

# *Gathering,* A/C/E 2020-2021

Advent to Epiphany and the Season after Epiphany

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## **Advent to Epiphany and the Season after Epiphany**

## **Season of Advent**

**Dates:** Advent is the beginning of the church year for most churches in the Western tradition. It begins on the fourth Sunday before Christmas Day, which is sometimes the last Sunday in November, and ends on Christmas Eve at sundown. Sometimes the fourth Sunday of Advent is Christmas Eve.

**Feast Days\* and Special Days**

\*December 6 – St. Nicholas’ Day – provides a good antidote to the commercial Santa Claus.

December 6 – National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women (Canada).

**Meaning of Name:** The term *Advent* comes via Old English from the Latin *adventus* (“arrival”). It is a combination of *ad* (to) + *venire* (come). In Advent, we are anticipating the arrival of the baby Jesus as well as the Second Coming of Christ.

**Liturgical Colour: Blue**

Blue is used within most United Churches for Advent, though some continue with the older practice of using purple. Blue was adopted to symbolize hope and replace the penitential purple, associated with Lent.

## **Season of Christmas**

**Dates:** Christmas Day is fixed on December 25 and begins the Christmas season, which runs through January 5.

**Meaning of Name:** The word *Christmas* comes from Old English *Crīstes mæsse* or “Christ’s mass,” referring to the worship service in celebration of Christ’s birth.

**Liturgical Colours: White and Gold**

White, which is all colours of light combined, traditionally symbolizes goodness, innocence, and God’s faithfulness. Gold reflects glory, triumph, wealth, richness, and extravagance. Together, they symbolize the light of dawn and are colours of celebration.

## **Season of Epiphany**

**Dates:** January 6 through to Shrove Tuesday. The length of the season of Epiphany varies, based on the beginning of Lent.

**Feast Days\* and Special Days**

\*January 6 – Epiphany – also celebrated as Christmas Eve for Orthodox Christians.

\*Baptism of Jesus – the Sunday after the day of Epiphany.

January 18–25 – Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

\*Transfiguration – This feast comes from the Eastern churches, who celebrate it on August 6. It became part of the Western calendar in about the ninth century and was universally celebrated by the fifteenth century. In some Western denominations, the date was moved to the last Sunday before Lent.

\*Shrove Tuesday – the day before Ash Wednesday, on which pancakes are traditionally served. *Shrove* comes from the word *shriven* or “to confess.” The practice of making pancakes was meant to use up rich foods in the house, such as fats and sugars, to prepare for Lenten fasting.

**Meaning of Name:** The word *epiphany* means a sudden insight or new understanding. It comes from the Greek word *epiphainein* meaning “to reveal” or “to be manifest.”

**Liturgical Colours: White and Gold; Green**

White and gold are used for Epiphany and Baptism of Jesus Sunday. Green is for the rest of the season. Green is a cool colour, evoking nature, growth, vitality, freshness, harmony, endurance, and fertility. It is associated with healing and rest. It is the depth and stability of blue combined with the warmth and joy of yellow.

## November 29 – Advent 1

*Worship materials for Advent were contributed by Heather Robbins, Loraine MacKenzie Shepherd, and Dorcas Windsor, Westworth U.C., Winnipeg, Man.*

**Isaiah 64:1–9**

Tear open the heavens and come down.

**Psalm 80:1–7, 17–19** (VU p. 794 Part One)

Shine upon us, shepherd of Israel.

**1 Corinthians 1:3–9**

In every way, you have been enriched in Christ.

**Mark 13:24–37**

You will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds.

### To Ponder

What distractions keep us from preparing our individual worlds for hope?

### Spark

We suggest going on a “wilderness trip” for this year’s Advent preparations. Begin around a “campfire”—a place where stories come alive and emotions intensify as we fear God’s absence, regret the wrongs we have done, and tremble in God’s presence. Build your campfire with a ring of rocks and some logs; add a light bulb, red and yellow tissue paper, and a fan.

### With Children

Ask the children to gather around the campfire. Ask them how they know that God is here. Tell them that in our Bible, the symbol of a fire often reminds people that God is with them. What are other reminders that God is with us? (Love of our parents, nature, the beautiful world God created.) All of these reminders give us hope. During these four weeks of Advent, let’s pay attention to reminders of hope that God gives us. Invite the children to report back next week.

### Sermon Starter

Our wrongdoing cuts us off from God, and we feel God’s absence, not because God has rejected us but because our wrongdoing is lodged between us and God. Three times in the psalm, the Hebrew word *shub* or *shuv* is used, which literally means “to turn again” and is translated as “restore us.” The word brings hope mixed with longing for the past. God fed the people tears—tears of repentance and forgiving release. As Anishinaabe singer-songwriter William Prince sings about in his song “Wasted,” fighting is a waste of time. Life is too short to be held up by what harms us and one another. It’s a waste of time and energy. Part of our Advent preparation involves active waiting—expectant, braced for action—as if we are holding out a handful of sunflower seeds to the chickadees (as opposed to passive waiting—unfocused, careless—dropping the seeds on the snow as we walk away). How can we be alert to the signs of God’s presence? To the lure of false prophets and gods? How do we live between the “already” and the “not yet” of God’s realm?

### Hymns

*Isaiah 64:1–9*

VU 4 “God of all places”

VU 289 “It only takes a spark”

VU 578 “As a fire is meant for burning”

VU 651 “Guide me, O thou great Jehovah”

*Psalm 80:1–7, 17–19*

VU 1 “O come, O come, Emmanuel”

MV 27 “Creator God you gave us life”

MV 126 “Are you a shepherd?”

MV 143 “We cannot own the sunlit sky”

MV 220 “Hope shines as the solitary star”

*1 Corinthians 1:3–9*

VU 265 “Creating God, your fingers trace”

VU 591 “Jesus, united by your grace”

MV 33 “Jesus came bringing us hope”

*Mark 13:24–37*

VU 2 “Come, thou long-expected Jesus”

VU 25 “Lo, he comes with clouds descending”

To help children become more sensitive to barriers experienced by others, leaders might plan a time where children attempt everyday tasks while constrained in some way, e.g., finding the bathroom with eyes covered or navigating two steps without moving the lower body. The world of people with heightened sensitivities might be shared by playing loud music and turning the lights up bright. Then leaders might challenge the children to design a Children’s Time where the day’s Bible story might be enacted/shared by children with varying abilities.

