

December 2023

St. John's news



A news publication from the
Anglican Parish of St John's, Bentleigh

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A prominent feature in the church is the cross above the chancel. Photo A. Lyons

From the Vicar

For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9.6)

For the Grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. (Titus 2.11)

But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. (Luke 2.10-11)

As I write these words, Christmas 2023 and New Year 2024 are fast approaching. Both of these will be my second at St John's, Benteleigh. For all of us this season would be different from previous years.

Much has occurred in the world during 2023. We hear and read of these different events happening in the world, with some still ongoing as we approach Christmas 2023 and the New Year 2024. We can be certain that more will occur in 2024 and in the years ahead, as long as the Lord's return is delayed.

Similarly, a lot has occurred in our individual lives and in the lives of our loved ones. A lot has occurred in the life of this parish. Some were pleasant and joyful, while some were difficult and even heart-wrenching. *How will we survive should these events occur again?*

Although it may be hard for us to imagine, uncertainties were prevalent before, during and after the birth of Jesus. Isaiah prophesied about the 'impending' arrival of a child who will have many attributes and titles. It must have been an exciting announcement for the people. But the people of Isaiah's time did not see the arrival of this "Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." I do not know how many continued to wait in hope. Undoubtedly, many would have given up and moved on with other things.

Many years later, news of the arrival of this "Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" was personally delivered by an angel to a group of shepherds as they cared for their sheep. The previous titles announced by the prophet Isaiah were expanded to include another three, "Saviour ... Messiah ... Lord."

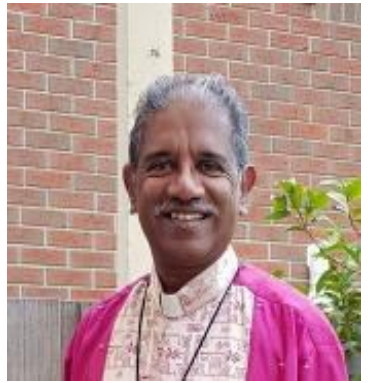
But these proclamation titles of who Jesus is did not stop! In *Titus* we read of another expression, "the *Grace of God!*" Each of these titles have particular meanings and given at a time and in an environment where those terms were needed the most.

Today, we are blessed because each of these titles of Jesus are equally relevant as we face many uncertainties in the world. For instance, where peace is absent, it is reassuring to know that Jesus is the Prince of Peace. Where our earthly fathers/parents have failed us, we have an unfailing and faithful Everlasting Father. Where we feel that we are irrelevant, Jesus is the 'Grace of God', graciously given to all humanity. From all these titles of Jesus, we know that we are all loved beyond our expectations!

Irrespective of our circumstances in the future, may all of us have a life-transforming encounter with Jesus, the *Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, Saviour & Messiah*, during this Christmas/New Year.

I look forward to ministering with you in 2024, as we together, with God's Grace, lead St. John's into growth.

Soli Deo Gloria, Santa ☺



The Parish Councillors, Wardens and I, together with our families, wish you and yours a very joyous, blessed, holy & safe Christmas and New Year 2024! Soli Deo Gloria, Santa ☺

The Anglican Parish of St John's Benteleigh is seeking to appoint a parish musician and a children/youth families minister. If you're interested in exploring using your gifts to serve God in the Anglican Parish of St John's Benteleigh, and to obtain a copy of the position description, please contact the parish office on 03 9557 2226 or email:

The HOPE of Christmas – The only treasure that lasts!

Presents, food and fun. Christmas is the one time of the year when anything goes; diets and budgets are thrown out of the window for a few days of celebration and generosity. But what does Christmas look like after a year when inflation, food prices and energy costs have crept up and up? When people have cancelled holidays to pay the mortgage or moved in with friends because they can't afford the rent they once could?

Many of us may have to rely on the kindness of strangers and charities to bring Christmas cheer to our homes this year. Will this just become another disrupted—perhaps disappointing Christmas? Our worries, questions and problems may change from year to year, but the Christmas story remains the same. And, perhaps just as relevant. You see, Jesus knew how hard life on earth can be. He lived in a perpetual cost-of-living crisis (not that He saw it that way). He owned next to nothing, had no savings and constantly relied on the kindness of others for his daily needs.

When He was born, He was laid in a borrowed manger. As an adult, when He taught about money, He had to borrow a coin from the crowd for his illustration. When He rode into Jerusalem, He did it on a borrowed donkey. His last meal with His friends was held in a borrowed room. After He was crucified on the cross, His body was laid in a borrowed tomb. *“I have no place to even lay my head”* He would say to His followers. He had no home, no money, no possessions.

