

The Church of St. John the Divine

Christmas Eve – 8:00 pm

December 24, 2020

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 ancestral lands of the Lekwungen speaking 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.



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 of 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.

Worship in a time of COVID-19 : In these times when we must be careful in any gathering we have, appropriate protocols are in place. For the time being due to the instructions from the Provincial Health Officer we will be meeting virtually on Zoom. Please check our website on how to attend: <https://www.stjohnthedivine.bc.ca/> or contact admin@stjohnthedivine.bc.ca

We will continue to livestream the weekly service of Evensong.

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

Contacting Us: We are all learning ways to build community "at a distance." We are checking phone messages and answering emails. The main email for contact is: admin@stjohnthedivine.bc.ca. If you wish to receive prayer for yourself or for another, there will be members of our Healing Prayer group 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.

8:00 pm Parish Eucharist

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

Presider: The Reverend Bill Tarter

Reader: Margaret Walker

Gospel: The Reverend Patrick Sibley

Sermon: The Reverend Bill Tarter

Intercessor: Peggy Wilmot

Streaming Technician: Karen Coverett

The Gathering of the Community

Prelude

Welcome to all who are gathering online.

Lighting of the Christmas Candle

Loving God, you have called us to be your family and to celebrate our life together in worship. We gather now in our church building, our homes and online to light the Christmas candle.

Blessed are you, loving God, creator of the Universe,

All: for you have made all things and your creation is sacred.

As Isaiah the prophet reminds us: The people have walked in darkness, the people have lived in a land of deep darkness. Open our eyes that have been closed by indifference and greed.

All: We are your people, send your Light to dwell among us.

As this Christmas candle is lit, we remember the light of Christ fills our hearts. This light proclaims that the hungry will be fed, the broken will be healed, the lowly brought into dignity. For a child is born unto us

All: and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Loving God, Prince of Peace, Jesus, the Christ.

Hymn (CP 135)

Iris

Shepherds in the field abiding,
tell us, when the seraph bright
greeted you with wondrous tiding,
what you saw and heard that night.

Refrain

Gloria in excelsis Deo!

We beheld it is no fable,
God incarnate, king of bliss,
swathed and cradled in a stable,
and the angel strain was this:
Refrain

Choristers on high were singing
Jesus and his virgin birth,
heavenly bells the while a-ringing,
“Peace, good will to all on earth.”
Refrain

Thanks, good shepherds, true your story;
let us go to Bethlehem.
Angels hymn the king of glory;
carol -we with you and them.
Refrain

Text: French trad.; tr. George Ratcliffe Woodward (1848-1934), alt.
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The Collect for Christmas

Silence is kept.

Eternal God, 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.

All: Amen.

The Proclamation of the Word

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

All: Amen.

The First Reading

Isaiah 52:7-10

How beautiful upon the mountains
are the feet of the messenger who announces peace,
who brings good news,
who announces salvation,
who says to Zion, ‘Your God reigns.’

Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices,
together they sing for joy;
for in plain sight they see
the return of the LORD to Zion.
Break forth together into singing,
you ruins of Jerusalem;
for the LORD has comforted his people,
he has redeemed Jerusalem.
The LORD has bared his holy arm
before the eyes of all the nations;
and all the ends of the earth shall see
the salvation of our God.

Hear what the Spirit is saying.

All: Thanks be to God.

Psalm

98

Sing to the Lord a new song,
for he has done marvellous things.
With his right hand and his holy arm
has he won for himself the victory.
The Lord has made known his victory;
his righteousness has he openly shown in the sight of the nations.
He remembers his mercy and faithfulness to the house of Israel,
and all the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God.
Shout with joy to the Lord, all you lands;
lift up our voice, rejoice, and sing.
Sing to the Lord with the harp,
with the harp and the voice of song.
With trumpets and the sound of the horn
shout with joy before the King, the Lord.
Let the sea make a noise and all that is in it,
the lands and those who dwell therein.
Let the rivers clap their hands,
and let the hills ring out with joy before the Lord,
when he comes to judge the earth.
In righteousness shall he judge the world
and the peoples with equity.

Cantor: Alleluia. The word became flesh and dwelt among us : and we have seen his glory.
Alleluia.

God is with you.

All: And also with you.

Here the Good news of Jesus Christ according to John.

All: Glory to you, O Christ.

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.

The Gospel of Christ.

All: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Following the address there will be a pause for silence.

Affirmation of Faith

With the whole church,

**All: we affirm that we are made in God's image,
befriended by Christ, empowered by the Spirit.**

With people everywhere,

**All: we affirm God's goodness at the heart of humanity
planted more deeply than all that is wrong.**

With all creation,

**All: we celebrate the miracle and wonder of life;
the unfolding purposes of God,
forever at work in ourselves and the world.**

Prayers of the People

Please note that those who have asked for our prayers are listed at the end of the leaflet.

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

Hymn during the Offertory (CP 123)

Irby

Once 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.

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.

Text: Cecil Frances Alexander (1818-1895), alt.

The Prayer over the Gifts

In the name of all of us gathered, near and far, we present these our gifts to God.

Let us pray:

Source of light and gladness,
accept all we offer on this joyful feast.

May we grow up in him who unites our lives to yours;
for he is Lord now and for ever.

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.

Let us pray.

Thanks be to you,

All: Lord Jesus Christ, for all the benefits you have given us, and all that you have borne for us. In our sharing in this Eucharist, in Church or at home, we ask you to come spiritually into our hearts. O most merciful redeemer, friend and brother, may we know you more clearly, love you more dearly and follow you more nearly, day by day. Amen.

The Great Thanksgiving

Liturgy of the Islands and Inlets – Prayer C

God is here.