## December 6 – Advent 2

**Isaiah 40:1–11**

Comfort, O comfort my people.

**Psalm 85:1–2, 8–13** (VU p. 802)

Will you be angry with us forever?

**2 Peter 3:8–15*a***

The Day will come like a thief in the night.

**Mark 1:1–8**

The preaching of John the baptizer.

### To Ponder

What are the things that make for peace?

### Spark

Add big rocks on either side of a straight path coming from last Sunday’s campfire. You could put picks, shovels, or rakes to the side, indicating that this path is still under construction. What does it mean to build a straight path? Perhaps it indicates a path leading directly to peace and justice amidst the twisted confusion of unreliable news and slander. What are the barriers that need to be cleared from the path?

### With Children

Invite the children to gather around the campfire, then follow the path between the big rocks, away from the fire. What helps us know the best path to take? We make decisions every day to be kind or to be mean, to be happy or to be grumpy. God urges us to choose kindness. If we are kind even when we want to be mean, we are choosing a better path. What are some ways to be kind to others? What blocks us from being kind? How can we get rid of these blocks? If we choose kindness, we will help ourselves and others to move on a path of peace.

### Sermon Starter

Isaiah notes that God comes in might, and yet also gathers lambs and leads us gently. There is strength and power in gentleness. God’s compassion and comfort are not just for Jews and Christians, but for all. In the face of a divided society and of indecision and indifference, all shall see this homecoming together, united in this vision of good news. Psalm 90:4 is echoed in 2 Peter 3:8 to remind us that God’s sense of time is not the same as ours. This letter was written near the end of the first century, when Christians were asking, “Is the Second Coming *ever* going to happen?” The author suggests that God is not slow to return, but patient so that all may be saved (pointing to universal salvation) through a new earth and a new heaven. Psalm 85 paints a picture of this new heaven and earth: love (*hesed*, “compassion”) and faithfulness (*emet*, “truth”) will meet; righteousness (*tsedeq*, “justice”) and peace (*shalom*, “wholeness”) will kiss. Karl Barth calls these divine attributes “divine perfections.” They each require the others and are “the things that make for peace” (Luke 19:12). When these four spiritual disciplines are found in our personal lives, families, churches, communities, and societies, God’s kin-dom will be at hand. The earth and all its creatures—all my relations—will be saved.

### Hymns

*Isaiah 40:1–11*

VU 28 “Herald! Sound the note of gladness”

VU 29 “Hark the glad sound”

VU p. 882 “Prepare the way”

VU p. 883 “Comfort, comfort now my people”

MV 221 “I am walking a path of peace”

*Psalm 85:1–2, 8–13*

MV 12 “Come touch our hearts”

MV 173 “Put peace into each other’s hands”

*2 Peter 3:8–15*a

VU 688 “O day of God, draw nigh”

VU p. 806 “O God, our help in ages past”

*Mark 1:1–8*

VU 5 “All earth is waiting”

VU 18 “There’s a voice in the wilderness”

## December 13 – Advent 3

**Isaiah 61:1–4, 8–11**

The spirit of the Lord is upon me.

**Psalm 126** (VU p. 850)

Sow in tears; reap in joy.

or **Luke 1:47–55** (VU pp. 898–899)

Song of Mary.

**1 Thessalonians 5:16–24**

Rejoice always; pray without ceasing.

**John 1:6–8, 19–28**

John testified to the Light.

### To Ponder

How can our relationships with one another and with the earth be mutually restorative?

### Spark

Move the baptismal font to a place along the path you created last week. Decorate the font with poinsettias and tree branches strung with lights. John’s baptism of repentance brought hope for personal and communal transformation. When people are transformed by God’s love, the earth rejoices and is restored.

### With Children

Ask the children to move from the campfire along the straight path marked by rocks to the baptismal font. What do we feel when we see someone being baptized? Review and discuss the baptismal vows: to renounce evil, to promise to follow Jesus, and to commit to being part of the Christian community. The Way of Jesus brings us joy—to people and to the earth. What makes people happy? What makes the earth happy? God wants to heal our hearts and our earth through what we say and do.

### Sermon Starter

The description of the year of God’s favour in Isaiah 3 refers to the year of jubilee described in Leviticus 25. This is a sabbatical year when debts are forgiven, indentured labourers are freed, and the land is given a fallow year of rest and returned to its original owner. How does this relate to our understanding that all of us are Treaty People? Our commitment to reconciliation requires care for the land and interdependent relationships of giving and receiving between Settlers and the original inhabitants of the land. As we honour our treaty responsibilities, the trees will rejoice, the gardens will be abundant, and the solid oaks of justice will be established. The Spirit of God restores not with the sword but with the hoe. Psalm 126 assures us that this hard work sown in tears will reap joy. John Keats refers to the vale of tears as the “vale of soul-making.” First Thessalonians suggests that our joy is not based on an ethic of moderation, but on a thorough, even excessive, devotion in which we can rejoice in all circumstances without ceasing. No moderation here! We are reminded that our joy comes not from our own efforts but from the abundant springs of life. Like John the Baptist, our calling is to be as clear about who we are NOT as who we are. Our role is to testify to the Messiah, not to be the Messiah.

### Hymns

*Isaiah 61:1–4, 8–11*

VU 2 “Come, thou long-expected Jesus”

VU 9 “People, look east”

VU 23 “Joy shall come”

VU 29 “Hark the glad sound”

VU 79 “Arise, your light is come”

MV 97 “Listen, God is calling”

*Psalm 126*

“Bringing in the sheaves” by Knowles Shaw and George A. Minor

*Luke 1:47–55*

VU 8 “Lo, how a rose e’er blooming”

VU 16 “Mary, woman of the promise”

VU p. 899 “Song of Mary”

*1 Thessalonians 5:16–24*

VU 6 “A candle is burning”

MV 48 “Jump for Joy”

*John 1:6–8, 19–28*

VU 14 “To a maid whose name was Mary”

VU 28 “Herald! Sound the note of gladness”

VU 62 “Once in royal David’s city”

VU 629 “Eternal light, shine in my heart”

MV 71 “When the wind of winter blows”

## December 20 – Advent 4

**2 Samuel 7:1–11, 16**

Who will build God’s house?

**Luke 1:47–55** (VU pp. 898–899)

Song of Mary.

or **Psalm 89:1–4, 19–26** (VU p. 804)

I will sing of God’s steadfast love.

**Romans 16:25–27**

Glory to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ.

