

**Holy Communion
at St Paul's, Ashgrove**



Advent 3

13 December 2020

HYMN: TiS 477 Jesus call us here to meet him.

P: Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins,
 whose mercy endures forever.
The Lord be with you.
 And also with you.

Lighting of the Third Advent Candle – The Candle of Joy

Leader: Light and peace, in Jesus Christ our Lord

All: Thanks be to God

Leader: Today is the Third Sunday of Advent and we will light the Candle of Joy.

We have lit the first two candles, one for hope and one for peace. Today we light the third candle, the candle of joy. This should be the easy one, because joy is all around us—in the children, the lights, the music, the gathering together. But how often do we let our preparations—or our memories—push joy to the side? Joy is like an underground spring that wells up within us, but joy is also a choice, an attitude. Like a muscle, it needs to be exercised. So today we open ourselves to joy, trusting that God has already planted it in us. All we need to do is give it care and offer it to share.

Loving God, we open ourselves to you,
trusting that this is how you made us:
you created us for joy-filled hearts and lives.
Show us the creative power of hope.
Teach us the peace that comes from justice.
Fill us with the kind of joy that cannot be contained,
 but must be shared.
Prepare our hearts to be transformed by you,
That we may walk in the light of Christ. Amen.

The ministers move to their places as the following hymn verses are sung.

O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

O come, O come, great Lord of might,
who to the tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times did give the law
in cloud and majesty and awe.
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

O come, O Key of David, come
and open wide our heavenly home;
make safe the way that leads on high
and close the path to misery.
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

LA: We acknowledge the traditional owners of the land where we gather today – the Yuggera and Ugarapul people – and pay respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging.

LA: From Isaiah 61 13, “Bind up the broken-hearted, proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners, proclaim the year of the Lord's favour, the day of vengeance of our God.” Isaiah 61.1-2

LA: [Let us pray.]

**Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open, all desires known,
and from whom 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.**

P: Eternal God,
you sent John the Baptist to prepare the way for the coming of your Son:
grant us wisdom to see your purpose
and openness to hear your will,
that we too may prepare the way for Christ
who is coming in power and glory
to establish his rule of peace and justice;
through Jesus Christ our Judge and our Redeemer,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion – to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, to display his glory.

They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.

For I the Lord love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the Lord has blessed.

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

Hear the word of the Lord, **thanks be to God**

Psalm 126

- 1 When the Lord turned again the fortunes of Zion:
then were we like those restored to life.
- 2 **Then was our mouth filled with laughter:
and our tongue with singing.**
- 3 Then said they among the heathen:
'The Lord has done great things for them.'
- 4 **Truly the Lord has done great things for us:
and therefore we rejoiced.**
- 5 Turn again our fortunes, O Lord:
as the streams return to the dry south.
- 6 **Those who sow in tears:
shall reap with songs of joy.**
- 7 They that go out weeping, bearing the seed:
shall come again in gladness, bringing their sheaves with them.

A reading from Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians

But we appeal to you, brothers and sisters, to respect those who labour among you, and have charge of you in the Lord and admonish you; esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves. And we urge you, beloved, to admonish the idlers, encourage the faint hearted, help the weak, be patient with all of them. See that none of you repays evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to all.

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil.

May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this. Beloved, pray for us. Greet all the brothers and sisters with a holy kiss. I solemnly command you by the Lord that this letter be read to all of them. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

Hear the word of the Lord, **thanks be to God**

Hymn: TiS 319 Child in the Manger

The gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John chapter 1 beginning at verse 6
Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ

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.

This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,'" as the prophet Isaiah said. Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

**This is the gospel of the Lord,
praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ**

LAs may sit in the congregation during the sermon

Sermon

Silence

LA:

Let us together affirm the faith of the Church

**We believe in one God,
who made and loves all that is.**

**We believe in Jesus Christ,
God's only Son, our Lord,
who was born, lived, died and rose again,
and is coming to call all to account.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit,
who calls, equips and sends out God's people,
and brings all things to their true end.**

**This is our faith, the faith of the Church:
We believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

LA: THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Let us pray for the world and for the Church.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

LA: Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord, who taught us to pray,

**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.**

**Lord, have mercy
Christ, have mercy
Lord, have mercy**

LA: The Lord comes, bringing to light things now hidden in darkness, and disclosing the purposes of the heart.

