

NORTHMINSTER UNITED CHURCH

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Guest Minister: Rev. John Taylor

Music Director: Dustin Bowers

Sunday, December 15, 2024 at 10 am

Advent III

Music as We Gather

Welcome

Acknowledgement of the Land:

As we gather, we acknowledge that we meet and live on the traditional territories of the Mississauga Anishinaabe People. We give thanks for their care for the land over thousands of years and for their deep spirituality and honouring of the Creator and the creation. May we live with respect in God's creation and in harmony with our neighbours.

Life, and Work of the Community

Music as We Centre

Lighting the Advent Wreath:

“Joy”

One: Joy, in the midst of sadness – is such a thing possible?

All: We come weary but full of hope that this is true, full of love for one another and God.

One: Joy, even when things are hard, this joy we seek today.

All: Let us gather from the four winds seeking God-with-us.

One: As we light the pink candle, the candle representing Joy, let us pray for Emmanuel, for Joy, for wisdom to find those glimmers of Joy like stars in the night sky... (the pink candle is lit). Amen.

All: Amen.

One: Let us join together in the singing of **VU6 vs 1, 2 & 3**
“A Candle is Burning”.

Please remain seated

- 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.
- 2 A candle is burning, a candle of peace,
a candle to signal that conflict must cease:
for Jesus is coming to show us the way;
a message of peace humbly laid in the hay.
- 3 A candle is burning, a candle of joy,
a candle to welcome brave Mary's new boy.
Our hearts fill with wonder, and eyes light and glow
as joy brightens winter like sunshine on snow. < >

Opening Prayer

Words of Assurance:

One: The promise of our faith is that we are always surrounded
by the hope, peace, joy and love of the Holy.

**All: Through reflection, transformation, and action this
Advent Season, we can live faithfully and authentically
as children of the Holy.**

Please stand for Hymn

Hymn: VU44

“It Came Upon the Midnight Clear”

- 1 It came upon the midnight clear,
that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth
to touch their harps of gold,
'Peace on the earth, good will to all,
from heaven's all-gracious King!'
The world in solemn stillness lay
to hear the angels sing.
- 2 Still through the cloven skies they come
with peaceful wings unfurled;
and still their heavenly music floats
o'er all the weary world;
above its sad and lowly plains
they bend on hovering wing,
and ever o'er its Babel sounds
the blessed angels sing.

- 3 Yet with the woes of sin and strife
the world has suffered long;
beneath the angel strain have rolled
two thousand years of wrong;
and warring humankind hears not
the love song which they bring.
O hush the noise, and cease your strife,
to hear the angels sing.
- 4 For, lo! the days are hastening on,
by prophets seen of old,
when with the ever-circling years
shall come the time foretold,
when peace shall over all the earth
its ancient splendours fling,
and the whole world send back the song
which now the angels sing. < >

First Lesson: Zephaniah 3:14-20

Karen Strano

- ¹⁴ Sing aloud, O daughter Zion;
shout, O Israel!
Rejoice and exult with all your heart,
O daughter Jerusalem!
- ¹⁵ The Lord has taken away the judgements against you,
he has turned away your enemies.
The king of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst;
you shall fear disaster no more.
- ¹⁶ On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:
Do not fear, O Zion;
do not let your hands grow weak.
- ¹⁷ The Lord, your God, is in your midst,
a warrior who gives victory;
he will rejoice over you with gladness,
he will renew you in his love;
he will exult over you with loud singing
- ¹⁸ as on a day of festival.
I will remove disaster from you,
so that you will not bear reproach for it.
- ¹⁹ I will deal with all your oppressors
at that time.
And I will save the lame
and gather the outcast,

and I will change their shame into praise
and renown in all the earth.

²⁰ At that time I will bring you home,
at the time when I gather you;
for I will make you renowned and praised
among all the peoples of the earth,
when I restore your fortunes
before your eyes, says the Lord.

