

BANYULE BABBLE

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ANGLICAN PARISH OF BANYULE

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

**FEBRUARY
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

Don't pity the fool

My favourite two films of the 80s are *Breakdance* and *Breakdance 2*. They follow the story of a guy who loves breakdancing. He practices hard and enters competitions and exercises and sacrifices until he gets a chance to compete against the **best**.

The movie reaches a climax with the two dancers facing each other off and trying to intimidate each other with their spectacular dance moves before an entranced audience. It's a great scene at the end of the movie—emotions are high, the tension is so thick you can feel it. The winner is showered in glory and the loser is humiliated.

This is basically the kind of thing the ancient Corinthians turned out to see. So when Paul came to their city they expected he would keep them excited and interested with new arguments and philosophies. But Paul wouldn't play their game. He refused to pander to their need for cheap entertainment. He wasn't some side show to distract a crowd, this was a big deal, this message could change your life. It had relevance for the whole world.

Jesus was alive from the dead—he had beaten the last enemy, and now he's king. He's the Christ. He wants you to be on the right side, because in an empire, rebellion won't be forgiven forever.

So Paul kept it simple. He writes: *"when I came to you, brothers and sisters, I did not come with eloquence or superior wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified."* (1 Cor 2:1-2)

You can see where the Corinthians are coming from. It's tempting to want to get beyond the crucifixion bit and focus on the glory. Focus on the gifts of tongues or prophecy or big turn-outs and popularity and leave everyone else in the dust. But Paul keeps emphasising the foolishness—the incongruity of it—an emperor who got killed. Only one week after his victory march into Jerusalem—arrested, flogged and strung up to be humiliated by passers-by.

If you sometimes feel a bit foolish as a Christian for believing what you do (I know I do from time to time), then take some reassurance from Paul, who would rather be a fool in the eyes of the world than be honoured by the world. Because this order of things is passing away, but God's kingdom will last forever.



René

Hellos & Farewells

At the service on 13th January Ethan Bowles was baptised (by his father) and we welcomed him into God's church, but sadly we then said goodbye to Andrew and Camille and Ethan, and also to Ros Rudd. We shall miss them all.

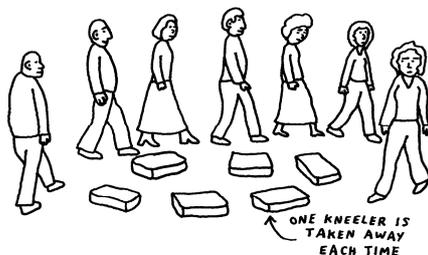
We gave Andrew and Ros gifts of a short space of relaxation before they hurtle back into work, for Andrew at St John's Diamond Creek and for Ros at the hospitals. (The Vicar gave the Editor the gift of a piece of his mind because he (the Editor) called him (the Vicar) 'fearsome' in his (the Editor's) speech as Field Committee chairman.)

We shall be welcoming and installing René, with Louisa, Tobias and Bruce, and commissioning the new Vestry and other leaders, at our Commencement Service on February 3rd.

GAMES

SUITABLE FOR CHURCH PARTIES

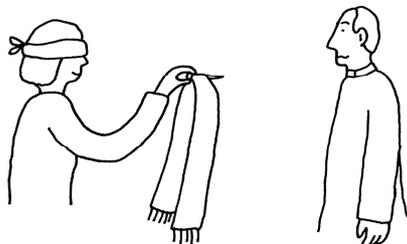
MUSICAL PRAYERS



PASS THE COLLECTION PLATE



PIN THE STOLE ON THE VICAR



THAT ONE WHERE YOU DRESS UP
IN A CASSOCK AND BIRETTA
(AND EAT CHOCOLATE WITH A KNIFE AND FORK)



This Month – February

Sunday 3rd: 10 am Special Combined Service at St John's; Commencement Service. Installation of René and parish leaders

Sunday 10th: 10 am St John's; 10 am St Andrew's; 6 pm Holy Spirit

Sunday 17th: 10 am St John's for whole parish

Sunday 24th: 10 am St John's; 10 am St Andrew's; 6 pm Holy Spirit

Wednesday 27th: 10 am Holy Spirit Mothers' Union

Wanted

- New volunteers for the Macleod Op Shop



Mavis Lean writes:

Reflecting on prayer, I offer the following, that we may be challenged as we seek the plans God has for our future:

Someone once told me: "If you don't want to change, then don't pray." Prayer teaches us to dream, to imagine the impossible. Prayer works against time, noise, language, pragmatism, inability. It begins with the appraisal of what we are and where we find ourselves and then moves on to changing the situation and ourselves.

We pray and change is inevitable. If you don't want to change, then don't pray... (If you don't want to change, then don't pray.) For prayer is the start of a motion, a continuing transformation and upheaval. Things are never quite the same as before and there is no going back.

