

FOR UNTO US A CHILD IS BORN. UNTO US A SON IS GIVEN



Nativity NEWS

Picture from 'The Nativity'
by Julie Vivas

DECEMBER 2021

Issue 20

Editorial by Rosemary Francis

WHAT WILL WE DO WITH JESUS?

This question has surfaced in my mind every Christmas for the last 50 years. It began with putting up our Christmas Manger days before Christmas when my toddler asked me "What will do I do with Jesus, place Him in the crib now, or wait until Christmas Day?" We placed His doll in the manger, so all would know that we welcome Jesus into our home.

What will I do with Jesus? This is the challenge of Christmas - His birthday. If you invite Him, Jesus will share your life in the most intimate way. When you are walking in truth and love, with Jesus as your best Friend, you will know His peace and joy in all circumstances. I know, because I walk with Him every day.

As this tough year of Covid challenges draws to an end, we celebrate God's great gift of our Saviour Jesus. We look back over highlights of our Nativity family; the fun of the picnic and the faith journeys of several of our whanau. We look at the outreach of our people into various ministries like the Blue Door, and an 'Healing Horticulture Course' we are running. In this issue we also meditate on the star of Bethlehem. We offer health advice from our parish nurse, and heartfelt words from Sarah Ashworth. We also offer suggestions for Christmas decorations you can create.

As the new 'traffic light system' of Covid protects our health system, we thank God for His safe keeping through these last months of our war against the enemy virus, and trust Him with our future.

When UK entered the horrors of World War 2 in 1939, King George the Sixth quoted words of encouragement from a poem over BBC in his Christmas Day Message:

"I said to the Man who stood at the gate of the Year "Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.' He replied "Step out into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of God. That shall be to you better than a light, and safer than a known way. So I went forth and, finding the Hand of God ,trod gladly into the night. And He led me towards the hills and the breaking of day."

May Christ be the centre of our Christmas, and may we step into the unknown, holding His hand and walking in His light and protection through the coming year.

May God bless you.



FIT FOR A KING.

This delightful children's book comes with a professionally produced CD. The cost is \$25.00, with all the profits going to NZCMS for mission work in Uganda.

Contact Details: Rosemary Francis,
48 Endeavour Street, Blenheim 7201

Email: llamafarmer@xtra.co.nz

Ph: 03 5777 454

UPDATE

From Sara Ashworth

the Vicar's wife



UNEXPECTED PLANS

It is beginning to look a lot like Christmas in the Ashworth whare. There is a dishevelled Advent calendar, a slightly wonky (but endearing) Christmas tree, and increasing patterns of unhealthy festive eating. However, while it may look like Christmas, there is also a sense that this Christmas is very different for us; we are far from home and the people we are used to celebrating with.

As I reflect upon this first Christmas away from Auckland and family, I have thought about the first Aotearoa/New Zealand Christmas at Oihi just over 200 years ago. There too it must have been a very different Christmas for the missionaries, themselves, far from home; just as the experience of celebrating a Christian festival must have been for Māori. And yet it worked. The chief, Ruatara and missionary Samuel Marsden, united despite differences of culture, in a way that could only have been according to a plan that God had brought about.



In this sense, the Oihi story is so encouraging. Moving to Blenheim and going through this most unexpected turn in our lives, can only be according to a plan that God has in place. This plan, like Ruatara and Marsden, brought about by a God who seems to revel in providing paths which are unexpected and yet beautifully perfect; the incarnation itself holding to this wonderful creative pattern of the unexpected.

It is with this hope that our family looks to the Christmas season. Even though apart from most of our family, this path, of His choosing, will be spectacular I'm sure.

arooha

PARISH PICNIC

A barrow-load of fun!



*An
eggceptional
day!*

ROD & JENNY TYNEY

Picnic hosts extraordinaire!



Rod and Jenny, share some of their story.....

We have been residents in NZ for nearly nine years but were regular visitors for seven years prior to that. We came to know Nativity during that time and happily joined the 10 am congregation in 2013. We are fortunate that our two sons, wives and two grandchildren reside in Blenheim.

JENNY

I spent my formative years in a small coastal farming community on lower Eyre Peninsula, in South Australia. I then went to Adelaide (603 km away) to finish my schooling and tertiary education.

