**Be United Communities of Faith**

**Bridgewater United Church**

**December 10th, 2023 Second of Advent Angel Tree Sunday**

**Minister:** *Reverend Neil McEwen* **Music Ministry Director:** *Barbara Pate*

**Leading in Worship:** *Bridgewater United**Youth and Young Adults*

**Audio Visual Technician:** *David Moran* **Sound Engineer:** *Shelley Moran*

**Greeter:** *Carolyn MacKay* **Greeter:** *Jane Martin*

*The asterisk (\*) indicates the congregation may stand, as they are able.*

*The print in* ***BOLD*** *is where the congregation participates.*

Prelude

**Hymn:** **# 38 VU – Angels We Have Heard on High**

Welcome and Announcements

**\*Chorus: B-United**

Lighting of the Inclusivity Candles

**Advent Candle****-Lighting: When God Is A Child**

Candle of Hope Is Lit

On this second Sunday of Advent,

we light this second candle symbolizing peace -

the proclamation that God calls us to live peacefully in understanding.

Candle of Peace Is Lit

**Noticing the tiny flame,**

**we wonder when the next puff of air will blow it out.**

**We ponder that, if this candle were outside,**

**it would quickly be extinguished.**

Still the flame flickers and flourishes –

a symbol of the Prince of Peace living within us,

a powerful image of strength despite perceived weakness.

**Advent Chorus:** **Hope Is A Candle (Verse 1 and 2)**

We come to affirm that divine peace thrives within us,

a seed of inspiration strengthened by Spirit breath.

**We come to seek wisdom and daring to live lives of peace,**

**transforming into a community of faith that builds bridges.**

We enter into prayer to receive the blessings of the peace,

that passes all understanding:

**Whisper to our hearts this morning, O God,**

**helping us to notice the gaps we create between one another.**

**Breathe into our intentions that we become ever more aware,**

**believing we can make a difference, no matter how small we may feel.**

**Lead us through the Way of Jesus to listen to one another in love. Amen.**

**Chorus:** **# 60 VU – O Come, All Ye Faithful (Chorus Only)**

**Opening Prayer:** (*unison)*

**Loving and eternal God, our Saviour, we exalt you, for you have done great things. Holy is your name. We sing songs of praise and adoration, as we anticipate and prepare with eagerness for the coming of Jesus, soon to be born in a stable. May your spirit stir our hearts to be open to your holy calling to justice and mercy. Keep us ever mindful of your love and everlasting faithfulness as we journey to Bethlehem. Honour and praise be yours forever. Amen.**

Your Generosity Matters: What is Advent the end of?

Special Music: Do You Hear What I Hear *sung by Isabella Frotten*

Offering our Thanks

**Offertory Response: # 55 VU – In the Bleak Midwinter – Verse 4**

**Prayer of Dedication:** (*unison)*

**Loving God, with hope and love, we bring our gifts to you. May our act of giving symbolize peace to the world. As we worship you through the Advent journey, may these offerings be blessed to bring peace for our work here in our own community and your work in the world. Amen.**

**Hymn: # 47 VU – Still, still, still**

Gospel Scripture Reading: Matthew 2:1-12

Holy Wisdom. Holy Word.

**Thanks be to God.**

Message: A Visit from St. Nicholas

Presentation of Angel Tree Gifts

Reflective Meditation

Special Music: Little Donkey *sung by the B-United Community Choir*

Prayers of the Community

**Hey God! A Prayer For Children**

**\*Hymn:** **# 43 VU – Go, Tell It on the Mountain**

Extinguishing The Candles

Commissioning And Benediction

Postlude

***CCLI No., 11287624, 20371363***

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***The church bulletins are given to the glory of God,***

***and in loving memory of parents, family, and friends,***

***gift of Everett and Margaret Anne Cook and family.***

**#APlaceWhereEveryoneBelongs**

**#ChooseLove**

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Church Office E-mail:  info@bridgewaterunited.ca Website:  [www.bridgewaterunited.ca](http://www.bridgewaterunited.ca/)

Church Office Hours ~ Tuesday to Friday ~ 10:00am – 12:30pm

Be sure to like and share our Facebook and YouTube page!

