



Mount Royal United Church

"At Mount Royal United Church, our mission is to serve God; living our faith inside and outside these walls and nurturing each individual on their faith journey."

Advent 1 – Hope Sunday

November 28th, 2021

Congregational responses in bold.

We Come Together

Prelude (*appreciate the gift of music and prepare our hearts for worship*)

Introit "Light of Light"

Greeting

Land Acknowledgement

Announcements

Lighting the Advent Candle of Hope:

One: Arise and be bold, good news of hope is here!

All: The warm glow of the Divine lightens our hearts.

One: Here we are together, not alone. We join with the cloud of witnesses here, there, elsewhere, and everywhere. On this first Sunday in Advent, we dream and imagine a different future, a rising-up and life-flourishing one. We are witness to hope.

We Listen (*Cathy*)

Hymn: "We Light this Candle"

Opening Prayer:

God of all light and life, lighten our hearts with an enlarged imagination to dream new possibilities: to imagine a world where transformation will happen, where creation is mended and restored, and where the broken and the breaking find healing and hope. As we enter this

Advent season, allow hope to make a home in our hearts as we wait for your coming Son. In His tender name, we pray. Amen.

Hymn: "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (vs 1, 3, 5 & 7)" **VU#1**

Sanctuary Evergreens (*Evergreens are placed*)

Have you ever wondered why we talk about the "hanging of the greens?" Or why an evergreen is called an evergreen? And why Christmas greens are traditionally used to emphasize the nativity? Green represents renewal, new life, freshness, and rebirth. Plants such as pine, fir, holly, ivy, and mistletoe are called evergreens because they do not die; through the seasons of the year, they remain ever-green. Ever-alive....

Hymn: "The Holly and the Ivy"

Christmas Poinsettia (*Placing of the Poinsettia*)

The legend of the poinsettia comes from Mexico. It tells of a girl named Maria and her little brother Pablo. They were very poor but always looked forward to the Christmas festival. Each year a large manger scene was set up in the village church, and the days before Christmas were filled with parades and parties. The two children loved Christmas but were always saddened because they had no money to buy presents. They especially wished that they could give something to the church for the Baby Jesus. But they had nothing...

Hymn: "Joy to the World" **VU#59**

The Nativity

Likely one of the best-known symbols of the Advent season, the nativity tells the story of Jesus' birth up and into the season of epiphany. (*Learning Time*)

Hymn: "Gentle Mary Laid Her Child" **VU#46**

The evergreen tree has been a symbol for Christmas and the center of holiday festivities for many years. The green colour of the tree symbolizes growth; it also represents everlasting life in the midst of winter....

Blessing of the Tree: (Unison)

Gracious God, as we enter this season of waiting, we slowly draw close to the manger to catch a glimpse of the Christ Child. As we light this tree may it be an ever-present reminder that your gifts of, hope, peace, joy, and love are our lights that lead us to your side. Bless this tree and each light it contains as we gaze and wonder and wait. Amen.

Hymn: "Angels We Have Heard on High" **VU#38**

Invitation to the Offering:

It is the season of Advent, the season of gifts and giving. With love in our hearts, let us worship God with our offerings as we anticipate in wonder the birth of the Christ Child.

Offertory Prayer (Unison)

God of all Grace, we pray that through this offering we will begin to be more fully your people. Through these gifts and our lives, may we help prepare the way of the Lord. In the name of the one for which we wait, Jesus the Christ we pray. Amen.

Hymn: "People, Look East" **VU#9**

Advent Candles

The lighting of candles has been a part of religious worship for centuries. The Hebrews burned candles for eight days as part of their Feast of Lights. Light has been used by many religious groups to symbolize truth, while the darkness of night has been the universal symbol for despair. Since Jesus was called "the light of the world" in the New Testament...

Hymn: "Hope Is a Star"

VU#7

Prayers of the People

Light (*lights turned on*)

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. He that follows me shall not walk in darkness but shall have the Light of life." May the lights of Christmas keep us ever mindful of Christ's loving and everlasting light in even the darkest corners.

Hymn: "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"

VU#2

Benediction:

One: Take time, in the busyness of this season, for quiet reflection— For the light of God's love is discernible everywhere.

All: **We will let ourselves be surprised by wonder and set aside time to offer quiet thanks.**

One: The good news of Advent is this: Christ is coming. Christ is always coming.

All: **We will welcome Christ into our hearts. We will let ourselves be guided by his ministry. We will go forth from this place in hope. Amen.**

***The Candle of Hope Continues to burn,
dispelling the darkness around it.***

Postlude

Poinsettias in the sanctuary are placed in loving memory of:

Eldon Freeman

by Ina Freeman

Bill Dutcher & Heather Dutcher

by Shirley Dutcher

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Ministers: The Gathered Community

Clergy: The Rev. Scott Stuart, BA, MDiv.

