

# Christmas Eve

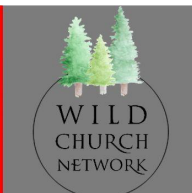
December 24, 2023 + 4pm



Front Image: *Prince of Peace* by Charlotte Walton + AbbeyChurch Artist in Residence



**BLACK  
LIVES  
MATTER**



# Welcome to the AbbeyChurch

No matter who you are or what you are carrying today, know you are beloved and so very welcome here!

At the AbbeyChurch, we tell stories of faith, encourage hope, share meals, care for each other and for God's creation – and strive to practice the teachings of Jesus.

We're at different places in our faith journey - but we share a guiding sacred Story as found in scripture (The Bible) and summarized in our Christian creeds.

We share a willingness to honestly wrestle with God - with our questions and doubts, our disillusionment with our institutions and our concern for our world.

We invite diversity in our community and our leadership; old, young, rich, poor, conservative, liberal, radical, single, married, LGBTQ2IA+, straight, evangelical, progressive, overeducated, undereducated, overhoused, underhoused, certain, doubting, hurting, thriving (to name a few).

As a witness to unity in diversity, The AbbeyChurch is an affirming shared ministry of The United Church of Canada and The Anglican Church of Canada. We draw on those spiritual traditions, as well as others across the Christian spectrum. We're also connected to an intentional community - the Emmaus Community - who make commitments of prayer, presence and simplicity.

We believe that Christ's love binds our differences together and renews our hope as we gather each week at Jesus' table of radical welcome.



*Kelly Latimore Icons*

# We Gather

## Opening Loop

### Welcome and Announcements

### Tolling of the Bells

## Opening Words

In this time and place we gather with gratitude on the stolen lands of the ɫəkʷəŋən people; known today as the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations.

**From many places and peoples we come to this house of prayer.**

A Palestinian Jewish boy is born under occupation.

**A Jewish Palestinian boy is born under the rubble.**

His mother walks for miles.

**At the end of her journey, she has no place to stay.**

Shepherds leave their work to search for signs of life.

**Wise Folks squint through missiles to glimpse a star of salvation.**

A Palestinian Jewish boy is born under occupation.

A Jewish Palestinian boy is born under the rubble.

He is the Hope of the World—

**For when He is free, we all are free.** enfleshed

*Bell x 3*

## Lighting of the Christ Candle

Narrator 1: Hope, peace, joy, and love, four promises always offered to us by God, and all of them manifest in this one we light tonight: the Christ candle.

Narrator 2: In Jesus Christ, we find the hope of redemption, the peace that flows from justice, the joy of community, and the love that encompasses us all.

**Christ is born! Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on Earth!**

*The Christ candle is lit*

Narrator 3: O come, O come, Emmanuel, let your Spirit shine in our hearts; let your love shine in our world, and let the wonder of this night touch all of our hearts. Lead us to the shining-star truth, of God with us, God for us, God in us. **Amen**

*Please rise in body or in spirit as we sing. Everyone is invited to help set the table with symbols of faith and creche pieces during our opening song...*

## Opening Song: O Come All Ye Faithful

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.*

God of God, light of light,  
lo, he abhors not the virgin's womb,  
very God, begotten, not created: *Refrain*

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

Go into the joy of this holy day to proclaim the radical love of the incarnation.

**Thanks be to God! Amen! Alleluia!**

**Song: Hark The Herald Angels Sing**

Hark! the herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn king:  
peace on earth, and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled!"  
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,  
join the triumph of the skies;  
with th'angelic hosts proclaim,  
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

*Refrain:*

Hark! the herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn king"

Christ, by highest heaven adored,  
Christ, the everlasting Lord,  
late in time behold him come,

