

# CHURCH NEWS

DECEMBER 2018 - JANUARY 2019



CELEBRATE

*Christmas*

AT ST PAUL'S



## JOHN GRAY

Senior Minister



Sun, warmth and mangoes – this is my favourite season. The Christmas and New Year’s break tends to slow time down while family gatherings, gifts and celebrations give us the opportunity to be generous. Or, prodigal.

When we think “prodigal” it’s often a “prodigal son” that comes to mind. It’s someone who went to the dark side but has now returned – or, we hope they will. “Prodigal”, though, is much richer. To be sure “prodigal” has been used for millennia to describe the younger son in Luke 15. He did go a little wild and he was brought home. “Prodigal” however, does not refer to any of this. “Prodigal” highlights the son’s reckless and extravagant spending.

This kind of expenditure is not limited to the younger son in Jesus’ story. The father is also extraordinarily reckless. He is the prodigal – even more than the younger son. He bore the humiliation that comes when a son takes half the family-purse and wishes you were dead.

He paid a shame-filled price when, legs bared, he ran to greet his wayward son BEFORE anyone in the town got to his son to beat him. More than this, the father paid handsomely when the older son – the one who never strayed at all – refused to welcome his young brother home. The father then walks another path of shame when he publicly walks out to his older son, implores him to join the celebration, and offers that son his hand. The father is the prodigal. He is the recklessly extravagant one.

What's more, in him we see the Heavenly Father thinly veiled.

It is our Heavenly Father, the Christian God, who is THE prodigal: his son, also. The parallels are clear. They bore the humiliation to save us. Jesus bore the shame of our sin when he became sin for us so he could welcome us Home. As a result, we who were once far off have not only been called home but we have been given a phenomenal privilege. We get to call the Holy God, "Father". His is an extraordinarily, reckless generosity.

Celebrate the birth of Christ – the prodigal – therefore!

Let the prodigal God capture your heart. Thank and worship him. Take another step to be like him. Be a prodigal yourself. Embrace the wild ones. Welcome those who are, for whatever reason, far from you. Be generous by using everything the prodigal God has placed in your hands to enrich others. Who knows...you may discover a joy otherwise not known. And someone else may just discover our Father and our Lord Jesus will welcome them Home, too.

May you be refreshed in body, mind, soul, spirit and heart over the Christmas/New Year.

Yours in Christ's Service,  
John



Christmas

IN THE HILLS



HAVE FUN!

CAROLS  
FIREWORKS  
FOOD STALLS  
PETTING ZOO  
RIDES

4PM WEDNESDAY



12TH DECEMBER

CHRISTMAS

☆☆☆ 2018 ☆☆☆

IN THE HILLS



For more information:  
[christmasinthehills.com.au](http://christmasinthehills.com.au)

BELLA VISTA FARM

SUPPORTING



Foster Care  
Angels



HCA  
Hills Community Aid  
Providing Support Since 1989

# THE BLUE ARMY

SERVING PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITY

**We have an opportunity to serve  
at Christmas in the Hills!**

**Wednesday 12th December**

It's time once again to grab out the Blue Army shirts and return to where it all began! We are known in the community as the Blue Army because of our work and service to the people that run and attend Christmas In The Hills! Every year people in the Hills have a fresh perspective on what it means to love one another and love God - it's such an incredible opportunity for us at St Paul's!

**What we will be helping out with this year:**

- Ticketing
- Charity Group assistance
- Carparking
- Stage Hands
- Rubbish Bins

We have two shifts we need to fill, 3-7pm and 7-10:30pm. Please come and serve our community, representing St Paul's - but also representing Jesus and showing His love in action!!!

To join our team, email [bluearmy@spch.org.au](mailto:bluearmy@spch.org.au) or find us on Facebook by visiting [facebook.com/stpaulsch](https://www.facebook.com/stpaulsch) and clicking on the "groups" tab.



