

BANYULE BABBLE

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ANGLICAN PARISH OF BANYULE

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

APRIL
2022

Office: 1 Burgundy Street Heidelberg 3084 ph. 9457 1144

Ministers: **Denise Nicholls** 0438 856 376
Helen McAlley 0447 372 972

Jonathan Lopez 0403 660 776

Internet: www.banyuleparish.org.au

email banyuleparish@gmail.com

Editor (author of all unsigned articles): Peter McKay 9459 5852 petergmckay@hotmail.com

J IS FOR JUMP SHOT

FROM time to time I hope to contribute to the *Babble* with an article on Christians in sport or pop culture in my *J is for* _____ contributions. This may serve to encourage you in your own journey of faith and maybe mention to a friend or family member who is into this area of sport or culture.

I want to preface this by saying that just like you and me these people are not perfect. Some have not been great examples of Christian faith. Some may even renounce their faith in Jesus later. Their interactions with media or on the court may not always align with Scripture. Again like us we are not perfect. Romans 3 tells us:

"²²This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, ²³for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus."

I've titled this article 'J is for Jump shot' and you might be asking why? Well the sports person I wanted to talk about is a smaller basketball player (barely 6 foot, that is small in the NBA: National Basketball Association in the US) and he has made a living by tormenting opponents with his 'Jump shot' literally from everywhere on the court! There is now a phrase used by basketballers: 'Curryland'. No, it is not a reference to a favourite curry dish but NBA player **Stephen Curry**,

or Steph as many refer to him. The other sport, apart from boxing, I am passionate about is basketball. I have keenly followed the NBA since I was 10 years old and was in awe of Michael Jordan. The term 'Curryland' refers to someone shooting a basketball 2–5 metres away from the 3-point line. The term became famous because of Steph, who plays for the Golden State (San Francisco) Warriors.

Steph is openly Christian. He is one of the smallest basketball players to ever win the greatest individual awards in the NBA—the Most Valuable Player (MVP)—in 2015 and again the next year, back to back. He has led his team to five NBA finals consecutively. An Australian Christian senior researcher for the Centre for Public Christianity (CPX), Justine Toh, refers to an interview he gave about his jump shooting. He said he simply plays with a sense of freedom and amazement that the impossible 'Curryland' jump shots make it though the hoop regardless of being fouled and the degree of difficulty to even get a clear shot.

Many professional basketball players will attest that those 'Curryland' jump shots would definitely get you benched by the coach. However, Steph's team coach has complete confidence in his abilities that seem 'other world'. You could liken this to the Geelong Cats great, Gary Ablett Sr, who took unbelievable marks in the forward line, or Tony Lockett who would kick goals nearly 60 metres away! You'd think this greatness would get to Steph's head; however, when he was being pursued by athletic sport brands like Nike and Adidas he was asked to talk less about his Christian faith if he was to sign multimillion dollar sponsorship deals. This was not Steph's true identity. He wanted to show where his 'other world' abilities truly come from: God. Therefore he would sign with a brand only if he was able to truly express who he was in Christ. Under Amour would eventually sign Steph because they gave him that freedom. His mother, Sonya Curry, would disciple Steph at 6 am every morning to instil the value

of placing God first. Sonya encouraged Steph to hold on to Scripture that encouraged him and was a source of strength. Steph would write 'I can do all things..' (a reference to Paul's words in Philippians 4:13) on his shoes with a marker before games but when he signed with Under Armour he had them permanently print those words on the shoes.



Steph was not seen as a superstar-level player coming into the NBA: he had a decent jump shot but did not have the physique or height. Steph in his first years in the NBA also suffered major ankle injuries repeatedly. However the source of Steph's abilities is found in his trust and source of strength: it is God who allows him to truly do all things!

Jonathan



This Month – April

Sunday 3rd Lent 5, Daylight Saving ends: 9 am St Andrew's; 10.15 am St John's; 5 pm Holy Spirit
Deuteronomy 6:1–9; Luke 10:25–37

Saturday 9th: 9.30 am – 1.30 pm Combined Banyule and Merri Creek Prayer Retreat at St John's

Sunday 10th Palm Sunday: 9 am St Andrew's; 10.15 am St John's; 5 pm Holy Spirit
Luke 19:28–40

Thursday 14th Maundy Thursday: 7 pm Service of Shadows at Holy Spirit
TBA

Friday 15th Good Friday: 9 am St Andrew's
Isaiah 52:13–53.12; Psalm 22; 1 Corinthians 1:18–31; Hebrews 10:16–25; John 18:1–19:42

Sunday 17th Easter Day: 10.15 am Combined at St John's
Acts 10:34–43; Luke 24:1–12

Sunday 24th Easter 1: 9 am St Andrew's; 10.15 am St John's; 5 pm Holy Spirit
Revelation 1:4–8; John 20:19–31

Monday 25th Anzac Day

Wednesday 27th: 10 am Holy Spirit Mothers' Union; 11 am Streeton Park and general mid-week service at St John's

Wanted

- Donations to help with repairs to St John's

Money: February

Income:	Giving:	\$6,630.10
	Other:	\$38,925.31
	Total:	\$45,555.41
Expenses:		\$25,136.86
Surplus:		\$20,418.55

Giving was down. Income was high because we were finally paid on shop income we were owed. We also got a diocesan ministry grant. Expenses were low in February but we are facing very large repair and maintenance bills in coming months and there will be large deficits.

Holy Spirit Mothers' Union

Wednesday 23rd February was our first meeting for 2022, starting with the 'three Cs' (clean, cuppa and a casual chat).

Our President Elizabeth led us in the MU service; Val did the Bible reading from *The Word for Today*. We all take it in turns to read part of the MU Service.

Business arising: Elsie still to follow up the 60-year Service Plaque.

Correspondence: March 27th: 4 pm MU Lady Day Sunday (celebration when the angel visited Mary) St Paul's Cathedral; 5 pm Holy Spirit Watsonia celebrating Mothering Sunday, with Simnel Cake and flowers.

Many thanks, Beth, for baking the Simnel cake.

Treasurer's Report: February Balance \$118.42.

Coral passed around a Christmas Card from our Link Branch St Mary's Broughty Ferry Scotland.

Next meeting hopefully we shall visit the teapot and cover at St John's Community Gardens at Heidelberg.

The meeting ended with Midday Prayers: North/West Deanery; Link Branch St Mary's Broughty Ferry Scotland; Defence Anglican Chaplaincy.

Elsie Storr

mainly music: April 2022

Family attendance is still very 'fluid'. It seems that almost every week we have an enquiry and/or a new family. This is encouraging for the team members, but we must be aware of the limited space.

Children's ages range from 2 weeks to nearly 6, (a child with younger siblings being home-schooled.) It is delightful to watch them develop new skills in their interaction with the music. The older children also set an example for the younger ones when it comes to interacting with the presenter, and now the COVID restriction have eased somewhat, we can encourage more of that.

Rosemary Bellair (9459 5394)

Banyule/Merri Creek Prayer Retreat

The two congregations of Merri Creek and us will be praying together at **St John's on Saturday 9th April**, the day before Palm Sunday and Holy Week, from **9.30 am to 1.30 pm**.

This would be a good opportunity to meet some of the people we are partnering with, and to pray for all of us.



God as we walk through Holy week toward the cross,
May we remember the wonder of who you are.
Beyond sin
your love is inexhaustible,
Beyond brokenness
your forgiveness is incomprehensible.
Beyond betrayal
your grace is poured out eternally,
Beyond death
your life is unimaginable.
Beyond human understanding,
Your ways are always higher than ours.

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<http://godspace.wordpress.com>



Holy Week

April 10 Palm Sunday

9 am St Andrew's Rosanna
10.15 am St John's Heidelberg
5 pm Holy Spirit Watsonia

April 14 Maundy Thursday

7 pm Holy Spirit Watsonia

April 15 Good Friday

10.15 am St Andrew's Rosanna

April 17 Easter Day

10.15 am St John's Heidelberg

Visit of the Beers

Tavis and Kate spoke to us on Sunday 6th March. The *Babble* cannot reproduce the whole of their very fascinating overview of their work in Northern Australia, but we can report that Kate gave, as an example of their work, a day when she had to go to a settlement 3½ hours' drive away to support the local Christians. (This support is very important, because people start no longer attending services, and the local leaders get very discouraged. Kate and Tavis can encourage the leaders, and often their presence invigorates the local Christians, who come back to church and realise what they were missing.)

On this day there had been some rain, but the earth roads still seemed passable, until just before the settlement, when there was a sizable amount of water over the road. Kate wasn't sure what to do, not knowing what depth the water might have in the middle (where she knew there was a bit of a dip) but she had come so far, so she pressed on. As the water came higher and higher up the wheels, she became more worried. The four-wheel-drive was equipped with a snorkel, but when the water came over the bonnet, this was a point well before which most cars would have ceased operating. But she was able to keep driving on in low gear, keeping up the revs and momentum, and successfully reached the settlement.

There she found, well before the time the service started, a group of people in prayer. They had been praying that she would arrive.

Tavis and Kate were sorry to be leaving behind so many people they had been working with and encouraging. They hope that someone new will be sent to carry on the work. But they are glad of the achievement of the production of important work in Kriol, and especially the Kriol Prayer Book (Preya Buk).

