



Advent 2025

First  
Baptist  
Amherst  
Devotional



*First Baptist Church  
Amherst, NS*

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*Advent Devotional Book  
2025*

May this fourth edition of First Baptist's Advent Devotional bless you. Thanks to about three dozen of us, we share this book of daily readings and prayers. We share some local hope, peace, joy and love, on the way to Christmas. Each day's thought is guided by a scripture verse from the ones prescribed for Sundays (and Christmas) or by lyrics from a carol. Whether you read *Our Daily Bread*, *Christ In Our Home*, or some other resource, and read some Bible every day or week, this book can be a welcome addition to your habit. How grateful I am that I get to worship and pray with others, Sunday by Sunday, AND do it on my own, day by day. In this publication, we inspire one another. I thank God for you!

*Grace and peace to you all,  
Jeff G. White, Senior Minister*

**Sunday, November 30**  
**Isaiah 2:4**

*He shall judge between the nations and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war any more.*

To paraphrase Isaiah 2:4 in my own words: Peace will reign, weapons (swords and spears) will be turned into plowshares and pruning hooks. Weapons of war will be turned into implements of harvest.

Each fall when the days are dark due to rain, little sunlight and gloomy I often think back to the summer, full of sunshine, light and colorful flowers and greenery of life. This provides me with hope. Hope once we get through the fall and winter—spring with its new growth, longer day light hours –will come once again.

It was the Prophet Isaiah who brought hope to the Israelites by explaining God would once again bring light into the world.

Throughout this Advent Season my prayer for you is this:

May the Spirit of Christmas bring you peace,  
The gladness of Christmas grant you hope,  
And the warmth of Christmas grant you love.  
*(Author Unknown)*

**-Rev. Marlene**

**Monday, December 1**

Edmund H. Sears

*"Peace on the earth, good will to men,  
From heaven's all-glorious King,"  
The world is solemn stillness lay,  
To her the angels sing.*

In the book, *The Little Coat: The Bob and Sue Elliott Story* by Alan J. Buick: 'Sussie Cretier was only 10 when she met Bob Elliott, a Canadian soldier assigned to help protect her region of the Netherlands from the invading German army. Sussie's family had endured years of Nazi occupation before escaping to a safe area where Canadian soldiers held firm with their guns and tanks. Brave little Sussi had once spoken out against the commanding German officer to save her father's life.

'To the soldiers, Sussie became a glowing example of the innocence of youth and a beacon of hope for the future. Children like Sussie were the reason the Allies were fighting this war. On Christmas Day 1944, the Canadians honoured Sussie with a special Army-style coat they ordered from a local seamstress. The soldiers donated army blanket material and a button each from their own uniform toward the making of the coat. Decades later, the relationship between Sussie Cretier and tank commander Bob Elliott not only endured but flourished. Sussie's 'Little Coat' has been donated to the War Museum of Canada as a permanent reminder of this powerful story of courage, hope and love.'

It is the awareness of such stories that makes me aware that God is with us in very tough times. Though war is cruel business, it is comforting to know that there are angels dressed in uniform who willing to serve to help keep us safe.

**- Judy Noonan-Sutherland**

**Tuesday, December 2**  
*When peace shall over all the earth  
Its ancient splendours fling,  
And the whole world give back the song  
Which now the angels sing.*

This is surely one of those carols that invoke the warm anticipation of a blessed, peaceful Christmas. As I sat down to reflect upon its meaning, I was distracted by a newspaper headline, – “Another Day Another Massacre” – the brutal civil war in the Sudan. Will this never end?! The lines immediately before those quoted above talk about the prophets foretelling this coming to pass. But how long, O Lord, how long?

In the time of a few of us, we have had a “War to End All Wars”, India vs. Pakistan, Vietnam, the Middle East 6 Day War, Afghanistan – too many to remember – and now Sudan, Ukraine and Gaza in the very birthplace of Jesus.

First Baptist has had close contact with victims of current conflicts – our Syrian and Ukrainian families who have benefitted from support – language training, help with accommodation and so on. In them, we have witnessed a resilience and hope that keeps at bay the despair that threatens us.

### **Prayer:**

Have mercy on us, Lord. We confess our warlike natures. Save us from the plague of human conflict and grant us peace. Amen.

