



**Church of the Nativity, Hamilton**

# **Christmas Songs and Stories**

December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2022 at 3:00 p.m.



**WEB EDITION**

*Called to Life — Compelled to Love*



The territory where the Church of the Nativity resides is has been long-tended by many Indigenous peoples including the Neutrals, the Mississauga, the Anishinaabe, and the Haudenosaunee. With them, we are members of the Dish with One Spoon wampum, and we will strive to live up to our responsibility as treaty members and respect the history, spirituality, and culture of the nations of this place and the heritage and gifts of Métis people.

**May our actions be guided by our commitment to reconciliation.**

*COVID-19 Precautions:* Our in-person services continue to be offered under the guidelines and directions from the Diocese of Niagara and Public Health as we strive to worship and protect the health of all who attend. Details about our Green Stage precautions can be found at <https://worshipwithnativity.org/what-do-worship-services-look-like-now/>

*Streaming:* Our principal services are streamed to YouTube. We try to minimize individuals' appearances on camera.

## **Welcome to the Church of the Nativity!**

Thank you for joining us as part of your Christmas celebrations. We hope that this afternoon's presentation will be a gift of joy and gladness for you and any friends and family you are sharing it with. If you are visiting with us, please take a welcome brochure from the table just outside the worship space. If you'd like more information about this community, please talk to one of the clerics or the greeters.

## **Children**

Children are always welcome here at Church of the Nativity! We hope that they will feel able to enjoy this experience too. Please don't worry about them moving about the space. If it's helpful for them, there are resources for children at the back pew on the north side of the church where they can colour, read, and move about freely.

## **Washrooms**

There are two unisex washrooms located in the hallway outside the church: one in the alcove just before the stairs and one in the alcove after the stairs.

## **About Songs and Stories**

Everything you need to take part this afternoon can be found in this booklet.

There will be no collection this afternoon. If you would like to contribute to the church, you may do so either by dropping a cheque in our mailbox on the front porch at 1831 King Street East, or by e-transfer to [donations.nativity@gmail.com](mailto:donations.nativity@gmail.com)

Gifts are used to support our mission and ministry as a community of faith in east Hamilton, and to serve our local community.

After the service please join us for a time of fellowship and refreshment downstairs in Bartonville Hall; the greeters will help you to find it! All are welcome!

**From all of the ministry team here at Church of the Nativity,  
we wish you a joyful and blessed Christmas  
and peace in the year ahead!**

Prelude

*Music is offered to help set the mood for our celebration!*

# **Territorial Acknowledgement**

## **We Sing Together:**

People, Look East! The Time is Near <sup>1</sup>

**People, look east! The time is near  
of the crowning of the year.  
Make your house fair as you are able,  
trim the hearth and set the table.  
People, look east and sing today:  
Love, the guest, is on the way.**

**Birds, though you long have ceased to build,  
guard the nest that must be filled;  
even the hour when wings are frozen  
God for fledging time has chosen.  
People, look east and sing today:  
Love, the bird, is on the way.**

**Stars, keep the watch: when night is dim  
one more light the bowl shall brim,  
shining beyond the frosty weather,  
bright as sun and moon together.  
People, look east and sing today:  
Love, the star, is on the way.**

## **Welcome and Introduction**

## **We Sing Together:**

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel <sup>2</sup>

**O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
and ransom captive Israel,  
that mourns in lonely exile here  
until the Son of God appear.**

**Rejoice! Rejoice!**

**Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!**

**O come, Desire of nations, bind  
in one the hearts of humankind;  
O bid our sad divisions cease,  
and be for us our Prince of Peace.**

**Rejoice! Rejoice!**

**Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!**

## **Choir Anthem:**

“An Advent Alleluia” by Douglas E. Wagner

## **A Reading:**

An Angel Visits Mary

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.' But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear 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 to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.’ Mary said to the angel, ‘How can this be, since I am a virgin?’ The angel said to her, ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.’ Then Mary said, ‘Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.’ Then the angel departed from her.

