



**ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF WANGARATTA**

**The Parochial District of  
Wangaratta West and The Warbys**

**Third Sunday of Advent  
17th December 2023**



**Holy Eucharist,  
8.00 a.m. & 9.30 a.m.**



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*St. Michael's, Wangaratta. St Paul's, Glenrowan. St George's, Taminick.*

Direct Debit: Parish of Wangaratta West & Warbys

A/c No. 126778711. BSB 633 108

## GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

*Please stand as the ministers enter*

*The Greeting*

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God,  
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

**And also with you.**

*The Acclamation*

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel:

**He has come to his people and set them free.**

He has raised up for us a mighty Saviour:

**born of the house of his servant David.**

In the tender compassion of our God:

**the dawn from on high shall break upon us,**

To shine on those who dwell in darkness  
and the shadow of death:

**and to guide our feet into the way of peace.**

**Opening Hymn:** *The Song of Zechariah (Benedictus)*. tune Blaenwern.

1. Bless the Lord, the God of Israel,  
who has come to set us free.  
He has raised for us a Saviour  
sprung from royal David's tree.  
Through his prophets God had spoken  
of the hope the Christ would bring;  
of his faithfulness and mercy  
let each generation sing.
2. Long ago God made a promise  
he would set his people free,  
that in all our life and worship  
we might know true liberty,  
to be holy, to be righteous  
in his sight throughout our days;  
now this child will be a herald  
making ready all God's ways.
3. Let all people know salvation  
through forgiveness of their sin,  
as our God in his compassion  
bids a shining dawn begin.

So may all who dwell in darkness  
see the shadows disappear  
while he guides our feet in pathways  
where his peace is ever near.

Anne Harrison (b. 1954)  
based on Luke 1.68-79 (Benedictus, The Song of Zechariah)

Let us pray

**Lord Jesus Christ,  
you draw and welcome us,  
emptied of pride and hungry for your grace,  
to this your kingdom's feast.**

**Nowhere can we find the food  
for which our souls cry out,  
but here, Lord, at your table.**

**Invigorate and nourish us, good Lord,  
that in and through this bread and wine  
your love may meet us  
and your life complete us  
in the power and glory of your kingdom. Amen.**

*The Priest says*

The Lord is coming!  
Prepare his way:

**The Lord is coming!  
We are making ready.**

As we prepare to celebrate the mystery of Christ's love let us  
look within, search our hearts and seek God's healing grace.

*A moment or two of quiet thought*

*The Confession*

**Holy and forgiving God,  
we have sinned against you and each other  
in thought and word and deed.  
We have turned from your life-giving word,  
and ignored the message of those you sent.  
We are unprepared for the coming of your Son.  
Have mercy upon us and forgive us,  
that strengthened by your love  
we may serve you more faithfully;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

*The Priest stands and declares God's forgiveness*

The almighty and merciful Lord  
grant you pardon and forgiveness of all your sins,  
time for amendment of life,  
and the grace and strength of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

### THE ADVENT CANDLES

#### **Advent 3 – John the Baptist**

Jesus said, 'No one more important than John the Baptist has ever been born; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.'

**Amen. Come soon, Lord Jesus!**

*The third candle is lit and this response is used*

Jesus is the light of the world.

**A light no darkness can ever put out.**

*We sing:*

Advent candles tell their story  
as we watch and pray,  
longing for the Day of Glory,  
'Come, Lord, soon,' we say.  
Pain and sorrow, tears and sadness  
changed for gladness on that Day.

John the Baptist, by his preaching  
and by water poured,  
brought to those who heard his teaching  
news of hope restored:  
'Keep your vision strong and steady,  
and be ready  
for the Lord.'

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*The Collect is said or sung*

O God, most high and most near,  
you send glad tidings to the lowly,  
you hide not your face from the poor;  
those who dwell in darkness you call into the light.

Take away our blindness,  
remove the hardness of our hearts,  
and form us into a humble people,  
that, at the advent of your Son,  
we may recognise him in our midst  
and find joy in his saving presence.

