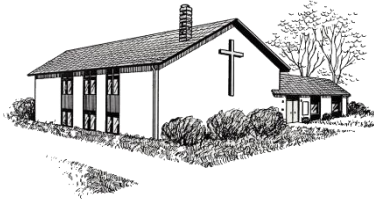


North Kildonan United Church  
174 Pentland St, Winnipeg, MB R2G 2S3  
Church Office: 204-667-7408  
email: [nkuc@mymts.net](mailto:nkuc@mymts.net)  
www.nkuc.ca



Minister: *Rev. Susan Reed*  
Pianist/Choir Director: *Joanne Diplock*  
Office Administrator: *Wilma Fehr*  
Property Manager: *Heinz Goetz*

*Our Mission...*

*to be an accepting Christian community dedicated to living, sharing and teaching the Word of God.*

*We respect all aspects of people including race, ethnicity, gender expression, sexual orientation, socio-economic background, age, religion, mental wellness, and ability.*

December 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025  
First Sunday after Christmas

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*\*The asterisk invites all to stand, if they are able. **Bold** print indicates a congregational response.*

## GATHERING TO WORSHIP GOD

PRELUDE *(Music played with permission under license #A-620529 One License)*

*~Joanne Diplock*

### WELCOME

*A warm welcome is extended to all, especially those who are worshipping at North Kildonan for the first time or who have returned after an absence. Your presence both enriches us, and this time of celebration together.*

### LIFE and WORK of the CHURCH FAMILY

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT of the LAND

*We acknowledge that we meet on Treaty 1 land, the traditional lands of the Anishinaabe, Cree and Dakota peoples, and the homeland of the Red River Metis. We also acknowledge that the water we use here comes from the Shoal Lake 40 First Nation. We are grateful for these first inhabitants and their stewardship of the land and its resources through the ages, and we commit to working together towards justice, truth and reconciliation.*

### LIGHTING of the CHRIST CANDLE *~lit by Paula Thomson*

*The light shines in the deepest night  
and the night has not overcome it.*

### LIGHTING of the PEACE CANDLE

*As we light this candle, we pray for peace:*

**peace in our hearts,  
peace in our homes,  
peace in our world.**

*As we celebrate the birth of Jesus, the Prince of Peace,*

**O God, we pray for peace. Amen.**

## CALL to WORSHIP

*Praise the Living God! Praise God from the heavens:*

**Sun and moon and shining stars, praise the Living God!**

*Praise God's Holy Name,*

**whose word speaks all things into being,**

**who is present in the expanse of the universe,**

**and in the voices of children.**

*Praise the Living God, our rescuer and deliverer,*

**whose wonder is found in the heavens and in all creation,**

**who comes in innocence, and with mercy.**

*O God, our light, our beauty, our rest:*

*With the appearance of your Son you have brought us  
into your new creation.*

**Form us into your people, and root our lives in you;**

**through Christ, the Living Light.**

## INTRODUCTION to the OPENING HYMN

*The Hymn, "Twas in the Moon of Wintertime", was written in the Huron language by Jesuit priest Father Jean de Brébeuf in 1643 with the title Jesous Ahatonhia ("Jesus, he is born"), and set by him to an old French tune, "Une Jeune Pucelle" ("A Young Maid"), this is considered the first Canadian carol. It is considered a national treasure and has been celebrated on a set of Canadian postage stamps. In re-telling the story of the Nativity, Father de Brébeuf used symbols that could be easily understood within the culture of the Hurons; it is said that the hymn entered the tribe's oral tradition.*

*Tragically, Father de Brébeuf and his companion Father Gabriel Lallemant were brutally tortured and murdered March 16, 1649 when the Iroquois wiped out the Jesuit mission and drove the Hurons from their homeland. Many Hurons escaped to Quebec where the carol re-emerged and was translated into English and French.*

*The carol has been included in the hymn books of both the Anglican Church of Canada and the Methodist Church. It has also been frequently recorded in recent years. The song was included as "Jesous Ahatonia" on Burl Ives's 1952 album Christmas Day in the Morning and was later released by Ives as a single with the title "Indian Christmas Carol." Canadian singer Bruce Cockburn and Tom Jackson have both recorded renditions, as have many other artists.*

