

November 27, 2011

Advent 1 Year B

## Welcome to Ellesmere United Church


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If this is your first time with us, thank you for coming. Your presence is a blessing for us.

We hope you find a community for worship and a place for personal prayer.

If you have any questions about the order or nature of our community worship, feel free to ask your greeter today, the minister, or the people around you.

We want you to be comfortable and unburdened in our midst, and at peace in your experience of God in worship.

\*  Indicates the community standing as able.

@ Indicates the text the minister is reading and reflecting on this Sunday.

### What's Happening in Our Faith Community (from 9:45 until 10:00)

#### Thought for the Day

Would You Camp Out in the City Streets for Your Beliefs?

#### Opening of Worship

#### Lighting of the Advent Candles

Leader: We light this candle that it might shine on the bleak and shadowed places of our world and our existence.

Assembly: **The light and warmth of one candle is not much and yet its presence can brighten and cheer even the darkest and coldest surroundings.**

Leader: Yet the flame is fragile and needs to be nurtured and protected if it is provide us with its benefits.

**Assembly: As Christians we are a people of hope – not an irrational expectation of grand miracles on demand, but of the persistent belief that through our enlightened hearts and nurtured faith, God can bring about the unimaginable through us.**

**Leader: We light this first candle as the symbol of God’s faithfulness and our abiding hope in God’s Covenant with creation! (Lights the first blue candle)**

**Assembly: May the light of this candle be a symbol of Hope in a broken and often despairing world.**

### **Silent Prayer of Centering**

(Let the sounding of the singing bowl lead you into a time of silent centering prayer and with its second sounding bring you back to community.)

### **Advent Carol: VU #6 Verse 1, *A Candle Is Burning***

### **Holy Greeting**

**Minister: The grace of our Sovereign Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.**

**Community: And also with you.**

### **♪Song VU #7 *Hope Is a Star***

### **Prayer**

**Minister: Merciful God, we believe that you love us and call us to fullness of life, but both without and within we observe the brokenness of the world and its ways.**

**Assembly: Our imagined triumphs are short lived and our moments of self-aggrandizement hollow, leaving a deeply felt inner void.**

**Minister: Our ‘new and improved’ consumerism does not satisfy, and indeed is not meant to satisfy, but to further addiction. As an addicted society we hope for change, but we resent the change that it demands from us on a deeper level.**

**Assembly: Our bountiful nation is not quite the “just society” we had hoped for it to be. People are still homeless in a city of plenty. Poverty and child hunger is increasing, as is the gap between the corporate aristocracy and the average citizen. People on this planet are still segregated and treated with contempt because of different faiths, race, ways, or values. People still die of disease when the cure is available to the privileged and connected.**

**Minister: We wonder at times, O Holy One, if we are the citizens of your realm that you had hoped, through the gift of the Christ, we would be.**

**All: Forgive us!**

**Invitation to the Scriptures:**

***MV #90 Don't Be Afraid***

**The Voice of the Prophet**

Isaiah 64: 1-9

Lay Reader: This is the witness of a prophet of the Holy One.

Community: **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm: 80 VU p. 794 Part One

**Read responsively with refrain sung at places marked 'R'.**

@Matthew 6: 5-14 (not the Lectionary Text for Today)

Minister: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

Community: **Write these words on our hearts dear God!**

**Musical Reflections**

**Theological Reflections – Doubting Debtors Dare**

**♪Song MV #157 *I Am a Child of God***

**Invitation to Give**

**♪Song of Praise and Dedication**

***With grateful hearts and open hands  
we bring our tithes this day***

*to aid your cause, proclaim your love,  
and celebrate your Way.*

*O God, who shines most true for us,  
in Jesus Christ, your Son,  
teach us to walk by faith each day  
until your realm has come!*

### **Prayer of Access**

**Community: Holy One, as we approach your table and one another in the spirit of Christ, enable us to still our minds and open our hearts that we might be fully present to the mystery of your presence in all creation. Grant us a humble heart and contrite spirit as we remember the story of our deliverance in the symbols of broken bread and bountiful cup. Open our arms and our spirits to the neighbour we embrace in peace this day and those we encounter this week that we might truly be ambassadors of your living presence, for in Christ's name we ask. Amen.**

### **\*Sharing of the Peace:**

**Minister: The peace of Christ be with you!**

**Community: And also with you!**

(The community is invited to share the peace with one another by the clasping of the hands, looking the person in the face and bowing.)

