

**STONY PLAIN UNITED CHURCH  
DECEMBER 14, 2025  
THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

**Stony Plain United Church & Mewassin United Church**  
**Mailing Address: Box 3196, Stony Plain, AB T7Z 1C2**  
**Phone: 780 963-4745      Email: [stonyuc@telus.net](mailto:stonyuc@telus.net)**  
**Reverend Deborah M. Hoekstra      Cell: 780 983-2148**  
**WELCOME to our service this morning!**

*Thank-you to our Presiders this morning.  
We thank Rev. Deborah for preparing today's service.  
She is in person at Devon United this morning.*

**MUSICAL PRELUDE**

**WELCOME**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

**WE GATHER TOGETHER BEFORE GOD**  
*on traditional territory of Treaty Six Peoples and of the Métis Nation*

**CALL TO WORSHIP (Responsive)**

Our souls proclaim your greatness, O God.

**And our spirits rejoice in you.**

We will praise you as long as we live.

**We will sing praises to you our whole lives long.**

We will not trust in the powerful of this world,

**But will trust in you—Creator of heaven and earth,**

the One who gives food to the hungry,

**the One who enacts justice for the oppressed.**

Our souls proclaim your greatness, O God

**As we worship you in this place,**

**As we light these candles in hope, peace, and joy.**

Written by Joanna Harader, and posted on Spacious Faith. <http://spaciousfaith.com/> Used with permission.

**ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING LITURGY**

**CHOIR: "Light of Light"**

Words: Joel Raney; Music: Coventry Carol setting & additional Music by Joel Raney

*(Music Continues)*

**RESPONSIVE LITANY (Responsive)**

Advent is a time to celebrate the joy of living.

**Lord of light, we thank You for the gift of life.**

Advent is a time to celebrate the joy of relationships.

**Lord of light, we thank You for our friends and family.**

Advent is a time to celebrate the earth we all share.

**Lord of light, we thank You for providing for our needs.**

Advent is a time to celebrate eternal life.

**Lord of light, we thank You for sending a Saviour.**

## **CANDLE LIGHTING**

### **CHORAL RESPONSE: Choir & Congregation "Light of Light"**

Voices cry out from a world in grief: Prayers of those who seek relief.

End their darkness, hear their call for peace on earth, good will for all.

~ Words & setting by Joel Raney; © 2019 Hope Publishing Company. All rights reserved. Reprinted under One License #A-718663

### **OPENING PRAYER (Unison)**

**Holy God of Joy,**

**We rejoice in the reality of who you are.**

**We live within the joy of your love for us.**

**Our contentment comes and goes.**

**Our happiness ebbs and flows.**

**Our feelings depend upon our circumstances,**

**our physical health, our brain chemistry.**

**But our joy is deeply rooted**

**in our identity as your beloved children.**

**And we give you thanks. Amen.**

Written by Joanna Harader, and posted on Spacious Faith. <http://spaciousfaith.com/> Used with permission.

## **JOYS AND CONCERNS**

### **PRAYERS OF JOYS AND CONCERNS**

#### **THE LORD'S PRAYER (Unison)**

**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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

<b>LISTENING TO GOD'S WORD FOR OUR LIVES</b>
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### **GIFT OF MUSIC: Choir "Comfort and Peace" from the Cantata, "Glory to the Newborn King" -**

Words and Music by Lloyd Larson

## **THEME TIME**

### **HYMN: VU #7 "Hope is a Star"**

#### **Verse 1**

Hope is a star that shines in the night,  
leading us on till the morning is bright.

**REFRAIN:**

**When God is a child there's joy in our song.  
The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong,  
and none shall be afraid.**

**Verse 2:** Peace is a ribbon that circles the earth,  
giving a promise of safety and worth.

**REFRAIN**

**Verse 3:** Joy is a song that welcomes the dawn,  
telling the world that the Saviour is born.

**REFRAIN**

**Verse 4:** Love is a flame that burns in our heart,  
Jesus has come and will never depart.

**REFRAIN**

Words: Brian Wren 1985. Music: Joan Collier Fogg 1867. Words and music copyright © Hope Publishing Company. All rights reserved. Reprinted under One License #A-718663

**PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION**

Posted on <https://www.caldwellpresby.org/docs/resources/>. Used with permission.

