

Sunday 13th December ~ 3rd Sunday of Advent

Sentence. Bind up the broken-hearted, proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners, proclaim the year of the Lord's favour, the day of vengeance of our God. *Isaiah 61.1-2.*

Collect. Eternal God, you sent John the Baptist to prepare the way for the coming of your Son: grant us wisdom to see your purpose and openness to hear your will, that we too may prepare the way for Christ who is coming in power and glory to establish his rule of peace and justice; through Jesus Christ our Judge and our Redeemer, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Readings. Isaiah 61.1-4, 61.8-11; Psalm 126; 1 Thessalonians 5.12-28; John 1.6-8, 1.19-28.

Sunday 20th December ~ 4th Sunday of Advent

Sentence. This child will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High. He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end. *Luke 1.32-33.*

Collect. Gracious God, whose eternal Word took flesh among us when Mary placed her life at the service of your will: prepare our hearts for his coming again and keep us steadfast in hope, that we may be ready for the coming of his kingdom; for his sake, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Readings. 2 Samuel 7: 1-11, 16; Luke 1: 47-55 or Psalm 89: 1-4, 19-27; Romans 16: 25-27; Luke 1: 26-38.

Covid 19 Cleaning After Church Services

We would like some volunteers to help please

Now that we are able to attend worship in the church building again, the church needs to be cleaned to 'Covid Safe' standard between services.

Irene Nelson and Jan Douglas are coordinating the cleaning and Jan is preparing a roster of volunteers.

Currently, the church is being cleaned after 12.00 noon on Thursdays, (this allows 4 days for any infections that may be on surfaces after Sunday services to dissipate) and cleaned again on Fridays, following the smaller 10.00 am service. Special protocols must be followed.

If you can help with this task, please call Jan Douglas **0428 621 121** or Irene Nelson **0403 664 219**.



How About a Story for The Link!

Please give or email your item to Peter Fyfe at pfyfe@iinet.net.au by 2.00 pm Tuesdays.

St Stephen's Anglican Church
Cnr Thomson and Regent St Belmont

Family Christmas Service

Sunday 20th December at 6.00pm



The Nativity

Carols

Sausage Sizzle

Fun for all the family

After such a challenging year, lets
get together and enjoy the
wonders of Christmas

- Door Prize
- Christingle
- Lucky Prizes
- Colouring Competition



Please observe social distancing!
Have a face mask ready! Hand Sanitise!

Weather permitting we will be outdoors, so bring a rug or a chair

Merry Christmas to All



Are there any 'No Fete' Jars out there?



Because of all the 'stuff' that has gone on with the Covid-19 throughout 2020 and the lack of coins being used, it is very likely that nobody has been using the 'No Fete Jar' system. But, if you have a jar in use, could you please bring it to Church on Friday or Sunday. Also, there will not be a New Year's Eve party this year.

We are now back in the church building, had you forgotten what it was like?

Thanks to the dedicated bunch of people who kept the wheels turning during 2020

A prayer for a new Incumbent

*Bountiful God,
give to this parish a faithful pastor
who will faithfully speak your word
and minister your sacraments;
an encourager who will equip your
people for ministry
and enable us to fulfil our calling.
Give to those who will choose, wisdom,
discernment and patience,
and to us give warm and generous hearts,
for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.*

This is the final Link for 2020

As has been the usual practice, we will be issuing a smaller, 'Summer Edition' Link during January and it will probably be fortnightly depending on content available and what is needed.

Thank you to those who have provided material and items of interest for inclusion in the Link throughout the year. It has been very helpful, but I would appreciate more stories from our parishioners, also thank you to the team who have printed and distributed it. *Peter Fyfe, editor.*



More Prayers for Today

pray for

our church

- For every member of St Stephen's at this time.
- For our Incumbency Committee Members.
- Pray with thanks for Reverend Liz, for her enthusiasm and for continuing to try new ways to lead us in these unusual times.
- For those among us who are working tirelessly to keep St Stephen's 'working as a Community of Faith'.
- For our Intercessors and Lesson Readers.
- For our Maintenance Team.
- To keep striving to maintain our connection with the community of Belmont and with each other to proclaim the good news of Jesus.
- For the gifts, fruit and power of the Holy Spirit to be manifest amongst us.
- For the financial and other resources to enable Christ's mission.

