

# BANYULE BABBLE

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ANGLICAN PARISH OF BANYULE

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

MARCH  
2021

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## PATRICK'S PROCLAMATION

*"Almighty and everlasting God, who hast made nothing that thou hast made, and dost forgive the sins of all them that are penitent: Create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we worthily lamenting our sins, and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of thee, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."*

THE above is the Book of Common Prayer collect appointed for the first day of Lent—Ash Wednesday. However, unlike most other collects it also is appointed to be said every morning and evening throughout Lent up until the beginning of Holy Week. Composed in 1549 to replace an older medieval collect, it gives us a deep insight into what Archbishop Thomas Cranmer, the first English Protestant to reform the church in England, wanted this season to be about.

Contrary to modern prayers and services of Lent, fasting is noticeably absent, as are ashes, dust, and mortality. This does not mean the BCP does not prescribe fasting; the collect for the first Sunday of Lent ties our Lenten fasting to Jesus' fasting in the wilderness. But the emphasis is elsewhere.

The accent falls upon repentance, one that is holistic and complete: not just an acknowledgement of our sins, which indeed is our "wretchedness", but also a true sorrow behind them. We ask God for "new" and "contrite hearts" so that we truly do repent and turn away from those things that displease God, we obtain forgiveness.

Fasting is subordinate to repentance. The true purpose of fasting is to aid us in this turn away from sin. When we fast we say to God, "I desire and need you more than whatever delicious food or drink I normally enjoy." This means Lent is more about our hearts, our inward and internal lives, than external food, drink, or any other habits we give up. God wants our hearts, and it is in our hearts that all sin proceeds from.

This is what we see behind so many relational conflicts today. This is what we

see behind so many conflicts that lead to a total absence of relationships. Two sides, both convinced of their own right, and equally convinced of the other's wrong; and, unless one side makes the first step towards peace, the conflict will remain. Years, even decades pass as both sides wait for the other to do that first step. What is needed is a change of heart.

This change of heart is precisely what the above collect seeks from God. We cannot change ourselves completely. We might succeed for a season or two, but sooner or later we revert to our bad habits. Only God can change our hearts, and so we pray, from now up until Easter, for new and changed hearts. For God to complete his work in us, and for us to participate in this work by fasting. And of course, as all BCP collects conclude, this is not through our own goodness or deserving, but solely "through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

Patrick

**World day of prayer: see p. 2**

## A prayer for church planting

Patrick also writes: I thought it would be good to print the collect for church planting (based on 1 Corinthians 3:5–11), along with an encouragement for people to use it who need help with praying for the church plant.



Almighty God,  
who grew the church after St Paul planted  
and Apollos watered:  
we pray that you would bless, direct, and  
grow the church plant by Merri Creek,  
that your gospel may be proclaimed, your  
name honoured, and your kingdom  
established;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord, the only  
foundation of the Church. Amen.

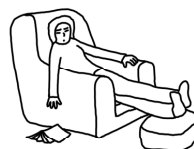
The new inner-north plant will happen  
some time around the end of the year.

**June Lockhart, Emmi Godau write: p. 4**

**Volunteers, Confirmees: see p. 10**

## LENT BOOKS

SEVEN DEADLY SINS



SLOTH



GREED



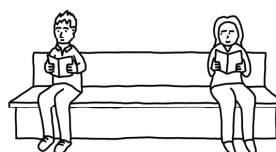
PRIDE



GLUTTONY



ENVY



LUST



WRATH

## This Month – March

**Each Tuesday:** 7.30 pm Bible study at St Andrew's

**Each Thursday:** 1.30 pm Bible study at Holy Spirit

**Wednesday 3rd:** 11 am Iris Grange; 3.30 pm Strathalan

**Friday 5th:** 10.30 am *World Day of Prayer*, St Andrew's

**Saturday 6th:** 8 am Blokes Helping Blokes breakfast at Macleod Community Hall

**Sunday 7th Lent 3:** 9 am St Andrew's; 10.15 am St John's; 5 pm Holy Spirit  
*Galatians 2:1–10*

**Sunday 14th Lent 4, Mothering Sunday:** 9 am St Andrew's; 10.15 am St John's; 5 pm Holy Spirit  
*Galatians 2:11–21*

**Sunday 21st Lent 5:** 10.15 am Combined at St John's  
*Galatians 3:1–14*

**Wednesday 24th:** 10 am Holy Spirit Mothers' Union; 11 am Streeton Park and general mid-week service at St John's; 3.30 pm Regis Macleod

**Sunday 28th Palm Sunday:** 9 am St Andrew's; 10.15 am St John's; 5 pm Holy Spirit  
*Mark 14:1–21*

## Wanted

- Volunteers for *mainly music*
- More churchwardens

## Money: December/January

Income:	Giving:	\$22,015.78
	Other:	\$32,986.98
	Total:	\$55,002.76
Expenses:		\$32,297.78
<b>Surplus:</b>		<b>\$22,704.98</b>

Giving was up, thank you. JobKeeper continued to assist us. We gratefully received back rent from the op shop. We have so far paid little on maintenance (will change).

## mainly music: March 2021

Watsonia has begun this term with 5 families (possibly 6) and a strong team of five people. This is where the young families tend to be as the demographics change. Unfortunately, the 5-day lockdown seems to have confused people and attendance on 18th was low. It is hoped that as time progresses, the families will gain more confidence and establish a routine which includes *mainly music*.

Four families came along to Heidelberg on 10th February to register and another four have expressed an interest in returning. However, as we have not yet been able to form a team we have decided not to re-open Heidelberg before Easter. This gives us another two months to find at least 2, if not 3, new team members. Meanwhile I will continue the weekly 'Wonderful Wednesday' emails with repeats of Jo's sessions from last year and a few new activities and 'Think Spots'.

We plan to lend each family a set of props to be kept in a bag (Kaye has done a terrific job of providing us with bags) along with the children's drink bottle and the family name tags (and the toilet-roll centres), and brought to *mainly music* each week. This means we will only have to clean the props once, at the end of the year. We have come to terms with the fact that we will inevitably lose a few props along the way.

Rosemary Bellair (9459 5394)

## World Day of Prayer

Last month we asked for a volunteer to represent the parish in the East Ivanhoe/Heidelberg ecumenical group. I am pleased to report that, after she was bound in chains and shown the instruments of torture, *Sylvia Webb* has agreed to take this on. Sylvia already works with another group that includes the northern part of the parish:



## WORLD DAY OF PRAYER SERVICE

Friday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2021

10.30 am, St Andrew's Anglican Church  
Cnr Grandview & Invermay Gve Rosanna

Country: **Vanuatu**

Theme: **'Build a Strong Foundation'**

Artist: **Juliette Pita**



**Matthew 7:24–27 (NIV) 'The Wise and Foolish Builders'**

(Normal service includes speaker, hymns & morning tea.)

<https://www.worlddayofprayeraustralia.org/>

## Holy Spirit Mothers' Union

Our meeting on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> Feb at 10 am had the usual form of service from the MU service book and songs from *Covenant Songs*.

