

**Welcome to Worship at Kamloops United Church
A Centre for Community and Spiritual Discovery
The First Sunday of Advent – November 29, 2015**

(To make a financial offering, please place it in the Offering Stand as you enter. Thank you for your generosity in supporting the ministries of Kamloops United Church.)

Opening Music and Words of Welcome

(While we gather this morning, please write on the back of your decoration 'a HOPE you have in your life or in the world.' Soon you will be invited to place your decoration upon the 'Advent Tree of Hope' as we journey toward Christmas.

A member of the Global Group will tell us how our Advent Tree gifts support three ways of spreading God's love in our world, country and city.)

The Lighting of the Christ Candle and bringing forward the Prayer Box followed by
Decorating the Advent Tree of Hope with support from the Global Group

Singing During the Tree Decorating:

More Voices # 221 'I Am Walking a Path of Hope' *(repeated)*

Voices United # 10 'Prepare the Way of the Lord' *(repeated)*

We Gather in this Sacred Space and Light the Candle of Hope

One: As we begin the Advent season, we are aware that much of the world is already preparing to celebrate Christmas.

Two: Some people are buying gifts, making plans, and decorating their homes.

One: In the church, we have the Season of Advent to help prepare our hearts to celebrate, once again, that Jesus comes to be among us.

Two: In our waiting, we trust in hope that God's promises – made long ago – will come true in our world.

One: And so we light the first Advent candle, the candle of Hope as a reminder of the journey to Christmas that we are taking together.

Two: (Light candle)

An Opening Prayer:

**O God of Hope,
in our busy world so full of many things
you call us to be patient and present.
You invite us to trust,
not in the things of this world,
but in your everlasting Word.
Open us to your Word,
your Spirit of Christ incarnate within us all.
Strengthen us to hear your Word,
and to faithfully respond
with hope in our daily living.
We ask for this embodied grace. Amen.**

A Time for Learning

Singing: Voices United # 9 'People Look East'

(After singing, those children who wish to go with their parents and Alix to the Dogwood room on the lower level for Godly Play are welcome to do so.)

Scripture:

Jeremiah 33:14-16

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will fulfil the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: 'The LORD is our righteousness.'

1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy that we feel before our God because of you? Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you face to face and restore whatever is lacking in your faith.

Now may our God and our Lord Jesus direct our way to you. And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we abound in love for you. And may the Lord so strengthen your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless before our God at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all the saints.

*Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church. **Thanks be to God.***

A Reflection: '*Living in Hope*' – Rev. D. Bruce Comrie

A Covenanting Time with the Discovery Circle:

Envisioning and Implementing the Centre for Community and Spiritual Discovery

Introduction: *(Margaret)*

At this time we, as a congregation are going to have a covenanting time with the Discovery Circle. This fall, two existing groups in our church, 'Emerging Church' and 'Faith Formation' came together to form a new group with a new name, now called the Discovery Circle.

Council Circle asked the Discovery Circle to give leadership to envisioning and implementing the Centre for Community and Spiritual Discovery. Council Circle was very pleased that the Discovery Circle said Yes to this challenge and that they are beginning to establish the Centre for Community and Spiritual Discovery. Today, as a

congregation we will covenant with the Discovery Circle to offer mutual support and accountability as they carry out their ministry of establishing the Centre.

At this time, I would like to call forward Mary Ann and Dawne the two co-chairs of Discovery Circle to tell us more about their mission and ministry with the Centre for Community and Spiritual Discovery.

Mary-Ann and Dawne:

Covenanting Time:

(Bruce to the Discovery Circle members)

Friends, we celebrate with joy and gratitude your willingness to serve as members of the Discovery Circle. We trust that you have been called to carry out this congregation's ministry of envisioning and implementing the Centre for Community and Spiritual Discovery. We give thanks for your ministry among us, with us, and on our behalf. We thank you and challenge you to offer your best to God, and to all God's people. As you continue with this ministry let us make a covenant before God and with one another.

I ask you...

As a child of God and as a member of the Discovery Circle of Kamloops United Church will you continue to live out your faith with praise and thanksgiving?

Will you carry out your ministry in this congregation with integrity and joy?

If so, would you say, **'I will, God being my guide.'**

(Bruce, to the Congregation)

I ask you... as children of God and as members and friends of Kamloops United Church, will you honour the leadership of these members of the Discovery Circle? Will you assist them through prayer, support and personal example, so that together we can carry out our ministry in this congregation with integrity and joy?