# COMMUNITY

MATT KELLER

Children's Minister



One of the things I love about the Christmas season is the sense of belonging to something bigger than us all. People in our community are united by a feeling of festivity, excitement and joy. This makes me even more eagerly anticipate our Mission 2020 initiative; I am keen as to see our church communities united in our proclamation of Jesus' death and resurrection in Easter 2020!

While this is still a long way off, I have been encouraged by being able to work with our local churches in the last few months. As new families move into our area new schools are opening up. North Kellyville and Bella Vista both have public schools opening in two months' time. Our local churches have been working together to ensure that the good news of Jesus enters these new schools at the same time as the children. We are trying to raise up more gospel workers, for as our Lord Jesus said 'the harvest is plentiful but the workers are few'. At present many schools across our local area are inviting chaplains and SRE teachers into their school communities, blessing us with significant opportunities to live and speak for Christ.

If you are interested in praying for, helping out or teaching in these roles in the new year please let me know [matt.keller@spch.org.au](mailto:matt.keller@spch.org.au) Since our Lord Jesus said ***"Everyone will know that you are my disciples if you love one another"***, I pray that our churches will exhibit a unity to our local communities that brings glory to God!





# **OUR CHRISTMAS MUSICAL**

*"The Heart of Christmas"*

Join us for a wonderful afternoon of music  
with our choir and soloists, as we celebrate the  
wonder of Christmas!

Free entry, afternoon tea to follow the show

**Saturday 1st December  
2pm in the church**



## **THANKSGIVING AND REMEMBERING SERVICE**

An opportunity to remember  
and thank God for loved ones

**Wednesday, 19th December  
6pm in the church**

(followed by light refreshments)

Information: 8858 1111

# GLOBAL OUTREACH

## NORM & JANELLE

Serving in Marsabit, Kenya



Report by Peter Sinclair

We had a great chance to catch up with Norm and Janelle at a recent CMS Function in Sydney, where they spoke of the joys and challenges of their mission. Janelle praised God's amazing goodness to them in the 11/2 years they have been back in Kenya and gave thanks for the faithful support from supporters in Australia. She has been developing literacy material and reading the Bible in the Boran language with local women.

Janelle has focussed on working in the Sagante Parish. (This is a link to Janelle's My Marsabit power point) The area is Muslim-dominated and girls go to a local Madrassa at an early age where they study the Koran and learn Arabic.

Marsabit is a massive area extending from the northern border down almost to Mt

Kenya in the middle of the country. As Islam is the dominant religion and is growing, a big challenge of Norm's work is how he engages in teamwork with local Pastors and how to equip Christians not only to stand strong against intimidation from Muslims, who accuse them of corrupting the Bible and believing in three gods, but also to equip Christians to share Christ courageously with their Muslim neighbors. For some months, a list has been in circulation offering a bounty for the killing of white Christian missionaries and giving specifics as to where to obtain weapons, how to arrange payment etc.

This year when a Sheikh in Marsabit was arrested for recruiting and radicalizing children and youth, many of his followers rioted attacking the Police station and a church.



***Tribal Clashes*** - Marsabit County  
Tribal clashes started on 5th September just outside of Marsabit and escalated during October with 14 killed and houses burned and many people fleeing their homes in fear. Bishop Qampicha and his wife Safi hosted many Boran displaced people and next door, Provost Mark Kargi and his wife opened their home to give refuge to many Gabbra who were fleeing the clashes.

Both Bishop Qampicha and the Provost Ven Mark Kargi played a key role in peace talks. We thank God for them and for all who were agents of peace and for our Lord, Saviour and Shepherd who is the Prince of Peace.

The clashes occurred in communities like Idido where

Norm and fellow Christians have recently been doing missions. Norm and Janelle thank God that there is now peace, please pray it continues and Christians take the opportunity to share the Good News of Peace with God through Christ.

At a recent mission at a community near Idido, Norm and the team assisted with the burial of one of the elders and later were able to share the Good News of Christ's victory over death.

