

**Stouffville United Church**  
**34 Church Street N., Stouffville, Ontario L4A 1E3**  
**Sunday, November 30, 2025**  
**First Sunday of Advent - Communion**  
**Lead by Catherine Hions**

**Music Prelude**

**Welcome & Announcements**

**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.

**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 hope into this waiting world.

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

**Lighting the Christ Candle**

We light our candles remembering that Jesus said: "Whoever believes in me, believes not just in me but in the One who sent me. Whoever looks at me is looking, in fact, at the One who sent me. I am Light that has come into the world so that all who believe in me won't have to stay any longer in the dark.

**Lighting of the Advent Candle**

**Reader 1:** Today is the first Sunday in Advent, and we light the first candle in our Advent wreath, the candle that represents hope. We live in a world where people long for hope: we see it in those who are searching for a home; we see it in those who are lonely; and we see it in those who live in despair.

**Reader2:** Knowing the need for hope in our own lives and in this despairing world, we light this candle as a symbol of the hope promised in the coming of Jesus.

(The first candle is lit)

**Congregation Sings: We Light this Candle TLUS #55**

We light this candle for hope.

Await the new life within.

May our hearts now live each day,

so hope can find a way,

so hope can find a way.

**Reader 1:** Be present with us in this hour of worship, we pray, and be present with us wherever we may journey with your hope held high. Amen

**We sing: "O Come All You Unfaithful"**

### **Prayer of Approach and Confession**

We enter, O God, into this season of preparation,  
longing to skip ahead and celebrate the coming of your light into our darkness  
**but you would have us first slow down,  
breathe deeply,  
and prepare ourselves to receive your gift.**

We know that your Holy Spirit comes in powerful and unexpected ways  
and so we pray we might recognize you moving in and through the season.

**As we wait, we seek your forgiveness  
for the ways in which we want to rush ahead,  
for the ways in which we cut corners,  
for the ways in which we have lost hope.  
Forgive our hastiness and unfaithfulness.  
Fill us with the patience and care  
to prepare for Immanuel,  
that we may truly know God with us. Amen.**

### **Words of Assurance:**

Hope, peace, joy, and love are the gifts we celebrate at Christmas. These gifts were unwrapped by the world in the person of Jesus. What precious gifts, given to precious people.

Receive God's great hope. You are a forgiven and blessed creation of God's. Rejoice!

**Thanks be to God!**

### **Music Ministry**

### **A Time of Silence**

### **Invitation to the Offering**

Jesus announced the coming of God's reign—  
a commonwealth not of domination  
but of peace, justice, and reconciliation.

He healed the sick and fed the hungry.

He forgave sins and freed those held captive by all manner of demonic powers.

He crossed barriers of race, class, culture, and gender.

He preached and practiced unconditional love—

love of God, love of neighbour,

love of friend, love of enemy—

and he commanded his followers to love one another as he had loved them.

Let our offering be a sign of our love.

**Offertory: 4<sup>th</sup> verse of “In the Bleak Midwinter” VU #55**

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.

**Offertory Prayer:**

Accept, O God, this money offered, these gifts given,  
the goodwill of our hearts,  
that disappointment may be turned to hope,  
and worry may be turned to anticipation,  
as we await with wonder the birth of Christ. Amen.

**Chorus**

**Prayer for Understanding** *Rev. Andy James*

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

**Scripture Reading: Romans 13:11-14 from The Message**

But make sure that you don't get so absorbed and exhausted in taking care of all your day-by-day obligations that you lose track of the time and doze off, oblivious to God. The night is about over; dawn is about to break. Be up and awake to what God is doing! God is putting the finishing touches on the salvation work he began when we first believed. We can't afford to waste a minute, must not squander these precious daylight hours in frivolity and indulgence, in sleeping around and dissipation, in bickering and grabbing everything in sight. Get out of bed and get dressed! Don't loiter and linger, waiting until the very last minute. Dress yourselves in Christ, and be up and about!

**“Waking Up”: a meditation based on a reading from ‘Using Scripture in Worship’**

**Reflection “It’s Time to Wake Up”**

### **The Great Thanksgiving**

**Chorus led Hymn: #194 MV “Bread of Life, Feed My Soul”**

Bread of life, feed my soul,  
as the presence of the Spirit makes me whole.

**Bread of life, fill my heart  
with the grace and mercy you impart.**

**I have heard your voice calling,  
“Come, my friend, and share  
In the feast that is laid out for you  
to show how much I care.”**

**Bread of life, help me live  
a life as pure and true as Jesus did.  
Bread of life, help me see  
the boundless love of Christ for you and me.**

**I have heard your voice calling,  
“Come, my friend, and share  
In the feast that is laid out for you  
to show how much I care.”**

**Bread of life, feed my soul,  
as the presence of the Spirit makes me whole.  
Bread of life, fill my heart  
with the grace and mercy you impart.**

**As we come to this table,  
we are reminded that this is the table of Jesus Christ,  
a banquet prepared for everyone.  
All who seek to be nourished and sustained in the journey of faith,  
all who seek wholeness and compassionate paths to peace and justice,  
all are welcome here.**

**God be with you.  
And also with you.  
Lift up your hearts.  
We lift our hearts in prayer.  
Let us give thanks to God.  
It is good to give God thanks and praise.**

**Let us Pray:**

**Blessed are you, Breath of peace,  
Giver of all life,  
Source of love that knows no boundaries.  
Your song of wisdom rang out before the world began;  
throughout the ages, your song of liberation has impregnated us with your hope for a world  
where:  
those considered last and least are first and most;**

violence is overcome by the power of your ancient love;  
and, all siblings work together for peace.

