The Anglican Church of St. John the Divine The 4th Sunday of Advent December 21, 2025

As people of God, we celebrate Christ in the heart of Victoria through joyful worship, building inclusive community, and putting faith into action.

St. John's acknowledges these lands of the Lekwungen people.

We are an inclusive and affirming parish; the sacraments of the church (baptism, communion and marriage) are available to all people on equal terms. Christ welcomes you, and so do we.



Photo: Karen Coverett

Welcome to the Parish Church of St. John the Divine, Victoria. We are a community of faith in the Anglican Tradition, seeking to live lives of faith, hope, and love as part of this community in Downtown Victoria. We are on a journey of learning to be a welcoming, inviting, inclusive, and serving community which is open to all.

Our worship reflects our rootedness in the Anglican tradition, whilst drawing on liturgies that reflect the long history and heritage of our Christian faith. Please join in as you feel able, and enjoy the words, music, and opportunity for prayer and to be a part of our community.

Services at St. John's are: 8:00 am (Holy Communion – said service), 10:00 am (Holy Eucharist – with choir and organ), 4:30 pm (BCP Choral Evensong) on Sundays as well as mid-week services (please see our website for times). If you can't attend in person we invite you to join us via Zoom (email admin@stjohnthedivine.bc.ca for the link) or through the livestream on the Website: www.stjohnthedivine.bc.ca

We continue to share daily prayer online with a link on our website.

Contacting Us: Please email us at admin@stjohnthedivine.bc.ca or call 250-383-7169. If you wish to receive prayer for yourself or for another, there will be members of our Pastoral Care Team who will offer their prayers. Please contact the church office at the above email address.

You are very welcome here. We don't always get it right; please let us know when we do, and when we don't. Please stay and be a part of our family, for however long you would like.

If you would like to give to support the work and ministries of St. John the Divine you can do so in the offering plate which is by the Garden door and will be presented as the Communion is prepared. You may also conveniently use our tap machine (no tax receipt) which is available at the garden door entrance, or the bank machine (tax receipt with envelope completion) available at the office. Envelopes for regular giving are available from the church office. Alternatively, you can scan this QR code which will take you to our Canada Helps giving page.

Thank you for your support.



8:00 am Holy Communion

The order of service is found on page 67 in the Book of Common Prayer

Presider: The Reverend Pam Worthington

10:00 am Parish Eucharist

The congregation is invited to join in the hymns, responses and prayers marked in **bold** print.

Presider: The Venerable Alastair Singh-McCollum

Greeters: Barbara Jenks, Marilyn Moody

Crucifer: Penny Holt Sacristan: Penny Holt

Readers: Ava Gregorian, Marilynn Mincey

Gospel: Lorraine Gates

Sermon: The Reverend Pam Worthington

Intercessor: Mary Kennedy

Lay Eucharistic Ministers: Iris Elsdon,

Susan Fraser, Patrick Samuel

Verger: Chuck Neilson

Streaming Technician: Karen Coverett

Music: The Community Choir

David Stratkauskas, Director of Music

This service is being broadcast live on the Internet. By attending this service, you acknowledge and consent to the fact that video images of you may appear there.

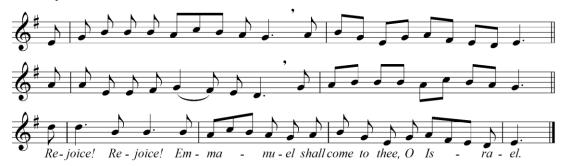
The Gathering of the Community

Land Acknowledgement & Welcome

Announcements

Processional Hymn (CP 89)

VENI EMMANUEL



1. O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.

Refrain

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

2. O come, O Wisdom from on high, who orders all things mightily; to us the path of knowledge show, and teach us in her ways to go.

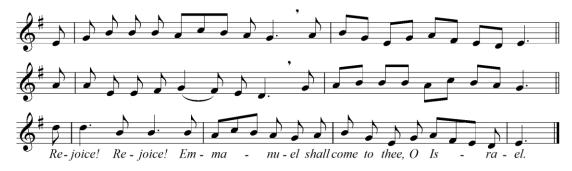
Refrain

- 3. O come, O come, Great Lord of might, who to your tribes on Sinai's height in ancient times once gave the law, in cloud and majesty and awe.

 Refrain
- 4. O come, O Rod of Jesse's stem, from every foe deliver them that trust your mighty power to save, and give them victory o'er the grave.

