

As a Christian community, meeting together to worship God, we affirm our commitment to ensuring the safety of each child who interacts with our community.

Our statement of commitment for Child Safety is available on our website or in the Narthex of each Parish Centre.

Mission Statement: To live as disciples of Christ embracing his teaching of love and service to all.

Vision Statement: To be known as God's people of prayer, to be welcoming of all our sisters and brothers by being inclusive and sensitive to diversity, open to change and growing as a community by the love and grace of Christ.

STEWARDSHIP GIVING

Please consider using Direct Deposit for your Stewardship giving.

Bank account details - BSB 703122, Indue Ltd. Account no. 05004414

The account is in the name of - St. Matthew's Glenroy/Hadfield with St. Linus' Merlynston

DIARY THIS WEEK

Tuesday 26th. December *Boxing Day public holiday*
Stephen, deacon and first martyr

Wednesday 27th. December 10.00 am. Morning Prayer at St. Matthew's
JOHN, APOSTLE and EVANGELIST

Thursday 28th. December
HOLY INNOCENTS

Friday 29th. December
Thomas Becket, archbishop of Canterbury, martyr (d.1170)

Saturday 30th. December
Josephine Butler, social reformer (d.1905)

Sunday 31st. December 9.00 am. Eucharist at St. Linus'
First Sunday 10.30 am. Eucharist at St. Matthew's
after Christmas



Christmas Day 25-12-2023

WELCOME

The services within our parish can be seen on the screens during the service.
Please see one of our welcomers if you would like to use the complete prayer book.
Morning tea will follow the service.
Please join in our fellowship time.



The Anglican Parish of Glenroy / Hadfield with Merlynston
St Matthew's Church - 30 Widford St Glenroy 3046
St Linus' Church - 21 Glyndon Ave Merlynston 3058

Where you find yourself in Christ

PARISH PRIEST: The Reverend Robert Koren

Email: priest@matthewlinus.org.au

Parish Mobile: 0493 384 108

Parish Phone: 9306 9528

This Week,

Rev Rob can be found at:

St. Linus' - Thurs. 9 am. to 3 pm: St. Matthew's - Wed. & Fri. 9 am. to 3 pm.
NOT available Tuesday.

PARISH WEBSITE - www.matthewlinus.org.au

PARISH FACEBOOK - www.facebook.com/matthewlinus

PARISH PODCAST - www.buzzsprout.com/1974085

Assistant Priest

The Reverend Prashant Bhonsle 0457 876 622

This Week,

Rev. Prashant can be found at: St. Linus' Thurs. 9 am. to 3 pm., St. Matthew's Friday 9 am. to 3 pm.

Authorised Honorary Lay Minister

Glenda Owen 0448 821 218

Authorised Honorary Parish Reader

Kerryn Pratchett 0409 306 818



Acknowledgement of Country

From time immemorial the Wurundjeri people have cared for this land, nurtured it, depended on it and given honour and thanks to the Creator.

As we acknowledge their faithful custodianship of the land, and the sacred stories they have told; as we offer our respect to their elders, past, present and emerging, guide us Lord in caring for them, this land, and each other with the help of the Holy Spirit of Dreaming.

Sentence: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, full of grace and truth. *John 1. 1, 14;*

Collect: God Most High, whose eternal Word chose a dwelling among us, that we might live in your presence: grant us a spirit of wisdom, to know how rich is the glory you have given us, and how great is the hope to which we are called in the word made flesh; who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Readings

The first reading is from the book of the prophet Isaiah ch.52: v. 7-10

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns.' Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices, together they sing for joy; for in plain sight they see the return of the LORD to Zion. Break forth together into singing, you ruins of Jerusalem; for the LORD has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem. The LORD has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

Hear the Word of the Lord Thanks be to God

Psalm 98 - said by alternate half verse

1 O sing to the Lord a new song;
for he has done marvellous things.

2 With his right hand and his holy arm;
has he won for himself the victory.

3 The Lord has made known his salvation;
he has revealed his just deliverance in the sight of the nations.

4 He has remembered his mercy and faithfulness toward the house of Israel;
and all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

5 Shout with joy to the Lord, all the earth;
break into singing and make melody.

6 Make melody to the Lord upon the harp,
upon the harp and with the sound of praise.

7 With trumpets and with horns;

Cry out in triumph before the Lord, the King.

8 Let the sea roar, and all that fills it,
the good earth and those who live upon it

9 Let the rivers clap their hands,
and let the mountains ring out together before the Lord,

10 For he comes to judge the earth;

he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with equity.

The second reading is from the letter to the Hebrews ch. 1: v. 1-4

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

Hear the Word of the Lord Thanks be to God

The Lord be with you; and also with you.

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John 1:1-14 Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ
In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

This is the Gospel of the Lord Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ

Faith Matters!! The story that is hidden within the story.

This week is a busy week for most clergy with many services that need to be finalised and sermons to be written. In dealing with what needed to be done I went and locked myself away at different times so I could focus. I wrote, deleted, rewrote passages and deleted files. I spin around on my office chair hoping that my brain would be activated. It was not in my isolation that God gave me a prompting but in my communion with the family and the body of Christ.

The beginning of John's gospel is the beginning arc and the foundational heart of the Christian tale: the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. The grounds of our joy and celebration, trees and presents, the decorations in each room—all of this is founded by the idea that the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. A new life of deep intimacy with God, freely given—as gift of grace. Yet there is a hidden story that we can sometimes over look.

When I finally came out of my room and was with the family, Jane needed me, the girls needed me—I was constantly called to be with them and part of their moments. It made me feel valuable to them It made me feel loved and wanted.

Then I revisited the idea that the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us and my mind popped!! I realised I was worth more to God than I could have imagined. Jesus came into a world that knew him not! Jesus has been accepted by myself and now I am a child of God living in God's glory by the grace and truth of Jesus Christ. He lived in a world that knew him not and was sacrificed for me!

I realised in the presence of my family, that I was worth more to God than I could ever imagine. I was worth the risk and sacrifice involved.

The trappings and dressing of the holiday season can blind and distract us in many ways and we forget to look beneath the symbols, whether we are enjoying them or like me trying to resist them.

What is the story within the story that we need to hear anew and share with others? The light shines in the darkness for you and me. The secret-surprise gift, a baby-then-boy-then-man on the fringes, is for you and me.

The nativity of Christ is a story of God's extravagant love and generosity given to you and me.

Because the Word came down and became flesh, we have an unearned invitation to accept liberation, support, and partnership with God.

Now we can get caught up in a number of debates: why do we show a star when the star happened a year or two later?; why do people say happy holidays when it is Merry Christmas? Why are people trying to take the Christ out of Christmas? Whilst these may be the source of significant debate, the biggest debate I hear most often is the one in our hearts—Am I worthy of the light of Christ?

Who can believe that the strange creatures we see in the mirror and on the street that we call people are worth this much trouble to God? To be humble is a healthy perspective for spiritual growth. Yet too much humility can make you downplay your relationship with God in an unhealthy way and kill the seeds of faith needed to journey in Christ. Humility says that we are not the light. Humility does not say the light has abandoned us or that we cannot testify to the light. Humility allows us to share that God loves us extravagantly and generously and we have a ministry to point others to the light. This Christmas remind others of the hidden story of God's generous and extravagant love for them.

Blessings, Rev. Rob.