

**A Service of Morning Prayer
for December 19, 2021
Fourth Sunday in Advent**



I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to his word. *Luke 1:38*

LIGHTING OF THE FOURTH ADVENT CANDLE

Voice 1: Let your light shine. Let your spirit soar. Throw open your mind. Hand over your heart. Here it comes – love.

Voice 2: It shines in the darkness. It sings in the shadows. It will not cower and cannot be contained.

Voice 1: It was the hope of the saints, the call of the prophets. It was the fire in the belly of the Baptist and the courage of Mother Mary.

Voice 2: Lamp in the window, beacon on the hill, star in the night sky. Love, you lead us home.

Light four candles.

Voice 1: On this fourth Sunday of Advent, we light a candle for love.

All: We light a candle for love. May it light the way.

CP 267 The God Whom Earth and Sea and Sky

1. The God, whom earth and sea and sky
adore and laud and magnify,
whose might they own, whose praise they
swell,
in Mary's womb vouchsafed to dwell.

4. blest in the message Gabriel brought,
blest by the work the Spirit wrought;
from whom the great Desire of earth,
took human flesh and human birth.

2. The Lord, whom sun and moon obey,
whom all things serve from day to day,
was borne upon a maiden's breast
who fullest heavenly grace possessed.

5. O Lord, the virgin-born, to thee
eternal praise and glory be,
whom in the Godhead we adore
forever and for evermore.

3. How blest that mother, in whose shrine
the world's Creator, Lord divine,
whose hand contains the earth and sky,
vouchsafed, as in his ark, to lie;

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
 And the love of God,
 And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
 Be with you all.

And also with you.

May his grace and peace be with you.

May he fill our hearts with joy.

Almighty God,

**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.**

"The Lord is our refuge and strength: O come, let us worship."

Psalm 80:1-7

80:1 Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock! You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth

80:2 before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh. Stir up your might, and come to save us!

80:3 Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved.

80:4 O LORD God of hosts, how long will you be angry with your people's prayers?

80:5 You have fed them with the bread of tears, and given them tears to drink in full measure.

80:6 You make us the scorn of our neighbors; our enemies laugh among themselves.

80:7 Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved.

A Reading from Micah 5:2-5a

5:2 But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days.

5:3 Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel.

5:4 And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth;

5:5 and he shall be the one of peace.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

CP 120 O Little Town of Bethlehem

1. O little town of Bethlehem
 How still we see thee lie
 Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
 The silent stars go by
 Yet in thy dark streets shineth
 The everlasting Light
 The hopes and fears of all the years
 Are met in thee tonight.

2. For Christ is born of Mary
 And gathered all above
 While mortals sleep
 The angels keep their watch of wondering
 love
 O morning stars together
 Proclaim the holy birth
 And praises sing to God the King
 And peace to men on earth.

3. How silently how silently
 The wondrous gift is given
 So God imparts to human hearts
 The blessings of His heaven
 No ear may hear His coming
 But in this world of sin
 Where meek souls will receive Him still
 The dear Christ enters in.

4. O holy Child of Bethlehem
 Descend to us we pray
 Cast out our sin and enter in
 Be born in us today
 We hear the Christmas angels
 The great glad tidings tell
 O come to us abide with us
 Our Lord Emmanuel.

A Reading from Hebrews 10:5-10

10:5 Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me;

10:6 in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure.

10:7 Then I said, 'See, God, I have come to do your will, O God' (in the scroll of the book it is written of me)."

10:8 When he said above, "You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings" (these are offered according to the law),

10:9 then he added, "See, I have come to do your will." He abolishes the first in order to establish the second.

10:10 And it is by God's will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

CP 269 Heavenly Message

1. Heavenly message, brought by an angel,
 Coming to lift the hopes of the earth;
 Bringing to Mary humble and lowly,
 God's invitation to give the Christ birth

2. Mary replied to Gabriel's message,
 "I am the servant, maid of the Lord.
 Let it be done just as you have spoken.
 My soul rejoices in God's saving word"

Chorus...

Chorus

***Mary we hail you, full of God's favour,
 Blessed are you, and blessed your son;
 He will be called the child of the highest
 Saviour of all, the holy one.***

3. In the beginning, when God had spoken,
 Through God's own Word all things came to be;
 Now by that Word, embodied through Mary,
 God's glory blazes, that our eyes may see

Chorus...

The Gospel

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke

Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Luke 1:39-55

1:39 In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country,

1:40 where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth.

1:41 When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit

1:42 and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb.

1:43 And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me?

1:44 For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy.

1:45 And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

1:46 And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord,

1:47 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

1:48 for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

1:49 for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.

1:50 His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.

1:51 He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

1:52 He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly;

1:53 he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty.

