**Be United Communities of Faith**

**Bridgewater United Church**

**December 31st, 2023 First Sunday After Christmas**

**Minister:** *Reverend Neil McEwen* **Music Ministry Director:** *Barbara Pate*

**West Side United Student Minister:** *Donna Kelly*

**Audio Visual Technician:** *David Walker* **Sound Engineer:** *Evan Rafuse*

*The asterisk (\*) indicates the congregation may stand, as they are able.*

*The print in* ***BOLD*** *is where the congregation participates.*

Prelude

Greeting

**\*Carol:** **# 68 VU – All Poor Ones and Humble**

Welcome

**Invitation to Worship:**

The joys of the Season of Christmas surround us,

**and the festive energy of new life invigorates us.**

Let us join the heavens in sounding the music of the Good News song,

**our hearts and voices ring with the ancient echo.**

Fill this room, fill our hearts with the joy of the Christ’s birth,

**with joy in our hearts and God in our midst, let us worship.**

Lighting of the Christ and Inclusivity Candles

**\*Chorus: B-United**

**Opening Prayer:** (*unison)*

**Dear Manger-Born Child, Emmanuel,**

**born again in our hearts.**

**You take your tiny hands and pull us towards you,**

**and embrace us with love;**

**we are filled with awe, delight and joy,**

**as you radiate God’s light among us.**

**May your illuminating presence guide us;**

**throughout our worship and praise this day. Amen.**

**Carol:** **# 74 VU – What Child Is This (Verses 1 and 3)**

Scripture Reading: Luke 2:1-7

Prayer

**Carols of Choice**

Scripture Reading: Luke 2:8-19

**Carol:** **# 44 VU – It Came upon the Midnight Clear (Verses 1 and 4)**

Scripture Reading: Matthew 2:1-12

**\*Carol:** **# 71 VU – ‘Twas in the Moon of Wintertime**

Prayer

**Carols of Choice**

Offering our Thanks

*We offer our gifts of time, talents and treasures each day.*

*Offering plates are located at the entrance of the Sanctuary*

*where you can place your donations as you arrive or as your leave.*

*The Offering Plates are not circulated among the congregation*

*during our Service of Worship.*

**Carol: # 55 VU – In the Bleak Midwinter**

**Prayer of Dedication:** (*unison)*

**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.**

Scripture Reading: Luke 2:36-40

**\*Carol: # 58 VU – Infant Holy, Infant Lowly**

Scripture Reading: Luke 2:41-52

**Carol: # 91 VU – The First Nowell (Verses 1 and 4)**

**Prayer:** (*unison)*

**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 order our lives in you;**

**through Christ, the Living One. Amen.**

Commissioning

**Benediction:**

Love has splintered the darkness,

**hope is ours once more.**

The light calls us forward;

**we remember the past and walk confidently into the future.**

Go from this place filled with peace and love;

**the Gifts of God for the People of God. Amen.**

**\*Carol:** **# 73 VU – The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy**

Postlude

***CCLI No., 11287624, 20371363***

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***The church bulletins are given to the glory of God,***

***and in loving memory of former members, Marge Dykeman,***

***Mildred Dechman, Maureen Hopkins, Chris Langille, Edna Kent,***

***Lorna Blades, Jean Schmeisser, Reta Saunders, Lillian McDormand,***

***Marguerite Merry, Annette Veinot, Dot Thomas, Ethel Dillon,***

***Barbara Rhodenizer, Marguerite Zwicker, Elizabeth Oickle,***

***Violet Copeland, Magreta Burton and Verna Gass,***

***a gift of Unit 7, UCW.***

**#APlaceWhereEveryoneBelongs**

**#ChooseLove**

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Church Office Hours ~ Tuesday to Friday ~ 10:00am – 12:30pm

Be sure to like and share our Facebook and YouTube page!

Our Church is a **Nut-Free and Scent-Free Church**