



# FAIRLAWN

Connect with what matters in life.



**Fairlawn Avenue United Church  
Advent II ~ Communion  
Sunday, December 8, 2024  
10:30am**

**Rev. Dr. Cameron Watts  
Eleanor Daley, Director of Music  
Fairlawn Avenue Senior Choir**

2.

\*Indicates when the congregation is to stand, as able.

Congregational responses, singing and readings in unison are indicated in bold text.

## Welcome and Acknowledgements

### Invitation to Worship

Based on Luke 1:68-79

"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,  
who has looked favorably on the people and redeemed them.

***Raising up a mighty Saviour for us  
from commoners and the royal line David,  
Speaking through the mouths of holy prophets from of old,  
saving us from our enemies,  
from the hand of all who hate us.***

Mercy was promised to our ancestors  
through holy covenant,

***Ancient promises like those to our ancestor Abraham,  
to grant us, that we,  
being rescued from the hands of our enemies,  
might live without fear, in holiness and righteousness  
in the Presence all our days.***

A child will be called the prophet of the Most High,  
for you will go before the Chosen One to prepare his ways,  
to give his people knowledge of salvation  
by the forgiveness of their sins.

***Because of the tender mercy of our God,  
the dawn from on high will break upon us,  
to shine upon those who sit in darkness  
and in the shadow of death,  
to guide our feet into the way of peace."***

### Advent Candle ~ Peace

*(An angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.' Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt.)*

**Reading**

Jim Benson and Doreen Uren Simmons

It's an old story about a family having to move  
 because they are threat to someone's  
 sense of well-being,  
 because the child is a source of embarrassment.  
 There were rumours that the child wasn't Joseph's.  
 This family heads to urban world of Egypt.  
 Families with children who are different,  
 with feared diagnoses  
 or the discovery that they are neuro-diverse children  
 move from their homes to seek help for their beloveds.  
 We speak of Jesus and Joseph and Mary as the Holy Family,  
 a family with a strange child.  
 All families are holy, unique, cherished by the Creator.  
 We light a candle this day for all families who must journey  
 somewhere else in search of a new life,  
 that they might find peace.

**Lighting the Advent Candle**

Lighting of the second purple candle in the Advent Wreath ~ Peace

**\*Opening Hymn** Hope is a Star

VU #7

**Hope is a star that shines in the night,  
 leading us on till the morning is bright.  
 When God is a child there's joy in our song.  
 The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong,  
 and none shall be afraid.**

**Peace is a ribbon that circles the earth,  
 giving a promise of safety and worth.  
 When God is a child there's joy in our song.  
 The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong,  
 and none shall be afraid.**

**Joy is a song that welcomes the dawn,  
 telling the world that the Saviour is born.  
 When God is a child there's joy in our song.  
 The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong,  
 and none shall be afraid.**

4. **Love is a flame that burns in our heart,  
Jesus has come and will never depart.  
*When God is a child there's joy in our song.  
The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong,  
and none shall be afraid.***

**\*Gathering Litany "A Story of Light and Darkness"[1]**

In the beginning the Creator allowed for chaos,  
for troubled dreams,  
and uncertain sounds,  
and fear in the darkness.

Then, when the chaos was most threatening  
and hope was bleakest,  
The Holy One said "Let there be light."

***And there was light!***

Remember the chaos  
the uncertainty  
the confusion in which you once groped,  
and give thanks for the light.

***When the light was brightest  
and life was good  
despite our better judgement  
but in solidarity with all humankind  
we chased shadows.***

Remember how and when and where  
and perhaps why you have wandered,  
from the light.

Because we are loved by the Creator,  
there will be light again.  
Not in chaos or shadow,  
but in a hidden place  
where the Holy One will hold out an infant's hand.

**\*Introit** Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord

E. Daley

Prepare ye the way of the Lord,  
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.  
(Isaiah 40:3)

**Scripture** Malachi 3:1-4

New Revised Standard Version

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple.

The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts.

But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?  
For he is like a refiner's fire and like washers' soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the Lord in righteousness.

Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord, as in the days of old and as in former years.

