Knox Church

love faith outreach community justice

Order of Service

Christmas Eve, 2025

I have loved you for a long time

a Christmas Eve service of carols and candle-light

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 city side of the sanctuary.

Music printed in this order of service is covered
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The sermon and prayers in this service were written by Matthew with no styling assistance by Artificial Intelligence.

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

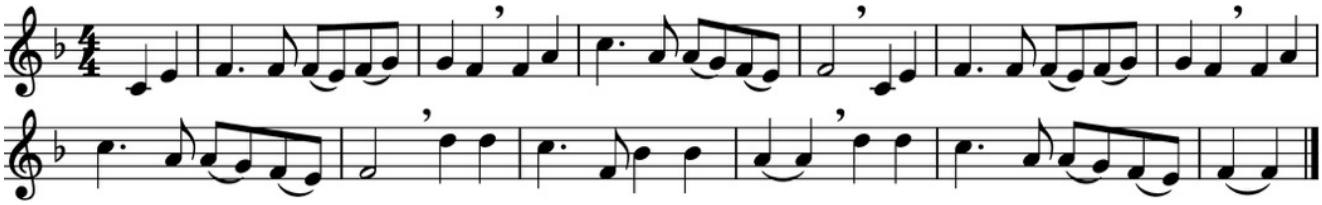
Kia noho a Ihowa ki a koutou. God be with you.
MA IHOWA KOE E MANAAKI. GOD BLESS YOU.

The Introit: Sleepers Wake (St Paul)
Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

Opening Prayer

. . . 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
<u>Hymn</u>:
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
<u>A Bible Reading</u>: Hebrews 1: 1-4

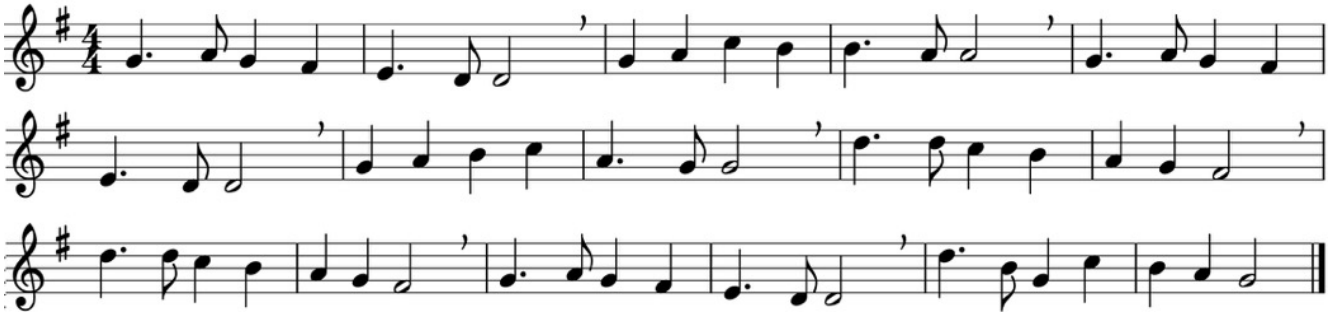
Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

In this is the Word of God.
THANKS BE TO GOD.

We stand for

<u>Hymn</u>:

Humility John Goss (1800-1880)



1. See, in yonder manger low,
   born for us on earth below;
   see, the gentle Lamb appears,
   promised from eternal years:
   Hail, O ever-blessed morn;
   hail, redemption's happy dawn;
   sing through all Jerusalem:
   "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

2. Low within a manger lies
   he who built the starry skies;
   he who, throned in height sublime,
   reigns above the cherubim:
   Hail, O ever-blessed morn . . .

3. Say, you humble shepherds, say
   what's your joyful news today?
   tell us why you left your sheep
   on the lonely mountain steep:
   Hail, O ever-blessed morn . . .

4. "As we watched at dead of night,
   all around us shone a light;
   angels singing Peace on earth
   told us of a Saviour's birth."
   Hail, O ever-blessed morn . . .

5. Sacred infant, king most dear,
   what a tender love was here,
   thus to come from highest bliss
   down to such a world as this!
   Hail, O ever-blessed morn . . .

