

**ORDER OF SERVICE**  
**3 January 2021**

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**Christmas 2**  
**“Mothering God”**



**Welcome to St Andrew's on The Terrace**

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.

Please join in the congregational responses printed in **bold** / *italics*,  
and stand, if you are able, for the hymns and the offering prayer.

We usually sing the hymns without announcement.

To use the loop system in the church, turn your hearing aids on to the appropriate setting.

Please note your nearest fire exit.

The church and hall have been earthquake strengthened.

In an earthquake: drop, cover and hold.

**Today's service is led by Bronwyn White**

**MUSIC for Gathering**

**'Prayer for the New Year'**

Words: Alfred, Lord Tennyson, *In Memoriam*

Tune 'Ring Out, Wild Bells'/'Carol of the Bells': Crawford Gates & Mykola Leontovych  
performed by Kat Tingey

**GATHERING**

**A New Year for Beloved Community**

—Debra Haffner

Happy new year!

Happy new year for our beloved community.

***We gather together at the start of this new year***

***as people of many ages***

***as people of many sexual orientations and gender identities***

***as people of many races and ethnicities***

***as people of many theologies and religious backgrounds***

***woven together in our love for this community.***

With our hopes and dreams and prayers for the year before us

With our hearts and minds and spirits ready

to be touched by the year before us

***With our hands and time and talents ready***

***to be offered in the year before us.***

We gather together at the start of this new year

with gratitude and love

for those who have come before us,

***for those who stand here with us.***

***May it be a good year. May it be a sweet year.***

Come, let us worship together.

## HYMN

**'Where is the room?'**

*Carol our Christmas 48*

Music: © 1993 David Dell. Words: ©1992 Shirley Murray

Where is the room,  
where is the house of Christmas?  
Where shall we welcome Jesus,  
where are the signs of home?  
Where are the signs of home?

Let Christ have space,  
place at the heart of living,  
centre of birth's new breathing,  
cradle for hope and peace,  
cradle for hope and peace.

Let there be room,  
room for the friend and stranger,  
room without hurt or anger,  
room for whoever come,  
room for whoever come.

Let love be here,  
love from the Christmas stable,  
love at our open table,  
love to be shared all year,  
love to be shared all year.

## WELCOME

Ngā mihi o te tau hou! **Happy New Year!**  
Kia ora tatou. **Kia ora.**

## GREETING EACH OTHER—*please remain seated*

*We greet the people sitting beside us, then listen in silence—or join in singing quietly:*

## MUSIC

**'Mothering God, You Gave Me Birth'**

Lyrics: Julian of Norwich; adapted by Jean Wiebe Janzen  
performed by The Concordia Choir

## PEACE OF CHRIST

Peace be with you  
**And also with you.**  
Peacefulness to the people  
**and peace to the land.**

My friends, we have arrived: we are here, in this new year.

We have crossed the boundary of time, into the next year, with all its resolutions and plans and schedules ahead of us.

Let us pause, for just this moment, before we move boldly onward.

Let us pause to hear the breathing of those around us, to feel their presence in this room; to know their presence in our lives.

Let us pause to consider the trees, their branches [with summer leaf], their elegant architecture on display.

Let us pause to feel the spirit of life and love that ties us to each other, that winds its way through our very bones and settles in our hearts.

Before we move forward, armed with resolutions that will shortly be forgotten in the day-to-day of living, let us notice what it is that remains every year, every day. What exists beyond schedules and months, beyond time. It welcomes us to life, not just at the start of the year, but every day.

And let us answer.

*(We say together a reinterpretation of The Jesus Prayer, created for Aotearoa in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century)*

**A NEW PRAYER**

Bronwyn White

*Creating, Evolving, Nurturing Spirit*

*We honour the mana of naming, describing and bringing-into-being through the power of Breath and Word.*

*The ground on which we stand is holy, Whenua Tapu, a place of mana tangata, where we show leadership in care for the rights of all people; a commonwealth of justice and liberation.*

*We are thankful for our resources:*

*we will be generous in sharing with others, gracious in learning from others.*

*May we not offend when we mean to welcome, not interject when we need to listen.*

*We let go of past hurts and memories which scar us—things we have done, things done to us, harmful attitudes we have absorbed.*

*We will be mindful, not falling back into negative patterns, as we learn new ways of being, a new appreciation of our full humanity.*

*We focus on things that are life-giving and true, rejecting defensiveness and cynicism.*

*We live in the abundance of the universe:*

*the sustenance of our mother the earth, the nurture of our father the sky, the oxygen-breath of forest, the manaakitanga of land.*

*For this is our promise today, our aspiration for tomorrow and our dream for the future.*

*Kia kaha te mahi! Amen*

## LIGHTING THE RAINBOW CANDLE

We light the Rainbow candle each week to symbolise our inclusive community, and in particular, the importance of children in our congregation.

## HYMN

**'I am the light of the world' (WOV 669)**

Words: Howard Thurman and Jim Strathdee Music © 1969 Jim Strathdee

### *Chorus*

I am the Light of the World  
You people come and follow me.  
If you follow and love, you'll learn the mystery  
of what you were meant to do and be.

1. When the song of the angels is stilled.  
When the star in the sky is gone.  
When the kings and the shepherds have found their way home.  
The work of Christmas is begun!

