

The Congregation of Mark the Evangelist

Advent 3A | 14 December 2025

Rejoice

Welcome to this service of worship at Mark the Evangelist!
Today's service is being live-streamed for the participation of those
who can't join us physically today

A SERVICE OF WORD AND SACRAMENT

Prelude Corbett Lyon, *Trumpet Tune* in D

∞ Advent ∞

Sung Processional

If you are able, please stand when the cantor sings the first line, and sing as the Scriptures are brought into the worship space:

***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.***

The Promises of God

Isaiah 35:1-10 *The desert shall rejoice and blossom*

With the prophet Isaiah we confess our faith:

Surely God is our salvation;

we will trust, and will not be afraid,

for the LORD GOD is our strength and our might;

he has become our salvation.

Shout aloud and sing for joy, O royal Zion,

for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel. *cf. Isaiah 12*

Come to us, Lord, as light for our world,

Come to us, O God.

The third Advent Candle is lit



Prayer of invocation

Hymn 472 Father of mercy, God of consolation

With the Children

❧ Christmas to Epiphany ❧

The Testimony of Scripture

Your word, O Lord, is a lamp to our feet
and a light to our path.

Matthew 11:2-11 *Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?*

This is the gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Proclamation of the Word

*The sermon text will normally be available
after worship and online*

A 'sermon of stillness' – a moment for quiet reflection – usually follows the preaching

❧ Lent ❧

Prayer of Confession

(Each line is sung first by the minister/cantor and then repeated by the congregation)



Declaration of Forgiveness

(Please stand if you are able)

...hear, then, Christ's word of grace to us:
Your sins are forgiven.

Thanks be to God!

Doxology Luke 1:46b-55 via hymn 172 My soul gives glory to my God

The Peace

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

Affirmation of faith: God is with us

**We are not alone,
we live in God's world.**

We believe in God:
**who has created and is creating,
who has come in Jesus,
the Word made flesh,
to reconcile and make new,
who works in us and others
by the Spirit.**

We trust in God.

We are called to be the Church:
**to celebrate God's presence,
to live with respect in Creation,
to love and serve others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,
our judge and our hope.**

**In life, in death, in life beyond death,
God is with us.**

**We are not alone.
Thanks be to God.**

*The United Church of Canada,
General Council 1968, alt. 1998*

Prayers of Intercession

(Names for inclusion in the prayers may be recorded in the book in the narthex)

Offering

(We remain seated as the offering is brought forward)

Many members now make their offering by electronic transfer; the plate will be passed for those who prefer to make cash/envelope offerings. The prayer dedicating the offerings 'captures' the full range of gifts.

We set the offering at the foot of the cross, with the whole of ourselves.

✠ Pentecost: Community ✠

Hymn 34 O Lord, you are my God, for you I long

(If you are able, please remain standing until after the Lord's Prayer)

The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

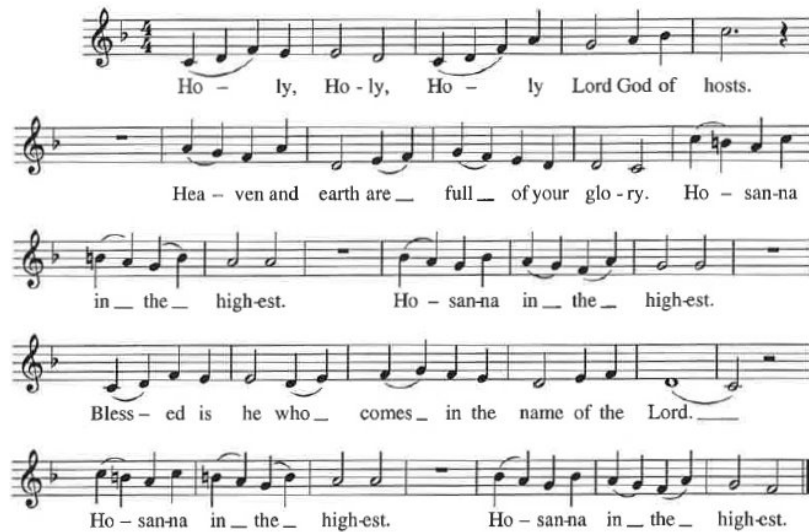
Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

(The prayer continues...)



(The prayer continues...)

The Lord's Prayer

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 people sit)

The Breaking of the Bread

...Let us receive what we are,

let us become what we receive

The body of Christ

The Communion

The Uniting Church recognises this Table as the Lord's and, so, open to all who would normally commune in their home congregations.

GATHERING: *We'll gather in a circle around the table for the distribution of the elements; please wait until all have received and the prayer is said before returning to your seats.*

If you can't stand or walk to the front but would like to receive communion, please raise your hand if the celebrant has not already noticed you.

Notices

✠ Pentecost: Mission ✠

Hymn 276 There's a light upon the mountains

Word of Mission and Blessing

Postlude Johann Georg Albrechtsberger, *Prelude & Fugue* in C major

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NOTICES

Today, we welcome Sesi Taunga as our preacher; Sesi is a candidate for ministry in the Uniting Church at Pilgrim College.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING, SUNDAY TODAY

A congregational meeting will be held after worship today.

The meeting will consider and adopt the Mark the Evangelist and Hotham Mission budgets and appoint the auditor for the year ended 31 December 2025.

FAITH AFTER FAITH

Craig publishes weekly on *Faith after Faith*, a Substack site, including Sunday sermons with a bit more commentary, and other material. You can subscribe to receive email updates of recent posts (avoid the paid subscription invitations!).

See faithafterfaith.substack.com for more info, or use the QR image here to check in.

Recent posts include

- Recent Sermons
- "Fearfully and wonderfully know: A funeral sermon."



Fragment 45: The forgiveness of sin, the liberation of the captive and the resurrection of the dead are all the same: *creatio ex nihilo*, creation out of nothing.

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

See above for more details on these events

Congregational Meeting (2026 Budget)

Advent Carols Service

Christmas Day

CAN will join MtE at the CTM for Sunday worship

MtE will conduct a combined worship service at

CAN, 180 Palmerston Street, Carlton

Monday Morning Movies @ The Nova

Church Council

Sun Dec 14, after morning tea

Sun Dec 21, (usual service)

Thu Dec 25, **9.30am**

Sun Jan 11, normal service

Sun Jan 18, 10.00@CAN

Mon Feb 2, time TBA

Tue Feb 3, 7.30pm online

People to commemorate this week

John Geddie & John Paton, Christian pioneers

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam

Lectionary Readings | 21 December 2025

Isaiah 7:10-16; Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; Romans 1:1-7; Matthew 1:18-25

A Parish Mission of the UCA, MtE is responsible for Hotham Mission

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