

PARKMINSTER UNITED CHURCH

Sunday, December 3, 2017

First Sunday of Advent – HOPE

Rev. Heather Power & Rev. Joe Gaspar





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LARGE PRINT Bulletins, Voices United Hymn Books and Bibles are available from the ushers.

BULLETIN NOTATIONS:

★ Signal to stand, for those who are able.

VU~Voices United Hymn book **MV**~More Voices Hymn book

Welcome Visitors! We're glad to have you worshipping with us at Parkminster and would like to make sure you feel connected. Please take a few minutes to fill out one of the white information envelopes found in the pews and place it on the offering plate, or put it in the mail slot outside the office. Whether you'd like more information about Parkminster's programs, want to request offering envelopes, or have a question about becoming a member – or whatever else is important to you, we'd love to hear from you! Welcome!

Gathering

Prelude: “Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord” by Stephen Schwartz
(soloists - Midori Marsh and River Guard)

Welcome

Statement of Welcome

One: Today, we remember our relationship with First People which has not always been healing and empowering. With gratitude and respect, we recognize the tribes on whose traditional land we make our spiritual home, the Anishnawbe (A-nish-NA-bay) the Haudenosaunee (Ho-di-no-SHOW-nay), and the Neutral. We acknowledge with regret, that this history has not always been respectful. We commit to just relationship in the present.

All: Seeking true community, we welcome all who have no church home, need strength, and are seeking deep meaning. Welcome to those who have doubts or who do not believe. Welcome to those whose faith is sure, and to those who believe, but who are asking large questions.

One: Welcome to visitors and to familiar friends. Welcome to grandparents, to mothers, fathers, youth and children, couples, and single people.

All: Welcome to people of all colours, gender identities, abilities, and sexual orientations.

One: Welcome to each who is searching for meaning, who is seeking an understanding of community and what it means to accompany one another.

All: As we come together as church, we turn to one another with gratitude and pray that we will be strong together, faithful together, and loving together. We seek blessing as we welcome the great gift of spirit in us, through us, and among us.

Joys and Concerns

Advent Candle Lighting:

Week One – HOPE

Introduction

One: Today is the first of four Sundays in the season of Advent. This season is a time of anticipation as we enter into the ancient story and await again the coming birth of Jesus. It is also a time of preparation, humbling our hearts to receive the gift of a lowly saviour and a vulnerable love.

All: In the weeks to come, we will prepare and wait by lighting the candles on the Advent Wreath. Candles that remind us of the promises of Emmanuel – God with us – the promises of hope, peace, joy and love.

**On Christmas Eve our Advent journey will be over,
we will light the Christ candle
and give thanks for the gift of Jesus.**

One: Today we light the candle of Hope. For we know that the sun will return, that despair does not have the last word. We remember the words of Israel in exile; “But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases.”

One: As we light the Candle of Hope let us join in singing our Advent song:

♪ **I am walking a path of hope, I am walking a path of hope,
I am walking a path of hope, lead me home, lead me home.**

One: Let us pray.

**All: Holy One,
as we begin our Advent journey
in the midst of poverty,
despair and insecurity worldwide
that often overwhelms us and
makes us feel inadequate and hopeless
help us to hold out for Your hope.
May the light of this candle ever brighten our
path
and reveal Your vulnerable hope in a hurting
world—
In hearts that break over injustice and pain,
In small acts of defiance and compassion,
In words that heal and empower,
In a saviour born in a stable.
Help us to prepare
and wait for the fulfillment of Your promises.
Our journey begins, Amen.**

Following the Advent candle lighting, children and youth will leave for Sunday Morning Activities. They will join us again later in the service for Communion. Happy Learning!

For babies and toddlers, there is the Family Worship Space at the back of the sanctuary. Each week, there will be an adult present so that the children can play and be cared for while parents worship. Parents are free to come and go from that space, according to the needs of their children.

★ Hymn: “O Come, O Come Emmanuel” 🎵 VU #1

Passing of the Peace



One: God is the source of peace within us.

All: In humility and surrender let us claim it.

One: Jesus is the way of peace among us.

All: With courage and faith let us live it.

One: The Holy Spirit is the unity of peace between us.

All: With generosity and joy let us share it.

One: May the peace of Jesus, the Christ be with you...

All: And also with you.

