



Anglican Church of Australia

Diocese of Melbourne

ST BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH

**PARISH OF BURNLEY**

ph: 9943 8442

stbartsburnley 'at' gmail.com

[www.stbartsburnley.org.au](http://www.stbartsburnley.org.au)

## **Worship Bulletin**



### **Fourth Sunday of Advent**

### **18<sup>th</sup> December 2022**

### **10.00am Sung Mass**

**Welcome to St Bart's!**

*We are an inner-city Anglican church in the progressive catholic tradition welcoming people of any race, language, culture, age, ability, gender or sexual orientation.*



*We recognize and give honour to the first peoples of Australia, and especially of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nations, past, present, and emerging, the traditional custodians of the land on which this parish has its mission and ministry.*

## ST BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH, BURNLEY

### Our Vision

To live as citizens of, and invite others into, God's Kingdom.

### Our Mission

The Mission of St Bartholomew's Anglican Church, Burnley, is to be a community who values the blessings and trust in the promises of God's Kingdom within the cultural and social context of Richmond, Melbourne:

- To live humbly before God and with all people
- To be dependent on God's comfort
- To be gentle with people and all Creation
- To hunger and thirst for the right ways of God
- To show mercy and compassion toward others
- To live with purity in motive and deed
- To be passionate for peace
- To persevere in the face of opposition

*Based on the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-10) Adopted by the 2015 Annual Meeting*

### CHILD SAFETY COMMITMENT

*St Bartholomew's Anglican Church, Burnley commits to meeting all of the standards of the Child Safety Code of Conduct of the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne, and the Victorian Government's mandatory Child Safe Standards (Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Act 2015, Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Oversight and Enforcement of Child Safe Standards) Act 2016). The parish community seeks to promote the cultural safety of all children, including Aboriginal children, who come to us from a culturally or linguistically diverse background. We also seek to ensure the safety of any child with a disability. The parish community affirms that all children who come to St Bartholomew's have a right to feel and be safe. We are committed to ensuring that children's best interests are met within our parish. We have zero tolerance towards child abuse. The parish community actively works to listen to and empower children within our community.*

*Facilities including disabled and baby change room are located in the front entrance of the main hall. Enter via the main door of the hall. For all able access see welcomer.*



*If you want to ensure regular giving to St Bart's, but find you never have the right amount in cash, or are sometimes unable to attend on Sundays, then*

**St Bart's Direct Transfer** may work for you.

**Account Name:** St Bartholomew's Anglican Church Burnley

**BSB:** 703 122

**Account Number:** 05009430

*As a reference you can use your own name, or you can use 'Offering' & your name will remain anonymous with your personal details not appearing on the St Bart's bank statement.*

## 10:00am SUNG MASS

<b>Presider:</b>	Rev James Brady
<b>Deacon &amp; Preacher:</b>	Rev Graeme Brennan
<b>Sub-Deacon:</b>	Dr Muriel Porter
<b>Organist:</b>	Linda Kent
<b>Cantor:</b>	Garry Warne
<b>Mass Setting:</b>	Christ Church Mass – Philip Matthias

## GATHERING

**Choral Introit:** I look from afar

Palestrina, arr. Richard Shephard

*The Introit is sung as the Sacred Ministers enter to commence the liturgy.*

**Hymn** (AM 35) Fling wide the gates

*(Tune: Crucifer)*

## INVOCATION & GREETING

✠ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

## SENTENCE

A virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel: God with us. Matthew 1.23

## LIGHTING OF THE CANDLE

Jesus, light of the world, you come from the family of David, the ancient king of your people.

**Be our king too: a king who is fair, a king who is peaceful. Amen.**

## ADVENT WREATH ANTHEM

### ADVENT CANDLES TELL THEIR STORY (AM 26)

**Mary's gift beyond all telling we recall today:**

**Son of God within her dwelling, born to show the way.**

**Who could guess the final story?**

**– Cross and glory: Easter Day!**

## INVITATION TO CONFESSION

*As we prepare to celebrate these sacred mysteries, let us call to mind our sins.*

## CONFESSION

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith, confident in God's forgiveness.

