

KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, BAYFIELD

December 5, 2021

May the grace of Jesus Christ be with you ... **and also with you.** Welcome to worship at Knox Presbyterian Bayfield on this second Sunday of Advent, December 5.

Announcements

The people of Knox Bayfield acknowledge that our community worships, lives, plays, and works on the traditional lands of the Anishinabewaki, Attiwonderonk (Neutral), and Mississauga peoples within Treaty 29, of 1827.

HYMN Hope is a star #119

CALL TO WORSHIP [responsive]

Second Sunday in Advent: PEACE

L: Peace is the light that sheds understanding.

P: Peace is the promise of God.

L: Peace is found when God's order and justice are brought to the world.

P: We await the birth of the Prince of Peace.

The candle is lit.

L: Let us pray:

P: Source of light, shine in our lives and in your world with your everlasting peace. Through Jesus Christ our Lord we pray. Amen.

PRAYER OF ADORATION AND ASSURANCE OF PARDON¹

God of peace and promise, you are the giver of life, living in us through the power of your Holy Spirit. You are the voice that sets us on a new path. You are the living water that purifies us, baptising us for service in the world that so badly needs your love. Refresh our desire to serve you each day.

Merciful God, we confess that we continue to sin against you and one another, in what we do and in what we fail to do. We take comfort in familiar habits and traditions and seek your forgiveness when we mistake such comfort for the peace you offer. We pray all this in the name of Jesus the Christ. Amen

¹ PCC Worship Planner Advent December 2021 Year C

Zechariah, father of John the Baptist, proclaimed this hope: "By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, giving light to those in darkness, guiding our feet in the way of peace." Receive God's tender mercy today. Trust that God's peace will prevail for all those who seek to live in the ways of Jesus Christ.

May the peace of Jesus Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

To Hear The Word Of God

Prayer For Illumination

God of wisdom, soften our hearts and direct our minds as we discern your holy scripture. May we be like fertile soil in which to plant your living Word. Amen.

Thank you Lois K, Judith R for responding to the call for scripture readers!

HEBREW BIBLE **Malachi 3:1-4** **[B#889/W#995]²**

EPISTLE **Philippians 1:3-11** **[B#196/W#209]**

GOSPEL **Luke 1:68-79** **[B#56/W#59]**

GOSPEL **Luke 3:1-6** **[B#60/W#61]**

May God bless our understanding of this, God's holy word. **The word of the Lord.**

Hymn Breathe on me, breath of God #389

May the words of my mouth and the meditation of our hearts be acceptable in your sight, O God.

Shalom, שלום,

Peace is more than a theme for the Second Sunday of Advent. We yearn for the peace that surpasses understanding. It is the peace that heals and makes whole. On this Second Sunday of Advent, Paul writes of his prayer that the love of God will be with the Philippians. Malachi shouts his prophecy that God is a refining fire, then John the Baptist brings the good news of the gospel and the challenge to focus our lives on the ways of God. The unsettling nature of advent directs us to the peace of God coupled with the necessity to look within ourselves and our communities.

Malachi received the word of God as a word of promise with a sense of apprehension. The prophet asked the questions: who can wait for the coming of God and who will be able to stand before God? There is a sense of urgency and hesitation. In this time of waiting, we

² Page #'s for pew bibles with Blue or White edged pages

KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, BAYFIELD

December 5, 2021

are encouraged to look within ourselves, within our church, and within our world to consider whether we are living in the ways of Jesus.

Paul wrote, "I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ." (Philippians 1:3-6) Paul's letter to the people of Philippi suggests a deep and enduring relationship. He wrote of thanksgiving rooted in shared suffering, the longing for fellowship, and memories of joy when he was in prison.

Memories shape how we experience life. French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs proposed that memory is created within a collective context. Social groups develop collective memories that shape their reality. When the social memory is shaped by a voice of oppressive authority those on the margins are silenced or dismissed. When the voices of the marginalized are lost the whole of society suffers a form of tunnel vision. We are fortunate to live in an era that is learning to celebrate the joining of many voices. When the stories are shared we all benefit from a more complex understanding of a vast reality. Diverse voices join in the collective conversation to share their lived experience. This collective voice allows us to develop a deeper and broader understanding of this complex world created by the divine God.

Paul's letter describes an active love when he expresses his own joy and his hope for their joy. He writes of his gratitude for them and for their sharing in the gospel. He wrote of his hope that their love would overflow to shape their ability to discern what is truly valuable. Paul urges the Philippians' to live within a community of agape. Paul encourages the love that develops a deeper sense of shared community and creates the cycle of perpetual love and care for one another.

Luke writes of the Benedictus, Zechariah's prophetic hymn of praise describing the healing shalom of God. Shalom, שלום, is the Hebrew word for peace. Shalom is derived from a word rooted in meaning wholeness and completeness, with the absence of war, quarrel, and conflict.

Earlier in Luke's gospel we are told that Elizabeth and Zechariah had been unable to have children. Then the angel Gabriel appeared and told the aging Zechariah that he and his

KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, BAYFIELD

December 5, 2021

wife Elizabeth would have a son named John. Zechariah was terrified. The surprising announcement caused fear and doubt and the skeptical response, "How can I be sure?" His response reminds us of Sarah's laughter when told she would become pregnant at a later stage of life. Zechariah doubted a similar miraculous pregnancy. In his doubt he became mute and remained unable to speak throughout Elizabeth's pregnancy. Our passage today took place during the naming ceremony for the baby.

