



ADVENT VESPERS
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2021 AT 7:00 P.M.

The Church of the Redeemer:
162 Bloor St. West, Toronto, ON M5S 1M4
office@theredeemer.ca • Tel: (416) 922 4948•

Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge with respect
that we gather today to celebrate on many traditional lands.
We give thanks for those peoples whose lands are home to Redeemer:
The Wendat, the Haudenosaunee, and the Anishinaabe Nations, including the
Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.
We pray that as we celebrate this Advent,
we may help to create those things for which we wait:
Hope for a truthful tomorrow,
a justice-filled peace,
the joy of hearts and lives reconciled,
and the love which binds us all as one.
This we pray through Jesus Christ our Redeemer. **Amen.**

The service begins as the Advent Candles are lit.

Opening Song: “When the night becomes dark”



TEXT: Taizé Community. TUNE: Suzanne Toolan (1927-). © 1991, Les Presses de Taizé, GIA Publications, Inc., agent.

The Gathering of the Community

Leader: O God, make speed to save us.

People: **O Lord, make haste to help us.**

Leader: We have gathered
in this season of Advent,
during this long pandemic,
to face into the last things,
to come to the end of ourselves,
and so to prepare our hearts
for the coming of Jesus Messiah. **Amen.**

Confession

Leader: Jesus said, ‘Turn now, for the kingdom of heaven is close.’
So let us confess our sins in hope:

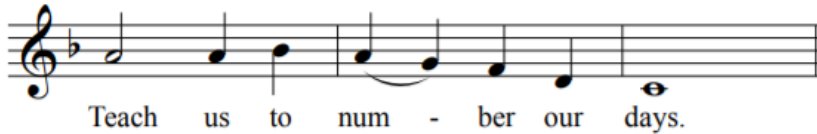
All: **Most merciful God,
we confess that we have sinned
in thought, word and deed.
We have not loved you with our whole heart.
We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.
In your mercy forgive what we have been,
help us to amend what we are, and direct what we shall be;
that we may do justly, love mercy,
and walk humbly with you, our God. Amen.**

Leader: May the God of all hope
free us from our sins,
heal us by the Holy Spirit
and raise us to new life
in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Word Heard

Psalm 90.1-8 (*George Black*)

Refrain



Lord, you have been our refuge
from one generation to another.
Before the mountains were brought forth
or the land and the earth were born
from age to age you are God. **Refrain**

You turn us back to dust and say,
"Go back, O child of earth."
For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it is past
and like a watch in the night. **Refrain**

You sweep us away like a dream;
we fade away suddenly like the grass.
In the morning it is green and flourishes;
in the evening it is dried up and withered. **Refrain**

For we consume away in your displeasure;
we are afraid because of your wrathful indignation.
Our iniquities you have set before you,
and our secret sins in the light of your countenance.
So teach us to number our days
that we may apply our hearts to wisdom. **Refrain**

Scripture Reading

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

I shall wait eagerly for the Lord, who is hiding his face from the house of Jacob; I shall watch longingly for him. ... People will say to you, ‘Seek guidance from ghosts and familiar spirits which squeak and gibber; a nation may surely consult its gods, consult its dead on behalf of the living for instruction or a message.’ They will surely say some such thing, but what they say has no force. So despondency and fear will come over them, and when they are afraid and fearful, they will rebel against their king and their gods. Whether they turn their gaze upwards or look down, everywhere is distress and darkness inescapable, constraint and gloom that cannot be avoided; for there is no escape for an oppressed people. Formerly the lands of Zebulun and Naphtali were lightly regarded, but afterwards honour was bestowed on Galilee of the Nations on the road beyond Jordan to the sea. The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; on those who lived in a land as dark as death a light has dawned. You have increased their joy and given them great gladness; they rejoice in your presence as those who rejoice at harvest, as warriors exult when dividing spoil. For you have broken the yoke that burdened them, the rod laid on their shoulders, the driver’s goad, as on the day of Midian’s defeat. The boots of earth-shaking armies on the march, the soldiers’ cloaks rolled in blood, all are destined to be burnt, food for the fire.

Reader: The word of the Lord.

Isaiah 8:17, 19–9:5

***People:* Thanks be to God.**

A moment of silence is observed

Poem for Reflection

Reader: Listen to the poem “Prayer,” by Keetje Kuipers:

Perhaps as a child you had the chicken pox
and your mother, to soothe you in your fever
or to help you fall asleep, came into your room
and read to you from some favorite book,
Charlotte’s Web or *Little House on the Prairie*,
a long story that she quietly took you through
until your eyes became magnets for your shuttering
lids and she saw your breathing go slow. And then
she read on, this time silently and to herself,
not because she didn’t know the story,
it seemed to her that there had never been a time
when she didn’t know this story—the young girl

and her benevolence, the young girl in her sod house—
but because she did not yet want to leave your side
though she knew there was nothing more
she could do for you. And you, not asleep but simply weak,
listened to her turn the pages, still feeling
the lamp warm against one cheek, knowing the shape
of the rocking chair's shadow as it slid across
your chest. So that now, these many years later,
when you are clenched in the damp fist of a hospital bed,
or signing the papers that say you won't love him anymore,
when you are bent at your son's gravesite or haunted
by a war that makes you wake with the gun
cocked in your hand, you would like to believe
that such generosity comes from God, too,
who now, when you have the strength to ask, might begin
the story again, just as your mother would,
from the place where you have both left off.

