

Sunday December 8, 2024
Second Sunday of Advent

We Gather In God's Presence

Prelude: "O Little Town Of Bethlehem" Lewis H. Redner Arr. Bernadine Johnson

Birthdays, Celebrations, and Life and Work of the Congregation

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

So this is the season, so Advent is here,
We're getting ready, the message is clear!
The gifts we're all making,
The cakes we're all baking,
There's no use in faking,
The season is here.

Now wait just a minute,
There's no need to shout,
Are you sure that's what Christmas is really about?

So what about peace, and what about joy,
And what about welcoming Mary's new boy?
Let's stop all our rushing and think about peace,
And two thousand years hoping conflict will cease.

The noise all around us is all about war,
And killing and bombing, as bad as before.
So tell me, please tell me, I hope you are able:
Just what is the message that comes from the stable?

You first must be quiet, before you can hear
The sound of the picture, the folks gathered here
The shepherds and wise men,

The dog and the cat,
The mouse in the corner,
The donkey and rat,
Forgetting their difference,
Forgetting their wrongs

All quiet together,
All getting along,
All hearing the angels,
All hearing their song.
For peaceful means loving,
And this is the thing:

You have to be quiet
To hear angels sing.
So let's light a candle,
A flickering thing
To remind us to listen
The angels still sing. (*light second candle*)

Hymn VU 18 "There's a Voice in the Wilderness" Words: James Lewis Milligan, 1925.

Music: Henry Hugh Bancroft, 1938. © 1938 Henry Hugh Bancroft.

Music © administered by Mr. Brian Burrows on behalf of the Estate of Henry Hugh Bancroft.

Words in the Public Domain.

OneLicense.net A620168

There's a voice in the wilderness crying,

a call from the ways untrod:

prepare in the desert a highway,

a highway for our God!

The valleys shall be exhalted,

the lofty hills brought low,

make straight all the crooked places

where God, our God, may go!

O Zion that bringest good tidings,

get thee up to the heights and sing!

Proclaim to a desolate people

the coming of their King.

Like the flowers of the field they perish,

like grass our works decay,

the power and pomp of nations

shall pass, like a dream, away.

But the word of our God endureth,

whose arm is ever strong;

God stands in the midst of nations

and soon will right the wrong.

God shall feed the flock like a shepherd,

the lambs so gently hold;

to pastures of peace will lead them,

and bring them safe to fold.

There's a voice in the wilderness crying,

a call from the ways untrod:

prepare in the desert a highway,

a highway for our God!

The valleys shall be exhalted,

the lofty hills brought low;

make straight all the crooked places

where God, our God, may go!

Opening Prayer (*unison*) Written by **Nora Vedress**, *Calvary U.C., Prince Albert, Sask.* Used with permission.

We are first called to Hope in you, Advent God. And once our hearts are touched by hope, peace is not far away. Today we pause once again. Here we breathe in hope. Here we open ourselves to the perfect peace you offer. Here we turn our eyes from the busyness of the world that we might glimpse the calmness of your Spirit as we wait. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Ministry of Music: "O Harken Ye" (The Alfred Burt Carols) Words: Wihla Hutson Music: Alfred Burt

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 MV 149 "Peace for the Children" Words and Music: Doreen Lankshear-Smith, 1993. Arr. David Abramsky, 1998.
Words & Music © 1993 Doreen Lankshear-Smith. Arrangement © 1998 David Abramsky.
OneLicense.net A620168 CCLI 11438349

Peace for the children, peace peace.
Peace for the children we pray.
Following the path of One of peace,
we work for healing, we work for peace;
peace for the children today.

Peace for the women, peace peace.
Peace for the women we pray.
Following the path of One of peace,
we work for healing, we work for peace;
peace for the women today.

Peace for the men, peace peace.
Peace for the men we pray.
Following the path of One of peace,
we work for healing, we work for peace;
peace for the men today.

Peace for the nations, peace peace.
Peace for the nations we pray.
Following the path of One of peace,
we work for healing, we work for peace;
peace for the nations today.
Peace for the creatures, peace peace.
Peace for the creatures we pray.
Following the path of One of peace,
we work for healing, we work for peace;
peace for the creatures today.
Peace in the soul, peace peace.
Peace in the soul we pray.
Following the path of One of peace,
we work for healing, we work for peace;
peace in the soul today.

We Open Ourselves to Receive God's Blessings

Responsive Reading: Luke 1:68-79 VU 900

God shall fulfill the promise and bring the people peace.

