

Welcome to Advent

BY REV MARGARET WESLEY

An *advent* is an appearance, or a "showing up". On the four Sundays before Christmas we reflect on God showing up in human experience. We do this in two ways:

1. We reflect on the astonishing reality of God becoming human, initially as a baby in the womb of a mother. During Advent we imagine ourselves accompanying Mary on that journey to bring God to birth in the world, and we ask what might be gestating in each of us, and in our community. What might we be called to labour on that will reveal God to the people around us?

2. At the same time we reflect on the future advent when Jesus will again be revealed to restore all that is broken in each of us and our world. We look forward to that day with hope and expectation, even as we carry the burden of the world's sorrow.

I wrote these poems last Advent. They have gained poignancy for me as I look back over the year that was, at that stage, ahead of me. Over the next year there will again be incubation and there will be labour and there will be new life. And whatever that might mean for us, and wherever it might take us, there will also be the presence of God. Always.

My question of Advent,

*As I stumble with Mary
through wonder and
doubt*

And fear and love,

My question in this:

*With what will my belly grow
round this time?*

Not

*With what sweat and shame
and sorrow*

Will I make this thing happen?

*That question will always be
asking itself*

So, I let it be.

But this I ask:

*What new life will breathe
and beat*

*And drink and cry out in this
world*

Because of God's work in me

This Advent?

Angel again,

Telling me not to be afraid;

*Telling me God is about to do a
new thing.*

Again.

Light on detail and big on faith.

As usual.

And so it starts.

Again.

*Mysterious as a baby just
conceived:*

Boy or girl?

Pianist or pilot?

None of that, just:

Will you carry it?

Will you love it?

Will you bring it to birth,

Whatever it is?

Do I have a choice?

Any more than Mary?

How do you say no to an angel?



Prayer and Thanksgiving

We give thanks for:

- Our church family and community
- All our frontline healthcare workers

We pray for:

- Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem and the People of Bethlehem
- The Diocese of The Murray: †Keith Dalby; Clergy and People
- The Parish of Samford: Robert Paget
- St Martin's Residential Aged Care - Taigum
- All Anglican Schools Business Managers/Bursars and Senior Leaders

For health and healing for:

Rosie, Nick, Cameron and Jenny, Kylie and Mike, Gemma, Sally, Margaret Shelton's cousin, Thomas Moore, Beryl and Tom Wakefield, Anthony Bugden, Saloni Paul, Romola Squire, Sue Jordan and Dianne.

At home or nursing home:

Jean Ward and Noela Burdett.

REFRAME

As our Monday and Wednesday Bible study groups go into recess over January, all members of St Paul's are encouraged to take a little time to see the big picture of how the whole Bible and the story of the Church fit together with God's call to each of us to live as followers of Jesus.

Reframe includes ten videos that are now free to download at www.reframecourse.com

This set of videos manages to be accessible for people just starting to explore the Christian faith and at the same time intellectually challenging for people who have been Christians all their lives. It will make you think AND it will help you live your faith in the whole of your life.

If you would like to discuss what you are learning with others from St Paul's, let Margaret know and she will connect you. If you prefer to do your learning alone, go ahead. Margaret is happy to respond to any questions this might raise.

Advent Blessings



<h3>Joy</h3> <p>This Christmas, may the stress of the year Melt with the laughter of Eyes that meet yours with love, Ears that are hungry for your stories, Words that celebrate your essence, Food that nourishes your heart, And conversation that reminds you That the world is good.</p> <p>May you see children playing, and hear adults sing. May you wear a silly hat and laugh at dumb jokes.</p> <p>This Christmas, may bundles of joy fall into your lap. And in New Year, may you toss them In the air to bless your neighbours. Amen</p> <p><small>By Rev Dr Margaret Wesley, St Paul's, Ashgrove Photos by: Ruaraidh Macgregor (on Unsplash)</small></p>	<h3>Love</h3> <p>This Christmas, may love be born in you, As he was in Bethlehem, To parents unprepared for such a gift (Since, who could be?)</p> <p>May love find you unprepared yet willing To receive its smiles and tears, Its painful truths and gentle silences, Its gifts and sacrifices.</p> <p>This Christmas, may love be The awkward guest at your table, And in the New Year may it take your hand And lead you into the street To dance with your neighbours. Amen</p> <p><small>By Rev Dr Margaret Wesley, St Paul's, Ashgrove Photos by: Phil Pearson (on Unsplash)</small></p>		
<h3>Peace</h3> <p>This Christmas, may you know the peace Of loving hands reached out across All borders, ideologies, Races, creeds and genders: Hands that bring Healing to age-old conflicts And demolish ancient walls. May you hear its gentle voice say, "You are enough." You are loved. All will be well."</p> <p>This Christmas, may you receive God's peace In the gentle hands of a newborn baby, And in the New Year, may your hands become Bearers of the peace of God to your community. Amen</p> <p><small>By Rev Dr Margaret Wesley, St Paul's, Ashgrove Photos by: Phil Pearson (on Unsplash)</small></p>		<h3>Hope</h3> <p>This year, may Christmas light shine In the darkest corner Of your fear and isolation. May the glow of love, joy and peace, However faint it seems right now, Guide your steps toward a tomorrow You can barely imagine: Where tears are dried, Wounds healed, And enmity forgotten.</p> <p>This Christmas, may you be guided By the light of Christ, And in the New Year, May you hold that light high To guide your community toward hope. Amen</p> <p><small>By Rev Dr Margaret Wesley, St Paul's, Ashgrove Photos by: Ruaraidh Macgregor (on Unsplash)</small></p>	

