

BANYULE BABBLE

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ANGLICAN PARISH OF BANYULE

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

SEPTEMBER
2020

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DENISE'S DATELINE

'REJOICE IN THE LORD!'

THE theme of JOY and REJOICING in the LORD recurs throughout the *Letter to the Philippians* which we have been exploring together in our Sunday Services, the Thursday Bible study group and in Sunday Club with the children of our Parish. You will find all the sermons preached so far in this series included in this month's *Babble* for your encouragement and reminder.

During these stage 4 shutdown times, as we tire of the necessity of wearing face masks, only leaving our homes to exercise for an hour per day, and limiting our interactions with our families and friends, can we really 'rejoice in the Lord' as Paul encourages his friends in this letter? Not only can we, but the Spirit of God encourages us to rejoice in God our Saviour every day, and so we can rejoice – not in our circumstances – but in the Lord.

So how can we do that? I think we begin by being thankful for what we DO have. As we recall, the apostle Paul wrote this letter from prison, and yet he could REJOICE in knowing, and being known by Christ Jesus, being united with Christ Jesus in his death and resurrection. So, Paul can say that he rejoices in the Lord, and encourages his friends that they, and we by extension, can rejoice in our connection with Christ Jesus, our Saviour.

At the very start of his letter to them, we read that he also rejoiced in his Philippians friends who kept in contact with him, supported him in his ministry and provided for his needs.

In Sunday Club we used pictures & symbols to complete Paul's prayer for his friends:

Our union with Christ brings us into the community of God's people. Think of the people who have kept in contact with YOU over these past six months – your loved ones, your Church family, and the creative ways they have done this; give thanks to God for them, pray for them and also, be thankful TO them for their love and support. Also think of how YOU have kept contact with and encouraged others: they too are thankful to you. Yes, our interaction with our loved ones has been different from 'pre-COVID-19 times', but following the model of Paul in Philippians, let us be thankful for what we do have.

For me the advantages of 'Zoom' meetings have been terrific, and I am thankful that we have our recorded services, Zoom Bible study on Thursday and Zoom Sunday Club for the children. Personally, I have connected each week with my three holiday buddies, also via Zoom, and sharing, laughing and praying together. This regular time has been a blessing for me, like a virtual hug from those who know me so well.

I have been encouraged by the members of our parish who take time to call each other for a chat on the phone, or communicate by text just to keep in touch. Of course you can see me and Patrick and Helen on the recorded services; who would have thought that recorded and streamed services would allow us to reach even more people with our services and ministry and when we speak to the camera, I do feel as

though you are with us.

It can be tough at the moment – and we all look forward to reconnecting with each other face to face. In the meantime, continue to REJOICE in the LORD, and be thankful for what we DO have.



Denise


mainly music: September 2020


We have continued to keep in contact with the families with the weekly emails although Jo's sessions are now only produced fortnightly. Young children like repetition so I hope it will be sufficient. I am concerned that there is little feedback from our families so I am not sure whether we have, in fact, 'kept' them. I am working on the assumption that 'no news is good news'!

With this stage 4 lockdown none of our sessions will be opening in Term 4, although I still hope it may be possible to have a gathering towards the end – in the open – just so we can see each other once more. Please keep praying that, if and when we do meet again, everybody will understand the measures which have been taken and are proposed for the future.

As a result of having no *mainly music* sessions we have had no attendance fees but have continued to pay a negotiated, reduced rate on our membership fees. With this further lockdown I will negotiate a further reduction, and, thanks to another very generous donation, we will be able to cover these fees until Christmas. As the Parish, too is experiencing reduced income I am offering a couple of patchwork quilts for sale (with a third to come), to raise money for the Christmas books to give to the families—see page 11.

Rosemary Bellair (9459 5394)

Paul prays that their  would keep on 

that they will fully know and  how to make  choices

This will bring GLORY to G _ _ .

...that their *love* would keep on *growing*, that they will fully know and *understand* how to make *right* choices... Philippians 1:9–11 (CEV)

This Month – September

Sunday 6th Trinity 13 / Pentecost 14

Philippians 4:1–9; Matthew 18:1–9; Psalm 95

Sunday 13th Trinity 14 / Pentecost 15

Philippians 4:10–23; Matthew 18:10–20; Psalm 103:8–13

Sunday 20th Trinity 15 / Pentecost 16 / St Matthew

2 Corinthians 4:1–6; Matthew 9:9–13

Sunday 27th Trinity 16 / Pentecost 17

Genesis 3:1–13; Romans 8:18–23

Wanted

- People to keep in touch with other people
- New volunteers for *mainly music* and the op shop, when the restrictions are lifted

Money: July

Income:	Giving:	\$6,548.40
	Other:	\$18,439.52
	Total:	\$24,987.92
Expenses:		\$40,257.25
Deficit:		\$15,269.33

Giving was down. Expenses were increased by two monthly salaries both falling in July. Our employment expenses will swing wildly from month to month, due to the arcane way the Diocese handles JobKeeper.

Blokes Helping Blokes on Zoom

August's *Blokes Helping Blokes* was held on 15th August instead of the first, for reasons that will not be disclosed here.

Twelve Blokes showed up, but some kept undercover by appearing under false names. Stuart showed his hacking and identity theft skills by not only taking over Glenn's hosting credentials, but also his name, preparatory to cleaning out his bank accounts and transferring the house title. Frank and Allan sneakily used their wives' names so no-one knew who they really were. Glenn himself appeared under the moniker 'Wendy's iPhone', pretending to be an inanimate electronic device.

Len appeared as himself, but lying back in a chair he seemed to have stolen from a dentist, so that the Blokes were treated to an excellent view up his nose.

David told us of the conditions of his house arrest. He is confined to his room, but he can go out on the balcony and give speeches to the waiting crowds below. Three meals a day are delivered to his door, but he can also ring the bell-pull for tea when desired. (The Editor is planning to install a bell at his home so he can ring for a maid to bring tea and scones.) There is a 'Happy Hour' during which all the inmates get drunk separately in their rooms.

Those Blokes not yet under arrest spoke of exercise along the Yarra Trail, and how terribly dense was the crowd of cyclists, all huffing and puffing without masks; except for the Blokes whose exercise along the Yarra Trail was on their bikes.

Glenn told us that his latest batch of salamis was ready, and showed a picture. Allan made a comment on the salami, but fortunately most of the Blokes didn't hear it.

The next monthly *Blokes Helping Blokes* meeting should be on Zoom at 7.45 am to 9 am on Saturday 5th September. But other small Zoom meetings will also take place to help the Blokes keep in touch. Call Glenn (0487 852 808) for an invitation.

Peter McKay

Holy Spirit Mothers' Union

The August meeting on Wednesday 26th was cancelled due to the coronavirus.

Apologies to our members for my missing the July *Banyule Babble* deadline (a busy week and I did not open my emails and missed out on a notice when the *Banyule Babble's* deadline was).

The July Meeting was our 58th birthday. We were planning to all have a cuppa in our own home at 10 am and do something special for an hour.

