

HOLY COVENANT ANGLICAN CHURCH

a place for everyone



**SUNDAY 27 DECEMBER 2020 AND 3 JANUARY 2021
FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS AND EPIPHANY**

A PRAYER-FULL CHRISTMASTIDE

In-person public worship has restarted but on a restricted basis. Please use the URLs below so that we can manage attendance and contact information. Registration available from Monday. We will also continue to worship online via ZOOM video conferencing. To join us, use the link below.

<https://adcg.zoom.us/j/8820962366?pwd=YUpja05YTXFCN0N4MGRiSFVIRlloZz09>

Meeting ID: [882 096 2366](https://adcg.zoom.us/j/8820962366)

Password: 033643

Kid's church is in recess over the holidays

SUNDAY 27 DECEMBER

Seating limited to 75 people per service.

9am Holy Communion

<https://www.trybooking.com/BNEKG>

Celebrant:

Rev Connie Gerrity

Preacher:

The Venerable (EM) Anne Ranse OAM

SUNDAY 3 JANUARY

Seating limited to 75 people per service.

9am Holy Communion

<https://www.trybooking.com/BNEKK>

Celebrant and Preacher:

Rev Connie Gerrity

Bank Details for Direct Debit are:

Bank: Commonwealth Bank

Branch: Jamison Centre, ACT

BSB: 062 907

A/C No: 802 588

Name: Holy Covenant Anglican Church

Christmas has arrived. All the usual rushing has stopped. We are catching up as best we can as COVID restrictions allow. We can feel overfed and yet strangely empty, content and yet restless. This might be an invitation from the Holy Spirit to go deeper this Christmastide.

Christmastide is the olde term for the season of 12 days from 25 December until 6 January. This period is when most of us have a break. Those who are employed or retired get a rest from all the usual appointments, challenges and problems. Yet many others can't or won't get any time off. Carers are busier as all the usual programs wind down. Essential workers still have to show for shifts. Most of us find ways to struggle on despite feeling exhausted mentally, physically and emotionally.

Maybe this year might just be the moment to find your strength renewed by God through prayer (Isa 40.31)?

Prayer is often experienced as presenting God with a shopping list of needs to be met and problems to be fixed. It can be much more than that. Prayer is about connection and conversation where God gets a chance to talk to us. The period after Christmas might be a good time to start a new habit. Here are some simple tips:

- pick a time within your regular daily schedule that works. It might be before breakfast, brushing your teeth or going to bed
- keep it short and simple
- if you can read a short passage of Scripture and ask yourself, 'what would I like to say to Jesus now?'
- ask yourself, what are you most thankful for or least thankful for in your day?

- where did you show love today or were unhelpful towards someone else?
- what might you need to hear from God today?

Most of us think of prayer as something done quietly by ourselves. There are ways we can pray that don't involve sitting still or being alone. It can be done even with the youngest family members outside on adventures together. Here are some thoughts:

- Creating a *prayer space*. Grab a nice piece of cloth, a cross and a candle. Put it in a place where you can see it and pull out easily. Think of five people that you pray for. Write their names down on something you can keep for a while. It might be a paddlepop stick, a stone or something handy. Choose a different person to pray for each day.
- *Prayer walk*. Many of us like to go for a walk beside the lake or around the park. Pick a few notable landmarks on the way. When you reach these milestones pray for the person, group or issue as you travel to the next milestone.
- *At the beach*. Walk along collecting shells or interesting stones. As you review your collection, associate a friend, family member or colleague with an item. As you place them in the sand say a simple prayer for them. Should you choose to hurl an item into the sea, make sure it's with a blessing!

However you spend your time over Christmas and New Year, remember that you are beloved and that God is always closer than you think.

Wayne

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CHRISTMAS JOY FOR SJC CLIENT

I met Patrick* three weeks ago when he walked into St John's Care and asked if he could get something to eat. I gave him a hot meal. We sat down under the tree outside and he started opening up. He explained that he hadn't had a meal for two days, his electricity bill was due and he had no means of paying it. The bill was close to \$1000.

