

## **Christmas Eve Candlelight Service**

December 24, 2023 — 5:00 p.m.

### **BAS Holy Eucharist**

*Rev'd Jon Forbes*

*assisted by - John Hayter*

*Organist – Dorothy Miller*

*Soloists – Lora Stevens and Donna Taylor*

### **Prelude**

### **Processional Hymn # 118**

***O Come, All Ye Faithful***

### **Sentence**

I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to his word

Luke 1:38

### **The Christ Child is placed in the Manger**

#### **Lighting of the Advent Wreath** (Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love)

Into the world of long nights and shadows the light came — not to extinguish dark skies or stormy seas, but to offer war harbour the comfort of the hearth fire and the peace of kinship.

#### **Lighting of the Christ Candle**

Light of Christ guide our way, enfold us and warm us.

On the eve of the miracle, we immerse ourselves in the light of your love for you love us into wholeness and kindled by your holy fire, we radiate your love into the world. **Amen**

#### **All sing:**

#### ***'A Candle is Burning'***

[words by Sandra Dean, 1986 tune by James Murray, 1887 (public domain)]

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

***O come, all you faithful, rejoice in this night,  
as God comes among us, the Christian's true light.***

### **THE GATHERING OF THE COMMUNITY**

#### **Greeting**

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.**

#### **Collect:**

O God our Father, whose Word has come among us in the Holy Child of Bethlehem, may the light of faith illumine our hearts and shine in our words and deeds; through him who is Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

## THE PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

**1<sup>st</sup> Reading:** Isaiah 52: 7-10

### **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.

The Word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God.**

**Psalm 98**(to be read responsively)

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. R**

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 your 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.**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Reading:** Hebrews 1: 1-12

### **A READING FROM THE LETTER TO THE HEBREWS**

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

[For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son; today I have begotten you"? Or again, "I will be his Father, and he will be my Son"? And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship him." Of the angels he says, "He makes his angels winds, and his servants flames of fire." But of the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, and the righteous sceptre is the sceptre of your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions." And, "In the beginning, Lord, you founded the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands; they will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like clothing; like a cloak you will

roll them up, and like clothing they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will never end.”]

The Word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God.**

**Duet:**

Where ***You There on That Christmas Night***

**Gospel:**John 1: 1-14

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

**Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST  
ACCORDING TO JOHN

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.

**Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.**

Sermon

In the beginning was the word. Tonight we rehearse the cosmic story of Christ's first coming into the world. Cosmic, because it takes you back in time to set you up to compare this story to the beginning of creation in Genesis. The gospel wants you to know that Jesus Christ, is a new creation. He is created, then John bears witness, and then we have a choice to make.

Jesus is both with God and is God. Separate, but the same. We call this a paradox. It's not either / or, but both / and. It's sort of like when your thoughts are forming and then you speak them into the world. They become separate from you, but they are still your words, they just have their own power after they are spoken, to be received by anyone in any way that suits them. It is a tricky business trying to understand God. Both / and, with God and was God. In the beginning.

Then our friend John the Baptist shows up and he bears witness to the light. So that others might believe through him. This is why we tell the story every year. So that others might believe.

Now that we have heard the witness we must make a choice. We can go on living in the darkness, or we can move into the light and be reborn as Children of God. It seems like an easy choice but maybe not. We all prefer a little certainty to the possibilities of the world. Maybe you remember being a child and peeking at Christmas presents under the tree. Risky, but the payoff was the certainty of what lies beneath.

Jesus was incarnated, a big fancy word that means to live in a tent. That's about as real as it gets. Ever been camping in an old canvas tent in the rain, it's not much fun, but it is real. But it's not just that because if you know your Old Testament you know that the Tabernacle of God was a tent. The place where God resided with the people on the move. Jesus is that tabernacle, a dwelling place of God, but also a sign pointing to the reality of our God. A God who lives in the here and now.

John pops back into the story again to witness to the light. He reminds us that the one who would come after him was always here. Then John reminds us that he and his friends choose Jesus, they follow him, and because of that they are transformed. This is a good thing. It is what Jesus is doing in the world. Changing things up.

So now the only question we are left with is what will we choose? We know the stories of Christmas tide. We have heard John's testimony and the testimony of others who have come after him. Will we choose the darkness we know and love? Or will we step into the light this Christmas Eve and shine the light of Christ into the world? Light the candles against the darkness. The world needs us now more than ever. Bring hope with your presents. Bring faith with your presents. Bring Love with your presence.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.  
Rev. Jon, Laura, and Audrey.

