

Unto you,
is born this day
in the city of David,
a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. *Luke 2:11*

Friday, December 25, 2020

Christmas Day

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the Holy Trinity, + one God,
Who was in the beginning,
Who makes a dwelling among us,
Who covers us with justice and mercy.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.
God of goodness and loving kindness,
We confess that we have sinned against you and our neighbours.
We have turned away from your invitation to new life.
We have turned away from the lowly and downtrodden.
In your abundant mercy, forgive us our sins,
Those we know and those known only to you,
For the sake of the one who came to live among us,
Jesus Christ, our Saviour. Amen.

Hear the good news of peace and salvation!
God forgives us all our sins, not through our own work,
But through Jesus Christ, made known to all people.
As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority,
I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins,
In the name of the Father, and + of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

GATHERING SONG

GREETING

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

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

All-powerful and unseen God, the coming of your light into our world has brightened weary hearts with peace. Call us out of darkness, and empower us to proclaim the birth of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 62:6-12

The reading may be announced:

A reading from Isaiah.

The prophet invites the people to give God no rest until God reestablishes Jerusalem. In turn, they will receive names full of promise: The Holy People, The Redeemed of the LORD, A City Not Forsaken.

⁶Upon your walls, O Jerusalem,
I have posted sentinels;
all day and all night
they shall never be silent.
You who remind the LORD,
take no rest,
⁷and give him no rest
until he establishes Jerusalem
and makes it renowned throughout the earth.
⁸The LORD has sworn by his right hand
and by his mighty arm:
I will not again give your grain
to be food for your enemies,
and foreigners shall not drink the wine
for which you have labored;
⁹but those who garner it shall eat it
and praise the LORD,
and those who gather it shall drink it
in my holy courts.

¹⁰Go through, go through the gates,
prepare the way for the people;
build up, build up the highway,
clear it of stones,

lift up an ensign over the peoples.

¹¹The LORD has proclaimed

to the end of the earth:

Say to daughter Zion,

“See, your salvation comes;

his reward is with him,

and his recompense before him.”

¹²They shall be called, “The Holy People,

The Redeemed of the LORD“;

and you shall be called, “Sought Out,

A City Not Forsaken.”

The reading may be concluded:

The word of the Lord.

The assembly responds:

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 97

¹The LORD reigns; let the | earth rejoice;

let the multitude of the | isles be glad.

²**Clouds and darkness sur- | round the LORD,**

righteousness and justice are the foundations | of God’s throne.

³Fire goes be- | fore the LORD,

burning up enemies on | every side.

⁴**Lightnings light | up the world;**

the earth | sees and trembles.

⁵The mountains | melt like wax

before the Lord of | all the earth.

⁶**The heavens declare your righteous- | ness, O LORD,**

and all the peoples | see your glory.

⁷Confounded be all who worship carved images and delight | in false gods!

Bow down before the LORD, | all you gods.

⁸**Zion hears and is glad, and the cities of Ju- | dah rejoice,**

because of your judg- | ments, O LORD.

⁹For you are the LORD, most high over | all the earth;

you are exalted far a- | bove all gods.

¹⁰**You who love the | LORD, hate evil!**

God guards the lives of the saints and rescues them from the hand | of the wicked.

¹¹Light dawns | for the righteous,

and joy for the hon- | est of heart.

¹²**Rejoice in the | LORD, you righteous,**

and give thanks to God’s | holy name.

SECOND READING: Titus 3:4-7

The reading may be announced:

A reading from Titus.

God saves us not because of what we do. Rather, God is a God of mercy and salvation who graciously cleanses us in baptism and renews our lives through the Holy Spirit.

⁴When the goodness and loving kindness of God our Saviour appeared, ⁵he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. ⁶This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, ⁷so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

The reading may be concluded:

The word of the Lord.

The assembly responds:

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

GOSPEL: Luke 2:[1-7] 8-20

The gospel is announced.

The holy gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

The world's deep night is shattered by the light of God's new day. The glory of God is revealed to poor shepherds, who share the good news with others.

[¹In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.]

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news

of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

¹⁴“Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.”

¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

The gospel concludes:
The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

HYMN OF THE DAY: “A Slumber Song of the Madonna”

Samuel Barber

SERMON

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Joining our voices with the song of the angels, let us pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

God of glory, you bring your word to birth among us. As you spoke through prophets and ancestors, empower your church to proclaim your name with boldness and tenderness, that your salvation is revealed to all the ends of the earth. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You founded the earth and the heavens are the work of your hands. Protect the beauty of mountains and valleys. Save glaciers, tundra, and arctic lands from the threat of changing climates. Sustain all things by your powerful word. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You send messengers to announce peace. Build trust among nations. Strengthen relationships that reach beyond borders. Grant safety to ambassadors, relief workers, military personnel, and health

care providers who travel across the world. Reveal your redemption through their work. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You bring hope to all people. Bring wholeness to all who long for your comfort and companionship. Revive aching spirits and restore tired bodies. Bring healing and wholeness to all who long for mercy (*especially Muriel, Klaus, Jack, Peter, John, Anne, Mervyn, Ken, Mary, Beryl, Katana, Neil, Maria, Ralph, Rose Marie, Nya, Karen, Ron, Brian, and Kolby*). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You are the fullness of grace and truth. Bless ministries of generosity in this congregation and community. Open our doors in welcome, extend our tables to guests, and send us out with provisions for those who lack food, water, shelter, clothing, or companionship. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Your throne, O God, is forever and ever. Claim us as your children in this life and in the next. Encourage us by the witness of the saints across the ages who have testified to your light and life. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of mercy, come quickly to us with grace upon grace as we lift these and all our prayers to you, in the name of Jesus.

Amen.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

Good and loving God, we rejoice in the birth of Jesus, who came among the poor to bring the riches of your grace. As you have blessed us with your gifts, let them be blessing for others. With the trees of the field, with all earth and heaven, we shout for joy at the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ our

Lord.

Amen.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:
Blessed are you for the birth of creation.
Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.
Blessed are you for your promise to your people.
Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.
Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.
Blessed are you for your Son Jesus,
the Word made flesh.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

With this bread and cup
we remember your Word dwelling among us,
full of grace and truth.
We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection.
We look with hope for his coming.

Come, Lord Jesus.

Holy God, we long for your Spirit.
Come among us.
Bless this meal.

May your Word take flesh in us.
Awaken your people.
Fill us with your light.
Bring the gift of peace on earth.

Come, Holy Spirit.

All praise and glory are yours,
Holy One of Israel,
Word of God incarnate,
Power of the Most High,
one God, now and forever.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**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,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

COMMUNION

The body of Christ, given for you.

Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

Radiant God, with our eyes we have seen your salvation, and in this meal we have feasted on your grace. May your Word take flesh in us, that we may be your holy people, revealing your glory made known to us in Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord.

Amen.

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favour and + give you peace.

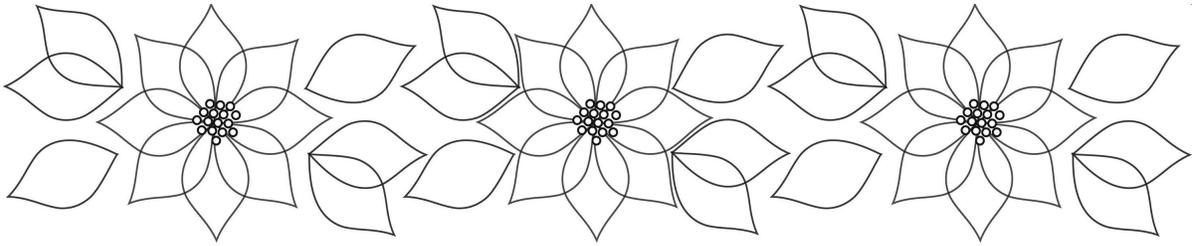
Amen.

SENDING SONG

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Christ is with you.

Thanks be to God.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

**** IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT ****

As you probably have heard, Ontario has been placed in lock down as of 12:01 A.M. December 26, 2020.

As a result, the Bishop recommends the suspension of ALL “In-Person” Worship until further notice.

Please stay tuned to our website

www.zionstratford.com

as

Pastor Jeff will continue to record his Sermons and Jane will continue to advise you of any updates and/or further announcements.

2020 OFFERINGS

To help us meet all of our commitments, by the end of the year, please remember Zion Church in your giving. Your gifts of love are needed to further the work of Christ's church. In order for your financial gifts to be credited to your 2020 Official Donation Receipt, it is important to receive your gifts by **December 31**, at the latest!

Thank You!!

2021 OFFERING ENVELOPES

Offering envelopes have been prepared. We are attempting to deliver to local addresses. If you live outside the city limits, and wish to pick them up, please call Jane and arrange a time.

PLEASE DO NOT USE YOUR 2021 ENVELOPES UNTIL JANUARY, 2021

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REMINDER !!

**THE OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED FOR THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY ON FRIDAY,
DECEMBER 25TH & MONDAY, DECEMBER 28TH**

**AS OF TUESDAY, DECEMBER 29TH IF YOU NEED
PASTOR JEFF, SISTER JEAN OR JANE
PLEASE CALL THE OFFICE 519-271-8527**

PLEASE NOTE

Annual Reports are due **Monday, January 4, 2021**. Committee Chairpersons are asked to write an article for the committee's events over the past year 2020. Also due, **Monday, January 11, 2021** are articles for the February Newsletter.

Thank you!



*A
Season
to
Rejoice*
