

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 21, 2025  
Advent 4



# Welcome!

## It is Advent!

The altar flowers are given this week by Neal and Trevor Davidge & Family & Flora Neave to the Glory of God and in loving memory of Isobel, Faithful Friend Sparky & John & all other friends.

To dedicate flowers,  
please sign up on the flower chart in the hall.

### Today's Scripture

*From Introductions to the Lessons by Bill Bennett.*

**The Book of the Prophet Isaiah 7:10-16** King Ahaz is persuaded by the first Isaiah in 733 BC not to join an alliance to placate the Assyrian threat.

**Paul's Letter to the Romans 1:1-7** Paul is yet to visit Christians in Rome. This reading is the opening greeting to them.

**Matthew 1:18-25** The gospel echoes other Old Testament stories of women whose pregnancies placed them at odds with social convention.

### 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.

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### Christmas Services:

December 24, 5pm (family) and 7pm  
December 25, 10am

### Next Sunday: December 28

Christmas Lessons and Carols

Michael Klaver presides and Sarah Autio Preaches

Joy to the  
World

# the Gathering of the Community

After the welcome, the presider sings the first verse of *O Come, O Come Emmanuel*, followed by the Lighting of the Advent Wreath

## *The Lighting of the Advent Wreath*

Heavenly Father, you exalted the humble and meek: give us humble and contrite hearts.

**Lord, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you grew towards birth in the Virgin's womb: be planted also in our hearts and lives.

**Christ, have mercy.**

Holy Spirit, you overshadowed Mary, that she might become the God-bearer: fill us with your heavenly gifts.

**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.**

**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.**

***Rejoice! Rejoice!***

***Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.***

**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.**

Lift Your Voice

*the Reverend David Taylor*

***Lift your voice!***

***In the wilderness cry,***

***"Make a highway for God."***

***Valleys rise.***

***Mountains fall to your knees  
at the glory of God.***

Everyone is able.

Lift up your voice, do not fear.

Like a shepherd,

God gathers us near to the stable.

See, our God has come to save us!

When the night grows longer,  
when all the stars disappear,  
we will wait on our

God to draw near and grow stronger.  
We will rise on wings as eagles.

God of all hope and joy,  
**open our hearts in welcome, so that your Son Jesus Christ at his coming may find in us a dwelling prepared for him; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.**

The peace of the Lord be always with you.  
**And also with you!**

### Commissioning of the Children

*We have a wonderful program for your child this morning. They will return for Communion. Please note that all our children's workers have had a criminal record check and are approved by the Diocese of New Westminster to work with vulnerable people.*



## the Proclamation of the Word

*We have large-print versions of the Scripture available for those who need one. Please ask a greeter for one.*

The Book of the Prophet Isaiah (7:10-16).  
Listen for God's Word.  
**Our hearts are open.**

### Love's Delights

*Meister Eckhart, rendered by Jon M. Sweeney and Mark S. Burrows*

I sometimes think You are the reverse of gravity, causing everything to rise, from the heavy earth up to the highest skies, but you show me that Yours is the work of coming down, of weighting what is light so that I, like You, might enter into what is least and raise it up to sound low's delight in heaven's proper height.

Paul's Letter to the Romans (1:1-70).  
Listen for God's Word.  
**Our hearts are open.**

Prepare ye the way of the lord  
*Stephen Schwartz*  
**Prepare ye the way of the lord!**

The Lord be with you.  
**And also with you.**

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.  
**Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ**

*Matthew 1:18-25*

The Gospel of Christ.  
**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

Sermon

# Sermon Notes



## The Creed

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father. Through whom all things were made. Who, for us and for our salvation came down from heaven: who by the power of the Holy Spirit became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made human. Who for our sake was crucified under Pontius Pilate; who suffered death and was buried. Who, on the third day, rose again in accordance with the scriptures; who ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. Who will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and whose kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father. Who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified. Who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

## The Prayers of the People

*While we have chiefly come to give thanks to God, our second purpose for gathering is to intercede for the world. We know that "the prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective" (James 5:16).*

# the Celebration of the Eucharist

*Please be seated as we gather our offering to present to God. You can give using an envelope, by signing up to our Pre-Authorized Debit program, or by using the terminal in the foyer. Today we use a Eucharistic Prayer 3 in the Book of Alternative Services, page 198.*

Common Praise 110

**"Sleepers, wake!" A voice astounds us;  
the shout of rampart-guards surrounds us:  
"Awake, Jerusalem, arise!"  
Midnight's peace their cry has broken,  
their urgent summons clearly spoken:  
"The time has come, O maidens wise!  
Rise up, and give us light;  
the bridegroom is in sight. Alleluia!  
Your lamps prepare and hasten there,  
that you the wedding feast may share."**