**Luke 1:26–38**

The angel Gabriel visits Mary.

##### To Ponder

What does it mean to be Christ’s body? Where is God calling us to be Christ’s body?

##### Spark

Our Advent trek through the wilderness began around the campfire. We then cleared away obstacles and built a path that took us to the baptismal font. Now, add a tent at the end of the path (a blanket fort or a pop-up tent). This tent is God’s house, ever on the move, where the building of relationships is more important than the building of temples.

##### With Children

During the time of the priestly blessing in the synagogue service, some Jewish people observe a beautiful ritual. People are invited to hold up a prayer shawl over their heads and invite family members and friends to stand together underneath it. They invite others who are standing alone to join them. They are told that the prayer shawl is a reminder of Shekinah, the divine feminine, sheltering them under her wings. This ritual represents God’s love, which is like a tent protecting us and holding us together in love. Following this story, hold up a prayer shawl or piece of cloth and ask the children to join you underneath it.\* Ask all the children to put their arms around each other. Then offer a blessing: “May each of us know that God’s love protects us and wraps us in a warm hug.”

*\*Note: If some sort of physical distancing is still a reality, please adapt as needed.*

##### Sermon Starter

David wanted to build God a house, but God was more interested in making David a house—a dynasty of the house of David. Sometimes we try to get ahead of God. We would do better to listen carefully and follow our God, who is ever on the move. In *The Living Gospel,* Luke Timothy Johnson writes that “the living God always moves ahead of *us*…theology is a matter of catching up with the work of the God who acts before we do and most often catches us by surprise” (Continuum, 2004, p. 43). We must be cautious not to use God to justify our own agendas, whether they be religious (Nathan) or political (David). John 1:14 reads, “The Word became flesh and lived among us.” The Greek word for lived (*eskenosen*) literally means “tented” among us. The incarnate God dwells and moves with us. As nomadic as our external and internal journeys are, God is always with us, behind and before us, leading the way. Mary’s song suggests that we, like her, are *theotokos*—“God-bearers”—each of us pregnant with Spirit-led possibilities, for God has chosen to move in and through us, not apart from us. In her annunciation of the incarnation, Mary responds to a call to be *theotokos*. She is not forced or coerced but accepts this vocation. Bernard of Clairvaux spoke of Mary as a wellspring of living water, birthing God incarnate. Baptismal fonts in some Middle Eastern churches are circular holes in the floor, portraying a womb from which each of us is birthed anew through our baptism.

##### Hymns

*2 Samuel 7:1–11, 16*

VU 2 “Come, thou long-expected Jesus”

VU 30 “Hail to God’s own anointed”

*Luke 1:47–55*

VU 12 “She walked in the summer”

VU 17 “O ancient love”

MV 120 “My soul cries out”

MV 134 “There was a child in Galilee”

*Psalm 89:1–4, 19–26*

VU p. 804 “My song forever shall record”

*Romans 16:25–27*

VU 677 “O God of every nation”

*Luke 1:26–38*

VU 40 “Before the marvel of this night”

VU 42 “Down to earth, as a dove”

## December 24 – Christmas Eve

*Worship materials for December 24 to January 1 were contributed by Diane Berge, Beth Johnston, and Karen Mitchell, Bridging Waters P.C., Nipawin, Sask.*

**Isaiah 9:2–7**

A child has been born for us.

**Psalm 96** (VU p. 816)

Sing to God a new song.

**Titus 2:11–14**

Live a godly, upright life.

**Luke 2:1–14, (15–20)**

Jesus’ birth.

### To Ponder

How has your life been changed by the practice of the religious celebration of Christmas?

##### Spark

This Christmas may be unique in many ways as the first after (or during) the COVID–19 pandemic. What has changed in people’s lives, both positively and negatively, that will affect how they celebrate Christmas this year? How can your congregation support people as they live into the changes that have happened in the past year?

##### With Children

On this night, in many churches, children not normally part of your worshipping congregation will be present. Christmas Eve visits with grandparents often involve going to church. They will likely be beyond excited, but they may notice things the grown-ups have not, since more and more often, these children don’t go to church the rest of the year. Ask them to look for signs that this is a special time in the church (Advent candles, tree, wreaths, etc.). Unpack a nativity set and have them help you set it up, but remember to hide the baby Jesus. If none of the children spontaneously ask about Jesus or the baby, ask, “Who is missing?” Help them search for Jesus. Wonder aloud where Jesus might be “hidden” today. Even if the children cannot make that mental leap, the adults will have something to wonder about other than the cuteness of the children.

##### Sermon Starter

If you are preaching, don’t waste the opportunity to connect the startling and unsettling elements of the story to our lives at Christmas 2020. We have heard this story so often, many of us can recite it from memory, but we can forget the disruption it involved. Ask people to imagine a refugee family, on the move for reasons beyond their control, or a couple in the last week of pregnancy whose plans have to be changed (perhaps their Airbnb has been rented to someone else or a pandemic erupted). Remind folks that the stable at the inn is not a place of “arrival” but a stop on the way; even if there had been room in the inn, they would not have stayed there very long. We are told that Mary pondered all these things in her heart. In the midst of raising her child, as parents the world over do every day, what special things from this night did she often think of? Ask your congregation to reflect on how the shepherds’ lives were changed after the angels broke into their silence. Ask, finally, “How are our lives changed by Jesus’ birth?”

##### Hymns

*Isaiah 9:2–7*

VU 95 “Born in the night, Mary’s Child”

VU 96 “Will you come and see the light”

VU 679 “Let there be light”

*Psalm 96*

VU 78 “Sing till sundown”

*Titus 2:11–14*

VU 46 “Gentle Mary laid her child”

VU 55 “In the bleak midwinter”

VU 59 “Joy to the world”

VU 79 “Arise, your light is come”

VU 343 “I love to tell the story”

*Luke 2:1–14, (15–20)*

VU 57 “Oh, how joyfully”

MV 36 “Glory to God”

MV 58 “We sing of your glory”

MV 124 “Glory to God in the highest”

“When Jesus was a refugee” by Mary Nelson Keithahn (Hymnary.org)

## December 25 – Christmas Day (Friday)

**Isaiah 62:6–12**

Prepare the way for the people.

**Psalm 97** (VU p. 817)

Let the earth be glad!

**Titus 3:4–7**

Saved by grace; heirs of hope.

**Luke 2:(1–7), 8–20**

Shepherds and angels.

