

*Christmas is a time for giving and sharing.
Make sure you take time to share joy with your
family and friends as well as others in the
Deaf community that may be having
a lonely Christmas.*

Share the Joy!



NEWSLETTER
DECEMBER 2025



JOHN PIERCE CENTRE
Spirit of the Deaf Community



www.jpc.org.au



admin@jpc.org.au



[JohnPierceCentre](https://www.facebook.com/JohnPierceCentre)



JOHN PIERCE CENTRE
Spirit of the Deaf Community

A.B.N. 55 005 611 601

Contact:

25-35 High Street

PO Box 443

Prahran Victoria 3181

Voice: 03 9525 1158

E-mail: admin@jpc.org.au

Website: www.jpc.org.au

Office Hours

MON - WED

9.30am to 3.30pm

THURS - FRI

By Appointment Only

Staff

Fr Wayne Edwards

Katrina Mynard

Teresa Paulet

Diane Backholer

Tamara Dwyer

Kim Kavanagh

Executive Manager

Sophie Duncan

Chairperson JPC Board

Trevor Hughes

Board Members

Dean Sinclair

Br Shane Wood (Minutes)

Evelyne Albrecht

Roshan Abraham

Next Newsletter Deadline

MARCH 2026

JPC would like to thank the community members for allowing us to use their photos in this publication and we acknowledge the free images in this newsletter from brgfx; rawpixel; kjpgarter; macrovector; and all Freepik images.

Message from the Executive Manager

Merry Christmas! I hope everybody enjoyed the Christmas Rally at JPC recently. There were a few new faces and it was a wonderful day. Thank you to everybody that attended and those that volunteered and helped on the day.

It has been a very busy and rewarding year with our Workshops and the Cyber Grant program. These initiatives have given us the opportunity to explore new skills, strengthen confidence, and build connections across our community. We hope that everyone who attended found the sessions both practical and interesting, and that you were able to take away knowledge that supports you in everyday life.

We are always here to help, whether through ongoing programs, one-on-one support, or simply being a place where you can ask questions and feel supported. Thank you for your contributions to making this year at JPC so meaningful. As we look toward 2026, let's carry forward the spirit of togetherness and compassion that makes JPC such a special place.

Wishing you all peace, joy and love this Christmas, and a bright start to the New Year!

Warm regards,

Sophie Duncan



Want to give back to the Community?

The John Pierce Centre is overseen by a committed Board of Representatives and Subcommittees who support the overarching operations of the JPC. We are seeking expressions of interest from Deaf individuals to join our Board of Directors or one of our Board Subcommittees: Finance Subcommittee or Management Subcommittee.

You do not require past Board committee experience, just a keen interest in supporting the work of the JPC.

Help shape the future of JPC and learn some new skills.

Feel free to ask any questions or request further information:

JPC Executive Manager
manager@jpc.org.au



FROM LITTLE THINGS BIG THINGS GROW:

Christmas is marked for the birth of a baby, who grew to become the Saviour of the world. Imagine if we all grew up to be the Saviour of the world!

I can see you all denying this as a possibility, but I wonder if anyone who did wonderful and amazing things for other people ever thought they were going to achieve it. I think they possibly never planned such achievements. Life develops and opportunities arise, often out of nowhere, sometimes even resulting from an accident! Some of the greatest inventions in the world were the result of such accidents.

Do any of our sporting heroes know they will win an Olympic Gold, or the Brownlow Medal. Or the doctors who find a cure for what has killed thousands of people. They may hope and pray to do so, but there are never any guarantees in this life. It was the same for Jesus. He was born in a stable, among the cows, donkeys, and other animals - not in a palace fit for a King. Yet he overcame all the doubts and questions, held by others about his identity and his knowledge; even overcoming his own doubts and fears. He was true to himself, accepted what God was asking of him, accepted the challenge and changed the world.

We also can change the world. Not by glamorous means, but in small instances of love, and care. It is often in the smallest things that huge achievements come. There is a song: "From Little Things Big Things Grow" - like the tiny mustard seed that grows into the biggest of trees. Just like a little baby grows into an adult, with the ability to do marvelous and wonderful things.

Let us remember this Christmas, that a tiny baby grew into a magnificent human being, and that we can all do the same. From our birth as a tiny baby, we can save our world, changing the lives of others in a positive way, just by being our own good selves.

Just start small and see what grows!



