



The Anglican Church of Australia
Diocese of Wangaratta
The Parish of Kilmore
with Broadford, Pyalong & Tallarook
18th December 2016
Fourth Sunday of Advent



Hymns: 272, 265 (candle), 302, Pewsheet, 273

A warm welcome to everyone, please stay and enjoy hospitality with us after the service.



Angel Appears to Joseph

Introit Hymn

Blessed be God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Blessed be God's kingdom, now and forever.

We are the body of Christ.

His Spirit is with us.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

All may exchange a sign of peace.

Fourth Sunday of Advent

We have lit three candles: one for hope, one for peace, and one for joy. Today we light the fourth candle—the candle of love. With this flame we signify the love of God that surrounds and fills us at all times, but that we recognise in a special way in the Christmas story. There is no greater power than love. It is stronger than rulers and empires, stronger than grief or despair, stronger even than death. We love, because God loves us.

[The fourth candle, the candle of Love is lit.]

[All Sing]

*O come, Thou Key of David, come,
And open wide our heavenly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high,
And close the path to misery.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.*



[The people are invited to join in the dialogue responses.]

Loving God, we open ourselves to you in this Christmas season.

As this candle is lit, light our lives with your imagination.

Show us the creative power of hope;

teach us the peace that comes from justice.

Fill us with joy that cannot be contained, but must be shared;

magnify your love within us.

Prepare our hearts to be transformed by you,

that we may walk in the light of Christ. Amen.

May we know the hope, the peace, the joy, the love,

and the certain knowledge

that God is always coming into the world.

We will seek God, not in a long ago stable or ancient manger,

but in the people we meet and the depths of our own hearts.

May the blessing of Christmas make you a blessing to others;

may the peace of the season pervade all that you do.

We will welcome the challenge of discipleship.

The Liturgy continues on page 119 Green Prayer Book

SENTENCE

A virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel: God with us. *Matthew 1.23*

FOR THE GOSEL - THE TRISAGION



THE COLLECT

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from all that hinders our faith, that eagerly we may receive your promises, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

FIRST READING

Isaiah 7. 10-16

[God promises a sign for King Ahaz, who is looking to Assyria for assistance with the threats of neighbouring Damascus and Samaria, that a virgin will give birth and call the child "Immanuel", and that the enemy nations will be desolate before the child knows good from evil.]

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah

The Lord spoke to Ahaz, 'Ask the Lord your God for a sign, whether in the deepest depths or in the highest heights.' But Ahaz said, 'I will not ask; I will not put the Lord to the test.' Then Isaiah said, 'Hear now, you house of David! Is it not enough to try the patience of humans? Will you try the patience of my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: the virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel. He will be eating curds and honey when he knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right, for before the boy knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right, the land of the two kings you dread will be laid waste.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalms 80.1-7, 17-19

[A prayer for God to forgive and restore God's people, and to send and empower the One God raises up to keep God's people from turning away from God.]

**Response: Show us the light of your countenance, O Lord God of hosts,
and we shall be saved.**

Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, you that led Joseph like a flock;
Shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim,
before Ephraim, Benjamin and Manasseh.

Stir up your mighty strength and come to our salvation.

Turn us again, O God;
show the light of your countenance,
and we shall be saved./R

O Lord God of hosts,
how long will you be angry at your people's prayer?
You feed them with the bread of tears;
you give them abundance of tears to drink.
You have made us the derision of our neighbours,
and our enemies laugh us to scorn./R

Let those who burnt it with fire, who cut it down,
perish at the rebuke of your countenance.
Let your hand be upon the man at your right hand,
the son of man you made so strong for yourself.
And so will we not go back from you;
give us life, and we shall call upon your name./R

SECOND READING

Romans 1. 1-7

[Paul celebrates Christ who is of both human and divine descent and who has called the apostles – and all of God's people – to belong to Jesus and to spread the Good News.]

A reading from Paul's letter to the Romans

Paul writes, 'I, Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God; the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures regarding his Son, who as to his earthly life was a descendant of David, and who through the Spirit of holiness was appointed the Son of God in power by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord. Through him we received grace and apostleship to call all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith for his name's sake. And you also are among those Gentiles who are called to belong to Jesus Christ. To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be his holy people: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.'

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

The virgin shall conceive and | bear a son,
and they shall name | him Emmanuel.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Matthew 1. 18-25

[Mary discovers herself to be pregnant while betrothed to Joseph, but Joseph is informed in a dream that the Child is of God, and must be named Jesus. These events are proclaimed to be the fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy of the virgin who conceives and gives birth to Immanuel.]