A moment of silence is observed for reflection.

Motet: “In the departure of the Lord” (*John Bull*)

In the departure of the Lord,
Of mortal body's vital breath,
There lies a mystery worth record,
Which He did show us here on earth:
Who doth prepare to die each hour
Must follow Christ our Saviour.

Prayers in Word

Please rise, as you are able

Leader: Dear friends, we live in the shadow of death, but are promised a light that's not our own. Let's pray to the God who finds us at the end of ourselves.

Almighty God, we have worn ourselves down trying to hide our faces from our fragility and mortality. Teach us to number our days with wise hearts and unclenched fists.

A long pause is observed. Please give voice to your prayers or offer them in silence.

Leader: Lord of our dust,

All: **come, hold us together.**

Leader: Some of us have fallen prey to death and darkness; some of us have befriended death and let its shadow fall over others. How long will you let us languish?

A long pause is observed. Please give voice to your prayers or offer them in silence.

Leader: Lord of our darkness,

All: come with the dawn.

Leader: You alone hold the frayed ends of our lives, the lives of those we love, and the life of this world. When will you at last weave these loose threads together?

A long pause is observed. Please give voice to your prayers or offer them in silence.

Leader: Lord of our stories,

All: write us a new ending.

Leader: Almighty God, in this season of waiting, we look out past the edges of ourselves to the One in whom all lines converge, Jesus Christ, our hope in life and death.

All: Amen.

Symbolic Gesture

All come forward and offer handfuls of earth with the words, “earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust.”

Advent Prose

The Cantor sings the refrain, then all sing as indicated



Drop down, O hea-vens, from a-bove, and let the skies pour down right-eous-ness.

Do not be angry beyond measure, O Lord, and do not remember iniquity for ever:
Your holy cities are a wilderness, Zion is a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation:
our holy and our beautiful house, where our forebears worshipped you. **Refrain**

We have sinned and are as an unclean thing, and we all fade as a leaf:
and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away; you have hidden your face from us:
and have consumed us, because of our iniquities. **Refrain**

You are my witnesses, says the Lord, and my servants whom I have chosen;
that you may know me and believe me: I, even I, am the Lord, and beside me there is no
Saviour: and there is no one who can deliver out of my hand. **Refrain**

Comfort, O comfort my people, my salvation shall not tarry: I have blotted out as a thick
cloud your transgressions: Fear not, for I will save you: for I am the Lord your God, the
Holy One of Israel, your Redeemer. **Refrain**

Concluding Prayers

Leader: Be with us, Lord, in all endings,
and direct our way safely home to you,
that among the changes and chances of this mortal life,
we may be always defended by your gracious help;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

Leader: Gathering all our cares into one, let us pray,
All: **Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come,
thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Closing Song: "Wait for the Lord"



Wait for the Lord, whose day is near. Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!

TEXT: Taizé Community. TUNE: Jacques Berthier, © 1991, Les Presses de Taizé, GIA Publications, Inc., agent.

Our thanks go out to all who contribute financially to the Redeemer community. Our ability to continue to offer outreach support through the Common Table and maintain our rich and varied worship and program life is possible thanks to the generous donations of parishioners and friends of the community. For health and safety reasons, we would appreciate your donations via the "Online Donation" link below, where you will be redirected to the gifts section of our Website. Thank you for your generosity.

[Online Donation](#)

CELEBRATE ADVENT

Wednesday, December 8, 7:00 PM – Christmas in the City

Church of the Redeemer's annual "Christmas in the City" event to support The Common Table

Sunday, December 12, 7:00 PM – Advent Vespers

A magnificent experience of music and liturgy, focusing on the theme of preparation and culminating in the joyful celebration of the Incarnation.

Tuesday, December 14, 7:00 PM – Blue Christmas

A service for those who live with sadness at this time of year

Sunday, December 19, 7:00 PM – Advent Vespers

A magnificent experience of music and liturgy, focusing on the theme of preparation and culminating in the joyful celebration of the Incarnation.

CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS

Friday, December 24, 5:00 PM – Family Service

Available exclusively on Zoom, a Christmas Eve service with families in mind.

Friday, December 24, 7:30 PM – Rockin' Christmas Eve

Traditional Carols and the Rock Eucharist Band

Friday, December 24, 10.30 PM

Carols, Procession & Solemn Sung Eucharist

Saturday, December 25, 10.30 AM

Christmas Day morning procession and eucharist

Sunday, December 26 – First Sunday After Christmas

Eucharist at 9:30 AM and 11:15 AM, in the church and on Zoom

Sunday, January 2 – The Epiphany of the Lord

Eucharist at 9:30 AM and 11:15 AM, in the church and on Zoom

Ministry Updates

Compline at 8 PM

Join in through Zoom at 8 PM each Sunday night for about 20 minutes. The link can be found in this week's eNews.

