



Welcome to worship!

Sunday December 20th 2020

Advent 4: “Love”

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

Worship Leaders:

Pastor Steven Loweth, DLM & Rev. Lionel Ketola, M Div

Musicians: Gabrielle Untermann, Jane Plewman, Julia Shatford, Barb Gilbert, Steve May.

Onelicense # A-723979 CCLI # 11550809

Musicians: From Claremont United Church: Gabrielle Untermann, Jane Plewman, Julia Shatford, Barb Gilbert, Steve May, otherwise known as “The Masked Bandits”.

From Fairbank United Church: Alexandra Hyunh Do.

We Joyfully Gather in God’s Presence

Words of Welcome

In the name of the triune God in whose presence we wait,
The Holy Parent, fulfilling the promise,
the Holy Child, waiting to be born,
the Holy Spirit, illuminating the way. **Amen.**

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

By: Carolyn, Sofia, and Felipe, Fairbank United

We light our First and Second Advent Candles in our homes

**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.**

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

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

Call to Worship

Alleluia the Christ child comes,
And we await his birth.
Let us throw off our distractions,
And allow the chaos to settle.
Let us watch for the signs,
And listen to the messengers.
Let us stand on tiptoe,
And shout aloud and sing.
Something new is emerging,
Something new is being birthed.

Prayer of the Day

God of impossible love,
you needed Mary
to give consent
to bear the scandal,
to carry your word within herself.

May her courage give hope
to women and men
who yearn to sing
new songs of justice
and find in the world
a dwelling place for God;
through Jesus Christ, the one who is to come. 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.

2 Samuel 7:1-16

Reader: Gabrielle Untermann

7 Now when the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, ²the king said to the prophet Nathan, "See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent." ³Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you."

⁴But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan: ⁵Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? ⁶I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. ⁷Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?" ⁸Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David:

Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; ⁹and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. ¹⁰And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, ¹¹from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house.

¹⁶Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.

Holy Wisdom, Holy Word **Thanks be to God**

Reflection: Pastor Steve

Scripture Song: Lo How a Rose E'er Blooming VU # 8 VIDEO

Luke 1:26-38

VIDEO

²⁶In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." ²⁹But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³²He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." ³⁴Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" ³⁵The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁶And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible with God." ³⁸Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

³⁹In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, ⁴⁰where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her

womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit ⁴²and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. ⁴³And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? ⁴⁴For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

The Magnificat

Reader: Sharon Loweth

⁴⁶ And Mary^[b] said,

"My soul magnifies the Lord,

⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

⁴⁸ for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.

Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me,

and holy is his name.

⁵⁰ His mercy is for those who fear him

from generation to generation.

⁵¹ He has shown strength with his arm;

he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

⁵² He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,

and lifted up the lowly;

⁵³ he has filled the hungry with good things,

and sent the rich away empty.

⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel,

in remembrance of his mercy,

⁵⁵ according to the promise he made to our ancestors,

to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

Holy Wisdom, Holy Word **Thanks be to God**

Reflection: Rev. Lionel

Hymn of the Day: There Was a Child in Galilee MV # 13

VIDEO

Song: "There was a Child in Galilee" (MV #134)

1. There was a child in Galilee who wandered wild along the sea,
A holy child, alone was she, and they called her Dreaming Mary.

And she dreamed, rejoicing in her saviour;
She dreamed of justice for the poor.
She dreamed that kings oppressed no more
When she dreamed, that Dreaming Mary.

2. One holy day an angel came with voice of wind and eyes of flame.
He promised blessed would be her name when he spoke to Dreaming Mary.

Then she spoke, rejoicing in her saviour.
She spoke of justice for the poor.
She spoke that kings oppressed no more
When she spoke, that Dreaming Mary.

3. And did she dream about a son?
And did he speak, the angel one?
We only know God's will was done in the son of Dreaming Mary.

Then she prayed, rejoicing in her saviour.
She taught him justice for the poor.
She taught that kings oppressed no more
When she taught, that Dreaming Mary.

4. Then Jesus grew in Galilee, they wandered wild along the sea.
Now he calls to you and me to dream with Dreaming Mary.

And we dream, rejoicing in our saviour.
We dream of justice for the poor.
We dream that kings oppress no more
As we dream with Dreaming Mary.

Words and music by Janet Cadeski (2005), arranged by Patricia Wright (2006).

Prayers of the People

As we approach the celebration of the birth of Christ, let us turn our hearts and minds to God as we pray for the Church, the world, and all in need.

