

\***BLESSING** (responsively)

May the light that surrounds our Lord's birthplace illumine your spirit and warm your heart. May you be spared, at least for a few hours, the static of the world and enjoy a clear reception of the angelic song.

May the love of God revealed in the holy Child move us to feel and show love for others, especially for any we may find difficult to love. Amen.

\***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE** *Angels We Have Heard on High* (v. 1) #155

\***POSTLUDE**

Please extinguish your candle before exiting and place it in the boxes in back of the sanctuary.

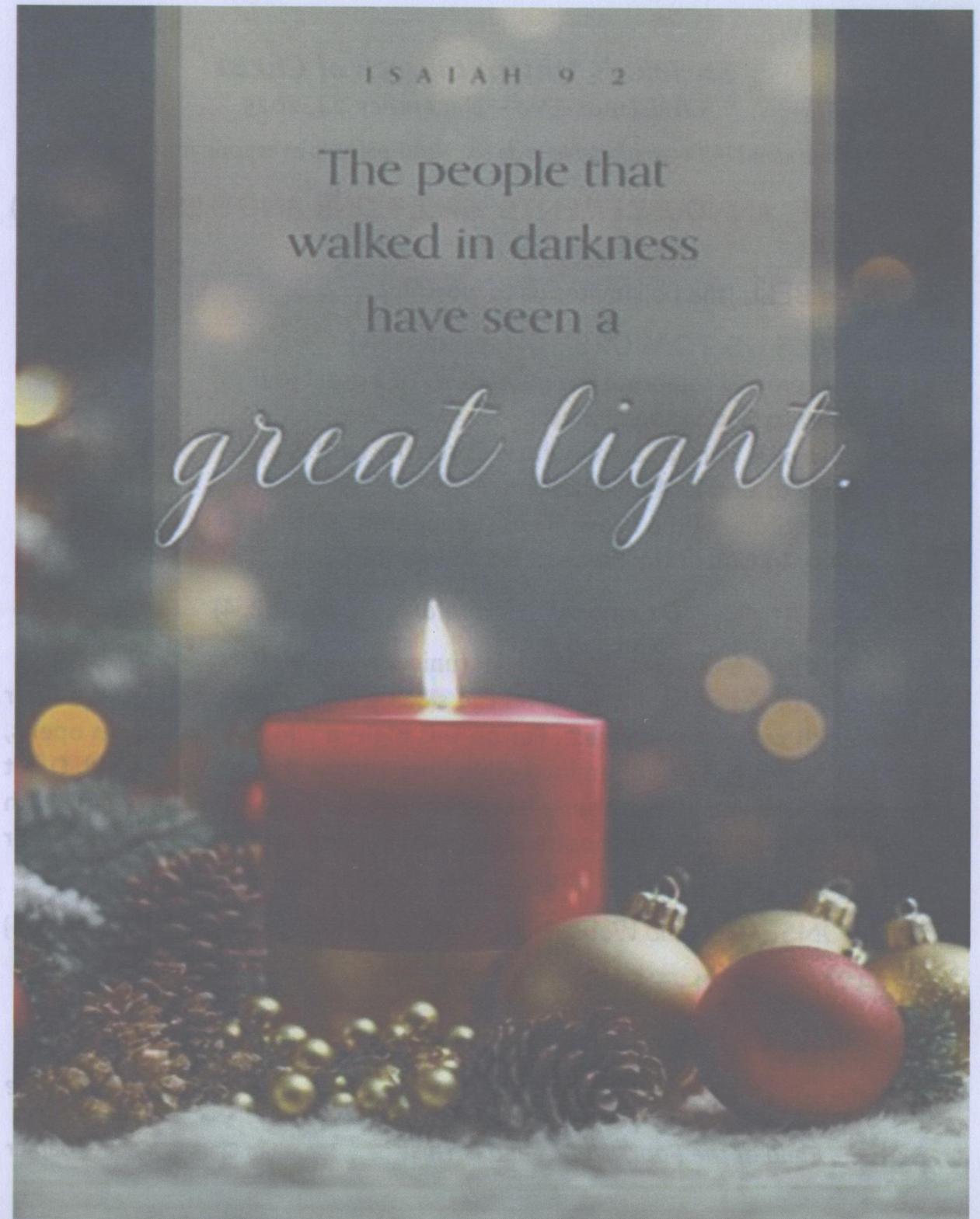
\*\**Who Would Think That What Was Needed* was written by the Iona Community in Scotland, which frequently develops hymn texts through a collaborative process, often employing traditional tunes from the British Isles such as *Scarlet Ribbons*. Pastor Debbie will be making a pilgrimage to the Iona Community when she travels to Scotland next year.

Pastor Debbie is on vacation until January 4<sup>th</sup>.

**MESSY CHURCH** will be held on January 7<sup>th</sup> from 5:30-7:00 pm. The theme is *Follow the Star: The Three Kings*. Lots of activities, crafts, dinner and fun! We will receive "Star words," play "Pin the tail on the camel," decorate crowns and share a King Cake to see who will be "King/Queen" for the evening. Bring the family and join us.