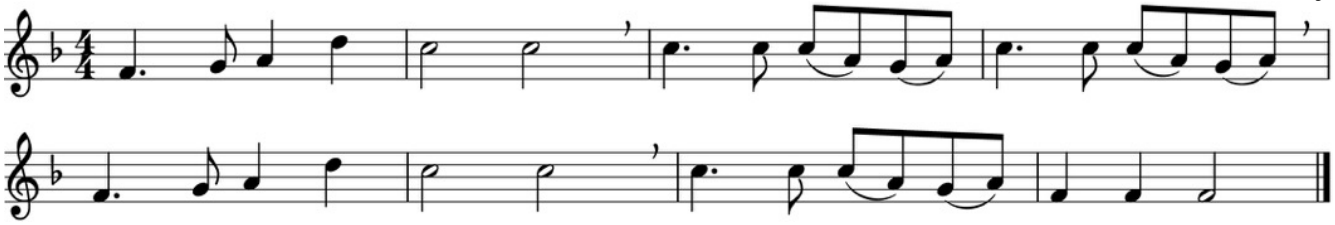
6. Holy Saviour, born on earth,
teach us by your lowly birth;
grant that we may ever be
taught by such humility.
Hail, O ever-blessed morn . . .

Edward Caswall (1814-1878)

We sit for
A Reflection: A Special Moment

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/tJgb8Dhj48Y

We remain seated to sing
Hymn:
Gartan Irish traditional melody



1. Love came down at Christmas,
Love all lovely, Love divine;
Love was born at Christmas,
star and angels gave the sign.

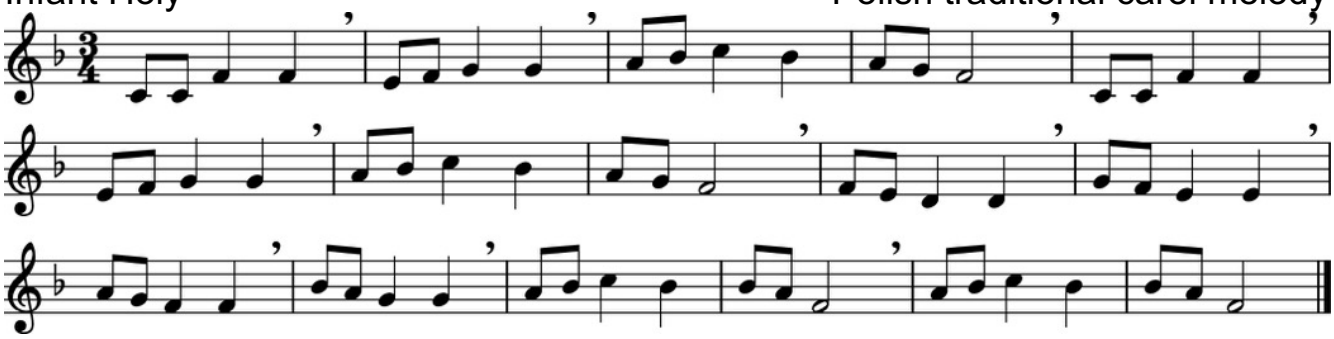
2. Worship we the Godhead,
Love incarnate, Love divine;
worship we our Jesus:
but where is God's sacred sign?

3. Love shall be our token,
love be yours and love be mine,
love to God and neighbour,
love for plea and gift and sign.

Christina Rossetti (1830-1894)

Reflection: A Litany of Shared Experience

We remain seated to sing
Hymn:
Infant Holy Polish traditional carol melody



1. Infant holy,
   infant lowly
   for his bed a cattle stall;
   oxen lowing,
   little knowing
   Christ the babe is Lord of all;
   swift are winging
   angels singing,
   nowells ringing,
   tidings bringing,
   Christ the babe is Lord of all.

2. Flocks were sleeping,
   shepherds keeping
   vigil till the morning new
   saw the glory,
   heard the story,
   tidings of a gospel true;
   thus rejoicing,
   free from sorrow,
   praises voicing
   greet the morrow,
   Christ the babe was born for you.

   Polish Carol,
   tr. Edith Margaret Gellibrand Reed (1885-1933)

Reflection: A million religions

Prayers for the World

In our prayers, to the minister's words "*In your mercy, O God",*
you are invited to respond "**SAVE US FROM OUR DIVISION**".