Attending church and its associated activities was an integral part of my upbringing. Making a 'Decision' to be a follower of Jesus in my early teens seemed a natural and logical thing to do.

There has never been a time in my life where I haven't belonged to a warm and caring congregation and felt that was where I was meant to be.

Belonging' involves certain responsibilities and understandings. I have always been in awe of people who have the ability to prophesy, speak about their faith so eloquently or to preach such well chosen and pertinent words. However over the years I have always heard God's calling to serve in a pragmatic way such as - Property Manager, pastoral visitor, organizer of social activities, Sunday School teaching, rosters etc. Hosting the Nativity Picnic for the last 2 years seemed the right thing to do, given the present climate.

Several years ago Kaye Dyer gave a wonderful series of sermons about the gifts we have to offer and challenged us to identify what we were based on Ephesians 4. Ephesians 4:11-12 says:

Now these are the gifts God gave the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists and the pastors (shepherds) and teachers. Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ.

This validation of our roles in our church community was a valuable exercise and personally helpful. In my daily walk with Jesus I am reassured by his presence especially in the beauty that surrounds me.

ROD

I was born in Northern Ireland and my parents attended a Presbyterian Church with my mother singing in Church choirs and indeed on Irish radio.

I therefore grew up and developed within a musical family background, It seems natural to me that I see music as a powerful spiritual thread journeying through different periods of my life in Northern Ireland, Melbourne and Adelaide and indeed The Church of the Good Shepherd in Beijing when Jenny and I attended this non inter-denominational Church for three years prior to coming to Nativity.

My first service as organist occurred in Adelaide when there was a need for an organist for the evening service. Aged fourteen, my mother encouraged my participation and with great nervousness I approached the task. All went well with the first verse of the first hymn with the congregation singing lustily. I gained in confidence and with each verse I added more stops. With all stops out I launched into verse four ... however no-one sang - there was no fourth verse!

Spending most of my adult life in Adelaide I served as organist and choirmaster for many years. One of the tenors in the choir, also an actor, was an extremely emotional gentleman and would sing with tears in his eyes - such can be the effect of music on the spiritual emotions.

As is stated above, our eldest son has been in Blenheim for some 18 years and so we visited Blenheim and Nativity often over that time. I always enjoy music as part of the worship service and appreciate the range of styles and the many musical skillful members in the choir, the music groups and the organists.

As Psalm 100 says -

"Make a joyful noise unto the Lord."



GETTING TO KNOW OUR CHURCH FAMILY

SISTERS!

CAROLINE HANSEN & ELIZABETH SAVILLE-SMITH

I am a cradle Anglican. As a small child before the war I went to church with the family, and to school where I learnt to read, and where daily prayers were said. Indeed, that happened in several schools including two years in a convent boarding school, and I loved the quiet, the hymns, and the gentle assurance of God's love even in the midst of wartime London.

In 1946 when we came to New Zealand it was the same. We attended the local church, and as time went on I sang in the choir and was confirmed. Later as I moved around I was always part of the local church, singing in the choir, teaching Sunday School, cleaning the brass, and had my daughters christened and later confirmed. However with the revision of the New Zealand prayer book I was deeply grieved, and also very busy. I fell away completely until I moved to Porirua and went to the hospital services of all denominations including Jewish.

I returned to Christchurch in the early 1980's and reached a climax after attending a midnight Christmas service. I was confronted by the realization that I had no place there – no work, no depth of belief. I determined to work sincerely until Easter and see what happened. There was no doubt then – I joined Holy Trinity, Avonside, and offered all my skills to the then Vicar. I was involved in most of the Parish activities including work in the related rest homes and hospital wings, also support for a branch of the Coptic Church escaping persecution all that time.

I am now no longer so actively involved in church life, but I value the spiritual and loving outreach and the many blessings in Nativity at this very uncertain time.

I follow the Lectionary daily and can perhaps say with Milton
"They also serve who only stand and wait".



Elizabeth Saville-Smith



Looking back over my life I suppose church in one form or another has been an integral part of my being. I helped my mother cleaning brass and doing church flowers as a very young child and unless we were unwell church was obligatory on Sunday.