pray for the

wider church

- For the Primate of The Anglican Church of Australia, Archbishop Geoffrey Smith.
- For Archbishop Philip Freier and the Diocese of Melbourne.
- For The Episcopal Church of South Sudan, St Stephens, Kakuma (The Revd Simon Majak) and Donholm (The Revd David Chol).
- For The Oodthenong Episcopal Area (The Rt Revd Kate Prowd).
- For The Geelong Archdeaconry (The Ven Jill McCoy).
- For the Corio-Norlane Parish: St Andrews, the Lara Parish: Holy Trinity and Christ Church Little River.

pray for the

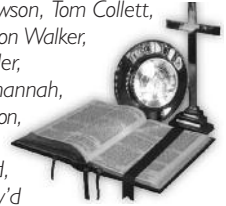
community

- For the Wathaurung People, Elders past, present, and emerging, all Aborigines, Torres Strait Islanders, for reconciliation and treaty.
- For those within our influence who don't yet know Jesus.
- For Hospital and Health Care Workers.
- For Geelong Grammar and all Private Schools.
- For Arts and Entertainment Industry Workers.
- For Geelong University Hospital, the Grace McKellar Centre and Aged Care Facilities.

pray for those in

need

- For Lynda Alsop, Murray Calder, June Cook, Jack Laherty, Sheila Dawson, Tom Collett, John and Lyn Hilcke, Alison Walker, Sylvia Biviano, Betty Miller, Diana Smith, Zaher Mhannah, Rhoda Lynch, Ken Bampton, Jim and Jan Dowsett, Rose Edwards, Wilf Seed, Charlotte MacEndry, Rev'd Sharon Valentino, Shirley Dougherty, Jim and Joy Durran, Den, Dawn Tait and for Dawn's sister Coral, Bernard Conradie and André, Amira Farag and George, Anna Bell-Hughes and Ewan, Archdeacon Jill McCoy, Carolyn Melling and for all others on our hearts and minds.
- For Prisoners, Families and their Support Groups.
- For the Bereaved and their Support Agencies.



pray for the

world

- For peace and prosperity for all nations in political turmoil especially where it has led to violence.
- For all who are orphaned by war and conflict and their Support Agencies.
- For all who are afflicted and affected by the Covid 19 pandemic, and all those who are caring for and treating those who have the disease.
- We pray that as restrictions have eased, the communities will act in a responsible way and be aware of the needs of all.
- For all governments; that they will surrender power for service.
- For Foundation South Sudan, for finances, and scholarship recipients (Mach, Abhor, David, James).

Remember rosters?

Yes, rosters are probably a distant memory for many of us. But, they are on the way back. Jan Douglas is preparing the 'come-back of the roster', so if you would like to go back to your previous job on the roster, or maybe you could try something a bit different, please give Jan a call, (0428 621 121) I'm sure she would be delighted to hear from you. Please see the Covid cleaning item on page 2.

Waiting

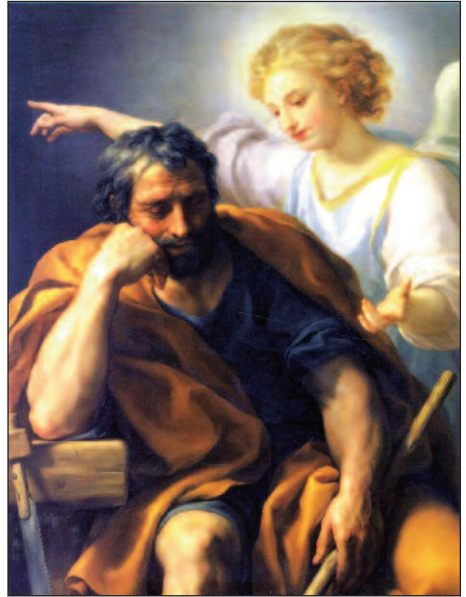
*A commentary on Matthew 1: 18-20 by Brother Ramon SSF;
New Daylight September - December 2000*

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. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But 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."

When I was a little boy, I had a stratagem to make Christmas come less slowly (*it works the opposite way now!*) I measured a novena (9 days) back from the early hours of Christmas morning and then counted down each day: "Nine days and nine nights - Christmas!" The pain was taken out of waiting - or seemed to be.

No such boyhood stratagem could help Joseph, for he was caught up in a dilemma of apprehension and anticipation in which hope and trust were mingled with fear. Can you imagine the widening of his eyes, the race-beat of his heart, the cold clamminess of his skin as he looked, listened, and took Mary's hand in his own when she told him of the visit of Gabriel. How could he believe such a thing - but how could he distrust her? It was a matter of believing where you could not see, of trusting where you could not prove, and the whole of his life was in her hands now.

