

**30 November 2025**  
**Advent 1**  
**Waiting for the Light**

**GATHERING**

Welcome to the beginning of a new year in our church's life, and the season of Advent. We're going to start with a video introduction to the season of Advent.

WATCH - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QSsMq6UXXwo>

Our first song picks up on some of these themes.

**SING – Advent news – Seasons 3-5**

*Sing a song of praise and glory  
to the one who came to be.  
Word and wisdom born among us,  
child of God to set us free.*

God's dream for creation is coming to birth,  
changes are happ'ning all over the earth.  
Swords into ploughshares and tools out of spears,  
peace breaking out both far and near.  
*Sing a song of praise and glory  
to the one who came to be.  
Word and wisdom born among us,  
child of God to set us free.*

The deserts will blossom and God's justice will grow.  
At the sound of God's voice healing waters will flow.  
Animals ev'rywhere will start a new trend:  
those who were enemies now will be friends.  
*Sing a song of praise and glory  
to the one who came to be.  
Word and wisdom born among us,  
child of God to set us free.*

My heart bursts with praise for the God who has done,  
wonderful things for everyone!  
The proud are brought down and the humble stand tall.  
Peace on earth, good will to all.  
*Sing a song of praise and glory  
to the one who came to be.  
Word and wisdom born among us,  
child of God to set us free.*

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## **Call to Worship**

The theme for today is "Waiting for the light", and we are reminded to be awake in our waiting.

I wonder what you are like when it comes to waiting.

Do you find things to distract you, hoping the time passes quickly?

Do you enjoy quiet time and reading a good book?

Do you keep busy and find yourself surprised when the waiting is over?

Today's readings encourage us to reflect on how we wait for the Christ Child to come into our world.

Are we alert, awake, and ready?

God of our waiting,

God of our anticipation,

God of hope,

we await the coming of the Christ.

Help us to be aware of your presence—

surrounding, embracing, and inspiring—

in our time of worship together.

Amen.

## **LIGHT THE CHRIST CANDLE / AFFIRMATIONS**

God is here

**God is always here**

God is with us

**God is always with us**

Christ is coming.

**Christ is always coming, always entering a troubled world, a wounded heart.**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF FIRST PEOPLES**

As we gather here today, we acknowledge that we are meeting on the lands of the Biddegall people of the Eora nation, the traditional owners of these lands. We pay our respects to the elders, past and present. We commit to listening to their wisdom and working together for truth, treaty and reconciliation.

## **SAYING WHO WE ARE**

Our vision is to be a loving and caring community, sharing God's love with the world.

We are a congregation who welcome people of all cultures and lifestyles.

We are creating a safe place for the community

and sharing the journey of life and faith.

## **LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH CANDLES**

This is a Christian custom for preparing for Christmas, featuring a circular evergreen wreath with four candles that are lit weekly to symbolize hope, peace, joy, and love. The wreath's circular shape represents eternal life and God's endless love.

The tradition we're following here has HOPE as the theme for this Sunday. Let's hear about it.

**WATCH:** <https://bibleproject.com/videos/yakhal-hope/> Bible Project HOPE video

**We light the first candle, the candle of hope,  
and dare to express our longing for peace,  
for healing,  
and the well-being of all creation.**

**Sing** O-SO-SO

Come now, O God of hope,  
make us one body,  
come, O Lord Jesus,  
reconcile your people.

Come now, O God of hope,  
make us one body,  
come, O Lord Jesus,  
reconcile all nations.

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### **Prayer**

Loving God, as we enter this Advent season,  
we open all the troubling places in our lives and memories  
to the healing light of Christ.  
Show us the creative power of hope.  
Prepare our hearts to be transformed by you,  
that we may walk in the light of Christ.

**Amen.**

### **Prayer of Brokenness - Confession**

God of grace,  
sometimes it is difficult to be patient.  
We plant seeds and want to see the fruit the next day.  
We bake bread and want to see it rise before our eyes.  
We love people and want to see them change straight away.

Give us patience, O God.  
Help us know that your timing is good,  
even when it does not suit our timing.

God of grace,  
sometimes it is difficult to live with hope.  
We watch the news and are filled with despair.  
We are quick to dismiss new possibilities and return to the old ways.  
We give up when things aren't going well,  
rather than getting up and trying again.

Give us hope in you, O God.  
Help us to see glimpses of your love  
in unexpected places around us.

### **Assurance of Forgiveness**

God of grace,  
even when we lack patience and let go of hope,  
you walk with us in life.  
May we know your love and compassion.  
May we know your grace and peace.  
May we know your abundant patience and hope for us.

**Thanks be to God.**

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

### **Reading from the Hebrew scriptures - Isaiah 2 : 1-5**

The word that Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. <sup>2</sup>In days to come the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hills; all the nations shall stream to it. <sup>3</sup>Many peoples shall come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths." For out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. <sup>4</sup>He shall judge between the nations, and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. <sup>5</sup>O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the Lord!

