

# Bribie Beacon

## DECEMBER 2023

**St Peter's Anglican Church  
Banya Street Bribie Island**

**Anglican**  
Church  
St Peter's Bribie Island



### CHRISTMAS SERVICES

**Christmas Eve** (Sunday 24 December 2023)

6pm – Holy Eucharist  
11pm – Holy Eucharist

**Christmas Day** (Monday 25 December 2023)

8.30am – Sung Eucharist

### WEDNESDAY SERVICES

**No Wednesday Eucharist on 27 December**

### Parish Office

The office will close at 12.00pm on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2023 and reopen on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2024. Rev Gary will be available on 3408 3191.

### WEEKLY SERVICES

Sunday - 7.30am & 9.30am  
Wednesday - 10am

### PARISH CONTACT DETAILS

#### PRIEST-IN-CHARGE

Reverend Gary Tognola (as from 9/12)

#### CHURCHWARDENS

Margaret Peterson 5497 6978  
Greg Rollason 3408 1998  
Di Thatcher 0409 846 471

#### PARISH OFFICE

(Wed & Fri - 9am to 12pm)  
3408 3191  
[bribieisland@anglicanchurchsq.org.au](mailto:bribieisland@anglicanchurchsq.org.au)

#### WEBSITE

[www.stpetersbribie.org.au](http://www.stpetersbribie.org.au)

#### ONLINE GIVING BY CREDIT CARD OR DEBIT CARD

<https://www.bpoint.com.au/pay/TIM/?BillCode=1730050>

#### ONLINE GIVING BY DIRECT DEPOSIT

Ac Name - Bribie Island Parish  
BSB - 704-901  
Account Number - 00000040

#### POSTAL ADDRESS

PO Box 1087 Bongaree 4507

#### LOCATION

10-12 Banya Street Bongaree

## **PARISH NOTICES**

**Neighbourhood Centre** – Food delivered to B.I.D.N.C. for October and November totalled 45.4kg. Thank you to all who gave. Greg Rollason.

**Commissioning** – The Rev'd Gary Tognola will be commissioned at St. Peter's by Bp. Bill Ray on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> December at 5.00pm as Priest-in-Charge of the Parish of Bribie Island. Names on list in the Narthex.

**Empty Christmas Tree** – We are currently collecting gifts for the Empty Christmas Tree which will be given to a child in foster care in our area. Anglicare for Children & Families Caboolture has asked if we could again concentrate on gifts for children aged from 8 years up to 17 years. Gifts may be wrapped with the appropriate age on a tag. Please, no pre-loved toys as this may be the only gift the child receives. Final day for giving is Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> December. Anglicare for Children & Families Caboolture are very grateful for our ongoing support.

**Parish Office** – The office will close at 12.00pm on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2023 for the Christmas break and reopen on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2024. Rev'd Gary will be available by contacting the office phone.

**Church Services** – Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> December one morning service only at 8.30am. Christmas Eve Services 6.00pm and 11.00pm. Christmas Day 8.30am. No service on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> December. Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> December one service only at 8.30am.

**Volunteers for Christmas Services** – We are looking for volunteers to do welcoming, readings, LA and AV for the Christmas services. If you are able to help, could you please put your name on the list in the narthex.

**Installation of New Archbishop** - Archbishop-elect Jeremy Greaves will be installed as Archbishop of Brisbane at St John's Cathedral on Saturday 16th December 2023 at 10.30am.

**Common Communion Cup** - Anyone who has concerns or medical conditions with the common communion cup are encouraged to maintain the practice of communion in one kind (the bread only). For those taking communion in one kind be assured that Christ is fully present, and nothing is lacking taking communion in one kind only. The practice of intinction (dipping the bread in the cup) is not allowed. Communicants are welcome to either stand or kneel while at the altar rail.

**Health and Safety Notice** – If you feel you may be contagious with cold and flu symptoms, please refrain from attending church activities. All parishioners are encouraged to maintain good hygiene practices and respect others personal space.

**Milestones** - It is our tradition at St Peter's to note people's birthdays in weekly and monthly publications, including special celebrations like 80<sup>th</sup> and 90<sup>th</sup> birthdays. If you would prefer not to have your special celebrations and birthdays noted in these notifications, please let the office know.

**Rosters** - Interested in joining our worship team as an AV operator, reader or intercessor? Please speak to Margaret Peterson (5497 6978).

