



NEWCASTLE UNITED CHURCH
December 7th, 2025, 10:30 am

“Seeking Peace”

The Second Sunday of Advent

“Newcastle United Church's ministry is to live out God's love through strengthening our faith, by encouraging kindness and hospitality, and learning to live out the presence of Christ in our lives.”

Gathering With God And One Another

**Indicates for congregation to stand in body or in spirit.*

Welcome

Land Acknowledgement

As we gather in worship this morning, we acknowledge that we do so within the traditional and treaty territory of the Mississaugas and Chippewas of the Anishinaabeg, known today as the Williams Treaties First nations.

We offer our respect and gratitude to those who have cared for and continue to care the land, and we commit ourselves to building a future based upon true reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.

Announcements

Moment of Preparation: “The First Noel”

17th Century English Carol arranged by Phillip Keveren

(Silence is kept.)

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Sung Response: VU 7 “Hope Is a Star” v. 2

**Peace is a ribbon that circles the earth,
giving a promise of safety and worth.**

When God is a child there’s joy in our song.

**The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong,
And none shall be afraid.**

Call To Worship:

One: A voice cries out in the wilderness: prepare the way of the Lord!

All: God calls us to get ready for the coming of the Messiah!

One: Prepare the way of the Lord!

All: Let every heart prepare Christ room!

One: Prepare the way of the Lord!

All: The earth will be changed; we will be changed!

One: Prepare the way of the Lord!

**All: God invites us to proclaim the good news:
Love the guest is on the way!**

***Hymn: VU 2 "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"**

**1 Come, thou long-expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free:
from our fears and sins release us,
let us find our rest in thee.**

**2 Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art,
dear desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart.**

**3 Born thy people to deliver;
born a child and yet a king;
born to reign in us for ever;
now thy gracious kingdom bring.**

**4 By thine own eternal Spirit
rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all-sufficient merit
raise us to thy glorious throne.**

Opening Prayer:

All: Dear God, in this most busy season of happenings and plans, we can get easily overwhelmed. In this season of obligations and intentions, we forget how simple it all once was. Slow us down, Holy One. Bless our Advent waiting. Fill our worship with peace and spirit-led intentions. Dedicate us to prepare your way by making straight the crooked pathways of our lives, and by making smooth the rough places in which others find themselves. For we pray in the name of the Christ child. Amen.

A Time for Healing and Renewal

The Lord's Prayer

Assurance of God's Healing Love:

One: The good news comes to us today, slowly and steadily.

All: Our frantic lives will find peace in the advent of our Saviour.

One: How will we know him when he comes?

All: His healing power and loving heart will give him away.

Conversation Time

Announcements

Sunday December 7th, 2025

Welcome! We enjoy open seating, so please, sit where you feel comfortable, and meet a new friend.

Today's Greeters are Wendy Bracken and Noah Hosein.

Today's Reader is Marie Narini.

Bible Study is Wednesday at 10 am.
The Sanctuary will be open for Quiet Reflection
Wednesday, from 11 am to 1 pm.



Coffee Time

Please join us in the hall after the service for fellowship. This week's treats brought to you by Property.

White Gift Sunday

Our food bank has identified a family who needs our help this Christmas. Faith in Motion will be posting gift ideas on a board in the hall. To participate, simply take one of the gift ideas off the board, purchase your item, and bring it to service on Sunday, December 14th. No need to wrap it in white, any bag or box will do. Please speak to Robin Blesse if you have questions.

Dates at a Glance.....

December 24 th , 7 pm	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
January 13 th , 2026	Official Board Meeting

Moderator's Advent Message

In her Advent Message, the Right Rev. Kimberley Heath, Moderator of The United Church of Canada, offers a reflection that makes space for all our feelings—the joy, the grief, the hope, and the weariness. <https://united-church.ca/news/moderators-advent-message-2025>

Mission and Service Bows

Our annual Mission and Service Bow campaign has begun. Donations to the M and S Fund will be designated by coloured bows which will be placed on our Christmas tree each week until Christmas. Bows may be purchased in denominations as follows: \$25-49, red; \$50-\$75, green; \$75-\$100, silver; and \$100+ is gold. However, any amount is most welcome! “**Gifts with Vision**” catalogues are in the Narthex. These gifts are an additional way to support the work of The United Church of Canada’s Mission and Service Partners. See Lynne or place donation in offering plate. <https://united-church.ca/donate>

By Phone- Local: 416-231-5931 ext. 2738
Toll-free: 1-800-268-3781 ext. 2738

Flowers For Advent

If you are interested in having flowers placed in the sanctuary for Advent Season, please see Lynne in the office. She can take names of individuals the flowers

are for and payment, and coordinate with Wendy to have the flowers ordered. Flowers can be ‘in memory of’ or in ‘honour of’.

Quiet Reflection in the Sanctuary this Advent

In addition to Bible Study on Wednesdays from 10:00 am to 11:00 am, the sanctuary will be heated and open for silent reflection during the first three Wednesdays in December (December 3rd, 10th and 17th) from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm. If you wish, a guided art meditation on the characters of the nativity will be available to use during this time.

Collective 2026: (em)brace for Impact:

The Presbyterian Church in Canada (PCC) and The United Church of Canada (UCC) are excited to announce **Collective 2026**, a joint national event for youth, young adults, and their leaders!

