

Church of the Ascension

Sudbury, Ontario

December 4, 2016



John 1:1-14

Rector The Ven. Anne Germond
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Welcome to our worship - it's good to have you here with us. If you are visiting or here for the first time.....

The Anglican Church teaches that all that are baptised in any Christian tradition are welcome to receive the sacrament at the time of communion. It is God's invitation to the table, if you feel so moved you are invited and welcomed.

If you do not wish to receive communion but would like a blessing, please come forward and cross your hands over your chest.

If you do not wish to drink wine from the chalice, please feel comfortable to receive the bread alone. Simply cross your arms over your chest so the Eucharistic assistant knows.

Church of the Ascension Advent Festival of Readings and Music

The Second Sunday in Advent Year A
December 4th 2016

Processional Hymn: #88 *Come Thou Long
Expected Jesus*

Today's service of Lessons and Carols is intended to be a meditative liturgy. There will be no announcements of readings, or hymn numbers. You are invited to follow along in the bulletin. Please stand during the singing of hymns and remain seated for the readings until the Gospel.

Advent Candle lighting: **The Second
Sunday in Advent**

A Bidding for Advent

My sisters and brothers in Christ, in these days of shadow and of hope let it be our duty and delight to listen to the story of our faith, and hear again the prophets' words of blessing and doom. And, as we prepare to celebrate again the birth of Jesus Christ as a baby, let us remember that he also comes to judge the just and the unjust, and to establish the reign of equity and peace.

As we hear the reading of God's holy word, let us rejoice in the promise that all, from the greatest to the least, will come to know our God *Jeremiah 31*

join with the prophet as he calls out to God to rend the heavens and come down *Isaiah 64*

find hope in the promise that the blind will see, the deaf hear, the lame dance, and the silent burst into

song *Isaiah 35*

join with Mary, the favoured handmaid, and offer ourselves in service to God's holy and saving purpose for the world. *Luke 1*

raise our voices with the messenger who announces good news of great joy to all the people. *Luke 2*

give thanks for the one whose power has made us the children of God. *John 1*

The bidding continues.

Let us remember that the Lord of Glory experienced the pain of life and death, and pray for the sick, the poor, the oppressed, the anxious, the weary, and the bereaved. And remembering the promise that he shall reign for ever and ever, let us pray for the rulers of the nations, for peace and justice on earth, for the unity and mission of the Church, that we may be a sign of the age to come.

With longing in our hearts for God's reign of peace, let us hear again the story of Christ's coming, and join with Mary and Joseph, and all our forebears in faith, in offering our worship.

Silence may be kept before the first reading.

The Readings

1 Genesis 2: 4b- 9, 15-25

(In the day the Lord made the heavens and the earth)

Reader: Rhonda Hirst (9am) and Gladys Abigail (11am)

These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created. In the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, when no plant of

the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up—for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no one to till the ground; but a stream would rise from the earth, and water the whole face of the ground— then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground,* and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being. And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. Out of the ground the Lord God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, 'You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.'

Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner.' So out of the ground the Lord God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man* there was not found a helper as his partner. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then

the man said, 'This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; this one shall be called Woman, for out of Man this one was taken. Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh.

Prayer (All)

Creating God, you call us to live in harmony with nature, with one another, and with you. Now fix our eyes upon the one in whom your purpose for the world has been revealed, Jesus Christ our Lord, Who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, For ever and ever.

Amen.

2. Isaiah 40.1–11

(Comfort, O comfort my people)

Reader: Gary Bate (9am) and Lori Cameron (11am)

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins. A voice cries out: 'In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. ⁴ Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. ⁵ Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.'

⁶ A voice says, 'Cry out!' And I said, 'What shall I cry?' All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. ⁷ The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it;

Prayer (read by everyone)

God our hope, hear again the cry of exiles, imprisoned in a dark land of war, hunger, and intolerance. Come among us with strength and healing and bring us back to the world of your just and holy purpose. We ask this through Jesus Christ the Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever.

Amen.

Hymn: When the King Shall Come Again #109 to the tune of Good King Wenceslas

3. Micah 5. 2-4

(From you shall come one who is to rule in Israel)

Reader: Jane Cox (9am) and Pippa Howard (11am)

But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labour has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth;

Prayer (read by everyone)

God of small beginnings, You bring strength out of weakness And hope out of fear. By the power of your Spirit Make us, your children, followers and partners In the grand design of justice and peace. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord, Who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, Now and forever.

