

The Congregation of Mark the Evangelist
Christmas 1A | 28 December 2025



Giotto Bondone: Flight into Egypt (Scrovegni Chapel) c. 1304-1306

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 François Couperin, *Offertoire sur les grand jeux*
from *Messe pour les convents*

The Gathering of the People of God

Sung Processional (*TIS 304 refrain*)

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 let us adore him,
O come let us adore him,
O come let us adore him,
Christ the Lord.*

[Hymn 304]

Call to Worship

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Praise the LORD from the heavens;
praise him in the heights!

Praise him, all his angels;
praise him, all his host!

Kings of the earth and all peoples,
princes and all rulers of the earth!

Let them praise the name of the LORD,
for his name alone is exalted;
his glory is above earth and heaven.

(Psalm 148)

Prayer of invocation

Hymn 290 Of the Father's love begotten

With the Children

The Word Spoken: Scripture and Preaching

ForeWord

Word: The Testimony of Scripture

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

Matthew 2:13-23 *Out of Egypt I have called my son*

This is the gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Word: In Preaching

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

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

AfterWord: Confession

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 via Psalm 148.1-13 *Praise the Lord*

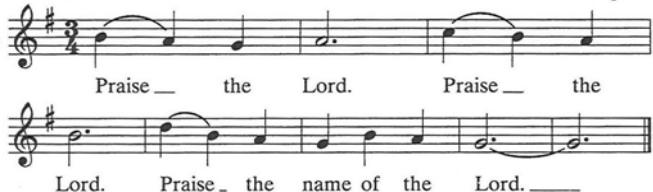
[PCS p.343, no.3]

REFRAIN: Organ with cantor, then all together (sung also at the end).

The psalm text is then sung responsively to the TONE

REFRAIN

Hal H. Hopson



Praise the Lord. Praise the name of the Lord.

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TONE



¹ ...Praise the LORD | from the heavens;
praise him / in the heights!

² Praise him, | all his angels;
praise him, / all his host!

³ Praise him, | sun and moon;
praise him, all you / shining stars!

⁴ Praise him, you | highest heavens,
and you waters / above the heavens!

⁵ Let them praise the name | of the LORD,
for he commanded and / they were cre-ated.

⁶ He established them for | ever and ever;
he fixed their bounds, which / cannot be passed.

⁷ Praise the LORD | from the earth,
you sea monsters / and all deeps,

⁸ fire and hail, | snow and frost,
stormy wind fulfilling / his command!

⁹ Mountains | and all hills,
fruit trees / and all cedars!

¹⁰ Wild animals | and all cattle,
creeping things and / flying birds!

¹¹ Kings of the earth | and all peoples,
princes and all rulers / of the earth!

¹² Young men and | women alike,
old and / young together!

¹³ Let them praise the name | of the LORD,
for his name alone is exalted;
his glory is above / earth and heaven.

REFRAIN

The Peace

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

Affirmation of Faith: We are a pilgrim people

Adapted from the Basis of Union of the Uniting Church in Australia

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.**

**We proclaim Jesus Christ, the crucified and risen One,
confessing him as Lord
to the glory of God the Father.**

**In the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
we acclaim Jesus as the Lord of the Church,
the Head over all things,
the beginning of a new creation.**

**We acknowledge that we live and work
between the time of Christ's death and resurrection
and the final consummation of all things
which he will bring.**

**We are a pilgrim people,
always on the way towards a promised goal;
on the way Christ feeds us with word and sacraments,
and we have the gift of the Spirit
in order that we may not lose the way.**

**We will live and work within the faith and unity
of the one holy catholic and apostolic Church,
bearing witness to that unity
which is both Christ's gift and his will.**

**We affirm that every member of the Church
is engaged to confess the faith of Christ crucified.
Together with all the people of God,
we will serve the world for which Christ died.
And we await with hope the day of the Lord Jesus.**

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.

The Visible Word: Eucharist

Hymn 506 Author of life divine

(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...)

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might, hea - ven and earth are
full of your glo - ry, ho - sa - na in the high - est. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the
Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est! Ho - san na - in the high - est!

(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

The Sending Forth of the People of God

Hymn 268 Joy to the world

Word of Mission and Blessing

Postlude Franz Schmidt, Prelude

from *Hallelujah* Prelude and Fugue in D major

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We'd love to hear your feedback on the service.

