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The Very Rev. Ansley Tucker, Diocesan Administrator

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

December 13, 2020

Advent 3

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 hope, your faith, and our joy, together, in signs of welcome.

Welcome: Welcome to this service of worship on the Third Sunday of Advent. 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, our storyteller, 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, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good tidings to the afflicted.”

Lighting of the Advent Candle: Today, we light the third candle on the Advent wreath. The candle of Joy. Please join us as Mary leads us in prayer.

Invitation: We come to the third 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: Isaiah 9:2-3a

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. You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy.

Lighting the Candle and Illuminating the Festivities of Joy:

We light this candle for the Christmas story that shines hope on our lives. (*blue*)

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. (*blue 2*)

We light this candle to celebrate the generosity and festivity of this season and to hold in tenderness and care feelings of loss and loneliness. (*pink*)

The Advent season is filled with cultural symbols – trees and gifts and cards and events and special foods and customs. When we are careful to delight in them rather than taking them on as burdens, these symbolic activities bring us joy. From candy canes to hanging stockings, let us name the customs that give us joy

Unison Prayer: Emmanuel, we celebrate the true joy in so many of our human customs of this season and consecrate them to you. We acknowledge the stress that expectations put upon some of us. We hold tenderly the sadness and depression that longer nights, commercial demands, memories of loss, or simple loneliness bring. Transform the joy that each of us finds into a gift of kindness. Amen

Opening Hymn: CP 103 “On Jordan’s Bank, the Baptist’s Cry”

(Text: Charles Coffin {1676-1749}; translated by John Chandler {1806-1876}; Music: Melody *Musicalisches Hand-Buch*, Hamburg {1690}; Harmony- William Henry Monk {1823-1889}, alt.)

On Jordan’s bank, the Baptist’s cry
Announces that the Lord is nigh;
Awake and hearken, for he brings
Glad tidings of the King of kings.

Then cleansed be every breast of sin;
Make straight the way of God within.
Prepare we in our hearts a home,
Where such a mighty guest may come.

For thou art our salvation, Lord,
Our refuge, and our great reward;
Without thy grace we waste away,
Like flowers that wither and decay.

To heal the sick stretch out thine hand,
And bid the fallen sinner stand;
Shine forth, and let thy light restore
Earth’s own true loveliness once more.

All praise, eternal Son, to thee
Whose advent doth thy people free,
Whom with the Father we adore
And Holy Spirit evermore.

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:

Direct us Lord God, in all our doings with your most gracious favour, and extend to us your continued help; that in all the things we have begun, continue to do, and that are now ended in you, we may glorify your holy name; and finally, by your mercy, bring us to everlasting life: through Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord. **Amen.**

Collect of the Day: God of power and mercy, **you call us once again to celebrate the coming of your Son. Remove those things which hinder love of you, that when he comes, he may find us waiting in awe and wonder for 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: 126 (BAS Pg. 885)

1 When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, *
then were we like those who dream.

2 Then was our mouth filled with laughter, *
and our tongue with shouts of joy.

3 Then they said among the nations, *
"The Lord has done great things for them."

4 The Lord has done great things for us, *
and we are glad indeed.

5 Restore our fortunes, O Lord, *
like the watercourses of the Negev.

6 Those who sowed with tears *
will reap with songs of joy.

7 Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed, *
will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.

Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil.

May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

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: VU 7 "Hope is a Star"

(Words: Brian Wren 1985, Music: Joan Collier Fogg 1987. Words and music ©1989 Hope Publishing Company)

Hope is a star that shines in the night,
Leading us on till the morning is bright.

Refrain:

***When God is a child there's joy in our song.
The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong,
And none shall be afraid.***

Peace is a ribbon that circles the earth,
Giving a promise of safety and worth. ***(Refrain)***

Joy is a song that welcomes the dawn,
Telling the world that the Saviour is born. ***(Refrain)***

Love is a flame that burns in our hearts,
Jesus has come and will never depart. ***(Refrain)***

Gospel: John 1: 6-8, 19-28

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

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

Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?' He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, 'I am not the Messiah.' And they asked him, 'What then? Are you Elijah?' He said, 'I am not.' 'Are you the prophet?' He answered, 'No.' Then they said to him, 'Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?' He said, 'I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, "Make straight the way of the Lord"', as the prophet Isaiah said.

Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, 'Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?' John answered them, 'I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.' This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

The Gospel of Christ.

Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ.

A Reading of The Christmas Story – Our celebration in honour of the Christmas Pageant for 2020 – the year of the Pandemic

Read by Mr. Lenn Enns

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 13, 2020

Dear Lord, as we are in this season of Advent, please remind us that Advent is waiting. Waiting for the birth of Your Son Jesus the Christ. This Advent let us wait in Hope, in Faith, in Joy, and in sympathy and Love with one another----for together we wait for Peace!

I will end each petition with "Holy and Compassionate God"

Please respond with "**Hear Our Prayers**"

Who are we, O God, that you should come to us? Yet you have visited your people and redeemed us in you Son. As we prepare to celebrate his birth, make our hearts leap for joy at the sound of your word and move us by your spirit to bless your wonderful works

Holy and compassionate God.....**Hear our prayers**

We pray for all who have asked us to pray for them and we pray for all who have no one to pray for them. We ask that you hold them in Your healing hands. We pray for Neil, Dianne, Sheila, Alice, Maureen, Barb, Mae, Dimas, and any others you wish to name now, either aloud or silently in your heart.

Holy and compassionate God.....**Hear our Prayer**

Loving Lord, we pray for those who are mourning especially the family and friends of Lorna. Hold all people who mourn in the warmth of your arms. They do not mourn alone. Give us the strength and courage to help them through their time of sorrow.

Holy and compassionate God.....**Hear our Prayer**

Lord, as we come forward each with our own burden, please help us let go! You and you alone know what our burdens are and how they are affecting us. We worry about work and money, food and health, about weather and crops and war and politics about loving and being loved.

Holy and compassionate God.....**Hear our Prayer**

May the God of Hope fill you all with joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. **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: CP 138 “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

(text: Charles Wesley {1701-1788} alt; Music: Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy {1809-1847}; adapted by William Hayman Cummings {1831-1915}; alternate harmony David Willcocks {1919- }. Altern. Harmony © 1961 Oxford University Press)

Hark! The herald angels sing,
Glory to the new-born King,
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinner reconciled.”
Joyful, all ye nations rise,
Join the triumph of the skies;
With the angelic host proclaim,
“Christ is born in Bethlehem!”

Refrain:

Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the new-born King.”

Christ, by highest heaven adored;
Christ, the everlasting Lord;
Late in time, behold him come,
Off-spring of a virgin’s womb,
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see;
Hail, the incarnate deity,
Pleased as one of us to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel!

Refrain:

Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the new-born King.”

Hail, the heaven-born Prince of Peace!
Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
Risen with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by,
Born that we no more may die,
Born to raise each child of earth,
Born to give us second birth.

Refrain:

Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the new-born King.”

Commissioning: Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God, and strengthen our faith in your coming, that transformed by grace, we may walk in your way; 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 Falkland Islands (Extra-Provincial to Canterbury)
Pray for Ansley our Diocesan Administrator, Anna our Bishop Elect,
& Paul our Interim Priest-In-Charge.
Pray for Congregation of Holy Trinity, Sooke, & Diocese of Caledonia.
In the Selkirk Region for Regional Corrections.*

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.
We also pray for those we remember in the quiet of our own hearts.*