

CWS Advent and Christmas Appeal

Church Service Resources 2025

“Give Water, Give Life”

Some Service outlines, Poems & Intercessory Prayers to use during Advent

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Many thanks to Rev'd Jenny Dawson for her help.. She did a wonderfully fast turnaround. Thanks also for input from Rev Luke Blackbeard.



Christian World Service
Celebrating 80 years

This Christmas we are focusing on helping our global partners to provide safe water.

Give water Give life

DONATE NOW
www.cws.org.nz

“But let justice roll on like a river”
Amos 5:24

Over 1.4 million people in developing countries, mainly children, die each year from diseases caused by lack of safe water for drinking, for hygiene, and/or for sanitation.
World Health Organisation, 2024.

Photo: Christian World Service



First Sunday of Advent 30 November

Candle-lighting:

Reader 1: Creator God, today we light the first candle of Advent.

Reader 2: We kindle it with hope. We long for you to come to our world, to break in and reign with peace, compassion, and justice for all who thirst.

Reader 1: The prophet Isaiah wrote that in the last days, all nations will stream towards the mountain of the Lord's temple.

ALL: May we all give water and give life in your name this Advent.

Readings:

Isaiah 2:1-5

Psalms 122 (see below)

Romans 13:11-end

Matthew 24:36-44

Responsive reading based on Psalm 122

I was glad when they said to me,
"Let us go to the house of the Lord!"

Let us go to the house of the Lord!

Our feet are standing within your gates, O Jerusalem.
Jerusalem—built as a city that is bound firmly together.

We are standing in your presence, God!

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:
"May they prosper who love you.
Peace be within your walls, and security within your towers."

We seek your peace here, God.

For the sake of my relatives and friends I will say,
"Peace be within you."

Peace be within you!

And also within you!

posted on the **Community of Christ** website. <http://www.cofchrist.org/worship13-14/13-12-01.asp>

Advent Sermon Rev DR Tim Pratt (See video)

Second Sunday of Advent 7 December

Candle-lighting:

Reader 1: Creator God, today we light the second candle of Advent.

Reader 2: We kindle it with Faith. We look to John, the one who baptised in the Jordan river to recall people of faith to a joyful new beginning.

Reader 1: God sent John to prepare the people for the coming of Jesus Christ. He proclaimed the new life that Christ, the one who followed him, would bring.

ALL: May we all give water and give life in your name this Advent.

Readings:

Isaiah 11:1-10

Psalms 72 (see below)

Romans 15:4-13

Matt 3:1-12

Responsive reading based on Psalm 72

O God, with your judgment endow the king,
and with your justice, the king's son;
He shall govern your people with justice
and your afflicted ones with judgment.

Justice shall flourish in his time, and fullness of peace for ever.

For he shall rescue the poor when he cries out,
and the afflicted when he has no one to help him.

He shall have pity for the lowly and the poor;
the lives of the poor he shall save.

Justice shall flourish in his time, and fullness of peace for ever.

Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel,
who alone does wondrous deeds.

And blessed forever be his glorious name;
may the whole earth be filled with his glory.

Justice shall flourish in his time, and fullness of peace for ever.

from the US Conference of Catholic Bishops

Advent Video Clip 1 (See video)

Third Sunday of Advent 14 December

Candle-lighting:

Reader 1: Creator God, today we light the third candle of Advent.

Reader 2: We kindle it with Joy. The prophet Isaiah wrote that the desert and the parched land will rejoice.

Reader 1: The ransomed of the Lord will return and there will be signing and gladness.

ALL: May we all give water and give life in your name this Advent.

Readings:

Isaiah 35:1-10

Psalms 146 (see below)

James 5:7-10

Matt 11:2-11

Responsive reading based on Psalm 146

Happy are those whose hope is in God,
maker of heaven and earth

for God keeps faith forever!

God executes justice for the oppressed
and gives food for the hungry.

**God sets the prisoners free
and opens the eyes of the blind.**

God lifts up those who are bowed down.

**God watches over the strangers
and upholds the orphan and the widow.**

People of God, sing praise to the One who is your help

for God keeps faith forever!

from the United Church of Christ's *Worship Ways*

Advent Video Clip 2 (See video)

Fourth Sunday of Advent 21 December

Candle-lighting:

Reader 1: Creator God, today we light the fourth candle of Advent.

Reader 2: We kindle it with peace. The birth of the Prince of Peace was proclaimed by the message of an angel.

