



# REACHING OUT

Sunday January 2, 2022

Weekly News for Wodonga West and Rural Uniting Churches

**9:00am at Emmanuel Anglican and Uniting Church.**

*Anglican Tradition, led by Fr. Jacques Jeffries*

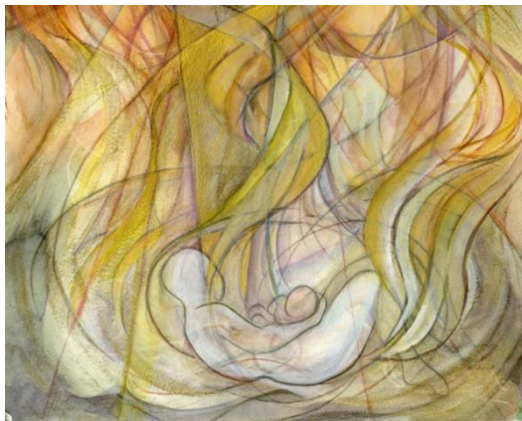
**No service at Kergunyah Uniting Church.**

Masks are now required for all persons over aged 8 and over inside at worship. Many thanks to everyone for following the COVID requirements when attending worship. We no longer need to show proof of double vaccination upon arrival. However, we still need to check in via a QR Code or with the tablet. There is COVID about and each of us will have to make our own decisions about the risks we take and our care for others. If you do feel unwell, please stay at home, but do keep in touch with us. We must look after each other.

## Christmas 2 Readings

Jeremiah 31: 7-14; Ps 147: 12-20; Ephesians 1: 3-14; John 1:(1-9), 10-18

### The Word Became Flesh



In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the

light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (John testified to him and cried out, 'This was he of whom I said, "He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me."' ) From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

**John 1: (1-9), 10-18**

# I Have Called You Friends - A Reflection

Rev Leonie Findlay

## PRAYER

Our loving God and friend, we are so grateful you are our companion along the way. This journey has indeed seemed long and at times never ending.

Yet we have needed every second to learn from all that has passed by.

We have needed every friend along the way who has comforted us consoled and celebrated together with us.

As each new day dawns like the tender unfolding of a fern, may we experience your friendship anew with gratitude and joy.

And may your peace and gracious love so enfold us all that our shared journey becomes a sign of hope in the midst of a despairing world.

## AMEN

## SOME THOUGHTS

When real friends meet it's like coming home. Genuine friendship offers each person a place of rest and comfort, a place where it is safe to risk self-disclosure.

Real friends remain even after they have glimpsed the brokenness and the hollowness of shattered hopes and fractured dreams.

Acquaintances help us celebrate our successes, but genuine friends are there besides us through the failures as well.

A friend is someone who knows how to truly be with the other.

A genuine friend knows how to offer reassurance and hope.

Maybe more importantly in real moments of pain and suffering a genuine friend knows how to be with and care for the other.

More important than any particular action or words of advice is the simple presence of someone who cares. Let us be the kind of friends who speak less and listen intently.

## SELAH



## A BENEDICTION.

And now respond with delight and joy to the one who calls you friend. Go forth and travel knowing you are not alone.

Your journey continues with the sure and deep knowledge that God goes with you and enfolds you in an amazing three-fold love.

Wrapping you round with unbreakable cords designed to hold and sustain you through every step of life's unfolding journey for you.

May you grow in understanding and friendly acceptance of your uniqueness, while enjoying the wonder of diverse yet interconnected friendships with fellow travellers all along the way.

## AMEN

## Lectionary Comment - John 1:(1-9), 10-18

Our reading is the continuation of the book's prologue, or the whole prologue. The Word, God, Christ, has been born into this imperfect world – a world that per v. 3, “came into being through him” – but most people did not embrace him as who he is. (To know, to a Semite, involves personal commitment as well as awareness.) He came to Israel, but its people generally rejected him, but some did receive him for who he is; some became committed to him. (To know someone's name meant more than it does today.) These received the power to be adopted as sons and daughters of God: they were reborn into God's family, through the Holy Spirit (“of God”, v. 13).

“Flesh”, humanity, per Isaiah 40:6-8, was seen as weak, imperfect and transitory. Christ does an amazing thing: he becomes a human being (albeit, being God, a perfect one). The author is a witness to the divine presence shown in Jesus (“glory”, v. 14). John the Baptizer was the first of this gospel's witnesses of the Christ-event, God become human.

