

St. John's Anglican Church

46 Ridout Street West, Tillsonburg ON N4G 5L8

Rector:

The Rev'd Fr. Tom Stradwick

Deacon:

The Rev'd. Vermell Stevens

Honorary Ass't:

The Rev'd. Fr. David Joyce

Choir Director/Organist: Joanne Smith

The Epiphany

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"The light of Christ is so clear and strong that it makes the language of the cosmos and of the Scriptures intelligible, so that all those who, like the Magi, are open to the truth can recognize it and join in contemplating the Savior of the world."

- Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI



*The Twelfth Day of Christmas:
Feast of the Epiphany of the Lord*

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free person,
there is not male and female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Galatians 3 : 28

**ORDER OF SERVICE FOR
JANUARY 4, 2026 – 10:30 a.m.**

Morning Prayer

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Anglican Church of Canada*



OFFICIANT

The Rev'd. Vermell Stevens

LAY READER

Elizabeth Rolls

OPENING HYMN

Hail to the Lord's Anointed (101)

GREETING/ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Minister shall read aloud one or more of these Sentences of the Scriptures that follow.

O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness: let the whole earth stand in awe of him.
(Psalm 96: 9)

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us: but if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 St. John 1: 8, 9)

The Minister, turning to the people, shall say the Exhortation in the form following. Occasionally the second paragraph may be omitted, or in place of the Exhortation the Minister may say,

Officiant: Let us humbly confess our sins to Almighty God.

All: Dearly beloved brethren, the Scripture moveth us in sundry places to acknowledge and confess our manifold sins and wickedness; and that we should not dissemble nor cloke them before the face of Almighty God our heavenly Father; but confess them with a humble, lowly, penitent, and obedient heart; to the end that we may obtain forgiveness of the same, by his infinite goodness and mercy.

And although we ought at all times humbly to acknowledge our sins before God; yet ought we most chiefly so to do, when we assemble and meet together to render thanks for the great benefits that we have received at his hands, to set forth his most worthy praise, to hear his most holy Word, and to ask those things which are requisite and necessary, as well for the body as the soul.

Wherefore I pray and beseech you, as many as are here present, to accompany me with a pure heart and humble voice unto the throne of the heavenly grace.

A general Confession to be said of the whole Congregation with the Minister, all kneeling.

Officiant: Almighty and most merciful Father

People: We have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep, We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts, We have offended against thy holy laws, We have left undone those things which we ought to have done, And we have done those things which we ought not to have done; And there is no health in us. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us, miserable offenders. Spare thou them, O God, which confess their faults. Restore thou them that are penitent; According to thy promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesus our Lord. And grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake, That we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life, To the glory of thy holy Name. Amen.

The Absolution, or Remission of sins, to be pronounced by the Priest alone, standing: the people still kneeling.

Officiant: Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who desireth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he may turn from his wickedness, and live, hath given power and commandment to his Ministers, to declare and pronounce to his people, being penitent, the Absolution and Remission of their sins. He pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly repent and unfeignedly believe his holy Gospel. Wherefore we beseech him to grant us true repentance and his Holy Spirit, that those things may please him which we do at this present, and that the rest of our life hereafter may be pure and holy; so that at the last we may come to his eternal joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Here the Lord's Prayer may be said; the people repeating it with the Officiant.

People: **OUR Father 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;
And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive them that trespass against us;
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory,
For ever and ever. Amen.**

Officiant: O LORD, open thou our lips;

People: **And our mouth shall show forth thy praise.**

Officiant: O God, make speed to save us;

People: **O Lord, make haste to help us.**

Here, all standing up, the Officiant shall say:

Officiant: GLORY be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;

People: As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.

Officiant: Praise ye the Lord;

People: The Lord's Name be praised.

VENITE, EXULTEMUS DOMINO (Psalm 95:1-7)

The Rev'd. Vermell Stevens

Come, let us sing to the Lord;
let us shout for joy to the rock of our salvation.
Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving
and raise a loud shout to him with psalms.

For the Lord is a great God, and a great king above all gods.
In his hand are the caverns of the earth,
and the heights of the hills are his also.
The sea is his for he made it,
and his hands have moulded the dry land.

Come, let us bow down, and bend the knee,
and kneel before the Lord our maker.
For he is our God,
and we are the people of his pasture
and the sheep of his hand.
Oh, that today you would hearken to his voice!

Officiant: Glory be to the Father,
And to the son, and to the Holy Ghost;

All: As it was in the beginning,
Is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.

PSALM 72:1-7, 10-14

Elizabeth Rolls

Reader: Please say alternate verses with me.