**-Ed Colquhoun**

*Wednesday, December 3*

**Romans 13:11-12**

*Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is already the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; the night is far gone; the day is near. Let us then throw off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light;*

Recently we had to turn our clocks back and it seems like darkness took over. We struggle with our sleep and our routines. Then morning arrives with warmth and the brightness of the sun, and we instantly perk up.

God sent his Son to us to dispel the darkness of sin and to clothe us in his armour of light to shine throughout the world.

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, give us the strength to cast off the darkness that threatens to overtake us. Make us shine our light over all the earth this Advent season, bringing hope and salvation to the world. In your name, Amen.

**-Tammy Arseneau**

*Thursday, December 4*  
*Joy to the earth, the Saviour reigns:*

*Let all their songs employ;*  
*While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains*  
*Repeat the sounding joy...*  
**“The Sounding Joy”**

How many times have you sung this carol of joy—likely several more than the number of candles on your birthday cake—perhaps twice each Christmas season or more? This second verse from “*Joy to the World*” turns our attention to the Earth—its hills and plains, rivers and fields. It declares that all of nature sings with joy, as the Spirit incarnate in all things.

We recall those moments of childhood wonder experienced in nature. If you’ll bear my personal recollection: I picture a tiny village strung along a narrow road—the hill we coasted on, topped by a little wood. The road curved around a lake, our summer and winter playground. Then it rose to hold the village cemetery, and further still, a bridge over a river that led into deep woodlands and blueberry patches.

When we revisit that childhood world in daydream, is it not the land that beckons? Didn’t we roll about in fallen leaves, hold buttercups under our chins, bury treasures in the yard, climb that favorite tree, and learn the names of wildflowers—blue grass, red sorrel, blue flags, and lambkill?

Reading this verse again with new eyes, I see what it is that draws us back through the years and makes those scenes so golden. I hear it echoing through time—*the sounding joy* of nature—the very voice and promise of God’s kin-dom. Let us, then, renew our conversation with the Earth this Advent. Let us renew our responsibility to care for creation, understanding our deep and sacred connection to all that is. In doing so, perhaps we rediscover the wondering gaze of childhood and the peace of a world made new, moment by moment.

**-Cynthia McCarthy**

*Friday, December 5*

**Matthew 24:42-44**

*Keep awake, therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.*

It's easy to fall into routine and forget the bigger picture. Honestly, some days I'm so caught up in anxiety, worry, and stress that "being ready" feels like one more thing on my plate. But I don't think Jesus meant it that way. When life feels overwhelming, His words are more like a gentle reminder of not letting the stress pull you asleep spiritually.

Being ready isn't about being perfect. It's about turning to Him in the middle of everything I'm feeling—when I'm anxious about what's ahead, worried about what I can't control, or stressed by the pressures of the day. Readiness happens in those little moments when I choose to breathe, pray, and invite Him into what I'm experiencing. These choices help to shape my heart and keep me anchored. I want to live with purpose, and with a heart and mind that is prepared, for as much as it can be, for anything that life throws at me.

**Prayer:** Lord, You see my anxiety, my worries, and the stress I carry. Help me stay awake to Your presence today. Meet me in the middle of it, and help me live ready—not by trying harder, but by trusting You more. Amen.

**-Angela Marks**

## *Saturday, December 6*

*Come, Thou long expected Jesus.  
Born to set Thy people free  
From our sins and fears release us,  
Let us find our rest in Thee.*

On that Christmas long ago God gave us a divine gift, “Jesus”.

This time of year is very special. I think of my childhood and all my family. I was one of eight children in a very poor family. We were rich in ways that counted, our parents loved us and taught us to love others. Most important, they taught us love our Lord and follow Him.

Christmas season brings activities, parties, and fun times with family and friends. I enjoy these times. I also enjoy quiet times amidst the bustle and hustle to reflect on God’s love and blessings.

Remember to thank God for that divine gift He sent that first Christmas to save us all.

### **Prayer:**

Dear Lord, teach me to live and love in such a way that those around me will recognize You in me. Amen,

**- Pauline Lusby**

*Sunday, December 7*

**Isaiah 11:2-3**

*The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see or decide by what his ears hear,*

Someone once told me that hope was naive—  
A foolish game that children play  
When they pray that summer won’t end,  
And bedtime won’t come.

Someone once told me that hope was naive as they  
Cradled pessimism in their lap like a sleeping cat,  
Stroking their ego while they stoked a fire within me.

