

Our song to sing or to read: Love Divine

Love divine all loves excelling, joy of heaven to earth come down
Fix in us thy humble dwelling, all thy faithful mercies crown
Jesus, thou art all compassion, pure unbounded love thou art
Visit us with thy salvation, enter every trembling heart.

Come, almighty to deliver, let us all thy life receive
Suddenly return and never, never more thy temples leave
Thee we would be always blessing, serve thee as thy hosts above
Pray, and praise thee, without ceasing, glory in thy perfect love.

Finish then thy new creation, pure and spotless let us be
Let us see thy great salvation, perfectly restored in thee
Changed from glory into glory, till in heaven we take our place
Till we cast our crowns before thee, lost in wonder, love and praise.

*Lyrics by Charles Wesley, melody by Rowland Huw Prichard (Hyfrydol)
Copyright: Public Domain*

A Prayer

Go now and celebrate God's love all your days
Give to Christ Jesus the obedience of faith
offering yourself as the servant of the Lord
and allowing God's Word to be fulfilled in you.

And may the only wise God establish you forever
May the mysteries of Christ be conceived within you
And may the Holy Spirit strengthen you and encircle you

Go now in peace to love and serve the Lord
Amen



Nathan Nettleton 2002

With thanks to Anne Vail and Raelene Burn for preparing today's reflection



Dubbo Uniting Church 64-66 Church Street Dubbo NSW 2830
p: 68854200 e: dubbouca@bigpond.com w: dubbo.uca.org.au



Church in a Bag
20 December 2020

Dubbo Uniting Church



Gathering

As we pour the water for our Advent wreath, we remember our deep thirst
for God's **love** (*Pour water into four glasses*)

A tsunami wave of **love**, overpowering, all-enveloping, overwhelming
sweeping up all before it and changing the landscape forever

Love which has the patience to seep into us one drop at a time over aeons
forming stalagmites of beauty in the darkest places

Love which holds us with the silent ethereal mystery
of mist on a mountain top

We name aloud people and places
in particular need of God's **love** at
this time

Advent God we worship you with
love.

Amen

An Advent Song: In the Beginning

Here is the link:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=UnG6YQeDbao



Preparation

Creator God, come to us in the breeze of a summer afternoon

Breathe on us, God of love

Holy Jesus, come to us in the voices of our neighbours

Speak to us, God of love

Sustaining Spirit, come to us in unexpected moments of joy
in the every day

Energise us, God of love.

Reading: Luke 1: 26-38

Reflection – What greater Love is there to know Jesus in your life – Love

What is LOVE?

How many different types of love are there? The love of a parent, the love from a child, the love of a partner, the love for a friend, the love for a pet?

In this transient world, love sometimes seems to be fleeting. True love is everlasting and founded on Jesus' sacrificial offering for us.

We hear in today's Gospel reading that Mary didn't have a clear plan with all the details laid out. It was all very new and shocking for her, but she was happy to offer her life to God because she knew and loved him.

Recently my family decided we needed another car as both my son and daughter were needing cars for work. I needed to think up something to help me remember the numberplate "YJC 59P" – "Yes Jesus Christ" – but what about the 59P? I looked through the different books of the Bible starting with P and it was in Philippians that I found my new memory verse.

Philippians 2:5-9 ⁵In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: ⁶Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; ⁷rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. ⁸And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death- even death on a cross! ⁹Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name.

Even today, God calls us and invites us to be part of his kingdom. Sometimes we hear him, sometimes we don't. At times we are faithful and obedient and quick to respond; but other times we are deaf to the call and are stubborn and ignorant and rebellious and don't want to be bothered. Through it all, God is faithful to us, pouring out his blessings of grace and love, whether we deserve it or not.

We often receive a message that freedom is doing what we want. We have been given free will to have the opportunity to say **Yes to Jesus**. To strive to be like Jesus and to try to love as Jesus loved.

Although we have waited four weeks to celebrate the birth of Jesus, some ancestors waited centuries and even millennia! Anything that is worth it takes time.

Jesus is Love, came from Love, in Love and with Love to share Love with the world.

Let us continue to share His story of Love to the World.

