

### **Invitation to the Offering**

God, has blessed us beyond imagining, blessed us in the wonder of creation, blessed us with friendships, blessed us with talents and abilities, and blessed us with the gift Jesus born this night to Mary. We gladly return these gifts for God. We believe that they will go to work for good through our church and in faith communities far from here. As God has blessed us, so we believe God will bless all who receive gifts we offer this Christmastime with hope, joy, peace, and love. Amen.

**Response** Away in a Manger VU 69

### **Offering Prayer**

**Holy God, bless these gifts and the givers.**

**May the sign of our collaboration in giving be another sign of Emmanuel's presence in this world.**

**Strengthen the work of this church and the growth of your kingdom coming. Amen.**

### **Prayers of the People, The Lord's Prayer**

**Choir: Let There be Peace on Earth**

**Hymn** Silent Night VU 67

### **Benediction**

May you experience the mystery of Christmas joy!

May you live the wonder of Christmas hope!

May you have a very blessed Christmas!

May the peace of God, who is Holy Mystery, fill you. May the love of the Holy Babe give you hope. May the awe of the Holy Spirit fill you with delight, this evening and forevermore! Amen.

We wish you a merry Christmas

We wish you a merry Christmas

We wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year

Good tidings we bring to you and your kin

We wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year

### **Meridian Pastoral Charge**

Christmas Eve 2025

### **Avonlea United Church, Domain MB**

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Welcome and Announcements

### **WE GATHER TO WORSHIP GOD**

### **Introit**

O Come All Ye Faithful verse 1 VU 60

### **Call to Worship**

Peace, mercy, and grace be upon people everywhere. Peace be upon those who are displaced, those who are hungry, those who are homeless. Peace be upon those who seek shelter in stables and in camps. Peace be upon those living in despair, those who are grieving, those who are ill.

### **Peace.**

For even in these shadowed places, the gift of light shines brightly. We have felt it quicken and leap up from the deepest places of our hearts. We have heard it call to us, daring us to abandon indifference and move into action for Love's sake.

**We have heard the call to open our souls to the wondrous places of Spirit and song. Let us pay attention now, as we await the mystery of all things, the birth of God, who will be laid in a manger in a stable. This is the mystery that treads softly in the silence of the night, this holy night.**

### **Hymn**

O Come All Ye Faithful verses 3 & 5 VU 60

### **Christ Candle**

*Light one Purple candle.*

1: May the carols of angels lead us to Hope, the hope born in a manger this night.

*Light the second candle*

2: May the wisdom of shepherds and magi lead us to Peace, the peace born in a manger this night.

*Light the third candle*

1: May the stars dancing in the sky lead us to Joy, the joy born in a manger this night.

*Light the last purple candle.*

2: May the courage of Mary and Joseph lead us to Love, the love born in a manger this night.

*Light the Christ candle.*

1: May the light of Christ be born in our hearts once again this Christmas.

2: May we discover hope, peace, joy, and love as we come to the manger this night. **Amen.**

### **Prayer of Approach**

Most Holy One, today we celebrate the birth of your love revealed to us in human form. In Jesus the Christ, a helpless baby, you arrived over 2,000 years ago. People needed a saviour then as they do now. Born in humble circumstances, in a time of oppression and poverty, your child gifted all humanity with hope.

**May we experience the joy of knowing your presence. May we open ourselves to the love that is born once again into the world this eve.**

May Jesus' peaceful ways be our ways. May Jesus' inclusive ways be our ways. May Jesus' healing ways be our ways. May Jesus' compassionate ways be our ways.

**As we gather with family and friends today and over the next few days, may the spirit of Christmas, the spirit of love, be at the centre of our fellowship.**

For those who may be alone and feeling lonely today and over the days to come, for those who are grieving, for those who are anxious and fearful, we pray for your spirit of peace and love to surround each one. Gracious God, we think of our loved ones who may be experiencing their first Christmas in your heavenly presence. We thank you for welcoming them into your loving care, even as we lament their empty seat at our table.

As the children and youth tear into their gifts, we pray that the joy they feel will be remembered and multiplied by the love they receive and give.

**Thank you, Loving God, for this evening, this precious, holy night. May we continue to be bearers of the Christ light for all to experience, not just at this time of the year but throughout the coming months. Amen.**

## **The Story of Christmas**

***As told by a narrator, Mary, Joseph, the InnKeeper & the Shepherds.***

*Luke 1:26-33*

*Luke 1:34-38*

### **Hymn**

What Child is This? VU 74 vv. 1 & 2

*Matthew 1:18-21*

### **Hymn**

O Little Town of Bethlehem VU 64 vv. 1 & 3

*Luke 2:1-7*

### **Hymn**

Once in Royal David's City VU 62 vv.1&2

*Luke 2:8-14*

### **Hymn**

Hark the Herald Angels Sing VU 48

*Luke 2:15-16*

### **Hymn**

Angels We Have Heard on High VU 38 vv.1-3

*Luke 2:17-20*

### **Hymn**

Joy to the World VU 59 vv. 1,2,4