



**Westminster United Church  
Worship Service for December 8th, 2019**

Today's Worship Leader is Rev. Helen Reid  
2<sup>nd</sup> Advent and Communion Service

*"We are a faith community building relationships with God, all people, and our world."*

CALL TO WORSHIP:

Today is the second Sunday of Advent.

**Today is the day we light a candle for peace.**

Peace—much needed in our world!

**This is one of the reasons we have come...**

**to bring our longing for peace:**

**for our world, for ourselves,**

**and for those we love.**

A part of our Advent waiting is waiting for peace.

**We are waiting to welcome the One who is  
the Prince of Peace—Jesus.**

We worship God together

(Kim Falls, Bethel Emily P.C., Omemee, Ont.)

✠Lighting of the Advent Candle: **"Of the Father's Love"**

***Choir:** Of the Father's love begotten, ere the world began to be. He is  
Alpha and omega, he the source, the ending he*

**All: Emmanuel, Emmanuel, evermore and evermore, Emmanuel**

*Responsive Litany (Read by member of the Congregation with Congregation  
responding)*

*During Advent, we wait for the promised in scripture*

**And he will be called the Prince of Peace**

*We wait for the one who can turn discord into perfect harmony.*

**And he will be called the Prince of Peace**

*We wait for the one who can replace hate with love, and anger with understanding.*

**And he will be called the Prince of Peace**

*We wait for the one who can replace division with unity, and war with peace.*

***And he will be called the Prince of Peace***

*Candle Lighting (Read by Member of Congregation)*

*Today we light two candles. The first candle reminds of us of our hope in knowing Jesus as our Wonderful Counselor. We light the second candle to remind us that Jesus came to earth as the Prince of Peace. In a world filled with conflict and discord, we pray for harmony and unity as we work towards claiming the promise of peace on earth.*

***Choir*** *Let the heights of heaven adore him; angel hosts his praises sing: powers, dominions bow before him, and extol our God and King*

**All: Emmanuel, Emmanuel, evermore and evermore, Emmanuel**

OPENING PRAYER:

**God, we thank you for prophet voices  
heralding the dawn of justice and peace,  
even though our skepticism is great  
and our dreams are small.  
Nurture our longing  
for a better day and a better way;  
coax the fragile shoots and tend them  
until they rise up to greet you at your coming.  
In the season of grey and cold,  
let there be a greening among us.  
We pray in the name of Jesus,  
righteous branch from David's line. Amen.  
(John Moses, Aylesford U.C., Aylesford, N.S.)**

SHARING THE PEACE

†OPENING HYMN: **"Morning has Broken" (VU 409)**

PRAYER OF CONFESSION:

**Many voices clamour for our attention.  
We are good at tuning them out,  
hearing only what we want to hear.  
That includes your voice, God—  
especially your voice—  
for you often speak to us from the wilderness,  
from places beyond the margins  
of our comfort and security.  
And you speak through strange messengers,  
people who don't fit in,  
prophets like John the Baptist, prophets like Jesus.  
We are good at tuning them out.  
Forgive us; heal our spiritual numbness.  
Soften our senses and help us to feel.  
Make us eager to answer your call  
to follow the path of life.  
(John Moses, Aylesford U.C., Aylesford, N.S.)**

WORDS OF ASSURANCE:

It is God who forgives all our sins  
and brings us healing.  
It is God who redeems us  
and crowns us with steadfast love and mercy.  
Bless the Lord, O my soul.  
**Thanks be to God.**

INVITATION TO PRAYER: **"To Us All, to Every Nation" (VU 694 vs 1)**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE:

**"The Lord's Prayer" (Sung VU 959)**

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION:

Our world is so fast-moving, God of the Journey, and we are offered so little time to be still.  
**Today, as we pause in worship, we take the time our hearts and souls need to stop on the road of life and listen for your voice.**  
Communicate with us in ways and words that we can understand.  
**Bathe us in your light so that we might have clarity for the road ahead of us.**

Grant us the wisdom we need to claim this sacred time with you as our centre. We pray this in Jesus' living name.

