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*After hours please contact MVLC Council Chairperson:
Joanne Pfeiffer 0417 802 052 or
Pastoral Assistant John Pohl 0427 876 776*

Pastor Paul will be on leave from 15th - 28th January
Pastor David will be away from 24th - 31st January
And Janelle is away for most of January

SERVICES

Sunday 14th January

Led by Pastor Paul with H/C *Lay Reading no H/C*
9am Holy Cross (morning tea) 10:30am Monarto
10:30am Christ Church (in the hall)
(morning tea & Trading Table)

Sunday 21st January

Led by Pastor David with H/C *Lay Reading no H/C*
9am Monarto (morning tea) 9am Christ Church (in the church)
10:30am Christ Church (in the hall) 10:30am Holy Cross
(morning tea in hall from 10am)

**The Murray Valley Lutheran Community Annual
General Meeting will be held in the John Dohler Hall
on the 25th February at 1:30pm.**

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



Murray Valley Lutheran Community

Friday 12th January 2024

Christ Church

31 Swanport Rd
Murray Bridge

Holy Cross

31 Florence St
Murray Bridge

Zion Monarto

427 Schenscher Rd
Monarto

Welcome to all worshipping with us Today

The Irony of Epiphany is a lonely Bethlehem and a lonely stable. Where are the theologians? It seems the only people who visit the baby were the dirty shepherds and the pagan astrologers. Where are the theologians? Their heads are filled with verses upon verse, and doctrine upon doctrine, but their hearts reject the Messiah. Their training should have led them straight to the manger. But they're not there, the shepherds and pagans are.

It's such an irony that Herod tried and tried to kill baby Jesus, but it was the chief priests who succeeded.

A single Epiphany Star reveals that the heart of God is for the pagans, the gentiles, and the Herod's of this world, even you and me. DJK

PRAYER: Help us to radiate the love that lives within us through your Spirit to those around us. Help us to remove the idols of our hearts and replace them with greater love for you. Help us to live out the love you've shown us in Christ in our thoughts, words, and deeds. Your word says that love never fails!

All Welcome – come along to events organised by the MVLC and form a close relationship with fellow members.

Cut off for notices sent to either Office is Wednesday 10am for the Newsletter and midday on Thursdays for the Bulletin.

14th January Readings

Psalms 139:1-6,13-18; 1 Samuel 3:1-20;
1 Corinthians 6:12-20; John 1:43-51

MVLC AGM ~ 1:30pm 25th February -

Reports are due, please ensure that they are given to either office by Monday 29th January so the Book of Reports can be compiled and printed for the AGM.

Nominations: If anyone would like to be involved on any of the MVLC committees, please come forward and help make our Lutheran Community stronger and encourage new members.

Nominations close 7th February.

Greg Herrmann – Nominations Committee.

Nomination forms available from either office.

Rosters: Please note that the rosters will no longer be available on line or in the bulletin. We will print a small number of handouts each week that will be available to be pick up with the next few weeks roster on them. Please have a look as there is often blank spots needing filling. If you would like another copy of your roster please contact the office.

Reopening after the New Year

Teen Challenge - 15th Jan

HC Monday Bible Study - 29th Jan

Youth (TBA)

Emerge Counselling - 16th Jan

CC Tues Bible Study - 6th Feb

Probus - February 2024

H/Cross Women's Guild Executive Committee meeting will be held in the Holy Cross Meeting room on Tuesday 16th January at 9.30am

Christ Church Paper Shed - URGENT! A new coordinator is required for the running of the paper shed - not a lot of work involved - if you can help please contact Christ Church office ASAP.

Diary Dates:

NO Time Out at Ten in January

Tues 16 9:30am HC Women's Guild Exec Meet

Thurs 18 1:30pm Resthaven Lutheran Service

Fri 26 **Australia Day - Public Holiday - Offices closed**
closing date for bulletin notices will be Wed 24th, 10am!

Wed 31 Church Council meets

REG:

Murray Valley Lutheran Community

BSB 704942

ACC# 101026587

MUSIC MINISTRY

MVLC Mission & Outreach

BSB 704942

ACC#101028369

Reference: Music Ministry

Baptismal Birthday Celebrations

14th Beverly Paech

18th Myrna Gerlach

Ross Thiele

19th Amy Gates

Haydn Hein

20th Tim Koch

Gloria Pohl

21st Jared Frahn

Philip Freund

Basil Zadow

Pray for:

Everyone who is feeling unwell and struggling with health issues. Surround them with your healing presence so they may know that they are not alone. We especially think of Rosa Waltrovitz

The farming community as they continue to work hard to bring us food. Bless them as they sow & reap crops and care for livestock. Surround them with your love so they may know they are cared for and valued. Help us to be thankful for the food they produce and not to waste it

Pray for the organisers, leaders and campers who are enjoying or have enjoyed or are preparing for youth gatherings across the LCANZ. Pray that they all grow in their faith through God's love.

