Life is a journey...

5 MARKS OF MISSION
1. Witness to Christ’s saving, forgiving, reconciling love for all people (Tell)
2. Build welcoming, transforming communities of faith (Teach)
3. Stand in solidarity with the poor and needy (Tend)
4. Challenge injustice and oppression (Transform)
5. Protect, care for and renew life on our planet (Treasure)
THE SILLY SEASON - AFFLUENZA

The Most Reverend Roger Herft AM | Archbishop of Perth

As 2015 hurtles to an end and 2016 bursts upon us we journey through the midsummer silly season. In journalistic parlance it is a “time out” from political intrigue and breaking news of leadership spills. It provides space in the news cycle for bizarre events to receive air time.

The mandatory deconstruction of some aspect of the Christian faith is a given.

Psychologists and sociologists refer to this period as being particularly susceptible to the effect of affluenza, ‘a painful, contagious, socially transmitted condition of overload, debit, anxiety and waste resulting from the dogged pursuit of the material.’ (Affluenza: The All Consuming Epidemic, John de Graaf, 2001).

It is, at its pervasive worst, an evasion of who we really are. It invites us to wallow in the slothful slumber of affluenza and that relationships can be reduced to the demeaning gimmicks of the ‘silly season’ and let the poignant truths held in the Scriptures, the ‘silliness’.

The Season of Advent reminds us that God comes to us from the future – breaking into our world of self-sufficiency and Pawned peace. Christmas points to the birthing of the divine in the most unlikely worlds of self-sufficiency and Pawned peace. Christmas points to the birthing of the divine in the most unlikely

... And the audiences
Still; all that close throng
Of spirits waiting, as I,
For the message.
Prompt me, God;
But not yet. When I speak,
Though it be you who speak
Through me, something is
Lost.
Through me, something is
Lost.
Though it be you who speak
Through me, something is
Lost.
Through me, something is
Lost.

(The Season of Advent reminds us that God comes to us from the future – breaking into our worlds of self-sufficiency and Pawned peace. Christmas points to the birthing of the divine in the most unlikely worlds of self-sufficiency and Pawned peace. Christmas points to the birthing of the divine in the most unlikely worlds of self-sufficiency and Pawned peace.)
STAINED GLASS
Betty Ross

his beautiful stained glass window in St David’s Church has been donated by the four daughters of Stan and Lyn Glassford as a lasting tribute to their parents.

Lyn was born here and met Stan when he came to Morawa in 1948 to work for Wesfarmers. They married in 1952 in St David’s. Stan started share farming, and later on he and Lyn purchased their own farming properties.

They both always played an active part in the church. Stan was part of Parish Council for some 50 years, 28 years continuously as secretary. He also served as the Rector’s Warden, and was a Pastoral Assistant.

Lyn was instrumental in starting up the Op Shop in Morawa, first carried out in make-do premises, until a grant was received in 2008 enabling new premises to be built in the church grounds.

In 1966 Stan was appointed to Diocesan Council by the Archbishop, and until 2008 served on numerous committees, was a General Synod representative for 20 years, and he connected right up until his death.

His involvement with Perth College was long standing, as his mother, daughters and grandchildren were all educated there.

Apart from his magnificent contribution to the Anglican Church, Stan had an equally impressive record with community boards and committees. He was a councillor of Morawa Shire, served on the committee establishing Morawa College of Agriculture, and was a much-valued rural counsellor caring for local people in need.

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Lyn died 23 July 2007, and Stan on 14 January 2013, with Archbishop Roger presiding at the funeral.

Hope Community Services

CS is a values-based community organisation that has been active in Western Australia for over a century, providing much needed support to people affected by alcohol, drugs and socioeconomic disadvantage. Hope’s dedicated staff and volunteers are fully engaged in the local communities in which they are based, and endeavour to work with the community to deliver services that best meet the their needs. Hope serves the Perth metro, outer metro as well as regional areas: Pilbara, Goldfields and the Midwest.

Hope’s services range from prevention and education to rehabilitation and assistance in transitioning back into the community. Among Hope’s newest projects is Hope Springs Community Farm, a project based on the Therapeutic Community model of care.

Hope Springs Community Farm is located in Walkaway, about 30 km outside Geraldton. The farm offers an innovative and sustainable model based on a holistic and person-centered approach, supporting people in order that they may participate fully in their communities, families and lives. The program is built on the foundation of vocational skills and mentoring, and provides a highly socialised environment where communication and personal accountability are crucial.

Since the farm’s purchase, participants have worked alongside staff and volunteers to begin building a working social enterprise, learning such skills as permaculture, bread-making and jewellery-making which will help fund the project in the future. Links with the local TAFE have been established, with opportunities to study in a variety of fields.

Hope is always seeking volunteer mentors for the Community Farm, and for its sister service in Geraldton, Rosella House. Whether from a local community member with a skill or knowledge to share, or just the gift of life experience and time, Hope welcomes volunteer inquiries and visits to the farm by interested community members.

Tree of Life Programme in Christian Spirituality, Spiritual Formation, Spiritual Direction
A residential course for lay people and clergy held at St John of God Retreat Centre Gloucester Crescent, Shoalwater.
The Programme consists of four residential weekends per year for four years. Each weekend consists of: lecture/presentations, reflection, discussions, case studies, sharing groups, practicum as well as prayer and regular worship in the Anglican Tradition.
Applications are invited for the 10 positions available for first year participants in 2016.
• A brochure, providing details of the programme together with an application form, is available on request from the Programme Director.
• Dates for 2016: 26-28 February; 27-29 May; 26-28 August; 18-20 November
• Enquiries may be directed to the Programme Director, Archdeacon Michael Pennington – Phone 9332 7221 or 0409 372 029; e-mail mpenn@q-net.net.au
CENTRE FOR CHRISTIAN BELIEF, SPIRITUALITY AND AUSTRALIAN CULTURE
Encouraging vital encounters with the living God and deepening awareness of the transforming work of the Spirit in Australian life.

CHURCH SAFE

Workshops are now organised for 2015 and 2016
Workshops will incorporate the new approach to training initiatives and the introduction of protective behaviours education.
Session content will include the issue of abuse as it relates to Churches, grooming, prevention, detection and empowering children and vulnerable people.
While it is only a requirement that leaders and those involved with children’s ministry attend training every three years, it is recommended that, where possible, everyone should attend one of these sessions over the next 12 months as it is a new initiative in child protection training.
Sessions will be held on both weekdays and weekends and will be for a duration of 3.5 hours inclusive of a tea break.
Please register at www.perth.anglican.org/ChurchSafe or call Diocesan Office
n 2013 the pipe organ at St Mary in-the-Valley, in the Parish of Kelmscott, was restored to its original design. It has been established that this is now the oldest working pipe organ in Australia. The organ is used for congregational accompaniment each Sunday at the morning service. The parish received support from the wider community for the restoration work, and so the congregation welcome opportunities for the organ to be used for the benefit of the wider community.

Last year Joseph Nolan, Organist and Master of Choristers at St Georges Cathedral, performed a terrific recital that was very well received. This year Joseph outdid himself, suggesting that he invite Sara Macliver, one of Australia’s most popular and versatile artists and an internationally acclaimed soprano, to accompany him. He and Sara performed to a packed house on the afternoon of Saturday 7th November. The programme showcased the amazing talents of both performers and included music from Handel and Purcell that was written for an 18th century chamber organ. Joseph’s solo of Handel’s Hallelujah Chorus was especially well received. Sara’s stunning voice came to the fore with her performance of pieces from J.S. Bach, Vivaldi, Mozart and Fauré. Then there was a change of pace: from a humorous piece entitled Mr Mozart’s Sleigh Ride by Ogden performed as an organ solo, Joseph switched to piano to accompany Sara in a wonderful bracket of George Gershwin songs.

Everyone who attended the concert thoroughly enjoyed it. The church building at St Mary’s can only seat about 110 people, so it is not a large audience. The congregation would therefore like to express again our thanks to Sara and Joseph for their generosity in performing at this relatively small venue. It is a great privilege for us to be able to host a performance by artists of their calibre and stature.

Now, what will happen next year? ⚫

We are a diverse group – farmers, teachers, nurses, a priest, a FIFO worker, mothers, aunts, grandmothers – but we are all committed to MU’s mission of supporting families, marriages and relationships. Activities over just the past 5 years have included marriage seminars, supporting Manly Music, donating gifts for newborns through the local Child Health nurse, visiting the elderly, raising money for the local high school chaplaincy (around $1500 per year), being involved in the World Day of Prayer, a seminar on Fair Trade, and always prayer and fellowship with each other and other women’s groups in the town.

This year the theme for MU in WA has been ‘Sewing/Sowing a Future Together’ and we have been making dolls for the Uthando Project, which provides toys for children in South Africa who have been orphaned by HIV/AIDS. In making the dolls and learning about the plight of children in another country, we are reminded anew that a few people can make a big difference – and that is what we are called to do. ⚫

U first started in Wongan Hills over 84 years ago and has seen much change in society over that time. One thing that has not changed is its determination to make a difference in our community. Sometimes that has been difficult – in 1965 the President had to row across a flooded Lake Ninan to get to the first Country Festival – but humour, flexibility and hard work have helped us through.
Bishop Jeremy noted the history and provenance of the Kelmscott parish and region, as well as the tragedy of the 2011 bushfires, and then commended the congregation on its community involvement.

