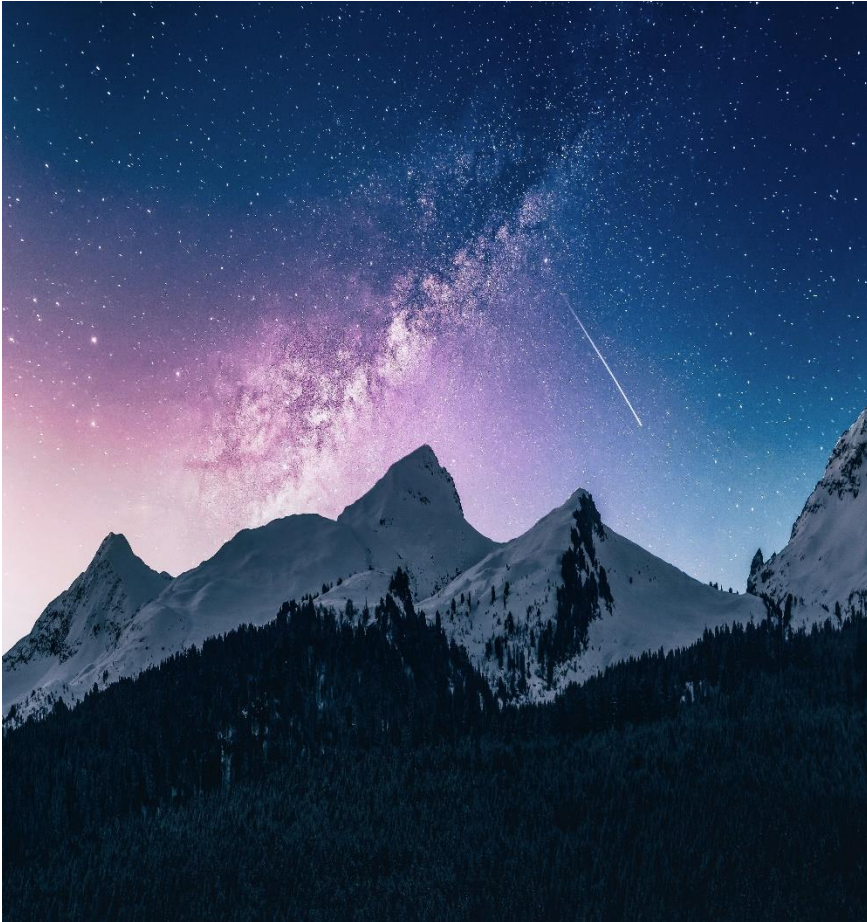


**The Anglican Parish of
St. Peter and St. Paul
December 24th 2024 10:00 PM
Christmas Eve Candlelit Eucharist Service**



I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people; for to you is born this day a Saviour, Christ the Lord.

Prelude

Words of Greeting and Welcome

(Please stand as clergy enters)

In the season of Advent we have used the Advent wreath and its candles to help us get ready for this great celebration of the birth of Christ, and so we have lit the candles of hope, peace, joy and love.

Today we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, a love incarnate which fulfils promises of old and demonstrates God's love for all.

(Christmas candle of advent wreath is lit)

Let us pray

Holy God, you wonderfully created and yet more wonderfully restored our human nature. May we share the divine life of your Son Jesus Christ, who humbled himself to share our humanity, and now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Joy to the World

(please stand)

*Joy to the world! The Lord is come: let earth receive the King;
let every heart prepare him room, and heaven and nature sing.*

*Joy to the earth! The Saviour reigns: let us glad songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding
joy.*

*No more let wrongs and sorrows grow, nor thorns infest the ground;
he comes to make his blessings flow far as our sin is found.*

He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove the glories of his righteousness and wonders of his love.

The Gathering of the Community *(please remain standing)*

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

And also with you.

Almighty God,

to you all hearts are open, all desires 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.

Gloria (Tune: chorus of Shepherds in the Fields Abiding)

Gloria in excelsis Deo

Gloria in excelsis Deo

(be seated)

The Story of Faith is Proclaimed

First Reading: Isaiah 9:2-7

A reading from Isaiah.

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined.

You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy;

they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder.

For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian.

For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named

Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it

with justice and with righteousness from this time onwards and for evermore.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 96

Sing to the Lord a new song;
sing to the Lord, all the whole earth.

**Sing to the Lord and bless his name;
proclaim the good news of his salvation from day to day.**

Declare his glory among the nations
and his wonders among all peoples.

**For great is the Lord and greatly to be praised;
he is more to be feared than all gods.**

As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols;
but it is the Lord who made the heavens.

**Oh, the majesty and magnificence of his presence!
Oh, the power and the splendour of his sanctuary!**

Ascribe to the Lord, you families of the peoples;
ascribe to the Lord honour and power.

