

Word and Light

St John's Anglican Parish, Otumoetai



Theme: Christmas

Christmas 2020

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Themes for Word and Light

The theme for the next edition will be **Faith in action**. We look forward to your contributions. Photos welcome! Please send your contributions to Lynda, the Parish Administrator, by **10 February**. Remember that, to keep readers' attention, your articles should not be too long. If you have ideas for future themes please let us know.

The Editor has the final say as to the suitability of articles for inclusion.

About this Magazine

This Magazine is called *Word and Light* because our parish church is dedicated to St John the Evangelist. At the beginning of the Gospel of John there are many powerful images. Two of these are *Word* and *Light* and they are woven together. Jesus as the *Word* of God echoes the story of creation. Jesus, the *Light* of the World, is the one who shines in the darkness.

Vicar's Voice

Again and again in the scriptures the birth of Jesus Christ is described as a light shining in the darkness. The prophet Isaiah (9:2) says: 'the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness – on them light has shined.' In John's Gospel (1:5) we read: 'the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.'



All over the world in our day there is darkness: the darkness of the shadow of death for many people who have been suffering from the ravages of COVID or other diseases; whose countries are at war or who are torn apart by internal strife; those who are diseased or starving in countries where there are limited medical facilities and little food; the darkness of despair for those who are homeless and for those who are imprisoned for what they believe.

For people such as these, we are called to be the light in their darkness; we are called to be their Christmas. When Christ told his disciples that they were the light of the world, he was not paying them a compliment, telling them that they were decent fellows. He was giving them a commandment: get out there and bring my light to those in darkness. How much light can we bring to the world this Christmas? How many people will bless us over the coming year because we have brought light into their darkness?

But we also have darkness in our own lives – darkness that needs to be illuminated ever more and more by the light of Christ. Each of us has our share of darkness, and for each of us the darkness is different. Some may have the darkness of grief, having lost a loved one, trying to face life alone. Others may face the darkness of illness. Others may have deep and dark worries over the future. Some may be staring into the darkness of guilt, a deep consciousness of things that should have been done better or should not have been done at all. Some live in the darkness caused by the loss or weakening of their faith.

'The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.' We may feel overwhelmed by the dark side of the world but the clear message of John's Gospel is that, from the very beginning and until the end of all things, the light of God's healing hope and love, given to us in Jesus Christ, continues to shine. It has not, and will not, and cannot, be overcome by the darkness.

The light shines surely in those who support the poor, the sick, the disadvantaged and dispossessed; in those who, despite all the setbacks, continue the delicate and precarious business of peacemaking, often at considerable cost to themselves; in those who, amidst differing political and religious ideologies, work patiently for greater understanding and tolerance, for the altogether larger goal – the realisation of the message of the angels as they announce the birth of the Saviour – 'peace on earth and goodwill among the peoples of the world'.

To all of us, and in every kind of darkness, the light of Christ shines anew. There is no corner of our darkness into which he cannot shed his glorious light. We are called to live out, in word and deed, a kingdom of justice and truth, of uprightness and integrity, of love and of peace – a kingdom which daily we pray may come among us, and be among us, here on earth as it is in heaven.

With every blessing for Christmas and 2021

Sue (Vicar)

The word "Rejoice!" is written in a large, black, cursive font. The letter 'j' has a long, sweeping tail that curves under the rest of the word. Above the 'i' and 'o' in "Rejoice", there are two lit candles with flames. The entire word is underlined with a simple, curved line.

Christmas in Mekelle, Tigray 1988

by Bob Shaw

The assignment extended over the European Christmas holiday period and I was forced to remain away from my family in Switzerland for the first time. I lived and worked with the Christian Brothers of the Bosco Order in their compound in the dusty town of Mekelle, Tigray. Together with Paul, the pilot of our Pilatus Porter plane, jointly operated with M.S.F, I shared a small bungalow and we ate in the evening with the brothers, who invited us to join their Christmas festivities.

