Riverbend United Church
Exploring Faith, Engaging Community

Christmas Eve, 2024

We Gather on this Holy Night

Prelude

Introit	*Fanfare and Alleluia* (Wagner)		RUC Handbells
*Opening Hymns	*Joy to the World*	vss. 1 & 4	VU 59
	O Come All Ye Faithful	vss. 1 & 3	VU 60

Welcome — Rev. Valerie Oden

Opening Prayer *(in unison)*

Source of life, on this holy night, we gather in awe and wonder to celebrate the good news of great joy for all people. As we come together, we remember the promise that the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness does not overcome it.

We thank you for the gift of this season, for the hope and joy it brings, and for the promise of peace. May the story of Christ's birth inspire us to open our hearts to one another in kindness and compassion. We pray in the name of the babe who grew to change the world, Amen.

Children's Time — *Song of the Stars: A Christmas Story (Lloyd-Jones)*
5:00 p.m.: Christine Ens; 6:30 p.m.: Krystal Manuel

Anthem — *While Shepherds Watched* (Tait & Martin, Paige) — RUC Choir, Paula Roberts, Director

We Share in the Christmas Story

Reflection

Carol	*O Little Town of Bethlehem* (Using Alt. Tune: Forest Green)	vss. 1, 2, 4	VU 64
Reading	Luke 2: 1-7		
Carol	*Infant Holy, Infant Lowly*		VU 58
Reading	Luke 2: 8-12		
Carol	*The First Nowell*	vss. 1 & 2	VU 91
Reading	Luke 2: 13-14		
Carols	*Hark the Herald Angels Sing*	vs. 1	VU 48
	Angels We Have Heard on High	vss. 1 & 3	VU 38
Reading	Luke 2: 15-16		
*Hymn	*Good Christian Friends Rejoice*		VU 35

We Respond with our Lives

Invitation to Offering — E-transfer: contactus@riverbendunited.org

A portion of tonight's offering will go to the No Room in the Inn initiative supporting Youth Empowerment & Support Services (YESS) and to local community outreach initiatives.

Offering Our Gifts — *Arise! (Foil and Martin)* — RUC Choir

Unison Prayer for Peace

O God, on this holy night, we gather to celebrate the birth of the Prince of Peace. We pray for peace in our world, for an end to violence and division, and for the healing of the nations.

We pray for peace in our homes, where love may grow, where forgiveness and kindness may guide us.

We pray for peace in our hearts, that we may be bearers of compassion and the light of love wherever we go. Amen.

Special Music (5:00) *O Holy Night* John Tessier

(6:30) *Do You Hear What I Hear* RUC Handbells
Alison Grant Préville, Director

Sharing the Light

As we share the light of Christ with one another, ***please hold your lit candle upright*** *and let your neighbour tip their unlit candle. Adults, please be mindful of children with candles.*

Hymn *Silent Night* VU 67

Benediction

Postlude Sherry Steele

****denotes you are invited to stand as you are able and inclined***
VU refers to the red hymnal, Voices United

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Thank you to tonight's readers:
5:00 p.m.: *Ray, Diane, and Adam Hawrelak*
6:30 p.m.: *Christine Ens and Joel Fleck*

A portion of tonight's offering will be given to:
The No Room in the Inn ecumenical program supporting Youth Empowerment & Support Services (YESS) for their new roof, and local community outreach initiatives to be determined by need.

Special thanks to John Tessier for singing tonight (5:00). He is an internationally known opera singer, a Juno Award winner and head of voice and opera in the University of Alberta Music Department. He is also married to Sherry Steele, our Accompanist. You can read more about him at johnptessier.com. If you are attending at 6:30, you can hear his solo on the Riverbend United Church YouTube channel.

We celebrate together: This month, we discharged our mortgage from the 2014 addition. Hallelujah! Join us in the new year as we celebrate this occasion. Thank you to all who helped along the way and thank you for your ongoing support of Riverbend United Church.

