



Christmas Eve:
Light in the Darkness

Emmanuel: God's Holy Darkness

Brougham Place Uniting Church

December 24, 2024

Christmas Eve

Kardlayirdi Karnungga

A Light on the Hill

We acknowledge the Kurna people as the traditional carers of the land on which our church is built.

Welcome! As you wait for worship to begin, please turn your phone to silent and ensure that you have a candle for later in the service.

Gathering Music (*from 6.45pm*)

Prelude

Resound and Rejoice – *JW Krug*

Opening

Readings from Genesis 1:1-3, 1:14-18a, Isaiah 60:19, John 1:1-4, John 1:5, and St Francis of Assisi

Introit

Ring All the Bells - *Jenni Hughes. Arr. R Nairn*

Call to Worship

Arise, people of God!
Let the light shine for all to see.

Arise, shine, for our light has come!
**Darkness as black as night covers all the nations of the earth,
but the glory of the Lord rises and appears over us.**

A new light has risen.
No longer will the sun be our light by day,
or the moon be our light by night.
For the Lord our God is our everlasting light.

Just as the wise men followed the star over
Bethlehem that brought them to Jesus,
we too will follow the light that was first seen as a star.
The Star of Hope.
The Star of Love.
The Star of Joy.
The Star of Peace.
The Star that is Christ.

We Sing: *Christ Be Our Light*

1. Longing for light, we wait in darkness.
Longing for truth, we turn to you.
Make us your own, your holy people,
light for the world to see.

*Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.*

2. Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has power to save us.
Make us your living voice.

Refrain

3. Many the gifts, many the people,
many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
making your kingdom come.

Refrain

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Welcome and Acknowledgment of Country

Naa marni?
(Are you all good?)
Marni Ai!
(Good I am)

Prayer of Confession

This is a time of waiting.
We have not always waited well.
We have waited for a long time,
anxiously and impatiently.
We have failed to lovingly take care of
your creation, your people, or ourselves.
We have failed to shine your light to those around us.
Forgive us, O God.

Word of Grace

We give you thanks that your promises are true,
and you are faithful.
We give you thanks that you are with us,
in the waiting.

We give you thanks for light in the darkness,
and for darkness in the light.

**In the name of the One who is coming to bring light, we pray.
Amen**

Passing of the Peace

The peace of our God be with you.
And also with you.

Lighting of the Candles

Jesus said, 'I am the light of the world'.

We have been waiting for the time when we celebrate the Christ child
born in the night.

We begin by lighting the candles of hope, love, joy, and peace
and we remember the path we travelled to get to this place.

Come, Jesus Christ.

**Break into our world once more,
Bringing light to our lives,
and light for all the world.**

Bible Reading: Isaiah 9:2-3, 6-7

Response:

Our hearts have lived in a pitch-dark land
May we trust in the light that is to come

Anthem

Waiting for Bethlehem's Light. - *Dale Peterson*

Bible Reading: Genesis 1:1-3

Reflection: "Darkness"

We Sing: *O Come, O Come Emmanuel*

1. O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and fill our lives, with hope that abounds,
as once an exiled Israel you found,
redeemed, restored and set on holy ground.
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to us and in our hearts will dwell.
2. O come, O light of Christ, so bright and clear
and lift our spirits by your advent here.
In all who gather, show us your face,
that we may know the warmth of your embrace.
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to us and in our hearts will dwell.
3. O come, O Wisdom, mind and heart divine,
help us restore a world we've let decline.
Enlighten us; your way we would know
and show us where new seeds of hope to sow.
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to us and in our hearts will dwell.
4. O Advent God of hope, joy, love and peace,
in you we pray our sad divisions cease.
Bind us as one, a people of grace,
for at your table each one has a place.
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to us and in our hearts will dwell.

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Tune Together in Song 265
Verse 1 adapted for Advent 2024 by Linda Driver

Reflection: *“Learning to Walk in the Dark”*

Inspiration from US theologian Barbara Brown Taylor’s book
“Learning to Walk in the Dark”.

Musical Offering

Comfort through this Night. - *Allan D. Hoare.*

Reading: *“Advent in the Dark”*

We Sing: *Born in the Night*

1. Born in the night,
Mary’s child,
a long way from your home;
coming in need,
Mary’s child,
born in a borrowed room.
2. Clear shining light,
Mary’s child,
your face lights up our way;
light of the world,
Mary’s child,
dawn on our darkened day.
3. Truth of our life,
Mary’s child,
you tell us God is good;
prove it is true,
Mary’s child,
go to your cross of wood.
4. Hope of the world,
Mary’s child,
you’re coming soon to reign;
King of the earth,
Mary’s child,
walk in our streets again.

