



St. James United Church



Belong • Grow • Serve

330 Elizabeth Ave,
St. John's, NL, A1B 1T9

Celebration of Worship for December 21, 2025



December 21, 2025 – Fourth Sunday of Advent

Leading worship: Rev. James Ravenscroft, Sheilah Beckett,
Jena Earle, Amy Dalziel, Bob Rose and the Senior Choir
Ushering: Gerry Mayo, Kim Mayo, Marilyn Adams,
Susan Pike and Jean Thompson

*Please rise as you are able where there is an * in the service.
Print in **bold** indicates that the portion is read or sung by everyone.*

We Come to Worship

PRELUDE

WELCOME; LAND AND KINSHIP ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

We share greetings in Inuktitut, French and Japanese, and give thanks for the land upon which we gather as we commit to be inclusive of everyone.

SHARING OF PEACE

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

Reader 1: We gather with anticipation on this last Advent Sunday.

Reader 2: Before we know it, we will be honouring Jesus' birth, the night when God's love was revealed in a vulnerable baby.

Reader 1: We light a fourth candle as we give thanks for this gift.

REFRAIN: We light this candle for love. Await the new life within.
**May our hearts now live each day,
so love can find a way, so love can find a way.**

OPENING PRAYER:

Holy One, the celebration of Christmas draws near!

**Soon we will gather with grateful hearts to honour
the revelation of your boundless love in the birth of Christ.**

**Be with us in these final days of preparation,
inspiring a holy dream of all that his coming makes possible,
as heaven comes to earth and we are drawn to heaven.**

We pray in the name of your coming Emmanuel. Amen.

* HYMN: “People Look East” (*Voices United 9*)

We Share in Love

OUR LIFE AND WORK

OFFERTORY: *There are many ways to give to St. James. You can place an offering in the plate, scan the QR code on the left, contribute via PAR, website (www.stjamesuc.org), e-transfer (email treasurer@stjamesuc.org), mail to the church office or drop in our secure mailbox. In whatever way you choose to give, the community is grateful. During the offering, the choir will sing “Come Thou Long Expected Jesus.”*



* HYMN: “In the Bleak Midwinter” (*Voices United 55 v 4*)

**What can I give him, poor as I am. If I were a shepherd,
I would bring a lamb. If I were a wise man I would do my part;
yet what I can I give him, give my heart.**

PRAYER OF GRATITUDE AND GRACE

We Listen and Respond

LEARNING TOGETHER

We explore themes of the day in a manner that is accessible to all ages.

ANTHEM: “Glory to God” from “Messiah” (*G. F. Handel*)

READINGS: *At the end of each reading please say, “Thanks be to God.”*
Is. 7:10-16 (in French); Mt 1:18-25; Malcolm Guite, “Annunciation”

HYMN: “O Little Town of Bethlehem” (*Voices United 64*)

REFLECTION ON THE READINGS

A PAUSE FOR THOUGHT: *We pause for a time of quiet reflection.*

ANTHEM: “Star Carol” (*Sir John Rutter*)

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE PRAYER OF JESUS (*based on the original Aramaic*):

**Radiant One: Your name shines within us, outside us
- even darkness shines in you.**

**Create your reign now,
that your one desire acts with ours.**

Grant what we need each day in bread and insight.

**Forgive our hidden past, our secret shames,
as we forgive what others hide.**

**Keep us from forgetfulness,
the temptation of false appearances
and free us to walk your path with light and joy.**

**For from you arises every vision;
to you returns the birthing glory of the cosmos.
Amen.**

We Leave to Serve

* **HYMN:** “Angels from the Realms of Glory” (*Voices United 36*)
(*Please change “come and worship” in the refrain to “go and worship”.*)

BENEDICTION AND SENDING FORTH

...Go forth in love, waiting for the One we call Emmanuel!

We go, blessed in the assurance that God is with us!

POSTLUDE: *Please remain seated during the postlude.*

St. James United Church

Chair of the Church Board:

Pamela Norman

Minister:

Rev. James Ravenscroft

Minister Emeritus:

Rev. Dr. Donovan Brown

Co-Directors of Music:

Amy Dalziel and Bob Rose

Technology Support:

Jake Thompson

Office Administrator:

Stephanie Harnum

Church Custodian:

Bruce Winsor

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 @StJamesUCNL  @stjamesuc

WiFi: StJamesGuest WiFi Password: StJamesUC

All worship services at St. James are Live Streamed via video for our online congregation. By participating in this service, you acknowledge that you may be visible on live broadcast or archived video. If you are uncomfortable about the possibility of appearing on video, please speak to an usher who can seat you in an area not visible on camera. All music and lyrics, not in the public domain, are reproduced/ broadcast under ONE LICENSE.

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Life and Work – December 21, 2025

Wishing you a very safe, healthy, and blessed Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from the Staff and Council here at St. James United Church.

Rev James Holidays: Rev. James will be away for Christmas holidays from December 25th until December 30th.

