

For ourselves ...
Silence

Closing Responses & Blessing

Go with songs of joy and hope
to bear witness to all that we have heard and
seen.

And may the Child of Bethlehem
be born into our life,
sheltered by brave love found here
and sustained by faith which will never turn God
away. 2

**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.

Cars driving by on a hot Christmas morning
Filled up with children lit up with smiles
Filled with the thought of a grandmother's cooking
Filled up with thoughts of the tree
I haven't always lived by the roadside
I had a family, I had a bride
But now we're scattered like dice from an egg cup
Still have that aching inside

Like Mary and Joseph, there's no red carpet treatment
Like Mary and Joseph it's a long way from home
There doesn't seem to be even a stable
And this is the morning that Jesus is born

Across the park are some carollers singing
Joy to the world is the song that they bring
And it's the tenderest love that they're bringing
To the people sitting under the trees
I don't know much about God or the Bible
I don't even know if he's there
But I remember the birth of my baby
And the colour of my baby's hair

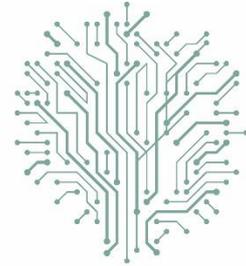
Like Mary and Joseph ...

Past open windows, laughter just spills out
All of the voices they weave into one
And this voice speaks of a family united
together, cause Christmas has come
When I was young I was as strong as a gumtree
And when I spoke my family listened to me
But I'm a man who spoke often in anger
Now no one listens to me

Like Mary and Joseph ...

Unless otherwise indicated liturgies © 2019
Saltbush Community Ministers

1. Commissioning and Benediction: McRae-McMahon D. 2006. Page 50. Liturgies for High Days. MediaCom.
2. Opening: McRae-McMahon D. 2001. Page 90. Prayers for Life's Particular Moments. MediaCom



SALTBUSH
UNITING THE SCATTERED COMMUNITY

Simple worship for the scattered Christian community

Christmas 1
Matthew 2 13-23

Welcome

An opportunity to welcome people to the gathering

Responses & Gathering Prayer

Love has come.

Love has come among us, even us, risking its own
destruction:

God with us.

God for us all.

Grace lies here in frailty.

Grace has come among us, even us,
journeying through costly pathways:

God with us.

God for us all. 1

Music for Reflection

Suggested song: [Like Mary and Joseph](#)

<https://johncolemans.bandcamp.com/track/like-mary-and-joseph>

John Coleman © 2012 Songs of Wind and Water

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 2 13-23

13 Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." 14 Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, 15 and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, "Out of Egypt I have called my son."

16 When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men. 17 Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah:

18 "A voice was heard in Ramah,
wailing and loud lamentation,
Rachel weeping for her children;
she refused to be consoled, because they are no more."

19 When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, 20 "Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child's life are dead." 21 Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. 22 But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. 23 There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, "He will be called a Nazorean."

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

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