

*Sunday 22nd December, 2024.*



**St Paul's Presbyterian  
Church Napier.**

*We celebrate life in Christ*

**4th Sunday of Advent Service: 10am**

**GATHERING:**

**Welcome and Notices**

**Lighting the Advent Candle**

**Call to Worship:**

God comes! So don't let go  
of all the reasons to rejoice.

**We will sing a song of Advent  
to the One who fills our lives with joy.**

God comes! So don't stop  
lifting your prayers with thanksgiving.

**We will sing a song of Advent,  
to the One who hears our words and silence.**

God comes! So don't stop  
giving your hearts to God.

**We will sing a song of Advent  
to the One who graces us with a peace  
we cannot begin to understand.**

**We Sing:**      O Come, O Come Emmanuel

O come, O come, Immanuel,  
and ransom captive Israel  
that mourns in lonely exile here  
until the Son of God appear.

*Rejoice! Rejoice! Immanuel  
shall come to you, O Israel.*

O come, O Wisdom from on high,  
who ordered all things mightily;  
to us the path of knowledge show  
and teach us in its ways to go. *Refrain*

O come, O Branch of Jesse's stem,  
unto your own and rescue them!  
From depths of hell your people save,  
and give them victory o'er the grave. *Refrain*

O come, O Key of David, come  
and open wide our heavenly home.  
Make safe for us the heavenward road  
and bar the way to death's abode. *Refrain*

O come, O Bright and Morning Star,  
and bring us comfort from afar!  
Dispel the shadows of the night  
and turn our darkness into light. *Refrain*

**Reading 1:**    Isaiah 12: 2-6

**Prayer**

HEARING:

**Reading 2:**    Micah 2: 2-5a

**We Sing:**      Carol our Christmas

Carol our Christmas, an upside-down Christmas;  
Snow is not falling and trees are not bare.

Carol the summer, and welcome the Christ Child,  
Warm in our sunshine and sweetness of air.

Sing of the gold and the green and the sparkle,  
Water and river and lure of the beach.  
Sing in the happiness of open spaces,  
Sing a nativity summer can reach!

Shepherds and musterers move over hillsides.  
Finding not angels but sheep to be shorn;  
Wise ones make journeys whatever the season.  
Searching for signs of the truth to be born.

Right-side up Christmas belongs to the universe,  
Made in the moment a woman gives birth;  
Hope is the Jesus gift, love is the offering,  
Everywhere, anywhere, here on the Earth.

**Reading 3:** Luke 1: 39-45

**We Sing:** The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came

The angel Gabriel from heaven came,  
his wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame;  
"All hail," said he to meek and lowly Mary,  
"most highly favored maiden." Gloria!

"I come from heav'n to tell the Lord's decree:  
a blessed virgin mother you shall be.  
Your Son shall be Immanuel, by seers foretold,  
most highly favored maiden." Gloria!

Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head;  
"To me be as it pleases God," she said.  
"My soul shall laud and magnify his holy name."  
Most highly favored maiden, Gloria!

Of her, Immanuel, the Christ, was born  
In Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn,

and Christian folk throughout the world will ever say,  
"Most highly favored maiden." Gloria!

**Reading 4:** Luke 1: 46b-55

**We Sing:** Tell out my Soul

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord!  
Unnumbered blessings give my spirit voice;  
tender to me the promise of his word –  
in God my Saviour shall my heart rejoice.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his name!  
Make known his might, the deeds his arm has done;  
his mercy sure, from age to age the same –  
his holy name: the Lord, the Mighty One.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his might!  
Powers and dominions lay their glory by;  
proud hearts and stubborn wills are put to flight,  
the hungry fed, the humble lifted high.

Tell out, my soul, the glories of his word!  
Firm is his promise, and his mercy sure:  
tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord  
to children's children and for evermore!

