

HOLY COVENANT ANGLICAN CHURCH

a place for everyone



SUNDAY 10 DECEMBER 2023
SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT

To join us on Zoom, please use the link below:

<https://zoom.us/j/8820962366?pwd=YUpja05YTxFcN0N4MGRiSFVIRlI0Zz09>

Meeting ID: 882 096 2366
Password: 033643

SUNDAY 10 DECEMBER

8am & 10am Holy Communion
Celebrant & Preacher : Revd Wendy Robertson

WEDNESDAY 13 DECEMBER

12 Midday Communion Service and lunch

SUNDAY 17 DECEMBER

8am & 10am Holy Communion
Celebrant & Preacher :
Revd Dr Wayne Brighton

Coming soon:

16 Dec: 9am-midday Working Bee

17 December: 5pm Blue Christmas

24 December: 4pm Kids' Christmas

& 11pm Carols, Candles & Communion

Bank details for direct debit:

Bank: Commonwealth
Branch: Jamison Centre ACT
BSB 062 907
Account No: 802588
Name: Holy Covenant Anglican Church

A new earth?

I'm a keen science fiction & fantasy reader. The identification (and occupation) of a new earth features frequently in those genres. And reliably, a new (to the occupiers) and perfect world is besmirched by human behaviour. "A beautiful world! And theirs!... With all that magnificent, productive land, the old imperatives don't apply. No, she added in private cynicism, people are already discovering new ones." (*McCaffrey, Dragonsdawn*)

In light of humanity's capacity for destruction and desecration, how can we begin to hope for "new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home" (2 *Peter 3:13*)? I think the answer to that question can be found in the way we are waiting and hoping.

John the Baptist gives us very clear instruction in the Gospel of Mark, which echoes the earlier words of the writer of Isaiah: "Prepare the way". We have work to do in our waiting. There is no time for sitting passively. The

challenge of Advent is to put into practice all that we have learned over the rest of the church year about love, about freedom and about justice.

To paraphrase Gershon Nimbalker: It's time for God's beautiful creation to be cared for so the environment and generations to come can flourish. It's time for all households and churches to become places of nurture, safety and support, where violence against women is eliminated. It's time for people seeking asylum to be embraced with open hearts and open arms... for peace, restoration and welcome. It's time to listen deeply to First Nations people and the truth of our history, where injustices are righted and the oldest continuous cultures in the world are celebrated.

This Advent, and into the new year, let's prepare the way. What a wonderful Christmas present that would be!

Megan Arthur

Gift shortage

Since I began working at St John's Care (SJC), I have seen a consistent increase in the number of vulnerable and disadvantaged community members accessing support from us. This increase is due to multiple factors: cost of living pressures, the rental affordability crisis, rising interest rates, economic pressures and loss of employment resulting from COVID-19 - the list goes on. Amongst all the uncertainty, one thing that has remained stable is the community's reliance on SJC to provide emergency relief, as well as Christmas specific programs such as our Christmas hampers and gift room.

Each year, we see a significant rise in the number of households accessing our services for these programs. Last year we provided approximately 723 Christmas hampers, and over 6000 gifts to those in need. This year we will provide 800 hampers, and many more gifts to the growing number of Canberrans who are struggling.

As things stand this year, we will not be able to provide a happy Christmas experience for all those who so heavily rely on us as we are desperately short of toys, gifts and presents— we need your help.

Donations can be dropped in to the Centre at 45 Constitution Avenue in Reid during business hours 9:30am – 2.00pm. If you would like to donate but are unable to attend between these times, please call our Centre on 6248 7771 and we will do our best to organise an alternative.

Thank you all for your ongoing support.

*Robbie
 Speldewinde,
 Operations
 Manager*

Items

Required: tomato sauce, cooking oil, small packets of sultanas, chicken stock, tea bags. Pictured is a list of highly desirable gift items

Christmas present room items:

- Gift cards for teens e.g., JB HI-FI, Rebel Sport, Hoyts, PlayStation/Xbox, EB Games, Clothing stores, The Ultimate Teen, Westfield
- Lego
- Sports equipment
- Board games
- Arts and Crafts
- Dolls, figurines and cars
- Books
- Stocking fillers

Stay a while with me

My beloved has gone down to the garden, to the beds of spices, to browse in the garden and gather lilies. Song of Songs 6:2

I have come to my sacred space with no shoes on today as I feel God is there before me, waiting, waiting for me to sit and just be. As I do that my eyes fall on the garden and on a flower in front of me, a glorious fuchsia and for several minutes I contemplate what I am seeing.