We ask this through him whose coming is certain,  
whose day draws near:  
your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever. **Amen.**

#### THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

#### **A Reading from the prophecy of Isaiah [61. 1-4, 8-11]**

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me,  
because the Lord has anointed me;  
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,  
to bind up the broken-hearted,  
to proclaim liberty to the captives,  
and release to the prisoners;  
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour,  
and the day of vengeance of our God;  
to comfort all who mourn;  
to provide for those who mourn in Zion—  
to give them a garland instead of ashes,  
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,  
the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.  
They will be called oaks of righteousness,  
the planting of the Lord, to display his glory.  
They shall build up the ancient ruins,  
they shall raise up the former devastations;  
they shall repair the ruined cities,  
the devastations of many generations.

For I the Lord love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing;  
I will faithfully give them their recompense,  
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.  
Their descendants shall be known among the nations,  
and their offspring among the peoples;  
all who see them shall acknowledge  
that they are a people whom the Lord has blessed.

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord,  
my whole being shall exult in my God;  
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,  
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,  
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,  
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.  
For as the earth brings forth its shoots,  
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,  
so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise  
to spring up before all the nations.

Hear the word of the Lord,  
**thanks be to God.**

Psalm is said: Left side, Right side. All together

### **Psalm 126**

When the Lord turned again the fortunes of Zion:  
**then were we like those restored to life.**

Then was our mouth filled with laughter:  
**and our tongue with singing.**

Then said they among the heathen:  
**‘The Lord has done great things for them.’**

*Truly the Lord has done great things for us:  
and therefore we rejoiced.*

Turn again our fortunes, O Lord:  
**as the streams return to the dry south.**

Those who sow in tears:  
**shall reap with songs of joy.**

*They that go out weeping, bearing the seed:  
shall come again in gladness,  
bringing their sheaves with them.*

### **A Reading from the 1st Letter of Paul to the Thessalonians [5. 12-28]**

But we appeal to you, brothers and sisters, to respect those who labour among you, and have charge of you in the Lord and admonish you; esteem them very highly in love because of their work.

Be at peace among yourselves. And we urge you, beloved, to admonish the idlers, encourage the faint-hearted, help the weak, be patient with all of them. See that none of you repays evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to all. Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil.

May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

Beloved, pray for us.

Greet all the brothers and sisters with a holy kiss. I solemnly command you by the Lord that this letter be read to all of them.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

Hear the word of the Lord,  
**thanks be to God.**

*please stand*

**Gradual Hymn:** AHB 199/TiS 270. tune, Winchester New.

1. On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry  
announces that the Lord is nigh;  
come then and hearken, for he brings  
glad tidings from the King of kings.
2. Then cleansed be every heart from sin;  
make straight the way for God within;  
prepare we in our hearts a home  
where such a mighty guest may come.
3. For you are our salvation, Lord,  
our refuge and our great reward;  
without your grace we waste away  
like flowers that wither and decay.
4. To heal the sick stretch out your hand,  
and bid the fallen sinner stand;  
shine forth, and let your light restore  
earth's own true loveliness once more.

5. To him who left the throne of heaven  
to free us all, let praise be given;  
and praise be to the Father done,  
and Holy Spirit, Three in One.

Charles Coffin 1676–1749  
*tr.* John Chandler 1806–76 *alt.*

The Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to John [1. 6-8, 19-28]

### **Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.**

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.

This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, ‘Who are you?’ He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, ‘I am not the Messiah.’ And they asked him, ‘What then? Are you Elijah?’ He said, ‘I am not.’ ‘Are you the prophet?’ He answered, ‘No.’ Then they said to him, ‘Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?’ He said,

‘I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness,  
“Make straight the way of the Lord”’,  
as the prophet Isaiah said.

Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, ‘Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?’ John answered them, ‘I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.’ This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

For the Gospel of the Lord,  
**praise to you Lord Jesus Christ**

*Sermon*

*A period of silence for reflection may follow the Sermon*

*Affirmation of Faith*

*Please stand*



We say together in faith

**Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God almighty,  
who was, and is, and is to come.**

We believe in God the Father,  
who created all things:

**for by his will they were created  
and have their being.**

We believe in God the Son,  
who was slain:

**for with his blood, he purchased us for God,  
from every tribe and language,  
from every people and nation.**

We believe in God the Holy Spirit:

**the Spirit and the Bride say, 'Come!'  
Even so come, Lord Jesus!  
Amen.**

*cf Revelation 4.8,11; 5.9; 22.17, 20*

#### THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

O God, for whom we wait and long,  
we bring to you our prayers for your world and for your church.

