

Sunday 20th December 2020

Greetings and welcome to this week's newsletter.

This is the last newsletter for 2020. Our next newsletter will be published in February 2021!

From the Supply Minister

This is the last Sunday of Advent and our theme will be "A time for love to live among us".

It has been a week of announcements. Year 12 students announced their ATAR scores, the Electoral College in the United States announced Joe Biden as the duly elected next President of the United States, SA Health announced there are no new Covid 19 cases in South Australia, while NSW announced three new community cases. After years and years of waiting, the story of the annunciation announces the coming of the Messiah! The time for which Israel had been praying arrives, as the angel tells Mary she is pregnant.

However such announcements demand patience - the patience of a mother. The Messiah doesn't just appear like a present under a Christmas tree on Christmas morning. This Messiah must be carried and labored over, born and raised, loved and nurtured, taught and disciplined. He comes to be through the love and care of a human family and that requires what it has always required - more love and more time than you thought you had to give. That is the announcement. God in Christ is coming to live among us as one of us. God in Christ needs no army to protect him, only a mother's and a father's love. *(Adapted from a devotion by Anna Carter Florence)*

Christmas Bowl

An opportunity to give a donation to the Christmas bowl appeal will be available at all Christmas Eve and Day services. A large bowl will be placed at the entrance for donations to be placed as people leave. Attendees at these services will be given a Christmas bag, in which a Christmas Bowl envelope will be included. Time will be given in the service to prepare a gift to be placed in the envelopes, or people may choose to give online or sent the envelope separately. Christmas bowl envelopes are also available for pick up from the foyer each Sunday and donations can be returned any Sunday until the end of January or you can make a donation online. Christmas Bowl projects this year include the work being done in Syrian refugee camps in Jordan to treat and contain Covid19 patients. There is more information about the work of the Christmas Bowl as well as videos and stories on the website at www.actforpeace.org.au/christmasbowl.



Fourth Sunday of Advent

Finding strength in love after fleeing Syria

Life was already tough for Syrian refugees living in Jordan. And now, the economic crisis unfolding as a result of the coronavirus has made the situation even worse. This Christmas your gifts will help refugees in Jordan to stay safe through the pandemic. Your kindness will translate into lifesaving food rations, hygiene kits and medical care. What a wonderful way to share God's love. **Please give today.**

CALL: 1800 025 101 VISIT: actforpeace.org.au/christmasbowl

The Christmas appeal of Act for Peace, the international aid agency of the National Council of Churches in Australia. ABN 86 619 970 188

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Please email newsletter items to newsletter@athelstonechurch.org.au by 5pm Wednesday.

Christmas services

Identical Christmas Eve services are offered at 6.30pm and 9pm.

Christmas Day service is at 9.30am.

Sunday December 27th service at 9.30am with Rev Linda Driver. (Welcome back!)

Christmas Rosters

Please note that Di Curtis might be tapping your shoulder today if you have indicated your attendance at one of the Christmas services in order to find volunteers for the various tasks that need to be done at these services. Any help will ensure we are keeping covid compliance and the services will go smoothly.

Moderator's Christmas Message

The Moderator, Mr Bronte Wilson's Christmas message can be accessed on line: <https://sa.uca.org.au/new-times/moderators-christmas-message>). A pastoral Christmas letter from the Uniting Church President Dr Deidre Palmer can be read online <https://victas.uca.org.au/message-from-the-president/>

Can you find the Wirra Nativity today?

Sue Ellis.

Worship on-site

It is so important for us to remain vigilant with regard to our response to COVID-19.

As you prepare to come to worship onsite, here are some important things to remember...

- Every person who attends activities on our church property is now required to register their attendance by using the COVID SAfe Check-In where at all possible. This is a government requirement, so please ensure you bring your mobile phones to church, and take the time to set up the app ready to scan our QR Code and upload your contact details on entry. A sign in sheet will be available when use of the QR code is absolutely impossible.
- Please don't come if you are unwell or if you have been in any of the high risk locations at times identified by SA Health.
- Think about wearing a mask, although this isn't mandatory it is one more thing we can do to keep others and ourselves safe in enclosed spaces.
- Also remember to:
 - Wear warm clothes! We'll have the exhaust fans on and windows open to keep the air circulating - this reduces the risks of COVID, especially as we will be singing.
 - Avoid parking next to the top hall – this space is still being used by Medical HQ.
 - Once you enter, you will be welcomed with a warm *Hello*, and possibly an elbow or toe tap. (Please refrain from handshaking, kissing or hugging at church for the time being).
Please remember that we are still being encouraged to maintain the physical distancing of 1.5 m when gathering with others outside of our immediate household.
You'll be signed in (as we need to keep a record of attendance) and please use the hand sanitiser provided.
 - Seating is spaced out to allow for physical distancing. Those who come from the same household can sit together (if you wish to!)
 - The Offering will be received at the end of the service. A receptacle will be provided near the exit. We continue to encourage regular giving through direct debit or electronic transfer.
 - Morning tea will not be provided. We encourage you to connect with others by either having a coffee at a local café to support their business (many of our folk frequent Caffè Settebello and the Rezz on Sundays) or consider inviting others to share a coffee in your home.
 - We encourage you to approach the 'Zoom screen' at the back of the church before and after the service and interact with those who are connecting online. It's important for us to help everyone feel welcome and included wherever they are.

