



PARTNERSHIP IN PRINT



ISSUE NO. 104 DECEMBER 2024

As we approach the Christmas season, we remember that the core of the Christmas message centres on **Emmanuel: God with us**. Beyond just a celebration of a historical birth of a special baby in Bethlehem, we are invited to consider all the ways that the light of Christ continues to shine into our lives and into our world, and to hope and pray for the time when God's vision for Creation will be made complete. As we journey towards that time, it's good to reflect on the times and places where God's good kin-dom is already breaking into our world. Meg's reflection on how our Partnership opened the doors of the White Goose to the Riddells Creek community is a powerful reminder of how we can be God's love in action. Thank you to all from the Partnership and the Riddells Creek community who opened the doors and welcomed people in, and thanks especially to Meg who brought it all together in very quick time while I was laid up with Covid.

Annette Buckley, November 2024

RIDDELLS CREEK ...

- a peaceful, smallish town and its community nestled in the foothills of the Macedon Ranges and at the southernmost part of our Uniting Church Partnership. It was an ordinary Monday morning that day (11-11-24) but it became a Monday that will be remembered for years to come. In a matter of minutes, early in the afternoon, buildings shook, power was lost, a loud bang, screams and Riddell will never be the same again.

By now most of you know that a fully loaded water tanker coming from the north-west careered from the bridge to the edge of the township, crossed the road and through the grounds of the Montessori Preschool. You will also know that a Teachers' Aide, a speech therapist, lost her life saving the lives of the children and that one young boy's arm was fractured. A family is devastated and a community is shattered and Riddell will never be the same again.



By the time I reached home after many detours I knew what we as a church had to do, could do. We opened the Riddells Creek Church, the White Goose as a quiet, safe space for people to gather, to be together, light candles, talk, pray, have a cuppa. By early Tuesday morning the centre of town was 'infested' (and I use the word deliberately) with media (journalists and cameras) and 'sticky beaks'. A quiet, safe space was just what people - mostly young mums and children - needed; a quiet, safe place was just what we could offer and we did! By Wednesday all other response groups (who have done and continue to do a wonderful job) were here but on Tuesday it was mostly 'just us', because we were in the community already. Everybody did what they could, when they could.



In response to my first Face Book post there were some 350 + positive responses. To the second, saying we would open a third day, 48. Over those three days we had almost 50 visitors, some for a short time, others up to an hour. Some came once and some came every day. We served much tea, coffee, water and enjoyed a box of fresh scones complete with jam, cream and butter from Goosey Gander (that's what she could offer and she did.)

Yes, Riddell will never be the same again, but it will be a stronger, more compassionate, more aware community. A changed community.

Perhaps a personal text received on Friday (*continued on page 3*)

Revised Common Lectionary Year C

ADVENT

A season of preparation, beginning on the fourth Sunday before Christmas, in which the church recalls its hope and expectation in the coming of Christ, past, present and future.

Date	Day	First Reading	Psalm	Second Reading	Gospel	C
Dec 1 2024	Advent 1	Jer 33:14-16	Ps 25:1-10	1Thes 3:9-13	Lk 21:25-36	P
Dec 8 2024	Advent 2	Mal 3:1-4	Lk 1:68-79	Phil 1:3-11	Lk 3:1-6	P
Dec 15 2024	Advent 3	Zep 3:14-20	Is 12:2-6	Phil 4:4-7	Lk 3:7-18	P
Dec 22 2024	Advent 4	Mic 5:2-5a	Lk 1:46b-55 or Ps 80:1-7	Heb 10:5-10	Lk 1:39-45, (46-55)	P

CHRISTMAS

The Christmas season includes Christmas Eve/Day and the twelve days of Christmas. It recalls the stories of the birth and infancy of Christ. The Church in this time celebrates the wonder of the incarnation. (Any of the Nativity selections may be used either for Christmas Day or Christmas Eve services.)

