

**Visions United Spirit Gathering
December 2, 2022
From Generation to Generation
Advent 2: "God Meets Us in Our Fear" (Peace)**

** Stand as able*

Our Community Gathers

Gathering Music/Prelude

Welcome

*God's Doors Are Open to All!
Open Doors · Open Minds · Open Hands · Open Hearts*
Visions United seeks to be a safe place for people of all
races, creeds, ages, cultural backgrounds,
sexual orientations and gender identities to worship.

Acknowledgement of Land

One: We remember with gratitude
that we live and worship on lands that are, by law,
the unceded territories of the Mi'kmaq.

**All: May we live with respect on this land,
and in peace and friendship with its people**

Sharing of WOW moments

Threshold Moment God meets us in our fear *adapted by Shawn Redden from a Sanctified Art*

Theme Song (*seated*) From Generation to Generation *Words: Debi Burns*
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From generation to generation,
we have shared the Christmas story
of a baby in a manger,
who was born in Bethlehem.
Hope is winging, Peace now ringing,
Joy we're singing, Love he's brining

God will meet you in your fear.
And bring peace both far and near.

Lighting of the Advent Candle – Peace

Sharing the Peace

The Peace of Christ be with you!
And also with you!

***Song** (*stand*) VU#7 Hope is a Star (*v2, refrain*) Words: Brian Wren, Music: Joan Collier Fogg
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We Listen for Wisdom

Theme Conversation for All Ages Christmas Traditions from Generation to Generation

*What are some of your Christmas traditions
that have been passed down from 'generation to generation'?
Maybe a cherished ornament, a holiday recipe,
a family Christmas photo, a nativity/creche, some other tradition?
This Advent, we are invited to participate in a 'show and tell' of sorts,
and each week a few people can share a tradition with us.*

(Children's program begins)

Prayer for Healing and Confession Words: Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.

Patient God,
you know just how often
we make decisions from a place of fear rather than love.
You know just how often
we allow fear to take the place of logic,
fanning unhealthy fires in our lives.
You know just how often
we tuck your words, "Do not be afraid"
on dusty shelves and in the back of closets,
stubbornly holding onto our own point of view.
Forgive us for giving fear the microphone.
Silence the voices of scarcity, shame, and rejection,
which spark and feed so much of our fear.
Recenter us in love.
With hope we pray, amen.

Promise of Grace

Wisdom Reading Luke 1:26-38

Special Music Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

Words/Music: 15th cent. German.
Trans: Theodore Baker, 1894 ©Public Domain

Poem Love Comes Running *by Sarah (Are) Speed* ©2022, A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.

Reflection God Meets Us in Our Fear

***Song** (*stand*) Here I Am

Words: Anna Strickland ©2021
Commissioned by A Sanctified Art, LLC. Free for congregational use.
Music: Traditional French Carol (17th cent.) Public Domain

Angel Ga-briel came to Ma-ry
In the hills of Ga-li-lee
Ap-pre-hen-sion and con-fu-sion
Filled her, won-d'ring what's to be
"Do not be a-fraid,"
The angel told the maid
"God has high-ly fa-vored thee."

Though his words were filled with glo-ry
 Still the mes-sage brough great fear
 “Who am I to bear the sav-ior
 With the path-way so un-clear?”
 “Here I am,” she pledged;
 the an-gel Gab-riel fled
 Quick-ly as he had ap-peared.

Week by week in Ma-ry’s bel-ly
 God was grow-ing flesh and bone
 As her life and path were chang-ing
 Ne-ver was she left a-lone
 With her all the while
 Was Ma-ry’s ho-ly child
 Pledge of “Here I am” of God’s own.

Whe-ther we may feel we’re rea-dy
 For the task be-fore us laid
 God will streng-then and up-hold us
 Ev-en when the fear won’t fade.
 We say, “Here I am,”
 To God’s tran-scen-dent plan
 Trust-ing God to lend us- aid.

We Respond with Prayer and Gratitude

Affirming the Story in Faith

Words: Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.

We believe in a God who knows our fears.
 We believe in a God who says, “Be not afraid.”
 We believe in a God who kicks off her shoes
 and wades into the muck of our lives with us.
 We believe in a God who stitches herself to our heels,
 and invites us to dance.
 We believe in a God who hemmed stars into the night sky
 so that we can find our way home,
 and who sends us friends with open doors,
 so we can find our way to love.
 We believe in a God who finds us in our fear
 and does not leave us alone.
 Thanks be to God for a love like that. Amen.

Our Community at Prayer

Sung Response: MV#90 Don’t Be Afraid

Words: John L. Bell and Graham Maule, 1995

Music: John L. Bell, 1995

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Invitation to Generosity & Blessing of Our Gifts *(Gifts brought forward during singing)*

Song: O What a Wonderful Gift *(refrain, v3, refrain)*

Words/Music: Linnea Good
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Refrain:

Oh — what a wonderful gift!
Oh — what a wonderful gift!
God gives lives of hope and --love.
Oh what a wonderful gift!

Verse:

For all that we receive,
For all the love we hold,
We answer with our thanks to God,
And share them with the world.

Refrain plus tag:

Oh, what a wonderful, Oh, what a wonderful, Oh what a wonderful gift!

The Work of the Congregation - Announcements

We Go Forth to Be a Blessing

***Song** VU#5 All Earth is Waiting

Words/Music: Alberto Taule, trans.
Gertrude C. Suppe © 1989
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Blessing

Words: Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.

Postlude Music for the Journey

Thank You for Joining Us!
May Each of Us Carry the Spirit into the world with us.