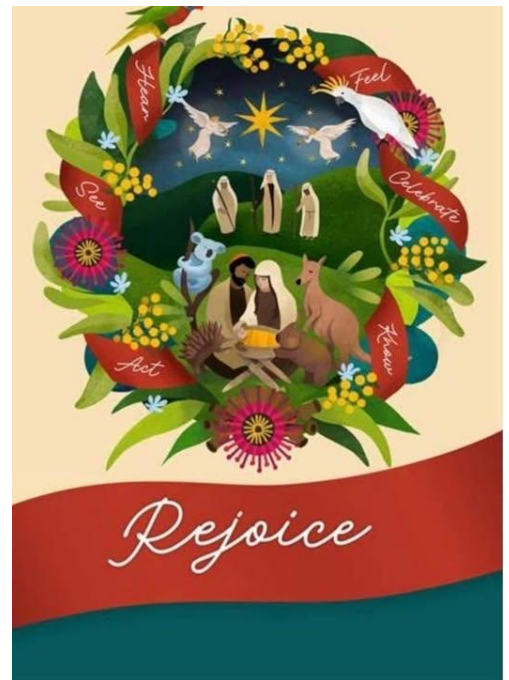


# New Horizons

**Newsletter of Warwick, Killarney,  
Freestone Parish of UCA**



Welcome and  
farewell  
Rev Yvonne  
McRostie



Presbytery in worship

**REJOICE and  
SEE  
LISTEN  
ACT  
FEEL  
CELEBRATE**



Piper  
Sandy Dalziel

Dear Congregation,

## **Affordable Housing Project**

As we embrace the spirit of **REJOICE** this Advent season, I am pleased to update you on the progress of our affordable housing project. While we needed to cut down a few trees, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to **John Morris** for his incredible effort in helping us donate nearly **thirty trees** to be replanted. These include silky oaks and Cape chestnuts, which will surely bring beauty to our region.

## **Community Engagement**

We recently held information sessions regarding the building project, during which we addressed many misconceptions with our neighbours in Warwick. I am happy to report that the overall mood was positive, and progress is being made on both sites. A special thank you to **Ian Darnell** and **Jenny Lane** for their outstanding work in this Endeavor!

## **Celebrating November**

Reflecting on the month of November, there are indeed many reasons to **REJOICE:**

- I am grateful for the **hospitality** extended during the presbytery meeting on the second weekend of November.
- On the third Sunday, we were honoured to welcome **Rev Charissa Suli**, the President of the Assembly of the Uniting Church.
- Additionally, on the fourth Sunday, we concluded our service for Rev Yvonne McRostie, our Presbytery Minister.

A heartfelt thanks goes out to our **hospitality team** and all **worship team members**, who worked tirelessly to make our visitors feel welcome.

## **Personal Blessings and Challenges**

On a personal note, Willie and I were blessed with our **sixth grandchild**, Leo William Popp, on November 25th—what a wonderful surprise! However, we have also received some challenging news regarding our visa situation. I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your ongoing prayers and support during this time.

As we celebrate this Advent and Christmas season, I trust you will find joy in the **comings** of Christ as we celebrate Christ's birth, but also prepare for his coming again and all the blessings around us.

