



# KNOX CHURCH

love faith outreach community justice

## Order of Service

8 December 2024



# WHOEVER WE ARE

ADVENT 2024

Waiting for Emmanuel - "God with us"

**A SERVICE FOR ADVENT 2**

## 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 South side of the sanctuary.

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, you are welcome to use the language that is most natural to you.

### The Call to Worship:

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

**JESUS, BRINGING THE WHOLE OF GOD'S STORY TO HUMAN LIFE;  
JESUS, MAKING A HOME AMONG THE PEOPLES OF THE WORLD;  
JESUS, OUR BROTHER, TEACHER, LORD.**

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

**MA IHOWA KOE E MANAAKI. GOD BLESS YOU.**

### Hymn:

Down Ampney

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)



1. Come down, O love divine, seek out this soul of mine,  
and visit it with your own ardor glowing.  
O Comforter, draw near, within my heart appear,  
And kindle it, your holy flame bestowing.

2. O let it freely burn, til earthly passions turn  
to dust and ashes in its heat consuming;  
and let your glorious light shine ever on my sight,  
and clothe me round, the while my path illuming.
3. Let holy charity my outward vesture be,  
and lowliness become mine inner clothing;  
true lowliness of heart, which takes the humbler part,  
and o'er its own shortcomings weeps with loathing.
4. And so the yearning strong, with which the soul will long,  
shall far outpass the power of human telling;  
for none can guess its grace, till we become the place  
wherein the Holy Spirit makes a dwelling.

*Bianco da Siena (d. 1434)*

*Trans: Richard Frederick Littledale (1833-1890)*

### **Prayer of Approach**

Come down, divine Love;  
there's a manger waiting for you,  
a star finding position for you,  
a people's longing open to you.  
**COME DOWN, O LOVE DIVINE.**

Come down, divine Love;  
seek out the old and young,  
the gay and straight,  
the male and female,  
the lover and the heretic -  
our arms are open.  
**COME DOWN, O LOVE DIVINE.**

Come down, divine Love,  
for rumour has pricked our ears,  
hope has invaded our hearts;  
we've stumbled upon this idea  
that you make your home among us.  
**COME DOWN, O LOVE DIVINE.**

Indeed, come down, divine Love;  
**KINDLE YOUR FLAME,  
CONSUME OUR SIN;  
DRESS US IN YOUR LOVE,  
AND HEAR OUR SILENT WORSHIP.**

*Silence*

In this second week of affirming Emmanuel, "God with us",  
we confess our inclination, O God,  
to live as if you were not among us.  
Our lives say that the tabernacle of God  
is not with humankind.

**WE REFUSE TO LISTEN,  
WE DISMISS OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS  
AS UNWELCOME "OTHERS".  
AND THE ONES YOU SEND TO US  
WE TURN AWAY.**

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.**

### **The Theme Prayer:**

Should you indeed make your home among us, O God,  
then who would be shut out?

**OPEN OUR SOULS  
TO THE LOVE THAT COMES DOWN AT CHRISTMAS.**

**GIVE US ARMS TO OPEN NOT ONLY TO YOU,  
BUT TO THOSE AROUND US  
WHO LONG TO KNOW IN CHRIST,  
THAT THEY ARE SO DEEPLY LOVED.**

We pray this in the name of Jesus,  
using the words he gave us, together saying

**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.**

*We exchange a sign of peace with one another.*

### **The Advent Wreath**

Waiting for the birth of the child at Christmas, we ask in faith: "is God with us?"

*We remain seated to sing*

#### **Hymn:**

Star Child

Carlton Young (1926-2023)



2. Street child, beat child, no place left to go,  
hurt child, used child, no one wants to know,  
This year, this year, let the day arrive  
when Christmas comes for everyone, everyone alive!

*Shirley Murray (1931-2020)*

### **The second candle: God with us as the One who welcomes**

Celebrating the wonderful tapestry that we are, within the flair and fabulousness of God's creativity, we rejoice that we have found people like ourselves in the story of faith, and can see ourselves as reflections of God's nature. We have come to see that God's story embraces us.

Lighting this candle, we affirm the welcome of God, and look for a new understanding of how "God is with us".

*The candle is lit*

O come to us, abide with us,  
**OUR LORD EMMANUEL.**

**The First Lesson:** Matthew 1: 18-23

This is the gospel of Christ.

**PRAISE TO CHRIST, THE WORD.**

**The Second Lesson:** Revelation 21: 1-4

In this is the Word of God

**THANKS BE TO GOD.**

**Hymn:**

Corvedale

Maurice Bevan (1921-2006)



1. There's a wideness in God's mercy  
like the wideness of the sea;  
there's a kindness in God's justice  
which is more than liberty.  
There is no place where earth's sorrows  
are more felt than in God's heaven;  
there is no place where earth's failings  
have such kindly judgment given.
2. For the love of God is broader  
than the grasp of mortal mind;  
and the heart of the Eternal  
is most wonderfully kind.  
But we make God's love too narrow  
by false limits of our own;  
and we magnify God's strictness  
with a zeal too greatly grown.
3. There is grace enough for thousands  
of new worlds as great as this;  
there is room for fresh creations  
in that upper home of bliss.  
If our love were but more simple,  
we would take him at his word;

and our lives would be all gladness  
in the joy of Christ our Lord.