*Brébeuf was born March 25, 1593 at Condé-sur-Vire, Normandy, France, a son of farmers. He became a Jesuit in 1617, joining the Order at Rouen. He was ordained in 1622, and in 1625 he sailed to Canada as a missionary. On his arrival, he lived with the Huron natives near Lake Huron, learning their customs and language, of which he became an expert; it is said that he wrote the first dictionary of the Huron language. Although the missionaries were recalled in 1629, Brébeuf returned to Canada in 1633. He is a patron saint of Canada, and his feast day is October 19th. Many Jesuit schools*

are named after him, such as College Jean-de-Brebeuf, Brebeuf College School and Brebeuf High School.

Brébeuf was canonized in 1930 with seven other missionaries, known as the Canadian Martyrs.

**\*OPENING HYMN: VU #71 – “’Twas in the Moon of Wintertime”**

(Brébeuf/Cabena)

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~Joanne Diplock

- 1 ‘Twas in the moon of wintertime,  
when all the birds had fled,  
that mighty Gitchi Manitou  
sent angel choirs instead;  
before their light the stars grew dim,  
and wandering hunters heard the hymn:  
    Jesus your King is born,  
    Jesus is born,  
    in excelsis gloria.**
- 2 Within a lodge of broken bark  
the tender babe was found,  
a ragged robe of rabbit skin  
enwrapped his beauty round;  
but as the hunter braves drew nigh,  
the angel song rang loud and high: R**
- 3 The earliest moon of wintertime  
is not so round and fair  
as was the ring of glory on  
the helpless infant there.  
The chiefs from far before him knelt  
with gifts of fox and beaver pelt. R**
- 4 O children of the forest free,  
the angel song is true,  
the holy child of earth and heaven  
is born today for you.  
Come, kneel before the radiant boy,  
who brings you beauty, peace, and joy: R**

**OPENING PRAYER**

*God of glory,  
your splendor shines from a manger in Bethlehem,  
where the Light of the world is humbly born  
into the darkness of human night.  
Open our eyes to Christ's presence in the shadows of our world,*

*so that we, like him, may become beacons of your justice,  
and defenders of all for whom there is no room. Amen.*

## INTRODUCTION to the HYMN

*Phillips Brooks, the composer of the famous Christmas carol, O Little Town of Bethlehem, was the minister of Holy Trinity Church in Philadelphia. In December of 1865 Phillips Brooks traveled to the Holy Land and had visited Bethlehem. The itinerary included a horseback ride from Jerusalem to Bethlehem on Christmas Eve. Back then it truly was a small village, far removed from the bustling city it would later become. By nightfall he was in the field where, according to tradition, the shepherds heard the angelic announcement. Then he attended the Christmas Eve service at the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem.*

*Something about the beauty and simplicity of that visit stayed with Phillips Brooks when he returned to America. Several years later, when he wanted a new song of Christmas for the children to sing at his church, he reached back in memory for inspiration from his Holy Land visit. The poem he wrote painted in words the sights and sounds of that little town of Bethlehem he had visited.*

*Writing to the children of his congregation, he recalled that first visit:*

*"I remember especially on Christmas Eve, when I was standing in the old church in Bethlehem, close to the spot where Jesus was born, when the whole church was ringing hour after hour with the splendid hymns of praise to God, how again and again it seemed as if I could hear voices I knew well, telling each other of the "wonderful night" of the Savior's birth."*

*What came from his pen was a Christmas carol that has lived to become a worldwide favourite.*

### **\*HYMN: VU #64 – "O Little Town of Bethlehem"**

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*(Brooks/Redner)*

*~Joanne Diplock*

- 1 O little town of Bethlehem,  
how still we see thee lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep  
the silent stars go by;  
yet in thy dark streets shineth  
the everlasting light;  
the hopes and fears of all the years  
are met in thee tonight.**
- 2 For Christ is born of Mary;  
and gathered all above,  
while mortals sleep, the angels keep  
their watch of wondering love.  
O morning stars, together  
proclaim the holy birth,**

and praises sing to God the King,  
and peace to all on earth.

