

**Contact information:**

Call Rev. Takouhi to book a visit. (Wednesday to Sunday)

Rev. Takouhi (direct Line) 613-777-0880

Email: [RevTakouhi@Terraautopia.ca](mailto:RevTakouhi@Terraautopia.ca)

**Office** (Laurie Cadue) 613-382-2161 [grace.gan@outlook.com](mailto:grace.gan@outlook.com)

**Church Office Hours:** Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday:  
8:00am to 1:00 p.m. **(Closed on Wednesdays)**

There are many ways you can partner up with God’s Mission through Grace United Church and help make a difference. by cheque.

120 Pine ST. Gananoque, On K7G 1C7,

e-transfer to [grace.gan@outlook.com](mailto:grace.gan@outlook.com)

Sign-up for Pre-Authorized Remittance (PAR) Forms (Included in Bulletin)

[https://united-church.ca/sites/default/files/form\\_par-authorization.pdf](https://united-church.ca/sites/default/files/form_par-authorization.pdf)

**PAR Forms are available at the back of the church**

by Credit Card through CanadaHelps.

<https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/118944701RR0001-grace-united-church/>

***Coming up this week at Grace United....***

<b>Sunday, December 31</b> <b>1<sup>st</sup> Sunday After Christmas</b> 10:30 am Worship	<b>Office Closed</b> <b>Morning Worship, Barb DeJeet</b>
<b>Monday, January 1</b>	<b>Office Closed –</b> <b>Happy New Year!</b>
<b>Tuesday, January 2</b>	<b>Office 8am – 1pm</b>
<b>Wednesday, January 3</b>	<b>Office Closed</b>
<b>Thursday, January 4</b>	<b>Office 8am – 1pm</b>
<b>Friday, January 5</b>	<b>Office 8am – 1pm</b>
<b>Saturday, January 6</b>	<b>Office Closed</b>
<b>Sunday, January 7</b> 10:30 am Worship	<b>Office Closed</b> <b>Worship Leader, Rev. Takouhi</b>

**WELCOME  
TO  
GRACE UNITED CHURCH**



***Where Everyone is Part of the Family  
&  
Worship is a Lifestyle NOT an Event***



## Grace United Church

120 Pine St. Gananoque, ON K7G 1C7

### Ordained Minister

Rev. Takouhi Demirdjian-Petro B.A., B.Th., M.Div.

### Director of Music

Mr. Paul Harding, B. Mus., B. Ed.

### Office Administrator

Laurie Cadue

## December 31, 2023 - Order of Worship

*First Sunday after Christmas*

*Guest Worship Leader, Barb DeJeet*

### We Gather as United and Uniting People

**"We are forever grateful that you made your "home among us.""**

**John 1:14**

**PRELUDE:** *Meditation on "Auld Lang Syne" - Traditional Scottish Tune*

**WELCOME/ANNOUNCEMENTS:** **Colleen Harding**

### **Land Acknowledgement (Responsive):**

**One:** Grace United Church takes seriously the commitments made to First Nations communities through the national Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report, especially through the Calls to Action to churches like us.

**All:** Therefore, we acknowledge, this day, that we gather for worship on the traditional territories of the original nations of this land, and we acknowledge with respect, their history, their spirituality, and their culture.

### **LIGHTING OF CHRIST CANDLE**

### **CALL TO WORSHIP**

One: Praise the Lord!

**All: Praise God from the heavens.**

One: Young men and women alike, old and young together!

**All: Let us praise the name of the Lord,**

One: whose name alone is exalted above earth and heaven.

**All: ALLELUIA!!**

*(Please stand as able.)*

### **OPENING HYMN: Voices United # 59**

*"Joy to the World"*

- 1 Joy to the world! the Lord is come:  
let earth receive her King!  
Let every heart prepare him room,  
and heaven and nature sing, and heaven and nature sing,  
and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.
- 2 Joy to the earth! the Saviour reigns:  
let all their songs employ,  
while fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains  
repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,  
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

- 3 No more let sins and sorrows grow,  
nor thorns infest the ground:  
he comes to make his blessings flow  
far as the curse is found, far as the curse is found,  
far as, far as the curse is found.
- 4 He rules the earth with truth and grace,  
and makes the nations prove  
the glories of his righteousness  
and wonders of his love, and wonders of his love,  
and wonders, wonders of his love.

Words: Isaac Watts 1719, alt.

Music: attrib. George Frideric Handel 1742

arr. Lowell Mason 1836 Public Domain

*(Please be seated.)*

### **PASSING OF THE PEACE:**

**In this time of glory and praise, let us rejoice by sharing signs of Christ's peace.**

### **OPENING PRAYER:**

### **PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION: (unison)**

**As you led Simeon to embrace the infant Jesus, guide us, Holy Spirit, by your gracious light that we may welcome your saving Word. AMEN**

## **We Hear the Sacred Stories**

### **Scripture Reader: Marilyn Belbin**

Reader: Let us open our hearts, and minds to hear the Word of Hope

**All: Let us listen for that Living Word.**

### **SCRIPTURES:**

**Galatians 4:4-7 "No longer a slave, but a child of God and an heir."**

But when the right time finally came, God sent his own Son. He came as the son of a human mother and lived under the Jewish Law, to redeem those who were under the Law, so that we might become God's children.