Anthem: Away in a manger
arr. David Willcocks (1919-2015)

The Watch Prayer

Silence until midnight

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

The Christmas Greeting

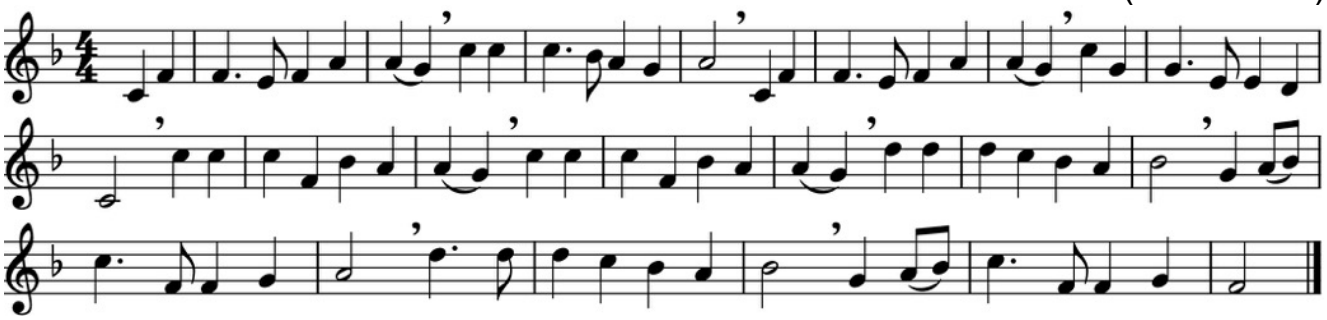
People of God,
Christ is born. God is with us.

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.

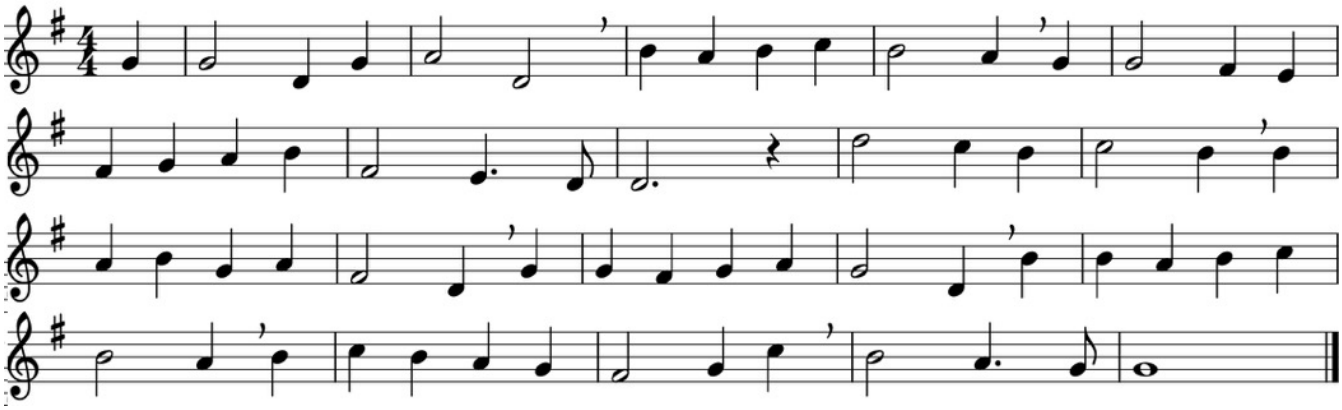
Jesus, Child in a manger,
King of Creation,
GLORY BE TO YOU.

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
<u>Hymn</u>:
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: Sortie in E flat
Louis Lefebure-Wely (1817-1869)

Retiring Offering

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

A Service for Christmas Day

Welcome to the new world

10:00am, Christmas Day
Retiring offering for Christian World Service

One of the ways that Knox supports the Christian World Service Christmas Appeal is by taking a retiring offering at the end of our Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services.

Knox Directory

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Keeping in Touch

Would you like to give our office your contact details so that we can send you our quarterly magazine and other Knox communications?

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