

The Carol Service

21 December 2025 7 p.m.



The Anglican Church of St. John the Divine
1611 Quadra St, Victoria BC

***St. John's acknowledges these ancestral territories
of the Lekwungen people.***

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.

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 one of the offering plates which are by the doors. You may also conveniently use our tap machine (no tax receipt) which is available near the north ('garden door') entrance, or scan this QR code which will take you to our Canada Helps giving page, through which tax receipts can be issued.

Thank you for your support.



In our worship we use language which is poetic and filled with metaphor and wonder – realising that any language about God is limited. We use some ancient words which may seem odd, or may seem to refer to God as male, or in terms which elsewhere we might not choose to use. The poetry and the metaphor are there not to restrict or define our understanding of God, but to remind us that our words are never enough to talk about the Divine: instead we use the beauty of the words and music in our worship to help us glimpse just a little of the God beyond all words.

ASSISTING WITH THE LITURGY

Clergy	The Venerable Alastair Singh-McCollum The Rev'd Dr. John Thatamanil
Crucifer	Penny Holt
Verger	David Pupak
Greeters	Mary Kennedy, Bill Williamson
Readers	Carol Anne Harper, Duane Lecky, Judith Branion, Brendan Feary, Mary Kennedy, Murray Harris, Sarah Kell, The Rev'd Doctor John Thatamanil
Musicians	The Choristers of St. John the Divine Char Hodgkins, Assistant Director David Stratkauskas, Director and Organist

ORDER OF SERVICE

¶ *The Territorial Acknowledgement and welcome is given by the Venerable Alastair Singh-McCollum, Rector.*

¶ *Please stand at the ringing of the bell.*

¶ *The sentence is said by the Rector:*

WELCOME, all wonders in one sight!
Eternity shut in a span.
Summer in winter, Day in night,
Heaven on earth, God in man.
Great little one whose all-embracing birth
Brings earth to heaven, stoops heaven to earth.

Richard Crashaw (1613-1649)

PROCESSIONAL HYMN



Solo: **O**NCE in Royal David's city,
Stood a lowly cattle shed,
Where a mother laid her baby
In a manger for his bed
Mary was that mother mild,
Jesus Christ her little child.

All: He came down to earth from heaven
Who is God and Lord of all,
And his shelter was a stable,
And his cradle was a stall;
With the poor and mean and lowly
Lived on earth our Saviour holy.

¶ *The hymn continues on the next page.*

And through all his wondrous childhood
Day by day like us he grew,
He was little, weak, and helpless,
Tears and smiles like us he knew:
And he feeleth for our sadness,
And he shareth in our gladness.

And our eyes at last shall see him,
Through his own redeeming love,
For that child so dear and gentle
Is our Lord in heaven above;
And he leads his children on
To the place where he is gone.

Not in that poor lowly stable,
With the oxen standing by,
We shall see him; but in heaven,
Set at God's right hand on high;
Where like stars his children crowned
All in white shall wait around.

Words: C. F. Alexander (1818-1895)

*Music: IRBY H. J. Gauntlett (1805-1876);
Descant: David Willcocks (1919-2015)*

¶Please remain standing, as the Rector gives the Bidding.

THE BIDDING

¶At the conclusion of the Bidding, all join in the Lord's Prayer:

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 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.

¶Please be seated.

CAROL

ON CHRISTMAS NIGHT all Christians sing
To hear the news the angels bring.
News of great joy, news of great mirth,
News of our merciful King's birth.

Then why should we on earth be so sad,
Since our Redeemer made us glad,
When from our sin he set us free,
All for to gain our liberty?

When sin departs before His grace,
Then life and health come in its place.
Angels and all with joy may sing
All for to see the new-born King.

All out of darkness we have light,
Which made the angels sing this night:
"Glory to God and peace to men,
Now and for evermore, Amen!"

