**First United Church**

*Seeking to be a welcoming community of Christian faith, proclaiming and celebrating the love of God in Jesus Christ through the Inspiration of the Holy Spirit*



January 5, 2020 @ 10:30am

*7 Curtis St., St.Thomas, ON N5P 1H3 Phone: (519) 631-7570*

*e-mail: office@1stunitedchurch.ca*

*web: www.1stunitedchurch.ca*

*MINISTERS: ALL THE PEOPLE OF GOD*

*Intentional Interim Minister: Rev. Daryl Webber*

*Music Minister: Jody McDonald-Groulx*

*Secretary/Treasurer: Lori Hoffman*

*Custodian: Dave Luftenegger*

Order of Service

\* You are invited to stand if comfortable doing so

VU = Voices United MV = More Voices

***Musical Prelude***

***Welcome***

***Choral Musical Prelude***

1. VU#82 “A Light Is Gleaming” (chorus only)

**A light is gleaming, spreading its arms throughout the night,**

 **living in the light.**

**Come share it’s gladness, God’s radiant love is burning bright,**

 **living in the light.**

1. MV#220 “Hope Shines as the Solitary Star”

**Hope shines as the solitary star. Faith is the inner light.**

**You and I together mirror the Light of Lights,**

**and illumine the pathway home.**

***Opening Prayer***

**God of gold, we seek your glory:**

 **The richness that transforms drabness into colour,**

**and brightens our dullness with vibrant light;**

 **Your wonder and joy at the heart of all life.**

**God of incense, we offer you our prayer:**

 **our spoken and unspeakable longings,**

**our questioning of truth,**

 **our searching for your mystery deep within.**

**God of myrrh, we cry out to you in our suffering:**

 **the pain of all our rejections and bereavements,**

**our baffled despair at undeserved suffering,**

 **our rage at continued injustice.**

**In our wealth, in our yearning, in our anger and loss,**

**We embrace you, God-with-us. Amen.**

***Call to Worship***

One: How many are your dwelling places, O God.
**All: In the paths beneath the pine trees,**

One: Beneath the cliff that is higher than me.

**All: In the borning cries of newborn babes,**

One: Shall we begin to count the ways?

How many are your dwelling places, O Lord?

**All: On the bus like one of us**

**Making your way home**

**As ordinary as that may be.**

One: In the poet’s pen and artist’s brush

And the gifted hands of such.

Shall we begin to count the ways?

How many are the room of your mansion, O Creator?

**All: In Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh**

**We sense something there,**

One: In the hands of those we love,

And the hospitality of those undreamed of.

**All: Your dwelling places, your mansions, your rooms**

**Your stars, these all offer their source**

**that you would be encountered.**

One: Many are your dwelling places.

**All: You have lead us here to such a place.**

**We find we are welcomed in.**

One: Such is the nature of God’s love.

Radically inclusive.

All are welcome.

***Lighting of the Christ Candle***

**I am the light of world, you people come and follow me.**

**If we follow and love, we’ll learn the mystery**

**Of what we were meant to do and be.**

***Passing of the Peace***

**Sing: Halle, Halle, Halle, lu jah! Halle, Halle, Halle, lu jah!**

 **Halle, Halle, Halle, lu jah! Halle lu jah! (clap) Halle lu jah!**

***Life and Work of the Church***

***Prayer/The Lord’s Prayer***

***Hymn: “We Three Kings”***

**We Three Kings of Orient are, bearing gifts we traverse afar.**

 **Field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.**

Refrain: **O, star or wonder, star of night,**

**star with royal beauty bright.**

**Westward leading, still proceeding,**

**guide us to thy perfect light.**

 **Born a King on Bethlehem plain, gold I bring to crown him again,**

 **King forever, ceasing never, over us all to reign.** *Refrain*

***Offering Ourselves, Tithes & Gifts***

***Dedication Hymn:*** (tune “Eidelweiss”)

**God of Love, hear our prayer. Bless this offering we bring you. May our lives do Your will; guide and guard us forever. Give us courage to stand for truth; help us give to others. God of Love, hear our prayer, Bless this offering we bring you.**

***Scripture Reading: Matthew 2:1-12***

***The Message: “Help Carry My Gift That Far”***

***Hymn:*** “Song for the Magi” (Daryl Webber, 2017)

(Tune: “You Ain’t Going Nowhere” B. Dylan)