I asked Kate afterwards how many people could read in Kriol. She replied that many cannot, because although for increasingly many Aboriginal people in Northern Australia Kriol is their native language, very few schools teach it as a written language. But the clergy can read it, and it is a comfort for the people that their clergy have this book. For the people, it is important that the right words are used, and the Preya Buk provides that assurance.

For those who cannot follow in the book, the services are designed so that the congregational parts are easily remembered, and so that congregational responses echo as much as possible the words of the minister.

The Nicene Creed in Kriol:

*Wi bilib langa wanbala God,
im na det Dedi, weya garram ola pawa.
Imbin meigim hebin, en dijan graun. Imbin
meigim ebrijing weya wi gin luk
en ebrijing weya wi kaan luk du.
Wi bilib langa wanbala Bos, Jisas Kraiss. Im
na det oni San blanga God.
Bifo enijing bin jidan,
imbin jidan garram Dedi God,
en im kipgon jidan olagijawan. God brom
God, Lait brom Lait
trubala God brom trubala God. Imbin deya
garram Dedi God, olataim. Imbin oldei det
San blanga God;
God nomo bin meigim im.
Dumaji im God, seim laik im Dedi.
En thru det San na, Dedi God bin meigim
ebrijing.
Imbin kamdan brom hebin
blanga jidan garram wi, en blanga seibum wi.
Blanga tharran na det Holi Spirit bin kaman
en jidan langa Meri
en bambai Jisas bin bon.
Blanga wi na,
Jisas bin gibit miselp blanga go thru
langa det trabul:
wen Panshas Pailat bin det lida, deibim
neilimap Jisas langa det kros.
Deya na imbin dai
en afta, deibim pudum im langa det greib.
Thrideistaim Jisas bin gidap laibala
laik ola speshalwan mesinja blanga God
bin tok longtaim;
en imbin gowap langa hebin
weya im jidan raitensaid langa Dedi God. Im
garra kambek igin
garram im shainiwan lait en detmatj pawa,
blanga kotim ebribodi;
detlot pipul hu jidan laibala, en detlot pipul
hubin dai du.
En afta, Jisas garra jidan Bos, olagijawan!
Wi bilib langa det Holi Spirit,
det Bos, weya gibit wi laif,
hubin kaman brom det Dedi en det San.
Garram det Dedi en det San,
wi garra weship
en libdimap im neim brabli haibala.
Det Holi Spirit bin tok thru langa detlot
speshalwan mesinja brom God.
Wi bilib God bin meigim Kristijan pipul
jidan wanbala nyukurrwan tjetj olagijawan,
hubin kaman brom detlot aposul. Wi bulurum
oni wanbala beptisim
weya God larramgo fri detlot pipul brom
olabat nogudbalawei.
Wi weidabat blanga det taim wen God garra
meigim pipul gidap laibala brom dedbala
en wen wi garra jidan olagijawan
langa det nyubala hom weya kaan neba binij.
Trubala.*

*Hi Peter, something for you, blessings Glenn:
Vision Christian Radio has broadcast this
testimony from a Pastor in Ukraine—*

From a pastor:

"Please tell your people, because of your prayers, God really fights our battles. The rockets disappear in the air without reaching our homes and no one knows where they went. Enemy tanks run out of fuel; Russian troops get lost and ask our locals for food and for directions. This is definitely God because we are dealing with the second strongest army in the world."

From a Ukrainian soldier:

"We feel your prayer support.

Sometimes something really inexplicable happens, as if someone's invisible hand really takes bullets and shells away from us, and they fly past us.

We emerge victorious from very difficult situations as if someone is accompanying us.

We become invisible to the enemy, we see even in complete darkness, and we know what to do and how to do it.

It inspires us and gives us strength.

We believe that the Lord Jesus Himself is for Ukraine.

We ask you not to stop, support us and continue to pray.

We really need you."

Editor's note: Sometimes messages of this sort are propaganda or well-meaning wishful thinking. It has not been possible to fully check these statements. The statement by the 'Pastor in Ukraine' is however known to have come from a real pastor in Ukraine, Pastor Igor Ivanishin of Lviv. It was issued only two days after the invasion began.

The message 'from a Ukrainian soldier' has not been fact-checked. Google finds it on only 559 sites, meaning it is not very common on the internet.

It is however clear at this point, long after Glenn sent me these messages, that Russia's attack has been much less effective than was expected.

The *Babble* hopes to be able to bring you in next month's issue the very interesting sermon Adrian Lane gave on 20th March on the work of BCA, seen in the light of Jesus' call of the first four disciples (Luke 5:1-11).

Adrian also supplied a showbag full of goodies, including a pencil made of a gum branch (how did they get the branch to grow around the pencil lead?). The Editor found this very useful for taking notes when a certain member of the congregation made a rash statement at morning tea. So unless a brown paper bag of used 50s appears in the *Babble* pigeonhole, next month's issue will contain more information on a certain Warden's husband D**** B*****, and which Vicar he described as "getting old".

The Ormerod Brothers



On the 29th December 1914, shortly after Christmas, **George Booth Ormerod** joined the 8th Light Horse Regiment, part of the 3rd Light Horse Brigade. He was just over 19 years old, and gave his occupation as 'Jackeroo' [sic]. He had 'GBO' tattooed on his left arm. Following a common Heidelberg tradition, he was one of the early enlisters and was given the low service number of 264.

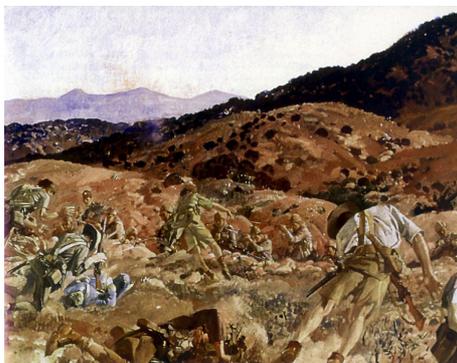
George had been born in 'Mungundi, near Brisbane' [sic] to Sedgwick Ormerod and Charlotte Margaret Ormerod. He had two older brothers, and a younger brother John would follow; there was also a sister Annie. The family moved to Melbourne, and George was educated at South Yarra and Caulfield. At the time George enlisted, his father had died and his mother was living at 4 Canterbury Rd Toorak, though she later moved to Broadford. However George was living in the Heidelberg area with a Mrs Mary Ormerod, possibly an aunt, at "Moorakne", Main Street, Heidelberg", said to be on the corner of 'Main St' and Castle St. (?)

After what must have been minimal training, George was sent off on a troopship, leaving 24th February 1915 and arriving in Egypt on 14th March. A bit more training, then another ship on 16th May, for Gallipoli.

The Light Horse had originally been considered unsuitable for Gallipoli, but as that débâcle continued they were sent, leaving their horses in Egypt. On 7th August 1915 the 3rd Light Horse Brigade started an attack on 'The Nek', a heavily defended and easily defensible narrow stretch of ridge. The 8th Light Horse Regiment led the first two waves.

It was a disaster, incompetently managed and coordinated. The men were ordered to stow heavy clothing days before the attack, which meant they had spent several nights freezing in only shirts and shorts. What training they had had was only as mounted troops, not as infantry. They had never participated in a major attack before. They had to attack with rifles unloaded, meant to encourage them to keep running and use bayonets and grenades at short range. They were supposed to be part of a pincer attack in coordination with the New Zealanders, but when the New Zealanders got held up they were ordered to attack anyway. The artillery bombardment before the attack stopped seven minutes early because the artillery and assault officers had failed to synchronise their watches. This gave the defenders time to get back into their largely undamaged trenches and prepare for the attack they now knew was coming (though this has been disputed).

The first wave of 150 attackers from the 8th Light Horse went over the top, and were met with a hail of machine-gun and rifle fire. In 30 seconds they were nearly all dead. Two minutes later a second wave was sent over, to an identical fate. The commander of the 10th Light Horse, whose men were about to be sent in the third wave, attempted to have it stopped, but the officer in charge was an old Boer War veteran who didn't like him, and refused his request, with the same result. He also refused to stop the fourth wave, but was overruled by his superior just as it was starting.



George Lambert, *The charge of the 3rd Light Horse Brigade at the Nek, 7 August 1915*

We do not know whether Trooper George Ormerod was in the first or second wave, but he suffered the fate of his colleagues that day. Most bodies could not be recovered, and when Australian burial parties came in 1919 after the war's end, the bones of the dead light horsemen were still lying thickly on the small piece of ground. Most could not be identified, and a cemetery was built over them.



George left two packages of personal effects. One contained a prayer book, a hymn book, and field glasses. The other contained a wallet, papers, and letters. Because his mother was a widow, she was given a government pension of £2 a fortnight. George is commemorated on the St John's honour board.