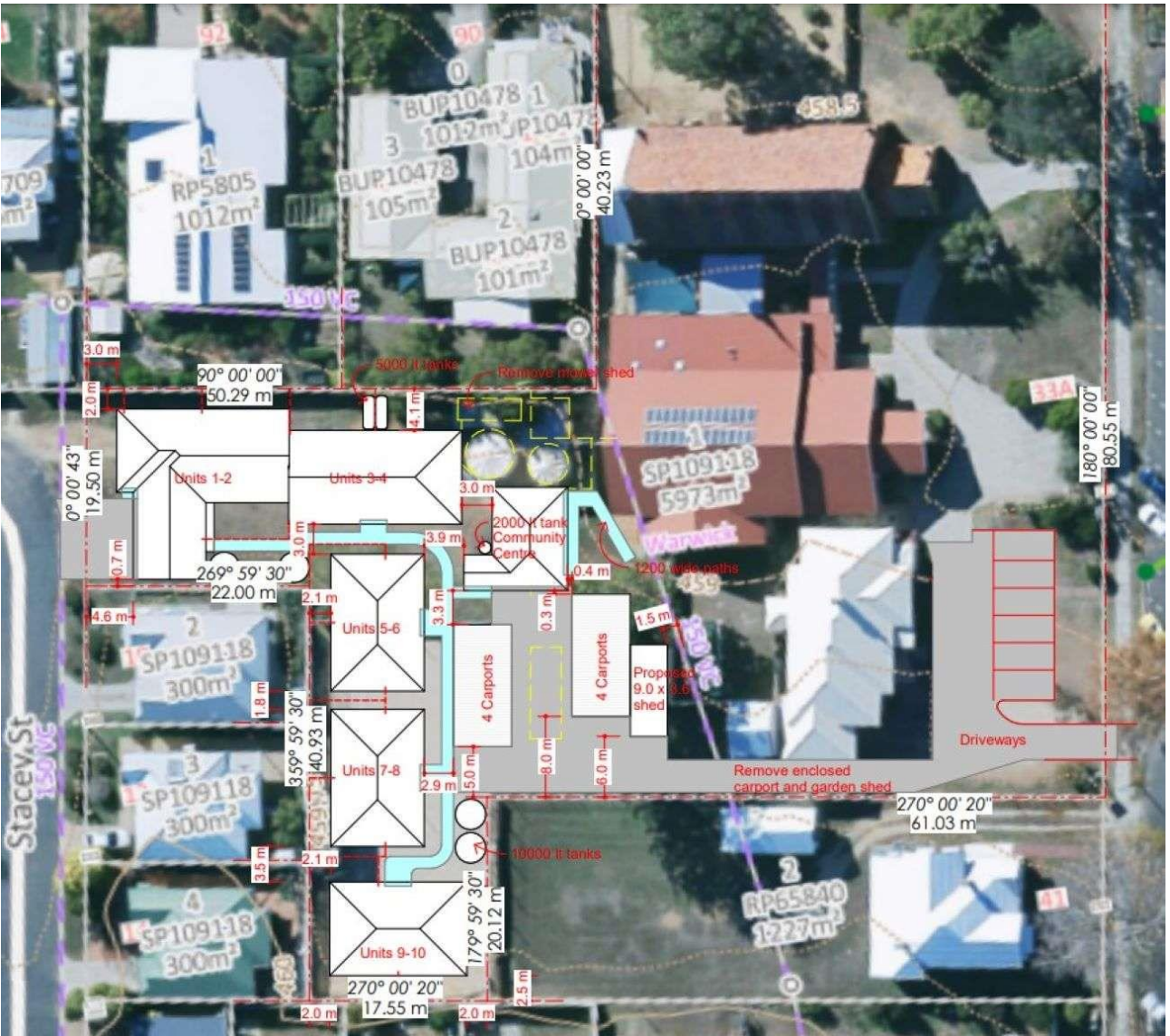
With warm regards,

*Ansie*





*Work begins in Killarney.*



Plan of Warwick Affordable Housing



**Welcome to our Parish!**  
**President of the Assembly of the Uniting Church in Australia**  
**Rev Charissa Suli**



With Scots PGC Boarders and Principal Kyle Thompson



Rev Yvonne McRostie,  
Kathy Payne, Rev Suli  
and Rev Ansie

## **2024 Christmas Message**

**Rev Charissa Suli, President of the Uniting Church in Australia.**

Hope isn't found in what we have or what we lack.  
Hope is born in the most unexpected places.

On that first Christmas night, hope took the form of a baby.  
Jesus, the Son of God, was born not in a palace but in a stable—God entering our world in humility and vulnerability.

Through this child, God chose to come among us, bringing love and light into the darkness.

Today, many of us carry heavy burdens. I hear stories of grief, fatigue, and isolation from communities across the country.

Our world is in conflict. It can feel like hope is not enough.

But the Christmas story speaks to these very struggles. Just like hope was born into poverty on that first Christmas, so is hope born into our broken world.

Jesus' birth is God's promise that no matter how dark life feels, we are never alone.

There is hope. I have witnessed this hope firsthand. I've seen communities rallying in times of crisis, reaching out with compassion and courage. I've seen women and girls standing up for equity, reclaiming their voices and dignity.

In places of conflict, I see so many peacemakers.

These are acts of love which build the hope we celebrate at Christmas – when we show up for each other just as God showed up for us in Jesus.

At Christmas, we remember the birth of Jesus—the birth of hope itself. Jesus brought a message of God's radical closeness and of radical love.

This love has the power to heal what is broken, to bring peace, and to unite us across every divide.

Let's weave Christ's love and hope into our lives this Christmas.

Let's show up for our neighbours, treat each other with compassion, and build a future where unity, peace, and love conquer hate and fear.

Hope is here. Hope is alive.

And it's up to us to share it.

Merry Christmas! May hope be yours.

## *Food for Thought...Christmas and Advent*

A couple of years ago close to Christmas, I was in Clifford Gardens in Toowoomba having a nice chocolatey morning tea with my daughter. We were sitting just beside one of those cheap shops which was filled with Christmas decorations full of glitz, sparkle and lights. Now, as you know I live in Oaktree Retirement Village and had gradually given away a lot of Christmas gear because storage is severely limited. But I saw a little one that caught my eye, and I just needed to buy it for \$5!

It is surprisingly unique and quite thought provoking. As I write this, I am sitting with it right in front of me as it evokes thoughts of both Advent and the celebration of the birth of Christ. Yes, Jesus was born in Bethlehem with the only lights being the stars, the angels, and the happy glow of proud adoring parents. And, yes, we all love those carols that have been a part of all our Christmas memories down through the years. And yes, those amazing light shows springing up throughout our town delight and amaze us. But what does it all mean?

My cheap little memento reminds me what it is all about! It is a clear faceted resin or plastic cross which is meant to hang on the Christmas tree...but it is quite heavy and would severely sag the branches down. What is special about it is that a sprig of holly sits on top, the branches following the shape of the cross being green and the red beads of holly giving the appearance of drops of blood.