**♪Song MV #194 *Bread of Life***

### **Prayer of Great Thanksgiving**

**Minister: The Lord be with you.**

**Community: And also with you.**

**Minister: Lift up your hearts.**

**Community: We lift them up to God.**

**Minister: Let us give thanks to our Sovereign God.**

**Community: It is right to give God our thanks and our praise.**

Minister: It is fit, right, and our covenant duty always and everywhere to give you thanks, God Almighty, mother of heaven and earth. You created for yourself a world filled with diversity and blessed by your breath of life. Rainbow colors, geometric shapes, wild organic patterns, these are but a few of the gifts with which you have blessed us.

Community: **We see the work of your paintbrush in the world around us.**

Minister: Foods of marvelous colour and amazing aromas, rich with spices and herbs that delight our senses as the nurture our bodies are all part of your providential care. Medicines from tree, root, and flower abound for our well-being. We honour this land for the tradition of stewarding the resources that it might last for all seasons and nurture all.

Community: **Yet while we still held to the chains of our winter, of pride, self-righteousness, and historic egos you loved us steadfastly and delivered us as babes to reflect the beauty and diversity of your grace, to bring us into a community that walks in the Light.**

Community: And so, with all your people on this small planet in every place where two or more are gathered in your name, and all the divine messengers, and all the company of heaven who have gone before us, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Community: **Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might; heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest! Bless'd is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest!**

*(VU# 934 Holy, Holy, Holy)*

Minister: Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ. Your Spirit anointed him to preach good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, and to announce that the time had come when you would save your people. He healed the sick, fed the hungry, and ate with sinners. By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection, you gave birth to your church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

**Community: He prayed that we might be one as he is one with you, O God, and he asked that we might be known by the love we have one another.**

Minister: On the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread, gave thanks to you saying,

*Baruch Ata Adonai Elohaynu,  
Melech haolem ha motzi lechem min ha aretz,*

he broke bread, and gave it to his friends, and said, "Take this all of you. And eat it; this is my body, which will be given up for you." When supper was ended, he took the cup. Again, He gave thanks saying,

*Baruch Ata Adonai Elohaynu,  
Melech haolam borei pri hagafin,*

gave it to his disciples, and said: "Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

**Community: Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.**

Minister: Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and wine. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ that we, together as a new creation and a new community around the globe, may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood. By your Spirit help the body of Christ be one. Hear now the prayers we voice for those whose need is great this day.

**(You are invited to voice prayers of thanksgiving and concerns for those in need – ending the petition with "God hear our prayer" and the community will reply, "and in your love answer.")**

Help the left hand and the right hand work as one in ministry to the entire world. Help the eyes and the ears sense your present and coming realm. Bring the blessing of the diversity of the body to bear fruit until Christ comes in final victory and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

**Community: Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy church, all honour and glory is yours, Almighty God, now and forever. Amen.**

**Prayer of Jesus (Ecumenical Version)**

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial  
and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours  
now and forever. Amen and Amen.**

**Breaking of Bread, Pouring of Cup, and Partaking of the Sacrament**

(We ask you to come forward and please take a piece of bread and then proceed to the chalice where you are asked to dip the bread in the chalice and take communion.

For health concerns we ask that you take a large enough piece of bread that when you dip it your fingers do not contact the wine.

During Communion we chant the Taizé piece VU #466 *Eat This Bread*)

**Post Communion Prayer:**

Minister: Almighty and Everlasting God, we give you thanks that you have granted us the presence of your beloved one Jesus Christ. Help us to walk the ways of love that Christ

may evermore dwell in us and us in Christ to the glory of your most holy name. Amen.

♪**Song VU #9 *People, Look East***

### **Extinguishing the Candle of Hope**

Leader: Let the spirit of Christian Hope, symbolized by the flame of this candle go from the Church to abide in your hearts and in your homes. (lights taper, extinguishes Blue Candle and lights the first home candle.)

People: (waiting for all home candles to be lit) **In faith we receive this gift and take it into our lives and our dwelling place as we await the rebirth of the One long promised!**

**\*Benediction**

♪**Choral Amen**

**The Advent Wreath – 3 blue candles, 1 pink candle, and 1 white centre candle in a wreath of evergreen was originally a home liturgy not dissimilar to the lighting of the Sabbath candles in Jewish homes. Today we continue our tradition of receiving a small ‘birthday candle’ to take home to either make or light our own Advent Wreath.**

