



St. Laurence, Coquitlam

December 6, 2020 at 9:30 am

Advent II

Gathering of the Community

All are warmly welcomed to our worship.

Poem

Prepare

Strange how one word
will so hollow you out.
But this word
has been in the wilderness
for months.
Years.

This word is what remained
after everything else
was worn away
by sand and stone.
It is what withstood
the glaring of sun by day,
the weeping loneliness of
the moon at night.

Now it comes to you
racing out of the wild,
eyes blazing
and waving its arms,
its voice ragged with desert
but piercing and loud
as it speaks itself
again and again:

Prepare, prepare.

It may feel like
the word is leveling you,
emptying you
as it asks you
to give up
what you have known.

It is impolite
and hardly tame,
but when it falls
upon your lips
you will wonder
at the sweetness,

like honey
that finds its way
into the hunger
you had not known
was there.

—Jan Richardson
from Circle of Grace

Lighting of the Advent Candle

Advent Gathering Song: *Come, Come Emmanuel*

***Come, come Emmanuel. Come, Emmanuel.
Come, come Emmanuel. Come, Emmanuel.***

1. Oh give comfort, my people, and
Come, come Emmanuel. Come, Emmanuel.

2. Oh prepare the way, and
Come, come Emmanuel. Come, Emmanuel.
3. Like a shepherd God feeds us, so
Come, come Emmanuel. Come, Emmanuel.
4. For the day of the Lord will
Come, come Emmanuel. Come, Emmanuel.
5. Oh make ready his way, and
Come, come Emmanuel. Come, Emmanuel.
6. He will baptize in Spirit and
Come, come Emmanuel. Come, Emmanuel.

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Call to Worship

Advent Call to Worship

We come to prepare the way;
The way for Christ -
the hope of Christ, the peace of Christ -
to enter our world;
to enter our hearts.

We cry out together in the wilderness:
The kingdom of heaven has come near.
We come to be part of the light -
the light that shines in the darkness.

- written by Joanna Harader, and posted on Spacious Faith <http://spaciousfaith.com>

Reading Isaiah 40:1-11

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. ²Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

³A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. ⁴Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. ⁵Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken." ⁶A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. ⁷The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people are grass. ⁸The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever.

⁹Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!" ¹⁰See, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. ¹¹He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

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Psalm *There Is a Longing*

Refrain

***There is a longing in our hearts,
O Lord, for you to reveal yourself to us.
There is a longing in our hearts
for love we only find in you, our God.***

1. For justice, for freedom,
for mercy: hear our prayer.
In sorrow, in grief:
be near, hear our prayer, O God. *Refrain*

2. For wisdom, for courage,
for comfort: hear our prayer.
In weakness, in fear: be near,
hear our prayer, O God. *Refrain*

3. For healing, for wholeness,
for new life:
hear our prayer. In sickness,
in death: be near, hear our prayer, O God. *Refrain*

4. Lord save us, take pity,
light in our darkness.
We call you, we wait: be near,
hear our prayer, O God. *Refrain*

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Gospel Reading

Reader May God be with you.
All **And also with you.**

Reader The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
 according to Mark.
All **Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

Gospel Mark 1:1-8

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

²As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,

“See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way;
³the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight,’”

⁴John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷He proclaimed, “The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. ⁸I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

Reader The Gospel of Christ.
All **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

Homily Reverend Eric Mason

Hymn *Each Winter as the Year Grows Older*

1. Each winter as the year grows older,
We each grow older too.
The chill sets in a little colder;
The verities we knew
Seem shaken and untrue.

2. When race and class cry out for treason,
When sirens call for war,
They overshout the voice of reason,
And scream till we ignore.
All we held dear before.

3. Yet I believe beyond believing,
That life can spring from death;
That growth can flower from our grieving;
That we can catch our breath
And turn transfixed by faith.

4. So even as the sun is turning,
To journey to the north,
The living flame, in secret burning,
Can kindle on the earth,
And bring God's love to birth.

5. O Child of ecstasy and sorrows,
O Prince of peace and pain,
Brighten today's world by tomorrow's,
Renew our lives again;
Lord Jesus, come and reign!

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Prayers of the People

Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name;
your kingdom come,
your will be done
on earth as in heaven.
Give us this day 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,
or the kingdom, the pow'r
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. **Amen.**

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Hymn *Ready the Way*

1. "Ready the way of the Lord!
Ready the way of the Lord!"
A voice cries out in the wilderness:
"Ready the way of the Lord!"
2. "Let ev'ry valley be filled.
Let ev'ry valley be filled.
Let ev'ry mountain be humbled;
let ev'ry valley be filled."

Refrain

***Here is your God,
coming with your vindication.
Look and behold
the saving power of God.***

3. Desert and wasteland will bloom.
Desert and wasteland will bloom.
Glory and splendor will fill the land.
Desert and wasteland will bloom. *(to Verse 4)*

4. Those who are blind will then see.
Those who are deaf will then hear.
Those who are lame will then leap for joy.
Those who are mute will then sing. *(to Refrain)*

5. Strengthen the ones who are weak.
Strengthen the ones who are weak.
Say to the frightened: "Have courage."
"Strengthen the ones who are weak. *(to Refrain)*

The Blessing

Presider So now we leave this space of worship
 And while so much of the road ahead is uncertain,
 the path constantly changing,
 we know some things that are as solid and sure
 as the ground beneath our feet,
 and the sky above our heads.

We know God is love.
We know Christ's light endures.

We know the Holy Spirit this there,
found in the space between all things,
closer to us than our next breath,
binding us to each other,
until we meet we again,

Go in Peace.

Sending Out into the World

Dismissal

Love wholeheartedly.

Live as you were created.