Thank you Beth Jones for baking the Simnel cake for Mothering Sunday (14<sup>th</sup> March). Mothering Sunday dates back to the 1700s when the Church was able to get one day a year off for children in service, to go home and visit their mothers. The flowers represent that the children would pick wild flowers on their way home to give to their mothers. The mothers would bake Simnel cake for the children on their return journey. The first years of Holy Spirit Watsonia (on the present site), the Sunday School would bake the Simnel cake, then the Ladies Guild, now MU.

Our link branch St Mary's Broughty Ferry Scotland sent us a lovely Christmas card and greetings. Coral, our Link Secretary, has sent a lovely card back.

Treasurer's Report: will report next month.

Correspondence: from MU Office: the Theme for 2021 is 'Rebuilding hope and confidence'.

Annual Lady Day MU Service: the Dean has kindly offered that MU can celebrate Choral Evensong at the cathedral on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> March at 5.10 pm. Those who are attending will need to book through TryBooking on the St Paul's Cathedral website. Please be aware that these plans can change.

We closed our meeting with midday prayers: the North/West Region: All Saints/St John's Footscray; Link Branches: St Mary's Broughty Ferry Scotland; Families world-wide: Myanmar, St David's in Wales and Seoul in South Korea; Defence: Anglican Chaplaincy—Andrew Knox, Mitchell, Thomas Killingbeck, David Hillard; Diocese of the Murray—Bishop John Ford. — *Elsie Storr*

## What's happening with the op shop

The op shop was closed on Tuesday 9th February for insufficient compliance with COVID-19 rules. We hope that it will be re-opening in very early March under strict guidelines.

The longer-term arrangements for the op shop are currently under negotiation between the parish and the Brotherhood of St Lawrence. We aim to put the op shop on a firmer footing, but it is not yet possible to predict what the new arrangements will be, except that they will be different. — *Peter McKay*



## Blokes Helping Blokes

A full twenty-four Blokes turned up at our new meeting-place at Macleod, despite the unfamiliarity of the place, and despite our missing a meeting in January. We had to keep safe distances from each other and wear masks inside in the nice hall, so we went into the nice dirt courtyard where we could at least take our masks off.

The Editor is used to eating outside when eating out, as restaurant owners usually, on seeing him approach, direct him and his family to some area outside in the rain, or, if such is not available, an area near the toilets that can be thoroughly hosed down afterwards. This saves the proprietor the trouble of putting down lots of newspaper and disposable plastic drop sheets. But he did notice that this time there was the same problem, that waiters never came outside to take one's order, but stayed inside with the food.

Despite the lack of waiters, however, the Blokes feasted hugely on sausages and rissoles prepared by that master of meats, that dean of delicatessen, that Blumenthal of bangers, our own Glenn Farrington.



After breakfast, Glenn noted that we had a new member, who was applauded, and explained the purpose of *Blokes Helping Blokes*. Glenn and Allan Way then showed the new member how *Blokes Helping Blokes* is committed to good taste and intellectual discourse, by having a discussion on the use of fresh urine for the treatment of athlete's foot (a matter about which doctors are extremely sceptical), details of which cannot be discussed here (and shouldn't have been, there).

It was a considerable relief to all when Glenn invited Allan to expatiate on a masterwork of wood-turning that Allan had recently completed for Glenn. It started with the finding (not by Glenn) of a very rare deposit of ancient red gum, that had been marinating in mineralising solutions deep underground for seven to twenty thousand years and was

semi-petrified and fossilised. Glenn had acquired an unusually large and highly valuable specimen, from what must once have been an enormous tree, "from a museum". (Under instruction, I shall say nothing about how he did this.) Glenn then passed this piece of ancient wood, much older than the Pyramids, temporarily to Allan, who has awards for his skill at turning things into different things; and Allan turned it into a bowl.



This took him some time—11 months—because the wood was very fragile and cracked, and was liable to split into bits under the chisel. Allan held it together with lots of super-glue. It also produced large quantities of black mineralised dust, and Allan told us that in consequence he had to wear a sort of space-suit outfit that he had in his wardrobe but very rarely wore. (He didn't mention what types of fancy-dress outfit he wore more often.) Due to the mineralisation the wood is almost as heavy as stone. It blunted his chisels rapidly and he had to resharpen them every second pass.

The Blokes were shown a photograph of the result and were highly impressed with Allan's skill and artistry. Glenn has given it to his wife for her birthday, in honour of her putting up with him.

The next *Blokes Helping Blokes* breakfast will be at 8 am on 6th March, again (provided there are no bad outbreaks) at Macleod Community Hall, just opposite the station, on the east (shops) side. Please let Glenn know if you are coming, to help with catering: 0487 852 808. All blokes are welcome!

Peter McKay



## A message from June Lockhart

The Editor returned from a short holiday away on Thursday 25th February and found this on his answering machine:

*Hello Peter McKay, it's June Lockhart, and these days I'm in an old people's home—ha, sorry, 'aged care'.*

*My telephone number—it's a landline—is 9846 6618.*

*I know it's a short thing, but I've had something incredible happen to me.*

*Remember 'The Ninety and Nine', in that hymnbook? This is just absolutely amazing.*

*I'll keep talking until they cut me off.*

*Years ago, in 1982, I bought 'God Calling'. And in Christmas 2000 I decided that it was falling apart at the seams and I could buy myself a new one. I called the Greensborough Christian Bookshop the 27th December—an answering device. I called again a few days later—left my phone number. The manageress, Chris, phoned me, and she said, "We're not open till Jan 19th, 2021". I forgot all about it! Ha, ha, ha!*

*Last Monday, I phoned the Greensborough bookroom, and I got a lady called Jenny. And I said, "Look, I'm at Charlesbrook Aged Care in Templestowe. I want to buy my 'God Calling'. Could I pay by card, and could you wrap it up and put my name on it, and hopefully I'll find someone to collect it?"*

*She said, "No!"*

*"I will bring it to you at Charlesbrook—I work in the kitchen and I'll be there tomorrow afternoon". Jenny only works Mon . . .*

At this point the tape stopped; but on calling I discovered that Jenny only worked at the Greensborough bookshop on Mondays and Saturdays.

*God Calling: A Daily Devotional*, edited by A.J. Russell, was written in the 1930s by two anonymous women about God speaking to them. June says it is particularly good for those suffering pain. She is not enjoying being in a nursing home, and George's loss of mental faculties means he is no longer the George she knew, which also causes her pain.

## Treasurer in 2020

by Emmi Godau

What can we remember from 2020? Life as we knew changed dramatically. In early January there were reports coming out of China about a new virus – coronavirus. Many people in China died and China placed the great area of Wuhan into lockdown.

People travelled back from holiday to their respective countries and with them come the coronavirus as hitchhiker. The virus arrived in Australia on 25th January 2020: it slips very quietly into the country but soon became extremely aggressive. No-one was safe and in February hospitals started to get ready for a massive influx of patients. Personal protective equipment (PPE) was used everywhere. Disinfected wipes, hand sanitiser and toilet paper disappeared off the shelves in supermarkets as soon as it was restocked.

Victoria and Australia went into lockdown and there were only four reasons you could leave the home. One hour exercise by yourself, going and see your doctor, do your essential shopping but only one person per household, and going to work. Schools were closed and anyone who could work from home was required to work from home. Parents had to pick up teaching or if they were lucky maybe grandma could help with teaching online.

