

ST PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH
FREDERICTON, N.B.

December 19, 2021

10:30 AM

Advent 4

I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in his word I hope; my soul waits for the Lord more than those who watch for the morning, more than those who watch for the morning. O Israel, hope in the Lord! For with the Lord there is steadfast love and with him is great power to redeem. It is he who will redeem Israel from all its iniquities. Psalm 150 5-8

THE PEOPLE GATHER

PRELUDE

GREETING

Come God, come with the frightened, with the poor, the children, and come with those who have always been your friends. Come and lead us where you are living and show us what you want us to do. Amen

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you.

And also with you

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING:

In the beginning we were created from a yearning for relationship, created out of love.

In the course of history, God came among us to walk, to live, to laugh, and to love.

We've been waiting...

We've been hoping...

(light Hope Candle)

seeking the Holy on our way...

seeking a peace beyond compare...

(light Peace Candle)

singing praise to the one gave life its breath.

jumping for joy as we bask in God's love light.

(light pink Joy Candle)

It is because of that love that we continue to gather; continue to wait.

And so we light this fourth candle for Love, a love that goes back farther than the beginning, and reaches beyond all our tomorrows.

(light Love Candle)

**Love is a flame that burns in our heart,
Jesus has come and will never depart.**

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.**

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP: (responsive)

Grace to you, and peace from God.

As Advent people, we give thanks to the One who is faithful.
Let us proclaim the wonder of God, who came, is coming and will always come.

**In word, action, and with gentleness of spirit, we celebrate the
Advent of our God.**

OPENING PRAYER (In Unison)

We are an anxious people, a waiting people, God. We long for a new and powerful encounter with you. We wait in bondage through no fault of our own, entangled by distant forces of evil, by anger and greed we did not create; saddened by the waste and foolishness of our time. We come to drink of your power, to view set free, and we wait in bondage because of our own sin. Lead us beyond advertisements which entice us to have too much, that we might be open to receive much; to have time for personal relationships, to give thanks for creation, to allow your coming into our hearts anew. So, we wait and wait, remembering your promise, O Promise-Fulfilling God. We rejoice that you are more faithful than we are; that you tug us again into hoping, and nudge us into life in your Spirit. We wait then, as generations have waited, for the Christ who came among us, is among us and will come among us. Amen

HYMN: O Come, O come, Emanuel

VU 1

THE WORD

TIME FOR ALL AGE

CHOIR ANTHEM: *Infant Holy*

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE: *John 1:1-18*

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

Thanks be to God for our Scriptures.

MESSAGE:

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

HYMN: *Unto Us a Boy is Born*

VU 54

PRESENTATION OF OUR OFFERING: (in unison)

As we prepare, O God, for the festival of Christ's birth, help us to give in expectation of his return. May our gifts be used to prepare the world for Christ's coming, when all creation will sing your praise. Amen

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD'S PRAYER

SENDING FORTH

CLOSING HYMN: *Will you come and see the Light?*

VU 96

COMMISSIONING & BENEDICTION

Return now to our world with its pain and wonder.

We remember the words of the prophets, and the faithfulness of Mary and the longing of all who yearn for a sign of hope.

And may the blessing of God, who is ever faithful, the blessing of Christ who still comes to us, and the blessing of the Holy Spirit who moves within and throughout our world, rest upon us and abide with us, this day and forevermore. Amen

CHORAL CLOSING

MV 220

Love 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

SCRIPTURE READERS

Narrator 1 – Carole Peacock

Narrator 2 – Deborah West

GREETERS

Front Door - Tammy Coughlan

Front Door – Linda Burton

Top Stairs – Dean Jones

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Good morning and welcome to EVERYONE. May this worship service be a blessing in your day as we continue to worship together each week in-church or by Zoom.

Upcoming December Services:

December 21 – Longest Night Service at 7pm

December 24 – Christmas Eve Services at 3pm, 7pm, 11pm

December 26 – Downtown United Worship at Wilmot

Lectionary Bible Study: There will be no bible study the week of December 22nd but will resume in January.

