

Welcome to the worship service of
St. Andrew's United Church, Chalk River, Ontario
on this **First Sunday of Advent/HOPE**
Nov. 29, 2020

Kindly enter this time centering on God, prepare to meet God.
The musical prelude is to assist you in this quiet meditative time.

GATHERING IN COMMUNITY

MUSICAL PRELUDE

INTROIT: "Hope Shines as the Solitary Star" (MV 220)

Hope shines as the solitary star. Faith is the inner light.

You and I together mirror the Light of Lights, and illumine the pathway home.

LIGHTING of the ADVENT CANDLE/CALL TO WORSHIP

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (VU 1) verse 1

Who do you say Jesus is?

To some of us who think of ourselves as students, Jesus is a teacher helping us learn and grow. Some of us are more explorers, to us Jesus is a guide leading us in new directions. (A moment of silent contemplation as you think about who Jesus is to you.) We wait for Jesus, the wise teacher and guide, who leads us to *hope*.

(The first Advent candle is lit)

We wait for Jesus as we pray: **God of the unexpected and undreamt:**

In this holy season, instill your *hope* in our hearts. Prepare us; prepare us again so we can hear the song of the angels and see again the beckoning star. Amen (Celebrate God's Presence 1G003)

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (VU 1) verse 2

WORDS OF GREETING: Psalm 80:1-3

Acknowledgement of Traditional Territory: For thousands of years, First Nations people have walked this land; their relationship with the land is at the centre of their lives and spirituality. We meet on the traditional territory of the Algonquin and acknowledge their stewardship of this land throughout the ages. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties.

WELCOME

OPENING PRAYER: Holy One, our hearts are filled with hope. The promise of new life is proclaimed. We are full of anticipation, our hearts overflowing. Take any jadedness that we hold on to and set it free so that we might fully embrace this time of year. May the hope of this blessed season be experienced by all people, especially

in gentle ways for those who are hurting and lonely. Grant life-changing hope and love to all, we pray, focusing on the stable of Bethlehem. Amen

Opening Hymn: "It Only Takes a Spark" VU 289

CALL TO CONFESSION:

THREADS OF HOPE: Awesome God, we admit to our separation from you. We have seen you as hiding from us, rather than admitting we have failed to see the thousands of ways you reveal yourself to us everyday. We have not called out to you and we have not listened for your call to us. We are tiny islands of self-concern. Our links to humanity are stretched and broken. O God, we long for that loving community in which your reign is acknowledged and your purposes are served. Move us to that place of hope, we pray.

Amen

ASSURANCE:

HEARING GOD'S WORD

Old Testament: Isaiah 64:1-9

MINISTRY OF MUSIC

Gospel: Mark 13:24-37

MESSAGE: "Brace for Action"

HYMN: "Come, Thou Long-expected Jesus" VU 2

RESPONDING TO GOD'S CALL

LIFE AND WORK OF THE CONGREGATION

INVITATION TO ACTION:

OFFERTORY PRAYER: Gracious God, we give our best, not out of guilt or fear, but with gratitude and faith. Every breath we take is a gift, we are supported in times of need. Help us to be awake and watchful for opportunities to make a difference in the lives of others and to value life in all its fullness as we learn to care. We dedicate symbols of thankfulness and all the days of our lives to your purposes. In Jesus name. Amen.

"Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying" VU 400

PASTORAL PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER:

CLOSING HYMN: "Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah" VU 651

BLESSING/SENDING

Three-fold Amen/ "Go Now in Peace" VU 964

WORSHIP NOTES:

1. Advent Candle Lighting Liturgy adapted from www.united-church.ca/worship-theme/advent-unwrapped Advent Candle Lighting Liturgies: Who Do You Say Jesus Is? © 2019 The United Church of Canada/L'Église Unie du Canada. Licensed under Creative Commons Attribution Non-commercial Share Alike Licence. To view a copy of this licence, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/2.5/ca>.
2. Confession and Offertory adapted/reprinted by permission of United Church Press from *Led by Love* by Lavon Baylor. Copyright 1966 by United Church Press