



DECEMBER 2018

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

From the President, SISTER ELIZABETH VAGG, PBVM:

SOME YEARS AGO QUEEN ELIZABETH PAID A VISIT TO THE NEWNHAM CAMPUS OF THE UNIVERSITY. There were various preparations, including determination of the planned route to avoid the series of dreaded speed humps along the driveway. We were somewhat amused to see a fence removed to facilitate a side entrance and the removal of one of the dreaded speedhumps to smooth the way. For me, this incident brought a new reality to the words of scripture in Isaiah 4:



A voice cries, "Prepare in the wilderness a way for the Lord. Make a straight highway for our God across the desert. Let every valley be filled in, every mountain and hill be laid low, let every cliff become a plain, and the ridges a valley: then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all mankind shall see it; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken".

The beginning of December marks the start of Summer and the beginning of Advent, a season of longing, expectation and hope that culminates in the celebration of Christmas. In Advent, we embark on a journey; it is a time of waiting, when we are challenged to prepare the way of the Lord, to examine those obstacles to our relationship with God and with one another. How do we treat others? Do we listen to them, with respect and

The 'Lund' Principle

*Should not the churches act together in all matters
except those in which deep differences of conviction compel them to act separately?*

TASMANIAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

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genuine interest and concern, even if their ideas and values differ from ours? Do we acknowledge and thank those who provide us with services?

Christmas joyously proclaims the three comings of Jesus – in Bethlehem, in our hearts today and as Lord of Glory at the end of time.

In our contemporary culture, the Christian narrative is not always the predominant theme. And yet, in many ways the spirit of Christmas is evident. People make an effort to reach out to others in a spirit of goodwill.

- Families try to spend time together, expressing their love through gift-giving and sharing, putting aside the petty differences that may divide them.
- Friends reach out to each other in a spirit of good will.
- Many people are aware of those who are lonely or less fortunate, ensuring that they find a welcome, someone spends time with them and they have food and gifts.

The important message at this time is to let this spirit permeate our whole lives – to show that love to others all year, to treat each one we encounter with respect. In them we meet Christ and through us, Christ ministers to them.

May each of you and your loved ones know the peace and love of Christ in your lives during this Christmas Season.

Elizabeth.



Unknown illustrator; sourced from ChristiansUnite.com

CHRISTMAS MESSAGES FROM TASMANIAN CHURCH LEADERS

MR ROHAN PRYOR

*Synod Liaison Officer, Presbytery of Tasmania,
Synod of Victoria and Tasmania,
Uniting Church in Australia
Head of Church to the TCC*



WE ARE ALL WELCOME

A WELCOME TO COUNTRY, OR AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY, IS OFTEN INCLUDED AT THE BEGINNING OF WORSHIP SERVICES and meetings of the Uniting Church, as with other church and community organisations also committed to Reconciliation. Janice Ross, an indigenous Saltwater Sister and watercolour artist from southern Tasmania, offered a generous and challenging Welcome to Country at the recent inaugural Annual Public Meeting of Uniting Vic Tas, the community services arm of the Uniting Church. Janice reminded everyone of the traditional custodians of this land, the devastating impacts of colonial settlement, the enduring strength of the sealer women of Bass Strait, and the importance of ongoing respect, collaboration and reconciliation for a shared future.

WE ARE ALL WELCOME.

In the language of the Constitution of the Uniting Church in Australia, the First Peoples of this country welcome – with strength, grace and truth – all of us who have come more recently: in the last few centuries and in the last few years, we the invading colonisers, we the economic migrants and we the refugees and asylum seekers, we the Second Peoples of this country.

WE ARE ALL WELCOME HERE.

The First Peoples of this country extend a welcome to all who come with good will. The Creator of this country – and of the whole cosmos – eternally extends a welcome to all, the gracious and free gift that is good news for all.

WE ARE TRULY WELCOME HERE.

In theological terms, the Uniting Church in Australia is committed to the reconciliation and renewal of all creation as a fundamental expression of the Christian gospel, the good

CHRISTMAS MESSAGES FROM TASMANIAN CHURCH LEADERS

news of God most fully incarnated in Jesus the Christ. The good news is that in Christ, we are siblings and family, and all barriers are broken down. This is Christ's will for the church: that we may be one, and that by our love for each other the world may better know the good news of God in Christ.

The Vision of the Synod of Tasmania and Victoria puts this in simpler terms:

Following Christ, walking together as First and Second peoples,
seeking community, compassion and justice for all creation.

