

ORDER OF SERVICE
December 12, 2021 - Advent 3

INTRODUCTION

John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruits worthy of repentance.

Good morning everyone. This is Fr. Dean Mercer and I welcome you as the parish of St. Paul's gathers to mark the first Sunday of Advent. Separated physically, we join in spirit, sharing in the joy of the resurrection of our Lord.

Reading the lessons is Veriann Chalmers. The reflection is offered by The Rev'd Dr. Annette Brownlee. The anthem is performed by Jocelyn Belfer, accompanied by David McCartney. And the litany is led by Jenifer Milton.

So let us hear Holy Scripture, reflect and pray together, and open our hearts to the Living Word, Jesus Christ - our risen Saviour and Lord.

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

God of power and mercy, you call us once again to celebrate the coming of your Son. Remove those things which hinder love of you, that when he comes, he may find us waiting in awe and wonder for him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. AMEN.

LESSONS

First Reading

Veriann Chalmers
PHILIPPIANS 4:4-7

A READING FROM THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE PHILIPPIANS

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

A SONG OF THANKSGIVING

ISAIAH 12:2-6

Reader: A Song of Thanksgiving

Surely, it is God who saves me; I will trust in him and not be afraid. For the Lord is my stronghold and my sure defence, and he will be my Saviour. R

Therefore you shall draw water with rejoicing from the springs of salvation. And on that day you shall say, Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his name; make his deeds known among the peoples; see that they remember that his name is exalted. R

Sing the praises of the Lord, for he has done great things, and this is known in all the world. Cry aloud, inhabitants of Zion, ring out your joy, for the great one in the midst of you is the Holy One of Israel.

GOSPEL READING

LUKE 3:7-18

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO LUKE

John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin 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." And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise." Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you." Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages." As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire." So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

HOMILY

The Rev'd Dr. Annette Brownlee

ANTHEM

Jocelyn Belfer, soprano; David McCartney, piano

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Jenifer Milton

THE LORD'S PRAYER & BLESSING

Help us through the 4th Quarter - St. Paul's is a strong parish and remains strong due to everyone's faithful support. *Through three quarters of the year, support has been outstanding* at a time when never has it been more important. The 4th quarter is always our largest challenge each year. Your faithful and regular gifts are important.

Gifts can be dropped off at the church or sent by mail. Kindly ensure that your name and envelope number is included. Or, members may wish to sign up for the Pre-Authorized Giving Program (contact the office). Members who use online banking can now make E-transfers (instructions here: www.stpl.ca/give.html). Gifts can also be made at our website through CanadaHelps: www.stpl.ca/give.html.

NOTE: Of the various means for online giving, we recommend *The Pre-Authorized Giving Program*. It is regular, matching the regular responsibilities of the parish, and once initiated all it takes is a phone call or e-mail to increase, decrease, or cancel the donation. The monthly amount is withdrawn on the 20th of each month, and the cost to the church is 50 cents per transaction, irrespective of the amount of the gift. This makes the PAG the most economical of all the online and electronic methods.

The Annual Stewardship Letter and 2022 Pledge Card is now available - from the church office or online: <https://stpl.ca/give.html>

The 2022 Offering Envelopes are Now Available for Pickup at the Church

Christmas Steel Concert - with the steel bands and the musicians of St. Paul's, Saturday, December 18, at 7.00 p.m. - sold out! Safety guidelines in place, and a limit of 80 tickets available. Recordings of parish musicians and selections from the live concert will be made available.