I phoned up St John's Fellowship wishing them a happy 60th birthday from us.

MU 2021 Diaries and MU Christmas Cards (designs are on page 13 in the winter *Mia Mia* magazine) have arrived at MU shop, but it is not open. I will take orders when it suits.

30th July – 1st of August was our MU Wave of Prayer 2020. The theme was Building Hope & Confidence. This service we did in our homes.

Past Speaker: April 1998 was an evening meeting (Holy Spirit MU had two evenings meetings a year, so that members who returned to full time employment could attend, I was one). The speaker was Alan, one of my sons-in-law, who had just returned from eight months at the Casey Base at Antarctic as an electrician. The evening was a fund-raiser to go to resettle some Australian Huskies in Canada. We had a full house and enough to finance several huskies.

Midday Prayers: North/West Deanery, Diocesan members. Link Branches: St Mary's Broughty Ferry Scotland & St Peter's Kitwe (Kitway) Zambia. Families world-wide: Wellington New Zealand, Yangon Myanmar. Defence Anglican Chaplaincy: RAAF Specialist Chaplains, Defence Health Organisation—doctors, nurses and medical specialists, and health policy makers.

Elsie Storr

Editor's Note: While corresponding with Elsie, I discovered a couple of things she was doing:

1. "A phone call came from Yarra Valley area, asking me if I had any material and elastic that could be made into face masks, I said I had, so on top of washing and drying bags of material half-wet, I was able to send them a car load of materials and elastic for face masks from my inside sewing room."
2. "Yesterday I . . . also gave away some steel for wrought iron and an industrial grinder and power steel cutter to a good home, a young fitter & turner (John would be well pleased)".

Elsie is an example to us all!! She explained to me further:

"My engineering work shop was John's: he started work at 14 as a fitter and turner, then a toolmaker, and ended up as the Assistant Engineer (for 20 years) at Larundel Psychiatric Hospital. One time he saw a double gate as a butterfly, so he went to night school and learnt to weld, so this is why I have a lot of wrought iron at my house. He was only on the Holy Spirit church vestry for a year. The palm tree at Watsonia was planted in memory of John. His engineering lathe I sold 15 years ago to a young man, I gave permission to help himself to the steel. Which he did from time to time as he had a hobby repairing old machinery at the Gulf Station at Yarra Glen. (I was at work in those days and I would come home to find a note on my front door 'Taken some more steel, Thank You'.) I am very pleased I have found a good home for all of John's tools that he would save up and buy from his pocket money."

Elsie has also added this anecdote for the Babble:

"At a MU evening meeting 30(?) years back at St James' Ivanhoe, the speaker was speaking on David. I was with Jean Benison (some call her Auntie Jean) over a cuppa before coming home. Jean went quiet; then she said that the verse that was spoken on was one of her favourite verse in the Bible:

2 Samuel 12:23: *But now that he is dead, why should I fast? Could I bring the child back to life? I will some day go to where he is, but he can never come back to me.*

Then Jean told me that she had a son, and in his early teens he was killed in a industrial accident at work. Then Jean asked me if John would buy a Hakea and plant it in the Church Garden for him, which John did."

Community Garden News

Dear Friends,

We received exciting news today—Banyule Council has awarded our garden a \$2000 grant for local artist Felicity Gordon to paint a mural on our gazebo floor!!!

Felicity is well known to the garden as the creator of the Yarra Water life fence artwork that she gave to the children at the Arty Farty Festival to paint.

Thank you to Jon and Felicity for preparing such a great grant application. Apparently many positive comments were expressed by the assessors re our project.

Look forward to watching Felicity progressively create the mural!!!

Katrina Philip

Here is part of the grant application describing the project:

Seed Mural

The Riverside Community Garden is a place of friendship, life and growth. Taking a holistic approach the garden increases wellbeing by growing healthy seasonal food while decreasing social isolation.

Art has been incorporated into the garden to create a feeling of place and belonging. The artwork made by locals has been a positive way to attract visitors while creating a beautiful environment. Art honours the volunteer’s work and tells the story of the local environment such as our Riverside fish fence art mural.

We would like to include art in a recently constructed outdoor gazebo. The gazebo space is open to the public and is used by gardeners as a place to gather and rest. We would like to paint a mural on the gazebo concrete floor. Local artist, Felicity Gordon has been approached to design a mural about seeds. The mural would tell the story of the incredible life of seeds. Seeds are fascinating as they are differently shaped and germinate in a myriad of ways. Different stages of seed development from a hard shell to a seedling will be painted. Many varieties of seeds will be incorporated into the design.

It is hoped the mural will not only operate as a way to share information about seeds but it will be a creative and imaginative response to the concept of seeds. As such we think an artistic representation is the best way to express our Seed project – bringing a sense of design, creativity and originality.

PROJECT: a tea cosy for ‘Brewster’

Calling all knitters and crochet-ers!



The community Garden is embarking on a tea cosy for ‘Brewster’ the teapot composter – picture above.

We are asking interested volunteers from Banyule Anglican Parish to provide 20 cm x 20 cm squares in acrylic yarn. We would like only TWO squares per person please.

You could do plain, flowers or anything to do with a garden.

Please let Denise know if you would like to contribute two squares: denise.banyule@gmail.com or 0438 856 376.

The congregation in St Fergus Church, Glamis, in Angus, sat up when the minister, Dr David Henderson, said he had some gardening tips for them.

He recommended sowing five rows of peas. The ones he had in mind were:

- Presence (at church),*
- Promptness,*
- Preparedness,*
- Patience,*
- Perseverance.*

He also advocated the sowing of four rows of lettuce:

- Let us be true to our obligations.*
- Let us be faithful to duty.*
- Let us be loyal and unselfish.*
- Let us love one another.*

And any time of the year was timely for his selection of turnips:

- Turn up for meetings.*
- Turn up with a smile.*
- Turn up with new ideas.*
- Turn up with determination to make everything count for something good and worthwhile.*

In the hot spell he also thought it a good idea to start developing your own ‘squashes’.

- Squash gossip.*
- Squash indifference.*
- Squash criticism.*

Useful hints indeed. And wouldn’t everything in the garden be lovely if we followed them!

Submitted by Rosemary Bellair

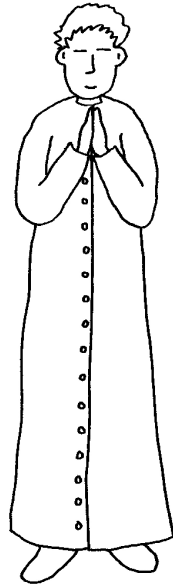
Want QUILTS? Go to page 11!

