

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

December 4, 2022

10:30 a.m.

Second Sunday in Advent

Peace

Central Queens Mission Statement

Central Queens United Church is a loving and living community called to support the life stages of all people; celebrating joy and sharing in pain. Through faith and fellowship 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 Peace

Reader 1 One candle to remind us of the prophets.

(1st Candle is lit).

The second for John the Baptist.

(2nd Candle is lit).

John called people to change their way of living to prepare for the coming of Christ.

Reader 2 The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has never put it out. God sent his messenger, a man named John, who came to tell people about the light, so that all should hear the message and believe.
(John 1:5–7)

***Hymn** “A Candle is Burning”

VU #6 vv. 1, 2

Prayer **Disturbing God, we thank you for the witness of John the Baptist. Help us to be open to the changing power of your love, and to be true witnesses to the power of Jesus in our lives. Amen.**

Bible Presentation

***Introit** “Angels We Have Heard on High”

VU #38 v.3

***Call to Worship**

A shoot comes from Jesse’s stump,
and a branch shall spring from roots.

Rejoice! Rejoice! All God’s children.

Let all the people give God praise.

A leader comes who will lift the poor.
This leader will have righteousness
around his waist.

Rejoice! Rejoice! All God’s children.

Let all the people give God praise.

A child comes from an innocent place
with wisdom and might he’ll lead the way.

Rejoice! Rejoice! All God’s children.

Let all the people give God praise.

(Inspired by Isaiah 11:1-10 and Romans 15:4-13)

Prayer of Approach

**God of the waiting wanderers in the wilderness,
we enter this moment of worship expecting that
when we leave these moments of prayer,
we will be full of the courage needed to stand as a signal.
We come to the mountain to feel closer to your presence,
O God. May righteousness flourish and peace abound.
You, alone, are the God who does wondrous things.
May your glory fill this place 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 Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19

VU #790 Parts 1 & 3

***Hymn “Breath of God, Breath of Peace”**

MV #24 vv. 1, 2

All God’s Children

***Hymn “Breath of God, Breath of Peace”**

MV #24 v. 3

Children may retire to Sunday School

Call to Confession

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

Prayer for Transformation and New Life

**God, we admit that we do not always stand as
a signal for your righteousness.
In the hustle and bustle of our lives, we often leave
little room to share our faith—
little room to be your hands and feet in a world that needs us
now more than ever.
In the warm belly of comfort, we often relax
in the layers of our privilege.
Attending to the needs of the least of these becomes a
distant thought.
Forgive us, O God.
Give us the courage to stand tall,**

**to follow in the footsteps of the one who came to secure
justice for the poor,
bring equity to the meek,
and condemn the wicked ways that destroyed life.
And on that day, we shall stand as a signal to the people.**

Assurance of God's Unending love

Beloved, know that God's grace and mercy abound, and in God and Christ, we are liberated and set free.

Let us live into this gift.

Amen.

Presentation of Our Gifts

Offertory Invitation

We believe in a God of justice and righteousness, and God believes in us to carry forth the task of loving and caring for all. Let us now share our gifts and resources so that we may continue to walk humbly with God and with our neighbours.

Offertory

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

***Offertory Prayer**

We dedicate these gifts that have been shared for the strengthening of the beloved community. Let these gifts do justice in the world. Let them be a signal to the people that there is a God who saves, heals and sets free. Amen.

Listening for the Word

Sacred Word

Isaiah 11:1-10 *The peaceable reign of God*

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

The spirit of God shall rest on him,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Most High.
His delight shall be in the fear of the GOD.

He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
or decide by what his ears hear;
but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.
Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist,
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

The wolf shall live with the lamb,
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
the calf and the lion and the fatling together,
and a little child shall lead them.
The cow and the bear shall graze,
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.
They will not hurt or destroy
on all my holy mountain;
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of God
as the waters cover the sea.
On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples;
the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

Matthew 3:1-12 *John the Baptist preaches*

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said,

"The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
'Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.'"

Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit worthy of repentance. Do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up

children to Abraham. Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

“I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

Anthem

Sermon

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

God of the peaceable kingdom Isaiah envisioned,
where predator and prey are reconciled,
and children play in safety,
we give you thanks for every step taken towards reconciliation
among rivals and every program provided to give children a
reliable future.

Thank you for policies implemented on behalf of the climate
and every vulnerable creature, to give us all hope for an enduring
future in the world you love, for peace will not come if the earth
keeps tilting out of balance.

God of John the Baptist’s rallying cry,
you raised up John in the wilderness as a voice calling us to new
ways of being. We thank you for signs of renewal and change in

the church, and in communities grappling with historic injustice and current outcry.

Guide advocates who work for change with both courage and compassion. As we await the coming of Christ, awaken the church to new ways to undertake ministry and mission, and give us the energy and resources to reach out in ways we have yet to imagine.

God of steadfast encouragement,
St. Paul called the followers of Christ to live in harmony, and welcome those perceived as strangers to you and to them. Thank you for welcoming us when we were strangers to a new community, a new church or a life changed by unexpected circumstance.

We pray for people who dread this Christmas season because life has changed for them, or circumstances leave them feeling lonely and discouraged. Draw close to those who suffer in body, mind or spirit, and guide us to reach out to someone who needs comfort or encouragement.

God of justice and equity,
the psalms, the prophets and the gospels proclaim your care for the poor, and your expectation that your people will look to the needs of the vulnerable.

We thank you that Canada has resources to share, and pray that our leaders will attend to longstanding injustice and urgent need without excuse or delay.

Hear our prayers, O God, and strengthen us to serve you in faith and obedience.

Responding to the Word

***Hymn** “Make Me a Channel of Your Peace” VU #684

***Blessing**

Let us go forth knowing
that we are led by God,
that we are held by God,
that we are loved by God.
Let us know that God empowers us
as God holds and leads and loves us;
And knowing all that, Let us stand as a signal
that the glory of God dwells with us now and forever more.
Amen.

***Choral Benediction** “Go Now in Peace” VU #964

*Please rise as you are able.