

Welcoming  
Growing  
Sharing



**LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
OF AUSTRALIA  
*where love comes to life*

Sunday 5 January 2025  
Your words reveal your heart

### Scripture

[John 1:\(1-9\) 10-18](#)

### Reflection

A wise mentor once said something to me that forever changed how I interact with people. It went something like this: 'As soon as someone opens their mouth and speaks, they reveal their heart, identity, desires and what is important to them. So, beware of opening your mouth!'

To a degree, this revelation made me mindful of what I actually say in the presence of others, particularly those I first meet or don't know well! And it made me aware of how unmindful many of us are when we open our mouths to speak (or, in this age of social media, choose to write a comment!).

If this saying, 'Your words reveal your heart', is correct, then for me, it unlocks something special for us in today's reading.

Something that characterised the Israelite/Jewish faith as distinct from other Near Eastern religions of the time is that it wasn't a faith that used idols or images to access God. Instead, it was a faith based on words. God is not accessed through a golden calf, an Asherah pole or a carved idol. God's throne on earth – the Ark of the Covenant – is empty! God is too 'otherworldly' to view physically. The Israelites don't bow down to an idol. They bow down to the hidden God who speaks. The access point? God's name. In Genesis 1, this God who speaks creates everything with the power of his words.

Much wiser people than me have dissected, pondered and analysed the first chapter of John's Gospel. But what strikes me is that if spoken words embody a person's mind and will – something that reveals someone's true heart – then what is God's heart? What happens when God speaks to us in this New Testament, this New Covenant, this new epoch – what is revealed? What is God's final word to us, to creation, to the universe?

John calls us back to Genesis chapter 1 with these opening words, 'In the beginning ...'.

But there is just one word spoken, one verbal embodiment of the Living God, a word so powerful that the embodiment is more than just verbal: it's an actual physical 'person'.

One word: Jesus. 'The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us' (John 1:14). Want to see God? Look at Jesus. Want to hear God speak? Listen to Jesus' words. Want to touch God? Jesus is with us 'in the flesh' each Sunday as we commune. God's heart is revealed in the 'Word made flesh', the person Jesus Christ.

by Pastor Stephen Abraham

### Prayer

*Almighty and ever-living God, thank you for revealing your heart to us in the person of your Son Jesus. Lord Jesus, thank you for coming to dwell with us and revealing the Father's heart of love for us in your act of redemption on the cross. Holy Spirit, come and dwell within my heart and blow away the cobwebs of my brokenness. Speak to us, O Living God. We are listening. Amen.*



**WE PRAY**  
**5 January 2025**

**Dear Heavenly Father:**

- † We give you thanks and praise that because of Jesus we have life that we can enjoy to its fullest. God of joy, bless;
- Camille and Adrian as they begin married life on the 11th of January
  - Heather S in her new season of life, whom we farewell on the 12th January
- † We give thanks for those who share your kingdom; pastors and laypeople, for the gift of music and for all who lead us to sing your praise, for Children's Church, Messy Church and OCC Teams who nurture children in the faith, for those who use their creativity and technology to communicate your heart through their words in Chatline, prayers or worship and all of our big-hearted volunteers who bless us with their hospitality, time and talents.
- † Guide our hearts, our hands, our feet, our voices and our lives, so that we may actively work in your kingdom of grace giving hope to those who can't be with us at this time, through long-term or ongoing illness, or those who, as yet, don't know your love.
- † Protecting God, we pray for;
- all who are travelling at this time
  - all affected by bushfires
  - safety for those working in dangerous situations
- Help us to see the needs of those around us and to respond with generosity and kindness.

**Guide us, Lord, as we pray for:**

- † The leaders you have appointed over the LCANZ, churchwide: LCA Bishop, Paul Smith, Assistant Bishop, Stephen Schultz, and the College of Bishops and locally District Bishop, Andrew Brook.
- † All pastors and parishes, principals and schools of the LCANZ, especially those in our South West Metro zone.
- † Pastoral Care Workers of the South Western School Ministry Team. We give thanks and praise for school chaplaincy reaching people in our community. Together we pray that the SA Government will make up the short fall in the Federal Government funding for the next 4 years as the previous Government did.
- † The students, families, teachers and staff of Immanuel Primary and Immanuel College. Bless College Principal, John Thompson, Principal IPS, Bec Clements, College Chaplain, Pastor Simon Cooper and Director of Boarding, Ujith Perera,
- † The chaplains you have called to serve the defence forces, hospitals, Police, prisons, and universities in the SA/NT District and their coordinator, Heidi Smith.
- † The leaders you have appointed over our country: Prime Minister, Anthony Albanese, State Premier, Peter Malinauskas and all our local government leaders.
- † Healing, strength and comfort as we pray alongside Barb K, Elle E, Joan L, Tim S, their families and carers. You have the power to move in our lives and through our circumstances.