To show that you are<sup>[a]</sup> his children, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who cries out, "Father, my Father." So then, you are no longer a slave but a child. And since you are his child, God will give you all that he has for his children.

**Luke 2: 22-40 "Jesus is presented in the temple."**

The time came for Joseph and Mary to perform the ceremony of purification, as the Law of Moses commanded. So they took the child to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, as it is written in the law of the Lord: "Every first-born male is to be dedicated to the Lord." They also went to offer a sacrifice of a pair of doves or two young pigeons, as required by the law of the Lord.

At that time there was a man named Simeon living in Jerusalem. He was a good, God-fearing man and was waiting for Israel to be saved. The

Holy Spirit was with him and had assured him that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's promised Messiah. Led by the Spirit, Simeon went into the Temple. When the parents brought the child Jesus into the Temple to do for him what the Law required, Simeon took the child in his arms and gave thanks to God:

"Now, Lord, you have kept your promise,  
and you may let your servant go in peace.

With my own eyes I have seen your salvation,  
which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples:

A light to reveal your will to the Gentiles  
and bring glory to your people Israel."

The child's father and mother were amazed at the things Simeon said about him. Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother, "This child is chosen by God for the destruction and the salvation of many in Israel. He will be a sign from God which many people will speak against and so reveal their secret thoughts. And sorrow, like a sharp sword, will break your own heart."

There was a very old prophet, a widow named Anna, daughter of Phanuel of the tribe of Asher. She had been married for only seven years and was now eighty-four years old. She never left the Temple; day and night she worshiped God, fasting and praying. That very same hour she arrived and gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were waiting for God to set Jerusalem free.

### **The Return to Nazareth**

When Joseph and Mary had finished doing all that was required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to their hometown of Nazareth in Galilee. The child grew and became strong; he was full of wisdom, and God's blessings were upon him.

**Anthem** : *The Light of Christmas* - Joel Raney

**REFLECTION**: "The Rest of the Story"



*(Please stand as able.)*

**RESPONDING HYMN: VU # 217**

### ***"All Creatures of our God and King"***

- 1 All creatures of our God and King,  
lift up your voice and with us sing:  
hallelujah, hallelujah!  
Bright burning sun with golden beam,  
soft shining moon with silver gleam,  
sing praises, sing praises,  
hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah!
- 2 O rushing winds and breezes soft,  
O clouds that ride the winds aloft,  
sing praises, hallelujah!  
O rising morn, in praise rejoice;  
O lights of evening, find a voice:  
sing praises, sing praises,  
hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah!

3 Earth, ever fertile, day by day  
brings forth rich blessings on our way:  
sing praises, hallelujah!  
The flowers and fruits that verdant grow,  
let them God's glory also show:  
sing praises, hallelujah!  
hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah!

4 And everyone of tender heart,  
forgiving others, take your part:  
sing praises, hallelujah!  
All who long pain and sorrow bear,  
praise God and yield up all your care:  
sing praises, hallelujah!  
hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah!

5 Let all things their Creator bless,  
and worship God in humbleness:  
sing praises, hallelujah!  
Praise God eternal, praise the Son,  
and praise the Spirit, three in one:  
sing praises, hallelujah!  
hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah!

Words: St. Francis of Assisi 1225; English trans. William Henry Draper ca 1919. alt.  
Music: Geisliche Kirchengaesänge, Cologne 1623; harm. Ralph Vaughan Williams 1906

*(Please be seated.)*

## **PREPARING OUR HEARTS FOR PRAYER: VU #400 (2X)**

### ***“Lord listen to your children praying”***

Lord, listen to your children praying,  
Lord, send your Spirit in this place;  
Lord, listen to your children praying,  
send us love, send us power, send us grace!

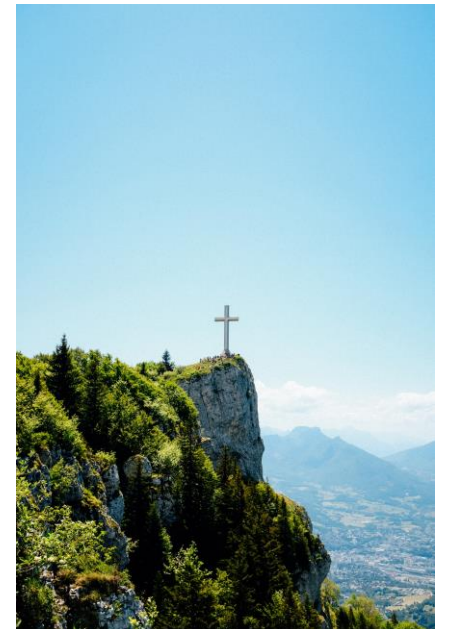
Words and music: Ken Medema 1970.

Words and music copyright © 1974 Hope Publishing Company

Reprinted by permission under One License A-736946. All rights reserved.