As I am an essential worker I continued to work as normal and could travel to work even during curfew. At work

we had all the necessary PPE, everything we touched was cleaned and sanitised with disinfected wipes. The first restrictions lasted about eight weeks and infection rates came down into single figures. People now started back and meeting others again for catch up and coffee.

It all changed again in July when COVID-19 cases increased dramatically and many people were dying from this horribly disease, especially in Nursing Homes. Melbourne and part of Victoria went back into stage 4 restrictions. My life continued as normal: working, shopping, and going for my walk around the neighbourhood. Nursing homes were calling for help to care for their residents as staff members had to isolate due to the virus. Nurses from different hospitals were sent into nursing homes to help care for the residents. I continued to work as normal, adhering to all restrictions and regulations at work and home.

On 1st August I was on night shift and receiving hand-over from my colleague, and after she left I used the disinfectant wipes and cleaned every surface which may have been touched by colleagues who use the same office. All was good until I got a phone call on Monday around lunch-time that did wake me up. It was the Infection Control Department informing me I needed to come in to have a COVID-19 test as my colleague had tested positive for the virus. Shock horror, but I felt fine, so I went and had the test done on 4th August with another appointment for day 11 to have another test. I worked as normal with no concern that I may have picked up the virus: we had our protective equipment on and sitting about two metres apart during the handover on 1st August, so all will be fine. Another swab gets stuck into my nose and throat on 12th August, but I am feeling great with days off going on as normal. All changed with a phone call on 13th August around 4 pm.

This is the Infection Control Registrar T from the hospital. Are you sitting down, she asks? Yes, I was reading a book at the time. "I need to inform you that your test from yesterday came back positive for COVID-19."

I am feeling fine and do not have any symptoms, like fever or runny nose—only my normal chronic cough I have, as I have mild COPD. I informed the Registrar. I was placed into 14-day home detention with not leaving the unit even to go downstairs to bring the rubbish away. I was devastated by the information and the diagnosis. I was informed that this was reported to DSHS and they would contact me to find out my last movements two days before. This all changed my life in a few minutes from a phone call. I did not believe this as I had no symptoms, and I made plans what I would do during the 14 days in quarantine. There was food in the fridge and pantry as I had done some shopping in the morning which would last me during my confinement. After making some phone calls to friends and family, I came to realise that life has provided me with some challenges.

Soon it was time to get a good night's sleep and be ready for my task in the morning. Before going to bed I checked my temperature; it was mildly elevated but not alarming? Popping some Panadol, I went to sleep as I had plans for the next day to clean out paperwork which I had not used for a few years. The next morning, I got woken up by messages from DSHS and Austin Health to fill in online forms with symptoms I have. The messages from DSHS and Austin would arrive every morning to be filled in for the day and this would continue for the next 14 days. Not sure how good you are assessing yourself when you are sick, I was not good as this; my reporting was acceptable but when I look back, I did not report properly.

This all changes on day 2 in quarantine: temperature is up and even with Panadol is not going away. I felt more tired and my coughing increases. Coffee does not taste right so I

\* Details about this can be found in the *Babble* of June 2017.

made a cup of tea and toast and had a lie in, reading before getting up, no need to rush. From day 3 the multitudes of challenges arise. Night sweats: soaking wet sheets and pyjamas, sometimes twice during the night I had to change. When you live alone it does not matter how sick you are, you still must do the washing and some cooking. I hardly got out of bed for the next 8 to 10 days as I was very tired. Living on tea, toast, and chicken soup. Friends send flowers and care packages which were much appreciated. When I am sick, I like to drink apple juice, black tea with one sugar, and chicken soup. I ask a friend who lives close by to bring me some apple juice as I had run out, which arrived a few hours later.

One friend did ring me morning and night to make sure I was okay and answered the phone. Cards of well-wishers collected in the letterbox as I was not able to go down to check the mail. Most days I had phone calls from friends offering to bring food or anything I may need. Mostly I declined as I had all that I needed, and with not eating much the fridge and freezer was still full of food. One day a colleague from work arrived with about 1.5 litres of chicken soup, some fresh bread, bananas, and chocolates. I do not mind eating chicken soup especially when I am sick; I had a cup for lunch and dinner with some bread for the next 4 to 5 days. Easy: just place in a cup and microwave and ready to go in 2 minutes. The washing machine was in overdrive with washing every day and me struggling getting the sheets back on to the queen size bed: it usually takes me five minutes but this time was like 15 min. I did ring one friend who is living close by another day and asked if he could get me some mashed potatoes, apple sauce and shoestring fries, which arrived a few hours later. In the evening I managed to eat a spoonful of the mashed potatoes and a little bit of apple sauce. I had lost my appetite and just forced myself to eat small amounts. On day 10 I felt very weak and lots of coughing and I did ring the hospital asking for advice if I should come in, but I was advised it would be better for me to stay at home. They did not consider that I was living alone and had to do everything for myself, it did not matter how sick I was. Making a cup of tea and getting some food were some of the challenges I had during the quarantine; forget the cleaning and washing of dishes, that was just left for another day. Taking the cup of tea or cup of soup back to the bedroom, lying down again and going back to sleep; after a few hours I wake up, the tea or soup is cold, and then staggering back to make another cup of tea or heat the soup up again. This was life with COVID-19 in quarantine for 12 days; then I felt a little bit better and from then on I was able to stay up for about 2 hours at a time.

The restrictions and quarantine were lifted on 27th August and I was declared to be COVID-19-free. The next day when ringing the Infection Control Department, I was told I can come back to work. The Doctor in the Hospital informed me I do not need a COVID test as DSHS had deemed me clear of COVID. I had not seen a doctor or been assessed if I was right and fit to work. I decided to go for a walk but had to turn around after ten minutes as I became noticeably short of breath and was coughing my lungs out. I did ring my GP and he realised I was too sick to go back to work and arranged for medications to stop the coughing and to have blood test to check my infection status.

During my early stage of this COVID infection I was planning to read a few books and watch a few movies. This never happened then: after about 5 pages in the book I was asleep, and with a movie I wake up a few hours later and the computer is turned off—I can't even remember what I was watching. My GP gave me another 14 days of sick leave and slowly my condition improved, and I was able to return to work on 12th September. In the early stages of lockdown, I

had taken the Treasurer's computer home and was able to do all the necessary reporting. I even managed to apply for a grant from the Government, but that was rejected as the parish was not eligible.

When back at work I did complain to the Director of Infection Control Department about the treatment—or no treatment—I had received during my recent infection with COVID-19 which I picked up at work. Soon I found myself called in for a breathing test and assessment by the Respiratory Clinic. Multiple tests with Chest X-ray, CT scan of the lungs, VQ scan to check for blood clots in my lungs and heart, abdominal ultrasound to check all the organs in my body, and blood test. My health improved slowly, with a prescribed exercise program with walking, stretching, and lifting small weights at home. On 26th November after another breathing test, I was started on high doses of prednisolone: 60 mg a day, to be reduced every two weeks by 10 mg. Breathing tests and Respirator Clinic assessments were every two weeks and on 23rd December I started on a preventive antibiotics treatment: Dapsone 100 mg. This treatment has some side-effects and requires every week to have a blood test. I did feel much better and my health had improved, I was able to walk longer without getting short of breath.

