

Chatter, eating, and laughter all blending  
with fond memories of other years:  
The personal, spiritual, and secular  
poured together into one incarnational celebration.

It's Christmas season again in this lucky country  
Christ's birthday awaited under evening skies.

Dear God, what a holy day tomorrow will be!  
What a celebration of life and love!  
With the whole church on earth and in heaven,  
we join in the angels' song:  
'Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace, goodwill toward all people'.

Let's stay seated to sing together  
**The North Wind is tossing the leaves (322 TIS)**

John reminds us:

3:<sup>16</sup>"This is how much God loved the world: He gave his Son, his one and only Son. And this is why: so that no one need be destroyed; by believing in him, anyone can have a whole and lasting life.

Almighty God, who gave your only-begotten Son  
to take our nature upon him and as at this time to be born of the virgin Mary:  
grant that we being born again and made your children by adoption and grace,  
may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit; through the same our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who lives and reigns with you and the same Spirit,  
ever one God, now and for ever. Amen.

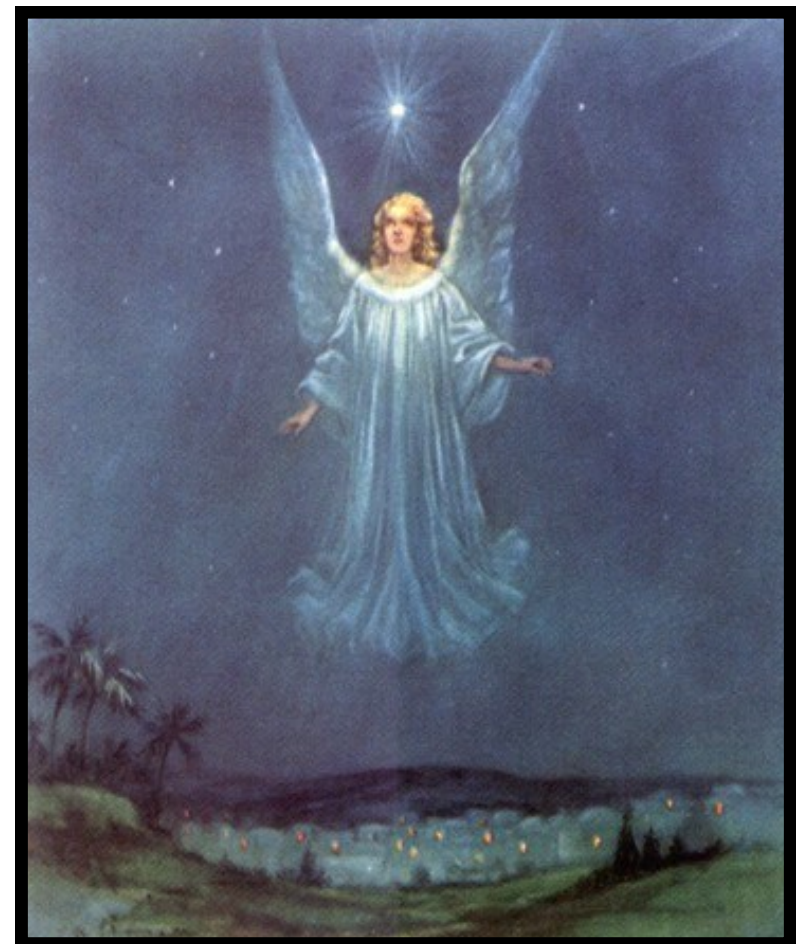
And now may the peace of God which passes all understanding keep our hearts and  
minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord;  
and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among  
you and remain with you always.

