

ST. ANDREW'S UNITED CHURCH
November 27, 2022 – First Sunday of Advent

Welcome to Worship

Join us for a Zoom Virtual Coffee Time at 7:00 p.m. Sunday, November 27, 2022

Email sketchingalong4@gmail.com to get the Zoom link.

Prelude

Opening Hymn: VU 82 *A Light is Gleaming, vv. 1, 2*

A light is gleaming, spreading its arms throughout the night,
living in the light.

Come, share its gladness, God's radiant love is burning bright,
living in the light.

1. When light comes pouring into the darkest place,
it hurts our eyes to see the glow.

Sometimes a word of hope reminds us of our fears,
our memories and tears.

A light is gleaming, spreading its arms throughout the night,
living in the light.

Come, share its gladness, God's radiant love is burning bright,
living in the light.

2. When night is round us and every shadow grows,
a star is there to light our way.

It tells a story of Jesus who came near to say:

"God's light will ever stay."

A light is gleaming, spreading its arms throughout the night,
living in the light.

Come, share its gladness, God's radiant love is burning bright,
living in the light.

Inviting Holy Light

We see you in the ordinary, Holy One. You make your way known in small ways, and encourage us to take small steps towards your peace. Help us to tiptoe to the peace of your reign as we enter this Advent season. Amen. [*lights candle*]

Hymn: MV 220 "*Hope*" *Shines as the Solitary Star*

Hope shines as the solitary star.

Faith is the inner light.

You and I together mirror the Light of Lights,
and illumine the pathway home.

Nurturing Safe Space

We are all children of God. Each one of us here, or at home, have answered the call of God inviting us to worship together. All are welcome, regardless of race, age, gender identity, ability. We celebrate our differences and rejoice that we are all welcomed in this space.

Acknowledging Traditional Territory

We acknowledge that we at St. Andrew's live, work, worship, and play on the traditional territory of the Wahnapiatae First Nation (pronounced Wahnapiataeping) and of the Atikameksheng Anishnawbek. As we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus once again, we remember everything this birth means for our whole world and all people: hope, peace, joy, and love. May we live our lives moving gently in creation, listening, learning, and striving to be people of reconciliation.

Welcome and Announcements

The Young Sudbury Singers and other special guests will be singing with our church choir today, the first Sunday in Advent. We are looking forward to this wonderful addition to our music ministry!

We are using the resource *From Generation to Generation* for our Advent services this year. This resource is from *A Sanctified Art*. All the details were sent out in the NEWS on Thursday.

Those at home, if you are new here, note that our contact information is at the end of the video, and you might want to visit our website, “like” our Facebook page, subscribe to our YouTube channel, or email our office manager so you can receive our weekly e-newsletter. We also have a Social Hour on Zoom, every Sunday night at 7. As always, you can get your Zoom link to join that time of connecting by sending an email to Diane. Her email address was shown in the slides before worship.

Lighting the First Candle of Advent – Called to Worship

Worship Leader: Over a hundred people, from the ages of two to eighty years old, were asked the question, “What gives you hope?” From the voices of different generations, hear their answers:

Maureen: My two-year-old son. Dogs wagging their tails. Talking with young people.

Torrin: Kindness from strangers. Spending time in the woods. Waffles.

Eric: Hands clasped in prayer. Social progress. The way my son calls everybody “buddy.”

Maureen: The ringing of church bells. Babies trying over and over to take their first step.
The turning of seasons.

Torrin: Christian community. Books. Friendship with my grandparents.

Eric: Advocates for justice. Hearing children in the pews sing the hymns.
The sunrise every single morning.

Maureen: What gives you hope?

Torrin: Today we light the candle of hope to remind ourselves that God is at work in this world.

[Torrin lights the candle]

From generation to generation, God has brought good news of love and compassion, justice, and community. Let us rest and abide in that good news. Amen.

Opening Prayer

God of the ages, in scripture we hear stories of people like us—ordinary people, people who longed to know you, people who longed to follow you, people who made mistakes, people who tried to grow—old, young, native, immigrant, new to the faith, lifelong believer. In scripture we hear stories of people like us, so just as you walked with them, help us to hear and remember all the ways that you walk with us. We are listening. We are grateful. We are yours.

Will you join your voice as we offer the traditional version of the prayer that Jesus taught:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kin-dom come, thy will be done on earth as it is heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; but 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 kin-dom, the power and the glory. Amen.

Hymn: VU 12 *She Walked in the Summer, vs. 1*

1. She walked in the summer through the heat on the hill.

She hurried as one who went with a will.