**Merciful God, our maker and our judge, we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, and in what we have failed to do: we have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves; we repent and are sorry for all our sins. Father, forgive us. Strengthen us to love and obey you in newness of life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## ABSOLUTION

Almighty God, who has promised forgiveness to all who turn to him in faith: ✠ pardon you and set you free from all your sins, Confirm and strengthen you in all goodness and keep you in eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## COLLECT

Gracious God, you chose the Virgin Mary, by your grace, to be the mother of our Lord and Saviour: so fill us with your grace, that with her we may rejoice in your salvation, and in all things embrace your will; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

# THE WORD

## FIRST READING

Isaiah 7: 10 – 14

*Look, the virgin is with child.*

A Reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah.

The Lord spoke to Ahaz, "Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven." But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test." Then Isaiah said: "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel."

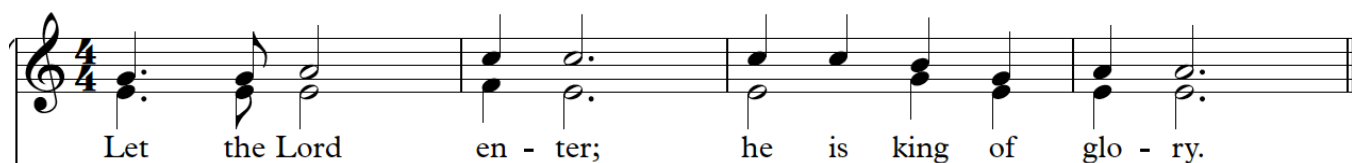
Hear the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Ps 24: 1 – 6

*Response*



The Lord's is the earth and its fullness, the world and all its peoples.  
It is he who set it on the seas; on the waters he made it firm. *R/-*

Who shall climb the mountain of the Lord? Who shall stand in his holy place? The man with clean hands and pure heart, who desires not worthless things. *R/-*

He shall receive blessings from the Lord and reward from the God who saves him. Such are the men who seek him, seek the face of the God of Jacob. *R/-*

## SECOND READING

Romans 1: 1 – 7

*Jesus Christ, descended from David, was declared to be the Son of God.*

A Reading from the Letter of Paul to the Romans.

From Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the Gospel of God, which God promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures: the Gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be



Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by Resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord. Through Christ we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for the sake of his name, including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ. To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Hear the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (AM 374)



*A virgin will give birth to a son; his name will be Emmanuel: God is with us.*



### GOSPEL

### Matthew 1: 18 – 24

*Jesus was born of Mary, who was engaged to Joseph, son of David.*

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

✠ A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

**Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

The birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are

to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

## SERMON

Fr Graeme Brennan

## THE CREED

Let us together affirm the faith of the Church.

**We believe in one God, the Father, the almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the Resurrection of the dead, and the ✕ life of the world to come. Amen.**

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Let us pray for all people and for the Church throughout the world.

Almighty God, your Son Jesus Christ has promised that you will hear us when we ask in faith: receive the prayers we offer:

*After each petition:*

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

*And at the end:*

✠ Rest eternal grant to them, O Lord:

**And let light perpetual shine upon them.**

Almighty God, you have promised to hear our prayers.

**Grant that what we have asked in faith we may by your grace receive, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## THE PEACE (*Stand*)

We are the Body of Christ.

**His Spirit is with us.**

The Peace of the Lord be always with you  
**and also with you.**

*The Peace is shared*

*Notices and announcements*

## THE SACRAMENT

**Offertory** (AM 34) Earth was waiting, spent and restless  
(*Tune: Picardy*)

*During the Offertory Hymn the altar is prepared. Gifts of bread, wine and the collection are gathered and brought to the front of the church. At the end of the hymn, the celebrant invites all present to prayer.*



## PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS

Lord God, by this holy exchange of gifts, you share with us your divine life. Grant that everything we do may be directed by the knowledge of your truth, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**Amen.**

## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

All glory and honour, be yours now and always, mighty Creator, everliving God. We give you thanks and praise for your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, who was looked for by the prophets, heralded by the Baptist, announced by an angel, born of the Virgin Mary, and revealed at last to men and women of every race. By his death on the cross and rising to new life, he offered the one true sacrifice for sin and obtained an eternal deliverance for his people. Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we proclaim your great and glorious name, for ever praising you and saying:

Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Ho - ly Lord,

God of pow'r and might, Heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry, Ho -

-san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who

comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

And now, Father, we pray that we who receive these your gifts of bread and wine according to our Saviour's word may be partakers of his Body and Blood.

