



The First Sunday of Christmas December 28th, 2025—10:00 a.m.

Welcome.

This church is a place of prayer and encounter with God. The stones of these walls have sheltered people seeking the presence of the Holy One for almost two centuries. This place of worship has been made hallowed by the prayers of generations and you are welcome to join your heart and voice to theirs.

St John's is an inclusive community of faith in the Anglican tradition: we welcome saints and sinners, people of faith and of no faith, people who are sure they know everything and those who are full of questions. All persons may share equally in the life and leadership of our church and we worship with and serve people of different ethnicities, politics, gender identities and sexual orientations, economic circumstances, and abilities. This church belongs to God, so all of God's children are welcome here.



Peterborough's Oldest Church—Established 1826
99 Brock Street, Peterborough Ontario K9H 2P2
705-745-7624 www.stjohnspeterborough.ca



THE GATHERING OF THE COMMUNITY

We gather in this place in person and virtually and we acknowledge that we are in Nogojiwanong, the traditional territory of the Mississauga Anishinaabe, the Original inhabitants and stewards of this part of the Creation, on whose land and by whose waters we gather by the Williams Treaty to worship, listen, learn, share, and heal together in the name of our Creator, the Holy One of Blessing.

Carol Sing

Before the service begins, we will sing Christmas hymns and carols from the hymn book.

Hymn

Unto Us a Boy Is Born

Puer Nobis Nascitur

Unto us a boy is born!
King of all creation,
came he to a world forlorn,
the Lord of every nation,
the Lord of every nation.

Christ from heaven descending low
comes, on earth a stranger;
ox and ass their owner know;
becradled in the manger,
becradled in the manger.

Herod then with fear was filled:
"A prince," he said, "in Jewry!"
All the little boys he killed
at Bethlem in his fury,
at Bethlem in his fury.

Now may Mary's son, who came
so long ago to love us,
lead us all with hearts aflame
unto the joys above us,
unto the joys above us.

Omega and Alpha he!
Let the organ thunder,
while the choir with peals of glee
doth rend the air asunder,
doth rend the air asunder.

The Greeting

Presider The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with you all.

People **And also with you.**

Prayer of Approach

Presider Christmas Child, as we wait now for you, steal softly into our lives:
All Still our clamorous busyness with the quiet of your coming.

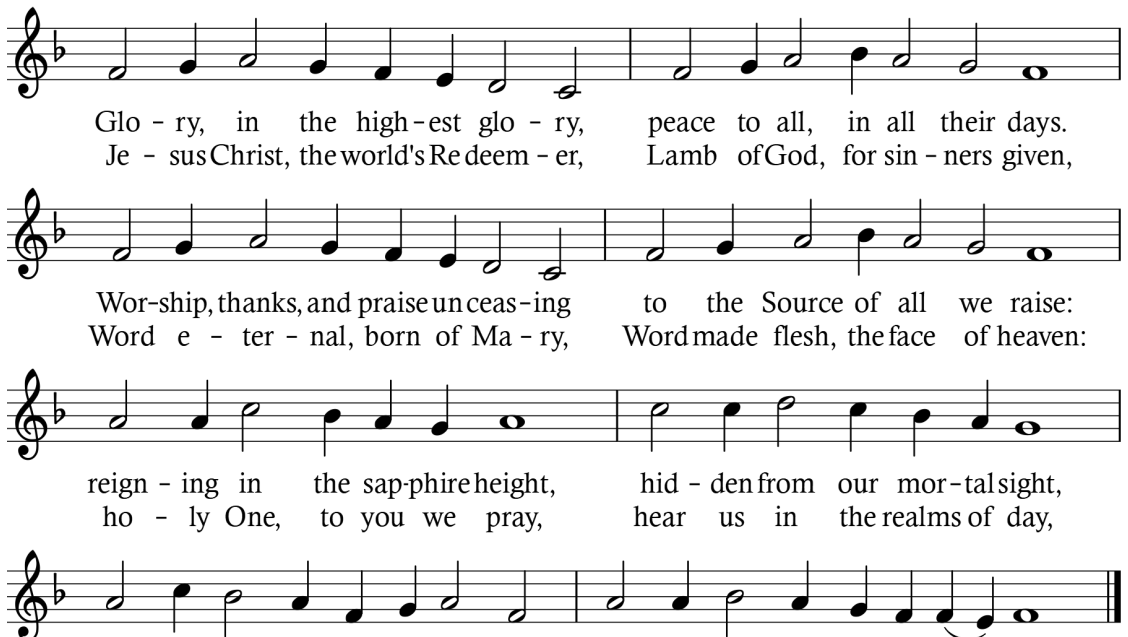
Presider Christmas Child, as we look now for you, steal softly into our minds:
All Transfigure our dull thinking with the colours of your seeing.

