

Christ Church Gabriola

A Collaborative Anglican – United Church
Open to All

Advent

The Hopes and Fears of all the Years...

When we're running out of hope,
God is at work



Advent II
7 December 2025

Presider: The Rev. Deborah van der Goes
Musician: Lisa Griffith

We acknowledge these lands upon which we worship are the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Snuneymuxw First Nation.

*Whoever you are and wherever you are on life's journey,
you are welcome here!*

Words For Worship

Words in bold italics, please say together

Prelude: What Child is This?

Bell Ringers Choir

Welcome & Gathering

People of faith, whether here or at home,
Wherever we are. God is at work!

God is healing and creating,
redeeming and dreaming,
calling and sending,
listening and loving.

Yes, indeed, God is at work!
So may we worship our God who never gives up.
May we worship our God who holds onto hope. Amen.

Candle Lighting - Peace

In a world full of fear, where do you see glimmers of peace?

***We see glimmers of peace in the quiet
of early morning, when people shake
hands, when loved ones say they're sorry,
and when the church sings together.***

You are right. Even in a fearful world, peace is all around us.
Today we light the candle of peace as a reminder of this good news. May
this flicker of light help us remember that even in a fearful world, peace is
present. We only have to look for it. (*Light candle*)

Hymn: Hope Is A Star (vs. 2)

VU #7

Peace is a ribbon that circles the earth,
Giving a promise of safety and worth,
When God is a child there's joy in our son.
The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong,
And none shall be afraid.

Call to Confession

Near the end of his ministry, John the Baptist reached out to Jesus with a heart full of anxiety. John was in jail. He knew he might not get out, so he asked Jesus, "Did I make a mistake? Am I making a difference here? Or did I get it all wrong?" Like John, let us be fully honest with Jesus about our innermost thoughts. We can pour our heart out to God because God always meets us with grace, tenderness, and mercy. So friends, let us go to God in prayer. Let us be honest, just like John the Baptist. Let us pray.

Prayer of Confession

*On-the-move God,
we have every reason to hold onto hope.
We have every reason to believe that
spring will come,
that flowers will bloom, that the sun will rise.
And yet, too often hope slips through our fingers.
With anxious hearts we cry out to you,
“Will change ever come?
Will things ever get better?
Will I ever make a difference?”
Soothe our wandering hearts and show us the places where the
sun is shining.
Show us the places where you are on the move.
With open hearts we pray, Amen.*

Words of Forgiveness

People of faith, in our honesty, we are heard.
In our worries, we are held.
In our failings, we are forgiven.
In our fear, we are not alone.
Friends, this is the good news of the gospel!
When we're running out of hope, God is still at work.
Thanks be to God!
Amen.

Hymn: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (vs 1,2,6,7)

CP #89/VU#1

¹O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.

[Refrain]

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel!

²O come, O Wisdom from on high,
who orders all things mightily;
to us the path of knowledge show,
and teach us in her ways to go. [R]

⁶O come, O Dayspring from on high,
and cheer us by your drawing nigh;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
and death's dark shadow put to flight. [R]

⁷O come, Desire of nations, bind
in one the hearts of humankind;
O bid our sad divisions cease,
and be for us our Prince of Peace. [R]

Scripture Reading

Reader: Betty Schultze

By the gift of your Spirit, calm and quiet our souls that we may hear your
Word today and be lifted up to walk with you.

Isaiah 43:19-21

(NIV)

See, I am doing a new thing!
Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?
I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.
The wild animals honor me, the jackals and the owls,
because I provide water in the wilderness
and streams in the wasteland,
to give drink to my people, my chosen,
the people I formed for myself
that they may proclaim my praise.

The Message of God

Thanks be to God

Chanters: Ava Maria

(The "O" Antiphon)

Gospel Reading

Reader: Deborah van der Goes

As is your custom, please stand or sit for the reading of the gospel.

God be with you.

And also with you

The Good News of Jesus the Christ according to Matthew

Glory to you, Christ Jesus.

Matthew 11:1-11

(NIV)

Jesus and John the Baptist

After Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples, he went on from there to teach and preach in the towns of Galilee. When John, who was in prison, heard about the deeds of the Messiah, he sent his disciples to ask him, "Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?" Jesus replied, "Go back and report to John what you hear and see: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me." As John's disciples were leaving, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see?

A reed swayed by the wind? If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear fine clothes are in kings' palaces. Then what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written: "I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you." Truly I tell you, among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet whoever is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

The Gospel of Christ
Thanks be to God

Sermon: When we are running out of hope God is at work

Silence

Affirmation of Faith

***We have seen the valley.
We have seen a sky without stars.
We have seen the longest night, and still we believe.
We believe in a with-us God.
We believe in the hope of tomorrow.
We believe that good news is louder than fear.
We believe this good news is for all people.
So even when our knees shake,
even when our voice trembles,
even when fear is all around us,
we will hold onto that good news.
We will reach for each other.
We will look for God in our midst.
We will sing songs of joy.
We will proclaim: Unto us, love is born.
We have seen the longest night,
and we have seen unimaginable love.
So still, we believe. Amen.***

Prayers of the People

We pray to our God,
Hear Our Prayers.

And now as Jesus has taught us, let us pray.

***Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,
Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God, in whom is heaven:***

Tim Leadem

***The hallowing of your name echo through the universe!
The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world!
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom
sustain our hope and come on earth.
With the bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trials too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love,
now and for ever. Amen.***

(New Zealand Anglican Prayer Book)

Life & Work of the Church

The Peace

(please stand as you are able)

The peace of Christ be with you!
And also with you!

(You are invited to turn to those directly around you and share Christ's peace. Those on Zoom, please unmute and share with one another)

Blessing

(Society of Archbishop Justus – Anglican Church)

In a fearful world,
may you look for God's spirit.
May you reach for each other's hands.
May you choose courage whenever you can.
And in all things, may you remember
that good news is louder than fear.
In the name of the one who calls,
the one who sends,
and the one who journeys with—
go in peace and be not afraid. Amen.

Hymn: When the King Shall Come Again

CP #109

¹When the King shall come again,
all his power revealing;
splendour shall announce his reign,
life and joy and healing:
earth no longer in decay,
hope no more frustrated;
this is God's redemption day
longingly awaited.

²In the desert, trees take root,
fresh from God's creation;
plants and flowers and sweetest fruit
join the celebration;
rivers spring up from the earth,
barren lands adorning.
Valleys, this is your new birth;
mountains, greet the morning!

³Strengthen feeble hands and knees;
fainting hearts, be cheerful!
God who comes for such as these,
seeks and saves the fearful.
Deaf ears hear the silent tongues
sing away their weeping;
blind eyes see the lifeless ones
walking, running, leaping!

⁴There God's highway shall be seen
where no roaring lion,
nothing evil or unclean
walks the road to Zion:
ransomed people, homeward bound
all your praises voicing,
see your Lord with glory crowned,
share in his rejoicing!

Dismissal

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord
Thanks be to God.

Postlude

(Mendelssohn)

What are "Glimmers"

The Stars the Magi followed
The Angels seen by the Shepherds
The Shekinah/Holy Presence of the Old Testament
When Jesus saw John the Baptist
and knew he was to be baptized
AND any time when you are LISTENING to Scripture,
Singing a hymn or humming a tune
watching someone being kind, generous, gentle,
merciful or loving to someone else.
Hearing or seeing some Good News in the world.