



**Services – Sunday 13 December, 2020**

**Advent 3 – Lessons & Carols**

**9.30am** Five Dock – Rev Don Everhart

Reading: various

Theme: "Lessons & Carols"

We give thanks to God that today we are able to again gather together in worship.

"This is the day which the Lord has made – we will rejoice and be glad in it."



**JOY**

Today we light the third candle of Advent, the candle of Joy. In Advent, we are in a time of waiting.

Like the Israelites who wandered through the Wilderness, waiting to come into the Promised Land, we wait for the coming of the Joy of Ages. We wait for the day where we can join our voices with the angels to sing "Joy to the World, the Lord is come!" We wait for the day when everlasting joy will be on each of us. We light this candle in Joy.

**On this day, we remember the Spirit who breathes joy into our lives.**

"But let all who take refuge in you rejoice; let them ever sing for joy. Spread your protection over them, so that those who love your name may exult in you".  
Psalm 5:11



**DIARY DATES**

**Advent and Christmas Bible Readings:**

- 20 Dec *Advent 4* Luke 1:26-45 – Mary
- 25 Dec *Christmas* Luke 2:1-20 (9am)
- 27 Dec *Christmas 1* Matthew 2:1-15 – Wise Men

**Giving at Christmas**

Appeal envelopes for the Christmas Bowl, Wesley Mission and Exodus Foundation are available today. These are the three appeals our congregation supports with additional giving at Christmas time. Gifts may be returned on Christmas Day or any Sunday through the offering.

**Maintenance Work Church and No.5 Residence**

The congregation is advised that maintenance work, including exterior painting of No 5 Residence and the cross on the church, will begin during the week starting 11th January 2021. As this work will involve lifting equipment and a rubbish skip, parking on the church drive way will be limited during the period of maintenance.

I congratulate the congregation for their patience and willingness to follow the Covid Safety Plan which allowed us to resume worship services on the 6th September 2020. I appreciate your co-operation and adherence to the guidelines each week. I believe we have done well.

The Government and NSW Health announced considerable **easing of restrictions** last **Monday 7th December 2020**, but continue to emphasise maintaining a **social distance of 1.5m** and **those aged over 70** to be reminded that they **are still in the high risk category** within the community.

There has been a relaxation of the **4sqm rule for indoors to 2sqm**. This effectively doubles our capacity to 80 rather than 40 currently. As it is unlikely we will need to house 80 congregants, **seating maximum will remain at 40**. The seating currently in the church has been measured to separate congregants by at least 1.5m and therefore will not be altered. The congregation is to **continue sitting beside the yellow marking tape** on the back of the seats, as they have been doing. Density limits (2sqm rule) do not apply if there are 25 congregants or less. Children count towards the capacity limit.

It is recommended that **masks continue to be worn indoors**. However, **from Sunday 13th December 2020 singing will be allowed indoors from behind a mask**. Singers are to face forward, not towards each other and maintain 1.5m of separation. The choir will remain in recess.

Our **current safety plan needs to be rewritten** to reflect the recent easing of restrictions, however, Synod and Presbytery are still negotiating final details. The **revised plan will need to be approved by Church Council and Presbytery** and then **forwarded to Synod and the Government**. The congregation may feel that not much has changed. I believe that our current safety plan is more rigorous than the new plan will be. We do not need to rush to participate in the recent relaxation of Covid regulations, but will give time to assess how the community handles its new found "freedom".

One area of concern is the **digital recording of attendance to worship, meetings and the church office**. The Government has a **high preference for the use of a QR code** for the purpose of contact tracing if and when required. Further investigation is taking place on this front.

*Lindsay Brockway*

**Church Roster**

The church roster for the period 3 January, 2021 to 27 June, 2021 is in the process of preparation. Please see Marie or phone the church office 9713 6818 if you envisage being unavailable in that period. In addition to the people currently serving we invite others to consider being placed on the roster. Areas on roster are Pastoral Prayer, Scripture reading and Page 3 item. If willing, a slip for you to complete is in the notice sheet today. This can be returned to Marie today or next Sunday 20 December.