

# BANYULE BABBLE

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ANGLICAN PARISH OF BANYULE

HOLY SPIRIT WATSONIA ❄️ ST ANDREW'S ROSANNA ❄️ ST JOHN'S HEIDELBERG

**JANUARY  
2012**

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## Christmastide and Epiphany issue!

### PHILIP PHILOSOPHISES

The end of the year has come at last!  
Or maybe, it has come too quickly for you?

We have been working hard over the last 3 years to clarify our Visions and Goals, and after the AGM (what a marathon!) in November, we have adopted our new Mission Action Plan.

The main points of this are:

- We are made by God to reach out to others and serve them: this must be our major focus.
- We will be focusing energy on Heidelberg, looking for growth, but also be faithful in providing spiritually nourishing traditional services at Watsonia and Rosanna as branch churches.
- We will make our main service at Heidelberg more "All-age friendly" to include families and children. We hope this will be our growing edge.

- We will rationalise our residential properties so that they serve us better.
- We have decided to make plans to redevelop Rosanna by 2015, and make good use of the capital wealth we have inherited as a parish.
- In the short term we want to improve the exterior look of the Heidelberg halls; in the long term, we will make plans to totally redevelop these and build more appropriate buildings and meeting spaces which will serve the community.
- We have an imperative to make sure that we set in place a stable, long term Anglican presence that will be a blessing to others for the next 160 years.

Now it's time for a little break.  
Let's rest back and let the joy of

Christmas infect us, as we celebrate this wonderful and ancient Christian feast. Let's take time to pray, to mull, to be restored. Let's spend time walking the beach, visiting family and being with friends, and reading books: whatever will restore the soul.

We are blessed to have each other, and we need to be thankful for one another – for God has called us to this Body, to be His people here in our suburbs.

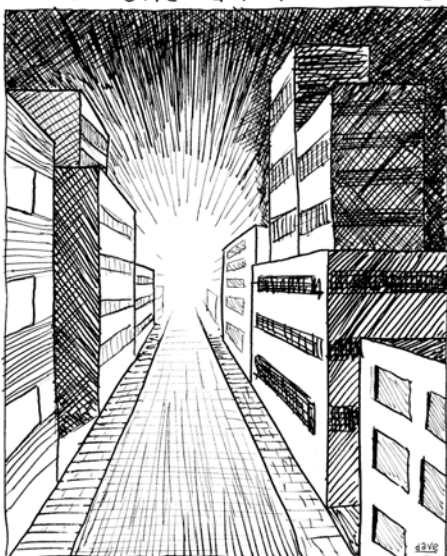
May the peace and joy of Christ's coming be with you, for he is our "Emmanuel", God with us.

With every blessing,

Philip



in the dark streets



shines the everlasting light

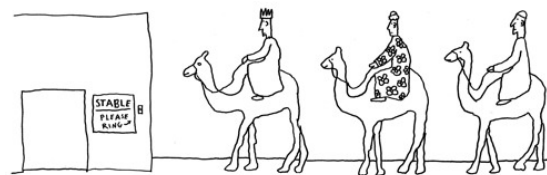
### The Gift of Christmas

As Christmas time draws nearer,  
our hearts are filled with joy,  
for at this special time of year  
God sent a baby boy.

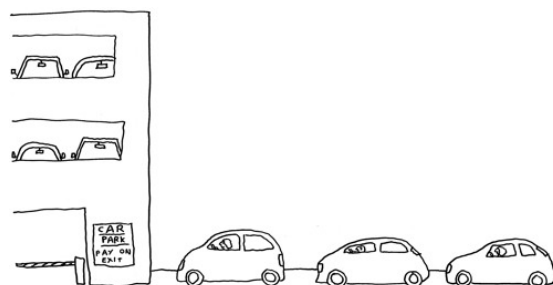
We buy gifts for loved ones,  
but the greatest gift of all  
was the birth of our Lord Jesus  
in a lowly stable stall.

So celebrate this great event  
with joyful songs resounding.  
A Merry Christmas to you all  
with happiness abounding.

Betty Kettle



ARRIVAL AT THE STABLE



ARRIVAL AT THE CAR PARK

# This Month - January

- Sunday 1st:** 10 am Combined service, Watsonia
- Sunday 8th:** 10 am Combined service, Rosanna
- Sunday 15th:** 10 am Combined service, at Heidelberg
- Sunday 22nd:** 10 am Combined service, at Watsonia
- Sunday 29th:** 10 am Combined service at Heidelberg, with Commissioning of Parish Leaders, and baptism

## St Andrew's Mission Boxes

CMS .....	\$450.00
Leprosy .....	\$452.00
BCA .....	\$486.85
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>\$1388.85</b>

*June Lockhart*

Brenda Griffiths wishes to thank everyone for their continuing generosity in supporting Mission in the parish.

