

*The church is fitted with a hearing loop which covers the body of the church. To receive most benefit, hearing aid wearers are advised to switch their hearing aid to T-setting.*



**Pilgrim Uniting Church**  
**12 Flinders Street, Adelaide**



**9.30 COMMUNITY WORSHIP**

**Advent 3**

**11 December 2016**

**Lighting the Welcome Candles  
and the candles of Peace and Mindfulness**

**Welcome**

**Acknowledgment of Country**

**Gathering Invitation**

The poet Emily Dickinson wrote:

Hope is a thing with feathers  
that perches in the soul.  
And sings the tune – without the words,  
and never stops at all.

**Like a kookaburra whose delightful laugh-like call always  
catches us by surprise.  
Like a blackbird whose bold music sings up the new day.  
Like a flock of parrots screeching hidden within the trees.  
Like the little birds whose subtle song is only heard in quiet  
times.**

The Spirit of Christ comes to us in quiet stillness,  
sometimes mysteriously hidden,  
constantly making all things new,  
catching us by surprise.

**May our hope never stop, at all.**

## Song      Season of Gifts

*Here's a New Day #59*

- 1 In twilight's calm and gentle space  
we find a safe and healing place;  
in times of grief and silent pain  
comes gift of grace for hearts again.  
This gift of grace our days will bless,  
and lead our lives to loveliness.
- 2 In midnight's dark and shadowed light  
we seek for wise and inner sight;  
in quest for truth to lives inspire  
comes gift of light as flame and fire.  
This gift of light our days will bless  
and bring to all life's hopefulness.
- 3 In morning's song, as hearts are stirred,  
we move to music faintly heard;  
in search for truth, new paths to take,  
comes gift of faith our minds to wake.  
This gift of faith our days will bless  
and bring to all life's sacredness.
- 4 In daylight's warm and welcome air,  
with grace and light and faith to share,  
comes here, to challenge and transform,  
this holy child, soon to be born.  
With hearts renewed, love's giving grows,  
as life with loving overflows.

### **Opening Prayer**

Our hope, O Holy One, is found in eyes wide open,  
in hearts linked in common cause,  
in small gestures of compassion,  
and in alertness to your coming,  
again and again.

As fire kindles brushwood and causes water to boil,

so we await to be set on fire with hope and gospel passion. **Amen**

*Bruce Sanguin*

*If Darwin Prayed*

### **Advent Candle Lighting**

We have lit a candle for Peace,

for Reconciling Love that was, and is, and is to come.

We have lit a candle for Mindfulness,

for the Understanding Spirit that will ignite insights and wise  
discernment

We light a candle for Hope,  
for the Mystery of Grace that will fulfill God's promises.  
We will light a candle for Compassion,  
for the Divine Spark that resides within us and our neighbours.

**Song**      O come O come Emmanuel      *(words: Sue Wickham, 2010)*

O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
and fill our lives, all dark and fear dispel,  
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.

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.

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.

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.

### **Prayers of Who We Are**

Waiting and watching are not always our strong suits.  
Sometimes we long for instant solutions  
and refuse to pause and listen for truth.  
Sometimes we are so impatient  
that we decide without allowing for inspiration.

**May we be patient, with ourselves and each other.**

Hope is often hard to hold.  
We become depressed and discouraged  
and turn away from hope; let go of promises.

*silence for reflection*

The promises of God are wider than the ocean,  
deeper than the earth,  
and higher than the skies.  
Grace will never fail us.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Song**      Hope Forever Born

*Songs for Pilgrim #23*

- 1      Long before the suns of summer  
        turned above the ochred earth,  
        God prepared for human knowing -  
        a single, perfect point of light.  
        Seeded deep within our dreaming,  
        hope that hungers to be born.
  
- 2      Patiently the faithful pilgrims  
        keep alive the precious dream,  
        weave the truth in dance and story,  
        shape the sacred songs of faith.  
        Hold before our eyes a vision  
        of the holy fire of hope.
  
- 3      Spirit breathes across our desert,  
        whispers that the time is now,  
        when the silent sighs of sadness  
        are lifted in a baby's cry;  
        and the evening stars sing glory  
        of a hope forever born.
  
- 4      Pilgrims, ours the Spirit-calling,  
        bearers of the holy name.  
        Carry hope conceived within us  
        ever waiting to be born.  
        Ours the star that blazes in the darkest night,  
        Christ, our hope, forever born.
  
- 5      Ever sing the song of angels  
        spoken new at every dawn,  
        Glory to God in the highest.  
        Peace to all upon the earth.  
        Christ our hope is born. Alleluia!  
        Alleluia! Christ is born.

