

Sunday 29th November 2020

Greetings and welcome to this week's newsletter.

Welcoming Rev Sue Ellis

I am delighted to be able to share with the Athelstone congregation during this Advent and Christmas time. Already, the leadership team has made me feel most welcome and the work of ministry teams has swung into action to help plan Advent services and bring me up to speed on the congregation. At little bit about me. I live at Aberfoyle Park, with my husband Rob Ellis and our toy poodle Astro Boy. Rob and I will celebrate our 24th wedding anniversary tomorrow and between us we have 7 children and 11 grandchildren. Of my 4 children, the eldest lives in Adelaide and is an ACAT assessor; the second is a farmer and teacher at Cummins; the third works at the Australian Consulate in Dubai and the youngest is a graphic designer in Melbourne. Rob's two sons both live in Naracoorte, where one is a farm hand and shearer and the other, the State Manager for an agricultural supply company, while his daughter is a SAPOL officer. We are rural people, with Rob a retired John Deere tractor dealer from Wirrabara and I was a school teacher living at Melrose, before entering into Lay Ministry leadership and then ordination. I have served the church at Moonta & Districts, West Lakes, The Far West Ministry area, based at Ceduna and at Western Eyre congregations, before moving to Adelaide to take up the role of Moderator in 2016. I am Ex-Moderator until 2022 and still serve on the Standing Committee and the board of Annesley College. In addition I am a SAPOL Chaplain at Thebarton Barracks and am of the elected Chaplains on the SAPOL Chaplaincy Council that the chaplaincy program. Please pray for our church at Athelstone and as we together pray for Linda's speedy recovery for surgery, please also pray for my 0.4 time with you to be helpful for all. I plan to be around Athelstone churches on Tuesdays, so please call me if you would like to see me for any reason, or contact Carol in the office for an appointment.

My freely available contact details are **M: 0427 162 009. E: rev.sellis@gmail.com**



ADVENT & CHRISTMAS - When Will It Be Time?

2020 has been a year we would rather never happened in many ways. The Corona virus pandemic has changed life as we know it and the bushfire devastation has highlighted the climate crisis facing the world. Our theme for advent will be When Will it Be Time? This week the prophet Isaiah in chapter 64 calls on God- "*O that you would tear open the heavens and come down*". In the midst of lockdowns and uncertainty, we might cry out the same - Comes down God and fix this mess! Of course, God did come down. In front of the communion table today is an empty manger - waiting for the time when God did come down - as the infant Jesus, the great gift of love to the world to show us the true ways of God - the way that St Paul defined as Love.

Today the focus for Advent is HOPE: a time to generate Hope.

During the Advent season, the Advent Giving Tree will hold items for purchasing and donating to Uniting Communities or Frontier services. As you are able, please take one of the hangings for your weekly shopping and return to the gift area for distribution. Such gifts may generate hope among us and for families who have suffered through unemployment and business closures during times of lockdown. Rev Sue Ellis is a confidential source for any congregational member who may wish to avail themselves of our gifts for their own family or neighbours. Over the week ahead, our advent theme will lead us through generating hope, making peace, seeking joy and helping love to live among us. *Rev Sue Ellis*

Christmas Services

At its meeting last Tuesday, Church Council endorsed the decision to hold 3 services this Christmas at the following times:

6.30 pm Christmas Eve, 24th Dec – Family Focus

9.00 pm Christmas Eve, 24th Dec – Carol's and Candles

9.30 am Christmas Day, 25th Dec – Christmas Celebration Service

We need to be aware of possible number restrictions if the current COVID situation remains and as such Church Council is interested in gauging an idea of possible numbers for each service. So over the next weeks we are asking people to nominate which service they are likely to attend. We have placed a list of all our congregation members in the foyer and you are asked to indicate on this list which service you are thinking about attending so we can get some estimate of possible numbers. This will help us know how many seats we will require.

Worship on-site

It is great that we have been able to come together to worship face to face again this Sunday because it was not looking very likely during the lockdown period. It is also very exciting that we can welcome Rev Sue Ellis as our preacher. Sue commenced her supply ministry this week and we are very much looking forward to sharing the next month with Sue. Please pray for Sue as she commences her ministry with us.

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...

- **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.**
- 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 Caffe 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.

Church Activities

Please note that under the current restrictions we are required to observe a density of 1 person per 4 sq meters at our church services and related church activities. This means we are now able to resume our regular church activities provided they meet this new 1 to 4 ruling. It is possible that on December 1 the restrictions will be further lifted and so we need to await the decisions on how this might impact our church community. We will update our church community through the email database as soon as we know more.

Frontier Services

We were fortunate to be able to enjoy a message last Sunday from Rev Sunil Kadaparambil (Sunny) from Frontier Services as part of our worship at home service. It was so disappointing that for the second time we have had to postpone Sunny as our guest preacher because of COVID restrictions. Sunny was so cooperative in meeting our request to present his planned message as a video production which hopefully most of the congregation were able to view. Normally we would have provided the opportunity for the congregation to make a retiring offering in support of the work of Frontier Services but as this was not possible Church Council has agreed to make a donation instead. With the COVID impact the church has not been able to conduct its normal fundraising efforts to support the Mission Outreach and so Church Council sees this as an opportunity to make a contribution to support at least one of the Mission Outreach projects. Individuals may also wish to make their own personal donation and so if this is the case then please place your donation in an envelope marked Frontier Services and place in the Offering Box over the coming Sundays.

Pastor Allan George

It was with sadness that we learnt of the passing of one of our past Minister Pastor Allan George. He will be fondly remembered by many of those who were in our congregation when Allan ministered to and with us from 1982 to 1989. A private funeral was conducted on Wednesday at 2.30pm at Hope Valley Church.