## PARISH PRAYER POINTS

**Those celebrating Birthdays** - December Birthdays – Jan White (1<sup>st</sup>), Gillian Parry (3<sup>rd</sup>), Susan Shaw (14<sup>th</sup>), Wendy Rollason (16<sup>th</sup>), David Bellis (17<sup>th</sup>), Bernadette Richards (20<sup>th</sup>), Marguerite Teuwen (20<sup>th</sup>), John Oxenford (21<sup>st</sup>), Christopher Beanlands (25<sup>th</sup>), Pearl Kenyon (25<sup>th</sup>), Rod Cullen (30<sup>th</sup>).

January Birthdays – Lynne Hooper (15<sup>th</sup>), Lorraine James (15<sup>th</sup>) Rhonda MacKenzie-Mowle (17<sup>th</sup>), Norma Collis (18<sup>th</sup>), Pam Cumming (18<sup>th</sup>), Jacqueline Nilsson (20<sup>th</sup>), Lionel Morton (23<sup>rd</sup>), Sue Morbach (26<sup>th</sup>), Norma Roobottom (28<sup>th</sup>), Brenda Holford (29<sup>th</sup>), Raelee Benn (30<sup>th</sup>), Jim Frost (30<sup>th</sup>).

**Special Birthdays** – Congratulations to Marguerite Teuwen who celebrates her 60<sup>th</sup> birthday on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> December, Jacqueline Nilsson who celebrates her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> January and Norma Roobottom who celebrates her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> January.

**Those in Need** – Vivienne Bourne, Linda Peterson.

**Continuing Prayer List** - Krista-Liisa Pulkkinen Elva Woods, Kaye Bush, Phillipa Booth, Nicholas, Blake & Elizabeth Kubler.

**Prayer for our New Archbishop-Elect** - Loving God, bless Jeremy, now called to be Archbishop of Brisbane; fill him with your truth, and clothe him with holiness, that he may preach your word, and care for your people; Give him compassion and wisdom, sustain him with your Spirit and inspire him with vision. We ask in the name of the one who calls, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Prayer for Anglicare Australia** - God of Life-Giving Creation, You call us to act justly, to love mercy, to walk humbly with you. We pray for the member organisations of Anglicare Australia working across this vast and ancient land. Enable us as we strive to meet human need through loving service and to build communities of resilience, hope and justice. Encourage us to work in mutual partnership to effect positive change. Empower the people we serve to reach their full potential, especially those who experience disadvantage and injustice. Guide us in our advocacy for social justice and strengthen our determination to respond with compassion. Remind us to care for ourselves and each other as we face the challenges of our work, and as we seek reconciliation, healing and community transformation. All this we pray in the name of Jesus Christ, our servant leader and friend. Amen.

**School Chaplaincy** - Julie Godfrey (Bribie High School) and Sean Godfrey (Bribie Island State School).



Our AMUA Branch provides for the use of members of the Parish “Care Bags” and “Prayer Shawls”. These are available in the narthex for all parishioners to take and offer to people they know who may be in need of support and care.



## **SUNDAY 3 DECEMBER 2023 - FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

Readings - Isaiah 64.1-9; Psalm 80.1-7, 17-19; 1 Corinthians 1.1-9; Mark 13.24-37

Sentence - 'Heaven and earth will pass away,' says the Lord, 'but my words will not pass away.'  
(Mark 13.31)

Prayer of the day - Eternal God, through long generations you prepared a way for the coming of your Son, and by your Spirit you still bring light to illumine our paths: renew us in faith and hope that we may welcome Christ to rule our thoughts and claim our love; to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