I look deep into its colours and envisage the creator with his palate of paints deciding which colours to use. 'This one? No, this one—perhaps that one'. I think of all the flowers in the garden with their different shapes and colours and sizes, intrinsic detail, and marvel at the joy God must have had in making them and painting them just for me, just for you, his beloved. It seemed a long time that I sat with God in no hurry to go anywhere.

Macrina Wiederkehr says contemplation is like going to heaven for a while.

Jehovah - Shalom the Lord is peace.

Anne, servant of the Lord.



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

Position available

Christian Education In Schools (CEIS), has a position available in early 2024, to lead and deliver Christian

education sessions in ACT public schools. More information is available on the CEIS website:

<https://ceis.org.au/extra-news/>

Farewell for Revd Wendy

Revd Wendy's last Sunday with us is 10 December 2023. Wendy and her family have been with us a short time. We have all been blessed by her gifts for pastoral care and community engagement as she has moved from being our children's worker to community chaplain, curate and assistant minister. Her family is moving to Perth where Lachlan has been for 12 months. Please keep all the Robertsons in your prayers.

There is a farewell card for Revd Wendy near the serving window for anyone who would like to sign. If you can't make it into the church, please email your farewell message to the office: office@holycovenant.org.au, and Megan will add your words to the card.



Kitchen Roster—Help Needed

There is a small band of folk who top up necessary items (tea, coffee, handwash, toilet rolls etc.) in our kitchen and bathroom, and also wash tea towels. It is not a hard job but a necessary one.

Recently the numbers of people on the roster have declined so we would appreciate some more helpers. Anyone who would like to help out in this way, please contact Helen Boulton on 0439 609 998 or hnboulton@gmail.com

End of year closures

As we move through December, many of the groups who use our facilities are wrapping up for 2023. If you are a group organiser, please make sure that you have let the office know about your final meeting date for the year, and when you plan to return in 2024.

The Church office will close between 22 December and 1 January.



Second Sunday of Advent



Bringing Peace to refugees in Ethiopia

Sara* fled to Ethiopia from Yemen eight years ago with her four children. In Addis Ababa refugees are at risk of severe exploitation, with little access to education, medical care, or basics like food. Through Act for Peace's partner, the Ethiopian Orthodox Church Development and Inter-Church Aid Commission, you can help provide refugees with medical and psychological care, as well as livelihoods training, giving people like Sara the chance to build secure futures for their families. **Please give today.**

*Name changed for safety reasons



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

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

Rainbow Centre redevelopment

As announced at the services last week, the Diocese has approved the redevelopment of the Rainbow Centre, and a brochure is available to explain the options for financially supporting the project.

The Building Fund is off to a flying start, as is the pool of interest free loans: this 'fundometer' will appear in the bulletin for the next few weeks to keep everyone updated on our progress.



If you have any or questions, or would like to use a different method to contribute, please talk with the Parish treasurer—Mark Cooper-Stanbury—on 0408 417 340 or e-mail treasurer@holycovenant.org.au.

Parish Council Elections

Parish Council elections will be held on 17 December. Council is comprised of 3 wardens (2 of whom are elected and 1 nominated by the Rector) and 8 members (6 elected and 2 nominated).

It will be opportunity elect some new wardens and members to Council.

Parish Council enables us to plan ahead and make decisions that affect our whole community. Wardens play a critical role to think through issues in parish life alongside the rector. Members of council assist with planning, congregational engagement and the realisation of our parish mission and vision.

A mix of people from both 8am and 10am congregations from all walks of life is especially helpful.

Would you consider helping us out in 2024? Why not talk to Wayne or a staff member if you'd be interested to serve in this way.

Christmas

Holy Covenant Anglican Church

17 December

A Blue Christmas, 5pm

Christmas Eve

Kids Christmas, 4pm

Carols, Candles & Communion, 11pm

Christmas Day

Classic Christmas Service, 8am

Contemporary Celebration, 10am

89 Dexter St, Cook

Blue Christmas



Blue Christmas

For those who haven't encountered a Blue Christmas service

before, this is a quiet and reflective service for the

bereaved, estranged or anyone just struggling to feel jolly this season.

Nungalinya News

Term 4 is a complicated time at Nungalinya College... it is hot and tiring and everyone finds it that little bit harder to focus on teaching and learning, or anything else pretty much! But, there is also great joy as students graduate from courses, often after many years of diligent study. This year Nungalinya held both Certificate III and IV in Christian Ministry and Theology graduations, and the final Certificate II in Creative Industries, commonly known as 'Music and Media'. They were all beautiful times of celebration, fellowship and food!



2024 is shaping up as another season of growth. With some new funding, two new courses will begin next year- a 'Children's Ministry' course focussing on running kids' activities, talks and camps and a 'Making Disciples' course, for Cert IV graduates who have the gifts and passion to lead their people through teaching, Bible Study leading and discipling. In November, staff have been out all over the NT doing community visits, talking about these new courses... and all the other existing ones! Meanwhile, back at Nungalinya work has begun to grow classroom spaces to accommodate all these new initiatives.

