

DECEMBER

- Sun 7th** **1st SUNDAY FAMILY SERVICE** led by Ken Barns at 10.30 a.m. Children's classes. Light lunch together afterwards. Then **Carol singing** at 'Rosalie' (local Nursing Home), 1.30 p.m.
- Fri 12th** Mt Tamborine Group Christmas lunch at Brian & Gaye's, 12 midday.
- Sun 14th** Worship Circle, 10.30 a.m.
- Sun 21st** **CHRISTMAS SERVICE** incl. Nativity Pageant, led by Darren and presentations to children. Christmas festive lunch together and then games in the local park.
- Sun 28th** No Service
- Mon 29th** NCIA Summer Camp at Philip Island commences (see page 9)
- Jan 4th** Summer Camp ends

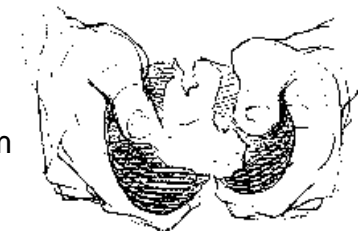
JANUARY

No Services are scheduled in January

Everything gets going again with the 1st Sunday of the month **FAMILY SERVICE** on **Sunday, February 1st, 2015**

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Breaking Bread



Newsletter – The New Jerusalem Church,
Brisbane and south-east Queensland

DECEMBER 2014 AND JANUARY 2015

From Darren
CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

How to *Remain* with The Lord

It doesn't take very long and that time of year comes around again - Christmas.

What does Christmas mean for you? Is it a time of joy and excitement?

As soon as you walk into the shops your ears are filled with music that raises your awareness to the Christmas season. Everywhere there is bright shining decoration, reindeers, angels, red Santa Claus, glowing stars, wisemen, nativity sets and so forth. Once twilight sets in there is at least one house in nearly every street that has Christmas lights hanging from every tree and gutter. Certainly here in Toowoomba, the house lights are a popular craze. We have one street where nearly every house is decorated and people come from all over to line the pathways and walk the street.

For nearly everyone, Christmas evokes powerful feelings. For some these feelings are sad as they remember a loved one.

For our family, Christmas has held both positive and negative feelings at different times. At one stage, we had a period where we didn't celebrate Christmas as we felt that it been corrupted by commercialism. Instead we would set up a nativity set and remember

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the birth of The Lord but there would be no decorated tree or piles of gifts. A shift came for us when we were able to realize that despite the commercialism, people everywhere were having their consciousness lifted to a new level of awareness around the coming of our Lord and Saviour. Now, I've learned to enjoy all the aspects of the Christmas Season as each component has become another tool to aid my meditations on the incredible event of God becoming a man born on this earth. Christmas also gives me permission to talk with others (although gently) about the incarnation of The Lord and the salvation of the human race.

So here we are again entering the season of remembrance. As previously stated, this season provokes powerful feelings. The most powerful of these feelings for me are those of childlike innocence arising from the realization of the fragile state of The Lord as a new born babe. From an earthly perspective, our Lord, the Creator of all life, was dependent on two imperfect adults to care for Him, feed Him, keep Him safe and so on. It is quite an incredible thought the length that our Lord was willing to go to ensure salvation could be purchased and made available for all.

Now I would like to focus on these feelings for a moment. We can easily miss, if we are not careful, the importance and significance of these feelings that are arising in us during such times as Christmas. They serve many purposes other than simply being a pleasant experience. In fact, I would like to stress the importance of us recognizing these kinds of feelings when they surface so that we can work with them and sustain them in our daily lives.

Here are two purposes that these feelings achieve in our lives:-

1. Powerful positive feelings are coming from remnants within us and are a marker of our spirit-man moving closer to heavenly states and heavenly beings.
2. Powerful positive feelings shut down communications with the Hells which seek to take us away from The Lord.

It is easy to dismiss emotions and feelings as much of our spiritual work (at least in the beginning stages) is centered on reforming the mind by learning truths and practicing such truths. If we were to run off our emotions without such reformations we would be in great spiritual danger. On the other hand,

as we progress in our practices of truth, if we deny or ignore our emotional side we will struggle in our love relationship with The Lord. The Lord said it this way:-

John 10:9-10

9 Yes, I am the gate. Those who come in through me will be saved. They will come and go freely and will find good pastures.

10 The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life.

In the King James Version it is stated as - 'I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.' Some come to The Lord and experience Life, some come and experience Abundant Life. I believe The Lord desires Abundant Life for us all and it is my conviction that as we learn to understand Remnants and the arising of Powerful Heavenly Feelings in our lives that we are 'freely' entering in to 'Green Pastures'. This is the Abundant Life that The Lord longs to deliver to each one of us.

