



SUNDAY DECEMBER 22<sup>ND</sup> - 7:00PM  
CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER

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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.

Officiant: Steven Mackison

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**Words of Welcome**

Opening Song: #12 Wait for the Lord

## Opening Prayer

### The Candle Lighting

#### First Candle

*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.

*Be still and aware of God's presence within and all around*

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.**

#### Second Candle

*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.

*Be still and aware of God's presence within and all around*

*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.**

#### Third Candle

*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.

*Be still and aware of God's presence within and all around*

*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.**

#### Fourth Candle

*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.

*Be still and aware of God's presence within and all around*

*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.

**Reading:** Isaiah 40:1,25-31

**Reading:** Excerpt from Structures of Kindness (John O'Donohue)

Song: #14 - Our darkness

**Reading:** John 8:12

**Reflection** (Susan Graham Walker)

*A time of silence*

Song: #19 - In God alone

### **Prayers of the People**

**Leader:** As we journey through this holy season, let us ask God for what we need.  
We pray for ourselves as we participate in whatever way we can this  
Christmas and for others as they struggle during this time of year.

*Please add your prayers either silently or aloud.*

**Leader:** God of kindness

**People: Grant us your light.**

**Leader:** We pray for our families and friends, that they may know love and peace and happiness and that they may continue to help and support us.

*Please add your prayers either silently or aloud.*

**Leader:** God of kindness

**People: Grant us your light.**

**Leader:** We pray for those we have loved who have died.

*Please add your prayers either silently or aloud.*

**Leader:** God of kindness

**People: Grant us your light.**

**Leader:** We pray for the losses that we have experienced. We pray for the parts of our lives that are causing stress: physical and mental health challenges, difficult family dynamics, and financially trying situations.

*Please add your prayers either silently or aloud.*

**Leader:** God of kindness

**People: Grant us your light.**

*Leader:* God of great compassion and kindness, listen to the prayers of your gathered people. Grant to all healing, wholeness, and restoration through your son, Emmanuel, God with us. **Amen**

Song: Some Hearts at Christmas Time (M. Parker / G. Sparhawk / S. Garrington)

Some hearts find peace	Some hearts are lost
A sort of release	They're tempest tossed
Not found beneath	Born on their knees
A Christmas tree	They lost what they need

Some hearts will break at Christmastime  
Some hearts are made too whole, too fine

*You are invited to come forward to light one or more candles to honour what or whom has brought you here this evening. Our lay anointers are available if you would like to receive prayers for healing as well as an anointing.*

### **The Common Prayer**

*Celebrant:* As our Saviour taught us, let us pray...

*People:* **God, who cares for us, The wonder of whose presence fills us with awe. Let justice, kindness and love shine in our world. Let your secrets be known here as they are in heaven. Give us the food and the hope we need for today. Forgive us our wrongdoing as we forgive the wrongs done to us. Protect us from pride and from despair and from the fear and hate which can swallow us up. In you is truth, meaning, glory and power, while worlds come and go. Amen.**

### **Concluding Prayer**

### **The Dismissal**

Departing Song: #31 Dona nobis pacem Domine

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*Worship with us...*

*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](http://theredeemer.ca/newsletters).*

*OFFERTORY – If you would like to make a monetary donation to support the ministry of Church of the Redeemer, we invite you to place your gift in the offering plate that sits on the offertory table in the centre aisle at the back of the worship space, or visiting [theredeemer.ca/donate](http://theredeemer.ca/donate). Thank you for joining us today.*