



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

25TH DECEMBER 2023
A KIWI CHRISTMAS

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



**As we remember the birth of the
homeless Saviour in the manger...
Let us commit ourselves to make room
for Jesus this year, in our lives and in our homes...
especially as he comes to us in his many disguises.**

Order of Service
CHRISTMAS DAY - 2023

Worship Leader: Rev. Nicola Teague Grundy
Organist: Vivien Chiu

WELCOME SAFETY BRIEFING

GATHERING (Emi mai ki taua karakia)

A child is born

HYMN (Himene) **“Good Christian Friends, Rejoice!”**

Words: John Mason Neale, *alt. Gretta Vosper*; Tune: H&P 104

Good Christian friends, rejoice,
with heart and soul and voice!
Give ye heed to what we say:
News! News!
All our dreams are born today.
Love has come to lead the way
and will with us forever stay,
Dreams are born today!
Dreams are born today!

Good Christian friends, rejoice,
with heart and soul and voice!
Now ye hear of endless bliss:
Joy! Joy!
Every child was born for this.
Love has opened heaven's door
and we are blest for evermore.
Joy is born today!
Joy is born today!

Good Christian friends, rejoice,
with heart and soul and voice!
Wondrous news have we to tell:
Peace! Peace!

Love with us is born to dwell.
Born within, it outward grows
and then to all the world, it flows.
Love is born today!
Love is born today!

OPENING WORDS

On a gentle summer's breeze, a peaceful Word is whispered,
From the mountain tops, a triumphant Word rings out,

From the depths of the ocean comes the roar of a mighty Word,
The birds sing out a joyous Word,

All of creation calls out the Word:
Jesus the Christ is born today, Hallelujah.

Life is a gift for which we are grateful
We gather in community
to celebrate the glories and
the mysteries of this great gift.

LIGHTING OF THE CHRISTMAS CANDLE

Over the past four Sundays we have lit our Advent candles

We light them again and remember ...
the ways tumanako, rangimarie, koa and aroha
are always brought to birth
in, through, and among, all creation.

Four candles are lit

Last night we lit our Christmas Eve candles.
It was a time for memories and remembering.
To wonder and to give thanks ...

And of quiet awakening to beauty
that still lives on through the strife of personal griefs
and a challenging world.

Now, we come to light our Christmas candle.
It is a friendly candle.
It brings light and love
as we celebrate in the warmth of summer.

It's a candle of understanding which drives away fear.
It is a candle of truth.
It will lead one in unknown paths
To learn more about the mysteries of life.
**Once upon a time a baby was born
who taught us to love and understand one another.
And they called his name, Jesus.**

The Christmas candle is lit

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.

OPENING PRAYER

Let us now claim some silence
In the midst of the busyness of our Christmas lives.

Silence

Hear and feel your quiet breathing.
Hear and feel the quiet of this place
and this community of people.

Silence

As we remember the birth of the one we call Jesus
we see that the love and peace which he spoke of
must be cherished, nurtured and defended
in every generation.

Source of Life and Love,
your presentness among us is a tiny light of hope
which will never be extinguished.

Silence

SO WHAT'S THE STORY ...?

A Kiwi Christmas

Written by Joy Cowley; Illustrations: Bruce Potter

Presented by:

Sarah Laurenson, Kula Bower, Uiesemaalii Holmes, Hugh
Laurenson, Peter Grundy and Philip Garside and the Samoan
Choir.

HYMN: (Himene) 'Upside down Christmas'

Words: Shirley Murray; Music: Colin Gibson [AA 9]

Carol our Christmas,
an upside down Christmas;
snow is not falling and
trees are not bare.

Carol the summer, and
welcome the Christ Child,
warm in our sunshine and
sweetness of air.

Sing of the gold and the
green and the sparkle,
water and river and lure
of the beach.

Sing in the happiness
of open spaces,
sing a nativity summer
can reach!