Tear Fund Useful Gifts

Tear Fund Useful Gifts Catalogues and cards will be available at Church from Don and Brian from this Sunday 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 Bowl

This year Frederike Ashby-Weiss has accepted the invitation to coordinate the Christmas Bowl Appeal on behalf of our congregation. Look out for more information in the coming weeks.

Messy Christmas 2020 is on December 13th 4-6 pm at Lovell Reserve

All invited for an afternoon of fun, faith and Christmas cheer! Bring along drinks and snacks to accompany the hot chicken we will provide for dinner and wear your best Christmas outfit! Speak to Meg Edwards for more details

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.

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

Church Council Strategic Plan

As indicated in the last newsletter, over the coming weeks various snippets from the draft Strategic Plan will be highlighted as an emailed attachment to the weekly newsletter. Remember Council is very keen to receive feedback from members of the congregation so this is an opportunity for you to have your say. Please email - jeffdry@bigpond.com providing written feedback on any aspect of the Strategic Plan.

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. We have postponed the meeting until the New Year.

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. If you are a Convenor, run a small group or a leader in any capacity please can you provide a written report to Carol by Thursday 3rd December at: office@athelstonechurch.org.au Please cc your report to Allan Amber (Chair of Congregation) at allan.amber@mga.com. 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

Stay and Play @ Home & Wirra Play Day 1st Dec

Exciting to be planning Wirra Play Day on 1st December! Team and families are all looking forward to this happening and finishing our year with a fun Christmas gathering. The Nook now has a chalk box and a box for a nature hunt activity installed for all to enjoy when visiting Wakwakurnaku Wirra. Don't forget an enrolment form and activity ideas for Stay and Play @ Home can be accessed on the AUC website. These are available for anyone to use and I know of at least one grandparent who is making use of them for children who are not enrolled in Stay and Play @ Home. *Bruce and Joy Stewart*



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.

Lectionary readings

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

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)

Church Bookings

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

Day	Time	Location	Hirer/User
Sunday	Evenings – 6.30 pm unless told otherwise, then can come later	Main building	VIP Cleaning Service
Monday	6.30 - 8.30 pm	Lower hall	Pilates
Tuesday 1st Dec	9.30 - 11.30 am	Main Auditorium	Pilates
Tuesday 1st Dec	9.00 – 12.30 pm	Lower Hall, Deck, Wirra	Wirra Play Day & Setup (event time is 10-11.30 am)
Wednesday	9.30 - 10.30 am	Lower hall	Pilates
Wednesday	6.30 - 8.30 pm	Main auditorium	Waratah Calisthenics (dependent on Govt restrictions after 1 st Dec)
Thursday	7.30 - 8.30 pm	Main auditorium	Worship Practice
Saturday	9.30 – 12.00 pm	Main auditorium	Waratah Calisthenics (dependent on Govt restrictions after 1 st Dec)
Saturday	9.30 - 11.30 am	Top hall	Pilates
At all times	Clinic operates Mon-Thurs 12.30-5.30pm and Saturday mornings but top hall remains out of bounds at all other times	Top hall & Top carpark	Medical HQ

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 Marshall 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

	29 Nov	6 th Dec
Prayer with Preacher	Sheralyn Robertson	Robyn Fry
Preacher	Sue Ellis	Sue Ellis
Worship Leader	Lynton Nicholas	Di Curtis
Singers	Yvonne Mitchell Friederike Ashby-Weiss Janet Luestner	Allan Amber Nola Pearce Sylvia Maywald
Sound	Don Brown	Noel Maywald
Data	David Walker	David Walker
Chair Steward	Bob Stevenson Don Brown	Trevor Goldsmith Paul Howland
Flowers	Marie Hickman	Di Curtis
Building Steward	Paul Howland	Eric Hurrell
COVID Marshal	Jeff Dry	David Walker
Door Greeter	Lynton Nicholas Jayne Nicholas	Robyn Fry Stella Waugh
Tick and Flick	Brenton Summers	Trevor Curtis
Notices	Lee O'Connell	Don Brown
Bible Reader	Dean Pearce	Jayne Nicholas
Count Offering	Gus Robin Paul Howland	Gus Robin Paul Howland
Cleaning	VIP	VIP
Communion Prep	N/A	Leanne Shirlock
Communion Servers	N/A	Robyn Fry Friederike Ashby-Weiss Ros Howland

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 Linda Driver (0458 500 656) or the worship leader for that service. Thank you.

A note for Chair Stewards regarding Dec 2020 and Jan 2021

We are working with our hirers to determine what dates they will be using the auditorium over the Dec/Jan period. We hope to be able to give our chair stewards a break from packing-up and setting-up chairs whilst the auditorium is otherwise not in use by hirers. Pilates will be using the auditorium as a once-off on Tuesday 1st Dec due to the Wirra Play Day and so chairs will definitely need to be packed away on Sunday 29th Nov. Waratah Calisthenics who otherwise normally use the auditorium throughout the week are currently awaiting news regarding whether or not they can resume classes after the 1st Dec or not. They were due to finish up their 2020 season on Sunday 6th Dec with an end of year concert, which has now been cancelled. As a result they may decide to extend their classes for an additional week until 13th Dec in order to do smaller trophy presentations, if government restrictions permit. So if you were rostered on in December then please stay tuned to the restriction changes in coming weeks and for more advice from Jeff Dry, or myself. After calisthenics classes cease in December, there will be no need to move chairs specifically for this hirer until at least the week beginning 17th Jan 2021.

Carol Lang