



## Merging Waters United Church

### Christmas Eve Worship

## DESTINATION: LOVE

### A Celebration

Saturday, December 24, 2022

## WELCOME / BIENVENUE

People of all ages, identities, and walks of life are welcome.

Wherever you are, whoever you are, we welcome you in love and community to worship.

Wherever we are, we're close in one another's hearts.

Toutes et tous sont bienvenus, peu importe l'âge, l'identité ou les conditions de vie.

Peu importe où que vous soyez, qui que vous soyez, nous vous accueillons dans l'amour et la communauté pour louer Dieu ensemble.

Notre amour n'est jamais limité par la distance.

Please join in the responses in **bold text**.

Keep our worship scent-free! To help fellow worshippers with chemical sensitivities, please do not wear perfume or scented products (lotion, hair spray) if attending in person.

***To protect personal privacy, please do not take photos or videos without authorization.***

## WELCOME

### ACKNOWLEDGING TRADITIONAL TERRITORY

We acknowledge that Merging Waters United Church is located on unceded Indigenous lands. The Kanien'kehá:ka nation is recognized as the custodians of the lands and waters on which we gather today. Tiohtià:ke (Montreal) is historically known as a gathering place for many First Nations. Today, it is home to a diverse population of Indigenous and other peoples. We respect the continued connections with the past, present and future in our ongoing relationships with Indigenous and other peoples within the Montreal community.

### MUSICAL CENTERING

Love Came Down at Christmas, words and music by Roger Copeland

Angels We Have Heard on High, traditional French carol

### ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

Light a candle at home if you wish!

The words of Isaiah promise us light: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. They lived in a land of shadows, but now light is shining on them.

And the gospel according to John declares its fulfillment: Jesus spoke. "I am the light of the world," he said. "Whoever follows me will have the light of life and will never walk in darkness."

Hope, peace, joy, and love. Four candles, four promises continually offered to us by God, and all of them manifest in this one we light tonight: the Christ candle. In Christ we find the hope of transformation, the peace that follows justice, the joy of self-fulfillment in community, and the love that encompasses us in all our diversity, empowering us to make our own unique contribution to this world. In Christ we find light and life, and the courage to be like him, answering his call and following in his footsteps.

**We rejoice in God's steadfast presence in our lives,  
and in God's unique presence in the life of Jesus of Nazareth—  
born of Mary, growing through childhood into an adult ministry,  
in all his life manifesting the peace, love, and justice of God;  
his voice undimmed by the centuries  
his call and his promise as clear to us as it was to his disciples so long ago.  
Jesus, be born in us this night, in our hearts, our minds, our lives.  
May the light of your life be kindled in us,  
And lead us to the shining truth,  
of God with us, God for us, God in us. Amen.**

**SONG More Voices 221** – I am walking a path of Love

I am walking a path of love (3x)

Lead me home, lead me home.

**SPIRITUAL FOCUS:** *Christmas is a Road to Love*

**STORY** *Taking the First Step*

**SONG Voices United 64** – 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 in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary, and gathered all above,

While mortals sleep, the angels keep

their watch of wond'ring 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 giv'n!

So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heav'n.

No ear may hear his coming; But in this world of sin,

Where meek souls will receive him,

still the dear Christ enters in.

**STORY** *Part 1: Self-Love*

## **SONG Voices United 74 – What Child is This?**

**What child is this, who, laid to rest**

**On Mary's lap is sleeping?**

**Whom angels greet with anthems sweet**

**While shepherds watch are keeping?**

*Refrain:*

**This, this is Christ the King**

**Whom shepherds guard and angels sing**

**Haste, haste to bring him laud**

**The babe, the son of Mary.**

**Why lies He in such mean estate,**

**Where ox and ass are feeding?**

**Good Christian, fear: for sinners here**

**the silent Word is pleading.**

*Refrain*

**So bring Him incense, gold and myrrh,**

**Come one and all to own Him;**

**The King of kings salvation brings,**

**Let loving hearts enthrone Him.**

*Refrain*

**STORY** *Part 2: Sharing*

## **SONG Voices United 67 – 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,  
heav'nly hosts sing, Alleluia!  
Christ, the Savior, is born!  
Christ, the Savior, 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.**

## **OFFERING**

### **MUSICAL OFFERING**

Christmas is Love, words and music by Sara Bareilles

### **PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

**With these gifts, dear God, accept the praise and thanksgiving in our hearts. We rejoice in your goodness and love. Amen.**

**STORY** *Part 3: Simplicity*

**STORY** *Part 4: Courage*

**SONG** **Voices United 59** – Joy to the World

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!  
Let earth receive her King;  
let ev'ry heart prepare him room  
and heav'n and nature sing,  
and heav'n and nature sing,  
and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

Joy to the earth, the Savior 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 world 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.

**STORY** *Conclusion – Destination: Love*

## **A PRAYER FOR CHRISTMAS**

God, we give thanks for all that you have given us:

**For hope, peace, joy and most of all love, which we celebrate on this special night.**

**For light and stars that help us in all we do, that guide us and help us to follow you.**

God, help us to shine our light:

**So that we can shine like stars.**

**So that we can help and guide others.**

**So that we can bring hope, peace, joy, and love as we walk the road together.**

We pray in the name of Jesus, whose birth we celebrate tonight and every day.

Amen.

## **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

**Our Mother/ Father/ Creator in heaven,**

**hallowed be your name,**

**your kingdom come,**

**your 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 the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours**

**forever and ever. Amen.**

## **SENDING**

Jesus, light of the world, here with us, walking with us on our road to love.

**Jesus has come into our world! Thanks be to God!**

**SONG Voices United 43** – Go Tell it On the Mountain

*Refrain:*

**Go tell it on the mountain,  
over the hills, and ev'rywhere;  
go, tell it on the mountain  
That Jesus Christ is born.**

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

*Refrain*

**The shepherds feared and trembled  
when lo, above the earth  
rang out the angel chorus  
that hailed our Savior's birth.**

*Refrain*

**Down in a lowly manger  
the humble Christ was born,  
and God sent us salvation  
that blessed Christmas morn.**

*Refrain*



Thank you for joining in worship today ❤️

**Merry Christmas!**

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**MERGING WATERS UNITED CHURCH**

A community of caring within the United Church of Canada

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