“This is an effective witness and makes it quite clear to the local community that you want to be part of it,’ he said.

As he confirmed Michelle Porcaro and received Claire Edgar into the Anglican Church, Bishop Jeremy commented that both women had spoken of a sense of coming home when they’d first arrived.

“You welcomed people who were searching and showed them Christ in your lives,’ he said to the congregation.

‘Your love for Christ shone through so that for [Michelle and Claire], they felt the presence of Christ and wanted to stay.’

Bishop Jeremy encouraged those present to never lose sight of the wonder of God, to live in faithfulness and obedience to Christ, and to serve willingly – an uplifting message that was well received.

‘Well done’, was the encouraging message the congregation at St Mary in-the-Valley received on 18 October when Bishop Jeremy James visited.

AN EFFECTIVE WITNESS

BUNS BLESSED

Buns Blessed

Staff and customers assisted in the raising of money for the Mirrabooka School Chaplaincy in this annual event by All Saints Parish. The day dawned hotter than anticipated, with heat in the kitchen high – however, never too high for this band of good men and women. The Bunnings staff broadcasted that the buns had been blessed so all was good in the eating. And so it was with good cheer and blessings for all.

A team of Dianella Anglicans gathered throughout the day at the doors of the local Bunnings to provide hotdogs and cold drinks to all who passed their way.
ADVENT, CHRISTMAS, EPIPHANY FEATURE
MARY AT THE THRESHOLD

The Reverend Mandy Heniman | Deacon | Kingsley – North Woodvale

Mary allows her body – her bones, blood and flesh – to be transfigured by the Holy Spirit to enable the conversation to be opened anew between God and us. Listen to her. She holds within her the Word that transcends the prophets like Moses and Elijah. She holds within her the Word that will speak of love, life, faith, healing and justice. Listen to her. She carries within her the new covenant that surpasses the law and the prophecy of old.

Mary is the first disciple of the new covenant because she brings it into being. Mary is the first of the new order of prophets for she not only proclaims the word of God, she births the Word of God. In the words of Abraham Joshua Heschel, ‘prophets are the voice God has lent to the silent agony, a voice to the plundered poor.’ Mary wastes no time in lifting up the lowly, He has filled the hungry with good things.’

The incarnation of the Word of God breaks into the created world through Mary, to herald transformative life. Jesus, as Word made flesh heralds the kingdom of heaven and Mary stands as the first of the Kingdom people.

Richard Rohr describes a kingdom person as one who has certain qualities: the capacity to express a calm assurance, spacious and generous in their ability to embrace others, living in the threshold space between heaven and earth and holding both as precious within them - a tension that is hard to reconcile. It is a tension that Mary carries in her heart from the very moment of the visit from the angel Gabriel and is at the height of pain as she silently screams from the foot of the cross.

Kingdom people are surrendered people who live for what matters, express a sense of freedom, and are grounded. Mary is a kingdom person. She perceives the advent of the kingdom of God and, despite the trouble she feels in her soul and the sorrow and the grief that she knows she will encounter, she is ready to be the bearer of light into this world.

We, like Mary, are ordinary people in an ordinary time and an ordinary place. This Advent, let’s allow God to break into our world. Let’s surrender ourselves to the visible presence of God in our lives, transfiguring the ordinary into the extraordinary. Let’s live in the threshold space between heaven and earth, carrying the tension of this world and God’s kingdom, being kingdom people, sharing the sorrow, grief and troubles of this world, encountering people on the journey and bearing light to those who live in darkness.

With the tuning of the liturgical year, we encounter the great stories and symbols of Advent with open hearts and readiness for something fresh to happen, for us and for the world around us. The voice which dominates in Advent is that of John the Baptist—two of just four prophets, and fore-runner of Jesus the Baptiser—two of just four prophets, and fore-runner of the Lord. Here is an ambiguous character with a forthright and fierce vision of the coming Lord, aggressive, perhaps even violent, in establishing justice. ‘His winnowing-fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.’ Over all our Christmas preparations hangs this threat, this prophecy of uncompromising judgement and naked accountability, for Bethlehem and the End Time are not to be separated. In accurately identifying the threat, however, remembrance is essential: remembering that the divine judge is first and last a baby, not some high court judge in wig and gown, but a new-born child wrapped in swaddling bands. It is before this embodied Love and nothing but this incarnate Love that we stand, that we are stripped bare, that we are left defenceless.

In their place we find silent stars and bleating sheep, curious astrologers from afar, and disreputable shepherds hanging about. Gathered around the Lord’s table this Christmas, we too will be worshipping at the manger throne where pure Love reigns, searching and refining and saving us from ourselves.

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A s one Christian year is poised to give way to another on Advent Sunday, we have the luxury of reflecting on what it means to live in linear time as well as faith time. Christian time, after all, is not tied to calendars, clocks, planners and apps. Rather, Christian time is a series of moments in time that are ripe and opportune; moments in time in which God stands ready to do something new.
A WORLD IN WAITING

The Reverend Alison Gilchrist
Parish Priest Bassendean
Diocesan Evangelism Enabler

The World Happiness Report is a survey of the state of global happiness. The first report was published in 2012, after a United Nations High-level Meeting on Happiness and Well-being.

The opening paragraph of the 2015 report reads: ‘The world has come along way since the First World Happiness Report in 2012. Happiness is increasingly being considered a proper measure of social progress, a goal of public policy.’

Chapter 8 of the report is entitled ‘Investing in Social Capital’, a term I have used on this page before, and which has been a significant theme used in considering various outreach initiatives I have been involved in developing and delivering, especially in journeying with emerging Christian communities. In defining the terms of reference the compilers suggest the following.

‘The intrinsic benefit of social capital is the human yearning for love, friendship, and community. Man, as Aristotle famously said, is a social animal. Social capital is a measure of the quality of interpersonal relations, involving trust, honesty, and mutual support, and these in turn increase mental and physical well-being.’

I have to admit I was somewhat puzzled by the underlying premise, driven by international politicians from every continent, that a statistical survey might be the correct driver to determine policy change intended to generate a deeper sense of meaning and hope in the world.

After reading the report I was left reaffirming that ‘the world is waiting’ for happiness and is at a complete loss as to where it might be located.

Waiting, the refrain of Advent, is a fundamental, unchangeable, universal fact of life. It’s reflected daily where the homeless are waiting for somewhere to go, refugees are waiting to return home, children wait for birthdays, the elderly wait for their savings to run out, commuters wait in traffic. We all wait, and this report indicates the world is holding its breath, ‘waiting for happiness.’

Israel, too, was waiting: waiting for the Messiah; and when he came, they missed him. Which leads us to ask: what kind of Messiah were the people of Israel waiting for? Certainly not one who looked and behaved like Jesus. So, in this season of wondering, I’m led to ponder what sort of happiness is the world currently waiting for?

Then as now, people everywhere try to produce their own solutions, to conjure a picture of what it is they think they’re expecting. Folk do this through relationships, through careers, through acquiring many possessions or a large bank account, through drugs or sex or other activities, and while they may create some temporary contentment, so very often it’s hollow and joyless.

Like the Israelites’ world, ours isn’t expecting Jesus to be the answer. He just doesn’t fit their picture of what it is they are yearning.

This Advent I want to challenge us, the Church, to step out of the shadows and make Christ known as the long awaited one, who brings his great shalom - the word can mean welfare, health, prosperity or even ‘happiness.’

The world is waiting.

GOLDFIELDS GOD-TALK – SAND PLAIN

The Reverend Dr Elizabeth J Smith | Mission Priest | The Goldfields

The landscape of the Goldfields is so flat that a gentle, uphill stretch of road, a rocky outcrop or the spoil heap of a mine site counts as high topographical excitement. The lowest points are the salt lakes. They are the ghosts of the ancient river systems that ground down mountains over half a billion years. Among the highest landmarks today are the granite domes, evidence that beneath the skin of soil and vegetation is some of the oldest rock on the planet. Flattest and driest of all landscapes in this flat, dry country are the sand plains.

I take a compass and leave the open woodland for the springy scrub of the sand plain. The thickets of paperbark and cypress pine are barely a couple of metres tall, yet high enough to block my view of the horizon, which is featureless, anyway, for the next fifty kilometres.

The compass is a necessity if I want to get anywhere and back again without geographical embarrassment. But I am waist-high in remarkable vegetation: grevilleas, hakeas, aromatic shrubs. A local wattle with diabolical spikes brightens the day at ankle height. Spinifex grows slowly outward in circular clumps, scavenging fresh nutrients in this poor yellow sand. An orchid’s single, broad leaf hints at a mysterious flower soon to form.

patches of bare sand are dotted with kangaroo tracks, conical ants’ nests, mysterious holes and the spoil heaps of burrowing creatures. Strange, curly grass blades, stiff grass-tree spikes and twenty different prickly bushes are endlessly fascinating. Each step I take demands decisions about how to conserve my forces. I clamber over shrubs and shoulder through thickets.

Whose habitat I am going to ruin with my trampling boots? There are spiders whose low-slung webs I don’t even see, beetles whose burrows fill with sand at my passing, ants in the flower spike that snaps under my clumsy feet.

