

# PARISH MESSENGER

FOR

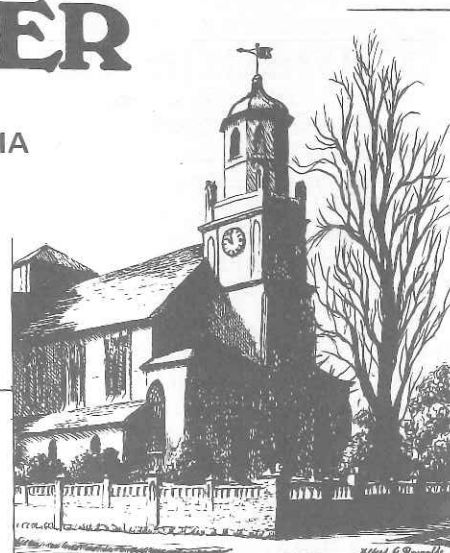
THE CHURCH OF ST. JOHN, LAUNCESTON, TASMANIA

(ANGLICAN)

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**Rector:** The Rev'd Ernest Horth, Th.L.  
(Telephone: 31 5218)  
**Assistant:** The Rev'd Robert McKay, B.V.Sc., Th.Dip.  
(Telephone: 31 4896)  
**Organist:** Mr. William Pierce B.A. (Syd.), F.R.C.O., F.T.C.L., L.Mus.A.  
(Telephone 31 1676)  
**Office Secretaries:** Mrs. J. Ikin; Mrs. J. Kilby.



## Christmas

The very familiarity of the stories of the birth of Jesus makes the preparation of a Christmas sermon unusually difficult. From the very first sentence one's mind is guided into a path so well-known that all too easily one fails to notice anything new. The well-worn words induce a vague but extraordinary pleasant "Christmassy" feeling. One finds oneself slipping into a dream world, quite remote from the world of everyday. Yet the most remarkable feature of Luke's story is its juxtaposition of the everyday and the extraordinary, of earth and heaven: on the one hand, a mother giving birth to a baby in a stable, his first visitors shepherds from the hillsides; on the other, the angel, the glory of the Lord, the multitude of the heavenly host. It is as if Luke were declaring, with the utmost possible emphasis: "Into this world, this world of everyday, came God." And into the same world He comes still through the Spirit.

Dr. M Watson

### SUNDAY SERVICES

Holy Communion: 8 a.m. Every Sunday; 10 a.m. 1st, 3rd and 5th Sunday; 7.30 p.m. 2nd and 4th Sunday.

Family Service: 10 a.m. 2nd Sunday. Morning Prayer: 10 a.m. 4th Sunday.

Evening Prayer: 7.30 p.m. 1st, 3rd and 5th Sunday.

(Laying on of Hands — 7.30 p.m. 4th Sunday).

### WEEKDAYS

7.30 a.m. Monday to Friday. Holy Communion: 10.30 a.m. Wednesday.

# Someone turned the light on

Some years ago an American news magazine printed an article on Christmas in Japan. The celebration seemed very familiar. Holidays, office parties, the exchange of gifts, and entertainment of friends were said to be the constituents for the Japanese festivities.

The story was told with a note of contradiction, even irony. In a country where the Christian church was a tiny minority, the birth of Jesus had, in an indirect way, given rise to a festive season.

But how different is Christmas in Australia? Parties and presents, drinks and dinners make up Australia's Christmas.

For the Christian community, Christmas is still the celebration of the birthday of Jesus. The Christian Christmas finds its centre in the parish church as Christians meet together in gratitude and celebration.



Yet we are all caught up in the world's Christmas, whether in Tokyo or Sydney. When Christmas Day comes it is hard to remember what it is about.

When we think where Christmas began, we find ourselves in a world where celebration was far from being the major note. The Christmas announcement is one of good tidings of great joy, but into what kind of world did that good news come?

St Matthew and St Luke give us the story of the beginnings of Christmas - a world of absolute authoritarian governments, compelling young families and pregnant women to undertake the uncertainties of travel for an uncomputerized census. A world of tyranny and brutal atrocity as babies were slaughtered to prevent any alternative political leadership arising. A world of refugees driven by fear into the hazards of travel and exile in a foreign land. A world of violence, injustice, terror and homelessness. Such was the world to which the glad tidings came.

St John has no Christmas story as we know it. What he has to say in a very simple sentence: "Light shone in darkness. The darkness did not overcome it." The darkness of that world continues. The Herods and the Caesars and the refugees are part of every age. Judaea one century, Uganda another. The Herods and the Idi Amins of history have the same face. The real world of the first Christmas is closer to the headlines of the newspapers and the television news than we care to think.

But other things are permanent too. Light shone in darkness, the darkness did not overcome it. God came into man's world, lived and died here, and changed it forever. The light has not, and shall never be, put out.

Darkness continues, but the light shines on. In the end the light will complete the Easter victory, and the darkness will be extinguished forever. Light continues. Darkness will pass.

As we come to this Christmas and the presents and the parties, what will fill our heart on Christmas Day?

