



KNOX CHURCH

love faith outreach community justice

Order of Service

15 December 2024



WITH US IN THE FULLNESS OF TIME

ADVENT 2024

Waiting for Emmanuel - "God with us"

a service for Advent 3

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.

Organ Prelude: Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland, BWV 659
JS Bach (1685-1750)

The Call to Worship:

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

**JESUS, THE WORD PRESENT AT THE CREATING OF THE WORLD;
JESUS, BORN INTO JUST THE RIGHT TIME AND PLACE FOR ALL;
JESUS, FOR WHOSE GREAT COMING WE AWAIT.**

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

MA IHOWA KOE E MANAAKI. GOD BLESS YOU.

Hymn:

Corde Natus

Piae Cantiones Theoderici, 1582



1. Of our God's own heart begotten
when the worlds were yet to be,
one there was with no beginning,
one who is eternally,
source and ending of all things that have been,
and all things that are to be
evermore and evermore.
2. By this word was all created
by this word were all things done:
land and air and deepest ocean,
harmony of three in one
and all growing in the luminance
shed forth from the moon and sun,
evermore and evermore.
3. This is One whom seers and sages
sang of old with one accord,
whom the voices of the prophets
promised in their faithful word;
now Christ shines, the long-expected:
let creation praise its Lord
evermore and evermore.
4. In the heights of heaven adore him,
angel hosts his praises sing,
all dominions bow before him
and extol our God and King;
let no tongue on earth be silent,
every voice in concert sing
evermore and evermore.

Aurelius Clemens Prudentius (348 - c.413)
tr. John Mason Neale (1818-1866)
Henry Williams Baker (1827-1877) and others

Prayer of Approach

An ancient prophet, O God, said
that quite suddenly the Lord whom we seek
would come to his temple.

**WHY DID HE THINK
THAT THAT WAS TRUE?**

God coming in the night,
God catching us unawares,
five virgins without oil in their lamps -
**THE FRIGHT OF SUDDENNESS,
THE SHOCK OF THE UNEXPECTED.**

Yet today, patient God of longer purpose,
we watch a slower process:
**SHEPHERDS SITTING,
ASTROLOGERS TRAVELLING,
COUSINS WONDERING,
PARENTS LOOKING FOR A BIRTHING PLACE.**

Today, our God, we see things slowly aligning
for all who are called to find their way to the manger.
**TODAY WE SEE,
COMING INTO PERFECT PLACE,
THE FULLNESS OF TIME.**

This is One whom seers and sages
sang of old with one accord,
**WHOM THE VOICES OF THE PROPHETS
PROMISED IN THEIR FAITHFUL WORD,**
now Christ shines,
the long-expected:
**LET CREATION PRAISE ITS LORD,
EVERMORE AND EVERMORE.**

Silence

Jesus confessed incredulity,
that while his people could read a shepherd's warning in the colour of the sky,
while they could read the Spring in the opening of the leaves,
they couldn't read the "signs of the times".
**PERHAPS THEY WERE TOO BUSY,
DISTRACTED,
UNINTERESTED.**

As for us, confessing our slowness to fly with the Spirit,
to ride with the star-gazers, to watch with the shepherds,
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:

O God, as we approach Christmas,
and today meditate upon the coming into place
of all the characters of the story,

**BLESS US,
THAT WE MIGHT SENSE OUR OWN PART
IN YOUR LONGER WORK
OF USHERING IN THE NEW CREATION.**

For we pray it in the name of the One who is to be born,
even Jesus Christ,
who taught us to pray together, saying

**E TO MATOU MATUA I TE RANGI,
KIA TAPU TOU INGOA.
KIA TAE MAI TOU RANGATIRATANGA.
KIA MEATIA TAU E PAI AI
KI RUNGA KI TE WHENUA
KIA RITE ANO KI TO TE RANGI.
HOMAI KI A MATOU AIANEI
HE TARO MA MATOU MO TENEI RA.
MURUA A MATOU HARA,
ME MATOU HOKI E MURU NEI
I O TE HUNGA E HARA ANA KI A MATOU.
AUA HOKI MATOU E KAWEA KIA WHAKAWAIA;
ENGARI WHAKAORANGIA MATOU I TE KINO:
NOU HOKI TE RANGATIRATANGA,
TE KAHA, ME TE KORORIA,
AKE AKE AKE.
AMINE.**

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)



3. Grown child, old child, memory full of years,
sad child, lost child, story told in tears,
This year, this year, let the day arrive
when Christmas comes for everyone, everyone alive!

Shirley Murray (1931-2020)

The third candle: God with us as patient creativity

Acknowledging the ways in which we, sometimes silently, are fashioned for the unfolding purposes of God, we delight in the good work achieved already in us. While we know not what tomorrow will bring, we know that God calls us into the new creation.

Lighting this candle, we affirm the patient creativity 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.

