



Church of the Nativity, Hamilton

Holy Eucharist

Third Sunday of Advent

December 14th, 2025



Web Edition

Called to Life — Compelled to Love



We will strive to live up to our responsibilities as members of the Dish with One Spoon wampum, first established between the Anishinaabek and Haudenosaunee to set out how this part of Turtle Island would be shared.

May our actions be guided by our commitment to reconciliation.

All are welcome in the worship and fellowship of the Church of the Nativity.
May you find grace and hope in this service.

We try to minimize individuals' appearances on camera for the stream.

Prelude

Music is offered to provide a time for quiet prayer and preparation.

A bell is rung, and the service begins.

Opening Hymn

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Come, Thou Long-expected Jesus ¹

**Come, thou long-expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us,
let us find our rest in thee.**

**Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art;
dear desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart.**

Born thy people to deliver;
born a child and yet a King,
born to reign in us forever,
now thy gracious kingdom bring.

By thine own eternal Spirit
rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all-sufficient merit,
raise us to thy glorious throne.

Greeting

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
alive in the world, reviving creation, arriving soon.
Amen.

Advent Responsory ²

Pour down, O heavens, from above,
and let the skies rain down righteousness.
**Arise, shine; for your light comes,
and the glory of the Lord rises upon us.**

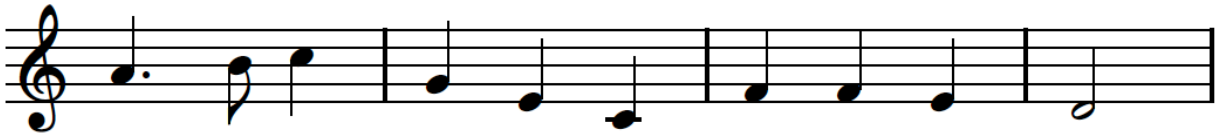
Though night still covers the earth
and darkness covers the nations,
**over us will the Lord arise,
over us will the glory of God appear.**

Pour down, O heavens, from above,
and let the skies rain down righteousness.

Lighting of Advent Candles ³



1. Hope is a star that shines in the night,
2. Peace is a rib - bon that cir - cles the earth,
3. Joy is a song that wel - come the dawn,



lead - ing us on till the morn - ing is bright.
giv - ing a prom - ise of safe - ty and worth.
tell - ing the world that the Sav - iour is born.

Refrain



When God is a child there's joy in our song.



The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong,



and none shall be a - fraid. _____

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God
and of one another.

God of mercy,
we confess that we have sinned.
We trust earthly powers and human authority alone.
We grow fearful.
We cling to false comforts.

God of might,
we confess that we have sinned.
We have turned away from our neighbours.
We have trusted false promises.

God in our midst,
we confess that we have sinned.
We plead: come to us.
Bring your mercy to birth in us.

Almighty God have mercy upon you,
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,
and keep you in eternal life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Let us pray.

God of the burning sand and thirsty ground,
you called John into the wilderness
to announce a new creation far from places of royal power.
Make us ready for your intensity,
the judgement that opens our senses to the poverty of our world
and calls to life what lingers in death;
through Jesus Christ, the one who is to come.
Amen.

Unfolding the Scriptures

1st Reading ⁶

A reading from the prophet Isaiah.

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.

Isaiah 35. 1 – 10

Listen for the leading of the Spirit.

Thanks be to God.

Canticle: *The Magnificat*

Luke 1. 46^b – 55

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord;
my spirit rejoices in God my saviour, •
for you, Lord, have looked with favour on your lowly servant
and from this day, all generations will call me blessed. •
You, O Most Mighty, have done great things for me
and holy is your name.

You have mercy on those who fear you •
from generation to generation.
You have shown the strength of your arm •
you have scattered the proud in their conceit.

You have cast down the mighty from their thrones •
and have lifted up the lowly.
You have filled the hungry with good things •
and the rich you have sent away empty.

You have come to the help of your people •
for you have remembered your promise of mercy,
the promise you made to our forbears •
to Abraham and his children forever.

A reading from the letter of James.

Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

James 5. 7 – 10

Listen for the leading of the Spirit.

Thanks be to God.

The Gospel ⁸

The acclamation is sung

Pre - pare the way of the Lord, pre - pare the way of the Lord,
and all peo - ple will see the sal - va - tion of our God. Pre-

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Matthew.

♪ **Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.** ♪

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.

Matthew 11. 2 – 11

The Gospel of Christ.

♪ Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ. ♪

Homily

We say together in faith

**Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God almighty,
who was, and is, and is to come.**

We believe in God the Father, who created all things:
for by his will they were created and have their being.

We believe in God the Son, who was slain:
**for with his blood, he purchased us for God,
from every tribe and language, from every people and nation.**

We believe in God the Holy Spirit:
**the Spirit and the Bride say, 'Come!'
Even so come, Lord Jesus! Amen.**

The Prayers of the People

✠ God of grace,
✠ hear our prayer.

The Peace

The peace of the Lord be always with you!
And also with you.

Celebration of the Holy Eucharist

Monetary contributions to the Church of the Nativity and its ministries as we live out God's mission can be mailed to the parish, dropped off in the mailbox, or made via e-transfer to donations.nativity@gmail.com

Offertory Hymn

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*People, Look East! The Time Is Near*¹⁰

**People, look east! The time is near
of the crowning of the year.**

**Make your house fair as you are able,
trim the hearth and set the table.**

**People, look east and sing today:
Love, the guest is on the way.**

**Furrows, be glad! Though earth is bare,
one more seed is planted there:
give up your strength, the seed to nourish,
that in course the flower may flourish.**

**People, look east and sing today:
Love, the rose is on the way.**

**Birds, though you long have ceased to build,
guard the nest that must be filled;
even the hour when wings are frozen
God for fledging time has chosen.**

**People, look east and sing today:
Love, the bird, is on the way.**

Stars, keep the watch: When night is dim
one more light the bowl shall brim,
shining beyond the frosty weather,
bright as sun and moon together.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the star, is on the way.

Angels, announce with shouts of mirth
Christ who brings new life to earth.
Set every peak and valley humming
with the word, the Lord is coming.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the Lord, is on the way.

Prayer over the Gifts ¹¹

Nourishing God,
you are water in the wilderness
and streams in the desert.
Through this meal,
satisfy our parched places,
that we may rejoice
and be for the world signs of your kingdom come.
Amen.

May God be with you.
And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.
We lift them up to God.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Worship and praise belong to you, God our maker.
Out of nothing, you called all worlds to be,
and still you draw the universe to its fulfilment.
Dawn and evening celebrate your glory till time shall be no more.

In Christ your Son the life of heaven and earth were joined,
sealing the promise of a new creation, given, yet still to come.

Taught by your Spirit,
we who bear your threefold Likeness look for the City of Peace
in whose light we are transfigured and the earth transformed.

As children of your redeeming purpose
who await the coming of your Son,
we offer you our praise,
with angels and archangels and the whole company of heaven
singing the hymn of your unending glory:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord,

Lord God of power and might,

heav'n and earth are full,

full of your glor - ry.

Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na,

ho - san - na in the high - est.

Bless - ed is the One who comes,

who comes in the name of the Lord.

Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na,

ho - san - na in the high - est.

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, Lord God of power and might,
heav'n and earth are full, full of your glory.
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is the One who comes, who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.**

Glory and thanksgiving be to you, most loving God.
Our hope is built on Jesus,
the first, the last, the living one.
Obedient, even to accepting death,
Jesus opened the gate of glory
and calls us now to share the life of heaven.

Before Jesus was given up to suffering and death,
alight with the vision of a feast that heralded a kingdom yet to come,
at supper with his disciples he took bread and offered you thanks.
He broke the bread, and gave it to them, saying:
"Take, eat. This is my Body: it is broken for you."

After supper, he took the cup, he offered you thanks,
and gave it to them saying:
"Drink this, all of you.
This is my Blood of the new covenant;
it is poured out for you, and for all, that sins may be forgiven.
Do this in remembrance of me."

