

*Welcome! Haere Mai!*  
**St John's Anglican Church, Ōtūmoetai**



**Wednesday, 24 December 2025**  
*Christmas Eve*

**Processional Hymn:**

Once in Royal David's city  
stood a lowly cattle shed  
where a mother laid her baby  
in a manger for a bed  
Mary was that Mother mild  
Jesus Christ, Her little Child

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 meek and lowly  
lived on earth our Saviour holy

And our eyes at last shall see Him  
through His own redeeming love  
for that Child so dear and gently  
is our Lord from heaven above  
and He leads His children on  
to the place where He has gone

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  
there His children gather round  
bright like stars with glory crowned.

## **Welcome and Greeting:**

In the name of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Grace and peace to you from God.

**God fill you with truth and joy.**

This is the day that the Lord has made.

**Let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

## **Advent Wreath:**

Each week during Advent we lit a candle on the wreath. Every time we lit a candle, we remembered an aspirational attitude that helped us prepare for the coming of the Lord.

The four candles represent: hope, peace, joy and love.

Today, all over the world, the birth of Jesus is celebrated in many different ways, some of them strange to us, but all having one purpose ... to express our joy about Jesus' coming.

We remember Jesus not only as a tiny baby, but also as a grown man. We recall how He loved people, how He helped them, how He taught them, and how He changed their lives. Let us also remember that we too, can learn how to live by following the way He lived.

A fifth candle in the centre of the others, represents Jesus the Light of the world. He came to show us how to live. Let us celebrate His birthday by trying to live as He did.

We light this candle as a sign that Jesus has come.

**Praise the Lord!**

## **Prayer:**

Loving Father, we thank You for Your gifts of **HOPE**, of **PEACE**, of **JOY**, and of **LOVE**. We thank You especially for the best gift of all, **Your Son Jesus**. He made all these other gifts possible.

Help us to understand His teaching, help us to be more like Him, and to love You as He loved You. **Amen.**

### **Collect for Purity:**

**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,  
so that we may truly love You, and  
worthily praise Your holy Name;  
through our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

### **The Gloria:**

**Glory to God in the highest and  
peace to God's people on earth.  
Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father,  
we worship You, we give You thanks,  
we praise You for Your glory.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,  
Lord God, Lamb of God,  
You take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us;  
You are seated at the right hand of the Father  
receive our prayer.**

**For You alone are the Holy One,  
You alone are the Lord  
You alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

### **The Summary of the Law:**

**Hear the teaching of Christ: a new commandment I give to you,  
that you love one another as I have loved you.**

**Spirit of God, search our hearts.**

## **Confession:**

Hear God's Word to all who turn to Christ:

God so loved the world that He gave His only Son,  
that whoever believes in Him should not perish  
but have eternal life.

*John 3: 16*

Jesus said: "Come to me all who labour and are heavy laden  
and I will give you rest."

*Matthew 11:28, ESV*

*Silence*

God has promised forgiveness to all who:

truly repent  
turn to Christ in faith, and  
are themselves forgiving.

In silence, let us call to mind our sins:

*Silence*

Let us confess our sins:

**Merciful God, we have sinned in what we have  
thought and said, in the wrong we have done  
and in the good we have not done.  
We have sinned in ignorance; we have sinned in weakness;  
we have sinned through our own deliberate fault.  
We are truly sorry. We repent and turn to You.  
Forgive us, for our Saviour's sake, and renew our lives  
to the glory of Your Name. Amen.**

## **Absolution:**

Through the cross of Christ, God have mercy on you,  
pardon you and set you free.

Know that you are forgiven and be at peace.

God strengthen you in all goodness and keep you in life eternal.

**Amen.**

### **Sharing the Word:**

The peace of Christ rule in our hearts.

**The Word of Christ dwell in us richly.**

### **Sentence:**

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;  
for to us a child is born, to us a son is given. *Isaiah 9:2, 6*

### **Collect:**

**Son of God, Child of Mary, born in the stable at Bethlehem,  
be born again in us this day that through us, the world may  
know the wonder of Your love. Hear this prayer for Your  
Name's sake. Amen.**

### **A reading from the prophet Isaiah:** *Isaiah 9: 2-7*

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

**Thanks be to God.**

### **Psalm 96:**

O sing to the Lord a new song:

**Sing to the Lord all the earth.**

Sing, and give praise to God's Name

**Tell the glad news of salvation from day to day**

Proclaim God's glory to the nations

**God's marvellous deeds to all the peoples**

For You O Lord are great and highly to be praised

**more to be feared than all the gods**

The gods of the nations are no more than idols

**but You O Lord are the One Who made the heavens**

Glory and majesty attend You

**strength and beauty are in Your sanctuary**

Ascribe to the Lord, you families of the nations

**ascribe to the Lord honour and might**

Ascribe due honour to God's holy Name  
**bring offerings, and enter the courts of the Lord**

Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness  
**let the whole earth stand in awe**

Proclaim to the nations, 'The Lord is King  
**the Lord has made the world so firm it cannot be moved,  
and will judge the peoples with justice**

Let the heavens rejoice, and the earth be glad  
**let the sea roar and all the creatures in it**

Let the fields be joyful and all that is in them  
**then all the trees of the forest will shout with joy  
before the Lord**

For You O Lord are coming to judge the earth  
**with righteousness You will judge the world,  
and the peoples with Your Truth.**

**Glory to God, Source of all being,  
Incarnate Word, and Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning,  
is now and will be forever. Amen.**

**A reading from Paul's letter to Titus:** *Titus 2: 11-14*

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**Gradual Hymn:**

Silent night, Holy night  
All is calm all is bright  
Round yon virgin Mother and Child  
Holy infant so tender and mild  
Sleep in heavenly peace  
Sleep in heavenly peace

Silent night, Holy night  
Shepherds quake at the sight  
Glories stream from heaven afar  
Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia  
Christ the Saviour is born  
Christ the Saviour is born

Silent night, Holy night  
Son of God, Love's pure Light  
Radiant beams from Thy holy face  
With the dawn of redeeming grace  
Jesus, Lord at Thy birth  
Jesus, Lord at Thy birth.

### **Gospel:**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke:

**Praise and glory to God.**

*Luke 2: 1-14*

This is the Gospel of Christ.

**Praise to Christ, the Word.**

### **Sermon**

#### **The Nicene Creed:**

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty  
Maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God  
eternally begotten of the Father, God from God,  
Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten not made,  
of one being with the Father;  
through Him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation He came down from heaven,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary  
and became fully human.**

**For our sake He was crucified under Pontius Pilate,  
He suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day He rose again, in accordance  
with the scriptures; He ascended into heaven and is seated  
at the right hand of God the Father.  
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead  
and His kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of life,  
Who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
Who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshipped and  
glorified and has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead and  
the life of the world to come. Amen.**

### **Prayers of the People:**

*Let us pray for the Church and the world giving thanks for God's  
goodness ...*

Today we pray for the people of Ontong Java, and for the people of  
the Reporoa Co-operating parish and their minister.

We pray also for those in need, especially those who have asked for  
our prayers: Craig, Viv, Hazel, Lynda, Lawrence, Vaughan, Kathy,  
Joanna, Reg

### **The Peace:**

The peace of Christ be always with you.

**And also with you.**

E te whānau / Brothers and sisters, we are the body of Christ.

**By one Spirit we were baptised into one body.**

Keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

**Amen. We are bound by the love of Christ.**



### **Offertory Hymn:**

While shepherds watched their flocks by night  
All seated on the ground  
An angel of the Lord came down  
And glory shone around

Fear not, said he, for mighty dread  
Had seized their troubled mind  
Glad tidings of great joy I bring  
To you and all mankind

To you in David's town this day  
Is born of David's line  
A Saviour Who is Christ the Lord  
And this shall be the sign

The heavenly Babe you there shall find  
To human view displayed  
All meanly wrapped in swathing bands  
And in a manger laid

Thus, spake the seraph and forthwith  
appeared a shining throng  
Of angels praising God, who thus  
Addressed their joyful song

"All glory be to God on high  
and on the earth be peace  
Goodwill henceforth from heav'n to all  
begin and never cease."

### **Prayer at the Preparation of the Table:**

Blessed are You, Lord God of all creation:  
through Your goodness we have these gifts to share,  
Accept and use our offerings for Your glory  
and for the service of Your kingdom.

**Blessed be God forever.**

## **The Great Thanksgiving:**

The Lord is here.

**God's Spirit is with us.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to offer thanks and praise.**

It is right indeed, it is our joy and our salvation, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, at all times and in all places to give You thanks and praise through Christ Your only Son.

You are the Source of all life and goodness;  
through Your eternal Word, You have created all things from the beginning and formed us in Your own image;  
male and female You created us.

When we sinned and turned away, You brought us back to Yourself and gave Your Son to share our human nature.

*In Him the light which shines for all has come into the world,  
and He has become One with us that we may become  
one with You.*

In Him You have made us a holy people  
by sending upon us Your Holy and life-giving Spirit.

