

Surfcoast Uniting Churches Newsletter

For assistance, please contact :
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Sunday 17th December 2023

We acknowledge that we meet and worship on the land of the Wadawurrung people and pay our respects to their elders past and present.

Find out more at www.wadawurrung.org.au.

Lectionary readings : ADVENT 3: Isaiah 61:1-4,8-11, Psalm 126, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24, John 1: 6-8,19-28

Our Christmas Bowl news. Donations gratefully received weekly, on line or on Christmas Day.

Joy is the theme of the Third Sunday in Advent. However, joy seems to be in short supply in many parts of the world. There is little joy for the many people who are now refugees who have fled from their countries which have been rent by civil war and communal violence.

Consequently, the needs of refugees, many of whom are living in difficult conditions in overcrowded camps, revolve around food, medical care and meaningful employment. Helping meeting these needs has become a focus for this year's Christmas Bowl Appeal.

Projects and aid provided through local churches, and supported by the Christmas Bowl, can help encourage people to find joy even if times are difficult.

Envelopes are available both at the church and inserted in the December issue of Crosslight.

Do take an envelope and you may make your gift at any time, or put something aside regularly to make a special offering on Christmas Day. You can also pass on an envelope to a friend.

May we continue to generously support this appeal as we have done in the past.

Third Sunday of Advent



Ben, Littlejohn/Act for Peace

Finding Joy in resilience

Twelve long years have passed since Rima* and her family fled their beloved home in Syria as the devastating civil war unfolded. Forced to leave everything behind, they sought refuge in Jordan, carrying with them only the essentials. With your kind gift to the Christmas Bowl, you can support Act for Peace's local partner, the Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees, continue to provide vital food packages, hygiene kits, and the long-term support that refugees need to rebuild their lives. **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



Christmas Bowl

Sunday 17th Dec.

ADVENT 3

¹The Good News of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, ²begins with the words of the early preachers: "Listen! I will send My helper to carry the news ahead of you. He will make the way ready. ³His voice calls out in the desert, 'Make the way ready for the Lord. Make the road straight for Him!'

Mark 1. New Life Version

PEACE

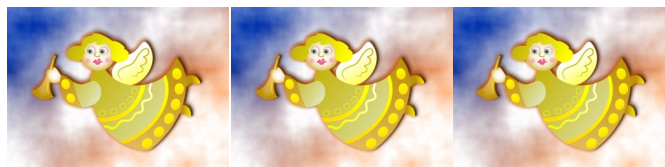


Our Christmas Services on the Surfcoast

**Thursday 21st at Oak Tree Place
Christmas Lunch @ Noon**

**Sunday 24th
Usual Services in the morning
And 10.30pm at Bellbrae Christmas Eve**

**Monday 25th
Christmas Day Service.
9.30am at Airey's Inlet and Torquay**



Sunday 17th December: Advent 3

Torquay 9.30am Brian Shaw
 Bellbrae 11am Rev Bob Thomas
 Aireys Inlet 9.30am Rev Bob Thomas

**Extra Christmas Services**

24th: Bellbrae 10.30pm
25th: Aireys Inlet & Torquay at

Sunday 24th December : Advent 4

Torquay 9.30am Rev Bob Thomas
 Bellbrae 11am Michele Hardy
 Aireys Inlet 9.30am Worship Team

December Dates:

- **Bellbrae Op shop** closes from Sat 16th December, OPENS on Fri 5th Jan.
- Torquay Cowrie market on Sunday 17th
- **Thursday 21st December: Christmas Lunch for Everyone** at Oak Tree Place. Bring a neighbour, friend or family. Roast veggies, Plum Pudding, Punch & Carols. Good food, new friends Time to stop and enjoy.
It's free to attend but please RSVP to Tricia, Jane or Robyn.

January Dates:

- Cottage By The Sea Annual Fete: Saturday 13th January Always a winner!
- Cowrie market at Torquay Esplanade: Sunday 21st January

Regular Weekly activities include:

Thursdays at 10.30am Coffee at BOMBORAS on the Torquay Esplanade.
 Beaut Beans—10:30am Tuesdays in Torquay church foyer
 Coffee & Kids—9.30am every Friday during Term. @ Oak Tree Place
 Bellbrae Opshop & Bookroom open every Friday & Saturday from 10 to 4pm.