Words: English Traditional

Music: English trad., arr Bob Chilcott (b. 1955)

FIRST LESSON

Genesis 3:8-15

THEY HEARD the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, 'Where are you?' He said, 'I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.' He said, 'Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?' The man said, 'The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate.' Then the Lord God said to the woman, 'What is this that you have done?' The woman said, 'The serpent tricked me, and I ate.' The Lord God said to the serpent, 'Because you have done this, cursed are you among all animals and among all wild creatures; upon your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will strike your head, and you will strike his heel.'

CAROL

ADAM lay ybounden
Bounden in a bond;
Four thousand winter,
Thought he not too long.

*Deo gracias!*¹

And all was for an apple
An apple that he took.
As clerkes² finden,
Written in their book³.

Deo gracias!

Ne had the apple taken been
The apple taken been,
Ne had never our lady,
Abeen heavené queen.

Deo gracias!

Blessed be the time
That apple taken was,
Therefore we moun⁴ singen.

Deo gracias.

Deo gracias!

¹ Thanks be to God ² Clergy ³ The Bible ⁴ Must

Words: 15th-century English carol

Music: Philip Ledger (1937-2012)

SECOND LESSON

Isaiah 11:1-9

ASHOOT SHALL come out from the stock of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.

He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid. the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

¶Please stand to sing the hymn.

HYMN



IT CAME UPON the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold:
‘Peace on the earth, goodwill to all, from heav’n’s all-gracious King!’
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come, with peaceful wings unfurled;
And still their heav’nly music floats o’er all the weary world;
Above its sad and lowly plains they bend on hov’ring wing;
And ever o’er its Babel sounds the blessed angels sing.

Yet with the woes of sin and strife the world has suffered long;
Beneath the angel-strain have rolled two thousand years of wrong;
And we amid our wars hear not the love-song which they bring:
O hush the noise, and still your strife to hear the angels sing!

For lo! the days are hastening on, by prophet-bards foretold,
When, with the ever-circling years comes round the age of gold;
When peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendours fling,
And the whole world give back the song which now the angels sing.

Words: E. H. Sears (1810-76)

Music: NOEL, trad. English, adapt. A. Sullivan (1842-1900)
and David Willcocks (1919-2015)

¶Please be seated.

THIRD LESSON

Luke 1:26-38

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.

CAROL

THERE IS NO ROSE of such virtue
as is the rose that bore Jesu.

Alleluia.

For in one little space this rose
Could all of heaven and earth enclose.

O great wonder.

By that rose we may well see
Our only God in persons three
Now appear.

Angels sang to shepherds so:

Gloria in excelsis Deo;

Rejoicing well.

Let us leave this worldly mirth,
Remembering this joyful birth.

May we excel.

Alleluia, O great wonder, now appear.

Rejoicing Well, may we excel.

Words: Anon. 15th century, adap. Alison Golding

Music: Howard Skempton (b. 1947)

FOURTH LESSON

Luke 2:1-7

IN THOSE DAYS a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

CAROL

I SAW A STABLE, low and very bare,
A little child in a manger.
The oxen knew him, had him in their care,
To us he was a stranger,
The safety of the world was lying there,
And the world's danger.

Text: Mary Coleridge (adapt) (1861-1907)

Music: Tawnie Olson (b. 1974)

¶Please stand to sing.

HYMN



O LITTLE TOWN of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light;
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to-night.
O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the King, and peace to all on earth;
For Christ is born of Mary; and, gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wond'ring love.

Choir: How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heav'n.
No ear may hear his coming; but in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in.

All: O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in, be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell:
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel.

Words: Bishop P. Brooks (1835-1893)

Music: FOREST GREEN, English trad.;
verse 3: arr. D. Stratkauskas (2019);

¶Please be seated.

