



CHRISTMAS
DAY
2025

10AM

Nau mai, haere mai;
a warm welcome to St Matthew-in-the-City,
a spirited place where people stand,
connect, and seek common ground.

We are glad you have come
to celebrate Christmas
with this community.

We hope that you will find
the Christmas spirit of peace and love
in today's celebrations.

Presider: Rev Richard Bonifant

Preacher: Rev Cate Thorn

St Matthew's Voices

Organist: Nicholas Forbes

*At any time in the service when we invite you to stand
you are welcome to remain seated if you need to.*

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

**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.*

**God from God, Light from Light,
lo, he abhors not the Virgin's womb!
Very God, begotten, not created:**

O come, let us adore him...

**See how the shepherds summoned to his cradle,
leaving their flocks, draw nigh with holy fear;
we too will thither bend our joyful footsteps:**

O come, let us adore him...

**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...

**Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning
Jesus, to thee be glory given;
Word of the Father now in flesh appearing:**

O come, let us adore him...

*Words: possibly by John Francis Wade (c.1711-1786)
Tune: Adeste Fideles, probably by John Francis Wade (c.1711-1786). TIS 304*

WELCOME

Priest:

Kia tau ki a koutou, te atawhai me te rangimarie o te Atua.
Grace and peace to you from God.

God fill you with truth and joy.

Liturgist:

We were walking in cold and darkness.

Now we dwell in the warmth of your light.

For your love and goodness
we give you thanks, O God.

A child has been born for us,
a new beginning is given to us.

For your love and goodness
we give you thanks, O God.

You are our creator, you dwell in our midst,
you bring us your peace.

For your love and goodness
we give you thanks, O God.

Please be seated.

GLORIA

from Coronation Mass, KV 317

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

SENTENCE AND PRAYER FOR THE DAY

I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people:
to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour,
who is the Messiah.

Luke 2:10-11

**God of every creature,
we praise you for the shepherds
who lived between the earth and sky,
who, with animals and angels,
greeted the Word made flesh:
may we share their urgency
to meet the promised child
with wonder and with joy. Amen.¹**

FIRST READING

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah.

Isaiah 9:2-7

May we hear angel voices.

May we see the star.

GRADUAL HYMN

**Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head;
the stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay;
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.**

**The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.
I love you, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky
and stay by my side until morning is nigh.**

**Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay
close by me forever, and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in your tender care,
and fit us for heaven to live with you there.**

Words: verses 1-2: Trad. Carol (19th century); verse 3: attr. to John Thomas McFarland

Tune: Cradle Song, melody by William James Kirkpatrick (1838-1921)

arr. David Willcocks. Carols for Choir 1, #2

¹ *Steven Shakespeare*

We turn to face the Gospel reader.

THE GOSPEL

Hear the Gospel of Christ according to Luke,
chapter two, beginning at verse eight.



Shine on our path -ways.

Luke 2:8-20

This is the Gospel of Christ.



May we hear wis - dom.

REFLECTION

ANTHEM

Ding dong! merrily on high

Trad., arr. by Malcolm Williamson (1931-2003)

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Let us be still and mindful of the world, the Church,
this nation, our communities, and ourselves.

THE PEACE

Please stand for the Greeting of Peace.

Blessed be Christ the Prince of Peace

who breaks down the walls that divide.

The peace of God be always with you

and also with you.

Please turn and greet those around you with peace.

OFFERTORY HYMN *

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.

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.

How silently, how silently
the wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
the blessings of his 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.

* *During this hymn there is a collection to support St Matthew's.*

For electronic giving options:

1. *to make a fast one-off, or ongoing, donation to St Matthew-in-the-City text **stmatthew** to **818**, or **scan this QR code**:*
2. *use the Tap-n-Go terminal on top of the donation box.*



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.

