



December 1st, 2024 9:30 a.m.

Advent 1

Together Toward the Light

Prelude

Annie Schulz

Gathering Thoughts

Jan Steven

Call to Worship

Leader: Advent is a time for God's people to reawaken our longings. The Christ candle flame in front of us today calls us to be true to the hopes in our hearts.

People: We wait in hope for the Lord.

Leader: We long for hurts to be healed.

People: In hope, we wait for the Lord.

Leader: We long for tears to be dried.

People: Before the Lord, we wait in hope.

Leader: We long for injustice to be made right.

People: It is right to hope these things before the Lord.

Leader: We celebrate God's promises and long for those yet to unfold.

All: We hold all the hopes of our hearts before the Lord.

Prayer

O God of Hope, you promised light for the world, and sent Jesus to shine in the darkness for all to see, to know, to follow, to serve, and to love, so that we might both hold onto, and also freely share everywhere, the hope that is alive for us now and forever in Christ, Amen.

Lighting the Candle of Hope ~ Moment of Silent Reflection

Hymn *O come, O come, Immanuel* HWB #172, vv.1,3,6

Passing of the Peace

Offertory Prayer

Musical Reflection *Lo How a Rose*

Prayers of the People

Jan Steven

Hymn *Come, thou long-expected Jesus*

HWB #178

Scripture Reading Jeremiah 33:14-16 (OT p.738)

Women's Chorus *We Come*
Scripture Reading Luke 21:25-36 (NT p.85)
Meditation "Waiting on God, in Hope" Laur Steven
Hymn of Response *In the quiet consecration* HWB #461, vv.1,2,3
Service of Communion Darrell Winger
Benediction
Sending Hymn *Oh, how shall I receive thee* HWB #182, v.1
Postlude

It is good to be together in worship this morning!
The ushers are pleased to help any who need assistance.
[Offering plate is available on table at back of sanctuary]

Adult Bible Study after the service ~ Today we begin a study
entitled *Thoughts on the Gospel According to Luke.*

GRACE NOTES & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sunday November 24th ~ Attendance – 53

Budget offerings for November was \$16,495.00

Second Advent Sunday December 8th

Speaker: Darrell Winger

Scripture Texts: **Malachi 3:1-4; Luke 1:68-79;**
Philippians 1:3-11; Luke 3:1-6

♪ **Women's Chorus** ~ Thursdays at 9:30 a.m.
December 5th, 12th, 19th

Coffee Times ~ December 8th, December 22nd

Christmas Eve Service, December 24th at 4:00 p.m.

Coffee, Cider and Cookies in the Church Hall after the service

Jan and Laur are away for the month of December but you are
welcome to contact them at 289-990-4839 or janscats@gmail.com
/ laursteven53@gmail.com



This Advent Season: *Together Toward the Light*

Advent marks the beginning of the liturgical year. It begins on December 1 and continues until December 24. Advent means “arrival”, and during this season we look forward for the arrival of Emmanuel, God-with-us, in the birth of Jesus, as well as looking forward with hopeful anticipation toward Christ’s second coming. Advent reminds us of why Christ came and is a season for spiritual reflection and preparation as we anticipate the Christmas season.

Our Advent theme is ***Together Toward the Light***. Advent is a season of hope. We are reminded of the promise of God through Isaiah, “The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.” This promise was fulfilled in Jesus! “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life.” (John 8:12) Even now, as we walk through darkness, we glimpse the promised light of Jesus Christ. Thankfully, we have companions as we journey through darkness toward the light. In this Advent season, let’s consider how we lean into the light of Christ, allowing him to shine in us and through us to others who are also hoping to glimpse light in the world. May this Advent be a time when we move together toward the light.



MCC – Give Gifts of Comfort & Joy!

Check out our Christmas Tree in the Foyer for Gift Ideas.

You can give online at <https://mcc.org/christmas> or you can give at our church through cash, cheque, or e-transfer. Be sure to note that the donation is for MCC – Give Gifts of Comfort & Joy! You may have received the magazine MCC “Gifts of Comfort and Joy” in the mail. If not, there are copies available under the tree. Blessings!



ACROSS THE STREET AND AROUND THE WORLD



*Please pray for the **MCEC community of congregations.**

This week we pray for **North Leamington United Mennonite Church.** Chris Hutton provides pastoral leadership to this congregation. Please pray for this church community found in Leamington.

Linwell Church (St. Catharines UM Church) invites applications for our part-time custodian position. Starting date will be December or January. Please apply to scumc.church@gmail.com.

From Canadian Mennonite: With the Canada Post strike, your December print issue will be delayed. Sign up for digital delivery to get it by email on November 29. CM sends an email each Friday and attaches a PDF copy of the magazine once per month. Contact Lorna at office@canadianmennonite.org.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven.

