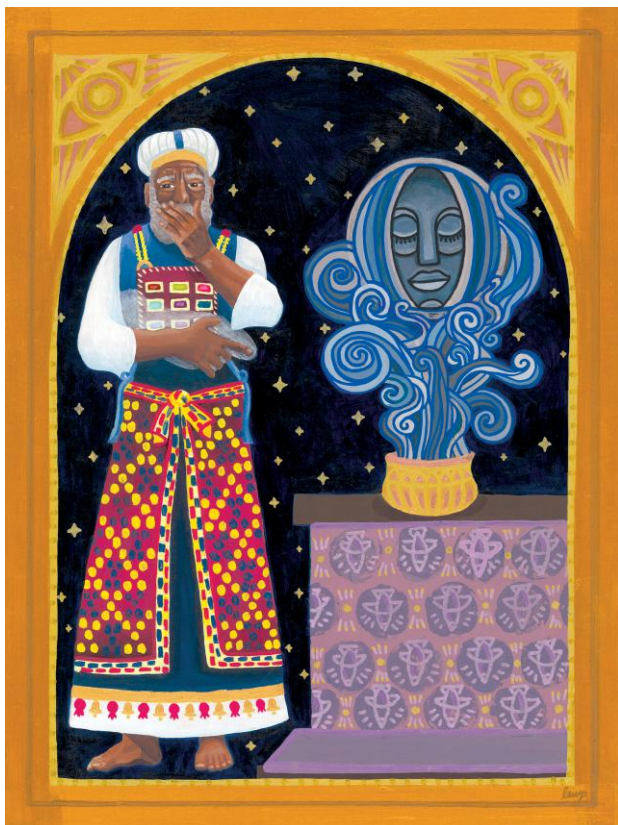


St. James United Church

How Does a Weary World Rejoice?

We acknowledge our weariness...

Advent 1



November 26, 2023 @ 10:00 AM

181 Portland Street
Dartmouth
B2Y 1J5
902-464-8852



(▲ Rise in body or in spirit/Responses in bold)

WE GATHER AS GOD'S PEOPLE

Welcome & Acknowledging the Territory

Call to Worship (Responsive)

In God's house, we can be joyful.

We can be grateful. We can be hopeful.

In God's house, we can be weary.

We can be anxious. We can be grieving.

In God's house, we can be honest—

inspired or tired,

delighted or doubtful,

connected or curious,

and everything in between.

This is God's house.

You are welcome exactly as you are.

Let us worship our loving God.

Lighting the Advent Candles

How does a weary world hope?

By telling stories of hope,

by lighting candles in the night,

and planting seeds in the winter that

will bloom in the spring.

By praying for children as they grow, and

picking up trash on the sidewalk.

By insisting that small acts can make a difference.

There are a million ways to practice hope.

So today we light the candle of hope as a

reminder and a charge.

With God's help, may we bring hope

into a weary world. Amen.

Candle Lighting Song – Tune – Silent Night

Candle light, sacred light.

Mystery flames, burning bright

We are waiting for Jesus' new birth.

Shine his hope over all of the earth.

Thanks for the gift of hope,

thanks for the gift of hope.

▲ Hymn – Come and Find the Quiet Centre # 374

Prayer of Confession (Responsive)

Gracious God, we are weary.

For weary bodies that ache and cry out, we pray:

Forgive us for pushing ourselves too hard.

Reminds us that we deserve Sabbath rest.

For weary minds that feel overwhelmed

and saturated with news, we pray:

Forgive us for creating so many distractions.

Remind us that in the quiet, we can hear you.

For weary hearts that long to feel the joy of this season, we pray:

Forgive us for being impatient with ourselves.

Remind us that healing takes time,

and that joy and grief can coexist.

For the weary edges of our faith that struggle to hold onto hope,

Forgive us.

Remind us of Zechariah and Elizabeth.

Remind us that your good news knows no bounds.

Amen.

Ministry of Music – Hope, Peace, Joy and Love

LISTENING FOR GOD’S WORD FOR US TODAY

A Time of Wondering

An Ancient Word – Luke 1:1-23

Reflection

Reflective Music

RESPONDING TO GOD’S WORD

▲ Hymn – O Come, O Come, Emmanuel – Please See Insert

▲ Affirmation of Faith (Together)

**We believe in a God who hears our prayers,
who knows the shape and form of our weariness.**

**We believe in a God who wants joy and delight for us,
not just survival and existence.**

**We believe in a God who looks ahead,
who is not done dreaming for the world—**

**a God who sends hope
in the form of people and change,
movements and Spirit.
And so we return to this space.
We bring our joy and our weariness
like two sides of the same coin,
and we trust that God is already at work.
Yes, we believe in a God who hears our prayers.
Thanks be to God for a love like that.
Amen.**

Minute for Mission

Sharing Our Gifts

Prayers of the People & The Lord's Prayer

THRESHOLD INTO GOD'S WORLD

The Life and Ministry of the Faith Community – Please See Insert

▲ Hymn – Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness # 375

▲ Commissioning & Blessing

▲ Song of Dismissal – We're Seeking Your Presence
Tune: Away in a Manger

**We're seeking your presence.
Help us find it today.
We wonder and ponder.
In so many ways.**

**Hope stirs deep within us.
We actively pray.
As we await Jesus
Please show us the way.**

Music Takes Us into the World

*Opening and Closing Hymns – Catherine MacDonald
O Come, O Come, Emmanuel – Juanita L. Austin*