Date	Day	First Reading	Psalm	Second Reading	Gospel	C
Dec 24/25 2024	Nativity 1	Is 9:2-7	Ps 96	Tit 2:11-14	Lk 2:1-14, (15-20)	W
	Nativity 2	Is 62:6-12	Ps 97	Tit 3:4-7	Lk 2:(1-7), 8-20	W
	Nativity 3	Is 52:7-10	Ps 98	Heb 1:1-4, (5-12)	Jn 1:1-14	W
Dec 29 2024	Christmas 1	1 Sm 2:18-20, 26	Ps 148	Col 3:12-17	Lk 2:41-52	W
Jan 1 2025	New Year's Day	Ecd 3:1-13	Ps 8	Rev 21:1-6a	Mt 25:31-46	W
Jan 1 2025	Holy Name of Jesus	Num 6:22-27	Ps 8	Gal 4:4-7 or Phil 2:5-11	Lk 2:15-21	W
Jan 5 2025	Christmas 2	Jeremiah 31:7-14	Ps 147:12-20	Ephesians 1:3-14	John 1:(1-9), 10-18	W

EPIPHANY

An 'Epiphany' is a revealing, appearing or manifesting of something or someone, and in this season the Church reflects on the manifestation of Christ to all people. The length of this period varies depending on the date of Easter.

Date	Day	First Reading	Psalm	Second Reading	Gospel	C
Jan 6 2025	Epiphany	Is 60:1-6	Ps 72:1-7, 10-14	Eph 3:1-12	Mt 2:1-12	W
Jan 12 2025	Baptism of Jesus	Is 43:1-7	Ps 29	Acts 8:14-17	Lk 3:15-17, 21-22	W
Jan 19 2025	Epiphany 2	Is 62:1-5	Ps 36:5-10	1 Cor 12:1-11	Jn 2:1-11	G
* UCA Day of Mourning						
Jan 26 2025	Epiphany 3	Neh 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10	Ps 19	1 Cor 12:12-31a	Lk 4:14-21	G
Feb 2 2025	Epiphany 4	Jer 1:4-10	Ps 71:1-6	1 Cor 13:1-13	Lk 4:21-30	G

Colours: P – Purple W – White G – Green R – Red

The Calendar and Lectionary in the image above is available from the UC Assembly Resourcing Unit. A link to the publication is available below (yes, it's a long link - or you can search for it online using "calendar and lectionary 2025")

<https://unifying.church/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Lectionary-YrC-2025-1.pdf>

Tylden: We are having a Christmas eve service, 24th December at 7.30pm. No barbecue in December (there is a baptism on the 22nd) or January. No Diners for December or January. Op Shop closes December 21 and will reopen on Monday 6th January.

Gisborne: there will be no alternative worship in December or January. Friends Lunch will be on a break in December but back on 24th January.

Front page photos by Annette Buckley (top) and Robyn Zumstein (bottom).

(from page 1) morning after the community gathering best sums up those comments and responses: "I just want to thank the Uniting Church for being the first to open and offer support and a quiet space after the accident. You are appreciated."

I want to offer my personal thanks to those members of the Partnership and Community who volunteered and came (some more than once) so that we as a church could support Riddells Creek. Thank you too, to those of you who sent your love and assured us of your prayers. This is God's people, God's church at its best.

We also received messages of support in the form of thoughts and prayers from Qld, SA, Tas, and across Vic. Hopefully we have learned much in responding to this tragedy.

Thank you again.

Meg



THE PRE-CHRISTMAS GRUMP

I find myself fast becoming a pre-Christmas Grump!

Every time I go near a shop or shopping centre or supermarket or even whatever they call the place where I fill my car with fuel, I'm assaulted by Christmas 'stuff' that has nothing to do with Christmas!

Baubles and bangles, bon-bons, perfumes and paper things (decorations), cards and calendars, twinkling lights, snowmen, and prancing reindeer. Chocolates and shortbread of every shape and size and flavour - I thought shortbread tasted like shortbread!! Then there's fruitless, fruit Mince Pies? I ask you. (That's worse than No Fruit Hot Cross Buns!) And then there are the trees!!

Trees of every shape and size, with permanent lights and on & off lights at consistent intervals and inconsistent intervals, tiny lights and great big bold ones and they're all attached to pine trees! PINE TREES! And many are not even real trees (they reappear year after year, bit more battered and dustier than last year.) What happened to GUM TREES?

And a certain retail chain selling household goods and clothing is advertising 'The Greatest Gift Catalogue' I thought that was the domain of charity groups!