Amen.

5. Isaiah 35.1–10

(The desert shall rejoice and blossom)

Reader: Paul Murdock (9am) Erma Howe (11am)

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.

Prayer (read by everyone)

Creating and renewing God, giving life in all its fullness, bring, we pray, all the children of this earth to the freedom of your holy purpose. May we see your beauty and glory in seas and lakes washed clean, in fields of plenty and forests strong, and in humanity made whole in body, mind, and mutual care, in the pattern of Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Amen.

6. Luke 1.5–25

(Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John)

Reader: Trish Hennessy 9am/ Luke Norton (11am)

In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly order of Abijah. His wife was a descendant of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. Both of them were righteous before God, living blamelessly according to all the commandments and regulations of the Lord. But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were getting on in years. Once when he was serving as priest before God and his section was on duty, he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to enter the sanctuary of the Lord and offer incense. Now at the time of the incense offering, the whole assembly of the people was praying outside. Then there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified; and fear overwhelmed him. But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard.

Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John. You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink; even before his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. With the spirit and power of Elijah he will go before him, to turn the hearts of parents to their children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." Zechariah said to the angel, "How will I know that this is so? For I am an old man, and my wife is getting on in years." The angel replied, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. But now, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time, you will become mute, unable to speak, until the day these things occur." Meanwhile the people were waiting for Zechariah, and wondered at his delay in the sanctuary. When he did come out, he could not speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the sanctuary. He kept motioning to them and remained unable to speak. When his time of service was ended, he went to his home. After those days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she remained in seclusion. She said, "This is what the Lord has done for me when he looked favorably on me and took away the disgrace I have endured among my people."

Prayer (read by everyone)

Almighty God you called John the Baptist to give witness to the coming of your Son and to prepare his way. Give your people wisdom to see your purpose, and openness to hear your will, that we too may wit-

ness to Christ's coming and so prepare his way; through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

7. Luke 1.26–38

(Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you!)

Reader: 9am Shannon Hengen 11am Maggie Leigh

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.' But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?' The angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.' Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her.

Prayer (read by everyone)

Pour your grace into our hearts, O Lord, that we who have known the incarnation of your Son Jesus Christ, announced by an angel to the Virgin Mary, may by his cross and passion be brought to the glory of his resurrection; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

Gradual Hymn: Canticle 18 (b) page 86 BAS (To the Tune of Tell Out my Soul)

9. John 1.1–14

(The Word became flesh and lived among us ... full of grace and truth)

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh

or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

Prayer (read by everyone)

Eternal Wisdom, creating, ordering, and saving, we give thanks that we have seen you in the selfless love of Jesus Christ. Now reign within our minds and hearts, and mobilize our wills, that by your power and through our hands this world may be re-made to be the garden and the city of your glory. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Jesu, der du meine Seele

Cantata 78 by JS Bach. It means: Jesus, it is through you that my soul

Clare Andrews, Philip Balson and Colin Germond (11am)

Apostles Creed

Advent Litany* Dave Fowler (9am) Brent Leigh (11am)

(In joyful expectation let us pray to our Saviour and Redeemer, saying, "Lord Jesus, come soon!")

O Wisdom, from the mouth of the Most High, you reign over all things to the ends of the earth: come and teach us how to live.

Lord Jesus, come soon!

O Lord, and head of the house of Israel, you appeared to Moses in the fire of the burning bush and you gave the law on Sinai: come with outstretched arm and ransom us.

Lord Jesus, come soon!

O Branch of Jesse, standing as a sign among the nations, all kings will keep silence before you and all peoples will summon you to their aid: come, set us free and delay no more.

Lord Jesus, come soon!

O Key of David and sceptre of the house of Israel, you open and none can shut; you shut and none can open: come and free the captives from prison.

Lord Jesus, come soon!

O Morning Star, splendour of the light eternal and bright Sun of righteousness: come and enlighten all who dwell in darkness and in the shadow of death.

Lord Jesus, come soon!

O King of the nations, you alone can fulfil their desires: Cornerstone, you make opposing nations one: come and save the creature you fashioned from clay.

Lord Jesus, come soon!

O Emmanuel, hope of the nations and their Saviour: come and save us, Lord our God.

Lord Jesus, come soon!

Collect

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness and put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to us in great humility, that on the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

Then the leader shall say,

With longing in our hearts for the reign of Christ, let us offer our prayer to the Source of our salvation.

