

Rosewood, Marburg, Lowood, Hiddenvale

**THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT  
13TH DECEMBER 2020**

Rejoice always, pray  
continually, give thanks in all  
circumstances; for this is God's  
will for you in Christ Jesus.  
*1 Thessalonians 5:16*



**Upcoming Sunday Services in the Parish:**

*Please register for services on: 0402-482-174*

**Today**

9am All Saints' Marburg  
5pm Prayer and Praise St Luke's

**20th December**

9am Morning Prayer St James' Lowood  
10.30am St Anne's Hiddenvale

**Come Join Us This Week in the Parish:**

**Monday Bible Study** 10.30am. St Luke's Outreach Centre  
Zoom ID: 833 8550 5862  
Passcode: 841521

**Tuesday Morning Prayer** 9am. St Luke's Outreach Centre

**Wednesday Eucharist** 9.30am. St Luke's Rosewood

**Wednesday Morning Prayer** 9.30am All Saints' Marburg

**Priest in Charge -Reverend Louise Orpe**      **Phone 0402 482 174**  
**Office Email: [rosewood@anglicanchurchsq.org.au](mailto:rosewood@anglicanchurchsq.org.au)**  
**Giving: Envelopes are available at each centre. To deposit offerings:**  
**Anglican Parish of Rosewood BSB 704 901 A/c 00008030**



### **Christmas Services in the Parish**

#### **Christmas Eve**

**5pm Children's Nativity at St Luke's Rosewood**

**7pm Carols and Eucharist at All Saints' Marburg**

#### **Christmas Day**

**9am St Luke's Rosewood**

**9am St James' Lowood**



#### **Daily Readings for the coming week:**

**Mon:** Numbers 24.27,15-17; Psalm 25.3-9; Matthew 21.23-27

**Tue:** Zephaniah 3.1-13; Psalm 34.15-22; Matthew 21.28-32

**Wed:** Isaiah 45.6-26; Psalm 85.8-13; Luke 7.19-23

**Thu:** Genesis 49.2,8-10; Psalm 72.1-7; Matthew 1.1-17

**Fri:** Jeremiah 23.5-8; Psalm 72.15-2; Matthew 1.18-24

**Sat:** Judges 13.2-7,24-25; Psalm 71.17-22; Luke 1.5-25

**Sun:** 2 Samuel 7.1-11,16; Psalm 89.1-4,19-27; Romans 16.25-27; Luke 1.26-38



#### **Notices:**

- **Marburg Carols** will be held at the Community Park on Sunday 20th December. Christmas Markets & Craft for Children at 5.30pm. Free Sausage Sizzle 6pm. Carols 7pm. BYO Blanket or Chair. All Welcome. If anyone would like to volunteer to register names or help serve the sausages—please contact Shirley on 0413789763.

#### **Message:**

Today we find ourselves one more step along the road to the long-anticipated birth of Christ. It is a reminder that as we face life's challenges of business, or our own self-imposed high expectations, that there is a power, a comforter that exists beyond all time and place. May our contemplations, and our devotions, reach for this place as we intentionally take ourselves beyond the surface and the everyday and recognize anew our place in

God's eternal plan that he has for each one of us.

*Rev'd Louise*

#### **Pray for those in need:**

We give thanks for prayers answered and ask for continued prayers for: Norm, Julie and family. Lynn. Carin and family, Carmel, Kristy and family. Glenda and family, Mary and Peter. Kevin and Lynn, Benjamin and Tiffany Hanel. Kim and family, Jan, Anita and Gordon. Robyn. Paul, Ann Perkins

#### **Pray for those whose need is ongoing:**

Ian, Brenda and David, May, Judy and Adrian. Mark, Graham and family, Wilma, Ron. Irene and Michael.

ADVENT 3 13<sup>th</sup> December 2020

Readings.

### **Isaiah 61:1-4**

**61** The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me,  
because the Lord has anointed me  
to proclaim good news to the poor.  
He has sent me to bind up the broken hearted,  
to proclaim freedom for the captives  
and release from darkness for the prisoners,<sup>[a]</sup>  
**2** to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor  
and the day of vengeance of our God,  
to comfort all who mourn,  
**3** and provide for those who grieve in Zion—  
to bestow on them a crown of beauty  
instead of ashes,  
the oil of joy  
instead of mourning,  
and a garment of praise  
instead of a spirit of despair.  
They will be called oaks of righteousness,  
a planting of the Lord  
for the display of his splendor.  
**4** They will rebuild the ancient ruins  
and restore the places long devastated;  
they will renew the ruined cities  
that have been devastated for generations.

**SONG OF MARY P.425 Prayer book.**

## **1 Thessalonians 5:12-28**

<sup>12</sup> Now we ask you, brothers and sisters, to acknowledge those who work hard among you, who care for you in the Lord and who admonish you. <sup>13</sup> Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other. <sup>14</sup> And we urge you, brothers and sisters, warn those who are idle and disruptive, encourage the disheartened, help the weak, be patient with everyone. <sup>15</sup> Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always strive to do what is good for each other and for everyone else.

<sup>16</sup> Rejoice always, <sup>17</sup> pray continually, <sup>18</sup> give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

<sup>19</sup> Do not quench the Spirit. <sup>20</sup> Do not treat prophecies with contempt <sup>21</sup> but test them all; hold on to what is good, <sup>22</sup> reject every kind of evil.

<sup>23</sup> May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>24</sup> The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.

<sup>25</sup> Brothers and sisters, pray for us. <sup>26</sup> Greet all God's people with a holy kiss. <sup>27</sup> I charge you before the Lord to have this letter read to all the brothers and sisters.

<sup>28</sup> The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

FOR THE WORD OF THE LORD.

## John 1:6-8

<sup>6</sup> There was a man sent from God whose name was John. <sup>7</sup> He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. <sup>8</sup> He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

<sup>19</sup> Now this was John's testimony when the Jewish leaders<sup>[a]</sup> in Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was. <sup>20</sup> He did not fail to confess, but confessed freely, "I am not the Messiah."

<sup>21</sup> They asked him, "Then who are you? Are you Elijah?"

He said, "I am not."

"Are you the Prophet?"

He answered, "No."

<sup>22</sup> Finally they said, "Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?"

<sup>23</sup> John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, "I am the voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way for the Lord.'"<sup>[b]</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Now the Pharisees who had been sent <sup>25</sup> questioned him, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?"

<sup>26</sup> "I baptize with<sup>[c]</sup> water," John replied, "but among you stands one you do not know. <sup>27</sup> He is the one who comes after me, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie."

<sup>28</sup> This all happened at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

Homily by Revd. Louise.

I have been rather puzzled by my own reaction to Christmas festivities this year, and question why I have had little inclination to decorate or to put up a Christmas tree at home.

The 'why' is a good question. I enjoy seeing the Christmas lights in our neighbourhood, but also question their motivation and the meaning of these outward displays.

Is it a moment for the self to shine, or merely a tradition; and what does it all mean.

Admittedly they certainly are uplifting even the simplest of displays, and the effort to give others joy cannot be denied.

But clearly in our waiting over the Christmas season we as Christians are confronted by two worlds. We have the tinsel, the lights and the sometimes, overwhelming commercial stream, along with the expectation to perform certain rituals at this time of year, send cards, buy presents and indulge in lots of food. Christmas is a time when we have permission, if you like to self-indulge in many ways.

A colleague said to me recently, Christmas is our story and has been stolen from us!

But as we all know the Christian significance of Christmas can get lost.

I think my biggest joy so far this Advent has been when I saw the Nativity scene materialize at St Luke's, as Christina carefully arranged the scene of expectation. The manger, Mary and Joseph, the animals in the barn, which are all part of God's creation are involved in this moment of Glory, as they wait in expectation. Baby Jesus and the wisemen were yet to be brought to the display. The nativity scene that recently arrived has become my display of Christmas this year.

I remember when I worked in the nursing home for 14 years, we had huge nativity statues that we put out each year in the foyer, and it was a symbolic moment for me to collect the trolley and find the statues in the back cupboard in the vestry. They were then one at a time carefully and ceremoniously wheeled through the corridors around to the front foyer. Often staff and residents alike commenting as I passed, 'ah it is that time of year again.' These rituals are a symbolic reminder that help tell our story, as we remember the past, which leads us into the future. We tell the story again and again to remind us of our identity and to whom we belong, and that we are here by God's Grace.

As the trolley reached the foyer sackcloth was laid, and a little bag of years old hay unpacked and Mary and Joseph, the crib, and animals carefully positioned, as was a banner which was hung carefully behind the scene. It was a ritual and it was meaningful. Often visitors and residents would ask, where was baby Jesus before Christmas day, so much so that we had to put a note in the crib to explain that baby Jesus was not there as he had not yet been born! The little baby was left in the nurses' station with a little note on Christmas eve to ask that he be put gently in the crib overnight. This scene was a tradition but yet meaningful and symbolic for many.

Advent is a time of expectation, and something new so we wait not for the countdown to get our shopping done in the mad rush to find a park and face the business of the shops, or to make final arrangements for a meal, we wait in expectation for the moment when all this is swept away and we can 'just be,' not in anxiety, but in God's Glory and peace. We can in fact choose how we respond and celebrate this moment that changed the world forever.

Let us take ourselves for a moment and imagine the atmosphere in the barn or the Inn that night when the wise men arrived to pay homage to the Holy one. We read that the wisemen were struck with awe and wonder, as something beyond themselves had changed their lives for ever.

This is what God's church awaits, this moment, when we too need not worry about committees, meetings, and fund raising to sustain us, but for that moment when we can be overwhelmed by the Glory and power that is beyond ourselves, beyond our lights and Christmas trees, when we encounter the divine, that sweeps everything else away just as it did the wise men, as God became flesh and dwelt amongst us, in the form of a little babe.

We are called in this time of waiting to step back and to seek a divine and cosmic perspective, in our daily activities, our intentions, our thoughts and others around us, as we see the world through God's eyes.

The theologian Michael Toy from Princetown theological seminary reminds us that "In waiting for the fullness of the Kingdom of God, we proclaim God's message of justice. We name sin or wrongdoing. We stand in the wilderness,' not worrying about ourselves but like John the Baptist pointing to the one more powerful than ourselves. As Psalm 85 reminds us "Righteousness shall go before him, and peace will be a pathway for his feet." He reminds us that when righteousness and peace are actively enacted, God is there.

This is our calling, and this is our focus, to be agents of change in our communities in which we live and work, or when we just 'are' with ourselves alone with Christ. We know we all fall short of the glory of God, but we also know that through him we can be transformed, as we are stripped of falsehood and pretension and have an understanding of ourselves as part of God's eternal plan. That we can be a community that people visit and feel not that humans are in control, but that the awesome presence of God is there as peace and surrender dwells. Just like that Holy night in Bethlehem where the presence of God, unspoken through a vulnerable baby changed the world forever.

Let us pray.

Loving God, we pray that we may surrender our lives to you, and that our thoughts, our concerns and our insecurities, give way to awe and wonder, as we trust, we wait and follow you, one body as your people. One by one Lord lead us and transform us we pray.  
Amen.