

# WHAT CAN'T WAIT?



FIRST  
BAPTIST  
CHURCH  
HALIFAX

ADVENT - CHRISTMAS 2020

# GOD COULDN'T WAIT

Cover Image & Poem-Prayer by Lisle Gwynn Garrity  
Inspired by Luke 2:1-14, (15-22) - Graphic Image - ©A Sanctified Art

What if God had waited  
For Mary to be wed,  
For Herod to relent,  
For a legitimate birthing bed?

What if God had waited  
Until the powerful promoted peace,  
And the politicians agreed?

What if God had waited  
For a plan with no risk of failure,  
For a place that felt safe and secure?

What if God had waited  
For the anxious to find rest,  
For the cynic to know hope,  
For the brokenhearted to be whole?  
For the wars to cease,  
For the violence to end,  
For the fears to pass,  
For the weapons to be banned?

What if God had waited  
For the earth to heal,  
For the laws to change,  
For every life to matter the same,  
For the addict to be freed from shame,  
For the refugees to not be blamed?

What if God had waited  
Until all was calm,  
All was bright,  
For a future that might  
Never come?

What if God had waited?

But God couldn't wait.

God couldn't wait to be love known in flesh and bone -  
And neither should we.

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*In person gatherings dependent on provincial COVID-19 guidelines*

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*To attend in person, please pre-register from the church website. Services will stream on the FBCH Facebook page and from the FBCH website (fbchalifax.ca - click "worship online"). After streaming, services will be available on the FBCH YouTube channel.*

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## Advent-Christmas 2020

**WHAT  
CAN'T  
WAIT**



It seems these days we have to do a lot more waiting than normal. We wait at the grocery store in new line-ups. We wait a little longer for packages to arrive on our doorsteps. We wait to receive results from a COVID test.

More significantly, the whole world is waiting. Waiting for a vaccine. Waiting for better treatments. Waiting to know how a second wave affects our community.

Many of us are waiting to see family. Waiting to travel. Waiting to see what our employment will look like in several months. Waiting to return to “normal.”

Advent has always been a season of waiting, all the more this year.

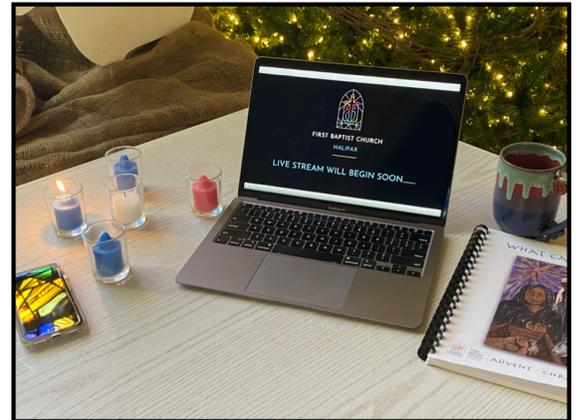
But some things can't wait. The work of bringing God's redemption—to join Christ in bringing God's realm of hope, peace, joy, and love into our world—can't wait. There are too many people suffering in our city and our world to put this holy work on hold. Indeed, in 2020 we have been reminded just how much work there is to do in our world.

This Advent-Christmas season, as we wait for so much, we pause to ponder what can't wait. What hopes must guide our prayers in this season? What work of Christ must we engage here and now? What can't wait?

## Worshipping at Home

Many of our Christmas traditions centre around our homes. Meals shared with family and friends, cherished decorations hung carefully on the family tree, familiar nativity sets placed lovingly on mantels.

Perhaps this year more than others, our homes become places where we connect, reflect, dream, long, and wait. The idea of worshipping at home this Advent and Christmas season may seem new, but in many ways, it is not a big divergence from the at home rituals and celebrations we have come to know and cherish.



The Christmas story we share shows us how the ordinary can become extraordinary; a stable becomes the place through which God in flesh comes into the world, an infant is born a saviour, a simple star in the vast night sky becomes a compass for generation upon generation.

We may not be gathering as a church community in traditional ways this year but that does not mean Christ is any less present. As you prepare to worship at home this season, consider ways you might create space and invite Christ into your home.

Whether your Advent candles match or whether you have cobbled together some semblance of a wreath, whether you are worshipping from a laptop, iPad, or phone, whether you are worshipping alone or with family, know that the love of God transcends and transforms.

# Advent Blues

## New Addition to The Prentice Memorial Paraments



In the Fall of 2019, Roger Prentice took a tour of our Godly Play room with Jenny (Drewitz) Eisener. He noted that in the Godly Play story materials, Advent was marked by the colour blue.

In the last two decades, many churches have added the colour blue for Advent alongside the more traditional purple. Purple is the liturgical colour of Lent and has long been interpreted as the colour of penitence. In its origin, Advent was considered “the little Lent,” as it was a penitential season of fasting modeled after the season of Lent.

Most churches today observe Advent as a season of hopeful expectation. In Advent, we wait for the coming of Christ into the world with joy and longing. Thus, many churches have begun using blue, the colour of hope, as a primary colour of Advent. Blue draws us to the sky where we remember angels singing to shepherds and a star guiding Magi to Bethlehem. Blue is also associated with Mary, who sang a revolutionary song of hope that the baby in her womb would transform the world.



As Roger and Jenny talked about the use of blue in Advent, he offered to extend the memorial gift of paraments he gave in 2011 to honour the memory of his parents. Percy Howard Prentice (1906 - 1992) was a member of the Board of Management, and a long-time Deacon. Myra Agnes Prentice (1908 - 2009)

served as a Sunday School Teacher, President of the Women’s Missionary Society, and President of the Women’s Auxiliary. The memorial gift also commemorates the significant role First Baptist had in Roger’s formation as a follower of Christ and a Baptist minister.

The new paraments consist of an altar cloth, pulpit scarf, and Bible marker. The symbol embroidered in silver is the Star of Bethlehem Cross, reminding us of the star that led to the infant Jesus as well as the Way of love that led Jesus to the cross.

Along with blue and purple, the third Sunday of Advent is marked by the colour of roses (pink) and reminds us that this season of hope is also a season of joyful anticipation.



HOPE CAN'T WAIT

# *Swords into Plowshares*

Hannah Garrity (image on reverse, ©A Sanctified Art)

Inspired by Isaiah 2:2-5

(see scripture lesson in Nov. 29 Worship Guide, page 11)

## FROM THE ARTIST

What is God's view of the world? What does God plan for this world? This text is all about God's vision for the earth becoming a reality. It's all about beating swords into plowshares. It's all about building peace.

How does this vision come to be? In this image of hands, I imagine how we might actually make God's vision come to life.

Here, in acrylic on canvas, a man wields a grinder, burnishing the edges of a sword that has been reformed into a plow. Growth, not death; care, not fear. The simple analogy of the sword transformed into the plowshare reminds us that peace is at the heart of all that God envisions for this world.

How might you make God's vision come into reality?

## PRAYER

Breathe deeply as you gaze upon the image. Imagine placing yourself in this scene. What do you see? How do you feel? Get quiet and still, offering a silent or spoken prayer to God.

# First Sunday of Advent

November 29, 2020, 10:30am



## HOPE CAN'T WAIT

**Prelude**

**Senior Choir Tenors**

***Wachet auf uns ruft die Stimme BWV 140 -J.S. Bach***  
***(Sleepers, Awake)***

*"Zion hears the watchmen singing, the joyful heart leaps.  
Her friend comes from heaven, Lord Jesus, God's Son"*

**Welcome**

*If joining on Facebook Live, we invite you to share greetings with everyone  
by posting a comment to the livestream.*

**Advent Introit**

***My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout - STAR OF COUNTY DOWN***

My soul cries out with a joyful shout  
that the God of my heart is great,  
and my spirit sings of the wondrous things  
that you bring to the ones who wait.  
You fixed your sight on your servant's plight,  
and my weakness you did not spurn,  
so from east to west shall my name be blest.  
Could the world be about to turn?  
My heart shall sing of the day you bring.  
Let the fires of your justice burn.  
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near,  
and the world is about to turn.

**Silent Call to Worship**

**Rhonda Schofield**

**Advent Carol (next page)**

# O Lord, How Shall I Meet You 104

1 O Lord, how shall I meet you, how wel-come you a - right?  
 2 Love caused your in - car - na - tion; love brought you down to me;  
 3 You come, O Lord, with glad - ness, in mer - cy and good-will,

Your peo - ple long to greet you, my hope, my heart's de - light!  
 your thirst for my sal - va - tion pro-cured my lib - er - ty.  
 to bring an end to sad - ness and bid our fears be still.

O kin - dle, Lord most ho - ly, a lamp with - in my breast,  
 O love be - yond all tell - ing, that led you to em - brace  
 In pa - tient ex - pec - ta - tion we live for that great day

to do in spir - it low - ly all that may please you best.  
 in love, all loves ex - cel - ling, our lost and fal - len race.  
 when your re - newed cre - a - tion your glo - ry shall dis - play.

Though many Advent hymns address Christ with entreaty and invitation, this more contemplative text considers how an individual prepares for and responds to Christ's coming. It also brings together a recollection of the First Coming with an anticipation of the Second Coming.

TEXT: Paul Gerhardt, 1653; trans. Catherine Winkworth and others, 1863, alt.  
 MUSIC: Melchior Teschner, 1614; harm. William Henry Monk, 1861

VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN  
 7.6.7.6.D

## LIGHTING OF THE HOPE CANDLE

**Prophetic Lesson: Isaiah 2:2-5**

**Donna & Bryan Darrell**

*The New Revised Standard Version*

<sup>2:2</sup> In days to come  
the mountain of the LORD's house  
shall be established as the highest of the mountains,  
and shall be raised above the hills;  
all the nations shall stream to it.  
<sup>3</sup> Many peoples shall come and say,  
'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,  
to the house of the God of Jacob;  
that the LORD may teach us God's ways  
and that we may walk in God's paths.'  
For out of Zion shall go forth instruction,  
and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.  
<sup>4</sup> The LORD shall judge between the nations,  
and shall arbitrate for many peoples;  
they shall beat their swords into ploughshares,  
and their spears into pruning-hooks;  
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,  
neither shall they learn war any more.  
<sup>5</sup> O house of Jacob,  
come, let us walk  
in the light of the LORD!

**Candle Lighting**

**Lee Family**

Our Advent journey has begun. We prepare for the celebration of Christ's birth.

**We can't wait to embrace the good news of the Light of the World.**

It is within the hidden mysteries of life we discover vulnerability. Within the dancing shadows cast by a flickering candle flame we discover the promise of hope and of new possibilities.

**The world can't wait to be transformed despite and because of our weakness.**

We light a candle reminding us of the way of hope.  
*(The first blue or purple Advent candle is lit)*

## **Candle Lighting Carol**

### **Hope is a Star - MOON BEAMS**

Hope is a star that shines in the night,  
leading us on 'till the morning is bright.  
When God is a child there's joy in our song.  
The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong,  
and none shall be afraid.

## **Advent Prayer of Approach**

**Janet Margeson**

**We gather to worship with the image of flickering light seared in our minds. It dances as your spirit dances within our hearts, gracious God, drumming the rhythm of hope that enlivens us all. As you bless us with the Way of Jesus, may we invite others to Christ's dance of transformation. Amen.**

## **GOD'S PROMISED DAY CAN'T WAIT**

## **Children's Story**

**Rhonda Schofield**

*God Couldn't Wait*

## **Doxology - VENI EMMANUEL**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,  
Praise Christ all peoples here below,  
Praise Holy Spirit evermore,  
Praise Triune God whom we adore,  
Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel shall come to Thee, O Israel!

## **Gospel Reading: Luke 1:5-24**

**Rusty Edwards**

*The New Revised Standard Version*

<sup>1:5</sup>In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly order of Abijah. His wife was a descendant of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. <sup>6</sup>Both of them were righteous before God, living blamelessly according to all the commandments and regulations of the Lord. <sup>7</sup>But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were getting on in years.

<sup>8</sup>Once when Zechariah was serving as priest before God and his section was on duty, <sup>9</sup>he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to enter the sanctuary of the Lord and offer incense. <sup>10</sup>Now at the time of the incense-offering, the whole assembly of the people was

praying outside. <sup>11</sup>Then there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. <sup>12</sup>When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified; and fear overwhelmed him. <sup>13</sup>But the angel said to him, 'Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John. <sup>14</sup>You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, <sup>15</sup>for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink; even before his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. <sup>16</sup>He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. <sup>17</sup>With the spirit and power of Elijah he will go before him, to turn the hearts of parents to their children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.' <sup>18</sup>Zechariah said to the angel, 'How will I know that this is so? For I am an old man, and my wife is getting on in years.' <sup>19</sup>The angel replied, 'I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. <sup>20</sup>But now, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time, you will become mute, unable to speak, until the day these things occur.'

<sup>21</sup>Meanwhile, the people were waiting for Zechariah, and wondered at his delay in the sanctuary. <sup>22</sup>When he did come out, he could not speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the sanctuary. He kept motioning to them and remained unable to speak. <sup>23</sup>When his time of service was ended, he went to his home.

<sup>24</sup>After those days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she remained in seclusion. She said, 'This is what the Lord has done for me when he looked favourably on me and took away the disgrace I have endured among my people.'

