



**Westminster United Church**  
**Worship Service for December 24th , 2019**  
Today's Worship Leader is Marg McCulley  
Christmas Eve Service

*"We are a faith community building relationships with God, all people, and our world."*

**Gathering as God's People**

DECLARATION OF GOOD NEWS:

**Isaiah 9: 6-7**

Processional Carol: **"Angels From the Realms of Glory" (VU 36)**

- 1 Angels, from the realms of glory,  
wing your flight o'er all the earth;  
ye who sang creation's story,  
now proclaim Messiah's birth:  
come and worship, come and worship,  
worship Christ, the newborn King.
  
- 2 Shepherds in the field abiding,  
watching o'er your flocks by night,  
God with us is now residing,  
yonder shines the infant Light:  
come and worship, come and worship,  
worship Christ, the newborn King.
  
- 3 Sages, leave your contemplations;  
brighter visions beam afar;  
seek the great desire of nations;  
ye have seen his natal star: come and worship,  
come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn King.
  
- 4 Saints before the altar bending,  
watching long in hope and fear,

suddenly the Lord, descending,  
in his temple shall appear: : come and worship,  
come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn King.

CALL TO WORSHIP:

Like the shepherds, we come to the stable,  
uncertain of what we have heard and seen,  
**longing to hear a word of peace and joy.**

Like the wise ones, we have journeys to make,  
gifts to offer, and hope in our hearts,  
**that this world can change for the better.**

Here, in the stillness of a winter's night,  
we gather to share the light of Christ,  
a light that shines in the nightfall.  
**We gather in the wonder of this night  
to share our joy and thanks for new life.**

✠Lighting of the Advent Candle: **"Of the Father's Love"**

***Choir:** Of the Father's love begotten, ere the world began to be. He is  
Alpha and omega, he the source, the ending he*

**All: Emmanuel, Emmanuel, evermore and evermore, Emmanuel**

*Responsive Litany (Read by member of the Congregation with Congregation  
responding)*

Tonight, we conclude our Advent journey as we light the Christ Candle, welcoming  
the one promised in scripture.

**He is called Emmanuel: God with us!**

We celebrate the earth brought to earth by our Wonderful Counsellor.

**He is called Emmanuel: God with us!**

We rejoice in the strength and power of a Mighty God.

**He is called Emmanuel: God with us!**

We sing of peace on earth and good will to all people.

**He is called Emmanuel: God with us!**

And we lift our hearts in praise to our Everlasting Father.

**He is called Emmanuel: God with us! Joy to the world, the Lord has come!**

## LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH:

Tonight , we light all the candles as we celebrate the birth of Christ, the Wonderful counsellor, Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. As the light from these candles fill this room, we light the Christ Candle, welcoming the newborn King. The one who is Emmanuel, Jesus Christ, God with us.

**Choir** *Let the heights of heaven adore him; angel hosts his praises sing: powers, dominions bow before him, and extol our God and King*

**All: Emmanuel, Emmanuel, evermore and evermore, Emmanuel**

## SIGN OF PEACE:

*Even as the heavens opened and angels spoke, the first word they sang was Peace. Even as confused shepherds came from the hills and flocks, uncertain but hopeful, they greeted each other with Peace. In the midst of our preparations and excitement, we take a moment to greet each other with a word of peace: peace in this place, peace in our homes, peace in this world*

Peace be with you.

**And also with you.**

Carol: **"Hark the Herald Angels Sing"(VU 48)**

- 1 Hark! the herald angels sing,  
'Glory to the newborn King,  
peace on earth, and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled!  
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,  
join the triumph of the skies;  
with the angelic host proclaim,  
'Christ is born in Bethlehem!'  
Hark! the herald angels sing,  
'Glory to the newborn King!'
- 2 Christ, by highest heaven adored,  
Christ, the everlasting Lord,  
late in time behold him come,  
offspring of a virgin's womb.  
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see;  
hail, the incarnate deity,  
pleased with us in flesh to dwell,  
Jesus, our Emmanuel! R  
Hark! the herald angels sing,  
'Glory to the newborn King!'
- 3 Hail, the heavenborn Prince of Peace!  
Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!

Light and life to all he brings,  
risen with healing in his wings.  
Mild he lays his glory by,  
born that we no more may die,  
born to raise us from the earth,  
born to give us second birth. R  
Hark! the herald angels sing,  
'Glory to the newborn King!'