Promise of righteousness, come.

Feed the hungry, shelter the homeless and hear the cries of all who  
plead for justice.

Come, O God for whom we wait, and, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

Promise of freedom, come.

Bring good news of release to the oppressed, free those in chains  
of misery and despair.

Come, O God for whom we wait, and, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

Promise of peace, come.

Heal ancient feuds and hatreds and deliver your people from the  
horrors of war.

Come, O God for whom we wait, and, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

Promise of forgiveness, come.

Look with mercy on our wrongdoings and help us to turn from our sinful ways.

Come, O God for whom we wait, and, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

Promise of salvation, come.

Remember your people, according to your ancient promises, and send your Messiah.

Come, O God for whom we wait, and, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

Promise of love, come.

Hold in your tender embrace all who are lonely, friendless, forgotten, rejected.

Come, O God for whom we wait, and, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

Promise of comfort, come.

Bring the balm of your presence to all who know pain, anguish, sorrow or grief.

Come, O God for whom we wait, and, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

Promise of hope, come.

Let us see that the time of your coming is near and keep us watchful for your return.

Come, O God for whom we wait, and, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

Promise of glory, come.

Draw your saints, in this world and the next, into the light of your eternal presence.

Come, O God for whom we wait and long, and, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

Almighty God, you have promised to hear our prayers

**Grant that what we have asked in faith  
we may, by your grace, receive,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## THE GREETING OF PEACE

Dear friends, while you are waiting for the day of God,  
strive to be found at peace by him.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

**And also with you.**

*All may exchange a sign of peace*

**Offertory Hymn:** AHB 193/TiS 265. tune, Veni Emmanuel.

1. 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 you, O Israel.*
2. O come, O come, great Lord of might  
who to the tribes on Sinai's height  
in ancient times did give the law  
in cloud and majesty and awe.  
*Rejoice! rejoice! ...*
3. O come, O 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! ...*
4. O come, O branch of Jesse, free  
your own from Satan's tyranny;  
from depths of hell your people save  
and give them victory o'er the grave.  
*Rejoice! rejoice! ...*
5. O come, O dayspring, come and cheer  
our spirits by your advent here;  
disperse the gloomy clouds of night  
and death's dark shadows put to flight.  
*Rejoice! rejoice!*

Anon., Latin, 18th cent. or earlier  
based on Antiphons from 9th cent. or earlier  
tr. John Mason Neale 1818-66 alt.

*At the Offertory the following may be said*

As the grain once scattered in the fields  
and the grapes once dispersed on the hillside  
are now reunited on this table in bread and wine,  
so, Lord, may your whole Church soon be gathered together  
from the corners of the earth into your kingdom. **Amen.**

## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord is here.

**His Spirit is with us.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

You are worthy of our thanks and praise, Lord God of truth,  
for by the breath of your mouth you have spoken your word,  
and all things have come into being.

You fashioned us in your image  
and placed us in the garden of your delight.  
Though we chose the path of rebellion  
you would not abandon your own.

Again and again you drew us into your covenant of grace.  
You gave your people the law and taught us by your prophets  
to look for your reign of justice, mercy and peace.

As we watch for the signs of your kingdom on earth,  
we echo the song of the angels in heaven,  
evermore praising you and saying/singing:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

Lord God, you are the most holy one,  
enthroned in splendour and light,  
yet in the coming of your Son Jesus Christ  
you reveal the power of your love  
made perfect in our human weakness.

**Amen. Lord, we believe.**

Embracing our humanity,  
Jesus showed us the way of salvation;  
loving us to the end, he gave himself to death for us;  
dying for his own, he set us free from the bonds of sin,  
that we might rise and reign with him in glory.

