

## *The Minister's Weekly Word...*



It was lovely this week to be a part of the Bowral Community Carols at Bradman Oval. Always a somewhat chaotic affair, this year it was made more so by a particularly heavy rain shower halfway through the event. There's always a question in my mind about the carols. Does it really achieve anything for the Kingdom? Is Jesus really proclaimed, or is it just an excuse for a good time and some fireworks to enjoy at the end? Of course, the reality is more complex than the questions suggest. Yet I'm always surprised at how, even in my most cynical moments, little conversations and connections cut through and make me think it's worthwhile. This year again I was able to speak with a range of people each at a particular point in their journey, each searching for something and perhaps catching glimpses of some possible answers in the sense of community and the messages of the carols. In the end, this is what the church is about. We come alongside others as Jesus comes alongside us and we strike up a conversation. And we pray that the Gospel will shine through. I'll probably question again next year whether it's really worth it, and I'm sure once more the God who interrupts our cynicism will show me that it is. *Blessings, Michael*

## Minister's Diary...

-The Minister is on Annual holiday leave 9<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> January 2017

## Advent, Christmas & New Years Day Services...

**Advent 3:** 9am Sunday 11 December (Restoration-Joy)

**Advent 4:** 9am Sunday 18 December Carols & Readings Service

**Christmas Eve** Regional Carols Service at Mittagong UC  
4.30pm for a 'Cuppa', 5pm for Readings & Carols

**Christmas Day** at Bowral UC...9am Sunday 25 December

**New Year's Day** at Bowral UC...9am Sunday 1 January 2017



Material for **WEEKLY NEWS** needs to be provided by noon each Wednesday to Rev Michael Earl or Sharon Hoogland, 48711583 or [hooglandsj46@gmail.com](mailto:hooglandsj46@gmail.com). Photos, information or notices promoting the work of the church for our **Website** ([bkuc.com.au](http://bkuc.com.au)) should be sent to [lucyearl79@gmail.com](mailto:lucyearl79@gmail.com)

## Bowral/Kangaloon Uniting Church

*"A church for all people..."*



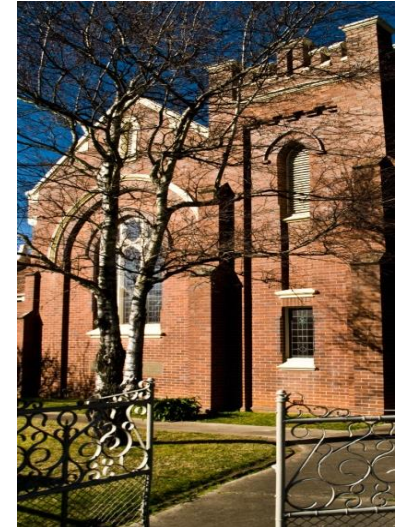
**Sunday 4 December 2016 (Advent 2)**

### Our ministry focus areas are:

*Worship & Discipleship  
Children & Families  
Seniors  
Community engagement*

*You are most welcome at worship today, particularly if you are a visitor or a new resident of the area.*

*We would love to get to know you, and help you feel at home. Please make yourself known. Join us for coffee after the service!*



**For matters concerning the life of the congregation, contact:**  
Reverend Michael Earl, on (mobile 0422 433 569).

**Office: 28 Bendooley Street  
Telephone: (02) 4862 1350  
Internet: [bkuc.com.au](http://bkuc.com.au)**

### Church Council Chairperson

Mrs Kathryn Searle 4872 1002

### Church Council Secretary

Mrs Sharon Hoogland 4871 1583

### Church Council Treasurer

Mr Graham Blackadder 4861 7385

### Elders' Convenor

Mr Jim Layton 4862 4623

### Readings:

Isaiah 35:1-10; Psalm 146:5-10; James 5:7-10; Matthew 11:2-11

**A Hearing Loop is in place in the Church and Hall.**  
To access it, switch your hearing aid to the "T" position.  
It is advisable not to sit right against the wall

