

Jeanette Winterson's Christmas Story is now available online:  
<http://www.jeanettewinterson.com/pages/news/index.asp?NewsID=29>  
*she writes in it about the "Christmas story":*

'It's a good story, the Christmas story. It starts with a demand for money – everyone goes to their own town to be taxed – and it ends with a gift – the gift of a child. You don't have to be religious to like the challenge of that – demands versus gifts, money versus what is beyond price.

'What you risk reveals what you value.' Said the Fairy.

'What does the Christmas story tell us about risk?'

'Risk everything – there is no other way.'

I thought of them in the stable, under the animals' breath, lying on straw, waiting for a birth, outcast and outside. Drinking water from an animal trough. Soaking the straw under her body with blood and water. Joseph trusting the truth of her body, the truth of the baby, believing the incredible, that this child born under a star will pull the world towards him like a gravity field, unseen, unknown, but felt. The fields outside are silent in the night. Joseph believes, but his heart is broken too, because this isn't his baby and all the gold and frankincense and myrrh they bring can't change that. He will live with this loss all his life.

'Christmas is the Festival of Broken Hearts' said the Fairy....."

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And news from Bethlehem

"...In the birthplace of Jesus, the impact of Israeli settlements and their growth has been devastating. In a Christmas message, the Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas said Bethlehem was enduring a "choking reality".

He added: "For the first time in 2,000 years of Christianity in our homeland, the Holy Cities of Bethlehem and Jerusalem have been completely separated by Israeli settlements, racist walls and checkpoints."

Bethlehem is now surrounded by 22 settlements, including Nokdim, where the hardline former Israeli foreign minister Avigdor Lieberman lives, and Neve Daniel, home to public diplomacy minister Yuli Edelstein.

The city is further hemmed in by the vast concrete and steel separation barrier, bypasses connecting settlements with Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, and Israeli military zones. With little room to expand, it is now more densely populated than Gaza, according to one Palestinian official.

Harriet Sherwood The Observer, Sunday 23 December 2012

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/dec/23/bethlehem-christians-feel-squeeze-settlements>



# St Philip's *Come & See*

**CHRISTMAS EVE & CHRISTMAS DAY**  
**24<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2012**

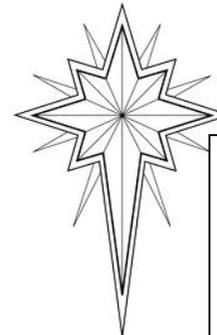
24 December,	5pm	Children's Christmas Service
	11pm	Carol Singing
	11.30pm	Midnight Eucharist
25 December,	9am	Christmas Day Eucharist

at 11.30pm

Readings: Isaiah 9.2-7; Psalm 96; Titus 2.11-14; Luke 2.1-14 (15-20)  
(liturgical assistant Robin Moore, Readers: Tim & Jan Gulliver)  
Carolyn & Mandy Forbes and Jenny Sawyer are singing:  
Introit: "Wolcum Yole" (Britten-Ceremony of Carols)  
during Communion: "Sing Lullaby" and "Quem Pastores",  
Recessional: "This Little Babe" (Britten - Ceremony of Carols).

at 9am

Readings: Isaiah 52:7-10; Psalm 96; Hebrews 1:1-4 (5-12); John 1:1-14



**Visitors are welcome to receive Holy Communion.**

Communion bread is administered first.  
The two common cups for sipping follow,  
then the small cup for intinction (dipping).

## Psalm 96

- 1 O sing to the Lord a new song:  
sing to the Lord, all the earth.
- 2 Sing to the Lord and bless his holy name:  
proclaim the good news of his salvation from day to day.
- 3 Declare his glory among the nations:  
and his wonders among all peoples.
- 4 For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised:  
he is more to be feared than all gods.
- 5 As for all the gods of the nations, they are mere idols:  
it is the Lord who made the heavens.
- 6 Majesty and glory are before him:  
beauty and power are in his sanctuary.
- 7 Render to the Lord, you families of the nations:  
render to the Lord glory and might.
- 8 Render to the Lord the honour due to his name:  
bring offerings and come into his courts.
- 9 O worship the Lord in the beauty of his holiness:  
let the whole earth stand in awe of him.
- 10 Say among the nations that the Lord is king:  
he has made the world so firm that it can never be moved;  
and he shall judge the peoples with equity.
- 11 Let the heavens rejoice and let the earth be glad:  
let the sea roar, and all that fills it:
- 12 Let the fields rejoice, and everything in them:  
then shall all the trees of the wood shout with joy before the Lord;
- 13 For he comes, he comes to judge the earth:  
he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with  
his truth.

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Rector: Rev'd Rebecca Newland  
Dinka Language Congregation Leader: Peter Manyok Kuot  
Hon. Deacons: Rev'd Linda Anchell & Rev'd Robin Moore (St Philip's Care)  
Hon. Associate Priests: Rev'd Jeannette McHugh,  
Rev'd Steve Clarke (Director of Mission & Justice, Anglicare)  
**Rector's Warden:** Leighton Mann, **People's Wardens:** Helen Palethorpe & Roger Sharp  
**Parish Councillors:** Ian Cousins, Shane Woodburn, Fred Anchell, Vicki Luker,  
Peter Wilson, Louise McKay

## The Rector Writes

*Dear Friends*

When I was a child, The great countdown to Christmas morning, opening presents, gathering with family and friends for Mum's special food and water fights in the afternoon with the cousins on Grandma's lawn. In my family the spiritual side of Christmas and the story of Jesus birth was simply not part of our Christmas. It was a very strange thing when at about the age of 12 I asked if I could go to the midnight service at our local church. Yet in all the changes of my life, the many Christmas celebrations, the different places and families and friends it has been that central story of God coming to us, God with us, that has sustained me in these times. I hope we can all find a still point in these coming weeks when we can rest in God's enduring ever-present love.

One of the prayers from our St Philip's Advent calendar (on the web page [www.stphilipsoconnor.org.au](http://www.stphilipsoconnor.org.au)) sums up this hope:

Intimate God,  
we yearn for the light of your coming  
and the warmth of your embrace;  
focus our hearts on the truly important  
and keep us centred on that still point, Jesus our Emmanuel,  
who is alive with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God now and for ever. Amen.  
(— Bosco Peters).

*I wish you all the very best for this season.*

*Peace & love*

*Rebecca*

N.B. As I am away at a conference some days, visiting my mother others and have a few days at the coast with David there will be no regular morning prayer held in the church during January. Regular prayers will resume in February.

Items for the Pew bulletin and names for the Prayer list (add or remove), please forward to Linda by Thursday. [lindafrd@pcug.org.au](mailto:lindafrd@pcug.org.au) 6236 3227  
If you would like to receive the bulletin by email every week email Linda.

**Pandora's @ O'Connor – Closed until 11<sup>th</sup> January 2013**