Responsive Selection: VU880

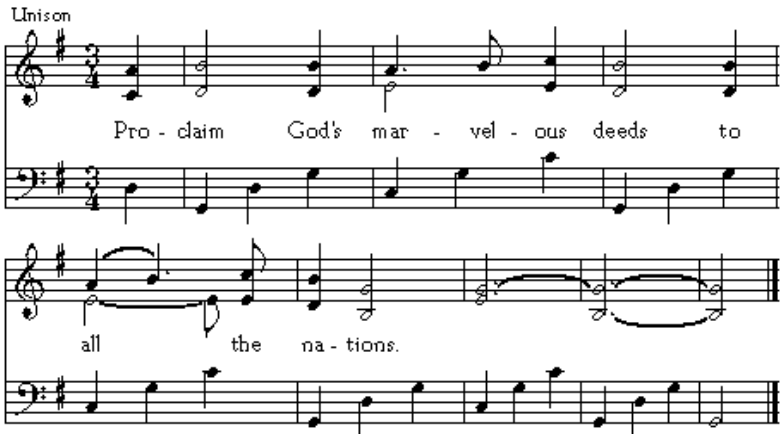
(from Isaiah 12)
Led by Karen Strano

Isaiah 12: 1a-6
(Give Thanks to God)

Refrain

*Words and music: Joe Zsiga;
arr. Catherine Ambrose 199*

Unison



Pro - claim God's mar - vel - ous deeds to
all the na - tions.

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Refrain: Proclaim God's marvelous deeds to all the nations.

One I will praise you, O God,

**All for though you were angry with me,
your anger turned away, and you comforted me.**

One Surely God is my salvation.

I will trust and not be afraid,

**All for you, God, are my strength and might;
you show yourself my saviour. R**

One With joy we draw water from the wells of salvation.

All Give thanks and call on God's name.

One Make known God's deeds among the nations;

All proclaim that God's name is exalted.

One Sing praises to God, whose work is glorious;
let it be known in all the earth.

**Shout for joy, you who dwell in Zion,
for the Holy One of Israel is majestic among you. R**

Hymn: VU20

"On Jordan's Bank"

- 1 On Jordan's bank, the Baptist's cry
announces that the Lamb is nigh;
awake and hearken, for he brings
glad tidings of the King of Kings.
- 2 Then cleansed be every life from sin;
make straight the way for God within;
and let each heart prepare a home
where such a mighty guest may come.
- 3 In you, we find abundant life,
our refuge in the midst of strife;
without your grace we waste away,
like flowers that wither and decay.
- 4 Stretch forth your hand, our health restore,
and help us rise to fall no more.
O let your face upon us shine,
and fill the world with love divine.
- 5 All praise to you, eternal Son,
whose advent has our freedom won;
and praise to God whom we adore,
with Holy Spirit evermore. < >

Young at Heart Time:

"Brown Paper Packages"

Gospel Lesson: Luke 3:7-18

Karen Strano

^{3:7} John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, 'You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸ Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our ancestor"; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ⁹ Even now the axe is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.'

¹⁰ And the crowds asked him, 'What then should we do?' ¹¹ In reply he said to them, 'Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.' ¹² Even tax-collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, 'Teacher, what should we do?' ¹³ He said to them, 'Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.' ¹⁴ Soldiers also asked him, 'And we, what should we do?' He said to them, 'Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.'

¹⁵ As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶ John answered all of them by saying, 'I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷ His winnowing-fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.'

¹⁸ So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

Responses

Reader: As we listen to the words from our scripture...

All: may we hear the stories from our faith history that inspire us to embrace the promise and new life shared with us by the Advent Spirit of the Holy.

Reader: In the name of Jesus, the Christ, Emmanuel, God-with-us...

All: Amen.

Meditation:

"Getting Our Attention"

Music for Meditation

Please stand for the New Creed

The New Creed

One: Let's share together in the New Creed:

**All We are not alone,
we live in God's world.**

**We believe in God:
who has created and is creating,
who has come in Jesus,
the Word made flesh,
to reconcile and make new,**

**who works in us and others
by the Spirit.**

We trust in God.

We are called to be the Church:

**to celebrate God's presence,
to live with respect in Creation,
to love and serve others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,
our judge and our hope.**

**In life, in death, in life beyond death,
God is with us.**

We are not alone.

Thanks be to God.

