



NEWSLETTER

16 - 22 December 2024



Worship Services Sundays 9am

Minister's Message

Dear Friends at North Rocks Church Community,

As Christmas approaches, I feel grateful for the time we have shared together. Serving as your supply minister has been a true privilege, and I'd like to thank you from the bottom of my heart for welcoming James and me into your lives with such warmth and kindness. Over this past year, I have seen your faith, resilience, and dedication to God's work, even during challenging times.

Christmas is a beautiful reminder of God's greatest gift to the world—His Son, Jesus Christ. In Him, we find hope, peace, joy, and love that sustain us through all seasons of life. My prayer for you this Christmas is that you will know His love, joy, and peace in a special way.

Just as the new year draws near, may God bless you with His guidance, strength, and peace as you continue to move forward in faith.

Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a New Year filled with joy and God's blessings.

With love and gratitude,
Deborah



Please invite friends and family to join us for our Christmas Services.

Dates for your Diary

Craft Group @ 10 am-noon Fridays will resume in February

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 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 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/>

Reflection of the Week

In the Bible, we see great value placed on names and several instances of God giving a new name to His people along with a new life or mission. Sarai became Sarah; Abram became Abraham; Jacob became Israel; Simon became Peter; and Saul became Paul.

God chose the name Jesus for His Son and sent the angel Gabriel to explain the significance of this all-important name. In Matthew 1:21, God tells Joseph, "[Y]ou are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." God knew that, 2,000 years later, people would

call Jesus a saviour and not the Saviour. For this very reason, God defined His name and mission clearly, setting Him apart from the prophets before Him and the founders of all other religions.

Today, many people do not feel like they need salvation because they think their sins are nominal. But every one of the more than 8.2 billion people living today was born with sin. We can only be freed from the bondage of sin through the blood of Jesus Christ.

At Christmas, we celebrate the Saviour's birth. The perfect, sinless Son of God came from heaven, lived a perfect life in the face of the same temptations we face, and died on the cross. He shed His blood and rose again on the third day to prove His power over death and sin, and through faith in His finished work, we can experience everlasting life that starts today and continues through eternity.

When you say "Merry Christmas," what do you mean? Have you completely surrendered every part of your life to God? Have you acknowledged your sin and called on the reliable name of Jesus, who came to save you from all your sins? Ask for His empowerment in His name as you surrender everything.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank You for the sacrifice of Christ that has brought me life. Give me the strength to surrender all to You today. I pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.

"She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21).

Prayer Points for This Week

For Our Church:

- Pray for hearts to be filled with God's love this Advent, for broken relationships to be healed, and for His love to overflow in our words and actions, bringing hope and peace to those around us.
- Pray for all serving in our services to be Spirit-filled, and for our minister and Church Council to have wisdom, unity, and guidance during this transition.
- Pray for our church leaders during this season of transition. Ask for wisdom in their decisions, unity in their vision, and care for our church's well-being.
- Pray for healing and restoration for those in need.

For the Wider Church:

- Pray for revival, that churches become centres of spiritual renewal, bringing transformation to their communities.
- Pray for churches without ministers in the UCA, asking for guidance, provision, and effective leadership during this time.

- Pray for mission organizations and missionaries as they share the Gospel across nations. Ask God to provide them with strength, wisdom, and the resources they need for their mission.
- Pray for churches across the world to be bold and effective witnesses, sharing the Gospel with clarity, compassion, and relevance in every culture.

For Australia:

- Pray for those facing financial hardships and sorrow, especially during this Christmas season. May God's love surround them and bring them comfort and renewed hope.
- Pray for political leaders at all levels to govern with wisdom, integrity, and compassion, especially when shaping policies that impact vulnerable communities.
- Pray for churches and Christian organizations to effectively share God's love and bring hope to communities across the nation.
- Pray for effective efforts focused on the prevention, treatment, and support of those affected by substance abuse.

For the World:

- Pray for world leaders, that they govern with wisdom, justice, and compassion. Grant them the insight to seek solutions that promote harmony and cooperation among nations.
- Pray for international cooperation, that wealthier nations respond generously to humanitarian needs and support sustainable solutions to poverty and food insecurity.
- Pray for peace in conflict areas like Ukraine and Israel, and for leaders to find effective solutions to these tensions.
- Pray for compassion and effective support for migrants and refugees, that their needs may be met and that they find safety and hope.

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

Church Council

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