



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: Gerry Dyck
Music: Barb Goertzen

November 30, 2025

Advent 1

Land Acknowledgement

For thousands of years, First Nations people have walked on this land; their relationship with the land is at the centre of their lives and spirituality. We gather on these tradition territories of the Blackfoot people and extend our gratitude and acknowledge their stewardship of this land throughout the ages.

Call to Worship

Spirit of new beginnings, of strength and hope,
Spirit whose voice echoed across the waters and brought forth life,
Echo in our hearts and help us begin anew!
Your voice, God, moved the world to change.
Speak to us as we await the birth of Your Child.
Amen!

ADVENT ONE

In a world filled with tragedy and chaos, we arrive weary, wary, and wrung out.
We come to find shelter from our fears, to discover hope as we practise our faith in worship.

We're tired of this marathon of difficulty, longing for relief through a return to what we once thought normal.

We come because the vulnerable Christ child enlightens us with possibility.

On this first Sunday of Advent, we light this first candle symbolizing hope—the assurance that the risen Christ transforms all things in love.

The first blue candle is lit.

All sing: We Light This Candle (Then Let Us Sing)

**We light this candle for hope
Await the new life within
May our hearts now live each day,
So hope can find a way, so hope can find a way**

Flickering and fragile, this tiny flame opens us to wonder, to the heart of God, which transforms us as we join together in prayer:

We come to be sustained in life, O God, even as we wrestle. Inspire us to perceive the Way of Jesus as the path of wholeness. Unite us to become a community of faith woven as one by the Spirit. Teach us how to live by loving-kindness, becoming catalysts for hope in the hearts of those we encounter. Amen.

HYMN #9 (VU)

People Look East

KIDS' TIME – LET'S BLESS

HYMN # 703 (VU)

In the Bulb There is a Flower

MINUTE FOR MISSION

"The army surrounded us," recalled 16-year-old Ramez. "We had nowhere to go. Either we move toward death, or we stay and risk dying. Either way, it's death."

For most children, childhood is a time to dream, go to school, play with friends, and imagine the future. But for children in Gaza, those simple dreams have been replaced by fear and survival.

Mission and Service partner Defense for Children International–Palestine (DCIP) shares that the situation in Gaza remains catastrophic. Families face famine, and the lack of access to clean water and medicine. Many have seen their homes bombed and are forced to live in tents or makeshift shelters. Parents spend hours in line each day for a small ration of bread or water, while children go hungry. Hospitals have run out of supplies, and schools have been reduced to rubble.

In interviews conducted by DCIP, children described their lives in stark, heartbreaking words. "We have no rights," said one child. Fourteen-year-old Jana shared what life is like now: "We live in a tent. Every few days we have to move again. We spend hours waiting for water or food. Even to use the bathroom, we wait in line for hours. There's no rest. We can't go on like this." These children have endured unimaginable hardship. Many have been displaced multiple times, separated from friends, and have lost their entire family. Hospitals have run out of medicine. Schools are destroyed. Safe water is rare. Hunger is constant.

And yet, through it all, DCIP continues its mission, documenting violations of

children's rights, amplifying the voices of those who have been silenced, and calling the international community to act. Their courage ensures that the world cannot look away.

Your gifts to Mission and Service help support organizations like DCIP, who stand beside children in Gaza with compassion and conviction. When you give, you help make sure their stories are heard, and that the call for justice and protection does not fade into silence.

This Giving Tuesday, we invite you to join in prayer and action for the children of Gaza. May every child one day live free from fear, with food on the table, a place to learn, and the chance to simply be a child again.

Because every child has the right to food, shelter, safety, and education.

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 and WORDS OF FREEDOM

Hear the good news!

God's hope dwells within each of us, keeping alive a vision of the life God gives,
the good life God intends.

Let us live as those who cherish this hope!

Thanks be to God!

HYMN #2 (VU)

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 2: 1 – 5 (NRSV) The Future House of God

The word that Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

In days to come
the mountain of the Lord's house
shall be established as the highest of the mountains
and shall be raised above the hills;
all the nations shall stream to it.
Many peoples shall come and say,
"Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,
to the house of the God of Jacob,
that he may teach us his ways

and that we may walk in his paths.”
For out of Zion shall go forth instruction
and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.
He shall judge between the nations
and shall arbitrate for many peoples;
they shall beat their swords into plowshares
and their spears into pruning hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword against nation;
neither shall they learn war any more.
O house of Jacob,
come,
let us walk in the light of the Lord!

Psalm 122 (NRSV)

I was glad when they said to me,
“Let us go to the house of the LORD!”
Our feet are standing within your gates, O Jerusalem.
Jerusalem—built as a city that is bound firmly together.
To it the tribes go up, tribes of the LORD, as was decreed for Israel,
to give thanks to the name of the LORD.
**For there the thrones for judgment were set up,
the thrones of the house of David.**
Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: “May they prosper who love you.
Peace be within your walls and security within your towers.”
For the sake of my relatives and friends
I will say, “Peace be within you.”
**For the sake of the house of the LORD our God,
I will seek your good.**

Romans 13:11–14 The Message

But make sure that you don’t get so absorbed and exhausted in taking care of all your day-by-day obligations that you lose track of the time and doze off, oblivious to God. The night is about over; dawn is about to break. Be up and awake to what God is doing! God is putting the finishing touches on the salvation work he began when we first believed. We can’t afford to waste a minute, must not squander these precious daylight hours in frivolity and indulgence, in sleeping around and dissipation, in bickering and grabbing everything in sight.
Get out of bed and get dressed! Don’t loiter and linger, waiting until the very last minute. Dress yourselves in Christ and be up and about!

MESSAGE An Explosion of Hope

HYMN #625 (VU) I Feel the Winds of God (verses 1, 2 and 3 of 626)

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 #424 (VU) May the God of Hope Go With Us

COMMISSIONING AND BENEDICTION

May we go forth in hope, hope deeper than fear, hope stronger than despair.

We watch for signs of hope.

May we be signs of hope for each other.

And may we carry in our hearts the blessing of God who created a world rich in hope! A God who brought new hope into a cold, dark time and who keeps hope alive in our hearts, now and always!

SUNG BLESSING MV #221 I am Walking a Path of Hope

I am walking a path of hope
I am walking a path of hope
I am walking a path of hope
Lead me home...
Lead me home.