



Pitt Street
Uniting Church

founded 1833



ON GADIGAL LAND

always was, always will be

CONTEMPORARY FAITH – JUSTICE – ENGAGING – COMMUNITY

29 December 2024

1ST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

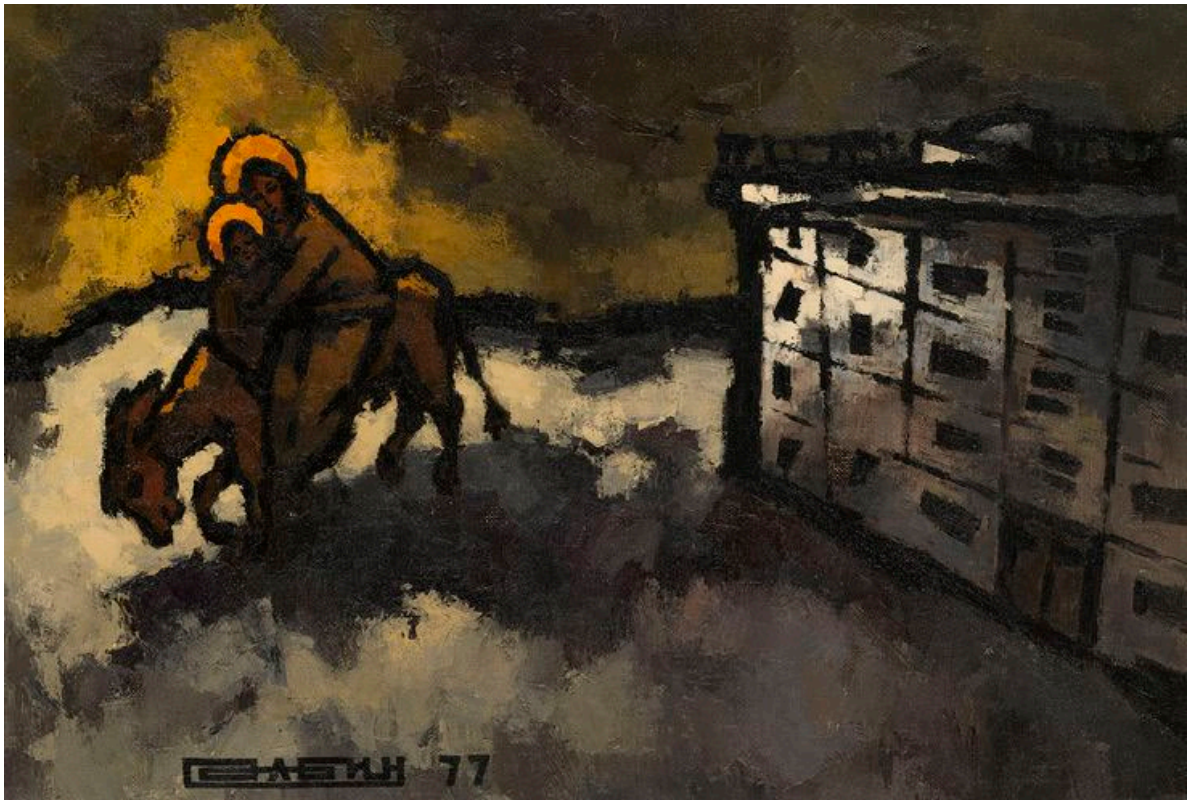


image: *Flight into Egypt* by Oscar Rabin (1928-2018)

A Russian painter and activist, Oscar Rabin was one of the founders of the Soviet Nonconformist Art movement.

After being stripped of his citizenship in 1978 for political dissidence, he emigrated to Paris, where he lived until his death.

WELCOME TO PITT STREET UNITING CHURCH

This is a place of welcome for all people regardless of race, sex, creed, age, cultural background, sexuality, gender identity or intersex status.

Wherever you are on your faith journey,
wherever you have come from and wherever you are going to,
whatever you believe, whatever you do not believe, you are welcome here.

All we ask for is mutual respect.

Please join in the congregational responses printed in ***bold italics***.

We will sing the hymns without announcement. Stand if you are able, but feel free to remain seated if that is more comfortable for you.

A quiet activity area is available at the north side of the church for young children.