Unfortunately for them, I’m allergic to cats.  
And unfortunately for them, those who deny hope  
Will never know vulnerability;  
For hope requires us to believe in a better day—  
Even when this one is falling apart.

Hope looks the 24-hour news cycle in the face,  
Hope looks our broken relationships in the face,  
Hope looks our low self-esteem in the face,  
And declares at low tide that the water will return.  
Hope is exhaling, trusting that your body will  
inhale again.  
Hope is watching the sunset and setting an alarm.  
Hope is planting seeds in the winter, assuming  
summer will come.

(continued.....)

I never said it would be easy.  
The ground is frozen, you are thirsty,  
and the night is long.  
But I will say this—  
I have found hope to be the rhythm of love and  
the fiber of faith;  
For to hope is to believe in God's ability to bring  
about a better day,  
And like a child with an Advent calendar,  
I will always be counting down the days.

So to those who cradle pessimism and fear,  
You can find me outside—with the kids—wishing on stars,  
Praying to the God of today  
That tomorrow will be just as beautiful.  
Set your alarm.  
We'd like for you to join us.

(Sara Are © A Sanctified Art)

### ***Monday, December 8***

*'O come, thou Rod of Jesse, free  
Thine own from Satan's tyranny;  
From depths of hell Thy people save,  
And give them victory o'er the grave.*



**Tuesday, December 9**

**Psalm 72:10-11**

*May the kings of Tarshish and of the isles render him tribute; may the kings of Sheba and Seba bring gifts. May all kings fall down before him, all nations give him service.*

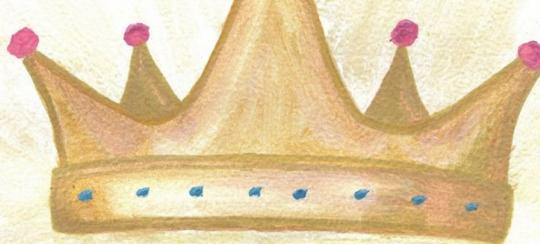


**-Cynthia McCarthy**

*Wednesday, December 10*

*'Born a King on Bethlehem's plain,  
Gold I bring to crown Him again,  
King forever, ceasing never  
Over us all to reign.*

*King Forever!*



*Thank you God for bringing us your*

*Son*

*to reign over us now and*

*Always*

**-Sharyn Tanner**

**Thursday, December 11**

**Romans 15:12-13**

*and again Isaiah says, "The root of Jesse shall come, the one who rises to rule the gentiles; in him the gentiles shall hope." May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.*

God gave us his Son, so as Christians we would be filled with His love and Hope.

How can we fill others with hope?

- Try to be a good listener for those who choose to confide.
- Serve others who are disadvantaged. For eleven months, First Baptist Cookie Crew has been delivering cookies weekly to the homeless shelter. The staff tell us the residents really appreciate this simple act of kindness.
- Pray; God does answer prayer, maybe not always in the way we expect, but what we need.

Having a son serving in the Canadian Armed Forces for long deployments in the Middle East was a prayer filled time in my life.

Let us show the world we are Christians by our love.

**Prayer:** Dear God, you are the source of hope and light in the darkness. Give us hope that overflows, and let us share it with others. Amen.

**-Sandy Corkum**

***Friday, December 12***

*Now ye need not fear the Grave: Peace! Peace!  
Jesus Christ was born to save*

There is an old saying that “Nothing is certain except death and taxes.” Neither should be that scary. God wants us to be filled with hope and trust, not fear. He has given us hope through the promise that He can and will uphold us by his love and strength each day. There is no need to fear the grave; enjoy each minute of your day that God gives each of us. Listen to the birds sing, watch nature grow around you, feel the sun, rain or snow even the wind as it blows around us; relax and stay calm. Remain steadfast and true to your faith in God and enjoy your time God has set out for you.

**Prayer:** Dear God give us the strength to remain calm and enjoy the life you have planned for each of us. May we all take the time to relax and enjoy this special season as we celebrate the birth of your son Jesus as well as activities planned and unplanned in our lives this Christmas season. Amen.

**-Sherrill Pettigrew**

**Saturday, December 13**  
**Matthew 3:1-3**

*In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, “The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight.’”*



**-Cynthia McCarthy**

*Sunday, December 14*  
**Isaiah 35:10**

*And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.*

I grew up singing these verses from Isaiah, at Sunday School. They date back to a time in history, long before Jesus, when the Hebrews were given hope that they would return to their home, their holy land. This chapter in Isaiah is one of a few that is filled with images of a desert becoming a blooming garden, hurting people getting healed, and a special road is ready for travel back to the homeland. Read the whole chapter!

