

*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.*



### DIARY THIS WEEK



Monday 24th. December 5.00 pm. All age CHRISTMAS EVE service , with a Eucharist at St. Linus'

Monday 24th. December 11.30 pm. MIDNIGHT MASS at St. Matthew's

Tuesday 25th. December 10.00 am. CHRISTMAS DAY Eucharist  
*BIRTH of our LORD* at St. Matthew's

Wednesday 26th. December *Boxing Day holiday* NO service at St. Matthew's

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

Sunday 30th. December 9.00 am. Eucharist at St.Linus'  
*First Sunday after Christmas* 10.30 am. Eucharist at St.Matthew's,

During the 10.30 am. Service at St.Matthew's each Sunday, opportunity will be available to receive one-on-one prayer for any personal needs.  
Please go to the Chapel area after you have received Communion

**Pew Leaflet Notices:**  
Please give to, or phone Glenda Owen,  
Or e-mail: - gonana7@bigpond.com - by 8 pm. Tuesday

## The Anglican Parish of Glenroy / Hadfield / Merlynston



St.Matthew's  
cnr. Widford St. &  
Melbourne Ave.  
Glenroy 3046

with

St.Linus'  
cnr. Glyndon Ave. &  
Delta Ave.  
Merlynston 3058



PARISH PRIEST: The Reverend Jo-Anne Wells  
Phone: 9306 9528  
Mobile: 0414 822 095  
Email: priest@matthewlinus.org.au

PARISH WEBSITE - [www.matthewlinus.com](http://www.matthewlinus.com)

Honorary Lay Minister  
Glenda Owen 0448 821 218

Honorary Lay Parish Readers  
Bev. Lacock 9309 277  
Lois Erickson 0421 327 159  
Kerryn Pratchett 0409 306 818

PLEASE TURN OFF YOUR MOBILE PHONE BEFORE  
THE START OF THE SERVICE *Thank You*



FOURTH SUNDAY  
of  
ADVENT

23rd. December  
2018

CHRISTMAS 2018

THE PEOPLE OF  
ST MATTHEW'S GLENROY/HADFIELD  
& ST LINUS' MERLYNSTON  
WISH YOU A HAPPY AND HOLY CHRISTMAS

### WELCOME

Our service begins on page 119 of 'A Prayer Book for Australia' (green book)  
Hymns are found in 'Together in Song' (red book)  
The number of each hymn is clearly displayed in the Church.  
At St. Matthew's the service can be followed on the screens.  
Please join us for morning tea, following the service.

## CHRISTMAS BOWL

*The Christmas Appeal of Act for Peace, the International aid agency of the National Council of Churches in Australia.*

## A Hand Up, Not a Hand Out

Reflection - Christ the Gatherer and Love -

There's a subtle but important difference between hoarding and gathering. Jesus was certainly not a hoarder, but he was a gatherer in an important sense. Families often gather at Christmas, and the drawcard is love, and a sense of belonging - community rather than isolation. That is surely what Assala, a Syrian mother, now living in a refugee camp in Jordan with her husband and son, along with many other refugees, experienced through the support they have received through the Christmas Bowl. It was not so much a hand-out, as it was assistance to enable Assala and people like her to remain strong in their difficult situation. Their problems have not gone away, but they gain a new perspective in knowing they are not alone, the love of God is shared through the Christmas Bowl.

Marty Haugen's 1983 song affirms that 'Here in this place, new light is streaming,' and prays 'Gather us in the lost and forsaken, the blind and the lame, the young, and the old' and concludes with 'Give us to drink the wine of compassion. We can share the love and compassion through giving to the Christmas Bowl.'

## ANGLICAN OVERSEAS AID

**Christmas stands as a grand statement from God of his love for us.**

It is the most bold, wonderful and hopeful statement of all. God never gave up on us and was willing to do whatever was necessary to reconcile us to him.

**"We love because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19)**

As followers of Christ, we have the privilege of loving others because we understand that God first loved us. We are inherently loved and worthy to God, no matter what has happened to us in life, or what we have done. Nothing can ever change that, which is why Christmas is so joyous.

But we also know that Christmas is not always merry for a lot of people. Often the poor are poorer and the lonely are lonelier. This is why at Christmas, the time when God's love for us is celebrated, it is important to remember that Jesus also commanded us to love our neighbours. This is really what we are born to do. We do it out of a heart already overflowing with God's love for us. We are loved so much that we just want to give that love to others.