I attended Rangī Ruru School from my intermediate years and of course the focus there was scripture as well as academic subjects – the school was Presbyterian but the doctrine was Christian rather than a specific sect and I did enjoy Knox church for school services but even more, my sister Sheila and I attended Christchurch cathedral for a number of years especially evensong with the wonderful music and rituals.

My husband John was also familiar with the Anglican faith having sung in the choir at St Mary's Parnell as a boy, so when our children were born they were baptised and grew up in church (both my sons are now staunch Baptists and their children also follow the Christian faith which is a blessing to me).

Over the years I have attended a number of silent retreats in various places - wonderful to focus on God's love for us and to learn more of the life of Jesus and His followers and so many teachers to this day.

To finish: just a comment on the depth of God's love when life is rough, such as times of loss, parents, child, husband, and siblings. Without his strength and faithfulness, life would be close to impossible. Thank you, Lord!

Caroline Hansen



HEALING HORTICULTURE

DON CROSS



HELPING PEOPLE GROW A HEDGE AT THE TOP OF THEIR CLIFF

At the time of writing, Healing Horticulture has delivered five of the six evenings, so I can give a bit of a reflection on how the course has gone to date. Healing Horticulture was an idea initiated to reach out to help people who not only wanted a bit of lift but who were also interested in gardening. Many of the participants didn't know much about gardening, so what I tried to do was to introduce them to the very basics of horticulture, so that not only did they now know the how, but they also understand the why behind the how. Amongst the laughter, there was some serious learning!!

On the first night, each participant was given a plant propagator, an irrigation system (aka a spray bottle), and was tasked to plant a pottle of microgreens. One of the funniest outcomes was that one participant's 3-year-old daughter took a very keen interest in Mum's growing efforts – so much so (according to Mum) that she took over looking after it. When I heard about this, I gave the Mum a pottle so the 3-year-old could have her own go. You can imagine how the little girl felt when the whole class (of adults) looked in absolute admiration at the little one's efforts – and then got the chance for a second go themselves. The results a second time around were amazing. Another participant was amazed to be served microgreens with her salad when out for a meal. My comment to that was: really? (seldom do I miss an opportunity to wind somebody up).

The course is all about learning, doing, sharing, caring, and reflecting. We have taken cuttings, divided plants, played mud pies with soils, made compost in a bucket, sharpened blunt rusty secateurs, and got to be able to predict the weather by looking at clouds. I can see that within the group associations are being formed, so it is now my task to look to the future for the group - and as a final comment - the suppers are to die for!!

If you are interested, check out our web site www.healinghorticulture.org
OR contact Don doncross@xtra.co.nz or phone 577 6863 for more information!

**MORE COURSES WILL BE
HELD IN 2022**



SERVICE WITH A SMILE

Two lovely cosy blankets made by the Care and Share team were donated to Nativity for use in the church when it gets cold.



If you have any scrap metal please donate it to Nativity. There is a box in the church foyer on Sundays or at the Admin desk during the week. This project will be ongoing through next year also.

SCRAP METAL TO



Beverley and William Kingston are selling this and donating proceeds to Nativity. If you have large items please contact Beverley (Ph. 577 5324) for advice

DONATE?



All sorts of metal items are good. Cutlery, keys, old wire, old hardware etc.



These folk had a great time staying at Aaron and Jacinda Thompson's Hanmer hideaway, the accommodation they bid for and 'won' at the Nativity Mid-winter Dinner and Auction.