Light has come and the light will triumph - Christ has come and Christ rules.

Christmas is and must be, preceded by Advent, when we look forward to Christ's coming in power and the dispelling of darkness forever. In the note of triumph and light is the meaning of Christmas. Christ's coming and Christ's triumph are the thoughts which must be at the centre, as we celebrate this Christmas. To do otherwise is to keep the wrapping paper and to throw the presents out!

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**"THE MESSIAH"**  
 by  
 G. F. Handel  
 Friday, 10th December, 1982  
 8.00 p.m.  
 in St. John's Church  
 by  
**The Launceston Philharmonic Society**  
 Admission by programme through members and at the door - Students and pensioners \$2.00; Adults \$6.00; Family \$15.00.

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### WOMEN'S GUILD

At our last Guild evening Mrs. Ward showed her beautiful selection of slides on lilioms and English gardens. There were 22 members present. This was our last meeting for the year, culminating a happy year of fellowship, interesting speakers and fund-raising. We look to the future with enthusiasm.

Would Guild ladies please note the following dates - December 9th at 7 p.m., our Christmas Dinner. Sunday 12th December at 12 noon, the Thanksgiving Luncheon. First meeting for 1983 is 10th February, commencing with Holy Communion in the Chapel. Supper hostesses - Mesdames Cornish, Holyman and Peck.

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### CHRISTIAN RADIO

F.M. STEREO - 106.5 MHz  
 Tune in! - You will enjoy it!  
 Monday 13 December/  
 Sunday 19 December  
 6.30 a.m. till 11 p.m. daily  
 TEST TRANSMISSION

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### SUNDAY SCHOOL

Kindergarten Christmas Evening  
 7.15 p.m. 16th December  
 Reconnence - Sunday, 20th February, 1983

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There will be no weekday services during January except for -  
 10.30 a.m. Holy Communion each Wednesday.

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THE  
RECTOR'S  
LETTER



Dear friends,

The Collect for the Sunday Before Advent is one which should be in constant use throughout the year. Because of false security and comfortable sameness any individual or congregation is in danger of inactivity or uselessness. Sometimes the activity is deadening in itself because of self-centredness and lack of vision. We live in a world crying out for the liberating gospel of Jesus Christ. Poverty, sickness, unemployment and anger surround us at every turn. Those suffering such agony look at the Christian Church and are generally not very impressed with what they see, feel or hear. Alas, all too often we are too busy fighting among ourselves to be concerned for the needs of others.

Jesus Christ came to set us free, free to be His witnesses in whatever circumstances we might find ourselves. He is the One who frees us from the power of Satan. Jesus is the One who died for us so we could find in Him freedom from God's anger because of our sin, freedom from our guilt, and freedom to be able to praise and serve Him. Jesus also gives us life through His Holy Spirit so when temptation to sin comes, we have victory in the power of His Name.

A dead congregation only has itself to blame. Jesus brings life and peace. If that life and peace is missing it is time for us to pray the Holy Spirit to convict us of our selfishness and sin. It is time to pray for the Holy Spirit to reveal Jesus afresh to us, and for the Holy Spirit to turn us again so we will confess, seek forgiveness and spiritual renewal. When we resist His life-changing power, dullness and deadness take over. Where the Spirit of the Lord is permitted to move, new life and vitality become increasingly evident.

"Stir up, Lord the wills of your faithful people, that they may produce abundantly the fruit of good works, and receive your abundant reward, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

May you, this Christmas, find in Jesus Christ the depth and reality of "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favour rests." St. Luke Chapter 2, verse 14.

And may we all share in the words of Isaiah Chapter 2 verse 3

"Come, let us go up to the mountain of the lord, to the house of the God of Jacob: that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths."

From all at the Rectory and the Parish Staff,

A Holy and Joyous Christmas in renewed relationships with Jesus, the Lord.

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SCRIPTURE UNION OF TASMANIA

The Annual Vestry allocations include support from St. John's for this agency. Mr. David Reeve is the Tasmanian Director.

Ministry through Scripture Union includes Bible reading resource materials and Sunday School curriculum. The agency sponsors Family Missions and holiday camps, primary school groups and inter-school fellowships. These are just a few of the activities.

As a congregation we are giving particular support to Lorraine Heazlewood and Peter Grant, two staff members of the Scripture Union. They are involved in strategic ministry with children in schools. Monetary gifts to their project are tax deductible and they would be very grateful for your support and prayers (c/o Scripture Union of Tasmania, 7 Cypress street, Launceston. 7250).

Reflections

CHRISTMAS MEANS LOVE

It was Christmas, 1944, and a group of German prisoners were clustered in a chilly outhouse watching a young mother binding the foot of her child.

"Her husband has been killed, and she expects a child within the hour," an older woman told a British officer who looked in.

At midnight British soldiers heard the tiny wail of the newborn child. At once they collected among themselves and sent a money gift into the mother. The German soldiers collected too, and Heinrich gave his fine, gold cross that had been in the family for years.

