



# KNOX CHURCH

love faith outreach community justice

## Order of Service 25 December 2025

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# Welcome to the New World

a simple celebration for Christmas Day

## 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.

A loop system for hearing aids operates at Knox.

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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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, you are welcome to use the language that is most natural to you.

This morning the Bible already has been placed on the lectern, so will not be processed in. At 10 o'clock, with the congregation remaining seated, the minister and reader approach the Advent Wreath. Once the Nativity Passage from Luke's Gospel has been read, the Christ Candle is lit. The service proceeds from there.

**The Nativity:** Luke 2: 1-14

**The Lighting of the Christ Candle**

**The Christmas Proclamation:**

The eternal Word was made flesh,  
**AND DWELLED AMONG US.**

Christ is born.

The new creation dawns.

On Christmas morn,

**THANKS AND PRAISE TO 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 sits for*

**The Prayers of Approach:**

Glory to the new-born king,  
**WHOSE LIGHT AND LIFE IN FAITH WE SING.**

Something in his longed-for birth,  
**FILLS WITH PRAISE THIS HUNGRY EARTH.**

Like a flag at last unfurled,  
**NOW'S MADE NEW, THIS LONGING WORLD.**

We have indeed longed for his coming, O God,  
that lion and lamb may find peace,  
that justice and truth might kiss,  
that heaven and earth might be reconciled,  
and that the One who has loved us for a long time  
we might love more nearly.

**SO, IN GRATITUDE FOR THIS DAY,  
AND ALL IT MEANS,  
WE KEEP A PRAYERFUL SILENCE.**

*Pause*

What is humanity's word, O God, to the One who was born?  
Welcome?

**WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?**

How can we care for you?

**HOW CAN WE BE YOUR VILLAGE?**

*Pause*

And what is your word, O Christ, to our God?

Hey, this is what it's like to live,

**TO BE MORTAL,**

to cry, to stretch,

**TO BE,**

to be slightly embarrassed but also proud

**THAT YOUR CRADLE IS A MANGER?**

*Pause*

For some time now, we have sung "bring in your new world",  
and in Christmas you have.

**BLESS US TO SEE THE NEWNESS**

**BROUGHT TO OUR BEING**

**BY THE CHILD OF PROMISE,**

and move our hearts,

**THAT WE MIGHT BE PEOPLE OF THE NEW CREATION,**

for we pray it in his name this Christmas, and always,

**AMEN.**

*If there are younger ones present who are feeling chatty,*  
**A Conversation with the Younger Ones**

## The Bible Lesson:

Revelation 21: 1-7

In this is the Word of God.

**THANKS BE TO GOD.**

## Hymn:

Forest Green

English traditional melody



1. O little town of Bethlehem,  
how still we see thee lie!  
above thy deep and dreamless sleep  
the silent stars go by:  
yet in thy dark streets shineth  
the everlasting Light;  
the hopes and fears of all the years  
are met in thee tonight.
2. O morning stars, together  
proclaim the holy birth,  
and praises sing to God the King  
and peace to all on earth;  
for Christ is born of Mary;  
and, gathered all above,  
while mortals sleep the angels keep  
their watch of wondering love.
3. How silently, how silently  
the wondrous gift is given!  
So God imparts to human hearts  
the blessed grace of heaven.  
No ear may hear his coming;  
but in this world of sin,  
where meek souls will receive him, still  
the dear Christ enters in.
4. O holy child of Bethlehem,  
descend to us we pray;  
cast out our sin and enter in,  
be born in us today.  
We hear the Christmas angels  
the great glad tidings tell;  
O come to us, abide with us,  
our Lord Emmanuel.

*Phillips Brooks (1835-1893) alt.*

## **A Reflection:**

### Three Monologues

1. the Christmas people address Jesus
2. Jesus addresses his God
3. God addresses the Christmas people

*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 10:00am today:*

*<https://youtu.be/MTPqphajoPU>*

## **Hymn:**

Salisbury Street

Colin Gibson (1933-2022)



1. Bring in your new world, child of the sun,  
God's shining Presence, bright in your essence,  
Christmas begun;  
bring to our sad world light and delight,  
singing and laughter, hope as our shelter,  
stars to our night.
2. Bring in your new world, child of the east,  
dangerous leader, born to be pleader,  
prophet and priest;  
come with your judgment, voice for the poor,  
born to collision God's righteous vision  
here at our door.
3. Bring in your new world, child of all time,  
peace without border, peace the new order,  
lion with lamb;  
come in the healing, sharing of bread,  
justice and freedom, signs on the kingdom,  
everyone fed.
4. Bring in your new word, child of our earth,  
holding creation in your compassion,  
waiting your birth;  
come little human, cry your first breath,  
cry out God's kindness, light out of blindness,  
life out of death.

*Shirley Erena Murray (1931-2020)*

## Prayers for Others and Ourselves

To the minister's words "God of the Christmas child",  
you are invited to respond "**BRING IN YOUR NEW WORLD**".

. . . **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.**

### Hymn:

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**

A retiring offering is collected for the Christian World Service Christmas Appeal



 **Christian  
World Service**  
Celebrating 80 years

This Christmas  
we are focusing  
on helping our  
global partners  
to provide safe  
water.

**Give water**  
**Give life**

**DONATE NOW**  
[www.cws.org.nz](http://www.cws.org.nz)

"But let justice roll on like a river"  
Amos 5:24

Over 1.4 million people in developing countries, mainly children,  
die each year from diseases caused by lack of safe water for  
drinking, for hygiene, and/or for sanitation.  
World Health Organisation, 2024.

Photo: Christian World Service

