

Church Announcements

Please Note: To ensure you receive 2018 receipts for the correct amount, at the end of 2017 please destroy any unused 2017 envelopes and replace with 2018. Some numbers have changed.

St. Bees'

St. Bees' service time has changed to 9:15am on Sundays

Card Socials: Every Friday evening, beginning at 7:30pm

Food Bank donations will be collected every 3rd Sunday of the month.

Christ Church

Notice: On the 1st Sunday each month please bring in items for donation to the Food Bank.

Please note the service time change on Sundays starting January 7th, 2018 to 11:15am.

St. James'

St. James' service time has changed to 11:15am on Sundays

Food Bank Donations collected the 1st Sunday of every month.

Coffee Hour will take place after the 11am Service on the first Sunday of the month.

Parish Prayer List

Bob Austin	Karen Jeffery	Muriel Jackson	Kerstin	Neil MacDonald
Ruth Myles	Susan Parsons	Gordon Clarke	Jan	Shannon Brundage
Laura Kelly	Rev Bill White	Bill Colbourne	Lisa	Dagmar Hubley
Carvell Riley	Debbie Haley	Dianne Hardy	Carla Bate	Erma Chenell
Chery Lynds	Evan Crowe	Mary Mackeigan	Brian Kelly	Mary Patterson
Amanda,	Davis, Robyn	Bruce Heighton		

Sunday January 7, 2018 Services

8am	HE BCP	Christ Church	Rev. Darlene
9:15am	HE BAS	St. Bees'	Rev. Darlene
11:15am	HE BAS	St. James'	Rev. Darlene
11:15am	Morning Prayer	Christ Church	Lay Readers

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The Rev. Arthur Bourré on leave of absence
Honorary Assistant: The Rev. William White



Greetings and Introduction

Leader: Welcome to our Service of the Nativity. We began a journey four weeks ago, a journey that will follow Jesus through this church year. We have watched and waited these past four weeks of Advent, anticipating the Coming of the Christ. And now our wait is over as we celebrate the birth of the Christ-child. But even as we celebrate on this day a new act of God in history, we realize that this is not the end of our journey. It is only the beginning. There is much yet to come. And much to do. But here today, we come before God in praise and celebration, because of the newness and possibility that God has brought to us in the birth of this Child.

Isaiah 35 (Alternate Reading: Isaiah 59:15b-21)

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you." Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Psalms 46

God is our refuge and strength, **a very present help in trouble.**
Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change, **though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea,**
Though its waters roar and foam, **though the mountains tremble with its tumult.**
There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, **the holy habitation of the Most High.**

God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved; **God will help it when the morning dawns.**

The nations are in an uproar, the kingdoms totter; **he utters his voice, the earth melts.**

The Lord of hosts is with us; **the God of Jacob is our refuge.**

Come, behold the works of the Lord; **see what desolations he has brought on the earth.**

He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; **he breaks the bow, and shatters the spear; he burns the shields with fire.**

"Be still, and know that I am God! **I am exalted among the nations, I am exalted in the earth.**"

The Lord of hosts is with us; **the God of Jacob is our refuge.**

Philippians 2:5-11

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Stand for the reading of the Gospel.

Luke 1:67-79

Then his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke this prophecy: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them. He has raised up a mighty savior for us in the house of his servant David, as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old, that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us. Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors, and has remembered his holy covenant, the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham, to grant us that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all our days. And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, to give knowledge of salvation to his people by the forgiveness of their sins. By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."

Leader: This is the Good News of God's Word to His people.

Congregation: **May it be so among the people of God.**

Leader: Please be seated.