**Zion hears the watchmen singing.  
Her heart with joyful hope is springing;  
she wakes and hurries through the night.  
Forth he comes, her bridegroom glorious  
in strength of grace, in truth victorious:  
her star is risen, her light grows bright.  
Now come, most worthy Lord,  
God's Son, incarnate Word, Alleluia!  
We follow all and heed your call  
to come into the banquet hall.**

**Lamb of God, the heavens adore you;  
let saints and angels sing before you,  
as harps and cymbals swell the sound.  
Twelve great pearls, the city's portals:  
through them we stream  
to join the immortals  
as we with joy your throne surround.  
No eye has known the sight;  
no ear heard such delight: Alleluia!  
Therefore we sing to greet our King;  
forever let our praises ring.**

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.**

*The priest continues in prayer.*

Common Praise 722

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
Lord God of power and might,  
heav'n and earth are full,  
full of your glory.  
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna,  
hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes,  
who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna,  
hosanna in the highest.**

*The priest continues in prayer.*

The 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, the power, and the glory are  
yours, now and for ever. Amen.**

God of promise, you prepare  
a banquet for us in your kingdom.  
**Happy are those who are called  
to the supper of the Lamb.**

The gifts of God for the Children of God.  
**Thanks be to God.**

*All are invited to receive Communion.*

*If you would like to learn more about baptism, please connect with the minister.  
Prayer for healing is offered during communion on the right side of the sanctuary.*

Emmanuel

*Bob Mcgee*

**Emmanuel, Emmanuel,  
his name is called Emmanuel.  
God with us, revealed in us,  
his name is called Emmanuel.**

Your Love is Amazing

*Brown and Doerksen*

**Your love is amazing,  
steady and unchanging.  
Your love is a mountain,  
firm beneath my feet.  
Your love is a mystery,  
how you gently lift me.  
When I am surrounded,  
your love carries me.**

***Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah,  
your love makes me sing.***

**Your love is surprising,  
I can feel it rising,  
all the joy that's growing  
deep inside of me.**

**Every time I see you  
all your goodness shines through.  
I can feel this God song  
rising up in me.**

All Who Are Thirsty

*Brenton Brown, Glenn Robertson*

**All who are thirsty,  
all who are weak,  
come to the fountain,  
dip your heart in the stream of life.  
Let the pain and the sorrow  
be washed away  
in the waves of his mercy  
as deep cries out to deep.**

***Come, Lord Jesus, come.***

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 486

**Love divine, all loves excelling,  
joy of heaven to earth come down,  
fix in us thy humble dwelling,  
all thy faithful mercies crown.  
Jesus, thou art all compassion,  
pure, unbounded love thou art:  
visit us with thy salvation,  
enter every trembling heart.**

**Come, almighty to deliver;  
let us all thy grace receive;  
suddenly return, and never,  
never more thy temples leave.  
Thee we would be always blessing,  
serve thee as thy hosts above,  
pray, and praise thee, without ceasing,  
glory in thy perfect love.**

**Finish, then, thy new creation;  
pure and spotless let us be;  
let us see thy great salvation  
perfectly restored in thee,  
changed from glory into glory,  
till in heaven we take our place,  
till we cast our crowns before thee,  
lost in wonder, love, and praise.**

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

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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](mailto: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

**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 [yministrysvp@gmail.com](mailto:yministrysvp@gmail.com) with any inquiries.



The Lunch Basket is given this week by Patrick Aiken and Janet Scott to the Glory of God and "In loving memory of Wendy Aiken".



## Prayer Chain & Sunday Intercessions

If you, or someone you know is in need of prayer, please connect with **Lynne** at [lynnehl@telus.net](mailto:lynnehl@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](mailto:michael@klaverrealtor.ca), or contact the office.

## Library News - Pastors Choice

### Blue Like Jazz: Nonreligious Thoughts on Christian Spirituality

by Donald Miller

"For anyone wondering if the Christian faith is still relevant in a postmodern culture.

For anyone thirsting for a genuine encounter with a God who is real.

For anyone yearning for a renewed sense of passion in life.

Blue Like Jazz is a fresh and original perspective on life, love, and redemption.



# News & Events

## This week at the Parish

Wednesday	Wednesday Eucharist 10am Christmas Eve service 5pm Christmas Eve service 7pm
Thursday	Christmas Day service 10am

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

# 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.



**Salal+Cedar is turning 10 years old!** They are an Anglican outdoor worshipping community that has blessed us with their ministry over the last couple of years. They are having their annual financial campaign and are hoping to raise at least \$10,000 by the end of the year to continue their ministry. If you are able and feel called, please visit [salalandcedar.com](http://salalandcedar.com).

