

The Messenger.

Publication of:

St. Peters Lutheran Church of Alberton &
Bethlehem Lutheran Church of Woongoolba

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"Easter at Alberton" - A devotional thought from...

"At the sixth hour, darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour. Jesus cried out in a loud voice: 'My God, My God why have You forsaken Me?'" Mark 15: 33

We had left the church on Good Friday in solemn silence - the clear image of the cross before us from the Scripture readings went with us. Remarks were made about the recent viewings of the movie "The Passion of the Christ," how it heightened our awareness ... we were now in a state of waiting - the mood of the day enshrouding us.

"Very early on the first day of the week, they (the women) were on their way to the tomb." Mark 16:2

Sunday Morning ...4:30 a.m. - Alberton Parish - darkness - 5:30 a.m. Husband in his usual devotion to the particulars of preparations - 'Marthaesque' (Editor's note: this is a reference to one of the times Jesus has a meal with Mary and Martha - cf. Luke 10:38 - 42.) In a flurry, hubby was over at the church next door, collecting the various items needed (Communion vessels, cloths for the altar) to prepare for the dawn service on the hill. [DRAMA!] The organ still had to be transported to the site and the cross was missing. (It had been taken home for repairs by a helping hand after a mishap at the Good Friday Service.)

Year after year, there are same procedures, the same time-line, leaving we lesser mortals to arise slowly and with groaning effort. There is a piercing chill and our kids would seek to hold us back in their warmth. ... 5:55 a.m. - The car approaches the unpredictable farm track. ('Martha' was long time in front of us; and thanks to all the Marthas,

all is waiting.) Wary of the sandy farm track, with its sudden ruts and grooves we travel with care... All is well! The canyons have been filled with soil and levelled for this special occasion. We will soon be there at the dawn service without the customary bumps.

As with each Lenten journey, with each precious year, we are travelling to the top of the hill, to the joyful end - the summit. The reddish glow of the soon-to-emerge-sun is shining on the horizon as we reach the top. 6:05 a.m. - The congregation is standing - in the middle of the paddock with simple altar in place, voices raised in Hallelujahs! ('Martha' is brandishing programs at late-comers.)

He is risen!...Oh, what sweet comfort. The sun rises in glorious splendour over the surrounding country - over the river, the patchwork canefields and the shining grasses down into the valley to the length and breadth of our vision. We again rejoice collectively in the climax of our salvation: He is risen! The freshly baked Communion bread and the wine are passed from person to person - true body and true blood, - in remembrance of Him who died - The Risen Lord, Jesus.

As the chairs are stacked and the warm voices chat over coffee and Hot Cross Buns - a new day has begun. ('Martha' collects the programs so they can be recycled for the later Easter service at our sister church in the parish... or maybe even next year.) Down the hill the cars slowly weave in quiet, calm certainty - Mission Accomplished. Mission begun! The items of worship are returned to the empty church; but with the certainty of the empty tomb.

"Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: 'I have seen the Lord!'" John 20:18

(Editor's Note: Thanks to the Marthas and Marys and all. Authors name provided but withheld.)

Parish Matters

CLW (Christian Life Weeks) 2004!

At Last! CLW registration forms are now available. Choose the camp you wish to attend and download your camp registration form from www.lyq.org.au and send into the LYQ office to book your place! If you have any problems please call us at the LYQ office. **Registrations close June 18, 2004** Have a great day. Rozzie

Ros Papst

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When was the last time you had a good old-fashioned game of cards with your friends? St. Peter's will be hosting a "Cards & Pizza Nite" for the parish. You will need your cards or favourite game your own 'Nibblies' and snacks and drinks. Cost for the night is \$3.00 to pay for Pizzas and ice cream. A variety will be ordered; but if you have special needs (triple anchovies and garlic orders will be sitting at their own special table ... way out the back! ✉) make a request. Let us know as soon as you can, if you plan to come so we can have enough Pizza ordered. Well, we can always get more. Call up some friends and make it a date! The more the merrier! Book the date now: Saturday, 5th of June at 6:30 p.m.

