



# THE ROCK



Anglican Parish of  
Caversham Saint Peter,  
Dunedin, New Zealand

December 2024—Christmas

**T**hank you again to our advertisers and contributors. Without you there would be no **Rock**. We wish you all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. There will be no publication in January—we return in February.

**For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour,  
which is Christ the Lord.**

LUKE 2:11



## Lights and The Light

By The Vicar

**M**y favourite part about the Christmas season is the lights. I have strung some fairy lights on the church fence but you can only see them after about 10.00pm. They twinkle amongst the greenery of the hedge, as a sign that even the church celebrates Christmas!!

A young woman I know has Christmas lights in her house all year 'round. At first, I thought it was just the result of a slow start to packing

away, but as the months rolled by my curiosity got the better of me. She told me she kept the lights up because she met her new partner just before Christmas and she believes he has brought light, joy and stability into her life. The lights remind her that the darkness has no place in her life anymore.

The church celebrates the Light of the World in various ways. Candles are used in the sanctuary, on the altar, held by the acolytes and in the Christmas wreath. They are lit and as they flicker they remind us that Christ's light is an active thing. The light of Christ isn't static. It dances within the environment and provides energy to those who choose to interact.

Watching the children, during the Christingle Service, play with the candles and discover the nature of a flame was delightful.



PHOTO.: D. BELLAMY.

## New Bishop announced



PHOTO.: WWW.ANGLICANTAONGA.ORG.NZ.

**T**he Diocese of Dunedin electoral synod has elected the Venerable Dr Anne van Gend (pictured above) 11<sup>th</sup> Bishop of Dunedin. She visited Saint Peter's last month to officiate and preach in the Vicar's absence.

A summary of Dr van Gend's history is available at [https://www.anglicantaonga.org.nz/news/tikanga\\_pakeha/dunedin\\_anne](https://www.anglicantaonga.org.nz/news/tikanga_pakeha/dunedin_anne).



(Continued on page 2)

# Speedy build

Building of the new vicarage has taken huge strides this month. At right, from top: 10 December The Vicar takes a break from a vestry meeting to welcome the truck carrying the flat-pack house; unloading begins; careful negotiation of hall and old vicarage; the first bundle about to land on site; the truck ready to depart in less than an hour; 13 December walls are in place as is scaffolding ready for adding the roof.

PHOTO'S: INFORMATION SERVICES OTAGO LTD AND THE VICAR.



## Busy weekend to start the month



The annual Rose Society Show (pictured at left) in Saint Peter's Hall on 7 December was very well attended with an incredible number of perfect blooms, despite recent inclement weather. The day began with people waiting at the door and was a wonderful success.



Father John Graveston and his assistant/daughter Poppy (pictured at right) leading the Christingle Service on 8 December. The day started with grey clouds and drizzle but as the time for the Service arrived the sun came out and transformed Saint Peter's into a children's playground, warm green grass surrounded by flowers. 55 people celebrated the Children's Service and enjoyed party food and games in the sunshine. A wonderful time for both children, parents, family members and friends.

STORY AND PHOTO'S: THE VICAR

## Lights and The Light

(Continued from page 1)

One Dad put his candle next to his daughter's and the flames drew close to each other and rose higher. A small group of young girls kept relighting their candles from each other. One boy took it upon himself to help others light their candles from his. None of these things can be achieved with a torch. The active flame attracts attention and playfulness, a sense of sharing and wonderment.

Does the knowledge of Emmanuel, God is with us, manifest those same feelings.

Do you dare to become familiar with that dynamic Light which flickers and dances?

Are you prepared to share your experiences with others who are in the darkness?

Christ's birth was heralded by angels in dazzling light and a bright star. Look past the tinsel, the Christmas characters, the hype and stress. Find a candle, light the candle and meditate as it dances and spreads light and warmth. I pray that we may give God the glory for the gifts we have already received, and shine with Christ's clear pure light this Christmas. 🕯️

# Obituary

## Joan Dutton

By Rosemary Brown

Joan Dutton grew up in Invercargill. She studied at the University of Otago and subsequently became secretary to the Dean of the Dental School.



