

SEEKING GOD TOGETHER



PRELUDE Gesù Bambino (The Infant Jesus)
(Pietro A. Yon) Susan Guido, trumpet

WELCOME & CONGREGATIONAL LIFE
Lighting of the Christ Candle

**Acknowledgment of Territory/Every Child Matters/
Rainbow Candle of Inclusion** Brian Walter

INTROIT Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming
(German, trans. T. Baker/harm. M. Praetorius)

CALL TO WORSHIP

We come now to worship and to wait
for the stirrings of new life.

**We come hoping for hope,
praying for peace,
dreaming of joy—
longing for love.**

Only a few more days...

Only a few more hours...

Come, Lord Jesus!

Come, and be born in our hearts!

***HYMN** Hark! the Glad Sound **VU 29**

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING LITURGY

Norma Draper, Joyce Hagarty, Jennifer Schafer

On this fourth Sunday of Advent,
we come with love as a community of faith.

We watch, we wait, we wonder.

When we feel God's unfailing love, we are able to
give love to—and receive it from —our families,

our friends, our community of faith, and, yes,
even those we find hard to love.

There is enough love for all.

**We experience God's love in the greatest gift
for all of us, in the birth of Jesus, who is bringing
love to the world.**

As we light the fourth candle today,
we breathe in the Spirit of Love.

(The fourth candle is lit.)

Let us pray...

**God of love, we give thanks for your unfailing love and
for the gift of love in the human relationships that give
our lives meaning. May we come to the manger filled
with your infinite love. Amen.**

SUNG RESPONSE Hope Is a Star **VU 7**

Love is a flame that burns in our heart,

Jesus has come and will never depart.

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.**

FINDING GOD TOGETHER

RESPONSIVE READING Song of Mary *pg 7*

(Mary sings, 'My soul gives glory to my God.) Paula Hanna

ANTHEM Alas, This Child *(Peter Zsebik)*

with Susan Guido, trumpet, handbell and percussion

GOSPEL Luke 1:39-45 *(p.57 Pew Bible NT)*

(Mary visits Elizabeth.)

Come to the quiet...a time for reflection

SERMON Of Love & Liberation

***HYMN** See Amid the Winter's Snow **VU 76**

SHARING GOD'S LOVE

OFFERING OUR GIFTS TO GOD

OFFERTORY Breath of Heaven *(arr. Sandra Eithun)*
Bellissimo Handbell Ensemble

DEDICATION In the Bleak Midwinter *(Tune: VU 55)*

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.

OFFERTORY PRAYER & Prayer Shawl Blessing

SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION *(pg 5-6)*

***HYMN** The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy **VU 73**

* **COMMISSIONING**

And now, let us go turn our hearts towards Christmas,
sharing God's gifts of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love!

* **SUNG BLESSING** Hope Shines as the Solitary Star

Love shines as the solitary star. *MV 220*

Faith is the inner light.

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

POSTLUDE Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas
(R.Blane/H.Martin), Away in a Manger (VU 69)

Here Comes Santa Claus *(Autrey/Oakley/Halderman/Melka)*
David Pilkey/Rev. Lorraine



Advent Communion Prayer of Great Thanksgiving

God be with you.
And also with you.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift our hearts in prayer.
Let us give thanks to God.
It is good to give God thanks and praise.

Blessed are you, Breath of peace, Giver of all life, Source of love that knows no boundaries. Your song of wisdom rang out before the world began; throughout the ages, your song of liberation has impregnated us with your hope for a world where: those considered last and least are first and most; violence is overcome by the power of your ancient love; and all work together for peace.

You bring our longings to birth, and send prophets to awaken us to your approaching Advent among us. We thank you for those who, like Mary, have the strength and courage to give birth to your love in the world; for those who, like the shepherds, dare to seek out the Child of Bethlehem; for those who, like the wise ones, actively challenge violent and oppressive powers.

We praise you that your everlasting light is shown to us in womb and tomb, in cradle and cross, in tenderness and compassion. We join in the Advent prayer of all your people, **“O come, Emmanuel.”**

And, as we wait and watch for your coming among us, we proclaim your goodness, as we sing:
O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel. (VU 1)

Prayers of the People & Lord’s Prayer

At this time, we remember Jesus, who on the night before he died, took a loaf of bread, gave you thanks, broke it, and said, “Take and eat; whenever you do this, remember me.” Likewise, after supper, he took the cup, saying, “This is the cup of the new covenant; whenever you drink of it, remember me.”