Reader 1: Mary and Joseph were told that their son would be called Emmanuel which means God with us.

ALL: May we all give water and give life in your name this Advent.

Readings:

Isaiah 7:10-16

Psalms 80 (see below)

Romans 1:1-7

Matt 1:18-25

Responsive reading based on Psalm 80

Hear, O Shepherd of Israel,
you that led Joseph like a flock;

Shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim,
before Ephraim, Benjamin and Manasseh.

Stir up your mighty strength
and come to our salvation.

**Restore us, O God;
make your face shine upon us
that we may be saved.**

O Lord God of hosts,
how long will you be angry at your people's prayer?

You feed them with the bread of tears;
you give them abundance of tears to drink.

You have made us the derision of our neighbours,
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.

**Restore us, O God;
make your face shine upon us
that we may be saved.**

You brought a vine out of Egypt;
you drove out the nations and planted it.
You made room around it,
and when it had taken root, it filled the land.

The hills were covered with its shadow
and the cedars of God by its boughs.
It stretched out its branches to the Sea
and its tendrils to the River.
Why then have you broken down its wall,
so that all who pass by pluck off its grapes?
The wild boar out of the wood tears it off,
and all the insects of the field devour it.

**Restore us, O God;
make your face shine upon us
that we may be saved.**

Turn again, O God of hosts,
Look down from heaven and behold;
Cherish this vine which your right hand has planted,
and the branch that you made so strong for yourself.
Let those who burnt it with fire, who cut it down,
perish at the rebuke of your countenance.
Let your hand be upon the man at your right hand,
The son of man you made so strong for yourself.
And so will we not go back from you;
give us life, and we shall call upon your name.

**Restore us, O God;
make your face shine upon us
that we may be saved.**

Adapted from Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England

Advent Video Clip 3 (See video)

Christmas Day

Candle-lighting:

Reader 1: Creator God, today we light the Christ candle.

Reader 2: Sing to the Lord a new song, sing to the Lord all the earth.

Reader 1:

ALL: May we all give water and give life in your name this Christmas.

Readings

Isaiah 9:2-7

Psalms 96 (see below)

Titus 2:1-14

Luke 2:1-20

Responsorial Psalm based on Psalm 96

Sing to the Lord a new song;
sing to the Lord, all you lands.
Tell his glory among the nations;
among all peoples, his wondrous deeds.

Give the Lord glory and honour.

For great is the Lord and highly to be praised;
awesome is he, beyond all gods.
For all the gods of the nations are things of nought,
but the Lord made the heavens.

Give the Lord glory and honour.

Give to the Lord, you families of nations,
give to the Lord glory and praise;
give to the Lord the glory due his name!
Bring gifts, and enter his courts.

Give the Lord glory and honour.

Worship the Lord, in holy attire;
tremble before him, all the earth;
say among the nations:

The Lord is king, he governs the peoples with equity.

Give the Lord glory and honour.

from Liturgies Alive: Models of Celebrations website

Christmas Day Sermon Rev Glenn Livingstone

Poems

The Earth's Cry

Esther O'Donnell (Western Springs College 2021)

Water is everything.
A spindly thread of life,
feeble, singular, wondrous.
Providing everything. Everything.

The earth cries a silent sob.
Listen closely and you will hear it.
Ignore it and you will be it.

The dams are dry
The people, ask why
Nothing compares. Nothing.

Progress comes at a cost.
Progress, it will be lost.
It all will come tumbling down.
Nothing compares. Nothing.

The leaders, they lie.
The people, they sigh.
Nothing compares. Nothing.

The famine is near.
The people live in fear.
Nothing compares. Nothing.

The tables are bare.
The leaders don't care.
Nothing.

The people, they die.
And nobody hears the Earth cry.

