
St. James'-Rosemount United Church

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God's Compassionate Community Sharing Christian Faith



December 13th, 2020 – Advent 3 – Joy
Lessons and Carols ~ Carols in Diffiult Times

Welcome!

Welcome to worship! We're glad you're here!

WE GATHER IN GOD'S HOPE

VU: Voices United

MV: More Voices

* Please remain seated for all of service.*

We would like to acknowledge that we are on the Haldimand Tract, traditional territory of the Neutral, Anishnaabeg, and Haudenosaunee peoples.

Welcome & Announcements

Lighting our Advent Wreath – Joy

One: The Advent wreath is a sign that we await the light of Christ in our lives. Over the last year, people around the world have struggled with the pandemic and understand just how dim the light can be in times like these. In lighting these candles, we thank God for giving us: Hope, Peace, and Joy.

Even if we cannot visit with our own children or parents Christ reassures us that we are all God's children, tenderly loved. There is no social distancing with God, We can live in joy! We take this moment to think of those who feel isolated and depressed in this time. May they feel the joy of your presence!

Light two purple candles – Hope, Peace

Light the pink candle – Joy

Candle Lighting Hymn – Hope is a Star VU 7

***1 Hope is a star that shines in the night,
leading us on till the morning is bright.***

***Ref: 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.***

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

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

Introduction of our Theme

Although we associate the singing of Christmas Carols with festivities and joyful occasions, many have roots associated with times of difficulty. Today's prelude is an arrangement of the carol "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day". The words for the carol are based on the poem "Christmas Bells" by the American poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. It tells the story of the narrator's despair upon hearing Christmas bells during the American Civil War where "hate is strong and mocks the song of peace on earth, good will to men". Longfellow's own son, Charles, secretly enlisted into the Union Army without his father's blessing and was seriously wounded.

Introit:

O Come, All Ye Faithful is a translation of the carol "Adeste, Fidelis" by John Wade, an English born scribe at a college in France. Wade was a strong supporter of the Jacobites who believed that Bonnie Prince Charlie was the rightful heir to the English throne. Many of Wade's manuscripts contained subtexts and ornamentations such as Stuart thistles and initials of the Stuart pretenders to the throne. "Adeste, Fidelis" was brought to England by returning

Catholics and some scholars think it was intended as a rallying cry to the Jacobite cause.

Prelude I Heard the Bells of Christmas Day

Introit O Come, All Ye Faithful v1 VU60

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,

O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem:

come and behold him, born the King of angels;

Refrain: O come, let us adore him,

O come, let us adore him,

O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

Opening Prayer *adapted from a prayer by Edwina Gateley*

One: God is soaked in our world.

God's Spirit
lives and breathes
in and through
all that is.

We are lost
only when we
do not understand
that God
is already with
and in
each one of us.

Our task is recognition
of God's initiative
to be at home in us—
acceptance
of God-With-Us.

Then we cannot help but be glad.

Lord's Prayer

**All: 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 who trespass against
us.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil:
For thine is the kingdom, the power and
the glory, forever and ever. Amen**

WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

1st Lesson – Isaiah 40:1-8

Comfort, comfort my people! says your God.
Speak compassionately to Jerusalem, and proclaim
to her that her compulsory service has ended, that
her penalty has been paid, that she has received
from the Lord's hand double for all her sins!

A voice is crying out: "Clear the Lord's way in the
desert! Make a level highway in the wilderness for
our God! Every valley will be raised up, and every
mountain and hill will be flattened. Uneven ground
will become level, and rough terrain a valley plain.
The Lord's glory will appear, and all humanity will
see it together; the Lord's mouth has commanded
it."

A voice was saying: "Call out!" And another said,
"What should I call out?" All flesh is grass; all its
loyalty is like the flowers of the field. The grass dries
up and the flower withers when the Lord's breath

blows on it. Surely the people are grass. The grass dries up; the flower withers, but our God's word will exist forever.

Stories of the Carols

Christmas Day was theoretically abolished by an Act of Parliament from 1644 to 1660 in England and the singing of carols was considered a pagan activity. However, the carol tradition was maintained in some remote country churches and also outside the church in larger towns and cities. The singing of carols in churches continued in other countries of Europe unaffected by the Puritan laws. In fact, in Germany Martin Luther encouraged hymn and carol singing and two of those carols, "*From Heaven Above to Earth I Come*" and "*Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming*" are still included in many hymnals around the world today.