Some Thoughts on the Front Page photo

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/f9Cd5eLtqlw>

Music for Reflection: Herr Gott, nun sei gepreiset
JS Bach (1685-1750)

The First Lesson: Malachi 3: 1-4

God sends a messenger to prepare a way.
MAY WE ALSO BE READY TO JOIN THE STORY.

Hymn:

Incarnation

Richard Madden (b. 1953)



1. Child of Christmas story,
stable, straw and star,
small and sweet and gentle:
tell us who you are.
2. Child whose baby finger
round our own is curled,
come to melt our hearts, and
come to change the world.
3. Child of Jew and Gentile,
child of white and black,
teach us how to love you,
teach us what we lack.
4. Child of Mary's courage,
birthed in human pain,
tell us what your name is -
be our hope again.

Shirley Murray (1931-2020)

A Reflection: The Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to the temple

The Gospel Lesson: Luke 1: 26-38

"God with us" breaks into the life of Mary.
BEHOLD, WE ARE SERVANTS OF OUR GOD.

Hymn:

Gabriel's Message

Basque traditional



1. The angel Gabriel from heaven came
his wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame;
"All hail," said he, "thou lowly maiden Mary,
most highly favoured lady,"
Gloria!
2. "For known a blessed Mother thou shalt be,
all generations laud and honor thee,
thy Son shall be Emmanuel, by seers foretold,
most highly favored lady,"
Gloria!

3. Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head,
 "To me be as it pleaseth God," she said,
 "my soul shall laud and magnify his holy Name."
 Most highly favored lady,
 Gloria!
4. Of her, Emmanuel, the Christ, was born
 in Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn,
 and Christian folk throughout the world will ever say--
 "Most highly favored lady,"
 Gloria!

Basque Carol

paraphrased by Sabine Baring-Gould (1834-1924)

Prayers for Others and Ourselves

led by Janet Wilson

The Offering and Dedication

We stand for the dedication of the Offering

If the original unfolding of the Christmas story
 involved the bringing together of the characters,
 the places and the times,
 the hopes about ready to rupture,

**THEN SO MAY WE,
 AND THE GIFTS WE OFFER,
 FIND PERFECT PLACEMENT
 IN THE BLESSING OF GOD,**

that we and our gifts
 might serve the coming of the New Creation

**THROUGH JESUS CHRIST,
 OUR ADVENT LORD.
 AMEN.**

Notices

Hymn:

Stockport

John Wainwright (1723-1768)





1. Christians, awake, anticipate the morn
whereon the Saviour to us shall be born;
rise to adore the mystery of love,
which hosts of angels chanted from above -
with them the joyful tidings first begun
of God incarnate and of Mary's son.
2. Back then to watchful shepherds it was told,
who heard th'angelic herald's voice, 'Behold,
I bring good tidings of a Saviour's birth
to you and all the nations upon earth'.
That day did God fulfil the promised Word;
that day was born a Saviour, Christ the Lord.'
3. Now, unto us, who go upon our way,
into the world in which God's rumours stay,
making us think the fullness of God's time
shall, like the dawn, upon us brightly shine.
So, joining others treading on the stage
we too may take our part in place and age.
4. Glory to God in whom we live our days,
and unto whom we offer thanks and praise,
knowing that Christmas shall occur again,
this time to make us whole, and even then
to make our world consistent with the Son
in whom, at Christmas, yes, our hearts are won.

Verses 1 & 2, John Byrom (1692-1763)

alt. for time and tense, Matthew Jack (b. 1963)

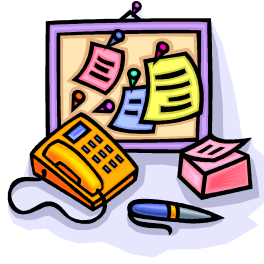
Verses 3 & 4, Matthew Jack (b. 1963)

Benediction and Sung Amen

Postlude: Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland, BWV 661
J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

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

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NOTICES

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

Next Week: 22 December – 28 December
Sunday 10.00am Morning Worship

Sunday lunch 15 Dec – Lunch and a friendly chat at the Black and White Café, 45 Merrin St, Avonhead. Meet at around 12pm.

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

Summer closure

The Knox office closes at noon on Thursday 19 December, and opens again at 9:00am on Monday 6 January 2025.

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 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



CWS
action against poverty
actalliance

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



Reviving resilient plants for food

In Advent 2, we met Mrs Mafi. As she works with her local community, they are discovering hopeful climate solutions. As they share traditional knowledge, they are finding ways to revive resilient food plants.

As they revive organic gardening approaches, they are strengthening food security in their communities. The 2024 CWS Give climate hope this Christmas appeal is a way for us to give toward hopeful climate solutions for Mrs Mafi and her community.



The Bible readings for next week will be:

Genesis 3: 3-15

Genesis 22: 15-18

Isaiah 9: 2, 6-7

Isaiah 11: 1-9

Luke 1: 26-38

Luke 2: 1-7

Luke 2: 8-16

Matthew 2: 1-11

John 1: 1-14

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