



**NEW HORIZONS  
WARWICK, KILLARNEY  
FREESTONE  
PARISH NEWSLETTER  
DECEMBER 2023**



## **Pastoral Ponderings**

I greet you in the name of Jesus, our Lord!

As 2023 draws to a close and we look back, we give thanks to God for sustaining us on the journey, for the many moments of joy and celebrations, that brought energy and courage, for the difficult and heartbreaking, disappointing moments, that deepened our faith and shaped us to become more and more like Jesus.

We are now officially in Advent!

The shops are adorned with tinsel and Christmas music is heard from almost every shop! The shops are busy, and it seems like there are more people around than in previous years. There are Christmas dinners, lunches, teas, dinners, and gatherings in all sizes and shapes as we celebrate the coming of Christmas again this year! But it is not Christmas yet... and so we wait!

We often think of Advent as the season of waiting. Many of us think of it as little more than a time of waiting for Christmas. Certainly, those who sell us our presents and decorations make great use of this time to maximise profits before the end of the year. But of course, Advent is about more than that. It's a time in which we connect once again with our longing for the world of hope, peace, joy and love that Jesus proclaimed.

It is a time when we look to the distant future and reaffirm our hope that one day God's reign will be fully realised on our Earth. And we commit to wait for that day even if we never see it arrive. The Scriptures call us to wait, it's always active and it always holds the promise that we can participate in bringing our hope into being. Won't you join me this Christmas as we actively wait together for the coming(s) of Christ?

I am thankful for another year of ministry and growth in this Parish. I am grateful to all those who have showered me with love, care, messages, food, coffee and cake, IT support, prayers, garden help, RI classes and kind encouraging words (the list is endless) when it was tough. Your generosity and hospitality have carried me during this year.

From my home to yours, I wish you a season filled with Hope, Peace Joy, and Love.

*Ansie Liebenberg*

## Christmas 2023....Some Food for Thought

Every year for over 2000 years, we have celebrated the birth of Christ, God in our human form, and we seem to feel a warm glow of peace and goodwill that seems to quickly evaporate. Each year, all around us, we feel the true reason for our celebration quietly slipping away. And yet, the age-old customs and traditions from all around the world tug us back to marvel at the way God planned to save us from our own destruction. Over many years these developed through man's desire to worship our amazing God and to acknowledge the amazing Gift of the birth of Emmanuel, God with us!

First of all, there are the songs and carols. In 1865, a young American called Phillip Brooks journeyed on horseback from Jerusalem to Bethlehem to attend a Christmas Eve service in the Church of the Nativity. Three years later, he returned to America, but the land of Jesus lay vividly on his heart. At age 32, he wrote the well-known carol, "O little town of Bethlehem." He became the Bishop of Massachusetts but is best remembered by this carol.



"What would you like for a Christmas present?" John Byron asked his daughter, Dolly, and she answered, "Please write me a poem?" So, on Christmas morning in 1749, Dolly found on her breakfast plate a piece of paper on which was written a hymn entitled, Christmas Day for Dolly. The organist of the Parish church wrote a tune and for it. The following Christmas morning, Byron and Dolly were awaked by the church choir singing below their window, "Christians awake, salute the happy morn, whereon the Saviour of the world was born".



Churches and some homes begin the season with an Advent Wreath which guides us through the four Sundays of the preparation of Advent. This little decoration is filled with so much symbolism to remind us what it is that we are celebrating. The wreath itself is a circle reminding us that God's love never ends while the green spells out eternal life, and the red of the holly reminds us of the drops of blood from Jesus'

crown of thorns. Inside the wreath are four candles symbolising the four weeks of considering hope, peace, joy and love. In the centre, a larger candle is lit on Christmas morning and is known as the Christ Candle.

Everywhere we see a Christmas tree in homes, churches and in shops. Martin Luther is believed to have been the first person to decorate a Christmas tree. Returning home through the snowy ground, after a Christmas Eve service, he was deeply moved by the beauty and the clarity of the winter sky with its countless twinkling stars. When he tried to explain such beauty to his family, he found words inadequate; so, he dashed outside, cut down a fir tree, and lit its branches with many flickering candles. Enter the Christmas Tree that is a must each year!