Confession and Absolution: **Page 191**

Offertory Hymn: **# 116**

Eucharistic Prayer #2.

The Lord's Prayer:

Communion Hymns: **# 110, 56, 73**

Prayer after Communion:

Blessing

Be steadfast in faith, joyful in hope, and untiring in love all the days of your life; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Recessional Hymn: **# 101**

The flowers in the church are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of Julie Binder Nelson, dear wife of Dr. Beaumont Nelson; by Beaumont Nelson. May Julie's soul rest in peace and rise again in glory.

Attendance on Sunday 27th November
was 52 at 9am and 75 at 11am.

In our prayers ...

In the Anglican Cycle of Prayer, we pray for Karnataka North - (South India) The Rt Revd Ravikumar J. Niranjana

In the Anglican Church of Canada, we pray our Primate, Archbishop Fred Hiltz, for our Metropolitan, Archbishop Colin Johnson, for our Diocesan Bishop-Elect, Rev. Anne; for our Archdeacon Anne Germond and for our parish clergy Rev. Anne, Fr. Bob, and Rev. Rhonda..

In the Diocese of Algoma, we pray for Christ Church, Port Sydney

We pray for the Church of the Ascension during this time of transition and discernment.

We pray for the members of the ARK Refugee Steering Committee as they prepare to bring a family to Sudbury.

We pray for Elliot Thomas Andrews-Norton and his parents Clare and Luke, as they prepare for the sacrament of baptism on December 18th.

We pray for the following people for God's continued healing and strength during the coming week., especially Beryl Cole, Nancy Turner, Diane, Sherry, Linda, Alan Findlay, Richard, Lillian, George, Derald Balson, Dan Turner, Barbara Blanchard, Inge, Ivan & Glenys Cutler, Priscilla Allurut, Canon Michael & Muriel Hankinson, Carol Sims, Theresa Kuehl (Megan's grandma), Lillian McCourt, Joan McNaughton, Brandon, Heather Kennedy.

We pray for these families recently bereaved, the Laking family, the Dunlop family, the Gilchrist family, the Paquette family, the Crawford family.

We pray for those who are living in retirement residences or nursing homes, or who find it difficult to join us for church on Sundays; Milt Fleming, Ron Little, Margaret Villeneuve, Velma Tansley, Karin Hoffman, Joyce Laking, Ivan Cutler. May they always feel God's presence in their lives.

(Continued from page 16)

In our parish we pray for our wardens and leaders and in our parish family for Kathryn Greenidge, Marcelle Haaman, The Haddada, and their families.

We pray for those who are caregivers to sick and frail loved ones. We pray that the God of love will surround them with people to look after them, and grant them rest.

An Advent Prayer

Lord make me ready to hear

Ready to see

Ready to do

Ready to go

Ready to receive your love

Ready for all you're making ready for me.

Lord make me ready to hear your story

Ready to see your glory.

Ready to receive your gift of love – that's Jesus!

Ready to do what's right

Ready to go spread your light

Ready for all you're making ready for me.

Lord make me ready to hear that wonderful story.

Ready to see you're the King of Glory.

Ready to receive your love – hallelujah, that's Jesus!

Ready to do what you show me is right

And ready to spread the Gospel light

And ready for all you're making ready for me.

(Jenny Dann - Shine On Star of Bethlehem)

In the Parish this Week

TONIGHT!!! - Gifts of Story and Song at 7pm. An event not to be missed. Tickets are \$10 for Barrydowne College and The Mission.

Monday 5th December : Deanery Quiet Day at St. John the Divine in Copper Cliff. 10:30am- 2pm.
Sunday school teachers Christmas dinner.

Tuesday 6th December at 9am Wardens meeting.
11am - Westmount Communion service.

Wednesday 7th December - 9:30am Holy Eucharist followed by an Advent Quiet morning until noon.
4:30pm Messy Church.

Thursday 8th December: 5pm - 7pm - ACW Christmas dinner at MIC on Falconbridge Rd.

Friday 9th December: 9am BCP Morning Prayer.
5:30pm - OOTC Dinner at the Church of the Epiphany.

Saturday 10th December at 3pm - Pageant dress rehearsal with L'Arche.