On 4th January I had another blood test and when the results came back, I received a phone call from the Respirator Registrar to inform me I had to stop the Dapsone as I had dropped my haemoglobin and other blood results were deteriorating, and I would need to have another blood test on 8th January. During the week I felt more tired and did not have much energy. Due to restrictions, I had a few Telehealth appointments and I was started on a new preventive antibiotic which needs to be taken with fatty food for better absorption. The next blood test showed my Hb had dropped from Hb 130 g/l early in December 2020 to Hb 91 g/l on 18th December. I was very tired and became easily short of breath just with normal walking and talking. On 20th January I was informed by the Respiratory Registrar I would need to come into hospital for further assessment. I was not keen on this and said I would come in when I got more problems. The next two days I struggled though my shifts and in the morning on 22nd January I did ring my friend that I needed to go to Hospital and if she could provide transport for me. I was admitted on 22nd January for 5 days to Austin Hospital, where multitudes of tests were performed. As for treatment of my low Hb, there was no option to give me blood, as the drug in my body would destroy the new blood as well. I am still tired and get easily out of breath; I can see small improvement. Going for daily walks, doing my exercises which I can modify to suit my level of fitness.

I have been advised even with all the treatment and exercise I have had and I am doing, there are changes in my body that will never go away but I need to manage them. The drug treatment with prednisolone is ongoing until my next review.

Thank you to every one of you who has me in your prayers during the last 6 months, which had a positive effect on my recovery.

I feel positive that I have overcome and survived COVID-19, this horrible disease, and with the reactions to the drug it is a matter of time until this improves. I am eating a healthy diet with lots of green vegetables, red meat, and lots of water to wash everything out that is not required by the body.

A positive mind, good friends and prayers make all the difference.

May the Lord all bless you and keep you safe.

*Emmi Godau*

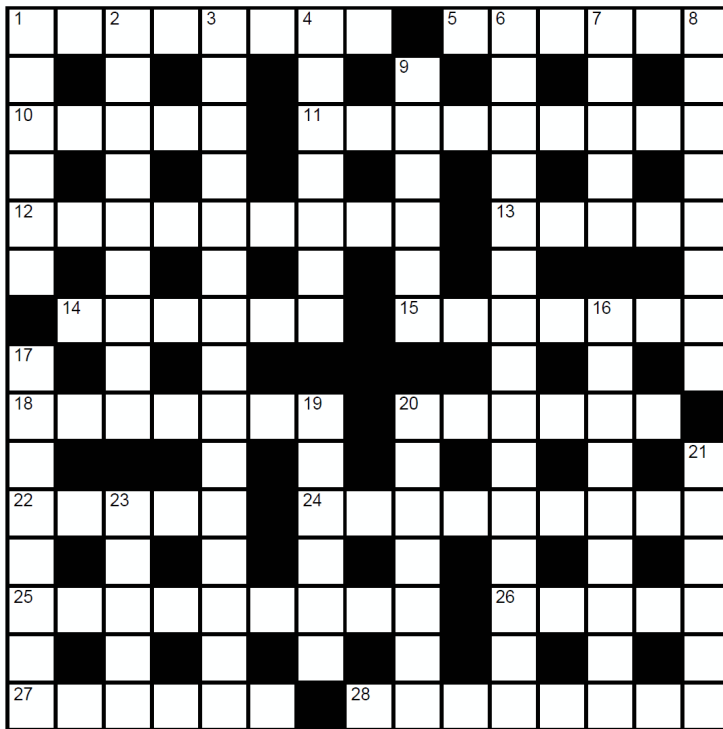
# BIBLE CROSSWORD XI

**Across**

- 1 Dealt with money in the temple (8)
- 5 Sacrifices (6)
- 10 Burial perfume (5)
- 11 Lamenting (9)
- 12 Assembly (9)
- 13 Blast of sound (5)
- 14 Blossoming tree (6)
- 15 Endures (7)
- 18 Prepares to sleep outdoors (7)
- 20 As the Amorites did, like bees (6)
- 22 Can be stony, clean or wicked (5)
- 24 Re-establish (9)
- 25 Synagogue chief (9)
- 26 Of God, still and small (5)

**Down**

- 1 Appoint (6)
- 2 Relating to the disciples (9)
- 3 The opening of a new covenant (6,2,7)
- 4 Haggai and Zechariah's call to the Jews (7)
- 6 Jewish festival (5,2,8)
- 7 Manassite warrior (5)
- 8 Roadside marker (8)
- 9 Idols (6)
- 16 Pinnacle (9)
- 17 "House of mercy" (8)
- 19 Sacred place (6)
- 20 Deep red (7)
- 21 Worship (6)
- 23 Son of Korah (5)



by Philologus

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**Answers to last month's puzzles:**



Bible Word Search mystery answer: **WORKS**

Last month's anagram:

- aertw water
- aceghinpr preaching
- closstu locusts
- ehnoy honey
- iiprst spirit
- deov dove
- ahsw wash
- beeivl believe
- blmosy symbol
- aceeenpr repentance

## Bible Word Search – Armour of God

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\\_ArmorOfGod\\_0.htm](https://www.christianbiblereference.org/ws_ArmorOfGod_0.htm)

T H G I L W I C K E D N E S S  
 E R E C O M F O R T P O W E R  
 M B G S U P P L I C A T I O N  
 L R N H U Y H T O M I T T E O  
 E E O S R E Y A R P I O H C I  
 H A I R N B A T T L E B S A T  
 T S T U S A S O A S Y E T R A  
 I T A L T S I P U T F D A G V  
 N P R E R T I S I I A I N N L  
 G L A R O C E R E R E E D I A  
 O A P S N J U R K H I N T H S  
 S T E I G C Y N A S P T R C D  
 P E R S E V E R A N C E U T R  
 E P P S S S Q U E N C H T A O  
 L O I N S R E T S A M E H W L

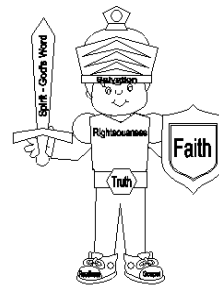
- Battle, Breastplate, Comfort, Darkness, Ephesians, Fiery, Gospel, Grace, Helmet, Jesus, Light, Loins, Lord, Masters, Obedient, Perseverance, Power, Prayer, Preparation, Principalities, Quench, Rulers, Salvation, Security, Spiritual, Strong, Supplication, Timothy, Truth, Utterance, Watching, Wickedness, Withstand

Unscramble the letters to find the words in our

## Armor of God Anagram

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# 'Different Parts belong Together'

Commissioning Sunday, 7 February 2021

1 Corinthians 12:12–31a

by Patrick Senn

## Introduction

When I was a child I could not care less about my Korean heritage. In primary school I was bullied about it, and in high school my friends also would tease me about it. And so, for all I cared, I was Swiss and that was the end of the matter. My mum tried in vain to get me to learn Korean and to appreciate this side of my family history. Well, this changed when I came to Australia. In the Christian organisation—Youth With A Mission—that I worked in there were lots of other Koreans, and it was a great perk to be one. All the Koreans would regularly meet for lunch, and if you know Koreans food is one of the most important things. The Koreans would regularly host the most extravagant lunches and gatherings, which were the envy of everyone. And I was always invited. Just because of the fact that I was born to a Korean mother, something totally beyond my control and something to which I contributed nothing, I was able to share regularly in the great feasts. These lunches were so great, that when I asked Beth out to date me, she said yes on the condition that I would take her along. I contributed nothing in order to belong, and yet I was a part of the community, I was part of the Korean body.

