

# BANYULE BABBLE

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ANGLICAN PARISH OF BANYULE

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

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2013

Office: 1 Burgundy Street Heidelberg 3084 ph. 9457 1144 Tues–Fri 9 am–1 pm

Ministers: **Philip Trowse** 0416 230 455 **René Pfitzner** 0401 609 946

**Rosemary Young** 0437 848 394

Internet: www.banyuleparish.org.au email banyuleparish@netspace.net.au

Editor: Peter McKay ph. 9459 5852 email petergmckay@hotmail.com

## RENÉ WRITES

WHEN was the last time you read through Lamentations? It's not a comfortable read, to be sure. Lamentations expresses the grief and confusion that Judah experienced at the destruction of Jerusalem. In 587 BC the Babylonians laid siege to Jerusalem and destroyed it. The suffering was incredible and the major institutions of the Jewish nation lay in ruins. It's clear that the author believed God was the ultimate cause of their defeat. While the suffering was terrible, the main impact of the fall was the confusion and distress. If this destruction was from God's hand, in what sense can Israel remain his people? Did they deserve so much anguish? What would happen to the covenant, now that the temple and the city of David were destroyed? The author pleads with God for mercy, and gives a shape to the distress of the community in the structure of the poetry.

In what sense could Israel continue to believe in YHWH? How could they cry out to him, when he's the one inflicting them so horribly? At the centre of the book lies a passage of hope in the darkness, it proclaims both the character of God and his great deeds:

*But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. "The LORD is my portion," says my soul, "therefore I will hope in him." The LORD is good to those who wait for him, to the soul that seeks him. It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD.* (Lam 3:21-26).

This is what the author grasps for when YHWH seems far off. Judah has known God as faithful, good and merciful.

It is remarkable that the covenant is still in their minds after all that has happened: the destruction of home and city, the murder and starvation of family. God may restore them, but the community is aware that God's anger is against them, and while they ask for life again, Yahweh's answer is by no means certain: *"Restore us to yourself, O Lord, that we may be restored! Renew our days as of old—unless you have utterly rejected us, and you remain exceedingly angry with us."* (Lam 5:21,22). The extreme nature of the punishment was hard to endure alongside the knowledge that God was sovereign and good. It might have been easier to curse God, but the writer chooses a far more difficult path: to continue to acknowledge YHWH and appeal to him, while facing his unbearable wrath.

What do you do when you're in a rut, spiritually? Like you don't want to pray anymore? When you've lost all enthusiasm for church. When you're so full of grief and you can't understand why God would allow these circumstances you're in. If Lamentations teaches us anything, it's that God wants us to keep calling out to him, because he is good, and he hears us. Lamenting is not a failure of faith, but an act of faith.

God doesn't say: "I'll take away your struggle", he says: "do not be afraid, for I am with you".

René



## Parish Working Bee

The next Parish Working Bee will be on **Saturday 3rd August**. All able-bodied members of the parish are urged to come and help. Non-able-bodied members bearing morning tea are also welcome! The work to be done includes:

Painting Window washing

Clearing drains Clearing gutters

So there is something for everyone! Bring any useful tools you have.

## Parish Spring Fair

*Saturday November 9th*

*9.30 am – 2.00 pm*

*St Andrew's, Rosanna*

The fair meeting was well attended. It was decided **SEPTEMBER** would be the month for **HAMPER DONATIONS**. Use-by dates of 2014 or after, please.

All hampers and Christmas cake will be on display for ticket sales at the musical afternoon in October.

**OCTOBER** will be the month for **MYSTERY BOTTLES** donations.

Next fair meeting: Saturday 28th September, 9.30 am, at St Andrew's.

*Rhonda Murphy*

## THE CUDDLE

Never underestimate a cuddle  
It can pick you up when you are sad,  
It can help you to rekindle  
The unhappy mindset you may have had

A warm little body snuggling in  
It won't be forever, so enjoy it now,  
A child's love can heal you within  
And take away the wrinkles set in your brow

They warm your heart and give you joy  
Your little child, a girl or a boy  
They come along and steal your heart  
But remember one day they will depart