She danced in the sunlight when the day was done.

Her heart knew no evening who carried the sun.

Time Up Front

We are going to celebrate again, as if it is happening for the first time, a special baby coming? Who? (hmmm) There is a very special line that this child comes from. In the Bible passage we hear about Jesus' ancestors, the males the boys. No girls.

The artwork on screen is by Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman. She wanted to show the women of Jesus' family who have not been talked a lot about. Some of them had tough lives, and, well, they were women. In the Bible, you have to look pretty carefully to find the stories of the women. Here we celebrate their stories.

In the centre, is a rose – that is a symbol for the baby coming. Who was that again? Surrounding the rose in a circle are some women who don't get credit for being brave, his family tree, the women. There is Tamar who assumed her father's role as leader of the tribe of Judah. Next is Rahab who holds the red chord she lowered to ensure the safety of her family after assisting the Israelites to achieve victory at Jericho. Then comes Ruth who must remarry to be protected and so takes the initiative with Boaz. The fourth woman is Bathsheba who survives great hardship and ensures that her son Solomon takes the throne. Finally, there is Mary who smiles lovingly on her son, Christ, remember the symbol on this picture representing Jesus? The rose.

These are all women in his family some from very, very long ago, who were incredibly brave, smart, strong, and who made huge sacrifices for their families and for God. So, let's keep our eyes open this coming week to see the kids and grown ups around us who are brave, but people don't give them credit for the stuff they do. The kid who comes to school with an awful lunch, maybe life at home is not great. The crossing guard who smiles at you every morning, have you said thank you?

This is a repeat-after-me prayer:

Dear God,...thank you for this exciting time,...a time to prepare for Jesus coming,...but also a time to keep our eyes open...to God's children – ...young ones and old ones – ...who are brave, and strong,...but don't get noticed. May we notice them, Jesus' family, our family...God, you are awesome. Thank you. Amen.

Hymn: VU 12 *She Walked in the Summer, vs. 3*

3. Hail, little sister, who heralds the spring.
Hail, brave mother, of whom prophets will sing,
Hail to the moment beneath your breast.
May all generations call you blessed.

Young Sudbury Singers: *A Wish for Peace* – by Denise Gagné and Craig Cassils

Scripture Readings

Isaiah 2:1-5 – New International Version

The Isaiah passage illustrates a convergence of opposing groups and identities coming together. Instead of the way of the past—of war—they learn a new way by transforming their weapons into gardening tools.

This is what Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem:

In the last days the mountain of the Lord's temple will be established as the highest of the mountains; it will be exalted above the hills, and all nations will stream to it.

Many peoples will come and say,

“Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the temple of the God of Jacob. God will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in God's paths.”

The law will go out from Zion, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

God will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks.

Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore.

Come, descendants of Jacob, let us walk in the light of the Lord.

Matthew 1:1-17 – Contemporary English Version (CEV)

Our gospel begins with Matthew's genealogy. In that long list of names, we remember the trauma and triumph of those who came before; each name holds a story and their story gives way to Christ's story. God works through the unexpected people and stories of the past and present

Jesus Christ came from the family of King David and also from the family of Abraham. And this is a list of his ancestors. From Abraham to King David, his ancestors were:

Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah and his brothers (Judah's sons were Perez and Zerah, *and their mother was Tamar*), Hezron;

Ram, Amminadab, Nahshon, Salmon, Boaz (*his mother was Rahab*), Obed (*his mother was Ruth*), Jesse, and King David.

From David to the time of the exile in Babylonia, the ancestors of Jesus were:

David, Solomon (his mother had been Uriah's wife), Rehoboam, Abijah, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Jehoram; ...

...Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh, Amon, Josiah, and Jehoiachin and his brothers.

From the exile to the birth of Jesus, his ancestors were: ...

...Eliud, Eleazar, Matthan, Jacob, and Joseph, the husband of Mary, the mother of Jesus, who is called the Messiah.

There were 14 generations from Abraham to David. There were also 14 from David to the exile in Babylonia and 14 more to the birth of the Messiah.

Message: "Making Room"

The Message will be posted on the website when it becomes available.

Anthem: A Place of Beginning Again – by Dr. Calvin Metcalf and Mary McDonald

Réseau Access Network Presentation (Video)

Offering Moment

Thank you for sharing both your talents and treasures. Your donations will help St. Andrew's to partner with people who help the most vulnerable downtown. Giving to the United Church of Canada's Mission and Service allows us collectively to reach out to Ukraine and other places needing love and community. Thank you for all you do!!

