



KNOX CHURCH

love faith outreach community justice

Order of Service 19 December 2021



Dear Theophilus

a Series of Readings, Reflections and Musical Meditations
for Advent 4

based on Luke's telling of the Christmas story

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.

Note on a departure from the "norm"

In recent years, it's been our custom to hold a service of Nine Lessons and Carols on the Sunday before Christmas Day. Until the Knox Church Council met on Sunday 28 November to discuss plans for operating within the Traffic Lights system for Covid containment, we were working within a policy of not singing in church. Under this policy I really couldn't see that a service of carols would work. So I got on with organising a nimble alternative.

While I was organising the alternative, the realistic deadline required for the Knox Singers to prepare anthems for a service came and went. It's not fair to expect musicians to present material they've not had time to prepare.

Since then, of course, we've begun singing again. Our new position concerning singing, though, doesn't miraculously provide extra time for the Singers to catch up. So this year we have this service. It follows Luke's telling of the birth and infancy of Jesus, and I hope, in all its newness, it will be a fitting 2021 expression of our Advent hope and faith.

In the absence of the Knox Singers, many warm and hearty thanks to Alexandra Watson, who is working with Daniel to fill the gaps left by the usual choral input. Please find ways of expressing your thanks to Alexandra.

Pre-service Voluntary: So shall the lute and harp awake
G.F. Handel (1685-1759)

Welcome

Kia noho a lhowa ki a koutou. God be with you.
MA IHOWA KOE E MANAAKI. GOD BLESS YOU.

The Advent Wreath

Within our season of letters,
today's candle is the candle of Luke
who wants a friend,
and all others who might be known as "lovers of God",
to know the story of Christ.
Luke wants it to be an orderly account of God speaking to the world
through the disorder of angel speech and government decree,
social dislocations and miraculous new communities of joy.

Luke wrote:

*I too decided,
after investigating everything carefully from the very first,
to write an orderly account for you,
so that you may know the truth
concerning the things about which you have been instructed."*

John later wrote:

*We declare to you what was from the beginning, what we have heard,
what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched
with our hands, concerning the word of life . . .*

The candle is lit.

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

Reflection: Dear Theophilus

Opening Prayer:

God, whose story we believe we have heard in the good news of Jesus,
**GIVE US CARE AND DELIGHT
AS WE HEAR IT AGAIN.**

Give us the capacity
as a family group
within the wider family of Christ,
**TO EXPRESS THROUGH OUR LIVES
AND THROUGH OUR WORSHIP
YOUR EXQUISITE LOVE FOR THE WORLD.**

And since we know that sometimes
our love does not shine brightly,
and that our hands move to the world
with violence rather than healing,
we say

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

Assure us, O God,
that your nature continues strongly to be love,
that it is your nature to forgive and set free.
Enable us to hear again,
in the name of Christ,
the fine declaration:
you are forgiven, and you are free.
**THANKS BE TO GOD.
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.

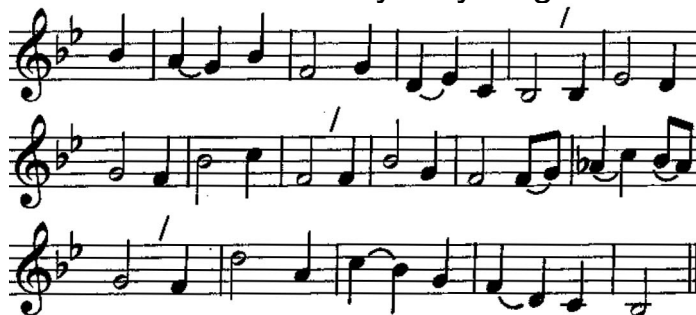
**A KI A KOE ANO HOKI;
AND ALSO WITH YOU.**

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

Hymn:

Bow Brickhill

Sydney Hugo Nicholson (1875-1947)



1. Who are you, Christ, of whom we've heard?
A new-born child, th'eternal Word?
And is your kingdom really here,
affirming that our God is near?
2. Who are you, Christ, whose birth we sing,
and in whose name hosannas ring?
Is that great love the prophets told
now placed within our hands to hold -
3. hands that are made of dust and love
that move with life borne from above,
in whose dear action we would bless
the world with faith we would confess.
4. We praise the Spirit who inspired
physician Luke, his gospel wise
to write for us, our hearts to win,
and give us peace within the din.
5. So free us now our praise to bring
to Jesus, infant, lowly king;
the One whom angels do adore,
that love may form us more and more.

