

Christmas Eve

December 24, 2024 + 4pm



Image: Prince of Peace by Cedar Walton





Welcome to the AbbeyChurch

*No matter who you are or what you are carrying today,
know you are beloved and so very welcome here.*

At the AbbeyChurch, we tell stories of faith, encourage hope, share meals, care for each other and for God's creation, and strive to practice the teachings of Jesus.

We're at different places in our faith journey but we share a guiding sacred story as found in scripture (The Bible) and summarised in our Christian creeds.

We share a willingness to honestly wrestle with God—with our questions and doubts, our disillusionment with our institutions and our concern for our world.

We invite diversity in our community and our leadership; old, young, rich, poor, conservative, liberal, radical, single, married, LGBTQ2IA+, straight, evangelical, progressive, overeducated, undereducated, overhoused, underhoused, certain, doubting, hurting, thriving (to name a few).

As a witness to unity in diversity, the AbbeyChurch is an affirming (full inclusion and leadership of 2SLGBTQ2IA+ folk) shared ministry of The United Church of Canada and The Anglican Church of Canada.

We draw on those spiritual traditions, as well as others across the Christian spectrum. We're also connected to Emmaus, an intentional community that is inspired by monasticism and whose members make commitments to prayer, presence and simplicity.

We believe that Christ's love and grace binds our differences together and renews our hope as we gather each week at Jesus' table of radical welcome.

We Gather

The AbbeyChurch acknowledges that we worship and pray on the stolen territory of the Lək̓ʷəŋən peoples', the Songhees and Xwsepsum (Esquimalt) Nations. We strive to journey toward reparation, right relationship and reconciliation with justice. We confess the complicity of our religious traditions and institutions in the loss of life, lands, languages, spiritualities and cultures of the First Peoples' of these lands. We are grateful for the ongoing wisdom, stewardship and tending of these lands and apprentice ourselves to this good work of caring for creation and seeking to live in right-relationship with each other.

Opening Loop

Tolling of the Bells

Welcome & Land Acknowledgment

During this evening's worship please feel free to worship in freedom and wonder! Those of all ages are staying in for all of worship today and we have the mandala to colour, art carts, the prayer weave and hot mulled cider which all are welcome to consume in the space as we worship!

*During this song, folks of all ages (including children and youth!) are welcome to set the table with creche figures and symbols of faith and hope found on the back table.
Please rise in body or in spirit as we sing:*

Table Setting Song: O Come All Ye Faithful

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:

Refrain: O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

The highest, most holy, light of light eternal, born of a virgin, and a mortal he comes;
Creator Word who is now in flesh appearing! *Refrain*

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation, sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God in the highest: *Refrain*

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning; Jesus, to thee be all glory giv'n!
Word, co-eternal, now in flesh appearing: *Refrain*

John Francis Wade / Public Domain

The Poem - Kenosis by Lucy Shaw

Selected and read by Rebecca Yeo, AbbeyChurch Poet-in-Residence

In sleep his infant mouth works in and out.
He is so new, his silk skin has not yet
been roughed by plane and wooden beam
nor, so far, has he had to deal with human doubt.

He is in a dream of nipple found,
of blue-white milk, of curving skin
and, pulsing in his ear, the inner throb
of a warm heart's repeated sound.

His only memories float from fluid space.
So new he has not pounded nails, hung a door
broken bread, felt rebuff, bent to the lash,
wept for the sad heart of the human race.

The Lighting of the Christ Candle

Reader: Hope, peace, joy, and love, four promises always offered to us by God, and all of them manifest in this one we light tonight: the Christ candle.

Reader: In Jesus the Christ, we find the hope of salvation, the peace that flows from justice, the joy of community, and the love that encompasses us all.

Christ is born! Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on Earth!

The Christ Candle is lit

We Proclaim

Reader One: Let us Pray- O come, O come, Emmanuel, let your Spirit shine in our hearts; let your Love shine in our world, and let the wonder of this night touch all of our hearts. Lead us to the shining-star truth, of God with us, God for us, God in us. **Amen**

Reader Two: The people who walked in shadows have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep bleakness —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 a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, 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.

