

# MERRY *Christmas*





Welcome to  
Sunday Morning Worship  
10:30 a.m., December 15, 2024  
**JOY**



## **MISSION STATEMENT**

“St. Andrew’s United Church is a progressive worshipping community dedicated to spiritual growth, caring, and inclusivity that is providing outreach to the community and the world.”

Our worship leaders are Sandra Fowler and Della Ferguson. Jenna Nash leads the choir with Karen Purdy and Hannah Elich taking turns on the piano/organ; their music brings life and joy to our Sunday mornings!

**Please note: We will not be passing the plate; there is a box for your donations at the Sanctuary entrance.**

Please join us for coffee and refreshments  
after the service!

**Welcome and Opening Prayer**

**Acknowledgment of the Territory**

**Announcements and Celebrations**

**Celebration Box:**

*Congratulations to you, May the dear Lord bless you*

**Call to Worship:** *adapted from Isaiah 61: 1-4; 11*  
*The Spirit of the Lord is on us,*  
*because the Lord has anointed us*

*to proclaim good news to the poor.  
God has sent us to bind up the broken-hearted,  
to proclaim freedom for the captives  
and release from darkness for the prisoners,  
to comfort all who mourn,  
and provide for those who grieve  
to bestow on them a crown of beauty  
instead of ashes,  
the oil of joy  
instead of mourning,  
and a garment of praise  
instead of a spirit of despair.*

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*Just as the soil makes the sprout come up  
and a garden causes seeds to grow,  
so the Lord will make goodness  
and praise spring up before all nations.  
Let us open our hearts to the Spirit of the All-Faithful  
God in Worship.*

### **Advent Litany 3**

**One Voice:** *“The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom, like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and shouting.” (Isaiah 35: 1-2)*

**What does joy feel like in the new world?**

**All Voices:**

**Joy feels like everlasting love.**

**Joy feels like the freedom to be who God created me to be**

**Joy feels like sharing love and kindness.**

**Joy feels like pride.**

**One Voice:** *Advent is the beginning of this new world,  
a better world,  
Where joy boldly bubbles up in unexpected places.*

**All Voices:** *May it be so.  
(Third Advent candle is lit)*

**One Voice:** *Amen.*



**Hymn:** *VU #6 A Candle is Burning (3 verses)*

**Prayer of Confession:**

*In this Sanctuary and with these sojourners, I lay before  
You the meanderings of my mind and the multitude of  
feelings in my heart. I confess that in my humanness,  
my thoughts and my feelings sometimes get tangled  
into behaviours that do not serve myself or You well.  
Today, I hold them up to Your Light and Your Love that I  
might process them WITH YOU. I do so in all faith,  
trusting You, the All Faithful.*

**Amen.**

 **Scripture Readings**

VU p. 850 Psalm 126

Luke 1:26-45 (NIV)

Song of Mary (Della)

**Message:** "The Unfolding"

**Hymn:** VU #7 Hope is a Star

**Minute for Mission:** Gifts with a Vision

**Offering Blessing:**

All Giving God, we humbly ask a blessing upon the monetary offerings of our finances and of our hearts. We lay all before You and ask that you bless them with Your Spirit of Holiness and Wholeness so we may use them for the building of heaven right here on earth. Amen.

### **Prayers of the People**

Creator God, in your embrace we know strength and wisdom, grace and acceptance. Thank you that you hear our prayers today and always.

### **God is with us and God's joy is close at hand.**

We are grateful for the joys that enliven our world: laughter shared, beauty perceived, and hope renewed. Sometimes these moments bring relief and sometimes these moments bring longing for what we have lost. Receive our prayers that when we feel outcast from joy we may be renewed by your comforting presence.

### **God is with us and God's joy is close at hand.**

We remember all those in our world and even as close as in our city, who struggle day to day to find a warm place, to find food and friendship. And yet, in the midst of all this, they are still able to share friendship, and joy. We give thanks that this church is able to do a small part in helping to meet their needs. And we give thanks for the friendships and understandings they offer to us and for all those who support them.

### **God is with us and God's joy is close at hand.**

Gather us in, O God, that we may give praise and glory

to your name, that renewed in your love, we may repent and rejoice and be glad, as we journey to a new vision of what we are called to do and to be in a changed reality.

**God is with us and God's joy is close at hand.**

We ask all these things in Jesus' name, who taught us to pray together Our Father and Mother **who art in heaven .....**

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

**Closing Collective Prayer:**

*May we embrace the birth of new possibilities with open hearts,  
acknowledging both our joys and our sorrows,  
and may we find the strength to be vessels of hope,  
peace, joy and transformation in a world yearning  
for something new.*

*Amen.*

**Commissioning:**

1 Thessalonians 5: 16-24 (The Voice)

VU #972 Amen (x2)

**Coffee time and memory/Symbol sharing.**

## HORIZON

*The season of Advent means there is something on the horizon the likes of which we have never seen before.*

*It is not possible to keep it from coming, because it will. That's just how Advent works. What is possible is to not see it, to miss it, to turn just as it brushes past you. And you begin to grasp what it was you missed, like Moses in the cleft of the rock, watching God's hindquarters fade in the distance.*

*So stay. Sit. Linger. Tarry. Ponder. Wait. Behold. Wonder.*

*There will be time enough for running. For rushing. For worrying. For pushing.*

*For now, stay. Wait.*

*Something is on the horizon.*

—Jan Richardson

*from Night Visions: Searching the Shadows of Advent and Christmas*

[janrichardson.com/books](http://janrichardson.com/books)



***Thank you to everyone who participated in today's worship service.***

**Please remember that St. Andrew's United is "Scent-Free".**

**Living Skies Regional Council Prayer Cycle 2024  
December 15, 2024**

Balgonie-McLean

Beechy

Bridging Waters (*Codette, Nipawin*)

**Latest news from St. Andrews:**

Attendance: December 8 – N/A

Local: \$660.00

Other donations:

M & S: \$35.00

PAR – Monthly - \$ 1065.00, M&S - \$120.00

**Weekly expenditures: \$2778.74**

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[www.facebook.com/StAndrewsUnitedChurchMooseJaw](http://www.facebook.com/StAndrewsUnitedChurchMooseJaw)

**Announcements:**

The office is now on reduced hours. There is a calendar posted on the door with the hours for each week. Thank you for your understanding.

**Committee meetings**

UCW – 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday @ 2 pm

Outreach – 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday @ 4pm

Worship – 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday bi-monthly @ 9:30am

Choir practice – Sundays 9:30 a.m.