

December 2014 Vol. 16: No 11

INTERACT

The Magazine of the Endeavour Hills Uniting Church



**For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son
is given:**

Isaiah 9:6 (KJV)

**Cnr. Hellyer Way & Raymond McMahon Boulevard
Endeavour Hills 3802**

Supply Minister: Kharis Susilawati

Email: kharistar78@gmail.com

Church Office Telephone: 9700 2125

Church Office Email: churchoffice@ehuc.org.au

Web Address: www.ehuc.org.au



TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
THE INVASION.....	3
TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS	5
PAY IT FORWARD.....	6
CHRISTMAS AGAIN	7
GENEROSITY OF JUSTICE	8
CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING REPORT.....	9
CHRISTMAS SERVICES AT ENDEAVOUR HILLS	10
TO NAME AND LET GO.....	11
NOTICE BOARD	12-13
ROSTERED DAY ON/OFF	14
CHRIST IS ALL.....	15
ENDEAVOUR HILLS UNITINGCARE NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE	16
CARTOON CORNER	17
A HAPPY NEW YEAR	18
FRIENDS	19
ON A LIGHTER NOTE... ..	20
QUOTES & COMMENTS	21
THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH.....	22
MEET JOHN THE BAPTIST	23
FOR OUR YOUNG PEOPLE	25
USAGE OF CHURCH BUILDING	26
LECTIONARIES FOR DECEMBER, JANUARY & FEBRUARY.....	27-29
FAMILY PRAYER MINISTRY	30
PLANNED GIVING	30
ROSTERS FOR DECEMBER, JANUARY & FEBRUARY	31-33
ENDEAVOUR HILLS UNITING CHURCH SERVICE TIMES.....	34
PRAYER CHAIN	34
CHURCH COUNCIL AND OFFICE-BEARERS	35
ENDEAVOUR HILLS UNITING CHURCH MISSION STATEMENT	BACK COVER
INTERACT PUBLICATION AND DEADLINE DATES.....	BACK COVER

Please note:

The views in the articles included in this publication are not necessarily those held by the Endeavour Hills Uniting Church.

THE INVASION



"Each night, we secretly huddled around the wireless," she said, "eagerly hoping to receive some coded message that meant, 'Invasion Begun.' We scanned the skies, looking for allied planes. People walked along the dykes, hoping for ships on the horizon. We prayed. People in Holland were starving. The Jews were already

gone. Could we endure another year of Nazi occupation?"

In these words, an old Dutch woman remembered the dark days of Christmas 1944 as Holland awaited redemption. What is it like to be a people captive, awaiting deliverance, dependent on someone, something, to come from the outside to save them?

Captivity comes in different forms. How is it that A.A. (pseudonym) puts it? "We are powerless to help ourselves. We had to reach out to a higher power." If you've never had debts you couldn't pay, a marriage that can't be saved, a problem that defies solution, you won't understand.

Cicero tells us of three first-century religious options in classical Rome:

- you could be Stoic, believing that everything is impregnated with the divine,
- you could be an Epicurean, believing that, if gods exist, they have better things to do than worry about us,
- or you can be as Cicero himself — an Academic.

So, even though you are sceptical, you go to the temple once in a while and enjoy the sacred rituals, which are mainly of value for holding the government together.

Sound familiar? Nature worship. Stoic stiff upper lip. Intellectual scorn. These are among our deities. No wonder the world seems emptier than a college campus in late December. What do the gods care for us and our vexations? Find what consolation you can in available therapy, or out of a bottle, relentlessly scan the information highway, scour the night-time skies,

(Continued on page 4)

The Invasion

search the horizon at twilight. People are starving. Another year of occupation may do us in. Where is deliverance?

I commend to you a movie, if you can take it—The Ice Storm. It's a cold night in 1971 in post-Christian Connecticut. The beautiful people with 'mod' houses and big cars and bell-bottom leisure suits are having a party. Upstairs, Mom and Dad delve into a little spouse swapping and downstairs the kids are belting vodka and experimenting with sex, and it is an unrelieved, cold, empty world. The movie ends with the family in the cold car, frozen; with Dad crying like a baby because that's all you can do in a world where deliverance is inconceivable.

"In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus" (Lk 2:1). Caesar calls the shots. What hope is there for Jews languishing under the heavy heel of the empire?

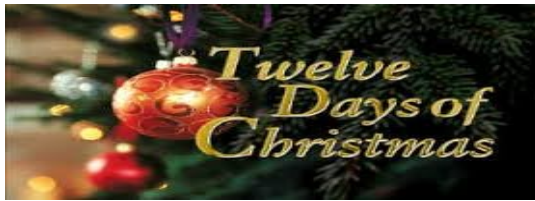
Nobodies named Mary and Joseph search in vain for a warm place to spend a cold night. There's no room at the inn. When is there ever room for the poor? Caesar calls it "the end of welfare as we know it." People on the bottom — unwed mums like Mary — know it is no place to spend a dark night.

Bethlehem is an occupied town, full of refugees, caught, powerless, and what then? Stoic stiff upper lips? Epicurean accommodation? Keep up appearances; go through the motions even if you no longer believe it? What hope for deliverance?

Then, a virgin conceives. A flutter of wings. Songs flung into the silence. Light. All creation flooded with presence. A child cries out in the night. Passionate, risky intrusion. There is traffic between God and humanity and tonight, and it's one way: God with us — Emmanuel.

The invasion has begun...

— William Willimon, *excerpted with permission from Pulpit Resource*, © Logos Productions.



