

St Andrew's on The Terrace

Hato Anaru o Te Parehua

Founded 1840

ORDER OF SERVICE

27th December 2015

Christmas 1

The face of God



"A Child is Born" by James Loveless

WELCOME TO ST ANDREW'S ON THE TERRACE

Wherever you are on your faith's journey,
wherever you have come from and wherever you are going to,
whatever you believe, whatever you do not believe, you are welcome here.

Please join in the congregational responses printed in ***bold italics***. Please stand if you are able, for the hymns and the offering prayer. AA is the NZ hymnbook *Alleluia Aotearoa*. We will sing the hymns without announcement.

*Please note your nearest fire exit.
The church and hall have been earthquake strengthened.
In an earthquake: stop, drop and hold.*

GATHERING

“Come” my heart says, “Seek God’s face”

Your face now do we seek.

Do not hide your face from us.

In our feelings and deepest instincts,
in our yearnings for peace and justice;

Your face now do we seek.

Do not hide your face from us.

In the dawning of this morning,
in the hopefulness of the summer season;

Your face now do we seek.

Do not hide your face from us.

In the people and places around us
in the small details of our everyday lives;

Your face now do we seek.

Do not hide your face from us.

Based on Psalm 27:8- 9a

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

Words Phillips Brooks Music Lewis Redner
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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

For Christ is born of Mary
And gathered all above
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wondering love
O morning stars together
Proclaim the holy birth
And praises sing to God the King
And Peace to all on earth.

OPENING RESPONSES

We arise today
Blessed by all things,
Wings of breath,
Delight of eyes,
Wonder of whisper,
Intimacy of touch,
Eternity of soul,
Urgency of thought,
Miracle of health,
Embrace of God.
May we live this day.

John O'Donohue

WELCOME

Kia ora tatou.
Kia ora.

PRAYER

“More than we can dream of” Jan S Pickard

LORD’S PRAYER

on card

LIGHTING THE RAINBOW ROOM CANDLE

TIME WITH CHILDREN

Roster Name

BLESSING THE CHILDREN

We remember the children of this community whether they are here in person or on beaches, at the pool or in the playground, spending time with their families and friends.

God bless you. Amen.

Rainbow Room is on recess this Sunday because of the school holidays. There are toys at the back of the church that children are welcome to enjoy.

PASSING THE PEACE

READINGS Seeing God’s face.

Hebrew Bible Exodus 34:29-35

Gospel John: 1-14 (Voice Bible)

New Testament: 1st Corinthians 13:1-13

RESPONSE

For the word of God in scripture,
for the word of God among us,
for the word of God within us,
We give thanks.

All who would see God's greatness,
draw near, bend down, look low:
see how love appears among us
as small as a child. Then go,
tell of the greatness made so small,
tiny and hidden, God of all.

If you would share God's riches,
draw near, reach out and touch:
God has only love to offer,
enough for us, and too much.
Take up God's treasure, made so poor,
naked the God that we adore.

Would you receive God's power?
Draw near, find strength in this:
laid open to all our violence
is love that will not resist.
This is our God, who chose to be
tied with our bonds to set us free.

Stand in the holy silence
while earth with heaven sings
that here in our hands for holding
is love that sustains all things.
Strange is this love that draws us near:
Glory of God, among us here.

A TIME OF REFLECTION

"Whichever way you turn, there is the face of God."

Quran (The Cow 2:115)

Whichever way we turn, O God, there is your face
in the light of the moon and patterns of stars
in scarred mountain rifts and ancient groves
in mighty seas and creatures of the deep.
Whichever way we turn, O God, there is your face
in the light of eyes we love

in the salt of tears we have tasted
in weathered countenances east and west
in the soft skin glow of the child everywhere.
Whichever way we turn, O God, there is your face,
there is your face among us.

John Philip Newell

We think back quietly over what has happened in our lives since the start of 2015 wondering, "Where have I seen God's face?"

Chant- please sing along if you wish.

"Whichever way you turn" soloist Suzanne Butler from
CD "Chanting for peace, praying with the earth" by John Philip Newell

Blessings

I bless the poverty in your heart, that knows its own emptiness,
because that gives me space to grow my Kingdom there.

I bless that in you that touches others gently,
because everyone responds to gentleness, and gentleness can capture
even hardened hearts.

I bless that in you which grieves and aches for all that is lost or can never
be,
because that is my opportunity to comfort you with my, much greater,
love.

I bless that in you which longs and strives after your own deepest truth
and after truth for the world,
because even as you pray, I am constantly satisfying these deep unspoken
longings.

I bless you every time you show mercy and forgiveness,
because that is like a little window in your heart,

setting you free from resentment and opening up a space for me to enter and to heal.

I bless the purity of your heart,
because that is the elusive centre where your deepest desire meets mine.
That is where we meet face to face.

I bless the peacemaker in you, that in you which seeks the peace that
passes understanding, knowing the cost of its obtaining,
because that is what I sent my Son to give, and in your peacemaking you
become my daughter, my son.

I bless even those things in your experience of journeying with me that
feel like persecution and abuse and misunderstanding,
because they are the proof that your faith is no illusion.

Margaret Silf

OFFERING

**The wise ones and shepherds who brought gifts to Jesus, so
we too offer these gifts to support God's work in the world,
Amen.**

*We recognise and bless the gifts brought to the table and those given
to support the mission of the church through automatic payment.*

HYMN Words Shirley Erena Murray Music Kingsland Colin Gibson No 35 COC
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Peace child,
in the sleep of the night,
in the dark before light
you come,
in the silence of stars,
in the violence of wars--
Saviour, your name.