We now obey your Son's command.
**We remember his death,
we proclaim his resurrection,
we await his coming in glory;**

Made one with him,

we offer you these gifts and with them ourselves,
a single, holy, living sacrifice.

Hear us, most gracious God,

and send your Holy Spirit upon us and upon this bread and this wine,
that, overshadowed by his life-giving power,
they may be the Body and Blood of your Son,
and we may be kindled with the fire of your love
and renewed for the service of your reign.

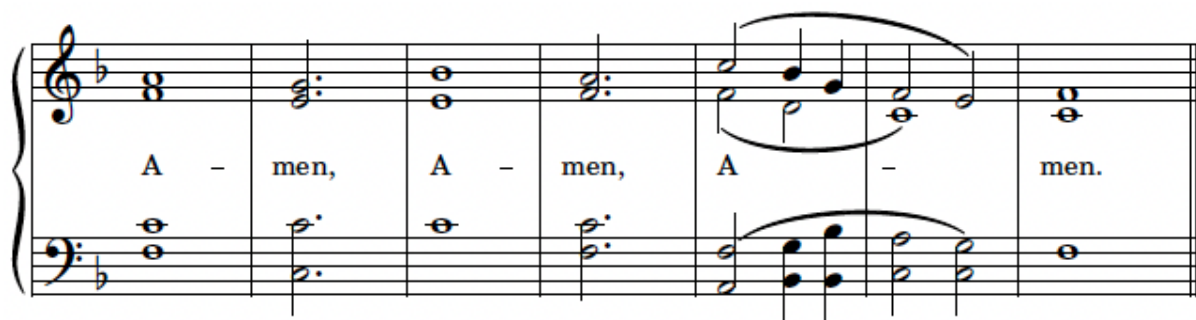
Help us, who are baptised into the fellowship of Christ's Body
to live and work to your praise and glory;

may we grow together in unity and love until at last, in your new
creation,

we enter into our heritage in the company of the Virgin Mary,
the apostles, and prophets,
and of all our brothers and sisters living and departed.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord,

with whom, and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory be to you, Lord of all ages,



Amen, amen, amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit,
let us pray as Jesus teaches us
in the language and version of our comfort:

Our Father

**in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom,
the power, and the glory
are yours, now and for ever.**

**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,
for ever and ever**

Amen.

We keep silent and pray for a short time.

The Breaking of the Bread ¹³

God of promise,
you prepare a banquet for us in your reign of justice and peace.
Happy are those who are called to the Supper of the Lamb.

Communion ¹⁴

Here is life. God is with us. Come, receive what God has promised.
Thanks be to God!

Communion

*All who are unable to be physically present to receive the eucharist
may wish to pray one of the following prayers of reception
for spiritual communion ¹⁵:*

I worship and adore you, Lord Jesus Christ, present in bread and wine, and present in your people, who are gathered in spirit. In this moment I join with them to receive you in my heart, and in our community. May you, enthroned on the altar, be now enthroned in my heart; may you, present in bread and wine, feed and renew my soul; may you, who gives yourself to us again, fill us with grace, and heavenly blessing. Even as I am fed, may my hunger for you and for your reign of justice and peace increase, that I may, with your Spirit, work for that day when your kingdom shall come on earth as it is heaven. Amen.

or

Come, Lord Jesus, and make in my heart your dwelling place and home. I seek to love you with all my heart, mind, soul and strength, and so, through your presence in bread and wine I receive you afresh and praise you for you are my God. As you fill me, so may my love for you and for all your people, rise and overflow, that with joy and thanksgiving I may serve you in the world you love. Amen.

or

Jesus, I believe that you are present with us in the sacrament of bread and wine. I love you and I desire your presence afresh in my life. Since I cannot now receive the bread and wine of the altar, come spiritually into my heart. I embrace you and unite myself to you; never let me be separated from you. Amen.

Heavenly message, brought by an angel,
coming to lift the hopes of the earth;
bringing to Mary humble and lowly,
God's invitation to give the Christ birth.

Refrain:

Mary we hail you, full of God's favour,
blessed are you, and blessed your son;
he will be called the child of the highest,
Saviour of all, the holy one.

