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St. John's Parish Messenger

Monthly News from the Mother Church of Launceston, Tasmania

No. 232

DECEMBER, 1970

Rector:

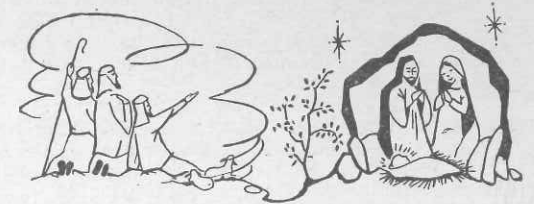
Rev. Hugh Girvan, S.B. St.J., Th.L., Dip. C.C.A.C.
Phone 2 3186

Parish Sister:

Miss Jenny Shaw, Th.A.

Organist:

Mr. Lindsay O'Neill,
F.R.C.O. (Ch.M.), A.R.C.M.
Phone 31 2998



CHRISTMAS AT ST. JOHN'S

CHRISTMAS EVE —

8.00 p.m. The Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols.

CHRISTMAS DAY —

6.00 a.m. Holy Communion.

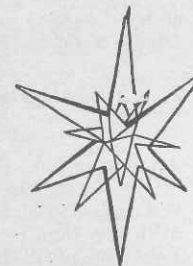
7.00 a.m. Holy Communion.

8.00 a.m. Holy Communion.

10.00 a.m. Holy Communion.

7.30 p.m. Evensong and Carols.

The Rector will be glad to administer Christmas Communion to any parishioners who are unable to attend the Church.



At this Christmas our wish for you is that —
God may bless you richly and give you a
Happy and Holy Christmas,
and may His presence go with you
into the New Year.

Hugh and Shirley Girvan,

The Churchwardens and Vestry

Ho hum — Christmas Bowl again!

You've heard about the Christmas Bowl every year since 1949.

What do you think about it?

Just one more appeal among many?

Quite a good thing if you have time for it?

Or a vital activity forced upon us by the reality of the Incarnation?

It is the main fund-raising and education programme of the Division of Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service of the Australian Council of Churches.

It provides help to mission and service programmes run by churches in Australia and overseas.

It helps dig wells, build irrigation systems, train farmers in crop management in the countries being helped.

It provides money and staff for education projects in developing countries, including school extension, teacher training, students' scholarships.

It provides support for Christian literature, evangelism, lay training, Christian education and theological training in the developing countries.

It helps churches to serve men, women and children who are suffering as a result of disasters.

The Church proclaims Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord by its words and deeds. The

Christmas Bowl helps it to do both. Dietrich Bonhoeffer said, "To provide the hungry man with bread is to prepare the way for the coming of grace."

Add the Christmas Bowl to your Christmas list now!

THE RECTOR'S LETTER

Dear Friends of St. John's,

When I wrote a letter for the "Messenger" last month I had no certainty in regard to the Reverend Murray Johnson's future. We both knew that after nearly three years in this parish it was time that he had further experience. We all now know that he has been instituted as Vicar of the parish of Buckland. Some of us were able to attend the service and represent this parish. It was not possible before Mr. Johnson left us to make a presentation to him, but at his welcome at Buckland I was able to present him with a communion set, given by friends at St. John's. His new work will be quite different to his experience here, and it will not be easy. I hope that you will remember him, his wife Dianne, and son Stewart, in your prayers.

The possibility of an assistant next year is not yet clear, but in the meantime an old friend of many parishioners, the Reverend Max Hughes, has offered to help me on Sundays. I am most grateful to him and I am sure that you will share my joy in having him with us.

As the wonderful season of Christmas approaches I hope that we will obey our Lord's command to love God and our neighbour in two very simple, yet meaningful ways.

Firstly, I hope that we will determine to worship God on Christmas day, and in an act of family worship take part in the Lord's service. Those with young children should not hesitate to bring them too, and allow them the privilege of joining their parents at the communion rail.

Secondly, I again draw your attention to the annual appeal for others through the Christmas Bowl. Don't offer to your neighbour what is left over, but budget before Christmas and make a gift that will be costly, even as the Wise Men so long ago.

We, at the Rectory, are looking forward to our first Christmas in Tasmania, and to the opportunity that January will bring to see something of the island. At the end of January I shall be taking Bible studies at Conference of Australian Deaconesses which will take place in Melbourne. Sister Shaw will be one of those attending. I do pray that you will have a blessed Christmas, and for those who then take a holiday that it will be a safe and restful time for you.

