



ST. JAMES UNITED
CHURCH

Rev. Peter Smith (Clergy) Sheila Davison (Organist)
Christine Morrison, Peter Rawding (Choir Directors)
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Our Mission as a congregation: *Love the Lord Your God with all your passion and prayer and intelligence and energy and love your neighbour as yourself. (Mark 12:19-21 MSG)*

December 11, 2016- Third Sunday of Advent

GOD BRINGS US TOGETHER

Prelude *Advent Meditation* (Dan Edwards) Handbell Choir
Welcome and Announcements

Introit: (O Come, O Come Emmanuel Vs 3)

***O come, O come, great God of might,
who to your tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times once gave the law in cloud, and majesty, and awe.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.***

Call to Worship (responsive from Psalm 9)

Let us give thanks to the Lord with our whole heart;

Let us tell of God's wonderful deeds.

Together let us be glad and exult in the Lord;

Together let us sing praises to the name of the Most High.

Prayer of Approach (together)

**Gracious God, your vision of peace and wholeness
comes to us in sweeping revelations and in tiny signs of hope.**

Kindle our hearts that we might be a hopeful people.

Keep us from growing weary of waiting,

lest we miss the glory of your appearing.

Even so, come quickly, O God,

for we wait and pray as your people, in Jesus' name, Amen.

Hymn: 232 VU Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You

Prayer of Confession

Assurance of Pardon

Hymn: 45 VU Joy is now in every place

The Advent Candle- L'Arche Friends

**O God of Joy, Emmanuel, send your light into our hearts at this time.
Fix our hearts and our minds upon those things you have done and
promised to do that we may have your joy within us. Amen.**

*A candle is burning, a candle of joy,
a candle to welcome brave Mary's new boy.
Our hearts fill with wonder, and eyes light and glow
as joy brightens winter like sunshine on snow.*

Children's Time and the Lord's Prayer

GOD SPEAKS THROUGH SCRIPTURE

Responsive Reading: Psalm 146

Phillip Cooper



Come, O Lord, and save us.

Old Testament: Isaiah 35:1-10

Pauline Liengme

Epistle: James 5:7-10

Doreen Smith

Gospel: Matthew 11: 2-11

Anthem: *Will You Travel to Bethlehem*

(Nancy Price/Don Besig)

Sermon: "Joy"

GOD CALLS US TO RESPOND

Hymn: 28 VU Herald! Sound the Note of Gladness

Offertory *Divinium Mysterium*

(arr. Wilbur Held)

Offertory Response (In the Bleak Midwinter 55 VU verse 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.***

Solo: "Sussex Carol"

(arr. David Wilcocks)

Phillip Cooper

Prayers of the People

Hymn: 59 VU Joy to the World

Commissioning and Benediction

Choral Benediction (Glory to God in 124 MV)

***Glory to God in the highest and peace to God's people on earth.
Glory to God in the highest and peace to God's people on earth.***

Postlude *The Holly and the Ivy*

(arr. Gordon Phillips)

A warm welcome to all who have gathered with us for worship this morning. May this time be one of fellowship with God and neighbour. If you are visiting please sign our guest book and make yourselves known to those around you.

A warm welcome to our friends from St. Paul the Apostle Anglican Church and the Rev. Sue Channen who have joined with us on this third Sunday of Advent. Following the service there will be a time of conversation, food, and fellowship in the hall. Everyone is welcome and invited.

Greeters at the door this Sunday are Sarah Armstrong and Chad Brazier.

Babies and toddlers who don't want to stay in the service for worship are welcome to make use of the nursery located in the multipurpose room. The nursery has toys and a speaker for parents to hear the service. This Sunday in the nursery - Krista Lauff

*A donation was made to the Hot Meal Fund
in memory of Jim and Evelyn Bayne.*

Envelopes for 2017 are now available in the Narthex before and after the service. Those wishing envelopes or to begin using PAR please contact the church office. Finance and Stewardship Committee

Sunday school News, The Sunday school would like to thank the congregation for their help in filling the gift bags for the food bank. We were able to fill 55 bags. The white gift offering was \$758.00 which will be shared equally with Brunswick Mission and United Church Mission and Service Fund.