Regular Monthly activities include:

Pub Lunch at Aireys—Noon, first Friday of the month
 Aged Care Service 2pm at Elouera, - First Thursday

Many of these activities will be taking a break for a few weeks during late December & January.

**Surf Coast Churches Christmas Lunch.**

Thursday Dec 21st @ 12:00 noon in Oak Tree Place.

Come and join together and celebrate the coming of Christmas with a **free** delicious lunch of Roast chicken, veggies, gravy, Christmas pudding (or fruit salad) and all trimmings.

And a few of your favourite carols to sing along too

Everyone is invited.. Bring a friend

We are inviting all the tenants of Oak Tree Place too.

RSVP to this email or to Robyn Harper.



And a bit of research to encourage your attendance: A 20 year research project from Harvard Graduate School showed that gathering together for a meal helps improve the physical and mental health for all family members and friends involved. To quote "...those who eat socially more often feel happier and are more satisfied with life, are more trusting of others, are more engaged with their local communities and have more support when needed."

Uniting Christmas Shelves/ Torquay Food Aid

Our Christmas tree in Oak Tree Place was full of donations this week **THANK YOU!** Those items have been delivered to Uniting for Hampers. The last delivery will be Monday 18th. Small toiletries, Packed biscuits, chocolates and cans and packets of festive food are all welcome. Many thanks.

Come & Share an Advent Study.

Join in the last two Advent studies by Stephen Cottrell entitled, "Walking Backward to Christmas". It offers a fresh perspective on the Christmas story. All are welcome to join in. We look forward to welcoming you, 10:30 AM, on Thursday mornings at Aireys Inlet. Dec, 14 & 21.

Notes from our Congregations:

Aireys Inlet members encourage you to attend the stimulating series of Advent studies on Thursday mornings. Details above...

Bellbrae members are thrilled with the new roof for the Opshop. No more leaks!

And—if you enjoyed the Taizé Service at Bellbrae last week, you may enjoy checking out the *Taizé in Melbourne* facebook page or You Tube channel.

Torquay members remember to bring a special bauble for our stick tree. Pop it on a branch before the service.

N.B. Our Coffee Cup Challenge has raised over \$450 for Uniting so far...

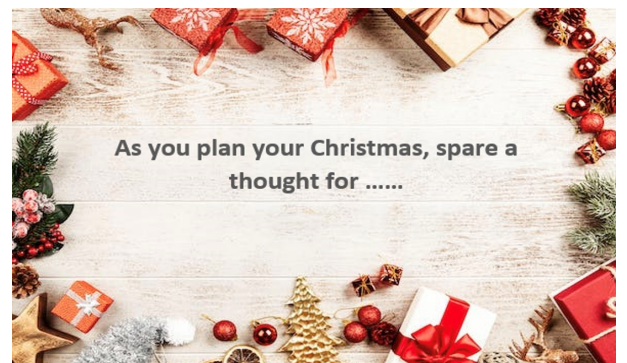


LUKE 1: [39] In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a city of Judah, **[40]** and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. **[41]** And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit **[42]** and she exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!"



Please note—the Surfcoast Newsletter Team will take a break over January. Next week's edition will have a full list of all the January Services to pop on your fridge!

Stay well, stay cool, stay connected to each other.



Deadline for items for our newsletter to be sent to newslettersurfcoastuc@gmail.com by 4pm on Thursday of each week

Airey's Inlet St Aidan's Church, 29 Great Ocean Rd, Airey's Sunday Service at 9.30am
Bellbrae: Uniting Church. School & Anglesea Roads, Bellbrae Sunday Service at 11.00am
Torquay: Torquay Uniting Church, 27 Anderson Street, Torquay Sunday Service at 9.30am

BELLBRAE BRIC-A-BRAC OP SHOP & BOOK ROOM : Uniting Church Hall, School Road. Bellbrae
 Open Fridays and Saturdays 10am to 4pm.

Your Offering for our churches, programs and outreach is very welcome.
 Direct Deposit or Cash

BSB:083 929 ACC: 93009 8403
 Quote TQ, AI or BB