## **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE/ LORD'S PRAYER**

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done,  
on earth, as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who  
trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil:  
For thine is the kingdom,  
the power, and the glory  
forever and ever. **Amen.**



## We Respond to God's Grace

**Your Generosity Matters: 2023 in the Rear View**

### **INVITATION FOR OFFERING:**

**As an act of thanksgiving, we respond to God's love by bringing our gifts of time, energy and skills, our offerings of life and love.**

Gary Simpson, McDougall United Church, Edmonton, Alta.

*(Please stand as able.)*

**OFFERING HYMN: Voices United #544** (Tune: "Amazing Grace" VU #266)

### ***"In Gratitude and Humble Trust"***

In gratitude and humble trust  
we bring our best today  
to serve your cause and share your love  
with all along life's way.  
O God, who gave yourself to us  
in Jesus Christ, your Son,  
teach us to give ourselves each day  
until life's work is done.

Words: Frank von Christerson 1960, alt.

Music: from Virginia Harmony 1831, adapt. and harm. Edwin O. Excell 1900

*(Please be seated.)*

### **OFFERING PRAYER:**

**God of the heavens and the earth, we come before you in celebration, bringing gifts for those who cannot celebrate with us. Our songs of praise are for your name and honor. May these gifts**

**give others the opportunity to sing praises to your name as they come to know the endless love you have for each of your children.**

**AMEN**

*(Please stand as able.)*

**CLOSING HYMN Voices United # 556** (Tune: "All the Way" VU #635)

### ***"Would You Bless Our Homes and Families"***

- 1 Would you bless our homes and families,  
Source of life who calls us here;  
in our world of stress and tension  
teach us love that conquers fear.  
Help us learn to love each other  
with a love that constant stays;  
teach us when we face our troubles,  
love's expressed in many ways.
- 2 When our way is undemanding,  
let us use the time that's ours  
to delight in simple pleasures,  
sharing joys in gentle hours.  
When our way is anxious walking  
and a heavy path we plod,  
teach us trust in one another  
and in you, our gracious God.
- 3 From the homes in which we're nurtured,  
with the love that shapes us there,  
teach us, God, to claim as family  
every one whose life we share.  
And through all that life may offer,





may we in your love remain;  
may the love we share in families  
be alive to praise your name.

- 4 Let us reach beyond the boundaries  
of our daily thought and care  
till the family you have chosen  
spills its love out everywhere.  
Help us learn to love each other  
with a love that constant stays;  
teach us when we face our troubles  
love's expressed in many ways.

Music: Robert Lowry 1875 Public Domain

Words: Walter Farquharson 1974

Reprinted with permission under One License A-736947. All rights reserved.

*(Please remain standing.)*

### **COMMISSIONING:**

**May we go forth into the world rejoicing, spreading the good news  
of Christ, our light and our redeemer.**

### **BENEDICTION**

### **CHORAL AMEN**

**POSTLUDE:** *Finale on "All the Way" - Robert Lowry*

*Welcome*

*as we gather for worship this Sunday morning. If you are a visitor or a  
newcomer to this Community of Faith, either in person or virtually, we  
extend a warm welcome. May you come in as a stranger but depart  
knowing you are part of the family. Thank you for joining us.*

### **Prayers for the people**



Remember in your prayers all those who are in hospital,  
recovering at home and those who may need our comfort,  
guidance, and support.

Please notify Rev. Takouhi or the church office if there is someone you  
know who is in need or a visit, in hospital or any other needs.

**NOTE – Due to privacy laws and confidentiality, the names of people on our list are not  
printed in the Order of Service.**

### **Celebration Candle**



Today we send Blessings of Joy to all who are celebrating  
Birthdays, Anniversaries and Special Events in the coming  
week. May Joy abound and Love Multiply.

### **Happy Birthday this week Catherine Mills.**

Would you like your Birthday or Anniversary added to our announcements contact Laurie at  
the church Office and give her the details.

### **MAKE SURE YOUR NAME & THE AMOUNT ARE ON YOUR DONATION ENVELOPES**

If you would like envelopes, there is a sign-up sheet available on the table in the Narthex.

#### **Offerings December 2023**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Attend</b>	<b>General</b>	<b>M&amp;S</b>	<b>Benevolent</b>	<b>White Gift</b>
<b>Dec 3</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>\$ 4112.50</b>	<b>\$ 232.50</b>	<b>\$ 35.00</b>	<b>\$ 280.00</b>
<b>Dec 10</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>\$ 2732.50</b>	<b>\$ 527.50</b>	<b>\$ 25.00</b>	<b>\$ 65.00</b>
<b>Dec 17</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>\$ 2,277.50</b>	<b>\$ 202.5</b>	<b>\$ 25.00</b>	<b>\$ 125.00</b>
<b>Blue Christmas</b>					
<b>Dec 24</b>					
<b>Christmas Eve</b>					
<b>PAR</b>		<b>\$ 1,680.00</b>	<b>\$98.50</b>	<b>\$ 57.50</b>	
<b>BMO</b>		<b>\$ 450.00</b>	<b>\$ 25.00</b>	<b>\$ 75.00</b>	

**Thank you for your generosity.**