



“Joy to the world, the Lord is come”

SENIOR CHAPLAIN REVD JENI GORING

This carol, often the first to be sung on Christmas morning, is one of my favourites. It reminds me of the joy brought by the birth of Jesus, the Son of God, and our joyous response to this amazing event – “heaven and nature sing”.

Many have found little reason to sing this year, instead of joy we have experienced stress, anxiety, loss and fear. Yet, this is indeed the time to sing, to share the joy in our hearts even more readily and often, for in the midst of trauma and tragedy is love and compassion. Stories of love of neighbour, of generosity and of sacrifice.

Christmas is a time to share joy. Not happiness, which is mine and dependent on external factors that make me feel happy – safety, health, wealth, companionship - but JOY. Joy that finds a home in every human heart. Joy that dwells within each of us, giving life meaning and purpose. Joy that shines from our eyes into the eyes of the person we greet, joy that tugs at our cheeks and causes our lips to smile, joy that wells up and bursts forth in song. “Joy to the world, the Lord is come ...”

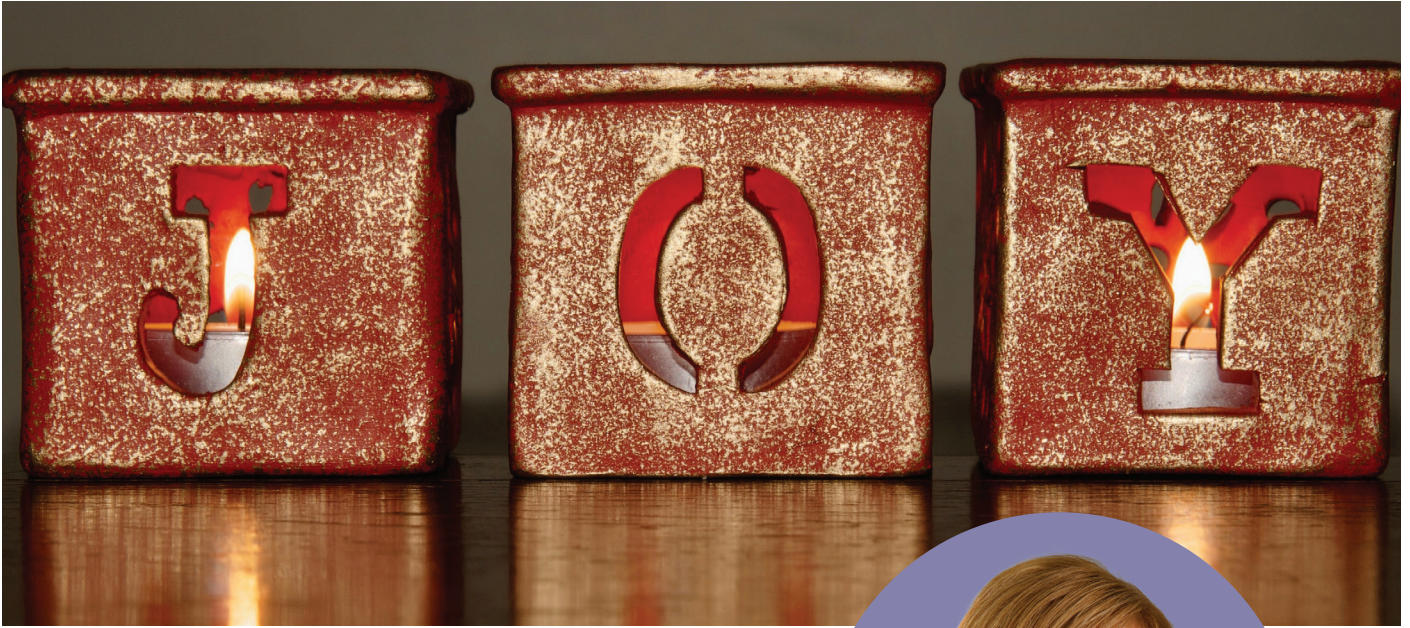
Joy is knowing God loves you, God has always loved you, and God will love you forever. Joy is believing Jesus the Christ is our Saviour, and as we celebrate his birth again this Christmas time, it is remembering what really matters. Joy is thankfulness and love and compassion.