From all that is in God (“fullness”, v. 16), we have received gift after gift (“grace upon grace”). The Mosaic Law was given by God, and Christ brought the full revelation of God's ways. Judaism said that God could not be seen (v. 18). (Even Moses, in Exodus 33:30-44, was not permitted to see God's face.) It is through Christ, who is in complete intimacy with the Father, that we have been given access to the Father.

*Chris Haslam of the Anglican Diocese of Edmonton*

## Praying For One Another 2021-22

### In the Uniting Church Presbytery of North East Victoria.

Many Congregations are in the habit of deliberately praying for one another each time they meet. By naming each other in prayer we enhance our pastoral support with each other, in God's company. This invitation builds our faith linkages every year. We invite our congregations to pray whenever they meet for the next group (or groups) of congregations on the list, according to date.

For the Uniting Church in the Presbytery of North East Victoria, this week we pray for the congegations of **Mathoura and Thyra** commencing January 2.

## Worship resources

**Worship Resources** - should you not be able to join with others at church for worship.

Click on the link below to find UCA resources for a wide variety of live streamed or recorded worship services.

<https://victas.uca.org.au/resources/weekly-worship/>

## Your Weekly Offering



For those that give by way of 'giving envelopes' you'll find that they are almost gone. We will be printing new ones for those who give this way unless we hear from you that you would like to change. If there are others who would like printed enveloped for 2022, please contact David Robinson (0407 835 432) or LouAnne (0419 644 769). If you wish to use direct deposit, account details are: BSB 033-264, account 960276, account name Emmanuel Congregation.

Please note 'offering' on your deposit. Thank you for maintaining your offering. LouAnne

## Emmanuel Roster

### January 2

Elder on Duty: David Robinson  
Reader: Carol Harris  
Prayers: Rod Clutterbuck  
Early Word: Carol Clutterbuck

TV Screen: Harold Cover  
COVID Marshall/ Usher: Rod Clutterbuck  
Organist: Colin Harris  
Morning Tea: Carol Clutterbuck/ Shirley Horsfall

### January 9

Elder on Duty: Carol Harris  
Reader: Harold Cover  
Prayers: LouAnne Stabb  
Early Word: LouAnne Stabb

TV Screen: Carolyn Renfrey  
COVID Marshall/ Usher: Ted Stabb  
Organist: LouAnne Stabb  
Morning Tea: Carol Clutterbuck/ Shirley Horsfall

## Bible Readings for Sunday January 9 Baptism of Jesus

Isaiah 43:1-7; Psalm 29; Acts 8:14-17; Luke 3: 15-17, 21-22

## Morning Tea Roster

We've been able to have morning tea in a more 'normal' manner these past few weeks. Carol Clutterbuck and Shirley Horsfall have been coming every Sunday to ensure that all is ready for our time of refreshment and conversation. We'd like to have a few more people to share the load so they don't have to do it each week. Please get in touch with LouAnne (0419 644 769) or Carol C. (02 6024 5896) if you're able to assist perhaps one Sunday a month. Thank you.

## Coming Events

Wed. 5 Jan	8:00 am	Grounds and Maintenance – summer time recommendation
Mon. 31 Jan	10:30am	Community Shop Opens for 2022

## Ministers of the Word & Other Contacts

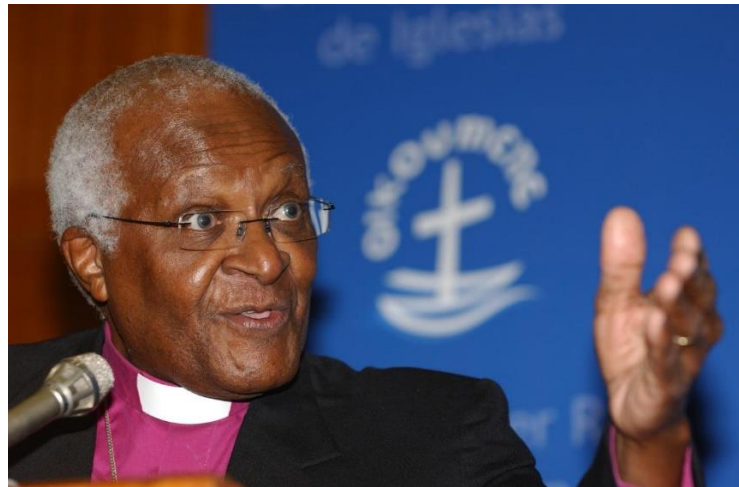
UCA: Rev. Leonie Findlay  
0419 990 358  
[lfindlay03@bigpond.com](mailto:lfindlay03@bigpond.com)

Anglican: Fr Jacques Jefferies  
02 6024 2129 or 0434 063 069  
[stjohnsw@bigpond.net.au](mailto:stjohnsw@bigpond.net.au)  
[weekly RDO: Friday]

