

Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Metcalfe
4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
DECEMBER 21, 2025
Reverend Dr. Tom Hubschmid

Invitation to Worship

Opening Sentence

Celebrant: O Morning Star, splendour of light eternal and sun of righteousness: Come and enlighten those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death. (Malachi 4:2)

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: Heavenly Father,
who chose the Virgin Mary, full of grace,
to be the mother of our Lord and Saviour,
now fill us with your grace,
that we in all things may 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.

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 love this week.**

The Proclamation of The Word

Reader: A Reading From The Book Of 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."

ISAIAH 7:10-16

The Word of the Lord

People: **Thanks be to God**

Reader: Psalm 80:1-7, 16-18

Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock;

All: **shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.**

Reader: In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh,

All: **stir up your strength and come to help us.**

Reader: Restore us, O God of hosts;

All: **show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.**

Reader: O Lord God of hosts,

All: **how long will you be angered despite the prayers of your people?**

Reader: You have fed them with the bread of tears;

All: **you have given them bowls of tears to drink.**

Reader: You have made us the derision of our neighbours,

All: **and our enemies laugh us to scorn.**

Reader: Restore us, O God of hosts;

All: **show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.**

Reader: Let your hand be upon the man of your right hand,

All: **the son of man you have made so strong for yourself.**

Reader: And so will we never turn away from you;

All: **give us life, that we may call upon your name.**

Reader: Restore us, O Lord God of hosts;

All: **show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.**

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 Jesus Christ according to Matthew (1:18-25) People: **Glory be to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

Celebrant: 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.

The Gospel of Christ.

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

Homily - Mary and Fulfillment

God With Us, may we bear Jesus according to your unique purposes for each, and may we find fulfillment through him. Amen.

We can learn from Mary about fulfillment. I mean personal fulfillment. As in a full life, a sense of wholeness, rightness, and authenticity. And maybe oddly, we can learn about fulfillment from Mary because of Matthew's choice to quote Isaiah about the virgin conceiving and bearing a son. Fulfillment as people has a likeness to the fulfillment of prophetic sayings, and that likeness has everything to do with Jesus. It's strange that Matthew refers to Isaiah, in the first place. "Look," he writes, "the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel." It's a line Isaiah says to a King of Judah, King Ahaz, some 700 years before Jesus. King Ahaz finds himself in a dire situation. It's a situation from which he can't save himself or his people. Isaiah comes and tells King Ahaz to ask God for a sign—to ask for an assurance that God will deliver them. But Ahaz is a devout man, and he refuses to put God to the test. And I love this: Isaiah is surprisingly annoyed with Ahaz! Agh! Ahaz is wearying God with his piety. Look, God will provide his own sign for you, Isaiah says. "The young woman" – which Matthew translates as virgin – "is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel," which means God with us in Hebrew.

We tend to think of prophesy as a prediction, an event to happen sometime in the unknown future, which is supposed to come true when the time is right. And this is the now the traditional reading of this saying for Isaiah, a

prediction of Jesus' virgin birth to Mary. But interestingly enough, the Jewish faithful of Jesus' era had no expectation that their Messiah would be conceived of a virgin. Why? Well, because this saying from Isaiah is more of a description than a prediction, and it is a description of something that was happening right then and there for King Ahaz to see. So, what on earth does Matthew mean by saying that what took place with Mary was to "fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet"?

Well, this is often what the word fulfillment means in the Bible when it talks about Jesus fulfilling prophecy. It's not so much the happening of a predicted event. But the fullest expression, the epitome, the best version of something that God has said or done already.

You can see this: to King Ahaz is promised an unlikely born child, named God with us, as a sign that God will deliver Judah from a military attack; but to Mary is promised an impossible child, also to be named God with us, who is actually God with us, come to deliver all humanity not only from one military attack, but from sin as the root of all violence and self-destruction. Jesus is the fullness of God-with-us, the epitome of God-with-us, the best possible version of some lesser kid once called Immanuel.

That's what fulfillment means here. And the fulfillment of a prophecy in this way is very much like the fulfillment of a person. A person is meant one day to find their fulfillment, their fullest self-expression, their epitome, the best possible version of themselves.

Just take Mary. She becomes Mary, the Mary, she becomes the fullness of who God made her to be, by saying yes to God's call, by consenting to bear God in her womb, incarnate as the Christ-child. Or take Joseph. He becomes himself, Joseph, by wedding Mary.

He fulfills his righteous character by wedding Mary even though it meant ignoring some religious rules and judge-y people. Do Mary and Joseph seem cowed by God, emptied because of

Jesus, glumly obedient? No, being emptied and glumly obedient is what they would have looked like had they fallen to the fear of what others would think. Mary and Joseph glimmer. They're full of life and personhood, full because they heard God's call, because instead of following the false-calls of rule-makers and trend-setters, they embraced God's call to do what they were meant to do and be who they were meant to be.

Mary, with her round belly, bearing God, is a symbol of fullness. And what I want to really push here, is the obvious point that what she is full with is Jesus. The presence of Jesus in her doesn't replace her or erase her. His presence in her makes her shine, fulfills her personhood. She's mother Mary, The God-Bearer.

And you are you. We are all made bearers of Christ. His risen body, transformed through his resurrection, is present to us in all kinds of hidden ways. The Holy Spirit is giving him to dwell in us and with us—while we are

called to bear him and deliver him to all around, being fulfilled in the mystery, and being made our truest and deepest selves.
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 the Multifaith Housing Initiative (MHI), for The Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples, the Rt. Rev. Christopher Harper, National Indigenous Anglican Archbishop, Sacred Circle Events, and the ministry of reconciliation. 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. Give us the grace, by your Holy Spirit to discern the promptings of your will: 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: Gracious God,
by the power of the Spirit
who sanctified the mother of your Son,

make holy all we offer you this day.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the 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.”

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: Faithful God,

in this sacrament we receive the promise of salvation.

May we, like the Virgin Mary,
be obedient to your will.

We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.

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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