



WESLEY WELLINGTON
75 Taranaki Street
www.wesleychurch.org.nz

Sunday 17th December 2023
3rd Sunday of Advent - JOY

Haere mai ki tēnei Whare Karakia
Welcome to this House of Prayer



**We are a multi-racial Christian community:
Methodist in affiliation – Ecumenical in intention
Diverse in theology – Inclusive in outreach.**

**Kia ora koutou katoa — Talofa Lava
Malo e lelei — Bula Vinaka Greetings to you all!**

Order of Service
SUNDAY – 17th December 2023

Worship Leaders: Rev. Nicola Teague Grundy and Sokopeti Sina

WELCOME & SAFETY BRIEFING

GATHERING (Emi mai ki taua karakia)

PREPARE THE WAY

God invites us to engage in ministry
to share the good news of God's unconditional love.

What a joy it is to work with our God!

What a joy it is to share the good news!

Through the power of love,
through the work of our hands,
those who were hungry are filled.

Through the power of love,
through the work of our hearts.

Through the power of love,
through the work of our minds,
those who were oppressed are freed.

We rejoice in God's amazing love.
We rejoice in the life-changing opportunities open to us.

Out of that joy, we offer our thanks and praise
as we gather in this place.

May we be challenged.

May we be encouraged.

May we be empowered.

So that we may continue to live as joyous partners
in creating a world filled with love.
and rules by justice.

WORDS OF AWARENESS

May we give thanks for the opportunity we have
To worship and celebrate this day.

May we be surrounded with a very real sense
of the presentness of God
as we spend this time together.
May it be so.

HYMN (Himene) **Great is the glory of the newborn day**

Words: Susan Jones; Tune: Woodlands; H&P 86

Great is the glory of the newborn day,
Sunrise gilds the harbour, sparkles on the waves,
Children shout with wonder, old men greet the sun,
All refreshed, transformed by the Creating One,
*Refrain: Great is the glory of this brand-new day,
Life is full, abundant, opening up the way!*

Great is the glory of this brand-new day,
Life is bright when Spirit shows us all the Way.
Kohwai, 'hutukawa bask in Love's bright rays,
Earth and sky and sea combined in fervent praise.
Refrain:

Sunshine warms us from the chill of night,
Healed to grow and flourish, graced to love, not fight.
People from the margins find space in the sun,
Women, men, non-binary, find old ways are done.
Refrain:

Life's not just only sunshine everyday
Sometimes darkened shadows with light interplay
Wholeness is the goal we juggle in our time,
Real people, not just plaster saints, suit Jesus fine!
Refrain:

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLES (Kānara Whakamāmā)

The light grows brighter and the nights are mild;
excitement is building in every true child.

Come, Companion Jesus, Come.

Last Sunday we lit the candle of Rangimarie – peace,
the second Advent candle.

We light it again, along with the candle of tumanako – hope.
which will always be brought to birth
in, through, and among, all creation.

First and second candles are lit

The third Advent candle is the candle of koa - joy
In the stillness of our worship here we light it,
watching it burn and glow.

Third candle is lit

And we affirm that we are a people of God
seeking to muster enough courage amid the many other voices
which surround us.

WAIATA - Be not afraid

Words by Jonathan Berkahn; arrangement: Philip Garside

When the world is full of noise,
when the heart is full of pain,
when the hopes I've built upon
start to tumble once again,
I remember what the angels did say:

*Refrain: Be not afraid, be not afraid,
here is hope, here is joy, here is peace.
Be not afraid, be not afraid,
here is hope, here is joy, here is peace.*

When the night is growing dark,
when the clouds are drawing near,
when tomorrow is in doubt,
and the sky is full of fear,
I remember what the angels did say:
Refrain ...

ADVENT PRAYER

Give thanks for the Spirit of Holy One,
who welcomes us and sends us,
to tell the Story of Light
for those in darkness;
to seek healing with the broken hearted;
to work for freedom for others
with the freedom we enjoy;
to loose the ties that bind
those who are captive in so many ways.

We are welcomed and we are sent
to bring comfort to those who mourn,
the comfort of Holy One who
exchanges garlands for ashes,
pours out the oil of gladness
when mourning is done,
lifts us up to promise
when our hearts would faint.

Give thanks, for we will be
great Gums and Kauri trees
planted to grow tall and reflect
the splendour of Holy One!

Give thanks, for the ruin
and devastation may be restored,
through the healing Spirit of Holy One!

Give thanks by loving justice
as Holy One loves justice;

through faithfulness and loyalty
found in Holy One;
and teach those who come after you,
so we are known, generation
after generation, People of Holy One.

Rejoice in Holy One,
with all your being,
clothed in justice
and loving kindness – jewels
most precious indeed!

The earth brings forth green shoots,
even after ravaging fire;
the rain waters the seeds we sow,
even after crippling drought.

Give thanks, people of Holy One,
and in your worship and your living,
tell the Story of light
after the dark.

SO WHAT'S THE STORY ...?

(Instructions placed around the church along with paper and felt pens.)

From Psalm 126: 3 & 6

“And so we celebrated because the Lord had indeed worked miracles for us We cried on the way to plant our seeds, but we will celebrate and shout as we bring in the crops.”

Consider:

What is joy?

How do you find joy?

What are you joyful about today?

What are you sad about today?

Who will you find special joy in giving to this Christmas, and what will you give them?

Draw or write on the paper

The most joyful thing that has happened to you in 2023.

Prayer: <https://www.theworkofthepeople.com/creative-joy>

Hymn (Himene) Child of Christmas Story

Words: Shirley Murray; Music: Richard Madden [AA 12]

Child of Christmas story,
stable straw and star,
small and sweet and gentle,
tell us who you are.

Child whose baby finger
Round our own is curled,
Come to melt our hearts, and
Come to change the world.

Child of Jew and gentile,
Child of white and black,
Teach us how to love you,
Teach us what we lack.

Child of Mary's courage,
birthed in human pain,
tell us what your name is,
be our hope again.

MINISTRY OF THE WORD (Ngā Pānui Karaipiture)

Isaiah 61: 1-4, 8-11 (Contemporary English Version)

The Good News of Victory

The Spirit of the LORD God

has taken control of me!

The LORD has chosen and sent me

to tell the oppressed

the good news,

to heal the brokenhearted,

and to announce freedom
for prisoners and captives.
² This is the year
when the LORD God
will show kindness to us
and punish our enemies.
The LORD has sent me
to comfort those who mourn,
³ especially in Jerusalem.
He sent me to give them flowers
in place of their sorrow,
olive oil in place of tears,
and joyous praise
in place of broken hearts.
They will be called
“Trees of Justice,”
planted by the LORD
to honor his name.
⁴ Then they will rebuild cities
that have been in ruins
for many generations.

The Lord Loves Justice

I, the LORD, love justice!
But I hate robbery
and injustice.
My people, I solemnly promise
to reward you
with an eternal agreement.
⁹ Your descendants will be known
in every nation.
All who see them will realize
that they have been blessed,
by me, the LORD.

Celebrate and Shout

I celebrate and shout

because of my LORD God.

His saving power and justice

are the very clothes I wear.

They are more beautiful

than the jewelry worn

by a bride or groom.

¹¹ The LORD will bring about
justice and praise

in every nation on earth,

like flowers blooming

in a garden.

John 1: 6-8, 19-28 (Contemporary English Version)

God sent a man named John,

⁷ who came to tell

about the light

and to lead all people

to have faith.

⁸ John wasn't this light.

He came only to tell

about the light.

¹⁹⁻²⁰ The religious authorities in Jerusalem sent priests and temple helpers to ask John who he was. He told them plainly, "I am not the Messiah."²¹ Then when they asked him if he were Elijah, he said, "No, I am not!" And when they asked if he were the Prophet, he also said "No!"

²² Finally, they said, "Who are you then? We have to give an answer to the ones who sent us. Tell us who you are!"

²³ John answered in the words of the prophet Isaiah, "I am only someone shouting in the desert, 'Get the road ready for the Lord!' "

²⁴ Some Pharisees had also been sent to John. ²⁵ They asked him, "Why are you baptizing people, if you are not the Messiah or Elijah or the Prophet?"

²⁶ John told them, “I use water to baptize people. But here with you is someone you don't know. ²⁷ Even though I came first, I am not good enough to untie his sandals.” ²⁸ John said this as he was baptizing east of the Jordan River in Bethany.

REFLECTION

HYMN (Himene) You are born in us again

Words: Mark Wilson; Tune: Dunstan [CoC 52]

You are born in us again
Like the warmth of the summer wind you come,
to melt away the icicles of vanity and pride;
you come to blow the very doors of loving open wide.
Like the warmth of the summer wind you come,
like the warmth of the summer wind you come.

You are born in us again
Like the scent of the summer rain you come,
You come to quench the thirsty and to freshen up the land;
you come to clean away the dust that settled in our hand.
Like the scent of the summer rain you come,
like the scent of the summer rain you come.

You are born in us again
Like the light of the summer sun you come,
to give light to the places that have never seen the Son;
you come now to embrace us, you're the holy, holy one.
Like the light of the summer sun you come,
like the light of the summer sun you come.

OFFERING (Tātou Koha ki Te Hāhi)

God is at work in the world, renewing, remaking, resurrecting, bringing hope through the faith, the gifts, and the work of the church. We trust in God and together we work for peace and

justice through God's Spirit. Let us rejoice in our God-given opportunity to share in God's work.

The offering is collected

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Thank you, God of Love, for the promise of this season. We are grateful for the generosity aroused in us by Christ's coming into the world. May these gifts represent a new spirit of joyous sharing among us, for the sake of all your children everywhere.

Amen.

COMMUNITY TIME

Notices - Sharing Joys and Sorrows

PRAYER FOR OTHERS (Ngā Inoi Mō te Whānau)

It's Good News this Gospel of yours, Jesus,
and we easily get so excited and full of expectation,
that we can be disappointed when goodness takes longer
than we had hoped.

But sometimes the most powerful changes, the most complete
healings come not in one startling moment,
but slowly, by degrees.

And so, we pray for your Good News to capture our world,
in the comfort of loving shoulders
offered for the grieving to cry on;

in the shared laughter and hopefulness
found in the midst of pain and suffering;

in the vulnerable welcome of hospitality
given to both strangers and friends;

in the unconditional love and challenging confrontation
received from trusted partners;

in the simple responsibility
accepted by those who are conscientious and faithful;

in the generous good
done by grateful followers of your ways;

In these small, but significant actions,
we pray that we and our world may recognise
the signs of your reign among us;
and that your Good News may be proclaimed by degrees,
in the daily rhythms of our lives.

LORD'S PRAYER (*Te Karakia o Te Atua*)

PARTING WORDS (*Ngā Inoi Whakamutunga*)

The God we worship is never confined to his holy place.
So go and travel with the God
who is found in ordinary and surprising places.

Gathered together
We wait for the light.
Standing together
We trust in the light.

Praying together
We hope for the light.

Seeking together
We step out with the light.

Singing together
We are blessed by the light.

WORDS OF BLESSING

Go now in joy, building, living in, and enjoying
a community full of welcome and equality.

GRACE

**Kia tau ki a tātou katoa,
te atawhai o to tātou Ariki o Ihu Karaiti,
me te aroha o te Atua,
me te whiwhinga tahitanga
ki te Wairua Tapu. Amine**

