

Finding
light
in
darkness



On the traditional land of the Semiahmoo

the Parish of St. Mark

O C E A N  P A R K

December 14, 2025

Advent 2



Welcome!

It is Advent!

The altar flowers are given this week by Brenda Horner and Ron Henze to the Glory of God and in thanksgiving for the lives of friends and family members whom we especially remember at this time of year. To dedicate flowers, please sign up on the flower chart in the hall.

The Service of Lessons & Carols

The service of Lessons & Carols dates back to the mid-19th century. In its fullest form, it is a service of nine lessons or readings from Scripture followed by the singing of carols. We listen to the great stories of our spiritual tradition which remind us of Go'd great plan for humanity from our beginning to our end.

Today we will read only seven of these readings and give thanks to God for the stories of his love and healing for us.

This Sunday we listen to the stories up to the promised birth of Jesus. On the Sunday after Christmas, we will recall the entire Christmas story.

For Children

Children will gather after the opening songs for a commissioning and then return for communion. All of our staff and volunteers have had a criminal record check and have been approved for ministry with vulnerable people.

For Youth

Following the opening songs, the youth will gather for a spiritual conversation.

Coffee Hour

Please gather in the hall for coffee and refreshment following the service.

Next Week: December 21

Advent 4

Isaiah 7:10-16; Psalm 80; Romans 1:1-7; Matthew 1:18-25

The Father Dara preaches.

Finding
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the Gathering of the Community

After the welcome, the presider sings two verses of O Come, O Come Emmanuel, followed by the Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Heavenly Father, you call us to prepare for the coming of your Son: forgive us our unreadiness to receive him.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you were proclaimed by John the Baptist: help us also to prepare your way.

Christ, have mercy.

Holy Spirit, you speak through the prophets: make us attentive to hear your word.

Lord, have mercy.

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

And also with you.

An Advent Bidding

The First Reading

A reading from the Book of Genesis (2:4b-9, 15-25).

Listen for God's Word.

Our hearts are open.

Creating God,
you call us to live in harmony with nature, one another, and with you. Now fix our eyes upon the one in whom your purpose for the world has been revealed, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen.

Creator of the Stars of Night

9th century

**Creator of the stars of night,
your people's everlasting light,
O Christ, redeemer of us all,
we pray you hear us when we call.**

**In sorrow that the ancient curse
should doom to death a universe,
You came, O Saviour, to set free
your own in glorious liberty.**

**When this old world
drew on t'ward night,
you came, but not in splendour bright,
not as a monarch but the child
of Mary, blessed mother mild.**

**At your great name, O Jesus, now
all knees must bend,
all hearts must bow.
All things on earth with one accord,
like those in heav'n, shall call you Lord.**

**Come in your holy might, we pray,
redeem us for eternal day.
Defend us while we dwell below
from all assaults of our dread foe.**

**To God Creator, God the Son,
and God the Spirit, Three in One,
praise, honour, might, and glory be
from age to age eternally.**

The Second Reading

A reading from the Book of Genesis (3:1-20).

Listen for God's Word.

Our hearts are open.

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.

Common Praise 488

**The tree of life my soul hath seen,
laden with fruit, and always green:
the trees of nature fruitless be
compared with Christ the apple tree.**

**His beauty doth all things excel:
by faith I know, but ne'er can tell
the glory which I now can see
in Jesus Christ the apple tree.**

**For happiness I long have sought,
and pleasure dearly I have bought:
I missed of all: but now I see
'tis found in Christ the apple tree.**

**I'm weary with my former toil,
here I will sit and rest awhile:
under the shadow I will be
of Jesus Christ the apple tree.**

**This fruit doth make my soul to thrive,
it keeps my dying faith alive;
which makes my soul in haste to be
with Jesus Christ the apple tree.**

The Third Reading

A reading from the Book of Isaiah (35:1-10).

Listen for God's Word.

Our hearts are open.

