



27 NOVEMBER 2022



First Sunday in Advent

Welcome to worship this morning,
we hope you enjoy being with us.

Lectionary Readings

This week 27 November, 2022

Isaiah 2:1-5
Psalm 122
Romans 13:11-14
Matthew 24:36-44

Next week 4 December, 2022

Isaiah 11:1-10
Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19
Romans 15:4-13
Matthew 3:1-12

COVID Update

Given the current surge in COVID cases, we would encourage you to wear a mask for church if you would like to, please also stay home if you are feeling unwell.

Christmas Gift Collection

For many years we have collected gifts for those in our community for whom Christmas is difficult. This year however, most of the groups we have previously supported have indicated they would prefer gift cards in lieu of gifts so we have decided to collect money for those affected by the devastating floods in the central-west towns in NSW. We have been in contact with Macquarie-Darling Presbytery and are planning to send our donations to them to distribute directly to those affected by the flooding.

We are therefore having retiring offerings for the next three weeks, if you would like to contribute, please place your donation in the plate at the doors after worship each week.

Christmas Bowl Envelopes

After a year of war and 'unprecedented' natural disasters, more than 65 million people now find themselves homeless refugees. Christmas Bowl works with churches around the world to bring food, shelter and hope to many of these people.

If you are interested in supporting the Christmas Bowl, their envelopes are on the back table. Please either place your donation in the envelope in the offering plate, or you can donate online at mycb.link/48489.



Greystanes Uniting Church

Cnr Cumberland & Eldridge Roads (P O Box 5064)

Greystanes NSW 2145

Minister: Rev Gail Hinton 0407 269 162

Office Phone: 9636 3245

Email: office@greystanesuniting.org.au

Website: www.greystanesuniting.org.au

Gail's Message

In an out of the way corner in the chapel of St. Francis of Assisi is a small statue of the saint, head bent towards the ground as if he is studying the dirt, or observing the grass sprouting out of the ground. This is an odd posture for a saint, normally they look heavenwards with eyes full of devotion and piety.

This statue and its posture reminds me of a story friends used to tell about the late great Freda Whitlam, yes, Gough's sister and long-term member of my home church in Penrith. I found her to be a formidable woman, confident, knowledgeable and a little bit intimidating but that was not the real Freda.

One day when my friends drove into Freda's Street to take her to a church event, they were astonished to see her out on the nature strip bent over as if the ground was the most amazing thing she had ever seen. "What on earth are you doing" they asked as they pulled up beside her. Freda replied, "Oh I was just watching the ants, they are such amazing creatures".

Both Freda and St. Francis could see something of God in the created world which has often been described as the first bible and the first incarnation. In the beginning God speaks and the world springs into being, through this divine act all things are in their own way sacred.

If we humans were more aware of the divinity in all things would we have exploited the earth bringing us perilously close to ecological disaster? Would we have colonised other territories with little regard to the lands first inhabitants? Would we so easily make the distinction between friends and enemies?

When we can begin to see the sacred, the divine in all living things, the world no longer seems such a terrifying place. God is everywhere, all about us, in the rising sun, in the ants scurrying around in the dirt and even in the face of the stranger.

May God's loving nature be present to you in all the created things and inspire within in you hope, joy and gratitude.