Yours sincerely,
HUGH GIRVAN.

CALENDAR FOR DECEMBER

- 1 Tuesday, Charles St. School Service.
- 2 Wednesday, 10.30 a.m. Holy Communion.
- 3 Thursday, 7.15 Kindergarten Christmas Prize Giving.
- 6 **Advent II**, 8.00 a.m. Holy Communion. 10 a.m. Broadland House School Service. 7.30 p.m. Evensong.
- 7 Monday, 7.30 p.m. Order of St. Luke in hall.
- 8 Tuesday, 2.15 p.m. Afternoon Tea for senior parishioners. 6 p.m. Men's Tea.
- 9 Wednesday, 10.00 a.m. Holy Communion. 7.30 p.m. Vestry.
- 10 Thursday, 8.00 p.m. Women's Guild Break-up.
- 13 **Advent III**, 8.00 a.m. Holy Communion. 10 a.m. Holy Communion. 7.30 p.m. Evensong.
- 16 Wednesday, 10.30 a.m. Holy Communion.
- 20 **Advent IV**, 8.00 a.m. Holy Communion. 10 a.m. Family Service, 7.30 p.m. Evensong.
- 23 Wednesday, 10.30 a.m. Holy Communion.
- 24 **Christmas Eve**, 8.00 p.m. Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols.
- 25 **Christmas Day**—See special notice.
- 27 **Christmas I**, 8.00 a.m. Holy Communion. 10 a.m. Mattins, 7.30 p.m. Evensong.
- 30 Wednesday, 10.30 a.m. Holy Communion.

AN APPRECIATION

Two extracts from a number of the letters received after our recent broadcast of "Community Hymn Singing".

From Victoria:

"What a wonderful programme it was too—really lovely singing and what a magnificent pipe organ, also the organist to go with it. Absolutely beautiful. Can't tell you how beautiful it all was. Congratulations."

From N.S.W.:

"The singing was excellent. Hymns well chosen. I am sure they made an impression on those listening. It reminds me of some of the better singing under Hugh Bancroft at St. Andrews Cathedral."

(Makes you wonder why so few of our own people seem to appreciate the excellency of the music at St. John's.)

ADVENT — THINK OVER THIS!

By far the best way to be ready for the Coming of Christ is to live with Him every day. If we do that, His Coming will be no shock to us; it will simply be the entry into the nearer presence of One with whom we have lived for long. The best way to prepare for the Coming of Christ is never to forget the presence of Christ.

Even if we have doubts and difficulties and questions about the physical Second Coming of Christ, this still remains true. For every man life will some day come to an end; God's summons comes to all to rise and to bid this world farewell. If we have never thought of God, and if Jesus has been but a dim and distant memory, seldom in our minds, that summons will be a summons to go out to meet a stranger and to voyage into the frightening unknown. But if all our days we have lived consciously in the presence of Christ, if day by day we have lived and talked and walked with God, then that summons will be a summons to come home and an entry into the nearer presence of God with the veil of sense and time for ever removed and taken away. It is the simple and obvious truth that a man's emotions at the end of life will depend entirely on how he lived life, for he will be going either to a God who is a stranger or to a God who is a Friend.

—Dr. W. Barclay: The Letters of John

WOMEN'S GUILD

The members of the Women's Guild have had a rather busy month, with two fund raising efforts being very successful. The profit from both functions totalling \$87.71 was most rewarding.

A donation of \$20 was forwarded to the Glenview Home for the Aged to help with the funds needed for the new public address system.

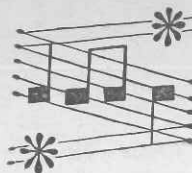
The Guild will once again be entertaining senior members of our parish at an afternoon tea on December 8th at 2 p.m.

All our senior parishioners are welcome to join us. There will not be a December meeting, Guild members will be having instead their Christmas party.

May we take this opportunity to wish one and all a very Happy Christmas, may God bless us all.

G.F.S.

G.F.S. members wish to thank all who helped to make the recent Annual G.F.S. Fair such a successful function. \$110.00 was raised for our Church Carpet Fund. G.F.S. (Townsend Members) will close their year early in December.



CHRISTMAS IS COMING

"Christmas comes but once a year, and when it comes it brings good cheer." So says the old rhyme, and naturally everyone tries at Christmas time to enjoy as much good cheer as he can. But not everyone realises the true and extraordinary story that lies behind Christmas. We may have a vague impression at the back of our minds of shepherds and angels and a star—like some kind of half-remembered fairy story of childhood, and with the passing of the years it has all become very beautiful and romantic.