**Centering Prayer**  
**Thursdays at 7pm, beginning January 8**

Are you looking for a prayer practice that can ground you in the stillness of God? Consider coming to Centering Prayer! Centering Prayer is a practice developed by Father Keating and Cynthia Bourgeault.

We spend 20 minutes in silence using the techniques taught by the Centre for Action and Contemplation. Google this Centre and read all that they do!

After 20 minutes of stillness, we spend another half hour on a Lectio Divina, or Holy Reading of Scripture, a spiritual writer of the past or present, or an image.

If you want to know more about how this practice can be part of your spiritual life, talk to David!.



**Inspire** is our online Christian Formation program at the Parish of St. Mark - Ocean Park. Each week, a new video and study guide will be uploaded to our webpage with a 15-30 minute lesson on a variety of topics. You can watch these videos alone, with a spouse or friend, or even a group of people. Our hope, through this program, is to feed our hearts and minds with spiritual food to help us navigate our Christian journey through life.

This January we begin a series called the **5 Foundational Stories of our Faith**. Over **six sessions**, we will cover the foundational stories of **God Made Everything Good, The Sin Virus, God Comes to Heal Us** (two parts), **God Makes a Community of Healers**, and **God Will Fully Heal This Good World**. These are the basic stories our our faith and inform all that we do in our prayer and practice as Christians. Be sure to check it out!

# the Prayer Corner

The traditional theme for this week is **love**. In the Bible we read that God is love, and that love drives away fear. As Christians, let us learn to breathe in the love of God, and to breathe out fear.

One God is the one who loves us!  
**All God is the one who loves us!**  
One There is no fear in love!  
**All There is no fear in love!**  
One Perfect love drives out fear!  
**All Perfect love drives out fear!**

*The reading is to be read three times.*

A reading from First John (4:9).

**God's love was revealed among us  
in this way:**

**God sent Jesus into the world  
so that we might live through him.**

*The fourth **blue** candle is lit.*

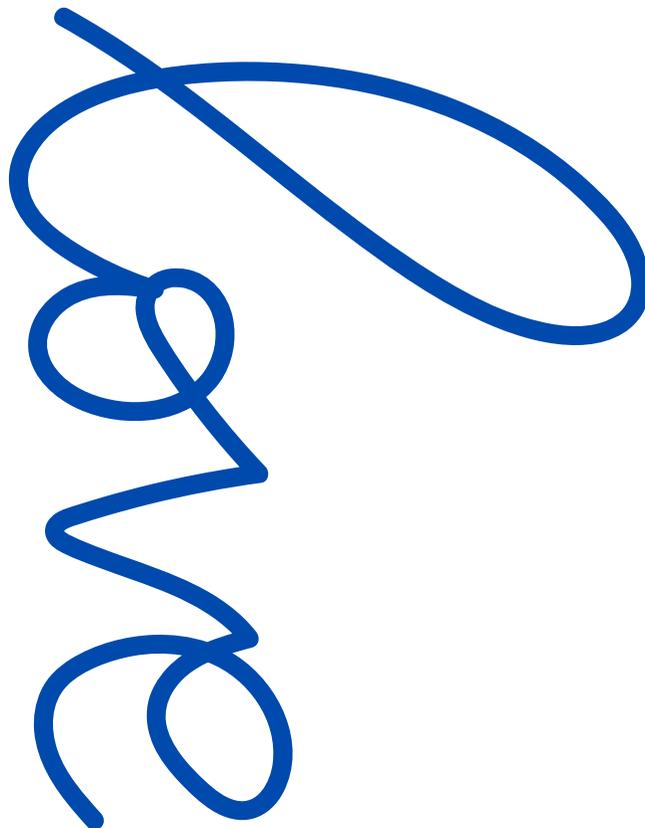
Prayer (repeat-after-me style)

**Loving God.**

**your love shines in our hearts  
removing our fear.**

**Give us the courage  
to share your love  
with everyone we meet  
through Jesus Christ,  
our friend and helper.**

**Amen**



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## Daily Gospel Readings

Monday Luke 1:57-66

Tuesday Luke 1:67-80

Wednesday Isaiah 59:15b-21

Thursday John 3:31-36

Friday Luke 2:15-21

Saturday Matthew 1:18-25



the Parish of St. Mark - Ocean Park  
**STMARKBC.ORG**

### Office Hours:

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, 9am to 2pm

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