

# The Messenger.

Publication of:

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

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From Pastor Greg:

Standing in the checkout at a Beenleigh supermarket recently, I overheard an older woman and her daughter talking. It was a slow line and she acknowledged me and continued in an I-can-still-laugh-about-it! tone: "What a year; and it's almost gone again! It's been so stressful! Everyone I talk to says so! Whether it's politics, finances, or the Bali Bombings aftermath. (She drew breath...) "Just folks" have watched the cost of housing soar, and for the present time, at least, ...well you know you've given up on owning your own home! (In a disgusted tone...) It's enough to make me go back to church to try to make some sense of it all! It's 'soul destroying!' "

She paused, and looked around at me. I didn't know her in the slightest and didn't know quite whether to jump in or not. Then, the words just popped out and there we both were...

"Well, it's Christmas soon...that's a pretty good time to head back. Start now and avoid the rush!" ☞ I exclaimed.

She gave a little laugh, said she might do that, and it was their turn at the checkout. As she and her daughter finished, she took the time to say good-bye; and told me she was 'a good Lutheran girl', though she hadn't been to church in years. Life was too busy! Her friends had moved away from their church "...and well you know..." she said, "But I might find out when the kiddies program is on...

"Come on mum! Leave the poor man alone!" the daughter interjected; (She threw me a smile and rolled her eyes.) and off they went with a 'farewell' wave of goodwill.

The whole scene happened in the space of a minute or two; but it's been stuck in my mind for a while now – reminding me of Jesus call to his disciples:

**"The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to Him all they had done and taught. <sup>31</sup> And He said to them, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest." For there were many coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat." Mark 6: 30 & 31.**

I've felt like that this year at times - drained. People on the land, no doubt, are pressured in the same way at this stage of the harvest! We can't just drop it all and head for a quiet place... or can we? Jesus is the one who calls us to "remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy (set apart) for us to get together and rest in His Peace! It's not a holiday; but just as Jesus blessed the loaves and fishes and there was abundance, so too, worship can be that time of refreshment and renewal of hope and strength.

God's peace be with you in hectic times, that you may plan for family and family in Christ this holiday season. ☞

# Parish Matters

Adrian Kramer, our Parish Youth Intern, has applied to enrol at Luther Seminary next year to study the Pastoral Ministry Program. He believes God is leading him along the path to becoming a pastor. We have appreciated his commitment to our Parish during the past year. We trust God will continue to bless Adrian, and further develop his ministry skills as he studies at Luther Seminary in 2004. He is assured of our prayers and support for the future.

A word from Adrian: "I would like to thank everyone who has helped to make my stay in QLD a fantastic experience. From day one I have felt very welcome and accepted as someone who had been born in the district. Many people have spoken words of encouragement to me which many times I have found to be a word in season, a comment to give me confidence, to keep me going when I felt down. To thank everyone personally would take up many pages; but I will mention a few. A thanks must go to the Heck family for making a house available for me to live in for many months; David and Jeanette Keith for allowing me to be a part of their family every Monday night; and Matthew and Sarah Kubenk for making room for me in their house.

In my work in the parish, I have had the pleasure of working with the scores of volunteers who participate in programs like A-team, Sunday School, Bible Studies, men and women's fellowship groups, youth, F.L.Y., PAWS and the Lutheran Holiday Program. I encourage each one of you to continue your valuable work for the Kingdom in these areas and to always remember that our motivation for doing these activities is to show others the love God has first shown us in Jesus. I have applied to study the Pastoral Ministry Program at Luther Seminary in Adelaide next year. I am about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the way through the application process and it is looking favourable. I will be away at Teen Missions Boot Camp from the second week of December until Christmas Eve; and plan to spend Christmas in the parish. Then I head home to Victoria on January the 5<sup>th</sup>. "

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Teen Mission Int'l Australia provides a way for young people 13-25 years to get involved in mission work around the world. Matt and Sarah Kubenk will be leading a team of approximately 28 teenagers to Chilli in South America to build a conference centre, during the Christmas holidays. Please pray for them and all the teams as they embark on this mission.