Tom Wright wrote, "Often it's the old people, the ones who cherish old memories and imaginations, who keep alive the rumor of hope... Zechariah comes across in this passage, especially in the prophetic poem, as someone who has pondered the agony and the hope for many years, and who now finds the two bubbling out of him as he looks in awe and delight at his baby son."

In the midst of the naming Zechariah found his voice. In response to people wondering, "What then will this child become?" he shared the song of prophecy and blessing. This baby would prepare the way for the long awaited Messiah. Zechariah's song speaks of the peace that blossoms when reconciliation is found with God. He sings of the promise that his child, John, will prepare the bridge for humanity to find their way to Christ. Zechariah sings of the hope to serve God -without fear -after he experienced the miraculous truth in Gabriel's words.

The arrival of John the Baptist altered the course of Elizabeth and Zechariah's life. In the chapters between our first and second reading in Luke we discover that John will focus on intentionally disrupting the lives of many with his prophetic message. His message continues to cause disruption as we are challenged to examine how we choose to live. This time of Advent is a time to brighten our homes with traditional Christmas decorations and a time to connect with friends and families. It is a time to accept John's challenge of metanoia, the call to repent and prepare. Metanoia means to change one's mind, to turn around, to re-orient, to prepare for the way of God. This invitation to metanoia is an open door ... to forgiveness. In John Calvin's commentary on this passage, Calvin urges the reader to find the good news of the gospel in John the Baptist's message: "For John does not say, 'Repent ye, and in this way the kingdom of heaven will afterwards be at hand;' Calvin stresses that first John speaks of the grace of God, and then he shares the prophecy of the need to repent. We yearn for the peace that heals and makes whole. The

KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, BAYFIELD

December 5, 2021

scriptures create a collective memory that is shared through the generations. Praise be to God.

Special Music is a Piano/Organ Duet of Christmas Pastorale performed by Ruth George & Jean Walker

THE OFFERING OF OUR LIFE AND LABOUR TO THE LORD

QUOTE Stewardship, like faith, must be woven into the fabric of our lives. Gregory Coulter, Philosophy professor

We make our offerings as a sign of our faithful commitment to Christ, trusting that our gifts will accomplish more than we might ever imagine.

BLESSING OF GIFTS & PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Malachi 3:1-4; Philippians 1:7-9, 8; Luke 1:79, 3:1-2; Baruch 5:1-7

Let us join in prayer:

Loving God, through the gift of prayer you teach us to hold one another in our hearts.

Holy One, receive our gifts of gratitude and the offerings of our lives. Purify them with your refining fire so that they may serve your purpose through Jesus Christ.

We lift up in prayer; the leaders and people of every nation and church...

for those who suffer in sorrow and affliction...

for refugees and travelers far from home...

for all who are in prison or facing trial...

for those who sit in darkness, or in the shadow of death.

God of love, we lift up those who travel the long journey of grief and mourning. We pray for Sandy and family, and David and Sharon. Holy God, we bring before you the names of people on our hearts this day: Rudy and Grace; Bonnie; Rob; Courtney and Kyla. We lift up all those who prefer to remain un-named as they face immense challenges of health and finances. Merciful God, accept our prayers, spoken and unspoken. May your love overflow more and more in our lives, in your church, and in all the world.

We join our voices together across space and time to speak the words that Christ taught his disciples ... **Our Father who art in heaven, hallow'ed 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. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Hymn Oh come, oh come, Emmanuel #122

To Go Forth In God's Name

Commissioning and Benediction Micah 6:8, 2Cor 13:13

God has shown you what is good. What does the Lord require of you? To do justice, love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.

May the grace of Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you this day and forevermore. Amen

Postlude Let there be peace on earth

Hope is a star #119

1. Hope is a star that shines in the night, leading us on till the morning is bright.

Refrain When God is a child there's joy in our song. The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong, and none shall be afraid.

2. Peace is a ribbon that circles the earth, giving a promise of safety and worth. **Refrain**

3. Joy is a song that welcomes the dawn, telling the world that the Saviour is born.

Refrain

4. Love is a flame that burns in our heart. Jesus has come and will never depart. **Refrain**

Breathe on me, breath of God #389

Breathe on me, breath of God; fill me with life anew, that I may love what thou dost love and do what thou wouldst do.

Breathe on me, breath of God, until my heart is pure, until with thee I will one will to do and to endure.

Breathe on me, breath of God, till I am wholly thine, until this earthly part of me glows with thy fire divine.

Breathe on me, breath of God, so shall I never die, but live with thee the perfect life of thine eternity.

Oh come, oh come, Emmanuel #122

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

Refrain Rejoice, rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

2. Oh come, oh come, thou Lord of might, who to thy tribes on Sinai's height, in ancient times didst give the law in cloud and majesty and awe. **Refrain**

3. Oh come, thou Wisdom from on high, and order all things far and nigh; to us the path of knowledge show, and cause us in her ways to go. **Refrain**

4. Oh come, thou Branch of Jesse, free thine own from Satan's tyranny; from the depths of hell thy people save, and give them victory o'er the grave. **Refrain**

5. Oh come, thou Key of David, come and open wide our heavenly home; make safe the way that leads on high and close the path to misery. **Refrain**

6. Oh come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer our spirits by thine advent here; disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadows put to flight. **Refrain**

7. Oh come, desire of nations, bind all peoples in one heart, one mind; bid envy, strife and discord cease, and be thyself our source of peace. **Refrain**

Let there be peace on earth*

Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me; let there be peace on earth, the peace that was meant to be. With God our creator we are family, let us walk with each other in perfect harmony*. Let peace begin with me, let this be the moment now; with every step I take, let this be my solemn vow: to take each moment and live each moment in peace eternally. Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

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