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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 24, 2022 - Christmas Eve

GOD CALLS US TOGETHER

Prelude *Jesus Christ, The Apple Tree* Michèle Ashby and Brenda Rose

Welcome

Call to Worship (responsive)

There is a song in the air

Come let us sing with the angels

There is commotion in the streets

Come let us join the celebration of the shepherds

There is hope in the manger

Come let us worship the new born king.

Opening Prayer (together)

God of wonder, in Bethlehem

you change the rules of creation,

for you come and live among us as a tiny child.

You bring hope in the midst of despair,

peace in a time of conflict,

and joy which sorrow cannot overcome.

Most of all you call us to draw near and

know your love for us in Jesus Christ, Amen.

Hymn: 48 VU *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

TO HEAR THE PROMISE

Old Testament: Isaiah 9:2-7

Garret van de Wiel

Lighting of the Advent Candles (responsive)

The Light shines in the darkness

and the darkness does not overcome it.

We who have walked in darkness have seen a great light

For the light of God breaks forth into our lives.

*We honour Messiah with Christ-candle's flame,
our Christmas Eve candles glad tidings proclaim.
O come, all you faithful, rejoice in this night,
as God comes among us, the Christian's true light.*

Anthem *Make My Life a Bethlehem*

Choir

OF SALVATION THROUGH THE BIRTH

Gospel: Luke 2:1-7

Jacob Polson

Hymn: 67 VU *Silent Night*

Gospel: Luke 2: 8-20

Michèle Ashby

Anthem *O Holy Night*

Sheumais MacLeod

A Story at Christmas

OF JESUS CHRIST THE LORD

Hymn: 43 VU *Go Tell It On The Mountain*

Offertory *Still, Still, Still*

Offertory Response (As With Gladness 81 VU)

*As they offered gifts most rare at that manger crude and bare,
so may we with holy joy, pure and free from sin's alloy,
all our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to you, our heavenly King*

Prayers of the People at Christmas

Hymn: 59 VU *Joy To The World*

Benediction

Postlude

A warm welcome to everyone who is joining us for worship. May this be a time for us to draw closer to each other and God. We recognize that we gather in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People, and we seek to be good neighbours to the First Nations.

The bulletin this Christmas Eve is dedicated to the glory of God and in loving memory of *Sheila Marie Polson* by her mother and father and family.

Thanks to everyone who shared their gifts and time to enrich our church services through Advent and Christmas. Many voices and talents have combined in this season of hope and joy to help us celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.

A Community Christmas dinner will be held in the hall at St. James United Church, Main Street, Antigonish at 2pm on Christmas Day. Anyone who is looking for a place to go on Christmas Day is welcome to join us and share a meal cooked with love.

The end of the year is fast approaching. The last day for donations of cheques and cash St. James to be credited for your 2022 tax receipt is December 29, 2022 (the secure drop slot is available when the office is closed). Donations via eft (eft@stjamesuc.com) or online (www.stjamesuc.com) can be made at anytime day or night.

CHRISTMAS SERVICES AT ST. JAMES

Saturday, December 24

4:00 pm Christmas Eve at St. David's
7:00 pm Christmas Eve Family Service at St. James
9:00 pm Christmas Eve Communion at St. James

Sunday, December 25

10:30 am Christmas Day service at St. James

A PRAYER AT CHRISTMAS

God of

shepherds and kings,

you gather us by the light of the star of promise.

You lead us not only to hope for the future,

but to trust in your presence and renewal of life in every time and place.

Guide us this night, by the light of that same star.

Lead us to the mangers of this world,

where uncertainty is met with the renewal life

and the transformation of this world is most deeply felt

in love, one with another.

Be with us on this most wondrous of nights,

we ask in Jesus' name.

Amen.