 Refrain

please turn page for vs. 5-7



- 5. O come, O Key of David, come, and open wide our heavenly home; make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery.
 - Refrain

- 6. O come, O Dayspring from on high and cheer us by your drawing nigh; disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadow put to flight. *Refrain*
- 7. O come, Desire of nations, bind in one the hearts of humankind; O bid our bitter conflict cease, and be for us our Prince of Peace.

 Refrain

Text: Latin (9th cent.?); tr. John Mason Neale (1818-1866), alt. Music: Plainsong, Mode 1, *Processionale* (15th cent.); arr. Healey Willan (1880-1968), alt.

Gathering

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

All: And also with you.

Lighting of the Advent Candle

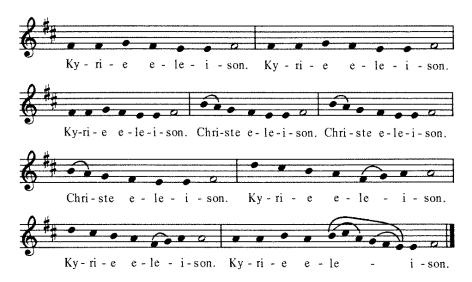
God our Creator, the angel Gabriel told Mary that she was to be the mother of your Son. Though Mary was afraid, she responded to your call with joy. Help us, whom you call to serve you, to share, like her, in your great work of bringing to our world your love and healing.

All: We ask this through Jesus Christ, the light who is coming into the world.

Amen.

From Common Worship: Times and Seasons, The Church of England, Amended

Kyrie (CP 687)



Music: New Plainsong, David Hurd (1950-). © 1981 G.I.A. Publications, Inc. All rights reserved. Reprinted under Onelicense.net #A-719605.

The Collect of the Day *Silence is kept.*

God of all hope and joy, open our hearts in welcome, so that your Son Jesus Christ at his coming may find in us a dwelling prepared for him, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

All: Amen.

A New Zealand Prayer Book (1989)

The Proclamation of the Word

Let us listen for the Word of God in Holy Scripture.

The First Reading

Isaiah 7:10-16

Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test. Then Isaiah said: 'Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted.

After the Reading

Hear what the Spirit is saying.

All: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 80:1-7, 16-18

Restore us, O Sovereign God of hosts

- Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock; * shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.
- In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, * stir up your strength and come to help us.
- Restore us, O God of hosts; * show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved. *Refrain*
- O Sovereign GOD of hosts, * how long will you be angered despite the prayers of your people?
- You have fed them with the bread of tears; * you have given them bowls of tears to drink.
- You have made us the derision of our neighbors, * and our enemies laugh us to scorn.
- Restore us, O God of hosts; * show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved. *Refrain*
- Let your hand be upon the person of your right hand, * and human child you have made so strong for yourself.
- And so will we never turn away from you; * give us life, that we may call upon your Name.
- Restore us, O Sovereign GOD of hosts; * show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved. *Refrain*

Inclusive Language Psalter: A New Gender-Inclusive Adaptation of the Book of Psalms,
Based on the 1979 Book of Common Prayer Text (Version for Congregational Use)
Edited and adapted by Adam Waddell, Hannah Bowman, the Rev. K.D. Joyce, and the Rev. Bailey Pickens.

The Epistle Romans 1:1-7

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for the sake of his name, including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

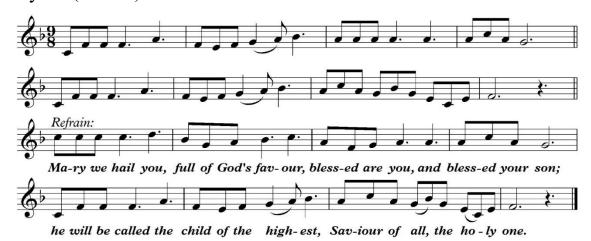
To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

After the Reading

Hear what the Spirit is saying.

All: Thanks be to God.



- 1. 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*
- 2. 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
- 3. 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

The Gospel *Before the Gospel:*

Matthew 1:18-25



Cantor: A virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel: God with us.

Matthew 1:23



God is with you.

All: And also with you.

Hear the Good news of Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

All: Glory to you, O Christ.

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.' All this took place to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

'Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel', which means, 'God is with us.' When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

After the Gospel

The Gospel of Christ.