On our trees, we decorate them with lights, balls, stars, bells and angels. The lights remind us that Jesus came to bring light into our world, the balls represent the world into which he came. Bells always announced special occasions in the Middle Ages and thus they symbolise the good news of Jesus' birth, bringing peace and justice for all. The star led both the shepherds and the wise men to the manger, while angels played a huge part in the whole story.

Then there are the candy canes! A candy maker in Indianapolis USA made peppermint sticks in a J shape to remind children that Jesus was the reason for Christmas, Turned upside down, it reminds us of the shepherds crooks for they were the first to hear the news of Christ's birth.

The Creche! Around the year 1200 AD, St Francis of Assisi created a manger tableau in a cave near his village, using live animals and people in order to revitalise devotion to the Christ child in the people, and to help them realise that Jesus was born in poverty. I could continue with so many other ways in which we are reminded of what Christmas is really all about...but I can't take over more space!

I did want to finish with the last word from a Sunday School student, The teacher of a young group of kids wanted them to realise that the birth of Jesus was real and important for us right now. She asked them, "Where is Jesus today?"

One answer was, "He's in heaven." Another answered that he was in her heart.

Then Johnny was waving his hand furiously and he blurted out, " I know where he is. He's in our bathroom!" The teacher asked him how he knew this, and he answered, "Well, every morning, my father gets up and knocks loudly on the bathroom door and he yells,

"Good Lord, are you still in there?"

Countless are the customs and traditions that surround each year's Christmas celebration...but they all have one aim...to remind us of the events of that First Christmas.

It is summed up by Francis Spellman: Peace is the theme, the meaning, and the very soul of Christmas; for, in this holy season, we celebrate the birth of Him who came to bring peace on earth, goodwill to men. He came to restore the shattered harmony between God and man, and between man and fellowman. For that exalted purpose, he lived!

He walked a while among us so that we might know the true meaning of love. May he daily walk beside us so that we might have the blessing of love, joy and peace!

Have an amazing Christmas 2023.....Shalom, Jean



## **A Short History of the Uniting Church Wesley Indoor Bowls Club**

presented by Marg Wilkie at the 70<sup>th</sup> celebrations.

Today, 11<sup>th</sup> October 2023, we gather to celebrate 70 wonderful years of bowling, great friendships, fellowship and good sportsmanship.

Firstly, I give our respect and deep gratitude, and thank our past members, especially the founding members, who had the foresight, doing the hard work to form this club, along with those following members who have helped to make it the strong club it is today.

In those days, women had to resign from employment when they married. The formation of this club allowed a place and time for them to interact with others in a similar situation.

Now, as I relate some of our club's past history, I am also passing the baton onto our younger members to carry our club forward into the future. As the earliest minute book available begins in November 1976, I shall do my best to relate what early history I have been told over the years.

The club began in 1953 as the Methodist Ladies Indoor Bowls Club, with Mrs Reimers as President. Mats were borrowed from the men's club until they could afford their own. The mats were different from the present ones, as they were backed with a carpet underfelt. To be repaired, this backing had to be stripped off and new underfelt reglued onto the mat.

Our meeting place was in the Methodist Hall situated on the corner of Guy and Grafton Streets, where part of the Rose City Shopping Centre now stands. The ladies played on Wednesday afternoons and once a month they held a Friendship night when their husbands played too. They also held an open afternoon once a month when ladies from other clubs were invited with the proceeds from playing fees and a 'bring and buy stall,' going to charity organisations – e.g., Red Cross, Meals on Wheels, Blue Nurses, Christmas Bowl etc.

In 1985, the Bring and Buy Stall was held on each meeting day to raise funds to purchase 2 new mats. By May of that year, they were able to buy a new mat for \$550 and sold an old mat along with 2 sets of unused bowls to Junabee Hall for \$50. The following year the club purchased 2 mats in good condition from the Senior Citizens Club for \$60 each.

In 1977 the Methodist, Congregational and Presbyterian churches united, however, our bowls club remained 'The Methodist Ladies Indoor Bowls Club' until the AGM on February 8<sup>th</sup>, 1978, and I quote – "The President said it is with pleasure I present the Annual Report of the Methodist Indoor Bowls Club, which in the future will be known as The Warwick Uniting Church Wesley Indoor Bowls Club" – end of quote. It was also at this meeting, an alteration of rules, allowed members of other churches to join the club. Up until then, St Marys Catholic Church, St Marks Anglican Church, St Andrews Presbyterian Church, along with the Methodist Church, all had their own men's and ladies' indoor bowls clubs.

