

Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Metcalfe
3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
DECEMBER 14, 2025
Reverend Dr. Tom Hubschmid

Invitation to Worship

The Gathering of the Community

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

People: **And also with you.**

Celebrant: Let us be grateful for the land on which we gather to worship today and acknowledge it as the ancestral, unceded territory of our neighbours the Algonquin-Anishinaabe.

All: **In a spirit of reconciliation, may we always seek to respect the history, spirituality, and culture of Indigenous Peoples and uphold our continuing responsibility as treaty people.**

Celebrant: Almighty God,

People: **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.**

The Song Of Mary

Celebrant: 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.**

Celebrant: From this day all generations will call me blessed: *

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

Celebrant: He has mercy on those who fear him *

All: **in every generation.**

Celebrant: He has shown the strength of his arm, *

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

Celebrant: He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, *

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

Celebrant: He has filled the hungry with good things, *

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

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

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

Celebrant: the promise he made to our fathers, *

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

Celebrant: 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.**

Celebrant: God of power and mercy,

you call us once again

to celebrate the coming of your Son.

Remove those things which hinder love of you,

that when he comes,

he may find us waiting in awe and wonder

for him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,

one God, now and for ever.

All: **Amen**

Advent Wreath Lighting

Celebrant: We light a candle each of the four Sundays in Advent. The light of the candles grows brighter each week as we wait in joyful expectation for the coming of Christ, the light of the world.

All: **Each candle reminds us of the gifts of hope, peace, joy and love that Jesus brings to the world. We receive these gifts, and we are called to share them with each other, and in our world. We light the candle of joy this week.**

The Proclamation of The Word

Reader: A Reading From The Book Of Isaiah

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you." Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. A highway shall be there, and it shall

be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveller, not even fools, shall go astray. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. ISAIAH 35:1-10

The Word of the Lord

People: **Thanks be to God**

Reader: Psalm 146:4-9

Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help! *

All: **whose hope is in the Lord their God;**

Who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them; *

All: **who keeps his promise for ever;**

Who gives justice to those who are oppressed, *

All: **and food to those who hunger.**

Reader: The Lord sets the prisoners free;

the Lord opens the eyes of the blind; *

All: **the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down;**

Reader: The Lord loves the righteous; the Lord cares for the stranger; *

All: **he sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way of the wicked.**

Reader: The Lord shall reign for ever, *

All: **your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. Hallelujah!**

Reader: A Reading From The Letter Of James

Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. JAMES 5:7-10, 14

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 Jesus Christ according to Matthew (11:2-11)

People: **Glory be to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

Celebrant: When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me." As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written, 'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.' Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

The Gospel of Christ.

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

Homily - *Patience*

(Isaiah 35:1-10, Matthew 11:2-12, James 5:7-10)

God our Redeemer, God our Sanctifier, in the first Advent of Christ you give a foretaste of his Final Advent. Give us patience and perseverance in doing good. Amen.

Today the readings put before us in plain sight the situation of the Church. We live in the middle of a story. It's story beyond the reach of our most wild imagining. And a story so earthly that during the season of Advent we're unsure how to decorate the church! Do we go with the more somber purple or the more hopeful blue? Do we throw up Christmas lights or not? Should we be spiking our eggnog and pounding ginger-snaps? Or should we sheepishly just have one gingersnap since they're on the table and maybe hold the rum but not the nog? This awkward timing of Advent—it's a good little parable for the cosmic and unfathomable and even terrifying largeness of the story God is weaving from the heavens and the earth.

In the Church's season of Advent, we acknowledge that we live between two Advents. Two appearances of Christ and his new world. Our Isaiah passage foretells the first and second in one vision. Our Matthew passage shows Jesus as the fulfillment, but only in part. Our James passage tells us how to be patient as we celebrate Christ's first Advent, while yet awaiting a final Advent. How do we be patient in an unredeemed world, despite the Redeemer having once appeared?

You'll notice in our era that Advent is a season only the churches observe, while beyond the church, Advent and Christmas have become one Holiday

season in general. This says it all. The Church is in a unique situation, as the Church. As the visible body of those drawn to Christ, we're not called between Christ's Advents to form a new nation, but to be a sign in the midst of the nations, a sacrament of a Kingdom not of this world. The Spirit creates the Church a visible sign of an invisible grace—a foretaste of a whole new Heavens and Earth. While we await the Christ's final Advent, we're called to persevere in doing good, loving our communities, and, instead of forcing our own way on the world, to practice patience in the face of this world's failing.

Let's look at the texts.

