

Anglican Riverland Grapevine



The magazine of the **Pastoral District of the Riverland**

December 2017

Advent and Christmas - *Jesus in our midst*



One of the many highlights for me this year was celebrating **Holy Communion at Bethlehem**, during a 19 day pilgrimage to Israel and Jordan in June. Bethlehem is significant because that is where Jesus was born a little more than two thousand years ago in a cave or a stable. He was born into the world during the Roman occupation of Israel and while a population census, the first of its kind, was being carried out by the Roman Empire. Hence, Joseph had to return to his family's home town, Bethlehem, to register. He took his fiancée Mary.

As we know, there was no room at the Inn when they arrived, so they had to settle for a stable. There Jesus was born, as God's Son as the prophets in the Old Testament had foretold. He came as a human being, to be one of us, to live as one of us, to die as one of us, but He rose again to show that there is eternal life for all us who believe in Him.

The Mass that I presided at Bethlehem was in the Church of the Good Shepherd, nor far from the Church of the Nativity, where Jesus was born. The Church of the Good Shepherd is where the angels came to the shepherds who were looking after their flock of sheep at night, and informed them of the birth of the Messiah. It was these humble people who were the first to be told of the birth of the Messiah. They were urged to go and meet Jesus, which they did.

Jesus came into the world as God's only Son. God loved the world so much that he wanted to send his only Son, Jesus Christ, into the world as His love for us. This is what we celebrate this Christmas and every Christmas over the past two thousand years. He came into the world, to share with us what God was like, to bring peace into the world and for all of us to live in harmony with each other.

I hope you are able to share in this excitement again this Christmas. It is not just about receiving presents and certainly is not about Santa Claus, an invention of Coca Cola in the 1930s; it is about God sending His only Son, Jesus, to be with us and with the invitation to be with us in our daily lives with the help of the Holy Spirit.

It is a time when you are able to share that joy of Christ being with us, with the birth of God's Son. I urge you to come and celebrate the occasion, by attending one of our Christmas celebrations. Make this an essential and vital part of your Christmas this year, and invite your family and friends to share that joy. Just as the angels told the shepherds of the birth of the Messiah, so Jesus cares for us as a shepherd, in being by our side on our pilgrimage in life on this earth, in having a relationship with Him, through prayer and worship.

With every blessing this Christmas and in 2018, **Fr Paul**





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ST AUGUSTINE'S, RENMARK



Work for the Dole

At the conclusion of the Work for the Dole project at St Augustine's, our church gardens are looking very refreshed with new plants and paths completed.



Church Signage

We now have a bright new sign at the front of our church with the new Diocese logo and outlining our service times.



Welcome to Visitors

We have also begun displaying a sign outside the church at any time it is open to encourage people passing to come in.

Rose Week Stall

A very successful stall was again held at the Fair that opened Rose Week. Over \$1000 was raised.

Jane Pitt



CHURCH OF THE RESURRECTION, LOXTON

Our **monthly lunches** continue in Loxton on the first Sunday of the month. We have had increased numbers attending and we thoroughly enjoy being able to put these lunches on for our church community. Recently we held a lunch at Jennie Lory's house garden – many thanks to Jennie and John for hosting the lunch and putting on such a delicious meal! We were entertained by the Loxton Primary School Staff Choir who sang a few songs and then tried out their Christmas Carols on everyone too!



If you would like to join us for one of our epic lunches, please contact Louise Burgess on 0437 278 617 for details of the next lunch.

On Sunday 12 November during our Praise, Prayer and Proclamation service, we **took time to remember** the returning soldiers, those who died and the animals that were used and lost in the war. It was a very poignant service which sparked many conversations and brought home to everyone how lucky we were that these amazing men, women and animals served our country.

Our **'BS on the Deck'** (yes that is 'Bible Study'!) has started at Peter Hartley's house on a Tuesday night at 7:00 pm for about an hour. Pete's address is 13 Wodonga Avenue, Loxton, and we would love to see you there!

God bless and wishing everyone a very blessed Christmas.

Louise Burgess



ST JAMES, WAIKERIE

Our service on Sunday 8 October was followed by a barbeque lunch in the hall and an informative talk and slideshow by Fr Paul and Helen on their recent **trip to the Holy Land**. There were 18 people in attendance.



On Friday 13 and Saturday 14 October was the annual **Waikerie Flower Show** which was again very successful. St James' exhibit depicted a church scene with a bride, bridesmaid and flower girl in front of an altar and stained glass windows. Our church ladies grew pots of petunias and other colourful plants to decorate the perimeter of the exhibit. Our thanks go to Lyn Nitschke for coordinating our exhibit. Roses from the church garden again took out some prizes.

In the second half of September we had some work around the church completed by the **Work for the Dole** programme in Waikerie. They painted the outdoor furniture and replaced all their bolts, painted the inside of the toilet, painted all doors on the church and hall, rebuilt a retaining wall on the eastern side of the church and connected the church roof to the rainwater tank.

