



St. James United Church

Centre for Faith, Arts & Multiculturalism

An Affirming Ministry

Advent 1 – Hope / Communion

Welcome Albert Moher!

(Loose \$ to Benevolent Fund)

Weekly Service Bulletin – November 30th, 2025

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More Info: affirmunited.ca • united-church.ca •

**Please stand as you are able*

PRELUDE / WELCOME AND LIFE AND WORK OF THE CHURCH / INTROIT

WE GATHER

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Iris Muir

"We respectfully acknowledge that St. James is located on the Treaty 20 Michi Saagiig territory and in the traditional territory of the Michi Saagiig and Chippewa Nations, collectively known as the Williams Treaties First Nations, which include: Curve Lake, Hiawatha, Alderville, Scugog Island, Rama, Beausoleil, and Georgina Island First Nations.

Our St. James congregation respectfully acknowledges that these Nations are the stewards and caretakers of these lands and waters, and that they continue to maintain this responsibility to ensure their health and integrity for generations to come."

Curve Lake First Nation Land Acknowledgement (adapted slightly for use)

CALL TO ACTION

Cora Muir

*A Land Acknowledgement is a single act of reconciliation. As an Affirming Ministry that is part of the United Church of Canada, we commit to learning from, listening to and supporting Indigenous people. One way we can do this is through the **Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action**.*

Call to Action #14

We call upon the federal government to enact an Aboriginal Languages Act that incorporates the following principles: Aboriginal languages are a fundamental and valued element of Canadian culture and society, and there is an urgency to preserve them. Aboriginal language rights are reinforced by the Treaties. The federal government has responsibility to provide sufficient funds for Aboriginal-language revitalization and preservation. The preservation, revitalization, and strengthening of Aboriginal languages and cultures are best managed by Aboriginal people and communities. Funding for Aboriginal language initiatives must reflect the diversity of Aboriginal languages.

***GATHERING SONG**

Jesus Came Bringing Us Hope

MV#33

Words and music: traditional song, Cameroon; arr. More Voices, 2007

1. Jesus came bringing us hope, Jesus came bringing us hope,
Jesus came bringing us hope, hallelujah forever more!

2. Jesus came bringing us peace, Jesus came bringing us peace,
Jesus came bringing us peace, hallelujah forever more!
3. Jesus came bringing us love, Jesus came bringing us love,
Jesus came bringing us love, hallelujah forever more!
4. Jesus came bringing us joy, Jesus came bringing us joy,
Jesus came bringing us joy, hallelujah forever more!

ADVENT CANDLELIGHTING & GATHERING WORDS

Maeve O'Neil

One: Today as we gather for worship, we light a candle of hope.

This is the hope we search for: hope found in times of a new beginning,

All: hope for the coming of Jesus,

One: hope found in the time of getting ready,

All: hope reflected in the smiles on our faces as we prepare and anticipate celebration,

One: hope found in time for thinking things over,

All: hope woven as we plan our Christmas carefully,

One: hope calling us to give generously and give freely.

(The first blue candle is lit)

One: This is the candle of hope, hope for which we search.

In its glow, the displaced, the sad, the lonely, the sick and the marginalized
will be offered courage and strength.

David Sparks, *Gathering - Advent 2014*

SUNG RESPONSE (remain seated) *We Light This Candle*

Then Let Us Sing (new UCC Hymnbook, words and music by Pat Mayberry, Arrangement by David Kai, 2016)

We light this can-dle for Hope.

A-wait the new life with-in.

May our hearts now live each day,

so hope can find a way,

so hope can find a way.

OPENING PRAYER *(responsive)*

One: May we approach this season as if it were our first-ever Advent.

All: May we gather with open and willing hearts, ready for fresh insights.

One: May we find baby Jesus wherever there is a vulnerable person in need.

All: May we be open to the Spirit's guidance on our Advent journey.

One: We pray in Jesus' name, as we say together a paraphrase of his prayer...

THE LORD'S PRAYER *(spoken in unison – a paraphrase)*

Indwelling God, who is infused throughout all existence,

we hallow thee with many names. Your Kingdom is within the human heart.

We accept life for all that it can be, on earth as throughout all creation.

May we continue to draw sustenance from this earth,

and may we receive forgiveness equal to our own.

May we ever move from separation toward union, to live in grace,

with love in our hearts, forever and ever. Amen.

Source: 1997 UUMA Worship Materials Collection.

HYMN*A Candle is Burning***VU#6, vs. 1**

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1. A candle is burning, a flame warm and bright,
a candle of hope in December's dark night.
While angels sing blessings from heaven's starry sky,
our hearts we prepare now for Jesus is nigh.

THEME CONVERSATION *Collecting Warm Items for One City*

CHILDREN'S PRAYER

Jesus, you are the light of the world. Fill my mind with your peace,
and my heart with your love. Amen.

SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION**WE REFLECT**

HEBREW SCRIPTURE READING *Isaiah 40:1-11*

Marilyn Perrin

A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

ANTHEM**GOSPEL READING***Mark 1:1-8***Marilyn Perrin**

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the prophet Isaiah: "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,'"

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

HYMNCome, Thou Long-Expected Jesus***VU#2**

Words: Charles Wesley 1744. Music: Psalmodia Sacra 1715

1. Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set thy people free:
from our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in thee.
2. Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art,
dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.

3. Born thy people to deliver; born a child and yet a king;
born to reign in us for ever; now thy gracious kingdom bring.
4. By thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all-sufficient merit raise us to thy glorious throne.

REFLECTION

WE RESPOND

OFFERING AND OFFERTORY MUSIC

***SUNG OFFERTORY RESPONSE** *In the Bleak Midwinter* **VU#55, vs.4**

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

***OFFERTORY PRAYER** *(in unison)*

God of many gifts, we thank you for your gift of **hope**

May our giving today be a sign of **hope** here and everywhere. Amen.

WE GO FORTH

*HYMN

All Earth Is Waiting

VU #5

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1. All earth is waiting to see the Promised One,
and open furrows await the seed of God.
All the world, bound and struggling,
seeks true liberty; it cries out for justice
and searches for the truth.
2. Thus says the prophet to those of Israel,
"A virgin mother will bear Emmanuel."
One whose name is "God with us," our Saviour shall be,
through whom hope will blossom once more
within our hearts.

*BLESSING

One: As we go forth in this Advent season,

All: let there be hope and light!

One: Shalom, Salaam, Peace, Mir Migwetch. Amen.

Carman McClelland, *Gathering – Advent 2022*

*SUNG BLESSING

Hope Shines as the Solitary Star

MV#220

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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.

POSTLUDE