No more nesting swallows

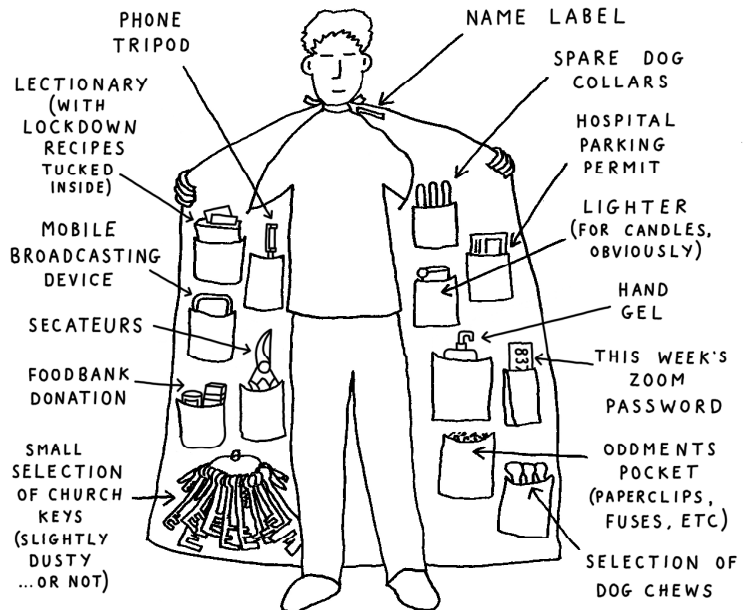


Glenn Farrington and his team have not only cleared the gutters at all our churches, but have also refastened the loose roof boards at St Andrew's.

THE CASSOCK



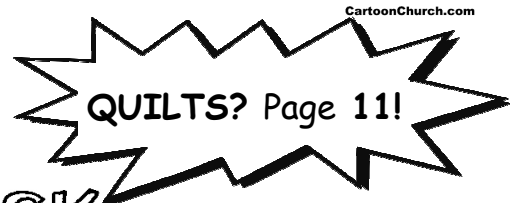
THE OUTWARD APPEARANCE



THE INWARD REALITY

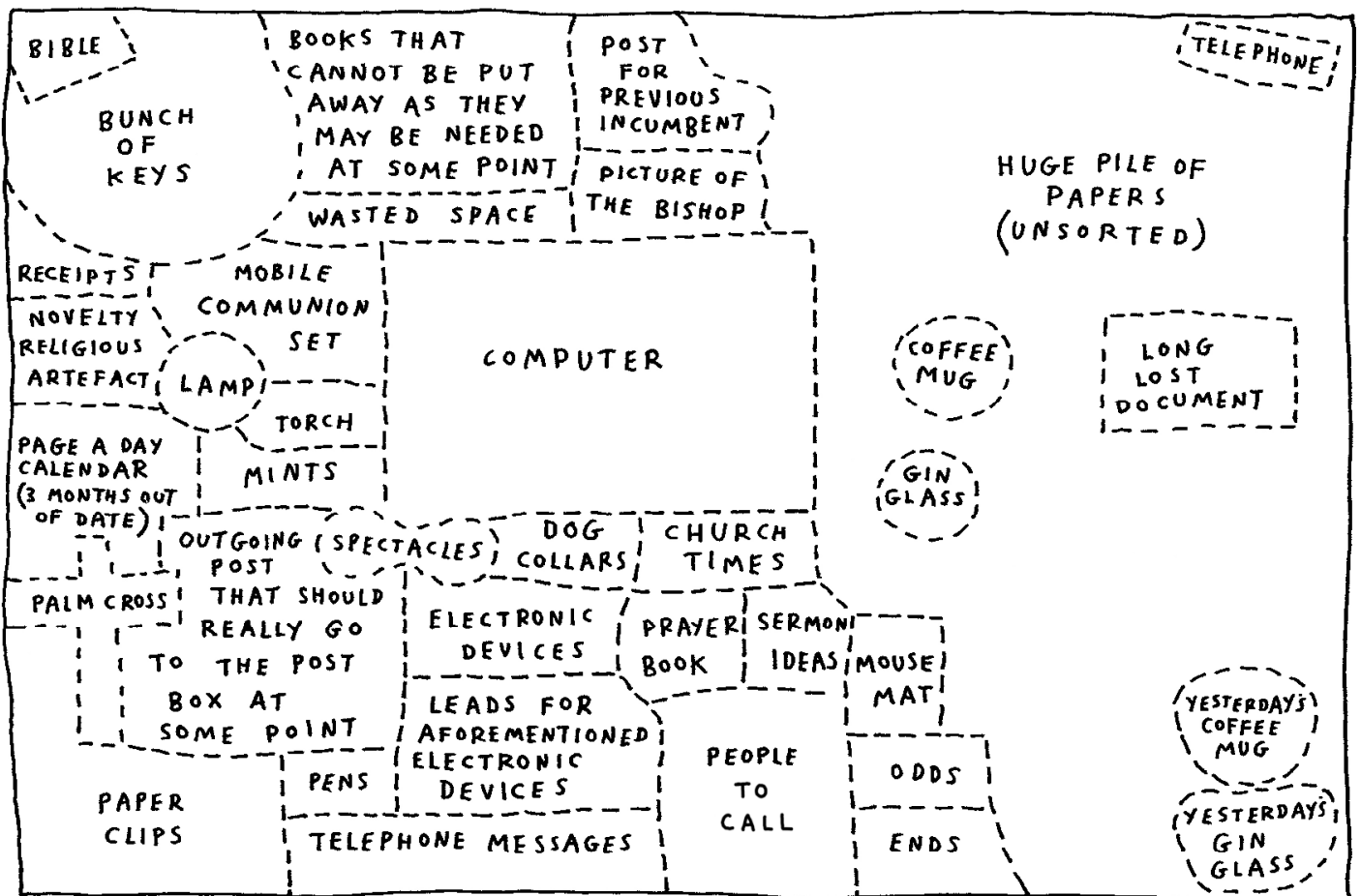
Congratulations to Beth and Patrick!

Phoebe Clara Senn arrived at 4.40 am on 1st August, Switzerland's national day. Mum and dad beaming but tired. Weight 3.95 kg, length 50 cm.



THE CLERGY DESK

THE TRIED AND TESTED WAY TO ARRANGE IT



Ronald Lawrence White

29 November 1935 – 1 July 2020



Herald-Sun 3rd April, The Age, 4th April:

WHITE, Ronald Lawrence

Died on 1st July 2020, aged 84 years. He will be greatly missed by family and friends from many walks of life including Victoria, Spain, France and the UK. A lover of singing, travel and *la dolce vita*, he was always an interested and interesting conversationalist. May he rest in peace with his God and his beloved wife Marisa. He is survived by his children Laurence, Vincent and Paloma and his siblings Vern, Kath, Janet, David, Terry and Roseanne. A private family funeral will be followed by a memorial service to be arranged once restrictions permit.

Ron White was a member of the parish, worshipping at St Andrew's, for some years. He was a remarkable man, gentle and erudite. I discovered that he knew a great deal about early sound reproduction, even the little-known Edison discs, and about the Canfranc Franco-Spanish railway; but he knew a great deal about everything. But I had no idea just how wide-ranging his knowledge and experience was.

We reproduce here just some of the eulogies written about Ron; and also an article he wrote himself for the *Babble*, on his own faith journey.

