



THE
THIRD
SUNDAY
OF
ADVENT

SPIRITUAL
COMMUNION

SUNDAY,
DECEMBER 17, 2023
AT 9:00 A.M.

The Church
of the
Redeemer:
162 Bloor St. West,
Toronto, ON
M5S 1M4

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



WELCOME TO THE CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER!

We are in the heart of downtown Toronto, and we gather to celebrate on the traditional lands of the Wendat, Haudenosaunee, and Anishinaabe Nations, including the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. Our beautiful building connects us to the rich heritage of our city while also drawing us deeper into the roots of our Anglican tradition. Just as the streetscape around us has evolved over the years, our members have changed to reflect the growing, vibrant and progressive Christian community found at the Redeemer today. We come from a variety of faith traditions (and sometimes no faith tradition at all), and we like it that way. We are students, workers, retired, homeless, not limited by sexual orientation, gender identity or personal history. We are at the very beginning of our life with Jesus, and we are deeply steeped in a life complicated by faith. We open our doors to worship God and to learn about Jesus, and how all of this might just transform our lives.

If you would like to stay up to date with our news and events, please feel free to subscribe to our eNewsletter by going to theredeemer.ca/newsletters.

theredeemer.ca

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Presider: Paige Souter

Land Acknowledgement

During the season of Advent, we will begin the liturgy in silence. Therefore, all are encouraged to offer this prayer, acknowledging the lands on which we dwell, before the service begins.

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 Nation, 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 community gathers in silence. The Priest rings a bell, then begins with the following Opening Sentences.

Opening Sentences

Paige Souter

Priest: Among the poor, among the proud,
among the persecuted,
among the privileged,

All: Christ is coming to make all things new.

Priest: In the private house, in the public place,
in the wedding feast,
in the judgment hall,

All: Christ is coming to make all things new.

Priest: With a gentle touch, with an angry word,
with a clear conscience,
with burning love,

All: Christ is coming to make all things new.

Priest: That the Kingdom might come, that the world might believe,
that the powerful might stumble,
that the hidden might be revealed,

All: Christ is coming to make all things new.

Priest: Within us, without us, behind us, before us,
in this place, in every place,
for this time, for all time,

All: Christ is coming to make all things new.

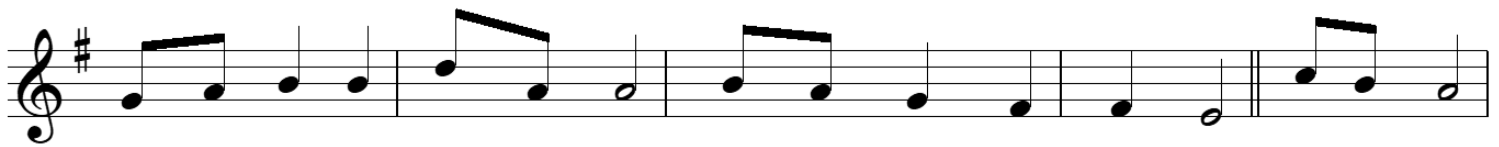
Opening Hymn: #417 (Gather, 3rd ed) "Warm the Time of Winter"

Redeemer Music Team



1. When the wind of win-ter blows, bring - ing times of sol - i - tude,
2. When we shiv - er in des - pair, when the chill of death comes near,
3. When in days of fall - en snow, change con - founds or love burns low,

Refrain



fill the si-lent, ic - y night; be our hearts' com - pas - sion. Ho - ly Light,
hold us, Spir - it, calm our fear, while the eve - ning deep - ens.
from the ash - es may there rise phoe - nix of our grow - ing.



warm our night; warm the time of win - ter. Ho - ly Light, warm our night;



Text: Ruth Duck, b.1947, © 1992, GIA Publications, Inc.
Tune: Lori True, b.1961, © 2000, GIA Publications, Inc.

warm the time of win-ter.

The Collect of the Day

Paige Souter

Priest: God of light,
who sent the Baptist to offer hope
and to face the world's scorn:
open our ears to hear the cries from the margins,
exposing our fears, sharpening our vision
and calling us to faith; through Jesus Christ,
the one who is to come. **Amen.**

✠ Proclamation of the Word

First Reading: Isaiah 61.1-4, 8-11

Heather Bennett

Reader: A Reading from the Prophecy of Isaiah.

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion - to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of

mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, to display his glory. They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations. For I the Lord love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the Lord has blessed. I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

Reader: For the Word of God in scripture,
for the Word of God among us,
for the Word of God within us.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

One minute of silence is observed

Psalm 126 (*George Black*)

Redeemer Music Team

Our God has done great things for us, and we are glad in deed.

When God restored the fortunes of Zion,
then were we like those who dream.
Then was our mouth filled with laughter,
and our tongue with shouts of joy. **Refrain**

Then they said among the nations,
"Our God has done great things for them."
Our God has done great things for us,
and we are glad indeed. **Refrain**

Restore our fortunes, O God,
like the watercourses of the Negev. **Refrain**

Those who sowed with tears
will reap with songs of joy.
Those who go out weeping, carrying their seed,
will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves. **Refrain**

The Gospel

Steven Mackison

Priest: The Lord be with you.

All: **And also with you.**

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

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

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,'" as the prophet Isaiah said. Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

Priest: The Gospel of Christ.

