



**TOORAK
UNITING
CHURCH**

We are a people
who follow Jesus.
His words and actions
inform our living.

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office@toorakuc.org.au

To protect our community, if you have Covid or flu-like symptoms please wear a mask during worship, particularly when singing. Maintaining a distance of 1.5m from others is also recommended.

Order of Service

Wednesday 25 December, 2024

**Christmas Day Service
10:15am Service**

Ministers: **Rev Sylvia Akauola-Tongotongo**
 Rev John Edwards

Director of Music: **Dylan Quinlan-Baskett**



**GOD WITH US,
THE GIFT OF CHRISTMAS**

Introit Sing to the Lord

Hal. H Hopson 1933-

*Sing to the Lord, O sing all the earth. Declare God's glory.
Tell it to all people: Salvation has come. Hallelujah.*

Welcome and Introduction

Lighting of the Candles

Call to Worship

by Dorothy McRae-McMahon

On an ordinary night, among people like us; in an ordinary place,
with homes and streets for living and walking; in a moment in time
when the stars wheeled across the skies as they do now, and sheep
grazed in the grass as they did each day;

All the earth received its Christ.

Christ, the one who came in the silences amid the singing of the
angels, the one who would never leave us, nor forsake us, born of a
woman and offered to us all.

Let us celebrate Christmas, God with us.

Hymn 304 O come all ye faithful

Prayer of Awareness

***Sacred Spirit, you have come to us. You are one with us.
Without our knowing, without our invitation, you are the God
with us who chooses to be in the midst of our everyday ordinary
life. We pray on this Christmas Day, that we are not only more
fully aware of your presence with us, but to welcome you with
grateful hearts, knowing that we are never alone. You are always
with us. Amen.***

Words of Scripture

Reading Isaiah 62: 6-12

Prue Brown

Upon your walls, O Jerusalem,
I have posted sentinels;
all day and all night
they shall never be silent.
You who remind the Lord,
take no rest,
and give him no rest
until he establishes Jerusalem
and makes it renowned throughout the earth.
The Lord has sworn by his right hand
and by his mighty arm:

I will not again give your grain
to be food for your enemies,
and foreigners shall not drink the wine
for which you have laboured;
but those who garner it shall eat it
and praise the Lord,
and those who gather it shall drink it
in my holy courts.

Go through, go through the gates,
prepare the way for the people;
build up, build up the highway,
clear it of stones,
lift up an ensign over the peoples.
The Lord has proclaimed
to the end of the earth:
Say to daughter Zion,
'See, your salvation comes;
his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.'
They shall be called, 'The Holy People,
The Redeemed of the Lord';
and you shall be called, 'Sought Out,
A City Not Forsaken.'

For stories and metaphors that awakens our imaginations
We give thanks.

Choir **The Holy City**

Stephen Adams 1841-1913

*Last night I lay asleeping
There came a dream so fair
I stood in old Jerusalem
Beside the Temple there
I heard the children singing
And ever as they sang
Me thought the voice of Angels
From Heaven' in answer rang
Me thought the voice of Angels
From Heav'n in answer rang*

*Jerusalem! Jerusalem!
Lift up you gates and sing
Hosanna in the highest!
Hosanna to your King!*

*And then me thought my dream was chang'd
The streets no longer rang
Hush'd were the glad Hosannas
The little children sang
The sun grew dark with mystery
The morn was cold and chill
As the shadow of a cross arose
Upon a lonely hill
As the shadow of a cross arose
Upon a lonely hill*

*Jerusalem! Jerusalem!
Hark! How the Angels sing
Hosanna in the Highest!
Hosanna to your King!*

*Jerusalem! Jerusalem!
Sing for the night o'er
Hosanna in the highest!
Hosanna for evermore!
Hosanna in the highest!
Hosanna for evermore!*

Reading Luke 2: 8-20

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.

For the stories of Jesus that brings the Spirit of Christmas
We give thanks.

Hymn 317 Love came down at Christmas

Reflection God with us, the gift of Christmas

Offering and Dedication

In gratitude for the blessings in our lives, we offer our gifts, talents and resources to support the work of the church. May our living and our giving bring hope to others. Amen.

Offering Wexford Carol—Irish trad.

John Rutter 1945-

*Good people all, this Christmas time, consider well and bear in mind
What our good God for us has done, in sending His beloved Son.
With Mary holy we should pray to God with love this Christmas Day;
In Bethlehem upon the morn there was a blest Messiah born.*

*The night before that happy tide the noble virgin and her guide
Were long time seeking up and down to find a lodging in the town.
But mark how all things came to pass: From every door repelled, alas!
As long foretold, their refuge all was but a humble oxen stall.*

*Near Bethlehem did shepherds keep their flocks of lambs and feeding sheep;
To whom God's angels did appear which put the shepherds in great fear.
"Prepare and go", the angels said, "To Bethlehem, be not afraid;
For there you'll find, this happy morn, a princely Babe, sweet Jesus born."*

*With thankful heart and joyful mind, the shepherds went the babe to find,
And as God's angel has foretold, they did our Savior Christ behold.
Within a manger He was laid, and by His side the virgin maid
Attending to the Lord of Life, who came on earth to end all strife.*

*Good people all, this Christmas time, consider well and bear in mind
What our good God for us has done, in sending His beloved Son.*

Community News

Prayers of the People

May the love that breathes life into all humanity and all of creation

Be born again in us today

May the love that brings healing

Be born again in us today

May the love that overcomes hatred and apathy

Be born again in us today

May the love that forgives and renews

Be born again in us today

May the love that brings the blessing of peace

Be born again in us today. Amen.

Hymn 303 Hark the herald angels sing

Blessing

May the love of God born again in us today continue to fill our hearts and minds with all that we need for our journey of life. Go in peace and live life according to your highest values. Go confidently knowing that your God is with you always. Amen.

Postlude

In Dulcissime BWV 729

Johann Sebastian Bach 1685– 1750



The flowers in church today are from Barbara McKinnon

Your offering will be gratefully received via direct credit to
Account Name: Toorak Church
BSB: 033086 Account Number: 911892

Welcome to Toorak Uniting Church

Toorak Uniting Church acknowledges and pays respect to the past, present and future Traditional Custodians and Elders of this nation and the continuation of cultural, spiritual and educational practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We welcome all people irrespective of race, religion, political views, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, or age. Wherever you are on your faith journey, wherever you have come from and wherever you are going to, whatever you believe, whatever you do not believe, you are welcome here at Toorak Uniting Church.

Toorak Uniting Church has been a proud member of the Toorak Ecumenical Movement since signing the Ecumenical Agreement in 1980. We pray for our partner churches: St Peter's Roman Catholic Church, St John's Anglican Church and the Swedish Church.