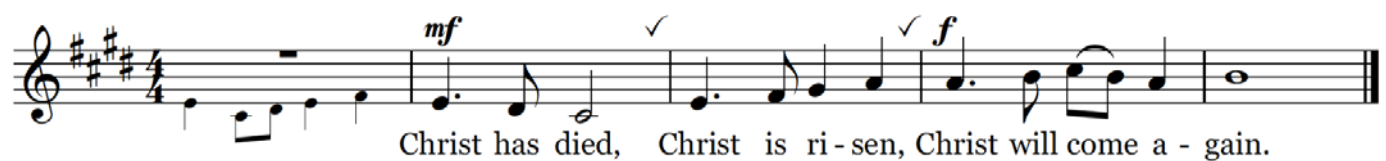
*The Celebrant takes the bread in his hands and says:*

For on the night he was betrayed he took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, his almighty Father, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, 'TAKE, EAT. THIS IS MY BODY WHICH IS GIVEN FOR YOU. DO THIS IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME.'

*The Celebrant takes the cup in his hands and says:*

After supper, he took the cup and again giving you thanks he gave it to his disciples, saying, 'DRINK FROM THIS ALL OF YOU. THIS IS MY BLOOD OF THE NEW COVENANT WHICH IS SHED FOR YOU AND FOR MANY FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS. DO THIS, AS OFTEN AS YOU DRINK IT, IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME.'

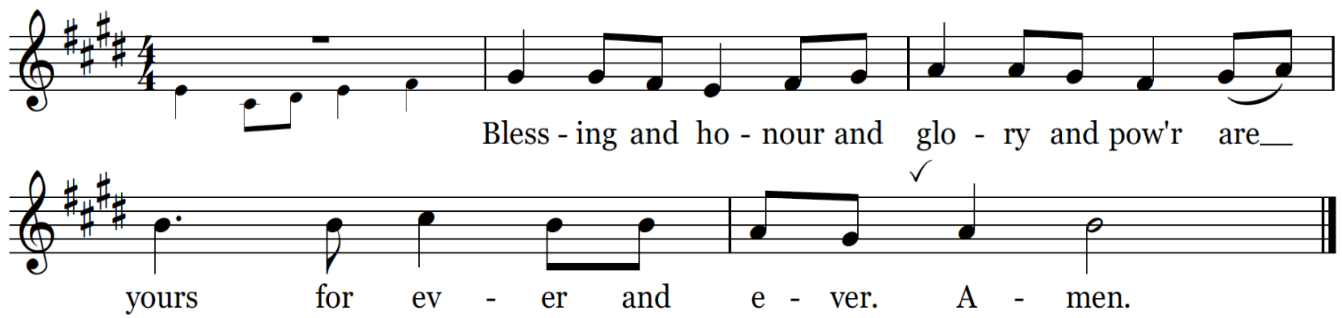
Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:



Therefore, in obedience to his command, we commemorate and celebrate his saving passion and death, his mighty Resurrection and Ascension into heaven and we eagerly await his coming again in glory.

We thank you that by your grace alone, you have accepted us in Christ; and here we offer you a spiritual sacrifice, holy and acceptable in your sight. Through Christ, receive this our duty and service, and grant that we who eat and drink these holy gifts may, by your Holy Spirit, be one body in Christ, and serve you in unity and peace.

