

REG:

Christ Church
BSB 704942
ACC# 100311504

Holy Cross
BSB 704942
ACC# 51176

Music Ministry
BSB 704942
ACC# 100828957

ROSTERS**MONARTO:**

18th Dec **Warden:** R&L Frahn **Reader:** T Franklin
Cuppa: T Franklin
24th Dec **Warden:** G&R Barolo
25th Dec **Warden:** Haydn & Penne **Reader:** J Brodde

HOLY CROSS**CHRIST CHURCH**

	18th Dec 10.39am HC	24th Dec 7pm	25th Dec 9am HC
Greeters	T Hancel K Pfeiffer	T Gogel K Lienert	V Zerk A Pearce
LS Server	L Rosenzweig	N/A	S Gates
Lector:	K Coventry	A Pearce	S Gates
PA / MM	A Gates	L Wiencke J Wiencke	E & A Ahrens
VC:	G Herrmann		J Kuchel
Ushers	A Pearce M Steinert	B & M Gerlach	B & J Kuchel
Bell	R Waldhuter	B Gerlach	R Waldhuter
Altar Guild	L Rosenzweig	N/A	S Gates
Musician	H Carroll	H Carroll	M Gogler
Flowers	Kathy Pfeiffer	Fran Henschke	Fran Henschke
Morning Tea	A Wiencke E & P Welke	N/A	N/A
Ministry Team	M Gerlach H Hueppauff		M Woidt

	9am Church 18-Dec	10:30am JDH 18-Dec	Christmas Day 25-Dec
Pastoral Assist	D Hampel	W Doecke	G Korzeba
Wardens	J&G Pohl	G Schubert I Kluge	Y Stiller
Greeters	R&M Herrmann	D&L Schiller	D Borchardt L Penhall
Tea / Coffee	S Jericho B Mann		
PA	Wes	Nathanael	
Data Projector	Gary B	S Kuchel	
Reader	C Mattner	I Kluge	I Kluge
Organist	Glynniss		
Video		R Jericho	R Jericho
Flowers	H Schirmer		C Miegel
Counter	Gary B	V Jaensch	Y Stiller
Grounds Roster	T&Y Koch		
Water & Care	T Koch		H Schulte



Murray Valley Lutheran Community

**Christ Church**

31 Swanport Rd
Murray Bridge
8532 6553

Holy Cross

31 Florence St
Murray Bridge
8532 4577

Zion Monarto

427 Schenscher Rd
Monarto
contact Christ Church

Sunday 18th December

9am Monarto - HC
 9am Christ Church— HC (*Church*) (*Coffee from 10am*)
 10.30am Christ Church— HC (*Hall*)
 10.30am Holy Cross—HC (*morning tea from 9.45am*)

Christmas Eve Saturday 24th December

7pm Music Ministry at The Steeple food from 6pm
 7pm Holy Cross—Carols and Lessons
 7pm Monarto—Carols and Lessons food from 6pm

Christmas Day Sunday 25th December

9am Holy Cross—HC
 10.30am Christ Church—HC (*Church*)
 10.30am Monarto—HC

Pastor David Kuss contact details: Mobile: 0474 229 959,
email david.kuss@lca.org.au

Pastor Paul Calnan contact details: Mobile 0417 466 611,
email paul.calnan@lca.org.au

Christ Church Office hours: Mon-Fri 9-12noon
 5 Marchand St, Murray Bridge Ph 8532 6553
 email: christchurch.murraybridge.sa@lca.org.au
 Website: www.cclutheranmb.org.au

Holy Cross office hours: Tues, Wed, 9.30-1.30pm; Thurs, Fri 9-2pm
Closed Monday. 31 Florence St, Murray Bridge. Ph 8532 4577.
 Email: hcoffice@internode.on.net

27th Dec 2022 to 3rd Jan 2023 inclusive ~ both Church Offices closed
 Find us on Facebook

PRAYER:

- ✚ Please pray for Tony Budarick, family and friends on the passing of Rosy Budarick 10th December. May God give them comfort at this time.
- ✚ Please pray for people whose lives are being and have been disrupted by the floods and for all who are providing help in any way.
- ✚ Pray for everyone at this busy time of year so we don't put our busy lives before Christ. For those planning and running our services, the office staff, Pastor David and Pastor Paul, those planning to travel for holidays; for the lonely and housebound.

