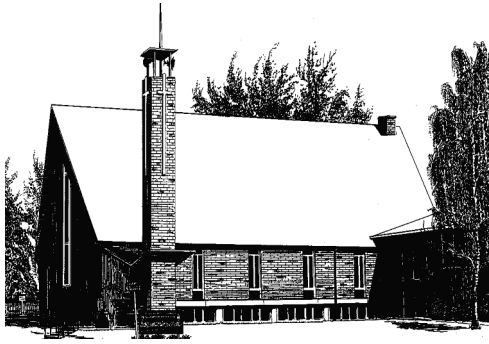


Westminster United Church



Ministers: All the people
Clergy: Rev. James Farrell
Director of Music: Chris White
Jr Choir: Anna Marie Hancock
Secretary: Kim Sherring
Treasurer: Murray Bell
Custodian: Lynne Ziefflie
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Website: www.westminsteruc.com

*“We are a faith community building relationships
with God, all people, and our world.”*

December 4, 2011

Advent II

Advent is a very busy time. The unprecedented rate of change in technology, politics, and financial expectations can dim our view of God’s working in creation. Our challenge becomes one of identifying and taking comfort in ways in which God is working in the world and in us.

If you would like to stay seated for any or all of the “standing” parts of the service, please feel free to do so.

Need a refuge? Our Nursery is located off Memorial Hall, has a speaker system through which to hear the service, and exists for all who may need this space. Memorial Hall approach is via the pulpit side exit.

Friendship Rosters: Please sign the Friendship Roster this morning. It is a helpful record of your worship presence and a way to share special concerns.

Prelude / Sharing Announcements / A Time of Greeting

A Time of Silent Preparation—Lighting the Christ Candle

Call to Worship *(Responsive)*

One: On Jordan’s bank stands the prophet John.

All: John hears the Word spoken loud and clear.

One: The prophet listens carefully to the Word and acts.

All: John’s clear message brings people together to face realities.

One: The prophet recognises the supreme worth of Jesus.

All: And we, the followers of Jesus, engage worship and prayer and service, in his name.

Opening Prayer *(Unison)*

We give thanks for the Advent promise of peace, revealed in the coming of Jesus. We give thanks for the opportunity to receive joy and to share love in this faith community. We give thanks for the ways in which we can share hope in this nation and in the neighbourhood. We rejoice that, in Jesus, we have the hope of peace which encompasses heaven and earth, time and eternity. Amen.

Advent II Candle Lighting: *The Candle of Peace* ***(The Candle of Hope is lit.)***

One: Long before candles were used as decorations, they served a very practical purpose of providing much needed light. A candle burning would point one in the right direction, guiding one safely home, or keeping a ship from being lost at sea. Candles and the light they provide point the way forward.

Two: Candles also have great symbolic meaning. From anticipation to thankfulness to peace, candles are often used to relay and symbolize these basic human emotions.

One: John the Baptist came to prepare the way for the arrival of the Messiah. He came as a light to point the way forward in this new time that God was preparing.

Two: Those who were self-satisfied and did not want to hear God’s voice tried to drown out the message that John was bringing. But for those who were ready to start over and embrace a new time, John’s message brought not only hope, but also peace.

One: We light this second candle as a sign of peace, the peace that comes in the midst of chaos when we allow the Holy to speak to us in new ways.

Hymn #7 “*Hope Is a Star*” (vv. 1 & 2) *(Please remain seated.)*

Conversation Time

The Sunday School leaves for their classes.

Prayer for Transformation *(Unison)*

Unpredictable, irrepressible, dancing, laughing Spirit, when we are tempted to be cautious and hesitate, may we be drawn forward into the surprising and joyful future that awaits us. When we are tempted to be shackled to comfort and conformity, may we be able to leave such things behind and be called into the surprise of each new day. May our vision be cleared to see things we have paid no attention to in the past. May we have a new spring in our step, and be lead into new situations. Let us be drawn into tomorrow with laughter... *(time for silent reflection)*

Words of Assurance *(One)*

May we journey, renewed, across a reshaped land prepared by love. Amen.

Biblical Notes / Prayer of Illumination

Isaiah 40:1-11 from the Hebrew Scriptures Pg. 700

Other lessons for your personal consideration from today's lections are:
Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13; 2 Peter 3:8-15a.

Anthem "Christmas Lullaby" with special guest, Julia McClung

Mark 1:1-8 from the Christian Scriptures Pg. 45 (NRSV)

Reflection

Hymn #9 "People, Look East"

Mission Moment Betty Sidlick

Our Church Tithes and Offerings / Offertory

Dedication Hymn #55 "In the Bleak Midwinter" (v. 4)

Prayer of Dedication (One)

Without our gifts shared, talents, used, and time made available, the work of Jesus cannot be done. May these gifts be blessed and used with wisdom. Amen.

Prayer of Thanksgiving, Intercession & Lord's Prayer

Hymn #20 "On Jordan's Bank"

Commissioning (One)

Let us go building, living in, and enjoying a community full of welcome and equality.

Choral Amen

Hymn #964 "Go Now in Peace" (x2)

Postlude

Welcome to Westminster this morning.