*Reader*      For the Word of God in Scripture,  
                    for the Word of God coming into our world,  
                    for the Word of God within us all.  
*All*             **Thanks be to God.**

**Spoken Reflection**

**Rusty Edwards**

*Hope Can't Wait*

**Interlude - STAR OF COUNTY DOWN**

## Prayers of the People

Janet Margeson

*During the silent pause, those following on Facebook Live are invited to participate by offering prayers and prayer requests. May the comment feed be a reminder that we are gathered as a community.*

## Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.  
Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those that trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the Kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and  
ever. Amen.**

## Advent Carol

***O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* VENI EMMANUEL**

O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
and ransom captive Israel,  
that mourns in lonely exile here  
until the Son of God appear.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, thou Wisdom from on high,  
who orderest all things mightily:  
to us the path of knowledge show;  
and teach us in her ways to go.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer  
our spirits by thine advent here;  
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
and death's dark shadows put to flight.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Desire of nations, bind  
all peoples in one heart and mind;  
bid envy, strife, and discord cease;  
fill the whole world with heaven's peace.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to thee, O Israel.

**Benediction**

**Rusty Edwards**

**Choral Amen**

**Danish Amen**

**Postlude**

**Lynette Wahlstrom, organ**

***Nun komm der Heiden Heiland, BWV 599 -J.S. Bach  
(Come now, Saviour of the Nations)***



### **Offerings**

*All contributions to FBCH support our mission and ministry and are greatly appreciated. Many choose to give by setting up recurring contributions. You may also give to FBCH by making an e-transfer or by giving online through a link on our website. You can go to our website [www.fbchalifax.ca](http://www.fbchalifax.ca) and click on the Ways to Give link on our homepage for instructions on how to give.*



### **Thank you to our worship leaders**

Janet Margeson, Board of Christian Education

Donna and Bryan Darrell, Lay Leaders

Sheri Allen Lee, Erick Lee, and Wendell Lee, Lay Leaders

Lynette Wahlstrom, Director of Music

Rhonda Schofield, Interim Minister of Faith Development

Jean Ferguson, Coordinator of Congregational and Community Engagement

Rusty Edwards, Senior Minister

Senior Choir Tenors

Hymn Choir: Bethany Ingraham, *soprano*; Rosalie Dowling, *alto*;

Leander Mendoza, *tenor*; André Gaudet, *bass*





PEACE CAN'T WAIT

# A Child Shall Lead Them

Lisle Gwynn Garrity (image on reverse, ©A Sanctified Art)

Inspired by Isaiah 11:1-9

(see scripture lesson in Dec. 6 Worship Guide, page 21)

## FROM THE ARTIST

The image of the stump of Jesse might have knocked the air out of those first hearing these words. The stump represented the end of the Davidic dynasty, the family line believed to carry God's goodness. The monarchy was either thwarted by the Babylonian exile, or the Assyrian empire—historically, we're not exactly sure. Regardless, Isaiah names what no one wants to say out loud—Jerusalem's political future feels dead, cut off, stunted by despair.

The image of a stump might accurately represent how we feel about our own future. Greenhouse gases and sea levels continue to rise. The pandemic looms close to all we do. World leaders fight like lions and wolves starving for dominance.

We also need Isaiah's vision for a reordered world where creation exists in harmony, not as a threat to itself.

When reading this poetry of peace, I found myself pausing at the line, "and a child shall lead them" (Is. 11:6). The example of Naomi Wadler came to mind. After the Parkland, FL, school shooting, Naomi, an eleven-year-old at the time, organized a walkout at her elementary school to honour victims of gun violence. In addition to those slain in Parkland, Naomi and her fifth grade classmates also recognized people of colour who are killed by gun violence every day and never make news headlines. Naomi went on to speak courageously before crowds in Washington, DC, and on TV shows about the need for gun reform. When she spoke, she held the nation—and much of the world—captive with her passion, her insight, and her urgency.

Where is new life springing up? Perhaps in the places where God can't wait for peace. Perhaps in the voices of our children, who urge us to find a better way.

## PRAYER

Breathe deeply as you gaze upon the image. Imagine placing yourself in this scene. What do you see? How do you feel? Get quiet and still, offering a silent or spoken prayer to God.

# Second Sunday of Advent

December 6 , 2020, 10:30am



## PEACE CAN'T WAIT

**Prelude**

**Lynette Wahlstrom, organ**

**Gottes Sohn ist kommen, BWV 600 -J.S. Bach  
(God's Son has come)**

**Welcome**

*If joining on Facebook Live, we invite you to share greetings with everyone by posting a comment to the livestream.*

**Advent Introit**

***My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout - STAR OF COUNTY DOWN***

Though I am small, my God, my all,  
you work great things in me,  
and your mercy will last from the depths of the past  
to the end of the age to be.  
Your very name puts the proud to shame,  
and to those who would for you yearn,  
you will show your might, put the strong to flight,  
for the world is about to turn.  
My heart shall sing of the day you bring.  
Let the fires of your justice burn.  
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near,  
and the world is about to turn.

**Silent Call to Worship**

**Rhonda Schofield**

**Advent Carol (next page)**

**Soloist: Leander Mendoza**

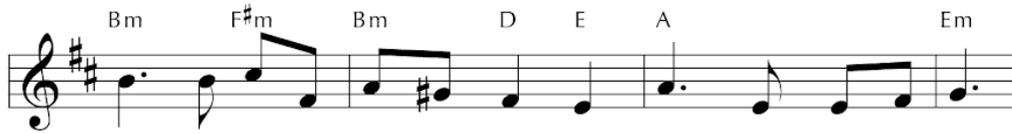
# 373 O Day of Peace



1 O day of peace that dim - ly shines through all our  
 2 Then shall the wolf dwell with the lamb, nor shall the



hopes and prayers and dreams, guide us to jus - tice, truth, and  
 fierce de - vour the small; as beasts and cat - tle calm - ly



love, de - liv - ered from our self - ish schemes. May swords of hate  
 graze, a lit - tle child shall lead them all. Then en - e - mies



fall from our hands, our hearts from en - vy find re - lease, till by God's  
 shall learn to love, all crea - tures find their true ac - cord; the hope of



grace our war - ring world shall see Christ's prom - ised reign of peace.  
 peace shall be ful - filled, for all the earth shall know the Lord.

*Guitar chords do not correspond with keyboard harmony.*

This text on peace was created to offer non-nationalistic words for a popular British tune. The first stanza depicts *pax*, a mode of peace focused on ending conflict, and the second (based on Isaiah 11:6-9) describes *shalom*, the condition of living in harmony and mutual good will.

TEXT: Carl P. Daw Jr., 1982

MUSIC: C. Hubert H. Parry, 1916; harm. Charles H. Webb, 1987

Text © 1982 Hope Publishing Company

Music Melody © 1916, 1944, this Arr. © 1977 Robertson Publications (admin. Goodmusic Publishing Ltd.)

Music Harm. © 1989 The United Methodist Publishing House (admin. The Copyright Company)

JERUSALEM

LMD

## LIGHTING OF THE PEACE CANDLE

### Prophetic Lesson: Isaiah 11:1-9

Lorraine Robertson

*The New Revised Standard Version*

<sup>11:1</sup> A shoot shall come out from the stock of Jesse,  
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

<sup>2</sup> The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him,  
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
the spirit of counsel and might,  
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

<sup>3</sup> His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.

He shall not judge by what his eyes see,  
or decide by what his ears hear;

<sup>4</sup> but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,  
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;  
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,  
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.

<sup>5</sup> Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist,  
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

<sup>6</sup> The wolf shall live with the lamb,  
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,  
the calf and the lion and the fatling together,  
and a little child shall lead them.

<sup>7</sup> The cow and the bear shall graze,  
their young shall lie down together;  
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

<sup>8</sup> The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,  
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.

<sup>9</sup> They will not hurt or destroy  
on all my holy mountain;  
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord  
as the waters cover the sea.

### Candle Lighting

Quintina Rolle, Malachi Wilchombe,  
Monalisa Knowles

Our Advent journey continues our time of waiting. As we wait, we  
prepare ourselves and our world for the Prince of Peace.

**We can't wait for a day when the people of the world embrace  
diversity and learn to live with one another in peace.**

In the lively dance of perspective and practice, communion and connection is forged. In the building of relationship and in the sharing of story, we come to know one another as we listen for bonds of peace.

**The world can't wait for us to strengthen our relations.**

We light the first candle reminding us of the way of hope

*(The first blue or purple Advent candle is lit)*

We light our second candle to signify Christ's path of peace in a broken world.

*(The second blue or purple Advent candle is lit)*

### **Candle Lighting Carol**

#### **Hope is a Star - MOON BEAMS**

Peace is a ribbon that circles the earth,  
giving a promise of safety and worth.

When God is a child there's joy in our song.

The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong,  
and none shall be afraid.

### **Advent Prayer of Approach**

**Rhonda Schofield**

**We come to worship as those created in your image of self-giving love, O God. Teach us your steps of harmony and of wholeness - the rhythms of connection and of interdependence sustained through beauty. As you bless us with peace rooted in our shared vulnerability, may we invite others to join us as companions along the way of transformation. Amen.**

### **REPENTANCE CAN'T WAIT**

### **Children's Story**

**Rhonda Schofield**

*God Couldn't Wait*

### **Doxology - VENI EMMANUEL**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,

Praise Christ all peoples here below,

Praise Holy Spirit evermore,

Praise Triune God whom we adore,

Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel shall come to Thee, O Israel!

## Gospel Reading: Luke 3:1-20

Rusty Edwards

*The New Revised Standard Version*

<sup>3:1</sup>In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, <sup>2</sup>during the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. <sup>3</sup>He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, <sup>4</sup>as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,

‘The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

“Prepare the way of the Lord,  
make the Lord’s paths straight.

<sup>5</sup> Every valley shall be filled,  
and every mountain and hill shall be made low,  
and the crooked shall be made straight,  
and the rough ways made smooth;

<sup>6</sup> and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.” ’

<sup>7</sup>John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, ‘You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? <sup>8</sup>Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, “We have Abraham as our ancestor”; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. <sup>9</sup>Even now the axe is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.’

<sup>10</sup>And the crowds asked John, ‘What then should we do?’ <sup>11</sup>In reply he said to them, ‘Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.’ <sup>12</sup>Even tax-collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, ‘Teacher, what should we do?’ <sup>13</sup>He said to them, ‘Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.’ <sup>14</sup>Soldiers also asked him, ‘And we, what should we do?’ He said to them, ‘Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.’

<sup>15</sup>As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, <sup>16</sup>John answered all of them by saying, ‘I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. <sup>17</sup>His winnowing-fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.’

<sup>18</sup>So, with many other exhortations, John proclaimed the good news to the people. <sup>19</sup>But Herod the ruler, who had been rebuked by him because of Herodias, his brother's wife, and because of all the evil things that Herod had done, <sup>20</sup>added to them all by shutting up John in prison.

*Reader* For the Word of God in Scripture,  
for the Word of God coming into our world,  
for the Word of God within us all.  
*All* **Thanks be to God.**

## **Spoken Reflection**

**Rusty Edwards**

*Peace Can't Wait*

## **Invitation to the Holy Feast**

## **Interlude - STAR OF COUNTY DOWN**

## **Prayers of the People**

**Rhonda Schofield**

*During the silent pause, those following on Facebook Live are invited to participate by offering prayers and prayer requests. May the comment feed be a reminder that we are gathered as a community.*

## **Lord's Prayer**

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.  
Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those that trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the Kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and  
ever. Amen.**

## **Sharing the Holy Feast**

*You are invited to partake of communion from home. Use whatever bread you have. Pour a cup of juice or wine. If you do not have that, water will be fine (Jesus once changed water into exquisite wine).*

## **Advent Carol (next page)**

# 770 I'm Gonna Eat at the Welcome Table

1 I'm gon-na eat at the wel-come ta - ble;  
 2 I'm gon-na eat and drink with my Je - sus;  
 3 I'm gon-na join with sis - ters, broth - ers;  
 4 Here all the world will find a wel - come;  
 5 We're gon-na feast on milk and hon - ey;

I'm gon-na eat at the wel-come ta - ble, Al - le - lu - ia.  
 I'm gon-na eat and drink with my Je - sus, Al - le - lu - ia.  
 I'm gon-na join with sis - ters, broth - ers, Al - le - lu - ia.  
 here all the world will find a wel - come, Al - le - lu - ia.  
 we're gon-na feast on milk and hon - ey, Al - le - lu - ia.

I'm gon-na eat at the wel-come ta - ble; I'm gon - na  
 I'm gon-na eat and drink with my Je - sus; I'm gon - na  
 I'm gon-na join with sis - ters, broth - ers; I'm gon - na  
 Here all the world will find a wel - come; here all the  
 We're gon-na feast on milk and hon - ey; we're gon - na

eat at the wel - come ta - ble, Al - le - lu - ia.  
 eat and drink with my Je - sus, Al - le - lu - ia.  
 join with sis - ters, broth - ers, Al - le - lu - ia.  
 world will find a wel - come, Al - le - lu - ia.  
 feast on milk and hon - ey, Al - le - lu - ia.

The image of a great feast showing God's welcome of all people was part of Jewish tradition (Isaiah 25:6-9) and underlies Jesus' parable of the Great Banquet (Luke 14:15-24). Such equality remains as unknown to many people today as it was to the slaves who created this spiritual.

TEXT: African American spiritual, alt.  
 MUSIC: African American spiritual; arr. Carl Diton, 1980, alt.  
 Music Arr. © 1930, ren. G. Schirmer, Inc.