Our Church is a **Nut-Free and Scent-Free Church**

**Angel Tree Sunday**

Angel Tree Sunday is today. Our B-United Church Community will be providing Christmas through the Christmas Daddies program for six families from our local area. We will provide gifts and groceries for each family. Any tags that request a financial donation, will be later totalled into a gift card and presented to the family. Thank you to everyone for helping to provide Christmas for this wonderful Outreach. If you have not returned your gift, we will be receiving gifts through the Church Office from December 12th to 13th, from 10:00am-12:30pm. If you missed getting an angel, monetary donations are also appreciated, please mark them "Angel Tree" with your name and church envelope number or address on the envelope.

During today’s Worship Service, little helpers will be coming around to collect your Angel Tree Gifts during that portion of the service. If you have monetary donations for this Outreach, please place it in the Offering Plates at the back of the Sanctuary.

**Songs of the Season: Scotia Brass in Concert**

Bridgewater United and Scotia Brass will be co-hosting a concert on Thursday, December 14th at 7:30pm. Scotia Brass is Nova Scotia's premier large brass ensemble, featuring brass musicians from HRM and beyond. Free-Will Donation. Bridgewater United’s portion of the donations will be split between the Bridgewater Inter-Church Food Bank and Souls Harbour Bridgewater. Save the date for a night of music!

**Church Council**

Due to scheduling and timeline constraints in preparation for the Church Council meeting, the meeting will be postponed a week from December 13th to December 20th. Church Council will take place in the Sanctuary on December 20th at 7:00pm.

**Christmas Eve at Bridgewater United**

Bridgewater United will be worshipping on Christmas Eve at 10:30am for Advent IV with Holy Communion and then at 8:00pm for our Christmas Eve evening service. Come join us for a time of reflection as we get ready to welcome the Prince of Peace.

**Annual Reports of B-United**

It is that time of year again, when Committees and Ministries of B-United should be preparing their program reports for inclusion in the 2023 Annual Report. Please be reminded that your report is based on 2023 activities. The Church Office asks that all program and financial reports be typed and emailed in a Word Document by Friday, January 26th, 2024. **NO PDF FILES.** Reports are needed from the following: *Church Council, Ministry and Personnel Committee, Bermuda-Nova Scotia Regional Council Representative, Board of Trustees Report and Financial Report, Memorial Ministry, Ministerial Team, Faith Formation Committee Report and Financial Report, Pastoral Care Ministry, Finance and Stewardship Committee Report and Financial Report, Ways and Means Ministry, Property Committee, United Church Women Report and Financial Report, Prayer Shawl Ministry, Profile Committee, Worship Committee, Music Ministry, B.U.C. Brigade Mission Trip, Bridgewater Day Care Centre Report and Financial Report, 3rd Bridgewater Scouting Group Committee Report and Financial Report and Bridgewater Inter-Church Council.* Thanks for all you do for B-United!

***Christmas Flowers and Poinsettias are given to the glory of God, and in loving memory of:***

*Our parents, Bruce and Glenda Wentzell,*

*gift of daughters, Debbie, Peggy and family.*

*Our parents,**Robert Allan and Ruth Ellen Rudderham,*

*a gift of their children, Joan, Richard, James, and Charles and their families.*

*In celebration of the youth at B-United, a gift of Tracy and Randy Rafuse.*

**Time, Talent and Treasures**

Prayerfully decide what you will give each year to your Church and divide that amount by twelve. You can donate by e-Transfer at info@bridgewaterunited.ca, through weekly offering envelopes or you can sign up for pre-authorized remittance (PAR). Contributions help our Church’s Ministry and increase our overall financial stability.

**A Message from your Envelope Steward**

Your 2024 offering envelopes will be in the Narthex and listed in alphabetical order next Sunday. Please make sure that your address is correct on your label. Envelopes allow your church givings and your child’s Sunday School givings, to be tallied into an end-of-the-year tax receipt. If you would like Church Envelopes, and currently do not have them for 2023, please contact Tracy; *Envelope Steward* at (902) 543-4833.

 **Faith Formation Sunday**

The Faith Formation Committee supports many wonderful aspects of our Faith Community, whether it is our B-United Sunday School Program, B-United Youth Group, Send a Kid to Camp, Student Care Packages, Angel Tree, Blessing Bags for Souls Harbour Bridgewater, Bible Study and so much more. Please find envelopes in support of this wonderful Outreach in the Narthex on the table. Thank you.

**3rd Bridgewater Scouting Volunteers Needed**

We are the last remaining Scouting group in Lunenburg/Queens County. We are in dire need for volunteers for Scouts, the program for youth ages 11-14. Please contact Peter Lake at peter.lake@bellaliant.net or by phone at (902) 523-4070. Thank you.

