

(▲ Rise in body or in spirit)  
(Responses in bold)

## WE GATHER AS GOD'S PEOPLE

Welcome & Theme Conversation

Acknowledging the Territory

Call to Worship

In this weary world,  
**we sing of joy.**  
In this fragile world,  
**we lift each other up.**  
In this beautiful world,  
**we look for God.**  
In this tender world,  
This is the invitation of faith.  
So in this time of worship,  
may we sing, lift up, look for,  
and hold onto our with-us God.  
**With hope in our hearts, amen!**

Candle Lighting Liturgy

In a weary and worn world,  
how do we begin again?  
Where do we start?  
**Let us begin with tenderness.**  
**Let us begin**  
**with our hearts on our sleeve.**  
**Let us begin**  
**from a place of vulnerability**  
**and hope.**  
**Let us begin with love.**  
Yes, let us start with love.  
Today we light the candles of  
hope, peace, joy, and love.  
**May the warmth of these lights**  
**Be our cornerstone.**  
**May the truth in these lights**  
**help us begin again.**  
May it be so! Amen.

Candle Lighting Song – As We Are Waiting

**As we are welcoming to Christ.**  
**When he is born anew.**  
**We trust your word revealed to us**  
**Today and all year through.**

Prayer of Confession & Words of Forgiveness

**Gracious God,**  
**You paint pictures of what could be,**  
**but we declare those visions impossible.**

**You speak of the lion lying down with the lamb,**  
**but we spout skepticism and uncertainty.**

**You dream of a more just day,**  
**but we poke holes in the plan,**  
**unable to fathom that horizon.**

**Forgive us for losing sight of hope.**

**Forgive us for assuming**  
**that what we see is all there is.**

**Open up our hearts**  
**to see the world as you see it.**  
**Open up our hearts to risk hope,**  
**to dream dreams, and to not be afraid of either.**  
**With gratitude we pray, amen.**

▲ Hymn – Hope Is a Star # 7

## LISTENING FOR GOD'S WORD FOR US TODAY

Ministry of Music – Pieta

A Time of Wondering

Ancient Words – Matthew 1: 18-25 & Luke 1: 46-55

Reflection – The Risk of Hope

Reflective Music

## RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

▲ Hymn – My Soul Cries Out MV # 120

My soul cries out with a joyful shout  
That the God of my heart is great  
And my spirit sings of the wondrous things  
That you bring to the ones who wait  
You fixed your sight on your servant's plight  
And my weakness you did not spurn  
So from east to west shall my name be blest  
Could the world be about to turn?

*Refrain*

*My heart shall sing of the day you bring*  
*Let the fires of your justice burn*  
*Wipe away all tears for the dawn draws near*  
*And the world is about to turn!*

Though I am small, my God, my all,  
You work great things in me  
And your mercy will last from the depths of the past  
to the end of the age to be  
Your very name puts the proud to shame  
And to those who would for you yearn  
You will show your might, put the strong to flight  
For the world is about to turn. R

From the halls of power to the fortress tower  
Not a stone will be left on stone  
Let the king beware for your justice tears  
ev'ry tyrant from his throne  
The hungry poor shall weep no more  
For the food they can never earn  
There are tables spread, ev'ry mouth be fed  
For the world is about to turn. R

Though the nations rage from age to age  
We remember who holds us fast  
God's mercy must deliver us  
from the conqueror's crushing grasp  
This saving word that out forebears heard  
is the promise which holds us bound  
'Til the spear and rod can be crushed by God  
Who is turning the world around. R

▲Affirmation of Faith

We believe in a God  
who gives us reason to hope,  
a God who fills our nights with stars,  
who follows winter with spring,  
who dwells with and among us.  
We believe that this God has dreams for creation,  
dreams of justice like a mighty stream  
and swords that will be beaten into plowshares.  
Therefore, we push cynicism aside.  
We risk vulnerability.  
We hold onto hope,  
and we declare:  
“My soul magnifies the Lord,  
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.

Invitation to Generosity & Prayer of Dedication

Prayers of the People & The Lord’s Prayer

THRESHOLD INTO GOD’S WORLD

The Life and Ministry of the Faith Community

Carol Sing

▲Commissioning & Blessing

▲Song of Dismissal – Hope Shines Through MV # 220

Hope shines as a solitary star,  
Faith is the inner light,  
You and I together  
Mirror the Light of Lights,  
And illumine the pathway home.

Music Takes Us into the World

Liturgy & Artwork – A Sanctified Art

Please note, our services are livestreamed, and photographs may be taken. You are welcome to take photos and video as well.

THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF THE FAITH COMMUNITY

This Week at St James – Dec 22-28, 2024

Day	What	Where	Time
Sunday	Coffee and Conversation	Hall	11:00 am
Tuesday	Christmas Eve, Children	Sanctuary	4:00 pm
Tuesday	Christmas Eve Service	Sanctuary	7:00 pm

**Christmas Poinsettia Project.** These poinsettias are placed in memory and celebration of those we love.

Your **Christmas letter** is available for you at the entrance.

**Ekko Music** invites you to a **Community Sing-Along** Monday, Dec. 23rd at St. James, 6-8 pm; pay what you can - suggested donation of \$7. Come as you are! (Cozy sweaters encouraged!)

**Potluck Breakfast Worship:** Join us December 29 at 10 am.

**Reminder:** Have your donations in by **December 31** to be included in 2024 charitable tax receipts.



If you would like to contribute to our ministry, there are **offering plates** at the back, or you can e-transfer to **stjamesfinancials181@gmail.com** This QR code will take you directly to our Canada Helps page.  
**Thank you for your generosity!**

Directory

**Minister:** Rev. Catherine MacDonald, cell 902-483-1422  
**email:**reverendcatherinemacdonald@gmail.com  
**Music Director:** Dean Bradshaw  
beforethursday@hotmail.com  
**Office (464-8852):** Cathy McLeod  
st.james.dartmouth@gmail.com  
**Facebook (Live 10am Sunday)** [St-James-United-Church](#)  
**Website:** [stjamesdartmouth.ca](#)  
**Food Bank** re-opens on Tuesday, Jan. 7, 8:30 -11

St. James United Church

United by Faith  
Strengthened by Friendship  
Building a Community of Love and Justice



December 22, 2024 @ 10:00 AM

181 Portland Street  
Dartmouth  
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