As I waited while the shop-keeper in a newsagents served other customers I looked around and saw a rack of charity Christmas Cards. That's good and useful I thought. But I saw the main heading on the stand was: Joy To Your World! JOY TO YOUR WORLD? Joy To My World?!

My head screamed out 'It's not YOUR world... It's NOT YOUR world!! It's not my world either! It's **JOY TO THE WORLD!** And if the world needs to be owned by anyone it's God's world, I muttered to myself as I went on my way.

I sat that evening looking half-heartedly at Facebook, my eye was caught by an advertisement by a company called 'Our Strong Voices' selling T shirts, and asking 'Is this the true meaning of Christmas?' The T shirt read:

**"REJOICE IN THE BIRTH OF
A BROWN SKINNED
MIDDLE EASTERN
UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANT"**

It brings Joy to my heart. I hope it brings Joy to your heart too.

JOY TO THE WORLD.

PS: I'm no longer grumpy! Well, not very grumpy!! (Meg)

I went looking for photos of **Joy** and **Emmanuel** that were not kitsch and commercial... The photos above came from unsplash: left by [DJ Paine](#) on [Unsplash](#); centre by [Fuu J](#) on [Unsplash](#); right by [Timon Studler](#) on [Unsplash](#) what images you would find or take if you were to image **Joy** and **Emmanuel**? Send them to me for the Feb PiP! RZ

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Advent 1 9.30am Gisborne Communion (AB) – streamed	12.30 Souper Lunch 2.30pm Faith Community 4pm Meditation Romsey		9.30-1pm White Goose Riddells Creek	2pm Romsey coffee	10am Prayers at Gisborne	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Advent 2 9.30am Northern streamed. 10-2pm White Goose	12.30 Souper Lunch 2.30pm Faith Community 4pm Meditation Romsey	10am Muffin Morning Gisborne	9.30-1pm White Goose Riddells Creek	2pm Romsey coffee	10am Prayers at Gisborne 6.30pm Fish & Chips Worship Kyneton 6.30pm Simba Sessions	10-2pm White Goose
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Advent 3 9.30am Streaming from Romsey	12.30 Souper Lunch 2.30pm Faith Community 4pm Meditation Romsey	Ministers Munchies	9.30-1pm White Goose Riddells Creek	2pm Romsey coffee	10am Prayers at Gisborne	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Advent 4 9.30am local services, no streaming (AB Tylden baptism) 7pm Sutton Gr Carols AB	4pm Meditation Romsey	Christmas Eve 7.30pm Tylden 7.30pm Gisborne	Christmas Day Services 9.30 Kyneton 9.30 Gisborne 9.30 Romsey	Boxing Day	10am Prayers at Gisborne	
29	30	31	<h1>December 2024</h1>			
Christmas 1 10am Partnership Service, Communion, Romsey?						

White Goose On five days in December (three Wednesdays, one Sunday and one Saturday) the White Goose will be open for people to take books for Christmas Gifts. They can be wrapped in Christmas paper for a small donation.

OPEN for FREE BOOKS for CHRISTMAS GIFTS: SUNDAY 8th, WEDNESDAYS 11th and 18th and SATURDAY 14th

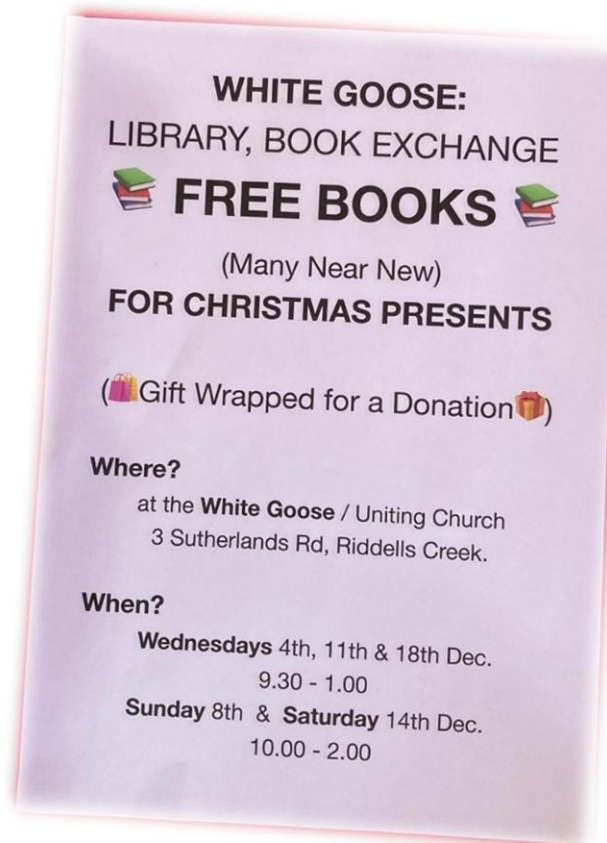
Lyn & Meg.

