

Holy Trinity Anglican Church Metcalfe

ADVENT 4

December 18, 2022

Reverend Michael Fleming

Fr. Michael: As we near Bethlehem, the heart of LOVE, we acknowledge that our parish sits on the unceded territory of the Anishinaabe Algonquin peoples.

People: **May we live together in love, hope and harmony.**

Fr. Michael: Prepare ye the way of the Lord

“ Behold, a young woman will conceive and bear a son and shall call his name Emmanuel.”

Creating and Giving God, source of all life and heart of all LOVE. Today we hold in our hearts your servant Mary whom you called blessed because she was faithful to your call to servanthood. At the risk of her future, she not only listened to your Voice, but consented to be the instrument of your giving and your peace. We thank you for her and ask that we too may hear and obey you when you call us by name to be servants to the world. We ask this in the name of the Prince of Peace, Lord of lords and embodiment of your Love, Jesus Emmanuel. **Amen and Alleluia!**

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

People: **And also with you.**

Fr. Michael: Almighty God,

All: to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hidden. Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

All: Holy God, holy and mighty, holy, immortal One, Have mercy on us (repeat three times)

Fr. Michael: Heavenly Father, you chose the Virgin Mary, full of grace, to be the mother of our Lord and Saviour. Now fill us with your grace, that we may in all things embrace your will and with her rejoice in your salvation; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God now and for ever.

Amen.

Fr. Michael: Father, the greatest gift of all came that first Christmas and was not wrapped in a beautiful package and set under a decorated tree. It came wrapped in the flesh of a baby and laid in the rough wood of a manger. Father, in this final week of Advent, fill our hearts and minds with the significance of that truth. Thank you Lord for loving us enough to send us Jesus and it is in his precious name we pray.

Amen

Reader: A Reading From Isaiah 7: 10-16

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."

The Word of the Lord

People: **Thanks be to God**

Reader: The Song of Mary

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour;

All: **for he has looked with favour on his lowly servant.**

Reader: From this day all generations will call me blessed:

All: **the Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name.**

Reader: He has mercy on those who fear him

All: **in every generation.**

Reader: He has shown the strength of his arm,

All: **he has scattered the proud in their conceit.**

Reader: He has cast down the mighty from their thrones,

All: **and has lifted up the lowly.**

Reader: He has filled the hungry with good things,

All: **and the rich he has sent away empty.**

Reader: He has come to the help of his servant Israel,

All: **for he has remembered his promise of mercy,**

Reader: the promise he made to our fathers,

All: **to Abraham and his children for ever.**

Reader: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:

All: **as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.**

Reader: A Reading from The Letter of Paul To The Romans Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for the sake of his name, including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ, To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ROMANS 1:1-7

The Word of the Lord

People: **Thanks be to God**

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Celebrant: The Holy Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ according to the

blessed St. Matthew [MATTHEW 1:18-25]

People: **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 with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss 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 fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear 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.

Celebrant: The Gospel of Christ.

People: **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ**

Homily

Fr. Michael: As we embrace our call to be kingdom- people, we affirm, I believe in God, All: 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: God of all hope and joy, open our hearts to wonder and to welcome so that your Son Jesus at his coming may find in us a dwelling place for you. As we once again prepare for Christmas, help us to make time in all our busyness for prayer and reflection; that we may think about the wonder of your love for the world and allow the reality of our Saviour's birth to dwell in our hearts and spirits. May our joy be deeper, our worship more real and our lives worthier of Christ's incarnation. Lord, grant us a share in your divine mystery.

People: **In your love, hear our prayer.**

Reader: Lord, look with your loving compassion upon your Church throughout the world. We pray for The Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples, Interim National Indigenous Bishop Sidney Black, Sacred Circle Events, and the ministry of reconciliation. We also pray for Shane, our Bishop; Anne, our Metropolitan; Linda, our Primate; as well as Staff at Ascension House. As we struggle as a body to be worthy of Christ's name, we ask you to heal all the divisions and sources of disharmony which wound your Son and redirect our energies to focus on the great panorama of the coming kingdom rather than the small details of the route we travel. Lord, grant us a share in your divine mystery.

People: **In your love, hear our prayer**

Reader: Lord, we rejoice in the love of our homes and our families. We pray for all who have enriched our lives by their goodness, all who have accepted us and who have cared for us. We pray for all who are separated from those they love because of COVID, those separated by conflict in other lands, those whose families are fractured by disharmony. We pray today for those who are alone at this time of the year and for those who are always lonely. Lord, grant us a share in your divine mystery.