(The Editor apologises for the late running of this item, which should have appeared in the December *Babble*.)

# January Services

There will be only one service in the parish each week during January, at 10 am on Sunday

- 1st January:** Holy Spirit, Watsonia
- 8th January:** St Andrew's, Rosanna
- 15th January:** St John's, Heidelberg
- 22nd January:** Holy Spirit, Watsonia
- 29th January:** St John's, Heidelberg

The service on the 29th will include the commissioning of parish leaders, and also a baptism.

## 1A Burgundy St

The proposed development at 1A Burgundy St, next to St John's, has just been before VCAT. We had sent a submission supporting opposition to the development, but could not afford to brief a lawyer. Margaret Billett tried to join the objection, but was refused.

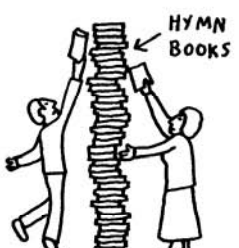
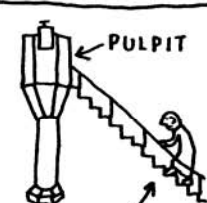
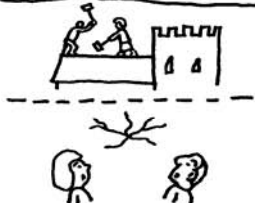



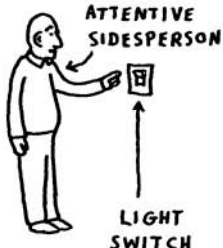


The result was not good for us. Banyule Council's condition that there be only one top-storey flat was removed without explanation. Indeed, practically every condition the developer objected to was removed.

Cr Tom Melican (now mayor) had told us that the Council approved the development in order that it might impose some sort of restraints that an appeal to VCAT would not. However, these restraints have now been removed.

*Peter McKay*

# SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS

IDEAS FOR SOME GOOD ONES

BIBLE PASSAGE	THINGS YOU WILL NEED	BIBLE PASSAGE	THINGS YOU WILL NEED	BIBLE PASSAGE	THINGS YOU WILL NEED
BUILDING THE TOWER OF BABEL	 HYMN BOOKS	MOSES ASCENDING MOUNT SINAI	 PULPIT ELDERLY MEMBER OF CLERGY	HEALING THE PARALYSED MAN	 CHURCHWARDENS ON ROOF, SLEDGEHAMMERS
THE FLOOD	 WATER BAPTISTRY CRECHE TOYS	DESTRUCTION OF THE CITY OF JERICO	 REDUNDANT PEWS PROCESS AROUND 7 TIMES, THEN DESTROY	CALMING THE STORM	 FONT HAIRDRYER
THE PLAGUE OF DARKNESS	 ATTENTIVE SIDESPERSON LIGHT SWITCH	BEHEADING OF JOHN THE BAPTIST	 SCISSORS FLOWER ARRANGEMENT	MARY AND MARTHA	 DILIGENT COFFEE ROTA VOLUNTEER LESS DILIGENT COFFEE ROTA VOLUNTEER

# The Long Victory

*Sermon by Andrew Bowles,  
preached at St Andrew's on Advent 2*

*Isa 40:1–11, 2 Pet 3:8–15a, Mk 1:1–8*

Is anyone here a fan of *The Lord of the Rings*? There is a small part in that story where one of the good characters describes their struggle with the Dark Lord which has gone on for a long time as 'the long defeat'.

That is quite a pessimistic view of things, but very common in many mythologies. I think particularly of the Norse gods, who in their myths are fighting a long and losing battle against the giants who will eventually destroy the world. I mention this because I think that the Christian view of history is the opposite of that, that we believe in a 'long victory'.

In the season of Advent we remember Jesus' first coming and look forward to his return, and the period in between in which we live is a struggle between Christ and the evil powers in which Christ will finally be victorious. Our baptism service is very aware of this, and places the newly baptised person within the context of the spiritual struggle that they are taking up. It is like being enlisted into an army. The service that was in use when I was baptised as a child says, after the sign of the cross is made on the forehead: "fight bravely under his banner against sin, the world, and the devil, and continue Christ's faithful soldier and servant to your life's end."

