

# ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH

Fredericton, N.B.

*191 Years of Glorifying God through Worship, proclaiming the Gospel of Christ, and serving others in Christ's name*

Dec 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Advent 2 ~ Peace

10:30 AM

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*The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ. As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way, the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight,' so John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ~ Mark 1:1-4*

## GATHERING AS GOD'S OWN

**PRELUDE:** Wachet Auf, ruft uns die Stimme ~ Bach

**WELCOME**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING LITURGY** <sup>1</sup>

~ Webb Family

We started with hope.

**It is a hope born of a promise. Hope that ignites possibilities. Hope that burns within us!**

*Light HOPE Candle*

We seek peace for our journey. A peace that is more than an end to conflict, or the stillness and silence found at midnight while everyone is fast asleep.

**We seek a peace that is more than this, peace that this world cannot give.**

We long for enduring peace, that comes when we know who and whose we are.

The radical peace that comes when God breaks into our lives,

**a peace that eclipses the chaos, a peace found when Christ walks beside us.**

This is the peace we seek,

**And so, we wait for Christ to be born anew for us and in us.**

*Light PEACE Candle*

We light this candle to symbolize the peace poured out on us by our Lord.

**A reminder that we are called and gifted to be disciples for such a time as this.**

**SUNG RESPONSE: A Candle Is Burning**

VU 6 vs 2

*A candle is burning, a candle of peace,  
a candle to signal that conflict must cease:  
for Jesus is coming to show us the way;  
a message of peace humbly laid in the hay.*

**CALL TO WORSHIP:** *(Responsive)* <sup>2</sup>

The God who speaks comfort to us calls us here.

The God who addresses us with tenderness meets us here.

The God who guides us with gentleness cares for us here.

**We come to prepare a way for the Lord.**

**We come to ready ourselves for the transformation of our lives.**

For the glory of the Lord will be revealed,  
**and all people will see it.**

### **OPENING PRAYER <sup>3</sup>**

### **OPENING HYMN: *There's a Voice in the Wilderness***

VU 18

*There's a voice in the wilderness crying,  
a call from the ways untrod:  
prepare in the desert a highway,  
a highway for our God!  
The valleys shall be exalted,  
the lofty hills brought low;  
make straight all the crooked places  
where God, our God, may go!*

*O Zion, that bringest good tidings,  
get thee up to the heights and sing!  
Proclaim to a desolate people  
the coming of their King.  
Like the flowers of the field they perish,  
like grass our works decay;  
the power and pomp of nations  
shall pass, like a dream, away.*

*But the word of our God endureth,  
whose arm is ever strong;  
God stands in the midst of nations,  
and soon will right the wrong.  
God shall feed the flock like a shepherd,  
the lambs so gently hold;  
to pastures of peace will lead them,  
and bring them safe to fold.*

*There's a voice in the wilderness crying,  
a call from the ways untrod:  
prepare in the desert a highway,  
a highway for our God!  
The valleys shall be exalted,  
the lofty hills brought low;  
make straight all the crooked places  
where God, our God, may go!*

## LISTENING FOR GOD'S WORD

STORY TIME FOR THE YOUNG AND YOUNG AT HEART

THE STORY BEFORE THE STORY

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 40:1-11

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

CHOIR ANTHEM: Prepare the Way, O Zion ~ arr. Mark Schweizer

MESSAGE

## RESPONDING TO GOD'S LOVE

HYMN OF RESPONSE: *Will You Come and See the Light*

VU 96

*Will you come and see the light from the stable door?  
It is shining newly bright, though it shone before.  
It will be your guiding star,  
it will show you who you are;  
will you hide, or decide to meet the light?*

*Will you step into the light that can free the slave?  
It will stand for what is right, it will heal and save.  
By the pyramids of greed  
there's a longing to be freed;  
will you hide, or decide to meet the light?*

*Will you tell about the light in the prison cell?  
Though it's shackled out of sight, it is shining well.  
When the truth is cut and bruised,  
and the innocent abused,  
will you hide, or decide to meet the light?*

*Will you join the hope, alight in the young girl's eyes,  
of the mighty put to flight by a baby's cries?  
When the lowest and the least  
are the foremost at the feast,  
will you hide, or decide to meet the light?*

*Will you travel by the light of the babe new born?  
In the candle lit at night there's a gleam of dawn,  
and the darkness all about  
is too dim to put it out:  
will you hide, or decide to meet the light?*

## **BRINGING FORWARD OUR GIFTS FOR GOD**

Offerings are collected at the door to the sanctuary, or via e-transfer to [stpaulsoffice224@gmail.com](mailto:stpaulsoffice224@gmail.com). To set up Pre-Authorized Remittance (PAR) monthly contributions, please contact Meghan in the office.

