

Anglican Parish of Warracknabeal

Project Regenerate: Explore. Rejoice. Give.

Advent 3

14 December 2025

Sunday Services: 9.30am - Warracknabeal

6.00pm - Christmas Festival at Racecourse (from 5.30pm)



Hello Everybody! I hope that you've had a good week.

I trust that your pilgrimage to Bethlehem is going smoothly and that you haven't had to lean on the donkey too much. However, it is there if you need it!

I've got two questions for you this week:

What is your Christmas Prayer?

What is your Christmas wish?

As people of faith - we trust that God not only listens to our prayers - but answers them. This means - we must take responsibility for 'what we ask for' ... and maybe God doesn't respond to what we want, but rather what we need.

Jesus gave us a hint in The Lord's Prayer. Deeply rooted in our relationships - with God and then those around us - we are guided to honour/worship, confession and forgiveness and then a 'return to wholeness' (*ie. Salvation*) - and hopefully joy!

Which aspect of The Lord's Prayer will you focus on this week?

Regarding your Christmas wish - some people may say - why would Christians 'wish' for anything? It might be perceived that our faith is compromised.

I ask this question on purpose - because sometimes we are uncertain about what to pray for. Therefore, identifying a 'wish' (*or call it desire, hope, aspiration, inspiration ...*) allows us to focus on what might be possible in relationship with God - and as the text tells us - NOTHING is impossible to God.

Maybe that broken relationship can find healing. Maybe division in our community will dissipate and goodwill will return. Maybe you and I can genuinely aspire to 'institution reform' and see people in need access the services that they require easier. Maybe your heart's desire - is also God's heart's desire for you/us. Maybe - just maybe you are more powerful than you think in influencing the matters of consequence in our world, our community, our region. *Blessings, Rev.*



Prayer in the Parish

In the Parish & Beyond:

- +Garry; our Parish 140yr celebrations; the 'Greater' Wimmera Deanery;
- For our community, our neighbours, our friends, those we find difficult;
- For the people of Sumatra, Thailand, Philippines, Sri Lanka;
- For the people of Haiti, Central African Republic, South Sudan, Eritrea;
- For sustainable peace in Middle East;
- For our farmers and their families;
- People of Palestine, Yemen, Syria, Ukraine and all Hong Kong;
- For all who are hungry, thirsty and seeking shelter around the globe;
- For all facing natural disaster: flood, fire, earthquake, cyclone, famine;
- For all known to us in hospital and our Residential Care facilities;
- For Kay Armstrong;
- For all those we love, near and far away;

Years Mind: Claude ROSS (1974), Annie MULLER (2005), Ellen CLARKE (2008), Louisa LOXTON (1986), Gavin BIBBY (2005), Ronald HOOPER (2010), Marjorie COWAN (2016), Keith SCHULZ (2021), Scott KING (1990) (infant), Florence WHITE (2012), Irene (May) HALL (1988), Kimberley DEMPSEY (1985), Francis (Frank) HEWITT (2008), Alice (Bea) EMMETT (2009), Percival DONEHUE (1992)

"Rest eternal grant to them, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon them."

Service Times Dec

Advent 3 – 14 December

9.30am Warracknabeal

6.00pm Warracknabeal Community Christmas Festival (*gates open at 5.30pm*)

Christmas Services

Advent 4 – 21 December

9.30am Warracknabeal

6.00pm Areegra – Café Carols
(*Bring a plate & drink and a friend*)

Christmas Eve – 24 December

8.00pm refreshments / 10.00pm Celebration

Christmas Day – 25 December

9.30am Celebration

Christmas 1 – 28 December

9.30am Warracknabeal

TEARFUND Useful Gift Shop

For the gift that gives twice.

*Contact Rev directly or via TEARFUND website: **usefulgifts.org***

for your alternative Christmas presents that help less advantaged around the world. Heaps of gifts to choose from!

**Choose a gift, send a card,
fight poverty!**

An invitation:

Recently, Rev was interviewed by the Dean of our Cathedral (Michael Davies) for a podcast - *The Theology Pod*. The topic - "Rural Ministry: Scattered Flocks, Faithful Presence."

