

First Glance

December 2025

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**ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS AT FIRST UNITED
CHURCH, OTTAWA
NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2025
ADVENT THEME: "Preparing for a New World."**



Beloved,

Advent is here, marking the beginning of the Christmas season, where joyful melodies fill the air. This time calls for preparation, not only for delicious meals and thoughtful gifts but also for grounding and embracing the good tidings wrapped in simplicity.

While many celebrate, others face significant challenges such as joblessness, mental health struggles, the loss of loved ones, illness, and the rising cost of living. These struggles make this season difficult for many, who lament the failures of political systems that significantly impact their lives.

Considering these challenges, we must take a moment to reflect on the importance of sharing with our neighbours, from far and near, whether we have much or little. "The more we share, the more plentiful our bowl will be."

Our theme for this Advent is "Preparing for a New World", a world characterized by justice, hope, peace, joy, and love. It is a space where the broken seek healing, the hungry are fed, the sick are restored, the unsheltered find shelter, and the unclothed receive clothing. We are called to envision this hopeful future as a community of beloved people by noticing what is already occurring within our communities.

It is a time to love deeply and courageously. It is time to dare to reach out, share a smile, and embody kindness. As people of Advent, let us love kindness, live justly and walk humbly.

As we enter this shadowy season, let us do so with sacred longing and preparedness. May we join in joy, courage, and hope for the new light. Let us approach this time with wonder as we wait and watch, knowing that hope is born in the margins; peace is found in the stillness of the night, and love emerges from the unimaginable. Have a wonderful Advent and Christmas! {Rev. Kanana}

Sunday, November 30 - 11:15 a.m.: First Sunday of Advent- Candle of Hope

Reflection in Advent

Our theme is Pause, Pray, Disrupt: Advent Vigil for Palestine. **Wednesdays, December 3rd, 10th, 17th**
Two ways to attend:

- 1) 12 noon - 12:30 via Zoom with the United Church of Canada. Please register using this link: bit.ly/4o74Byi
- 2) 7 pm-7:45 pm, via Zoom with our First United congregation. Led by Kanana, including the earlier recording. To receive the zoom link, please email office@firstunitedchurchottawa.org

Sunday, December 7 - 11:15 a.m.: Second Sunday of Advent - Candle of Peace

Sock Sunday: Bring socks for clients of Centre 507 (see page 2)

Sunday, December 14- 11:15 a.m.: Third Sunday of Advent - Candle of Joy

Christmas Pageant - Pat Lindsey leads the pageant. Intergenerational dramatizes the story of the birth of Jesus on the theme, "What if," A Christmas Pageant, by Rev. Ruth Noble, modified for First United by Joelle Morgan and Pat Lindsey. Nikki will help us find people for props and costumes. Rite 13 leaders Robert G., Jessica W-K, and Ben LC help fill in parts and help with rehearsals on Saturday, December 13, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Sunday, December 21 -11:15 a.m. Fourth Sunday of Advent - Candle of Love

Sunday, December 21 - Blue Christmas 7 p.m. (in the chapel)

This special evening service on December 21st creates a sacred space for those who struggle with loneliness or have experienced any loss. Worship begins at 7 p.m., followed by hot drinks and conversations around the table.

Wednesday, December 24 - Christmas Eve Services

5:45 p.m. Multigenerational Service with stories and communion

8:00 p.m. Candlelight Communion Service

Sunday, December 28

11:15 a.m. Celebrating in the Season of Christmas

Table Liturgy and Pancake Breakfast in the church hall.

Other Important Events in December: Community in Advent:

Saturday, December 6 – 3 p.m.

A Service Remembrance and Action to End Violence Against Women (in the chapel)

I am willing, walk to the mountains; we will keep on walking.

Friday, December 12 - TGIF Christmas Lunch at noon in the Hall

Saturday, December 13- 5- 8 p.m. Lumen Night with women for a Christmas get-together at this shadowy season to connect, regift (less than ten dollars or something from home that you no longer use), share stories of resilience, and meditate with candlelight. We will have a potluck {In the Hall} . Please let us know who will be coming through the office via email: office@firstunitedchurchottawa.org

Sunday, December 14 - A Child's Christmas in Wales- **CANCELLED**

GIVING IN ADVENT

Advent Campaign reminder

Our annual Advent Campaign to support the church budget is underway and the appeal letters are in the mail! Our goal this year is \$40,000 or roughly \$250 per household above and beyond what you give regularly. As always, some people will be able to give more than \$250 and some less and some not at all. Please give as you are able. Thank you.

December 7th is Sock Sunday at First United!

Please bring stuffed socks to church, filled with items for the Centre 507 drop-in. Community members of all genders welcome this Christmas gift. In addition to socks, needed items include razors, feminine products, toothbrushes, toothpaste, deodorant, underwear, lip balm, chocolates and other small treats. Please use large or medium winter-weight socks. One sock can be the "Christmas stocking" (don't forget to include the other socks inside).

Donate to the Westboro Food Bank

Copies of the Advent Calendar Wish List are available at the entrance to the Sanctuary.