Worship Online or at Home

- If you choose not to attend for whatever reason, you can view the service as it is happening, using the same <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86912199103>
- Meeting ID: 869 1219 9103
- We will also provide a lectionary-based Worship at Home resource.

COVID Safe Check-In process

Please continue to check-in using COVID SAfe Check-In and our QR Code where possible. If you do not have a compatible smart phone, you will need to sign in by hand and ensure that the church office has your current contact details. A sheet will be provided in the foyer for you to check off your name if you are not using the QR code. Note that this sign in step is now necessary and will be in addition to our Tick and Flick register, which records everyone's service attendance for our own records. Children in the presence of parents do not need to sign in.

The Giving Tree

The Giving Tree is now in the church for donations of items to be distributed by Uniting Communities. You are invited to take a decoration off the tree, purchase the item listed on the back of the decoration and then place the item under the tree next week. Return the decoration to the tree if you remember and if possible take another one! **Final day for donations will be Sunday 20th December.**

Tear Fund Useful Gifts

Tear Fund Useful Gifts Catalogues and cards will be available at Church from Don and Brian **until Dec 20**. We have a great array of projects available to be supported as you give that special gift to friends and family at Christmas and at the same time express your solidarity with needy people and communities throughout the world. All the gifts in the catalogue contribute to long-term community development or advocacy programs that enable people to become self-sufficient. What a great privilege it is to be engaged in this ministry!

Christmas Lunch 2020

Sadly due to COVID19 we are unable to offer a community Christmas Lunch this year. After the great success of last year with our friends from the disability support group in Campbelltown, we thought it would be lovely if we could still provide something for them for Christmas Day. We are asking for donations of the following for 7 hampers: Tinned Salmon (John west 210g); Tinned peas, corn, carrot (425g cans); Tiny taters (canned edgell 822g); Individual Christmas puddings; Long life custard or cream; Tinned fruit (410g in JUICE); Jam; Biscuits and wrapped chocolates. You can also donate money if you would like to - either in an envelope or electronically - please mark it "Christmas Lunch", so that it gets to the right place. We would also like to include some knitted angels in the hampers and be able to share them in the community as well, for details and patterns please speak to Robyn Fry, Meg Edwards or Judi Foster. **Last day for food collection is Sunday 20th Dec.** *Let's not let COVID19 overshadow the Christmas cheer!*

Next TOFS Tuesday 2nd February 2021

Mark your 2021 Diary for the next TOFS coffee and chat time on Tuesday 1st February 2021. More details will be in the newsletter closer to the date.

Sheralyn Robertson

Triple C's – 10th February 2021

Last Wednesday 15 Chaps turned out for Coffee and Chat, of the latter there was plenty. Next get together will be FEBRUARY 10th 2021. In the interim feel like a chat then pick up the phone and reach out to one of us.

Enjoy the upcoming holiday time and do not weigh b4 and after the "festival" season!!

Ray Walter

Church Office Closure

The church office will be closed from 12.30 pm on Thursday 17th December 2021 and not reopen until Tuesday 2nd February. For urgent pastoral concerns, please contact Brenton Summers on 0400 632 829 or Linda Driver (in January only) on 0458 500 656.

Worship Rosters for February 2021 and March-May 2021

Worship rosters for February have been finalized. Some hard copies are available for collection from the foyer. Over January, please also start considering when you are available in March to May 2021. Some roster planning forms are in the entry foyer. Please return completed forms to the marked tray in the vestry by the 2nd February 2021. If nothing about your volunteer roles is changing (i.e. task and timing preferences) then you don't have to fill in the form unless you want to – just email me any unavailable dates and I will leave all other info the same!

Carol Lang

Congregation AGM – 21st February 2021

Church Council wishes to advise all members of Athelstone Uniting Church that we will be holding our AGM on Sunday 21 February 2021 at 10.45am. There will be vacancies to be filled, so we ask you to prayerfully consider whether this is for you and if you would like to nominate. More details about nominations and voting will be advised early in 2021 but if you have any questions please contact Jeff Dry 0408 254 489.

