



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

31st DECEMBER 2023
CAFÉ CHURCH

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
31 December 2023 – Café Church

Have Christmas mince pies, sparkling grape juice, tea, coffee available as people arrive.

SAFETY BRIEFING

WELCOME

HYMN (Himene) “Open, open, open the stable door”

Words and Music: Colin Gibson; Tune: Mornington CoC 34
Music will be played through blue tooth speaker

Refrain:

*Open, open, open the stable door,
Welcome, welcome, welcome, the baby's born,
Enter, enter, join in the celebration,
Fear not, here is room for us all.*

There's a flock of sheep and a cow and a donkey
welcome, welcome,
Here's a puffing shepherd, three wise men wonky,
welcome, welcome
Refrain ...

What a crowd of folk come to see the baby,
welcome, welcome,
One of them is drunk and another's crazy,
welcome, welcome,
Refrain ...

Fallen off the back of a skip just lately?
welcome, welcome,
Feeling rather bruised, yes, and shook up greatly,
welcome, welcome,
Refrain

Can't afford a coat and the kids are crying,
welcome, welcome,
Haven't found a friend yet, but I'm still trying,
welcome, welcome,
Refrain

OPENING WORDS

Another Christmas Day has been left in its wake,
but the joy of the Incarnation resides with us always!

**We praise you, O God, to the highest heavens,
angels and the heavenly host all praise you,
sun and moon and the shining stars!**

Old year, new year, are all the same to God,
whose goodness endures forever!

**We praise you, Lord, with kings and rulers,
with young men and women together
with old people and young children!**

PRAYER OF PRAISE AND ADORATION

Holy One,
let our first prayer be to you words of praise:
Praise for the joy of Christmas;
praise for the embodiment of living hope
in the life of Jesus;
praise for the wonder of angels and shepherds,
praise for the experience of the young and the old,
praise for the faith-full and the faith-empty,
praise for the exuberant and the weary.
However this new day finds us,
let praise be found:
loud and clear, quiet and gentle.
May our praise shine through our singing;
may our praise glow through our adoration;
through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

THANKSGIVING STRING

SO WHAT'S THE STORY ...?

Anna and Simeon

A dialogue based on Luke 2: 22-38 by Ralf Milton

GROUP DISCUSSION

Introduction

Discussion:

Some questions to ponder in your groups:

What does it mean to wait for something or someone with patience, as Anna and Simeon did in the temple? Can you think of a time in your life when you had to wait for something important? How did you handle it?

What are some ways we can recognise God's presence in our lives today? What signs or stories can you recall that point to god's work in the world around us?

What is quickening our heart as we wait on the threshold of a New Year?

Summing up:

NOTICES

PRAYERS FOR OURSELVES AND OTHERS

Ever present One,
today we stand on the threshold,
as a new door opens,
into a time of new beginning.

We embrace this wondrous gift:
A new, open space extending out into possibilities yet unseen,
A new chapter yet to be written,
One new day yielding place to another.

All Compassionate One,
as we cross the threshold,
we may carry with us regrets and sorrows,
for what befell in this year just ending,
or what we said or did not say,
or what we did or did not do.

May your Wisdom offer us the life-lessons
we need as we seek to live better.
May your healing embrace our places of pain and loss,
as your Light, shining always at the heart of the cloud of
unknowing, guides us through the nighttime of sadness,
step by step through whatever landscape our souls inhabit.

O liberating One,
Giver of newness of life,
May we lay down those burdens we need carry no further.
Your work of equity and inclusion,
Your work of transformation.

May we, with all your beloved, give birth to better days for your
beloved world, in this year to come.

And over this threshold, most loving Spirit,
You carry us with our tender hearts.
You pray through us our deepest prayers for those among us,
those known to us,
who especially need comfort, consolation, hope, justice, safety,
caring community – whatever they most deeply need,
whatever we ourselves most deeply need.

In a moment of silence, we join our breath with yours in prayers
beyond our naming ...

Silence

These and all the prayers of our hearts we offer in the name of
your Beloved as we pray together as one community,

**E tō mātou Matua i te rangi
Kia tapu tou Ingoa
Kia tae mai tou rangatira-tanga.
Kia meatia tau e pai ai
ki runga i te whenua,
kia rite ano ki to te rangi.
Homai ki a mātou aianei
he taro mā mātou mo tēnei ra.
Murua o mātou hara
Me mātou hoki e muru nei
i o te hunga e hara ana ki a mātou.
Aua hoki mātou e kawea kia whaka-waia;
Engari whaka-orangia mātou, i te kino:
Nou hoki te rangatira-tanga,
te kaha,
me te kororia,
Ake, ake, ake.
Āmine.**

OFFERING and BLESSING OF OFFERING

(We acknowledge offering made by automatic payment and on-line banking)

We give in grateful thanksgiving for all that God has given us.
In the upside down world of the gospel,
we measure our wealth not by what we have,
but what we can give away. Let us give generously in our
offering.

Offertory Prayer

God of generosity, in this time of giving, we are grateful for what we have received from you. In this time of sharing, we are challenged to share what we have with others. Receive our gifts with our thanks, as we dedicate them to the outworking of your love in action. In the name of the Christ-Child. Amen.

HYMN: (Himene) E te Atua

Arr. Nicola Jansen and Guy Jansen; Tune: Kum Ba Ya [AA 3112]

E te Atua aroha mai,

E te Atua aroha mai,

E te Atua aroha mai,

Ake ake tonu e, ake ake tonu e.

E te Atua Manaaki mai ...

E te Atua awhina mai ...

PARTING WORDS (*Ngā Inoi Whakamutunga*)

Go forth, open to new ways of seeing and being, ready to grow and deepen in wisdom and compassion, willing to receive the gifts of those of all ages as you give of yourself openly and generously. May the new life glimpsed at Christmas take root and grow within your heart! May you find the light you need to continue the journey in faith, hope and love.

May it be so. Amen.

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**

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Liturgy for this service was sourced and adapted from:

Ralph Milton – *Woodlake Books*.

<https://www.woodlakebooks.com/files/Gospel%205,%20Anna-Simeon,%20a%20dialogue.pdf>

Janice MacLean – *The prayer bench*, <https://prayerbench.ca/>

Jane Doull, *Let us Pray: A Digital Collection of*

Prayers <https://prayerbench.ca/product/let-us-pray-a-digital-collection-of-prayers-1/>

NZ Hymn Book Trust, *Alleluia Aotearoa*, Raumatī

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<https://www.facebook.com/wesleywellington.methodistchurch.10am>