Isaiah sees God's promised future. "The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing." For the earth itself the promise comes. Whatever the nature of eternal salvation, nature itself shall be saved. The vision continues with a word for the oppressed: "Say to those who are of a fearful heart, 'Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God.' He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you." Salvation of this world, nation against nation, is never pretty. Only those who have been slaughtered or starved by their enemies know what it's like to desire a salvation that looks like vengeance. No one not in their situation should get on their moral high horse. But as the vision continues, we start to see signs of a salvation beyond the nature of nations against nations: "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy." Isaiah foresees re-created bodies. "For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water..." Isaiah foresees a re-created earth.

Jump to Jesus' day, and is the re-creation happening? Ask John the Baptizer, the last and greatest of Israel's prophets, and even he is unsure. He looks a little like he doesn't know whether to spike his eggnog or not. In actual fact John is rotting in prison. He preached that the Christ would bring down the very system that has him in prison. What's Jesus up to? "Are you the one who is to come...?" he asks.

And Jesus' answer then is the answer even now, some 2000 horrible years later. With John believers in Jesus look at our lives and the suffering and corruption in every nation and wonder, should we really believe? Jesus' answer requires of us a kind of patience the sinners in us can hardly stand. Give us firm yes, or a firm no. Instead, we get a yes, but. Yes, look at his works. He is the Christ Isaiah foresaw, and more! "...the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them." He is by all accounts not only a human leader but the Creator walking the earth as a human, re-creating as he goes, mending broken bodies. But he stops so short, doesn't he? John is beheaded by a tyrant soon after. Then follows 20

centuries of death and destruction and a planet on the brink of irreversible disaster.

If we're to understand what it means to be the Church and to hold fast to Christ in the midst of our situation, we must hear and receive what Jesus says about John. "...[A]mong those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he," Jesus says. Jesus draws a line in the sand of our fallen world. He stands in the story of this creation as a sign forever of another world to come.

Chief among the differences of the fallen world and the Kingdom of Heaven is that the Kingdom of Heaven is unforced. "From the days of John the Baptist until now," the Christ declares, "the Kingdom of Heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force." Just look at the Old Testament. His new power is not new authority to force and kill. His is the power to be arrested and killed, and yet in the process rob the power all that arrests and kills our lives on earth. His is the power of the Creator to bring to nothing the things that are, and the bring to being the things that are not. To make sinners saints, to make the defeated victors, to make the rejected heirs. The freedom of the Christian is to be able with Christ to live in the midst of this fallen world, unafraid and undefeated in the face suffering and sin and death. It is a freedom that comes not by force but by grace, by a divine gift beyond the workings of human will and the machinery of human nations. Even the least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than the greatest in this world, because their faith comes not from this world, nor requires feats of strength, not to mention violence, but comes from a grace and gift that creates us whole even as we fade away.

So, therefore, what's it mean to be the Christ's Church? We are a sign in the midst of the nations, of an invisible world yet to come. What should we be up to? What we're already up to. We keep up the good work. And we live with a patience that could outwait the planets. We're between Advents. "Be patient, therefore, beloved," as James wrote, "until the coming of the Lord." Don't force things. That's not the way anymore. "The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also must be patient."

Thanks be to God. Amen.

Silence For Reflection

The Nicene Creed

Celebrant: Let us confess our faith, as we say,

**All: We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified
under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father.
With the Father and the Son
he is worshipped and glorified.
He has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic
and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism
for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

Prayers of the People

Reader: In joyful expectation let us pray to our Saviour and Redeemer,
saying, "Lord Jesus, come soon!"

O Wisdom, from the mouth of the Most High, you reign over all things to the

ends of the earth, patiently abiding the rulers of our world: come and teach us how to live.

All: **Lord Jesus, come soon!**

Reader: O Lord, and head of the house of Israel, you appeared to Moses in the fire of the burning bush and you gave the law on Sinai, and through Christ you are gathering your Church from all tribes and languages: come with outstretched arm and ransom us.

All: **Lord Jesus, come soon!**

Reader: O Lord, behold and come to the aid of your servants in the Church. We pray for Archbishop Shane Parker, Primate of Canada; Archbishop Anne Germond, Metropolitan of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario, as well as our Diocesan Partners: Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and Archbishop Hosam Naoum. Come and bring down the fire of your light.

All: **Lord Jesus, come soon!**

Reader: We pray for our Community Ministries: Belong Ottawa: Centre 454; St. Luke's Table; The Well/La Source; Centre 105 (Cornwall); Cornerstone Housing for Women; Ottawa Pastoral Counselling Centre; and, the Refugee Ministry. Come and help us.

