



Diocese of
New Westminster
ANGELICAN CHURCH OF CANADA



St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church

servicing North Vancouver since 1899

December 24, 2020

Christmas Eve

5:00 p.m. Family Service

Presider: The Reverend Patrick Blaney

St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church

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WELCOME *We are glad you have joined us for worship this evening*

Christmas Letter 2020

Wow, what a year. I am reminded of a cartoon I once saw. Behind an imposing desk was a Yale University English Literary Professor. Such Professors apparently have a reputation for being very demanding and critical of their students. In front of the desk was a small, cowering Charles Dickens. The manuscript on the desk was "A Tale Of Two Cities". The caption was the Professor saying, "Charles, it might have been the best of times, and it may well have been the worst of times, but it could hardly have been both". I think our world has in these past few months experienced a degree of both the worst and the best. The death toll to the pandemic is staggering and thoroughly tragic. The loneliness of social isolation, particularly amongst our elders, is a serious concern. We have also witnessed acts of courage and kindness and volunteerism that showcase the very best of humanity. As I write these words people are literally being vaccinated against Covid-19 around the world. Hope is here and the end is prayerfully in sight.

Our St. John's community has also been through a year of tough challenges and new opportunities. I am saddened that in the long history of our wonderful Church, this will be the very first season of Advent and Christmas that St. Johns will be closed to in-person services. At the same time I am excited that we have online services that I trust will be meaningful to all of us, and warmly welcome once again this year the birth of our Saviour. As well, I am glad that this year we have been able to record and produce a regional joint Service of Lessons and Carols. Hope is here and the star of Bethlehem is in sight.

While St. John's has been physically apart as a community for the past few months, and will likely be for a few to come, I am so thankful we have been able to remain connected by other means. Our Sunday Service broadcasts, our weekday Morning Prayer, our Telephone Ministry, our Advent Discussion group and Zoom meetings of Parish Council, Fellowship and Hospitality, and Altar Guild are just a few examples. I know it is not the same as meeting in person, but in some ways St John's is now more connected as a community than we were before. I would like to thank the many people who have made this possible. Because of their hard work and dedication to our Church maintaining our connectedness has been, and continues to be, a successful work in progress. Hope is here and our love of God and each other abides.

This year has underscored for me many things but chief among them

would be the importance of a caring community, the peaceful acceptance of things I cannot change, reassessing what is truly valuable in life, the enduring good of humanity and the inexpressible power of hope and of love. My brothers and sisters in Christ, my Christmas message to you is that everything good I just mentioned in my letter above can be found and amplified in the birth of Jesus. God has walked with us this past year and once again leads us to Bethlehem where all things begin again. God invites all of us to dream out loud; to dream of a world free from the pandemic and a world where we can gather together once again to rejoice in each other and to worship our God. Hope is here and the new brilliant light of the love of God surrounds us.

Christmas blessings to you all and may God's newborn Son abide with you always. Merry Christmas!

The Reverend Patrick Blaney



Ministering today at our 5:00 p.m. service:

Presider:

The Reverend Patrick Blaney

Musician:

Galina Martyniuk, piano and organ

Choir Director:

Christie Smith

St John's North Vancouver Parish recognizes we are on the unceded Coast Salish territories within the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations.

The Gathering of the Community

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

All And also with you.

Celebrant Almighty God,
**All to you all hearts are open,
all desires are known,
and from you no secrets are hidden.
Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you, and worthily,
magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

The Collect

Celebrant Eternal God,
**All this holy night is radiant
with the brilliance of your one true light.
As we have known
the revelation of that light on earth,
bring us to see the splendour of your heavenly
glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy
Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.**

Liturgy for the Christ Candle at Christmas - Fulfillment

The Advent time of waiting and preparing is over!
We have lit four candles that remind us about
longing and peace and joy and love.

(The four Advent candles are lit)

These candles remind us that God promises to be with us, to comfort us, to help us rejoice, and to teach us to love.

Today we celebrate that God has come to be with us in the baby called Jesus.

Today we light one more candle, and we call it the Christ candle.

(The white Christ candle is lit)

This candle reminds us of all God has done for us. God fills us with good things, like hope and peace and joy and love. God is faithful to us. God is with us, now and always.

