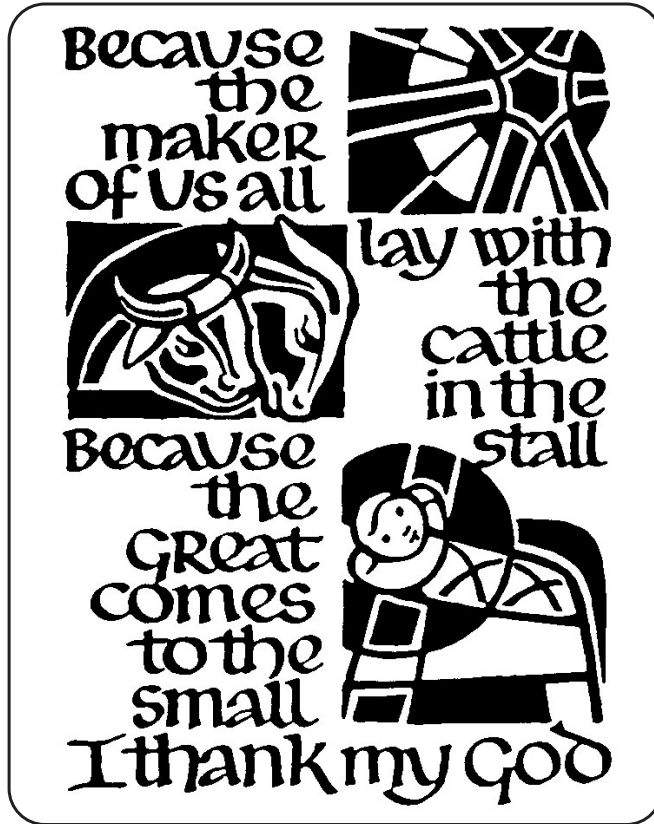


Saint James' Episcopal Church
Order of Worship
The Season of Christmas
Lessons and Carols



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Welcome to St. James' Episcopal Church

We are a community who invites all people to join in worship. Our primary sacrament of initiation into the Church is the sacrament of Holy Baptism. If you wish to follow Christ, or if you wish to deepen your exploration of the sacred, you are encouraged to speak to a clergy person about baptism or about your own spiritual path and where it is leading you.

If you are visiting us, please introduce yourself at the door. We invite you to fill out a visitor's card and put it in the offertory plate or hand it to an usher. The card can be found in the pew.

Our Liturgy and the Season of Christmas

The Episcopal way of worshipping has been in existence for centuries, and closely follows the ancient rites of the early church. Our primary texts are the Holy Bible, New Revised Standard Version, and the 1979 Book of Common Prayer. If there are things about our worship that are new to you or do not make sense, be patient with the unfamiliarity. Consider that you are entering a conversation with God and the faithful which began centuries before we were here and will continue after we are gone. Just join in as you are, and bear with us as we are, and we will all be changed as we go.

The Christmas Season begins with the celebration of the birth of Christ, and extends until the Season of Epiphany, marking the traditional twelve days of Christmas. Unlike popular culture, it is during the day of and the days following Christmas Eve that we sing Christmas Hymns and celebrate the season, thus marking the Twelve Days of Christmas. Our service is shaped to point to the incarnation of God in the form of the Christ child and the emergence of light in this world.

The Christmas Festival of Lessons & Carols is intended as a celebration of the inbreaking of God into our world. Services of Lessons & Carols differ from place to place in format and content; the order of this service follows the form observed by the United Church of Canada, and uses five lessons: two from the Hebrew Scripture and three from the Christian Scripture. The readings provide the core and structure of the service.

The hymns, found in the 1982 Hymnal (blue), were chosen with the lessons in mind.

please stand

The Word of God

Processional Carol: O Come All Ye Faithful

H83

Celebrant
People

Blessed be the one, holy and living God.
Glory to God for ever and ever.

The Collect for the Day

Celebrant
People
Celebrant

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Let us pray.

Almighty God, you have poured upon us the new light of your incarnate Word: Grant that this light, enkindled in our hearts, may shine forth in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

The First Lesson

Carol: Lo, He Comes With Clouds Descending

Genesis 1:26–2:4

Hymn 57

The Second Lesson

Carol: In the Bleak Midwinter

Isaiah 9:2, 6–7

Hymn 112

The Third Lesson

Carol: Hark! the Herald Angels Sing

Luke 1:26–35

Hymn 87

The Fourth Lesson

Carol: What Child Is This

Luke 2:1–20

Hymn 115

The Fifth Lesson

Carol: Joy to the World

John 1:1–14

Hymn 100

Reflection

The Nicene 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 him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He 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.