Ann Brown, Secretary Church Council and Congregation

Food Donations to Uniting Communities

Food or cash donations for Uniting Communities Eastern Services Branch Emergency Relief Program are welcomed at any time. For more information contact Brenton Summers. Phone 0400 632 829.

Wider Church News

Wider church news: <https://sa.uca.org.au>

You can also subscribe to receive UC E-News personally at <https://sa.uca.org.au/uc-e-news/>

The New Times is available online as well at <https://sa.uca.org.au/new-times/new-times-print-edition/>

Wimala Presbytery News: <https://www.facebook.com/Wimala-Presbytery-109646960529095/>

Wimala Presbytery website: <https://wimala.ucasa.org.au/>

Prayer Requests

Can we support you in prayer? Here's how:

Prayer Chain - send an email to, or call Brenton Summers, who will pass your prayer request on to a group of people who faithfully pray in response to Prayer Chain emails.

Confidential Prayers - if the issue is more personal you are invited to contact Linda for individual prayer or one the members of the Pastoral Care Oversight team (Brenton Summers, Ann Brown, Bob Stevenson and Linda). All prayer requests going to the team will be kept strictly confidential within this team.

Prayers for Others (Sunday Worship) If you have something you would like to be included, please contact Linda. "We are all called to pray for one another, and so we are all encouraged to offer to pray for, or with others, especially if they share a concern with you." (James 5:13-16)

Lectionary readings

Refer to your Uniting Church Calendar for lectionary readings and key dates.

Church Bookings

Special Event or changes to regular bookings or location are highlighted in bold.

Day	Time	Location	Hirer/User
Sundays	Evenings – 6.30 pm unless told otherwise, then can come later	Main building	VIP Cleaning Service
Thursdays	7.30 -8.30 pm	Main auditorium	Worship Practice
At all times	Clinic operates Mon-Thurs 12.30-5.30pm and Saturday mornings but top hall remains out of bounds <u>at all other times</u>	Top hall & Top carpark	Medical HQ
Tuesday 5 th January	8.30 am -	All windows	Window Cleaning
Monday 11 th January	9.00 am -	Auditorium and Office	Carpet Cleaning *Chairs need to be packed away on Sun Jan 10th

Note: Pilate's classes return on 11th January. Calisthenics classes return near end of January or week of 30th (TBC)

Reminder re activities in the church during Covid-19: In order to comply with COVID Marshal Requirements any activity held on site **must have** a covid marshal in attendance. The training can be completed at <https://marshal.clickontraining.com.au/>. The training should take you no more than 15 minutes to complete. Please notify Carol once you have finished the training and email the office a copy of your certificate of completion. Covid Marshal Badges are located in the cupboard in the vestry for you to wear, along with a hard-copy record of the COVID Marshal certificates, should you need to produce them during an inspection.

**Practice
Good
Hygiene**



Church Roster

	20 th Dec	27 th Dec	Jan 3rd
Prayer with Preacher	Ann Brown	Lee O'Connell	Meg Edwards
Preacher	Sue Ellis	Linda Driver	Nola Pearce
Worship Leader	Jeff Dry	Robyn Stevenson	Dean Pearce
Singers	Jeanine Dry Janet Luestner Sylvia Maywald	Bob Stevenson Friederike Ashby-Weiss Ann Brown	Jean Richardson Marie Bartsch Yvonne Mitchell
Sound	Noel Maywald	Don Brown	Noel Maywald
Data	David Walker	David Walker	Samantha Walker
Chair Steward	Not needed	Not needed	Not needed
Flowers	Ruth Henderson	Marie Hickman	Raelene Anderson
Building Steward	Paul Howland	Richard Read	Eric Hurrell
Covid Marshall	Jeff Dry	David Walker	Lee O'Connell
Door Greeter	Coralie Summers Brenton Summers	Lynton Nicholas Jayne Nicholas	Jayne and Lynton (*only ones available)
Tick and Flick	Trevor Curtis	Trevor Curtis	Lee O'Connell
Notices	Don Brown	Don Brown	
Bible Reader	Friederike Ashby-Weiss	Lee O'Connell	David Walker
Count Offering	Friederike Ashby-Weiss Paul Howland	Lynton Nicholas Sylvia Maywald	Sylvia Maywald Lynton Nicholas
Communion Prep	-	-	Leanne Shirlock
Communion Server	-	-	Sheralyn Robertson Tara Shirlock Leanne Shirlock
Cleaning	VIP	VIP	VIP

Please swap with someone if you can't do the date you are assigned and if possible, please also notify the office of the change. It is very important during this pandemic that you do not attend services when you are unwell. Please swap with someone, or if late notice on the Sunday morning, then contact Sue Ellis (0427 162 009) or the worship leader for that service. Thank you.

As this is the last newsletter for 2020 and there will not be a new newsletter until February, please refer to your emailed roster (or vestry notice board) for the rest of January and February.