



# FAIRLAWN

Connect with what matters in life.



Exodus by Ben Uri

**Fairlawn Avenue United Church  
Advent II ~ Communion  
Sunday, December 7, 2025 10:30am**

**Rev. Dr. Cameron Watts  
Eleanor Daley, Director of Music  
Fairlawn Avenue Senior Choir**

2.

\*Indicates when the congregation is to stand, as able.

Congregational responses, singing and readings in unison are indicated in bold text.

## Welcome and Acknowledgements

### Invitation to Worship

Based on Exodus 15

***The Holy One is my strength and my might,  
and has become my salvation;  
this is my God, whom I will praise,  
the God of my heritage whom I will exalt.***

'Who is like you, O Holy One, among the gods?

Who is like you, majestic in holiness,  
awesome in splendour, doing wonders?

***'In your steadfast love you led the people whom you redeemed;  
you guided them by your strength,  
to where you could be found.***

We are on a journey to freedom,  
an Exodus away from the values of the gods of this world,  
to be part of a community of compassion and justice.

***We are nurtured on this journey by bread and wine,  
served by Jesus who accompanies us through the wilderness  
of fear and complacency,  
Who invites us to stop striking false flames,  
and allow ourselves to be enveloped by a holy darkness.***

### Advent II Candle Exodus

Reader: Derek Wishart

"God does all her best work in the dark."

At this time of year, in the Northern Hemisphere,  
we are more aware of darkness.

The time of light is short and will dwindle more until the 22<sup>nd</sup> of December.

As we light our Advent Candles this year,  
we focus on the work God does in the darkness:  
Creation, the Exodus, the Nativity and the Resurrection.

In the Exodus account,  
the Holy One distracts the oppressing Egyptians with plagues  
and the Children of Israel escape under the cover of darkness  
and begin their long journey to freedom.

In the nighttime darkness they received manna,  
enough food for their journey.

At Mt. Sinai darkness contained the Presence of God  
as they were given the Law, the Way forward and the Way for life.

For us, this year, the second Advent Candle is the Exodus Candle.  
We light a second Advent Candle not just to dispel the dark but to help us find our  
way in the cloaking darkness.

Traditionally it is the candle of peace.

We light this candle with the prayer that all who know oppression will find a path to  
peace.

### **Lighting the Advent Candle**

Lighting of the second purple candle in the Advent Wreath

**\*Opening Hymn** Blest Be the God of Israel

VU #901 (verse 1)

**Blest be the God of Israel,  
who comes to set us free;  
who visits and redeems us  
and grants us liberty.  
The prophets spoke of mercy,  
of freedom and release;  
God shall fulfil the promise  
and bring the people peace.**

### **Gathering Litany** A Story of Light and Darkness

In the beginning the Creator allowed for chaos,  
for troubled dreams,  
and uncertain sounds,  
and fear in the darkness.

***We live by faith, not by sight.***

4. When the chaos was most threatening  
and hope was bleakest,  
The Holy One said  
***“Do not fear.  
“I am your light.”***

When we felt like we were fumbling in the dark  
The Holy One said  
***“I give you peace.  
Not as the world gives.”***

When we were overwhelmed by the darkness of death  
The Holy One said  
***“Though you walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death  
I am with you.”***

When we were unsure of our way  
The Holy One said  
***“I give you my Spirit as an Advocate  
to walk alongside you on your journey.”***  
  
***We walk together into this day,  
and every day.***

**\*Introit** Hark, the Glad Sound! E. Daley

Hark, the glad sound! the Saviour comes,  
the Saviour promised long:  
let every heart prepare a throne,  
and every voice a song.  
(Philip Doddridge, 1702-1751,  
based on Luke 4:18, 19)

**Scripture** Isaiah 11:1-10 New Revised Standard Version

**Anthem** The Yearning Craig Courtney (b. 1948)

There is a yearning in hearts weighed down by ancient grief  
and centuries of sorrow.  
There is a yearning in hearts that in the darkness hide  
and in the shades of death abide,  
a yearning for tomorrow.

