



**BLUE CHRISTMAS**  
**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2023 AT 6 PM**

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

## 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](https://theredeemer.ca/newsletters).

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**OFFERTORY** — If you would like to make a monetary donation to support the ministry of Church of the Redeemer, we invite you to visit [theredeemer.ca/donate](https://theredeemer.ca/donate) via the QR code above.

Thank you for joining us today.

## 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.

## Opening Prayer

*Priest:* God of comfort,  
we seek your gentle presence this evening.  
As we gather we are filled with feelings of loneliness,  
despair, confusion, anxiety, fear.  
In the midst of our darkness, be the light that guides our steps.  
Be the light that comforts, heals, and restores us.

*All:* Amen.

## First Reading

*Reader:* A Reading from the prophet Isaiah.

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God.

To whom then will you compare me,  
or who is my equal? says the Holy One.

Lift up your eyes on high and see:

Who created these?

He who brings out their host and numbers them,  
calling them all by name;

because he is great in strength,  
mighty in power,  
not one is missing.

Why do you say, O Jacob,  
and speak, O Israel,

‘My way is hidden from the LORD,  
and my right is disregarded by my God’?  
Have you not known? Have you not heard?

The LORD is the everlasting God,  
the Creator of the ends of the earth.  
He does not faint or grow weary;  
his understanding is unsearchable.  
He gives power to the faint,  
and strengthens the powerless.  
Even youths will faint and be weary,  
and the young will fall exhausted;  
but those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength,  
they shall mount up with wings like eagles,  
they shall run and not be weary,  
they shall walk and not faint.

*Reader:* The word of the Lord.

*All:* **Thanks be to God.**

Isaiah 40.1, 25-31

*A moment of silence is observed*

## **Second Reading**

*Reader:* Reading from Rami M. Shapiro

We are loved by an unending love.

We are embraced by arms that find us  
even when we are hidden from ourselves.  
We are touched by fingers that soothe us  
even when we are too proud for soothing.  
We are counseled by voices that guide  
even when we are too embittered to hear.  
We are loved by an unending love.

We are supported by hands that uplift us  
even in the midst of a fall.  
We are urged on by eyes that meet us  
even when we are too weak for meeting.  
We are loved by an unending love.

Embraced, touched, soothed, and counseled,

Ours are the arms, the fingers, the voices;  
Ours are the hands, the eyes, the smiles;  
We are loved by an unending love.

*An Unending Love*

**Taizé**

*All Sing*

In God a-lone my soul can find rest and peace, in  
Mon â - me se re - pose en paix sur Dieu seul: de  
God my peace and joy, On - ly in God my  
lui vient mon se - lut. Oui, sur Dieu seul mon  
soul can find its rest, find its rest and peace. In  
â - me se re - po - se, se re - pose en paix. Mon

TEXT: Taizé Community, 1991; TUNE: Jacques Bertier, © 1991, Les Presses de Taizé, GIA Publications, Inc.. Used with permission

## Third Reading

*Reader:* A Reading from the Gospel of Matthew.

Jesus said, 'Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.'

*Reader:* The word of the Lord.

Matthew 11.28-30

*All:* **Thanks be to God.**

*A moment of silence is observed*

**Reflection:** Paige Souter

## Song: "Maranatha"



Ma-ra - na - tha, ma-ra - na - tha, come, Lord Je - sus, come. Ma-ra -  
*Ma-ra - na - tha, ma-ra - na - tha, viens, Jé - sus Christ. Ma-ra -*



na - tha, ma-ra - na - tha, come, Lord Je - sus, come.  
*na - tha, ma-ra - na - tha, viens, Jé - sus Christ.*

"Maranatha" is an Aramaic word meaning "Come, Lord." Words: traditional liturgical text; French trans. *More Voices*, 2007. Music: Louise Skibsted. Music © Louise Skibsted. Used by permission

## Litany of Remembrance

*We invite those joining us by livestream, 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.*

**Priest:** We light this candle to remember those persons who have been loved and lost.  
We pause to remember their names, their faces, their voices.