Peace Child,
to the road and the storm,
to the gun and the bomb
you come,
through the hate and the hurt,
through the hunger and dirt--
bearing a dream.

Peace Child,
to our dark and our sleep,
to the conflict we reap,
now come--
be your dream born alive,
held in hope, wrapped in love:
God's true shalom.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Roster Name

PRAYER for a gift/grace for the next year.

In the hymn "Peace-child" we sang of the gift of peace embodied in the Christ-child and meeting us in the troubled places of our world.

Looking into the New Year, we take some time in silence to reflect " what gift/grace do I need for the year ahead?".

We ask that that grace may grow in us.

HYMN Tune Auld Lang Syne arr Joyce Leong Words Fiona McDougal

Please insert the gift you identified above in the first line of this hymn at ****

A New Year Hymn

For ***** we pray this coming year,
as the old one draws to an end,
we know Your presence with us now
whatever life may send.

*With thanks recalling see'ng Your face
in many shapes and forms,
with hope envis'ning paths we'll tread,
whether lined by ferns or thorns.*

Some plans we made have failed and fall'n
and our dreams have come to naught,
we left or lost someone, or friends
couldn't give the care we sought.
So many changes come our way
but the deepest things remain,
like love and courage, trust and peace,
and it's these our hearts sustain.

*With thanks recalling see'ng Your face
in many shapes and forms,
with hope envis'ning paths we'll tread,
whether lined by ferns or thorns.*

We sing our songs and murmur prayers
to the God who heals and holds
each one of us, through thick and thin
and our whole lifespan enfolds.
Our eyes shine now, our steps are light
as we go out from this place,
we look ahead with energy
and we live in God's great grace.

*With thanks recalling see'ng Your face
in many shapes and forms,
with hope envis'ning paths we'll tread,
whether lined by ferns or thorns.*

BLESSING AND SUNG AMEN

Wherever we go,
**may the joy of God the gracious
be with us.**

Wherever we go,
**May the face of Christ the kindly
be with us.**

Wherever we go,
**may the encompassing of the Spirit of grace
be with us.**

Wherever we go,
**the presence of the Trinity around us
to bless us and to keep us.**

Cover artwork by www.jamesloveless.com

Listen to Joyce Leung's piano arrangement of Auld Lang Syne on youtube www.youtube.com/watch?v=U4XtPx55zzk

READINGS

Hebrew Bible Exodus 34:29-35

The Radiant Face of Moses

When Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tablets of the covenant law in his hands, he was not aware that his face was radiant because he had spoken with the Lord. When Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, his face was radiant, and they were afraid to come near him. But Moses called to them; so Aaron and all the leaders of the community came back to him, and he spoke to them. Afterward all the Israelites came near him, and he gave them all the commands the Lord had given him on Mount Sinai.

When Moses finished speaking to them, he put a veil over his face. But whenever he entered the Lord's presence to speak with him, he removed the veil until he came out. And when he came out and told the Israelites what he had been commanded, they saw that his face was radiant. Then Moses would put the veil back over his face until he went in to speak with the Lord.

Gospel Reading. John 1: 1-14

In the beginning

Before time itself was measured, the Voice was speaking.
The Voice was and is God.
This *celestial* Word remained ever present with the Creator;
His speech shaped the entire cosmos.
Immersed in the practice of creating,

all things that exist were birthed in Him.
His breath filled all things
with a living, breathing light—
A light that thrives in the depths of darkness,
blazes through murky bottoms.
It cannot and will not be quenched.

A man named John, who was sent by God, *was the first to clearly articulate the source of this Light.* This baptizer put in plain words the *elusive mystery of the Divine Light* so all might believe through him. *Some wondered whether he might be the Light,* but John was not the Light. He merely pointed to the Light. The true Light, who shines upon *the heart of everyone*, was coming into the cosmos.

He entered our world, a world He made; yet the world did not recognize Him. Even though He came to His own people, they refused to *listen and* receive Him. But for all who did receive and trust in Him, He gave them the right to be *reborn as* children of God; He bestowed this birthright not by human power or initiative but by God's will.

The Voice took on flesh *and* became human and chose to live alongside us.

THE VOICE BIBLE

1 Corinthians 13

13 If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. ² If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. ³ If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

⁴ Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵ It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶ Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷ It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

⁸ Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will

pass away.⁹ For we know in part and we prophesy in part,¹⁰ but when completeness comes, what is in part disappears.¹¹ When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became an adult, I put the ways of childhood behind me.¹² For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

¹³ And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

More than we can dream of

We thank you God

because you give us

more than we would ever dream of asking:

daily bread and shared meals that become feasts,

the breath of life and voices to celebrate,

the understanding of our history

and the hope of our future.

Work we can do and time to be recreated,

people to love and trust,

people who love and trust us,

gifts and responsibilities.

We thank you, God

because you ask of us

more than we can dream of giving,
skills we have never developed,
care for a world whose problems we cannot solve,
listening which hurts us,
giving which leaves us empty-handed,
love which makes us vulnerable,
faith which seems impossible.

But you do not ask us to be supermen and women,
you challenge us to be human.

Give us the courage to be human
because you yourself became human
and lived our lives,
knowing our imperfections,
sharing our joy and pain,
making us your people.

Jan S Pickard