

The Anglican Parish of St. Peter and St. Paul

December 18th 2022

Home Church Connections Service

Advent Four



*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was
with God, and the Word was God. What has come
into being in him was life, and the life was the light
of all people.*

Words of Welcome

The Gathering of the Community

(Wild Goose Big Book of Liturgies Iona Community)

God of time and God of eternity

For you we wait

God of outer space and God closer that we can imagine

For you we wait

God of the roaring noise of the world and God of silence

For you we wait

In our work and play, our going out and our coming in

For you we wait

In this place and in this time

For you we wait

(If you have an advent wreath at home you are invited to light a candle while Psalm 130 is read)

Psalm 130

(rewritten by Nan Merrill *Praying the Psalms* 2007)

I wait for you, my soul waits,

for in your Love I would live;

My soul awaits the Beloved

as one awaits the birth of a child or

as one awaits the fulfillment of their destiny.

O sons and daughters of the Light,

welcome the Heart of your heart!

Then you will climb the sacred Mountain of Truth;

You will know mercy and love in abundance,
Then will your transgressions be forgiven;
and you will know the Oneness of All.

Let us pray,

Giver of joy, help us enter the mystery of advent, of you being Christ-with-us and Christ coming. In the waiting may we find your presence deeper within ourselves and work toward the true restoration of the whole world. And let the joy that lives in our hearts shine out and all we meet will know your love. Amen.

My brothers and sisters in Christ we have come together as Christmas draws near to prepare for our celebration of the birth of God's beloved Son. As the days of Advent continue, we follow the light of Christ, waiting in excitement and anticipation, preparing our hearts in humility and gratitude. This morning we also travel in spirit with Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem to acclaim with the multitude of the heavenly host the coming of the Prince of Peace. Through Scripture and silence, prayer and song, let us hear again the wonderful story of our redemption, and, hearing, let us rejoice and respond with a faith that lives out as love in the world.

Hymn Of Eternal Love Begotten

First Reading

The people who walked in darkness

have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness--
on them light has shined.
For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
His authority shall grow continually,
and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.
He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time onward and forevermore.
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Second Reading

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David.

He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

Adoration Prayer

Adapted from a prayer written by Caryl Micklem, "Contemporary Prayers for Public Worship"

Hymn: What Child is This

Homily; The Rev Gail Rodger

Affirmation of Faith

(cf Ephesians)

**We believe in God the Father,
from whom every family
in heaven and on earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son,
who lives in our hearts through faith,
and fills us with his love.**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens us
with power from on high.**

**We believe in one God;
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Amen.**

Prayer of Thanksgiving.

Let us pray,
Accept, O Lord, our thanks and praise for all you have done for us.
We thank you for the splendour of the whole creation, for the
beauty of this world, for the wonder of life, and for the mystery of
love. We thank you for the blessing of family and friends, and for
the loving care which surrounds us on every side. We thank you for
the church and our church family and the community around us.
We thank you for setting us tasks which demand our best efforts,
and for leading us to accomplishments which satisfy and delight us.

We thank you also for those disappointments and failures that lead us to acknowledge our dependence on you alone.

Above all, we thank you for sending your Son Jesus to be born for us; for the truth of his word and the example of his life; for his steadfast obedience, by which he overcame temptation; for his dying, through which he overcame death; for his rising to life again, in which we are raised to the life of your kingdom. Grant us the gift of your Spirit, that we may know Christ and make him known; and through him, at all times and in all places, may give thanks to you in all things. Amen.

Prayers of the People

Let us pray:

For the peace of the whole world, for the welfare of the Anglican Communion and for all churches that proclaim love over hatred, that we may work in unity for the acceptance of all people. Let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For our bishops, priests and deacons, especially Anna our bishop and Gail our priest and SuSan our deacon, Pam our honorary priest and for all the clergy and people of the diocese of these Islands and Inlets. Let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For our First Nation neighbours, their chiefs, elders and band councils, that relationships may be healed and injustices forgiven through right action. For Charles our King, for the leaders of the nations, for our national, provincial, and local leaders; and for all in authority and for those who have influence, that justice and mercy guide them. Let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For Esquimalt and all the surrounding communities, and for those who live in them in faith. Let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For good weather, for abundant food, for clean and fresh drinking water, and the sharing of all of earth's resources. Let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For those who travel by land, water, or air, for their safety and refreshment. For those who during this continued endemic of Covid19 chose not travel and face disappointment. Let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For the desolate, the lonely, the hungry and cold, that they may be comforted and have good health. Let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For those who are ill, especially those in our parish family and those dear to our heart, have your Spirit surround them and make your presence and healing touch known to them; for those who are dying give them peace as they say goodbye and instill a confidence in their hearts of knowing their heavenly destiny. Let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For all who have died, may their life be a witness to us of a holy life. Remembering them and all the saints, we commit ourselves, one another, and our whole life to Christ. **To You, O Lord.**

We pray all these things giving glory to God, in the name of Christ and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

And now, as our Saviour Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

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, for ever and ever. Amen.

Third Reading

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

Blessing

(Wild Goose Big Book of Liturgies Iona Community)

May the light of God

Lead us and make us unafraid

May the power of God

Protect us and make us strong

May the joy of God

Heal us and make us happy

May the grace of God

Bless us and keep us loving, now and evermore. Amen.

Dismissal:

Go now and walk in the light of the Lord.

In the name of Christ we go in hope and peace, joy and love to serve the Lord. Alleluia!

Welcome to all those visiting us at St. Peter and St. Paul.

We welcome saints, seekers and sinners as we live into a life in Christ, learning about and from one another as we worship God together. Christ binds us together in love through our diversity. If you are comfortable, please give us your name and address so we can add you to our weekly prayer list. We are looking forward to getting to know you better.

Territorial Acknowledgement

We worship on the traditional lands of the Esquimalt, Songhees and other Nations of the Salish and Coast Salish Peoples. We, who came from many lands to join the line of those worshipping here, commit our Church to continue the journey of truth and reconciliation with our First Nations' neighbours.

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