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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 12, 2025- Baptism of Jesus

GOD BRINGS US TOGETHER

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

Introit: (84 VU O Radiant Christ, Eternal Word)

***O Radiant Christ, Eternal Word,
eternal love revealed in time
come make your home within our hearts,
that we may dwell in light sublime.***

Call to Worship (responsive from Isaiah 2:5, John 1:5)

Come, people of faith

Let us walk in the light of the Lord.

For the light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness has never put it out.

Prayer of Approach (together)

**Eternal God, radiant with grace,
thaw our fears and snow-bound spirits;
make us shine with your Word, our hope;
shine with your love, our life;
shine with your peace, our joy;
through Christ, who is our Light, Amen.**

Hymn: 232 VU *Joyful, Joyful*

Children's Time and the Lord's Prayer

Hymn: 356 VU *Seek Ye First*

GOD SPEAKS THROUGH SCRIPTURE

Responsive Reading: Psalm 29 (p. 756 VU)

First Lesson: Isaiah 43:1-7

David Hamilton

Second Lesson: Acts 8:14-17

Nancy Kotanen

Gospel: Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

Anthem

Sermon: "The Blessings of Fire and the Holy Spirit"

GOD CALLS US TO RESPOND

Hymn: 161 MV *I Have Called You By Your Name*

Minute for Mission

Shaun Scott

Offering and Offertory Response (104 MV Know That God is Good)

***Know that God is good, know that God is good,
know that God is good, God is good, God is good.
C'est vrai: Dieu est bon! C'est vrai: Dieu est bon!
C'est vrai: Dieu est bon! Dieu est bon! Dieu est bon!***

Prayers of the People

Hymn: 375 VU *Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness*

Commissioning and Benediction

Choral Benediction (84 VU O Radiant Christ, Eternal Word v4)

***O Light of Nations, fill the earth;
our faith and hope and love renew,
Come, lead the peoples to your peace,
as stars once led the way to you.***

Postlude

A warm welcome to everyone joining us for worship. May this time help you draw to closer to God and your neighbour. 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.

Coffee Hosts this morning are Joanne Clifton and Isabel Tate

Scripture for Next Sunday

Isaiah 62:1-5 • 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 • John 2:1-11

More than 100 Francophone Youth Attend First-Time United Church Event

Two things are clear from the gathering of francophone youth, La rencontre nationale des jeunes francophones du Canada (Ré-unis), held at Jouvence, QC, November 29–December 1. One: There is an eagerness among francophone youth to gather together in one place as the United Church. Two: Francophones are not just from Nakonha:ka region; many of the youth who attended were also from Shining Waters and Eastern Ontario Outaouais regions.

More than 100 youth enthusiastically participated; they were divided into groups of under age 13 and older than age 13. More than 95 percent were from French-speaking African communities in Canada. “All the participants were so happy for the event. The kids had a wonderful time during that weekend and are eager that another youth event should be organized again as soon as possible,” says Ruth Sandeu. “They celebrated their faith and connected with other French-speaking youth through songs, praise, and worship. We saw an actual church of communion during this weekend.”

During the weekend, the youth heard from Éric Hebert-Daly, Regional Council Executive Minister for East Central Ontario, Eastern Ontario Outaouais, and Nakonha:ka regional councils, and Jennifer Henry, Executive Minister for Organizational Development and Strategy. Participants also shared in worship, icebreakers, workshops, presenters, and panels, all around the theme “We are no longer strangers.” On Saturday, other speakers joined the participants, including Martin Bellerose, Jean Daniel Ó Donnca a, Noubissi Luc, Marie-Claude Manga, Isaac Kamta, Kofi Akoussah, Mepoubong Floriane, Bukam Florence, and Samuel Dansokho.

On the final day, they worshipped and ate together, along with parents in attendance, with Plymouth Trinity United Church at Jouvence, during which messages from the Moderator and General Secretary were read. The event left the adults who attended feeling energized, says Sandeu, and certain that the next event will bring even more youth out. “For the ones who are in immigrant churches and involved in current social issues,” she says, “we’re observing a revival.”

The prayers and Christian sympathy of the congregation are extended to the family and friends of *Eileen Adams* whose funeral was yesterday at St. James. Please keep her family and friends in your thoughts and prayers during this time.

THIS WEEK AT ST. JAMES

Sunday, January 12

11:30 am UCW gathers in the Meeting Room

Tuesday, January 14

11:00 am Community Hot Meal Program

1:30 pm Outreach and Communication

3:00 pm Meditation Group in the Parlour. Contact Fran for more information 902 870-1198.

4:00 pm Finance and Stewardship in the Meeting Room

7:00 pm Worship Committee via Zoom

Thursday, January 16

11:00 am Community Hot Meal Program

7:00 pm Choir practice

Friday, January 17

12:00 pm Deadline for reports to be in for the Annual report

UPCOMING AT ST. JAMES

Tuesday, January 19

7:00 pm Council meets via Zoom.

Annual Reports for 2024 are to be sent by *Friday, January 17th*. The tentative date for the Congregational Meeting is Sunday, March 2nd. after worship and a shared meal.

The latest issue of Connections, our congregational newsletter, is available in print at the door and in the e-version on the website (www.stjamesuc.com/connections-newsletter/). Thanks to Brenda Rose for the editing and layout and to all the contributors for their articles.

2025 Social Justice calendars are now available in the narthex for those who would like to be aware of important upcoming dates in 2025 that require our reflection, prayer, and possibly, action.

The Social Justice Collective reminds you that 18- 25 January is the **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**. This is a non-denominational Christian observance celebrated internationally between the feast days of St Peter and St Paul. This year's celebration has been prepared by the community of Bose, an ecumenical monastery of brothers and sisters in northern Italy. The 2025 text is John 11:17-27, the dialogue between Jesus and Martha when Jesus visited the home of Martha and Mary in Bethany following the death of their brother Lazarus, as narrated by the evangelist John. The theme is John 11:26 "Do you believe this?" (The Prayer for Christian Unity Service in Antigonish will be on Thursday, January 23, 2025 at the St FX University Chapel. More information will be available next Sunday).

Visiting at St. Martha's. Just a reminder that because of policies in place at the hospital that patients or their families have to request visits from clergy. If you are in the hospital and would like a visit from Rev. Peter please call 902-863-2859 or tell one of the staff or chaplains at St. Martha's.

Did you know? There is no minimum or maximum amount for your PAR (Pre-Authorized Remittance) contribution to St. James. Simply designate the offering you normally give to the congregation and once a month on a designated date the money moves from your account to the church's. Interested in learning more? Speak with Pamela Cunningham or drop by the church office.

Canada Helps - Looking for a copy of a tax receipt for a donation you made to St. James through Canada Helps in 2024? We don't issue those but if you go to <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/tax-receipts/> they will email you a duplicate (all you need is the email address you used when you donated).

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Wind from the Sea Wild Church- Winter Wander Saturday Jan 18th at 2:00pm. Bethany Centennial Garden, Antigonish. All welcome. More information at rector3harbours@gmail.com and Wind from the Sea on Facebook.

Blood Donation Clinic St. Ninian's Parish. Jan 21-23rd. blood.ca