### **DEDICATION VERSE: *In Gratitude and Humble Trust***

VU 544

*In gratitude and humble trust  
we bring our best today  
to serve your cause and share your love  
with all along life's way.*

*O God, who gave yourself to us  
in Jesus Christ, your Son,  
teach us to give ourselves each day  
until life's work is done.*

### **PRAYER OF DEDICATION: *(In Unison)***

God, your trust in us is amazing and your faithfulness is beyond belief. Into our midst, you came as a baby, dependent on human hands to provide your every need. To your church, you have entrusted the ongoing ministry of Christ. Such faith you have in us. Today, in our offerings, we rise in response. Accept the gifts we give, the time, the use of our talents, and the financial resources. Bless what is given, that in their deployment, you will be seen, your hope, peace, joy, and love experienced. This we pray in Christ's name. Amen.

### **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

#### **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

### **GOING FORTH WITH GOD**

### **CLOSING HYMN: *All Poor Ones and Humble***

VU 68

*All poor ones and humble and all those who stumble,  
come hastening, and feel not afraid;  
for Jesus, our treasure, with love past all measure,  
in lowly poor manger was laid.  
Though wise men who found him  
laid rich gifts around him,  
yet oxen they gave him their hay,  
and Jesus in beauty accepted their duty;  
contented in manger he lay.*

#### ***Refrain:***

*Then haste we to show him the praises we owe him;  
our service he ne'er can despise;  
whose love still is able to show us that stable,  
where softly in manger he lies.*

*The Christ Child will lead us, the Good Shepherd feed us  
and with us abide till his day.  
Then hatred he'll banish; then sorrow will vanish,  
and death and despair flee away.  
And he shall reign ever, and nothing shall sever  
from us the great love of our King;  
his peace and his pity shall bless his fair city;  
his praises we ever shall sing. R*

## COMMISSIONING & BLESSING

### CHORAL CLOSING: *Take Up His Song*

MV 213

*Take up this song of peace and go into the world.  
Take up this song of peace in ev'ry moment.  
In ev'ry moment of the journey, we're laying down our lives;  
Lay them down, in peace, lay them down, and take up this song.*

### POSTLUDE: "Postlude on "Gloria" ~ Jason Payne

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<sup>1</sup> Fredericton Narrative Lectionary Clergy Collective 2023

<sup>2</sup> Moira Laidlaw, as found on *Re: Worship*

<sup>3</sup> Adapted from Nancy Townsley *Ministry Matters Worship Connections December 10, 2023*

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**Scripture Readers:** Reader #1 – Jane Banks, Reader #2 – Ann Krause, Reader #3 – Andrew Steeves  
**Greeter:** Mary Stickles **Audio Visual:** Murray Simpson

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**GOOD MORNING AND WELCOME TO EVERYONE!** May this worship service be a blessing in your day as we continue to worship together each week in person and by Zoom.



### SONGS OF JUBILEE ORGAN RECITAL

Please join Dr. Sharon Pond, organist at St. Paul's United Church, for an organ recital at the church on Sunday, **December 10<sup>th</sup>** at 2:00pm. *Songs of Jubilee* will feature music of joy in a variety of genres: Baroque, Classical, Romantic, post-Romantic and contemporary... half of it being Christmas selections. Freewill offering will be received to support the music program at St. Paul's. A reception will follow in the church hall.

### LONGEST NIGHT SERVICE

On the Longest and darkest night of the year, we gather to worship at 7pm. This service is a quiet and reflective service, designed for those who may be struggling with grief, loneliness, or just not connecting with the joy so prevalent this time of year. In the darkness of the night, we hold each other and find hope that Christ is coming, a light in the darkness. You are invited to join us 7pm on **December 21<sup>st</sup>**, here at St. Paul's for this year's service.