Isaac Watts wrote the lyrics to “Joy to the world” based on Psalm 98 in 1719. Two hundred years later, it is one of the most popular carols in the English language. Why? I think it is because he understands the need for the human heart to give expression to the joy that is in each of us.

So find some time to sing this Christmas. Sing carols or hymns or your favourite pop, jazz or rock and roll songs. Sing. Sing loud, sing with joy and sing for joy.



Reasons to be joyful



FROM THE CEO STEPHANIE BUCKLAND

2020 has been an undeniably tough year. Lives have been lost, families have been kept apart, and livelihoods affected. Who could have predicted the entire globe would be battling a virus we had never even heard of 12 months ago?

It would be easy to wish this year had never happened, but I think it's important to remember what has given us joy. If being grateful can improve your mental health, then feeling joy is surely an antidote to the stresses and strains of 2020.

At Amana Living, I've found many reasons to be joyful. I've found joy in being surrounded by staff whose compassion and commitment to the people we serve is stronger than ever before. Celebrating staff achievements through our annual 3R awards has proven yet again that the best thing about Amana Living is its people.

This is evident in the way we responded to the pandemic with resilience and innovation. We relocated more than 100 office based staff to home working at warp speed, we quickly set up technology up to keep residents in touch with families, and we ramped up infection control procedures to keep residents, clients and staff safe. We did all this while continuing to provide high quality care and support every day.



These efforts have not gone unnoticed. Residents and clients are thankful for our work, and praise the kindness and professionalism of our staff. We can take joy in the comfort we have provided to residents and clients this year, and the reassurance we provide to their families that their loved ones are receiving the very best in Christian care.

I've taken joy in the role we play in the community and the connections we've formed with people of all ages and backgrounds. Our chaplains are integral to this but I'm also thankful for the involvement of Anglican schools. The thoughtfulness of the school children who wrote notes and sang songs to our residents while visiting restrictions were in place made my heart sing.

Finally, my faith has also given me joy and comfort this past year. As we approach Christmas, reflecting on the birth of Jesus is a reminder that we have much to be happy for despite the challenges the year has presented.

Blessings to you all this Christmas and a happy New Year.

The wonder of Christmas

The world of Christmas is found amongst real life circumstances, events and peoples. On that first Christmas, Christmas happens as a government orders a census and taxation. Christmas happens in the midst of travel, crowds, and over-booked motels. Christmas happens in the darkness and fear of an unknown future. Christmas happens with the birth of a baby.

Jesus' birth does not allow us to escape the realities of our life and of the world. Christmas enters our real-life circumstances, events and people.

There is no place you go or circumstance you encounter in which Jesus is not being born.

Your life is the place in which Jesus is being born - a place where God's divinity meets your humanity. Jesus is born in the joys, celebrations, and thanksgivings of your life. He is born in the sorrow, losses, and griefs of your life. He is born in times of hopes and fears, in your words, and in your silence. He is born in your successes and accomplishments and in your failures and disappointments.

God's presence, love, and healing fills every aspect of life. Every aspect of your life. Your life is now the manger in which Jesus settles into - with Christmas being the time we can ensure there is always room in our manger to hold God, as we are being held by God, ensuring the miracle of Christmas continues to be.

A time comes when everything no longer looks like Christmas - when the manger is once again a feeding trough for the cattle, the night sky is dark and silent, and the shepherds again keeping watch over their flocks.

And yet Christmas does not end. It cannot be the end. It is a beginning.

CHAPLAIN
REVD WENDY GILBERT

Presence is a present

While Christmas celebrates Jesus' birthday, we are the ones who get the presents. The giving of presents is connected to the gifts brought by the 3 wise men and while it is nice to receive presents (though I pass on the socks and undies), I wonder if it reflects the true meaning of Christmas. Do they really bring a deep sense of joy?

Now there is a story about 2 children and presents.

A boy was locked in a room full of wrapped presents and after a while he was heard complaining about all the wrapping paper and boxes; there was no room to play and he didn't know what to play with first.

Then there was a girl who was locked in a room full of horse manure. She was heard squealing with delight and saying; "With all this horse poo there has to be a pony in here somewhere".