So, why did He bother coming here at all? Why leave His throne in heaven to live a penniless, humble and brutally short life on earth? He came to claim the only treasure worth having: *you!*

Jesus spoke powerfully to the crowds, but what He loved most was connecting with individuals. His passion was to reach each person within their hardships, uncertainty and fear of their lives and show them their true value to Him. To everyone who trusts Him, Jesus gives them Himself. We are His treasure and He is ours!

The world's treasure is fragile and temporary. *Jesus explained, “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy and where thieves break in and steal. But store*

up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” He did not say this to diminish the important things and relationships we have in our lives, but to show He is more valuable, and crucially can never be lost. Everyone who places their trust in Jesus enters a lasting and secure relationship with God.

That's the hope of Christmas; Jesus knows what it is to live with very little, so He knows how to take care of us and provide for us throughout all our ups and downs. *That is why Jesus is the real treasure we need.*

If we are willing to trust Him, our debts and living costs won't magically disappear, but He will provide for us each day. And we will now joy and peace—because we won't have to manage this life on our own anymore. God will walk with us through it all. And He will never let us down.

He's the only treasure that lasts!

[adapted from: *Our Daily Bread ministries*, 2023]

Christmas at St John's Bentleigh

17 Dec @ 7PM	Christmas Carols service
24 Dec @ 10AM	Combined Advent 4 Service
24 Dec @ 11PM	Christmas Eve - Carols and Communion
25 Dec @ 10AM	Christmas Day - Carols and Communion

All welcome

For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”
(Isaiah 9.6)



Sunday Worship

8.30AM Holy Communion
10AM Holy Communion or
Praise, Prayer & Proclamation

“Christmas starts with Christ”

St John's Anglican Church
624 Centre Road, Bentleigh 3204
P: 9557 2226
W: www.stjohnsbentleigh.org
“loving God, loving people, making disciples of Christ”

Foundation Stone



Revd. Donald Redding
New Guinea, 1943

(<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C346158>)



Sir Edmund Herring
Queensland, 1944

(<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/064081>)

A blast from the past! Pt. 1

IT AIN'T NECESSARILY SO!!

The things that you're liable,
To read in the Bible,
Ain't necessarily so.
Moses was found in a stream,
Saved from the water
By old Pharaoh's daughter,
Moses was found in a stream.

Jonah he lived in a whale,
He made his home in
That fishes abdomen,
Jonah he lived in a whale

It ain't necessarily so,
The things that your preacher's
Liable to teach yuh,
Ain't necessarily so.

David was small, but Oh my,
He fought with Goliath
Who lay down and dieth
David was small, but Oh my.

It ain't necessarily so,
The things that your preacher's
Liable to teach yuh,
Ain't necessarily so.



Normie Rowe's popular pop echoes the thoughts of many today. This is not a bad thing! It's only as we question our beliefs that we become involved enough to search and find what is truth.

Amongst Jesus Christ's own disciples were those who said, "*it ain't necessarily so.*" In fact Thomas said, "*I will not believe until I place my finger in the print of his nails and thrust my hand into his side.*"

It is admirable to question categorical statements and seek reality for ourselves. A secondhand faith is no use except to swim with the tide. When we do ask such (to p.8)

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questions we should also be prepared to prove the answers for ourselves. Taste and try. In fact when we are in a better position to know if the statements are worth depending on. This is possible when we compare piece by piece, statement by statement in order to weigh the evidence.

Honest doubters, like Thomas, are refreshing in an age when too much is taken for granted and the crowd is too easily followed – usually a fairly indifferent crowd when it comes to religious action!

St. John's Parish News East Bentleigh, vol. IX, no. 5, June 1965.



BACKWARDS TO CHRISTMAS

In view of the close proximity of Christmas and its ever-increasing commercialization, we consider this article by J.B. Phillips most appropriate.

There is no mention of the celebration of the Birthday of Jesus Christ by the early Church in the New Testament. As far as the Gospels are concerned, Jesus commanded men to remember, not His birth, but His death. Not once in the inspired Letters are newly born companies of believers in Christ urged to glorify God worthily on the Nativity of His Son. The unconquerable young Church of the Book of Acts had no Christmas in its message. Its ears were still ringing with the resounding miracle of the Resurrection. It is at least possible that these brand-new Christians did not even know the story of the Babe at Bethlehem. Certainly, it is true that what filled their minds was the Resurrection – to them the irrefutable proof that Christ was who He claimed to be, the unforgettable demonstration that death was conquered, and the daily demonstrable sign that the same power was available to transform and irradiate any human being who was willing to put his trust in Christ.