As the seasonal celebrations of the birth of Jesus begin, we look forward to celebrating the birth of the one in whom Christians see the divine and eternal most clearly embodied, uniquely incarnated. The Jesus we meet in the gospels is not primarily concerned about religious practices, ritual purity, or a person's inner spiritual life. Time and time again in the gospels we hear, we see, Jesus confronting the religious leaders of his day, and the political leaders of his day, and challenging them all to extend God's eternal welcome, to live with more compassion, to include those on the margins of society and the most vulnerable, the widows and orphans, the refugees and aliens, the poor and meek. The Jesus we meet in the gospels, and to which Christians bear witness in every time and place, does not remain a gentle infant, meek and mild, but actively and radically seeks to extend God's welcome to all. Jesus embodies the free and gracious gift of God's eternal welcome to all.

CHRISTMAS IS A SEASON FOR BOTH RICH TRADITIONS AND COMMERCIAL EXCESSES; many communities of faith explore yet again the deeper meaning of Christmas beyond gifts, food and trees. As you hear yet again familiar Christmas carols and biblical stories I invite you to listen carefully for the poetry, the images, and the metaphors. Listen for the timeless story that the writers are attempting to tell, beneath the images and metaphors that come from their own cultural and historical contexts. Listen for the values that sit beneath the old songs, and behind the modern translation of the ancient biblical narratives. Listen for the new hope that springs forth in unexpected places, and for unexpected people. This is what Christmas celebrates, just like Easter: new life, new hope, new possibilities for us and for all of creation.

This is what the Church's season of Advent is for: an unexpected and new thing happened long, long ago, and in every new generation since, people find this story of new life and new hope provides a powerful alternative to the commercial stories our global

CHRISTMAS MESSAGES FROM TASMANIAN CHURCH LEADERS

media-saturated culture now relentlessly tells us. We need new hope, as we face the huge challenges of climate change, domestic violence and global warfare, obscene wealth and dire poverty, religious conflicts and terrorism.

THE CHRISTMAS STORY RELENTLESSLY CRITIQUES THE POWERFUL KINGS AND RULERS OF OUR WORLD, AND INVITES US TO LIVE WITH GRACE, INTEGRITY AND HUMILITY. These build resilience and help us to live lives of purpose and meaning. We are relentlessly told to be consumers, but we know already that we consume far more than the earth can sustain. We need to live with responsibility and commitment to recover a sustainable world. We are relentlessly told to fear difference, but we know already that compassion, belonging and inclusivity build authentic relationships for everyone's well-being and a safer world.

As Christmas approaches, I encourage you to listen for the values that lie beneath the snowflakes and tinsel, to show a welcome with family and friends and strangers, and to share care and compassion: love is what the world needs now, and in Jesus we see love born in human form. It is in this form that we see embodied a love which eternally welcomes all in order to bring hope and new life to all.

May the story of Christmas be born anew for you.

Rohan Pryor

RECONCILIATION TASMANIA (RT) is a not-for-profit organisation that aims to provide a safe and friendly place where all Tasmanians can seek to become involved in real reconciliation. RT aims to achieve this through building relationships, respect and trust between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Tasmanians through RT's projects and activities. Part of RT's 2018 operational plan is to build relationships with faith communities, including church organisations and denominations.

See Oikoumene, November 2018 issue for a fuller report.



CHRISTMAS MESSAGES FROM TASMANIAN CHURCH LEADERS

**THE RIGHT REVEREND DR
RICHARD CONDIE**
*Bishop of Tasmania
Anglican Diocese of Tasmania*



WAITING IN SURE HOPE

AS CHRISTMAS RAPIDLY APPROACHES WE FIND OURSELVES IN THIS SEASON OF WAITING ONCE AGAIN. Waiting with eager expectation for the angel's words to the Shepherds, that they might be his words to us: "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

And then the heavenly song through all generations:

"Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests" (Luke 2: 14).

Our world needs this saviour. We need this saviour. He has come. He reigns in the highest heaven and He brings us peace.

But what is more, is that this season of waiting is also a reminder that we are also waiting for his coming again.

"Look, he is coming with the clouds,"
and "every eye will see him,
even those who pierced him" (Revelation 1: 7).

We wait for his coming again in glory to redeem the whole world. This is our Christmas hope.

Bishop Richard.

2018 CAROLS AROUND TASMANIA

(in date order)

St Helens – **Sat 8** December 2018,
7pm, Carols on the Foreshore,
BYO chairs

Glenorchy – **Sat 8** December 2018
6-9.30 pm, Tolosa Park Soundshell

Clarence – **Sat 8** December 2018,
5.30-7 pm, Bellerive Beach

Devonport – **Sun 9** December 2018
6.30 pm, Roundhouse Park,
Mersey Foreshore

Port Sorell – **Sun 9** December 2018
6.30 pm, Port Sorell Primary School

New Norfolk – **Fri 14** December 2018
6 -10 pm, Tynwald Park

Latrobe – **Fri 14** December 2018,
7-8 pm, Christmas Carols,
St Luke's Church, Cotton Street