We again manned the plant stall at the **Hospital Gala Day** on 3 November and the ladies donated goods for a raffle and Janet did an excellent job of wrapping the box of goodies.

Thanks to *The River News* for the image.



All Souls Day was commemorated on Sunday 5 November with everyone lighting a candle for their departed loved ones.



During November, the **Waikerie Rectory**, which was rented out for over four years, was refurbished for our new Deacon, Scott Mudd, and his wife Melissa.



Patching and painting has occurred in most rooms. A new oven, cooktop, washing machine and bathroom vanity have been installed. We thank an anonymous parishioner for a new refrigerator purchase.

We were fortunate to have some of the painting completed by inmates of the Cadell Training Centre and are very thankful for all the work done by Waikerie parishioners - men and women. To finish off, the house has been cleaned from carpets to curtains to ceiling air conditioner.

June Taylor

St Peter's, Morgan

Sunday 29 October was a fifth Sunday and hence worship was held at Morgan instead of Waikerie. The service attracted 22 participants, including from other churches in the Pastoral District and even interstate! The next service at Morgan will be on Sunday 31 December at 11:30 am, with a Christmas theme.

Waikerie Advent Pageant Friday 1 December



Students and staff of Waikerie, Ramco and Waikerie Lutheran Primary Schools took to the streets.

Skits and songs followed at the 'inn' and the Waikerie Primary hall. Donations of food were collected for distribution via Intercare.

CENTRAL AREA – BERRI, BARMERA, MONASH

St Oswald's, Monash

St Alban's, Berri

We have had an exciting few months since our last Grapevine, with the **Berri-Monash combined Family Services** on the eve of the second Sunday (yes that is Saturday evening, but not always the second Saturday) each month proving very popular. We thank all those who have supported the services to help make them so enjoyable.

In September we adjourned to Geoff and Cheryl Davis' home following the service for a BBQ and campfire tea. Joy's family from Merbein helped to make this a great night with the children roasting marshmallows on the fire. The men, in particular Ron, watched the football final with Port Power struggling to stay in the match!

For our October service we travelled to the **Gurra Lakes 'Bush Church'** owned by Malcolm and Sandra Weisman - what a beautiful night. The service, even though it was windy, was made even more special with the pelicans gliding by in the background ... never mind the snake and rats in the water!



A spectacular sunset after a pooled tea sealed the night as a huge success.

As the November service coincided with **Remembrance Day**, we decided to remember our loved ones who gave their lives to makes ours better. Many parishioners shared their stories. What a wonderful collection of memories and experiences, with Joy speaking on General John Monash, after whom

Monash was named. We then enjoyed a sumptuous BBQ at Ron and Gayes' place, with lots of fun and laughter 'christening' their new table.

Our next family service will be **preparing the Berri Church for Christmas** with setting up the Nativity Scene and decorating the Tree. Please bring your families and children along to join in the fun at 5:00 pm at St Alban's Church, Berri, on Saturday 16 December. Please bring a plate to share for tea after the service.

Cheryl Davis

St Edmund's, Barmera

With the Advent season upon us, greetings from St Edmund's Barmera. When we look back over the fast flown year so much has happened that we are grateful for.

We are pleased that our **numbers are slowly increasing**. We have a good team who keep the church, vestry and yard clean, neat and tidy. So many people give in various ways: the sacristan, music makers, flower and reading rosters, the Pastoral Assistants and, of course, Father Paul and Father John. Our gardener on his trusty ride-on mower keeps the grounds tidy and weeds disappear magically! With this recent rain it will look better too.

We recently had a **music workshop** with Greg Johns. We are practising the new sung service which is simple and easy to follow.

A large number attended our **Patronal Festival** and morning tea in November.



In August we celebrated the **60th anniversary** of the laying of the foundation stone of the new church. Lunch and a photograph display were held in the hall, i.e. the old church.



The hall, which was the original church (1921), has been used as a central meeting place for the Pastoral District, and many other functions and meetings. It is quite packed on Sunday after the weekly service as people get together for a cuppa and a catch up. We try to theme our morning teas, e.g. red cakes for Pentecost, green for St Patrick's Day, white for Mother's Day with flowers given out as well to make the hall a welcome place.

The **community kitchen** will close for a few weeks over the Christmas break, but a lunch snack will be provided instead. Several of our congregation work there regularly and find it is a rewarding experience.

The **monthly market stalls** are still going strong and our December stall will have Christmas goodies again. We thank our produce makers and customers too. We always welcome new cooks!

The Christmas tree will be decorated again by the children and the congregation on 10 December with **Chrismons** which were made by Mothers' Union members about 50 years ago, and have been used ever since. These decorations all have a Christian significance which is explained as each is put on the tree. There will be a special morning tea after in the hall for everyone.