**Sermon Hymn # 126**  
***Away in a Manger***

**The Apostles' Creed**

Let us confess the faith of our baptism, as we say,

**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.**

**Prayers of the People**

Let us pray with confidence to the Lord, saying, "Lord hear our prayer."

O Lord, guard and direct your Church in the way of unity, service, and praise.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

Give to all nations an awareness of the unity of the human family.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

Cleanse our hearts of prejudice and selfishness, and inspire us to hunger and thirst for what is right.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

Teach us to use your creation for your greater praise, that all may share the good things you provide.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

Strengthen all who give their energy or skill for the healing of those who are sick in body or in mind.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

Set free all who are bound by fear and despair.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

Grant a peaceful end and eternal rest to all who are dying, and your comfort to those who mourn.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

In our parish cycle of prayer, we pray for...

### **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.

**The Confession:** 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.**

**Absolution:** 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.**

All sing softly as we remain seated:

***Spirit of the Living God, fall a-fresh on me;***

***Spirit of the Living God, fall a-fresh on me;***

***Break me, melt me, mould me, fill me.***

***Spirit of the Living God, fall a-fresh on me!***

### **The Peace**

Leader: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: **And also with you.**

### **Offertory Hymn**

***Go Tell It on the Mountain***

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)

### **Prayer over the Gifts**

Generous Creator, in faith and joy we celebrate the birth of your Son. Increase our understanding and our love of the riches you have revealed in him, who is Lord now and for ever.

### THE CELEBRATION OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST

#### **Eucharistic Prayer**

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.**

We give you thanks and praise, almighty God, through your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Redeemer. He is your living Word, through whom you have created all things.

By the power of the Holy Spirit he took flesh of the Virgin Mary and shared our human nature. He lived and died as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

In fulfilment of your will he stretched out his hands in suffering, to bring release to those who place their hope in you; and so he won for you a holy people.

He chose to bear our griefs and sorrows, and to give up his life on the cross, that he might shatter the chains of evil and death, and banish the darkness of sin and despair. By his resurrection he brings us into the light of your presence.

Now with all creation we raise our voices to proclaim the glory of your name.

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
God of power and 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.**

Holy and gracious God, accept our praise, through your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ; who on the night he was handed over to suffering and death, took bread and gave you thanks, saying, "Take, and eat: this is my body which is broken for you." In the same way he took the cup, saying, "This is my blood which is shed for you. When you do this, you do it in memory of me."

Remembering, therefore, his death and resurrection, we offer you this bread and this cup, giving thanks that you have made us worthy to stand in your presence and serve you.

We ask you to send your Holy Spirit upon the offering of your holy Church. Gather into one all who share in these sacred mysteries, filling them with the Holy Spirit and confirming their faith in the truth, that together we may praise you and give you glory through your Servant, Jesus Christ. All

glory and honour are yours, Father and Son, with the Holy Spirit in the holy Church, now and for ever.

**Amen.**

### **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.**

### **The Breaking of the Bread**

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

**We, being man, are one body, for we all share in the one bread.**

### **The Communion**

The gifts of God for the people of God.

**Thanks be to God.**

### **Prayer after Communion**

Source of truth and joy, may we who have received the gift of divine life always follow the way of your Son. This we ask in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord

Duet:

***Sleep, Little King***

### **The Doxology**

Glory to God, **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.**

### **Distribution of the Lights**

The sides people will distribute the candles and when everyone's candle is lit, the lights will be dimmed and we join together to sing '*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 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.*

**Please turn off your candle!**

**The Blessing**

May the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the perseverance of the wise men, the obedience of Joseph and Mary, and the peace of the Christ child be yours this Christmas; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.

