



The Fourth Sunday of Advent

Spiritual Communion

Sunday, December 21, 2025 at 9 AM

Church of the Redeemer

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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.

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Presider: Steven Mackison

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.

As we draw near to the celebration of Christ's birth,
we pause on this fourth Sunday of Advent to acknowledge the land that sustains us— land cared for with devotion and wisdom by Indigenous peoples across generations. We honour the traditional caretakers of this land: the Wendat, the Haudenosaunee, the Anishinaabe, and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. We gather from many homes and homelands— Indigenous, settlers, and newcomers— knit together by the love of God that draws near in flesh and promise. Holy One, you come to us in unexpected ways— in the courage of Mary,
in the steadfastness of Joseph, in the quiet unfolding of your love within the world. As we prepare to welcome Emmanuel, God-with-us, teach us to cherish the land where we dwell,
to honour the covenants made and broken, and to participate in healing wherever harm has been done. May our worship bear witness to the reconciling love you plant among us,
made known in Jesus Christ, Love made flesh for all creation. Amen.



Your support of the ministries of the Church of the Redeemer allows us to be witnesses to God's love on our corner of Bloor Street and Avenue Road. Donations can be made through the QR code. Thank you for your gift and for joining in worship today.



1. No wind at the win - dow, no knock on the door;
 2. "O Mar - y, O Mar - y, don't hide from my face.
 3. "This child must be born that the king - dom might come:
 4. No pay - ment was prom - ised, no prom - is - es made;
 no light from the lamp - stand, no foot on the floor;
 Be glad that you're fav - oured and filled with God's grace.
 sal - va - tion for man - y, de - struc - tion for some;
 no wed - ding was dat - ed, no blue - print dis - played.
 no dream born of tired - ness, no ghost raised by fear:
 The time for re - deem - ing the world has be - gun,
 both end and be - gin - ning, both mes - sage and sign;
 Yet Mar - y, con - sent - ing to what none could guess,
 just an an - gel and a wom - an and a voice in her ear.
 and you are re - quest - ed to moth - er God's Son."
 both vic - tor and vic - tim, both yours and di - vine."
 re - plied with con - vic - tion, "Tell God I say 'Yes.'"

Text: John L. Bell, 1992. Music: COLUMBILLE Melody Irish trad.; arr. John L. Bell, 1992. Text and arr. © 1992 WGRG c/o Iona Community, GIA Publications, Inc., agent.

Opening Sentences

Steven Mackison

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.**

The Collect of the Day

Steven Mackison

Priest: God of grace, give us the faith of Joseph
to see the Spirit's work
where the world sees only shame; to listen to the promise
and to awaken to the cry of life renewed and love reborn;
through Jesus Christ, the one who is to come. **Amen.**

✠ Proclamation of the Word

First Reading: Isaiah 7.10-16

Abigail Young

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

Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying, "Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven." But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test." Then Isaiah said, "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son and shall name him Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted.

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.**

A moment of silence is observed

Psalm 80.1-7, 17-19

Led by Redeemer Music Team

Refrain

Show the light of your coun-ten-ance, and we shall be saved.

Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock;
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.
In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh,
stir up your strength and come to help us.
Restore us, O God of hosts;
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved. Refrain

O God of hosts,
how long will you be angered despite the prayers of your people?
You have fed them with the bread of tears;
you have given them bowls of tears to drink. Refrain

You have made us the derision of our neighbours,
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.
Restore us, O God of hosts;
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved. Refrain

Let your hand be upon your chosen people,
those you have made so strong for yourself.
And so will we never turn away from you;
give us life, that we may call upon your name.
Restore us, O God of hosts;
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved. Refrain

A moment of silence is observed

Sequence Song: Heliseb väljadel (Ave Maria) (*Urmas Sisask*)

Led by Redeemer Music Team

The Gospel

Liska Stefko

Priest: The Lord be with you.

All: **And also with you.**

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

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

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: "Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

Priest: The Gospel of Christ.

Matthew 1.18-25

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

Homily: Liska Stefko

Prayers of the People

Elli Howard

Leader: Loving and Faithful God,
come close and draw us to yourself;
help us to love you with our whole heart,
and turn us to love our neighbours as ourselves.

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

Leader: Jesus, our Emmanuel,
you broke into our mortal world in humility and love.
Come to us now as our lives are marred by war, indifference, cruelty and sin.
Give hope and wisdom to those who negotiate for peace.
Give respite and aid to those who have lost everything
and who, right now, live in grief and fear.
Bring your gifts of justice and peace to all.

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

Leader: Lord God of the universe, creator of all that is.
Forgive our greed and hubris
that have led to the destruction of so much
that is good in the natural world.
Bless those who work to revive and protect our fragile planet.
Turn our hearts to give us the will and the wisdom
to do our part to heal this our good earth.