Joan came to Saint Peter's at the beginning of 1990 when she and her partially blind Aunt Ruth moved to Bay View Road. She rapidly became involved in our parish life, becoming a very capable and remarkable contributor. A member of Vestry, a server until she became too frail, a valued member of AAW, of study groups and of the Meditation Group. The latter, begun in 1991, was later hosted at Joan's home with the meetings always attended by her cat.

Joan took a major part in the formation of the Parish Library and was a regular supporter and promoter of Christian World Service.

Very intelligent, she lived in a monastic way, disciplined and prayerful and became an Anglican Franciscan Companion, a member of the Friends of the Community of the Sacred Name (Christchurch) and an oblate of St. Mark's Benedictine Abbey in Victoria, Australia.

Joan loved retreats, always seeking guidance and a close relationship with God.

Although she was not demonstrative in her affections she was deeply, caring and appreciative of others' gifts, needs and friendship.

Joan was not expected to live past Thursday ... but as ever in her exactness stayed until 5am on the Sunday morning, so we were able to be with her in spirit at the 10:30 Mass. David Hoskins commented, 'Typical timing, we just happen to be having her favourite hymn, *For the Beauty of the Earth*'.

"Our beloved Joan has entered into the Kingdom where the supreme and only rule is the rule of love".

## The Frolicsome Friar



"Grandma and Grandpa are giving you their computer. They say they've barely used it in the last 20 years, so it's like brand new. Happy Birthday!"

SOURCE: WWW.HOWTOGEEK.COM..

## Christmas Treats

A selection of messages which we are assured really did appear in Church notices in England.

The Fasting Prayer Conference includes meals.

The sermon this morning: *Jesus Walks on the Water*.

The sermon tonight: *Searching for Jesus*.

Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.

Don't let worry kill you off - let the Church help.

Miss Charlene Mason sang 'I will not pass this way again,' giving obvious pleasure to the congregation.

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**MEETINGS**

THE PRACTICAL ALTERNATIVE TO WORK



# The Nostalgia of Christmas

By Father James Harding



In the first Sunday in Advent, David Hoskins played the lovely Welsh lullaby *Suo Gân* on the organ during communion at the Sung Eucharist. I think I first heard *Suo Gân* in the film *Empire of the Sun*, one of my favourite Steven Spielberg films, and it always gives me a warm feeling of melancholy and nostalgia.

Christmas is a very nostalgic time of the year. For many of us it evokes special memories of childhood, a time of simplicity and security, surrounded by the love of family. For others, these memories come tinged with the sadness and grief of loss. And for too many, memories of Christmas are neither wholesome nor homely, but are haunted by trauma of some kind.

So much of Christmas in the Church is nostalgic and homely. There are familiar hymns and carols which many of us have known since childhood. *Once in Royal David's City* was always a particular favourite of mine when I was a child, though as an adult it is *Of the Father's Heart Begotten* which moves me most. There are the familiar readings from Scripture. And there is of course the Nativity scene in the crib, the memory of a vulnerable family far from home and their newborn baby, who embodies the hopes and fears of the world.

Many of the readings from Scripture which we associate with Christmas come from Isaiah. It should not be surprising, then, that Isaiah contains so many hints and memories of childhood. It is perhaps the most nostalgic of all the books in the Old Testament. Why is this so?

The poems and prophecies of Isaiah were written down over several centuries, beginning in the eighth century BCE. They are difficult and ambiguous. They are also the response of a prophet, his community and their descendants and successors to significant trauma.

At the beginning, the people of Jerusalem and Judah faced the terrifying threat of an Assyrian invasion. Having averted one invasion during the reign of King Ahaz, the city of Jerusalem was then besieged during the reign of his son, King Hezekiah. The siege was lifted, but that was not the end of the story. Hezekiah's descendant, King Jehoiachin, was taken into Exile in Babylon several generations later, along with leading figures in society. Much of the rest of

the population was deported a few years later, following the destruction of the Temple in 586 BCE, and the Jewish tradition has lived with the trauma of destruction and Exile ever since.