Give the king your justice,
O God, and your righteousness to the king's son;
**That he may rule your people righteously
and the poor with justice;**

That the mountains may bring prosperity to the people,
and the little hills bring righteousness.
**He shall defend the needy among the people;
he shall rescue the poor and crush the oppressor.**

He shall live as long as the sun and moon endure,
from one generation to another.
**He shall come down like rain upon the mown field,
like showers that water the earth.**

In his time shall the righteous flourish;
there shall be abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more.
**The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall pay tribute,
and the kings of Arabia and Saba offer gifts.**

All kings shall bow down before him,
and all the nations do him service.
**For he shall deliver the poor who cries out in distress,
and the oppressed who has no helper.**

He shall have pity on the lowly and poor;
he shall preserve the lives of the needy.
**He shall redeem their lives from oppression and violence,
and dear shall their blood be in his sight.**

At the end of the Psalm the following may be said.

O God, bring our nation and all nations to a sense of justice and equity, that poverty, oppression, and violence may vanish and all may know peace and plenty. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

THE FIRST LESSON

A reading from the book of Isaiah

Read by Karen Liiv

Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you. Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. Lift up your eyes and look around; they all gather together, they come to you; your sons shall come from far away, and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms. Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and rejoice, because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you. A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall proclaim the praise of the Lord. (*Isaiah 60: 1-6*)

After a period of silent reflection, the following is said.

Here ends the first lesson.

TE DEUM LAUDAMUS

Elizabeth Rolls

We praise thee, O God; we acknowledge thee to be the Lord.
All earth doth worship thee, the Father everlasting.
To thee all Angels cry aloud, the Heavens and all the Powers therein.
To thee Cherubim and Seraphim continually do cry,
Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts;
Heaven and earth are full of the Majesty of thy glory.

The glorious company of the Apostles praise thee;
The goodly fellowship of the Prophets praise thee;
The noble army of Martyrs praise thee;
The holy Church throughout all the world doth acknowledge thee,
The Father, of an infinite Majesty;
Thine honourable, true, and only Son;
Also the Holy Ghost, the Comforter.
THOU art the King of Glory, O Christ.
Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father.
When thou tookest upon thee to deliver man,
thou didst not abhor the Virgin's womb.
When thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death,
thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers.
Thou sittest at the right hand of God, in the glory of the Father.
We believe that thou shalt come to be our Judge.
We therefore pray thee, help thy servants,
whom thou hast redeemed with thy precious blood.
Make them to be numbered with thy Saints, in glory everlasting.

THE SECOND LESSON

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Ephesians

Jeff Monk

This is the reason that I Paul am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles - for surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace that was given me for you, and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. In former generations this mystery was not made known to humankind, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: that is, the Gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God's grace that was given me by the working of his power. Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to me to bring to the Gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ, and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him. (*EPHESIANS 3:1-12*)

After a period of silent reflection the following is said.

Here ends the second lesson.

BENEDICTUS (St. Luke 1:68)

**All: Blessed be the Lord God of Israel;
For he hath visited, and redeemed his people;
And hath raised up a mighty salvation for us,
in the house of his servant David;
As he spake by the mouth of his holy Prophets,
which have been since the world began;
That we should be saved from our enemies,
and from the hands of all that hate us;**

**To perform the mercy promised to our forefathers,
and to remember his holy covenant;
To perform the oath which he sware to our forefather Abraham,
that he would grant us.
That we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies
might serve him without fear,
In holiness and righteousness before him,
all the days of our life.
And thou, child, shalt be called the Prophet of the Highest:**

**for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways;
To give knowledge of salvation unto his people
for the remission of their sins;
Through the tender mercy of our God;
whereby the day-spring from on high hath visited us;
To give light to them that sit in darkness,
And in the shadow of death,
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.**

**Officiant: Glory be to the Father,
 And to the son, and to the Holy Ghost;**

All: **As it was in the beginning,
Is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.**

Hear, O Israel

All: **Hear, O Israel
the Lord our God, the Lord is one.**

**Love the Lord your God
with all your heart,
with all your soul,
with all your mind,
and with all your strength.
This is the first and the great commandment.
The second is like it:
Love your neighbour as yourself.
There is no commandment greater than these.**

*And after the Creed these prayers following, all devoutly kneeling,
the Minister first pronouncing:*

Officiant: **The Lord be with you**

People: **And with thy spirit**

Officiant: **Let us pray**

Lord, have mercy upon us.

People: **Christ have mercy upon us.**

Officiant: **Lord, have mercy upon us.**

Here the Lord's Prayer may be said; the people repeating it with the Minister.

THE LORD'S PRAYER (said)

All: **Our Father 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;
And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive them that trespass against us;
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil. Amen.**

Then the Minister standing up shall say:

Officiant: O Lord, show thy mercy upon us;
People: **And grant us thy salvation.**
Officiant: O Lord, save the King;
People: **And mercifully hear us when we call upon thee.**
Officiant: Endue thy Ministers with righteousness;
People: **And make thy chosen people joyful.**
Officiant: O Lord, save thy people;
People: **And bless thine inheritance.**
Officiant: Give peace in our time, O Lord;
People: **And evermore mightily defend us.**
Officiant: O God, make clean our hearts within us;
People: **And take not thy Holy Spirit from us.**

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Elizabeth Rolls

We begin by praying for those people who have special events in their lives.