Very soon after George's death, his two older brothers had enlisted. **Egbert Quarterman Ormerod** enlisted into the 12th Battery, 4th Field Artillery Brigade; he was 24 years old, a station overseer, and was given service number 6839. The date of his enlistment is unclear: various parts of the enlistment forms, which are usually all dated identically, have dates of 30th July, 31st July, 4th August, 20th August, 25th August and (several) 26th August. His official 'start date', usually the same as the enlistment date, was 13th September 1915. **Eric Sedgwick Ormerod** enlisted on 6th September into the 9th/26th Infantry; he was 26 years old, also a station overseer, and was given service number 3861. Although neither of these brothers has a known relationship with Heidelberg, the St John's honour board lists an 'E. Ormerod', which must be one (or both) of them. No other E. Ormerods are recorded as having served.

After 5½ weeks of initial training, Egbert was made a driver. He left Australia on 8th November, arriving in Egypt on 15th December; but he transferred at his request to being a gunner on 1st March 1916. He was immediately made Acting Bombardier and sent to France, arriving 19th March. On 1st August he was officially promoted to Bombardier, and on 21st August he was further promoted to Corporal. He retained that rank through the rest of the war, except for a stint as Acting Sergeant for two weeks in December 1917.

Egbert severely dislocated his shoulder on 16th May 1917, requiring treatment in England for months, and it seems to have been a problem for him for some time thereafter. In early 1918 he was sent to the Army Artillery School for five weeks, though in what capacity is unknown. On 1st September 1918, near the end of the war, Egbert was wounded in action by a gunshot through the chest and after a few days at Rouen Hospital he was sent to England. It was a severe case, but after two weeks at Bath Hospital he was considered strong enough to be put on a ship and invalided home, apparently arriving back on the 8th November, just before the Armistice, a good deal less healthy than he had left.

The situation for Eric was worse. His constitution evidently did not cope well with military life. He left Australia on 31st January 1916. From 2nd to 30th April we find him in hospital in Heliopolis with 'debility'. He sailed from Egypt on 10th May but was not taken on the military strength in France until 2nd August: there is a gap there that is not well explained by the records. From 23rd August he was ill again: asthma, then bronchitis, were recorded, but the final diagnosis was 'phthisis': tuberculosis. On 3rd/4th October he was transferred to an English hospital, and on 12th February 1917 he was put on a ship back to Australia for medical discharge, finally returning to Melbourne on 10th April. In the meantime, on 21–22 December 1916 we find he went absent without leave, for which he was admonished and fined two days' pay. Perhaps it was an attempt at a last hurrah.

On 14th May 1917 Eric was sent into the military sanatorium in Macleod (which may be why he is on the honour board). The military continued to pay him his standard salary until 19th July, and after that a pension of £3 a fortnight. On 31st October 1922 Eric Ormerod died. The government accepted that his death was due to war service.

Regrettably, no photographs are available of any of the Ormerod brothers.

References

There is an extremely comprehensive history of the Ormerod family at <http://www.ormerod.uk.net/>

George Booth Ormerod 264

Brian Membrey, *The Shire of Heidelberg's Great War Honour Roll* (Yarra Plenty Regional Library: 4 Feb 2017) p 202

<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/R2228984>

<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/P10259476>

<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/R1656170>

<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/R2032593>

http://www.ormerod.uk.net/History/Ormerod/Two_World_Wars/2WW_Ormerod/George_Booth_Ormerod/george_booth_ormerod.htm

<https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=7996986>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_the_Nek

Eric Sedgwick Ormerod 3861

<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/R2228983>

<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/R1878919>

http://www.ormerod.uk.net/History/Ormerod/Two_World_Wars/2WW_Ormerod/Eric_Sedgwick_Ormerod/Eric_Sedgwick_Ormerod.htm

<https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=7996985>

Egbert Quarterman Ormerod 6839

<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/R2228982>

http://www.ormerod.uk.net/History/Ormerod/Two_World_Wars/2WW_Ormerod/Eric_Sedgwick_Ormerod/Eric_Sedgwick_Ormerod.htm

<https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=7996984>

Crossed lines

Crossed lines used to be quite common in the old days of telephony, when you would get to hear, and sometimes join in, someone else's conversation.

It seems that crossed lines can occur with emails too, and sometimes unexpected messages pass across the Editor's screen . . .

To: Rev'd Susan Sharp (Curate, St Swithun's)
From: Archdeacon the Venerable Gilbert Dullage

Dear Susan,

Thank you for attending Bill Boreham's stress course. I have your results in front of me now, and though I see excellent attendance scores and an excellent self-assessment, Bill noticed you were occasionally twitching while he was speaking, which he ascribes to some level of residual stress. That is unfortunate, and it is the general assessment of Diocesan senior management that you need some more formation.

Indeed, it was noted at our latest senior management meeting that so far you have only had experience looking after people in a parish setting. The Diocese does not consider that adequate experience for the multidisciplinary issues involved in looking after people in a parish. As part of the Diocese's anti-siloisation drive against ivory towers, something more is needed, such as time in academia. Communication skills are also a *sine qua non*, even if they need not be as advanced as you will have noticed in Diocesan senior management.

I should at this point dispel one fear that may be licking at your brain. I am not sending you to be chaplain of a girls' school. I will not permit that terrible fate worse than death for any member of my archdeaconry of whom I have such a high opinion. I work hard at our senior management meetings to ensure that such positions, when they arise, are filled by the less-loved members of other archdeaconries. You can be assured that your archdeacon will fight hard on your behalf in that regard.

No, I have a different suggestion, which I believe will put you in excellent standing with the Diocese, and the Bishop in particular. You may not be aware that the Bishop has recently remarried. I have not seen his new wife—nor has anyone I know, as she does not seem to attend any Diocesan meetings or functions. I believe she spends most of her time with her friends. I am told she is much younger than he is, and does not look much like a bishop's wife. She was apparently previously an 'influencer'.

At any rate the Bishop's wife wants to do something Christian, and she has decided she wants to 'save fallen women'. Rather old-fashioned, and we don't do that sort of thing much now, but the Bishop is keen to support her venture, and all Diocesan senior management were unanimous that I was the best person to help. Unfortunately, I suspect her energy will wane rapidly. My idea therefore is that you put together a lecture on her behalf, and take it around the parishes.

Organise with the Bishop's wife a suitable tour of the appropriate areas, get some photos of the women in question, put some statistics in tables and make a nice PowerPoint, making sure the Bishop's wife's name is prominent. That should bring you sufficient credit with everyone and slay two birds with one stone.

In His service,

Gilbert

P.S. Parishes are now required to appoint an official Safety Officer, and no-one is at present listed for St Swithun's. Could you fix this, please?

G.

To: Sussan Sharp
From: Vacua Bloggs-Wimshurst-Smythe

Dear Sussan,

Thank you so much for offering to help me!! My friends and I thought it would be a great idea to tour the red-light district! I didn't know where it was but Alastair has been very helpful! He knows so much!!!

Shall we say, soon after Easter? Looking forward to meeting you!!

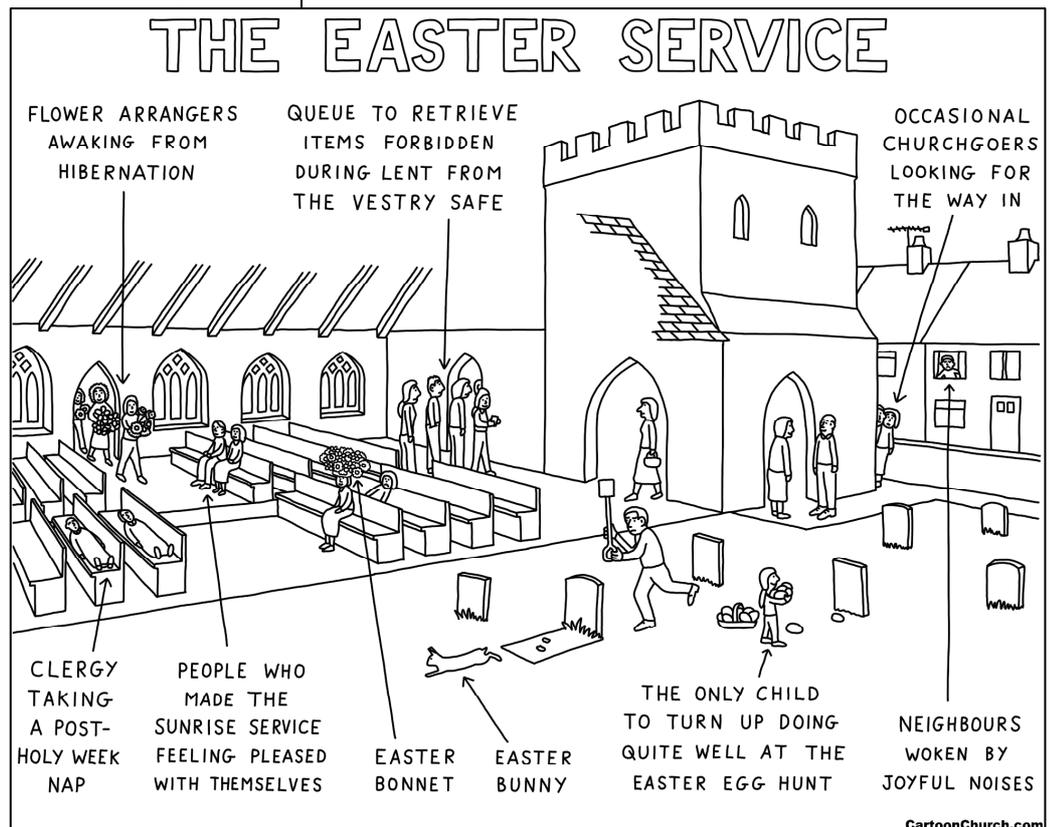
Vacua 🥰❤️🥰

To: Rev'd Susan Sharp
From: Ronald Fidgett

Susan, thank you very much for appointing me Parish Safety Officer. I shall attempt to make myself worthy of this trust. I have long thought that we have needed tighter, documented procedures to ensure everything is done correctly and you can be sure I shall do all I can to achieve this.

