

## Music Prelude

## Welcome

### Acknowledgement of the Land

We are gathered on the treaty territory of the Huron Wendat, Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe people and their ancestors. May we honour their history, spirituality, culture and teachings and uphold our responsibilities as treaty partners.

## Announcements

### Chorus "Long-Awaited One"

#### Call to Worship

Advent is a season of waiting.

**But we do not wait alone.**

God is with us.

**We gather with those who have seen the signs,  
heard the whispers, felt the tugs in their hearts.**

God is birthing Peace into this waiting world.

**Let us worship with hearts open to Peace.**

### Lighting of the Advent Candles

Today is the second Sunday in Advent. Last week, we lit the first candle in our Advent wreath, the candle that represents hope. *(The first purple candle is lit)*

Today we light the second candle, the candle that represents peace. We live in a world longing for peace: a peace that will squash wars and the devastation wars leave behind, a peace that will reunite families, a peace that will restore minds and spirits.

**Knowing the need for peace in our lives  
and in this conflicted world,  
we light this candle as a symbol of the peace  
promised in the coming of Jesus.**

*(The second purple candle is lit)*

### Congregation Sings (#34 VU)

**Come now, O God of peace, we are your people;  
pour out your spirit that we be one body.**

Faithful God, we thank you for choosing to fulfill your promise of a Saviour in the wonderful, yet so natural way of entering our world as a baby. May the preparations we make for Jesus' birth be pleasing to you. **Amen**

## Hymn: "People, Look East" #9 VU verses 1, 2, 4, 5

People, look east. The time is near  
of the crowning of the year.  
Make your house fair as you are able,  
trim the hearth and set the table.  
People, look east and sing today:  
Love the guest is on the way.

Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare,  
one more seed is planted there:  
give up your strength the seed to nourish,  
that in course the flower may flourish.  
People, look east and sing today:  
Love the rose is on the way.

Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim  
one more light the bowl shall brim,  
shining beyond the frosty weather,  
bright as sun and moon together.  
People, look east and sing today:  
Love the star is on the way.

Angels, announce with shouts of mirth  
Christ who brings new life to earth.  
Set every peak and valley humming  
with the word, the Lord is coming.  
People, look east and sing today:  
Love the Lord is on the way.

### **Prayer of Approach**

God, we cling to the hope that Love is indeed on the way  
because we live in a world where peace seems like a distant dream.

**And so we pray—not just for the absence of violence and conflict, but for the deep peace  
of knowing and trusting your will and your way.**

As the darkness and coldness of December set in,  
we trust that the light and the warmth of your Holy Spirit will enfold us  
and remind us of the shalom that is to come and the shalom that is already within us.

**Music Ministry:** "Behold"

**A Time of Silence:**

### **Prayer of Confession**

Merciful God, how many John the Baptists,  
how many prophets of your light, have we ignored  
because they were not what we were looking for?  
How many times have we ignored voices crying in the wilderness,  
"Make straight the way of the Lord."  
How many times have we breathed a sigh of relief,  
and turned our backs on your messengers,  
because they did not speak the message we expected to hear?  
Help us hear anew, God, the cry of those who would lead us to Christ,  
lead us to hope, peace, joy, and love.  
Tune our ears to your heralds, that we might also testify to your light. Amen.

### **Congregational Sung Response: #948 VU**

**O God, hear my prayer, O God, hear my prayer,  
When I call answer me.  
O God, hear my prayer, O God, hear my prayer,  
Come and listen to me.**

### **Words of Assurance**

All the broken hearts shall rejoice;  
all those who are heavy laden,  
whose eyes are tired and do not see,  
shall be lifted up.  
The battered souls and bodies shall be healed;  
the hungry shall be fed;  
the imprisoned shall be free;  
all her earthly children  
shall regain joy in the reign  
of the just and loving one  
coming for you, coming for me,  
in this time, in this world.

*Coming for You, Coming for Me by Sun Ai Lee Park*

### **Invitation to the Offering**

Indeed, the world is crying out, "Where is the God of peace?" By offering our gifts, we give an answer. The impact of what we offer, through this church and through Mission and Service, loudly proclaim that the God of peace is active in this community of faith and around the world. Please be generous.

## Offertory

### Offertory Response: #55 VU, "In the Bleak Midwinter"

What can I give him, poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;  
If I were a wise man, I would do my part,  
Yet what I can, I give him, give my heart.

### Prayer of Dedication:

**Gracious and loving God, we offer these gifts to continue to fulfill the words of the prophets. May our gifts help to bring about your goodness, your grace, and your peace throughout the world in this wonderful Advent and Christmas season and beyond. Amen.**

### Chorus "Because of Bethlehem"

### Prayer for Illumination

Speak to us, Lord.  
Speak to us in the waiting, the watching,  
the hoping, the longing,  
the sorrow, the sighing, the rejoicing.  
Speak to us by your Word in these Advent days,  
and walk with us until the day of your coming. Amen

*Rev. Andy James*

### Scripture Readings:

#### **Luke 1:68-79 from VU p. 900**

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.**

### **Luke 3: 1-6**

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, during the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John, son of Zechariah in the wilderness. He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,

‘The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

“Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

Every valley shall be filled,

and every mountain and hill shall be made low,

and the crooked shall be made straight,

and the rough ways made smooth;

and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.”’

### **Sermon**

#### **Hymn: “There's a Voice in the Wilderness” #18 VU**

1 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 exalted,

the lofty hills brought low;

make straight all the crooked places

where God, our God, may go!

2 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.

3 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.

4 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 exalted,  
the lofty hills brought low;  
make straight all the crooked places  
where God, our God, may go!

## **Prayers of the People**

### **The Lord's Prayer**

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, the power and the glory  
Forever and ever. Amen

## **Closing Hymn: "Let There be Peace on Earth" #128 Songs for a Gospel People**

Let there be peace on earth  
and let it begin with me;  
Let there be peace on earth,  
the peace that was meant to be.

With God, our creator,  
children all are we;  
let us walk with each other  
In perfect harmony.

Let peace begin with me,  
let this be the moment now,  
with every step I take  
let this be my solemn vow:

to take each moment  
and live each moment  
in peace eternally,  
Let there be peace on earth  
and let it begin with me.

### **Blessing**

Go in peace, into this holy time, a time of longing and of hope.  
Go, believing that good will prevail! Go, believing that you are treasured!  
Go and tell the world that love returns again!

### **A Benediction Chorus for Advent (tune VU #48)**

**Saviour, dwell with us that we  
may go forth, your light to be.  
Send us out, good news to sing;  
hope, peace, joy and love to bring.**

**God incarnate, with us dwell.  
Come, O Come, Emmanuel.  
Come, Lord Jesus, don't delay;  
shine your peace through us this day.  
Saviour, dwell with us that we  
May go forth, your light to be.**

*\*Benediction written by Rachel Frey, Chaplin, Edmonton General Continuing Care Centre,  
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