In your grace and mercy, bring us to the joy of your eternal kingdom with all the company of the redeemed. May we praise you in union with them, and give you glory, through your Son, Jesus Christ. Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, we worship you, Father eternal, in songs of never-ending praise:



## RITE OF HOLY COMMUNION

### THE LORD'S PRAYER

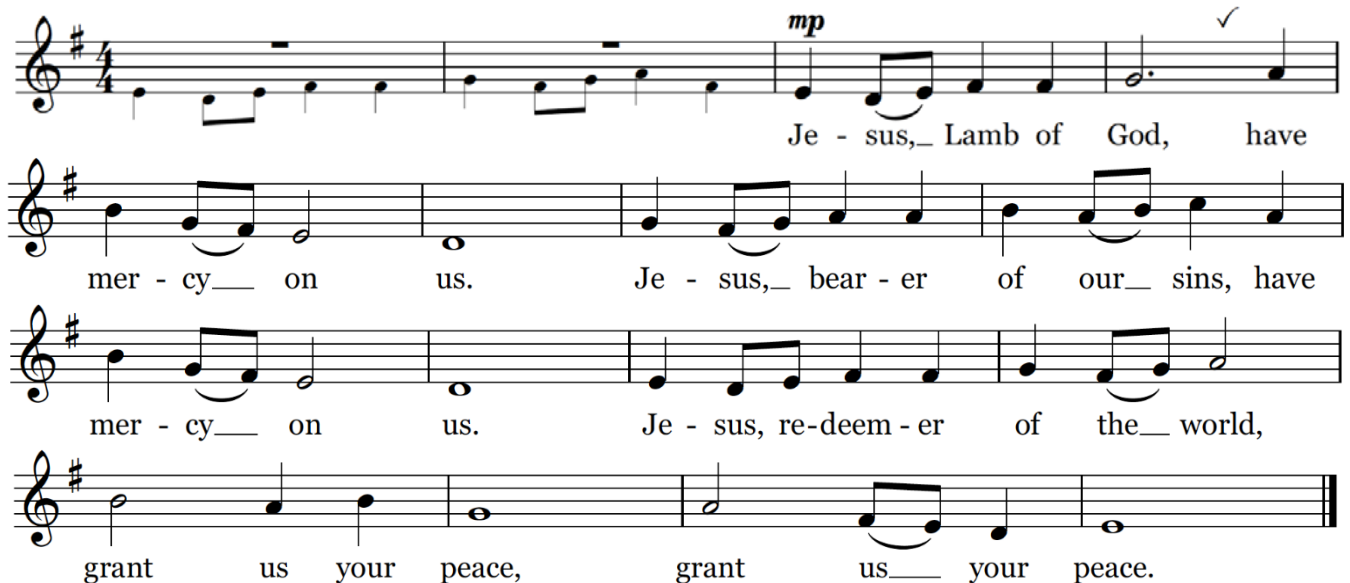
As our Saviour has taught us, we are confident to pray:

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

### FRACTION

We who are many are one body in Christ,  
**for we all share in the one bread.**

### FRACTION ANTHEM



## THE INVITATION TO HOLY COMMUNION

✠ This is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. Happy are those who are called to his supper.

**Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word, and I shall be healed.**

*Holy Communion is administered with these or similar words:*

The Body / Blood of Christ. **Amen.**

*All communicant members of any Christian Church are invited to receive the Sacrament. All others are very welcome to come forward for a blessing.*

## COMMUNION SENTENCE

Behold, a young woman shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel' <sup>Isaiah 7.14</sup>

## POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

We praise and thank you, O Christ, for this sacred feast: for here we receive you, here the memory of your passion is renewed, here our minds are filled with grace, and here a pledge of future glory is given, when we shall feast at that table where you reign with all your saints for ever. **Amen.**

Father . . . **we offer ourselves to you as a living sacrifice through Jesus Christ our Lord. Send us out in the power of your Spirit to live and work to your praise and glory. Amen.**

**Hymn (AM 45)** O Come, O come, Emmanuel  
(Tune: *Veni Emmanuel*)

## BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

The Lord be with you  
**And also with you.**

Christ, the Sun of righteousness shine upon you and make you ready to meet him when he comes in glory; and the blessing of God almighty, ✠ the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

**In the name of Christ. Amen.**

## POSTLUDE

---

### PRAYER DIARY

**For the sick, suffering, frail with age, and those who grieve:** Peter Bryce; Joy Turner, Mira, Milenka, Bruce Kelsall, Howard; Nilani; Stephen; Vivien, Neville, Bp John Parkes; Fr Barry Brown; Fr Ken Hewlett; Fr Robert Whalley; and Constables Keely Brough & Randall Kirk.

