

St. Cyprian's Anglican Church & Iona Presbyterian Church

1080 Finch Ave East, Toronto, Ontario

Telephone: 416-494-2442 Email: postmaster@tri-church.ca

St. Cyprian's Website: stcyprianschurch.ca

Iona's Website: tri-church.ca/iona

Church office hours: Tuesdays & Fridays 10:00 am to 1:00 pm

Sunday Worship by Zoom and in person at 10:30 am



Advent 4

Sunday, December 21, 2025

Minister: Every member of the congregation

Priest-in-Charge: The Rev. Dr. John Oakes

Email: revdrjohnoakes@outlook.com

Phone: (647) 219-5754

Rector's Warden: Carol Berger

People's Warden: Stacey Leslie

Iona Elders: Marg Black, Dorine Bourque, Melissa Reid

Director of Music: Laura Hope

Office Administrator: Bob Williams

Zoom Link for Sunday Worship

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2897790104?omn=83067962618>

Or call: 647 374 4685 or 647 558 0588

Meeting ID: 289 779 0104

No Passcode Needed

Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that we meet on the traditional lands of the Mississauga. We acknowledge this territory's significance for the Indigenous peoples who lived, and continue to live, upon it and whose practices and spiritualities were tied to the land and continue to develop in relationship to the territory and its other inhabitants today.

Traditional Service of Seven Lessons and Carols **Hymns are from *Common Praise***

Welcome

Processional Hymn #123: *Once in Royal David's City*
(first verse solo) Liliana Lobato

Bidding Prayer

Officiant: Beloved in Christ, be it this Christmastide our care and delight to hear again the message of the angels, and in heart and mind to go even unto Bethlehem and see this thing which is come to pass, and the Babe lying in a manger.

Therefore, let us read and mark in Holy Scripture the tale of the loving purposes of God from the first days of our disobedience unto the glorious Redemption brought us by this Holy Child.

But first, let us pray for the needs of the whole world; for peace on earth and goodwill among all his people; for unity and brotherhood within the Church he came to build, and especially in this city and diocese of Toronto.

And because this of all things would rejoice his heart, let us remember, in his name, the poor and helpless, the cold, the hungry, and the oppressed; the sick and them that mourn, the lonely and the unloved,

the aged and the little children; all those who know not the Lord Jesus, or who love him not, or who by sin have grieved his heart of love.

Lastly, let us remember before God all those who rejoice with us, but upon another shore, and in a greater light, that multitude which no man can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom in the Lord Jesus we are forever one.

These prayers and praises let us humbly offer up to the Throne of Heaven, in the words which Christ himself hath taught us:

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 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, for ever and ever, Amen.

Officiant: The Almighty God bless us with his grace; Christ give us the joys of everlasting life; and to the fellowship of the citizens above may the King of Angels bring us all. **Amen.**

Lighting of the Advent Wreath – Hanson Lam

The first three candles on the Advent Wreath signify the hope, peace, and joy that come with Jesus. Today we light the fourth candle, the candle of love. With this flame we signify the love of God that surrounds and fills us at all times, and especially in and through the Christmas story. There is no greater power than love. It is stronger than rulers and empires, than grief or despair, even than death itself. And we love, because God first loved us.

“And now these three remain,” the apostle Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 13:13, “faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.”

Let us pray.

Loving God, we open ourselves to you this Christmas season. Light our lives with your imagination. Show us the creative power of hope. Teach us the peace that passes all understanding. Fill us with the kind of joy that must be shared. Magnify your love within us, we pray, and prepare our hearts to be transformed by you that we may walk in the light of Christ. **Amen.**

Wreath Candle Lighting Hymn: *Light One Candle* (Natalie Sleeth) (v. 1–4)

**1. Light one candle for Peace
One bright candle for Peace
Christ brings Peace to every heart
He comes, He comes**

**2. Light one candle for Hope
One bright candle for Hope
Christ brings Hope to every heart
He comes, He comes**

**3. Light one candle for Joy
One bright candle for Joy
Christ brings Joy to every heart
He comes, He comes**

**4. Light one candle for Love
One bright candle for Love
Christ brings Love to every heart
He comes, He comes**

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1st Reading: Isaiah 9: 2–7 read by Ron Bloor

