

St. James United Church

A Community of Friends in Faith

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



The people of St. James United Church are eternal seekers who value diversity within our congregation, our city, and all of society. We affirm each person's uniqueness and believe that all persons deserve to be valued, treated with equity, and respected. We are all children of God, walking many paths of spirituality.

Further, we proudly and publicly declare our commitment to practice radical hospitality and strive in every way to provide a safe and supportive place for all persons to participate in the worship and work of our church.

Guided by the teachings of Jesus, we embrace all persons, regardless of creed, race, age, ability, economic status, cultural and ethnic background, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, or any other difference that has led to marginalization or oppression.

In Loving Memory of a Cherished Mother

Roma Paul

(November 30, 1938 - April 27, 2013)

From: Nancy & Anthony

"Your kind and loving ways personified the Christmas spirit.
You will always be our guiding light."

In Loving Memory of

Murley Bursey

(October 13, 1927 to November 26, 2012)

"Ever Remembered and Loved"

From Shirley, Carolyn, Sherry, Paul, Barry, Melissa and Families.

December 4, 2022 – Second Sunday of Advent

Leading Worship Today: Rev. James Ravenscroft
Leading Music: Amy Dalziel, Bob Rose and Senior Choir
Ushers: Brenda and Clyde Flight, Susan Pike, Marilyn Adams, and Jean Thompson

We Come to Worship

PRELUDE

WELCOME

We extend words of greeting in Inuktitut, Urdu and Ukrainian.

INTROIT: “Hope Is a Star” (*Voices United 7, verse 2*)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF LAND AND KINSHIP

We give thanks for the land and the Indigenous peoples who steward it and pledge to be a safer and inclusive space for everyone.

CENTERING SONG: “Joyful is the Dark” (*VU 284, v 2 & 5*)

HONOURING THE GIFT OF DARKNESS

We acknowledge the lengthening night with a time of quiet reflection.

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

Reader 1: God of wisdom, we light the second candle of Advent.

(A member of a family lights the first candle.)

Reader 2: We kindle it with a prayer for insight. The quiet of the night is often a time for inner reflection, when ideas are planted and slowly grow until they are brought to life in the light of day.

Reader 1: John the Baptist invited his hearers to reflect on their lives, to consider what they should nurture and what they need to set aside if they were going to plant the promise of God’s Reign.

All: Creator of day and night, we pray this Advent that your grace may be sown within our hearts. May the peace that you plant there come to maturity, grown into a harvest of justice, kindness and care as we walk the path of your Holy Child. In his name we pray. Amen.

HYMN: “Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus” (*Voices United 2*)

We Share

OUR LIFE AND WORK

We acknowledge the connection between our work and worship as we announce what is going on in our congregation and community.

OFFERTORY: “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.**

OFFERTORY PRAYER

We dedicate our offerings to the work of God's love and justice. Tax receipts issued at year-end if donor's name and address are provided.

We Listen

LEARNING TOGETHER

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

HYMN: "There's a voice In the Wilderness" (*Voices United 18*)

PRAYER OF AWAKENING

ANTHEM: "A Choral Hymn for Advent", by Henry G. Ley."

READINGS: Isaiah 2:1-5; Matthew 3:1-12

MESSAGE: "Seeking Lasting Peace"

We Respond

HYMN: "O Jesus, Joy of Loving Hearts" (*Voices United 472*)

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

One: Jesus came to bring God's hope and peace to the world.

All: In table fellowship may we know his joy and his love.

THE GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

One: God is here. **All: God is within and around us.**

One: Open your hearts. **All: We gladly open them to God.**

One: Let us give thanks. **All: It is good to give thanks and praise.**

One: It is good to give thanks, God of promise, as we gather on this Advent morning. We praise you for Jesus: born in Bethlehem, proclaimed by the Baptizer, bearer of good news for the world.

All: We give thanks too for the words of prophets, for the courage of Mary and Joseph, for the song of the angels.

One: With them we raise our own voices in praise:

All sing: O holy, holy, holy Lord, O God of time and space.

All earth and sea and sky above bear witness to your grace. Hosanna in the highest heav'n, creation sings your praise. And blessed is the One who comes and bears your name always! (*More Voices #203*)

One: God of hope we give thanks, for the child born to us did not stay in a manger but grew in wisdom and announced your reign. He grew up to heal the tormented, confront the powers, and in word and action reveal your justice and love. Arrested for his witness to truth and mercy, he was put to death; in fulfillment of your promise, he was raised to new life.

All: We remember his birth long ago; we remember his life and teaching; we remember his message of hope lived out at table; we remember the night he broke bread with friends.

One: On the night before he died, he gathered with his friends. Taking bread and giving thanks, he gave it to them saying, "This is my body, given for you." In the same way he took a cup, and gave it to them saying, "This is a sign of the new covenant in my life's blood. Whenever you do this, remember me."

God of peace, we remember, gathered around this table, open to your presence, sharing life and love in bread and wine:

All: Sing Christ has died, and Christ is risen, Christ will come again! (x2) (*More Voices #204*)

One: God of wisdom, open our hearts to the presence of your Spirit flowing within us and through these gifts. As you touched Mary and Jesus with Spirit's breath, so fill us with your power.

All: Renew us through this holy meal and send us pregnant with your grace to bear your love to the world.

One: Holy One we give you praise. Creator God, we praise you, through Your Word made flesh, in the power of your life-giving Spirit, now and forever.

All sing: Amen, amen, O Holy One! Hosanna and Amen! (x2)
(*More Voices #205*)

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, as in all light so in all things. 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.

COMMUNION ANTHEM: "Eat This Bread" (*Taizé chant, VU 266*)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION (*in unison*): **God of grace, we give thanks for love revealed in Mary's child, experienced anew through bread and wine. Strengthen our faith that we may be Advent people, sharing your promise of love. Amen.**

We Leave to Serve

HYMN: "Hark the Herald Angels Sing" (*Voices United 48*)

BENEDICTION AND SENDING FORTH

One: Go forth in peace: the One we call Emmanuel is coming!

All: We go, blessed in the knowledge that he is here!

POSTLUDE

St. James United Church

Lead Minister:	James Ravenscroft, OM
Youth/Christian Education Minister:	Susan Sheppard, DLM
Minister Emeritus:	Rev. Dr. Donovan Brown
Music Director:	Amy Dalziel
Associate Music Director:	Bob Rose
Technology Support:	Jake Thompson
Office Administrator:	Stephanie Harnum
Church Custodian:	Bruce Winsor

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Creative Corner:

A place for you to write a note, draw a picture, or whatever you wish!