

The Days are Surely Coming.....

First of Advent--Hope



NEWCASTLE UNITED CHURCH

December 1st, 2024 10:30 am

Rev Bryan Ransom, B.A., MDiv.

Donna Barber, ARCT

First Sunday of Advent – HOPE

Welcome!

“As followers of Christ, we are called to be a worshipping and learning, receiving and giving community of faith, hope and love.”

Newcastle United Church Mission Statement

As we gather as a faith community, we acknowledge that we are on sacred land rich in the legacy, culture, and spirituality of the Indigenous people. It is home to many First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people. We acknowledge that we live and work on land that is under the Williams Treaty, which has been the traditional territory of the Anishinaabeg, Huron-Wendat and Haudenosaunee Nations, as well as many other Indigenous nations. These lands today are under the care of the Mississauga's of the New Credit First Nations people.

We acknowledge this land, out of respect for the many Indigenous nations who have cared for the lands and waterways from the beginning of time and continue to do so. Today we are grateful for the opportunity to live, work, and to worship on their traditional lands.

We are committed to learn and understand the truth of our shared history, confronting our past and present so that we can strive to build a future together upon true reconciliation, living out what the original ancestors of Turtle Island envisioned: sharing the resources of the land and waterways, and to live in harmony with one another as one people.

Approaching God With Praise

Welcome

Land Acknowledgement

Announcements

***Indicates to stand as you are able.**

Prelude (A centering time)

Biblically, waiting is not just something we have to do until we get what we want. Waiting is part of the process of becoming what God wants us to be.

John Ortberg

**Lighting the Advent Candle – Hope
Trudy, Bennett, Joshua and Matthew**

VU 7 “Hope Is A Star”

v. 1 and refrain

**1. Hope is a star that shines in the night,
leading us on till the morning is bright.**

Refrain:

**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.**

Harris Family: On this First Sunday of Advent, we come with hope as a community of faith.

A: We watch, we wait and we wonder.

Harris Family: We come in hope for God's promise to bring light into the world.

A: We wait in hope for the coming of Jesus, the Christ Child.

Harris Family: As we light the first candle in the Advent wreath, we take a moment to breathe in the Spirit of Hope. (Pause, before lighting the candle of Hope)

A: God of Hope, on this first Sunday of Advent, fill us with hope for the world and for the Church, knowing that Jesus, the Christ Child, brings the light of hope to all. Amen!

(by Irma Nadeau modified by Rev. B Ransom)

***Opening Hymn VU 1**

vv. 1-4

“O Come, O Come Emmanuel”

**1 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.**

**2 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. REFRAIN**

**3 O come, O come, great God of might,
who to your tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times once gave the law
in cloud, and majesty, and awe. REFRAIN**

**4 O come, O Rod of Jesse's stem,
from every foe deliver them
that trust your mighty power to save,
and give them victory o'er the grave. REFRAIN**

Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus,

Master of both the light and the darkness, send your Holy Spirit upon our preparations for Christmas. We, who have so much to do and seek quiet spaces to hear your voice each day.

We, who are anxious over many things, look forward to your coming among us. We, who are blessed in so many ways, long for the complete joy of your kingdom. We, whose hearts are heavy seeking the joy of your presence. We are your people, walking in darkness, seeking your Light, the Light of the world. To you we say, "Come to us Lord Jesus, come!" Amen.

- Henri J.M. Nouwen

***Opening Hymn VU 1 "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" vv. 5-7**

**5 O come, O Key of David, come,
and open wide our heavenly home;
make safe the way that leads on high,
and close the path to misery. REFRAIN**

**6 O come, O Dayspring, from on high,
and cheer us by your drawing nigh;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
and death's dark shadows put to flight. REFRAIN**

**7 O come, Desire of nations, bind
all peoples in one heart and mind;
O bid our sad divisions cease,
and be for us the Prince of Peace. REFRAIN**

*Listening For The Spirit Of God
Through The Word*

Scripture Reading

Hebrew Text (Old Testament) Jeremiah 33:14-16

Response

L: For the Word of God in scripture, for the Word of God among us, for the Word of God within us,

A: We give praise for the presence of God through the Word.