What will be my compass through December, when the shopping and eating frenzies of our culture threaten to block our view of the horizon of faith? I navigate by something further ahead than Christmas: the conviction that Jesus Christ will come again. His future is my landmark in this season. He stands tall in the desert, calling for a change of heart and pointing to someone still to come. Mary and Elizabeth are outbreaks of beauty, glorious flowering of the best of Israel’s faithfulness and praise. I pause and take pleasure in their courage, their integrity.

I choose my steps carefully in this season, so as not to trample on fragile lives. I look for the broken-hearted as well as for the happy families heading for their holidays.

Advent is full of prickles, a season of fasting and prayer. Tread gently. Go slowly. Look for the age to come.
Throughout the Middle East, the birthplace of Christianity, thousands have been martyred for their faith in these last few years. Today modern media reveal the scale of such slaughter. It was not so in 1915, when 1.5 million Armenian Christians were exterminated by Ottoman Turks. In the 1930s Hitler asked, ‘Who today remembers the extermination of the Armenians?’ But we do now.

At 5pm on Sunday 6 December the Armenian Bishop of Australasia preaches at the Genocide Centenary in St George’s Cathedral. A service of prayer for today’s persecuted Christians is offered there also at 5pm on Sunday 27 December, anticipating the feast of St Thomas Becket.

The rise and rise of carol services

Some will have been Advent carols, on Sunday 29 November; some ‘Christmas’ carols brought forward into Advent, perhaps because of school or university terms.

Christmas carol services were, historically, the first-born, from the 1870s in the UK, and their Advent and Epiphany cousins followed much later.

For carol services sung to a high standard, this Christmastide, look at the websites of those churches which have professional choirs or worship bands and of Anglican schools and colleges with strong choral traditions.

St George’s Cathedral has a typical pattern: Festival of Lessons and Carols (7.30pm on 20, 23, and 24 December), Epiphany Carols (5pm Sunday 10 January), Benjamin Britten’s ‘A Ceremony of Carols’ (5pm Sunday 17 January), and a Candlelit Sung Eucharist (6pm Tuesday 2 February) closing the Christmas season on Candlemas.

By the time you read this you will already have been to a few carol services this year. For carol services sung to a high standard, this Christmastide, look at the websites of those churches which have professional choirs or worship bands and of Anglican schools and colleges with strong choral traditions.

DEATH AFTER CHRISTMAS

It is sobering that Christmas Day is followed immediately by martyrs’ feasts: of Stephen, of the Holy Innocents, and of Thomas Becket. In this new age of Christian martyrdom we are keenly aware that recognising Christ as Lord places 21st century Christians in martyrs’ shoes.

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When the gospel writers came to consider the Good News of Jesus Christ they confronted a similar dilemma. At one end is St Mark, who begins with John the Baptist baptising the thirty year old Jesus; at the other end, reflecting another aspect of the profound truth of Jesus, St John begins ‘In the beginning’ and he celebrates the pre-existent Christ, declaring that the Word has become flesh.

The pre-existent Christ, known in his years of ministry as he is, Jesus is completely present in our world. This is no legend or fable. St Luke and St Matthew begin with a beginning that declares our common humanity, Jesus is fully human, born in the same way as every one of us. Nurtured in the womb Jesus is born into the chaos of the world.

As we celebrate the birth of Jesus, and the hope that it heralds the evangelists each emphasise the earthly reality of Jesus’ life and ministry. Pre-existent as Jesus is, known in his years of ministry as he is, Jesus is completely present in our world. This is no legend or fable.

Jesus is born at a particular time in a particular place; he lives a measurable life no less than any other one of us. His death is set in time and his church emerges with the joy of the resurrection at an identifiable time.

I labour this point to emphasise that the deep celebration of Christmas is not to be found in the sweet songs of our children, nor in the triumphs of love and tolerance that are depicted in our favourite Christmas movies. The deep celebration of Christmas is to be found in the soiled straw of a stable, with the shocking reality of human birth.

However the story of Jesus begins, every path converges in this place and time. This is the action that makes resurrection a possibility. God must break into history, moving from beyond time to immersion in time. The tragedy of death can only be confronted and defeated if God himself enters into the darkness.

The true light that comes into the world is not a twinkling star nor an ancient stable oil lamp, it is the light that shines into the darkest places, replacing shadow and fear with hope and the promise of life for all beyond time.

There is a great temptation to relax into the sweetness of the season, lulled by familiar tunes and familiar images on our screens. This is a sanitised Christmas that is of no benefit at all; instead insist this year on the deep, messy, disturbing, joyous, reality of the birth of the one who is fully our hope and our light.
In the Wakefield Mystery Play, one of those great achievements of mediaeval English drama that unfolds the full story of the ‘mystery’ (hence the name) of salvation, there was a further blurring of details, one that would send shudders through any self-respecting contemporary New Testament scholar! In that play, three Yorkshire shepherds come to visit the Christ child, and offer gifts, long before the Wise Men turn up! Sadly, there isn’t room here to reproduce in full what they say. The important thing is what they give. So, what do these three shepherds give to the one they recognise as ‘maker of all’, ‘sovereign Saviour’ and as a ‘darling dear full of Godhead’? A bob of cherries, a budgie and… a tennis ball! As Rowan Williams writes in commenting on this remarkable play, it is much more difficult to allegorise and make theological commentary on these, than the gifts of the wise men, that seem so theologically resonant. They seem, and are, pointless, useless presents.

The English theologian John Milbank has written frequently over the last decade or so about the remarkable theology of ‘gift’ the Christian faith offers. What we celebrate throughout the seasons of Christmas and Epiphany (though we remember it all year) is the remarkable gift God has given us in the coming of his Beloved Son. The ‘maker of all’ has, indeed, come to be with us. For that remarkable gift there can be no legitimate ‘exchange’, which is why we call it ‘grace’. There is no equitable ‘return’ that we can make. God’s extraordinary outpouring of gratuitous love can have no answer, except in some faint, inadequate effort to echo that outpouring; rather like the pointless, silly gifts of the Wakefield shepherds: a bunch of cherries, a budgie in a cage, a tennis ball!

Milbank’s point is that the mere fact of giving opens us up to the joy that can go with a ‘pointless, silly’ offering. We begin to take delight simply in being caught up in an ‘economy’ of love – where what we offer to God, to other people, cannot bear comparison with what God has done for us. But we do it anyway. And we don’t offer it from a sense of duty or obligation, but for the sheer joy of it. That is how we best mirror the sheer joy that God has in giving to us ‘God’s presence and his very self’, as Newman puts it!

Epiphany recalls rich and costly gifts given to the Christ child. But we also call this feast ‘The Manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles’. Who and what Christ is becomes manifestly, abundantly clear: pure, gratuitous, overflowing gift. ‘What can I give him, poor as I am?’, Christina Rossetti asks in a poem (‘In the Bleak Midwinter’) it is climatically inappropriate for Australians to use at this season! What indeed? In terms of ‘equal’ or ‘just’ exchange, absolutely nothing! There is no gift to ‘match’ what we’ve been given. Epiphany teaches us that even gold, frankincense and myrrh, however symbolically resonant they are, aren’t adequate. Instead, we’re invited to rejoice in the giving of cherries, budgies and tennis balls – little things that simply say, I enjoy being part of this remarkable ‘economy of gift’ that God initiates and makes real in Jesus.
But Luke takes this further. In Simeon’s song – the Nunc Dimittis of Evening Prayer – the old, righteous and devout man makes clear that this child is ‘a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel’. Human devised racial divisions are also to be overcome. Young, middle aged, old; men, women; Jews, Gentiles: all are now to be gathered in worship of God, with the focus being the young Child, recognised by Simeon and Anna as ‘the Messiah’. And Anna is inspired to ‘speak about the child to all who were looking for… redemption.’ You see what I mean about the model of what the Church should be.

There are other things to discover, too. Simeon makes clear that ‘this child is destined for the falling and rising of many…, and to be a sign that will be opposed’. The child Jesus is presented in the Temple, as required of all first born, sharing in the thanksgiving to God proper to all God’s people. But we know that he will also share many of the same things all other human beings share – suffering, sadness, death. He will, to use a word of St Irenæus, ‘recapitulate’ all it is to be human (except sin). And, because of that, ‘a sword will pierce [his mother’s] soul too.’ That reminds us of some important things. Candlemas marks both the end of the full Christmas season, giving us an opportunity to recall and reflect on all the joy that the birth of this child brings. But it also marks the start of our move towards Lent and its dreadful climax – the Passion and death of our Lord. That’s especially so this year, given how early Holy Week, Good Friday and Easter are in 2016. Again, yet more is ‘included’ in our worship by the saving actions of our God – all of human life, birth, sorrow, suffering, pain, death and the joy and grief that accompanies them. All are significant and important to God.