All: **Lord Jesus, come soon!**

Reader: We pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit as we prepare to elect a new bishop: for those discerning a call to let their name stand for election; for the candidates; for Members of Synod; and for our diocesan Administrator, Bishop Michael Bird. Come, Holy God, and make our paths straight.

All: **Lord Jesus, come soon!**

Reader: O Branch of Jesse, standing as a sign among the nations, all kings will keep silence before you and all peoples will summon you to their aid. No more does your Kingdom come through violent force. We wait for you: come, set us free and delay no more.

All: **Lord Jesus, come soon!**

Reader: O Morning Star, splendour of the light eternal and bright Sun of righteousness, shine your light on those for whom we have been asked to pray: Brian, Liesa, Willy, Marjorie, Kelly, Louise, Zabrina, Zachariah, Randy, Deb, Richard, Irene, Howard, Beth, Jeanette and Cheryl, come and enlighten all who dwell in darkness and in the shadow of death.

All: **Lord Jesus, come soon!**

Reader: O Emmanuel, hope of the nations and their Saviour: come and save us, Lord our God.

All: **Lord Jesus, come soon!**

Confession and Absolution

Celebrant: Dear friends 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.

Silence is kept.

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.**

Celebrant: Almighty God have mercy upon you,
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,
and keep you in eternal life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
All: **Amen.**

Celebrant: The peace of the Lord be always with you.
People: **And also with you.**

Prayer over the Gifts

Celebrant: God of hope,
renew in us the joy of your salvation
and make us a living sacrifice to you,
for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.
All: **Amen**

Eucharistic Prayer 3

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.**

Celebrant: Blessed are you, gracious God,
creator of heaven and earth;
we give you thanks and praise
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who in the fullness of time came among us in our flesh,
and opened to us the way of salvation.
Now we watch for the day when he will come again
in power and great triumph to judge this world,
that we, without shame or fear,
may rejoice to behold his appearing.

Therefore we praise you,
joining our voices with angels and archangels
and with all the company of heaven,
who for ever sing this hymn
to proclaim the glory of your name.

**All: 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.**

Celebrant: We give thanks to you, Lord our God,
for the goodness and love
you have made known to us in creation;
in calling Israel to be your people;
in your Word spoken through the prophets;
and above all in the Word made flesh,
Jesus your Son.
For in these last days you sent him
to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
to be the Saviour and Redeemer of the world.

In him, you have delivered us from evil,
and made us worthy to stand before you.
In him, you have brought us
out of error into truth,
out of sin into righteousness,
out of death into life.

On the night he was handed over

to suffering and death,
a death he freely accepted,
our Lord Jesus Christ took bread;
and when he had given thanks to you,
he broke it, and gave it to his disciples,
and said, "Take, eat:
this is my body which is given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me."

Celebrant: 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
for the forgiveness of sins.
Whenever you drink it,
do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore, Father, according to his command,
All: **we remember his death,
we proclaim his resurrection,
we await his coming in glory;**

Celebrant: and we offer our sacrifice
of praise and thanksgiving
to you, Lord of all;
presenting to you, from your creation,
this bread and this wine.

We pray you, gracious God,
to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts,
that they may be the sacrament
of the body of Christ
and his blood of the new covenant.
Unite us to your Son in his sacrifice,
that we, made acceptable in him,
may be sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

In the fullness of time,
reconcile all things in Christ,
and make them new,

and bring us to that city of light
where you dwell with all your sons and daughters;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
the firstborn of all creation,
the head of the Church,
and the author of our salvation;

by whom, and with whom, and in whom,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory are yours, almighty Father,
now and for ever.

All: **Amen.**

Celebrant: And now, as our Saviour Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

People: **Our Father who art in heaven,
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.**

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

All: **Happy are those who are called
to the supper of the Lamb.**

Celebrant: The gifts of God for the People of God.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Communion

Prayer After Communion

Celebrant: Merciful God,
may this eucharist free us from our sins,
fill us with unending joy,

and prepare us for the birthday of our Saviour.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ,
who is Lord now and for ever.
All: **Amen**

Doxology

Celebrant: 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.**

Celebrant: Be steadfast in faith,
joyful in hope,
and untiring in love
all the days of your life;
and the blessing of God,
our Creator, our Redeemer, and our Sanctifier,
One God, be upon you and remain with you always.
All: **Amen.**

Celebrant: Go forth in the name of Christ.
All: **Thanks be to God.**

Worship follows the Holy Eucharist in the Book of Alternative Services
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