

Together



Sunday 15 December 2024

Minister

Rev. Greg McConnell
0404 046 697

Administration Assistant

Katy Burfield
4945 4655 - office
Tues 9am - 5.30pm
Fri 9am - 5.30pm

Website

www.stlukesbelmont.com.au

Email

belmontuca@gmail.com



THIRD SUNDAY
OF
Advent

We acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which we stand. We pay our respects to them for their care of the land. May we walk gently and respectfully upon this land

Worship services

Sunday 15 December	8.00am	Rev Greg McConnell HC
	9.45am	Rev Greg McConnell HC
	5.30pm	Rev Greg McConnell
Sunday 22 December	8.00am	Rev Greg McConnell HC
	9.45am	Rev Greg McConnell HC

Narla Hostel services are held each Friday at 3.45pm

Dinner Church—every Sunday at 5.30pm

Dinner Church is a casual service for all ages with a message, a catered meal, prayer, discussion and more. This will be the last Dinner Church for this year. It will re-commence on Sunday 2nd February 2025. This week Rev Greg McConnell will be giving the message and there will be sharing on this week's Advent theme of Joy. This week will be a "bring food to share" meal.

Lectionary readings for the coming week

Mic 5:2-5a	Lk 1:46b-55
Heb 10:5-10	Lk 1:39-55

Onsite internet: St Luke's Guest - no password required



Welcome to St Luke's Uniting Church, Belmont



A place for everyone

A church where you are welcome regardless of who you are, where you are from, and whom you love

**Pray for those known to you who are in hospital,
not well or recuperating**

Bank transfer option for your weekly offerings

If you would like to transfer your offerings into the St Luke's Uniting Church giving account the details follow.

All transfers are anonymous.

BSB: 634 634

Account No. 100028307

Account name: St Luke's Uniting-Giving Acc

Thank you for supporting the St Luke's Uniting Church!



Calendar

Friday 20 December

Friday Plus Bible study meets from 10am

1 **Together**

Today is the last edition of Together until Sunday 26th January 2025. If you have any announcements that need to be made on any Sunday, please give them to the person leading worship on that day.

2 **Friday Plus Bible Study**

Friday Plus Bible study group will meet again on Friday 20th December for a Christmas morning tea at 10am in the gathering area. There will be no study on that day but we will be sharing " what Christmas means to me".

Bible study will resume on Friday 7th February at 9.30 am as usual.

We thank Rev Tom Anderson and Rev Greg for their contributions during 2024. May love, joy and peace be yours this Christmas season.



3 **Activity Centre Games**

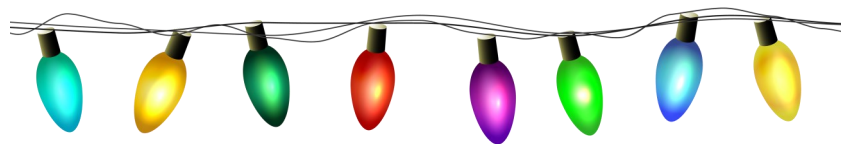
Some members from the Activity Centre will be meeting for board games in the Community Centre in January - 6th, 13th and 20th from 9.30am until noon. Any interested persons are welcome to join them. Further information from Marjorie Hicks: 4948 6127

4 **Rev Greg McConnell - Long Leave**

Greg will be on long leave from Monday 30th December and returning on Tuesday 12th February 2025. If you have any queries or a pastoral need during this time, please contact Jenny Mathieson: 4946 8143 or jennyandray@bigpond.com or Greg Anderson: 0412 010 170 or: grega411@gmail.com. Our prayers go with Greg and Wendy for a happy and relaxing time away.

5 **Dinner Church**

This is the last Sunday for Dinner Church for the holiday season. It will resume again on Sunday 2nd February 2025. If you would like to be added to the Dinner Church email list for next year, please contact Jenny Mathieson: 4946 8143 or jennyandray@bigpond.com



6 **Christmas Bowl**

Act for Peace (Christmas Bowl) envelopes are available on the table in the entrance for you to take and return in the offering bag.

7 **Synod 2025**

The next meeting of the NSW/ACT Synod will be held on 11-13th July 2025 at Western Sydney Conference Centre at Penrith. If you would be interested in nominating to attend, please contact Jenny Mathieson for all the information. Nominations have to be in by Monday 10th February 2025.

8 **St Luke's Annual Elections**

The following people were elected at the annual elections last Sunday;

Leadership Team: Greg Anderson, Stewart Ellway, Alison Gill, Margaret Guerke, Joy Helman, Julie Killeen, Jenny Mathieson and Michael Turner .

