

**Sunday December 1, 2024  
First Sunday of Advent**

**We Gather In God's Presence**

**Prelude:** "Advent Prayer" Anthony Giamanco

**Birthdays, Celebrations, and Life and Work of the Congregation**

**Lighting the Advent Candle** Written by Jean Hamilton. Used with permission.

It soon will be Christmas, with snowflakes and bells,  
And turkeys and candy, and songs and noels.

Do you know what it means,

Do you know what it meant?

And are you all ready, a hundred percent?

**I know what it means, I do get your drift,**

**It means I get millions and zillions of gifts.**

**It means Christmas morning right under the tree**

**There's all kinds of gifts and they're mostly for me.**

Oh no you're quite wrong, oh no you're adrift

That isn't my meaning, that isn't my drift

Its not about millions and zillions at all,

It's not about piles of stuff bought at the mall

There's only one gift and it's really quite small

It really is tiny, it really is little,

It's hardly as big as a jot or a tittle.

**Just one little gift, and that is the reason?**

**Just one little gift for the whole Christmas season?**

**That really is awful, that really is bad,**

**I guess you just haven't been reading the ads.**

But wait till I tell you, this news is not sad,

This news is not awful, this news is not bad

This news is the best news that you've ever had

This news is awesome and happy and glad.

The gift is a baby, this gift is a boy,

It's all about love, and it's all about joy,

It's all about hope and it's all about peace

This baby is sweeter than Pieces by Reece!

Now what do you think? Now what do you say?

Do you think this will be such a bad Christmas day?

**That really is awesome, and now I agree,**

**This gift is for everyone, not for just me!**

**I do get your meaning, I do get your drift**

**So let's light a candle to honour the Gift! (*light first candle*)**

**Hymn VU 5** “All Earth is Waiting” Words: Catalanian, Alberto Taulé, 1972. Translation: Gertrude C. Suppe, 1987.  
Music: Alberto Taulé, 1972. Harmonized: Skinner Chávez-Melo, 1988.  
Words, Music © 1993, administered by Oregon Catholic Press.  
Translation © 1989 The United Methodist Publishing House. Harmony © 1989 Skinner Chávez-Melo.  
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All earth is waiting to see the Promised One,  
and open furrows await the seed of God.  
All the world, bound and struggling, seeks true liberty;  
it cries out for justice and searches for the truth.

Thus says the prophet to those of Israel,  
“A virgin mother will bear Emmanuel.”  
One whose name is “God with us,” our Saviour shall be,  
through whom hope will blossom once more within our hearts.

Mountains and valleys will have to be made plain,  
open new highways, new highways for our God,  
who is now coming closer, so come all and see,  
and open the doorways as wide as wide can be.

In lowly stable the Promised One appeared.  
Yet, feel that presence throughout the earth today,  
for Christ lives in all Christians and is with us now;  
again, on arriving, Christ brings us liberty.

**Opening Prayer** (*unison*) Written by **Nora Vedress**, *Calvary U.C., Prince Albert, Sask.* Used with permission.  
Holy God, we enter this time of waiting and pray that your Spirit would shine upon us. Help us pause here,  
to breathe in the hope you offer, to bask in the light of one candle that has the power to shatter the deep  
shadows. As this Sacred time of Advent begins may we be aware, may we be awake, may we be brave  
enough to wait. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

**A New Creed** VU 918

We are not alone,  
we live in God’s world.

We believe in God:  
who has created and is creating,  
who has come in Jesus,  
the Word made flesh,  
to reconcile and make new,  
who works in us and others  
by the Spirit.

We trust in God.

We are called to be the Church:  
to celebrate God's presence,  
to live with respect in Creation,  
to love and serve others,  
to seek justice and resist evil,  
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,  
our judge and our hope.

In life, in death, in life beyond death,  
God is with us.

We are not alone.

Thanks be to God.

**Hymn VU 4** "God of All Places" Words: David Haas, 1988. Music: David M. Young, 1988.  
Words © 1988 G.I.A. Publications, Inc. Music © David M. Young, c/o Jo Young  
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God of all places; present, unseen;  
voice in our silence, song in our midst,  
we are your people, knowing, unsure:  
come, Lord Jesus, come!