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## *Bethlehem Lutheran Church - Woongoolba*

The Harvest Thanksgiving Service will be on Sunday 16th November at 8.00a.m. As in recent years our gifts are being donated to Mary and Martha's Christmas Camp. The gifts of non-perishable food and personal items are gratefully received and enable this camp to operate. Pastor Tim Jaensch, the President of Qld District will be our guest on the day. His message will be one of encouragement to our church family i.e. the youngest to the oldest.

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The new covered area looks great! It provided shelter for the children at Lutheran Holiday Program and is used each Sunday for morning teas. Thanks to all who helped organise the structure being completed. Our new kitchen was also used for food preparation at Lutheran Holiday program. Everyone will appreciate working in our clean and hygienic kitchen. Thanks to Ross Ennis, our cabinetmaker and all who have assisted to make this happen. Both of these projects were funded by the "Community Benefit Funds" made possible through the State Government, and we extend our thanks for their assistance.

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## **Coming events for the Christmas Season**

**The Bethlehem Pre-school and Kindy will be farewelling Rochelle**, our co-director at the end of the year after seven years with us. We have appreciated her efforts at our centre and we wish Rochelle well as she continues her career at the Kenmore C & K centre. A presentation was made to Rochelle at our recent Preschool/Kindy Family Service held in the centre. Sheena who has been our co-director this past year will remain in her position, and a two-day co-director will be sought. The committee is advertising for applicants for the position of co-director for 2004. The end of year Christmas Concerts have been arranged: for the Kindy group - Thursday 4th December at 5.30 p.m.; and the Preschool Concert - Tuesday 9th 5.30 p.m. Come and hear the message of Christmas presented by the children.

To enquire about enrolments for coming year(s), please phone: 5546 2246.

***"Let the children come"*** - this is our focus as we reach out to the families in our community.

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Sunday Kids meets each Sunday at 9.00 - 10.00a.m. We welcome children to come and join us as we learn more about Jesus and his love for us all. The children enjoy Bible stories, games and activities. A class for children 3-5 years is designed especially for early childhood, The 6-12 year olds meet in a larger group environment. We thank the teachers and helpers who have shared with the children this past year. Our Children's Christmas Program will be held on Sunday 21st December at 9:30 a.m. in the Church. Please, come and join us!! We'd love to be together on the day. ✍

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***A-Team and youth activities continue with theme nights and break up parties. We encourage our youth to watch the calendars for dates and contact Adrian on 38079859 for further details.***

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**Sunday 30th November is the Advent Tea for Woongoolba and the theme for the night is "The message of the Advent Wreath". Adrian Kramer has become a special part of our Church family during his year as Youth Intern, and on this night we will be thanking him for his efforts in our congregation.**

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**"Jacobs Well Community Carols By Candlelight" will be held on Sunday 14th December commencing at 6.30p.m. Sausages and drinks will be available from 5.30p.m. Everyone is welcome to join in this special event in our community. Bring along your blanket or chair and a candle or torch. Santa will be visiting for the children and sharing Christmas joy.**

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**Christmas Day Service at Woongoolba 7.00a.m. with the celebration of Holy Communion.**

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### **Update on R.E.G. (Regular Electronic Giving)**

In thankfulness to God for his blessings we present an offering to the work of the Church each Sunday in our worship service. Many of our families are now using R.E.G. ! and we are pleased this service is has been offered by Lutheran Laypeople's League. With no bank charges for the service, your offerings are now electronically put into the Church's account. There are no names or individual amounts listed (only a total is put in the account each week). You are provided with a small card to symbolise your giving through R.E.G., and this is placed on the offering plate. Our treasurer, Sandy Kleinschmidt, would be happy to provide more information to anyone interested.