

CHRISTMAS  
EVE



## St. John's Anglican Church

Lunenburg, Nova Scotia

Rector: The Rev. Michael H. Mitchell

To all who mourn or need comfort,  
To all who are weary and need rest,  
To all who seek friendship,  
To all who desire to grow in relationship with God  
To all who yearn pray,  
To all who need a Saviour, And to all whoever will worship,  
This Church of St. John's opens wide its doors  
and in the name of Christ our Lord, says - WELCOME.

## Announcements and Welcome

### Prelude: Brass Quartet -

Laura Allen  
Sarah Wentzell  
Garry Macey  
Scott MacDonald



Christmas Eve  
Communion

### St. John Ringers - Journey of The Kings arr. Sharon E. Rogers

Please stand for Processional Hymn

### Processional Hymn # 123 Once in Royal David's City

Once in Royal David's City stood a lowly cattle shed,  
Where a Mother lay 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.

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,  
When, like stars, his children crowned All in white shall gather round.

## 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.

*People* **And also with you.**

### Lighting of The Christ Candle - 'Emmanuel - God with us!'

**Reader 1:** The waiting is over.

**Reader 2:** Christ's birth brings a new reality.

**Reader 1:** Our hopes and dreams are real.

**Reader 2:** God's promise has been fulfilled.

**Reader 1:** The Advent candles are all lit, a circle of light  
to remind us of God's never-ending love for us.  
(Light the Christ candle)

**Reader 2:** Now we light the Christ candle, celebrating the presence of  
Jesus in our midst, today and always.

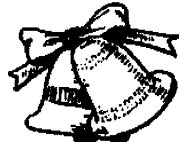
**Thank you, God, for coming to be with us in the person of Jesus. We rejoice that he lived as one of us, knowing our joys and sorrows, our pains, hopes and dreams. As he came to show your love to us, help us to show your love to others all the year through.**

*Light the Christmas candles, now; Sing of donkey, sheep and cow.  
Birthday candles for the King, let the alleluias ring.  
Candle, candle, burning bright, Shining in the cold winter night;  
Candle, candle, burning bright, Fill our hearts with Christmas light.*

## Glory To God

**Everyone Rings their Bell while singing:**

**Gloria, Gloria, in excelsus Deo,  
Gloria, Gloria, Alleluia, Alleluia.**



Glory to God in the highest and peace  
to his people on earth. **(Gloria... - Ring Bells)**  
Lord, God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father.  
We worship you, we give you thanks,  
we praise you for your glory. **(Gloria... - Ring Bells)**  
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,  
Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world:  
have mercy on us:  
You are seated at the right hand of the Father:  
receive our prayer. **(Gloria... - Ring Bells)**  
For you alone are the Holy One, You alone are the Lord.  
You alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,  
With the Holy Spirit, in the Glory of God the Father. Amen.

## The Collect for Christmas Eve

*Celebrant Let us pray. The community prays silently. The celebrant says the collect.*

Eternal God, this holy night is radiant with the brilliance of your one true light, Jesus Christ the Lord. 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.**

## The Proclamation of the Word

### A READING FROM THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

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. **ISAIAH 52:7-10**  
The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**Choir Anthem:** *How Beautiful Upon the Mountains - Stainer*

## PSALM 96 ALL JOIN IN THE REFRAIN

**Today is born our Saviour, Christ the Lord.**  
**Verses sung by: Louis Quennelle**

### A READING FROM THE LETTER OF PAUL TO TITUS

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ. He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.  
The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.** *TITUS 2:11-14*

**Gradual Hymn #136** While Shepherds Watch Their Flocks by Night

**Gospel Reader** The Lord be with you. *People* **And also with you.**  
**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO LUKE.** *People* **Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

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.



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 Savior, 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 favors!"

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. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them. Lk. 2:1-14

The Gospel of Christ. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

**Choir Anthem** - 'Hurry, Hurry Yonder'

**Christmas Sermon**

*Rev'd Michael Mitchell*

**The Apostles Creed** *In joy, we confess the faith of our baptism::*

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.**

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit  
and born of the Virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

**He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again.**

**He ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

**The Prayers of the People** *Please kneel or sit for the prayers.*

**Response: Lord Jesus, be born in our hearts.**

**Confession and Absolution**

Dear friends in Christ,  
God is steadfast in love and infinite in mercy;  
he welcomes sinners and invites them to his table.  
Let us confess our sins, confident in God's forgiveness.