Presider Christmas Child, as we long now for you, steal softly into our hearts:
All Enrich our meagre loving with the warmth of your being.

Presider Christmas Child, as at Bethlehem's stable,
All Steal softly in among us now and heal and hallow us with your Presence.

Gloria in Excelsis

Hymn 366



Glo - ry, in the high - est glo - ry, peace to all, in all their days.
Je - sus Christ, the world's Re deem - er, Lamb of God, for sin - ners given,

Wor - ship, thanks, and praise unceas - ing to the Source of all we raise:
Word e - ter - nal, born of Ma - ry, Word made flesh, the face of heaven:

reign - ing in the sap - phire height, hid - den from our mor - tal sight,
ho - ly One, to you we pray, hear us in the realms of day,

now re - ceive our a - dor - a - tion, as we make our sup - pli - ca - tion.
with the Spir - it there u - nit - ed, and the God - head high ex - alt - ed.

Confession and Absolution

Presider Christmas Child—

All **becoming flesh, you showed what it was to serve and share,
to live and love, as God intended.**

**As we stand at the stable door we confess that all too often
our serving and sharing, our living and loving,
have concealed or mocked your generosity,
rather than making it present and plain.**

Christmas Child,

**as we kneel again at your manger restore, renew and reshape us
so that our serving and sharing, living and loving
may, now and always, incarnate you in the world.**

Presider In the name of the Most High God, who came to earth a Child,
I declare that your sins are forgiven
and that, through the life, death, and rising of the Saviour,
you are reconciled to God.

All **Amen.**

Collect of the Day

Presider Almighty God, you have shone upon us the new light of your incarnate Word. May
this light, enkindled in our hearts, 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.

All **Amen.**

Collect for the Parish Bicentennial

Presider God of life and love, who put into the hearts of our ancestors in faith the building of a
church in this place: we give you thanks and praise for your steadfast mercy through the
generations; for the calling of this parish of St John the Evangelist to serve the needs of
our neighbours and to proclaim the good news of your kingdom. In our bicentennial
year, renew in us our zeal for your mission: let us be generous, compassionate, and
faithful servants of the gospel and wise stewards of the heritage handed down to us, that
this place and its people may be a light upon the hill, showing forth your love to all who
see it. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Saviour, who lives and reigns with
you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

The Congregation sits.

THE PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

First Reading

Isaiah 63:7-9

Reader A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah.

I will recount the gracious deeds of the Lord, the praiseworthy acts of the Lord, because of all that the Lord has done for us, and the great favour to the house of Israel that he has shown them according to his mercy, according to the abundance of his steadfast love. For he said, "Surely they are my people, children who will not deal falsely"; and he became their saviour in all their distress. It was no messenger or angel but his presence that saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm

148

The Cantor sings the verses. The Congregation joins in the refrain (R).



