



December 2009 / January 2010

## **St Andrew's Uniting Church**

*A congregation of the Uniting Church in Australia  
25 West Market Street, Richmond, NSW*

St Andrew's has something for everyone of all ages, as we follow our mission to Seniors, Young Families and Young Adults in our community. Please contact a member of the Ministry Team or an Elder for any needs or support. Our Elders' names and phone numbers are listed in the Foyer (near the clock).

### **MINISTRY TEAM**

Rev Je-Kon Oh  
Minister of the Word  
4578 3820 BH)  
0410 596 991 (AH)  
4578 3421 (AH)

Email (Ministries): [minister@richmonduniting.org.au](mailto:minister@richmonduniting.org.au)

### *Pastoral Care:*

Margaret Bailey (Seniors) 4776 1487  
Dulcie Butler (Young Families/Young Adults) 4571 2246



### **MOPS Christmas Party**

**Wed. 2nd December at 0945am. in the auditorium.  
MOPS mums to bring a small plate of food to share.**

Thank you to our carers who volunteer their time to look after our children every fortnight. We appreciate your kindness in caring for our children which in turn you care for us mums.-

Michelle Dacey.



## *Christmas Worship*

**Christmas Eve**  
11.00pm  
Carols &  
Communion

**Christmas Day**  
9.00am  
Christmas Day  
Celebration  
Service

### **SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES**

Please see worship planner. Note that service times are changed for summer Sundays.



### **Church Office**

Mail: PO Box 450, Richmond, NSW 2753  
Phone: 02 4578 382  
Hours: 10.00am – 2pm most days  
Email: [office@richmonduniting.org.au](mailto:office@richmonduniting.org.au)

Fax 02 4578 0155  
Church Administrator: Bruce Fairhall 02 4571 1019  
Web: [www.richmonduniting.org.au](http://www.richmonduniting.org.au)

## The twelve days of Christmas

*Have you ever wondered why the gifts offered to the “true love” in this Christmas song sound so strange? The entire carol is giving a coded religious message. The following is an extract from an article by the Rev David Bryant.*



The “true love” in each verse is really God. There is something else interesting in the first stanza. Originally it read “part of the juniper tree” but over the years it was misheard and became a partridge in a pear tree”. Verse two mentions “two turtle doves”.....Smaller and darker than the familiar collared dove and slightly larger than a blackbird, they refer to the Old and New Testaments. “What about three French hens”? That’s an easy one! They stand for those three values so often mentioned in the New Testament – Faith, Hope and Love.

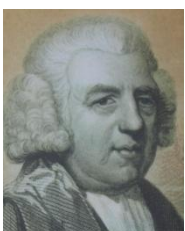
Is this all becoming like a Christmas quiz or crossword? “Four calling birds”? Well the four “coaly” birds are the four gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Gold has been used for thousands of years as currency. The “five gold rings” are the first five books of the Old Testament which are especially sacred to the Jewish people.....Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

Up to verse six now and “six geese a-laying”. They are probably Canada geese which can live for twenty-three years and take mates for life and refer to the six days of creation. Now come the “seven swans a-swimming”. I picture a male cob accompanied by his lady wife, the pen, and their babies swimming on a lake. They represent the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit: prophecy, service to others, teaching, encouragement, contribution to society, leadership and mercy. Verse eight and there are eight maids a-milking”. They refer to the Beatitudes, the blessings spoken about by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount. The first one reads “Blessed are the poor in spirit for they shall see the kingdom of God”

The “nine ladies dancing” conjures up a beautiful picture of ladies in their frilly dresses and pearl necklaces but means the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit .....Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness and Self-control. We can’t help smiling at the “ten lords a-leaping”. Had they been at the ale-cask or were they playing a game of leap-frog in the House of Lords? The easy explanation is, of course, the Ten Commandments. And so we reach eleven pipers piping”. The bagpipes did not originate in Scotland as so many think. It is an extremely old instrument and in its primitive form was used in ancient Egypt. The eleven pipers are the faithful disciples, leaving out Judas Iscariot. “Twelve drummers drumming” represent the twelve points of belief in the Apostles Creed which is recited in churches, chapels and other places of worship.

## Book Review: “John Newton – From Disgrace to Amazing Grace” by Jonathan Aitken

It is often said that God uses ordinary people to do extraordinary things. That is so applicable to John Newton, whose early life was certainly disgraceful but when he finally committed his life to the Lord, he was used mightily to spread the gospel and change people’s lives. The story of John Newton is so beautifully told by the author, in so much intricate detail which, was, no doubt made possible by Newton’s lifelong habit of keeping a daily diary of his thoughts and events in his life, plus the copious letters between himself and his contemporaries. The book commences with an excellent Foreword by Phillip Yancey and a very useful Foreword by the author. Do not skip over them as they set the scene for what follows.