Change means letting go, dying and rising. It is the continual paradox of death and resurrection which is experienced in prayer. For prayer is a longing to change. It is asking that we become what God dreams us to be. If you don't want to change, then don't pray.

To live is to change. To be holy is to have changed often.

Ascribed to Megan McKenna

Holy Spirit Happenings

by Elsie Storr

Holy Spirit Anglican Church in the Parish of Banyule is the central position in Watsonia—to the east the library, railway station and bus terminals; to the west the RSL, native forests, and road to Plenty Rd; to the north the IGA, Watsonia Primary School, Loyola College, and 2 km to the Ring Road; to the south the Post Office and banks and roads to St Andrew's, St John's and to Melbourne.

Watsonia Traders have two Saturday Festivals a year: one being a winter feast, and the other a motor show, on the second Saturday in November, with all the trimmings of bands, face painting, farm animals, street stalls, and children's train.

Our church has been a part of these festivals over the years, with the use of our car park, power for the ice carving, and one year for spraying graffiti on an old car then washing it off. We serve hot drinks and biscuits from the church to SES workers. The last Motor Show we had display cars in our car park: see the pictures.

NB: Holy Spirit Mothers' Union will meet on 27th Feb at 10 am.

Working Bee at St Andrew's Vicarage

The St Andrew's vicarage tenants (excellent people) have bought their own home and left the vicarage in the middle of January in very clean condition, but it is showing its age as it has not been repainted or otherwise refurbished for decades. However by Monday 21st there were parishioners ready with rollers and brushes—Allan Way having already prised a paint chip from the wall and had it matched. Frank Webb and Allan filled in holes in walls and installed door-stops, as well as painting. Geoff Murphy proved to be a skilful wielder of a roller. The work continued on Tuesday, as the difference a fresh coat of paint made was so remarkable that we decided to do more rooms.

New tenants have now moved in as this *Babble* goes to bed.



MY LITTLE FAT TOES

I cannot get down to my foot
it's an impossible physical task
my toenails have gone completely kaput
They are growing so long and so fast,

My little fat toes are painted
a flaming, brilliant red
But it's chipping and looking quite tainted
Somehow I will have to remove the red!

I've puffed and I've blown and bent right over
Gone red in the face and I'm through,
Someone will just have to come and take over
And change my red nail polish to blue.

Gay Miller © 2012



Ethel Lyle Dopper

22/02/1909 – 01/01/2013



Lyle died less than two months before her 104th birthday. The funeral was at St Andrew's and officiated by Rosemary Young and Geoff Poliness.

Lyle Bailey was born in 1909, the second in a family of five children, on a selection in the Bagnoo area of NSW, up the Hastings River, inland of Port Macquarie and Wauchope. Home was a slab house built from left-over timber from her father's work as a cutter of railway sleepers. The floor was dirt, and the rooms were divided by hung hessian bags covered by paper stuck on with flour and water. The household linen was made from flour and sugar bags.

It was a very isolated life; the tinker was sometimes the only person they would see for months. They grew their own fruit and vegetables, the children helping. It was occasionally supplemented with kangaroo or honey from a wild beehive.

Later the selection was sold and a butcher's shop bought. The children were excited because it had real walls and floors.

Lyle played competitive hockey. The team was so good it was to go to England. But Lyle met Gordon Dopper, and chose marriage to him over travel.

They set up in Gordon's town of Jindera, just north of Albury. They had two sons, which Lyle had to look after when Gordon was in the army during the war.

After the war they moved to Melbourne, eventually settling in Heidelberg. Lyle worked at Ormiston Rubber until she retired at 65, and then plunged into community activities. She was a great cook: she cooked meals for the less fortunate, and also

provided meals for synods and archbishops at Bishops Court. Her sponge cakes, high and light, were legendary.

She lost Gordon unexpectedly on Christmas Day 1973, and her two sons predeceased her, but she never lost her love of life. She travelled with friends and family and on organised trips with a spirit of adventure that would put younger people to shame. On her hundredth birthday she enjoyed the gift of a hot-air balloon ride. She didn't like being confined to Iris Grange and on one memorable occasion she escaped.

She has now escaped for good to be with her husband and sons.

She has left grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren.

Peter McKay, from material written by Lyle's grandchildren

Jars of Clay

2 Corinthians 4:7–5:10

Sermon by Andrew Bowles at Holy Spirit & St. Andrew's, 10/11th Nov 2012

When did you get your first grey hairs?

I found my first grey hairs when I was 24 years old, which was (totally by coincidence) just shortly after I got married.

Grey hair is a first sign, like the aching back or legs, or finding it difficult getting out of bed in the morning, that mortality is beginning to catch up with us. Our body is starting to show the wear and tear of time, which accelerates over the years as weakness and ailments add up.

