



Worship at St Luke's this weekend

Sunday 7 am: Holy Communion

(Hymns: TIS 497, The candle of hope vv1-3, MP 210 vv1,2,4,5, MP 538, TIS 147)

9 am: Family Communion (also streamed via ZOOM*)

(Hymns: TIS 447, TIS 286,vv1-3, MP 48, MP 538, TIS 282)

* <https://zoom.us/j/7210725462> or by telephone (07 3185 3730, meeting ID 721 072 5462).
Contact the Parish Office for the password.

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.

Rev'd Timothy writes

When we hear the gospel reading this week, we might feel a sense of familiarity. We have a quotation from Isaiah about the forerunner, the one crying in the wilderness 'make straight the way of the Lord', of John baptising, and then his description of Jesus as one whom he is 'not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.'

Last week we read from Mark's gospel, and this week from John, and in fact these elements are present in all four of the gospels. Therefore, for the people of the early church this must have been seen as an important message, and where the gospel accounts started (neither Mark nor John have any birth narratives of Jesus).

The focus then, which is very appropriate to consider in this Advent season, is who is Jesus; where did he come from, and why. In John 1:6-8, set within the prologue of this Gospel, these verses tell us that John is a man sent by God to witness in history to Jesus who was present with God at creation and who will be the eternal presence of God within history. Then in John 1:19-28, Jesus' coming is set within the context of Jewish history, the promised messiah.

In this passage is also a reminder that we too are called, with John, to be witnesses of the light of Christ in the midst of the 'wilderness' of the 21st century. We will sing on Sunday a new hymn (see box) that well brings these ideas together. The author is a Presbyterian Pastor in the USA and the tune is the familiar Picardy (used for 'Let all mortal flesh keep silent').



John came preaching, bearing witness,
Pointing to God's only Son.
He proclaimed the truth with boldness:
"Now believe! God's light has come!"
Yet he would not be the focus;
He proclaimed a greater One.

Thank you, God, for all your servants
Who proclaim your light each day.
Brave and bold, like John, they bless us,
Pointing us to Jesus' way.
They proclaim your kingdom's nearness
In the things they do and say.

May we live in that tradition;
Fill us with integrity.
Take away our vain ambition;
Keep us in humility.
Make us faithful in our mission
As we serve Christ joyfully.

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Reminder of changed service times on 24th and 31st Dec.

There will only be ONE morning service on Sundays 24th and 31st December. This will be held at 9am with zoom available, but will be the 7am service format. Please pass this on to others who may not be aware.

Readings for 3rd Sunday of Advent

First reading (7am & 9am)

A reading from the book of Isaiah

¹ The spirit of the Lord God is upon me,
because the Lord has anointed me;
he has sent me to bring good news to
the oppressed,

to bind up the broken-hearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and release to the prisoners;

² to proclaim the year of the Lord 's
favour,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;

³ to provide for those who mourn in
Zion—

to give them a garland instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the mantle of praise instead of a faint
spirit.

They will be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the Lord , to display his
glory.

⁴ They shall build up the ancient ruins,
they shall raise up the former
devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities,
the devastations of many generations.

⁸ For I the Lord love justice,
I hate robbery and wrongdoing;
I will faithfully give them their
recompense,
and I will make an everlasting covenant
with them.

⁹ Their descendants shall be known
among the nations,
and their offspring among the peoples;
all who see them shall acknowledge that
they are a people whom the Lord has
blessed.

¹⁰ I will greatly rejoice in the Lord ,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments
of salvation,
he has covered me with the robe of
righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a
garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her
jewels.

¹¹ For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it
to spring up,
so the Lord God will cause righteousness
and praise
to spring up before all the nations.

Isaiah 61:1-4,8-11

Psalms 126

¹ When the Lord turned again the
fortunes of Zion:
then were we like those restored to life.

² Then was our mouth filled with
laughter:
and our tongue with singing.

³ Then said they among the heathen:
'The Lord has done great things for
them.'

⁴ Truly the Lord has done great things for
us:
and therefore we rejoiced.

⁵ Turn again our fortunes, O Lord:
as the streams return to the dry south.

⁶ Those who sow in tears:
shall reap with songs of joy.

⁷ They that go out weeping, bearing the
seed:
shall come again in gladness, bringing
their sheaves with them.