***Hymn VU 82 "A Light Is Gleaming"**

v. 1-3

**REFRAIN A light is gleaming, spreading its arms
throughout the night, living in the light.
Come share its gladness, God's radiant love
is burning bright, living in the light.**

**1 When light comes pouring into the darkest place,
it hurts our eyes to see the glow.**

**Sometimes a word of hope reminds us of our fears,
our memories and tears. REFRAIN**

**2 When night is round us and every shadow grows,
a star is there to light our way.**

**It tells a story of Jesus who came near to say:
'God's light will ever stay.' REFRAIN**

**3 And Jesus showed us a brighter path to walk.
He showed us things we hadn't seen.**

**Now we, like Jesus, can help creation shine,
and this will be a sign: REFRAIN**

Conversation Time

Hymn VU 82 "A Light Is Gleaming"

vv. 4

**4 So let us live in the brightness God has giv'n,
and let us rise to see the dawn.**

**We trust that God is here a sparkle and ablaze,
- warming all our days. REFRAIN**

Reflection

Announcements

Sunday December 1st, 2024

Welcome! **We enjoy open seating**, so please, sit where you feel comfortable, and meet a new friend.

Today's Greeters are Dorothy Stapleton and Debbie Dunham

Scripture and Announcements Reader is Gail Empey

Bible Study will be at 10 am this week.



Coffee Time

Please join us in the church hall for fellowship after the service. Today's Treats brought to you by the Mission and Service.

Flowers for The Sanctuary

If you are interested in memorial flowers for the sanctuary for Advent Season, please see Lynne in the office. She can take names of individuals the flowers are for and payment, and coordinate with Wendy to have the flowers ordered. Flowers can be 'in memory of' or in 'honour of'.

Key Chains



There are still lots of 200th Anniversary Key Chains available. Great stocking Stuffer idea! \$5 each. See Lynne during the week, or on Sunday. Marie or Marlene have some as well.

Cheese Orders

Cheese Orders are due December 8th. Forms in sanctuary and Emily St vestibule. Leave order forms with Marlene or in the office with Lynne.

Fundscrip Orders

Fundscrip order forms are available for you to purchase your gift cards for Christmas. A portion of each sale is given to the church. If you give gift cards for Christmas, please consider purchasing from us. Order forms will be in the narthex as well as the Emily Street door.

200th Anniversary Cookbooks!

Cookbooks are now available!! Each is \$20. Speak to Lynne or Jewel to get your copy.

Offering Envelopes

Please check the Narthex for your 2025 Envelopes. See Marlene or Lynne if yours are not there.

Mission and Service Bows

Our annual Mission and Service Bow campaign will begin this week, the first Sunday of Advent. Donations to the M and S Fund will be designated by coloured bows which will be placed on our Christmas tree each week until Christmas. Bows may be purchased in denominations as follows: \$25-49, red; \$50-\$75, green; \$75-\$100, silver; and \$100+ is gold. However, any amount is most welcome!

“Gifts with Vision” catalogues are in the Narthex. These gifts are an additional way to support the work of The United Church of Canada’s Mission and Service Partners.

Upcoming Services

| | |
|---------------|-------------------|
| December 8th | White Gift Sunday |
| December 15th | Baptism |
| December 22nd | Communion |

White Gift Sunday December 8th, 2024

One of the traditions of the Church has been White Gift Sunday. White Gift Sunday is based on a Chinese legend that on the king's birthday the citizens would wrap gifts in white and bring their presents to the king. Being wrapped in the white paper, was a way of making them equal in the eyes of the beholder.

In a Methodist Church in Ohio in 1904, a minister's wife asked the congregation to wrap their gifts in white to prevent individuals and families from feeling ashamed of gifts that they brought to the Church's Christmas gift exchange. All gifts were to be seen as equal.