**Poem:** Selected and read by poet-in-residence, Rebecca Yeo

**We Proclaim**

**Hebrew Scripture**

A reading from the prophet Isaiah (9:2-7)  
The people who walked in bleak shadows  
have seen a great light;  
those who lived in a land of deep  
darkness—  
on them light has shined.  
You have multiplied exultation;  
you have increased its joy;  
they rejoice before you  
as with joy at the harvest,  
as people exult when dividing plunder.  
For the yoke of their burden  
and the bar across their shoulders,  
the rod of their oppressor,  
you have broken as on the day of  
Midian.  
For all the boots of the tramping warriors

See, how the shepherds  
summoned to his cradle,  
leaving their flocks, draw nigh  
with lowly fear;  
we too will thither  
bend our joyful footsteps; *Refrain*

*John Francis Wade / Public Domain*

offspring of the virgin's womb:  
veiled in flesh the Godhead see;  
hail th'incarnate deity,  
pleased with us in flesh to dwell,  
Jesus, our Immanuel. *Refrain*

Hail the heaven-born prince of peace!  
Hail the sun of righteousness!  
Light and life to all he brings,  
risen with healing in his wings.  
Mild he lays his glory by,  
born that we no more may die,  
born to raise us from the earth  
born to give us second birth. *Refrain.*

*Charles Wesley / Public Domain*

and all the garments rolled in blood  
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.  
For a child has been born for us,  
a son given to us;  
authority rests upon his shoulders,  
and he is named  
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.  
Great will be his authority,  
and there shall be endless peace  
for the throne of David and his kingdom.  
He will establish and uphold it  
with justice and with righteousness  
from this time onward and  
forevermore.

The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.  
...The Word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God.**

*You are invited to rise in body or in spirit as we prepare our hearts to hear the Gospel.*

**Gospel Acclamation: Angels We Have Heard on High** (verse 3)

Gloria, in excelsis deo!  
Gloria, in excelsis deo!

Come to Bethlehem and see  
Christ whose birth the angels sing;  
Come, adore on bended knee,  
Christ the lord, the newborn king.

**The Gospel Reading**

Let us proclaim the gospel from the rooftops!

**With our words and with our lives!**

A reading from the +Gospel according to  
Luke (2: 1-20).

In those days a decree went out from  
Caesar Augustus that all the world should  
be registered. This was the first  
registration and was taken while  
Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went  
to their own towns to be registered.  
Joseph also went from the town of  
Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of  
David called Bethlehem, because he was  
descended from the house and family of  
David. He went to be registered with Mary,  
to whom he was engaged and who was  
expecting a child. While they were there,  
the time came for her to deliver her child.  
And she gave birth to her firstborn son  
and wrapped him in bands of cloth and  
laid him in a manger, because there was  
no place in the guest room.

Now in that same region there were  
shepherds living in the fields, keeping  
watch over their flock by night. Then an  
angel of the Lord stood before them, and  
the glory of the Lord shone around them,  
and they were terrified. But the angel said  
to them, "Do not be afraid, for see, I am  
bringing you good news of great joy for all  
the people: to you is born this day in the

**Gospel Acclamation: Angels We Have Heard On High** (verse 4)

Gloria, in excelsis deo!  
Gloria, in excelsis deo!

city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah,  
the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you  
will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth  
and lying in a manger."

And suddenly there was with the angel a  
multitude of the heavenly host, praising  
God and saying: "Glory to God in the  
highest heaven, and on earth peace  
among those whom God favours!"

When the angels had left them and gone  
into heaven, the shepherds said to one  
another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and  
see this thing that has taken place, which  
the Lord has made known to us."

So they went with haste and found Mary  
and Joseph and the child lying in the  
manger. When they saw this, they made  
known what had been told them about  
this child, and all who heard it were  
amazed at what the shepherds told them,  
and Mary treasured all these words and  
pondered them in her heart. The  
shepherds returned, glorifying and  
praising God for all they had heard and  
seen, just as it had been told them.

Let us proclaim the gospel from the  
rooftops!

**With our words and with our lives!**

See him in a manger laid,  
whom the choirs of angels praise;  
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid,  
While our hearts in love we raise.