All **O God, come, travel with us through our lives.
Give us courage to spread your light in the world.
Amen.**

Advent Candle-Lighting Liturgy *we sing all verses of the hymn.*

Hymn ***Hope Is a Star***

**Hope is a star that shines in the night,
leading us on till the morning is bright.**

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 afraid.**

**Peace is a ribbon that circles the earth,
giving a promise of safety and worth.**

Refrain

**Joy is a song that welcomes the dawn,
telling the world that the Saviour is born.**

Refrain

**Love is a flame that burns in our heart.
Jesus has come and will never depart.**

Refrain

**We honour Messiah with Christ Candle's flame.
Our Christmas Eve candles glad tidings proclaim.**

Refrain

A Christmas Story: A Night Like No Other

Part One. This night is like no other night. It is a time to dream and sing our way to Bethlehem. The children will show us how to go. The little town we seek sits in the hill country some ten miles south of Jerusalem. For thousands of years the houses have gathered there on the hilltop like a family breaking bread. "Bethlehem" means "House of Bread." In the centre of the village is a small inn. On this night it is overflowing with people seeking sleep and a place to eat. Behind the inn is a dark stable. A gray donkey chews his barley and broken straw while a weary cow leans and rests after the day's plowing in the valley. A sheep nearby is nearly asleep. All is still and quiet in the little town.

Hymn On to Bethlehem Town

During the singing of the hymn, the children bring forward the donkey, the cow, and the sheep.

1

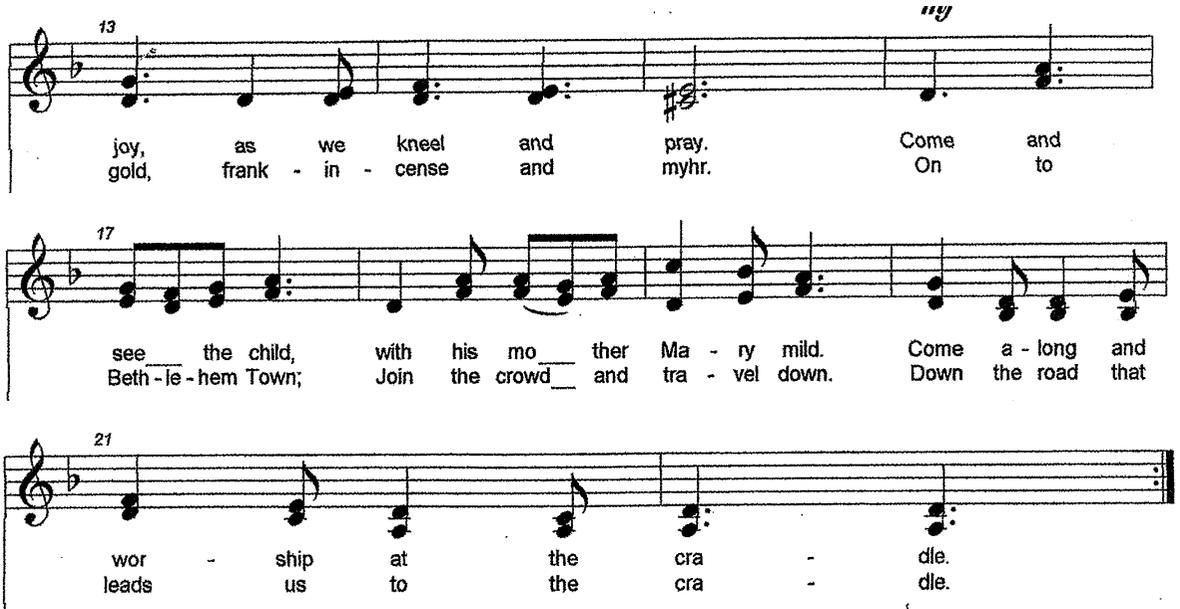
1. On to Beth-le-hem Town; Join the crowd and tra - vel down;
2. There we'll see the boy; Hearts a - glow with bound-less joy;

5

down the road that leads us to the cra - die. Come all who are
in the ev - er - las - ting word. We will bow be -

9

a - ble. Come, come to the sta - ble with hearts full of
for Him. Come, come and a - dore Him. Bring - ing gifts of



13 joy, as we kneel and pray. Come and
gold, frank - in - cense and myhr. On to

17 see the child, with his mother Ma - ry mild. Come a - long and
Beth - le - hem Town; Join the crowd and tra - vel down. Down the road that

21 wor - ship us at the the cra - die.
leads us to the the cra - die.

Part Two. As night gathers, the last two travellers come slowly up the road. Look, there is a young woman about to be a mother. She is walking with her husband. They are Joseph and Mary from Nazareth! They have walked for six days to come to this city where King David was born, so long ago.

They have come, like so many others, because the Roman emperor wants to count each one, so he can take their money as a tax. But it is late, and Mary is so weary. Where will they sleep? There is no room in the inn. They decide to sleep with the animals.

