



Welcome to worship!

Sunday December 6th, 2020

Advent 2

***A joint online Zoom worship Service with
Claremont, Fairbank & Goodwood United Churches
and friends.***

Worship Leaders:

Pastor Steven Loweth, DLM & Rev. Lionel Ketola, MDiv

Musicians: From Claremont United Church: Gabrielle Untermann, Jane Plewmann, Julia Shatford, Barb Gilbert, Steve May; From Fairbank United Church: Alexandra Huynh Do.

Onelicense # A-723979 CCLI # 11550809

We Joyfully Gather in God's Presence

Words of Welcome

Acknowledgement of the Land

During this season of Advent, we await the celebration of Jesus' birth – the Word made flesh - who called us to walk on the earth with love and justice. We acknowledge the gift of the land, and the First Nations who are the traditional custodians of the land where each of us gather today.

God of Advent hope, awaken us to new opportunities for reconciliation with our First Nations. Amen.

Lighting the Advent Candle – Video

Kelly, Brooke and Lauren

We light our First and Second Advent Candles in our homes

O Come O Come Emmanuel VU # 1 Verse One & Two – Alex Huynh Do

**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.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

Call To Worship

A voice cries out, "Prepare the way of the Lord!"
Make Way! Clear the Path!
Level the Valleys!
Make straight the road!
The earth will be transformed, God's glory will be revealed.
Open our ears and eyes to hear the call of the prophet.
Let us prepare a way for the one who is to come.

Opening Prayer

**Advent God,
when the hour had come,
you sent your servant John into the wilderness
to proclaim the coming of the one true Messiah:**

**On this second Sunday of Advent
we have heard your servant crying out to us in the wilderness.
We have heard the call to repentance and restoration,
and we want to respond.
Open wide our hearts and our minds
so we can hear the call of your Kingdom;
through Jesus, the one who is to come. Amen**

Opening Hymn: People Look East VU #9

Video

Prayer of Confession

As the streets of our neighbourhoods
light up with holiday decorations,
and stores broadcast their tempting offers,
You lead us along a different path, O God,
to a desert river and a Prophetic voice
a call to repentance
a call to service
a call to reorient our lives toward your Kingdom.

Let us pause for silent confession.

God in your mercy, **Hear our prayer**

Words of Assurance

Hear the good news:

God forgives all our sins,
heals our brokenness,
and renews our lives.

God invites us to continue
the journey filled with hope. Amen

We Open our Hearts to the Spirit's Voice

One: Whether you take what is written in the Bible as fact, metaphor, myth or story, listen now to these words for the meaning they hold in your lives today.

All: May the Spirit bless us with wisdom and wonder, as we ponder the meaning of these words in our lives.

Isaiah 40:1-11

¹Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. ²Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

³A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. ⁴Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. ⁵Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken." ⁶A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. ⁷The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the people are grass. ⁸The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever.

⁹Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!" ¹⁰See, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with

him, and his recompense before him. ¹¹He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

Psalm 85

VIDEO

2 Peter 3:8-15

⁸But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day.

⁹The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. ¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.

¹¹Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, ¹²waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? ¹³But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home. ¹⁴Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; ¹⁵and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

Reflection: Pastor Steven

Mark 1:1-8

¹The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

²As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,

“See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way;

³the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight,’”

⁴John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷He proclaimed, “The one who is more powerful than I is

coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. ⁸I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

Reflection: Rev Lionel

Hymn of the Day: There’s a Voice in the Wilderness Calling VU # 18

Invitation to the Offering

Mission and Service Fund Video

Prayer of Dedication for the Gifts:

God of hope, during this season of waiting and anticipation, you call us to stay awake for the coming of your Son. Jesus’ love often comes into our lives in quiet, unexpected ways. In joyful gratitude we respond with the gifts of our time and talent, our resources and our lives; through Jesus, your beloved son. Amen.

Prayers of the People

Keeping awake as we watch for Christ, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need.
(a brief silence)

God of promise, your reign has come near. Call your people to the way of repentance and inspire your church to bear fruit in the world through acts of faithful service.

God in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

God of creation, we pray for the wolf and the lamb, the lion and calf, and all species whose lives are intertwined. Repair and preserve ecosystems, that all life on earth may be sustained.

God in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

God of the nations, teach those with power and privilege, to serve the vulnerable. Give to all leaders wisdom and understanding, counsel and might, and a heart for the world you so love.

God in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

God of the poor, set tables of abundance in all places where hands are empty, where stomachs ache with hunger, and where hearts and minds suffer pain. Feed and heal all who are in need.

God in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

God of hope, renew in your people all joy and peace in believing, especially those facing anxiety, depression, or alienation. Guide our churches to welcome one another just as Christ has welcomed us.

God in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

At this time we lift up all who are in our prayers.....

Loving God, you hear the cries of our hearts. Fill us with hopeful expectation, that in each day and hour we may love and serve our neighbours, in Jesus name.

As our Saviour taught us, we pray together..... **God, our Mother and Father in heaven.....**

Closing Hymn: It Came upon the Midnight Clear VU # 44

[We Go Forth to Serve our Neighbours](#)

Blessing:

Go in peace

To love and care for one another in the name of Christ.

May the power of the Holy Spirit

make the rough places in your life smooth,

and the lonesome valleys of our world into places of healing.

May the way of the Lord be made ready in us.

May the blessing of God;

Creator, Christ and Holy Spirit,

Be with us now and always.

Amen.

