



Christmas 1 Yr A – 1st January 2023
Communion

Meditation Hymn: A new commandment I give unto you (TIS 699)

A new commandment I give unto you
that you love one another as I have loved you,
that you love one another as I have loved you.
By this will others know that you are my disciples
if you have love one for another;
by this shall all know that you are my disciples
if you have love one for another.

Welcome:

Greeting:

As we celebrate the arrival of the Christ-child this Christmas:
May the Lord be with you
And also with you

Moment of Stillness:

Christ Candle: Judith

We light this light to remind us that the Light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it.

Acknowledgement First Peoples:

As we gather to worship God, we acknowledge the First Peoples of this country on which we gather today; the Gadigal and Wangal people. And we pay our respects to their Elders past and present, together with all descendants.

We commit ourselves to support Voice, Treaty, Truth – justice for First Nations Peoples.

Call to Worship

We give thanks to God that hope was born!

**God's light, whose sign was a star,
was poured out for all people.**

All the fears and pain of this world cannot diminish God's light.

**That light is the life of Jesus Christ,
who breaks through the darkness.**

Thanks be to God, for the most precious gift of Light.

Let us live as people of new Light and Hope.

Opening Prayer

God of promise and mysterious Light,
be with us this day as we journey to meet your Gift.

Give us courage and hope along our way,
as your light continues to glow brightly in our path,
leading us to love and follow you.

In Jesus' Name.

AMEN.

Songs: Amazing Grace

1. Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound,
that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found,

was blind but now I see.

2. 'Twas Grace that taught my heart to fear,
and Grace my fears relieved.
How precious did that Grace appear,
the hour I first believed.

My chains are gone, I've been set free.
My God My Saviour has ransomed me,
and like a flood his mercy reigns,
unending love, amazing grace.

3. The Lord has promised good to me,
His word my hope secures.
He will my shield and portion be,
as long as life endures.

My chains are gone, I've been set free.
My God My Saviour has ransomed me,
and like a flood his mercy reigns,
unending love, amazing grace.

4. The earth shall soon dissolve like snow,
the sun forebear to shine.
But God who called me here below
will be forever mine.

Spirit of the Living God

Spirit of the Living God,
fall afresh on me.
Spirit of the Living God,
fall afresh on me.

Break me, melt me,
mould me, fill me.
Spirit of the Living God,
fall afresh on me.

Prayer of confession:

We come to God
knowing that we have failed to obey the call of Jesus
to love God and one another with our whole hearts;
but we come also to a God who reaches out to us
with healing and reconciliation.

In this knowledge, let us pray

We are sorry when we let the comfort of Christmas
stop us from seeing those who don't live in comfort;
those who are hungry, those in pain, those in need of your love.
Break those bonds of comfort and strengthen us to take on the risk of
following you. Help us to follow your light.
Shine brightly in us and through us.
Forgive the blindness we so often offer to you.
Give us vision of what you would have us be and do in the light of your love.
AMEN.

Words of assurance:

The Light has come. The Light has come and has put out the darkness.
Now we can walk in the light.
You are loved by God and called to walk with God in the light.

Hear then Christ's words of grace to us:
"Your sins are forgiven."

Thanks be to God

Peace:

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

Moment for the young at heart: Graham

Bible Readings: Paula

Isaiah 63:7-9

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 favor 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 act deceitfully,"
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 pity it was he who redeemed them;
he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

Matthew 2:13-23

¹³ Now after they 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." ¹⁴ Then Joseph^[a] got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt ¹⁵ and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, "Out of Egypt I have called my son."

¹⁶ When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the magi,^[b] 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 magi.^[c] ¹⁷ Then what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:

¹⁸ "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."

¹⁹ When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, ²⁰ "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." ²¹ Then Joseph^[d] got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. ²² But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling 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. ²³ 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 Nazarene."

