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**St. Andrew's By-The-Lake United Church**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> of Advent – December 16, 2018**

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As you sit to prepare for worship, you are invited to take a moment to acknowledge the land on which our church stands and the spirit of those First Peoples who named this area Katorokwi – the meeting place on the flat rocks.

We also acknowledge the enduring presence of First Peoples who remind us to honour the places where our feet stand.

- ◆ the congregation is invited to stand, as you are able. Congregational responses and hymn titles appear in **bold type**

*Gathering of God's People*

**Welcome & Greeting / Life & Work / Mission & Service**

**Prelude:** Prelude on *Quem Pastores* Helmut Walcha

**Lighting of 3<sup>rd</sup> Advent Candle — Joy:**

**Voice 1:** On the first Sunday of Advent we lit a candle for Hope.

Our second candle was lit for Peace.

Today we light a candle for Joy.

This is the Joy we search for:

the Joy that comes when we go out of our way to help others,

the Joy that overcomes fear and repression,  
the Joy Jesus brought to the downtrodden and  
despised,

**Voice 2:** the Joy that chuckles out from a young baby,  
the Joy that is in the energy of a street-hockey game,  
the Joy that comes with a new job and is found in a  
purposeful retirement,  
the Joy of compassionate friendship,  
the Joy of a Christian faith that is central to all we do  
and are,  
a Joy to release us,  
a Joy to encourage us,  
a Joy to challenge the despair in our hearts, in our  
town/city, and among the hopeless of our world.

**Voice 1:** Let us pray together,  
**Loving God, as we prepare for Christmas, we  
remember and share the joy you offer us. Help us  
every day to see and feel your presence among us.  
We pray in faith. Amen.**

**All Sing: *Come Now O God of Peace* (seated) VU #34  
Come now, O God of joy,  
we are your people;  
pour out your spirit  
that we be one body.**

## **Call to Worship:**

Come, people of God, let us journey in the way of joy.

**The stable beckons, and the angels sing.**

Christ is the embodiment of God's love,

**and we are star-followers. Come let us worship!**

**Hymn:**        *Hark the Herald Angels Sing*        **VU #48**

**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 the angelic host proclaim,**

**R “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! R**

**Hail, the heavenborn 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. R**

**Prayer of Gathering:**

**God, as we journey ever closer to Christmas, we take time this morning to pause. We dedicate the next hour to you. Help us to connect with you and each other. Hear us as we express our gratitude for all the blessings in our lives and hear us as we lift up to you any stress, anxiety or fear that may be weighing us down. May we find the spiritual nourishment we need. Amen.**

**Anthem:** *The Angel Gabriel*  
*Little One, Holy One*

Baring-Gould/Stauff  
Robert Lau

**Children's Time**

*Good News in God's Word*

**Scripture Readings:** read by Ken Ross

**First Reading:** Philippians 4:4-7

<sup>4</sup> Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.

<sup>5</sup> Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. <sup>6</sup> Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

<sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Hear the words of the Apostle.

**Thanks be to God.**

◆ **Hymn:**      *Joy Is Now in Every Place*      **VU #45**

**Joy is now in every place,  
Christmas lightens every face;  
now be with us, in your grace,**

**R O hear us, bless us, holy Jesus.**

**May the star that shone that night,  
making your poor stable bright,  
fill our hearts with love and light, R**

**Through the New Year let it stay,  
leading us upon your way,  
making Christmas every day, R**

**Now and ever may we find  
your good news to fill our mind:  
peace and love to humankind, R**

**Second Reading: Luke 3:7-18**

<sup>7</sup> John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? <sup>8</sup> Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor’; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. <sup>9</sup> Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”

<sup>10</sup> And the crowds asked him, “What then should we do?” <sup>11</sup> In reply he said to them, “Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.” <sup>12</sup> Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, “Teacher, what should we do?” <sup>13</sup> He said to them, “Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.” <sup>14</sup> Soldiers also asked him, “And we, what should we do?” He said to them, “Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.”

<sup>15</sup> As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, <sup>16</sup> John answered all of them by saying, “I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. <sup>17</sup> His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

<sup>18</sup> So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.  
This is the good news of Jesus Christ. **Praise be to God.**

**Reflection:**     *Filled with Expectation*

*Giving Our Response*

◆ **Hymn: *Good Christian Friends, Rejoice*     VU #35**  
**Good Christian friends, rejoice  
with heart and soul and voice!  
Give ye heed to what we say: News! News!  
Jesus Christ is born today.  
Ox and ass before him bow,  
and he is in the manger now.  
Christ is born today! Christ is born today!**

**Good Christian friends, rejoice  
with heart and soul and voice!  
Now ye hear of endless bliss: Joy! Joy!  
Jesus Christ was born for this!  
He hath opened heaven's door,  
and we are blest forevermore.  
Christ was born for this! Christ was born for  
this!**

**Good Christian friends, rejoice  
with heart and soul and voice!  
Now ye need not fear the grave: Peace! Peace!  
Jesus Christ was born to save!  
Calls you one and calls you all  
to gain his everlasting hall.  
Christ was born to save! Christ was born to  
save!**

**Mission Minute:** Linda Harrison

**Presentation of Our Gifts and Offerings**

**◆ Sung Response & Offertory Prayer:**

*As with Gladness Men of Old, vs 3 VU #81*

**As they offered gifts most rare at that manger  
crude and bare,  
so may we with holy joy, pure and free from sin's  
alloy,**



**all our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to you,  
our heavenly King.**

**Prayer of Dedication: God of expectation, we  
come before you with humble and grateful hearts.  
We offer to you our gifts of time, talent and  
treasure, and ask you to transform them into  
peace, hope, joy and love for your world. Our  
Advent prayer is that all your children can live  
abundant lives knowing they are loved. Amen.**

## **Prayers of the People**

**and Lord's Prayer – a paraphrase**

**Eternal Spirit,**

**Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver, Source of  
all**

**that is and that shall be. Father and Mother of us  
all, Loving God, in whom is heaven:**

**The hollowing of your name echo through the  
universe!**

**The way of your justice be followed  
by peoples of the world! Your heavenly will be  
done**

**by all created beings! Your commonwealth of  
peace and freedom  
sustain our hope and come on earth.**

**With the bread we need for today, feed us.  
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.**

**In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.  
From trials too great to endure, spare us.  
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.**

**For you reign in the glory of the power that is love,  
now and for ever. Amen.**

**◆ 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.**

**◆ Blessing & Going Forth:**

*He Came Singing Love*                      **VU #359**

**He came singing joy and he lived singing joy;  
he died singing joy. He arose in silence.**

**For the joy to go on we must make it our song;  
you and I be the singers.**

**Choral Postlude:**

*Sing we all Noel*

Ruth Elaine Schram

**ADVENT STUDY – THE NATIVITY**

**A Gathering for Gospels, Goodies and Guitar**

**Tuesday, Dec. 18 at 10:30 am – Friendship Room**

Everyone is invited to attend the last Advent Study on the Nativity. We will explore the biblical accounts of the birth of Christ while nibbling on cookies, sipping on tea and singing some Christmas tunes. No preparation or materials are needed. You are most welcome!