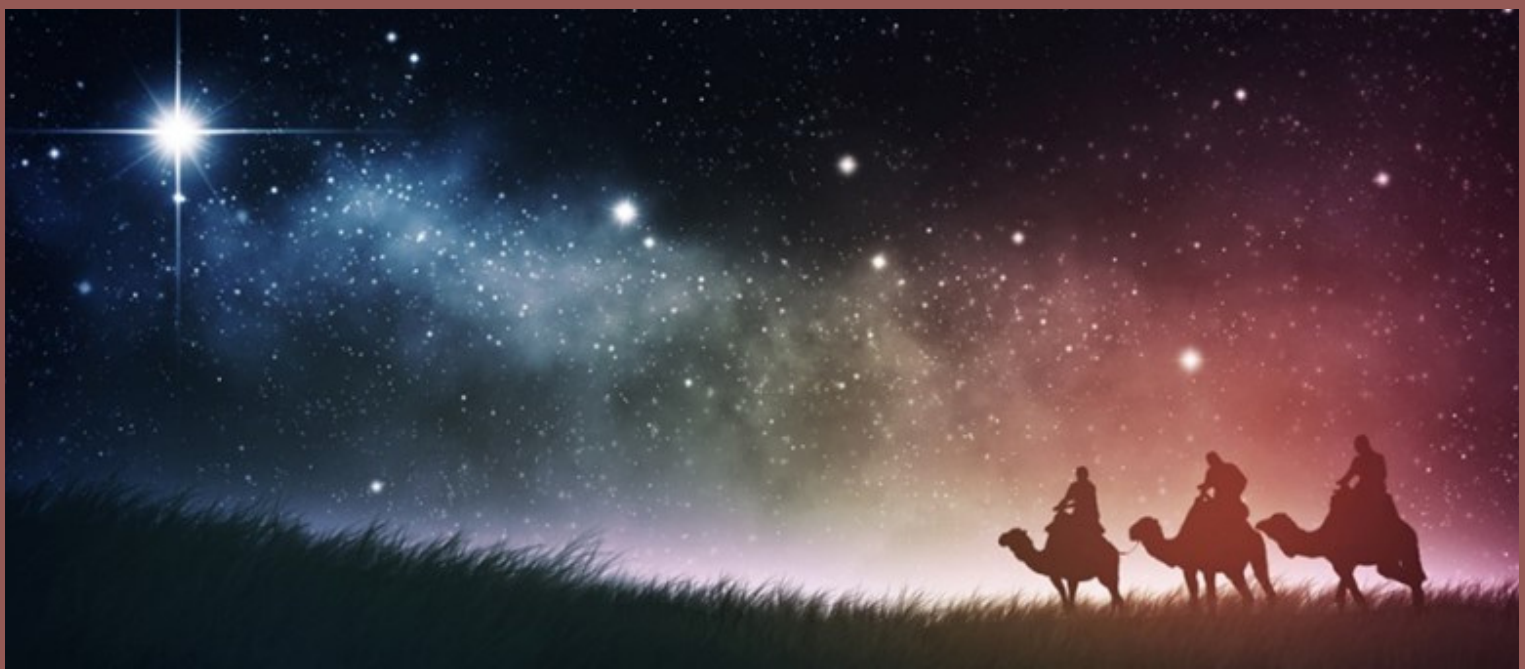
REVERENDFUN.COM COPYRIGHT BIBLE GATEWAY



Thanks to Nadine Fafard (See Luke 2:1-16)

12-24-2001

THAT'S THE BEST ONE-STAR HOTEL THAT I'VE EVER SEEN



WISE MEN

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East, and have come to worship him." - Matthew 2: 1-2

The wise men had read ancient scriptures and knew the prophecies that a special star (or light in the sky) would be used by God to announce the birth of the Messiah.

It was Balaam's prophecy, as recorded in the Bible (Numbers 24:17), that spoke of this future star. The Oracle of Balaam prophesied 'a star shall come forth out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel'.

The wise men knew when to look for the star.

Daniel's prophecy revealed that the Messiah would come as Prince of Israel 483 years after the Persian emperor gave the commandment to the Jews to rebuild Jerusalem (Daniel 9:25).

In faith, the wise men stepped out on their journey.

Having seen the sign they left everything to follow. They had no guarantee they would find anything at the end of their journey. Their journey was to be long, although they had no idea how long, and it took much planning and cost. Their commitment to finding where God was showing up caused them to re-organise their whole lives. Their time, comfort, and money was all tied up in finding Jesus. They simply had hope and trusted that the words of scripture were true and that they would get to see this baby king.

The wise men were seeking to worship God.

Believing that their journey would result in them finding the Messiah they brought the very best gifts they could to worship and honour Him. In their choice of gifts, the wise men made a prophecy of their own. Gold for a king, frankincense for the priestly nature of the Messiah, and myrrh which can be seen as prophetic of His death.

