



## Merging Waters United Church

Sunday, November 26, 2023

Take a Page from Mary's Journal, Advent I:

“Family knows Best”

### WELCOME / BIENVENUE

People of all ages, identities, and walks of life are welcome.

Wherever you are, whoever you are, we welcome you in love and community to worship.

Wherever we are, we're close in one another's hearts.

Toutes et tous sont bienvenus, peu importe l'âge, l'identité ou les conditions de vie.

Peu importe où que vous soyez, qui que vous soyez, nous vous accueillons dans l'amour et la communauté pour louer Dieu ensemble.

Notre amour n'est jamais limité par la distance.

Please join in the responses in **bold text**.

Keep our worship scent-free! To help fellow worshippers with chemical sensitivities, please do not wear perfume or scented products (lotion, hair spray) if attending in person.

***To protect personal privacy, please do not take photos or videos without authorization.***

### LIFE AND WORK OF THE PEOPLE

#### ACKNOWLEDGING TRADITIONAL TERRITORY

We acknowledge that we at Merging Waters live, work, worship, and play on the unceded and unsundered lands of the Kanienkeha:ka Peoples.

**As we journey towards the birth of Jesus once again, we remember everything this birth means for our whole world and all people: hope, peace, joy, and love. May we live our lives moving gently in creation, listening, learning, and striving to be people of reconciliation.**

Jessica Knoyle, Ottawa, Ont.

### CENTERING SONG

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

*Words by Juanita L. Austin, music adapted by Michael Woytiuk*

## THE LIGHT AT OUR CORE

Light a candle at home if you wish!

### GATHERING PRAYER

Wonderful Counsellor, Loving God, O Promised One,  
we come to this time of Advent awaiting your presence.  
**Give us the wisdom to see meaning in these busy days.**  
Give us the courage to wait in times of pain and trouble.  
**Give us assurance like Mary in her questioning, and anticipation.**  
Give us the compassion to wait for one another.  
**Give us the hope to wait for the Saviour**  
**even when we cannot hear the angels singing.**  
Give us the love that does not wait  
when it meets Christ in our neighbour.  
**Give us the excitement of dreaming like Mary,**  
**your kin-dom for all. Amen.**

### OPENING HYMN MV#134 There Was a Child in Galilee (Dreaming Mary)

#### ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

Advent I: Hope

Arise and be bold, good news of hope is here!  
**The warm glow of the Divine lightens our hearts.**  
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 will dream and imagine a  
different future, a rising-up and life-flourishing one. We are witnesses to hope Just like  
Mary. (The first candle is lit.)  
Let us pray:  
God-of-our-dreaming, 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 exiles and strangers will find a home. Become in our  
lives the way to what we need, to what we can become, and to what we can do.

#### ADVENT HYMN VU#6

A Candle Is Burning v.1

### FOR THE YOUNG AT HEART

#### SCRIPTURE: Luke 1:26-56 MSG

##### A Virgin Conceives

26-28 In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to the  
Galilean village of Nazareth to a virgin engaged to be married to a man descended from  
David. His name was Joseph, and the virgin's name, Mary. Upon entering, Gabriel  
greeted her:

Good morning!

You're beautiful with God's beauty,

Beautiful inside and out!

God be with you.

29-33 She was thoroughly shaken, wondering what was behind a greeting like that. But the angel assured her, “Mary, you have nothing to fear. God has a surprise for you: You will become pregnant and give birth to a son and call his name Jesus.

He will be great,

be called ‘Son of the Highest.’

The Lord God will give him

the throne of his father David;

He will rule Jacob’s house forever—

no end, ever, to his kingdom.”

34 Mary said to the angel, “But how? I’ve never slept with a man.”

35 The angel answered,

The Holy Spirit will come upon you,

the power of the Highest hover over you;

Therefore, the child you bring to birth

will be called Holy, Son of God.

36-38 “And did you know that your cousin Elizabeth conceived a son, old as she is? Everyone called her barren, and here she is six months pregnant! Nothing, you see, is impossible with God.”

And Mary said,

Yes, I see it all now:

I’m the Lord’s maid, ready to serve.

Let it be with me

just as you say.

Then the angel left her.

## **Blessed Among Women**

39-45 Mary didn’t waste a minute. She got up and traveled to a town in Judah in the hill country, straight to Zachariah’s house, and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the baby in her womb leaped. She was filled with the Holy Spirit, and sang out exuberantly,

You’re so blessed among women,

and the babe in your womb, also blessed!

And why am I so blessed that

the mother of my Lord visits me?

The moment the sound of your

greeting entered my ears,

The babe in my womb

skipped like a lamb for sheer joy.

Blessed woman, who believed what God said,

believed every word would come true!

46-55 And Mary said,

I’m bursting with God-news;

I’m dancing the song of my Savior God.

God took one good look at me, and look what happened—  
I'm the most fortunate woman on earth!  
What God has done for me will never be forgotten,  
the God whose very name is holy, set apart from all others.  
His mercy flows in wave after wave  
on those who are in awe before him.  
He bared his arm and showed his strength,  
scattered the bluffing braggarts.  
He knocked tyrants off their high horses,  
pulled victims out of the mud.  
The starving poor sat down to a banquet;  
the callous rich were left out in the cold.  
He embraced his chosen child, Israel;  
he remembered and piled on the mercies, piled them high.  
It's exactly what he promised,  
beginning with Abraham and right up to now.  
56 Mary stayed with Elizabeth for three months and then went back to her own home.

**MARY'S JOURNAL:**

**“Family Knows Best”**

**APPLICATION FOR TODAY**

**MUSICAL OFFERING MV#120**

*My Soul Cries Out*

**OFFERING**

**OFFERING SONG**

*Highways and Byways by Sandra Sears*

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

**LORD'S PRAYER**

Our Mother/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 them that 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

## CLOSING SONG


Go Now in Peace by Don Besig

## BENEDICTION AND COMMISSIONING

Return now to our world with its pain and wonder,  
remembering the words of the prophets,  
the faithfulness of Mary,  
and the longing of all  
who yearn for a sign of hope.  
And may the blessing of God who is ever faithful,  
the blessing of Christ who still comes to us,  
and the blessing of the Holy Spirit who moves within us  
and throughout our world,  
rest upon us and abide with us, this day and forevermore. Amen.

## SENDING/SONG

A World of Difference by Monica O'Brien

Thank you for joining in worship today 

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## MERGING WATERS UNITED CHURCH

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### UPCOMING SERVICES at 10:30 a.m.

December 3 Second Sunday of Advent	Take a Page from Mary's Journal <b>Advent 2: For Better or for Worse</b>  Sacrament of communion
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<p>December 10 Third Sunday of Advent</p>	<p>Take a Page from Mary's Journal <b>Advent 3: Sharing the Burden</b></p> <p><b>All Ages and Generations Celebrate the Story</b></p>
<p>December 17 Fourth Sunday of Advent</p>	<p>Take a Page from Mary's Journal <b>Advent 4: Kindness of Strangers</b></p>
<p>December 24 <b>No morning service.</b></p> <p>Christmas Eve service 7 pm</p>	<p>Take a Page from Mary's journal <b>Christmas Eve: Unconditional Love</b></p> <p>An evening of story, song, and candle lighting</p>