

## **Cooma Anglican 7 December 2025 1st Order APBA**

### **Welcome**

#### **Hymn TIS 272 - Come, thou long-expected Jesus**

**Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set thy people free,  
from our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in thee.**

**Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art;  
dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.**

**Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a king,  
born to reign in us for ever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.**

**By thine own eternal Spirit, rule in all our hearts alone;  
by thine all-sufficient merit, raise us to thy glorious throne.**

### **Greeting**

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

### **Sentence of the Day**

In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." Matthew 3:1,2

### **Prayer of Preparation**

**Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name, through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.'

Jesus said: 'This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: you shall love your neighbour as yourself.'

**Lord, have mercy on us, and write your law in our hearts by your Holy Spirit**

### **Prayer of the Day**

Merciful God, who sent your messenger John the Baptist to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation; give us grace to hear his warning and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of our Redeemer, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen**

### **The Ministry of the Word**

#### **Isaiah 11:1-10 (NIV)**

<sup>1</sup> A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.

<sup>2</sup> The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding,

the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the LORD—<sup>3</sup> and he will delight in the fear of the LORD. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; <sup>4</sup> but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked. <sup>5</sup> Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist. <sup>6</sup> The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. <sup>7</sup> The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. <sup>8</sup> The infant will play near the cobra's den, and the young child will put its hand into the viper's nest. <sup>9</sup> They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. <sup>10</sup> In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his resting place will be glorious.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God**

### **Psalms 72:1-7, 18-19 (NIV)**

<sup>1</sup> Endow the king with your justice, O God, the royal son with your righteousness.

<sup>2</sup> **May he judge your people in righteousness, your afflicted ones with justice.**

<sup>3</sup> May the mountains bring prosperity to the people, the hills the fruit of righteousness.

<sup>4</sup> **May he defend the afflicted among the people and save the children of the needy; may he crush the oppressor.**

<sup>5</sup> May he endure as long as the sun, as long as the moon, through all generations.

<sup>6</sup> **May he be like rain falling on a mown field, like showers watering the earth.**

<sup>7</sup> In his days may the righteous flourish and prosperity abound till the moon is no more.

<sup>18</sup> **Praise be to the LORD God, the God of Israel, who alone does marvelous deeds.**

<sup>19</sup> **Praise be to his glorious name forever; may the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and Amen.**

### **Romans 15:4-13**

<sup>4</sup> For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope. <sup>5</sup> May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, <sup>6</sup> so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>7</sup> Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God. <sup>8</sup> For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the Jews on behalf of God's truth, so that the promises made to the patriarchs might be confirmed <sup>9</sup> and, moreover, that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written:

"Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles; I will sing the praises of your name."

<sup>10</sup> Again, it says, “Rejoice, you Gentiles, with his people.”

<sup>11</sup> And again, “Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles; let all the peoples extol him.”

<sup>12</sup> And again, Isaiah says, “The Root of Jesse will spring up, one who will arise to rule over the nations; in him the Gentiles will hope.”

<sup>13</sup> May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God**

### **Matthew 3:1-12 (NIV)**

#### **Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ**

<sup>1</sup> In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea <sup>2</sup> and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” <sup>3</sup> This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah:

“A voice of one calling in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.’”

<sup>4</sup> John’s clothes were made of camel’s hair, and he had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. <sup>5</sup> People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan. <sup>6</sup> Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. <sup>7</sup> But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? <sup>8</sup> Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. <sup>9</sup> And do not think you can say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. <sup>10</sup>

The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. <sup>11</sup> “I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. <sup>12</sup> His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

This is the gospel of the Lord: **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ**

### **Sermon - Advent 2 - What do you expect for Christmas**

#### **The Apostles’ Creed**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, died and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose from the dead, he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins and the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

## Thanksgiving for Offering

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have gifts to share. Accept and use our offerings for your glory and for the service of your kingdom. **Blessed be God forever.**

## Prayers

Let us pray for the world and the church.

Response: Lord, in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

## The Lord's Prayer

Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord, who taught us to pray,  
**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.**

## Exhortation

Brothers and sisters in Christ, we who would come to the holy communion of the body and blood of our Saviour Christ must consider how St Paul exhorts us to examine ourselves before presuming to eat of that bread and drink of that cup.