If you'd like to listen - here's the link:

<https://open.spotify.com/episode/5UjAXmwEtXsSJB3DeRKTMA?si=IYgsKyIcSZyWxU418BrROW>

TODAY'S READINGS

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

First Reading:

Isaiah 35:1-10

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

The desert and the parched land will be glad; the wilderness will rejoice and blossom. Like the crocus, it will burst into bloom; it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy. The glory of Lebanon will be given to it, the splendour of Carmel and Sharon; they will see the glory of the Lord, the splendour of our God. Strengthen the feeble hands, steady the knees that give way; say to those with fearful hearts, 'Be strong, do not fear; your God will come, he will come with vengeance; with divine retribution he will come to save you.' Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy. Water will gush forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert. The burning sand will become a pool, the thirsty ground bubbling springs. In the haunts where jackals once lay, grass and reeds and papyrus will grow. And a highway will be there; it will be called the Way of Holiness; it will be for those who walk on that Way. The unclean will not journey on it; wicked fools will not go about on it. No lion will be there, nor any ravenous beast; they will not be found there. But only the redeemed will walk there, and those the Lord has rescued will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.

This is the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Song of Mary

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord: my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,

Who has looked with favour on his lowly servant: from this day all generations will call me blessed.

The Almighty has done great things for me: and holy is his name.

God has mercy on those who fear him: from generation to generation.

The Lord has shown strength with his arm: and scattered the proud in their conceit,

Casting down the mighty from their thrones: and lifting up the lowly.

God has filled the hungry with good things: and sent the rich away empty.

He has come to the aid of his servant Israel: to remember the promise of mercy,

The promise made to our forebears: to Abraham and his children for ever.

Second Reading:

James 5:7-10

A reading from the letter of James

Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains. You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near. Don't grumble against one another, brothers and sisters, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door! Brothers and sisters, as an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

This is the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, **Alleluia!**

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; he sent me to bring Good News to the poor.

Alleluia!

Gospel:

Matthew 11:2-11

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew

When John, who was in prison, heard about the deeds of the Messiah, he sent his disciples to ask him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?' Jesus replied, 'Go back and report to John what you hear and see: the blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me.' As John's disciples were leaving, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John: 'What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swayed by the wind? If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear fine clothes are in kings' palaces. Then what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written: "I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you." Truly I tell you, among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet whoever is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

This is the Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

The Propers

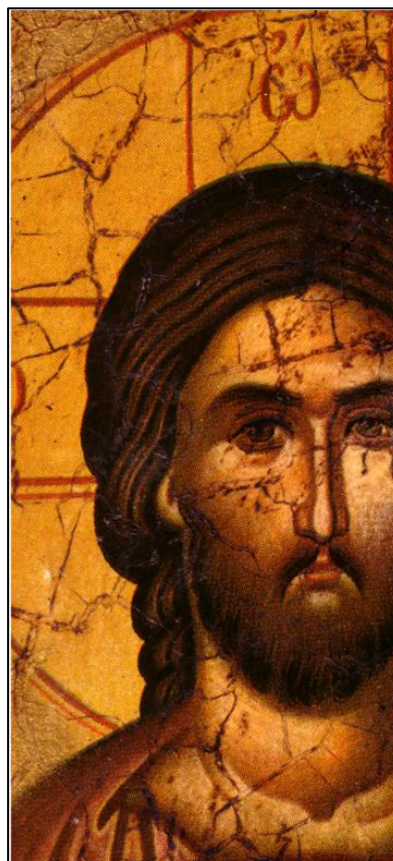
Sentence: Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees; Say to those who are of a fearful heart, 'Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God.'

Collect: Sustain us, O God, with the power of your love on our journey to meet the One who is coming: strengthen our weak hands, make firm our feeble knees, and open blind eyes to the dawning of your kingdom, so that our hearts may rejoice as we behold the majesty of our God. We ask this through your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

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Church's NGR number:

NGR 12439740



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