Hallelujah! Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise him in the heights. Praise him, all you angels of his; praise him, all his host. **R**

Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars. Praise him, heaven of heavens, and you waters above the heavens. **R**

Let them praise the name of the Lord; for he commanded, and they were created. He made them stand fast for ever and ever; he gave them a law which shall not pass away. **R**

Praise the Lord from the earth, you sea-monsters and all deeps; fire and hail, snow and fog, tempestuous wind, doing his will; **R**

mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars; wild beasts and all cattle, creeping things and winged birds; kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the world; **R**

young men and maidens, old and young together. Let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name only is exalted, his splendour is over earth and heaven. **R**

He has raised up strength for his people and praise for all his loyal servants, the children of Israel, a people who are near him. Hallelujah! **R**

Second Reading

Hebrews 2:10-18

Reader A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews.

It was fitting that God, for whom and through whom all things exist, in bringing many children to glory, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one Father. For this reason Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters, saying, 'I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters, in the midst of the congregation I will praise you.' And again, 'I will put my trust in him.' And again, 'Here am I and the children whom God has given me.' Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death. For it is clear that he did not come to help angels, but the descendants of Abraham. Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

People **Thanks be to God.**

The Congregation stands.

Hymn 153—Good Christians All, Rejoice

In Dulci Jubilo

Gospel Acclamation (*sung before and after the Gospel*)

Hymn 715



Gospel

Matthew 2:13-23

Gospeller May God be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Gospeller The Holy Gospel of our Saviour Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

People **Glory to you, Jesus the Christ.**

Gospeller Now after the Magi had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.' Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, 'Out of Egypt I have called my son.' When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah: 'A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they are no more.' When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child's life are dead.' Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, 'He will be called a Nazorean.'

The Gospel of Christ.

People **Praise to you, Jesus the Christ.**

Sermon

*The Congregation sits after the prayer.
A silence for reflection follows the Sermon.*

The Congregation stands with the Presider.

The Nicene Creed

Presider Let us confess our faith as we say,
All **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,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and became truly human.**

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,
who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified,
who 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.

The Prayers of the People

Sharing of the Peace

Presider The peace of Christ be always with you.
All And also with you.

A sign of peace is exchanged with those around us.

THE CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST

At the Offertory, gifts of bread and wine, signs of the fruit of human labour, are brought to the altar to be transformed into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, signs of God's love for the world. The money offering, a sign of our gratitude for God's blessing of our lives, collected before the liturgy, is blessed. If you are participating in worship online, please consider making your offering through one of the means available at www.stjohnspeterborough.ca/donate

Hymn 580—In Bethlehem a Newborn Boy

Deus Tuorum Militum

Prayer over the Gifts

Presider Generous Creator, in faith and joy we celebrate the birth of your Son. Increase our understanding and our love of the riches you have revealed in him, who is Lord now and for ever.
All Amen.

Eucharistic Prayer

Presider May God be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Presider Lift up your hearts.

People **We lift them up to God.**

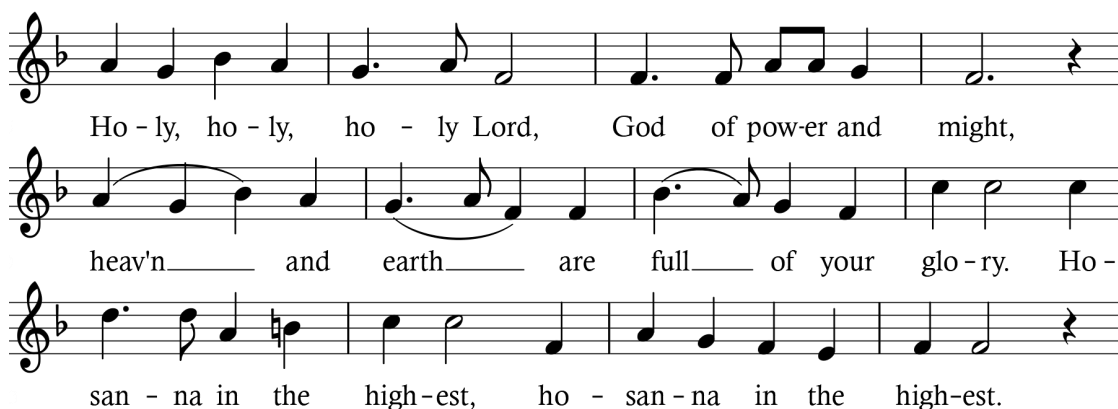
Presider Let us give thanks to God our Creator.