WELCOME TABLE  
 Irregular

**Benediction**

**Rusty Edwards**

**Choral Amen**

**Danish Amen**

**Postlude**

**Lynette Wahlstrom, organ**  
**Toccata on "Veni Emmanuel" -A. Carter**



### **Offerings**

*All contributions to FBCH support our mission and ministry and are greatly appreciated. Many choose to give by setting up recurring contributions. You may also give to FBCH by making an e-transfer or by giving online through a link on our website. You can go to our website [www.fbchalifax.ca](http://www.fbchalifax.ca) and click on the Ways to Give link on our homepage for instructions on how to give.*



### **Thank you to our worship leaders**

Leander Mendoza, Tenor

Lorraine Robertson, Lay Leader

Quintina Rolle, Malachi Wilchombe, Monalisa Knowles, Lay Leaders

Lynette Wahlstrom, Director of Music

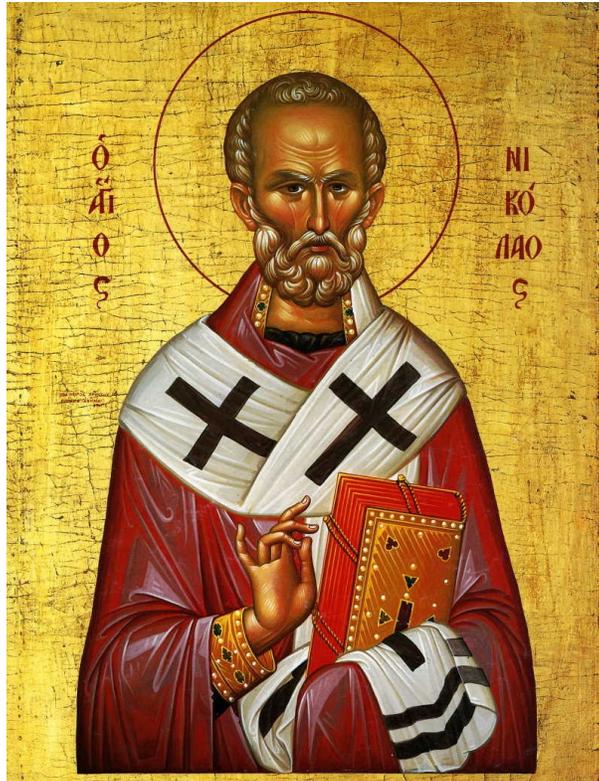
Rhonda Schofield, Interim Minister of Faith Development

Jean Ferguson, Coordinator of Congregational and Community Engagement

Rusty Edwards, Senior Minister

# Feast of Saint Nicholas

December 6, 2020, 4:00pm



**Prelude**

**Noam Koubi-Bahar, piano**

**Changes -Rameau**

**Call to Worship**

**Rhonda Schofield**

For the gift of each person gathered with us and for all our neighbours.

**We give thanks.**

For the capacity to care for and to share with those in need.

**We give thanks.**

For a holiday season of hope, peace, joy, and love.

**We give thanks.**

**Prayer of Approach**

**Gracious and good Lord, we bless you on this feast of St. Nicholas, your servant. St. Nicholas is an example to us of a life of charity and love. May we see in his life an invitation to imitate his good deeds. Make us always mindful of the needs of others and help us rejoice in the abundance of your goodness around us. Through Jesus our Lord. Amen.**

**Carol**

**Zadeh Family**

**St. Nicholas -TRADITIONAL ENGLISH CAROL**

A follower of Jesus, by persecution torn,  
Was Nicholas the Bishop, to noble parents born.  
Forsaking wealth and power, he gave to all in need,  
The bread to fill their bodies, God's love their souls to feed.

He taught the Gospel simply so all could understand,  
Through his kind ministrations faith flourished in the land.  
And when three guiltless victims would perish by the sword  
He freed them in a moment, obedient to his Lord.

Three girls too poor to marry he gave three bags of gold,  
Their weddings were a blessing from Nicholas, we're told.  
His robe a bishop's crimson, our Advent patron lives,  
In life of all who follow, in heart of each who gives

**Story of Saint Nicholas**

**Rusty Edwards**

**WHITE GIFT PROGRAM**

**The Ward 5 Neighbourhood Centre**

Gwendolyn MacLean, Chair, Community Outreach Committee  
Doug MacDonald, Executive Director, Ward 5 Neighbourhood Centre  
*For more information about the Ward 5 Neighbourhood Centre go to: [ward5.org](http://ward5.org)  
For more information about how you can help with the White Gift Program and  
Christmas food boxes, email Gwendolyn MacLean: [gfmaclea@gmail.com](mailto:gfmaclea@gmail.com)*

**Blessing of Gifts & Inspiration of St. Nicholas**

**Rhonda Schofield**

**Carol**

**Zadeh Family**

**The Song of St. Nicholas -JOLLY OLD ST. NICHOLAS**

Once upon a long ago  
Very far away,  
In the town of Bethlehem  
Lying in some hay,  
Jesus came for you and me  
Bringing heaven's love  
As a gift for us to have  
From the Lord above.

In the town of Myra once  
Also long ago,  
Lived good Bishop Nicholas  
Hair as white as snow.  
Nicholas loved Jesus who  
Loved and helped us all.  
"I will do the same," said he  
"Helping great and small."

Thankful Bishop Nicholas  
Friendly, good and wise;  
When he could, helped the poor  
Always by surprise.  
Rich men came to Nicholas  
Bringing wealth to share  
So it could be sent to those  
Living in despair.

We should be like Nicholas  
Thankful, good and kind,  
Loving those who need our help  
All the ones we find.  
Jesus and Saint Nicholas  
Taught us how to give:  
Share but never seek rewards,  
That is how to live!

**Benediction**

**Rhonda Schofield**

**Postlude**

**Anthony Zadeh, piano**

***Hark! The Herald Angels Sing***



**Thank you to our worship leaders**

Noam Koubi-Bahar, Piano

Amanda, Anthony, and Cecilia Zadeh, Family Choir

Gwendolyn MacLean, Chair, Community Outreach Committee

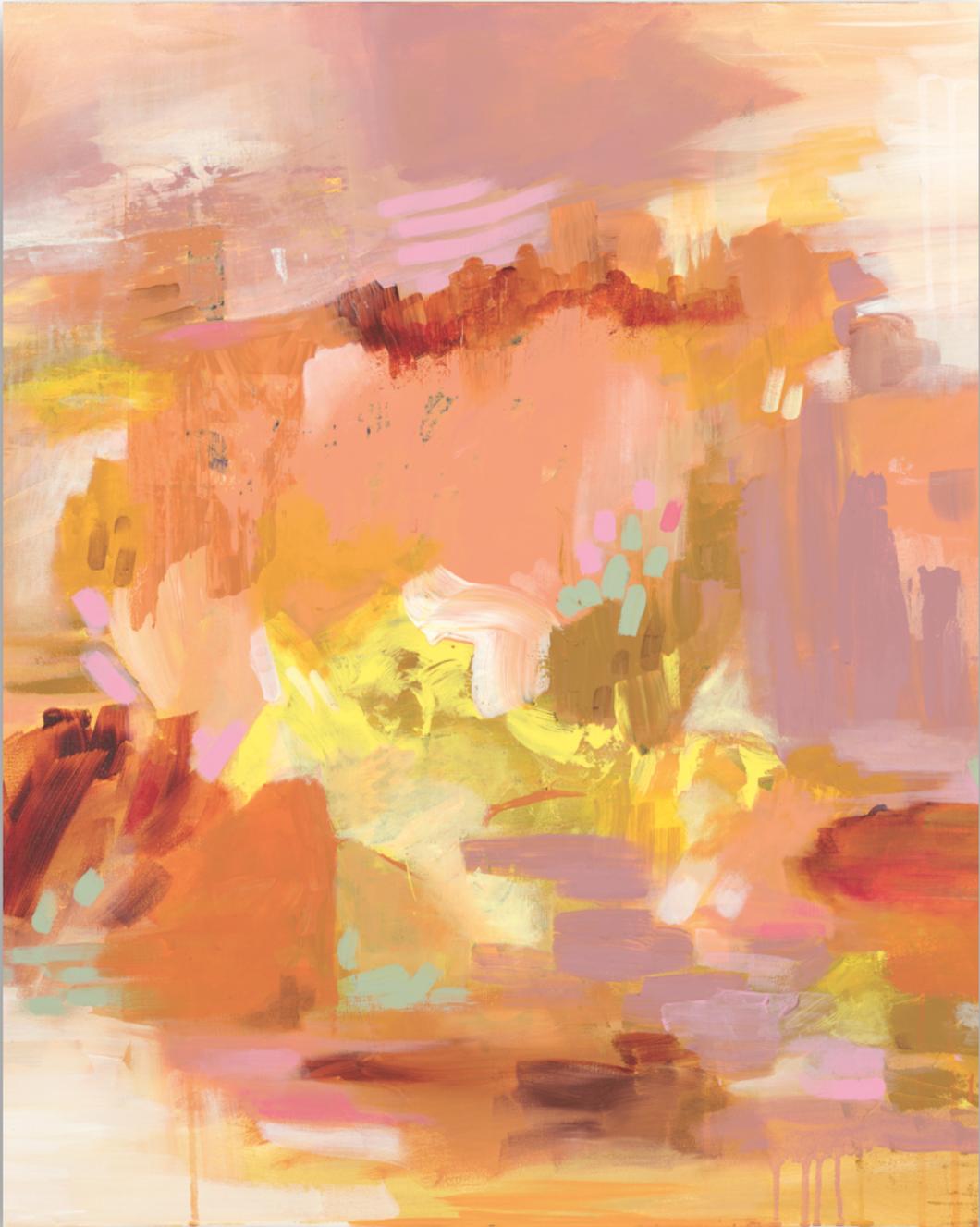
Doug MacDonald, Executive Director, Ward 5 Neighbourhood Centre

Jean Ferguson, Coordinator of Congregational and Community Engagement

Rhonda Schofield, Interim Minister of Faith Development

Rusty Edwards, Senior Minister





JOY CAN'T WAIT

## Desert Blooms

Lauren Wright Pittman (image on reverse, ©A Sanctified Art)

Inspired by Isaiah 35:1-10

(see scripture lesson in Dec. 13 Worship Guide, page 35)

### FROM THE ARTIST

When I approached this piece, I read the first few verses of the passage until a phrase stuck in my head, “like the crocus [the desert] shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing” (Is. 35:2). I thought I might paint a study of a crocus flower—one zoomed in on the subtle shifts in shades of purple. However, when I began to roll the phrase around in my mind, I felt the need to paint the colours of the desert. The text says the desert blossoms “like a crocus” not “with crocuses.” I almost missed the desert for the flowers. For me, flowers are evident metaphors for joy and a clear testament to God’s magnificence. After all, Emerson wrote, “Earth laughs in flowers.” My initial instinct with this painting was to transform the desert with flowers, but instead, I think I needed to see the desert for what it is.

The desert is often associated with desolation, scarcity, and death, but it’s really a place of surprising, subversive beauty—a place of meeting the Divine. I found myself grabbing paints I don’t typically use—mauves, ochres, pale greens, and dusty pinks. My painting intuition doesn’t often lead me to desert colours because I’m drawn to deeply saturated hues that I find more obviously beautiful. It takes a bit more effort to see the desert as a place of abundance and overflowing worship of our Creator, but I think this intentional shift in seeing is part of what it means to prepare the way during Advent. What would it look like to delight in elements of creation that you often overlook? How can you help the parched places of your corner of the world blossom into new life?

### PRAYER

Breathe deeply as you gaze upon the image. Imagine placing yourself in this scene. What do you see? How do you feel? Get quiet and still, offering a silent or spoken prayer to God.

# Third Sunday of Advent

December 13, 2020, 10:30am



## JOY CAN'T WAIT

**Prelude**

**Noam Koubi-Bahar, piano**

**L'Egyptienne -Rameau**

**Welcome**

*If joining on Facebook Live, we invite you to share greetings with everyone by posting a comment to the livestream.*

**Advent Introit**

**My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout - STAR OF COUNTY DOWN**

From the halls of power to the fortress tower,  
not a stone will be left on stone.

Let the king beware for your justice tears  
every tyrant from his throne.

The hungry poor shall weep no more,  
for the food they can never earn;  
there are tables spread; every mouth be fed,  
for the world is about to turn.

My heart shall sing of the day you bring.

Let the fires of your justice burn.

Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near,  
and the world is about to turn.

**Silent Call to Worship**

**Rhonda Schofield**

**Advent Carol (next page)**

# 134 Joy to the World

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re - ceive  
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their songs  
 3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow, nor thorns in - fest  
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the na -

her king; let ev - ery heart pre - pare him room,  
 em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains  
 the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings flow  
 tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous - ness

and heaven and na - ture sing, and heaven and na - ture  
 re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing  
 far as the curse is found, far as the curse is  
 and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his  
 and heaven and na - ture sing,

and

sing, and heaven, and heaven and na - ture sing.  
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.  
 found, far as, far as the curse is found.  
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

heaven and na - ture sing,

While Isaac Watts did not write this text strictly for Christmas use, he did purposely cast his paraphrase of Psalm 98:4-9 in Christian terms, titling it "The Messiah's coming and kingdom." So "the Lord" here is Jesus Christ, rather than the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

TEXT: Isaac Watts, 1719, alt.  
 MUSIC: Attr. George Frederick Handel, 1742; arr. Lowell Mason, 1836

ANTIOCH  
 CM with repeat  
 (alternate tune: RICHMOND, 266)

## LIGHTING OF THE JOY CANDLE

**Prophetic Lesson: Isaiah 35:1-10**

**Peter Boudreau and Kevin Selig**

*The New Revised Standard Version*

<sup>35:1</sup>The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,  
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;  
like the crocus <sup>2</sup>it shall blossom abundantly,  
and rejoice with joy and singing.  
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,  
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.  
They shall see the glory of the LORD,  
the majesty of our God.

<sup>3</sup> Strengthen the weak hands,  
and make firm the feeble knees.  
<sup>4</sup> Say to those who are of a fearful heart,  
'Be strong, do not fear!  
Here is your God.  
God will come with vengeance,  
with terrible recompense.  
God will come and save you.'

<sup>5</sup> Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,  
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;  
<sup>6</sup> then the lame shall leap like a deer,  
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.  
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,  
and streams in the desert;  
<sup>7</sup> the burning sand shall become a pool,  
and the thirsty ground springs of water;  
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp,  
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

<sup>8</sup> A highway shall be there,  
and it shall be called the Holy Way;  
the unclean shall not travel on it,  
but it shall be for God's people;  
no traveller, not even fools, shall go astray.

<sup>9</sup> No lion shall be there,  
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;  
they shall not be found there,  
but the redeemed shall walk there.

<sup>10</sup> And the ransomed of the LORD shall return,

and come to Zion with singing;  
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;  
they shall obtain joy and gladness,  
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

### **Candle Lighting**

**Amy, Paulo, and Ezra Ordoveza**

Our Advent journey continues our time of waiting. As we wait, we celebrate the coming of the Christ child who turns the world upside down.

**We can't wait to dance joyfully in anticipation of this season of new life, new life that challenges and guides, comforts and confronts.**

Out of pain comes possibility; out of anguish comes transformation; out of loneliness comes community; out of labour comes birth. We wait in joy but not to distract us from life's pains; instead, joy emerges out of each disruption and within each disappointment.

**The people of the world can't wait to share healing joy in the midst of all life's challenges.**

We light the first candle reminding us of the way of hope

*(The first blue or purple Advent candle is lit)*

We light our second candle to signify Christ's path of peace.

*(The second blue or purple Advent candle is lit)*

We light our third candle, which dances in joy even as it burns.

*(The rose-coloured/pink Advent candle is lit)*

### **Candle Lighting Carol**

**Hope is a Star - MOON BEAMS**

Joy is a song that welcomes the dawn,  
telling the world that the Saviour is born.

When God is a child there's joy in our song.

The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong,  
and none shall be afraid.

### **Advent Prayer of Approach**

**Sandra Murphy**

**We come to worship as we hold images of the baby Jesus in our mind's eye, O God. We imagine the boundless love pouring out for this child, just as we imagine the colicky nights and the diapering days. Teach us to stop drawing boundaries between joy and labour, allowing us to lean in to the wholeness and complexity of life. Bless us this morning with an openness to all of life's realities, knowing we are never alone in the struggle nor in the celebration. Amen.**

## DELIGHT CAN'T WAIT

Children's Story

Rhonda Schofield

*God Couldn't Wait*

### Doxology - VENI EMMANUEL

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,  
Praise Christ all peoples here below,  
Praise Holy Spirit evermore,  
Praise Triune God whom we adore,  
Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel shall come to Thee, O Israel!

### Gospel Reading: Luke 1:39-55

Rusty Edwards

*The New Revised Standard Version*

<sup>1:39</sup>In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, <sup>40</sup>where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. <sup>41</sup>When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit <sup>42</sup>and exclaimed with a loud cry, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. <sup>43</sup>And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? <sup>44</sup>For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leapt for joy. <sup>45</sup>And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.'

<sup>46</sup> And Mary said,

'My soul magnifies the Lord,

<sup>47</sup> and my spirit rejoices in you, my Saviour,

<sup>48</sup> for you have looked with favour on the lowliness of your servant.

Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

<sup>49</sup> for the Mighty One has done great things for me,  
and holy is your name.

<sup>50</sup> Your mercy is for those who fear you  
from generation to generation.

<sup>51</sup> You have shown strength with your arm;  
you have scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

<sup>52</sup> You have brought down the powerful from their thrones,  
and lifted up the lowly;

<sup>53</sup> you have filled the hungry with good things,  
and sent the rich away empty.

<sup>54</sup> You have helped your servant Israel,  
in remembrance of your mercy,

<sup>55</sup> according to the promise you made to our ancestors,  
to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.'

*Reader* For the Word of God in Scripture,  
for the Word of God coming into our world,  
for the Word of God within us all.  
*All* **Thanks be to God.**

**Spoken Reflection**

**Rusty Edwards**

*Joy Can't Wait*

**Interlude - STAR OF COUNTY DOWN**

**Prayers of the People**

**Sandra Murphy**

*During the silent pause, those following on Facebook Live are invited to participate by offering prayers and prayer requests. May the comment feed be a reminder that we are gathered as a community.*

**Lord's Prayer**

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.  
Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those that trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the Kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and  
ever. Amen.**

**Advent Carol (next page)**

***Men Without Jackets***

# 852 When the Lord Redeems the Very Least

1 When the Lord re - deems the ver - y least,  
 2 When the Lord re - stores the sick and weak, we will re -  
 3 When the Lord re - vives the world from death, we will re-joyce, will re -  
 4 When the Lord re - turns in vic - to - ry,

joyce.  
 joyce, will re-joyce.  
 When the hun - gry gath - er for the feast,  
 When the earth is giv - en to the meek,  
 When the word of God fills ev - ery breath,  
 When we live in glo - rious lib - er - ty,

*Refrain*

we will re-joyce. We will re-  
 we will re-joyce, will re-joyce, will re-joyce. We will re-joyce, will re-

What does it mean to pray “thy kingdom come”? This text (loosely modeled on Psalm 126) sketches out some of the features that help us to know when God’s reign has truly come. The energy of the gospel song tune adds to the sense of rejoicing repeatedly promised in this text.

TEXT: Sylvia G. Dunstan, c. 1991

MUSIC: Albert E. Brumley, 1932; arr. Evelyn Simpson-Curenton, c. 2001

Text © 1991 GIA Publications, Inc.

Music © 1932 Hartford Music Co., ren. 1960 Albert E. Brumley & Sons (admin. ClearBox Rights)

PLL FLY AWAY  
 9.4.9.4 with refrain

joyce with glad-ness. We will re-joyce.  
 joyce with glad-ness. We will re-joyce, will re-joyce with glad-ness. All our  
 days we'll sing to God in praise. We will re-joyce, will re-joyce, will re-joyce!

**Benediction**

**Rusty Edwards**

**Choral Amen**

**Danish Amen**

**Postlude**

**Lynette Wahlstrom, organ**

**Mary Had a Baby -Gant**

### **Offerings**

*All contributions to FBCH support our mission and ministry and are greatly appreciated. Many choose to give by setting up recurring contributions. You may also give to FBCH by making an e-transfer or by giving online through a link on our website. You can go to our website [www.fbchalifax.ca](http://www.fbchalifax.ca) and click on the Ways to Give link on our homepage for instructions on how to give.*

### **Thank you to our worship leaders**

Peter Boudreau and Kevin Selig, Lay Leaders  
 Amy, Paulo, and Ezra Ordoveza, Lay Leaders  
 Sandra Murphy, Deacon  
 Lynette Wahlstrom, Director of Music  
 Rhonda Schofield, Interim Minister of Faith Development  
 Jean Ferguson, Coordinator of Congregational and Community Engagement  
 Rusty Edwards, Senior Minister  
 Men Without Jackets  
 Hymn Choir: Bethany Ingraham, *soprano*; Rosalie Dowling, *alto*;  
 Leander Mendoza, *tenor*; André Gaudet, *bass*

**Music reprinted and streamed by permission, One License A-734863**

# Children's Nativity Tableau

December 13, 2020, 4:00pm



## Thank You to Our Cast

Narrator: Elena  
Baby Jesus: Phoebe  
Mary: Scarlet  
Joseph: Malachi  
Innkeeper: Jamie  
Angel: Addison  
Elizabeth: Madeleine  
King Herod: Hudson

Shepherds:  
MacKinley, Michael, Addy, August, Angus

Cow: Joanna

Angels:  
Theo, Vivian, Cecilia, Eliza

Magi:  
Wesley, Elliot, Wendell



***Thank You to the Musicians of the  
FBCH Songsters & Youth Group***



## Thank You

Director: Gisela O'Brien  
Assistant Director: Rhonda Schofield  
Photography: Ben Lemphers  
Costumes: Roz Marshall, Gisela O'Brien  
Musical Director: Lynette Wahlstrom





LOVE CAN'T WAIT

# Peace Without Your Walls

Lauren Wright Pittman (image on reverse, ©A Sanctified Art)

Inspired by Isaiah 63:7-9

(see scripture lesson in Dec. 13 Worship Guide, page 47)

## FROM THE ARTIST

We all desire peace and security for ourselves, our families, and our communities. It seems, however, we often disagree about how to achieve peace and security, and about who is deserving of such well-being. Often, those who have realized even a baseline sense of peace and security quickly forget what it was like to be without. Fear creeps in and we separate ourselves with walls and isolate ourselves within towers. We worship and exist with people like us because it feels safe. We hoard peace and security as though they are finite resources, and elevate our own peace and security above that of other nations. We pray for ourselves, even if our answered prayers result in our neighbour's harm.

This text celebrates refuge. As we know well from the news, there are many people in our world who have become refugees—those seeking peace and security—while those within their walls and towers seek the good of themselves.

When I began to paint this piece, I kept wondering how walls and peace can coexist, but if I'm honest, if true shalom were to be realized, there would be no need for walls or towers. For me, peace looks like open doors leading out of the confinement of stone walls and into a field of poppies. For me, peace looks like flowers scaling walls, weakening the strength of stone foundations, and over time, bringing the barriers down. Peace looks like open arms—open to the difficult work of welcoming peace, and open to receiving the boundless gifts of a truly peaceful world.

## PRAYER

Breathe deeply as you gaze upon the image. Imagine placing yourself in this scene. What do you see? How do you feel? Get quiet and still, offering a silent or spoken prayer to God.

# Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 20, 2020, 10:30am



## LOVE CAN'T WAIT

### Prelude

**Blue Engine String Quartet**

*In the Bleak Midwinter* -Harold Darke, arr. Chris Palmer

### Welcome

*If joining on Facebook Live, we invite you to share greetings with everyone by posting a comment to the livestream.*

### Advent Introit

***My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout* - STAR OF COUNTY DOWN**

Though the nations rage from age to age,  
we remember who holds us fast:  
God's mercy must deliver us  
from the conqueror's crushing grasp.  
This saving word that our forebears heard  
is the promise which holds us bound,  
til the spear and rod can be crushed by God,  
who is turning the world around.  
My heart shall sing of the day you bring.  
Let the fires of your justice burn.  
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near,  
and the world is about to turn.

### Silent Call to Worship

**Rhonda Schofield**

### Advent Carol (Next Page)

# 123 It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

1 It came up-on the mid-night clear, that glo-rious song of old,  
 2 Still through the clo - ven skies they come, with peace-ful wings un - furled,  
 3 Yet with the woes of sin and strife the world has suf-fered long;  
 4 And you, be-neath life's crush-ing load, whose forms are bend-ing low,  
 5 For lo, the days are has-tening on, by proph-ets seen of old,

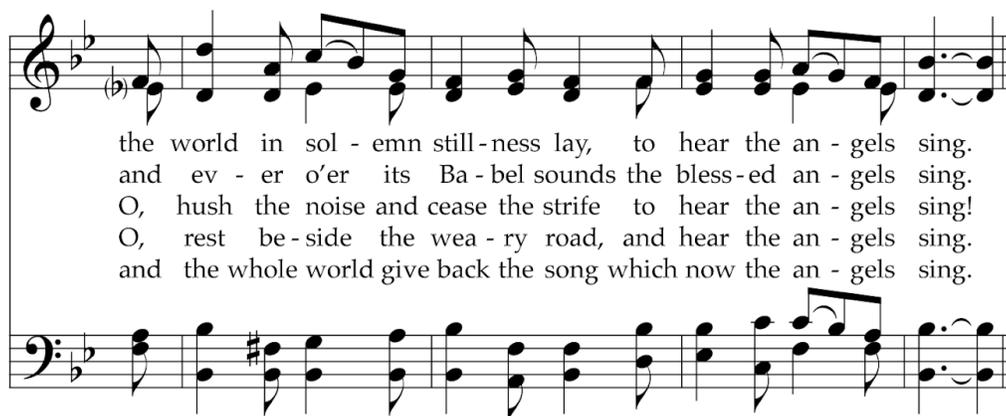
from an - gels bend - ing near the earth, to touch their harps of gold:  
 and still their heaven-ly mu - sic floats o'er all the wea - ry world:  
 be - neath the heaven-ly hymn have rolled two thou-sand years of wrong;  
 who toil a - long the climb-ing way with pain - ful steps and slow,  
 when with the ev - er - cir-cling years shall come the time fore - told,

“Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heaven’s all-gra-cious King”:  
 a - bove its sad and low - ly plains they bend on hov-ering wing;  
 and we at war on earth hear not the tid - ings that they bring;  
 look now, for glad and gold - en hours come swift - ly on the wing;  
 when peace shall o - ver all the earth its an - cient splen-dors fling,

The “it” of the first line of this text by a Unitarian minister does not refer to the birth of Jesus, but to “that glorious song of old,” the angelic tidings of peace on earth. The restored third stanza laments how often the noise of human strife has obscured that message.

