



Westminster United Church
Worship Service for December 15th, 2019
Today's Worship Leader is Anna-Marie Hancock
3rd Advent Christmas Cantata

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

LIFE AND WORK:

CALL TO WORSHIP: **(Gathering, Eric Hebert-Daly)**

What a joy to be gathered together as one people in all our diversity
In all our strengths and weaknesses, with all our different perspectives, with all our different voices.

We use that diversity to help experience the world as God intended it,
by empathizing with our neighbours, by acknowledging the light that burns brightly within the stranger.

We come to this place with our humanity, seeking to encounter other human beings,

Human beings that share our fears and our hopes, our insecurities and our desires, our passions and our pain.

Thanks be to God for giving us the ability to see the world more fully through the divine spark that connects us all. Let us worship as one people.

Amen

✠Lighting of the Advent Candles: **"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 Prince of Peace

We wait for the one whose power has no limits and whose strength knows no end.

And he will be called Prince of Peace

We wait for the one whose everlasting light can illuminate the darkest night.

And he will be called Prince of Peace

We wait for the one whose mercy never ends and whose faithfulness endures forever.

And he will be called Prince of Peace

Candle Lighting (Read by Member of Congregation)

Today we light three candles. The first candle reminds us of the hope found in knowing Jesus as our Wonderful Counselor. The second candle reminds us that Jesus came to earth as the Prince of Peace. As we light the third candle, we reflect on the joy found in serving a God who is almighty, all-knowing and always present. Continuing our advent journey, we joyfully celebrate a Saviour who brings hope and a God whose power and strength have no limits.

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: **(Gathering, Wanda Winfield)**

Gracious God, we seek your Spirit,
So that we may understand the gifts you give us.
We receive your call upon our hearts,
A call to love and serve others
As Jesus loved and served among us.
We ask for your wisdom,
That we might have the mind of Christ within us.
Amen

✠OPENING HYMN: **"My Soul Cries Out" (MV 120)**

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

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE:

“The Lord’s Prayer” (Sung VU 959)

CANTATA: **“What Child is This?”**

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING:

As Mary opened her mind and heart to follow God’s plan let us open our minds and hearts to give God’s plan a chance to continue. The offering will be received.

OFFERTORY: The Westminstrels: **“Mary Did You Know?”**

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

†DEDICATION: **(Gathering, Wanda Burse)**

O Holy One, these are the gifts of our hands and our hearts shared in thanksgiving. May they touch the lives of many. Where brokenness resides, may our gifts offer healing and wholeness. In the name of Christ. Amen

†A NEW CREED: **(Spoken)**

†CLOSING HYMN: **“The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy” (VU 73)**

†ADVENT III CLOSING PRAYER: **(Gathering, Jeanne Wilson, adapted)**

As we journey along the Advent road, anticipating Jesus, may we reach out to each other in love and support, reach out to others as Jesus would and reach to God for strength and guidance. We pray this in the name of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ

May the blessings of God the Creator, Son and Holy Spirit be with each one of us as we leave this place.

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

†COMMISSIONING: **(Gathering, Robin Wardlaw)**

In all that you do, all that you love, and everywhere you journey, let justice, kindness, and humility be your guides. Go now in peace.

SENDING FORTH: **"I am Walking a Path of Joy" (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.

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

"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 18th, 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 22nd 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 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

<i>Elder-in-Charge:</i>	Jeanette Zollner
<i>Greeters:</i>	Pat & Stan Bohnet
<i>Coffee Hosts:</i>	Doug & Velma Pearson Boyd Alcock
<i>Sound :</i>	Pat Evans
<i>PowerPoint Operator:</i>	Kathy Nielsen
<i>Wheelchair Lift Operator:</i>	

A white dove is shown in flight, positioned to the left of the word "Joy". The dove is white with its wings spread, flying towards the right. The word "Joy" is written in a bold, red, serif font with a gold outline and a slight shadow effect. The dove's tail feathers are visible at the bottom left.

Joy