A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew

Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.' All this took place to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: 'Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel', which means, 'God is with us.' When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

For the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

THE PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

In the hushed anticipation of your coming, O Lord, remind us that you are always with us, that like Joseph we might always be eager to respond to your message.

Come Lord Jesus, **and hear our prayer.**

O God, in days to come, the mountain of your house will be established, and your joy shall reign; we pray for the church throughout the world preparing to celebrate the coming of the infant Jesus; for our Diocese and John our Bishop, for our parish, that you might teach us your ways and that we might walk in your paths.

Come Lord Jesus, **and hear our prayer.**

Out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and you, O God, shall judge between the nations; we continue our prayer for all nations; we pray for our nation, for our parliamentarians and civic leaders that your peace would be manifest in every corner of the land; for the peoples of Aleppo desperate for peace.

Come Lord Jesus, **and hear our prayer.**

In your Kingdom, O Lord, the sick find relief, the wounded are healed, and the distressed are relieved; we pray for the sick, the suffering, and those in distress of any kind, that you would heal all injuries, comfort all grief, and settle all wrongs; for the dying and those who wait with them that you may open the gates of glory to them and bring calm and peace.

Come Lord Jesus, **and hear our prayer.**

Gracious God, you prophets dreamed visions where justice reigns, where people are valued and honoured regardless of station, race, or gender; we pray for those in need, the hungry, the homeless and the marginalised; those caught in the cycle of addiction; for the lost and the lonely; we pray for those known to us and those who have requested prayer; *Chris Schafer, Karen Goodger, Jean Evans, Belinda Shannon, Jenny Curry, Barbara Kaye, Seth Gunter, Tom Scrivens, Mark Bennetts, Faye Muddyman, Rob Muddyman, Sharon De Battista, Eunice Downie, Carey Bickoff, Lorraine Lipson, Sarah Davidson, John Leonard, Nathan and Sarah.*

We give thanks for healing and blessings wherever received.

Come Lord Jesus, **and hear our prayer.**

Almighty God your kingdom waits for all the faithful and those who seek your nearer presence; we commend into your care the recently departed and those whose years mind occurs at this time.

18th Jeffrey Morgan, Robert Pratt, Gladys Martin, Elsie Chuter, Dianne Humm; 19th Ray Soney; 20th William Mandel, Neville Payne, Ian Poulter 23rd Kevin Elson, McGregor Kean, Edie Pattinson, Rick Casiste; 24th Edna Moore, Kathy Hincks, John Kirby; 25th Christine Marshall, 27th Wilby Milburn, Alice Hughes; 28th John Dixon. 30th Derrick Davies, William Sherwood, Lilliam McLachlan; 31st Edie Hannam, Vera Robinette, Lewis Nyman (priest), Rex Calette.

Rest eternal grant unto them O Lord; **and let light perpetual shine upon them.**

Come Lord Jesus, **and hear our prayer.**

Shepherd of Israel, may Jesus son of Mary and our Emmanuel be more than just a dream in our hearts; hear us as we pray for ourselves; prepare us to meet him anew and with the apostles, prophets, and saints; save us, restore us, and lead us in the way of grace and peace, that we may bear your promise into the world, through him who taught us to pray; **Our Father ... [pg. 124]**

Hymn: When Common Dreams are Shared [Tune TiS 422]

1. When common dreams are shared

And visions are unveiled

Imaginations are not spared;

Ideals are not curtailed.

For dreams enlarge the scope

Of faith by which we live;

Can stimulate us with the hope

That God within can give.

2. When we begin to dream

Or catch a vision clear

New truths emerge; they can redeem;

Cast out our inner fear.

Old ways, they still can tempt,

With so-called certainty,

To drag us back from our attempt

To probe God's mystery.

3. When common dreams are shared

New peace and purpose rise;

New plans are tried, directions dared,

Some risky, some quite wise.

We seek integrity

In faith's inquiry;

In God we find the energy

To forge our destiny.

Reflections on the readings

The readings in this the final Advent week before the Christmas celebration turns our attention to the significance of the name given in Isaiah's prophecy, and ascribed to Jesus by Matthew – "Immanuel" meaning "God with us". The idea that God is with us may seem commonplace to us now, since we've heard it so many times, but for the ancient hearers of the Gospel, it must have sounded radical, or even scandalous. Yet, it reflects the intense longing within God for intimate union with humanity. It is a testament to God's unfailing, unconditional love, and is reinforced by all the readings this week. Isaiah speaks a prophecy which offers a sign of God's care and willingness to protect God's people to a king who has largely ignored God's law. The Psalm offers a prayer in faith and expectation that God cares for God's people and will send one who will lead and deliver them. Paul celebrates the Good News of God's kindness and the belonging we find in God through Christ. And, in a rather moving narrative, Matthew describes Joseph's love and care for Mary, which becomes something of a metaphor (whether intentional or not on Matthew's part) for the love of the God who is about to step physically into human affairs and experience. On the scale of global issues, such love may seem to be completely irrelevant. When governments negotiate, when corporations strategise, when soldiers march, or when the weak and poor struggle to survive, what place is there for love? Yet, God must know something about love that we don't since love is the only command we have been given as followers of Christ. In truth, if love was the driving force behind our voting, our business dealings and our consumption, our dealings with friend and enemy, and our awareness and care of the most vulnerable, the world would be a far more whole place. How could a policy of love actually work out practically in the world, though? Perhaps if the followers of Christ in places of influence began to embrace dialogue, collaboration and the quest to listen and understand, that would be a powerful first step. The Advent challenge this week is for us to follow Christ in becoming – individually and

