

**As we celebrate your coming
in gifts and gatherings of plenty,
we make our commitment to them,
the commitment that we will not forget them on this
day or the next.**

And at this time when, for many people, betrayals and loneliness become stark, like the bare bones of death confronting the fullness of life as they see those who enjoy the privilege of love, we pray that you will hold them close to your heart.

Be with all those who find Christmas Day a mockery and painful reminder of who they are and what their life is like.

**Join us in every place Jesus Christ.
Visit us whoever we are and wherever we are this
day, we pray in your name ¹.
Amen.**

Closing Responses & Blessing

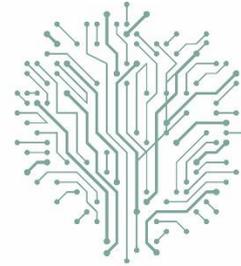
Let us go with open eyes and hearts to see where Christ is in those corners, stables, and ordinary places where people find themselves. Let us go in peace in the presence of God.

Bless us and the people we meet along the way
Father,
Son
and Holy Spirit.

Amen

Unless otherwise indicated liturgies ©
2020 Saltbush Community Ministers

1. ©Dorothy McRae-McMahon 2006.
Liturgies for High Days – Advent 4



SALTBUSH
UNITING THE SCATTERED COMMUNITY

Simple worship for the scattered Christian community

Christmas Day
Luke 2: 1-20

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 centre candle.

The dawn has come,
gentle as the being of a child,
clothed in the light of its newness.

Responses & Gathering Prayer

The dawn has come,
not in the harsh midday sun,
but as fragile rays of pale light,
feeling their way through the darkness.

The dawn has come,
calling the world into vulnerable hope
and claiming a space for God
deep in the centre of our brokenness.

**The dawn has come!
Let us worship our God,
For this is Christmas day ¹. Amen.**

Music for Reflection

Suggested song: Love came down at Christmas
<https://thewallarecovery.bandcamp.com/track/love-came-down-at-christmasWeb link>

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

Luke 2: 1-20.

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. 2 This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. 3 All went to their own towns to be registered. 4 Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. 5 He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. 6 While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. 7 And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

The Shepherds and the Angels

8 In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. 9 Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 10 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: 11 to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. 12 This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." 13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

14 "Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favours!"

15 When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." 16 So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. 17 When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; 18 and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. 19 But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. 20 The

shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Bible reading text

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?
- Where do you find Jesus Christ in the ordinary everyday, even the chaos of life?
- 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

O God, on this day of all days, we pray for the world, in its yearning for signs of good and hope, in its fears that nothing will ever change enough for free and just life to be given to its people.

Silence

We pray for those who look with longing eyes for tiny signs that there are better things to come, who clutch the fragments of survival as though tomorrow they may never see the dawn.

Especially we pray for these people and situations:

The people pray

Come in new possibilities among them Jesus Christ.