Nevertheless, the time must have come when this First Army of the New Church, convinced both theoretically and practically that Jesus of Nazareth was indeed God's Christ, turned their thoughts to the manner of His entry into the world. Luke himself, who was one of that early company, may have been the man whose patient research discovered the thirty years' old story. When the event happened, by far the most important in the history of this planet, the facts were known to very few. Did Luke get his story from our Lord's own mother, did he 'interview' the old shepherds on the hills and hear from their own lips of that strange midnight when Heaven suddenly opened and they were so afraid?

Of course, we do not know for certain, and it may disclose the story of her divine

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conception.

But whether it was early or late in the life of the young Church we may guess that the story was received with joy, but without much surprise. For would not this quiet humble entry into the world have seemed completely 'in character' with the God whom they already knew? They had known, some of them personally, a Man who was undoubtedly God in human form, yet a Man who was neither ashamed to work as a carpenter, nor to lead the life of a roving preacher, nor to accept as His destiny desertion by his friends and a terrible and degrading death at the hands of His enemies. How beautifully and surely did the story fit into what they already knew! How different indeed from any human planning was the King's entry into His own world, and yet how much in keeping with the ways of the God whom they knew, and with whom they were daily working!

In a sense, then, the early Christians looked backwards to Christmas. Most of them, we may safely guess, knew in experience the reconciliation wrought by His death and the power released by His Resurrection before they ever heard the strange story of His humble birth. But not many generations passed before Christians were celebrating with every kind of human rejoicing the very heart and centre of their Faith that God became Man. In the fourth century, Constantine, the first Christian Roman emperor, decreed, for good or ill, that the pagan festival of the winter solstice should be combined with the Church's celebration of the Nativity of her Lord. From that time onwards, and perhaps with growing confusion, there has been a mixture of pagan jollification and Christian rejoicing. That is why every Christmas we must deliberately and thoughtfully look backwards.

We all deplore the fact that the Christmas season has become so highly commercialized, but it is difficult to see what we can do about it. It is painful for Christians to see the original Birthday Celebrations smothered under trappings and decoration, so that its religious significance is overlaid by purely pagan merry making. But most painful, and indeed most dangerous, is the fact that millions of men and women regard the Christmas story as a beautifully preserved piece of folklore. They make no real distinction in their minds between the myth of Father Christmas and his reindeer, and the story of the Babe with the adoring shepherds. Christians can serve no good or useful purpose by decrying the generosity, the truce to normal hostility and the general goodwill engendered at Christmas time. Indeed, though they are superficial, these things are often good. But wherever opportunity occurs they must not hesitate to say that what we are celebrating is a unique fact of human history. Before we can do that effectively we need ourselves to look backwards to the first Christmas, stripped of all the

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romance, decoration, and sentimental association with which it has become encrusted. Quietly and with our adult minds we need to see afresh with clear fresh eyes that we live on a visited planet and that be God's choice God and Man are irrevocably joined together.

The modern acceleration of scientific discovery, the leaps and bounds by which the human mind has progressed in a score of different directions from agriculture to psychology is certain, if we use our minds as we should, enormously to expand our conception of God. What is more, this very enlargement of knowledge is enough to show the humble-minded that it is perfectly possible that vista upon vista of unknown truth has yet to be discovered. To the man of sensitivity and imagination his own microscopic existence upon this tiny planet, set amid immeasurable whirling universes, seems both precarious and terrifyingly unimportant. But not if he is a Christian.! Not if he believes that the infinite God fitted His stature to our need and became a human being. The awe may remain, but the terror and the loneliness are gone for ever once a man accepts with mind and heart that God became man. The real wonder starts here. For surely, we cannot grasp in anything but a formal way the meaning of our redemption, unless we know for certain that the Figure on the Cross was truly God-become -Man. We cannot be convinced of the relevance of the Resurrection, even though we give assent to the Resurrection stories of the Gospels, unless we believe that the immeasurable God became human – as truly human as we are human – and yet conquered the black terror of death. The Ascension of Christ witnessed with joy by a few early Christians means almost nothing to us unless we see it as a demonstration of the fact that God takes Humanity with Him back into the timeless realm of Heaven.