TEXT: Edmund Hamilton Sears, 1849, alt.  
 MUSIC: Richard Storrs Willis, 1850

CAROL  
 CMD  
 (alternate tune: NOEL)



the world in sol - emn still - ness lay, to hear the an - gels sing.  
and ev - er o'er its Ba - bel sounds the bless - ed an - gels sing.  
O, hush the noise and cease the strife to hear the an - gels sing!  
O, rest be - side the wea - ry road, and hear the an - gels sing.  
and the whole world give back the song which now the an - gels sing.

## LIGHTING OF THE LOVE CANDLE

**Prophetic Lesson: Isaiah 63:7-9**

**Grace and Dave Gibson**

*The New Revised Standard Version*

<sup>63:7</sup> I will recount the gracious deeds of the LORD,  
the praiseworthy acts of the LORD,  
because of all that the LORD has done for us,  
and the great favour to the house of Israel  
that the LORD has shown them according to the LORD's mercy,  
according to the abundance of the LORD's steadfast love.

<sup>8</sup> For the LORD said, 'Surely they are my people,  
children who will not deal falsely';  
and the LORD became their saviour

<sup>9</sup> in all their distress.

It was no messenger or angel

but the LORD's presence that saved them;  
in the LORD's love and pity the LORD redeemed them;

The LORD lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

**Candle Lighting**

**Lara, Bob, James, Diana Hazelton  
Emma Hazelton & Sandrico Provo**

Our Advent journey is nearly complete, yet the waiting continues with anticipation. We pause to ponder, to proclaim, and to prepare for what has come but is not yet fulfilled.

**We can't wait to gaze into each other's hearts as companions  
along the way, discovering the love that transforms from the  
inside out.**

We can't wait to discover love lived into a world too focused on division. We can't wait to turn away from polarization to perceive the Christ in one another.

**The world can't wait to take up the challenge of affirming each person as worthy of love.**

We light the first candle reminding us of the way of hope

*(The first blue or purple Advent candle is lit)*

We light our second candle to signify Christ's path of peace.

*(The second blue or purple Advent candle is lit)*

We light our third candle, reminding us of Spirited joy.

*(The rose-coloured/pink Advent candle is lit)*

We light our fourth candle to mark how love abides by God's grace.

*(The final blue or purple Advent candle is lit)*

### **Candle Lighting Carol**

#### **Hope is a Star - MOON BEAMS**

Love is a flame that burns in our heart,

Jesus has come and will never depart.

When God is a child there's joy in our song.

The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong,  
and none shall be afraid.

### **Advent Prayer of Approach**

**Arla Johnson**

**We gather to worship welcoming you, O God, into the centre of our living. When you live in our hearts, we make room for strangers and for friends; we make room for enemies and for allies; we make room for our neighbours; we make ever more room for the power of your love. We thank you for your blessing of grace-filled love, knowing better each day how to share widely the love you shower among us. Amen.**

## **COURAGE CAN'T WAIT**

### **Children's Story**

**Rhonda Schofield**

*God Couldn't Wait*

### **Doxology - VENI EMMANUEL**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,

Praise Christ all peoples here below,

Praise Holy Spirit evermore,

Praise Triune God whom we adore,

Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel shall come to Thee, O Israel!

## **Gospel Reading: Matthew 1:18-25**

**Rusty Edwards**

*The New Revised Standard Version*

1:18 Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. 19Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. 20But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. 21She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.' 22All this took place to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

23 'Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel', which means, 'God is with us.' 24When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, 25but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

*Reader* For the Word of God in Scripture,  
for the Word of God coming into our world,  
for the Word of God within us all.

*All* **Thanks be to God.**

## **Spoken Reflection**

**Rusty Edwards**

*Love Can't Wait*

## **Interlude - STAR OF COUNTY DOWN**

### **Prayers of the People**

**Arla Johnson**

*During the silent pause, those following on Facebook Live are invited to participate by offering prayers and prayer requests. May the comment feed be a reminder that we are gathered as a community.*

### **Lord's Prayer**

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.  
Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those that trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the Kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and  
ever. Amen.**

## **Advent Carol**

# 107 Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn



1 A - wake! A - wake, and greet the new morn, for an - gels  
 2 To us, to all in sor - row and fear, Em - man - u -  
 3 In dark - est night his com - ing shall be, when all the  
 4 Re - joice, re - joice, take heart in the night. Though dark the



her - ald its dawn - ing. Sing out your joy, for soon he is  
 el comes a - sing - ing; his hum - ble song is qui - et and  
 world is de - spair - ing, as morn - ing light so qui - et and  
 win - ter and cheer - less, the ris - ing sun shall crown you with



born, be - hold! the Child of our long - ing. Come as a ba - by  
 near, yet fills the earth with its ring - ing; mu - sic to heal the  
 free, so warm and gen - tle and car - ing. Then shall the mute break  
 light; be strong and lov - ing and fear - less. Love be our song and



weak and poor, to bring all hearts to - geth - er, he o - pens  
 bro - ken soul and hymns of lov - ing - kind - ness. The thun - der  
 forth in song, the lame shall leap in won - der, the weak be  
 love our prayer and love our end - less sto - ry; may God fill



wide the heaven - ly door and lives now in - side us for - ev - er.  
 of his an - thems rolls to shat - ter all ha - tred and vio - lence.  
 raised a - bove the strong, and weap - ons be bro - ken a - sun - der.  
 ev - ery day we share and bring us at last in - to glo - ry.

After attending a carol concert, the author and composer of this hymn was moved to create a contemporary, accessible carol that drew on the familiar images in a new way. There are echoes here of passages such as Isaiah 9:6, Isaiah 7:14/Matthew 1:23, Isaiah 35:5-6, Isaiah 2:4.

**Benediction**

**Rusty Edwards**

**Choral Amen**

**Danish Amen**

**Postlude**

**Lynette Wahlstrom, organ**  
**Processional for Christmas - Roger Wilson**



### **Offerings**

*All contributions to FBCH support our mission and ministry and are greatly appreciated. Many choose to give by setting up recurring contributions. You may also give to FBCH by making an e-transfer or by giving online through a link on our website. You can go to our website [www.fbchalifax.ca](http://www.fbchalifax.ca) and click on the Ways to Give link on our homepage for instructions on how to give.*



### **Thank you to our worship leaders**

Blue Engine String Quartet: Jennifer Jones, *violin*; Anne Simons, *violin*;

Alex Bates, *viola*; Hilary Brown, *cello*

Grace and Dave Gibson, Lay Leaders

Lara, Bob, James, Diana Hazelton, Lay Leaders

Emma Hazelton & Sandrico Provo, Lay Leaders

Arla Johnson, Deacon

Lynette Wahlstrom, Director of Music

Rhonda Schofield, Interim Minister of Faith Development

Jean Ferguson, Coordinator of Congregational and Community Engagement

Rusty Edwards, Senior Minister

Hymn Choir: Bethany Ingraham, *soprano*; Rosalie Dowling, *alto*;

Leander Mendoza, *tenor*; André Gaudet, *bass*



# Carols by Candlelight

December 20, 2020, 7:00pm



**Prelude**

**Shawn Whynot, organ**

***Magnificat Primi Toni* -D. Buxtehude  
*Noel X* -L.C. Daquin**

**Welcome**

**Rusty Edwards**

**Introit**

**Senior Choir**

***My Lord has Come* -Will Todd**

**First Lesson**

**Micah 5:2-5a**

**Scott Sterns**

*New Revised Standard Version*

<sup>5:2</sup> But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah,  
who are one of the little clans of Judah,  
from you shall come forth for me  
one who is to rule in Israel,  
whose origin is from of old,  
from ancient days.

<sup>3</sup> Therefore he shall give them up until the time  
when she who is in labour has brought forth;  
then the rest of his kindred shall return  
to the people of Israel.

<sup>4</sup> And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord,  
in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.  
And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great  
to the ends of the earth;

<sup>5</sup> and he shall be the one of peace.

**Carol**

## Once in Royal David's City 140

1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y stood a low - ly  
 2 He came down to earth from heav - en who is God and  
 3 Je - sus is our child - hood's pat - tern; day by day like  
 4 And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own re -

cat - tle shed, where a moth - er laid her ba - by in a  
 Lord of all, and his shel - ter was a sta - ble, and his  
 us he grew; he was lit - tle, weak and help - less; tears and  
 deem - ing love; for that child so dear and gen - tle is our

man - ger for his bed: Mar - y was that moth - er  
 cra - dle was a stall; with the poor and meek and  
 smiles like us he knew; and he feels for all our  
 Lord in heaven a - bove; and he leads his chil - dren

mild; Je - sus Christ, her lit - tle child.  
 low - ly, lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.  
 sad - ness, and he shares in all our glad - ness.  
 on to the place where he is gone.

Like "All Things Bright and Beautiful" (see no. 20), this popular Christmas hymn was written by an Irish poet to illustrate for children the various articles of the Apostles' Creed. It is not known which of several English villages the composer had in mind when naming this tune.



What if God had waited  
For Mary to be wed,  
For Herod to relent,  
For a legitimate birthing bed?

**Second Lesson**

**Luke 1:26-35, 38**

**Peggy Dunbar**

*New Revised Standard Version*

<sup>1:26</sup> In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, <sup>27</sup>to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup>And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.' <sup>29</sup>But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup>The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. <sup>31</sup>And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup>He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. <sup>33</sup>He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.' <sup>34</sup>Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?' <sup>35</sup>The angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God... <sup>38</sup>Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her.

**Carol (next page)**

# 119 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

1 Hark! The her - ald an-gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born king,  
 2 Christ, by high - est heaven a-dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,  
 3 Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the sun of righ-teous-ness!

Peace on earth and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!"  
 late in time be-hold him come, off-spring of the vir-gin's womb.  
 Light and life to all he brings, risen with heal - ing in his wings.

Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise; join the tri-umph of the skies;  
 Veiled in flesh the God-head see; hail the in-car - nate de - i - ty,  
 Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,

with the an-gel - ic host pro-claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"  
 pleased in flesh with us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el.  
 born to raise us from the earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.

Brought together in the mid-19th century, the text and tune of this familiar carol began in quite different forms. The text had ten stanzas and began, "Hark, how all the welkin rings." The tune was created for a festival celebrating Gutenberg's introduction of moveable type.



What if God had waited  
 Until the powerful promoted peace,  
 And the politicians agreed?

**Third Lesson**

**Luke 1:46-55**

**Alison Clarke**

*New Revised Standard Version*

1:46 And Mary said,  
 'My soul magnifies the Lord,  
 47 and my spirit rejoices in you, my Saviour,  
 48 for you have looked with favour on the lowliness of your servant.  
 Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;  
 49 for the Mighty One has done great things for me,  
 and holy is your name.  
 50 Your mercy is for those who fear you  
 from generation to generation.  
 51 You have shown strength with your arm;  
 you have scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.  
 52 You have brought down the powerful from their thrones,  
 and lifted up the lowly;  
 53 you have filled the hungry with good things,  
 and sent the rich away empty.  
 54 You have helped your servant Israel,  
 in remembrance of your mercy,  
 55 according to the promise you made to our ancestors,  
 to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.'

***Praise the Lord***

Emmanuel Solomon, *tenor*; Jacob MacDonald, *piano*;  
Ogooluwa Sobukola, *flute*; Adeshina Ojo, *talking drum*;  
Babatunde Adeniyi, *videographer*



What if God had waited  
For a plan with no risk of failure,  
For a place that felt safe and secure?

**Fourth Lesson**

**Luke 2:1-7**

**Alice Chan-Yip**

*New Revised Standard Version*

<sup>2:1</sup>In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup>All went to their own towns to be registered. <sup>4</sup>Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. <sup>5</sup>He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup>While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. <sup>7</sup>And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

**Carol (next page)**

# 132 Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

1 Good Chris-tian friends, re - joi - ce with heart and soul and voice;  
 2 Good Chris-tian friends, re - joi - ce with heart and soul and voice;  
 3 Good Chris-tian friends, re - joi - ce with heart and soul and voice;

give ye heed to what we say: Je - sus Christ is born to - day;  
 now ye hear of end - less bliss: Je - sus Christ was born for this!  
 now ye need not fear the grave: Je - sus Christ was born to save!

ox and ass be - fore him bow, and he is in the man - ger now.  
 He has o - pened heav - en's door, and we are blest for - ev - er - more.  
 Calls you one and calls you all to gain the ev - er - last - ing hall.

Christ is born to - day! Christ is born to - day!  
 Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!  
 Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

Carols using two languages, like this one dating from at least the 14th century, belong to a special group called "macaronic," the original languages here being German and Latin. Though the present version is only in English, it is sung to the traditional German folk melody.



What if God had waited  
For the anxious to find rest,  
For the cynic to know hope,  
For the brokenhearted to be whole?  
For the wars to cease,  
For the violence to end,  
For the fears to pass,  
For the weapons to be banned?

**Fifth Lesson**

**Luke 2:8-20**

**Matthew Shelton**

*New Revised Standard Version*

<sup>2:8</sup>In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup>Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup>But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: <sup>11</sup>to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup>This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.'

<sup>13</sup>And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

<sup>14</sup> 'Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace among those whom God favours!'

<sup>15</sup> When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.' <sup>16</sup>So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup>When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; <sup>18</sup>and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup>But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup>The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

**Carol (next page)**

# 113 Angels We Have Heard on High

1 An - gels we have heard on high, sweet-ly sing-ing o'er the plains,  
 2 Shep-herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro-long?  
 3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see him whose birth the an - gels sing;

and the moun-tains in re - ply ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.  
 What the glad-some ti - dings be which in-spire your heaven-ly song?  
 come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ, the Lord, the new - born King.

