



FIRST UNITED CHURCH

Swift Current, SK
Sunday, December 3, 2023

Advent One - Hope

Leading Worship: Rev. Annette Taylor
Music Director: James McLauchlan
Pianist: Mary Anderson
Organist: Patti McCleary
Reader: Mary Anderson



GATHERING

Moment for Reflection

*It is at my chamber, entering the keyhole,
pushing through the padding of the door.
I cannot scream. A bone of fear clogs my throat. It is upon me.
It is sunrise, with Hope its arrogant rider.
— Maya Angelou*

Land Acknowledgement & Announcements

Lighting the Advent Candles - Zion, Zoe & Zabella Orola

Advent Hymn: *We wait for God* (verse 1 – sung twice)

– Words by William S. Kervin, Music by Deborah Park and Tom Reynolds
(please remain seated)

Call to Worship

Children: Are we there yet?

All: Yes, we are in the place of birth and new life.

Children: Are we there yet?

All: Yes, we are listening for the voice of God.

Children: Are we there yet?

All: Yes, God is with us even in the darkness.

Children: Are we there yet?

All: Yes, God is in the storm and the calm.

Children: Are we there yet?

All: Yes, we see clearly where we are through our tears.

Children: Are we there yet?

All: Yes, this is a place of sharing bread.

Children: Are we there yet?

All: Yes, we are at home with the holy.

Children: We are home! Yeah!

Written by: Naramata Centre, Summer Community Worship, August 21, 2002, Naramata, B.C.

Opening Hymn: VU #7 *Hope Is a Star*

(please stand as you are able)

Opening Prayer

**Holy Mystery,
Ground of our Being,
your vision of peace and wholeness
comes to us in sweeping revelations
and in tiny signs of hope.
Kindle our hearts
that we might be a hopeful people.
Keep us from growing weary of waiting,
lest we miss the wonder of your appearing.
Even so, come quickly. Amen.**

Adapted from *Celebrate God's Presence*, page 82.

The Lord's Prayer

WORD

Hymn: MV #158 *Dream a Dream* (verses 1 & 2)
(please remain seated)

Community Learning Time

Hymn: MV #158 *Dream a Dream* (verses 3 & 4)

Scripture Reading: Mark 13:24-37

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.

Poem: *A Plagued Journey* by Maya Angelou

Reflection: *Arrogant Hope*

Choral Offering: *Somewhere in Your Silent Night*

– Arranged by: Joseph M. Martin

Words & Music by: Matthew West, Bernie Herms and Mark Hall

RESPONSE

Minute for Mission: *Education in the Wake of Disaster*

Offering Invitation

Prayer of Dedication:

**Take the gifts we offer,
not as a means to rescue others,
but as a means for relationship and for connection,**

**as a means to build bridges between strangers,
as a means to embody the good news. Amen**

Adapted from: Gord Dunbar, *Gathering*, Pentecost 2 2015, page 40.

Celebration of Communion

Closing Hymn: MV #83 *Let My Spirit Always Sing*
(please stand as you are able)

Commissioning & Benediction

Choral Closing: MV #221 *I Am Walking a Path of Hope*

Postlude

Prayer Cycles

Ministerial

New Life Seventh Day Adventist Church

Living Skies Regional Council

Tisdale: St. Paul's

Moose Jaw: Trinity

Wapella

Lectionary Readings for December 10, 2023

Isaiah 40:1-11

Psalms 85:1-2, 8-13 (VU p. 802)

2 Peter 3:8-15a

Mark 1:1-8

Worship Schedule

(Travelling through Advent with Maya Angelou's Poetry)

Dec 10	<i>Advent Two – Peace</i>	- Rev. Annette Taylor
Dec 17	<i>Advent Three – Joy</i>	- Rev. Annette Taylor
Dec 24	<i>Advent Four – Love</i>	- Rev. Annette Taylor
Dec 24	<i>Christmas Eve (7 p.m.)</i>	- Rev. Annette Taylor
Dec 31	1 st after Christmas	- Norma Hain

COP28 Virtual Delegation



From November 30 to December 12, 2023, a delegation of [young adults from The United Church of Canada will attend the COP28 conference virtually](#). Join us as we [pray](#) for these young adults and their COP28 journey. Follow along for COP28 updates on social media using [#UCCANCOP28](#) and [#FLCCOP28](#).

The theme of COP28 is Unite. Act. Deliver. You can take action right now by [sending an email](#) to urge Minister Guilbeault to ensure a Loss and Damage Fund with new funding centered on equity and climate justice is established.

[Image credit: COP28 UAE, Rev. Chali Mfuta, Sarah Gingles, and Shane Goldie]

Calling for end to support for Philippines counter-terrorism campaign

Hundreds of concerned citizens made their voices heard by writing letters to their Members of Parliament via The United Church of Canada website. They expressed deep concern that the Canadian government may be inadvertently enabling continued attacks on human rights and human rights defenders by providing financial, programmatic, and technical support to the Government of the Philippines. In partnership with the [International Coalition for Human Rights in the Philippines](#) (ICHRP-Canada), these concerns were also brought to Parliament Hill through the [speaking tour](#) of Neri Colmenares, Filipino Human Rights Lawyer. An ICHRP-Canada and United Church of Canada delegation accompanied Colmenares in meetings with several Members of Parliament from five political parties and with representatives from Global Affairs Canada. They discussed concerns related to Canada's pending defense cooperation memorandum of understanding with the Philippine government.

Why were these letters written? In 2020, the Government of the Philippines passed an Anti-Terrorism Act that allows attacks on the basic rights of those who oppose the government, all in the name of fighting "terrorism." Since then, the Philippine government has misused the act to attack human rights and human rights defenders through extrajudicial killings, false accusations, arbitrary arrests, detention, and other means. The United Church of Canada, with other denominations and organizations, is very concerned that the Canadian government is inadvertently funding these attacks by providing support to the Government of the Philippines.

Save the date! The National ICHRP-Canada Conference and Third General Assembly will be held in Montreal May 3–5, 2024. The theme of the Conference is "Resist State Terror. Stand for People's Rights in the Philippines." Information is available on the [ICHRP-Canada website](#).