Norm is keen to prioritise discipleship and in teamwork with Bishop Qampicha and Pastors empower and equip Christians to be Disciple making Disciples.



Compassion are doing a good work in the North and Norm and the Mission team run training for those teaching the children.

There are plans to make theological training available through Moore College and African Enterprise to better equip Christian leaders in the area. Norm and Janelle are thankful for our partnership with them in their work and encouraged us to sign up for their news and prayer letter.

**[www.cms.org.au/missionaries/norm-and-janelle-gorrie/](http://www.cms.org.au/missionaries/norm-and-janelle-gorrie/)**



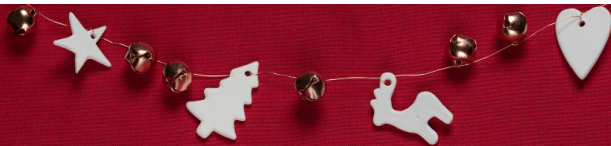
### **Prayer Points:**

- For fruitful training of Christian leaders in Marsabit to become disciple makers
- For Bishop Qampicha and Provost Mark Kargi's work in peace talks and visitation.
- Opportunity to grow children's and youth ministry which is sadly neglected
- Give thanks for the opportunity Norm had recently to speak at a local funeral
- For the privilege of running preaching workshops at Marsabit.
- To give thanks for the partnership with Compassion in Marsabit
- For safety and good health for Norm and Janelle.



## GEOFF DEUTSCHER

Anglicare Minister - St James Chapel



Saturday 1st December - "Come and See" Day  
Sunday 2nd December - Our first service  
Sunday 9th December - Lessons and Carols Service

## ANGLICARE PARISH PARTNERSHIP NEWS

The great day is nearly here!

The new St James' Chapel and Dover Hall is almost complete. Our Come and See Day will take place on December 1 with the St James' congregations inviting residents to come and take a tour of the new building, enjoy a sausage sandwich or coffee and cake and receive a gift bag.

Key to this day are the Tour guides who will not only point out various aspects of the new Chapel, but share with their tour group why they come to St James' and what they love about coming to St James'. There will also be video interviews (per favour of Adrian) playing throughout the day on the seven screens throughout the new complex.

Please pray with us that people will be stunned by the kindness of our congregations and the enthusiasm they have for attending their church, such that they will want to come and join us.

Our first service will be on the following day, December 2 and the official opening will be by the Archbishop on February 27 2019.

Please also pray for the opportunities we have to speak at all 9 Christmas lunches and dinners that take place throughout December.





CELEBRATE

# Christmas

## OUR SERVICE TIMES:

Sunday 23rd December - 8am, 10am, 6pm

Monday 24th December - 4pm, 6pm, 8pm, 10pm

Tuesday 25th December - 7:30am, 9:30am

For more info on what to expect at Christmas this year, visit  
**[stpauls.church/christmas](http://stpauls.church/christmas)**

## SUMMER SERIES EVENING SERVICES

We will be combining our usual 5pm and 7pm services throughout Summer, on the following dates we will be meeting at **6pm:**

**December 30th, January 6th, January 13th,  
January 20th, January 27th**

On February 3rd we will resume our normal service times.

## OFFICE CLOSURE

During the upcoming Christmas & New Year holiday period, the church office will be closed from  
**Thursday 27th December until Monday 14th January**  
when standard office hours will resume.

For urgent pastoral matters during this time,  
please contact us on 8858 1166



# Share the joy



***Toys and Tucker provides a way for us all to come together to share the joy of Christmas with people in need!***

On **Sunday 16th December** we will be collecting and donating non-perishable foods and new toys to help make Christmas a happier time for those who would otherwise go without. Bring your gifts to any service throughout the day and everything will be picked up by the Anglicare team on Monday 17th December.