St Luke's representative to the Hunter Presbytery meeting: Peter Wilson.

Thank you to all for your willingness to serve in this way and the prayers of the congregation are with each person.

9 **Christmas Cards**

We have Christmas Cards for sale – both Frontier Service and Uniting World. Please take them and place your money in the box provided.



10 **Project Blessing 2024**

Reaching out to our local area with Christmas hampers is something that St Lukes has been doing for over 40 years and this year it all happened again throughout the week. Here are the details ...

Monday: Using money that was generously donated, a variety of items were purchased. Using donated 'Market Basket Co' baskets, 13 smaller hampers (for single people and families with only 2 members) were made up.

Tuesday/10am - 2pm...a huge number of toys were sorted in the basement, in readiness for hampers. Toys, books, crafts etc were meticulously picked out to match up to the age and sex of each child that would be part of a family receiving a hamper. Thankyou Meredith H for doing such an amazing job on this.

Tuesday/2pm- 4pm...the huge shopping list was written and the money that was generously donated by members of St Lukes was used to purchase groceries from Woolworths and Coles. Thank you to El H for helping me with this.

Tuesday/4:30 – 6:30pm...All the grocery items were transported from Belmont supermarkets, unpacked from cars, tables were set-up and the items (+ all the donated' food items) were put in place, in order (1- 18) individually counted so all was ready for packing. Thankyou to Chris G, Robyn B, El H & Cathy T for help with this.

Tuesday/7pm – 8:30pm...using donated Market Basket Co' baskets, the remaining 37 hampers were packed, toys added, name marked off, name tags tied on and a Christmas message from St Lukes added. Thankyou to Clare B, Eric B, Jean T, Jenny M, Cathy T,

Greg A, Wendy W, Gary W & Peter H.

Wednesday/8am onwards... hampers were personally delivered to Floraville PS (8), Belmont North PS (14), Belmont PS (8), Belmont High (8), St Luke's Preschool (4). Along with these, some other nominated people/



families received them as well. Thank you to Peter F, Gary W, Greg A and Peter H for being our 'Ubers' and safely delivering them all. The ones for our local refuge will be delivered within the next week, by Meredith H. Thanks

In summary, 50 hampers were packed and delivered to people in our community that need it most – all schools are asked to nominate.

Thank you to everyone who donated items or cash so that we could again conduct this outreach ministry

As I mentioned at last week's AGM, there were some very sad stories coming through this year with 3 families who had lost their mother during 2024, some sickness, and others who are struggling financially. Please keep them all in your prayers as we approach the festive season and 2025.

11 **Thursday Bible Study Group - starts back 6th February**

Our group is now in recess until the **6th February** (not 13th February as per last weeks notice) - our first meeting for 2025. However, on 16th January, we will meet for morning tea at 11am at the 16 Footers Club, with a choice to stay on for lunch. Our gathering is open to all who would like to join us!

Enquiries to Barbara Bell on 4946 8549.

12 **St Luke's 'Fundraising Fortnight'** **at Bunnings, Bennetts Green**

Our fortnight of fundraising at Bunnings is now over and both Saturdays a huge success, thanks to the support of everyone at St Lukes. In last week's Together you would have read the amazing outcome of the home cooking/homecrafts stall (lots of cooking handed in to sell, amazing homecrafts, \$1048 raised etc) and here is the wrap-up of the BBQ held on 7/12...

Before the day:

*All items needed for the day and stored in basement checked off - Greg A, Alison G

*Sausages and bread orders placed - Alison G

*Guidance, tips, hints throughout the week - Meredith H

*Drinks purchased – Alison G

*Sausages and bread collected – Greg A

*Bread buttered – Lenora F, Jenny M, Alison G, Greg A & Jean T

On the day:

Ice purchased: Meredith H

Team captain - Greg A (with initial guidance from Meredith H)

Morning shift – Greg Mc, Gary W, Julie K, Bronwyn D, Cathy T, Alison G

Afternoon shift – Grahame K, Ian E, Robyn L, Julie E, Peter H, Meredith H – this shift experienced a short and heavy downfall of rain around 2pm – ask them what happened (I heard the words “soggy onion” mentioned)!

HUGE thankyou to everyone – we provided an amazing service to customers including large and yummy sausage sandwiches. We raised \$1816.14!

Going forward...if you are reading this and see any of the tasks mentioned above and think, “I could help with that bit” then please let me know as many hands make light work.

We will be hosting another BBQ Boxing Day that will include more “1st timers” and Alison will be in touch next week with everyone regarding help needed, shift times etc.