*Followed by bell / brief silence for meditation / bell*



You are invited to rise in body or in spirit as we affirm the ancient story of faith:

**Credo**

C F/A Gsus G C C/E F Gsus G

1. We be-----lieve in God al-----migh-----ty Ma---ker of all Heav'n and  
 2. Suff---ered un----der Pont-ius Pi-----late on the cross He bled and  
 3. In ----to Heav---en He a-----cen---ded seat-ed at God's own right

C F G C F/A B♭ E/G# Am C/E

Earth. And in Je---sus Christ our Sav-----iour God's own Son of match---less  
 died. Placed with---in the grave so Si---lent, where for three days he did  
 hand. Til' He comes a-----gain in glo---ry Gra-----cious judge 'oer ev-----ry

F Gsus C/E G/C F Gsus G C C/E F E/G#

Worth. By the Spir----it was con----ceive----ed, of the vir-----gin Ma-----ry  
 Lie. Then the stone sealed tomb was emp-----ty, we be-----lieve He did a-  
 Land. We con----fess the Ho---ly Spir----it, who was sent through Christ the

Am Am/G F C/E G G/B C C/E

born. God in Whom we have be-----lie-----ved God al---  
 rise. Triumphed o'er the grave fo-----ev-----er ov-----er  
 Son. Who is Lord and gi-----ver of life, God the

F Gsus G C 1,2,3

Migh-----t-----y Three in One!  
 Death He----- is the Christ!  
 Spi-----ri-----t Three in

4. C C/Bb Asus A  
 One! I be -

D G/B Asus A D D/F# G Asus A D2 G2 A  
 -lieve the Church of Je-----sus, ca-tho-----lic it 'ere re-----mains; we are

D G/B C F#/A# Bm D/F# G Asus D/F# A  
 one through all the a-----ges the com-----mu-----nion of the saints. We be-

G2 Asus A D D/F# G2 F#/A# Bm Bm/A  
 lieve sins are for-----giv-----en, that our bo-----dies shall be raised. Ev--er

G2 D/F# A A/C# D D/F# G Asus A D  
 Las-----ting life the pro-----mise, May God's Ho---l-----y name be praised!

\*Catholic = Universal Apostles Creed 2nd-6th cent. Deckard/Arr. Benedict 2006 Cardiphonia Music. Verses Rob Crosby-Shearer.

## Our Prayers

Chivonne Graff

### The Confession

We come to confess before the God of mercy and compassion.

#### **Silence is kept**

When we reduce Christmas to plastic and tinsel **have mercy on us, Creator**

When hardness of heart keeps us from seeing, hearing and touching the needs of others,  
**let your grace consume us, O God.**

When the wars around us are of no concern or paralyse us with fear.

**Remove all barriers that divide us, and let there be no obstacle to our love for you and for one another. Amen.**

### The Absolution / Assurance of God's Grace



## The Peace

Beloved community, the peace of Christ be with you all. **And also with you!**

*We acknowledge the peace of Christ in each other.*

*During the 'offertory' song, the table is set.*

*Contributions to our common life can be made at the back of the space (now or later).*

*As we prepare for this holy feast we are reminded that all are welcome to receive wherever they find themselves in their spiritual journey. All are welcome to Jesus' table - as you feel ready.*

## Offertory: Go Tell It On the Mountain

*Refrain:* Go, tell it on the mountain,  
Over the hills and everywhere  
Go, tell it on the mountain,  
That Jesus Christ is born.

While shepherds kept their watching  
Over silent flocks by night  
Behold throughout the heavens  
There shone a holy light. *Refrain.*

The shepherds feared and trembled,  
When lo! above the earth,  
Rang out the angels chorus  
That hailed the saviour's birth. *Refrain.*

Down in a lowly manger  
The humble Christ was born  
And God sent us salvation  
That blessed Christmas morn. *Refrain.*

*African-American Spiritual via John Wesley Work, Jr. /  
Public Domain.*

## We Celebrate

### Prayer over the Gifts

Holy and vulnerable God, take these gifts we offer this eve and transform them into emblems of wonder and joy that we may know your sacred presence in all places and at all times. In the name of the one who sets free - Jesus - born of Mary, we pray. **Amen.** rjcs