The poems and prophecies of Isaiah (and his successors) are an attempt to deal with this trauma. One of the ways they dealt with it was by looking to the future, when the hope of Israel and all the nations would be fulfilled in a peaceful new Eden when all war and violence would be brought to an end, all people would come to Zion to learn the teaching of God and the trust of childhood would be restored once and for all (see Isaiah 2:1-4).

This is a far cry from the doom-laden prophecies of Jeremiah, whose only glimmer of hope is around the promise of a new covenant in chapters 30 and 31. Jeremiah, too, is trying to deal with the trauma of dispersion and Exile, but without the dreams of a new childhood which we find in Isaiah.

So it is Isaiah that speaks of a young woman becoming pregnant and giving birth to a son, whom she will name "God is with us," *'immānû El* (Isaiah 7:14). This is God's promise that the threat of invasion will soon be over. Isaiah also looks forward to a child who has been born to us, a son who has been given to us, who will rule over God's people in peace (Isaiah 9:1-6).

Behind this is the idea that the God of Israel has an eternal covenant with dynasty of King David and that the city of Jerusalem is inviolable. Of course, when the city of Jerusalem was destroyed, the Temple razed, and both king and people sent into Exile, this provoked the sort of trauma which derives not just from the shock of the events themselves, but from the fact that one can no longer have faith in what one once wholeheartedly believed and trusted. The poems and prophecies of Isaiah tell us how the scriptural tradition tried to deal with that trauma.

One way was by looking to the future and seeing, with the sort of sight that only prophets have, what God had in store for His people. His vision was for a new Eden, when a king will reign in justice and righteousness (Isaiah 11:4) and there will be such peace in all creation that the wolf will dwell with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the kid and the calf and the beast of prey will graze, with a little child to shepherd them



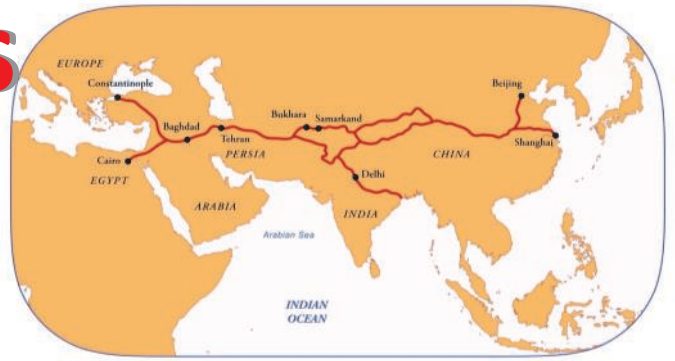
Jeconiah from Guillaume Rouillé's *Promptuarii Iconum Insigniorum*, 1553.

IMAGE: WIKIPEDIA.

(Continued on page 5)



# Nutritious



The Silk Road.

IMAGE: WWW.IFLSCIENCE.COM.



## Ginger

By Alex Chisholm

In many traditional Christmas foods, spices such as ginger, cinnamon, cloves and mace are used frequently and we are familiar with ginger as an ingredient in Christmas baking. It has been described as having a sweet, sharp warmth which stands out.

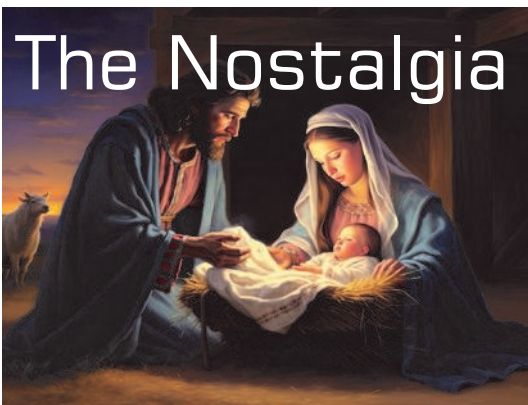
Ginger has a long history as a very valuable trade commodity travelling down the Silk Road to Europe, when one pound of ginger would have cost the same as a sheep. Not only was it very expensive but found only in dishes prepared for the wealthy and those at the pinnacle of society. By medieval times ginger was being preserved and imported to England for use in sweets. A common use was “gingerbread.” However, that gingerbread was quite unlike the cake- or biscuit-like treats we enjoy today. It was more of a honey candy made of honey, ground ginger, ground cinnamon, ground cloves and finely ground, dry, unseasoned breadcrumbs. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the English replaced breadcrumbs with flour and