Gracious God, Breath of peace, Source of love, we pray for your Spirit.
Make us, while many, one. Make us, though broken, whole. Make us, despite death, alive.
And so we pray:
Come, Holy Spirit, come.

SHARING THE BREAD AND CUP

Communion elements of bread cubes and rice crackers are shared today with tongs; juice is served in separate glasses. Please make your way to one of the serving stations at the front of the sanctuary, by way of a centre aisle. Receive the elements, stay for as long as you wish and then return to your seat by an outside aisle.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God of shepherds and kings, you gather us by the light of the star of promise. You lead us not only to hope for the future, but to trust in your presence and renewal of life in every time and place. Guide us in this time by the light of that same star. Lead us to the mangers of the world, God of Love, where uncertainty is met with the renewal of life and the transformation of this world. Amen.

Adapted from: Alydia Smith, Program Coordinator, Worship, Music, and Spirituality, General Council Office



The United Church of Canada acknowledges that its buildings and ministries, from coast to coast to coast, are on traditional territories of Indigenous Peoples.



AURORA UNITED CHURCH



An Affirming Congregation

Church Office 905-727-1935
www.auroraunitedchurch.ca

Rev. Lorraine Newton-Comar & Rev. Andrew Comar
Music Coordinator—Margaret Heney



ADVENT 4 —LOVE
Sacrament of Communion
December 22, 2024
11:00 am

Christ Jesus, stay with us as we celebrate your coming with joy and laughter — with stillness and wonder.
(Margaret Harvey)

Hark, the Glad Sound

Hark, the glad sound! The Saviour comes, the Saviour promised long: let every heart prepare a throne, and every voice a song.

He comes, the prisoners to release in Satan's bondage held; the gates of brass before him burst, the iron fetters yield.

He comes, the broken heart to bind, the bleeding soul to cure, and with the treasures of his grace to bless the humble poor.

Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace, your welcome shall proclaim; and heaven's eternal arches ring with your beloved name.

Responsive Reading – Song of Mary

R Blessed are you among women and blessed the fruit of your womb.

My soul proclaims God's greatness.

My spirit rejoices in God my saviour.

For you have looked with favour on your lowly servant.

From this day all generations will call me blessed.

You have done great things for me, O Most Mighty.

Hallowed be your name!

You have mercy on those who fear you,

From one generation to another. R

You took action with a strong arm.

You scattered the proud in their conceit.

You pulled the mighty from their thrones.

You raised the lowly.

You filled the hungry with good things.

You sent the rich away empty.

You come to the aid of your servant, Israel.

**for you remembered your promise of mercy, to our ancestors,
Abraham and Sarah, and to their children in every age. R**

See Amid the Winter's Snow

See amid the winter's snow, born for us on earth below, see, the tender Lamb appears,
promised from eternal years.

Hail, thou ever-blessèd morn; hail, redemption's happy dawn; sing through all Jerusalem, Christ is born in Bethlehem.

Lo, within a manger lies God who built the starry skies, who enthroned in height sublime sits
amid the cherubim. **R**

Say, ye holy shepherds, say what your joyful news today; wherefore have ye left your sheep
on the lonely mountain steeps? **R**

“As we watched at dead of night, lo, we saw a wondrous light; angels singing ‘Peace on
earth’ told us of the Saviour’s birth.” **R**

Sacred infant, all divine, what a mighty love was thine, thus to come from highest bliss down
to such a world as this! **R**

The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy

The virgin Mary had a baby boy, the virgin Mary had a baby boy, the virgin Mary had a baby
boy, and they say that his name is Jesus.

**He come from the glory, (clap, clap) he come from the glorious kingdom. He come from
the glory, (clap, clap) he come from the glorious kingdom. Oh, yes! believer! Oh, yes!
believer! He come from the glory, (clap, clap) he come from the glorious kingdom.**

The angels sang when the baby was born, the angels sang when the baby was born, the
angels sang when the baby was born, and they say that his name is Jesus. **R**

The shepherds came where the baby was born, the shepherds came where the baby was born,
the shepherds came where the baby was born, and they say that his name is Jesus. **R**