*Refrain*

Glo - ri - a

in ex - cel - sis De - o! Glo - ri - a

This French carol probably dates from the 1700s, though it was not printed until the following century. Because it uses a vernacular language for the narrative stanzas and Latin for the refrain, it belongs to a special category called "macaronic" or mixed-language texts.

TEXT: French carol; trans. James Chadwick, 1860, alt.  
 MUSIC: French carol; arr. Edward Shippen Barnes, 1937  
 Music © 1937, ren. 1965 H. Augustine Smith Jr.  
 (admin. Fleming H. Revell Company, a div. of Baker Publishing Group)

GLORIA  
 7.7.7.7 with refrain



What if God had waited  
 For the earth to heal,  
 For the laws to change,  
 For every life to matter the same,  
 For the addict to be freed from shame,  
 For the refugees to not be blamed?

## Sixth Lesson

## Matthew 2:1-15

Paula Antunes

*New Revised Standard Version*

<sup>2:1</sup>In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup>asking, ‘Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.’ <sup>3</sup>When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; <sup>4</sup>and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. <sup>5</sup>They told him, ‘In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

<sup>6</sup> “And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,  
 are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;  
 for from you shall come a ruler  
 who is to shepherd my people Israel.” ’

<sup>7</sup> Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup>Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, ‘Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.’ <sup>9</sup>When

they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup>When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. <sup>11</sup>On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. <sup>12</sup>And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

<sup>13</sup> Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.' <sup>14</sup>Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, <sup>15</sup>and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, 'Out of Egypt I have called my son.'

**Carol (next page)**

# O Come, All Ye Faithful 133

1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant; O come  
 2 True God from true God, Light from light e - ter - nal, born  
 3 Sing, choirs of an - gels; sing in ex - ul - ta - tion; sing,  
 4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing; Je -

ye; O come ye to Beth - le - hem! Come, and be - hold him,  
 of a vir - gin, a mor - tal he comes; ver - y God, be -  
 all ye cit - i - zens of heaven a - bove! Glo - ry to God, all  
 sus, to thee be all glo - ry given; Word of the Fa - ther,

*Refrain*

born the King of an - gels!  
 got - ten, not cre - at - ed! O come, let us a - dore him; O come, let  
 glo - ry in the high - est!  
 now in flesh ap - pear - ing!

us a - dore him; O come, let us a - dore him, Christ, the Lord!

From its Roman Catholic origins, this 18th-century hymn has spread to worldwide use by many denominations in both Latin and vernacular versions. Once popular with a wide range of hymn texts, this tune is now firmly associated with this Christmas text from which it is named.

TEXT: John Francis Wade, c. 1743; trans. Frederick Oakeley, 1841, alt.  
 MUSIC: John Francis Wade, c. 1743; harm. *The English Hymnal*, 1906

ADESTE FIDELES  
 Irregular



What if God had waited  
Until all was calm,  
All was bright,  
For a future that might  
Never come?

What if God had waited?

**Seventh Lesson**

**John 1:1-14**

**John Boyd**

*New Revised Standard Version*

<sup>1:1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup>in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

<sup>6</sup>There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup>He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup>He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. <sup>9</sup>The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

<sup>10</sup>He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup>He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup>But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, <sup>13</sup>who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

<sup>14</sup>And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a parent's only son, full of grace and truth.



But God couldn't wait.

God couldn't wait to be love known in flesh and bone  
And neither should we.

# Silent Night, Holy Night! 122

1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm, all is bright  
 2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake at the sight;  
 3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God, love's pure light  
 4 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Won - drous star, lend thy light;

'round yon vir - gin moth - er and child! Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and  
 glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far, heav - en - ly hosts sing "Al - le - lu -  
 ra - diant beams from thy ho - ly face, with the dawn of re - deem - ing  
 with the an - gels let us sing Al - le - lu - ia to our

mild, sleep in heav - en - ly peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.  
 ia: Christ the Sav - ior is born; Christ the Sav - ior is born!"  
 grace, Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth, Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth.  
 King: Christ the Sav - ior is born; Christ the Sav - ior is born.

GERMAN

1 *Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht!*  
*Alles schläft, einsam wacht*  
*nur das traute, hochheilige Paar.*  
*Holder Knabe im lockigen Haar,*  
*schlaf in himmlischer Ruh,*  
*schlaf in himmlischer Ruh!*

KOREAN

1 고요한밤 거룩한밤  
 어둠에 묻힌밤  
 주의부모 앉아서  
 감사기도 드릴때  
 아기잘도 잔다  
 아기잘도 잔다

SPANISH

1 *¡Noche de paz, noche de amor!*  
*Todo duerme en derredor,*  
*entre los astros que esparcen su luz,*  
*bella, anunciando al niño Jesús,*  
*brilla la estrella de paz,*  
*brilla la estrella de paz.*

The tradition that this carol's tune was created for guitar accompaniment at its first singing on Christmas Eve 1818 seems reliable, though a recent find shows that the text was about two years old. But there is no question that this is now a favorite Christmas carol worldwide.

TEXT: Joseph Mohr, 1816; stanzas 1-3, English trans. John Freeman Young, 1863;  
 stanza 4, English trans. Jane Montgomery Campbell, 1863, alt.  
 MUSIC: Franz Xaver Gruber, 1818  
 Korean Trans. © The Christian Literature Society of Korea

STILLE NACHT  
 Irregular

**Postlude**

**Shawn Whynot, organ**

***Fantasia on 'In Dulci Jubilo' -JS Bach***



**Offerings**

*All contributions to FBCH support our mission and ministry and are greatly appreciated. Many choose to give by setting up recurring contributions. You may also give to FBCH by making an e-transfer or by giving online through a link on our website. You can go to our website [www.fbchalifax.ca](http://www.fbchalifax.ca) and click on the Ways to Give link on our homepage for instructions on how to give.*



**Thank you to our worship leaders**

FBCH Senior Choir

Hymn Choir: Bethany Ingraham, *soprano*; Rosalie Dowling, *alto*;  
Leander Mendoza, *tenor*; André Gaudet, *bass*

Shawn Whynot, Organist (27th Year playing for Carols by Candlelight)

Ke mi ma fi lu gbanjo: Emmanuel Solomon, *tenor*; Jacob MacDonald, *piano*;  
Ogooluwa Sobukola, *flute*; Adeshina Ojo, *talking drum*;  
Babatunde Adeniyi, *videographer*

Lay Readers: Scott Sterns, Peggy Dunbar, Alice Chan-Yip, Alison Clarke,  
Matthew Shelton, Paula Antunes

John Boyd, former Senior Minister of FBCH

Lynette Wahlstrom, Director of Music

Rhonda Schofield, Interim Minister of Faith Development

Jean Ferguson, Coordinator of Congregational and Community Engagement

Rusty Edwards, Senior Minister



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# GOD CAN'T WAIT



# Light Pierces Through

Lisle Gwynn Garrity (image on reverse, ©A Sanctified Art)

Inspired by John 1:1-14

(see scripture lesson in *Contemplative Christmas Eve  
Worship Guide*, page 79)

## FROM THE ARTIST

When we talk about the creation story, we often refer to Genesis. But the Bible is full of creation stories, and the opening of John's gospel is one of them. Not to be confined to literal interpretation, the poetry of John 1 tells us more about the nature of God than about the contents of the cosmos.

Looking at this story of birth, what do we learn about God?

*In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God (John 1:1).* God is living word, holy discourse. God is known to us in logic, debate, truth, and story.

*What came into being through the Word was life, and the life was the light for all people (John 1:4).* God is living flesh, divine presence in human form, the embodiment of love for all people. God joins us in every human experience.

*The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness doesn't extinguish the light (John 1:5).* God is light that pierces through the darkness. Nothing can stop it or dampen its might.

In this painting, I meditated on the persistence of light. Light can travel endlessly through a vacuum; light waves won't diminish no matter how far they have to travel. Therefore, starlight travels through space for billions of light years to reach us on earth. Can you imagine that? Perhaps that's God's nature and constant posture—endlessly traveling through time and space just to reach us.

## PRAYER

Breathe deeply as you gaze upon the image. Imagine placing yourself in this scene. What do you see? How do you feel? Get quiet and still, offering a silent or spoken prayer to God.

# A FBCH Family Christmas Eve

December 24, 2020, 4:00pm



**Prelude**

**Blue Engine String Quartet**

**Jennifer Jones, violin; Anne Simons, violin;**

**Alex Bates, viola; Hilary Brown, cello**

***And Therefore Be Merry,***

***A Wreath of Christmas Carols for String Quartet -Brian Joyce***

*Bring a Torch, Jeannette, Isabella -17th c. Provençal Carol*

*Sussex Carol -English Carol*

*Now is Born the Divine Christ Child (Il est Neé) -French Carol*

*Patapan -Bernard de la Monnoye*

*We Three Kings -John Hopkins*

*A Virgin Most Pure -English Carol*

*O Little Town of Bethlehem -Lewis Redner*

*Ding Dong! Merrily on High -16th c. French Melody*

*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing -Felix Mendelssohn*

**Welcome**

**Rusty Edwards**

**Call to Worship**

***Hush***

***Sssh.***

**Rhonda Schofield**

Can you hear it?  
An expectant silence,  
a hushed anticipation,  
as if the very galaxy  
is holding its breath.  
There are some truths  
even the stars know,  
like darkness,  
like loneliness  
and how the night  
can be a living thing.  
And how once, long ago,  
the night waited in wonder  
along with the darkness  
and the loneliness,  
for the sound of a baby's cry,  
for the miraculous  
to come down  
to the earth mundane.

JESUS CHRIST: BIRTH

# 121 O Little Town of Bethlehem

1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie!  
 2 For Christ is born of Mar - y and, gath - ered all a - bove,  
 3 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly, the won - drous gift is given!  
 4 O ho - ly child of Beth - le - hem, de - scend to us, we pray;

A - bove thy deep and dream - less sleep the si - lent stars go by.  
 while mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep their watch of won - dering love.  
 So God im - parts to hu - man hearts the bless - ings of his heaven.  
 cast out our sin and en - ter in; be born in us to - day.

Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing light;  
 O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er pro - claim the ho - ly birth,  
 No ear may hear his com - ing, but in this world of sin,  
 We hear the Christ - mas an - gels the great glad ti - dings tell;

the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.  
 and prais - es sing to God the king, and peace to all on earth.  
 where meek souls will re - ceive him, still the dear Christ en - ters in.  
 O come to us; a - bide with us, our Lord Em - man - u - el!

Though he was famed during his lifetime as a great preacher, no sermon Phillips Brooks ever preached has been heard or read by as many people as have sung this carol he wrote in December 1868 for the Sunday School children of Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in Philadelphia.

TEXT: Phillips Brooks, 1868  
 MUSIC: Lewis Henry Redner, 1868

ST. LOUIS  
 8.6.8.6.7.6.8.6  
 (alternate tune: FOREST GREEN)

## LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

### Prophetic Lesson: Isaiah 9:2-7

Joan Fraser

*The New Revised Standard Version*

<sup>9:2</sup> The people who walked in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—  
on them light has shined.

<sup>3</sup> You have multiplied the nation,  
you have increased its joy;  
they rejoice before you  
as with joy at the harvest,  
as people exult when dividing plunder.

<sup>4</sup> For the yoke of their burden,  
and the bar across their shoulders,  
the rod of their oppressor,  
you have broken as on the day of Midian.

<sup>5</sup> For all the boots of the tramping warriors  
and all the garments rolled in blood  
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

<sup>6</sup> For a child has been born for us,  
a son given to us;  
authority rests upon his shoulders;  
and he is named  
Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

<sup>7</sup> His authority shall grow continually,  
and there shall be endless peace  
for the throne of David and his kingdom.  
He will establish and uphold it  
with justice and with righteousness  
from this time onwards and for evermore.  
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

### Candle Lighting Family

Currie & Bethune

Our Advent journey is complete as we witness Mary and Joseph gathered in a manger room to welcome Christ into our world. May the birth of the baby Jesus in humble circumstances open us to people on the margins.

**We can't wait to remember the story and to live into the transformation it prompts.**

We proclaim, like the heavenly chorus, the good news of vulnerability.  
We come, like the shepherds, filled with wonder at what could be.

**The world can't wait for the gracious gift of becoming, of potential.**

We light the first candle reminding us of the way of hope

*(The first blue or purple Advent candle is lit)*

We light the second candle reminding us of Christ's path of peace.

*(The second blue or purple Advent candle is lit)*

We light the third candle reminding us of Spirit-filled joy.

*(The rose-coloured/pink Advent candle is lit)*

We light the fourth candle reminding us of God's self-giving love.

*(The final blue or purple Advent candle is lit)*

We light this Christ candle for the arrival of Emmanuel, God-with-Us.

*(The final blue or purple Advent candle is lit)*

### **Christmas Eve Prayer of Approach**

**Rhonda Schofield**

**We come to worship, to honour, and to welcome you, O God, in the baby Jesus. In your humility, may we find humility. In your loving, may we give our own love. In your humanity, may we affirm our own humanity. In your coming, may we share your good news with all our aching world. Amen.**

### **Anthem**

**Blue Engine String Quartet  
Bethany Ingraham, soprano**

***Laudate Dominum omnes gentes  
from Vesperae Solennes, K. 339 -Mozart  
(O Praise the Lord, all ye Nations)***

### **First Gospel Lesson Family**

**Luke 2:1-7**

**LaFleche-Bell**

*New Revised Standard Version*

<sup>2:1</sup>In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup>All went to their own towns to be registered. <sup>4</sup>Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. <sup>5</sup>He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup>While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. <sup>7</sup>And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

## Interlude - MUELLER

### Second Gospel Lesson

Luke 2:8-20

Kirkegaard-MacGibbon

### Family

*New Revised Standard Version*

<sup>2:8</sup>In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup>Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup>But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: <sup>11</sup>to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup>This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.'