All: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Affirmation of Faith (CP 44)

BEACH SPRING



- 1. I believe in God almighty,
 Author of all things that be,
 maker of the earth and heavens,
 keeper of the sky and sea.
 I believe in God's Son, Jesus,
 now for us both Lord and Christ,
 of the Spirit and of Mary
 born to bring abundant life.
- 2. I believe that Jesus suffered,
 scourged and scorned and crucified;
 taken from the cross, was buried—
 true life there had truly died.
 I believe that on the third day
 Christ was raised up from the grave,
 then ascended to God's right hand.
 He will come to judge and save.
- 3. I believe in God's own Spirit,
 bonding all the saints within
 one church, catholic, and holy,
 where forgiveness frees from sin;
 in the body's resurrection,
 for the breaking of death's chain
 gives the life that's everlasting:
 this the faith that I have claimed.

Text: The Apostles' Creed; para. Sylvia G. Dunstan (1955-1993). Para. © 1991 G.I.A. Publications, Inc. Melody – Welsh trad. Coll. Edward Jones (1752-1824), Musical & Poetical Relicks of the Welsh Bards, 1784, alt. All rights reserved. Used under OneLicense.net # A-719605.

The Peace

The peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also with you.

All may offer their neighbour a sign of peace.

The Celebration of the Eucharist

We don't pass the offertory plate at St. John's, but we are grateful for your support of our ministry and heritage building. There are several ways you can contribute financially. You may use the QR code printed on page 2 of this leaflet to contribute via Canada Helps (tax receipt included). There is a donation box by the garden door entrance and collection plates at the front and back entrances for people to leave offerings or envelopes. You may also conveniently use our tap machine (no tax receipt) which is available at the garden door entrance, or the bank machine (tax receipt with envelope completion) available at the office. Envelopes for regular giving are available from the church office.

Offertory Hymn (CP 96)

CONDITOR ALME SIDERUM



- 1. Creator of the stars of night, thy people's everlasting light, Jesus, redeemer of us all, hear thou thy servants when they call.
- 2. Thou, sorrowing at the helpless cry of all creation doomed to die, didst save our lost and guilty race by healing gifts of heavenly grace.
- 3. When earth was near its evening hour, thou didst in love's redeeming power, like bridegroom from his chamber, come forth from a maiden mother's womb.
- 4. At thy great name, exalted now, all knees in lowly homage bow; all things in heaven and earth adore, and own thee King for evermore.
- 5. To God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit, Three-in-One, praise, honour, might, and glory be from age to age eternally.

Text: Latin (6th cent.); tr. John Mason Neale (1818-1866), alt. Music: Melody – Sarum plainsong, Mode 4.

The Prayer over the Gifts

Gracious God, by the power of the Spirit who sanctified the mother of your Son, make holy all we offer you this day. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.

All: Amen.

As we prepare to celebrate this Eucharist, we remember that we are the people of God. Near or far we are gathered together by the love of Christ. We remember that we are incorporated into the body of Christ. We join together in this celebration of our union in Christ.

The Great Thanksgiving

Scottish Episcopal Church 1982 (2022 revision)
Eucharistic Prayer II
Anticipation (Suitable for Advent)



Worship and praise belong to you, God our maker.

Out of the waters, you called all worlds to be,

and still you draw the universe to its fulfilment.

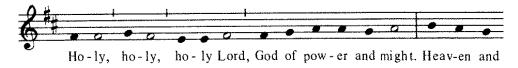
Dawn and evening celebrate your glory till time shall be no more.

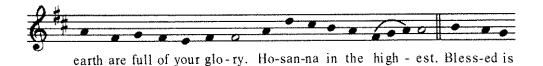
In Christ your Son the life of heaven and earth were joined, sealing the promise of a new creation, given, yet still to come.

Taught by your Spirit,
we who bear your 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:

Sanctus and Benedictus (CP 689)







he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san-na in the high - est.

Music: New Plainsong, David Hurd (1950-). © 1981 G.I.A. Publications, Inc. All rights reserved. Reprinted under Onelicense.net #A-719605.

Glory and thanksgiving be to you, most loving Mother and Father of all. In Jesus you showed us yourself. Our hope is built on the one who is the first, the last, the living one. Obedient, even to accepting death, He opened the gate of glory and calls us now to share the life of heaven. Before being 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 Jesus 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, 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 recall his blessed passion and death, his glorious resurrection and ascension; and we look for the coming of his Kingdom.

