



December 25, 2022  
 Service of Lessons and Carols and Holy Communion

**We Prepare For Worship**

Organ Prelude

Preparing our hearts:

*The sun of righteousness has dawned with healing in his wings.*  
*Malachi 4:2*

\*Processional Hymn *Oh come, all ye faithful* #159

Welcome and Announcements

The Call to Worship The Rev. Dr. Heather Vais

Leader: For unto us a child is born

**People: to us a son is given.**

Leader: His name will be called Wonderful counsellor, mighty God,

**People: the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.**

Leader: Let us worship God.

**PWS&D Christmas Day Insert** Julie and George Meek

Solo canticle *Glory to God in the Highest* Lucas Kuipers

Prayers of Adoration and Confession

Assurance of Pardon

Minister: The peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

**We Listen for God's Word**

Scripture lesson Isaiah 9:2,6-7 Doreen Murray  
 Solo anthem *Of the Father's love begotten* LK  
*(Corde Natus Ex Parentis)*

Scripture lesson Isaiah 11:1-3a, 4a, 6-9 Lorraine McBride  
 Solo anthem *Es ist ein Ros entsprungen* LK  
*(Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming)*

Scripture lesson Luke 1:26-35, 38 Clare Mezes  
 \*Hymn *The angel Gabriel from heaven* #156

Scripture lesson Luke 2:1, 3-7 Julie Meek  
 Solo anthem *In the bleak mid-winter* Neil Murray

Scripture lesson Luke 2:8-16 Jasmine Low  
 Solo anthem *Quelle est cette odeur agréable?* LK

Scripture lesson Matthew 2:1-12 Julie Meek  
 Solo anthem *Il est né, le divin Enfant* LK

Scripture Lesson John 1:1-14 The Rev. Dr. H. Vais

\*Praise Time *Christmas Offering* (green insert)

**We Respond to God's Word**

Prayers of the People

Invitation to the Table

Offering of Tithes and Gifts

\*Doxology #830

Apostle's Creed (please see pew card or hymn book) #539

\*Dedication of Offering and Elements

\*Communion Hymn *Let all mortal flesh keep Silent* #542

The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving (green insert)

The Breaking of the Bread

Distribution of the Elements (please come forward as able)

Prayer after Communion

Prayer for Christmas (in unison) **Almighty God, you have shed upon us the new light of your incarnate Word. May this light, enkindled in our hearts, shine forth in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.**

\*Benediction

\*Hymn *Hark! the herald angels sing* #139

Organ Postlude The Shepherds' Farewell Berlioz

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 \*If you are able, please stand

*Welcome*

We welcome everyone here today. We hope that you feel comforted in our fellowship and that you leave here refreshed and inspired in your personal life.

Whether you are simply visiting or actively seeking a worshipping community, we look forward to responding to you. You are invited to fill out a pew card.

# A Christmas Prayer

by Robert Louis Stevenson

Loving Father,  
Help us remember the birth of Jesus,  
that we may share in the song of the angels,  
the gladness of the shepherds,  
and worship of the wise men.

Close the door of hate  
and open the door of love all over the world.  
Let kindness come with every gift  
and good desires with every greeting.  
Deliver us from evil by the blessing  
which Christ brings,  
and teach us to be merry with clear hearts.

May the Christmas morning  
make us happy to be thy children,  
and Christmas evening bring us to our beds  
with grateful thoughts,  
forgiving and forgiven,  
for Jesus' sake.

Amen.



## THORNHILL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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Minister: Rev. Dr. Heather Vais

Director of Music Ministry: Vacant

Church Office Administrator: Nadine Calfa

Office Hours: Tuesday – Friday from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm

Custodian: Delacey Graham

**Duty Elder: Russell Morden**

## Office Closure

The office will be closed between Christmas and New Year.

We will resume regular office hours starting

Tuesday January 3, 2023.

Phone messages and mail will be checked regularly.

If this is a pastoral emergency, please contact  
Rev. Heather on her cell phone #416-949-3465.

Have a happy, healthy and safe holiday.