(or The Everlasting Turkey)

On the first day of Christmas my true love said to me,
I've bought a big, fresh turkey and a proper Christmas tree.
On the second day of Christmas much laughter could be heard,
As we tucked into our turkey – a most delicious bird.
On the third day of Christmas came the people from next door,
The turkey tasted just as good, as it had done before.
On the fourth day of Christmas came relations, young and old.
We finished up the Christmas pud and had the turkey cold.
On the fifth day of Christmas, outside the snowflakes scurried,
But we were nice and warm inside – we had the turkey curried.
On the sixth day of Christmas, the Christmas spirit died,
As the children fought and bickered- we had turkey rissoles fried.
On the seventh day of Christmas my true love he did wince,
When he sat down at the table and was offered turkey mince.
On the eighth day of Christmas the dog had run for shelter,
He'd seen our turkey pancakes and the glass of Alka Seltzer.
On the ninth day of Christmas by lunchtime Dad was blotto,
He knew that bird was back again, this time as a risotto.
On the tenth day of Christmas we were drinking home-made brew,
As if that wasn't bad enough, we were eating turkey stew.
On the eleventh day of Christmas the Christmas tree was moulting.
With chilli, soy and oyster sauce the turkey was revolting.
On the twelfth day of Christmas we had smiles upon our lips.
The guests had gone, the turkey too – we dined on fish 'n chips!

Anonymous.

Contributed by Elke Beecher.

*Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to one and all at Endeavour Hills
Uniting Church and in particular to the participants of our Wednesday morning
Bible Study Group
Blessings from Elke.*

PAY IT FORWARD



When I was in a café recently I couldn't help but overhear a conversation between the cashier and a customer. "You want to pay for two tables?" the cashier was asking.

"That's right, my own and another," the customer said. The cashier, who appeared to be a high-

schooler at his first job, was dumbfounded. "Why?" he asked.

"Somebody did the same for me the other day. I wanted to thank them and they'd left a message telling me to pay it forward – do something kind for somebody else – instead of paying them back."

Though he still seemed unsure, the cashier put both receipts through and let the man pay for both tables. "If they want to say thank you, tell them the same thing – pay it forward." I searched on my phone for this phrase and found that recently, it's been moving through Facebook and other social media. People suggesting random acts of kindness with the condition that if you are to receive one, you must return the favour – but to somebody else.

Reflection: It felt refreshing to see such a positive and altruistic project being spread around so much, and I even looked at my own social media newsfeeds to see people I knew taking up this challenge to be good to others. He never saw it, but that man left a smile on somebody's face. While I can't know for sure, I have a feeling that smile has been passed on to another.

Zach Blackmore

CHRISTMAS AGAIN

The Christmas story is refreshingly new every time we hear it; an occasion for pilgrimage and procession; a season of carolling, joy, possibility and wonder, particularly for little children; a story linked to the past but ever present; the fulfilment of a



prophecy; assurance to the faithful, peoples oppressed and the downtrodden looking for a coming one who would bring peace; Bethlehem, a little town foretold by the prophet to be his birthplace; a significant star followed by Magi, its position indicating the site of a royal birth; shepherds out in the fields on a starry night minding their sheep; angels round about doing what angels are called to do; a young couple, Mary and Joseph; Mary very pregnant, housed in a stable (there is no other room); Mary with a secret in her heart.

The simplicity of it all – in what other way, or place, would God act? An angel went to the shepherds out in the fields. “Do not be afraid; for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all people: to you is born this day in the City of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.”

Reflection: So it happened, as the prophet had foretold, in little Bethlehem would be born a King – a good shepherd for his people. At this wonderful season of Christmas – with generous giving to the less fortunate, prayers for peace and the responsible settlement of refugees, as our Lord once was – as in carol and song, we are summoned to respond to the invitation to love one another and to love God.

Bill Pugh

GENEROSITY OF JUSTICE



Image courtesy of iStockphoto.com

Generosity is a word you hear a lot in church circles. We are asked to be generous with our time, our money and our talents. Perhaps we are encouraged to see a generous disposition as a special virtue – something rare and valuable to be revered and cultivated.

However, I think generosity can be difficult to define. If those who have plenty give to those who have little or nothing, is this generosity or is it simply justice? Should we be using the word generosity to describe the act of giving to those in need from a place of financial comfort?

Perhaps generosity is not necessarily big-heartedness, charity or kindness – perhaps being generous is not a particularly virtuous or altruistic thing to do – maybe it is simply and naturally taking the opportunity to fulfil someone else's need where we have the means to do so. It is our pleasure to utilise the power in our possession to live by Christ's values rather than the world's values. Best of all, noticing how and where we can give, means that we need no longer feel so helpless at the disparity in the world. Through doing something, we are freed from a hopeless view that would have us despair – and we find ourselves at a vantage point that is empowering and energising. It is good news.

Reflection: Generosity should be a way of life for Christians – the core of a lifestyle willing to recognise my surplus as a solution to your deficit. Giving from the heart can offer just as much reward to the giver as to the recipient, regardless of how big or small the act. What a true gift it is to be able to do this.

Deb Festerbooth

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING REPORT

12th November 2014

Devotions were led by Gavin Bartholomeusz.

Business Arising from Minutes. There will be no Christmas Eve service at Endeavour Hills this year. We will all be welcome to attend the service at Narre Warren North.

Business Arising from Correspondence. *Kids Hope* – We will find out more about this.

Glowstix candles have been ordered.

We received a letter from the Council of Trinity Uniting Church, Dandenong re. the possibility of sharing resources. We will contact them to suggest a meeting.

Mission Shaped Ministry. Cheryl and Wes will attend an information evening regarding the training for this, which will be held next year.

Supply Minister's Report. Kharis is preparing the Advent and Christmas services.

Worship. The baptism of Evie Shaw will be held on Sunday 23rd November. Lauleti will conduct the baptism.

Music. The singing group will resume practising on Thursday 20th November.

Fundraising. The profits from the Trading Table for the next 6 months will be used for emergency mission.

Sunday School/Youth. Cheryl hopes to do some Bible studies with the Youth. The younger children will be provided with activities to do during the sermon.

General Business. Now that the questionnaires re our future ministry have been collated our profile can be written.

Judy Hopkins.

Secretary.