Therefore, with the faithful who rest in Him, with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven, we proclaim Your great and glorious name, forever praising You and 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 the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

All glory and thanksgiving to You Holy Father; on the night before He died, Your Son Jesus Christ took bread; when He had given You thanks, He broke it, gave it to His disciples and said:

Take, eat, this is My body,  
which is given for you;  
do this to remember Me.

After supper, He took the cup; when He had given You thanks, He gave it to them and said:

Drink this, all of you. This is My blood of the new covenant  
which is shed for you and for many  
for the forgiveness of sins;  
do this as often as you drink it, to remember Me.

**Glory to You Lord Christ. Your death we show forth;  
Your resurrection we proclaim; Your coming we await.  
Amen! Come Lord Jesus.**

Therefore, loving God, recalling Your great goodness to us in Christ, His suffering and death; His resurrection and ascension; and looking for His coming in glory, we celebrate our redemption with this bread of life and this cup of salvation. Accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving which we offer through Christ our great high priest.

Send Your Holy Spirit, that these gifts of bread and wine which we receive, may be to us the body and blood of Christ, and that we, filled with the Spirit's grace and power, may be renewed for the service of Your kingdom.

United in Christ with all who stand before You in earth and heaven, we worship You, O God in songs of everlasting praise.

**Blessing, honour and glory be Yours,  
here and everywhere, now and forever. Amen.**

*As our Lord has taught us, let's sing together:*

**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 forever. Amen.**

### **The Breaking of Bread:**

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

**We who are many are one body,  
for we all share the one bread.**

Let's pray together:

**Most merciful Lord, Your love compels us to come in.  
Our hands were unclean, our hearts were unprepared;  
we were not fit to eat the crumbs from under Your table.  
But You, Lord, are the God of our salvation  
and share Your bread with sinners.**

**So cleanse and feed us with the precious body and blood  
of Your Son, that He may live in us and we in Him;  
and that we, with the whole company of Christ,  
may sit and eat in Your kingdom. Amen.**

### **The Invitation:**

Draw near and receive the body and blood  
of our Saviour, Jesus Christ in remembrance that He died for us.  
Let us feed on Him in our hearts by faith with thanksgiving.

### **Prayers after Communion:**

Father of all, we give You thanks and praise, that when we  
were still far off, You met us in Your Son and brought us home.  
Dying and living, He declared Your love, gave us grace

and opened the gate of glory. May we who share Christ's body live His risen life; we who drink His cup, bring life to others; we whom the Spirit lights give light to the world.

**Keep us firm in the hope You have set before us, so we and all Your children shall be free, and the whole earth live to praise Your name. Amen.**

**Blessing:**

May the peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God and of His Son Jesus Christ ... and may the blessing of almighty God; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be with you, and all those you love, and with those you struggle to love, this day and always. **Amen.**

**Recessional Hymn:**

Angels from the realm of glory  
Wing your flight o'er all the earth  
Ye who sang creations story  
Now proclaim Messiah's birth

*Come ... and worship  
Christ the new-born King  
Come ... and worship  
Worship Christ, the new-born King*

Shepherds in in the fields abiding  
Watching o'er your flocks by night  
God is now with us residing  
Yonder shines the Infant Light

*Come ... and worship  
Christ the new-born King  
Come ... and worship  
Worship Christ, the new-born King*

Sages, leave your contemplations  
Brighter visions beam afar  
Seek the great desire of nations  
Ye have seen His natal star

*Come ... and worship  
Christ the new-born King  
Come ... and worship  
Worship Christ, the new-born King*

Saints before the altar bending  
Watching long in hope and fear  
Suddenly the Lord descending  
In His Temple shall appear

*Come ... and worship  
Christ the new-born King  
Come ... and worship  
Worship Christ, the new-born King*

Though an infant now we view Him  
He shall fill His Father's throne  
Gather all the nations to Him  
Ev'ry knee shall then bow down

*Come ... and worship  
Christ the new-born King  
Come ... and worship  
Worship Christ, the new-born King*

**Dismissal:**

Haere i runga i te rangimarie, i runga i te aroha,  
me te ngakau hihiko, ki te mahi, ki te Ariki.

Go now to love and serve the Lord. Go in peace.

**Amen. We go in the name of Christ.**

This service comes from "A New Zealand Prayer Book: He Karakia Mihinare o Aotearoa" p. 404 *Thanksgiving of the People of God* and is used in accordance with GSTHW Canons and regulations.  
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