

**Central Queens Pastoral Charge
United Church of Canada**

December 11, 2022

10:30 a.m.

Third Sunday in Advent

Joy

Central Queens Mission Statement

Central Queens United Church is a loving and living community called to support the life stages of all people; celebrating the joy and sharing in pain. Through faith and communion, we are united by God's love to live and serve as Disciples of Christ.

Gathering for Worship

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

Birthdays & Special Occasions

Lighting the Candle of Joy

Reader: One candle to remind us of the prophets.

(1st Candle is lit).

Reader: Second candle for John the Baptist.

(2st Candle is lit).

Reader: Third candle for Mary, who gladly responded to the call of God.

(3rd Candle is lit).

Reader: 'I am the Lord's servant,' said Mary; 'may it happen to me as you have said.' (Luke1:38)

Hymn "A Candle is Burning" VU #6 vv. 1, 2, 3

Prayer **Startling God, we thank you for the joyful obedience of Mary. We ask you to fill us with your grace, so that we, too, may accept your call, and rejoice in your salvation. Amen.**

Bible Presentation

***Introit** "Angels We Have Heard on High" VU #38 v.3

***Call to Worship**

Our souls magnify the Lord.

Our spirits rejoice in God our Saviour!

**We come today with eager hope,
awaiting God's new revelation.**

The mighty One has done great things!

God's mercy covers generations.

We come today desiring peace, filled with anticipation.

The One who lifted up the lowly
and filled the hungry, dwells with us.

**We come today with fervent joy, we worship with great
expectation.**

(Inspired by Luke 1:46b-55, The Magnificat)

***Hymn** "Hark the Glad Sound" VU #29

Prayer of Approach

**God of Mary, Ruth, Bathsheba and Rahab—
God of us all, your children here and your children afar—
we enter this moment of worship with eager anticipation.
We know that even before a child would come to lead the way,
you were leading our way. From the valleys of the shadows of
death to the tables in the presence of enemies, you have never
left us nor forsaken us. Your rod and your staff have guided us.
Guide us now, O God. Make your presence known as we worship
you in spirit and in truth.**

With Jesus, we share in the ancient prayer...

Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, which 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,
for ever and ever.
Amen.**

Responsive Reading Luke 1:47–55

VU #898

Sacrament of Baptism

The Statement

Minister

Hear the command of the risen Christ:

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you and remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

(Mt. 28:18-20)

In baptism we celebrate God’s love, a love revealed in his life, death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, a love which has surrounded us from our beginning. In baptism, we proclaim that God has acted to save us. God washes us in cleansing waters and brings us into the church, the living body of Christ. When we baptize children, we dedicate them to God, knowing that even though we may fail, God will not; that God will continue, through the Holy Spirit, the work began this day, a work in which life triumphs over death.

Presentation [Representative of the Church]

On behalf of the Central Queens Faith Community, I present the following child to you, **Harry Charles**, son of Debra and Nathan Foster, that he might be initiated into the body of Christ through the Sacrament of Baptism.

Questions and Promises

Minister: Do you desire to have Harry baptized into this Christian community?

Parents' Response: I do.

Minister: Will you encourage Harry to learn from the wisdom of the prophets; doing justice, loving mercy, and walking humbly with his God?

Parents' Response: I do.

Minister: Will you foster for Harry an appreciation for the life and teachings of Jesus in concert with an appreciation for diverse religious traditions?

Parents' Response: I will, God being my helper.

Minister: Throughout Harry's life, will you teach Harry to honour his faith questions that belong to him?

Parents' Response: I will, God being my helper.

Minister: Will you journey with Harry to discover the wonder of God's love made manifest here this day?

Parents' Response: I will, God being my helper.

[Congregation, please rise.]

Minister: Jesus calls us to welcome children into the full life of our community, opening our table and hearts to those most vulnerable, offering the wisdom of the ages to all who hunger for truth.

Do you, who witness and celebrate this sacrament, promise your love, support, and care to Harry he lives and grows in this Christian community?

Congregational Response

We promise our love support and care.

Profession of Faith

**We are not alone,
we live in God's world.
We believe in God:
who has created and is creating,
who has come in Jesus,
the Word made flesh,
to reconcile and make new,
who works in us and others
by the Spirit.
We trust in God.
We are called to be the Church:
to live with respect in creation,
to love and serve others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,
our judge and our hope.**

**In life, in death, in life beyond death,
God is with us.
We are not alone.
Thanks be to God. Amen.**

***Hymn** “A Little Child the Saviour Came”

VU #445

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Pouring of Water

God be with you.
And also with you.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to God.
Let us give our thanks to God.
It is good to give God thanks and praise.

