

Central Queens Pastoral Charge  
United Church of Canada  
December 24, 2020 – 10:00 pm  
Christmas Eve  
Communion Service

Central Queens' Mission Statement

*Central Queens United Church is a loving and living community called to support the life stages of all people; celebrating joy and sharing in pain. Through faith and fellowship, we are united by God's love to live and serve as Disciples of Christ.*

Gathering for Worship

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

Quiet Preparation for Worship

Gathering

\*Introit

**\*Call to Worship** *Come and See*  
Light to splinter darkness.  
Hope to lift the soul.  
Peace to ring the changes.  
Grace resounds for all.

Night, the time for birthing.  
Stars to guide us on.  
Angels voices singing,  
Joining with our song.

Come and see the newborn.  
Come with newfound joy.

Come, from heavens rejoicing ...  
Mary's infant boy!<sup>1</sup>

**Like a newborn baby... vulnerable, naked, dependent ...  
we come to worship God!**

Advent Candle Lighting

**Voice 1:** Love-shine, your moment has come. In the darkness of the womb you waited. Bathed in the balm of the star, you rest. Into a world sorely in need of your light, you are born.

**Voice 2:** When you knock on our door looking for room, may we welcome you. Like the Herald of your birth, call us to share your good news first with those who are poor, excluded and afraid.

**The light shines in the darkness and the darkness cannot put it out.**

*Light the Christ candle and all four advent candles.*

**Voice 1:** The love of heaven has come to earth.

**Voice 2:** The call of Christ begins in a baby's cry. Listen and respond.

**We light the Christ candle. May it light the way.**

\*Prayer of Approach

**God of our darkest nights and brightest days,  
fill us with your hope as we celebrate with joyful hearts  
the birth of Christ.**

**May familiar words speak to us with a new voice,  
and may the song of Bethlehem reach into our hearts.**

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<sup>1</sup> Stephen J Maunder, from Candles & Conifers, published by Wild Goose Published by the Iona Community, UK.

**This we ask in the name of Jesus who is the Christ,  
light of the world. Amen <sup>2</sup>**

**\*Hymn of Praise**                      O Come, All Ye Faithful                      VU #60

### **Call to Confession**

#### **Prayer of Confession**

**God of grace and truth,  
you give the gift of yourself,  
but we are often caught up in giving and receiving our own gifts.  
You offer us new life in the baby born in Bethlehem,  
but we cloak that birth in sentiment and ignore the cost of new  
life. You shine in the world, but we dwell on the darkness  
around us. You came to us in flesh and blood,  
but we often fail to see you in the human lives beside us.  
Forgive what we have been, shape who we are, and direct who  
we shall be, through Christ our Saviour. Amen**

### **Assurance of God's Love**

**Hymn**                      It Came Upon a Midnight Clear                      VU #44

### **The Word**

**Luke 2:1-20**

**Anthem**

**Sermon**

**Hymn**                      Will You Come and See the Light                      VU #96

### **Service of the Table**

### **Passing of the Peace**

### **Invitation to Give**

**Offertory**                      In Gratitude & Humble Trust                      VU #544

**Presentation of Gifts** (Money, Bread & Wine)

#### **Offertory Prayer**

**Generous God, you have done great things for us. We offer  
these gifts in response to the great love you have shown us. We  
pray that they will be useful, not only to our congregation, but  
to the world where many babies are being born into poverty,  
injustice and hopelessness. This we do in the name of Christ the  
Jesus. Amen**

#### **Prayer of Great Thanksgiving**

**God be with you.  
And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to God.**

Let us give thanks to God.

**It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

God of all times and places, we gather at your table of grace to  
recall your vision of hope for all people and for your world.  
Through Abraham and Sarah, you revealed your promise in the  
surprise of a child. Through your prophets, you called your people  
to make way for peace and justice. In Jesus, you revealed your  
way of forgiveness and love. Through the ever-circling year, your  
Word discloses to us—again and anew—your promise for the  
restoration of all creation.

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<sup>2</sup> Stephen J Maunder, from Candles & Conifers, published by Wild Goose Published by  
the Iona Community, UK.

As we gather to share this sign of hope and fulfillment, we remember Jesus, the child born into obscurity, amid fear and uncertainty. We remember the fragility of that revelation, as well as the hope he stirred and imagination he inspired, and we sing...

(VU 55, v.1) **In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan,  
earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;  
snow had fallen, snow on snow; snow on snow.  
In the bleak midwinter, long ago.**

We remember Jesus, the One who blazed a new and risky path of extravagant generosity and of passionate concern: temple-shaker, world-maker, rule-breaker, risk-taker; the author and finisher of our faith.

We remember Jesus' self-giving love and the offer of himself for others, even those who gave him over to death, and we sing...

(VU 55, v.2) **Our God, heaven cannot hold him, nor earth  
sustain; heaven and earth shall flee away when  
he comes to reign; in the bleak midwinter a  
stable place sufficed the Lord God almighty, Jesus  
Christ.**

On that night, in the midst of great confusion and fear, Jesus broke bread with friends, saying, "This is my body, which I give for you and for all. When you do this, remember me."

With a blessing, he took the cup and offered it to them saying: "This cup is God's covenant which is given for all. When you drink this, remember me."

(VU 55, v.3) **Enough for him, whom cherubim worship night  
and day, a breast full of milk, and a manger full of  
hay. Enough for him, whom angels fall down  
before, the ox and ass and camel which adore.**

Come to us, life-giving Spirit of God. Bless us, these gifts, and what we do here, so that we might sing your song of love for your people and for your world.

### **Prayers of the People**

God of All, we pray for your people.  
For those who are afraid and oppressed, may you give courage.  
For those suffering conflict and fear, may you bring peace.  
For those who long for food and water, may they be filled.  
For those who long for justice, may it be fulfilled.  
We pray also for ourselves and our community.  
That those in hospital and in care feel your strength.  
That those who are alone and anxious feel you near.  
That those who are ill in body and in spirit be comforted.  
That our friends and family be blessed by healing and love.

Hear our prayers, O God,  
**and in your mercy, answer.**

We pray these things, trusting in God's faithfulness revealed:  
**Christ has died.  
Christ is risen.  
Christ will come again.**

(VU 55, v.4) **What can I give him, poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd I would bring a lamb,  
if I were a wise man I would do my part;  
yet what I can I give him—give my heart.**

### **The Lord's Prayer**

**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,  
for ever and ever.  
Amen.**

### **Communion**

The bread that we break  
**is our sharing in the life of Christ.**  
The Cup for which we give thanks  
**is our sharing in the life of Christ.**

Come, for all is ready, these are the gifts of God for the people of God. Jesus turned no one away, nor do we... all are welcome at this table.

### **Prayer after Communion**

**God of shepherds and Kings, you gather us by the light of the star of promise. You lead us not only to hope for the future, but to trust in your presence and renewal of life in every time and place. Guide us this night, by the light of that same star. Lead us to the manglers of this world, where uncertainty is met with the renewal of life and the transformation of this world is most deeply felt in love, one with another. Be with us on this most wondrous of nights, we ask in Jesus name. Amen**

### **Going Forth**

*Candles are Lit*

**Hymn**                      Silent Night, Holy Night                      VU #67

**Blessing**

**Postlude**

**Choral Amen**