Building on the shared vision established during their groundbreaking 2024 "Audacious Hope" partnership, The Collective continues the rich traditions of PCC's Canada Youth and UCC's Rendez-Vous events.

This spirit-filled gathering is designed to inspire faith growth, foster deep community, and equip leaders for the future. The event is packed with worship, interactive workshops, discipleship groups, recreation, and time for shared reflection.

<https://www.collective-gathering.ca/>

Cheese Orders

Cheese orders will go out this week and be back for next week. Make sure you have enough for your holiday entertaining! Forms in Narthex or Emily St vestibule. Due back on the December 14th.

Advent: Preparing for the birth of Jesus

The custom of lighting candles on a decorated wreath comes to us from the Lutheran Church in Scandinavia. Like the Christmas tree, the Advent wreath has its origins in pre-Christian festivals of light which celebrated the winter solstice. In recent years it has been used in churches and homes as a reminder of our time of preparation for the coming of Christ, into our hearts and into our world. The wreath is a circle, symbolizing the eternity of God. God has no beginning or end. The evergreen boughs are a symbol of eternal life and a reminder of the steady, unchanging love of God. The four candles represent the four weeks of Advent. The white candle in the center is the Christ candle.

The appropriate candles can be lit during the main meal in your family's day. Choose a meal once a week where the following words might be read by an adult or older child.

To be read some time during the week of December 7th

One: The first Advent candle reminds us that we wait in hope. *(Light first purple candle.)* We remember our longing for God to be with us.

Two: Today, we light a second candle. *(Light second purple candle.)* This candle reminds us of our dreams for peace in the world.

One: This candle reminds us that Jesus, the Prince of Peace, is coming.

***Hymn: VU 44 "It Came upon the Midnight Clear"**

- 1 It came upon the midnight clear,
that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth
to touch their harps of gold,
'Peace on the earth, good will to all,
from heaven's all-gracious King!'
The world in solemn stillness lay
to hear the angels sing.**

- 2 Still through the cloven skies they come
with peaceful wings unfurled;
and still their heavenly music floats
o'er all the weary world;
above its sad and lowly plains
they bend on hovering wing,
and ever o'er its Babel sounds
the blessed angels sing.**

- 3 Yet with the woes of sin and strife
the world has suffered long;
beneath the angel strain have rolled
two thousand years of wrong;
and warring humankind hears not
the love song which they bring.
O hush the noise, and cease your strife,
to hear the angels sing.**

- 4 For, lo! the days are hastening on,
by prophets seen of old,
when with the ever-circling years
shall come the time foretold,
when peace shall over all the earth
its ancient splendours fling,**

and the whole world send back the song
which now the angels sing.

Listening for God's Word

Hebrew Scripture Reading: Isaiah 40:3-5

Gospel Reading: Matthew 3:1-12

Response:

One: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

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

Ministry of Music: "Peace Like a River"

American Spiritual arranged by Donald Moore

Message: "A Slow Christmas"

*Hymn: VU 18 "There's a Voice in the Wilderness"

- 1 **There's a voice in the wilderness crying,
a call from the ways untrod:
prepare in the desert a highway,
a highway for our God!
The valleys shall be exalted,
the lofty hills brought low;
make straight all the crooked places
where God, our God, may go!**
- 2 **O Zion, that bringest good tidings,
get thee up to the heights and sing!
Proclaim to a desolate people
the coming of their King.
Like the flowers of the field they perish,
like grass our works decay;
the power and pomp of nations
shall pass, like a dream, away.**

- 3 But the word of our God endureth,
whose arm is ever strong;
God stands in the midst of nations,
and soon will right the wrong.
God shall feed the flock like a shepherd,
the lambs so gently hold;
to pastures of peace will lead them,
and bring them safe to fold.**
- 4 There's a voice in the wilderness crying,
a call from the ways untrod:
prepare in the desert a highway,
a highway for our God!
The valleys shall be exalted,
the lofty hills brought low;
make straight all the crooked places
where God, our God, may go!**

Responding To God's Word

Minute for Mission: 40 Days of Engagement on
Anti-Racism

Invitation to The Offering

***Offertory Hymn: VU 55 "In the Bleak Midwinter" v.4
What can I give him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;
if I were a wise one, I would do my part;
yet what I can I give him – give my heart.**

Offertory Prayer

Prayers of the People

Going Into The World

***Hymn: VU 29 “Hark the Glad Sound”**

- 1 Hark, the glad sound! The Saviour comes,
the Saviour promised long:
let every heart prepare a throne,
and every voice a song.**
- 2 He comes, the prisoners to release
in Satan's bondage held;
the gates of brass before him burst,
the iron fetters yield.**
- 3 He comes, the broken heart to bind,
the bleeding soul to cure,
and with the treasures of his grace
to bless the humble poor.**
- 4 Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace,
your welcome shall proclaim;
and heaven's eternal arches ring
with your beloved name.**

***Commissioning & Benediction**

***Sung Blessing - “Go Now In Peace”**

You can find the words on the inside cover of Voices United or on the screens

Postlude: “Deck the Halls”

Welsh Carol arranged by Catherine Rollin