**Recently Departed:** Richard Cacopardo; Jean-Pierre Pavillon; Dan Octigan, Priest; Jill Jolliffe, Alan Dare, and Constables Matthew Arnold and Rachel McCrow.

**and for those whose Anniversaries of death occur in Years mind:** Francis Mason (13<sup>th</sup>), Tilley Czech (14<sup>th</sup>), Glen Clement, Cynthia Garner & Timothy Conboy (17<sup>th</sup>)

---

### St Bart's Vicarage Renovation Appeal



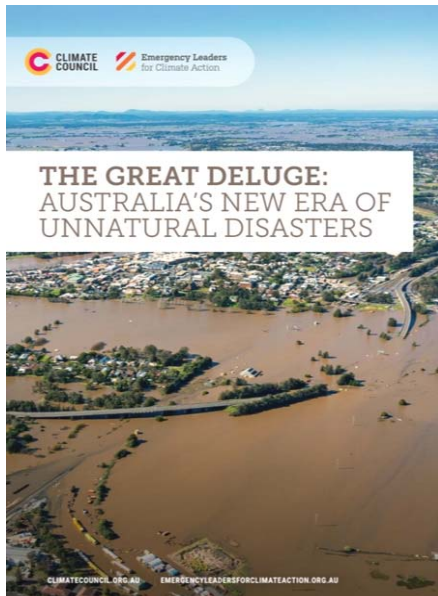
*The last major capital expenditure on St Bart's Vicarage was in 1990, some 32 years ago. That work has proven long-lasting in conjunction with some updating of areas in the house over the past 10 years, including: a new kitchen, areas with new flooring, renovated ensuite shower, new carport, paving, and new back garden. There are now other areas of the house that require attention to maintain a reasonable living standard, including: a new family bathroom, new flooring, back veranda work and a complete interior redecorating. We won't be able to achieve it all at once but we do need to get the major items fixed as a matter of urgency so to house an additional priest in 2023. If you could consider donating to the Vicarage Renovation Appeal, it would be much appreciated. You can donate via a specific EFT (below), by cheque (payable to St Bartholomew's, Burnley) or by cash.*

**Account Name:** St Bartholomew's Anglican Church, Burnley

**BSB:** 703 122    **Account Number:** 05009979

## From the Climate Action Group

The Climate Council's recent webinar entitled *Summer of Extremes: Changing Hearts and Minds in a Changing Climate* can be accessed on YouTube and I would highly recommend it.



Based on their report, *The Great Deluge: Australia's New Era of Unnatural Disasters*, it refers to Australia's 'decade in the wilderness' and how we are on the 'highway to climate hell'.

Powerful language and quite Biblical in some ways! But the big change in public opinion also gives hope if we can move fast enough.

One Chat questioner asked, 'I know a lot of people who believe in Climate Change but I don't feel they know how big a deal it is' and asked 'how do I talk to them about it without badgering them'.

Dinah Arendt, Head of Strategic Communication at the CC gave a great answer. (*It's right at the end of the recording and worth waiting for!*) In summary, the two most important things we can do is:

1. Be active voters;
2. Talk to your friends and family. 'You are one of the most important messengers'.

So, as with sharing our faith, we have a challenge!

By the way, for local climate action news in Yarra it is worth subscribing to the free e-Environment News. On the Yarra City Council website, search 'Take Climate Action' then scroll down (*and keep scrolling*). There is much to talk about on their website.

