



KNOX CHURCH

love faith outreach community justice

Order of Service 12 December 2021



ADVENT 3 IN THE SEASON OF LETTERS: BETHLEHEM: A LETTER TO THE LITTLE ONES

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.

Pre-service Music

The Call to Worship:

We light a candle in the name of Jesus Christ, the Light of the world.

JESUS, WHOSE LIFE BEGAN IN A MAKE-SHIFT SHELTER;

JESUS, ONCE MOCKED FOR HAVING GROWN UP IN NAZARETH;

JESUS, WHOSE CONQUERING OF THE WORLD WAS THROUGH LOVE.

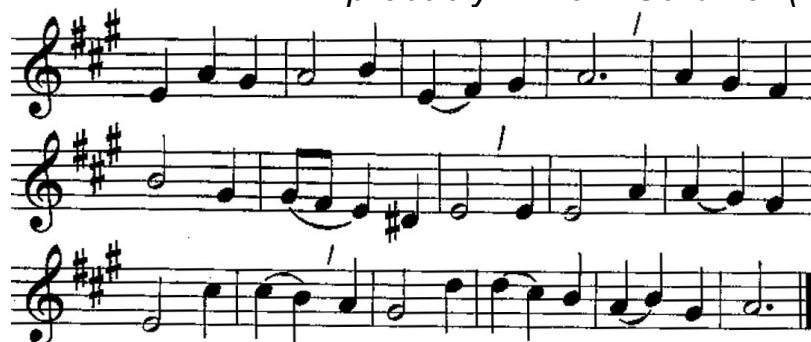
Kia noho a lhowa ki a koutou. God be with you.

MA IHOWA KOE E MANAAKI. GOD BLESS YOU.

Hymn:

Fulda

probably William Gardiner (1770-1853)



1. We have a gospel to proclaim,
good news for all throughout the
earth;
the gospel of a Saviour's name:
we sing his glory, tell his worth.
2. Tell of his birth at Bethlehem,
not in a royal house or hall
but in a stable dark and dim,
the Word made flesh, a light for all.
3. Tell of his death at Calvary,
hated by those he came to save,
in lonely suffering on the cross,
for all he loved his life he gave.
4. Tell of that glorious Easter morn;
empty the tomb, for he was free:
he broke the power of death and
strife
that we might share his victory.
5. Tell of his reign at God's right hand,
by all creation glorified.
Sending the Spirit on his church
to live for him, the Lamb who died.
6. Now we rejoice to name him King:
Jesus is Lord of all the earth.
This gospel-message we proclaim:
we sing his glory, tell his worth.

Edward Joseph Burns (b. 1938 - alt.)

Prayer of Approach

Who would have thought,
O God of the prophet's foretelling,
that the division of history in two,
the conquering of the world for love and goodness,
would begin in Bethlehem,
a town belonging to one of the littlest clans.

WE HAVE AN UNLIKELY GOSPEL TO PROCLAIM.

Who would have thought,
O Christ of the servant's way,
that none of machinery of state,
the flexing of military might,
that none of guards at the tomb
could prevent the empty tomb.

WE HAVE AN UNLIKELY GOSPEL TO PROCLAIM.

Who would have thought,
O Spirit of a thousand paddocks,
that from a scattered people,
confused and afraid,
a new temple would be built,
not with hands,
but with the changing of minds and hearts.

WE HAVE AN UNLIKELY GOSPEL TO PROCLAIM.

Yet, indeed, this has long been your way:
to work with the small and unlikely,
to rejoice in the surprising and absurd,
to create magnificence
out of ordinary earthy stuff.

**WE HAVE AN UNLIKELY GOSPEL TO PROCLAIM,
BUT IN RECALLING ITS TELLING,
AND THE GOODNESS BY WHICH IT WAS GIVEN TO US,
WE BEND THE KNEE
IN SILENT WORSHIP.**

Silence

We confess to God and to one another
that radical wonder
is not our usual mode.

Rather than look for stars,
WE SHUT OUR EYES.

Rather than "come and see",
WE LINGER BACK.