I expect to hear when the memorial service is held, and will pass the information on to those interested.

Peter McKay

Eulogy for Ronald Lawrence White delivered at Ronald's funeral, 9 July 2020

By Laurence Fredric White

In recent years I feel I'd got to know my father all over again, as I travelled with him in Spain and Australia, and as he visited Jane and me when we were living in Switzerland. I'd become his firm friend, though we'd never been estranged, and also one of his admirers.

I think it's when dad was travelling and seeing the world that he was at his best, or at least at his most light and charming. Others gravitated towards him, so much so that I remember being quite envious of his magne-

tism in a bar in Pamplona, on a rest stop on a gruelling walk along the Camino de Santiago. He was walking the trail carrying a full 15 kg backpack in the Spanish summer heat (complete with a statue of the Virgin Mary that he'd been asked to take back home by mum's relatives). (He'd chosen to save himself the postage by carrying the statue all the way to Santiago.) He and two other elderly locals belted out a traditional number, then he mingled easily with some young Swedish or German women in their hiking boots and shorts. Next to him, I was suddenly very much the wallflower.

Dad was of course a very avid collector of experiences, including visual experiences, and a tireless ticker of things off his expansive and imaginative itineraries, even in his early 80s. As for collecting visual experiences, when he took his trip to India, Iran, Turkey and other exotic countries in 1960 en route to every Aussie's Mecca at that time, London, he took two expensive cameras with him across deserts and dusty roads on his motorbike, one for the colour slides and one for the black and white prints, along with the film for both. Like all photographers, he wanted to trap in a trice pictures in his net for all time. He took some brilliant photos, though they run out in his album before Pakistan and are more or less replaced by postcards, as he had to sell his film and even one of his cameras to keep going. In recent years he and my Jane spent many hours discussing the merits of photographers, particularly the pictorialists whom they both loved, and exchanging prints and books. Dad was a strong supporter of her work, travelling to Horsham and Sydney to see her exhibitions.

For dad, travel wasn't just a matter of sightseeing by any means. Dad was also genuinely interested in people, in making friendships and decoding other cultures, including other religions than his own. His gift for making and keeping friendships is evident from his trip to India. He made lifelong friends such as Barry Swift, Prem Kapoor, Gillian, a Brit and her Greek husband who lived in Paris, and others, whom he continued to correspond with and visit faithfully. In London he made lifelong musician friends such as Judith Lambden and Lillian and David Snell, whom I have been in contact with in recent days. Judith remarked on how Ron would look her up consistently after however long a break.

The number of messages from staff at the Westgarth nursing home who were touched by dad's patience, his kindness to menial staff such as cleaners, and his stoicism in the face of his illness has been overwhelming. Many of these staff were from South Asia and Africa, and for these in particular he always had a question or a bit of knowledge about their origins and their home country to help establish a connection.

What, finally, did all of dad's wanderings bring him, and what did they bring forth in us? Aside, that is, from the pearl of great price that was my mother that he found while abroad in the world?

Dad wasn't just a collector, not just a magpie or bower bird, though he was that, and avidly so, and his eye for beauty was sharp as well as being learned.

More importantly, he wove the places he visited and the people he met there into a tight and ever growing web of connections, aesthetic, cultural, and emotional.

The meaning of the word 'religion' in Latin is 'binding'. Dad practiced his practical

religion, if I can call it that, by always seeking to bind together things that would otherwise have lain apart. This included his respect for religions other than Christianity, and he expressed a number of times to me particular affection for the Sikh religion and also for Jewish people, just as examples. As Terence the Roman said, so Dad practiced: "*I am human, and I think nothing human is alien to me.*"

He also sold, gifted and loaned elements from his collection to those he thought would most benefit from the exchange, such that parts of his many very sizeable and expert collections – of printed books, of glassware, of artworks, of sheet music and of course his beloved records, not to mention his phonographs – have graced, and will grace, the State Library of Victoria, National Film and Sound Archive, and other learned collections.

In his final years, during the rather sweet – if somewhat chilly! – coda to his life after he'd retired to Tylden, dad had occasion to commission what is quite a significant piece of architecture, albeit on a small scale, from Peter Hogg who is here today and his fellow architect Toby Reed.

In these ways, my dear father, intrepid, independent and even solitary as he was on occasions, was in another sense very much part of the human story, and the great collective enterprise we all participate in and which we call *civilisation*.

Post scriptum

Last year and particularly during my trip to Sydney and back by road with Dad in August, he dictated many hours of memoirs, including stories about his parents, which one day I will try to piece together into a coherent narrative. Despite his operation, and the effects of his various therapies, dad had marvellous recall, including of particular days and events. (Though occasionally we did get into an endless loop in the deserts of India). But besides the pitfalls that befell his motorbike in India, still vivid, and the wonderful hospitality he received from a Sikh temple when skint, he also had crystal-clear recollections of those few days in November 1964 in Barcelona when his – and my and my siblings' – futures were being decided.

Over a few meals in a relatives' restaurant and at my mum's friends' dining tables, and with my grandmother looking on as watchful chaperone, and him using the halting Spanish he'd learned back in Melbourne at the Saturday school of languages, it was mutually decided, as dad put it, that mum and dad would marry very shortly, as soon as dad had set up base and found a job again in London. (This was some 2½ years after they had first met in Pisa and dad had knocked on her hotel room door asking for hot water for his teapot, so there wasn't a moment to waste.) True to his word, they were married by 6 January 1965, and took their honeymoon at Granada in mid-winter and also Paris en route to London.

After surviving his operation at the start of last year in remarkably good shape, thanks to the skill of the surgeons and his own physical fitness, Dad told everyone who would listen that he felt he was destined to be a 'beacon of light' to others. When he said this to the congregation sitting in the round at the vicarage of Christ Church Brunswick late one Sunday afternoon, Linda, a Singaporean Chinese woman of a certain age, replied, "You are a beacon, Ron; whatever you're on, I want some of it."

Laurence

July 1, 2020

My older sibling Ron was born 18 months before me, and his role in my life has been significant.

Through all those years, from my first six years in Mitcham, up until Ron left our family home in Williamstown, we always shared a room together. Those times, especially laying in bed after dark, were special. If not listening to our regular radio shows, we discussed the many books we had read and all manner of things about life and the family. I believe many of the character traits that marked each of us over our life times, were established in that time.

Quite early in his primary school years, I realised that Ron could be differentiated from other kids by what he was not.

He was not interested in sport but conscientious about school, he was not ashamed at being ridiculed for his 'nerdiness', but passionate in reading books: books of a level that were above and beyond his primary school level.

This persona he carried into secondary school. At Footscray Technical school, Ron was known as 'prof' by those who had a sense of admiration for his 'difference' and his evident intelligence.

In my pre-teen years, I knew of no other kid who had such an entrepreneurial brother. After walking 2 kms to a sawmill, we would collect timber scraps in an old babies pram, and on the way home we would sell it house to house as kindling wood.

We would go to Rowdon's dairy with our pram, and shovel horse manure into bags to sell door to door, again on our way home.

