

Order of Service – 25/12/2022 Christmas Day

Opening verse on screen

Luke 2:11 '...to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord.'

Gathering, Greeting and Call to Worship

Kirsty

Please come and find a place to sit and prepare to worship.

Listen to the sounds of life and love around us.

Listen for the voice of the angel:

'to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord'

Let us stand to sing and worship the Christ child as we welcome the Word.

Song: O come all ye faithful, v1,6&7, TiS 304

1 *O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
come and behold him born the king of angels:
O come let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!*

6 *Sing choirs of angels, sing in exaltation,
sing all ye citizens of heaven above,
'Glory to God, glory in the highest':
O come let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!*

7 *Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning,
Jesus, to thee be glory given;
Word of the Father now in flesh appearing:
O come let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!*

SONG: [O Come all ye faithful](#), from [Together in Song](#), Harper Collins *Religious*, PUBLIC DOMAIN

Acknowledgement of Country

Kirsty

We acknowledge and respect
the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nation,
the traditional custodians of this land
since time immemorial.

We are learning that the land
is not ours to own, but to look after;
and that if we listen, we may hear in it
the calling of the eternal Spirit.

**Responding to this call,
we commit ourselves
to work for justice, reconciliation,
and care of the earth.**

Song: The North Wind is Tossing the Leaves, TiS 322

Kirsty

For the Kulin people, Christmas falls in the Kangaroo-apple season, with its changeable thundery weather and long days. Let's sing of Christ's birth in this season.

*The north wind is tossing the leaves.
The red dust is over the town;
The sparrows are under the eaves,
And the grass in the paddock is brown;
As we lift up our voices and sing,
To the Christ-child the heavenly King.*

*The tree ferns in green gullies sway;
The cool stream flows silently by;
The joy bells are greeting the day,
And the chimes are adrift in the sky,
As we lift up our voices and sing,
To the Christ-child the heavenly King.*

SONG: [The North Wind](#), by John Wheeler, © copyright Chappell Music Limited, from [Together in Song](#), Harper Collins Religious, Copyright uncertain

Welcome and introduction

Kirsty

Welcome to worship this Christmas morning. It is great to be gathering together in person or online. My name is Kirsty and I will be leading worship today with our minister Ian, Kenna, Mal, Courtney and the musicians, and the support of the AV team.

It is Christmas Day! The Advent time of preparation and waiting is over.
Christ is born.

Today as we celebrate the Christ child's birth, we will be reflecting on the place where he was born, and the stories we tell.

Let us pray:

Prayers of Adoration and Confession

Kirsty

Jesus, born of Mary, born this day,
We know so much about you, and so little.
We hear so many stories of your birth and your life
And yet learn more, and know you better each day.

Mighty God
Wonderful Counsellor
Saviour, Messiah, Lord
You are the light of the world.

Everlasting Father
Prince of Peace
You are a child born for us
A Son given to us.

Mary's child, born in the night
Hope of the world
Newborn King
You are Immanuel, God with us.

Infant holy, infant lowly
King of angels
Word of the Father now in flesh appearing
You are Christ the Lord!

You are all these things and so much more.
We adore you.

Forgive us when we put limits on who you are
When we only listen to part of your story,
When we shape your story to suit ours.
Amen.

Word of Grace

Kirsty

Christ is born this day,
A child who will challenge and change us all
A God who loves and forgives.
And so we can say with confidence:
'Our sin is forgiven'
Thanks be to God.

Song: Infant Lowly, TiS 292

Kirsty

*1. Infant holy, infant lowly,
for his bed a cattle stall;
oxen lowing little knowing
Christ the babe is Lord of all;
swift are winging angels singing,
nowells ringing, tidings bringing,
Christ the babe is Lord of all,
Christ the babe is Lord of all.*

*2. Flocks were sleeping, shepherds keeping
vigil till the morning new
saw the glory, heard the story,
tidings of a gospel true;
thus rejoicing, free from sorrow,
praises voicing, greet the morrow,
Christ the babe was born for you,
Christ the babe was born for you.*

SONG: [Infant Holy](#), from [Together in Song](#), Harper Collins *Religious*, Reproduced with permission under ONE LICENCE # 604502, ALSO Reproduced with permission by CCLI license no. 247623

Candle Lighting

Ian

With the Children

We continue the story of rebirth,
Telling a story into the circle of lights.
The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;
Those who lived in a land of deep darkness on them light has shined.

This final light is for our own rebirth.
**This is the candle for CHRIST, born once again among us.
Let us honour the Light!**

Song: Angels from the Realms of Glory, TiS 309

1. *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 newborn King.
Come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn King.*

2. *Shepherds, in the field abiding,
Watching over flocks by night,
God with us is now residing;
Yonder shines the infant light:*

3. *Wise men, leave your contemplations,
Brighter visions beam afar;
Seek the great Desire of nations;
You have seen His natal star.*

4. *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:*

SONG: [Angels from the realms of glory](#), by James Montgomery,
from [Together in Song](#), Harper Collins *Religious*, PUBLIC DOMAIN

Bible Readings Isaiah 9:2-7

Kenna Morrison and Mal Rowe

Kenna: The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—
on them light has shined...
For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
His authority shall grow continually,
and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.