Regards,

Ronald Fidgett



DAVE WALKER CARTOON WORKSHEET

EASTER

NAME: _____

DRAW / COLOUR / FILL IN THE GAPS

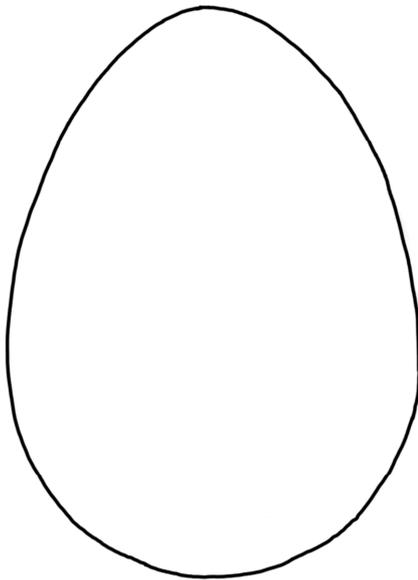
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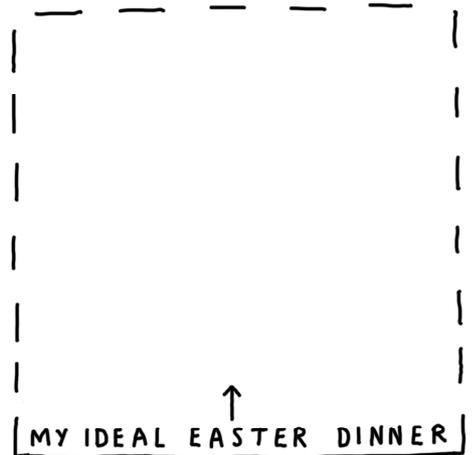
SPOT THE DIFFERENCE
(THERE ARE TEN...)



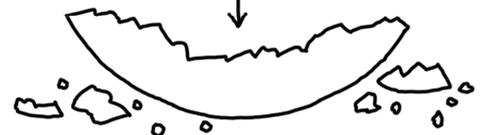
DESIGN



COLOUR



SORRY



SOMETHING WE COULD MAKE THIS WEEK

THINGS TO BE HOPEFUL ABOUT:

- ① _____
- ② _____
- ③ _____

CRYPTIC BIBLE CROSSWORD I

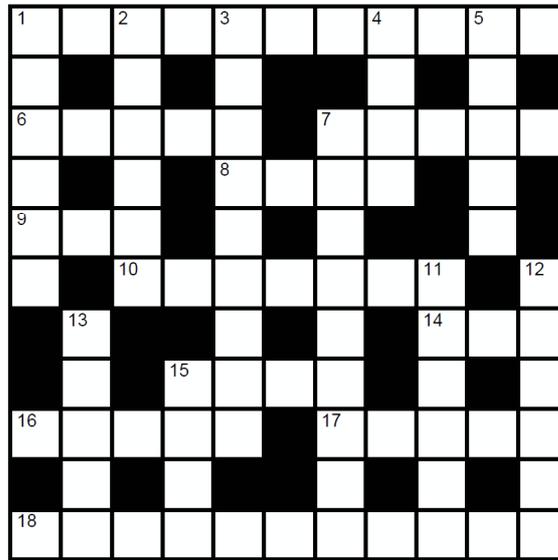
Across

- 1 Maybe bug in shrub, eating nothing initially, was not consumable? (7,4)
- 6 Meat found in Troas thrown away (5)
- 7 Quiet peer is a jewel (5)
- 8 King in rough sea they hear? (4)
- 9 Woman is envied, oddly (3)
- 10 Bank excluding Italian editor is forced out (7)
- 14 Lie disturbed old priest (3)
- 15 Caught seven dropping off five (4)
- 16 Praise officer after axe is returned (5)

- 17 Pick out God's chosen (5)
- 18 Sunday Devil working in a foolish way (11)

Down

- 1 Endlessly bore the German neighbour (6)
- 2 Primate wearing red gathered crops (6)
- 3 Make sense of alien going after injured printer (9)
- 4 Bishop with experience brought back creatures (4)
- 5 Asian Republic airways became lost overlooking Washington (5)

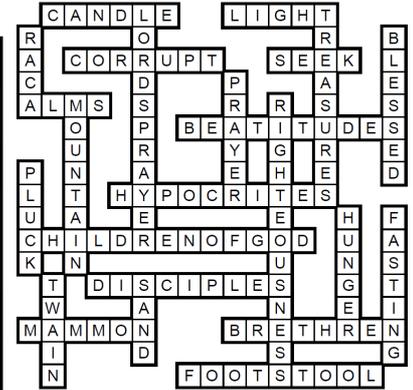


by Philologus

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- 7 Prince is one starting to release several hostages (9)
- 11 Support for champion (6)
- 12 Unclean partly fulfil thyself (6)
- 13 Grown old and pale (5)
- 15 Second cover moved sideways (4)

Answers to last month's puzzles



Bible Word Search mystery answer:

ATTEND SERVICES

Last month's anagram:

- eilstn listen
- acceiprt practice
- bdeilrsu builders
- dimosw wisdom
- morst storm
- bcdeeeino obedience
- aabeehklnsu unshakeable
- adfinnootu foundation
- gnorst strong
- philoos foolish

Unscramble the letters to find the words in our

Good Samaritan Anagram

www.dltk-bible.com



- beghinor _____
- e.jnoruy _____
- bbeorry _____
- deginor _____
- aaaimnrst _____
- deehlp _____
- emnoy _____
- acimnoopss _____
- abeent _____
- eehrt _____

Answers to the hidden Bible book names:

This is a **most remarkable** puzzle. It was found by a gentleman in an airplane seat pocket on a flight from Los Angeles to Honolulu, **keeping** him occupied for hours. He enjoyed it so much, he passed it on to some friends...One friend from Illinois worked on this while fishing from his **john** boat. Another friend studied it while playing his **banjo**, Elaine Taylor, a columnist friend, was so intrigued by it she mentioned it in her weekly newspaper column. Another friend **judges** the **job** of solving this puzzle so involving, **she brews** a cup of tea to help her **nerves**. **There** will be some names that are really easy to spot. That's a **fact**. Some people, however, will soon find themselves in a **jam**, especially since the book names are not necessarily capitalized. **Truthfully, from answers** we get, we are forced to **admit it usually** takes a minister or a scholar **to see** some of them **at the worst**. Research has shown that something in our **genes is** responsible for the difficulty we have in seeing the books in this paragraph. During a recent fund raising event, which featured this puzzle, the Alpha Delta **Phi lemonade** booth set a new record. The local paper, The **Chronicle**, surveyed over 200 patrons who reported that this puzzle was one of the most difficult they had ever seen. As **Daniel** Humana **humbly** puts it, "The books are all right here in plain view hidden from sight." **Those able** to find all of them will hear great **lamentations** from those who have to be shown. One **revelation** that may help is that books like **Timothy** and **Samuel** may occur without their **numbers**. Also, keep in mind, that punctuation and spaces in the middle are **normal**. A chipper attitude will help you **compete** really well against those who claim to know the answers. Remember, there is no need for a mad **exodus**. There really are 30 books of the Bible **lurking** somewhere in this paragraph waiting to be found. God Bless.

Note: Osee appears in KJV Romans 9:25 as a variant spelling of Hosea. — Howard Culbertson

Bible Word Search – The Cross

All the words listed below are in the puzzle – left, right, up, down or diagonally. Find each word and circle each letter of the words you find. After you have found all the words, the leftover letters form the **mystery answer**. — https://www.christianbiblereference.org/ws_TheCross_0.htm

- Abraham, Afflicted, Christ, Creation, Crucify, Disciple, Forsaken, Freedom, Glory, Good, Heaven, Hell, Honour, Hyssop, Justify, Messiah, Mission, Moses, Passover, Peace, Perfection, Pharisee, Pilate, Power, Praise, Promises, Prophecy, Punishment, Rebellion, Righteous, Sacrifice, Scapegoat, Slavery, Throne, Trinity, Worthy



Luke 9: 28–36

27th Feb 2022

by Jonathan Lopez

²⁸ About eight days after Jesus said this, he took Peter, John and James with him and went up onto a mountain to pray. ²⁹ As he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning. ³⁰ Two men, Moses and Elijah, appeared in glorious splendour, talking with Jesus. ³¹ They spoke about his departure, which he was about to bring to fulfilment at Jerusalem. ³² Peter and his companions were very sleepy, but when they became fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men standing with him. ³³ As the men were leaving Jesus, Peter said to him, 'Master, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters – one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.' (He did not know what he was saying.) ³⁴ While he was speaking, a cloud appeared and covered them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. ³⁵ A voice came from the cloud, saying, 'This is my Son, whom I have chosen; listen to him.' ³⁶ When the voice had spoken, they found that Jesus was alone. The disciples kept this to themselves and did not tell anyone at that time what they had seen.