Hymn During the singing of the hymn, the children bring forward Mary and Joseph.

ONCE IN ROYAL DAVID'S CITY

IRBY 8 7 8 7 7 7 irregular

melody by Henry John Gauntlett 1805-1876
harmonized by Arthur Henry Mann 1850-1928

1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's ci - ty stood a low - ly cat - tle - shed,

where a mo - ther laid her ba - by in a man - ger for his bed.

Ma - ry was that mo - ther mild, Je - sus Christ her lit - tle child.

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.

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,
when, like stars, his children crowned
all in white shall gather round.

Cecil Frances Alexander 1823-1895

Part Three. Stars brighten slowly in the sky. All creation holds its breath. Suddenly, from the stable, comes the cry of a newborn child! Mary gently wraps the baby in a blanket and lays him in the feed box that his father has filled with straw.

Hymn *During the singing of the hymn, the children bring forward the baby Jesus.*

CHRISTIAN YEAR Christmas/Epiphany

126 Away in a Manger

Capo 1

E

C#m

F#m

11 11 11 11 11
CRADLE SONG

1 A - way in a man - ger, no crib for a bed,
2 The cat - tle are low - ing, the ba - by a - wakes,
3 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask you to stay

the lit - tle Lord Je - sus laid down his sweet head.
but lit - tle Lord Je - sus, no cry - ing he makes.
close by me for ev - er and love me, I pray.

The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
I love you, Lord Je - sus — look down from on high
Bless all the dear chil - dren in your ten - der care,

the lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.
and stay by my side un - til morn - ing is night.
and fit us for heav - en to live with you there.

Text: American (19th cent.),
Music: William James Kirkpatrick (1838–1921), adapt.

Part Four. In the hills outside Bethlehem, shepherds watch their shadowy sheep. All at once, the dark is lost in light, and in the midst of the light is something even brighter: the faces of angels. The fearful shepherds then hear music in the sky, and a voice says clearly, "Do not be afraid. Listen, I bring you news of great joy, a joy to be shared by all people. Today in the City of David a Savior is born! He is Christ, the Lord."

Then more angels appear, a whole heavenly host of them, praising God and singing: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill to all people, everywhere."

The shepherds run with joy across the fields to Bethlehem to the barn behind the inn. There they find the Holy Family and creep forward, overwhelmed with mystery, to find Nativity itself in the centre of all that love.

Hymn During the singing of the hymn, the children bring forward the shepherds and the angel.

CHRISTIAN YEAR Christmas/Epiphany

136 While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks

Descant

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It features a descant at the beginning. The lyrics are as follows:

"All glo - ry be to God on high, and
 1 While shep - herds watched their flocks by night all
 2 "Fear not," said he, for migh - ty dread had
 3 To you in Da - vid's town this day is
 4 the heaven - ly babe you there shall find to

The musical score continues with the following lyrics:

to the world be peace; good will hence - forth from
 seat - ed on the ground, the an - gel of the
 seized their trou - bled mind. "Glad ti - dings of great
 born of Da - vid's line a Sav - iour, who is
 hu - man view dis - played, all mean - ly wrapped in

Text: Luke 2:8-14; para. Minum; Tune (1652-1715), alt.
 Music: Melody Whole Book of Psalms, 1592; desc. Craig Sellar; Lang (1891-1971).
 Desc. © Novello & Co., Ltd. Reprinted by permission of Shawnee Press, Inc. (ASCAP).

WINCHESTER O.S.S.

heaven to earth be - gin, and ne - ver cease."

Lord came down and glo - ry shone a - round.
 joy I bring to you and hu - man - kind.
 Christ the Lord; and this shall be the sign:
 swadd - ling bands, and in a man - ger laid."

5 "All glory be to God on high,
 and to the world be peace;
 good will henceforth from heaven to earth
 begin, and never cease."

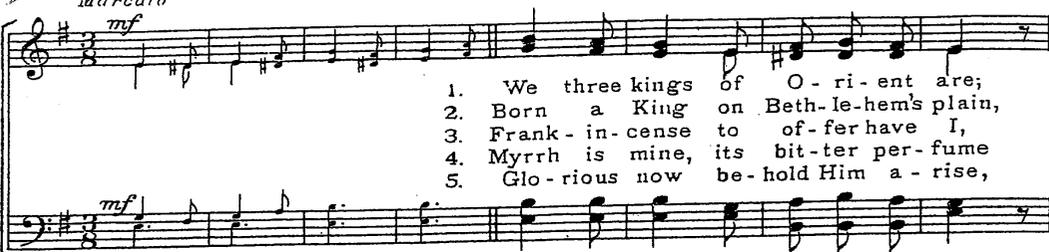
Part Five. Three camels plod up the road to Bethlehem. They have come from the East, far beyond the Arabian Desert, perhaps from as far as the Caspian Sea. The camels carry three kings, the wise ones, the Magi. They are following the wild star, the destiny they had never seen before, and they are following it, wherever it goes, to find the King its shining shows them.

