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# Family Newsletter

## A Christmas message from Alison Hume

I have been spending some time with some little people in my family. Twins were born just a few months ago. They seem so fresh and new and full of mystery.

Christmas is a time when I often think about birth and new life. A baby is at the centre of the traditional story of Christmas after all. I like to think that we can experience new life and the birth of newness in our lives time after time. Each of us has the potential to grow and develop every day. We are dynamic, vibrant people.

Over Spring there have been so many reminders of new life – beautiful new leaves on the trees, the flowers, lambs in the fields. So it is with us – we can breathe new life into our lives.

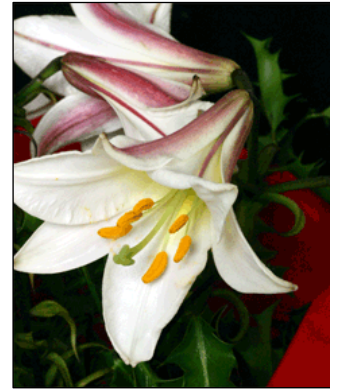
This year, some of our team have been exploring ways to enhance and fast-track our development. We have been exploring the work of Marilee Adams, using the Choice Map (see inquiry institute.com). This shows us how we can change our mindset whenever needed so that we start afresh, make

choices, and change the way we live our lives.

I will be celebrating new life this Christmas.

However, sometimes Christmas can be a difficult time. We remember the people who we used to spend Christmas with who are no longer with us. We can feel left out and sad. Maybe Christmas just doesn't seem right this year. Things are not always just as we would like them at this time.

It is my hope that each one of you will experience some beautiful moments. Look out for these moments. It may be a

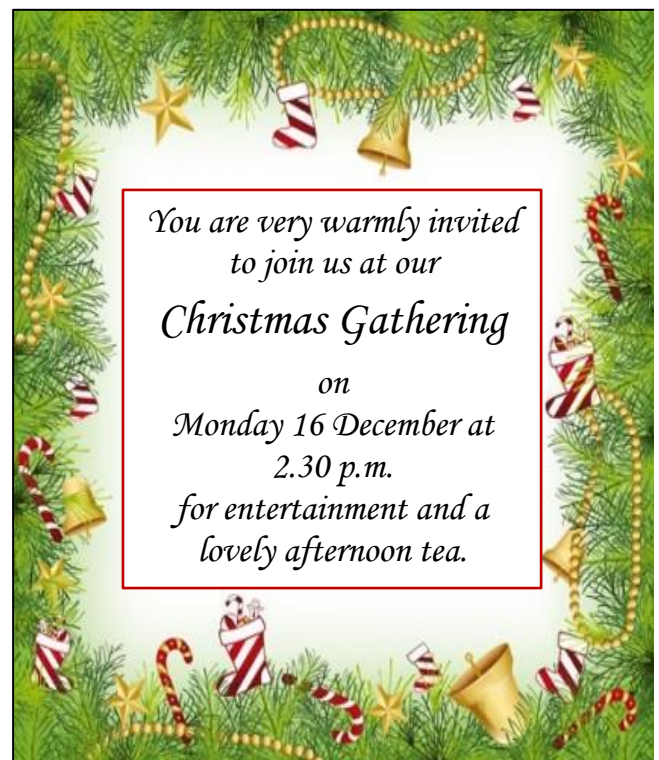


little smile someone shares with you, or a beautiful flower, some special music. It may be the warmth of the sun on your back.

I wish you beautiful moments this Christmas.

With love

Alison



## Celebrating Christmas at Millvale

*Every year many of our staff leave their own families at home to help care for their other 'family' here. It is a time of closeness, laughter, special moments and much love.*



Christmas is traditional, simple and homely



Christmas roses in bloom, Avonlea gardens, Christchurch

Christmas is always a special time in our rest homes. It's a time celebrated by our residents, families and staff together. It's an opportunity to have some lovely special events in the build up to Christmas. We all look forward to our Christmas family gathering. We have live entertainment. Our wonderful cooks excel themselves with home baked Christmas cake and mince pies and a delicious Christmas dinner.

Our Diversional Therapists plan special Christmas activities in the build up to Christmas and on the day itself. With the help of our residents we make decorations for the lounge and for the Christmas tree, and have a lovely time decorating the tree together. Simple home made presents and cards are often made for loved ones with the help of our divisional therapists. We also spend time making Christmas cakes, and icing and decorating them. This process involves lots of tasting and heated debates on various recipes just as it would at home, with many memories emerging of family Christmases and traditions from many years ago.

We welcome visits from carol singers who give of their time generously to come and entertain our residents and visitors during the weeks before Christmas. This is always a peaceful and often emotional experience stirring memories of Christmases past with just a simple song and helping people enjoy a special moment in the here and now.

Christmas day sees the arrival of Santa with gifts, welcomed with many smiles and much laughter. We always have lots of visitors on Christmas day and a wonderful traditional Christmas lunch. Although only residents and staff are catered for, families are very welcome to join us for morning or afternoon tea, or to take their loved one home for family time if they wish. After lunch we share a variety of activities such as time in the garden, a Christmas quiz, a sing-song of Christmas carols, maybe an old familiar Christmas movie, and best of all, time spent with family and loved ones.

It's a magical time of the year, and we are blessed to have the opportunity to spend this time with the wonderful people in our care.

### Holiday reminders

Please remember that all new items need to be clearly marked with the owner's name before they arrive. This is especially important at Christmas time, when many lovingly chosen new items are given as gifts by family members. We discourage expensive woollen items, which are easily damaged in the wash. Please select easy care clothing wherever possible.

If you intend to take your loved one home for the day or afternoon over the Christmas period please discuss this with a Registered Nurse so that medication and comfort requirements can be arranged.