A silence is kept

That the Church will faithfully proclaim the message of hope and promise to the world, that has been entrusted to us, especially during this time when so many are struggling. God in your love, **hear our prayer.**

For Government leaders, that they will be responsive to the needs of their people, especially the vulnerable, families with young children, and families struggling with loss of employment or housing during this pandemic. God in your love, **hear our prayer.**

For the nations of the world, that they might know the gifts of peace, wholeness and reconciliation during this sacred season and always; God in your love, **hear our prayer.**

For the poor, the lonely, and the neglected, that they will experience God's love during this Christmas season, through the kindness and care of others; God in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For all who are busy making preparations to celebrate Christmas, that they will take time to reflect on God's great love for us in Christ; God in your love, **hear our prayer.**

For those who are grieving or struggling during this Advent and Christmas season, that Christ's healing presence might bring them comfort and strength; God in your love, **hear our prayer.**

For all who are in our prayers at this time, we name them now ...

Healing God, you hear the cries of our hearts. May the peace of Emmanuel, God-With-Us shine in every heart. Empower us to be healers in our broken world. All of these things we ask in Jesus' name, and for his love's sake. Amen.

Invitation to the Offering

Minute for Mission

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.

Holy Communion

Blessed are you, Scandalous God,
for giving yourself to the world,
not in the powerful and extraordinary,
but in weakness and the familiar:
in a baby; in bread and wine.

Thank you
for offering us a new beginning through Christ;
for offering, in the poverty of a stable, the richest jewel of your love;
for revealing, in such a humble place, a light for all nations.

Thank you
for bringing us to Bethlehem, House of Bread,
where the empty are filled,
and the filled are emptied;
where the poor find riches,
and the rich recognize their poverty;
where all who kneel and hold out their hands
are abundantly fed.

On the night when Jesus was betrayed

Nourishing God, send your Life-Giving Spirit
upon us and upon us and these gifts of bread and cup.

May we who share these gifts be Love-Made-Flesh for our world!

Blessed be God:

Holy Wings, to enfold us!

Blessed be Christ:

Heart of love, to heal us!

Blessed be the Spirit:

Song of Hope, to cheer us!

This is our prayer!

Now and Forever! Amen!



With our saviour Christ, we pray: "God our mother and father in Heaven ..."

At the breaking of the bread:

Holy things for holy people! **Thanks be to God! Amen!**

Post-Communion Prayer:

Tender God, at your table of hope, we taste and see your own self-giving.
Send us from this table, to tables throughout the world,
to love and serve our neighbours in Jesus' name. Amen.

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

Closing Hymn: Angels We Have Heard on High VU # 38

VIDEO

Musicians: The Masked Bandits of Claremont United Church

1 Angels we have heard on high,
singing sweetly through the night,
and the mountains in reply
echoing their brave delight.

Refrain:

Gloria in excelsis Deo,
gloria in excelsis Deo.

2 Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why these songs of happy cheer?
What great brightness did you see?
What glad tidings did you hear? [Refrain]

3 Come to Bethlehem and see
him whose birth the angels sing.
Come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn King. [Refrain]

4 See him in a manger laid
whom the angels praise above.
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid,
while we raise our hearts in love. [Refrain]

Blessing & Commissioning

And Mary said: My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour.

May your trust in the coming of Christ
soar within you like wings of joy.
May you go out into the world
and serve one another as God-bearers.

And may the blessing of God:
Creator, Christ and Holy Spirit
be with us now and always.
Amen!

Go Now in Peace

VIDEO



NEW Start Time for Worship: Sunday worship on Zoom begins at **10:30 am** this Sunday.



Christmas Eve Worship (on Zoom & Youtube): December 24, 7:00 pm

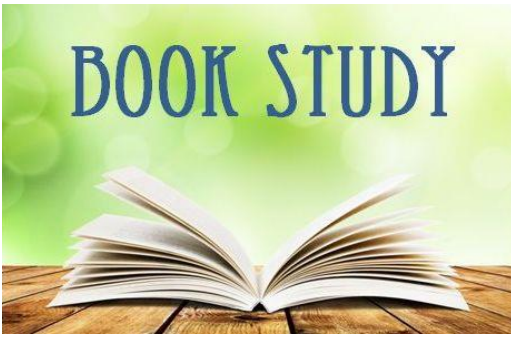
The Sunday After Christmas – Sunday December 27, 10:30 am - worship service on Zoom.

Weekly Church Programs

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.

The Knit-Wits: This is **Goodwood United Church’s weekly ZOOM group** for Knitting, crochet and other needle craft. This group leads our congregation’s **Prayer Shawl Ministry**. To find out how to connect with this group on Zoom, contact Shirley Baster.

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

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.

(Available online through a variety of bookstores).

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.

You can order your copy through: www.woodlakebooks.com

YOUTUBE – Watch worship LIVE, Sunday Mornings at 10:30 am on YOUTUBE, or watch recordings of our Sunday service anytime during the week. See this Link (Fairbank United's Youtube channel):

<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: treasureruc@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