All good religions teach men something about God and they all urge men to lead a good life, but only the Christian Faith dares to state that God really became Man, that from the time of that event, now nearly two thousand years old, God has identified Himself with man. There is no revoking of that position, and the Son of God does not cease to call Himself the Son of Man. Our values, our treatment of our fellows, our quality of living, indeed our whole attitude towards life and death derives ultimately from what happened in the stable of an inn.

That is why with reverent imagination and with humble minds we must year by year look backwards to the First Christmas.

The Church Mouse, Dec. 1973/Jan. 1974, pp3-4

A blast from the past! Pt. 2

CAN YOU BE A CHRISTIAN WITHOUT GOING TO CHURCH?

This important and perplexing question has been asked many times by sincere and thinking people. The questions and Biblical references below are suggested to help you find your own answer.

When you have carefully considered the subject from various 'angles', read the opinions expressed by the Student Christian Movement, in the second half of this article. The question numbers correspond with the answers offered by the Student Christian Movement.

1. WHAT DID JESUS DO?

Look at St. Luke, Chapter 4, verse 16. 'As His custom was' means 'as He usually did'

2. WHAT DID THE FIRST CHRISTIANS DO?

Look at the Acts of the Apostles. Ch.2, v.44; ch. 12, v. 12; ch. 16, v.5 and 40; Romans, ch. 16, v.3,4 & 5. (There were no church buildings in those days. The Christians met in somebody's house). Why did the Christians meet? Because they wanted to. Because they felt this was what Jesus wanted them to do (see Luke 22, 19 – the last part of this verse).

3. WHAT DID THE CHRISTIANS DO IN YOUR AREA?

Were the churches in your area started by one person who thought people should go to church, or by people themselves because they wanted a church to go to?

4. WHY DO PEOPLE GO TO CHURCH NOW?

Here are three valid reasons:

- (i) To meet God through the prayers, lessons, and through the chance to be quiet, and to meet God in a special way through the words and actions of the Communion Service. Could you meet God just as well if you sat at home? Would you find it easy at home to concentrate on thinking about God?
- (ii) To learn more about Christianity. What do you learn from? The Sermon? Discussion groups? Can you learn from the hymns, the prayers, the Bible readings? Does it matter if you don't always understand everything you hear in church?
- (iii) To help in the work of the church. Are churches just clubs for people who like religion? Would they have lasted so long if they were just religious clubs? Have churches got work to do? What is their job? Does going to church only do you good if you enjoy the service? Is going to church supposed to do you good? Is that the idea of going?

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5. **CAN YOU BECOME A CHRISTIAN ON YOUR OWN?**

Could you understand Christianity properly without help from some other people who know more about it?

6. **CAN YOU KEEP ON BEING A CHRISTIAN ON YOUR OWN?**

Is living in a Christian way an easy thing to do? Do you need the experience and encouragement of other people to keep you going? Is this another reason for going to church?

1. Everyone would agree that Jesus lived a good life, but He also felt He needed to go to church regularly – the Synagogue was the Jewish Church.
2. The first Christians met together because they felt:
That they belonged to a new ‘family’ and wanted to meet with others who belonged to this family
That the best way to praise God and to learn about the teachings of Jesus was to do it together.
That Jesus had given them a job to do (see Matthew 28:19) to share in His work, and they could only do it if they did it together.
3. The churches in your area were started because the Christians felt they needed a place to meet for worship. Christians have always felt that they want to praise God and follow the Christian way *TOGETHER*.
4. Some of the reasons people go to church are given in point 2 above. (Other reasons have already been expressed under question 4 above). It is NOT true that people go to church because it is ‘the done thing’, or to be thought well of. It is not ‘the done thing’ now in most places to go to church (only one person in ten in this country goes). People will not think well of you for going to church. They are just as likely to think that you are a bit queer. It is easier to praise God and think about Him when others with you are concentrating on the same thing. It is not easy to think about God on your own or in the country (even if you mean to). Thinking about God is not the same as praising Him, and learning about Him, through sharing in the life of His family. The job of a church is to TELL the truth about God (in services & sermons) and to SHOW the truth about God, by the way members treat each other and by the way they care for other people (sick people, refugees, and so on).
5. If it was not for the church we would not have heard about Christianity. The church spreads the news about Christianity and passes it on down the years.
6. There are some people who do not go to church who always treat other people kindly. But it is a difficult thing for most of us to live in a Christian way. We need help. You may start by thinking that you will do right by other people, but some of them get on your nerves, and some of them let you down, and soon you are so busy getting even with them or standing up for your rights that you forget all your good intentions. Going to church reminds us of what we were meant to be like and

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brings us close to God's help to be like that.