Creating and renewing God,

giving life in all its fullness, bring, we pray, all the children of this earth to the freedom of your holy purpose. May we see your beauty and glory in seas and lakes washed clean, in fields of plenty and forests strong, and in humanity made whole in body, mind, and mutual care, in the pattern of Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

Common Praise 109

**When the King shall come again,
all his power revealing,
Splendour shall announce his reign,
life and joy and healing;
Earth no longer in decay,
hope no more frustrated,
This is God's redemption day
longingly awaited.**

**In the desert, trees take root,
fresh from God's creation;
Plants and flowers and sweetest fruit
join the celebration;
Rivers spring up from the earth,
barren lands adorning.
Valleys, this is your new birth;
mountains, greet the morning!**

**Strengthen feeble hands and knees;
fainting hearts, be cheerful!
God, whom comes for such as these,
seeks and saves the fearful.
Deaf ears, hear the silent tongues
sing away their weeping;
Blind eyes, see the lifeless ones
walking, running, leaping!**

**There God's highway shall be seen
where no roaring lion,
Nothing evil or unclean,
walks the road to Zion:
Ransomed people homeward bound
all your praises voicing,
See your Lord with glory crowned,
share in his rejoicing!**

The Fourth Reading

A reading from the Book of Isaiah 11:1-9.

Listen for God's Word.

Our hearts are open.

God our salvation,
who by water and the Holy Spirit
delivered us from sin and raised us to
the new life of grace, give us an
inquiring and discerning heart, the
courage to will and to persevere, a spirit
to know and to love you, and the gift of
joy and wonder in all your works. We ask
this in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the
Holy Spirit, now and for ever. Amen.

Common Praise 89

**O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here,
until the Son of God appear.**

Rejoice! Rejoice!

Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

**O come, O wisdom from on high,
who orders all things mightily;
to us the path of knowledge show,
and teach us in her ways to go.**

**O come, O come, great Lord of might,
who to your tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times once gave the law,
in cloud and majesty and awe.**

**O come, O Rod of Jesse's stem,
from every foe deliver them
that trust your mighty power to save,
and give them victory o'er the grave.**

**O come, O Key of David, come,
and open wide our heavenly home;
make safe the way that leads on high,
and close the path to misery.**

**O come, O Dayspring from on high
and cheer us by your drawing nigh;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
and death's dark shadow put to flight.**

**O come, Desire of nations, bind
in one the hearts of humankind;
O bid our bitter conflict cease,
and be for us our Prince of Peace.**

The Fifth Reading

A reading from the Book of Isaiah 65:17-25.

Listen for God's Word.

Our hearts are open.

God of gentleness and peace,
teach our hands to shun the tools of
violence and our minds to conceive the
paths of peace, that we may know with
thanksgiving the joy of your generosity,
made known to us in Jesus Christ our
Lord, who lives and reigns with you and
the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for
ever. Amen.

Common Praise 318

**Rejoice today with one accord,
Sing out with exultation;
Rejoice and praise our mighty Lord,
Whose arm hath brought salvation.
His works of love proclaim
The greatness of his name,
For he is God alone
Who hath his mercy shown;
Let all his saints adore him!**

**When in distress to him we cried,
He heard our sad complaining.
O trust in him, whate'er betide;
His love is all-sustaining.
Triumphant songs of praise
To him our hearts shall raise;
Now every voice shall say,
"O praise our God always";
Let all his saints adore him!**

The Sixth Reading

A reading from the Gospel according to Luke (1:5-25).

Listen for God's Word.

Our hearts are open.

Almighty God,
you called John the Baptist to give witness to the coming of your Son and to prepare his way. Give your people wisdom to see your purpose, and openness to hear your will, that we too may witness to Christ's coming and so prepare his way; through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Common Praise 106

**There's a voice in the wilderness crying,
a call from the ways untrod:
prepare in the desert a highway,
a highway for our God!
The valleys shall be exalted,
the lofty hills brought low;
make straight all the crooked places
where the Lord our God may go!**

**O Zion, give voice to good tidings,
ascend to the heights and sing!
Proclaim to a desolate people
the coming of their King.
The works of pride all perish,
like flowers they shall decay;
the power and pomp of nations
shall pass like a dream away.**

**But your word, O God, is faithful,
your arm, O Lord, is strong;
you stand in the midst of nations,
and you will right the wrong.
You will feed your flock
like a shepherd,
and fold the lambs to your breast;
in pastures of peace you'll lead them,
and give to the weary rest.**

**There's a voice in
the wilderness crying,
a call from the ways untrod:
prepare in the desert a highway,
a highway for our God!
The valleys shall be exalted,
the lofty hills brought low;
make straight all the crooked places
where the Lord our God may go!**

The Seventh Reading

A reading from the Gospel according to Luke (1:26-38).

Listen for God's Word.

Our hearts are open.

