



# NEWSLETTER

9 - 15 December 2024

**R**evive  
**R**estore  
**R**each Out

**Worship Services Sundays 9am**

A photograph of a wooden nativity scene with a star on top of the manger. The text is overlaid on the image.

**Christmas Services**

<b>Christmas Eve</b> Tuesday 24 December 5.30pm sausage sizzle. 6.30pm Carol Service	<b>Christmas Day</b> Wednesday 25 December 9am Christmas Day Service
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North Rocks Community Church  
132 North Rocks Road, North Rocks

Please invite friends and family to join us for our Christmas Services. There will be some printed flyers at church on Sunday if you need some.

## Dates for your Diary

### **Craft Group @ 10 am-noon Fridays**

Bring along your latest craft project and join us for morning tea and a chat. 10am each Friday in the church.

Dec	
13	Craft Group
15	Advent 3—Joy
18	Zoom Prayer Meeting
24	Christmas Eve Carols & Sausage Sizzle
25	Christmas Day

## **Community News and Notices**

### **Christmas Gift Ideas**

There are a number of groups offering different gift ideas this Christmas. Please consider these options this year when buying gifts.



**UnitingWorld's Everything in Common Gift Catalogue is out now for Christmas.**

It's filled with gifts that fight poverty through health, education, leadership and income opportunities. Shop online at [www.everythingincommon.com.au](http://www.everythingincommon.com.au) or click on the image above.



More than just your average charity card, Tearfund's Useful Gifts contribute to long-term sustainable development projects. When you buy a goat or other useful gift, your gift is contributing to sustainable, long-term development projects run by Tearfund and our local partners. Shop online at [www.usefulgifts.org](http://www.usefulgifts.org) or simply click on the image above.



Through the Christmas Bowl, you are empowering families to find safety, dignity and independence after being displaced by conflicts and disasters. Go to <https://christmasbowl.actforpeace.org.au/46872> or click on the above image to donate on behalf of NRCC.



As Christmas approaches, we are reminded of the importance of extending kindness to those who may feel alone or isolated during this season. Parramatta Mission is committed to ensuring that individuals and families facing difficult times — whether due to homelessness, crisis or mental illness — experience the joy and warmth of Christmas.

For as little as \$25, you can provide a meal and support to someone in need, helping to bring a smile to their face and a little light to their holiday season. Go to <https://donate.parramattamission.org.au/event/plate-for-a-mate/home>, or click on the image above to contribute.

### Uniting Church Assembly and Synod News Links

Uniting Church Assembly: <https://uniting.church/news/>

NSW & ACT Synod: <https://nswact.uca.org.au/>

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## Reflection of the Week

**Read Luke 2:22-35.**

In Luke 2, we read about a man from Jerusalem named Simeon. He was not a famous preacher, scholar, evangelist, or theologian, but he was faithful and devout. He watched and waited for the Messiah, of course, but God had also given this humble no-name a personal promise: He would not die before he had seen the Lord's Anointed One. After seeing baby Jesus in the temple, Simeon praised God, saying, "Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismiss your servant in peace" (Luke 2:29).

**"Now dismiss your servant"—this simple prayer of trust in God has impacted millions upon millions throughout history.** It's easy to think there was something special about Simeon. But the Truth is he was simply a man who exercised his faith, and each of us has the opportunity to believe, just as Simeon did. In fact, many of the great revivals in history were ignited by nameless but faithful people. Simeon's story is powerful because he wasn't disappointed. He did not set unrealistic expectations in powers that couldn't fulfill his deepest longings. He didn't set his hope in Rome or even Jerusalem. He didn't place his hope in politicians or the economy. He didn't even set his hope in his own righteousness and devotion to God. His expectations were realistic because they were rooted in the only one who never fails to keep His promises: the Lord Almighty.

**God has given you some precious promises, too—promises that you can watch and wait for with faithful anticipation.** There are general promises that believers can claim such as "I will come back and take you to be with me" (John 14:3), and promises attached to a certain condition, such as "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you" (Matthew 7:7). And there are personal promises. With these, we must be sure we are listening to God with all our heart and mind lest we deceive ourselves and confuse our voice with God's.

