

Charman Uniting Church

News Letter

29th November 2026 Vol 7 No 43 Advent 1



Christ is Coming!

(but when?)

In the late 19th Century in America, there was a wave of enthusiasm for prophecies predicting the actual date for Christ's Second Coming.
One such prophet was an Adventist leader William Miller (1782-1849). And it is in his movement that both the Jehovah's Witnesses and the Seventh Day Adventists find their roots.

Miller first predicted that Christ would return on 21st March 1842, but then revised the date to April 3, 1843. Over 3,500 of his followers jammed the Boston Advent Temple, only to be disappointed. You might have thought that the movement would have died. But it didn't. Rather it continued to grow. Miller decided to recalculate his date for the Second Coming and soon publicised a new date - April 18, 1844. When the messiah did not show up on that date, there was again frustration and some followers left the Adventist ranks.

Undeterred by these failures, Miller came up with a third date - 22nd October 1844. The date was publicized as the Millerite publication True Midnight Cry. And, surprisingly, this third date surprisingly rallied his followers. They began to spread the news of the new date of the second coming with an enthusiasm that had not seen before. Churches which did not accept this message were denounced as agents of "Babylon." and the devil.

And - despite opposition from established, mainline religious groups -, thousands of people – including many clergy – began to defect to the Millerite cult. As doomsday approached, the Millerites began to prepare. One account notes that "Fields were left unharvested, shops were closed, people quit their jobs, paid their debts, and freely gave away their possessions with no thought of repayment." Huge press runs of Advent publications like The Midnight Cry warned the public that "The Time Is Short". "Prepare to Meet Thy God!" and "The Lord is Coming!" William Miller himself began peddling white "ascension robes" to the faithful, many of whom waited for the miraculous event in freshly dug graves. But as we all know, the Second Coming did not occur on 22nd October 1844.

In fact if they had heeded this morning's Gospel, they would not have been taken in by Miller's false prophecy. For Jesus speaking about the Second Coming said: "*No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come.* (Mark 13)



When I looked at the Lectionary reading for today I wondered what on earth does a passage about the Second Coming of Christ have to do with Advent!!! For many of us, Advent is a time when we look forward to the Birth of Jesus two thousand years ago in a stable in Bethlehem. However it is also the time we look forward to Christ's Second Coming. As I reflected on the meaning of Advent, I found myself drawn to three themes in the Gospel passage. Themes that I think are useful to reflect on during Advent.

1. He is coming again
The first of these themes was that, as we prepare to remember Jesus's coming to this earth two thousand years ago in Bethlehem , so we can look forward to his Second Coming. And that is something special to look forward to. Jesus said, *"At that time men will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. And he will send his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens".*

The great Christian hope that HE WILL COME AGAIN and he will usher in a new heaven and a new earth, where there will be no more tears, no more suffering and Jesus will be the light in our midst. (Rev 21 and 22)
Perhaps we should live our lives, all the year round, as an ADVENT preparing for that event.

2. God has work for us to do on earth.
The second of these themes was that God still has work for us to do on earth. We are called to live our Christian life in our communities – loving our neighbours as ourselves – sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ with our neighbours. Jesus had this to say about the time in which we are living - leading up to the Second Coming:
It's like a man going away: He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with his assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch. *"Therefore keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back--whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or at dawn. If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping".*

Britain is a deeply "spiritually inquisitive" nation. How else can we account for the avid addiction to horoscopes in the national press and on television. When I was a member of the Anglican Chaplaincy Team in the Wolds Prison, I found that lots of prisoners would pour over the Bible – fascinated by the prophecies of Revelation.
But few of them would go further and commit their lives to Christ. Jesus wants us to focus on living the Christian life today, not dreaming of the future. Martin Luther is reputed to have said that even if he knew Christ was going to return tomorrow, he would still plant an apple tree.

3. Watch, be alert
The final theme I saw - from our Gospel reading this morning - is that Jesus wants us to be on our guard - to be alert. He wants us to be so well schooled in the Scriptures that we cannot be taken in by false prophets , as the Millerites were about 150 years ago. When I was a young Christian, I was taught to challenge everything I heard from the pulpit, to ask myself the question: Does what is being preached coincide with a reasonable interpretation of Scripture.

In conclusion, our Gospel reading encourages us to know
1. that one day Jesus will return in glory and that we are living in the ADVENT of that time
2. that Jesus wants us to go on living as if he was coming tomorrow - to be on RED ALERT. If he came tomorrow, would you be embarrassed by what he would find you doing? and
3. Jesus wants us to be on our guard – against being led astray by false prophets and teachers.