**Amen. Lord, we believe.**

On the night he gave up himself for us all  
he took bread and gave you thanks;  
he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;  
do this in remembrance of me. ✠

**Amen. Lord, we believe.**

In the same way,  
after supper he took the cup and gave you thanks;  
he gave it to them, saying:  
Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant  
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.  
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me. ✠

**Amen. Lord, we believe.**

Therefore we proclaim the death that he suffered on the cross,  
we celebrate his resurrection,  
his bursting from the tomb,  
we rejoice that he reigns at your right hand on high  
and we long for his coming in glory.

**Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

As we recall the one, perfect sacrifice of our redemption,  
Father, by your Holy Spirit let these gifts of your creation  
be to us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ; ✠  
form us into the likeness of Christ  
and make us a perfect offering in your sight.

**Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.**

Look with favour on your people  
and in your mercy hear the cry of our hearts.  
Bless the earth, heal the sick, let the oppressed go free  
and fill your Church with power from on high.

**Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.**

Gather your people from the ends of the earth to feast with Mary, Michael, Paul, George, and all your saints at the table in your kingdom, where the new creation is brought to perfection in Jesus Christ our Lord; by whom, and with whom, and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honour and glory are yours, almighty Father, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

As our Saviour Christ has taught us, we are confident 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 Priest breaks the Bread*

We who are many are one body in Christ,  
**for we all share in the one bread.**

*The following is said or sung by all*

**Jesus, Lamb of God, have mercy on us.**

**Jesus, bearer of our sins, have mercy on us.**

**Jesus, redeemer of the world, grant us your peace.**

*The priest gives the Invitation.*

The gifts of God for the people of God.  
Come let us take this holy sacrament  
in remembrance that Christ died for us,  
and feed on him in our hearts by faith with thanksgiving.

*Communion Reflection Hymn: A&M 441. tune Song 46.*

1. Draw nigh and take the body of the Lord,  
and drink the holy blood for you outpoured.
2. Saved by that body and that holy blood,  
with souls refreshed, we render thanks to God.

3. Salvation's giver, Christ, the only Son,  
by his dear cross and blood the victory won.
4. Offered was he for greatest and for least,  
himself the victim, and himself the priest.
5. Approach ye then with faithful hearts sincere,  
and take the pledges of salvation here.

John Mason Neale (1818-1866)

### AFTER COMMUNION

Father in heaven,  
who sent your Son to redeem the world  
and will send him again to be our judge:  
give us grace so to imitate him  
in the humility and purity of his first coming  
that, when he comes again,  
we may be ready to greet him  
with joyful love and firm faith;

**We thank you, Lord,  
that you have fed us in this sacrament,  
united us with Christ,  
and given us a foretaste of the heavenly banquet  
prepared for all peoples. Amen.**

*Notices may be given at this point.*

**Concluding Hymn: Colours of Day (Light Up the Fire)**

1. Colours of day dawn into the mind,  
The sun has come up, the night is behind.  
Go down in the city, into the street,  
And let's give the message to the people we meet.  
*So light up the fire and let the flame burn,  
Open the door, let Jesus return.  
Take seeds of His Spirit, let the fruit grow,  
Tell the people of Jesus, let His love show.*
2. Go through the park, on into the town;  
The sun still shines on, it never goes down.  
The light of the world is risen again;  
The people of darkness are needing a friend.  
*So light up the fire . . .*

3. Open your eyes, look into the sky,  
The darkness has come, the Son came to die.  
The evening draws on, the sun disappears,  
But Jesus is living, His Spirit is near.

*So light up the fire and let the flame burn,  
Open the door, let Jesus return.  
Take seeds of His Spirit, let the fruit grow,  
Tell the people of Jesus, let His love show.*

Sue McClellan, John Paculabo and Keith Rycroft

### *The Blessing*

Christ the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you,  
scatter the darkness from your path,  
and make you ready to meet him  
when he comes in glory;  
and the blessing of God Almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

### *The Dismissal*

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord:  
**in the name of Christ. Amen.**

The resources used in this order of service are: A Prayer Book for Australia.  
Confession from The Methodist Worship Book (GB) 1999.  
Prayers of the People from Prayers of the People are from Let Us Pray © 1999 Janet Nelson.  
Common Worship (Church of England): Thanksgiving Prayer F & After Communion prayer.  
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