



Richmond Hill United Church
An Affirming Ministry



December 5, 2021

The following resource is offered to help you worship at home, either on your own or online. The worship will be 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.

Prelude: "Nun Komm Der Heiden Heiland" (J.S. Bach)
(Come Now Saviour)

Words of welcome: Happy New Year and welcome to worship, my name is Rev. Ruth Noble and it is my pleasure to be in worship with you today. We continue the journey through the season of Advent, the season of walking towards the season of Christmas.

Announcements:

Just a couple of housekeeping reminders:

If you are in the Sanctuary you can stand and sing as long as you are distanced and masked, offering is to be placed in the locked box at the back of the Sanctuary near the Nursery, please remain seated for the postlude and then exit on the Nursery side of the Sanctuary.

For those at home, please mute and sing loudly during the hymns, go to the website in order to donate through the Canada Helps portal.

Let us take a moment to prepare our hearts and minds for worship.

Lighting of the Advent Candles: United Church Women
(Candle from the previous week is lit)

One: Arise, take courage, and catch a glimpse of peace!

Two: The warm glow of the Divine lightens our hearts.

All: We are together, not alone.

One: In spirit and in community we gather on this second Sunday in Advent in solidarity and with courage to partner for a world full of peace where all of creation will flourish. Our witness is to and for peace. *(second candle is lit)*

Two: Peace is real and possible. In solidarity we pray, work, and wait for its blossoming. We pray together:

All: God-of-peace-and-possibility, kindle in the hearts of all compassion and love so that goodness, just deeds, the common good, and trust may flourish. Bless and gift all with hope for a future of peace built on justice for all. In the name of the Child, the peaceful one. Amen

**Peace shines as a solitary star.
Faith is the inner light.
You and I together mirror the Light of Lights
and illumine the pathway home.**

Acknowledgement of the Land: Let us now take a moment to acknowledge the land that we are on today, Richmond Hill United is on the land of the Anishaabeg and most recently the Mississaugas of the Credit River, this land is part of Treaty 13 also known as the Toronto Purchase, if you know the territory and treaty where you are I invite you to silently reflect on whose territory you are on, as we strive to walk the way of reconciliation.

Call to Worship: Please join me in the call to worship that is projected on your screen, from Stephanie Dorsey

Righteous one! Equitable one!

Refining one! Delightful one!

Blessed one! Redeeming one!

One-of-flesh to save all flesh!

Emmanuel, One of Us – praise be your coming!

Opening Prayer: Let us pray:

Holy One,

**Give us the courage to be ourselves, as we prepare for Christ's arrival,
so that, like the Magi, we can take a different path,
seek help from unlikely places, and
like all of the people who have followed the star,
own and love our part in Christ's story.
Help us to be ourselves, as we prepare.
Amen.**

Hymn: On Jordan's Bank (Voices United #20)

**1 On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry
announces that the Lamb is nigh;
awake and hearken, for he brings
glad tidings of the King of Kings.**

**2 Then cleansed be every breast from sin;
make straight the way for God within;
and let each heart prepare a home
where such a mighty guest may come.**

**3 In you, we find abundant life,
our refuge in the midst of strife;
without your grace we waste away
like flowers that wither and decay.**

**4 Stretch forth your hand, our health restore,
and help us rise to fall no more.
O let your face upon us shine,
and fill the world with love divine.**

**5 All praise to you, eternal Son,
whose advent has our freedom won;
and praise to God whom we adore,
with Holy Spirit evermore.**

Reflecting Together as a Community

Prayer: Loving God, you speak to us in so many ways, Speak to us now. Help is to hear your voice and follow in the way. Amen

Scripture:

Andrea Risk

Luke 3:1-6:

King James Version

3 Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene,

Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness.

And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins;

As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth;

And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

Anthem: “Advent Messages” (Martin How)

Scripture Song: Song of Zechariah

Rev. Ruth Noble

Message: “Dear John”

Rev. Ruth Noble

Hymn: Love Divine Voices United #333

**1 Love divine, all loves excelling,
joy of heaven, to earth come down,
fix in us thy humble dwelling,
all thy faithful mercies crown.
Jesus, thou art all compassion,
pure, unbounded love thou art;
visit us with thy salvation,
enter every trembling heart.**

**2 Come, almighty to deliver,
let us all thy life receive;
suddenly return, and never,
nevermore thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing,
serve thee as thy hosts above,
pray, and praise thee, without ceasing,
glory in thy perfect love.**

**3 Finish then thy new creation;
pure and spotless let us be;
let us see thy great salvation
perfectly restored in thee,
changed from glory into glory,
till in heaven we take our place,
till we cast our crowns before thee,
lost in wonder, love, and praise.**

Sharing in a Spirit of Gratitude

Prayers of the People

Lynne Saul

The Prayer of Jesus translated from Aramaic by Neil Douglas-Klotz

**O Birther! Father-Mother of the Cosmos
Focus your light within us—make it useful.
Create your reign of unity now—
through our fiery hearts and willing hands.
Help us love beyond our ideals
and sprout acts of compassion for all creatures.
Animate the earth within us:
we then feel the Wisdom underneath supporting all.
Untangle the knots within
so that we can mend our hearts' simple ties to each other.
Don't let surface things delude us,
but free us from what holds us back from our true purpose.
Out of you, the astonishing fire,
returning light and sound to the cosmos.
Amen.**

Our Mission: Tracy Wixon will share information about our special Advent givings

Offering

Hymn: There's a Voice in the Wilderness (Voices United #18)

**1 There's a voice in the wilderness crying,
a call from the ways untrod:
prepare in the desert a highway,
a highway for our God!
The valleys shall be exalted,
the lofty hills brought low;
make straight all the crooked places,
where the God, our God, may go!**

**2 O Zion, that bringest good tidings,
get thee up to the heights and sing!
Proclaim to a desolate people
the coming of their King.
Like the flowers of the field they perish,
like grass our works decay,
the power and pomp of nations
shall pass like a dream away.**

**3 But the word of our God endureth,
the arm of the Lord is strong;
God stands in the midst of nations,
and soon will right the wrong.
God shall feed the flock like a shepherd,
the lambs so gently hold;
to pastures of peace will lead them,
and bring them safe to fold.**

**4 There's a voice in the wilderness crying,
a call from the ways untrod:
prepare in the desert a highway,
a highway for our God!
The valleys shall be exalted,
the lofty hills brought low;
make straight all the crooked places,
where the God, our, God may go!**

Called beyond Ourselves to Minister to the World

Blessing and Sending Forth

Postlude: "Praeludium in G Minor" (Nickolaus Bruhns)