Patrick also disclosed that he suffers from a skin disease which can be managed by medication and some very expensive creams. He does not have any family or friends here in Canberra and he told me that his best friend was his dog Spotty. Spotty was also doing it tough. Often hungry, he'd sit next to Patrick and lick his hands.

Patrick's eyes were filling with tears as he was telling me how he had to sit outside the supermarkets with a hat on the ground asking for money so that he could feed himself and his dog.

He told me that he lives in a tiny unit (Housing ACT tenant). One day a couple of friends asked him if they could stay at his place as they had nowhere to go. Patrick felt sorry for his newly met friends and let them stay. One day Patrick came home to find his flat burgled and everything valuable – gone. When he received an electricity bill a few days later, he got a shock – almost \$1000! It took him some time to summon enough courage to come to SJC and ask for help.

When SJC helped Patrick with his electricity bill, he broke into tears. The volunteers prepared a food pack containing fresh fruit and vegetables, meat, some frozen meals and some dog food.

He also told me that his MyWay card had negative balance on it. We gave him a few bus tickets too.

I was able to put Patrick in touch with the Care Financial team and some other agencies to link in to support him.

Patrick was asking if there was anything, he could do for SJC to repay this generous help. He said, "I'll pray for all the donors who make this possible for people like me andI can help sweeping leaves when you need, just call me". When Patrick left the Centre, he had a look of hope and relief on his face.

St John's Care has continued to provide Patrick with ongoing support in the form of meals, fruit and vegetables as well as dog food.

He is extremely grateful to now to be in a position where he can feed his dog and slowly pay the rest of his bills from his Centrelink payments. This will allow Patrick to have a memorable Christmas.

During these hard and uncertain times, St John's Care continues to provide support and assistance to Canberran families who need it the most.

Kind regards,

Nailia, SJC Case Manager

Items required: Soap, weetabix, tinned vegetables, powdered milk and 200ml long life milk

*not his real name.

RESOURCES TO HELP WITH PRAYER

Prayer helps to whet our appetite for God's presence. A range of resources can also help us explore God's presence in our lives. When reading is difficult, podcasts can offer an alternative. Podcasts are downloadable from either the Appstore or Google Play.

Sorting through religious podcasts is difficult, especially to find something that's not boring, fundamentalist or downright nutty. Here are a few that I've found enriching that don't appear on the top 10 lists:

- *The Way of Love with Bishop Michael Curry*, a series of interviews with thought provoking leaders from all points of American Christianity (45 mins)
- *The Bible for Normal People* with Peter Enns about Scriptural topics with a scholar who is socially engaging and theologically insightful (50mins)
- *The Liturgists* a conversation about those intersections where faith and culture collide (1hr 20mins)
- *Godpod* is a British conversation between theologians that's perfect with tea and biscuits (45mins)
- *Sacred* is another British effort exploring the public face of faith in dialogue with pressing social issues (45mins)

Wayne

A ROSE IN THE DESERT

O what a gift, what a wonderful gift. (TIS 278)

I was looking into the Christmas box of gifts for St John's Care to distribute to those who have so very little. Gifts that will bring joy and excitement. Gifts that will be given to those who otherwise would have no gifts, and again I thought of the one perpetual gift that can be given away time and time again and never needs replacing, repurchased or re given - the gift of Jesus who came as a baby, wrapped in bands of cloth, a baby who will bring joy and excitement, a baby who would be our Saviour, a baby who would turn the world upside down in three years of profound ministry that gave us eternal life. What a gift. *And I ask, what gift would you give to Jesus in return?*

I read this from a Benediction: Grant that we may gladly give you the one precious gift we have to bring, the offering of our loyalty and love and enable us to walk in love for others in Christ who walks the road with us, a fragrant offering, a rose in the desert for you.

May peace, joy, hope and love be your blessings this Christmas.

Anne, servant of the Lord

<https://comewalkwithme-reflections.blogspot.com>



May I be a fragrant offering for you



Summer program will run Dec 27 - Jan 24 with only a single service at 9am and no evening conversation. As we have a combined service, registrations will help manage numbers.