MUSICAL PRELUDE

A gong sounds – centring prayer / meditation

PROCESSIONAL CAROL

Joy to the World

TIS 268

Joy to the world! The Christ has come
Let earth receive her king.
Let every heart prepare God room
And heaven and nature sing
And heaven and nature sing
And heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

Joy to the world! The Saviour reigns
Let us our songs employ.
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy
Repeat the sounding joy
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

Christ rules the world with truth and grace
And makes the nations prove
The glories of God's righteousness
And wonders of God's love
And wonders of God's love
And wonders, wonders of God's love.

Please remain standing as you are able.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

As we gather, we acknowledge the Gadigal and elders past and present, first inhabitants of this land for tens of thousands of years before Christ: land taken without their consent or compensation.

***We recommit to walk with First Peoples for justice,
and give thanks for the custodianship of the land.***

CALL TO WORSHIP

It is Christmastide;
let the bells ring with cheerful sounds
and children's laughter echo in the streets.

It is Christmastide;
let a cascade of colour greet the day
and our harmony of voices join in song.

It is Christmastide;
this is the time that Christ is born,
and love is released again in the world.

Please be seated.

BUDYERI GAMMARUWA - GREETINGS

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

*We light the Christ candle to celebrate the light of God,
coming into the world through the birth of Jesus.*

Sophia, Holy Wisdom, Christ, light of the world
growing from creation's birth, source of life and hope.

The Christ candle is lit.

Christ child in the manger
we thank you for this day of celebration
of the renewal of your love that never fails.

***We pray for all your world
that today even in the darkest corners
your light may shine, giving joy and peace. Amen.***

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

In the face of our human fear and anxiety, loss and grief,
in the midst of pain and suffering, trauma and thwarted hopes,
in a world of war and destruction, cruelty and oppression,
we pray that the song of the angels may renew our lives and world:

We share a time of silent reflection

Where we have failed to love ourselves as God loves us

Let there be light and new life.

Where we have failed to love others as fellow children of God

Let there be peace and renewed relationship.

Where we have failed to give birth to divine life within us

Let there be joy and new birth.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

As the angels urge us 'be not afraid!'
Like a loving parent with their child,
God seeks to embrace and empower us,
making sacred our flesh and inspiring us with divine light.
Through the peace of Christ,
may we know God's mercy and renewing grace,
now and always. ***Amen.***

Stand as you are able to sing

GLORIA (Taizé)

(sing twice)

Gloria, gloria (canon)

Glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a, in ex - cel - sis De - o!

Glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

Music: J. Berthier

© Ateliers et Presses de Taizé, F-71250 Taizé-Communauté

Please remain standing as you are able

SHARING A SIGN OF PEACE

Christ is our peace, the presence and power of new creation.
May the peace of God be with you now and always!

And also with you!

We are invited to greet those around us, sharing a sign of peace.

CAROL

Love came down at Christmas

TIS 317

Love came down at Christmas,
love all lovely, love divine;
love was born at Christmas,
star and angels gave the sign.

Love shall be our token,
love be yours and love be mine,
love to God and neighbours,
love for plea and gift and sign.

We listen for God's Word

RESPONSIVE PSALM 148 Creation renewed: touched and transfigured
(adapted from a version by Jim Cotter)

Versicle: Praise to the transfiguring God,

Response: **whose touch transforms and renews.**

A Reading from the Epistles: from Colossians chapter 3 verses 12-17

For the invitation to share the love of Christ

Thanks be to God.

A Reading from the Gospels: from Luke chapter 2 verses 41-52

For the word of God in the story of Jesus

Thanks be to God.

SONG

Halle, halle, hallelujah

TIS 720

Halle, halle, halle-lu-jah!

Halle, halle, halle-lu-jah!

Halle, halle, halle-lu-jah!

Halle, halle, halle-lu-jah!

REFLECTION

Elizabeth Watson

On the cusp

We respond in love

Please stand to sing as you are able

HYMN

Not the powerful, not the privileged

TIS 288

Not the powerful, not the privileged,
not the famous in the land,
but the no-ones and the needy
were the first to hold God's hand.

Not a well-established family
with an heirloom christening shawl,
but a homeless, wandering couple
parented the Life of All.

Not, at first, to little children,
nor to those whose faith burned bright,
but to adults, stalled in darkness,
angels brought God's love and light.

God, determined to be different
from the standards we think best,
in God's choice of friends and family
lets forgotten folk be blessed.

Not obsessed by our achievements,
worldly wealth or family tree,
may we, in and with God's chosen,
find our fondest pedigree.

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING AND SOLIDARITY

Let us pray:

Wherever the world is in darkness.

Let there be light.