Please Pray for the following people and their carers:

Martha Aartsen, Stella Altmann, Ian & Fay Baxter, Judy Brereton, Tony Budarick, Olga Burgemeister, Lores Frahn, John Fournier, Pastor Andy Gierus, Maxine Gogler, Lila Grocke, Trevor & Kyle Hage, Bert & Nita Hyam, Flo Kerkham, Glen Koop, Irene Kuchel, Yvonne Lablack, Bryan Lees, Joy Leighton, Audrey Leske, Erin, Travis, Cooper, Brady & Taylor Lienert, Joy Lienert, Lynette & Terry Little, Andy & Colleen Nicholls, Brenda O'Reilly, Gwenda Paech, Jim Poole, Jan Richards, Erwin Rohrlach, Neil Schubert, Vena Shinnick, Barbara Taylor, Sandra Thiele, Clarita Venn, June Walker, Rodney Zanker.

Resthaven: Pam Altmann, Norm Bensch, Pat Jenke, Joan Kluge, Leila Koehler, Murray Piltz, Reg Schwartz.

Lerwin: Glad Haeusler, Stewart Jaensch, Margaret Jenke, Alice Kowald, Eric Kuss, Stan and Lorna Peltz.

Craigmore Resthaven: Ivy Roennfeldt

Golden Grove Helping Hand: Joyleen Rosenzweig

Meningie Hospital Aged Care: Kurt Unger, Felicity Woods

RAH: David Pech

Strathalbyn Rehab: Joyce Herrmann

St Paul's Aged Care, Hahndorf: Margaret Pfeiffer

Tailem Bend Hospital: Bevan Schulz

MVLC Baptismal Birthday Celebrations

18th	Emily Mueller	Joan Martin	23rd	David Altmann
20th	Darcy Ahrens	Dianne Paech	25th	Beverly Frahn
	Celina Klenke	22nd Cheryl Doecke		Erwin Rohrlach
	Hayley Pohl	David Kuchel		Glenda Schirmer
21st	Liz Frahn	Caitlin Mueller		Rosa Waltrovitz
	Pat Kuss	Felix Patriitti		

If you would like to be included in our Prayers above or have your Birthday, Anniversary or any other special occasion announced in the fortnightly Newsletter, please email or call either church office.

Diary Dates:

16th Dec	6pm Youth in the Cave (last one for 2022)
22nd Dec	10am Funeral for Betty Paech at Holy Cross 2pm Funeral for Rosy Budarick at The Steeple Unity College
23rd Dec	1.30pm Communion Concordia Hall— please note change of date
24th Dec	7pm Christmas Eve Music Ministry @ The Steeple - food from 6pm 7pm Holy Cross: Carols and Lessons Service 7pm Monarto: Carols and Lessons—food from 6pm
25th	9am Holy Cross Holy Communion 10.30am Christ Church Holy Communion 10.30am Monarto Holy Communion

***Emerge Counselling will recommence on 17th January
Lutheran Care counsellor will recommence on 19th January***

Weekly:

Mon:	9:30am	Cards and Coffee, Ed Centre, Christ Church
	10am	Bible Study, Holy Cross in recess until Feb 2023
Tues:	10am	Bible Study, Ed Centre, Christ Church in recess
Wed:	9:30am	Crafty Capers, Holy Cross in recess until Feb 2023
	9.30am	Holy Cross Paper Shed closed until 4th Jan—Owl Drive pick up on 2nd Jan.
	4pm	MVLC Prayer Time , Christ Church (in the church)
Fri:	10am	Time Out at 10 ~ Dec. Concordia Hall, Jan. JD Hall Not on 29th December!
Sat	1.30pm	Cards at Concordia Hall in recess to 14th Jan 2023

All Welcome – come along and join in the fellowship of these groups

Please note: Cut off time for notices for the bulletin is midday on Thursdays to either office. (Newsletter is Wednesday 10am)

18th December Readings & Songs

Readings: Isaiah 9:1a,2-7; Philippians 4:6-7; John 14:27-31

Songs: Christ Church 9am: Peace like a river; The Advent of a King; On Jordan's bank; Lift up your heads; Make me a Channel of your peace.