*Silence is kept.*

All Most merciful God,  
**we confess that we have sinned against you  
in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done,**

**and by what we have left undone.  
We have not loved you with our whole heart;  
we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.  
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.  
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,  
have mercy on us and forgive us,  
that we may delight in your will,  
and walk in your ways,  
to the glory of your name. Amen.**

Almighty God have mercy upon you,  
pardon + and deliver you from all your sins,  
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,  
and keep you in eternal life;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**The Peace** *All stand, and the celebrant addresses the people.*

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

**And also with you.** *The assembly greets one another in the name of the Lord.*

**The Celebration of the Eucharist**

**The Preparation of the Gifts**

**Offertory Hymn #118 – O Come, All Ye Faithful**

*Parishioners share in gathering the offering of God's people. Each one as they are able, makes an offering to the Lord for the needs and responsibilities of the Church to be placed on the altar.*

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; *Refrain*

Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation,  
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;  
Glory to God In the highest; *Refrain*

See how the shepherds, Summoned to his cradle,  
Leaving their flocks, draw nigh to gaze;  
We too will thither Bend our joyful footsteps; *Refrain*

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, Born this happy morning;  
Jesus, to thee be glory given; Word of the Father,  
Now in flesh appearing; *Refrain*

**The Prayer over the Gifts** *Read by celebrant.*

Source of light and goodness, 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 forever. **Amen.**

## **The Great Thanksgiving - Eucharistic Prayer #6**

*Sung Setting "The Mass of Creation" by Marty Haugen,  
copies available in seat pockets.*

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**  
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**  
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

### **Preface for Christmas**

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.  
Therefore we praise you Lord, with all the angels, in their song of joy.

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
God of power, God of might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.**



We acclaim you, holy Lord, glorious in power; your mighty works reveal your wisdom and love. You formed us in your own image, giving the whole world into our care, so that, in obedience to you, our creator, we might rule and serve all your creatures. When our disobedience took us far from you, you did not abandon us to the power of death. In your mercy you came to our help, so that in seeking you we might find you. Again and again you called us into covenant with you, and through the prophets you taught us to hope for salvation.

Father, you loved the world so much that in the fullness of time you sent your only Son to be our Saviour. Incarnate by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, he lived as one of us, yet without sin. To the poor he proclaimed the good news of salvation; to prisoners, freedom; to the sorrowful, joy.

To fulfil your purpose he gave himself up to death and, rising from the grave, destroyed death and made the whole creation new. And that we might live no longer for ourselves, but for him who died and rose for us, he sent the Holy Spirit, his own first gift for those who believe, to complete his work in the world, and to bring to fulfilment the sanctification of all.

When the hour had come for him to be glorified by you, his heavenly Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end: at supper with them he took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "*Take, eat: this is my body which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.*" After supper he took the cup of wine; and 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, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."*

Father, we now celebrate the memorial of our redemption. Recalling Christ's death and descent among the dead, proclaiming his resurrection and ascension to your right hand, awaiting his coming in glory; and offering to you, from the gifts you have given us, this bread and this cup, we praise you and we bless you.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith. *(Sung)*

**Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.  
Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.**

Father, we pray that in your goodness and mercy your Holy Spirit may descend upon us, and upon these gifts, sanctifying them and showing them to be holy gifts for your holy people, the bread of life and the cup of salvation, the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.

Grant that all who share this bread and this cup may become one body and one spirit, a living sacrifice in Christ to the praise of your name.

Remember, Lord, your one holy catholic and apostolic Church, redeemed by the blood of your Christ. Reveal its unity, guard its faith, and preserve it in peace. Remember Rowan, the Archbishop of Canterbury and Fred, the Primate of all Canada, together with our bishops Sue and Ron. Remember, Michael our Rector, and all bishops, priests and deacons, and everyone who ministers in your Church.

Remember all your people, this Christmas Eve who seek your light and your truth, especially this congregation of St. John's, Lunenburg.

Remember all those who are in need of our prayer, all those who are ill and in need of hope. Remember all who have died in the peace of Christ, and those whose faith is known to you alone; bring them into the place of eternal joy and light. And grant that we may find our inheritance with the blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of our Lord, with patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and martyrs, with St. John, patron of this parish and all the saints who have found favour with you in ages past. We praise you in union with them and give you glory through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ, all honour and glory are yours, almighty God and Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever.