Be God's people in our fragmented world. **Amen.**

by Tim Graves and posted on **LiturgyBits**. <https://liturgybits.wordpress.com>



The flowers are given to the glory of God and in thanksgiving for the life of Hugh, husband, father, brother and grandfather by Kathy MacCorkindale and family.



News and Notes

December 6, 2020

For more information on St. Laurence and upcoming activities visit the parish website www.saintlaurence.ca

Liminal Space: Embracing the Mystery and Power of Transition (February 5-7, 2021)

Please join us at Loon Lake for the 2nd annual Men's Retreat centering around the theme ***Liminal Space***.

Our guest speaker, author Brad Jersak, will offer his thoughts and insights on life transitions during his time with us.

To register and reserve your spot, please contact Detlef Beck by January 15, 2021.

Phone 604-992-7929/detlef2@gmail.com.

Cost is \$395 per person includes private room and all meals.

Bible Study

Paul: The Man We Thought We Knew

Please join us starting Monday, January 11, 2021 and running until February 8, 2021 at 6pm via **ZOOM**.

We will be studying Paul's conversion, missionary journey and teachings.

Please contact Olav at olav.slaymaker@ubc.ca

Access information will be provided.

ALTAR FLOWERS

Ministry Opportunity

Some of you might not know that the flowers on the altar are part of the pastoral care ministry at St. Laurence. The flowers are donated by parishioners for different reasons - to remember someone or to remember an occasion in their lives. After the services the flowers are given to two or three people that we are aware are in need or maybe have something to celebrate. The flowers tell them that we as a parish are thinking of them.

We are inviting you to be a part of this ministry by signing up to donate the flowers one Sunday in 2021. The ask is that you donate \$60-\$70 to cover the cost and the altar guild will purchase and display them in the church. After the services the flowers will be delivered by a parishioner.

If you would like to sign up for one of the available dates below please send an email to office@saintlaurence.ca or call Juley in the office at (604)946-5423. If you have any questions please call Heather at (604)945-7073.

Available dates

January 3,10,17

February 21,28

April 18

May 30

June 13, 20, 27

July 4,11,18

August 1,8,15,22,29

September 5,12,19,26

October 24,31

November 14, 28

December 5, 19, 26



"Christmas Cards"

PWRDF - If you wish to make a donation to PWRDF and receive a package of 12 PWRDF they will be from the office or by contacting Pat Sharpe at 604 219-9352.

A tax receipt will be issued for donations of \$25.00 or more.

"World of Gifts"

Have you considered choosing a gift for a special person from the PWRDF guide and support the work of PWRDF and their many partners around the world? Some of the gifts are matched 6;1 by the Canadian Government.

To receive gift cards in time for Christmas a purchase needs to be made by December 2.

A gift guide with all the information for ordering was an insert in the recent Anglican Journal or you can go to pwrdf.org/worldofgifts

Issues and Actions

Due to the pandemic the MAT program will not be happening this year, but "**Hope for Freedom**" outreach workers and the Tri-City homeless still need our help.

In the spirit of giving St. Laurence parishioners can provide much needed items for some of the most vulnerable in our community.

Hope for Freedom is very pleased with our interest in supporting their work and has provided a list of items needed. Donations of goods can be dropped off at the church Monday through Thursday from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm or you may phone Juley in the church office to arrange for a pick up from your home.

Wish list from outreach workers:

“Hope For Freedom”

Backpacks

Umbrellas

Hot Paws (warmers for gloves and boots)

Sweat pants

Socks

Underwear

Rain gear (waterproof jackets and pants)

Boots

Nail clippers, combs, and small or folding hair brushes

Small packages of wet wipes

Small bottles of Tylenol (there are tubes containing 10 tablets)

Food items: granola bars, fruit cups, pull top tins of a meal item eg.ravioli



First Reading

What Isaiah has to deal with is the crushing disappointment of his people. After eighty years of exile they return home only to find home -Jerusalem - a shattered dangerous ruin occupied by strangers. No wonder his first word is "Comfort" . Then his second word is "Prepare", a call to act. "Prepare the way of the Lord in the wilderness". His third word is the most powerful -" the word of our God will stand for ever." Isaiah senses a response. "Get you up." He cries, gesturing. By now he is shouting and they are singing. "Lift up your voice"! he shouts.

These days of Covid are a kind of exile. But we possess everything that Christians have possessed before us - the Word of God, the presence of God' spirit, the presence of a risen Christ. The Jerusalem we have to rebuild won't be the same as the one we had, but the point is we must build it.

The Psalm

In our human experience there can be times when God seems to be absent from us, and times when we will have a real sense of God being present - as in this Psalm. In fact God has neither gone or returned, but we can still feel that some kind of veil has fallen between us and God. Even the greatest of souls is not immune to this experience. But if we can stand firm, there will again be a sense of Presence

The Second Reading

As Peter, now elderly, wrote this letter to the communities across the empire, chiefly in its cities, the cost of being christian was becoming daunting. At certain times it could even cost your life and the lives of your loved ones. While there are places in today's world where this is still possible, it is not a reality for western Christians today.

But what is a reality is the tension that will always exist between Jesus' radical vision of the kingdom of God, its demand for justice, peace, and selflessness, and our all too human ability to respond to that challenge.

The Holy Gospel

Even the way John comes on the stage of the gospel is typical. He "appeared in the wilderness" writes Mark. One minute not there and the next there! If Isaiah believes in comforting, John believes in confronting!

John would not be the first nor the last to challenge his society about its priorities and its taken for granted assumptions. The early Celtic saints of Iona and Lindisfarne would do this. So would Francis of Assisi, Mahatma Gandhi in the India of his time, Nelson Mandela and Teresa of Calcutta in our own time.

Herbert O'Driscoll