The popular name of the feast – ‘Candlemas’ – gives us something to think about too. In the dark days of an early February in Europe, candles were held in churches as the gospel on this day was read. They reminded people of Simeon’s words about ‘the light to lighten the Gentiles’. But there’s something rather splendid about candlelight. There’s a reason that churches light candles on the altar or Holy Table: no one thinks of putting two electric lamps there. Why? Well, candlelight flickers, it sputters into life, blazes up and offers light and warmth. But there’s always the possibility a wind or a breath will put it out. ‘The darkness comprehendeth it not’, but all men and women, old and young, of any and every race are ‘comprehended’ by this extraordinary love, and brought to worship that Light of life in the Church ‘catholic’ – universal and all-embracing.

Candles offer light, and warmth, gently, softly. There is none of the harsh glow of electric light. So Jesus offers himself, as a fragile baby, and his self-sacrificing love still softly, gently. In the feast of Candlemas, Luke seems to come very close to the vision of John: this is ‘the light of the world, a light that shines in darkness’. And even if it appears that this fragile light has been extinguished at the cross, we know that is not the last word. ‘The darkness comprehendeth it not’, but all men and women, old and young, of any and every race are ‘comprehended’ by this extraordinary love, and brought to worship that Light of life in the Church ‘catholic’ – universal and all-embracing.
FACING CHALLENGE AND CHANGE

For us in the community service sector, this past year has been one of challenge and change. Strangely enough, much of this began with the downturn in the mining sector. Youth workers, family counsellors and other community service providers are the last people you might expect to take an interest in the price of iron ore. Yet it has not been an uncommon sight to see our staff huddled around a newspaper in the morning, reading the business pages, hoping to see those graphs turn in the other direction.

The decline in the resource sector has created a ripple effect across our economy. In response, the government has tightened its belt and cut spending across the board - including funding for community services like ours.

In the midst of these cuts, the need for community support has not waned. In fact, the economic uncertainty has, if anything, created greater demand for counselling, both financial and personal. Many workers have recently found their jobs and very livelihood in jeopardy.

However, important as it may be, community service is about more than just funding. The passion and ingenuity routinely displayed by our staff has been truly inspiring. In the face of increased demand and decreased resources, our year has been characterised by collaboration and innovation. By working together with other service organisations, corporate partners and, of course, Anglican parishes and schools, we have been able to continue our work supporting vulnerable families in Western Australia.

Perhaps a perfect example of this approach is the continued success of our youth homelessness program – Foyer Oxford. Many housing services will take in homeless people and put a roof over their head for a short period. However, once their time is up, that person will inevitably return to the streets. Foyer Oxford strives to equip at-risk young people with the tools to permanently end their homelessness. To accomplish this, Foyer Oxford is run by a consortium of three organisations – Anglicare, Foundation Housing, and the Central Institute of Technology.

We provide professional youth workers who offer support and case management to the young people. Foundation Housing has overseen the construction of 98 apartments, styled after student accommodation, to house the young people. The Central Institute of Technology offers access to education and training opportunities, with the goal to getting young people into the workforce. This holistic approach has proved to be enormously successful, with over 85% moving into their own place.

Excitingly, the program hit capacity this year, housing 98, including 24 young parents and their children. The program received several awards, including the program’s manager, Jethro Sercombe, being awarded the WA Youth Work Leader Award, and culminating with the Premier’s Award in October 2015.

This theme of collaboration was a common thread for us. We were thrilled when our Mental Health worker, Paul Escott, received the St John of God Health Care Mental Health Employee of the Year Award.

Paul was recognised for his extraordinary contribution to enhancing the well-being of young people in the Balgo, Mulan and Billiluna communities in the North West. In addition to providing a range of counselling and crisis prevention services, Paul has implemented a number of successful initiatives which have positively impacted these communities. In particular, Paul’s involvement in the local football team has been inspirational. He is the coach of the Wirrimanu Tigers who managed to overcome a number of obstacles to reach this year’s grand final. Players in the team abide by a code of conduct, and those who engage in antisocial behaviour face disciplinary action from a jury of their peers. This has had a remarkable impact, markedly reducing instances of violence.

Paul’s ability to connect with the local community has been critical to his success.

I was particularly happy that our Street Connect program was able to continue operating this year. The work Street Connect does with marginalised young people, engaging them in positive life changes, is truly vital. Our Street Connect youth workers provide a daily outreach presence via the Mobile Youth Resource Centre – better known as the outreach bus. They meet with young people on the streets, forming positive working relationships and providing informal counselling, referral to other helpful services, advocacy, and crisis intervention. However, the program receives no government funding. Instead we rely upon corporate partners, philanthropists, and the generosity of parishioners. I was thrilled to see an outpouring of support over the course of 2015 for this service.

Support for Street Connect came from schools including St Mary’s, Christ Church Grammar, St Hilda’s and Guildford Grammar, as well as parishes including Mount Pleasant, South Perth and Floreat Park.

As we move into 2016, there is a great deal of uncertainty for us and the people we serve. We know, however, that by bringing together our community we have been able to change many lives for the better. Anglicare WA exists to help all people in our community move from surviving to thriving, and this is what we will continue to do.
AULD LANG SYNE: ROBERT BURNS AND THE INVENTION OF YULETIDE

It is often said that Christmas was re-invented in Victorian England, and it is true that Dickens’s A Christmas Carol (1843) and Truro Cathedral’s first carol service (1878) contributed elements now considered indispensable to the season. But the ‘bleak midwinter’ (Christina Rossetti, 1872) had been warmed in Scotland long before the pre-industrial Christmas folk-traditions of England were revived.

Robert Burns (1759-1796) transcribed, elaborated, and popularised ‘Auld Lang Syne’, a Hogmanay (New Year’s Eve) song. From 1802 ‘Burns Suppers’ were being held in his memory annually on 25 January. Thus both his work in collecting song and his life added traditional elements to the Christmas - Candlemas period long before Victorian England experienced its Christmas revival. At 5pm on Sunday 24 January, Scots Australians and others gather at St George’s Cathedral for worship, using Burns’ own versifications of the psalms, followed by a traditional Burns Night Supper (ticketed) ending, of course, with ‘Auld Lang Syne’.

It is interesting that religious metaphors are applied by journalists to sport on a regular basis more than any other walk of life. ‘Comebacks like Lazarus’, ‘baptisms of fire’, players who are ‘saviours’, coaches who are ‘messiahs’ and returning champions making ‘second comings’ are a few examples. Perhaps it is striving after superlatives, maybe it’s laziness; but there is no denying that it works for those people who really care about sport. There is a way in which the rituals, sensory overload, passions, tribalism, chants, colours, sessions and transformational experiences that sport offers in the short term makes some of the same connections as religion for certain people.

Perhaps as we begin another church year, rejoice at the arrival of our Saviour, and kneel with shepherds and magi in adoration, we could open ourselves anew to something of the excitement and passion we see on the sporting field. For our hope is eternal and our transformation lasts longer than ninety minutes. Have a safe, meaningful and blessed season.
WHAT SEPARATES US FROM IS

Andrew Hamilton SJ | Consulting Editor | Eureka Street.

The initial response of Malcolm Turnbull, like that of many other international leaders, did all that was possible. He expressed horror at the killings, sympathy with the victims, solidarity with the French people in their grief and outrage, and defiance in the face of terror.

In this he echoed the football fans who sang the Marseillaise as they left the imperilled football stadium. It was a song of battle undertaken and of commitment to victory against terrorism.

The themes of war against terrorism and victory have dominated commentary on the killings. In light of the fact that the war against terror was the seedbed in which IS grew, they demand serious reflection. We should ask precisely what they demand serious reflection.

The mass murder of unarmed civilians carried out by terrorists in Paris last weekend was appalling. Whether considered as an act of war or of terror, it was indefensible. It left over 100 people dead, many more injured, and families devastated. It embedded terror into French urban life. It needs a response.

Based on our shared humanity, and where we give freely. Without equality and freedom, what is given becomes an exaction, a demand or an expectation. Alienation and disengagement follow.

Totalitarian regimes usually adopt a high rhetoric of fraternity that masks the iron handed impositions of the state. Where the economic freedom of the individual is canonised, the rhetoric of fraternity is advertising puff to mask sectional self-interest. In both cases cynicism about political processes results.

Against this background it is not helpful to define freedom as the defining issue in responding to IS terrorism. In our culture fraternity is an illusion. It will be expressed in solidarity not only with the victims of terror and with the French people in their trial, but also with the Muslim communities both in France and in Australia.

They are also our brothers and sisters with whom we are called to build an open and respectful society that exposes the meanness of the IS ideal.

The risk is that we shall turn on our Muslim brothers and sisters in our own lands and abroad, and treat them in repressive and discriminatory ways. Turnbull’s refusal to link what is done in Paris to immigration or to discriminatory ways. Turnbull’s refusal to link what is done in Paris to immigration or to authentic Islam is encouraging.

Andrew Hamilton SJ | Consulting Editor | Eureka Street.
Despite the presence of dead soldiers’ relatives within the crowd, war seemed long ago. School children sang the Marseillaise. Their peace-filled voices echoed like uninterrupted innocence. I wondered, “How long will these villages keep these ceremonies? How long do they grieve? When will someone decide these wars are too long ago or too far away, as today war is fought on other people’s soil?”

Two days later, after an evening at our local organic market, Paris was attacked. The news came like war does — sudden and violent, fracturing freedom with mass death. Then came declarations of a state of emergency and the closing of borders. That night my eldest daughter was over the border in Switzerland without a passport. The morning after the attacks, dirt will be released in early 2016.