**SCRIPTURE READINGS:**

**FROM THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES:**

**Isaiah 35:1-10**

**GOSPEL LESSON:**

**Matthew 11:2-11**

**REFLECTION:** “Unexpected Joy” by Rev. Deborah M. Hoekstra  
(Recorded)

**HYMN: VU# 2 “Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”**

**Verse 1**

Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set thy people free:  
from our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in thee.

**Verse 2:** Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art,  
dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.

**Verse 3:** Born thy people to deliver; born a child and yet a king;  
born to reign in us for ever; now thy gracious kingdom bring.

**Verse 4:** By thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone;  
by thine all-sufficient merit raise us to thy glorious throne.

Words: Charles Wesley 1744; Music Psalmodia Sacra 1715. Public Domain

## THAT WE MIGHT LIVE WITH INTENTION

### **PASTORAL PRAYER** by Henri Nouwen (*One voice*)

Written by Fr. Henri J. M. Nouwen. Posted on Patheos. <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/yimcatholic/2012/12/an-advent-prayer.html>

### **INVITATION TO GIVE**

Posted on [https://www.ucc.org/worship-way/stewardship\\_advent-offerings/](https://www.ucc.org/worship-way/stewardship_advent-offerings/) Used with permission.

### **OFFERTORY** *To the Tune of “Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow” (VU #541)*

O Glorious God, to you we bring  
Praise, treasures, lives as offering;  
Spirit of Peace, within us dwell;  
Come, Jesus, our Emmanuel.

~ Written by Paula Meador Testerman. Posted on <https://www.hillsidemedford.org/transforming-love/doxology>  
Used with permission.

### **DEDICATION OF GIFTS** (*Unison*)

**Joy-filled God, we offer not only financial gifts, but our commitment to serve in your name. We long to use our skills and abilities in ways that glorify you. We seek to share words that tell the Good News. We dedicate to you the fullness of who we are, as we present our offering. Praise be to you, Gracious God. Amen.**

Written by Laura J. Turnbull. *Gathering*, Advent/Christmas/Epiphany 2022/2023, page 31. Used with permission

## WE LEAVE TO SERVE GOD IN THE WORLD

### **CLOSING HYMN: VU #9** “People Look East”

#### **Verse 1**

People, look east, the time is near of the crowning of the year.  
Make your house fair as you are able, trim the hearth and set the table.  
People, look east and sing today: Love the guest is on the way.

#### **Verse 2:**

Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is planted there:  
give up your strength the seed to nourish,  
that in course the flower may flourish.  
People, look east and sing today: Love the rose is on the way.

#### **Verse 3:**

Birds, though you long have ceased to build,  
guard the nest that must be filled;  
even the hour when wings are frozen God for fledging time has chosen.  
People, look east and sing today: Love the bird is on the way.

**Verse 4:** Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim one more light the bowl shall brim,  
shining beyond the frosty weather, bright as sun and moon together.  
People, look east and sing today: Love the star is on the way.

**Verse 5:** Angels, announce with shouts of mirth Christ who brings new life to earth.  
Set every peak and valley humming with the word, the Lord is coming.  
People, look east and sing today: Love the Lord is on the way.

Words: Eleanor Farjeon 1928. Music: French folk melody, harm. Martin Shaw 1928. Words copyright © David Higham Associates. Harmony © Oxford University Press 1928. All rights reserved. Reprinted under One License A-718663

### **CLOSING PRAYER (*Unison*)**

God of light, we thank You for the many gifts you have given us, and we pray today that You will teach us to be truly joyful. Help us remember that You supply our needs and fill our lives with meaning. Fill our days with keen awareness of Your presence, and fill our hearts with praise as we celebrate this joyful Advent season. Amen.

