

Christ Church Gabriola
A Collaborative Anglican – United Church
Open to All



Home Church
Christmas Eve
December 24, 2021 7pm

Rev. Karen Hollis

We acknowledge these lands upon which we worship are the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Snuneymuxw First Nation.

Medley of Carols

Piano by Dirk Damonte on album:
When the Silent Night Starts to Sing by Tom Hunter
Recording used with permission

Welcome

Centering Stillness

Greeting

One: I bring greetings in the name of the One born this night:
May the hope, peace, joy and love of Christ be with you.

All: **And also with you.**

Advent Candle Lighting

Kilbourn/Holmes Family

Carol: O Come All Ye Faithful v. 1,3,5

VU #60

¹ 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.

³ Sing, choirs of angels,
sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;
Glory to God in the highest: [Refrain]

⁵ Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be all glory given;
word of the Father, now in flesh appearing: [Refrain]

We Engage the Story

First Reading: Genesis 17:1-8 (JPS)

Reader: Christine Blackburn

When Abram was ninth-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am El Shaddai. Walk in My ways and be blameless. I will establish My covenant between Me and you, and I will make you exceedingly numerous." Abraham threw himself on his face; and God spoke to him further, "As for Me, this is My covenant with you: You shall be the father of a multitude of nations. And you shall no longer be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I make you the father of a multitude of nations. I will make you exceedingly fertile, and make nations of you; and kings shall come forth from you. I will maintain My covenant between Me and you, and your offspring to come, as an everlasting covenant throughout the ages, to be God to you and to your offspring to come. I assign the land you sojourn in to you and your offspring to come, all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting holding. I will be their God."

Video: Your Kindness Pierces Time Through

The Work of the People

Second Reading: Isaiah 9:2-7 Robert Alter

Reader: Charlie Blackburn

You have made great the nation
and heightened its joy.
They rejoiced before You
as the joy in the harvest,
as people exalt
when they share out the spoils.
For its burdensome yoke
the rod on its shoulders,
the club of its oppressor –
You smashed, as on the day of Midian.
For every boot pounding loudly
and every cloak soaked in blood
is consigned to burning, consumed by fire
For a child has been born to us,
a son has been given to us,
and leadership is on his shoulders.
And his name is called wondrous councillor,
divine warrior, eternal father, prince of peace,
making leadership abound and peace without end
on the throne of David and over his kingdom
to make it firm-founded and stay it up
in justice and righteousness, forever more.
The zeal of the Lord of Armies shall do this.
A word has the Master sent out in Jacob
and it has fallen in Israel.

There's a Light in the Darkness Tom Hunter *fr When the Silent Night Starts to Sing*

You've got to be careful when you walk in the darkness,
So you don't bump into the things that you can.
I know that some darkness is gentle and friendly,
but sometimes its' scary, so please hold my hand.

Sometimes in darkness I like someone with me.
Sometimes I wait 'til the darkness is gone.
Sometimes I like to know things will get better,
and it helps to hear things that I've known all along.

Chorus: There's a light in the darkness, a calm in the storm
The angels are singing. A baby is born.

Please tell me a story of mangers and magi,
of shepherds and stars and an innkeeper man.
Tell me how Mary is holding the baby,
and remember it's dark, so keep holding my hand. [Chorus]

Sometimes in darkness I find myself worried.
Sometimes I wonder whatever I can,
like do you think Jesus knows all about darkness?
Do you think when I see him, will he hold my hand? [Chorus]

Third Reading: Luke 1:26-38 NRSV

Reader: Christine Blackburn

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

Carol: Joy to the World v. 1,2,4

¹ Joy to the world! the Lord is come:
let earth receive her King!
Let every heart prepare him room,
and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

² Joy to the world! the Savior reigns:
let all their songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains,
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

⁴ He rules the earth with truth and grace,
and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness
and wonders of his love,
and wonders of his love,
and wonders, wonders of his love.

Fourth Reading: Luke 2:1-7 The Message

Reader: Pat Armstrong

About that time Caesar Augustus ordered a census to be taken throughout the Empire. This was the first census when Quirinius was governor of Syria. Everyone had to travel to his own ancestral hometown to be accounted for. So Joseph went from the Galilean town of Nazareth up to Bethlehem in Judah, David's town, for the census. As a descendant of David, he had to go there. He went with Mary, his fiancée, who was pregnant.

While they were there, the time came for her to give birth. She gave birth to a son, her firstborn. She wrapped him in a blanket and laid him in a manger, because there was no room in the hostel.

Song: Wexford Carol

Traditional English and Irish (12th C), arr. Laura Hawley
performed by Elektra Women's Choir

Good people all, this Christmastime,
Consider well and bear in mind
What our good God for us has done,
In sending his beloved Son.
With Mary holy we should pray
To God with love this Christmas Day;
In Bethlehem upon that morn
There was a blessed Messiah born.