### To Ponder

The “big moment” for which we have prepared so long has come. Now what?

### Spark

There is so much hype leading up to Christmas and, for many churches, the Christmas Eve service is the big one. On Christmas Day and even on the Sunday after Christmas, only the most devoted attendees will be present. This is a good opportunity to do some in-depth discussion of the impact of the whole Christmas event on our lives. The gift that we received for Christmas is one that does not come all put together. It is a “to be assembled” gift. What are the parts that make up the gift? What tools do we need to assemble it?

### With Children

Bring a Christmas stocking as a prop; if you have a personalized one, even better. Let the children tell you what they found in their stockings and share some of their excitement. Ask, “What do you think Santa is doing now?” (This might also be an opportunity to share some of the history of the real St. Nicholas.) “Is Santa thinking about the gifts he has given? What do you think Santa hoped you would do with your gifts?” Ask them if they got a special gift from their parents or grandparents, and what they hope to do with the gift. Then ask, “What gift did we get from God for Christmas? What is God hoping we will do with the gift we have received? What can we do to make God’s dreams and hopes for us come true?”

### Sermon Starter

Christmas is a beginning, not an end. Advent has been the time of preparation for the new reality we are confronted with—a new understanding of who God is and how God is present in our lives. The scripture readings are ones of assurance (we are saved), inspiration (we are heirs), and encouragement (we should prepare for what is to come). One wonders what happened with the shepherds following their encounter with the child and his parents. Did they just return to the fields and their day-to-day activities, or did they engage the world in a new way? We assume the angels just went back to their angelic endeavours, but were they also startled by God’s unexpected action and by how God chose to interact with people? What will we now do with the gift God has given to us? Christmas is a call to action, to help bring about God’s realm through our own living. How will we respond? Who can help us to discover and develop the great potential Christmas offers to us?

Hymns

*This is a time to sing those Christmas carols that everyone wanted to sing during Advent. You might take requests.*

*Isaiah 62:6–12*

VU 10 “Prepare the way of the Lord”

VU p. 882 “Prepare the way”

*Psalm 97*

VU 249 “Rejoice in the Lord always”

*Titus 3:4–7*

VU 35 “Good Christian friends, rejoice”

*Luke 2:(1–7), 8–20*

VU 43 “Go, tell it on the mountain”

VU 49 “No crowded eastern street”

VU 52 “Sheep fast asleep”

VU 75 “While shepherds watched their flocks”

MV 147 “God, help us to treasure”

MV 158 “Dream a dream”

MV 162 “Christ, within us hidden”

## December 27 – First Sunday after Christmas

**Isaiah 61:10—62:3**

God clothes me with salvation and righteousness.

**Psalm 148** (VU p. 871)

Let all creation praise God.

**Galatians 4:4–7**

No longer a slave but a child of God and an heir.

**Luke 2:22–40**

Jesus is presented in the temple.

### To Ponder

What did we expect once we decided to follow Jesus? What is expected of us?

### Spark

If Anna and Simeon had lived to see the fulfillment of the life story of this child whose birth created so much excitement for them, how might they have reacted? So much anticipation was in their minds and hearts as they rejoiced in the temple that day. Was their expectation fulfilled by Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection, or would they have thought they had been mistaken? How do we react when things in our faith journey turn our differently than we expected they might? Perhaps the story of Anna and Simeon could be enacted, addressing these questions.

### With Children

Even when things do not proceed as we expect, God’s promise to support us and be with us can be trusted. Our God is faithful. Share the Dr. Seuss story *Horton Hatches the Egg* (Random House, 1940). Talk with the children about whether they think an elephant is a good choice to fill in for a mother bird sitting on her eggs when she wants to take a break. A surprising choice but it certainly worked out very well because Horton was “faithful one hundred percent.” Even though the people in the Bible reading (Anna and Simeon) were surprised by the idea that a baby was God’s gift of the Messiah, they trusted in the gift because they believed God is faithful one hundred percent and would not let them down. We too can trust that God is with us one hundred percent and will not disappoint us or let us down.

### Sermon Starter

Jesus’ dedication at the temple was his formal initiation into a life of learning about his faith tradition. What did he learn about his people’s history and their hope of a messiah? How would the story his parents told him about Simeon and Anna and their words have affected his self-identity? Speculate about how Jesus’ self-understanding grew as he grew. People in the congregation may have already decided for themselves if Jesus knew all along he was the Messiah or if he grew into that identity. Ask them to consider the other option. Invite the congregation to trust you to take them on a possibly uncomfortable journey to expand our sense of Jesus. In the sermon, ask questions, speculate, and explore. You might refer to various novels about the childhood of Jesus, such as *Lamb: The Gospel According to Biff, Christ’s Childhood Pal* by Christopher Moore (William Morrow, 2004) or *The Gospel According to Jesus Christ* by José Saramago (Mariner Books, 1994), another fictional yet thought-provoking account.

### Hymns

*Isaiah 61:10—62:3*

VU 96 “Will you come and see the light”

MV 45 “You are holy”

MV 115 “Behold, behold, I make all things new”

*Psalm 148*

VU 220 “Praise to the Lord, the Almighty”

VU 222 “Come, let us sing”

VU 229 “God of the sparrow”

MV 30 “It’s a song of praise to the Maker”

MV 174 “Holy Ground”

*Galatians 4:4–7*

MV 48 “I can feel you near me God”

MV 157 “I am a child of God”

*Luke 2:22–40*

VU pp. 902–903 “Song of Simeon”

MV 138 “My love colours outside the lines”

MV 209 “Go, make a diff’rence”

MV 212 “Sent out in Jesus’ name”

MV 215 “Peace be with you”

## January 1 – New Year’s Day (Friday)

**Ecclesiastes 3:1–13**

For everything there is a season.

**Psalm 8** (VU pp. 730–732)

We are crowned with God’s glory.

**Revelation 21:1–6*a***

A new heaven and a new earth.

**Matthew 25:31–46**

When I was hungry, you gave me food.

### To Ponder

What is your vision of humans joining together as God’s family and forming a new earth?

### Spark

What is our relationship with the earth, each other, and our Creator on the land where we live? As people, we come from different races, cultures, and regions; so as God’s family, what is it to be as “one” with God? If your congregation does not do a land or treaty acknowledgement at the beginning of worship and meetings, this might be an opportunity to introduce it. Consider using the film *Reserve 107: Reconciliation on the Prairies*, found at www.reserve107thefilm.com. It has been made available for free by the Mennonite Central Committee Saskatchewan and St. John’s Lutheran ELCIC. Donations welcomed.

