

**"We aim to be a reflection of God to the community"**

Bi-monthly Newsletter of The Alexandra, Clyde Lauder Union Parish ~ Dec 23 / Jan 24

## OUR MINISTERS CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

Greetings as once again we ponder a new the story of Christmas, and reality of a world that needs the story of light and love, more than ever.

*But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: Luke 2:10*

In a world filled with strife, uncertainty, and conflict, the approaching Christmas season provides for us a reminder of the enduring message of hope and peace heralded by the birth of Jesus Christ. As the holy lands and many regions across the globe grapple with the harsh realities of war and suffering, the story of Christ's birth resonates as a beacon of light, offering solace and inspiration to those yearning for a better tomorrow.

The Christmas narrative, told through the Gospel of Luke and Matthew, transcends time and place, reaching out to people across diverse cultures and backgrounds. It tells the tale of a humble birth in a stable, witnessed by shepherds and celebrated by angels—a story that speaks to the universality of the human experience and the promise of salvation.

Amidst the chaos and tumult that often characterize times of conflict, the message of Christmas brings a much-needed sense of unity. The birth of Jesus symbolizes the potential for transformation and renewal, reminding believers that even in the darkest moments, there is a glimmer of hope. The significance of Christ's arrival lies not only in the historical context but in its eternal relevance, offering comfort to those who find themselves amid adversity.



The Howley family enjoying the light trail activities

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The teachings of Jesus, characterized by love, compassion, and forgiveness, serve as a guidepost for individuals navigating the challenges of a troubled world. Jesus' life exemplifies the potential for positive change through empathy and understanding, urging us to extend a helping hand to those in need. In times of war and conflict, these principles become even more pertinent, encouraging a collective commitment to peace, justice, and the well-being of all humanity.

Christmas serves as a reminder that hope is not a distant ideal but a tangible reality. It is a reminder that, regardless of the circumstances, individuals and communities can draw strength from the enduring message of Christ's birth. This hope is not passive but calls for action—action rooted in love, compassion, and a commitment to building a world where peace triumphs over conflict and where the bonds of brotherhood and sisterhood prevail.

As we approach Christmas amid challenges faced by the holy lands and beyond, let us reflect on the transformative power of Christ's birth. Let us be inspired to emulate the qualities of love, mercy, and forgiveness in our interactions with others, fostering an environment where healing and reconciliation can take root. Christmas beckons us to be agents of positive change, contributing to the creation of a world where the promise of peace is not just a distant dream but a lived reality. As it is sung, let there be peace and let it begin with me.

In this season of celebration and reflection, may the story of Christ's birth continue to inspire and uplift, offering a renewed sense of hope to a weary and suffering world. Christmas reminds us that, amid darkness, a light has dawned, and that light has the power to guide us toward a future filled with compassion, understanding, and lasting peace.



*A new artwork dubbed Scar of Bethlehem by the artist Banksy is displayed in the Walled Off Hotel, in the West Bank city of Bethlehem 2019 'Banksy is trying to remind the world that people of Bethlehem ... are not celebrating Christmas.'*



*"Christmas in Palestine this year. The Child under the rubble."  
Immanuel God is with us in our pain and suffering. God in solidarity with the oppressed.*

*The child of Bethlehem is our hope. For the children of Gaza and all victims of wars. At the Christmas Lutheran Church Bethlehem"*

@MuntherIsaac, a Palestinian Evangelical

**Every Blessing this Christmas and Advent Season**

**Rev Andrew Howley**

**BE AT PEACE**

*"My prayer is that we take time to pause and think about the timely gift of a baby in the manger. Don't be too overwhelmed or occupied with what is to come... Take a quiet, peaceful moment to ponder the beginning of His life - the culmination of heavenly prophecy but the earthly beginning for Him. Take time to relax, be at peace, and see this little child in your mind. Do not be too concerned or overwhelmed with what was coming in His life at the time or in yours today. Instead, take a peaceful moment to contemplate perhaps the most serene moment in the history of the world - when all of heaven rejoiced with the message "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men" - Luke 2:14.*



Many blessings, Neels Janse van Rensburg,  
Chief Executive Bible Society Group 2021

**Privacy Officer**

All agencies are required to have a privacy officer under the Privacy Act 2020, which came into effect 1st December 2020. The purpose of this position is to prevent or respond to any privacy issues.

At ACLUP we collect personal information from you – name, contact information and location. This is for communication – e.g. for your annual donation receipt.

Providing some information is optional – but we will be unable to contact you if we have no contact information.

