



St. James United Church



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

Celebration of Worship for December 8, 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.

In Loving Memory of:
William (Bill) Butt
January 2, 1938 - December 7th 2020
From his Wife Barbara and family.
"Your presence we miss, your memories we treasure,
loving you always, forgetting you never." ~Unknown~

December 8, 2024 – Second Sunday of Advent

Leading Worship: Rev. James Ravenscroft, Amy Dalziel,
and the St. James United Church Brass Trio
Ushering: Skyler Simpson, Leah Kirk, Marilyn Adams,
Susan Pike and Jean Thompson

*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 Innu-aimun, French & Arabic, and give thanks for the land upon which we gather as we commit to be inclusive of everyone.

SHARING OF PEACE

INSTRUMENTAL INTROIT: "Prepare the Way of the Lord"

OPENING POEM: "Moon and Water" by Mary Oliver

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

1. At times as we look into the night sky, and all is dark save the bright light of the moon. We can feel unsure, not knowing what to do, but the moon shines in silent witness of where we are to turn.

2. The moon shines, not from its own light source. No, it reflects rather than burns, as we too are to reflect another light, to shine not on our own but Christ shining through us, shining with love.

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, be with us in these Advent days, through your Spirit guiding us in your way of wisdom. Though at times we may be unsure, may we look to Jesus whose birth reminds us that the way to fullness is found first in letting go. We pray in the name of the one who comes, your promised Emmanuel. Amen.

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

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 is (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.

*** PRESENTATION OF GIFTS FOR WHITE GIFT SUNDAY**

We bring forward donations to Stella’s Circle and other community groups and dedicate our offerings as we sing “In the Bleak Midwinter” VU 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:** “There’s a Voice in the Wilderness” (*Voices United 18*)

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

Malachi 3:1-4; and Luke 1:57-80

*** HYMN:** “O Lord How Shall I Meet You” (*Voices United 31*)

REFLECTION ON THE READINGS

BRASS ANTHEM: “Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming” (traditional)

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:** “Hark the Herald Angels Sing” (*Voices United 48*)

BENEDICTION AND SENDING FORTH

One: Go forth in peace, 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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We accept the following donation to the General Fund:

* In Loving Memory of Parents, Gilbert and Ruby Hiscock, Sister Lorna and Brother Gilbert from Patsy.

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 Sunday, December 15th at the latest.

The Christmas Visitor is here! This edition of the Visitor is completely online, so please visit the church website at www.stjamesuc.org to download your edition. If you would like a paper copy, please contact the office. Thank you to all who contributed.

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

Looking For: Our IT team is looking for a 32" TV and mount to help with our ongoing upgrades. If you have a newer model TV available, in excellent working condition, for donation please reach out to Susan Pike. susanpike@warp.nfld.net or 709-685-5613

Looking for Volunteers to assist Rev. James with Worship: Beginning in the new year, we are looking to have people to assist Rev. James in leading parts of the worship service like the welcome, announcements, some prayers. These portions are prepared ahead of time by Rev. James. Training will be provided for those who are interested in helping in this way. For more information or to volunteer, email Rev. James at james@stjamesuc.org.

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.

Silent Vigils for Peace, December 11 from 5:30 to 6:30 pm: Beginning on December 11, St. James will be hosting a monthly silent vigil for peace. Given the many conflicts in our world, especially as we enter the second year of the war between Israel and Hamas, we all need a place to just sit together in prayer. This is to be a no-taking-sides event, and so we ask people not to bring signs, or wear clothes with slogans, or to engage in conversation about one issue or another. This is a place of silent solidarity with all the people who are suffering because of our

addiction to aggression and violence, seen especially in the bloodshed and destruction in Gaza, in the ongoing captivity of hostages from Israel, in war and violence in other places in our world. Let's come together and prayerfully hold the world in love and a desire for peace.

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.

Baking Spirits Bright Bake Sale: Don't have time to bake your Christmas cookies, cakes or treats? Let us help you out! On Sunday, December 15th directly after the worship service we will be hosting a Christmas Bake sale, including breads, cookies, homemade fudge and more. Lunch we will be serving, baked beans, soup, hot dogs and sweets for a free-will offering. We are asking for donations of soup, chile, rolls and sweets. Please contact Jean at treasurer@stjamesuc.org, speak with one of the ushers on Sunday or email/call the church office at info@stjamesuc.org or 709-722-1881 ext 200. We hope to see you all there. We are accepting donations for the bake sale on Saturday evening Dec 14th from 4 - 6 pm. All donations are welcome.

Also, if you or someone you know has a prepared food business, we invite you to rent your own table at the sale for \$25 (per table) to sell your own goodies. (for example, selling bread, preserves, sauces or make your own cookies kits, etc.)

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.

Christmas Envelopes Reminder: With the Canada Post strike, we are not able to mail out the Christmas Envelopes. Please put your contribution in an envelope and mark Christmas on it. You can either drop it off to the church any time and place in our secure lock box, bring it to church on Sunday morning, e-transfer to treasurer@stjamesuc.org, use the donate button on the church's website or please call the church office 709-722-1881 and leave your name and address and we will get someone to drop by and pick it up.

English-as-a-Second (or Another) Language Conversation Café : Are you a newcomer -- or do you know a newcomer -- whose first language is not English and who needs help learning and improving their knowledge of it to speak it? The Social Action group, in partnership with Teachers on Wheels, will start a weekly café-style conversation session to give immigrants an opportunity to learn and to practice. We are looking for participants to start in early January. Dates & times are yet to be determined. If interested, please e-mail: robinbartlett1224@gmail.com, or leave a message with the church office: 722-1881 ext. 200. Thank you!

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:

Silent Vigils for Peace Service - December 11 @ 5:30PM

Tapestry Service - December 14 @ 5:30PM

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