Gay Miller © 2012

## This Month – August

**Saturday 3rd:** 9 am – 1 pm Parish Working Bee at St John's

**Sunday 4th:** 8 am St Andrew's; 10 am St John's (Family service); 5 pm Holy Spirit (+ teaching)

**Wednesday 7th:** 10.30 am Mothers' Union Deanery Day at St Matthew's Glenroy

**Sunday 11th:** 10 am St John's; 10 am St Andrew's; 5 pm Holy Spirit (with teaching)

**Wednesday 14th:** 3 pm Southern Cross Macleod

**Sunday 18th:** 10 am St John's for whole parish

**Monday 19th:** 1.30 pm St Andrew's Mothers' Union

**Tuesday 20th:** 10.30 am–3.30 pm M.U. Victorian State Conference Open Day, Templestowe

**Wednesday 21st:** 11 am Iris Grange

**Sunday 25th:** 10 am St John's (Adrian Lane preaching on BCA); 10 am St Andrew's; 5 pm Holy Spirit (with teaching)

**Wednesday 28th:** 10 am Holy Spirit Mothers' Union

## Next Month – October

**Saturday 26th:** Parish Working Bee at St Andrew's

**Sunday 27th:** 2 pm Savoy Singers at St Andrew's, \$20 by 7th Oct; 9846 1681. We want 200 people to come!

## Wanted

- New ADF deposits
- New helpers for *mainly music*
- New volunteers for the Macleod Op Shop

## Holy Spirit Watsonia Mothers' Union

*Proverbs 16 verse 1: We may make our plans, but God has the last word.*

At our meeting of 29th May, the speaker was unable to come. After our service we tidied our MU photo albums, then stapled one of our favourite songs, *Shine Jesus Shine*, into the back of the *Covenant Songs* book.

At the meeting on June 26th, we were planning our meeting so that Jean, one of our members who live in Strathallan Homes, would not need to come out in the cold. Jean phoned in sick, so we met at the Church. Our Service opened with *Shine Jesus Shine*. We all signed a card for Coral (our link secretary) to send to St Mary's Broughty Ferry Scotland for the retirement of their link secretary Marion.

Then we had two in-house speakers. Elsie gave a short talk on the C.R.E. lesson that she does not teach. Then Sylvia gave a most interesting talk on the Good Shepherd Aged Care Hostel where she works. The Good Shepherd Community celebrated 150 years of care this year. Sylvia attended the celebrations, and told us a little of the work carried at the convent starting 150 years ago and what they do now at Good Shepherd Aged Services at Clark St Abbotsford.

The meeting on July 24th was our 51st birthday. Thanks to Barbara for leading our service and meeting while Elizabeth is up north. Then we celebrated our birthday at Café Rimba.

*Dates for August:*

**Wednesday 7th:** Northern Deanery Day at St Matthew's Glenroy 10.30 am. BYO lunch. Car leaving Holy Spirit Watsonia car park at 9.45 am (travelling via ring road).

**Tuesday 20th:** Open Day at the Victorian M.U. State Conference, Holy Cross Centre 207 Serpells Rd Templestowe, 10.30–3.30, \$35.

**Wednesday 28th:** M.U. meeting at Watsonia.

Seventeen beanies were taken to the Seafarers early June. Thank you to all the knitters across the Parish.

*Elsie Storr*

## An email from the Treasurer

*Good afternoon all, I was in the office this morning to pay our accounts. This included the electricity accounts for all centres. The bills paid were \$803.66, \$747.34, \$568.92, \$1254.53, \$601.57. The unit cost of power has increased but looking at the back of the accounts the usage has also increased and in some instances the usage is close to double compared to the corresponding period last year.*

*This excessive usage of power is not sustainable and MUST stop. Peter can you insert some words to this effect in the Babble; also we may need to consider some devices which will automatically switch off appliances after a certain time period. Our hall rental will need to increase.*

