



Be *patient* and stand  
firm, because the  
*Lord's* coming is near.

■ JAMES 5:7-8

**December 14, 2025**

**St. John's United Church of Christ**

*As believers in Jesus Christ, we strive with unconditional love and selflessness – using our God given gifts – to provide a nurturing shelter for those seeking a Christian home. We offer opportunities for spiritual growth through worship, education, fellowship, prayer and Christian action throughout our community and the world.*

**Called by God  
Sharing with the World**



Saints before the altar bending,  
Watching long in hope and fear,  
Suddenly the Lord, descending,  
In his temple shall appear:  
Come and worship, come and worship,  
Worship Christ, the newborn King.

## Lifting up our Joys

## Passing of the Peace

✠ **Call to Worship** (Congregation reads **bold** print)

Be patient! Wait and Watch for the Lord is drawing near to us.

**We have gathered here this day to hear the good news and to gather strength for the times to come.**

Be at peace with one another.

**Let love and wisdom prevail.**

Open your hearts and souls to God's healing word.

**Lord, touch our hearts. Teach us to patiently listen for your words of love.**

## ✠ Opening Prayer

Pastor Jeff

## ✠ Prayer of Confession

**Patient Lord, forgive our lack of faith in your loving power. We look around us and all that we see is what we don't have. We fail to notice the daily blessings you lavish upon us. Clear our blindness to the needs of others. Strengthen us and move us from our excuses for not serving you. Help us to truly listen to one another, not with our pat answers ready, but with loving and generous hearts. Heal us and make us ready to truly be your disciples. In Jesus' Name, we pray.**

*Silent pause for reflection*

**Amen.**

## ✠ Assurance of Forgiveness

Behold and believe in the wondrous power and love of God! It is poured out for you and for God's beloved world. Rejoice in this good news, for it is given especially to you. **Amen.**

## Lighting of the Advent Candle

The Pacovsky Family

Let us pray together the Advent Prayer.

**God of all hope, at the beginning of creation you made the light that scatters all darkness. May Christ, the true light, shine on us and free us from the power of sin and death. Fill us with joy as we welcome Jesus Christ for he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen**

## Bible Readings

*Psalms 146:5-10; James 5:7-10*

Stephen Goodale

### **Psalms 146:5-10**

<sup>5</sup> Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord their God, <sup>6</sup> who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them; who keeps faith forever; <sup>7</sup> who executes justice for the oppressed; who gives food to the hungry.

The Lord sets the prisoners free; <sup>8</sup> the Lord opens the eyes of the blind.

The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down; the Lord loves the righteous.

<sup>9</sup> The Lord watches over the strangers; he upholds the orphan and the widow, but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin.

<sup>10</sup> The Lord will reign forever, your God, O Zion, for all generations. Praise the Lord!

### **James 5:7-10**

<sup>7</sup> Be patient, therefore, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains.

<sup>8</sup> You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts,  
for the coming of the Lord is near.

<sup>9</sup> Brothers and sisters, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be  
judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors!

<sup>10</sup> As an example of suffering and patience, brothers and sisters, take the prophets  
who spoke in the name of the Lord.

## **Choir Anthem**

*Shine the Light of your Love*

By Mark Patterson

## **Pastor's Message**

*"Patience"*

Pastor Jeff

## **✠An Advent Creed**

**We believe in one God, who is Creator, maker of all we see and all we don't see. Who is Ruler of the universe: Source of all creation!**

**We believe in one God, who is Jesus Christ, God from God, Light from Light, true God and true human. He is one with the Creator; the Word made flesh, our Messiah: Savior of all creation!**

**We believe in one God, who is Holy Spirit, breath of God moving among us; who is one with the Creator; one with the Christ; our Comforter and our Guide: Mentor of all creation!**

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## **Giving our Gifts to God**

### **Offertory**

*Ready the Way* by Curtis Stephan

### **✠Doxology**

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow.**

**Praise God all creatures here below.**

**Praise God above ye heavenly hosts.**

**Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

## **Prayers of the People**

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✠ *All who are able shall stand*

## **The Lord's Prayer**

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.**

**Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we**

**forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us**

**from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen**

## **✠Closing Hymn #176**

*Lift Up Your Heads, O Mighty Gates*

Lift up your heads, O mighty gates:

Behold, the King of glory waits!

The King of kings is drawing near,

The Savior of the world is here.

Fling wide the portals of your heart:

Make it a temple set apart

From earthly use for heaven's employ,

Adorned with prayer and love and joy.

Redeemer, come! I open wide

My heart to you: here, Lord abide!

Let me your inner presence feel:

Your grace and love in me reveal.

So come, my Sovereign, enter in!

Let new and nobler life begin!

Your Holy Spirit guide us on,

Until the glorious crown be won.

## **✠Sending Forth and Final Blessing**

## **✠Chimes/Meditation**

## **Postlude**

*The King of Glory Comes*



*The Altar flowers are given to the Glory of God,  
In memory of Squire Skelding, Jim & Kathryn  
Heinbaugh, Judy Kenney, Doris Austin, Raymond  
& Clara Losch, Mary, Mark, and Ronnie Keller,  
Jean, Dink & Marlene Schneck, and Grace  
Herring. Presented by Barb & Scott Skelding.*

