



We are
Olds-Sundre Pastoral Charge and
Knox Didsbury Pastoral Charge
of the United Church of Canada
Sunday December 12th, 2021
Minister: Rev. Tammy Allan



Musician today: Janice and Barry Beaudry (Knox /Olds)

Our mission statements:

Olds: A Family of Faith, Spiritually Motivated, Welcoming and Caring

Sundre: Believing, Caring, Sharing

Knox Didsbury: Caring, Sharing, Believing

*As we worship we gratefully acknowledge that our churches are all
on the ancient and traditional lands of The Blackfoot Nation, the
people of the Treaty 7, and of Metis Region 3.*

*May we cherish and care for these lands and the people,
just as those who came before us have done.*

Prelude

Announcements

- Tonight - concert

- This Wednesday, December 15th – Blue Christmas service, 7:00 pm at Knox United.

- Dec. 19 Meeting in Olds (update from the Property Learning Group)

- Coffee time – Tuesdays at 10:00, zoom link in Friday's email. Dec. 14, 21; then we'll break until the new year.

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Call to Worship

Advent is a season of waiting,

But we do not wait alone.

God is with us.

God is birthing joy into this waiting world.

Let us worship with hearts open to joy.

Hymn VU 59 Joy to the World

Lighting the Advent Candle

(first 2 blue candles are lit)

For the wrath we are always fleeing,

We light this candle.

For the roads we never believed we would ever travel,

We light this candle.

For our questions and curiosities,

We light this candle.

For doubt and confusion,

We light this candle.

For trust in our believing that this is the way,

We light this candle.

For the journey that we all share,

We light this candle. (*pink candle is lit*)

Hymn VU 6 A Candle is Burning vs. 1, 2, and 3

Opening Prayer

God of Advent Joy, we enter this relationship we call worship with a song of joy in our hearts. We enter seeking affirmation of the love that brings us new life. Hear our prayers this day, and in your love, answer. Amen.

Time with Children

Hymn VU 7 Hope is a Star vs. 1, 2 & 3

Reflection

The Christmas Story

as written by Jessie Negropontes and Chris Giffen

The 'words' and sounds and actions :

WORD	SOUND	ACTION
Mary.....	Who, me?	Pretend to run your hands over your pregnant belly.
Angels.....	Hallelujah!	Stand and flap arms.
Child	Waaahhh! Hush.	Cradle arms and rock the baby.
Stable.....	any animal noise	Form a roof –raising your arms above head
Shepherds.....	Baaa-baaa	Shade your eyes & peer into the distance.
Star.....	Superstar!	Point up to a star
Magi.....	We seek the light!	Bring hands together as in prayer.
King Herod.....	make booing and hissing sounds	Stomp your feet

I used this pageant script many years ago – it was written by Jessie Negropontes and Chris Giffen, who at the time were involved in youth ministry in Alberta. I've dusted it off because it really is a COVID friendly service, as well as an all ages – for the child in all of us pageant.

To tell our story today, I will need your help. There are words and actions for certain important words in the story. Whenever you hear them, I invite you to shout out the words and do the actions, enthusiastically – and I expect that those of you watching us on-line will participate too, whether you're at home or in Olds.

So – let's practice the words and actions...they're on the screen...if you need to remember them later... The story will be told in 3 parts, and we'll sing between each part.

(Demonstrate the words and actions, and have the congregation practice with you; run through twice...make sure on line folks are in on the action!))

And so we begin...

Storyteller:

Many years ago (though not so many that we may have forgotten) in a town in Galilee called Nazareth, there was a young woman called **MARY**... She was engaged to a man called Joseph. One day, an **ANGEL** appeared and said, "**MARY**, do not be afraid. God has chosen you to bear his **CHILD**. You will name him Jesus, and he will be king, and of his kingdom there will be no end." With that the **ANGEL** disappeared.

In those days, a decree went out from the Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered in their own town. Joseph was from Bethlehem, so that is where he and his fiancée went. **MARY** rode on a donkey because by that time she was great with **CHILD**.

While they were there, the time came for **MARY** to give birth. She delivered her **CHILD** in a **STABLE** and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them at the inn.

Hymn Away in a Manger VU 69

Storyteller:

In that area there were **SHEPHERDS** living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Suddenly, an **ANGEL** appeared and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.

"Do not be afraid," the **ANGEL** said to them, "for see – I bring you good news of great joy, for all people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. You will find the **CHILD** in a **STABLE** wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And then there was a multitude of the

heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Peace on earth and glory to God in the highest!"

When the **ANGELS** departed, the **SHEPHERDS** wasted no time in going to Bethlehem, where they found the **STABLE** with **MARY** and Joseph inside, and the **CHILD** lying in the manger. When they saw this, they told everyone about this **CHILD**; and all who heard it were amazed at what the **SHEPHERDS** told them. And **MARY** treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.