**3** How silently, how silently  
the wondrous gift is given!  
So God imparts to human hearts  
the blessed gift of heaven.  
No ear may hear his coming;  
but in this world of sin,  
where meek souls will receive him, still  
the dear Christ enters in.

**4** O holy child of Bethlehem,  
descend to us, we pray;  
cast out our sin, and enter in;  
be born in us today.  
We hear the Christmas angels  
the great glad tidings tell;  
O come to us, abide with us,  
our Lord Emmanuel.

## LISTENING FOR AND REFLECTING ON GOD'S WORD

Scripture Readings: *read by Rev. Brenda Gibson*

### **Psalm 148**

*Praise the Lord!  
Praise the Lord from the heavens,  
praise him in the heights!  
Praise him, all his angels,  
praise him, all his host!  
Praise him, sun and moon,  
praise him, all you shining stars!  
Praise him, you highest heavens,  
and you waters above the heavens!  
Let them praise the name of the Lord!  
For he commanded and they were created.  
And he established them for ever and ever;  
he fixed their bounds which cannot be passed.  
Praise the Lord from the earth,  
you sea monsters and all deeps,  
fire and hail, snow and frost,  
stormy wind fulfilling his command!  
Mountains and all hills,  
fruit trees and all cedars!*

*Beasts and all cattle,  
 creeping things and flying birds!  
 Kings of the earth and all peoples,  
 princes and all rulers of the earth!  
 Young men and maidens together,  
 old men and children!  
 Let them praise the name of the Lord,  
 for his name alone is exalted;  
 his glory is above earth and heaven.  
 He has raised up a horn for his people,  
 praise for all his saints,  
 for the people of Israel who are near to him.  
 Praise the Lord!*

### **Matthew 2: 13-15**

*Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there till I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." And he rose and took the child and his mother by night, and departed to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfil what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt have I called my son."*

### Words of Response:

*Let us hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.*

**Thanks be to God! Amen.**

### INTRODUCTION to the HYMN

*(Copyright 2008, Richard Niell Donovan)*

*"**Good King Wenceslas**" is a Christmas carol that tells a story of a tenth-century king of Bohemia (modern day Czech Republic) who goes on a journey, braving harsh winter weather, to give alms to a poor peasant on the Feast of Stephen. During the journey, his page is about to give up the struggle against the cold weather, but is enabled to continue by following the king's footprints, step for step, through the deep snow. The legend is based on a story about Saint Wenceslaus I, Duke of Bohemia (907–935)—who was assassinated by his own brother and had been adored by his subjects. His charity and popularity eventually led to his being named the patron saint of the Czech Republic.*

*In 1853, English hymnwriter John Mason Neale wrote the lyrics in collaboration with his music editor Thomas Helmore to fit the melody of the 13th-century spring carol "Tempus adest florum" ("The Blooming Time Is Here"), which they had found in the 1582 Finnish song collection Piae Cantiones. The carol first appeared in Carols for Christmas-Tide, published by Novello & Co the same year.*

*This carol is beloved by many, in large part because of the evocative story images and the possibility for performance.*

**\*HYMN: "Good King Wenceslas"**

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(Neale/Helmore)

~Joanne Diplock

- 1 Good King Wenceslas looked out,  
on the Feast of Stephen,  
When the snow lay round about,  
deep and crisp and even;  
Brightly shone the moon that night,  
tho' the frost was cruel,  
When a poor man came in sight,  
gath'ring winter fuel.**
- 2 "Hither, page, and stand by me,  
if thou know'st it, telling,  
Yonder peasant, who is he?  
Where and what his dwelling?"  
"Sire, he lives a good league hence,  
underneath the mountain;  
Right against the forest fence,  
by Saint Agnes' fountain."**
- 3 "Bring me flesh, and bring me wine,  
bring me pine logs hither:  
Thou and I will see him dine,  
when we bear them thither."  
Page and monarch, forth they went,  
forth they went together;  
Through the rude wind's wild lament  
and the bitter weather.**
- 4 "Sire, the night is darker now,  
and the wind blows stronger;  
Fails my heart, I know not how;  
I can go no longer."  
"Mark my footsteps, good my page.  
Tread thou in them boldly  
Thou shalt find the winter's rage  
freeze thy blood less coldly."**
- 5 In his master's steps he trod,  
where the snow lay dinted;  
Heat was in the very sod  
which the saint had printed.**