However this happened for the people, way back then, we imagine how this all happens anew with Jesus in our world. The biblical Christmas stories celebrate this Messiah. This Anointed One comes to set people free, to heal people, to feed them, to reunite them, to make a home for them. Our prayers can include the longing and hopes for folks we know to 'obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.'

**Prayer:** O God, we do sometimes sigh. You hear us as we let out a gasp, or groan, or simply roll our eyes at things that happen. As I think now about some problem that appeared, may the sorrow and sighing flee away! Let there be mercy, help, hope, and love, in the face of day-to-day problems. In Jesus' name. Amen.

**-Rev. Jeff White**

**Monday, December 15**

*Come, Thou Long expected Jesus ‘  
...rule in all our hearts alone...’*



**-Cynthia McCarthy**

**Tuesday, December 16**

**Luke 1:46-49**

*And Mary said, “My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowly state of his servant. Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name;*

Mary was a simple servant of God. God chose her for a mission that must have felt overwhelming to a young girl. Instead of worrying how the world would judge her, Mary glorified God in song. She accepted this great gift God had given her.

This Advent season let us be like Mary and accept the gifts God gives us to glorify Him.

**Prayer:** Father, we thank you for each gift you have given us, and for the greatest gift of all—Jesus. Amen.

**-Tammy Arseneau**

*Wednesday, December 17*  
*He is born, the Holy Child,*  
*Play the oboe and bagpipes merrily!*  
*He is born, the Holy Child,*  
*Sing we all of the Saviour mild.*  
(Traditional French 19th Century)

This is the English chorus of an old Christmas carol based on the original French, “Il est né le divin enfant”, celebrating the birth of Jesus. When I saw this as one of the options to write about for the Advent Devotional Booklet, it spoke to me (actually, I immediately was singing it in my mind). Music moves us. It appeals to our innermost feelings, and I cannot imagine any better way to celebrate the joy we feel, as Christians, of the birth of Jesus.

Music has been a part of my life as far back as I can remember. I was a member of the children’s choir in Wolfville with Florence Olson as our director (who, prior to that, also led choirs here at First Baptist when her husband, Herman, was minister in the 1940s) and I’ve sung in many other choirs since then. Choral music and instrumental music (organ, string, “oboe and bagpipes”, etc.), are magnificent and moving expressions of celebration and joy, especially at this time of year as we anticipate, once again, the arrival of the Christ Child. This Christmas, I look forward to hearing (and perhaps even singing along with) a production or recording of Handel’s Messiah. Let us celebrate Jesus’ birth with joyous music!

**Prayer:** Dear God, even in the time of this world’s problems and unrest help us to reach into our innermost beings and, through music, allow us to celebrate with joy the birth of the Christ Child. Amen.

**-Susan Colquhoun**

*Thursday, December 18*

**James 5:9-10**

*Brothers and sisters, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! As an example of suffering and patience, brothers and sisters, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.*

I was making one of my favorite meals, but it took some time to prepare. I started to cut the sweet potatoes while waiting for the oven to heat up. After cutting the potatoes, I looked up the recipe to make sure I had the right ingredients for the seasoning. After doing so, I cut the onion and broccoli and put all the veggies in the oven. I then began to prepare the salmon, coating it with olive oil and spices. After all that preparation I now had to wait twenty-five more minutes for everything to be cooked just right. When the timer finally went off, I checked to see if everything was ready. The potatoes looked good, but they weren't quite as crispy as I liked. The broccoli looked yummy, but it turned out to be cooked more on one side. The salmon looked good, but when I cut into it, I noticed it could be a little more done. So I put it all back in the oven and waited five more minutes for it to be perfect. It was then that I realized I was missing a vital ingredient of the recipe: baked chickpeas.

Making the perfect meal would require more waiting. I could have enjoyed the meal without the chickpeas. But I knew that this tiny detail was necessary for the recipe to be complete, and would be worth the wait. It's safe to say we live in a microwave society, when we want things quick and want them now. We order things on Amazon Prime and expect them to come in a couple of hours. We scroll on our social media feeds and think everyone became an overnight success and everyone had their dreams come true in a day.

