



Christmas Eve Worship

at the

Covenanter Church

1989 Grand Pré Road, Grand Pré, NS



Welcome!

A warm welcome to all who gather for worship. If you are a visitor, please sign the guest book in the stairwell.

In the spirit of this late evening Christmas Eve Service, we ask that we all endeavour to keep noise to a minimum. Please turn off all cell phones and electronic devices.

Special thanks to:

Presider	Rev. Don Sellsted
Organist	Carmen Peng
Choir Director	Thea Burton
Choir	Covenanter Choir
Soloist	Caroline Burton
Participants:	Betty Curry
	Jim Keech
	Donna Murphy
	Dave Murphy
	Irvin Nicholson
	Barbara Sobaszkilwicz

Please Note: A Retiring Offering is at the door for the continued maintenance of The Covenanter Church.



COVENANTER CHURCH, GRAND PRÉ
Orchard Valley Pastoral Charge
The United Church of Canada

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Sunday, December 24, 2023, 11:00 pm

Christmas Eve

Music as We Gather

Recognition of the Land

Introit: "O Holy Night" vs. 1 & 2
Soloist Caroline Burton

Lighting of the Advent Candles

Candle of Hope

Arise and be bold, good news of hope is here! Here we are together, not alone. We join with the cloud of witnesses here, there, elsewhere, and everywhere. On this first Sunday in Advent, we will dream and imagine a different future, a rising-up and life-flourishing one. We are witnesses to hope. *the first candle is lit*

Candle of Peace

Arise, take courage, and catch a glimpse of peace! We are together, not alone. In spirit and in community we gather on this second Sunday in Advent in solidarity and with courage to partner for a world full of peace where all of creation will flourish. Our witness is to and for peace. *the second candle is lit*

Candle of Joy

Arise and celebrate, good news of deep joy is here! Here we are together. We are not alone. We gather on this third Sunday in Advent with gratitude and overflowing generosity, blessed multiple times by our give-away God. We are witnesses to joy. *the third candle is lit*

Candle of Love

Love abundant overflows, pouring into our midst: Rise, take heart, and love deeply. We are together and never alone. Gathered on this fourth Sunday in Advent we witness to God's deep love and tender compassion for the whole world. Our witness is love. *the fourth candle is lit*

Welcome and Announcements

May the peace of Christ be with you.
And also with you!

Call to Worship:

We waited.

And imagined a saviour.

We imagined power.

One like the world but stronger and on our side.

We imagined a king on a strong white horse wielding a sword.

We got a baby born in a stable among the livestock.

We imagined the work done for us through the destruction of our enemies.

We receive a baby who will teach us our calling to seek reconciliation and to love enthusiastically and completely.

Praise be to God for the unexpected babe of Bethlehem.

Praise to the wisdom of love. Amen!

Opening Prayer

*** Hymn:** "Joy to the World"

VU #59

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.

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.

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.

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.

Scripture:

Isaiah 9:2–7 *A child has been born for us.*

The Word of God for the People of God.

Thanks be to God.

*** Hymn:** “Angels, We’ve Heard on High”

VU #38

Angels we have heard on high
sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply,
echoing their joyous strains.

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
which inspire your heavenly song? **R**

Come to Bethlehem and see
Christ whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee
Christ, the Lord, the newborn King. **R**

See him in a manger laid,
whom the choirs of angels praise;
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid,
while our hearts in love we raise. **R**

Scripture:

Luke 2:1–14.....*Jesus' birth.*

The Word of God for the People of God.

Thanks be to God.

Anthem:

“Ding Dong Merrily on High”

Covenanter Choir

Message:

Angel Presents

*** Hymn:**

“It Came Upon the Midnight Clear”

VU #44

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.

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.

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.

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.

Poem

“Christmas”

by John Betjeman

Prayers of the People

Lighting of the Christ Candle

Arise and celebrate: God loves the world, and a child is born. Here we are together in a world caught between anxiety and hope, celebrating what God has done in Christ. We will never be alone. May our remembering and celebrating change how we live and open our hearts and communities, so that all can together live and share in the fullness of life.

*** Hymn:**

“Silent Night”

VU #67

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!
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.

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.

(repeat first verse, a cappella)

*** Words of Blessing**

*** Benediction**

May you be filled with the wonder of Mary,
the trust of Joseph,
the joy of the angels,
the eagerness of the shepherds,
the determination of the magi,
and the peace of the Christ child.

The blessing of God, Son and Holy Spirit be upon
you now and forever.

And the people said... **Amen!**

Postlude:

“O Holy Night”

vs. 3 & 4

Soloist Caroline Burton



Merry Christmas!