**NEXT SUNDAY** will be a series of Lessons and Carols and worship will be led by Ed Cummings.

**EPIPHANY** will be celebrated during worship on January 4<sup>th</sup>. Epiphany celebrates the arrival of the Magi bringing gifts to the infant Jesus. We will distribute "Star Words" of affirmation during the service.



# St. John's United Church of Christ

Christmas Eve - December 24, 2025

\* Please stand if it is comfortable to do so. **Bold print** is everyone in unison

**WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS, GREET ONE ANOTHER** (be seated)

PRELUDE

CHURCH BELL (the bell invites us to worship)

**GOD CALLS US TO WORSHIP** (responsively)

We come to celebrate the good news of a great joy!

**Glory to God in the highest!**

Unto us is born a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

**Glory to God in the highest!**

A multitude of the heavenly host appeared, praising God:

**Glory to God in the highest! Let us worship God!**

\***OPENING HYMN** *O Come, All Ye Faithful* (vs. 1, 2, 4) #148

\***WE INVITE GOD TO WORSHIP** (unison)

**God of angels and babies, fill the skies with light and song and fill our hearts with wonder and peace. For on this night a window to heaven opens, and we catch a glimpse of an incredible love which descends as a child. O, let the angels sing and let our hearts be softened. Let our lives be filled anew with hope and joy. God of the shepherds and stars, open us to the miracle of your love which enters the world and our lives this holy night. Amen.**

\***RESPONSE** *Who Would Think That What Was Needed\*\** (screen)

**LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH-** Sarah Lowe & Marty Wilson

**ANTHEM** *Breath of Heaven*

**CHILDREN'S MOMENT** *Jesus Loves Me*

**DUET** *Child of the Poor/What Child is This?* Jonathan Clark & Jennifer Garner

## OFFERING INVITATION

Let us give back to God with gratitude for all blessings received.

## OFFERTORY

\***RESPONSE** *In the Bleak Midwinter* (v.4)

\***PRAYER OF DEDICATION** (unison)

**O God, you have given us the greatest gift, your Son. We respond by giving to you what is precious to us. Grant that we might learn to give even more freely, and teach us how giving changes us. Amen.**

## LESSONS AND CAROLS

Scripture	Isaiah 9: 2-7	Brenda Fillingim
Carol	<i>On Christmas Night, All Christians Sing</i>	(screen)
Scripture	Luke 2:1-7	Ed Cummins
Carol	<i>Away in a Manger</i>	#147
Scripture	Luke 2 8-20	Kelly Alexander
Carol	<i>Hark, the Herald Angels Sing</i>	#150
Scripture	Matthew 2: 1-2, 9b-12	John Riggs
Carol	<i>We Three Kings (vs 1 &amp; 5)</i>	#172
Solo	<i>O Holy Night</i>	Jonathan Clark

## MESSAGE

## CANDLELIGHTING CEREMONY

Solo	<i>One Little Candle</i>	
Carol	<i>Silent Night</i>	#145
<b>Charge to the Congregation</b>		

\***CLOSING HYMN** *Joy to the World* #143

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**May the love of God revealed in the holy Child move us to feel and show love for others, especially for any we may find difficult to love. Amen.**

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## Lighting of the Christ Candle

### *Responsive Litany*

During Advent, we have journeyed in faith toward God's wondrous gift.

**O come, let us adore Him.**

During Advent, we stood in awe of God's saving grace.

**O come, let us adore Him.**

During Advent, we recalled the promise of God's spoken word.

**O come, let us adore Him.**

During Advent, we waited for the time of God's glorious arrival.

**O come, let us adore Him**

Tonight, our waiting is over, our eyes are open, and the gift is given.

**O come, let us adore Him**

### *Candle Lighting*

Tonight, we light all the candles. The first **blue** candle calls us to behold the glory of the season with renewed wonder. Advent is a time to be awed by God's redeeming love for the lost and broken. The second **blue** candle calls us to reclaim the promises of God spoken in ages past. As the light fills this room, so the Word of God fills our world with hope for the hurting, peace for the restless, and joy for the heavy-hearted. The third candle is **pink**, an invitation to wait patiently upon the Lord. In a world where we often lack for patience, Advent reminds us to rest in God's timing and trust God's plan. The fourth **blue** candle challenges us to grow in faithful expectation. As people whose faith often becomes tamed to the miraculous, Advent is a time to remember afresh a God in whom all things are possible. Tonight, we light the Christ Candle, rejoicing in the Good News of the holy birth, the hope of humanity and the light of the world.

**Congregation Sings:**

*One Candle is Lit (v. 5)*

#128

*Come, listen, the sounds of God within us ring clear*

*And signs of a cross in the distance appear.*

*The Word once made flesh, yet the Word ever near.*

*One candle is lit for the Christ birth day here.*

Let Us Pray: **Gracious God, thank you for guiding us throughout this season of wonder. We stand amazed at the promise now fulfilled and awed by your humble birth. Help us receive, again, the joy and wonder of the greatest gift offered to the world. We pray this in the name of Jesus Christ, our newborn King. Amen.**