



KNOX CHURCH

love faith outreach community justice

Order of Service

Christmas Eve, 2024



corridors of power, things that scare us, fish breakfast by the lake, a mother and child

God ponders how to be with us

a Christmas Eve service of carols and candle-light

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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.

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", feel free to pray in your first language.

Welcome

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

The Introit: Zion, at thy shining gates
arr. George Guest (1924-2002)

A Prayer of John Donne, 1571-1631

Bring us, O Lord God, at our last awakening
into the house and gate of heaven,
to enter into that gate and dwell in that house,
where there shall be
no darkness nor dazzling, but one equal light;
no noise nor silence, but one equal music;
no fears nor hopes, but one equal possession;
no ends nor beginnings, but one equal eternity:
in the habitations of thy majesty and glory,
world without end.
Amen.

Opening Prayer

It seems to have been forever,
O God of love,
that your people have been dreaming of peace,
and have been discerning that it might be elusive
without your being among us,
WITHOUT YOUR BEING AMONG US.

Yes, there are those who say that you are a source of argument,
of disagreement,
a kind of weaponizing of the soul.
They point to Crusade,
to Inquisition,
to conversion therapy.

A tear forms indeed in the eye -
A TINY RIVER OF SALT.

But still comes the dream of the last awakening,
the vision of peace for all,
the picture of a great hush
formed around a stable in Bethlehem,
wherein all quietly could whisper
"God is with us".
GOD IS WITH US.

We come this night
to remember that birth,
and somehow to claim its being true again
in the faith of the church
AND IN THE HOPE OF OUR WORLD.

So, will you bless us with quiet hearts?
Will you be in our praying,
our singing,
our waiting,
that when the morning comes,
together in faith, hope and love,
together we might say
**GOD IS WITH US,
THROUGH CHRIST THE LORD.**

We pray this in the name of Jesus,
using the words he taught us, as together we say:

... 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.

We stand for

Hymn

Irby

H. J. Gauntlett (1805-1876)



Verse 1 is sung by a soloist.

Verse 2 is sung by the Knox Singers only.

The congregation starts singing at verse 3.

1. *Once in royal David's city
 stood a lowly cattle-shed
 where a mother laid her baby
 in a manger for his bed:
 Mary was that mother mild,
 Jesus Christ her little child.*

2. *He came down to earth from heaven
 who is God and Lord of all,
 and his shelter was a stable,
 and his cradle was a stall;
 with the poor and mean and lowly
 lived on earth our Saviour holy.*

3. **And our eyes at last shall see him,
 through his own redeeming love,
 for that child so dear and gentle
 is our Lord in heaven above;
 and he leads his children on
 to the place where he is gone.**
4. **Not in that poor lowly stable,
 with the oxen standing by,
 we shall see him; but in heaven,
 set at God's right hand on high;
 when, like stars, his children crowned
 all in white shall wait around.**

C. F. Alexander (1818-1895)

We sit for

A Bible Reading:

Luke 21:25-36

This is the gospel of Christ.

PRAISE TO CHRIST, THE WORD.

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

The Reflection: If I were a god

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 11:15pm today:
<https://youtu.be/HT30o6NmgDw>

We remain seated to sing

Hymn:

Personent Hodie

Melody from Piae Cantiones, 1582



1. Long ago, prophets knew
Christ would come, born a Jew.
Come to make all things new;
bear his People's burden,
freely love and pardon.
Refrain:
Ring, bells, ring, ring, ring!
Sing, choirs, sing, sing, sing!
When he comes,
When he comes,
who will make him welcome?
2. God in time, God in man,
this is God's timeless plan:
he will come, as a man,
born himself of woman,
God divinely human. [Refrain]
3. Mary, hail! Though afraid,
she believed, she obeyed.
In her womb God is laid;
till the time expected
nurtured and protected. [Refrain]
4. Journey ends! Where afar
Bethlem shines, like a star,

stable door stands ajar.
Unborn Son of Mary,
Saviour, do not tarry!
Refrain:
Ring, bells, ring, ring, ring!
sing, choirs, sing, sing, sing!
Jesus comes!
Jesus comes!
We will make him welcome!

Fred Pratt Green (1903-2000)

Prayers for the World

In our prayers, to my words "O come to us, abide with us",
you are invited to respond "**OUR LORD EMMANUEL**".

Anthem: Away in a manger
arr. Bob Chilcott (b. 1955)

The Watch Prayer

Silence until midnight

The Reading of the Nativity: Luke 2:1-14

The Christmas Greeting

People of God,
Christ is born. God is with us.

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.**

Please greet one another with the peace of God.

Without announcement, we stand to sing

Hymn:

Mendelssohn

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)



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 remains standing for

The Christmas Litany:

Jesus, Son of the living God,
Splendour of heaven,
GLORY BE TO YOU.

Jesus, Child in a manger,
King of Creation,
GLORY BE TO YOU.

Jesus, wonderful Counsellor,
mighty God, everlasting Lord,
GLORY BE TO YOU.

Jesus, inexhaustible Wisdom,
our Way, our Truth, our Life,
GLORY BE TO YOU.

The Word was made flesh
and dwelt among us,
full of grace and truth.
THANKS BE TO GOD, AMEN.

Without announcement, we sing

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: Finale from Symphony No. 1
Louis Vierne (1870-1937)

Retiring Offering

A retiring offering is taken for the Christian World Service Christmas Appeal.



God with us

a simple celebration
for Christmas Day
10:00am

Summer closure

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

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.



Weather Stations in the Solomons

In 1966, the island of Walande, Solomon Islands, had 200 inhabitants who had built houses flat on the ground. Over decades, more people built homes, and by 2002, there were 1200 inhabitants. But the sea was changing. People described feeling "scared" of what they called the "restless seas." They felt "out of control," unsure of the future for them and

their children. When the church was flooded, people began to relocate to live higher up on nearby islands. By 2016, there were only four inhabitants left.

In the Solomon Islands (consisting of 21 main islands and over 900 smaller ones), there are very few climate monitoring and weather station sites. This means little is known about climate change in this part of Oceania. Every one of the islands, however, has a church. In 2019, the Anglican Church decided to respond to the "restless seas" by using some of its churches to host weather monitoring stations. Local people committed to be trained as citizen scientists to record the weather. While the task is shared, it is led by a person commissioned by the church as a "green apostle," often a clergy person, who takes responsibility as part of their daily prayer for updating the booklet in which the weather measurements are recorded. These measurements can then be used for scientific analysis by the government and international organisations.

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