

Anglican Parish of Avon

ALL AGE FAMILY WORSHIP AND FUN!!

Anglican Church Stratford, 10am today Sunday 13 Dec

3rd Week of Advent

JOY



We acknowledge the Gunai Kurnai people as the original inhabitants of this land. We acknowledge their elders past and present and their children who are their hope for the future.

GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

Opening Hymn: 'Joy to the world' – MP 393

1 Joy to the world, the Lord has come!
let earth receive her King;
let every heart prepare Him room
and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven, and heaven and nature sing!

2 Joy to the earth, the Saviour reigns!
your sweetest songs employ
while fields and streams and hills and plains
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

Public Domain

Greeting

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.
And also with you.

Welcome/Acknowledgement of Country

Call to Worship

Come! Rejoice in our God.
Let us give thanks, whatever life brings.
**May those who sow in tears
reap with shouts of joy.**

Let us prepare our hearts and our world
for the Prince of Peace, who is coming.
May all who weep come home with shouts of joy.

Prepare the way of the Lord,
and make straight the path for God's arrival.
**In prayer, song, and service,
let us prepare for the birth of love.**

The Sentence

“Bind up the broken-hearted, proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners, proclaim the year of the Lord's favour, the day of vengeance of our God.”

(Isaiah 61. 1–2)

Lighting of the Advent Candle

Minister: On this 3rd Sunday in Advent, Psalm 146 and the prophet Isaiah tells:

All: of a world where the desert sings, rejoices and blossoms.

Minister:

A world where eyes will see, and ears will hear;

All: where everyone will want to dance and sing for joy.

Liturgical Assistant:

We watch and wait for such signs of God's coming kingdom.

All: We wait in Hope and Peace, and with joy.

Two candles relit

Liturgical Assistant: The God in whom we rejoice, prepares our hearts for the coming of the Lord. We light the candle of joy.

The third candle is lit

All: God of grace and truth, may our spirits rejoice in the coming birth of Christ, our Saviour, in whom we experience your mercy and see your glory. Amen.

Time of thanks

Prayer of thanks

Let us pray,

Loving Father,

We thank you for the blessings in our lives.

We thank you for our families, especially for our faith family gathered here.

We thank you for our homes and for all you provide for us.

We thank you for all the things you give to us, even the ones we haven't thought of.

Thank you for everything you bless us with through your Son.

Amen.

The Confession

When the Lord comes, he will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness, and will disclose the purposes of the heart.

(1 Corinthians 4.5)

Silence for self-reflection

Therefore, in the light of Christ let us confess our sins.

God of the prophets,

**we give thanks for the voices that cry out
and demand our attention.**

They call us to put our trust and hope in you.

**Forgive us when we close our eyes to your vision,
and when we stop our ears to your promise.**

**Heal our weakness when we give up on ourselves,
on one another, and on you.**

**Free us from hopeless living,
that we may joyfully love and serve others
in your holy name. Amen.**

Absolution

May the God of all healing and forgiveness
draw us to himself,

and cleanse us from all our sins
that we may behold the glory of his Son,
the Word made flesh,
Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The Prayer of the Day

God for whom we watch and wait,
you sent John the Baptist to prepare the way of your Son:
give us courage to speak the truth,
to hunger for justice,
and to suffer for the cause of right,
with Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Ministry of the Word

The First Reading

A Reading from the First Letter to the Thessalonians

¹² Now, brothers, we ask you to respect those people who work hard with you, who lead you in the Lord and teach you. ¹³ Respect them with a very special love because of the work they do with you.

Live in peace with each other. ¹⁴ We ask you, brothers, to warn those who do not work. Encourage the people who are afraid. Help those who are weak. Be patient with every person. ¹⁵ Be sure that no one pays back wrong for wrong. But always try to do what is good for each other and for all people.

¹⁶ Always be happy. ¹⁷ Never stop praying. ¹⁸ Give thanks whatever happens. That is what God wants for you in Christ Jesus.

¹⁹ Do not stop the work of the Holy Spirit. ²⁰ Do not treat prophecy as if it were not important. ²¹ But test everything. Keep what is good. ²² And stay away from everything that is evil.

²³ We pray that God himself, the God of peace, will make you pure, belonging only to him. We pray that your whole self—spirit, soul, and body—will be kept safe and be without wrong when our Lord Jesus Christ comes. ²⁴ The One who calls you will do that for you. You can trust him.

²⁵ Brothers, please pray for us.