Blue Christmas
at St Paul's
Ashgrove

5pm, Dec 13, 2020

And the Light was for all time.

Service bookings

www.trybooking.com/BLTHD



St. Paul's Anglican Church Ashgrove

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St. Paul's, Ashgrove

Christmas at St Paul's

December 13

Blue Christmas at 5pm

Christmas Eve

Family Service at 3pm

Family Service at 6pm

Midnight Service at 10:45

Christmas Day

Family Service at 8:30am

Find us on the corner of Waterworks Road & Jubilee Terrace in Ashgrove.
Bookings (at [Trybooking.com/blthr](https://trybooking.com/blthr)) are essential due to Covid restrictions.

Love

Scan to book



Joy

Peace



Bookfest Success

The Bookfest was a great success with a record figure of \$5600 being raised as well as successfully engaging the community. Thank you to Ann and Tony for their ongoing commitment to Bookfest and to Sarah who coordinated all of the associated activities.



CONGRATULATIONS!

A huge congratulations to all the Bookfest raffle winners!

1st Prize	Christmas Cake	- Margaret Shepherd
2nd Prize	Quilt	- Dee
3rd Prize	Advent Calendar	- Liz Ameer
4th Prize	Bubbles	- Deb Walker

THRIFT SHOP CHRISTMAS PARTY - CROQUET ANYONE?

A huge thank you to all our Thrift Shop volunteers! Despite the challenges this year the Thrift Shop has continued to do well going from strength to strength. A well deserved party!



ARE YOU OUR NEXT THRIFT SHOP VOLUNTEER?



St Paul's Thrift Shop is seeking volunteers!

Can you offer 4 hours once a month on a Wednesday or Saturday?

Orientation to the role will be provided and you will be working with at least one other volunteer.

Previous experience not required!

If you can help out please contact **Margaret Marshall on 3366 6095 or 0448 119 518.**

Calling all who are creative and crafty!

There is a new web site on its way! The current web site has served us well for a number of years, having been created and managed by John Hynd, but we have reached a point where it needs to be modernised and freshened up. Thomas Wesley, Margaret's son, has been creating the new web site, with Margaret working on the content.

We would love to include photos, artwork, reflections and prayers from you. Please give some thought to what you have that we might be able to include. Out of respect for everyone's privacy we will only include photos of people where written permission has been granted from them to publish.

Newsletter: Your contributions to the newsletter – poems, reflections, photos, etc – are invited and very much appreciated.

Christmas and beyond: Margaret would love to work with anyone who has creative abilities or ideas for making our special services extra special. Are you an actor, writer, musician or artist (even in your dreams)? Do you enjoy putting together craft activities for children? Margaret would love to chat with you about bringing our creative energies together as children of our Creator God.



PASTORAL CARE SUPPORT

St Paul's has recently formed a **Pastoral Care Group**. Its mission is to provide a way to monitor the well being of parishioners, support them with social contact and activities and refer to other agencies if needed. **If you or another parishioner needs help please don't hesitate to contact one of the committee members :**

George McCallun 0488 661 187

Robyn Carl 0409 478 257

Gill Outen 0409 468 128

Margaret Franklin 0438 664 287.

Simple Morning Teas

Finding people to fill the morning tea roster has not been easy this year. In the past we have rostered two people per Sunday, but this year we have only been able to find one person per week to take this on. In order to lighten the load, we will be moving toward simple morning teas - just a packet of biscuits and a cuppa.



If you would like to join the morning tea roster please talk to Margaret Shelton or Rev Margaret. If enough extra people join the roster next year we will be able to go back to being spoiled each week.

What's on

TAIZE

Friday 4 December

Please contact Pam or John Hynd if you are interested in joining us
0431 424 737 or
pamhynd@hotmail.com.

BIBLE STUDY AND MORNING PRAYER

Runs Wednesday mornings with Morning Prayer at 9am and Bible Study at 9.45am.

EVENING BIBLE STUDY

Runs fortnightly on Monday evenings
Please contact Rev Margaret on 0424 214 924 for further details.