News and Announcements

Gifts of Story and Song - TONIGHT at 7pm

This is the 5th Annual Gift of Story and Songs at the Ascension. Come and join us for an evening of great stories and music with guests Markus Schwabe, Dan Lessard, and our own Roz Jones, Luke Norton, Trish Hennessy. Musical offering by EK, Colin, Philip and Clare Andrews - Norton. The funds raised on this evening will be shared between the Elgin Street Mission and Barrydowne College

Advent Quiet Morning at the Ascension on Wednesday Dec. 7th.

"God Waits" - Advent Images and Insights. You are invited to join us on Wednesday morning for Eucharist at 9:30am followed by a Quiet Morning in the church. Rev. Anne will offer a reflection based on "Luke 1 - The Annunciation". There is no charge for this opportunity to take some time to be still in this holy season.

Christmas Letter And December Calendar

The Christmas letter and December Calendar are available in print today. Please take one home with you. The Ascension Witness will be available online this week.

ACW Invitation

The ACW would like to invite all women to join them for their annual Christmas dinner on Thursday 8th December at MIC on Falconbridge Rd. The evening starts at 5pm and will end by 7pm. Anyone who would like to attend should let Cathy Dionne know as soon as possible. Please bring a gift to give to someone else for \$5 -\$8. This is a deanery dinner so look forward to meeting friends from other parishes.

Becoming John the Baptist

Accepting the Call to Prepare the Way for Jesus

Advent can take us way beyond preparing for Christmas. It certainly does prepare us to be open to the gifts that come with this season. It is a season of hope and expectation. We encounter what happens when we taste our longing and can say, "Come, Lord, Jesus" at a deeper and more personal level. However, Advent can also draw us into the mystery of being not only "preparing" but to become one who is called to prepare the way for Jesus, in our world, for others.

Looking at John the Baptist

John the Baptist is given to Elizabeth and Zachariah, and to us, as a Hebrew testament prophet. He comes in order to be a precursor. He is the one who steps right out of the message of the Prophet Isaiah to prepare a way for our God to save us - in the midst of the wilderness, the wasteland - wherever there is hopelessness. His message is that the mountains aren't too high, the valleys aren't too severe for our God to come and save us - to be with us. He comes to make it clear that he himself is not the promised one. He is only to announce and prepare his way. He calls for repentance and offers forgiveness. He comes with power to speak the truth to those who would be threatened by the good news. And, John pays a prophet's price for his discipleship.

Becoming John the Baptist

Advent is a time for us to hear the call - ultimately which comes from Jesus - to prepare his way. We are sent before him to the non-geographical places where the good news of Jesus hasn't been heard or where it is no longer accepted. Pope Francis tells us - in the Joy

of the Gospel - that we share the good news best by our actions, more than by our words. Our inner joy, made manifest in our freedom to witness our joy, in our service for others, evangelizes, that is, it credibly announces the good news of our salvation in Jesus. We tell people about it best when we look like we believe it, and we look like we believe it because we live it.

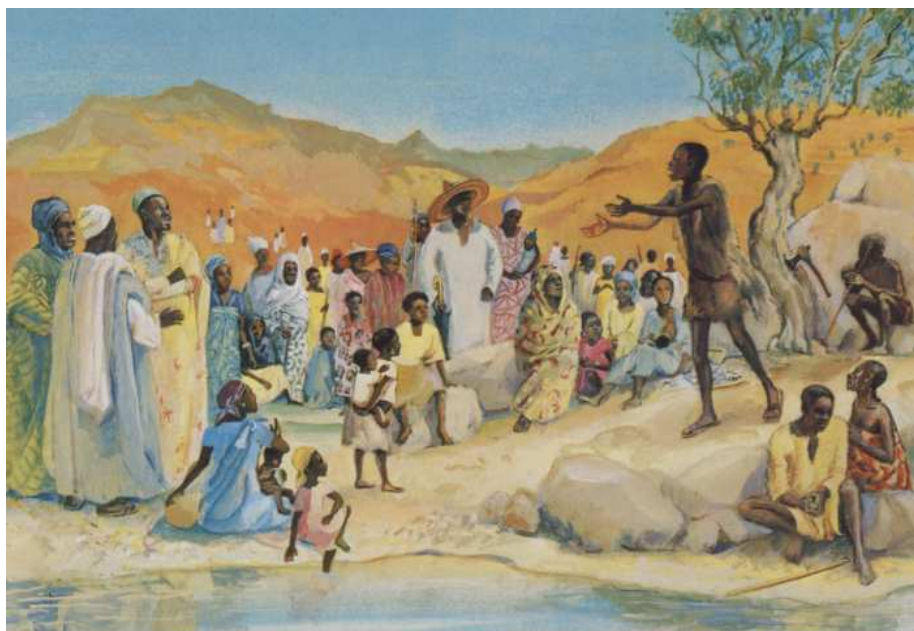
We become those who prepare the way for faith, through our core relationships and in our families, when we witness our faith in Jesus. Perfectionism, harshness, judgements, the pointing finger never brought anyone closer to Jesus. Yet, this is too often what "being religious" looks like to others. Our role in preparing the way for Jesus is to announce, to witness, to show how full of joy and how free we are by the personal relationship we have with Jesus. It is the exact opposite of being "self-righteous" or "impatient." We "proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes" when we look and act like loved sinners. When we know we are forgiven and saved by God's mercy in Jesus, we are not only free from our own self-centeredness, but we become courageous in loving as we have been loved. We become compassionate. We have the heart of Jesus for others. We are the people who keep the door open, even when it seems there is no hope that someone will return. We become more merciful. We hear the cries of those in need and we reach out and stand on the side of those in need.