Please take a moment to read the **Announcements** which follow:

Give the Gift of Care this Christmas! A Claremont United Fundraiser for Herizon House

2020 continues to be a year of changes to how we do almost everything. What hasn't changed is the work of Herizon House, a shelter for abused women and their children in Ajax. What also hasn't changed is our desire to help those tired and frightened people have a happier Christmas.

To give them the gift of care this year, we are collecting gift cards so that Herizon House can create a Giving Tree for those women and children. If you are interested in helping us 'give

the gift of care', we are suggesting cards from grocery stores, Tim Hortons's, local eateries, Walmart, Visa/Mastercard, Toys'r'Us, etc, in denominations of 25. or greater.

Please bring your **gift cards** to either my house or Tracey May's house **by Sunday, December 6th**, and your Mission and Outreach Team will be sure to deliver them shortly afterward.

Please deliver them to:

Debbie Andersen: 1513 Kodiak Street

Tracey May: 5057 William Street

With love and light,

Debbie Andersen for the Claremont United Church Mission & Outreach Team

Affirming Committee - Volunteers Needed!

Exciting news! Both Goodwood United Church and Claremont United Churches have voted at their recent Board meetings to begin the process of **becoming an Affirming congregation**. An Affirming congregation is a congregation which intentionally, publicly and explicitly (PIE) welcomes, affirms and advocates for the full inclusion of GLBTQ people in church and in society, along with affirming and celebrating the diversity of all people including culture and ethnicity, ability, economic status, etc. **Both churches are seeking volunteers** to serve on their congregation's affirming committee.

- **For Goodwood United Church contact: Shirley Baster**
- **For Claremont United Church contact: Debbie Andersen**

For more information see Affirm Canada's website at:

<https://affirmunited.ause.ca/affirming-ministries-program/>



Goodwood United Church: Online Community Check-in: Tuesdays at 10:00 AM, on Zoom. Once our check-in time has come to a conclusion, the group will proceed with our weekly Bible Study / "Conversations about Life", so feel free to join us for this as well.

Claremont United Church: Wednesdays @ 12:00 noon - Join us for a Zoom "drop-in" meeting Everyone is invited to join us for these "Virtual Brock Café" Zoom gatherings to connect with our congregational community.

Joint BOOK STUDY GROUP for all 3 Churches & friends: Friday mornings at 10:00 am:

Here is the schedule:

Fri Dec 11 – We read & discuss the last Chapters 7, 8, 9 in INDIGENOUS RELATIONS by Bob and Cynthia Joseph.

Fri Dec 18 - We will watch a **video lecture from a progressive Christian biblical scholar talking about the birth of Christ**, and enjoy discussion about it. Bring your eggnog!

After Dec 18th, we will break until Christmas is over.

New Year Book Study Sessions

Beginning January 8th to Friday February 12th we will read:

Unsettling the WORD: Biblical Experiments in Decolonization, Steve Heinrichs Editor.

see this link (Cut and paste it into your browser):

https://www.amazon.ca/Unsettling-Word-Biblical-Experiments-Decolonization/dp/1626983119/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=unsettling+the+word&qid=1606521159&sr=8-1

Lent Book Study (5 weeks)

Beginning the first week in Lent (Friday Feb 19th) we will read:

The Death of Christ for Progressive Christians, by Donald Schmidt. (see the link below):

<https://www.woodlakebooks.com/search/results/inventory/All-Products/Biblical-Studies/Death-of-Jesus-for-Progressive-Christians>

Note: Please let me know if you would like me to order your book for you (BULK with no shipping costs) and you can send me an e-transfer.

Thanks! Rev. Lionel

PAST WORSHIP SERVICES - are being uploaded to YouTube

We are now live streaming to our YouTube Channel. The service will also be available for watching later. Please use this link to visit the uploaded services site.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1HPD2ai10bo-qbNaXvNVtw>

Continued Financial Support for our Congregations

Please prayerfully consider how you can continue to support your congregation's ongoing ministries during this time.

- Offerings can be **mailed to the church address** itself
- **PAR forms** (for pre-authorized debit) are available from your church treasurer
- You can send your offering by **E-TRANSFER** through your online banking. Here is where to send them:

For **Claremont United** send to: treasurerucuc@outlook.com

For **Goodwood United** send to: goodwooductreasurer@gmail.com

Thank you for your continued support of our congregation's ministry.



Find us online! Check out our websites!

Check out our church websites for **new updates** during this time, including Sunday devotions, and information about coping with stress during COVID-19.

www.claremontunitedchurch.com

www.goodwoodunitedchurch.com



Find us on Facebook!

<https://www.facebook.com/goodwoodunited>

<https://www.facebook.com/claremontunited>



PLEASE SHARE THE POSTER BELOW!



**Computer Savvy?
Looking for a
Volunteer opportunity?**

Need Co-op / Volunteer Hours for School?

**Claremont, Fairbank and Goodwood United Churches
are seeking a**

Geek Squad / Tech Volunteer

to help out with the technical aspects
of our Joint Sunday morning Zoom Worship Services at 11:00 am.

Your time, efforts and skills will help ensure that the
technical aspects of our Zoom Worship Service run smoothly.
Your role could be carried out remotely, from home, if needed.

In return, you would get volunteer hours
& the satisfaction of knowing you made a difference!
Knowledge of MS Word, PPT, and Zoom would be helpful.

Interested? Get in touch!

Contact Rev. Lionel Ketola at: lionelketola@gmail.com

Church phone: 905 649 1363