²⁶ Give all the brothers a holy kiss when you meet. ²⁷ I tell you by the authority of the Lord to read this letter to all the brothers.

²⁸ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

1 Thessalonians 5. 12-28

Hear the word of the Lord,
Thanks be to God.

Gospel Reading

A Reading from the Gospel of John

⁶ There was a man named John who was sent by God. ⁷ He came to tell people about the Light. Through him all people could hear about the Light and believe. ⁸ John was not the Light, but he came to tell people about the Light.

¹⁹ The Jews in Jerusalem sent some priests and Levites to John. The Jews sent them to ask, “Who are you?”

²⁰ John spoke freely and did not refuse to answer. He said clearly, “I am not the Christ.”

²¹ So they asked him, “Then who are you? Are you Elijah?”

He answered, “No, I am not Elijah.”

Then they asked, “Are you the Prophet?”

He answered, “No, I am not the Prophet.”

²² Then they said, “Who are you? Give us an answer to tell those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?”

²³ John told them in the words of the prophet Isaiah:

“I am the voice of a man

calling out in the desert:

‘Make the road straight for the Lord.’”

²⁴ In the group of Jews who were sent, there were some Pharisees. ²⁵ They said to John: “You say you are not the Christ. You say you are not Elijah or the Prophet. Then why do you baptize people?”

²⁶ John answered, “I baptize people with water. But there is one here with you that you don’t know. ²⁷ He is the One who comes after me. I am not good enough to untie the strings of his sandals.”

²⁸ This all happened at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan River. This is where John was baptizing people. *John 1. 6-8, 19-28*

Hear the word of the Lord,
Thanks be to God.

Early Talk

Homily

Time of discussion

The Affirmation of Faith

Let us affirm the faith of the Church:

**We believe in God the Father, from whom every family
in heaven and on earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son,
who lives in our hearts through faith, and fills us with his love.**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit, who strengthens us with power
from on high.**

We believe in one God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Amen.

The Prayers

Please sit or kneel for prayer as you are able.

Response:

Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayers.

At the conclusion of the prayers:

Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord, who taught us to pray,

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.**

The Greeting of Peace

We are the body of Christ.
His Spirit is with us.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.
And also with you.

The Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right to praise you, Father, Lord of all creation;
in your love you made us for yourself.

When we turned away
you did not reject us,
but came to meet us in your Son.
**You embraced us as your children
and welcomed us to sit and eat with you.**

In Christ you shared our life
that we might live in him and he in us.
**He opened his arms of love upon the cross
and made for all the perfect sacrifice for sin.**

On the night he was betrayed,
at supper with his friends
he took bread, and gave you thanks;
he broke it and gave it to them, saying:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.
**Father, we do this in remembrance of him:
his body is the bread of life.**

At the end of supper, taking the cup of wine,
he gave you thanks, and said:
Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant,
which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins;
do this in remembrance of me.
**Father, we do this in remembrance of him:
his blood is shed for all.**

As we proclaim his death and celebrate his rising in glory,
send your Holy Spirit that this bread and this wine
may be to us the body and blood of your dear Son.
**As we eat and drink these holy gifts
make us one in Christ, our risen Lord.**

**With your whole Church throughout the world
we offer you this sacrifice of praise
and lift our voice to join the eternal song of heaven:
Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**

The Breaking of the Bread and Communion
We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.
We who are many are one body,
for we all share in the one bread.

Draw near with faith, to feed on Christ in our hearts with thanksgiving.

For those unable to receive Holy Communion this Sunday, you may like to practice the tradition of 'spiritual communion' as you watch and listen, the following prayer may be helpful:

O Lord Jesus Christ, through your tender mercy grant that as the hem of your garment, touched in faith, healed the woman who could not touch your body, so the soul of this your servant may be healed by like faith in you, whom I cannot now sacramentally receive. In union with the faithful at every altar-table in your Church I desire to be united with you and pray that you will come spiritually into my heart. Let nothing ever separate me from your love, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

The Sending Out of God's People

We give you thanks, O Lord, for these heavenly gifts;
kindle in us the fire of your Spirit
that when your Christ comes again
we may shine as lights before his face;
who is alive and reigns now and for ever.

Father,
**we offer ourselves to you
as a living sacrifice
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Send us out in the power of your Spirit
to live and work to your praise and glory.**

Announcements

Final Hymn: 'It is well'

1 Grander earth has quaked before,
Moved by the sound of His voice,
Seas that are shaken and stirred,
Can be calmed and broken for my regard.