It reminds us that being a disciple of Christ means taking up a position within a spiritual struggle, and that there are three great enemies with whom we contend – sin, the world, and the devil. Our readings today remind us of these three areas and the way in which the coming of Christ is the beginning of the victory over them. Before looking at that we'll just briefly remind ourselves of what the terms 'sin, the world, and the devil' are referring to.

'Sin' in this context refers to the fact of our personal corruption and failure. Our fundamental issue is an alienation from God that issues forth in all the kinds of immoral and unpleasant behaviour – things such as pride, hatred, envy, greed. This ingrained way of life is our enemy and needs to be defeated.

Secondly, 'the world' is a term that usually refers to the collective effects of sin. Human societies create political and economic systems that are in defiance of God and which result in injustice and suffering in many and various ways. It doesn't mean that we are hostile to the earth or the good creation of God, but that we struggle with 'the world' that humanity has created.

Thirdly, 'the devil' refers of course to a personal spiritual being who resists God and oppresses humanity. But it's more helpful sometimes to think of this as the wider cosmic dimension of evil and corruption in the structure of reality. Paul talks about this in Ephesians 6:12, "For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places." This particular area is not something we tend to think about a lot, but the more you get involved with the spiritual experiences that many people have the more you see the reality of this.

So we have these three enemies – sin, the world and the devil. They are obstacles to be overcome on the way to the perfection of creation – to the love, joy and peace of an eternity with God. How then does Christ's coming achieve a victory over them, and how do we participate in that? Our gospel reading from Mark 1 reminds us of Christ's victory over sin. Sin is defeated in a twofold way. John the Baptist proclaimed a baptism of repentance and forgiveness of sins. This involves a decisive turning away from sin and towards God, repenting and changing our mind. We receive then forgiveness and a new start. But furthermore, John says that he baptises with water, but Jesus when he came would baptise with the Holy Spirit. The continuing victory over sin involves a reconnection with the Spirit of God which of course cuts out the root of sin. Our own life as Christians, therefore, is a microcosm of the long victory of God, whereby we should be progressively repenting of sin and being forgiven, and transformed by the Holy Spirit.

Our Old Testament reading from Isaiah 40 helps us to think about the victory of Christ over 'the world' and how that is achieved. This is a beautiful passage about the return of God to his people, comforting and caring for them and healing their brokenness. In Christ's vision the world is not defeated by military action, it is defeated by a new creation of a people who have God dwelling with them in their midst. In the Old Testament this was what Israel symbolised, and in our own era the Church is supposed to be where this reality is found – a community of people who live with God and demonstrate his way of life in their interactions with each other in the wider world. So the more the church becomes what it is supposed to be the more the world is defeated. And we look forward to the completion of that when Christ returns and a 'new world' is created.

Finally we see in our reading from 2 Peter 3 the vision of the final defeat of the devil and all that he represents. The second coming of Christ is seen as a judgement on the cosmic order and something

that purifies it into a 'new creation'.<sup>10</sup> "But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.<sup>11</sup> Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness,<sup>12</sup> waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire?<sup>13</sup> But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home." That is the end of the long victory, which is the hope that we remind ourselves of during this Advent season.

This has been a very brief tour of large concepts about the nature of the world and the spiritual struggle that we are in. It is helpful, though, to be reminded in this festive time that there is a hard edge to the coming of Christ, not just sentimentality about a baby in a manger. Advent and Christmas are times that involve a call to take up a fight against sin, the world, and the devil, and to take the side of Jesus who has come and is coming. We do have a part to play in the long victory.

The place to start, if we haven't already, is with the enemy of sin. We need to repent and seek forgiveness, and receive from Christ the Holy Spirit to transform us. And after that we can turn our attention to changing the world and our struggle with the devil and his temptations. So I urge you to begin this today if you haven't already, and if you have laid down your weapons for a while take them up again. The struggle continues whether we are active or not. In the passage from Ephesians that I read earlier, Paul goes on to say<sup>13</sup> "Therefore take up the whole armour of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.<sup>14</sup> Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness.<sup>15</sup> As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace.<sup>16</sup> With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one.<sup>17</sup> Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

Let's pray.

*We pray, Christ, that you would empower us to fight bravely under your banner against sin, the world, and the devil, and to continue your faithful soldiers and servants until our life's end. Help us to see your victory in our lives and the life of the world. In your name, Amen.*

Andrew Bowles

**How to Give a Cat a Pill**

1. Pick up cat and cradle it in the crook of your left arm as if holding a baby.  
Position right forefinger and thumb on either side of cat's mouth and gently apply pressure to cheeks while holding pill in right hand. As cat opens mouth, pop pill into mouth. Allow cat to close mouth and swallow.
2. Retrieve pill from floor and cat from behind sofa. Cradle cat in left arm and repeat process.
3. Retrieve cat from bedroom and throw soggy pill away.
4. Take new pill from foil wrap, cradle cat in left arm, holding rear paws tightly with left hand. Force jaws open and push pill to back of mouth with right forefinger. Hold mouth shut for a count of ten.
5. Retrieve pill from goldfish bowl and cat from top of wardrobe. Call spouse in from the garden.
6. Kneel on floor with cat wedged firmly between knees, hold front and rear paws. Ignore low growls emitted by cat. Get spouse to hold head firmly with one hand while forcing wooden ruler into mouth. Drop pill down ruler and rub cat's throat vigorously.
7. Retrieve cat from curtain rail. Get another pill from foil wrap. Make note to buy new ruler and repair curtains.  
Carefully sweep shattered figurines and vases from hearth and set to one side for gluing later.
8. Wrap cat in large towel and get spouse to lie on cat with head just visible from below armpit. Put pill in end of drinking straw, force mouth open with pencil and blow down drinking straw.
9. Check label to make sure pill not harmful to humans and drink one beer to take taste away. Apply band-aid to spouse's forearm and remove blood from carpet with cold water and soap.
10. Retrieve cat from neighbour's shed. Get another pill. Open another beer. Place cat in cupboard, and close door onto neck, to leave head showing. Force mouth open with dessert spoon. Flick pill down throat with elastic band.
11. Fetch screwdriver from garage and put cupboard door back on hinges. Drink beer. Fetch bottle of scotch. Pour shot, drink. Apply cold compress to cheek and check records for date of last tetanus shot. Apply whiskey compress to cheek to disinfect. Toss back another shot. Throw tee-shirt away and fetch new one from bedroom.
12. Call fire department to retrieve the damn cat from the top of the tree across

THIS YEAR MY RESOLUTION IS TO BE A BETTER PERSON IN EVERY RESPECT



WHERE POSSIBLE I AM PLANNING TO DO THIS FROM THE COMFORT OF MY ARMCHAIR

the road. Apologize to neighbour who crashed into fence while swerving to avoid cat. Take last pill from foil wrap.

13. Using heavy-duty pruning gloves from shed, tie the little \*%#%^'s front paws to rear paws with garden twine and bind tightly to leg of dining table. Push pill into mouth followed by large piece of filet steak. Be rough about it. Hold head vertically and pour two pints of water down throat to wash pill down.

14. Consume remainder of scotch. Get spouse to drive you to the emergency room. Sit quietly while doctor stitches fingers and forearm and removes pill remnants from right eye. Call furniture shop on way home to order new table.

15. Arrange for RSPCA to collect mutant cat from hell and call local pet shop to see if they have any hamsters.

**How to Give a Dog a Pill**

1. Wrap it in bacon.
2. Toss it in the air.

*Submitted by Gay Miller*

**One from Laurel Ceff . . .**

A 54 year old woman had a heart attack and was taken to the hospital.

While on the operating table she had a near death experience. Seeing God, she asked, "Is my time up?"

God said, "No, you have another 43 years, 2 months and 8 days to live."

Upon recovery, the woman decided to stay in the hospital and have a face-lift, liposuction, breast implants and a tummy tuck. She even had someone come in and change her hair colour and brighten her teeth! Since she had so

much more time to live, she figured she might as well make the most of it.

After her last operation, she was released from the hospital. While crossing the street on her way home, she was killed by an ambulance.

Arriving in front of God, she demanded, "I thought you said I had another 43 years? Why didn't you pull me from out of the path of the ambulance?"

God replied: "\_\_\_! I didn't recognise you!"

**US Crime Reports**

120 Northtown Drive NE. The black and tan puppy was left in a non-secured area. The estimated value is \$1,300.  
**DEC. 23**  
**Property damage.** A man from the 12000 block of Oak Park Boulevard NE. called police because someone knocked the head off of the snowman he made this year. He said this happens every year. The police report noted the snowman was made of snow.  
**DEC. 25**  
**Property damage.** Someone knocked a snowman's head off on the 12000 block of Oak Park Boulevard NE. This was the...

**Jan. 24**  
**Assault:** 2:30 p.m., 1500 block of Auburn Way North. Two students of unspecified gender told police they were assaulted in some way on their way home from an unspecified school by an unspecified number of assailants, perhaps sustaining unspecified injuries or none at all, police didn't say.

ing open bags.  
 10:36 a.m. Monday, 608 N. Spurgeon, found a million dollar bill and would like confirmation if it is real.

**A Christmas Display:**