Celebrating Birthdays this week are:

Louise Barton, Jayne Hackney,

We would also like to pray for Vermell's Great Grandson, Charlie, born on December 30th. May the Lord bless him and keep him safe.

Let us pray.

In our prayer cycle today, we pray for the following Parish families:
Tom and Carol Nant, Alan Oliver and Patricia England, Christina Oliver,
Dave and Mary Palmateer and Helen Parrott.

And at this time, we keep in our prayers, all those who are sick and bereaved and their families. Including Father Tom, Millie, Mary Jean and Jim.

For those who would like to place a loved one's name on the prayer list, please enter the name in the prayer book on the cross-aisle or call the office, so we may pray for them.

In the Diocese of Huron, we pray for the Parishes of:
St. John's-by-the-Lake, Grand Bend; St. Anne's Worshipping Community, Port
Franks; St. Paul's, Palmerston;
The Regional Ministry of Hope: Trinity, Blyth and St. Paul's-Trinity, Wingham;
And the Parish of the Holy Spirit, Seaforth

Today we pray for Kirk and Karen Armstrong, who have donated the altar flowers to the Glory of God and in loving memory of their mothers, Katherine Armstrong and Anita Liiv.

The Collect of the Day.

Almighty God, by grace alone you call us and accept us in your service. Strengthen us by your Spirit, and make us worthy of your call; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The Second Collect, for Peace.

O God, who art the author of peace and lover of concord, in knowledge of whom standeth our eternal life, whose service is perfect freedom: Defend us thy humble servants in all assaults of our enemies; that we, surely trusting in thy defence, may not fear the power of any adversaries; through the might of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Third Collect, for Grace.

O Lord our heavenly Father, Almighty and everlasting God, who hast safely brought us to the beginning of this day: Defend us in the same with thy mighty power; and grant that this day we fall into no sin, neither run into any kind of danger; but that all our doings may be ordered by thy governance, to do always that is righteous in thy sight; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Gospel Hymn

There's a Wideness in God's Mercy (606)

Verses 1 & 2

The Holy Gospel

The Rev'd. Vermell Stevens

Reader: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Reader: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

People: Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: 'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel. '" Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage."

When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road. (*MATTHEW 2:1-12*)

Gospel Hymn (continued)
There's a Wideness in God's Mercy (606)
Verses 3-5

Sermon
The Rev'd. Vermell Stevens

Hymn for Offering
See Amid the Winter's Snow (148) (5 Verses)

Prayer Over Gifts

Officiant: Loving God, before the world began you called us.
Make holy all we offer you this day, and strengthen us in that calling.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord. **Amen.**

Reader: *A Prayer for the Clergy and People.*

Almighty and everlasting God, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift: Send down upon our Bishops and Clergy, and all Congregations committed to their charge, the healthful Spirit of thy grace; and that they may truly please thee, pour upon them the continual dew of thy blessing. Grant this, O Lord, for the honour of our Advocate and Mediator, Jesus Christ **Amen.**

Then may be read any of the Occasional Prayers or Thanksgivings, or any prayers sanctioned by the Ordinary, always ending with the Prayer of St. Chrysostom and the Grace;

Reader: *A Prayer for all Conditions of men.*

O God, the Creator and Preserver of all mankind, we humbly beseech thee for all sorts and conditions of men; that thou wouldest be pleased to make thy ways known unto them, thy saving health unto all nations. More especially we pray for the good estate of the Catholic Church; that it may be so guided and governed by thy good Spirit, that all who profess and call themselves Christians may be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life.

Finally we commend to thy fatherly goodness all those, who are any ways afflicted or distressed in mind, body, or estate [especially Father Tom], that it may please thee to comfort and relieve them, according to their several necessities, giving them patience under their sufferings, and a happy issue out of all their afflictions. And this we beg for Jesus Christ his sake. **Amen.**

This to be said by the Minister and the people together.

A Prayer of Saint Chrysostom.

All: Almighty God, who hast given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplications unto thee; and dost promise that when two or three are gathered together in thy Name thou wilt grant their requests: Fulfil now, O Lord, the desires and petitions of thy servants, as may be most expedient for them; granting us in this world knowledge of thy truth, and in the world to come life everlasting. Amen.

2 Corinthians 13:14.

All: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all evermore. Amen.

BENEDICTION

Officiant: The peace of God, which passeth all understanding,
keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God,
and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord:
And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit
be amongst you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Special Hymn

Go Now In Peace

Music by Don Besig - Words by Don Besig and Nancy Price. Harold Flammer Music, a division of Shawnee Press, Inc. Exclusively Distributed by Hal Leonard Corporation.

**Go now in peace, never be afraid
God will go with you each hour of ev'ry day.
Go now in faith, steadfast, strong and true Know
God will guide you in all you do.**

**Go now in love, and show you believe.
Reach out to others so all the world can see.
God will be there watching from above.
Go now in peace, in faith and in love.**

Recessional Hymn

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing (138)