People: **In your love, hear our prayer.**

Reader: Lord, we pray for all those who want nothing more than to be accepted for who they are regardless of race, colour, creed or gender; for the ill among us Marjorie, Roy, Beth, Howard, Irene, Richard and Deb L., Zachariah, Jeanette, Cheryl, Sarah and their families; those who are anxious about family or friends; we pray for all those who have died, that they may find love in your promised Kingdom of Hope. Lord, grant us a share in your diviner mystery. People: In your love, hear our prayer.

Reader: Heavenly Father, you chose Blessed Mary to be the mother of your promised Messiah and Saviour; fill us your servants with your grace, that in all things and in all ways we may embrace and do your holy will and with Miriam of Nazareth rejoice in being called sons and daughters of your love. Lord, grant us a share in your divine mystery.

People: **In your love, hear our prayer.** (from Lay Anglicana adapted by RMF)

Fr. Michael: My dear sisters and brothers in Christ, God is steadfast in love and infinite in mercy; he welcomes sinners and invites them to his table. Let us confess our sins, confident in God's forgiveness. Most merciful God, All: we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us, that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your name. **Amen.**

Fr. Michael: May the peace of Christ, the love of God and the empowering joy of the Spirit be with each and every one of us today and always.

People: **And also with you**

Celebrant: Gracious God, by the power of the Spirit who sanctified Miriam the mother of your Son, make holy all that we offer this day in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Celebrant: The Lord be with you

People: **And also with you.**

Celebrant: Lift up your hearts.

People: **We lift them to the Lord.**

Celebrant: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Fr. Michael: It is indeed right to thank you and praise you, holy and gracious God, creator of all things, ruler of heaven and earth, sustainer of life, for you are the source of all goodness, rich in mercy and abounding in love; you are faithful to your people in

all generations and your word endures for ever. Therefore, with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven, we glorify your holy name as we say,

People: **Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

Fr. Michael: We praise you merciful Father, not as we ought but as we are able, because in your tender love you gave the world your only Son in order that the world might be saved through him. He made you known by taking the form of a servant, healing the sick, liberating the oppressed and reaching out to the lost. Betrayed, reviled and nailed to the cross, he confronted the power of sin and disarmed it for ever. In his offering of himself he became the perfect and sufficient sacrifice for the sin of the whole world. Redeemed by Christ, we have been adopted as your children; by your pardon, you have made us, your sons and daughters, to praise you. On the night he was betrayed, Jesus, at supper with his friends, took bread, gave you thanks, broke the bread, gave it to them and said, "Take and eat; this is my Body broken and given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me." After supper, he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, He gave it to them and said, "Drink this all of you: this is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for you and for many of the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me." In obedience to him and with grateful hearts, we approach your holy table, remembering our Saviour's sacrifice and rejoicing in his victory. Confident in his sovereign purpose, we declare our faith:

People: **Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.**

Fr. Michael: Send your Holy Spirit on us that as we receive this bread and this wine we may participate in the body and blood of our Lord Jesus and feed on him in our hearts by faith with thanksgiving. May we be renewed in his risen life, filled with his love, and strengthened in our will and resolve to serve others; and make our lives a pure and holy sacrifice, acceptable to you, knitting us together as one in your Son Jesus Christ, to whom with you and the Holy Spirit be all honour and glory, world without end. Amen.

Fr. Michael: And now, as Jesus has gifted to his Church, so we pray, Our Father, who art in heaven, People: hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Fr. Michael: God of promise, you prepare a banquet for us in your kingdom.

People: **Happy are all who are called to the supper of the Lamb.**

Fr. Michael: The gifts of God for the children of God.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Fr. Michael: Faithful God, in this sacrament we receive the promise of our salvation. May we, like Mary, be obedient to your will and we ask this in the name of Jesus.

Amen

Fr. Michael: After the season is over, the Christmas lights come down, the smell of the tree disappears and Christmas music no longer plays we may ask, "what happens

next?" The awe and wonder of Christmas is just beginning. Christmas reminds us a that a child is born and has given us a purpose for living and what happens next is largely dependent upon how we embrace Jesus in our own lives. Jesus, as we celebrate your birth this week may we begin to see the world in the light of the understanding that you give. When the song of the angels is stilled, when the star is gone from the sky, when the kings and princes are home, when the shepherds are back in the hills, then the work of Christmas begins: to find the lonely, to heal those broken in spirit, to feed the hungry, to release the oppressed, to rebuild the nations, to bring peace among all peoples, to make music with the heart and to radiate the Light of Christ every day in every way, in all that we do and in all that we say. Then the work of Christmas really begins. **Amen**

(Howard Thurman from www.Christianity.com)

Fr. Michael: 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, for ever and ever. Amen

Fr. Michael: May Almighty God give us peace and joy in this holy season and in the one blooming on the horizon; may God scatter the darkness of our world and brighten our hearts with the light of holiness and the blessing of God Father, Son and Holy Spirit be upon us this day and and for evermore. **Amen**

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

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