

**December 11, 2022**  
**Third Sunday of Advent**

**We Gather In Joy**

**Advent Candle Lighting Liturgy**

**Luke 3:7-18**

John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Therefore, bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire."

And the crowds asked him, "What, then, should we do?" In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none, and whoever has food must do likewise." Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you." Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages."

As the people were filled with expectation and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water, but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the strap of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

So with many other exhortations he proclaimed the good news to the people.

**When confusion claims us,  
When we feel unable to do anything right,  
the Holy invites us to be faithful  
and we find Joy.**

*Candle is lit.*

**Hymn** "Light the Advent Candle"

Light the Advent candle three

Think of heavenly harmony

Angels singing "Peace on Earth"

At the Blessed Savior's birth.

Candle, candle burning bright

Shining in the cold winter night

Candle, candle burning bright

Fill our hearts with Christmas light.

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

**Call to Worship**    *based on Isaiah 35:1-10*

Waters shall break forth in the wilderness,  
and streams in the desert.

**And the dry land shall be glad;  
the desert shall rejoice and blossom.**

Those who are fearful of heart hear this,  
“Be strong, do not fear! Your God is coming to save you.”

**In those days, the eyes of the blind and the ears of the deaf shall be opened,  
the lame shall leap like a deer,  
and the tongue of the speechless shall sing for joy.**

There shall be a highway and it shall be called the Holy Way.

**Everlasting joy shall be upon the heads of the children of God;  
those who travel the Way.**

**Hymn VU 820** “Make a Joyful Noise”

Make a joyful noise all the earth!  
Worship your God with gladness.  
Make a joyful noise all the earth.  
Come to this place with a song!

Know that your God has made you.  
Know it's to God we belong.  
And come to this place with joyfulness and praise.

Worship your God with a song!  
Make a joyful noise all the earth!  
Worship your God with gladness.  
Make a joyful noise all the earth.  
Come to this place with a song!

Enter these gates, thanks giving.  
Enter these courts with praise.  
Sing thanks to your God and bless the holy Name.

Worship your God with a song!  
Make a joyful noise all the earth!  
Worship your God with gladness.  
Make a joyful noise all the earth.  
Come to this place with a song!

Ages through endless ages,  
seasons of endless years,  
the love of our Maker ever shall endure.

Worship your God with a song!  
Make a joyful noise all the earth!  
Worship your God with gladness.  
Make a joyful noise all the earth.  
Come to this place with a song!

### **Opening Prayer** (*unison*)

Holiness, we gather in your presence lifting songs of praise and joy. You sprinkle showers into the desert places in our lives, and they blossom like the crocuses in the spring. You offer a shoulder to cry on in our moments of weakness and need. You open our eyes and ears to your wonders that are all around us, raising our spirits, driving away sorrow and sighing. In your presence we discover true joy. For all these things, and more, we offer unceasing praise to you. Join in our worship this day, and in our lives this week. In the name of the joy of your heart, Jesus, we pray. Amen.

### **Joy Expands**

#### **Anthem:**

**Time for the Young and the Young @** 

#### **Hymn VU 58** “Infant Holy, Infant Lowly”

Infant holy, infant lowly, for his bed a cattle stall;  
oxen lowing, little knowing Christ the babe is Lord of all.  
Swift are winging angels singing,  
noels ringing, tidings bringing:  
    Christ the babe is born for all.  
    Christ the babe is born for all!

Flocks were sleeping; shepherds keeping vigil till  
    the morning new  
saw the glory, heard the story, tidings of a gospel true.  
Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow,  
praises voicing greet the morrow:  
    Christ the babe was born for you.  
    Christ the babe was born for you!

#### **Minute for Mission**

##### **Invitation to Invest in God’s Mission**

God’s Word of joy is coming into the world: joy for those who are filled with worry and anxiety, joy for those who are filled with sorrow and remorse, joy for those who are numb to their feelings. We offer up our tithes and offerings to help prepare the way of the Lord, we offer up our gifts as symbols of joy.

##### **Offertory Hymn VU 81** “As with Gladness Men of Old” vs 3

As they offered gifts most rare  
at that manger crude and bare,  
    so may we with holy joy,  
    pure and free from sin's alloy,  
all our costliest treasures bring,  
Christ, to you, our heavenly King.