TO SUM UP:

It is difficult to become a Christian without coming into touch with the church, and it is very hard to keep on being a Christian without keeping in touch with the church. We the people who believe in God and worship Him together are the Church. The Church building is only the venue where we worship.

Can you be a Christian without going to Church?? Well, you just might be, but you probably won't be one for long!

The Church Mouse, Aug.Sept 1973, pp3-4



A couple of familiar faces!!! In Kalgoorlie W.A our previous vicar, David Powys caught up with another previous St John's vicar, Revd. Elizabeth Smith

Food Security Champion for refugees

St John's is proud to become a Food Security Champion for refugees by partnering with the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre (ASRC).

ASRC feeds more than 1,600 people each fortnight. Most are families living with no income, right to work or access to health care. Each month we will collect one foodbank item that is in high demand and our donations taken to the ASRC in Dandenong.

For the month of August we will collect dishwashing liquid. Please keep this much needed item in mind when you do your weekly shop and bring them to the donation box in the narthex for distribution.

Donations for the remainder of 2023 are,

December—laundry liquid.

For further information please speak with Beatrice McDonald who will coordinate the project over the year. Thank you!

Beatrice McDonald

REFERENDUM DAY, 14 October 2023



Referendum Day 2023 was a great success for the St John's stalls and especially the BBQ. Our illustrious Ross Newcombe in the picture above having the formal photo taken, along with other helpers, thanks to David and Jo a'Beckett, Graham Williams and Peter Anderson.



Four generations in one photo! 14 October 2023.
Glynis Rose (R) with daughter Liz, granddaughter Kira (L) with great-granddaughter Cora



Lucy, who also attends the Monday morning 'Craft and cuppa', brought along her magnificent little friends Ruby & Jazz!!!



At the age of 10 Ryan was ready to give up on life.

His trust of others had eroded through trauma and incredibly challenging life circumstances. His single mum tried her best but she herself was traumatised so her capacity was limited.

The school worked hard to help but Ryan refused to engage. *In fact, he stopped coming to school altogether.*

Fortunately, Ryan's story didn't stop there and Kids Hope was able to provide a mentor for him.

When Chris, Ryan's mentor, first started his weekly visits to school, *there was no sign of Ryan!* Chris would faithfully show up for him, but... no Ryan.

Ryan soon became curious. "Who is this guy? Why does he want to see me?" he thought. He decided to come to school to find out who Chris was, and why he kept turning up. Ryan arrived at school and thought, "Hmm, he's alright," so he came again the following week, and the next. It started with Tuesday – the day Chris came to see him. Then he started coming on Wednesdays, then Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays.

Now Ryan attends regularly, his behaviour has settled, and he's enjoying school. Most of all on Tuesdays!

Without Chris, Ryan may have given up, not only on school, but on life itself.

Sadly, Ryan is not alone in his school refusal. The mental health crisis across Australia has impacted kids and there has been a surge in school refusal.

How can we help if we can't get kids to school?

Thankfully, Kids Hope helps get troubled kids like Ryan back to school when other measures fail.

We need your help to reach more kids like Ryan who might otherwise give up on school and life. Will you join us by giving generously this Christmas?

Great News!

A generous supporter has offered to match your donation this Christmas up to \$10,000 so you can **double your impact!** Your gift of ...

\$75 provides mentoring for a child for one two terms

\$300 provides mentoring for one two children for a year

\$3,000 provides mentoring for one two schools for a year

Together, with your support, **we can meet the need and make a difference to thousands more kids like Ryan** who might not be here today if it weren't for a mentor like Chris.

ON A WING AND A PRAYER!!

I fly out of Melbourne on October 1st to Dublin. Thank you to the kind, caring folk in St. John's and friends in Bentleigh who have been so good to me over the past 5-6 years.

Also a huge thank you to the front line workers who are my little angels. I will leave on Sunday without all my boxes ticked so I go on a wing and a prayer.

September has been a month for Devils, Demons and Dragons. We all do the wrong things at times, but God forgives us, so I'm sure the devil is forgiven, and I have the devil's angel and God's Angel on my shoulders.