Matthew Jack (b. 1963)

The First Reading: Luke 1: 26-38

Reflection: A mother's conviction

Musical Meditation:

Angels' Carol
John Rutter (b. 1945)

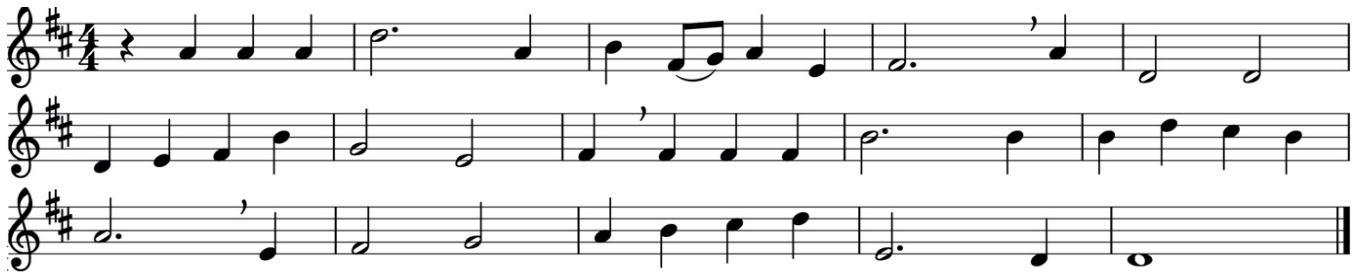
The Second Reading: Luke 1: 39-56

Reflection: Never alone

Hymn:

Woodlands

Walter Greathorex (1877-1949)



1. Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord!
Unnumbered blessings, give my spirit voice;
tender to me the promise of the word;
in God my saviour shall my heart rejoice.
2. Tell out, my soul, the greatness of God's 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.
3. 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.
4. 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!

Timothy Dudley-Smith (b. 1926)

The Third Reading: Luke 2: 1-7

Reflection: Current complexity and age-old longing

Musical Meditation: Meditation on Corde Natus
Daniel Cooper (b. 1997)

The Fourth Reading: Luke 2: 8-20

Reflection: Spreading the news

Musical Meditation: How beautiful are the feet
G.F. Handel (1685-1759)

The Fifth Reading: Luke 2: 21-33

Reflection: Two turtles doves and a breath

Musical Meditation: Nunc Dimittis
George Dyson (1883-1964)

The Sixth Reading: Luke 2: 41-52

Reflection: An adolescent at large

Prayers for Others and Ourselves

*To the minister's words, "As it was hoped for the world of Theophilus",
you are invited to respond **"SO MAY IT BE FOR OURS"**.*

**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 Offering and Dedication

We stand for the dedication of the Offering

Having reflected on Luke's desire to speak to the one who loves God,
and express to the best of his ability
how God the world has been blessed through the birth of Jesus,
we bring our offering.

**MAY IT EXPRESS SOMETHING OF OUR DESIRE
TO BE PART OF THE ON-GOING WAY
OF HOW GOD BLESSES THE WORLD.**

Take the money and food, O God,
to the right places,
AND TAKE US ALSO
TO THE RIGHT PLACES AND PEOPLE,
FOR THE SAKE OF JESUS,
AMEN.

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)

Benediction and Sung Amen

Postlude: Processional
William Mathias (1934-1992)

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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CHRISTMAS SERVICES



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.

Possibilities for Boxing Day

Hearing that Knox was not having a service on Boxing Day, 26 December, Rev. Anne Stewart assures us that any Knox person is welcome to join her at the Village Church, 365A Ilam Road, at 10:00am.

There is also a Boxing Day service at 10:00am
at Cashmere Presbyterian Church, 2 Macmillan Avenue, Cashmere.



