

**Advent** begins four Sundays before December 25

**Christmas** begins the evening of December 24 and continues for 12 days

**Epiphany** begins January 6 and continues (for 7 Sundays) until Lent

**Advent** means “coming.” It is a season for faithful Christians to prepare to meet God when he comes. Scripture readings tell of the promise that God will come as Saviour, Lord and Judge. He will come as a little baby, to be born in Bethlehem. He will come to his faithful people in prayer and worship and in the bread and wine.

Prominent in Advent is the prophet Isaiah’s vision of the future fulfilled in the coming of Jesus Christ. John the Baptist bears his witness to “He who is to come”. The Blessed Virgin Mary shares with us her own experience of the “coming of the Lord.”

This is a season when we think of the darkness of a world without the light of Christ. It is a time when our human longing for God is expressed in the liturgy. Solemn, majestic music prepares us for the Advent of the Lord and King of all Creation.

In our parish, the “Advent Wreath” provides a focus for our prayerful preparation for the coming of the Lord.

This wreath is a circle of evergreen branches. Both the circle and the evergreen are symbols of eternal life. Four candles stand for the four Sundays in Advent. (Sometimes a fifth “Christ Candle” is added for

Christmas Day.) Each Sunday, a candle is lit and a prayer is said.



Before the beginning of the Sunday Eucharist, the Advent Candle in church will be lit and the appropriate prayer offered.

Observing this solemn season is sometimes difficult. Commercial interests begin their Christmas season in November and end it on December 25 – just when the church’s season begins! It requires real effort to wait until Advent is over before beginning Christmas!

### **Christmas** is “Christ-Mass”

It is 12 days of joyful celebration beginning the eve of December 25. We celebrate the birth of Jesus, the Christ sent by God to be the Saviour of the world.



White and gold hangings deck the Altar. Flowers fill the sanctuary with new colour. All the candles are lit. The church bell peals. Joyful music rings out the good news: Light shines in the darkness, the Word of God is made flesh to dwell among us – Jesus Christ is born!

### ***In our Parish:***

***Christmas Concert - Dec. 13 - 4 p.m. Trinity  
Lessons & Carols service, Dec. 20, 11.15***

***Trinity***

**Christmas Eve Eucharist –**

4 p.m. Trinity, Digby

6 p.m. St. Peter’s, Weymouth North

### **Christmas Day**

There will be a said (no music)

BCP Eucharist at Trinity Digby at 10 a.m.

**Sundays after Christmas**, celebration of the birth of Jesus continues

– Dec. 27, the First Sunday after Christmas, regular services at 9.30 (Weymouth) and 11.15 (Digby)

- **Friday Jan. 1**, said Eucharist celebrating the Naming of Jesus and New Year’s Day; 11 a.m. at St. Peter’s, Weymouth North.

**Epiphany** means “shining forth” as light in darkness. The Book of Common Prayer calls it “The Manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles”. We celebrate the Epiphany of Christ until the beginning of Lent on Ash Wednesday. In 2016, there are six Sundays in the season. All services are 9.30 at St. Peter’s, Weymouth North, and 11.15 at Trinity, Digby.

**January 3** (celebrating the Epiphany) 9.30 at St. Peter’s and 11.15 at Trinity. The Gospel for the Feast of the Epiphany is the story of the Magi (Wise Men or Kings), who followed the light of a star and found Jesus. They are symbols of the shining light of Christ on all the people in the world.



**January 10**, the first Sunday after the Feast of the Epiphany, is a celebration of the Baptism of the Lord.

The light of Christ shines forth in the world as he receives the Holy Spirit and begins his mission as redeemer of the world. It is an appropriate time for Baptism and the renewal of Baptismal promises.

**January 17**, on this Sunday, the story of Jesus' miracle of "water into wine" offers us a glimpse into the relationship the adult Jesus had with his mother, Mary.

**January 24**, the third Sunday after Epiphany, will focus on the beginning of Jesus' ministry in Galilee.

**January 31**, we celebrate "Candlemas", or the "presentation of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Temple". The Gospel tells how Mary and Joseph brought the infant Christ to the temple, where he is recognized as the light of the world by Simeon and Anna.

Candles are powerful symbols of Christ, as light in the darkness of our world. This will be a Sunday where parents and children are especially encouraged to worship together at a Eucharist which gathers all ages within our community of faith.

**February 7** is the last Sunday of the Epiphany season. The Gospel tells how Jesus' glory is revealed as shining light on the Mount of Transfiguration. This Sunday completes the three seasons that make up our celebration of the Incarnation of God in the birth of Jesus Christ. **Advent** is the time for getting ready for the coming of light. **Christmas** is the celebration of the birth of Jesus, the "true light". **Epiphany** tells how God illuminates us with his

presence. Advent, Christmas and Epiphany focus our hearts and minds on Jesus, the light of the world.

*But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. (1 Pet.2:9)*

Anglican Parish of Digby/Weymouth  
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*Church of the Nativity – Sandy Cove  
St. Matthew – Weymouth Falls  
St. Peter & St. Thomas – Weymouth  
Trinity – Digby*



**Diocesan Bishop:**  
**The Right Reverend Ron Cutler**  
**Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada:**  
**The Most Reverend Fred J. Hiltz**



## Christmas is coming!

**P**eople have started counting the days until December 25. For countless centuries, people seeking God have divided this time into special seasons for worship.

Both ancient and modern religions follow universal cycles of human experience in patterns for spiritual living. The regular rotation of nature's seasons inspires the cycle: birth, life, growth, death, then on to new life again. This is the cycle or season of Easter.

Then there are the cycles of darkness and light. The sun, moon, stars and planets shine with brightness and darken into night. Christmas celebrates the coming of the "light shining in the darkness". Jesus is born. The Word is made flesh. The light of the world has come!

This cycle of darkness and light consist of three seasons: