

Weekly News Sheet

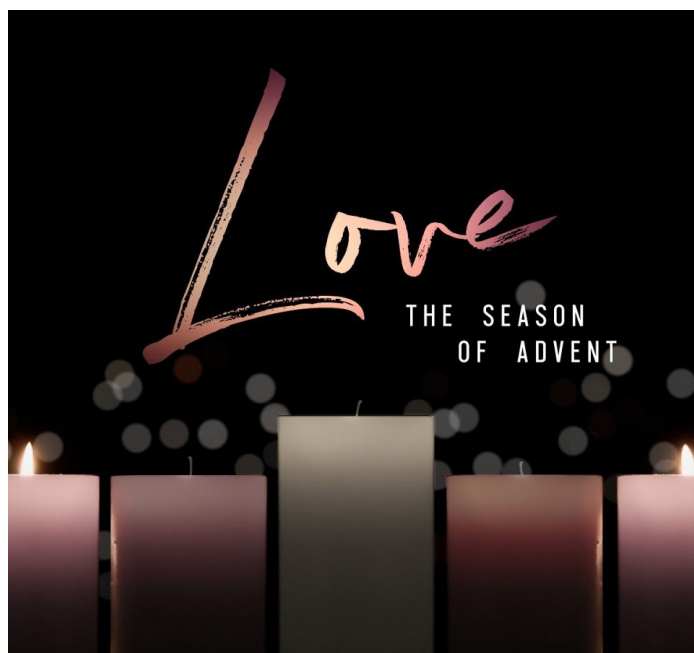
The Uniting Church in Australia

ST. LUKE'S CONGREGATION, HIGHTON

Sunday December 24, 2017



Worship Leaders: Barry Tattersall and Robyn Hodge



Jesus' Birthday Party - an all age celebration on Christmas Eve



Are you new to St. Luke's?

If you would like to connect with us, complete a pew card or please let one of the pastoral connections team know so that you can be included in our contact list and invited to join in.

A Christmas Message from The Moderator Sharon Hollis:

Theologian Serene Jones often speaks of her congregation's celebration of the Christmas story. Each year, as someone narrates, different members of the congregation act out the various parts.

Serene tells how transforming this can be, both for those given roles and for those witnessing the re-telling. She tells of the year Pam, struggling with mental illness and low self-confidence, was invited to play an angel. At first Pam wasn't sure, but with the encouragement of others she agreed.

On the night of the performance, Pam joined with other angels singing Joy to the World. Her face shone with joy. She turned to another angel; the life of struggle normally seen in her face momentarily banished. 'I never knew I could be an angel,' she said.

That same year Reggie, a homeless member of the congregation, played the innkeeper. When Mary and Joseph approach his inn seeking accommodation, instead of the expected 'No room at the inn', Reggie said, 'of course, come in.' Confused, they try again and the same answer is forthcoming – 'come in'. Reggie knows how much it means to be welcomed. The homeless man cannot turn away another human being, and something new in the story is glimpsed.

We are reminded again of God coming amongst us as a fragile, precious baby. The Christmas story is to be entered into with our whole body and mind. It is to be lived as Pam and Reggie live it, allowing it to transform us.

Imagine you are the shepherd, minding your own business, watching your sheep. You are considered an outsider in society, ritually unclean because of your job.

You aren't expecting anything exciting to happen when suddenly angels appear in the night sky. 'Don't be afraid' they say, because you are – you are terrified.

Fear mixes with wonder. What's happening? Why is this happening to you? 'Don't be afraid, God has come to you, bringing peace, salvation, joy. Go and see, don't be afraid.'

Can you join with the shepherds and seek Jesus even when you are afraid or lonely?

Mary and Joseph welcome the baby Jesus into their life, their family, even though his birth courts scandal. They care for him, keep him safe, nurture him. Their story invites us to carry Jesus in our lives, to be open to nurturing the life of Christ in our homes, our workplaces, our daily living. Like Mary, we too can bear Christ, bear witness to Christ in our daily life.

To live the story of Christmas with our whole body and mind is to do more than look on as others re-tell the story. We are invited to live the story as our own.

To find self-worth in being chosen by God for joy.