God Bless you all

Jean Phibbs (Sept. 2023)



Thanking and praising God for the Vinicombes

Dear CMSVictoria,

We have been praying for and supporting the Vinicombe family since their motor vehicle accident on Christmas Day 2022. Theirs' has been a long and complex journey filled with many challenges and griefs, but also thanksgivings and answered prayer.

Matt and Kate's various insurances have finally been approved. This means that with sadness they have resigned as missionaries of CMS. Kate expects to be discharged from hospital and join the family in their new home shortly. She will continue to receive rehabilitation care.

Please continue to pray for Matt and Kate, Bethany, Chloe and Amos; their extended family; and their church family at Bundoora Presbyterian. Their journey of healing continues, as does the story of God's powerful work of grace in and through the faithful witness of their lives.

The Scriptures insist that when 'bad things' happen, God often uses them for his own good purposes. We have seen this in the tremendous response to our calls to prayer. We have seen this in the \$1.1M raised for the special assistance fund. We continue to see this in Kate and Matt's steadfast public testimony of faith in Christ amidst their circumstances. For each of these, we give thanks and praise to God.

Our gospel work among our indigenous sisters and brothers on Groote Eylandt and across North Australia continues. Thank you and thank God for the Vinicombes' part in this. None of their work or love is in vain. We keep praying for a North Australia That Knows Jesus.

Yours in Christ,

Wei-Han Kuan, Executive Director, CMS Victoria



Pic: Casuarina Beach Darwin...

... a renewing journey on a pathway with many textures and adventures.



The Snibsons' October Update 2023

Supporting and Equipping Aboriginal Christians and Leaders in Darwin

Remote travel along the Roper Highway to Ngukurr, Urapunga and Numbulwar

Greetings to our friends and family

The last three weeks have involved lots of travel through the red dust and semi-desert scrub and relentless heat. It is good to get into a neutral mindset and tune out as the bush rushes past.

Here are some of the highlights of our stay:

Derek, along with Simon Koefoed, led a retreat for the two Ordination candidates: James Woods and Edwin Rami. The bush setting at Roper Bar was the place to reflect, read and talk about their call. (See photos)



Edwin meditating on some passages from Scripture during Retreat at the beautiful Roper River.

Derek, James, Edwin and Simon on Retreat at Roper Bar before the Ordination

Top End Tales (cont'd)

Two Ordinations: James at Urapunga and Edwin at Numbulwar

There was a lot of logistical planning for the two Ordinations, with many people travelling from Darwin and other remote locations to attend on consecutive days.

We had a house full of people in Ngukurr on the first day - then we travelled to Urapunga, where there is no accommodation for visitors. The next day, we continued on to Numbulwar, where Derek and I stayed with the Mackenzies (CMS Missionaries). The second service was spoken in Kriol, English and Wubuy to cover the language needs of that community. Many Baptisms and five Confirmations were part of that service. It was such an exciting time for all of us as well as many people from the community who turned up to check out what was happening. The dogs came as well and were a distraction when a dog fight broke out.



Praying outside James house, getting ready to walk to church ground.



Ministers (white shirts) laying hands on Edwin at Holy Spirit Church Numbulwar



Baptisms and Confirmations at Numbulwar. Left: Edwin Baptising the son of one of the leaders. Right: preparing for Confirmation

Top End Tales (cont'd)



Before and after all this joy and excitement, we were wandering around Ngukurr finding people we wanted to talk to, encouraging some of the leader mob, attending the Bible Studies, and helping in practical ways for two funerals. The three weeks were quite intense but it was great to reconnect with people we knew and loved from our first orientation to the Northern Territory in 2018.

While we were staying at Numbulwar, we were able to attend the viewing of Mandy Manggurra's husband's body returning to his homeland before burial (above left).

There were some relaxing times, when we accepted the ever present requests to go fishing. Above right: Edwin and Glen cook the fish we caught at Rocky Point. There were some good catches - Mangrove Jack, Groper and Rock Cod.

'So from now on, we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way. Therefore if anyone is in Christ the new creation has come. The old is gone, the new is here. All this is from God... through Christ, who gave us the ministry of reconciliation'

(2 Corinthians 5:16-17)

Please, give thanks for and ask with us for..

Encouraging visits to Church communities at Ngukurr, Urapunga and Numbulwar, as well as the blessing of the appointment of two new leaders - James and Edwin in their respective communities. ...pray that they might continue to grow in faithfulness and readiness to serve in new ways in their roles..

