

Order of Worship
Second Sunday of Advent
December 7, 2025



Gathering and Welcome *Rise Up Shepherd and Follow*

Lighting of the Advent Candles

Sam and Jessica Wilds

Prelude *Come Thou Long Expected Jesus/Come Thou Fount –*

Arr. Joel Raney

Jessye Whitis, pianist

***Call to worship** (based on Isaiah 11: 1-10)

A shoot shall come forth from Jesse's stump,

And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him.

He will judge the poor with righteousness, and the meek with equity;

He will be clothed with righteousness and faithfulness.

The wolf and the lamb will live peacefully together,

The leopard and the kid will lie down side by side.

The cow and the bear will graze together; the lion will eat straw like the ox,

And a little child will lead them all.

They will neither hurt nor destroy on God's holy mountain,

For the earth will be full of the knowledge of God, as the waters fill the sea.

***Advent Hymn # 105** *People Look East*

***Call to confession**

We hear the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord and make God's paths straight." Let us prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ as we confess our sins together:

***Prayer of confession**

God of Grace, we confess that we are not ready for you to come into our world — not quite yet. We cling to the known and familiar, afraid of the transformation your grace will bring.

Yet you are always a step ahead of us, a voice crying out in the wilderness, inviting us into to bold new ways of being disciples. Humble us, O God, and teach us to do the work of repentance so that, fully reliant on your grace, we may know the richness of restored relationship with you and one another. Amen.

(The Silence is kept)

***Assurance of pardon**

Friends, hear the good news: God's mercy is from everlasting to everlasting. Before we repent and change our ways, God's love has already claimed us as God's own. Proclaim with me the good news of the gospel:

In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven! Thanks be to God!

Choral Anthem *Come to Us Now, Emmanuel* – by Nancy Price and Don Besig
Jessye Whitis, Music Director, pianist; Celica Castro, flutist

Prayer for illumination (*Glory to God #88*)

“O come, thou Wisdom from on high, Who orderest all things mightily:
To us the path of knowledge show; ...
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.”

Scripture readings Isaiah 11: 1 - 10; Matthew 3: 1 - 12

Sermon *Center on Peace*

Rev. Kathy Vineyard, H.R.

***Affirmation of faith** (adapted from The Confession of 1967)

God's redeeming work in Jesus Christ embraces the whole of human life: social and cultural, economic and political, scientific and technological, individual and corporate. It includes our natural environment as exploited and despoiled by sin. God wills that God's purpose for human life shall be fulfilled under the rule of Christ, and all evil be banished from God's creation. Already God's reign is present as a ferment in the world, stirring hope in all people and preparing the world to receive its ultimate judgment and redemption.

With an urgency born of this hope, the church applies itself to present tasks and strives for a better world. It does not identify limited progress with the kingdom of God on earth, nor does it despair in the face of disappointment and defeat. In steadfast hope, the church looks beyond all partial achievement to the final triumph of God.

Advent Hymn # 110 *Love Has Come

Call for the offering

God is the giver of every good gift, pouring out grace upon grace on us and our world. Let us give back a portion of those gifts as we receive the morning offering.

Offertory *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence* – arr. Lloyd Larson

Jessye Whitis, pianist

Doxology # 606 *Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

Prayer of dedication (*Glory to God #144*)

In this moment of worship
we embrace Your presence again, O God.

And we offer You our love.

In this moment of prayer
we proclaim again Your purpose for the world, O Saviour.

And we offer You our resources.

In this moment of giving
we hear Your call again, O Lord.

And we offer You ourselves.

Use us – all that we have and all that we are
to touch the world with the Christmas message:

God is love. God is with us. God will never leave us.

So, may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ

The Love of God

and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit

Be with us all now and forever. Amen.

— John van de Laar, in ***A Liturgy for Advent and Christmas***

Advent Communion Liturgy Hymn # 108 *Of the Father's Love Begotten*

(Verses 1-3)

An Advent Communion Service

God be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.
We lift them up to God.

Let us give thanks to God.
It is right to give God thanks and praise.

In the rich dark of winter, God makes an astounding promise:
“I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up.” (Jeremiah 33:15)

In the wilderness, a voice
cries out, longing for the
Refiner’s fire, repair, and
renewal, the promised
birth (and rebirth) of hope.

Called to bear the weight and fruit of promise,
Mary sings ancient trust—the song
of generations—that God comes to
fill the hungry and lift the humble.
She sings that love and truth will meet, that justice and peace will kiss.

In the midst of uncertainty,
Jesus assures his disciples:
Just as the tree blooms, so the
signs are clear that the
kingdom of God is near.
In the deep of our own winter, we look for them:
bud of hope, branch of peace, sprig of joy, blossom of love.

While around us the snares of fear and conflict lie in wait of infant hope,
you, O Wisdom, O Endless Love, O Radiant Dawn, are there,
keeping vigil with us, in this season of expectation.

We gather at this table, praying that crooked ways be made
straight,
that valley’s peace be lifted up and mountain’s might brought low
so that all God’s people might rejoice together, saying:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest!
Blessed is the one that comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest!**

We give thanks for the mystery and wonder revealed that first night,
as humble people led by hope gathered in a quiet stable
and were witness to your promise reborn.

We give thanks for the blessing and love Jesus shared
with all whom he met, in food and story.

We remember that, on the night before he was handed over to die,
Jesus broke bread with his friends, blessed it, gave thanks, and said,
“Take, eat. This is my body, which I give for you. When you share it,
remember me.”

We remember that he took the cup and, giving thanks, said,
“This cup is the new covenant in my blood. When you drink it,
remember me.”

Revealed in stable, cross, and empty tomb, we give thanks, O God,
for your limitless love for all. With your people of all times and places,
we await with hope the fulfillment of your vision for all creation.

**Bless us, O God, and these your gifts.
Encourage us to share your life and love,
which make us, and the gifts we share, truly holy.**

Transform us, God, and your world, and bless your children:
those who feel alone or afraid...

those whose souls and homes are broken by violence...

those who will go hungry, thirsty, and cold tonight...

those who long only to hear that they are loved...

God made known in Jesus Christ,

hear our prayer.

We pray these things, trusting in God’s faithfulness revealed:

**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will
come again.**

Sharing the Bread & Cup

Prayer after Communion

At this table, Christ is the host, welcoming all who hunger.
At our tables, may Christ be our guest this day and always,
that we might welcome hope, peace, joy, and love into our lives,
and become hosts to God’s presence and people.

God of Love, guide us to the stables of our world,
where the lonely and longing gather.
Lead us to the mangers of our time,
where hope and renewal are born again.

Make us heralds of your love and joy. Amen.

—Rev. Andrew O’Neil, St. Paul’s United Church, Riverview, NB

***Hymn of Sending # 108 *Of the Father’s Love Begotten* (Verses 4-6)**

Charge and benediction

Go now in hope
to bear Christ’s light
into those places shrouded with darkness.
Go now in peace
to extend hands of friendship
to those who feel lost and estranged.
Go now in joy
to proclaim release to the captives and good news to the poor.
Go now in love
To welcome the birth
of God’s own Love into the world.

And as you go, may God’s love empower you, Christ’s grace uphold you,
and the Spirit’s light guide your way, now and forevermore. **Amen.**

Postlude *People Look East*

Jessye Whitis, pianist

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