On Christmas Eve I walked through the dark dusty streets to midnight mass in the rough stone Ethiopian Catholic Church which the resident priest had built with his own hands over many years without using any cement. Abba Antonious, a tall fair young priest accompanied me, and on the way he told me how he came from a small village in the Tyrol to become a priest, and how rewarding his work here had been during the terrible drought-induced famine of the last four years.

In the morning of Christmas Day, I was invited to join the Brothers and the Nuns from the nearby cloister in a service, and greatly honoured by being asked to read a passage from Isaiah. After the service and, before we all sat down to lunch, Brother Ceasare Bullo appeared in a St Nicolas costume that frightened the Tigrayan nuns out of the kitchen where they were preparing lunch. The lunch was cooked in the Italian style from ingredients brought from Rome and served with Ethiopian wine. It was a very jolly occasion and one realised that the brother and sisterhood of the religious orders really made them one big family.

After we had finished eating, an elderly sister stood and made an address first in Tigrayan, then in Italian and finally in English. I learned that she came from an old aristocratic English family and had worked in Eritrea since the British arrived in 1941. She was now over 90 years of age and had long decided to end her days in Mekelle with the sisterhood. It was indeed a memorable Christmas Day.

Christmas = New Life

by Helen D'Ath

My mother and her seven sisters were a very close family, and at Christmas time we would all gather at Grandma's home in Sanson, Manawatu. I love those memories as I had no siblings and was the youngest cousin so everyone made a fuss of me! The big living room in the old villa housed a grand piano, where the aunts took turns to play and everybody joined in the singing. They were always happy and there was lots of laughter. I can just close my eyes and see and hear the radiance of that Christmas spirit!

Dinner was at 1pm and I remember the huge dining table groaning with food – traditionally we always had roast turkey and baked ham with all the trimmings, and all the usual puddings of course!

There was a tennis court on the front lawn, and the adults played tennis after Christmas dinner! They had to make room for the next feast – all the leftovers from dinner were served cold at tea time!

Grandma died when I was 12. We had a few Christmases at aunts' homes, but it was never quite the same. Thereafter, Mother followed her family traditions, and invariably invited family and friends to join us.



I believed in Father Christmas for years! But somehow, I never questioned how on earth he fitted down the chimney! And how did my parents know he liked whisky? A small glassful of whisky and a generous slice of Christmas cake were left on a small table next to the hearth and the first thing I always did on Christmas Day was to check it had been taken. That meant Father Christmas had definitely visited! Then, to prove it further, I opened my 'stocking'. That was actually a pillowcase on the end of the bed filled with gifts.

Mother's traditional rituals were as follows:

Up early to prepare the dinner and put it in the oven to cook while we went to Church. We attended All Saints' in Palmerston North and, as we lived in the country, the timing was crucial! After Communion, we headed for the dairy. As dairies were open for only a few hours on Christmas Day, it was essential we bought the cream for the Christmas Pudding! Then headed for home. Then followed the glass of sherry while we opened our presents from under the Tree. I did my best to follow these family traditions, though my children balked at having to wait till 'sherry time' to open presents!

Christmas was always such a happy event to celebrate, until an untimely blow in 1969. My second child Vanessa suddenly died in her sleep on 19th December! It was heart-rending, especially as we had to remove her presents from under the tree, and explain to my four-year-old daughter about death. Extremely difficult! But, thank God (who listened to my prayers and they were answered!), 22 December 1970, my son was born! **New Life!**

It was a miraculous birth, taking only one and a half hours from start to finish. The poor doctor had already delivered 12 babies that day, and virtually went to sleep watching my progress from the end of the bed. As they wheeled me from the delivery room to the ward, I sang the 'Halleluiah chorus'!

In those days we had to stay in the maternity annexe for ten days, so I had the delight of sharing a fabulous Christmas dinner with all the other new Mums and nursing staff. We even had bottles of beer on the long tables! It was all wonderful, with outside choirs coming into the Annexe singing Christmas Carols, and the support and camaraderie from all.