If so, would you say, **'I will, God being my guide.'**

Prayer: *(Bruce)*

Loving God, you call us to service.

Send your Holy Spirit upon the members of the Discovery Circle and upon us all that we may keep the promises we have made today.

Help us to offer your ministries through us.

May our leadership reflect your love and grace always. Amen.

Declaration and Commissioning: *(Bruce)*

And now, in the name of the Creator, Christ, and Spirit,

I say to the members of the Discovery Circle,

we recognize and affirm your ministry.

Go forth to serve.

Go forth in peace.

The Folk of Note Anthem

Our Prayers followed by the Lord's Prayer (*sung from Voices United # 959*)

O God of Hope, help us trust your loving, just and compassionate nature and purpose for the world. May your hope flow into our lives that we may receive it and pass it along to others....

O Creator, as the Paris Climate Change talks begin we pray for our leaders that they may come together for the sake of the earth and sea and sky and all of your creation. Help us to be wise stewards for generations to come...

O Compassionate Christ, we pray for nations and peoples in the midst of chaos and crisis. We pray especially for refugees and all those displaced by violence and war. Help us to do what we can to bring your hope, peace and justice to places of death and despair....

O Sustaining Spirit, we pray for those celebrating the joys, the beauty, the mystery and the goodness of life...

We pray too for those going through difficult times...times of illness... We pray for those suffering loss and grief... We pray for those who are finding this time of year especially difficult... We pray for those named through our Prayer Box and for all those we name before you either aloud or in the silence of our hearts....

O Source of Our Hope, we trust that you are amongst us – hear our prayers we pray in the name of Jesus Christ who taught us to pray as we sing together the Lord's Prayer....

Our Offering/Doxology: Voices United # 6 'A Candle Is Burning' – verse 1
Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication

The Passing of the Peace:

May the Peace of Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

The Sacrament of Communion

God be with you!

And also with you!

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to God!

Let us give thanks to God.

It is right to offer thanks and praise.

Let us pray:

Gracious God, on this first Sunday of Advent we come before you with Hope. As we anticipate the birth of your Christ child once again in our hearts and world, gather us in gratitude as we sing '**Prepare the way of the Lord...**'

*(Prepare the way of the Lord! Prepare the way of the Lord!
Make a straight path for him, make a straight path;
prepare the way of the Lord!)*

Creator God, you made humankind in your image, with such a wide and wonderful diversity. We give thanks that all of us are beautiful in your sight and that you call us your beloved children. Gather us in gratitude as we sing '**Prepare the way of the Lord...**'

We thank you for sending Jesus Christ to live among us. In his time on earth, Jesus reached out in love to all persons, poor and rich, children, women and men, the sick, the grieving and those who were marginalized. Jesus taught us to do the same.

And Jesus gave us this meal to remember him: taking bread and giving thanks he broke it and said, 'This is my body that is broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'

In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.' Gather us in gratitude as we sing, '**Prepare the way of the Lord...**'

The breaking of the bread: 'Jesus Christ, the bread of life.'

The pouring of the juice: 'Jesus Christ, the cup of blessing.'

We pray that we might know the presence of your Holy Spirit at this table today. Bless each person that we may grow in unity and in your love, to bring your reconciling peace to the world. With these prayers gather us in gratitude as we sing, '**Prepare the way of the Lord...**'

My friends, these are the gifts of God for the people of God. Thanks be to God.

Come, for all is now prepared!

Jesus Christ, the Bread of Life.

Jesus Christ, the Cup of Blessing.

Prayer after Communion

Eternal God, we thank you that you have called your people from around the world, to feast at the table of Jesus Christ. Keep us faithful to your will. Go with us to the streets, to our homes, and to our places of labour and leisure- that whether we are gathered or scattered, we serve with peace in the name of the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ. Amen

Announcements and Celebrations of the KUC Community

Commissioning and Benediction

Go forth from here trusting in the Hope of God.

Let's go forth to live out God's hope in our daily lives.

Let us walk a path of Hope. Let's sing.

Sung Closing: More Voices # 221 'I Am Walking a Path of HOPE' (*repeated*)

(Parts of today's service were adapted from Seasons Fusion, ACE 2015-2016. Used with permission.)