On Friday night the French imaginary of war altered, but not the grief and trauma of its violence. The thought I had on Remembrance Day forgot repetitions of world history, ‘Lest we forget’ that this country, like others, painfully knows war down to its inherited cellular and quotidian levels. Grief and hurt pervades the people. Whether it’s at war or not, it’s an historical, difficult and reluctant moment for the French people.

Dr Bronwyn Lay worked as a lawyer in Melbourne before moving to France where she now works as an legal consultant for international NGOs. She is also the creative director of the Dirt Foundation and her book, Jurs Materiaum: Empires of Earth, Soil, and Dirt will be released in early 2016.
Leading up to the Roundtable, both the Perth Diocese and the Public Affairs Commission of the national Anglican Church made submissions. We stressed the importance of religious freedom and the need for comprehensive legal protection of that right, including the right to manifest beliefs. Manifesting beliefs could be as diverse as needing to take certain days off work for religious reasons, wearing certain symbols of belief, or refraining from activities against one’s conscience. Religious freedom is, however, not absolute. It can be limited by other people’s fundamental rights and freedoms, and their health and safety. In situations where rights may conflict, there will of course be debate as to how both rights can be accommodated.

Our submissions urged continuing ‘exemptions’ for religious organisations from laws against discrimination on the grounds of religion. Religious bodies wishing to maintain their religious mission may feel that they need to employ or give preference at all levels to people who share in their mission. This could include both lay and ordained, as mission and vocation may apply to all members of staff.

The Roundtable presented an interesting mix of organisations. As well as many Christian denominations, there were Scientologists, Sikhs, Muslims, Progressive and Orthodox Jews, Bahá’í, Hindus and a range of Atheist, Humanist or Rationalist organisations. Gender balance was organised by requesting that each organisation should send a male and a female representative. All were supportive of religious freedom and complete protection of rights to believe or not believe. Debate centred on whether there should be rights to manifest beliefs, and where to draw the line. There was a desire for the word ‘exemptions’ from discrimination law to be replaced by something more positive. The term ‘mutual respect’ was preferred to terms like ‘toleration’. The contentious issues were about preserving religious freedom when organisations receive taxpayers’ money to provide a public service, such as in schools, hospitals and aged care. Concerns were expressed about lack of protection from attacks by hostile groups or hostile media, about community ignorance concerning religions, and about the need for education. We discussed self-regulation and the benefits of formulating commonly-accepted principles for social cohesion. Ultimately no decisions were made; nor could they be. For me, it was useful to hear different perspectives and problems faced by various religious groups and to note that most had a range of views within their organisations. It was pleasing that the Human Rights Commission recognised the importance of religious freedom and was willing to put the time and effort into bringing people together in what will hopefully be an ongoing, respectful conversation.

At a time like this, as well as remembering in our prayers the families of those brutally murdered, we must guard our reactions. We are shocked about Paris; but this meant that we almost entirely ignored Beirut, where there was a similar attack the same weekend. What seems to be happening is that ISIS, which has been suffering some reverses in Iraq and Syria, has launched attacks on soft targets in the Middle East and the West. They’ve used the obvious route into Europe via the mass refugee migration to smuggle fanatics into our midst.

So what should our reaction be? First of all, let’s not victimise the victims. The refugees are fleeing ISIS, not supporting them; so if jihadists are being smuggled in their midst, let’s not tar everyone with the same brush. It all goes to show that a lot more work, and a lot more co-operation, is needed to manage the refugee crisis. It would play into the hands of ISIS if they could point to an uncaring and rejecting Europe.

Second, let’s reflect on what’s really going on. ISIS are managing to recruit angry and frightened young men, and some women, from across the Islamic world, and even from British communities, for an extreme creed because suicidal violence is presented as a solution to them. A solution to what? We need to answer that question if ever we’re going to understand the root causes of this terrorism.

Violence appeals to ISIS recruits because this particular brand of Islam is telling them that they can be martyrs and saints if they bring specific anti-Islamic forces to the ground. The West (land that includes us; even you and I are potential targets) is being blamed for Middle East dictatorships, for Israeli oppression and Palestinian suffering, for tempting Muslims with consumer culture and lax morality. All this is presented as a justification for getting high on bloodshed.

In the face of all this, we need to hold our nerve. We need to encourage international co-operation to tackle the root causes of war in the Middle East, and that includes a renewed focus on solving long-standing problems like Palestine, and Arab dictatorships. We need to renew our commitment to the values which actually feed us – compassion, fairness, tolerance – so that violence can be transcended. We need to pull people together, including our Muslim neighbours, the vast majority of whom share our revulsion at the violence. We need, we can say as Christians, the transforming power of God to be focussed on the situation by prayer, and Christian advocacy. All this can feel utterly overwhelming in the front rooms of our homes. But let us do what we can – a letter to a politician or a newspaper here, a carefully chosen donation there, a wise word in a conversation with our neighbours, a gesture of friendship to the stranger, to the Muslim neighbour or the incoming refugee, and above all, prayer. By God’s grace and favour, we may yet change the world.
JOY RIDE

The Reverend Eion Simmons, has become part-time chaplain assisting Garry South at the Port Hedland Mission to Seafarers. With up to 16 large iron ore carriers in port at any one time, Garry has welcomed the appointment for the invaluable ministry of ship visiting. The chaplains travel to the ships by launch, climbing the gangway to board and often going up a series of stairwells to the Captain’s cabin. The launch service transports seafarers from ship to shore, where they are met by the Mission bus, taking them to the shopping arcade. It is too far and too hot to walk.

Newman Parish will be conducting a Family Carols Night outside their church on 13 December to farewell them from the Parish of Windsor in Sydney where they have been working for the past years, and commissioning them for this new ministry. With their two little girls, Ada (3) and Eliza (18 months old) they will arrive in Geraldton in mid-January. Many church members in Geraldton will be delighted to welcome Bishop Howell Witt’s granddaughter, Amanda, into our ranks.

All God’s children need each other. The world is a better place when people are prepared to help each other. Service is a duty of love. Serving others is an integral part of the Christians life. It is an essential element in our spiritual nourishment.

We receive other’s service to us as a gift and sign of God’s love and of their love too - if we have the mind to receive it in that way. When we serve others, they too may experience God in the service that we offer. Then again, they may not. They don’t have to though. Our service does not come with a price tag that says, ‘Now that I have done this for you, you have to become a Christian.’ Service is sacrificial. It costs us something. It is not a trade-off nor a way to bargain with God or others.

Are we teaching our people about Jesus the servant leader? Are we serving them and showing how it can be done? In ministry, are we providing opportunities to serve? Many people will testify that some of the most profound spiritual experiences they have had, have come through being involved in serving others, or in experiencing the amazing gift of grace of being served by others.

It can be a profound thing when a group of Christians build service into their life together and into their interaction with others beyond the group. We can do studies on: the parable of the sheep and the goats, what it means to feed the hungry, give water to the thirsty, clothes to the naked; visit the lonely and those who are imprisoned; comfort the sick and so on.

But what do we do after our studies and reflections are over? Do they lead us to action?

What would it be like to serve Jesus, who came to us covered in human skin, gets down and dirty to serve us. He rolls his sleeves up, gets down on his knees and washes his disciples’ feet. Master and slave.

Towards paying for a well in a third world country; participate in World Visions 40 Hour Famine; support and participate in the work of ABM; hold a second hand clothing drive; or visit our elderly neighbour.

When the words, ‘Let me help you with that’ are common as part of daily life and ministry, that’s a great sign. When people talk about needs, how can you be the catalyst for action? When you hear people talking about situations and problems, maybe you can be the one to say ‘that’s obviously an issue you are passionate about, how about we find a way to help yourself and others do something to assist that situation?’.

In a ‘what’s in it for me’ focussed society, how can we be counter-cultural in a Jesus kind of way, living the way of Jesus.

‘Glory to God in the heavenly heights; peace to all men and women on earth who please him.’
That God the Son should deign to add humanity to his Divinity and dwell amongst us in such humility should be reason enough to fill our hearts with wonder and gratitude. Every time we affirm this supernatural reality in the creedal statements: ‘who was conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary’ or ‘was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human’ we are encouraging wonder in each other. Not only are we the visited planet but we are the beneficiaries of God’s remarkable grace. Here is a truth of revelation that would keep us from idle speculation as to God’s existence or His nature. Plato’s proposition ‘never can man and God meet’ is corrected by the incarnation of God the Son. ‘The twin miracles of the historic incarnation of God the Son and our own experiential adoption into God’s family through repentance and faith are essential elements of Christianity. Our faith is rooted in the historical coming, atoning death and bodily resurrection of Jesus. Ours in not a vague spirituality or mindless mysticism. Our faith is supernaturally mundane, down to earth, where God mercifully comes to indwell us in order to comfort, correct, transform and assure us that we belong not simply to the earth but to eternity. Nothing evokes such wonder save the Good Friday death which His incarnation anticipated. To accomplish our redemption and adoption God the Son not only needed to take our humanity but to take the penalty for our sins. He was indeed the God-man born to die. Here is the source of deep wonder and great riches.’