People **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

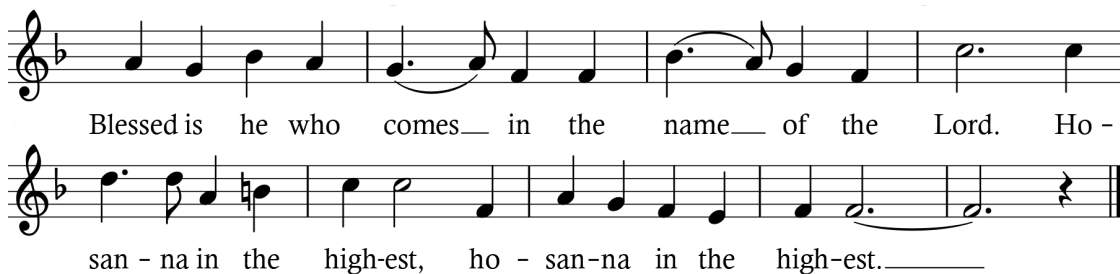
Presider This is the feast of the Christmas Child—a place where heaven and earth coincide, and eternity once more condenses into time as God is seen and known in the simple and the small, in story and song, and in bread and wine. So come—whether you are drawn by joy or driven by need, whether you walk with confident step, or stumble on faltering feet, whether you understand the meaning, or can only wonder at the mystery—come and gaze on the face of God for all are welcome in the stable.

The story of the Christmas Child is the story of Jesus—joyfully accepting the restriction of flesh and entering the constraint of time to show how life and love fully lived and freely offered transcend their limitations. It is the story of Jesus—seated at a table with his friends breaking bread and pouring wine to show how life and love fully lived and freely offered change the world. It is the story of Jesus—accepting a kiss and carrying a cross to show how life and love fully lived and freely shared count no cost. It is the story of Jesus—confined in a tomb but rising with the dawn to show how life and love fully lived and freely shared defy and defeat even death. It is the story of Emmanuel—God, now and always with us and for us.

So, as we take this bread and wine—in remembrance of that life and love—we give thanks for the healing and hope which spring from the coming, living, dying and rising of the Christmas Child. And, with those who gather round his crib, with the angel choirs, and the singing planets, we join in creation's song of joy:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and might,
heav'n and earth are full of your glo-ry. Ho -
san - na in the high-est, ho - san - na in the high-est.