The older woman watching said: "Wise men brought gifts for the Baby, so why not these men too?"

In war-torn Europe the true meaning of Christmas shone as brightly as the Bethlehem Star when German and British soldiers joined in an act of compassion that triumphed over hate and enmity.

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CHRISTMAS SERVICES

**Christmas Eve**  
8.00 p.m. Nine Lessons and Carols.  
11.30 p.m. Midnight-Holy Communion.

**Christmas Day**  
8.00 a.m. Holy Communion.  
10.00 a.m. Holy Communion.

HELP



RESTORE THE BALANCE



GIVE TO THE  
CHRISTMAS BOWL

AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

MOTHERS' UNION

Members and guests enjoyed a pleasant Christmas break-up at our November meeting, following a service of Holy Communion in the Chapel. The Parish Centre was decorated with a Christmas theme, and we were entertained with duets of carols and inspirational songs from Jenny Gill and Jan McKay, and piano duets from Grace and Lorraine Watson. We enjoyed singing carols and playing Christmas games together, before finishing the evening with a festive supper.

Our thanks go to all who made our break-up evening so enjoyable, and to the Rev'd Ernest Horth for celebrating Communion with us.

Our first meeting in 1983 will be on Tuesday, 15th February at 7.45 pm, when we hope to have a guest speaker from the City Mission to talk to us about the Family Life Movement.

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PARISH CAMP - 1983

Put aside the weekend of May 6th/8th 1983 and plan to spend it with the Parish Family at the C.Y.C. Camp at Ulverstone.

There will be activities and programmes for adults and children and we hope that many parishioners will attend; . . . singles youth, family groups . . . everyone is welcome.

Watch for details concerning: -

- \* The camp leaders and organisers.
\* The cost. A "Camp Club" will be started in January to enable people to put aside their money towards their camp fees.
\* The various jobs which will need to be done. Perhaps YOU have the talent to do some of these.

Support - Help - Attend - Enjoy
This is a Parish Family Experience

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NO ROSTER Required for Sunday, 12 December owing to the Thanksgiving Service that day.

ROSTER FOR JANUARY 9th

M. Brain, H. Bourke, D. Gill, M. Willson, S. Murray, V. Murgatroyd, M. McMahon, B. Easther, B. Donaldson, K. Lillico.

If you find you cannot attend on your rostered day, please contact us so we can make other arrangements - tel: 28 1358

Lesley and Michael Perkins.

FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS

Baptisms

7th November - Courtney John Franklin
14th November - Kristy Lee Richardson
21st November - Stephanie Jane Peck

Marriages

6th November - Michael David Allen to Karen Maree Crooks
6th November - Michael John Mace to Gail Andrea Marquis
6th November - Robert Maxwell Jordan to Karen Louise Davis
13th November - Peter Ellis Morice to Jeanette Irene Quill
20th November - Glenn Douglas Ringrose to Lindy Joy Bird

Deaths

28th October - Gerald Dutton
3rd November - Elvie Jean Croft
17th November - Violet Amelia Maumill
18th November - Blanche Isobel Atkins

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PRAYERS FOR THE PARISH

Sunday at 7.40 and 9.30 a.m.
LOCATION: Old Vestry
All parishioners welcome.

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Christmas word search

FIND THE WORDS

Hidden in the diagram below are 45 words and phrases from the Christmas story (Luke 2: 1-20) in the Good News Bible. Can you find them all? The words are formed forwards, backwards, up, down and diagonally, but they are always in a straight line and no letters are skipped. You will not, however, use all the letters in the diagram. Circle each word as you find it, and cross it out on the word list. Afterwards, read Luke 2: 1-20, to see how they all fit into the story.

- Achaicus Junias Phlegon
Ampliatius Linus Phoebe
Andronicus Lucius Priscilla
Apelles Luke Pudens
Apollos Mark Quartus
Apphia Mary Rufus
Aquila Nereus Silas
Archippus Nympha Sospater
Aristarchus Olympas Stachys
Artemas Onesimus Stephanas
Asyncritus Patrobas Tertius
Carpus Persis Timothy
Claudia Philemon Titus
Crescens Philolugus
Demas

Epaenetus AMAZEDAANGELDBEWDP
Epaphras GLORYCPREGNANTRRRD
Erastus OFDESCENDANTNAOOIG
Eubulus VAIRYS AVI OURPLMVG Y
Fortunatus EHNI RNCRJ LOPEI AKLO
Gaius RMNHAIEMOBEHSDNPOJ
Hermas NHPPMGOQNDTEGPEQRT
OETEIHNSUTDNDDEMRYA
RAUSRTESIIEDSPGTE
NVT OFOAIHKRTVDINOR
OEMJLWRXAEHIZLRIGG
RNEUOHTABGPYBEEGOA
OBHDCFHMUAOHIICDNL
MNLES MHMPDUYNROSAL
KOHAE TEENOHSNTDQRE
USTRIPSOFCLOTHOSFE
HTERAZANSCENSUSWAT
ZENAS LWBIRTHGOODBEWSRN V