The Advent truth that our Lord will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead delivers us from the sentimentality of our cultures love affair with triviality, that wistful yet misguided attempt at wonder, seen every December and the equally foolish optimism that there is really no judgement. Both the Incarnation and Advent of the Lord Jesus remind us how seriously and joyfully God takes us. He comes to identify with us in our sinfulness and resultant loneliness and disillusionment in that most humble way as a babe. Yet he calls us to account and will give us what we choose in this life. The accountability of the Judgement reminds us that not only will He right wrongs but that He will honour all those who take his Son seriously. Riches indeed, that are guaranteed to trump any and every glittering substitute.

Fundraising Manager of ABM, Christopher Brooks said, ‘Christmas is a wonderful time to give to others but to give to children seems to bring that extra joy. This year ABM is ensuring we give hope and joy to children in our partner countries by having our appeal focus on two Christian Education projects.’

I encourage our supporters to consider a gift to ABM’s Christmas Appeal to give the gift of education to children in Kenya and the Philippines,” he said.

In Kenya, The Catechises of the Good Shepherd children’s ministry is a Christian Education program which builds young children’s faith from ages 3 to 12. In slum areas such as Kibera, which is located within the Archbishop’s diocese in Nairobi, there is a great need to grow faith in the children. This program is being well received by the children and their families but even more success is possible if the program continues to grow and strengthens the faith of even more children.

The Archbishop and the Bishops in Council recognise the program is encouraging and effective for the children and are hoping to spread it all across Kenya. The program has now been extended across other Dioceses in West Kenya.

ABM’s Christmas Appeal will help children learn the love of God. Please give generously at www.abmission.org.

The training leads lay leaders to a deeper participation and commitment to contribute to the ministry of the church in the broader society as a whole. The project also provides opportunities for ordained ministers to specialise in particular pastoral works such as counselling for the young people or conducting spiritual retreats. The Episcopal Church in the Philippines has a Vision-Mission-Goal – ‘by the year 2018 we envision a vibrant and dynamic church of caring, witnessing and mission-oriented parishes.’

Continued support will help the Church reach 170,000 young members of the Episcopal Church in the Philippines and help leaders realise the vision of 2018.

Your support of ABM’s Christmas Appeal will help children learn the love of God. Please give generously at www.abmission.org.
y background was that of prison ministry. And whenever I was ‘on duty’ to conduct the service on Christmas Day I would make a point of giving some small gift to every person present. So it was that a few years ago I was in a religious bookshop at this time of the year, searching for bookmarks with a Christmas theme.

To my surprise, I saw a bewildering array of nativity scenes available for sale. Some were simple affairs made of folded cardboard, while others were more intricate – made of porcelain, clay, plastic, wood or metal. But the one that caught my attention was at the other side of the display room. It was wooden, very large, and beautifully carved. I went over to look at it more closely. Then I noticed the sign in front of it: ‘SALE – Nativity Scene $10, Jesus Missing’.

It occurred to me that very often our Christmas celebration is like that. In the midst of all the wind-ups, break-ups and celebrations leading up to the wind-ups, break-ups and is like that. In the midst of all the wind-ups, break-ups and celebrations leading up to the wind-ups, break-ups and is like that. In the midst of all the wind-ups, break-ups and celebrations leading up to the wind-ups, break-ups and is like that. In the midst of all the wind-ups, break-ups and celebrations leading up to the wind-ups, break-ups and is like that. In the midst of all the wind-ups, break-ups and celebrations leading up to the wind-ups, break-ups and is like that. In the midst of all the wind-ups, break-ups and celebrations leading up to the wind-ups, break-ups and is like that. In the midst of all the wind-ups, break-ups and celebrations leading up to the wind-ups, break-ups and is like that. 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SORTING OUT THE SEASON
ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS AT JOHN SEPTIMUS ROE ANGLICAN COMMUNITY SCHOOL

The Reverend Tony Murray-Feist | Senior Chaplain | John Septimus Roe Anglican Community School

ince pies come on sale in our supermarkets in September, the Christmas decorations go up in October. Santa begins his pre-season in November, and the piped music blasts forth the occasional carol amongst the snow and the sleigh-rides. Christmas is here! But wait, what about this inconvenient season called Advent, as preparation for Christmas, how does that fit into the ‘festive season’? In the seventies the Liturgical Commission produced an experimental lectionary, where Advent began in late October, and the Christmas season started with four Sundays before Christmas and finished at Epiphany. Maybe the Church couldn’t cope with such novelty, did the lectionary end up in the bins along with the wrapping paper and turkey bones? Perhaps it was thought that we were giving in too much to ‘the world’ - does anybody remember?

The liturgical life of an Anglican school in Advent and Christmas has to be something similar though, something ‘outside the box’, and in fact an arrangement like that trial lectionary makes a lot of sense. There is a danger that the wonderful and powerful season of Advent gets lost altogether, as it is in the shopping malls. Schools have various customs when it comes to their chapel services, if our day schools were to have the luxury of a weekly service for all students, they might light a candle each week (pink on the third Sunday, of course) and their chaplains could deliver ringing sermons on The Four Last Things. But in a large school like JSRACS the secondary students each attend but one Advent chapel, so a useful service has been devised, which includes traditional Advent elements and themes.

Four students each bring up lighted candles, which are labelled love, forgiveness, hope, and peace, and each reads a Bible verse and reflection on the importance of these gifts to the lives of the world looking for the coming of Christ in Bethlehem, at Christmas, and at the end of the time. Then a candle marked Jesus is placed among the others, and a brief address explains how Jesus is the way in which these gifts were, are, and will be made known. Prepared intercessions reinforce and apply this teaching. Advent wouldn’t be the same without its hymns, and so Mine eyes have seen the glory and a simplified, shortened (and comprehensible) version of O come, O come Emmanuel, are used. These two favourites seem to get a surprisingly good response from teenagers.

Then, on the final day of term, just before Christmas, and in tune with everybody else in the community, there are closing prayers and community carols, sung with gusto using karaoke tracks and a powerful sound system. Advent and Christmas are unforgettable parts of the school’s liturgical year.

In primary, however, things are a little different. The children love dressing up for the nativities, held in each campus, they learn new songs, and the gatherings look forward unashamedly to the coming of the Christ-child. But there is one last thing to look forward to: Primary chapel in the last week of term is also a nativity play, but this one is put on by the staff for the students’ edification and entertainment, and their hilarious amusement too. Surely joy and gladness are at the very centre of the season we celebrate.

What might an Anglican school look like that truly practices the core value of diversity? As a starting point, of course its student population will comprise girls and boys (if a co-educational school) from a ‘diverse’ background of countries and cultures. Classrooms, assembly halls, Chapels and playgrounds will be unmistakably multi-cultural. Families new to Australia from each continent will learn alongside those whose ancestors have lived in our land for hundreds or thousands of years. Refugees and others of disadvantage or displacement will be welcomed and cared for thoughtfully.

Yet diversity means more than country, culture or colour. As Anglicans, our minds turn to another ‘c’... creed. A hallmark of Anglican schooling has long been that we openly enrol students from families of all faiths or none. Whilst unashamedly we see matters such as participation in religious studies classes and attendance at Chapel as ‘core’, we welcome and value a mix of religious faiths in our schools, and the richness that this diversity brings. A commitment to expressing our Christian faith through the Anglican tradition brings a richness of inclusivity, whether in parish, aged-care facility or school.

Diversity is also expressed in schools, as much as in wider society, through the construct of family. Today this means that some of our families are single parent, others comprise same-sex parenting, and some families are blended through marriage with children of different parents, adoption or the love of carers and guardians. Again what a wonderful richness this brings to our schools, as it does to society at large.

Diversity in our schools is expressed in many other ways, from socio-economic circumstances to disability of some kind. Yes there are many ways, through policy and practice that we can and do ensure that Anglican schools are diverse in nature. A genuine expression of the Anglican Schools Commission’s core value of ‘diversity’ surely means that all students and families are warmly welcomed and fully embraced in school life, no matter what their country or culture of origin, creed, circumstance or family construct.

In this season of Advent, with Christmas and year’s-end approaching, there is no better time to reflect on our own actions, how we have valued others this year, and how our actions have impacted the lives of people with whom we have connected in some way during 2015. I am deeply grateful for the time spent by Principals, Chaplains, teachers and support staff this year making the love of Christ known to the young people in their care, their families, guardians and carers. Our Christ would have rejoiced every time a staff member did something to promote social inclusion and celebrate difference in their school this year. How blessed we are to be Anglican. Emmanuel...God is with us.
We wish our readers, advertisers and columnists a Peace filled New Year.

A Happy and Holy Christmas and a
CATHEDRAL ORGANIST SHINES
IN FRANCE AND GERMANY

The church of St Étienne Du Mont (great Charles-Marie Widor was organist for 64 years). The famous Church of St Étienne Du Mont is home to the organ that Maurice Duruflé was its organist first recordings at Buckingham Palace Ballroom, and the Church of St Sulpice, Paris (where the Signum Records. This is the third time Joseph has been thus honoured: He has made similar
sessions, Joseph travelled to Germany for a series of concerts in Frankfurt, Koblenz, Trier and Gackenbach, where he performed with both of whom had considerable associations with Duruflé. With St Sigismund's College in Prague, where the grade one listed case to Germany for a series of concerts in Frankfurt, Koblenz, Trier and Gackenbach, where he performed with both of whom had considerable associations with Duruflé. With St Sigismund's College in Prague, where Duruflé's Organist, Vincent Tappey

Joseph was invited to make Toulouse Oratory performances.

