

Carol Service

Christmas Eve

Wednesday 24 Dec

9pm



The Waikato Cathedral Church of St Peter

Te whare karakia matua o Pita Tapu ki Waikato

stpeter.org.nz

Opening Carol: O come, all ye faithful (please stand / e tū tātou)

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
come and behold him, born the King of angels:
 O come, let us adore him,
 O come, let us adore him,
 O come, let us adore him,
 Christ the Lord.

God of God, Light of Light,
lo, he abhors not the Virgin's womb;
very God, begotten, not created:
 O come

See how the shepherds, summoned to his cradle,
leaving their flocks, draw nigh with lowly fear;
we too will thither bend our joyful footsteps:
 O come

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above;
glory to God in the highest:
 O come ...

John Francis Wade (1711-1786)

Welcome

Introduction and Bidding Prayer (please be seated / e noho tātou)

Welcome. At Christmas time we delight again to hear the story of the journey to Bethlehem, the song of the angels, the surprise of the shepherds, and their joy as they found Jesus in the manger.

But lest we forget he was born to poverty, we remember at this season all who are hungry or cold.

And lest we forget he became a refugee, we remember now the stranger and the lonely among us.

And lest we forget he felt the pain of life and death, we remember now those who are ill, or anxious, or bereaved.

And because we know he came that we might have life in all its fullness let us in heart and mind go once again to Bethlehem, to hear the message of the angels and worship afresh the Son of God.

We commend all whom we love, or who have asked for our prayers, to the unfailing mercy of our heavenly Father.

As Christ teaches us we 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.**

Kua ākona nei tātou e tō tātou Ariki,
ka īnoi tātou

E tō mātou Matua i te rangi
Kia tapu tōu Ingoa.
Kia tae mai tōu rangatiratanga.
Kia meatia tāu e pai ai
ki runga ki te whenua,
kia rite anō ki tō te rangi.

Hōmai ki a mātou āianei
he taro mā mātou mō tēnei rā.
Murua ū mātou hara,
Me mātou hoki e muru nei
i ū te hunga e hara ana ki a mātou.

Aua hoki mātou e kawea kia whakawaia;
Engari whakaorangia mātou i te kino:
Nōu hoki te rangatiratanga,
te kaha, me te korōria,
Āke ake ake. Āmine.

Reading: Luke 1.26-38 – The Annunciation to Mary

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.' But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?' The angel

said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.' Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her.

Collect

All: **Heavenly Father,**
who chose the Blessed Virgin Mary
to be the mother of the promised Saviour:
fill us your servants with your grace,
that in all things we may embrace your holy will
and with her rejoice in your salvation;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Carol: The angel Gabriel (*please stand / e tū tātou*)

The angel Gabriel from heaven came,
his wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame.
'All hail,' said he, 'thou lowly maiden, Mary,
most highly favoured lady.'

Gloria!

'For known a blessed Mother thou shalt be.
All generations laud and honour thee.
Thy son shall be Emmanuel, by seers foretold,
most highly favoured lady.'

Gloria!

Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head.
'To me be as it pleaseth God,' she said.
'My soul shall laud and magnify his holy name.'
Most highly favoured lady!

Gloria!

Of her, Emmanuel, the Christ was born
in Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn;
and Christian folk throughout the world will ever say:
'Most highly favoured lady.'

Gloria!

Sabine Baring-Gould (1834-1924)

Reading: Matt 1:18-23 – The birth of Jesus (*please be seated / e noho tātou*)

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.'

Collect

All: **We pray you, Lord, to purify our hearts,
that they may be worthy to become your dwelling place.
Let us never fail to find room for you,
but come and abide in us, that we may abide in you,
for you were born into the world for us,
and live and reign, King of kings and Lord of lords,
now and for ever. Amen**

Choir Carol: King Jesus hath a Garden - Wood

Carol: Once in royal David's city (please stand / e tū tātou)

— 1 —

Once in royal David's city
stood a lowly cattle shed,
where a mother laid her baby
in a manger for his bed:
Mary was that mother mild,
Jesus Christ her little child.

— 2 —

He came down to earth from heaven
who is God and Lord of all,
and his shelter was a stable,
and his cradle was a stall;
with the poor and mean and lowly
lived on earth our Saviour holy.

— 3 —

And our eyes at last shall see him,
through his own redeeming love,
for that child so dear and gentle
is our Lord in heaven above;
and he leads his children on
to the place where he is gone.

C F Alexander

Reading: Luke 2.8-16 – The shepherds go to the manger (please be seated / e noho tātou)

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.’ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ‘Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!’ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, ‘Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.’ So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

Collect

All: Lord Jesus Christ, your birth at Bethlehem
draws us to kneel in wonder at heaven touching earth:
accept our heartfelt praise as we worship you,
our Saviour and our eternal God. Amen.

Carol: Silent night (*please stand / e tū tātou*)

— 1 —

Silent night, holy night.
All is calm, all is bright,
round yon virgin mother and child;
holly infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace,
sleep in heavenly peace.