John Newton was born in 1725 and he died 82 years later, just 9 months after William Wilberforce’s Bill to abolish the slave trade had passed in the British House of Commons. His father was a ship’s captain, at sea most of the time, and his mother died (of tuberculosis) when he was only 6. Most of his formal education was in a boarding school, but his mother gave him a good Christian beginning to his life. He began his career at sea at 15 years of age, and that is where the rot set in!

Newton became so rebellious, blasphemous and libertine that he disgusted even his maritime colleagues. He became a slave ship captain himself. He had several “lucky escapes” (eg almost shot himself in the head; fell into slavery himself and had to be rescued from it) but the Lord had better things in store.

When he was nearly 23, and days from land, his ship was severely damaged in a storm. It was close to sinking. They lost most of their food and had a desperate struggle to survive. His captain even started blaming their plight on God's punishment for Newton's shocking behaviour and Newton genuinely feared they might throw him overboard (sounds like the story of Jonah all over again!). Newton realised the God he had despised so much was firmly in control, and he returned to the Bible, started praying and stopped swearing. When they finally went ashore, he attended church twice daily, took communion, etc. This was the beginning of his commitment to Christ. Newton studied theology, then tried – unsuccessfully for 7-years – to gain appointment to the Anglican clergy. His chief problem, it seems was that the church hierarchy took exception to his attraction to the radical, evangelistic teachings of the likes of John Wesley, Charles Wesley and George Whitefield (founders of Methodism)!!

Newton's early life to his conversion is covered amazingly well, but this absorbing episode is all told in Pages 1 to 40. Pages 41 to 274 (the rest of the book) describes in detail his Christian ministry, starting from his first appointment as curate of Olney parish and his transfer to St Mary Woolnoth 16 years later, where his influence was so great, the church building had to be extended to accommodate the massive congregations of people attracted to his teaching.

At Olney, Newton befriended William Cowper, a well-known "Romantic" poet and hymn-writer and together the two published a collection of their hymns as "Olney Hymns". This hymnal was apparently in great demand throughout the Christian world. Newton had written 281 of the hymns and Cowper had written 67. The most famous by far was Newton's "Amazing Grace" which remains one of the most performed hymns in history. Harriet Beecher Stowe's famous book, "Uncle Tom's Cabin" includes the words of it.

What I have described is a very small sample of this great man's ministry, which stretched far beyond his parish. Newton was a huge influence on the now famous Christian, William Wilberforce MP, whom Newton dissuaded from resigning from parliament and became both his mentor and a first-hand witness in parliament during Wilberforce's 18 years of striving to have the House of Commons pass his legislation to abolish the slave trade. Newton was instrumental in having Rev. Richard Johnson accompany the First Fleet of convicts to Botany Bay, in "New Holland" (ie, New South Wales) in 1787. And yet, beyond all of these and many other great achievements he remained, till his death, a very humble man who remained completely unworthy of his Lord.

Newton commented, when near death, as follows: -

"I am a great sinner, but Christ is a great Saviour."

That is so like the words of his most famous hymn.

That is all I will say about this exciting, totally absorbing book about a man who, once he grasped and experienced the enormity and truly amazing grace of his Lord, used all of his learning, life experiences and his energies to serve and tell others the Good News.

If you read this book, you will be totally absorbed, but be careful. You might never be the same again! (In a good way, of course.) It is available for loan from St Andrews' library.

*Lester Vincent*

## **Notes from the library**

- Lesley and I have completed a review of all our books as the library has now been running for 12 months. Quite a few have been borrowed for a considerable time so we are asking everyone to have a look around and return books they may have forgotten they may have taken out.
- Just a reminder that there are a lot of books kept in the vestry and only a selection put out each week. However everyone is welcome and encouraged to browse and borrow from the full range. If the vestry is not open just ask around for someone who has a key.
- If you are donating books please leave an appropriate note on them. We don't wish to assume any books left laying about are meant for the library.
- We love to receive feedback, comments and reviews of anything you have borrowed.
- We welcome suggestions or requests for books studies or DVDs which you feel would enhance our resources.