God of all dreaming, near and yet far;  
vision unheard of, wake us to rest.  
We are your presence sent forth, afraid:  
come, Lord Jesus, come!

God of all people, dust and the clay;  
breath of a new wind, fire in our hearts,  
light born of heaven, peace on the earth:  
come, Lord Jesus, come!

***We Open Ourselves to Receive God's Blessings***

**Responsive Reading:** Psalm 25

**To you, O God, I lift my soul, to you I lift my soul.**

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.**

**To you, O God, I lift my soul, to you I lift my soul.**

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!**

**To you, O God, I lift my soul, to you I lift my soul.**

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.**

**To you, O God, I lift my soul, to you I lift my soul.**

**Scripture:** Jeremiah 33:14-16 The Righteous Branch and the Covenant with David

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David, and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days Judah will be saved, and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: "The Lord is our righteousness."

*The other readings for this week are: 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13; Luke 21:25-36*

**Meditation:** "Hope"

**Hymn VU 2** "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus" Words: Charles Wesley, 1744. Music: Psalmodia Sacra, 1715.  
Words and Music in the Public Domain.

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 forever;  
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 Grace**

### **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*

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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.

### **Prayer of Dedication**

Written by Gord Dunbar. **Gathering**, Advent/Christmas/Epiphany 2024/2025, page 33.

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Spirited God, your gift of hope comes to us through the advent of the Christ child. We offer these gifts back to you as signs of hope: hope that nestles into your loving presence, hope that these donations may help turn the world upside down, hope that trusts in your promise of transformation, hope that opens us to strangers, to neighbours, to enemies, and to friends. Bless our journey on the Way of Jesus. 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, 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 Shirley Day and Donna Harrison;

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 we pray for:

Anita, Christa, Erin, Kurt, and Ernie Reid, 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 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 Myanmar and Thailand.

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 Richwood United Church, and their spiritual leaders, Michael Shewburg and the Rev. Sarah Horvath..

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,

**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;**

**and 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.**

**Hymn VU 699** "Live into Hope" Words: Jane Parker Huber, 1976. Words © 1981 Jane Parker Huber.

Music: Thomas Williams' Psalmodia Evangelica, Vol. 2., 1789. Harmonized by Lowell Mason.

Words Westminster John Knox Press. Music in the Public Domain.

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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.

### **Commissioning**

O come, desire behind our greatest needs.

**O come, Hope of the world.**

O come, O come, Emmanuel.

**Amen.**

**Response: MV 220** “Hope Shines as the Solitary Star” Words: Catherine Faith MacLean.

Music: Janet Bauman Tissandier. Words © Catherine Faith MacLean.

Music © Janet Bauman Tissandier. OneLicense.net A620168

Hope shines as the solitary star. Faith is the inner light.

You and I together mirror the Light of Lights, and illumine the pathway home.

**Postlude:** “O Come, O Come Emmanuel” Plainsong. Arr. Bernadine Johnston

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Dorchester United Church is invited to join with St. Peter’s Anglican Church for a service of Advent Lessons and Carols on Sunday, December 1 at 2:00 p.m.

**ADVENT STUDY:** *What are you longing for? Join us for a three week Advent Small Group Study about how we can use ‘longong’ as a spiritual gift and activate Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love to the world. Wednesdays at 2 p.m., December 4, 11, 18.*

We (St. Peter’s Anglican and Dorchester United) would like to share the faith that is ours as Christians with the Dorchester community. We ask that you unpack all those nativity sets you have stored away and bring them to the church where we can display them in the lower hall. We will invite the community to come and see them for the cost of a donation of a non-perishable food item for the Dorchester Food Bank. Perhaps we could even set up our outdoor nativity, so people know where to go! Dropoffs can be Wednesday mornings 10-11 am, or Sunday mornings. The display will be open to the public Saturday, December 7, 12 to 4 p.m. and Sunday, December 8, 1 to 3 p.m.

*The Thames Centre Community Choir presents a Concert of Sacred and Secular Song of the Christmas Season at Thorndale United Church on Sunday, December 1 at 2:00 p.m. Admission by donation.*

## **LECTIONARY READINGS:**

December 8 – Second of Advent – Year C – VU 998

Malachi 3:1-4; Luke 1:68-79; Philipians 1:3-11; Luke 3:1-6