Song - O Little Town of Bethlehem

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, gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wond'ring love.
O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the King, and peace to all on earth.

How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of God's heav'n.
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!

Brooks/Redner - Public Domain

Reader Two: In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent by God to the town in Galilee, Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The name of the young woman was Mary. And the angel came to Mary and said, "Rejoice, favoured one! The Most High God is with you."

Now, she was troubled by the angels' words and pondered what sort of greeting this was. But the angel said: "Fear not Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Sovereign God will give him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his reign, there will be no end." Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be since I have not known a man intimately?" The Angel said "The Holy Spirit, will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the one born will be holy. He will be called Son of God. And now, Elizabeth your kinswoman has even conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for she who was called barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Mary said, Here am I, the servant of God; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel left her.

Song: Hear Now You House of David

Hear now you house of David - a promise from your God
I am sending one to dwell among you - Emmanuel, The Lord

One who spoke all of creation is from a virgin born
One whom angels worship in glory a child in Bethlehem La la la....

Praise and thanks to our Maker - and to the Holy Ghost
And to Christ who came among us - to teach us how to love. La la la ...

2006 Ordinary Time/ Peter LeGrand / CCLI

Reader Three: Now, this is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah happened: When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to have a child in her womb from the Holy Spirit. Joseph, her husband, was a just man and unwilling to shame her, he wanted to divorce her secretly. But when he deliberated this, suddenly an angel of God appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for in her is conceived a child from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this happened to fulfil what had been spoken by the Most High God through the prophet: "Look now! The virgin shall conceive a child in her womb and give birth to a son, and they shall call him Emmanuel," meaning, "God is with us." When Joseph got up from sleep, he did as the angel of the Most High God commanded him.

Reader Four: 'Mary set out with haste, to a Judean town in the hill country. There she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. Now when Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leapt in her womb and Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, said, "Look! As soon as I heard the sound of your greeting in my ear, the baby in my womb leapt for joy. Now blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of those things spoken to her by the Holy One."

Song: The Day Soon Will Come

The day soon will come when I'll stand by your side, and I'll show you my face and my favour;
your cries I will answer, your tears I'll wipe away; I will guard and protect you forever'

Refrain: Let music fill heaven and gladness fill earth. Let the tall mountains sing with deep fervour
For God will respond to the cry of the poor and will banish oppression forever

To you and to yours and to those far away - this promise I'll make for my people:
the fields which were barren shall flourish once again, and the land once abandoned will settle.

Refrain.

Those hidden in shadow I'll call into light, and prisoners I'll lead into freedom;
and none shall fear hunger and none shall suffer thirst; for their God, who is loving, will lead them.' *Refrain.*

A highway across tall mountains I'll make, a road I'll prepare for my people;
from east and from west, from all corners of the earth I will gather the lost and the broken.
Refrain. John Bell / Wild Goose Publishing / Iona Community / OneLicense

Reader Five: In those days, a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered for taxation. This was the first registration that occurred while Quir-in-ius was governor of Syria. So all went to be registered; each to their own towns. Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth in Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, for he was from the house and heritage of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was betrothed and who was pregnant. So it was, that while they were there, the time came for the child to be born. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and swaddled him, and laid him in a manger because there was no place for them in the inn.

Reader Six: Shepherds were in that region there staying in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of God came upon them, and the glory of the Living God shone around them, and they were greatly terrified. But the angel said to them, "Fear not. Look! For I proclaim to you good news of great joy for all the people: For there is born to you this day a Savior who is the Messiah, the Sovereign God, in the city of David. This will be a sign for you: you will find a baby swaddled and lying in a manger." And immediately there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly array, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among peoples whom God favours!"

It Came Upon a Midnight Clear

It came upon a midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heaven's all gracious king."
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come with peaceful wings unfurled.
And still their heavenly music floats o'er all the weary world.
Above its sad and lowly plains they bend on hovering wing.
And ever o'er its Babel sounds the blessed angels sing.