Introduction

When I think of major events in the New Testament, I think of the birth of Jesus, I think of his miracles, his teachings that have forever changed my life, I think of his death on the cross but his triumph over death itself – the resurrection.

Today will be the first time I am preaching on the Transfiguration, and honestly I did not know too much about it until I was preparing for this sermon. I know the church celebrates the feast day of the transfiguration on 6th August but I have never really understood its significance.

So what does the word 'transfigured' mean, you might be asking? It means a transformation into something more beautiful or elevated. Its origins are the Greek word 'meta-morph'. To visualise this you might think of a caterpillar turning into a butterfly. Though in our reading today the gospel writer Luke does not use the word 'transfigured' that the other gospels highlight:

Mark 9:2 – 'he was transfigured' (*metamorphoth*)

Matt 19:2 – 'he was transfigured' (*metamorphoth*)

Luke chooses the words 'became' and 'changed' to explain what the disciples saw.

As we end the Epiphany season and lead into Lent, have we been 'becoming' more like the disciples of Jesus? The Luke lectionary reading shows us how the first disciples grew in their knowledge and love of Jesus. If Epiphany has been about maturing in faith then *what new areas in our lives has God been showing you to be more like Christ?* For me it has been about being humble.

Today I want us to look at two things about the Transfiguration:

- Its significance to the disciples
- Its significance to us

Part 1: The disciples: Peter, John & James (vv 28–36)

Before the Transfiguration occurs, the disciples have just been sent out on mission: the Twelve (Lk 9:1–6), and this causes Herod to question who Jesus really is—he thought he was John the Baptist come back to life (Lk

9:7–9). It is noted here in Luke that he was 'perplexed' by the reports of Jesus and his disciples on mission – who is this Jesus? There is Jesus' famous feeding of the 5,000 (Lk 9:10–17); and just before our reading today Jesus asks his disciples who the crowds say he is and who they think he is. Peter declares he is the Messiah of God, and Jesus commands them not to reveal this to anyone, and that he must suffer at the hands of the elders and be killed in Jerusalem, but raised to life on the third day.

Have you heard the maxim/term: **seeing is believing?**

We all want evidence of what we believe, right? We want to touch, feel, see with our own eyes what we believe.

So here in our reading Jesus takes away his 'inner circle' of disciples, Peter, John and James, to the mountain area NE of Galilee – Ein Pnias – Caesarea Philippi – Golan Heights, Israel. Today tourists know this as the temple of Pan. This inner circle were about see more about the true identity of Jesus. There they prayed with Jesus but then we are told in v 29:

"As he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning."

This is the actual point of transfiguration. Side note: And quite possibly his teeth were also whitened, as our Life of Joseph series tells us in the oracle given to Judah about a Messiah. Our Exodus (Ex 34:29–35) reading regarding Moses at Mt Sinai shows a precedent for one's appearance changing when one has encounters with God. However this is more than just an encounter.

My friend who invited me to my first Anglican church was June Robertson. She is the prison chaplain at Dame Phyllis Women's Prison, Deer Park. I recall her distinct 'visit from God'. She recounted this at a Ridley chapel service when we were studying together, as she led the service. She said she saw an angel of God in her backyard as a child. I recall the chapel was very silent for a moment as she shared a significant moment in her life. In this month's TMA one of our Ridley lecturers in Hebrew, Jill Firth, shared that she spoke with God as a child growing up in Deer Park.

These are significant manifestations that June and Jill knew were from God.

Remember Jesus has been showing his disciples miracles: healings, feeding the 5000, teaching etc. Jesus' full identity is on show here – a complete disclosure of who he really is: the 'son of God' whom the church declares in our creed:

God from God,

*Light from Light,
true God from true God,*

begotten, not made;

of the same essence as the Father.

Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation

he came down from heaven

Jesus' true heavenly radiance, his GLORY, is seen by his disciples. You can only imagine, like Moses, these three disciples would have come back to the larger group of disciples totally convinced that Jesus was the real deal – they are no longer unsure or perplexed!

BUT along with this transfiguration two men appear: Moses and Elijah (v 30).

What is the significance of these two figures in Scripture?

Moses: helped lead the **exodus** of Israel out of Egypt to the promised land, received the Ten Commandments on Mt Sinai – **the old covenant**.

Elijah: a powerful prophet God used to manifest his **power**.

Moses: law, Elijah: prophets

Jesus fulfils the law and the prophets (Matt 5:17).

v 31 tells us they were speaking about Jesus' departure, or in the Greek 'exodus', which he is about to fulfil.

v 32: Have you ever fallen asleep in prayer / at church? Well, here the disciples are sleepy, and then awaken to Jesus and his glorious appearance as well as seeing two pretty significant historical figures.

³³ *As the men were leaving Jesus, Peter said to him, 'Master, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters – one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.' (He did not know what he was saying.)*

Now I know Peter sometimes gets a bad rap for being a bit too quick to react, often putting his foot in his mouth saying or doing things. v 33 does depict Peter this way. He almost sounds like he is still drowsy from his prayer nap. Despite this depiction here, there is a precedent for wanting to build what seem to be booths like the Feast of Booths for Jesus, Moses and Elijah. In many instances we see in the OT, key Biblical figures choose to mark geographical areas where there has been a significant manifestation of God—e.g. Isaac in Bethel.

Our reading ends in vv 34–36:

– A cloud covers them

– They were fearful

– God speaks: Jesus is his son whom he has chosen – LISTEN TO HIM.

So what does this scene look like: a mountain, Jesus' divine identity, Jesus' exodus, a cloud that covers the mountain, and the voice of God speaking?

The Transfiguration is NOT just Jesus showing off to his disciples, but a significant covenantal moment in God's story of salvation! Jesus is the one who will lead a new exodus of all the oppressed! He fulfils those words in Isaiah (61:1–2) which says:

to proclaim good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners

and recovery of sight for the blind,

to set the oppressed free,

to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour

...this is a HUGE tipping point, a watershed moment!!! – The new covenant.

POINT 1: For the disciples it is a further revealing of Jesus' **identity**: seeing is believing.

APPLICATION: For the disciples: they see and hear all Jesus has done: the miracles, the healing, and they hear all he teaches and he disciplines them. They keep this scene a secret as Jesus previously requested (Lk 9:21).

Part 2: Us: ushering in the NEW covenant

POINT 2: Though we are not eye-witnesses to the transfiguration, our faith is based on 'hearing is believing': the Transfiguration is the ushering in of a new covenant and Jesus' exodus—life, death and resurrection—will bring it in.

APPLICATION: This is a turning point, a 'watershed' moment in human history, and not just a weird ghostly story. Unlike Herod, who was perplexed by Jesus' identity, or the disciples, who were commanded by Jesus not to disclose his identity, we all have the AMAZING gift:

1. To *know* fully who Jesus is
 2. Freedom to *proclaim* WHO JESUS IS!
- For some of us, we may not know who Jesus is. I encourage you: after Easter we are hopefully partnering with another local church to conduct the Alpha course, which is a great, interactive and refreshing series on the basics of Christian belief. Even if you want to 'refresh' your beliefs please come and see me.
 - For those here who want to proclaim who Jesus is, we have a great opportunity to serve at the Alpha course, as people providing hospitality, hosting a small group or a praying presence in a small group.

Now Alpha is not just the only way we proclaim who Jesus is. I came to faith through just a high school friend inviting me to church on a regular Sunday. Be encouraged that every invitation has significance. Of late we have been getting a lot of baptism enquiries – child and adult – so please pray for these opportunities to grow and encourage people who come to our churches.

Conclusion: this is my son, listen to him

Though we are not 'eye-witnesses' like Peter, John and James, we are indeed **hearers**: chosen and invited by God to know his son fully.

Our Gospel reading ends with God speaking, making clear two points to the disciples and to you and me as the church:

1. Jesus is HIS son
2. LISTEN to him

We are told in our Corinthians reading, 2 Cor 3: 18:

¹⁸ And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

Jesus has been 'unveiled' to the disciples and you and me: the church. This unveiling affects us by continually shaping us – transforming us – by seeking God's glory.

Are we listening to Jesus today?

The last few verses in our reading show a transition in the disciples' learning: they move from seeing to hearing. It may be likened to those of us who have experienced a dramatic conversion to being followers of Jesus, and at the start of our journey we saw and experienced amazing change, healing and restoration, and then we were disciplined by teaching and hearing God's word in Scripture. A metamorphosis occurred.

Our listening to Jesus' radical teaching (which fulfils the law and the prophets) does not mean we do away with the law and the words of the prophet, but rather Jesus now becomes God's appointed interpreter.

As our eyes and ears have begun to be opened, so we begin to comprehend with the help of the divine voice what we see in the Transfiguration. It is only following the resurrection that we are able to grasp the significance of this event and, indeed, of the rest of the story of Jesus. (J Green).

