



Werribee Uniting Church

3 December
2023
Advent 1

We acknowledge the people of the Kulin alliance, the original custodians of the land which was never ceded and on which our buildings for worship stand and on which we gather.



OUR COMMUNITY NEWS FOR TODAY AND THE COMING WEEK

Church Council Ballot today

As you enter the church this morning you will receive the two-page ballot paper. Twelve people have been nominated. **Please write YES or NO in the box beside EVERY name.** At its last meeting the Joint Church Council agreed that our new Church Council can have twelve members so we could elect them all. However, to be elected a person must receive a majority of the votes. It is therefore important that you vote for every candidate. Please complete both pages of your ballot paper immediately after the service and place in the Ballot Box in the foyer by midday today. The result of the ballot will be announced next Sunday.

Thanks to retiring members

At our combined Church council meeting last night, the Rev. Linley Liersch from Presbytery thanked the current Church councillors who are retiring as of amalgamation.

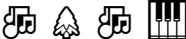
From Crossroads: Margaret G 13 Years, Robert R 8 years, Luciana A 6 years, Wendy B 5 years, Kur M 5 years, Lauren D 4 years, Jan B co-opted for 1 year, and Ken S co-opted for many years. From Hoppers Crossing: Elliott S, Site T and Taituave K

The new Church council will meet mid-December after the elections today.

Bible Discussion Group

The Bible Discussion Group resumes meetings on Tuesday **5 December** at 11.30 am. The gospel passage set for next week is Mark 1:1–8. Neil T.

Carol Service preparation

 The annual Carol Service is planned for 17 December at 7pm. Rehearsals will continue on the following dates: Monday Sunday 3/12/23 5–6.30pm, Sunday 10/12 5–6.30pm; Saturday 16/12 5–6.30pm. Looking forward to seeing everyone again and enjoying the beautiful music of the season. (Wendy B.)

Invitation to an induction

Rev. Fa’amata’u Leota’s Induction Service will be held at St Andrew’s at 10-20 Barkly Street, Sunbury this afternoon at 2.00pm. All are welcome.

CHRISTMAS BOWL STARTS TODAY



First Sunday of Advent **Hope for families forced to flee**

Jehan*, a brave mother of five, made the courageous decision to escape on foot to Pakistan with her family when Afghanistan fell to the Taliban in 2021. Your gifts through the Christmas Bowl can help Act for Peace coordinate rapid emergency responses with local partners, like Church World Services Asia, so that they can immediately act, giving families like Jehan's safety in exile – and hope for the future – when they need it most. **Please give today.**

*Name changed for safety reasons

CALL: 1800 025 101 VISIT: christmasbowl.actforpeace.org.au

The Christmas appeal of Act for Peace, the international humanitarian agency of the National Council of Churches in Australia. ABN 85 619 910 188

During Advent our combined congregations will be participating in the Christmas Bowl, through which more than 1,000 churches across Australia will be working together to fulfill the commission Jesus gave us, to care for our neighbours. Our role is to trust Him, to pray and to act.

By continuing to be part of this important tradition, we can help to create a world where uprooted people have a safe place to belong.

Over the weeks leading up to Christmas we will be learning about refugees in different countries around the world, and how the projects supported by the Christmas Bowl are helping them. We will be given the opportunity to help out by praying and donating.

Today we will dedicate our own large wooden Christmas Bowl, asking God to open our hearts so we can courageously act for peace in our world and our hands to share what we have with those who have little. Our Christmas Bowl will sit at the back of the chapel for all of Advent, so that you may place your donations to the Christmas Bowl Appeal in it if you wish to.

Other **options for donating** are to use the envelopes provided at church, visit our church’s Christmas Bowl donation page with this link: mycb.link/45154, scan the QR code on the posters in the foyer, or call 1800 025 101.

This **first Sunday in Advent** we will learn about refugee families from **Afghanistan**, forced to leave their homeland when their country was taken over by the Taliban in 2021.

NEWS AND NOTES

TODAY AND NEXT WEEK

A Reflection on Mark 13: 24-37



(Based on Uniting scholar William Loader’s view. The painting to the left is by Van Gogh, 1899, called “Starry Night”.) Here is a text for the First Sunday of Advent, of defiant hope in the midst of a suffering world. For those who yearn for a just order, the bearer of good news will come.

The writer of Mark’s Gospel imagines what Jesus would say as his last words to his people—watch for the signs of the end!

Mark uses coded Old Testament images (from Isaiah and Daniel) darkened moon, falling stars, of the Human One who will overcome his oppressors; an affirmation of hope.

Mark’s hearers knew the experience of Rome’s crushing the Jewish revolt 70 CE. They were familiar with false prophets and messiahs. They knew pain and despair—these must be the end times!

We today are challenged to silence, critical analysis of the Murdoch journalists, action with concerned folk.

Mark tones down the tendencies of some religious zealots to plot the events leading up to the end. Take a sober look at the world’s happenings; live in the light of hope beyond the present. Be ready for life!

We Christians, hoping, reflecting and speaking, have a crucial role for change in the world. We recognise that there must be global, systemic change. Not demons and

angels, but international co-operation will involve major decisions about the survival of the planet as habitat.

Our call to “watch” means engaged awareness of what the powers of this world are doing, and to be in tune with the One who comes alongside us now. (Neil T)



Worship services

3 December: HC: Rev. Annetia Goldsmith
10 December: Rev. Aiono Kilifi

What’s On This Week

Monday: 9.30am Playgroup
Tuesday: 11.30am Bible Discussion Group
Wednesday: 9.30am Property C’tee
Thursday: 9.30am Gardening Group

Bible Readings 3 Dec. & 10 December

3 December: Isaiah 64:1–9; 1 Corinthians 1:3–9; Mark 13:24–37; Psalm 80:1–7, 17–19
10 December: Isaiah 40:1–11; 2 Peter 3:8–15a; Mark 1:1–8; Psalm 85:1–2, 8–13

Rosters for 3 December & (10 Dec.)

Greetings: Elizabeth B (Margaret B)
AV: Christian R-K (Jacob Lewis)
Morning Tea: Samoan Ladies (Elaine B & Julie R)
Flowers: Bev C (Rose G)
Music: Elliott S (Gina L)
Prayers: Lauina L (Margaret B)
Reader: Rosie L-S (Julie R)

Werribee Uniting Church online

Our Facebook page can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/621987747878234/> <https://crossroadsunitingchurch.org.au>.

Church Office

Church office is open Monday to Friday, 9.30–12 noon. Phone 9741 1084. Email office@crossroadsunitingchurch.org.au.

WUC News: For any inclusions, please contact the editor **by Tuesday** (ph. 0427 812 606) or email robert.renton@bigpond.com. Our ‘roving reporter’ is Neil Tolliday (0402 817 673)—if you have a piece of news or a good story, please contact Neil.

Bank Accounts: Crossroads BSB 083-909 A/c 516109795. Hoppers Crossing BSB 013-915 A/c 354439707 Reference: Your surname.

Boom gate Remember the code: 0459#

To book for an event at any of Werribee Uniting Church facilities, please email bookings@crossroadsunitingchurch.org.au. Elizabeth B manages the bookings.