Gospel Reading Luke 2:1-20

Kenna: In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

Mal: In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

Kenna: When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

Mal: When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Kenna and Mal: For these words of witness and for Christ the Word: ***Thanks be to God***

Reflection

Ian

Song: Born in the Night, TIS 323

Ian

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.*

SONG: Born in the night, by Geoffrey Ainger, from Together in Song, Harper Collins *Religious*,
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Prayers of the People

Ian

Ian: Our prayers today will focus on the places in the world being assisted by the Act for Peace Christmas Bowl Appeal. All offerings made today (into the bowls by the baptism font or in this bowl on the communion table) will go to the Christmas Bowl (online offerings via the Christmas Bowl website). First let's hear the story of a mother and her children – a Christmas Bowl story.

Christmas Bowl Story – a mother and her children

Kirsty

Kirsty: My name is Mugisha, I am Congolese, and I am a refugee here in Kenya. It's because of war. My home is a place where they used to fight. Sometimes they come to chase us, they go after our cows, some people are killed, and others are burnt in their houses. We came here to Kenya to seek asylum and we have spent five or six years here. Since the time when RefugePoint (Act For Peace's local partner) started supporting me, that's when I started finding something to do to support myself. They supported me with food and rent for the period of six months. Again, to be alive for us, is a miracle of God. The food has helped us so much, you can't live without eating, you can't work without eating. They helped us a lot. I took a time to rest as a mother, I raised my kids, I got the time to think about them, the time to talk to them, and the time to give them love.

Prayers of the People

Ian

God of Christmas love,

we bring to the manger today the people of Ukraine. We pray for:

- a peaceful resolution to this crisis that prevents further human suffering
- safety for those who have fled and those still in danger at home
- and for all who will bear the cost of a senseless war

Enrich the lives of those who wait in limbo, yearning for miracles.

We bring to the manger today the people of Syria. We pray that

- those experiencing relocation driven by desperation are not forgotten and receive the care and support they need.

Open now doors to the home of your heart. Show us the way.

We bring to the manger today the people of Zimbabwe. We pray for

- families affected by severe droughts,
- and for unity and reconciliation amidst deep division and social fragmentation.

Grant protection to the weak and wisdom to the unjustly accused.

We bring to the manger today Sri Lankan refugees in South India. We pray for

- forgotten followers of paths without destination
- and for guidance and support on the journey home.

Help us listen to and understand the plight of the displaced and despised.

We bring to the manger today the people of the Congo. We pray for

- the millions who are on the brink of famine, enduring empty bellies and escaping evil situations.

May people seek peace there with the tenacity that they have worked at war.

We pray for hope, peace, joy and love around the world, for all people, all creatures, for the very earth itself, that your will might be done on earth as in heaven.

Let us pray together as Christ taught us:

***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 from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.*

You are welcome to light taper candle for your own prayers in the chapel space and to make an offering to the Christmas Bowl during the closing hymn or after the service.

Song: Hark the Herald Angels Sing, TiS 303

Ian

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1. Hark! the herald angels sing glory to the newborn King,
peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled.
Joyful, all you nations, rise, join the triumph of the skies;
with the angelic host proclaim, 'Christ is born in Bethlehem.'
Hark! the herald angels sing glory to the new-born king.
 2. Christ, by highest heaven adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come, offspring of a virgin's womb!
veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail the incarnate Deity!
Pleased in human flesh to dwell, Jesus, our Immanuel. (Refrain)
 3. Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die,
born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth. (Refrain)
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SONG: [Hark the herald angels sing](#), by Charles Wesley,
from [Together in Song](#), Harper Collins *Religious*, PUBLIC DOMAIN

Blessing and Sending

Ian

Go now to live the story of Christmas.

Go with
the blessing of peace;
the blessing of joy;
the blessing of hope;
the blessing of love.
The blessing of God
who is Source of every blessing,
who is the Child in the manger,
who is the Spirit of love born in us today.

In the name of the newborn Christ, Amen.

Thankyou

Thank you for joining us, and thank you to...

Liturgist:
Kirsty Bennett

Bible readers:
Kenna Morrison
Mal Rowe

Children's time:
Ian Ferguson

Reflection:
Ian Ferguson
(Minister of the Word)

Prayers of the People:
Ian Ferguson

Musicians:
Courtney Rodhe
(coordinator)
Jane Allardice
James Balsillie
Helen Burnham

Images:
Ian Ferguson

Editing / Production:
Jane Allardice
Hugh Brown
Saide Cameron
Ian Ferguson
Mal Rowe

Closing verse on screen

Luke 2:7 And she laid him in a manger, because there was no place in the guest room