

SEEKING GOD TOGETHER

PRELUDE

- * Mary's Boy Child (*J.Hairston*) Jules Pastoor, trumpet, Myles Heney, trombone, Brian Pastoor, synthesizer
- * It Came Upon a Midnight Clear (*Sears/Willis arr.Lewis*), Marina & Mehraeen Safari, violins
- * O Holy Night (*A.Adam*) Mehraeen Safari, violin

WELCOME

Acknowledgment of Territory/Every Child Matters

INTROIT Holy is the Night (*J. Strathdee*)

CALL TO WORSHIP

Let us journey with Mary and Joseph to that little town of Bethlehem, to once again experience the birth of the Christ Child.

Let us, like the angels, proclaim this miraculous birth.

Let us, like the shepherds, offer our praise and adoration.

We come to the stable this night, filled with love and wonder.

A STORY LIKE NO OTHER

***CAROL** O Come, All Ye Faithful (vss 1-4) on insert
p 7

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

Peter, Andrea, Nicholas & Veronica Drost

Glory to God in the highest
and hope to all who are wearied and worried.

The first candle is lit.

Glory to God in the highest
and peace to all who are struggling and lonely.

The second candle is lit.

Glory to God in the highest
and joy to those who celebrate and those who wish they felt like celebrating.

The third candle is lit.

Glory to God in the highest,
and love to each one of us.

The fourth candle is lit.

Glory to God in the highest,
for Christ is born on this night.

The Christ candle is lit.

Let us pray...

God of Christmas, we are here to celebrate the unimaginable love you shared so generously through your son, Jesus. We are here to welcome the hope, peace, joy and love you offer in abundance. You call each one of us by name and bless us. Knowing that you love us and care for us, may we celebrate the wonder of this night. Amen. (M.Parsons, Munn's UC, Oakville, Ont.)

SUNG RESPONSE We Light This Candle (*Mayberry/Kai*)

We light this candle for Love.

Await the new life within.

**May our hearts now live each day,
so Love can find a way,
so Love can find a way.**

ANTHEM Shepherd's Pipe Carol (*J. Rutter*)

SHARING THE STORY

The Story Begins in Scripture....

SCRIPTURE Isaiah 9:2-7 Brian Walter
(The people walked in darkness.)

GIFT OF MUSIC Ave Maria (*Franz Schubert*)
Mackenzie and John Malarczyk, Soprano & guitar

News of a Big Trip...

SCRIPTURE Luke 2:1-7 (The decree.)
Elizabeth Kyriakides

***CAROL** O Little Town of Bethlehem (*on insert*) p 7-8

A Birth Like No Other...

SCRIPTURE Luke 2:8-14 (Angels and Shepherds)
Myles Heney

***CAROL** Away in a Manger (*on insert*) pg8

The Animals Speak...

SCRIPTURE Luke 2:15-20
(The shepherds go to the stable.) Janice Nolan

***CAROL** Hark! the Herald Angels Sing (*on insert*) p 8
...the Holy Family arrives to take their place among us.

SHARING GOD'S LOVE

OFFERING OUR GIFTS TO GOD

OFFERTORY Shepherd's Jubilee (*M.Helman*)
Faith-A-Peal Handbell Ensemble

***DEDICATION** As We Offer Gifts (*Tune: VU 81*)
As we offer gifts most rare
at your stable crude and bare,
and we bend our knee before
Christ, whom heaven and earth adore;
so our humble hearts we bring,
Christ, to you our praise we sing.

**OFFERTORY PRAYER
OUR CHRISTMAS EVE PRAYERS**

Let the Bells Ring Out!....

BLESSING
As we carry your light into the world this night, O God—
touch us with the beauty of Jesus' birth once again.

***CAROL** Silent Night (*on insert*) p 10

POSTLUDE Go Tell It on the Mountain (*arr. Kirby Shaw*)
Susan Guido, trumpet



*Thank you to our Holy Family this afternoon-
Graham & Celidah, Austyn & Declan Hilliard.*



The congregation of Aurora United Church
wishes you and your family God's deepest blessings
in this holy time of the year!
May your Christmas days be merry and bright
as you celebrate.



Please join us for worship, next Sunday,
December 31st at 11:00 am
so that we can ring in the new year together!



The United Church of Canada acknowledges that its buildings and ministries,
from coast to coast to coast, are on traditional territories of Indigenous
Peoples.



**AURORA UNITED
CHURCH**



An Affirming Congregation

Church Office 905-727-1935
www.auroraunitedchurch.ca

Rev. Lorraine Newton-Comar & Rev. Andrew Comar
Music Coordinator—Margaret Heney



CHRISTMAS EVE
December 24, 2023
5:00 p.m.

*Child of Bethlehem, when your fingers wrap
themselves around one of ours, and your eyes focus
on our face, you look for love in us: love for
friends, for God and strangers, love for the Earth,
love for enemies, love that says, 'yes' to life.*
(Ruth Burgess, Iona)

O Come, All Ye Faithful

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

God of God, light of light, lo, he abhors not the
virgin's womb; very God, begotten not created:
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord.

Sing, choir of angels, sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;
glory to God in the highest:
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord.

See how the shepherds, summoned to his cradle,
leaving their flocks, draw nigh with lowly fear;
we too will thither bend our joyful footsteps;
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord.

O Little Town of Bethlehem

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see
thee lie! Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by; yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting light; the hopes and fears of all the
years are met are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary; and gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels
keep their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars, together, proclaim the holy
birth, and praises sing to God the King,
and peace to all on earth.

How silently, how silently the wondrous
gift is given! So God imparts to human
hearts the blessed gift of heaven.
No ear may hear his coming; but in this world
of sin, where meek souls will receive him still
the dear Christ enters in.

O holy child of Bethlehem, descend to us,
we pray; cast out our sin and enter in;
be born in us today. We hear the Christmas
angels the great glad tidings tell; O come to us,
abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel.

Away in a Manger

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky looked down where
he lay, the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.
I love you, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky,
and stay by my side until morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask you to stay
close by me forever, and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in your tender care,
and fit us for heaven, to live with you there.

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

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 angelic host proclaim,
‘Christ is born in Bethlehem!’
Hark! the herald angels sing,
‘Glory to the newborn King!’

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!
Hark! the herald angels sing,
‘Glory to the newborn King!’

Hail, the heaven-born 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.
Hark! the herald angels sing,
‘Glory to the newborn King!’

Silent Night, Holy Night

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.

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.

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.