**Therefore, Christian men, be sure,  
wealth or rank possessing,  
Ye who now will bless the poor,  
shall yourselves find blessing.**

## RESPONDING TO GOD IN PRAYER AND ACTION

### PRAYER of CONFESSION

*Loving Christ, we confess that we do not always share the Good News.*

**We have heard the message time and again and  
have let it grow stale.**

*We know we need You, but we don't know how we need You.*

**We want to turn away from empty phrases and worn-out platitudes,  
but we know in our heart that we need You.**

*We need Your salvation, redemption and healing in our lives  
from where we have gone astray and where we have been hurt.*

**Help us to live into Your full embrace,  
so that we can fully share Your grace,  
healing and love with those who are hurt,  
those who have gone astray,  
those who feel so far gone from Your love.**

*Forgive us when we have closed off our hearts  
instead of allowing them to break.*

**Forgive us when we have said nothing  
in order to avoid saying the wrong thing.**

*Forgive us when we have been too afraid of being looked down upon  
instead of sharing the story of our faith.*

**Guide us with the wisdom of Anna and Simeon,  
who were unafraid to praise You and  
to share the Good News of Your Son, Jesus the Christ. Amen.**

### INTRODUCTION to the HYMN

**"It Came Upon the Midnight Clear"**, sometimes rendered as **"It Came Upon a Midnight Clear"**, is an 1849 poem and Christmas carol written by Edmund Sears, pastor of the Unitarian Church in Wayland, Massachusetts. Sears served the Unitarian congregation in Wayland, Massachusetts, before moving on to a larger congregation at First Church of Christ, Unitarian, in Lancaster, also known as The Bulfinch Church, for its design by Charles Bulfinch. After seven years, he suffered a breakdown and returned to Wayland. He wrote *It Came Upon the Midnight Clear* while serving as a part-time preacher in Wayland. Writing during a period of personal melancholy, and with news of revolution in Europe and the United States' war with Mexico fresh in his mind, Sears portrayed the world as dark, full of "sin and strife", and not hearing the Christmas message.



*Sears is said to have written these words at the request of his friend, William Parsons Lunt, pastor of United First Parish Church, Quincy, Massachusetts, for Lunt's Sunday school. One account says the carol was first performed by parishioners gathered in Sears' home on Christmas Eve, but to what tune the carol was sung is unknown as Willis' familiar melody was not written until the following year.*

*According to Ken Sawyer, Sears' song is remarkable for its focus not on Bethlehem, but on his own time, and on the contemporary issue of war and peace. Written in 1849, it has long been assumed to be Sears' response to the just ended Mexican–American War. The song has been included in many of the Christmas albums recorded by numerous singers in the modern era.*

**\*HYMN: VU #44 – “It Came Upon a Midnight Clear”**

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*~Joanne Diplock*

- 1 It came upon the midnight clear,  
that glorious song of old,  
from angels bending near the earth  
to touch their harps of gold,  
'Peace on the earth, good will to all,  
from heaven's all-gracious King!'  
The world in solemn stillness lay  
to hear the angels sing.**
- 2 Still through the cloven skies they come  
with peaceful wings unfurled;  
and still their heavenly music floats  
o'er all the weary world;  
above its sad and lowly plains  
they bend on hovering wing,  
and ever o'er its Babel sounds  
the blessed angels sing.**
- 3 Yet with the woes of sin and strife  
the world has suffered long;  
beneath the angel strain have rolled  
two thousand years of wrong;  
and warring humankind hears not  
the love song which they bring.  
O hush the noise, and cease your strife,  
to hear the angels sing.**
- 4 For, lo! the days are hastening on,  
by prophets seen of old,  
when with the ever-circling years  
shall come the time foretold,  
when peace shall over all the earth**

**its ancient splendours fling,  
and the whole world send back the song  
which now the angels sing.**

### AN INVITATION to SHARE

*In the gifts of word and song,  
we hear the story of your gift of life, O God.  
Here, we offer what we can of ourselves,  
we who are part of that same story.*

