

Fourth Sunday of Advent: Love

SHOWING LOVE TO THE MOST VULNERABLE

Sisters Srinidhi* and Mahira* are Sri Lankan refugees who have been living in refugee camps in India for decades. Like many refugees from Sri Lanka, they were forced to flee due to the conflict and violence in their home country.

They are both widows who lost their husbands while in India and after all these years, they have never lived apart. Despite being independent, travelling outside the camp to the nearest hospital is too difficult, particularly with Mahira's health problems.

Srinidhi explained, "Can't you see my sister? She can't even walk, how is she going to go to the hospital? That's why we want the hospital to come to us, the health workers to come to us. She comes and sees me regularly."

Fortunately, Act for Peace's local partner in India, Organization for Eelam Refugees Rehabilitation (OfERR), which is run by refugees themselves, have been providing crucial support and assistance in the camps for four decades.



LECTIONARY READINGS:

Sunday 24th December

2 Samuel 7:1–11, 16
Luke 1:46b–55 or Psalm 89:1–4, 19–26
Romans 16:25–27
Luke 1:26–38

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES:

Mark & Thelma Zma
22/12/1962
Dennis & Trish Williams
23/12/1969
Wally & Bernice Humphrys
3/01/1976

CHRISTMAS EVE:

Morning Service, 9.30 am

Nativity Sets - Share the JOY!

On Christmas Eve there will be a small display of 'Nativity sets' owned by members of the congregation. If you have one you're invited to bring it to Church and place it on the table in the foyer before the morning service begins.

Evening Service 7 pm

Readers are wanted for the evening service on Christmas Eve. Please contact Janice on 0416 106 518 or email jmcwhinney@bigpond.com.

I invite you to write a sentence or two on "What Christmas means to me."

Please email me at jmcwhinney@bigpond.com

I'll read out a few during the Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Services.

SERVICE & PREACHING PLAN:

Sun Dec 24th **Christmas Eve**

9.30 am – Rev'd J McWhinney

7.00 pm – Rev'd J McWhinney

Mon Dec 25th **Christmas Day**

9.30 am – Rev'd J McWhinney

Sun Dec 31st – Rev'd J McWhinney *

Sun Jan 7th – Rev'd J McWhinney HC

Sun Jan 14th – Rev'd J McWhinney

* Indicates morning tea after the service.

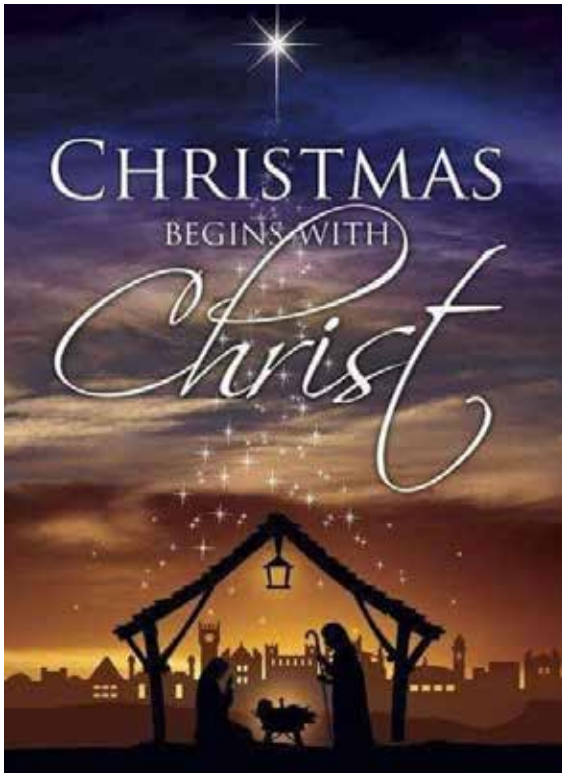
BIRTHDAYS:

Marlene Winkler	21/12
Maxine Davies	23/12
Lesley Mableson	27/12
Joyce Baxter	18/12
Marlene Winkler	21/12
Maxine Davies	23/12
Lesley Mableson	27/12
Rachel Warren	30/12
Beth Duke	31/12
Eric Secomb	02/01
Ian McCallum	02/01
Jenny Fletcher	03/01

* A Big 'O' Birthday.

