



# The Messenger

South Mandurah Uniting Church's Weekly Newsletter

Welcome to our Sunday Service of worship, commencing at **9-30am** every Sunday



## Epiphany Worship

### *Saving The Best Till Last*

The Jews attached great importance to the high moments of life. Thus a wedding was not just a brief ceremony, but an experience shared by the entire community. The typical wedding feast could last up to seven days. That sounds strange to our modern way of thinking, but this offered a bright interlude in an otherwise dreary existence. The ceremony would begin on Tuesday at midnight. After the wedding the father of the bride would take his daughter to every house so that everyone might congratulate her. It was a community experience. Weddings were a time of joy.



Years ago, when Johnny Carson was the host of The Tonight Show, he interviewed an eight year old boy. The young man was asked to appear because he had rescued two friends in a coalmine outside his hometown in West Virginia. As Johnny questioned the boy, it became apparent to him and the audience that the young man was a Christian. So Johnny asked him if he attended Sunday school. When the boy said he did Johnny inquired, "What are you learning in Sunday school?" "Last week," came his reply, "our lesson was about when Jesus went to a wedding and turned water into wine." The audience roared, but Johnny tried to keep a straight face. Then he said, "And what did you learn from that story?" The boy squirmed in his chair. It was apparent he hadn't thought about this. But then he lifted up his face and said, "If you're going to have a wedding, make sure you invite Jesus!" The little boy was on to something. Weddings are time of Joy.

At the wedding, which Jesus attended in Cana of Galilee, there was great joy but a problem developed. There was a shortage of wine. Not only was that a social embarrassment, it was also a symbol. For a wedding to run out of wine was an omen that there was little chance of this particular marriage reaching its full potential, maybe joy was not meant for this couple. So Mary approaches Jesus and asks him to do something. Jesus was reluctant, but Mary's faith in him lead to Jesus performing his first miracle, bringing joy to all the attendees, and (undeserved) credit to the bridegroom for saving the best till last. But it is Jesus who has promised us that he is saving the best till last for all those who believe in Him and are truly faithful, whereupon when we leave this life we will join Him in heaven for eternity.

[www.sermons.com](http://www.sermons.com) (Edited)

## Epiphany 2 19 January 2025



Welcome: Rosie Sharp & Judy Law  
Flowers: Jan Gibson  
Coffee/Tea: Ken & Julie Lehmann  
Reader: John Lawrence  
Kids Church: TBA  
Music: Jan Gibson  
Church Rep: Andrew Telfer  
Worship Leader: Andrew Telfer  
Speaker: Piet Speyers

## Epiphany 3 26 January 2025

Welcome: Keith & Jaren Picking  
Flowers: Judy Law  
Coffee/Tea: Sue & John Lawrence  
Reader: Chris Ashley  
Kids Church: TBA  
Music: Sherryl Smith  
Church Rep: Kerry Lawson  
Worship Leader: John Lawrence  
Speaker: Evelyn Ashley



### Readings from the Lectionary

Is 62:1-5  
Ps 36:5-10  
1 Cor 12:1-11  
Jn 2:1-11

Neh 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10  
Ps 19  
1 Cor 12:12-31a  
Lk 4:14-21



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Members of the Leadership Team: Rev. Mike Fawcett, Ps. Yoy Alberastine, Kerry Lawson, Sherryl Smith, Andrew Telfer & Raelyn Punch

### Halls Head Bendigo Bank details for electronic transfers:

A/C Name: Uniting Church in Australia-South Mandurah Congregation  
BSB: 633-000 A/C No: 117072207

It is optional whether you include your name as a reference for the payment.



Our Vision: "United in Christ we reach out to build loving relationships that deepen faith and enrich lives."

## A Sense of Awe

I consider it divine good fortune that we have a scripture lesson so early in the year which encourages us to ponder a miracle. You and I need to become more sensitive to the possibility of miracles. Such a sensitivity will help us recognise present miracles, which we either do not see or which we take for granted; and it will prepare us to receive still more miracles.