Made one with him, we offer you these gifts with them ourselves, a single, holy, living sacrifice.

Hear us, most merciful God, and send your Holy Spirit upon us and upon this bread and this wine, that, overshadowed by your Spirit's 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 Kingdom.

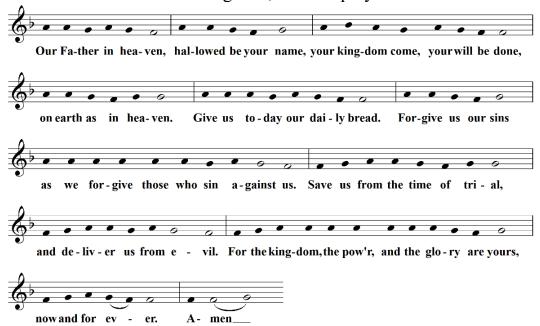
Help us, who are baptised into the fellowship of Christ's Body to live and work to your praise and glory; may we grow together in unity and love until at last, in your new creation, we enter into our heritage in the company of Mary, the apostles, and prophets, and of all our siblings, living and departed.

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, world without end.



The Disciple's Prayer

Priest: As our saviour Christ has taught us, we now pray:



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The Breaking of the Bread

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

All: We, being many, are one body, for we all share in the one bread.

The Communion

The gifts of God for the people of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

All are invited to receive communion. Receiving bread or wine is considered full communion. It is the practice of the ACC not to dip the bread into the wine. Any not receiving communion are invited to receive a blessing, and to indicate that by holding their arms crossed on their chest.

If you are unable to come to a communion station please make this known to the Greeters and we will bring communion to you.

Gluten free wafers for communion are available. Please request them from the person who is distributing the bread.

Agnus Dei (CP 690)



Lamb of God, you take a -way the sins of the world: have mer-cy on us.



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sins of the world: have mer-cy on us.



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sins of the world: grant __ us peace.

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Anthem during Communion

The angel Gabriel from heaven came, his wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame; "All hail," said he, "thou lowly maiden, Mary, most highly favored lady,"

Gloria!

"For know a blessed Mother thou shalt be, all generations laud and honour thee, thy Son shall be Emmanuel, by seers foretold, most highly favored lady,"

Gloria!

Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head,
"To me be as it pleaseth God," she said,
"my soul shall laud and magnify His holy Name,"
most highly favored lady,"
Gloria!

Of her, Emmanuel, the Christ was born in Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn, and Christian folk throughout the world will ever say most highly favored lady,"

Gloria!

Text: Traditional Basque Carol; Paraphrased by Sabine Baring Gould, (1834-1924).

Music: 'Gabriel's Message' Traditional Basque Carol.

Setting: Edgar Pettman, 1922.

Following the Communion there will be a pause for silence.

The Commissioning of the Community

One body are we.

All: For, though we are in many places, spiritually we share one bread.

Prayer after Communion

Faithful God,

in this sacrament we receive the promise of salvation.

May we, like Mary,

be obedient to your will.

We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.

All: Amen.

The Book of Alternative Services

Acclamation for Advent

In the life of our Church

All: Come, Lord Jesus!

With love and compassion

All: Come, Lord Jesus!

In grace and mercy

All: Come, Lord Jesus!

Through love and service

All: Come, Lord Jesus!

In wisdom and growth

All: Come, Lord Jesus!

The Blessing

Dismissal

Let us go in peace to love and serve our living God.

All: Thanks be to God.

Recessional Hymn (CP 117)

ES IST EIN' ROS



- 1. Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming from tender stem hath sprung, of Jesse's lineage coming as seers of old have sung. It came, a blossom bright amid the cold of winter, when half spent was the night.
- 2. Isaiah 'twas foretold it, the Rose I have in mind; with Mary we behold it, the virgin mother kind. To show God's love aright, she bore to us a Saviour, when half spent was the night.

3. O Flower, whose fragrance tender with sweetness fills the air, dispel in glorious splendour the darkness everywhere; true man, yet very God, from sin and death now save us, and share our every load.

Text: St. 1-2, German (15th cent.); tr. Theodore Baker (1851-1934). St. 3, Friedrich Layritz (1808-1859); tr. Harriet Reynolds Krauth Spaeth (1845-1925). Music: Melody – *Alte Catholische Geistliche Kirchengesäng*, Köln, 1599. All rights reserved. Reprinted under Onelicense.net #A-719605.