Latrobe – **Sat 15** December 2018,
7 pm, Carols in Kings Park

Smithton – **Sat 15** December 2018,
7.30-10 pm, Smithton Christian
Fellowship, Nelson Street

Queenstown – **Sun 16** December 2018,
5.30-10 pm, St Martin's Church,
Russell Street

Penguin – **Sun 16** December 2018,
7-9 pm, Carols by Candlelight,
Hiscutt Park

Ulverstone – **Sat 22** December 2018,
7.30 pm, Carols by Candlelight,
Ulverstone Outdoor Entertainment Centre
(Bicentennial Park soundshell)

Launceston – **Sun 23** December 2018,
7 pm, Carols by Candlelight, City Park

Burnie – **Sun 23** December 2018,
7 pm, Burnie Park

Hobart – **Sun 24** December 2018,
7 pm, St David's Cathedral,
9 Lessons & Carols

Hobart – **Sun 24** December 2018,
11.15 pm, Christmas Carols,
St Mary's Cathedral

Launceston – **Sun 24** December 2018,
7.30 pm, St John's Church,
9 Lessons & Carols

Launceston – **Sun 24** December 2018,
11 pm, Christmas Carols,
Church of the Apostles

Other Events

This list is only a selection.
Please check with local churches and
community organisations for details.

2018 CHRISTMAS BOWL APPEAL

Love your
neighbour
as yourself

Mark 12: 31



SHARE THE JOY OF THIS CHRISTMAS WITH OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN NEED.

Place a Bowl of Remembrance on your dinner table this Christmas
and invite your family to place a generous gift in it,
to “share your good dinner with hungry children in other lands”.

Donate this gift through your local church in an envelope



Christmas Bowl

Share God's love through the Christmas Bowl.

You can download worship resources at:

actforpeace.org.au/christmasbowl

Call **1800 025 101** to have worship resources and giving envelopes
posted to you for use in your congregation.

Where your gifts to the Christmas Bowl go

YOUR GIFTS SUPPORT VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES THREATENED BY CONFLICT AND DISASTER ALL AROUND THE WORLD. Your kindness helps to provide urgent survival basics as well as fund long-term development programs that help people gain independence. Through your support of the Christmas Bowl, you also help communities plan and prepare for disasters, provide essential healthcare to people in need, protect human rights in marginalised communities and care for refugees. As part of the ACT Alliance, Act for Peace works with local organisations around the world, saving lives when disaster strikes and helping to build long-term change.

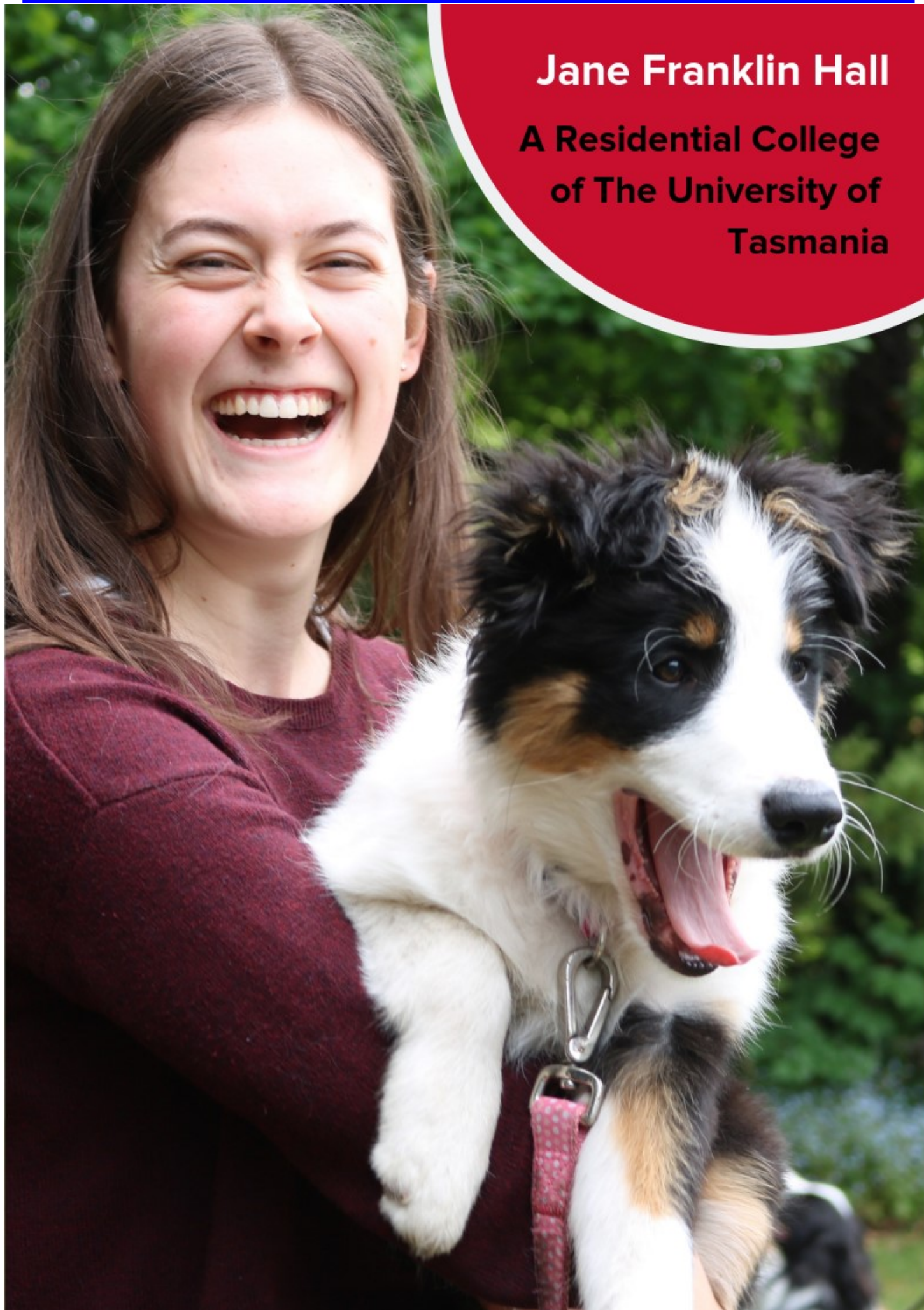
Act for Peace is contributing even more funds to the work on the ground to ensure the best possible impact.