Mary replied to Gabriel's message,
"I am the servant, maid of the Lord.
Let it be done just as you have spoken.
My soul rejoices in God's saving word." *Refrain*

In the beginning, when God had spoken,
through God's own Word all things came to be;
now by that Word, embodied through Mary,
God's glory blazes, that our eyes may see. *Refrain*

God our host,
at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness.
Send us forth,
eager to share the feast,
welcome the stranger,
and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus.
Amen.

Generous God,
you have fed us at your heavenly table.
Kindle us with the fire of your Spirit
that when the Lord comes again
we may shine as lights before him,
who is alive and reigns in glory for ever.
Amen.

Parish Announcements

Blessing

Hail to the Lord's Anointed ¹⁸

**Hail to the Lord's anointed, great David's greater Son!
Hail, in the time appointed, his reign on earth begun!
He comes to break oppression, to set the captive free,
to take away transgression, and rule in equity.**

**He shall come down like showers upon the fruitful earth,
and love, joy, hope, like flowers, spring in his path to birth.
Before him on the mountains shall peace the herald go,
and righteousness in fountains from hill to valley flow.**

**Kings shall fall down before him, and gold and incense bring;
all nations shall adore him, his praise all people sing.
To him shall prayer unceasing and daily vows ascend,
his kingdom still increasing, a kingdom without end.**

**O'er every foe victorious, he on his throne shall rest,
from age to age more glorious, all-blessing and all-blest.
The tide of time shall never his covenant remove.
His name shall stand for ever: that name to us is Love.**

Dismissal

**Go in peace. Keep awake.
Thanks be to God!**

Postlude

Your Daily Prayers are Requested:

For the Church:

For Susan our bishop;
and for & all the people of the Diocese of Niagara;
For the parish of St. Stephen-on-the-Mount in Hamilton.
For Anne, our Metropolitan Archbishop and Acting Primate;
For the worldwide Anglican Communion,
remembering the Igreja Episcopal Anglicana do Brasil.

For those in our parish cycle of prayer:

For Evelyn; for David & Tim; for Ruth & Jack.

For the needs of the world:

For peace:

For peace especially in Ukraine, South Sudan, Yemen, Gaza, Palestine, Israel, and all places of conflict

For those we know in need of healing:

For those who have died, and those who mourn:

For the repose of the soul of Albert Jones;

**Thank you for your daily prayers
for the people, worship, fellowship, and ministries
of the Church of the Nativity**



The Church of the Nativity

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Honorary Assistant
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Director of Music
Parish Administrator

Mrs. Jan Collinson
Mr. David Eccles
Ms. Gayle MacDonald
Mr. Derek Smith

Wardens

Sources

Our cover image is a photograph of the painting “St. John the Baptist in the Prison” by Juan Fernández de Navarrete (1526 – 79). The original is in the collection of the Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg.

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- ¹ Text: Charles Wesley (1707 – 88). Music: Melody: *Psalmodia Sacra*, Gotha, 1715; harm. William Henry Havergal (1793 – 1870), alt. Used under OneLicense A-604280.
- ² “Rorate cœli.” Introit for the Fourth Sunday of Advent from the *Graduale Romanum*. Based on Isaiah 45.8.
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- ⁴ *Sundays and Seasons*.
- ⁵ Steven Shakespeare, *Prayers for an Inclusive Church*, 2008.
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- ⁹ *Common Worship, The Church of England*. cf. *Revelation* 4.8, 11; 5.9; 22.17, 20.
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- ¹¹ *Sundays and Seasons*.
- ¹² *Eucharistic Prayer 2. The Scottish Liturgy*, 1982. *The Scottish Episcopal Church*.
- ¹³ *Book of Alternative Services*, alt.

¹⁴ *Sundays and Seasons*.

¹⁵ Selected from the prayers provided for this use in “A Celebration of the Holy Eucharist with Spiritual Communion,” Diocese of Niagara, 2020.

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¹⁷ *Sundays and Seasons. An Order for Holy Communion*, Church in Wales.

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