## UPCOMING WEEK'S EVENTS AT A GLANCE

**Tuesday December 27, 2022**

7:30 pm Board of Managers Meeting via Zoom

**Thursday December 29, 2022**

7:30 pm Book Club Meeting via Zoom

**Sunday January 1, 2023**

11:00 am Worship Service – *New Year's Day*

## 2022 Donations

### TODAY IS THE LAST SUNDAY

for donations to be counted and eligible for a 2022 tax year receipt, **OR no later than in the mail slot in front of the church on Friday December 30th.** Donations received after that time will be part of your 2023 donations.

## Thank you

A special welcome to our guest soloist, **Lucas Kuipers**.

Thank you also to Neil Murray and to all our readers.

### Notes about the music today

#### Glory to God in the Highest

This hymn is one of the oldest hymns regularly sung as part of Christian worship. In many churches it is generally sung whenever Communion is celebrated. The hymn begins with the words that the angels sang when announcing the birth of Christ to shepherds in Luke 2:14. Other verses were added very early, forming a doxology (a hymn of praise to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit). The setting sung by Lucas is by American church composer David Hurd and part of Hurd's New Plainsong Mass. The setting is sung in many North American Anglican and Episcopal churches.

#### Of eternal love begotten (Book of Praise #163)

"Of eternal love begotten" is an English translation of a Latin hymn written as a poem by Marcus Aurelius C. Prudentius, who lived in the 4th century in northern Spain. The hymn is a confession of faith about the Christ, the eternal Son of God, whose birth and saving ministry are the fulfillment of ancient prophecies (st. 1-3). The final stanzas are a doxology and a reflection on John's visions recorded in the book of Revelation 4-7 (st. 4-5).

Lucas will chant this hymn. Plainsong by definition is unaccompanied music sung in unison in medieval modes and in free rhythm corresponding to the accentuation of the words.

#### In the Bleak Mid-Winter (Book of Praise #145)

For hundreds of millions of Christians, Canadians included, Christmas comes smack in the middle of winter. In the bleak midwinter, to be precise. *In the Bleak midwinter*, in our Book of Praise, at 145, was written as a poem by the English Victorian poet Christina Rossetti. Once set to a melody composed by Gustav Holst, it quickly became popular and has become one of the most well-loved of English carols. It's interesting that this quintessentially English Christmas hymn was written by an Englishwoman of Italian descent set to music by an Englishman of mixed

German, Swedish and Latvian background. Today we are blessed to have our very own Neil Murray sing this favourite carol.

#### Lo, how a Rose e'ver blooming (Book of Praise #151)

Our next solo piece is *Lo, how a Rose e'ver blooming*. The origins of the melody is unknown but the harmonization we will hear was composed by Michael Praetorius, a late 16th century early 17th century German composer.

The rose is often associated with the Virgin Mary, but in the context of this hymn, the reference is to the infant Christ, an ever blooming flower whose fragrance tender with sweetness fills the air. The hymn makes reference to the prophecies of Isaiah, which we interpret as foretelling the incarnation, and to the Tree of Jesse, a traditional symbol of the lineage of Jesus.

**Il est ne (Book of Praise #169)** This is a French carol from the early 19th century. The music predates the lyrics by a century and is also of French origin. A very exuberant piece, we can imagine a group of street musicians and dancers celebrating with joy. Among artists who have recorded this carol are Edith Piaf, the Chieftans, Placido Domingo and Annie Lennox.

**Lord, you were rich (Book of Praise #134)** If you flip to Book of Praise 134, you will find a hymn entitled "Lord, you were rich." The words were composed in the 20th century by an Anglican missionary bishop, Frank Houghton. The words are set to an old French carol from the 18th century, but Houghton's hymn, beautiful as the words are, are wholly unrelated to the words of the French carol.

*Quelle est cette odeur agreeable?* Older English translations of the French carol called were entitled: "**Whence is that goodly fragrance flowing?**"

The first stanza can be translated as:

What is that fragrance, Shepherds?  
How does it ravish with joy our senses five?  
This is the scent of heaven's glory  
Brought to this earth by God's own Son.  
What is that fragrance, Shepherds? How does it  
Ravish with joy our senses five?

The French carol, sung in French, has become part of the repertoire of King's College, Cambridge for their Lessons and Carols at Christmas.