*A moment of silence is observed*

We embrace and give thanks for the memories that bind them to us in this season of expectation, when all Creation waits for the Light.

**All:** **We remember them with love. May God's eternal love surround them.**

**Leader:** We light this second candle to remember the pain of loss: loss of relationships, loss of trust, loss of jobs, loss of health, loss of faith, the loss of joy.

*A moment of silence is observed*

**Leader:** We acknowledge and embrace the pain of the past, O God, and we offer it to You, asking that into our wounded hearts and open hands You will place the gift of peace, shalom.

**All:** **We remember that through You all things are possible. Refresh, restore, and renew us, O God.**

*Priest:* We light this third candle to remember ourselves this Christmas time. We pause and remember the past weeks, months, and for some of us years, that have been heavy with our burdens.

*A moment of silence is observed*

*Priest:* We accept and lay before you, God, the sharpness of memory, the sadness and grief, the hurt and fear, the anger and pain. We accept and lay before you the ways we feel we have fallen short, and the times we have spent blaming ourselves, and you, for all that we have suffered.

***All:* We remember that dawn defeats the darkness.**

*Leader:* We light this fourth candle to remember faith, the gift of light and hope that God offers to us in the story of Christmas.

*A moment of silence is observed*

*Leader:* We remember that the loving God who came to share this life with us promises us comfort and peace.

***All:* We remember that the loving God who came to share this life with us promises us comfort and peace. We remember the One who shares our burdens, who shows us the way to the Light, and who journeys the way with us.**

*You are invited to come forward to light one or more candles to honour what or whom has brought you here this evening.*

## **Closing Prayer**

*Priest:* Lord, it is night.  
The night is for stillness.  
Let us be still in the presence of God.

It is night after a long day.  
What has been done has been done;  
what has not been done has not been done; let it be.

The night is dark.  
Let our fears of the darkness of the world and of our own lives  
rest in you.

The night is quiet.  
Let the quietness of your peace enfold us,  
all dear to us,  
and all who have no peace.

The night heralds the dawn.  
Let us look expectantly to a new day,  
new joys,  
new possibilities.

In your name we pray.

**All: Amen.**

## The Blessing

## The Dismissal

## Hymn: #119 (Common Praise) "Silent Night"



1. Si - lent night! Ho - ly night! All is calm, all is bright  
2. Si - lent night! Ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake at the sight:  
3. Si - lent night! Ho - ly night! Son of God, love's pure light



round yon vir - gin moth-er and child. Ho - ly in - fant so ten - der and mild,  
glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far, heav - enly hosts sing al - le - lu - ia,  
rad - iant beams from thy ho - ly face, with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace,



sleep in heav - en - ly peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.  
Christ the Sav - iour is born, Christ the Sav - iour is born.  
Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth. Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth.

Text: Joseph Mohr (1792-1848); tr.  
John Freeman Young (1820-1885).  
Music: Melody Franz Xaver, Gruber  
(1787-1863), alt.; harm. Carl H.  
Reinecke (1824-1910).



*You are welcome to linger here in this candlelit space at the conclusion of the service. You are also invited to stay for refreshments and conversation at the back of the church.*

*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**

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## **Ministry Updates**

### **Advent Chapel: Prayers for Peace**

On Wednesday December 20, we will gather at 12:15pm to pray for peace. Through song, stillness, prayer, and candle lighting we will reflect on peace in our world and in our lives.

### **"I Wonder as I Wander": Walking Together Wednesday Evenings in Advent**

Once again this Advent, Redeemer Explorers invites you to join fellow travellers each Wednesday in Advent for a guided evening candlelit walk of 45 to 60 minutes. The walks will begin at 5:30 PM, setting out from and returning to Redeemer.

Gather inside the doors, ahead of our 5:30 departure from the front steps of the church. The walks are a chance to socialize with friends, renew acquaintances and make new ones, in a format that encourages awareness of our surroundings and mindful attention to where we are right now, as we carry light along the early evening streets. The walks are conceived with the words of Walter Burghardt in mind:

"Contemplation is a long, loving look at the real."

