

Christmas Events and Times

- Christmas Eve = Sun 24th Dec: 10am Service and 5pm Carols
- Christmas Day = Mon 25th Dec: **9am Carols and Communion**
- New Years Eve = Sun 31st Dec: 10am prayers
- January service times: 10am Sundays - no rostered duties

Parish day out at beach hosted by Hodgson Family: 13th Jan 2024

Working Bee 9am-12noon, Sat 20th Jan 2024

Resources for ministry

Giving can be made directly to our Bendigo Bank Warrandyte account
BSB: 633-000 Acct Number: 140334277.

Church Contact Details

Rev'd. Mark Hanson (Vicar) 0430 141 006

ph (general admin): 0491 185 983

email: ststephenswarrandyte@gmail.com

website: www.ststephenswarrandyte.org.au



*A welcoming Christ-centred community
seeking and working together
through the power of the Holy Spirit
to worship God, share His good news
and grow as disciples of Jesus*

Sunday 24th December 2023

Advent 4 : Love

Through Advent, we have enjoyed skilful liturgy as the great themes of God's gift of grace is uncovered. Our Christian message is hope, peace, joy and love. Thank you to Graham and Ellie who have worked hard to develop this picture. So this last Sunday we land on love.

There are many aspects of 'Love' and our single English word is hardly adequate to convey these meanings. At different points in history, different aspects of love have been more greatly valued; love of country which inspires patriotism, love of self which protects one's dignity, romantic love which leads to great deeds of heroism, love of friends which fosters generosity. These different kinds of love burn with greater or less ardour depending on the culture. What kind of love emanates from a God who, sufficient in himself, stoops to create so that love may abound?

The Bible tells us how God's has shaped humanity to become good companions. God made big promises to Abraham and his descendants, in ancient times. He exerted mighty powers to preserve his people (in the time of Moses) or to winnow and refine (in the time of conquest and exile). At the end of the Bible, it is revealed that God is shaping his people to become his eternal companion, like a bride for a husband. The middle and heart of the story is the gift of a Saviour, who builds us up in goodness as we follow him and who carries away our shortcomings. This is the quality of Christmas love.

1 If a child is in **immediate danger** at any point **CALL 000**

2 All suspicions or reports of child abuse must be reported to:

All suspicions or reports of child abuse must be reported to:	What is Child Abuse?	Who can report neglect and abuse of a child under the age of 18?	What sorts of things must be reported?
Police Child Protection Kooyoora Professional Standards	Abuse and neglect includes but is not limited to: Physical Abuse, Emotional Abuse, Family Violence, Sexual Abuse, Grooming and Neglect.	Children, Parents, Staff, Volunteers, Anyone.	All child safety concerns must be reported: • Disclosure of past and present abuse and harm • Allegations, suspicions or observations • Breaches of the Code of Conduct

CONTACT NUMBERS:

POLICE 000	CHILD PROTECTION SEE BELOW	KOYOORA PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS 1800 135 246
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Song for the Season

As we enter Advent and prepare ourselves for Christmas, our new song of the season reminds us that Jesus coming to earth is good news for all people. The song, *Go Tell it on the Mountain*, is an African-American spiritual based on Luke's record of Jesus' birth being announced to the shepherds. It draws on an image from the prophet Isaiah, who says, 'How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of the messenger who brings good news, the good news of peace and salvation, the news that the God of Israel reigns! (Isa 52:7 NLT). And it evokes the Great Commission of Matthew 28:18-20, in which Jesus authorizes his followers to go and teach his ways to all the world and gather people into God's family.

Jesus is God's good news to us! This season we celebrate together who he is and what he means for us all. Our song of the season inspires us to share with joy the good news about Jesus to everywhere to everyone.

Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere
Go, tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born

While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night
Behold throughout the heavens there shone a Holy light
Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere
Go, tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born

The shepherds feared and trembled when, lo! above the Earth
Rang out the angel chorus that hailed our Savior's birth
Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere
Go, tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born

Down in a lowly manger our humble Christ was born
And brought us all salvation that blessed Christmas morn
Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere
Go, tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!

2 Samuel 7: 1-14

When King David was settled in his palace and the Lord had given him rest from all the surrounding enemies, ²the king summoned Nathan the prophet. "Look," David said, "I am living in a beautiful cedar palace, but the Ark of God is out there in a tent!" ³Nathan replied to the king, "Go ahead and do whatever you have in mind, for the Lord is with you."

⁴But that same night the Lord said to Nathan, ⁵"Go and tell my servant David, 'This is what the Lord has declared: Are you the one to build a house for me to live in? ⁶I have never lived in a house, from the day I brought the Israelites out of Egypt until this very day. I have always moved from one place to another with a tent and a Tabernacle as my dwelling. ⁷Yet no matter where I have gone with the Israelites, I have never once complained to Israel's tribal leaders, the shepherds of my people Israel nor asked them, "Why haven't you built me a beautiful cedar house?"

⁸"Now go and say to my servant David, 'This is what the Lord of Heaven's Armies has declared: I took you from tending sheep in the pasture and selected you to be the leader of my people Israel. ⁹I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have destroyed all your enemies before your eyes. Now I will make your name as famous as anyone who has ever lived on the earth! ¹⁰And I will provide a homeland for my people Israel, planting them in a secure place where they will never be disturbed. Evil nations won't oppress them as they've done in the past, ¹¹starting from the time I appointed judges to rule my people Israel. And I will give you rest from all your enemies.

"Furthermore, the Lord declares that he will make a house for you—a dynasty of kings! ¹²For when you die and are buried with your ancestors, I will raise up one of your descendants, your own offspring, and I will make his kingdom strong. ¹³He is the one who will build a house—a temple—for my name. And I will secure his royal throne forever. ¹⁴I will be his father, and he will be my son. Your house and your kingdom will continue before me for all time, and your throne will be secure forever."

Matthew 1:18-24

This is how Jesus the Messiah was born. His mother, Mary, was engaged to be married to Joseph. But before the marriage took place, while she was still a virgin, she became pregnant through the power of the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹Joseph, to whom she was engaged, was a righteous man and did not want to disgrace her publicly, so he decided to break the engagement quietly.

²⁰As he considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. "Joseph, son of David," the angel said, "do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. For the child within her was conceived by the Holy Spirit. ²¹And she will have a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²²All of this occurred to fulfill the Lord's message through his prophet:

²³"Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel, which means 'God is with us.'" When Joseph woke up, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded and took Mary as his wife