





## Sunset United Church

December 24, 2018 – Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Minister: Rev. Tricia Gerhard

Children & Youth Minister: Michelle McConkey

Choir Director: Nancy Edwards

Pianists: Shirley Hill/Kevin Petrychyn



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Sunset United, located on Treaty 4 Territory,  
is an Affirming community of faith. All are welcome here.

### WE GATHER

**Prelude**

**Welcome**

**Centering Words**

**Opening Prayer:**

**Hymn:** VU#47      Still, Still, Still

**Call to Worship & Opening Prayer**

We have arrived at our goal,  
Having travelled through Advent.

**We are here to witness the fulfillment of God's promises  
many years ago.**

We have come to be near the manger,  
To be close to the birth of the Christ child.

**We have come, open to new life and new hope.**

We have approached this time with anticipation,  
Knowing all that has occurred in the days and weeks  
Leading up to this night.

**We come open to the expectation of the moment,**

**Aware of the many ways that people look forward to this holy night**

We are here to worship,  
To be in community,  
And to celebrate the coming of hope as found in the birth of the babe.

Let us pray:  
Waiting God,  
You who brought the angels to announce  
The birth of the promised one,  
You who travelled with Mary and Joseph  
As they made their way to Bethlehem,  
You who is with us this holy and anticipation filled night,  
Center us in what we do here in this place.

**Waiting God,  
This evening, the stars shine a little brighter  
And the music of the carols rings a little more clearly  
As we once again gather to celebrate the birth.  
You have brought us to this moment,  
And together, in the sacredness of this place  
We express the wonder at the mystery of it all.**

May the hope, peace, joy and love of advent  
Flow into our worship tonight,  
Bringing a fullness to all we do together.  
May it be so. Amen.

**Hymn:** VU#60 O Come, All Ye Faithful (verses 1, 3 & 4)

**Scripture:** Isaiah 9: 2-7

<sup>[a]</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 Counselor, 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 onward and forevermore.  
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

### *Lighting the Hope Candle*

**Reading:** *Those Who Saw the Star – Julia Esquivel*

**Hymn:** VU#44 It Came Upon a Midnight Clear (verses 1 &4)

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

<sup>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, favored one! The Lord is with you."<sup>[a]</sup> <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 favor 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 forever, 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>[b]</sup> <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<sup>[c]</sup> will be holy; he will be called Son of God.

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.

*Lighting the Peace candle*

**Reading:** *Gabriel’s Annunciation*

**Hymn:** MV#134 There Was a Child (verses 1-3)

**Scripture:** Matthew 1: 18-21

<sup>18</sup> Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah<sup>[a]</sup> 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. <sup>19</sup> Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. <sup>20</sup> But 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. <sup>21</sup> She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”

*Lighting the Joy Candle*

**Reading:** *The Risk of Birth – Madeleine L’Engle*

**Hymn:** VU#71 ‘Twas In the Moon of Wintertime (v. 1-3)

**Scripture:** Luke 2: 1-20

The Birth of Jesus

**2** In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. **2** This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. **3** All went to their own towns to be registered. **4** 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. **5** He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. **6** While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. **7** 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.

### The Shepherds and the Angels

<sup>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 Savior, who is the Messiah,<sup>[a]</sup> 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,<sup>[b]</sup> praising God and saying,

<sup>14</sup>“Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”<sup>[c]</sup>

<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.

*Lighting the Love candle*

**Special Music – O Holy Night**  
*Sung by Mark Pitman*

### Communion

#### Great Thanksgiving

Let us open ourselves to God.

#### We are here God!

Let us rejoice in God’s presence.

**God is here with us, now and always!**

Let us give thanks to God for all that God is.  
**Joyfully we thank you God!**

We give you thanks...  
...in their presence and yours.

**Holy, Holy Holy God of story and song;  
All that we are and all that we know, sing of your glory!  
Blessed are we as we bask in the beauty of all you have made.  
Blessed are we, as we come to know all you have made us to be!**

But the story...  
...promise and discover our faith:

**In his death, all hope died.  
With resurrection came new life.  
In new life we are transformed!**

As our story continues...

## **Sharing the Light**

**Hymn:** #67 Silent Night

## **Blessing**