We also pray in silence for all that rests upon our hearts and minds ...

*Please offer your own prayers in silence
(or, if online, use the chat facility on Zoom)*

God of Light and new beginnings,
help us trust in your Love as we approach a New Year.

***Renew in all of us a thirst for justice,
a cherishing of the earth and the oceans,
the wisdom of restraint,
and a deep desire for the common good. Amen.***

JESUS PRAYER

In the spirit of Jesus, in these words, or in those of our own language or tradition, we pray:

***Emmanuel, God with us, holy be your Name.
May your Love be born everywhere:
as it was in Mary, so in all time and space.
Give us today the warmth of your embrace,
and the milk of deep compassion,
that we may truly flourish.
Free us from fear and hurt,
as we free others who create fear and hurt us.
Strengthen us in our times of testing
and deliver us from evil.
For your new life continually breaks forth,
in unfolding universes, unfathomable mysteries,
and in the wombs of new beginnings,
full of grace and loving power, now and forever. Amen.***

OFFERING OF GIFTS

Let us make our offerings
as an expression of our response to God's love.

CAROL

Where is the room?

Words: Shirley Erena Murray

Tune: Michaela

Where is the room,
where is the house of Christmas?
Where shall we welcome Jesus,
where are the signs of home?
Where are the signs of home?

Let Christ have space,
place at the heart of living,
centre for birth's new breathing,
cradle for hope and peace,
cradle for hope and peace.

Let there be room,
room for the friend and stranger,
room without hurt or anger,
room for whoever come,
room for whoever come.

Let love be here,
love from the Christmas stable,
love at our open table,
love to be shared all year,
love to be shared all year.

*We give thanks for the gifts given to support the mission
of the church in person or through automatic payment.*

We offer these gifts in thanksgiving for God's grace
and as signs of our commitment to God's unfolding love.

***Giver of life and all good things,
may our offerings contribute
to the coming of your vision in all its fullness.
In Jesus' Name. Amen.***

COMMUNITY GREETINGS

We go out to the world God loves

SENDING OUT PRAYER

O God of hope and peace, joy and love,
from Bethlehem long ago
your light shines out
in every corner of the world.
May we sing with the angels
of the joy of your coming,
give birth to your promise in us,
and live by your light in all we do,
that tidings of peace and goodwill
may resound through all of Creation. Amen.

BLESSING

HYMN

Bring in your new world

Words: Shirley Erena Murray

Tune: Salisbury Street

Bring in your new world, child of the sun,
God's shining Presence
bright in your essence,
Christmas begun:
bring to our sad world light and delight,
singing and laughter,
hope as our shelter,
stars to our night.

Bring in your new world, child of the east,
dangerous leader,
born to the pleader,
prophet and priest,
come with your judgement, voice for the poor,
born to collision,
God's righteous vision
here at our door.

Bring in your new world, child of all time,
peace without border,
peace the new order:
lion with lamb;
come in the healing, sharing of bread,
justice and freedom,
signs of the kingdom,
everyone fed.

Bring in your new world, child of our earth,
holding creation
in your compassion,
sharing your birth;
come little human, cry your first breath,
cry out God's kindness,
light out of blindness,
life out of death.

SUNG AMEN

MUSICAL POSTLUDE

*Everyone onsite is welcome to stay for morning tea and coffee,
and all on Zoom are invited to stay on for community time
together.*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*Christa/community is used in our liturgy to point to the reality that the risen Christ is beyond gender and evidenced in communities following the Way that the human Jesus chartered.

Hymns used under CCLI Copyright Licence No. 208789 unless otherwise noted.

CCLI Licenses: Streaming 17918 Reproduction 557214 Video 128166

Call to Worship, Lighting of the Christ Candle and Offering Prayer adapted from past Christmas liturgical materials by Dorothy McRae-McMahon and Margaret Mayman

Other prayers and adaptations by Josephine Inkin.

Present for Jo and Penny



Image by Photo by [Jess Bailey](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Sunday 2 February 2025 will be the last Sunday Jo and Penny will be with Pitt Street. We are collecting to give them a present on that day.

Our present is to celebrate and thank them for their incredibly valuable ministry during their time with us.

If you would like to contribute, you can either use the labelled envelopes at the back of the Church and give them to Jolyon Bromley or John Floyd, or you can contribute by electronic funds transfer at:

Account name: Pitt Street Parish
BSB: 634-634. Account: 100028278
Reference: Jo & Penny Present