ENDEAVOUR HILLS UNITING CHURCH

CHRISTMAS SERVICES



Sunday 21st December 7.15. pm

Family Carol Service

7.15 pm Pre-Service Carols

7.30 pm Carol Service

**Battery operated candles may be purchased on arrival @
\$1.50 each.**

**Please bring a plate of food to share during supper after the
service.**

Thursday 25th December 9 am

Christmas Day Service

TO NAME AND TO LET GO

When we pray it is helpful to have an attitude that holds in tension the naming and claiming of our deepest longings, and a willingness to let go of outcomes. This might be an attitude worth bearing in mind as we pray about the New Year.

First, the naming of our deepest longings. Here before God who is unconditionally inviting us to find life in all its fullness, we might with confidence give words to the longings we may never speak to another person.



When we start to sift and sort through those longings, we begin to excavate the desires that lie beneath them, desires that were placed within us by God's Spirit. At the deepest level of our being we are hard-wired to be in tune with that Spirit.

So, what do you long for as the New Year begins? What is driving your actions and shaping your motivations? Can you sift and sort until you begin to hear the desires that lie underneath, and find yourself tuning in to what God desires for you?

Having clarified and articulated our desires, there comes the invitation to let go of the outcome of our prayers. In his prayers in Gethsemane, Jesus moved from "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me" to "yet, not my will, but yours, be done." (Luke 22: 42) It may take us much longer to make this transition!

Letting go of outcomes gives God room to move, acknowledges that we do not have all the answers and frees us to let the outcomes be different from what we expected. If we become too fixed on the limited possibilities that lie within our imagination, we may miss the unfolding of something more splendid!

There is so much about prayer and the spiritual life that remains a mystery. But, fortunately many have travelled this road and left us good advice. Learning to both embrace and name our longings, and to let go of outcomes is an inviting, but rather radical, approach to life in a world that encourages longings but likes to control and measure outcomes.

Ann Siddall (Ann Siddall is a Spiritual Director working within the life of the Uniting Church. She lives in South Australia.)

Notice Board



Christmas Gifts

Our Christmas Tree will be in the church in the next couple of weeks, and there will be a box under the tree for any presents you are able to donate., which should be UNWRAPPED. Adult presents as well as children's gifts are will be appreciated.



Sammy Stamp

Please save your used stamps for the Sammy Stamp

Appeal—this has raised more than \$600,000 for needy causes since it began. Our thanks to Warren Ward who makes sure the stamps are not damaged and that there is at least 3mm around the perforations. Please deposit saved stamps in the box marked "STAMPS" on the table in the Narthex.

Trading Table & Book Sales

The next Trading Table will be on the 14th December 2014. The November takings were \$80.75. Please contact Heather Kimber. Phone : 9796 8154

The Andrews Centre

Leading up to Christmas is a busy time for the Andrews Centre.

Donations of non-perishable food will be gratefully received.



Lawn Mowing & Gardening

A couple of people have been clearing the garden beds etc.

Any help will be much appreciated.

Contact: Bruce Hansen 9706 0585

Email: bajphansen@bigpond.com

Paper Collection & Packing & Aluminium Can Collection

To all volunteers

Our next loading day has been arranged for **9.00am Friday 12th December 2014 at Dandenong North Uniting Church.**

Syd Swaby

Web Site

The web site could do with more photos (with permission from the people concerned). Anyone who can take a few photos at church events is encouraged to do so – photos of children and youth activities, Trading Table, Praise Time Singers, Singing Group etc.— just look around. The more people involved the better our web site will look. (Please submit them to Jean Lacey or Marion Ward.) A big 'thank you' in advance.

Notice Board

Wednesday Morning Bible Study Group

The group meets at the Church at 10.15 am for Morning Tea and at 10.30 am for Bible study (except during school holidays). Everyone is welcome.

Beta: Ladies' Bible Study Group

The group meets at 7.30 pm on the 1st & 3rd Tuesdays of each month (except during school holidays) at the Church. Please contact Mary Mehl: Phone 9791 5442.

Coffee Break

This informal group gathers at 10 am on Friday mornings (except on the 1st Friday of the month) at Muffin Break in the Food Court, Endeavour Hills Shopping Centre.



Everyone is welcome, so if you are in the vicinity on a Friday morning around that time, please feel free to come and join in. You will be very welcome. No need to book!

First Friday Lunch



**12.30 PM ON THE FIRST FRIDAY
OF EVERY MONTH EXCEPT
JANUARY**

Various people take turns in organising the First Friday Lunch. Everybody is welcome, and you are invited to bring your friends too.

Check Notice Sheet on Sunday prior to lunch for name and contact details of Organiser and venue of lunch.

Contact Organiser by 5 pm on the Wednesday preceding the lunch if you can come.

ROSTERED DAY ON/OFF



Workers are familiar with the term 'Rostered Day Off'. Housewives, Mums, stay-at-home Dads, know more about rostered days on. Even grandparents sometimes would like a rostered day off. Funerals seem to happen on the minister's day off. At the end of

the year, or early in January, there will be empty sheets headed by notices such as Morning Tea Roster on our church noticeboards, and others for cleaning, gardening, flowers, worship leaders, readers and door welcomers for each month.

During the notices, these will be underlined and upheld by the minister. Religion studies teachers and Sunday School teachers are always needed too. Please will you think and pray for our special ministries? Can you help us and add your name to one of our rosters? There will be appeals for used stamps for Sammy Stamp, tins of food for local mission, and clean clothes and items in good repair for the Op Shop. Can the Messy Church use some packages and the like that we usually recycle?

Many of our older folk are not able to move church seats and tables. How can we harness the able-bodied to take this on – at a convenient time? Someone on call to open and close the church for funerals perhaps? Can we add our names to one of these lists, and be a 'Rostered On' person?

Reflection: Lord we thank you for the many who, year by year, work as willing helpers in the engine room of the Church. Please, by your Spirit at work, challenge more labourers to come forward to work in the field of willing service. The praise and glory be yours! Amen.