Christian World Service Christmas Appeal

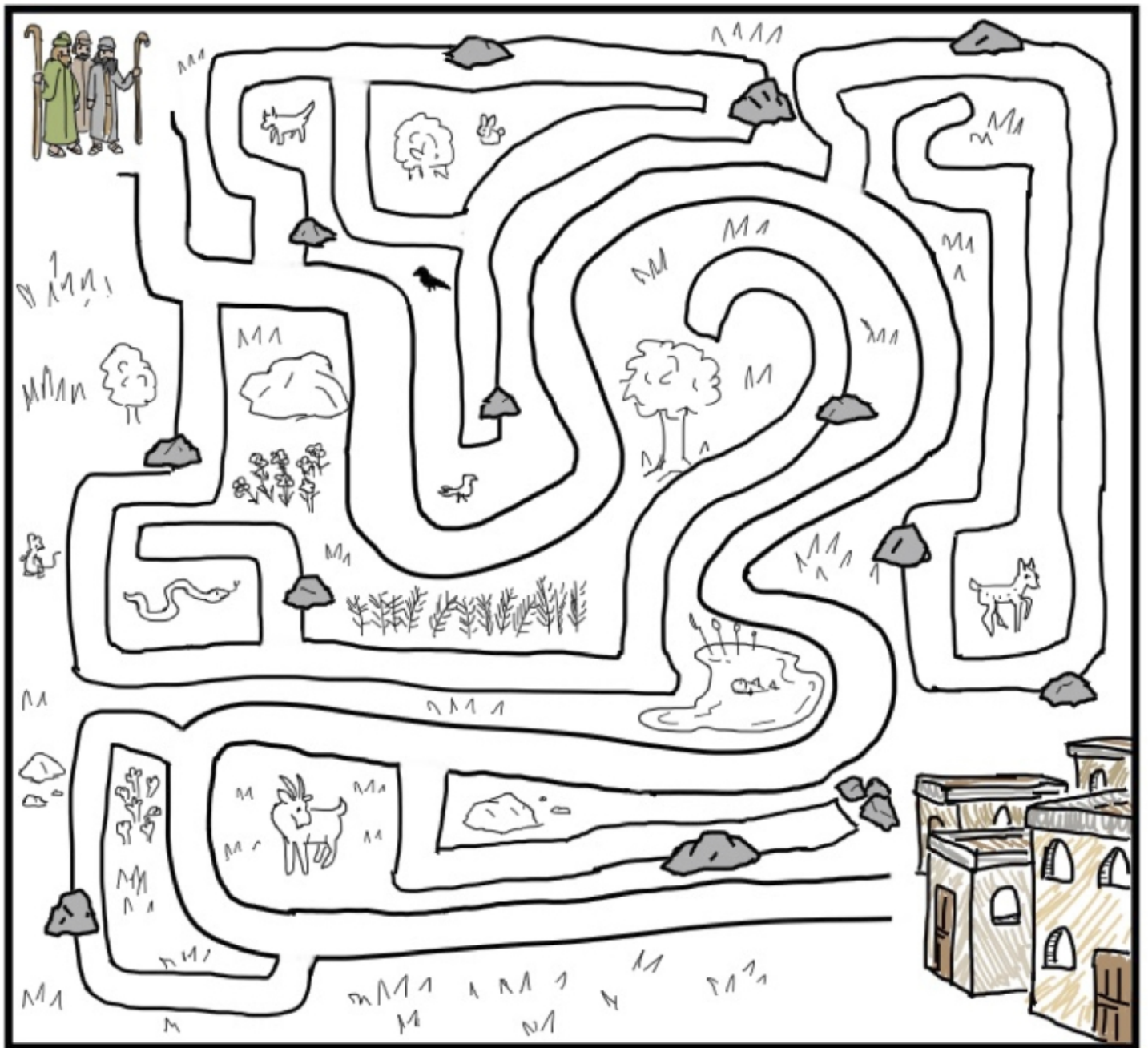
This year's Christmas appeal will support projects in various parts of the world, including Uganda



In Uganda Covid-19 has caused great harm. The official Covid death toll would be much higher if more people had been tested. Medical centres are unprepared and the promise of the People's Vaccine far distant. Schools have been closed for the last 18 months and incomes have fallen. But there has been joy in the southwest where the Centre for Community Solidarity has organised rainwater tanks, distributed facemasks made by young women and taught the HIV and AIDS caregivers how to protect themselves and their communities. Grandmother Sikora (*pictured left*) says her tank was a blessing from God. **Together we seek Covid Justice.**

PATH TO BETHLEHEM

Can you help the shepherds find their way to the place where Jesus was born? It's dark outside, so watch out for rocks you could trip on!





The Bible readings for next week will be:

- There is no service at Knox on Sunday 26 December

Knox Directory

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Wed, Friday - 10:00am - noon

Visit our website
www.knoxchurch.co.nz



website

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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