



ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS AT FIRST UNITED CHURCH, OTTAWA
NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2025
ADVENT THEME: "Preparing for a New World."

Beloved,

Advent is here, marking the beginning of the Christmas season, where joyful melodies fill the air. This time calls for preparation, not only for delicious meals and thoughtful gifts but also for grounding and embracing the good tidings wrapped in simplicity.

While many celebrate, others face significant challenges such as joblessness, mental health struggles, the loss of loved ones, illness, and the rising cost of living. These struggles make this season difficult for many, who lament the failures of political systems that significantly impact their lives.

Considering these challenges, we must take a moment to reflect on the importance of sharing with our neighbours, from far and near, whether we have much or little. "The more we share, the more plentiful our bowl will be."

Our theme for this Advent is "Preparing for a New World", a world characterized by justice, hope, peace, joy, and love. It is a space where the broken seek healing, the hungry are fed, the sick are restored, the unsheltered find shelter, and the unclothed receive clothing. We are called to envision this hopeful future as a community of beloved people by noticing what is already occurring within our communities.

It is a time to love deeply and courageously. It is time to dare to reach out, share a smile, and embody kindness. As people of Advent, let us love kindness, live justly and walk humbly.

As we enter this shadowy season, let us do so with sacred longing and preparedness. May we join in joy, courage, and hope for the new light. Let us approach this time with wonder as we wait and watch, knowing that hope is born in the margins; peace is found in the stillness of the night, and love emerges from the unimaginable. Have a wonderful Advent and Christmas! {Rev. Kanana}

Reflection in Advent

Our theme is *Pause, Pray, Disrupt: Advent Vigil for Palestine*. Wednesdays, December 3rd, 10th, 17th - Two ways to attend:

- 1) 12 noon - 12:30 via Zoom with the United Church of Canada. Please register using this link: bit.ly/4o74Byi
- 2) 7 pm-7:45 pm, via Zoom with our First United congregation. Led by Kanana, including the earlier recording. To receive the zoom link, please email office@firstunitedchurchottawa.org

Sunday, November 30 - 11:15 a.m.:

First Sunday of Advent- Candle of Hope

Sunday, December 7 - 11:15 a.m.: Second Sunday of Advent

Sock Sunday: Bring socks for clients of Centre 507 (see page 2)

Candle of Peace

Sunday, December 14- 11:15 a.m.: Third Sunday of Advent - Candle of Joy

Christmas Pageant

Pat Lindsey leads the pageant. Intergenerational dramatizes the story of the birth of Jesus on the theme, **"What if,"** A Christmas Pageant, by Rev. Ruth Noble, modified for First United by Joelle Morgan and Pat Lindsey. Nikki will help us find people for props and costumes. Rite 13 leaders Robert G., Jessica W-K, and Ben LC help fill in parts and help with rehearsals on Saturday, December 13, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Sunday, December 21 -11:15 a.m. Fourth Sunday of Advent

Candle of Love

Sunday, December 21 - Blue Christmas 7 p.m. (in the chapel)

This special evening service on December 21st creates a sacred space for those who struggle with loneliness or have experienced any loss. Worship begins at 7 p.m., followed by hot drinks and conversations around the table.

Wednesday, December 24 - Christmas Eve Services

5:45 p.m. Multigenerational Service with stories and communion

8:00 p.m. Candlelight Communion Service

Sunday, December 28

11:15 a.m. Celebrating in the Season of Christmas

Table Liturgy and Pancake Breakfast in the church hall.

Other Important Events in December: Community in Advent:

Saturday, December 6 – 3 p.m.

A Service Remembrance and Action to End Violence Against Women (in the chapel)

I am willing, walk to the mountains; we will keep on walking.

Friday, December 12 - TGIF Christmas Lunch at noon in the Hall

Saturday, December 13- 5- 8 p.m. Lumen Night with women for a Christmas

get-together at this shadowy season to connect, regift (less than ten dollars or something from home that you no longer use), share stories of resilience, and meditate with candlelight. We will have a potluck {In the Hall}. Please let us know who will be coming through the office via email: office@firstunitedchurchottawa.org

GIVING IN ADVENT

Advent Campaign reminder

Our annual Advent Campaign to support the church budget is underway and the appeal letters are in the mail! Our goal this year is \$40,000 or roughly \$250 per household above and beyond what you give regularly. As always, some people will be able to give more than \$250 and some less and some not at all. Please give as you are able. Thank you.

December 7th is Sock Sunday at First United!

Please bring stuffed socks to church, filled with items for the Centre 507 drop-in. Community members of all genders welcome this Christmas gift. In addition to socks, needed items include razors, feminine products, toothbrushes, toothpaste, deodorant, underwear, lip balm, chocolates and other small treats. Please use large or medium winter-weight socks. One sock can be the "Christmas stocking" (don't forget to include the other socks inside).

Donate to the Westboro Food Bank

Copies of the Advent Calendar Wish List are available at the entrance to the Sanctuary.

Picture source: <https://united-church.ca/worship-theme/advent-unwrapped#:~:text=Advent%20Unwrapped%202025%3A%20Making%20Things, and%20the%20work%20of%20reconciliation>

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