Our **Christmas Eve Service** will be at 11:00 for 11:30 pm, and the church will be decorated with as many flowers and candles as possible to give a real festive feel to the service. We hope to see you there and then for Christmas cake and drinks in the hall after.

We are looking forward to meeting our new Deacon, Scott, and his wife Melissa and sincerely welcome them.

Pauline Stevens and John Reed

FUTURE VISION TASK GROUP

At its first meeting on 9 October 2016, the **purpose** of this Pastoral District wide group was:

- *To explore suggestions about our future and to advise PDC*
- *To be looking toward planning for the future, referring to the Mission Action Plan with 5 to 10 year vision*
- *To be open and to encourage all who would like to attend at any time and to vary the town in which we meet to facilitate this.*

Ruth Daws has chaired eight meetings, often with eight attendees, although the individuals have differed. The venues so far have been Barmera and Waikerie. Initiatives from the early meetings included the Prayer Vigil (just repeated in Nov 2017) and the ecumenical service for those suffering from the Nov 2016 hail storm.

Much of the meetings in 2017 has explored the various factors that affect us achieving our objectives. These have recently been formatted into a 'SWOT' matrix, a copy of which is available at each church. A text document summarises discussion points and possible actions.

	Positive	Negative
Internal	S Strengths	W Weaknesses
External	O Opportunities	T Threats

In November the group met with Jeff McHugh and Des Warner from the Diocesan Finance, Audit and Investment Committee and discussed options for using invested funds and existing capital assets as well as the financial support we can expect from the Home Mission Fund for our new Deacon.

At the next meeting, on Sunday 17 December, it is planned to review how we have progressed over the last two years with our Mission Action Plan and if our administration structure suits our needs. Pastoral District Council has requested Local Committees also consider the latter.

TREASURER'S REPORT

During September, Fr Paul and I gave a presentation to each congregation about the impact of having Deacon Scott Mudd join our Pastoral District. While Fr Paul outlined what he anticipated Scott's role would be in the district, I outlined the financial situation.

In the first instance we will receive a subsidy from the Home Mission Fund, but we also need your assistance to embrace the changes needed to be fully independent within the next couple of years. We continue to work through these issues with the Diocese, with Des Warner and Jeff McHugh attending our Future Vision meeting this month.

I have been encouraged with three more parishioners using EFT for their weekly pledge. I continue to recommend this to all who can access this facility.

Bank Balance 1 January 2017	\$35,634.39
Bank Balance 31 October 2017	\$20,622.67
This represents a shortfall of	\$15,011.72

I would like to thank all those who have assisted and offered support to me throughout the year and wish everyone a Happy and Holy Christmas. **Cheryl Davis**

MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE TO THE LORD ...

An accomplished musician and organist, **Greg John**, shared some of his skills with representatives of most of the churches in the Riverland in November. Greg visited all seven Anglican Churches to play the church organ, and to see what opportunities there may be in enhancing the music on offer. He also staged a music workshop at St Alban's, Berri. This was an opportunity to practise the new Owens Mass setting, which has been recommended for use in the Diocese over the coming year. It was also a chance to learn some new hymns and songs.



Greg demonstrated a **Hauptwerk Virtual Pipe Organ**, sourced through a downloaded computer program and played via an electronic keyboard. It gave out an impressive sound! As a result, Waikerie will consider installing it. This virtual pipe organ was also demonstrated at the music workshop.

Greg also spoke of the websites available which offer accompaniment tracks and CD's for hymns and other worship songs. Some of the websites are free. As well, he spoke of the software available which enables you to change the key, tempo, or number of stanzas on mp3 tracks. Again, some of the software is free.

Greg is the organist at St Margaret's, McLaren Vale, and has offered to help the Diocese in any way to enhance its music opportunities. He is now retired, having completed 30 years as a music teacher and Performing Arts Director at Tatchilla Lutheran College at McLaren Vale. He is also a singer in State Opera productions and directs the Handel's Messiah at the Coriole Winery at McLaren Vale annually. He has also directed over many years the community Christmas Carols at Tatchilla College. Greg has offered to make another visit to the Riverland, if requested.

Fr Paul





This is the theme set by the Diocese for the coming year in an effort to give people hope that there is more to life than just day to day living, but in the hope that Jesus Christ gives us in our pilgrimage on earth and beyond.

Over the past 12 months, the Diocese has been encouraging everyone to ignite their expression of faith in God through '**Ignite Growth 2017**'. This has been done through workshops, in better equipping each other, in sharing our faith with others and encouraging all of us to enter into a deeper relationship with Jesus.

The theme for the coming year '**There must be more to life ... Discover Jesus**' is an attempt to put our faith into action and to speak openly with others about what Jesus offers all of us, firstly through starting a new life through baptism and with the gift of the Holy Spirit. As Jesus said, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit" (John 3.5).