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

Leader: Jesus, our healer, your cross shows your faithfulness to us
and your willingness to come along side of us in our suffering.
Bring your healing touch to all in need;
the sick and the friendless, the homeless and the captive,
the weary and the depressed, and for all the cares we have on our hearts this day.

Please add your prayers either silently or aloud.

Leader: Come to us in the power of your healing love; bring health, comfort, and hope.

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

Leader: Jesus, the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end,
we thank you for giving us the precious gift of life
and for sustaining us day to day.
Thank you for all the ways you reveal yourself to us;
goodness and beauty, comfort and wholeness,
friendship and love. Thank you for guiding us, caring for us,
bringing us closer to you step-by-step each day until at last,
we meet you face-to-face in your heavenly kingdom.

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


The Peace

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

All: And also with you.

Offertory Hymn: #89 (Common Praise) "O Come, O Come Emmanuel"

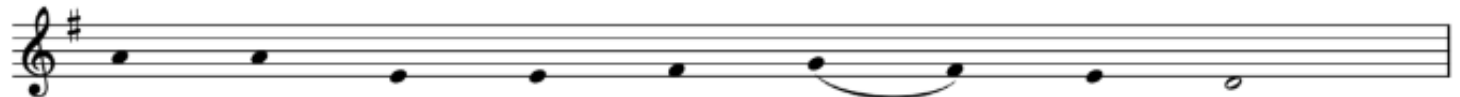
Led by Redeemer Music Team




1. O come, O come, Em - man - u - el,
2. O come, O Wis - dom from on high,
3. O come, O come, great Lord of might,
4. O come, O Rod of Jes - se's stem,
5. O come, O Key of Dav - id, come,
6. O come, O Day - spring from on high
7. O come, De - sire of na - tions, bind



and ran - som cap - tive Is - ra - el,
who or - ders all things might i - ly;
who to your tribes on Si - nai's height
from ev - ery foe de - liv - er them
and o - pen wide our heaven ly home;
and cheer us by your draw - ing nigh;
in one the hearts of hu - man - kind;



that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here
to us the path of know - ledge show,
in an - cient times once gave the law,
that trust your might - y power to save,
make safe the way that leads on high,
dis - perse the gloom - y clouds of night,
O bid our bit - ter con - flict cease,



un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
and teach us in her ways to go.
in cloud, and maj - es - ty, and awe.
and give them vic - tory o'er the grave.
and close the path to mis - er - y.
and death's dark shad - ow put to flight.
and be for us our Prince of Peace.

Refrain



Re-joyce! Re-joyce! E - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

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

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: Lord, you stand at the door of my heart and knock.
You wait for me and only I can let you in.
I believe and trust in you and ask you now
to fill me with your presence.
Feed me with your body and unite me in your blood,
that I may be your blessing to a world in need. Amen.

Departing Hymn: #122 (Common Praise) "In the Bleak Midwinter"

All sing



1. In the bleak mid - win - ter, frost - y wind made moan,
 2. Our God, heaven can - not hold him, nor earth sus - tain;
 3. An - gels and arch - an - gels may have gath - ered there;
 4. What can I give him, poor as I am?

earth stood hard as i - ron, wa - ter like a stone;
 heaven and earth shall flee a - way when he comes to reign.
 cher - u - bim and ser - a - phim thronged the air;
 If I were a shep - herd, I would bring a lamb;

snow had fal - len, snow on snow, snow on snow
 In the bleak mid - win - ter a sta - ble place suf - ficed the
 but his moth - er on - ly in her maid - en bliss,
 if I were a wise man, I would do my part; yet

in the bleak mid - win - ter long a - go.
 Lord God al - might - y, Je - sus Christ.
 wor - shipped the be - lov - ed with a kiss.
 what I can, I give him give my heart.

Text: Christina Georgina Rossetti (1830-1894). Music: CRANHAM, Gustav Theodore Holst (1874-1934). © Oxford University Press.

The Dismissal

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

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

FURTHER CREDITS FOR THIS BULLETIN

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Prayers of the People written by Judy Burnham. Cover art by Yani Feng.

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WORSHIP WITH US

Sunday, December 21 (Advent 4)

4:00 PM – Quiet Christmas (in the Church and through YouTube)

8:00 PM – Compline (on Zoom only)

CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS WITH US

Wednesday, December 24 (Christmas Eve)

3:00 PM – Cozy Christmas (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 & Sung Eucharist (in the Church and through YouTube)

Thursday, December 25 (Christmas Day)

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

Sunday, December 28 (First Sunday in Christmas)

9:00 AM – Spiritual Communion (on Zoom only)

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

SEASON OF EPIPHANY

Sunday, January 4 (Epiphany)

9:00 AM – Spiritual Communion (on Zoom only)

4:00 PM – Be Still (in the Church)

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