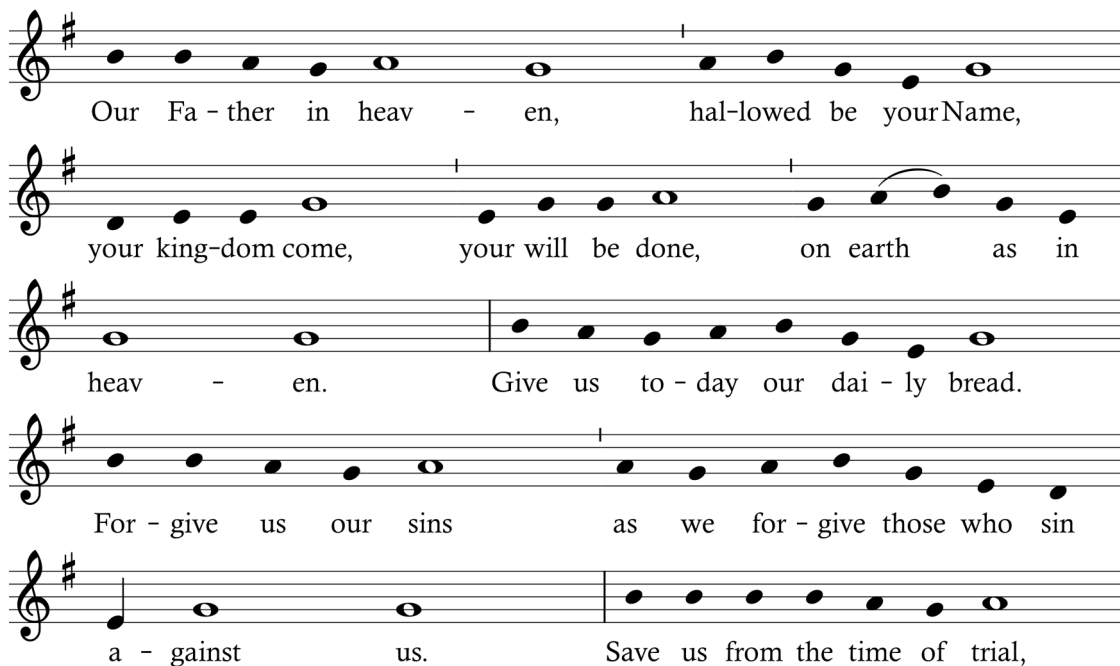
Presider And as we follow the example of Jesus, send down your Holy Spirit on us, and on these gifts of bread and wine, that the story of the Christmas Child—of life fully lived and freely shared—may continue on in us and through us, until the world is transformed.

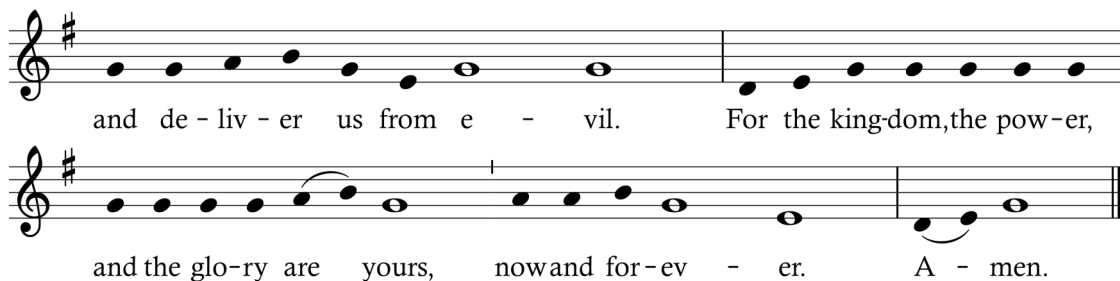
May the peace of the Christmas Child—the soft peace of a starlit night, the noisy peace of a crowded stable, the challenging peace of life and love fully lived and freely shared—enfold, enrich and energise you. Emmanuel, who came to us in the Christmas Child, and who comes to us still through the living, loving, and sharing of others, offers these signs of his Presence and invites us to join our story with theirs.

All **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

Presider As our Saviour taught us, let us pray,





Breaking of the Bread

Presider We break the bread of life, and that life is the light of the world.

All **God here among us, light in the midst of us, bring us to light and life.**

Presider The gifts of God for the People of God.

All **Thanks be to God.**

Presider Dear friends, I invite you in this moment, wherever you may be, to receive Christ, in communion with the saints, and the gathering of God's people, unseen and yet present with us now. In this Eucharist, many are made one.

Fraction Anthem

Let all mor - tal flesh keep si - lence, and with fear and
King of kings, yet born of Mar - y, as of old on
trem - bling stand; pon - der noth - ing earth - ly mind - ed,
earth he stood, Lord of Lords in hu - man ves - ture,
for, with bless - ing in his hand, Christ our God to us ap -
in the bod - y and the blood, he will give to all the
proach - eth, our full hom - age to de - mand.
faith - ful his own self for heaven - ly food.