On September 2015, St George's Cathedral's distinguished Organist and Master of the Choristers, Joseph Nolan, became the first British/Australian organist to record a commercial CD at the famous Church of St Étienne Du Mont in Paris, for the award-winning UK label

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IN FRANCE AND GERMANY
**BOOKS**

Shirley Claughton

Richard Leonard is an Australian Jesuit Priest, and the author of the best-selling *Where the Hell is God*. This new book of just 100 pages, and divided into seven Chapters, takes the reader from Advent, to Christmas, Epiphany and the Baptism of our Lord. Along the journey, this engaging storyteller introduces us to his surprising mixture of parishioners at King’s Cross, and the theme of acceptance of all people wherever they are, continues throughout the book. It is laugh-out-loud funny, but beneath all the wit and humour, he has a genuine and honest message and is keen to debunk some of the unrealistic images of Christmas that many have grown up with.

Goodness and Light, Readings for Advent and Christmas, $34.95

This is a wide-ranging anthology of 48 selections, including writers and poets, Richard Rohr, Joyce Rupp, Harper Lee, Frederick Buechner, Mary Oliver, Kathleen Norris, John Shea and Pope Francis. It is divided into readings for each day from November 21 to January 7, so can be used any year. Some selections are brief, others complete stories, such as Tolstoy’s Papa Panov. It is a brilliant new book. A similar book, *All Shall be Well* with readings for Lent and Easter will be available soon. The editors, including the late Kenneth Leach, have done a marvellous job gathering reflections from the best writers.

Sacred Space, Readings from the Revised Common Lectionary for Advent and Christmas Seasons 2015, 2016, by the Irish Jesuits. $3.95

The format of Sacred Space is to read and reflect on the Scripture for the day, and to focus on a weekly topic enhanced by six steps of prayer and reflection. Accordingly, it is useful either for individual disciplined reading or for group discussion. Sacred Space is published each year in this extract form for both Advent and Lent and the entire Liturgical year is also available in an attractively presented larger book. www.sacredspace.ie has further resources to complement.

Sacred Space is published each year.

This is exactly what parish clergy and liturgists have been waiting for. In AAPB in 1977 few Australians were included, and when over 30 Australian individuals and events were added to APBA in 1995, the Anglican Church awaited a comprehensive volume by well-known scholar Charles Sherlock is exactly what parish clergy and liturgists have been waiting for.

A Warming World’, Church and Mission in a Warming World, by Dr Mick Pope and Claire Dawson. Foreword by Jarrod McKenna


Claire and Mick come from a solidly biblical evangelical tradition. In this book they unpack ‘how God relates to creation and how things are meant to work’. They answer the question ‘What does this have to do with Christians? Isn’t our mission to save souls? Aren’t the keys to the Christian life Bible reading, prayer and evangelism?’ Taking a deeper look will show us that the Gospel Jesus preached was not simply about going to heaven when you die. The Gospel is about the whole world (this world) being put right. The broken relationships between people and God, people among themselves, people within themselves and people with the rest of creation. That Jesus was raised from the dead points to the fact that matter itself matters to God. The whole world has a future as described in Revelation 20 and 21.’ (taken from page 22).
St Bart’s 2015 Christmas Hamper Campaign

It’s that time again when we call upon your generosity to give to one of our:

370 single Male clients
180 single Female clients
30 families
to provide those going through tough times with some Christmas Cheer.

You can help by adopting a Christmas Hamper for one or more of our clients or choose to donate individual items from the List’s below.

(Please note-all items donated should be non-perishable food, not expired and essential Items not requiring refrigeration)

- Christmas cake/Christmas pudding/long life custard (Individual serves)
- Packet of Christmas Shortbread or other sweet biscuits e.g. Tim Tam
- Savoury Biscuits/snacks/confectionery/dried fruit/Nuts
- Small jars of Vegemite/peanut butter /Jams Packaged cheese
- Tinned Ham
- Tinned tins (Plain flavoured, Pull top or self opening cans)
- Cereals - e.g. small box of Weet-Bix or Individual boxed portion sizes welcome
- Tea (25 to 50 pkt) /Coffee(50g jar ideal) /sugar (Small tub) /long life milk
- Fruit Juices/soft drink (Individual serves)
- Pasta packet and jar of pasta sauce
- Tinned baked beans or spaghetti (Pull top or self opening cans)
- Instant noodles
- Tinned Peaches/fruit salad (Pull top or self opening cans)
- Canned (pull top or self opening cans) or packet individual long-life meals
- Shampoo & conditioner or toothbrush/toothpaste/soap or body-wash/deodorant/disposable razors/Tissues
- Socks/Jocks
- Gifts for men and women are also appreciated but please DO NOT WRAP GIFTS!

If you choose to adopt a complete hamper/s, please email Mitch at coordinator.volunteers@stbarts.org.au with how many you wish to provide for and I will confirm your allocation

Alternatively you can choose to donate Money to go towards purchasing a hamper

Donations can be delivered, Mon – Friday between 9.30am – 4pm and Saturday 9.30am – 12 noon to St Bart’s old site at 78 Brown St (The delivery entry point will be sign posted) from 24 November to 19 December. To deliver outside this time please contact reception on 9323 5100 to organise delivery to 7 Lime St East Perth

Thank you for your generosity

THEATRE

A Dickens of a Christmas Carol

Anthony Howes

2012 saw the 200th anniversary of the birth of Charles Dickens. There was a great deal to celebrate, including the outstanding literary output; but, very importantly for the Cathedral, there was the acknowledgement that Charles Dickens epitomised the story-telling mission of the Church, showing Christ at work in the world. So, together with the Order of St John of Jerusalem Knights Hospitaller and Volunteering WA, the Cathedral staged A Dickens of a Christmas. Using portions of A Christmas Carol, interwoven with seasonal music, actors and musicians hoped to raise a few hundred dollars to assist the homeless of our city. They were astonished when the Cathedral was filled to overflowing and many thousands of dollars were raised for the needy. Charles Dickens would have been pleased, we felt! He it was who has established a shelter for single and ‘distressed’ women; he it was who saved the Great Ormond Street Hospital for Sick Children from closure; he it was, on a visit to Manchester, who was so appalled at the conditions of the workers there that he resolved ‘to strike a sledge hammer blow for the poor’. Such was the inspiration for A Christmas Carol.

The demand quickly followed to establish A Dickens of a Christmas as a Perth Christmas tradition, so here it is for a fourth year! There is much that will be familiar, but new touches include additional performers, instead of an actor and an organist as in the past, more performers including Jenny Davis, Rick Hearer, Alinta Carroll, Dan Luxton, Bernie Davis and yours truly, with Leo Brown as Tiny Tim. Music makers include the forty-voice Phillips Chorale, conducted by internationally acknowledged Marilyn Phillips, and joined by soprano Katherine Friend and tenor Justin Friend, the Royal Agricultural Society’s WA Brass, and organist Stewart Smith. The performers have donated their services so that all proceeds will go to assist the homeless. Now all that is needed is the audience; who, as always, get the chance to sing some of the favourites of the season! Bookings are with Trybooking.com and also by using the Cathedral website –www.perthcathedral.org, enquiries 9325 5766.

Charles Dickens said: ‘I have always thought of Christmas time, when it has come round, as a good time; a kind, forgiving, charitable time; the only time I know of, in the long calendar of the year, when men and women seem by one consent to open their shut-up hearts freely, and to think of people below them as if they really were fellow passengers to the grave, and not another race of creatures bound on other journeys.’

There is no better way to conclude this December column than with Tiny Tim’s ‘God bless us all, everyone.’
They attacked the homes of politicians, assaulted police officers, and claimed responsibility for London bombings. They held illegal meetings that advocated violence and radicalised others to destroy public property. If the word ‘terrorist’ had been in common use it would almost certainly have been applied – to the women activists who strove to gain their gender the vote. The new film Suffragette highlights their inspiring struggle, while at the same time raising questions about the part violence plays in social change.

Carey Mulligan (Drive, Far From The Madding Crowd) leads an all-star cast as Maud Watts, a factory worker and housewife who finds herself drawn into the struggle to see women enfranchised. Meryl Streep plays Emmeline Pankhurst, a leading suffragette who encourages her audience and Maude to see themselves as social revolutionaries:

“We’re fighting for a time when every little girl born into the world will have an equal chance with her brothers. Never underestimate the power we women have to define our own destinies. We do not want to be lawbreakers. We want to be law makers!”

However Emmeline’s catch-phrase is, ‘It’s deeds, not words that will get us the vote,’ and her tactics increasingly turn on the sort of drastic actions guaranteed to gain the attention of the press. The authorities, personified by Brendan Gleeson’s Inspector Arthur Steed, react with arrests, imprisonment, and public shaming. But these tactics only go to show just how unequal their struggle is. For Maude it becomes increasingly an issue of justice rather than equality:

Steed: ‘Violence doesn’t discern! It takes the innocent and the guilty! What gives you the right to put that woman’s life at risk?’