We accept the following donation to the Maintenance Fund:

- *In loving memory of Daughter, Kimberley Renee from Mom and Dad, Brother and Sister
- *In loving memory of Parents: Chesley and Mary Granter and Leah and Lewis Bursey from Doug and Joan Bursey, Granddaughter and Grandson.
- *In loving memory of Gordon Bursey from Doug and Joan Bursey
- *In memory of James B. Marshall from Doug and Joan Bursey
- *In memory of Eric & Olga Hounsell and Daughter Erica from Doug and Joan Bursey
- *In loving memory of Parents Leah and Lewis Bursey and Brother Gordon from Harry and Jean Bursey

We accept the following donation to the General Fund:

- *In loving memory of parents Ruby and Gil Hiscock, sister Lona, and brother Gilbert from Patsy.
- *In memory of Dorothy and David Hapgood, Joanne Hapgood and Bethany Pike from Cathy and Luke Grenning
- *In loving memory of Rev. William A. Coish from Dora-Lee Pope and family who miss him dearly.
- * In loving memory of Winnifred Daniels from James and Lynn Payne, Brenda Spurrell, Gerald and Karen Smith and Winston Taylor
- * In loving memory of my parents William and Ruby Vallis from Daughter Betty and Family

We accept the following donation to the Memorial Fund:

- *In memory of dear mother, Ruby Hiscock from Glenn Hiscock
- *In memory of Jack Head from the family.

We accept the following donation to the Bethany Danielle Pike Memorial Camp Fund:

*In memory of Bethany Pike from Susan Pike and Michael Kavanagh

*In loving memory of Bethany's favourite time of year Love Stephen, Susan, Rebecca, Kyle and Micah

We accept the following donation to the Sound System:

*In loving memory of Gary and Andrew Winsor Winsor and Beth Holloway from Janice Winsor

THANK YOU: We would like to thank everyone that made Baking Spirits Bright a big success. We raised \$1317 so far, and we had a record number of people stay and enjoy lunch, great fellowship. There were a number of bake sale items left over, so we froze them, and they will be available in the vestibule on Sunday morning at a reduced price.

January 4 Epiphany Party: Get ready for some fun following worship on January 4. We will mark Epiphany with a potluck lunch (bring a holiday food from your cultural heritage), sharing some king cake (whoever finds the bean is monarch for the day) singing some carols, and making some crafts that celebrate light. So get ready for some fun and invite friends and family to join you.

Participating at home: Throughout the season of Advent we encourage those of you who worship from home to set up your own advent wreath (all you need is four candles.) Each Sunday light a candle at the same time as our people do in the Sanctuary at St. James.

After Worship Bible Study: Rev. James will lead a Bible study each Sunday after the coffee time. This will be a chance to explore the lectionary readings in more detail. Gather in the library 30 minutes after worship for an hour-long study.

Readers Required: If anyone is interested in helping out during Sunday worship services by doing readings, please see the sign up sheet in the vestibule or please contact Barry Cutler at (709) 685-9030 or by email at newfie_1_ca@yahoo.ca. Thank you

Bring Your Own Addition to the Manger Scene: In the tradition of the little drummer boy, this year we want to expand our manger scene with added characters beyond Mary, Joseph, animals, shepherds and magi. You are invited to bring someone you feel should be there, someone who represents you or what you love. Perhaps it is a baker, Barbie, a fisherman, farmer, or even a teddy bear, your choice. You can bring it anytime, even on Christmas Eve, just be aware it will need to stay until the end of the season.

**Buckle up for a joyride down memory lane with Spirit of Newfoundland's latest musical comedy, "Shift Happens...at 100 Smiles per Hour"!
On February 26, 2026, Gower Theatre doors open at 6:30 p.m.**

 Dinner, Show, and Non-Stop Entertainment  – All for just \$120 per person!

This is your chance to grab your spot for an unforgettable night filled with laughter, community, and music!

Bypass the downtown parking, park at St. James and avail of our taxi service to Gower St UC. Please enquire about our childcare availability. Dietary considerations available upon request. Tax receipts (\$50.00 per ticket) will be issued for the charitable portion of the ticket.

Tickets are selling fast, so get yours today by contacting the church office by phone or email. Payment is due at the time of purchase via cheque, e-transfer, or cash.

 Hosted by Gower Street United Church, St. James United Church, and Cowan Heights United Church, proceeds will be shared between the three churches in support of their ministries. 

ST. JAMES UNITED CHURCH

Celebrate the joy of Christ's birth

CHRISTMAS EVE *Church Services*

Wednesday, December 24

4:30 PM - FAMILY CHRISTMAS

It's Christmas meets Hallowe'en. Come dressed as a character from Barbie to a Baker, or bring an object/figurine that you feel should visit the baby Jesus along with the shepherds

7:00 PM - CANDLELIGHT CHRISTMAS

We reflect on the story of Christ's birth in this traditional service, as we sing carols, celebrate communion, and share the light of Christmas with each other.

9:00 PM - CONTEMPLATIVE CHRISTMAS

Welcome to a reflective time of soft music, readings and personal prayer. The church will be open until 10:30 pm for you to drop by. Stay for as long as you wish, 9 minutes or the whole 90.