

# *Jamestown Rediscovery*

HISTORIC JAMESTOWNE

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



*Celebrating the season by candle light during "At Christmas be Mery"*

### **A 17th-Century Virginia Holiday Celebration: "At Christmas be Mery"**

*JAMESTOWN, VA (November 12, 2025) –*

Jamestown Rediscovery is delighted to once again present "*At Christmas be Mery*," *A Special Evening at Historic Jamestowne* this holiday season. Visitors are invited to step back in time to 1621 to join Sir Francis Wyatt, the colony's newly arrived Governor, for an early Virginia Christmas celebration with costumed interpreters, a cappella performances, a bonfire, and caroling. The program will be offered on Saturday, December 13, at 5:30pm and 7:30pm. Tickets are \$30.00 each and must be purchased in advance.

A unique opportunity to see Jamestown Island aglow with firelight, "*At Christmas be Mery*" explores the origins of traditions we now commonly associate with the holiday season, including hanging evergreens, caroling, and observing the winter solstice. The Captain of the Guard will escort guests along a cresset-lit path to the 1618 church (today called the Memorial Church) where they will meet Governor Sir Francis Wyatt and other leading Virginia dignitaries. As a

special addition to this year's program, the William & Mary Christopher Wren Singers will perform traditional and Renaissance-era songs that would have been familiar to the early Jamestown colonists. After the program in the Church, visitors will herald in the season by throwing sprigs of holly into the nearby bonfire and making their wishes for the year ahead.

The title "*At Christmas be Mery*" is taken from *Fiue [Five] Hundred Pointes of Good Husbandrie* by English poet Thomas Tusser and published in 1580. The full line is "At Christmas be mery, and thanke god of all: and feast thy pore neighbors, the great with the small, yea al the yere long, have an eie [eye] to the poore: and god shall sende luck, to kepe open thy doore." The poem refers to the gift-giving practices of the holiday season, which we are, of course, familiar with today. We invite guests to join in on this celebration of our community and the season with carols, stories, and a little mischief by the bonfire.

"For the first 20 years of the colony, life in Jamestown was extraordinarily difficult, but records suggest that colonists continued celebrating Christmas like they had back home in England or other parts of Europe," said Willie Balderson, Director of Living History & Historic Trades. "The confluence of different cultures and religions coming together in Europe created unique holiday traditions many people practice today, and I hope guests will come away with a renewed zeal to take part in activities that are literally hundreds of years old."

Tickets are limited and will sell out! Purchase tickets at [historicjamestowne.org](http://historicjamestowne.org). This program is held rain or shine.

Available photos can be found [here](#). All images courtesy of Jamestown Rediscovery Foundation.

Formatting note: whenever possible, please use quotes and the historic spelling of "Mery" when referring to the program.

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#### About Jamestown Rediscovery Foundation

*The Jamestown Rediscovery Foundation preserves and shares the original site of James Fort and Jamestown, established in 1607. The Foundation is dedicated to uncovering, preserving, and sharing Jamestown's diverse history, and highlighting its major contribution to the foundations of modern American society. Jamestown Rediscovery Foundation is a private 501(c)(3) nonprofit and jointly administers Historic Jamestowne alongside the National Park Service. Admission includes the James Fort site, New Town, and the Voorhees Archaearium Archaeological Museum, as well as walking tours, living history, and public programs. For more information about visiting Jamestown, please visit [www.historicjamestowne.org](http://www.historicjamestowne.org) or call (757) 856-1250.*