



Richmond Hill United Church
An Affirming Ministry



November 22, 2020: Second Sunday of Advent

The following resource is offered to help you worship at home, either on your own or online. Worship is livestreamed on Zoom. Log-in details are sent weekly by email to those on RHUC's contact list. For a recording of the service, click the following link: www.facebook.com/RichmondHillUnitedChurch/. This will take you to our Facebook page. We may be apart physically but we are still a community of faith spiritually, and digitally.

Centred in Christ

Welcome and Land Acknowledgement: *We give thanks for the land and the Indigenous peoples who steward it. We affirm our call to inclusion, extending greetings in Mohawk, Arabic and Ukrainian.*

Opening Hymn: "Herald! Sound the Note of Gladness" (*Voices United* #28)

**1. Herald! Sound the note of gladness! Tell the news that Christ is here;
make a pathway through the desert for the one who brings God near.
Sound the trumpet! Tell the message! Christ the Saving One has come!**

**2. Herald sound the note of judgement, warning us of right and wrong,
turning us from sin and sadness, till once more we sing the song.
Sound the trumpet! Tell the message! Christ the Saving One has come!**

**3. Herald! Sound the note of pardon! Those repenting are forgiven;
God receives these wayward children, and to all new life is given.
Sound the trumpet! Tell the message! Christ the Saving One has come!**

**4. Herald! Sound the note of triumph! Christ has come to share our life,
bringing God's own love and power, granting victory in our strife.
Sound the trumpet! Tell the message! Christ the Saving One has come!**

Lighting the Advent Candle

One: Hear this word from the prophet Isaiah: "See I am laying a cornerstone in Zion, a sure foundation for all. It will be set through justice, aligned according to the way of righteousness."
(*adapted from Isaiah 28:16-17*)

(*Light first and second candles*)

Two: Let us pray:

O Desire of nations, rejected cornerstone that holds us together as one:
Come to us in this Advent time, and show us the way of unity in love. **Amen.**

Centring Refrain: "Come Now, O God of Peace" (*Voices United* #34)

**Come now, O God of peace, we are your people; pour out your spirit, that we be one body.
O-so-so o-so-so, pyong-hwa-ui-im-gum, u-ri-ga han-mom i-ru-ge ha-so-so.**

Centring Words: "O Rex Gentium" by Malcolm Guite in *Sounding the Seasons*

O King of our desire whom we despise,
King of the nations never on the throne,
Unfound foundation, cast-off cornerstone,
Rejected joiner, making many one,

You have no form or beauty for our eyes,
A King who comes to give away his crown,
A King within our rags of flesh and bone.
We pierce the flesh that pierces our disguise,
For we ourselves are found in you alone.
Come to us now and find in us your throne,
O King within the child within the clay,
O hidden King who shapes us in the play
Of all creation. Shape us for the day
Your coming Kingdom comes into its own.

Hymn: "O Ancient Love"

- 1. O ancient love, processing through the ages; O hidden love, revealed in human form;
O promised love, the dream of seers and sages:
O living Love, within our hearts be born, O living Love, within our hearts be borne.**
- 2. O homeless love, that dwells among the stranger; O lowly love, that knows the mighty's
scorn; O hungry love, that lay within a manger:
O living Love, within our hearts be born, O living Love, within our hearts be borne.**
- 3. O gentle love, caressing those in sorrow; O tender love, that comforts those forlorn;
O hopeful love, that promises tomorrow:
O living Love, within our hearts be born, O living Love, within our hearts be borne.**
- 4. O suffering love, that bears our human weakness; O boundless love, that rises with the
morn; O mighty love, concealed in infant meekness:
O living Love, within our hearts be born, O living Love, within our hearts be borne.**

Reflecting Together as a Community

Reading: Isaiah 64:1-9 (*read by Craig Lee*)

If only you would tear open the heavens and come down!
Mountains would quake before you
like fire igniting brushwood or making water boil.
If you would make your name known to your enemies,
the nations would tremble in your presence.
When you accomplished wonders beyond all our expectations;
when you came down, mountains quaked before you.
From ancient times,
no one has heard,
no ear has perceived,
no eye has seen any god but you
who acts on behalf of those who wait for him!
You look after those who gladly do right;
they will praise you for your ways.
But you were angry when we sinned;
you hid yourself when we did wrong.
All of us wither like a leaf;
our sins, like the wind, carry us away.

No one calls on your name;
no one bothers to hold on to you,
for you have hidden yourself from us,
and have handed us over to our sin.
But now, Lord, you are our father.
We are the clay, and you are our potter.
All of us are the work of your hand.
Don't rage so fiercely, Lord;
don't hold our sins against us forever,
but gaze now on your people,

Anthem: "The Dawn Is Surely Coming" (Joseph M. Martin; sung by the Chancel Choir)

*The dawn is surely coming; awake and greet the day.
The time has come for worship. Rejoice! Prepare the way!
The promise of tomorrow adorns the sky with gold.
And faith is beaming brightly and filling hearts with hope.
The dawn is surely coming; behold the eastern sky.
Alleluia! Redemption draweth nigh.
Glory is shining; it drives away the night.
God's Word will be our candle, His love our guiding light.
Sing for joy! Sing for joy! All creation, every nation, sing and rejoice! Make joyful noise!
Sing for joy! Sing for joy! Morning is breaking, the world is awaking with joy! Sing for joy!
The dawn is surely coming; break forth with joyful sound.
Begin the celebration; spread music all around.
The Morning Star is climbing; lift every eye above.
Behold God's new arising of peace, and joy and love.
Arising! Peace and joy and love. Sing for joy! Sing for joy! Sing for joy! Sing for joy!*

Reading: Mark 13:24-37 (read by Craig Lee)

Jesus said to his disciples, "In those days, after the suffering of that time, the sun will become dark, and the moon won't give its light. The stars will fall from the sky, and the planets and other heavenly bodies will be shaken. Then they will see the Human One coming in the clouds with great power and splendor. Then he will send the angels and gather together his chosen people from the four corners of the earth, from the end of the earth to the end of heaven.

"Learn this parable from the fig tree. After its branch becomes tender and it sprouts new leaves, you know that summer is near. In the same way, when you see these things happening, you know that he's near, at the door. I assure you this generation won't pass away until all these things happen. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will certainly not pass away.

"But nobody knows when that day or hour will come, not the angels in heaven and not the Son. Only the Father knows. Watch out! Stay alert! You don't know when the time is coming. It is as if someone took a trip, left the household behind, and put the servants in charge, giving each one a job to do, and told the doorkeeper to stay alert. Therefore, stay alert! You don't know when the head of the household will come, whether in the evening or at midnight, or when the rooster crows in the early morning or at daybreak. Don't let him show up when you weren't expecting and find you sleeping. What I say to you, I say to all: Stay alert!"

Message: "Keeping our eyes open" (Rev. James Ravenscroft)

Minute for Meditation: "Meditation on a traditional Irish carol" (Charles Callahan)

Prayers of the People (*composed and read by Doug Loweth*)

The Prayer of Jesus:

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 forever and ever. Amen.

Generous Spirit Testimony (*Natalie Savoie*)

Offering Prayer

God of our deepest yearnings, we pause in this season of hope,
grateful for this moment even as we look to the coming of your reign of justice and peace.
We are grateful for all that opens us to your promise,
including this community where so many freely share their gifts.
For all of the blessings that open us to your promised reign we are truly grateful. **Amen.**

Called beyond Ourselves to Minister to the World

Hymn: "Isaiah 9:2-8" (*Voices United* p. 879)

- 1. The race that long in darkness pined have seen a glorious light;
the people dwell in day, who dwelt in death's surrounding night.**
- 2. To hail you, Sun of Righteousness, the gathering nations come;
rejoicing as when reapers bear their harvest treasures home.**
- 3. To us a Child of hope is born, to us a Son is given,
him shall then people all obey, him all the hosts of heaven.**
- 4. His name shall be the Prince of Peace, for evermore adored,
the Wonderful, the Counsellor, the great and mighty Lord.**
- 5. His power increasing still shall spread, his reign no end shall know;
justice shall guard his throne above and peace abound below.**

Blessing and Sending Forth

Go! Go and prepare the way for the coming of Peace!

Go forth blessed by Christ, ready to bring to the world the good news of God's love.

Thanks be to God. Amen.