For the benefit is great, if with a penitent heart and lively faith we receive that holy sacrament. We then spiritually eat the flesh of Christ and drink his blood; we dwell in Christ and he in us; we are one with Christ and Christ with us.

Yet also the danger is great if we receive the bread and cup unworthily. Judge yourselves therefore, that you be not judged of the Lord. Repent truly of your sins, having a steadfast faith in Christ our Saviour. Amend your lives and love your neighbour.

Above all, give hearty thanks to God for the redemption of the world by the death and passion of our Saviour Christ, truly God and truly human, who humbled himself to death on the cross for us sinners, that he might make us children of God, and raise us to eternal life.

You who truly and earnestly repent of your sins, and are in love and charity with your neighbours, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God and walking in his holy ways, draw near with faith, and take this holy sacrament to strengthen and comfort you. But first, let us make a humble confession of our sins to almighty God.

## Confession

**Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, maker of all things, judge of all people, we acknowledge with shame the sins we have committed, by thought,**

word, and deed, against your divine majesty, provoking most justly your wrath and indignation against us.

We earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for all our misdoings. Have mercy on us, most merciful Father. For your Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake forgive us all that is past, and grant that we may ever hereafter serve and please you in newness of life, to the honour and glory of your name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Almighty God our heavenly Father, who of his great mercy has promised forgiveness of sins to all who with hearty repentance and true faith turn to him: have mercy on you; pardon and deliver you from all your sins; confirm and strengthen you in all goodness; and keep you in eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Hear the words of assurance for those who truly turn to Christ: If anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the perfect offering for our sins. 1 John 2:1-2

### **Hymn TIS 283 Long ago prophets knew**

Long ago prophets knew, Christ would come born a Jew  
Come to make all things new  
Bear His People's burden, Freely love and pardon

#### ***Chorus***

Ring bells ring ring ring, Sing choirs sing sing sing  
When He comes when He comes, Who will make Him welcome

God in time God in man, This is God's timeless plan  
He will come as a man  
Born Himself of woman, God divinely human *Chorus*

Mary hail though afraid, She believed she obeyed  
In her womb God is laid  
Till the time expected, Nurtured and protected *Chorus*

Journey ends where afar, Bethl'em shines like a star  
Stable door stands ajar  
Unborn Son of Mary, Saviour do not tarry

Ring bells ring ring ring, Sing choirs sing sing sing  
Jesus comes Jesus comes, We will make Him welcome

### **The Thanksgiving**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to you, Lord, Mighty Creator and Eternal God. Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we proclaim your great and glorious name, for ever praising you and saying:

**Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Glory to you, O Lord most high.**

### **Prayer of Approach**

**We do not presume to come to your table, merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in your manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table. But you are the same Lord whose nature is always to have mercy. Grant us, therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.**

All glory to you, our heavenly Father, for in your tender mercy you gave your only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death on the cross for our redemption: who made there, by his one oblation of himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world; and instituted, and in his holy gospel commanded us to continue, a perpetual memory of his precious death until his coming again.

Hear us, merciful Father, we humbly pray, and grant that we who receive these gifts of your creation, this bread and this wine, according to your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of his death and passion, may be partakers of his most blessed body and blood; who on the night he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given you thanks, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, 'Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me.' Likewise after supper he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them saying, 'Drink from this, all of you; for this is my blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the remission of sins; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.' Amen.

Come let us take this holy sacrament of the body and blood of Christ in remembrance that he died for us, and feed on him in our hearts with thanksgiving.

### **After Communion**

Almighty and everliving God, we heartily thank you that you graciously feed us, who have duly received these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious body and blood of your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, and thus assure us of your favour and goodness towards us and that we are true members of the mystical body of your Son, the blessed company of all faithful people, and are also heirs, through hope, of your eternal kingdom, by the merits of the most precious death and passion of your dear Son. And we humbly beseech you, heavenly Father, so to assist us with

your grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as you have prepared for us to walk in, through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with you and the Holy Spirit be all honour and glory, world without end.