Blessed be the God of Israel,
who has come to the people and set them free,
who has raised up for us a mighty saviour,
born of the house of the servant David.
Through the holy prophets of old
God promised to save us from our enemies,
from the hands of all who hate us,
to show the mercy promised to our ancestors,
to remember the holy covenant,
the oath God swore to our ancestors, Abraham and Sarah,
to set us free from the hands of our enemies,
free to serve God without fear,
holy and righteous in God's presence,
all the days of our life.

God shall fulfill the promise and bring the people peace.

And you, child,
will be called the prophet of the Most High,
for you will go before the Lord to prepare the way,
to give the people knowledge of salvation
by the forgiveness of their sins.
In the tender compassion of our God,
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,
to shine on those who sit in darkness,
in the shadow of death,
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

God shall fulfill the promise and bring the people peace.

Scripture: Malachi 3:1-4 The Coming Messenger

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the Lord in righteousness. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord, as in the days of old and as in former years.

*The other readings for this week are: **Philippians 1:3-11; Luke 3:1-6***

Meditation: "Peace"**Hymn VU 682** "O Day of Peace" Words: Carl P. Daw, Jr., 1982. Music: C. Hubert Parry, 1916. Arr. Janet Wyatt, 1977.

Music and Arrangement © 1916, 1944, 1977 Robertson Publications. Administered by Theodore Presser Co.

Words © 1982 Hope Publishing Co. OneLicense.net A620168 CCLI 11438349

O day of peace that dimly shines
through all our prayers and dreams,
guide us to justice, truth, and love,
delivered from our selfish schemes.
May swords of hate fall from our hands,
our hearts envy find release,
till by God's grace our warring world
shall see Christ's promised reign of peace.

Then shall the wolf dwell with the lamb,
nor shall the fierce devour the small;
as beasts and cattle calmly graze,
a little child shall lead them all.
Then enemies shall learn to love,
all creatures find their true accord;
the hope of peace shall be fulfilled,
for all the earth shall know the Lord.

We Respond To God's Grace**Invitation to Invest in God's Mission**

The world is crying out, "Where is the God of peace?" By offering our gifts, we give our answer. The impact of what we offer, through this church and through Mission & Service, loudly proclaim that the God of peace is active in this church and around the world. Please be generous. Our tithes and offerings will be received.

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

Words © 2003 Louise Robson. Used with permission. Music in the Public Domain.

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.
Used with permission

On this Sunday when the Advent candle of peace flickers and dances, may you breathe in us, O Spirit, blessing what we offer in our dance with difficult partners, as we share your choreography of peace. In our giving, may we be inspired to follow the Way of Jesus in our living, learning to perceive the image of Christ across divides. 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 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.

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 Bill Latham, and Shirley Day;

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:

Ina, and their loved ones and caregivers,

and those known only in the silence of our own hearts

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 44 "It Came upon the Midnight Clear" Words: Edmund Hamilton Sears, 1849.
Music: Richard Storrs Willis, 1850. Words and Music in the Public Domain.

It came upon the midnight clear,
that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth
to touch their harps of gold,
"Peace on the earth, good will to all,
from heaven's all gracious King!"
The world in solemn stillness lay
to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come
with peaceful wings unfurled,
and still their heavenly music floats
o'er all the weary world;
above its sad and lowly plains
they bend on hovering wing,
and ever o'er its Babel sounds
the blessed angels sing.

Yet with the woes of sin and strife
the world has suffered long;
beneath the angel strain have rolled
two thousand years of wrong;
and warring humankind hears not
the love song which they bring.
O hush the noise, and cease your strife,
to hear the angels sing.

For, lo! the days are hastening on,
 by prophets seen of old,
 when with the ever circling years
 shall come the time foretold,
 when peace shall over all the earth
 its ancient splendours fling,
 and the whole world send back the song
 which now the angels sing.

Commissioning

Prepare the way of the Lord.

Fill in the valleys, bring the mountains down low.

Make the crooked path straight and the rough way smooth.

Set your feet on the pathways of our God,
 and may God walk them with you,
 as guide and companion.

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

Peace 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: “The Holly and The Ivy” Traditional. Arr. Robert Schultz

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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 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.

LECTIONARY READINGS:

December 15 – Third of Advent – Year C – VU 998

Zephaniah 3:14-20; Isaiah 12:2-6; Philippians 4:4-7; Luke 3:7-18