Bill Pugh

"CHRIST IS ALL"

Colossians 3:11

"CHRIST IS ALL" Three simple words but with a most profound meaning to all true Christian believers. Christ is all and in all. Christ transcends all barriers and unifies people from all cultures, races and nations. There is no significance in such distinctions. Christ alone is what matters.

Christ is all, in all the counsels of God concerning man.

In the beginning there was a time when this earth had no being. Gigantic solid mountains, roaring boundless seas, multitudes of stars in the heavenly realm; they all once did not exist, and Man with all the high moral thoughts and pride he now has of himself, was a creature unknown. At that time where was Christ? Christ was 'with God' and 'was God' (John 1: 1) and was 'equal with God' (Philippians. 2:6). Even then He was the beloved Son of the Father. He says, 'Thou loved'st Me, before the foundation of the world.' (John 17:24), and 'I had glory with Thee before the world began.' (John 17:5). 'I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, before the world began.' (Proverbs 8:23). Even then He was the Saviour 'foreordained before the foundation of the world' (1 Peter 1:20), and 'believers were chosen in Him' (Ephesians. 1:4).

There came a time when this earth was created in its present order. Sun, moon and stars, sea, land and their inhabitants were called into being, and made out of chaos and confusion. Finally man was created out of the dust of the ground. We repeat the question again—"And where was Christ then?"

'All things were made by Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.' (John 1:3) 'For by Him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by Him and for Him.' (Colossians 1:16)

Christ is all in all Holy Scripture. In both the Old and the New Testament Christ is to be found. Christ's sacrifice and death for sinners, and Christ's kingdom and future glory, are the lights that shine in all Scripture. Christ's cross and Christ's crown are the clue and key. There are those who complain they do not understand the Bible; to them it is like Egyptian

(Continued on page 16)

(Continued from page 15)

Christ is All

hieroglyphics, a mystery wrapped in an enigma, not knowing the clue or having a key.

Christ will be all in heaven for all men and women who reach heaven, like in Solomon's altar described in 2 Chronicles 3:4; 4:1 there will be the 'Lamb that was slain' (Revelation 5:6), 'and the Lamb is its lamp' (Revelation 21:23).

It is sad that a majority of Christians do not make Christ all in all. We cannot make a Christ of our own faith but rely on Christ. We cannot add anything else with Christ such as our righteousness or good works. We rest not on our feelings but on Christ. Let us all live **on** Christ, live **in** Christ, live **with** Christ, live **for** Christ.

'Let us all abide in Christ and in doing so there will be peace from the Lord and attainment of the holiness of Christ, without which no one shall see the Lord.' (Hebrews 12:14). Christ is all.

Laksman Pethiyagoda

Endeavour Hills UnitingCare Neighbourhood Centre

Address:	10 Raymond McMahon Boulevard Endeavour Hills 3802
Postal Address:	P.O. Box 216 Endeavour Hills 3802
Telephone:	(03) 9700 3789
Fax:	(03) 9700 6754
Email:	ehunc@tpg.com.au
Web	www.ehunc.org.au

CARTOON CORNER

Salt and Light by Jonny Hawkins



"Hey, you got dual hand grips?!"

Salt and Light by Jonny Hawkins



"All in favour of congregational rule say 'Aye'."

Salt and Light by Jonny Hawkins



Salt and Light by Jonny Hawkins



"Pastor, I came up to confess to identity theft."

A HAPPY NEW YEAR!



The meaning of a happy new year

The New Year's chief value to us is its spiritual opportunity. A year from now we may be richer or poorer than we are today: stronger in body or weaker: more famous or more obscure. Whatever these results may be, they will not interpret the real significance of the year. That will only be revealed by the application of finer tests. If the year makes us more patient and courageous, with a purer zeal for righteousness and a consciousness of deeper fellowship with the Spirit of Christ, it will have brought us the richest harvest it can bring. Whatever else the New Year may mean to us, it surely means the opportunity for spiritual attainment. If we go forth into it with the full appreciation of that face, and the purpose and prayer to redeem the time, we shall estimate our experiences by a true standard and be certain not to fail to gather the choicest fruitage of the days.

George E Horr

Recipe for a happy new year

Take 12 whole months. Clean them thoroughly of all bitterness, hate and jealousy. Make them just as fresh and clean as possible. Now cut each month into 28, 30 or 31 different parts, but don't make up the whole batch at once. Prepare it one day at a time out of these ingredients.

Mix well into each day one part of faith, one part of patience, one part of courage and one part of work. Add to each day one part of hope, faithfulness, generosity and kindness. Blend with one part prayer, one part meditation and one good deed. Season the whole with a dash of good spirits, a sprinkle of fun, a pinch of play and a cupful of good humour.

Pour all of this into a vessel of love. Cook thoroughly over radiant joy, garnish with a smile and serve with quietness, unselfishness and cheerfulness. You're bound to have a happy new year.

FRIENDS

Before we can be a good friend to someone else, we need to be well acquainted with ourselves.

To be a good friend is to have empathy — the ability to leave one's own problems and passions and enter fully into the problems and passions of the other.

It's like being a time traveller. It ought to be impossible, especially since we have to keep a rope attached to our own self.

Entering another's problems is not helpful unless we can bring our own perspective to bear.

If I have no foundation or strength or identity of my own, I am useless to my friend. One of two things will happen. I might enter into her life, but have no connection with my own life experience to draw on for help. There will be no exhilarating moment of clarity when we can see front and back of the difficulty, because we have two sets of eyes.

The other possibility is that I will — perhaps wisely — not enter her life in any depth. Without a strong identity of my own, I might not find my own self again. A time traveller without a rope!

Write in a journal. Pray. Finding out who we are is how we learn to be a friend.