Emmanuel Pastoral Care: speak with an Elder or Warden  
Emmanuel Prayer Chain: give requests to Betty Saggars on 0427 761 044  
Address: PO Box 435, Wodonga 3689  
Office Phone: Emmanuel Meeting Place: (02) 6059 5460  
Reaching Out: Items to Harold Cover 02 6024 7929 [hcover@bigpond.com](mailto:hcover@bigpond.com)  
or LouAnne Stabb 02 6059 2244 [stabb@inet.net.au](mailto:stabb@inet.net.au) by Wednesday.  
Website: <http://www.emmanuel.unitingchurch.org.au/index/htm>

## World mourns loss of Archbishop Desmond Tutu

This week the world joins in mourning the passing of a towering figure in the struggle for freedom and for human dignity and rights.



Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who has died at the age of 90, was a key leader in the moral struggle against the apartheid system in South Africa, but the impact of his life's ministry and witness extended far beyond the borders of his own country and beyond that historical moment. Also in the post-apartheid era, his principled commitment and engagement for justice for all remained unwavering. Tutu believed passionately that the Christian faith is inclusive of all, and that Christian responsibility is for the good of all people. His leadership strengthened us all in that belief and continues to call us to action upon that belief.

World Council of Churches (WCC) acting general secretary Rev. Prof. Dr Ioan Sauca said Archbishop Tutu was a stalwart contributor to the ecumenical movement during joyful times and times of great challenge, and taught us all the value of persistence. "We thank God for giving us Archbishop Tutu for 90 years," said Sauca. "Through his life and works he has become an image of dignity and freedom for all human beings and inspired many to use their gifts and talents in the service of others and the mission and prophetic task of the church."

Rev. Frank Chikane, moderator of the WCC Commission of the Churches on International Affairs, paid tribute to his counterpart in the struggle against apartheid: "In Archbishop Desmond Tutu we have lost a great prophet of God who lived among us and stood for justice – the justice of God for all – here in South Africa, on the African continent, and throughout the world, including standing against injustices committed against Palestinians in Israel-Palestine, where others would not dare to. We thank God for his prophetic witness which is worth celebrating nationally and internationally."

As well as powerful and forthright voice against injustice, Tutu was also a prophet of forgiveness. In his role as chairperson of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, he became, as the former head of WCC Programme to Combat Racism Baldwin Sjollema recalls, "the pastor of the nation." Tutu stressed time and again that there could be no future without forgiveness. "You can only be human in a humane society. If you live with hatred in your heart, you dehumanize not only yourself, but your community," Tutu said.

*From World Council of Churches Website*

To read more see: <https://www.oikoumene.org/news/world-mourns-loss-of-archbishop-desmond-tutu>



# For whom the bell tolls

By Bill Pugh



I love to be in the city when the bells of St Paul's are ringing. Such clear and joyous sounds.

Straight away you are uplifted by notes of praise, summoning you to worship.

Much practice and dedication is involved for the team of bell ringers.

A new vicar came to our little country town and he was young, keen and enthusiastic.

The church bell had been silent for a long time and, enthusiastically, he began ringing it on Sundays and Wednesdays and for special occasions.

The congregation and the town loved it, everyone except the holiday guests at

the motel next door to the church, as the loud ringing at 8am on Sundays ruined their peace and sleep-in and they made a fuss.

Finally there was a compromise. The vicar shortened the 8am ringing to a couple of notes to welcome the worshippers and allow the guests to sleep on.


Many forget the purpose of Sunday. Sport takes over, cinemas are open and the shops have sales. But the ringing bells call us to worship.

Music is special to the praise of God. Bells join with the music of Psalm 150 for worship.

## *Reflection:*


*Praise the Lord, praise him with trumpet sound;  
Praise him with lute and harp! Praise him with tambourine and dance,  
Praise him with strings and pipe! Praise him with clanging cymbals;  
Praise him with loud clashing cymbals!  
Let everything that breathes praise the Lord!*

[www.victas.uca.org.au/resources](http://www.victas.uca.org.au/resources) | Photo by Ralph (Ravi) Kayden | January 2022



## Moderator's Emergency Response Fund

The new *Moderator's Emergency Response Fund* helps Victorian and Tasmanian communities with assistance in times of emergencies. Donations can be made at any time, not just in response to a specific emergency. To donate, visit [www.victas.uca.org.au](http://www.victas.uca.org.au)



Uniting Church in Australia  
SYNOD OF VICTORIA AND TASMANIA

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