Chorus:

*Through it all through it all,
My eyes are on You,
Through it all through it all,
It is well,
Through it all through it all,
My eyes are on You,
And it is well with me.*

Verse 2

Far be it from me to not believe,
Even when my eyes can't see,
And this mountain that's in front of me,
Will be thrown into the midst of the sea.

Bridge:

*//So let go my soul and trust in Him,
The waves and wind still know His name.//*

The waves and wind still know His name.

*//It is well with my soul,
It is well with my soul,
It is well with my soul,
It is well it is well with my soul.//*

*It is well with my soul,
It is well it is well with my soul.*

Chorus

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The Blessing

The Spirit of the Lord is upon us,
anointing us to bring hope to all people.
Go, and prepare the way for the Lord of Love,
and the blessing of God our Creator, Redeemer and Giver of life be
among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord
In the name of Christ. Amen.

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BULLETIN PRAYER POINTS

Holy God, as we wait in joyful hope for the coming of Christ our Saviour we ask that you will answer our prayers and make us a holy people, fit to greet him with eager hearts. May our Church leaders be blessed with wisdom and holiness to guide us through this season of Advent to a holy, peaceful and joyful Christmas. We raise before you our Parish of Avon and ask that with eager longing for the return of Christ, our Advent celebrations may help all who join with us to prepare a place in their hearts and homes for you and your son Jesus Christ our Lord

We pray:-

- *For safety and protection of our beautiful world. Effective and safe management of climate change.
- *For peace in places of conflict and violence. Provision of safe-haven and new beginnings for refugees.
- *For an end to the racial, social and domestic violence and injustices.
- *For an end to power and aggression by some dictatorships who seek to control the world.

- *For those living with ill health, grief, social unrest and economic hardship through the lens of a world-wide pandemic, particularly those nations where Covid-19 is raging.

We give thanks for your miracle work through our world scientists who have developed vaccines against Covid-19. May they be safe and save millions of lives.

*Guidance and wisdom for those undertaking the long process of bringing to justice the **very** few SAS personnel who have committed war crimes against humanity and for compassionate justice for the suffering families in Afghanistan.

For all our defence personnel who dedicate their lives to protecting us and others, from aggression, may they receive the respect and appreciation due to them.

*For the worldwide church, our Diocese, and the churches in our local community.

*For Bishop Richard and his family as he leads the Diocese through difficult times.

May the Christmas season and year 2021 be a time of healing and peace in our Diocese.

We pray for our Archdeacon the Venerable Brenda Burney, her family, friends, clergy and the parishioners of Bairnsdale as they grieve for Rod and seek to pull together the shattered pieces of their lives.

*For Dave as he supports Bishop Richard in his role as Chaplain.

*For guidance, inspiration, and energy for Dave as he leads the parish through this Advent and Christmas season.

*For Emma and their 4 children.

*For good discipleship here in Avon, to take Your message of love

*and concern for everyone into our community.

We give thanks for our emergence out of the Covid-19 shutdown.

We pray our mainly music families as they prepare for Christmas.

*For all who support the op shop. Coordinator Bev, volunteers, and all who donate to our ministry and mission.

*For our Retiring Offertory – Act for Peace, Christmas Bowl.

*Healing God, we lift to you those who are suffering in our parish. Those with physical, mental, or emotional illness, all carers and for those who are mourning.

We pray especially for Marion, Cliff, Paul, Aubrey, Julie, Brenda, Lillas, Marj, Keith, Ruth, Alice, Emma, Crystal, Daryl, Jan and Mick.

Faithful God, as we continue this Advent journey, teach us to turn to you in times of joy and pleasure as well as we do when faced with fear and sorrow. Help us to put our differences behind us and to unite behind the great commission of Jesus to make disciples of all nations and all people.

NEWS AND NOTES

Greetings friends,

Today, the third Sunday of Advent, commences the last week before Christmas week. How this year of many trials and tribulations has flown. Please pick up some copies of our Christmas services flyers to pass on to family and friends.

This afternoon at 4pm, will be a Healing Service at Holy Trinity

Following an update from Bishop Richard, Dave advises that:-

- **To enable us to double our density quotient** (number of people in a building) we need to institute electronic record keeping. Hence there is a ‘check in location code’ in the entrance of our 3 parish churches and in the Link at Holy Trinity. You can check in using your smart phone. Although this is not mandatory, it needs to be evident to permit doubling the number of congregants in each church . . . important over the Christmas season.
- **Singing is permitted in a mask and socially distanced.** Songs to be soft not too exultant.
- **Social gathering after worship may commence on Sunday 20 December with the following precautions:**
 - Avoid sharing of food, utensils or crockery. We will be using all disposable items.
 - Avoid self-service of food or drinks.
 - Pay particular attention to cleaning of surfaces.
 - Be mindful of the 90 minute rule.