Adapted from Rex A. Hunt

http://www.rexaehuntprogressive.com/liturgy_collection/year_b_liturgy_collection/year_b_pentecostafter/pentecostb2452015.html

Exploring

Opening Our Hearts

**God of the now and the not yet,
while we wait for your promises
to be made real in our world,
give us hope in your Word. Amen.**

* Adapted from *Celebrate God's Presence*

Ministry of Music: “In the Bleak Midwinter”

arr. by Martha Lynn Thompson
(Cast in Bronze Handbell Choir)



Scripture

Mark 1: 1 – 8

Mark 1: 1-8 Mark's Gospel begins not with Jesus, but with John the Baptist. Immediately he quotes from Isaiah 40, transferring this reference to Israel's return from exile in Babylon in 639 BC

to the coming of the Messiah. The early church searched the Hebrew scriptures for every possible prophecy about the coming of Israel's Messiah, no matter whether they were relevant or not. They understood the coming of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, into the world as the fulfilment of those prophecies. Now that God's love and purpose for Israel were being fulfilled, John called everyone to prepare by repenting and being baptized.

John Shearman- <http://www.seemslikegod.org/lectionary.htm>

Mark — Three gospels[†] (the good news) in the New Testament portion of the bible offer similar portraits of the life of Jesus and are known as the synoptic gospels. As witnesses to the events of Jesus life and death became old and died, the need arose for a written synopsis. Mark was likely the first gospel to be written. When other synoptic gospels were written, i.e. Matthew and Luke, they used the Gospel according to Mark as a source. This book stresses the crucifixion and resurrection as keys to understanding who Jesus was.

[†] The stories of Jesus—Matthew and Luke being the others.

Chris Haslam- <http://www.montreal.anglican.org/comments/badv1m.shtml>

Questions for Reflection

- What do you need to do to prepare the way for God to come into your life?
- How do you recognize God's activity in the world? Is there a recent time when this happened?

Ministry of Music: "Do Not Be Afraid" *by Henry Boon*

Reflection

★ Hymn: "God of Still Waiting"  MV #20

Responding

What Parkminster Means to Me – Tracie Klaehn

Offering – invitation

Offertory: "Staccato Giocoso" *by Cathy Mocklebust*
(Cast in Bronze Handbell Choir)

★ Dedication: "What Can I Do?"

♪ MV #191

**What can I do? What can I bring?
What can I say? What can I sing?
I'll sing with joy. (I'll sing with joy.) I'll say a prayer.
I'll bring my love. I'll do my share.**

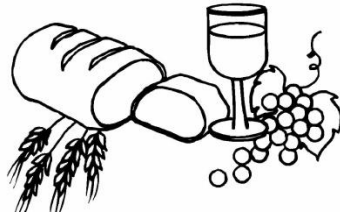
★ Offering Prayer

CELEBRATING

★ Hymn: "I'll Come With Joy"

♪ VU #477
(vs. 1, 3, & 5)

Sacrament of Communion



One: Our tradition says at the Last Supper, Jesus, sharing bread and wine, invited the disciples to share his journey.

All: Here today, through bread and the fruit of the vine, we renew our journey with Jesus and his disciples.

One: Here today, through bread and the fruit of the vine, we renew our unity with one another, and with all those who have gone before us in this place.

All: Here today, through bread and the fruit of the vine, we renew our communion with the earth and our connectedness with the broken ones of the world.

One: God is the heart of life.

All: And we are the heartbeat.

One: May our hearts be filled with thanks and joy.

All: We rejoice in the miracle of life and delight in our participation.

One: Let us give thanks to the Creator, who in the beginning brought light and life to the world.

All: Your song of wisdom echoes through the ages, your ancient promise still brings us hope.

One: Over the ages you have called people to embrace your hope and share your love.

All: But even when they have closed their ears to the song you did not stop singing.

One: You sent prophets and messengers to your people, reminding them of the promised time of peace and justice that would surround the world.

All: They came in the midst of our despair and filled us with hope.

One: And then you came to a young woman named Mary and laid out the promise in a new way

All: Promising her a son, who would be called Jesus. Promising her that in her son the world would be changed.

One: Now as we prepare for that child to be born, we echo the ancient cry:

All: O come, O come Emmanuel.

One: In that hope we still yearn for wholeness and pray for hope in our world.

All: We pray for our friends and families, for neighbours and strangers.

One: For those who are ill, for those who are lonely, for those who are grieving.

All: For refugees – those who live their lives, and birth their children, far from the comfort and familiarity of home. For all those without a place to call home.

One: For places around the world recovering from natural disasters.

All: For those who experience violence simply because of who they are.

One: Pour your grace and love upon all the peoples of the world so that your hope and your will be known.

All: Holy Mystery that is Wholly Love, we offer our thanks to you.

One: Every day we are engaged in a miracle which we don't even recognize:

All: beating hearts and expanding lungs with no intention on our part,

One: our home the earth at just the right distance from our star,

All: everyday gifts of love and kindness from family, friends and strangers alike.