**Ascribe to the Lord the honour due his name;
bring offerings and come into his courts.**

Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness;
let the whole earth tremble before him.

**Tell it out among the nations: “The Lord is king!
he has made the world so firm that it cannot be moved;
he will judge the peoples with equity.”**

Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad;
let the sea thunder and all that is in it;
let the field be joyful and all that is therein.

**Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy
before the Lord when he comes,
when he comes to judge the earth.**

He will judge the world with righteousness
and the peoples with his truth. **Amen.**

Second Reading: Titus 3:4-7

A reading from Titus.

But when the goodness and loving-kindness of God our Saviour
appeared, he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness

that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

Thanks be to God.

O Little Town of Bethlehem (*Forest Green*)

(please stand)

*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 tonight.*

*For Christ is born of Mary; and, gather all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the King, and peace to all the earth.*

Gospel Reading: Luke 2:1-20

(please remain standing)

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

Praise 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 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. 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.

The gospel of Christ.

Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.

*How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is given
as love imparts to human hearts the blessings of God's heaven!
No ear may hear his coming; but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in.*

*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.*
(be seated)

Christmas Reflection *The Rev. Gail Rodger*

Special Music “Jesus, Joy of Man’s Desiring” from the cantata *Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben* (BWV 147) by Johann Sebastian Bach.

Prayers of the People

Let us pray to God, who came among us in the birth of Jesus:

Gracious God, Jesus’s birth drew strangers from great distances to Bethlehem that they might greet the Christ-child; draw all people

into unity, loving each other through diversity, that we might be the church and the people you call us to be. Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

As you gave Mary your Holy Spirit, filling her with the delight of your Presence; fill us with your Spirit, and renew our lives. Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

As ordinary people streamed to Jesus' light, and kings to the brightness of his rising; draw all in authority, to his brightness that they might see mercy and justice. Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

As angels sang 'glorias' to you and proclaimed peace on earth, and goodwill among all peoples; bring us your peace, and bring an end to war, terror and strife. Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

As shepherds were drawn away from their flocks by night; remind us again of your creation and how to steward it well. Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

As Jesus was born in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn; be especially present with those who have nowhere to lay their head, those who are vulnerable, and those who are hungry. Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

As the Holy Family gathered together in Bethlehem, and travelled together to far off lands; protect those who travel. Please bless all families, especially the families of our parish, those who could gather, and be with those who could not. Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

As your son came to proclaim the forgiveness of sins, and the assurance of life eternal; give to the departed, eternal rest and let light perpetual shine on them. Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

O Lord our God, may the Light and Hope of this night, and of your Son's Incarnation, reassure our hearts that you are among us, that you hear our prayer, and that you will be with us always, even to the end of the age. In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, we pray. **Amen.**

The Peace *(please stand)*

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

The Celebration of the Eucharist

The Preparation of the Gifts: the table is set

(The offering plate is in front of the font at the back of the church to accommodate your gift. The offering plate is not passed through the pews or brought forward and is available before and briefly after each service. You may also donate online by using the QR code on the inside of the back page of this bulletin.)

Good Christians All Rejoice *(please remain standing)*

*Good Christians all, rejoice with heart and soul and voice!
Listen now to what we say: Jesus Christ is born today;
ox and ass before him bow and he is in the manger now!
Christ is born today; Christ is born today!*

*Good Christians all, rejoice with heart and soul and voice!
Hear the news of endless bliss: Jesus Christ was born for this;
he has opened heaven's door and we are blessed for evermore!
Christ was born for this; Christ was born for this.*

*Good Christians all, rejoice with heart and soul and voice!
Now you need not fear the grave; Jesus Christ was born to save:
come at his most gracious call to find salvation, one and all!
Christ was born to save; Christ was born to save!*

Prayer of Thanksgiving

God of light and gladness, accept all we offer on this joyful feast.
May we grow in love, uniting our lives to yours; in the name of the
Holy One who is Lord now and forever. **Amen**

Eucharistic Prayer *(please remain standing)*

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.

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.

(Tune: Hark the Herald Angels Sing Melody)

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might adored
heaven and earth are shining bright
with the glory of your light.**

**Loud hosannas now we sing! In the highest may they ring!
Blessed is the coming one, Christ, Emmanuel, your Son.
Glory in the highest! Holy God, your name be blessed.**

Holy God, source of life and goodness, all creation rightly gives you praise. In the fullness of time, you sent your Son Jesus Christ, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all. He healed the sick and ate and drank with outcasts and sinners; he opened the eyes of the blind and proclaimed the good news of your kingdom to the poor and to those in need. In all things he fulfilled your gracious will.

On the night he freely gave himself to death, our Lord Jesus Christ 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.”

Gracious God, his perfect sacrifice destroys the power of sin and death; by raising him to life you give us life for evermore.