LA: Let us open our hearts and prepare for his coming, confessing our sins in penitence and faith

**Merciful God,
our maker and our judge,
we have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed,
and in what we have failed to do:
we have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves;
we repent, and are sorry for all our sins.
Father, forgive us.
Strengthen us to love and obey you in newness of life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

P: Almighty God,
who has promised forgiveness to all who turn to him in faith:
pardon you and set you free from all your sins,
strengthen you in all goodness
and keep you in eternal life,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

P: We are the body of Christ. **His Spirit is with us.**
The peace of the Lord be always with you. **And also with you.**

All may exchange a sign of peace, maintaining 1.5m separation and without touching.

HYMN: TiS 474 Here In This Place New Light Is Streaming

Note that we cannot pass collection bowls around at this time. There is a box at the back of the building to receive your offerings.

THANKSGIVING 1 (Advent)

P: The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

All glory and honour be yours always and everywhere,
mighty Creator, everliving God.

We give you thanks and praise for your son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ,
who by the power of your Spirit was born of Mary
and lived as one of us.

By his death on the cross
and rising to new life,
he offered the one true sacrifice for sin
and obtained an eternal deliverance for his people.

We thank you that when he shall come again
in power and great triumph to judge the world,
we may with joy behold his appearing,
and in confidence stand before him
who redeems us from sin and death
and makes us heirs of everlasting life.

Therefore with angels and archangels,
and with all the company of heaven,
we proclaim your great and glorious name,
for ever praising you and saying:

**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 Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Merciful God, we thank you
for these gifts of your creation, this bread and wine,
and we pray that by your Word and Holy Spirit,
we who eat and drink them
may be partakers of Christ's body and blood.

On the night he was betrayed Jesus took bread;
and when he had given you thanks
he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying,
'Take, eat. This is my body given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.'

After supper, he took the cup,
and again giving you thanks
he gave it to his disciples, saying,
'Drink from this, all of you.
This is my blood of the new covenant
shed for you and for many
for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.'

Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

Therefore we do as our Saviour has commanded:
proclaiming his offering of himself
made once for all upon the cross,
his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension,
and looking for his coming again,
we celebrate, with this bread and this cup,
his one perfect and sufficient sacrifice
for the sins of the whole world.

Renew us by your Holy Spirit,
unite us in the body of your Son,
and bring us with all your people
into the joy of your eternal kingdom;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
with whom, and in whom,
in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
we worship you, Father,
in songs of never ending praise:

**Blessing and honour and glory and power
are yours for ever and ever. Amen.**

The priest says

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.
We who are many are one body,
for we all share in the one bread.

Jesus, Lamb of God, have mercy on us.
Jesus, bearer of our sins, have mercy on us.
Jesus, redeemer of the world, grant us your peace.

Bread and wine; the gifts of God
for the people of God.

**May we who share these gifts
be found in Christ
and Christ in us.**

NZ Prayer Book

Special Covid-19 Guidelines: Please come forward to receive communion (bread only). Maintain 1.5m separation as you move forward. Queue close to the pew – not in the centre of the isle – in one line. Sanitise hands. Receive the bread while standing and return to your seat.

While others are receiving communion you may wish to listen or quietly sing along to the communion hymn while remaining seated.

Communion Hymn (not announced): TiS 607 Make Me a Channel of Your Peace

God for whom we wait,
we thank you that you have fed us with the bread of life
and the cup of salvation.
As we joyfully await your Son,
keep us ever watchful
that we may be ready to stand before him
on the day of his coming.

**Most loving God,
you send us into the world you love.
Give us grace to go thankfully and with courage
in the power of your Spirit.**

Announcements

Please stand for the blessing:

May God your Eternal Friend bless all your days.
May God speak in the very heart of you and be in each of your words and actions.
May this Soul Mate anticipate your every need, stand with you in every struggle,
and nudge you in every challenge.
May you be friend and soul mate to those closest to you.

--Maxine Shonk, OP

and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always. Amen.

Rejoice in God always, and again I say, rejoice
For God has created you with the capacity for joy.
**We will find what makes us joyful,
And make that our gift to the world.**

Trust in God's good will for all of creation
and open yourself to God's gentle, transforming love.
**We will welcome new possibilities in our lives.
We will offer ourselves to God's goodness.
We will go forth in hope, and peace, and joy.**

LA: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord: **In the name of Christ. Amen**

HYMN: TiS 268 Joy to the World

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