**-Jean Harrison**

## *Friday, December 19*

*Hail, the heaven-born Prince of Peace!  
Hail, the son of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all He brings,  
Ris'n with healing in His wings.*

This is a verse from a well known Christmas carol, “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”. The familiar tune to the music was composed by Felix Mendelssohn. The words to the hymn were written by Charles Wesley and were based on the passage from Luke 2: 13-14. “And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.”

This praise and adoration is directed towards our Heavenly Father who sent his only Son to live among us. He is that light that brings life to redeem us back to Himself if we just believe in Him and accept this free gift. He heals the rift between mankind and Himself.

Dear Heavenly Father, we too sing praise to You and thank you that you loved us so much that you sent Your Son to provide the payment and healing for our sins through His sacrifice and shed blood. We thank you. Amen.

**-Barbara Martin**

**Saturday, December 20**

**Matthew 11:2-3**

*When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?”*

John had his doubts about Jesus.

I often struggle with what is my will and what is God's. Which path should I take? I know that when I feel a desperate urge to act, it is usually my will that is pushing, and when I feel a calm certainty, it is usually God's. More will be revealed when the time is right, no matter what choice I make.

Today I will remember that uncertainty is not a fault but an opportunity. Everything contributes to my growth and understanding. I try to be open to what I hear. I never know from where a message will come.

**Prayer:** I pray that I may believe in the Unseen. I pray that I may be convinced by the results of the Unseen which I do see.

“Every now and again take a good look at something not made with hands – a mountain, a star, the turn of a stream. There will come to you wisdom and patience and solace and, above all, the assurance that you are not alone in the world.” Sidney Lovett



**-Verna VC**

*Sunday, December 21*

**Isaiah 7:14-15**

*Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son and shall name him Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good.*

On September 15, 2025, a four-story apartment complex in Middle Sackville, NS was severely damaged in an overnight fire. No one was injured. More than 180 people were displaced due to the fire. My cousin's daughter, her husband and their 3 cats were among those displaced and lost everything. They have since been residing with my cousin and waiting for news from their former landlord about another potential vacant apartment in a different location.

Following the fire, they have been blessed with much support from family and friends. As well, a Go Fund Me Page was set up to help them get started again and to recover from their losses. They have also since been blessed with the news that they are expecting their first child in the spring 2026. It is so wonderful to hear such good news following what is a very dark time in their lives.

Thank you God for responding to our many prayers for those who need help and for your many blessings, especially those that give us hope when life sends us more than what we think we can bear.

**-Judy Noonan-Sutherland**

## *Monday, December 22*

*O Come O come, Emmanuel  
And ransom captive Israel,  
That mourns in lonely exile here,  
Until the Son of God appear.*

Some thoughts on Mary, the mother of Jesus.....

Upon learning that she was with child, Mary went to visit her trusted friend and cousin, Elizabeth. By the world's standards, Mary was in trouble. She was a young girl who was engaged and pregnant.

It is possible that by this time she was showing her pregnancy, and perhaps village people were talking about her in whispers behind her back. Maybe this is the reason she went to visit Elizabeth.

Mary received encouragement from Elizabeth, but also, Mary believed God. She wasn't overwhelmed by her circumstances, but believed that what God had told her would in fact happen. She was more interested in what God was doing in her life than she was in her circumstances.

Mary had a simple and strong faith in God and came to understand and believe in God's plan for her. We can all take a lesson from Mary and have faith that God can accomplish great things through us, if we put our trust in Him.

**-Greg Wilson**

**Tuesday, December 23**  
**Psalm 80:17-18**

*But let your hand be upon the one at your right hand, the one whom you made strong for yourself. Then we will never turn back from you; give us life, and we will call on your name.*

Long ago - for centuries, actually - the Hebrews sang and prayed this Psalm, along with all the others. 'May God's hand be upon God's right hand man. Then we will be faithful; we will call on You.'

When we read this, just before our celebration of Christmas, we use these words about Abba God and Jesus the Son. If we think of the whole Jesus story, we see His strength made perfect in weakness. From the beginning, from His fragile birth. And then to the Cross.

I don't ever speak of Jesus as "God's right-hand Man." But we could. In this very personal way, this completely human way, we get to meet the God of the Universe. Jesus' arrival is so down-to-earth. Yet what His life and work does in all creation changes everything! First of all, when born, Jesus blesses our human lives with God's own self. Christ brings God to us, and brings us to God. Alleluia!

