



An Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Canada

2016 Dec 25

Christmas 1

Welcome and
Inclusion

We open our hearts and our church family to all people in our community regardless of sexual orientation, age, gender, differing abilities, ethnicity, or economic circumstance. Many people's lives continue to be devastated by hatred, prejudice, and inequality, therefore we stand with those who are adversely affected by injustice, alienation and oppression.



Friends in Christ

Prelude: *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming*, Michael Praetorius

Sicut Cervus, Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina Robertson-Wesley Chortet

Text:

Sicut cervus desiderat ad fontes aquarum, ita desiderat anima mea ad te, Deus. (Psalm 42)

Translation:

Like as the hart desireth the water-brooks: so longeth my soul after thee, O God.

Embracing Our Spirit

Opening Prayer

God of promise: Our darkness hungers for your light; our failure yearns for your mercy; our unknowing seeks your truth. Come to us this day, we pray. Touch our hearts as you did those humble shepherds. Guide us by your light as you did the magi. Empower us as you did the young Mary. Break open our hearts that we may truly be the people for whom the Morning Star shines Amen.

Coming Into God's Presence

God's Holy Word

Scripture: Luke 2: 1-7 & Revelation 22:12, 16 *The Birth of Jesus, the Morning star*

Reflection: *The Rising Star*

Hymn: *Born in the Night, Mary's Child*

Voices United 95

Scripture: Luke 2: 8-17 *Glory Surrounds the Shepherds*

Reflection: *Amazed with the Shepherds*

Hymn: *The First Nowell*

Voices United 91

Scripture: Matthew 2: 1-12 *Visit of the Magi*

Reflection: *Led to the Morning Star*

Hymn: *Midnight Stars Make Bright the Sky*

Voices United 85
Tune #48

Scripture: Luke 2:19 *Mary Pondered these Things*

Reflection: *Enlightened with Mary*

Hymn: *A Light is Gleaming*

Voices United 82

Prayers of the People

Grateful Response

Offering: *Northern Lights*, arr. Ola Gjeillo

Robertson-Wesley Chortet

Text:

*Pulchra es amica mea,
suavis et decora sicut Jerusalem,
terribilis ut castrorum acies ordinata.
Averte oculos tuos a me
quia ipsi me avolare fecerunt.* (Song of Solomon)

Translation:

*Thou art beautiful, O my love,
sweet and comely as Jerusalem,
terrible as an army set in array.
Turn away thy eyes from me,
for they have made me flee away.*

Offertory Hymn

(Voices United 64 vs 2)

**For Christ is born of Mary, and gathered all above
while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love
O morning stars together proclaim the holy birth
and praises sing to God the King and peace to all on earth.**

Prayer of Gratitude

Hymn: *Joy to the World*

Voices United 59

Blessing:

Postlude: *Of Love*, arr. Dede Duson

Robertson-Wesley Chortet

*Following worship, all are invited to the Memorial Hall
for fellowship, and refreshments.*

Music Notes

Many thanks to members of the Robertson-Wesley Choir who make up our "Chortet" (/kôr'tet/) today: sopranos Lara Tang and Shamin Malmas, altos Caroline De Grave and Kalea Turner-Beckman, tenors Andy Melson and Yaroslav Veremenko, and basses Neal Neigel and Matthew McGuigan.

In keeping with the "celestial" theme of this morning's service, Northern Lights was composed by Ola Gjeillo after he observed a brilliant display of aurora borealis in his home country of Norway on a Christmas night, and he attempts to capture the perplexing mix of fear and adoration that our ancestors must have felt witnessing such wonders of nature. The text is taken from the Song of Solomon, which is commonly interpreted in Christianity as an allegorical description of the love of Christ for the Church; however, it is has also been notably interpreted by feminist Bible critics as a positive representation of sexuality and egalitarian gender relations. The text is a dialogue between lovers, suggesting an equal partnership rather than the relationship of inequality between God and the Church that is more commonly described in books of the Bible.

Our prelude and postlude music also describe love from a variety of sources! Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina is a famed figure in the sacred choral world, known for his style of "smooth polyphony" and clear setting of text, which today is an excerpt from Psalm 42. Our postlude comes from Texan composer Dede Duson (b.1938), with text from a collection of poetry by Robert Fulton and Micha Langer, gently reminding us to accept the moments in our lives that offer love.

Cover Image

Cover image: This picture was taken by Albert deVos of a portion of the mural in the Memorial Hall painted by Garnet Thomas, designed by the Children in Kids' Church many years ago at Robertson-Wesley United Church. The picture was taken in 2016.

Worship Thanks

Rev. Lynn Maki, Nancy Heule, Matthew McGuigan, John Helps, R-W Chortet

Minister of Spiritual and Pastoral Care Development: Vacant

Minister of Congregation and Community Development: Rev. Karen Bridges

Director of Music: Tammy-Jo Mortensen

Office Administrator: Tanya Eckenswiller

Facilities Manager: Brad Campbell

10209 – 123 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T5N 1N3

Phone (780) 482-1587 · Fax (780) 482-1580

mail@rwuc.org · www.rwuc.org