Music Ministry: France Henriques

Office Administrator: Tracy Parrott

Custodian: Wayne Surette **-5-**
Church Office: 855-5771
Kitchen Phone & Fax: 855-7180
Rev Scott Stuart's cell: 506-295-5918
Office e-mail: office@mountroyaluc.ca
Mount Royal website: www.mountroyaluc.ca
Office Hours: Tuesday – Friday, 9am - 3pm

Screen operators for the coming weeks:

Nov 28 – Debbie, Dec 5 – Esther, Dec 12 – Elizabeth, Dec 19 – Erik

Sound/Prompter operators for the coming weeks:

Nov 28 – Stephen, Dec 5 – Tracy, Dec 12 – Tracy, Dec 19 – Stephen

This Weeks Events

Monday	9:30am	Tai Chi	Church Hall
	7:00pm	Visioning Comm	Church Hall
Tuesday	10:00am	Craft Group	Church Hall
	1:00pm	Art Club	Church Hall
Wednesday	9:30am	Tai Chi	Church Hall
	7:00pm	Choir Practice	Sanctuary
Friday	9:30am	Tai Chi	Church Hall
Saturday	10:00am	Tai Chi	Church Hall

Announcements

Grocery gift cards are now available. Please contact Terry Foreman at 388-4887 or grocerycards@mountroyaluc.ca or the office at 855-5771 or office@mountroyaluc.ca to place your orders. Thank you for supporting this important fundraiser.

Memorial Tree Bulbs - You can request a bulb be lit on the outdoor tree celebrating the life of a loved one; acknowledging a person you are thankful for or even celebrating a special life event. Please contact the office at officeadmin@mountroyaluc.ca or 855-5771 or and provide the specifics of the person or event you wish to honour. The cost is \$5 per celebration. Dedications will be printed in the bulletin on Dec 19. The tree will be lit on **Nov 28th**.

White Gift Sunday will be celebrated on **Dec 5th**. This year we are asking for donations of grocery gift cards, cash or personal hygiene items (toothbrushes, toothpaste, deodorant, tampons) as well as toques, gloves, scarves and men's and women's undergarments (smaller sizes).

The sympathy of the Community of Faith is extended to family and friends of **Marie Bishop-LeBlanc** who passed away on Nov 25.

Carol Sing - Plan to join the choir for a carol sing on **Dec 12th** at 7pm. Details to follow. Please send your carol requests to music@mountroyaluc.ca or call the office at 855-5771 by Nov 28th.

Council Highlights - The Finance Report for the 10 months ended October 31, 2021 was presented by the treasurer which shows a current year operating deficit of (\$32,341) compared to (\$18,691) last year before the CEWS wage subsidy. Government wage subsidy (CEWS), of \$22,713 has been received during the year to assist with salaries and has reduced the current year deficit to (\$9,628). The CEWS subsidy program, which has helped to offset reduced fund raising over the past year, will end on Oct 23. It is hoped that the current year deficit will be eliminated by Dec 31 with special givings at Christmas, the grocery card fund raising as well as regular envelope givings. The treasurer also reported that the office **copier/printer** lease is up for renewal in 2022. We have received an offer from our existing supplier to lease a new machine now for 66 months at \$288 per quarter plus \$.01 cent per copy, plus tax. This is a reduction from our current lease of approx. \$100 per quarter, plus tax. It was recommended and approved by Council that we accept this offer.

OUTREACH FUNDS: \$2,000 in grocery cards will be sent to the Moncton Food Bank. **NOMINATING COMMITTEE:** two current committee chairs will be stepping down as well as the treasurer. **MINISTRY & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE:** the holiday schedule for the staff was reviewed. Minister's Education Allowance: Rev. Stuart has been unable to attend educational events, and his education allowance of \$1,500 for 2020 and 2021 (total of \$3,000) will be carried over to 2022. Staff annual reviews are underway, and it is recommended that staff salaries be increased by 2% for 2022. **PASTORAL CARE:** the Committee and the UCW will be combining efforts for the "Thinking of You" Christmas project. About

thirty gifts will be delivered to members of the community of faith who are unable to attend worship or other church activities. Delivery will be on Dec 12th. **UCW/CRAFT GROUP:** the Craft Group met earlier today with good attendance. The next meeting of the UCW will be on Dec 14th at 11:30 AM. **WORSHIP:** reviewed past services and reviewed the dates of upcoming services. There was positive feedback on the All Saints and Remembrance services. **PROPERTY:** the heating system is up and running with no obvious problems, and the snow removal contract will be confirmed. We are waiting for the Energy Audit report and it is expected that there will be recommendations brought to the January Council meeting. **COMMUNICATIONS:** Facebook page has seen an increase in hits, and information is being posted as it becomes available. **VISIONING:** the committee has had several meetings with good discussion and progress is being made. **SYSTEMS:** everything is going well with lots on the go! **MEN'S GROUP/FINANCE/FUNDRAISING/TRUSTEES:** Terry now has \$30,000 in gift cards and anyone wishing to purchase them should contact either Terry or Tracy. He will be looking into insurance costs in the near future. There will be no fund-raising activities until Covid is at an acceptable level and restrictions are lifted. **CHRISTIAN DEVELOPMENT:** the CD Committee will be preparing gift packages for the children in our community of faith. The Committee hopes to embark on new activities in the new year. **COVID PROTOCOL:** Regular Sunday services will continue to require proof of vaccination, and the appropriate government regulations will be followed, including: Proof of full vaccination, wearing a mask at all times, physical distancing is not required, no capacity limits and singing while masked is permitted. An exception will be made for the Christmas Eve service as it is anticipated that unvaccinated children (or others) will be in attendance. Children will be required to sit with their families, and government regulations for unvaccinated attendance will be as follows: Everyone masked at all times, Operate at 50% or less capacity, Maintain two metres of physical distancing between different households, No congregational singing, Record names of all attendees and contact information by row or have a consistent assigned seating plan for contact tracing; and Prevent anyone displaying COVID-19 symptoms or who has been instructed to self-isolate from entering, **Pre-registration will be required for the Christmas Eve service.**