



KNØX CHURCH

love faith outreach community justice

Order of Service 25 December 2019



Making a home

a simple celebration for Christmas Day

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WELCOME TO KNOX

Knox Church is a congregation within the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand. We aim to create Christian community in which people of all ages, sexual orientations, cultural backgrounds and socio-economic situations are included as equally valued participants in our congregational life. We cherish our diversity, offering a safe place of belonging to any who wish to explore their beliefs in an atmosphere promoting discussion, the development of healthy relationships and spiritual growth. We strive to be open to dialogue and shared experiences with people of other faiths. We enjoy worshipping the God made known in Jesus, endeavouring to do so in ways that are relevant to our daily lives, respect the integrity of creation, and make a positive difference to our wider world.

A loop system for hearing aids operates at Knox.

Toilets are available through the door on the lectern side of the sanctuary.

Please don't leave any items unattended around the church;
they may cause alarm.

We take care to use inclusive language in our services. References to God in traditional prayers and hymns may sometimes be gender-specific. As we pray and sing together, you're invited to adapt the words we've chosen. When we pray the "Lord's prayer", feel free to pray in your first language.

This morning the Bible already has been placed on the lectern, so will not be processed in. At 10 o'clock, with the congregation remaining seated, the minister approaches the Advent Wreath. Once he has read the Nativity Passage from Luke's Gospel, the Christ Candle is lit. The service proceeds from there.

The Nativity: Luke 2: 1-14

*In those days, Caesar Augustus issued a decree . . . 'Glory to God in the highest!
and on earth peace among those whom he favours!'*

The Lighting of the Christ Candle

The Christmas Proclamation:

Unto us a child is born!

UNTO US A SON IS GIVEN!

Come, let us go now to Bethlehem,

**AND LET US SEE THIS THING
THAT HAS COME TO PASS.**

Without announcement, we stand to sing

Hymn:

Mendelssohn

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)



Hark! the he-rald an-gels sing glo-ry to the new-born king.

1. Hark! the herald angels sing
glory to the new-born King;
peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled:
joyful all ye nations, rise,
join the triumph of the skies,
with th'angelic host proclaim,
Christ is born in Bethlehem.
*Hark! the herald angels sing
glory to the new-born king.*
2. Christ, by highest heav'n adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come,
offspring of a virgin's womb:
veiled in flesh the God-head see;
hail th'incarnate Deity!
Pleased on earth with us to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel.
*Hark! the herald angels sing
glory to the new-born king.*

3. Hail the heav'n-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 all from earth,
Born to give us second birth.
*Hark! the herald angels sing
glory to the new-born king.*

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

The congregation sits for
The Prayers of Approach:

He was not at home, dear God,
in Bethlehem.

HE WAS NOT AT HOME.

It was a place of tenuous connection,
a formal administrative allocation of a place;
and he was born in a stable
because there was no room for him
in a decent motel or guest house.

He was not at home, dear God,
in his family unit;

HE WAS NOT AT HOME.

By the time he was twelve,
he was calling another place his Father's house,
the place where he belonged.

He was not at home, dear God,
in Nazareth;

HE WAS NOT AT HOME.

At thirty he left for good,
to walk the earth,
to meet the stranger,
to explore that thing called the kingdom
and live a different life.

He'd caution those who would follow him,
not to expect for themselves a home -

foxes have dens
and birds have nests,
but the son of man has nowhere to lay his head.
HE WAS NOT AT HOME.

Yet, strange is the mystery of incarnation;
by his being here,
among us,
not at home,
you made your home here among us,
AND WE ARE AT HOME.

Beneath the star above Bethlehem,
WE ARE AT HOME.

In the birth of a child,
WE ARE AT HOME.

With shepherds coming to see,
WE ARE AT HOME.

With kneeling at the manger,
WE ARE AT HOME.

With sensing that you are meeting us,
WE ARE AT HOME.

Behold, the dwelling place of God
is among mortals.
WE ARE AT HOME.

Bless us this day, O God,
to hear the Christmas story,
and to rejoice in the holy birth,
through Jesus,
born in Bethlehem.
AMEN.

If there are younger ones present
A Conversation with the Younger Ones

John's Christmas Poem: Cheers for Jesus

Hymn:

Iris

French traditional melody



1. Angels from the realms of glory,
wing your way o'er all the earth;
you, who sang creation's story,
now proclaim Messiah's birth:
*come and worship Christ, the newborn King,
come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn King.*
2. Shepherds, in the fields abiding,
watching o'er your flocks by night
God with us is now residing;
yonder shines the infant Light:
come and worship . . .
3. Wise ones, leave your contemplations,
brighter visions beam afar;
seek the great Desire of nations,
you have seen his natal star:
come and worship . . .
4. Saints, before the altar bending,
watching long in hope and fear,
suddenly the Lord descending,
in his temple shall appear:
come and worship . . .

James Montgomery (1771-1854), alt.

The Bible Lesson: Matthew 1: 18-25

This is the gospel of the Lord.

PRAISE TO CHRIST, THE WORD.

The Christmas Reflection: The Arrival of the Christmas Trinity

Generally, sermons are posted on our website shortly after the service at:

<http://www.knoxchurch.co.nz/sermons.html>

Hard copies of the sermons are available before and after the service – ask the person at the door.