In Jeremiah 29:13 God made a promise, saying:

"You will seek Me and find Me; when you seek Me with all your heart, I will be found by you"

**THIS IS WHAT THE WISE MEN DID,
AND THIS IS ULTIMATELY WHAT MADE THEM WISE.**



***In the Church Foyer
is Nativity's
Remembrance Tree.***

***Please feel free to write on
a bauble, the name of
someone you will miss
this Christmas,
and hang it on the tree.***

Christmas Word Find

G	C	P	M	E	H	E	F	F	N	Y	Y	A	S	E
V	F	I	O	G	K	N	O	C	Y	R	R	I	L	B
Z	H	S	J	Z	X	U	H	E	G	A	B	Z	N	B
H	A	T	I	D	U	R	X	S	Z	M	E	I	P	E
R	P	L	R	S	I	L	E	N	T	N	I	G	H	T
R	K	O	Q	S	N	E	M	E	S	I	W	A	J	H
Y	L	X	T	Y	Z	S	W	C	Z	S	P	E	P	L
M	I	M	F	H	F	N	P	N	S	J	V	E	K	E
J	A	B	T	T	B	A	R	I	O	R	S	X	Z	H
S	A	I	Y	L	Y	T	E	K	V	O	F	L	W	E
H	A	Y	E	Y	T	I	G	N	J	I	O	E	E	M
F	A	M	K	R	H	V	N	A	E	V	U	G	P	E
M	A	A	N	W	A	I	A	R	S	A	S	N	O	E
C	I	H	O	T	C	T	M	F	U	S	O	A	H	F
D	J	E	D	K	Q	Y	S	V	S	W	T	E	K	Q

JESUS

MARY

JOSEPH

WISEMEN

MANGER

NATIVITY

BETHLEHEM

CAMEL

DONKEY

STAR

HAY

ANGEL

FAITH

HOPE

FRANKINCENSE

MYRRH

SILENT NIGHT

LORD

SAVIOR

CHRISTMAS



GETTING TO KNOW OUR CHURCH FAMILY

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching. (Hebrews 10:24-25)

This passage in Hebrews is very much on my mind when sitting down to share something of our lives. The challenge to the Body of Christ during these unprecedented times is very real. However, social distancing does not mean relational distancing. Nativity has, over many years, given the encouragement and support to our family that these verses talk about.



***DI, HANNAH & DOUG
SMIT***

Doug and I started our married life (January 2000) in Picton and soon after our arrival, our first interaction with the church community in Marlborough began. Still unsure of where to go to church one day there was a knock on the door and Vicar David Hastings was there. He spurred us on by walking alongside us and running an Alpha course for the two of us. This proved to be a real time of renewal in our walk with Jesus. At this time we had both started new jobs, Doug as the analytical chemist at SafeAir and me, teaching at Marlborough Girls' College. What a good time to be reminded to put Jesus first in our lives.

In January 2001 we moved into Blenheim and started our time at Nativity. Initially, we would slip in and slip out each Sunday service. It was through Roger and Pauline Tisch and Warrick Hearne's faithful greetings each Sunday that drew us to put down roots at Nativity. This led to us getting involved in the 40 Days of Purpose. From our group formed from the letters S and R in the alphabet, we found friends who have encouraged us, providing wisdom and support through so many life moments. Thanks Stephen and Jane. In turn we have been spurred on at various times to give back to Nativity. Notably in recent years by Jenny Bennett-Burrows which has led to us becoming welcomers and me helping out with the Intermediate youth.

Our daughter, Hannah is now heading into her second year at Massey, Palmerston North studying Zoology. She grew up in Nativity and we are so grateful to so many for their part in her spiritual journey. From her early days with Roz Mundy in First Steps to her five years in Nativity Youth with Shane and Jenny Downes, Jacinda Thompson, and Paulette James, she has known the love and good deeds of the church community. It has also been special for our family to have also had the South African connection with Hannah and Mieke de Bruin growing up together at Nativity.

1 Corinthians 12 -27 says, "Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it." There are so many other members of the Nativity body of Christ who have enriched our lives. Although Covid 19 has made us all too aware of the vulnerabilities of our physical bodies, the fundamental truths of the strength of belonging to the Body of Christ is never more pertinent than now. We may be required to be a different type of church. However, the last 21 years have taught our family that serving and loving others as Christ has loved us, which happens at Nativity, will be bridges across the barriers of Covid.