Christmas Flowers

The Flower Guild of St. Paul's is receiving donations for Christmas flowers. Due to the safety restrictions, only a few plants will be purchased for use in the church and donations above and beyond will be forwarded to the ACSA Food Bank assisting those in need during the pandemic. Please pass along the information below to the church office by mail or email. Please make cheques payable to St. Paul's L'Amoreaux Church. December 20 is the last date for donations. Flowers are \$6 each. Kindly indicate the following

- *In Memory of:
- or as a Thank Offering:
- *Donor's Name:
- *Envelope #:
- *Amount of Gift:

The 180th Anniversary of the Parish of St. Paul, L'Amoreaux

Dedicated - November 18, 1841, by Bishop John Strachan, 1st Bishop of Toronto

Recorded musical mementoes can now be found on the homepage of the church website:

www.stpl.ca

All are encouraged to donate to the Outreach Program of St. Paul's.

Good News - Safety Guidelines Update

Changes have been made to the safety guidelines:

*The College of Bishops have relaxed their COVID-19 restrictions as of November 24th to allow for congregational singing with masks and appropriate distancing. St. Paul's will proceed in measured fashion.

*Readers, preachers and intercessors may remove their masks while speaking.

*The Bishops now permit as many people in the church who can maintain "physical distancing of 2 metres." Attendance at church services at St. Paul's has now increased to 100.

Advent and Christmas Schedule

Sundays of Advent - the ordinary schedule

Christmas Steel Concert - Saturday, December 18, 7 pm

Christmas Eve - 6 pm and 11 pm.

Christmas Day - 8 am (Tamil); 10 am (English)

First Sunday of Christmas (December 26) - the ordinary schedule

Watchnight Service - 11 pm (December 31)

Each service is limited to 100 people. Seat reservations can be made here:

<https://stpl.ca/services.html> or by calling the church office (416-499-1545).

The Sacrament by Christmas - A note from Fr. Dean

With the signs pointing in the right direction, Christmas this year should be a lot more like what we expect than what we experienced last year. For that reason, by Christmas this year I would urge everyone to make plans to receive the sacrament - *at least once* - whether it be by attendance at one of the in-person services or by a request for home communion. Even with the remaining guidelines, that should be more than possible.

The ordinary and grateful obligation of a Christian is to gather on Sundays, to unite in prayer and praise, and to be nourished by both Word and Sacrament. The season of Covid was an exception, not a new normal, and we will work diligently to re-establish the ordinary habits of our Christian life - which is precisely what we are doing now as opportunity permits.

The 2021 Angel Tree Program - St. Paul's L'Amoreaux will be partnering for an eighth year with Prison Fellowship Canada to provide Christmas gifts for children with a parent that is incarcerated. This year, St. Paul's will be serving 20 children. Due to the generosity of the parish, we had a surplus of donations from last year that will cover the cost of gifts for this year. A team of volunteers has also signed up to deliver the gifts. Those who ordinarily give to the Angel Tree Program are asked to consider the parish Christmas Hamper Program this year. Thank you St. Paul's for all your support!!

Christmas Hampers are being prepared this Advent to be distributed to families in need. Monetary donations are being sought to fund this ministry and your generosity is greatly appreciated and much needed during these challenging times. Simply indicate that you would like your gift to go towards Christmas hampers.

Tamil Congregation Service of Carols - Sunday, December 19th at 3:15pm.

Walk-a-Thon Results are in and thanks to the generosity of St. Paul's we were able to raise \$12,920 for our outreach ministries. Thank you to all who gave of their time and resources for this important ministry fundraiser.

The Spiritual Companions Program - is a companionship program to encourage spiritual growth. Open to those who are 22 years or older, companions are placed in groups of two, committing themselves to meet weekly for reflection and prayer. Those couples may include married and dating couples. The materials for reflection are agreed on by the pair and may be a reading or Collect from Morning Prayer, from Our Daily Bread, or from another devotional source. Guided by respect, honesty and confidentiality, pairs will agree to a convenient date and time and may meet in person, over the phone, or on Zoom. For a copy of the manual and application, call the office (416-499-1545) or check online:

<https://stpl.ca/spiritual-companions-program.html>

Questions - contact Carol Shih (Wycliffe student) - carol.shih@mail.utoronto.ca

St. Paul's Youth Music Program Now On - Pans and Strings

Our parish and community youth music program has re-opened with pan practice on Saturdays at 12.30 pm, and string practice at 4.30. A great group. Our largest string group ever. Registration at practice.