**B-United Supports our Local Food Bank**

Monetary donations and donations of non-perishable food items are always appreciated throughout the month. For December, there is a request for Pasta Sauce, Spaghetti, Canned Fruit, Instant Muffin Mix, and Granola Bars. Thank you.

**Salvation Army Community Christmas Boxes**

Bridgewater United has been asked to provide 200 cans of turkey or chicken gravy for the Salvation Army Community Christmas Boxes. We currently need 96 more gravies. These can be dropped off by December 12th. Your support is appreciated.

**Minute for Mindfulness**

*“Be like the bird who, pausing in her flight awhile on boughs too slight,*

*feels them give way beneath her, and yet sings, knowing she hath wings.”*

*~ Victor Hugo*

***“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”***

***~ Matthew 6:21***

Prayerfully decide what you will give each year to your Church and divide that amount by twelve. Contributions help our Church’s Ministry, with a dependable flow of contributions, to increase our overall financial stability. Church envelopes allow your Church Givings to be tallied into a year-end income tax receipt. Your regular givings supports the local ministry of our congregation. With a Church Envelope you can designate where you would like your givings to be distributed.

**Local Expenses Designation** helps with the overall daily upkeep of the building, such as electricity, heating costs, insurance, as well as personnel expenses.

**Mission and Service Designation** is forwarded to The United Church of Canada to be deposited to their Mission and Service Fund which is used for many wonderful Outreach aspects that The United Church of Canada is a part of such as helping people overcome poverty, train new ministers and Mission and Service Gifts support vibrant and vital ministries for the healing of the world.

**Building Fund Designation** helps with repairs/upgrades that need to be undertaken by B-United, to make sure our building is safe for all that use it.

**Food Bank Designation** helps The Bridgewater Inter-Church Food Bank, which provides help to those who are in need. We encourage our members to bring in non-perishable food bank items to be placed in Brother Lawrence’s Wheelbarrow in the Narthex throughout the month or you can place a monetary donation in the Offering Plate. This can be specified on your Church Envelope.

**PAR** is a monthly pre-authorized bank withdrawal by Bridgewater United Church directly, that can be increased or decreased five business days before the end of the month. PAR is not only convenient, but it ensures regular monthly givings to help your Church’s Ministry even when you are away.

**Sunday School Local Designation** helps with obtaining supplies for weekly curriculum, snack items, yearly curriculum lessons and events the youth will be taking part in and much more. It provides for the daily upkeep of Sunday School.

**Sunday School Mission and Service Designation** is forwarded to The United Church of Canada to be deposited to their Mission and Service Fund which is used for many wonderful Outreach aspects of The United Church of Canada.

**e-Transfers** are now accepted by Bridgewater United Church. Add info@bridgewaterunited.ca as a payee, and you can submit your donation that way.

Any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Tracy Rafuse, Envelope Steward, at (902) 543-4833 or by email at info@bridgewaterunited.ca. Thank you.

*We are now given an opportunity to be a blessing to others.*

*Through our PAR commitments, through our money, and through our time and talents,*

*we now return to God, so that we might be a part of God’s Love and God’s Mission.*

**B-United PAR Authorization Form**

 **(Pre-Authorized Remittance)**



**B-United PAR Authorization**

Donor Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Phone: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Envelope #: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Monthly Gift Amount: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

My Monthly Gift of $ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ will be designated to benefit monthly:

*(Please specify amounts designated to which Church Fund)*

Local: $\_\_\_\_ Mission and Service: $\_\_\_\_ Building $\_\_\_\_ Food Bank: $\_\_\_\_

I/we authorize, Bridgewater United Church, to debit my/our bank account on one of the following dates, 1st, 20th, or Month-End of every month, starting on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_.

I/we may change the amount of my/our contribution five days before month-end, by contacting the Envelope Steward with this adjustment. I/we have certain recourse rights if any debit does not comply with this agreement. I/we waive my right to receive pre-notification of the amount of pre-authorized remittance (PAR) and agree that I do not require advance notice of the amount of PAR before the debit is processed monthly.

I/we acknowledge that I/we have read and understood all the provisions contained in the terms and conditions of the pre-authorized payment authorization and that I/we have received a copy.

Please attach a **VOID** cheque.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Dated: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Dated: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_