Yet in reality, although it is a most wonderful fact of history, it was not at the time particularly beautiful. For when God decided to enter the stream of human history by becoming a human baby, He did not choose, as we might expect, to be born in a rich and privileged home. There were no priorities or special advantages for Him. He chose a peasant woman in humble circumstances.

There was no publicity and no fuss when he slipped like this into human life. It happened in a third-rate country some nineteen hundred years ago and very few people knew what was happening. It may look beautiful now on a Christmas card or in a religious picture, but there is not really anything lovely in hunting desperately for lodgings when your wife is pregnant and near her time. There is nothing romantic in having your first baby in a draughty cave because no one in the inn next door will give up their bed for you, and it isn't really much fun to put your baby to sleep in the cattle's feeding trough because there is nowhere else except the dirty floor. The historic fact, shorn of its romance and decoration, was rather ugly and squalid. It is not a pleasant thing for a mother to feel that the world has no room for her baby.

How it must have cheered Mary when the rough shepherds came bursting in, all breathless and excited, saying that they had a vision of angels up there on the hillside and had been told this little fellow was really God, and might they please kneel and give Him their presents! How the people snoring comfortably in the inn next door would have laughed to have seen the sight of those country bumpkins kneeling on the stable floor. It would have been as good as a play!

Yet that is how God made His entrance. If you can imagine the contrast between the splendours of heaven and the squalors of earth you cannot help admiring and loving a character who accepted no special advantages or defences, who lived life on the same terms as His creatures. That is the real Good Cheer of Christmas: that God is not an aloof Invisible Power, but One who actually took the risk of entering His own world.

Cutting out the sentimentality, the decoration and the commercial racket of Christmas time, the historic fact that we are celebrating is simple, but quite unforgettable once it gets under your skin. God became one of us that we might find the way to become something like Him.

—J. B. Phillips

10 A.M. SERVICES DURING DECEMBER

Please note the changed pattern which is for this month only—

- 6th Broadland Service.
- 13th Holy Communion.
- 20th Family Service.
- 27th Mattins.

PARISH MESSENGER

Donations to the Parish Messenger help us to defray the cost of printing, postage and distribution together with the "Church News". Donations may be given to the clergy or Church Wardens.

The following donations have been received: Mr. B. P. Gordon \$5.00, Anonymous \$2.00, Mrs. R. E. Gee \$2.00, Anonymous, 50c.
Thank you.

CHURCH FLOWER ROSTER — 1971

- 3rd January—Mrs. White.
- 10th January—Mrs. Watson.
- 17th January—Mrs. Swinnerton.
- 24th January—Mrs. Cornish.
- 31st January—Mrs. Robinson.
- 7th February—Mrs. Targett.
- 14th February—Mrs. Easther.
- 21st February—Mrs. Page.

CHAPEL

- 3rd January—Mrs. Crawford.
- 10th January—Mrs. Boyd.
- 17th January—Mrs. Smith.
- 24th January—Mrs. Grueber.
- 31st January—Mrs. Thompson.
- 7th February—Mrs. Watson (Jnr.)
- 14th February—Mrs. Higgins.
- 21st February—Mrs. Crawford.

HOLY BAPTISM

"Thine own by adoption"

Mark Leonard Wickham, Philippa-Lyn Harris, Andrew John Midson, Lisa Maree Donohue, Darren James Richards, Allison Maree Thomson, Naomie Jane Stevenson, Jason Brian Stevenson, Monica Jane Langridge, Josef Michael Holyman.

CONFIRMATION

"Bound to fulfil the Christian duties to which your Baptism hath pledged you."

Karen Frances Butler, Sandra June Hooper.

HOLY MATRIMONY

"Those whom God hath joined together"
Allan James McGrath-Kerr and Julie Beryl Price, Andrew Frank Jan Vodak and Merlene Elizabeth Bricknell, Paul Raymond Mansell and Margaret Hilda Stevenson, Robert Bruce Elwell and Jennifer Maree Ross, Christopher Ian Watts and Helen Anne Ford, Graeme Arthur Banfield and Helen Joyce Simons, David Richard Marston and Barbara Ellen Morice, Trevor Allan Davis and Denise Ann Trinder, Paul Philip Richardson and Maree Annette Rigby.

CHRISTIAN BURIAL

"I am the Resurrection and the Life"
Arthur Donald Whittle.