



# St Ives Uniting Church

14 December 2025

## Advent 3

### Call to worship and welcome

### Lighting the Advent candle – Joy

Today, we light the third Advent Candle  
**We kindle it with joy.**

May we who share in the light of these Advent candles, share the light, the hope, and the joy of Christ with the world.

**God, you delight in your creation. Help us always to delight in the joyous news of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, in whose name we pray.**

**Amen.**

**Hymn:** Come sing the songs of Christmas time

### Prayer of adoration and confession

### Assurance of forgiveness

Hear Christ's word of grace, "Your sins are forgiven."  
**Thanks be to God.**

### Notices

Lawrence Peak

**Hymn:** 152 Joyful, joyful

### Commissioning of Elders

There are diverse gifts;  
**but it is the same Spirit who gives them.**

There are different ways of serving God:  
**but it is the same Lord who is served.**

God works through people in different ways:  
**but it is the same God whose purpose is achieved through them all.**

Each one of us is given a gift by the Spirit:  
**and there is no gift without its corresponding service.**

There is one ministry of Christ:  
**and in this ministry we all share.**

Together we are the body of Christ:  
**and individually members of it.**

**Response:** 768 Praise God from whom all blessings flow

## **Bible readings**

### **Isaiah 35**

Jill McNamara

The desert and the parched land will be glad;  
the wilderness will rejoice and blossom.  
Like the crocus,<sup>2</sup> it will burst into bloom;  
it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy.  
The glory of Lebanon will be given to it,  
the splendour of Carmel and Sharon;  
they will see the glory of the Lord,  
the splendour of our God.

<sup>3</sup> Strengthen the feeble hands,  
steady the knees that give way;  
<sup>4</sup> say to those with fearful hearts,  
“Be strong, do not fear;  
your God will come,  
he will come with vengeance;  
with divine retribution  
he will come to save you.”

<sup>5</sup> Then will the eyes of the blind be opened  
and the ears of the deaf unstopped.

<sup>6</sup> Then will the lame leap like a deer,  
and the mute tongue shout for joy.  
Water will gush forth in the wilderness

and streams in the desert.

<sup>7</sup> The burning sand will become a pool,  
the thirsty ground bubbling springs.  
In the haunts where jackals once lay,  
grass and reeds and papyrus will grow.

<sup>8</sup> And a highway will be there;  
it will be called the Way of Holiness;  
it will be for those who walk on that Way.  
The unclean will not journey on it;  
wicked fools will not go about on it.

<sup>9</sup> No lion will be there,  
nor any ravenous beast;  
they will not be found there.

But only the redeemed will walk there,  
<sup>10</sup> and those the Lord has rescued will return.

They will enter Zion with singing;  
everlasting joy will crown their heads.  
Gladness and joy will overtake them,  
and sorrow and sighing will flee away.

For the word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God**

**Matthew 11:2-11**

Caroline Turner

<sup>2</sup> When John, who was in prison, heard about the deeds of the Messiah, he sent his disciples <sup>3</sup> to ask him, “Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?”

<sup>4</sup> Jesus replied, “Go back and report to John what you hear and see: <sup>5</sup> The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. <sup>6</sup> Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me.”

<sup>7</sup> As John’s disciples were leaving, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swayed by the wind? <sup>8</sup> If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear fine clothes are in kings’ palaces.

<sup>9</sup> Then what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. <sup>10</sup> This is the one about whom it is written:

“I will send my messenger ahead of you,  
who will prepare your way before you.’

<sup>11</sup> Truly I tell you, among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet whoever is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

For the word of the Lord  
**Thanks be to God**

**Sermon:** Joy to the world?

**Hymn:** 313 Good Christians all rejoice

**Offering and prayer**

**Offering response:** 772 Worship, honour, glory, blessing

**Prayers of the people**

Shirley Ashton

**The Lord’s prayer**

**Hymn:** 210 O for a thousand tongues

**Benediction**

**Threefold Amen**

**Postlude**

**Organist**

Jeanette Steer