Rather than support the stumbling,
WE TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THEIR FALL.

The pocket is lined,
the heart is hardened,
the cynicism abounds.
So we say

Lord have mercy.
CHRIST HAVE MERCY.
Lord have mercy.

Assurance and Response

. . . In the name of Christ I say to you:
You are forgiven and you are free.
THANKS BE TO GOD.

Prayer of Supplication:

By a strange combination, O God,
of government decree, star-gazing and ancient prophecy,
Mary and Joseph, shepherds and sages from the East
came together in Bethlehem
to celebrate the birth of the good shepherd, the Prince of Peace.

**BRING US ALSO, IN YOUR GOOD TIME,
WHICH IS THE BEST TIME,
TO PERCEIVE WHAT A BLESSING HAS BEEN GIVEN
THROUGH HIS BIRTH.**

We pray this in the name of Jesus,
using the words he 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 FOR EVER. AMEN.**

The Passing of the Peace

Kia tau tonu te rangimarie o te Ariki ki a koutou.
The peace of Christ be with you all.

**A KI A KOE ANO HOKI;
AND ALSO WITH YOU.**

*In a suitably physically remote way,
we exchange a sign of peace with one another.*

*Our next Sunday School day will happen once we're out of Alert Level Two,
and will operate in way consistent with whatever constraints are recommended.*

The Scripture Lesson:

Micah 5:2-5a

In this is the Word of God
THANKS BE TO GOD.

Hymn:

Humility

John Goss (1800-1880)



1. See, in yonder manger low,
born for us on earth below;
see, the gentle Lamb appears,
promised from eternal years:
*Hail, O ever-blessed morn;
hail, redemption's happy dawn;
sing through all Jerusalem:
"Christ was born in Bethlehem!"*
2. Low within a manger lies
he who built the starry skies;
he who, throned in height sublime,
reigns above the cherubim:
Hail, O ever-blessed morn . . .
3. Sacred infant, king most dear,
what a tender love was here,
thus to come from highest bliss
down to such a world as this!
Hail, O ever-blessed morn . . .
4. Holy Saviour, born on earth,
teach us by your lowly birth;
grant that we may ever be
taught by such humility.
Hail, O ever-blessed morn . . .

Edward Caswall (1814-1878)

Sermon:

Out of insignificance, into vulnerability, the "conqueror" comes

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.

Music for Reflection: Gottes Zeit ist die Allerbeste Zeit (Cantata 106)
Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

The Advent Wreath

Within our season of letters,
today's candle is the candle of the conquering shepherd.

As Micah describes his nation
as a vulnerable woman living out in the open,
the scale of the world's need at Christmas
becomes obvious.

Micah's conviction that God's provision for the world
would come in the form of a shepherd,
who stands and who feeds the people,
gives us pause for thought.

Many years later,
reflecting on the people who were called by Jesus to be the church,
Paul would write:

*"Consider your own call, brothers and sisters:
not many of you were wise by human standards,
not many were powerful,
not many were of noble birth.
But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise;
God chose what was weak in the world to shame the strong;
God chose what is low and despised in the world . . .
so that no one might boast in the presence of God."*

We light this candle,
hoping that God will allow us to see the form of the shepherd where it is,
among us,
and to nurture for the world what is good.

The candle is lit.

In hope, we await the birth of Christ.
AMEN. COME, LORD JESUS.

Poverty

Caniedydd Committee, Welsh Congregational Union



1. You poor ones and humble,
you lame ones who stumble,
come haste ye, nor feel ye afraid.
For Jesus our treasure,
with love past all measure,
in lowly poor manger was laid.
2. Though magi who found him
laid rich gifts around him,
yet oxen they gave him their hay;
and Jesus in beauty
accepted their duty;
contented in manger he lay.
3. Then haste we to show him
the praises we owe him;
our service he ne'er can despise:
whose love still is able
to show us that stable
where softly in manger he lies.

*Welsh text by Caradog Roberts (1878-1935),
translated by Katharine Emily Roberts (1877-1962),
adapted.*

Prayers for Others and Ourselves

led by Graeme Downie

The Offering and Dedication

We stand for the dedication of the Offering

To the God of small beginnings
we dedicate this offering of money and food.