Voluntary Es ist ein Ros entsprungen

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Please join us at the back of the church for refreshments and fellowship. Sunday Reflections will be held in the Walking Together Chapel following coffee hour.



This traditional and festive service consists of choral and congregational carols insterspersed with eight readings from the Christmas story. Based on the Festival of Lessons and Carols held at Kings College Cambridge since 1918, this is the perfect start to Christmas.

Carols sung by the Choristers of St John the Divine this year will include:

- Dancing Day (Elizabeth Poston)
- Adam lay ybounden (Philip Ledger)
- There is no rose of such virtue (Howard Skempton)
- I saw a stable (Tawnie Olson)
- The angels sing (Sarah MacDonald)
- The Telling (Michael Finnissy)
- The Sussex Carol (Bob Chilcott)

Flowers

Given to the Glory of God and in loving memory of Herb and Ruth Zenger, who both died December 19, 10 years apart (Herb in 2005 and Ruth in 2015), from Michael and Carol-Ann Zenger.



Readings for December 28th – The 1st Sunday after Christmas

Isaiah 63:7-9 The prophet reminds his listeners that the Lord saves, leads God's people out of danger, and can be trusted.

Psalm 148 The whole universe is summoned to praise the Creator.

Hebrews 2:10-18 Christ, who lived as one of us, has led us out from the slavery of fearing death.

Matthew 2:13-23 An angel warns Joseph to take Mary and the baby Jesus and flee from Herod.

The following people have asked for our prayers.

Please keep them in your heart and mind as you go through your week.

Jill & family	Charles & Frances
Nancy B.	Mallory
Zoe	John & Pat
Kate	Deb
Jim	Pete
Joanne	Vorna & family
Michael & family	Mike & family
Joshua	Carol
Liz & family	Susan
Zola	Paul
Richard M.	Laura
	Nancy B. Zoe Kate Jim Joanne Michael & family Joshua Liz & family Zola





Christmas at St. John the Divine

Christmas Carol Service The 4th Sunday of Advent, December 21 7:00 p.m.

The traditional service of lessons and carols for Christmas, as popularized by King's College Cambridge: carols new and old sung by The Choristers of St. John the Divine, and favourites for all to sing.

Christmas Eve Wednesday, December 24

All-Age Celebration of the Nativity Story 4:00 p.m.

Bring the whole family and rejoice at the birth of Christ. Children, especially, are invited to participate in the telling of the Nativity Story in word and song.

Midnight Mass 10:00 p.m.

The festive Christmas service, with Holy Communion, traditional carols and candlelight, led by The Choristers of St. John the Divine. Sermon by The Reverend Dr. John Thatamanil

Christmas Day Thursday, December 25 10:00 a.m.

Christmas morning service of Holy Communion, sermon, congregational carols.



The Anglican Church of St. John the Divine

Stewards

People's Warden: Jim Harlick jharlick@stjohnthedivine.bc.ca Associate Warden: Lorraine Gates lgates@stjohnthedivine.bc.ca Givings Coordinator: Jim Harlick givings@stjohnthedivine.bc.ca Incumbent's Warden: Jamie Lawson jlawson@stjohnthedivine.bc.ca
Associate Warden: Carol Anne Harper charper@stjohnthedivine.bc.ca
Treasurer: David Buckman treasurer@stjohnthedivine.bc.ca

Parish Council

Jaqueline Gillespie, Murray Harris, Ann McLaren Pam Plummer, Ruth Swinton, Cornelia van Voorst

Synod Delegates

Jim Harlick, Jamie Lawson, Michael Zenger

Staff Supporting the Ministry of St. John's

Incumbent: The Ven. Alastair Singh-McCollum incumbent@stjohnthedivine.bc.ca
Volunteer Priest Associate: The Rev. Dr. John Thatamanil jthatamanil@stjohnthedivine.bc.ca
Honorary Assistant: The Rev. Pam Worthington
Please contact the office for email.

Director of Music: David Stratkauskas sjdchoirs@gmail.com Family Ministry Coordinator: Ruth MacIntosh familyministry@stjohnthedivine.bc.ca Parish Administrator: Carol-Ann Zenger admin@stjohnthedivine.bc.ca

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or email admin@stjohnthedivine.bc.ca

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