**Amen**

Let's stand to sing together  
**Joy to the World (268 TIS)**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord:  
**In the Name of Christ, Amen**

# CHRISTMAS CAROLS AND HOLY COMMUNION



WELCOME

We stand to sing together **O Come all ye Faithful (304 TIS vs 1,2,5 & 8)**

Luke 2:1-12 <sup>1</sup>About that time Caesar Augustus ordered a census to be taken throughout the Empire. <sup>2</sup>This was the first census when Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup>Everyone had to travel to his own ancestral hometown to be accounted for. <sup>4</sup>So Joseph went from the Galilean town of Nazareth up to Bethlehem in Judah, David's town, for the census. As a descendant of David, he had to go there. <sup>5</sup>He went with Mary, his fiancée, who was pregnant.

<sup>6</sup>While they were there, the time came for her to give birth. <sup>7</sup>She gave birth to a son, her firstborn. She wrapped him in a blanket and laid him in a manger, because there was no room in the hostel.

<sup>8</sup>There were shepherders camping in the neighbourhood. They had set night watches over their sheep. <sup>9</sup>Suddenly, God's angel stood among them and God's glory blazed around them. They were terrified. <sup>10</sup>The angel said, "Don't be afraid. I'm here to announce a great and joyful event that is meant for everybody, worldwide: <sup>11</sup>A Saviour has just been born in David's town, a Saviour who is Messiah and Master. <sup>12</sup>This is what you're to look for: a baby wrapped in a blanket and lying in a manger."

Let's stay seated to sing together  
**While Shepherds Watched (299 TIS)**

Luke 2:13-14 - <sup>13</sup>At once the angel was joined by a huge angelic choir singing God's praises:

<sup>14</sup>Glory to God in the heavenly heights,  
Peace to all men and women on earth who please him.

Let's stand to sing together  
**Hark the Herald (303 TIS)**

Luke 2:15-20 - <sup>15</sup>As the angel choir withdrew into heaven, the shepherders talked it over. "Let's get over to Bethlehem as fast as we can and see for ourselves what God has revealed to us." <sup>16</sup>They left, running, and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup>Seeing was believing. They told everyone they met what the angels had said about this child. <sup>18</sup>All who heard the shepherders were impressed.

<sup>19</sup>Mary kept all these things to herself, holding them dear, deep within herself. <sup>20</sup>The shepherders returned and let loose, glorifying and praising God for everything they had heard and seen. It turned out exactly the way they'd been told!

AFTER COMMUNION

We are thousands of kilometres removed from that first Christmas scene.  
Our season is Summer

CHRISTMAS EVE "Australian Psalms" by Bruce Prewer

Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace, goodwill toward all people!

The dry grass has turned light brown  
crackling under footsteps like crisp paper.  
Soak-hoses and sprinklers are at work  
greening gardens and preserving shrubs.  
The starlings arrive for a drink,  
while two brown doves take a shower.  
In the old palm trees the sparrows gossip,  
and from the gum trees cicadas sing.

The highways are already thick with cars  
packed with parents, presents, children, and pets.  
In city parks crowds gather at dusk  
to sing by candlelight the much-loved carols.  
Near midnight many stream into churches  
ordinary people sharing an extraordinary faith:  
Glorifying again the Word made flesh,  
tasting the royal Bread and priceless Wine.

Tomorrow the summer sun will wake us early,  
the few hours' sleep swiftly fled.  
Even then, children will be out on the footpaths,  
their scooters, prams, and bikes sparkling.  
At church, family worship will have many guests—  
cousins, grandparents, new toy bears, and dolls!  
Outside church, more cards, kisses, and greetings—  
'Merry Christmas' under the hot morning sun.

By midday the aroma of turkey and mint peas  
will blend with the fragrance of fruit salad and puddings;  
The scent of pollens on a warm summer wind,  
mixed with the smell of pine needles and fruit punch.

## THE STORY OF THE LAST SUPPER

Among friends, gathered round a table,  
Jesus took bread,  
And, having blessed it,  
He broke the bread  
And gave it to his disciples, saying,  
This is my body which is given for you'.