### The Great Thanksgiving

God is with you. **And also with you!**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them up to God.**

Let us give thanks to God. **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Holy God, How wonderful is the work of your hands! All of creation echoes the music of your praise. When sin had scarred the world, You made a covenant to renew the whole of creation. You embraced a people as your own and filled them with longing for a peace that would last and a justice that would never fail. **Glory to you forever and ever.**

Through countless generations, your people hungered for the bread of freedom. From them you came in Jesus, the living bread, in whom all our hungers are filled. You have sent your Holy Spirit as a mighty stream to refresh and renew the face of the earth. Therefore with the company of heaven and all of your creation we sing:

*(sung to the tune of O come o come Emmanuel)*

**Holy holy hol—y Lord - God of power Go—d of might**

**Heaven and the earth are full... are fu—ll of your glo—ry, O God**

**Hosanna, Hosanna! +How blessed is the one who comes in the name of the lord**

While Jesus was eating with his disciples, he took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it, broke it, gave it to them, and said, "Take, this is my body. Do this in remembrance of me."  
**Glory to you forever and ever.**

As supper was ending, Jesus took the wine and after blessing it, poured it, gave it to them and said, "take, this is my blood, do this in remembrance of me.

**Glory to you forever and ever.**

Holy God we give you thanks for the mystery of faith given to us in Jesus your Child:

**Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.** (x2)

+Send your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these gifts of bread and wine that they may be to us the Body and Blood of your Christ. Grant that with burning hearts, we may be a people of hope justice and love.

As grain was scattered across this land then gathered and made one in this bread, so may your people, scattered to the ends of the earth, be gathered and made one in your love.

**Amen.** St. Lydia's Table, alt.

### **The Prayer of Jesus**

As beloved children of a loving parent, we pray as Jesus taught:

*(said in a language, translation or paraphrase of your choice)*

**Our \*Father (\*or Parent, or Mother, or Source) who are in heaven,**

**hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come,**

**Thy will be done, on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.**

**And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.**

**For Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory**

**Forever and ever. Amen.**

*Silence.*

These are the gifts of God for the people of God given for the life of the world.

**Thanks be to God!**

*All are welcome to receive at Jesus' table! The bread is gluten-free but contains almond flour and dairy. Please ask the server if you would like a non-dairy/almond option. The juice is in the small cups. Wine is in the common cup. Please refrain from dipping the bread.*

### **Communion Song (Pre-recorded): Creator of Orion (Agnus Dei)**

Tom Wuest / Brass Trumpet Publishing. used with permission.

#### **Communion Song: In The Bleak Midwinter**

In the bleak midwinter  
frosty wind made moan,  
earth stood hard as iron,  
water like a stone: snow had fallen,  
snow on snow, snow on snow,  
in the bleak midwinter, long ago.

Our God, heaven cannot hold them,  
nor earth sustain;  
heaven and earth shall flee away  
when he comes to reign:  
in the bleak midwinter

a stable place sufficed  
the Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ.

What can I give him, poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd,  
I would bring a lamb,  
if I were a wise one  
I would do my part,  
yet what I can I give him,  
give my heart.

Christina Rosetti (poem) / Gustov Holst (music)  
/ Public Domain

## **Communion Song: It Came Upon A Midnight Clear**

It came upon a midnight clear,  
that glorious song of old,  
from angels bending near the earth  
to touch their harps of gold:  
"Peace on the earth, good will to all,  
from heaven's all gracious king."  
The world in solemn stillness lay  
to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come  
with peaceful wings unfurled.  
And still their heavenly music floats  
o'er all the weary world.  
Above its sad and lowly plains

they bend on hovering wing.  
And ever o'er its Babel sounds  
the blessed angels sing.

For lo! the days are hastening on,  
by prophet bards foretold,  
when, with the ever-circling years  
shall come the age of gold:  
when peace shall over all the earth,  
Its ancient splendors fling,  
and all the world give back the song,  
which now the angels sing.