One of the interesting features for me of working at this parish is that I've tended to be working with people either a good deal older than me or a good deal younger. This teaches you the importance of perspective.

My CRE class found out the other day that I'm thirty and told me in no uncertain terms that I am now very, very old.

And if you laugh at that because you think that I'm as young as anything, then it is worth remembering from the other side that even relatively young people feel the wearing out of our body. I have had occasion to quote Isaiah 40:30 to members of this parish who have presumed that I have unlimited energy – *'Even youths will grow faint and weary, and the young will be exhausted'*.

I'm thinking this month about a few issues which are 'pre-Advent' themes.

Advent starts in December and is the preparation for Christmas. We remember what it means to hope for the coming of the Messiah, and for his return.

But there are some general issues that make Advent more relevant for us. Last week we considered the problem that faced Naomi in the book of Ruth. This is the problem of depressing circumstances that consume our vision and give us a lack of hope.

And we saw that the message of the Bible here is that people of faith are those who look not just at current circumstances but also look forward to the promises of God

being fulfilled. That is where Advent, looking forward to the coming of Christ, becomes relevant.

The problem that we see today in 2 Corinthians is the problem I've opened up with, the problem of mortality, of change and death.

Everything that we have and everything that we are is wearing out and will wear out. The hope of what we can achieve diminishes gradually over the course of our lives until we come in the end to nothing. Our bodies wear out, our work crumbles, our friendships pass away, our houses fall into disrepair, our churches decline. Nothing stays as it should, it all passes towards death.

This is the reality that I hear in the conversations I have with many members of this parish. This problem of hope and weariness grips us. And if it grips you then you are someone who should know why Advent is important.

Paul in 2 Corinthians give us the antidote to this problem. The hope that we can have is in the 'life of Christ' that grows within us as we follow him in faith. It is a spiritual life and power that operates in the opposite direction to the decline of our own powers.

In fact, as we grow weaker and weaker this spirit becomes stronger and stronger. Paul says: *'So we do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day'*.

And how does this work? Well – *'For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure, because we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal'*.

What he is referring to as 'what cannot be seen' is the resurrection body.

Faith for Paul operates like an extension power cord plugged in to the reality of the resurrection in the future. Our bodies are wearing out, but the renewed body is waiting for us, and so in the meantime our spirit can grow in preparation.

In the same way, our church may be declining and suffering, but the Kingdom of God is in the future waiting and we draw our hope and power from that.

This is how Paul dealt with suffering. Being persecuted and crushed and oppressed was always just a way of the life of Christ and the resurrection being seen more clearly within him.

So, one of the problems that Advent brings up and reminds us of is the problem of mortality and limitation.

That is a problem that we need to face by looking forward to the coming of Jesus and the hope of the resurrection. And the result of that looking forward with hope is the ability to go on with faith.

Paul says, *'So we are always confident; even though we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord – for we walk by faith, not by sight'*.

So our grey hairs are not the sign of hopelessness. They should be for us a reminder that the life of the Holy Spirit, the life of Christ, is increasing within us, and an encouragement to look forward with hope to the coming of Christ and to the resurrection from the dead.

All the Verses!

This month, verses from the American Quaker poet John Greenleaf Whittier (1807–1892). Whittier spent most of his life lobbying for the abolition of slavery. His zeal often led to violence against him, and prevented his original desire of a successful career in politics, because few at the time wanted immediate freedom for all slaves, which he considered the only moral course. He was not a strong man, and suffered bad health and nervous breakdowns throughout his life.

Several of Whittier's poems have become hymns. One that readers may know is

*O brother man, fold to thy heart thy brother;
Where pity dwells, the peace of God is there;
To worship rightly is to love each other,
Each smile a hymn, each kindly deed a prayer.*

*For he whom Jesus loved has truly spoken:
The holier worship which He deigns to bless
Restores the lost, and binds the spirit broken,
And feeds the widow and the fatherless.*

*Follow with reverent steps the great example
Of Him Whose holy work was doing good;
So shall the wide earth seem our Father's temple,
Each loving life a psalm of gratitude.*

*Then shall all shackles fall; the stormy clangor
Of wild war music o'er the earth shall cease;
Love shall tread out the baleful fire of anger,
And in its ashes plant the tree of peace.*

My main subject in this article, however, is another hymn that we owe to Whittier, *Dear Lord and Father of mankind*. This comes from a longer poem of his, *The Brewing of Soma*. Soma was a sacred ritual drink in the Vedic religion—the precursor of modern Hinduism—from the Late Bronze Age. It was prepared from an unknown plant, possibly with hallucinogenic properties.

Whittier's poem starts with a quotation from the *Rigveda*, an ancient collection of Vedic hymns. It continues with a description of the use of Soma to achieve a state of elation; then points to other means, some still used, of attaining a similar feeling of nearness to God. Whittier rejects these in favour of the Quaker ideal of selfless, sober, stillness and receptivity to God. It is the last six verses that present this ideal that are used as the hymn.

