

November 28, 2021
First Sunday of Advent

We Gather In God's Presence

Lighting the Candle of Hope

Hope admits that we're not quite there yet.

Hope means that something good is within reach.

Hope calls out to us, so that we come to see the good that awaits.

God is our hope.

Let us taste, see, hear, feel, smell, and anticipate this hope.

May hope be found in a manger and throughout the world.

(The first Advent candle is lit.)

*Written by Eric Hebert-Daly.
Gathering, Advent/Christmas/Epiphany 2021-22,
page 69. Used with permission.*

Response VU 6 "A Candle Is Burning" vs. 1

A candle is burning, a flame warm and bright,
a candle of hope in December's dark night.

While angels sing blessings from heaven's starry sky,
our hearts we prepare now for Jesus is nigh.

Birthdays, Celebrations, and Life and Work of the Congregation – see last page ...

Call to Worship

Your promise dawns upon us, Living God -

We wait expectantly.

Your hope arises among us, Living God -

We wait confidently.

Your Cherished One comes to us, Living God -

We wait in hope.

Hymn VU 31 "O Lord, How Shall I Meet You"

O Lord, how shall I meet you,
how welcome you aright?

Your people long to greet you,
my hope, my heart's delight!

O kindle, then, most holy,
a lamp within my breast,

to do in spirit lowly
all that may please you best.

Love caused your incarnation,
love brought you here to me;
your thirst for my salvation
procured my liberty.

O love beyond all telling,
that led you to embrace
in love all loves excelling
our lost and fallen race.


A glorious crown you give me,
a treasure safe on high,
that will not fail nor leave me
as earthly riches fly.
My heart shall bloom forever
for you with praises new,
and from your name shall never
withhold the honour due.

Opening Prayer (*unison*)

Merciful God, always with us, always coming: we do not know how to prepare for your Advent. We have forgotten how to hope in miracles; we have ignored the promise of your Eternal Realm; we get distracted by all the busyness of this season. Grant us the simple wonder of the shepherds, the intelligent courage of the Magi, and the patient faith of Mary and Joseph, that we may journey with them to Bethlehem, and find the Good News of a child born for us. In the quiet of our hearts, we ask you to make us ready for his coming. Amen.

Anthem: "Go Tell It On The Mountain" by High Valley

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ttDT0Hk9RV4>

Time for the Young and the Young @ 

Hymn VU 2 "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"

Come, thou long-expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free:
from our fears and sins release us,
let us find our rest in thee.

Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art,
dear desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart.

Born thy people to deliver;
born a child and yet a king;
born to reign in us for ever;
now thy gracious kingdom bring.

By thine own eternal Spirit
rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all-sufficient merit
raise us to thy glorious throne.

We Respond to God's Blessing

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession & The Lord's Prayer (VU 959)

God of Love, "A voice cries in the wilderness: prepare the way of the Lord!" Yet we need you, by your Holy Spirit, to prepare a way in our hearts and minds and lives.

Prepare among us, O God, the path of hope.

We pray for those in need of hope today:

all who mourn the death of a loved one; the friends and families of David Gill, Lorne Scott, and Anne Smith.

all who grieve the end of a relationship;

all who are worried for a friend;

all who are anxious for a family member's health;

all who are overwhelmed by illness or disability, especially we pray for:

Cecil Jenkins, Paul McMillan, Marleen Parish, Marlene Smith, Mac Toner, and their loved ones and caregivers, and those known only in the silence of our own hearts ;

all who live in the midst of social collapse;

all who live in the midst of warfare and terrorism;

all who live in grinding poverty.

Prepare among us the path of peace. Grant the peace that comes in following your ways, in practicing justice and righteousness, in sharing our gifts for your sake. We pray for the peoples of this world, that they may be reconciled one to another and learn to live in peace. Especially we pray this week for the people of Brunei, Malaysia, and Singapore.

Prepare among us the path of joy.

We pray for those whose spirits need to be buoyed up and who have forgotten childhood's gift of taking delight in the simple pleasures of life, which come from you, Extravagant God. We pray for Your church that it may be a joy giving light in the darkness. Especially we pray for Dexter-Port Stanley Pastoral Charge, and their minister, the Rev. Elizabeth Stewart.

Prepare among us the path of love.