Hear what God's spirit is saying to the church

**SING** –God sends us the spirit – TiS 412

God sends us the Spirit  
to befriend and help us,  
re-create and guide us, Spirit-friend:  
Spirit who enlivens,  
sanctifies, enlightens,  
sets us free is now our Spirit-friend.  
Spirit of our Maker, Spirit-friend,  
Spirit of our Jesus, Spirit-friend,  
Spirit of God's people, Spirit-friend.

Darkened roads are clearer,  
heavy burdens lighter  
when we're walking with our Spirit-friend:  
now we need not fear the  
powers of the darkness:  
none can overcome our Spirit-friend.  
Spirit of our Maker, Spirit-friend,  
Spirit of our Jesus, Spirit-friend,

Spirit of God's people, Spirit-friend.

Now we are God's people,  
bonded by his presence,  
agents of his purpose, Spirit-friend:  
lead us forward ever,  
slipping backward never,  
to your re-made world, our Spirit-friend.  
Spirit of our Maker, Spirit-friend,  
Spirit of our Jesus, Spirit-friend,  
Spirit of God's people, Spirit-friend.

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### **READING FROM THE CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURES - Matthew 24:36–44**

But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. <sup>37</sup> For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. <sup>38</sup> For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, <sup>39</sup> and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so too will be the coming of the Son of Man. <sup>40</sup> Then two will be in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. <sup>41</sup> Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken and one will be left. <sup>42</sup> Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. <sup>43</sup> But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. <sup>44</sup> Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.

Hear what God's spirit is saying to the church

### **SING – The heavens shall declare – TiS 746**

The heavens shall declare  
the glory of his name,  
all creation bow at the coming of the King;  
every eye shall see,  
every heart will know,  
every knee shall bow,  
every tongue confess:  
holy, holy, holy is the Lord;  
see the coming of the King;  
holy is the Lord.

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### **OFFERING**

Loving God,  
we thank you for all the gifts you have given us in life.  
We ask that you take these gifts we have given and our lives,  
and use them to bring about your reign of love, joy, and peace in this world. Amen.

## **Christmas Bowl**

The Christmas Bowl is one of the ways the Church in Australia has embodied that hope for 76 years. When we take part in the Christmas Bowl, we join this long tradition of faith in action — part of a global story of hope that continues to change lives today.

Our focus this week is Ethiopia — a country where many families remain displaced and where opportunities for refugees can be extremely limited.

After fleeing her home in Eritrea, Arsema arrived in Ethiopia with her young daughter, carrying deep fear and uncertainty about the future.

As an urban refugee, she struggled to find work, affordable housing, or a safe way to provide for her child.

Through support from the Christmas Bowl and their local partner, the Ethiopian Orthodox Church – Development and Interchurch Commission, Arsema joined the **Tesfa program**, which means “hope.”

She received mentoring, vocational training, and small-business support.

She’s now studying make-up artistry — a skill that will allow her to earn an income, care for her daughter, and build a stable future.

Arsema says that for the first time since fleeing home, she feels confident about the future and hopeful that her daughter will grow up with security and opportunity.

Her story reminds us that when people who have been displaced are given the chance to learn, work, and belong, hope takes root again.

Let us pray for refugees in Ethiopia rebuilding their lives through the Tesfa program, that they may find strength, confidence and renewed purpose.

We give thanks for the local teams providing training, mentoring and community support to women who have fled their homes, helping families to rebuild their lives.

We pray that God would bring peace to the Horn of Africa, and comfort to those still separated from home and loved ones.

Amen.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**TEACH THE REFRAIN** Wait on love.

We’re going to hear this song now. The song starts by looking at the brothers and sisters gathered here this morning, then lifts its focus to our community, and then to people everywhere. Please sing along with the refrain when it appears.

**LISTEN: WALK AS ONE PACK 5** – Wait on love - video

## **PRAYERS FOR OURSELVES AND OTHERS**

Loving God,

Light of the World,

we see so many places in our world

in need of your warmth and light.

*Pause*

We wait in anticipation for your light

which shines in the shadows of our lives.

God of light and love,  
be with all those in need who are on our hearts today.

*Pause*

May your light be kindled in their hearts,  
and may our love and compassion  
bring warmth where hope feels faint.  
Amen.

## **SENDING OUT**

### **BLESSING/BENEDICTION**

As we leave this place  
to continue waiting for the light,  
may the blessing of God,  
Creator, Redeemer, and Spirit  
be with us all evermore. Amen.

**SING** – As we go now – Seasons 6-6  
As we go now from this moment,  
as we leave behind our time together.  
May we walk with one another,  
may we help each other on the way.  
As we go now from this moment,  
as we go into the future together.  
May we treasure one another,  
may we realise how precious we are.  
May we realise how precious we are.  
May we realise how precious we are.

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