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The Right Rev. Anna Greenwood-Lee, Bishop Rev. Sr. Ingrid Andersen, Priest

> "Together in Christ we seek to love God and to love and serve all others"

Fourth Sunday of Advent 10:00 a.m. Service December 21, 2025



Anonymous. Nativity of Christ, from Art in the Christian Tradition.

Sunday Services are at 8:30 a.m. (Traditional Rite) 10:00 a.m. (Contemporary)

Office Hours Mon to Thurs 9:00-Noon
Online Bible Study Thursdays at 6:00 p.m.

WELCOME TO CHURCH OF THE ADVENT

If you are new to our parish, please identify yourself to the sidespersons or priest so we can welcome you and tell you about our church.

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.

The Rev. Sr. Ingrid Andersen preaches & presides.

This service is being broadcast live on the Internet. By attending this morning, you acknowledge and consent to the fact that video images of you may appear there.

Please have your electronic devices on silent mode during the service.

10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist
A Service from "Evangelical Lutheran Worship"

Lay Eucharistic Minister is Carol Denton Sidespeople are Rose Chandler & Jose Perena Pratt Ministry of the Chalice – Mike Armstrong & Joan Hoffman Director of Music is Nell Howard

THE GATHERING OF THE COMMUNITY

Leader: As we meet today, we begin by remembering the Songhees and x^wsepsəm nations, on whose traditional land we now gather in gratitude. We acknowledge their story and their stewardship of the land and water, the plants, and animals, through the many generations. As we meet today, 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 greet one another with words and signs of welcome.

Opening Hymn: CP 89 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (Vss 1, 2, 3, 6, 7)

LIGHT OF LIGHT – A CANDLE LIGHTING CEREMONY FOR ADVENT

Words & setting by Joel Raney. © 2019 Hope Publishing.

Fourth Sunday of Advent - Light of Love

Advent is a time to let go of anger and fear.

God of love, fill our hearts with true compassion.

Advent is a time to look for the best in others.

God of love, help us speak truth with kindness.

Advent is a time to share with those in need.

God of love, remind us that in giving; we receive.

Advent is a time to notice and appreciate the good around us.

God of love, help us see the world through loving eyes.

Candle Lighting

Mary Wills

Today, we light four candles -the candles of hope, peace, joy, and the candle representing love. This candle is a symbol of Christ's eternal love for us, as well as a reminder that we have been instructed to love others as we love ourselves. Because God is love, and because we were created in God's image, we ourselves are the embodiment of God's love here on earth. Love is patient and kind and powerful, and we all share the calling to go into the world and spread that love to others.

Light of Light (Sung)

Voices cry out from a world in grief: Prayers of those who seek relief. End their darkness, hear their call for Peace on earth, good will for all.

<u>Closing Prayer</u> Eternal God of love, as we enter these final days of Advent, unite us in a place of quiet rest. Here in this place, prepare for us a space in which we can contemplate the gifts of the Advent season. Guide us as we seek to find ways to give you thanks for your love and help us discern how best to respond in love to the needs of the world. **Amen.**

-Adapted from: Levine, Amy-Jill. Light of the World: A Beginner's Guide to Advent, Abingdon Press.

<u>Sentence of the Day:</u> A virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel: God with us.

<u>Collect of the Day:</u> Heavenly Father, who chose the Virgin Mary, full of grace, to be the mother of our Lord and Saviour, now fill us with your grace, that we in all things may embrace your will and with her rejoice in your salvation; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

(Please be seated)

THE STORY OF FAITH IS PROCLAIMED

Chat at the Chancel:

Hymn: SNC 39 Stay Awake, Be Ready (Vs 3)

Author: Christopher Walker (1988); © 1988 Christopher Walker, admin. OCP Publications

By the power of the Spirit, Mary will give birth to a son called Jesus. By the power of the Spirit, Emmanuel is near.

Refrain: Alleluia, alleluia! Emmanuel is near.

First Reading: Isaiah 7:10-16

Bill Van Sickle

Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test. Then Isaiah said: "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted."

Hear what the Spirit says to the Church.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm: 80: 1-7, 16-18 (Pg. 812)

Carol Denton

Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock; * shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.