1st Carol – From Heaven Above to Earth I Come VU72

1 *From heaven above to earth I come
to bring good news to everyone!
Glad tidings of great joy I bring
to all the world, and gladly sing:*

2 *To you this night is born a child
of Mary, chosen virgin mild;
this newborn child of lowly birth
shall be the joy of all the earth.*

3 *These are the signs which you will see
to let you know that it is he:
in manger bed, in swaddling clothes
the child who all the earth upholds.*

2nd Lesson – Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light. On those living in a pitch-dark land, light has dawned. A child is born to us, a son is given to us, and authority will be on his shoulders. He will be named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be vast authority and endless peace for David's throne and for his kingdom, establishing and sustaining it with justice and righteousness now and forever. The zeal of the Lord of heavenly forces will do this.

2nd Carol – **Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming** VU8

***1 Lo, how a rose e'er blooming
from tender stem hath sprung,
of Jesse's lineage coming,
as seers of old have sung.
It came a blossom bright,
amid the cold of winter,
when half spent was the night.***

***2 Isaiah 'twas foretold it,
the Rose I have in mind,
with Mary we behold it,
the virgin mother kind.
To show God's love aright
she bore for us a Saviour
when half spent was the night.***

3rd Lesson – Luke 1:26-38

When Elizabeth was six months pregnant, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a city in Galilee, to a virgin who was engaged to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David's house. The virgin's name was Mary. When the angel came to her, he said,

“Rejoice, favored one! The Lord is with you!” She was confused by these words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. The angel said, “Don’t be afraid, Mary. God is honoring you. Look! You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and he will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of David his father. He will rule over Jacob’s house forever, and there will be no end to his kingdom.” Then Mary said to the angel, “How will this happen since I haven’t had sexual relations with a man?”

The angel replied, “The Holy Spirit will come over you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the one who is to be born will be holy. He will be called God’s Son. Look, even in her old age, your relative Elizabeth has conceived a son. This woman who was labeled ‘unable to conceive’ is now six months pregnant. Nothing is impossible for God.”

Then Mary said, “I am the Lord’s servant. Let it be with me just as you have said.” Then the angel left her.

3rd Carol – She Walked in the Summer

Solo – Madison Marino

4th Lesson – Luke 2:1-7

In those days Caesar Augustus declared that everyone throughout the empire should be enrolled in the tax lists. This first enrollment occurred when Quirinius governed Syria. Everyone went to their own cities to be enrolled. Since Joseph belonged to David’s house and family line, he went up from the

city of Nazareth in Galilee to David's city, called Bethlehem, in Judea. He went to be enrolled together with Mary, who was promised to him in marriage and who was pregnant. While they were there, the time came for Mary to have her baby. She gave birth to her firstborn child, a son, wrapped him snugly, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the guestroom.

Stories of the Carols

It Came Upon a Midnight Clear was written in 1849 by American clergyman Edmund Hamilton Sears during a time of political and territorial turmoil in both Europe and the United States. The Mexican-American War (1846-48) saw Mexico lose about 1/3 of its territory to the United States, while in Europe revolutions would start in France in 1848 and quickly spread to over 50 countries including Italy, Germany, Denmark, Hungary, Austria and the Netherlands. It is widely believed that the third verse of this carol is a response to these events.

4th Carol – It Came Upon a Midnight Clear VU44

***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.***

5th Lesson – Luke 2:8-16

Nearby shepherds were living in the fields, guarding their sheep at night. The Lord's angel stood before them, the Lord's glory shone around them, and they were terrified.

The angel said, "Don't be afraid! Look! I bring good news to you—wonderful, joyous news for all people. Your savior is born today in David's city. He is Christ the Lord. This is a sign for you: you will find a newborn baby wrapped snugly and lying in a manger." Suddenly a great assembly of the heavenly forces was with the angel praising God. They said, "Glory to God in heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors."

When the angels returned to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, "Let's go right now to Bethlehem and see what's happened. Let's confirm what the Lord has revealed to us." They went quickly and

found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger.

Stories of the Carols

While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks was the only Christmas hymn officially permitted in Church of England services throughout most of the 18th century because it was a paraphrase of St. Luke's account of the Nativity. It wasn't until the late 18th century that "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" made the 'approved' list. By this point there was concern that the tradition of Carols was dying out and a small group took it upon themselves to preserve carols in danger of being lost forever.

Go Tell It On the Mountain seems to have originated in the 19th century among slaves in the Southern United States. It achieved popularity in the late 19th Century when it was arranged for and performed by the Fisk Jubilee Singers, a celebrated African-American choir from Fisk University, Tennessee, a university established in the 1860's for freed slaves. Famous as they were this choir was regularly shut out of hotels, train stations and even churches because of their colour.

5th Carols – While Shepherds Watched v1-3 VU75

***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:***

Go, Tell it on the Mountain VU43
**Refrain *Go, tell it on the mountain,
over the hills and everywhere.
Go, tell it on the mountain
that Jesus Christ is born.***

**1 *While shepherds kept their watching
o'er silent flocks by night,
behold, throughout the heavens
there shone a holy light. Refrain***

**2 *The shepherds feared and trembled
when lo, above the earth
rang out the angel chorus
that hailed our Saviour's birth! Refrain***

**3 *Down in a lonely manger
the humble Christ was born,
and God sent our salvation
that blessed Christmas morn. Refrain***

6th Lesson – Matthew 2:1-11

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in the territory of Judea during the rule of King Herod, magi came from the east to Jerusalem. They asked, "Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We've seen his star in the east, and we've come to honor him."

When King Herod heard this, he was troubled, and everyone in Jerusalem was troubled with him. 4 He gathered all the chief priests and the legal experts and asked them where the Christ was to be

born. They said, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for this is what the prophet wrote:

You, Bethlehem, land of Judah, by no means are you least among the rulers of Judah, because from you will come one who governs, who will shepherd my people Israel.”

Then Herod secretly called for the magi and found out from them the time when the star had first appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search carefully for the child. When you’ve found him, report to me so that I too may go and honor him.” When they heard the king, they went; and look, the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stood over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were filled with joy. They entered the house and saw the child with Mary his mother. Falling to their knees, they honored him. Then they opened their treasure chests and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Stories of the Carols

How Brightly Shines the Morning Star was written by Philipp Nicolai in the midst of a deadly plague. It commemorated the life of the young Count of Waldech to whom Nicolai had been a tutor when the boy succumbed to the plague at age of 15. The initial letters of each of the 7 verses spelled out the Count’s name.

’Twas In the Moon of Wintertime is a retelling of the Nativity story in the Huron tongue. It is attributed to the Jesuit missionary Jean de Brebeuf who lived and worked with the First Nation peoples. Taken

prisoner during the Iroquois campaign of extermination against the Hurons, Brebeuf was tortured to death and cannibalized. He was canonized in 1930.

6th Carols – How Brightly Shines (choir)

'Twas in the Moon of Wintertime **VU71**

1 *'Twas in the moon of wintertime,
when all the birds had fled,
that mighty Gitchi Manitou
sent angel choirs instead;
before their light the stars grew dim,
and wandering hunters heard the hymn:*

*Refrain: Jesus your King is born,
Jesus is born, in excelsis gloria.*

2 *Within a lodge of broken bark
the tender babe was found,
a ragged robe of rabbit skin
enwrapped his beauty round;
but as the hunter braves drew nigh,
the angel song rang loud and high: Refrain*

3 *The earliest moon of wintertime
is not so round and fair
as was the ring of glory on
the helpless infant there.
The chiefs from far before him knelt
with gifts of fox and beaver pelt. Refrain*

4 *O children of the forest free,
the angel song is true,
the holy child of earth and heaven
is born today for you.
Come, kneel before the radiant boy,
who brings you beauty, peace, and joy: Refrain*

7th Lesson – John 1:1-14

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

The Word was with God in the beginning.
Everything came into being through the Word,
and without the Word
nothing came into being.

What came into being
through the Word was life,
and the life was the light for all people.

The light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness doesn't extinguish the light.

A man named John was sent from God. He came
as a witness to testify concerning the light, so that
through him everyone would believe in the light. He
himself wasn't the light, but his mission was to
testify concerning the light.

The true light that shines on all people
was coming into the world.

The light was in the world,
and the world came into being through the light,
but the world didn't recognize the light.

The light came to his own people,
and his own people didn't welcome him.

But those who did welcome him,
those who believed in his name,
he authorized to become God's children,
born not from blood
nor from human desire or passion,
but born from God.

The Word became flesh
and made his home among us.

We have seen his glory,
glory like that of a father's only son,
full of grace and truth.

7th Carol – Mary Did you Know

(solo – Christopher Wilson)

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD AND LOVE

Invitation to Offering

Offertory

Do You Hear What I Hear?

(solo – Colin Watts)

Stories of the Carols

Do You Hear What I Hear? was written by Noel Regney and his first wife, Gloria Shayne-Baker. Despite being born in Alsace, France, Regney was drafted into the Nazi army during WWII. He soon deserted and joined a group of French Resistance fighters. He became a double agent working for the French. After the war he moved to New York City. *Do You Hear What I Hear?* was written in Oct. 1962 as a plea for peace during the Cuban Missile Crisis. Neither creator was able to personally perform the entire song at the time they wrote it because of the intense emotions surrounding the crisis.