— *From A Woman's Book of Days by Donna Sinclair. Copyright 1997 Donna Sinclair. Used by permission of and available from Northswne Publishing Inc.*



Forever Friends

ON A LIGHTER NOTE...

Catholic Definitions Most of us Should Know and Remember

AMEN: the only part of a prayer that everyone knows.

BULLETIN: Your receipt for attending Mass.

CHOIR: A group of people whose singing allows the rest of the Parish to lip-sync.

HOLY WATER: A liquid whose chemical formula is HOLY.

HYMN: A song of praise usually sung in a key three octaves higher than that of the congregation's range.

RECESSIONAL HYMN: The last song at Mass often sung a little more quietly, since most of the people have already left.

INCENSE: Holy Smoke!

JESUITS: An order of priests known for their ability to find colleges with good basketball teams!

MAGI: The most famous trio to attend a baby shower.

MANGER: Where Mary gave birth to Jesus because Joseph wasn't covered by Private Health Cover.

PEW: A medieval torture device still found in Catholic churches.

PROCESSION: The ceremonial formation at the beginning of Mass consisting of altar servers, the celebrant and late parishioners looking for seats.

RELICS: People who have been going to Mass for so long, they actually know when to sit, kneel and stand.

TEN COMMANDMENTS: The most important Top Ten list not given by David Letterman.

USHERS: The only people in the parish who don't know the seating capacity of a pew.

— *The Anglican Digest, Transfiguration 2005.*

QUOTES AND COMMENTS

In the incarnation, God gets close to us, God gets local. The Lord, the creator of the world, the judge of the universe, moves in with us, stands with us, beside us. And the word, the eternal, sovereign word becomes flesh and dwells among us. And that is glorious.

- William H. Willimon, *Pulpit Resource*

From a commercial point of view, if Christmas did not exist it would be necessary to invent it.

- Katharine Whitehorn, *Roundabout*

Were it not for the shepherds, there would have been no reception, and were it not for a group of stargazers, there would have been no gifts.

- Max Lucado, *God Came Near*

Light gives of itself freely, filling all available space. It does not seek anything in return; it asks not whether you are friend or foe. It gives of itself and is not thereby diminished.

- Michael Strassfeld

Christmas is about much more than a baby in a stable. It is about being found in a stable. It is about being found by God. God has chosen to be with us, wherever we are, whatever we have done, and in God's good time we will be fully restored to our lost home. We will climb back into the lap

of the one who loves us, and be held, embraced and fed.

- Gretchen Wolff Pritchard, *Christian Century*

Christmas gift suggestions:

To your enemy, forgiveness.

To an opponent, tolerance.

To a friend, your heart.

To a customer, service.

To all, charity.

To every child, a good example.

To yourself, respect.

- Oren Arnold

Biblically speaking, to repent doesn't mean to feel sorry about, to regret. It means to turn, to turn around 180 degrees. It means to undergo a complete change of mind, heart, direction. Turn away from madness, cruelty, shallowness, blindness. Turn toward the tolerance, compassion, sanity, hope, justice that we all have in us at our best.

- Frederick Buechner, *Secrets in the Dark: A Life in Sermons*

God loves you as if you were the only one in the world to love. And he loves everybody the way he loves you.

St Augustine.

(Continued on page 22)

(Continued from page 21)

Quotes & Comments

After a formal dinner a bishop was approached by one of the waitresses, who shyly asked him to autograph a menu. He did so and prefaced the signature with the customary small cross. After he handed back the menu, the waitress whispered, "And thanks for the wee kiss, my Lord."

In your experience of the forgiveness of God, learn to forgive the boss who abused your willing spirit, the church that failed to meet your expectations, the spouse who hurt you, and the kids who disgraced you. God forgave you, didn't he?

Stuart Briscoe.

There are two days in every week about which we should not worry. One is yesterday, with its mistakes

and cares, its aches and pains. Yesterday has passed forever beyond our control.

The other day is tomorrow, with its possibilities, adversities and blunders. Until its sun rises we have no stake in tomorrow, for it is yet unborn.

That leaves only one day — today. Anyone can fight the battle for just one day.

It is only when we add the burden of those two awful eternities: yesterday and tomorrow, that contentment will escape us.

A little girl, whose church did not have a choir, was taken by her mother to a neighbouring church where there was a surpliced choir. She whispered in dismay to her mother. "They're not all going to preach, are they?"

Thought for the Month

Gossip is when you are sharing information and you are neither part of the problem, nor part of the solution.

MEET JOHN THE BAPTIST



Usually during the month of December we focus on the life of Jesus. But the Bible also wants us to know about some other important and interesting people. Have you ever heard of John the Baptist? Here is a story about him, and you can also read more about him in Mark 1:1-11.

Long ago, in the land of Israel, surprising things were happening. Not in the city, but out in the wilderness. Word spread of an unusual man named John who lived near the River Jordan.

John wore clothes made from camel's hair. He wore a leather belt around his waist. John lived off the land, eating locusts and wild honey.

People from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to see him and listen to him teach. Many years earlier the prophet Isaiah had said, "I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight'." Could John be the one Isaiah had told about? They had to see for themselves.

John urged the people to repent — to say they were sorry for wrong things they had done. He told them to turn around and follow in God's way. John said the people could be baptised as a way to show their commitment to live a new life.

John said, "I have come to help you get ready, because someone who is powerful and good is coming. I am not worthy to stoop down and untie his sandals. I have baptised you with water; but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit."

Everyone wondered about John and what his words might mean, and it wasn't just ordinary people who were interested; the religious leaders wondered about John too. "Who are you?" they asked him.

(Continued on page 24)

(Continued from page 23)

Meet John the Baptist

"I am not the Messiah," he confessed.

"Then are you Elijah, or the prophet?"

John said, "I am not."

Then they said to him, "Who are you? What do you say about yourself?"

John said plainly, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,'" just as the prophet Isaiah said.

They asked him, "If you are not the Messiah, and if you are not Elijah or the prophet, then why are you baptising?"