Christmases came and went and the years rolled by with many changes. My last most memorable Christmas was 12 years ago when I purposely chose the date to leave Hawkes Bay and return to Tauranga after my second husband had died. I will never forget singing in the St Luke's (Havelock North) choir on Christmas Eve, then driving up to my family in Tauranga on Christmas morning. The beginning of another **New Life!**

Christmas in the Country

by Mary Toomer

We tumbled out of the car pleased to have finally arrived at Aunt Evelyn and Uncle Leslie's farm, 'Mount Hope', Roxburgh. We were greeted by Grandma and Grandad, who had arrived at the farm the week before, and our lovely Aunt Evelyn. It had been a long trip since boarding the steamship Hinemoa in Wellington the night before after waving goodbye to Daddy on the wharf. Twelve hours later we docked in Lyttleton, disembarked and boarded the steam train.



The train trip was long but Mummy had brought sandwiches and fruit for us and we enjoyed waving to the people standing by the track watching the train roar by with dense smoke billowing from the engine. We got really excited as the train raced through the seaside settlement of Waikouaiti where we had spent Christmas with Grandma and Grandad a couple of years before. Late in the afternoon we arrived at Milton and climbed off the train to be met by Uncle Les and then we were on the two-hour car trip to the farm. Mother must have been exhausted by this time with four children aged 4 to 13 to organise.

After a good night's sleep, we were ready for action. It was high summer and Christmas not far off. The days were filled with walking up the hill to the orchard with Grandma to pick ripe, warm peaches and apricots. We thought Grandma was so clever when she put her arm down a rabbit warren and pulled out not one but four wee bunnies. We proudly carried them down in a kerosene tin to show off but in the morning they were gone and was that rabbit stew we had for dinner?

Sitting on the step of the back porch we turned the handle of the churn and were amazed when the cream in the churn turned to butter. And then there were always walnuts to be shelled. Most nights after tea my older sister, Claire and I with Mum and Grandma picked red and black currants and raspberries which Aunt put into containers and then into her large deep freeze.

But at last it was Christmas Eve and we picked peas and shelled them whistling as Uncle had told us to so he knew we were not eating them. Before going to bed we hung our flour bags with great anticipation in front of the fireplace in the dining room. A glass of Aunt's homemade raspberry cordial and a few biscuits were set out for Santa along with carrots for the reindeer.

We were up early on Christmas Day but Aunt already had the leg of lamb in the oven. Following breakfast, the womenfolk and us children dressed in our best clothes squeezed into the car – no seat belts in those days – and we were off on our way to St James Anglican Church in the Roxburgh village. The church was full to overflowing, the air was heavy with the scent of Christmas lilies which were in vases on every available space possible, Moira Reid with her red hair flying played the organ and we all sang the carols with great enthusiasm, even four year old Lesley doing her best to join in. We waited impatiently outside after the service while the adults shared Christmas greetings with friends then *hurrah* it was in the car and back to the farm where we anxiously lined up to be let into the room so we could see what Santa had brought us. I am sure we were all happy with our presents.

It was a hot Central Otago day but we sat down to a huge meal of roast lamb with lots of fresh vegetables followed by plum pudding with custard and cream. What excitement when we found a threepence, sixpence or one lucky person a shilling in the pudding. Too full to move we sat outside while the women did the dishes.

Aunt had decorated a tree in the garden which us children danced around singing 'Little tree, little tree what have you got for me?' When the singing stopped we were allowed to choose a lolly or small gift off the tree. *What a happy, busy Christmas day we had had filled with love and laughter.*

After Christmas the haymaking started and Brian offered to help but when we went to get him for lunch he was propped against a hay bale fast asleep! *New Year's Eve arrived* and us children spent the day building a fireplace using bricks from the old school yard well away from the dogs and sheep paddocks. To fill in time till it got dark, which in Central Otago is around 10.30pm in summer, Aunt played the piano while we all sang but at last we all trooped to the fire. Uncle had a box of fireworks and we oohed and aahed as they were let off until somehow one fell into the box of crackers then there were Catherine wheels spinning madly around, tom thumbs and bangers jumping all over the place and sky rockets shooting up into the air. Us kids ran around screaming and yelling in delight!! What an awesome start to 1953!!