Advent Carol Service

Please join us in person or on Zoom for our Advent Carol Service tonight! If you have not yet, please register by [clicking here](#) if you plan on attending in the church. The Zoom link is available in Friday's edition of eNews.

Daily Prayer

Each **Wednesday morning**, a simple printed order for daily prayer is added to the parish website with a link shared on the Facebook page. This is an invitation to set aside time at some point in the day to read scripture, spend time with a reflection, and offer prayers. The link to the order of service is in eNews. The order of service for December 1 will be posted on Wednesday morning on the [website](#).

Marginalia: The Four Last Things

Many modern Christians know Advent's four weeks of ascent toward Christmas: hope, love, joy, and peace...and then Jesus! But one older tradition takes a lower, darker path to Christmas over Advent's four weeks: death, judgment, heaven and hell. This December, as the pandemic tarries, Redeemer's Marginalia will explore Advent's "four last things" using Scripture, literature, art and music, led by our Scholar-in-Residence, Nate Wall, and a few special guests. We'll make our way to the beginning by facing into the end. Join us over [Zoom](#) on Monday nights (Dec 6, 13, 20) at 7:30 PM. All are welcome.

Christmas in the City

All are invited to this online musical event to benefit the Common Table at Church of the Redeemer on **Wednesday, December 8 at 7:00 PM on Zoom**. We have a great lineup for this lovely online event, featuring incredibly gifted [Church of the Redeemer](#) community members and a few special guests. Tickets are available depending on how much you wish to contribute – all tickets provide equal access to the event. Tickets can be purchased [on Eventbrite](#). Or on the website.

Mid-day Prayer

Join members of our community mid-day prayer **Monday through Saturday** on Zoom at **12:15 PM**. For about 20 minutes we pause to hear scripture read and to pray for what's on our hearts and for the cares and concerns of the world. The Zoom link and list of readings is sent out each week through eNews. The order of service is [here](#).

Tuesday Meditation Group

Tuesday Meditation with Lilian Junkin is meeting in the chancel again on Tuesdays for a half an hour, starting at **12:15 PM**. All are welcome to join for a peaceful mid-week reflection. Registration/contract tracing will be completed at the door. If you have any other questions, please contact [Lilian](#).

Becoming a Pilgrim

The results of the on-line questionnaire about pilgrimage indicate that there is considerable interest both in undertaking a pilgrimage to Spain and local ones close to home. Therefore, the Committee is proposing a parish Camino to Santiago in mid-September of 2022, with two possible starting points. The first begins in the village of O'Cebreiro and would mean a pilgrimage of about nine days; the second in the city of Sarria and would take approximately six to seven. As well we will plan a series of local pilgrimages in and around the GTA, beginning in Eastertide of next year and continuing into the autumn.

Any one interested in the Camino pilgrimage in Spain is invited to a Zoom planning meeting on Wednesday January 19, 2022 at 7:30 PM. Meanwhile, if you have any questions, please contact Susan Haig or Henry Krol. The Zoom link will be available in a future edition of eNews.

Planning for the local pilgrimages will commence in February of 2022.

The Common Table

The pandemic has caused many services to close, meaning low-income folks or people experiencing homelessness have limited access to resources. Clothing and hygiene supplies are particularly hard to come by and, with the changing of the seasons, we are in urgent need of winter wear.

If you would like to bring in a donation, please contact [Paul Wasswa](#), The Common Table's Outreach Supply Room Coordinator, to arrange a drop-off time. Please be mindful of the items we are requesting, as we do not have storage space for items our community

does not need. A list of the items we need right now is updated regularly and can be found on The Common Table's page of the website. Please note that we are unable to provide receipts for in-kind donations.

Pastoral Care Team Checking In

The Pastoral Care Team and its volunteers have been calling and continue to call, members of the Redeemer Community to check in with them regarding how they are doing during this pandemic. Due to the ongoing isolation and disconnectedness, if you know of anyone who would benefit from a call from our Pastoral Care Team, that has not been receiving a call, please contact Tony Crosbie at tony.crosbie@sympatico.ca.

Intercessions

In the prayers of the people each Sunday, space is left for members of the community to add a name or concern in chat. If you have people or situations that you would like included in the service but are not comfortable giving voice to them, there is a prayer request form on the website. These will be added to the intercessions in the appropriate petition. You can find the form [here](#).

Parish Cycle of Prayer

Each month a cycle of prayer is available [online](#). This resource provides the names of ministries from the Anglican Communion, the Indigenous cycle of prayer, the diocese and our community to hold in our prayers each day. In peace we pray. Lord, Hear our prayer.

Future Ministry Updates

For all future announcement or ministry updates, please email twilliams@theredeemer.ca by Wednesday each week for your contribution to be included in the following Sunday bulletin.