GIFTS FOR ALL AT THE.....



The Blue Door was started 23 years ago by Nativity's Beverley Kingston. It has been supported by many Nativity volunteers over the years and currently Stephen Leitch is the Chair of the Committee.

The Blue Door was Marlborough's first recycling shop. All profits are given back to local non-profit organizations. In the twenty-three years since opening they have given more than \$600,000 in grants. Twenty-four grants were given in 2021.

**BLUE DOOR MISSION:
"TO BE A LEADING RE-USE
ORGANISATION THAT SUPPORTS
THE MARLBOROUGH COMMUNITY"**



Beverley Kingston



Stephen Leitch





THE BETHEL EXPERIENCE

When I took up Kaye's invitation to attend the Bethel Old Testament Series, I thought it might be like making a trip to the attic to find a few things mislaid for many years. Blowing the dust off my recollections of the stories of old, I guess I hoped to come out of it better informed. I discovered (as did the others I think) that I had to reset everything that I thought I already knew. Typically, the Western world approaches the Hebrew scriptures as I did, placing the emphasis on enquiring how, (as the Greek Scholars do), whereas the Hebrew writers themselves were mostly interested in showing why. You can easily miss it if you fail to look through Hebrew eyes. This Bethel Series equipped us to do just that, and without exaggeration it opened up a whole new understanding of the things we thought we already knew. Along with the insights we were given some clever picture images ("storymonics") which contained easily remembered visual cues for the essential details of each story and their place in the Biblical sequence. But the best bits were the "ah ha" moments when we discovered unexpected gold amongst the attic treasure. We will be ready for more in the New Year. Thanks to Kaye and Richard for leading us through it in their welcoming home. I would highly recommend it for even the most jaded soul, for, who knows what you don't know?

Sign up next year and find out.

Barry Struthers

We hope that Richard & Kaye Dyer will be offering more from the Bethel Series in 2022

BIBLES FOR SALE

New Living Translation - Silver Fern or Tourquise \$28 each

Beginners Bible \$25 each

Others may be ordered on your behalf please see the office for more information

PARISH NURSE

Sharon Thomas (our Parish Nurse) is starting up an exciting/interesting/challenging new initiative.

The "Healthy Living Alliance" is aimed at people who are keen to learn and share ideas for healthier options in their lives.

Sessions will be facilitated by Sharon but will include guest speakers at times.

Open to all ages.

Meetings will now be starting on Monday 14th February at 7pm in the Nativity Lounge.



Cartoon of the Month!



It is difficult to buy Bibles in Blenheim which are attractive, have a good sized print, and include maps and concordance. Now Nativity have a selection of adult and children's Bibles which can be purchased from the office. A great Christmas gift!



Jeanette Silva, Tunes for Tots leader, shares how to make a Christmas Angel

To make a Christmas Angel you will need:

- Paper or card
- Glitter card or foam
- Pipe cleaners
- Hot glue gun
- Jewels, glitter, or any decorations
- Scissors
- Felt pen
- Feathers
- Stapler
- Wooden mothballs (non-chemical ones you can find in 'The 2 fantastic Store')

Firstly, create a cone shape with your card, it can be any size you like, as long as it has an opening at the top of roughly 1cm.

Staple in place.

Draw a wing shape you like on your glitter card/foam and cut out.

Use a glue gun or glue stick to put feathers on the non-glitter side of wings.

Attach wings on the cone with the glue gun.

Bend the pipe cleaner in half and create a circle for the halo, glue gun the wooden ball just underneath the halo onto the pipe cleaner for the head.

Slide pipe cleaner into the hole at the top of the cone.