So presents don't always bring joy it can depend on the attitude of the receiver. But it's the PRESENCE that can bring deep, lasting and even eternal joy. God so loved the world that Jesus was sent to be one of us so we can be one with him. And through the presence of God's spirit in us we can know who we are and whose we are. And I reckon that presence is a pretty good present.

CHAPLAIN
REVD BOB MILNE



Is joy only found at Christmas?

There are so many Christmas cards and messages we receive at Christmas, we could be forgiven for thinking that joy only comes at Christmas time. The cards say 'Joy to you this Christmas' and shops say 'Come and buy your family and friends joy for Christmas'.

All this seems to imply that Christmas is the Season of Joy.

It would be easy to think Joy only comes at Christmas. It is easy to equate remembering the birth of Jesus Christ with giving and receiving presents and that is what gives us joy.

Why, because we think joy is excitable happiness! But if we think joy can also be found in other ways such as contentment and praising God then we can have joy all the year round.

At Kinross Care Centre one of our favourite hymns is 'Give me joy in my heart'. We sing it with great gusto each week! And the message in the hymn touches each of us. It goes like this....

*Give me joy in my heart, keep me praising.
Give me joy in my heart, I pray.
Give me joy in my heart keep me praising,
keep me praising till the break of day.*

The secret in finding joy is there in the hymn – we are told to praise God for all the good things in our life. That is, to live in such a way that we capture joy. Seek it daily. Be content with what we have. Be grateful when it comes easy, and fight for it when it doesn't.

I love the Bible verses on joy because they confirm that joy is a beautiful gift from God that can be experienced in every season of our life, no matter what is happening and what we are going through.

These are 10 Bible verses on Joy:

1. James 1:2-3. Pure joy in perseverance.
2. 1 Peter 1:8-9. Unspeakable joy.
3. 2 John 1:12. Joy in relationships
4. Luke 15:7 Joy in repentance.
5. Nehemiah 8:10. The joy of the Lord is my strength.
6. 2 Corinthians 6:10. Rejoicing in our sorrow
7. Psalm 30:5. Joy comes in the morning.
8. Galatians 5:22-23. Joy is a fruit of the Spirit.
9. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18. Rejoice always.
10. John 16:24.

You could very easily find more Bible verses on joy, but these are my top 10.

So this Christmas enjoy all the Joy that this season brings in remembering the birth of Jesus, and the presents you give and receive. But I then urge you to continue experiencing joy throughout the year, by being content with what you have and praising God.

William Kethe wrote part of Psalm 100 into a hymn. We sang it in the Methodist church in the 1950's as the doxology.

*All people that on earth do dwell,
sing to the Lord with cheerful voice;
Him serve with mirth, his praise forth tell,
come ye before him and rejoice!*

CHAPLAIN

REVD DR GEORGIE HAWLEY





Finding joy in the small things

At times like this year, it can be very difficult to find joy. To find joy, delight, fulfillment and happiness.

For me, there has been something going on, that as I write this, has bought me great joy today.

My husband and I have an onsite caravan at Lancelin. From there, we go out exploring or go to our favourite little places. One of those is a place that we call into on our way home. It is a 24 hour stopover site for caravans and travellers.

Here at this place, that is just off Indian Ocean Drive, on the North side of the Moore River, is a surprising haven for small birds. And even though the noise of the traffic is highly disruptive, and there are plenty of people who camp there, these birds still live in the surrounding bushland and take advantage of the open space around the grounds to hunt for food.

One little bird, in the picture above, a White Capped Red Breasted Robin, comes down to say 'hello' on a very regular basis. And because I am a photographer, I take great joy in seeing and taking photos of it. But since the fires in Yanchep (which came close to the spot), we haven't seen it much (in fact, for months). I was concerned that something had happened to it.

But today, after waiting patiently and taking photos of a family of Splendid Blue Fairy Wrens, out of the corner of my eye, I just saw a little red flash go up into a tree.

I was beside myself with relief and great joy. And took many photos, you see, it is a real 'poser'.

