



**“Making Room (Hope)”
First Sunday of Advent
November 28, 2021**

GOLDEN EARS UNITED CHURCH

An Affirming Christian Community for Faith, Justice and Music

Prelude

Land Acknowledgement

One: Long ago, all of this land was covered by ice

All: Clothed in a winter without end

One: But God our Creator brought back the warmth

All: Pulling back the ice and revealing this land

One: Plants and animals returned to the land

All: And it was good

One: Then God gave to the land a people

All: And a people to the land

One: To care for one another

All: To live together

One: And in this time, we acknowledge the land, and the people of this land the Katzie and Kwantlen First Nations

All: **We celebrate all who make this place a home**

One: We celebrate the promise of hope

All: **Hope for a future good beyond imagining**

One: When all will share this land together

All: **in hope, peace, joy and love. Amen.**

Rev. Mitchell Anderson

Lanigan-Nokomis Pastoral Charge,

Treaty 4 Territory and the Homeland of the Métis Nation

Greetings and Announcements

We Open the Door

Leader: The pandemic has laid bare, and widened, economic disparity locally and globally. As we enter the Advent season, how can our church become a house where the Holy will be born anew—offering respite, sustenance and care, opening the doors ever wider to those seeking shelter from the onslaught of life? No one church can do it all, but each can do something. As we study the biblical prophets that call us to care for our neighbors and “make room in the inn,” the lonely and frightened spaces within us are filled with the light of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love.

“Hope Waits for Us At Advent”

Words and Music: Amanda Udis Kellser
Used by Permission

**Hope waits for us at Advent
Hope waits for us to trust.
Hope waits for our commitment
to a land that’s kind and just.
In this time of preparation
for the work of co-creation,
for the birthing of a world
that heals the ones in pain.
Hope is born in us again!**

Reader(s):

Today we offer the Light of Hope to illumine the Door of Welcome. May this light shine in our hearts, in our lives, and in our church. May Hope awaken us to possibilities and lead us to greater hospitality. There *IS* room in this Inn, a House for the Holy.

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Hope is born in us again!**

The Peace

**The Hope of Christ be with you!
And also with you!**

Opening Hymn

VU 1

O Come O Come Emmanuel

Words translation John Mason Neale 1851

Used by Permission

Refrain:

**O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel
that mourns in lowly exile here
until the Son of God appear.**

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.**

**O come, O Wisdom from on high,
who orders all things mightily;
to us the path of knowledge show,
and teach us in her ways to go. R**

**O come, O Key of David, come,
and open wide our heavenly home;
make safe the way that leads on high,
and close the path to misery. R**

**O come, O Dayspring, from on high,
and cheer us by your drawing nigh;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
and death's dark shadows put to flight. R**

**O come, Desire of nations, bind
all peoples in one heart and mind;
O bid our sad divisions cease,
and be for us the Prince of Peace. R**

Children's Time

Lesley Fairley

First Reading

Jeremiah 33: 14-16 (CEB)

The time is coming, declares the Lord, when I will fulfill my gracious promise with the people of Israel and Judah. In those days and at that time, I will raise up a righteous branch from David's line, who will do what is just and right in the land. In those days, Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is what he will be called: The Lord Is Our Righteousness.

Special Music

'Living Hope'

Second Reading

Psalms 25: 4-5 (CEB)

*Make your ways known to me, Lord;
teach me your paths.
Lead me in your truth—teach it to me—
because you are the God who saves me.
I put my hope in you all day long.*

Sermon

Prayers of the People

“Make of My Heart a Stable”

Words and Music: Amanda Udis Kellser
Used by Permission

**Make of my heart a stable,
a house for the holy,
a warm and sturdy place
for hope to live and grow.**

In this moment we open the doors of our hearts to honesty before God about what we've done and left undone that created less hope in a hurting world. Let us breathe out this regret... and breathe in the life-giving, for-giving Spirit of God... and out again with the Peace of Christ...

**Make of my life a stable,
a house for the holy,
a warm and sturdy place**

for hope to live and grow.

In this moment we open the doors of our lives to the call of the Spirit, inviting us to become more than we can ask or imagine. Let us breathe out our fear...
and breathe in the courage of the Spirit of God...
and out again, with the Peace of Christ...

**Make of our church a stable,
a house for the holy,
a warm and sturdy place
for hope to live and grow.**

In this moment we open the doors of this church, filling it with the compassion of Christ for all those who are struggling. We remember and pray for...

... those who are suffering economic hardship, and insecurity in basic needs; may abundance be shared.

... those who are suffering mentally, finding it difficult to cope; may paths open and hope return.

... those who are suffering illness or injury; may healing abound.

.... those who are suffering loneliness and isolation; may companionship and solace arrive.

... those who are suffering discrimination, fear and violence; may they know respect, respite, and safety.

May the Advent of Compassion be born in us, reside within us, move outward from us, to meet the needs of the world, making a house for the Holy that is each and every child of God.

We pray this in the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray

The Lords Prayer (music: Lines/Ellington)

**Ever present God
hallowed be your name,
your kindom come,
your will be done
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our debts
as we forgive,
as we forgive our debtors,
save us from our trials
and deliver us from evil
for the kindom, and the power
and the glory are yours,
now and for evermore.
Now and forever. Amen**

A Story of Innkeeping: Offering

Leader: The Bible doesn't actually mention an Innkeeper in the story of Jesus' birth. But this popular notion is alive in our imaginations. Sometimes the Innkeeper gets a bad rap, as if providing substandard accommodations for a family about to go through the birthing process. But what if we saw the innkeeper as someone who, with a full house, thought literally "outside the box" to solve a problem? What if we endeavored to do the same to provide ministry, to "house the Holy" in ways we have not yet imagined? This Advent season we will offer some stories to stir our imagination and stoke the possibilities for our own hospitality.

Lynn Rajala – The Community Supper

Closing Carol

Leader: Each week of this series we will close out with a Christmas Carol. Yes, Advent is not yet the birth of Christ. However, as we prepare our homes and this house for the Holy, we live in the "already and not yet." We already know "the rest of the story" AND YET we have not seen the fulfillment of a time when suffering ends. Today we sing "O Little Town of Bethlehem," a carol written by Phillips Brooks in 1865 after a horseback ride between Jerusalem and Bethlehem on Christmas

Eve An original verse not included in our hymnals is especially poignant for our theme:

“Where children pure and happy
Pray to the blessed Child,
Where misery cries out to thee,
Son of the Mother mild;
Where charity stands watching
And faith holds wide the door,
The dark night wakes, the glory breaks,
And Christmas comes once more.”

Let us remember that it was in a little and unassuming town where the Holy was housed. We too can offer light and hope and a place where “faith holds wide the door,” even and especially in our little town.

Hymn VU 64

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

Words: Phillips Brooks 1868
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**O little town of Bethlehem,
how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by;
yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting light;
the hopes and fears of all the years**

are met in thee tonight.

**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.**

**How silently, how silently
the wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
the blessed gift of heaven.
No ear may hear his coming;
but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still
the dear Christ enters in.**

**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.**

Benediction

May God's Door of Welcome
swing open in your heart and in your life.
May Christ's humble first dwelling
remind you of the plenty you already know.
And may the Spirit lead you into
more possibility and hospitality than you can
imagine,
making room in The Inn for all.
May it be so for you.
May it be so for us.
May it be so for this church.
Amen.

Sending Out

'Go in Peace'

Words and Music: Brian Tate 2012
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Go in peace.
Go in love.
Go in grace from above
Go in light.
Let it shine.
Go in Spirit Divine.