## ***What kinds of items should we bring in?***

### **FOOD**

Christmas cake  
Christmas pudding  
Tinned ham (450g)  
Tinned salmon (415g)  
Tea (50pk) or Coffee (100g)  
Milo (small tin)  
Packet of biscuits  
Dried pasta (500g)  
Pasta sauce  
Long-life milk, custard or cream  
Tinned fruit and vegetables (425g)  
Jam (500g)

### **GIFT IDEAS**

#### ***FOR PRE-SCHOOL***

Age-appropriate games  
Educational toys  
Picture books

#### ***CHILDREN***

Good-quality toys  
Outdoor games  
Sporting equipment

#### ***TEENAGERS***

Gift cards/vouchers  
Sporting equipment  
Toiletry packs

***(visit [toysandtucker.org.au](http://toysandtucker.org.au) for more info)***



# CHURCH CALENDAR

## DECEMBER

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**SATURDAY**

**1<sup>ST</sup>**

**"THE HEART OF CHRISTMAS"  
OUR CHRISTMAS MUSICAL**

**2pm in the Church**

Free entry, afternoon tea to follow the show

**SATURDAY**

**1<sup>ST</sup>**

**MEN'S BREAKFAST**

**7:30am in the CEC, \$5 for a BBQ breakfast**

Ken Allen will be sharing with us "What I would tell my younger self - lessons from a life walking with Jesus"

**SUNDAY**

**2<sup>ND</sup>**

**CHRISTMAS MARKET**

**After 8am and 10am service**

Kibera cards, Interwoven Jewellery, Jesus Club crafts and Malacci's coffee - all for a great cause

**TUESDAY**

**4<sup>TH</sup>**

**SENIORS FRIENDSHIP GROUP**

**12-2pm**

Guest Speaker: Danielle Allen

"Christmas Around the World"

**SUNDAY**

**9<sup>TH</sup>**

**LESSONS AND CAROLS SERVICE**

**At St James Chapel**

**WEDNESDAY**


**12<sup>TH</sup>**

**CHRISTMAS IN THE HILLS**

**4pm at Bella Vista Farm**

For info visit [www.christmasinthehills.com.au](http://www.christmasinthehills.com.au)

To volunteer email [bluearmy@spch.org.au](mailto:bluearmy@spch.org.au)



Our Saturday Prayer Meetings will finish for 2018 on **Saturday 8th December**, and will resume in 2019 on **Saturday 9th February**

## DECEMBER (CONTINUED)

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FRIDAY

**14<sup>TH</sup>**

**CROSSFIRE CHRISTMAS PARTY**

**Our final night of Crossfire for the year**

Crossfire 68 - 6pm, Crossfire X - 8pm

SUNDAY

**16<sup>TH</sup>**

**TOYS AND TUCKER**

**All services**

Bring your toys and food to church for collection

WEDNESDAY

**19<sup>TH</sup>**

**THANKSGIVING AND REMEMBERING SERVICE**

**6pm in the church**

A chance to remember loved ones

TUESDAY

**24<sup>TH</sup>**

**CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES**

**4pm, 6pm, 8pm, 10pm**

[www.stpauls.church/christmas](http://www.stpauls.church/christmas)

MONDAY

**25<sup>TH</sup>**

**CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICES**

**7:30am, 9:30am**

[www.stpauls.church/christmas](http://www.stpauls.church/christmas)

## JANUARY

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MONDAY

**14<sup>TH</sup>**

**IMPAKCT - MON 14TH TO SAT 19TH**

**For high school students in yrs7-12**

Regos close 9th December or when spots fill

FRIDAY

**25<sup>TH</sup>**

**YOUNG ADULTS VISION NIGHT**

**7pm in the church**

WISHING YOU A VERY MERRY  
CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR  
FROM ALL OF THE STAFF OF ST PAUL'S  
AND THEIR FAMILIES.

MAY GOD BLESS YOU AS WE CELEBRATE  
THE PRECIOUS GIFT OF HIS SON THIS  
SEASON.

## CONTACT US

[www.stpauls.church](http://www.stpauls.church)

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