Dedication Hymn: MV 85 Take, O Take Me as I Am

Take, O take me as I am;
summon out what I shall be;
set your seal upon my heart
and live in me.

Dedication Prayer

God of all people, we bring our gifts to you. May our offerings be used to prepare the world for Christ's coming. May these offerings and the goodwill of our hearts and lives be magnified and multiplied to bring love, justice, and compassion for your work through St. Andrew's locally, and through Mission and Service around our world. Amen.

Prayers of Community

God of Abraham and Isaac, Tamar and Ruth, God of Mary and Joseph,

God, we know that your expansive love makes room for us to breathe, and we want to love with our lungs and hearts full. So today we pray—teach us how to make that same room for others.

Thank you for creating space for us. Thank you for seeing our scattered thoughts, our fragments of doubt, and still you say, “Come on in.”

Help us to do the same for others.

Thank you for seeing our ordinary selves with anxious concerns and unflattering habits, yet you surprise us, saying, “I have bigger plans for you.”

May help others know that Good News that they too are your children, and you love them, and that you have big plans for them.

Thank you for seeing our fragile egos, and our uncertain relationships,

And, yet, you say, “You still belong here.”

When we come face to face with stories that are different from ours, show us how to add chairs to the table.

When we find ourselves face to face with stories that frustrate and test our patience, show us how to build bridges instead of walls.

When we find ourselves face to face with stories that feel foreign, incomprehensible, remind us to open the door, and to listen fully. From Abraham to Mary you made room for every story - and that love continues to make room for us. Teach us to do the same for our neighbor so this world will know love.

Now, in holy silence, we hold our world in prayer, people near to us, people who seem far from us who need your love, Creator – people and communities needing your dream justice and peace realized in their lives. Let us pray in silence...

Come Spirit, come. Be born anew in us, be born in our world in transformative ways that create space at the table of plenty for all, including those who cannot imagine your abundance. Amen.

Closing Hymn: *VU 7 Hope is A Star, vs. 1*

1. Hope is a star that shines in the night,
leading us on till the morning is bright.
When God is a child there's joy in our song.
The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong,
and none shall be afraid.

Blessing

We lit the first candle in our Advent wreath.

Our Advent journey has begun.

We have gathered with friends in faith.

Our service in Christ's name continues.

We have received the good news of God's great hope in each of us.

We go into the world to make a difference.

May the generosity of God Our Lover be with you in the coming week. May the blessedness of Jesus Christ give you strength as you live out your faith. May the delight of the Holy Spirit wrap around you and help you reach out to others with compassion and love, this day and forevermore. Amen.

Choir Blessing: *May Your Roads Be Straight and Narrow* – by Sally K. Albrecht and Jay Althouse

Postlude

Inviting Holy Light: *Seasons of the Spirit, Fusion Advent • Christmas • Epiphany 2022–2023*, Wood Lake Books, Inc. © 2022

Acknowledgment of Traditional Territory: By Jessica Knoyle, Ottawa, ON. From GatheringWorship.ca, Advent, Christmas, Epiphany 2022/2023, Year A.

Call to Worship and Opening Prayer: Written by Rev. Sarah Speed, *A Sanctified Art LLC*, sanctifiedart.org

Scripture Reading Introductions: From *Sanctified Art from Generation to Generation*, Sermon Planning Guide. *A Sanctified Art LLC*, sanctifiedart.org

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Matthew 1:1-17: Contemporary English Version (CEV) Copyright © 1995 by American Bible Society For more information about CEV, visit www.bibles.com and www.cev.bible

Dedication Prayer: Written by Lori Van Santvoort-Jansekovich, Broadway U.C. From GatheringWorship.ca, Advent, Christmas, Epiphany 2022/2023, Year C.

Prayers of the Community: Adapted from a prayer written by Rev. Sarah Speed, *A Sanctified Art LLC*, sanctifiedart.org

Blessing Prayer: Written by Laura J. Turnbull, Penticton, B.C. GatheringWorship.ca, Advent, Christmas, Epiphany 2022/2023, Year A.

Thank you to: Ralph McIntosh for his musical leadership; special guest Young Sudbury Singers; Betty McFarlane for reading the scripture; Suzanne Nykilchuk for her assistance with liturgy preparation; Myfawny McIntosh for arranging the Sunday readers; Jen Bruneau for assisting with graphics for the PowerPoint presentation; Jen Bruneau, Maureen McGuinness, and Suzanne Nykilchuk for the sanctuary décor; and Mallon Appianing and Roger Pile in the audiovisual booth.
