



**Birchcliff Bluffs United Church**

**Ministers:** All the People – wherever and however they gather

**Rev. Gregory Daly:** Minister of Word & Sacrament

**Rev. Carmen Llanos:** Minister of Community Development

**Music Director:** Randy Vancourt

**Advent One - November 29, 2020**

WE GATHER AS GOD'S PEOPLE

**Prelude**

**Call to Worship**

Do you Remember Me?

*Yes, we remember You.*

How do you Remember Me?

*We remember You with Hope.*

What do you hope for?

*We remember the hope that comes with waiting for a baby to be born.*

*We hope for a brighter future with Your guidance.*

*We hope for a time to see each other again in person.*

*We hope for a time when your commandments of justice and kindness are felt more fully in our lives and in the world.*

Remember Me with Hope, as I remember you.

Let us worship together

**Response**

**Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding**

Text: Latin, c. 6th century / English: Edward Caswall

Music: Michael Weisse

1 Hark! A thrilling voice is sounding!

"Christ is near," we hear it say.

"Cast away the works of darkness,  
all you children of the day!"

4 So when next he comes in glory  
and the world is wrapped in fear,  
he will shield us with his mercy  
and with words of love draw near.

## Life & Work of the Church

*Welcome to online worship*



## Land Acknowledgement

As we prepare for worship, we take a moment to acknowledge the sacred land beside the water on which Birchcliff Bluffs United Church stands. It has been a site of human activity for many thousands of years. This land is the territory of the Huron-Wendat and Petun First Nations, the Seneca, and most recently, the Mississauga's of the Credit and Scugog, part of the Williams Treaty. Today, the meeting place around Toronto is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island. We are grateful for the opportunity to live and work on this territory. We seek to be mindful of broken covenants and the need to strive to make right with all our relations.



## Advent One Candle Lighting



As this season of “sparkle and bright” unfolds before us, the glimmering promises of hope lie like boxed jewels awaiting an adoring light. May we hold fast to hope’s patient possibilities. May we lift them high that they might catch the light of our dreams and shine bright in our broken world, and may we instil hope’s challenge in the hearts of our children that they, too, will live it into meaning—pouring their lives, as we do ours, into making it real—for themselves, for each other, for the world. May Hope light the world this Christmas.

## Candle Lighting Hymn

### Hope is a Star v. 1

VU 7

Words: Brain Wren  
Music: Joan Collier Fogg  
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Hope is a star that shines in the night,  
leading us on till the morning is bright.  
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.

## Opening Hymn

### O Come, O Come Emmanuel

VU 1

Words: 9th century Latin  
Translation: John Mason Neale, et al.  
Music: 15th century plainsong

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.

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.

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

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.

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

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.

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

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.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee O Israel.

### **Prayer for Grace**

*Loving and gracious God you call us to serve each other.*

*We do not know when and how you may call, but unlike Mary, who had the courage to say "yes" to you, we can often find ourselves wanting to say "no."*

*Our excuses are many: too little time; too little ability; too little resources. We don't want to get involved. We don't want to mar our reputation.*

*Help us to remember those who do answer your call with courage and conviction.*

*Help us to be like the prophets of old and today: ready to give ourselves; ready to be faithful.*

*Help us to say "yes" when you call.*

*Amen*

## WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

### And Now for Something Completely Different



Observing Advent can enrich our celebration of Christmas. Taking four weeks to focus on the hope of Christ's coming can help us to find new joy when we finally get to celebrate it. The more we get in touch with our need for Jesus and the message Jesus offers, the more we rejoice at the celebration of his birth.

### Hymn

### People Look East

VU 9

Words: Eleanor Farjeon

Music: French folk melody

- 1 People, look east. The time is near  
of the crowning of the year.  
Make your house fair as you are able,  
trim the hearth and set the table.  
People, look east and sing today:  
Love the guest is on the way.
- 2 Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare,  
one more seed is planted there:  
give up your strength the seed to nourish,  
that in course the flower may flourish.  
People, look east and sing today:  
Love the rose is on the way.
- 3 Birds, though you long have ceased to build,  
guard the nest that must be filled;  
even the hour when wings are frozen  
God for fledging time has chosen.  
People, look east and sing today:  
Love the bird is on the way.
- 4 Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim  
one more light the bowl shall brim,  
shining beyond the frosty weather,  
bright as sun and moon together.  
People, look east and sing today:  
Love the star is on the way.
- 5 Angels, announce with shouts of mirth  
Christ who brings new life to earth.  
Set every peak and valley humming  
with the word, the Lord is coming.

People, look east and sing today:  
Love the Lord is on the way.