In a sense, I'm suggesting that powerful feelings will arise in us from one or two sources: - either the Hells or from the Heavens through remnants:-

Arcana Coelestia (Potts) n. 561

561. But what are remains? They are not only the goods and truths that a man has learned from the Lord's Word from infancy, and has thus **impressed on his memory**, but they are also all the states thence derived, such as **states of innocence from infancy**, states of love toward parents, brothers, teachers, friends; states of charity toward the neighbor, and also of pity for the poor and needy; in a word, all states of good and truth. These states together with the goods and truths **impressed on the memory**, are called remains, which are preserved in man by the Lord and are stored up, entirely without his knowledge, in his internal man, and are completely separated from the things that are proper to man, that is, from evils and falsities.

When these states are impressed upon our memories, they are done so along with the powerful positive feelings connected to them. At different points in our lives such as the Christmas season these remnants find the right conditions to resurface and we experience the Abundant Life of being nearer to The Lord and to Heaven.

In finishing, I would like to say that over the last several years I have experienced an increase in the frequency of such powerful positive feelings to the point that they occur several times a day. I find that these arising memories (states) along with their consecutive feelings are increasing in duration as I am consciously engaging with them and expressing thanks and gratitude towards The Lord for these experiences. I am also keenly aware that there has been an increase in such moments around the time that Renee became pregnant with our seventh child. The Writings tell us that Angels draw closer when there is conception and birth. I can personally attest to an increase in lovely states due to the presence of a newborn babe.

It is my desire in writing this Christmas message, that you too will find an increase in opportunity during this festive season to stop and acknowledge the powerful positive feelings and moments occurring in your life and that you will dwell longer in these states through thankfulness and appreciation towards The Lord who seeks to give you Abundant Life. Blessings and Amen.



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Happy news!

Warm congratulations to Darren & Renee on the safe arrival of **Xavier Ezekiel**, born on Wednesday, November 13th. We join with the whole family in welcoming this beautiful little boy.



Christmas Hamper

As in previous years we are collecting items for as generous a hamper as possible to help brighten Christmas for some 7 folk in our area less fortunate than ourselves. A decorated box into which you can pop your donations will again be positioned at the left hand side of the entrance to the Church.

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Editorial

An elderly lady and a favourite passage of Scripture

Over the years, when visiting people, particularly people in Hospital or in Care situations, I made it a practice of asking them if they had a particular passage of Scripture that they loved and would like me to read to them. On one occasion, back in England, the person I was visiting nominated the 21st and 22nd Chapters of the Book of Revelation. For others it has been such passages as the 23rd Psalm or Joshua 1.

Just a few years ago, here in Brisbane, the lady I was visiting told me her favourite passage of Scripture was Isaiah Chapter 35, not all that familiar to me at that time. But I read it to her and, truly, closing her eyes – she seemed to move to another place. It's actually a very beautiful Chapter I have read many times since. It is full of promise; it speaks of renewal and transformation and of what is withered and dried up coming back to life again. It is in fact one of the prophecies or promises made hundreds of years beforehand about the coming of the Messiah and changes this would usher in. The wilderness would become a garden. People tired and weakened would become strong again. Confidence would be renewed with the fearful and fainthearted. Blindness, deafness and lameness would be healed. And there would be reeds and rushes and loveliness where once jackals had dwelt. I urge you to read the Chapter, just 10 verses, say before you switch off the light tonight after you have got into bed.

I soon saw why this elderly lady loved this Chapter. She was nearing the closure of her life in this world and looked forward to renewal and transformation when she passed into the next. But I know this from talking with her that she also knew of the meaning here over and above physicality and outward life.

Remember? This Chapter is about the coming of the Lord and the differences, benefits and blessings that stood to come of it. As it turned out, these were to be cosmic and utterly far reaching so far as the whole human race is concerned, but my focus here is on the coming of the Lord into our very own, individual, lives.

This is for sure, that we have to set the scene, co-operate, play our part and make it possible for that coming to take place. The Lord doesn't force His way in. But hang on to what is promised here, about life changed, renewed and refreshed as a consequence of it happening – the whole landscape of our inner life now so radically different for the better from what it was previously.

Most of us struggle to hold on to the Bethlehem event in the midst of the busyness, pressures and secularism of the Christmas season. But how usefully, how importantly, even if just a short while – we tap into the story and wonder of it. The Lord presses to be born into that muddled, contradictory, little world (with all its contrary forces) we each are and inhabit. And when He is, blessings and benefits follow, so magnificently and movingly held up to us, *as these are*, in this favourite Chapter in the Bible of this fine old lady I used to visit years ago.