— 2 —

Silent night, holy night.
Shepherds quake at the sight,
glories stream from heaven afar,
heav'ly hosts sing alleluia:
Christ, the Saviour is born,
Christ, the Saviour is born.

— 3 —

Silent night, holy night.
Son of God, love's pure light,
radiant beams from thy holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace:
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Joseph Mohr (1792-1848) tr. J Young (1820-1885)

Reading:

Matthew 2.1-11 - Wise men are led by the star to Jesus (*please be seated / e noho tātou*)

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, 'Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.' When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, 'In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet "And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel."

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, 'Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.' When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Collect

All: The kings, Lord,
brought myrrh, frankincense and gold.
Lord, we have nothing of our own to bring;
we bring you what you have given: our lives for your life.
Amen.

Choir Carol: Lo! How a Rose e'er Blooming - *traditional*

Prayers (please be seated or kneel / e noho, e tūturi rānei tātou)

In peace let us pray to the Lord.

At the end of each prayer, we use the response:

Holy God
All: Hear our prayer.



Carol: O little town of Bethlehem (*please stand / e tū tātou*)

— 1 —

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.

— 2 —

O morning stars, together
proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the King,
and peace to all on earth;
for Christ is born of Mary;
and, gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep
their watch of wond'ring love.

— 3 —

How silently, how silently,
the wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts
the blessings of his heav'n.
No ear may hear his coming;
but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him,
still

— 4 —

O holy child of Bethlehem,
descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin, and enter in,
be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
the great glad tidings tell:
O come to us, abide with us,
our Lord Emmanuel.

the dear Christ enters in.

Bishop Phillips Brooks (1835-1893) alt.

Reading: John 1.1-14 – The Incarnation of the Word of God (*please remain standing / e tū tonu tātou*)

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in

his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

Collect

All: To you, O Christ, Eternal Word,
we offer our lowly prayers and humble thanks;
for love of our human race
you most wonderfully chose to be born of Mary,
and to take our nature as nevermore to lay it by;
so that we might be born again by your Spirit
and restored in the image of God;
to whom, one blessed Trinity,
be given all honour, might, majesty and power,
now and for ever. Amen.

Blessing

May the joy of the angels,
the eagerness of the shepherds,
the perseverance of the wise men,
the obedience of Joseph and Mary,
and the peace of the Christ-child
be yours this Christmas;
and the blessing of God,
Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer
be upon you and all whom you love
tonight and always. Amen.

Closing Carol: Hark, the herald-angels sing

— 1 —

Hark, the herald-angels sing
glory to the newborn King;
peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled:
joyful all ye nations rise,
join the triumph of the skies,
with th'angelic host proclaim,
'Christ is born in Bethlehem.'

*Hark, the herald-angels sing
glory to the newborn King.*

— 2 —

Christ, by highest heav'n adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come,
offspring of a virgin's womb!
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see,
hail, th'incarnate Deity!
Pleased with us in flesh to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel.

*Hark, the herald-angels sing
glory to the newborn King.*

— 3 —

Hail, the heav'n-born Prince of Peace!
Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
ris'n with healing in his wings;
mild he lays his glory by,
born that we no more may die,
born to raise us from the earth,
born to give us second birth.

*Hark, the herald-angels sing
glory to the newborn King.*

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)



Cantata Vespers - Third Saturday of the month

Next Vespers: 21 February 2026 at 5:00pm

Choral Evensong - Fourth Sunday of the month

Next Evensong: 22 February 2026 at 6:00pm

Cathedral Ministry Team and Contacts

Dean: The Very Rev'd Julian Perkins (Day off- Friday)
deanjulian@stpeter.org.nz | 020 4124 6555

Assistant priest: Father Ben Ong (Mon & Thurs)
ben@stpeter.org.nz | 022 627 3217

Volunteer Ministry Team

Assistant priest: The Rev'd Robin Olds
pastoralcare@stpeter.org.nz | 027 441 9292

Assistant priest: The Rev'd Wendy Tyrrell | bells@stpeter.org.nz

People's warden: Kay Neilson
peopleswarden@stpeter.org.nz | 021 1522 999

Dean's warden: Dianne Cameron
deanswarden@stpeter.org.nz | 021 588 399

Verger: Plex John | verger@stpeter.org.nz | 022 312 9523

Pastoral Care Team

Julian Perkins, Robin Olds, Vivianne Flintoff, Heather Powell, Plex John

If you would like pastoral support, or know someone who would and have their permission, please let the pastoral care team know:

pastoralcare@stpeter.org.nz
or Robin (027 441 9292) or ring Julian (020 4124 6555)

Giving - Bank Details: 02-0316-0268898-000

The Cathedral Church of St Peter

The ministry of the cathedral is paid for by our church members. If you can be a part of this it greatly helps the life of the church.

Cathedral Office

Monday-Friday: 9am-3pm | (07) 839 4683 | admin@stpeter.org.nz

Cathedral Shop

Monday-Friday: 10am-2pm; Sunday: 11am-12pm | (07) 839 4683