

Highfield Road Uniting Church  
Canterbury  
*Advent - The Season of Waiting*  
December 6, 2020



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Advent 2 - The beginning of the Good News

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Reader: Wendy Taylor  
Prayers: Rev Ross Pearce  
Music: John Kirkham  
Minister: Rev. Ross Pearce

Leading the worship and ministry of all the Congregation

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We gather in the name of Christ

Introit      *'Drop down ye heavens from above' - (Isaiah 40:8)*

**Call to Worship and Greeting**

Prophets and preachers cry out God's message to "Prepare!"

***Let us hear what God is saying***

God has shown favour in bringing the kingdom to life

***Let us rejoice in what God is doing***

God's will is for this world to be ruled by love and mercy

***Let us share what God is offering***

In the wilderness of this broken world, the message is clear

***Prepare the way of the Lord!***

**Hymn of Praise      "Praise with joy the world's creator"**

**179**

1. Praise with joy the world's Creator,  
God of justice, love and peace,  
source and end of human knowledge,  
force of greatness without cease.  
Celebrate the Maker's glory,  
power to rescue and release.

2. Praise the Son who feeds the hungry,  
frees the captive, finds the lost,  
heals the sick, upsets religion,  
fearless both of fate and cost.  
Celebrate Christ's constant presence –  
Friend and Stranger, Guest and Host.

3. Praise the Spirit sent among us,  
liberating truth from pride,  
forging bonds where race or gender,  
age or nation dare divide.  
Celebrate the Spirit's treasure –  
foolishness none dare deride.

4. Praise the Maker, Son and Spirit,  
one God in community,  
calling Christians to embody  
oneness and diversity.  
Thus the world shall yet believe, when  
shown Christ's vibrant unity.

## Advent Candles

.. May we prepare for the coming of our Lord by softening our hearts and opening ourselves to the peace that passes all human understanding.

## Congregation

*In the wilderness of the Jordan you called for people to prepare for the coming of your Son. In the wilderness of this modern world may we echo that call; prepare our own hearts and offer your peace to all whom we meet. We pray this in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ who has come and is to come. Amen.*

## Welcome and Notices - Ian Taylor

## Prayer of Praise and Adoration

We praise you, God of mystery,  
for entering the wilderness of our lives;  
*calling us to prepare for Christ's ministry.*

We praise you for filling the valleys of our hearts  
and bringing low the mountains of our conceit;  
*making straight the paths so we can follow.*

We praise you for smoothing out the rough edges of our souls  
and guiding our feet in the ways of peace.

*allowing us to prepare once more for the advent of your Son.*

For it is your will to always bring newness and life, ...

## Kid's Hope Commissioning

With joy we commission Barbara Pallot as a new Kid's Hope Mentor, congratulate Erik Birzulis in his new role as Coordinator and thank Wendy Taylor for all her work and advocacy for Kid's Hope

Let us look at the word HOPE together...

**H-** reminds us to HONOUR the requirements of serving as a KIDS HOPE AUS volunteer.

**O-** in hope reminds us that this ministry is OWNED by two neighbourhood churches ...

... companions in the work of the church, will you dedicate yourselves to be people of prayer and seek to embrace and support the KIDS HOPE AUS ministry as God enables you?

**Congregation**                      **We will**

**P-** in hope reminds us to pray.

**E-** in hope reminds us to EXPECT great things from God.

Please take the time to look at the *"Prayer for Children"* sheet and reflect on all those we minister to and with.

## We hear the Word of God

Here we are, waiting for the revelation of God's word.

*May your words, O Lord, call out our faith.*

**First Reading**                      **Isaiah 40:1 - 11 -**                      Wendy Taylor

**Psalm** **85:1 - 2, 8 - 13**

**Response:** *'Show O Lord your mercy and grant us your salvation'.*

## Gospel Acclamation

*'Alleluia. (repeat)*

*Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,  
and all flesh shall see the salvation of God'*

**Gospel**                      **Mark 1:1 - 8 -** Ian Taylor

Here we are, called to God's service,

*Let it be with us according to your word.*

**Anthem**                      *'He shall feed his flock like a shepherd' - (Matt 11: 28-29)*

We respond to the Word

**Hymn for Theme**      ***“The voice of God goes out to all the world”***

**282**

1. The voice of God goes out  
to all the world;  
his glory speaks across the universe.  
The great King’s herald cries  
from star to star:  
‘With power, with justice,  
he will walk his way.’

2. The Lord has said,  
‘Receive my messenger,  
my promise to the world,  
my pledge made flesh,  
a lamp to every nation,  
light from light’:  
with power, with justice,  
he will walk his way.

3. The broken reed  
he will not trample down,  
nor set his heel  
upon the dying flame.  
He binds the wounds,  
and health is in his hand:  
with power, with justice,  
he will walk his way.

4. Anointed with the Spirit  
and with power,  
he comes to crown with comfort  
all the weak,  
to show the face of justice  
to the poor:  
with power, with justice,  
he will walk his way.

5. His touch will bless the eyes  
that darkness held,  
the lame shall run,  
the halting tongue shall sing,  
and prisoners laugh  
in light and liberty:  
with power, with justice,  
he will walk his way.

**Christmas Bowl**

Act for Peace supports medical work in the Jamtoli refugee camp in Bangladesh, housing Rohingya refugees. On top of all the struggles of health in refugees, they are now desperately trying to resist an outbreak of COVID 19. Your gift can help.

