



**Westminster United Church**  
**Worship Service for December 22nd , 2019**  
Today's Worship Leader is Rev. Dr. Bob Cruickshank  
Advent IV

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

CALL TO WORSHIP:

**One:** God has called us to be together, in this place, at this time.

**Many:** We come with our whole selves to worship our God who has created and is creating.

**One:** We are called to wait for the coming of the Christ child.

**Many:** We ready our hearts to receive the gift of love during this Advent time of waiting.

**All:** May the Spirit's power move through our worship today.

✠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 one promised in scripture.

**And he will be called Everlasting Father.**

We wait for the one who knows our deepest thoughts and fulfills our every need.

**And he will be called Everlasting Father.**

We wait for the one who will love us unconditionally, as apparent loves a child.

**And he will be called Everlasting Father.**

We wait for the one whose grace and mercy will never end.

**And he will be called Everlasting Father.**

*Candle Lighting (Read by Member of Congregation)*

Today we light four candles. The first candle reminds us of our hope in knowing Jesus as our Wonderful Counsellor , the second candle reminds us that Jesus came to bring peace into the world. The third candle reminds us of our joy in proclaiming

Christ as almighty God. We light the fourth candle to celebrate the fact that God loves us in spite of our flaws, as a parent loves a child. In an unsettled world, surrounded by confusion, we affirm that our Everlasting Father is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

**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: **(Unison)**

**Loving, creating God, you break into these short winter days with your words of hope, your words of warning, your words of birth.**

**Come, Lord Jesus, into our waiting hearts with your promise of new life, your presence of comfort, your words of hope.**

**Like Mary, may we be willing to receive you.**

**Like Joseph, may we be ready to accept you.**

**Like Christ, may we be willing to rejoice in the fulfillment of your promised coming.**

**Come, Lord Jesus. Amen.**

SHARING THE PEACE

✠OPENING HYMN: **"All the Earth is Waiting" (VU 5)**

PRAYER OF CONFESSION: **(Unison)**

**God of hope, in these shortening days when we lose touch with the light, thank you for Jesus.**

**In these hectic days when we lose our tempers over trivial matters, thank you for Jesus.**

**God of joy, in these frenzied days when we lose sense of what we really need to be happy, thank you for Jesus.**

**God of love, in these busy days when we lose our focus on what is important, thank you for Jesus.**

**For Jesus brought your light and hope into the world. O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord. Amen.**

*(a time of silent reflection)*

WORDS OF ASSURANCE: **(Leader)**

We hear the words of the prophets – for unto us a child is born. The desert will burst forth in bloom; comfort will be among us.

Even as we wait – we can trust in God’s future, we can trust in God’s healing forgiveness, this day and always. Thanks be to God! Amen.

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:

In the law and the prophets, you have revealed your will and your wisdom, and in Jesus Christ, you have revealed your love. Open our hearts and minds by the inspiration of your Spirit so that we might hear what you are saying to the church. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS:

ISAIAH 7: 10-14

One: This is the witness of Israel.

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

ANTHEM:

MATTHEW 1: 18-25

One: This is the Good News of Jesus Christ.

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

SERMON:

†HYMN: **“Tomorrow Christ is Coming” (VU 27)**

MINUTES FOR MISSION: **“Healing and Teaching”**

LIFE AND WORK:

OFFERTORY:

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

†DEDICATION: **(Unison)**

**This is the season of gifts given and received, gracious and generous God. You have revealed yourself and your love to the world in the Child of Bethlehem, born to be Lord of all.**

**Our givings and receivings seem so insignificant in comparison. It is our good intentions and motivations that matter.**

**Lord, this Christmas again, we truly offer you in service, all we are and have. Use us and our resources to make our world a welcoming and loving place for Jesus. Amen.**

†A NEW CREED: **(Spoken)**

†CLOSING HYMN: **"Herald! Sound the Note of Gladness"** (VU 28)

†ADVENT IV CLOSING PRAYER:

Gracious Lord, we thank you for your promises and for coming to earth to be our Everlasting Father. As we continue our Advent journey, remind us of your eternal and steadfast love, and help us radiate this love to others by our actions, and with our words. We pray this in the name of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ Amen.

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

†COMMISSIONING/BENEDICTION:

**One:** Christmas comes every time we see God in other persons.

**Many:** The human and the holy meet in Bethlehem...and in Medicine Hat.

**One:** For someone on earth will see the star.

**Many:** Someone will hear the angel voices.

**One:** Someone will run to Bethlehem.

**Many:** Someone will know peace and goodwill.

**All:** And Christ will be born! Hallelujah!

(based on material by Ann Weems. "Reaching for Rainbows")

†SENDING FORTH: **"I am Walking a Path of Love"** (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 December 24<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m.**

**Gordon Memorial will be holding a Christmas Eve Service at 5 pm on December 24<sup>th</sup>**

**FAM will be holding a Christmas Eve Service with Communion at 8pm on December 24<sup>th</sup>.**

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

***The Westminster Church office will be closed on December 25<sup>th</sup> and re-open on January 6th***

Donation envelopes are available in the Church Office. 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. Contact Donna Scharf at 403-526-1555 or e-mail [rdscharf@shaw.ca](mailto:rdscharf@shaw.ca) for information.

#### ***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>	Murray Bell
<b><i>Greeters:</i></b>	Rose & Dan Connor
<b><i>Scripture Reader:</i></b>	Janice Croissant
<b><i>Minutes For Mission</i></b>	Jen Zollner
<b><i>Coffee Hosts:</i></b>	Jenn Oster & Brenda Ashman
<b><i>Sound :</i></b>	Hayley McKim
<b><i>PowerPoint Operator:</i></b>	Pat Marshall
<b><i>Wheelchair Lift Operator:</i></b>	Pat Evans

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