Prayers

WE GO OUT TO LOVE AND SERVE OTHERS

Stories of the Carols

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice has been updated and modernized to ensure that we all know that we are called to rejoice. Originally *Good Christian Men,*

Rejoice, this carol was written by John Mason Neale to fit the tune of an old German carol, In Dulci Jubilo. Ordained as a priest in the Church of England, Neale had a falling out with a bishop and was sent to a remote area where he lived in extreme poverty for the rest of his life. Neale was a prolific hymn writer and translator and wrote several well known songs including Good King Wenceslas. Even amidst the times that we're suffering, the song of faith must go on.

Ukrainian Bell Carol or *Carol of the Bells* was written by Ukrainian composer Mykola Leontovych in 1916. It was based on a 4-note melody which was from a Ukrainian folk song, sung to observe New Year's Eve - Jan. 13 on the Julian calendar. It was written during a time of intense political struggle in the Ukraine and shortly after its composition the Russian Revolution began. Leontovych was a civic activist supporting Ukraine's political independence and he was killed by an undercover Soviet agent in his hometown in 1921. The truth about his death only emerged after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The song made its North American debut in a 1922 concert tour and was very well received. English lyrics were written in 1936 and *Carol of the Bells* became an immensely popular Christmas song in North America.

In all of these stories, we hear how amidst our sufferings and struggles, amidst our very real grief, the song of joy must go on.

Closing Hymn Good Christian Friends VU35

**1 *Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice!***

Give ye heed to what we say: News! News!

Jesus Christ is born today.

Ox and ass before him bow,

and he is in the manger now.

Christ is born today! Christ is born today!

**2 *Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice!***

Now ye hear of endless bliss: Joy! Joy!

Jesus Christ was born for this!

He hath opened heaven's door,

and we are blest forevermore.

Christ was born for this!

Christ was born for this!

**3 *Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice!***

Now ye need not fear the grave: Peace! Peace!

Jesus Christ was born to save!

Calls you one and calls you all

to gain his everlasting hall.

Christ was born to save!

Christ was born to save!

Commissioning

One: **Why do we celebrate Joy?**

Because Christmas is almost here

Because dancing fits so well with music

Because inside baby clothes are miracles.

All: **Joy!**

One: Because some people love you
Because of chocolate
Because pain does not last forever
Because Santa Claus is coming.

All: Joy!

One: Because of laughter
Because there really are angels
Because your fingers fit your hands
Because forgiveness is yours for the asking
Because of children
Because of parents.

All: Joy!

One: Because the blind will see, the lame will
walk, the lepers will be clean, and the
deaf will hear.

All: Joy!

One: Because the dead will live again
Because there will be good news
for the poor.

All: Joy!

One: Because of Christmas
Because of Jesus
We rejoice!
And we go into our world rejoicing!

Postlude

Ukrainian Bell Carol

Announcements

Special Gifts Allocations: The Special Gifts Committee invites applications for a share of any interest earned from the Special Gifts Fund. The deadline for applying is March 31, 2021. Please ensure that your application is in writing, is supported by the appropriate church committee, and that you indicate that you will spend any allocation by the end of 2021. Please send your application to Valerie Hoag at mail@sjruc.ca or mail it to her at the church, by the deadline.

Turkey Trot - The UCW would like to thank everyone who ordered dinners for our 2nd Turkey Trot. You helped us reach our 2020 Goal for the M&S Fund of the UCC!!! And we have a bit left over to begin 2021. A big THANK YOU to all those who packed dinners and all those who helped distribute them in our parking lot. A very busy day for all!

Love and Memory Sunday – December 20th – as we remember those who have died this past year, if you have special prayers you would like included, please send a note to Rev. Chris. When praying for others, please check with them first to ensure we're allowed to use their name.

Christmas Eve – We are planning for a few options for you for Christmas Eve. In addition to the online services, we are planning an in-person, outdoor Christmas Eve service on the Labyrinth. Come dressed for the weather as we celebrate the birth of Christ. Sign up will be through the website, or by email, or by calling the office. Space will be limited, however, we will continue to add services until all those wishing to gather have found space. As we pray for snow and starlight for that evening, we are also aware that our plans may be cancelled if we go into lockdown. Please continue to watch the website, or check your email for the latest details about this service.

December 27th – Zoom Carol Sing – Bring your requests and your singing voices as we continue the celebration of this season!