**Prayer:** O Holy One, the storytelling of this season is such a special way that people feel and know You are close to us. Thanks and praise to You. Today, shower the blessings of Your presence upon those who feel far from You, those who are hurt by life and sometimes blame You, and those who can think of You a lot but not feel You are close. Sometimes I'm the one who feels all these ways! At Christmastime, come around again, and in a way we can understand: Jesus of Nazareth. Amen.

**-Rev. Jeff White**

**Wednesday, December 24 - Christmas Eve**

*Infant Holy, Infant Lowly  
For His bed a cattle stall;  
Oxen lowing, little knowing  
Christ the Babe is Lord of all*

On this most holy eve of the Christmas season, hearts and minds reflect upon the things that mean the most to us. The decorations are beautiful and encourage our celebration. The gifts under the tree remind us of our good fortune to live in a land of plenty. But, behind these symbols of Christmas we are reminded of the barenness and loneliness of the night. Mary and Joseph, away from family and friends about to share in the birth of their child must have wondered what God had in store for them and their child. The love they shared embraced them and strengthened them.

Tonight, as we once again celebrate the birth of our Lord, Jesus Christ, we have to wonder what is in store for this world and the troubled times we live in. Hunger, hatred, war, and devastation are realities of life in this era. In the quietness of the evening we pray for peace, for human dignity, and good will among the peoples of our world.

Now more than ever we need a peace that sustains and brings to a close conflict. As Christians and citizens of this world we need to be part of the change for good.



**Prayer:** Our God, as we look forward to the morning and all the festivities associated with Christmas day, may we take a moment to pray for our world and work for the day when peace on earth becomes a reality. Amen.

**- Rev. Byron Corkum**

***Thursday, December 25—Christmas Day***

**Matthew 1:24-25**

*When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son, and he named him Jesus.*

**“Awake!”**

Welcome a new day, this Christmas morning. Awake from dream, hear your call, for a baby has been born, we know him by name—Jesus, Emmanuel—God with us! Long we have been preparing for this day. And whether there are lights or gifts or “carols on the spinet”; whether snow falls softly and perfectly outside; whether turkey roasts or family is on the way—the good news of love *has* arrived!

Awake and greet the One who will challenge us to fulfill our promise, yet the One who will be there when we stumble – the One who call us “friend”. So let the day unfold in whatever way it should happen for you. Let us be grateful for the light of Christ to warm the day and to kindle a love that no gift-wrapped boxes could ever hold. A Joyous Christmas to you!

**-Cynthia McCarthy**

***Thursday, December 26***

*'Twas In the Moon of Wintertime  
When all the birds had fled,  
That mighty Gitchi Manitou  
Sent angels choirs instead.*

'Twas in the Moon of Wintertime, also known as the Huron Carol, is Canada's oldest song. It was written around 1642 by a Jesuit missionary, Jean de Brebeuf. He wrote it in the Huron language to tell the Huron of the nativity story using local symbols of the time. It speaks of God as the Great Spirit (Mighty Gitchi Manitou). They wrapped baby Jesus in rabbit skins and laid him in a lodge of broken bark. The three wise men were known as the great tribal chiefs that came from afar, bring fox and beaver pelts as presents for the baby Jesus.

The English version was written in 1926 by Jesse Edgar Middleton with new lyrics to the original melody. The music has a haunting tone and as you listen it speaks to you that Jesus is born and we should celebrate. His birth is the mystery and wonder that we still celebrate to this day.

**Prayer:** Dear God we pray that we never forget the wonder of Jesus' birth as we continue this journey through the Christmas season. Help us to keep Jesus with us each and every day. Amen.

**-Sherrill Pettigrew**



*First Baptist  
Festive Worship and Events  
2025*

*Worship, 1st Sunday of Advent 10:30, Nov 30*

*Advent Lunch & Learn 12—1:00, Nov 26,  
Dec 3, 10, 12*

*Worship, 2nd Sunday of Advent 10:30, Dec 7*

*Worship, 3rd Sunday of Advent 10:30, Dec 14*

*Church Turkey Dinner 11:45 Sun, Dec 14*

*Christmas Cheer Box Packing 1 pm, Sun, Dec 14*

*Christmas Caroling 6-8 Tue, Dec 16*

*Rachel MacLean Concert 7 pm, Fri, Dec 19*

*Worship, 4th Sunday of Advent 10:30, Dec 21*

*Christmas Eve Service 6 (six) pm, Dec 24*