##### **Prayer of Dedication**

Accept, O God, this money offered, these gifts given, the goodwill of our hearts, that despair may be turned to hope, and sorrow to joy, as we await with wonder the advent of Christ. Amen.

## **Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession & The Lord's Prayer**

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 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, whose role it is to transform lives, especially we pray for Siloam United Church, and their ministers, the Rev Shiela Macgregor, the Rev Ann Corbet, and Marilyn Arthur.

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;.

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, especially the friends and families of Paul McMillan.

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 live in the midst of social collapse;

all who live in the midst of warfare and terrorism;

all who live in grinding poverty;

all who are overwhelmed by illness or disability, especially the Rev. Grafton Antone, the Rev. Jim Evans, Glenda McMillan, and their loved ones, and caregivers, and those known only in the silence of our own hearts .....

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 your children around this world, especially for the people of Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam.

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

**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 sins,  
as we forgive those who sin against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom,  
the power, and the glory,  
for ever and ever. Amen.**

**Responsive Reading:** Luke 1:47-55

My soul proclaims God's greatness.

**My spirit rejoices in God my saviour.**

For you have looked with favour on your lowly servant.

**From this day all generations will call me blessed.**

You have done great things for me, O Most Mighty.

**Hallowed be your Name!**

You have mercy on those who fear you,

**From one generation to another.**

You took action with a strong arm.

**You scattered the proud in their conceit.**

You pulled the mighty from their thrones.

**You raised the lowly.**

You filled the hungry with good things.

**You sent the rich away empty.**

You come to the aid of your servant, Israel,

**for you remembered your promise of mercy,  
to our ancestors, Abraham and Sarah,  
and to their children in every age.**

**Scripture:** Matthew 11:2-11

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What, then, did you go out to see?

Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What, then, did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written,

'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,  
who will prepare your way before you.'

"Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

*The other readings for this week are: **Isaiah 35:1-10; Psalm 146:5-10; James 5:7-10***

**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.

**Meditation:** "Happy vs. Joyful"

### ***We Go To Share Joy With The World***

**Hymn VU 59** "Joy to the World"

Joy to the world! the Lord is come:  
let earth receive her King!  
Let every heart prepare him room,  
and heaven and nature sing, and heaven and nature sing,  
and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

Joy to the earth! the Saviour reigns:  
let all their songs employ,  
while fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains  
repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,  
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows grow,  
nor thorns infest the ground:  
he comes to make his blessings flow  
far as the curse is found, far as the curse is found,  
far as, far as the curse is found.

He rules the earth with truth and grace,  
and makes the nations prove  
the glories of his righteousness  
and wonders of his love, and wonders of his love,  
and wonders, wonders of his love.

## **Commissioning and Benediction**

O come, desire behind our greatest needs.

**O come, Joy of our hearts.**

O come, O come, Emmanuel.

**Amen.**

**Sung Response: VU 45** “Joy Is Now in Every Place” vs. 1

Joy is now in every place,  
Christmas lightens every face;  
now be with us, in your grace,  
O hear us, bless us, holy Jesus.

## **ALL:**

Next Sunday, December 18, we will celebrate Holy Communion. If you are joining online, please make sure you have some form of bread and juice or wine so you can join the celebration.

## **UNION**

The Christmas Eve service will be live in-person and live-streamed at 7 p.m.

The Christmas Day service will be online only at 9:45 a.m.

## **DORCHESTER:**

The Christmas Eve service will be live in-person at 7 p.m., led by the worship committee.

The Christmas Day service will be live in-person at 10 a.m., led by the worship committee.

Please note that these services will not be streamed online. If you wish to join online, please join the service from Union at 7 p.m. on Christmas Eve, or 9:45 a.m. on Christmas Day.

December 25<sup>th</sup> is the last Sunday to make a donation to Dorchester United Church for your 2022 tax receipt.

**Lectionary Readings for next week:** (December 18, 4<sup>th</sup> of Advent, Year A)

Isaiah 7:10-16; Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; Romans 1:1-7; Matthew 1:18-25