### With Children

Ask the children what kinds of activities they like to do in winter. What is their favourite winter activity? (hockey, ice fishing, sledding, skiing, crokicurl, playing with snow, drinking hot chocolate, playing board games, doing crafts) etc.) Ask, “Do you do these by yourself or do you want to do them with family and friends?” Ask them what kinds of clothing and equipment they need for their favourite activities. What can they do to make sure everyone has fun? (Make sure everyone has what they need to take part.) Jesus talks to us today about sharing what we have with others, even strangers, and making everyone part of God’s family. Do you think you could try to do this? How could we share among ourselves and with others?

### Sermon Starter

In *When All You’ve Ever Wanted Isn’t Enough* (Fireside, 1986), Rabbi Harold Kushner describes Ecclesiastes as the most dangerous book in the Bible—sages thought it was so full of cynicism and skepticism that it might turn young people off religion. However, this passage from Ecclesiastes reminds us that there is balance to all of life and that the search for a life lived through God is what matters. Psalm 8 reveals what kind of God we engage: that is, a God who is majestic in the expansive heavens yet creates the smallest creatures. Jesus reveals in Matthew 25 that the way we care for others is the way we show love for him. We are to care for others in the same way that God is portrayed as caring for all mortals in Revelation 21. Through compassion, the old earth and heaven passes away and a new heaven and earth take their place.

### Hymns

*Ecclesiastes 3:1–13*

MV 24 “Breath of God, breath of peace”

MV 103 “Ka mana’o ’l ’O”

MV 136 “When hands reach out and fingers trace”

MV 156 “Dance with the Spirit”

*Psalm 8*

VU 226 “For the beauty of the earth”

VU 238 “How Great Thou Art”

*Revelation 21:1–6*a

VU 713 “I see a new heaven”

MV 49 “When we seek language”

MV 115 “Behold, behold, I make all things new”

MV 120 “My soul cries out”

*Matthew 25:31–46*

VU 210 “You, Lord, are both lamb and shepherd”

VU 600 “When I needed a neighbour”

MV 1 “Let us build a house”

MV 53 “God who spread the boundless prairie”

MV 79 “Spirit, open my heart”

MV 169 “When hands reach out”

MV 171 “Christ has no body now but yours”

MV 209 “Go, make a diff’rence

From *The Good Book 1*, Linnea Good (Borealis Music, 2001)

“Living in the Light”

“How then shall I live”

“Part of everything”

## January 3 – Second after Christmas

*Worship materials for January 3 and 6 were contributed by Geoff Wilfong-Pritchard, St. Andrew’s U.C., Edmonton, Alta.*

**Jeremiah 31:7–14**

The grieving people will be gathered in joy.

**Psalm 147:12–20** (VU p. 868)

God blesses Jerusalem with peace and abundance.

**Ephesians 1:3–14**

Adopted, forgiven, and blessed with abundance.

**John 1:(1–9), 10–18**

The Word was in the world, but the world did not know him.

### To Ponder

What is coming into being through us?

### Spark

A person’s eyes, as well as their actions, tell us a lot about what dwells within them. Create a slide show or a collage of pictures that focuses on a variety of faces and actions under the heading “We have seen Wisdom’s glory, full of grace and truth.”

### With Children

Remind everyone that it is a new year, and with a new year come new beginnings. Have each of the children find an adult they don’t know and ask them, “What’s hard about starting something new?” Invite people to discuss it amongst themselves. (We have found this to be a great way to teach children how to have a conversation with an adult. You or someone else may need to coach or support them to approach an adult, speak slowly and clearly, and then thank the adult for their response.) Gather up the responses from the children and solicit answers from the larger group. Add your own reflections. Though new beginnings can be hard, the Gospel of John reminds us that God’s wisdom is present in every new beginning. Even if things don’t end up the way they began, God’s presence is there, building on what has been.

Sermon Starter

The prologue to the Gospel of John sounds like it is describing an event from long ago: “In the beginning was the Word.” That energy still permeates the cosmos, still creating, still singing. Put the gospel in the present tense: “The Word becomes flesh and dwells among us, and we see that glory.” What is it like when we see, notice, or discover that energy, or glory, at work in ourselves and in the community? Note that the Gospel of John starts with the same phrase as the Book of Genesis. How do these two “creation” stories relate?

Hymns

*Jeremiah 31:7–14*

“Lord, you can turn all mourning” by John L. Bell in *There Is One Among Us* (Wild Goose Publications, 1998)

VU 273 “The King of love”

VU 657 “He leadeth me”

*Palm 147*

VU 684 “Make me a channel of your peace”

VU 955 “Dona nobis pacem”

*Ephesians 1:3–14*

VU 660 “How firm a foundation”

MV 161 “I have called you by your name”

*John 1:10–18*

VU 84 “O radiant Christ, incarnate Word”

VU 93 “When heaven’s bright with mystery”

VU p. 891 “Who comes from God”

MV 162 “Christ, within us hidden”

## January 6 – Epiphany (Wednesday)

**Isaiah 60:1–6**

Arise, shine; for your light has come.

**Psalm 72:1–7, 10–14** (VU p. 790 Parts One and Two)

God’s anointed defends the poor.

**Ephesians 3:1–12**

Boldness and confidence through faith.

**Matthew 2:1–12**

The visit of the magi.

### To Ponder

In *For the Time Being: A Christmas Oratorio* (1944), W.H. Auden offers this line: “To discover how to be human now is the reason we follow this star.” Why do you follow the star?

### Spark

Set up an area with the necessities of travel—suitcases, backpacks, passport, airline tickets, etc.

With Children

Ask the children to ask congregants, “What’s one thing that you can’t travel without?” Gather up the responses. Add your own. Look through the items on display. Remind everyone that the story from Matthew’s gospel is the ultimate travel story. See if anyone remembers what Matthew said the magi couldn’t travel without. Gifts! In some cultures, one never arrives at someone’s house without a gift in hand. Did you know that wherever we go, we take gifts with us? Depending on how well you know the children, you can point out the gifts they have that they take with them wherever they go, like curiosity, kindness, and caring.