*Frederick William Faber (1814-63)(alt.)*

**A Reflection:** Maurice's little booklet

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. A video of  
this sermon being practised is available from 10:00am today:  
<https://youtu.be/n79Dq0epFks>

**Music for Reflection:** Gottes Sohn ist kommen, BWV 600  
J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

**Hymn:**

Württemberg

Hundert Arien Dresden 1694



1. Human voices sing to God,  
in the hope they will be heard.  
"God be with us" is their prayer;  
will God's presence be their care?  
Is God with us?
2. We are women once ignored  
yet whose names are in God's Word;  
silenced through the ages long,  
yet protesting history's wrong.  
Is God with us?
3. We are rainbow people bright,  
oft denied the gospel's light,  
yet whose hope is in the Lord,  
whose great love our trust affords.  
Is God with us?
4. We are those considered poor,  
well who know the hard shut door,  
yet who hear the Christ has said  
he would raise us from the dead.  
Is God with us?



5. We are shepherds on the hill-  
worldly status? Shepherds nil!  
Now God's story calls us in,  
knees to bend and joy within.  
Is God with us?
6. I am someone shedding tears,  
full of doubt and full of fears,  
but "God with us" loves and calls,  
we who answer shall not fall.  
God is with us!

*Matthew Jack (b. 1963)*

### **Prayers for Others and Ourselves**

*led by Jennifer McKinnon*

### **The Offering and Dedication**

*We stand for the dedication of the Offering*

Make your home, O God,  
within what here is offered.

**MAY THE FOOD BRING LIFE AND LOVE  
TO THE TABLES WHERE IT IS SERVED.  
MAY THE MONEY MAKE GOOD THINGS HAPPEN.**

And may we, who make this offering,  
find ourselves well deployed,

**THAT ALL MAY KNOW  
THAT YOU DWELL AMONG US.**

Ecce tabernaculum Dei cum  
hominibus.

**AMEN;  
THANKS BE TO GOD.**

### **Notices**



In a dream, Joseph believes that he should call his son "Jesus"



## **Hymn:**

Hyfrydol

Rowland Huw Prichard (1811-1887)



1. Love divine, all loves excelling,  
joy of heaven, to earth come down,  
fix in us thy humble dwelling,  
all thy faithful mercies crown:  
Jesu, thou art all compassion,  
pure unbounded love thou art;  
visit us with thy salvation,  
enter every trembling heart.
2. Come, almighty to deliver,  
let us all thy life receive;  
suddenly return, and never,  
never more thy temples leave:  
thee we would be always blessing,  
serve thee as thy hosts above,  
pray, and praise thee, without ceasing,  
glory in thy perfect love.
3. Finish then thy new creation,  
pure and spotless let us be,  
let us see thy great salvation,  
perfectly restored in thee:  
changed from glory into glory,  
till in heaven we take our place,  
till we cast our crowns before thee,  
lost in wonder, love and praise.

*Charles Wesley (1707-1788)*

## **Benediction and Sung Amen**

**Postlude:** O Emmanuel (O Antiphon Sequence)  
Cecilia McDowall (b.1951)

Following the service, morning tea and coffee are served in the church

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## NOTICES

**This Week:**            **8 December – 14 December**  
Sunday                10.00am    Morning Worship  
                             11.00am    Congregational Meeting

**Next Week:**        **15 December – 21 December**  
Sunday                10.00am    Morning Worship  
                             12.00pm    Lunch at Black & White Cafe

**Congregational Meeting:** A congregational meeting will be held today at 11am immediately following the worship service. The purpose of the meeting is to vote for new members of the church council. Three nominations have been approved by the church council and the congregation will now vote on these nominations. Brief biographical notes have been provided by the nominees and have been distributed. Anyone with any concerns is asked to speak to Matthew before the congregational meeting.

**Sunday lunch 15 Dec** – Join us for lunch and a friendly chat at the **Black and White Café, 45 Merrin St, Avonhead**. Meet at around 12pm. Please, add your name to the attendance list at the church entrance if you are planning to join us, or, send an email to [jannekenuysink@gmail.com](mailto:jannekenuysink@gmail.com) preferably no later than Wednesday the 11<sup>th</sup>.

**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. For further information or options contact:**  
[office@knoxchurch.co.nz](mailto:office@knoxchurch.co.nz) ph: 379 2456.

# Christian World Service Christmas Appeal 2024

## Give Climate Hope this Christmas



The theme emerges from listening to our CWS partners in Oceania. Former Archbishop of Tikanga Pasifika, the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia, Winston Halapua speaks of a call from the world's largest ocean as "to treasure God's gift of the planet earth. Fe'iloakitau Kaho Tevi, Advisor to the current Bishop of the Diocese of Polynesia and member of Christian World Service Board, recently described oceans as our hope. "We need to make ocean front and centre of our church, the message, the preaching, the discussions, the intercessions, the prayers." A focus on climate hope this Christmas also aligns strategically with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Strategic Development Goal 13: Climate action



### Garden Redevelopment in Tonga

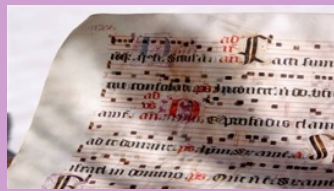
Mrs Mafi is a wife, mother, and grandmother. She lives on the eastern coast of Tonga. High tides and rising sea levels are damaging vegetable gardens.

Mrs Mafi has taken action. She and the women in her community have dug new vegetable gardens on higher ground and rotated their crops so there is always food for older adults.

## CHRISTMAS SERVICES

22 Dec

**Nine Lessons and Carols**



**ADVENT 4**

God with us in the singing of the ancient story. We sing some favourite carols and enjoy hearing some brand new originals written especially for the occasion.



**God ponders how to be "with us"**

A candlelight service  
11:15pm. Christmas Eve



**God with us (bus stop)**

A simple service  
for Christmas Day - 10:00am



## The Bible readings for next week will be:

- Malachi 3: 1-4
- Luke 1: 26-38

## Knox Directory

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## 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