For lo! the days are hastening on, by prophet bards foretold,
when, with the ever circling years shall come the age of gold:
when peace shall over all the earth, Its ancient splendors fling,
and all the world give back the song, which now the angels sing.

Sears / Willis / Sullivan / Public Domain

Reader Seven: It happened when the angels had departed from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to be, which God has made known to us." So they came hurrying and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. Now seeing this, they made known what had been spoken to them about this child. And all who heard marvelled at what was spoken by the shepherds to them. But Mary preserved all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen; it was just as it had been told to them.

Song: 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 watchin go'er silent flocks by night,
behold, throughout the heavens there shone a holy light. *Refrain*

The shepherds feared and trembled, when high above the Earth
rang out the angel chorus, that hailed our saviour's birth. *Refrain*

Down in a lonely manger our humble Christ was born
And God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn. *Refrain*
African-American Spiritual / Oral tradition / Work / First Published 1909

Sermon

Matt Humphrey

Our Prayers

The Peace

On this holy night, the angels sang, "Glory to God in the highest and peace to all on earth. The peace of the Christ child be always with you. **And also with you.**

You are invited to share a sign of peace to those near you.

During the 'offertory' song, the communion table is set.

Offering: Contributions to our common life can be made at the back of the space (now or later) in the boxes or using debit or credit card. You can e-transfer donations to treasurer@emmauscommunity.ca (that's our preferred method) or by making a donation to AbbeyChurch / Emmaus via CanadaHelps by using the QR Code to the right. All donations are eligible for a charitable tax receipt.



Offertory Song: People Get Ready

People get ready, there's a train a coming;
you don't need no baggage, you just get on board
All you need is faith to hear the diesels humming;
don't need no ticket, you just thank the Lord

People get ready for the train to Jordan;
it's picking up passengers from coast to coast
Faith is the key, open the doors and board 'em;
there's hope for all among those loved the most.

There is still room for the hopeless sinner!
who has hurt humankind with their push and shove.
Have mercy on those who think their chances grow dimmer;
for there's no hiding place from our Jesus' love

So, people get ready, there's a train-a-coming;
you don't need no baggage, you just get on board
All you need is faith to hear the diesels humming;
don't need no ticket, you just thank the Lord
You don't need no ticket, you just thank the Lord
Curtis Mayfield 1964, alt. / CCLI

As we prepare for this holy feast we are reminded that all are welcome to receive wherever they find themselves in their spiritual journey.

You are also welcome to come forward for a simple blessing if you do not wish to receive. All are welcome to Jesus' table (none compelled!) - as you feel ready.

We Celebrate

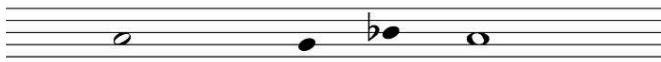
Prayer Over The Gifts

Beloved of God, weary and anxious, joyful and longing, you are invited to the table of love and liberation. Come and feast on the bread of life, the word made flesh!

Let us pray, Oh God of all, you embrace our poverty yet in giving us yourself in this feast, you make us whole. Receive all we offer you this day and fill us with your life, your peace, your love enfleshed, through Jesus Christ we pray. **Amen.**

The Great Thanksgiving / The Most Holy Eucharist

[chanted] The Lord be with you



C: And al - so with you.

The responses continue with the same tone:

Lift up your hearts:

We lift them up to God

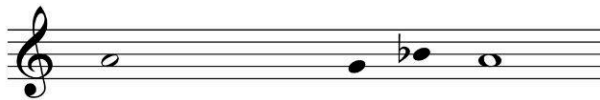
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Holy God how wonderful...

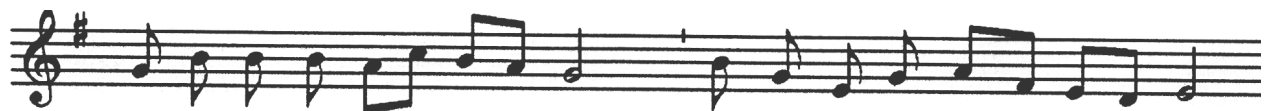
... place at Your table:

...proclaimed liberation for all:



Glory to you fore - ver and ever.