**Amen.** *(Sung)*

## The Lord's Prayer

With joyful hearts on this Christmas Eve, we join with Christians everywhere, saying:

**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.**

## The Breaking of the Bread

*The celebrant breaks the consecrated bread for distribution, and says:*

We break the bread of life, and that life is the light of the world  
**God here among us, light in the midst of us, bring us to light and life.**

*The celebrant invites the people to share in communion and says,*  
The gifts of God for the People of God.  
**All Thanks be to God.**

**Jesus Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.**  
**Jesus Bread of life, you take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.**  
**Jesus Prince of Peace you take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.**  
**Jesus Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, grant us your peace.**

*The celebrant and people then receive communion.*  
The body of Christ (given for you). The blood of Christ (shed for you).  
*The communicant responds each time, Amen.*

The Anglican Church  
welcomes to the Lord's table  
all who are baptized and who wish to be nourished  
with the Body and Blood of Christ.

## Music During Communion:

**#122** In the Bleak Mid-Winter  
'Improvisations on 'Es ist ein Ros Entsprungen' and 'In Dulci Jubilo' - Chris Norman, flute *Flutist* - Chris Norman

## Prayer after Communion

*Celebrant* Let us pray. *Standing, the community prays in silence.*

Father of all, tonight you have united earth to 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. **Amen.**

## Doxology

Glory to God,  
**All whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine.**  
**Glory to God from generation to generation, in the Church and in Christ Jesus, for ever and ever. Amen.**

## Hymn #119 "Silent Night"

*(The choir will process in the aisles, and pass the light to each one. Please pass the flame along).*

Silent night, holy night, All is calm, all is bright.  
Round yon Virgin Mother and Child, Holy Infant so tender and mild.  
Sleep in heavenly peace, Sleep in heavenly peace

Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight.  
Glories stream from heaven afar, Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia!  
Christ, the Saviour is born, Christ, the Saviour is born.

Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's pure light.  
Radiant beams from Thy holy face, With the dawn of redeeming grace.  
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

## Christmas Blessing

May Christ who by his incarnation gathered into one all things earthly and heavenly, fill you with peace and goodwill this Christmas Eve and make you partakers of the divine nature; And the blessing of God almighty, Father + Son, and Holy Spirit, be with you now and remain with you always. **Amen.**

## Dismissal

Go in joyful hope to love and serve the Lord.  
**All Thanks be to God.**

## Recessional Hymn: #143 Angels From the Realms of Glory

Angels from the realms of glory, Wing your flight o'er all the earth;  
Ye who sang creation's story, Now proclaim Messiah's birth:  
Come and worship, Come and worship,  
Worship Christ, the newborn King!

Shepherds, in the fields abiding, Watching o'er your flocks by night,  
God with man is now residing, Yonder shines the infant Light;  
Come and worship, Come and worship,  
Worship Christ, the newborn King!

Sages, leave your contemplations, Brighter visions beam afar;  
Seek the great desire of nations, Ye have seen His natal star;  
Come and worship, Come and worship,  
Worship Christ, the newborn King!

Saints before the altar bending, Watching long in hope and fear,  
Suddenly the Lord, descending, In His temple shall appear:  
Come and worship, Come and worship,  
Worship Christ, the newborn King!

Though an infant now we view him, he shall fill the eternal throne,  
gather all the nations to him; every knee shall then bow down:  
come and worship, come and worship,  
worship Christ, the newborn king.

**Postlude: Toccata - Boellmann**

*If You Look For Me At Christmas you won't need a special star  
I'm no longer just in Bethlehem, I'm right there where you are.  
You may not be aware of Me amid the celebrations –  
You'll have to look beyond the stores and all the decorations.  
But if you take a moment from your list of things to do  
And listen to your heart, you'll find I'm waiting there for you.  
You're the one I want to be with, you're the reason that I came,  
And you'll find Me in the stillness as I'm whispering your name.  
Love, Jesus*



**On behalf of the Parish of St. John's Church, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Father Michael for the hard work he does behind the scenes to create such beautiful and meaningful services all year long, but especially at Christmas. We are truly blessed to have such wonderful guidance and leadership.**

**We wish Michael and Holly a blessed and joyous Christmas as they celebrate the birth of Christ this Christmas season.**

*~Mary Wagner, Parish secretary*

