



*St. James United Church*  
**Announcements**  
**January 8, 2023**

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**Upcoming Events:**

- **Sun. Jan. 8<sup>th</sup> – 10am – Worship Service**
  - **Mon. Jan. 9<sup>th</sup> – 1pm – UCW Meeting** (upper room)
  - **Sun. Jan. 15<sup>th</sup> – 10am – Worship Service & Annual Committee Reports Due** (Please e-mail in a Word or Excel document to Heather at [stjamesunited@rogers.com](mailto:stjamesunited@rogers.com))
  - **Tues. Jan. 17<sup>th</sup> – 9:30am – Board Meeting** (upper room)
  - **Sun. Jan. 22<sup>nd</sup> – 10am – Worship Service**
  - **Sun. Jan. 29<sup>th</sup> – 10am – Worship Service & Lunch After Church**
  - **Sun. Feb. 5<sup>th</sup> – 10am – Worship Service**
  - **Sun. Feb. 12<sup>th</sup> – 10am - Annual Congregational Meeting**
  - **Sun. Feb. 19<sup>th</sup> – 10am – Worship Service/Inclement Weather Date for ACM**
  - **Sun. Feb. 26<sup>th</sup> – 10am – Baden Powell Service**
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**THIS WEEK IN WORSHIP... *from Pastor Patricia***



This week I encourage you to take time to read this week's Word of God, slowly, a few times, allowing yourself to dwell on anything that strikes you. This Sunday we will be reading Matthew 2: 1 - 12 The Epiphany of the Lord.

Epiphany means the showing of God to all nations. The Magi follow a star and bring gifts of gold of Gaspar, myrrh of Melchior, and frankincense of Balthasar. And in the Christian tradition they symbolize all nations and every race: "There were three kings and oh what a sight! One was yellow and one was white, and one was black as Epiphany night."

*(Sacred Space Prayer Book 2007)*

Just as the three kings did, will **we** also keep **our eyes** on the Bethlehem star? Is this where we will find ways to sustain our hope in a world that is sometimes indifferent or evil?

*This week: Remembering that we are always in God's presence, take time to imagine Jesus standing or sitting beside you, and say whatever is on your mind, whatever is in your heart, speaking as one friend to another. Pause for just a moment, and feel the gift of this presence of God within you!*

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**'Веселого Різдва' Veseloho Rizdva! Khrystos Rozhdayetsia!**

*Merry Christmas! Christ is Born!*

This is an excerpt from a captivating article written by Iryna Tatarenko called:  
Christmas in Ukraine.

There is a link at the end of this passage should you wish to read more about this year's Christmas thoughts by 4 Ukrainian women.

In addition to sharing this reading, Mary (McGrath) and myself (Pastor Patricia) would like to share a bit of our Ukrainian heritage with you this Sunday.

Both of us continue to recognize the 2<sup>nd</sup> Christmas that was softly celebrated in our homes as we grew up.

Traditional Ukrainian food was prepared and family joined together to honour the heritage we gained from our grandparents and extended family from the "old country". This Sunday, we will share a few tasty Ukrainian foods during fellowship. Please enjoy as we invite you to celebrate Ukrainian Christmas (January 7<sup>th</sup>) with us, and the people of Ukraine.

**Excerpt from "Christmas in Ukraine":** As I finish this article, it is the morning of December 16th. I am in Kyiv, and explosions can be heard outside my window. For the uninitiated, this has become our daily routine. The explosions are the work of air defense as well as the crashing of Russian missiles into residential buildings and critical Ukrainian infrastructure facilities that provide Kyiv residents with light, heat, and water.

Despite the air alarm, the voice of a merchant's megaphone can be heard from under my window: "Potatoes, carrots, onions, apples for sale..." This is also our daily routine, because it allows us to buy fresh organic produce even during wartime. Some neighbors and shop workers from my area can be seen looking out of the shelter, the entrance to which is visible from my window. The merchant's voice is reassuring.

... "I celebrate Christmas on the Eve of January 7th, as my grandmother did, as I come from Ivano-Frankivsk. I will prepare a festive dinner according to my grandma's recipes," says Sonya, designer of the jewelry brand LUTIKI.