Scripture Reflection - This Sunday we commence the season of Advent and the gospel reading for this Sunday calls the disciples to keep awake, alert and be on the watch, as something is going to happen. We are invited to join in with anticipation and expectation of an impending event. "In those days, after the suffering the sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light..." (13:24). As we commence Advent it is not the birth of the baby Jesus we are waiting for, we are not called to focus on a manger or an overcrowded inn or shepherds in search of a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes. Nor is it lights, trees, carols or presents. It is not what we expect to hear at this time of year, or perhaps, it is just not what we want to hear. In fact, at first glance the prophetic overture is dim. The selected text is made clearer as the whole of Mark 13 is brought into view. Early on Jesus calls the disciples to pay attention. Watch for deception. Watch out for yourselves. Watch during the difficult days ahead. In the face of environmental, political, social, and cosmic calamity. It is as if there is the possibility that the disciples will miss that which should be seen and known. The disciples' tendency towards ignorance amid divine activity is a dominant theme in Mark's Gospel. They do not seem to recognise Jesus, though they believe he is the Messiah. Jesus' insistent call for attentive living might also be read as apocalyptic pastoral care. Despite their dull perception, Jesus urges them: stay alert and woke. What is at stake when we sleep or allow our senses to become dull during times of crises? Who is at risk when God's people slip into spiritual slumber? What is the cost for sleeping when the call is to see, to remain awake, and to work? While the disciples were sleeping, Judas, the religious leaders, and a crowd were en route to arrest Jesus (14:43). The speech of Mark 13 is Jesus' response to the disciples' query: "Tell us, when will this be, and what will be the sign that all these things are about to be accomplished?" (13:4). With traditional eschatological and Jewish apocalyptic imagery, the culmination of the realm of God is foretold. Jesus' response on the Mount of Olivet indicates that signs of the impending tribulation and destruction of the temple will be pervasive. The centre of religious life will surely be destroyed; the question is when will it be destroyed? A pertinent question for contemporary readers is what happens when the temple is destroyed? Time emerges as a theme related to watchfulness. When will these things be? The lesson of the fig tree juxtaposed to the parable of the homeowner may be interpreted as predictable imminence and unpredictable suddenness. The imagery of the ripening fig tree suggests a definite urgency; new sprouts hint that a new season is on the horizon (13:28). Similarly, the signs of the times let the disciples know, "he's near, at the entrance" (13:29). Exactly who he is, is unclear. But with surety, when all else fails, Jesus is reliable. In contrast to the certainty of the fig blossom is the unpredictable suddenness of a traveling homeowner. The timing of the return of the homeowner is unknown to the servants. They are charged to work and watch, and not to be found asleep. The work referred to here is not specified but is often interpreted as the work of discipleship. But what happens when the return is delayed? The longer the delay, the more likely servants become at risk of complacency, slackness, and even distraction. Jesus is adamant that his followers remain alert and engaged. The precise timing of what is to come is irrelevant; preparedness for what is to come is what matters. Watching can be hard. Waiting can cause disillusionment. Work can be difficult. Still, Jesus' disciples are called to actively wait, with anticipation. We may not know what is to come, but we know Who is to come.

### Questions for Scripture Reflection

1. If "we are the clay, and you are our potter" how are we still a work in progress? (Isaiah 64:8)
2. Eclipse, earthquake, hurricanes. Feels like the end. How are you called to be a "woke" witness? (Mark 13:24-37)

## **SUNDAY 10 DECEMBER - SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

Readings - Isaiah 40:1-11; Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13; 2 Peter 3:8-15a; Mark 1:1-8

Sentence - Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. For the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together. (Luke 3.4; Isaiah 40.5a)