There is such a straight forward beauty about the account and such a ring of truth which shines through Mary's belief in Joseph as he wakes from the communicative truth of his dream, acting with integrity and quiet faith. This is the point at which the Gospel summons us to enter into the beauty of obedience and trust as we wait for his yearly miracle of grace which takes place in the celebration of the.



Church and within the secret mystery of our hearts

*Though Christ a thousand times
In Bethlehem be born -
Be he not born in thee
Thy soul is all forlorn*

So wrote the fourteenth - century German mystic Angelus Silesius, and we are on the brink of such a new birth. And we are waiting!

Prayer

I think too little of Joseph, Lord, but let those marvellous inward virtues of waiting, apprehension and anticipation shine in my heart at this brink of Incarnation - and let the light spread!

Christmas Day Service at 9.30 am

Prayer of the Week

Almighty God, you have made us and all things to serve you: come quickly to save us, so that wars and violence shall end and your children may live in peace, honouring one another with justice and love; through Jesus Christ, your Son our Lord, who lives with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Monday December 14th**Morning**

Pss 108, 109: 20-30 or Pss 70, 75;
Is 10: 33-11: 9; Mk 9: 2-32.

Evening

Ps 119: 105-128 or Ps 44; Is 11: 110-12: 6;
Rev 15.

Tuesday December 15th**Morning**

Ps 104: 1-25 or Pss 76, 82; Is 13: 1-13; Mk 9: 2-32.

Evening

Ps 104: 26-37 or Ps 74; Is 13: 14-14: 2; Rev 16.

Wednesday December 16th**Morning**

Ps 105: 1-22 or Pss 28, 62; Is 14: 3-23: 12;
Mk 10: 1-16.

Evening

Ps 105: 23-45 or Ps 94; Is 13: 14-14: 2; Rev 17.

Thursday December 17th**Morning**

Ps 106: 1-24 or Ps 86; Is 13: 3-4: 6; Mk 5: 21-43.

Evening

Ps 78: 39-70 or Ps 10; Is 17: 1-11; Mk 10: 46-11: 11.

Friday December 18th**Morning**

Ps 107: 1-22 or Ps 144; Is 17: 12-18: 7;
Mk 11: 12-26.

Evening

Ps 107: 23-43 or Pss 50; Is 55; Rev 19: 11-21.

Saturday December 19th**Morning**

Pss 110, 111 or Ps 18: 1-31; Is 19: 1-15;
Mk 11: 27-12: 12.

Evening

Pss 112, 113 or Ps 80; Is 56; Rev 20: 1-10.

Prayer of the Week *Until Christmas Eve*

O Lord, raise up your power and come among us, and with great might succour us, that, whereas through our sins and wickedness we are sore let and hindered in running the race that is set before us, your bountiful grace and mercy may speedily help and deliver us; through your Son our Lord, to whom with you and the Holy Spirit be honour and glory, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Monday December 21st**Morning**

Pss 121, 122, 123 or Pss 120, 121; Is 26: 1-19;
Mk 12: 28-40.

Evening

Ps 119: 129-152 or Ps 72; Is 57: 14-21;
Rev 21: 9-21.

Tuesday December 22nd**Morning**

Ps 118: 1-18 or Pss 125, 126; Is 27: 2-13: 4;
Mk 12: 41-13: 13.

Evening

Pss 118: 19-29, 120 or Ps 96; Is 58;
Rev 21: 22-22: 5.

Wednesday December 23rd**Morning**

Pss 124, 125, 126 or Pss 123, 130; Is 28: 1-13;
Mk 13: 14-37.

Evening

Pss 127, 128, 129 or Pss 84, 85; Is 59: 1-15a;
Rev 22: 6-13.

Thursday December 24th**Morning**

Pss 130, 131, 133 or Pss 19, 113; Is 28: 14-29;
Galatians 3: 23-4: 7.

Evening

Ps 85; Is 33: 17-22; Rev 22: 14-21.

Friday December 25th Christmas Day**Morning**

Ps 132: 10-18; Micah 4: 1-8; Matt 1: 18-2: 6.

Evening

Ps 138; Micah 5: 2-5a; I John 4: 7-21.

Saturday December 26th**Morning**

Ps 130; Exodus 18: 13-26; Acts 6: 1-7, 7: 1-49.

Evening

Ps 72; Isaiah 60: 1-11; Titus 1.