

## In the Days of Caesar Waldo Williams

In the days of Caesar, when his subjects went to be reckoned,  
there was a poem made, too dark for him (naive with power)  
to read.

It was a bunch of shepherds who discovered  
in Bethlehem of Judah, the great music beyond reason  
and reckoning:  
shepherds, the sort of folk who leave the ninety-nine behind  
so as to bring the stray back home, they heard it clear,  
the subtle assonances of the day, dawning toward cock-crow,  
the birthday of the Lamb of God, shepherd of mortals.

Well, little people, and my little nation, can you see  
the secret buried in you, that no Caesar ever captures in his lists?  
Will not the shepherd come to fetch us in our desert,  
gathering us in to give us birth again, weaving us into one  
in a song heard in the sky over Bethlehem?  
He seeks us out as a wordhoard for his workmanship, the laureate  
of heaven.

### Cosmic Origins

*The writers of Genesis were not far off the mark when they pictured God forming the first human beings 'from the dust of the ground', for every atom of carbon in our bodies and every atom of iron in our blood, was created in the stars and broadcast by supernovae explosions before the earth was formed.*

Michael Mayne **Learning to Dance**



# CONTACT WARTA JEMAAT

**ST JOHN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH, CAMBERWELL**  
**Christmas 2015**

My Dear Friends,

On behalf of all our parish staff and ministry team, our Wardens and Parish Council, I extend to you a warm St John's welcome. Whether you have worshipped here more times than you can count, or whether this be your first time, be assured that Christ the Word made flesh is host at this banquet Altar-Table – welcoming and embracing all, without distinction.

Gathering at midnight on this one special night each year, darkness made light by candle and carol, we come to this great nocturnal feast in the company of countless millions down the Christian centuries – and all around the world at this very hour – having heard the rumour of God's incarnation. The symbol of tonight's feast matches the reality: there is much darkness in our world, we ourselves are acquainted with darkness. We are not here to pretend. Christ's-mass is not an exercise in the 'power of positive thinking' or mere wishfulness. This is a robust feast. Incarnation is a gutsy doctrine. The darkness is real. And so too is the light. Indeed, our celebration at midnight tangibly expresses the Christian proclamation: "the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not grasp it."

'O great Mystery!' There are angel choirs, 'the glory of the Lord' shines, shepherds visit, and a child wrapped in bands of cloth, yes. This is all so familiar to us as to be ho-hum perhaps. But I wonder, do we notice that in spite of these brief bursts of graphic joyous interruption, there is in fact a whole lot of nothing-happening. The graphic bits are naturally attention-grabbing. But actually, most of what's going on here is unaccompanied by any kind of fanfare. The dominant experience for Mary is silence, and absence – perhaps wondering, 'Did I hear right?' One brief and overwhelming angel visit with 'the news', a strange entourage of poor shepherds turning up to see for themselves. That's it. After the angel departs, silence. Mary is left 'pondering these things in her heart'.

This, too, is our experience of birth-giving, of being called to give birth to the Divine in our time, in our bodies, our flesh. There may be a very brief flash of illumination, possibly even a fanfare. But for most of our lives nothing of any particular note seems to be happening. There is silence. There is waiting. There is much pondering. It is 'midnight'. Much of our lives are spent simply doing our best to be available for birth. Yet the Word *is* becoming flesh in the dark abyss of time and space, whether we 'feel it' or not. We do catch a brief glimpse, a tiny candle does penetrate darkness, an angel is occasionally heard speaking our name.

May you, and those you love, be sustained by and held in the sublime beauty, holiness and joy of this night's incarnation good news.

With my love, David

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## SERVICES

**WELCOME!** to this sacred space. May you find fresh encounter here with the Holy. We are glad to have you join us in the sacred liturgy. With generations of Christ's followers we are all welcomed around the banquet table of the Word made flesh—regardless of gender, race, colour, sexual orientation, social status or any other distinction. And you are warmly invited to join us for bubbles in the narthex at Midnight, or morning tea in the Rutherford Room following the 9am liturgy on Christmas Day and 10am liturgy on Sunday 27 December or an evening meal following the 3pm liturgy on 27 December.

### *Christmas Eve*

**5.00pm** Christingle Service  
**11.00pm** Carols by Candlelight  
**11.30pm** Midnight Mass  
followed by bubbles

### *Christmas Day*

**9.00am** Sung Eucharist

### *Sunday 27 December 2015*

#### *Christmas 1*

*Readings for the Day*

*1 Samuel 2.18-20, 26, Psalm 148,  
Colossians 3.12-17, Luke 2.41-52*

**8.00am** Eucharist  
**10.00am** Eucharist  
**3.00pm** Liturgy of the Word  
**6.00pm** Contemplative Service

### *Friday January 1*

*The Naming & Circumcision of Jesus*  
**12 noon** Eucharist followed by  
lunch in the Rutherford Room  
at 12.30pm.