All too soon it was time to pack our bags, to say goodbye and thank you to Aunt Evelyn and our Grandparents and for Uncle Les to take us back to Milton to start our long trip home but what tales we had to tell Daddy!!



A Childhood Christmas

by Brenda Harrison

When I was a child my grandparents owned a Bach at Maraetai Beach, a seaside suburb south of Auckland. It was right on the beach and we went there every school holiday and of course at Christmas. On Christmas Eve a huge tree (or large branch) of a pine tree appeared in the living room which was decorated by us all. Miraculously gifts appeared stacked beneath it on Christmas morning. One of the things I liked doing on Christmas morning was listening to Ian Watkins (a IZB radio announcer) talking to the children in hospital and distributing presents to them.

We used to put on records of carols and then my cousins would arrive from Auckland to help prepare and partake in Christmas lunch. There was always a turkey, fresh peas – my job was to pod them – and potatoes and of course Christmas pudding with money in.

After the dishes were cleared away (no dishwashers then), the presents were handed out. There was often a fashion parade if you had got some new clothes or races up and down the drive if you had received a new bike or scooter. Then us kids all went for a swim. Certainly, some of my happiest memories.



Christmases remembered

by John Beverly

It is always said that Christmas is for families – well, mainly children. Leaving aside the scope Christmas brings for family disputes – how do we get everyone together? where? who does the cooking? Do we have to put up with Uncle Horace’s’ jokes? etc – it is a time when families small or large make an effort.

My immediate family was a small one – with my mother an only child and all my father’s relatives in Scotland or Canada or the US – but we did make a big thing of Christmas. Food we could not normally afford; a real tree – decorated with the same decorations year after year; cards on cords/ribbons all over the downstairs rooms. We had many postal deliveries then. We had parcels including luxuries sent from the US – orange juice in large cans; fruit in particular. Christmas lunch was a squeeze round our table in our smallish dining room with guests – a colleague of my father’s and one year an African who was spending time in my father’s office. We saw a bottle of wine – always *Entre Deux Mers* – a rare event.

Afterwards we played games – Monopoly, Totopoly, Draughts (my father’s favourite), occasionally chess. We all really enjoyed this part of the day. Do such games feature much in Christmas now?

Although things tend to go flat after Christmas, the high spot for my father was still to be enjoyed – Hogmanay and First Footing. New Year’s Eve was never complete without Andy Stewart. This was really the only time TV featured – we had a most unreliable TV in the 1950s and my brother and I were instructed not to fiddle with it. This may account for my lifelong technophobia – the feeling that if I go near equipment it will break down.

One Christmas our corgi – Rusty (my mother sometimes called me Rusty and I knew then I was in her good books) – was run over when the TV repair man left the door open on Christmas Eve. Rusty was found in the road with blood from his mouth. Christmas blighted? No, as he had only bitten his tongue.



It is odd how what I recall here seems so clear and how it adds up to happy memories of a good family time. I think we have lost a great deal in this much more materialist age.

Silent Night, Holy Night 1948

The town band played 'Heilige Nacht' in the almost deserted snow-covered market square of the small town set in a valley in the Harz Mountains. Fine driven snow found its way under the main door of the old Palast Hotel forming a white carpet over the doormat. Behind the bar a tall blond girl vigorously polished glasses, while waiting for further orders from the British soldiers leaning against the polished surface.