Hear the word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

Reflection: *Rev Dr Alan Russell*

Moment of Stillness:

Prayers of the People: *Chris W*

The Lord's Prayer:

**Our Father in heaven
hallowed be your name.
your kingdom come
your will be done
on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread
forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us in the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom the power and the glory are yours.
Now and forever.
Amen**

Communion Hymn: Comfort Comfort all my People

Chorus

Comfort comfort all My people
With the comfort of My Word
Speak it tender to My people
All your sins are taken away

Though your tears be rivers running
Though your tears be an ocean full
Though you cry with the hurt of living

Comfort comfort
Every valley shall be lifted
Every mountain shall be low
Every rough place will be smoother
Comfort comfort

Though your eyes see only darkness
Though your eyes can see no light
Though your eyes see pain and sorrow
Comfort comfort
Every night will have its morning
Every pain will have an end
Every burden will be lightened
Comfort comfort

Though we fracture God's creation
Though we stand so far apart
Though we fail to love each other
Comfort comfort
Every wall will crack and crumble
Every stranger will be friend
Every one embrace another
Comfort comfort

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper – Epiphany Liturgy

Lift your eyes and look around.
The light of the babe of Bethlehem
shines from the face of each one here.
Let us now greet that light,
rejoice that we are here together,
and pass the peace of Christ,
our joy and our hope.

Invitation

This is the table, not of the Church, but of Jesus.
It is to be made ready for those who love him
and those who want to love him more.
So, come, you who are hungry for God's love.
Come, you who are yearning the Christ's presence.
Come, you who want community;
know that you are welcome here.

Come, not because it is I who invite you: it is Jesus.
It is his will that those who want him
should meet him here in the place where the ordinary things
like bread and wine and ourselves
are made extraordinary by the Grace of God.

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.
We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

God of all blessings, we give you thanks and praise for Jesus the Light of the world, the light that no darkness can overpower;
we thank you that you have called us from darkness to walk in the light; we thank you for the insight of the magi, who by their gifts showed us that all life is a gift;
and with them, the angels and archangels and all who live in the light, we praise you, saying together:

**Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest!**

**Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest!**

Accept our praises now, loving God, as we remember Jesus, who, on the night before he died, took bread and wine,
gave you thanks and offered them to his friends, saying:
this is my body, this is by blood.
Eat and drink to remember me.

Come freshly to us now, present God,
as we offer you our lives, renew in us your gifts;
the gold of our potential,
the incense of our prayers and aspirations,
the myrrh of healing for our pain;
feed us and nourish us, that we may grow in the life of Christ;

fill us with your Spirit that we may overflow with your love,
and transform the world with your glory.

Prayer of consecration

For us you were born, for us you healed,
preached, taught and showed the way to your kingdom;
for us you were crucified, and for us, after death, you rose again.

As we do in this place what you did in an upstairs room,
send down your Holy Spirit on us
and on these gifts of bread and wine
that they may become for us your body,
healing, forgiving and making us whole;
and that we may become, for you, your body,
loving and caring in the world until your kingdom comes.
Amen.

The bread that we break is a sharing in the body of Christ
The cup that we take is a sharing in the blood of Christ

These are the gifts of God for the people of God.

Jesus welcomes everyone to his table,
and so we offer everyone, without exception,
the bread and wine, which are Christ's body and blood.

Let us receive what we are;
let us become what we receive.
The body of Christ.

Distribution

Concluding prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,
you have put your life into our hands; now we put our lives into yours.
Fed and nurtured at this table we continue to be your presence in this world.
Touched by your love we take it to share with each person we encounter,
until everyone knows they are loved by you, and in turn loves one another.

Amen

Community News:

Offering Prayer:

O Christ, today we join those who first
offered you their gifts
as we bring our own to you.
Use these gifts and us to be your light in the world.
Amen.

Hymn: Angels from the realms of glory

Angels, from the realms of glory,
wing your flight o'er all the earth;
heralds of creation's story,
now proclaim Messiah's birth:

Refrain:

come and worship Christ, the new-born King,
come and worship, worship Christ, the new-born King.

Shepherds, in the fields abiding,
watching over flocks by night,
God with us is now residing;
yonder shines the infant Light: [Refrain]

Though an infant now we view him,
he shall fill his Father's throne,
gather all the nations to him:
every knee shall then bow down: [Refrain]

Benediction & Blessing:

Go into God's world, bearing the light of hope and peace.
Bring the Good News of the love of God through Jesus Christ to all people.
Go in peace.
And the blessing of Creator, Christ and Spirit be with you
this day and evermore.

3-fold-amen

Acknowledgements:

Image: Refugee icon by Kelly Latimer

*Call to worship, opening prayer, prayer of confession, assurance and benediction: adapted from –
ministrymatters.com*