**VICARAGE CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE:** Judy and I extend a warm invitation to everyone at St John's to join us for a Christmas celebration at our home. Come any time between 1pm and 5pm on **Saturday 2 January**. Please bring only the gift of yourselves (i.e. nothing else). We look forward to welcoming you all.  
*Fr David.*

**THANKS!** My heartfelt thanks to all who have contributed so much, in so many ways, in preparations for and in leading our Christmas celebrations. Cleaners, cooks, gardeners, musicians, singers, readers, intercessors, welcomers, printers, flower arrangers, servers, money counters - what a tremendous act of communal celebration. Thank you all very much! *Fr David.*

### SUNDAY LITURGIES at St John's.

- **8am—Eucharist**
- **10am—Sung Eucharist**
- **3pm Liturgy in Bahasa Indonesia**
- **6pm Contemplative Service**

#### **January 3 : Epiphany:**

*Isaiah 60.1-6; Psalm 72.1-7, 10-14;  
Ephesians 3.1-12; Matthew 2.1-12.*

#### **January 10 : Baptism of Christ**

*Isaiah 43.1-7; Psalm 29;  
Acts 8.14-17; Luke 3.15-22.*

#### **January 17 : Epiphany 2**

*Isaiah 62.1-5; Psalm 36.5-10;  
1 Corinthians 12.1-11; John 2.1-11.*

#### **January 24 : Epiphany 3**

*Nehemiah 8.1-3, 5-6, 8-10; Psalm 19;  
1 Corinthians 12.12-31; Luke 4.14-21*

#### **January 31 : CandleMass**

*Malachi 3.1-4; Psalm 24 or Psalm 84;  
Hebrews 2.14-18; Luke 22-40.*

What will surprise us is Love.  
*Philip Larkin*

**THE SEASON—**A Resource Booklet is available at the back of the church. *'Advent-Christmas-Epiphany: a guide to the season'*. Please take a copy.

**2016 PLANNING:** Copies of parish liturgical planner are available in the Narthex.

**CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM ARCHBISHOP PHILIP FREIER.** A transcript is on the notice board. Please take a copy to read or to view the message, visit [www.melbourneanglican.org.au/christmas](http://www.melbourneanglican.org.au/christmas)

**THE PARISH OFFICE** is now closed re-opening at 10am on **Wednesday 27 January 2016**. During this time clergy will be available and the office phone will be monitored.

**CONTACT—**One edition for the 4 weeks of January will be available next week. Regular issues will resume for Sunday 31 January. Notices for that must be in the office by 1pm on Thursday 28 January.

**KIDZ@CHURCH** at 10am is in recess for the holidays, resuming for the Feast of Candlemass on 31 January. In the meantime, please make use of children's activities at the back of the church.

**SERVERS:** If you are interested in joining the serving team please speak with the vicar or Ross Smith.

**THE CHOIR** is in recess after Christmas Day, returning at Feast of Candlemass.

**MIDWEEK EUCHARISTS** (Tuesdays 12 noon; Wednesdays 11.30am) continue throughout Christmas-Epiphanytime.

**COMMUNION & CURRY**-6.30pm  
Wednesday 6 January.

### WARTA JEMAAT

1. Bagi yang pertama kali hadir beribadah disini, mohon berdiri dan memperkenalkan diri.
2. Pdt. Kuncoro akan mengambil cuti mulai tgl 4 Januari sampai 12 Januari. Kembali melayani di Gereja tgl 13 Januari.
3. Setelah kebaktian selesai, kami mengundang seluruh jemaat, terutama yang baru pertama kali hadir, berkumpul beramah tamah dan menikmati makan bersama di Rutherford Room.

**YEAR'S MIND:** We remember before God, Christine Petrie, Ronald Paterson, Maisie Johnson, Helen Moore, Marjorie Lambert, Ernest Legg, Russell MacDougall, Jean Carter, and Neil MacKenzie, whose anniversaries occur at this time.

**THANK YOU** from the Flower Guild for the donations towards the cost of Christmas Flowers.

**THANK YOU** for the wonderful response to the Anglicare Christmas Toy, Gift and Food appeal.

**ENVELOPES** are available for donations to The Christmas Bowl (Act for Peace) and also for ABM 2016. See noticeboard for more details of their programs.

## LENT AND HOLY WEEK 2016

### Ash Wednesday— 10 February

Liturgy of Ashes –  
11.30am; 8.00pm

### Palm Sunday—20 March

### EASTER TRIDUUM

#### Holy Thursday—24 March

8.00pm then Vigil of Prayer  
all night until ...

#### Good Friday—25 March

Liturgy of the Cross  
9.30am

#### Easter Day—27 March

**6am Easter Vigil & 1st  
Eucharist of Resurrection,  
followed by breakfast.**