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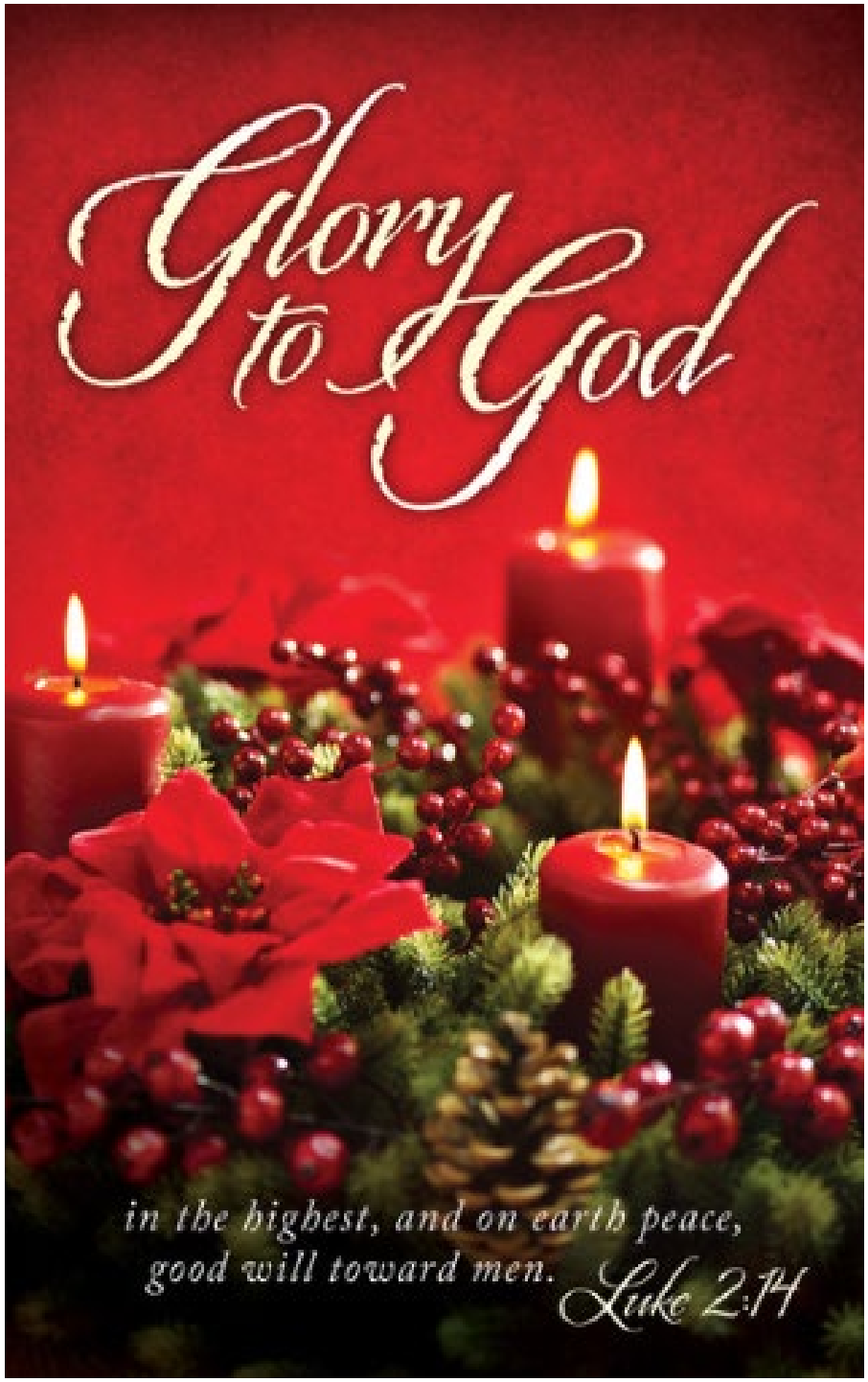
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