HYMN VU 48 Hark the Herald, Angels Sing

Storyteller:

After the **CHILD** born, a bright **STAR** arose over the **STABLE** where Jesus lay. Some **MAGI** from the east saw the **STAR** and came to ask **KING HEROD**, "Where is the **CHILD** who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his **STAR** at its rising, and have come to pay him homage."

KING HEROD felt threatened by the news of this miraculous **CHILD**, and decided to trick the **MAGI** into telling him where he lay, so that he could have Jesus killed.

The **MAGI** left **KING HEROD** and there, ahead of them, went the **STAR** that they had seen at its rising. They followed until it stopped over the place where the baby was. On entering the **STABLE**, they were overwhelmed with joy. They saw the **CHILD** with **MARY**, and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, the **MAGI** offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Later, having been warned in a dream, they did not go back to **HEROD**, but returned home by another road.

After they had left, Joseph had a dream in which an **ANGEL** appeared and told him it was not safe to go back to Galilee. When he awoke in the night, Joseph took the **CHILD** and **MARY** into Egypt as the **ANGEL** had told him, and they remained there until it was safe to go on.

HYMN VU 91 The First Nowell (verses 1, 2, 3, & 5).

This Week's Minute for Mission **Generosity Makes Hearts Sing with Joy**



*Photo Credit: Jennifer Webb from Pixabay
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"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and

with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God,” says the book of Colossians 3:16.

From the beginning of time, people have known that nothing stirs the heart and brings people together quite like music. Music has the power to change our world, and when we harness it, we do too.

That’s why **Embracing the Spirit grants** supported through your Mission & Service gifts and **Seeds of Hope grants** administered by the United Church Foundation fund music projects that build community and tend to the soul across our United Church.

For example, your generosity makes a joyful noise at Sprucedale United Church in Chatham, Ontario, where an outreach ministry provides free ukulele lessons to adults so they can provide entertainment to local retirement and nursing homes. Thanks to your support, Prairie Points Pastoral Charge in southwestern Alberta received a grant to license songs to create a condensed songbook for use in hospitals and lodges. At Port Nelson United Church in Burlington, Ontario, your gifts helped fund a new handbell choir and in Kamloops United Church, Kamloops, British Columbia, a drop-in pride choir for LGBTQ2S+ community members and allies.

“When harnessed for good, music helps us take important steps to social justice,” says Sarah Charters, Director of Philanthropy and President of the United Church Foundation. “Looking back, music has played a key role in anti-war, civil rights, and women’s movements. How many of us on a personal level have been motivated to make a life change after listening to a song or turn to music to soothe our spirit? Music is the language of the spirit,” she says.

Your generosity means that our United Church can pool resources to make an incredible impact in local communities from coast to coast. An impact none of us could ever make alone. Thank you for fostering spirituality, community, and inspiring social change through music. Your generosity makes hearts sing with joy.

Offertory Music VU 538 For the Gift of Creation

Offertory Prayer

God of love, you breathe joy into our very souls, motivating us to see the world with eyes of kinship. Bless these gifts of joy to do your work in the world, healing, restoring, encouraging and building. Amen.

Prayers for the Day

Creative and playful God, we thank you for the joy that is part of our lives. For children who giggle and count the sleeps till Christmas; for people who find joy in searching out the perfect gift; for Santa’s who Ho, Ho, Ho and make us smile!

We are thankful for heartfelt warm wishes, warm handshakes and hugs; and letters and cards that come from friends and family that bring both laughter and tears.

We give thanks for the moments of joy that come into our lives, and the joy that we can bring to others.

We give our deepest thanks this day for the great gift of joy that comes with the birth of the Christ child, in a Bethlehem stable and into our hearts.

We are also aware that for some, finding joy in this season can be difficult. Loss and grief can cast a shadow, illness can darken the glow of the season. Worry can sap strength and energy from festivities.

O God, be present with all who are suffering. Give us the energy and compassion to offer love, prayers and support.

God of transformation and change, walk with us, as we continue our journey of ministry together as 3 communities of faith – Knox, Olds and Sundre. Help us journey with together in shared mission and ministry.

Be with us as we lift up the prayers of our hearts in a moment of silence...

Grateful for your presence, we share the words of Jesus...

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy 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. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever, Amen.

Hymn VU 43 Go Tell It on the Mountain

A Blessing for Today

As we go forth in this Advent season, let there be joy, peace, hope and light!

May we be bearers of joy wherever we go. Amen.

Choral Benediction MV 220 Hope Shines as the
Solitary Star

Postlude

Thank you for taking time to be part of the Olds-Sundre Pastoral Charge and Knox (Didsbury) Pastoral Charge worship experience.

Olds and Didsbury alternate hosting live worship each week, while live-streaming to the other church. You are welcome to attend either location at 9:30.

Sundre continues to have in- person worship at 1:30. All are welcome there, too! The bulletin and sermon will continue to be posted to the websites, for those who are unable to join us. Messages will also be posted to the Facebook Page, Olds and Sundre United Churches.

Each week, via email, there will be updates and announcements. If you'd like to receive those emails, please contact your church office and ask to be included.

Questions? Wish to financially support our ministries? To Contact us:

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