St Paul tells us today of another kind of community, another kind of body, to which we belong apart from our own contributions, and purely by the decision of someone else. We belong to Jesus, and we belong to his family of followers—his body—not by any of the skills or talents that we have, but purely by the Holy Spirit's adoption of us at our baptism.

## By one Spirit made one body (1 Cor 12:12–14)

Paul uses the image of a human body to illustrate our belonging to Christ and to one another. *"Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ."* The image of the body was not something unique to Paul. Different writers in the ancient world used the body to illustrate how different members of society function together. However, these writers always used the body to set up an unquestionable hierarchy, with some members as the head on top, and others as servants on the bottom. Paul is different: he uses the image to question hierarchy, and to emphasise the unity of different members, and their equal importance. It is about unity in diversity, different people belonging together.

This unity comes about by the one and same Holy Spirit working in each of our baptisms. *"For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many."* In our baptism, the Holy Spirit works in us to unite us to Jesus. And because we all receive the same Spirit, and we all are united to the same Lord, we really do become one body. Regardless of your background, whether you are a man or a woman, white or dark, rich or poor, old or young, regardless of any of our differences, in our baptism we all are given the same Spirit to drink, and we all are united to the same Lord Jesus.

Before St Paul tells us anything about serving or doing, he tells us that we belong apart from our contributions. It is not about individual gifts, and talents, nor even about how long you have been a Christian or how much you are on the roster. Through the Spirit working in your baptism, you have become one with Christ, you belong to his body the church.

## God has chosen the inferior (1 Cor 12:15–20)

Now, in Australia today we think we are pretty egalitarian. Everyone is an equal, anyone can come and have a fair go, and our national anthem just recently changed to "We are one and free". The ancient world was the exact opposite of today; society was composed of set differences that are unchangeable. If you were born a slave, you remained a slave your whole life. If you were from a wealthy family, you had endless opportunities ahead. The idea of someone working their way from the bottom to the top was almost unheard of.

These social hierarchies continued to exist in the church in Corinth. And it was very easy for those on the bottom—the poor, slaves, unmarried women—to think their gifts and contributions were not that important. St Paul points out: *"Now if the foot should say, 'Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,' it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. And if the ear should say, 'Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,' it would not for that reason stop being part of the body."* A foot or an ear may seem like less important parts of the body than a hand or an eye, but that does not mean they are not part of the body. This is obvious. Every part of our body plays an important role. And if we only had an eye, or it we only had an ear, that would obviously be bad. Every part of our body has an important role to play because God ordained it that way. *"But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body."*

This is a wonderful encouragement for anyone who downplays and doubts their own place in the church. You do not need to possess other gifts than the ones you have. You do not need to envy the gifts others have. If everyone had the gift of preaching, that would be like a body composed of just one eye. Clearly, that would be an unhealthy body. Just as the body needs different parts to make up a healthy body, so the church needs the many different gifts in order to flourish. All God wants of you in the church, is to use what you are good at, and to use what you enjoy doing, for the benefit of this congregation.

## The superior needs the inferior (1 Cor 12:21–27)

Moving on, Paul does not just speak to the poor and lower members of the congregation. In verses 21–27 he speaks to the honourable and wealthy at the top. Not only did some of the poor look down on themselves, some of the elites looked down on them too. They assumed that in the church things run as in society, where the honourable obviously are more valued and more important. *"The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I don't need you!' And the head cannot say to the feet, 'I don't need you!' On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and the parts that we think are less honourable we treat with special honour."* To look down on the gifts and contributions of others would be as foolish as our eyes telling our hands 'We don't need you', or our head telling our feet 'I don't need you'.

A few weeks ago, I watched with Beth 'My Big Fat Greek Wedding' for the first time. Usually, we are pretty tired in the evenings and so do not have much energy for long or complex movies, and MBFGW seemed pretty easy to follow. The movie is about a Greek woman with a very big Greek family marrying a very white man with a very non-Greek family. The two families just do not connect with each other, and the bride's father keeps trying to get

her to marry a Greek man instead. It does not work, and the father gets more and more frustrated that his daughter does not listen to him. Things get so bad until one night he tells his wife in exasperation 'I am the head of this family!'

This is how the ancients used the metaphor of the body. They used it to set up a hierarchy with the most valuable part—the head—at the top. But Paul is unique. The head cannot say to the feet 'I don't need you'. The powerful must not despite the lowly. In fact, Paul says *"the parts that are unrepresentable are treated with special modesty, while our presentable parts need no special treatment."* There are parts of our body that we pay special attention to by always covering them up, and Paul says that those who are despised are like that—they should receive extra honour and care.

It should be obvious to most that Paul is using the body as a metaphor to describe how the different members of the church, while different, all are one and need each other. But, in case anyone missed it he states it clearly in verse 27: *"Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it."* This is good news for us.

What are some of the things you don't feel a part of? Students have just returned to school recently, and the school courtyard during recess is of course one of the most exclusive spaces in the world. There are so many cliques, and you may not be a part of the cool group. But, you are a part of the Lord Jesus; while these groups may exclude you, Jesus will never exclude or push you away. Others here might feel strongly that they are not part of a marriage; but, you are one body with Jesus who will never cease to love you. I personally feel the absence of my family in Switzerland. It pains me my mum cannot come here and meet Phoebe, and if I do not guard my heart I can quickly get jealous of my sister and all the love she can get from my mum. But, I am one with Jesus and his family, and I can never be separated from him.

We are the body of Christ. In the eyes of the world we may be insignificant, but in the eyes of God we are very part of the Lord Jesus, God's only-begotten Son, and we are members of his own body. This is an honour. It is an honour for us as individuals, and it is an honour for us as a group. So, do not dishonour Jesus by looking down on your own gifts or envying the gifts of others. And do not dishonour Christ by thinking too highly of your own gifts, or thinking you are more special than others. *"The body is not made up of one part but of many."*

## Conclusion

In conclusion, I began by sharing about growing up half-Korean in Switzerland. As a child and teenager, I was not interested in my Korean side of the family at all. When I joined YWAM, I found myself welcomed and embraced by the Koreans. I soon realised I belonged to a community, to a body, apart from anything I ever did. Just because I was born half-Korean, I belonged to that group.

Today, God tells us that we belong to another kind of group, another kind of body, one that is not limited to one nationality but includes all kinds of different people. We all belong to Jesus, and with all our different skills and gifts we make up different parts of his body.

*"Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink."*

AMEN.

## 'Worth Nothing': Life without Love

Quinquagesima Sunday, 14 February 2021

*Ps 71:1–14; 1 Cor 13:1–13; Luke 18:31–43*

by Patrick Senn

### Introduction

Every now and again, the readings of the day perfectly match up with the time we are in. A few years ago, we had Easter Sunday on April Fool's, and today we have 1 Corinthians 13—the love chapter—on St Valentine's Day. Paul Zahl is an Anglican priest in the United States and he recounts a story where he witnessed profound love. One of his parishioners, a woman who had been married for 35 years and with four children, was diagnosed with breast cancer. She was admitted to the hospital and stayed there for a long time. Her husband offered loyal and sacrificial support. He was beside the woman at all times, spending most nights in the hospital on a cot beside the woman. While Paul ministered to her, the husband was unfailingly sincere in his attention to her. In all of Paul's ministry, he never saw such companionship and loyalty, and he attributed the woman's survival to her husband's tireless care and love.