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith.

(Tune: We Three Kings)

Dying Christ destroyed our death.

Rising Christ restores our life.

Christ will come again in glory, raising us all to life.

Oh, God of power, God of might, God of love, our hearts delight:

Feed us, guide us, walk beside us, bless us with gentle light.

Recalling his death, proclaiming his resurrection, and looking for his coming again in glory, we offer you, Father, this bread and this cup. Send your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these gifts, that all who eat and drink at this table may be one body and one holy people, a living sacrifice in Jesus Christ, our Lord. Through Christ, with Christ, and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory is yours, almighty Father, now and for ever.

The Lord's Prayer

And now, with the words our Saviour Christ has taught us, we are bold to say:

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

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.

(Tune Infant Holy Infant Lowly)

**God our Mother, Christ our Brother,
Spirit in these gifts you vow**

**By your giving, in our living, we become your body now
Bread is broken, light revealing; word is spoken for our healing
Make us all your body now. Amen. Amen.**

The table of love is offered for all people. It is Christ who invites us to meet love incarnate here, and all are welcome.

The gifts of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

(be seated)

The Communion

(Communion will be offered in the pew for those with mobility issues; please let the greeter/usher know. Communion is at the altar rail. If receiving, please walk single file on the right to the front. Responses to receiving the host include: Amen: Hallelujah; or Thanks be to God. Please approach the altar rail and cross your arms if you prefer a blessing to communion. Please be seated after receiving.)

Instrumental musical selections during communion

Prayer after Communion *(please stand)*

Let us pray,

God of all, tonight you have united earth and heaven in sending Jesus to take our human nature. May we all share in the life abundant on earth and in the eternal kingdom. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord. **Amen.**

Candle lighting

As the light of love shines in the darkness so a candle's light shows the love of God to the world. And now, we'd like to invite you to light a candle.

(Candles are lit by passing the light on from one to the other along the pew. Please hold the lit candle upright and tip only the unlit candle to prevent wax from dripping. Once all the candles are lit, we will dim the lights and sing. We will then hold silence for a few moments.)

Silent Night

*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 Savior is born.*

Christ the Savior 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*

Please hold silence

(Please do not blow out your candles. Candles will be snuffed out. As the light of the candle is extinguished, we say)

May God's love live in your heart and shine in your life.

Blessing

May the true spirit of Christmas be with us all.
The spirit of joy that overflows from the heart
and makes neighbours rejoice,
the spirit of peace that harmonises differences
and makes music of our common life.
The spirit of love that sings the mind
of God to the world.

And may the blessing of the manger –
God's creation all around;
the blessing of the shepherds –
God's people on the ground;
the blessing of the angels –
good news for all, and peace for the world,

be among us, and remain with us, always.

Go, Tell it on the Mountain

Refrain

Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere.

Go, tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born.

*While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night,
behold, throughout the heavens there shone a holy light.*

Refrain

*The shepherds feared and trembled when lo, above the earth
rang out the angel chorus that hailed our Saviour's birth.*

Refrain

*Down in a lonely manger the humble Christ was born,
and God sent our salvation that blessed Christmas morn.*

Refrain

Dismissal

Go forth into the world rejoicing and loving one another in Christ.

Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

Postlude

Thank you so much for coming tonight. St Peter and St Paul hope and pray you will have a blessed Christmas and every happiness in the New Year.

For this service
Greeter: Don Rodger

Reader: John Ducker
Server: Sharon Wickware
Organist: Lawrence Surges
Altar guild: Ann Easton and Sharon Wickware

Donations for the poinsettias and flowers are given in Glory to God by Gail Gill, Betty Hendry, Rosemary Wallace, Ann Easton, Licette How, Leatrice Lam, Mavis Pillar, Annie Kung and Sharon Wickware.

We worship on the traditional lands of the Lək̓ʷəŋən speaking peoples, who are the Esquimalt, Songhees and other Nations of the Salish and Coast Salish Peoples. We, who came from many lands to join the line of those worshipping here, commit our Church to continue the journey of truth and reconciliation with our First Nations' neighbours.

We care about Esquimalt!

St Peter and St Paul is your local Anglican church and a registered charity. We have donated over \$6,800 this year to local people in need, St John the Divine Food Bank, Rainbow Kitchen and The Victoria Friendship Native Centre. Please consider donating tonight or becoming a committed supporter of SPSP by setting up a monthly donation through our website using the “donate now” button or use the QR code provided.



Credit cards accepted and charitable tax receipts are provided.

www.stpeterandpaul.ca



ST. PETER AND ST. PAUL
ESQUIMALT

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Rector's Warden Ann Easton

People's Warden Adora Waters

Organist Lawrence Surges

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**Our regular Sunday services resume January 5th 2025
10 AM in person or 9AM online.**