

Holy Communion at St Paul's, Ashgrove

Third Sunday in Advent 17/12/23



Service Time: 8.30am

“How can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land”

HYMN: Tis 474 Here in this Place

Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins,
whose mercy endures forever.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lighting of the Third Advent Candle—The Candle of Joy

Third candle is lit, symbols are hung on the tree

Loving God, we open ourselves to you,
trusting that this is how you made us:
you created us for joy-filled hearts and lives.

**Show us the creative power of hope.
Teach us the peace that comes from justice.
Fill us with the kind of joy that cannot be contained,
but must be shared.
Prepare our hearts to be transformed by you,
That we may walk in the light of Christ. Amen.**

The Advent song is sung

Light one candle for hope
One bright candle for hope
He brings hope to every heart
He comes! He comes!

Light one candle for peace
One bright candle for peace
He brings peace to every heart
He comes! He comes!

Light one candle for joy
One bright candle for joy
He brings joy to every heart
He comes! He comes!

Acknowledgement of Country

Bind up the broken-hearted, proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners, proclaim the year of the Lord's favour, the day of vengeance of our God. Isaiah 61.1-2

**Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open, all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,**

**and worthily magnify your holy name,
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

The Collect

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah 61.1-4, 8-11

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion— to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, to display his glory. They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.

For I the Lord love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the Lord has blessed. I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

Hear the word of the Lord, **thanks be to God**

Psalm 126

1 When the Lord turned again the fortunes of Zion:
 then were we like those restored to life.

2 Then was our mouth filled with laughter:
 and our tongue with singing.

3 Then said they among the heathen:
 'The Lord has done great things for them.'

4 Truly the Lord has done great things for us:
 and therefore we rejoiced.

5 Turn again our fortunes, O Lord:
 as the streams return to the dry south.

6 Those who sow in tears:
 shall reap with songs of joy.

7 They that go out weeping, bearing the seed:
 **shall come again in gladness,
 bringing their sheaves with them.**

A reading from Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians 5.12-28

But we appeal to you, brothers and sisters, to respect those who labour among you, and have charge of you in the Lord and admonish you; esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves. And we urge you, beloved, to admonish the idlers, encourage the faint hearted, help the weak, be patient with all of them. See that none of you repays evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to all.

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the word of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil.

May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this. Beloved, pray for us. Greet all the brothers and sisters with a holy kiss. I solemnly command you by the Lord that this letter be read to all of them. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

Hear the word of the Lord, **thanks be to God.**

HYMN: The God of all Eternity

1. The God of all eternity,
Unbound by space yet always near,
Is present where his people meet
To celebrate the coming year.
2. What shall we offer God today -
Our dreams of what we cannot see,
Or, with eyes fastened to the past,
Our dread of what is yet to be?
3. God does not share our doubts or fears,
Nor shrinks from the unknown or strange:
The one who fashioned heaven and earth
Makes all things new and ushers change.
4. Let faith or fortune rise or fall,
Let dreams and dread both have their day;
Those whom God loves walk unafraid
With Christ their Guide and Christ their way
5. God grant that we, in this new year,
May show the world the Kingdom's face,
And let our work and worship thrive
As signs of hope and means of grace.

*Words: John L. Bell and Graham Maule ©1989 WGRG, Iona Community, Scotland
From the collection [Known Unknowns](#), 2018.*

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to **John** chapter **1** beginning at verse **6**
Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,'" as the prophet Isaiah said. Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

NRSV

For the Gospel of the Lord,
praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

Sermon – www.stpaulsashgrove.org.au/sermons/

Silence

Let us together affirm the faith of the Church

**We believe in one God,
who made and loves all that is.**

**We believe in Jesus Christ,
God's only Son, our Lord,
who was born, lived, died and rose again,
and is coming to call all to account.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit,
who calls, equips and sends out God's people,
and brings all things to their true end.**

**This is our faith, the faith of the Church:
We believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Let us pray for the world and for the Church.

.....
**God of the nations,
whose sovereign rule brings justice and peace,
have mercy on our broken and divided world.
Shed abroad your peace in the hearts of all
and banish from them the spirit that makes for war,
that all races and peoples may learn to live
as members of one family
and in obedience to your law,
through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**

.....
**God who made our home,
And made your home with us,
Yet often had no place to lay your head,
Have mercy today on all who have no home.
Provide shelter and protection,
A future and a hope,
To all whose beds tonight will be unsafe, unstable or exposed.
Grant wisdom and compassion,
To everyone with power or resources
To end our housing crisis,
So that all may live in peace
And share with equity and thanksgiving
The good things you provide
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**

Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord, who taught us to pray,

**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.**

**Lord, have mercy
Christ, have mercy
Lord, have mercy**

The Lord comes, bringing to light things now hidden in darkness, and disclosing the purposes of the heart.