Sharing a poem from the UCA on social media:

#ReignofChrist

Lord of the Unexpected,
You call us into your upside-down kingdom
Where the poor inherit the earth,
And those who weep find laughter.
Where we seek power, teach us servanthood;
Where we chase success, show us true blessing.
When we grasp for more, open our hands to give;
When we harbour anger, fill us with your grace.
Make us hungry for your righteousness,
Quick to show mercy, slow to judge.
Help us see with kingdom eyes:
Finding treasure in simple things,
And your face in those the world forgets.
Shape us into people of your paradox—
Strong in weakness,
Rich in giving,
Blessed in serving,
Living your revolutionary love.
Amen.

*Thanks to Paul Wetzig, Mission Development Partner
in the **Uniting Church Queensland***



Woodend Faith Community will be studying **The First Christmas** by Marcus J Borg (and JD Crossan) in Advent. You are invited to join us at 2.30pm on the first 3 Mondays of December. The book is available as an audio or digital book and Paul Gilbertson may also have a spare hard-copy. For more details contact Annette

RECYCLING: (Again!) I'm riding my hobby horse once more! (Well one of them!)
Recently (October 22nd) the Mt Alexander Shire Council (along with Sustainability Victoria) ran an advertisement in the Midland Express on the 'recycling of rigid plastic containers' and their lids in the Yellow Recycling bin. The article said that **small lids** such as plastic soft drink lids, tetra pack lids such as soup stock, tetra pack milk, plastic milk bottle lids and similar type lids should **NOT** go into the recycling bin. **HOWEVER** these lids **can** be recycled into furniture, such as park seats, children's seats and toys. If you would like to recycle these lids, I am happy to collect from you as I travel round the partnership and take them to the Riddells Creek Neighbourhood House whose volunteers pack them up for recycling. They also recycle metal coffee pods, old x-rays, corks and other bits and pieces, which I could also collect, **BUT** check out what **your** neighbourhood house recycles first! Thanks, if you're a recycler too, Meg.

Disappointed with the feeble offerings in the usual Christmas cracker? Help fill our **GIANT CHRISTMAS CRACKER** at **Muffin Morning** on Tuesday December 10th from 10am at Gisborne UC. Let's make this one full of happy surprises for the same time next year when we open up this CHRISTMAS TIME CAPSULE. Bring along your favourite Christmas poem, a really funny joke, a challenging riddle, a decorated cookie, chocolate, your memory of the best Christmas ever, the absolutely essential Christmas recipe or....? Join in the fun and get a bang out of this cracker.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>January 2025</h1>			1	2	3	4
			New Years Day (No White Goose)		10am Prayers at Gisborne	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Christmas 2	Epiphany No Souper lunch today 4pm Meditation Romsey		(No White Goose)		10am Prayers at Gisborne 6.30pm Fish & Chips Worship Kyneton (tbc)	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Baptism of Jesus	11am Faith Community 12.30 Souper Lunch 4pm Meditation		9.30-1pm White Goose Riddells Creek		10am Prayers at Gisborne	*PiP articles due tomorrow please
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Epiphany 2 (UCA National Day of Mourning)	11am Faith Community 12.30 Souper Lunch	10am Ministers Munch (tbc)	9.30-1pm White Goose Riddells Creek		10am Prayers at Gisborne 12pm Gisborne lunch 6.30pm Fish & Chips Worship Kyneton (tbc)	
26	27	28	29	30	31	
Epiphany 3	(Public Holiday - no Souper Lunch)		9.30-1pm White Goose Riddells Creek		10am Prayers at Gisborne	Sunday services in January as usual – 9.30am around the partnership, 4 th Sunday not streamed.

