



SALTBUSH

UNITING THE SCATTERED COMMUNITY

Simple worship for the scattered Christian community

Matthew 1:18-25
A Time to Ponder
Advent 4

Welcome

We come to hear the Good News, to embody the love of God in Christ as we share our lives with others.

Lighting of Christ Candle

God's truth is revealed in Jesus Christ the light of the world. May the light shine for the hope of the world.

Responses & Gathering Prayer

Come, God who bears the name Emmanuel, 'God with us', as we anticipate your incarnation, open our eyes so we may see more of your goodness. (pause)
Open our ears that we may hear more clearly your call upon our lives. (pause)
Stretch our imagination that we might begin to understand fully what it means to be in this intimate relationship with you.

Song:

[Come Christmas](https://johncoleman.bandcamp.com/track/come-christmas) by John Coleman
<https://johncoleman.bandcamp.com/track/come-christmas>

Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you.
And also with you.

The Word around the Bush

Matthew 1:18-25

18 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. ¹⁹Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. ²⁰But 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. ²¹She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.' ²²All this took place to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:
²³ 'Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel', which means, 'God is with us.' ²⁴When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, ²⁵but 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

What does it mean for you to be an adopted child of God?

How do we live as a reflection of God's love?

Silence in Two Ways

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

Allow this time to be present to the Spirit of God.

Prayers for Others

Loving God, you invite to spend times pondering what the coming of Christ into the world means to us and others. For the world we bring to you our prayers. We pray for people where the powerful suppress those who call out for equality and justice for all.

Lord hear our prayer.

We pray for those who have lost hope and find no good in their circumstances.

Lord hear our prayer.

We pray for the earth, our mother, struggling to sustain all of life, may we care for all you have created.

Lord hear our prayer.

Loving God, may we find moments in our days to ponder your love and what it means for us to be your children.

In Christ we pray. Amen.

Song for Reflection

[Joseph](#) by Peter Kearney

<https://peterkearney.bandcamp.com/track/67-joseph-original-version>

Closing Responses & Blessing

Go from here, listen for the movement of God in your lives, the clear leading of the Spirit, be ready for the presence of Christ and know your journey with hope, love and peace.

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