

**First United Church, Mount Pearl Pastoral Charge
Vesper Service, Led by the Youth Group
December 10th, 2023 – 7 pm**

Welcome and Announcements

Call to Worship:

Dear God, as we gather here today, help us to take a moment of rest in our otherwise busy lives to allow this service to resonate deeply within our minds and our hearts.

Help us to rest.

Dear God, allow us to experience the joy that was felt by your people the night of your heavenly son's birth.

Help us to feel the joy.

Dear God, help to fill us with hope for a better future, one in which all of your children spread your word.

Help us to hold hope in our hearts.

Dear God, help us to love one another and embrace our differences so that we may grow stronger together.

Help us to experience your love.

Dear God, help us to find moments of peace in a chaotic world so that we can appreciate all of your gifts.

Help us to observe peace.

Dear God, help us to reflect on the words shared today and all throughout the season of advent. Not only to hear them but enact your teachings into our everyday lives so that together we may work towards a better future.

Help us to reflect. (Moment of silence)

Prayer of Approach: (unison)

As we remain busy with the Christmas season, we ask you God to remind us to be kind to one another, to not focus on the materialistic aspects of Christmas, but rather the love that surrounds us. Remind us to share the love that we are showered in from you, with those around us. Be with us in our hearts and our actions as we take part in the Christmas season, and as we sit here tonight praising you through worship. Amen.

Hymn: Joy to the World **VU 59**

Invitation to Confession:

Our hearts long for God, and we know that we often fall short in God's desire for us, so let us now confess to God the ways we have individually and collectively fallen short of God's grace. Let us pray.

Prayer of Confession: (unison)

Holy One, as we experience the season of Advent, our focus is often pulled from the foundations you've taught us of hope, peace, joy and love. For this we ask forgiveness and for you to remind us what this season is all about as we patiently await the birth of your son. Often we are blinded by the rush of the Christmas season, and we do not take the time to rest and see the beauty in the waiting. Amen.

Assurance of Forgiveness:

Be gracious as God hears our prayers and offers us forgiveness and strength to carry us through the holiday season. God reminds us that it is in the waiting, that hope, peace, joy and love can flourish. **Amen.**

Hymn: It's a Song of Praise to the Maker

'THE LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES'

The Candle of Hope (First Candle)

Hope in Waiting

Lamentations 3:24-26

Romans 15:13

Romans 12:12

Lamentations 3:21-23

(First Candle; Candle of Hope, is lit)

A moment of silence

Hymn: Hope is a Star **VU 7 verse 1 & chorus** (remain seated)

The Candle of Peace (Second Candle)

Peace in Chaos

Luke 2:8-14

Isaiah 54:10

(Second Candle; Candle of Peace, is lit)

A moment of silence

Hymn: Hope is a Star **VU 7 verse 2 & chorus** (remain seated)

The Candle of Joy (Third Candle)
Joy in Hardship

Matthew 2:10-12
Luke 2:9-10
Romans 15:13

(Third Candle; Candle of Joy, is lit)
A moment of silence

Hymn: Hope is a Star **VU 7 verse 3 & chorus** (remain seated)

The Candle of Love (Fourth Candle)
Love in Abundance

John 3:16
1 John 4:7-21

(Fourth Candle; Candle of Love, is lit)
A moment of silence

Hymn: Hope is a Star **VU 7 verse 4 & chorus** (remain seated)

Meditation

Hymn: O Little Town of Bethlehem **VU 64**

Prayers of the People and The Lord's Prayer

Prayer Response: Hallelujah

Lighting the Christ Candle
Christ in Life

John 1:1-5

(Fifth Candle; Candle of Christ, is lit)
A moment of silence

Hymn: Silent Night **VU 67**