

# SHEPPARTON UNITING CHURCH

## SHEPPARTON RURAL CLUSTER



### NEWS JANUARY 10, 2021

#### MINISTERS

Rev Loni Vaitohi 5822 4602 0449 504 228

Rev Joan Fisher, Minister in Assoc

Rev Glenys Gill, Supply Minister

Pastoral Care Convenor Shirley Marven

Church 4805 1120

Website [sheppartonuc.org.au](http://sheppartonuc.org.au)

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/shepparton.unitingchurch>

#### SUNDAY JANUARY 10 9.30am Baptism of Christ

*Praying Together* Defence Forces Chaplains

*Readings* Baptism Gen 1.1-5 Ps 29 Acts 19.1-7 Mark 1.4-11

*Worship* Revd Loni Vaitohi

#### READINGS FOR JANUARY

Jan 17 1 Sam 3.1-10 Ps139.1-6,13-18 1Cor 6.12-20 John 1.43-51

Jan 24 Jonah 3.1-5,10 Ps 62.5-12 1 Cor 7.29-31 Mark 1.14-20

Jan 31 Deut 18.15-20 Ps111 1Cor 8.1-13 Mark 1.21-28

#### YOUR COMFORT DURING WORSHIP

As we are not allowed to serve drinks, including water, you may like to bring some water with you.

*We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters of the region, the Peoples of the Yorta Yorta Nations, and pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging.*

#### SHEPPARTON WORSHIP ALSO CONTINUES ONLINE

##### Joining in to Zoom via the phone

*Step 1:* Dial 03 7018 2005 or 02 8015 6011 *Step 2:* when prompted enter the meeting ID for that date, followed by #

*Step 3:* Press # *Step 4:* enter the passcode for that date, then#

January 10 Meeting ID 990 4208 1399# Passcode 024 601#

We apologise for not being able to Zoom the January 3 service because we had insufficient technicians.

#### SHEPPARTON RURAL CONGREGATIONS

Shepparton Congregation warmly welcomes members from the Rural Cluster to worship with them on January 10.

#### ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION 2020-21

The Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, February 7. You will recall that the 2020 could not be held because we moved into lockdown a couple of weeks before the meeting date. So this meeting will be different from usual. It will be a short meeting, to receive reports and call for nominations for the officers of the Congregation and the Congregation's representatives to other bodies. The elections will be held on Sunday, March 14.

Arrangements for the elections are in hand should we not be able to meet.

**The meeting** will receive the resignation of Thelma Payne (March 2020) as Elder and representative to Church Council. It will formally release the three elders and representatives to Church Council whose term expired in 2020 but who graciously consented to serve until an Annual Meeting could be held. Warmest thanks to Ray Luscombe, Shirley Marven and Lisa Tu'ungafasi for offering their gifts for what has become a further year.

**Elections** We need to elect up to eleven Elders of the Congregation. They will automatically become representatives to Church Council. There are vacancies for other representatives to Church Council. For the Congregation, Chairperson and Secretary of the Congregation and representatives to Presbytery are to be elected.

**Reports** In addition to the 2019 reports already received, groups are asked to provide a very brief (dot point) update of activities during 2020, including Zoom meetings, contacts with members and so on. Reports are due with Joan **Monday January 18** - by email or in the Narthex box or the church letter box. If this causes problems, please contact Joan 5812 9320

*Joan McRae, Chair of Congregation*

## **EPIPHANY AND THE SUNDAYS AFTER EPIPHANY**

The church originally celebrated Christmas, including Wise Men, the Baptism of Christ and the first 'sign' - at the wedding in Cana, on January 6, date of a pagan festival. By 330, Christmas was being celebrated on December 25, date of another pagan festival! The Western Church separated the visit of Wise Men and the showing forth of God-in-human-flesh to the wider world and observed this on January 6, as we still do - the Twelfth Day of Christmas, and end of the Christmas season. Epiphany is a day, not a season. Matthew 2.1-12 is the Gospel for the day, often read the first Sunday in January. The Sundays after Epiphany, between four and nine, depending on the date of Easter, continue the theme of the showing forth of God incarnate (in a human body), and the theme of Jesus, Light of the World, shown in the ministry of Jesus. The first Sunday always observes the Baptism of Christ, when Jesus receives God's approval and God's Spirit descends on him. The last Sunday after Epiphany celebrates the Transfiguration. Except for the first and last Sundays, which are white, the colour is green.

## **CHURCH ROSTERS**

Warm thanks for the wonderful response to Lorraine's request for people to go on the rosters! Of the 50 at worship last Sunday, eighteen offered to assist with these tasks. Your offer will still be received: please contact Lorraine. Offers to learn to work with the AV will gladly be received, too.

## **WORLD DAY OF PRAYER**

This year the local World Day of Prayer service will be held at our church on Friday, March 5. To get started, it would be very helpful to have some keen helpers become involved, before meeting with representatives from other churches. We will meet on Wednesday, January 27 at 10.00am at our church.

If you are willing to help with preparations for our service, please contact Lois. Leave a message for Lois to contact you via our email sheppartonunitingchurch@gmail.com. *Lois Hardy*

## **PASTORAL PRAYERS**

This week, please remember those who are not well, those who are still feeling lonely or separated from families interstate and all who are mourning. The WCC invites prayers for Israel, the Occupied Territories of Palestine, Jordan, Egypt and other Middle Eastern countries. In the Presbytery we pray for Defence Force Chaplains. Always we remember those suffering from domestic violence. And, from today, the United States.

## **CHRISTMAS CHEER 2020**

A very big, sincere 'thank you' to all who donated items, cash, cards, food and time to inflate balls, assemble and wrap presents, decorate lolly jars and so on.

Christmas Cheer was delivered to 31 family households in December. These comprised approximately 50 adults and over 50 children and teens. Families are asked to share any items unsuitable for their family, and readily do so, so the numbers involved are even higher.

Many more packages have been delivered and shared during the year, especially clothing and items for children, thanks to the generosity of our anonymous Melbourne supporters. We also have some food to help some families as the school year starts. Pental Soaps kindly provided bathroom products.

'This will be such a help' were words often heard during the deliveries. Genuine appreciation was expressed for every delivery. People couldn't believe their eyes and were happily overwhelmed at some of the gifts. The quality and quantity of your Christmas Cheer gifts certainly helped grateful families celebrate Christmas. *Val Gibbs for Women's Afternoon Group*

## **WITH LOVE TO THE WORLD**

Subscriptions for 2021 now need to be renewed. As explained earlier, *WLTTW* is now available on an App, which you purchase in the usual way. For those wishing to continue a hard copy subscription, the usual four issues will be available in 2021. This year the total cost is \$24. This is payable to Joan when you receive the first issue in February. New subscribers are very welcome - contact Joan 5812 9320 by January 17. Joan will contact present subscribers by January 18, for their order.

## **DOVE OR WILD GOOSE?**

My reading this week included the comment that just four days after 'a trio of wise guys and a whole lot of light for Epiphany... we have water and Jesus and a wild-honking goose of a Holy spirit clattering through our organised worship... Yes, the Holy Spirit that descended on Jesus in the Jordan... is on the loose and ready to take you along for the ride of your life.' (Revd Sharron Blezard, US Lutheran pastor) 2018

What about the Holy Spirit as a dove? The sixth century Celtic Christians on Iona, west Scotland (whose founder St Columba's name means 'dove') decided that the Scottish wild geese were better reminders that the Holy Spirit cannot be tamed or controlled. So the wild goose reminds us to expect the unexpected when it comes to God. *To be continued Joan*