



*Many thanks to artist Teddy Payne for the water colour given to St. James, which is reproduced here.*

# *Christmas Jazz Vespers*

*St. James Anglican Church Stratford ON  
Sunday, December 24, 2025, ~ 4:00 p.m.*

## **Clergy:**

**The Ven. Rob Lemon & The Rev'd Tianna Gocan**

## **Musicians:**

**The Paul Shilton Trio:**

**Paul Shilton – Piano, Laurence Gauci - Bass,  
David Campion – Drums, Barbara Fulton - Vocals**

*The evening Office of Vespers has roots extending into the worship life of the Jewish people. Our tradition has molded and shaped these forms of worship and prayer through an evolutionary process that is both faithful to our heritage and open to creating new traditions of praise. The Jazz Vespers Service is itself a synthesis of several traditions, each finding a unifying voice through the unique musical heritage that we call jazz. The makers of jazz develop consummate technical achievement as both a composer and a performer. The virtuosity of the performer is not an end unto itself. The musical tradition is about the task of giving voice to the hopes, dreams, frustrations and pain that expresses human experience. Jazz is the musical incense that collects and carries the prayers of a people. (From an article by the Rev. Norm Freeman, Episcopal priest 1952-2024).*

## **Order of Things**

Music by the trio to begin.

Congregational Carol: CP 154 Joy to the world.

Opening Christmas prayer (said together):

God of glory, your splendour shines from a manger in Bethlehem, where the Light of the world is humbly born into the darkness of human night. Open our eyes to Christ's presence in the shadows of our world, so that we, like him, may become beacons of your justice and defenders of all for whom there is no room. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> From Prayer without Ceasing: The Anglican Church of Canada 2019

Music by the trio

Reading: **Luke 2: 1-20**      Read by: Rev'd Tianna Gocan

Congregational Carol CP 138 Hark the Herald Angels Sing verses 1-2 then please be seated for the improvisation. Then verse 3.

Time at the Creche during which an offertory is received.

Music by the trio

Christmas Prayers and the Lord's Prayer

The Collect for Christmas

Congregational Carol: CP 119 Silent Night

Christmas blessing

Congregational Carol: Go tell it on the mountain -with improvisations – verses sung by Barb Fulton

Refrain: Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere.  
Go tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born.

1. While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night. Behold throughout the heavens there came a holy light. Refrain.
2. The shepherds feared and trembled when lo, above the earth Rang out the angel chorus that hailed our Saviour's birth. Refrain.

***Improvisation – congregation please be seated.***

3. Down in a lowly manger the humble Christ was born,  
And God sent our salvation that blessed Christmas morn.

Refrain: Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere.  
Go tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born.

## The Musicians:

Paul Shilton, piano; Paul has composed music for many productions at the Stratford Festival: All's Well That Ends Well; Julius Caesar; Romeo and Juliet; The Adventures of Pericles; Edward the Second; An Ideal Husband; and Dark Lady of the Sonnets, (a Stratford / CBC radio co-production recorded live at the Glenn Gould studio), as well as the 2024 production of Twelfth Night.

Laurence Gauci, bass; Laurence has been making music in Stratford and area for over 30 year. He is the conductor of the Stratford Concert Band and the Director and bassist of the Festival City Big Band. He has also performed the duties of Music Director for productions in Stratford and the surrounding area. Laurence can be heard performing with various groups in and around Stratford, from jazz trios to classic rock groups to large ensembles.

Dave Champion, drums; Dave is appreciating the gentler pace of today's service, having just wound up a busy 44th season in the orchestra at the Stratford Festival. He's played with Canada's early instrument orchestra, Tafelmusik, for many years and just performed Handel's Messiah concerts and singalong at Massey Hall in Toronto.

Barbara Fulton, vocals; Barbara enjoyed three years with Come From Away, Toronto. She's been with the Stratford Festival for twenty-two seasons. Up next, this summer: Marilla in 'Anne' at the Charlottetown Festival and Come From Away, AGAIN!

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