10:30am: Here we are to Worship; Glory, let there be peace; Prince of Peace; Hark the Herald Angels sing; There's a lot of pain; Broken vessels amazing Grace **Holy Cross:** There'll be Peace; He was a simple carpenter; Mary's child; Prayer of Peace; My Peace I give to you; Behold a rose is growing. **Monarto:** Make me a channel of you peace; It is well with my soul; My peace I bring; Hark the Herald Angels sing

"LIFE THROUGH THE LENS"



Image: King County Recycling

THE GIFT OR THE WRAPPING

Finally came Christmas morning. As a young father with a young son, this Christmas would be "special". He would be old enough to understand and enjoy the gifts we had lovingly, carefully selected and wrapped with precision folded corners. Son was presented with the first Gift. The wrapping paper was so firmly attached Dad had to help. Then came the "let-down" I'm sure all parents have experienced. The colourful paper was more exciting than the actual Gift. The Gift just "sat there" while the paper could be "scrunched". It made a "scrunchie" noise; it could be pushed and pulled into interesting yet meaningless shapes, and it was good to suck. The parents, full of anticipation, discovered the child felt the wrapping was more interesting than the Gift.

I wonder if God feels a bit like that father. He presented his Gift to humanity with love, the simple Gift of His Son, born in a stable from a humble woman. A gift that brought the message that the great God of all dearly desires a restored relationship with people who had turned away from him.

He also wrapped this Gift with words that should help people understand this baby was an authentic and valid gift. A gift that people had been told for generations to expect. Some of those pointers: A virgin birth; **Isaiah 7:14**. He would be known as the "Prince of peace; **Isaiah 9:6-7**. He would be born in Bethlehem; **Micah 5:2**. He would return to his home country from Egypt: **Hosea 11:1**.

The loving Father God, who never does anything by halves, added kings travelling to show people from outside the country believed this baby was royal. Shepherds demonstrated that even the lowly could approach the Son of God – this Gift is for everyone. Then to add some heavenly majesty, choirs of angels appeared—a wondrous gift of love surrounded by events orchestrated by His Father.

I wonder if God the Father would feel like the other father in my story.

Have we taken our focus from the Gift and placed it on the wrapping? Could it indeed have been a virgin birth? Are there actually angels? Were they kings or wise men, what is a Maggi, and when did they give gifts to Jesus? Why didn't God provide someplace to stay? When did Jesus return from Egypt? There are multiple discussions around the Christmas story, probably all interesting and valid, but what might happen to **YOUR** Christmas story, **MY** Christmas story, if we make a real effort to focus on the **GIFT – JESUS – GOD'S SON?**

God bless,
Kevin.



Growing
FAITH
at home

18 December 2022

FOURTH SUNDAY
OF ADVENT

ADVENT IS A
SEASON FOR
CELEBRATING
GOD'S
PROMISES



growministries
LCA CHILD YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY



www.growministries.org.au



CONVERSATIONS

Share your highs and lows, or respond to the following:

1. What does your name mean?
2. Do you know why it was chosen for you?



BIBLE READINGS

*Read the following Bible readings throughout this week.
Talk about what words or phrases stand out for you.*

1st reading

Isaiah 7:10-16

Isaiah prophesies
the birth of Jesus

2nd reading

Romans 1:1-7

Obedience comes
from faith

Gospel reading

Matthew 1:18-25

Immanuel – God
with us

DISCUSS

A title for Jesus is 'Immanuel' which means 'God with us'. How have you experienced God 'with you' recently?



ACTION RESPONSE

Simple acts of kindness can be a wonderful gift. Make up 'kindness vouchers' to give to one another as gifts this Christmas. Each voucher should list a kind deed that is redeemable during the year e.g. a night off the dishes, a bed made, a room cleaned, a massage provided. Have fun thinking of voucher ideas and preparing them for one another!



MEALTIME PRAYER

Bless our table, heavenly Father, and all who sit at it. As we wait for Jesus' return, give us the gift of sharing with others. Amen.



PRAYER

O come, O
come, Immanuel.
Please fill us
today with your
light and grace.
Amen.



BLESSING

May God our
Father and our
Lord Jesus
Christ be kind to
you and bless
you with peace.

SO THE LORD'S PROMISE CAME TRUE, JUST
AS THE PROPHET HAD SAID, "A VIRGIN WILL
HAVE A BABY BOY, AND HE WILL BE CALLED
IMMANUEL," WHICH MEANS 'GOD IS WITH US.'