We pray for all who need to be embraced by love:

all who are cramped and narrowed in spirit;

all who have lost the ability to trust;

all who ache for a signal they are cherished, or even noticed by someone;

all who struggle with a lifetime burden of being told they are not good enough.

O God of hope, peace, joy and love, we honour you now and always, through Jesus, your Anointed One, who taught us to pray, singing,

Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your name,

Your kingdom come,

your will be done on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins

as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil

for the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,

now and forever.

Amen.

Invitation to Invest in God's Mission

God has blessed us with all we need for today and with hope for tomorrow. Through our tithes and our other offerings we share our blessings that they may bring hope to the hopeless.

Offertory Hymn "Bless Our Hands" *to tune Good King Wencaslas*

Bless our hands to do your work, bless the gifts we're bearing.

May your love and grace be known in the way we're sharing.

Peace and hope and joy and love – these are gifts worth giving.

These be ours to pass along when in Christ we're living.

© 2003 Louise Robson. Used with permission.

Prayer of Dedication

Accept, O God, this money offered, these gifts given, the goodwill of our hearts, that disappointment may be turned to hope, and worry may be turned to anticipation, as we await with wonder the birth of Christ.

Amen.

We Listen for God's Word

Responsive Reading: Psalm 25

To you, O God, I lift my soul; my God, in you I trust.

Let me not be put to shame, nor let my foes gloat over me.

**Let none who wait for you be shamed;
let them be shamed who wantonly break faith.**

Show me your ways; teach me your paths.

**Lead me in your truth and teach me;
for you are God my saviour.**

For you I wait all the day long.

Remember your mercy, O God, and your steadfast love,
for they are as old as time.

**Do not remember the sins and offences of my youth.
According to your steadfast love remember me,
for your goodness' sake, O God!**

You are upright and good, O God,
therefore you show the path to those who go astray.

**You guide the humble to do what is right,
and teach the lowly your way.**

All your ways are loving and sure

**for those who keep your covenant
and commandments.**

Scripture: Luke 21:25-36

The Coming of the Son of Man

²⁵ "There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. ²⁶ People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ²⁷ Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in a cloud' with power and great glory. ²⁸ Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

The Lesson of the Fig Tree

²⁹ Then he told them a parable: "Look at the fig tree and all the trees; ³⁰ as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. ³¹ So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. ³² Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. ³³ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

Exhortation to Watch

³⁴ "Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day does not catch you unexpectedly, ³⁵ like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. ³⁶ Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man."

*The other readings for this week are: **Jeremiah 33:14-16; 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13.** You can look them up on www.biblegateway.com and search for the passage.....in any translation you prefer (ie. King James - KJV, NKJV, NRSV, etc.)*

Hymn VU 699 "Live Into Hope"

Live into hope of captives freed,
of sight regained, the end of greed.
The oppressed shall be the first to see
the year of God's own jubilee!

Live into hope the blind shall see
with insight and with clarity,
removing shades of pride and fear,
a vision of our God brought near.

Live into hope of liberty,
the right to speak, the right to be,
the right to have one's daily bread,
to hear God's word and thus be fed.

Live into hope of captives freed
from chains of fear or want or greed.
God now proclaims our full release
to faith and hope and joy and peace.

Meditation: "Interrup....."

We Go Forth in Hope

Hymn VU 29 "Hark the Glad Sound"

Hark, the glad sound! The Saviour comes,
the Saviour promised long:
let every heart prepare a throne,
and every voice a song

He comes, the prisoners to release
in Satan's bondage held;
the gates of brass before him burst,
the iron fetters yield.

He comes, the broken heart to bind,
the bleeding soul to cure,
and with the treasures of his grace
to bless the humble poor.

Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace,
your welcome shall proclaim;
and heaven's eternal arches ring
with your beloved name.

Commissioning and Benediction

O come, desire behind our greatest needs.

O come, Hope of the world.

O come, O come, Emmanuel.

Amen.

Sung Response: VU 35 "Good Christian Friends Rejoice" vs. 2

Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice!

Now ye hear of endless bliss: Joy! Joy!

Jesus Christ was born for this!

He hath opened heaven's door,

and we are blest forevermore.

Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!

Announcements.....

Union:

Dorchester:

ALL:

Scripture Readings for next week: (Dec. 5, Second Sunday of Advent)

Malachi 3:1-4, 10-17; Luke 1:68-79; Philippians 1:3-11; Luke 3:1-6