"LIFE THROUGH THE LENS"



EYES OPEN – BLINDLY FOLLOWING – OR?

Appearing as if each is rusted to his place, these "Rusty Birds" typically stand in a circle on the lawn. Not doing much and saying even less.

But, today, they were in line, head to tail, looking like they were going somewhere, heading for the road. Concerned for their safety, I asked, "Where are you going, fellas?"

The only answer came from "Tailing Charlie". "Dun-no. Were just following him!" I was about to suggest, "Following someone and not knowing where you are going sounds a pretty dumb idea.". Fortunately, my brain caught up with the thought, "How many times have I done that?"

It is so easy to follow someone or some group or an idea because it either looks exciting or will get us something we want, like a financial reward, admiration of others, a group to belong to, or to have friends.

Nightly, the newscasts demonstrate this phenomenon as our TV screens fill with images of "Followers" thrusting placards or flags towards the sky while bellowing and repeating the thoughtless obscenities of someone with a megaphone, with little regard for "why", "reason", or "understanding". Once, one took the time to learn about the leader and find out where they were leading you. The emphasis now appears to be on "following", even if it leads to a confrontation with the elected law and negligent, willful destruction.

A little over two thousand years ago, a bloke called Jesus called to twelve men, "Come, follow me, and I will show you how to fish for people (**Matthew 4:19**). He also listed his credentials to lead with the words, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." (**John 14:6**). And what was to be the outcome of "following"? A friendship with the God of love who **guaranteed** a spirit which brought to life love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against these things there is no law." (**Galatians 5:22-23**)

The difference between Jesus and many of today's "leaders" is he does not call for "blind following". Instead, he encourages, "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world." (**1 John 4:1**)

Try checking out what Jesus says about himself in the Bible. Quietly talk to him about your questions, and listen for his quiet, gentle answers.

You might be surprised where he leads you. AND who he wants you to lead to a life of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.



Growing FAITH at home

SECOND
SUNDAY AFTER
EPIPHANY

YEAR B

We are all
called to be
God's servants



Grow Ministries
LCA CHILD YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY



www.growministries.org.au



CONVERSATIONS

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

1. If you could use only six words to describe yourself to someone else, what words would you choose?
2. Philip looked for Nathanael and brought him to Jesus. Who has brought you to Jesus?
3. What does it mean to follow Jesus? In what ways is your life different because you follow Jesus?



BIBLE READINGS

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

S	John 1:43-51	Jesus calls Philip and Nathanael
M	1 Samuel 3:1-20	The call of Samuel
T	1 Corinthians 6:12-20	Honour God with your body
W	Romans 8:31-39	God's love in Christ Jesus
T	Genesis 28:10-17	God blesses Jacob
F	1 Corinthians 1:1-9	Called to be saints
S	Psalm 139	The Lord knows us well

VERSE OF THE WEEK

Follow me.

JOHN 1:43



CREATIVE RESPONSE

Psalm 139:13-16 tells how each of us was specially and uniquely created by God and of his intimate love and concern for each of us. Print and display these verses to remind you.

**You created the deepest parts of my being.
You put me together inside my mother's body.
How you made me is amazing and wonderful.
I praise you for that. What you have done is
wonderful. I know that very well. None of my bones
was hidden from you when you made me inside my
mother's body. That place was as dark as the deepest
parts of the earth. When you were putting me together
there, your eyes saw my body even before it was
formed. You planned how many days I would live.
You wrote down the number of them in your book
before I had lived through even one of them.**

Share stories of where and when you were born. If possible, look at baby pictures of household members. Say prayers of thanks for each other.



ACTION RESPONSE

The weeks following Christmas are a good time to review the material possessions we have. Have each household member choose at least one item (of good working order) they no longer use or could do without. Take these to a local charity shop. Say a prayer of thanks to God for the many ways he provides for us.



MEALTIME PRAYER

God bless this food.
God bless this day.
God keep us safe in
every way. Amen.



PRAYER

Jesus, Son of God,
you have searched
me and known
me. Thank you for
calling me to follow
you as a beloved
child of God. Amen.



BLESSING

May the God who
knows when you sit
down and when you
rise up, who knows
all your ways, give
you freedom to serve
the world with joy.