



St John the Divine

'Midnight Mass'

Christmas Eve

24th December 2022

WELCOME!

Welcome to our worship and community life at St John the Divine, and to our live-streamed service, linked from our parish website: www.stjohndivine.org.au

Hymn: O little town of Bethlehem

Phillips Brooks (1835-93) alt. - tune: Forest Green

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- 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,
the peace to all on earth;
for Christ is born of Mary;
and, gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep
their watch of wond'ring love.**
- How silently, how silently,
the wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts,
the blessings of his heav'n.
No ear may hear his coming;
but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still
the dear Christ enters in.**
- 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.**

THE ADVENT WREATH

Christ's candle in the centre of the Advent wreath is lit.

Blessed are you, sovereign Lord, King of peace:
to you be praise and glory for ever.
The new light of your incarnate Word
gives gladness in our sorrow,
and a presence in our isolation.
Fill our lives with your light,
until they overflow with gladness and praise. **Amen.**

May the light and love of Christ be with you
All and also with you.

Blessed be God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
All Blessed be God's kingdom, now and forever.

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

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.**

GLORIA AND COLLECT

Peruvian Gloria, led by cantor

- Glory to God, glory to God, glory in the highest!
To God be glory for ever.
Hallelujah! Amen. (x3)**
- Glory to God, glory to God, glory to Christ Jesus!
To God ...**
- Glory to God, glory to God, glory to the Spirit!
To God ...**

Let us pray.

Give us, O God, such love and wonder
that, with shepherds and pilgrims unknown,
we may come to adore the holy Child,
the promised King,
and with our gifts worship him,
our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

A reading from the prophecy of Isaiah 9.2-7:

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness - on them light has shined. You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onwards and for evermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

May your word live in us,
and bear much fruit to your glory.

We say the verses of Psalm 96 alternately:

- 1 O sing to the Lord a new song:
sing to the Lord, all the earth.
- 2 **Sing to the Lord and bless his holy name:
proclaim the good news of his salvation
from day to day.**
- 3 Declare his glory among the nations:
and his wonders among all peoples.
- 4 **For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised:
he is more to be feared than all gods.**
- 5 As for all the gods of the nations, they are mere idols:
it is the Lord who made the heavens.
- 6 **Majesty and glory are before him:
beauty and power are in his sanctuary.**
- 7 Render to the Lord, you families of the nations:
render to the Lord glory and might.
- 8 **Render to the Lord the honour due to his name:
bring offerings and come into his courts.**
- 9 O worship the Lord in the beauty of his holiness:
let the whole earth stand in awe of him.
- 10 **Say among the nations that the Lord is king:
he has made the world so firm
that it can never be moved;
and he shall judge the peoples with equity.**
- 11 Let the heavens rejoice and let the earth be glad:
let the sea roar, and all that fills it:
- 12 **Let the fields rejoice, and everything in them:
then shall all the trees of the wood
shout with joy before the Lord;**
- 13 For he comes, he comes to judge the earth:
he shall judge the world with righteousness,
and the peoples with his truth.

A reading from Paul's letter to Titus 2.11-14:

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ. He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

May your word live in us,
and bear much fruit to your glory.

Hymn: While shepherds watched

by Nahum Tate (1652-1715) alt. - tune: Winchester Old
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CCL No 632290

1. **While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
all seated on the ground,
the angel of the Lord came down,
and glory shone around.**

2. **'Fear not,' said he (for mighty dread
had seized their troubled mind);
'Glad tidings of great joy I bring
to you and humankind.**
3. **'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:**
4. **'The heavenly babe you there shall find
to human view displayed,
all meanly wrapped in swathing bands,
and in a manger laid.'**
5. **Thus spake the Seraph; and forthwith
appeared a shining throng
of angels praising God, who thus
addressed their joyful song:**
6. **'All glory be to God on high,
And on the earth be peace;
Goodwill henceforth from heaven to earth
begin and never cease.'**

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to
St Luke 2.1-20

Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see—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, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.' And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favours!' When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.' So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them.

But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

This is the Gospel of the Lord,
praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

Sermon

Hymn: Silent night

*Joseph Mohr (1792-1848) tr. John Freeman Young (1820-85)
alt. - tune: Silent Night - ©1999 The Australian Hymn Book Co.
Pty Ltd, CCL No 632290*

- 1. Silent night, holy night.**
All is calm, all is bright,
round the virgin mother and child;
holy infant so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace,
sleep in heavenly peace.
- 2. 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.
- 3. Silent night, holy night.**
wondrous star, lend your light,
with the angels let us sing,
Alleluia to our King;
Christ our Saviour is born,
Christ our Saviour is born.

Let us together affirm the faith of the Church:

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ,
God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father;
from there he will come to judge
the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Let us pray for the world and for the Church.

Response:

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Almighty God, you have promised to hear our prayers.
**Grant that what we have asked in faith
we may by your grace receive,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Christ the light of the world has come.
to dispel the darkness of our hearts.
Let us turn to the light and confess our sins.

**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.**

May God who loved the world so much
that he sent his Son to be our Saviour
forgive you your sins,
and make you holy to serve him in the world,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

THE GREETING OF PEACE

Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given,
and his name shall be called the Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9.6

The peace of the Lord be always with you.
And also with you.