One: Open eyes, hearts and souls, that this Advent might be one of surrender into the holy presence.

All: And as we wait and watch for your coming, we proclaim your goodness in song
(♪ MV #203 tune: Kingsfold):

***O holy, holy holy God, O God of time and space.
All earth and sea and sky above bear witness to your grace.
Hosanna in the highest heav'n, creation sings your praise.
And blessed is the One
who comes and bears Your name always!***

One: Yet even now, as we prepare to celebrate his birth, we remember the life that this baby would live.

All: We remember how he broke the bonds of human tradition to show all what the Banquet of Hope could be, as he ate openly with the despised and the outcast of his world.

One: And we remember again the tradition that surrounds our faith story and one special meal that he ate with his closest friends.

All: Long ago, on the night of his arrest, Jesus took bread, gave thanks, and broke it:

One: “This bread is broken, as my body will be”. And he handed it to his friends, and invited them to eat:

All: “Remember all that I have been to you”.

One: Long ago, on that same night, Jesus poured a cup of wine, offered thanks for it, and gave it to his friends:

All: “This wine is poured out, as my life will be. Remember me and give thanks for all I have given”.

One: Following the meal Jesus was unjustly killed by the powers of his day, by those who saw the hope he brought as a threat.

All: As faithful Jews, his friends saw Jesus as being like the Passover lambs that God had once used to save Israel, in the stories of their faith;

One: Lambs that were sacrificed and whose blood adorned the doors of Jewish homes, sparing the nation of Israel from the final plague before liberation from slavery.

All: To his frightened disciples it seemed that the broken bread was like his body, and the poured wine like his blood.

One: It also seemed like injustice and violence killed Jesus and his ministry.

All: But there were more meals - and more ministries! We thank you, Holy One, that the last supper wasn't the last meal – or the last word!

One: Through this loaf and cup, Jesus lives within us.

All: In word and deed, Jesus lives among us.

One: Remembering your boundless love for us in Jesus the Christ,

All: we offer you our praise, as we proclaim in song the mystery of faith:

(♪ MV #204 tune: Kingsfold)

*Sing Christ has died and Christ is risen,
Christ will come again!*

*Sing Christ has died and Christ is risen,
Christ will come again!*

One: Holy One, you poured your Spirit on the Prophet as he proclaimed words of defiance and hope.

All: Pour out your Spirit upon us gathered here.
As we eat and drink may we know your presence.

One: As we eat and drink may we be opened to the possibilities of your hope and power

All: And may we be strengthened to let love take on our flesh.

One: And so we pray:

**All: Praise be to God, the Source of love!
Praise be to Jesus, Love incarnate!
Praise be to the Spirit, Love's power!
Praise be to God! Amen.**

...the gifts of God for the people of God. Come all is ready.

*(As you are given the bread and the juice you may respond with
"amen" or "thanks be to God".)*

**God of pregnant expectations,
God of Christmas promise,
God of child-like hope,
we have eaten and drunk from your table.
May the eating and the drinking
fill us with hope in a world of despair.
May we be beacons of hope
as we wait for the day
when the world will be changed.
Grant that this taste of your banquet
would give us the hunger for peace and justice
in our community and around the world. Amen.**

Returning

★ Hymn: "My Soul Cries Out" 🎵 MV #120

★ **Commissioning and Blessing**

★ Sung Blessing: "Peace Be with You" 🎵 MV #215

**Peace be with you, peace forever,
peace be with you, my friends.
Till we meet again, may God be with you.
Peace, peace, peace.**

Postlude: "Moderato" *by Tomasa Albinoni*
(Cast in Bronze Handbell Choir)



Birth Announcement: A single rose has been placed on the communion table this morning to celebrate the birth of **Amelia Helene Charette**, born Sunday, November 26, 2017. Proud parents are Amanda and Cedric. Best Wishes & congratulations from your Parkminster family!

Thank you to everyone who has offered their gift of time to volunteer in various ways this Sunday:

Ushers:.....Kathy & Isaias Teves, Trudie Robbins, and
.....Marjorie Eveleigh
Greeters:Pat Smith & Fred Monteith
Lay Reader:.....Margo Foster Cohen
Chancel Arrangements:.....Chancel Committee
Candle Lighters:.....arranged each Sunday morning in Advent
Music:.....Cast in Bronze Handbell Choir, Voices United Choir
Soloists:.....Midori Marsh, River Guard
Counters:Ron Usaty, Colleen Usaty
Coffee Hour:Jeanne Foster, Andrea Gaspar
Coffee Hour Dessert:Audrey McWilliams

The Ministry of Parkminster:..... All of us
Ministers:.....Rev. Heather Power (x 22) and
.....Rev. Joe Gaspar (x 23)
Music Director:.....Neil Murray (x 25)
Office Administrator:.....Melanie Chisholm (x 21)
Custodian:.....Allen Switzer (x 26)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

For full details please refer to the weekly “What’s UP” email.