Those who are new in faith and those who would like to be updated about faith can contact Kanana, as well as those who would like to be baptized or their children for Sunday, January 11, 2026

Weekly/Monthly Gatherings at First United

If there is a small group gathering you wish to initiate, please contact Nikki at nikki@firstunitedchurchottawa.org and she will help explore and facilitate your hope.

Sunday Morning- Men's Breakfast: The First United Men's Breakfast Gathering is scheduled for Sunday, December 8th at 9:00 AM at the **Newport Restaurant** located at the corner of Churchill Ave and Scott St. Join us for breakfast, fellowship and conversation the second Sunday of each month from September through June. For information, please contact Don Brodie at donmarilynnbrodie@gmail.com

Let's Talk About Mental Health peer support group. We gather on the first Sunday of each month starting at 12:30, in room 7/8, over a bite to eat and some good company. We welcome you whether you come to the service or not, whether you come to First United or not - so come as you are and feel free to bring a friend! We talk about our daily life experiences living with mental illness and give one another support as people going through similar lived experiences. No one is an expert - there are no counsellors or mental health professionals present - just peers supporting peers. Contact Jessica Ward-King at j.ward-king@hotmail.com

Monday Evening- On-line Christian Meditation, occurs at 5:30 every Monday evening on Zoom and is led by Cathy Nobleman, and Liz Tyrwhitt. This gathering is connected with the World Community for Christian Meditation based on the leadership of Laurence Freeman. Contact Liz at liz.tyrwhitt@gmail.com to register and get more resources on Christian Meditation.

Monday Drumming Group: Dec. 1st & 15th at 7 p.m. in the sanctuary. Join with other drummers for a time of connecting spirit with rhythm. Contact Dave Henderson at daveandging@gmail.com

Thursday Evening Choir: meets from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. We sing different styles of music - gospel, folk, classical, pop and more - and rehearse anthems and service music for the 11:15 a.m. Sunday gatherings. We are currently about 35 singers. Contact Marg Stubington at marg@firstunitedchurchottawa.org.

Enneagram Group: the second Thursday of the month, 6:45 – 8:45 p.m. We will be exploring the three Centres that make up the Enneagram Circle (Head, Heart and Body/Gut) and where we might each find our preference. We invite new members to join with us. You will enjoy the folks in the group - the laughter, the relationships, the wisdom. Prior experience is not necessary. For more information and for a brief orientation, contact Dorothy Naylor at done07@sympatico.ca. We invite new participants to begin in November.

Fourth Friday Fellowship with TGIF –The Christmas luncheon will take place on December 12th, 1:30 - 3:00 p.m., Room 5/6. We welcome all interested persons to attend the fellowship tea social to be held on the fourth Friday of each month. For more information, contact maryanne.macd@gmail.com

Environmental Justice Committee- We collaborate to embed the principles and ideas of environmental justice in all aspects of the life of First by engaging the congregation, promoting calls to action and supporting concrete steps to reduce our community's ecological footprint. The committee meets on the first Wednesday of each month. All ages are welcome. Find out more by contacting Wallace Beaton, jwbeat63@gmail.com

Congregational Givings- Update from Church Council: Church Council is grateful to the congregation for the continued support of community life at First and beyond.

To November 30th:	2024	2025	2025 Budgeted to Nov. 28th	Difference
General	\$197,267	\$196,610	\$221,000	(24,390)
Mission & Service	\$ 31,165	\$ 34,106	\$ 33,000	(1,106)

For those who wish to e-transfer a donation, the email is treasurer@firstunitedchurchottawa.org. If you want any information on our pre-authorized remittance, contact Cindy Cherry, our church administrator, at treasurer@firstunitedchurchottawa.org



Members of both First and All Saints came together Thursday, November 22nd, to do a waste audit. Contents of garbage and recycling bins were emptied, sorted, measured, and labelled. Now we have a baseline to measure future progress. Thank you to all who helped out!



Lunch Hour Prayer- Open for everyone regardless of your faith religion or who you are. Every Wednesday in the chapel from noon -12:30 p.m.

HEALING PATHWAY SESSIONS

Healing Pathway practitioners are offering sessions in the Chapel at 1 pm and 2 pm. Healing Pathway works to balance the receiver's energy system to work for healing wholeness. When the field is balanced, healing can occur on all levels, mind, body, spirit. All are welcome to receive with our trained practitioners. For an appointment for in person sessions, contact Howard Clark: HealingPathway2010@gmail.com Evening sessions will be available Tuesdays at 7 pm (and 8 pm if needed).

Every Communion Sunday (usually the 1st of the month but not always) a notice that Healing Pathway practitioners will be offering healing prayer during communion. Individuals or couples or family groups are invited for individual prayer and blessing.

Every third Sunday: Healing Pathway practitioners are offering 5-minute chair session in the chancel following the service. All are welcome, including children.

Page 1= Picture source: <https://united-church.ca/worship-theme/advent-unwrapped#:~:text=Advent%20Unwrapped%202025%3A%20Making%20Things, and%20the%20work%20of%20reconciliation>

Unwrapped%202025%3A%20Making%20Things, and%20the%20work%20of%20reconciliation

Jazz Vespers
Sunday, December 7th 4:30 pm
 Jazz Vespers hosted by All Saints
 and First United – for Advent &
 Christmas: with Yves Laroche &
 Charley Gordon