### **BENEDICTION**

### **SUNG RESPONSE:**

**VU #507 "Today We All Are Called to Be Disciples" Verse 4**

May we in service to our God act out the living Word,  
and walk the road the saints have trod till all have seen and heard.

As stewards of the earth may we give thanks in one accord  
to God who calls us all to be disciples of the Lord.

~Words H. Kenn Carmichael 1985. Music: English traditional melody arr. Arthur Seymour Sullivan 1874. Words Copyright © 1989 H. Kenn Carmichael All rights reserved. Reprinted under One License #A-718663

### **MUSICAL POSTLUDE**

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***REMINDER: Advent Dinner and Cantata Sunday, Dec 14.***  
***Doors open at 4:30.***

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS DECEMBER 14, 2025**

### **NEW OR REVISED**

#### **CHRISTMAS SEASON SERVICES**

**Wed. Dec 24, 2025 Christmas Eve: Mewassin 4:30 pm Stony Plain 7:00 pm**

**Thurs. Dec 25, 2025 Christmas Day – no services at either Church**

**Sunday, Dec 28, 2025 No Service at Mewassin. Stony Plain regular service 10:30 am**

**DEC 25 FREE CHRISTMAS DAY COMMUNITY DINNER:** The annual free Christmas dinner for the community will be held again at Stony Plain United Church, but is organized and catered by Doreen Coenen. For information, please contact Doreen at 780 937-6053.

## **REMINDERS**

**(Please also check the “Meetings & Special Events”)**

**CARD RECREATORS TAKING A BREAK:** The Card Recreators will not meet again until Jan 8, 2026, but you can still buy cards!

**ADVENT DINNER AND CHOIR CANTATA SUNDAY, DEC 14:** Tickets are available at the Church Office for this year’s Christmas Cantata and Advent Supper on Sunday, Dec. 14. General admission: \$27.00; Children 6 to 11: \$13.00 and Children 5 & under: Free. Dinner starts at 5:00 pm (doors open at 4:30) and will include Ham, Scalloped Potatoes and all the trimmings. Carol Singing and Special Music starts at 6:30 followed by the Cantata, “Glory to the Newborn King!” by Lloyd Larson.at 7:00 pm. Plan to stay afterward for fellowship, coffee and dessert As always, we depend on volunteers to make the dinner a success –there are Sign Up sheets in the atrium.

**MEW: SUNDAY DEC 21:** Mewassin will have coffee after the service Sunday, Dec. 21.

**SUN DEC 21 STONY PLAIN SUNDAY SCHOOL:** During church at Stony Plain on Sunday Dec 21, Sunday School will be doing its Christmas Presentation. There will be coffee after the service, thanks to our Sunday School group!

**JANUARY 11, 2026:** Communion at both churches.

**PASSING ON YOUR CONCERNS:** If you know of anyone who would like a visit or needs a card, please contact the Care Committee, Rev. Deborah or call the Church Office (780 963-4745) or email [stonyuc@telus.net](mailto:stonyuc@telus.net).

## **WEEKLY ACTIVITIES**

Ukuleles & Choir:	Ukes 6:15, Cantata 7 pm; Choir 8 pm
Card Recreators:	<b><u>RESUME</u></b> JAN 8, 2026 Thursdays, 10 am

## **MEETINGS & SPECIAL EVENTS**

Sun Dec 14	Advent Dinner & Choir Cantata (at SPUC) - Doors open 4:30 pm
Sun Dec 21	MEW: Coffee Sunday
Sun Dec 21	SP: Sunday School Christmas Presentation during church – coffee to follow
Wed. Dec 24	Christmas Eve Services: MEW 4:30 pm SP 7:00 pm
Thurs Dec 25	No Services
Sun. Dec 28	No service at MEW. SP Service 10:30 am