<sup>13</sup>And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

<sup>14</sup> 'Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace among those whom God favours!'

<sup>15</sup> When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.' <sup>16</sup>So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup>When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; <sup>18</sup>and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup>But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup>The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

**Carol (next page)**

**Cruess Family**

# 115 Away in a Manger

Capo 3: (D) F (G) B $\flat$  (D) F

1 A - way in a man - ger, no crib for his bed,  
 2 The cat - tle are low - ing; the poor ba - by wakes,  
 3 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask thee to stay

(A7) C7 (D) F

the lit - tle Lord Je - sus laid down his sweet head.  
 but lit - tle Lord Je - sus, no cry - ing he makes.  
 close by me for - ev - er and love me, I pray.

(G) B $\flat$  (D) F

The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,  
 I love thee, Lord Je - sus; look down from the sky,  
 Bless all the dear chil - dren in thy ten - der care,

(A7) C7 (D) F (Em) Gm (A7) C7 (D) F

the lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.  
 and stay by my side un - til morn - ing is nigh.  
 and fit us for heav - en to live with thee there.

Though erroneously attributed to Martin Luther, this anonymous carol has North American roots, probably originating among Pennsylvania Lutherans. Although more than forty melodies have been connected with these words, this tune was among the earliest written for them.

TEXT: Stanzas 1–2, *Little Children's Book for Schools and Families*, c. 1885;  
 stanza 3, *Gabriel's Vineyard Songs*, 1892  
 MUSIC: James R. Murray, 1887

MUELLER  
 11.11.11.11  
 (alternate tune: CRADLE SONG, 114)

JESUS CHRIST: BIRTH

# 134 Joy to the World

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re - ceive  
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their songs  
 3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow, nor thorns in - fest  
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the na -

her king; let ev - ery heart pre - pare him room,  
 em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains  
 the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings flow  
 tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous - ness

and heaven and na - ture sing, and heaven and na - ture  
 re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing  
 far as the curse is found, far as the curse is  
 and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his  
 and heaven and na - ture sing,

and  
 sing, and heaven, and heaven and na - ture sing.  
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.  
 found, far as, far as the curse is found.  
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

heaven and na - ture sing,

While Isaac Watts did not write this text strictly for Christmas use, he did purposely cast his paraphrase of Psalm 98:4-9 in Christian terms, titling it "The Messiah's coming and kingdom." So "the Lord" here is Jesus Christ, rather than the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

**Benediction**

**Rusty Edwards**

**Choral Amen**

**Danish Amen**

**Postlude**

**Blue Engine String Quartet**  
***The First Nowell* -arr. Marshall Ocker**



**Thank you to our worship leaders**

Blue Engine String Quartet: Jennifer Jones, *violin*; Anne Simons, *violin*;  
Alex Bates, *viola*; Hilary Brown, *cello*

Bethany Ingraham, Soprano

Mathis Family Choir: Andrea, Eric, Adelaide, and Eliza

Cruess Family Choir: Laurie, Alan, Angela, Bill, Michael and Vivian

Zadeh Family Choir: Amanda, Anthony, Cecilia

Shelly, Mike, Hudson, and Wesley Currie, Lay Leaders

Jennifer, Andrew, Adelaide, and Cassian Bethune

Elisabeth Bell, Paul, Robyn, and Ruth LaFleche, Lay Leaders

Lois MacGibbon, Hugh, Olivia, and Isabella Kirkegaard, Lay Leaders

Joan Fraser, Lay Leader

Addison Edwards, Lay Leader

Lynette Wahlstrom, Director of Music

Rhonda Schofield, Interim Minister of Faith Development

Jean Ferguson, Coordinator of Congregational and Community Engagement

Rusty Edwards, Senior Minister

# Contemplative Christmas Eve Communion

December 24, 2020, 9:00pm



## Ringling the Trinity

Prelude

Lynette Wahlstrom, organ

*English Carols for Organ* -G. Martin

## Summoning Prayer

*(by Bruce Powers)*

The impossible is about to happen in a stable.

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;

**Those who lived in a land of deep darkness,  
on them has the light shined!**

This is the evening when creation stood still and held its breath,  
for God was doing the most unbelievable, dangerous thing.

**This is the evening when God embraced humanity  
from the inside, as one of us, from birth to death.**

In the beginning was the Word,  
and the Word was with God,  
and the Word was God.

**And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us,  
full of grace and truth. Amen!**

## Silent Reflection

Gospel Reading

John 1:1-14

Rusty Edwards

*New Revised Standard Version*

<sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup>in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

<sup>6</sup>There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup>He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup>He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. <sup>9</sup>The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

<sup>10</sup>He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup>He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup>But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, <sup>13</sup>who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.  
14 And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a parent's only son, full of grace and truth.

**Reader** For the Word of God in Scripture,  
for the Word of God among us,  
for the Word of God within us.  
**All** **Thanks be to God.**

### Silent Reflection

## SACRED FEAST

### The Peace

*Celebrant* The angels said it to startled shepherds  
and Jesus said it to frightened followers.  
And now these words which come from heaven  
are shared to make us whole and make us one:

*All* Peace be with you.  
**And also with you.**

### Invitation to the Feast

*Celebrant* Holy God,  
In the beginning was darkness, mystery, and you.  
By your own Word, you created life out of the  
darkness, calling forth all plants of the earth, all fish  
of the seas, all creatures of the land and forming  
human community. You forever transformed our  
darkness.

Ever-persistent and ever-loving God,  
Jesus was born in the night, lived and loved in dark  
times, drawing the lost and forgotten, the hurt and  
the wounded, the oppressed and depressed to the  
wellspring of life. He changed water into wine,  
called unheralded workers to be disciples,  
preached good news to the poor, healed the sick

and beckoned people to love their neighbour. By his baptism, suffering, death, and resurrection, he revealed the depths of your love and your power to transform darkness into the place of your creative, liberating, and transformative presence. Amen.

## **Thanksgiving**

*Celebrant* Blessed is our brother Jesus,  
who walks with us the road of our world's suffering,  
and who is known to us in the breaking of bread.

During his final meal before his death, he took bread.  
And when he had blessed it, he broke it  
and said to his disciples, "This is my body. It is given for  
you. Do this to remember me."

Later in the meal, he took a cup of wine;  
and after he had given thanks he said,  
"In this cup is the new relationship with God made  
possible because of my death. Drink it, all of you... to  
remember me."

So we will do as Jesus did.  
We take this bread and this wine,  
the produce of the earth  
and the work of human hands  
through which Jesus has promised  
to make himself known.

And as he said a prayer before sharing,  
let us follow his example.

## **The Lord's Prayer**

**Creating God, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.  
Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those that trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the Kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and  
ever. Amen.**

## **Breaking of the Bread & Pouring of the Wine**

*Celebrant* All of you who hunger and thirst  
for a better life,  
for a deeper faith,  
for a better world,  
here is the bread of life: feed on it with gratitude;  
here is the cup of salvation: drink from it and believe.

*All* **These are the gifts of God for the people of God.**

*Celebrant* So come to this table,  
you who have much faith  
and you who would like to have more;  
you who have been here often  
and you who have not been for a long time;  
you who have tried to follow Jesus,  
and you who have failed.  
Come, it is Christ who invites us to meet him here.

## **Sharing the Feast of Christ**

*You are invited to partake of communion from home. Use whatever bread you have. Pour a cup of juice or wine. If you do not have that, water will be fine ( Jesus once changed water into exquisite wine).*

**Music for Reflection**

**Amanda Zadeh, soprano**

***O Holy Night* -Adams**

**Benediction**

**Rusty Edwards**

**Postlude**

**Lynette Wahlstrom, organ**

***Silent Night* -W. Held**



## **Thank you to our worship leaders**

Amanda Zadeh, Soprano  
Lynette Wahlstrom, Director of Music  
Jenny Edwards, Live Stream  
Rusty Edwards, Senior Minister



## A Dance

Hannah Garity (image on reverse, ©A Sanctified Art)

As you view the image, reflect on the song of Anna  
(Luke 2:21-38 in Dec. 27 Worship Guide, page 88)

### PRAYER

Breathe deeply as you gaze upon the image. Imagine placing yourself in this scene. What do you see? How do you feel? Get quiet and still, offering a silent or spoken prayer to God.

# First Sunday After Christmas Day

December 27, 2020, 10:30am



## GOD CAN'T WAIT

**Prelude**

**Lynette Wahlstrom, organ**

***VIII Noel -Daquin***

**Welcome**

**Rusty Edwards**

*If joining on Facebook Live, we invite you to share greetings with everyone by posting a comment to the livestream.*

**Silent Call to Worship**

**Christmas Carol (next page)**

# 147 The First Nowell

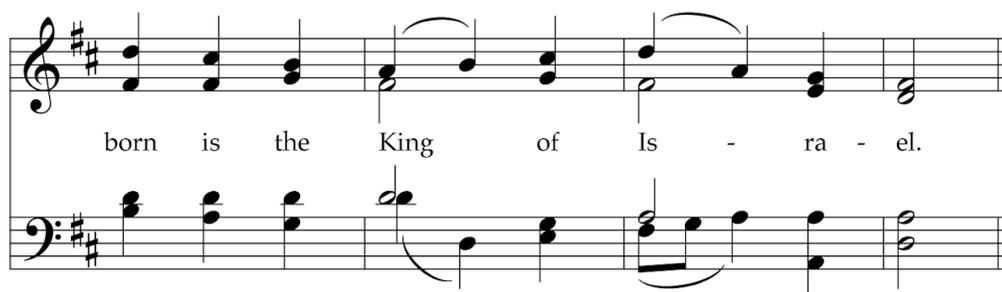
1 The first Now-ell the an-gel did say was to cer-tain poor  
 2 They look-ed up and saw a star shin-ing in the  
 3 And by the light of that same star three wise men  
 4 This star drew nigh to the north-west; o'er Beth - le -  
 shep-herds in fields as they lay, in fields where they lay keep-ing  
 east be-yond them far; and to the earth it gave  
 came from coun - try far; to seek for a king was their  
 hem it took its rest, and there it did both stop  
 their sheep, on a cold win-ter's night that was so deep.  
 great light, and so it con - tin - ued both day and night.  
 in - tent, and to fol - low the star wher - ev - er it went.  
 and stay, right o - ver the place where Je - sus lay.

*Refrain*

Now - ell, Now - ell, Now - ell, Now - ell,

“Nowell” is the English form of the French “noel,” a shout of joy formerly used at Christmas (as in Chaucer’s “Franklin’s Tale”), a clue that the word is older than its first printing. It may have Latin and French roots related to “born” (*natus / nē*) as well to “news” (*nova / nouvelle*).

TEXT: English carol; *Some Ancient Christmas Carols*, 2nd ed., 1823, alt. THE FIRST NOWELL  
 MUSIC: English carol; Sandys’ *Christmas Carols*, 1833 Irregular



5 Then entered in those wise men three, 6 Then let us all with one accord  
 full reverently upon their knee, sing praises to our heavenly Lord,  
 and offered there in his presence that hath made heaven and earth of nought,  
 their gold, and myrrh, and and with his blood our life hath bought.  
 frankincense. *Refrain*

### Prophetic Lesson: Isaiah 61:10-11

Addison Edwards

*The New Revised Standard Version*

61:10 I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,  
 my whole being shall exult in my God;  
 for God has clothed me with the garments of salvation,  
 God has covered me with the robe of righteousness,  
 as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,  
 and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.  
 11 For as the earth brings forth its shoots,  
 and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,  
 so the LORD God will cause righteousness and praise  
 to spring up before all the nations.

### Candle Lighting

We light the first candle reminding us of the way of hope  
*(The first blue or purple Advent candle is lit)*  
 We light our second candle to signify Christ's path of peace.  
*(The second blue or purple Advent candle is lit)*  
 We light our third candle, reminding us of Spirited joy.  
*(The rose-coloured/pink Advent candle is lit)*  
 We light our fourth candle to mark how love abides by God's grace.  
*(The final blue or purple Advent candle is lit)*  
 We light this Christ candle to celebrate the presence of God-with-Us.  
*(The Christ candle is lit)*

## Christmas Prayer of Approach

Kathy Schwartzenruber

We come to worship, to honour, and to welcome you, O God, in the baby Jesus. In your humility, may we find humility. In your loving, may we give our own love. In your humanity, may we affirm our own humanity. In your coming, may we share your good news with all our aching world. Amen.

## WE CAN'T WAIT

### Children's Story

Rusty Edwards

### Doxology - VENI EMMANUEL

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,  
Praise Christ all peoples here below,  
Praise Holy Spirit evermore,  
Praise Triune God whom we adore,  
Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel shall come to Thee, O Israel!

### Gospel Reading: Luke 2:21-38

Rusty Edwards

*The New Revised Standard Version*

<sup>2:21</sup> After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

<sup>22</sup> When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord <sup>23</sup>(as it is written in the law of the Lord, 'Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord'), <sup>24</sup>and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, 'a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons.'

<sup>25</sup> Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. <sup>26</sup>It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah.

<sup>27</sup> Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, <sup>28</sup>Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

<sup>29</sup> 'Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,  
according to your word;

<sup>30</sup> for my eyes have seen your salvation,

<sup>31</sup> which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

<sup>32</sup> a light for revelation to the Gentiles

and for glory to your people Israel.’