FIFTH LESSON

Luke 2:8-16

IN THAT REGION there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.' And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!' When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.' So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

CAROL

THE ANGELS SANG this day, and so will I.
Now in a manger lies the eternal Word:
the Word he is, yet can no speech afford;
he is the Bread of Life, yet hungry lies;
the Living Fountain, yet for drink he cries;
the angels sing this day, and so will I.
He cannot help or clothe himself at need
who did the lilies clothe and ravens feed;
he is the Light of Lights, yet now doth shroud
his glory with our nature as a cloud.
The angels sing this day, and so will I.
Christ had four beds and those not soft nor brave:
the Virgin's womb, the manger, cross, and grave.
The angels sing this day, and so will I
that have more reason to be glad than they..

Text: Rowland Waykyns (c. 1614-1664), from 'Upon Christ's Nativity'. Music: Sarah MacDonald (b. 1968)

¶ Please stand to sing.

HYMN



WHILE SHEPHERDS watched their flocks by night
all seated on the ground,
the angel of the Lord came down
and glory shone around.

**"Fear not," said he for mighty dread
had seized their troubled mind
"glad tidings of great joy I bring
to you and humankind.**

**"To you, in David's town, this day
is born of David's line
a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord;
and this shall be the sign:**

**"The heavenly babe you there shall find
to human view displayed,
all meanly wrapped in swaddling bands,
and in a manger laid."**

**Thus spake the seraph; and forthwith
appeared a shining throng
of angels praising God, who thus
addressed their joyful song:**

**"All glory be to God on high,
and to the world be peace;
Good will henceforth from heaven to earth
Begin and never cease."**

Words: Luke 2.8-14, para. Nahum Tate (1652-1715)

Whole Book of Psalmes, 1592; Desc. Craig Sellar Lang (1891-1971)

¶ Please be seated.

SIXTH LESSON

Matthew 2:1-11

IN THE TIME of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, 'Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.' When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, 'In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: "And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel."' Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, 'Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.' When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.' Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod.

CAROL

LULLA, BY, BY, lullay.
O sisters two, how may we do
For to preserve this day
This poor youngling for whom we do sing:
By, by, lully, lullay?

Herod the king, in his raging, charged he hath this day
His men of might, in his own sight
All young children to slay.

That woe is me, poor child, for thee, and ever mourn and say:
For thy parting, neither say nor sing:
By, by, lully, lullay.

*Text: 16th century English carol, from the mystery play
The pageant of the Sharmen and Tailors.*

Music: Tamsin Jones (b. 1972)

SEVENTH LESSON Colossians 1.15-20

HE IS THE IMAGE of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

CAROL

SOON MUST I SING with rejoicing,
For the time it is run.
Of a wee child all undefiled,
The King of Heaven's Son.

*His blood so red for thee was shed,
The price it was not small.
Remember well that which I tell,
And come when Jesu call.*

Man stands in doubt, and seekst about,
Where that they mayst him see.
Idols they set, riches to get,
Fashioned from stone and tree.

His blood....

Mankind I call which lies in thrall,
For love he made thee free.
To pay the debt the price was great,
From Hell he ransomed thee.

His blood....

Text: anon, 16th century

Music: Michael Finnissy (b. 1946)

¶*Please stand for the Lesson from the Gospel of John, on the next page.*

EIGHTH LESSON

John 1:1-14

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.

¶Please be seated.

CAROL

THE HOLLY AND THE IVY when they are both full grown,
of all the trees that are in the wood the holly bears the crown,
*O the rising of the sun, the running of the deer,
the playing of the merry organ, sweet singing in the choir.*

The holly bears a prickles as sharp as any thorn
and Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ on Christmas Day in the morn,
O the rising of the sun &c.

The holly bears a bark as bitter as any gall
and Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ for to redeem us all,
O the rising of the sun &c.