Regards  
Geoff

## St Andrew's Mothers' Union

**Wednesday 7th August:** 10.30 am Deanery Day at St Matthew's Glenroy

**Friday 9th August:** Mary Summer Day

**Monday 19th August:** 1.30 pm Branch Meeting in the church. Bring an 'inspirational book'.

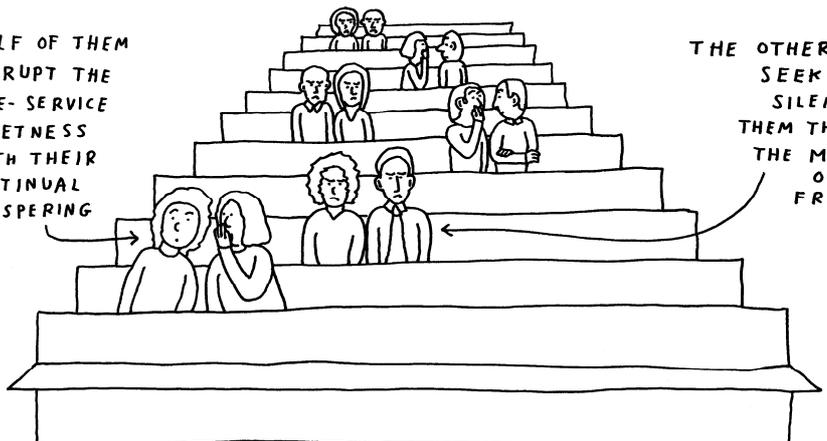
*Betty Kettle, 9435 6533*

## BEFORE THE SERVICE

THE CONGREGATION UNDERTAKE CAREFUL DEVOTIONAL PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

HALF OF THEM DISRUPT THE PRE-SERVICE QUIETNESS WITH THEIR CONTINUAL WHISPERING

THE OTHER HALF SEEK TO SILENCE THEM THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF FROWNING



## Sermon by René

Pentecost 5, 23rd June 2013  
at St Andrew's

**Realise that following Jesus is costly.  
Jesus wants your whole life.  
Jesus wants you to persevere.**

I'm going to take us a little bit further on in Luke's Gospel this morning, up to chapter 14 and we'll be thinking in particular about the subject of discipleship.

**Luke 14:25–27:** *Now large crowds were travelling with him; and he turned and said to them, "Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple. Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple."*

These are strong words coming from Jesus' mouth as he emphasises for us how costly discipleship is. Why would he need to do that?

Well Jesus is speaking to a large crowd and there may be many people there who have found his teaching interesting. There would definitely have been people attracted to all the miracles he was doing.

And there are people there who are maybe thinking, 'This is the start of something big. When this all gets started, I want to be there on the ground floor. When Jesus becomes king, I want to be able to say I was there at the start. One of his loyal followers. I heard all his sermons. I remember when he was just 30 years old. That kind of devotion has got to be worth something. I'm a true disciple'.

But Jesus says to the people there: 'If you want to follow me—if you want to walk in my footsteps, be my disciple—you need to hate your family, hate your life, take up your cross'.

He's asking, 'Do you know what you're getting yourself into? I'm not here to satisfy your curiosity or improve your social standing. If you come after me you have to put everything else in 2<sup>nd</sup> place, including your own life'.

*Hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself.*

Now this sounds pretty strong to us. And it is. I don't want to take the force of it away for a minute.

But the word hate could mean 2 things. Hating actively. Or hating comparatively.

Jesus is using the old Hebrew use of the word of hating by comparison. So, in Gen 29, it says that Jacob loved Rachel and hated Leah. But in most of our translations it reads: 'He loved Rachel more'. Rachel was Jacob's priority. Leah was not.

It's the same when Paul writes in Romans 9—he's quoting God—he says 'Jacob I loved, Esau I hated.' Now, God was good to them both, but he had special plans for Jacob's family, he chose Jacob's descendants to be the nation of Israel.

So the word hate here doesn't mean despise. It means love less. Relegate parents and family to a lesser priority.

Jesus was no anarchist. He knew the law. Honour your mother and father. Jesus upheld that law. But here he says: if it comes down to a choice between preserving your family unity, or being my disciple, then the

choice should be clear. Discipleship means following Jesus.

Now in some countries if you decide to be a Christian your family may disown you or even kill you, because of the disgrace you bring them.

In Jesus' day and in many countries around the world, the honour and dignity of the family was to be preserved above all else. In our culture that's less the case, especially amongst younger generations. But Jesus adds something that might rattle a few cages today.

*Unless you hate even life itself, you cannot be my disciple.*

Again, we're not talking about despising ourselves. Jesus is talking about putting your Christian walk, your discipleship, in first place. Your own life, your own wants and desires, in second place.

It's a question about what you love the most. Do you love comfort? Being appreciated? Being known? Do you love to see your family prosper? Of course we do. But are you prepared to forgo these things out of love for Jesus?

These other things are in front of us all the time. Society expects us to be concerned for our standard of living, our family's well-being, our social standing. But how often is Jesus put in front of us as a real priority for our love and devotion? An hour on Sundays? If you go to small group, an extra 2 hours on a weeknight?

