

HOLY TRINITY ANGLICAN CHURCH METCALFE, ON.

JANUARY 2, 2022 Christmas 2

Reverend Michael Fleming



Celebrant: As we gather for the first time in this new year of 2022, we remember and acknowledge that our parish sits on the unceded territory of the Ashanabee Algonquin peoples.

People: **May we enter this new year with our Indigenous sisters and brothers in a spirit of reconciliation, honour and hope.**

#156 The People That In Darkness Sat

1 The people that in darkness sat

a glorious light have seen;

the Light has shined on them who long in shades of death have been.

2 To hail thee, Sun of Righteousness, the gathering nations come;

they joy as when the reapers bear

their harvest treasures home.

5 His name shall be the Prince of Peace, the everlasting Lord,

the Wonderful, the Counsellor,

the God by all adored.

6 Lord Jesus, reign in us we pray,

and make us thine alone,

who with the Father ever art

and Holy Spirit one.

Celebrant: As this is the second day of the new year, I wanted to spend our time as a community today thinking and praying about what lies ahead for us individually and as a parish. Although we know that all is in God's hands, sometimes it doesn't hurt for us to think prayerfully and intentionally about who we are as a people and who we wish to become with the guidance and help of God. The readings are those appointed for this Sunday in the Common Lectionary and each adds a lens to the prism through which we look in the future. So, with all this in mind, let us pray...

Celebrant: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

All: **And also with you.**

Celebrant: As the dawn breaks on a new year, let us give thanks for all that we hold as dear to us: our family, our health and our friends. Let us let go of our grudges and our pain, for they are nothing but binding chains. Let us live each day in the most loving way, the God-conscious way. Let us serve all who are in need, regardless of race, colour, ethnic or religious heritage. Let us keep the God of our own understanding in our hearts and to call upon the name of the Lord every day. Let us lead the world from darkness to light, from falsehood to truth and from wrong to right. Let us remember that we are all one in the Spirit, embracing all, discriminating against none. May this year be filled with peace, prosperity and above all else, love. May the blessings of God shower upon us and bestow on each of us a bright, healthy and peace-filled new year.

(Reverend Marcy Sheremetta)

People: **Amen.**

The First Reading: Jeremiah 31: 31-34

“The days are coming,” declares the Lord, “when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah.

It will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them,” declares the Lord.

“This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel after that time,” declares the Lord.

“I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts.

I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will they teach their neighbour, or say to one another, ‘Know the Lord,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest,”

declares the Lord. “For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

People: **O God of our hearts, you yearn to be so close to us that we can know you in every breath, in every hope, in every relationship. Meet us here today and teach us to recognize the covenant of justice, peace and love that you have written in our hearts. So may your desires become our desires , our work become your work, and our community a place where you are sought and found: we ask this in Jesus’name.Amen** (from re:Worship)

Psalm 147: 12-20

But the Lord has pleasure in those who fear him, in those who await his gracious favour.

Worship the Lord, O Jerusalem; praise your God, O Zion; For he has strengthened the bars of your gates; he has blessed your children within you. **Praise God, O Zion.**

He has established peace on your borders; he satisfies you with the finest wheat.

He sends out his command to the earth, and his word runs very swiftly.

He gives snow like wool; he scatters hoarfrost like ashes. **Praise God, O Zion.**

He scatters his hail like bread crumbs; who can stand against his cold?

He sends forth his word and melts them; he blows with his wind, and the waters flow.

He declares his word to Jacob, his statutes and his judgements to Israel. **Praise God, O Zion.**

He has not done so to any other nation; to them he has not revealed his judgements. Hallelujah!

Praise God, O Zion.