John 1.6-8, 19-28

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

Homily: Steven Mackison

One minute of silence is observed

Meditation and Silent Prayer

Paige Souter

Litany:

Sylvia Keesmaat

Leader: In the silences of life, O God, when feeling is beyond saying,
your faithful people everywhere wait upon your Spirit. In the silence of joy –
when a baby is born, when a sunset blazes, when a loved one is restored to health, when peace
replaces strife –

In our joy, we wait upon you, O God.

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

Leader: In the silence of sorrow – when love is lost, when pain is too constant a companion, when time
brings change that is hard to bear, when death seems victorious –

In our sorrow, we wait upon you, O God.

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

Leader: In the silence of anger – when justice is postponed until tomorrow, when violence shatters body and
soul, when prejudice sets neighbor against neighbor, when no one will listen –

In our anger, we wait upon you, O God.

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

Leader: Let us put our trust where it belongs, not in our positions of power or wealth, for such things are
lighter than breath.

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

A long silence is observed, please add your own prayers, silently or aloud

Leader: In our joy, our sorrow, our anger, we trust in God's unfailing love and guidance.

All: **We rely upon the blessing of being a community of faith, a church universal. Siblings of many colors, ages, sexual orientations, gender identities, and abilities, we are one in Christ. Together, let us wait upon the God of our salvation. Amen.**

The Peace

Paige Souter

Priest: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: **And also with you.**

The Lord's Prayer

Priest: As our Saviour taught us, let us pray.

All: **Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.**

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 Giving and Receiving of Communion

Paige Souter

Priest: Dear friends, I invite you in this moment, wherever you may be, to receive Christ, in communion with the saints, and the gathering of God's people, unseen and yet present with us now.

*For those of us participating at home, it is a strange experience to be invited to Communion
– not through the physical bread and wine we can touch and taste –
but a Spiritual Communion with the God who comes to meet us wherever we are.*

*There are no special words or prayers for this, all the Church has ever thought necessary is genuine true desire, lively faith, and genuine love. Come honestly before God the way you know how.
You may wish to pray quietly this prayer to help you:*

One: O Christ, I believe that you are truly present in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. I desire to offer you praise and thanksgiving as I proclaim your resurrection. I love you above all things, and long for you in my soul. Since I cannot receive you in the Sacrament of your Body and Blood, come spiritually into my heart. Cleanse and strengthen me with your grace, Lord Jesus, and let me never be separated from you. May I live in you, and you in me, in this life and in the life to come. Amen.

The Doxology

Paige Souter

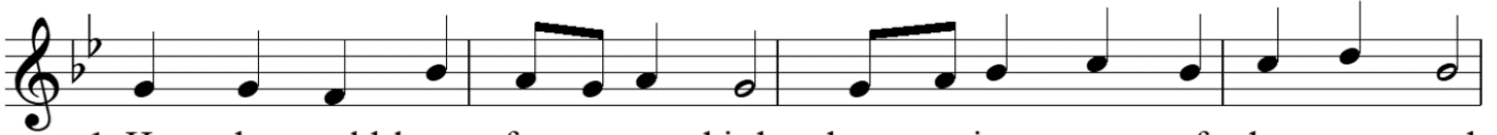
Priest: Glory to God,

All: **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**

Concluding Hymn: #90 (Common Praise) "How the World Longs for Your Birth"

Redeemer Music Team



1. How the world longs for your birth, bear - ing news of hu - man worth;
2. How the earth a - waits your seed, parched and bar - ren from our greed;
3. How we ache to know your peace; wars and weap - ons still in - crease;
4. How our minds for heal - ing long, bro - ken bo - dies to be strong,
5. God, who sets your peo - ple free, God who comes, our flesh to be,
6. To our dark - ness bring your light; fill our long - ing eyes with sight.



to our la - bour bring your mirth: Ma-ra-na-tha, come, Lord, come.
now to hal - low it we need: Ma-ra-na-tha, come, Lord, come.
bid our fears and hate to cease: Ma-ra-na-tha, come, Lord, come.
wound-ed hearts to learn your song: Ma-ra-na-tha, come, Lord, come.
now we wait, your reign to see: Ma-ra-na-tha, come, Lord, come.
In our lives shine ev - er bright: Ma-ra-na-tha, come, Lord, come.

Text: Anna Briggs (1947-) ©. Music: Melody plainsong, adapt. Johann Walther (1496-1570), alt.; harm. Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750).

The Dismissal

Paige Souter

Priest: Go forth in joy and serve the Lord. Alleluia!

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

FURTHER CREDITS FOR THIS BULLETIN

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WORSHIP WITH US

CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS WITH US

Sunday, December 17 (Advent 3)

7 PM - Bach Vespers Cantata 61 "Nun komm der Heiden Heiland"
- in the Church and through YouTube

Sunday, December 24 (Advent 4)

9 AM - on Zoom
10:30 AM - Holy Eucharist - in the Church and through YouTube

CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS WITH US

Sunday, December 24 (Christmas Eve)

5 PM - Family Nativity Story & Sung Eucharist
- in the Church and through YouTube

7:30 PM - Rockin' Christmas Eve - Traditional Carols and the Rock Eucharist Band
- in the Church and through YouTube

10:30 PM - Carols, Procession & Solemn Sung Eucharist
- in the Church, and through YouTube

Monday, December 25 (Christmas Day)

10:30 AM - Christmas Day Holy Eucharist
- in the Church and through YouTube