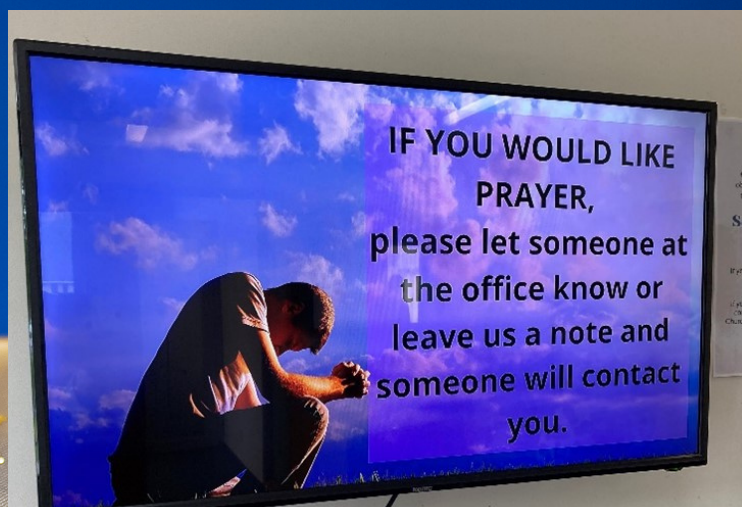
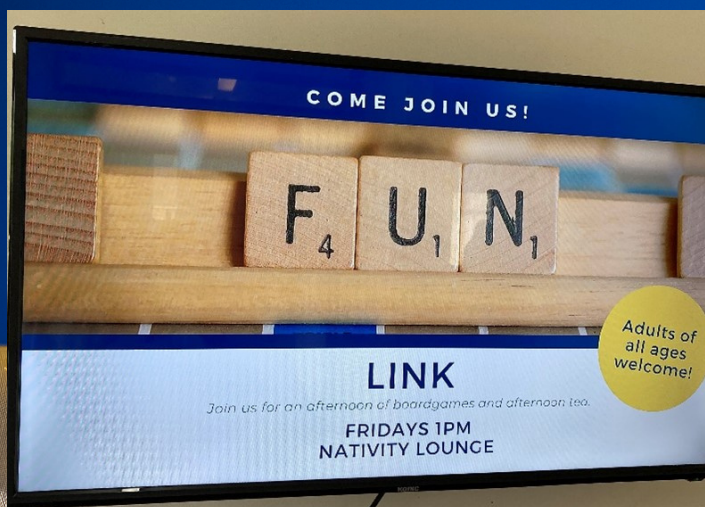
Decorate the cone body with stick-on jewels or glitter or BOTH lavishly!



Nativity *Tunes for Tots* not only enjoy music and singing, they play with toys, have morning tea, and do amazing crafts. Making these angels was just one of their Christmas Crafts. *Tunes for Tots* is held for preschoolers and their carers, at Nativity Hall, on Friday mornings during the school term.

New Electronic Noticeboard

Have you seen the new electronic notice board in the foyer of Nativity Centre?
Along with useful information about the many groups and activities of Nativity
there is also up-to-date information about upcoming services and events.
Well worth checking out.



NATIVITY ANGLICAN CHURCH
INVITES YOU TO

Christmas SERVICES



VISIT WWW.NATIVITY.ORG.NZ
FOR COVID-19 UPDATES

SteamCleanz
Marlborough

Roger Nicholls

027 578 1163

info@steamcleanz.co.nz

www.steamcleanz.co.nz

GEOFFREY T
SOWMAN

FUNERAL DIRECTORS
MONUMENTAL MASONS

Proud to be
associated with the
Church of the Nativity

Caring for the Marlborough
community for generations.

Cnr Hutcheson & Parker Streets
03 578 4719 www.sowmans.co.nz

Cloudy Bay
FUNERAL SERVICES

Alan Walker / FUNERAL DIRECTOR

PO Box 9, Blenheim 7240
15 Boyce St, Blenheim 7201
T: 03 578 2004 F: 03 578 2005
E: info@cloudybayfunerals.co.nz

www.cloudybayfunerals.co.nz



A big 'thank you' to our generous
Sponsors who support the publication of
this magazine. If others are interested
in adding their sponsorship please
contact Nativity Office.

THE THE NATIVITY NEWS TEAM
WISH YOU ALL A
VERY BLESSED CHRISTMAS

CONTACT US

Nativity News Team: Rose Francis, Jo Danks,
Raewyn Parkes, Miriam Taylor
76 Alfred Street Blenheim
Ph. 03 5756864
www.nativity.org.nz