Offertory hymn: O come all ye faithful

*by John Frances Wade (c.1711-86) & William Thomas Brooke
(1848-1917) alt. - tune: Adestes Fideles - © The Australian
Hymn Book Company Pty Ltd, 1999, CCL No 632290*

- 1. O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
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. 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 ...**
- 3. Child, for us sinners, poor and in the manger,
fain we embrace thee with love and awe;
who would not love thee, loving us so dearly?
O come ...**
- 4. Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;
'Glory to God, glory in the highest':
O come ...**
- 5. Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning,
Jesus, to thee be glory giv'n;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing:
O come ...**

*The collection and the bread and wine on the altar are
offered to God:*

Word made flesh, life of the world,
in your incarnation you embraced our poverty:
by your Spirit may we share in your riches. **Amen.**

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

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.

Almighty God, you shape your very life
to create and restore and enjoy us for ever.

We gather around your altar
like those who thronged your Son's manger,
longing for you to reassemble women and men,
kings and working people, Jews and Gentiles,
heaven and earth
at the place where our humanity
and your divinity meet.

You have too much love to keep it to yourself;
and though we took up arms against you
and one another,
you disarmed us in coming into our midst
as a defenceless baby.

As his arms were tied in swaddling clothes,
so later his hands were nailed to the cross;
yet you made his birth the foretaste of our redemption
and his death the gateway to resurrection life.

You give us such joy and peace in your company
that our hearts join the angels in the Christmas sky
and around your eternal throne,
singing the hymn of your unending praise:

**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.

God of new birth, as you laid your Son in Mary's arms,
you place these gifts of bread and wine in our hands.
Sanctify your church to be as fragile and tender and true
as the infant Saviour.

Send down your Holy Spirit,
that this bread of wheat gathered from the fields
and this cup of grapes gathered from the vineyards
may be for us the body and blood
of your Son Jesus Christ.

Who, at supper with his disciples,
took bread, gave you thanks,
broke the bread, and gave it to them, saying,
'Take, eat: this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.'

After supper, he took the cup.

Again he gave you thanks, and gave it to his disciples,
saying, '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, in remembrance of me.'

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

Shepherd king,

as you drew the magi to the place of your epiphany,
call us to yourself

and bring your creation to its consummation.

Lift your whole church, living and departed,

to the vision of your glory,
once made flesh in a humble family,
now exalted and reigning with justice and mercy.

In this banquet restore us in your image,
surround us with your company
and prepare us for your freedom,
after the pattern of your Son,
through whom and with whom and in whom,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
we offer our songs of never-ending praise:
**Blessing and honour and glory and power
are yours for ever and ever. Amen.**

As our Saviour Christ has taught us,
we are confident 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.**

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD AND THE COMMUNION

As this broken bread was once many grains which have
been gathered together and made one bread:

**so may your Church be gathered
from the ends of the earth into your kingdom.**

**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.

THE SENDING OUT OF GOD'S PEOPLE

God of heaven, dwelling among us,
we thank you for feeding us with this holy food.
By your grace keep us ever faithful
to your Word made flesh
that as his body in the world
we may bring your presence to all people.

Father,
**we offer ourselves to you
as a living sacrifice
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Send us out in the power of your Spirit
to live and work to your praise and glory.**

Hymn: Hark! The herald angels sing
by Charles Wesley (1707-88) - tune: Mendelssohn
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CCL No 632290

- 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 the angelic host proclaim,
'Christ is born in Bethlehem.'
*Hark, the herald-angels sing
glory to the new-born King.***
- 2. Christ, by highest heaven 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 as man 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 from the earth,
born to give us second birth.
*Hark, the herald-angels sing
glory to the new-born King.***

May the joy of the angels,
the eagerness of the shepherds,
the perseverance of the wise men,
the obedience of Mary and Joseph,
and the peace of the Christ-child
be yours this Christmas;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Go in peace. Proclaim the Word made flesh.
Glory, thanks and praise to God. Amen.

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THIS WEEK IN THE PARISH

Sun 25 th Dec	<u>Christmas Day</u> 9am Eucharist
Mon 26 th Dec	10.30am AI Anon meeting
Tue 27 th Dec	1pm AA meeting 5.30pm community meal: TDRM
Wed 28 th Dec	no Wednesday Eucharist service - these resume on 1st February 7.30pm NA meeting
Thu 29 th Dec	10.30am AA meeting 7.30pm AA meeting
Fri 30 th Dec	-
Sat 31 st Dec	7am AA meeting
2023 - HAPPY NEW YEAR - 2023	
Sun 1 st Jan	<u>Epiphany Sunday</u> 9am Eucharist (the 8am & 10am Sunday services resume on 5th February)

NOTICES

TDRM Christmas carols - thanks

Thanks to all who provided the music and sang at our annual community carols with and for The Dining Room Mission guests and volunteers last Tuesday. It was greatly appreciated.

Food donation arranged by Coles

Thanks to the thoughtful initiative of the management at Coles, Croydon, and the overwhelming generosity of their customers, about five trolleys full of non-perishable food items have been given to St John's. These are being shared with the Tuesday and Wednesday community meals programs, and with Anglicare.

How wonderful that we at St John's are able to bless many others beyond our walls with these gifts arranged by our local Coles supermarket. Thanks to those managing the distribution. What a privilege to share in this blessing!

Community meals over Christmas/New Year

TDRM will continue to provide meals each Tuesday evening from 5.30pm.

The Wednesday evening community meals program is taking a break and will resume on Wednesday 18 January.

January Eucharist services

Sunday services for the whole of January will be combined as a single 9am service. The Wednesday services are pausing after Christmas Day and will resume on 1 February.

Fr John will be on leave from Thursday 5 to Wednesday 25 January. Rev'd Wendy Pullin will be locum during this time.