(she says) In Ukraine, Christmas is celebrated twice: on December 25th in accordance with the Catholic tradition, and on January 7th according to the Orthodox tradition.

Grandma attributed sacral importance to Christmas," says Sonya. "She demanded sheer silence as she cooked *kutia*, and with her thoughts, she thanked God for the year's harvest. This is because the ingredients in *kutia* make up our agrarian universe: wheat, poppy, nuts, and honey. They signify work, nature, and godliness."

And Sonya brags that this year, she will be able to personally grind poppy seeds for *kutia* in an authentic clay mortar, which she purchased at the antiquities market in Lviv. Cooking is a hobby for her, she says—a ritual. This is what she does during the blackouts. Furthermore, Sonya cooks using products from her own garden.

"This year, I planted roses in my garden to the sounds of military aviation. Analysts make apocalyptic predictions," she says. "I am not afraid of either cold or blackouts. I know that spring will come. I'll see the blooming of the tulips that I specially planted all over the garden." She smiles. "We missed the spring of this year. It did not bring us joy. All three months were an endless February. Now we are already on a new level of endurance. We won't give our next spring to anyone, even if the war continues."...

<https://www.marieclaire.com/author/iryna-tatarenko/>

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**This poetic prayer about God, who is our Faithful Companion, can become a voice to each of us every morning in 2023 as we take time to read it daily and reflect on how we will walk with the Holy Spirit throughout the new year.**



***Faithful Companion,  
In this new year we pray:  
to live deeply, with purpose,  
to live freely, with detachment,  
to live wisely, with humility,  
to live justly, with compassion,  
to live longingly, with fidelity,  
to live mindfully, with awareness,  
to live gracefully, with generosity,  
to live fully, with enthusiasm.***

**Help us to hold this vision  
and to daily renew it in our hearts,  
becoming ever more one with you,  
our truest Selves.**

**Amen.**

(Sr. Joyce Rupp, [Out of the Ordinary](#) Prayers, Poems, and Reflections for Every Season. Notre Dame, Ind. Ave Maria Press, 2010, p.144.)

# New from The United Church of Canada...

Epiphany: A New Year, a New Vision



*Deep Spirituality. Bold Discipleship. Daring Justice.*

**These six words are our call as a United Church.**

**And they go with a vision:**

*Called by God, as disciples of Jesus,  
The United Church of Canada seeks to be a bold, connected, evolving church  
of diverse, courageous, hope-filled communities united in deep spirituality,  
inspiring worship, and daring justice.*

## At This Threshold

God is creating new paths and possibilities,  
as we prepare for where we are going.  
Christ is freeing us with newfound love and grace,  
as we learn from where we have been.  
The Spirit is revealing new dreams to guide us,  
as we start our journey home on a new path.  
We take courage in the assurance that God goes with us;  
we affirm our call to go where Christ leads; and  
we trust the Spirit to guide us through the challenging space between,  
where we have been, where we are, and where we are going.  
Surely, we are not alone.  
Thanks be to God.

—adapted from Prayer for Times of Change, The United Church of Canada

<https://united-church.ca/prayers/threshold>

## **2023 Offering Envelopes**

Envelopes are available from Silvia Leibundgut. Those who would prefer to make their offering by preauthorized remittance, please let Silvia know. These payments are like regular bill payments, and are made electronically, and thus, are not dependant on people being present each week.

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**Please remember to sign your name to our Sunday gatherings lists for Greeter, Lay Reader or Refreshments. The lists are posted in the Upper Room. *Thank you!!***

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**Thank you to this Sunday's volunteers who make our time of gathering meaningful and fun.**

**Greeter:** *Could this have been you?!*

**Lay Reader:** Donna Wice

**Refreshments:** Mary McGrath & Patricia James

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**If there is anyone interested in becoming an official member of St. James United Church,  
please speak to Patricia for details.**

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For updates on the ongoing work of the United Church of Canada, click on the link below for their newsletter entitled "*E-ssentials*"

-- *The United Church of Canada E-ssentials* - September 13, 2022

<https://mailchi.mp/united-church/es220830-1050176?e=fbdc2a77e6>

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***Please submit all announcements via e-mail to Heather Thompson by noon on Tuesdays.  
Thank you!***