It gives me great joy to be able to share my photography with everyone, especially when people just can't get out to see nature, like birds, for themselves. It may only be a little thing, a tiny bird, but as the singer songwriter Paul Kelly sings "From Little Things Big Things Grow." A little bird, brings me, great joy, delight, fulfillment and happiness, that I share with others and that to me, is a big thing. Thank God for nature and the small things that can bring great joy, just like a small baby, in a borrowed manger did for the world, so many centuries ago.

CHAPLAIN
REVD JILL GLEESON

The many emotions of Christmas

In the Christmas Bible stories, joy comes when the wise travellers finally arrive in Bethlehem and see that the star has stopped over the house where the baby Jesus is sheltering. The joy is overwhelming.

Of course there are other emotions in the Christmas stories. Some feelings are named; some we can imagine. King Herod and all his lackeys were frightened when they heard about the birth of a new king, a possible rival. The shepherds were afraid when the angels appeared in all their midnight glory. We can imagine the worry of Joseph and Mary, looking for shelter at the end of their heavily pregnant journey, with nothing but the cow shed available. We can imagine their relief when Mary gives birth, and Joseph can announce that mother and baby are both well.

What emotions do you bring to Christmas this year?

All of us have been frightened about infections floating around. Many of us will be sad about the gaps at our Christmas tables, because of travel limitations, or because someone has died during the year. Some of us will be looking at our friends, our children, our grandchildren, and wondering, with that classic mixture of hope and worry, what kind of world 2021 will bring.

Whatever our mixture of feelings, all of us are invited to share a moment of joy with the wise travellers, before they set out on the next stage of their journey.

Joy is bigger than ordinary happiness. Joy is breathtaking. Joy is laughter, mixed with tears of relief and gratitude. Joy is not something we can plan for. Joy is a gift, with a special intensity. At the turning point of a journey, as we meet Jesus, joy is God's gift to us.

2020 has been quite a journey! Tiring, worrying, sometimes lonely, often frightening. Yet at the turning point of the year, joy is waiting for us. Joy bursts in to overwhelm us. God's son, Mary's baby is not just someone we pop in on once a year to share a mince pie with, pop a cracker or put on a silly paper hat. He is our steady friend, our joy-bringing companion on every journey. Come, let us worship him.

CHAPLAIN

REVD DR ELIZABETH SMITH

The joy of giving

St John the Evangelist, Anglican Parish of Albany is so honoured to look after chaplaincy to Wollaston Court.

The dictionary describes joy as "a feeling of great pleasure and happiness". Spiritual joy, however, is different. Joy is expressing God's goodness and involves more. It is a deep-rooted, inspired happiness. "The joy of the Lord is your strength" (Nehemiah 8.10). God gives us joy and peace. Real joy comes from God and is ours forever. The joy that is found in God's presence isn't static; it transforms and regenerates us. As Christmas approaches this year we once again look forward to living in a season of joy, peace, love at hope that came down that first Christmas.

I feel that over the past year God's kind of joy has been tapped into here in Albany. Following the initial shock of lockdown, isolation and a change of pace, we, in the Amana community and community in general emerged from a time of introspection more

focused on love, the importance of our relationships with each other and God and able to truly revel in the joy of being together.

The Joy Of Giving

Somehow, not only for Christmas,
But all the long year through,
The joy that you give to others
Is the joy that comes back to you;
And the more you spend in blessing
The poor and lonely and sad,
The more of your heart's possessing
Returns to make you glad.

– John Greenleaf Whittier

CHAPLAIN

REVD KAREN CAVE

After pain comes joy

This year we haven't had a lot of Joy.

So many people who have lost their lives. And so many people are mourning, not only from losing family and friends, but also struggling with not being able to say Goodbye or attend a loved ones funeral. So many have been seriously ill, and some still have not returned to full health.

Others have lost their livelihoods, are worried about paying bills and keeping a roof over their heads.

So many families have been torn apart but we can't give up. It has been a year like no other, people are saying this will be the normal thing in the coming years but really no one knows.

As a Christian I feel I have lots to be thankful for. When I look around, I can see Joy. I look at my Grandchildren - what Joy they bring! As I look back to when they were born, the pain as I watch my daughters' suffering through their journey of pregnancy and birth. Yet the pain leads to Joy when the baby is born, all that suffering goes. You see on their faces its amazing.