We have enough names on the roster for the day however we may need some names as “back-up” so please contact me if you can be one. Thanks!

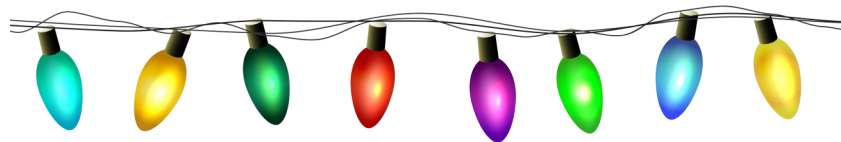
Alison Gill



13 Farewell Eldrene March

Eldrene has been an active member of St Luke's for the past 37 years and will be moving on 20th January 2025 to live in Cessnock. We will thank and farewell Eldrene at morning tea following the 9am combined service on Sunday 19th January 2025.

Eldrene has been actively involved in the life of St Luke's for 37 years in a wide variety of ways. She led the YMMM (Young Mums Meaningful Mornings) for many years, been a member of the Mission & Wider Work committee (later called Local & Global Mission Team) and gave leadership in much of our wider work. She led our work with Refugees several years ago. She has used her home for hospitality including a Home group for many years. She has been the convenor of the Homecraft stall and Jams and Pickles stall at many Carnivals, and has been actively involved in catering. She has been an Elder and Pastoral Care leader, and is on the bible reading and communion rosters at the 9.45am service. She has been an active member of Dinner Church. We see her creative gifts in so many ways as we look around St Luke's e.g. our seasonal coloured table cloths. She has also been a member of the Hunter Presbytery representing St Luke's congregation. Thank you Eldrene! Our prayers go with you as you move and settle into a new congregation at Cessnock.



“The Lord bless you
and keep you;
the Lord make his face shine on you
and be gracious to you;
the Lord turn his face toward you
and give you peace.”



HOLIDAY SERVICE TIMES

Christmas Eve 7pm

Christmas Day 8.30am

29 DECEMBER 9AM- REV GREG MCCONNELL
5 JANUARY 9AM- REV TOM ANDERSON
12 JANUARY 9AM - MRS HELEN WEAVERS
19 JANUARY 9AM - PASTOR KIM LANGFORD
26 JANUARY 9AM- MR JOHN NOWLAND

NORMAL SERVICES RESUME 2 FEBRUARY



St Luke's Recycling Station

Please continue to use the 6 bins on the table for your:

- * *Household Batteries*
- * *Medicinal Blister Packs (foil or plastic)*
- * *Soft Plastics (e.g. plastic bags, bread bags, lolly bags, cling wraps ...)*
- * *Aluminium and steel bottle tops*
- * *Mobile Phones*
- * *Printer Cartridges.*



ALSO - Return and Earn Recycling:

There are 2 bins on the ground beside the table for

- * *Eligible glass bottles, eligible plastic bottles and all aluminium cans.*

So far over \$50 has been raised!

Please rinse the containers out before you put them in the bin and dispose of the lids thoughtfully.

Thanks for your help in reducing waste and benefitting our environment.



Zephaniah 3:14-20 NIV

Sing, Daughter Zion; shout aloud, Israel! Be glad and rejoice with all your heart, Daughter Jerusalem!

The Lord has taken away your punishment, he has turned back your enemy. The Lord, the King of Israel, is with you; never again will you fear any harm.

On that day they will say to Jerusalem, “Do not fear, Zion; do not let your hands hang limp.

The Lord your God is with you, the Mighty Warrior who saves. He will take great delight in you; in his love he will no longer rebuke you, but will rejoice over you with singing.”

“I will remove from you all who mourn over the loss of your appointed festivals, which is a burden and reproach for you.

At that time I will deal with all who oppressed you. I will rescue the lame; I will gather the exiles. I will give them praise and honor in every land where they have suffered shame.

At that time I will gather you; at that time I will bring you home. I will give you honour and praise among all the peoples of the earth when I restore your fortunes before your very eyes,” says the Lord.

Luke 3:7-18 NIV

John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. The axe is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.”

“What should we do then?” the crowd asked.

John answered, “Anyone who has two shirts should share with the one who has none, and anyone who has food should do the same.”

Even tax collectors came to be baptized. “Teacher,” they asked, “what should we do?”

“Don’t collect any more than you are required to,” he told them.

Then some soldiers asked him, “And what should we do?”

He replied, “Don’t extort money and don’t accuse people falsely—be content with your pay.”

The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Messiah. John answered them all, “I baptize you with water. But one who is more powerful than I will come, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” And with many other words John exhorted the people and proclaimed the good news to them.