How can we keep our love for Jesus alive?

We won't find a lot of encouragement from the world. We will find ourselves being constantly drawn away by other things.

Jesus tells us not to quit. He tells us to persevere, to be intentional. To count the cost.

*Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it? For if he lays the foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him, saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.'*

Before starting on a big project, you need to figure out if you'll be able to see it through.

My wife Louisa loves that TV show *Grand Designs*. It's a show that documents the development of different building projects from concept to completion. And every episode is about a different building.

And every time I watch it with her, it always seems that the person funding the project is hopelessly disorganised. They have scanty plans, an inadequate budget, and they keep changing their mind about what they want. So the project goes way over budget and sometimes doesn't even get finished.

And I'm watching the show thinking, you foolish person. You should have made better plans, got better advice, got more information, before you started. You couldn't even finish.

The unfinished building becomes literally a monument to their failure to count the cost. There for all to see.

Jesus has another illustration for us, from the sphere of war craft.

*Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Will he not first sit*

*down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace. So therefore, none of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions.*

If you're a king, and you're going to make war, you'd better figure out if you've got the strength to win. If you don't, you do the smart thing: you make negotiations for peace.

We're talking about planning into the future, looking ahead, counting the cost. Jesus spells out the cost. Love Jesus more than family, more than possessions, more than your life.

Or to put it another way, in the words we hear every Sunday: Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength.

The question is, how do we do this?

Jesus says we are to take up our cross. It sounds a little abstract to us now. Bear your cross. People talk about this in an even flippant way these days. "Oh well, my car broke down so I have to catch the bus for a week, that's my cross to bear."

But this was a stark, shocking image in the 1<sup>st</sup> C Mediterranean world: if you saw a person carrying a cross, that was it for them. You'd probably never see them again.

A person carrying a cross has no choice in the matter. They were compelled to carry it. There was no option of putting it back down again.

So how do we persevere in our Christian walk? How do we continue to follow Jesus? By considering ourselves dead to the world and alive to Christ.

In Colossians 3:1:

*So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth, for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.*

We have died to the old order of this world. We have died to selfish ambition, pride, envy and slander. Instead we seek the things above, where Christ is. Jesus will bring a new order of life to this world, but we start by living it now.

By being humble. By serving others. Loving the Lord.

We have died, and our life is hidden with Christ in God. This is something we need to remind ourselves every day.

Remind yourself that you are living in the shadow of the cross daily, remind yourself of who you are in Christ, living a life of sacrificial service, knowing what he did for us there.

If this seems like a remote ideal, remember that as we walk with Jesus, discipleship is not instant. Even the apostle Peter took years to grasp what this new life meant. Even Peter failed Jesus in his hour of need.

We fail Jesus, but every week we confess our sins and re-commit ourselves to living in his service, knowing that our identity is secure in him.

*Continues next page*

## Vestry Notes

Meeting of Tuesday 18th June at 7.30 pm

- Pathways #2 session on 29 June: a letter of encouragement to all team members is in progress.
- Car park negotiations with the developers of the Vine Street property have come to nothing.
- No feed-back from BSL re OCHS at the op. shop.
- No response from U3A re our offer of reduced fees.
- Nothing further on the possum situation.

### REPORTS

Philip reported on his work for the month. It included dealing with:

- The Vine St developers;
- Thefts from the office and insurance claims;
- Estate agents and builders re Gloucester Drive;
- Nursing home visits, hospital visiting, preparing wedding couples, and overview of staff team.

René reported on increasing links with other young families as well as various parish duties.

### FINANCE REPORT

We have had a number of unexpected large expenses in the last 6 months that have left our finances in somewhat of a disarray. The theft of his lap-top prevented Geoff presenting any figures to the meeting.

### WARDENS' REPORTS

#### Spending cuts:

- *Maintenance* to be limited to ESSENTIALS ONLY.
- *Grass cutting & garden maintenance* at Heidelberg will cease immediately. Allan will draw up a roster to cut the lawns.
- *Utilities* expenses are very high. It was proposed that a Winter Levy be charged to help with the extra costs of heating in the colder months.
- *Staffing* – it was reluctantly decided that Elizabeth Tulloh's services would need to finish at the end of 2013.
- The office is in desperate need of a *photocopier*: to be allowed in next year's budget.