We keep your information safe by storing on a computer and allowing access to approved people only.

You have the right to ask for a copy of any personal information we hold about you, and to ask for it to be corrected if it is wrong.

**Privacy Officer ACLUP: Don Melville** Ph: 03 448 9233

Email address: sthlink@xtra.co.nz



**Privacy Officer :**

*The following is a position description for a privacy officer in a PCANZ church, provided by the PCANZ Assembly Office in May 2023.*

**1. Position Description – Privacy Officer**

<b>Job Title:</b>	Privacy Officer
<b>Reports to:</b>	ALCUP Parish Council
<b>Location:</b>	Alexandra
<b>Date:</b>	27 Nov 2023

**1. Role Purpose**

2.1 All agencies are required to have a privacy officer under the Privacy Act 2020, which came into effect on 1 December 2020. The purpose of this position is to prevent or respond to any privacy issues.

1. Key Accountabilities 3.1 Privacy is an important issue for any organisation that collects, uses, or discloses personal information. "Personal information" means information relating to an identifiable individual. It could be someone's name, a photograph of a person, contact details, or a record of someone's actions. For churches, this could include a church directory, pastoral information, or employment information.

2. 3.2 The Privacy Officer will understand the thirteen principles in the Privacy Act 2020. These can be found on the Privacy Commissioner Website.

3. 3.3 The Privacy Officer will support the Parish in complying with the Privacy Act 2020.

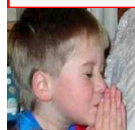
4. 3.4 The Privacy Officer will understand the risks in relation to personal information, and proactively work to eliminate or mitigate these risks.

5. 3.5 Receive complaints from the Parish's members or employees about possible privacy breaches.

6. 3.6 Deal with requests for access to personal information, or correction of personal information from members or employees of the Parish.

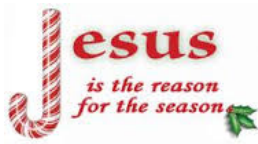
7. 3.7 Act as the Parish's liaison with the Office of the Privacy Commissioner.

8. 3.8 The Privacy Officer works in support of and at the direction of the Church Council



*Lord, direct our thoughts and teach us to pray. Lift up our hearts to worship you in spirit and in truth, through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.***





### CANDY CANES

A devout candy maker in Indiana wanted to make a sweet that would mark what Christmas is really about. His Christmas candy cane included symbols for the BIRTH, MINISTRY and DEATH of JESUS.

He began with a stick of pure white hard candy, white to symbolise virgin birth and sinless nature. Hard candy to symbolise the solid foundation of the church. The candy maker made the candy in the form of a 'J' to represent the name of JESUS. It also represented the staff of the Good Shepherd.

The candy maker included red stripes. He used three small stripes and a large red stripe to represent the suffering JESUS endured at the end of his life.

### Keep CHRIST in CHRISTMAS

#### Knock, Knock Christmas Story by G. Gordon ©

Knock, Knock!  
Who's there?  
Angel  
Angel who?  
Angel Gabriel.

Knock, Knock!  
Who's there?  
Shep  
Shep who?  
Shepherds.

Knock, Knock!  
Who's there?  
Mary  
Mary who?  
Mary the mother of Jesus.

Knock, Knock!  
Who's there?  
Wise  
Wise who?  
Wise men.

Knock, Knock!  
Who's there?  
Jo  
Jo who?  
Joseph the husband of Mary.

Knock, Knock!  
Who's there?  
Pres  
Pres who?  
Presents  
for Jesus.

Knock, Knock!  
Who's there?  
Inn  
Inn who?  
Innkeeper.

Knock, Knock!  
Who's there?  
God  
God who?  
God the  
Heavenly  
Father.

Knock, Knock!  
Who's there?  
Je  
Je who?  
Jesus the son of God.



Colour in the picture

# Past & Upcoming Events

## The Light Trail 2023



Photo's of volunteers & children enjoying the light party activities. St Enoch's was a Disney theme and concentrated on Finding Nemo and making Model Planes to fly.



After the service at Clyde on the 3rd of December we celebrated two of our dedicated Parish members. We wished Kathy Milligan all the best for her coming wedding. (Cake cutting practise.) Those present thanked Valerie for playing at services at both Clyde and Alexandra. Valerie is retiring from playing the organ/piano at Alexandra and Clyde after twenty + years.



