

The Anglican Parish of St. Peter, Quamichan

CHRISTMAS EVE

FAMILY SERVICE

Rev MJ: People of God in this place and in all places, people of God settled in your homes by yourself or with a loved one, or a family of loved ones, we give thanks that you are worshipping with us here in the community of St. Peter, Quamichan as part of our virtual church family. On this Holiest of Nights, we come together to share in the Liturgy of the Word as we welcome the One who has come to be the light of the world.

Opening Acknowledgement:

Officiant: In this time and place, we gather on the unceded ancestral territories of the Coast Salish people and the Cowichan Tribes.
In this time and place we gather in the name of the living God.
In this time and place we gather with the community of faith around the globe and across the ages
In this time and place we are not alone, but one in Christ
In this time and place Hallowed, expectant, one people in God

All: In this time and place, heaven and earth are one. In the name of the Holy and Blessed one, Creator, Redeemer and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Lighting the Advent Wreath

Officiant: This is the Eve of Christmas, the day we have waited for and prepared for is finally here! Together, as we have been waiting in anticipation we have gathered around a wreath to light candles. The wreath reminds us of the circle of our human community and the lights illuminate the many ways we have prepared ourselves for this Holy Night – Christmas Eve.

The first candle we lit was the candle of Hope – this light has been a reminder that Hope is on the way, a hope that leads us towards good things. Even during days that are hard, God's hope is here.

The second candle we lit, was the candle of peace – this light reminds us that there is a peace from God that goes beyond all understanding. Even though our world is not always a peaceful place, God's peace is always here.

The third candle we lit, was the candle of Joy – this pink candle reminds us to take a moment from our busy preparations for Christmas to share a moment of joy and remember that joy is coming to the world. Even when it's hard to feel it, God's joy is here with us.

The fourth candle we lit, was the candle of Love – this light reminds us of the incredible love that God has for each and every one of us, because we are ALL God’s children. Even on days when we don’t feel like it, God’s love is here.

And now we gather this Christmas Eve and pause to light the center candle. This candle is white and represents the birth of Jesus, the One who God sent to bring hope, peace, joy, and love to all people. This candle reminds us of the innocent little baby born, God Incarnate, to be a wonderful Gift to become the Light of the world always. Even during dark days, Jesus is here and with us.

Officiant: Together let us pray:

All: Emmanuel, you come as a little one, a tiny baby, yet we know that you are God, and you are with us. May the flame of this candle remind us that you are the Light of the World, and that if we follow you, we will never walk in darkness, but will have the true light of life. Amen.

We now raise our hearts and voices in song as Barry leads us in the Hymn: Shepherds in the Fields Abiding

Greeting:

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

All: And also with you.

Collect of Purity

Officiant: Almighty God,

All: 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.

Collect of the Day:

Officiant: Let us pray: Eternal God,

All: This holy night is radiant with the brilliance of your one true light. As we have known the revelation of that light on earth, bring us to see the splendour of your heavenly glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Officiant: I invite you to settle your hearts and minds and be attentive as we hear the words of Scripture for today.

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 9:2-7

Psalm 96

1 Sing to the Lord a new song; * **sing to the Lord, all the whole earth.**

2 Sing to the Lord and bless his name; * **proclaim the good news of his salvation from day to day.**

3 Declare his glory among the nations * **and his wonders among all peoples.**

4 For great is the Lord and greatly to be praised; * **he is more to be feared than all gods.**

5 As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols; * **but it is the Lord who made the heavens.**

6 Oh, the majesty and magnificence of his presence! * **Oh, the power and the splendour of his sanctuary!**

7 Ascribe to the Lord, you families of the peoples; * **ascribe to the Lord honour and power.**

8 Ascribe to the Lord the honour due his name; * **bring offerings and come into his courts.**

9 Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness; * **let the whole earth tremble before him.**

10 Tell it out among the nations: "The Lord is king! * **he has made the world so firm that it cannot be moved; he will judge the peoples with equity.**"

11 Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea thunder and all that is in it; * **let the field be joyful and all that is therein.**

12 Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy before the Lord when he comes, * **when he comes to judge the earth.**

13 He will judge the world with righteousness * **and the peoples with his truth.**

We worship you, God of glory, in the beauty of holiness, and we joyfully proclaim your just and righteous rule, established for all, through your Son Jesus Christ the Lord.

Amen.

Gospel: Luke 2:1-14 (read by Norah Fisher, Deacon)

Homily (Kirsten Evenden, Seminary Student)

Music for reflection (Just a Tiny Baby written and sung by Barry de Silva)

Affirmation of Faith

Leader: 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

Leader: On this Holy Night in which God joins heaven and earth, let us offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all those in need. When I bid the prayer, *Lord of great love*, please offer the response of, **Hear our Prayer.**

Confession and Absolution

Deacon: Dear friends in Christ, let us confess our sins, confident in God's forgiveness.

Silence is kept

Deacon: 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.

Officiant: 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. **Amen.**

The Peace

Officiant: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

All: And also with you.

*We now raise our hearts and voices in song as Barry leads us in Hymn: **What Child is This***

The Lords Prayer:

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

All: 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 forever. Amen.

Officiant: Give thanks for all God's goodness

All: God's love shall last forever.

Officiant: Generous and faithful God,

All: May the nourishment we have received during our time together, enable us to enrich the lives of others wherever we may go. Whether the future be dark or bright, the road be smooth or rough, whether our cares are light or heavy, our song be strong or weak, keep our hearts warm and our hands open, our lives ever embracing and ever embraced by your love. Amen.

Blessing

Officiant: May Christ, who by his Incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, fill you with his joy and peace; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Dismissal

Officiant: Alleluia – Let us go forth into the world rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.

All: Thanks be to God. Alleluia.