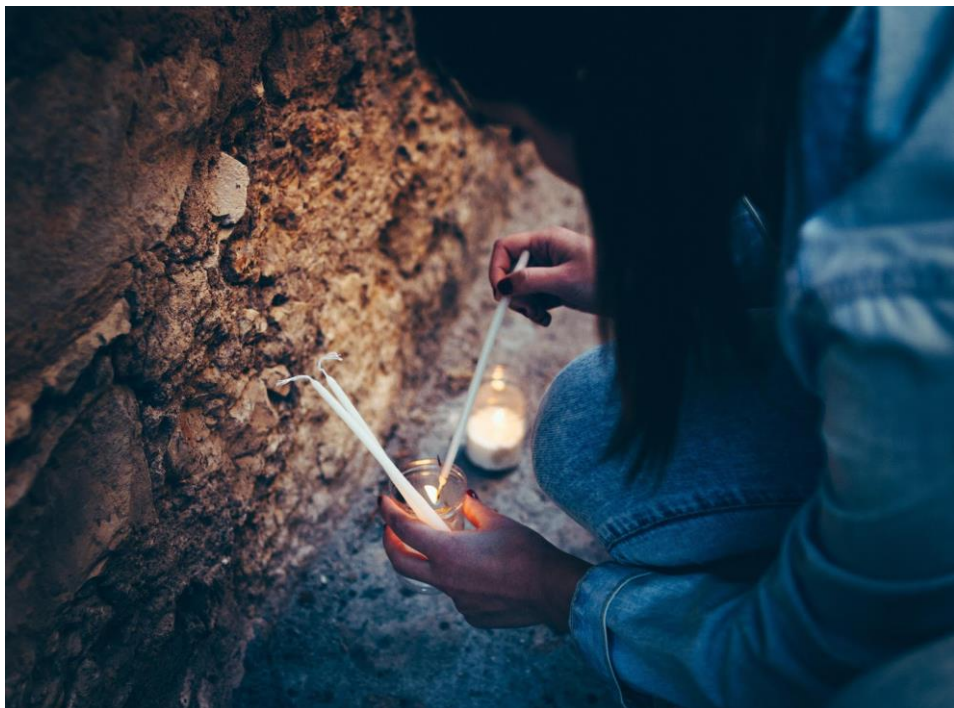


Christ Church Gabriola

A Collaborative Anglican – United Church

Open to All



Home Church

2nd Sunday in Advent

December 6, 2020

Rev. Karen Hollis

We acknowledge these lands upon which we worship are the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Snuneymuxw First Nation.

Preparing the Space Around Us

Whoever you are and wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here! Welcome if you are gathering on zoom or if you are worshipping at home with the bulletin. We are one community and all part of the body of Christ. Today is the second season of Advent; if you haven't already made an Advent wreath, I encourage you to do so. You don't have to use coloured candles, just use what you have – maybe some rocks or greenery or driftwood. Set up your Advent Wreath in the worship space in your home before sitting down to worship.

Preparing the Space within Us

*Let us prepare now the space within us for a time of worship. I invite you to sit quietly, perhaps with feet on the floor, taking a couple of deep breaths and bring yourself into this moment. Open yourself to the presence of God who is with us and within us . . . as you intentionally open yourself to God, **open yourself also to what you need from this time of worship.***

Greeting

One: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

All: **And also with you**

Advent Candle Lighting

Lisa Griffith & Jamie Doig

Last Sunday we lit the first candle of our Advent Wreath, the candle of Hope. We light it again as we remember the power of Hope and the difference it makes in the world.

This Sunday we light the second candle, the candle of Peace. We light it knowing full well that Peace is elusive, and in some parts of the world, it is almost completely absent. Yet in this season of Advent, we trust that God is always with us even in war and discord between countries; God is present within families and within our own hearts, gently leading us to new possibilities. This candle reminds us that Christ is the Prince of Peace, the one promises and facilitates healing, wholeness and reconciliation.

Let us pray: **O God of Peace, Emmanuel, God with us, we ask you to send your healing light into our hearts. Soften us to the possibilities of new life within us, reconciliation around us, and a Peace in the world that surpasses all understanding. Holy One, make us whole, we pray. We ask in the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace. Amen.**

Light your own Advent Wreath

¹ O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.

Refrain:
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.

⁷ O come, Desire of nations, bind
all peoples in one heart and mind.
O bid our sad divisions cease,
and be for us the Prince of Peace. Refrain

Invitation to Confession

A little later in the service we will be hearing a gospel reading about John the Baptist from the Message translation. It translates the word repentance as “a changed life”. It’s an invitation in this season of Advent to go deeper into truth and deeper into God’s love, that our lives may be changed, even transformed, and we may more fully live in Christ. In this spirit of “a changed life,” I invite you into a modified Examen, an exercise that comes from the Jesuits.

Prayer of Confession

Adapted from the Society of Jesus

Sit comfortably with either a paper and pencil for jotting down thoughts or with eyes closed.

1. Become aware of God’s presence and with the company of the Holy Spirit, recall these first few days of Advent.
2. Bring your awareness to gifts you have received during these days. Perhaps connection through a phone call . . . a walk in nature . . .
3. Bring into your awareness what has been most challenging about these days. Perhaps images on the news ...feelings of loneliness waiting without a defined end ... the shortening of daylight hours. What is most difficult to stay present to? Acknowledge these places and invite God’s presence.
4. In the company of the Holy Spirit, breathe into this moment, and into a deeper truth that is at work in you. Open yourself to the warmth of God’s love that surrounds you.
5. Ask for God’s help to guide you forward with this truth.