Hymn:

Forest Green

English traditional melody

arranged by Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)



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| 1. O little town of Bethlehem,
how still we see thee lie!
above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by:
yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting Light;
the hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight. | 2. O morning stars, together
proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the King
and peace to men on earth;
for Christ is born of Mary;
and, gathered all above,
while mortals sleep the angels keep
their watch of wondering love. |
|--|--|

3. How silently, how silently
the wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
the blessings of his heaven.
No ear may hear his coming;
but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still
the dear Christ enters in.
4. O holy child of Bethlehem,
descend to us we pray;
cast out our sin and enter in,
be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
our Lord Emmanuel.

Phillips Brooks (1835-1893) alt.

Prayers for Others and Ourselves

*To the minister's words "O holy child of Bethlehem",
you are invited to respond "BE BORN IN US TODAY".*

**. . . 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 FOR EVER. AMEN.**

Notices

Hymn:

Adeste Fideles

John Francis Wade (c.1711-1786)



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!*

2. God of God,
Light of light,
lo! he abhors not the Virgin's womb;
Very God,
begotten, not created:
O come, let us adore him . . .

3. Sing, choirs of angels,
sing in exultation,
sing all ye citizens of heaven above.
'Glory to God,
glory in the highest':
O come, let us adore him . . .

4. Yea, Lord we greet thee,
born on Christmas morning,
Jesu, to thee be glory given;
Word of the Father,
now in flesh appearing:
O come let us adore Him . . .

John Francis Wade (c.1711-1786)

Benediction and Sung Amen

Postlude: Sleigh Ride
Leroy Anderson (1908-1975)

Retiring Offering

A retiring offering is taken for the Christian World Service Christmas Appeal. Regular offering envelopes may also be placed in the offering baskets and find their way into the regular offering system.

SERVICES FOR THE NEXT FOUR SUNDAYS



Sunday 29 December
Towards the new creation
Rev. Dr Matthew Jack



Sunday 5 January
The New Year
Rev. Glenn Livingstone



Sunday 12 January
The Baptism of the Lord
Rev. Glenn Livingstone

Sunday 19 January
The calling begins
Rev. Dr Matthew Jack



THE CHURCH OFFICE SUMMER BREAK

Knox Church Office is now closed for the summer break. It will open again at 9:00am on Monday 13 January. Any urgent matters from today until 31 December should be directed to the acting Church Council Clerk, Jean Brouwer, on 355 6534, and thereafter to Janet Wilson, the Church Council Clerk on 338 7203.

CHRISTIAN WORLD SERVICE CHRISTMAS APPEAL

PARTNER STORY

GIVE GOOD WATER, GIVE LIFE



Her name could have been Mary but it is not. She lives in the south of Gaza not that far from Bethlehem. She has a new baby but there is not enough food. The baby girl named Niveen is not growing well. Niveen's mother knows she needs help, or she will die. She has no money and life is marked by suffering and misery.

Desperate for her daughter now 18 months old, she takes Niveen to the medical clinic at Rafah run by the Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees even though she has no money.

"I can hardly find the food to feed my family. I try to cope by cooking cheap food or use the rice and lentils from the government rations. I can't afford to buy nutritious food. I feel guilty because my inappropriate feeding practices contributed to her illness," says her mother.

The doctor said Niveen was suffering from severe malnutrition and anaemia and prescribed various medications and vitamins. Her mother was grateful for the help and the opportunity to learn about better nutrition.

The family of seven live in a very poor neighbourhood. Their house has one room, a small hall and a tiny area used as a kitchen. A traditional toilet is attached to the house which is hot in the sun, cold in the winter and leaks in the rain. They have an old table and fridge but no other furniture. Once her father worked as a casual labourer but like many men in Gaza now has no work – unemployment is close to 46.7%. They depend on a small government pension, food rations and the occasional assistance from Niveen's grandfather. Water is in short supply.

"By the fourth visit, the nurse informed me that my child's weight and haemoglobin had returned to normal. I was so happy. I will continue to visit the clinic until my daughter reaches the age of six years," she concludes.

Life is not easy for many Palestinian and Syrian refugees. Years of conflict and few opportunities have pushed them to the limits of their resourcefulness. Mothers face each day with dread as they calculate how to manage the shrinking rations and emergency assistance they get. There are few opportunities for employment and living conditions are cramped. Malnutrition is rising and many more children have been traumatised by their experiences. The need is clear.

(Note the image is not Nirveen, but another baby attending the well baby clinic. Her mother was happy to share her story but not her image.)

**Christmas Appeal donation envelopes are available
on the table in the new foyer**



The Bible readings for this coming Sunday will be:

- Genesis 1: 26-31
- Revelation 21: 1-7

Knox Directory

28 Bealey Ave, Christchurch 8013
Secretary: Jane Ellis,
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Office hours: Mon-Fri 9.00am-noon

Minister: Rev. Dr Matthew Jack
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Church Council Clerk: Janet Wilson,
ph. (03) 338 7203

Director of Music: Daniel Cooper,
organist@knoxchurch.co.nz

Pastoral Assistant: Jan Harland
ph. 0273560215



website



facebook



Keeping in Touch

Please help us get acquainted with you by filling in this form
and putting it in the offering bag.

Name:

Contact details