Offertory Music *as the offerings are collected*

*~Joanne Diplock*

**\*Offering Hymn: VU #541 – "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow"** (Ken)  
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*~Joanne Diplock*

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
praise God, all creatures high and low;  
give thanks to God in love made known:  
Creator, Word and Spirit, One.**

**\*The Dedication of our Gifts**

**Receive these gifts, God of All,  
for the work of your kingdom.  
May our words become witness,  
and our witness become work,  
for your people, in your world. Amen.**

### PRAYERS of THANKSGIVING and CONCERN

*As you have drawn us to your cradle of wondrous love, O God,  
draw us together in this place, that we might  
pray for your people and your world.*

*Today, we give you thanks for the gift of your child, Jesus Christ,  
who in birth, life, death, and resurrection revealed  
your unending love for all people and opened to us  
the purpose and promise of life together.*

*We give thanks also for the gifts of this season:*

*hope for the vision of justice you promise, even in the midst of despair;  
for peace within and among your people, even in the midst of conflict;  
joy found in reunion and celebration, even amid the challenges of this life;  
and love, with the power to transform and heal all things,  
even in the midst of brokenness.*

*We pray for those who still long for these, your gifts, God of Love:  
for those who will spend this season alone or anxious...  
for those who grieve an empty place at the table this year...  
for those who are ill, in body or in spirit...*

*for those in hospital and in care...  
for those who endure the terror of conflict and oppression...  
for those who will go hungry this day,  
and who long for the simplest of creation's gifts...  
for your people and your world, we pray, O God.  
Let us listen to the angels' song again, your song of love for this world.  
Move us to return that song in what we say and do,  
that we may be instruments of your hope and peace and joy and love.  
We pray these things in the name of Jesus, who became the Christ,  
and who taught us when we pray to say:  
At this time, let us say together the prayer that Jesus taught us...*

## 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.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil:  
For thine is the kingdom,  
the power and the glory forever and ever.      Amen.**

## SENT INTO GOD'S WORLD

### INTRODUCTION to the HYMN

*"Joy to the World" was written by the English minister and hymnist Isaac Watts, based on a Christian interpretation of Psalm 98 and Genesis 3. The song was first published in 1719 in Watts's collection The Psalms of David: Imitated in the Language of the New Testament, and applied to the Christian State and Worship. The paraphrase is Watts's Christological interpretation. Consequently, he does not emphasize with equal weight the various themes of Psalm 98. In first and second stanzas, Watts writes of heaven and earth rejoicing at the coming of the King. Watts did not write this hymn as a Christmas carol, as the lyrics do not reflect the Virgin birth of Jesus, but rather Christ's Second Coming. Stanza three, an interlude that alludes to Genesis 3:17–19 rather than to the psalm text, speaks of Christ's blessings extending victoriously over the realm of sin. The cheerful repetition of the phrase "far as the curse is found" has caused this stanza to be omitted from some hymnals. But the line makes joyful sense when understood from the New Testament eyes through which Watts interprets the psalm. Stanza four celebrates Christ's rule over the nations." The nations are called to celebrate because God's faithfulness to the house of Israel had brought salvation to the world.*

**\*HYMN: VU #59 – "Joy to the World"**

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(Watts/Handel)

~Joanne Diplock

- 1 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.**
- 2 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.**
- 3 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.**
- 4 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 and SENDING FORTH**

*Go now and embrace the new time which God has given us.  
Recognize Christ in friend and stranger,  
and as Christ has been gracious to you,  
so be gracious to those in need.  
And may God dwell with you as your God.  
May Christ be your food and drink  
and give you pleasure in your work.  
And may the Spirit be your beginning and end  
and hold all your times in her loving embrace.  
We go in peace to love and serve the Lord,  
In the name of Christ. Amen.*

**\*CHORAL BENEDICTION**

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(Price/Besig)

~Joanne Diplock

**May the Lord go with you, let him take your hand.  
Keep His love within you, until we meet again. Amen.**

**POSTLUDE "Auld Lang Syne"**

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~Joanne Diplock