MATTHEW 1:22-23

VERSE OF THE WEEK

Murray Valley Lutheran Community

CommUnity Chatter

Sunday 18th December 2022

Christ Church Lutheran
31 Swanport Rd
Murray Bridge

Holy Cross Lutheran
31 Florence St
Murray Bridge

Zion Monarto
427 Schenscher Road
Monarto

*We want everyone in the Murray Bridge regional communities
to know the love of Jesus and be in a saving relationship with Him.*

WELCOME... TO OUR 16TH NEWSLETTER.

MAY GOD BLESS YOU AND LEAVE YOU STRENGTHENED FOR THE
CHALLENGES AND JOYS OF THE COMING WEEK!

BULLETINS / NEWSLETTERS The bulletin (for service info, diary dates, rosters and prayers) will come out weekly and the Newsletter (for any notices etc.) every 1st and 3rd Sunday of the month. Please remember to submit notices /articles/photos for the newsletter to either office in advance to ensure it is included for the date you require by 12pm the Wednesday preceding.

*****PLEASE NOTE***** there will be no Bulletin/Newsletter on Sunday 1st January 2023

OFFICE CLOSURES ETC:

Christ Church and Holy Cross offices will both be closed between Christmas and New Year.
Emerge Counselling will be on leave from 14th December to 17th January
Lutheran Care counsellor are on leave from 1st December to 19th January
Teen Challenge will be closed from 24th December to 15th January inclusive

ROSTERS: **Holy Cross:** Nov/Dec roster is now available—please let the office now if you are unavailable Jan-March 2023 as next roster is being worked on. **Christ Church:** Roster until end of Feb is now available - please advise the office of any changes you make.

MUSIC MINISTRY: *Your opportunity to **Engage in the Mission** is now easier.*

As you continue your prayerful support, you are invited to be part of what we are we're are doing at Music Ministry with your financial support.

You're generosity, enables countless people in the wider community to experience God's blessings.
The LLL account for Music Ministry is: BSB 704-942 Account #100828957

TIME OUT AT 10 on FRIDAYS

Drop the tools, forget the housework and come in for a coffee/tea and chat (bring plate of morning tea to share.) Come and join us for a chinwag and morning tea. December Concordia Hall, January at JD Hall.

CONFIRMATION: If there is anyone interested in commencing pre communion/Step Up confirmation classes please contact Pastor David, Pastor Paul or the office staff. An information night will be held in February. Friday 3rd Feb at 5pm ~ the young ones can stay for Youth at 6pm!

Thursday Communion Services ~ Please note the next Thursday Communion service will be at Concordia Hall, Holy Cross on 22nd December @ 1.30pm

Please remember to turn off all lights and heaters, if you are the last one leaving any of the buildings and ensure the doors are securely locked - please try doors before leaving

**LAST ONE OUT
PLEASE
TURN OFF THE
LIGHTS AND THE
AIR CONDITIONER**



Christmas Day Lunch 25th December 2022 – 12pm at the Uniting Church, Narooma Boulevard, Murray Bridge

A free luncheon will be provided on Christmas Day for people that will be on their own and want some fellowship and company at the Uniting Church, Narooma Boulevard. The Catholic Church are working with the Uniting Church to put this luncheon on. All welcome. Please contact the Catholic Church Parish office 8531 1699 or Rev Darren Lovell – Uniting Church 0466 411 784 to advise that you are coming and how many are coming, to assist with catering.

YOUTUBE LINKS TO VIEW OUR SERVICES ONLINE:

Holy Cross Murray Bridge <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1o3Cy-fGMCsEoTtn9kwkgQ>
Christ Church Murray Bridge <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCGGccwtvzlvNOA302m1TjGw>
Music Ministry Online <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDoA2JRIV7vHNT0oceDkibg>
Christ Church Web Page: <http://www.cclutheranmb.org.au/>
Music Ministry email: musicministrymb@gmail.com
Other Livestreamed Services etc – Go to LCA Church@Home: <https://www.lca.org.au/worship/wpp/churchhome/click> on View@Home to see services online, Pray@Home for prayer resources and Faith@Home for other options.
Sermons4Kids- Stories of the Bible: <https://sermons4kids.com/>

TEEN CHALLENGE: Carol and Jenny would like to thank you all very much for the support you have given them throughout the year. It has been very much appreciated! You may not be aware but Salvation Army are no longer giving out food and the demand on Teen Challenge has increased. They hate to ask as you have been very faithful in supporting them for so long but any extra help you could provide would be greatly appreciated. They wish you all a Blessed Christmas and New Year. **They will be closed after 23rd December and re open on 16th January.**