These experiences developed in both of us different life skills. We've often reflected how fortunate we both to have lived through such accepting and supportive times.

In our teenage years, I knew no one who had a brother who at 13 years old, had a car; let alone their parents. I remember going with dad down the lane beside Mrs Newings to the shed to see it; a 1919 Angus Sanderson canvas roofed tourer.

I recall Ron's sense of enthusiasm as he explained to our Dad how he was going to repair it. Dad couldn't understand how Ron could be so confident.

I know no one whose brother, from the age of 15, would trawl the stalls at Vic market during his work lunch break, seeking out antique records, sheet music, antiquated books and vintage car handbooks. His aim was to sell off some of his finds to pay for those items he wanted for his collection.

I know no one who had a brother, who at 15, bought an antique (1920's) hand operated 35 mm Pathe Gaumont cinema projector. How memorable; first taking the train into Chapel St Prahran to buy movie reels from a dealer, planning the subsequent theatre night, the communal backyard silent film nights, the sepia 1st WW newsreels, the early Tom Mix westerns, the scraping of the film's cellulose emulsion to splice and join with amyl acetate when the film broke. and of course, developing the skill required to operate the winder..... faster or slower, depending on how many reels we had, or whether impending rain was going to shorten the night's viewing.

What vision, and what a joy it was to our neighbourhood who flocked to our backyard to enjoy these 'nights out'.

I know no one who had a brother, who at 16, had an interest and eventual passion for classical music, who learned to understand Italian from a Pitmans teach-yourself language book, who was not put-off by the stares of passer-bys as he sang operatic 'airs' on our way to work, and couldn't understand why I chose to walk a couple of steps behind, cringing.

International singer Lorenzo Nolan, on the way to the ABC recording studios, saw Ron from his tram and quickly jumped off to join with Ron arm-in-arm, in a duet.

My cringing turned to admiration for the uniqueness of such a brother.

I know no one who had a brother who, after listening to many hours of opera from his wide collection of operatic recordings, and with his learned Italian language skills, decided to travel overseas to sing opera as a career.

As a young adult, I know no one who had a brother, who at 22, in 1959, bought a water-cooled, 4-stroke, Velocette motor bike and a Rollicord camera, and left Australia for Europe. With inadequate financial backup, Ron left Port Melbourne by ship to Indonesia, then Ceylon, then by motorbike through India, Afghanistan, Iran and across Europe. After 14 months travelling, he arrived in the UK. There he sang with the Sadler Wells Opera chorus.

Again, how I admired that confidence, that positivism, and the obvious research he had done for the trip.

What preposterous bravado in those days. What a jolt and a challenge for me to be in some ways more adventurous.

I know no one who had a brother who was conscripted into National Service with them, in the same unit, same tent and eventually in the same select group co-opted to join the Army Survey Corp at Bendigo.

Again, I have such admiration for the unique way that Ron remained unruffled by the negative comments levelled at him by many during his Army service

I know no one who had a brother who, over many years, had continued to keep in touch with several elderly past primary and secondary teachers, past workmates, our elderly library shop owner Mr Rudolph Tersch, and a range of other special interest folk.

Ron and I have shared so many fond, life-changing experiences together. I've only reflected here on some of our pre-married days. Many will know various aspects of Ron's life in the subsequent years

Over that time, as we raised our own families, Ron proved to be a valued mentor.

Since I can remember, Ron had not been one to readily accept that things cannot be different if you had belief. His life was never lived as a victim, but enjoyed because he enabled it.

That was my brother Ron.

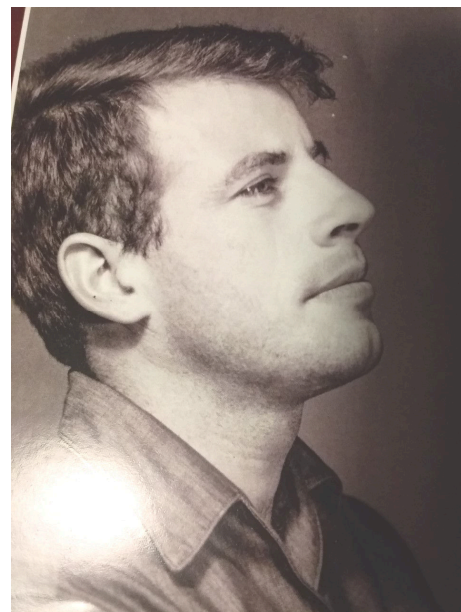
Sure, Ron had his faults, as was the lot of the common man, but it was his admirable qualities that marked him as an uncommon man.

During the last 15 months, Ron exhibited a remarkable positive and determined attitude as he endured those difficult times.

Ron will continue to be an exemplary model for me; for his courage, his moral integrity, his displayed curiosity, his humility and honesty, but above all, that deep Christian faith he called on, to help sustain him until his passing.

I have an embedded respect for the love and support Ron gave to Marisa, Laurence, Paloma and Vincent, and importantly, the love and support they gave their Dad when he most needed it.

Vern



Ron in younger days

Dad eulogy

Rather than give dad's full life story, I thought I would talk about the decade 1955 – 1965, perhaps the most action-packed dozen years of dad's long and very active 84 years. For the most part, I tell the tale through photographs, some of which can be inspected in the photo album behind you after the service.

At December of '55, at age 20 he was nearing the end of his apprenticeship as a photoengraver, which he had done at the *Truth* and *Sportsman* newspapers in La Trobe Street. In that year he took a solo trip to Beechworth and Albury in his Morris Cowley and took many excellent photographs.

At the start of '56 Dad and his brother Vern were called up for national service. After six weeks at Puckapunyal they were transferred to the 20 Topographical Survey Corps. They were posted to 'Fortuna', a country mansion near Bendigo, where dad apparently had enough time to take many artfully composed photos of the surrounds. The photo of the corps taken at this time shows dad rather more rueful in his army uniform than his brother Vern, at least to my eyes. But characteristically dad kept up a formal connection with the Army Reserve for many years later in life. [Perhaps he left it to Vern to actually survey the countryside?]

[The Melbourne Olympic games passed without leaving a trace in dad's photo and scrap album. His lack of interest in sport appeared to survive that year intact.]

In the late 1950s he also took many photos of old Melbourne landmarks that would be demolished in the 60s and 70s, including the Menzies Hotel and the St James arch. His photos were laid out methodically in wonderful old photo albums with celluloid corners that we still have.

Only a few photos survive from his album from 1957. He performed in amateur theatricals at an Army camp that year and held his 21st birthday party in November 1957.

He travelled to Sydney solo in 1958, this time by train it would seem, where he took

fine photographs of the CBD and Paramatta, which had a village feel to it at that time, and Paramatta cemetery.

In 1958 and '59 dad worked as a laboratory technician at [Williamstown] High School while completing matriculation at Taylor's College by night. At Taylor's he met Freddie, who's here today, and with him and with their pals Rudi and Mok spent what looks like a very fun Easter long weekend at Phillip Island. He introduced Freddie to his sister Janet (was it one night at Park Crescent?), at least according to Ron, who liked to take credit for matches made.