The Congregation sits.

Communion

For those who are present in person, all baptised persons may receive Communion. Please come forward to the Nave altar in single file to receive the Bread from the Presider and then move to the first available Chalice Administrator to receive the Wine. Gluten free Hosts are available upon request. Those who find walking difficult may request that Communion be brought to them. Those who wish to receive a blessing instead of Communion may indicate their desire by crossing their arms over their breast when they approach the Presider.

Hymn: 122—In the Bleak Midwinter

Solo “Minuit, Chretiens”

Adolphe Adam; soloist Lucas Paradis

COMMISSIONING AND SENDING

Announcements

Prayer after Communion

Presider The starlight and song, story and supper,
which called us home, now compel us to go out.

All **May we who have knelt at the manger
always have room to hold within ourselves the Christmas Child.
May we who have gazed on the face of God
learn to live fully, and to share freely
all that we have and are.
So may Emmanuel—God with us and for us—
be once again incarnated in the world. Amen.**

Blessing

Hymn 154—Joy to the World

Antioch

Dismissal

Presider Go in peace to love and serve God and God’s people!

All



Thanks be to God, thanks be to God, thanks be to God, al-le-lu-ia!



Thanks be to God, thanks be to God, al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia!

Liturgical Ministers

Presider	The Rev. Canon Brad Smith
Preacher	The Rev. Canon Brad Smith
Greeters	Alan Brunger and John Perkins
Organist	Robert Grandy
Cantor	Lucas Paradis
Readers	Walter Howell and Jennifer Passmore
Intercessor	Mickey Bongers
Crucifer	
Sacrist	
Server	
Chalice Administrator	
Chancel Guild	Ellen Seddon and Leslie Sherman
A/V	Walter Howell

Acknowledgements

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To the right are some commonly-asked questions by visitors. If you have a question that is not answered here, please do not hesitate to ask one of the greeters or clergy for assistance.



The Rev. Canon Brad Smith
Rector

The Rev. Ruth Adams
The Rev. Mary Bell-Plouffe
The Rev. Steve Smith
Honorary Assistants

Mr. Robert Grandy
Director of Music

Mr. Colin Walsh
Dr. Andrew Vreugdenhil
Churchwardens

Deputy Churchwarden

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Welcome!

Children's Ministry

We welcome children and youth, who may remain with you to worship and do not have to remain perfectly still and quiet! Please feel free to allow them to roam if they wish. Families are most welcome to use the activities in the children's area in the church and to bring colouring sheets, toys, and snacks for their children.

On Posture in Worship

It is customary that we stand to pray and sing and sit to hear God's Word proclaimed and interpreted. Some people prefer to kneel to pray. Please adopt the posture that helps you to worship.

Visitor's Cards

If you're visiting, please do take the time to complete a visitor's card, which can be found in the rack on the bookcase in the Chapel. We would love the opportunity to stay in touch with you.

Making an Offering (Donation)

To support the ministry of the parish, an offering may be made by placing cash or a cheque in an envelope available where you picked up this order of service. Please write your name and address on the envelope, then place it on the brass offering plate. Tax receipts are issued for gifts of \$20 or more. We also have a convenient pre-authorised giving program for monthly donations that are debited from your bank account or we accept e-transfers to office@stjohnspeterborough.ca. Please visit www.stjohnspeterborough.ca/donate for more information.

Accessibility

The facility is entirely accessible through the Brock St entrance, from where all levels of the facility are accessible via elevator.

Washrooms/Change Table

Accessible washrooms are located down the hall from the narthex (lobby). A change table is in the nursery at the end of the hall.

Fragrances

We ask that you refrain from wearing strong fragrances in order to accommodate those with breathing sensitivities.

Fellowship & Refreshments

All are welcome to stay after the liturgy for fellowship and refreshments in the Guild Hall.