A thin ashen faced corporal began to sing to the melody played in the square, but the words he sang were not those of the well-known hymn Silent Night. He sang of a tropical jungle where skeletons of men laboured to build a railway track under the cold narrow watchful eyes of sadistic guards. He sang of men falling and left to die beside the track, of the misery of dysentery, malaria and tropical sores left untreated, of vicious beatings and beheadings. He sang of men who had lost all hope in the steaming hell of the South East Asian jungle.

As he finished, choking back sobs, the girl behind the bar began to sing in German the words of the ancient hymn. She was rudely interrupted before she had sung the first line by a gaunt figure emerging from the shadow by the lift, an empty sleeve flapping as he strode up to the bar.

He too began to sing also in German and he sang of stumbling figures staggering along a frozen snow-covered road ever eastward in the freezing night. He sang of the pathetic bundles of rags dropping by the wayside to be covered by a cold white blanket. He sang of cruel faces of Red Army soldiers driving the survivors on with the butts of their automatic rifles. He sang of those who had given up all hope of seeing their parents, wives and children again.

The town band paused to march to another quarter of the town and the two singers faced each other. At signal from the corporal a beer filled glass was slid across the bar to the one-armed lift man. The two old soldiers faced each other and lifted their glasses in silent homage to their fallen comrades and the memory of the horrors of war they had endured.



'It must be your busy time of year'

Reflections on the ordained life by the Vicar

'It's your busy time of year' people often say to me and other clergy at Christmas time. 'Yes', I say, 'but actually it is busy all year – it is just a question of what I'm busy doing'. For sheer number of services there's nothing quite like Holy Week and Easter, Easter being the most important festival of the Church year. But what else do clergy do apart from take services?

Before that, some background. In the Anglican church, of which we are part, there are three – and only three – basic types of ordained person: bishop, priest and deacon. When we are first ordained, we are ordained deacon and then, generally a year later, we are ordained priest. When we are ordained priest we don't, however, cease to be a deacon. In the same way, someone who is ordained bishop will first of all have been ordained deacon and then priest.

Being ordained priest does not make us a Vicar even though many people often refer to anyone wearing a clerical collar as 'Vicar'. There is a lot of history to that title but the easiest way of thinking of it is as a kind of job title – a parish priest with responsibility for a parish or group of parishes.

So, in our parish, I am *Vicar* and Sue Genner's title is *Priest Assistant*. Other priests have other jobs: think of the Dean of a cathedral, for example. Some clergy, generally those who like me are full time, receive a stipend paid in order to enable them to exercise their ministry without the need to take another job in order to earn their living. Other clergy are non-stipendiary, giving their time voluntarily – these clergy are often in secular employment (like Sue Genner who is a GP) or are retired from paid employment.

God's call to a priest involves a number of challenges. If we had to put them in order, which we don't, the first call is to be a human being, the second to be a Christian and, only then, to be a priest. Someone once said the only things a priest has to be concerned with are 'the glory of God, the pain of the world and the renewal (repentance) of the Church'. Not much then!! *The glory of God*: a priest is a leader of worship, a person of prayer, a spiritual explorer, a preacher and storyteller, an interpreter of scripture and faith, a learner, a teacher and a theologian. *The pain of the world*: the priest is an intercessor, a pain bearer, a wounded companion, an encourager, a weather-beaten witness, a presence in the community and a prophet (in the sense of speaking truth to power, not in the sense of crystal-ball gazing). *The renewal of the Church*: a priest is a creative leader, someone who points to Christ, a faith coach, a mature risk taker in terms of thinking of new ways of being church and someone who, depending on their role, manages the church's life.

So, now to the 'nuts and bolts': what do I do as Vicar? It is a very busy role involving many different activities. Here are just some: preparing for and leading worship in church which includes the orders of service and music plans; preparing sermons; preparing for and leading study groups; pastoral care which includes being alongside people in difficulty or distress, listening to people who have issues and concerns and taking communion to the housebound; coordinating pastoral care; leading worship in some of our local retirement villages; being involved with Playgroup, Golden Age, the Toy Library and the Op Shop.