Pour your grace into our hearts, O Lord,
**that we who have known the
incarnation of your Son Jesus Christ,
announced by an angel to the Virgin
Mary, may by his cross and passion be
brought to the glory of his resurrection;
who lives and reigns with you, in the
unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now
and for ever. Amen.**

**Tell out, my soul,
the greatness of the Lord!
Unnumbered blessings,
give my spirit voice;
tender to me the promise of his word;
in God my Saviour
shall my heart rejoice.**

**Tell out, my soul,
the greatness of his name!
Make known his might,
the deeds his arm has done;
his mercy sure,
from age to age the same;
his holy name - the Lord, the mighty one.**

**Tell out, my soul,
the greatness of his might!
Powers and dominions
lay their glory by;
proud hearts and stubborn wills
are put to flight,
the hungry fed, the humble lifted high.**

**Tell out, my soul,
the glories of his word!
Firm is his promise,
and his mercy sure.
Tell out, my soul,
the greatness of the Lord
to children's children and for evermore!**

Sermon

The Prayers of the People

God of glory and compassion,
**at your touch the wilderness blossoms.
Grant perseverance and patience to all
who long for your Son's return, so that
we may announce in word and deed the
good news of the kingdom. We ask this
through Christ whose day draws near.
Amen.**

With joy in our hearts, let us gather our
prayers in the words our Saviour taught us.
**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, the power, and the glory are
yours, now and for ever. Amen.**

Blessing

Announcements

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.

Blessing

Common Praise 425

**Joyful, joyful we adore thee,
God of glory, Lord of love;
hearts unfold like flowers before thee,
opening to the sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness,
drive the dark of doubt away;
giver of immortal gladness,
fill us with the light of day.**

**All thy works with joy surround thee,
earth and heaven reflect thy rays;
stars and angels sing around thee,
centre of unbroken praise.
Field and forest, vale and mountain,
flowery meadow, flashing sea,
chanting bird and flowing fountain
call us to rejoice in thee.**

**Thou art giving and forgiving,
ever blessing, ever blest.
well-spring of the joy of living,
ocean depth of happy rest!
Thou our Father and our Mother,
all who live in love are thine;
teach us how to love each other,
lift us to the joy divine.**

As we await our coming Saviour,
go in the peace of Christ.
Thanks be to God

*Lyrics are printed with permission through:
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Financial Support

We are grateful for your stewardship of this place through your tithes and offerings. They ensure that St. Mark – Ocean Park will be a centre and a light to the community for generations to come.

If you would like to become a regular steward of the ministry of this place, please fill out a welcome card and give it to the greeter, or the priest.

Donations can be made
by **cash** or **cheque**

(made out to the Parish of St. Mark – Ocean Park),

by **Pre-Authorized Debit** (PAD),
at the **Electronic Donation Station** (EDS) in
the foyer (please ask the usher for assistance),
by **e-Transfer** at

stmark.op.treasurer@gmail.com, or
through **CanadaHelps** on our website.

If you would like donation **envelopes**, please
connect with the office.

All donations will receive a tax-receipt in
February of the following year.



The Pulse

Children Youth & Family Ministry

Did you know!!!

The last youth gathering for 2025 will Friday
December 19 7-9pm.

The youth program will continue on January 9th 7-
9pm 2026.

Sunday Junior Church Program

Come and explore the Gospel with us!

Group 1: Grades K to 7

Group 2: Grades 8-12

A sensory space is available for all those
who would like to use it.

Youth Group Fridays

Grades 8 - 12, 7 - 9 pm

All are welcome!

email yministryrsvp@gmail.com with
any inquiries.



The Lunch Basket is given this week by Betty-Ann and Ian Bainbridge to the Glory of God and in gratitude for the many blessings and joy that our grandchildren bring to our lives.



Prayer Chain & Sunday Intercessions

If you, or someone you know is in need of prayer, please connect with **Lynne** at lynneh1@telus.net. She will share your request with a community of faithful intercessors!

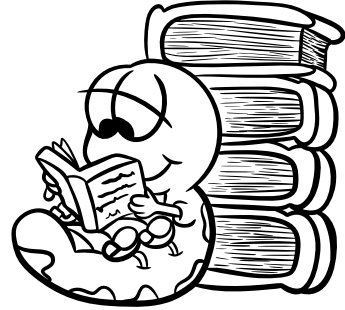
To have a name mentioned in the Sunday Intercessions, please write their name on the sheet at the back of the sanctuary, connect with **Michael** at michael@klaverrealtor.ca, or contact the office.