## **Reflection**

RESPONDING:

## **Prayer**

**Reading 5:** Matthew 1: 18-23

**We Sing.** Hark the Herald Angels Sing (WOV 227)

Hark! the herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn 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 hosts proclaim,  
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"  
*Hark! the herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn King"*

Christ, by highest heaven adored,  
Christ, the everlasting Lord,  
late in time behold him come,  
offspring of the Virgin's womb:  
veiled in flesh the Godhead see;  
hail th'incarnate Deity,  
pleased with us in flesh to dwell,  
Jesus, our Immanuel. [*Refrain*]

Hail the heaven-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. [*Refrain*]

SENDING:

**We Sing:**      A Christmas Blessing

May the feet of God walk with you, and his hand hold you tight.  
May the eye of God rest on you, and his ear hear your cry.  
May the smile of God be for you, and his breath give you life.  
May the Child of God grow in you, and his love bring you home. (x2)

*Service led by Mark Johnston & Carolyn Kelly. Music by Dorothy Finlayson & Pam Clare*

## **Thought this week**

“Discovering more joy, I’m sorry to say doesn’t save us from the inevitability of hardship and heartbreak. In fact, we may cry more easily, but we will laugh more easily too. Perhaps we are just more alive. Yet as we discover joy, we can face suffering in a way that ennobles rather than embitters. We have hardship without becoming hard. We have heartbreak without becoming broken” *Desmond Tutu & the Dalai Lama*

## **Prayer Pointers this week**

1. We pray for ourselves: that we may know moments of joy (even surprisingly) this Christmas.
2. We pray for our country and its peoples, those stressed by the last-minute frenzy, or for those who are afraid or alone, for glimpses of sacred stillness, for moments of loving intervention and attention.
3. We pray for all Christian churches in Napier this week, celebrating Christ’s coming, serving others, providing companionship.

## **ON THIS NIGHT!**

Christmas Eve 9pm Carols with the Gospel Choir, with a cuppa and mince pies from 8.30pm. Here at St Paul’s. Advertising is out in the city, and on Facebook. We could have a crowd so we are looking for volunteers to help on the night, to assist (a) Janice and her catering team (b) 3 ushers to guide the crowd. (c) a couple of bouncers to help with security! Please talk to Carolyn 0204731178

## **Services for next few weeks**

- 24th Dec 9pm:**            ***On This Night*** with Gospel Choir and Carols
- Christmas Day**            No Service at St Paul’s. *You are welcome to join worship at St Johns Anglican Cathedral 10am or Trinity Methodist 9.30am.*
- 29th Dec 10am:**        Worship here at St Paul’s
- 5th Jan 10am:**         Worship with Trinity Methodist, Clive Sq
- 12th Jan 10am:**        Worship here at St Paul’s

## THIS WEEK'S NOTICES:

	<u>Serving Today</u>	<u>Serving 29th Dec 2024</u>
<u>Greeters:</u>	Bruce & Janice Tucker	Christine W & Rika H
<u>Offering</u>	Helen McClymont	Sylvia Low
<u>Bible</u>	Rika Hentschel	Sylvia Low
<u>Music</u>	Dorothy & Pam	Pam Clare
<u>Flowers</u>	Eleanor H & Yvonne D	Marian Eagle
<u>Grounds</u>	Mike & Bev Coghil	Bruce Tucker

### Nourished for Nil:

Appreciates your support. Any non-perishable food is gratefully accepted. In particular, we are always short of breakfast cereals, rice and any type of spread. *Richard Loan, for NFN.*

### Eco Corner

This holiday season, let's embrace the gift of nature and cherish the planet we call home. May your celebrations be as bountiful as a thriving garden, and as sustainable as a forest's ecosystem. As we gather 'round the table, let's toast to a sustainable future and a healthier Earth.

**For any giving and donations to St Paul's Presbyterian Church:  
Our Bank Account is 02 0700 00131 01 00**

### **Contact Information:**

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### **Christmas and New Year Office Hours –**

St Paul's Church office will be closed from **Friday 20<sup>th</sup> Dec to Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> Jan 2025**. Messages can still be left on the office voicemail.

Wishing you all a very happy and peaceful Christmas.