A TINY BEGINNING: THE CHRISTMAS BOWL

The theme for a recent service at Gisborne was "From little things, big things grow". This certainly applies to the annual Christmas Bowl appeal. The first effort, 75 years ago, raised just 17 pounds 10 shillings and one Christmas cake (maybe \$200 or so in today's money).

Since then, the Bowl has raised many millions of dollars for aid and development projects in several dozen countries. It is administered by the National Council of Churches, in co-operation with the World Council of Churches and other aid agencies. That first tiny effort was the initiative of a Methodist minister Rev Frank Byatt.

Frank was born in England and came to Australia as a toddler. He attended Melbourne High School and did a degree in Civil Engineering. His four years in what is now Malaysia enabled him to combine his engineering skills with preaching and leading singing with an auto-harp.

He had offered for the ordained ministry but worked in England and Malaysia before being ordained in 1927. He served in Methodist circuits for 24 years before taking on Inter-Church Aid work full-time in 1951. It was during his circuit ministry that he came up with the idea of placing a bowl on the family Christmas table and donating the equivalent of the cost of the meal to overseas aid.

The biggest need in the period after World War II was refugees. There were hundreds of thousands across Europe and elsewhere. The Australian Government, working with the Churches, settled many thousands in Australia.

By the 1960s it was realized that the idea of "aid" was inadequate to address the great inequality between nations. And so the idea of "development" took hold. At the 1968 Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Sweden a passionate speech by the English economist Barbara Ward changed the thinking of churches across the world. Funds from the Christmas Bowl and other appeals are now directed to education, agricultural development and empowering local communities so that inequality is reduced.

Aid directed to emergencies hasn't disappeared however. When cyclones, floods and other disasters occur, funds can be directed quickly to the areas of need.

The 75th anniversary of the Bowl was recognized at a launch in Melbourne on 24th November. The work of Frank Byatt was celebrated. One question remains unanswered: what happened to that Christmas cake in 1947?

D'Arcy Wood

This is the final *Partnership in Print* for the year of 2024. Please get anything you want for the next issue (due before February 2025) to me by **19th January 2025**. I realise that we are bombarded with information all the time and paradoxically it is therefore quite difficult to pick through it all and decided what is important to us. I would like to know if PiP is important to you. If you read as far as this, please send me a message (phone/text/email or a letter) answering three questions for me:

1. What is your favourite colour? 2. What is (or was) your favourite age? And 3. Should PiP continue in this format in 2025? (I'm happy for a yes or no, but if you'd like to expand that would also be graciously received)

I wish you all a Blessed Christmas time and a happy start to the New Year!

Robyn (ed)

A VERY HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

Uniting AgeWell recently celebrated its 20th anniversary in grand style, gathering a couple of hundred members of its Board, staff, committees, and volunteers. Of course the UCA did not begin its work in aged care only in 2004 but that year marked the end of it being provided by local congregations with local boards. That system had advantages until the needs of older clients and the demands of government became more complex.

In 2001 the synod faced the challenging task of deciding if we would remain a provider of residential aged care or, like the Salvation Army and the Baptist church did at that time, quit the area. Governance, financial stability and accountability, the provision of quality care and reputational risk were seriously debated and the final decision was to remain as a provider of such care but with one central organization to manage it for Victoria and Tasmania. Hence the 'invention' of Uniting Age Care which in 2014 changed its name to the more appropriate one which promoted ageing well.

I was its first chair and my 3 successors joined in cutting a large celebratory cake. That was followed by a highly entertaining and professional awards ceremony with various categories. There's no doubt it is a much more sophisticated organization now with over 17000 clients and 4500 staff covering not only residential care but also community centres and home care.

It also has a much wider geographical spread from its earlier presence mainly in Hobart and in Melbourne's eastern suburbs. There is a staff scholarship program, support for staff to become experts in particular fields, and our facilities have well-being personnel, nutritionists and chaplains. One of its best attributes, at least from the UCA's point of view, is that although large and an incorporated body, its ties to the Uniting Church remain firm and strong. So a happy anniversary indeed.