Hymn During the singing of the hymn, the children bring forward the three kings.

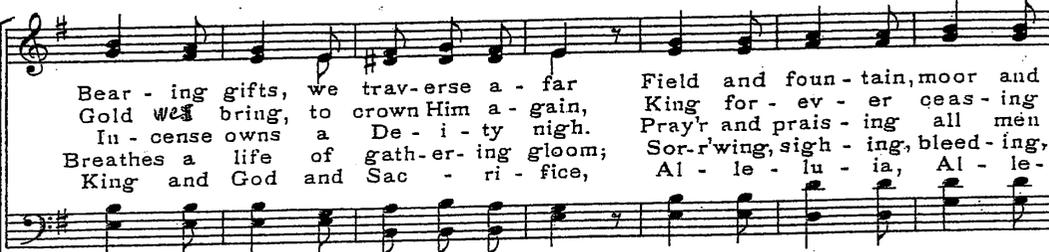
We Three Kings of Orient Are

JOHN H. HOPKINS, 1857

Marcato
mf



1. We three kings of O - ri - ent are;
2. Born a King on Beth - le - hem's plain,
3. Frank - in - cense to of - fer have I,
4. Myrrh is mine, its bit - ter per - fume
5. Glo - rious now be - hold Him a - rise,



Bear - ing gifts, we trav - erse a - far Field and foun - tain, moor and
 Gold we bring, to crown Him a - gain, King for - ev - er ceas - ing
 In - cense owns a De - i - ty nigh. Pray'r and prais - ing all men
 Breathes a life of gath - er - ing gloom; Sor - r'wing, sigh - ing, bleed - ing,
 King and God and Sac - ri - fice, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le -

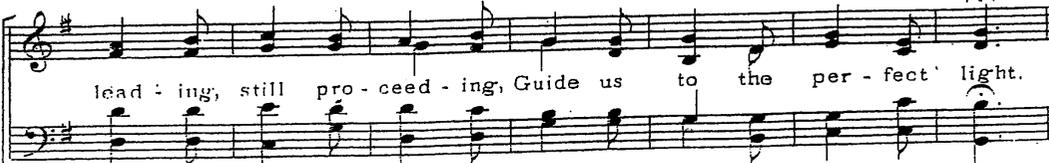
CHORUS
ff *a tempo*



moun - tain, Fol - low - ing yon - der star.
 nev - er O - ver us all to reign. } O — Star of won - der,
 rais - ing, Wor - ship Him, God most high. }
 dy - ing, Sealed in the stone - cold tomb. }
 lu - ia, Earth to the heav'ns re - plies. }



Star of night, Star with roy - al beau - ty bright, West - ward



lead - ing, still pro - ceed - ing, Guide us to the per - fect light.

Part Six. The kings' journey ends in a new kind of king. Their restlessness rests at last. They fall to their knees and give him bright gold, sweet-smelling frankincense and bitter myrrh, brought so far with so much love.

So now we all come, following the star, to find God-with-us. We come, as people have come all through the ages, to bring our own gifts to this Child, God's gift to us.

Come forward now. Bring your gifts of stars and of yourselves to place around the manger. Show us the way into the Mystery of Christmas, as we sing, for this night is holy and filled with overflowing silence.

Hymn *During the singing of the hymn, the children bring forward stars to place in and around the stable.*

119 Silent Night

Capo 1

1 Si - lent night! Ho - ly night! All is calm,
 2 Si - lent night! Ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake
 3 Si - lent night! Ho - ly night! Son of God,

all is bright round yon vir - gin moth - er and child.
 at the sight: glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far,
 love's pure light rad - iant beams from thy ho - ly face,

Ho - ly in - fant so ten - der and mild, sleep in
 heav - enly hosts sing al - le - lu - ia, Christ the
 with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus,

heav - en - ly peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
 Sav - iour is born, Christ the Sav - iour is born.
 Lord, at thy birth. Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth.

The Blessing

Dismissal

Presider Go forth in the name of Christ.

All Thanks be to God.



We wish you all a wonderful Christmas