The Faucet of Hope

Neil Vincent Scott 2025

clean water
the essential element
to sustain the rivers of life
crucial for survival
yet for most
simply taken
taken for granted
without another thought
but do think
and think globally
turning on the faucet
of love
of compassion
of hope
and yes
of waste
offering it generously
to those who hunger and thirst
for simplicity and purity
filtered through kindness
and the generosity of spirit
let it flow
pure, fresh and clean
to swell the river of life

The Water Poem

Alina Siegfried, performance poet

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cRxq1ZJx0Ks>

The poem begins at 1;14

Anchor Me

Don Mcglashan

© Concord Music Publishing Anz Pty Ltd

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qlAJjSpi5T0>

Full fathom five
Someday I'll lie
Singing songs that come
From dead men's tongues
Anchor me, anchor me

As the compass turns
And the glass it falls
When the storm clouds roll
And the gulls they call
Anchor me, anchor me, anchor me

Anchor me
In the middle of your deep blue sea, anchor me
Anchor me
In the middle of your deep blue sea, anchor me
Anchor me, anchor me

Let the salt spray lash
The shivering skin
Where the green waves crash
And the whirlpools spin
Anchor me, anchor me, anchor me

Anchor me
In the middle of your deep blue sea, anchor me
Anchor me
In the middle of your deep blue sea, anchor me
Anchor me

Where the Banshees cry
And the bells they sound
When you lift me high
When you pull me down
When you pull me down
When you pull me down

Anchor me
In the middle of your deep blue sea, anchor me
Anchor me
In the middle of your deep blue sea, anchor me
Anchor me, anchor me

Anchor me, anchor me
In the middle of your deep blue sea, your deep blue sea
In the middle of your deep blue sea, your deep blue sea
Anchor me, anchor me
Anchor me
Anchor me
Anchor me

The Lilburn Lecture for 2025 was held on Thursday 6th November. Organised jointly by the Lilburn Trust and the Alexander Turnbull Library, the annual event gives opportunity for a notable New Zealand composer, musician, or musicologist to speak on topics they consider of importance.

With the title 'Bodies of Water', this year's lecture was delivered by singer, songwriter and musician Don McGlashan who talked about water as a recurring theme in his life and his music. As with all previous Lilburn Lectures, this was recorded by RNZ and will be broadcast on RNZ Concert on Sunday 23 November, 7pm, and after which it will be available for streaming, along with all previous lectures, from their Lilburn Lecture Series page

— <https://www.rnz.co.nz/concert/programmes/lilburnlecture>.

Prayers:

Rev Luke Blackbeard The Village Presbyterian Church Bryndwr,

Loving God, we gather before you to praise you
We say you are the ruler over all creation.
You speak a word, and action happens,
Waters roll back, storms roll in, and storms cease.
The wind and rain, the foaming seas, remind us of our fragility, God,
They also show us your sovereignty.
You are the Lord of peace and calm. But also Lord of the Storm.
You ride the dark clouds and the wind,
Even when you make the darkness of night and brooding storms your cloak, the
light of your presence shines through¹.
 You are the sea on which we float,
 You are the wind that fills our sails,
 You are the storm that buffets us,
 You are the calm that brings us peace².
 Open our eyes to see you in our boat—today³,
Strengthen our hearts for the challenges that lie ahead, for
 We know we have not relied on your word or wisdom,
 we have not shown any concern or compassion when we should have;
 we have not loved our neighbour as we love ourselves.
 We have remained silent when we should have spoken and
 spoken when we should have been silent⁴.
Still small voice of the Spirit, we hear the words of Grace,
That you God, take delight in our prayers.
Speak to us today, calm our restlessness.
Deepen our thirst for you,
Fill our cups with your living water of life.
Amen.

¹ Psalm 18

² Richard Rosenberg - <https://re-worship.blogspot.com/2012/06/invocation-to-wellspring-of-all-that-is.html>

³ Long Green Valley Church of the Brethren - <https://re-worship.blogspot.com/2012/06/opening-prayer-mark-4-35-41.html>

⁴ Very Rev. John Christie - <https://re-worship.blogspot.com/2012/05/prayer-of-approach-mark-4-35-41.html>

A Prayer for our Humanity

Season of Creation 2024 Te Hāhi Weteriana o Aotearoa/Methodist Church of New Zealand P.30

God, open our hearts to your hurting creation,
help us to grieve the damage being done to our living Earth.
Give us tears,
give us voice to cry out with all who suffer in your creation.
Help us to weep as Jesus wept over Jerusalem.

Save us from numbness and denial.

Liberator, free us from the voices from without,
that have become the voices within,
that seek to distract us from reality,
and distance us from each other,
and all in the community of life;
those voices that draw us to triviality and away from deep knowing;
voices that try to convince us that what we feel is an overreaction.

Save us from numbness and denial.

God of our ancestors,
rekindle within us the lamentation of Jeremiah,
the anger of Amos,
the defiance of Shiphrah and Puah,
the love of Mary Magdalene.

