

**Immanuel United Church**  
**Advent 4**  
**December 17, 2023**  
“A Weary World Rejoices”

**PRELUDE**

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE LAND AND TREATIES**

Today, we acknowledge the land that we are gathered on is Treaty 1 territory..... the traditional lands of the Anishinaabeg, Cree, Oji-Cree, and Dakota Peoples, as well as the homeland and the heart of the Red River Metis People, who for thousands of years, walked gently on this land with deeply rooted gifts of spirituality, culture and ways of knowing.

We respect the Treaties that were made on these territories, acknowledge the harms and mistakes of the past, and give thanks for the connection we share with this land – in times past and also in the present day.

Today we are called to seek a new relationship as Indigenous and nonindigenous people, creating one based on friendship, built on respect, and one that produces peace, remembering that we are all treaty people.

*As we enter this time of worship,*

*The rainbow candle is lit*

*To symbolize and remind us*

*Of the commitment that we have made To be an inclusive and affirming community and that all God’s people belong here.*

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE**

(written by: rev. sarah speed | sanctifiedart.org )

How does a weary world practice love?

**By sending cards, and picking up the phone.**

**By practising empathy, and assuming the**

**best in others. By learning people's stories and finding common ground.**

**By advocating for justice, and saving a place at the table.**

There are a million ways to practice love. So today we light the candle of love as a reminder and a charge.

**With God's help, may we bring love into a weary world. Amen.**

**Hymn : Light Dawns on a Weary World**

#### **MOMENT TO PONDER:**

Most years, thousands of Christians would be travelling to the Holy Land to celebrate Christmas in Bethlehem. This year there are no decorations, no celebrations, Christmas in Bethlehem is cancelled. The minister of the Lutheran Church in Bethlehem said, "If Jesus was born today, he would be born in Gaza under the rubble."

Bethlehem is under siege, part of the Gazan war.

If Christmas cannot come to Bethlehem this year, perhaps it is up to us to hold Christmas a little more deliberately; gently, quietly, hopefully; On behalf of all those who can't hold Christmas this year. We could hold Christmas on behalf of those in our own community who are estranged, those who are in prison, those who are grieving. But we can also hold Christmas on behalf of Palestinian Christians, and say a prayer for the families of Israeli dead and those who are hostages, for Muslim children. Christmas can be a time of celebration, it can also be a time of compassion, determination, love, even when there is little Peace.

**HYMN:** VU# 64 O Little Town of Bethlehem

#### **PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

**SCRIPTURE:**

Luke 1:26-38

Luke 1: 46b-55

**CHOIR ANTHEM: Come, Emmanuel**

**REFLECTION:**

**HYMN:** MV#120 My Soul Cries Out

**OFFERING INVITATION AND PRAYER**

The gift of this season is a gift of Holy Presence.

May we offer, May we share, may we be a gift of Holy presence

Hymn: VU# 55 In the Bleak Midwinter (Vs. 4)

**Let us Pray:**

**Jesus, we offer our gifts to make real your coming reign upon the earth. We offer also ourselves. Fit us for your service, empower us by your Spirit, to be a blessing to our neighbours and the world.**

**AMEN**

**COMMUNITY PRAYERS**

**LORD'S PRAYER**

Our Father in heaven,  
Hallowed be your name.  
Your kingdom come,  
Your will be done  
On earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins, as we forgive  
Those who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial,  
And deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
And the glory are yours,  
Now and forever. Amen.

**HYMN:** MV# 134 There Was a Child In Galilee

**BLESSING:**

**CHORAL AMEN**

A-a-men, A-a-men, Hallelujah A-a-men!

**POSTLUDE**