

*A Warm Welcome to All Who Gather for Worship*

**Quispamsis United Church**

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MINISTER Rev. Audrey Lounder

ORGANIST Pat Vincent

GREETERS Bob, Faye, Heather, and Dan Sherrard

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTERS Linda Reid, Stacey, Kaitlyn and Alex McIntosh

**December 24, 2009, 6:30pm**

*Christmas Eve*

(Congregational responses are in bold type.)

\*Please stand as you are able)

Prelude: *Sleepers, Awake* (Krebs)

**WE GATHER AS GOD'S PEOPLE**

Introit: *Christmas Is a Feeling*

Sunday Night Jammers

Call to Worship:

The people who have walked in darkness have seen a great light.  
They lived in a land of shadows but now light is shining on them.  
They rejoice in what you have done, O God,  
for you have broken the yoke that burdened them  
and the rod that beat their shoulders.

A child is born to us!

**A child is given to us!**

**One who will be called Wonderful Counsellor!**

**Mighty God!**

**Eternal Father!**

**Prince of Peace!**

**One who will rule as King David's successor,  
with righteousness and justice,  
from now until the end of time.**

Carol: #59VU *Joy to the World*

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**WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD**

Offering Our Gifts to God: *Gesù Bambino* (Pietro a Yon)

Emma Crowley

Dedication: #37 VU

*Gloria, gloria, in excelsis Deo!*

*Gloria, gloria, alleluia, alleluia.*

*Glory to God, glory to God, glory in the highest!*

*Glory to God, glory to God, hallelujah, hallelujah!*

Words: trad. liturgical setting. Music: Jacques Berthier, arr. Darryl Dixon 1987. Music copyright©1978,1980, 1981 Les Presses de Taizé (France). Used by permission of G.I.A. Publications, Inc.\*\*

Offertory Prayer:

**The shepherds came that first night to see the newborn child,  
and offered their hearts in worship and praise. So we come  
bringing our gifts to you this day, Jesus Christ. Receive them  
and bless them in ways beyond our imagining and make your  
love real among those who are in need. Amen.**

Music for Christmas: *Welcome to our World*

Sunday Night Jammers

Litany of Light

\* Hymn: #67VU *Silent Night, Holy Night*

**WE ARE SENT FORTH**

\* Commissioning

\* Choral Benediction

*O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us we pray;  
cast out our sin and enter in; be born in us today.*

*We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;  
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel.*

\*\*Words: Phillips Brooks 1868. Music: Lewis Henry Redner 1868.

Postlude: *Gloria Joy to the World* (Vivaldi, Handel)

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Prayer of Approach and Prayer of Jesus

**We approach this moment of joy, the light of new life before us. A powerless child lies at the centre. Shepherds gather from the fields of work. Wise ones approach with eyes fixed on the hovering star. The celebration begins! We too gather round, from all the earth and every nation, sharing the hope of Christmas. Joined with every race and culture – joined with woman, man and child. Jesus Christ is with us and, born in every place, there is a promise of peace. Let us worship God. Amen.**

Carol: #38VU *Angels We Have Heard on High*

Lighting the Advent Candles  
Advent Chant



**Twilight then darkness, night falls and candles glow  
Gently surrounding us, a new birth of hope.  
Watching, waiting, awakening a new birth of hope.**

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Luke 2: 13-14

The Heavenly Angel Choir

**Prayer: God of all Creation, whose song the Angels sing on this holy Christmas Eve, may the song of your angels endure forever. May the peace which they foretold in the song sung to the shepherds so long ago come to be for all people always. Amen.**

Carol: #43 *Go, Tell It on the Mountain*

Prayer of Confession:

**O God of wonder in ordinary places,  
we wonder if we might have missed your coming,  
had we been there,  
with the stable too out of the way,  
the cradle too makeshift,  
he animals too noisy,**

**the shepherds too crude,  
the carpenter too rough,  
the mother too young,  
the night too dark and cold.  
We confess our preference  
for trumpets and hallelujah choirs,  
for cherub-cheeked children,  
for gift exchanges,  
and shopping day countdowns.  
Forgive us for not seeing you  
in out-of-the-way places and in unlikely people.  
In this season of darkness and light,  
hold us close. Amen.**

**Assurance of Pardon**

Just as the Christ was born into our life, moving past all the barriers and traveling towards the people, so the love of God pursues us past our failings and guilts and brings us grace. On this day of all days, we are forgiven!

**Thanks be to God. Amen.**

**WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD**

Prayer of Illumination

Gospel Reading: Luke 2:1-20

\* Hymn: #58 VU *Infant Holy, Infant Lowly*

A Story for Christmas Eve: *The Last Straw* by Frederick H. Thury

Anthem: *Away in a Manger*



*At Christmas and always,  
may you be blessed by  
God's gift of love.*

*Merry Christmas  
and may God keep you  
safe and well.*

