



Welcome to worship!

Sunday December 27th 2020

The First Sunday after Christmas

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

Worship Leaders:

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

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, Pastor Steven, Mary Slate and Kelly Slate.

We Joyfully Gather in God’s Presence

Words of Welcome

Lighting the Christ Candle

There was a man named Jesus, who brought hope and healing to all he met. And he said **“I am the light of the World”**.

Acknowledgement of the Land

During this Christmas season, we celebrate 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 new beginnings, awaken us to new opportunities for reconciliation with our First Nations. Amen.

Call to Worship

Let the righteous rejoice,

for their Light is born!

Let the broken rejoice,

For their Healer is born!

Let the oppressed rejoice,

For their Liberator is born!

Let the poor rejoice,

For their Advocate is born!

Let the forsaken rejoice,

For their Beloved is born!

Let all creation rejoice,

For Jesus Christ is born! *(Adapted from St. Augustine, 354-440 CE)*

Opening Carol: O Come, All Ye Faithful VU # 60 The Masked Bandits

Prayer of the Day

Wondrous God,

we thank you for revealing you love

through the most surprising and unlikely of places:

from the smallest atom and cell of creation

to the beauty and wonder

of a star-lit winter night.

Grant that the light

that was kindled at Jesus birth

may be kindled in our hearts

and shine out in our lives.

We ask this in the name of the One

whose brilliance

guides and sustains us on our way -

Jesus our brother.

Amen.

Confession – A Poem

O God revealed in ordinary places,
we wonder if we might have missed your coming, had we been there:
with the stable too out of the way,
the cradle too makeshift,
the animals too noisy,
the shepherds too crude,
the carpenter too rough,
the mother too young,
the night too dark and cold.

We have a preference for trumpets
and hallelujah choirs, for cherub-cheeked children;
for gift exchanges and shopping day countdowns.

Forgive us for not seeing you in out-of-the-way places and in unlikely people,
in this season of holy celebration.

Let us pause for silent confession.

God in your love, Heal and restore us. Amen

Words of Assurance

Hear the good news:

God was born into the brokenness of the world
to bring healing and wholeness in our lives.

God forgives us, loves us, and sets us on a road of new beginnings.

Thanks be to God! Amen.

We Open our Hearts to the Spirit's Voice

One: And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

All: **May the Spirit bless us with wisdom and wonder, as we ponder the meaning of these words in our lives.**

Isaiah 61:10 - 62:3

¹⁰I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. ¹¹For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

⁶²For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her vindication shines out like the dawn, and her salvation like a burning torch. ²The nations shall see your vindication, and all the kings your glory; and you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the LORD will give. ³You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

Carol: Go Tell it On the Mountain VU # 43 Video

Galatians 4:4-7

⁴But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. ⁶And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" ⁷So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

"Safely Delivered": by Jeremy Williams

Lord of creation,
architect of stars,
Captain of angels,
and son of God most high.

A promise, a prophet,
miracle man, Messiah,
King of Kings,
and Prince of Peace.

Carpenter. Winemaker.

healer, hillside caterer.
Teacher, preacher,
stiller of storms and footwisher general.

Heretic, lunatic,
blasphemer,
political schemer,
rabble rouser, rebel,
criminal, martyr.

Escape artist,
jailbreaker, earth-shaker,
destroyer of death
and firstborn of the truly alive.

The hopes and fears
of all the years -

All wrapped up,
seven pounds three ounces
in Mary's arms,
safely delivered.

Carol: O Little Town of Bethlehem VU # 64

Video Message: Pastor Steven (Poem: Earthed, by Jeremy Williams)

Luke 2:22-40

²²When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³(as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord”), ²⁴and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.”

²⁵Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. ²⁶It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he

would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. ²⁷ Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, ²⁸ Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, ²⁹ "Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; ³⁰ for my eyes have seen your salvation, ³¹ which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, ³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel." ³³ And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. ³⁴ Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed ³⁵ so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too."

³⁶ There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷ then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. ³⁸ At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

³⁹ When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth.

⁴⁰ The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

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

Video Message: Rev. Lionel

Hymn of the Day: **I heard the Bells on Christmas Day** **Video**

I heard the bells on Christmas Day
Their old, familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet
The words repeat
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

And thought how, as the day had come,
The belfries of all Christendom
Had rolled along
The unbroken song
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Till, ringing, singing on its way
The world revolved from night to day,
A voice, a chime,
A chant sublime
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

And in despair I bowed my head;
'There is no peace on earth,' I said;
'For hate is strong,
And mocks the song
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!'

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
'God is not dead; nor doth he sleep!
The Wrong shall fail,
The Right prevail,
With peace on earth, good-will to men!'