Walt Whitman, who is considered one of the most influential poets in American literature (1819-1892), felt that "each part and tag" of his own person was a miracle, and that "a mouse is miracle enough to confound sextillions of infidels." He reminded us that we are surrounded by the glorious and the miraculous and do not know it. Science ought to have increased our sense of awe, as it has unfolded the marvels of the heavens above and mysteries of our bodies within; but we take the attitude that if we know how far it is to a given planet, we have, therefore, encompassed all its significance.

We need to know that God is at work in our world. The affairs of this world, and of our individual lives, often seem to be out of control. At such times we can be reassured by the knowledge that God has worked wonderfully in days past, and that he is still at work today.

J. Ellsworth Kalas, Epiphany: A Faith to Work Miracles, CSS Publishing (Edited)

## Humour: Miracles

There is a time-honoured story about a sceptic who was continually harassing the local pastor. His one delight in life seemed to be making the pastor appear inadequate intellectually. The pastor bore these challenges to his theology and faith with great restraint.



One day the sceptic was heckling the pastor about his views on miracles. "Give me one concrete example of a miracle," the sceptic taunted. "One concrete example." Whereupon the pastor hauled off and kicked the sceptic as hard as he could on the shin.

The sceptic couldn't believe it!

The pastor asked, "Did you feel that?"

"Yes," the man whined as he nursed his sore leg.

"If you had not," said the pastor, "it would have been a miracle!"

King Duncan, Collected Sermons, www.Sermons.com (Edited)



*A very warm welcome is extended to any visitors. We trust that you will be blessed during this time of worship and invite you to fellowship with us after the service.*



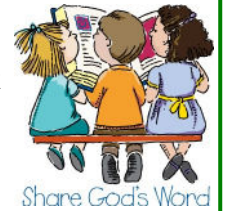
## Thank You

A very special thank you to Chris Ashley for all his work organising the resealing of the carpark at the rear of our church and for doing much of the weeding. Thank you also to the men who joined the busy bee on Sunday afternoon in preparation for the workmen arriving Monday to repair the carpark.



## Why Not Join a New Home Group?

A new home group will be commencing 7pm Friday 31<sup>st</sup> January at Chris and Evelyn's place. Initially, we will be looking at the book of Philippians, so if you are planning to come, please read the first chapter. If you wish to be a part of the group and have not already expressed your interest, please contact Evelyn on 0412 825 259 or [evelyn.ashley@iinet.net.au](mailto:evelyn.ashley@iinet.net.au)



Share God's Word

## The Annual Report

Thank you to those who have sent photos taken at church functions which may be suitable for inclusion in this year's Annual Report. More photos are needed so please send them in PDF format to Peter as soon as possible E: [prpunch@lasar.net.au](mailto:prpunch@lasar.net.au)



## An Epiphany Prayer

We forget sometimes that the Jesus whose birth we celebrated at Christmas spent many years growing up in a small Jewish family, growing wiser and stronger, learning a trade, waiting for his moment. Waiting for the pieces of the bigger picture to fall into place, when he would enter the waters of the Jordan, the Holy Spirit descend on him and that voice come from heaven proclaiming, "You are my one dear Son; in you I take great delight."

Father God, as we join together in worship let us not forget your infinite patience and love in dealing with your people, of which we count ourselves. Use us in your service, that we might draw others into your kingdom. To your praise and glory we ask this. **Amen.**

[www.faithandworship.com/prayers\\_Epiphany.htm](http://www.faithandworship.com/prayers_Epiphany.htm)

## Pastoral Care

For pastoral care or spiritual guidance please contact:

**Rev. Mike Fawcett**

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E: [fawcettmichael176@gmail.com](mailto:fawcettmichael176@gmail.com)



**OR** Any member of the leadership team (their names are overleaf)

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY

**Ron Lawson** Monday 20 January  
**Andrew Telfer** Tuesday 21 January  
**Jonathon Smith** Tuesday 21 January  
**Piet Speyers** Friday 24 January  
**God Bless and warm wishes  
To you all upon your birthdays**