Below is a list you may find helpful for Christmas giving:

Christmas Puddings	Soft Drinks or juices	Cans of Beetroot	Cans of Peas & corn
Custard & Jellies	Cans of Fruit Salad	Short Bread biscuits	Christmas Lollies
Christmas Cakes-any size	Cans of Ham or Turkey	Fresh carrots and potatoes can be helpful	

Together in Mission 2022 - now available

It's been a busy year of mission and celebration for LLL. Look back at the highlights of 2022 in the annual Together in Mission publication. **Now available online to [view](#) or [download](#).**

The LLL team Thanks you for your support.

Lutheran Men of Australia: The LMA Newsletter for December 2022 is now available, pick up a copy from your hall or office.

Christ Church Trading Table will be back in 2023, h n the third Sundays, between services.



FIGHT THE FAMINE!

Rice. Wheat flour, Sugar. Dates. That's probably not your Christmas lunch this year ... but it might start a month of meals for a family in Somalia or Ethiopia.

We are aiming to supply family food packs to 300 families for the next six critical months.

Can you give a special gift to provide food aid to a family this Christmas?

\$105 provides one month's food - 80kg - for a family of six!

alws.org.au * 1300 763 407



ALWayS for those forgotten



shine joy!

Tired of throwaway Christmas gifts?

With ALWS Gifts of Grace, you shine Christmas joy to family and friends ...

... and brighten the lives of families in need.

20+ gifts, from just \$4. All tax-deductible.

Receive Grace Cards to be your Christmas gift.

First 500 orders receive a shine tea towel!

alws.org.au/grace * 1300 763 407



ALWayS for those forgotten



Recycling Sheds

Don't forget to recycle you used Christmas paper / Cards and boxes etc...

Holy Cross Recycling Shed will be closed un 1 3rd January and be open again from the 4th. The Christ Church recycling shed is open 24/7.



Christ Church Bookshop

Closed over Christmas. There are plenty of Christmas cards & gi ideas available this week

In Recess:

Time out at 10 not on Friday 30th December

Holy Cross Bible Study - recommences when school is back in 2023, new me of 1:30pm

Holy Cross Cra y Capers - recommences when school is back in 2023

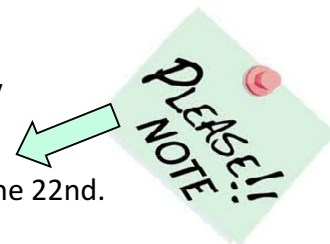
Holy Cross Cards - recommences on 7th January 2023

Christ Church Tuesday Bible Study - in recess un 1 advised

Christ Church Cards and Coffee not meefing on the 26th December

Emerge Counselling @ Holy Cross will recommence 17th January

Lutheran Care Counselling @ Holy Cross will recommence 19th January



Thursday Communion this week

will be on Friday 23rd December at Holy Cross due to the funerals on the 22nd.



NEW YEAR'S EVE SERVICE

7pm on Christ Church Lawns

Bring a chair / dress appropriately
for the weather

Stay for supper - bring your own drink
and nibbles to share

CHRISTMAS 2022

CELEBRATE JESUS BIRTH

join us ~ everyone welcome!

Murray Valley Lutheran Community

Music Ministry @ the Steeple, Owl Dry. Murray Bridge
Christmas Eve 7pm Carols & Music, *food available from 6pm*

Christ Church Lutheran, 31 Swanport Rd. Murray Bridge
Christmas Eve 7pm at Unity with Music Ministry
Christmas Day 10:30am in the Church, Holy Communion Service

Holy Cross Lutheran, 31 Florence St. Murray Bridge
Christmas Eve 7pm Carols & Lessons
Christmas Day 9am Holy Communion Service

Zion Lutheran, Schenscher Rd. Monarto
Christmas Eve 7pm Carols & Lessons, *food available from 6pm*
Christmas Day 9am Holy Communion Service

***may the Hope, Love, Joy & Peace
of Jesus be with you!***





Our deepest Condolences to Trudy, Maxine, Allison, Doris, Yvonne and families and friends on the recent passing of Betty Paech on 8th December.

Her funeral will be held on Thursday 22nd Dec at 10am at Holy Cross.

Our deepest condolences also to Tony Budarick, family and friends on the passing of Rosy Budarick on 10th December. Rosy's funeral will be held on Thursday 22nd Dec at 2pm at 'The Steeple' Unity College.



