



Date: December 15, 2024
Advent 3
Theme: Joy

Worship Leaders: Rev. Dr. OhWang Kwon
Musician: Linda Kneeland
Audio/Visual: Amy Kwon
(*: Please, stand if you are able.)

Musical Prelude:

Greetings

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Response: And also with you.

Welcome & Announcements (Care & Concerns)

- **THANK YOU** ~ to everyone who "lent a hand", the cookie walk & bazaar was a big success! The final tally ~ \$2300.00
- **Parking** ~ Please be mindful of the people who need (due to mobility issues) to park close to the church entrance closes ~ close to the lift. Please leave the spots in the alley for Rev. Kwon and the others for those who need it.
- **December 20th** ~ Michele starts Holiday
- **December 22** ~ No Service
- **December 23** ~ Erskine Christmas Eve Service 7:00 pm
- **December 24** ~ Christmas Eve Services ~ Big Valley 4:00 pm, Stettler United 7:00 pm.
- **December 29** ~ Worship Service (Worship Committee) 11:00 am

Acknowledgement of Territory

ALL: God calls us to live with respect and care for all our relations in creation. For thousands of years, Indigenous peoples of this area have tended the earth, and we give thanks for such diligence. We covenant to live and work together, sharing this land in peace and respect as long as the sun shines, the grass grows, and the river flows.

Peter Chynoweth, Cochrane AB

Call to Worship

Joy, in the midst of sadness—is such a thing possible?

We come weary but full of hope that this is true, full of love for one another and God.

Joy, even when things are hard, this joy we seek today.

Let us gather from the four winds seeking God-with-Us.

Let us pray for Emmanuel, for joy, for wisdom to find those glimmers of joy like stars in the night sky.

Whitney Bruno, *Little Current and Sheguiandah U.C.*, *Little Current*, Ont. <https://gatheringworship.ca/prayer/hope-midst-fear-advent-calls-worship-hope-peace-joy-and-love>.

Lighting the Christ Candle

(The first two candles are lit.)

On this third Sunday of Advent, we light this candle symbolizing joy—acknowledging the reality that joy often bursts out of pain, hardship, and failure.

(The third blue (or pink) candle is lit.)

Joy often comes to us unexpected, especially when we have given up on life.

Joy reminds us that nothing is impossible—even in weakness.

In our joy, we are powerfully reminded that God is always near.

Therefore, let us rejoice! Let us sing as we celebrate the good news in this divinely newborn baby.

Hymn *Hope Is a Star* VU#7 (verse three only, being seated)

Words: Brian Wren 1985 Music: Joan Collier Fogg 1987. Words, Music: © 1989 Hope Publishing Company. All rights reserved. Used by permission. Words, Music: Hope Publishing Company. Licensing, OneLicense.net

Rejoice! And again, I say, rejoice!

Our joy erupts from the assurance that God is with us in our here and now.

Let us join prayerfully in thanksgiving and through divine conversation to discover peace and strength for our living and our loving:

Open our understanding, O God, rooted in coming home to

your loving. Free our perceptions from the chains of judgment and of polarization. Equip us to perceive the good in one another while sharing right relations. Inspire us for new life and new vision in all we think and do, that we might dance joyfully in Jesus' name. Amen.

Gord Dunbar, Kincardine P.C., Kincardine, Ont., 2023.

***Hymn *Joyful, Joyful We Adore You* VU#232** Words: Henry van Dyke 1907.

Music: Ludwig van Beethoven 1824. Adapted by Edward Hodges. Descant: © 1979 G.I.A. Publications, Inc. Words, Music, Adaptation: Public Domain. Descant: G.I.A. Publications, Inc. N/A

Opening Prayer

Prayer of Confession

God of all joy, we gather this morning, a people after your own heart, wanting to draw near to you, wanting to declare our devotion to you, wanting to live lives worthy of our calling.

We desire to run this race called life to completion but struggle to find the strength to do so.

We long to feel your Spirit move through this gathering. We long to feel your presence with us in the long, lonely days. We long to notice evidence of your healing power. We long to notice you in the people we meet, in our children and grandchildren. We long for forgiveness and a fresh start. We long for a broken relationship restored.

God of all joy, help us to journey in faith, through these Advent days. Give us the senses to perceive your kingdom come. Give us hearts open to the songs of angels. Give us the courage to share the Good News of a baby born, the answer to all of our longings, the joy of the world.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

*Sue Webb, Faith Centennial U.C., Selkirk, Ont. Susan Silverthorne, First U.C., Wetaskiwin, Alta.
<https://gatheringworship.ca/prayer/god-all-hope-we-gather-morning-people-after-your-own-heart>*

***Hymn *Herald! Sound the Note of Gladness* VU#28**

Words: © 1968 Moir A. J. Waters. Used by permission of Margaret Waters, 134 St. Lawrence Blvd., London, ON N6J 2X1. Music: Adapted from Joachim Neander. Words: Moir A. J. Waters. Used by permission of Margaret Waters. Music: Public Domain. N/A

Prayer of Illumination

ALL: O God, your Word is a lamp to our feet, and a light to our path. Give us grace to receive your truth in faith and love. Amen.

Celebrate God's Presence: A Book of Services for The United Church of Canada, Etobicoke, Ont. The United Church Publishing House, 2000, 44.

Scripture Readings: Linda Kneeland

Philippians 4:4–7: Rejoice in God always! Again, I say, rejoice!

Luke 3:7–18: John warns the crowds, "You brood of vipers!"

Hymn *Tell Me the Stories of Jesus* VU#357 (verse 1) (being seated)

Words: William H. Parker 1885 Music: Fredrick Arthur Challinor 1903 © 1904 National Christian Education Council, 1020 Bristol Rd., Selly Oak, Birmingham B29 6LB, England. Reproduced with permission. Words, Music: National Christian Education Council. CCLI

Congregational Theme/Story Time

Message Rev. Dr. OhWang Kwon

***Hymn *Good Christians Friends, Rejoice* VU#35**

Words: Latin, 14th Century. Translated by John Mason Neale. Music: German melody. Harmony: © 1989 The United Methodist Publishing House. Words, Translation, Music: Public Domain. Harmony: The United Methodist Publishing House. LicenSing, OneLicense.net

Invitation for Offering

***Offering Hymn *Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow* VU#541**

Words: Thomas Ken ca. 1674. Music: Genevan Psalter 1551. Public Domain. N/A

Offering Prayer

ALL: So often, when we present our offerings to you, O God, we do so out of a sense of duty and of responsibility.

On this Sunday of joy, however, we want to celebrate how you bless us each day.

By sharing our abundance—no matter how insignificant it may seem to us—our spirits dance in celebration of how your purpose, through what we give, changes lives.

Bless us by changing our lives too, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Gord Dunbar, Kincardine P.C., Kincardine, Ont.

Prayers of the Gathered Community

The Lord's Prayer

ALL: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom 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. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

***Parting Hymn *Joy Shall Come* VU#23**

-Words: Israeli traditional. Music: Israeli traditional. Arrangement: © 1987 Songs for a Gospel People, Wood Lake Books, 10162 Newene Rd., Winfield, BC, Canada V4V 1R2. Words, Music: Public Domain. Arrangement: Songs for a Gospel People. N/A

***Commissioning and Benediction**

***Threefold Amen (Unison) VU#967**

Postlude: