

# grace church joondalup

DIOCESE OF PERTH  
ANGLICAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA

**Naming & Circumcision of our Lord**  
**27 December 2009**

*My dear Friends*

*It's a boy! In Christian art, baby Jesus is frequently shown naked, making it quite clear that this is a boy. In order to be truly human we must be male or female. Gender is fundamental to our identity, so much so that some require gender re-assignment surgery before they can feel at home in their own bodies. The fact that Jesus is male, however, is not exactly the point. The point is that he is a real human being in every sense of the word. He is not bat-man, and not God in disguise. As Bishop John Robinson reminds us, Jesus is not a supernatural person with two natures, but one human person of whom we must use two languages, human-language and God-language. "Jesus is wholly and completely a man, but a man who 'speaks true' not simply of humanity but of God. He is not a man-plus, a man fitted, as it were, with a second engine – which would mean that he was **not** a man in any genuine sense. He is a man who in all that he says and does as man is the personal representative of God: he stands in God's place, he **is** God to us and for us." Today at his circumcision, this truth of the Word made flesh is proclaimed and celebrated. Like all of us, Jesus is human because he is born into a human family. Like all of us, Jesus is human because he is born into a particular culture and history and language and religion. His Jewishness is not something incidental or indifferent. It matters that Jesus is a Hebrew born of Hebrews. It matters that he grows up learning the scripture and prayer of his people. As he sheds just a few drops of blood for us today, we know that we can trust his love, for he is one of us, a high priest who identifies with us and prays for us in all the changing circumstances of life.*

*with my love*  
**David**