Some writers opine that the shorter hymn makes more sense and less sentiment when seen in the context of the whole poem, but this is one occasion when I believe the shorter version is better. By placing the last six verses by themselves, they are not merely standing in contrast to a philosophy of seeking God through sensuality, but act as a more general confession of all 'foolish ways', and a prayer for a more godly life.

The conversion of the last six verses into a hymn was by Garrett Horder in his hymnbook *Congregational Hymns*, published in 1884. The tune was originally *Rest* by Frederick Maker, and this is still the usual tune in the United States. However in 1924 George Gilbert Stocks, director of music at Repton School, used a tune that Hubert Parry wrote in 1888 for an unrelated aria. Despite the need to repeat the last line of each verse, this tune, now known as *Repton*, was so perfect for the words that it soon became the standard in the UK and here.

Peter McKay

The Brewing of Soma

by John Greenleaf Whittier

"These libations mixed with milk have been prepared for Indra: offer Soma to the drinker of Soma."

—Vashista, translated by Max Müller.

The fagots blazed, the caldron's smoke
Up through the green wood curled;
"Bring honey from the hollow oak,
Bring milky sap," the brewers spoke,
In the childhood of the world.

And brewed they well or brewed they ill,
The priests thrust in their rods,
First tasted, and then drank their fill,
And shouted, with one voice and will,
"Behold the drink of gods!"

They drank, and lo! in heart and brain
A new, glad life began;
The gray of hair grew young again,
The sick man laughed away his pain,
The cripple leaped and ran.

"Drink, mortals, what the gods have sent,
Forget your long annoy."
So sang the priests. From tent to tent
The Soma's sacred madness went,
A storm of drunken joy.

Then knew each rapt inebriate
A winged and glorious birth,
Soared upward, with strange joy elate,
Beat, with dazed head, Varuna's gate,
And, sobered, sank to earth.

The land with Soma's praises rang;
On Gihon's banks of shade
Its hymns the dusky maidens sang;
In joy of life or mortal pang
All men to Soma prayed.

The morning twilight of the race
Sends down these matin psalms;
And still with wondering eyes we trace
The simple prayers to Soma's grace,
That Vedic verse embalms.

As in that child-world's early year,
Each after age has striven
By music, incense, vigils drear,
And trance, to bring the skies more near,
Or lift men up to heaven!

Some fever of the blood and brain,
Some self-exalting spell,
The scourger's keen delight of pain,
The Dervish dance, the Orphic strain,
The wild-haired Bacchant's yell,—

The desert's hair-grown hermit sunk
The saner brute below;
The naked Santon, hashish-drunk,
The cloister madness of the monk,
The fakir's torture-show!

And yet the past comes round again,
And new doth old fulfil;
In sensual transports wild as vain
We brew in many a Christian fane
The heathen Soma still!

Dear Lord and Father of mankind,
Forgive our foolish ways!
Reclothe us in our rightful mind,
In purer lives Thy service find,
In deeper reverence, praise.

In simple trust like theirs who heard
Beside the Syrian sea
The gracious calling of the Lord,
Let us, like them, without a word,
Rise up and follow Thee.

O Sabbath rest by Galilee!
O calm of hills above,
Where Jesus knelt to share with Thee
The silence of eternity
Interpreted by love!

With that deep hush subduing all
Our words and works that drown
The tender whisper of Thy call,
As noiseless let Thy blessing fall
As fell Thy manna down.

Drop Thy still dews of quietness,
Till all our strivings cease;
Take from our souls the strain and stress,
And let our ordered lives confess
The beauty of Thy peace.

Breathe through the heats of our desire
Thy coolness and Thy balm;
Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
Speak through the earthquake, wind, and fire,
O still, small voice of calm!

Just a line to say I'm living

Just a line to say I'm living,
That I'm not among the dead.
Though I'm getting more forgetful,
... And mixed up in my head.

I've got used to my arthritis,
To my dentures I'm resigned.
I can manage my bifocals,
But, oh my!! I miss my mind.

For sometimes I can't remember
When I stand at the foot of the stairs,
If I must go up for something
Or, I've just come down from there.

And before the refrigerator so often,
My poor mind is filled with doubt.
Have I just put food away, or
Have I come to take some out?

And there's times when it is dark,
With my nightcap on my head.
I don't know if I'm retiring,
Or just got out of bed.

So if it's my turn to write you,
There's no need of getting sore.
I may think that I have written
And don't want to be a bore.

So remember I do love you,
And wish that you were near.
Now it's nearly mail time,
I must say good-bye, my dear.

Here I stand at the mailbox,
With face so very red,
Instead of mailing you my letter,
I have opened it instead!!

*Author unknown; many versions exist
Submitted by Albert Harvey*