Please gather for coffee in Memorial Hall, following worship.

www.westminsteruc.com/calendar

This Week at Westminster (December 4th – 10th)

Sun.	Music & Worship Meeting	9:00 a.m.	Lounge
	Local Food Needs	10:00 a.m.	Narthex
	Worship: Advent IIô Peace	10:25 a.m.	Sanctuary
	Jr. Choir Practice	11:45 a.m.	Lounge
	Blue Christmas Service	2:00 p.m.	Sanctuary
Mon.	Property	7:00 p.m.	Westminster Room
Tue.	Prayer Shawl	1:30 p.m.	Lounge
Wed.	Bible Study	9:30 a.m.	Nursery
Thu.	UCW Annual Meeting	11:30 a.m.	Sanctuary

	Senior Choir Practice	7:00 p.m.	Sanctuary
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Next Week at Westminster (December 11th – 17th)

Sun.	Worship: Advent IIIô Pageant	10:25 a.m.	Sanctuary
	Jr. Choir Sings	10:25 a.m.	Sanctuary
Tue.	Prayer Shawl	1:30 p.m.	Lounge
Wed.	Bible Study	9:30 a.m.	Nursery
Thu.	Senior Choir Practice	7:00 p.m.	Sanctuary
Fri.	Neighbourhood Christmas Carolling	6:45 p.m.	Meet in Memorial Hall

www.westminsteruc.com/bulletins

WUC Christmas Outreach projects for this Advent Season are: Birthday Bags for the **Food Bank**; cash donations for the **Elm Street School** snack program; and cash donations for purchasing **Medical Supplies for underprivileged countries**. Please place your items under the Christmas tree. **Deadline for all Outreach projects—Sunday, December 18th.**

The **2012 Canadian Church Calendars**, featuring stained glass windows, are available in the office for \$5 each.

Thanks to the helping nature of our congregation, Donna Scharf has filled Westminster's days with the **Salvation Army Christmas Kettles**. People still wanting to help at different times or places should call *The Salvation Army* at 403-527-2474.

UCW Annual Homemade Cookie Sale—after Worship today!

Westminster's Blue Christmas Service will be held today at 2:00 p.m. You may be approaching this season of hope without the company of loved family members or friends who have recently passed away. The anguish of broken relationships, the insecurity of unemployment, the weariness of ill health, the pain of isolation ó all can make us feel very alone in the midst of the celebrating and shopping. We need the space and time to acknowledge our sadness and concern. Our hope is that this service will provide an opportunity for such reflection.

Write for Rights! Amnesty International Letter Writing Campaign-- December 5-7 (12 noon-4p.m.) at Unisphere (WUC basement).

UCW Annual Meeting will be held on **Thursday, December 8th** beginning with Worship at 11:30 in the Sanctuary with a potluck luncheon to follow in Memorial Hall. **All women of the Congregation are cordially invited.**

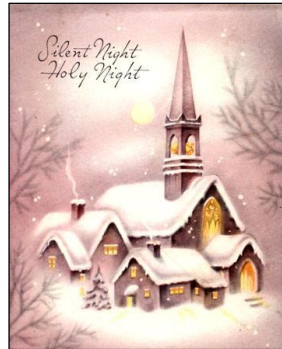
Attention all Families (including those of you with grandchildren): The Child/Youth/Family Group will be hosting our **2nd Annual Swim & Pizza Party on December 10th at the Family Leisure Centre**. We will meet in the pool at 3:00 p.m. and then reconvene in the Board Room at 4:30 for pizza and sweets. The children's swim fees will be paid for from our fund and adults will receive 20% off their fee when they mention they are with our Westminster group.

The Medicine Hat Concert Band Society, under the direction of Bill Wahl, presents **"A Gala Christmas"** with a full complement of players to perform on **Wednesday, December 7th at 8:00 p.m. at the Esplanade**. Tickets (Adults \$12, Children & Students \$6) are available at the Esplanade Box Office during business

hours.

“A Tuba Christmas” will be presented **Sunday, December 11th at 2:00 p.m. at Fifth Avenue Memorial United Church.** “A Tuba Christmas” is the tuba and euphonium/baritone sections (That’s a lot of brass!) from the adult bands combining to present Christmas Carols in a very new and interesting way. Admission is a non-perishable food item for the Medicine Hat Food Bank.

***Christmas Eve
Candlelight Service
at 7:00 p.m.***



Celebrations This Week

Birthdays: Marg Taylor, Anne Lonson, Janice Archer and Esther Klautd.

Anniversaries: Lawrence & Jean Pfeifer and Earl & Joyce Carlson.

South Alberta Presbytery: *Our prayers this week are requested for soup kitchens and food banks.*

Our Order of Ministry This Morning

Sunday School Co-ordinator	Jackie Carlson
Greeters & Ushers	Don Lonson, Pat Marshall, Barb Grozell, Gordon Bruins
Coffee Hosts	Mike & Joan Jantzie, Sharon Clay, Maureen Oster
Scripture Reader	Mina Carlson
Elder-in-Charge	Maureen Oster

Next Week’s Readings: *Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; Psalm 126 or Luke 1:47-55; John 1:6-8, 19-28; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24.*

Stewardship Thought for Today

Stewards help to create a new heaven and a new earth by living as though they are already here.

by Kathie Murphy (General Council Office)
