



**Weekly Newsletter**  
**Sunday 21 December 2014**

**"Being the Gospel to all People"**

A very warm welcome is extended  
to all visitors to St Johns

Morning tea is offered after the service today, so please stay and enjoy some time with us.

**Today's Theme: 'Great Reversals'**

**Focus Scripture: Luke 1:46b-55**

**Other Readings: 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16**



Luke does not provide the particulars of young Mary's situation; his account is of a young girl who becomes pregnant by divine intervention, and accepts her call to bear the instrument of Israel's salvation. In the "magnificat," Mary sings a song of total trust, singing of great reversals, and rejoicing that even in affliction God can bring about good. The song falls among the most memorable of canticles in scripture, bringing to mind other biblical women anguished by rejection, ridicule, and humiliation – Hagar (Genesis 16:9), Leah (Genesis 29:32), and Hannah (1 Samuel 1:11). Each feels that the Divine has seen her affliction and hears her prayer and cry. God has been her saviour. With Mary, God sees her lowliness, her devaluation, and responds to it by subverting the system through which she is devalued. The pride-filled powerful are brought down and scattered. The lowly are raised up and filled with good things. This is the way of God.

**Luke 1:46-55 (NIV) Mary's Song**

And Mary said: "My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me - holy is his name. His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation. He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts. He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble. He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful to Abraham and his descendants forever, even as he said to our fathers."

## **NEXT WEEK: Sunday Worship: 28 December**

**Focus Scripture: Luke 2:22-40**

**Other Readings:** Psalm 148; Galatians 4:4-7

**Prayer points:** Please pray for: Margaret Morrison's successful radiotherapy treatment; Ron Ashton, Cory Melville (Jeannine's Son) with the continued recovery for his leg wound. Dick and Judy's Grandson Joel with a fall and stitches in his chin

### **CHURCH NOTICES AND EVENTS:**



**Advent – dancing into the Promise:** This year St John's Worship Committee has chosen to replace the 48-hours of prayer that we traditionally hold towards the end of November with a time of directed meditation and prayer that you can undertake in your home. You are invited as a St John's church member to participate in this activity for a week. Each day during this week you are invited to set aside about 20-30 minutes at a time that suits you to sit quietly to contemplate the messages of Christmas, to consider the material we have provided as a stimulus for meditation and to respond to the prayer focus for the day. Resource material is available on the foyer table.

### **Christmas Calendar for St Johns sharing December!**

Sun 21st     9:30 am Worship  
               7:00 pm - Blue Service  
Weds 24th   7:00 pm Family Christmas Eve Service  
               10:30 pm Carol Singing  
               11:00 pm Worship on Christmas Eve  
Thurs 25th   9:30 am Worship on Christmas Day



**Christmas Offerings** this year will be sent to the Auckland City Mission. This is all cash offerings received on Christmas Eve and Day will be forwarded to them. This is from their website: "The Auckland City Mission relies on the generosity of the Auckland public to continue providing our increasingly stretched services to those Aucklanders that need them the most. By making a donation to the Auckland City Mission you are helping to ensure that we can continue to help those Aucklanders who have no one else to turn to and are in desperate need of help, now."

**Holiday Programme 2015 :** As part of January's Holiday Programme we are going to Auckland Zoo. To save costs we would like to take the children by car. Are you able to assist us in providing transport please? Contact Jeannine: 534 2305.

**Mobility Carparks:** Anyone needing a mobility carpark is welcome to drop in and park in the courtyard outside the main church doors. Please ask if you need someone to drive you out.

**Thank you** from Christine Lewis and family for your kind thoughts, prayers and expressions of sympathy over the loss of her father.

**Real Life with John Cowan:** This Sunday night 21 December) John's guest will be Samuel Marsden & Chief Ruatara, **as told by Keith Newman**

**Inspirational TV** Inevitably "festive greetings" and "happy holidays" give way to "MERRY CHRISTMAS" because Christmas is awesome. A simple, irresistible fact. Merry Christmas to you and your family! This week on [www.inspirationaltv.net](http://www.inspirationaltv.net): Christmas videos.

### **State of St John's financial position at the 30/11/2014**

**Comments** (November):

- Offerings for the month of November were above Budget by \$301.00.
- Offerings for the five months [year to-date] are above Budget by \$1,589.00

	Month of November 2014	
	Actual	Budget
EXPENSES	\$13,306.37	\$16,374.00
INCOME	\$14,139.91	\$13,881.00
SURPLUS or (DEFICIT)	<b>\$833.54</b>	<b>(\$2,493.00)</b>

For the year to date (excluding Thanksgiving) our income exceeds expenditure by \$189.00.