

WORSHIP WITH A DIFFERENCE

ADVENT TWO



Welcome to Blacktown Uniting Church in this season of Advent. Advent is a time of anticipation and expectation as we prepare for the coming of Jesus.

Today we think about joy in adversity. And this year has certainly had much in the way of adversity. But the coming of Christ gives us reason for joy. And so, we come to worship together.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Reader One: If ever there was a year we needed Advent, this is the year. We hardly know how to describe the year we have lived through. We hesitate to reflect on all the mess around us in 2020. All we know is that nothing seems right, nothing seems like it used to be, nothing. We need Advent!

Reader Two: The prophet Isaiah reminded us that there is work to be done. "Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." When God comes in, then healing is to be found, but we need to make the way; we need to open the door into our lives.

Reader One: So, we light these candles as a sign of our faith that the God we worship is not far from us and that we can clear the way for that God to come and dwell with us. We light these candles in faith that company is coming.

And I invite you now to light a candle in your home

(Candles One and Two are lit using taper from the Christ candle)

TIS NO. 265 O COME, O COME IMMANUEL

O come, O come, Emmanuel
And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear

*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel*

O Come, O branch of Jesse, free,
your own from Stan's tyranny;
from depths of hell your people save
and give them victory O'er the grave

*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel*

O come, Thou Day-Spring, come and
cheer
Our spirits by Thine advent here
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night
And death's dark shadows put to flight

*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel*

O come, O come, Emmanuel
And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear

*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel*

PRAYERS

When we realize how we are
blessed beyond every imagining,
we can sing of your surprising grace
and your steadfast presence
to a world which has grown deaf
from the noise of empty clichés.

When we remember your love
which has no beginning and no end,
when we stand in grace's sweet waters
swirling around our hearts,
we can rejoice in your hope
which sees every person,
even those we would
never invite into our circles,
as your beloved child.

When we remember your call
to treat every single person
with dignity, justice, and hope,
we can share your peace
(even when we don't recognize it)
with a society which believes
violence is the solution
to every single problem.

And yet when you call us to your feast, our busy lives keep us from responding.

You remember every word we utter, every prayer we whisper, but we forget all the little ways you care for us.

You make your gentleness known through us, but we lash out in anger and fear towards others.

Forgive us, God of all hope, and remember your Servant, Jesus Christ. In him, we can live in your way. Through him, we can learn the dreams you have for us. With him, we can open our arms and embrace all the people we meet.

As we are forgiven by God, we can begin to reflect on all those ways in which we can live justly, act honourably, love completely. This is indeed good news for us.

SONG: 10,000 Reasons (Bless the Lord O my Soul)

Bless the Lord O my soul

O my soul

Worship His Holy name

Sing like never before

O my soul

I'll worship Your Holy name

The sun comes up
It's a new day dawning
It's time to sing Your song again
Whatever may pass
And whatever lies before me
Let me be singing
When the evening comes

Chorus

You're rich in love
And You're slow to anger
Your name is great
And Your heart is kind

For all Your goodness
I will keep on singing
Ten thousand reasons
For my heart to find

Chorus

And on that day
When my strength is failing
The end draws near
And my time has come
Still my soul will
Sing Your praise unending
Ten thousand years
And then forevermore

Chorus

Jonas Myrin Matt Redman

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| Thankyou Music | worshiptogether.com songs

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

Listen to this invitation:

Come, all who long for hope and peace
Here is a place where you are welcome.
Here is a place where you can joyfully
rest and be fed
in the heart of God's love.

Let's give thanks to God:

The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

Holy God
you shaped creation
and placed your grace within us.
Your story of hope and peace
has joyfully rung out from ancient days
beckoning us to join in.

A young woman named Mary
opened her heart to your story.
She heard the promise
that she would give birth;
she heard the promise
that this child would transform the world –
and she believed.

In this Advent season
we wait and prepare,
as our hearts echo an ancient cry:
O come, O come, Emmanuel

We prepare for Emmanuel, God with us.
We remember how this child, born in a stable
lived a life of healing, mercy and wisdom
We remember a special meal shared with friends
shared in the darkness of the night
on which Jesus Christ was arrested:
Gathering them together
Jesus spoke with boundless love

In the blessing of the bread he said
"Take. Eat

This is my body which given is for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.”

(pour the juice into the cup)

In the blessing of the cup he said
“Take Drink.