Our thoughts and prayers are with you all.

Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times and in every way.

The Lord be with all of you. 2 Thessalonians 3:16 (NIV)

90th Birthday

*Congratulations to **Rosa Waltrovitz** who celebrated her
90th Birthday
on 9th December. God's Blessings*

MVLC Glampers

Informa on night in January 2023 for:

"Meet the Lutherans" in Central Australia, August 23 – 29 2023.

January 15 – 6.00pm, JDH, BYO Drinks and Food to Share.

Open to anyone/off road campers trailers/caravans, fly & motel,
(meet @ Hermannsburg Tea rooms 2.00pm August 23)



Murray Valley
Lutheran Community



BLESSING OF BACKPACKS

You're welcome to come along and join us as we bless your child/ren's backpacks for the 2023 School Year. Bring your backpacks along!

Sunday 29th January, 9:30am, The Steeple, Unity College, Owl Drive, Murray Bridge

Sat morning, November 19th, saw our last **Men's gathering** of 2022.



It didn't disappoint.

Cynthia s Dutschke's shed was a perfect venue and scrubbed up nicely. A lot to look at in this shed, from old mallee railway signage to old hand tools, to heritage ns to old bo les, and much more.

The 25 men loved it...

We were greeted and assisted with a beau ful pancakes, crumpet breakfast and much more for the sweet tooth, as well as coffee, toast and juice. (I've got pancake cooking down to

fine art now, lol). Nice change from the regular bacon, eggs and cereal.

With the theme of advent upon us, (prepara on for Christmas). Graham Schubert again took the floor and delivered another awesome devofton based on "what do we need for a party"? How do we prepare?

How do we prepare for the birth of JESUS our saviour and party that goes with that? Graham was awesome, reitera ng the prophets, John the Bap st and the angels, telling us to prepare the way for the new born saviour.



Along with the highlight of the pancakes, yum, the other highlight was our special guest and former mallee boy, Pastor Michael DUTSCHKE. This man is an awesome speaker, teacher and good bloke. He shared with us his early life on the farm near Karoonda, the journey to the seminary and now a Pastor and his mission trips over seas. His main talk to us was about a mission trip to THAILAND, the construc on of fern houses for people to grow vegetables etc, Chris anity in Thailand and so much more.

We need to get this man back, he has many stories to tell.

We thank our friends at Bridgewater Lutheran for allowing Pastor Michael to share with us.

Pastor Michael closed us with scripture and prayer.

Final coffees, left over pancakes, and fellowship and a chance to fill out sugges ons, ideas, comments for next year rounded out the event.

A MASSIVE thankyou to Cynthia Dutschke for volunteering up her shed (it was ideal) and for organising our beau ful menu. Also thankyou's go to Velma and Roy Zerk for help on the day, Brian Lees, Graham Schubert and all who a ended. And to Ian Kluge and Pastor David and all those who contributed throughout the year.

We look forward to our men gathering again in 2023. Its been a massive year for us blokes, seen a lot, sheared a lot, shared a lot, SHED a lot, lol. We've had a endances double at mes too. Thank our Generous God.

On behalf of MURRAY BRIDGE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY MENS GROUP (Murray Valley Lutheran Community) We'd like to extend a blessed Christmas season to u all and a safe New year.

A saviour is born Christ the Lord!!!!!!

I'm having a break for a bit, Stay tuned for Men's group Feb 2023 .

Blessings to all . Joshua 1:1- 9 / Psalm 91 / Psalm 37 . Ma Woidt .

Who can you spot at the Murray Bridge Christmas Carols??



Advent Wreath

1st Sunday
Candle of **HOPE**
2nd Sunday
Candle of **LOVE**

3rd Sunday
Candle of **JOY**
4th Sunday
Candle of **PEACE**
Christmas
Candle of **CHRIST**

The Advent season is a time of preparation for our hearts and minds for the anniversary of the Lord's birth on Christmas.

The wreath and candles are full of symbolism tied to the Christmas season. The wreath itself, which is made of various evergreens, signifies continuous life. The circle of the wreath, which has no beginning or end, symbolizes the eternity of God, the immortality of the soul, and the everlasting life we find in Christ.

The four candles represent the four weeks of Advent, and one candle is lit each Sunday. Three of the candles are purple because the colour violet is a liturgical colour that signifies a time of prayer, penance, and sacrifice.

