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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)

January 8, 2023 - Epiphany

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

Introit: (O Come, O Come Emmanuel Vs 6)

***O come, Desire of nations, bind all peoples in one heart and mind;
O bid our sad divisions cease, and be for us the Prince of Peace.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.***

Call to Worship (responsive)

Leader: We will sing of God's steadfast love forever;

People: with our mouths we will proclaim God's faithfulness to all generations.

Leader: We declare that your steadfast love is established forever;

People: God's faithfulness is as firm as the heavens.

***Let us, like the Wise Men,
look for signs of the divine presence.***

***Let us, like the shepherds,
respond to the invitation to see what God has done for us and our world.***

***At this time of new beginnings –
a new year, a new month, a new week, and a new day –
let us leave behind the past.
Let us leave behind our bad memories, our past mistakes,
our old animosities, our painful failures,
and let us look to Jesus Christ, our Good Shepherd,
who will lead us with joy and confidence into the future.***

Prayer of Approach (together)

Radiant God, light of all people and all places,

***By the guidance of a star you led the Magi
to worship the Christ Child.***

By the light of faith

***Lead us to worship you in peace and love,
and guide us in your way.***

***We pray in the name of Christ,
light of the world. Amen.***

Hymn: 50 VU *He is Born / Il est né* (1st verse en français)

Children's Time and the Lord's Prayer

GOD SPEAKS THROUGH SCRIPTURE

Responsive Reading: Psalm 72:1-8 (p. 790 VU Part One)

First Lesson: Isaiah 60:1-6 (see insert)

Linda Darwish

Second Lesson: Ephesians 3:1-12

Marlene Groenenberg

Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12

Anthem

Sermon: The Feast of Epiphany – What Does It Mean to Us Today?

GOD CALLS US TO RESPOND

Hymn: *We Three Kings* (see insert)

Minute for Mission

Robert Smith

Offertory Prayer

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

Hymn: 91 VU *The First Nowell*

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

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.

Thank you to Michèle Ashby who is leading our service of worship this morning.

Annual Reports for 2022 are due into the church office *Friday, January 13th* . Reports can be emailed to the church office at sjuantigonish@gmail.com The tentative date for the Congregational Meeting is Sunday, February 26th.

Rev. Peter is on sabbatical from December 26, 2022- March 27, 2023. During that time Rev. Doug Stewart (revdoug@stjamesuc.com) will be pastoral charge supervisor and Rev. Meredith Marple will be available for pastoral care and emergencies (revmeredth@stjamesuc.com or 902-863-0452). Leadership for our Sunday services will be provided by Rev. Doug Stewart, Joan MacGillivray, Michèle Ashby, Garret van de Wiel, and several groups and committees.

THIS WEEK AT ST. JAMES

Tuesday, January 10

11:00 am The Community Hot Meal in the Hall.
3:00 pm Meditation Group in the Meeting Room.
4:00 pm Finance & Stewardship in the Hall

Thursday, January 12

11:00 am The Community Hot Meal in the Hall.
6:30pm Choir Practice in the Sanctuary.

Sunday, January 15

11:30 am UCW will meet in the Meeting Room.

Isaiah 60:1-6

Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you. Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. Lift up your eyes and look around; they all gather together, they come to you; your sons shall come from far away, and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms. Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and rejoice, because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you. A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall proclaim the praise of the LORD.

We Three Kings

1) We three kings of Orient are;
bearing gifts we traverse afar,
field and fountain, moor and mountain,
following yonder star.

Refrain:

O star of wonder, star of light,
star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding,
guide us to thy perfect light.

2) Born a King on Bethlehem's plain,
gold I bring to crown him again,
King forever, ceasing never,
over us all to reign. *[Refrain]*

3) Frankincense to offer have I;
incense owns a Deity nigh;
prayer and praising, voices raising,
worshiping God on high. *[Refrain]*

4) Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume
breathes a life of gathering gloom;
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,
sealed in the stone-cold tomb. *[Refrain]*

5) Glorious now behold him arise;
King and God and sacrifice:
Alleluia, Alleluia,
sounds through the earth and skies. *[Refrain]*

As we head into 2023, the **Social Justice Committee** invites you to consider poverty issues across Canada and in NS specifically. Two excellent sources of information are:

<https://www.statcan.gc.ca/en/topics-start/poverty> and

<https://cwp-csp.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Poverty-Progress-Profile-s-2022.pdf>

These websites provide up to date statistics about how we now hear, see and feel deeper and greater income, housing and food insecurity since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and the recent economic inflation. Did you know that “Nova Scotians are being priced out of the housing market in Halifax. Rents have increased by 30% since last year and some rental listings are more expensive than in Ontario, but the minimum wage is almost \$2/hour less.” The Consumer Price Index as of Oct 2022 has risen across the board 7.7%, but energy specifically has risen a shocking 23.7%. How can the average family afford this? Poverty is a policy decision – let our politicians know that we want and need changes!

COMMUNITY EVENTS

There will be a **VOLUNTEER FAIR** on Tuesday, 17 January at the Community Room in the People's Place Library. Sessions to take place 12:00 > 1:00 or 5:00 > 6:00. If you are looking for a way to give back to our community, build your resume, meet new people or become more involved in Antigonish - come on out! Participating organizations will include: Antigonish County Adult Learning Organization, Canadian Association for Community Living (CACL), Syria-Antigonish Families Embrace (SAFE), Community Transit, Community Health Board, Girl Guides, Antigonish Women's Resource Centre, Nova Scotia Works and the Antigonish Affordable Housing Association.