Prayer of the day - Merciful God, you sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Scripture Reflection - John the Baptist is best known as the forerunner of Jesus, the one who calls on people to prepare the way of the Lord's coming. The next two consecutive Sundays the Gospel readings are devoted to the ministry of John the Baptist, presenting back-to-back parallel texts from the Gospels of Mark and John. The text for Advent 2 introduces us not only to the figure of John the Baptist but also to the Gospel of Mark, from which most Gospel texts will be selected in the coming year. The first verse is probably intended as the title of the book. At this point in history, no one had ever written "a Gospel" before. Mark probably thought he was writing a biography, but when he chose to call his work "the good news (gospel) of Jesus Christ" he gave a name to a new genre of literature. The book differs from biographies of other heroic individuals in that it does not simply claim to recount the inspiring tale of a noble man. Mark wants to tell us about the beginning of a new era, a time and place in which God has entered human history in an unprecedented way. It is "the gospel era": the kingdom of God has dawned. Mark wants us to know that God is ready and willing to rule our lives; he wants us to believe this and to act accordingly (Mark 1:14-15). This book (with which we shall spend so much time over the next year) is going to tell us how this gospel era began: it all started with Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who announced the dawn of God's rule and sealed the reality of that reign by establishing a covenant through his own blood (14:24). But first — a preface. Yes, it begins with Jesus, but before Jesus there was John, and before John, there was Isaiah. In Mark's Gospel, John the Baptist is basically an Old Testament figure. His clothing is based on descriptions of Elijah in 2 Kings 1:8; in some sense, Mark believes that John is Elijah, who has returned just as Malachi said he would (Mark 9:9-13; cf. Malachi 4:5-6). But the most important scripture for understanding John is Isaiah 40:1-11, which serves as the first lesson for today. The passage announces God's intention to visit God's people. God gives directions for the way to be prepared. By who? By the people God wants to visit? No, by God's own servants. God does not say, "Tell the people to get ready and when they have done so, I will come to them." God says, "Prepare the way! I am coming to my people (whether they are ready or not)." Indeed the voice of God in the Isaiah text has the character of a wounded lover. God is desperate: "I will come to my people, and nothing will keep me from them. Mountains will be torn down, valleys will be filled in, rough places made smooth — whatever it takes!" So, Mark's Gospel announces that this plan is, once again, about to be fulfilled. John the Baptist is one of God's agents preparing the way for the Lord to come. He offers a baptism of repentance as a means of "getting ready." That baptism occurs in the Jordan River, famous in the Old Testament as the boundary marker for what came to be called "the Promised Land." In the exodus story, God's people wandered in the wilderness for forty years until at last they reached the Jordan River. When they entered these waters, they knew their wandering was over and that God's promises were about to be fulfilled. So the basic Advent theme sounded throughout this text is that the time of promise is drawing to a close and the time of fulfillment is drawing near. For Isaiah, the probable context was the end of exile for Israelites in Babylon. For John the Baptist, of course, it was the coming of Israel's long-awaited Messiah. The announcement is gracious, with only the dimmest echo of warning. Neither Isaiah, nor John, nor Mark intended to say, "God will come to those who are ready; those who are not, will be left out." The accent is simply on God's imminent, certain advent, though such an announcement obviously calls for response. God is coming to us! This is fantastic news! So, what can we do to get ready? Confess your sins, John suggests. Get baptised. Repent. Later, Jesus will add, "and believe in the good news!" (Mark 1:15). God will come and fulfill all of God's promises whether or not we do any of these things — but knowing God is on the way, why wouldn't we want to do them?

### Questions for Scripture Reflection

1. Does Isaiah's vision of the "peaceable kingdom" apply to nations today? If so, how? If not, why? (Isaiah 11:6-7)
2. The prophet says, "The earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD." What does this say about God's plan for salvation? (Isaiah 11:10)
3. Why did John the Baptist preach such stern warnings? Do they apply to us today? Why or why not? (Matthew 3:7-12)

### **SUNDAY 17 DECEMBER 2023 - THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

Readings - Isaiah 61.1-4, 8-11; Ps 126; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-28; John 1:6-8, 19-28

Sentence - Bind up the broken-hearted, proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners, proclaim the year of the Lord's favour, the day of vengeance of our God. (Isaiah 61.1-2)

Prayer of the day - Eternal God, you sent John the Baptist to prepare the way for the coming of your Son: grant us wisdom to see your purpose and openness to hear your will, that we too may prepare the way for Christ who is coming in power and glory to establish his rule of peace and justice; through Jesus Christ our Judge and our Redeemer, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Scripture Reflection - In the Synoptic Gospels, John the Baptist is a prophet who has an important ministry in his own right. He calls people to repentance and eventually dies as a martyr for daring to confront petty earthly tyrants with the word of the Lord. But in John, for the most part, he just points people to Jesus. The text for this Sunday tells us more about who John wasn't than about who he was: he wasn't the light; he wasn't the Messiah; he wasn't Elijah; he wasn't the prophet." Who, then, was he? He was a witness (John 1:7) and he was a voice (John 1:23), albeit a voice telling people to prepare for someone else, someone whose sandal thong John was unworthy to untie (John 1:28). There are probably historical reasons for this subordination. Many of the commentaries discuss various versions of a theory that John's significance had to be downplayed in some segments of the church because his followers had become competitors with the followers of Jesus. Thus, John himself is represented as directing his followers to Jesus and as declaring that "he must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30). Whatever political struggles might have influenced the Fourth Gospel's presentation of events, the account we have before us offers a different nuance than what we encountered in Mark. That is what seems most important to the writer of our Fourth Gospel: it is not just what he says about Jesus that is important, but how he says it. John is a witness (martyría; John 1:7) who testifies (martyréo; John 1:7, 19) to the good news of Jesus Christ. Those two words are used more than forty-five times in John's Gospel and are expressive of what many consider to be a central theme of the work. They have their origin in a legal context and, so, imply public testimony to something that one guarantees is absolutely true. When a witness testifies to something, he or she stakes his or her life on it; a "false witness" commits perjury, a capital offense. This, of course, explains the origin of our English word martyr: a witness who suffers the ultimate consequence when his or her public testimony is deemed false. John is only the first of many to testify on behalf of Jesus in this Gospel. Like the man whose name was John, the church is sent into today's world as a witness. So, focusing specifically on the text for this Sunday, we may characterize this witness as public, certain, and humble. These qualities are in tension with the spirit of our age. Most people today regard religion as a private matter and do not want to hear about someone else's particular beliefs. Certainty is also shunned in these postmodern times; we are all victims of our own perspectives: who can ever know for sure whether anything is true or not? Still, we are audacious enough to believe that the gospel is true, and that it must be proclaimed boldly, publicly and confidently. The trick is to bear witness to this truth with humility. For John, that meant directing people away from himself and toward Jesus. Notice how people try not to let him do that. "Who are you? What do you say about yourself?" (John 1:22). That is one thing that has not changed. Talk about Jesus, and people will always want to change the subject; often they want us to talk

