

WEEKLY NEWS

Saturday 25 December 2021

Christmas Day

Welcome to the 10.00 AM service at each worship centre today. Fr Ray will be at All Saints and Rev'd Philippa will preside at St James



THE FAMILIARITY OF CHRISTMAS

There is nothing like familiarity to breed avoidance or disconnection, even contempt. The Christmas stories – yes, there are two, one in Matthew and the other in Luke – regularly combined into the one narrative, have the potential of being such an occasion. As I noted in last week's sermon there is growing cynicism about and rejection of faith as central to our celebrations of Christmas. More likely, in many places the Christian message will be ignored, belittled, ridiculed, and made fun of more than other religions, including Judaism, Islam and Buddhism. Without doubt some of the reasons relate to the posturing of some politicians who claim to be Christian but act to the contrary, and the failures of the institution of the Church to address abuse and violence in its own ranks. The secular, the promotion of materialism by business and commerce, has replaced the holy.

How many of us take seriously the words of the carols we sing? In the lead up to Christmas our letterboxes and emails are filled with junk mail calling us to buy, buy and buy. Many of our streets are decorated with Father Christmas, sleighs, and reindeer along with the new politically correct Holiday symbolism that has begun to appear in some local government areas.

Perhaps this is more particular to Australia, in the southern hemisphere. During a recent London Christmas I discovered that thousands and thousands attend carol services, Midnight mass and other religious gatherings as well as celebrating with family and friends on Christmas Day and the full twelve days of Christmas. The BBC and ITV still have extensive coverage of worship, as do most forms of the print media.

So, what about Christmas this year? Sharing times and gifts with family and friends is a must. Place the Christmas Bowl on the table as a reminder to focus on

OUR CLERGY

Our Locum Vicar is the Rev'd Canon Dr Ray Cleary AM. Ray is available part-time and is in the parish on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday mornings, as well as Sundays. Ray may be contacted on 0419 371 613 or at ray@theclearys.com.au



Our honorary associate priest is the Rev'd Philippa Wetherell.



the other. Sing carols, invite those who are alone to share with you. Be bold in offering hospitality. We all contribute to the cynicism and diminishment of the Christian message at this time when we remain silent and spend time with the glitter and tinsel rather than hearing the message of the angels of peace and goodwill to all.

Blessings, Ray

CALENDAR FOR THE COMING WEEK

Services and events

5.00 PM	26/12	Simple Eucharist at All Saints
10.30 AM	30/12	Eucharist at St James
9.15 AM	2/1	Sung Eucharist at St James
11.15 AM	2/1	Sung Eucharist at All Saints

**There will be no Sunday service at St James tomorrow
Tuesday morning prayer will resume in January (TBC)**

Readings for 2 January, 2ND Sunday After Christmas

OT	Jeremiah 31: 7-14
Psalm	147: 12-20
NT	Ephesians 1: 3-14
Gospel	John 1: 10-18

Take the Weekly News home

FOOD AND CASH FOR ANGLICARE

Please keep bringing non-perishable food and groceries along to both worship centres, to be collected and taken to Anglicare's food distribution centre through All Saints Preston. Toiletries are also very welcome and useful for people in need. Cash is always needed: you can place money in an envelope in the collection, marked 'Anglicare' and we will forward it for you.

THE CHRISTMAS BOWL APPEAL

Envelopes are available today and at other services during Christmas, for your contribution to this fund, which is for the support of the safety of those in exile and those forced from their homes through conflict or natural disaster. Funds support the work of local partners in Gaza, Ethiopia, Jordan and many other locations. Act for Peace, which receives these donations, is the international agency of the National Council of Churches in Australia, an ecumenical body through which Christians are able to come together to help others. The envelopes allow you to post your contribution by cheque or credit card directly, but please don't post cash. To donate cash, place your envelope in the collection plate and we'll send it for you by cheque.

IN OUR PRAYERS THIS WEEK

We are asked to pray for Dianne, Paul, Jenny, Huw, Max, John, Ron and Liz, Susan and Richard, Helen, Maeve, Russell, Dorothy, Jeffrey, Joseph, Martha and Prue. We pray for Bruce, Evan and Gillian. We pray for the recently departed and those whose year's mind occurs at this time, including Ian Tyrrell and Alice Miller.

To place a notice in the Weekly News

0409 339 046 or send to ryrie@ihug.com.au

About the Anglican Parish of South Darebin

We are one parish with two worship centres, each with its individual style but within the same tradition of worship.

St James the Great

Cnr Newcastle and Pender Streets, Thornbury
Organists
Elizabeth Braithwaite, James Braithwaite, Paul Dulfer
Cantor James Braithwaite
COVID-Safe Officer James Braithwaite

All Saints

Cnr Walker and High Streets, Northcote
Music Director/organist Rod Junor
Family Safety Champions Chris and Roberta
COVID-Safe Officer Arnaud Gallois
Child Safety Officer Laura Tsakmakis

Churchwardens Megan Lewis, Alma Ryrie-Jones, Laura Tsakmakis
Parish Council Norm Appleby, Elizabeth Braithwaite, Arnaud Gallois,
John Gibbons, Chris Peterson, Len Roberts, Kevin Wheeler

THERE IS SUCH A THING AS A FREE BRUNCH

Thank you so much to those who brought and shared food last week at All Saints. Special thanks to Liz Neumann who helped serve throughout and clean afterwards.



GREETINGS FROM RON

We received a delightful card this week, wishing a Christmas blessing on us all, from Ron Cottrell in Caerfilly, Wales. Please continue to keep Ron in your prayers in the hope of a happy reunion with Liz and good health for them both.

WEEKLY NEWS IS ON HOLIDAY

This is the last edition of the Weekly News for a few weeks. Sunday services during January will be at the regular times of 9.15 for St James and 11.15 for All Saints. During Fr Ray will be contacting you with essential information about services and other activities as necessary. Keep an eye on the website for updates if uncertain. The Weekly News will be back for 30 January.

UPDATE OF COVID SAFE RULES

Thank you for cooperating to ensure a safe gathering for all. On arrival, please check in and sanitise your hands. Mask wearing is now mandatory indoors, except at home. If you are not vaccinated or have not disclosed your vaccination status, you will be seated in an area outside the main body of the church.

We acknowledge the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation as the traditional custodians of the land on which our churches were built, and pay our respects to their Elders, past and present.