²The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined.³You have multiplied

the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder.⁴ 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.⁵ For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire.⁶ For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.⁷ His authority shall grow continually, 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 onwards and for evermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

Carol #132: *Of Eternal Love Begotten*

2nd Reading: Isaiah 11: 1–9 read by Una Ford

¹A shoot shall come out from the stock of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots.²The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.³His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; ⁴but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. ⁵Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins. ⁶The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. ⁷The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. ⁸The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.⁹They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

Carol #117: *Lo, How a Rose E're Blooming*

3rd Reading: Micah 5: 2–4 read by Norma Halstead

² But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days.³ Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labour has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel.⁴ And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth;

Carol #121: *O Little Town of Bethlehem*

4th Reading: Luke 1: 26–28 read by Marcus Berger

²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth,²⁷ to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary.²⁸ And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you."²⁹ But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be.³⁰ The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God."³¹ And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus.³² 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.³³ He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."³⁴ Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?"³⁵ 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."³⁶ 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.³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God."³⁸ 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.

Choir Anthem: "Comfort Ye" (Natalie Sleeth)

5th Reading: Luke 2: 1–20 read by Michael Gordon

¹ In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴ 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. ⁵ He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷ 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.

⁸ In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ 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: ¹¹ to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!” ¹⁵ 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.” ¹⁶ So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Carol #143: *Angels from the Realms of Glory*

6th Reading: Matthew 2: 1–11 read by Hanson lam

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, ² 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.”³ When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him;⁴ and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born.⁵ They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:⁶ ‘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.’”⁷ Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared.⁸ 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.”⁹ 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.¹⁰ When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy.¹¹ 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.

Carol #139: *The First Nowell*

7th Reading: John 1: 1–14 read by Rev. Dr. John Oakes

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. ⁶here was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth.

Choir Anthem: “And Glory Shone Around” (Diane Hannibal; arr. John Paige)

Message: “God’s Greatest Gift” - Rev. Dr. John Oakes

Offertory Carol #122: *In the Bleak Midwinter*

The Collect

Officiant: Almighty God, who hast given us thy only- begotten Son to take our nature upon him, and as at this time to be born of a pure Virgin: Grant that we being regenerate, and made thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit; through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the same Spirit, ever one God, world without end. **Amen.**

Announcements

Blessing

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. The blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the son and the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always. Amen.

Recessional Carol #138: *Hark the Herald Angels Sing*

Dismissal

Officiant: Alleluia! Let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God, Alleluia!**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome!

Welcome to St. Cyprian’s and Iona, as we continue our **combined worship and ministry at 10:30 a.m. on Sundays**. After today’s service, we invite everyone to join a **joint fellowship time** together **in the Iona space**.

Sunday Bible Study

The **Sunday Bible Study** is now taking a Christmas break and will resume in **January at noon** in the **Fellowship Room**.

All are **welcome**, including newcomers.

Please bring your own lunch, if you want one.

Christmas Services

Our **Christmas services** will be on:

December 24, 7:30 p.m. — Christmas Eve Carols by Candlelight with Communion

December 25, 10:30 a.m. — Traditional Christmas Day Communion

All are invited and all are encouraged to bring family and friends
to these special services!

Wednesday Noon Meditation

The **Wednesday meditation** is taking a break for Christmas and will resume in **January** with David Rudd and others **at 12 noon**. It is **20 minutes long** and **a helpful way to nurture your faith** through the practice of silent prayer.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9321564941?pwd=QmhLdDZ6ekQ2a1FLMmRWK2tXU0F0Zz09>

Meeting ID: 932 156 4941

Passcode: 1080

Friday Zoom Bible Study

Rev. John's weekly **Zoom Bible Study** on **Fridays at 7 p.m.** is now taking a Christmas break and will resume in the New Year.

All are welcome at any time. You can join online at:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8517044556>

Meeting ID: 851 704 4556

You can also join the meeting by phone on
647-374-4685 or 647-558-0588

Happy Birthdays

Jessica Luo December 23

**Happy birthday, Happy birthday, God loves you.
Happy birthday and may all your dreams come true.
When you blow out the candles, one light stays aglow.
It is the love light of our Lord for all to know.**