Dad was a very active student of singing at this time. As part of his singing preparation, he was studying Italian and German at the Saturday School of Languages.

He was also becoming increasingly interested in Italian culture including the Italian films that were being shown, including at Footscray, the growing café culture that had come to Melbourne with Italian migrants in the 1950s, and he was able to read *Il Globo* which started being published in 1959.

He studied singing in Melbourne under a teacher who had sung at Covent Garden alongside the greats of her day. He also performed in concerts and light opera around Melbourne including in the choir of "Blossom Time" at the Key Philharmonic Society in October 1958. He also appeared on the radio in a variety programme, as he did much later on TV in BP Showcase in 1971.

On 6th January 1960 he departed on his famous trip overland from Ceylon to London by motorbike, bus and ferries, having visited Perth, Singapore and Penang on the Oranje ship from Melbourne. I won't reel off the names of all the countries, cities, towns and indeed ruins he visited along the way on his overland trip. Dad was never a mere sight-seer. In many of the towns and cities he visited, including on this trip Bhopal, Bombay and Delhi, he made lifelong friends that he kept in touch with through letter-writing and visits. One of them, Barry Swift from Sydney, who's still alive, told him he would love Spain, and he was right on the money.

Dad certainly made the most of his time in London, musically speaking. He studied singing under the well-known singer Heddle Nash, and performed with the Handel Opera Company in "Jephtha", including for 2 nights in 1962 at the Liege Opera House in Belgium. He also appeared in "Goyescas" in 1965, for which mum designed some of the costumes. He was a member of the Hampstead Music Club. He attended a great many concerts, including at Wigmore Hall, Royal Albert Hall and Covent Garden as well as Sadler's Wells. He also made lifelong musical friends there including Judith Lambden, and Lilian and David Snell, and with both of whom I have been in contact with only last night.

Some time in 1962, my mother Maria Luisa Monzon was in Pisa in Italy, travelling with two friends on an art scholarship. One night, a bearded Australian knocked on mum's hotel room door and asked, in the Italian which was the only language they had in common, for hot water for his teapot. It was basically love at first sight, at least judging by the photo of dad, mum and a group of friends taken after this meeting. Mum and dad arranged means to keep in touch, which again meant letter writing in Italian until dad's Spanish had improved sufficiently.

In April 1963 dad travelled to Spain via Paris and met up with mum again, this time in her home city of Zaragoza, where she showed him the local sights and he met her family there. Characteristically, he didn't lose the chance to see a lot more of Spain, including Madrid, Toledo and Segovia, which presumably mum had correctly recommended to him as well worth seeing.

Dad returned to Australia a few months later, having in mind to save enough money quickly in his printing trade to be able to finance getting married. (Dad had been unable to practice his trade as a printer in the UK due to his inability as an Australian to get a union ticket.) In October, he headlined at a concert in the Williamstown Town Hall, having newly returned.

By November 1964, the intrepid Ron is on the move again, this time back to Europe, again by boat. Stops at Bombay, Aden, Messin and Naples ended at Genoa, from which he took the train to Barcelona, where he met my mother at the Estacion de Francia. To dad's surprise, mum's mother was travelling with mum as her chaperone. There was a branch of the Monzon family in Barcelona and dad met them there. Dad found my grandmother very courteous and welcoming, despite dad's halting Spanish hospitality. They went to a pre-prepared luncheon at the restaurant run by one of mum's relatives. Mum and dad only had eyes for each other and the more they talked the more it was settled that they would marry. Her mother seemed quite happy as well. They talked about Ron going to London, finding work and lodgings and coming back to Spain for the wedding. On that trip Dad also met some of mum's friends from university such as Lorenzo, Jaime, Tomas Bel the sculptor and his wife a poetess.

The wedding was arranged over a long lunch, and after a sojourn in Granada and a brief spell in London dad married on 6 January 1965 in Spain. In one sense, at least, his travels were at an end. In another, they had just come to a temporary rest.

From Ron's speech, on the occasion of a family viewing of Mum and Dad's memorial plaques at the Williamstown Cemetery 6 May 2012:

Williamstown has so many memories, mostly happy, for us kids who grew up here from 1943 on. Dad was released from War Work in the country and took up a fairly active parenting role in those early years in joining in games of cricket on the back beach, in visits to warships at anchor, in inviting us (forbidden now) up onto the roofs of houses that he was painting by hand in Williamstown and Newport.

With the post WW2 period came many opportunities, more work and a higher income, a necessity with a growing family rising to seven kids by 1951.

The North Willy home gave a largely sheltered and quiet environment, broken only by the occasional foghorn from the water, the sirens from the nearby workshops and the occasional aero plane overhead.

I think for our parents also, the Williamstown house gave them a respite from the sub-standard housing they'd had at Mitcham and Richmond and the many privations of WW2. So 30 Park Crescent was the spot

where our parents could breathe easier with a secure roof over our heads and money coming in each week to pay the modest rent and, for the first time, a greater sense of freedom and expansion.

Dad built sheds for the older kids and later a bungalow for the two eldest boys (Ron and Vern) around 1950 just before Roseanne arrived. By 1954, the house was bursting at the seams as it were, but then the exodus of the children began.

In the 1940's and 1950's at least, Williamstown was also a great place for the kids to explore, relatively free of traffic in those days. It had both ghosts of its nautical past and shipbuilding present in Nelson Place; two cinemas (one with Saturday matinees); a Youth Centre, which Vern and I attended: Girl Guides and Scouts; Anzac Day Parades down Ferguson Street; a sheltered beach; a back beach with mangrove swamps; the Rifle Range where spent cartridges could be collected to make pocket money. Add Altona Beach and much else besides!!

And so for myself and my six siblings, our parents live on in our minds, with the largely positive contributions they made to our welfare and upbringing.

Kath's personal reminiscences

I remember Ron as the older of the two 'Big Boys' in our family, preceding us two 'Girls', the two 'Little Boys' and 'The Baby', Roseanne. The Big Boys were the trail-blazers, giving us siblings a unique example to follow. Ron, 'the Prof', was distinguished by his studious and erudite interests, as Vern was the acknowledged expert in all things natural. I particularly remember Ron's meticulous pencil drawing of the Taj Mahal when he was perhaps 12 years old, and which hung framed in our house for many years. I remember us younger siblings selling for a penny around the neighbourhood his Graphic newspaper, mass-produced by handset rubber letters and a jelly pad. I remember his purchase of a wartime waste-paper collection handcart in 1946 to use to gather horse manure from the roads to sell to grand Williamstown houses for their gardens, a business enterprise that attracted Mr Burke's esteem and landed Ron and his younger siblings Saturday morning jobs at Burkes Department Store. I remember Ron's picture shows in the backyard where early silent movies, cunningly spliced, were shown to neighbourhood kids (for an admission price, of course). I remember rows of books in the boys' sleepout, notably all the works of Charles Dickens; and Ron's advising me which books to read, and instructing me in declaiming Shakespearean speeches; Janet and I both remember being invited to accompany Ron to musical shows in Melbourne and, embarrassingly, being publicly serenaded on the way home. He was unlike other boys in eschewing football and other popular pastimes, and instead going his own way regardless of majority inclinations. He was a swot by inclination, he loved machines and tinkered with his own purchased car, he rode his bike long distances, he cultivated and maintained friendships with people of all ages who shared his interests from steam cars, cylinder records, local history, music and aerodynamics. We were privileged to have grown up with him.