May 4<sup>th</sup> 1988, is the first mention of a man at a meeting. Mr Harry Hunt was an associate member. He continued to attend meetings as such until the AGM on February 1<sup>st</sup>, 1989, when he accepted the position of Vice Captain. At this meeting it was decided to discontinue social nights, due to poor attendance, and to conform with the Uniting Church Council's requirements and hold our AGM in December. The constitution now states – "The AGM is to be held no later than the 2<sup>nd</sup> week in December each year with financial

books closing on 15<sup>th</sup> November.” Up until then, the AGM was held in February, with the books closing in December.

A note I make here is about the fees. At the AGM on February 6<sup>th</sup>, 1980, the annual membership for ladies was \$2.50 and 50cents for gentlemen who wished to become an associate member, while the playing fees were to remain at 30 cents.

At first our mats were laid by two High School boys who were paid 3 shillings (30 cents) each. This was gradually increased, and in 1979, they were paid 70 cents each. However, in 1981, the 2 girls who were laying the mats then asked for a raise to \$1.00 each, and I quote – “after a lengthy discussion, that if they were desirous of more pay, they be asked if they would be willing to roll up the mats as well as rolling them out. At present club members are rolling them up. This motion was carried.” - end of quote.

On April 11<sup>th</sup>, 1990, the last game of bowls was played in the Wesley Hall and once again I quote – “And so (because we must), we say farewell to Wesley; we will always remember your hallowed walls wherein we enjoyed good times, good games and good fellowship.” – end of quote.

A week later, the Williams Memorial Hall became our home until it was sold and removed, then St Marys kindly let us use their hall, until the new Williams Hall was built. The Methodist Church and building complex was completely dissembled, each brick carefully numbered, and then rebuilt over at Scots College, where it is now used as their chapel with the Hall situated on its western side.

Once again, as the minute books from 1994 until February 2006 appear to be missing or mislaid, I advise what I remember, as during this time I was secretary.

We played our first game of bowls in the new Williams Hall in August 1999, and we held our first open afternoon there, with 60 players participating – 12 players on each of 5 mats – a grand afternoon of bowling.

Also, that year, we applied through our local RSL Club to Jupiter’s Gaming Fund for a grant and was successful. This money was used to purchase a much needed new mat. Later we applied again for a grant which allowed us to buy another new mat and 6 sets of the smaller bowls at a cost of \$3771. We then donated our larger bowls to Warwick East Lawn Bowls Club.

Up until 2020, our club participated in all open afternoons, shield competitions of the other clubs, all association shields, pennants and championships. In early times, up to 20 teams playing on 10 mats, competed for these various trophies. Victoria Hill, Freestone, City Council, Senior Citizens and Buffaloes, along with all the previously mentioned churches (to name the clubs that come to my mind) sported 2 teams each. Many great friendships, along with great sportsmanship, came from these nights. Sadly, however, with the closing of the Association and insurance complexities, these all ceased along with all open afternoons.

Another interesting shield keenly competed for by Warwick Indoor Bowling Association (of which we were a large part) and Stanthorpe, was the Maroon Shield. The Maroon family were a wonderful community minded family who ran a drapery store in Warwick. To thank his customers, Mr Maroon donated this shield. Stanthorpe came to Warwick in March, while Warwick then travelled with a full bus of bowlers to Stanthorpe in November, often



arriving home well after midnight. These were wonderful evenings of camaraderie and hospitality. Sadly, they have ceased as well.

Over the years our club has maintained a goodly number of members. It is pleasing to note of our present 40 members we have 2 second generation members; namely Margaret Bryant (nee Dempster) and Gloria Mogridge (nee Cooper).

Caring for each other, and sharing our joys and sorrows, has been an integral part of our club. A kindly word, a hand extended in friendship, along with a hug and a prayer, has helped to ease many a burdened heart (mine included).

We give praise and thanks to God and are blessed to have the opportunity to share great fellowship and sportsmanship in wonderful surrounds. To show our appreciation, we make a goodly donation to the Uniting Church each year.

