



**WELCOME TO EMMANUEL
UNITED CHURCH**

**Second Sunday of Advent
December 10, 2017**

The Gathering of God's People

The Life & Work of our Community of Faith

Emmanubells: *Sing We Now of Christmas*

French Carol Noel Nouvelet arr. Kevin McChesney

Welcome (*read responsively*)

Welcome to this sacred place of belonging where we embrace the sacredness of life and recognize the dignity of each person, spirit-filled with the image of God, the Mystery in whom we live and move and have our being.

Welcome to all who have no church home, need strength, want to follow Christ, have doubts. Welcome to visitors and to new and old friends.

Welcome to grandparents, to mothers, fathers, aunts, uncles, youth, couples and single people.

Welcome to people of all colours, cultures, abilities, gender identities, and sexual orientations, to old and young, to believers and questioners – and welcome to questioning believers.

This day, we are all invited to live into God's love, peace and justice.

Hymn: *Hope Is A Star* (verse 2)

VU 7

**Peace is a ribbon that circles the earth,
giving a promise of safety and worth.**

**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.**

Advent Candle Lighting

One: Advent is a season for the hope, peace, joy and love of God to break into our lives anew through the story of the birth of Jesus, and through acts of hope, peace, joy and love.

All: **Today, we light the second candle, the candle of peace.**

One: We long, not because we do not know the story of Jesus, and not because he is not already and always here.

All: **We long because we desire the story might enter our hearts and our world in new ways and to bring change.**

One: As we light the candle of peace, we remember the stories of times you have been our comfort, when you have heard our cries for justice, for certainty, for peace and you have led us home.

All: **We know we can trust you that you are leading us forward, as we wait for peace to be born, anew, in us. †**

Prayer of Approach

One: O Holy God,
During these busy days, we are looking for moments of rest and peace. Too many diversions, secrets and animosities bring us down. Too many wars, crisis and natural disasters make us doubt when we simply desire to celebrate with the rest of the world the birth of the Christ Child.

All: **Help us to leave behind anything that would interfere with our worship and raise our awareness of your presence in our lives. We ask in the name of Jesus the Christ, the Prince of Peace. Amen.**

Emmanubells: *Still, Still, Still* Austrian Carol, arr. Linda R.
Lamb

Dedication of a new keyboard for our sanctuary

A Time for All God's Children

Hymn: *I Am Walking the Path of Light*

MV 221

**I am walking a path of peace,
I am walking a path of peace,
I am walking a path of peace,
lead me home, lead me home.**

Reading from the Bible

Prayer of Illumination

Psalm 85 (refrain as indicated)

VU 802

Refrain: God, show us your love, show us your love and mercy.

Once you were gracious to your land, O God,
you restored the fortunes of Jacob;
**you forgave the offence of your people,
and pardoned all their sin.**

You drew back all your displeasure,
and turned from your fiery wrath.

**Restore us again, God our Saviour,
and put away your just anger toward us.**

Will you be angry with us forever?

Will you prolong your wrath to all generations?

**Will you not revive us again,
that your people may rejoice in you?**

Refrain: God, show us your love, show us your love and mercy.

Let me hear what you will say, O God,
for you will speak peace to your people,
to the faithful who turn their hearts to you.

**Surely salvation is near those who fear you,
and your glory will dwell in our land.**

Mercy and faithfulness will meet,
justice and peace will embrace.

**Faithfulness will spring up from the earth,
and righteousness look down from heaven.**

You, O God, will give what is good,
and our land will yield its harvest.

**Righteousness will go before you,
and the paths of your feet will be peace.**

Refrain: God, show us your love, show us your love and mercy.

Scripture Reading: The Gospel according to Mark 1: 1-8

Both Isaiah and Malachi prophesized that, before the coming of the Messiah, a prophet would emerge to prepare the way for him.

Anthem: *A Voice Cries Out, "Prepare the Way of the Lord"*

By Lloyd Larson

Sermon

Hymn: *There's a Voice in the Wilderness*

VU 18

**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!**

**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.**

**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.**

Responding with Prayer & Thanksgiving

Gathering of Our Offerings

Presentation Hymn: *In the Bleak Midwinter* (verse 4)

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

Prayers of the People & The Lord's Prayer

VU 921

**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 and the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Hymn: *People, Look East*

VU 9

**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.**

**Birds, though you long have ceased to build,
guard the nest that must be filled;
even the hour when wings are frozen
God for fledging time has chosen.
People, look east and sing today:
Love the bird 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.**

Benediction

Choral Closing: *Amen “Dresden”*

VU 966

Postlude

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†The Advent Candle Lighting liturgy is inspired from Sarah Agnew, “Seasons of the Spirit, Christmas / Epiphany 2017-2018”, pp. 12-13. Used with permission.

Prayer

A clipboard for prayer concerns will be circulated, if you wish, add a line, printing clearly, then pass it on. It is also available in the foyer before each service.

A Prayer Box is available for individuals to write requests for personal prayers. It is located on the Prayer Table at the front of the sanctuary.

Prayer requests are treated with respect and confidentiality.

Ecumenical Prayer Partner: Through every week of the year, our prayers affirm our solidarity with neighbours all over the world. This week we pray for Cape Verde, the Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal.