



### **Not A Hijacking...**

I have been up country visiting my mother this week, so have not had time to prepare a reflection. However, as it is the Christmas season, I am aware that, every year, the same old claims get made by humanists, atheists, and even some Christians, that the date Christmas is celebrated - 25th December - was "hijacked" by early Christians in order to "take over" pagan feast days such as Saturnalia, the birth day of the god Mithras, or the celebration of Sol Invictus (the Unconquered Sun).

One of my favourite podcasts, The Rest Is History, recently covered this issue, and did a very thorough job of dispelling the various claims that are made about the date of the Christmas celebration. If you have time to listen to the podcast, I recommend it to you.

If, however, you don't, I recommend this article by my colleague Andrew McGowan. He covers the same area as the podcast, but in the course of a much shorter article. Please [click this link](#) to read the article.

### **Please Remember In Your Prayers**

Please remember Joan Alsop and her family in your prayers in light of the recent passing of Rod Alsop. Details regarding a memorial service for Rod will be forthcoming. Prayer for grace and peace for Joan and the Alsop family at this difficult time.

## **Combined Services For January 24**

Just as we did for January this year, there will be combined services for Ringwood and Heathmont in January 2024. The schedule is as follows:

Dec 31st: Combined @HUC

Jan 7th: Combined @RUC (Communion)

Jan 14th: Combined @HUC

Jan 21st: Combined @RUC

Jan 28th: Combined @HUC

Please note that all services **start at 10am.**

## **Notes From Congregational Meeting**

For those of you who were not able to attend the congregational meeting last Sunday and thus were not able to hear Church Council's presentation regarding the future of HUC, Council have agreed to make available the information slides which accompanied the presentation. Please [click this link](#) to access the PowerPoint presentation.

Please note that the resolution of the meeting was to support the recommendation contained in the presentation.

## **The Christmas Bowl Appeal 2023**

The Christmas Bowl Appeal is currently being run during Advent at HUC. This important Ecumenical Appeal helps many people around the world and you can help by giving to the Christmas Bowl in one of three ways.

Envelopes are available in each of the pews at church, or you can call 1800 025 101 to donate by phone, or by one of two the internet addresses. For the tech savvy, use the [christmasbowl.actforpeace.org.au](https://christmasbowl.actforpeace.org.au) or the unique donation page address for Heathmont Uniting- [mycb.link/75432](https://mycb.link/75432).

Glenis McDonald, Christmas Bowl Ambassador

### **Library Trolley**

The library trolley in the foyer has a quiet ministry going on during the year where books are donated, people buy a book for a gold coin donation and the revenue collected is sent to the Presbytery Mental Health Ministry. This year, David has sent off \$724 to the MHM made up from \$600 through the Church accounts and \$124 from the coins collected from the Library Trolley. If you have saleable books to donate to the library trolley, please place them in the tubs under the trolley and of course browse through to see if there any others you may like to donate for a gold coin.

Glenis McDonald, sorter and tidier of books

Blessings,

Brendan Byrne





---

Copyright © 2023 Heathmont Uniting Church, All rights reserved.  
You are receiving this email because you opted in via our website.

**Our mailing address is:**  
Heathmont Uniting Church  
89 Canterbury Road  
Heathmont, Victoria 3135  
Australia

[Add us to your address book](#)

Want to change how you receive these emails?  
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).

