

**Sunday, 20 December 2020**

**Holy Communion  
at St Paul's, Ashgrove**

**Advent 4 2020**



**HYMN: Tell Out My Soul (TiS 161)**

P: Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins, **whose mercy endures forever.**  
The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

***Lighting of the Second Advent Candle—The Candle of Peace***

We have lit three candles—for hope, for peace, and for joy. Today we light the fourth candle—the candle of love. With this flame we signify the love of God that surrounds and fills us at all times, but that we recognize in a special way in the Christmas story. There is no greater power than love. It is stronger than rulers and empires, stronger than grief or despair, stronger even than death. We love, because God loves us.

The Candle is lit, and a new decoration is placed on the tree.

*O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
And ransom captive Israel,  
That mourns in lonely exile here,  
Until the Son of God appear.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel.*

O come, Thou Rod of Jesse, free  
Thine own from Satan's tyranny;  
From depths of hell Thy people save,  
And give them victory o'er the grave.  
*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel.*

*O come, Thou Key of David, come  
And open wide our heav'nly home;  
Make safe the way that leads on high,  
And close the path to misery.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel.*

O come, Thou Dayspring, from on high,  
And cheer us by Thy drawing nigh;  
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
And death's dark shadows put to flight.  
*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel.*

Loving God, in this time of preparation and planning,  
We thank you for the hope and peace you unfailingly offer us.

**Show us the creative power of hope.  
Teach us the peace that comes from justice.  
Prepare our hearts to be transformed by you,  
That we may walk in the light of Christ.**

LA: We acknowledge the traditional owners of the land where we gather today – the Yuggera and Ugarapul people – we celebrate their culture and pay respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging.

LA: This child will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High. He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end. Luke 1.32–33

LA: [Let us pray.]

**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.**

P: Gracious God,  
whose eternal Word took flesh among us  
when Mary placed her life at the service of your will:  
prepare our hearts for his coming again  
and keep us steadfast in hope,  
that we may be ready for the coming of his kingdom;  
for his sake, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. Amen.

## **2 Samuel 7.1-11, 7.16**

<sup>1</sup> Now when the king was settled in his house, and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies around him, <sup>2</sup> the king said to the prophet Nathan, 'See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent.' <sup>3</sup> Nathan said to the king, 'Go, do all that you have in mind; for the Lord is with you.' <sup>4</sup> But that same night the word of the Lord came to Nathan: <sup>5</sup> Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the Lord : Are you the one to build me a house to live in? <sup>6</sup> I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. <sup>7</sup> Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, 'Why have you not built me a house of cedar?' <sup>8</sup> Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the Lord of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; <sup>9</sup> and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. <sup>10</sup> And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, <sup>11</sup> from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house. <sup>16</sup> Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure for ever before me; your throne shall be established for ever.

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

## **Song of Mary**

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord:  
**my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,**

Who has looked with favour on his lowly servant:  
**from this day all generations will call me blessed;**

The Almighty has done great things for me:  
**and holy is his name.**

God has mercy on those who fear him:  
**from generation to generation.**

The Lord has shown strength with his arm:  
**and scattered the proud in their conceit,**

Casting down the mighty from their thrones:  
**and lifting up the lowly.**

God has filled the hungry with good things:  
**and sent the rich away empty.**

He has come to the aid of his servant Israel:  
**to remember the promise of mercy,**

The promise made to our forebears:  
**to Abraham and his children for ever.**

#### **Romans 16.25-27**

<sup>25</sup> Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages <sup>26</sup> but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith— <sup>27</sup> to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory for ever! Amen.

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

**Hymn: God is Love** (TiS 153)

The gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke chapter 1 beginning at verse 26  
**Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ**

#### **Luke 1.26-38**

<sup>26</sup> In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, <sup>27</sup> to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup> And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.' <sup>29</sup> But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup> The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. <sup>31</sup> And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup> He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. <sup>33</sup> He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.' <sup>34</sup> Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?' <sup>35</sup> The angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. <sup>36</sup> And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. <sup>37</sup> For nothing will be impossible with God.' <sup>38</sup> Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her.