## BROWN BAG LUNCH PROGRAM

This week, the program needs **proteins with flip top lids, juice boxes, and pudding cups**. Thank you for your continued support and generosity of this program.

## PANTRY PROGRAM

The Pantry program needs the following items this week: pancake mix, syrup, ketchup, Cheez Whiz, peanut butter – smooth & crunchy, granola bars, tea, Coffee Mate, soda crackers, cookies, salt, juice boxes, pudding cups, white & brown sugar, flour, apple sauce, large apple & orange juice, oatmeal, cereals – Corn Flakes, Rice Krispies, Shreddies, laundry & dish detergent, Mr. Clean, Kleenex, and paper towel. Thank you for your continued support of this increasingly busy outreach program!



## WHEELCHAIR WANTED

St. Paul's is in search of a gently used wheelchair to help our congregants to attend services. If you or someone you know has one to donate, please reach out to Meghan in the office.

## WARM CLOTHING DONATIONS NEEDED!

Our clothing cupboard is running low on winter boots and warm jackets. Also needed are warm socks and mittens. If you have any gently used items to donate, please drop by the office. Many thanks for helping keep things warm!



## FELLOWSHIP HOUR SERVERS NEEDED!

Fellowship Hour is a way to serve your community and enter into the spiritual practice of hospitality. For each Sunday in the new year, we are looking for teams of 3 or more to host fellowship hour. You will bring treats and whole milk, set up before church and make tea & coffee, serve, and clean up. Sign up as individuals, with your friends or as a committee. A sheet is posted on the bulletin board. Don't worry if you don't have experience, help is always nearby!

## MINCEMEAT

The UCW has 6 bottles of mincemeat available for sale. Each 450 ml jar will be \$15.00 Please stop by the office or contact Cathy Davis if you would like one.



## UPCOMING DATES TO REMEMBER

- December 10<sup>th</sup>** ~ Advent 2 Service ~ Fellowship Hour hosted by Mel & Barb McGuigan & Debbie Allison
- December 10<sup>th</sup>** ~ Songs of Jubilee Organ Recital at 2pm
- December 17<sup>th</sup>** ~ Advent 3 Service ~ Fellowship Hour hosted by Rachel & Stephanie Lavigne & Beth & Shawn Meister
- December 21<sup>st</sup>** ~ Downtown United Longest Night Service at St. Paul's at 7pm
- December 23<sup>rd</sup> – January 1<sup>st</sup>** ~ **Office CLOSED for Holidays**
- December 24<sup>th</sup>** ~ Advent 4 Service at 10:30
- December 24<sup>th</sup>** ~ Family Christmas Service at 3pm
- December 24<sup>th</sup>** ~ Traditional Christmas Eve Candlelight Service with Communion at 7pm
- December 31<sup>st</sup>** ~ Christmas 2 Service at 10:30



## SANCTUARY DRESSED FOR CHRISTMAS

Last week in the service we neglected to say thank you to the team of people who transformed the sanctuary from every day to Christmas Wow. Thursday the team came together to hang lights, fluff trees, arrange flowers, place candles, and raise the wreath. Thank you so much for your dedication, sharp eye for detail, and beautiful work. If you ever wonder how that great big wreath gets raised, check out our Facebook posts and see for yourself.

<https://www.facebook.com/StPaulsUnitedFredericton/>

## ADVENT MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT OF FUNDY ST. LAURENCE DAWNING WATERS REGION

You can read this year's Advent message from our regional president Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Stevenson at <https://ucceast.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Advent-Message-from-the-President-of-FSLDW.pdf>

## GOD'S STORY, OUR STORY

Pick up this reflection guide at the back of the sanctuary to use as a home devotional or with your friends.

## BIBLE STUDY ON SUNDAY READING

**Tuesdays from 10:45am-11:45am** in the Board room. Can't make it in person, Join by Zoom <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81736183320> Meeting ID: 817 3618 3320 Passcode: 750844

## EVENING SMALL GROUP FAITH EXPLORATION

**Thursdays from 6-7pm** in the Parlor. We hope you will join us.



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### CONTACT INFORMATION

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**Minister:** Rev. Michelle Armstrong | **Organists:** Dr. Sharon Pond & Alexis Ervin

**Church Administrator:** Meghan Roebuck | **Custodian:** Rusty Blakely