Second Reading (7am only)

A reading from the first letter to the Thessalonians

¹² But we appeal to you, brothers and sisters, to respect those who labour among you, and have charge of you in the Lord and admonish you; ¹³ esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves. ¹⁴ And we urge you, beloved, to admonish the idlers, encourage the faint-hearted, help the weak, be patient with all of them.

¹⁵ See that none of you repays evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to all. ¹⁶ Rejoice always, ¹⁷ pray without ceasing, ¹⁸ give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. ¹⁹ Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰ Do not despise the words of prophets, ²¹ but test everything; hold fast to what is good; ²² abstain from every form of evil.

²³ May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

²⁵ Beloved, pray for us.

²⁶ Greet all the brothers and sisters with a holy kiss. ²⁷ I solemnly command you by the Lord that this letter be read to all of them.

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

1 Thessalonians 5:12-28

Gospel reading

A reading from the gospel of John

⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸ He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

¹⁹ This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?' ²⁰ He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, 'I am not the Messiah.'

²¹ And they asked him, 'What then? Are you Elijah?' He said, 'I am not.' 'Are you the prophet?' He answered, 'No.' ²² Then they said to him, 'Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?' ²³ He said,

'I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness,

"Make straight the way of the Lord" ', as the prophet Isaiah said.

²⁴ Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. ²⁵ They asked him, 'Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?'

²⁶ John answered them, 'I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, ²⁷ the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.' ²⁸ This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

John 1:6-8,19-28

Refocus, Restore, Rejoice

Rejoicing in God is not something we often intentionally do. We rejoice with friends and family at different events in our lives: a birthday celebration; an anniversary; the birth of a newborn. Sometimes after the celebration has ended, we take a moment to rejoice in what God has accomplished in our lives. What would be the impact of refocusing our joy?

Isaiah 61:1–4, 8–11 begins with an introduction of one sent by God to declare a holy word of restoration for the people Israel. The servant's words have power because they do not imply the importance of the servant, rather the work of God through the people to restore what has been destroyed. This news of restoration is for the oppressed, broken-hearted, captives, and prisoners. These categories have a mark on every Israelite of this time, whether exiled by the Babylonians or left in the wake of the destruction that took place. These first few verses grab the pain with which these people were dealing, and so too the restorative verses that present the very nature of God. Out of brokenness can come restoration and rejoicing.

Psalms 126 has the tension of both past tense and future tense; the writer remarks on what God has done – restoring the people of Israel from exile – and sheer joy that came from that knowledge. God didn't just use the people Israel in this restorative act. God used another nation to bring it about.

As expressed in verse two, God uses others to perform God's purposes, and in so doing spreads the knowledge of God's deeds. As a post-exilic work, this psalm gives way to a new need for restoration. The return of the exiled people had occurred, but the building back of what had been lost was yet to come.

As many know, water often represents life and abundance. Where there is water, there is life; there is agriculture, there is prosperity. The watercourses in the Negeb were the constancy of life. The psalmist is aware of the nature and importance of water, and this reference helps the hearers recall God's provision throughout the history of the Hebrew people. The psalmist prudently gives thanks for what God has done, and is certain of the provision that will come, "with shouts of joy."

1 Thessalonians 5:16–24 Paul gives us a best-of list. They are actions that should be reflected in our everyday lives so that our daily living may glorify God. The section begins with "rejoice always." In everything we do, we should rejoice in God and in that rejoicing all the practices listed will set us on our way to sanctification. John 1:6–8, 19–28 introduces John the baptizer. The writer of the fourth gospel wants to dispel any notion that John is somehow more important than the Messiah. He is a witness only, one who is preparing the way for the light by pointing to the Light. John draws on the words of Isaiah to refocus misconception of his messiahship and point to the Christ who is to come. In emphasizing the personhood of John, any reader can put themselves in place of John as the witness to the Light. We can all testify that we are

not the Light, and we can all testify to the Light.

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The readings in this third week of Advent live into the joy of God. Rejoicing in the therapeutic nature of God. Refocusing on the one who is to come. While readings from Isaiah and Psalms focus on the idea of restoring and rejoicing. The reading from the letter to the Thessalonians bridges this week's readings from the Hebrew scriptures to the gospel reading, as we look to refocus ourselves and the world around us on the coming Messiah

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Mission Focus: Bush Church Aid

A final message from Luke and Julia Collings ...

