



*The United Church of Canada*  
Prairie Spirit Pastoral Charge  
Coaldale United and St. Andrew's UC  
Trinity and First United  
**Worship leader** Ruth Pelletier

Reader: Pat Mikalson

Music: Cheryl Nelson

December 21, 2025

Advent 4 - Love

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**Land Acknowledgement**

**Call to Worship**

God of all love, you teach us abundant love through the birth of your child! With the angels we shout -

**Glory to God! Hallelujah!**

God of all Love, you teach us abundant love in the choices of Mary and Joseph. With the angels we cry -

**Glory to God! Hallelujah!**

God of all life, you teach us abundant hope in the awe of the shepherds, in the warmth of the animals, in the gift of the Story. With the angels, we sing -

**Glory to God! Hallelujah! Glory to God in the highest! Hallelujah!**  
**Amen!**

**Advent 4 – Love!**

(The first three candles are lit)

On this fourth Sunday of Advent, we light this candle symbolizing love.

**We come to lean into loving one another – even when it is difficult. Jesus demonstrated that every person is worthy of our love, a flame of purpose that should not be extinguished.**

(The fourth blue candle is lit)

Love is most fully lived in relationships that are mutual, life-giving and self-giving.

**We come, learning how to love with kindness and compassion.**

Let us sing as we celebrate the good news embodied in love alive among us.

**All sing: We light this candle for love.**

**Await the new life within.  
May our hearts now live each day,  
So love can find a way...  
So love can find a way.**

Let us join together in prayer, inspired by everlasting love:

**Teach us, O God, to hear the cries of those impoverished.**

**Show us how to care for others with loving-kindness.**

**Communicate with us so that we, too, may communicate the good news with  
love.**

**Encourage us to move toward those who need us.**

**Open our perceptions to discover Christ's face in one another, setting our  
hearts on fire with passionate self-giving.**

**Amen**

**Hymn #47 (VU)**

**Still, Still, Still**

**Kid's Time**

**Minute For Mission**

Last year, a small gift reminded us just how powerful generosity can be.

We received a cheque for \$125 from a longtime Mission and Service donor. But the money didn't come from her... it came from her three grandchildren. They had gathered loose change from around their house, rolling loonies, quarters, and dimes. They were told they could spend it on anything they wanted. Instead, they chose to send it all to help children in Ukraine.

Their letter said simply, "They decided to send it to help children in need."

That story was a reminder of something that already lives within us. We don't need to be taught how to care. God created us for compassion, and sometimes it takes the perspective of children to remind us of that.

That same spirit of generosity was powerfully echoed at General Council 45, where youth delegates from across the country shared their hopes for the church. They spoke of a church that is more than buildings, one that adapts boldly to God's call. They imagined a church that cares deeply about the world beyond its walls and is committed to real change. They envisioned a community that places the needs of the vulnerable first and uses its resources to serve others.

Their voices reflected the heart of Mission and Service: meeting people with compassion, supporting partners who respond to crises, and working for justice and healing in Canada and around the world.

The dreams of these young leaders, and the generosity of children who share what little they have, show the kind of future the church can build when people join their sparks together.

This Advent, Mission and Service invites the church to share sparks of compassion that can ignite fires of change. When generosity is passed from one person to another, it grows into comfort, hope, and lasting impact for those who need it most.

Thank you for supporting Mission and Service and helping that spark shine brightly this season.

**Mission Prayer: from Song of Faith**

**God is creative and self-giving, generously moving in all the near and distant corners of the universe. Nothing exists that does not find its source in God. Our first response to God's providence is gratitude. We sing thanksgiving. Amen**

**Prayer of Reconciliation**

Dear God, in these days of darkening skies, we come to you looking for light – the light of love and warmth and new life, knowing that you are still with us.

**We long for you, and yet in our busyness, we so often hide from you.**

We shelter our gifts in fear, never daring to be who we really are, who we are truly called to be.

**Help us, God to find ways of truly noticing and discovering ourselves and others.**

Bring us to your Light and to your Love! That in sharing our authentic selves, we will be made whole.

**Amen**

**Words of Freedom**

Hope, peace joy and love are the gifts we celebrate at Christmas. These gifts were unwrapped by the world in the person of Jesus - in a precious baby born to us in a most humble way. A precious gift given to a precious people.

Receive God's good love! We are forgiven! Rejoice!

**Thanks be to God!**

### **Scripture Readings:**

**Isaiah 7:10-16 (NRSV) Isaiah Gives Ahaz the Sign of Immanuel** Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying, “Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test.” Then Isaiah said, “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son and shall name him Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted.

### **Matthew 1:18-25 (NRSV)**

The Birth of Jesus the Messiah

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

“Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son,  
and they shall name him Emmanuel,”

### **Message**

#### **Hymn**

#### **Joseph Heard the Troubling News**

Joseph heard the troubling news: Mary was expecting!  
What should he, a just man do? He sought God’s directing.  
Joseph thought to send her home – leave her without blaming;  
Then an angel in a dream spoke of joy proclaiming:

“God take Mary as your wife; Joseph, don’t you fear it  
God has formed a precious life by the Holy Spirit.  
Mary soon will bear a son: you shall name him Jesus.  
When the prophet spoke of him, he said, ‘God is with us!’ “

God of love, we too must face times of doubt and trouble.  
May we know your daily grace, even when we struggle.

Just as Joseph answered, “Yes!” with new dedication,  
We rejoice, for we’ve been blessed by your incarnation.

**Offering**

Take whatever I can offer  
Gifts that I have yet to find,  
Skills that I am slow to sharpen,  
Talents of the hand and mind,  
Things made beautiful for others  
In the place where I must be:  
Take my gifts and let me love you,  
God who first of all loved me.

**Prayers of Our People and The Prayer of Jesus**

**Hymn #333 (VU)**

**Love Divine, All Loves Excelling**

**Commissioning and Benediction**

Let us go out into the world in love!  
**We are not alone. God is with us!**  
Love is promised in these Advent days.  
**Love is known deeply in these Advent days.**  
God bless us all as we wait!  
**Let us go out into the world with love!**

**Sung Blessing #221 (MV)**

I am walking a path of love!  
I am walking a path of love!  
I am walking a path of love!  
Lead me home  
Lead me home