Yours in God's work, Beryl and Lesley

## Worship Planner for December 2009

Date	8:30am	9:45am	6pm	Remarks
<b>6 December</b> (Advent 2)	Je-Kon Oh (HC)	Je-Kon Oh	Mike Faine	
<b>13 December</b> (Advent 3)	Je-Kon Oh	Je-Kon Oh	Geoff Brown	Kids' Sunday (End of 4 <sup>th</sup> Term)
<b>20 December</b> (Advent 4)	Je-Kon Oh	Je-Kon Oh (HC)	Je-Kon Oh	
<b>27 December</b> (Christmas 1)	9:30am Tony Blake		No service	

## Worship Planner for January 2010

Date	9:30am	6pm	Remarks
<b>3 January</b> (Christmas 2)	Mike Faine (HC)	TBA	Je-Kon's Annual Leave: 4/01 -17/01
<b>10 January</b> (Baptism of Jesus)	Graham Knight	TBA	
<b>17 January</b> (Epiphany 2)	Geoff Brown	TBA	
<b>24 January</b> (Epiphany 3)	Je-Kon Oh	TBA	
<b>31 January</b> (Epiphany 4)	Je-Kon Oh	TBA	

*\* Note: This plan can be changed at any time.*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2 9.30 Fellowship Christmas Lunch 9.45 M.O.P.S. (Party) 7.00 Presbytery	3	4	5
<b>6 ADVENT 2</b> 8.30/9.45 Worship <i>Sundays@6.00</i>	7 9.30 Playtime	8	9	10 10.00 Coffee 'n Chat	11	12
<b>13 ADVENT 3</b> 8.30/9.45 Worship <i>Sundays@6.00</i>	14 9.30 Playtime	15	16 9.45 M.O.P.S.	17	18	19
<b>20 ADVENT 4</b> 8.30/9.45 Worship  2.00 Carols Cantata <i>Sundays@6.00</i>	21	22	23	24  6.30 Aussie BBQ 7.00 Worship 11.00 Communion	25 9.00 Worship <b>CHRISTMAS DAY</b> 	26
<b>27</b> Summer Sundays: * 9.30 Worship (Only service today)	28	29	30	31		





**Because of the danger to members and visitors with an allergy to nuts, the church premises are declared to be NUT FREE. Please do not bring nuts in any form.**

## WHAT'S ON DURING THE WEEK

### SUNDAYS

**Paddlers** – Age 3 to Kinder: 9.45-11.00am (Heather Fairhall 4571 1019)  
**Kids Sunday** – Years 1-5: 9.45-11.00am (Robyn Duignan 4572 7517)  
**GWU** – Junior High Youth Years 7-9: 9.45-11.00am (Greg Inskip 4573 1002)

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### MONDAYS

**Playtime** – 9.30am-11.30am – Parents and preschoolers (Michelle Dacey 4574 1312)  
**Andy's Hands-on-Help** – 9.00am to 1.00pm – Maintenance and Fellowship (Bob Thuaux 4578 2309)

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### TUESDAYS

**eMT Youth** – 3.15pm-4.15pm (During school term time) (Glenda Christie 02 9913 8626)  
**Church Council** – 7.30pm – Quarterly Meetings (Greg Inskip 4573 1002)  
**Elders** – 7.30pm – 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday each month (Sandi Herbert 4573 1517)

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### WEDNESDAYS

**MOPS** – 9.45-11.45am Fortnightly in school terms for Mums and preschoolers (Michelle Dacey 4574 1312)  
**Adult Fellowship** – 10am – 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesdays – Friends, food, fun (Irene Milne 4578 1482)

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### THURSDAYS

**Coffee 'n Chat** – 10am (2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday each month:  
**All Together** – 10am - 12noon; Crafts and fun  
(for info on Thursday seniors' activities contact Sandi Herbert 4573 1517)  
**Senior's Bible Study** – 12 noon-1.30pm Bible Study (except 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday)  
(Sandi Herbert 4573 1517)  
**Seniors' Luncheon** – 12noon - 1.45pm (4<sup>th</sup> Thursday each month)

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### FRIDAYS

**Op Shop** – 9.00am – 12.00 – clothes and wares (Carmel Hagedoorn Phone 4567 7448)  
**Open Church Prayer** – 9.30am - 10.30am and more (Margaret and Keith Bailey 4776 1487)

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### SATURDAYS

**Blokes 'N Sheds** – 8am Working Bee & Lunch – 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturdays each month (Bob Thuaux 4578 2309)

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*SMALL/HOME GROUPS are a valuable and integral part of  
St Andrew's ministry.  
We encourage all members to join a group.  
For further information please speak  
to our Minister Rev. Je-Kon Oh - phone 4578 3421 (Home)*