



FIRST UNITED CHURCH

Swift Current, SK
December 24, 2017

Advent Four - Love

Leading Worship: Rev. Annette Taylor
Reader: Adele Heise
Pianist: Mary Anderson



GATHERING

Moment for Reflection

*"When you look into your mother's eyes,
you know that is the purest love
you can find on this earth."*

— Mitch Albom, *For One More Day*

Welcome and Announcements

Sharing of Peace/Prelude

Lighting of the Candles

Advent Hymn: VU #6 A Candle is Burning (*verse 4*)
(*please remain seated*)

Call to Worship

ONE: Come, people of God, holy creations, wholly God's,
with our holey and ragged lives.

**ALL: We come, seeking God's grace
to make us whole.**

ONE: Come on this fourth Sunday of Advent.

**ALL: Our journey to Christmas is nearly over;
the Christ Child arrives tonight
and our hearts are open to welcome his coming.**

ONE: Come to trust, listen, believe and imagine
what is possible with God incarnate
in our lives and in our world.

ALL: We come, O God, we come.

Adapted from: Susan Lukey, *Gathering*, A/C/E 2017-2018, page 26.

Worship Schedule

Dec 24	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service (7 p.m.)	
Dec 31	First Sunday after Christmas	- Norma Hain
Jan 7	Epiphany	- Rev. Annette Taylor
Jan 14	Knowing Ourselves	- Rev. Annette Taylor

Recent Events

Tuesday, December 19 - Eileen Yake Funeral Service

Rag Dolls at Parliament Hill



We believe that child poverty in our country can and must be eliminated, and that a national strategy is necessary.

On November 21, 2017, representatives of the Bread Not Stones Project and The United Church of Canada were hosted

on Parliament Hill by the All-Party Anti-Poverty Caucus. We were their guests at a Breakfast and Panel Discussion in recognition of the United Nations Universal Children's Day, November 20. We were partnering with two other well-known agencies—[Campaign 2000](#) and [Citizens for Public Justice](#). 338 Dolls of Hope accompanied us, and were delivered to all MPs.

Each doll represents a child in poverty in our country. They were created with care by women, men, and children across the country. They were presented to politicians and others of influence who can make a difference. Have a look at the wonderful [photo album](#) created by Brian Dalton of London, ON. Rag doll workshops galore were held to create the 338 dolls! (*see back of bulletin*)

Opening Hymn: VU #60 O Come, All Ye Faithful
(verses 1,2 & 3) (please stand as you are able)

Opening Prayer and Jesus' Prayer

Ground of our Being,
this Advent season is a reminder
of your coming amongst us.

To us, you are a mystery,
and yet we often experience your presence
in the midst of ordinary life.

In our despair, you are the source of Hope.

In our turmoil, you are the birthplace of Peace.

In our sadness, you are the font of Joy.

In our heartache, you are the cradle of Love.

As we enter this time of worship

may our hearts be open to your abiding grace.

Adapted from: Kim Falls, *Gathering*, Advent/Christmas/Epiphany
2017-2018, page 27.

WORD

Hymn: VU #17 O Ancient Love *(verses 1,2 & 3)*

Community Learning Time - Melanie Davis

Hymn: VU #17 O Ancient Love *(verse 4)*
(please remain seated)

Scripture Reading: Luke 1:26-38

ONE: We read this text so that in it we may find wisdom for life.

ALL: May we be open to the Wisdom we understand and hear.

Song: Amen *(see insert)*
- Leonard Cohen

Reflection: Tell Me That You Love Me Then

Choral Offering: It is Love / Up Where We Belong
- Scott Kearns / Joe Cocker

RESPONSE

Minute for Mission: New Beginnings after Civil War

Offering

Offertory Hymn: These Gifts We Bring

- Pat Mayberry (please stand as you are able)

Prayer of Dedication

Through these gifts, may we be agents of love
in your world,

lifting people up in love

so they can experience an abundant future.

Amen.

Adapted from: Karen Boivin, *Gathering*, Advent/Christmas/Epiphany
2017-2018, page 30.

Prayers of the People

Closing Hymn: VU #38 Angels We Have Heard on High
(please stand as you are able)

Commissioning & Benediction

Choral Closing: MV #220 Love Shines as the Solitary Star

Postlude

Lectionary Readings for December 31, 2017

Isaiah 61:10- 62:3

Psalm 148 (VU p.871)

Galatians 4 :4-7

Luke 2 :22-40

(from previous page)

On this special day, Campaign 2000 also released its Annual Report on Child and Family Poverty and hosted a press conference, in which Bread Not Stones and Citizens for Public Justice also participated.

Bread Not Stones had the opportunity to raise concerns with officials about existing funding gaps for services for children in First Nations communities, the need for a \$15 per hour minimum wage for every worker nationwide and addressing extreme global income inequality by working with other nations to eliminate tax havens at home and abroad.

At the heart of the Bread Not Stones project is the Child Wellbeing Initiative, launched in 2006—the inspiration of the remarkable women in the United Church in Alberta and Northwest Conference. They were outraged by the number of children in poverty in their province and introduced rag dolls and paper dolls as their powerful symbols. They have since delivered 87 rag dolls and 70,000 paper dolls to the Alberta legislature. Following in their footsteps, the women, men, and children of London Conference have created a strong initiative in their area. Joined by others from across Ontario, they delivered 107 rag Dolls of Hope to the Ontario legislature in November 2016. Women in the Maritime Conference have also been especially active in this project.

[Read More about Ending Poverty](#)