

# SHEPPARTON UNITING CHURCH

## WITH DOOKIE UNITING CHURCH



**NEWS DECEMBER 25, 2022**

### CHRISTMAS DAY

#### MINISTERS

Rev Loni Vaitohi

Sick Leave

Rev Kerrie Needham

Rev Joan Fisher, Minister in Assoc 5821 8382

Rev Glenys Gill, Supply Minister

Pastoral

Care Convenor Shirley Marven

0438 242 150

Church 4805 1120

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

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24 Christmas Eve 6.00-7.00PM**

Rev Kerrie Needham and Messy Church

***Waiting for the Baby***

*Interactive Christmas 2022*

*Activities, including*

A Garden View

Sunflower Peace Prayers

Photo Bomb Christmas

Story Christmas Tent

Salt Dough Christmas

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

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25 Christmas Day Rev Loni Vaitohi**  
*Readings* Is 9.2-7 Ps 96 Tit 2.11-14 Luke 2.1- 20

**DOOKIE Christmas Day 9.30am Rev Glenys Gill**

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 1 New Year**  
**SHEPPARTON Rev Kerrie Needhsm HC**  
**DOOKIE Joan McRae**

*Readings* Is 63.7-9 Ps 148 Heb 2.10-18 Matt 2. 13-23

**SHEPPARTON WORSHIP 9.30AM**

**Worship online [www.youtube.com/user/SheppartonUniting](http://www.youtube.com/user/SheppartonUniting)**

**Christmas Day** **SINCE 1949** **Merry Christmas!**

Mugisha\*, along with her sister and two young children are just some of the millions of families living as refugees around the world. Mugisha fled to Kenya after conflict broke out in her home country of Congo. Since arriving, she has faced many challenges to meet the basic needs for her family. Through the Christmas Bowl, our local partners around the world can continue to share God's love with refugees like Mugisha by providing food, care and lifesaving support. **Please give today.**

\*Mugisha's name has been changed for safety reasons.

**CALL: 1800 025 101 VISIT: [actforpeace.org.au/christmasbowl](http://actforpeace.org.au/christmasbowl)**

The Christmas appeal of Act for Peace, the international humanitarian agency of the National Council of Churches in Australia. ABN 86 619 970 188

## **THE PRESIDENT'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE**

'The good news of Christmas is that Christ enters into the darkest of places, shining the light of God in the world and in our lives', says Rev Sharon Hollis, Uniting Church President, in her Christmas message. The electronic version of the *NEWS* will have the link so that you can watch the President's message and those of the Moderators of the Synods.

## **GREETING FROM KERRIE**

Hello and Merry Christmas!

If hecticcity was a word, I'd use it to tell you how busy my week has been. I guess you could send the same word right back at me. I hope that like me, you are finding everything falling into place and settling into the final preparations for Christmas.

Last Sunday I worshipped with Dookie for the second time. In the afternoon I was privileged to be at Messy Church to see what a fantastic job the team does. I got to colour in part of a puzzle Christmas tree, make a foil angel, decorate an angel cookie, discovered some angels in disguise, and saw people create the most awesome stained glass window decorations. As we finished up, we were invited to a most sumptuous Christmas Dinner. Chicken and roast vegetables, followed by a choice of plum pudding and custard or fruit salad and Ice cream.

I prepared some prayer stations for Wednesday's Quiet Christmas.. Joan brought a very powerful focal image for contemplation and we had a time to spend with our memories and consider grief, and take time to remember special things and give thanks.

(On a culinary adventures note, Don and I discovered the Chinese restaurant close to the church and enjoyed a smorgasbord style dinner – definitely a plus.)

Over the last couple of days I have been busy finding and printing, and am on the final stages of having activities ready for an interactive Christmas service. It will be fun for families and still hold the central theme of waiting for the baby (Jesus). We'll have a Godly play style story, and then follow on with activities centred around that story. One thing I am really looking forward to is showcasing Cam's magnificent visual installation on the wall of the church. I'm taking my picnic mat to sit on while watching. It will still be light at that time, but I'm hoping it shows up well on the wall.

And so we look forward to the day! Christmas Day. I am privileged to join you in celebrating the day as a worshipper (I worship every Sunday I preach too but I'm sure you know what I mean).

Wherever, however and whenever you celebrate the day we recognise as the reminder of the birth of Jesus- may you have the most blessed day, including the joys you are hoping for and the blessings you are praying for, for yourselves and others.

God bless you, Kerrie and Don

## **PASTORAL PRAYERS**

*We remember* Emily, Eve, Nola Smith

All with Covid, or Long Covid; those isolating – the greatly increasing numbers in Victoria and locally. *The Presbytery* prays for St Stephen's Wodonga and Uniting Wodonga. *The WCC* prays for the lands and peoples of Japan, North Korea and South Korea. The Assembly prays for \*Dialogue, peace and justice in West Papua. \*Ministry agents and worship leaders as they prepare for Christmas services and create spaces for communities to gather and celebrate the birth of Christ. \*Those who are lonely or doing it tough this Christmas. May they know the joy and hope of Christ. Loni and family.

## **DAY OF MOURNING JANUARY 22, 2023**

'In marking the Day of Mourning, we live into our covenant relationship to stand together with, and listen to the wisdom of, First Nations people in their struggle for justice. We affirm the sovereignty of First Peoples and honour their culture and their connection to country.' The Assembly's resource has been updated.

### **A REFLECTION - HOPE LIGHTING THE DARK**

(Isaiah 9:2-7)

In darkness and fear  
a small flame of hope relieves  
a burdened nation.

A child born, a gift,  
to grow as a just, wise king,  
the promise of God.

In different times  
a promised child is born, poor,  
hunted, fugitive.

Celebrate with joy  
the risky birthing of hope  
which lights our darkness

*With warm thanks to Rev Jeff Shrowder, The Billabong Used with permission*

## **CHURCH OFFERINGS – ELECTRONIC GIVING**

Please contact us for information regarding electronic giving.