**Recessional Hymn # 154**  
***Joy to the World!***

**Dismissal**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**Organ Postlude**

***The flowers on the Altar today are given to the Glory of God from Sally and Rev Ray Jenkins in memory of our parents, Marion and Manley Samson, and Doris and Newton Jenkins and Aunt Alice Jenkins***

***The Christmas Wreath on the front of the pulpit is given to the Glory of God and in loving memory of our many family members and friends at this blessed Christmas Season, a gift of the Heasman family.***

**NEWS AND EVENTS**

**Please send** all announcements for the bulletin to Karen by **11:00 a.m. Tuesday** of each week email [canondavis@gmail.com](mailto:canondavis@gmail.com) or call 519-344-9531

If you would like to contact Rev'd Jon Forbes or would like a home visit with Communion or know of someone who would, Rev'd Jon may be reached at 1-905-818-9488 or email [jonforbes@outlook.com](mailto:jonforbes@outlook.com)

**The Church calendars for 2024 are available at the back of the church. Cost: \$6.00. And, there are cookbooks still available for purchase. Cosg, \$10.00. Please see Ginny Schleihauf or Sheree Hayter.**

**Reminders: December**

**Dec 25** There is **NO Christmas Day Service**

**Dec 31 New Year Eve Day Service**  
**9:30, Holy Eucharist, Rev'd**  
**Jon Forbes**

**Christmas Memorials--2023**

In loving memory of my husband Hugo, mother and dad Henry and Verna Tomlinson, remembered by Faith Archer.



In loving memory of members of the Ayers family, remembered by Greta Ayers.

In loving memory of Ray Chalifoux, and Melody Chalifoux (VanSickle), a gift of Pat, Debbie and Michelle and family.

In loving memory of Ollie and Nancy Haddon and Sue Chalmers and my husband Les Chalmers, remembered by Marg and their families.

In memory of loved ones from Marion Curran and family.

In memory of Margaret and Garth, lovingly remembered by Joan Dew.

In loving memory of Mr. and Mrs. William Frew, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Spencer, brothers, Raymond, Russell and George Spencer, sister, Marion Bradley and great-grand daughter, Winnie Mae I remembered by Doug and Shirley Frew and family.

In memory of loved ones, remembered by Helen and Glenn Forbes.

In loving memory of Kenneth and Ev George, and Brian George, remembered by the family.

In loving memory of Kathy Graham, remembered by Bill Graham and family.

In loving memory of Bill and Hettie Graham, Jean and Jim Bell, and Marjorie and David Ashcroft, remembered by Bill Graham and family.

In loving memory of parents and grandparents, Merien and Earl Sloat, and George and Edith Scott, remembered by Raymond, Rebecca and Katie Grandis.

In loving memory of Mr. and Mrs. Reginald Haddon, remembered by their family.

In loving memory of Margaret and Glen Hayter, Mom, Dad, Gram and Gramps, Great Grammie and Great Granpooh, a gift of Sheree Lynn, Mike, Jason and Lucy.

In memory of our 'Mum' and 'Gran,' Mary Tracy, our aunts and sisters, Christine Labrasceur, and Lynn McCann, our 'Papa' and 'Dad,' Gerry Tracy and our 'Gramma' and Grampa, Mother and Dad, Glen and Margaret Hayter, lovingly remembered by John, Elaine, Joanna, Sarah, and Nikki Hayter and Jeremy Wickham.

In thanksgiving for blessings received and in memory of loved ones, lovingly remembered by Ruth and Charlie Lavigne.

In memory of our parents, Kathleen and Gordon McPhail, lovingly remembered by the family.

In memory of loved ones, and in thanksgiving for many blessings, lovingly remembered by Mary and Lyle Moran.

In memory of Kathy Wilson, lovingly remembered by the Pusey family and the Morphew family.

In memory of the Rinker and Redden families, lovingly remembered by Gerry Rinker and family.

In memory of my husband Alexander Scrimgeour, and loving son, Ian, lovingly remembered by Sylvia Scrimgeour, and family.

In loving memory of Beth Simmons, Mary Switzer, Mary Walker-Thiel and Georgina and Gordon Simmons, Sr., remembered by Gord, Mary-Elizabeth and Brad, Pamela, and Joel, and families.

In loving memory of Marg and Bill Spence, a gift from Bob and Carol.

In loving memory of Eve and Earle Armstrong and grandson Ryan Andrew Stallibrass, remembered by Wendy, Ron and Robyn Stallibrass.

In loving memory of dear parents, Mary and Fred Wyville, remembered by Pat, Barbara and Dave, Bonnie and Ed, and families.

In loving memory of Gary Laidlaw, a gift of Seonaid and family.

To the glory of God and in loving memory of my Granny, Zola May, remembered by Ginny Schleihauf.

In memory of Pat Wood from Joan, Gerry, and Marion.

In loving memory of Clarence and Bessie Dease, their daughter, Carol and husband Peter Dicks, a gift of the Dease family.

In loving memory of Don Dease, a gift of Nancy and family.