Save us from numbness and denial.

Healing One, in the face of hard truths restore in us our emotions,
the ability you have instilled in us to feel and to empathise,
to be compassionate,
to live in community, our sense of connection with all life,
our very humanity.

Make us whole again. Amen

A Prayer for Human-beingness

God, in these hypermobile times when we skim across the surface of things like a flat stone on a still lake; teach us the gentle art of slowing down, of pausing, of reconnecting with all the life around us, with gratitude; so that we might learn again the gift of simple presence, the joy of human-beingness and at-one-ment. **Amen**

A New Zealand Prayer Book:
Prayer for Peace page163-4

Let us be at peace within ourselves.

Silence

Let us accept that we are profoundly loved
and need never be afraid.

Silence

Let us be aware of the source of being
that is common to us all
and to all living creatures.

Silence

Let us be filled with the presence of the great compassion
towards ourselves and towards all living beings.

Silence

Realising that we are all nourished
from the same source of life,
may we so live that others be not deprived
of air, food, water, shelter, or the chance to live.

Silence

Let us pray that we ourselves cease to be
a cause of suffering to one another.

Silence

With humility let us pray for the establishment

of peace in our hearts and on earth.

Silence

May God kindle in us
the fire of love
to bring us alive
and give warmth to the world.

**Lead me from death to life,
from falsehood to truth;
lead me from despair to hope,
from fear to trust;
lead me from hate to love,
from war to peace.
Let peace fill our heart,
our world, our universe.**

A New Zealand Prayer Book:

The alternative Lord's Prayer page 181

**Eternal Spirit,
Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,
Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God, in whom is heaven:**

The hallowing of your name echo through the universe!

**The way of your justice be followed by the peoples
of the world!**

Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!

**Your commonwealth of peace and freedom
sustain our hope and come on earth.**

With the bread we need for today, feed us.

In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.

In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.

From trials too great to endure, spare us.

From the grip of all that is evil, free us.

**For you reign in the glory of the power that is love,
now and forever. Amen.**

The minister and people pray responsively.

I will lie down in peace and take my rest,

Ka takoto ahau, ka whakatā,

for it is in God alone that I dwell unafraid.

i roto i te Atua e kore ahau e wehi.

Let us bless the Earth-maker, the Pain-bearer, the Life-giver,

Tātou ka whakapai i te Kai-hanga, i te Kai-whakamārie,

i te Kai-hōmai i te ora,

**let us praise and exalt God above all forever.
tātou ka whakapai, ka whakanui i te Atua mō ake tonu atu.**

May God's name be praised beyond the furthest star,

Whakanuia te ingoa o te Atua ki ngā Tūārangi,

glorified and exalted above all forever.

whakapaingia, whakamoemititia mō ake tonu atu.

An Intercessory Prayer

(1) Let us pray for all who suffer today
through lack of clean fresh water,
who long for and work for a better life.

May the God of mercy
touch them through the support of others this Advent.

Lord, hear us:

Lord, hear our prayer.

or E te Ariki, **whakarongo mai ki a matou.**

For our country, Aotearoa New Zealand,
in thanksgiving for its influence on us.

As we work and pray for justice here,
may we find strength and consolation
in the love and support
of unselfish and brave people

Lord, hear us:

Lord, hear our prayer.

or E te Ariki, **whakarongo mai ki a matou.**

For our local community,
in this Advent season,
that God will grant us
the compassion and courage of Jesus
as we respond to the needs around us.

Lord, hear us:

Lord, hear our prayer.

or E te Ariki, **whakarongo mai ki a matou.**

For the church everywhere,
that we may be true to the gospel
and share the abundance of God's creation.

Lord, hear us:

Lord, hear our prayer.

or E te Ariki, **whakarongo mai ki a matou.**

For our sick,
and all whom we carry in our hearts today

May they have the comfort of Christ's presence
to relieve their distress, remove their fears,
give them peace, and restore their health.

Lord, hear us:

Lord, hear our prayer.

or E te Ariki, **whakarongo mai ki a matou.**

For ourselves,

May we not be overwhelmed
but remain trusting and hopeful,
Knowing that God is with us always.

Lord, hear us:

Lord, hear our prayer.

or (E te Ariki, **whakarongo mai ki a matou.**)

Lord, hear our prayer.

or (E te Ariki, **whakarongo mai ki a matou.**)