



10 DECEMBER 2023



Second Sunday in Advent

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

Lectionary Readings

This week 10 December, 2023

Isaiah 40:1-11
Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13
2 Peter 3:8-15a
Mark 1:1-8

Next week 17 December, 2023

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11
Psalm 126 or Luke 1:46b-55
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
John 1:6-8, 19-28

**Frontier Services
Christmas Cards**

We have some Christmas Cards available from Frontier Services. They are \$8 for a pack of 10 cards, 2 each of 5 designs. All money raised will support the work of Frontier Services with those who live in outback Australia. Please see Sue to purchase your cards.



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Blue Christmas. Thursday 21st December 7pm -8pm.

Greystanes Uniting Church
Cnr Eldridge and Cumberland Rds. Greystanes.

Do you find Christmas emotionally draining
and challenging? Do you feel all alone?
Do you wish Christmas could be cancelled this
year?

Drop in for:
A time to pray.
A time to heal.
A time to grieve.
A time to express sadness and weariness.

Spend some time sharing your story
with others or just light a candle in our chapel
as prayer for inner peace.

Open to all faiths and none.

**Phone Rev. Gail for more information on
0407269162**

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Hands and Feet Update

Thank you to everyone who contributed Christmas food items for our Hands and Feet clients, your support is appreciated.

Our Food Distribution program in conjunction with Hands and Feet Inc, continues to meet a real need in our community with an average of 45 families a week being provided with free fruit and veggies. If you would like to contribute towards our ongoing costs please place your donation in the bowl on the morning tea table.



Greystanes Uniting Church

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Advent 2: How does a weary world rejoice?

As we journey through Advent we will reflect upon an image or artwork each week.

Below this week's artist, Rev. Nicolette Peñaranda's provides a personal reflection on Luke 1:24-45.

Advent 2. How does a weary world rejoice- we find joy in connection.

A couple of months before I took on this project, I was forced into early labour and birthed our second child. Needless to say, I was still pretty raw with emotions and was processing the trauma. During that time, I found myself in isolation. Our days were spent driving back and forth to the NICU to check on our 3 lb. infant. It was terrifying and tiresome. But during that time, so many wonderful people sought us out. We were gifted food, baby clothes, childcare, and rest. But the greatest gift was the comfort I received from other people who had given birth. There was this sacred sharing of birth stories and postpartum depression. Parents passed on beautiful garments that they, too, received after birthing a preemie. Some of these pieces looked like they had been passed down many times before, like each thread held a memory from a different family.

We were connected.

It is because of this connection that parents share that I felt instantly connected to paying homage to Frida Kahlo's Two Fridas. Rather than being connected from veins of the heart, Mary and Elizabeth would be connected through the uterus.

Nearly a quarter of Black women between ages 18 and 30 have fibroids while also being the racial demographic with the highest maternal death rate in the United States. More than 100,000 women undergo some form of mastectomy each year. Globally, an estimated 14% of girls give birth before the age of 18. Where do these realities meet the heart of scripture? How do we see the struggles of infertility or empathize with the vulnerability that comes with not being a socially accepted pregnant person?

While Elizabeth is crowned with holy grey hair and a dress marked with the blood of previous miscarriages, Mary sits next to her holding a childhood doll, draped in the jewelry, flowers, and silks of a traditional Middle Eastern Jewish bride. Their stories and experiences are vastly different. But Mary sought out her kin. This reminds me that we do not need to do the hard things alone. There is power in connection. With you, there is joy. —Rev. Nicolette Peñaranda
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