In the same way he took wine,  
And, having given thanks for it .  
He poured it out  
And gave the cup to his disciples, saying,  
'This cup is the new relationship with God,  
Sealed with my blood.  
Take this and share it.  
I shall drink wine with you next in the coming kingdom of God'.

We who are many are one body  
**For we all share in the one bread**

### WORDS OF INVITATION

At the Last Supper Jesus, sharing bread and wine,  
Invited the disciples to share his journey.  
Like many grains of wheat becoming one loaf of bread,  
The disciples were invited to become one body with him.  
Here today, through bread and wine,  
We renew our journey with Jesus and his disciples.  
Here, through bread and wine, We renew our unity with one another,  
And with all those who have gone before us in this place,  
Through bread and wine,  
We renew our communion with the earth  
And our interwovenness with the broken ones of the world.  
So come, taste of this bread and wine.  
Gifts of the earth, work of human hands,  
Food both of earth and of heaven.

*All who know Christ as Lord and Saviour  
are welcome to partake of the bread and wine*

Let's stay seated to sing together  
**O Little Town of Bethlehem (316 TIS)**

John writes of Jesus' birth at the beginning of his Gospel....

John 1:9-14

<sup>9</sup>The Life-Light was the real thing:

Every person entering Life he brings into Light.

<sup>10</sup>He was in the world,  
the world was there through him,  
and yet the world didn't even notice.

<sup>11</sup>He came to his own people, but they didn't want him.

<sup>12</sup>But whoever did want him,  
who believed he was who he claimed and would do what he said,  
He made to be their true selves, their child-of-God selves.

<sup>13</sup>These are the God-begotten,  
not blood-begotten, not flesh-begotten, not sex-begotten.

<sup>14</sup>The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighbourhood.  
We saw the glory with our own eyes, the one-of-a-kind glory,  
like Father, like Son,

Generous inside and out, true from start to finish.

Paul puts it this way in Philippians 2:5-8

<sup>5</sup>Think of yourselves the way Christ Jesus thought of himself. <sup>6</sup>He had equal status with God but didn't think so much of himself that he had to cling to the advantages of that status no matter what. <sup>7</sup>Not at all. When the time came, he set aside the privileges of deity and took on the status of a slave, became *human*! <sup>8</sup>Having become human, he stayed human. It was an incredibly humbling process.

Let's stand to sing together **Away in a Manger (318 TIS)**

### ADDRESS

**INTERCESSIONS**  
*ending with...*

Receive the prayers of your people for the people of this world through Jesus Christ  
our Lord who taught us 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 angel said, "You shall call his name, Jesus, for he shall save his people from  
their sins."

**CONFESSION**

**Most merciful God,**  
**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.**

*The priest pronounces the absolution*

We have turned our hearts to God in repentance  
and our sins are laid bare before the cross of Jesus Christ.  
God forgives you in Jesus Christ, in whom there is no condemnation

We receive God's mercy and forgiveness.  
Lead us, Holy Spirit to walk in the light of Christ. Amen.

*All stand*  
**THE PEACE**

We are the body of Christ  
**His Spirit is with us**

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

*We exchange peace with one another*

We stand to sing our offertory song  
**The Virgin Mary—Calypso Carol (307 TIS)**

**THE BLESSING OF BREAD AND WINE**

Almighty God we thank you that you loved the world so much that you sent your  
only Son, Jesus Christ our Lord to this world to live the only perfect human life and  
to die as the sacrifice for our sins, to set us free from sin and death, and redeem us  
to friendship with you.

This day we lift our voices to praise you, saying...  
**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,**  
**heaven and earth are full of your glory.**  
**Hosanna in the highest.**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
We thank you for your presence with us now.  
As we do in this place what you did in an upstairs room,  
Breathe your Spirit upon us  
That this bread and this wine may be heaven's food and drink for us,  
Renewing, sustaining and making us whole,  
And that we may be your body on earth,  
Loving and caring in the world.