A plastic container of food

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**MESSAGE TO THE CONGREGATION FOR SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29TH, 2020**

It is common in Advent to light candles on a wreath as a ritual of waiting and preparing our hearts for the celebration of Christmas.

          Traditionally, an evergreen circle reminds us of the timeless nature of God’s love and presence in our world. Evergreens seem to defy nature by remaining green throughout the year, reminding us that God sets God’s own rules.   
Because the circle has neither beginning nor end, it represents the timeless nature of God – the divine has no beginning and no end.

          The four candles represent each of the four Sundays. The colours of the candles and the names given to each Sunday vary according to a wide number of traditions, so it’s good to remember that none of these things are carved in stone. Some traditions go with themes such as Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love – although the order of those changes amongst traditions. Others assign the candles to different people in the Christmas story:

                   Joseph – fear or anxiety, a sense of anticipation and uncertainty

                   Mary – courage and strength

                   Birth of Jesus – wonder, new life, hope

                   Magi – promise, transformation, or new directions/new paths

**The important thing to remember is that the candles tell us of the light which came into the world with Jesus Christ.** Some people use purple or violet candles; this is a penitential colour, reminding us that we need God’s help to be the people we are meant to be. Others use blue which represents anticipation. During Advent, we wait and prepare for Jesus with hopeful anticipation. The white candle which we light on Christmas Eve signifies the coming of Christ.

          The use of a pink candle on the third week comes from an odd custom that really has no relevance to Advent at all, although the idea stuck. Advent was modelled after Lent, and on the 4th Sunday of Lent the Pope once visited a church with pink roses, and gave everyone a pink rose that day. Thus, pink got associated with the 4th Sunday of Lent, and when Advent was developed the idea behind the use of pink had largely been forgotten, but it was carried over from Lent 4 to Advent 3. A reminder, perhaps, that traditions die hard!

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Worship with Summerland and Westbank United Churches

November 29, 2020 09:45 AM Vancouver

\_\_**Join Zoom Meeting**  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83971543383>  
  
**Meeting ID: 839 7154 3383  
Passcode: 487991**

Dial by your location  
         
        +1 778 907 2071 Canada  
Meeting ID: 839 7154 3383

**Passcode: 487991**

**Summerland United Church website also provides access to our weekly Zoom church service.**

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**November 29, 2020**

**A Sunday Service for Summerland and Westbank United Churches**

**Rev. Donald Schmidt - Presiding**

**Power Point:  Judi Ritcey, LLWL – Summerland United**

 **GATHERING TIME**9:45 AM

**TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**Donald

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**Donald

**BELL RINGING**10 AM

**WORDS OF WELCOME -   Fred Gartrell,**Summerland United

*A warm welcome to our friends from Summerland and Westbank United Churches who are with us today and to all those joining us from other locations. If there are any visitors joining us today from other congregations or other places, we would love to know your names. The host will now unmute everyone, and if you are comfortable, we invite visitors to introduce themselves.*

**MOMENT OF SILENCE TO VIEW THE CONGREGATION –**Donald

**LIGHTING OF THE CANDLE**

**LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE**Donald

**O God, help us to be open to your shaping of our lives, that we may be channels of hope, love, peace, and joy in our hurting world. Amen.**

**WE SING TOGETHER**    O Healer of All Life

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

From ancient times, God has been with us,

**and God is with us now.**

Through generation after generation,

**God has stayed with us.**

Even in times when we as a people have turned our backs on God,

**God has never turned away from us.**

So, in this time of holy mystery we come to be with God once again, knowing that God calls us from yesterday into tomorrow. Come, let us worship God!

**OPENING PRAYER:**Holy One, you challenge us to hear your story – and our own story – in new ways. Sometimes we are called to break the rules, to contradict the norms of the world around us, because your desire for justice and goodness for others weighs greater than everything else. Help us to know your ways, and to have the courage to stand up for what is right. Amen.

**WE SING TOGETHER**                O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (VU 1)

**SCRIPTURE READING**                         Isaiah 64:1–9 – Inclusive Bible - **Ken Bridges** – Westbank United **REFLECTION**

**WE SING TOGETHER**Hope Is a Star (VU 7)

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE                Rev. Donald Schmidt**

**THE LORD’S PRAYER**

**OFFERING**  
**PRAYER OF DEDICATION**  

**God of restoration and remembrance take our gifts and mould them, craft them, and shape them into those things that bring your hope to all the world. Amen.**

**WE SING TOGETHER:**Advent News, Seasons of the Spirit, Volume 3

**BLESSING**

**BREAK INTO CHAT ROOMS**

**O Healer of All Life**(from the Monks of the Weston Priory, Weston, Vermont. Used with permission.)

O that you would rend the heavens, pierce our blindness,

cure our deafness, and draw so near to our side,

O healer of all life.