Thank you to our volunteers

The John Pierce Centre wish to sincerely thank all of our supporters, volunteers and community that contribute to the running of our centre. Without your continuous support through financial contribution, volunteering and sharing of information, we would not be able to achieve all that we do for the Deaf Community.

Each year we hold a thank you party to acknowledge our supporters and share in the good work that we are able to achieve together! Thankyou to those that were able to attend and be celebrated!



The John Pierce Centre support the spiritual wellbeing of Deaf and hard of hearing people all around Victoria. Donating to our work can be done simply and easily by using this QR code. All donations over \$2 are tax deductible!

Trip to Bendigo

The JPC team headed out to Bendigo in September. It was a lovely day out at the local St Kilian's Catholic Church and then the pub for lunch. If you would like JPC to come to your regional area for a community catch up please let us know.



Thanks for buying a burger at Grill'd!

In October the Deaf community enjoyed a lovely outing for lunch to Grill'd on Chapel Street. Delicious burgers and great conversation.

And guess what? JPC received the most tokens in the jar which means we scored the \$300 donation for the October giveaway! Thanks to everyone who bought a burger to support our centre.



Cyber workshop—Staying Safe Online



Thanks to Olivia Beasley for

presenting a workshop about staying safe online. Great information about keeping your accounts safe with strong passwords and checking the settings on your phones and devices to stay safe.

Cyber workshop—MFA

Thanks to Danni Wright for presenting about multi-factor authentication as an important way to protect your accounts.



My Aged Care updates with COTA

With all the recent changes to My Aged Care and access to support for seniors, it was great to get an update from COTA to support individuals understanding the new system.



Coffee with a Cop

Many thanks to the Police Officers from our local Prahran Police Station for coming out to JPC again and chatting with the community. Thoroughly enjoyed by all who came along.



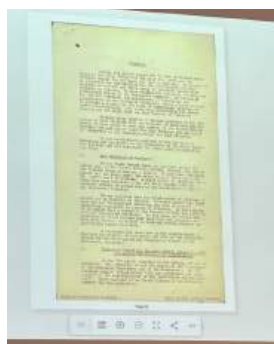
Australian Catholic Youth Festival

The JPC team recently held a stall at the Australian Catholic Youth Festival event in Melbourne. The staff had a great time meeting young adults and older school children who were attending the event, taking the opportunity to promote our centre as well as share some Auslan catholic signs. It was fabulous to meet some young people that knew some Auslan and were thrilled to be able to chat with the JPC team.



Deaf History Tour session with Dr Breda Carty

Thank you to Deaf Connect for partnering with JPC to bring Dr Breda Carty to our centre to share the important work she is doing to preserve Deaf history. Through collating, investigating and storing many photos, articles, and items connected to Deaf community, Dr Breda is ensuring Deaf history is kept forever.



Sr Bernadette's 80th Birthday Celebration

Thank you to everyone that attended the October Mass and stayed on to help celebrate Sr Bernadette's 80th Birthday with some delicious cake! Happy birthday Sr Bernadette.



Christmas Hampers

Thankyou to Toorak Uniting Church and Endeavour Hills St Paul the Apostle Church

Once again JPC are truly thankful for the support we receive each Christmas through donations provided from Toorak Uniting Church and Endeavour Hills St Paul the Apostle Church. Hampers full of food and goodies are given out to Deaf community members and families for the Christmas season. We hope that those who received hampers are able to enjoy them with family.



JPC Volunteer Visitor Program

Do you have some spare time? Are you interested in giving back to the Deaf community? Perhaps volunteering is right for you. We are looking for Deaf people or people who use Auslan, who are interested in volunteering their time twice a month to visit the elderly Deaf in our community. Supporting the aging Deaf community is a priority for JPC.

We would provide the necessary training and ongoing support as needed and aim to find someone close to you to visit.

Also, if you are a Deaf senior or know someone who would benefit from having a volunteer to visit them please get in contact with JPC. We aim to find local volunteers to visit Deaf people in their home/nursing home/local café. Building a sense of connection with language and culture to those that are feeling lonely and isolated.

Contact us today at admin@jpc.org.au

Christmas Closure Dates:

JPC will be closed from Thursday 18th December and will re-open on Monday 19th January.

Staff will be on leave during this time but if you have urgent need of support please contact the Manager—Sophie 0416 207 913 (SMS or voice) or Pastoral Care—Katrina 0400 660 601 (SMS only)

We are still available to support your needs and refer you to appropriate services if you need anything urgently.



We remember always, those that have been a part of our lives, as their spirits are weaved through the story that is our Deaf community.

