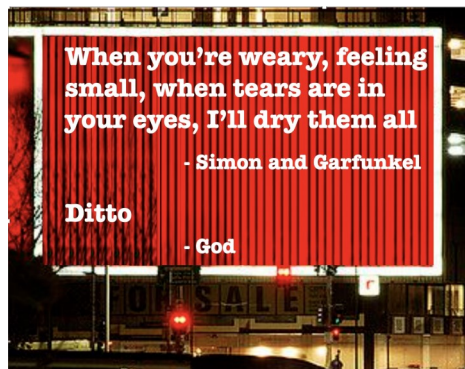




## Summer Sermon Series



If God managed his communication through billboards, it might go like this:

*We need to talk* - God  
*When you're weary, feeling small, when tears are in your eyes, I'll dry them all* - Simon and Garfunkel  
*Ditto* - God  
*Don't make me come down there* - God

Ironically, God has come down. The great one has come to earth. Jesus, the Lord of glory became like you and me. He ate, he drank, he got tired, he wept, he celebrated, he got sore feet, he had friends. He knew what it was to be misunderstood, let down – even betrayed. John's Gospel takes us into the heart of God and is our next sermon series.

## February Diary

Sun 4 10am Holy Communion  
5pm The Gathering

Sun 11 10am Morning Prayer  
5pm The Gathering

Wed 14 Parish Council

Sun 18 10am Holy Communion  
5pm The Gathering

Sun 25 10am Morning Prayer  
5pm The Gathering



## Christ Church generosity

Well done, Christ Church! You donated 28 boxes of food and toys to the Anglicare Toys'nTucker Appeal. Donations were collected by Anglicare transport from churches and sorted inside a large warehouse in Villawood. Then volunteers from all parts of Sydney worked in shifts, packing Christmas toys and food to match the needs of Anglicare clients. Our own **Jennifer Morgan-Nicholson** worked three shifts, 18 volunteer hours. She's seen here with volunteers from Lidcombe Anglican Church.

## Bible Studies are restarting for 2024. A good time to join!

Monday nights (fortnightly)  
(Keith & Anne Mason)  
Monday nights: (Geoff Kells)  
Tuesday nights: (Greg Webster)  
Wednesday nights: (Di Nicolios)  
Thursday mornings: (Di Nicolios)

## Contacts

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## Student couple marry

On 21st January, it was almost full house at St James Church, Turramurra, for the wedding of now **Chris and Naomi Tompkins**. Christ Church Lavender Bay was well represented by our morning and evening congregations. We're grateful for Chris's service here as student minister! We wish God's blessings on them as they continue as students at Moore College and start serving together at Sadlier Anglican Church.



## Rector's Message

Ever wished you could tell the future? Many have tried. Tealeaves, palms, stars, numerals, ghosts from the 'other side' – it's all been used to try to tell the future. Do you remember 'Paul' the octopus with the perfect score in picking World Cup winners? One mistake, and he'd get turned into calamari.

But maybe knowing the future is not such a great idea. It didn't do much good for 'Macbeth'. Remember the witches at the beginning? It might have done 'Ebenezer Scrooge' some good in *A Christmas Carol*, although the possible future doesn't turn out to be his actual future. Then, what about knowing the future but not being able to change it - or worse - changing it for your own ends? I'm selfish enough in the past and present – let alone deciding the future.

Knowing the future is for the fainthearted who really don't really want to trust God. We don't need to consult cards, calamari or Casper's cousins. God wants you to trust Him with your future. It's out of your hands anyway. You can't predict it, and if you could, you'd probably mess it up. Far better to leave it in the hands of a sovereign God, who is never 'off the job', is good, just and powerful. He's also kind and sensitive. He really 'listens' to people when they call to Him. He's across every possible future, even the one you are asking for.

