



**St Johns**  
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.

Sunday  
24-Dec-2023  
AND  
25-Dec-2023

## 24th Scripture reading: Ruth chapter 4 (NIV)

Merry Christmas

### Boaz Marries Ruth

<sup>4</sup> Meanwhile Boaz went up to the town gate and sat down there just as the guardian-redeemer he had mentioned came along. Boaz said, "Come over here, my friend, and sit down." So, he went over and sat down.

<sup>2</sup> Boaz took ten of the elders of the town and said, "Sit here," and they did so. <sup>3</sup> Then he said to the guardian-redeemer, "Naomi, who has come back from Moab, is selling the piece of land that belonged to our relative Elimelek. <sup>4</sup> I thought I should bring the matter to your attention and suggest that you buy it in the presence of these seated here and in the presence of the elders of my people. If you will redeem it, do so. But if you will not, tell me, so I will know. For no one has the right to do it except you, and I am next in line."

"I will redeem it," he said.

<sup>5</sup> Then Boaz said, "On the day you buy the land from Naomi, you also acquire Ruth the Moabite, the dead man's widow, in order to maintain the name of the dead with his property."

<sup>6</sup> At this, the guardian-redeemer said, "Then I cannot redeem it because I might endanger my own estate. You redeem it yourself. I cannot do it."

<sup>7</sup> (Now in earlier times in Israel, for the redemption and transfer of property to become final, one party took off his sandal and gave it to the other. This was the method of legalizing transactions in Israel.)

<sup>8</sup> So the guardian-redeemer said to Boaz, "Buy it yourself." And he removed his sandal.

<sup>9</sup> Then Boaz announced to the elders and all the people, "Today you are witnesses that I have bought from Naomi all the property of Elimelek, Kilion and Mahlon. <sup>10</sup> I have also acquired Ruth the Moabite, Mahlon's widow, as my wife, in order to maintain the name of the dead with his property, so that his name will not disappear from among his family or from his hometown. Today you are witnesses!"

<sup>11</sup> Then the elders and all the people at the gate said, "We are witnesses. May the Lord make the woman who is coming into your home like Rachel and Leah, who together built up the family of Israel. May you have standing in Ephrathah and be famous in Bethlehem. <sup>12</sup> Through the offspring the Lord gives you by this young woman, may your family be like that of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah."

### Naomi Gains a Son

<sup>13</sup> So Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife. When he made love to her, the Lord enabled her to conceive, and she gave birth to a son. <sup>14</sup> The women said to Naomi: "Praise be to the Lord, who this day has not left you without a guardian-redeemer. May he become famous throughout Israel! <sup>15</sup> He will renew your life and sustain you in your old age. For your daughter-in-law, who loves you and who is better to you than seven sons, has given him birth."

<sup>16</sup> Then Naomi took the child in her arms and cared for him. <sup>17</sup> The women living there said, "Naomi has a son!" And they named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David.

### The Genealogy of David

<sup>18</sup> This, then, is the family line of Perez:

Perez was the father of Hezron,

<sup>19</sup> Hezron the father of Ram,

Ram the father of Amminadab,

<sup>20</sup> Amminadab the father of Nahshon,

Nahshon the father of Salmon,

<sup>21</sup> Salmon the father of Boaz,

Boaz the father of Obed,

<sup>22</sup> Obed the father of Jesse,

and Jesse the father of David.



Sunday

25-Dec-2023

THIS WEEK

Scripture readings: 1 John 1 (New International Version)

From: 24-Dec-2023

To: 31-Dec-2023

### The Incarnation of the Word of Life

1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. <sup>2</sup>The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. <sup>3</sup>We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. <sup>4</sup>We write this to make our joy complete.

### Pastoral Reflection

Merry Christmas, friends, who love St Johns,

Welcome to our fourth Sunday of Advent. Last week, when we picked up the story it was at the end of the harvest season. We witnessed Naomi cooking up a desperate plan to try and address their desperate situation. In order for them to ensure secure their future, they were depended on Ruth producing a male child with a blood relative. Naomi was old, so the next of Kin redeemer was useless to her. Ruth was a Moabite, so she was excluded from the assembly. The two women were in a no-win situation.

Thus, Ruth's story was not merely a love story, but a story of survival. This was a story of two women who were falling through the cracks in the society, they were forced to create a desperate plan out of their desperation. Ruth's story was not a Middle-class, white fenced story. It was a story about low social economic, people in the bottom social hierarchy- working poor story. It was a story that required and called for God's intervention.