Revd. Martin Dale
Retired Anglican Minister

1968-1972 Charterhouse
1973-1976 University of London, Chelsea College
1999-2001 Wycliffe Hall, University of Oxford



Read more at -

SermonCentral



"For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder, and His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."
Isaiah 9:6

You are invited to our Christmas Celebration
Sunday December 13
4.00 pm - Coffee Van, Gelati, Sausage Sizzle, Petting Zoo
6.00 pm - Carols

St. David's Parkdale Uniting Church
128 Parkers Road, Parkdale - www.parkdaleuniting.com.au
03 (03) 9580 2889 - office@parkdaleuniting.com.au

Children's Ground

Walk with us



Children's Ground was set up to give people agency. To give people a say. To give them choice in how they see their children growing up. Because the oldest education system in the world deserves a strong future.

Click on the above image or **HERE** to read the full story



- First Nations people across Australia have self-determination and enjoy social, cultural, political and economic justice.
- Our next generation of children know and celebrate their culture and identity, have freedom of choice and expression and can live with opportunity, peace, harmony and wellbeing.

Australians recognise our shared history and celebrate First Nations culture and strength.



Achieve systemic reform over 25 years through the Children's Ground Approach led by our First Nations people. Evidencing this approach for national reform.

And through our approach, celebrate and uplift First Nations knowledge, creating equity and access to high quality education, health and economy in community for the next generation of children.



Recognising children, families, our Elders and our culture. Listening to the way we as First Nations people want to lead and then following that path.

Upholding First Nations law and culture and the central place of land, kinship, responsibilities and knowledge from Apmerengetyele (from the land).

For the full story of Children's Ground click on the image at the right or HERE to watch a short video….



CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

Monday 30th November to Sunday 6th December.

CHARMAN UNITING CHURCH

313 CHARMAN ROAD CHELTENHAM

DECORATE A TREE

BETWEEN 2PM AND 5PM ON SATURDAY 28TH OR SUNDAY 29TH NOVEMBER
BE PART OF OUR INAUGURAL CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL.

BRING YOUR TREE AND DECORATIONS TO 313 CHARMAN ROAD

Decorate your tree in a traditional style

OR

a theme which may relate to your business or your group's activities

OR your family's special interest

Let your imagination FLY
see what others have done

Come and view trees
30 November - 6th December

MONDAY, TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY
1PM TO 5PM
THURSDAY & FRIDAY 3PM TO 7PM
SATURDAY AND SUNDAY 1PM TO 5PM

Free entry for trees and visitors



OUR ANNUAL GIVING TREE

Every year our congregation has the Giving Tree .

Our generous congregation can bring gifts for all ages ,and place them under the Christmas tree .

The gifts will be given to Family Life, who will distribute them to those unable to afford presents for their families .

Please bring the gifts unwrapped .

We aim to hand over our contribution by December 4th.

Many thanks in anticipation of your thoughtfulness .

Barb Allan



Pastor Di admiring last year's Giving Tree at Black Rock



Leprosy Mission Australia

Christmas Catalogue 2024

Your shopping is transforming lives — one gift at a time!



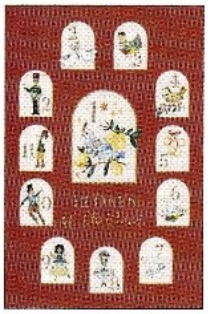
Gift Love and Hope this Christmas

Click **HERE** to go straight to the leprosy shop

1800 710 710 shop.leprosymission.org.au Shop online

Let Christmas wishes support those in need.

Your purchase helps people in crisis this Christmas.



12 Days of Christmas

$15 per pack of 10

Sentiment: May the festive season bring only happiness and joy to you and your loved ones.



Australian Native Flora (Mixed Pack 1)

$15 per pack of 10

Native Flora sentiment: May you have a wonderful Christmas and a happy New Year.
Floral Joy sentiment: May the joy and peace of Christmas be yours throughout the year.



Christmas Stockings

$15 per pack of 10

Sentiment: Wishing you a wonderful Christmas and Happy New Year.

Nativity (Mixed Pack 2)

$15 per pack of 10

Nativity Sentiment: May joy be yours during the season of goodwill and may the New Year bring grace and peace.

Nativity Bible Verse: 'And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.' John 1:14

Three Kings Sentiment: May joy be your gift at Christmas and may hope and love be your treasures in the New Year.
Three Kings Bible Verse: 'From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.' John 1:16





Peace Dove

$15 per pack of 10

Sentiment: May happiness be yours during the season of goodwill and may the new year bring peace and joy to you and your loved ones.