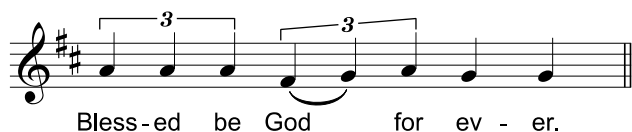
Words: Phillips Brooks (1835-1893)
 Tune: Forest Green, English traditional melody
 coll., adapt. and arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958). TIS 316

THE PREPARATION OF THE GIFTS

Cantor:

Glory be to God who flows through all creation,
 blessing us with gifts to share.

All:



THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

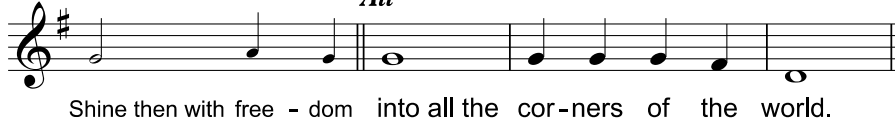
Cantor

All



Cantor

All



Cantor

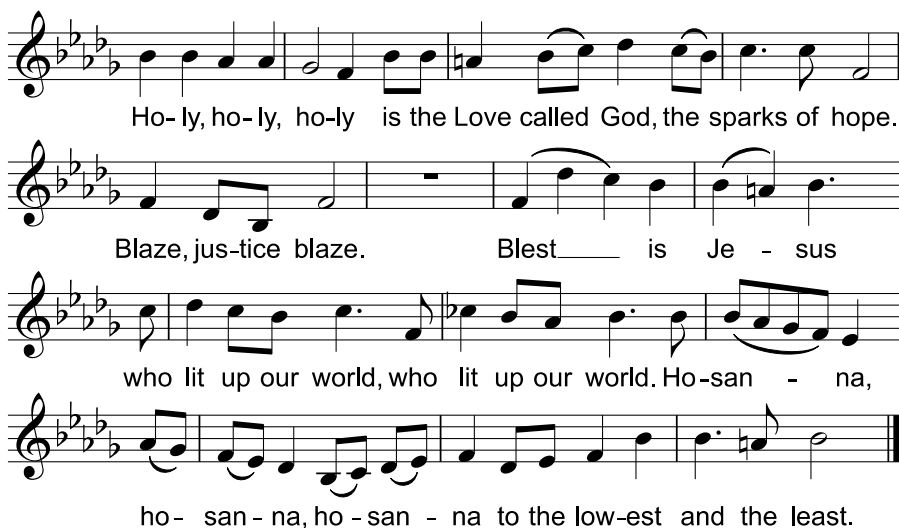
All



All life is holy, sacred; worthy of respect and dignity.
Let us give thanks for the power of the heart
to sense the holy in the midst of the simple.

Power and possibility of Love,
we praise you and give you thanks,
for on this morning Jesus was born among us,
a baby needy and naked, born into poverty and oppression,
in order to proclaim the gift
of your transforming grace and justice.

Therefore with all the faithful, living and dead,
with Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, Magi, and angels,
we proclaim your great and glorious name,
forever praising you and singing:



Ho-ly, ho-ly, ho-ly is the Love called God, the sparks of hope.

Blaze, jus-tice blaze. Blest is Je - sus

who lit up our world, who lit up our world. Ho-san - na,

ho - san - na, ho - san - na to the low-est and the least.

On the night before he died Jesus 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,
for this is my blood which brings new life;
do this as often as you drink it, to remember me.

With this bread and wine we answer the call of God.



We of - fer bread to eat with eyes and hands held
o - pen. We pass this cup to share. We take, break,
bless and give kind-ling hope ev' - ry where.

Empower our celebration, Spirit of promise,
feed us with your life, fire us with your love,
confront us with your justice,
and make us one with all who share your gifts of love.

Amen.

Please be seated.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Kua akona nei tātou e to tātou Ariki, ka inoi tātou:

**E tō mātou Matua i te rangi,
kia tapu tōu Ingoa.**

Kia tae mai tōu rangatiratanga.