### *Chorus*

2. To find the lost and lonely one,  
To heal that broken soul with love,  
To feed the hungry children with warmth and good food,  
To feel the earth below the sky above!

### *Chorus*

3. To bring hope to every task you do,  
To dance at a baby's new birth,  
To make music in an old man's heart,  
And sing to the colours of the earth!

### *Chorus*

## OFFERING

*We recognise and bless the gifts brought to the table, and those which wing  
their way electronically from our banks to the church's account.*

## OFFERING PRAYER

**Prayer at New Year**

Tim Atkins

As we share our gifts of money & food & time:  
***May we all be grounded in living our values in the coming year.***  
***May we all spread our wings to new heights in the coming year.***  
***May the fire of our commitment to our ethical values***  
***burn brighter than before.***  
***And may we all be authentically ourselves in the coming year.***  
***Amen***

## THE WORD IN TEXTS

**Gospel**

*Paraphrased verses from John 1*

**Historical reading**

*from Revelations of Divine Love  
Julian of Norwich (c.1374)*

**Contemporary reading**

*Suddenly there is light all around  
Bronwyn Angela White, You who delight me*

## **Gospel**—paraphrased verses from **John 1**

In the beginning was El Shaddai, the All-Sufficient;  
Sophia—Divine Wisdom—was with God,  
and Shekinah—the feminine, earthly aspect—was God...

What she brought into being is life, and her life is the light of all people.  
The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness cannot overcome it...

She came into the world, and the world came into being through her;  
yet the world did not acknowledge her.

She came to what was her own, and her own people did not accept her.  
But those who welcomed her, who believed in her,  
she empowered and made children of God,  
not born of blood or of human desire or human will,  
but of El Shaddai.

And the Word became embodied and lives among us.  
We experience her glory and wisdom,  
know her grace and truth.

### **Historical reading**

from Dame Julian of Norwich's *Revelations of Divine Love* (c1374)

Our Saviour is our true Mother in whom we are endlessly born and out of whom we shall never come...  
And when we fall, God quickly lifts us up, leaping out into our lives like a mother playing peek-a-boo  
with her child, reassuring the baby with her touch.  
And when we have been strengthened by God's action in our lives, then we choose with all our  
consciousness to serve God and be God's lovers, endlessly.

### **A contemporary reading from *You who delight me***

Suddenly there is light all around  
and the silences  
of morning

a small town  
waking  
birds  
distant cattle  
work-bound traffic on the road outside  
voices, muted and curious  
laughter, footsteps

Such an ordinary light  
skimming a cup  
nudging the rim of a bowl  
gilding one wooden arm  
of an old chair  
dust spangling in sunshine

The smell of grass, baled hay

and wood smoke  
bread fresh from a nearby oven  
earth  
and blood  
and new milk

And the brightness  
the dizzying, commonplace brilliance of

oh! falling in love:  
the universe contracts  
into a blessed trinity

of elbow, breast and fontanel

## RESPONSE

Michelle L Torigian

The light shines in dimness  
***And dimness did not overtake the light***  
The light shines in each space.  
***No gloom, no despair will overtake it.***  
The light shines in our souls.  
***The shadows of life did not shade Divine light.***  
We celebrate the light of Christ  
***A steadfast presence from the beginning***  
***which will shine through the end of time.***

## REFLECTION: "Mothering God"

Bronwyn White

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

### CIRCLE OF PRAYER

#### PRAYER FOR ST ANDREW'S

***Renew your people, God,***  
***and renew our life in this place.***  
***Give us a new spirit of unity***  
***with all who follow the Way of Jesus***  
***and new bonds of love***  
***with people of other faiths.***

***Bless the city in which we live***  
***that it may be a place***  
***where honest dealing,***  
***good government,***  
***the desire for beauty,***  
***and the care for others flourish.***

***Bless this church***  
***that what we know of your will***  
***may become what we do,***  
***and what we believe***  
***the strong impulse***  
***of our worship and work.***  
***Amen***

## HYMN

**'Light of lights beholden' (AA 89)**

Indigo II—Words & music by Jenny McLeod ©1983

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Light of lights beholden  
we from days of olden  
sang this song  
for to understand  
that peace upon this planet  
was pledged to come.

Each to other, sister, brother,  
born for life and song,

*Look towards the light and carry on:  
let the simple heart and hope among us  
keep our family strong,  
let the simple heart and hope among us  
keep our family strong.*

Darkness all around us,  
light has always found us,  
light will come  
where the dark is deepest,  
greater light will keep us  
safe from harm.

Troubled times will always find  
a voice of trouble doom,

*Look towards the light and carry on:  
let the simple heart and hope among us  
keep our family strong,  
let the simple heart and hope among us  
keep our family strong.*

## BLESSING FOR THE NEW YEAR

Cara Heafey

***Let us look for Christ wherever we go  
Let us never stop seeking  
Believing that there is a light that shines in the darkness  
Which the darkness shall not overcome.***

## BENEDICTION

Go into this new year with courage.  
Follow a star that's twinkling with curiosity  
blazing with possibility  
leading to places you've dreamed of finding.

Know as you midwife and mother and bring forth  
the Righteous Kindom  
the Beloved Community  
that Love—Mother, Christa, Sophia—  
surrounds you every moment of every day.

So go in peace, to love and to serve  
this day and always—

## SUNG THREEFOLD AMEN