The whole ordeal had been a great surprise and shock to her, but what she did not expect was an even greater shock that followed. Two weeks after leaving the hospital and returning home, just as life was returning to normal, the husband made a confession: he was in love with his secretary for the past two years, and now that everything is back to normal, he was going to divorce his wife, and leave her for his much younger secretary. It turns out, the man's profound commitment and loyalty was motivated not by love but by guilt.

This story brings us to the heart of what St Paul says in our first reading. You can do the greatest achievements, you can sit beside your sick spouse 24 hours a day, you can even give your life as a martyr for God, but if you do any of these things without love they are worth nothing. In life there are many absolutes: We are either dead or alive, there is something or there is nothing, we can either see or we are blind, and we are saved or we are lost. Before God, love is what counts. Love is what makes us alive to him, that lets us see him, that makes us something rather than nothing.

And we need to hear this today on Quinquagesima, 50 days away from Easter, because we are about to enter into Lent, the season of fasting. What matters to God is not what we can do for him, what we can give up for him, but that we love him, as he loves us. Lent is about love, loving God and loving those around us. And our readings today help us to do this.

### Love is an Action

Of course, love is a very popular thing, and the word is thrown around a lot without clear definition. For most, it is the warm, fuzzy feeling, that spark of connection you feel for someone attractive. However, St Paul tells us that more than just being a feeling, love is also a verb: Love is an action, something that we do, not just something that we feel. He tells us:

*"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonour others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth."*

Patience, kindness, the absence of envy and pride; these are not easy characteristics to have. And yet, Paul tells us that only when we are patient with difficult people, kind with impolite people, only then do we love them. Only when we honour one another, and we seek each other's good, only then do we love one another. If you are easily angered by someone, if you keep a record of wrongs, then quite frankly you do not love them. And we cannot get off the hook by saying 'Well, I really tried, I tried to do so many times, but then I just had to give up.' For love, Paul says, *"always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails."*

The call to love is a high and difficult calling. Romance and warm feelings come and go, but love never fails. And this is because love does not need to take in order to give. True love does not depend upon gifts or rewards. We all recognise the emptiness of someone's love who says: 'I will only love you if...' True love does not need to take; it is like a fountain that keeps giving, that keeps flowing, regardless of how little it receives in return. It is patient, it does not keep a record of wrongs, it never fails.

### No Room for Improvement

However, I fail. I fail all the time. I mentioned before the absolutes of life. We are either dead or alive, we can see or we are blind. If love is everything, if love makes us alive, something rather than nothing before God, then I am nothing. Over and over again, I fail to be patient, I fail to be kind. I show little humility and boast too much in my pride. By default, I seek my own interests first and it is so easy keep a record of the wrong others have done against me. I do this in my friendships, in my marriage, and in my family. And many of you may feel the same way. Broken relationships, repeated frustrations with family members, resentment and pain because of the hurt others have caused you. These absolutes, this either-or is alarming. There is no optimism, no sense of slow improvement, and gradually becoming better. Paul says without love, you are nothing, you gain nothing. This is the point where we realise we need grace, we need a power outside of ourselves. And this is also where we turn to the Gospel—the good news of Jesus.

### The Blind Beggar

In our Gospel we encounter someone else who was nothing: a blind beggar who lived in the city of Jericho. We must remember that the ancient world was a brutal world especially for people with disabilities. There was no Centrelink or NDIS, and no special needs schools. There was no concept of human rights, and no special concern for people with disabilities. At best, someone like the blind man was a poor soul who suffered a cruel fate; at worst, an evil person cursed by the gods for whatever reasons. All a blind person could do was beg, living each day at the mercy of strangers.

Obviously, he heard the stories of Jesus, how in his power and goodness he healed and saved people. *"When he heard the crowd going by, he asked what was happening. They told him, 'Jesus of Nazareth is passing by.'"* He called out, *"Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"* Most of us would never have the courage to call out like this for one person surrounded by a giant crowd. Whenever I am in the city and happen to see a friend surrounded by strangers, I never call out for them. Instead, like a coward I just text them later. Why is the blind beggar different? He knew his own condition. He knew he needed help. He saw better than most people today.

It is almost a miracle to see your own shortcomings, and to be humbled enough to cry out for help and mercy. If we go back to think about the broken relationships; so often it happens because someone is blind to their own wrong, blind to their own issues, out of touch with the way things really are. But, the blind beggar sees clearly. He knows his own insufficiency, he knows only Jesus can help. And so he calls out: *"Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"*

The crowd notices, and it tells him to shut up, to be quiet, and to stop. Most of us, even if we had the courage to disrupt a crowd and be loud, we quickly would stop at this point. I mean, just remember the last time you were somewhere unfamiliar, everything is quiet, and you are suddenly told you are being too loud. It is a great shock. But the blind beggar shouts even more *"Son of David, have mercy on me!"* Although he is blind he sees Jesus with the eyes of faith. He sees his own need and who Jesus really is: the Messiah, the promised King of Israel, the Son of David. He sees better than anyone else that is there, and so he persists.

*"Jesus stopped and ordered the man to be brought to him. When he came near, Jesus asked him, 'What do you want me to do for you?' 'Lord, I want to see,' he replied. Jesus said to him, 'Receive your sight; your faith has healed you.' Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus, praising God. When all the people saw it, they also praised God."*

### Dead Beggars, yet Loved

When we realise our failure to love as God commands, when we realise our own sin and unworthiness, we begin to see that before God we really are just beggars. But, this is a good thing. The blind beggar cried out to Jesus precisely because he knew his own condition. And when he reached out, trusting not in himself but in Jesus, he received what he needed.

If we know we are unworthy, if we know the many ways we have sinned and messed up, we can confidently approach Jesus and pray *"Son of David, have mercy on me!"* And just as Jesus stopped, heard, and saved the blind beggar, so he also will stop, hear, and forgive us our sins. While we fail to be patient, God never fails. While we fail to be kind, God is always kind. While we fail to love, God never fails in his love. Like a fountain that is unquenchable, God's love always springs forth. Even when we are unlovely, God still loves us. And it is this unconditional love that transforms us and changes us.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, as we are approaching Lent, a season of fasting and being more intentional about our good works, God reminds us that without love these things are worthless. We can give up meat, we can donate all our money to charity, we can even give up our lives in martyrdom, but if we do any of these things without love, they are worthless. We are like the man we heard about at the start: besides his wife at all times doing the right thing, and yet completely meaningless and without love. Love is what makes us something or nothing before God. This season is not about boasting in ourselves and growing in confidence, but about plumbing the depths of God's love for us. If we approach him like blind beggars in need of mercy, we surely will be heard. If we admit our own insufficiencies and cry out to God for help, he will receive us in a warm embrace. This season of Lent, God is waiting for us to go deeper with him.

AMEN.