Let us open our hearts and prepare for his coming, confessing our sins in penitence and faith

**Merciful God,
our maker and our judge,
we have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed,
and in what we have failed to do:
we have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves;
we repent, and are sorry for all our sins.
Father, forgive us.
Strengthen us to love and obey you in newness of life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Absolution

We are the body of Christ. **His Spirit is with us.**
The peace of the Lord be always with you. **And also with you.**

*The collection bowl will be passed around during this song to support the ministry of St Paul's.
Most members give electronically through their bank, instead. St Paul's bank details are Name:
Ithaca-Ashgrove Anglican Parish BSB: 704901 Acc No: 00004420*

HYMN: TiS 658 I, the Lord of Sea and Sky

THANKSGIVING 5

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

[response]
Lord our God,
we give you thanks and praise.

...we rejoice and praise you, saying:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

...Do this in remembrance of me. '

**Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.**

...Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord.
**Blessing and honour and glory and power
are yours for ever and ever. Amen.**

The priest says

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.
We who are many are one body,
for we all share in the one bread.

**Jesus, Lamb of God, have mercy on us.
Jesus, bearer of our sins, have mercy on us.
Jesus, redeemer of the world, grant us your peace.**

Bread and wine; the gifts of God
for the people of God.

**May we who share these gifts
be found in Christ
and Christ in us.**

NZ Prayer Book

*Please come forward to receive the bread and wine. Gluten free wafers are available (please ask).
If you prefer not to receive communion, please come forward for a blessing (keep your hands
behind your back). You are welcome to kneel at the communion rail. If you prefer to stand, please
stand in the middle section. For the safety of all in the community we ask you to:*

- *Use hand sanitiser before receiving the bread and wine*
- *NOT intinct (dip the bread in the wine)*
- *Take wine only if you are free from symptoms and free of anxiety about drinking from the
common cup. Be assured that Christ is present in you and for you as you receive the bread
alone.*

Silence for communion

God for whom we wait,
we thank you that you have fed us with the bread of life
and the cup of salvation.
As we joyfully await your Son,
keep us ever watchful
that we may be ready to stand before him
on the day of his coming.

Most loving God,

**you send us into the world you love.
Give us grace to go thankfully and with courage
in the power of your Spirit.**

Announcements

HYMN: TiS 268: Joy to the World

Please stand and turn to face the back for the blessing

Blessing

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord: **In the name of Christ. Amen**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ST PAUL'S NOTICEBOARD

Join us for morning tea after the service!

ADVENT REFLECTIONS: Rev Margaret is writing a prayer and reflection on peace for every day of advent. To receive these by email, subscribe by clicking:

<https://revdrmargaretwesley.substack.com/p/advent-of-peace>

Early in 2024, we hope to re-introduce a **Bible Study group** that meets outside of business hours. Please let Rev Margaret know your availability so we can decide on a day and time.



Christmas Bowl is an appeal run through Act for Peace, the international humanitarian agency of the National Council of Churches in Australia. It gives hope and loving connection between Christians in Australia and people around the world in hardship and suffering! You can **donate online** (mycb.link/134847) or use the envelopes at the back of the church.

ABM 2022 Advent and Christmas Appeal - donate online www.abmission.org/ or by using the envelopes available at the back of the church!



Upcoming events

TODAY

Rev Pam Hynd's 25th Anniversary of Ordination to the Priesthood – this is our **combined service** at 8.30am

Sun 24 Dec

8:30am - a small service, without singing

6pm – Family Service – carols, storytime and a gift for every child

10.30pm – midnight service – carol singing for 30mins before a Christmas eucharist

Mon 25 Dec, 8.30am Family Celebration Christmas Service

Jubilee Terrace Playgroup - weekly on a Friday from 9.30-11.30am during school terms. \$4 per week to cover cost. Registered Playgroup with Play Matters.

Bible Study and Morning Prayer every Wednesday morning during school terms. **Prayer** from 9:05am and **Bible Study** from 9.45. Everyone welcome!

For your prayers

Baskaran. Cherilee (knee injury), Caroline M (thanks for successful shoulder surgery), Elizabeth T (recovery from a broken ankle), Bernie, Ofa, Rebekah, Clinton, Melissa, Sue J, Anne (Sue's daughter), Angela, Liam. We give thanks for the continuing recovery of Revd Jack and Sam. Please also pray for Rev Jack and Rev Kathy and the Everton Park Congregation, Revd Sue and the Goonaneman Parish and the LAMB Medical Ministry in Bangladesh. We hold in our prayers Wayne, Noel, Joy and Romola who are at home or in a nursing home. **Please let us know at the office if you would like someone added or removed from our prayer list.**

PILGRIMAGE - Sat 4th - Mon 6th May 2024 The Cursillo team is planning a pilgrimage, starting at the Anglican Parish of Grovely in Arana Hills, going via Esk and Warwick, and ending in the Boonah/Harrisville area on the Sunday night. This is open to everyone, not just those who have been to a Cursillo weekend. For further information, contact the parish office and your question will be forwarded to the organiser.

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