Shepherd of Israel, bend your ear.

Lead us, we are Your own.

We strain to hear the sign of Your love.

Answer us! Return to your side.

O that you would rend the heavens, pierce our blindness,

cure our deafness, and draw so near to our side,

O healer of all life.

Where is Your zeal? Where is Your might,

the yearning of your heart?

Your mercy dwelling so far away!

Draw near, then we will be saved.

O that you would rend the heavens, pierce our blindness,

cure our deafness, and draw so near to our side,

O healer of all life.

Why have we strayed far from Your paths,

hearts hardened like a stone?

Stumbling, we fall, not knowing the way.

Brighten our night with Your light!

O that you would rend the heavens, pierce our blindness,

cure our deafness, and draw so near to our side,

O healer of all life.

No eye has seen, nor ear has heard,

such tenderness as Yours.

For, in the midst of our desperate lives,

You pitch Your tent of peace!

O that you would rend the heavens, pierce our blindness,

cure our deafness, and draw so near to our side,

O healer of all life.

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**Advent News** (Donald Schmidt)

Sing a song of praise and glory

to the one who came to be

Word and Wisdom born among us –

Child of God to set us free. *(repeat)*

God’s dream for creation is coming to birth,

changes are happ’ning all over the earth.

Swords into ploughshares and tools out of spears,

peace breaking out both far and near.

Sing a song of praise and glory

to the one who came to be

Word and Wisdom born among us –

Child of God to set us free. *(repeat)*

The deserts will blossom and God’s justice will grow.

At the sound of God’s voice healing waters will flow.

Animals ev’rywhere will start a new trend:

those who were enemies now will be friends.

Sing a song of praise and glory

to the one who came to be

Word and Wisdom born among us –

Child of God to set us free. *(repeat)*

My heart bursts with praise for the God who has done

wonderful things for everyone!

The proud are brought down and the humble stand tall.

Peace on earth, good will to all.

Sing a song of praise and glory

to the one who came to be

Word and Wisdom born among us –

Child of God to set us free. *(repeat)*

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Christmas Eve - preparing together**

**From Linnea:** "I think in this time of doubled-down lockdown it would be really lovely to have a recording of "us" - our shared congregations at this season. I would like to invite everybody in the Zoom-gregation to take the opportunity to say one simple line of the Luke nativity scripture in a compiled telling for that service (with music underneath). Stay a short while after one of the 4 Advent services and be recorded on Zoom saying a line that I give you. It should be fairly easy because you can pretty much hear the line and say it from quick memory.

**Think about:**

* Position yourself so that there is more light shining *on*you than behind you. Swivel away from windows and turn on a desk lamp.
* You could find a nice place in your home to be in for the recording (a roaring fire in the fireplace, on the deck, by your bookshelf, etc)
* Note: This is not reading - just telling what I give you.
* Is there someone you could make arrangements to assist in getting their own little bit of video to me - someone in a care home, someone who doesn't usually come to our Zoom services, or your far-flung family..? I will give you the scripture to pass on to them.
* Anyone who would like to record their own away from Zoom is welcome to do that too, and email to me.

I think this will be a treasure for us to enjoy and share for years to come.

Our Christmas Eve Service is at 7pm on Dec 24th. Usual Worship link.

**A Tale of Two Farming Women**

Imagine the Advent story of Mary and her cousin Elizabeth meeting up to share their common mission. You are invited to join December 3, 2020 at 7:00 pm, in a virtual screening of the documentary ‘*Common Strength’* -  the story of two women inspired by hope who do the hard work of feeding their families. The film follows Colleen Dyck, a farmer from Niverville, Manitoba, who travelled to western Kenya to live and work alongside small-scale farmer Lucy Anyango. The screening will be followed by a time of conversation with Colleen Dyck, Wangui Gitai (World Renew Kenya staff in Nairobi) and the film's producer, Meagan Silencieux.

Register in advance at:  <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAkdemupzwtG9dzePXGLH3J-U_--N6oUxVB>

Questions: Contact Debbie Hubbard at 250-469-4468,[sowingseedsofpossibilities@gmail.com](mailto:sowingseedsofpossibilities@gmail.com)

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