Affirmation of Faith

I believe in the promise of Christmas
and the importance of celebrating it in the church.

I believe in the God at the centre of Christmas,
whose hope for the world was imagined by prophets.

I believe in Mary who sang of a world turned upside down,
and who allowed her life to be disrupted by God.

I believe in Joseph, whose broken heart broke the rules
to do the right thing.

I believe in the smell of the stable –
For I believe there is no place where God will not go.

I believe in the shepherds,
those humble ones, open to hearing the angels' song.

I believe in the Magi,
the ones outside the faith, outside the community
who journeyed to search out the Holy.

I believe in Jesus, born in poverty,
soon a refugee, raised in faith,
lived seeking justice, died speaking forgiveness,
rose with a love that could not be stopped.

I commit to use this season
to seek out the Holy both in God among us,
and in God beyond us.

I open myself to a joyful, life-changing journey
during this Christmas season.

Prayers of the People

Adapted from a prayer by Nadia Bolz-Weber

Dear God, I understand that Christmas Day is past, and it's now the Third Day of Christmas. And usually, that would mean we're in the middle of boxing day shopping, returning presents that didn't fit or we didn't like, visiting family and friends we hadn't seen yet, or having a beer in the neighbours' garage.

But this year we don't get to do much of that.
This year we are isolated and watching the number of infections and deaths grow each day. So celebrating the Christmas season ended up being an 'inside job' this year... but I can't keep doing this alone. Alone, I can only binge watch TV and eat my increasing weight in cookies. But I still have enough faith (barely) to believe that with you all things are possible. So I'm asking for some help.

Help me let go of every bit of resentment I have about the things we have lost this year. Help me forgive myself for not doing this Pandemic thing as well as people on Facebook seem to have. Help me to not judge everyone who isn't taking COVID as seriously as I am. Help me not close my heart to the suffering of others. Help me to give thanks for the "Sabbath" that our over-burdened Earth has finally enjoyed during this Pandemic, including using less gas in my car. Help me know when to reach to be a lifeline for someone else. Help me to know when to grab the lifeline that someone else is sending my way.

Lord Jesus, you were born into this mess of a world to bring us new hope. Open all of our hurting, brittle, devastated hearts like only a baby can do. Then, give our hearts an extreme makeover – get rid of the clutter and resentments and fears and everything that keeps the joy that, despite everything we've lost, is still all around us. I guess what I am saying is, we may need some help this year with that whole "Let every heart prepare Him room" thing. God in your love, **hear our prayer.**

At this time we lift up our prayers for those people and places in our world whose needs are close to our hearts at this time ... *prayers of intercession are offered*

Into your hands, tender God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting that your love manifest in the Christ Child can bring hope and wholeness to our lives and our world. **Amen.**

With our Saviour Christ, we pray together: **"God our Mother and Father in Heaven ..."**

Invitation to the Offering

Minute for Mission

Prayer of Dedication for the Gifts:

God of love,
as we kneel before the cradle of your mystery
what gift can we offer
 but to open up our hearts
 and let your love
 reshape our very lives.
May the gifts that we offer this night
bring healing and hope to our aching world.
We pray in Jesus' name, amen.

We Go Forth to Serve our Neighbours

Carol: Joy to the World VU #59 – Video Gloria Dei Lutheran Church Winnipeg

Blessing & Commissioning

Rejoice for the light is now in the world!
Rejoice for God has become one of us!
Rejoice for Love is born in each of us!
Rejoice for the manger is full!

Go and believe that the joyful tidings
and the angels song is true!

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

Sung Dismissal

Go Now in Peace

VIDEO

Church Announcements

Weekly Church Programs

Goodwood United Church & Claremont United Church:

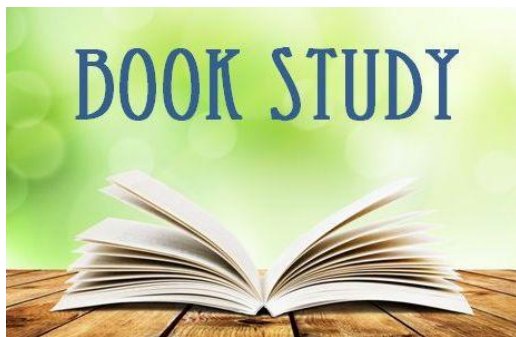
No regular Zoom Programs (Check in / Bible Study / Book Study) the week of Dec 28-Jan 1. ___Our regular programs will resume the following week of January 4th.

Online Community Check-in: Tuesdays at 10:00 AM, on Zoom. Resumes Tue Jan 5th. 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. Resumes Wed January 6th. 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 AM

Beginning January 8th to Fri Feb 12 (if our books arrive on time) 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