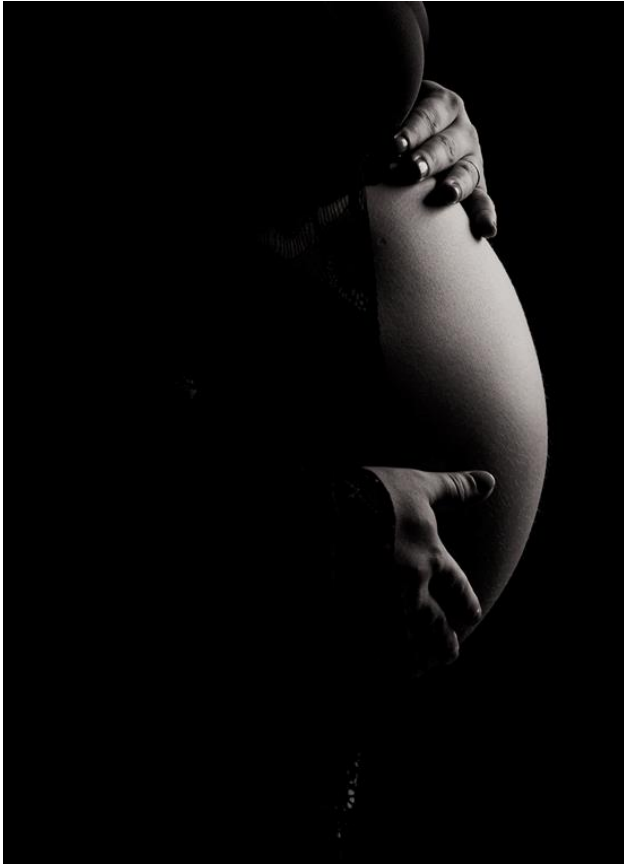


Christ Church Gabriola

A Collaborative Anglican – United Church

Open to All



Home Church

4th Sunday in Advent

December 20, 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 fourth Sunday of Advent, the Sunday of Love. You're invited to take a moment before you sit down for worship to prepare the space with your Advent Wreath, or maybe a candle (one you can hold during the blessing) and some festive decoration. Without the ability to be in the sanctuary, it's easier to enter the worship space when we intentionally tend to the space around us.

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.***

Prelude: God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen

Don Butt & Hiromi Bradshaw

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

Sarah Holmes, Derek Kilbourn, Colin & Linus

The first three candles in our Advent Wreath are Hope, Peace and Joy. As we light them, we remember that Hope and Peace are seeds of Joy.

The fourth candle of Advent is the candle of Love. God's Love made the world in which we live and made each one of us. Jesus comes to teach us about God's Love and how foundational it is to life. "Love God," he says, "Love your neighbour, Love yourself;" everything else follows. Jesus offers Love to all who encounter him; when we receive it, we live in Love. As we light the candle of Love, we celebrate God's Love born to us again in Jesus the Christ. It is stronger than rulers and empires, stronger than grief or despair, stronger than even death. We Love because God Loves us.

Let us pray: **Loving God, we thank you for the power of your Love, for the foundation of Love for our lives and how specifically you Love each of us. Help us to make your Love the centre of our lives so that everything else may flow from the Love we know in you.**

God of heavenly light, shine on the world this day, as the light of your Love prepares to be born in a tiny, precious baby.

Light your own Advent Wreath

Hymn: O Come Emmanuel v. 1 & 5

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

Refrain:

Rejoice! Rejoice! Immanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.

⁵ O come, O Key of David, come
and open wide our heavenly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high,
and close the path to misery. Refrain

Prayer of Confession

We long for you, O God. In this moment, in this space of worship, we thank you that you are here with us.

You know us, O God; we do not have to pretend with you. In the silence of your love, we bring to you the things that trouble us, that harm us, that make us feel ashamed or afraid, that we have not been able to say aloud.

Silent Prayer of Confession

Assurance of Grace

God is gracious and merciful beyond our understanding. God comes in love to you specifically in the way that you need. Let us breathe into this love and receive it as a gift.