(Water is poured into the font)

Gracious and Holy God, we bless you for the gift of life, and, within it, the gift of water. Over its unshaped promise, your Spirit hovered at creation; by water comes the growth of the earth. Through water you led the children of Israel to freedom. In the waters of the Jordan your Child, Jesus, was baptized.

Now may your Spirit be upon us and what we do, that this water may be a sign for all of new life in Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

The Baptism

Baptism

Harry Charles, I baptize you in the name of the Father (creator), the Son,(redeemer) and the Holy Spirit (sustainer). **Amen.**

Harry Charles, with the sign of the cross, you are claimed as Christ's forever. **Amen.**

Harry Charles, the power of the Holy Spirit work within you, that being born of water and the Spirit, you may be a faithful witness to God who created you. **Amen.**

Blessing

May the blessing of the One God, Mother and Father of us all, be with you today and always. Amen.

Giving of a Candle

Receive this candle. It symbolizes that in baptism we have passed from darkness to light. Shine as a light in this world, to the glory of God.

Presentation of Certificate, Bible & Prayer Shawl [Representative of the Church]

Welcome

Into the household of faith,
we welcome you with joy and thanksgiving.

We are members of the Body of Christ.

We are inheritors of God's promise.

In the name of Christ, we welcome you.

**May God who creates you give you light.
May God who sustains you make you wise.
May God who protects you give you joy.
May God who surrounds you give you peace.**

Children may retire to Sunday School

Invitation to Transformation

We gather together in this season of Advent
anticipating hope, praying for peace, attempting to cultivate joy
and share love amidst commotion, grief, despair and uncertainty.

Prayer for Transformation and New Life

**God, we confess that we have often placed our hope in
people and things that can't fulfill our every need.
We have searched for peace in shallow places.
We have mistaken joy for momentary pleasure.
We have put limits on the ways we love,
excluding those who need our loving kindness the most.
God, when we have lost our way, show us yours.
Guide us to the hope in you that will renew our strength.
Lead us to your peace that transcends all understanding.
Fill us with a joy we can only experience in your presence.
Remind us that you have always loved us with everlasting love,
so that we may share that love with others. Amen.**

Assurance of God's Transformative Love

In this season of desolation and uncertainty, it is good to know that God's love for us is sure—that God's commitment to us is definite—that God is walking with us, guiding us, as the compassionate companion that we are called to be for each other. Let us live into this gift.

Presentation of Our Gifts

Offertory Invitation

As recipients of the generosity of God, let us share our generosity with each other and the community.

Offertory

***Presentation of Offering** "Called by Earth and Sky" MV #135

*Offertory Prayer

For the wondrous ways this offering will bless this
community and beyond
we dedicate these gifts.

For the ways it'll help us live into God's unconditional love
we dedicate these gifts.

Let these gifts strengthen our call to do justice, love mercy and
walk humbly.

Listening for the Word

Sacred Word

Isaiah 35:1–10

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly,
and rejoice with joy and singing.
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
They shall see the glory of the LORD,
the majesty of our God.

Strengthen the weak hands,
and make firm the feeble knees.
Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
'Be strong, do not fear!
Here is your God.
He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.
He will come and save you.'

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,
and streams in the desert;
the burning sand shall become a pool,
and the thirsty ground springs of water;
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp,
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

A highway shall be there,
and it shall be called the Holy Way;
the unclean shall not travel on it,
but it shall be for God's people;
no traveller, not even fools, shall go astray.
No lion shall be there,
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;
they shall not be found there,
but the redeemed shall walk there.
And the ransomed of the LORD shall return,
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Matthew 11:2–11

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?' Jesus answered them, 'Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me.'

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: 'What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What then 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,

“See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way before you.”

Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has
arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the
kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

Anthem

Sermon

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

Responding to the Word

***Hymn** “In the Bleak Midwinter” VU #55

***Blessing**

God forth with great expectation
Waiting for God’s mercy to fill us
Wait for God’s grace to surround us
Wait for God’s child to lead us
And in that waiting,
May God bless and keep you
May God’s face shine upon you
May God be gracious to you
And give you peace and Joy.
Amen

***Choral Benediction** “Hope Shines as the Solitary Star” MV #220

***Please rise as you are able.**