Over the years White Gift Sunday has seen some changes. In the past, on White Gift Sunday, the Sunday School led the Worship service with a Christmas pageant. During the service the gifts were brought forward and then were used in the church hampers to be distributed to families that did not have much for Christmas.

NUC will be celebrating White Gift Sunday on Dec 8th. The focus will be on a local family. You will see the board with sticky notes. Pick a note with an item listed and return that item next week. You do not need to wrap items in white tissue paper. Bring what you can to help this family. Thank you for your compassion and help.

Rev. Bryan Ransom

<https://flyladyfaye.wordpress.com/2006/12/11/history-of-the-white-gift/>

Visioning 200

The Visioning 200 Team will meet again on **Thursday December 5th** at 7 pm at the church. If you wish to join, please come out or let Rev Bryan know your interests in joining the team.

Contacting Rev. Bryan Ransom directly

905-922-8394

minister@newcastleunitedchurch.org

Contact the Church

905-987-4515

newcastleunitedchurch@bellnet.ca

Contact Lynne in the Office

905-987-4515

office@newcastleunitedchurch.org

Book the Hall

property@newcastleunitedchurch.org



We appreciate all donations and can accept PAR, envelope givings, and e-transfer at nucetransfer@gmail.com or through CanadaHelps. **You can scan our QR code to the left to donate.** If you have any questions please contact our interim treasurer, Susan at 289-927-6297 or treasurer@newcastleunitedchurch.org

Thank you for your donations which make our continued ministry possible.

December 1, First Sunday in Advent

Our generous giving helps to prepare the way of the Lord by providing hope for those around us.

Ministry of Music “Prepare the Way!”

Don Besig and Nancy Price

Our Response

Invitation to The Offering

***The Offertory Hymn VU 55**

v. 4

“In The Bleak Midwinter”

**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.**

Dedication Of The Offering

Prayers of the People

Communion

***Communion Hymn VU 469 “We Gather Here”**

vv. 1-3

**1 We gather here in Jesus' name,
his love is burning in our hearts like living flame;
for through the loving son God fashions us as one:**

**Come take the bread, come drink the wine,
come, share the Lord.**

**No one is a stranger here, - everyone belongs;
finding our forgiveness here,
we in turn forgive all wrongs.**

**2 He joins us here, he breaks the bread,
the One who pours the cup is risen from the dead;
the One we love the most is now our gracious host:**

Come take the bread, come drink the wine,

come, share the Lord.

**We are now a family of which Christ is the head;
though unseen he meets us here
in the breaking of the bread.**

**3 We'll gather soon where angels sing;
we'll see the glory of our Lord and coming King;
now we anticipate the feast for which we wait:**

**Come take the bread, come drink the wine,
come, share the Lord.**

Invitation

L: All are welcomed to the banquet. At this banquet table, the rich and powerful will sit with the weak and poverty-stricken. At this table, the young and old will learn from each other. At this table, all can sit together in peace where, “the wolf will lie down with the lamb”.

Here at this table, we get a foretaste of God’s eternal banquet. This is indeed God’s table, not the Newcastle United Church’s. All who come are welcome. God welcomes those who are seeking, those who are committed, and those who are unsure. God’s invitation is to everyone, no one is turned away. So, come, come and taste God’s love for you. Come and see that God is good.

The Great Thanksgiving

L: God is with us

A: We are not alone

L: Christ is present here

A: The Spirit moves within us

L: Let us give thanks to God

A: In memory and in hope

L: Blessings to you, Creator God, who in the beginning brought light and life into the world and who continues to bring love and hope into the world.

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

L: Over the ages you have called people to embrace your hope and share your love. But even when they have closed their ears to the song you did not stop singing.