Brown Bag Lunch Program: Our shelves are **extremely empty**, **Proteins including canned meats (with flip tops) are top of the list** as well as drink boxes, desserts (pudding, fruit cups), and granola bars for our brown bag lunch program. Drop off anytime during the week or on Sunday before worship. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

FundScrip: Cards being distributed today! A reminder that there will be no orders in January and we are shifting the deadline date to the first Sunday of each month. This means the next deadline will be February 6, 2022. *Remember, shopping is fundraising for St. Paul's.*

Upper Room Daily Devotional for January-February 2022 has arrived. It can be purchased in the Church office Monday-Friday between 8am and 3pm.

Advent – The Season of Love

St. Paul's Contact Information

Office Hours: Monday - Friday; 8:00 – 3p.m.

224 York St., Fredericton, N.B. E3; Tel: 458-1183.

Web-site: www.stpaulsunited.ca; email: stpaulsunited224@gmail.com

Minister

Rev. Michelle Armstrong

Organist

Dr. Sharon Pond

Church Administrator

Meghan Roebuck

Church Custodian

Rusty Blakely

Land Acknowledgement :

We remember that St. Paul's sanctuary and our worship here is on the unceded territory of the Wolastoqey peoples. Long before this building was here, the land was considered sacred and tended to with respect and care. May our faith drive us to seek to be in right relationship with the first peoples of this land.

HYMN WORDS

HYMN: *O Come, O come, Emanuel*

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.

O come, O Wisdom from on high,
who orders all things mightily;
to us the path of knowledge show,
and teach us in her ways to go. R

O come, O come, great God of might,
who to your tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times once gave the law
in cloud, and majesty, and awe. R

O come, O Rod of Jesse's stem,
from every foe deliver them
that trust your mighty power to save,
and give them victory o'er the grave. R

O come, O Key of David, come,
and open wide our heavenly home;
make safe the way that leads on high,
and close the path to misery. R

O come, O Dayspring, from on high,
and cheer us by your drawing nigh;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
and death's dark shadows put to flight. R

O come, Desire of nations, bind
all peoples in one heart and mind;
O bid our sad divisions cease,
and be for us the Prince of Peace. R

VU 1

HYMN: *Unto Us a Boy is Born*

VU 54

Unto us a boy is born!
King of all creation,
came he to a world forlorn,
the Lord of every nation,
the Lord of every nation.

Christ from heaven descending low
comes, on earth a stranger;
ox and ass their owner know,
becradled in the manger,
becradled in the manger.

Herod then with fear was filled:
'A prince,' he said, 'in Jewry!';
all the little boys he killed
at Bethlem in his fury,
at Bethlem in his fury.

Now may Mary's son, who came
so long ago to love us,
lead us all with hearts aflame
unto the joys above us,
unto the joys above us.

Omega and Alpha he!
Let the organ thunder,
while the choir with peals of glee
doth rend the air asunder,
doth rend the air asunder.

CLOSING HYMN: Will you come and see the Light? VU 96

Will you come and see the light from the stable door?
It is shining newly bright, though it shone before.
It will be your guiding star,
it will show you who you are;
will you hide, or decide to meet the light?

Will you step into the light that can free the slave?
It will stand for what is right, it will heal and save.
By the pyramids of greed
there's a longing to be freed;
will you hide, or decide to meet the light?

Will you tell about the light in the prison cell?
Though it's shackled out of sight, it is shining well.
When the truth is cut and bruised,
and the innocent abused,
will you hide, or decide to meet the light?

Will you join the hope, alight in the young girl's eyes,
of the mighty put to flight by a baby's cries?
When the lowest and the least
are the foremost at the feast,
will you hide, or decide to meet the light?

Will you travel by the light of the babe new born?
In the candle lit at night there's a gleam of dawn,
and the darkness all about
is too dim to put it out:
will you hide, or decide to meet the light?