



Sunday December 10, 2023  
Second Sunday of Advent - Peace

St. Paul's Anglican Church, Uxbridge



## THE GATHERING OF THE COMMUNITY

Prelude

*Offertory on Noels*

Boellmann

Welcome & Opening Greeting

**Advent Candle Lighting**

**One:** In days when God's people longed for peace, Isaiah declared, "Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from God's hand double for all her sins" (Isaiah 40:1).

**All:** We who gather today also seek comfort and peace, yet we are unsatisfied with ideas of peace that tell us to keep quiet and go with the flow. We long for real peace, true peace, just peace.

**One:** We wait.

**All:** We wait as people who yearn for peace that bears the fruit of community, equity, and flourishing for all.

**One:** We light these candles as signs of God's shocking hope and just peace. May they be beacons calling us to repent and to live the good news of Jesus Christ, as we wait, watch, and labour for the day when all people can gather together to worship and glorify God.

**Amen.** (<https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/articles/advent-candle-lighting-liturgy-2023>)

**Lighting of two candles of the Advent Wreath**

### **A Candle Is Burning**

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.

*Tune: Cradle Song (Common Praise 1998 #126)  
Text by Sandra Dean*

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.**

**Processional Hymn**

*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

**CP 89**

### **Land Acknowledgement**

Together we say

**The Township of Uxbridge is situated on the traditional territory of the Huron-Wendat, Haudenosaunee, Mississauga, and Chippewa (Anishinaabe) people. We acknowledge that these lands are covered under the Williams Treaties and are home to many Indigenous communities. We honour, recognize, and respect this nation and Indigenous Peoples as the traditional stewards of the lands and waters on which we now live, work, and play.** (Township of Uxbridge)

### **Litany for Advent 2**

**One:** The prophets call and an apostle writes that peace comes from God.

**All:** “For a child has been born for us...and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting [Parent], Prince of Peace. ...and there shall be endless peace.” (Isaiah 9) “The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4)

**One:** The world, our relationships and our lives are all too often torn by conflict and injustice. Advent calls us to pray and work for peace—shalom—in the world God loves, and to which Christ came. But God’s shalom is not simply the absence of conflict.

**All:** **Shalom is the peace that comes when we live life in balance, loving God and one another.**

**One:** Holy are you, Source of all new life among us.

**All:** **Jesus Christ comes as the Prince of Peace. We join with all creation and lift our hearts in joyful praise. [May our lives be an example of God's peace.]**

(Presbyterian.ca)

### **Collect of the Day**

Almighty God, who sent your servant John the Baptist to prepare your people to welcome the Messiah, inspire us, the ministers and stewards of your truth, to turn our disobedient hearts to you, that when the Christ shall come again to be our judge, we may stand with

confidence before his glory; who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

## THE PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

### First Reading    Isaiah 40:1-11

**Reader:** A Reading from the Book of Isaiah

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins. A voice cries out: 'In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.' A voice says, 'Cry out!' And I said, 'What shall I cry?' All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand for ever. Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, 'Here is your God!' See, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep. (NRSVA)

**Reader:** The Word of the Lord

**People:** Thanks be to God

### Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13    Refrain

Lord, show us your mer - cy and love.

### Gradual Alleluia

CP 712

*"Speak O Lord, your servant is listening,  
you have the words of everlasting life.  
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!"*

### Holy Gospel    Mark 1:1-8

**Reader:** The Lord be with you

**People:** And also with you

**Reader:** The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark

**People:** Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ

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." *(The Message)*

**Reader:** The Gospel of Christ

**People:** Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

**Gradual Alleluia**

**CP 712**

*"Speak O Lord, your servant is listening,  
you have the words of everlasting life.  
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!"*

**Reflection**

**Contemplative Pause**

**People:** God we hear and receive your words of hope and encouragement and with thoughtful gladness we sing.

*Lord, We Hear Your Word with Gladness (vs 1)*

**CP 447**

*"Lord we hear your word with gladness: you have spoken – we rejoice:  
Words of love and life and freedom – help us make their truth our choice!  
Now in holy celebration for your Word we worship you;  
Spoken, written, known in Jesus, ours today to prove anew."*

**Affirmation of Faith for Advent**

We believe in God,  
creator and lover of the earth, origin and destiny of us all.

We believe in Jesus the Christ—

God coming to us in the fragile promise of a baby yet unborn—  
who emerges as the herald of hope,  
God's laughter in the face of despair.

Plunged into death and hell, he broke free the captives, and is leading the way  
to the land of promise where justice and peace will flourish.

We believe in the Holy Spirit,  
who implants the seed of truth, brings us to birth as the body of Christ,  
and empowers us to confront and transform all that is corrupt, degrading and deceitful.

We believe in the coming reign of God.  
Announced by the Baptist, it has drawn near to us in Jesus,  
and will be consummated in the glorious marriage of earth and heaven,  
when all who have passed through the world's deep sorrow  
will be raised from the waters, robed in righteousness,  
and gathered into the joyous fulfilment of God's desire.

For the coming of that day on this day, we work and pray:  
Come, Lord Jesus, Come!