I think back to my first baby and the years waiting, we married when I was only 19. After 7 year of waiting I had my first which was a long time to wait, but what joy when she was born.

It reminds me of Mary, how she suffered. Mary was so very young and to have been in her shoes and the

stigma she would have gone through, I can't imagine how hard that was. Mary didn't have the traditional support of her female relatives - her mum, sisters, aunties and cousins - only her husband. And in those times that would not have even been thinkable.

I am sure a lot of you ladies who have had children would have felt the same - your husband was not allowed in to be part of the birth. By the time I got to my youngest child, my fourth, I had a 10 year difference between the eldest and the last, so the husbands were encouraged to be there.

Imagine to be in a barn, nowhere to rest in a nice comfortable bed with crisp clean sheets. Mary was in a stable with animals around, no privacy, no safety of experienced female family to calm her nerves. When you think of Mary's time, how really Blessed are we today. So lets find the Joy in the things we take for granted, for the safety we have. Lets try to have JOY and enjoy what we have even, we have a lot to be thankful for the beautiful place we live, the warm weather we have, a pension - not a lot but some money!

So may I wish every Blessing to you at this time and pray for joy for you all the Christmas.

**CHAPLAIN
JUNE ORMEROD**



Nature of the heart

As this season's football competitions becomes a distant memory, I ask you to recall the players as they would gather together as a team to sing their club song. As true Australians – they sing their club songs with gusto, enthusiasm and great energy, although rarely in tune. Is God smiling when we sing out of tune? Of course he is, if we sing with passion and energy and generosity – being in tune is only secondary. So too, does God smile when we dance – however out of step we are. It's the nature of the heart that counts.

A central part of the theology of Hassidic Jews is to give thanks to God for the gift of life by singing and dancing their lives away – in Joy! In the Christian tradition the concept of 'Word' as used in the Gospel, (Verbum in Latin and Logos in Greek) means divine harmony. 'I am the Word, the Word made flesh' John 1:1 is a call to be invited into the divine dance with God.

So, I recall the smiles of those residents I meet. Their joy, courage and gratefulness in relationships. The

capacity to give thanks for the gift of the now. The hymns that we sing with such energy. We all can have joy, we can all give thanks for each day. Sure, there are days and moments of great challenge. There is pain, fear and hardship, psychological scars and relationship complications. But, that's not everything and joy should not and cannot be stolen from us because of those moments. God through Jesus Christ came to reach out to those who suffer and we are called to do the same. Jesus brings peace, hope and compassion and the angels say to us; 'fear not'. There is great confidence and joy in that.

As we celebrate the birth of Jesus in the world, let us prayer for God's ongoing presence and growth in our hearts. For this is the Good News of joy that is foretold. Yes, sing with all your heart and dance like no one's watching. Merry Christmas.

CHAPLAIN
REVD JON CORNISH



CONTACTS

SENIOR CHAPLAIN
Revd Jeni Goring, 0419 145 369
jgoring@amanaliving.com.au

**PERSONAL ASSISTANT
TO SENIOR CHAPLAIN**
Jen Allan
9424 6888
jallan@amanaliving.com.au

CONTACT OUR TEAM
chaplaincy@amanaliving.com.au

CHAPLAINS
Revd Jon Cornish, 0419 145 378
jcornish@amanaliving.com.au

Revd Jill Gleeson, 0448 261 634
jgleeson@amanaliving.com.au

Revd Bob Milne, 0413 325 486
bmilne@amanaliving.com.au

June Ormerod, 0405 761 347
jormerod@amanaliving.com.au

HONORARY CHAPLAINS
Revd Wendy Gilbert
Revd Georgie Hawley
Revd Dave Russell

REGIONAL

ALBANY
Revd John Jones, 0458 630 468
johnreddinginoz@gmail.com

AUSTRALIND
Revd Cathie Broome, 0466 458 191
revcathiebroome@gmail.com

KALGOORLIE
Revd Elizabeth Smith, 0417 348 997
esmith@perth.anglican.org

MANDURAH
Revd Cheryl Absalom, 0428 781 411
cheryl@anglicanchurchmandurah.org.au

Father Ian Mabey, 0427 131 480
imabey@westnet.com.au