All: The Spirit is with us.

Lift up your hearts and minds.

All: We lift them to God.

Let us give thanks to God the Creator.

All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Blessed are you, gracious God,
creator of heaven and earth,
because in the mystery of the Word made flesh
you have caused a new light to shine in our hearts,
to give knowledge of salvation
in the face of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Now, with angels and archangels
and the whole company of heaven,
we lift our voices
to proclaim the glory of your name.

Sanctus (CP 735)

*Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might.
Holy, holy, holy Lord
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full,
full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest,
hosanna in the highest.*

*Blessèd is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest,
hosanna in the highest.*

To you be glory, almighty God,
because on the night before he died,
Jesus took bread,
when he had given thanks,
he broke it, gave it to his disciples, and said:
Take, eat, this is my body
which is given for you; do this to remember me.

After supper he took the cup;
when he had given thanks,
he gave it to them and said:
Drink this all of you,
This is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you;
do this to remember me.
Great is the mystery of faith.

All: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

Recalling Christ's death and resurrection,
we ask you to accept this, our sacrifice of praise.
Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here,
and on these gifts of bread and wine
that we may be fed with the body and blood of your Son.
When all of creation groans, unite us in Christ and give us your hope
that we might be strengthened to do your work,
as your body in the world.
Through Christ our Redeemer, in the power of the Spirit,
all praise and glory be yours, Almighty God, now and forever.

All: Amen.

The Disciple's Prayer

As Christ taught his friends, and longing for the new life of God's reign,
let us pray:

All: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread

We break the bread of life,
and that life is the light of the world.

**All: God here among us,
light in the midst of us,
bring us to light and life.**

The Communion

The gifts of God for the people of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

Hymn during communion (NEH 40)

What child is this, who, laid to rest
On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
While shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King,
Whom shepherds worship and angels sing:
Haste, haste to bring him praise
The Babe, the son of Mary.

Why lies he in such mean estate,
Where ox and ass are feeding?
Come, have no fear, God's son is here,
His love all loves exceeding:
Nails, spear, shall pierce him through,
The cross be borne from me, for you:
Hail, hail, the Saviour comes,
The Babe, the son of Mary.

So bring him incense, gold and myrrh,
All tongues and peoples own him,
The King of kings salvation brings,
Let every heart enthrone him:
Raise, raise your song on high
While Mary sings a Lullaby,
Joy, joy, for Christ is born,
The Babe, the son of Mary.

Text: W. Chatterton Dix (1837-1898), and Editors

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, we spiritually share one bread.

Prayer after Communion

Father of all,
tonight you have united earth and heaven
in sending your Son to take our human nature.
May we who have tasted heavenly things
share in the life of his eternal kingdom.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Blessing

Dismissal

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

All: Thanks be to God. Amen.

Postlude

Please stay and join us for our Zoom Coffee Hour.

Readings for January 3rd – The Epiphany of Our Lord

Isaiah 60:1-6 The glory of the Lord is light for all the nations.

Psalms 72:1-7, 10-14 In the ancient Near East, kings were next to gods. A king and his heir were seen as endowed with justice by gods, and had special responsibility for the poor and needy. This psalm is a prayer for the king, possibly written for a coronation.

Ephesians 3:1-12 The manifestation of God's revelation to the Gentiles is celebrated and Paul's ministry to them affirmed.

Matthew 2:1-12 "Wise men" (in Latin: magi) were members of a Persian caste of astrologers and interpreters of dreams. Astrology was widely accepted then. A star was associated with each person; the way the star rose told the wise men that a king had been born. A later church tradition called the wise men kings.

Flowers are given to the Glory of God

in loving memory of Herb & Ruth Zenger, Hugh & Betty McCaw and Alan Ormerod.



EVENSONG

Every Sunday – sung by a small ensemble of Choral Scholars

Evensong is a contemplative, musical and prayerful liturgy, ideally suited to the end of the week and the close of day, and to this current time when we have been asked to avoid congregational singing, but still long for the depth and beauty of a choral liturgy.

Evensong will be livestreamed on the church Facebook page and available via the website www.stjohnthedivine.bc.ca



The following people have asked for our prayers.
Please keep them in mind as you go through your week.

Hagos, Tsigay & family	Alan	Richard
Anne	Derek	Merle
Harriet	John	Marion
Philip & Lisa	Linda	Blanche
Rhoda	Helen	Iris
Silvana Carr	David & Pat	Cathy
Carolyn	Gary	Jessie
Nicholas	Liz	John
Patrick	Lorraine	

R.I.P. – Alan Ormerod

The Anglican Church of St. John the Divine

Stewards

People's Warden: Joan Huzar
Associate Warden: Lorraine Gates
Envelope Secretary: Jim Harlick

Rector's Warden: Michael King
Associate Warden: Karen Coverett
Treasurer: David Buckman

Parish Council

Susan Bansgrove, Carol Denton, Marguerite Heppell,
Penny Holt, Erin Kelly

Synod Delegates

Karen Coverett, Joel Hefty, Bill Huzar, Joan Huzar

Staff Supporting the Ministry of St. John's

Rector: The Ven. Alastair McCollum
Associate Priest: The Rev'd Canon Kevin Arndt
Associate Priest: The Rev'd Bill Tarter
Deacon: The Rev'd Patrick Sibley
Curate: Stephanie Wood

Director of Music: David Stratkauskas
Family Ministry Coordinator: Ruth MacIntosh
Parish Administrator: Carol-Ann Zenger

Honorary Assistants

The Rev'd Derek Dunwoody / The Rev'd Canon Andrew Gates
The Rev'd Jane Reid

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