



# NEWCASTLE UNITED CHURCH

December 10, 2023

10:30 am

Second Sunday of Advent

~Peace~

Welcome!

*“As followers of Christ, we are called to be a worshipping and learning, receiving and giving community of faith, hope and love.” –*

**Newcastle United Church Mission Statement**

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*As we gather as a faith community, we acknowledge that we are on sacred land rich in the legacy, culture, and spirituality of the Indigenous people. It is home to many First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people. We acknowledge that we live and work on land that is under the Williams Treaty, which has been the traditional territory of the Anishinaabeg, Huron-Wendat and Haudenosaunee Nations, as well as many other Indigenous nations. These lands today are under the care of the Mississauga's of the New Credit First Nations people.*

*We acknowledge this land, out of respect for the many Indigenous nations who have cared for the lands and waterways from the beginning of time and continue to do so. Today we are grateful for the opportunity to live, work, and to worship on their traditional lands.*

*We are committed to learn and understand the truth of our shared history, confronting our past and present so that we can strive to build a future together upon true reconciliation, living out what the original ancestors of Turtle Island envisioned: sharing the resources of the land and waterways, and to live in harmony with one another as one people.*

## ***Approaching God With Praise***

**Welcome**

**Announcements**

**\* Indicates for congregation to stand as you are able.**

**Prelude (A centering time)**

***Lighting The Second Candle of Advent -Peace  
(Please remain seated)***

L: Today we are lighting the second candle of Advent- Peace. As Christians, we light the Advent wreath to remind us that we are waiting for Christ's light to be born into the world. The wreath is in the shape of a circle to remind us, that God's love for us never ends.

Today we are lighting the candle of peace. We remember that Jesus brings the promise of peace: peace in our hearts, peace between family and friends, peace between nations, peace between human beings and all of creation.

Let us quiet our hearts and minds. Close our eyes, or focus on the candle....

Notice your breathing...be aware of your breath as it enters and leaves your body....

As you breathe in, say to yourself, "Jesus."

As you breathe out, say to yourself, “Send your peace.”

*(A few moments of silence for reflection – The sound of a chime will end the silence)*

L: Together we say,

**A: Jesus, help your light to shine in us as peace.**

( <https://united-church.ca/worship-liturgical-season/first-sunday-advent> modified by Rev. B Ransom)

***The second Candle of Advent is lit – Peace***

**Hymn: (*unannounced*) “A Candle Is Burning ”**  
**VU 6 vv. 1&2**

**Opening Prayer (In Unison)**

**Creator over the centuries you send your messengers to share the Good News of the one who is to come. Through these various voices you have called us to prepare the way and to be ready for his coming. There have been moments where we have lost the energy to do this. At time we have lost hope, and have become anxious about what is to become of creation and humanity. Send your Spirit of courage and strength to call us back believing that the One who will come bring healing and restoration. Let your Living Spirit**

lift our frazzled spirits to be faithful to your prophet's call to "prepare the way for the One who comes in your, Holy Name. The One who will lead us through the wilderness of our living to new beginnings. Amen.

**\*Hymn: "There Is A Voice In The Wilderness"**  
**VU 18**

***Listening For The Spirit Of God Through The Word***

**Scripture Readings:**

**New Testament: Mark 1:1-8**

***Response***

L: For the Word of God in scripture, for the Word of God among us, for the Word of God within us,

**A: We give praise for the presence of God through the Word.**

**\*Hymn: "Once In Royal David's City"**  
**VU 62 vv.1-3**

**Conversation Time**

**Hymn: "Once In Royal David's City"**  
**VU 62 v. 4**

**Reflection: Humility**

**Ministry of Music: "Hands United in Peace"**  
Words & Music by Irv Rothenberg; Arranged by Jay Althouse

***Our Response To The Living Spirit Of God***

**Invitation to The Offering**

**\*The Offertory Response "In The Bleak  
Midwinter" v. 4** **VU 55**

**What can I give him, poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;  
if I were a wise man, I would do my part;  
yet what I can I give him - give my heart.**

***Dedication Of The Offering***

**Prayer of the People**

**\*Closing Hymn: "It Came Upon A Midnight  
Clear"** **VU 44**

***\*Commissioning & Benediction***

**\*Sung Blessing - "Go Now in Peace"**  
*(Copyright 1988 by Harold Flammer Music, a Division of  
Shawnee Press, Inc.)*

**Words can be found on the screens or in  
front of Hymn book.**

## **History of The Advent Wreath**

During Advent, we are reminded of the many Christian symbols that span centuries and are steeped in meaning and ritual. The tradition of the Advent wreath is no exception. Wreaths with candles were used by Christians in the Middle ages but the first actual Advent Wreath was created in the 1830s by a Protestant pastor, Johann Hinrich Wichern, who ministered to the orphans and poor in cities.

When Johann noticed that the children in his mission school, Rauhes Haus, often asked if Christmas had arrived during the month of December. His advent wreath, made from the wheel of a cart, answered their question. It had 20 red candles and 4 white ones, with a new red candle lit each weekday and a white candle lit on Sundays. The wreath became a visual reminder of when Christmas would arrive.

Protestant and Catholic churches began to adopt this practice of lighting candles to mark the approach of Christmas. As time passed, the materials changed and the wreath evolved: it is now made from fir branches with four candles and the Christ Candle with which we are familiar.

The meaning of the wreath has changed over the years as well. The circle with no beginning and no end has come to symbolize God's infinite love and resurrection. The fir branches symbolize life and remind us of the

hope of spring when nature will come to life once again.

The candles on our wreath are a symbol of the light of Jesus. The wreath shines brighter as we near Christmas, reminding us that Jesus, the Light of the World, was born on Christmas.

If your custom is to light the Advent wreath, I invite you to incorporate the Advent Liturgy that is used Sunday morning in worship as a reminder of what each Candle represents.

<https://www.mr-beam.org/en-es/blogs/news/quien-invento-la-corona-de-adviento>

<https://www.nightofsilence.com/blog/2018/11/28/advent-wreath>

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