Silent Prayer

Assurance of Grace

God is here with us, in these shortened Advent days that are bookended by darkness, just as God was yesterday and will be tomorrow. God is our companion along the journey of life and will not let us go . . . through what is life giving and what is most challenging. God is with us. We are not alone. Thanks be to God.

Peace of Christ

Jesus is the Prince of Peace: his peace is healing, wholeness and reconciliation. Let us celebrate this peace by sharing it with one another.

The Peace of Christ be with you!
And also with you!

First Reading: Isaiah 40:1-11

(Transl. Robert Alter) Owen McCooley

Comfort, O comfort My people,
says your God.

Speak to the heart of Jerusalem
and call out to her,

for her term of service is ended,

her crime is expiated,

for she has taken from the Lord’s hand

double for all her offenses.

A voice calls out in the wilderness:

Clear a way for the Lord’s road,

level in the desert a highway for our God!

Every valley shall be lifted high

and every mountain brought low,

and the crooked shall be straight,

and the ridges become a valley.

And the Lord’s glory shall be revealed,

and all flesh together see

that the Lord’s mouth has spoken.

A voice calls out, saying: “Call!”

And I said, “What shall I call?” –

All flesh is grass

and all its trust like the flowers of the field.

Grass dries up, the flower fades,

for the Lord’s wind has blown upon it.

The people indeed is grass.

Grass dries up, the flower fades,

but the word of our God stands forever.

On a high mountain go up,
O herald of Zion.
Raise your voice mightily,
raise it, do not fear.

**Say to the towns of Judah:
here is your God.**

**Look, the Master Lord shall come in power,
His arm commanding for Him.**

Look, His reward is with Him,
His wages before Him.

**Like a shepherd He minds His flock
in His arm He gathers lambs,
and in his lap He bears them, leads the ewes.**

Gospel Reading

One: God be with you.

All: And also with you

One: The Good News of Jesus Christ according to Mark

All: Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Mark 1:1-8 (Transl. The Message) Lisa Griffith

The good news of Jesus Christ — the Message! — begins here,
following to the letter the scroll of the prophet Isaiah.

Watch closely: I'm sending my preacher ahead of you;

He'll make the road smooth for you.

Thunder in the desert!

Prepare for God's arrival!

Make the road smooth and straight!

John the Baptizer appeared in the wild, preaching a baptism of life-change that leads to forgiveness of sins. People thronged to him from Judea and Jerusalem and, as they confessed their sins, were baptized by him in the Jordan River into a changed life. John wore a camel-hair habit, tied at the waist with a leather belt. He ate locusts and wild field honey. As he preached he said, "The real action comes next: The star in this drama, to whom I'm a mere stagehand, will change your life. I'm baptizing you here in the river, turning your old life in for a kingdom life. His baptism—a holy baptism by the Holy Spirit—will change you from the inside out."

One: This is the Gospel of Christ;

All: Praise be to Jesus Christ

Reflection: Preparing

Silent Reflection

A New Creed: *Let us affirm our faith . . .*

**We are not alone,
we live in God's world.**

**We believe in God:
who has created and is creating,
who has come in Jesus,
the Word made flesh,
to reconcile and make new,
who works in us and others
by the Spirit.**

We trust in God.

**We are called to be the Church:
to celebrate God's presence,
to live with respect in Creation,
to love and serve others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,
our judge and our hope.**

**In life, in death, in life beyond death,
God is with us.**

We are not alone.

Thanks be to God.

Prayers of the People

Susan Brockley

One: Everlasting God

All: Hear Our Prayer

Lord's Prayer

New Zealand Prayer Book – Jim Cotter

Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver, Source of all that is and that shall be, Father and Mother of us all, Loving God, in whom is heaven: The hallowing of your name echo through the universe! The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world! Your heavenly will be done by all created beings! Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come one earth. With the bread we need for today, feed us. in the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us. In times of temptation and test, strengthen us. From trials too great to endure, spare us. From the grip of all that is evil, free us. For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and for ever. Amen

Offering Prayer

Gar Lee

Let us pray . . . Loving God, we pray with gratitude that you are with us in every season of life; even when we are done with you, your presence with us is steadfast. Thank you for leading us to places of nourishment

and communities where we can belong, where we can worship and serve in Christ's name. Amen.

Glory to God **whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine. Glory to God from generation to generation, in the Church and in Christ Jesus, for ever and ever. Amen.**

Hymn: *Come Thou Long Expected Jesus*

VU #2

¹ Come, thou long-expected Jesus
born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us,
let us find our rest in thee.

² Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art,
dear desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart.

³ Born thy people to deliver,
born a child and yet a King,
born to reign in us forever,
now thy gracious kingdom bring.

⁴ By thine own eternal Spirit
rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all-sufficient merit,
raise us to thy glorious throne.

Blessing

Iona Community

Light a candle and hold it during the blessing (maybe the candle of Hope from your Advent Wreath). If you are with another person, you're invited to bless each other, taking every other line.

One: The Creator's blessing be yours on your road, on your journey,
guiding you, cherishing you.

Female: *The Son's blessing be yours, wine and water, bread and stories, feeding you, challenging you.*

Male: *The Spirit's blessing be yours, wind and fire, joy and wisdom, comforting you, disturbing you.*

All: **The Angel's blessing be yours, on your house, on your living, guarding you, encouraging you. Let us walk together, a community on a journey, sustained in God's blessing. Amen!**

One: *Let us go now in peace to love and serve the Lord.*

All: ***Thanks be to God! Alleluia!***