New premium gift tags

$8 per pack of 10. All with strings attached. Size: 90mm x 55mm.



Gift Tag 1
Love Peace Joy



Gift Tag 2
Peace Dove



Gift Tag 3
Merry Christmas



Gift Tag 4
Kookaburra Wreath

Call us
1800 668 426 (opt 5)

Visit
unitingvictas.org.au /christmas-cards

All prices are inclusive of postage and handling.

Uniting is the community services organisation of the Uniting Church in Victoria and Tasmania.

REGISTERED CHARITY

Uniting



Bible Readings November 2026 *(the readings used in our service may differ slightly)*

Sunday 1st	Pentecost 23	Joshua 3:7-17	Psalm 107:1-7, 33-37	1 Thessalonians 2:9-13	Matthew 23:1-12
Sunday 8th	Pentecost 24	Joshua 24:1-3a, 14-25	Psalm 78:1-7	1 Thessalonians 4:13-18	Matthew 25:1-13
Sunday 15th	Pentecost 25	Judges 4:1-7	Psalm 123	1 Thessalonians 5:1-11	Matthew 25:14-30
Sunday 22nd	Christ the King	Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24	Psalm 100	Ephesians 1:15-23	Matthew 25:31-46
Sunday 29th	Advent 1	Isiah 64:1-9	Psalm 80:1-7,17-19	1 Cor 1:3-9	Mark 13:24-37

Prayers of the People



We pray for all in need especially -

Joan Lum
Alannah and children Sophie, Harvey and Austin
Peter & Rubia
Lyn's family—*friend of Costellos*
Matilda
Robyn
Pat
Adie & Ally
Katherine's cousin David & Family
Tina, friend of Joan Wood
Phillip (Barbara's nephew)
Anne-Maree, Andrew and their daughter, Rachel
Maria
Jenny and Janine Bartholomeusz
Anita and Kingsley
Joyce Curnow
Stuart - addiction struggles
Helen & Earle Hosking
Grace & Van Rensberg
Joan's friends Robyn & Jemma
Kath Tondorf
Susan Hoskin
Karen
Helen Cole
Barry
Adrian
Gloria, Samson & Family
Mark
Joyce Carpenter
Andrew
Bronwyn
Teresa
June and Grace Fairbank

We give thanks for those whose prayers have been answered..

Christmas Services and Events at Charman

The Giving Tree – please bring your gifts before December 4th
Christmas Tree Festival - from Saturday 28th November to Sunday 6th December
Combined Carols and BBQ at Charman Sunday 20th from 5pm
"Carols Under the Canopy" - Christmas Eve, Thursday 24th December midday for 30 minutes
Christmas Day - Charman at 9am

WEEKLY OFFERINGS: Thanks to everyone who have continued to make their weekly offering.
Direct Debit: Cheltenham / Mentone members note that direct payments can now be made to our Westpac account at Southland, **BSB number is 033 358, Account Number is 664 881** Payee "UCA Cheltenham Mentone Parish"

SOCIAL COLLECTION DEPARTMENT:

BayCISS - Please bring your donations, especially non perishable food to the church and we will arrange for their distribution.

Emerge - Financial help is the best way to help - Cheques to - GPO Box 420 Melbourne VIC 3001 or donate via the website www.emergesupport.org.au
Emerge welcomes vouchers for supermarkets or art materials which children could use at home - materials, pencils, colouring books etc. Margaret Bode is happy to collect items if you leave them at her home, 16 Monaco Street Parkdale. **Donations in an envelope marked EMERGE may be left in the collection plate.**

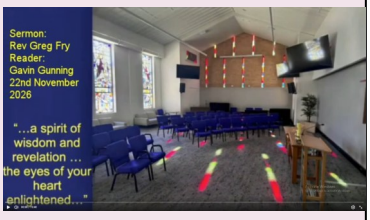


OUR YOUTUBE CHANNEL:

Click on the YouTube logo to view a selection of **over 270** sermons and service preludes

This week's video – "A spirit of wisdom and revelation" Rev Greg Fry 22nd November 2026

*Click on image or **HERE** to view*



Church on the Internet - Sunday 10am *(virtual doors open 9:45 am)*



If you don't have Zoom on your computer/laptop/iPad/Smartphone, click on https://zoom.us/support/download
Then click on this link below or the "Sunday Church" image to join our Service
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82004410836?pwd=cU9RWlhVMm8wOUw0TStLV1EvNFdYdz09
Meeting ID: 820 0441 0836 Passcode: 665 784
You can also join us on your phone by dialling **03 7018 2005** and entering the above meeting details.



Oh dear, it's that time of the year again …. …



Santa has a senior moment