VU #59

Near Bethlehem did shepherds keep
Their flocks of lambs and feeding sheep;
To whom God's angels did appear,
Which put the shepherds in great fear.
'Prepare and go,' the angels said,
'To Bethlehem, be not afraid;
For there you'll find, this happy morn,
A princely babe, sweet Jesus born,'

With thankful heart and joyful mind,
The shepherds went the babe to find,
And as God's angel had foretold,
They did our Saviour Christ behold.
Within a manger he was laid,
And by his side the virgin maid,
Attending on the Lord of life,
Who came on earth to end all strife.

Fifth Reading: Luke 2:8-20 CEV

Reader: Charlie Blackburn

That night in the fields near Bethlehem some shepherds were guarding their sheep. All at once an angel came down to them from the Lord, and the brightness of the Lord's glory flashed around them. The shepherds were frightened. But the angel said, "Don't be afraid! I have good news for you, which will make everyone happy. This very day in King David's hometown a Savior was born for you. He is Christ the Lord. You will know who he is, because you will find him dressed in baby clothes and lying on a bed of hay."

Suddenly many other angels came down from heaven and joined in praising God. They said: "Praise God in heaven! Peace on earth to everyone who pleases God." After the angels had left and gone back to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see what the Lord has told us about." They hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and they saw the baby lying on a bed of hay. When the shepherds saw Jesus, they told his parents what the angel had said about him. Everyone listened and was surprised. But Mary kept thinking about all this and wondering what it meant.

As the shepherds returned to their sheep, they were praising God and saying wonderful things about him. Everything they had seen and heard was just as the angel had said.

Carol: Go Tell It Jim & Jean Strathdee with St. Marks UMC Choir

[Refrain] Go, tell it on the mountain,
over the hills and everywhere.
Go, tell it on the mountain
that Jesus Christ is now born (repeat)

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

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

Meditation: Christ is Born

Carol: O Little Town of Bethlehem v. 1,2,4

¹ 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.

² For Christ is born of Mary;
and gathered 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 on earth.

⁴ 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.

Prayers of the People

One: God of Light,
All: Hear Our Prayer

Lord's Prayer

**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 and the power,
and glory are yours now and forever.
Amen**

Paddy Waymark

VU #64

We Respond to God's Love

Invitation for Offering

Throughout our experience of COVID we have not only experienced joy and challenges in surprising places, we have also felt this desire to help and to serve. It's no different tonight, when we are filled with awe and moved by our gratitude for the miracle of this night. Perhaps tonight you feel moved to make a special donation to the church or to one of the wider church organizations we support. Perhaps tonight it fits for you to make or renew a commitment to service. However you give, may you do so with joy.

Christ Church Gabriola
2600 South Rd
Gabriola, BC V0R 1X3
250.247.8633

Mission & Service – United Church
1-800-268-3781 ext. 2738
<https://united-church.ca/donate>

Primate's World Relief Fund
1-866-308-7973
<https://pwrdf.org/give-today/>

Offering Prayer

With these gifts, loving God, accept the praise and thanksgiving of our hearts, which rejoice in your goodness and love. Let our gifts point to your presence in the world, and further your dream for the world through Jesus, Emmanuel, God-with-us. Amen.

Candle-lighting

You're invited to light and hold a candle (perhaps the Christ candle from your wreath) while we sing together Silent Night.

Carol: *Silent Night* v. 1 & 2

VU #67

¹ 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.

² Silent night! Holy night!

Shepherds quake at the sight:
glories stream from heaven afar,
heavenly hosts sing Hallelujah,
Christ the Saviour is born,
Christ the Saviour is born,

We Go Into The World

May the light that enlivens all the world, the light that darkness cannot overcome, love's pure light in Jesus the Christ, shine on you and in our world this night. Amen

Postlude: *Pat-a Pan*

Bernard de la Monnoye (1641-1728), arr. Shawn Kirchner
performed by Elektra Women's Choir

Willi, get your little drum.
Robin bring your flute and come.
Aren't they fun to play upon?
Turelurelu, patapatapatapan
When you play your fife and drum,
How can anyone be glum?

When the folk of olden days
Give the King of Kings their praise,
They had pipes to play upon.
And also the drums they'd play,
Full of joy on Christmas day.

On this day the Saviour's grace
Makes the Devil hide his face;
Let the merry tune play on!
For the tune that you now play,
Drives the darkness far away.

Heav'n and earth today become
Finely tuned as flute and drum.
Let the joyous song play on!
O be merry as you play,
Sing and dance this Christmas day!