When we are on fire with the reality of the Incarnation of our God - for us - we become not only more charitable, and kind and generous. We become on fire with being advocates for those in need. We desire, with Jesus, with the power of the Holy Spirit, to stand up and speak the truth about the need for justice and prepare a highway for Jesus to let God's Kingdom come on earth - as it is in heaven.

Becoming John the Baptist, we point to Jesus

Like John, we don't call attention to ourselves. We

point the way to Jesus. We say, "Look, there he is." "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world!" When we point the way to Jesus, who is mercy, we become ambassadors of his mercy. One of the most effective ways we can do this is to let ourselves not only be filled with the good news, personally, but to let ourselves fall in love with Jesus - to fall in love with his story, his example, his way of being, his trust in the Father, his parables, his healing presence.



John the Baptist preaches in the wilderness of Judea.

Matthew 3:1-12

Everything about Jesus becomes more and more attractive to us. We come to him and learn from him. Our very being "proclaims the greatness of our God."

The Cost of this Discipleship

As we live the life of Jesus in our world, we will experience immediately how counter-cultural it is. It is very difficult to be non-judgmental and compassionate in a very harsh world, in a sometimes very severe community. Living the life of Jesus, speaking truth to those who sustain injustice, will cost us. If we actively en-

gage in dismantling unjust social structures, it will cost us dearly. Sometimes, even being kind and compassionate will cost us. Speaking about mercy and acting with forgiveness, building bridges, rather than walls, will too often place us at odds with others. John the Baptist found himself in a Herod jail, unsure of his survival, for speaking out about Herod's life style. It must have shaken him because he sent some of his followers to go to Jesus and to ask if he had been a prophet in vain: "Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?" Jesus sent them back to John with this message: "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the good news proclaimed to them. And blessed is the one who takes no offense at me." (Luke 7)

John gave his life, becoming a martyr who inspires us today. He died in the consolation of Jesus' assurance that he was blessed in his trust in Jesus and his way. John had prepared the way, and pointed others to Jesus, where they found healing and good news.

Asking for the grace

During Advent, we can ask for the grace to become a John the Baptist, in whatever way the Lord wants to use us to open a door for him today. The opportunities will come. We can simply ask to be opened to see them - to recognize them - and to be given the courage and the trust to be an instrument of grace for others. We can give that special content to the prayer, "Come, Lord Jesus, Come."

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Lectioary

Dec, 11, 2016

Third Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 35:1-10

The world will rejoice in the presence of the Lord.

Psalm 146:5-10 or Luke 1:46b-55

The LORD will reign forever, your God, O Zion, for all generations

James 5:7-10

Take heart, the coming of the Lord is near.

Matthew 11:2-11

John the Baptist prepares the way of the Lord.

Dec. 18, 2016

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 7:10-16

A young woman shall bear a son and name him Immanuel.

Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

Stir up your might, and come to save us!

Romans 1:1-7

Paul writes to the Romans

Matthew 1:18-25

The circumstances of Jesus' birth

Parish Directory

Email. ascension@vianet.ca

Web Site www.churchoftheascensionsudbury.com

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Rector The Ven. Anne Germond

Hon. Assistant The Rev. Rhonda Hirst

Hon. Associate The Rev. Dr. Robert Derrenbacker

Rector's Warden Erma Howe 705-521-0377

People's Warden Jen Ames

Deputy Warden Brent Leigh