Maude: ‘What gave you the right to stand in the middle of a riot and watch women beaten and do nothing?!’

Their standoff highlights the tension seething through every moment of Suffragette. Maude slowly sacrifices everything she has to the cause – her public standing, her job, her husband and finally her son. Modern audiences will have no trouble identifying the justice of her cause, but the approach she is adopting is just as clearly hardening hearts rather than softening them. As Christians called to change the world, it falls to us to ask if her path is as worthy as her purpose?

Ben Whishaw plays Maude’s husband Sonny, a man who cannot bear to see the transformation taking place in her:

Sonny: ‘You’re a mother Maud. You’re a wife. My wife. That’s what you’re meant to be.’

Watching, I was reminded of the similar rejection many believers go through as those close to them realize their faith is not some passing fad. However the master offers a path radically different to Ms. Pankhurst. Jesus’ call-to-arms involves suffering, but the sort that derails violence rather than perpetuates it:

‘You have heard that it was said, ‘Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.’ But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also.’

‘Love your enemies’ was no easy platitude... it points to the world-changing truth that God’s peace is far more powerful than our most persistent protests.
CLERGY NEWS

APPOINTMENTS
The Reverend Susan Thorpe-Gudgeon Priest-in-Charge, Roleystone 01.10.15
Commissioning Thursday 12 November at 6.30pm
St Christopher’s Church, Hall Road, Roleystone

LOCUM TENENS
The Reverend Alan Forsyth St Bartholomew’s House 01.11.15 – 30.05.16
The Reverend Debora Spencer Swanbourne-Mt Claremont 01.11.15 – 31.12.15
The Reverend Debbie May St Hilda’s Anglican School for Girls 07.11.15 – 31.12.15
The Reverend John Smith Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital 14.12.15 – 24.01.16

RESIGNATIONS
The Reverend Chris Beal Chaplain, Peter Moyes Anglican Community School

VALE
Mr Peter Jooste QC Chancellor Emeritus 10.11.15

PURPLE PATCH

06
Archbishop Claremont Crosslinks
Bishop Tom Wanneroo
Bishop Jeremy Northam – Deconsecration of St Peter’s Jennapullin
Bishop Kate Heathridge

13
Archbishop Greenwood
Bishop Jeremy Serpentine-Jarrahdale
Bishop Kate Rottnest Island, 50th Anniversary Service

20
Archbishop Applecross
Bishop Tom Shenton Park
Bishop Jeremy Turquoise Coast-Dandaragan-Eneabba
Bishop Kate Bull Creek-Leeming

24
Archbishop Midnight Mass, St George’s Cathedral
Bishop Jeremy Brookton
Bishop Kate North Perth

25
Archbishop Christmas Day, St George’s Cathedral
Bishop Jeremy Beverley
Bishop Kate North Perth

January

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1-31</th>
<th>Archbishop</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Bishop Tom</td>
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February/March

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<th>1-29</th>
<th>Archbishop</th>
<th>Long Service</th>
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<tr>
<td>29-8</td>
<td>Bishop Jeremy</td>
<td>Conference in UK</td>
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<td>14-28</td>
<td>Bishop Kate</td>
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Christmas Services

Diocesan Office Christmas 2015

The Diocesan Office will close
Thursday afternoon
24 December 2015, and will reopen
Monday 4 January 2016

Wishing you a holy and blessed Christmas, and peace in 2016

Christmas Services

St Mary’s Church
Corner of Queen Street
And Peel Terrace, Busselton

Christmas Service Times

Dec 24th | 7:30pm
21.15pm & 11:00pm
Dec 25th | 7am, 8am, 9:30am
10am
St Georges Walpole
Christmas Day December 25th
9:00am
Sundays 10:00am

Christmas Holiday

This Christmas
Don’t Walk Alone

Christmas Eve 6pm Carols for Families
Christmas Eve 11pm Holy Communion
Christmas Day – 8am Holy Communion

St George’s Anglican Church, 367 Chapman Rd, Bluff Point.
Enquiries to Andrew Burr on Ph: 9923-1206
Email: stgeorgesbluffpoint@gmail.com

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2016 Year C lectionaries have arrived

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limited trading after Christmas and during January but will be open each Thursday - other days will be listed on our website www.stjohnsbooks.com.au

Christmas Services

Parish of St Johns
York St Albany
Christmas Services
Christmas Eve
• 5.00pm - Crib Service
• 11.30pm – Midnight Mass
Christmas Day
• 7.00am – Holy Communion
• 8.00am – Holy Communion with hymns
• 9.30am – Sung Eucharist

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Shop 1, Highgate Court, 26 Queen St Fremantle
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WHERE TO WORSHIP

ST GEORGE’S CATHEDRAL
38 St Georges Terrace, Perth
Daily: 7.30am Morning Prayer and Bam Eucharist.
For details of all other daily Eucharists and Evening Prayer, see our website: www.perthcathedral.org | 9235 5766

SUNDAY SERVICES
8am: Holy Eucharist (BCP) and hymns
10am: Choral Eucharist and Sunday School
5pm: Choral Evensong

SPECIAL SERVICES
FROM DECEMBER 2015 TO FEBRUARY 2016
5pm: Christmas. Music: Missa Hodie Christus à Becket.
8am: Holy Eucharist (BCP) and hymns
10am: Choral Eucharist with Carols.
10am: Eucharist with Imposition of Ashes.
1pm: Holy Eucharist.
5pm: Choral Evensong of St Thomas à Becket.

SUNDAY 17 JANUARY
5pm: Benjamin Britten’s A Ceremony of Carols. Harp: Bronwyn Wallis.
Reader: Jenny Davis.

SUNDAY 24 JANUARY
5pm: Burns Night Service followed by traditional Burns Supper (ticketed).

SUNDAY 31 JANUARY
5pm: Evensong with Blessing of New Stained Glass for the Cathedral Clerestory.

TUESDAY 2 FEBRUARY - Candlemas
6pm: Blessing of Candles and Choral Evensong.

SUNDAY 7 FEBRUARY
5pm: Choral Evensong marking Waitangi Day.

WEDNESDAY 10 FEBRUARY
- Ash Wednesday
8am: Eucharist with Imposition of Ashes.
10.30am: Eucharist with Imposition of Ashes.
6.30pm: Choral Eucharist with Imposition of Ashes.

SUNDAY 14 FEBRUARY
2pm: Families Connect. 5pm: Choral Evensong of St Valentine with Champagne Reception.

SUNDAY 21 FEBRUARY
5pm: Centenary Commemoration of John Winthrop Hackett.

SUNDAY 28 FEBRUARY
5pm: Evensong of St David.
In English and in Welsh.

SUNDAY 6 MARCH
5pm: ‘Ultreya’ Evensong with the Giovanni Consort,
Natus Est (Palestrina).

ST JOHN’S
SUNDAY EUCHARIST
8.00am & 10.00am

DAILY MASS
Monday 12.30pm
Tuesday 12.30pm
Thursday 8.00am
Friday 12.30pm
Office 9335 2213
www.freemantleanglican.com

ATTENDANCE
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SUNDAY EUCHARIST
9.30am
Wednesday 10.00am
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SUNDAY 13 DECEMBER
3pm: Annual Compassionate Friends Service.
5pm: Valedictory Evensong for the Reverend Dean Spalding.

SATURDAY 19 DECEMBER
4pm: Children’s Christmas Service.

SUNDAY 20 DECEMBER
7.30pm: Festival of Lessons and Carols.
(Note: 5pm Said Evening Prayer.)
WEDNESDAY 23 DECEMBER
7.30pm: Festival of Lessons and Carols.

THURSDAY 24 DECEMBER
7.30pm: Festival of Lessons and Carols.

FRIDAY 25 DECEMBER
8am: Holy Eucharist with Carols.
10am: Choral Eucharist with Carols. Music: Mass for Four Voices (Byrd).

SUNDAY 27 DECEMBER
5pm: Choral Evensong of St Thomas à Becket.

SUNDAY 3 JANUARY
5pm: First Eucharist of the Epiphany, with commemoration of St Edward the Confessor.

SUNDAY 10 JANUARY
2pm: Families Connect.
5pm: Epiphany Carol Service sung by The Giovanni Consort, with Champagne Reception.

CANNINGTON
ST MICHAEL’S CHURCH
5pm: Benjamin Britten’s A Ceremony of Carols. Harp: Bronwyn Wallis.
Reader: Jenny Davis.

CHRISTMAS. MUSIC: Missa Hodie Christus à Becket.

5pm: Valedictory Evensong for the Primate of the Diocese of New Norcia.

WHERE TO WORSHIP

NEW NORCIA MONASTERY GUESTHOUSE
Experience the peace, quiet and prayer of the Benedictine monastic community of New Norcia. 132km north of Perth. Twin rooms with en-suites and single rooms. Join the monks for daily prayer. Directed retreats by arrangement. Recommended donation of $80 per person/day full board.
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email: michaeljohnwood.com

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For more information visit us at the Diocesan Office,
Level 8, QBE House, 200 St Georges Terrace, Perth WA 6000
contact us on (08) 9323 4182
drop us an email at info@anglicancf.com.au
or visit www.anglicancf.com.au

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