In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, * stir up your strength and come to help us.

Restore us, O God of hosts; * show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

O Lord God of hosts, * how long will you be angered despite the prayers of your people?

You have fed them with the bread of tears; * you have given them bowls of tears to drink.

You have made us the derision of our neighbours, * and our enemies laugh us to scorn.

Restore us, O God of hosts; * show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

Let your hand be upon the man of your right hand, * the son of man you have made so strong for yourself.

And so will we never turn away from you; * give us life, that we may call upon your name.

Restore us, O Lord God of hosts; * show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

Second Reading: Romans 1:1-7

Linda Van Sickle

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for the sake of his name, including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ, To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Hear what the Spirit says to the Church.

Thanks be to God.

(Please stand as you are able for the Gradual Hymn.)

Gradual Hymn: CP 117 Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

(Please remain standing for the Gospel reading)

The Lord be with you. And also with you.

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

Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel: Matthew 1:18-25

Rev. Sr. Ingrid Andersen Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

The Gospel of Christ.

Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

Sermon: Rev. Sr. Ingrid Andersen

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

Prayers of the People:

Sue Hamblin

(Please be seated for the prayers)

Each petition will end with - God of Love Please respond with - Hear our prayer.

Confession & Absolution:

God has promised forgiveness to all who truly repent, turn to Christ in faith and are themselves forgiving. In silence we call to mind our sins.

Merciful God, we have sinned in what we have thought and said, in the wrong we have done and in the good we have not done. We have sinned in ignorance: we have sinned in weakness: we have sinned through our own deliberate fault. We are truly sorry. We repent and turn to you. Forgive us, for our Saviour Christ's sake, and renew our lives to the glory of your name. Amen.

Through the cross of Christ, God have mercy on you, pardon you and set you free. Know that you are forgiven and be at peace. God strengthen you in all goodness and keep you in life eternal. **Amen.**-From A New Zealand Prayer Book

(Please stand as you are able for the Peace)

The Peace:

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you!

All are warmly welcome to join us at the Lord's Table. If you prefer not to receive communion but to receive a blessing, please cross your arms over your chest. Gluten-free bread is available upon request. Please leave your communion glasses in the bowls on the left and right as you return to your seat.

THE SACRED MEAL IS SHARED

Offertory Hymn: PoP 12 Advent Begins in the Darkness of Night

Author: David Bjorlin (1984); © 2017 GIA Publications

Advent begins in the darkness of night, waiting and watching for signs of a light, walking in faith that a path will appear, daring to follow in spite of our fear.

Advent begins with our dreams yet deferred. Love sounds ridiculous; prayer seems absurd.

But in the midst of life's centerless maze, we lift together our protest of praise.

Advent begins in oppression's domain, marked by the cries of confusion and pain. Yet hope is kindled where justice is done, mercy is nurtured and peace is begun.

Advent goes on till the promised dawn breaks, tyrants are toppled, and God's dream awakes.

Hope is perfected and faith is made sight. Love is our center and Christ is our light.

<u>Prayer over the Gifts</u>: Gracious God, by the power of the Spirit who sanctified the mother of your Son, make holy all we offer you this day. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord. Amen.

Eucharistic Prayer: Lutheran Church May God be with you.

And also with you. Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Holy One.

Let us give thanks to our loving God!

It is right to offer thanks and praise!

It is right to give you thanks and praise, Great God of the Coming Dawn, for in each new day you surprise the earth with splendor.

Be with us in this Advent season, as we wait and watch for your coming amongst us together, we raise our voices with all the saints to proclaim

The Sanctus:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might adored, Heaven and earth are shining bright with the glory of your light. Loud hosannas now we sing! In the highest may they ring! Blessed is the Coming One, Christ, Emmanuel, your Son. Glory in the highest! Holy God, your name be blessed!

Blessed are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ whose coming was announced by wilderness prophets and who arrived to the song of angels in the choir stall of a manger. In Jesus you not only took our name but our flesh. He was the One promised. He announced the new day and the acceptable year when the blind would see, the poor rejoice, when captives would be set free, and the oppressed would once more walk in liberty. In stories he spoke of waiting bridesmaids and prodigal sons. With tears and compassion, he brought a dead man to life and gave a woman at a well the living water she sought. With anger he overturned tables and challenged the powerful. On the cross he revealed the power of weakness and in the emptiness of the tomb, he gave us a glimpse of your tomorrow that does not end in death.

On the night when he was betrayed, he sat at a table with his friends. He took bread, blessed it, broke it, served it to them, and said, "Take this. Eat it. It is my body, given for you. Do this to remember me." In the same way he took the cup, Blessed, served it to them, and said, "Drink from this every one of you. This is my blood poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sin. Do this to remember me."

And so we remember.

And so we offer our praise and thanks and our very selves.

As a holy and living sacrifice in union with Christ's offering for us.

As we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

So we await your new day. We call on you to send your Holy Spirit on us and on these elements of bread and wine. Let them be for us once more Christ's body and let us be for you once more Christ's body. Make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world,

God of the Dawn, Christ of the new Day Spirit who is ever present, we wait for you this day, your day. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer:

Music by Gordon Light © Common Cup Company

Our Father in heaven, hallow'd be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heav'n. 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, the power, and the glory are yours; now and for ever. Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread:

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

We, being many, are one body, for we all share in the one bread.

The Communion:

Communion Anthem: Ye Shall Go Out with Joy Sung by Choir

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(Please stand as you are able for the Prayer after Communion)

<u>Prayer after Communion:</u> Faithful God, in this sacrament we receive the promise of salvation. May we, like the Virgin Mary, be obedient to your will. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord. Amen.

<u>Doxology:</u> 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.

SENDING FORTH

Shared Ministry:

Birthdays & Anniversaries:

Sending out of Lay Eucharistic Visitors:

In the name of God and of this congregation, we send you forth bearing these holy gifts, that those to whom you go may share with us in Christ's body and blood. We being many, are one body, because we all share in the one bread.

May those who receive it from you be strengthened and encouraged in the community we have together in our Lord Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Blessing:

Commissioning Hymn: VU 6 A Candle is Burning

Words: Sandra Dean 1986 © 1986 Sandra Dean. Music: James R. Murray 1887

A candle is burning, a flame warm and bright, a candle of hope in December's dark night. while angels sing blessings from heaven's starry sky, our hearts we prepare now for Jesus is nigh.

A candle is burning, a candle of peace, a candle to signal that conflict must cease: for Jesus is coming to show us the way, a message of peace humbly laid in the hay.

A candle is burning, a candle of joy, a candle to welcome brave Mary's new boy. Our hearts fill with wonder and eyes light and glow as joy brightens winter like sunshine on snow A candle is burning, a candle of love, a candle to point us to heaven above. A baby for Christmas, a wonderful birth, for Jesus is bringing God's love to our earth.

Commissioning:

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

In the name of Christ!

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INTERCESSIONS

TODAY WE PRAY

We pray for The Anglican Church of Burundi.
We pray for our Primate Shane, John our Metropolitan,
Anna our Bishop, and Ingrid our Priest.
In the Western Peninsula & Gulf Islands region for the Parish of Holy Trinity, North
Saanich, and the Rev. Denise Doerksen.

FOR THOSE WHO HAVE ASKED US TO PRAY FOR THEM

We pray for those who have asked for our prayers and for those we know and love, especially Steve, Alan, Frank, Jim, John, Tina, Jenny, Beth, Mike, Trevor, Barb, Larry, Jim, Geoff & Kim, David, Cena, Kathy, Susan, Kathy, Jim, Wayne, Neil, Christopher, Dianne, Brandon, Jo, and the residents and staff of Broadmead Lodge.

For Those Who Are Mourning

We pray for Gwen and Doug Doust and their family as they grieve the sudden loss of their son Andrew, particularly for Scott, his brother, and for Melina,

Andrew's widow.

SHARED MINISTRY

Christmas Day Home Alone Luncheon - Noon — Thank you to the many who have signed up to contribute to the Christmas Lunch We need the help of just three more volunteers; one to cook a ham, one to prepare stuffing, and another gluten free stuffing. The ham will be paid for and provided. We just need people to cook the food ahead of time! It's also not too late to sign up to help in other ways. Please let Jose know by today if you are interested. Thank you!

Advent Creative Meditations – Tues. 6-7 pm - Make the most of this season with some creative quiet time, with special Advent colouring-in sheets and readings from much-loved author, Henri Nouwen. Bring your coloured pencils and markers. Dec 23 in the St John's Room

Church Parking – Due to the heavy recent rain we've had, the church grounds remain very wet and soft. To avoid adding stress to the grassy areas, we kindly ask that parishioners please drive and park only where there is pavement.

Christmas Pastoral Letters – Your Christmas letter is ready for pick up in the Narthex.

Offertory Envelopes – Remember to pick up in the Narthex your 2026 assigned offertory envelopes.

Looking for members of our new social media team! - Next year, our 40th Anniversary, is an important year for the Church of the Advent. We are taking the opportunity to strengthen our social media campaign on Facebook and expand it to Instagram.

Caroline DeCiantis, our parish administrator, manages the posting of parish events on social media and on our website. She needs information six weeks in advance of the event.

Shaena Wallace, our Communications Ministry Liaison and Sr. Ingrid manage the overall strategy for social media, and recently, Shyju Shabu has joined the team to manage the social media accounts. Thank you, Shyju! We're looking for another one or two people to share the load with him. This should not take more than an hour a month in total, with quarterly zoom team meetings.

Are you Gen X, Millennial or Gen Z? Interested in raising the profile of our parish on Social Media? Contact Sr. Ingrid at iandersen@bc.anglican.ca

Celebration Dinners to welcome new Royal Roads students - Church of the Advent is planning two themed potluck meals next year to welcome the new Royal Roads University students to Colwood. The campus does not permit the advertising of religious services, and this is the best way to introduce new students to our welcoming community.

Feb 7 - Celebration of International Black Cuisine - We're looking for people to volunteer to make the foods of the African diaspora - Caribbean, African, Cajun and many others. February is Black History Month.

Sept 19th_- **Celebration of Asian Cuisine** - We're looking for people to volunteer to make foods from the vast range of Asian cultures: East (Chinese, Japanese, Korean), Southeast (Thai, Vietnamese, Filipino, Indonesian), South (Indian, Pakistani), Central (Uzbek, Kazakh), and Middle Eastern (Turkish, Lebanese)

How can you help to welcome new students?

- -Would you like to help cook food?
- -Can you offer recipes?
- -Can you help to organise?

We need a small team to manage these two events. If you would like to be part of the team, please contact Terry Mikkonen, the Fellowship Ministry Liaison, at tlmikko@gmail.com. February is around the corner, so we'd like to set up the team soon.

ALREADY? Yes, it's that time of year! - As you have noticed, our little brown envelopes for flowers are here again. As you may or may not be aware, your Altar Guild receives no money for flowers except from YOU, our wonderful parishioners. We ask for your support in purchasing flowers for Christmas. We also know at this time of year, most of us are short on cash. We are asking only for a small contribution of whatever you have in your pockets! Please help us with this special ministry. **Thank you so much.** - **Your Altar Guild**

From the Parish Library: Books for the Advent season remain on the Top Shelf for today, with Christmas stories on the children's table until New Year. Coming next week to the Top Shelf: daybooks for study in 2026.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Dec 24 Christmas Eve Services:

Carols at 6:30 pm

Family Eucharist Service at 7 pm

Eucharist Service with Choir at 10 pm

Dec 25 Christmas Day Home Alone Luncheon

Dec 26-Jan 12 Sr. Ingrid away on holidays

Dec 28 Lessons & Carols Service, 10 am (no 8:30)

Jan 4 8:30 & 10 am services celebrated by Rev. John Steele

Jan 7 Community Coffee Social, 9:30 am

Jan 10 Celebration of life for Dietrich Rodwoski, Hall, 2 pm

Jan 11 Morning Prayer led by Terry Mikkonen, 10 am (no 8:30)

Jan 14 Ladies Guild Mtg, 1:30 pm

Jan 18 Jazz Vespers, 7 pm

Jan 20 Parish Council Mtg, 7 pm

Jan 24 Spanish Service & Potluck, 6 pm

Jan 25 8:30 Breakfast

Jan 28 Ladies Guild Lunch, Noon

Jan 29 Prayer Shawl Mtg, 10 am, St. John's Rm