**Isaiah 64: 1-9**      **New Revised Standard Version**

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down,  
so that the mountains would quake at your presence—  
as when fire kindles brushwood  
and the fire causes water to boil—  
to make your name known to your adversaries,  
so that the nations might tremble at your presence!  
<sup>3</sup>When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect,  
you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.  
<sup>4</sup>From ages past no one has heard,  
no ear has perceived,  
no eye has seen any God besides you,  
who works for those who wait.  
<sup>5</sup>You meet those who gladly do right,  
those who remember you in your ways.  
But you were angry, and we sinned;  
because you hid yourself we transgressed.  
<sup>6</sup>We have all become like one who is unclean,  
and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth.  
We all fade like a leaf,  
and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.  
<sup>7</sup>There is no one who calls on your name,  
or attempts to take hold of you;  
for you have hidden your face from us,  
and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity.  
<sup>8</sup>Yet, O God, you are our parent;  
we are the clay, and you are our potter;  
we are all the work of your hand.  
<sup>9</sup>Do not be exceedingly angry, O God,  
and do not remember iniquity forever.  
Now consider, we are all your people.

**Mark 13: 28-37**      **New Revised Standard Version**

<sup>28</sup>“From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. <sup>29</sup>So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the time is near, at the very gates. <sup>30</sup>Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. <sup>31</sup>Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.  
<sup>32</sup>“But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. <sup>33</sup>Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. <sup>34</sup>It is like a person going on a journey, when they leave home and puts the servants in charge, each with work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. <sup>35</sup>Therefore, keep awake—for you do

not know when the head of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, <sup>36</sup>or else you may be found asleep. <sup>37</sup>And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

Jesus' words for us to consider in our lives today.

*Thanks be to God*

## Sermon

## About Hope



## Hymn

### Comfort, Comfort Now My People

VU 883

Words: Johannes G. Olearius  
English: Catherine Winkworth  
Music: Louise Bourgeois

- 1 Comfort, comfort now my people;  
speak of peace; so says our God.  
Comfort those who sit in darkness,  
mourning under sorrow's load.  
Cry out to Jerusalem  
of the peace that waits for them;  
tell them that their sins I cover  
and their warfare now is over.
- 2 For the herald's voice is crying  
in the desert far and near,  
calling all to true repentance,  
since God's judgement now is here.  
Oh, that warning cry obey!  
Now prepare for God a way!  
Let the valleys rise in meeting  
and the hills bow down in greeting.
- 3 Then make straight what long was crooked;  
make the rougher places plain.  
Let your hearts be true and humble,  
as befits a holy reign.  
For the glory of our God  
now on earth is shed abroad,  
and all flesh shall see the token  
that God's word is never broken.

## WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD



### Offering

We place our hope in the gifts we offer. May they bring hope to our community and our world as we use them to serve you in this place.

### Prayers of the People

*(adapted from the Book of Isaiah with content by Rev Robin Wardlaw)*



*Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

## BLESSING AND SENDING FORTH

### Closing Hymn

#### All Earth Is Waiting

VU 5

Words and Music: Alberto Taule

English: Gertrude C. Suppe

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- 1 All earth is waiting to see the Promised One,  
and open furrows await the seed of God.  
All the world, bound and struggling, seeks true liberty;  
it cries out for justice and searches for the truth.
- 2 Thus says the prophet to those of Israel,  
'A virgin mother will bear Emmanuel.'  
One whose name is 'God with us', our Saviour shall be,  
through whom hope will blossom once more within our hearts.
- 3 Mountains and valleys will have to be made plain,  
open new highways, new highways for our God,  
who is now coming closer, so come all and see,  
and open the doorways as wide as wide can be.
- 4 In lowly stable the Promised One appeared.  
Yet, feel that presence throughout the earth today,  
for Christ lives in all Christians and is with us now;  
again, on arriving, Christ brings us liberty

**Benediction & Commissioning**



**Postlude**

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## Other Resources for Today

Advent Calendar

[https://www.united-church.ca/sites/default/files/2020-10/au\\_advent-calendar-2020.pdf](https://www.united-church.ca/sites/default/files/2020-10/au_advent-calendar-2020.pdf)

Advent Body Prayers

<https://www.united-church.ca/sites/default/files/body-prayers.pdf>

## Other Lectionary Readings

**Psalm 80: 1-7, 17-19**

**NRSV**

Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,  
you who lead Joseph like a flock!  
You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth  
<sup>2</sup> before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh.  
Stir up your might,  
and come to save us!  
<sup>3</sup> Restore us, O God;  
let your face shine, that we may be saved.  
<sup>4</sup> O God of hosts,  
how long will you be angry with your people's prayers?  
<sup>5</sup> You have fed them with the bread of tears,  
and given them tears to drink in full measure.  
<sup>6</sup> You make us the scorn of our neighbours;  
our enemies laugh among themselves.  
<sup>7</sup> Restore us, O God of hosts;  
let your face shine, that we may be saved.  
<sup>17</sup> Let your hand be upon the one at your right hand,  
the one whom you made strong for yourself.  
<sup>18</sup> Then we will never turn back from you;  
give us life, and we will call on your name.  
<sup>19</sup> Restore us, O God of hosts;  
let your face shine, that we may be saved.

**1 Corinthians 1:3-9**

**New Revised Standard Version**

<sup>3</sup> Grace to you and peace from God and our saviour Jesus Christ.  
<sup>4</sup> I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, <sup>5</sup> for in every way you have been enriched in speech and knowledge of every kind— <sup>6</sup> just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you— <sup>7</sup> so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of Jesus Christ. <sup>8</sup> He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our saviour. <sup>9</sup> God is faithful; by God you were called into the fellowship of Jesus Christ.