Greg Webster



# Singing God's praise in two joyful ways



For Christmas, we were treated to a musical feast to mark Jesus' birth. Before the service, accomplished pianist **William Shi**, a friend of our brilliant organist **Louie Chen**, played virtuosic piano music by Franz Liszt. Then **JoAnn Cerdenia** beautifully played several pieces on the harp. The enlarged Christ Church 17-voice-choir, above, led the singing at a traditional service of lessons and carols, with the congregation joining favourite seasonal carols. Our dedicated choir, continues to meet every Sunday morning starting with early warm-ups and practice at 9.10am. On Christmas Eve, a group dubbed "The Webster Band", (all the same family) led contemporary carols. We were honoured to have such a talented group for the occasion, while our regular musicians took a well-earned break. From left: **Katie**, husband **Angus**, **Laura**, her husband **Sam**, **Grace**, **Jono**, and off-camera, on guitar **Greg Webster**. Jono's wife **Sophie** was service leader.



First to show appreciation to Jo-Ann was Christ Church Honorary Treasurer Maggie Springett

## JoAnn and her heavenly harp

As a prelude to the traditional carol service, worshippers delighted in pieces played by **JoAnn Cerdenia**, a relatively new member of Christ Church.

JoAnn finished her studies in music composition at the University of the Philippines and completed her harp studies at Robert Schumann Hochschule in Düsseldorf. Already an experienced harp teacher, JoAnn is completing a Masters of Composition at the Australian Institute of Music. She also sings and plays her harp or piano in 'The Gathering' band. JoAnn's life journey proves that attaining one's dream is possible so long as you trust in God. Her husband **Hans Cerdenia** - also a singer - is senior web developer in North Sydney.

## Carols and The Messiah

Did you know that Christ Church is very well represented in two highly regarded Sydney choirs? Singing at the Combined Churches Choir's Messiah at the Town Hall were (see pic) **Luke and Sami Williams**, **Jen Philp**, **Robyn Wood** and **Frances Duke**. Also in the same choir was **Wendy Pearce**. At the Opera House in the Philharmonia Choir's Carols in the House: **Penny Morris**, **David Wood**, **Anne Cooke**, **Jennifer Morgan-Nicholson** and **Annette Hodgkinson**.



**Buzz from the Bay:** In early December, there was a concert in church to mark the end of the first year of Lavender Bay Preschool, under the principal **Laura Rivera**. In January, the church was taken over for a movie shoot and **Graeme Adam** made his debut as an extra. And our own **Jo Kadlecak-Gilbert** agreed (prayers appreciated!) to take on the role of Parish Administrator & Communication Consultant while the amazingly gifted **Alice Hung** goes on maternity leave. During February, we'll celebrate **Rev Ross McDonald's** 90th birthday!

## March Diary

Sun 3 10am Holy Communion  
5pm The Gathering

Sun 10 10am Morning Prayer  
5pm The Gathering

Wed 13 Parish Council

Sun 17 10am Holy Communion  
5pm The Gathering

Sun 24 10am Family Service  
11.15am Annual General Meeting (No Gathering)

Sun 31 10am Good Friday

Sun 31 10am Easter Sunday  
Holy Communion  
5pm The Gathering

**The Bible in my Life**  
Geoff Kells - morning congregation



*Now to him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to his power that works in us. Ephesians 3:20.*

**Geoff:** "I love this verse because it reminds me of the power of our Lord, and His deep and unqualified love for us. Not only can God do what we ask, He can do more than anything we ask, or can even imagine. He does this through His power (the Holy Spirit) who works within us. Not in our strength."

## Offeratories update

By the end of December (and thus the calendar year) offeratories were \$210,807 and we had budgeted to receive \$210 000. Therefore, we are 0.4% above budget.

**Come to the 2024 Annual General Meeting (AGM)**

**Put it in the diary: Sunday 10 March, at 11:15 am.**

The AGM is an encouraging time where we review how God has been working to grow his kingdom, through our church over the past year.

We will elect Parish Councillors, Wardens, Nominators and Synod Representatives.

**Who would you like to represent you in these important roles?**

Nomination forms will be on the table at the back of church.