Rest in Peace

Mary Winterton – 6th Sept (mother of Janet McDonald)

Fernando Saulle – 17th Oct'25 (husband of Valerie Saulle)

Barry Tucker – 24th Nov'25 (brother of Philip Tucker)

Anthony Hastings – 2nd Dec'25

Peter McCormick – 17th Dec'25

Office Hours-

MON - Wed: 9:30am-3:30pm

Thurs-Fri: by appointment only

Please make contact via email at admin@jpc.org.au

Your contribution:

Help us to support Deaf people and their families throughout VIC by making a tax deductible donation today.



www.givenow.com.au/jpcdonations

Leave a bequest

By leaving a gift to John Pierce Centre in your Will, you will have a lasting impact, supporting our Centre for years to come. It is a powerful reflection of the values and principles you treasure. It enables you to create a legacy of love and care for those in need.

For more information, please contact our office on 03 9525 1158 or email admin@jpc.org.au

Thank you.



Memorial Mass

A lovely Memorial Mass was held at JPC on Sunday 16th November to remember all those that we have lost in the last 12 months. At the end of the service we went out into the Memorial Garden to remember those from our community that have a plaque on our Memorial Stone.



Story of Impact—Lizzie

Lizzie has been a part of the JPC community for many years, joining activities, Mass and special events. Lizzie recently moved into aged care which can be an isolating place for many Deaf people. JPC volunteers have been a great support to Lizzie. Sr Janette visits Lizzie each month, and then each month for the JPC Mass, Marie picks Lizzie up to bring her to our centre for Mass and then drives her home again. These outings and visits are a crucial part of helping Deaf seniors to feel engaged and a part of their Deaf community. Thank you to all of our volunteers that support Deaf seniors to maintain their connection with the Deaf community.



Christmas is often portrayed as a season of togetherness—full of conversation, laughter, and shared traditions. Yet for many Deaf people, it can be one of the loneliest times of the year. While families gather around tables and social events, communication barriers can quietly deepen feelings of isolation.

Much of Christmas revolves around spoken interaction: family dinners and overlapping conversations. For Deaf people in hearing families or mixed social groups, these moments can become exhausting rather than joyful.

When sign language is not used or interpreters are absent, it is easy to be physically present but socially excluded. Smiles and nods may mask the reality of missing jokes, stories, and emotional connections.

Having this shared understanding means that we can support each other by reaching out and checking in on one another. Sharing the Christmas joy with Deaf friends and isolated Deaf people is part of our special Christmas spirit.

JPC would like to thank the following organisations for their support through grants and sponsorships...



Ephpheta Foundation Grant

Gorman Foundation Grant

Community Activities Update!

Community groups are now on break for the Christmas and summer holidays. We will see you all back again in February 2026!

Signee Tots

Thank you to all of the Signee Tots families for their attendance and support this year with our playgroup. A special thanks to Olivia and Ash who ran the Signee Tots playgroup as volunteers. We have had a boom of attendance this year with many families attending the sessions which has made the days lots of fun for the kids. Thank you to everyone for coming and making it a joyful space to play.

The last session of the year was at JPC with a Christmas theme of activities, a jumping castle, craft and a small gift from Santa!

Olivia will be stepping back from her role but will still be about at playgroup. Ash will continue to coordinate Signee Tots playgroup for 2026 and we are deeply grateful for her continued work for this program.

The JPC team hope that you all have a restful and joyful Christmas and New Year and we look forward to seeing you all again in 2026!

Please email for more information: signeetots@jpc.org.au

First session in 2026 will be

**Sunday 1st
February
10am-12pm**



Deaf Men's Group

The Men's group has had a great year in 2025 with workshops, activities and outings. We are looking forward to plenty more activities and outings in 2026. If you are interested in attending the men's group please contact admin@jpc.org.au



Sessions for 2026

Wed 28 Jan	Wed 20 May	Wed 16 Sept
Wed 18 Feb	Wed 17 Jun	Wed 21 Oct
Wed 18 Mar	Wed 15 Jul	Wed 18 Nov
Wed 15 Apr	Wed 19 Aug	Wed 9 Dec

Thank you to our Volunteers

A very big thank you to the wonderful volunteers that are involved in one or more of these community groups. They always attend with an eagerness to help out and always roll up their sleeves to take on the task.. Thank you from all of the staff at JPC.

Remember!! For information on any community activities, please contact Katrina:

Deaf Arts & Crafts

What a very busy and successful year with the **Deaf Arts and Craft Group**! The artwork was absolutely stunning and I'm so proud of this group.