(By Nathan Nettleton, re-worship.blogspot.com)

**Choir Anthem**

*Break Day of God*

Beaudoin

**Prayers of the People**

**Confession and Absolution**

Friends in Christ, let us confess to God the faults and shortcomings of our world; its pride  
its selfishness, its greed; its evil divisions and hatreds. Let us confess our share in what is  
wrong, and our failure to seek and establish that peace which God wills for all humanity.  
**Merciful God, we confess that we have not given you the things that are yours. We  
quibble over technicalities and argue over questions that do not lead us to love you,  
ourselves, or our neighbors well. We ignore your goodness that is all around us, and  
we do not allow ourselves to be filled with the Spirit who empowers us to live as  
people who glorify you. We do not recognize your holy touch in the world around  
us, and we neglect our responsibility to treat all things and all people as sacred.  
Forgive us, we pray, and free us to live in love and peace with you, with ourselves,  
with our neighbors, and with all creation. Amen.**

(Dr. Lisa Hancock, Discipleship Ministries, April 2023)

Almighty God have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm  
and strengthen you in all goodness, and keep you in eternal life; through Jesus Christ our  
Lord. **Amen.**

**The Peace**

May the peace of the risen Christ be with you!      **And also with you!**

**THE CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST**

**Offertory Hymn**

*There's a Voice in the Wilderness*

**CP 106**

## **Prayer over the Gifts**

With these gifts, dear God, accept the praise and thanksgiving of our hearts, which rejoice in your goodness and love. Let our gifts point to your presence in the world, and further your dream for the world through Jesus, Emmanuel, God-with-us. **Amen.** (UCC.org.)

## **The Eucharistic Prayer**

**One:** Our God is here.

**All: God's Spirit is with us.**

**One:** Lift up your hearts.

**All: We lift them to our God.**

**One:** Let us give thanks to our God.

**All: it is right to give thanks and praise.**

Living God, Parent of light, hope of nations, friend of sinners, builder of the city that is to come. Your love is made visible in Jesus Christ. You restore the lost and give dignity [to the marginalised] and despised. In the face of Jesus Christ your light shines out, flooding lives with goodness and truth, gathering into one a divided and broken humanity. With people from every race and nation, with the Church of all the ages, with the apostles, evangelists, and martyrs, we join the angels of heaven in their unending song:

### **Sanctus**

**CP 722**

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, Lord God of power and might,**

**Heaven and earth are full, full of your glory.**

**Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes, who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.**

Merciful God, you are the most holy one, enthroned in splendour and light, yet in the coming of your Son Jesus Christ you reveal the power of your love made perfect in our human weakness. Embracing our humanity, Jesus showed us the way of salvation; loving us to the end, he gave himself to death for us; dying for his own, he set us free from the bonds of sin, that we might rise and reign with him in glory.

On the night he gave himself for us all he took bread and gave you thanks. He broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way, after supper he took the cup and gave you thanks. He gave it to them, saying: Drink this, all of you. This is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

**Therefore, we proclaim the death that he suffered on the cross, we celebrate his resurrection, his bursting from the tomb. We rejoice that he reigns at your right hand on high and we long for his coming in glory.**

As we recall the one, perfect sacrifice of our redemption God, by your Holy Spirit let these gifts of your creation be to us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ; form us into the likeness of Christ and make us a perfect offering in your sight. Look with favour on your people and in your mercy hear the cry of our hearts. Bless the earth, heal the sick, let the oppressed go free and fill your Church with power from on high.

Gather your people from the ends of the earth to feast with all your saints at the table in your kin-dom, where the new creation is brought to perfection in Jesus Christ our Lord; by whom, and with whom, and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honour and glory be yours, almighty Parent, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

### **The Lord's Prayer**

Let us join in prayer with confidence.

**Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting [Parent], Prince of Peace—  
hallowed be your name.**

**Immanuel, God with us—hallowed be your name.**

**In us, through us, and around us, your kin-dom come,  
where the wolf will live with the lamb and the lion will feed with the calf.**

**Bread of life, feed us with your truth.**

**For our indifference to the wonder of your coming, forgive us.**

**Protect us from the constant dangers and enticing temptations we face each day.**

**Word who became flesh and lived among us,  
we have seen your glory, full of grace and truth.**

**As You come to us now, and You will come to us again in glory,  
when we will join all heaven and earth in giving you blessing  
and honor and glory and might forever! Amen.**

*(www.minnesotaumc.org)*

### **The Breaking of the Bread**

**Celebrant:** We break this bread to share in the body of Christ

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

The gifts of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

**Agnus Dei**

**CP 685**

**Communion**

**Communion Hymn**

*Comfort, Comfort Ye My People*

**CP 100**

### **Prayer after Communion**

We thank you, God, for breaking into our world and pouring into our lives and our experiences. We thank you, God, for this meal of thanksgiving and the stories of love, grace, and hope that it tells **Amen.** *(AdventUnwrapped.ca)*

## **The Doxology**

**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 & Blessing**

### **A Peaceful Blessing**

**One:** Be people of peace.

Let peace live in your heart and share the peace of Christ with all you meet.

Share peace by acting out of compassion and not fear.

Share peace by listening to all sides of a story.

Share peace by praying for our world.

**All:** **In this Advent season, we need to see, feel, and share peace.**

**As we go out into the wonder of God's creations, we will share peace and hope with those we meet. Amen.** (liturgylink.net)

## **Announcements**

### **Recessional Hymn**

*Herald! Sound the Note of Judgement*

**CP 111**

### **The Dismissal**

Go in peace to love and serve Christ who is our peace.

**Thanks be to God.**

### **Postlude**

*Noel Parisien*

Quef