### **Hymn TIS 290 Of the Father's love begotten**

**Of the Father's love begotten, ere the worlds began to be,  
he is Alpha and Omega, he the source, the ending he,  
of the things that are, that have been, and that future years shall see  
evermore and evermore.**

**O that birth for ever blessed, when the virgin, full of grace,  
by the Spirit's power conceiving, bore the saviour of our race,  
and the babe, the world's redeemer, first revealed his sacred face,  
evermore and evermore.**

**This is he whom seers and sages, sang of old with one accord,  
whom the voices of the prophets, promised in their faithful word;  
now he shines, the long-expected: let creation praise its Lord  
evermore and evermore.**

**In the heights of heaven adore him, angel hosts his praises sing,  
all dominions bow before him, and extol our God and king;  
let no tongue on earth be silent, every voice together sing  
evermore and evermore.**

### **Notices**

#### **Dismissal**

The peace of God which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord: **In the name of Christ. Amen.**



## Sermon - Advent 2 - What do you expect this Christmas?

We are well into the season of Advent, and TVs and the internet tell us we have made it through black Friday, statistically the biggest shopping day of the year and now there are 18 days until Christmas.

What do you expect for Christmas?

Today I want to look at what those in the first century Israel were expecting on the first Christmas when the expected Messiah would come. Christians believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the anointed saviour, One scholar, J. Barton Payne, has found as many as 574 verses in the Old Testament that somehow point to or describe or reference the coming Messiah, so I won't look at everything this morning. You'll be pleased to know that I will only focus on our Old Testament reading from Isaiah, and the last Old Testament prophet: John the Baptist. Firstly, Isaiah 11.

In our reading we are told: 11:1 *A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.* Jesse was the father of King David, so the Jews of John's day expected the coming Messiah to be a descendant of King David, in the tribe of Judah. To many, this would have suggested that the Messiah would be a political king, re-establishing their kingdom to the majesty and power it held under David and his son Solomon, when the kingdom was at its peak, when it was bigger than it had been at any other time.

Many Jews attributed the fall of their kingdom to the nation and its kings, straying from their God, Yahweh. This theme is repeated many times throughout the scriptures, but Isaiah says in verse 2 that *The Spirit of the LORD will rest on the shoot, and that Spirit of Yahweh will be the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, of counsel and of might, of the knowledge and fear of the LORD— 3 and the shoot will delight in the fear of the LORD.* If Yahweh had rejected Israel's kings because they strayed from Him, this would not be the case with the Messiah - not only would Yahweh be with the Messiah, he would give him wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge and fear of the Lord.

Isaiah also says that the Messiah would not be corrupt like so many of the kings: He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears. No, He says the Messiah will judge with righteousness, bringing justice to the needy and to the poor of the earth, and slay those who are truly wicked.

Isaiah then moves from the Messiah being just a human, political king. He says the Messiah would also bring harmony to creation: *The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. 7 The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie*



*down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. 8 The infant will play near the cobra's den, and the young child will put its hand into the viper's nest.* Many may have understood this as picture language, with the wolf, the leopard, the lion and snakes representing Judah's enemies, and the lamb, the goat, the yearling and the young representing God's people, but some at least would have seen the images as literal, a restoration of the complete harmony that was only previously ever found in the garden of Eden. Isaiah says that the Messiah would restore Eden's harmony to all creation, when he restores Yahweh's complete authority over everything.

Then, to emphasise that Yahweh will be fully in control, Isaiah says *nothing will harmed or destroyed on all God's holy mountain, for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of Yahweh as the waters cover the sea.* In that day all the nations will rally to the Messiah and his resting place, the nation of Israel, will be glorious.

This is part of the Jewish expectation of the coming of the Messiah, and there are some 564 or so other verses that build on this expectation. Some emphasise the escatological expectation - that the Messiah would bring about the end days, the end of time, or at least the end of this eon in creation's history. Others emphasise the political nature of the Messiah. Even others show the Messiah as a suffering servant. Some 800 years after Isaiah, when Jesus was born, the political view was very strongly felt. The Roman empire occupied Judea, and Jews longed to be rid of them. Many expected the Messiah to throw out the Romans and possibly even bring the entire world back under God, where it should be, and that is when John the Baptist came along.

