



Advent 3 Yr B – 17th December 2023

Greeter: Roger T

Meditation Song: O come, O come the time is near

O come, O come the time is near;
we yearn to know your presence here.
Creation stirs: the time is full.
Be born to us, Emmanuel.
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to us,
a child shall be the sign.

O come, O Dayspring, come and cheer
our spirits by your advent here;
love stir within the womb of night
and death's own shadows put to flight:
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to us,
a child shall be the sign.

Welcome:

Greeting:

As we prepare this Advent to enter the mystery of Christmas:
May the light of Christ be with you.

And also with you

Moment of Stillness:

As we begin our service, let's take a moment to be still and aware of God's presence within and all around us.

Advent Candle: *The first 2 Advent Candles are lit and the third candle is lit for joy*
Tonia & Hector

We light this candle of joy
to recall Simeon and Anna
and all those who are the Quiet in the Land
who have awaited in every generation
for the glory of the Lord to be revealed
and have patiently accepted God's will and timing.
May the Light overcome the darkness.

Acknowledgement of Country:

This is God's land and God's Spirit dwells here.
We acknowledge and give thanks for the Gadigal and Wangal people who have walked upon and cared for this land for thousands of years. We acknowledge the continued deep spiritual relationship of the First Nations Peoples to this Country.

We commit to walking with and learning from the elders of this land, and to the ongoing journey of justice and reconciliation.

Call to Worship:

Holy God, in this quiet season, the season of waiting,
We rest in the shelter of your love.

In this season of waiting, we seek your light to guide us.

We trust in the light of your promise.

In this season of solitude, when we listen for the rhythm of your breath.

We find hope in the signs of your presence.

In this season, it is a time to make room and to make ready.

For we shall join in the angel's chorus.

Peace on earth, goodwill to all people.

We cry out for peace on earth, goodwill to all.

Opening Prayer:

God of all time

In our watching and our waiting

Come Lord Jesus.

In our hopes and in our fears

Come Lord Jesus.

In our homes and in our world

Come Lord Jesus.

Come Lord Jesus.

Bless us and surprise us as we look forward to the day of your birth.

Amen

Hymn: Tell out my soul (TIS 161)

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord!

Unnumbered blessings give my spirit voice;

tender to me the promise of his word –

in God my Saviour shall my heart rejoice.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his name!

Make known his might, the deeds his arm has done;

his mercy sure, from age to age the same –

his holy name: the Lord, the Mighty One.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his might!

Powers and dominions lay their glory by;

proud hearts and stubborn wills are put to flight,

the hungry fed, the humble lifted high.

Tell out, my soul, the glories of his word!

Firm is his promise, and his mercy sure:

tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord

to children's children and for evermore!

Prayer of confession:

Because it is so hard to wait, it is not easy to live through Advent's days.

But watch what God does during this time.
God waits for us to turn from our old ways to find new paths;
God waits for us to admit what we have done, and failed to do,
So, we might be forgiven and graced with new life.
Let us approach the One who waits - for us!

God of Stable, stars and surprises,
of light and hope and new life:
open our eyes and hearts to your presence in the world;
forgive our obsession with property and possessions;
forgive our compromises and narrowness of vision;
forgive us when we have not loved our neighbour as ourselves.
Open us to your grace,
that we might hear again the song of the angels,
and respond with a song in our hearts, and in our lives.
Amen

Words of assurance:

Love has come into the world,
a free gift of grace for ordinary people,
a nurturing of hope,
and a promise of new things!

I invite you to respond with me:
**We are loved. We belong. We are
forgiven. Thanks be to God.
Amen.**

Peace:

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

Hymn: Community of Christ (TIS 473)

1. Community of Christ,
who make the Cross your own,
live out your creed and risk your life
for God alone:
the God who wears your face,

to whom all worlds belong,
whose children are of every race
and every song.

2. Community of Christ,
look past the Church's door
and see the refugee, the hungry,
and the poor.
Take hands with the oppressed,
the jobless in your street,
take towel and water, that you wash
your neighbour's feet.

3. Community of Christ,
through whom the word must sound -
cry out for justice and for peace
the whole world round:
disarm the powers that war
and all that can destroy,
turn bombs to bread, and tears of anguish
into joy.

4. When menace melts away,
so shall God's will be done,
the climate of the world be peace
and Christ its Sun;
our currency be love
and kindness our law,
our food and faith be shared as one
for evermore.

Moment for the young at heart: Room for a Little One - Tonia

Bible Readings: Marian

Introduction to Hebrew Bible reading:

These verses in the book of Isaiah can be read as a creation narrative. Out of the chaos of destruction and exile, God will create something new. We hear a description of the character of God; this God who will bring forth a new creation is also one who loves justice.

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me,
because the Lord has anointed me;
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,
to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and release to the prisoners;
² to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;
³ to provide for those who mourn in Zion—
to give them a garland instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the Lord, to display his glory.
⁴ They shall build up the ancient ruins,
they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities,
the devastations of many generations.
⁸ For I the Lord love justice,
I hate robbery and wrongdoing;^[b]
I will faithfully give them their recompense,
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.
⁹ Their descendants shall be known among the nations,
and their offspring among the peoples;
all who see them shall acknowledge
that they are a people whom the Lord has blessed.
¹⁰ I will greatly rejoice in the Lord,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
¹¹ For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.

John 1:6-8, 19-28

⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸ He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹ The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.^[b]

¹⁹ This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” ²⁰ He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, “I am not the Messiah.”^[g] ²¹ And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the prophet?” He answered, “No.” ²² Then they said to him, “Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?” ²³ He said,

“I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness,
‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’”

as the prophet Isaiah said.

²⁴ Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. ²⁵ They asked him, “Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah,^[h] nor Elijah, nor the prophet?” ²⁶ John answered them, “I baptise with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, ²⁷ the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.” ²⁸ This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptising.

Hear the word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

Reflection: Rev Joy

Moment of Stillness:

Prayers of the People: John

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**

Community News:

Offering Prayer:

Holy One, this Advent season we wait in hope.
And we give in hope.
Hope for your coming reign;
Hope because of your presence with us now.
Receive our gifts,
And use them for your work of healing and hope in our world.
Amen.

Song: Born in the night (Mary's Child)

1. Born in the night, Mary's child,
a long way from Your home.
Coming in need, Mary's child,
born in a borrowed room.
2. Clear shining light, Mary's child,
your face lights up our way.
Light of the world, Mary's child,
dawn on our darkened day.
3. Truth of our life, Mary's child,
You tell us God is good.
Prove it is true, Mary's child,
go to Your cross of wood.
4. Hope of the world, Mary's child,
you're coming soon to reign.
King of the earth, Mary's child,
walk in our streets again.

Benediction & Blessing:

Hold your light out to the world.
Follow, where the Spirit of Hope leads you.
Listen, as the Child of Peace cries for you.
Rejoice, as the Love of God embraces you.

And may Almighty God bless you;
Creator, Christ and Spirit
be upon you and remain forever within you.

3-fold-amen

Pastoral Prayers: Hector

Acknowledgements:

Image: Stushie Art

Advent Candle liturgy: Shine on Star of Bethlehem – Christian Aid

Call to worship: adapted Shine on Star of Bethlehem – Christian Aid

Prayer of confession: adapted G. Nodwell - Shine on Star of Bethlehem – Christian Aid

Assurance: adapted Dorothy McRae-McMahon – Prayers for Life's Particular Moments

Communion Liturgy: Shine on Star of Bethlehem – Christian Aid

Blessing: Adapted Shine on Star of Bethlehem – Christian Aid