Library News

Inspired: Slaying Giants, Walking on Water, and Loving the Bible

by Rachel Held Evans (Author)

If the Bible isn't a science book, instruction manual, or position paper, then what is it? New York Times bestselling author Rachel Held Evans invites readers on a journey of rediscovery as she explores the magic of the Bible, engaging the old, familiar stories in new ways that honor the past and enlighten the present.



News & Events

This week at the Parish

Tuesday	Guild Meeting 2pm
Wednesday	Holy Communion, 10 am
Thursday	Contemplative Prayer 7 pm Choir Practice 7:30 pm
Friday	Sr. Youth Group 7:00 pm

A Cozy Christmas

Carols, Cookies and Cider
with Common Sound Choirs



4th Annual Cozy Christmas

with Common Sound Women's Choir,
Common Sound Chamber Choir, &
Common Sound Children's Choir

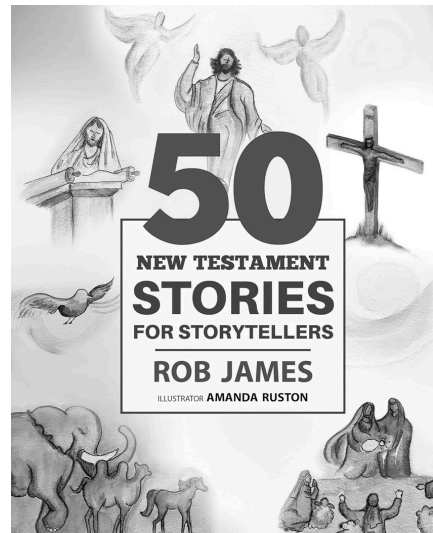
Wednesday, December 17 2025, 7:00pm

at the Parish of St. Mark Ocean Park

tickets can be purchased at

commonsoundchoirs.ca

2026 offering envelopes are available for
pick-up in the Narthex,



The Reverend Rob James is the author of *50 New Testament Stories for Storytellers*, illustrated by Mother Amanda of St. James, Vancouver. If you would like a copy of this great book, it is \$25.

Mental Health Moment

As we get closer to the longest night, when the northern hemisphere tilts the furthest from the sun, and as the rain falls heavily, remember to take care of yourself. Steep some tea, call a friend, read a book, and consider coming to church on December 21st at 6pm for our Longest Night Service with special guest preacher **Vanessa Siemens Maher**.



We give thanks to God.

the Ordination of Father Dara to the Sacred Order of Priests occurred on December 6th, St. Nicholas Day. Thanks to everyone who came out to support her in this exciting moment. Thanks to Serina for these photos!



Even More Thanks!

A huge thanks to everyone who participated in the annual Holly Berry Fair! It was a great success. It is wonderful to open these doors to so many from our community so they can experience first hand the hospitality of this sacred community!



Christmas Services

Wednesday, December 24, 5pm

A service of Holy Communion planned for families with children.

Wednesday, December 24, 7pm

A service of Holy Communion.

Thursday, December 25, 10am

A service of Holy Communion.

Sunday, December 28, 10am (no 8am service)

A service of Christmas Lessons and Carols.



inspire
CHRISTIAN
FORMATION

Inspire will return again in January with a study on the **5 Foundational Stories** of our faith. I wonder who you can invite to watch this video series with you.

the Prayer Corner

The traditional theme for this week is **joy**. In the middle of our preparation for Christmas, while we keep working hard for God's kingdom, God offers us a time for joy and celebration. Pink is the colour of joy!

One God's kingdom is justice!
All God's kingdom is justice!
One God's kingdom is peace!
All God's kingdom is peace!
One God's kingdom is joy!
All God's kingdom is joy!

The reading is to be read three times.

A reading from Zephaniah (3:17).

**The Lord, your God, is in your midst,
he will rejoice over you with gladness,
he will renew you in his love;
he will exult over you with shouts of joy.**

*The **pink** candle is lit.*

Prayer (repeat-after-me style)

**Loving God,
you give us joy when we are sad.
Give us the courage
to share your joy
with everyone we meet
through Jesus Christ
our friend and helper.
Amen.**



Daily Gospel Readings

Monday Matthew 24:15-31
Tuesday Matthew 24:32-44

Wednesday Matthew 24:45-51
Thursday John 3:16-21

Friday Luke 1:1-25
Saturday Luke 1:26-38



the Parish of St. Mark - Ocean Park

STMARKBC.ORG

Office Hours:

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