John the Baptist came out of the wilderness, sounding and looking very much like an Old Testament prophet. He was proclaiming to anyone who would listen: *'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near and to Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.'*

He was quoting a later chapter from the prophet Isaiah: Isaiah 40. Reading from verse 3 and a bit further than John quotes, this said: *"In the wilderness prepare the way for the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.<sup>4</sup> Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain.<sup>5</sup> And the glory of the LORD will be revealed, and all people will see it together. For the mouth of the LORD has spoken."* Isaiah 40:3-5

People went out to John from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan. In response to his call for them to repent of their sins, they confessed and were baptized by John in the Jordan River. He baptised, or washed them in the

Jordan River to symbolize that they were clean of all their sin in preparation for God to come and judge them and intended to completely turn away from their sinful lives.

These people expected the end of the age, that Yahweh would come and take charge of his creation again. Part of this taking charge was to clean up the mess that it had become, which not only involved the Romans occupying the land he had promised to his people, but also cleaning up the sin that was standing between his people and him. They expected the full weight of God's judgement on all sinners, and so they were keen to demonstrate that sin no longer had any part in their lives.

But there was another group of people there where John was baptising. These were Pharisees and Sadducees, groups of Jews who thought they knew all about what God wanted, and weren't afraid to let everyone know it. The Pharisees were the goody goodies of the day. They knew every command in their Bibles and tried to keep them, and ensure everyone else kept the letter of the law, even if they didn't really see the bigger picture, the spirit of the law. The Sadducees also thought they knew everything, but they only believed the first 5 books of the Old Testament: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, and they thought you didn't have to worry about the rest.

It is not clear what these groups expected when they went to John. They may have gone to John expecting to be told they were good enough and didn't need to repent. Perhaps they went to go through the motions of baptism, but just to demonstrate how sinless they thought they were. But I think it is more likely they expected to find some fault in John that they could criticise, some excuse to ignore him, something that would give them ammunition to persecute those and those who did follow him.

John doesn't mince words with them he says: *You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath?* <sup>8</sup> *Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.* John doesn't really care what they think they know, or how much they think they obey God's word. He wants to see the fruit of their obedience they say they have,, not just hear their words.

John tells them he also doesn't care who they think they are related to. Perhaps they are direct descendants of the great Abraham, but John knows that God can raise up children for Abraham from the very stones underfoot. He tells them that if they do *not produce good fruit, they will be cut down and thrown into the fire.* Matthew 3:7-10

So we have three different expectations for the coming of the Messiah: those like Isaiah's hearers who expected a political Messiah, albeit one who would usher in the new age of God's perfect rule.

Then those like John's hearers who were expecting a judgement that they wanted to be ready for, busily going through the motions of repentance and baptism. And then you have the Pharisees and Sadducees, expecting some kind of judgement, but not really thinking that it applied to them.

So this brings me back to my original question: what do you expect from Christmas? Why do you think Jesus came as a baby some 2000 years ago?

Do you think he came to bring about a political revolution, attempting but failing to throw out the Romans and restore God's rule to Israel?

Do you think he came to bring God's judgment, but that it doesn't really apply to you, perhaps because you aren't really that bad, and that there are many others who deserve your judgement well before you do?

Or are you like the first group of John's hearers, those who expected the Messiah to bring judgement, and knowing that your sin is standing in the way of your relationship with God, you need to turn from it; in other words, repent, demonstrate your repentance through baptism, but also to stop sin playing any further part in your lives. You know you don't even keep the greatest of the commandments, you fail to love our God with all our heart, soul, strength and minds. You fail to worship Him as you should, but you want to be fully prepared for the judgement the Messiah will bring but repenting your sin, being baptised and trusting in the Messiah?

Is your expectation this Christmas the same as in our reading from Romans, that *the God who gives endurance and encouragement will give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, 6 so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Will you accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, and so bring true praise to God.

Paul tells us that Christ, the Messiah, served the Jews on behalf of God's truth, so that the promises made to the patriarchs: to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob might be confirmed 9 and, moreover, that Gentiles, like us, might praise God for his mercy. Is that what you expect to do? It is what all who have faith in the Messiah will do in the perfectly restored creation that he is ushering in.

Is that your expectation this Christmas, that through faith in Jesus the Messiah who was born as a man on Christmas some 2000 years ago, you will glorify God for his mercy in the perfect creation that Jesus came to usher in? Is that your expectation this Christmas?