A woman anoints Jesus' feet

Luke 7:36–50

13th March 2022 at St. Andrew's Rosanna

by Helen McAlley

SIMON THE PHARISEE

In our gospel reading today, we have Jesus invited to the home of a Pharisee named Simon. The Pharisees often felt very threatened by Jesus and Simon's motive may even have been to entrap Jesus rather than to learn from Him. It appears that this Pharisee did not believe in Jesus. He doubted for example that Jesus was a prophet, when he said about Jesus and the woman in the story, 'If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is...that she is a sinner.'

LACK OF HOSPITALITY

Simon invited Jesus to his home but did not give Him the normal hospitality that you would expect in a home in those days. The host would be expected to provide water for the guest's feet to be washed. We see this custom at the Last Supper when Jesus washed the disciples' feet (usually the job of the most menial servant) and way back in the book of Genesis (Genesis 18), Abraham asked for water to be brought to wash the feet of his guests. Walking in sandals on the dusty roads meant that it would be refreshing to have your feet washed when you arrived at the house of your host. Jesus had not received this courtesy when he arrived at the house.

Another thing that you would expect from your host was a kiss of welcome. Again this welcome was not given to Jesus when He arrived at Simon's house.

And finally, your host would anoint the head of his guests with oil. This would be with olive oil. We read in Psalm 23:5, 'You anoint my head with oil.' This courtesy was not given to Jesus either.

Hospitality was considered to be a very important value in those days. It would be very unusual for a guest not to be afforded these marks of hospitality.

THE WOMAN WHO WAS A SINNER

Simon keeps his eyes upon Jesus, maybe to catch Him out in some way, and now he sees his opportunity. A woman comes into his house and he knows this woman is a 'sinner' which probably means a prostitute.

In those days, a meal like this one was not as private as it would be today. People could walk in and watch what was going on. However, we would not expect that a prostitute would have been welcome in Simon's house. It would have taken courage for her to walk in and to minister to Jesus as she did.

We are not told if this woman had actually met Jesus before. The commentator Leon Morris suggests that she may have simply been among the crowds listening to Jesus and been so convicted that her life was dramatically changed. Or she could quite easily have had unrecorded contacts with Jesus.

One thing is certain. She knew she had been a sinner and that Jesus had forgiven all her sins. She felt deep love and gratitude towards Him. Unlike other people in the room who questioned Jesus' words to the woman that her sins were forgiven ('Only God can forgive sins. Who does this man think he is?') this woman gladly accepted His love and forgiveness.

AN EXAMPLE OF GOD'S GREAT LOVE

Joyce Meyer Ministries has a ministry to girls, especially those who are trafficked for sex. They describe a girl called Ashley whose parents were divorced when she was 5. As a teenager, she experimented with drugs and within a few years lost everything that was good in her life. Her relationship with her family was shattered, she got fired from her job and she became homeless. A so-called friend shared a way she could support herself, offering her work as a prostitute. She believed his lie that she had no other option. She commented, 'Getting into prostitution opened up a whole other realm of darkness that I definitely did not expect, nor was I prepared for....In my head, I felt like I was going crazy....I was just like, Is this really happening to me? Am I really at this point?....' she remembers thinking.

In what she now sees as a miraculous intervention by God, Ashley's then abusive boyfriend took her to a hospital to get help for her state of mind. Because of COVID-19 restrictions, he could not go in with her, and that meant she could finally speak freely and ask for help.

The hospital staff connected her to a short-term shelter, and after 30 days she became a resident of a Christian emergency shelter for women. She was able to get clean from the drugs and find healing for some of the deep wounds she had carried since she was a small child. She was empowered to make her own choices about what she wanted next for her life. The staff loved her, provided her with support, taught her the joy of serving others as well as how to apply the Word of God to her life. And through those things, she was able to develop a close, personal relationship with the Lord. Ashley said, 'The way God used such a dark situation that I was in and the way he pulled me out, made me realise that He's really mindful of me. With everything else going on in their world, He cared enough to pull me out.'

I imagine Ashley's experience might well parallel the experience of the woman in our gospel story. Through the love of Jesus, she was given fresh hope and a new life. No wonder she expressed her love for Jesus in such an extravagant way.

ANOINTING JESUS' FEET

The woman had an alabaster flask of perfume. This was a globular container with no handles, but a long neck which was broken off when the contents were needed. We can assume that the perfume was very costly.

In those days, people did not sit at tables as we do, but they reclined on low couches, leaning on the left arm with the head towards the table and the body stretching away from it. The sandals were removed before reclining. The woman was therefore able to approach Jesus' feet without difficulty. Morris explains that she evidently intended to anoint His feet with the perfume, but as she stood there, her emotions got the better of her and her tears began to fall on Jesus' feet. She promptly wiped them with her hair, a significant action, for Jewish women did not unwind their hair in public. She seems to have been oblivious to the people around her and in the grip of deep emotion. This explains the kissing of the feet of an honoured rabbi which was certainly not the usual thing to do.

Normally the perfume would have been poured on Jesus' head. Her using it on his feet may have been a mark of her humility.

JESUS SPEAKS TO SIMON

Simon, Jesus' host, saw it all and disapproved. He did not think Jesus was a prophet, but Jesus showed Himself to be a prophet by answering his thoughts rather than his spoken words.

Jesus loved that Pharisee as much as He loved the woman. He lovingly drew him aside and politely tried to explain what was going on. He told him the story of the two debtors, one of whom owed 500 denarii and the other just 50. Their creditor forgave them both the debts. Who then would love the benefactor more? Simon grudgingly acknowledged that it would be the one who had been forgiven the bigger debt.

Jesus compares the behaviour of Simon and the woman. Simon had not acted hospitably. In contrast, this woman, whom Jesus acknowledges had committed many sins, has loved much. Her love is a proof that she has been forgiven much. It is her response to God's grace.

Simon had shown little love and the implication is that he had not been forgiven much. Simon did not think he needed to be forgiven. He was self-righteous, trusting in himself rather than in Jesus.

LEARNING FROM THIS STORY

What can we learn from this story? Firstly, we cannot save ourselves and we cannot live a holy life without Jesus. We need to depend upon Him moment by moment. Jesus reminded his disciples that without Him, they could do nothing. Without Jesus we are totally helpless, and this knowledge helps us to understand His grace and all that he has done for us and to be truly thankful.

This woman showed her love for Jesus in a beautiful way. How can we show our love for Jesus? Jesus reminded His disciples at the Last Supper that he would no longer call them servants but friends. He was not only interested in the work He had given them to do. He wanted to be their friend. What do we do with our friends? We enjoy spending time with them; we have a love relationship with them. We talk with them about many aspects of our lives. We feel safe with them and we appreciate them.

We can show our love for Jesus by talking to Him throughout the day about everything. It is a habit we can get into. We can be thankful, maybe spending time each day thinking of things we can be thankful for. We can have a few minutes' silence with Jesus each day, expressing our love to Him, listening to His loving voice to us, or just being quiet in His presence. When we are in the car, we can turn off the radio and spend some time praising Him, maybe using the words of hymns or choruses that we know. When we are out walking we can thank Him for the beautiful natural world that we see. What ways do you show your love for Jesus?

As we think of Simon the Pharisee, we can ask the Lord to help us not to be judgmental. We are called to love people, not to judge them. Being judgmental is making ourselves feel better by comparing ourselves with others. It is looking down on people. It is being hard-hearted. Of course there is a time to be discerning when we know that something wrong is happening and we need to do something about it.

What can we do when we are judgemental? Firstly we need to acknowledge it

and confess it as a sin before God. 'Lord, I'm feeling judgemental about that person. I'm making myself feel better by dwelling on their sin. I'm being self-righteous. Forgive me and change my heart. I pray for that person that you would bless and help them in every way. Help me to have a loving attitude to them. Amen.' We need to recognise that being judgemental is a very common sin. As soon as we are aware of it, we need to confess it before God rather than justifying ourselves as we are so often inclined to do. The Lord always disciplines us in love and we need to learn to accept His discipline and love with gratitude. He never condemns us.

PRAYER

Shall we pray: *Help us Lord to be like that woman who poured out her love for you. Show us ways that we can show love towards you. Help us to recognise too when we are being judgmental and to immediately confess it and have your cleansing and a new attitude. We thank you for all that Jesus has done for us and we say that we love you. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.*

Helen McAlley

Luke 7:36–50

13th March 2022 at St John's Heidelberg

by Denise Nicholls

³⁶ When one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, he went to the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table. ³⁷ A woman in that town who lived a sinful life learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee's house, so she came there with an alabaster jar of perfume. ³⁸ As she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them.

³⁹ When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is—that she is a sinner."

⁴⁰ Jesus answered him, "Simon, I have something to tell you."

"Tell me, teacher," he said.

⁴¹ "Two people owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. ⁴² Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he forgave the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?"

⁴³ Simon replied, "I suppose the one who had the bigger debt forgiven."

"You have judged correctly," Jesus said.

⁴⁴ Then he turned toward the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. ⁴⁵ You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. ⁴⁶ You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet. ⁴⁷ Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—as her great love has shown. But whoever has been forgiven little loves little."

⁴⁸ Then Jesus said to her, "Your sins are forgiven."