Community Christmas Dinner Again this year, St. James United Church is hosting a community Christmas Dinner on December 25 at the St. James United Church hall in Antigonish. This event has been a success every year, but we can't do it without the help of our community. We are looking for volunteers to help with set up, food preparation, serving, and clean up. We also require donations of food, including turkeys, vegetables, condiments, and desserts, as well as monetary donations to help with expenses.

This is a wonderful way to do help others at Christmas. If you want to be involved in any way, please call Carolyn @ 863-0492 or email webberenglish@gmail.com.

Connections is waiting for your contribution to the Christmas 2016 edition. The deadline for all submissions is Dec. 11th, no later than 5:00 p.m. You may hand deliver your work to the church office or e-mail it to one of the following addresses: office@stjamesuc.com OR brendaannerose@gmail.com

The Funscrip order for December has arrived. If you ordered gift cards last week please see Randy or Marilyn after church to pick up your order. Thanks to everyone who is supporting our life and ministry in this way.

Next Sunday's Scriptures (December 18, 2016)
Isaiah 7:10-16 • Romans 1:1-7 • Matthew 1:18-25

THIS WEEK AT ST. JAMES

Sunday, December 11

- 10:30 am We are pleased to be combined with St. Paul the Apostle Anglican Church for this Service of Worship. A reception will follow in the church hall.
- 12:00 noon St. James United Church Women will meet following the reception for St. Paul's. We will be packing our "Baskets Of Love" in the meeting room. We could use donations of small or individual bottles of *sent free* Hand Lotion, Shampoo, Powder, Deodorant, toothpaste, Soap, Kleenex, Candy, Fudge, and Cookies.
- 12:00 noon Ministry and Personnel meet in the Parlour.

Tuesday, December 13

- 7:30 am Yoga with Stacy Steeves in the Hall
- 11:00 am Hot Meal in the Hall
- 3:00 pm Meditation Group in the Meeting Room.

Wednesday, December 14

- 11:00 am Christmas Service at the RK MacDonald Nursing Home. Everyone is welcome.

Thursday, December 15

11:00 am Hot Meal in the Hall
6:30 pm Senior Choir (Welcoming new members)
7:30 pm Women Chorus (Welcoming new members)

UPCOMING AT ST. JAMES

Sunday, December 11, 7:30pm, The Antigonish Choral Ensemble presents a Christmas Celebration, featuring the St James Handbell Choir and the Antigonish String Quartet, at St. James United Church Admittance by donation. All are welcome.

Saturday, December 24th. Christmas Eve Services will take place as in previous years. 4:00 pm at St. David's, 7:00 pm Family Service at St. James, and 9:00 pm Communion Service at St. James.

Sunday, December 25th Christmas Day worship will occur at 10:30 as usual and will include readings and music. Please bring something you received for Christmas for the Children's Time.

Looking for a gift for the person who has everything? Want to help make our community a better place? Why not pick up a copy of the Antigonish Gift Book, a project of St. James, St. Paul's, The Sisters of St. Maetha's and the Antigonish Quaker Worship Group, and donate to one of the many worthy organizations listed. Copies can be found at the back of the Church and at many locations around town.

Gifts with Vision Our Congregation has multiple copies of the 2016 edition of *Gifts with Vision: A Gift-Giving Catalogue from the United Church of Canada* for all of us to use and share. The United Church developed the gift catalogue in response to member requests to be able to give gifts to support that support the church's Mission and Service partners. Gifts are available in a range of dollar amounts and include projects here in Canada and around the world many different areas of need (hunger, shelter, education, health, safety, mobility, and more). An online copy of the gift catalogue can be found at www.giftswithvision.ca

FINANCIAL NEWS For December 11, 2016

Offering Last Week \$3,370 Year - To - Date Offering \$145,710

Required for Budget \$3,708 Year -To - Date Budget \$176,731

The offering for last week reflects the money received from the congregation through donations put on the offering plate and through PAR. The required for budget amount is the total collection needed to break even, if all budgeted activities took place.