Prayers of the People

as the intercessor bids with "we pray to you, O Lord", the people respond with "Lord, hear our prayer".

Dear family in Christ, in this most sacred time of our Lord's birth, that we may find peace, joy, and contentment in this holy season, let us pray for ourselves and all those in need of our prayers, saying: Lord, hear our prayer.

For the church of Christ, that it may faithfully proclaim the good news of salvation and may care for the needs of God's people in all corners of the world, we pray to you, O Lord.
Lord, hear our prayer

For peace in our troubled world, that the darkness of violence, war, and injustice may be replaced by the light of peace and love, we pray to you O Lord.
Lord, hear our prayer

For all those in need of our prayers, the unhoused, the unemployed, the hungry, those who are hospitalized, those who are imprisoned in body or soul, and all those for whom this season is one not of joy but of trial and sadness, we pray to you O Lord.
Lord, hear our prayer

For the sick, that their illnesses may be turned into health, and their sorrow into rejoicing, we pray to you O Lord.
Lord, hear our prayer

In thanksgiving we remember the lives of those who have gone before us in the faith. That we, like them, may remain faithful to the end and live forever in the light of your eternal glory, we pray to you O Lord.
Lord, hear our prayer

Celebrant O God of heavenly glory and earthly peace, you have hallowed this sacred day with the joyful tidings of Christ's birth: May the Light dawning upon us kindle our hearts and awaken hope, that we may shine forth your glory in love; in Christ's name. **Amen.**

The Passing of the Peace

The "passing of the peace," based on ancient rites of the early church, allows the community to gracefully greet one another by saying "the peace of Christ be with you", or simply "peace be with you"; the response is typically "and also with you."

Offertory Hymn: It Came Upon a Midnight Clear

H89

During the offertory anthem, the Altar is prepared for Communion while the ushers pass the offering plates. Offerings, prayer requests, and visitor information may be placed in the plate. As you are able, please stand as the offerings are brought to the table and the Doxology is sung.

The Doxology

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.



All who desire to may receive Holy Communion.

The Great Thanksgiving

Celebrant

People

Celebrant

People

Celebrant

People

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 God thanks and praise.

All thanks and praise are yours at all times and in all places, our true and loving God; through Jesus Christ, your eternal Word, the Wisdom from on high by whom you created all things. You laid the foundations of the world and enclosed the sea when it burst out from the womb; You brought forth all creatures of the earth and gave breath to humankind.

Wondrous are you, Holy One of Blessing, all you create is a sign of hope for our journey; And so as the morning stars sing your praises we join the heavenly beings and all creation as we shout with joy:

S125

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and might,

heaven and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -

san - na in the high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -

san - na in the high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Glory and honor are yours, Creator of all, your Word has never been silent; you called a people to yourself, as a light to the nations, you delivered them from bondage and led them to a land of promise. Of your grace, you gave Jesus to be human, to share our life, to proclaim the coming of your holy reign and give himself for us, a fragrant offering.

Through Jesus Christ our Redeemer, you have freed us from sin, brought us into your life, reconciled us to you, and restored us to the glory you intend for us.

We thank you that on the night before he died for us Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, gave it to his friends and said:

“Take, eat, this is my Body, broken for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.”

After supper Jesus took the cup of wine, said the blessing, gave it to his friends and said: “Drink this, all of you: this cup is the new Covenant in my Blood, poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.”

And so, remembering all that was done for us: the cross, the tomb, the resurrection and ascension, longing for Christ’s coming in glory, and presenting to you these gifts your earth has formed and human hands have made, we acclaim you, O Christ:

Presider and People

Dying, you destroyed our death.

Rising, you restored our life.

Christ Jesus, come in glory!

The Presider continues

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 we, burning with your Spirit’s power, may be a people of hope, justice and love.

Giver of Life, draw us together in the Body of Christ, and in the fullness of time gather us with all your people into the joy of our true eternal home.

Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, all honor and glory is yours, Almighty God, now and forever. AMEN.

Celebrant: And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say:

**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 those who trespass against us.**

**And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

The Breaking of the Bread

Celebrant Alleluia! Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.

People Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia!

When prompted by the usher, please come forward for communion. All are invited to come forward. If you would like receive a blessing instead of the bread, simply cross your arms over your chest as an indication to the clergy..

Communion Hymn: The Snow Lay on the Ground

H110

The Post-Communion Prayer

Celebrant and People

Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with the spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Blessing

Recessional Carol: Good Christian Friends Rejoice

H107

The Dismissal

Priest Let us bless the Lord, Alleluia, Alleluia!

People Thanks be to God, Alleluia, Alleluia!