Are you looking for a great gift idea - then contact us and purchase an "Entertainment Book" which is full of great vouchers. Proceeds raised from the sale of books goes towards meals that the Young Adults prepare; and then share out to needy families in the community. Phone Sarah on 38079859 to place your order.

F.L.Y (Friday Lutheran Youngsters) is held on the last Friday of the month at the Bethlehem Lutheran Church Hall, Woongoolba. Each night is based around a different theme to vary the experience. We work to ensure that these nights are enjoyed by all. Watch your letterbox, or the Woongoolba School Newsletter for regular updates of these monthly events. This is an excellent way for young mums to give their children an opportunity to get to know other children in the community in a safe environment. Why not bring your kids along and stay for a cuppa. There's always a cuppa and a biscuit available so that parents on the go can rest for a minute or two (or the whole afternoon ✉).

A-Team is held on the 2nd Friday of the month and is for young people in years 6, 7 & 8. Fiona, our group leader and the other leaders organise and present exciting events; and are keen to make this a group which is close knit and supportive. Contact Fiona on 5546 2644 or Bec on 3209 9312.

The Youth group meet on the 1st and 3rd Friday nights of the month. With dedicated leaders the group is able to enjoy many fun activities. Contact Jessica for details of youth events on 5546 2302.

Our Young Adults meet Tuesday and Thursday nights to have fun, make new friendships and enjoy growing together in faith. We have two Tuesday night groups. One is comprised of 18 - 21 year olds. The other Tuesday group is a mix of ages from 19 - 30's who range in life pursuits from University students to general workers. The Thursday night group tends to be a group who practical in nature comprised of people who have been in the workforce long term. These are generalisations but may give insight into which group might suit your needs best. All these groups have space and a desire for others to join. If you would like to know more, please contact Pastor Greg.

This year our **LUTHERAN HOLIDAY PROGRAM** is on the 28th, 30th, September and 1st October with the theme "Son Harvest Country Fair". Our first planning meeting is on 12th May 7.30 p.m. at the Woongoolba Church Hall. We really need your attendance this first meeting, please. We will also require more leaders and helpers who can assist with this year's program. So don't be shy! If you have think you'd like to be involved let us know! ✍

OUR COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING SERVICE will be held on Sunday 1st August, 2.00 p.m. at the Woongoolba Community Hall. This annual event brings together our community to give thanks to God for the blessings we receive. Everyone is very welcome to attend. We'd love to see you there!

Bethlehem Lutheran Church - Woongoolba

Children in the church? Yes Please!

We welcome **families** with young children to our Church Family. As we come together each Sunday to worship and praise God, we invite our younger children to collect an activity box from the entry of the Church. Inside the box are various items to enjoy whilst in our worship service.

Sunday Kids is held each Sunday at 9.00 a.m., and we would love to have more children join us as we learn about God's love for us.

Our Church Picnic will be held on Sunday 20th June following the 9.30 a.m. service. This is not just for kids but for everyone to enjoy. There will be activities for all ages if your looking for a program; but you might just like to come and chat with friends you haven't had the time to see. Bring your "Boule/Bocce" set and see if your skill is still all there. Come and join in.

"Colour My World" is the theme for the **Woongoolba Ladies Fellowship** morning tea to be held in late July.

At 9-30 a.m. we commence with a cuppa followed by a great morning of entertainment, good food, and a guest speaker from Lutheran World Service. Cost \$6 ... Look out for the date either 22nd or 29th July.

Confirmation Day celebrations: Stephanie Brooking, Katie Dart and Simon Zipf are the young people being confirmed at Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Woongoolba on Sunday 6th June at 9.30 a.m. They have been introduced to our congregation at our Sunday worship service. Confirmation Camp will be a highlight of their preparation for Confirmation. Please continue to pray for these Confirmees as they complete their instruction.

A little boy was playing on the roof of the house when he began to slip towards the edge. Immediately, he began to pray. "Oh Lord, save me! Save me! He slid further still. Then... "Never mind, Lord, this nail I got caught on stopped me. ✍