A READING FROM THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE EPHESIANS

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, To God’s holy people in Ephesus, the faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the

promised Holy Spirit; this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

EPHESIANS 1:1-14

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

People: **Blessed are you, O God and Father of our Lord Jesus, for you have blessed us in Him with unimaginable spiritual blessings, but also blessings conceived long before the heavens were created. We thank you that you chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world. Help us to fulfill your calling through lives lived in generosity and made known to others in acts of justice and righteousness. We are who we are through the grace of your Son and by the strength of your Spirit. Thus may our words and deeds be worthy of and dedicated to your glory. Amen** (from OpossumScreed)

#158 Earth Has Many A Noble City

1 **Earth has many a noble city; Bethl'hem, thou dost all excel: out of thee the Lord from heaven came to rule his Israel.**

2 **Fairer than the sun at morning was the star that told his birth, to the world its God announcing seen in fleshly form on earth.**

4 **Sacred gifts of mystic meaning: incense doth their God disclose, gold the King of kings proclaimeth, myrrh his sepulcher foreshows.**

5 **Jesu, whom the Gentiles worshipped at thy glad Epiphany, unto thee with God the Father and the Spirit glory be.**

Holy Gospel

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

All: **And also with you.**

Celebrant: The Holy Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ according to the blessed St. John

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

[In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. 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.]

The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

JOHN 1:(1-9) 10-18

Celebrant: The Gospel of Christ.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

People: **Lord, you have called us and brought your Light into our lives. And now you ask us to be your Light in the continuing darkness of the world. At times, we will be like small, fragile, flickering candles; at times like a bright, strong beam of power. Help us to let your light shine through us in our words and actions this week. We pray this in the name of the Light of lights, your Son Jesus. Amen**

Homily

Celebrant: Let us affirm our baptism as we say,

**I believe in God the Father Almighty,
creator of heaven and earth**

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

He descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven,

and is seated at the right hand of the Father

He will come again

to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit,

the holy catholic Church,

the communion of saints,

the forgiveness of sins,

the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

Reader: Gracious God, we come to you a broken people – broken by all those things that blind us to seeing you in the ordinariness of life; broken by the prejudices we hold; weighed down by fear and doubt. And so, we come to you today seeking to be made whole again, like the blind man who, when asked by Jesus what he wanted most in life replied, “I want to see again”. For you God put your love within us; you wrote it on our hearts so that we may be your people and you may be our God.

On this day, we pray for all those who weep out of sorrow or fear; we pray for those who are struggling from a lack of clean water to drink, food to eat, quality and affordable health care; we pray for those persons who want to make decisions about their lives, their families and their bodies based not on what others want but based on what is best for them; and so we come to you seeking wholeness.

People: **For you God put your love within us; you wrote it in our hearts so that we may be your people and you may be our God.**

Reader: Compassionate God, God of the Covenant, God of Love, we come to you weary and tired, yearning for peace and harmony in our lives. We pray for all the peacemakers, remembering especially at this time the life and ministry of Archbishop Desmond Tutu not only to his own peoples in South Africa but to all who seek reconciliation and hope among all peoples; we pray today that this may be a year of international peace and cooperation, especially given the realities of the COVID life we are leading.

People: **For you God put your love within us; you wrote it in our hearts so that we may be your people and you may be our God.**

Reader: Gentle God of the Covenant, we come to you a community of faithful people who struggle at times with our faith and our commitment to your gospel of hope, joy, peace and love. We remember the wider church family to which we belong, remembering especially today the Church of the Epiphany, Gloucester and their priest The Reverend Arran Thorpe, and All Saints Westboro and their priest The Venerable Chris Dunn. In our Companion Diocese of Jerusalem, we pray for the clergy and people of St. Peter’s Church, Birzeit, West Bank.

We hold before your loving and healing arms the needs and concerns of this your family at Holy Trinity and of the communities in which we live. We pray particularly at this time for Roy, Jeanette, Marjorie, Cheryl, Zachariah, Howard and Irene and their families. Glorify us in your love and draw us more and more deeply into your heart and anoint us with your peace.

People: **Write your compassion on our hearts that we may love others as you love us. We pray all this in the name of Jesus, our Redeemer, Friend and Brother. Amen**

Celebrant: Sisters and brothers in the Lord, as we begin this new year with hearts ready to be unburdened and set free to love, let us make our confession to one another and to God. Let us begin in the silence of our own hearts and thoughts....