TIME WITH CHILDREN:

### **A Service of Lessons and Carols**

The First Lesson **Genesis 1:26–2:4**

Carol: **"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (VU 1)**

- 1 O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
and ransom captive Israel  
that mourns in lowly exile here  
until the Son of God appear.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to thee, O Israel.
- 2 O come, O Wisdom from on high,  
who orders all things mightily;  
to us the path of knowledge show,  
and teach us in her ways to go. R  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to thee, O Israel.
- 3 O come, O come, great God of might,  
who to your tribes on Sinai's height  
in ancient times once gave the law  
in cloud, and majesty, and awe. R  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to thee, O Israel.
- 4 O come, O Rod of Jesse's stem,  
from every foe deliver them  
that trust your mighty power to save,  
and give them victory o'er the grave. R  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel

shall come to thee, O Israel.

- 5 O come, O Key of David, come,  
and open wide our heavenly home;  
make safe the way that leads on high,  
and close the path to misery. R  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to thee, O Israel.
- 6 O come, O Dayspring, from on high,  
and cheer us by your drawing nigh;  
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
and death's dark shadows put to flight. R  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to thee, O Israel.
- 7 O come, Desire of nations, bind  
all peoples in one heart and mind;  
O bid our sad divisions cease,  
and be for us the Prince of Peace. R  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to thee, O Israel.

The Second Lesson     **Isaiah 9:2, 6**  
**Carol: "What Child is This" (VU 74)**

- 1 What child is this, who laid to rest,  
on Mary's lap is sleeping?  
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet  
while shepherds watch are keeping?  
This, this is Christ the King,  
whom shepherds guard and angels sing;  
haste, haste to bring him laud,  
the Babe, the Son of Mary!
- 2 Why lies he in such mean estate  
where ox and ass are feeding?  
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here  
the silent Word is pleading. R  
This, this is Christ the King,  
whom shepherds guard and angels sing;

haste, haste to bring him laud,  
the Babe, the Son of Mary!

- 3 So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh;  
come, one and all, to own him.  
The King of Kings salvation brings;  
let loving hearts enthrone him. R  
This, this is Christ the King,  
whom shepherds guard and angels sing;  
haste, haste to bring him laud,  
the Babe, the Son of Mary!

The Third Lesson **Luke 1:26–35**

Carol: “ **It Came Upon the Midnight Clear**” (VU 44)

- 1 It came upon the midnight clear,  
that glorious song of old,  
from angels bending near the earth  
to touch their harps of gold,  
'Peace on the earth, good will to all,  
from heaven's all-gracious King!'  
The world in solemn stillness lay  
to hear the angels sing.
- 2 Still through the cloven skies they come  
with peaceful wings unfurled;  
and still their heavenly music floats  
o'er all the weary world;  
above its sad and lowly plains  
they bend on hovering wing,  
and ever o'er its Babel sounds  
the blessed angels sing.
- 3 Yet with the woes of sin and strife  
the world has suffered long;  
beneath the angel strain have rolled  
two thousand years of wrong;  
and warring humankind hears not  
the love song which they bring.  
O hush the noise, and cease your strife,  
to hear the angels sing.

- 4 For, lo! the days are hastening on,  
by prophets seen of old,  
when with the ever-circling years  
shall come the time foretold,  
when peace shall over all the earth  
its ancient splendours fling,  
and the whole world send back the song  
which now the angels sing.

The Fourth Lesson      **Luke 2:1–20**

Carol: "**Away In the Manger**" Performed by Westminster Choir

The Fifth Lesson      **John 2:16–17**

Carol: "**While Shepherds Watched Their Flock (VU 75)**

- 1 While shepherds watched their flocks by night  
all seated on the ground,  
the angel of the Lord came down,  
and glory shone around.
- 2 'Fear not,' said he, for mighty dread  
had seized their troubled mind;  
'glad tidings of great joy I bring  
to you and humankind.
- 3 'To you in David's town this day  
is born of David's line  
a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord;  
and this shall be the sign:
- 4 'The heavenly babe you there shall find  
to human view displayed,  
all meanly wrapped in swaddling bands,  
and in a manger laid.'
- 5 Thus spake the seraph; and forthwith  
appeared a shining throng  
of angels praising God, who thus  
addressed their joyful song:
- 6 'All glory be to God on high,  
and to the earth be peace!  
Good will to all from highest heaven

begin, and never cease.'

