

Trinity-Grace United Church  
November 28, 2021



CLOSE to  
HOME

*“Homesick”*  
First Sunday of Advent

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**GATHERING**

**Welcome**

**Preparing our Hearts**

**Introit:** (Solo) “Hope in the Darkness”

Turn to God for hope in the darkness,  
Minds at rest, we know you are near;  
Advent watching and waiting for Jesus,  
God with us, redeeming the years,  
Emmanuel, hope is here;  
Hope is here!

**Invitation to Worship**

(Leader/**All**):

Can one be homesick for something you’ve never known?

**We are homesick for a just world, for peace like rivers,  
for the end of suffering.**

Yes, we are homesick—

**for joy that is contagious, for nations that feel like neighbours,  
and for a vibrant, healthy planet.**

We are homesick for the world God intends.

**We are homesick, but we are on our way.**

God is here. God is still creating.

**Let us worship in hope.**

## Opening Prayer

**Hymn:** "O COME, O COME EMMANUEL"

Tune: VU 1

O come, O come Emmanuel,  
And bless the place your people dwell  
Melt every weapon crafted for war  
Bring peace upon the earth forever more.

*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to heal our hurting world.*

O come, strong branch of Jesse free  
Your people from despair and apathy.  
Forge justice for the poor and the meek,  
Grant safety for the young ones and the weak.

*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to heal our hurting world.*

O come now, living water, pour your grace  
And bring new life to every withered place;  
Speak comfort to each trembling heart:  
Be strong, fear not for I will ne'er depart.

*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to heal our hurting world.*

O come, dear child of Mary, come –  
God's word made flesh within our earthly home.  
Love stir within the womb of night;  
Revenge and hatred put to flight.

*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to heal our hurting world.*

## Candle-lighting

We hope for a world where all are fed.

**We hope for a world with more bridges than walls.**

We hope for a world with wide open doors.

**We hope for a world with contagious laughter.**

We hope for a world where trees grow tall and creeks run clean.

**We hope for a world where all people feel at home—  
in their bodies, in the church, in their physical homes.**

We hope for that world. We long for that world.

**We are homesick for that world.**

So today we light the candle of hope,

**because hope keeps our hearts alive as we wait.**

*The first Advent candle - the candle of hope - is lit.*

We are close to home. May we carry hope with us.

**Amen.**

**Response:** (Tune: "Still, still, still")

*\*1st time soloist, 2nd time congregation*

Hope, hope, hope

we light a flame of hope.

When Advent comes our hearts are yearning,

as we set each candle burning.

Hope, hope hope -

We light a flame of hope.

### **Reconciling Prayer:**

(Leader)

Gracious God,

We find ourselves with two options every day—

to stay homesick for the world you had in mind, or to allow cynicism to win.

Do we hope against hope, or do we throw in the towel?

Do we insist on a better world, or do we assume it's impossible?

Forgive us for the days when cynicism wins.

Forgive us for numbing our homesick hurt instead of using it to fuel a better world.

*Silent prayer*

Holy One, kindle in us a hope that won't let go.

Gratefully we pray.

**Amen.**

## Sharing Peace

(Leader/All):

May the peace of Christ be with you all.

**And also with you.**

## ENGAGING WITH THE WORD

### Prayer for Illumination

**First reading:** Jeremiah 33: 14-16

**Second reading:** Luke 21: 25-36

Reader: May we hear the Word the spirit is speaking into our lives.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

### Reflection

- Rev. Sandra Nixon

## RESPONDING

**Hymn:** "DEEP IN OUR HEARTS"

MV 154

Deep in our hearts there is a common vision  
Deep in our hearts there is a common song  
Deep in our hearts there is a common story  
Telling Creation that we are one.

Deep in our hearts there is a common purpose  
Deep in our hearts there is a common goal  
Deep in our hearts there is a sacred message  
Justice and peace in harmony.

Deep in our hearts there is a common longing  
Deep in our hearts there is a common theme  
Deep in our hearts there is a common current  
Flowing to freedom like a stream

Deep in our hearts there is a common vision  
Deep in our hearts there is a common song  
Deep in our hearts there is a common story  
Telling Creation that we are one.

## **Dedicating Our Gifts for God's Mission**

Invitation

Prayer of Dedication

(One/All):

Holy God, We are homesick.

We long for the day that you spoke of when swords will be beaten into plowshares, the lion will lie down with the lamb, and justice will roll like waters.

**Until that holy day comes, take all the gifts we offer: our time, our creativity, our skills and knowledge, and our financial giving - and use them to build your world here. We are hopeful. Amen.**

## **Announcements & Sharing**

### **WIDENING THE CIRCLE**

#### **Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession**

*Prayers for the world and our community are offered.*

#### **The Prayer of the Disciples** (The Lord's Prayer)

(ALL:)

Source of life, shepherd of all,  
may your name be held sacred by all creation.

May your reign come,  
and your holy will be done here among us,  
as it is in the great communion of saints.

Provide what we need to sustain us this day.

Forgive our sin and our sins,  
as we are forgiving the hurts others cause us.

Keep us from trials too great to bear,  
and strengthen us to resist evil.  
For yours is the realm of love,  
yours the energy of life,  
and yours the true essence of all that is,  
now and always.

Amen.

**Hymn:** "GOD OF ALL PLACES"

VU 4

1. God of all places, present, unseen;  
voice in our silence, song in our midst,  
we are your people, knowing, unsure:  
come, Lord Jesus, come!
2. God of all dreaming, near and yet far;  
vision unheard of, wake us to rest.  
We are your presence, sent forth, afraid:  
come, Lord Jesus, come!
3. God of all people, dust and the clay;  
breath of a new wind, fire in our hearts,  
light born of heaven, peace on the earth:  
come, Lord Jesus, come!

**Sending & Blessing**

(Leader)

As you leave *this* service, *your* service begins:  
Comfort the homesick.  
Open your doors to others.  
Seek sanctuary.  
Be brave enough to go home by another way.  
And remember that here in our little room in God's house,  
all are welcomed; all belong — all are family.  
In the name of our Foundation—  
God, Spirit, and Son—  
go in peace.

**Response:** (Tune: MV 220)

*Hope shines as an Advent star,  
faith is the inner light.  
You and I together mirror the Light of Lights,  
and illumine the pathway home.*

**Postlude**