 - Careful attention to social distancing is important.
 - **We are seeking 2 volunteers for Morning Tea duties next Sunday please.**
- **All of the principles and protocols that have long been in place around hand hygiene, record keeping, signage, eucharistic hygiene, COVIDSafe plans, and cleaning remain operative during the COVIDSafe Summer’’ regime**

Cont. next page:--

Bishop Richard writes:

It is especially important that visitors to our churches and buildings during this great season have a sense of comfort that we are taking their safety, and the interests of the wider community, fully seriously – not only by being compliant with the letter of the law but by embracing its spirit also.

Wednesday last, we packed 100 boxes of Christmas Morning Tea treats for delivery people to people working in the business houses, the industrial estate and some contractors working in Stratford. Dave and Bev H distributed the boxes and Dave reported that the expressions and comments were “what it’s all about”! Thank you to the parishioners who thoughtfully provided baking and to the team on the day - Linda T, Judy K, Bev H and Denise. We did have to buy some extra supplies and will be needing to hopefully increase donations next year.

The afternoon tea for the op shop volunteers at Wa de Lock was a good occasion. Volunteers expressed appreciation of the gift of an ‘in shop gift voucher’ presented to each. John Harrap was presented with a token of appreciation for his years of dedicated service at the op shop. John is retiring from the op shop but will continue his involvement in parish activities – thank you John!

A message from Christine née Vice advises that Brenda is slowly settling into her new abode. Brenda really likes her new apartment and people have been very welcoming. Brenda’s postal address is Private Bag 2, Bundoora 3083.

With Marion J’s express permission, we wish to advise that on Monday last Marion had a nasty fall fracturing her hip and wrist. She is currently in Latrobe Valley Hospital and expects to be transferred to Sale Hospital. Cliff is in Ashleigh House for respite. Marion enjoys phone calls and visitors. You may recall her speaking about her great appreciation of phone calls and visitors when she was in hospital and care earlier in the year.

- **Please return raffle tickets books next Sunday in readiness for drawing the raffle on Wednesday 23 December**
- **Dave will soon be producing the Christmas services rosters.**
- **The Agenda and papers for the next meeting of Parish Council will be circulated Sunday evening or Monday morning. Please take the time to read them before the meeting.**
- ****Please note: Parish Council Meeting will convene this Tuesday 15 December.**

WHAT'S ON IN THE PARISH

DECEMBER

OP Shop / Parish Raffle.

Retiring Offertory: Act for Peace, Christmas Bowl

School Holidays: Saturday 19 December to Wednesday 27 January 2020.

- Sun 20 Advent 4.
Wed 23 Op Shop Raffle Drawn
Thurs 24 6pm Family Christmas Service at Holy Trinity
Thurs 24 8pm Christmas Eve, Holy Communion at **St Mary's
Thurs 24 11pm. Candle-lite Holy Communion at Holy Trinity
Fri 25 8.30am & 10am Christmas Day HC at **All Saints & Holy Trinity.
Sun 27 First Sunday after Christmas

JANUARY 2021

Fridays 9.30am Morning Prayer at Holy Trinity

School resumes Thursday 28 January 2021

***Dave & family will be on Annual Leave after Sunday 10th for approximately 2 1/2 weeks.*

Retiring Offertory: CBM plus completion of Act for Peace Christmas Bowl

- Fri 1 New Year's Day. New Offertory Envelopes
Sun 3 Second Sunday of Christmas.
All Age Family Worship at Holy Trinity
Wed 6 The Epiphany
Sun 10 1st Sunday after Epiphany. The Baptism of Jesus
Healing Service
Sat 16 8.30am Men's Breakfast
Sun 17 2nd Sunday after Epiphany
Tues 19 Parish Council Report due
Fri 22 Family Movie Night
Sun 24 3rd Sunday after Epiphany

Sunday 20 December, 4th Sunday of Advent

2Samuel 7.1-11,16 Ps 89.1-4,19-27 or Song of Mary
Romans 16.25-27. Luke 1.26-38

Priest: Dave. Lit Assist: Denise. 1st Reading Kerrie S

Intercess: Denise. Org: Vic. Camera: Bev H.

Flowers: Wendy. Morning Teas: TBA Sac: Bev/Denise

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