Simeon trusted in the highest promise of God—that He would save—and he held onto it. So when God met both the personal promise that Simeon would see God's salvation and the general promise of Christ's coming, Simeon was able to say, "Now I can be released from sentinel duty. I can depart in peace." When your expectations rest on the promises of God in His Word, you will never be disappointed.

*Prayer: Father, thank You for sending Your Son that first Christmas. Thank You for the example of Simeon, who trusted in Your promises, looked for Your Messiah, and was rewarded with Your peace. May I too have such faith. I pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.*

**"Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation, . . ." (Luke 2:29-30)**

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## **Prayer Points for This Week**

### **For Our Church:**

- Pray for hearts filled with the joy of the Lord as we anticipate the celebration of Christ's birth. May the joy of this season strengthen our faith, renew our hope, and inspire us to share Christ's love and peace with others.
- Pray for those grieving or feeling lonely during this season, that they may find comfort and hope in Christ's promises and experience His presence with them.
- Pray for a spirit of generosity within our congregation, that amidst the festive celebrations, we may focus on serving others, especially those in need around us.
- Pray for moments of stillness and reflection in this busy season, that we may stay centred on the

true meaning of Advent and prepare our hearts for Christ's coming.

- Pray for healing and restoration for those in need. We pray for HSC students awaiting results.

### **For the Wider Church:**

- May church leaders be guided with wisdom, and may believers grow in faith and love, spreading Christ's light and peace throughout the world this Advent season.
- Pray for WEC, Compassion, and Mission Aviation Fellowship, asking God's strength and encouragement for their missionaries, and for their efforts to bear abundant fruit.
- Pray for the Uniting Church's assembly, synods, and presbyteries. May they be vessels of truth, peace, and justice, empowered by the Holy Spirit to fulfil God's mission.
- Pray for persecuted Christians in nations like Iran, Somalia, India, Egypt, and Myanmar. Ask God to protect them, grant them courage, and help them remain firm in their faith despite the hardships they face.

### **For Australia:**

- Pray for wisdom and integrity in leadership, that God may guide leaders to make decisions that promote unity, justice, and long-term stability for the nation.
- Pray for the youth of Australia, that they may seek God and discover their identity and purpose in Him.
- Pray for churches and Christian organizations, that they may effectively share God's love and bring hope to communities across the nation.
- Pray for Australia as bushfires continue to devastate communities. Pray for stronger prevention measures, protection for affected areas, and healing for those impacted. May God bring peace and safety to all.

### **For the World:**

- Pray for those displaced from their homes due to war, environmental disasters, and political instability, particularly in Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Myanmar, and Ukraine. May they find safety, refuge, and hope as they await a more stable future.
- Pray for solutions to food production and distribution challenges, especially in areas experiencing food shortages and dealing with environmental issues caused by industrial farming.
- Pray for Syria, as the regime of Bashar al-Assad falls. Pray for peace, justice, and healing for all Syrians, and for future leadership to guide the nation toward stability and reconciliation.
- Pray for a global revival of faith, asking that hearts across the world turn to God with renewed hope and trust in His promises.

**E - give** (Anonymous Direct Electronic Giving)

**Account Name:** North Rocks CC - Giving  
**(BSB):** 634634 **Account Number:** 100025906

**Prayers**

If you have any prayer requests or would like to know of those with particular pastoral needs to pray for, please contact Robyn or Pastoral Care Team.  
Robyn: 0424 791 916

**Ministry Leaders**

Supply Minister: Rev. Deborah Yun / 0424 922 312 / [revdeborahyun@gmail.com](mailto:revdeborahyun@gmail.com)

**Church Council**

Chairperson: Cathy Nelson Secretary: Samson Leung Treasurer: Anne Crabb  
Alex Chow, Nicole Critchley, Jenny Keyte