about ourselves. And frequently that may be what we would prefer to talk about as well. Don't take that bait. Our testimony about Jesus is ultimately less significant than Jesus' testimony about us. Sure, share your opinions and beliefs about Jesus with friends, neighbours, and strangers (if they'll listen), but that's all you've got, beliefs and opinions. The testimony of Jesus himself is more powerful. His words are the word of God; his actions, an incarnation of that word, putting us all on trial with public testimony. The light of God's love and the darkest parts of humanity come together, and there need be no postmodern squabbling over what happens when darkness and light try to co-exist: the truth of what happens is public and certain.

Reflection by Mark Powell, Professor of New Testament at Trinity Lutheran Seminary in Columbus.

### Questions for Scripture Reflection

1. There is no shortage of oppressed, brokenhearted and captive. Who needs comfort, liberty this week? (Isaiah 61:1-3)
2. Can you remember a time when your weeping turned to shouts of joy? (Psalm 126:6)
3. When have you taken the opportunity to identify with Christ when asked, "Who are you?" (John 1:19, 22)

## **SUNDAY 24 DECEMBER - FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

Readings - 2 Samuel 7.1-11, 16; Psalm 89.1-4, 19-27; Romans 16.25-27; Luke 1:26-38

Sentence - This child will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High. He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end. (Luke 1.32-33)

Prayer of the day - Gracious God, whose eternal Word took flesh among us when Mary placed her life at the service of your will: prepare our hearts for his coming again and keep us steadfast in hope, that we may be ready for the coming of his kingdom; for his sake, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Scripture Reflection - This story of Gabriel's announcement to Mary is surrounded by the impossible. Elizabeth's story brackets Mary's. Just before the designated text for this Sunday is Elizabeth's pain-filled yet wondrous words, "This is what the Lord has done for me when he looked favourably on me and took away the disgrace I have endured among my people." This impossibility demands that we hear Mary's story as equally incredulous. The angel's confession that "nothing is impossible for God" finds its deepest meaning in that impossibility abounds, that a barren, elderly woman is pregnant, that a young teenage girl from a nothing town is favoured. Once again, our set imaginations that might idealise the Christmas story are turned upside down. This just does not happen. Do we get that? Mary herself acknowledges the impossible possibility of God with her first response to Gabriel. Mary's initial response to this encounter is worth significant pause. The angel has barely said a thing. Why is Mary bewildered? To call attention to Mary's response to the angel's first words is to emphasise to what extent Mary cannot even believe this impossible possibility. Me? Who am I? Why am I favoured? How can the Lord be with me? She knows her place. She knows who she is. And this should not be happening. She's a she, a teenager, and from the wrong side of the tracks. Gabriel then tells her the big news that she's going to be pregnant with a son, but not just any son, the Son of the Most High, no less, from the lineage of David, with a never to end kingdom. OK. What? "How can this be?" Can we voice her disbelief with the kind of incredulity that must have been Mary's? Or, do we perpetuate an obedient response, relegating Mary's true astonishment to some sort of obligatory prophetic answer?

### Questions for Scripture Reflection

1. After all God did for David, God promises more. How do we also respond with gratefulness and humility? (2 Samuel 7)
2. How does your congregation share the secret of God's gracious salvation with the world? (Romans 16:25-27)
3. We hear much impossibility today. How does this story of possibility ring true for you this season? (Luke 1:37)