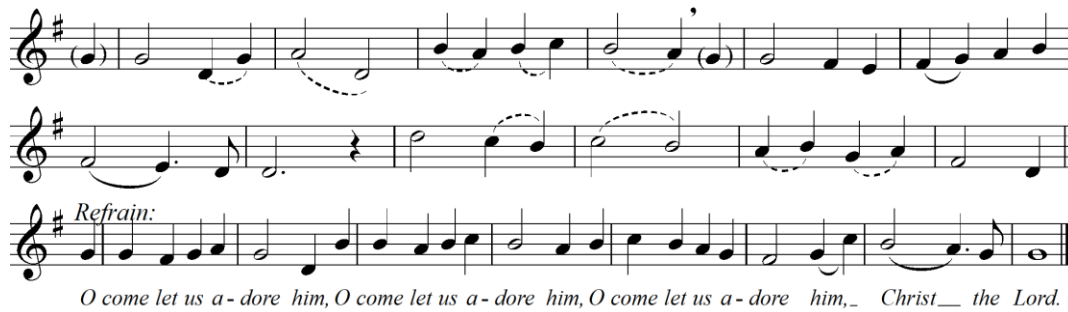
The holly and the ivy when they are both full grown,
of all the trees that are in the wood the holly bears the crown,
O the rising of the sun &c.

English traditional.

Music: French traditional, arr. June Nixon (b. 1942)

¶Please stand to sing the hymn.

HYMN



O COME, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him born the King of Angels:
*O come, let us adore him, O come let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!*

God of God, Light of Light,
Lo! he abhors not the Virgin's womb;
Very God, Begotten not created:

See how the shepherds, summoned to his cradle,
Leaving their flocks, draw nigh with lowly fear;
We too will thither bend our joyful footsteps:

Lo! star-led chieftains, Magi, Christ adoring,
Offer him incense, gold and myrrh;
We to the Christ Child bring our hearts' oblations:

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above;
Glory to God, in the highest:

Text: 18th century tr. F. Oakeley (1802-80)

Music: ADESTE FIDELES, J. F. Wade (1711-86);
desc: D Willcocks (1919-2015)

¶Please remain standing.

THE COLLECT AND BLESSING

O GOD, WHO makes us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of your only son, Jesus Christ: Grant that as we joyfully receive him for our Redeemer, so we may with sure confidence behold him when he shall come to be our judge; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end.

All: Amen.

CHRIST, WHO by his Incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, fill you with peace and goodwill and make you partakers of the divine nature; and the blessing . . .

All: Amen.

HYMN



HARK, THE HERALD angels sing Glory to the new-born King;
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled:
Joyful all ye nations rise, Join the triumph of the skies,
With th'angelic host proclaim, Christ is born in Bethlehem.
Hark! the herald angels sing Glory to the new-born King.

Christ, by highest heav'n adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold him come Offspring of a virgin's womb:
Veiled in flesh the God-head see, hail th'incarnate Deity!
Pleased as man with man to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! the herald angels sing Glory to the new-born King.

Hail the heav'n born prince of peace! Hail the sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, Risen with healing in his wings;
Mild he lays his glory by, Born that we no more may die,
Born to raise those of the earth, Born to give them second birth.
Hark! the herald angels sing Glory to the new-born King.

Text: Charles Wesley (1707-88)

*Music: MENDELSSOHN F. Mendelssohn (1809-47);
descant: David Willcocks*

ORGAN VOLUNTARY

In Dulci Jubilo, BWV 729

J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

*The Church of St. John the Divine wishes you a very
Happy Christmas!*

Christmas Services at St. John the Divine

Christmas Eve – Wednesday, December 24

4:00^{PM} The Story of the Nativity

Children, especially, are invited to participate in the telling of the Christmas story in word and song, featuring the Grumpy Innkeeper, and piano-led carols.

10:00^{PM} Midnight Mass

The festive first Eucharist of Christmas, with, carols, candlelight, sermon, the Choristers of St. John the Divine, and string ensemble. Setting: Joseph Haydn, Missa Brevis Sancti Joannis de Deo.

Christmas Day - Thursday, December 25

10:00^{AM} Christmas Communion

With sermon and organ-led carols.

Sundays at St. John the Divine

8:00^{AM} Holy Communion (BCP, said)

10:00^{AM} Parish Eucharist (With hymns and choir)

4.30^{PM} Choral Evensong (with choir or quartet – resumes in January, see website)

Anglican Church of St. John the Divine (Anglican Church of Canada)
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