The year – to - date offering is the actual amount that our congregation has donated so far in 2016, to the end of November. The year – to - date budget amount is the required amount needed for all budgeted activities to take place this year as of the end of November, 2016.

Stewardship Thought for this Week- December 11, 2016

One of the dangers of having a lot of money is that you may be quite satisfied with the kinds of happiness money can give and so fail to realize your need for God. If everything seems to come simply by signing checks, you may forget that you are at every moment totally dependent on God.

- C.S. Lewis

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Wednesday, December 14. The next Epistles at St. Paul's, Dr. Ariana Patey will speak on "The Virgin Birth: Islam Celebrates Jesus". Dr. Patey is a specialist in Catholic-Islam relations and grew up in the Middle East. Refreshments at 6:30 PM, talk begins at 7:00 PM

Friday, December 16 at 8:00 pm A King's Christmas in Antigonish: at St Ninian's Cathedral. Paul Halley and the University of King's College Chapel Choir return to Antigonish for a third year to present their feast of seasonal song and story that brings audience and performers fully into the profound beauty and poignancy of Christmas. The choir will be joined this year by guest narrator Roberta Barker, Associate Professor and Associate Director (Theatre) at the Fountain School of Performing Arts at Dalhousie University. Tickets \$15-\$100, reserve at Antigonish Performing Arts (902.867.3909) or www.tickethalifax.com. Tickets also sold at the door. Info at www.ukings.ca/concerts.

Attention Pet Lovers - Michèle Ashby will have both SPCA and Cat Rescue Maritimes (carma) 2017 calendars for sale the next few Sundays if you would like to purchase one. They make an ideal gift for fellow pet fans

THOUGHTS ABOUT ADVENT

Old-fashioned, Spiritual Christmas?

John R. Brokhoff, Preaching the Parables—Cycle C. p. 28.

What has happened to the old-fashioned, spiritual Christmas? The cause is our disregard of Advent. The church set aside this four-week pre-Christmas season as a time of spiritual preparation for Christ's coming. It is a time of quiet anticipation. If Christ is going to come again into our hearts, there must be repentance. Without repentance, our hearts will be so full of worldly things that there will be 'no room in the inn' for Christ to be born again... We have the joy not of celebration. Which is the joy of Christmas, but the joy of anticipation.

Meanings of Christmas

Fr. Andrew Greeley, Woman's Day, 12-22-81

It might be easy to run away to a monastery, away from the commercialization, the hectic hustle, the demanding family responsibilities of Christmas-time. Then we would have a holy Christmas. But we would forget the lesson of the Incarnation, of the enfleshing of God—the lesson that we who are followers of Jesus do not run from the secular; rather we try to transform it. It is our mission to make holy the secular aspects of Christmas just as the early Christians baptized the Christmas tree. And we do this by being holy people—kind, patient, generous, loving, laughing people—no matter how maddening is the Christmas rush...

Life Is an Advent Season

CONNECTIONS, 11-28-93

Life is a constant Advent season: we are continually waiting to become, to discover, to complete, to fulfill. Hope, struggle, fear, expectation and fulfillment are all part of our Advent experience.

The world is not as just, not as loving, not as whole as we know it can and should be. But the coming of Christ and his presence among us—as one of us—give us reason to live in hope: that light will shatter the darkness, that we can be liberated from our fears and prejudices, that we are never alone or abandoned.

May this Advent season be a time for bringing hope, transformation and fulfillment into the Advent of our lives.