**WE DEDICATE ALSO OUR HOPE
THAT GREAT THINGS MAY GROW FROM IT:**

the end of war and famine,
THE END OF GREED AND HATRED,
the coming of truth and peace,
THE TRANSFORMING OF THE WORLD.

To the God of small beginnings,
WE OFFER OUR ADVENT IMAGINATION,
through Jesus, born in Bethlehem,
AMEN.

Notices

Hymn:

Dunedin

Vernon Griffiths (1894-1985)



1. Where mountains rise to open skies
your name, O God, is echoed far,
from island beach to kauri's reach,
in water's light, in lake and star.
2. Your people's heart, your people's part
be in our caring for this land,
for faith to flower, for aroha
to let each other's mana stand.
3. From broken word, from conflict stirred,
from lack of vision, set us free
to see the line of your design,
to feel creation's energy.
4. Your love be known, compassion shown,
that every child have equal scope:
in justice done, in trust begun
shall be our heritage and hope.

5. Where mountains rise to open skies
your way of peace distil the air,
your spirit bind all humankind,
one covenant of life to share!

Shirley Murray (1931-2020)

Benediction and Sung Amen

Postlude: Fugue in B minor, "Corelli, BWV 579
Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

During the current Covid containment level, we are not having our usual post-service morning tea. Should you wish to linger in the church for company and conversation, please do - just remember to maintain suitable physical distancing.

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NOTICES

This Week:	12 December – 18 December 2021
Sunday	10.00am Morning Worship
Next Week:	19 December - 25 December 2021
Sunday	10.00am Morning Worship and AGM.
Friday	11.15pm Christmas Eve – see below
Saturday	10.00am Christmas Day – see below

Christmas Baking 2021 - Many many thanks to all those who collected orders, baked, packed, delivered, gave donations for ingredients and of course, ordered baking. This year we raised \$2480. Really well done. Thank you again. Jennifer McKinnon.

Sunday lunch 19 Dec – If you need a break from your Christmas preparations, you might like to meet for lunch and a friendly chat, at the Oderings Barrington café (Urban Eatery) at 12pm. Please put your name down for this event if you would like to join us. Attendance lists are at the church entrance but, if you prefer, you can send an email to jannekenyuysink@gmail.com no later than **Wednesday** the 15th.



CHRISTMAS SERVICES



19 December, Advent 4 - 10am

Dear Theophilus - "to the wondering ones" - a service of Christmas music.

24 December: Christmas Eve - 11.15 pm

"Delivering the mail by hand" - a gentle meditative service

25 December: Christmas Day - 10 am

"It's a parcel!"

26 December: Boxing Day

NO SERVICE AT KNOX

January 2022

Sunday services at 10am as usual.

KNOX CHURCH AGM

After an unavoidable postponement the Knox AGM will now take place after the morning service on Sunday 19 December. The written reports have been distributed already and the audited Financial Performance Report is now available also. Both documents may be picked up from the new foyer.

Knox church values the support of all who are involved in our community's life. Knox Church is a charity. All charitable donations are eligible for a tax rebate of 33%. Bank account - 03 1705 0029641 00. Put your name in the reference field and email your contact details to the office or donations secretary. For further information or options contact: office@knoxchurch.co.nz Ph 3792456 or Janet Wilson, Donations Secretary janmwil507@gmail.com Ph 338 7203.



The Bible readings for next week will be:

- Luke 1: 26-39
- Luke 2: 1-7
- Luke 2: 21-3
- Luke 1: 39-56
- Luke 2: 8-20
- Luke 2: 41-52

Knox Directory

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Secretaries: Jane and Lynda,
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Office hours:
Mon, Tues, Thurs - 9.00am-noon
Wed, Friday - 10:00am - noon

Visit our website
www.knoxchurch.co.nz



website

Minister: Rev. Dr Matthew Jack
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Pastoral Assistant: Jan Harland
ph. 0273560215



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