I aim to help lay people and other clergy in my care develop their gifts and encourage them in the contribution they make to the parish and community. I am the line manager for all the paid staff of the parish:

the Parish Administrator, the Playgroup Co-ordinator, the Children and Families Coordinator, the Toy Librarian, the Op Shop Manager and now the Community Activities Coordinator. Among other meetings, I prepare for and chair Vestry (the leadership team of the parish) and the Op Shop Management Group. There are other obvious responsibilities – baptisms, weddings and funerals when the need arises – and many other activities and administrative tasks (weekly newsletters, preparing articles for this *Magazine* and editing it, updating the website and so on) and attending meetings and events outside the parish with other clergy locally and in the Diocese (such as Clergy Conference and Diocesan Synod).

I enjoy what I do enormously. It is a remarkable joy and honour to walk with people on their journey with God in happy times, sad times and in ordinary times too.

Reflections of a newly-ordained priest

by The Rev'd Sue Genner

Sue (Beverly) had just been installed as Vicar and we started the liturgical year together on Advent Sunday 2019. People had told me that I would be changed by ordination – no one knew how because it is different for different people. That first Sunday as I stood at the door in my new deacon's stole at the end of the service there was an epiphany. I knew that I was your deacon and you were my people to love and serve. There was joy, caring and obligation filling my heart. This was part of God's work in me.

It has been a joy to be part of 'Sue squared' and serve alongside Sue, with her mentoring and training me this year. The discernment process and my spiritual formation group with the Diocesan Ministry Educator continued (a mix of people either pre-ordination or recently ordained priests and deacons). I realised that I had fallen in love with study again and although my time doing the Diploma in Christian Studies was ending I wanted



to continue studying. This year I did a paper via Otago University in the first semester and 2 papers starting mid year with St John's college – one a pastoral paper and the major paper studying Te Reo Māori.

There was a further 'readiness for ordination' assessment process later in the year before the Bishop decided to ordain me to the priesthood. The discernment process has been rigorous and thorough making sure of my continuing sense of call and that this was confirmed by the church. It has involved prayer and worship, study and assessment, training, experience and theological reflection. The service of ordination is contained in our prayerbooks – I wonder if you have ever looked at it? Perhaps if I was trying to explain it to someone I would suggest it is a bit like a marriage: vows and promises are made in the context of prayer and worship. The vows are serious and challenging.

Here in Waiapu Diocese the liturgical colour for ordination is red – for the work of the Holy Spirit, because it is a work of the Holy Spirit 'empowering God's servants for the office and work of a priest in the Church'. Priesthood is not an occupation – it is about who one IS. Priesthood is not a destination – I have not 'arrived' – I am now in a different phase of my journey – a lifelong journey in service of God, God's church and God's world. My learning has not finished – perhaps it is really just beginning.

How will ordination to the priesthood change me? The short answer is 'I don't know – I only know it will.' I will not suddenly become a vicar, I may never be a vicar and to be honest that has not felt a part of my calling thus far. I will continue, at least for the present, to work as a part-time GP. Sue will continue to mentor me, team 'Sue squared' continues – Sue B remains



Vicar and myself now priest-assistant. I have an obligation to continue training with the Ministry Educator for at least another couple of years and to continue a lifetime of studying the scriptures. I am not 'a minister', my job is not to DO (all) the ministry – all the saints are called to the work of ministry – priests are called to 'equip God's people for their work of ministry' (from the ordination service).

My model for ministry (and yours) is Jesus who modelled servanthood. Together, you and I explore what it means to be servants of God, each other and the world. How can I serve, enable and equip you for the work of ministry and the mission of the Church? Together we love and worship God, together with God we are a welcoming inclusive community of love and together with God we bring aroha to a world crying out in need. *Arohanui Rev'd Sue Genner (priest-assistant).*

On the Feast of Stephen

Everyone knows that it was on the feast of Stephen that 'good King Wenceslas looked out'. After all, it's in a Christmas carol – but why? There's nothing about Christmas in it: a splendid young page who rustled up some flesh, wine and logs, an old man out in the snow ('deep and crisp and even') and a kindly monarch. But Christmas?

