



Birchcliff Bluffs United Church

Ministers: All the People – wherever and however they gather

Rev. Gregory Daly: Minister of Word & Sacrament

Rev. Carmen Llanos: Minister of Community Development

Music Director: Randy Vancourt

December 12, 2021

Advent 3

WE GATHER AS GOD'S PEOPLE

Prelude

Call to Worship

Come in Joy this day.

We come here open to hearing good news.

Come seeking your deepest desires.

We let the light dance and our anticipation stir.

It is Advent, the season of waiting and longing.

We wait for Christ's first and final arrival.

Come let us worship in joy as we wait for God.



Response

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

VU 8

*Lo, how a rose e'er blooming from tender stem hath sprung,
of Jesse's lineage coming, as seers of old have sung.*

*It came a blossom bright,
amid the cold of winter,
when half spent was the night.*

*Isaiah 'twas foretold it, the Rose I have in mind,
with Mary we behold it, the virgin mother kind.*

*To show God's love aright
she bore for us a Saviour
when half spent was the night.*

Life & Work of the Church

Welcome to online worship



Land Acknowledgement

Advent Three Candle Lighting



Light for the shadows:

may it show us the way.

A flame of joy:

may our hearts be warmed.

A beacon of possibility:

*may there be light and joy in our living
as we prepare to welcome Jesus.*

Come, bask in the light of Christ. May Joy light the world this Christmas.

Opening Hymn

Gaudete

English Text:: Randy Vancourt

Music: Piaie Cantiones

Rejoice, rejoice

For Christ is come among us

Of the Virgin Mary born

So rejoice

The time of grace is drawing near

For which we have waited

Let us worship faithfully

Life is celebrated

God becomes as one of us

Nature is astounded

All the world has been renewed

Sin has been confounded

Rejoice, rejoice

For Christ is come among us

Of the Virgin Mary born

So rejoice

The closed gate of Ezekial

Passed through like a river

Now the Light is rising up

We will be delivered

*Praise the glory that arrives
Sing in celebration
God will bless the coming child
Who will bring salvation*

*Rejoice, rejoice
For Christ is come among us
Of the Virgin Mary born
So rejoice*

Prayer for Grace



We pray for joy in a world that can sometimes seem devoid of merriment or delight.

We know that sometimes we mock the merriment and delight of others just because they have something we don't.

God, grant us a vision for your future, may we live with joy and support others in their joy.

Let it give us strength in hard times and be a cause for celebration in times of bliss. Amen.

WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

And Now for Something Completely Different

What is pure joy?



Hymn

Rejoice in the Lord Always

VU 249

*Rejoice in the Lord always
and again I say rejoice!
Rejoice in the Lord always
and again I say rejoice!
Rejoice, rejoice, and again I say rejoice!
Rejoice, rejoice, and again I say rejoice!*

Prayer of Illumination



*Help us O God, to come to you with open lives to receive your words.
May we give them new life as we listen to what you have to say.
Open our hearts as we embark on this journey with each other and with you.
Amen*

Isaiah 12:2-6**New Revised Standard Version**

² Surely God is my salvation;
I will trust, and will not be afraid,
for GOD is my strength and my might;
and has become my salvation.

³ With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. ⁴ And you will say in that day:

Give thanks to GOD,
call on GOD'S name;
make known GOD'S deeds among the nations;
proclaim that GOD 's name is exalted.

⁵ Sing praises to GOD, for all that has been done gloriously;
let this be known in all the earth.

⁶ Shout aloud and sing for joy, O royal Zion,
for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.

Luke 3:7-18**New Revised Standard Version**

⁷ John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" ⁸ Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ⁹ Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

¹⁰ And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" ¹¹ In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise."

¹² Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?"

¹³ He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you." ¹⁴ Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages."

¹⁵ As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶ John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷ His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

¹⁸ So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

This is the word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God

Sermon

Snakeskin Jacket



Hymn

On Jordan's Bank

VU 20

*On Jordan's bank, the Baptist's cry
announces that the Lamb is nigh;
awake and hearken, for he brings
glad tidings of the King of Kings.*

*Then cleansed be every life from sin;
make straight the way for God within;
and let each heart prepare a home
where such a mighty guest may come.*

*Stretch forth your hand, our health restore,
and help us rise to fall no more.
O let your face upon us shine,
and fill the world with love divine.*

*All praise to you, eternal One,
whose advent has our freedom won;
and praise to God whom we adore,
with Holy Spirit evermore.*

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

Offering our Gifts to God



Prayers of the 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.*

BLESSING AND SENDING FORTH

Closing Hymn

Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending

VU 25

Lo, he comes with clouds descending,
robed in awesome majesty,
Thousand, thousand saints attending
join to sing the glad refrain:
hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah!
God appears on earth to reign.

Now redemption, long expected
see in solemn pomp appear;
all the saints, by us rejected,
thrill the trumpet sound to hear:
hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah!
See the day of God appear!

Benediction & Commissioning (Philippians 4: 4-7)

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, Rejoice.



Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Postlude

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Other Resources for Today

Saks Toronto: [Shop Ralph Lauren Collection Dasha Silk Snake-Print Trench Coat | Saks Fifth Avenue](#)

Lectionary Readings

Zephaniah 3:14-20

New Revised Standard Version

¹⁴ Sing aloud, O daughter Zion;
shout, O Israel!
Rejoice and exult with all your heart,
O daughter Jerusalem!
¹⁵ GOD has taken away the judgments against you,
GOD has turned away your enemies.
The king of Israel, GOD, is in your midst;
you shall fear disaster no more.
¹⁶ On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:
Do not fear, O Zion;
do not let your hands grow weak.
¹⁷ GOD is in your midst,
a warrior who gives victory;
GOD will rejoice over you with gladness,
GOD will renew you in his love;
GOD will exult over you with loud singing
¹⁸ as on a day of festival.
I will remove disaster from you,
so that you will not bear reproach for it.
¹⁹ I will deal with all your oppressors
at that time.
And I will save the lame
and gather the outcast,
and I will change their shame into praise
and renown in all the earth.
²⁰ At that time I will bring you home,
at the time when I gather you;
for I will make you renowned and praised
among all the peoples of the earth,
when I restore your fortunes
before your eyes, says GOD.

Philippians 4:4-7

New Revised Standard Version

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵ Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. ⁶ Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.