If you would like to join this group please contact Diane at JPC
d.backholer@jpc.org.au



**Arts will run
fortnightly in 2026!**

First session back in 2026 will be

Friday 6th February!



Ladies Get Together

Co-ordinated by Diane Backholer

A fabulous year of gathering at JPC and going on outings around Melbourne and beyond! What an enjoyable year for all of the Ladies.

(runs every second Wednesday through the term)

First event for 2026 will be
Wednesday 4th February!



Pankina

It's been a fabulous year again for Pankina with extra Bingo days. All are welcome to attend fortnightly on Mondays.

First event for 2026 will be

Monday 9th February!

A catch up and chat session

...then...

Monday 23rd February

Monday 23rd March

Monday 20th April

AEI

Thanks to Expression Australia for coming along to Pankina to explain about the new 000 Auslan Emergency Interpreting Service which ensures that Deaf people can call 000 for Fire, Ambulance and Police when needed. They assisted people to download the app and have a trial call. We encourage all of the community to install the App on their phones.



SMS: 0400 660 601 / E: k.mynard@jpc.org.au

JPC Third Sunday Mass

JPC continues to provide onsite and livestreamed mass on Facebook. We encourage you to come to mass on the third Sunday of each month when you can or if you can't you can watch it online at:

Www.facebook.com/JohnPierceCentre



Mass at St Patrick's Cathedral

Deaf Interpreters will be at St Patrick's Cathedral for the Midnight Mass on the Wednesday 24th December from 11:30pm

Interpreters will continue to be provided on the first Sunday of each, beginning on 4th January 2026. We hope you are able to watch online or on Channel 31 (channel 44).

Thank you to the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne for their continued support of the Deaf community and JPC.

St Patrick's Cathedral Christmas Eve Midnight Mass

The Midnight Mass at St Patrick's in East Melbourne will be interpreted.

11:30pm start with Christmas songs

12 midnight Mass

Please come and celebrate Mass at St Patrick's Cathedral

Calendar For Masses:

Wednesday 24th Dec JPC Christmas Eve, online	From 3pm online only: watch at www.facebook.com/johnpiercecetre
Wednesday 24th Dec St Patrick's Cathedral, East Melbourne	11:30pm St Patrick's Midnight Mass. Watch on Channel 31 (Channel 44 on your tv)
Sunday 4th January 2026 St Patrick's Cathedral, East Melbourne	11am St Patrick's or on Channel 31 (44)
Sunday 18th January JPC, Prahran. Welcome back Mass 2026	11am at JPC in Prahran or watch www.facebook.com/johnpiercecetre
Sunday 1st February St Patrick's Cathedral, East Melbourne	11am at St Patrick's or on Channel 31 (44)
Sunday 15th February JPC, Prahran.	11am at JPC in Prahran or watch online
Sunday 1st March St Patrick's Cathedral, East Melbourne	11am at St Patrick's or on Channel 31 (44)
Sunday 15th March JPC, Prahran	11am at JPC or watch online
Good Friday 3rd April JPC, Prahran	11am at JPC or watch online
Easter Sunday 5th April JPC, Prahran	11am at JPC or watch online

JPC Christmas Eve Mass aired on Facebook on Wednesday 24th December

JPC Christmas Eve Mass will be pre-recorded and posted on Facebook. There will be NO onsite Mass provided

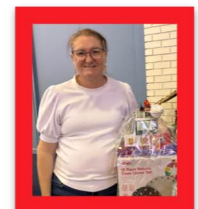
Please watch at www.facebook.com/JohnPierceCentre

Christmas Rally

Once again the John Pierce Centre had a lovely Christmas Rally event! Our most popular event of the year in our centre. There was a lovely Mass for the advent season. Then after Mass was a delicious lunch and dessert. Followed by our popular raffle with several lucky winners!

Thank you to everyone that attended. A special thank you to Santa for making the time to pop down from the North Pole to visit the kids! We hope you enjoyed the day as much as we did.

Enjoy your Christmas with friends and family.



We know the community enjoy the JPC newsletter so in 2026 we will be increasing to have 4 newsletters per year. We hope you enjoy the newsletter. Feedback about content is always welcome!

Please note that if you would like a hard copy newsletter the payment is

\$15 per year for 4 newsletters.

Payment must be made by March 2026



Office Closed:

JPC will be closed to the public and community over Christmas. If you have any urgent queries, please contact Sophie Duncan 0416 207 913

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