**Amen.**

*(Nora Vedress, Calvary U.C., Prince Albert, Sask.)*

SCRIPTURE READINGS:

ISAIAH 11:1-10

One: This is the witness of Israel.

**ALL: Thanks be to God for the Word.**

ANTHEM: "What Child is This?"

MATTHEW 3:1-12

One: This is the Good News of Jesus Christ.

**ALL: Praise to Christ, the Living Word.**

SERMON: "The Road to Peace"

LIFE AND WORK:

OFFERTORY:

†DOXOLOGY: "**In the Bleak Midwinter**" (VU 55 vs 4)

†DEDICATION:

John was ready to change his lifestyle.

**John was not afraid to take on the powerful.**

John spoke directly of the evil he saw.

**John saw that unfaithfulness to God had consequences.**

John recognized God's chosen one, Jesus.

**With humility, John made way for Jesus.**

Loving God,

**as we present our Advent gifts,**

**our time, our talent, and our money,**

**enable us, with humility,**

**to liberate our prophetic spirit**

**and the prophetic spirit of our church. Amen.**

*(David Sparks, Summerland, B.C.)*

†A NEW CREED: **(Spoken)**

## **COMMUNION**

Invitation to the Table

As our Lord has come to us and is coming again, so we come together to his table both in memory and in hope. Jesus meets us here in common elements, that we might be transformed into his likeness and eat with him in his kingdom.

**Hymn: "Love divine, all loves excelling" VU 333**

The Lord be with you

**Also with you.**

Lift up your hearts

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to God.

**It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Prayer of thanksgiving:

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Mighty God, Creator of heaven and earth.

**You created light out of darkness and brought forth life on the earth. You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life. When we turned away, and our love failed, your love remained steadfast. You delivered us from captivity, made covenant to be our sovereign God, and spoke to us through your prophets. You loved the world so much you gave your only Son Jesus Christ to be our Saviour**

As the angels sang glory to you in the highest and peace to your people on earth, so with your people on earth and all the company of heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,**

**heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

Holy are you and blessed is your firstborn, Jesus Christ. As Mary and Joseph went

from Galilee to Bethlehem and there found no room, so Jesus went from Galilee to Jerusalem and was despised and rejected.

**As in poverty of a stable Jesus was born, so by the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection you gave birth to your church, you delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and you made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.**

As your Word became flesh, born of a woman, on that night long ago, so on the night in which he gave himself up for us he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said: "Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

**When the supper was over he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, said, "Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."**

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

**Christ has died. Christ has risen. Christ will come again.**

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us, gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and wine. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other; and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ come in final victory and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Through your Child Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy church, all honour and glory is yours, Mighty God, now and forever.

**Amen**

Breaking the Bread and pouring the Wine

Distribution of the Elements.

POST COMMUNION PRAYER:

**Merciful God, you have included us in this meal that welcomes all. May what we have received here enlarge our hearts. Help us to include the stranger, the different one, the awkward one, in our caring. May your grace overflow through us to bless and tend the world you love, for Jesus' sake, Amen.**

✠CLOSING HYMN: "On Jordan's Bank" VU 20

✠ADVENT II CLOSING PRAYER:

Gracious Lord, we thank you for your promises and for coming to earth to be our Prince of Peace. As we continue our Advent journey, grant us the peace that comes

from trusting in your grace, and relying on your promises. Help us spread this peace through all the things we say and all the things we do. We pray this in the name of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

**Amen**

†CHORAL AMEN **"May the Grace of Christ" (VU 963)**

†COMMISSIONING:

God invites us out into the world to live the love of Christ.

**We answer that invitation with all our heart and soul.**

The Spirit draws us into our community to knit together wounds and bind up those who are hurting.

**We open our hearts to those excluded, drawing the circle of God's embrace ever wider.**

God's grace fills us with courage, strength, energy and passion.

