



Parramatta
Mission



uniting
church
in Australia,
Synod of NSW & ACT

OUR NEWS for 1st January 2017

*Learn From Yesterday,
Live For Today,
Hope For Tomorrow.*

Happy New Year



*Congregational life @ Westmead &
Parramatta, Hospitality, Community and
Mental Health Services across
Greater Sydney and beyond*

Our Vision

*A Community Transforming Lives
Our Values, Grace, Inclusion, Dignity,
Faith and Hope*

Matthew 2:13-23

13 When the Magi had departed, unexpectedly, an angel appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to seek the child to destroy him". 14 So he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt, 15 and was there until the death of Herod; in order that the word spoken by the prophet might be fulfilled, "Out of Egypt I called my son". 16 Then Herod, seeing that he was mocked by the Magi, was exceedingly angry, and he sent and killed all the boy children in Bethlehem and in all the surrounding districts, from two years and under, according to the time when he inquired from the Magi. 17 Then was fulfilled the word spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: 18 "A voice was heard in Ramah, much weeping and mourning; Rachel is weeping for her children; and would not be comforted because they are no more". 19 But when Herod died, unexpectedly, the angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt 20 saying, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel; for those who seek the child's life have died". So rising, he took the child and his mother and entered the land of Israel. 22 But when he heard that Archelaus ruled over Judea in place of his father Herod, he feared to go there, and being warned by a dream, he departed into the district of Galilee, 23 and he went and lived in a city called Nazareth; so that the word spoken by the prophet might be fulfilled, "He shall be called a Nazarene".

(Translation by Keith Hamilton)

Reflections on the Lectios

The season of Christmas is 12 days, hence the song. Depending upon the day, not date, of Christmas there can be either one or two Sundays. This Christmas there is one Sunday in the season of Christmas, and it also aligns with New Year's Day. So we have extra reason to say Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Today's Gospel begins with Joseph having another dream. Dreams are different to visions. Visions are where images come before us, usually when we are awake but not exclusively so and of which we have no control over. They come from outside. Dreams, on the other hand, are created by the sub-conscious mind. They will use material familiar to us and at the same time there could be new material. We can manipulate dreams. That is, we are part of this 'film making' that is taking place in our sub-conscious. At the same time, often, God is involved in the dreaming process. It could be our sub-consciousness speaking to us, or it could be the Holy Spirit speaking to us through dreams. The message may be clear, or it may require interpretation to find the meaning. Some people write or draw the dream to help them interpret it. The message may not be the most obvious one.

There are many different types of dreams. Here Joseph is having a warning dream and fortunately for the story, he takes heed of the warning. The family move to Egypt.

Does this remind you of another Joseph who went to Egypt and who was recognised for his dream interpretation? Does the story resonate with the story of the less than 2 year old Moses who was hidden in the bull-rushes to avoid facing a similar death to that of other 2 year old Israelite children in Egypt? Matthew deliberately wants us to make those connections. Jesus is the new Moses who will lead the people out of captivity into the promised land. Matthew uses story to make a statement about who Jesus Christ is.

The statement by the Uniting Church found in the Basis of Union that “We are pilgrim people on a journey to the promised end” has its genesis in the movement from captivity to freedom led by the new Moses, Jesus of Nazareth.

God speaks to us through many different means. Sometimes God breaks in to our consciousness through visions, at other times we may only discern the message through careful ‘listening’. We could miss many messages through inattentiveness, and thus miss out on many blessings. Hence the importance of regular prayer that helps us ‘tune-in’. Not forgetting that we also measure any message against our reading of Scripture.

The Christian faith, as taught by its founder Jesus, is that God is present at all times in all places. So while many are on holidays, the church is still engaged in the work of God in the community. PM people are there even today providing hospitality, walking along side of someone in their journey, nurturing faith and hope. From all of us at PM, thank you to those who worked on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and again today, New Year's Day, making a difference in people's lives, demonstrating that no one is alone, a Christmas New Year Message.

It is also that time when many close off the past year, and set a new course for a new year. Best wishes with your best resolutions; may they with your efforts become reality in 2017.

Blessings, Keith Hamilton

- Manas will be on leave through January. Veitinia will be providing full-time supply during this time.
- Parramatta Mission Office will be closed from 3pm Friday 23rd and re opening Tuesday 3rd January 2017. Mealsplus will be operational on the non public holidays during the office closure period

♥ *Prayers for all who are travelling, and all who are holidaying, and all who are keeping organisations going through working at this time. Prayers for people who feel lonely at Christmas New Year.*

Worship Services at Parramatta Mission

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| Mon to Fri | 9.00am - 2.00pm | Open Church @ Leigh Memorial |
| Tuesday | 1.10pm | Holy Communion @ Leigh |
| Sunday | 9.30am | Leigh Memorial Congregation @ Leigh |
| | 9.45am | Westmead Congregation @ Westmead |
| | 11.15am | Leigh Fijian Congregation @ Leigh |
| | 1.30pm | Korean Faith Community @ Leigh |
| | 7.00pm | Praise, Prayer, Cake & Coffee @ Leigh |

Contacts

Leigh Memorial Congregation – Leigh Congregation leaders,
Veitinia Waqabaca, through the church office, 98912277

Leigh Memorial Church 119 Macquarie St Parramatta

Leigh Fijian Congregation: 9891 2277

Leigh Korean Faith Community Minister: Rev Hyun Goo Jun 0433 320 588

Westmead Congregation Rev Christine Bayliss Kelly 0409 925 607

Westmead Church 175 Hawkesbury Road Westmead: 98919354

Senior Minister/Group CEO Rev Keith Hamilton 0417 487 446

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