May the Uniting Church Wesley Indoor Bowls Club continue to flourish, offering a warm welcome and friendship to all who come.

Thank you. Marg Wilkie, Life Member



## **GOD'S GARDEN**

Many of the vegetables are flourishing at present so please help yourself to anything which you can use in your cooking or salads.

It is a shame if they just wither away especially in the hot weather.

## **CHRISTMAS DOWNUNDER**

No activities this year.  
However, be sure to look for the Nativity scene at the foot of the travelator.



## NOVEMBER CHURCH COUNCIL CHATTER

What a year! It is impossible to address the business from our November Church Council without acknowledging the dedication of our Ministry Groups – many of whom have already submitted their Annual Report. Our Task Teams have been busy supporting our priorities of Discipleship, Fit for Purpose and Children, Youth and Families.

Our Annual General Meeting will provide a wonderful overview of 2023. Will you see yourself on the screen? The date is below, please make a note to come along as we review this year and plan the coming.

If using Williams Hall and complex over this period, please be aware that our cleaner will only be working one hour a week not the usual three.

The defibrillator will be placed in Williams Hall foyer.

### Christmas closures:

- Office closed Monday 18<sup>th</sup> open Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January with Notices out on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> January.
- Courthouse Coffee to close after Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> December and reopen Friday 12<sup>th</sup> January.

### Christmas Services:

- Carols Warwick Uniting Church Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> December, 5:30pm with a light meal to follow.
- Christmas Eve (Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> December)
  - Killarney: 8:30am
  - Warwick 9:30am
  - Freestone 7:00pm
- Christmas Day (Monday 25<sup>th</sup> December)
  - Killarney 8:00am
  - Warwick 7:00am

### Dates for 2024:

- Pleasant Sunday Afternoon: Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> January, 2:30pm in the Warwick Uniting Church. This will be the start of a few pleasant Sunday afternoons by David Cahill.
- Marriage Course will be starting Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> January, 6pm Williams Hall. This course is for those who would like to invest in their relationship. It comes with a meal and a better name for it is probably date night.
- Grief and Loss – the next course commences Monday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2pm.
- Church Council now meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month.
  - We will have a short Council Meeting Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> January, 7pm, to plan the Annual General Meeting
  - Annual Parish Meeting will be held Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> February, 2pm in Killarney
- Market Day 9<sup>th</sup> March 9am-12midday Feature Stall: Trash and Treasure, with a light book Stall on the stage, Plant Stall in the courtyard, Courtyard Café, Sausage Sizzle, Treat Yourself and Home Baked



- World Day of Prayer 1<sup>st</sup> March. Prepared by women of Palestine. We will be the host church, holding an ecumenical Service in the Church 10am followed by morning tea.

Blue Care Program  
**Grief and Loss Course**  
*Have you experienced the loss  
of a loved one?*  
6 week Course commencing  
**Monday 29th January 24**  
**2-4pm** Trained Facilitators  
Confidential  
  
**Warwick Uniting Church**  
33a Guy Street Warwick  
0491071787

**MARKET DAY**  
Warwick Uniting Church cnr Guy & Fitzroy Streets  
**Saturday 9th March 2024**  
**Stalls 9am- 12pm**  
Trash n Treasure  
Books  
Exotics and Native Plants  
Treat Yourself Sweets  
Home Made Cakes/slices  
Courtyard Cafe  
Sausage Sizzle  
  
EFTPOS  
More information:  
wkuc.org.au  
**Entertainment**

As you gather at Christmas pause and pray this Christmas Blessing

Whenever you gaze into a crib this Christmas season may new hope and joy flood your spirit.

Whenever you watch babies and young children playing May a new energy for a better world effuse your heart.

Whenever you are tantalised by the aroma of a BBQ May you unwind, relax and enjoy time off.

Whenever the crush of family and friends overwhelms you May the hospitality of your heart expand. Whenever you receive an abundance of love and gifts May your pocket and compassion extend to those without.

Whenever you provide a meal or bed over the holidays May you experience love and appreciation. Whenever you travel to be with loved ones May you journey well and arrive safely.

Whenever you spy your reflection in the mirror or pool May you find yourself an image of God.

Whenever you put your feet up for leisure May the humble presence of the Incarnate One companion you.

Whenever you feel distance from each other around the world May the Christ child draw us into unity.

