



ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST ANGLICAN CHURCH

December/
Christmas/
advent
2016

Newsletter

A Christmas Message

The season of Advent is a season of reflection, once kept with a similar strictness as Lent, without the fasting. This time of year places us in some conflict with the secular Christmas, with Santas, parties, planning for holidays and all the excitement of the season.

Advent as the name suggests comes from the Latin '*Adventus*' which means the coming, or the arrival. In this instance it is about the arrival of Jesus. During this season we reflect on His coming as a babe in Bethlehem over two thousand years ago, of the preparation made for his birth but then we are projected to Jesus arrival as the Messiah with the words of John the Baptist ... prepare the way for the Lord. Further we are challenged to direct our attention to the promised return of Christ at the end of the age.

Whichever the coming, the preparation is the same. It is a time when we need to be spiritually ready to encounter God's revelation of himself. To refocus and commit ourselves afresh to looking for the signs of His presence, to embrace them, so that we might be spiritually prepared.

Advent is a time of new beginnings: 'It is the start of a new liturgical year, we meet a God who is the God of the impossible with images of transformation and hope. It is the season of the impossible becoming possible. In the scriptures we read of the dry, barren wilderness bursting into bloom; of broken hearts healing; of a barren woman and a young virgin both conceiving children. It is the season of longing and light'

As we enter the Christmas season we can do so, amid all the secular trimmings, with a sense of hope that God can make all things new. We can rejoice that the giftedness of God continues in our world, that transformation is possible. The gift of the new born babe in Bethlehem kindles within us the hope that there can be a better world. All we need do is be alert, and trust God at his word.

May you each enjoy a happy and holy Christmas rejoicing in God's gift of love: of the Word made flesh.
Fr. Jim.

ABM Advent Appeal

This year we are again supporting the Anglican Board of Mission's Disaster Risk Management Program in Kenya and the Philippines. ABM, working with partner churches are enabling communities that are at risk of suffering from natural disasters the ability to respond effectively to them. Please consider supporting this cause. Envelopes are in the Church.

Carols in the Old Rectory

Garden 2nd December @6.30pm

This also includes the lighting of the Christmas Tree. An annual ecumenical event, hosted by the combined churches of Raymond Terrace, and a fun filled family evening.

Loaves and Fishes

6th December, 6pm.

Join us on the banks of the river for this, the highlight of the Parish's year, hosted by the Mothers Union.

Dates for your Diary Christmastide 2016

Carols and Lighting of the Christmas Tree.

2nd December, 6.30pm.

Loaves and fishes 6th December, 6pm

Parish Council/leaders Gathering

13th December, 6pm

Christmas in Words and Music

18th December, 6pm

Christmas at the Movies 4th December, 4pm

Milo's Table 20th December, 5-7pm

Packing Christmas Hampers 20th December

Christmas Eve: 24th December

Families 6pm

Midnight Mass and Blessing of the Crib 11.30

Mass of Christmas 25th December, 9am

SERVICE/MASS TIMES

Tuesday

9am Holy Eucharist

Wednesday

7am Morning Prayer

9am Holy Eucharist

Saturday

6pm Vigil Mass

Sunday

8am High Mass

10am Low Mass & Kids' Church

REGULAR ACTIVITIES

Monday

Parish Pantry 9am

1st Tuesday

Girl's Night Out 6.30pm

Last Tuesday

Mother's Union 1pm

Thursday

Craft Group 1pm

Choir 5pm

Band 6.30pm

Friday

GAPS 10.30am

Religious instruction in schools

Please note:

No Men's dinner in December and January

No Parish Lunch in December
Evensong is 3rd Sunday in December "Christmas in Words and Music. No Evensong in January.

Kids' Church

Kids' Church takes place during the 10am Service every Sunday for children of preschool age and older. Kids' Church is run by a small team and, as Kids' Church grows, we would welcome help. If you would like to get involved, please contact Jen Buckingham on 0438 608 451.

Mother's Union

'Christian care for families worldwide'. Raymond Terrace Branch meets on the last Tuesday of the month at 1pm in the St John's Anglican Church hall. We invite you to come and join us. Call Denise Brown on 4930 5979 or for more information. Visit: www.muaustralia.org.au/

Parish Council/Leaders

Christmas Gathering

13th December @6pm

Parish Council will meet at this time, followed by a combined leaders social evening with the Guardians and Bursars

Christmas in Words and

Music 18th December, 6pm

Join us for our annual celebration of Christmas in Words and music, led by our wonderful choir.

Christmas at the

Movies 4th December, 4pm

The University of Newcastle Choir (which features two of our own choristers!) present their annual Christmas program. This year it's 'Christmas at the movies.' at the Great Hall at the Callaghan Campus of the University of Newcastle. Tickets \$25 or \$20 for concession.

Milo's Table

20th December, 5pm

The next Milo's Table will be on Tuesday 20th December with a Christmas theme. Anyone who would like to come along to engage with this ministry is very welcome. Please see Tracie Hendricks for more info, or why not volunteer to help those in our community who are in need, especially at this time of year?

Christmas Bowl appeal

This year, we are supporting the work of the Christmas Bowl appeal

giving seeds of hope to farming families in Zimbabwe, and Syrian refugees. Envelopes for giving are in the church. Please consider helping with this worthy cause.

Packing Christmas

Hampers 20th December, AM

With Christmas fast approaching, our Parish is packing Christmas hampers. If you are able to help, either by donating items or packing, please contact Heather Buckingham.

Christmas Eve

24th December, 6pm - Families
11.30pm - Blessing of the Crib

Christmas Day

25th December, 9am
Mass of Christmas.

Donations

Donations to St. John's can now be made using our new website and clicking on the donate button. Thank you.

<http://www.stjohnsraymondterrace.org>

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NOTE

Please check our noticeboards for more information and sign-up sheets. There is also a suggestion box in the foyer. For inclusions in the newsletter email: scott.j.d.mudd@hotmail.com

Parish Council Minutes: these are published after each meeting and a copy for parishioners is placed in the morning tea area (see folder on table).