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Bible Reading: *John 1:1-18*

Christ Candle

We come to the time when we celebrate
that Jesus is the light of the world,
come to us in the form of a newborn baby.

**Jesus, Emmanuel, we celebrate your presence
in the light and in the holy darkness.**

Bible Readings:

Readings from John 8:12, Matthew 5:13-16

Response:

May the Light of the World be our comfort and strength.
Shine, O Light, in the darkness of our world.

We Sing: *Blessed Night, Blessed Light*

1. Holy is the light illumining
Holy is Creation's dark
Blessed be the night for birthing
Blessed be the Maker's spark
Holy are the heavens shining
Holy is the inky space
Blessed be the twilight dreaming
Blessed be the gleaming grace

*Blessed night, blessed light
Holy One, Holy Christ*

Please stand

2. Holy is the word unspoken
Holy the deep mystery
Blessed cloud of our unknowing
Blessed be the sight unseen
Holy is the truth revealing
Holy promise, prophets tell

Blessed angels voices singing
Blessed gift, Emmanuel

*Blessed night, blessed light
Holy One, Holy Christ*

3. Holy is each heart now beating
Holy every breath we take
Blessed be the soul still weeping
Blessed every healing space
Holy is the night of mourning
Holy is the cross laid bare
Blessed be the morn of rising
Blessed be the hope we bear

*Blessed night, blessed light
Holy One, Holy Christ
Blessed night, blessed light
Holy One, Holy Christ*

*Words by Craig Mitchell, (c) 2024 Music by Allan D. Hoare.
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Reflection: "Light"

Christmas Bowl

To read more about The Christmas Bowl, go to:
<https://christmasbowl.actforpeace.org.au/>

We sing: *Silent Night*

1. Silent night, holy night:
all is calm, all is bright
round the virgin mother and child,
holy 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,
heavenly hosts sing, 'Alleluia!

Christ the Saviour is born,
Christ the Saviour is born.'

3. Silent night, holy night:
wondrous star, lend your light;
with the angels let us sing
Alleluia to our King;
Christ our Saviour is born,
Christ our Saviour is born.

*Together in Song 311 Franz Gruber 1787 – 1863. Joseph Mohr 1792-1848, tr John
Freeman Young 1820-85 alt. Public Domain*

Bible Reading: Psalm 129:1-12

Response:

When we hide in darkness or despair,
May the Lord lighten our way with love.

Reflective Prayer: *When the World Was Dark*

Musical Offering: MiniM Small Group

Holy Darkness – *Dan Schutte*

Prayer of the People

We sing: *O Little Town of Bethlehem*

1. O little town of Bethlehem,
how still we see you lie!
Above your deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by:
yet, in your dark streets shining
the everlasting light,
the hopes and fears of all the years
are met in you tonight.

2. For Christ is born of Mary;
and, gathered all above,
while mortals sleep the angels keep
their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars, together
proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the King
and peace to all on earth.
3. How silently, how silently
the wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
the blessings of his heaven.
No ear may hear his coming;
but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still
the dear Christ enters in.
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
their great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Immanuel.

Together in Song 316. Phillip Brooks 1835-93. Public Domain.

Closing

Benediction

**May the light of God shine on us,
May the love of Christ shine in us,
May the life of the Spirit shine through us.
This day and evermore, Amen.**

You may be seated

Postlude: Illumina Chimes

Angels We Have Heard on High – arr. JW Krug

Postlude: Organ

Hallelujah Chorus (from The Messiah) – GF Handel

We gather again for worship at 9.00 am tomorrow to celebrate the birth of the Christ child on Christmas Day. Our regular Sunday worship services are held at 10.00 am and are live-streamed each week. You are welcome to join us!

**“It is often in the darkest skies
that we see the brightest stars.”**
– Richard Paul Evans

This service has been adapted from
“Light in the Darkness” Christmas Eve service by Rev Cheryl Wilson.

It includes prayers, liturgy and readings from....

Learning to Walk in the Dark (Barbara Brown Taylor. HarperCollins – US. 2014)

Advent in the Dark (from the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa, New Zealand
(abridged). Posted by James Hawes, on Sunday Papers.

<http://www.sundaypapers.org.uk/>)

When the World Was Dark in *Cloth for the Cradle* (Wild Goose Publications. 2004)

Benediction (Christine Sine)

Thank you to all those participated in this evening's service,
including you, for joining us!

Special thanks to:
(in alphabetical order)

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Illumina Chimes
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MiniM small group
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