...With the company of heaven and all your creation we sing:



1. Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er, God of might,

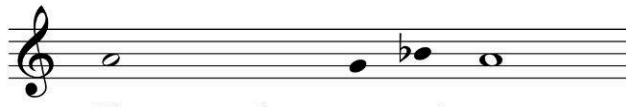


hea - ven and the earth are full, are full of your glo - ry, O Lord. Ho - san - na,



ho - san - na! How bles - sed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

... take, this my body, do this in remembrance of me:



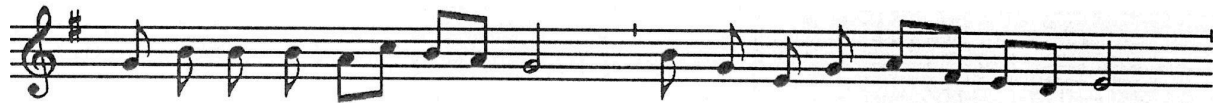
Glory to you fore - ver and ever.

.... Take, this my blood, do this in remembrance of me:



Glory to you fore - ver and ever.

... mystery of faith given to us in Jesus your Child:



2. Praise to you, Lord Je - sus - Christ: dy - ing, you de - stroyed our - death;



ri - sing, you re - stored our life. Lord Je - sus, come in glo - ry to reign. O come,



O come, - Em - man - u - el! Lord Je - sus, come in glo - ry to reign.

Send your Holy Spirit...

... gathered and made one in your love:



A - - - men.

The Prayer of Jesus

As beloved children of a loving parent, we pray as Jesus taught:

Our *Father (*or Parent, or Abba, or Amma, or Source, or Mother)

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.

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

Forever and ever. Amen.

Silence.

These are the gifts of God for the people of God given for the life of the world.

Thanks be to God!

All are welcome (none compelled!) to receive at Jesus' table! The bread is gluten-free but may contain almond flour, egg and dairy. Please ask the server if you would like a non-dairy / nut option (rice cracker). The juice is in the small cups. Wine is in the larger common cup. Please refrain from dipping the bread.

Song: Creator of Orion (Agnus Dei)

Creator of Orion and the Pleiades - One who turns the shadow of death into day
Voice beheld in the morning psalm of creation - Lord of all crucified from the dawn of time

You are the lamb of God - Who takes away the sin of the world
You are the Lamb of God - King of Kings, Lord of Lords

You will gather us in and bind up our broken. You will loosen the chains on all our oppressed
You will lead us to living fountains of water. You will wipe away all tears from our eyes
Tom Wuest/ Brass Trumpet Publishing used with permission 2010

Song: Angels We Have Heard On High

Angels we have heard on high,
sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply,
echoing their joyous strains.

Refrain: Glo----oria Glo----oria Glo----oria! in excelsis Deo;
Glo----oria Glo----oria Glo----oria! in excelsis Deo;

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
which inspire your heavenly song? *Refrain:*

Come to Bethlehem and see
him whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn King. *Refrain*
HF Hemy/ Public Domain

Song: Hark The Herald Angels Sing

Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King,
peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, join the triumph of the skies;
with the angelic hosts proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Refrain: Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King!"

Christ, by highest heaven adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come, offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail the incarnate deity.
pleased with us in flesh to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel! *Refrain:*

Hail, the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die,
born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth. *Refrain:*
Charles Wesley, Whitfield adaptation / Public Domain

Prayer after Communion

Infinite, intimate God, in this meal we have tasted the feast which you prepare for us in the Christ child. Be born in each of us. Fill us with your life-giving breath that we might make room for you in this weary waiting world. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, Immanuel, God with us. **Amen.**

We Are Sent

Blessing

Go into this night, glorifying and praising God for all you have seen and heard. And the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the love of Joseph and Mary, and the blessing of the Christ-child be yours this Christmas and always. **Amen**

During this song, candles are distributed and lit.