1:54 He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy,

1:55 according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

The Gospel of Christ

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Sermon by the Rev. Alison Westervelt

CCLI 7023299 Light Of The World

1. The world waits for a miracle
 The heart longs for a little bit of hope
 O come O come Emmanuel
 A child prays for peace on earth
 And she's calling out from a sea of hurt
 O come O come Emmanuel
 And can you hear the angels singing

Chorus 1

***Glory to the Light of the world
 Glory the Light of the world is here.***

2. The drought breaks with the tears of a
 mother
 A baby's cry is the sound of love come down
 Come down Emmanuel oh
 He is the song for the suffering
 He is Messiah the Prince of peace has come
 He has come Emmanuel oh

Chorus 2

Glory to the light of the world (4 times)

Bridge

For all who wait for all who hunger
 For all who've prayed for all who wonder
 Behold your King behold Messiah
 Emmanuel Emmanuel

Chorus 3

Glory to the light of the world (3 times)
***Behold your King behold Messiah
 Emmanuel Emmanuel***

Ending

The world waits for a miracle
 The heart longs for a little bit of hope
 O come O come Emmanuel

Affirmation of Faith (The Apostles' Creed)

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
 creator of heaven and earth.
 I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
 He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
 and born of the Virgin Mary.
 He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
 was crucified, died, and was buried.
 He descended to the dead.
 On the third day he rose again.
 He ascended into heaven.
 and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
 He will come again
 to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
 the holy catholic Church,
 the communion of saints,
 the forgiveness of sins,
 the resurrection of the body,
 and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Prayers of the People compiled and led by Lesley Lambert

O Lord who has brought us safely to this day, accept the prayers we offer You. We pray that Your name be blessed now and forever as we come to You in prayer with confidence not in ourselves but in Your everlasting love for us.

We pray for the work of Your church throughout the world:

The Church of the Province of Central Africa - Diocese of Toronto: the Rt. Rev. Andrew Asbil, Bishop, the Rt. Rev. Riscylla Shaw, the Rt. Rev. Kevin Robertson, Suffragan Bishops. - Good Shepherd, Edmonton: Jordan Haynie Ware, Rector; Tom Dean, Honorary Assistant; Michelle Yee, Administrative Assistant. - Buyé Hospital Chaplaincy: Daniel Bizimana, Chaplain. - Alexander First Nation.

We ask your blessing on this parish family of St. Peter's and our ministry, Heather and Alison, and our musician Nadine who brings us the blessing of her musical gifts every week. We pray for the volunteers who are preparing the church before and after our in-person services, who check for messages, who greet and welcome all who enter our parish home. Without them, our church could not be open. We are so grateful for their presence and also for the presence of those who continue to provide the blessing of on-line worship every week.

We pray for a world that is facing further disruption from the pandemic as a new strain emerges. For so many, it has seemed interminable. We ask your grace to help us navigate physical and emotional challenges knowing that You walk beside us every day and love us so much. Be with those who are facing economic hardship, job loss, separation from loved ones or anxiety for the future and sustain with Your love the many agencies who work amongst the hungry, the homeless, the addicted and the marginalized. Help us all to remember that You come to us through those who most need our help.

Let us pray today for all those for whom our prayers have been requested and for those who care for them in the home or the hospital: Sandra... Merle..... Mona.....Lois Ward..... Ray and Mary..... Irene Kathryn.....Helen..... Jenifer..... Judy..... Tony and Mary Jean..... Luisa..... Lois Davis..... Stacey..... Evelyn.....Miranda.....Iain.....Diane and Bill.....Maxime.....Barry Westervelt.....Geraldine.... Florence..... Joan..... Kathleen..... baby Emelia and Jerry.

We pray for the peaceful repose of the souls of David Page and Willis Scott. May they rest in peace and rise in glory and may You show Your infinite comfort to those who mourn them.

As we wait and prepare for the birth of the little baby in Bethlehem, may our hearts be ready to welcome Him. Help us to find quiet spaces in our day where we can be with You. Dwell around us and within us and grant us the comfort of Your peace. May the path that we follow now lead us from that lowly manger to eternal life with You. Amen.

Compassionate God, we thank you for answering our prayers and allowing us to once again, open the doors of St. Peter's to worship in person. The gift of being able to gather together is truly a blessing to us all and the ability to sing the songs of praise to glorify you is a gift we have missed. We praise and thank you that as we now gather in person and online we continue to be bound together in love and fellowship by your divine grace and compassion.

Collect

Heavenly Father,
 who chose the Virgin Mary, full of grace,
 to be the mother of our Lord and Saviour,
 now fill us with your grace,
 that we in all things may embrace your will
 and with her rejoice in your salvation;
 through Jesus Christ our Lord,
 who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
 one God, now and for ever.

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

**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.**

CP 155 From East to West, From Shore to Shore

1. From east to west, from shore to shore

Let every heart awake and sing
 The holy child whom Mary bore,
 The Christ, the everlasting king.

2. Behold, the world's creator wears

The form and fashion of a slave;
 Our very flesh our maker shares,
 His fallen creature now to save.

3. For this how wondrously He wrought!

A maiden, in her lowly place,
 Became, in ways beyond all thought,
 The chosen vessel of His grace.

4. Ascending to the angel's word,
 She chose what God the Spirit willed,
 And suddenly the promised Lord
 That pure and hallowed temple filled.

5. He shrank not from the oxen's stall,
 He lay within the manger bed,
 And he whose bounty feeds us all
 At Mary's breast himself was fed.

6. And while the angels in the sky
 Sang praise above the silent field,
 To shepherds poor the Lord most high,
 The one great shepherd, was revealed

7. All Glory for this blessed morn
 To God the source of all, is due;
 All praise to you, O Virgin-born;
 All praise, O Holy Ghost, to you.

The Dismissal

I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to his word. *Luke 1:38*

Let us bless the Lord
Thanks be to God.

May the God of peace enable us to do His will in every kind of goodness working in us what pleases Him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory for ever and ever, Amen.

As we await our coming Saviour, go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God.