

For others we have heard about throughout our world..

*Silence*

For other people we know and are close to ...

*Silence*

For our church and our wider community ...

*Silence*

For ourselves ...

*Silence*

## Closing Responses & Blessing

Emmanuel, God with us;  
Send us out to risk like you who comes as baby  
into the world to offer joy and peace

May we too risk the dream of a new creation that  
has emerged with the birth of Jesus and give  
thanks forever more.

**Lord, bless us all as we go from this place today.  
Bless us and the people we meet along the way.**

Father,  
Son  
and Holy Spirit.

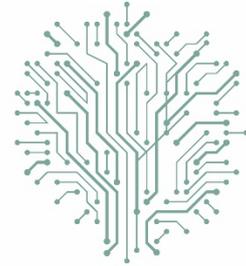
**Amen.**

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Saltbush Community Ministers

1. Response & Gathering Prayer: McRae-McMahon D. 2006. Page 35. Liturgies for High Days. MediaCom.
2. Song - Christmas Day · Kasey Chambers Bittersweet © 2014 Essence Group Pty Ltd  
Composer: Kasey Chambers

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vzidsNHKWsc&list=OLAK5uy\\_kZ8XPi86MorByz0Aty4tF6aSja3MSt9cQ&index=12&t=0s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vzidsNHKWsc&list=OLAK5uy_kZ8XPi86MorByz0Aty4tF6aSja3MSt9cQ&index=12&t=0s)



SALTBUSH

UNITING THE SCATTERED COMMUNITY

## Simple worship for the scattered Christian community

Fourth Week of Advent  
Matthew 1: 18-25

### Welcome

An opportunity to welcome people to the gathering

### Lighting of Advent Candle

You are invited to arrange 5 candles for Advent and Christmas Day. This week we light the fourth candle.

We light this candle on the fourth week of Advent as people seeking. We remember all who seek Christ in the midst of life and for those, near and far, who long for good news.

Light the fourth candle.

### Responses & Gathering Prayer

Let the world hold its breath,  
for good is coming in all its vulnerable newness.

Deep within our life a wonder is conceived, hidden  
in humanity's moments of faithfulness.

Look for it, for it is near.  
Believe in it, for it is of God.

Be ready to nurture its life among us, for it is a  
precious gift for all history.

**Christmas is drawing close.  
Thanks and praise be to our God.**

**Amen.** <sup>1</sup>

## Music for Reflection

Suggested song: 2. **Christmas Day**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vzidsNHKWsc&list=OLAK5uy\\_kZ8XPi86MorByz0Aty4tF6aSja3MSt9qQ&index=12&t=0s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vzidsNHKWsc&list=OLAK5uy_kZ8XPi86MorByz0Aty4tF6aSja3MSt9qQ&index=12&t=0s)

Christmas Day · Kasey Chambers Bittersweet @ 2014 Essence Group Pty Ltd Composer: Kasey Chambers

## Passing the Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

You are invited to turn to those around you and offer them a word of greeting and peace.

## The Word around the Bush

**Matthew 1: 18-25**

<sup>18</sup> Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup> Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. <sup>20</sup> But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup> She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." <sup>22</sup> All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: <sup>23</sup> "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." <sup>24</sup> When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, <sup>25</sup> but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

## The Message

From your Scattered Community Minister or another leader within your gathering.

## Questions for conversation

- I wonder what you have heard and thought from the Word today?
- I wonder what you heard in the Word for our church?
- What one action can you or your church take in response to the Word today?

## Silence in Two Ways

Spend some time in silence sitting still (suggested 5 minutes). Close your eyes lightly. Sit relaxed but alert.

- You may like to say the prayer phrase "Mar-an-ath-a" (which means come Lord). Say this as four syllables. Do not try to think or imagine anything. If thoughts or distractions come simply return to saying the word.
- Or you may like "sitting with God" — a silent time in which we focus all our mind, heart and soul on the presence of God without trying to create it. Simply be still and open to God.

## Prayers for Others

Eternal God, in this season of Advent, we bring our prayers for others.

Where there is hope, you are there.  
Where there is compassion and the desire for wholeness, you are there.  
Where there is the struggle for peace, you are there.  
Where the hungry are fed, and the poor empowered, you are there.  
Where there is delight in the trees of the land, or the depths of the seas, you are there.  
Wherever love is announced, you are there.

In you is such longing for your creation, and for humanity, and we thank you for that presence of you, in Spirit, in people, renewing, calling, and saving.

In that knowledge, and in our simple faith, we bring our prayers for your creation and for the people of this world.

- O Christ we open ourselves in prayer for: [\[Silence for personal prayer or invite others to open prayer in between each\]](#)

Your creation ...  
*Silence*