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

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

L: Holy One, you came to a young woman named Mary and laid out the promise of Hope in a new way, promising her a son, who would be called Jesus. Promising her that in her son the world would be changed. And now as we prepare for the child to be born, we echo the ancient cry:

A: O come, O come Emmanuel

L: And, again we lift our voices up together the saying

A: Holy, holy, holy, God,

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

The Story Remembered

L: As we prepare to celebrate Jesus' birth, we remember the life that this infant lived. We remember how he broke the bonds of human traditions to show all what the Banquet of Hope could be as he ate openly with the despised and the outcast of his world.

As we remember this special meal, it symbolizes a foretaste of the banquet that is yet to come.

Through this celebration, we remember the meal that he shared with his closest friends.

Gathering them together in an upper room to share the story of liberation, he prepared them for them for this journey. At the end of the meal he

took bread, blessed it and broke it, passed it to them saying: Take and eat.

This bread is the body of Life, broken by the world. Eat it in remembrance and in hope.

After that he took the cup, blessed it, and passed it to them saying, “This cup is the sign of the New Covenant. Whenever you drink it remember me, for I shall not eat or drink of it again until the time of the heavenly banquet.”

Remembering the birth of this child in a stable, we also remember his life, his death and his resurrection.

We remember how he poured his love out to all he met and looked forward to his return bringing peace, love, and justice. In our remembering of Jesus, we proclaim the mystery of faith.

L: Christ has died and Christ is risen,

A: Christ will come again!

L: Christ has died and Christ is risen,

A: Christ will come again!

The Spirit Transforms

L: God, you poured your Spirit on Mary and she sang words of defiance and hope. Pour out your Spirit upon us gathered here and upon the bread and wine.

As we eat and drink may we know your presence. As we eat and drink may we be open to the possibilities of your Hope and power strengthening us in our time of waiting and filling us with hope, peace and justice. Filled in this way we will have the courage to make the Christmas promise a reality in our lives and in the lives of others. With one voice we pray, **Creator, Our Father....**

The Sharing of the Bread and Wine

L: The Bread we break is the Bread of Life

The Cup we share is the Cup of Promise

These are the gifts of God for all of the people of God.

A: Thanks be to God.

L: Come, the banquet table is set for you.

Jesus, the Bread of Life

Jesus, the True Vine

(Please approach *down the centre aisle* and return to pews walking back up the outside aisles. If you are unable to walk down, raise your hand and a server will serve you communion.)

Prayer Following Communion (In Unison)

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 which is to come gives us the hunger for peace and justice in our community and around the world. Amen (<http://worshipofferings.blogspot.com/2008/01/banquet-of-hopeful-expectation-advent.html> modified by Rev. B Ransom)

***Closing Hymn VU 91 "The First Nowell"**

vv. 1-6

**1 The first Nowell the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
in fields where they lay akeeping their sheep
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.**

**Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
born is the King of Israel.**

**2 They looked up and saw a star,
shining in the east, beyond them far;
and to the earth it gave great light,
and so it continued both day and night. REFRAIN**

**3 And by the light of that same star
three wise men came from country far;
to seek for a king was their intent,
and to follow the star wherever it went. REFRAIN**

**4 This star drew nigh to the northwest;
o'er Bethlehem it took its rest,
and there it did both stop and stay,
right over the place where Jesus lay. REFRAIN**

**5 Then entered in those wise men three,
full reverently upon their knee,
and offered there in his presence
their gold and myrrh and frankincense. REFRAIN**

**6 Then let us all with one accord
sing praises to our heavenly Lord,
that hath made heaven and earth of nought,
and with his blood our life hath bought. REFRAIN**

****Commissioning & Benediction***

***Sung Blessing - "Go Now in Peace"
Go now in peace. Never be afraid.
God will go with you each hour of every day.
Go now in faith, steadfast, strong and true.
Know God will guide you in all you do.
Go now in love, and show you believe.
Reach out to others so all the world can see.
God will be there watching from above.
Go now in peace, in faith, and in love.
Amen, amen, amen.**

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Postlude