Wishing you the blessings of the Christmas event, and an ever closer walk with the Lord in 2015,

Ian



Isaiah Chapter 35:

1. "The wilderness and the wasteland shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose;
2. It shall blossom abundantly and rejoice, even joy with singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the excellence of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the LORD, the excellency of our God.
3. Strengthen the weak hands and make firm the feeble knees.
4. Say to those who are fearful-hearted, 'Be strong, and do not fear! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God; He will come and save you.
5. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped, and sorrow and sighing shall fly away."
6. Then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing. For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert.
7. The parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water; in the habitation of jackals, where each lay, there shall be grass with reeds and rushes.
8. A highway shall be there, and a road, and it shall be called the highway of Holiness. The unclean shall not journey on it, but it shall be for others. Whoever walks the road, though a fool, shall not go astray.
9. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast go up on it; it shall not be found there. But the redeemed shall walk there,
10. And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with singing, with everlasting joy on their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness."

Philip Island Camp Monday, 29th December to Sunday, 4th January 2015

As previously advised, some 80 people, adults and children, have signed up for the Camp and this is excellent. We have a contingent of just over 20 going from Queensland and there are some 15 people from Perth who have booked.

We wish everyone who is going a wonderful and inspiring time there, safe and hassle-free travel and unforgettable happy moments.

Bi-monthly all-age Family Service

On the 1st Sunday in October Darren led the first all-age Family Service, every one of all ages remaining in Church for the whole Service. There was a pleasing affirmative response and this scheduling will continue into 2015.

Some of our Christmas Customs

MINCE PIES

The first mince pies were MINCEMEAT pies made from strips of meat. Towards 1700 they became MINCED pies with meat but also currants, eggs and brandy. Eventually the meat was left out, but today's mince pies still have suet in the recipe.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS CARDS

The first Christmas card is recorded in 1843. Henry Cole was late writing to all his friends for Christmas. So he asked an artist to design a card to be sent instead. The original card like today's card said, 'A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.' It shows people enjoying Christmas and also pictures of the poor and needy being fed.

ST.NICHOLAS, SANTA CLAUS

Nicholas was Bishop of Myrna in Asia Minor in the 4th century. Stories surround him about him giving presents to people, especially the poor. He became known as St Nicholas and was regarded as the patron saint of children. St Nicholas gradually became corrupted into Santa Claus.

News and general updates

Though belatedly, we congratulate **Margaret and David Chambers**, Allison's parents, on their 60th wedding anniversary on October 23rd.

Glenn and Mary Alden have made it back to Tucson, reconnecting with many dear friends there and collecting their household belongings to take back to Fernwood, Washington State, to where they have now retired. Glenn was Pastor in Tucson for some 8 years until taking early retirement in 2012.

Daniel Harry writes of what was a great experience, the cruise he and his brother Scott (with carers) took, November 1st to 5th.

And our affectionate best wishes to **Mrs Lyn Williams** now into post-operative treatment after a fairly rugged few months, health wise.

Below – **Peter and Eva Larsen** on the day of their Marriage Blessing Service, October 4th on Mt Tamborine.



Birthdays

To all our friends celebrating birthdays in the next two months we wish you birthday greetings and blessings.



In December

Margaret Lawler (3rd); Erlinda Attwater and Max Fitzgerald (5th); Mrs Ruth Blom (8th); Addi Stainton (9th); Allison Chambers and Felicity Lawler (13th); James Heldon (26th); Mark Fitzgerald (27th); Neville Barrett (29th) and Charlie Dinsdale (31st).

In January

Jacqueline Lawler (6th); Melody Brunne (7th); Mrs Lenore Sandow (24th); Kaye Macfarlane, Kaylene Glenn and Lina Heldon (30th).

CHURCH CONTACT DETAILS

The Church is at 21 Agars Street, Rosalie, just up from Baroona Road. Presently Services are held on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of each month at 10.30 a.m. Always check the Calendar on page 12.

Pastor: Rev. Darren Brunne, contactable on 0421 319 252

Secretary: Mrs Gaye Heldon, contactable on 07-5577 8772
Address: P. O. Box 359, Sanctuary Cove, Qld. 4212

For activities on the Gold Coast and Mt Tamborine meetings contact Mrs Gaye Heldon on 07-5577 8772

Sunday School Co-ordinators: Julie & Ken Barns