### Sermon Starter

The magi’s story can be heard as a story of power transformed. At the beginning of the story, the magi seem to have a lot in common with Herod. Their first instinct is to head to Herod, the king; they are natural conversation partners. But, after encountering Jesus, the magi are changed. They resist Herod’s command to return to him, going home instead by another way. While Herod exercises the power of violence and coercion, the magi exercise the power of resistance. Not only do they worship the Christ child, but by not going back to Herod, they embody the resistance to violence that Jesus will live for and ultimately die for. This story might well challenge our communities to consider how we, like the magi, embody the resistance to violence that is the foundation of the ministry of Jesus.

### Hymns

*Isaiah 60:1–6*

VU 79 “Arise, your light is come”

VU 679 “Let there be light”

VU 680 “Isaiah the prophet has written of old”

*Psalm 72*

VU p. 790 “Hail to God’s own anointed”

*Ephesians 3:1–12*

VU 266 “Amazing grace”

MV 12 “Come touch our hearts”

MV 79 “Spirit, open my heart”

*Matthew 2:1–12*

VU 89 “From a distant home”

VU 91 “The first Nowell”

VU 93 “When heaven’s bright with mystery”

MV 220 “Hope shines as the solitary star”

## January 10 – Baptism of the Lord Sunday

*Worship materials for January 10 and 17 were contributed by Ivan Gregan, Port Wallis P.C., Dartmouth, N.S.*

**Genesis 1:1–5**

The first days of creation.

**Psalm 29** (VU p. 756)

God’s voice is over the waters.

**Acts 19:1–7**

Paul baptizes with the Spirit.

**Mark 1:4–11**

Jesus is baptized by John.

### To Ponder

Where was the most challenging place you have ever been to in your life, or when was the most challenging time-? When did you begin to “see the light” or to discover a new perspective on life? When have you experienced the dawning of a new day?

### Spark

The first emanation from God is light—that which reveals and helps us see or discover. At his baptism, Jesus is revealed as God’s son. Fill the sanctuary with various types of light and many vessels of water.

### With Children

Have ready an eyewash cup and a basin, a towel, and a soothing aloe balm. Talk about how when we have something in our eye, this cup can help flush it out and help our eye feel fine again. When we are injured, we must wash the dirt out of the wound. If we are sunburned, we put on soothing aloe. Let the children handle these objects and maybe try some balm. Link this to baptism, in which God’s soothing water brings healing, hope, and possibility.

### Sermon Starter

Baptism incorporates us into community. In Greek, there are two concepts related to baptism: one is to wash or to dip for cleansing while the other is to be immersed. In pickling, we wash cucumbers at the very beginning, and then we immerse them in vinegar and spices and leave them there until they are infused with the flavours, creating pickles. Baptism is not just water washing away sin or saving us—it means to be immersed in the community until our outlook is influenced by the flavour of the community. Baptism is about a covenant relationship in which we are immersed Sunday after Sunday in the community of Christ, where we grow in grace as we advance both in years and in faith. In this progressive faith journey, the light comes on and we begin to understand the world differently. Through the gentle encouragement of loving hands, we are filled with the Holy Spirit and given new birth, just as Paul and Apollos helped people discover God’s Spirit. Jesus was baptized not for his salvation but to be immersed in the covenant community and to offer flavouring to the community. How are we flavouring our church community? What can we add? How can we be infused with the light of Christ and carry that light out beyond the walls of our church to enlighten the world?

### Hymns

*Genesis 1:1–5*

VU 82 “A light is gleaming”

VU 375 “Spirit, Spirit of gentleness”

VU 453 “Out of deep, unordered water”

VU 679 “Let there be light”

*Psalm 29*

VU p. 755 “The God of heaven”

*Acts 19:1–7*

VU 445 “A little child the Saviour came”

MV 150 “Spirit God, be our breath”

*Mark 1:4–11*

VU 99 “Christ, when for us you were baptized”

VU 100 “When Jesus comes to be baptized”

MV 109 “My soul is thirsting for you”

MV 115 “Behold, behold, I make all things new”

## January 17 – Second Sunday after Epiphany

**1 Samuel 3:1–10, (11–20)**

God calls Samuel.

**Psalm 139:1–6, 13–18** (VU p. 861)

God has searched and known me.

**1 Corinthians 6:12–20**

Your body is a temple of God’s Spirit.

**John 1:43–51**

Jesus calls Philip and Nathanael.

### To Ponder

When have you ever thought that you were too (*fill in the blank*) to be called by God? Why?

### Spark

Make a sign that reads “Members Only!” Make another one that says “Responsible Persons Only!” or “Only Valued People May Enter!” Finally, make one that reads “Children of God—Saints and Sinners Welcome.” Have these on display at the front of the sanctuary as people enter. Ask a child and an elder to share in reading the scriptures today.

### With Children

Refer to the signs and read them aloud. Ask the children to consider which sign applies to them. Guide them to choose the Children of God sign. Explore how everyone brings gifts and abilities to the congregation and to the world. We need each other. For example, a little person can crawl into a small space where a larger person can’t go or a child with heightened senses can help those around them appreciate the blessings of nature. What can you do that I can’t do? How do we change as we grow older? God calls each of us just as we are now. Link this to God calling the boy Samuel and Jesus calling Philip and Nathanael. Each of these people was asked to bring their particular gifts to God’s work.

### Sermon Starter

Inadequacies abound. People concentrate on what is missing in our congregations today—“Where are the children?” “We can’t afford that!”—rather than on what we have, and how, together, we can make something wonderful for God. We are all equal before God and God calls us into ministry. God called the young Samuel. (His name in Hebrew means “called by God.”) God called three times to Samuel, but Samuel required the wisdom of an elder to figure it out. Jesus called Philip (who appears quite often in the gospels) and Nathanael (who seldom appears and then is often called by the name Bartholomew—people can’t even remember his correct name!). In Corinthians, Paul addresses sexual immorality. Sexual breaching of boundaries, assaults, and innuendoes destroy many lives and cannot be sidestepped. The focus of this passage is dealing with our bodies being temples in which the Holy Spirit may dwell and thus allowing us to become one with God, regardless of age, sexual orientation, or gender. What other activities might fill what should be the God-space in our lives and possibly destroy the temple of our bodies?