## **RESPONDING IN LOVE**

INVITATION:

Just as God has given us the wonderful gift of Jesus Christ, let us return part of that with which we have been gifted in our lives

OFFERTORY :

DOXOLOGY: **"In the Bleak Midwinter (VU 55 vss 1-3 vs 4 approach)**

DEDICATION: (Gathering, Robin Wardlaw)

God of many names, God of our ancestors and of our descendents, God of love and peace and justice, accept what we do and what we give this day. Accept the sacrifices we make, big and little, of our time, our energy, our resources. Bless what we offer, we pray, for the life-changing ministry of Jesus Christ. We ask it in his holy name. Amen

REFLECTION: **"CHRIST THROUGH THE AGES"**

Hymn: **"Twas in the Moon of Wintertime"(VU 71)**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE:

**God of star and stable, you lead us to wonder and to hope.**

**You gather us together to hear your promise of love.**

**As we gather, we offer our concerns and our dreams, our hopes and fears... (silence)**

**Like the shepherds who sought the stable, we seek your promise of peace.**

**We pray for your people broken by violence, those who live with fear, and those who live without hope.**

**We remember war torn countries and refugees seeking safety and peace, , and we pray for your courage and peace... (silence)**

**Like the wise ones who dedicated their gifts, we remember those in need.**

**We pray for those who are lonely, hungry, or forgotten; for those who are ill in body, in mind and in spirit; for those who are confused or afraid.**

**We pray for your joy and love, for all your people, especially those we remember now... (silence)**

**Holy One, you came as a child, offering renewal of spirit and of living.**

**May our prayers be a new beginning: for healing, truth, and trust.**

**May we embody love that is forgiving, compassionate, and gracious.**

**May we send back the angels' song of peace and joy.**

**We pray these things in the name of Jesus who became the Christ, who taught us when we pray to sing...**

**Our Father...**

### **Moving in God's Way**

#### **Sharing the Christ Light**

Carol: **"Silent Night, Holy Night" (VU 67)**

- 1     Silent night! Holy night!  
      All is calm, all is bright  
      round yon virgin mother and child.  
      Holy infant so tender and mild,  
      sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.
  
- 2     Silent night! Holy night!  
      Shepherds quake at the sight:  
      glories stream from heaven afar,  
      heavenly hosts sing Hallelujah,  
      Christ the Saviour is born, Christ the Saviour is born.
  
- 3     Silent night! Holy night!  
      Son of God, love's pure light  
      radiant beams from thy holy face,  
      with the dawn of redeeming grace,  
      Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Solo: Shannon Bergstreser **"Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas"**

CLOSING PRAYER:

Gracious Lord, throughout this Advent season we have come to know you by many names. Tonight we celebrate your birth and thank you for being our Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace. Remind us that no matter where we are, or where we've been, you are with us. We gather in the glory of this night to welcome you as Jesus, Emmanuel,

God with us. We pray this in the wonderful name of Christ, our Lord and Saviour.

**BLESSING AND BENEDICTION:**

From this house to yours,  
may you share in the gifts of this season.  
May love, the promise of generations, attend you.  
Joy, the gift of life together, fill you.  
Peace, the desire of neighbour and nations, find you.  
Hope, the horizon of faith, sustain you.  
And may a very Merry Christmas be yours. **Amen**  
**Go in peace knowing that you are sustained by the love of God.**

**Carol: " Joy to the World" (VU 59)**

- 1 Joy to the world! the Lord is come:  
let earth receive her King!  
Let every heart prepare him room,  
and heaven and nature sing, and heaven and nature sing,  
and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.
- 2 Joy to the earth! the Saviour reigns:  
let all their songs employ,  
while fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains  
repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,  
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.
- 3 No more let sins and sorrows grow,  
nor thorns infest the ground:  
he comes to make his blessings flow  
far as the curse is found, far as the curse is found,  
far as, far as the curse is found.
- 4 He rules the earth with truth and grace,  
and makes the nations prove  
the glories of his righteousness  
and wonders of his love, and wonders of his love,  
and wonders, wonders of his love.

*Postlude*

### **Announcements**

*Help us keep the air we share healthy and fragrance-free. The chemicals used in scented products can make some people sick, especially those with asthma, allergies and other medical conditions. Please do not wear perfume, cologne, aftershave and other fragrances.*

**The Peace Candle is lit as a reminder to Christians to pray for and work for world peace.**

***The Westminster Church office will be closed on December 25<sup>th</sup> and re-open on January 6<sup>th</sup>***

***A Christmas Carol Service will be led by Anna- Marie Hancock on December 29<sup>th</sup> at 10:25 a.m.***

***Rev. Helen Reid will be officiating the January 5<sup>th</sup> service with Communion.***

### ***Assisting with the Service This Evening***

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<b><i>Elder-in-Charge:</i></b>	Pat Evans
<b><i>Greeters:</i></b>	Corianne
<b><i>Scripture Reader:</i></b>	Debbie Hoeffling
<b><i>Sound :</i></b>	Pat Evans
<b><i>PowerPoint Operator:</i></b>	Pat Marshall