added eggs and sweeteners, giving a lighter product, more like the gingerbread biscuits we know today. As well as being used in food preparation ginger was valued for its medicinal effects for possibly 5,000 years in India and China. In medieval times in Europe oriental spices with hot and dry ‘qualities’ were employed to cure different diseases, but particularly those caused by coldness and humidity.

The incorporation of spices into foods has a positive impact on gut health and ginger has long been used as a traditional remedy for digestive health. It promotes enhanced secretion of saliva and gastric juices and increased concentration of biliary acids which stimulates the secretion of digestive enzymes from the pancreas and the absorption of dietary fats. All important after a rich Christmas dinner. 🍷

## The Nostalgia of Christmas



(Continued from page 4)

(Isaiah 11:6).

And so we come to the manger in Bethlehem: a vulnerable family and a helpless baby, who embodies all the hopes and fears of

God’s people, fulfilling the ancient prophecies of Isaiah. Soon, according to Matthew’s Gospel, this fragile family will become refugees heading for Egypt, to escape the murderous rage of a jealous king who has the children of Bethlehem—the Holy Innocents—slaughtered to ensure the promised heir to the throne of David would never come to the throne.

Such human rage, however, cannot in the end destroy the joy and the hope that Isaiah saw for his people. The Christmas story, and the Christian Gospel, tell us that God comes to us in a little child—Jesus—who will teach the people ways of gentleness and peace in a society poisoned by envy and injustice. This Jesus will be put to death by the most violent means—on a Roman cross—but He will rise again and lead us back to the peace and childlike trust of Eden. 🍷



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# Angels

By Alex Chisholm, Vicar's Warden

**C**hristmas is the season when we hear most about angels as they feature at several important points in the Christmas story. An angel

Gabriel appears to Mary at the Annunciation (Lk1:26-28), to Joseph in a dream so he does not '.... put Mary away quietly....' (Mt 1:19) again to Joseph to warn of the danger of Herod's anger, to flee and when it is safe to return and before all of that to Zechariah to announce that his wife Elizabeth would bear a son to be named John.

During this appearance the angel announces who he is, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news." This is unusual as angels are messengers. Both the Greek word for angel and its Hebrew equivalent mean just that: a messenger, a being that conveys a message. The words were used of ordinary human beings who brought a message from one human to another as well as of heavenly beings who brought messages direct from God.

In the angelic appearance to the shepherds there is not



Annunciation by John William Waterhouse, 1914.



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Catacombs of Priscilla  
Annunciation (ca 200).

only the angel making the announcement but also 'a multitude of the heavenly host'. We don't know what Angels look like and famous stories about messenger angels in the Bible give little description apart from the fact that they often had dazzlingly white clothing—something which, in biblical tradition, indicates they had come from God's presence. Our 'pictures' of angels are possibly influenced by the various depictions of angels which over the centuries have appeared in works of art, often showing a (wealthy) domestic background of the time, or an exotic location. Paintings and art works depicting the angel's announcements—particularly to Mary—have usually been painted using the artistic style and setting popular at the time. In most the angel Gabriel is depicted with wings, which probably relates back to the few descriptions found in the Bible (e.g. Isaiah 6:2), as we don't know what angels look like. Other accounts of angels depict them as human messengers. Regardless of how we see or think of them angels are a part of the joy and wonder of the miracle that is Christmas.☪

## Regular Services

(for variations consult *The Pebble* or our website)  
All services are held in Saint Peter's unless noted otherwise

### SUNDAY:

8am: Holy Communion according to the Book of Common Prayer  
10.30am: Solemn Sung Eucharist  
5pm: 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of each month: Evensong and Benediction

