

**Visions United Spirit Gathering
December 17th, 2023 – Advent 4 (Love)
How Does a Weary World Rejoice?
Café Worship – We sing stories of hope**

* Stand as able

Our Community Gathers

Gathering Music/Prelude

Harp: Emilie Murphy; Piano: Martha Shaw

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

Gathering Invitation

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

One: How does a weary world rejoice?

#1: We sing songs of hope.

#2: We invite hope to change us.

#3: We allow hope to strengthen us.

#4: We tell the stories of what could be.

#5: We listen for God's word.

#6: We resist the temptation to give up or give in.

#7: We remember Mary's song.

#8: We bless goodness with Zechariah.

One: How does a weary world rejoice?

Left: We hope.

Right: We hope.

All: Against all odds, we hope.

Theme Video Sing It True

Lighting of the Advent Candle – Love

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

One: How does a weary world practice love?

All: By sending cards and picking up the phone.

One: By practicing empathy, and assuming the best in others.
By learning people's stories and finding common ground.

All: By advocating for justice and saving a place at the table.

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

All: May we bring Love into a weary world. Amen.

***Advent Song** (*standing*) An Advent Dream

Words: Peter Lightfoot. Music: Zhang Shuai
(Snowflakes, Snowflakes 2022 Beijing Winter Olympic Games)

Hope is a dream: - - it comes from above.
Peace is a dream: - - it flies with the Dove.
Joy is a dream that we all - - need more of.
Hope, peace, and joy come alive with our love.

Chorus:

Angels, angels singing in the night,
Waking to - coming to - bringing in the light:
Angels, angels – here the babe you see:
Gloria, gloria – here for you and me.

We Listen for Wisdom

Café Conversation What is your favorite Christmas Carol? Why?

Theme We Sing Songs of Hope

O Holy Night Instrumental – Harp, Emilie Murphy

The Magnificat - Song of Mary

Luke 1:47-55 (*VU#898 – Refrain 1*)

Words/Music ©1978 Michael Joncas.

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Sung Response: To God I lift my soul in praise;
In God my saviour I rejoice

Reflection

Benedictus - Song of Zechariah

Luke 1:68-79 (*VU#900*)

Words: Michael Perry ©1973

Music: Hal H. Hopson ©1983.

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Sung Response: God shall fulfil the promise
and bring the people peace

Reflection

Reflection Questions

Where is the hope of liberation and freedom needed today?
What blessing needs spoken into your world today?

Special Music Gentle Mary, Tender Mary

Words/Music: Jay Althouse ©2004

Blackout Poetry We Pray with Stories of Hope

Read aloud the song at your table

Take a few minutes in silence.

Use your pen to circle the words that speak to you.

Blackout (crossout) the rest of the words on the page.

From the words that remain, what new message or poem or image emerges?

We Gather Around the Table Singing Songs of Hope

Invitation to the Table & Sharing of the Peace

Carol (*standing*) VU#68 All Poor Ones and Humble (*v.1*) Words: Katherine Roberts 1927.
 Music: Public Domain, All rights reserved. Reprinted under OneLicense.net 720804

Prayer of Thanksgiving & Story of Jesus

Carol (*seated*) VU#71 'Twas in the Moon of Wintertime (*v1, 2, 4*) Music: Jesse Middleton, 1926.
 Music: French Folksong. Arr. H. Cabena ©1971.
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Prayers of Community

VU#75 While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks (*v6*) Words: Nahum Tate, 1700
 Music: Este's Whole Book of Psalms.
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“All Glory be to God on high
 And to the earth be peace;
 Good will to all from highest heaven
 begin, and never cease.”

Blessing of the Bread & Wine and Our Gifts

VU#74 What Child is This (*v3*) Words: William Dix 1865.
 Music: English Melody, attrib. John Stainer 1871.
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So, bring him incense, gold, and myrrh;
 come, one and all, to own him.
 The King of Kings salvation brings;
 let loving hearts enthrone him.

Refrain: This, this is Christ the King,
 whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
 haste, haste to bring him laud,
 the Babe, the Son of Mary!

Breaking of the Bread & Pouring of the Wine

Sharing of the Bread & Cup at Table

Harp: Emilie Murphy

Prayer After Communion

Every Star Shall Sing a Carol (*v1&2*) Words/Music: Sydney Carter ©1961
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The Work of the Congregation – Announcements

We Go Forth to Be a Blessing

***Song** (*standing*) VU#59 Joy to the World (*vs 1&2*) Words: Isaac Watts ©1719.
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Blessing & Changing of the Lights

Postlude Music for the Journey

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