John answered them, "I baptise with water. But someone is coming after me whom you do not know. I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal."

Everyone wondered about John and what his words might mean.

John was not the light, but his words were preparing people for someone God was sending into the world — he was preparing the way for Jesus!

Even though the Bible tells us many things about John, we might still wonder about a lot of things, for example:

I wonder how many people went out to see John.

I wonder what people did when John said they needed to repent and be forgiven.

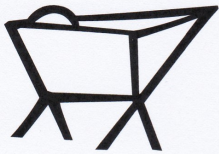
I wonder what it was like to be baptised in a river.

I wonder what it might be like to be baptised by the Holy Spirit.

— *Excerpted with permission from Awaken Sunday School, Logos Productions.*

FOR OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

A Child Is Born



Luke 2:7 is part of the Christmas story. Use this code to discover these verses.

A	‡	D	↔	G	⌘	J	=	M	✧	P	▲	S	♣	V	:	Y	˙
B	■	E	↙	H	+	K	●	N	&	Q	▽	T	→	W	/	Z	=
C	♣	F	○	I	⊠	L	▴	O	▶	R	⊙	U	□	X	#		

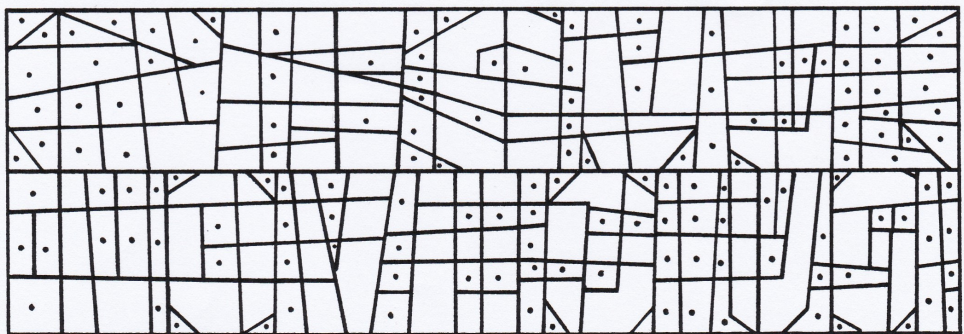
‡ & ↔ ♣ ‡ ↙ ⌘ ‡ : ↙ ■ ⊠ ⊙ → ‡
 → ▶ ‡ ↙ ⊙ ○ ⊠ ⊙ ♣ → ■ ▶ ⊙ &
 ♣ ▶ & ‡ & ↔ / ⊙ ‡ ▲ ▲ ↙ ↔
 ‡ ⊠ ✧ ⊠ & ■ ‡ & ↔ ♣ ▶ ○
 ♣ ▴ ▶ → ‡ ‡ & ↔ ▴ ‡ ⊠ ↔
 ‡ ⊠ ✧ ⊠ & ‡ ✧ ‡ & ⌘ ↙ ⊙

And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger

Answer

Saviour

We know also that Jesus is God's Son and our Saviour. Jesus is called our Saviour because he saved us from being separated from God by our sins. He was even willing to die on the cross for us. Why did he do that? Colour in the shapes with a dot in them to find out.








USAGE OF CHURCH BUILDING

Day	Time	Group	Area
Sunday	10.30 am	Worship EHUC	All Areas Except Presbytery Office
	2—3 pm	Jesuran Computer Classes	Hall
	3-6:30 pm	Jesuran Worship Service	Church
Tuesday	7:30-9 pm	Beta Bible Study	Meeting Room (1 st and 3 rd Tuesday)
	7:30 - 9 pm	Property & Finance Committee	Meeting Room (4 th Tuesday)
Wednesday	10-12 noon	Bible Study	Church and Meeting Room (except School Holidays)
	7-9 pm	Jesuran Music Group (6-8 people)	Narthex
	7:30 pm	Presbytery	Hall (1st Wednesday)
	7:30 – 9:30 pm	Church Council	Hall (2nd Wednesday)
Thursday	10 am—4 pm	Presbytery	Hall—(2nd Thursday)
	7:30 pm -	Presbytery	Hall (3rd Thursday)
	7:30 pm	Singing Group	Church
Friday	10 am - 1 pm	Presbytery	Hall (4th Friday)
Saturday	9.30 am – 2:30 pm	Jesuran Worship	All except Hall and Presbytery Areas
Monday- Friday	Business Hours + meetings	Presbytery	Back Office
Other areas for meetings as necessary			
ALL GROUPS will have access to toilets and kitchen. "Hall" = old pre-school area			
<p>Note: Some sessions will not be held over the holiday period.</p> <p>The Jesurans will not be using the church on Saturdays from 20th December 2014 to 31st January 2015. They will be holding a service on Christmas Day at 4 pm and on the 31st December at 10 pm.</p>			







Lectionary for December

Date		Readings
Advent 2 7th December 2014		Isaiah 40:1-11 Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13 2 Peter 3:8-15a Mark 1:1-8
Advent 3 14th December 2014		Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 Psalm 126 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24 John 1:6-8, 19-28
Advent 4 21st December 2014		2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16 Luke 1:47-55 Romans 16:25-27 Luke 1:26-38
Christmas Day 25th December 2014		Isaiah 9:2-7 Psalm 96 Titus 2:11-14 Luke 2:1-14 (15-20)
Christmas 1 28th December 2014		Isaiah 61:10-62:3 Psalm 148 Galatians 4:4-7 Luke 2:22-40








Lectionary for January

Date		Readings
Christmas 2 4th January 2015		Jeremiah 31:7-14 Psalm 147:12-20 Ephesians 3:1-14 John 1:(1-9). 10-18
Baptism of Jesus 11th January 2015	 You are my Son. <small>Mark 1:11</small>	Genesis 1:1-5 Psalm 29 Acts 19:1-7 Mark 1:4-11
Epiphany 2 18th January 2015	 Angels of God ascending and descending. <small>John 1:51</small>	1 Samuel 3:1-10 (11-20) Psalm 139 1-6, 13-18 1 Corinthians 6:12-20 John 1:43-51
Epiphany 3 25th January 2015	 Follow me. <small>Mark 1:17</small>	Jonah 3:1-5, 10 Psalm 62:5-12 1 Corinthians 7:29-31 Mark 1:14-20



