

S U M M E R 2 0 1 5

CELEBRATING THE SEASON OF CHRISTMAS

Havelock & The Sounds Anglican Church

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Christmas Shopping Tips

Christmas shopping and celebrations this year must surely have a certain cringe factor. There are so many human tragedies around us at the moment – especially the devastating earthquake toll in Nepal and Afghanistan, and the millions of refugees fleeing war torn Syria and Iraq, desperately seeking a safe haven for themselves and their loved ones. How meaningful would it be, on Christmas Day, to receive a gift-wrapped receipt from one of the many aid organizations rather than just another pair of sox or undies? If you are a family, how about discussing this sort of idea with your kids? How satisfying to know my gift is gifted to someone else with infinitely greater need than I. Isn't this the true spirit of Christmas? Wasn't it Jesus who said, "It is more blessed to give

Wise Men follow the Star

Three Middle Eastern gentlemen, maybe Iranians or Syrians, who were astute at reading the signs of the times, particularly in the study of the astral bodies, observed a very large, bright star that during a number of days and weeks moved slowly westward across the night skies. Intrigued and convinced it signaled a mammoth event for humankind, they determined to follow it. As they travelled, they sought more knowledge of it's meaning, speaking with priests, prophets and Kings, as to ancient predictions, until they found what they were looking for, a babe, lying in a manger in a Bethlehem stable. And they worshipped. **Wise** men are not satisfied with status quo, they ask, seek, knock and find.

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

Do you remember the wonderful old advent hymn, "O come, O come Emmanuel"? It was the Old Testament prophet Isaiah who referred to the coming Messiah as Emmanuel, which means "God with us." And He did. God did come to us, to be with us, born in a humble stable in Bethlehem, Israel, 2000 years ago. Emmanuel came to us and lived among us, modeling a life of pure heavenly love, and offering to us the gift of Himself - Love manifest. Love incarnate. Forgiveness and salvation. Heavenly love in human form. What a gift. What a night to remember! Kings came and shepherds too, angels singing, trumpets sounding and a brilliant big star to guide. Mary and Joseph called him Yeshua, Jesus, which means "Saviour". And that was the very first Christmas.

Christmas Services

Te Towaka	Wed.	2.00pm	16/12	Leov's Place
Waitaria	Sun.	2.30pm	20/12	Waitaria Hall
Rai Valley	Sun.	3.30pm	13/12	St. Mark's
Havelock	Thurs.	9.00pm	24/12	St. Peter's
Linkwater	Fri.	10.00am	25/12	St. Luke's

EVERYONE IS MOST WELCOME

