

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA

St. Paul's Pastoral Charge
December 5, 2021 – Advent 2

PRELUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Dave Collis

WELCOME

INTROIT: VU #1 “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” (vs. 2)

O come and bring your peace upon the earth;
that even now still longs for its rebirth.
We seek to live and move in your way;
guide us to peace and justice all our days .
Rejoice, rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to us and all things shall be well.

(Adapted version)

GOD GATHERS US TOGETHER

LIGHTING OF ADVENT CANDLE: Mary Hessler

(Candle from previous week is lit.)

One: Arise, take courage, and catch a glimpse of peace!

All: The warm glow of the Divine lightens our hearts.

One: We are together, not alone. In spirit and in community we gather on this second Sunday in Advent in solidarity and with courage to partner for a world full of peace where all of creation will flourish. Our witness is to and for peace.

(A blue candle is lit.)

All: Peace is real and possible. In solidarity we pray, work, and wait for its blossoming.

united-church.ca/worship-theme/advent-unwrapped

OPENING HYMN: VU # 389 “God is Here”

God is here! As we your people meet to offer praise and prayer,
May we find in fuller measure what it is in Christ we share.
Here, as in the world around us, all our varied skills and arts
Wait the coming of the Spirit into open minds and hearts.

Here are symbols to remind us of our lifelong need of grace;
Here are table, font and pulpit; here the cross has central place.
Here in honesty of preaching, here in silence, as in speech,
here, in newness and renewal, God the Spirit comes to each.

Here our children find a welcome in the Shepherd's flock and fold;
Here as bread and wine are taken, Christ sustains us as of old.
Here the servants of the Servant seek in worship to explore
What it means in daily living to believe and to adore.

God of all, of church and kingdom, in an age of change and doubt,
Keep us faithful to the gospel; help us work your purpose out.
Here, in this day's dedication, all we have to give, receive;
We, who cannot live without you, we adore you! We believe!

We pray (in unison)

God-of-peace-and-possibility, kindle in the hearts of all compassion and love so that goodness, just deeds, the common good, and trust may flourish. Bless and gift all with hope for a future of peace built on justice for all. In the name of the Child, the peaceful one.

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Reflections on National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women.

We gather today in sadness to remember all victims of violence, but especially those women and children who have been victims of violence in their own homes. We come together because there is so much violence experienced by the vulnerable ones in our world; countless women, children and men.

Acknowledging the Pain/Confession

We gather together, aware of the violence around us;
The physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect of children;
The murder and beatings of women by their partners;
The forced prostitution of young women and men in Canada other parts of the world;
The sexual harassment of women in the workplace, including the church;
The rape of countless women within marriage and dating relationships;
The further violence perpetrated against women in the court system,
Ritual abuse and mutilation of women and children,
The atrocities suffered by the victims of war.

In naming these forms of evil, we feel grief and pain.

All: My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Loving God, you are the one who desires that all people be brought into right relationship with one another and with you.

Show us the path to justice and fill us with your healing power.

All: May we experience your presence among us as comforter, sustainer and healer.

MV # 78 “God Weeps”

sung by Rev Charmain Bailey Foutner & pianist Lee Amlin of Central UC Windsor

1. God weeps at love withheld,
at strength misused,
at children’s innocence abused,
and till we change the way we love, God weeps.
2. God bleeds at anger’s fist,
at trust betrayed,
at women battered and afraid,
and till we change the way we win, God bleeds.
3. God cries at hungry mouths,
at running sores,
at creatures dying without cause,
and till we change the way we care, God cries.
4. God waits for stones to melt,
for peace to seed,
for hearts to hold each other’s need,
and till we understand the Christ, God waits.

OUR PRAYER OF COMMITMENT (in unison)

We offer ourselves to you, O God our Creator.

We offer our hands.

Use our healing touch to comfort sisters, brothers and children who are afraid.

We offer our eyes and ears. May we see and hear the signs and stories of violence,

So that all my have someone with them in their pain and confusion.

We offer our hearts and our tears as their hurt and sorrow echo within us.

We offer our own stories of violence.

May we be healed as we embrace each other.

We offer our anger. Make it a passion for justice.

We offer all our skills. Use our gifts to end violence.

We offer our faith, our hope, our love.

May our encounters with violence bring us closer to you and to each other.

All this we ask through Jesus Christ who knows the pain of violence. **AMEN.**

Carol Penner, *Healing Waters: Churches Working to End Violence against Women*
(Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada), pp. 147, 149.