Hymns

*1 Samuel 3:1–10, (11–20)*

VU 269 “The care the eagle gives her young”

VU 506 “Take my life and let it be”

VU 509 “I, the Lord of sea and sky”

MV 1 “Let us build a house”

MV 10 “Come and seek the ways of Wisdom”

MV 18 “Lord, prepare me to be a sanctuary”

*Psalm 139:1–6, 13–18*

VU 219 “When all your mercies”

*1 Corinthians 6:12–20*

VU 266 “Amazing grace”

VU 508 “Just as I am”

MV 48 “I can feel you near me God”

*John 1:43–51*

VU 268 “Bring many names”

VU 562 “Jesus calls us”

MV 161 “I have called you by your name”

## January 24 – Third Sunday after Epiphany

*Worship materials for January 24 to February 14 were contributed by Anna Atkinson, Cedar U.C., Nanaimo, B.C.*

**Jonah 3:1–5, 10**

Jonah calls Nineveh to repent.

**Psalm 62:5–12** (VU pp. 779–780)

Be still, my soul, and wait for God.

**1 Corinthians 7:29–31**

The time is short for the present form of the world.

**Mark 1:14–20**

Jesus calls Simon, Andrew, James, and John.

### To Ponder

What is the longest you have spent in silence? What is your relationship with silence?

### Spark

Silence is powerful. It might be interesting to begin the service by invoking silence directly and dramatically, either by standing in silence at the table and closing your eyes or by declaring, like a prophet, the first words of the psalm reading: “For God alone my soul waits in silence, for my hope is from God.” You might sing it. Here’s a tune by Anna Atkinson:



### With Children

Bring something small to give to the children to share. Cookies or candy are classic but beware of food allergies. Small cards with pictures and words of encouragement (joy, peace, love, comfort, hope, etc.) would be even better. Have a conversation about God inviting us, calling us, to make others feel welcome. This is what Jesus did. Consider the difference between trying to convince someone they are welcome and simply sharing something with them. Give the children several cards or treats each and ask them to share—with each other, with their friends and family, or with anyone else it feels safe and okay to share with.

### Sermon Starter

One of the most striking things about this group of readings is made manifest in the text of the psalm, which hints that there are only two ways of becoming rich: extortion and robbery. The psalm also has some difficult words to say about those who are “of low degree”: they are “but a breath” (often translated as “vanity”)—meaning empty, transitory, unsatisfactory. Those “of high degree,” on the other hand, are “a lie.” It is indeed unsatisfactory in the kingdom of God to have those who are poor, who lack sufficient means; likewise, in the kingdom of God, the idea of anyone having “high degree” is a lie. Rather, all should be fed, all should have enough, and all are equal in God’s sight. In the gospel, Jesus calls four men away from their occupation in order that they might now “fish for people,” but this, too, is difficult, at least in its usual interpretation, which sees “fishing” as evangelism. Because what is fishing if not the use of something illusory to fool the gullible and engage them in their own destruction? What is Jesus really asking here: that we should evangelize by fooling people into believing a falsehood that, in the end, opposes their best interests and enriches the evangelists? Surely not. Perhaps then we could understand this in a different way: rather than meaning “catching people,” fishing could mean fishing in order to care for others. If we work for each other and for all who are in need, then indeed the world in its present form will end and a new world will begin.

Hymns

*Jonah 3:1–5, 10*

MV 18 “Lord, prepare me”

*Psalm 62:5–12*

VU 262 “A mighty fortress is our God”

MV 80 “Beyond the beauty and the awe”

MV 103 “Ka mana’o ’l ’O”

*1 Corinthians 7:29–31*

VU 713 “I see a new heaven”

MV 17 “God in the darkness”

*Mark 1:14–20*

VU 563 “Jesus, you have come to the lakeshore”

VU 567 “Will you come and follow me”

MV 113 “Jesus saw them fishing”

MV 127 “I saw the rich ones”

MV 209 “Go, make a diff’rence”

## January 31 – Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

**Deuteronomy 18:15–20**

God will raise up a prophet after Moses.

**Psalm 111** (VU p. 833)

The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom.

**1 Corinthians 8:1–13**

Concerning food offered to idols.

**Mark 1:21–28**

A man with an unclean spirit is healed in Capernaum.

### To Ponder

When have you offered a prophetic voice? What was that like for you?

### Spark

Place signs of modern-day prophecy around the sanctuary. Ask your congregants to help: Who has a protest sign to offer? What about a megaphone? A picture or memento of your favourite prophet? (Wangari Maathai, Greta Thunberg, Óscar Romero, etc.). Or come to lead worship dressed in clothes that are grubby from gardening or working in your workshop.

### With Children

Start a conversation about “prophecy” as speaking up for what’s right (and not as telling fortunes!). Then read a book about someone who does this, even in a really gentle and unexpected way, such as *The Curious Garden* by Peter Brown (Word Alive, 2009) or *Malala’s Magic Pencil* by Malala Yousafzai (Little, Brown, 2017). Or bring some easy-to-grow seeds (sunflower, chia, peas, or beans) and a cup of dirt. Start a conversation about what the word “unclean” means in the story from the Gospel of Mark. That’s how people saw the man then, but now we “see” or understand people in a different way, a way that Jesus showed us. Talk about how dirt is sacred—not just “dirty”! Use as an illustration the fact that seeds cannot grow well unless they have good dirt (soil). Creation needs to be “unclean”! Now plant the seeds together.

### Sermon Starter

The readings from the Hebrew Bible and the gospel this Sunday share this: they both speak to the coming of a prophet. But they also both assert that the prophet *comes from the people*, which is where all biblical prophets come from. In Deuteronomy 18:15, Moses relays God’s promise of a prophet raised up from among the people; Jesus is noted in Mark 1:22 as *not* being one of the scribes, and yet as having authority. But Jesus is not the only prophet, nor is he the last. The word *prophet* comes from a Greek word meaning “spokesperson,” and although we tend to see a prophet as a biblical character repeating messages from God, quite frequently, those messages sound very familiar: take care of the vulnerable, seek peace, love justice, care for the earth and for each other. The prophet, then, speaks for all those in creation whose voices are being drowned out. Perhaps, then, we are all called to be prophets, and perhaps the fear of God that is the beginning of wisdom is in part the willingness to move through our fears and discover God reflected in others—especially those most marginalized, particularly since we are the only “Jesus” many people will ever experience.

Hymns

*Deuteronomy 18:15–20*

MV 171 “Christ has no body now but yours”

*Psalm 111*

VU 287 “Wellspring of wisdom”

MV 10 “Come and seek the ways”

*1 Corinthians 8:1–13*

MV 141 “We are all one people”

*Mark 1:21–28*

VU 609 “In all our grief and fear”

VU 611 “Out of the depths, O God”

VU 619 “Healer of our every ill”

VU 620 “Silence, frenzied, unclean spirit”

MV 90 “Don’t be afraid”

## February 7 – Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

**Isaiah 40:21–31**

Those who wait upon God shall renew their strength.