(If you would like to receive “What’s UP”, please contact the church office.)



ADVENT/CHRISTMAS SERVICES & PROGRAMS

Please refer to the insert in today’s bulletin.



MINISTERS’ MESSAGES

Christmas Eve Candle Lighters: Do you plan on celebrating Christmas by coming to church on Christmas Eve? Would you like to be part of the service? We are looking for people to be part of the Advent/Christ candle lighting liturgy at both the 7:00pm Family Service and the 10pm Communion Service. It involves lighting the candles and reading a short script. Let us know if you’re interested. revjoegaspar.parkminster@gmail.com (519- 885-0935 ext. 23) revheather.parkminster@gmail.com (519-885-0935 ext. 22).

Pastoral Care – Rev. Joe Gaspar and Rev. Heather Power: If you or anyone in the congregation requires pastoral care or you become aware of someone who might be ill, in hospital or in need of some support, please contact Heather or Joe at church by phone at **519-885-0935 (Heather at ext. 22 or Joe at ext. 23)**. Voicemail messages will be checked regularly.

Ministers' Day Off: Rev. Joe and Rev. Heather take Friday as their day off during the week. For urgent matters that cannot wait until their Sunday to Thursday work schedule, please contact the church office and they will be contacted for you.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Children and Youth at PUC: Sundays are an exciting time to gather in community at PUC and that's no exception for our children and youth! Did you know that we have expanded from a one-room option to two classes? We have one for younger children and one for older children and youth! Thank you to the C.E. Committee, Rev. Heather, and of all the volunteers who are offering their gifts and enthusiasm on Sunday mornings with our young people!

Here's what's coming up in the weeks ahead!

Sunday, Dec. 10 - Pageant preparations (Rev. Heather with the classes)

Sunday, Dec. 17 - Pageant Sunday - all are welcome to be a part of telling the story with roles for all ages! Be a part of this "no-rehearsal-required" Pageant that shares the Christmas story with a fun twist. Invite your friends!

Sunday, Dec. 24 (10:00am) - Christmas Activities and Celebrations with Rev. Heather

AUDIO / VISUAL HELP IS AVAILABLE!

Please contact our A/V coordinator Sandra Quehl, should you require help with the Sanctuary projector for your group's next event or meeting. Operators are standing by! You may reach Sandra by email at quewat1@outlook.com

THANK YOU!

Christmas Decorating Volunteers: A special Thank You to all who volunteered their time and talents to decorate the church this past Sunday. Because of the 20 some volunteers we were able to complete the task within two hours (and that included time for a lovely potluck lunch)! The halls are now ready as we prepare for a time of peace and joy. Thank you.

FROM NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Seeking Volunteer for Church Council Secretary: You are invited to serve as Secretary for Council for the next 2 years. The Council meets once a month except July and August and for special Congregational meetings such as the Annual General Meeting. You will be included in the important discussions as the church moves forward and you will keep up to date with the life of Parkminster. Minutes will be submitted electronically to the Office Administrator, Melanie, for circulation to Council and Committees. Please contact Melanie or a member of Nominating if you are interested: Maedith Radlein, Mary Reynolds, Barb Leask Wynne, Liz Forde or Jeanne Foster.

MEETING

HOUSE GROUP #7: Please come to the Family Room after church on **Sunday, December 10th** to organize our January schedule. Thanks – Sue Usaty.

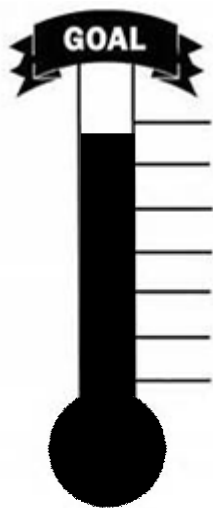
FINANCIAL UPDATE

As happens each year-end, we'll continue to keep you posted on progress in reaching the amount of offerings needed to pay operating costs for the year, and to reach our Outreach goal.

As of December 1st, we are at 82% for the Local Fund budget. A further \$63,300 is required to meet our projected operating costs for the year of \$342,280. For Outreach, we are at 80%. A further \$16,080 is required to meet our year-end Outreach goal of \$80,000.

Outreach Goal - \$80,000

Local Fund - \$342,280



← at 80%
\$63,920



← at 82%
\$278,900

This week let us pray for:



World Council of Churches Focus
Myanmar, Thailand

Hamilton Conference Prayer Cycle
Emmanuel United Church, Hamilton