This is my blood
the fulfilment of the promise
poured out for you and for everyone
for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this Whenever you drink it,
in remembrance of me.”

Grant that by the power of your Spirit
these gifts of bread and wine
may be for us his body and his blood.

And as we joyfully share this bread and cup
strengthen our hope in the promises of this season
and give us courage to live the way of peace
and to you be all praise and glory
today and forever Amen.

THE LORD’S PRAYER

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come your will be done, on earth as it is 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 forever. Amen.**

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

(break the bread and lift it to the people)

the bread of joy

The bread we break is a sharing in the body of Christ.
Ko e mā 'oku tau pakipakí, ko 'etau ma'u 'inasi ia 'i he sino 'o Kalaisí.

Let us we eat the bread, with thanksgiving
(persons at home take a piece of bread and eat it)

(Lift the cup)

The cup of promise

The cup we take is a sharing in the blood of Christ.

Ko e ipu 'oku tau talí, ko 'etau ma'u 'inasi ia 'i he ta'ata'a 'o Kalaisí.

(pour the juice into the cups of the leaders)

Let us drink from the cup with thanksgiving

(persons at home take a cup and drink from it)

The peace of Christ is here to stay.

Gracious God the bright light of Christ your Son scatters the darkness

- may the joy we have shared here at his table flow through us to others.

Amen.

SERVICE OF THE WORD

Philippians 4:1-9

Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved.

I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. Yes, and I ask you also, my loyal companion, help these women, for they have struggled beside me in the work of the gospel, together with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life.

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about[f] these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

REFLECTION: Joy in the Midst of Adversity

SONG: How Great is Our God

The splendour of a King,
clothed in majesty

Let all the Earth rejoice
All the Earth rejoice

He wraps himself in light
And darkness tries to hide
And trembles at His voice
Trembles at His voice

*How great is our God, sing with me
How great is our God, and all will see
How great, how great is our God*

Age to age He stands
And time is in His hands
Beginning and the end
Beginning and the end

The Godhead Three in One
Father Spirit Son
The Lion and the Lamb
The Lion and the Lamb

How great is our God, sing with me
How great is our God, and all will see
How great, how great is our God
Name above all names

Worthy of our praise
My heart will sing
How great is our God

How great is our God, sing with me
How great is our God, and all will see
How great, how great is our God

Chris Tomlin Ed Cash Jesse Reeves
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| Vamos Publishing | worshiptogether.com songs

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

As heralds of God's good tidings,
let us lift up our voices with strength this day
praying to the One who comforts, restores, and heals.

We pray for all leaders and people of the world.
You have created one human family to live in righteousness and peace.
Give us the wisdom to order our common life
according to your loving purposes,
that your glory may be revealed and all people shall see it together.

We pray for your church.
You have given us the gift of the Messiah
so that your church may be steadfast and true.
Give us strength to follow your Son
until all have come to repentance and are reconciled by his love.

We pray for those who are sick, who suffer need,
who are exiled or in danger.
You have made us for a holy purpose,
to comfort and care for each other.
Give us compassion to love our neighbour
and patience to care for those in need.

We pray for your creation.
Your faithfulness springs up from the ground,
and your goodness looks down from the sky.
Rid us of the laziness and greed that diminish life
as you teach us to care for your creation together.

We remember those who have died.
Ever-living God,

one day in your presence is like a thousand years,
and a thousand years are like one day.

Make us one with the saints,
who have found their eternal home in you,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

OFFERING

*Do not worry about anything,
but in everything let your requests be made known to God.
And the peace of God, which passes all understanding,
will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Phil 4:6-7*

You are invited to take your offering or a symbol of it and hold it in your hands.

We give with joyful hearts because God first gave to us

Creator God, you are our provider

We offer all that we have
and all that we are to you,
because we belong to you.

Bless these gifts, and empower us, your church,
that through the work of your Spirit
we may be a refuge for the needy in their distress,
a shelter from the storm,
and a shade from the heat.

Through Christ, our shield and our stronghold. Amen.

SENDING OUT / BLESSING

Rejoice in the Lord always;
again I will say, Rejoice.

Let your gentleness be known to everyone.

Do not worry.

With thanksgiving, speak to God
your needs and the needs of this world.

Ponder what is pleasing and excellent.

Rejoice always.

TIS 779 MAY THE FEET OF GOD

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 you 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

Robin Mann