⁴⁹ The other guests began to say among themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?"

⁵⁰ Jesus said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

A big thank you for the greeting that Jonathan organised last Sunday, and I received it up in Sydney. That little video was really lovely, so thank you so much.

"Knock, knock!" The right response . . . ?
"What do you get when you cross a sheep with a kangaroo?" "A woolly jumper!"

"Did you hear the one about . . .?"

"Once upon a time . . ."

When we hear these words we know what is coming: a knock-knock joke; a riddle; a fairy story. These are rhetorical devices that have been instilled in us from infancy; and it's lovely when children start to try to tell jokes or riddles, and they always mess it up, because we know that there's a rhythm. We don't say, "Seven people walked into a bar", do we? We say, "Three people walked into a bar: an Irishman, a Scotsman, and an Australian"—I don't know, you can make the rest up for yourself.

We begin today a series, as Jonathan said, on the parables of Jesus that are found in Luke. Some of them are very well known, like the parable of the Good Samaritan, such as is seen in our church window here at St John's. In this series we're focusing on the ones that are only found in Luke.

And of course always when we look at Scripture, no matter what genre of Scripture, we're wanting to know what does it teach us about God, and what does it teach us about ourselves. So let us pray: *Lord, reveal yourself to us today by your Spirit, and through your word, so that we may know you better, love you more, and follow you with our whole lives. Amen.*

So, firstly, what is a parable? It's a device used by Jesus: it was a story drawn from the everyday life of Jesus' hearers. So we have parables about oil in lamps; wine in wineskins; crops being harvested and there being weeds present; things that are lost and then found; labourers wanting to be hired; and children who bring shame to their parents.

A parable is a little story that teases the hearers with a clash, or a surprise turn of events. Some people often say, "Oh, a parable is given by Jesus to make things more clear". That's not what Jesus said. Rather, a parable is a challenge, a riddle: something which forces our minds, and the hearers of Jesus, to think—to draw them in, to get them to engage with things that are perhaps even obscure, about them and their position with God.

But Jesus also said that to some the parables help make things clear, and to others it obscures the truth of God. So first of all a parable is not to make things simple but to draw us in and to cause us to think, to consider. And sometimes there's no ending to the parable: it's just left up in the air so that we have to apply it to ourselves.

Sometimes they're long; sometimes they're short. Sometimes they're grouped together, like in Luke chapter 15 that we're very familiar with—the parable of the lost coin, the lost sheep and the prodigal son are all in Luke chapter 15. And sometimes they're in the midst of a narrative, and this is what we're looking at today, where some action requires a teaching from Jesus.

So let's look at this parable today that Jesus gives. He says to Simon, "Simon, I have something to tell you." "Tell me, teacher." Jesus begins the parable: "Two people owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him 500 denarii and the other 50. Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he forgave the debts of both. Now, which of them will love him more?" Simon replied, "I suppose the one who had the bigger debt forgiven." "You have judged correctly," said Jesus.

Imagine, in our setting, your bank—whomever you bank with—decides that for all of its customers, whether they have a mortgage, whether they have a credit card or a savings account, any debt will be forgiven! Well, what a great story that would be! And who would be more excited? I think it's going to be the young people with a mortgage, isn't it? Or even older people with a mortgage would be very excited. If you had your mortgage payment totally forgiven forever—or whether you had a small credit card debt of a hundred dollars.

Why does Jesus tell this story? Well, as always in Scripture, context is all. Imagine I rush into the office on Tuesday morning and say to Jonathan, "Oh the world's going to hell in a hand-basket! The Vikings are invading England!" Well Jonathan could simply say to me, "Denise, stop reading the comics! You're reading Hagar the Horrible, not the news!"

Context is important, isn't it? So what is it that prompts Jesus to tell this parable? We know from the context that Jesus has been invited to a dinner at the house of a Pharisee named Simon, and there's an unnamed woman at the dinner who performs a number of actions: she washes Jesus' feet with her tears; she dries his feet with her hair; she kisses his feet; and pours perfume on his feet. And we've got two images up on the screen: one on the left from a sort of modern-day painting, and I like that one particularly because it shows the response of the people there—the shock of seeing this woman perform this outrageous act at this dinner. And the one on the right has Jesus, the woman and Simon the Pharisee in a stained glass window.

Hospitality in the Middle East today and in the Middle East 2000 years ago is much the same: practices and rituals of honour and welcome are so important. A greeting of a kiss: equals would greet each other with a kiss on either cheek. We see people do that on the news, or if you've travelled through the Middle East: parents are greeted by their children with a kiss on the hand; students greet their teachers with a kiss on the hand; and great and abject honouring is a kiss on the feet.

As well, sandals were the footwear of the day so water was always given to guests to wash their feet, and perhaps even some oil for their head. When I travelled in Pakistan nearly 30 years ago, the hospitality that I was given and offered, not just by the friends whom I knew, but by strangers in the street: "Please come into my house. Have tea"—and they would set food before me to eat. "Please can we take you around the town and show you? Oh, we have a very strong truck"—which turned out to be a tractor. They wanted to show us that the town is incredibly hospitable.

Being lost: myself and Lynn, two western women, dressed appropriately for that culture, but we're a bit lost, and a man came up to us and said, "Do you need a taxi?" And we said, "Yes, we're lost" and he said, "Come with me" and I said to him, "Are you a taxi driver?" and he said no; but he went and he found a taxi driver, argued with him to make sure that he would take two strange western women, agreed on a price, and put us in. He went out of his way to show hospitality.

In our homes: when someone comes to our home, whether they are expected or not, even if they pop in—"Welcome, welcome, come in, please sit down. Can I get you a drink? Would you like a cup of tea? Cup of

coffee? Glass of water—it's a hot day—would you like a beer? And you might run to the kitchen, think, 'Oh boy, what have I got? Oh, a packet of biscuits: OK, that'll do.' We usually break something out, don't we? Because we have, um not *rules*, but that's what we do when we greet people.

The woman who comes into this dinner is named as a 'sinful woman'. It's pretty clear from what Simon the Pharisee says, he had some sort of test for Jesus in mind when he invited him to his place for dinner. The text says: *When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is—that she is a sinner."*

So we have the image of Jesus reclining, which was the normal way of eating, on low couches, with food down the centre of the table. This was probably in a courtyard that would have been open to the street. Hence the lady was able to come in, and there were more. It wasn't like our little individual homes where we can close the door: this was a public event.

Simon looked at what this woman did for Jesus, and his response was "She's a sinner." Who do we think is beyond the grace of God? Do we divide people into two groups: 'nice people like us' and 'others'? Do we believe that God's mercy and grace is available to all people? Have we seen in our circumstances and in our lives people who've been forgiven from a large debt by Jesus and who love him unconditionally?

So the lady gives these actions and this is what prompts Jesus to say, "Simon, I want to tell you something. Two people owed money to a certain moneylender . . ." You see Jesus tells this little parable, this story, to engage Simon with the question in the story: who would love the moneylender more? And Simon's reluctant reply becomes, "Well, I suppose the one who had the bigger debt forgiven." "You've judged correctly," said Jesus.

There's a sting in the tail, isn't there? For Jesus goes on to say to Simon—Simon, who thought himself godly and upright, Simon who knew this woman, that she in some ways had lived a sinful life—we don't know what that was, whether she was someone who was a prostitute or what it was—but she was known as a sinful woman in the town. To Simon, the godly, the upright, this woman was and always would be a sinner, in a culture of shame and honour as this culture was.

Simon thought he knew where everybody stood. He was sort of up here; Jesus he didn't know about; and the woman was down there. She was shameful and she had acted shamefully; and yet Jesus turns to the woman—he speaks to Simon but he turns to the woman. In a man's world, she is the heroine of repentance, faith and devotion. She acted with honour, and in her honour she shamed Simon. Jesus turns to the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You didn't give me water for my feet, but she washed my feet and dried them with her hair. You didn't give me a kiss [when he called him Rabbi and he should have] but she hasn't stopped kissing my feet. You didn't put oil on my head, but she's put perfume on my feet. Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven, as her great love has shown. But whoever has been forgiven little loves little."

This great act of love shows us that she had met Jesus before. She had learned of God's grace and had turned her heart towards God, and this demonstration of love and devotion to Jesus shows that she had already been forgiven by God. She had been forgiven much, and so she loved much. Jesus' declaration that her sins had been forgiven was a public declaration to all the people present, and the whole town, that her forgiveness was complete.

She didn't go away from there ashamed, but full of peace: the peace of God and the grace of God. And yet Simon, the one who thought he was 'up here' loved little, for he had been forgiven little.

In this narrative, in this scene of Jesus having dinner at Simon's house, with whom do you most identify? Simon, trying to do the right thing all the time, but perhaps testing Jesus, maybe even keeping him at arm's length, thinking that Jesus is pretty lucky to have us in his following? Or do you identify with the woman, that you recognise that your forgiveness is great and merciful, because of God's mercy poured out on you through Jesus? Do you lavish Jesus with love and affection? Or perhaps you're like the guests who asked, "Who's this who's forgiving sins?"