**We dance, we rejoice, we celebrate the good news, singing the story of Emmanuel, God with us.**

*(Gord Dunbar, Kincardine P.C., Kincardine, Ont.)*

SENDING FORTH: **"I am Walking a Path of Peace" (MV 221 2X)**

*Postlude*

Announcements

*Help us keep the air we share healthy and fragrance-free. The chemicals used in scented products can make some people sick, especially those with asthma, allergies and other medical conditions. Please do not wear perfume, cologne, aftershave and other fragrances.*

**The Peace Candle is lit as a reminder to Christians to pray for and work for world peace.**

**"What Child is This?" a Christmas Cantata** by Joel Raney will be performed by Music Director Chris White and the WUC Choir at Westminster United Church on Sunday, December 15<sup>th</sup> at 10:25 am

Westminster United Church will be holding a Christmas Eve Candlelight Service on Dec 24<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m.

## **Carolfest Tonight**

An evening of choirs and carols Sunday, December 8 @ 7p.m.

Featuring: Choirs from: St John's Presbyterian Unity & Victory Lutheran, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Gordon Memorial, Westminster & Fifth Avenue Memorial United The Veiner Center choir, the TarTones, Ella Hoffarth, Josie Hoffarth, Expandable Brass, and Darrel Maier

Fifth Avenue Memorial United Church 476 – 4 St SE Admission is free / Refreshments to follow

"The Tartones", Medicine Hat's community 4-part Men's Chorus, invite you to join us once again for our annual "Christmas with the Tartones" Concert. Wednesday, December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at 7:30p.m. St. John's Presbyterian Church, 504 – 2St. S.E. Director: Judith Dickie. Accompanist: Alison Kapcala. Free-will offering. Social-time following concert in church Hall.

***December 22<sup>nd</sup> will be Fun Christmas Attire Sunday! Don on some festive socks, a tie, sweater and come to Westminster United Sunday Worship with a with merry spirit!***

If you are looking for a pithy, short, free, on line, daily devotional based on the scriptures for the coming week, go to <http://www.uhill.net/daily/> There you will find a scripture verse and commentary and prayer to enhance your meditations.

This resource comes from University Hill congregation in Vancouver where Heather Carlson was as a student, The writer of the season of Advent material is Janice Love. She and her husband Jim, lived in Medicine Hat the summer of 1997 when Jim was the student minister at Fifth Avenue Memorial. The devotions are in conjunction with the Christian Calendar which is also produced by this congregation. This calendar starts with the first Sunday in Advent and is divided, not by months but by the Seasons of the Christian year. This resource can be ordered via the congregation's website. I recommend both, Helen Reid.

We will be getting the donations envelopes printed up in the next week. So this is a perfect time for you to sign up for PAR (Pre -Authorized Remittances) and then you won't need envelopes. Your donation comes out of your bank account on the 20th of every month and into Westminster United bank the same day. No looking for the right bills or to write up a cheque each week. It is worry free.

Contact Donna Scharf at 403-526-1555 or e-mail [rdscharf@shaw.ca](mailto:rdscharf@shaw.ca) for information.

***The 2020 UCC Calendars are now here! Calendars are available in the office priced at \$6.00***

***Drive a Friend to Church***

*We are fine tuning our Drive a Friend plan. If you are interested in this volunteer opportunity, please contact Pat Marshall or Jennifer in the church office.*

*Donations at Coffee Time during December are allocated to the UCW*

***Assisting with the Service This Morning***

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<b><i>Elder-in-Charge:</i></b>	Marg Taylor
<b><i>Greeters:</i></b>	Betty & John Sidlick
<b><i>Scripture Reader:</i></b>	Marg McCulley
<b><i>Minutes For Mission</i></b>	Donna Scharf
<b><i>Coffee Hosts:</i></b>	Dan & Rose Connor
<b><i>Sound :</i></b>	Joyce Shannon
<b><i>PowerPoint Operator:</i></b>	Kathy Nielsen
<b><i>Wheelchair Lift Operator:</i></b>	Pat Evans

# *What Child Is This?*



*A Christmas Cantata by Joel  
Raney  
Performed by Chris White & The  
Westminster Choir  
December 15<sup>th</sup> @ 10:25 a.m*