The phrase 'There must be more to life ... Discover Jesus' aims for us to give that promise of hope to others and to share in the good news of Jesus Christ, who came into the world as God's Son. As baptised children of God, we are made inheritors of the kingdom of God. It is important though to share this great message to others and to invite them to come along to our churches and share with us in worshipping as fellow believers. As Christians, we should not do this alone, but as a community of faith, and in being spiritually nourished in the Eucharist.

Please pray regularly that we may notice opportunities to share our faith with others. There will be help along the way, with a focus for each month to illustrate the overall theme. These topics are loosely based on the lectionary readings for the month. For example, the Advent and Christmas focus is '**Jesus in our midst**'; for January through the season of Epiphany: '**Jesus is for all people**'; and for Easter: '**Jesus reveals new life**'.

It is the aim as part of this initiative to grow each of our congregations by 25 per cent over the coming year. It is an ambitious target but one that we can aim to achieve in being able to actively share our faith, in supporting others in going beneath the surface of their lives, and to consider the eternal values, summed up in the life of Jesus.

With continued prayers and every blessing, **Fr Paul**

DEACON FOR THE RIVERLAND

By the time you read this, Bishop John will have **ordained Scott Mudd as a Deacon** on 9 December. Scott and his wife Melissa have taken up residence in the Waikerie Rectory. I took the opportunity to have a chat prior to his retreat and ordination.

Mark Taylor

Scott was born and bred (fifth generation) in Maitland in the Hunter Valley, initially on a small farm. His initial knowledge of God was from his mother (Uniting Church) and father (Anglican). Scott grew up in the Uniting Church, reading lessons in church from age 10. He campaigned for youth ministry and became Youth Leader for ten years as well as other leadership roles in the parish and region.



While exploring his vocation for ministry, Scott moved to the Anglican Church at the end of 2014 and pursued lay ministry in two parishes. He earned a Degree in Theology from the University of Newcastle.

After a discussion in late 2016, Bishop John invited him to a Discernment Conference in March 2017 in Murray Bridge. This was Scott's first visit to SA outside Adelaide. He was "struck by the sheer beauty and size, the scope ... everything out here is so much bigger". After consulting with his wife, he accepted a stipendiary position in the Diocese - to learn later that he would come to the Riverland. After some research, this was "a great delight"!

Scott would particularly like to explore families' worship and ministries – "the future of the church ... but there is more to it than just saying we'll put on a families' service or we'll do a kids' talk at Mass". Meanwhile, he loves the Anglican liturgies. He sees great potential for growth in the Riverland, in line with the Diocese wide plan for a 25% growth in 2018.

Melissa, who is more than happy to answer to **Mel**, met Scott at a mutual friend's gathering and completely forgot him! Fortunately, they met again at University. She has liked visiting southern Australia before and is looking forward to living in Waikerie.



Previously a High School teacher, she has not found any local vacancy, but is investigating Pastoral Care and Chaplaincy positions in local schools. She has been an organ scholar and played both in church and with a choir. She and Scott both enjoy singing.

Scott expects to assist Fr Paul initially, in the Assistant Curate role. Melissa will accompany him, but would also like to play the organ on occasion, particularly to try the Berri pipe organ.

Favourite	Scott	Melissa
Food	<i>pizza</i>	<i>fish & chips</i>
Drink	<i>good red wine – shiraz</i>	<i>water, orange juice</i>
Sport	<i>rugby league</i>	<i>viewing tennis</i>
Book	<i>fantasy science fiction</i>	<i>whatever reading at the time</i>
Musical	<i>Les Miserable</i>	<i>Phantom of the Opera</i>
Hobbies	<i>reading, cooking, wine, steam trains</i>	<i>theatre – musical direction</i>

CHRISTMAS SERVICES 2017

In Christmas, Jesus comes to us

Saturday 16 December

St Alban's, Berri

5 pm Family Service, preparing nativity and tree

Wednesday 20 December

St Alban's, Berri

7 pm Nine Lessons and Carols

Christmas Eve – Sunday 24 December

St Oswald's, Monash

9 am Holy Communion

St James, Waikerie

6 pm Holy Communion and Blessing of the Crib

St Augustine of Hippo, Renmark

7 pm Family Service

Church of the Resurrection, Loxton

9 pm Vigil Mass

St Edmund's, Baramba

11 pm Carol singing prior to 11:30 pm Midnight Mass

St Augustine of Hippo, Renmark

11 pm Carol singing prior to 11:30 pm Midnight Mass

Christmas Day – Monday 25 December

St Alban's, Berri

9 am Family Service

St Augustine of Hippo, Renmark

9 am Sung Eucharist

Jesus in our midst



Baby Jesus – God with us?

Singing spreads Christmas cheer

