

# First United Church

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November 27, 2022

10:30 a.m.

The First Sunday in Advent



Purpose: Building Relationships,  
Living God's Transforming Love.

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- Is a request to stand in body or in spirit

**Prelude:**

O Come, O Come Emmanuel; What Child is this; I Wonder as I Wander  
arr. Robert Lau

## *Listening as we Gather*

### Acknowledgement of the Land

We acknowledge that we gather on the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee, Anishnawbe and Neutral peoples and acknowledge their stewardship of this land throughout the ages. We seek a new relationship with Original Peoples of this land, one based on honour and deep respect.

We aspire to create a safer space for everyone. We welcome you and the gifts you bring as part of your sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, race, cultural background, or abilities.

### Welcome and Opportunities for Ministry and Fellowship

#### Lighting the Candle of Hope:

Joanne & John McPhail

**One:** Come all you faithful, and come all you doubtful:

**All: we are here to see the light of hope.**

**Another:** As we light this candle of hope, we remember that this light that shines is a light that nothing can overcome. We call to mind and heart all those who are discouraged, those who are facing illness, and those who mourn the loss of loved ones. May we all live in the light of hope.

*The first candle is lit.*

• **All: “Hope Is a Star”** (vs 1)

VU 7

- 1 Hope is a star that shines in the night,  
leading us on till the morning is bright.  
When God is a child there's joy in our song.  
The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong,  
and none shall be afraid

**Prayer of Approach**

• **Opening Hymn** O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (vs 1,2,3,6)

VU 1

- 1 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.
- 2 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
- 3 O come, O come, great God of might,  
who to your tribes on Sinai's height  
in ancient times once gave the law  
in cloud, and majesty, and awe. R
- 6 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

*Listening For God's Word*

**A Story for the Young at Heart**

**Scripture Reading:** Isaiah 2: 1-5

Reader: Nancy Lennox

One: Herein is wisdom.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

**The Gospel:** Matthew 24, 36-44

**One:** This is the Gospel of Jesus the Christ.

**All: Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Ministry of Music:** How Long, the Prophets Cried James E. Cemens

**Sermon:** It's the End of the World as We Know It and, I Feel...?

## *Responding to God's Word*

• **Hymn** Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

VU 473

- 1 Let all mortal flesh keep silence,  
and with awe and reverence stand;  
ponder nothing earthly-minded,  
for with blessing in his hand,  
Christ our God to us approacheth  
our full homage to demand.
- 2 King of kings, yet born of Mary,  
as of old on earth he stood,  
Lord of lords, in human vesture,  
in the body and the blood,  
he will give to all the faithful  
his own self for heavenly food.
- 3 Rank on rank the host of heaven  
spreads its vanguard on the way,  
as the Light of light descendeth  
from the realms of endless day,  
that the powers of hell may vanish  
as the darkness clears away.

4 At his feet the six-winged seraph;  
cherubim with sleepless eye  
veil their faces to the presence,  
as with ceaseless voice they cry,  
Hallelujah, hallelujah,  
hallelujah, Lord most high!

## Time of Offering

### Prayer of Thanksgiving

**One:** The prophets foretold it: The deserts burst into bloom; wolf and lamb lie down together; and a little child shall lead. Angelic messengers delivered news. From that Bethlehem beginning, Jesus spent his life serving others, that all might know the compassionate care of a loving God. Today, Jesus serves us yet again, as we gather at this table prepared for all.

**All: At this table, all are welcome. No matter who you are, no matter where you have been on your life's journey, no matter what you have done or not done, you are welcome here.**

**One:** At this table, God brings wholeness out of brokenness and healing to our world.

**All: Let us break bread together.**

**One:** Blessings be to you, Creator God, who in the beginning brought light and life to all creation and who continues to bring love and light everlasting.

**All: Your song of wisdom echoes through the ages; your ancient promise still brings us hope and so we sing:**

**O holy, holy holy God, God of time and space,      Tune: Forest Green  
All earth and sea and sky above bear witness to your grace.  
Hosanna in the highest heav'n, creation sings your praise.  
And blessed is the One who comes and bears your name always!**

**One:** Dear Jesus of Advent, you remain a sacred mystery to us. You have brought Good News for all, and we, while sometimes afraid find courage in knowing you are here.