And for Jesus, it is the poor and outcast that his heart aches for. That is why our Christmas Appeal this year is based on the passage from Matthew 25, in which Jesus identifies so closely with the poor that whenever we care for them, we are actually caring for him (more info on our Christmas Appeal below).

So whether your Christmas is shaping up to be merry or not, our prayer for you is that it is meaningful and you know anew the wonderful love that God has for you.

## Acknowledgement of Land

( An act towards reconciliation by the Parish of Glenroy/ Hadfield / Merlynston )

For thousands of years indigenous people have walked in this land.  
Their relationship with the land is at the centre of their lives.  
We acknowledge the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nation,  
for their stewardship throughout the ages.

## GLUTEN FREE COMMUNION WAFERS ARE AVAILABLE

If you require Gluten free wafer,  
please speak to the Lay Assistant or a Welcomer, BEFORE the Service,

**PLEASE OBSERVE SILENCE  
PRIOR TO OUR SERVICE, DURING HOLY COMMUNION  
AND AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE SERVICE**

**Catch up with one another in the Narthex or at Morning Tea**

**Sentence:** Blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord. Luke 1. 45;

**Collect:** Gracious God, you have visited your people and redeemed us in your Son: as we prepare to celebrate his birth, make our hearts leap for joy at the sound of your word, and move us by your Spirit to bless your wonderful works. We ask this through him whose coming is certain, whose Day draws near, your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## READINGS

**Micah 5.2-5a;**

The LORD says to his people: But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labour has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; and he shall be the one of peace.

**for the Psalm - The SONG of MARY - page 31, APBA. ( Luke 1. 46-55 )**

**My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord;  
my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour.**

**Who has looked with favour on his lowly servant,  
from this day all generations will call me blessed.**

**The Almighty has done great things for me,  
and holy is his name.**

**God has mercy on those who fear him ;  
from generation to generation.**

**PARISH DIRECTORY 2018**



**PLEASE CHECK THE DRAFT OF THE PARISH DIRECTORY,  
which is in the Narthex at each Church  
AND NOTE AMENDMENTS REQUIRED,  
IN PREPARATION FOR 2019 DIRECTORY.**

**IF YOUR DETAILS ARE NOT INCLUDED IN THIS DIRECTORY,  
PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM and give to Glenda Owen, or email  
to  
gonana7@bigpond.com      THANK YOU**

*The completion of this form gives the Parish your consent for  
your details from this form to be included in the Parish Directory*

**Surname** .....

**Christian name** .....

**Spouse (if applicable)** .....

**Children  
living at  
home** .....

**Address** .....

..... **Post Code** .....

**Phone no.** .....

**Mobile no.** .....

**Email:** .....

**The Lord has shown the strength with his arm,  
and scattered the proud in their conceit.  
Casting down the mighty from their thrones;  
and lifting up the lowly.  
God has filled the hungry with good things;  
and sent the rich away empty.  
He has come to the aid of his servant, Israel,  
to remember the promise of mercy.  
The promise made to our forebears:  
to Abraham and his children for ever.**

**Hebrews 10. 5-10;**

When Christ came into the world, he said, 'Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me; in burnt-offerings and sin-offerings you have taken no pleasure. Then I said, "See, God, I have come to do your will, O God" (in the scroll of the book, it is written of me).' When Christ said, 'You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings' (these are offered according to the law), then he added, 'See, I have come to do your will.' He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. And it is by God's will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

**Luke 1. 39-45;**

Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leapt for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.'

**ADVENT 4  
23rd. December 2018**

**MOVING WITH MARY'S SONG**

Mothers and prophets, psalmists and seers, sing praises and seek to do God's will. Words old and new lift up promises fulfilled and promises awaited. The blessedness of trust in God partners with joyful hopes in God's justice and peace. In that joining, we are invited to move with Mary's song as we celebrate God's power coming to us and to all through her child.

Luke 1:39-45, (46-55) The first half of Luke 1 tells stories of promised birth. Zechariah balks when he is told his wife Elizabeth will bear a child. Six months later her relative Mary receives news of a child promised to her. The focus scripture recounts the meeting of these two women after Mary journeys from Nazareth to Judea.

Elizabeth greets Mary with three blessings. The first (“blessed are you among women”) quotes a blessing bestowed on two other women in Israel’s tradition. Jael and Judith received this blessing for an act of the sword (Judges 5:24–26; Book of Judith 13:6–8, 18). Ironically, Simeon will later tell Mary that “a sword will pierce your own soul” after his blessing of the child (Luke 2:35). The second (“blessed is the fruit of your womb”) extends Elizabeth’s blessing to Mary’s child. The third blessing (“blessed is she who believed”) is the most unique of all. Mary believes God will fulfill the promises spoken to her. Her trust then leads her to act accordingly as God’s servant. Mary’s enacted trust in God makes her the first “disciple” in Luke.