My Faith Journey

by Ronald White

Faith journeys: we all have them. In my case, my faith was never of the St Paul conversion type of experience but, rather, had to be sifted by my excessively analytical mind—even though we know faith is a gift and we should be grateful for it when it comes. I have a tendency to digress but I am here to talk of *my own* faith experience.

I can do this best by pointing to certain key incidents which stand out in my faith journey. Not all these have been specifically Christian but I can say that they were *spiritual* experiences, touching the religious side, that Godhead which I believe is in all of us but—in the case of many people—is often covered over, obscured by the barnacles of egotism, or the here and now, or a lack of time for seeking that inner Godhead. But I digress—forgive me.

1943: I am aged 7. I am sitting on a chair in Forest Hill Primary School in the sunshine one autumn morning, wrestling with the realisation that we were shortly to leave our charming country environment and go to an unknown place called Williamstown. On the other side of the road stood the Anglican Church where a neighbour had taken us kids sometimes. My introduction to God had begun, not through my agnostic and non-churchgoing parents, but by a teenager who had the good grace to walk us three kilometres to Sunday School and back.

Wrestling with the sadness of imminent departure, I had a mystic experience, an expression of *panentheism* (not pantheism)—God **in all**. The gentle breeze, the sunshine, the fluttering leaves seemed to be full of hope and encouragement, and I realised that God was in Nature, a great source of comfort. The Negro spiritual “He’s got the whole world in his hand” expressed the wonderful experience of the Comforter at work.

1945–46: Williamstown—we sang hymns at the Church of Christ with great gusto. “Yes, Jesus loves me” stand out in my mind; also “Jesus loves the little children of the world”.

1947–49: I attended outdoor Sunday School conducted by three devout evangelical Christians from the Gospel Mission. Again, I loved hymns, but their presentation of Jesus as humble and meek and mild seemed too wishy-washy for me, and their puritanism also turned me off. (I instinctively rejected the *mea culpa* argument—the whole time spirit was against it, as society was changing dramatically: materialism was beginning to be in the air.)

1950–58: Lost years in respect of organised religion, for me. I called myself a theist (God-believer) rather than a Christian: I had difficulty coming to terms with Jesus, a very distant figure for me. I was closer to the Holy Spirit, blowing freely here and there; and to other aspects of the spiritual, as in great literature and music, for example.

1958: Under pressure from my sister I attended the Billy Graham Crusade and marched forward at the end. Next day I felt I’d been blackmailed by the fear of eternal damnation, but at least my journey towards being a Christian began. I started reading Scripture Union aids to Bible reading, supplied by my devout (and still devout) sister Kathleen.

1959: I sang in the Williamstown Methodist church choir, solos and duos. Music has always been an important part of my spiritual journey.

1960s: Overland to London, my home for five years in the 1960s. I joined the choir of an Anglo-Catholic church and sang plainsong on Sundays. Father Collinson impressed by his sheer charisma (though 82 not out) and his insightful sermons. I began to see that the Christian life changed people—they seemed more truthful, earnest and “deeper” than many of the existentialists I knew (how many remember that post-WW2 fashion?). In 1962 I became baptised and confirmed into the Anglican church.

I got engaged to a Catholic and struggled with Catholic beliefs. Was it the Real Presence or a memory of Jesus’ death? In the end I found it unprovable and the main thing was to remember Christ’s sacrifice for us—and be grateful for it. In this period I read Temple’s thought-provoking essays—a great Anglican I thought.

“Honest to God” appeared—a milestone. The Second Vatican Council ushered in a wave of ecumenical dialogue and activity just as my Catholic wife and I needed it. So began forty years of attending each other’s churches . . .

Two years in Spain. A very different sort of Catholicism to the Irish brand we had in Australia. I realised how much cultural accretions, politics and world events had corrupted the original Christian message, and how fallible manmade institutions can be: nowhere more apparent than in the unreal demands placed on Catholics in some countries more than others . . .

1968: Here in Oz. Joined St Peter’s Anglican Murrumbidgee choir. Fr Laity demonstrated love and charity towards my wife (a Catholic) in her post-partum depression—a fine Christian exemplar.

1972: At St Andrew’s Rosanna, between houses and churches: Canon Leon Morris opened my eyes to the eternal nature of Jesus Christ by focussing on his “I am that I am”. In a flash I saw his coexistence of God in the timeless dimension of eternity.

1973–74: I studied Middle Eastern Studies at Melbourne University and learned a good deal from a wonderful Muslim scholar, Dr Kazi, speaking from another perspective, also rooted in the Old Testament.

In recent years I have had some wonderful mystic experiences:

1989: Had been to Santa Domingo de Silos in northern Spain. Half-awake, half-asleep, my mind was directed to the Pyramids, the Pyrenees, Glastonbury and the Himalayas. I felt a wave of electricity at each spot and I had an acute sensation of the *power* of God. I was left awe-ful after that.

1990: Synod representation began. In 1997 or 98 the Spirit zapped me and I moved the proposal that saw Anglicare created, one year after ‘my’ motion to amalgamate three 19th century agencies was approved.

2000: I begin to teach Religious Education, so far to some three hundred children.

2001: In two cathedrals, one in Leipzig, one in New York, the sacred music lifted me to another ‘pitch of being’, when I felt ‘tuned in’ to something other-worldly, outside of myself.

2003: Rehearsing a lovely passage from the prophet Isaiah for reading at my wife’s Catholic Church, I was doing the dishes when I got ‘zapped’. This lasted some thirty seconds. My wife thought I’d had a heart attack or something. No, it was that familiar electric shock again!

2005: I was singing with the group ‘Friends of Anglican Music’ choir at Tarrawarra Abbey: an uplifting experience. One or two mornings later I woke up—on St Cecilia’s day—and felt I was being ‘bathed in love’, a most peculiar sensation that left me speechless, even thoughtless. Was this a message from God? I remembered that St Teresa had likewise been blessed by ecstasies . . .

I am sure the spiritual *can* interact with our material existence, if we only let it. These subtle forces are of a ‘higher stuff’ than most of us are, and unless we ‘tune in’ (usually, but not always, consciously—in prayer or sacred song or Bible reading) we can miss out on so much. Basically, I personally need to consciously *make* time to be with Nature, that largely benefic power for prayer; to bless that wind; to pray for protection, especially when I drive; and just **to be**, to be still and accepting.