Please register separately for each walk on the Redeemer Explorers page of the website (<https://theredeemer.ca/learning-at-redeemer/>) so we have an idea of numbers, and can contact you if bad weather causes us to reschedule at the last minute. You can attend just one, or all four. At the end of the walk back at the church, you're invited to stay and chat over a hot drink and a nibble before heading off. Facilitators will lead each walk on the theme of the evening:

~~Advent 1 (November 29). Hope, led by Paul Pynkoski~~

~~Advent 2 (December 6). Peace, led by Deb Deacon and Richard Van Delft~~

~~Advent 3 (December 13). Joy, led by Kasey Visser and Craig Spielmacher~~

~~Advent 4 (December 20). Love, led by AJ Finlay and Richard Van Delft~~

## **Christmas in the City**

Christmas in the City is an annual tradition at Church of the Redeemer, a multi-act concert benefitting the Common Table. Join in on **Saturday, December 16 at 1PM**. This year, we will be joined by: Wendell Ferguson, Toby Hughes, Amara, Jill and Mike Daley, Michelle Rumball, Michael-Robert Broder, Clela Errington, Danny Marks, Dan Norman and Lorelle Angelo. Three ticket prices are available, depending on how much you want to donate: \$50, \$25 and \$10. All tickets are the same, providing general admission to the event. Refreshments will be served. Tickets are available on Eventbrite. The link is in the news item on the home page of the website.

## **Bach Vespers**

Beautiful choral music, prayers and readings are woven together in our Bach Vespers service on **Sunday, December 17 at 7 PM**. Join us for worship and preparation for Christmas as our choir sings Bach's Cantata 61 Nun komm der Heiden Heiland – Saviour of the Nations, Come. The service will be available through **YouTube**.

## **Carols on the Steps**

Join the choir on **Thursday, December 21 at 6 PM** when we bring Christmas carols to the community. You can sing with the choir on the steps or be part of the crowd that listens! Hot chocolate and sweets to warm up afterward

## **How Are You Doing?**

Our clergy are available to meet with you to talk and for prayer as is helpful to you. You can contact them through the church office (416-922-4948) or by email (Steven Mackison – [smackison@theredeemer.ca](mailto:smackison@theredeemer.ca), Paige Souter – [psouter@theredeemer.ca](mailto:psouter@theredeemer.ca)).

## **Pastoral Care Calls**

Volunteers from the pastoral care team continue to call members of the Redeemer community to check in with them. Please contact Tony Crosbie ([tony.crosbie@sympatico.ca](mailto:tony.crosbie@sympatico.ca)) if you know someone who would benefit from a call from one of the pastoral care team.

## **WORSHIP WITH US**

### **Sunday, December 17 (Advent 3B)**

**9 AM** – Advent Liturgy (on Zoom only)

**10:30 AM** – Holy Eucharist (in the Church and through YouTube)

**7 PM** – Bach Vespers (in the Church and through YouTube)  
featuring Cantata 61 “Nun komm der Heiden Heiland”

**8 PM** – Compline (on Zoom only)

### **Sunday, December 24 (Morning - Advent 4B)**

**9 AM** – Advent Liturgy (on Zoom only)

**10:30 AM** – Holy Eucharist (in the Church and through YouTube)

### **Sunday, December 24 (Evening – Eve of the Nativity)**

**5 PM** – Family Nativity Story (in the Church and through YouTube)

**7:30 PM** – Rockin’ Christmas Eve (in the Church and through YouTube)

**10:30 PM** – Solemn Sung Eucharist (in the Church and through YouTube)

### **Monday, December 25 (The Nativity of the Lord)**

**10:30 AM** – Sung Eucharist (in the Church and through YouTube)

### **Sunday, December 31 (The Epiphany of the Lord)**

**9 AM** – Spiritual Communion (on Zoom only)

**10:30 AM** – Holy Eucharist (in the Church and through YouTube)

**8 PM** – Compline (on Zoom only)