Shepherds and musterers
move over hillsides,
finding, not angels,
but sheep to be shorn;
wise ones make journeys
whatever the season,
searching for signs of the
truth to be born.

Right side up Christmas
belongs to the universe,
made in the moment
a woman gives birth;
hope is the Jesus gift,
love is the offering,
everywhere, anywhere,
here on the earth.

REFLECTION – Rev Nicola Teague Grundy

A CHRISTMAS LITANY

Blessed are they who find Christmas
in the fragrant Tarata,
the song of the korimako
and the soft flicker of candles...

To them shall come memories of love and happiness.

Blessed are they who find Christmas
in the Christmas star...

Their lives may ever reflect its light and beauty.

Blessed are they who find Christmas
in the age-old story
of a child born in a stable and laid in a manger...

**To them a little child will always mean
hope and promise in a troubled world.**

Blessed are they who find Christmas
in the joy of gifts sent lovingly to others...

**They shall share the gladness and joy
of the shepherds and sages of old.**

Blessed are they who find Christmas
in the message of Jesus of Nazareth...

**They shall ever strive to help bring
peace on earth, good will to all.**

SHARING THE PEACE

Let us take a moment to celebrate each other in the sharing of
peace.

May a heart of peace rest with you.
And also with you.

Let us offer the peace to each other.

ANTHEM – Tongan Choir

OFFERING (Tātou Koha ki Te Hāhi)

We rejoice in the new world God is creating around us and with us. May our gifts proclaim the way of Jesus and strengthen a faithful people.

The offering is collected

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Loving God, on this Christmas morning we thank you for the wonderful gifts of light and life that you have given to us in your Son, Jesus Christ. With this offering we give to you our lives dedicated to your will.

Use these gifts and use us to reveal your love to empower the powerless to feed the hungry and to free the oppressed. In our world troubled by war, inequality and climate crisis bring peace, justice and healing bring hope where there is despair. In Jesus' name Amen.

PASTORAL PRAYER (Ngā Inoi Mō te Whānau)

O God, whose love blesses and unites us in this place and time, we come before you with hearts gladdened by this holy season, its lights, its colours, and most especially, its message of peace and good will to all.

In the birth of Jesus, you have given our weary and struggling world reason to rejoice. In the cry of an infant, you have given hope to all who cry. By the light of a star, you have helped us find our way again.

We thank you, good and generous God, that in Jesus the Christ, you have made yourself known and have beckoned us to join you in the continual creation of a world where wolf and lamb shall dwell together and justice will rush down like waters.

Create in us, O God, hearts devoted to shaping that world, and bless especially those for whom such a world seems only a distant dream – the poor, the imprisoned, the ill, the lonely, the despised. Open our hearts, Spirit of Life, to the news of angels and the wonder of shepherds that these days may renew us for the days to come.

Grant us, for the sake of Christ’s ministry, hearts that may discern how to make meaningful the Gospel that we cherish. Grant to your glory, that those whose lives we touch may hear in our words and see in our lives that truly you are merciful and gracious and abounding in steadfast love!

These things we ask, trusting in your care for us today and always. Amen.

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

**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.**

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.

PARTING WORDS (*Ngā Inoi Whakamutunga*)

Go in peace to claim the life of Christ within our midst:
and may the earth be warm under your feet,
the rain bring the gentle flowers
of the bush bright around you,
and the wind blows as the breath of the Spirit before you.

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:
Ann B. Day, *Touch Holiness: Resources for Worship*. Edited Ruth C Duck and
Maren C. Tirabassi

Rex A. Hunt. <https://www.rexaehuntprogressivegy.com/advent3b17122023>

Dorothy McRae-McMahon, 'Christmas Day liturgy'

Gretta Vosper. *Holy Breath. Prayers for Worship and Reflection*.

Gretta Vosper. *With or Without God. Why the way we Live is more Important
than What we Believe*.

R Burgess. *A Book of Blessings*.

NZ Hymn Book Trust, *Alleluia Aotearoa, Carol our Christmas*. Raumati
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