Kathy Kozlowski

---

## A Prayer for Ukraine

Lord of all the earth, be present with the people of Ukraine at this time of danger, fear and conflict. Grant that wise and peaceable counsels may yet prevail, and give to all suffering nations the freedom they desire and deserve. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**



## Prayer at the Time of Choosing an Incumbent

Bountiful God, give to this parish a faithful pastor who will faithfully speak your Word and minister your Sacraments; an encourager who will equip your people for ministry and enable us to fulfil our calling. Give to those who will choose, wisdom, discernment and patience, and to us give warm and generous hearts, for Jesus Christ's sake. **Amen.**

---

### FOR YOUR DIARY

#### Sunday, 18 December 2022 – Fourth Sunday of Advent

**10.00am Sung Mass**

**5.00pm Mass**

#### Monday, 19 December

10.00am to 12noon Richmond Churches Food Centre

#### Tuesday, 20 December

#### Wednesday, 21 December

**7.30pm Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols**

#### Thursday, 22 December

**10.00am Mass**

#### Friday, 23 December

#### Saturday, 24 December: CHRISTMAS EVE

**5.00pm Family Carols**

**11.00pm Vigil of Carols & Midnight Mass**

#### Sunday, 25 December: CHRISTMAS DAY

**10.00am Mass & Carols**

#### Sundays 1, 8, 15, 22 January 2023

**10.00am Mass** *and refreshments*

#### Sunday 29 January 2023

**10.00am Mass** *followed by Summer Garden Party*

**Anglican Church of Australia ~ Diocese of Melbourne**  
**ST BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH**  
**PARISH OF BURNLEY**

*ph: 9943 8442      stbartsburnley 'at' gmail.com      www.stbartsburnley.org.au*

## 2022/2023 PARISH MINISTRIES

### **Bell Ringers**

**Captain:** Jonathon Harrison

- jmharrison 'at' iinet.net.au  
0490 450 974

### **Book Club**

Second Tuesday of the month @  
7.30pm in St Bart's Café

**Co-ordinator:** Ann Brady

- ajbrady 'at' cobwebs.id.au  
0423 723 009

### **Richmond Churches Food Centre**

*(Mondays, 10.00am to 12noon)*

**Manager:** Francis Flood

- rfoodcentre 'at' gmail.com  
0493 104 144

### **St Bart's Close**

*(1-4/2 Canterbury Street,  
Richmond)*

**Guardian:**

- stbartsburnley 'at' gmail.com    0473 493 153

### **Opportunity Shop**

Temporarily closed for refitting

### **Climate Action Group**

**Convenor:** Kathy Kozlowski  
kathykoz45 'at' yahoo.com.au

### **Sanctuary Guild**

**Sacristan:** Jonathon Harrison

- jmharrison 'at' iinet.net.au  
0490 450 974

### **Social Enterprise Café**



**Committee Chair:** Glenis Heath  
glenisheath 'at' gmail.com

# 2022/2023 PARISH GOVERNANCE



## Churchwardens:

- Helen McDonald (People's)
- Cynthia Nyholm (People's)
- Glenis Heath (Vicar's)

## Parish Council:

*(meets 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday 7.30pm)*

- Trevor Blake
- Glenis Heath
- Helen McDonald
- Cynthia Nyholm
- Dr Muriel Porter
- Tom Ransom

## Parish Administrator:

Warren Collins

- 03 9943 8442
- 0408 020 446
- stbartsburnley 'at' gmail.com

## Parish Honorary Treasurer:

Tom Ransom

- 0400 187 584
- transom2000 'at' gmail.com

## Parish Honorary Secretary:

Dr Muriel Porter

- 0430 575 874
- murielporter5 'at' gmail.com

## Incumbency Committee:

- Don Heath
- Dr Muriel Porter
- Helen McDonald  
(Churchwarden)

## 53<sup>rd</sup> Diocesan Synod

### Representatives:

Ann Brady & Jonathon Harrison

Dhakshini Saravanamuttu  
(alternate)

## Child Safety & OHS

### Compliance

### Churchwarden with Oversight:

Glenis Heath

### Compliance Officer:

Jonathon Harrison

- 9943 8442
- stbartscompliance 'at' gmail.com

## WORSHIP SUNDAY

**10.00am SUNG or SOLEMN MASS**

**5.00pm MASS**

## MID-WEEK

**Thursday 10.00am Mass**

## MINISTRY TEAM

*To prevent internet spamming 'at' replaces the @ symbol*

### Locum Tenens:

- ❖ Rev Graeme Brennan  
0427-321-744                      g.j.milpara 'at' gmail.com