## **Time for Reflection**

At the midpoint of this season of waiting and hoping,  
let us look for small signs of hope which have been given to us.

“Hope is not the conviction that something will turn out well,  
but the certainty that something makes sense,  
regardless of how it turns out.”

Margaret Wheatley

*Far from Home: Lost and Found in a Brave New World*

*time for reflection*

## **Song**

Desert Rain

*Songs for the People of God #17*

See the desert rain  
falling on the parched terrain,  
feel it quenching,  
see it drenching all the dust away.  
See the earth transform;  
from the death new life is born;  
watch it sprouting,  
hear it shouting to the joyous day.  
Can't you feel the Spirit flowing,  
watering the seed God's sowing?  
Soon you'll find your spirit growing free.  
Feel the spirit rain  
falling on your heart again,  
bringing healing,  
gently filling up your life.

## **Reading from the tradition**

excerpts from Isaiah 35

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,  
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;  
like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly,  
and rejoice with joy and singing.

Strengthen the weak hands,  
and make firm the feeble knees.  
Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear!"

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,  
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;  
then the lame shall leap like a deer,  
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.

For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,  
and streams in the desert;  
the burning sand shall become a pool,  
and the thirsty ground springs of water;  
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp,  
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

A highway shall be there,  
and it shall be called the Holy Way;  
no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.

## **Witness to Hope**

*During the singing of this song, we will receive the offering of money for the work of Pilgrim Uniting Church, seeking to be a prophetic witness in the city of Adelaide so that new life and vitality are generated in the city and its people. We aren't the only ones who do these things, but we do them as best we can and in partnership with others. Your financial gifts help keep up the good work for the common good. Thank you!*

**Song**      Hope for the Children      Songs for the People of God #34

1      Hope for the children in our midst,  
        facing a world that's conflict torn.  
        All that they ask is time to grow,  
        and live the years for which they're born.

CHORUS    Hope for the children everywhere.  
            We'll build with them a world of peace.

2      Rumors of war sound everywhere,  
        wondering if there's a chance for peace.  
        Yet for all children that we love,  
        we will not yield 'till hate shall cease.

CHORUS

3      Peace is the goal of all we do.  
        Love leads to justice on the earth.  
        Let justice flow like waters clear,  
        so may we see the world's rebirth.

CHORUS

4      Hope for the children yet to be.  
        Pray they may find years free from war.  
        Let us make plowshares of all swords,  
        harvesting life healed evermore.

CHORUS

## Prayers of the People

Prayer is an act of hope:  
hope for inspiration  
hope for communion with one another  
hope for consolation and renewal.

We enter a time of prayer  
to collect our hopes for ourselves, for others, for our world.

These are those for whom we hope today:  
*silence for prayer*

Add your prayers to ours, Holy Spirit,  
stretch our wisdom and expand our hope.  
Wait with us as we seek to understand our part  
in the wellbeing of those who wait for love.  
Watch over them as they hope for a world that cares enough to act  
with new justice and fresh compassion.  
Give to us here an energy and passion for good change  
and a faithfulness so that we never give up,  
even when we cannot see the way ahead.

**Grant to us a spirit of adventure, Loving God,  
as we talk together towards our dreams of a better world.**

## Song Advent Round

- 1 Through darkest night, the hour grows late
- 2 We yearn for break of Christmas morn
- 3 'Til midnight hour we watch and wait
- 4 for hope's renewal, love reborn.

### Advent Round

With an appreciative nod to William Billings

Rick Asher

1. 2. 3.

Through dark - est night— the hour grows late, We yearn for break- of Christ-mas morn; 'Til

9

4.

mid - night hour... we watch and wait For hope's re - new - al, love re - born.

## **Blessing**

May the way of Jesus be our path,  
and hope be our guide  
as we walk together in the love of God. **Amen**

## **Blessing Jana on her way**

You are invited to come forward to sing the Blessing Song to Jana, as this is her last 9.30 service with us as one of the Pilgrim ministers in placement.

## **Song**      Blessing Song

*Songs for Pilgrims #2*

May the blessing of God go before you.  
May her grace and peace abound.  
May her Spirit live within you.  
May her love wrap you 'round.  
May her blessing remain with you always.  
May you walk on holy ground.

## **Passing the Peace**

The peace of Christ be always with you.

### **And also with you.**

We share together the peace of Christ.

This service was compiled by Petryn Thiele and Jana Norman. Thank you to everyone who participated in bringing Advent hope to life in our time together.

Everyone is welcome for morning tea in the hall immediately following the service.