

THE VINES UNITING CHURCH

The Grape: Advent

Good morning!

Saturday 19th December 2020



The GRAPE: It is a solitary thing and yet even in isolation it has come from a bunch and the bunch is connected to the Vine.



20 DEC

Luke 1:26-38

“King of the Mess”



JOIN US ONLINE FOR a COMBINED CHRISTMAS EVE / DAY service... as you gather together.

What a mess... Lk 1:28 – 34

Mess is a term that could be used to describe all manner of things... your garage, back yard... your neighbour's house, grandchildren's face after eating pasta, or this year 2020!



“A mess” infers chaos, confusion, grime, disarray, things out of place. I think it is fair to say that Christmas 2020 is a mess. In actual fact we are probably getting close to what the lives of Mary and Joseph felt like after Mary's encounter with the Angel Gabriel.

30-32 The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David."

(Click this link https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KT_cHi8QJMw to watch “Gabriel visits Mary from The Nativity Story.”)

Whatever plans Mary and Joseph had, they were in tatters; a mess. Functioning in a mess can be difficult, as we have found out this year. The Bible and faith is a record of how faith and new life can emerge out of the chaos of people's lives.

Our focus on this 4th Sunday in Advent is to examine Mary's response to the startling, life changing invitation to be the mother of the Messiah. We will investigate Mary's choice; how did she respond, was it in blind obedience or fear? How exactly did she make a decision that sustained her throughout her life?

Like Mary, Joseph and the shepherds, we too have been shocked and confronted by the chaos and mess of this year. We are not there yet. This year has been very hard and we have discovered things about ourselves and others that we didn't know last year. This is a significant foundation for our future, one we will need to continue to build upon.

Rev DJPrior





WORSHIP SERVICES THIS CHRISTMAS

This COVID 19 season is all about compromise. Not everyone is happy with compromise and yet the benefit is that it is a way forward for singles, couples, families, sports teams, governments and The Vines. Compromise allows us to continue to grow together, while reducing a COVID outbreak and the Lockdown that no one wants.

After an in depth discussion at The Leaders Meeting on the 11 Dec 20, it was decided to

- Maintain our online strategy and focus
- Encourage people to gather in small groups at homes and view our online service so they can have community connection
- Ensure we have a couple of greeters available at the Church for the duration of our typical Christmas service times on Christmas Eve & Christmas Day to connect with any unexpected visitors.

The opportunity is to invite friends, family or neighbours to gather for “Egg Nog Eve” or “Croissant Christmas Day” and watch the combined 1 off service in the comfort of your home. What an interesting and creative opportunity to relive 1st century early church ministry. Covid Compromise can be Creative and maybe allow your friendship to plant and nourish the seed of faith that is sitting dormant or slowly growing within those you know.

NOTE: Face to Face worship will resume on the 03 Jan 2021, with the normal Booking arrangements in place, reflecting 2mtr2 spacing; unless COVID restrictions are reintroduced.

Rev DJPrior : davidjprior@bigpond.com or 0403 991 475

TREASURER for 2021:

John Norton has agreed to take over the Treasurer position for 6 months. We are very thankful to John and look forward to God’s continued stirring for this important role.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING:

Occurs 2 or 3 times a year, often to elect elders and pass the Budget. Our next meeting will be in February to agree to the 2021 Budget.

LIVE STREAMED SERVICE



Please use the following link to access services, including the Christmas service, which will be available from 12 noon on Christmas Eve.

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=the+vines+uniting+church

BOOKING ARRANGEMENTS FOR SUNDAY SERVICE, 3rd JANUARY.

Tickets can be booked through **Humanitix** from 3pm on Sunday 27th December until 11 am on Friday 1st January. Google **Humanitix**, click on "events", and in the box that says "search events" type in, "The Vines Uniting Church". Click on the event to book your tickets. Please fill in your phone number should the need for Covid tracking ever arise.

Should you need **TO CANCEL** your tickets, please let

Judy Beames (H: 83220892 M: 0402 249 324)

or Colleen Farmer (H: 7220 7383 M: 0430 646 844)

know by **4 pm on Thursday 31st December**, (unless there are unexpected circumstances).

Please do not attend the Sunday Service if you are at all unwell.

2021 SEATING PLAN

- Please leave chairs where they are.
- Please allow 1 vacant chair between singles/couples/families.
- People who travel together can sit together

WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU ALL IN THE NEW YEAR!



Remember OUR key

MESSAGE:

*"Connect with people
and Choose Life"*

'Cos to grow stronger during Covid
we *have* to pass on God's Love.