## Alexandra Community Christmas Day BBQ Lunch 2023

Monday 25<sup>th</sup> December 12 Noon

Free Event: All Welcome

St Enoch's Church Grounds,  
12 Centennial Ave, Alexandra



Lord, we pray for the world, for those who need help. Guide our leaders and help everyone to work for peace.

Help us to act with wisdom and love, like Jesus, and to live in harmony. **Amen.** (pic Barbara Howley handcraft)

## REGULAR MEETINGS AND GROUPS

### Weekly

<b>House Study Group</b>	Resumes February 2024 <b>Contact: Valerie Anderson</b>	3A Mayfair Grove Alexandra <b>448 8049</b>
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### Monthly

<b>Afternoon Fellowship</b>	4th Thursday of the month 1.30pm <b>Contact: Various</b>	June Sinclair <b>448 8281</b>
<b>St Mungo's Fellowship</b>	3rd Wednesday of the month 2.00pm <b>Contact: Sheryll Hanning</b>	Various Feb 2023 <b>449 2703</b>
<b>Parish Council</b>	3rd Wednesday of the month—summer <b>Contact: Don Melville</b>	St Enoch's 4.30pm <b>03 448 9233</b>

### Treasurers Report

At this time of year, when we  should be spreading the good news, this report is unfortunately 'Grinch – like'!  
The figures below are for the 5 months of this financial year.

#### July - November

<b>Income</b>	<b>Expenses</b>	<b>Deficit</b>
<b>6,9218.21</b>	<b>78,865.80</b>	<b>- 9,647.59</b>

Even with successful fundraising from the Fair and fantastic plant sales by the Hanning's, we have had to use reserve funds to pay large accounts such as insurance.

Higher income from our investment with the Otago Foundation Board, due to interest increases, has helped, but this can also decrease as well!

Without a concerted effort in fundraising and/or giving, the rest of the years' prospect looks grim.

**Please pray for our Parish.**

Linda Armstrong Treasurer




**EDITORS NOTE:** The next ACLaim will be Feb/March 2024 please have any articles to me by **Monday 22nd January 2024**. sent to me via Phone 448 8486 **Gay Gordon**. Thanks to Jackie Roy for helping me with proof reading the ACLaim.



**MERRY CHRISTMAS From the ACLaim Team**  
**Gay- Editor, Jackie - Proof Reader**

### Your Pastoral Visitor Message:

### Upcoming Worship Services

<b>Dec 10th</b>		<b>10.30am</b>	<b>Combined Christmas Music Service</b>
<b>Advent 2</b>		<b>Alexandra</b>	
<b>Dec 17th</b>	Clyde	<b>9.00am</b>	<b>Memorial Hall</b>
<b>Advent 3</b>	Alexandra	<b>10.30am</b>	
<b>Community Ecumenical Christmas service-St Enoch's 7pm</b>			
<b>Dec 24th</b>	Alexandra	<b>10.30am</b>	<b>Advent 4</b>
<b>Dec 25th</b>	Clyde Hall	<b>9.00am</b>	<b>Christmas Day</b>
<b>Dec 31st</b>	<b>Combined Service with Anglicans</b>		
<b>Christmas 1</b>	Alexandra	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>St Aidans</b>
<b>2024</b>			
<b>Jan 7th</b>	Clyde	<b>9.00am</b>	<b>Communion</b>
<b>Epiphany 1</b>	Alexandra	<b>10.30am</b>	<b>Communion</b>
<b>Jan 14th</b>	Clyde	<b>9.00am</b>	
<b>Epiphany 2</b>	Alexandra	<b>10.30am</b>	
<b>Jan 21st</b>	Clyde	<b>9.00am</b>	
<b>Epiphany 3</b>	Alexandra	<b>10.30am</b>	
<b>Jan 28th</b>	Clyde	<b>9.00am</b>	<b>Check weekly bulletin For future Clyde Services</b>
<b>Epiphany 4</b>	Alexandra	<b>10.30am</b>	



Combined Service with Anglicans on banks of the Mata au River at Rotary Park 29th October 2023 (photo Chris Beilby)

### Contact Us

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021 518 053

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**Don Melville**

Phone: 03 448 9233

Email:  
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Visit us on the web at  
[www.alexchurch.org.nz](http://www.alexchurch.org.nz)

Like us on FaceBook  
[Facebook.com/alexchurch](https://www.facebook.com/alexchurch)

### Worship Times

#### Sunday:

**Clyde: 9.00am**

**Alexandra: 10.30am**

**If you require transportation to church please ask!**

**Telephone Jennifer Bowie: 448 7369 or Don & Sue Melville 448 9233**