



# Covenant

*The United Church of Canada*

a safe place for all people to worship

Ministers: the people  
and Rev. Cindy Désilets

3 December 2017

Advent 1<sup>b</sup>

Acknowledgement of Land  
*(An act towards reconciliation)*

## Gathering

*The gong is sounded three times*

### ENTRY INTO THE CELEBRATION

Advent is about the birth of something sacred.  
For something sacred needs to be born:  
born from the mating of what is, and what might be.  
It needs a manger.

**So let us prepare a manger in our hearts  
for the birth of the sacred.** *(Davidson Loehr/First UU Church of  
Austin)*

### LIGHTING OF THE COMMUNITY CANDLE The candle is lit

In this special season, let us celebrate the richness  
and diversity of life.

**HYMN: HOPE IS A STAR**

**VU 7**

### CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

#### THE CHILDREN LEAD US...

#### Advent Candle Lighting 1: **HOPE**

**HYMN: JESUS CAME BRINGING US HOPE**

**MV 33**

#### OPENING SENTENCES

We know not at what hour  
we will experience our God,  
**whether in the middle of the night or at the break of day,  
at a time to come or in this very hour.**

We know not in what place  
we will experience our God,  
**whether in the darkness of a city alley  
or on a beach warmed by the sun's rays,  
in a far-off, distant land or in the stillness of this place.**

We know not through whose face  
we will experience our God,  
**whether in the tired eyes of a stranger  
or in the warm embrace of a loved one,  
within a people yet unknown  
or within this community of faith.**

Ever-present God, we come together today  
with the hope that we will encounter you.  
**Keep us awake; keep us alert  
that as we pray and as we sing,  
as we make a joyful noise and as we keep holy silence  
we might encounter you in this time,  
in this place, within this community.** *(Jessica Petersen/ct)*

## PRAYER OF AWARENESS

**God of all time bless this season of Advent.  
May we recognise your presentness,  
rather than merely scuttle to and fro,  
in a frenzy of cooking and shopping,  
parties and glitter.  
For this season is precious time... of waiting, of hoping.  
May it be so.**

### *Centering*

Silence and Music of Reflection

### *Exploring*

## READINGS FROM OUR BROAD RELIGIOUS TRADITION

Gospel: Mark 1:2-3 *(Inclusive Text)*

From the World Around us: 'Roadwork'  
By Bruce Sanguin. **If Darwin Prayed/12.**

“Advent” Gretta Vosper. **We All Breathe**

Gospel: Mark 13:33-37 *(Inclusive Text)*

## CONTEMPORARY EXPLORATION

**HYMN: AS A FIRE IS MEANT FOR BURNING** VU 578

### *Affirming & Celebrating*

## PRAYERS

**HYMN: SPIRIT OF LIFE** VU 381

## OUR OFFERINGS

**PRESENTATION** YOU ARE HOLY MV 45

We give thanks to God for our life  
and the courage we are given to live it.  
Let our gratitude for life be expressed in our generosity.  
Let our faith be expressed in good causes.  
Let our belief in the future find full expression  
in our daily attitude of mind. *(Francis Macnab/h)*

### *Scattering*

**HYMN: DREAM A DREAM** MV 158

## PARTING WORDS

Let us go in faith to ponder in our hearts  
the mystery and the wonder of this season...

*The Community Candle is extinguished*

Gathered together **We wait for the light.**

Standing together **We trust in the light.**

Praying together **We hope for the light.**

Seeking together **We step out with the light.**

Singing together **We are blessed by the light.**

*(Trisha Watts/s)*

## WORDS OF BLESSING WORDS

Go now in joy, building, living in, and enjoying  
a community full of welcome and equality.

**Thanks be to God.** *(Jack Nelson-Pallmeyer/wsj)*

**SUNG RESPONSE: GO NOW IN PEACE**