God of stars and angels,

People: **God of sheep and lambs, God of abundance and grace; you know us well, better than we know ourselves. You hear us cry "Glory" and "Alleluia" and you watch us tear things and people apart with our words and deeds. You hear us say, "Your will be done" and "Use me, O Lord" and you watch as we do little or nothing for those in need around us who cry out for help and for recognition of their humanity. Hear us now cry out to you, "Help us to change; turn us around. Make us more loving and courageous and outrageously hopeful.**

Celebrant: My friends, hear this good news: the love of God is beyond all measure and each of us is included in that love. Know that we are forgiven and so now free to love and serve our neighbours and our own selves in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen and Amen. (from "Hold Fast to What is Good", a blog by Beth Merrill Neel, adapted by RMF)

#131 Love Came Down At Christmas

**1 Love came down at Christmas, love all lovely, love divine;
love was born at Christmas -- star and angels gave the sign.**

**2 Worship we the Godhead, love incarnate, love divine; worship we our Jesus --
what shall be our sacred sign?**

**3 Love shall be our token;
love be yours and love be mine; love to God and neighbour,
love for prayer and gift and sign.**

Celebrant: Creating Loving One, how we came into being and why you love us so much is a mystery to us. And yet we trust that through what we do know we may fulfill your intention for our lives. Grant us the wisdom to speak when we should speak and to be silent when we should be silent; to act when it is your will and to stay our hand when it is not. Open our minds that we may receive your Word; open our hearts that we may love our neighbour as we love ourselves. Open our eyes that we may see the least of these our sisters and brothers and open our ears that we may hear your Voice calling in the night from those who live lives of such desperation. Help us to dedicate our lives to your service and your glory and this we pray in the name of your Son, our Lord Jesus who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns now and forever. Amen (from OpossumScreed)

Celebrant: It is not over, this birthing. There are always newer skies into which God can throw stars. When we begin to think that we can predict the Advent of God, that we can box the Christ in a stable in Bethlehem, that's just the time when God will be born, in a place we can't imagine and won't believe. Those who wait for God watch with their hearts and not their eyes listening, always listening for angel words.

("It is not Over" by Ann Weems from Kneeling in Bethlehem)

People: Father, we thank you for your great love and blessing over our lives. Thank you that your favour has no end but lasts for the entirety of our lives. Forgive us for sometimes forgetting that we are intimately acquainted with all your ways, that you know what concerns us and that your love covers us like a shield. We ask that we might walk in your goodness and blessing this week. May your face shine upon us and may you open the right doors for us and close those which would lead us into harm and temptation. Establish the work of our hands and bring to fulfillment all that you have set before us this week. We pray that you may make our way purposeful and our footsteps firm in your goodness and love. Give us hearts of wisdom to hear your Voice and make us strong by your favour and grace to love and serve you and each other. Amen

Celebrant: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them has light shines. For unto us a child is born, to us a son is given and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace...walk as children of the Light- for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth. Awake you who sleep and rise from the dead and Christ shall give you light...be filled with the Spirit speaking to one another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs and making melody in your heart to the Lord. Praise the name of the Lord in the dance. Let us sing praises to the Lord! But remember – there is no end to this service – the Lord’s dance goes on forever. Go now and dance for the Lord. (from “Jesus and Dancing” in Reaching for Rainbows by Ann Weems)

#148 See Amid The Winters Snow

1 See amid the winter's snow, born for us on earth below, see, the tender Lamb appears, promised from eternal years!

Refrain:

Hail, thou ever-blessed morn! Hail, redemption's happy dawn! Sing through all Jerusalem, Christ is born in Bethlehem.

2 Lo, within a manger lies

he who built the starry skies, who enthroned in height sublime sits amid the cherubim. [Refrain]

5 Sacred infant, all divine, what a mighty love was thine, thus to come from highest bliss down to such a world as this! [Refrain]

Announcements, and Celebrations

Worship follows the Holy Eucharist in the Book of Alternative Services.

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