- Energy and stamina for us as we return to Darwin and pack up to leave for Melbourne. Pray for safe travel through Central Australia as well as time for reflection as we transition towards Home Assignment.*
- Wisdom and direction as we plan the visits to the many churches and people who support us in Melbourne and elsewhere.*

(Postscript: The Snibsons have arrived safely in Melbourne and will be visiting St John's Bentleigh on 14 April 2023.)

Bible Word Search: 'Christmas'

All the words listed below are in the puzzle - left, right, up, down or diagonally. Find each word and click its first letter then its last letter to highlight it. After you have found all the words, click the leftover letters in the correct order to form the mystery answer. To work the puzzle on paper instead: Print this page and circle each letter of the words you find.

(from: https://www.christianbiblereference.org/ws_Christmas_0.htm)

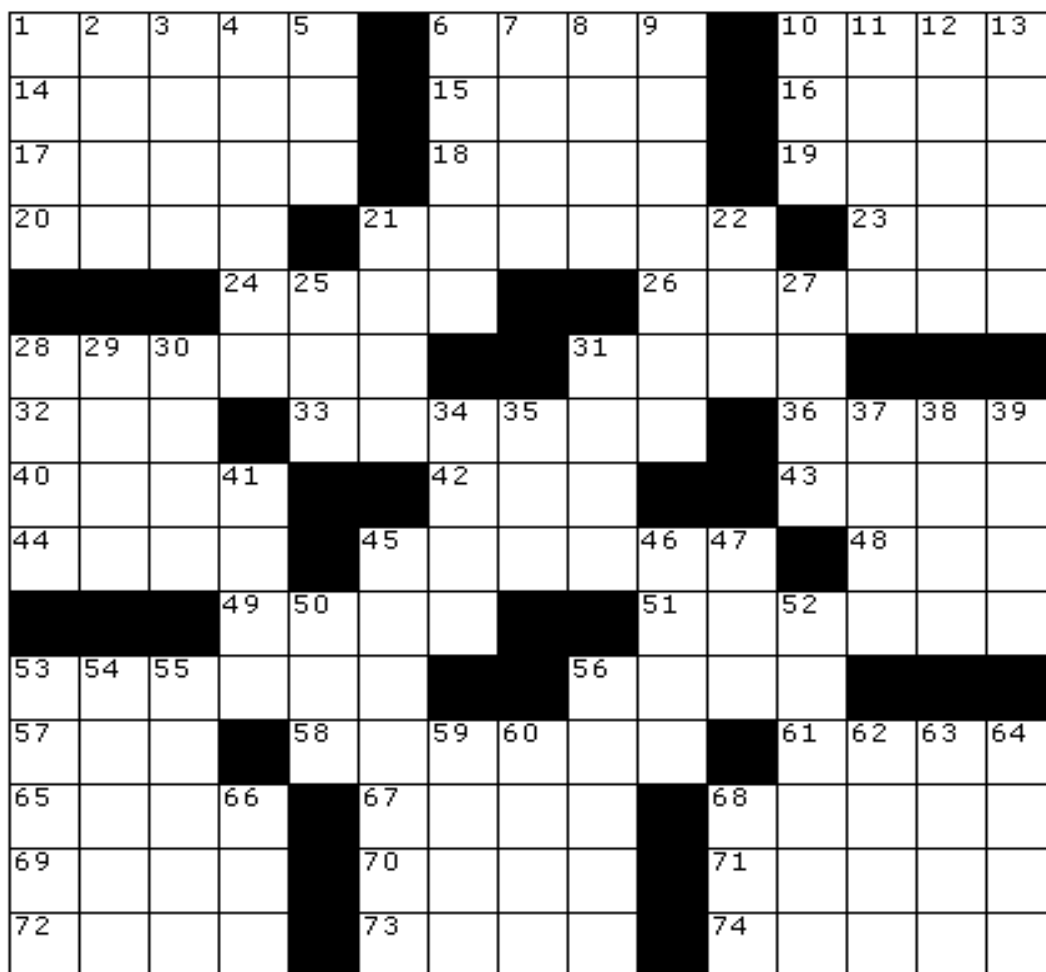


Advent, Angels, Beauty, Birth, Cards,
Carols, Census, Children, Christ, Church,
Creche, December, Family, Feast,
Festival, Garland, Giving, Goodwill,
Herod, Holiday, Holly, Holy, Icicles,
Jesus, Joseph, Joy, Lights, Love, Magi,
Manger, Mary, Merry, Music, Nativity,
Noel, Pageants, Peace, Prayer, Santa,
Season, Shepherd, Sleigh, Snow, Star,
Stocking, Trees, Yule

Bible Crossword Puzzle

All the words listed below are in the puzzle - left, right, up, down or diagonally. Find each word and click its first letter then its last letter to highlight it. After you have found all the words, click the leftover letters in the correct order to form the mystery answer. To work the puzzle on paper instead: Print this page and circle each letter of the words you find.

