

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Monday	Patchwork Group meet @ 12.30pm
Tuesday	Parish Council dinner @ 6pm
Wednesday	Golf Group meet @ 6am Rainbow Lunch Club meet @ 11.30am
Thursday	Advent Study @ 10am Rev Josie @ church till noon
Sunday	Blue Christmas service @ 5.30pm

BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE - Christmas is not always an easy time for everyone. It may be a time when the absence of loved ones through death, divorce or relationship break-up is particularly painful; or a situation you are going through – loss of job, loss of health may be very difficult. This is a service which recognises this. If someone you know feels like this, please invite them to this service and maybe attend with them as a sign of understanding and support.

CHRISTMAS SERVICE TIMES

Tuesday 24 th December	Nativity Play	@ 5pm
Tuesday 24 th December	Midnight Mass	@ 11pm
Wednesday 25 th December	Christmas Service	@ 9am

Please pray for: Paul; Keena; Cheryl; Elsie; Isla; Charlotte Marilyn; Rodney; Cameron; Kieth; Bhav; Joyce; Gazza; Derek; Hazel; Stan & Dorothea; Heather & Colin; Kate, Stuart & family

This week Johnny is with Peter & Bernie Bird



*Happy birthday to Anne Hamilton-Cowan
& Elizabeth Stokes on 10th; Pamela Henning on
12th*

Wardens -	Phil Goulding	Phone: 9247 4978
	Judith Smith	Phone: 9246 3745
Parish Priest – the Reverend Josie Steytler	Phone: 0421 115 438	

Electronic giving: Account Name - Anglican Parish Greenwood

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Welcome to Worship



Advent 2

8th December 2024

We are a warm-hearted community who are delighted to have you worshipping with us today ...

Our Mission is to

- **Know God personally**
- **Love and respect one another deeply**
- **Disciple and serve those around us**

Sentence: By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to give light to those who sit darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace. *Luke 1:78-79*

Collect of the Day

God of our salvation,
you straighten the winding ways of our hearts
and smooth the paths made rough by sin:
keep our hearts watchful in holiness,
and bring to perfection the good you have
begun in us.

We ask this through him whose coming is
certain, whose Day draws near,
your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of
the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

Today's readings:

Malachi 3:1-14
The Song of Zechariah
Philippians 1:1-11
Luke 3:1-16

Next Week:

Zephaniah 3:14-20
A Song of Isaiah
Philippians 4:4-7
Luke 3:7-18



Advent 2 – Luke 3:1-16

John went throughout the whole region of the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

So important is the emergence of John the Baptist in human history that Luke dates his appearance in six different ways. In his Gospel, Luke introduces John as prophets were introduced in the First Testament (“the word of God was spoken to John son of Zechariah in the desert”). As does Matthew and Mark, Luke cites the famous passage from Isaiah regarding “a herald’s voice in the desert” to describe the Baptist’s mission – but Luke quotes more of the Isaiah prophecy than his synoptic counterparts, including the promise of universal salvation that is so central to Luke’s Gospel.

Forms of “baptism” were common in the Judaism of Gospel times: in some Jewish communities, it was through baptism rather than

circumcision that a Gentile became a Jew. But John’s baptism was distinctive. His baptism at the Jordan was a rite of repentance and *metanoia* – a conversion of heart and spirit. The Baptist’s ministry fulfilled the promise of Ezekiel (Ezekiel 36: 25-26): that, at the dawn of a new age, the God of Israel would purify his people from their sins with clean water and instil in them a new heart and spirit.

In his book **Sacred Fire: A Vision for a Deeper Human and Christian Community**, theologian Ronald Rolheiser writes about the two baptisms John speaks of in today’s Gospel: “John’s baptism is only a preparation for Jesus’ baptism. What’s John’s baptism? It is a baptism of repentance, a realisation of what we are doing wrong and a clear resolution to correct our bad behaviour. What is Jesus’ baptism? It is an entry into grace and community in such a way that empowers us internally to do what is impossible for us to do by our willpower alone.”

Each one of us is called to be a **prophet** of Christ: to “proclaim” (the Greek word for *prophet*), in our ministries, in our compassion and generosity, in our courageous and constant commitment to what is right that Jesus the Messiah has come.

The same Word that came to John in the desert comes to each of us in the deserts of our own hearts, enabling us to transform the wastelands and straighten the winding roads of our lives in the compassion and justice of God.

John comes to fulfil Isaiah’s vision of the prophet: to “make straight” a highway for God, to create a level road for all of us to travel to the kingdom of God. In baptism, we take on that same prophetic role of “road building:” to create passageways and entries of hope, healing, and support for all of us to complete our journey to God’s dwelling place.

In giving the needs of others priority over our own interests, in taking the first humbling steps toward reconciliation with another, in seeing in other people the face of Christ, we make a “highway” in our world for the Lord who comes.