

SUMMERLAND UNITED CHURCH

*celebrating faith
seeking justice and
serving others in a loving community*

Welcome to our Sunday Service

Rev. Paul James - Presiding
Sunday, December 5th, 2021



TEAMWORK MAKES SUNDAY WORSHIP HAPPEN

Words of Welcome: David Jonsson

Scripture Reading: Larry Harder

Greeters: Joan & Rick Gasior

Ushers: Sharon O'Shaughnessy & Carl Bronevitch

Accompanist: Lynn Robinson

Music Leader: Kathleen Estabrooks

PowerPoint Creation: Judi Ritcey **PowerPoint Presenter:** Fred Gartrell;

Sound: Dylan Ganzeveld

Pastoral Care Minister: Rev. Paul James

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The church is open Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday 10:00 – 2:00

WORDS OF WELCOME ANNOUNCEMENTS

David Jonsson

TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Paul James

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLES

Paul James

Presider: On this second Sunday of Advent, we hear stories of the dreams and longings of God's people. The Hebrew people dreamed of a king who would rule with justice and peace. The apostle Paul had a dream that all people would belong to God. John the Baptist invited people to dream with him about the coming of God's reign.

The People: We share these dreams that can lead to life-changing action.

Presider: God's people have long dreamed of the coming of peace, justice and faithfulness to God's ways. In our own time we dream of equality and good life for everyone. Such dreams come from God and inspire us to work for justice and peace.

The People: With John the Baptist we dream of making crooked paths straight, of making a smooth highway, broad enough for all God's people to move on together in peace and harmony.

Presider: Our actions can help build that highway. God's dream can become our dream. Last week we lit the first candle. Its flickering flame reminded us that our waiting is to be both contemplative and active. (*Light the first candle*) The flame of this second candle reminds us that just as candles can be given a flame, so God's dreams can become real in our world. (*Light the second blue/purple candle.*)

The People: Loving God, give us the desire, the willingness, and the courage to be part of your dream for a world made new. We pray in the name of Jesus, your dream incarnate. Amen

WE SING TOGETHER

VU 2 – Come Thou Long Expected Jesus

CALL TO WORSHIP

Listen! Listen for a messenger from God.

The way is being prepared for Christ's coming.

We are here to listen for a word from God.

We have gathered to prepare for Christ's advent.

We are partners in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Claim anew today this opportunity and responsibility.

We are glad God is doing great things among us.

We commit ourselves to God's work in the world.

OPENING PRAYER

How good it is to gather where garments of sorrow and affliction are removed. Here we are wrapped in the beauty of Your glory O God, and welcomed to life at its fullest. Surely you restore us to our best, mighty God, and equip us for productive living. Make a difference within and among us today so we can work for a better tomorrow.

SCRIPTURE READINGS – New Revised Standard Version

Larry Harder

Malachi 3:1-4

The Coming Messenger

³ See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. ² But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; ³ he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the LORD in righteousness.^[a] ⁴ Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

Luke 3:1-6

The Proclamation of John the Baptist

³ In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler^[a] of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler^[b] of the region of Ituraea

and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler^[c] of Abilene, ² during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. ³ He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, ⁴ as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.

⁵ Every valley shall be filled,
and every mountain and hill shall be made low,
and the crooked shall be made straight,
and the rough ways made smooth;

⁶ and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’”

These words come from the Scriptures of our traditions.

May we find wisdom for our daily lives.

WE SING TOGETHER
REFLECTION
WE SING TOGETHER

VU 8 – O How a Rose is Blooming

Paul James

VU 18 – There’s a Voice in the Wilderness Crying

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE
THE LORD’S PRAYER

Paul James

Traditional

OFFERING
PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Paul James

Loving God, receive our gifts of money and our heartfelt thanks for the depth of your love revealed in Jesus. We commit ourselves again to your ways of justice, peace, and compassion. Amen

WE SING TOGETHER

VU 31 – O Lord, How Shall I Meet You

BLESSING

Paul James

BUILD BRIDGES OF PEACE

“We’re all human. All created by the same divine being.”



Credit: Geralt from Pixabay

December is one of the holiest months of the year. Along with Christmas, there’s the Jewish festival of Hanukkah, winter solstice rituals, as well as spiritually significant days for Buddhists, Muslims, and Zoroastrians. That makes this month a good one to remember what unites us.

And it’s important we do. In October, Global Affairs Canada stated that, worldwide, the right to practice, choose, and change one’s religion or belief is increasingly under attack. According to the Pew Research Centre, in 2018 more than a quarter of the world’s countries experienced hostilities caused by religious hatred, mob violence related to religion, terrorism, and harassment of women for violating religious codes.

“I think we have a great lack of understanding of other faith traditions. Lack of understanding breeds contempt and fear. The more we understand and the more we talk, there’s a greater opportunity to break down some of the walls of fear. We can’t do that if we keep talking about us and them,” says John Dowds, City of Edmonton Chaplain in a film called *Building Bridges*.

The film is produced by the Edmonton Interfaith Centre for Education and Action, a Mission & Service partner. Your gifts through Mission & Service support the centre—the first of its kind

in Canada—to hold interfaith celebrations, dialogues, and learning events. You can watch [*Building Bridges*](#) on the centre’s website, and faith communities are encouraged to host a screening. This is one way your Mission & Service gifts not only transform the lives of others but can also change yours for the better, too.

Karen Lumly Kerr from the Society of Edmonton Atheists speaks compellingly about finding common ground in the film: “We all have to learn how to cooperate and figure out how to get along...trying to understand each other a little bit better and finding your common ground.

What things do you all believe in? What things do you all find important?”

“Look at my veins, they’re blue,” says Indigenous Elder Fernie Marty, lifting his arm slightly before the camera. “It’s so important to understand our own values and understandings and share them openly and honestly. When we don’t share who we are as individuals, the different cultures, it creates fears.... All of us have blue veins. That tells me we’re all royalty. We’re all equal. None of us is superior to the others. We’re all human. All created by the same divine being,” he says.

Each one of us needs to take a clear and public stand against intolerance and for love. During this month, which is so much about spiritual deepening for so many of us, let us take that stand.

Let’s build bridges of peace with all of our neighbours.

Thank you for your generosity through. Your gifts support organizations that remind us there’s more that unites us than divides.