**Kia meatia tāu e pai ai ki runga ki te whenua,
kia rite anō ki tō te rangi.**

**Hōmai ki a mātou āianeī
he taro mā mātou mō tēnei rā.**

**Murua ō mātou hara,
me mātou hoki e muru nei,
i ō te hunga e hara ana ki a mātou.**

**Aua hoki mātou e kawea kia whakawaia;
engari whakaorangia mātou i te kino:**

**Nōu hoki te rangatiratanga, te kaha, me te korōria,
Āke, ake, ake. Āmine.**

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

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

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

“Hodie Christus natus est”²

Plainchant

² Translation: Today is Christ born; today the Savior has appeared;
today the Angels sing, the Archangels rejoice;
today the righteous rejoice, saying: Glory to God in the highest. Alleluia!

TE POWHIRI THE INVITATION

Haere mai e te kahui a te Atua,
Tangohia enei kai rangatira a te Karaiti.

Come bringing your varied faiths and backgrounds,
for all are welcome to share in this act of communion.

*All are welcome to come and receive the bread and wine;
there are gluten free wafers, just ask the serving priest.*

*There is a chalice for dipping –
simply hold the bread in front of you to signify your choice.*

If you do not wish to take communion you may come forward for a blessing.

*If the stairs are a barrier please sit in the front pews
and communion will be brought to you.*

Te Taro o te Ora. The Bread of Life.

Te Kapu o te Ora. The Cup of Salvation

MUSIC DURING COMMUNION

Love came down at Christmas

Alexander L'Estrange

I sing of a maiden

Richard Madden

When Christ was born of Mary free

John Gardner (1917-2011)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Welcome, welcome, Jesus Christ our infant Saviour,
baby who makes every birth holy.

**May we, who like the shepherds
have witnessed in the stable a new kind of love
return to our work with joy.**

**May we, for whom the heavens have opened
to proclaim that God is with us,
we who have fed on living bread
and drunk the wine of heaven,
go out to be instruments of your peace,
day by day. Amen.**

BLESSING

Do not be afraid
the light still shines in the darkness,
and the darkness cannot overcome it.
Bear the light of Christ into the world
with hope and great joy!
The love of God,
the light of Christ,
and the joy of the Holy Spirit
abide with you this holy day and forever.
Amen.

FINAL HYMN

**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!”**

**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 Godhead see;
hail th’incarnate Deity,
pleased with us in flesh to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel!
Hark! the herald angels sing:
“Glory to the new-born King!”**

**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 from the earth,
born to give us second birth.
Hark! the herald angels sing:
“Glory to the new-born King!”**

*Words: Charles Wesley (1707-1788)
Tune: Mendelssohn, from a chorus by Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy (1809-1847)
adapted by William Hayman Cummings (1831-1915). TIS 303*

Deacon from the rear of the church:

Go now to live the Gospel. Go in peace.

Amen. We go in the power of Love.

ORGAN VOLUNTARY

Fantasia on In Dulci Jubilo BWV 729

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

If you want to know more about St Matthew's take a look at our website
<http://www.stmatthews.nz/>, like us on Facebook.

Feel free to take **photos** during our services and share them on
Facebook and Twitter. **No video** recording please.

Toilets are located down the stairs on the left hand side of the church.
An **accessible toilet** is located on the right hand side past the kitchen.

The **Parish Office** is now closed; reopening Monday 12 January 2026.

Sunday services on 28 December, 4, 11, 18, 25 January at 10am only.

Sunday 8am services resume on February 1, 2026

Wednesday 12.20pm services resume on February 4, 2026

Vicar: Rev Richard Bonifant *richard@stmatthews.org.nz*

Priest for Community Engagement: Rev Cate Thorn
cate@stmatthews.org.nz

Curate: Rev Grace Behm *grace@stmatthews.org.nz*

Parish Office **phone:** (09) 379 0625

The service is being live streamed –
the camera only shows the altar area, not the congregation.

*We invite you to **keep** this copy of the Service and take it home with you
to share with another member of your family, or with a friend
OR put in a recycling bin provided at the back of the church.*

Music for Liturgical responses is by Michael CW Bell.

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Cover: Depiction of the infant Christ from the Great West window