

## Prayers of the People

### The Lord's Prayer

**Hymn:** VU 2 Come Thou long expected Jesus

To Depart in Faith

### **Commissioning and Benediction**

The word we have been given this day is *peace*.

May we carry peace on our journey throughout this week, the *peace* we have encountered and experienced in this place.

May we offer the vision of *peace* to all we meet.

May we share the blessing that we have received, this day and always. Amen.

### **Closing** (tune: *Hark the Herald*)

In this Advent time of waiting, May we serve the Prince of Peace  
Share his love with those around us, Joy and hope in all increase.  
Dream the vision, tell the story, Healing bring to those in need.  
Share the promises once more, Christ is near who came before.  
Advent comes the time is here, Jesus Christ will soon appear.

### Scripture readings for December 14 2025

Isaiah 35:1-10 Psalm 146 James 5:7-10 Matthew 11:2-11

### Prayer for Memory Tree

Thank you, God, for memories and memory-making of Christmases past and those yet to come, mixtures of calm and confusion, light and darkness, cold and warmth, regrets discarded and treasures piled high. Thank you for anticipation and hope, laughter and joy from children's giggles and grown-ups' chuckles. We lift up to you our loved ones who have passed into your eternal light. Even as we trust they are now with you, we still miss them and pray for them. We give thanks for gift they have been in our lives and communities. Gathered, we enjoy warmth and companionship and pray that, scattered, we continue in thanksgiving for the One who gives us life and love. There are no words to say it all except Wonder, Praise, and Thank you.

## **Meridian Pastoral Charge**

*December 7, 2025 Advent 2*

### **Sanford United Church, Sanford MB**

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Welcome and Announcements.

### **Acknowledgement**

Holy One, Child of Life, Great Spirit, we meet you in the company of ancestors and the presence of people praying throughout our country, connected by a longing for peace and healing.

**Find our hearts open and ready for reconciliation as we face the injustices of the past and long for the joy of a future of peace and healing.**

**Introit Peace is a ribbon that circles the earth, giving a promise of safety and worth. When God is a child there's joy in our song. The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong, and none shall be afraid! VU 7v.2**

### WE GATHER TO WORSHIP GOD

### **Call to Worship**

We are called into worship and fellowship by the words of John the Baptist:

**Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.**

We bring our wishes for the world and its people:

**Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth; and all flesh shall encounter the salvation of God.**

**Hymn VU** VU 31 O Lord How Shall I meet

**Advent Candle** *Symbol: weigh scales*

**Second Candle: Justice and the End of Oppression**

*One blue/purple candle is lit.*

In the name of the One who came to bring justice, we gather around the Advent wreath.

**The prophet Isaiah announces, “Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations” (Isaiah 42:1).**

A tiny babe, a child of wisdom, an adult with courage, Jesus lived the way of justice. He committed to a ministry of ending oppression.

Jesus the Christ brought hope for troubled folk.

**“What does the Lord require of you but to do justice and to love kindness and to walk\* humbly with your God?” (Micah 6:8).**

We too travel the paths of justice, kindness, and humility, knowing that these are the footprints\*\* of the merciful Christ.

**This Advent season we commit ourselves to Isaiah’s instruction:**

**“Learn to do good; seek justice; rescue the oppressed; defend the orphan; plead for the widow” (Isaiah 1:17).**

We light the second Advent candle committing ourselves to the way of justice and overcoming oppression. We place on the communion table these scales, reminding ourselves of the scales of justice.

*The second candle is lit*

VU 6 v. 2 **A candle is burning a candle of peace, a candle to signal that conflict must cease: for Jesus is coming to show us the way; a message of peace humbly laid in the hay.**

**Prayer of Approach**

Gentle Creator, who travels beside us and dwells among us, we gather in this community to feel your embrace. We are waiting in joyful anticipation for the arrival of your son, God- Made-Flesh. Ready our hearts for the hope, the peace, the joy, and the love that arrives with Jesus. Open our senses to your messages today, to feel your grace weaving between us and drawing us closer to you and to each other.

**Story Time**

**Hymn:** VU 5 All Earth is Waiting

**Prayer for Understanding**

God of the journey, we have begun to make our way to Bethlehem. We stumble on rocks and pull out a well-worn map, wondering if we are on the right path.

Here in the wilderness, may these words from scripture guide our path. May they offer the peace of a deep and sacred breath, that we might discover a clear and evident way ahead, the one that leads to a humble stable, the one that reveals Emmanuel, God-with-Us. Amen.

**First Scripture Reading** Isaiah 11:1-10

This is the story of God’s people. **All: Thanks be to God.**

**Responsive Reading** Psalm 72 VU 790

**Gospel** Matthew 3:1-12

This is the Good News of Jesus Christ! **All: Thanks be to God.**

**Presentation from the Westgrove Family Resource Centre**

**HYMN:** VU 336 Christ Whose Glory Fills the skies.

**Minute for Mission**

**Offering Invitation:** This Sunday, we celebrate the Advent of Peace, born for us in Jesus Christ. Think of your gifts as seeds of that peace which we can plant in the world God loves for Christ’s sake.

**Offertory Hymn:** VU 55 v.4 **What can I give him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb, if I were a wise man, I would do my part, yet what I can I give him—give him my heart.**

**Offering Prayer:** God, our Peace and our Promise, receive our gifts as seeds of gratitude for your gift to us in Christ Jesus. Bless these seeds with growth so that peace will take root in people who face conflict and danger, and in places seeking to establish peace in the face of violence. Be their peace and their promise, through Christ our Lord.