# Ash Wednesday

by Denise Nicholls

## Isaiah 58:1–12

<sup>1</sup> *Shout it aloud, do not hold back. Raise your voice like a trumpet. Declare to my people their rebellion and to the descendants of Jacob their sins.*<sup>2</sup> *For day after day they seek me out; they seem eager to know my ways, as if they were a nation that does what is right and has not forsaken the commands of its God. They ask me for just decisions and seem eager for God to come near them.*

<sup>3</sup> *'Why have we fasted,' they say, 'and you have not seen it? Why have we humbled ourselves, and you have not noticed?' Yet on the day of your fasting, you do as you please and exploit all your workers.*<sup>4</sup> *Your fasting ends in quarreling and strife, and in striking each other with wicked fists. You cannot fast as you do today and expect your voice to be heard on high.*<sup>5</sup> *Is this the kind of fast I have chosen, only a day for people to humble themselves? Is it only for bowing one's head like a reed and for lying in sackcloth and ashes? Is that what you call a fast, a day acceptable to the LORD?*

<sup>6</sup> *Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke?*<sup>7</sup> *Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter—when you see the naked, to clothe them, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?*<sup>8</sup> *Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the LORD will be your rear guard.*<sup>9</sup> *Then you will call, and the LORD will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I. If you do away with the yoke of oppression, with the pointing finger and malicious talk,*<sup>10</sup> *and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday.*<sup>11</sup> *The LORD will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail.*<sup>12</sup> *Your people will rebuild the ancient ruins and will raise up the age-old foundations; you will be called Repairer of Broken Walls, Restorer of Streets with Dwellings.*

## Matthew 6:1–8

<sup>1</sup> *Jesus said: Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.*<sup>2</sup> *So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honoured by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full.*<sup>3</sup> *But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,*<sup>4</sup> *so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.*<sup>5</sup> *And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full.*<sup>6</sup> *But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.*<sup>7</sup> *And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words.*<sup>8</sup> *Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.*

Hello friends! Well, Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent—it feels like 2020 was the year of continuous Lent and Advent, with waiting, denial of ourselves, patience and perseverance. But as we enter Lent this year, as we come to celebrate Easter but prepare ourselves for that joyous news of the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus, we come to the readings that we have today—these two readings which point out to us two things: one, that God **knows** our hearts; and two, that God **wants** our hearts.

From our Isaiah reading, we see that God calls to his people to be honest with themselves about their hearts. For they've been deluding themselves. They have regarded themselves as good and pious and religious people who were doing the right thing. Verse 2 of our Isaiah reading says: *For day after day they seek me out; they seem eager to know my ways, as if they were a nation that does what is right and has not forsaken the commands of its God. They ask me for just decisions and seem eager for God to come near them.* And God calls them out on their sin: *Shout it aloud, do not hold back. Raise your voice like a trumpet. Declare to my people their rebellion and to the descendants of Jacob their sins.*

You know what it's like with a child, when we correct them for doing the wrong thing. Often their response is denial; or an excuse. And of course we don't like being called out by children, do we, when they see us doing the wrong thing or not doing the thing that is right. I remember with my nephew and nieces: when I used to pick them up to take them on a little trip somewhere, I had the habit of reversing out of their driveway before I put my seatbelt on. This would not wash with my nephew. He said, "Auntie Denise, you have to have your seatbelt on before you start the car! That's the rule!"

As adults too, we don't like being called out on our transgressions, be they great or small. We might say, "Well, it's a stupid rule that you can't do a U-turn over an unbroken line, I'm just going to do it"; or, "It was only a small thing that I did wrong"; or to the officer, "I was in a hurry and so I sped"; or, "I only parked here in the disabled spot for just a moment".

Parking is something that when we're working here in the office at St John's is quite interesting, when we see people park in our car park, who have nothing to do with church, and are not coming to see us; but to whom my first response is always, "Can I help you? Are you looking for me?" and the different ways I get responded to are: a *lie*—"I didn't know I wasn't allowed to park here"; or, "I'm here to see the counsellor" "Oh really? She doesn't work on Tuesdays, she only works on Thursdays"—or *honesty*: "I had to get to court and I was in a hurry".

Very minor things; but some major things we don't like being called out on, and we can excuse and blame others. We don't like it. We don't like being shown where we have fallen down. And yet God says to his people, *Declare to my people their rebellion and to the descendants of Jacob their sins.* You know it's one of the reasons why, as Anglicans, when we meet together, we always include a confession: a confession to remind us that the basis of our gathering is on God's grace, on our need for forgiveness, not upon our own righteousness.

For God knows the heart. God knows our sins. God is not fooled or mocked. God is not fooled by acts of piety, or religious observance, or extravagant giving.

It was clear to God's Old Testament people whom Isaiah was speaking to, that their good acts of fasting meant nothing to their heart. One day is what they were doing. They fasted for one day. It was outward. It was obvious to all.

But as God calls them out, he says: but on the same day you go about exploiting people, quarrelling, fighting with one another; and a little later in the passage: finger-pointing and malicious talk against one another.

And so God asks the question of his people, in verse 5: *Is this the kind of fast I have chosen, only a day for people to humble themselves?* God doesn't want just a day. He doesn't even just want the Lord's day on Sundays, when we meet together (when we're able to). He wants our whole hearts. He wants our whole hearts and lives directed towards God, so that our lives are shaped by God, in every way.

In Isaiah in the passage that we're looking at, chapter 58, in verse 6 God says to his people, *Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen:* and he goes on to elaborate the difference between fasting by abstaining from food, or acts of righteousness, or lying in sackcloth and ashes, with what God sees as a true life shaped by God. Verse 6 continues: *to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter—when you see the naked, to clothe them, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?*

You see God knows our hearts; but God **wants** our hearts and everything that that signifies, our whole lives. Jesus' words to his people in our Matthew reading show that Jesus expected his followers to engage in acts of righteousness and piety. That's why he says, *when you give to the needy*, expecting that they would; and *when you pray*, expecting that this will be part of a Christian's whole world and life orientation.

The question that seems to be hanging in Jesus' discourse here is, 'To whom is our heart, our life, directed?' or, 'Who is our audience?' Jesus goes on to say that if it is to be seen as righteous by other people, or religious by other people, or good and kind by others, then you have your reward—that's all it does. Jesus' expectation is that his followers—his people—would have in their minds, and in their hearts, the audience of one—one God, who is our Father.

When we look at that section of Matthew chapter 6, we see that just in these eight short verses, Jesus speaks of God as 'your Father' five times. He's trying to show his people that our heavenly Father God wants our hearts, our lives, our attitudes, our every fibre of our being, to be oriented towards God our Father's ways.

And we can call God our heavenly Father because he loved us first: love shown us in the Lord Jesus Christ, his son; love shown us in the gift of the Holy Spirit.

If our audience is God, and not human beings, we will long that our hearts be conformed to God, and in imitation of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is the Holy Spirit who works in our hearts and minds to long for that desire.

As we enter this time of Lent, various practices: whether it is denying some sort of food or drink, extra times of prayer, and advanced giving. We know as Christians that these are not in any way to earn God's favour, but we do these confident in the love that God has already shown us in Christ. God knows our hearts; he wants our hearts, our whole lives, oriented towards him.