The Service of the Nativity

Leader: The Nativity brings together Mary, Joseph, the Christ Child, the Shepherds, and the Angels. And even though the wise men probably did not appear at the manger, they are an integral part of the Christmas story. And so we include them in the scene in order to tell the story

of the birth of Jesus the Christ. The Nativity is a visual proclamation of the Christmas story. Each piece of the Nativity unfolds the story of Christ's birth. As in the day of Jesus' birth, so today his coming brings joy and hope to many. To some, the Nativity is an issue of controversy. They say that The Nativity is a religious expression, a Christian symbol. We must agree with those in our day who claim that the Nativity is a religious expression. It is a pictorial statement of faith, a uniquely Christian symbol of what we believe about God and His revelation of Himself in our world. In placing the Nativity in our yards and on our mantels we are declaring our hope in the God who invaded human history. In so doing He revealed Himself to humanity, expressing the reach of His love as He chose to walk along side those whom He created in His own image. So, we have placed a Nativity in the front yard of our Church. It declares to those who drive by that we have a wonderful story to tell. That story is how the Creator God became one with those He formed. It is a story of hope because God built a bridge of Divine Love from Himself to us. It is a story that shines through the birth of every child and resonates in the supportive ties of every family. And today we begin our Christmas Season with this Service of the Nativity. Through it we will again tell our story.

Hymn

Mary's Story

It had all began some time ago when Mary and Joseph were making wedding plans. They dreamed of their future together. The love that united them seemed indestructible. Then, unexpectedly, Mary was encountered by a heavenly visitor. Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you." But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and pondered what manner of greeting this was. Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever and of His Kingdom there will be no end." Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have not known a man?" And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be the Son of God. For with God nothing will be impossible." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her. (Luke 1:26-38)

Joseph's story

Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, intended to put her away secretly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that

which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." . . . Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. (Matthew 1:18-25)

Joseph and Mary in Bethlehem

And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. So everyone went to their own towns to be registered. And Joseph also went, out of the city of Nazareth in Galilee, to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David. He went to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was expecting a child. (Luke 2:1-5) It was a crowded city that night, Bethlehem, the city of David. People from all over had returned to the city of their fathers. Here they would register and a census would be taken. Joseph and Mary sought for a place to stay. An inn. A room somewhere, anywhere. A safe place from the chilly night air. But there was no place, no room in the inn. At the city's edge was a stable, a place where animals could be protected and fed. There, in a stable, Mary and Joseph found warmth and protection. They would stay here until a new day brought light.

Hymn

The Birth of Jesus

So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn Son, wrapped Him in bands of cloth, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. (Luke 2:6-7)

Hymn

God Is with Us

Leader: All this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet, "A young woman shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means "God is with us." (Matthew 1:22-23)

The Shepherds' Story

Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy for all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you; You will find a Child wrapped in bands of cloth, lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the heavenly host praising God and saying; "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will among all people!" So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, "Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." And they came quickly and found Mary and Joseph, and the Child, who was lying in a manger. (Luke 2:8-16)

Hymn

The Magi's Story

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to pay him homage." When King Herod heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had called 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 thus it is written by the prophet: 'But 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 will shepherd My people Israel.'" Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and determined from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found Him, bring back word to me, that I may come and pay him homage also." When they had heard the king, they departed; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it came and stood over where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy. And when they had entered the house, they saw the child with Mary His mother, and fell down and paid him homage. Then opening their treasure chests, they presented to Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Then, being divinely warned in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed for their own country another way. (Matthew 2:1-12).

Hymn

We Gather at the Manger

Leader: Heaven looked down on that Holy Night as a manger became an altar and a stable became a cathedral. History now looks back to that moment in time when God came in Jesus to reveal Himself to people everywhere. The humble shepherds were there. The Wise Men bowed before Him, you and I join them as we gather around the manger. What a night! A Holy Night! A night of hope for today and tomorrow.

Hymn

Closing Prayer (adapted from *The Book of Common Prayer*)

Leader: O God, you have caused this holy night to shine with the illumination of the true Light. You have given us your only-begotten Son to take our nature upon Him to reveal to us your glory and grace. As you have given this gift in love, may we receive it with joy. Grant that we, being regenerate and made your children by adoption and grace may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit. Grant us, we pray, that as we have known the mystery of that Light upon earth, so may we also reflect that light to a darkened world; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.