### FIRST AND THIRD MONDAY OF EACH MONTH:

1pm: Holy Communion at Radius Fulton Home

### FIRST TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH:

11am: Holy Communion in the lounge of Frances Hodgkins Retirement Village, Fenton Avenue

### SECOND AND FOURTH TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH:

11am: Holy Communion  
in the chapel of the Home of St Barnabas, Ings Avenue

### WEDNESDAY:

9am: Morning Prayer  
10.30am Bishop's Companionship Programme  
- Studying the Bible, prayer and life in Christ

### THURSDAY:

10am: Holy Communion according to the Book of Common Prayer

## Special Services

Contact The Vicar to arrange baptisms, weddings, house blessings, burials, confessions and other special services.

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# For your diary

**Sunday, 22 December** : 10.30am Festival of Lessons and Carols followed by a Christmas Potluck Lunch

**Christmas Eve** : 7.30pm Evening meal and Combined Service with St Martha's

**Christmas Day** : 9am Holy Communion (BCP) with carols  
11am Holy Communion at Frances Hodgkins

**Tuesday, 14 January** : Vestry meeting

**Friday, 21 February** : Deadline for the February edition of *The Rock* (there is no publication in January).



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## The Epiphany

(Continued from page 8)

the season and the faithful would have had no doubts as to the importance of that season. The complete lack of holidays at the beach would have helped clarify minds no doubt!

However, at Saint Peter's, the hymns and organ music will lead us to the messages of the celebration—within the usual Anglican time-frames. In particular, the organ music of the Bach family will be as invaluable as ever. The *New English Hymnal* provides a rich source of congregational music. One of my favourite hymns, *O Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness*, leads off

the seasonal music and all the favourites are there—*What child is this, who laid to rest, The first Nowell, From the Eastern mountains, As with gladness and the wonderful Why, impious Herod, shouldst thou fear, because the Christ is come so near?*. Great stuff!

So, here's hoping and praying that enough people are back from holiday to join in the singing and hear the remarkable chorales and organ music of this important season. In times when one cannot be sure of the weather, one can be sure of the music in this case! 🎵

**Rock music**



J. S. Bach at the organ.

IMAGE: WIKI COMMONS.

# The Epiphany:

## Kings, gifts and great hymns



By David Hoskins, Director of Music

It has become increasingly popular to celebrate Advent with a 'Procession' from darkness into light. A choir will take different positions within the body of the church as hymns, readings and prayers form a pilgrimage representing that journey into the light of the Christmas season. When done well, it is a fine thing indeed. However, it isn't easy to organise the light in the context of a southern hemisphere early

summer—especially in the South with its long, well-lit evenings.

After the rejoicings of the Nativity, we return from holidays and our summer activities, to find ourselves in that season so remarkably rich in symbolism: The Epiphany. In the Anglican church this season has often passed with little fanfare, unlike traditions such as those of the Poles, Swiss and Portuguese, where much is made of the arrival of the Three Kings.

Epiphany 2025 could well have passed by in the same way. This Epiphany I would like to introduce the idea of the season as a procession. There is a good deal of movement in the readings—the long-travelled Kings/Wise Men, the flight into hiding, the realisation of what is symbolised in the gifts presented to the Christ-child. The music of words and music in the hymns and psalms gives a sense of movement.

In the Lutheran tradition of J. S. Bach's time, the Epiphany Eucharist would have taken 2 hours and 40 minutes including cantata's, organ preludes, hymns and a 45 minute sermon. The cantatas would have told the narrative details of the rich tapestry of events included in



Stained Glass window of the three kings at Taize.

IMAGE: [HTTPS://SHOP.TAIZE.FR/](https://shop.taize.fr/)

(Continued on page 7)



Millions of people turn out in Poland each year to celebrate the Epiphany.

PHOTO.: [HTTPS://ATOZSERWISPLUS.COM/BLOG/EPIPHANY-OR-THREE-KINGS-DAY-IN-POLAND](https://atozserwisplus.com/blog/epiphany-or-three-kings-day-in-poland).