Dec 27 - 9am <https://www.trybooking.com/BNEKG>

Jan 3 - 9am <https://www.trybooking.com/BNEKK>

Jan 10 - 9am <https://www.trybooking.com/BNEKM>

Jan 17 - 9am <https://www.trybooking.com/BNEKQ>

Jan 24 - 9am <https://www.trybooking.com/BNEKR>

Jan 31 - 10am <https://www.trybooking.com/BNKAX>

Normal service schedule will resume Jan 31.



Tai Chi	Resumes 03.02.21
Wednesday Midday Service	Resumes 03.02.21
Crafty Crew	Resumes Tuesday 16.02.21. NOTE change of day!
Book Club	Resumes Thursday 18.02.21
Tuesday 1pm meditation	Resumes 02.02.21.
Kid's Church	Resumes 07.02.21
A Darn Good Yarn	Resumes Tuesday 12 January 2021 at 10.30 to 12 noon

AGM Preparation

The AGM has been scheduled for Tuesday 16 February 2021. Could coordinators please ensure that their reports are in the office by the end of January.

COVID UPDATE

The Christmas plans of many have been upended by restrictions that have been reimposed in an effort to contain outbreaks. The ACT government has implemented restrictions for those who were in the Northern Beaches local government area from 11 December and Greater Sydney, Central Coast and Wollongong areas from 21 December to get tested and

stay home for 14 days. Should you visit these areas it will affect your capacity to come to church too. Please help us to keep everyone safe from unwanted outbreaks by following health advice. At present, the ACT is at stage 4 of the recovery plan and the ministry team will adjust requirements as circumstances change.

COLLECT for 1st Sunday after Christmas

Saving God,
whose Son Jesus was presented in the temple
and was acclaimed the glory of Israel
and the light of the nations:
grant that in him we may be presented to you
and in the world may reflect his glory;
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the
Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

READINGS for 27 December

Isaiah 61.10-62.3
Psalm 148
Galatians 4.4-7
Luke 2.22-40

PRAYER POINTS

IN THE WORLD

⇒ We give you thanks for your beautiful and bountiful
creation and all who work to protect it

IN AUSTRALIA

⇒ We pray for all affected by corona virus restrictions and
safety for all those travelling during the holiday season.

IN THE DIOCESAN CYCLE OF PRAYER

⇒ Diocese of Willochra
⇒ Cobargo
⇒ Bodalla-Narooma
⇒ Open Sanctuary @ Tilba Tilba
⇒ Moruya
⇒ Batemans Bay; Boomerang Meeting Place, Mogo
⇒ St Peter's Anglican College
⇒ Pray for: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ministry,
Bimbadeen Training College, Cootamundra.

IN OUR PARISH AND COMMUNITY

⇒ For all members of our parish family including Carol
Kubanek and Quentin Grafton; Pam Lane; Anne, Martin
and Jenny Lange; Clare Lawler; Chris Lee; Penny and Ted
Lilley; and Colin Lyons.
⇒ We uphold those in special need of prayer including Barry
Button, Elizabeth Grant, Andrew Hill, Phil Bloomfield,
Judith Ann, Bev Barnes, John Blue, Anne and Peter
Bazeos, Violet Hart and Lucia Horciu and anyone known
to us personally.

COMMEMORATIONS

6 January: **Ronald Earle Grant (d.2011)**
7 January: **Pierre Willem Elkhuisen (d. 2007),**
Dorothy Joan Williams (d.2019)

COLLECT for Epiphany

Lord God of the nations,
we have seen the star of your glory rising in
splendour:
may the brightness of your incarnate Word
pierce the night that covers the earth,
signal the dawn of justice and peace,
and beckon all nations to walk as one in your
light.
We ask this through Jesus Christ, your Word
made flesh,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
in the splendour of eternal light,
God for ever and ever. **Amen.**

READINGS for 3 January

Isaiah 60:1-6
Psalm 107:1-7,10-14
Ephesians 3:1-12
Matthew 2:1-12

MINISTRY TEAM CONTACTS

Children's Worker

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Reverend Connie Gerrity

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Resources Team

0419 255 002

BIRTHDAYS THIS WEEK

Tuesday: Chris Lee, Janice Green
Wednesday: Megan Mackay
Thursday: Wendy Robertson
Friday: Jodie Petrov;
Friday 8 Jan: Hilary Harris