Lectionary for February

Date		Readings
Epiphany 4 1st February 2015	 <p>Jesus taught them in the synagogue. <small>Mark 1:21</small></p>	Deuteronomy 18:15-20 Psalm 111 1 Corinthians 8:1-13 Mark 1:21-28
Epiphany 5 8th February 2015	 <p>He went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message. <small>Mark 1:39</small></p>	Isaiah 40:21-31 Psalm 147:1-11,20c 1 Corinthians 9:16-23 Mark 1:29-39
Epiphany 6 Transfiguration 15th February 2015	 <p>I do choose. Be made clean! <small>Mark 1:41</small></p>	2 Kings 5:1-14 Psalm 30 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 Mark 1:40-45
	<p>Transfiguration</p>  <p>Transfiguration</p>	2 Kings 2:1-12 Psalm 50:1-6 2 Corinthians 4:3-6 Mark 9:2-9
Lent 1 22nd February 2015	 <p>He was in the wilderness 40 days. <small>Mark 1:13</small></p>	Genesis 9: 8-17 Psalm 25:1-10 1 Peter 3:18-22 Mark 1: 9-15

FAMILY PRAYER MINISTRY



In our Family Prayer Ministry we pray for three families of our congregation every week, from Sunday to Saturday. This is in addition to our Prayer Chain Ministry, and other special requests mentioned during Worship Services.

Please keep the families listed below in your prayers during the weeks indicated.

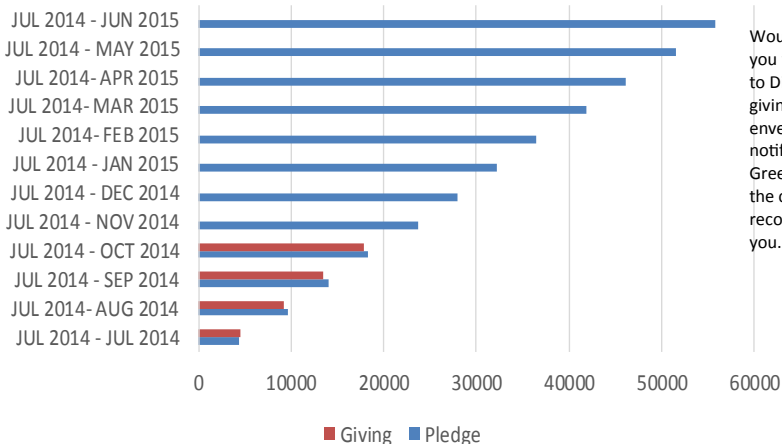
Week beginning:	Families		
14th December	COX	DE SILVA	DODDRELL
21st December	EBERT	EDGECOMBE	GACUTAN
2015			
1st February 2015	GARNEPUDI	GONSALVES	GREENSTREET
8th February 2015	GYLES	HALL	HANSEN
15th February	HARDING	HOPKINS	JOHN
22nd February	JOHNSTON	KAPITANY	KIMBER

Planned Giving



Remember Your Pledge!

Chart Title



Would those of you who commit to Direct Debit giving in place of envelopes, please notify Brian Greenstreet for the church records. Thank you.

December Roster

December 2014	7	14	21	25	28
Bible Reading	Wes & Jenni Porch	Marion & Warren Ward	Cheryl Doddrell Geoff Lacey	Pam Cowley Wes Porch	Judy Hopkins Murray John
Communion Prep	Pam Cowley Patricia Matthys				
Communion Servers	Colin Wilhelms Elke Beecher Diane Hall Judy Hopkins				
Counting of Offering	Brian Greenstreet Pam Cowley	Brian Hall Sandra Cox	Grant Allison Lynne Bryan		Pam Cowley Patricia Matthys
Door/Offering	Sandra Cox	Andrew Moore	Grant Allison	Murray John	Christine Summers
Early Word		Elke Beecher	Pan Cowley	Kharis Susilawati	Judy Hopkins
Flowers	Anne Williams	Artificial Flowers	Cheryl Doddrell Edith John		Artificial Flowers
Kitchen	Delilah Spencer Elizabeth Moore	The Smith Family	The Gonsalves Family 7 pm Carol Service Jacqui Gacutan Mathy Watkins		Joan Hansen Sandra Neal
Organist/Pianist	Edith John	Sue Reid	Olive Morland 7 pm Carol Service TBA	Sue Reid Edith John	Olive Morland
PowerPoint	Jean Lacey	Patricia Matthys	Andrew Moore 7 pm Carol Service Marion Ward	Ursula Ebert	Jean Lacey
Praise Time	Olive Morland	Geoff Harkness	Edith & Murray John		
Preacher/Duty Elder	Kharis Susilowati Diane Hall	Kharis Susilowati Colin Wilhelms	Kharis Susilowati Cheryl Doddrell 7 pm Carol Service Judy Hopkins	Kharis Susilowati Pam Cowley	Kharis Susilowati Judy Hopkins
Public Address	Paul Watkins	Warren Ward	Gavin Bartholomeusz	Geoff Lacey	Colin Wilhelms