Voices United page 918

We Receive the Offering

Doxology: VU542

"We Give You But Your Own"

We give you but your own,
whate'er the gift may be;
all that we have is yours alone,
we give it gratefully. < >

Dedication of Our Gifts

Hymn: VU326

"O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing"

- 1 O for a thousand tongues to sing
my great Redeemer's praise,
the glories of my God and King,
the triumphs of God's grace.
- 2 Jesus! the name that charms our fears,
that bids our sorrows cease;
'tis music in the sinner's ears,
'tis life and health and peace.
- 3 He speaks, and listening to his voice,
new life the dead receive,
the mournful broken-hearts rejoice,
the humble poor believe.
- 4 Hear him, you deaf; you voiceless ones,
your tongues again employ;

you blind, behold your Saviour comes,
and leap, you lame, for joy!

- 5 My gracious Master and my God,
assist me to proclaim,
to spread through all the earth abroad
the honours of your name. < >

Prayers of the People and Jesus Prayer

Please stand for the Closing Hymn

Closing Hymn: VU55

“In the Bleak Midwinter”

- 1 In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan,
earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;
snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,
in the bleak midwinter, long ago.
- 2 Our God, heaven cannot hold him, nor earth sustain;
heaven and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign;
in the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed
the Lord God almighty, Jesus Christ.
- 3 Enough for him, whom cherubim worship night and day,
a breast full of milk, and a manger full of hay.
Enough for him, whom angels fall down before,
the ox and ass and camel which adore.
- 4 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. < >

Blessing as We Go Forth:

One: Let us go from this place with hope and celebration.

All: Let us go from this place with peace and compassion.

One: Let us go from this place with joy and celebration.

All: Let us go from this place with love and inclusion.

One: Let us go from this place sharing the Presence of Emmanuel, God-with-us. Amen.

All: Amen.

Sung Blessing: VU964

“Go Now in Peace”

Go now in peace, go now in peace.

May the love of God surround you everywhere,
everywhere you may go. < >

Music as the Worship Service Concludes

Regional Council Prayer Cycle

As church, we are called to pray for each other and for our mission in the world for the week of December 15, 2024

Selby United Church, Selby

[*East Central Ontario Regional Council*]

THANK YOU TO THIS WEEK’S VOLUNTEERS for Dec 15

Duty	Nelson Pickett
Elevator	John Tewsley
Greeters	Martin & Debbie Noakes
	Pat Brunton
Scripture Reader	Karen Strano
Congregational Elder	Mary Hess Northey
Sunday School Coordinator	Maggie Crawford
Nursery Coordinator	Gale Osmond
Sound	Al & Lynn Bartholomew
Video	Nelson Pickett
Videographer	Ken Nash

Advent/Christmas Schedule

Sunday, December 15 th	Advent III
Sunday, December 22 nd	Advent IV
Tuesday, December 24 th	Christmas Eve
Sunday, December 29 th	First Sunday of Christmas
Sunday, January 05 th	Epiphany Sunday

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FOOD BANK SUNDAY- is held on the 2nd Sunday of each month. We invite you to bring items to support Kawartha Food Share. Boxes are located in Upper Wright Hall and back foyer [*exit to parking lot*]. If you wish to make a cash donation instead, there is a line provided on the offering envelopes. ***Please make cheques payable to: “Northminster United Church”***. This can be placed on the offering plate.

Next date: January 13th . We also accept Interac NUC Treasurer: treasureernuc@gmail.com

OUR NURSERY FOR OUR YOUNGEST CHILDREN is along the main corridor across from the kitchen.

OFFERING ENVELOPES ... please contact Michele in the office to let her know you require offering envelopes. Email: info@northminsteruc.ca or Tel. # 705-748-4881.

NAME TAGS: If you need a name tag, please contact the office. I would be happy to make you one. Also stick on name tags are available, located on the table at the back of the church and on table at west entrance into Sanctuary.

WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS If you are not on our weekly email list and would like to be, please let us know by sending us an email to: info@northminsteruc.ca

PASTORAL CARE: If you know someone that is in the hospital that we should know about, please call the office and let us know. The hospital does not notify us & there is no longer access to a church list. If calling the church after hours, please leave a message 705-748-4881.

Please keep in mind, we all need to take care of each other.

The Sanctuary is decorated and the “**Mitten Tree**” is waiting to be decorated with mittens, scarves, hats, underwear & socks. All items will be donated to those in need. Please consider making a donation to our tree and help make someone’s Christmas a bit brighter....

Donations will be collected during the Advent season.