Our email address is:

enquiries@marktheevangelist.unitingchurch.org.au

Our website is:

<http://marktheevangelist.unitingchurch.org.au/>

The Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

www.oikoumene.org/resources/prayer-cycle

Japan

Japan was settled thousands of years ago by people who migrated from China and Korea. The original religion of Japan is Shinto, which has intermingled with Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism. The Christian churches form a small minority. The Protestant churches, through the national Christian council, have been active in promoting reconciliation between Japan and the Asian countries it had occupied, opposing the re-emergence of nationalism, re-militarization, and nuclear armament. There are a number of small but active Evangelical, Pentecostal and Holiness groups. The Japan Evangelical Association is affiliated with the WEA.

Korea (Republic of Korea)

Christian missions entered Korea at the end of the 19th century. The churches have grown enormously, especially after the Korean war. Korea is home to the largest congregation in the world, the Yoido Full Gospel Church (Pentecostal), with 800,000 members. Korean churches have sent thousands of missionaries to all parts of the world. In the 1960-70s, ecumenically committed churches and Christians were in the forefront of the struggle for democracy and human rights. They developed the minjung theology for the church of the poor. Churches in South Korea began in the 1980s a movement of peace and unification and meeting with the Christian Fellowship of North Korea. The Korean Assemblies of God joined the national council of churches in 1997. The Korean Evangelical Fellowship is affiliated with the WEA.

PEOPLE TO COMMEMORATE...

Josephine Butler, renewer of society

Josephine Butler was born on 13 April 1828 in Northumberland. Her father John Grey was a strong advocate of social reform and a campaigner against the slave trade. His cousin was Earl Grey, British prime minister between 1830 and 1834.

John Grey's family were members of the Church of England, and strong supporters of the anti-slavery campaign. The Grey children learned early about the horrors of slavery and Josephine's first feminist instincts were aroused by the terrible stories of female slaves made pregnant by their masters and then forced to give up their babies. The girls were educated at home by their mother, and Josephine had only a few years of formal schooling. Despite that, as an adult she was a prolific writer of books and pamphlets, and became a competent speaker of both French and Italian.

The Grey siblings remained close throughout their lives, even when marriage took two of the sisters to live abroad. Their political and Christian commitments inspired them to become involved in a number of philanthropic campaigns, but Josephine was the most dedicated and the most persistent. Her faith was also an overwhelming motivation for all she did – at 17 she had an experience of conversion which led her to prioritise daily prayer and bible study throughout her life.

Josephine married George Butler in 1852. He was an academic with similar political views to her own. Together they had four children but in 1863, their six-year old daughter died. In an attempt to cope with her grief, Butler threw herself into charity work, particularly related to the rights of women. Amongst the issues on which she campaigned was child prostitution. She was part of a group which forced parliament to raise the age of consent from 13 to 16.

In 1869, Butler began her campaign against the Contagious Diseases Acts. These had been introduced in the 1860s in an attempt to reduce venereal disease in the armed forces. Police were permitted to arrest women living in seaports and military towns who they believed were prostitutes and force them to be examined for venereal disease. Butler toured the country making speeches condemning the acts. Many people were shocked that a woman would speak in public about sexual matters. But in 1883 the acts were suspended and repealed three years later.

[CONT'D...]

PEOPLE TO COMMEMORATE...

Josephine Butler, renewer of society [CONTD...]

Butler also took a great interest in women's education. She pressured the authorities at Cambridge University into providing further education courses for women, which eventually led to the foundation of the all-women college at Newnham. She was appointed president to the North of England Council for the Higher Education of Women in 1867.

Butler's writing – promoting social reform for women as well as education and equality – was widely distributed. Her most famous publication 'Personal Reminiscences of a Great Crusade' was written in 1896.

Butler died on 30 December 1906.

Peter Gador-Whyte

NOTICES

FAITH AFTER FAITH

Craig publishes weekly on *Faith after Faith*, a Substack site. You can subscribe to receive email updates of recent posts (avoid the paid subscription invitations!). Use the QR image here to check in, or see faithafterfaith.substack.com for more info. Recent posts include:

- Recent Sermons
- New Theological Fragments (90-94): Divine absence and the Incarnation.



UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

See above for more details on these events

Normal service times in January
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
Quarterly Conversation on the Quarterly Essay

NOTE Jan 18!
Sun Jan 11, normal service
Sun Jan 18, 10.00@CAN
Mon Feb 2, time TBA
Tue Feb 3, 7.30pm online
Fri Feb 6, 11.00am CTM Library

People to commemorate this week

Josephine Butler, renewer of society

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

Japan, North Korea, South Korea

Lectionary Readings | 04 January 2026

Jeremiah 31:7-14; Psalm 147:12-20; Ephesians 1:3-14; John 1:(1-9), 10-18

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

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