## Praise Time



### Christmas Offering

Over the skies of Bethlehem appeared a star  
 While angels sang to lowly shepherds  
 Three wise men seeking truth traveled from afar  
 Hoping to find the child from Heaven  
 Falling on their knees  
 They bowed before the humble Prince of Peace

*I bring an offering of worship to my King  
 No one on earth deserves the praises that I sing  
 Jesus may You receive the honour that You're due  
 Oh Lord I bring an offering to You  
 I bring an offering to You*

The sun cannot compare to the glory of Your love  
 There is no shadow in Your presence  
 No mortal man would dare to stand before Your throne  
 Before the Holy One of Heaven  
 It's only by Your blood, it's only through Your mercy  
 Lord I come

*I bring an offering of worship to my King  
 No one on earth deserves the praises that I sing  
 Jesus may You receive the honour that You're due  
 Oh Lord I bring an offering to You (REPEAT CHORUS)*

*Oh Lord I bring an offering to You*

Words and music by Paul Baloche CCLI License #993446

## The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

*The prayer opens with thanksgiving for creation and for God's mighty acts throughout salvation history.*

*The people join in the ancient song after these or similar words:*

*... We lift our hearts in joyful praise, singing together:*

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,  
 Heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
 Hosanna in the highest.  
 Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
 Hosanna in the highest.**

*Prayers of thanksgiving continue for the work of Jesus Christ, his life, death, and resurrection and for the institution of the Lord's Supper. The people are invited to "proclaim the mystery of faith:"*

**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

*Thanksgiving continues for the gift of the Holy Spirit. The presence of the Holy Spirit is invoked followed by a doxology and the people say: Amen.*

As our Lord taught us, we now pray:

**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 debts, as we forgive our debtors.  
 Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
 For Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory  
 Forever. Amen**

## Hymn

### Oh come, all ye faithful

Oh come, all ye faithful,  
joyful and triumphant;  
oh come ye, oh come ye  
to Bethlehem.  
Come and behold him,  
born the King of angels:

#### *(Refrain)*

Oh come, let us adore him;  
oh come, let us adore him;  
oh come, let us adore him,  
Christ the Lord.

God of God, Light of light,  
born unto Mary, the virgin blest,  
very God, begotten, not created:

#### *(Refrain)*

See how the shepherds,  
summoned to his cradle,  
leaving their flocks draw nigh  
with holy fear;  
we too will thither  
bend our joyful footsteps:

#### *(Refrain)*

Sing, choirs of angels,  
sing in exultation;  
sing, all ye citizens  
of heaven above:  
'Glory to God  
in the highest!'

#### *(Refrain)*

Yea, Lord, we greet thee,  
born this happy morning;  
Jesus, to thee be  
glory given;  
Word of the Father,  
now in flesh appearing:

#### *(Refrain)*

## Hymn

### The angel Gabriel from heaven

The angel Gabriel from heaven came,  
his wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame;  
'All hail,' said he, 'O lowly maiden Mary,'  
most highly favoured lady: Gloria!

'For know a blessed mother you shall be,  
all generations praise continually,  
your son shall be Emmanuel, by seers foretold,'  
most highly favoured lady: Gloria!

Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head,  
'To me be as it pleases God,' she said,  
'my soul shall laud and magnify God's holy name,'  
most highly favoured lady: Gloria!

Of her, Emmanuel, the Christ, was born  
in Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn,  
and Christian folk throughout the world will ever say:  
most highly favoured lady: Gloria!

## Hymn

### Let all mortal flesh keep Silent

Let all mortal flesh keep silence,  
and with fear and trembling stand;  
ponder nothing earthly minded,  
for with blessing in his hand  
Christ our God to earth descendeth  
our full homage to demand.

King of kings, yet born of Mary,  
as of old on earth he stood,  
Lord of all, in human vesture,  
in the body and the blood,  
Christ will give to all the faithful,  
his own self for heavenly food.

Rank on rank the host of heaven  
spreads its vanguard on the way,  
as the Light of Light, descending  
from the realms of endless day,  
comes the powers of hell to vanquish  
as the darkness clears away.

At his feet the six-winged Seraph,  
Cherubim with sleepless eye  
veil their faces to the Presence  
as with ceaseless voice they cry,  
'Hallelujah, hallelujah,  
hallelujah, Lord most high.'

## Hymn

### Hark! The herald angels sing

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,  
'Christ is born in Bethlehem.'

#### *Refrain:*

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 on earth with us to dwell,  
Jesus, our Emmanuel.

Hail the heaven-born 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 the lost of earth,  
born to give us second birth.