**Psalm 147:1–11, 20*c*** (VU pp. 868–869 Part One)

God heals the broken-hearted.

**1 Corinthians 9:16–23**

I have become all things to all people for the gospel’s sake.

**Mark 1:29–39**

Simon’s mother-in-law and many others healed.

### To Ponder

When have you brought healing to someone? How did it occur?

### Spark

Try a musical call to worship. Consider using “Something Which Is Known” by Gregory Norbet of the Benedictine Monks of the Weston Priory. (Visit westonpriory.org and note the monks’ permissions policy, which allows for a single use for free.) The tune of the chorus is lovely and has only one word, alleluia, which could be sung by everyone. The verses are trickier, but could be offered by a choir or soloist. Or use any chorus that is composed of alleluias, since it would allow us to do exactly what the psalm says: praise God!

### With Children

Jesus didn’t use healing methods that we would recognize. What do doctors and nurses use? What other kinds of healing do you know about? How can ordinary people who are not doctors or nurses help to heal people in their bodies, hearts, and minds? You might “fish” for ideas like giving healthy food to the food bank, writing a get-well card to someone who is sick, offering a smile to someone who is sad, praying for others, or getting a bandage for them. We can be healers, too. In fact, Jesus asked his disciples to heal others in his name.

### Sermon Starter

Today’s gospel seems to be going in several directions at once, but one sentence jumps out: the one where Simon’s mother-in-law is cured and she immediately begins to serve. Two things seem really important here. The first is that we cannot serve if we are not ourselves well—whether this is in body, mind, or spirit. And, of course, others often notice that we need help and offer it, as the disciples do here. If we receive the help with gratitude and grace, we are much more likely to be healed and thus be able to serve again. This brings us to the second point: no one has to tell Simon’s mother-in-law to serve. In fact, in all of the gospels, Jesus never ever has to tell a woman to serve. It’s not that men didn’t serve—it’s just that in Jesus’ culture (and still to some extent in our own) service was something women were overwhelmingly more likely to be taught to do. But men also serve. It becomes important to accept help and healing, or seek it out, for ourselves, as Jesus does. After he has been engaged with healing and teaching, he goes to a quiet place where he cannot be disturbed. His disciples, when they track him down, sound a bit whiny: “Where have you been? Everyone is looking for you.” Having spent some time in rest, Jesus is ready to proceed with his work. This could be an interesting way to emphasize the importance of Sabbath time. It certainly connects back to the reading from Isaiah, where we are told to “wait” on God and renew our strength.

Hymns

*Isaiah 40:21–31*

VU 269 “The care the eagle gives her young”

VU 270 “Dear Mother God”

VU p. 808 “On eagle’s wings”

MV 65 “When we are tested”

MV 83 “Let my spirit always sing”

MV 84 “In you there is a refuge”

*Psalm 147:1–11, 20*c

VU 625 “I feel the winds of God”

MV 83 “Let my spirit always sing”

*1 Corinthians 9:16–23*

VU 467 “One bread, one body”

VU 606 “In Christ there is no east or west”

MV 145 “Draw the circle wide”

MV 159 “In star and crescent”

*Mark 1:29–39*

VU 358 “When Jesus the healer”

VU 595 “The Servant Song”

VU 611 “Out of the depths, O God”

VU 613 “We cannot measure how you heal”

MV 17 “God in the darkness”

## February 14 – Transfiguration Sunday

**2 Kings 2:1–12**

Elijah is taken up into heaven.

**Psalm 50:1–6** (VU p. 775)

God summons the earth.

**2 Corinthians 4:3–6**

The light of knowledge shines in our hearts.

**Mark 9:2–9**

The transfiguration of Jesus.

### To Ponder

How do you imagine Jesus’ appearance, clothing, actions, voice, language, etc.? How was this perception formed?

### Spark

Find as many different cultural depictions of Jesus as possible and create a rotating slide show or post them around the sanctuary. One of the points here is that Jesus does not have one specific appearance; in fact, we don’t know what Jesus looked like. However, the transfiguration of Jesus is a prelude to what happens at his rising: he is changed, he is not what we expect.

### With Children

It just so happens that Transfiguration Sunday falls directly on Valentine’s Day this year. If you have mostly little ones, you could perhaps read My Valentine for Jesus, a board book by Laurie Lazzaro Knowlton (Zonderkidz, 2009). Older children could be engaged in a conversation about how love has the power to “transfigure” or transform all of us. As followers of Jesus, we seek to transform this world in love. How important a task that is in the world!

### Sermon Starter

The contrast between the reading from the Hebrew Bible and the one from the gospel is striking. Where Elijah is taken up to heaven while his disciple watches, in a similar incident, Jesus *stays on earth*. This is perhaps the best illustration of the message of the New Testament: God is with us, and we are sent to proclaim this good news. This is the real challenge that the disciples—both Elisha and Jesus’ followers—face. It’s also a challenge that we face. After a spiritual experience, how do we proclaim the good news? We cannot, as Peter suggests, simply build a refuge and hang out on a mountaintop with Jesus, in part because Jesus is not going to hang out with us there. Jesus, having spoken with the prophets who came before, heads back down the mountain to do God’s work. Not only this, but he turns the disciples’ heads away from him: he is beloved of God, but he is not the centre of attention. The centre of attention is the work of bringing God’s kingdom to earth.

Hymns

*2 Kings 2:1–12*

VU 559 “Come, O Fount of every blessing”

VU 575 “I’m gonna live so God can use me”

“Swing low, sweet chariot” African American spiritual

*Psalm 50:1–6*

VU 296 “This is God’s wondrous world”

VU 312 “Praise with joy the world’s Creator”

*2 Corinthians 4:3–6*

VU 264 “Immortal, invisible, God only wise”

“Shine, Jesus, shine” by Graham Kendrick (Hymnary.org)

*Mark 9:2–9*

VU 102 “Jesus on the mountain peak”

VU 336 “Christ whose glory fills the skies”

MV 44 “Shadow and substance”

MV 114 “Behold the face of Christ”

MV 213 “Take up his song”

“Transform us” by Sylvia G. Dunstan (Hymnary.org)