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***“Together in Christ
we seek to love God and
to love and serve all others”***

December 6, 2020

Advent 2 & The Feast of St. Nicholas

Sunday Virtual Worship Service



WELCOME TO CHURCH OF THE ADVENT

We recognize that we worship on the traditional lands of Coast Salish peoples. We commit ourselves to continue with our First Nations neighbours on the journey of healing, truth and reconciliation.

Rev. Dr. Paul Schumacher presides & preaches.

Organ prelude - Nell Howard

THE GATHERING OF THE COMMUNITY

Leader: Good morning. As we meet today, we begin by remembering the Songhees and Esquimalt nations, on whose traditional land we now gather in gratitude. We acknowledge their story and their stewardship of the land and the water, the plants, and the animals, through the many generations.

As we meet, we remember those who have called this place their home in recent years—the community of faith known as Church of the Advent. Let us share our joy in signs of welcome.

Welcome: Welcome to this service of worship on the Second Sunday of Advent and the Feast day of St. Nicholas, the patron saint of children and sailors. My name is Paul Schumacher, and I am the interim priest-in-charge here at the Church of The Advent, during this time of transition. We invite you to come and join our readers, prayer leaders, music director and choir members, along with our technical team, as we offer prayer and praise to our Creator. Come, come with your doubts, your strengths, your weaknesses, and your fears, for God loves us all and all are welcome in this space.

Scripture Sentence of the Day: Scripture shares with us, “Prepare the way of the Lord, make his path straight. All flesh shall see the salvation of God.”

Lighting of the Advent Candle: Today, we light the second candle on the Advent wreath. The candle of Peace.

Invitation: We come to the second week of the season of Advent and gather around a wreath to light candles. The wreath reminds us of the circle of our human community and the lights illuminate the many ways in which we bring ourselves to the Incarnation, God’s longed-for presence among us — human and holy, Emmanuel — God with us and God coming to us.

Scripture: Luke 2:11-14

But the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid; for see – I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.’ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest and peace on earth, good will to all!

Lighting the Candle and Illuminating the Stories of Hope:

(Light one purple/blue candle)

We light this candle for the Christmas story that shines hope on our lives.

(Light the second purple/blue candle)

We light this candle to shine on the places that bring us peace, including this church, and the places and people that need peace this day.

Naming Our Places of Peace: The Advent season reminds us that God chooses real places to meet us. Our hopes and fears are met, not in the clouds, but in the little town of Bethlehem.

We find peace in very real places – from a grandmother’s kitchen, at the seashore, from a decorated street to a snowy backyard, to the roar of the ocean’s waves against the shore. I invite you to consider those places and times in your life where you have found peace. Hold these memories in your heart as we pray for personal peace, community peace, global peace.

Unison Prayer: Emmanuel, we find peace in places near and far, expected and unexpected. Help us in this Advent season to pray for peace in our lives, our relationships, our communities, and our world. Amen.

Opening Hymn: VU 883 “Comfort, Comfort, O My People”

(Text: Is. 40; para. Johannes G. Olearius {1671}; trans. Catherine Winkworth {1863}; Music: Louis Bourgeois {1551}, harm. Claude Goudimel {1564} PUBLIC DOMAIN)

Comfort, Comfort, now my people,
Speak of peace, so says our God.
Comfort those who sit in darkness,
Mourning under sorrow’s load.
Cry out to Jerusalem
Of the peace that waits for them;
Tell them that their sins are I cover
And their warfare now is over.

Then make straight what long was crooked;
Make the rougher places plain.
Let your hearts be true and humble,
As befits a holy reign.
For the glory of the our God
Now on earth is shed abroad,
And all flesh shall see the token
That God’s word is never broken.

Greeting:

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
And the love of God,
And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
Be with you all.

And also with you.

Act of Praise: A Prayer (*from the Lutheran prayer book*)

Please join me in the spirit of this prayer:

Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming nurture our growth as people of peace and care for all your Creation; through Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Collect of the Day: Almighty God, who sent your servant John the Baptist to prepare your people to welcome the Messiah, inspire us, the stewards of your truth, to turn our disobedient hearts to you, that when Christ shall come again to be our judge, we may stand with confidence before his glory; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

THE STORY OF FAITH IS PROCLAIMED

Chat @ the Chancel:

Song: The Wise May Bring Their Learning (Anon 1880 ©Public Domain)

The wise may bring their learning,
The rich may bring their gold;
And some may bring their greatness,
And glories new and old;
We too would bring our treasures
To offer to the King.
We have no wealth nor wisdom;
What shall we children bring?

We'll bring him hearts that love from,
We'll bring him thankful praise,
And young souls meekly striving
To walk in holy ways.
And these shall be the treasures
We offer to the King,
And these the gifts that even
The poorest child may bring.

We'll bring the little duties,
We have to do each day,
We try our best to please him
At home, at school, at play.
And better are these treasures
To offer to our King,
Then richest gifts without them,
Yet these a child may bring.

Psalm: 85: 1-2, 8-13 (BAS Pg. 818)

1 You have been gracious to your land, O Lord, * you have restored the good fortune of Jacob.

2 You have forgiven the iniquity of your people * and blotted out all their sins.

8 I will listen to what the Lord God is saying, * for he is speaking peace to his faithful people and to those who turn their hearts to him.

9 Truly, his salvation is very near to those who fear him, * that his glory may dwell in our land.

10 Mercy and truth have met together; * righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

11 Truth shall spring up from the earth, * and righteousness shall look down from heaven.

12 The Lord will indeed grant prosperity, * and our land will yield its increase.

13 Righteousness shall go before him, * and peace shall be a pathway for his feet.

Second Reading: 2 Peter 3:8-15a

But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.

Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.

Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation. So also our beloved brother Paul wrote to you according to the wisdom given to him.

For the Word of God is scripture,
For the Word of God is among us,
For the Word of God is within us,
Thanks be to God.

Hymn of the Day: “Lord, I come to You” or “The Power of Your Love”

(Geoff Bullock© with permission)

Lord I come to You
Let my heart be changed, renewed
Flowing from the grace
That I found in You.
And Lord I've come to know
The weaknesses I see in me
Will be stripped away
By the power of Your love.

Refrain:
Hold me close
Let Your love surround me
Bring me near
Draw me to Your side.
And as I wait
I'll rise up like the eagle
And I will soar with You
Your Spirit leads me on
In the power of Your love.

Lord unveil my eyes
Let me see You face to face
The knowledge of Your love
As You live in me.
Lord renew my mind
As Your will unfolds in my life
In living every day
In the power of Your love.

Refrain (two times)

Gospel: Mark 1: 1 - 8

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark.

Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,

‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,

who will prepare your way;

the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

“Prepare the way of the Lord,

make his paths straight” ’,

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, ‘The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.’

The Gospel of Christ.

Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ.

Sermon: Rev. Dr. Paul Schumacher

Affirmation of Faith:

Let us confess the faith of our baptism, as we say,

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

Prayers of the People December 6, 2020

I will end each petition with “Come Lord Jesus”

Please respond with “and Hear Our Prayer”

In the hushed anticipation of your coming, O Lord, kindle in us the desire to remain awake; that we might be ready for your coming, and eager to pray. O God, in days to come the mountain of your house will be established, and your joy shall reign.

Come Lord Jesus, **and hear our prayer.**

Out of Zion shall go forth instruction. And you, O God, shall judge between the nations. We pray for our nation, and all nations, that your peace would be manifest in every corner of the earth.

Come Lord Jesus, **and hear our prayer.**

In your Kingdom, O Lord, wolves lie down with lambs and children play with serpents without fear. We pray for the sick, the suffering, and those in distress of any kind; that you would heal all injuries, comfort all grief, and settle all wrongs. **We pray especially for Dianne, Sheila, Alice, Maureen, Barb, Mae, Dimas, Garry, Neil, and any others you wish to name now, either aloud or silently in your heart.**

Come Lord Jesus, **and hear our prayer.**

In your Kingdom, O Lord, even the wilderness and dry land are glad and rejoice. We pray for those who rejoice this week as they celebrate all of life's joys; that they might obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing might flee away.

Come Lord Jesus, **and hear our prayer.**

Loving Father, we pray for all who mourn. We pray for Linda and her family as they mourn for her sister Lorna. We ask that all who mourn will find comfort in You. We ask for your strength for them in their time of need. Let them know they are loved and wrap them in the love of You.

Come Lord Jesus, **and hear our prayer.**

Come among us O God, and hear our prayers; so that when your Son Jesus comes among us with great might, and in manger mild, we might recognize his face and his voice, and come to adore him.

Come Lord Jesus, **and hear our prayer.**

May the God of Hope fill you all with joy and peace as you trust in him, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit, you may overflow with hope. **Amen.**

Confession and Absolution: Dear friends in Christ, God is steadfast in love and infinite in mercy; he welcomes sinners and invites them to share in his forgiveness. Let us confess our sins, confident in God's forgiveness.

Most merciful God,

we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.

We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.

For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us, that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your name. Amen.

May Almighty God have mercy upon you, forgive you all your sins through the grace of Our Lord, Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer: And now, as our Saviour Christ has taught us, we are bold to pray...

**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.**

Blessing:

May the peace of God which passes all understanding,
Keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge of God, our Creator,
Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, And the Holy Spirit, our Comforter.
And may the blessing of the God the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, be with you this day and forever more. Amen

Shared Ministry:

Commissioning Hymn: "Beside the Streams of Living Water"

(text: music arr. Thomas Keesecker; tune: Shenedoah © with permission)

Beside a stream of living water
 stands a tree of God's blest people,
 Its roots run deep, from those before us.
 By grace, it grows by grace,
 The love of God abounding.

So many rings, a living history,
 Some are thin from years of struggle
 Some circle wide from times of plenty.
 By grace, it grows by grace,
 The love of God abounding.

The branches soar beyond the steeple,
Leaves as varied as its people,
So many gifts and yet one body.
By grace, it grows by grace,
The love of God abounding.

O tree of life, O tree of glory,
May our witness tell God's story
For all who follow in the future.
By grace, it grows by grace,
The love of God abounding.

Commissioning: Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming nurture our growth as people of peace and light; through Jesus Christ our Saviour and Lord, who lives and reigns with you, and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

TODAY WE PRAY

*Pray for The Reformed Episcopal Church of Spain.
Pray for Ansley our Diocesan Administrator, Anna our Bishop Elect,
& Paul our Interim Priest-In-Charge.
Pray for S. Mary, Nanoose Bay & Territory of the People Anglican Church.
In the Selkirk Region for Regional Chaplaincies in Hospital.*

FOR THOSE WHO HAVE ASKED US TO PRAY FOR THEM

*Today, we remember Dianne, Rick & Barb, Sheila, Alice, Carol Ann,
Joan, Maureen, Barb, Azeita, Margaret, Mae, Dimas, Garry, & Neil.
We also pray for those we remember in the quiet of our own hearts.*