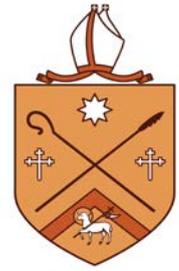


# ANGLICAN PARISH OF ALICE SPRINGS

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15<sup>th</sup> December 2015 #16

## Parish e-letter

# Happy and Holy Christmas

### A Christmas Message from the Rector

*The end of the year is often a time for saying goodbyes and of endings, but as Christmas brings us the celebration of the birth of Jesus we have the promise of new beginnings.*

*We can anticipate the joy and happiness that Christmas brings. It is a time to enjoy being with family and friends through the giving and receiving of gifts and celebrating with good food and drink. Christmas is also a time to remember and renew our life in Christ.*

*The essential meaning of Christmas as a celebration of Christian life is that God chose his son to be human to help us to live in the fullness of life with which God gifts us. Without God becoming fully human, through the birth of his son Jesus, we have no hope.*

*It is our hope that we can truly become what God intended for us. It is fair enough to ask ourselves the big question, "Why are we here on this earth?" and "What is our purpose in this life?" The answer is more than just fulfilling our potential as human beings. Created in the image of God, we can strive to follow the example that the life of Jesus set for us.*

*We know we often fall short. Things we think, do or say take us away from God's presence. Yet as Christians we believe that Jesus is in the image of God, in him is God revealed and we do well to be like Jesus.*

*Our hope then is in Jesus Christ. The example of his life provides us with the expectation of what we can become. God dwelt in Jesus in his childhood and in his ministry as an adult. As God dwelt in Jesus' life, he brought wholeness to others. As Jesus suffered and died for the sins of humanity and as we believe in his resurrection and ascension to God, we have the hope of eternal life.*

*To live a life of service and to show love to others in obedience to God, we come to know and appreciate that God is with us. That Jesus dwells in us, and that we do truly have hope; hope of resurrection and eternal life with God.*

*The hope we personally have for life with God eternally transcends our personal expectations. The life and witness of Jesus offers hope for all humanity.*

*Jesus is the light of the world, who can restore not only us but all humanity to wholeness; he can offer us hope and peace in a troubled world.*

*"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit" (Romans 15:13).*

*Heather and I wish to thank you for supporting our ministry during 2015. May you be blessed with the happiness and joy of Christmas and look forward to the promises and opportunities that the New Year brings.*



Rector Brian on 15/12/15



North Pole colder than Alice!

Leony and Neil Bowey making sure that the Russian icebreaker, 50 Years of Victory is "secure" at the North Pole (as in 90.00° North) in July. They felt on top of the world!

### Thanks Be to God



*St Mary's Chapel has been reinstated for regular worship and quiet prayer in 2015 and the mural has been restored.*



*Nicki Smith had her camera in church at the right time to show another beautiful aspect of the Church of the Ascension*



Heather and Patti were active with the children in Messy Church - 2015



Prison Fellowship Australia, Northern Territory, is a world-wide ministry that we strongly support in our church.

Grant Butler Chairs the Committee of management.

Enid Harland implements the on-going operations and she has been actively involved since 1996.

The work of *Prison Fellowship* volunteers is to provide transport by bus on Saturdays and Sundays for families and friends of prisoners in the Alice Springs Correctional Centre. The Centre is about 25 kilometres South of Alice Springs on the Stuart Highway.

Volunteers do all the administrative work in the Visitors' Centre. They help visitors in understanding the strict regulations governing entry to the prison including form-filling, ID requirements and the rules of entry.

Volunteers collaborate in other ways including writing letters for prisoners and their families and in helping overseas-born prisoners in contacting their families and friends.

The Northern Territory Government provided a grant for maintenance of a Coaster bus to transport families to the prison. The *Prison Fellowship* budget relies on a \$10 donation per person for the round trip.

Enid said the work is supported by twelve to twenty volunteers, on average, at various times during the year. She added, "Additional drivers are always needed to drive the 22-seater bus. They require a NT Drivers Licence. Also, help in the Visitor's Centre is always welcomed."

Contact Enid on 0448 186 521 / 8955 1202 to discuss your role in the ministry.



Another activity that Enid Harland has been involved-in for twenty years is *ANGEL TREE*. Prisoners nominate their children, aged up to 12 years, who are living in Alice Springs and other communities.

Christmas gifts are purchased, wrapped and identified with an Angel Tree tag. Gifts for Alice Springs children are delivered to their homes by Enid.

Negotiations are underway for delivery to children in remote communities. The aim is to send them through the help of Local Councils. Alternatively, the presents will be sent by post.

Anglican and Catholic volunteers work together in this on-going family prison ministry.