PRACTICALLY SPIRITUAL

This is a group that meets once a month to reflect on theological books. Talk to Revd Kathy on how to become involved.

BOARD GAME GROUP

Run by David Adams

Meeting every second Saturday in the Crypt at 8pm. All welcome.

BOOK CLUB

Book Club has finished meeting for the year and will resume in 2021.

If you enjoy reading please join us. For further details and to RSVP please contact **Elizabeth Trew** on **emd.trew@gmail.com.**

RSVPs are essential at the moment given Covid restrictions.

Making music!

This November we have been lucky enough to host two concerts in our gorgeous church.

A special thank you to the Westside Orchestra who donate the concert money to St Paul's!

BRISBANE BAROQUE PLAYERS—22 NOVEMBER



WESTSIDE ORCHESTRA —29 NOVEMBER



From the Parish Council - 25 November

Parish councillors met last week for the final meeting for the 2020. What a year it has been. Despite the difficulties presented to us by covid-19 and the subsequent limitation to services the parish has finished its year on a very positive note, noting that the season of advent sees the beginning of the new liturgical year.

The Council continued deliberations regarding which organisations will be the focus of mission giving for 2021. Payments for those we have supported in the past have now been made in line with an increased budget allocation approved at our last meeting.

The restrictions regarding the numbers of people attending church have been eased so that the space we have in the church enables us increase attendance. We decided to set a maximum of 90 people. Pews have been returned to almost pre covid spacings and we feel 90 is a comfortable number at this point. This enables some level of social distancing where required. Following discussions regarding maintaining safety at the Christmas services it has been decided to have single use masks available. Website information will encourage attendees to bring their own masks.

Following a suggestion by George we will trial the use of BioPak drink containers for morning teas. These are reasonably priced and environmentally friendly. The company provides a composting pickup service.

Approval was given for repairs to the organ involving reasonably costly works on the electronic system. The major part of this work will be completed before Christmas. The Westside Orchestra have committed to donate the proceeds of their annual concert to the organ maintenance fund. This is greatly appreciated and we thank Amanda for her role in guiding this.

The Bookfest has produced an exceptionally good result not only in terms of the financial benefit with a record figure of \$5600 but also from the point of view of successful community engagement. As a parish we thank Ann and Tony for their ongoing commitment to Bookfest which is our primary fundraiser each year and to Sarah who coordinated all of the associated activities.

The Pastoral Care committee is small group working diligently to ensure outreach is maintained to all parishioners especially those who may not have attended church recently and to families of those baptised on the anniversary of the baptisms.

The wardens prepared a wish list of priorities for maintenance expenditure in regard to buildings and the mission of the parish community and presented these for discussion. The emerging priorities are: fly screens for the parish house: sealing the bottom carpark: increasing the administration hours for Rachael: and installing security cameras in the thrift shop area.

We are fortunate to have a parish community which is growing in its presence, strength and ministry in this community under the leadership of Rev Margaret Wesley.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR ST. PAUL'S COMMUNITY

How funds are used? Your giving to our parish community helps our community grow! Your donations go towards having a full time minister, electricity, insurance, rates, copyright, cleaning, music ministry, supporting Children's Church, grounds maintenance, Mission giving to Anglican Board of Mission, Bush Ministry Fund and the Anglicare women's' shelter. These are agencies that provide clean water to 3rd world communities, educational opportunities and safe shelters to the vulnerable. Without your contributions our parish would not be able to support a full time minister, pay the costs of running the parish and to support these wonderful missions. Every dollar goes towards making a difference to Ashgrove and to the world.

HELP US GROW! BANK ONLINE!

For easier ways to give and build up St. Paul's and our mission.

Give online.

Account Name:

Ithaca-Ashgrove Anglican Parish

BSB: 704901

ACC No: 00004420

PARISH DIRECT - No cash. Don't worry!

You can fill out a direct debit form from the back of the church and save the anxiety of having to find the correct cash on a Sunday morning. Pick up a form today, or speak to Richard Lane about setting up a regular transaction.

Priest-in-Charge:

The Reverend Dr Margaret Wesley:

0424 214 924

priest@stpaulsashgrove.org.au

Honorary Priests:

The Reverend Pam Hynd -

pam.hynd@stpaulsashgrove.org.au

The Reverend Kathy Hammer and

The Reverend Jack Hammer:

hammer.katherine@gmail.com

Peoples Wardens:

Jen Sneesby, Sarah Combe

Priest's Warden: Susan Lane

Welcoming-Care Group:

Elizabeth Sillano and Gill Outen

Choir: Robyn Carl

Rosters: Margaret Shelton

Hall Hire: Sarah Combe

Thrift Shop:

Margaret Marshall & Deborah Walker

Mother's Union: Joy Lloyd

Playgroup: Sarah Combe

Book Club: Ann Caston