



St. Thomas United Church
 Open Hands – Open Hearts – Open Minds

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Saturday, December 24, 2016, 8:00pm
Christmas Eve
Theme: Joy!

✠ indicates stand as you are able
Bold indicates participation by the people

MV = More Voices
VU = Voices United

We Gather With

PRELUDE: *Kloria Wen*

WELCOME to our Livestream Worship Service

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TREATY 7 LAND

ADVENT WREATH LIGHTING

Light all 4 blue candles

We gather to hear the ancient account of God with us. Not the God of elsewhere, but the God within us.

The last four Sunday mornings, we drew our attention to this simple evergreen wreath. We chose the circle shape to symbolize God's everlasting love and relationship with humankind. We lit these candles to mark our journey, our time of waiting for today.

We gather now, together around this wreath, with these now-lit candles, for the journey of waiting ends today. For those who yearn for the love within and from God, let that be so now. Let this brazen candle remind us that even in our short days and long winter nights, our Christ flame burns and guides us, giving us hope, peace, joy, and love.

Light white Christ candle

INTROIT: *Jesus Came Bringing Us Hope*

MV#33

CALL TO WORSHIP: *(Responsive)*

Where's the line to see Jesus?

Pardon me?

Where's the line to see Jesus?

Can I find him here?

Can I ask him the questions I've always wondered?

Can I listen to him teach?

Can I be healed by his touch?

Can I live in his love?

Yes!

Well, where's the line to see Jesus?

There is no line.

**Each of us meets the Christ,
in our own way, in our own time...**

and no one has to wait.

Christ is with us.

Christ is with you.

Christ is with the world!

Christ is with me?

Christ is with you.

Merry Christmas!

Written by Richard Bott, Gathering, A/C/E 2016-17, page 34.

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OPENING PRAYER: *(Unison)*

On this day of days, loving God,

we gather to celebrate the wondrous gift of Jesus Christ.

Born long ago and still today,

Child of the universe present among us.

May we, in the things we do and say,

**continue to give birth to the presence of the living Christ
in our world today and always. Amen.**

Seasons of the Spirit Seasons Fusion A/C/E 2016-17, page 89.

Used with permission.

HYMN: *Joy to the World* (vv. 1,2,4)

VU#59

ADULT CHOIR CANTATA:

Joy! A Gospel Christmas Celebration

- composed and arranged by Joel Raney

Luke 2:1-14

Sing Joy!

- words by Isaac Watts, alt.; additional text by Joel Raney

- music by G.F. Handel; arranged by Joel Raney

Isaiah 9:2

Waiting

- words and music by Joel Raney

Luke 2:15

A Song in the Air

- words and music by Joel Raney

Luke 2:16-20

Jesus, What a Wonderful Child

- traditional spiritual arranged by Joel Raney

Matthew 2:1-2

HYMN: O Come, All Ye Faithful (vv. 1,3,5) VU#60

Isaiah 9:6

Tell It on the Mountain

- traditional spiritual arranged by Joel Raney;

words by John W. Work

Sing Joy! (Reprise)

- words by Isaac Watts, alt.; additional text by Joel Raney

- music by G.F. Handel; arranged by Joel Raney

INVITATION TO OPEN HANDS

OPPORTUNITY TO OPEN HANDS

with our Offerings & Prayers

Tonight we are pleased to share 50% of the loose offerings with the Zambia Youth Exposure Trip where 16 youth and seven leaders will travel to Zambia in August 2017

OFFERTORY: *In the Bleak Midwinter* (v.4)

VU#55

OFFERTORY PRAYER (*Responsive*)

Christmas Eve is here.

Excitement has built among our families and loved ones as we approach this holy night.

The biblical stories have told us of the ways in which God was part of the birth of Jesus.

These tales echo in our minds and reverberate in our hearts.

We are reminded through words and songs that Jesus is God's gift to the world.

Now it is our turn to respond, in the tradition of gift giving and gift sharing.

We have given our gifts to God and to the ministry that we share as part of living God's mission in love. Receive them God, so that they may be a blessing to our world.

Adapted from Bill Steadman. Gathering, A/C/E 201-17, page 36.

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CALL TO PRAYER: *Hope Shines as the Solitary Star*

MV#220

PASTORAL PRAYERS & PRAYER OF JESUS

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Open Hearts to Each Other and the World

LIGHT CANDLES AND CRACK GLOW STICKS

COMMISSIONING: (*Unison*)

Let the hope that was born in a stable this night be a sign that God can change the world through one small light.

May the God of all touch us once again with wonder.

May the spirit of love fill our hearts to overflowing.

May Christ's spirit of peace be upon everyone, everywhere.

Written by Kim Falls. Gathering, A/C/E 2016-17, page 36. Used with permission.

HYMN: *Silent Night, Holy Night*

VU#67

CHOIR FINALE: *He Shall Reign Forevermore* – words and music by Chris Tomlin and Matt Maher; arranged by Tom Fettke

BENEDICTION: *(Leader)*

POSTLUDE

Participating in worship leadership today: Rev. Tracy Robertson, Kloria Wen, The Adult Choir, Pam Bazinet, Greg Hyatt, Hal Tonkin, Sherrill Knight, Roger Anderson, Tess & Harold Ashley, Barb & Bill Cousens, Lois Shewan, The Hyatt Family.