Closing Song: 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.

Go in the joy of this holy night to proclaim the radical love of the Incarnation.

Thanks be to God! Amen! Alleluia!

Christmas Dinner Potluck Tomorrow December 25th

ALL are welcome! Talk to Matt for location and time.

No public worship on December 29th!

**We'll be back Sunday January 5th at 4pm
for the feast of the Epiphany**

Weekly Prayer

**Please note that we're going to take a break from weekday prayer
from December 23 until we re-start on Monday January 6th**

Resuming January 6th:

Mondays at 9 am - Morning Prayer with Centering Prayer @ Emmaus/AbbeyChurch office
(off the Balmoral parking lot, metal stairs up) - approx 45 mins - in-person only.

Tuesdays at 9 am - Morning Prayer @ Emmaus/AbbeyChurch office
- in-person and online on Zoom - approx 25-30 mins.

Thursdays at 8:15 am - morning prayer - Emmaus/AbbeyChurch office and online on zoom.

Fridays at 8:15 am - morning prayer - *on-line zoom only*

Contact us for information on accessible entrance or zoom/liturgies link

Mark the date:

Ecumenical Prayer in The Way of Taizé

Friday January 17 at 6pm



Year-end and Ongoing Donations **to The AbbeyChurch / The Emmaus Community**

We are so grateful for your presence with us! A huge thank you to everyone who supported our ministry in 2024 and made it possible to continue to thrive in the place God has called us to. If you are interested in donating to our common life, you can now send offerings by e-transfer to treasurer@emmauscommunity.ca or talk to Lynn, our treasurer to sign up for monthly giving (PAR)! There's also a point of sale machine at the back table for debit or credit donations. You can also use the CanadaHelps for to donate by using the QR code here. All donations are eligible for a charitable receipt for income tax purposes.



Our Partnership with QomQem : ONGOING Call for Food Donations

We're now welcoming food donations for AbbeyChurch/Emmaus partnership with QomQem coastal connections - an indigenous harm reduction organisation. We'll be using this food to support their street outreach on Sunday evenings. Our folk are also welcomed to assist in sandwich prep after church at 5:30pm most Sundays.

NON PERISHABLE FOOD URGENTLY NEEDED!

WE NEED YOU!

SOLID OUTREACH *
A collaborative project between:
QomQem, NPNA, SOLID, & Abbey Church

Night outreach - We're at it again!
We are in need of non-perishable foods to support Street Family!

What's Needed?

Large Tins of: Peanut Butter, Jam & Nutella
Fruit Cups,
Packaged treats (wagonwheels etc)
Large bags of Soft candies
Gatorade Powder Tins
Camp gear!

TO ARRANGE DROP OFF, CONTACT:
admin@qomqem.com / 250-291-1204

Here is the list of desired items:

- large bags of soft candies to make up mixed candy bags (ie sour keys, cherry blasters etc)
- Large jars of peanut butter, Nutella or jam
- Tins of Gatorade powder (once it starts to cool)
- Tins of hot chocolate powder
- Sweet treats like pre wrapped Rice Krispie squares, wagon wheels, ding dongs etc
- Fruit cups
- Flavoured Apple sauce cups
- Soft chew granola bars (nutrigrain, etc)
- Small easy peel oranges and bananas (for Sunday drop-off)
- Gatorade/powerade bottles
- Home baking on the day of - starting September 22nd (ideally 150 units)
 - Sunscreen, batteries, flashlights

Up to 150 people served each night, so bulk family/sized items appreciated. We now have a treasure chest at the back of the church for collection. Thanks for any help you can be in this amazing work.

NO QomQem on December 29th!



Image: from the AbbeyKids room in the 'vestry'

**admin@emmauscommunity.ca www.abbeychurch.ca
778.557.4166 We would love to connect.**

This leaflet is printed on tree-free paper. Please recycle.