The song of Mary that begins with verse 46 closely parallels the song of Hannah in 1 Samuel 2:1–10. Both songs grow out of the birth of a promised child. Both songs praise God for new ways that fulfill ancient traditions of covenant. Both songs celebrate God’s actions for the poor and vulnerable. Like these songs, Luke’s gospel celebrates the God who comes to do justice and exercise mercy. Those who are lowly will be lifted up; those who are haughty will be brought low. Such reversals, sung by these women, will be revealed in Jesus’ ministry. A Samaritan will serve as the example of neighbour (10:25–37). Women will exercise ministry (8:1–3). Prodigals and stay-at-homes alike will be embraced by love (15:11–32). Luke’s Beatitudes (6:20–26) link Jesus’ teachings with his mother’s song.

Mary calls God “Saviour.” Only one other verse in Luke uses this title. Shepherds are told in Luke 2:11 of the birth of a Saviour. Several inscriptions from this era bestow the title of “saviour” on the Roman emperor Augustus – one even declares him “saviour of the world.” This gospel, in contrast, places “saviour” in Mary’s song and in the angel’s news “for all the people.” In doing so, Luke addresses his community with a subtle word of resistance. In an empire that pressed for worship of the emperor, Luke avowed that Saviour is a title that belongs to God. Mary sings a revolutionary song to a God who comes to save.

The theme of shepherds – leaders – who seek justice for and from their flocks moves through the other texts as in Mary’s song. Micah 5:2–5a points to hopes of a just ruler and rule whose ways will bring God’s shalom. Psalm 80:1–7 sings its plea for God to save and restore. Hebrews 10:5–10 opens with references from Isaiah 1 that speak on the surface of empty ritual. But between those quoted lines stands the command that Isaiah announced: “Learn to do good, seek justice” (Isaiah 1:17). In other words, live out the message of Mary’s song.

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Advent preparations draw to a close on this last Sunday in the season. Or do they only now begin? The child whose birth we prepare to celebrate comes to change everything – and us – for the good. In what ways might Mary’s song be moving us to trust, to go, and to do? What words or activities, what rituals or projects, have helped Mary’s ancient song take on new life for you in this season?

### REFLECTION

**Teach us to sing your praise, O God.**

**Teach us to sing with notes formed by hopes and acts of justice.**

**Teach us to sing with harmonies shaped by mercy’s wide embrace.**

**Teach us to sing Mary’s song of birth and rebirth for all creation  
in Jesus Christ. Amen.**

### Archbishop’s Philip Freier’s Christmas Message 2018

A service celebrating multicultural Melbourne at St Paul’s Cathedral late last month was a marvellous event. There were people from almost every continent: joyful, laughing, listening, dancing, singing and eating together. What a delight!

The Cathedral was alive with colour, sound and movement. It highlighted what we can be together, in service of God and each other. As Saint Peter told those gathered at the home of the Roman Centurion, Cornelius: “God does not show favouritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right.”

That night in Cornelius’ home was a time of joy, like the multicultural service at the Cathedral. That sort of joy, which flows from the One who came as a baby born in Bethlehem, brings hope of peace, hope of dreams fulfilled.

It is a joy that transcends the painful circumstances in which so many people find themselves. Recently I was in Amman, Jordan, in the midst of the terrible tensions wracking the Middle East, and yet I saw and heard the joy of God’s people.

Christmas is a time for joy and peace. Yes, it can be sentimentalised, trivialised by all the busyness and commercialisation of what should be a simple celebration, and it can be challenged by the pace, pressures and pain of ordinary life. But reflecting on Jesus Christ and how he fulfilled the promises of God is inspiring.

Christmas cards speak of joy and peace. Christmas carols sing of joy and peace: joy and peace in the birth of a baby in a land troubled then as now.

Mary, the mother of Jesus, trusted in God and his promises. Luke’s Gospel tells us that she treasured up these things in her heart and pondered them. Perhaps she glimpsed what we can glimpse this side of Jesus’ birth, death and resurrection: a vision of a world restored, made whole. As the famous carol puts it:

*Peace on earth and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled!  
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,  
Join the triumph of the skies;  
With the angelic host proclaim  
Christ is born in Bethlehem!*

Have a happy and joyous Christmas.