To find our home with God because Jesus lives in our home.

To overcome our fear and live as one who seeks and serves the way of Jesus. To open our hearts to welcome Jesus and bear witness to his goodness.

This Christmas season I invite you to do more than observe the story. I invite you to enter into it, to encounter Christ and allow that encounter to change you.

I wish you a happy joyful Christmas season.

Sharon Hollis, Moderator, Uniting Church Synod of Victoria & Tasmania

St Luke's Office Hours

The office will be attended on Wednesdays and Fridays from 9am till Noon all through the month of December and January 2018.

Prayer points for this week

Prayers of Thanksgiving

- Give thanks for the gift of Your Son, Jesus Christ who came to save the world from all ugliness and evil, conveying the message of love, hope and peace.

Personal Prayers

- Give thanks for the mystery and wonder of Jesus' coming.
- Praise that Christ's coming, his emergence into history, means we will never again be separated from the love of God.
- Give thanks for the gifts of Christmas – peace, hope, joy and love.

Prayers for Others

- Pray for opportunities to share the real meaning of Christmas.
- We give thanks for the life and witness of Mary Shepherd, and pray for her family as they grieve.
- Pray for all who may be lonely or grieving at Christmas, those separated from loved ones, and those for whom Christmas is a difficult time. Pray that all may know the comfort, peace and presence of God.
- Pray for safety on the roads. Pray also for the families of those killed or injured in road accidents.

Prayers for the World

- May the light of Christ shine in all the dark places in the world, bringing peace on earth.
- Pray for all who suffer in war-torn countries – loss of loved ones, loss of dignity, lack of access to food and clean water, loss of homes, those living in fear.
- Pray for world leaders, for peaceful resolution to conflict, and justice for all.
- Pray for all affected by devastating fires, floods, and freezing conditions.

Requests and Appeals

From Pam Seller, Pastoral Connections Team

PRAYER LINK

How to submit a prayer request:

Complete a Prayer Request form (found on the back of each pew) and handed to Pam Seller or Beth Allen, by email pamseller@bigpond.com or call 0407 557 933

Website: stlukesuca.org.au **Email:** info@stlukesuca.org.au **Ph:** 5244 2997 5

What's On this coming week

What's on @stlukeschurchgeelong 25th - 31st Dec 2017		
Christmas Day Monday 9:30am		Lectionary Readings
Worship Leader:	Rev Kevin Yelverton	Is 9:2-7
Welcomer:	I Tattersall	Ps 96
Ushers:	B Tattersall & I Allen	Ti 2:11-14
Sound:	K McAvaney	Lk 2:1-20
Powerpoint:	N Patchett	
Reader:	I Petersen	
Flowers:	D Bath (Christmas)	
Sharing the Journey:	N Patchett 5241 9782	
Music:	J Patchett	
Sunday Worship 9:30am 31st Dec		Lectionary Readings
Worship Leader:	Rev Kevin Yelverton	Is 61:10-62:3
Welcomer:	S Hunter	Ps 148
Ushers:	H Swan & P Seller	Gal 4:4-7
Sound:	I Lawrence	Lk 2:22-40
Powerpoint:	I Pooley	
Reader:	J Daw	
Flowers:	D Bath (Christmas)	
Morning tea:	M Baum & J Hicks	
Connections:	I Tattersall	
Drivers:	M Robertson	
Sharing the Journey:	N Patchett 5241 9782	
Music:	J Patchett	
	M John	
		Weekly Offering
		Budget: \$1,711
		Actual: \$2,065
		Difference: +\$354
		YTD Budget: \$87,258
		YTD Actual: \$89,869
		Difference: +\$2,257

From Noel McMillan:

Please note that the church will be closed on the 8th and 9th of January 2018 for carpet cleaning.