G Am, C G, Am, C G

**One beautiful star, draws from afar**

**Three sages wise, by Divine disguise**

**O let it be, that I’m as free**

**To carry my gift as far.**

**Chorus: O Lord, I dream at night**

 **A beautiful star taking hold of me**

**O Lord, warm and bright**

**This light fills up my days.**

**Scribed in the charts of astrologers**

**Like a journal of God’s promises**

**Write, quiet star, to this commoner**

**To carry my gift as far.**

**Chorus: O Lord, I dream at night**

 **A beautiful star taking hold of me**

**O Lord, warm and bright**

**This light fills up my days.**

**To Herod the King, the three had been**

**He wanted to know, only the wise did go**

**That’s what I dream, the star so gleams**

**And I carry my gift as far.** *Chorus*

**The star babe had nothing to say**

**Seers laid treasures anyway**

**Joy sounds like that, so may**

**I carry my gift as far.** *Chorus*

**The three face West their eyes now blessed**

**They’ve grown old, by their charts they know**

**The Holy One will take them home,**

**Help carry my gift that far.** *Chorus*

***\*Commissioning/ Benediction***

 ***Closing - Sing:*** VU#33 “Jesus Came Bringing Us Hope/Peace/Joy/Love”

**Jesus came bringing us Hope/Peace/Joy/Love,**

**Jesus came bringing us Hope/Peace/Joy/Love,**

**Jesus came bringing us Hope/Peace/Joy/Love,**

 **hallelujah forever more!**

***\* Musical Postlude***

**LIFE & WORK OF THE CHURCH**

**January 5, 2020**

**Happy birthday to**: Klark Kewley, Heather Yacula

**\*TODAY:** You are invited to join us refreshments in the Fellowship following worship.

**This week:**

**Tuesday: \*EarlyON Playgroup** in the Gym - 9:30 – 11:30am

\***First Youth** with Chris Ross & Justin Chute in Room 3/Gym from 7-8:15pm.

**Thursday**

**\*Sr. Choir @ 7:30pm!** Don’t be shy – singing’s great for the soul – come and give it a try!

***\*Looking for Board Members:*** The church requires many hours of volunteer work to make it run smoothly.  If you are able to serve or know of someone who would be good to serve on our Official Board please talk to an existing member of the Board, or Lori in the church office

\*At First we love having a time of **Fellowship after Worship on Sundays!** It’s a time to greet friends, new and old, over a drink & maybe a goody!! If this is something you would enjoy hosting, you are invited to sign up on the sheet in the Fellowship Room (Drinks supplied – coffee would just need to be put on in the morning!). We’d love to have you!

\*Would you be **willing to participate or lead the worship service**?  If so please speak to Rev. Daryl, Richard Auckland or one of the worship team leaders.

**FROM THE CHURCH OFFICE …..**

Lori is on holidays, returning Tuesday (the 7th).

If you would like to make a **DONATION FOR THE YEAR 2019** – please place it through the Curtis Street mail slot, slip it under my Office Door or mail it to the Church. You may come in on Tuesday, January 7 if you would like to see me in person. The final deposit for 2019 Givings will be made at 3pm on Tuesday, January 7. Donations received after this time will be credited to your 2020 Givings*.*

*Best wishes, Lori*

**REMINDER TO ALL COMMITTEE CHAIRS & GROUP LEADERS: All ANNUAL REPORT SUBMISSIONS** are needed in the office before January 15, 2019. Thank you.

**A Note from Lori & the Finance Committee**

**The 2020 Offering envelopes are ready for pickup in the Library.**

**IMPORTANT: Please note – ALL Numbers have changed!**

To reduce costs and save trees we have done a complete overhaul of the numbering of our offering envelopes for 2020! We reduced the number of sets given out (removed those who didn’t use / or didn’t pick up their envelopes resulting in them being thrown out at year end) – and we were able to reduce our numbers by 200 sets!!! BIG SAVINGS! Over $400!)

**PLEASE DO NOT USE ANY OLD ENVELOPES OR ENVELOPE NUMBERS AFTER DECEMBER 31, 2019!** *Doing so could cause your offering to be inadvertently credited to another person*.

If you go to pick up a set of envelopes and there isn’t one there with your name on it, please contact Lori in the office and she can arrange to get you a set.

We are hoping to only distribute envelopes to those who use them on a regular basis. If you give monthly, quarterly, annually, etc. (that’s great – no problem!) – you have been assigned a number that does not have actual envelopes but your offerings will be credited to it. Just place your cheque on the offering plate (or in a plain envelope if you’d prefer) and we’ll look after it! If you’d like to KNOW the number you’ve been assigned to write it on your cheque/blank envelope, Lori can give you that information. Thank you so much for your co-operation as we go through this numbering transition!!