### Associate Clergy:

- ❖ Rev Canon (Emeritus) Jim Brady  
0422-566-184                      fjhbrady1 'at' gmail.com
- ❖ Rev Barry Brown  
0478-767-728                      brbrown1910 'at' gmail.com
- ❖ Right Rev Alison Taylor  
0417-593-833                      amtaylorms 'at' outlook.com

### Honorary Lay Reader:

- ❖ Dr Muriel Porter  
0430-575-874                      murielporter5 'at' gmail.com

### Candidate for Holy Orders:

- ❖ Tim Collison  
0420-954-601                      tcollison 'at' gmail.com

### Organist and Director of Music:

- ❖ Linda Kent  
0423-240-464                      lkent56 'at' me.com

### Weekly Bulletin, Prayer Diary & Rosters:

- ❖ Warren Collins  
0408-020-446                      stbartsburnley 'at' gmail.com

## Weekly Reflection

Dear Friends of St. Bart's,

In anticipation – a happy and holy Christmas to you all. It is an extraordinary thing that the moment we get to Christmas Day, we seem to forget Christmas. There used to be the Twelve Days of Christmas with a lot of sharing and feasting and caring throughout. In an earlier age, the Alms Box was opened and alms given to the poor on the Feast of Stephen – hence the name '*Boxing Day*'. The tree was left adorned until Epiphany – '*Green, green, green all a-green, all a-green; A-dancing round the Tree*' – the tree being a hawthorn, in the old English belief that a hawthorn tree on a knoll marked the entrance to the '*other world*' and a symbol of Christ. *(It might be a lovely idea if a hawthorn tree could be planted in the church garden symbolically, say, near the main entrance.)* Twelfth Night used to be a great party time. Remember Shakespeare's tale?

In some parts of the world, the 12 days of Christmas are still a time for visiting friends and relatives, for telling stories and wishing others well.

But the moment we get to Christmas Day, the carols and songs seem to cease. The endless barrage of tinkling muzac that assaults us from every quarter in our department stores suddenly reverts to another sound altogether. The radio stations, too, can't get back to secular music quickly enough it seems.

Even **here** at St. Bart's, we make the concession of having our Festival of Christmas Lessons and Carols (at 7.30pm) on the Wednesday **before** Christmas instead of keeping it as it should properly be kept on the Sunday **after** Christmas – right in the middle (*as it were*) of Christmastide. In either event, it is vitally important that we make a space about us this Christmas – time for reflection – time for thanksgiving – time for friendly visitors.

To those parishioners who will be away from the parish during this holy season – take care and God bless you. And God bless you too, who **will** be here.

Wishing you His grace and peace, Fr. Graeme Brennan (Locum Tenens)

## Image for the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Advent – Dr Alison Asquith

The image on the front cover today is about Mary and Joseph riding into Bethlehem as they await the birth of Jesus. There is hope and patience surrounding them and we feel it too, as we await the coming event, and in this we all celebrate the faithfulness of God in sending Jesus. Eventually, as love lay in scratchy hay on a manger in a meagre barn in Bethlehem all your love God, was robed in the delicate skin of a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes.

What we hope for now is that those who meet us may see, as we have, Jesus involved with us, of his looking at us, clinging untidily to us, quietly working, and speaking in us. Imagining Mary in words and pictures over the last three weeks has been one of the most powerful ways of imagining the Church, and thus we imagine ourselves in a fresh light.

As Rowan Williams\* suggests, *'may we help others to imagine and . . . encounter the child of Mary as we go about our business of discipleship'*.

\* Williams, Rowan. *Ponder these things: Praying with the Icons of the Virgin*. Norwich: Canterbury Press

## FESTIVAL OF LESSONS & CAROLS – DON'T MISS IT!



Lots of your Favourite Carols on Wednesday evening, 21<sup>st</sup> December, at 7.30pm. Sing your heart out. ***But be seated early!*** Followed by drinks in the Guild Room. ***Bring a plate of nibbles.***