*Greetings (and farewell)
from Moranbah!*



The last six months have been a rollercoaster for us as we have been waiting to discern what God may desire of us for our next phase of ministry. After six years of service here in Moranbah, we knew that it was time for a change, for a variety of reasons. We wanted to stay in ministry in a regional area, and we wanted an opportunity to put into practice some of the many things that we have learned up here. So, as many of you are probably aware, in January 2024 we will commence a new ministry in Yass in the Diocese of Canberra & Goulburn. We are very excited by this opportunity, and a lot of our spare energy has been going towards the preparation for our move.

We are, of course, sad to be leaving Moranbah and the many friends we have made here. The town (and Central Queensland generally) will always have a special place in our hearts. That said, we are very thankful to God for the opportunities we have had to serve Him in this place and are looking forward to what is in store for us in the future.

The Moy family would like to thank everyone for their help, prayers and support with David Moy's funeral; the setting up, the flowers, the serving, and those that attended in person or online. David would have been pleased with the service and the team effort. Special thanks also to Rev'd Timothy and Rev'd Denis for all their support of the family during this difficult time .



For our Prayers

Prayer for the day

Eternal God, you sent John the Baptist to prepare the way for the coming of your Son: grant us wisdom to see your purpose and openness to hear your will, that we too may prepare the way for Christ who is coming in power and glory to establish his rule of peace and justice; through Jesus Christ our Judge and our Redeemer, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen

The World

Continue to pray for all those working for peace in both Israel-Gaza and Ukraine.

Anglican Communion

The Anglican Church of Papua New Guinea

The Diocese of the Northern Territory: †Greg Anderson; Clergy and People

The Parish of Samford: Robert Paget, Jan Crombie

St Francis College Formation students

The Southport School, Southport: Headmaster – Andrew Hawkins; Chaplain – John Dougherty; Chair of School Council – Fraser Perrin; members of School Council; staff & students

Our missionary partners

Bruce and Libby, serving with CMS in South Asia.

Our parish

Pray that many will come to our services over Christmas and hear the gospel message. Pray too for families travelling away this holiday season.

Local Schools & Colleges

Yeronga High, Mansfield High, Holland Park High, Mt Gravatt High, Brisbane State High

Those who are sick, frail or emotionally stressed

Ryan, Jocelyn Hawes, Peter F, Peter Pressdee, David F., Jan Moody, Robyn McEInea, June McNichol, Ash and Joh, Cathy, Janette Hagerty,

From the Parish Book of Remembrance

17 December: David Massey Cole; *18 December:* Aileen Scott Houston, Mavis Enid Retschlag; *19 December:* Thomas Bevan Bell, Shirley Muriel Croyden, Stewart Charles Croyden, Neil Eric Anthon; *20 December:* Marjorie Alice Elizabeth Abbott; *21 December:* Norman Donald McLean, Patricia Beames; *22 December:* John Edward Erickson, Geoffrey George Crittall; *23 December:* Kathleen Joan Williams.

CHRISTMAS AND EPIPHANY AT ST LUKE'S

Come let us adore Him

Christmas Eve, Sunday 24th December

9am Holy Communion for the 4th Sunday of Advent (also streamed on Zoom)

5pm Family service with nativity story and communion

11pm Holy Communion by candlelight (join us to sing carols from 10.30pm)

Christmas Day, Monday 25th December

9am Family Service with communion (also streamed on Zoom)

Sunday 31st December

9am Holy Communion for Epiphany (also streamed on Zoom)

Note: No 7am Service on 24th, 25th or 31st December

Judy Moy, David F, and Sharon went to Care force Inala (Inala Pantry) on Wednesday 13th December and delivered a bootfull of goods and cash donations to a value of in excess of \$775 .

Fr Jon was pleased to accept the donations during this busy time .

Services This Week:

Tuesday—Friday

6pm: Evening prayer on Zoom

Sunday 24th December

(Fourth Sunday of Advent)

9am: Holy Communion (St Lukes/
Zoom) *No Children's Church*

*Readings , 2 Samuel 7:1-11,16,20-24, Song of
Mary, Romans 16:25-27, Luke: 1:26-38*

Keep in touch:

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Parish Wardens:

Brian Wood (0466 656 149)

Alison Lampe (0408 183 701)

Lynn Mitchell (0409 150 861)

Offerings:

Bank details (internet banking):

Anglican Parish of Ekibin

A/C 0000 7820

BSB 704 901

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code to give
online:



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