



St. James United Church
330 Elizabeth Avenue,
St. John's, NL, A1B 1T9



Celebration of Worship for December 15, 2024



The people of St. James United Church are eternal seekers who value diversity within our congregation, 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.

December 15, 2024 – Third Sunday of Advent

Leading Worship: Rev. James Ravenscroft,
Amy Dalziel, Bob Rose and the St. James Senior Choir
Ushering: Heather & Ian McMaster, Robyn McMaster,
Jalna McMaster and Susan Pike

*Please rise as you are able where there is an * in the service.
Print in **bold** indicates that the portion is read or sung by everyone.*

We Come to Worship

PRELUDE

WELCOME; LAND AND KINSHIP ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

We share greetings in Mi'kmaq, French & German, and give thanks for the land upon which we gather as we commit to be inclusive of everyone.

SHARING OF PEACE

INTROIT: “The Angel Gabriel” (*Old Basque Carol - v. 1 & 3*)

OPENING POEM: “The Breeze at Dawn” by Jalaluddin Rumi

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

1. In the early hours of every morning, the inky blue of the sky slowly begins to purple, heralding that the night is passing.
2. The dawn is drawing nearer in a transition time between night and day, inviting us to awaken to the possible when light returns.

REFRAIN: “We Wait for God” (Words: William S. Kervin, 2023; Music: Deborah Park and Tom Reynolds, 2023)

We wait for God, creation longs to see a new day dawn. And though the night is dark and deep we dare to sing our song. We wait for God, creation longs, we dare to sing our song.

OPENING PRAYER

Holy One, **as the celebration of Christ’s birth draws closer, we feel a shift in our hearts, the rising of a gentle wind telling us your promised reign draws nearer. Be with us in these holy days, awakening us to the peace that comes with Jesus’ birth. We pray in the name of the one who comes, your promised Emmanuel, Amen.**

* **HYMN:** “All Earth is Waiting” (*Voices United 5*)

We Share in Love

OUR LIFE AND WORK

OFFERTORY: *There are many ways to give to St. James. You can place an offering in the plate, scan the QR code on the left, contribute via PAR, website (www.stjamesuc.org), e-transfer (email treasurer@stjamesuc.org), mail to the church office or drop in our secure mailbox. In whatever way you choose to give, the community is grateful.*



* **HYMN:** “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.**

PRAYER OF GRATITUDE

We Listen and Respond

LEARNING TOGETHER

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

* **HYMN:** “Don’t Be Afraid” (*More Voices 90*)

READINGS: *At the end of each reading please say, “Thanks be to God.”*

Isaiah 12:2-6; and Luke 1:26-38

ANTHEM: “And the Glory of the Lord” (from *Messiah*) – *G. F Handel*

REFLECTION ON THE READINGS

* **HYMN:** “O Little Town of Bethlehem” (*Voices United 64*)

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

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. 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.

We Leave to Serve

* **HYMN:** "Joy to the World" (*Voices United* 59)

BENEDICTION AND SENDING FORTH

One: Go forth in joy, waiting for the One we call Emmanuel!

All: We go, blessed in the assurance that God is with us!

POSTLUDE

St. James United Church

Chair of Council:	Michelle Skinner
Minister:	Rev. James Ravenscroft
Minister Emeritus:	Rev. Dr. Donovan Brown
Music Director:	Amy Dalziel
Associate Music Director	Bob Rose
Office Administrator	Stephanie Harnum
Technology Support:	Jake Thompson
Church Custodian:	Bruce Winsor

Office: 722-1881, x200; Email: info@stjamesuc.org;
Emergency Cellphone: 709-351-0983; Website: www.stjamesuc.org

WiFi: StJamesGuest WiFi Password: StJamesUC



@StJamesUCNL



@StJamesUnited



@stjamesuc

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Life and Work - December 15, 2024

We accept the following donation to the Memorial Fund:

* In Loving Memory of Dot and Dave Hapgood, Joanne Hapgood and Bethany Pike from Cathy and Luke Grenning

We accept the following donation to the General Fund:

* In Loving Memory of son Brian and husband Carlson from Anne Emberley

We accept the following donation to the General Protestant Cemetery:

* In Loving Memory of Fred Higdon from wife Claire and family

We would like to thank the UCW for their very generous donations:

* We accept a \$500 donation to the M&S Fund

* We accept a \$4000 donation to the General Fund for operating expenses

* We accept a \$400 donation to Bridges to Hope

* We accept a \$200 donation to Stella's Circle

Christmas Office Closure: The church office will be closed starting on December 21 until the morning of January 2nd. If anyone has any donations to go in the Christmas bulletins, please have them into the office by TODAY, Sunday, December 15th at the latest.

Gift Wrap Tubes: As you wrap your gifts this year, please set aside a gift wrap tube or two. We are looking for about 6 tubes for a project at the church.

Preparing for December 29: Do you have a nativity set at home that is unique or holds special memories for you? Bring to the church on December 29 and if you are comfortable, set it up in the sanctuary. As part of worship that day, there will be time in

the service for people to look at different nativities and share about them.

2025 Church Envelopes: Your 2025 church envelopes are available to be picked up at the church during office hours or Sunday morning during service.

Advent Perspectives: Do you want to spiritually prepare yourself for Christmas this year? Why not gather in small groups and prayerfully reflect together on the readings for each Sunday of Advent? At the beginning of each week, we will send out an email with readings and questions to prompt your reflection and discussion. Reach out to some friends and together make room for Christ to be born in your hearts.

Blue Christmas Service: December 17 at 7 pm. A reflective service for all who feel blue during the holidays, especially because of a recent death, illness, break up or any other loss.

St. James Calendar: 2025 Calendars are available to purchase. If you wish to buy one, please contact the office during regular business hours. The cost is \$20.

Bridges to Hope: Bridges To Hope are asking their partner churches to contribute a specific item each month. Of course, this item, and other non-perishable food items, can be given any other Sunday as well. These items are staples in the food hampers distributed and will go a long way to ensuring that hampers can be filled.

The suggested item(s) for December 2024, especially useful for Bridges to Hope - Canned Meat. Other non-perishable food items are always welcome and appreciated!

Thank you for your support!

St. James Christmas Worship Services:

3rd Sunday of Advent Service - December 15 @ 11AM

Blue Christmas Service - December 17 @ 7PM

Winter Solstice - December 21 @ 7PM at the Sheppard's
(contact office for address)

4th Sunday of Advent Service - December 22 @ 11AM

Christmas Eve Family Service - December 24 at 4:30PM

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service - December 24 at 7:00PM

1st Sunday of Christmas Service - December 29 @ 11AM