There is a yearning for the promised One,  
 the First-born of creation.  
 There is a yearning for the Lord who visited His own,  
 and by His death for sin atoned,  
 to bring to us salvation.  
*Emmanuel, Emmanuel,*  
*within our hearts the yearning.*

There is a yearning that fills the hearts of those who wait  
 the day of His appearing.  
 There is a yearning when all our sorrows are erased  
 and we shall see the One who placed  
 within our hearts the yearning.  
*Emmanuel, Emmanuel,*  
*within our hearts the yearning.*  
 (Susan Bentall Boersma)

**Reflection** Belt Tightening

Rev. Dr. Cameron Watts

**\*Hymn** O Day of Peace

VU #682

**O day of peace that dimly shines  
 through all our hopes and prayers and dreams,  
 guide us to justice, truth, and love,  
 delivered from our selfish schemes.  
 May swords of hate fall from our hands,  
 our hearts from envy find release,  
 till by God's grace our warring world  
 shall see Christ's promised reign of peace.**

**Then shall the wolf dwell with the lamb,  
 nor shall the fierce devour the small;  
 as beasts and cattle calmly graze,  
 a little child shall lead them all.  
 Then enemies shall learn to love,  
 all creatures find their true accord;  
 the hope of peace shall be fulfilled,  
 for all the earth shall know the Lord.**

**The Sacrament of Communion ~ Invitation to the Table ~ Sharing the Elements**

**Communion Anthem** Thou Shalt Know Him

Mark Sirett (b. 1952)

Thou shalt know him when he comes,  
 not by any din of drums,  
 nor his manners, nor his airs,  
 nor by anything he wears.

Thou shalt know him when he comes,  
 not by his crown or by his gown,  
 but his coming known shall be,  
 by the holy harmony which his coming makes in thee.  
 Thou shalt know him when he comes. Amen.  
 (Anon.)

**The Passing of the Peace****Introduction of the Offering and the Offertory****\*Presentation of the Offering**

E. Daley

(The choir will sing through once, and then the congregation is invited to join in.)

**Come, Light of lights, come shine upon us,  
 Come, touch our hearts, we long for you.  
 Come, touch our lives, come and renew us,  
 Come to us, Emmanuel.**

**Prayers of the People and The Lord's Prayer**[2]

**O Breathing Life, your Name shines everywhere!  
 Release a space to plant your Presence here.**

**Imagine your possibilities now.  
 Embody your desire in every light and form.**

**Grow through us this moment's bread and wisdom.**

**Untie the knots of failure binding us,  
 as we release the strands we hold of others' faults.**

**Help us not forget our Source,  
 yet free us from not being in the Present.**

**From you arises every Vision, Power and Song  
from gathering to gathering. Amen.  
May our future actions grow from here!**

**\*Closing Hymn** Of the Father's Love Begotten

VU #61 (verses 1 and 2)

**Of the Father's love begotten  
ere the worlds began to be,  
Christ is Alpha and Omega,  
Christ the source, the ending he,  
of the things that are and have been,  
and that future years shall see,  
evermore and evermore.**

**At his word the worlds were framèd.  
He commanded, it was done:  
heaven and earth and depths of ocean  
in their threefold order one:  
all that grows beneath the shining  
of the moon and burning sun,  
evermore and evermore.**

**\*Sending Out**

**\*Choral Commissioning**

E. Daley

(The choir will sing through once, and then the congregation is invited to join in.)

**Redeemer, come! We open wide our hearts to you; here Lord, abide.  
Let us your inner presence feel, your grace and love in us reveal.**

(Georg Weissel 1642, trans. Catherine Winkworth 1855, alt.)

**Postlude**

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[1] MBelletini/adapted

# Advent & Christmas at Fairlawn

Sunday, Dec. 14 10:30am Advent III Worship Service

Sunday, Dec. 14 7:00pm Lessons and Carols

Sunday, Dec. 21 10:30am Advent IV Worship Service

Sunday, Dec. 21 7:00pm The Longest Night ~  
Messiah Complex

Wed., Dec. 24 4:00pm Christmas Eve ~ Family Service

Wed., Dec. 24 10:00pm Christmas Eve Candlelight  
Communion Service

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