I pray that this time of Lent—this season of Lent—would be a time of great encouragement, and refreshing, for us all. May God show us our hearts, as he knows them; and may God shape all our hearts in the way of the Lord Jesus Christ, our Saviour and our Redeemer. Amen.

## Parish Council Notes

### Zoom meeting of Monday 15th February

**COVID 19:** latest diocesan advice tabled.

#### Finance report

- In January, clergy paid by JobKeeper.
- Within 14 days, new tenants moved into Gloucester Dr, which is great!
- Our churches now cleaned every week due to COVID-19.
- Student minister paid \$3000 p.a.

#### Vicar's report

- 1 February 2021 marked 3 years of me being here at Banyule Parish!
- What a joy to meet for Christmas! Delighted people keen to gather as the Body of Christ, as commanded in Scripture. Commissioning Service on 7 Feb terrific: chance to know Rev Peter Carolane (Merri Creek) a bit more.
- With my quick return to Victoria on 1 January, then mandated isolation, planned 3 weeks of annual leave did not happen. Tired & despondent; thankful to Warden for care and concern. Encouraged to take 4 days last week to go to Rye for replenishment and re-set—beginning to feel refreshed and ready to start the year again! Some leave time planned for 2021 – hoping that I can get away when time comes!
- I have been appointed by the Archbishop as Area Dean for the Deanery of Yarra-Plenty. This is a pastoral role for the other clergy in the 12 parishes and is a 3-year commitment.
- Our student minister Catriona has started with us and will be with us this year most Sundays. She is keen to be involved and to learn as much as she can. Please invite her for lunch one Sunday.
- Banyule-Merri Creek Anglican partnership: need to work out an MOU – we have a draft.
- Peter Harper is aiming to give a scope of works for PC meeting 15 March.
- Jane Hart has finished with Diocese. Waiting on Matt Wilson about update of E&Y report.
- COVID restrictions: flexibility is key.

**Curate's report:** oral, tabled.

[Patrick spoke of pastoral visits, of Phoebe's baptism, of taking a burial the previous week, a funeral that week and two weddings coming up. A recent member has moved back home but been put in touch with a local church. Patrick has started with Merri Creek and will be there on the first Sunday of each month.]

#### Warden's report

- Seven power boards bought to be distributed among centres.
- 57 Gloucester Drive
  - Miles got new tenants very quickly. Same rent, 12-month lease.
  - Got garage keys from old tenants: one copy at St John's. Repainting not needed. A scratch in the floor of the lobby—cleaners?
  - Top sliding door fixed; bottom ones can wait.
  - Three smoke alarms replaced + a new battery in fourth. Ceiling paint touched up.
  - Plumber to put in new bench-top with separate basins in upstairs bathroom 21st February. As stopgap cracked basins painted clear varnish.
  - When side fence rebuilt, a post of the side gate removed and not replaced. Will be fixed.
  - Upstairs shower leaking again. Plumber has put down epoxy sealant.
  - Tenant reports some termite damage in garage. WR Gay Pest Control engaged—no report yet.
- St John's
  - List of works now expected in March.
  - Glenn has taken trimming of vegetation near tennis courts as project for a disabled person.
  - Shelving put in the upper hall storage room.
  - Small pressure washer bought to clean the hall exterior.
  - Repairs needed to low retaining walls in garden. Deck needs some or all boards replaced. Sign needs updating. Lower hall needs repainting; also some door frames, and external wood, some of which needs replacement. Toilet doors need new handles or press plates; women's cubicle locks don't work properly. Outside noticeboard needs replacing. Denise's office needs stronger light and shade. Playground unfit for purpose.

– Desert Ash tree in garden, bone of contention with 1A Burgundy St, cut down in error by contractor they asked to quote re cutting down. No Banyule Council approval needed; our garden people OK. Will look for replacement.

#### St Andrew's

- Narthex roof downpipe blocked again, by two rubber balls: unblocked.
- Broken toilet roll holder in women's replaced.
- Narthex carpet water-stained: steam cleaning?

#### 80 Watsonia Rd

- Shed roof inspected: plumber will repair roof as well as clear drain, but not yet able to attend.

#### Holy Spirit

- Shelving put in storage area behind the vestry. A small stained pine cupboard is now surplus.
- Both women's toilets partially blocked, now cleared. Handicapped one needs work.
- A gum tree lost two branches in a storm. Concern re stability of remains: get arborist's opinion.
- Op shop situation has deteriorated badly. Relations and communications between BSL and parish not good. Still can't get card reader money. Back rent paid. Shop closed by BSL for lack of COVID compliance. See below.

**Op shop financial report:** tabled.

#### Banyule-Merri Creek partnership

- MOUs to be worked on at Warden's meeting, circulated to PC.

#### Op shop

- Urgent. Hand over management to BSL, but need to ensure we get \$40,000 p.a.; MOU for 2 years. Investigate issue of potential competition. Meeting to be arranged.

#### General business

- Steps shed to Community Garden: not asking for money, only approval for construction: granted. PC to receive a copy of plans.
- Community Garden shed on tennis court OK'd.
- Tennis courts: increase fee for Reza to \$2000 per quarter.
- New admin person: Laura (university student).

*Précis by Editor*

### VOLUNTEER CLEARANCES FOR MINISTRY

Attention ALL volunteers!

There are new requirements for ALL volunteers in the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne. These have been implemented to comply with Government regulations and recommendations from the Royal Commission.

From now on, all new **and existing** volunteers must have:

- Working with Children Card: we already do this
- Police check through **CRIMCHECK**: this is new
- Clearance for Ministry through **Kooyoora**: is new

We as a Parish need to comply with these requirements by **28 March 2021**.

The process is a bit fiddly, but we are here to help you!

A letter will be sent to you (by email) with the instructions given in a step-by-step manner.

If you can manage it yourself, please follow the steps: note that you do need to upload documents to the **CRIMCHECK** site.

Or, if you need help in doing any of this, please come to the church office at any of the following times for assistance:

- **Tuesday 9th, or 16th, March** 10 am – 12 noon
  - **Sunday 21st March** after our combined service
- Please bring the documents needed with you.*

### Would you like to be confirmed this year?

Confirmation is a public declaration of Christian faith and commitment, and accepting the baptism promises made on our behalf by our godparents.

Bishop Kate will be with us on 16 May 2021, and that service would be a great time for anyone who would like to be confirmed.

Please let Denise, Patrick or Catriona know ASAP if you are interested.

### Free to a good home, otherwise cremated



We have a stained pine cupboard now surplus to requirements. The drawers need new knobs, and repair of the runners. It is 1102 mm long, 847 mm high and 450 mm deep.

If it is not wanted as furniture, offers to take it away for firewood will be accepted. Contact Peter McKay.

**LOCKDOWN IS A TIME TO**

**L** Listen to God's voice and reflect.

**O** Obey His Word and His teachings.

**C** Call on Jesus' name and be calm.

**K** Know that God has a purpose for everything.

**D** Dwell in His presence. Do not panic.

**O** Offer a prayer for everyone's safety.

**W** Wait on the Lord and be patient. This too shall pass.

**N** Nurture our personal relationship with God.

*Submitted by Olive Clements*

Olive says: "Received from my Irish friend who is still in Lockdown."

**Notice in church:** If you would like to talk to God, come in, choose a quiet place, and talk to him. If you would like to see him, send him a text while driving.