- *Mission giving* – we cannot give much as a parish given our Budget problems. However private donations and retiring offerings were doing well.
- *The Parish received* \$31,770 plus \$6,000 in rent for the year from the Watsonia Op. Shop. Many thanks to ALL the volunteers.
- The *property maintenance* schedule is in hand.
- *Gloucester Drive* has fallen into disrepair and much needs doing. Renovations to the property MUST be kept below \$45,000. The wardens are overseeing the project.
- *Vine Street developers' car-parking* at St John's is now not going ahead: they were not interested in our parking fee.
- *Insurance claims* following the theft of 2 lap-top computers from the office, at a cost of \$2,000. The insurance excess is \$500.00. The lock to the office has now been changed. It was agreed that the locks on the Church should also be changed, and Geoff agreed to ask the Diocese about recouping the cost of new locks through the insurance.
- *Vibrations* from the Vine Street Development are being felt in the surrounding area, and concern was raised about the Church, particularly as the existing cracks appear to be worsening. Philip will email/write a letter to the Site Manager about this problem.

### OTHER BUSINESS

- Plans in progress for the visit of the Savoy singers. Parish Hall to be used for a High Tea following the concert.
- Quotes will be obtained for the removal of the 'dead' tree in the memorial garden at Rosanna.
- Working Bee at Heidelberg 3rd August.
- Combined Service on Sunday 21st July – retiring offering for Macleod College Chaplaincy Fund. Vestry agreed to cater for morning tea on this occasion, but with the next roster will revert to 5th Sundays only.

Rosemary Bellair

**NB. IF YOU FEEL YOU WOULD LIKE CLARIFICATION ON ANY OF THE ABOVE POINTS, VESTRY MEMBERS AND WARDENS ARE ALWAYS AVAILABLE TO HELP.**

René continues . . .

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the German pastor, wrote a book called *Discipleship*. He says this:

*The disciple must say to himself the same words that Peter said of Christ when he denied him: (he must say to himself) 'I know not this man'. Self-denial is never just a series of isolated acts of mortification or asceticism. It is not suicide, for there is an element of self-will even in that. To deny oneself is to be aware only of Christ and no more of self, to see only him who goes before and no more of the road which is too hard for us. All we can say is: 'He leads the way, keep close to him.'*

Some people say: 'Become a Christian, your life will be much better! You'll be better adjusted, you'll find inner peace, break free of your addictions!'

We shouldn't expect Jesus will make our life better. But he does make our death meaningful.

Jesus says deny yourself, take up your cross and follow me. I require your full devotion. This isn't the sort of club you can have one eye on the exit.

Count the cost, then commit yourself for life.

René

## Rosanna 2015 Committee

On Tuesday 23rd July the first meeting of the 'Rosanna 2015' group was held, at Rosanna. The only attendee from outside the parish was Lesley Tarves, the Chief Operating Officer of the Diocese's 'Business Services – Registry', so we were particularly interested in what she had to say.

She told us that legislation assured that the Diocese could not close a church without the approval of a General Meeting of the parish as a whole. This is good news as it means the decisions are in our hands.

However, when Philip presented an option of a staged redevelopment along Invermay Grove, starting with the vicarage area, that would keep the present church, Lesley was not enthusiastic. She did not reject the plan outright, but stressed that parishes cannot take out mortgages on church land: only the diocese can do that. She put forward an alternative option of offering the whole site for redevelopment (including the church area) on a ground lease from the diocese.

I asked Lesley what the diocesan vision was for Melbourne churches and parishes, but it seems there isn't one, except for a general desire to thin them out.

This was only the first meeting of many and Lesley will report back further explorations of options in later meetings.

Peter McKay

## PAINFUL PUNS

(Submitted by Rosemary Bellair)

How does Moses make his tea? Hebrews it.

A cartoonist was found dead in his home. Details are sketchy.

I used to be a banker, but then I lost interest.

They told me I had type-A blood, but it was a Type-O.

I know a guy who's addicted to brake fluid, but he says he can stop any time.

I stayed up all night to see where the sun went, and then it dawned on me.

This girl said she recognized me from the vegetarian club, but I'd never met herbivore.

I'm reading a book about anti-gravity. I just can't put it down.

I did a theatrical performance about puns. It was a play on words.

I didn't like my beard at first. Then it grew on me.

All the toilets in New York's police stations have been stolen. The police have nothing to go on.