For the gospel of the Lord, **praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ**

## **Sermon**

**LA:** 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.**

## **LA: THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

Let us pray for the world and for the Church.

**LA:** 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**

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

**LA:** 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.**

P: Almighty God,  
who has promised forgiveness to all who turn to him in faith:  
pardon you and set you free from all your sins,  
strengthen you in all goodness  
and keep you in eternal life,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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

*All may exchange a sign of peace, maintaining 1.5m separation and without touching.*

**HYMN: I Will Raise You up (TiS 48)**



*Note that we cannot pass collection bowls around at this time. There is a box at the back of the building to receive your offerings. Alternatively, please consider giving electronically through your bank. St Paul's bank details are BSB: 704901 Acc NO: 00004420*

P: 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.**

All glory and honour be yours always and everywhere,  
mighty Creator, everliving God.  
We give you thanks and praise for your son,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ,  
who by the power of your Spirit was born of Mary  
and lived as one of us.  
By his death on the cross  
and rising to new life,  
he offered the one true sacrifice for sin  
and obtained an eternal deliverance for his people.  
We thank you that when he shall come again  
in power and great triumph to judge the world,  
we may with joy behold his appearing,  
and in confidence stand before him  
who redeems us from sin and death  
and makes us heirs of everlasting life.

Therefore with angels and archangels,  
and with all the company of heaven,  
we proclaim your great and glorious name,  
for ever 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 Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

Merciful God, we thank you  
for these gifts of your creation,  
this bread and wine,  
and we pray that by your Word and Holy Spirit,  
we who eat and drink them  
may be partakers of Christ's body and blood.

On the night he was betrayed Jesus took bread;  
and when he had given you thanks  
he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying,  
'Take, eat. This is my body given for you.  
Do this in remembrance of me.'

After supper, he took the cup,  
and again giving you thanks  
he gave it to his disciples, saying,  
'Drink from this, all of you.  
This is my blood of the new covenant  
shed for you and for many  
for the forgiveness of sins.  
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.'

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

Therefore we do as our Saviour has commanded:  
proclaiming his offering of himself  
made once for all upon the cross,  
his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension,  
and looking for his coming again,  
we celebrate, with this bread and this cup,  
his one perfect and sufficient sacrifice  
for the sins of the whole world.

Renew us by your Holy Spirit,  
unite us in the body of your Son,  
and bring us with all your people  
into the joy of your eternal kingdom;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
with whom, and in whom,  
in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,

we worship you, Father,  
in songs of never ending praise:

**Blessing and honour and glory and power  
are yours for ever and ever. Amen.**

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.**

The gifts of God for the people of God.  
Come let us take this holy sacrament of the body and blood of Christ in remembrance that he died  
for us, and feed on him in our hearts by faith with thanksgiving.

*Special Covid-19 Guidelines: Please come forward to receive communion (bread only). Maintain  
1.5m separation as you move forward. Queue close to the pew – not in the centre of the isle – in  
one line. Sanitise hands. Receive the bread while standing and return to your seat.  
While others are receiving communion you may wish to listen or quietly sing along to the  
communion hymn while remaining seated.*

**Communion Hymn (Not announced): Silent Night (TiS 311)**

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*

*Please stand for the blessing:*

May love be born in you,  
As he was in Bethlehem,  
To parents unprepared for such a gift.  
May love find you unprepared yet willing  
To receive its smiles and tears,  
Its painful truths and gentle silences,  
Its gifts and sacrifices.  
and the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always. Amen.

Depart in peace, and take with you the certain knowledge  
That God is always coming into the world.

**We will seek God, not in a long ago stable or ancient manger,  
But in the people we meet and the depths of our own hearts.**

May the blessing of Christmas make you a blessing to others;  
May the peace of the season pervade all that you do.

**We will welcome the challenge of discipleship.**

**We will offer ourselves as God's ministers.**

**We will go forth in hope, peace, joy, and love.**

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

**HYMN: Love Divine (TiS 217)**

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Copyright 1995, The Anglican Church of Australia Trust Corporation, From the text of *A Prayer Book for Australia* 1995, The Anglican Church of Australia and published under the imprint of Broughton Books. Reproduced with permission.

Scripture quotations are from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible, 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA. Used by permission.