



BLUE CHRISTMAS

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2020 AT 7 PM.

The Church of the Redeemer:

162 Bloor St. West, Toronto, ON M5S 1M4

office@theredeemer.ca • Tel: (416) 922 4948 • www.theredeemer.ca

Welcome: *Susan Haig*

Song: “Ave Maria” (*J.S. Bach / Charles Gounod*)

Opening Prayer: *Susan Haig*

Priest: God of Mercy and Love,
we gather here tonight as dispersed people of exile,
bringing our pain, our sorrow and our confusion
to this safe space of your dwelling.
We ask you to meet us in our darkness,
to give us the freedom and courage to lament together,
and finally to make a straight highway
in the desert to lead us home.

All: **Amen.**

First Reading: *Sharon Kirby*

Reader: A Reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah.

What do you mean that you have gone up, all of you, to the housetops, you that are full of shoutings, tumultuous city, exultant town? Your slain are not slain by the sword, nor are they dead in battle. Your rulers have all fled together; they were captured without the use of a bow. All of you who were found were captured, though they had fled far away.

Therefore I said: Look away from me, let me weep bitter tears; do not try to comfort me for the destruction of my beloved people. For the Lord GOD of hosts has a day of tumult and trampling and confusion in the valley of vision, a battering down of walls and a cry for help to the mountains. Elam bore the quiver with chariots and cavalry, and Kir uncovered the shield. Your choicest valleys were full of chariots, and the cavalry took their stand at the gates. He has taken away the covering of Judah.

Reader: The word of the Lord.

Isaiah 22.1-8

All: **Thanks be to God.**

A moment of silence is observed

Song: "On the Willows" (*Stephen Schwartz*)

On the willows
There we hung up our lives
For our captors there
Require of us songs
And our tormentors mirth

On the willows
There we hung up our lives
For our captors there
Require of us songs
And our tormentor's mirth

Saying, sing us one
Of the songs of Sion
Sing us one of the songs of Sion
But how can we sing?
Sing the Lord's songs?
In a foreign land?

Second Reading: *Susan Scott*

Reader: A Reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah.

Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: For your sake I will send to Babylon and break down all the bars, and the shouting of the Chaldeans will be turned to lamentation. I am the LORD, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King.

Thus says the LORD, who makes a way in the sea, a path in the mighty waters, who brings out chariot and horse, army and warrior; they lie down, they cannot rise, they are extinguished, quenched like a wick: Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. The wild animals will honour me, the jackals and the ostriches; for I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to my chosen people, the people whom I formed for myself so that they might declare my praise.

Reader: The word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Isaiah 43:14-21

A moment of silence is observed

Hymn: #882 (Gather) "Healer of Our Every Ill"

Refrain



Heal-er of our ev-'ry ill, light of each to - mor-row, give us peace be-



yond our fear, and hope be-yond our sor-row.



1. You who know our fears and sad-ness, Grace us with your
2. In the pain and joy be-hold-ing, How your grace is
3. Give us strength to love each oth-er, Ev-'ry sis-ter,
4. You who know each thought and feel-ing, Teach us all your



peace and glad-ness, Spir-it of all com-fort: fill our hearts.
still un-fold-ing, Give us all your vi-sion: God of love.
ev-'ry broth-er, Spir-it of all kind-ness: be our guide.
way of heal-ing, Spir-it of com-pas-sion: fill each heart.

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950. Tune: Marty Haugen, b. 1950. © 1987, GIA Publications, Inc.

The Gospel: *Tony Crosbie*

Reader: The Lord be with you.

All: **And also with you.**

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

All: **Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

(Jesus said:) "I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. They who have my

commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them.” Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, “Lord, how is it that you will reveal yourself to us, and not to the world?” Jesus answered him, “Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.

Reader: The Gospel of Christ.

John 14.18-23

All: **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

Reflection: Anne Evers

Candle Lighting

We invite you to light a candle or two in your home in remembrance of a loved one or to symbolize a loss that you will be grieving this Christmas season.

Music: “Spiegel im Spiegel” (Mirror in the mirror) - Avro Pärt

Litany: Susan Haig

Priest: Healing and Restoring God,
whose grace is greater than
frightening viruses and frustrating vulnerabilities,
We pray for those who have been afflicted by the coronavirus,
especially those who have died,
in our communities of Redeemer and the Common Table,
and in our city and province.
We name them now, either silently in our own hearts or in writing in the chat.
We remember their families and friends and their caregivers.
We pray for those who are suffering with the virus now
and for those medical professionals and first responders
who place themselves in harm’s way to provide aid and succor to them.

