



The Footscray Baptist Church celebrates the God-given diversity of cultures. We welcome you to join us in the journey of faith, whatever your race, religion, capability, gender or sexuality.

Order of Service - December 20th, 2020 Advent 4 - Love

Music: Angels we have heard on high

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dtByTy_5jqI

Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country

For thousands of years Indigenous people have walked
in this land, on their own country.
Their relationship with the land is at the centre of their lives.

We acknowledge the Wurrundjeri people of the Kulin Nation and their stewardship
of this land throughout the ages.

We honour their history, their elders, past, present and emerging and commit to work
for reconciliation between all people, God and the land.

Welcome everybody to worship!

Lighting the Advent Wreath Candles

Today is the third Sunday of Advent – the time when we prepare again for the coming of Jesus. Last week we lit candles symbolising Hope, Peace and Joy. Today we light those candles and another one symbolising Love.

(Paul) Angels sang a message of love out over the hills
Shepherds heard a surprising message of love
In a stable surrounded by animals, love was born
In Jesus we see God's message of love for us

We light the candles of hope, peace, joy and love, in so doing we proclaim
God's light is coming into the world. **(Sunny to light four purple candles)**

Call to Worship

God of all hopefulness,

Like Elizabeth and Zechariah, we wait in hope.

God of Peace,

Like Joseph we wait in peace.

God of Joy,

Like Mary we sing songs of joy.

God of love,

We wait for love to be born in our midst.

Song - Angels from the realms of glory

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=diiTq2vHCHw>

Opening Prayer

God of love,

This morning we give thanks for the shepherds

Hard working folk, ostracised, no home, no status – a bit like us

We thank you for their openness to your message of love – initially afraid but soon their fear turned to joy.

We thank you for the way they hurried to see the baby born to bring love – may we too hurry to find the Christ child.

We thank you for the way in which they were welcomed into the family of God – may we welcome others into your family in the same way.

We thank you for the way in which they could not contain their joy and told all they saw as they returned home – may we too share our joy with others.

We thank you for the way in which you bring good news to unexpected people in unexpected places.

We pray in the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace and the realisation of our hopes and dreams. Amen.

Bible Reading: Luke 2:8-15 (NRSV)

⁸ In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹ to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah,^[a] the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!” ¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.”

Passing the Peace

Shalom my friends

God's peace my friends

Go with you now

And stay with you

In all you do

Shalom, shalom.

Bible Reading: Luke 2: 16 - 20 (NRSV)

¹⁶ So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Song: The First Nowell <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0u5UvnKICTA>

Children's Talk: Tonight in the Palace

Reflection– A Message of Love to the Shepherds

Communion Song: Come As You Are

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qD4KAq_W8tY

Communion

Invitation

Jesus, the good shepherd invites us to this table.

A table without edges

A table where all are welcome

A table leave singing songs of joy.

Prayer of Preparation

God of the world,

You speak love to us in the created world

You spoke love through the prophets

You spoke love through Elizabeth and Zechariah, Joseph and Mary, angels and shepherds

You have shown love by entering into human history in Jesus

Your greatest gift of love, comes to us, in his birth, his life, his death and his resurrection.

As we eat and drink and remember, pour out your Spirit on us so that we might show and be your love in this world. Amen.

Words of Institution - Mark 14:22-26

²² While they were eating, he took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to them, and said, "Take; this is my body." ²³ Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, and all of them drank from it. ²⁴ He said to them, "This is my blood of the ^g covenant, which is poured out for many. ²⁵ Truly I tell you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God." ²⁶ When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Prayers for the Church & World

Remembering:

- Those known to us who struggle with their health
- For our two babies born this year
- For those who wait to hear about their visas
- For those living in aged care, those caring for them, especially our neighbours at Westhaven
- Those who have Covid 19, those in hospital and families who have lost loved ones, those working on cures, vaccines, treatments. For places experiencing increases in Covid 19 cases
- Those affected by political unrest in especially Afghanistan, Ethiopia. Kachin State & Thailand
- Global Interaction – staff will find creative ways to tell the story of Christmas in such a way to connect with people
- Baptist World Aid – gratitude for the way in which BWA has impacted in the lives of those who live in poverty
- Our friends at Sanctuary and the Houses of Hope in Footscray
- Our friends in Kenya as they build a new church building

Silence – in the silence and through our minds and imaginations we bring prayers which words cannot contain:

(p. 56-7 A Wee Worship Book)

We continue to pray for the church and the world which needs your love.

- Bring love to those who grieve
- Bring love to those who are alone or separated from loved ones
- Bring love to those who are anxious at this time of the year
- Bring love to those who will go without at Christmas
- Bring love to those who are angry and not sure why
- Bring love to asylum seekers far from home
- Bring love to those without hope
- Bring love to those who feel like outsiders or on the edge of society
- Bring love to those who work hard to keep us safe

We pray in the name of Jesus. Amen,

Song: While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks By Night

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qvs83qpoysg>

Offering

God of shepherding love,

Take our offerings and ourselves, use them to be a message of love to the world. Amen.

- Offering can be made in a couple of ways – put it aside and when we can gather again you could place it in our offering bowl in the normal manner. Or you could take the opportunity to use our direct debit facility –

Footscray Baptist Church

BSB: 083 437

Account No: 515383063

Community Time & Notices

- **Re-opening for Face-to-Face Worship**
We will aim to reopen for face-to-face worship on **January 17th, 2021**. This gives us time to get everything in place ready to be Covid safe.
- **Bible Study Groups** – Have concluded for the year. If you would like to join a group or start a group in 2021 please speak to Cheryl. Study questions are posted on our Website
- **Baptcare Sanctuary** - is very grateful for all the donations Footscray Baptist has made this year. They held their Christmas Party on Friday and were more than grateful for the money we donated to buy supplies.
- **Christmas Greetings** – I wish you all a very happy, safe and holy Christmastide, full of hope, peace, joy and love.

Song: The Little Drummer Boy https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qJ_MGWio-vc

Sending Out

Go forth to sing God's good news to others.

Go forth to reveal God to others.

And may the God of timeless gifts,
surprises and revelations

go with you on your journey. Amen.

(Adapted from pilgrimwr.unitingchurch.org.au/?p=256)