You bring our longings to birth,  
and send prophets to awaken us to your approaching Advent among us.  
And, we thank you for those who, like Mary,  
have the strength and courage  
to give birth to your love in the world;  
for those who, like the shepherds,  
dare to seek out the Child of Bethlehem;  
for those who, like the wise ones,  
actively challenge violent and oppressive powers.

We praise you that your everlasting light is shown to us  
in womb and tomb, in cradle and cross,  
in tenderness and compassion.  
And we pray for your coming once more. Amen.

**Soloist:**

**O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
and ransom captive Israel  
that mourns in lowly exile here  
until the Son of God appear.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to thee, O Israel.**

As we wait and watch for your coming among us,  
we proclaim your goodness and we also remember  
all with whom you would have us share your feast.  
We pray for all who are in sorrow or in pain...  
all who are ill or alone...  
all who are close to our hearts...  
all our siblings who live with fear, oppression, or hunger...  
all whose lives have been blighted by violence, racism, or poverty...  
for all whom the world counts as last and least,  
and for all of those who are on our prayer list.  
We pray for the church and its many ministries,  
for nations as they strive for peace and justice,  
for an end to violence against our brothers and sisters.

God of hope, make this bread the means of our rebuilding,  
this wine the medium of our transformation,  
this table the foundation of our renewal,

and this community the place of our rebirth. Amen.

Now, we remember Jesus,  
who on the night before he died,  
took a loaf of bread,  
gave you thanks, broke it, and said,  
“Take and eat; whenever you do this, remember me.”  
Likewise, after supper, he took the cup, saying,  
“This is the new covenant; remember me.”

Gracious God, Breath of hope and peace,  
source of love, we pray for your Spirit.

**Make us, while many, one.**

**Make us, though broken, whole.**

**Make us, despite death, alive.**

And so we pray:

**Come, Holy Spirit, come.**

### **Breaking the Bread and Pouring the Cup**

The body of Christ,

**the Bread of life.**

The lifeblood of Christ,

**the cup of blessing.**

Let us eat and drink together

for our strengthening in the faith, and for the sake of the world.

### **The Gifts of God for the People of God**

#### **Prayer after Communion**

**We thank you, God,**

**for breaking into our world**

**and pouring yourself into our lives and our experiences.**

**We thank you, God,**

**for this meal of thanksgiving**

**and the stories of love, grace, and hope that it tells**

**and thank you for the prayer that Jesus taught us.**

**Hear us now as we say together:**

**Our father....**

#### **Closing Hymn: TLUS #64 “There’s a Wild Hope on the Wind”**

**There’s a wild hope on the wind**

**Her whisper is heard on the breeze**

**The gale is her shout, calling us out**

**There’s a wild hope on the wind**

**O God in the wind  
Come, gather us in  
Be our courage and promise  
The future is dim, but we want to live into  
A wild, wild hope**

**There's a wild hope in the trees  
Her skin is as rough as the bark  
As smooth as a leaf, we can feel her belief  
There's a wild hope in the trees**

**O God in the trees  
Come, heal our dis-ease  
Be our courage and promise  
The future is dim, but we want to live into  
A wild, wild hope**

**There's a wild hope in the skies  
Her gown is the blue of forever  
The purple of night is her heart's pure delight  
There's a wild hope in the skies**

**O God in the skies  
Come, open our eyes  
Be our courage and promise  
The future is dim, but we want to live into  
A wild, wild hope**

**There's a wild hope in the earth  
The fields are her breasts giving nurture  
The dark underground is where life can abound  
There's a wild hope in the earth**

**O God in the earth  
Come, aid our re-birth  
Be our courage and promise  
The future is dim, but we want to live into  
a wild, wild hope**

**Blessing:**

The vision will be fulfilled in its own time.

If it seems slow in coming, wait for it,  
for it will surely come.

And as we wait,  
may all things work together for good;

may we be blessed with wisdom and discernment,  
and determination and patience;  
may we take the time to grow in grace,  
day by day. Amen.

**Closing Response #215MV: "Hope Be with You"**

Hope be with you, hope for ever,  
hope be with you, my friends.  
Till we meet again may God be with you.  
Hope, hope, hope.

**Postlude**

*The Communion liturgy was written by Alydia Smith, Program Coordinator, Worship, Music, and Spirituality, General Council Office*