**All: We are hungry for your love, which surpasses our understanding; we are thirsty for your spirit that never runs dry. In this meal, nourish our souls and our minds, quench our deepest longings, and forgive our limitations, that we might walk with you every day of our lives.**

**One:** As we prepare to celebrate Christ's birth, we remember the life that this baby lived. We remember how he broke the bonds of human tradition to show all what the banquet of hope could be, as he ate openly with those who were despised and outcasts in his world. And we remember how on the night before died at the hands of the privileged and powerful he shared a meal with his friends.

As they sat at table Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and then passed it to them saying: Take and eat. This bread is the body of life, broken by the world. Eat it in remembrance and hope.

After that, he took the cup, poured it, blessed it, and passed it to them saying: This cup is the sign of the new covenant. Whenever you drink it, remember me.

**All: Remembering the birth of the child in the stable, we remember also his life, his death, and his resurrection. We remember how he poured out his love to all he met. We look forward to his return and the coming age of peace, love, and justice. And in our remembering, we sing the mystery of our faith:**

**Sing Christ has died and Christ is risen, Christ will come again!  
Sing Christ has died and Christ is risen, Christ will come again!**

**One:** Holy God, you poured your Spirit on Mary and she sang words of wonder and hope. Pour out your Spirit upon us and these gifts. As we eat and drink may we know your presence. As we eat and drink may we be opened to new possibilities. May we be strengthened in our time of waiting for peace and justice, so that we will have the courage to follow the Christmas promise. We pray this all in Jesus' name.

**All:**

**Amen, amen, O Holy One!  
Hosanna and Amen!  
Amen, amen, O Holy One!  
Hosanna and Amen!**

## **The Lord's Prayer**

Our Father (and Mother), who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kin(g)dom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,  
for thine is the kin(g)dom, the power and the glory,  
forever and ever. Amen

## **Breaking the Bread and pouring the Cup**

### **Sharing the Bread and the Cup**

**Music during communion:** All Earth Is Waiting

VU 5

- 1 All earth is waiting to see the Promised One,  
and open furrows await the seed of God.  
All the world, bound and struggling, seeks true liberty;  
it cries out for justice and searches for the truth.
- 2 Thus says the prophet to those of Israel,  
'A virgin mother will bear Emmanuel.'  
One whose name is 'God with us', our Saviour shall be,  
through whom hope will blossom once more  
within our hearts.
- 3 Mountains and valleys will have to be made plain,  
open new highways, new highways for our God,  
who is now coming closer, so come all and see,  
and open the doorways as wide as wide can be.
- 4 In lowly stable the Promised One appeared.  
Yet, feel that presence throughout the earth today,  
for Christ lives in all Christians and is with us now;  
again, on arriving, Christ brings us liberty.

## Prayer after the Meal

**All: We thank you God of Christmas promise, God of childlike hope, that you have refreshed us at your table. Send us now into the world that we might shar your promise and your hope and work to bring peace through justice to the whole of your creation. Amen**

**Closing Hymn:** Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending

VU 25

- 1 Lo, he comes with clouds descending,  
see the Lamb for sinners slain!  
Thousand, thousand saints attending  
join to sing the glad refrain:  
hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah!  
God appears on earth to reign.
- 2 Every eye shall then behold you,  
robed in awesome majesty;  
all who jeered, and mocked, and sold you,  
pierced, and nailed you to the tree,  
deeply grieving, deeply grieving, deeply grieving,  
shall the true Messiah see.
- 3 Now redemption, long expected  
see in solemn pomp appear;  
all the saints, by us rejected,  
thrill the trumpet sound to hear:  
hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah!  
See the day of God appear!
- 4 Yea! Amen! Let all adore you,  
high on your eternal throne;  
crowns and empires fall before you,  
claim the kingdom for your own:  
O come quickly! O come quickly! O come quickly!  
Everlasting Christ, come down.

## **Sending Forth and Benediction**

- **Sung Benediction:** Hope Shines as the Solitary Star MV 220

Hope shines as the solitary star.  
Faith is the inner light.  
You and I together mirror the Light of Lights,  
and illumine the pathway home.

## **Recession of the Light and Word**

**Postlude:** Overture to “For Unto Us a Child is Born”, from Cantata 147 J.S.Bach