<sup>33</sup> And the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. <sup>34</sup>Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, ‘This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed <sup>35</sup>so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.’

<sup>36</sup>There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband for seven years after her marriage, <sup>37</sup>then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshipped there with fasting and prayer night and day. <sup>38</sup>At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

*Reader* For the Word of God in Scripture,  
for the Word of God in our world,  
for the Word of God within us all.  
*All* **Thanks be to God.**

**Spoken Reflection**

**Rusty Edwards**

*We Can’t Wait*

**Interlude - STAR OF COUNTY DOWN**

**Prayers of the People**

**Kathy Schwartzenruber**

*During the silent pause, those following on Facebook Live are invited to participate by offering prayers and prayer requests. May the comment feed be a reminder that we are gathered as a community.*

**Lord’s Prayer**

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.  
Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those that trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the Kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and  
ever. Amen.**

# Christmas Carol

JESUS CHRIST: BIRTH

## 143 Angels, from the Realms of Glory

1 An - gels, from the realms of glo - ry, wing your flight o'er  
2 Shep - herds, in the fields a - bid - ing, watch - ing o'er your  
3 Sag - es, leave your con - tem - pla - tions; bright - er vi - sions  
4 All cre - a - tion, join in prais - ing God the Fa - ther,

all the earth; you, who sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry,  
flocks by night, God with us is now re - sid - ing;  
beam a - far; seek the great de - sire of na - tions;  
Spir - it, Son, ev - er - more your voic - es rais - ing

now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth:  
yon - der shines the in - fant light: come and wor - ship,  
you have seen his na - tal star: to the e - ter - nal Three in One:

come and wor - ship, wor - ship Christ, the new - born king!

This familiar carol was first published as a poem in the Christmas Eve 1816 issue of a newspaper the author edited in Sheffield, England. The tune name celebrates the location of a prominent Presbyterian Church in London, sometimes called the "Presbyterian cathedral."

TEXT: Stanzas 1-3, James Montgomery, 1816, 1825; stanza 4, *Salisbury Hymn Book*, 1857  
MUSIC: Henry Thomas Smart, 1867

REGENT SQUARE  
8.7.8.7.8.7

**Benediction**

**Rusty Edwards**

**Choral Amen**

**Danish Amen**

**Postlude**

**Lynette Wahlstrom, organ**

**XII Noel -Daquin**



### **Offerings**

*All contributions to FBCH support our mission and ministry and are greatly appreciated. Many choose to give by setting up recurring contributions. You may also give to FBCH by making an e-transfer or by giving online through a link on our website. You can go to our website [www.fbchalifax.ca](http://www.fbchalifax.ca) and click on the Ways to Give link on our homepage for instructions on how to give.*



### **Thank you to our live stream worship leaders**

Kathy Schwartzenruber, Deacon

Lynette Wahlstrom, Director of Music

Jenny Edwards, Live Stream

Rusty Edwards, Senior Minister

Hymn Choir: Bethany Ingraham, *soprano*; Rosalie Dowling, *alto*;

Leander Mendoza, *tenor*; André Gaudet, *bass*



# Second Sunday After Christmas Day

January 3, 2021, 10:30am



## GOD CAN'T WAIT

**Introit** **Bethany Ingraham, soprano**  
*"Jesu, the Very Thought of Three" -E. Thiman*

**Prelude** **Lynette Wahlstrom, organ**  
**Greensleeves -R. Vaughan Williams**

**Welcome** **Rhonda Schofield**  
*If joining on Facebook Live, we invite you to share greetings with everyone by posting a comment to the livestream.*

**Silent Call to Worship**

**Christmas Carol (next page)** **Bethany Ingraham, soprano**

# 145 What Child Is This

1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mar-y's lap is sleep-ing?  
 2 Why lies he in such mean es - tate where ox and ass are feed - ing?  
 3 So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh; come, one and all, to own him.

Whom an - gels greet with an - thems sweet while shep - herds watch are keep - ing?  
 Good Chris - tian, fear; for sin - ners here the si - lent Word is plead - ing.  
 The King of kings sal - va - tion brings; let lov - ing hearts en - throne him.

This, this is Christ the King, whom shep - herds guard and an - gels sing;  
 Nails, spear, shall pierce him through; the cross be borne for me, for you.  
 Raise, raise the song on high. The vir - gin sings her lul - la - by.

haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mar - y!  
 Hail, hail, the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mar - y!  
 Joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mar - y!

This Victorian text gains scope and power by having the original second halves of stanzas two and three restored. They give a stark forward glimpse of what lies ahead for this "babe, the son of Mary!" The tune is much older, dating from Tudor England.

## Prophetic Lesson: Isaiah 52:7-10

Rhonda Schofield

*The New Revised Standard Version*

- <sup>52:7</sup> How beautiful upon the mountains  
are the feet of the messenger who announces peace,  
who brings good news,  
who announces salvation,  
who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns.'
- <sup>8</sup> Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices,  
together they sing for joy;  
for in plain sight they see  
the return of the LORD to Zion.
- <sup>9</sup> Break forth together into singing,  
you ruins of Jerusalem;  
for the LORD has comforted God's people,  
the LORD has redeemed Jerusalem.
- <sup>10</sup> The LORD has bared God's holy arm  
before the eyes of all the nations;  
and all the ends of the earth shall see  
the salvation of our God.

### Candle Lighting

We light the first candle reminding us of the way of hope

*(The first blue or purple Advent candle is lit)*

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*(The second blue or purple Advent candle is lit)*

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### Christmas Prayer of Approach

Rhonda Schofield

**We come to worship, to honour, and to welcome you, O God, in the baby Jesus. In your humility, may we find humility. In your loving, may we give our own love. In your humanity, may we affirm our own humanity. In your coming, may we share your good news with all our aching world. Amen.**

## WE CAN'T WAIT

Children's Story

Rhonda Schofield

### Doxology - VENI EMMANUEL

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,  
Praise Christ all peoples here below,  
Praise Holy Spirit evermore,  
Praise Triune God whom we adore,  
Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel shall come to Thee, O Israel!

### Gospel Reading: Luke 2:41-52

Arla Johnson

*The New Revised Standard Version*

<sup>2:41</sup>Now every year Jesus' parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. <sup>42</sup>And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. <sup>43</sup>When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. <sup>44</sup>Assuming that he was in the group of travellers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends. <sup>45</sup>When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. <sup>46</sup>After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. <sup>47</sup>And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. <sup>48</sup>When his parents saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, 'Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety.' <sup>49</sup>He said to them, 'Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Creator's house?' <sup>50</sup>But they did not understand what he said to them. <sup>51</sup>Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart.

<sup>52</sup>And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favour.

*Reader* For the Word of God in Scripture,  
for the Word of God coming in our world,  
for the Word of God within us all.

*All* **Thanks be to God.**

**Invitation to the Holy Feast**

**Interlude - GO TELL IT**

**Prayers of the People**

**Rhonda Schofield**

*During the silent pause, those following on Facebook Live are invited to participate by offering prayers and prayer requests. May the comment feed be a reminder that we are gathered as a community.*

**Lord's Prayer**

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.  
Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those that trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the Kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and  
ever. Amen.**

**Sharing the Holy Feast**

*You are invited to partake of communion from home. Use whatever bread you have. Pour a cup of juice or wine. If you do not have that, water will be fine (Jesus once changed water into exquisite wine).*

**Christmas Carol (next page)**

**Bethany Ingraham, soprano**

# 136 Go, Tell It on the Mountain

Refrain 

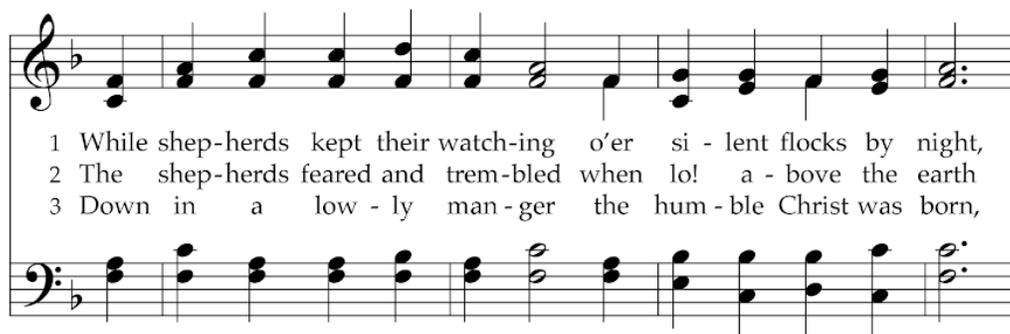


Go, tell it on the moun-tain, o-ver the hills and ev - ery - where;

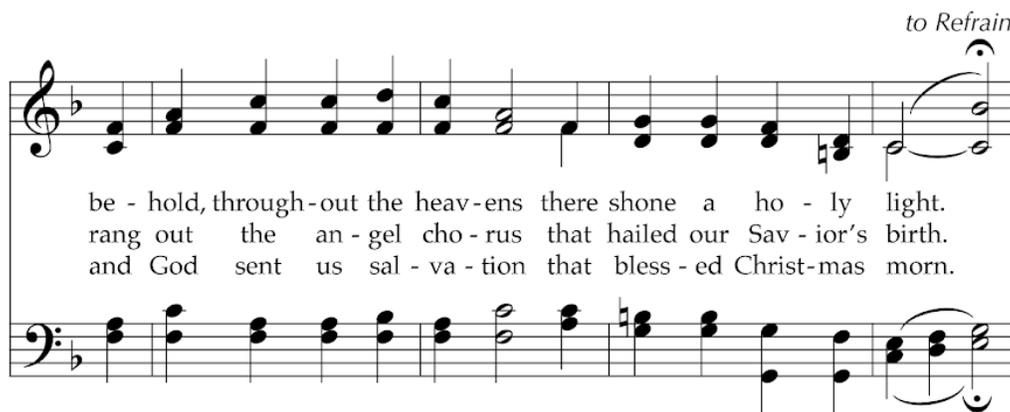


go, tell it on the moun - tain that Je - sus Christ is born!

*Fine*



1 While shep-herds kept their watch-ing o'er si - lent flocks by night,  
 2 The shep-herds feared and trem-bled when lo! a - bove the earth  
 3 Down in a low - ly man - ger the hum - ble Christ was born,



*to Refrain*

be - hold, through-out the heav - ens there shone a ho - ly light.  
 rang out the an - gel cho - rus that hailed our Sav - ior's birth.  
 and God sent us sal - va - tion that bless - ed Christ-mas morn.

Like other material from oral traditions, 19th-century African American spirituals flourished without being written down. Their refrains were their most stable parts, and narrative stanzas were often improvised to fit. These Nativity stanzas attempt to recall that tradition.

**Benediction**

**Arla Johnson**

**Choral Amen**

**Danish Amen**    **Bethany Ingraham, soprano**

**Postlude**

**Lynette Wahlstrom, organ**

***I Noel -Daquin***



**Offerings**

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**Thank you to our live stream worship leaders**

Arla Johnson, Deacon and Licenced Minister of FBCH and CABF

Bethany Ingraham, Soprano

Lynette Wahlstrom, Director of Music

Jean Ferguson, Coordinator of Congregational and Community Engagement

Rhonda Schofield, Interim Minister of Faith Development





## FBCH in 2021

### What Can't Wait?



We enter 2021 with expectant hope. We hope that life will return to “normal,” even as we know that many aspects of our lives will never go back to how they were at the beginning of 2020. Our life as a congregation continues to evolve too. In 2021, FBCH must remain committed to embracing our congregational future with imagination and determination. How might we advance the work of the Five Guiding Statements we affirmed in April 2019?

1. It is a human characteristic to seek connection with the Holy within ourselves, within others, and within creation. For many at FBCH, a primary place for seeking this connection is the Sunday morning worship service. In addition, we would like to provide opportunities that encourage a multitude of avenues of spiritual exploration informed by the broad Christian tradition that meet the diverse needs of the larger community.

2. We are social beings who not only desire but require community to live and to thrive. We seek to deepen our connection among those who already participate in our common life. We also need to broaden our reach to connect with more of our neighbours and in doing so will better reflect the diversity of the surrounding community.

3. From our beginnings in 1827, FBCH has sought to live out the words of Micah 6:8 “Listen here, mortal: God has already made abundantly clear what ‘good’ is and what is needed from you: simply do justice, love kindness, and humbly walk with your God.” (Inclusive Bible) Building on this tradition, we seek to extend our voice and our efforts to do justice for our neighbours and for the good of all creation.

4. The financial stability of FBCH depends on the active contributions of its participants AND on developing other revenue streams that are in line with our core values.

5. Honouring the freedoms at the centre of our Baptist heritage, we practice broad-based, informed decision-making that actively seeks input from all participants. Recognizing this as a core of our shared life, we also acknowledge that our current structures need adjustments to meet the needs of a changing congregation. We will develop governance structures that seek to be responsible, flexible, nimble, and fearless.



# FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

## HALIFAX

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### Breaking Stereotypes Since 1827

The story of the early church in the New Testament is a story of the ever-expanding circle of those included in the community of Jesus. We believe that circle expands to include all people.

Because we are followers of Jesus, First Baptist Church Halifax welcomes all people into the full life of the church community. This means we will not discriminate on the grounds of gender, age, race, national or ethnic origin, colour, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or economic circumstances.

We really do want you to join us. Our diversity helps us all expand our understandings of God.

Learn more about First Baptist Church Halifax at [www.fbchalifax.ca](http://www.fbchalifax.ca) or find us on FaceBook.