## WHAT'S HAPPENING THIS WEEK?

<u><b>Monday 12 December</b></u> 5.30pm Uniting Voices	12 noon – 1.30pm OPEN CHURCH 12.30pm Food & Fellowship in the Gallery... All welcome!
<u><b>Tuesday 13 December</b></u> 9.30am Playgroup 9.30am Pieces & Yarns	<u><b>Thursday 15 December</b></u> 4.00pm Kids Connect 6.30pm Elders' Meeting 7.30pm Church Council Meeting
<u><b>Wednesday 14 December</b></u> 10.00am Reflections Study Group @ the Bunker's home. <i>See Note in Calendar of Events</i>	<u><b>Friday 16 December</b></u> 6.00pm Bell Ringing Practice

### TODAY'S SERVICES 11 December (Advent 3)

9.00am Service of Holy Communion (Rev Michael Earl)  
**11.30am Uniting Families Connect Nativity Play (All welcome!)**  
 6.00pm Evening Fellowship Time

### NEXT SUNDAY 18 December (Advent 4)

9.00am Carols & Readings Service with special music  
 6.00pm Evening Fellowship Time

Readings Next Week: Is 7:10 – 16; Ps 80:1-7, 17-19; Rom 1: 1-7; Mt 1: 18 - 25

ROSTER	THIS WEEK: 11 Dec	NEXT WEEK: 18 Dec
<b>Organ</b>	Ann Clipsham	Heather Tredinnick
<b>PowerPoint</b>	J & S Hoogland	Ian Prior
<b>Elder</b>	Fran Manton	Jim Layton
<b>Stewards</b>	Ian & Diane Prior	G & R Robinson
<b>Flowers</b>	Kathy Searle, Judy Dyson	H Ling, R Robinson
<b>Kids Church</b>	11.30am U Families Nativity Play	Lucy Earl
<b>Morning Tea</b>	Margaret M & Lorraine R	Art/Jen/Em Alcorn



*Thank you to our wonderful volunteers!  
 If you would like to assist in any of our activities,  
 please see the Rosters on the Gallery Noticeboard*

**Christmas Bowl Appeal...** this began in 1949 when Rev Frank Byatt of Victoria placed an simple empty bowl on the Christmas dinner table & asked his guests to contribute what they thought their Christmas meal cost...from there to now (under the banner of 'Act for Peace') reaching out to help well over 1 million people in need around the world. Please make a donation &/or take an envelope as you leave this morning.

## THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

"One of the essential paradoxes of Advent: that while we wait for God, we are with God all along, that while we need to be reassured of God's arrival, or the arrival of our homecoming, we are already at home. While we wait, we have to trust, to have faith, but it is God's grace that gives us that faith. As with all spiritual knowledge, two things are true, and equally true, at once. The mind can't grasp paradox; it is the knowledge of the soul."

*Michelle Blake, American author*



## Coming events...

<b>Wednesday 14 Dec</b>	<b>REFLECTIONS morning tea @ Bunkers – 10.00am</b>
Thursday 15 Dec	BUC Elders meet, followed by Church Council
Wednesday 21 Dec	11.30am Mid-week Communion Service
Saturday 24 Dec	4.30pm Regional Christmas Eve Carols service (MUC)

## CHANGE OF DATE FOR DECEMBER MID-WEEK COMMUNION

Wednesday 21 December, the mid-week service will be held prior to the Food & Fellowship Christmas lunch. Everyone is Welcome to attend...!

## ELDERS & GOOD NEIGHBOURS PLEASE NOTE...

There are signed copies of the Minister's Christmas Letter in the vestry for you to collect and distribute. If you would prefer to receive the letter by email, please let Michael know.

## SPRING FAIR CALENDAR 2017

Due to popular demand we have a further printing! I will be taking orders up until 10am Monday 12<sup>th</sup> Dec. \$12.95 each or 2 for\$25.

Please contact me on 0412776262 if you wish to place an order. They should be available by the end of the week. Thanks Jan Hamilton

## Target & Uniting Christmas Appeal

Target and Uniting(Care) are working together to brighten the lives of Australians in need at Christmas through the purchase of gift tags and presents.

Food hampers, gifts and other assistance will be managed and distributed by Bowral Uniting Church in conjunction with the Uniting Care's Brighter Futures program. December can be a sad time for many and we pray that we might bring some joy to people within the Southern Highlands who are struggling.

Members of the congregation are invited to place their gifts under the Christmas Tree at the front of the church.