BIRTHDAY SURPRISES:

When your birthday is listed, please check your pigeon-hole and receive your birthday surprise!



FROM THE CHURCH OFFICE:

To assist with our review of congregation members' details for the Church Directory for 2024, the current directory details will be placed on the table in the Church Foyer each Sunday during December.

Please review your details and update if any changes are required. Even if no changes are needed, please tick and initial against your name(s).

The office will be closed until 11th January and there will NOT be an Update produced next week.

Many thanks for your assistance.

Pat & Janet



CHURCH COUNCIL:

At the final Council Meeting for 2023, retiring members Peter Smithson and Jim Hayward were thanked for their contribution, and Pat Keep was warmly welcomed as a new member.

The Executive for 2024 was elected. Chairperson, Lesley Mableson, Secretary, Anne Craig and Treasurer, Lindsay Pryde.

Thank you from Council for your support in 2023. A special thankyou to all who contributed gifts for the local VH Churches/City Council appeal. These have now been distributed to needy families through the Salvation Army.

Church Council will meet next on February 13th 2024. Any matters needing attention can be directed to Executive or any Council member. Have a blessed and safe Christmas.

Christmas Day: Light of the world

SHARING GOD'S LOVE



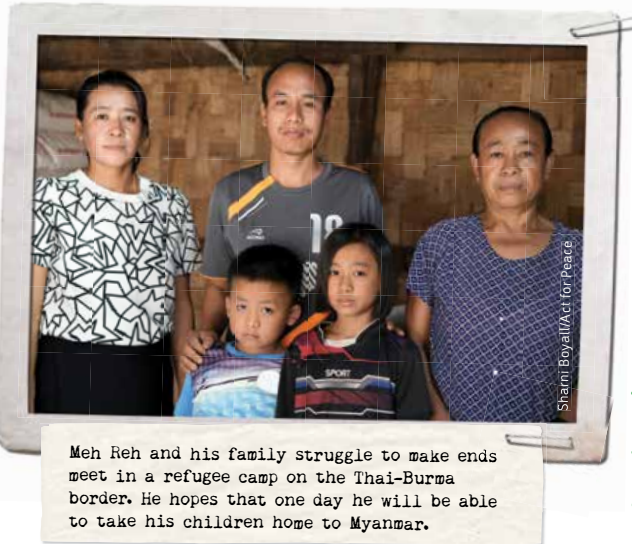
Meh Reh fled Myanmar more than 29 years ago. Living in a refugee camp on the Thai-Burma border ever since, he hopes that one day it will be safe for him and his family to return home.

Meh Reh explained, "Personally, my wish is to go back home... but it depends on the political situation in Myanmar... If the political situation is not stable, we cannot go back. If we go back, we will face many problems".

Thousands continue to flee Myanmar to this day, but with the emergency no longer in the headlines, they are left out of sight and out of mind, trapped in a devastating limbo. Meh Reh prays that the world hasn't forgotten them.

"It is difficult to survive, to earn an income for our family," says Meh Reh. "It is difficult for our children to go for further study, and we have limited opportunities and have limited food."

At a time when more people than ever are forced to flee their homes, lifesaving aid is being stretched too thin, leaving many refugees at breaking-point without the support they need to survive. But by bringing together committed Australian Christians and our dedicated local partners around the world, we can give hope in these dark times.



The Act for Peace - Christmas Bowl Appeal

you can make your donation via Adare's unique donation page link: mycb.link/47679.



First Sunday after Christmas: Thank you



THANK YOU FOR BEING PART OF THE CHRISTMAS BOWL

At a time when Christian kindness is needed more than ever, your support will help Act for Peace's local partners provide practical care to people in urgent need around the world.

In a world that often feels divided, you've come together with churches across Australia to stand alongside those uprooted by conflict and disaster.

Thank you for standing with Act for Peace's local partners to bring practical care – as well as hope, peace, joy, love and light – to people in urgent need around the world.

From Ethiopia to Jordan, India to the Thai-Burma border, and for those affected by emergencies like we're seeing in Afghanistan, you are helping families heal from trauma and rebuild their lives.