(from: https://www.christianbiblereference.org/Crossword/cw_02-41.htm)



ACROSS

- 1 West Coast Fl. city
- 6 Bivouac
- 10 File
- 14 Mends
- 15 Margarine
- 16 Peak
- 17 First husband of Bathsheba
- 18 Junk e-mail
- 19 Horse command
- 20 Ding's partner
- 21 Repents
- 23 And so forth
- 24 Ca. University
- 26 Tenant
- 28 Artifact show place
- 31 Call
- 32 Epoch
- 33 Book near Proverbs
- 36 Hawaiian island
- 40 Water (Sp.)
- 42 Pen brand
- 43 Son of Seth
- 44 Valley

- 45 S. American llama
- 48 Day of the wk.
- 49 Biblical weed
- 51 Demands
- 53 Evil angels
- 56 Opp. of love
- 57 Spanish "one"
- 58 Berate (2 wds.)
- 61 Word meaning father
- 65 Ignore
- 67 Middy
- 68 Young fish
- 69 Adjust
- 70 Eager
- 71 Australian bear
- 72 Location
- 73 Optical device
- 74 Within

DOWN

- 1 Thump
- 2 Air (prefix)
- 3 Leading
- 4 Affliction sent against Egypt
- 5 Tree
- 6 ___ Rica

- 7 Dog food brand
- 8 Not nice
- 9 Shaddocks
- 10 Crude
- 11 ___ and pains
- 12 Struck (KJV)
- 13 ___ be with you
- 21 Charity
- 22 Stitch
- 25 Coffee holder
- 27 Healing plant
- 28 Alcoholic beverage from honey
- 29 Exhort
- 30 First king of Israel
- 31 Song by the Village People
- 34 Competent
- 35 Mouth part
- 37 Stake
- 38 Part of a day
- 39 Avails
- 41 Singing voice
- 45 Armory
- 46 Covering
- 47 Creative work
- 50 Whichever

- 52 Biblical church servant
- 53 Cleans
- 54 Listlessness
- 55 Sermon on the ___
- 56 Arm extensions
- 59 ___ your neighbor
- 60 Cut of beef
- 62 Cereal ingredient
- 63 Tree trunk
- 64 6th month (Jewish calendar)
- 66 Hive dweller
- 68 Slide on snow



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St John's Bentleigh

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Church Office: + 61 3 9557 2226 | www.stjohnsbentleigh.org.au

Church Office e-mail: bentleighanglican@bigpond.com

Sunday @ 8.30AM Holy Communion

Sunday @ 10.00AM Holy Communion

(1st and 3rd Sundays).

**Sunday @ 10.00AM (Prayer, Praise & Proclamation
(2nd & 4th Sundays).**

3rd Sunday @ 4PM - 6PM Messy Church (from March 2024).

**5th Sunday @ 10AM Combined all age Holy Communion service
& shared lunch.**

Wednesday @ 10.30AM Holy Communion in the Chapel

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<https://youtube.com/channel/UCwvuRjxqlX4njbrwZJBqNXQ/live> .



Ministers: All Parishioners

Vicar: The Reverend Santa Packianathan

Email: spackianathan@melbourneanglican.org.au

Phone: 9557 2226 or 0438 509 669

Office: Sun - Sat., except Thursdays.

Honorary Children & Families Minister: Heather Saba 9557 2226

Honorary Lay Minister (Healing ministry): Terry Nisbet 9557 2226

Parish Musician: Vacant (TBA) 9557 2226

Administrative Assistant: Anthony Lyons 9557 2226

Email: bentleighanglican@bigpond.com

Office hours: Tue, Thu & Fri 9.30am - 12:30pm, 1pm - 4pm

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**Thank you for supporting
the mission & ministry of St John's Bentleigh!**

Vision: To be a centre of God's love and hope

Mission: To love God, love people, grow disciples of Christ

The Anglican Parish of St. John's, Bentleigh, acknowledges the traditional custodians of the country on which St. John's is situated, the Bunurong People of the Kulin nation. We recognize their continuing connection to land, waters and culture. We pay our respects to their Elders, past and present