*Text: Edmund H. Sears, 1810–1876 Music: Richard S. Willis,  
1819–1900*

## **Prayer after Communion**

In this holy meal has been hope and promise, presence and holy mystery. Having eaten, may we, like Mary rejoice in you and be prepared to bear You to the weary world you love.  
**Amen.** rjcs.

## **We Are Sent**

*During this closing song, all are invited to light a taper  
as a reminder of light and hope and peace and joy and love that has come in the Christ.*

## **Closing Song: Silent Night**

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.

Silent night, holy night,  
shepherds quake at the sight.  
Glories stream from heaven afar,  
heavenly hosts sing alleluia.

## **Sending**

Go tell it on the mountains, over the hills and everywhere - Jesus Christ is born!

**Thanks be to God. Amen!**

## **Postlude: Joy to The World**

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.  
Joy to the earth, the saviour reigns!

Christ the saviour is born;  
Christ the saviour is born.

Silent night, holy night,  
son of God, love's pure light;  
Radiant beams from thy holy face,  
with the dawn of redeeming grace.  
Jesus, lord at thy birth;  
Jesus, lord at thy birth.

*Joseph Mohr / Public Domain*

Let all our songs employ;  
While fields and floods,  
rocks, hills and plains  
Repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat, repeat, the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows grow,  
Nor thorns infest the ground;  
God comes to make all blessings flow  
Far as the curse is found,  
Far as the curse is found,  
Far as, far as, the curse is found.

God rules the world with truth & grace,  
And makes the nations prove  
The glories of God's righteousness,  
And wonders of God's love,  
And wonders of God's love,  
And wonders, wonders, of God's love!

*Isaac Watts, alt. / Public domain*

**Closing Loop** *(please stay for cider!)*

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*Tonight from 7-9, join us for a candlelit Christmas Spiral.*

*We'll be back next Sunday. New Year's Eve at 4pm  
for contemplative prayer in the way of Taize.  
There will be simple chants, silences, and candles.  
There will be no AbbeyKids or AbbeyTeens gathering,  
but all are welcome into the space.*

*Jan 7th we will celebrate the feast of Epiphany with a Bluegrass Mass!*

*We worship Sundays at 4pm and you're always welcome to join us.*



## Coming Up

- Tonight - 7-9pm come and walk the space - **Contemplative Spiral Walk** (drop in)
- Monday, Dec 25th **Christmas Dinner** at 5 pm - *RSVP for details and house location*
- Sunday, Dec 31st at 4 pm- **New Year's Eve Service** in the way of Taize ::: Contemplative prayer with chants, silence and candles (incense may be used in this service)
- Regular Sunday worship resumes Sundays at 4pm on January 7th with a Bluegrass-flavoured celebration of the Epiphany!

## Weekday Prayer

*[cancelled between Christmas Day and New Years Day]*

**Mondays at 8pm - Centering Prayer with Evening prayer. Resuming Jan 15.** Online only between Jan 15 and 29. Resuming in-person in February at Balmoral Chapel.

**Tuesdays at 8:15am - Morning Prayer.** Online-only January 2 and 9. Resuming in-person/online January 16 at Lynn and Phil's (email for location - near Castle Hardware on Cook) and on Zoom.

**Wednesdays at 4pm - Communion at Our Place. Resuming January 10** in-person only, followed by meal. Meet at church at 3:45 to walk over together.

**Thursdays at 8:15am - Morning prayer** at Quadra/Balmoral Chapel - in person only. Enter from Parking lot at 932 Balmoral. **Resuming Jan 11**

**Fridays at 8:15am - Morning Prayer - Resuming January 5.** Zoom only.

*Our common prayer is liturgical in nature and based on ancient monastic practices.  
It's open to all who wish to join in-person or online.*



Kelly Latimore Icons + Christ of The Rubble

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**778.557.4166 We would love to connect.**

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