Priest:: Lord, we remember your promise to us:

All: **“I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you.”**

Pause

Priest: We pray for all our loved ones who have died to this earthly life, leaving us feeling bereft of their company and companionship. We name them now, either silently in our own hearts or in writing in the chat. We remember with tears and laughter what they meant to us and how many gifts they bestowed upon us. When we are despairing, allow your tears to mingle with ours, your heart to break with ours, until finally your resurrected life proclaims the final joyful word.

Priest: Lord, we remember your promise to us:

All: **“I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you.”**

Pause

Priest: We pray for the most vulnerable in our midst: those who live alone in the solitude of their homes; those who long for wholeness in a hospital bed, long-term care facility, shelter, or prison; those who struggle to rise from the pit of depression or addiction; those pinched by financial or employment stresses; those locked in oppressive or dead-end relationships; all who need our robust support and understanding, may they find hope and strength in the truth that you are a God who does not watch our struggles from a distance but pitches your tent with us on this earth.

Priest: Lord, we remember your promise to us:

All: **“I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you.”**

Pause

Priest: We remember with care and concern those whose businesses and employment have been impacted by restrictions, lockdowns, and border closures, and those who have had to continue to work despite the risk to their health. May all of us know the relief of a Jubilee and the joy of renewed and equitably-shared prosperity.

Priest: Lord, we remember your promise to us:

All: **“I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you.”**

Pause

Priest: We acknowledge with concern the families and teaching communities that have had to accommodate to new realities and adjust to unplanned rhythms and challenges.
Give parents, grandparents, teachers and educators an energized patience and loving wisdom in all that they do, learning from the children that learning is play and play is fun.

Leader: Lord, we remember your promise to us:

All: **“I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you.”**

Pause

Priest: We remember those who are cynical or disbelieving about this crisis and those who feel secure and unthreatened.
Humble all of us in our arrogance and disrupt our artificial sense of safety.
Transform our cynicism into a true desire to stand alongside and serve the least of our sisters and brothers.

Priest: Lord, we remember your promise to us:

All: **“I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you.”**

Pause

Priest: We pray for your church robbed of its normal patterns and practices and evicted from its beloved buildings, that despite our fast and our thirst, we may continue to follow the homeless man named Jesus, who had no place to lay his head but whose heart burned for the Kingdom of God.

Priest: Lord, we remember your promise to us:

All: **“I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you.”**

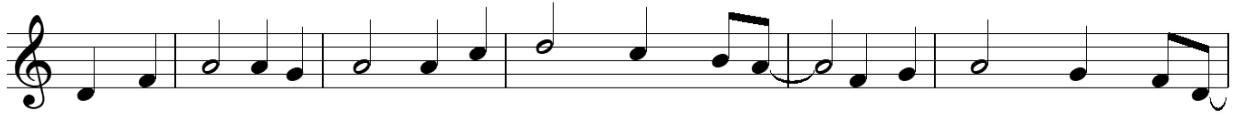
Closing Prayer: *Susan Haig*

Priest: Healing and Restoring God,
Your desire is for our wholeness and well-being.
We hold in tenderness and prayer
the collective suffering of our world at this time.
We grieve precious lives lost
And vulnerable lives threatened.
We ache for ourselves and
Our neighbours
Standing before an uncertain future.
We pray, may love, not fear go viral.
Call us to profound trust in your faithful presence.
For we believe you to be the God who does not abandon,
She who breathes within us
Among us
Around us.
She Who Is Our Home.
Give us strength for today,
Courage for tomorrow
And peace for the past.

All: **Amen.**

Hymn: #703 (Gather) "Song of St. Patrick"

Refrain



May the Spir-it of Christ be our hope through the day, be our guard through the night,



our com-pan-ion on the way.

Verse 1



1.Christ be ev-er be-fore us, Christ be ev-er be - hind us, Christ be ev-er with-in.

Verses 2-5



2.Christ up - on our left hand watch - ing, At our right hand guid - ing,
3.Christ be in each ho - ly si - lence, Christ be in our speak - ing,
4.Let us be God's light in the dark - ness, Let us be God's kind - ness;
5.God Cre - a - tor, bless and keep us, Christ, be ev - er near us;



Christ a-bove, be-neath us guard-ing, Near to us a - bid - ing.
Christ in ev - 'ry work we of - fer, Ev - er in our seek-ing.
Let us be God's jus - tice and mer - cy, Hands and feet of Christ.
Spir - it be the light be - fore us, Gen - tle be our path-way.

Text: Based on St. Patrick's Breastplate; Martyr Haugen, b. 1950. Tune: Martyr Haugen, b. 1950 © 1986, GIA Publications, Inc.