together – “Immanuel” in our broken world. The incarnation continues through Christians if we take Christ’s call seriously! It’s not hard to discern, how the call to be agents of God’s presence and love should be worked out in our communities. Within our own groups, it’s the simple acts of service, inclusion and grace that easily manifest God’s love. It is more than the obligatory gift giving. Welcoming needy or lonely people into our celebrations – making them part of our family - also offers tremendous healing and transformation. Whatever the actual actions we may choose to do, the key to experiencing Immanuel again this Advent, is to offer ourselves to be “little Immanuels” in practical ways in our own world. If we can lay aside any possible benefit we may receive – so much the better!

Adapted from John de Veer (2016) www.sacredise.com

Notices

**** TONIGHT ** 7pm Community Carols at St Stephens Tallarook. All are welcome.**

Empty Christmas Tree Today is the last opportunity to place your gift. As is our custom an empty Christmas tree during Advent in Christ Church is for donations of Christmas presents to distribute through Anglicare. Wrapped gifts, need to be labelled as being suitable for girl or boy and what age range.

Christmas Bowl envelopes are available to bring to Christmas services.

*****IMPORTANT NOTICE - CHANGE TO BANK ACCOUNT****

Direct Debit/EFT Offerings: Parish Account details: BENDIGO BANK - Account Name ‘Anglican Parish of Kilmore’; BSB 633-000; Account Number 158946921. Parishioners using direct debit or electronic funds transfer please change your bank details when making offerings.

Parish Fete - Once again many thanks to all involved in the Parish Fete at St Matthews. We have a mannequin left at St Matthews who has not been collected by the relevant owner. Please contact Clergy if you can help.

Income from Parish Fete Stalls

Bric-a-Brac	\$438.85	Jumping Castle	\$69.50
Outside Stalls	\$60.00	Raffle	\$1094.45
Friendship Group	\$176.05	Cakes	\$525.50
Exhibts Church	\$85.10	Morning Tea	\$225.70
Lemon Stall	\$225.30	BBQ	\$381.50
Spinning Wheel	\$696.00	Books	\$466.35
Mystery Bottle	\$379.85	Produce	\$225.00
Plants	\$652.65	Craft Books	\$6.00
Total Gross	\$5937.80		

Parish life this week

Fourth week of December

Tuesday 20th	11.00am Carol Service & Eucharist Caladenia
Wednesday 21st	11.00am Meeting with Bishop Wangaratta
Thursday 22nd	10.00am Eucharist St Matthews 10.00am Eucharist Willowmeade 4.00pm Eucharist Dianella
Friday 23rd	10.00am – 4.00pm Op Shop Church House
Saturday 24th	10.00am – 12noon Op Shop Church House 11.30pm Christmas at Midnight St Matthews

Next Sunday: 25th December 2016 The Birth of our Lord Jesus Christ / CHRISTMAS DAY

Isaiah 62. 6-12.; Ps 97; Titus 3. 4-8a; Luke 2. 1-20

Christ Church	9am	Sung Eucharist
St Matthews	11am	No service this day
St Stephens	11am	Holy Eucharist
Transfiguration	11am	Holy Eucharist

Parish Clergy

Rector Revd Dr Kim Benton, 9 Union Street, Kilmore, 3764; Ph 5782 1155
m 0407 569 343; rector@anglicankilmore.org.au

Hon Associate Priest Revd Maryann Leonard, Piva House, 78 High Street, Broadford, 3658; Ph 5784 3007; m 0439 066 553; associatepriest@anglicankilmore.org.au

Priest (PTO) Fr John Young, 9/40 Powlett St, Broadford, 3658; Ph 5784 2224

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Parishioners and visitors are advised that photographs may be taken of activities in the Parish from time to time for use on Parish website, Facebook and for publication in the Advocate. If you do not wish to be included in a photo please stand clear of the group at the time. Photos are never taken without a warning.