Peace of Christ

We gather today in gratitude for God's love that is so alive in our midst. Christ brings us deeper into that love with the peace he brings – let us share Christ's peace with one another.

One: The Peace of Christ be with you all!

All: And also with you!

First Reading: Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26

Alie Lee

I will sing of your steadfast love, O Lord, for ever;
with my mouth I will proclaim your faithfulness to all generations.

**I declare that your steadfast love is established for ever;
your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens.**

You said, 'I have made a covenant with my chosen one,
I have sworn to my servant David:

**"I will establish your descendants for ever,
and build your throne for all generations."**

Then you spoke in a vision to your faithful one, and said:

'I have set the crown on one who is mighty,
I have exalted one chosen from the people.

**I have found my servant David;
with my holy oil I have anointed him;**

my hand shall always remain with him;
my arm also shall strengthen him.

**The enemy shall not outwit him,
the wicked shall not humble him.**

I will crush his foes before him
and strike down those who hate him.

**My faithfulness and steadfast love shall be with him;
and in my name his horn shall be exalted.**

I will set his hand on the sea
and his right hand on the rivers.

**He shall cry to me, "You are my Father,
my God, and the Rock of my salvation!"**

Gospel Reading

Alex McConnell

One: God be with you.

All: And also with you

One: The Good News of Jesus Christ according to Luke

All: Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Luke 1:26-38

(Transl. NRSV)

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, favoured 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 favour 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 for ever, 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. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with 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.

One: This is the Gospel of Christ;

All: Praise be to Jesus Christ

Song: *Watchful Sort of Waiting* Tom Hunter, Recording used with permission

To a young and peasant woman, the blessed message came

"Jesus is the child there in your womb."

So with trembling tears, she answered, "Let it happen as you say,"

And so began the wait to make him room.

CHORUS

It's a watchful sort of waiting, this waiting for the birth,

Waiting for a child to light the corners of the earth

Joseph knew of waiting too, this carpenter by trade,

Confused and angered by the news he'd heard –

Soon to be a father but not his flesh and blood

Waiting for a baby and the Word

CHORUS

CHORUS

Now here in this Advent, we await his birth again,

Though waiting's not our favorite thing to do.

But in the season's songs and stories, and in the waiting most of all,

We find that we're all great with child too.

CHORUS

Reflection:

Silent Reflection

Song: *God in Flesh Our Hope Divine*

The Brilliance

God of heaven, Lord of earth, **we beseech Thee**

Born of Mary, virgin birth, **Lord we greet Thee**

God in flesh our hope divine, **Hallelujah**

Babe of heaven, God's own son, **Hallelujah**

Star of David, Son of man, **God be with us**

Suffering servant, wounded man, **bring peace to us**

Broken flesh, our hope divine, **Hallelujah**

Lifted up for all mankind, **Hallelujah**

Gloria, gloria, gloria in excelsis deo

Gloria, gloria, gloria in excelsis deo

Brood of Jesse, which I'll stand, **Lord we need Thee**

Banner o'er the nations, **we receive Thee**

Glorious resting place for all, **Hallelujah**

Jew and Gentile, welcome all, **Hallelujah**

Gloria, gloria, gloria in excelsis deo

Gloria, gloria, gloria in excelsis deo

Come Lord Jesus, people sing, **we are yearning**

Give us back the garden, **we are longing**

On that day we'll see Thy face, **Hallelujah**

This whole realm in Your embrace, **Hallelujah**

Gloria, gloria, gloria in excelsis deo

Gloria, gloria, gloria in excelsis deo

Gloria, gloria, gloria in excelsis deo

Gloria, gloria, gloria in excelsis deo

Silent Reflection

Prayers of the People

Susan Brockley

One: Holy God,

All: Hear Our Prayer

Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your name,

your kingdom come,

your will be done,

on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

**Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom and the power,
and glory are yours now and forever. Amen**

Offering Prayer

Jean Rhodes

Carol: Joy to the World

VU #59

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 world! the Savior 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.

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!***