GISBORNE PRESBYTERIAN PARISH

#### ***Matawhero Church – Church Lane***

#### ***St Andrew’s Church and Community Centre:***

#### ***176 Cobden Street, Gisborne***

***24 December 2024 Matawhero Historic Church Christmas Eve***

**We welcome Rev Mike Cotton, and Lynne Cotton on organ**

**Carol:** “O little Town of Bethlehem” CH3 172 SOA35

Mike. We gather together to once again remember the story that never changes. Each year we hear the same story but for each one of us on Christmas Eve, as the excitement and anticipation of tomorrow dawns, things do change, the world changes, people change. Tonight let’s try to build up the excitement of tomorrow in a different way concentrating on our lives as children of God seeking ways to bring renewed joy as we follow Jesus.

Leader:-Candle Lighting – Each week we have lit a candle to rekindle thoughts of Love, Joy, Peace and Hope.

Tonight we light the Christ candle in the eager expectation of renewal and life.

All:- **God the source of eternal light, shed forth your unending day on us who watch and wait for you, that praise may be on our lips, our hearts bless you and our lives glorify you. Amen**

John 1: 1 – 14 “In the Beginning” (Reader)

New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition

**The Word Became Flesh**

**1**In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2**He was in the beginning with God. **3**All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being **4**in him was life,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John%201%3A%201%20%E2%80%93%2014%20&version=NRSVUE#fen-NRSVUE-26039a)] and the life was the light of all people. **5**The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it.

**6**There was a man sent from God whose name was John. **7**He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. **8**He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. **9**The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John%201%3A%201%20%E2%80%93%2014%20&version=NRSVUE#fen-NRSVUE-26044b)]

**10**He was in the world, and the world came into being through him, yet the world did not know him. **11**He came to what was his own,[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John%201%3A%201%20%E2%80%93%2014%20&version=NRSVUE#fen-NRSVUE-26046c)] and his own people did not accept him. **12**But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, **13**who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

**14**And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son,[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John%201%3A%201%20%E2%80%93%2014%20&version=NRSVUE#fen-NRSVUE-26049d)] full of grace and truth.

Leader. Psalm 119 tells us that God’s Word is a light for our feet. We don’t always watch where our feet are treading, who we may have stepped on, pushed aside without knowing.

Lord, Our lives are always in your hands, help us to see those in need, those without hope or help, who we may meet but don’t always see in our daily walk. That we may always be instruments of your peace.

**Carol:** “On Christmas night…” CH3 181 SOA36

Reading:- Luke 1:39 – 45 and v 56 (Reader)

All **The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control. If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the spirit to be renewed as people of God.**

**Carol:** “Once in Royal David’s City” CH3 193 SOA 38

Leader-. Let us bring a prayer of Thanksgiving to God:-

All- **Thanks be to God, that our fears and doubts cannot stop the birth of God among us. Thanks be to God that Jesus comes among ordinary people from all walks of life. Thanks be to God that this Good News has carried unchanged from that first Christmas, that we may share in the blessings of this day. Help us to seek and be aware of the lost, the lonely and the hungry in our own community that they too may know those same blessings. Amen.**

Luke 2: 1 – 7 (Reader) New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition

**The Birth of Jesus**

**2**In those days a decree went out from Caesar 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 in the guest room.[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke%202%3A1-7&version=NRSVUE#fen-NRSVUE-24973a)]

Mike – “A Christmas story

Whatever is true, or noble, or right, or pure, or lovely, if anything is worthy of praise – think about such things. Whatever you have learned from Jesus – put it into practice and the God of peace will be with you.

**Carol: “**O Come all ye faithful” CH3 191 SOA32

Mike – Closing prayer

**Carol:** ““Ding Dong merrily on high” CH3– SOA- VC21

1. **Ding-dong! Merrily on high**

**in heaven the bells are ringing.  
Ding-dong! Verily the sky  
is riven with angels singing:  
*Gloria, hosanna in excelsis!***

**2. E'en so, here below, below,  
let steeple bells be swungen;  
and *i-o, i-o, i-o*, (pronounced ee-o)  
by priest and people sungen!  
*Gloria, hosanna in excelsis!*  
  
3. Pray you, dutifully prime  
your matin chime, you ringers;  
may you beautifully rhyme  
your evetime song, you singers:  
*Gloria, hosanna in excelsis!***

G R Woodward (1848-1934)

**The Grace**

**The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all, now and forever.**

Sing the Threefold Amen

**Coming up:**

**Wednesday 25** **CHRISTMAS DAY**

**10.00am St Andrew’s Christmas Day Service**

**Rev Mike Cotton**

**Sunday 29 10.00am St Andrew’s (Lynnor Cooke)**

**Matawhero – no service**

**Sunday 5 January 10.00am Communion and Picnic at Matawhero.**

**Anniversary of GPP**

**Wednesday 15 January 12.30pm British organist and pianist Ian Miles presents** his 6th biennial St Andrew’s lunchtime concert

***Gisborne Presbyterian Parish***

***St Andrew’s Church and Matawhero Historic Church:***

***Office: 06 868 5513******Hours 10-12 Tuesday – Thursday***

***176 Cobden Street 4010 Bank A/c number 03-0638-0462917-000***

[standrewsgisb@xtra.co.nz](mailto:standrewsgisb@xtra.co.nz)[www.standrewsgis.org.nz](http://www.standrewsgis.org.nz)