Hallowed be thy Name. Thy Kingdom come.

Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those that trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory.

For ever and ever. Amen.

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677 Niagara Street, St. Catharines

Office Hours: 8:30-2:30 ~ Wednesday, Thursday

www.gracemennonitechurch.com

www.facebook.com/gracemennonitechurchstcatharines

Pastor	Darrell Winger 905-483-2335	Darrell.winger@gmail.com
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Office Administrator	Ester Funk	gracemennonite@bellnet.ca
Community Chaplain	Jan Steven 289-990-4839	janscats@gmail.com

Communion Service Litany

Leader: The people walking in darkness have seen a great light;

People: on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.

Leader: Amid the darkness that still presses in around us,

People: We see your light, Oh Christ.

Leader: We move together toward your light,

People: and together, we come to your table.

Leader: As we come, we hear again, your promise:

All: Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life.

We Confess Our Faith and Need of God's Forgiveness

Leader: Let us confess our faith together.

All: We are not alone,
we live in God's world.

We believe in God:

who has created and is creating,
who has come in Jesus,
the Word made flesh,
to reconcile and make new,
who works in us and others
by the Spirit.

We trust in God.

We are called to be the Church:

to celebrate God's presence,
to live with respect in Creation,
to love and serve others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,
our judge and our hope.

In life, in death, in life beyond death,
God is with us.

We are not alone.

Thanks be to God.

Leader: Trusting in God's grace, let us confess our need of God's forgiveness.

All: Have mercy on me, O God,
According to your steadfast love.
For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is ever before me.
Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and put a new and right spirit within me.

Leader: Anyone who is in Christ is a new creation,
The old life has gone; a new life has begun.
In the name of Jesus,
we are forgiven, loved, and free.

Pastoral Prayer

We thank you for Jesus Christ, the true light
that enlightens the whole world,
who offers the bread of compassion,
and the wine of renewal.
As he broke bread before the brokenness of his death,
as he poured out wine before his blood was poured out on the cross,
as he gave his life in acts of goodness,
as he invited all to the feast of new hope,
so come to us, God of Jesus, in your love.
Come to us, Spirit of our Lord of love,
so that the bread we break and the cup we share
might be a communion of the body and blood of Christ.
Nourish us with his vision of hope,
and unite us in one body of peace.
Nurture us with your brokenness,
renew us with your poured out life,
empower us with your powerlessness,
that we may take root in your risen life
and bear fruit in your world.

Words of Institution

For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me."

The Bread

Distribution of the Bread (Please hold the piece of bread until all are served and we are able to partake together.)

Prayer for the Bread.

Leader: The body of Christ, broken for you.
(We eat the bread together.)

The Cup

In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Distribution of the Cup (Please take a cup as the trays are passed. We will wait until all are served and we can partake together.)

Prayer for the Cup.

Leader: The blood of Christ shed for you.
(We drink the cup together. Please place the empty cup in the holder in front of you.)

Prayer After Communion

Leader: In hope and peace let us pray:

All: God of Advent promise,
As we go from this table.

May the eating and drinking renew our sense of hope,
even as we wait for the day when the world will be changed.

May this fresh experience of your grace,
awaken us to see your coming light,
and strengthen us, as together we pursue your peace,
reconciliation,

and justice in the darkness of our world.

Amen.

Seasons Chorale Christmas Concert - Sunday December 1 at 3pm. Plan on attending this free concert... and bring friends! This will be a time of music and fellowship. Light refreshments with coffee / cookies after the concert in the gym. If the elevator is needed, please use the front doors. Location: Linwell Church (aka St. Cath UM Church) 335 Linwell Road, St. Catharines.

Sat Dec 7 at 2:30pm Heidelberg-Rheingold Singers Christmas Concert at Linwell Church (aka St. Catharines UM Church) in the sanctuary. Coffee and cookies in the gym after the concert. All are welcome... bring your friends! If elevator is needed, please use the front doors. Location: 335 Linwell Road, St. Catharines.

Senior's Event (Silver Foxes) - On Dec. 18 we will head to Betty's Restaurant for a choice of four delicious dinners (turkey, fish and chips, roast beef and chicken parmesan). Please meet at Bethany Mennonite Church between 4:00 and 4:15 p.m. The bus will leave at 4:30 p.m. After dinner, we will enjoy a Lights Tour and plan to be back at Bethany Mennonite Church by 9:00 p.m. Price of \$65 includes dinner, taxes, gratuity, the Coach, the Lights Tour, some carol singing and some laughter! Please pay Bud and Ella Andres, Paul and Jo Thiessen or Ted and Sylvia Wiens by **Dec. 8th** to hold your reservation.

