

Knox Service Outline - Advent 3

12/14/25

Interim Moderator: The Rev. Daniel Martinez

Pastors: James Prette / Liz Scott

Music: Connie Dunwoody

Elder: Anne Krauss

Reader: Heather Anderson

Prelude

Welcome/Announcements/Land Acknowledgement (Unison)

Elder

As followers of Jesus, we are compelled to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with God. It is our love of God and neighbour that leads us to acknowledge that we gather with gratitude on the traditional and unceded Coast Salish Territory of Lkwungen people. We pray that past and present injustices can be reconciled as we commit ourselves again to just and respectful relationships.

Gathering Song: 119 Hope is a star

(Verse 3)

Lighting the Advent Candle: Joy (Responsive)

Pastor

Mary praised God who entrusted her with a sacred role. Great things God has done!

With Jesus' birth, the world will never be the same again.

The powerful will be toppled from their thrones. The hungry will be lifted up and joy will break through in unexpected places.

Every time a child is born, the world changes for someone. Our lives changed when a humble young woman gave birth to the One who would save us. On this third Sunday of Advent, we light the candle of joy.

(The candle of joy is lit.)

Let us pray together:

Living God, gift us with Mary's trust and readiness to accept your purpose. May we celebrate your coming, as we say with joy: Come, Lord Jesus.

First Hymn: 130 To A Maid Whose Name is Mary

Gathering Prayer

Pastor

The light shines in the darkness,

We come to worship, seeking the joy Mary sang to welcome her saviour.

Source of light, shine into our lives and your world this Advent.

Renew in us the joy of our salvation.

Creator God, Maker of heaven and earth, with the sea and the stars, and everything in between, we praise you for the wonders of this world and beyond it. You set all creation in relationships both fruitful and fragile. You make deserts bloom and refresh the earth with seasonal rain. As you care for the vulnerable and all your people, we praise with joyful songs in our hearts this day, Our God, who is the Source, Saviour and Spirit of life, perfect in unity, splendour and truth.

Second Hymn: 156 The Angel Gabriel

Prayer for Understanding (Unison)

Reader

God of justice and joy, we turn to your Word to hear your will and your wisdom for our times. Open our hearts and minds by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit so that we might hear what you are saying to the church through Christ, our Friend and Saviour.

Old Testament Reading : Isaiah 35:1-10

Reader

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 shouting. 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 shall be opened; 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 traveler, 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.

New Testament Reading : James 5:7-10

Reader

Be patient, therefore, brothers and sisters, 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. Brothers and sisters, 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, brothers and sisters, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

Scripture Response

Reader

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

Sermon: JOY

Liz Scott

Third Hymn: 153 Joy to the World

Offering and Prayer

Pastor

This Sunday, we celebrate the Advent of Joy, rising in us through Jesus Christ. Think of your gifts as seeds of that joy which we can plant in the world God loves for Christ's sake.

Offering Song: 306 - Praise God from whom all blessings flow

Prayer of Dedication

Pastor

God, our Judge and our Joy, receive our gifts as seeds of gratitude for your gift to us in Christ Jesus. Bless these seeds with growth so that joy will blossom for people depleted by challenges, and places overwhelmed by scarce resources. Be their justice and their joy and ours, through Christ our Lord.

Prayer of Confession (Unison)

Pastor

Gracious Judge, we look around us and we are not proud of what we see. People criticize each other and listen only to those who agree with them. We grumble and think the past holds the solutions, forgetting its inequities and iniquities. We are impatient for things to improve but we do not want to change our ways. Forgive us for sharing in the ungrateful mood of our times, and renew in us the joy and gratitude we once knew for your gifts to us in Christ Jesus.

Assurance of Pardon

Pastor

Receive the Good News in joy. With great mercy, God forgives what we have confessed and offers us new life in Christ. Rejoice that you can make a new beginning and share the joy in mercy and forgiveness with others.

Pastoral Prayers (Responsive)

Pastor

God of all creation, every creature finds its way to rejoice in your presence. The desert blooms, a mountain top glistens, a stream makes music flowing over rocks. We give you thanks for the joy in nature that can lift our hearts. Thank you for the joy we can share with each other, for familiar songs on our lips, for greetings from old friends, for the excitement of children in this season, and for the promise born again in us as we anticipate Jesus' birth.

God who makes all things new,
Renew our life together.

God of the world, its wonders and its woes, we know there are many people who cannot rejoice this year, so we open our concerns for the world before you this day.

We remember those who have been silenced by oppressive regimes, by shocking tragedy, by bullying and threats or by illness that takes away speech.

(Keep silence)

Help us listen with care when words are not easy to find, and show us when and how to speak when others cannot.

God who makes all things new,
Renew our life together.

We remember those who have grown weaker through changing economic circumstances, through aging or illness, through fear or loss, through hunger and homelessness.

(Keep silence for 10-15 seconds.)

Renew their strength and courage to engage life as they are able, and show us when and how to offer our support and encouragement.

God who makes all things new,
Renew our life together.

We remember those whose days are filled with fear because of war and conflict on their streets, because of intimidation and discrimination, because the security they relied on has disappeared.

(Keep silence)

Bring them protection and comfort in uncertain situations, and make us wise and generous neighbours who can offer relief.

God who makes all things new,
Renew our life together.

We remember those whose lives seem empty because their cupboards are bare, because someone precious is absent, because choices made have not been fulfilling

(Keep silence)

Fill empty lives with meaning and purpose. Show us how to share what we have in ways that are generous and dignified, and let joy dawn again where it has died.

God who makes all things new,
Renew our life together.

Renew in us all the joy that comes from the assurance of your love for us in Christ Jesus for we gather our prayers together in the words he taught us:

The Lord's Prayer (Unison)

Pastor

Our Father, 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen

Fourth Hymn: 109 All Earth is Waiting

Blessing

Pastor

Go with joy renewed this day, energized to share that joy with justice and generosity in the world God loves. And may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Dispersal Song: PCU 314 Longing for Light

Verse 3

Postlude