Ruth's story highlights ways in which God choses to intervene. God often intervenes through the decisions of people living in communities. Ruth embodies Heseed (covenant, faithful love) to Naomi. Boaz embodies Kanaf (a covering) to Ruth and Naomi. In that way, Ruth and Boaz's story embody's the spirit of Christmas. Christmas is God taking on human flesh in a form of a little baby in Bethlehem. Christmas is God saying redemption is not just a grand gesture; redemption is God embodied in the lives of people. The write of 1 John will then write:

**“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. <sup>2</sup>The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. <sup>3</sup>We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. <sup>4</sup>We write this to make our joy complete.”**

In essence the Christmas story is God incarnated. i.e., God taking on the human flesh and intervening in human stories and altering its destructive ends. A very Merry Christmas everybody!

**Sunday 24-Dec-2023**

9.30 am Christmas Eve Sunday Service in English (Chinese subtitle)  
7:30 pm Christmas Eve Service in English and Mandarin, jointly held with Christian Youth Church

**Monday 25-Dec-2023**

9:30 am Christmas Holy Communion Service in English (Chinese subtitle)

**Tuesday 26-Dec-2023**

N/A

**Wednesday 27-Dec-2023**

N/A

**Thursday 28-Dec-2023**

Musiqhub - school holiday

**Friday 29-Dec-2023**

N/A

**Sunday 31-Dec-2023**

9.30 am Sunday Service in English (Chinese subtitle)  
3:30 pm Christian Youth Church

**Sunday 31-Dec-2023**

Scripture readings: Isaiah 43:18-21

**Prayer points:**

- For peace and restoration of stability in Israel, Ukraine and other regions experiencing unrest;
- For Jane's health;
- For Brenda's health;
- For Felicity's recovery;
- For violence and crime to be subdued in our country.
- For those who have had major surgery and are recovering;
- For support for all those who have lost loved ones, homes and/or livelihoods in the recent natural disasters.



**Thanksgiving** **\$6,706 collected**  
**as of Dec 21**

Express thankfulness by giving back!  
**Collection Period: Nov - Dec 2023**  
Whether you give online or through envelopes, please use the remark  
**"Thanksgiving."**



This year's Thanksgiving donation will support:

- 90% for general repair and maintenance fund
- 5% for the Breakfast Club
- 5% for Youth and Community Development Trust (Howick)

Bank account: 03-0166-0135407-025 (Bucklands Beach Co-op Parish)


**Join us in spreading gratitude and helping those in need!**



**Office Close**  
between  
**1 January 2024**  
&  
**21 January 2024**



For serious pastoral support,  
please contact Judy McDonald  
021 057 6327



**Cash Offerings collected on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day will be donated to Breakfast Club**

What is preventing students from learning? It might be a lack of shoes, problems in the home, no budget for sanitary products, no way to stay dry on a rainy day. The struggles some kids have, are beyond what many of us could ever imagine.

## Friday evening Youth Group - School Holiday

### Songs for 24 Dec

1. Yet not I but through Christ in me
2. O come all ye faithful
3. Shout to the lord
4. Majesty
5. O Holy night



### Songs for 25 Dec

1. O Holy night
2. What child is this
3. Three kings of Orient are
4. O come O come, Emmanuel

Sunday Services:	English 9:30a.m.	
Office Hours:	Tues - Friday 9:00 am – 12:00 noon	
Phone: 09 534 2305	Email: <a href="mailto:office@stjohnsbb.org.nz">office@stjohnsbb.org.nz</a>	
Website:	<a href="https://stjohnsbb.org.nz">https://stjohnsbb.org.nz</a>	
Minister	Rev Jeff Odhiambo	022 674 0044
Administrator	Winnie Wong	
Property Manager	Charles de Vilder	
People's Warden	Ayleen de Vilder	
Minister's Warden	Julie Dickey	
Pastoral Care	Judy McDonald	021 057 6327
Prayer Chain	Judy McDonald	
Direct Credit Offerings AC	03-0166-0135407-025	

**Youth Group:** Contact Jeff [minister@stjohnsbb.org.nz](mailto:minister@stjohnsbb.org.nz)

	Today's Helpers 24-Dec-2023	Tomorrow's Helpers 25-Dec-2023
Preacher	Rev Jeff Odhiambo	Rev Jeff Odhiambo
Musician/s	Des Sharp, Alicia Odhiambo Albert Ip, Winnie Wong	Jeanette Li Dimock, Albert Ip Winnie Wong
Projector & Sound Desk	Michael Zhao	Alicia Odhiambo
Reader	Judy McDonald	Alison Stanton
Intercessor	Julie Dickey	Jeff Odhiambo
HC set up	N/A	Jeff Odhiambo
HC Serving team	N/A	Alison Stanton
Prayer ministry	Joan Jones	
Sunday School	N/A	N/A
Welcome Desk	Ayleen de Vilder	
Usher	Charles de Vilder	N/A
Counters	Charles de Vilder Trevor Haigh	To lock and to be counted following Sunday
Morning Tea	Hongyan Song Julie Dickey	Not required