Janet Wood

Contacts Other Groups		
<u>SUTTON GRANGE</u> <u>MIA MIA</u> <u>BARFOLD</u> <u>METCALFE</u>	<u>Congregation Chair</u> - Dot Smith <u>Elders - North</u> Dot Smith Marge Townrow	<u>Elders- Kyneton</u> Pip Elston, Jenny Elston, Helen Aldridge Andrea Strack
<u>KYNETON</u>	<u>Church Council</u> Helen Carey Chair – Pip Elston Sec – Helen Aldridge	<u>Congregation Secretary</u> Helen Adridge <u>Congregation Chairperson</u> Roy Gibbs
<u>ROMSEY</u>	<u>Church Council/Elders</u> Noel Shaw Jay Brooks Jeni Clampit Jenny Elliott Carol Toy	<u>UCAF</u> Pres/Sec - Jeni Clampit Treasurer - Carol Toy
<u>TYLDEN</u>	<u>Elders</u> Shirley Bowen, Joy Evans Max Hinneberg	<u>Worship Team Co-Ord</u> Janet Cole, Shirley Bowen <u>Op-Shop Contact:</u> Fiona Armour
<u>WOODEND</u>	<u>Editor Partnership in Print</u> – Robyn Zumstein	
<u>RIDDELLS CREEK</u>	<u>White Goose</u> Meg Evans	
<u>GISBORNE</u>	<u>Prayer Ministry</u> – D’Arcy Wood <u>Pastoral Care</u> - Bev Gilbertson <u>Social Justice</u> – Nola Anderson <u>Worship & Education</u> - Paul Gilbertson	<u>Faith & Community</u> – Kerrie Birch – Wendy Hallinan - Helen Hallett
<u>CoCo</u> - (Co-ordinating Council)	<u>Chair</u> - Colin Chapman <u>Deputy Chair</u> - Keith Hallett <u>Minute Secretary</u> - Keith Hallett <u>Treasurer</u> – Lyn Ward	<u>Tylden Woodend Op Shop CoCo members</u> Paul Gilbertson, Nola Anderson, Colin Chapman

Address label

Partnership in Print is a monthly newsletter produced by the Uniting Church in Australia – Macedon Ranges Partnership and is available every month via email, on-line or in print, except January.

Macedon Ranges Partnership is part of the Port Phillip West Presbytery of the Uniting Church in Australia.

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PARTNERSHIP WEBSITE www.macedonrangesunitingchurch.org.au

CONGREGATION DETAILS	CHAIRPERSON	SECRETARY	TREASURER	PROPERTY	CoCo REPS
<p><u>SUTTON GRANGE</u> - Church Access Rd <u>MIA MIA</u> - Matheson Rd <u>BARFOLD</u> - Heathcote-Kyneton Rd <u>METCALFE</u> - 3 Metcalfe-Kyneton Rd <u>KYNETON</u> - 54 Ebdon St (PO Box 892)</p>	Pip Elston	Helen Aldridge miamiakynetonu c@outlook.com	<p><u>Finance Committee</u> Helen Carey (Treas) Jenny Elston</p>	Church Council Executive	<p>Marge Townrow Dot Smith Pip Elston, Lyn Ward, Helen Aldridge(alt)</p>
<p><u>ROMSEY</u> - 25 Pohlman St (PO Box 264, Romsey, 3434)</p>	Noel Shaw	Jeni Clampit	Roger Baker		Noel Shaw, Jeni Clampit, Jay Brooks (alt)
<p><u>TYLDEN</u> - Trentham Rd (c/o Tylden General Store, Tylden, 3444)</p>	Max Hinneberg	Janet Cole	Dawn Hinneberg	Max Hinneberg	Bronwyn Hewitt, Dawn Hinneberg
<p><u>WOODEND</u> - 37 Forest St</p>					
<p><u>GISBORNE</u> - 23 Brantome St</p>	Bev Gilbertson	Colin Chapman	Paul Gilbertson	Neil Moorhouse Rob Dunstan	Colin Chapman, Keith Hallett, Paul Gilbertson



We're fundraising for Simba, having a party and Unpacking Christmas! Come join us! This month at Simba Sessions on the 13th of Dec, Paul and the Simba community gather to share their experiences as together they "Unpack Christmas". It will be a night of merry-making where artists from all through the year come to offer their thoughts and experiences around the complexities of Christmas, and offer two originals and a Christmas themed song/poem in celebration of community amidst diversity. All voices are heard and all are welcome. Come help Simba 'Unpack Christmas.' Food and tickets available at the door from 6.30pm