Introduction to Christianity & Simple ESL Class for Adults - Saturdays, 4.30 pm, in the church.

Morning Prayer on Zoom - Password Added

Morning Prayer is said Monday to Saturday at 7.30 a.m.. Tuesday to Friday mornings, it is live-streamed from the church. For that reason there is now a password for those attending Morning Prayer on Zoom. Join us for prayer, Monday to Saturday morning at 7.30 a.m.:

Computer Access Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/397231088?wd=ekhBRm9XcDRmWXo5Z0Via2dyY2tpUT09>

Telephone Access - (647) 374 4685, or (647) 558 0588

Meeting ID: 397 231 088; Password: 549300

Schedule

The full schedule of in-person and online services and programs can be found on the online church calendar - www.stpl.ca/calendar.html - or here: www.stpl.ca/services.html. This is the quickest and easiest way to get service and program information.

Sunday Services by Phone on Zoom

The weekly Sunday recording can be heard by phone on Zoom. (It can also be viewed on Zoom, but the quality is diminished.)

Zoom Invitation: *By Phone:* 647 374 4685; 647 558 0588;

Meeting ID: 854 0290 8277; Passcode: 970844

Computer link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85402908277?pwd=Q1RlckxCZXJNTFJJek5tYWpOTzIzFUT09>

Ontario COVID-19 Vaccine Booking - You can currently book an appointment at a mass vaccination clinic through the provincial online vaccine booking system (<https://covid-19.ontario.ca/book-vaccine/>) If you prefer to schedule an appointment by phone, call the Provincial Vaccine Booking Line at 1-833-943-3900 (TTY 1-866-797-0007). This line is available 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., 7 days a week. Information is available in more than 300 languages. *If St. Paul's can be of any help to you in this process, please let our office know.*

IMARA Generation Project Taibu Community Health Centre is conducting a consultation for parents and other concerned adults regarding Black youth and their mental health. For more information or to participate, please contact coladehinde@taibuchc.ca

New Honorary Priest at St. Paul's

Effective December, 2021, The Rev'd Canon Kim Beard has been appointed by Bishop Robertson as honorary priest at St. Paul's, L'Amoreaux. Canon Beard is the recently retired priest of St. Paul on the Hill, Pickering. We welcome Canon Beard on Sunday, December 19, when he will be the preacher of the day.

Mission Trip to Tanzania Rescheduled: July 2023.

Our incoming honorary assistant Rev. Canon Kim Beard will be leading a work mission trip to Tanzania, now re-scheduled for 2023. Look for an information session this coming March.

Sunday School Every Sunday at 10.00 on Zoom

Check the church calendar for links and information: www.stpl.ca/calendar.html

S.P.Y. - St. Paul's Youth - Friday nights at 7 pm.

Contact Sarah for more information: splcyouthministry@gmail.com.

Friday Night Bible Study - join us *at the church or online* for study, following the Bible study guides of Bishop Tom Wright. The study guides are available online (www.amazon.ca or www.parasource.com or www.christianbook.com) or may be ordered through Fr. Dean. We are now on Christmas break, resuming Friday, January 14, and beginning a study of Ephesians - 15 copies are available from Fr. Dean for \$11.

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/830877703>

Telephone: 647-374 4685, or 647-558 0588; Meeting ID: 830 877 703

Contact - The clergy of St. Paul's are all in the vicinity and visiting in homes again, abiding by diocesan safety guidelines. Don't hesitate to call or write. Website: www.stpl.ca; Church phone: 416-499-1545; Email: stpl@stpl.ca; Fr. Dean Mercer: deanmercercer@hotmail.com; Rectory phone: 416-497-6352.