*Luke 1.26—38*

## **We Sing Together:**

O Little Town of Bethlehem <sup>3</sup>

**O little town of Bethlehem,  
how still we see thee lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep  
the silent stars go by;  
yet in thy dark streets shineth  
the everlasting light;  
the hopes and fears of all the years  
are met in thee tonight.**

**O holy child of Bethlehem,  
descend to us, we pray;  
cast out our sin and enter in;  
be born in us today.  
We hear the Christmas angels  
the great glad tidings tell;  
O come to us, abide with us,  
our Lord Emmanuel.**

## **A Reading:**

### The birth of Jesus

In those days a decree went out from Emperor 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 for them in the inn.

*Luke 2.1—7*

## **We Sing Together:**

Once in Royal David's City <sup>4</sup>

**Once in royal David's city  
stood a lowly cattle shed,  
where a mother laid her baby  
in a manger for his bed.  
Mary was that mother mild,  
Jesus Christ her little child.**

**He came down to earth from heaven,  
who is God and Lord of all,  
and his shelter was a stable,  
and his cradle was a stall.  
With the poor and mean and lowly  
lived on earth our Saviour holy.**

**Not in that poor lowly stable,  
with the oxen standing by,  
we shall see him, but in heaven,  
set at God's right hand on high,  
when, like, stars, his children crowned  
all in white shall gather round.**

## **Choir Anthem:**

“Born is a Baby” by Stan Pethel

## **A Reading:**

### The Shepherds and the Angels

In that 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 city of David a Saviour, 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 he 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. But 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, as it had been told them.

*Luke 2.8—20*

## **We Sing Together:**

While Shepherds Watched their Flocks <sup>5</sup>

**While shepherds watched their flocks by night,  
all seated on the ground,  
the angel of the Lord came down  
and glory shone around.**

**“Fear not,” said he, for mighty dread  
had seized their troubled mind;  
“Glad tidings of great joy I bring  
to you and humankind.**

**“All glory be to God on high  
and on earth be peace;  
good will henceforth from heaven to me  
begin and never cease.”**

## **A Musical Offering**

**“The Christmas Song”  
by Robert Wells and Mel Tormé (1945)**

*Played by Matthew Griffin*

## **A Christmas Story**

*A Cup of Christmas Tea* by Tom Hegg

*Read by Mrs. Susan Pleli*

## **Choir Anthem:**

“Were You There on that Christmas Night”  
by Natalie Sleeth

## **We Sing Together:**

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing <sup>6</sup>

**Hark! The herald angels sing,  
“Glory to the new-born King,  
peace on earth, and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled.”  
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,  
join the triumph of the skies;  
with the angelic hosts proclaim,  
“Christ is born in Bethlehem!”**

**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,  
offspring of a virgin's womb.  
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see;  
hail, the incarnate Deity,  
pleased as one of us to dwell,  
Jesus, our Emmanuel!**

**Hark! the herald angels sing,  
“Glory to the newborn King.”**

**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 each child of earth,  
born to give us second birth.**

**Hark! the herald angels sing,  
“Glory to the newborn King.”**

## **A Reading:**

### The Magi Visit

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.’

*Matthew 2.1—12*

## **We Sing Together:**

We Three Kings <sup>7</sup>

**We three kings of Orient are,  
bearing gifts we traverse afar,  
field and fountain, moor and mountain,  
following yonder Star.**

*Refrain* **O star of wonder, star of night,  
star with royal beauty bright,  
westward leading, still proceeding,  
guide us to thy perfect light.**

**Born a king on Bethlehem plain,  
gold I bring to crown him again.  
King for ever, ceasing never  
over us all to reign. *Refrain***

**Frankincense to offer have I,  
incense owns a deity nigh:  
prayer and praising all men raising,  
worship him God on High. *Refrain***

**Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume  
breathes a life of gathering gloom;—  
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,  
sealed in the stone-cold tomb. *Refrain***

**Glorious now behold him arise,  
king, and God, and sacrifice;  
heav'n sings Hallelujah:  
Hallelujah the earth replies. *Refrain***

## A Musical Offering

“I’ve Heard About You” by David Crowder

*Played by Derek Smith*

## Prayers

As Christmas draws close,  
let us pray together for ourselves and our world, that we may draw close  
to God.