Cleverly, it combines Christmas and Easter and reminds us why Christmas is special, why Jesus was born... why God's plan for our salvation was put into practice...why we were given a glimpse of the nature, love and wisdom of our Creator. The world is caught up in the glitter, the glamour, the celebration of family, feasting, and good will that enters into the traditions of the celebration. But, this year, behind it all we are very aware of the need for peace, for compassion, for helping the outcast, for remembering just why Jesus was born.

My little decoration is priceless as it does just that. I think a lot in the shower and this Advent I realised how Advent and Lent are inexplicably linked together, that you can't have one without contemplating the other as both give us that opportunity to deeply consider who we are, who we follow and why inviting us into confession and forgiveness. All that from a tiny Christmas decoration!

In finish from a book of Christmas gems comes this little poem. God's good! It just sums up my ponderings!

*It's Christmas time in our house and we're putting up a tree.  
I wish I could find some simple way to remember God's gift to me.  
Some little sign or symbol, to show friends stopping by.  
The little babe was born that day, but he really came to die.*

*Some symbol of his nail-pierced hands, the blood he shed for me.  
What if I hung a nail on my Christmas tree?  
I know it was his love for us, that held him to a tree;  
But when I see this simple nail, I'll know he died for me.*

*It may seem strange at Christmas time, to think of nails and wood,  
But both were used in Jesus' life to bring us something good.  
From manger bed to crown of thorns, to death on calvary,  
God used the wood of nails and men to set all people free.*

So ends Food for Thought for 2024.

I wish you all a happy, holy and fulfilling Christmas and a Happy New Year.....Shalom, Jean

## **TWEATTT**

What a special time shared on those Sundays that started each month! Our numbers have waxed and waned, but the chatting and eating haven't! One of the hardest things in a solitary household is to enjoy eating and discussing the day's ups and downs. In fact, it often happens that we forget to eat...so tea becomes a few chunks of chocolate instead!

What is even more special is the team who look after us giving us a choice between both the main dishes and the desserts. Of course, the meal is delicious, even the vegetables! I can always find a taker for my cauliflower! It is really the grace and love that spills into our meal that makes it so special. *Thank you, team; you are angels in disguise!*

On a couple of occasions, there were visitors at worship, and we invited them to join us; and this gave us a whole lot more to ponder as we ate. I'm sure they'll talk about it when they return to their own congregations. We are now in recess until the first Sunday in March...what a feast of food and talk will flow that day!

Thank you also to those who come together for this meal of food and talk. It has helped to chase away the aloneness of living alone! A happy and holy Christmas a peaceful and rested holiday season to all....Shalom, Jean

## **Selah Home Group**

We have enjoyed another year of sharing our faith, our celebrations and our problems as we cover the lectionary readings for each week after a time of sharing over a coffee and cake, followed by a time of prayer for the world and us. Then it is an hour of Bible Study. All have agreed that all this highlights the benefits and praise that comes then with the Sunday Worship.

Sadly, as age mows us all down, we will no longer be meeting at the house of Ann Ware as she resides in Church of Christ Care. We will probably meet at Oak Tree as we did before the advent of Covid and, hopefully, we'll still have Ann involved with us. Thanks Ann, for your gracious hosting and spacious tables. We will resume next year when school starts again. Thanks, team!

Thank you Jean for your contributions throughout the year, keeping is informed and certainly providing FOOD FOR THOUGHT.

## **Christmas Worship service times**

Freestone – 24<sup>th</sup> Dec – 7:00pm

Warwick – 25<sup>th</sup> Dec – 7:00am

Killarney – 25<sup>th</sup> Dec – 8:30am

Ecumenical Service Killarney 29<sup>th</sup> Dec – 8:30am

Warwick - 29<sup>th</sup> Dec – 9:30am





**Always pray to have  
eyes that see  
the best in people,  
a heart that forgives  
the worst, a mind  
that forgets the bad,  
and a soul that  
never loses faith  
in God.**  
via curiano.com

**THE GOOD NEWS OF CHRISTMAS IS THAT.  
EVEN WHEN THE WORLD OR OUR CIRCUMSTANCES CHANGE  
– THE MESSAGE OF CHRISTMAS IS TIMELESS.  
BECAUSE CHRISTMAS IS ABOUT THE BIRTH OF  
GOD'S SON – JESUS.  
IT IS ABOUT HOW HE CAME TO GIVE US  
LOVE, HOPE AND JOY.  
THAT MESSAGE DOESN'T CHANGE FROM YEAR TO YEAR.**

**CHRISTMAS BLESSINGS FOR PEACE AND HOPE.  
MAY YOU BE FILLED WITH THE WONDER OF MARY,  
THE OBEDIENCE OF JOSEPH,  
THE JOY OF THE ANGELS,  
THE EAGERNESS OF THE SHEPHERDS,  
THE DETERMINATION OF THE MAGI,  
AND THE PEACE OF THE CHRIST CHILD.  
ALMIGHTY GOD, FATHER, SON AND HOLY SPIRIT  
BLESS YOU NOW AND FOREVER.**