In the past financial year, 72% of Act for Peace's expenditure was used on our programs, advocacy and community education work. 9% was spent on our accountability and administration to ensure our programs and funds are used as effectively as possible. 19c from every \$1 was invested in fundraising, raising a further \$1 for our work.

ACT FOR PEACE
CONFRONTING INJUSTICE TOGETHER
THROUGH THE **act**alliance

Jane Franklin Hall

**A Residential College
of The University of
Tasmania**





What is Jane Franklin Hall?

Jane Franklin Hall is a residential college located in South Hobart. It was founded by the Tasmanian Council of Churches in 1950 as an all-female college before becoming co-educational in 1973. Now fondly referred to as "Jane", the College is home to students from all over Tasmania, Australia and the world.

Why Do People Choose Jane?

Jane is the only fully-catered Oxbridge-style college in Tasmania. This means that our residents live together, study together, dine together and achieve together. This all occurs in a caring and nurturing community that offers academic development, a range of scholarships and 24/7 support.

What Makes the Jane Community Special?

The community at Jane is made up of undergrad and postgrad students, Jane Alumni, Jane Fellows and Chaplains. This unique blend of community members creates the perfect environment for students to learn and grow. In the Jane community, the goal is always to provide students with a life-enhancing learning and living experience.

How Do I Find Out More?

Applications to live at Jane in 2019 are currently open until February 18, but there are only 70 positions available.

To find out more, visit jane.edu.au or call (03) 62100 100.



Schools Sunday

in Tasmania is observed
on the third Sunday in February.

In 2019 Schools Sunday is on

17 February



Visit the Schools Sunday website
for worship and activity resources:

<https://sutas.org.au/Schools-Sunday>

Schools Sunday is an initiative of the TCC resourced by SU Tasmania.



IN AN EMERGENCY:

If an emergency (fire-related, flood, or otherwise) occurs, please listen for advice on **ABC Local Radio**, our emergency broadcaster in Tasmania. ABC Local Radio is found at

- **936 AM** in Southern Tasmania
- **91.7 FM*** in Northern Tasmania

(*see table below for regional frequencies).

ABC Local Radio	Frequency	ABC Local Radio	Frequency
Bicheno TAS	89.7 FM	Queenstown TAS	90.5 FM
Burnie TAS	102.5 FM	Rosebery TAS	106.3 FM
East Devonport TAS	100.5 FM	Savage River/Waratah	104.1 FM
Fingal TAS	1161 AM	St Helens TAS	1584 AM
Hobart TAS	936 AM	St Marys TAS	102.7 FM
King Island TAS	88.5 FM	Strahan TAS	107.5 FM
Launceston City TAS	102.7 FM	Swansea TAS	106.1 FM
Launceston TAS	91.7 FM	Waratah TAS	103.3 FM
Lileah TAS	91.3 FM	Weldborough TAS	97.3 FM
NE Tasmania TAS	91.7 FM	Zeehan TAS	90.5 FM

*The President and Executive of the
Tasmanian Council of Churches
pray you will enjoy the abundant blessings of the Christmas Season
in the Peace and Love of God.*



*In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God.*

*And the Word was made flesh,
and dwelt among us,
(and we beheld his glory,
the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,)
full of grace and truth.*

St John, chapter 1, verses 1 and 14