



Waterloo Christian Reformed Church

209 Bearinger Road N2L 4H5 (519) 746-5727

4th Sunday of Advent, December 20, 2020

In this year of uncertainty, we can find hope in an unchanging God who offers comfort through his assurance to “Be not afraid”. While we wait for the coming of Christ during this Advent season, we can look to the natural world to see examples of how “all creation waits.”

Preacher: Rev. Vicki Cok
Pianist: Pam Joosse

Worship Leader: Don Bisch
Deacon: Rob Leach

Storyteller: Fran Williston

Visuals: Alanna Groen-Brunsting
Liturgy: Nelda Looyenga

*Note that * indicates to stand in body or in spirit, and **bold italic** indicates congregational response.*

Welcome and Announcements

We Gather to Worship

Lighting of the Advent Candles - *by Pardys family*

As we anticipate the birth of Jesus Christ,
we light the candles of *hope, love and peace*
as reminders of the promise that Emmanuel is our God with us
and that God graciously gives us these gifts
even if they sometimes come in ways that are mysterious to us.

On this fourth Sunday of Advent, we light the candle of *joy*.
We fix our eyes on Jesus Christ, the author and perfecter of our faith.
For the joy set before him, he came down to earth
and took on our humanity,
endured the cross with all its shame
and sat down at the right hand of God in heaven.
The day is coming when there will be everlasting joy to the world,
for our Lord will come! Let all the earth receive her King!
We light this candle of joy in anticipation of that day.
[candles are lit]

Call to Worship

We gather in preparation
for good news is about to be proclaimed.
We gather in expectation
for joy is about to explode in our midst.
We gather in celebration
for we are the people who have said
yes, to the manager,
yes, to love enfleshed,
yes, to the one incarnate for others,
yes, to the wholeness of God.

With preparation and in expectation, let us celebrate!

Opening Song: LUYH #92 (vs. 1 & 2) – **Joy to the World**

- 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 earth! 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.

God's Greeting

We Confess our Sin and Receive Assurance of Forgiveness

Prayer of Confession

Come, thou long-expected Jesus, come.
Sometimes we have a hard time imagining that you would come down
from the glorious splendor of Heaven
to be born in a Bethlehem stable
with straw, mud and animals all around.
We cannot imagine that you willing took on our broken flesh
with bodies that ache and suffer from illness and pain.
***You walked into our sadness, into wars, into violence and persecution,
and you did this all for us.***
We confess that it is difficult to comprehend and difficult to believe.
Why, Lord, would you do that for us?
We call you Emmanuel, God with us,
but how often do we live out this Christmas story
with the truth that your incarnation was for us?
Continue to enter in, Emmanuel.
Enter into our darkness and give us light.
Enter into our lives and change them for your good purposes.
Enter into our hearts and still them with the words "Be not afraid."
Prepare our hearts to receive him when he comes. Amen.

Song: LUYH #88 (vs. 1, 3, 4) – **O Little Town of Bethlehem**

- 1 O little town of Bethlehem,
how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting Light;
the hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight.
- 3 How silently, how silently
the wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
the blessings of his heaven.
No ear may hear his coming,
but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him still
the dear Christ enters in.
- 4 O holy Child of Bethlehem,
descend to us, we pray.

Cast out our sin and enter in;
be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
our Lord Emmanuel.

Assurance

Our hope for a new creation is not tied to what humans can do,
For we believe that one day every challenge to God's rule will be crushed.
His kingdom will fully come,
And the Lord will rule.

Come, Lord Jesus, come.

- Our World Belongs to God, st.55

We Hear God's Word

Children's Story – based on **All Creation Waits: The Advent Mystery of New Beginnings** by Gayle Boss; *condensed and told by Fran Williston*

Prayer for Illumination

Scripture Reading: **Matthew 1:18-25**

(concluded with "This is the Word of the Lord" and "***Thanks be to God***")

Sermon: **Fear of a Ruined Reputation**

Moment of Silent Meditation

(Take a moment to reflect on what God's word might mean for your life or on a truth that spoke to you. Please be still until after the pianist concludes this time of silence.)

We Respond with Gratitude

Song of Response: LUYH #56 – **Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus**

- 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.

Prayers of the People (on chat)

We will conclude this time of prayer with the Lord's Prayer:

***Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name;
your kingdom come,
your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.***

***Forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,
for yours is the kingdom and the power
and the glory forever. Amen.***

Offering: Shalem Mental Health Network

Diaconal Prayer

We Celebrate Holy Communion

Lift up your hearts unto the Lord.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right for us to give thanks and praise.

***With joy we praise you, gracious God,
for you have created heaven and earth,
made us in your image, and kept covenant with us –
even when we fell into sin.***

***We give you thanks for Jesus Christ, our Lord,
whose coming opened up the way of salvation
and whose triumphant return we eagerly await.***

We give thanks to God, that our Saviour Jesus Christ,
before suffering, gave us this memorial of his sacrifice until his coming again.
On the night of his arrest Jesus took bread, gave thanks to God,
and broke it saying: "This is my body, which is for you; do this to remember me."
In the same way he took the cup after supper and said,
"This cup is the new covenant sealed by my blood.
Whenever you drink it, do this to remember me."

***Your death, O Christ, we proclaim,
your resurrection we declare,
your coming again we await. Glory be, to you, O Lord.***

Let us pray:

Send your Holy Spirit upon us, we pray, that the sharing of the bread that we break
and the cup that we bless may be for us the communion of the body and blood of Christ.
Grant that, being joined together in him, we may attain to the unity of the faith
and grow up in all things into Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus, the Lord has prepared his table for all who love him and trust in him
alone for their salvation. All who are truly sorry for their sins, who sincerely believe in the Lord Jesus as
their Saviour, and who desire to live in obedience to him, are now invited to come with gladness to the
table of the Lord.

Eat and drink, remember and believe, that Jesus gave himself for a complete forgiveness of all our sins.
(*indicating the elements*) The gifts of God for the people of God!

Thanks be to God!

(We share the bread and cup with each other)

Thanksgiving

Father, we are thankful for the quiet faith of Mary,
who believed the promise that was given her.

For the humble faith of the shepherds
who were obedient to the vision that had been given them,

For the searching faith of the wise men,
who sought and found the wisdom of heaven.

Father, we are thankful that in Christ all these promises have been fulfilled:

***A Prince has been born from the house of David,
the Root of Jesse has sent forth a righteous branch,***

And we are thankful that this Messiah,
anointed by your Spirit, made himself a sacrifice for us,
***and having perfected this priestly service,
is now seated at your right hand in eternal glory.***

We Are Sent Out with the Spirit

Call to Service

By the power of your Spirit,
we will walk in the light.

In times of joy and gladness,
we will walk in the light.

In times of sorrow and despair,
we will walk in the light.

Called to witness to your love,
we will share the light.

Closing Song: LUYH #100 (vs. 1 & 2) – **Jesus, the Light of the World**

- 1 Hark, the herald angels sing.
Jesus, the light of the world.
Glory to the newborn King.
Jesus, the light of the world.

Refrain

We'll walk in the light, beautiful light.
Come where the dewdrops of mercy shine bright.
Oh, shine all around us by day and by night.
Jesus, the light of the world.

- 2 Joyful, all ye nations, rise.
Jesus, the light of the world.
Join the triumph of the skies.
Jesus, the light of the world. ***Refrain***

Benediction and Choral ***"Amen, Amen, Amen"***.

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Sermons from our worship services can be found on Waterloo CRC's website, www.waterloocrc.org