Prayer Points:

- Students and families celebrating the many graduations
- Safety and good pastoral times during community visits

Act for Peace: Gaza Update



This picture taken on October 11 2023 shows an aerial view of buildings destroyed by Israeli air strikes in the Jabalia camp for Palestinian refugees in Gaza City. Yahya Hassouna / AFP via Getty Images

Over the past two months, hospitals, clinics, and churches have been bombed. At least 60% of housing in the Gaza Strip has now been destroyed or is uninhabitable.

Even more significantly, the human cost of this tragedy is enormous. Over 1.7 million people have been forcibly displaced, and thousands of lives have been lost. Devastatingly, this includes two local partner staff and their families, and many others remain unaccounted for.

The Gaza team shared the following prayer requests:

- A complete ceasefire—that peace and calm could be restored with a complete end to all forms of violence in Gaza.
- For children, women, the sick, the injured and the most vulnerable who are struggling to stay alive in the most dangerous and deprived environment.
- For the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC) Gaza team, and Near East Council of Churches (NECC) staff for their safety and the safety of their families.
- For MECC and NECC for wisdom, strength, and perseverance as they continue to serve the poor and most vulnerable in their communities so that they can meet the urgent needs of their communities in a timely manner.

PRAYER POINTS

IN THE WORLD

- ⇒ Peace in Ukraine, Gaza, Israel & Sudan, and an end to occupation
- ⇒ All those impacted by the changing climate

IN AUSTRALIA

- ⇒ Teachers, students and families at the end of the school year
- ⇒ Mental health support services at this time of peak workload

IN THE DIOCESAN CYCLE OF PRAYER

- ⇒ Bishop to the Defence Force
- ⇒ St Philip's O'Connor
- ⇒ Defence Force Chaplains: Regular - Full Time and Reserve – Part Time
- ⇒ Service Chaplains from this Diocese Serving Elsewhere
- ⇒ Churchwardens; members of Parish Councils; and Lay Leaders.

IN OUR PARISH AND COMMUNITY

- ⇒ For all members of our parish family including Jenny DeBont; Elaine and Brian Dennis; Remus Douglas; Anne and Gary Drummond; Anne Dudzinski; and Georgina and Andrew Dudzinski.
- ⇒ We uphold those in special need of prayer (often for long term needs) including Barry & Sandra Button; Bev Barnes; Brian and Elaine Dennis; Glenys Wimmer; Ann & Peter Bazeos; Bev Chambers; Gracie Bonnett; Bob and Kath Arthur; Reg Holmes; Hugh MacWilliam, Chris Olsson and anyone known to us personally

COMMEMORATIONS

- 10 Dec Delma Alice Margaret Murry (d.2001)
12 Dec Gunaseeli Lamech (d, 1985)

BIRTHDAYS

- 11 Dec Maxine Rose
13 Dec Allison Cooper-Stanbury, Zoe Rose
16 Dec Katie Wood, Naomi Farrington

BIBLE READINGS

- Isaiah 40:1-11
Psalm 85:1-2,8-13
2 Peter 3:8-15a
Mark 1:1-8

COLLECT

Merciful God,
you sent your messengers the prophets
to preach repentance and prepare the way for our
salvation:
give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake
our sins,
that we may greet with joy
the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

MINISTRY TEAM CONTACTS

Rector

The Reverend Dr Wayne Brighton,
0407 408 333 rector@holycovenant.org.au

Assistant Minister & Community Chaplain

The Revd Wendy Robertson
0481 458 037 hccommunitychaplain@gmail.com

Youth Coordinator

Tobias Nevile
0468 969 372 youth@holycovenant.org.au

Wardens

Allison Cooper-Stanbury 0410 506 231

Prayer Vine

Rosemary Kennemore
6251 2009 kennemorerosemary@gmail.com

Belonging and Caring

The Reverend Dr Wayne Brighton
0407 408 333 rector@holycovenant.org.au

Children & Families Worker

Lou Passmore
0411 338 361 holycovenantkids@gmail.com

Covenant Care Program Manager

Megan Arthur
0487 945 615 nurse@holycovenant.org.au

Covenant Care Program Director and Chaplain

Venerable (EM) Anne Ranse OAM
0406 379 599 anne.ranse@gmail.com

Honorary Priests

The Revd Anne Dudzinski
0413 994 739 annedudzinski@optusnet.com.au

The Revd Connie Gerrity
0429 423 725 connie@gerrity.id.au

The Revd Lynda McMinn
0403 769 991 ellemm99@gmail.com

Resources Team

0419 255 002