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURES: Gospel: Luke 3:1-6

Reader: This is God's Word;

Response: We receive it with thanks.

MESSAGE: "Peace"

SONG OF REFLECTION: "It is Well with My Soul"

When peace, like a river, attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea billows roll;
Whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to say,
It is well, it is well with my soul.

Refrain: It is well (it is well)
With my soul (with my soul)
It is well, it is well with my soul

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

OFFERTORY PRAYER (in unison)

Lord as we bring our gifts today, Help us to use them to usher in your peace among all people; As we give, remind us that you call us to not only to be hearers but also doers of your word Spreading your love as we go. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE:

IN JESUS' NAME WE GO TO SERVE

CLOSING HYMN: VU # 657 "He Leadeth Me"

He leadeth me, O blessed thought!
O words with heavenly comfort fraught!
Whate'er I do, where'er I be
Still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me.

Refrain: He leadeth me, He leadeth me,
By His own hand He leadeth me;
His faithful foll'wer I would be,
For by His hand He leadeth me.

Sometimes 'mid scenes of deepest gloom,
Sometimes where Eden's bowers bloom,
By waters calm, o'er troubled sea,
Still 'tis His hand that leadeth me. (Refrain)

Lord, I would clasp thy my hand in mine,
Nor ever murmur nor repine;
Content, whatever lot I see,
Since 'tis my God that leadeth me. (Refrain)

And when my task on earth is done,
When by thy grace the victory's won,
Even death's cold wave I will not flee,
Since God through Jordan leadeth me. (Refrain)

COMMISSIONING AND BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

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We welcome all who join us in worship today.
Please be reminded that you must register to attend worship
Live-streaming will continue for your viewing on our YouTube channel

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In our thoughts and prayers this week: the Fitzpatrick family,
Henry Atkinson, Fern Gowman, Brenda Marshall, Kaytlyn McKibbon and Margaret Vanderzweerde.

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Welcome back Sunday school children!

Parents, please fill out the registration forms on the table outside the Friendship Room.
Today the Sunday school message will be uploaded to YOUTUBE after worship.

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SUNDAY SCHOOL REQUEST

As we start to open up a bit more - we are in need of help. We need more Sunday school teachers & helpers. If you are interested in being a part of the Sunday school team, please talk to Karen or Brenda Marshall. We would love to have you. Thank you for considering being a part of this ministry. Karen

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The new United Church of Canada **Gifts with Vision** season has launched! Take a look at the website to see all the exciting and meaningful new gifts available this year at giftswithvision.ca



St. Paul's Celebrating Advent and Sharing
God's Message of Hope, Joy, Love and Peace



1. **Family Care Fund-** Donations for the Morrice Family -donations will be collected December 1-December 19.
2. **Adopt-a-Family** - donations accepted December 5- December 17
3. **White Gift Sunday** – Donations December 19 ONLY

For all the details about these opportunities and how to share in these **giving projects** see the **information letter** you received from the church by email on December 1, or by real mail a few days later. That letter also indicates all the details about your donations explaining the when, the where and the how to participate in these Christmas sharing projects.

Thank you for your participation. Lives will be touched by our ministry as a church.

If you have questions or need clarification please contact:

Mary Anne Silverthorn -519-421-3241 home or 519-788-3705 cell or at m.silverthorn@sympatico.ca.

Thank you sincerely for your support.



TOGETHER we can make a DIFFERENCE

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Update from Southwestern Ontario Public Health

On Tuesday, the church office received a memo for the SW Public Health explaining the “Reinstating Capacity Limits” effective December 2-January 10, 2022. This memo was specifically titled Weddings, Funerals and Religious services and indicated that the capacity limits at these services be limited to 50%. Therefore, in summary we have been compliant and will remain complaint with no changes necessary. We will continue to maintain social distancing and MASKS MUST BE WORN.

Even as we finalize plans for our Christmas Eve Service, we will be compliant with the suggested number of 70 -75 max.

Stay tuned for details about pre-registering for the Christmas Eve Service. Those details will be announced in about 2 weeks. Thanks. Mary Anne.

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The funds collected from the special **Green Christmas Giving envelope** totals will be divided between the **Salvation Army and Sakura House**. Sakura House is a residential hospice serving all of Oxford County and is operated by Victorian Order of Nurses. Donations support all costs other than the front-line nurses.



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Donations for 2021 must be received in the office mailbox by **December 25** or on the offering plate **December 26** as this is the last deposit for the year. Thank-you.

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Licenses: Licensing #2401; CCLI: #2395724