January Roster

January 2015	4	11	18	25
Bible Reading	Gavin Bartholomeusz Geoff Lacey	Elke Beecher Heather Kimber	Judy Hopkins David Garnepudi	Pam Cowley Lynne Bryan
Communion Prep	Christine Summers Heather Kimber			
Communion Servers	Judy Hopkins			
Communion Steward	Geoff Lacey			
Counting of Offering	Bruce Hansen Sandra Cox	Grant Allison Warren Ward	David Garnepudi Patricia Matthys	Lynne Bryan Catherine Gonsalves
Door/Offering	Pam Cowley	Stan & Sue Ashley	Andrew Moore	Sandra Cox
Early Word		Elke Beecher	Judy Hopkins	Pam Cowley
Flowers	Artificial Flowers	Artificial Flowers	Mary Mehl	Artificial Flowers
Kitchen	Stan & Sue Ashley	Heather Kimber Pam Cowley	Delilah Spencer Elizabeth Moore	Gonsalves Family
Organist/Pianist	Olive Morland	Edith John	Olive Morland	Edith John
PowerPoint	Jean Lacey	Andrew Moore	Patricia Matthys	Marion Ward
Preacher/Duty Elder	Kharis Susilowati Judy Hopkins	Kharis Susilowati Colin Wilhwilms	Kharis Susilowati Judy Hopkins	Kharis Susilowati Pam Cowley
Public Address	Paul Watkins	Geoff Lacey	Colin Wilhelms	Warren Ward

A Reminder

If you swap, would you please make a note on the Roster on the Notice Board? Also, it may be a good idea to make sure you are not doing conflicting duties!

For those needing access to the church, please note that **Jesuran Healing** is using our church every Saturday from 9.30 am to 2.30 pm.

February Roster

February 2015	1	8	15	22
Bible Reading	Wes & Jenni Porch	Diane & Brian Hall	Catherine Gonsalves Sue Reid	Joan Hansen Elke Beecher
Communion Prep	Sandra Cox Delilah Spencer			
Communion Servers	Colin Wilhelms Diane Hall Pam Cowley Judy Hopkins			
Communion Steward				
Counting of Offering	Brian Greenstreet Bruce Hansen	Sandra Cox Warren Ward	Catherine Gonsalves Grant Allison	David Garnepudi Brian Hall
Door/Offering	Christine Summers	Grant Allison	Andrew Moore	Stan & Sue Ashley
Early Word		Michelle Smith	Sue Reid	Lynda Greenstreet
Flowers	Lynda Greenstreet	Artificial Flowers	Elizabeth Kapitany	Artificial Flowers
Kitchen	Mathy Watkins Jacqui Gacutan	Joan Hansen Sandra Neal	Smith Family	Delilah Spencer Elizabeth Moore
Organist/Pianist	Olive Morland	Sue Reid	Edith John	Band
PowerPoint	Ursula Ebert	Marion Ward	Patricia Matthys	Jean Lacey
Praise Time	Edith & Murray John	Geoff Harkness	Jean Lacey	Band
Preacher/Duty Elder	Kharis Susilowati Diane Hall	Kharis Susilowati Colin Wilhelms	Kharis Susilowati Judy Hopkins	Kharis Susilowati Pam Cowley
Public Address	Gavin Bartholomeusz	Warren Ward	Paul Watkins	Geoff Lacey

Endeavour Hills Uniting Church

Service Times

Sunday of the Month	10.30 am
1st	Worship Service with Communion
2nd, 3rd	Worship Service
4th (when applicable)	Worship Service
Last Sunday of the Month	Contemporary Style Worship Service (February to November)

Prayer Chain

Endeavour Hills Uniting Church is fortunate in having an active Prayer Chain. If you have any Prayer Requests, please contact any member of the Prayer Chain listed below:

Mary Mehl 9791 5442

Judy Hopkins..... 9700 7551

Sue Reid 9704 9195

Pam Cowley 9793 5997

Church Council

Chairperson

Cheryl Doddrell 9700 1674

Vice Chairperson

Wes Porch 9706 1995

Treasurer

Catherine Gonsalves 9796 9852

Church Council Secretary

Judy Hopkins 9700 7551

Council Members

Gavin Bartholomeusz 9700 5015

Jean Lacey 9700 7246

Marion Ward 9700 1878

Elders

George Balthazar 9700 3998

Pam Cowley 9793 5997

Cheryl Doddrell 9700 1674

Diane Hall 9700 5104

Judy Hopkins 9700 7551

Colin Wilhelms 9794 7175

Our Web Address

The Endeavour Hills Uniting Church web page is available for viewing at <http://www.ehuc.org.au>. Church Council oversees its maintenance. Please send all correspondence etc. to the Secretary, Judy Hopkins. Email: church_council@ehuc.org.au

Staff/Office Bearers

Congregation Chairperson

Brian Hall

Congregation Secretary

Anne Williams

Presbytery Representative

Gavin Bartholomeusz

Editors Interact

Sue & Stan Ashley

Ursula Ebert

Finance & Property Committee

Chairperson

Geoff Lacey

Treasurer

Catherine Gonsalves

Secretary

Brian Greenstreet

Committee Members

Brian Hall

Sandra Cox

Work Groups

Conveners

Administration

Jean Lacey

Hospital Visiting Team

Judy Hopkins

Pastoral

Judy Hopkins

Prayer Chain

Mary Mehl

Endeavour Hills Uniting Church Mission Statement

The Endeavour Hills Uniting Church...
a worshipping, nurturing, learning community...
an open door, reaching out to show Christ's face to all.
'Together We Grow'

Contributions to Interact

Any material you may have to be included in Interact may be sent in one of two ways:

1. e-mail (preferred method) to interact@ehuc.org.au putting "Interact" in the subject line
2. leave in the green Interact folder which is located on the stand to the right of the kitchen window.

Your articles, notices, goods & services for sale etc. are very welcome, **BUT please include your name, phone number &/or email address in case it is necessary to contact you.**

Material should be submitted by 5 pm on the deadline dates indicated below:

Month	Deadline	Publication Date
February 2015	January 25th	February 1st
March 2015	February 22nd	March 1st
April 2015	March 29th	April 5th
May 2015	April 26th	May 3rd
June 2015	May 31st	June 7th

This issue of Interact was prepared by Ursula Ebert and proofread by Marion Ward.