*a short time of silence is kept*

Response One God of love,  
**All hear our prayer.**

*a short time of silence is kept*

## **A Christmas Poem**

“The Work of Christmas” by Howard Thurman<sup>8</sup>

When the song of the angels is stilled,  
when the star in the sky is gone,  
when the kings and princes are home,  
when the shepherds are back with their flock,  
the work of Christmas begins:  
to find the lost,  
to heal the broken,  
to feed the hungry,  
to release the prisoner,  
to rebuild the nations,  
to bring peace among others,  
to make music in the heart.

# A Blessing

## We Sing Together:

Joy to the World <sup>9</sup>

**Joy to the world! The Lord is come:  
let earth receive the 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 world! The Saviour reigns:  
let us glad songs employ,  
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains  
repeat the sounding joy,  
repeat the sounding joy,  
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**

**He rules the world with truth and grace,  
and makes the nations prove  
the glories of his righteousness  
and wonders of his love,  
and wonders of his love,  
and wonders, wonders of his love.**

Postlude

For more information about the Church of the Nativity,  
please visit  
[worshipwithnativity.org](http://worshipwithnativity.org)

## **You are invited to join us for our Christmas Services:**

**Christmas Eve (December 24<sup>th</sup>)**

**4<sup>pm</sup> Christmas Service**

**8<sup>pm</sup> Christmas Service with Choir**

**Christmas Day (December 25<sup>th</sup>)**

**10<sup>am</sup> A simple Eucharist to celebrate Christ's birth**

**Naming of Jesus (January 1<sup>st</sup>)**

**10<sup>am</sup> A simple Eucharist to celebrate Christ's birth**

**Three Theophanies (January 8<sup>th</sup>)**

*The Days of Christmas conclude as we celebrate  
the Epiphany, the Presentation, and the Naming of Jesus*

**8:30<sup>am</sup> Said Service**

**10<sup>am</sup> Eucharist with Choir**



# The Church of the Nativity

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Mr. Peter Harding  
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*Bishop of Niagara*  
*Rector*  
*Honorary Assistant*  
*Parish Deacon*  
*Director of Music*  
*Parish Administrator*

Mrs. Jan Collinson  
Mr. David Eccles  
Mr. Doug Lampman

*Wardens*

## Sources

Our cover image is an icon of the “Annunciation to St. Joseph” written by the iconographer Br. Claude Lane, O.S.B.

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<sup>1</sup> Text: Eleanor Farjeon (1881—1965), © David Higham Associates Ltd. Music: “Besançon” (French trad.). Used under OneLicense A-604280.

<sup>2</sup> Text: Latin (9<sup>th</sup> cent?); trans. John Mason Neale (18—18—66), alt. Music: Plainsong, Mode 1, *Processionale* (15<sup>th</sup> c.) Used under OneLicense A-604280.

<sup>3</sup> Text: Phillips Brooks (1835—93), alt. Music: Lewis Henry Redner (1831—1908) (but we all know Forest Green is the right tune)

<sup>4</sup> Text: Cecil Frances Alexander (1818—95). Music: Henry John Gauntlett (1805—76).

<sup>5</sup> Text: Luke 2.8—14; para. Nahum Tate (1652—1715), alt. Music: Melody *Whole Book of Psalms*, 1592.

<sup>6</sup> Text: Charles Wesley (1701—88), alt. Music: Felix Mendelssohn—Bartholdy (1809—47)

<sup>7</sup> Text & Music: John Henry Hopkins, Jr (1820—91)

<sup>8</sup> Howard Thurman, *The Mood of Christmas and Other Celebrations*.

<sup>9</sup> Text: Isaac Watts (1674—1748), alt. Music: George Frideric Handel (1685—1759); adapt. William Holford, *Voce de Melodia* (1835).