The third candle is pink and symbolizes joy. It is called the "Shepherd's Candle," and is pink because rose is a liturgical colour for joy.

The white candle is called the "Christ Candle" and represents the life of Christ. The colour white is for purity—because Christ is our sinless, pure Saviour.

Two Babes In a Manger

[Author Unknown](#)



In 1994, two Americans answered an invitation from the Russian Dept. of Education to teach morals and ethics (based on biblical principles) in the public schools. They were invited to teach at prisons, businesses, the fire and police departments and a large orphanage. About 100 boys and girls who had been abandoned, abused, and left in the care of a government-run program were living in an orphanage. They relate the following story in their own words:



It was nearing the holiday season, 1994, time for our orphans to hear, for the first time, the traditional story of Christmas. We told them about Mary and Joseph arriving in Bethlehem. Finding no room in the inn, the couple went to a stable, where the baby Jesus was born, and then placed in a manger.

Throughout the story, the children and orphanage staff sat in amazement as they listened. Some sat on the edges of their stools, trying to grasp every word. Completing the story, we gave the children three small pieces of cardboard to make a crude manger. Each child was given a small paper square, which was cut from yellow napkins I had brought with me. No coloured paper was available in the city.

Following instructions, the children tore the paper and carefully laid strips in the manger for straw. Small squares of flannel, cut from a worn-out nightgown an American lady was throwing away as she left Russia, were used for the baby's blanket. A doll-like baby was cut from tan felt we had brought from the U.S.

The orphans were busy assembling their manger as I walked among them to see if they needed any help. All went well until I got to one table where little Misha sat. He looked to be about six years old and had finished his project. As I looked at the little boy's manger, I was startled to see not one, but two babies in the manger. Quickly, I called for the translator to ask the lad why there were two babies in the manger.

Crossing his arms in front of him and looking at this completed manger scene, the child began to repeat the story very seriously. For such a young boy, who had only heard the Christmas story once, he related the happenings accurately ~ until he came to the part where Mary put the baby Jesus in the manger. Then Misha started to ad-lib. He made up his own ending to the story as he said...

"...And when Maria laid the baby in the manger, Jesus looked at me and asked me if I had a place to stay. I told him I have no mamma and I have no papa, so I don't have any place to stay. Then Jesus told me I could stay with him. But I told him I couldn't, because I didn't have a gift to give him like everybody else did. But I wanted to stay with Jesus so much, so I thought about what I had that maybe I could use for a gift. I thought maybe if I kept him warm, that would be a good gift. So I asked Jesus, 'If I keep you warm will that be a good enough gift?' And Jesus told me, 'If you keep me warm, that will be the best gift anybody has ever given me.' So I got into the manger, and then Jesus looked at me and told me I could stay with him ~ for always."

As little Misha finished his story, his eyes brimmed full of tears that fell down his little cheeks. Putting his hand over his face, his head dropped to the table and his little shoulders shook as he sobbed and sobbed. The little orphan had found someone who would never abandon nor abuse him, someone who would stay with him ~ *for always*.

I've learned that it's not what you have in your life, but *who* you have in your life that counts. "Be joyful always; pray continually; give in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." (*1 Thes. 5:16-18*)

What gifts would *you* bring to the manger?

HE SAVED US

RENEW YOUNG ADULTS CAMP

RENEW is a Christian camp for YAs!
Join us for a relaxing, “renewing” weekend of
fun, fellowship & faith
For all the details check out the Renew
Facebook page.

Titus 3:4-7

Click here to Register:

<https://www.blueprintministries.org.au/camps/renew/>

3 nights \$210
2 nights \$185
1 night \$155

3 - 6th Feb 2023
Ankara Campsite,
Walker Flat



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WHO AM I?
SPIN 2023

JANUARY 10-13

**GLENHAVEN PARK CAMPSITE
STOCKPORT**



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JANUARY 10-13

GLENHAVEN PARK CAMPSITE, STOCKPORT

REGO FEE - \$200

FIRST TIME CAMPERS - \$20

YEARS 4-6

BUS OPTIONS MAY
BE AVAILABLE
NOMINATE PREFERRED LOCATION
DURING REGISTRATION



TO REGISTER OR FOR MORE INFO
[BLUEPRINTMINISTRIES.ORG.AU/CAMPS/SPIN](https://www.blueprintministries.org.au/camps/spin)