**Offering**

We gather at the table

**Hymn for Communion**      ***“Let us talents and tongues employ”***

**537**

1. Let us talents and tongues employ,  
reaching out with a shout of joy;  
bread is broken, the wine is poured,  
Christ is spoken and seen and heard.

2. Christ is able to make us one,  
at the table he sets the tone,  
teaching people to live to bless,  
love in word and in deed express.

**Refrain:**

**Refrain:**

Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again,  
pass the Word around: loaves abound!  
Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again,  
pass the Word around: loaves abound!

3. Jesus calls us in, sends us out  
bearing fruit in a world of doubt,  
gives us love to tell, bread to share:  
God-Immanuel everywhere.

**Refrain:**

**Prayer of Confession**

Gracious God, if we are anxious about crying out to you.  
in case others see that as lacking faith:

***Come to us in reassurance, we pray.***

If we lose sight of the troubled lives of others  
because no-one is placing their needs before us:

***Come to us in revelation, to see the world, we pray.***

If we find it hard to believe that love and peace will come,  
and hear the stories of your coming with doubt:

***Come to us in encouragement and hope, we pray.***

If we leave it to governments and leaders  
to find solutions to injustice in the world:  
*Come to us and show us new ways of responding, we pray.  
Lift our hearts with your inspiration and strength,  
and forgive us if our faithfulness runs low. Amen*

#### Declaration

... we are met by God's love in Jesus the Christ. We are forgiven!  
*Thanks be to God*

#### Invitation

And so, although we cannot share, we can respond to the open welcome and the call to gather, and recall the great gifts of God in Jesus and the Spirit, and we can honour God with our prayers of thanksgiving.

#### Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord is with you  
**and also with you**  
So lift up your hearts  
**We lift them up to the Lord**  
We join to give thanks to the Lord our God  
**It is right to give our thanks and praise**

We praise you, Eternal, Loving God ...

...joining with choirs of angels and the whole creation in the eternal hymn:

*Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest  
Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord,  
Hosanna in the highest.*

Powerful and gracious God, ...

#### Prayers of the People - Rev Ross Pearce

... and bring with us all who are on our hearts and make this sacrament one of trusting in the presence of God in all the trials of our lives.

Response: Lord, the world thirsts,  
*Fill us to overflowing with your love*

*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 sin 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.*

#### We are sent to the World

#### Hymn of Sending "Lord, your almighty word"

447

1. Lord, your almighty word  
chaos and darkness heard,  
and took their flight:  
hear us, we humbly pray,  
and where the gospel day  
sheds not its glorious ray,  
let there be light.

2. Saviour, who came to give  
those who in darkness live  
healing and sight,  
health to the sick in mind,  
sight to the inly blind,  
now to all humankind  
let there be light.

3. Spirit of truth and love,  
life-giving holy dove,  
speed forth your flight;  
move on the waters' face,  
bearing the lamp of grace,  
and in earth's darkest place  
let there be light.

4. Holy and blessed Three,  
glorious Trinity,  
Wisdom, Love, Might,  
boundless as ocean's tide  
rolling in fullest pride,  
through the earth far and wide,  
let there be light.

### **Commissioning**

The good news of God's reconciliation has begun

***And yet we wait for it to come to fulness***

Creation, Law, and Prophets all mark a point of beginning

***And yet we see Jesus Christ, God's Son as THE Good News***

Let us continue the story by working for reconciliation and peace

***And work for the Gospel as we wait for the good news to come to life.***

### **Blessing and Dismissal**

As heralds of God, let us proclaim the way of the Lord

Knowing the gracious blessing of God,

the loving presence of the Spirit

and the guidance of Jesus the Christ.

Go in peace to love serve the Lord

***In the name of Christ. Amen***

**Benediction**                      ***"May light come into your eyes"***

**780**

May light come into your eyes,

may hope spring up in your heart,

may peace guide all of your mind,

and keep you in God;

and keep you in God.

(Repeat)

# A PRAYER FOR CHILDREN

## **We pray for children**

who sneak popsicles before supper,  
who erase holes in math workbooks,  
who can never find their shoes.

## **And we pray for those**

who stare at photographers from behind barbed wire,  
who can't bound down the street in a new pair of trainers,  
who have never "counted potatoes,"  
who are born in places we wouldn't be caught dead,  
who never go to the circus  
who live in an X-rated world.

## **We pray for children**

who bring us sticky kisses and fistfuls of dandelions,  
who hug us in a hurry and forget their lunch money

## **And we pray for those**

who never get dessert,  
who have no safe blanket to drag behind them,  
who watch their parents die,  
who can't find any bread to steal,  
who don't have any rooms to clean up,  
whose pictures aren't on anybody's dresser,  
whose monsters are real.

## **We pray for children**

who spend all their allowance before Tuesday,  
who throw tantrums in the grocery store  
and pick at their food,  
who like ghost stories,  
who shove dirty clothes under the bed,  
and never rinse out the tub,  
who get visits from the tooth fairy,  
who don't like to be kissed in front of the carpool,  
who squirm in church and scream in the phone,  
whose tears we sometimes laugh at  
and whose smile makes us cry.

## **And we pray for those**

whose nightmares come in the daytime,  
who will eat anything  
who have never seen a dentist  
who aren't spoiled by anybody,  
who go to bed hungry and cry themselves to sleep,  
who live and move, but have no being.

## **We pray for children**

who want to be carried  
and for those who must,  
for those we never give up on  
and for those who don't get a second chance.  
for those we smother... and for those who will grab  
the hand of anybody kind enough to offer it.