As we see in this little parable this picture of God's grace, and we see God's grace and generosity extended, do we extend that grace to others, or do we withhold as Simon withheld? Do we offer little grace and forgiveness to others because we think we need little forgiveness from God? That's pride, isn't it? And not the pride of where we're proud of our children for doing well in school, or proud of an achievement that we've made, but that pride of arrogance.

Or knowing the grace of God, do we extend to others that forgiveness that's been given to us, that we pray in the Lord's Prayer?

The woman came with a poverty of spirit. Elsewhere in Scripture Jesus says, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." That's what this little parable shows us, doesn't it? Those who have been forgiven much, love much, and this woman acts out this parable.

As we consider Jesus' parables, little stories that are often open-ended, that leave us with an engaged mind and heart, Jesus encourages us, the Holy Spirit can work within us, to apply these parables to ourselves. Whoever has been forgiven much loves much; whoever has been forgiven little loves little. So perhaps next time your grandchild comes to you with a knock-knock joke or a riddle or a joke that they mess up, perhaps you might consider Jesus' use of parables and the way he challenges us, because he wants us to recognise God's grace that has been poured out to us through him.

Let us pray: *Lord Jesus, you used stories and parables and humorous illustrations to challenge your hearers and they challenge us today, Lord. We ask, Father, that you would help us to come to you with ears that are willing to hear, hearts which are ready to be challenged and changed by you. And we pray for the gift of your Spirit to work in our wills that which is pleasing to you. Father, you have forgiven us much: help us to love you and love our Lord Jesus Christ much. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.*

Parish Council Notes

Meeting of Monday 21st March

Apologies

- Raj Ariyathurai has had to leave Parish Council. Vote of thanks to Raj for his contributions.

Watsonia – new service initiative

- Jonathan in touch with army barracks chaplain, planning regular visits. Want involvement with Watsonia people. A major Parish prayer point.

Watsonia Town Square

- Continuing talks between Denise, Diocese and Council on the car park. On-site meeting 17 March 2022.
- Expect work to start early 2023.

Gloucester Drive

- Agreed to proceed expeditiously with necessary repairs to guttering/eaves.
- Obtain comparable quotes.
- During property inspection 8 April, after present tenants move out, check other needed repairs.
- See if Diocese can assist financially.

Finance report

- Feb surplus \$20418: BSL paid outstanding money, receipt of a diocesan ministry grant. Forecast for coming months much bleaker: facing some large repair and maintenance bills.

Rosanna

- Nothing: chase up.

St John's building subcommittee

- Circulate copies of reports.
- Getting the Diocese to sign off on expenditure needed to support initial stages of restoration process and to undertake urgent repairs.
- Look at historical information re previous restoration and see what we can learn from it.

Watsonia op shop

- MOU between Parish and BSL now in operation.
- Thank-you arvo tea 26 Feb went well: key BSL and parish people, about 16 volunteers. New arrangements clarified, misinformation corrected.
- Thanks to Barbara Andrews and Allan Way (both unfortunately unable to attend), later delivered.
- POS facilities installed, working with BSL how to invoice them for our monthly profit-share.

Compliance with Diocesan standards

- Safe Ministry Training session at St John's 20 March. Ten parishioners completed Level 1, nine Level 2. Others did online. Inform Abp.
- Denise and Jonathan to attend Regional Diocesan Clergy Conference 6–8 June.

OH&S: COVID-19

- A parishioner asked if precautions should be more stringent, given rising cases due to Omicron BA.2. Diocese has not changed advice but parishioners reminded of role of mask use.
- Jonathan recently completed a first aid course refresher; Denise plans similar.

Animal medicine

A man runs into a vet's office carrying his dog, screaming for help. The vet rushes him to an examination room and has him put his dog down on the examination table. The vet examines the still, limp body and after a few moments tells the man that his dog, regrettably, is dead. The man, clearly agitated and not willing to accept this, demands a second opinion.

The vet goes into the back room and comes out with a cat and puts the cat

Vicar's report

- Thanks for (BIG) birthday wishes!
- *Ministry*
 - Still no success re a student minister this year.
 - Ash Wednesday Service held at Watsonia.
 - Series on the Parables in Luke begun.
 - Monthly prayer breakfasts resumed this month.
 - Attendances have fluctuated.
 - Thankful for Jonathan's setting up live-streaming: will let members join in who struggle to attend.
 - Syd Simpson diagnosed with, got treatment for Macular Degeneration – doing quite well.
- *Merri Creek partnership*
 - Combined Banyule/Merri Creek Prayer Retreat Sat 9 April 9:30– 1:30: great Easter lead up.
 - First service at Merri Creek Fairfield postponed until after Easter: work required on St Paul's.
- *BSL and Op Shop*
 - Thank-you arvo tea held with about 16 volunteers.
 - Mark Lane, Helen Moppert and new Volunteer Manager for BSL all attended.
 - Mark Lane and I spoke on ongoing BSL/ parish partnership, cleared up misinformation.
 - Barbara Andrews, Allan Way unable to attend but thanked publicly, gifts delivered to them.
 - Tour of op shop to see fruit of rearranging work of volunteers and staff. Cash results good too.
- *Watsonia Town Square*
 - 17 March meeting to see Council's preferred design, to be discussed 29 March.
 - Acquisition of our car park mentioned. Council prefers to buy outright. Diocese informed.
- *Rosanna*
 - Written to Matt Wilson asking for clarity re Hall: what will be best, most beneficial to the parish.
- *Other*
 - Attended the first intensive for the Graduate Certificate of Professional Pastoral Supervision on 24–25 Feb. Other dates for this year are 28–29 April, 14–15 July, 8–9 Sept.
- *Additional matters discussed:*
 - Denise expressed disappointment she had so far not been able to find a student minister.
 - Reminder of the combined Banyule Merri Creek Prayer Retreat on Saturday 9 April.

Associate's report

- Completed level 1–3 Safe Ministry training.
- Final stages of communications strategy: live stream tested.
- Lags in Holy Spirit Watsonia plans.
- First baptism booked 26/03; two more enquiries.
- Marriage prep with couple to be married 07/05.
- Funeral 18/03.
- First meeting with Diocese coach.
- Met with Dragan Milic (former project manager for council: playgrounds and childcare centres) re: St John's play area.
- Completed First Aid training.
- Attended EPIC training on conflict (08–10/03).
- Attended Anglican meeting: emails, cloud.
- Attended Watsonia Army Barracks to connect with soldiers.

down next to the dog's body. The cat sniffs the body, walks from head to tail poking and sniffing the dog's body and finally looks at the vet and meows. The vet looks at the man and says, "I'm sorry, but the cat thinks that your dog is dead too."

The man is still unwilling to accept that his dog is dead.

The vet brings in a black Labrador. The lab sniffs the body, walks from head to tail, and finally looks at the vet and barks. The vet looks at the man and

• Thanks:

- Busy, productive month, many future possibilities.
- God using experiences and gifts in ministry.

• Prayers:

- Baptisms to be opportunity to connect with young families.
- Watsonia progress.

• Goals next month:

- Attend St Pius Alpha.
- Document instructions for live streaming.
- Study plans for Watsonia: church revitalisation.

• Goals next quarter (Apr–June):

- Further EPIC training.
- Planned meetings in Watsonia.
- Possible new Sunday services at Holy Spirit.

• Additional matters discussed:

- Live-streaming system set up, two services live-streamed. Ironing out problems, improving system. Thanked Jonathan for his hard work.
- Advised that need to consult a landscaper on the former St John's play area.
- Progress on updating, improving parish website.

Wardens' report

• Heidelberg

- Guttering at rear of Lower Hall: John Ryan quoted \$660: gave go-ahead.
- While he was on-site the sewer overflowed! Fixed it temporarily \$286 but needs further work to remove tree roots: \$1705. Gave go-ahead, preferably during school holidays.
- 'Broken' pew mended, thanks Andrew.
- Melbourne Water re tennis courts: still no action. We should not have to pay half!
- All wardens attended information session re St John's–Community Garden path.

• Gloucester Drive

- Quote from Jeff Harvey: \$38,500 + GST. Need decision.
- Notified footpath needs slab replaced where trench was cut. Asked Council re approved concreters or costs if they do it: still awaiting reply.

• Rosanna

- Parish hall roof leaking again: waiting to contact insurer. Where is the Diocese?

• Watsonia

- New fire extinguishers installed, emergency exit signs in church fixed.

• Watsonia Road

- Shed door installed, lock fitted. (Hooray!)
- Op shop have moved rubbish bin to the front. Tenant (works nights) claims noise in afternoon when trying to sleep. Put bin against op shop wall rather than house wall? Right under his shower window, can see in? No, windows are frosted, fly screen, too high. Internal blind?

• Additional matters discussed:

- Further on emergency exit sign requirements.

Op Shop financial report: tabled.

Minutes by Mike Connor, précis by Editor

says, "I'm sorry, but the lab thinks your dog is dead too."

The man, finally resigned to the diagnosis, thanks the vet and asks how much he owes. The vet answers, "\$650."

"\$650 to tell me my dog is dead?" exclaimed the man....

"Well," the vet replies, "I would only have charged you \$50 for my initial diagnosis. The additional \$600 was for the cat scan and lab tests."

Submitted by Frank Webb (I think...)