What's On over January 1 of 2

Notices for Sharing the Journey over January can be given to:

Iris Speare Ph: 0421 244 353

What's on @stlukeschurchgeelong 1st to 14th Jan 2018				
Sunday Worship 9:30am 7th Jan		Lectionary Readings		
Worship Leader:	Noel Patchett	Gn 1:1-5		
Welcomer:	P Mills	Ps 29		
Ushers (Collection only):	I Allan & M Baum	Acts 19:1-7		
Sound:	I Lawrence	Mk 1:4-11		
Powerpoint:	M Seller			
Reader:	B Allan			
Flowers:	Artificial Flowers			
Morning tea:	N & N McMillian			
Connections:	J Hicks			
Drivers:	P Gill P Phelan			
Sharing the Journey:	Iris Speare 0421244353			
Music:	J Patchett			
		<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>What's on</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Men's Shed recommences 9th of January Tue/Thu 9:30-12:30</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	What's on	Men's Shed recommences 9th of January Tue/Thu 9:30-12:30
What's on				
Men's Shed recommences 9th of January Tue/Thu 9:30-12:30				
Sunday Worship 9:30am 14th Jan		Lectionary Readings		
Worship Leader:	Lloyd Walker	1 Sam 3:1-10		
Welcomer:	J Smith	Ps 139:1-6,13-18		
Ushers (Collection only):	A & F Safarnejad	1 Cor 6:12-20		
Sound:	K McAvaney	Jn 1:43-51		
Powerpoint:	J Daw			
Reader:	D Sellar			
Flowers:	Artificial Flowers			
Morning tea:	P & M Sellar			
Connections:	L Robertson			
Drivers:	J Hicks V & J England			
Sharing the Journey:	Iris Speare 0421244353			
Music:	L Walker			

What's On over January 2 of 2

Sunday Worship 9:30am 21st Jan		Lectionary Readings
Worship Leader:	Rev Kevin Yelverton	Jon 3:1-5,10
Welcomer:	J Hicks	Ps 62:5-12
Ushers (Collection only):	P Gill & D Younghusband	1 Cor 7:29-31
Sound:	L Walkery	Mk 1:14-20
Powerpoint:	I Pooley	
Reader:	D Younghusband	
Flowers:	Artificial Flowers	
Morning tea:	P & M Sellar	
Connections:	P Sellar	
Drivers:	C & D Manks	
Sharing the Journey:	Iris Speare 0421244353	
Communion Set up:	D Bath & J MacRobbie	
Communion:	P & I Peterson	
	L Saravanan & H Swan	
Choir:	J Patchett	
Sunday Worship 9:30am 28th Jan		Lectionary Readings
Worship Leader:	Barry Tattersall	Dt 18:15-20
Welcomer:	D Ayrton	Ps 111
Ushers (Collection only):	B & M Hunt	1 Cor 8:1-13
Sound:	P Phelan	Mk 1:21-28
Powerpoint:	N McMillian	
Reader:	B Tattersall	
Flowers:	Artificial Flowers	
Morning tea:	C & J Findlay	
Connections:	A Lyons	
Drivers:	J & G Boehm	
	I Peterson	
Sharing the Journey:	Iris Speare 0421244353	
Music:	M John	

Church Contacts

Position		Name	
Minister		Commencing February 11 2018	
Office Administrator		Corrine Goldberg	
Phone	5244 2997	Email	info@stlukesuca.org.au
Church Council Executive			
Chairperson		Lloyd Walker *	
Phone	0414 666577	Email	lloyd@tech4life.com.au
Deputy Chairperson		Sue Anderson*	
Phone	5241 9717	Email	suzanne.anderson54@yahoo.com.au
Secretary		Robyn Hodge *	
Phone	0427 571453	Email	robyn.hodge@stlukesuca.org.au
Treasurer		Ian Pooley *	
Phone	5243 4832	Email	igp@people.net.au
Congregation			
Chairperson		Kevin McAvaney	
Phone	5243 1448	Email	kjmca@ozemail.com.au
Secretary		Dorothy Ayrton	
Phone	5243 3467	Email	terdor01@gmail.com
Ministry Team Convenors			
Mission Outreach		Sue Anderson*	
Worship & Education		Lloyd Walker *	
Pastoral Connections		Pam Seller	
Phone	0407 557933	Email	pamseller@bigpond.com
Resourcing		Ian Pooley *	
Communications		Robyn Hodge *	
Planned Giving			
Stewardship Co-ordinator		Judy Boehm	
Phone	52438559	Email	jcboehm@gmail.com