The clue is in 'the feast of Stephen', which falls on 26th December, 'Boxing Day', as we usually know it. That has nothing to do with Christmas either, beyond the fact that in the past people put a contribution in tradesmen's boxes as a kind of Christmas present for their services during the year.

The Stephen, whose feast day falls on the day after Christmas, was the first Christian martyr. He was a member of the church in Jerusalem in its early days and was an eloquent spokesman for the Christian cause. His proclamation on the day of his martyrdom pulled no punches. He told the Jewish authorities that God did not depend on the Temple and that Christ, who was the prophet foreseen by Moses, was the Messiah for whom the Jewish race had so long awaited. So outraged were his hearers that they stoned Stephen on the spot for blasphemy. *(Image: The Stoning of Stephen by Paulo Uccello)*



As he died, Stephen saw a vision of Christ on God's right hand. Stephen, an ordinary Christian, died under a hail of rocks for claiming that Mary's Son was the promised Messiah. That is probably the reason why the first martyr is honoured on the day after we celebrate the birth of the Saviour. It's a bit like the myrrh in the gifts of the Wise Men – a reminder, as we celebrate, that the bitter shadow of a cross is never far away from this story.



I will Dwell: poetry and meditation for Christmas

BC:AD

This was the moment when Before turned into After, and the future's uninvented timekeepers presented arms.

This was the moment when nothing happened. Only dull peace sprawled boringly over the earth.

This was the moment when even energetic Romans could find nothing better to do than counting heads in remote provinces.

And this was the moment when a few farm workers and three members of an obscure Persian sect walked haphazard by starlight straight into the kingdom of heaven.

U.A Fanthorpe



Find a place to sit quietly and spend time just listening to the sounds around you. Focus on these sounds, one by one. Now focus on the sound within you; your breathing, your heartbeat, your thoughts. Let yourself come to a place of rest. As you pray ask God for the grace to be open to the dwelling of God in you and in the world. Read this passage from Zechariah 2. What words or phrases strike you?

Sing and rejoice, O daughter Zion! For lo, I will come and dwell in your midst, says the Lord. Many nations shall join themselves to the Lord on that day, and shall be my people; and I will dwell in your midst. And you shall know that the Lord of hosts has sent me to you. The Lord will inherit Judah as his portion in the Holy Land, and will again choose Jerusalem.

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Remembrance Tree of Light

Sponsor a light in memory of a departed loved one

and support St John New Zealand (Ambulance Services)
and the 'Leaky Roof Fund' of the Church

*Your sponsorship may be a memorial to a family member,
a special friend or colleague who has died.*



Christmas is for *celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ*, a time for families and for remembering and for giving. It is at such times that the loss of loved ones is keenly felt. The name and symbolism of the 'Tree of Light' reminds us that there is light and hope even in the bleakest of times.

A beautiful, lighted tree will stand in St John's Church from Sunday 7th December through the Christmas period. Names of loved ones remembered will be displayed around the Tree.

Application forms are available in the foyer, from the Parish Office and on the website.

Services December & January

Services will continue at 8.30am and 10am from Sunday 6th December until Sunday 20th December.

Thursday 24 th	<i>Christmas Eve</i>	
	4.00pm	Instant Nativity
	8.00pm	Christmas Eucharist
Friday 25 th	<i>Christmas Day</i>	
	9.00am	Christmas Eucharist
Sunday 27 th	9.00am	Sunday Eucharist



From Sunday 27th December to Sunday 7th February there will be one service only at 9am.

Wednesday 23rd December will be the last Wednesday service before Christmas. Communion on Wednesdays at 10am will re-commence on 13th January.

Contact Us

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