**Anthem**

The Yearning

Craig Courtney (b. 1948)

There is a yearning in hearts weighed down by ancient grief  
and centuries of sorrow.

There is a yearning in hearts that in the darkness hide  
and in the shades of death abide,  
a yearning for tomorrow.

There is a yearning for the promised One,  
the First-born of creation.

There is a yearning for the Lord who visited His own,  
and by His death for sin atoned,  
to bring to us salvation.

*Emmanuel, Emmanuel,  
within our hearts the yearning.*

There is a yearning that fills the hearts of those who wait  
the day of His appearing.

There is a yearning when all our sorrows are erased  
and we shall see the One who placed  
within our hearts the yearning.

*Emmanuel, Emmanuel,  
within our hearts the yearning.*

(Susan Bentall Boersma)

6.

**Reflection** "A Little More Light"

Rev. Dr. Cameron Watts

## **Passing of the Peace**

**\*Hymn** Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

VU #473 (verses 1 and 2)

**Let all mortal flesh keep silence,  
and with awe and reverence stand;  
ponder nothing earthly-minded,  
for with blessing in his hand,  
Christ our God to us approacheth  
our full homage to demand.**

**King of kings, yet born of Mary,  
as of old on earth he stood,  
Lord of lords, in human vesture,  
in the body and the blood,  
he will give to all the faithful  
his own self for heavenly food.**

## **The Sacrament of Communion**

Communion Bread: A Story

Jill Klaehn

Welcome to the Table

The Elements of Commensality (bread being served is gluten-free)

## **Communion Anthem** Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning

Andrea Ludwig – Mezzo Soprano

Traditional, arr. Jay Althouse (b. 1951)

*Keep your lamps trimmed and burning,  
keep your lamps trimmed and burning,  
keep your lamps trimmed and burning,  
for the time is drawing nigh.*

Oh, children, don't get weary,  
oh, children, don't get weary,  
oh, children, don't get weary  
till your work is done. *R*

Oh, sister, don't stop praying,  
 oh, brother, don't stop praying,  
 oh, sisters and brothers.  
 brothers and sisters,  
 keep on praying till the work is done. *R*

## **Introduction of the Offering and the Offertory**

### **\*Presentation of the Offering**

E. Daley

(The choir will sing through once, and then the congregation is invited to join in.)

**Come, Light of lights, come shine upon us,  
 Come, touch our hearts, we long for you.  
 Come, touch our lives, come and renew us,  
 Come to us, Emmanuel.**

### **Prayers of the People and The Lord's Prayer<sup>[2]</sup>**

**O Breathing Life, your Name shines everywhere!  
 Release a space to plant your Presence here.**

**Imagine your possibilities now.  
 Embody your desire in every light and form.**

**Grow through us this moment's bread and wisdom.**

**Untie the knots of failure binding us,  
 as we release the strands we hold of others' faults.**

**Help us not forget our Source,  
 yet free us from not being in the Present.  
 From you arises every Vision, Power and Song  
 from gathering to gathering. Amen.  
 May our future actions grow from here!**

### **\*Closing Hymn** Hark, the Glad Sound!

VU #29

**Hark, the glad sound! The Saviour comes,  
 the Saviour promised long:  
 let every heart prepare a throne,  
 and every voice a song.**

8.

**He comes, the prisoners to release  
in Satan's bondage held;  
the gates of brass before him burst,  
the iron fetters yield.**

**He comes, the broken heart to bind,  
the bleeding soul to cure,  
and with the treasures of his grace  
to bless the humble poor.**

**Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace,  
your welcome shall proclaim;  
and heaven's eternal arches ring  
with your beloved name.**

### **\*Sending Out**

Remember the chaos  
the uncertainty  
the confusion in which you once groped,  
and give thanks for the light.

### **\*Choral Commissioning**

E. Daley

(The choir will sing through once, and then the congregation is invited to join in.)

**Redeemer, come! We open wide our hearts to you; here Lord, abide.  
Let us your inner presence feel, your grace and love in us reveal.**  
(Georg Weissel 1642, trans. Catherine Winkworth 1855, alt.)

### **Postlude**

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[1] Wild Good Worship, adapted, with permission

[2] New Translation from Aramaic, with permission



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