## **FAREWELL MORNING TEA**-Sunday 12 January

For all the ways Heather Schmitt has blessed us with her servant heart while a member of ILC, we'd like to show our appreciation with a morning tea in the foyer after worship. Please bring a plate to share.



**SUNDAY WORSHIP ON 2 FEBRUARY WILL BE AT 11:30AM** for the installation of new college Principal, John Thompson. **There will be no worship at 9:30.**

## **LUTHERAN CHRISTMAS MISSION INITIATIVES**-ALWS & Lutheran Care

Please collect an envelope from your pigeonhole or the Welcome Table to give extra care for children with special needs and/or families in need. Place your gift in a marked envelope on the offering plate. Fill in your details to receive a Tax receipt.

## **ST PAUL'S COMMUNITY CARE CENTRE**-Mondays and Wednesdays 11:00-2:00

*St Paul's LC, 48 Brighton Road, Glenelg*

Non-perishable food, bathroom, kitchen and laundry items as well as volunteers urgently needed.

## **THE LUTHERAN MEDIA 2025 CALENDAR**

Now available from the Welcome Table-*thanks Heather.*

You can donate to Lutheran Media at <https://secure.lutheranmedia.org.au/>



## **OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD**

Our OCC Team received a Certificate of Participation from Samaritan's Purse with this message, *"Your support has shown love, brought joy and the Good News of Jesus Christ to children in need around the world."* For 20 years our volunteers have made a big difference in more ways than can be seen and in more lives than they'll ever know. God bless you for your faithful service.

## **ILC VOLUNTEERING SURVEY**

If you have a few spare hours each week or fortnight please consider nominating as an ILC volunteer, prior to or at this meeting. There are a few rosters where we would love to have more people; *Lay Assistants + Stewards + Flowers + Coffee + Sound + PowerPoint + Children's Addresses + Children's Church.* Please complete a Volunteer Nomination Form available at the Welcome Table or online [www.ilc.org.au/volunteering](http://www.ilc.org.au/volunteering)

## **ILC PRAYER GROUP**-Thursdays & Sundays 9:00

You're invited to join in prayer on Thursdays and/or Sundays before worship in the Prayer Chapel. Please leave any **prayer requests** in the gold box on the Welcome Table.

If you have any **feedback**, you can leave a note in the locked wooden box on the Welcome Table. Paper and pens provided, and your message can be anonymous.

# PARISH VACANT

Ann Goodwin - ILC Office Administrator

Email: [agoodwin@immanuel.sa.edu.au](mailto:agoodwin@immanuel.sa.edu.au)

Phone: 8375 1755

Chris Schutz—Nurture Team Leader

[christine.r.schutz@gmail.com](mailto:christine.r.schutz@gmail.com)

Phone: 0439 899 590

## COMING UP at ILC

Sunday 5 January	9:00am	Prayer in the Prayer Chapel- <i>all welcome</i>
	9:30am	Worship without Holy Communion-2nd Sunday after Christmas
Thursday 9 January	9:00am	Prayer in the Prayer Chapel- <i>all welcome</i>
Sunday 12 January	9:30am	Worship with Holy Communion-1st Sunday after Epiphany
	10:30am	Please bring morning tea to share as we thank and farewell Heather S

### REGULAR ELECTRONIC GIVING (REG)

Fill and lodge a Direct Debit Request Form (available from the office), giving the LLL authority to transfer a specific amount from your bank account to ILC's REG account.

**Account Name: NOVAR GARDENS IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH REG A/C**



## LCA Child Safety Standards for Congregations

What does ILC do to keep our children and vulnerable people safe?

**LCA Child Safety Standards for Congregations:**

<https://www.lca.org.au/ministry-support/child-safety-standards/>

**LCA Policies and Procedures:**

<https://www.lca.org.au/services-resources-training/policies/>

## THIS WEEK'S BIBLE READINGS

Jeremiah 31:7-14	The Lord will gather Israel
Psalms 147	The Word became flesh and lived among us
Ephesians 1:3-14	Paul's thanksgiving and prayer
John 1:(1-9)10-18	We saw God's glory in Jesus