God has been very good to me and my six siblings and I live in hope that he will reveal more and more his Will to me so that I might become a more effective instrument for the Trinity’s work in this world, which is much in need of the Christian message. My journey continues: a deepening understanding, which has largely come through experiences and encounters in my case. We should not underestimate the power of ourselves as good examples to others.

Some evangelical Christians believe that to come to Jesus one *must* be “born again”—the conversion experience. I disagree. In my case this was a long, long process and I believe God in his wisdom has different time-frames for different people. Certainly my own journey is miles away from that evangelical belief. And what is sixty-five years in relation to Eternity?

My thanks to the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and to the many spiritual preachers and teachers (including Dean Thomas, Michael Ramsay and many Catholics and even the Buddhist ecologist Joanne Macey) I have had and heard over the years. My thanks for half a million kilometres travelled without a serious accident. My thanks for good health, a sound mind and a voice to sing your praises still. Thanks for your servants past and present and for the opportunity to positively touch the lives of children in State Schools. And for much besides. Amen.

Ronald White
Banyule Babble, January 2006



Observed by Glenn Farrington

Doreen Mabel Rumpf

4 August 1924 – 8 August 2020



Herald-Sun & The Age, 11th August:

RUMPF, Doreen Mabel (nee Everson)

4 August 1924 – 8 August 2020

Aged 96 years

Beloved wife of Frank (dec.) for 62 years. Much loved mother to John, Bruce and Peter. Cherished mother-in-law to Teena, Rose and Tracey. Adored grandmother to Megan, Adam, Caitlan, Amy and Sean. Great grandmother to Lincoln and Hudson.

We all loved you so very much and you will be deeply missed by us all.

Generous in nature, loving in spirit.

With us all, always.

Doreen's funeral was held at St John's on Friday 14th August. The eulogy was given by her son, Bruce:

My mother was a remarkable woman. Her long life was imbued with a profound sense of justice, compassion & dignity. It is simply horrific that her long life was ended by the pernicious vicissitudes wrought by COVID-19.

My mother possessed an inner strength that sometimes gave the impression of her being an irrepressible force of nature. Perhaps it is not surprising then that it took the worst pandemic in 100 years to snuff out that very bright light that shone within her.

...But let's start at the very beginning.

Doreen Mabel Everson was born on Monday 4th August 1924 in North Melbourne. She was the first-born child to John Cornelius and Mabel Everson (née Taylor).

As an aside, I should mention that Mother always remarked on her father's distaste for his Nordic middle name, Cornelius, which he had acquired in honour of his father.

2½ years after Mother arrived in the world, she was joined by her baby brother,

Jack. I understand that Uncle Jack was in fact christened John, but was always called Jack to avoid confusion with his father.

I have been able to establish much of the information I am about to relate about our mother's early years from the extraordinarily comprehensive family history dutifully researched and documented over a period of 30 years by my late father, Frank.

Drawing on my father's epic tome, we know that Mum attended Tottenham State School commencing in 1930 at age 5. Quoting Dad directly from that source regarding Mother's experiences at school:

"She did well at school and won a cup for a special Temperance examination. Her favourite sports were basketball and running and she represented the school in inter-school sports in these events.

After passing the sixth grade in 1935, she transferred to Williamstown High School, which was directly opposite Williamstown Beach railway station."

"She did very well in all the subjects she studied, with the notable exception of cookery. The cookery teacher was a Miss Turner who had red hair and a temper to match."

Paraphrasing my father's account, it seems that following one particular misadventure in her cooking class, Miss Turner was moved to launch a missile strike on Mum using the saucepan that Mum had managed to destroy in her failed attempt to make white sauce.

Returning to my father's account of Mum's early life:

Your mother was a very fast runner but, to her frustration, another girl named Betty Dolphin could always beat her. Betty later became a notable athlete and after retiring from athletics, was associated with the administration of the sport at ANU in Canberra."

I ought mention that Mum once told me that she in fact did once beat Betty in an athletics event, but only on a single, solitary occasion.

Again returning to Dad's account:

"After gaining her Leaving certificate (year 11) which was the highest level then taught at Williamstown High, your mother worked for the accountancy firm 'Harris and Horne' in Melbourne. She studied Accountancy through the Hemmingway and Robertson Correspondence School and was soon sent out to the offices of several different clients to keep their accounts. Doreen finally left Harris and Horne to take up a position with Goss Gaskets."

In the family history, Dad then continues to detail his wedding to Mum.

"Your mother and I were married on Saturday the 19th February 1949 at St George's Church of England (W. Footscray), where we had both attended, been christened and confirmed."

I always understood that Mum and Dad had in fact first met at St George's.

Continuing his narrative in the family history, Dad mentions that his father, Norman Rumpf, had not been able to attend their wedding and sadly died the following day. Sadly also, Mother's father had passed away earlier in 1942 during the darkest days of WWII. I understand that Mum was very close to her father and deeply affected by his passing, to the extent that it affected both her

ongoing accountancy studies and her desire to continue piano lessons, which she had maintained for at least 5 years prior.

Mum and Dad moved into their first home, at 22 Leonard Street Sunshine, in May 1950. The modest two bedroom brick veneer house was due to be completed prior to their marriage, but construction was apparently delayed due to post-war material shortages.

Whilst residing at 22 Leonard Street, three boys arrived from 1953 to 1960, all born at what was then the "Bethesda" hospital in Erin Street, Richmond. My elder brother, John, was the first to be hatched, followed by myself, then my younger brother, Peter.

Meanwhile, Mum's brother, Jack, and his wife, Elaine, not to be outdone, also brought 3 children into the world. My cousins, Andrew, Peter and Christine, were all born within a year of each of Mum and Dad's three children.

In September 1969, Mum and Dad, together with their three boys, moved to a new home at 40 Buckingham Drive, Heidelberg. All of us loved our new place of residence which overlooked farmland adjacent to the Yarra River. My elder brother, John, especially rejoiced at being so close to a river as he had already developed a keen interest in fly-fishing.

For her part, Mum had always been interested in tennis and prior to her marriage, had played in a number of teams in the Footscray area. On the family moving to Heidelberg, Mum resumed her tennis career and regularly played social tennis at this church, St John's Heidelberg. It is quite extraordinary that she continued playing until 2006, aged 81. Her career finally came to a close when she ruptured a bicep tendon doing her new double-handed backhand. With considerable humility, she told me at the time that she had thought herself "terribly clever" for being able to get more power into her backhand by virtue of the double-handed swing, until it proved to be her undoing.

Mum had a great interest in flower arranging and attended classes to develop her skill. She was Treasurer of the local flower arranging society and was on the 'flower roster' for many years at this church. For those many years, Mum maintained her enthusiasm for doing the flower arrangements at St John's, both for the regular Sunday church services, as well as for weddings and funerals. I understand that Mum also volunteered her brass polishing skills in the church. These circumstances once led my father to express his surprise that the church wasn't charging her rent.

At one time, Mum was also secretary of the 'Young Wives' group at St John's until, with the passing of the years, it finally became too much of a stretch to continue to refer to themselves as 'young wives'. A name change to 'Ladies' Evening Fellowship' was therefore deemed appropriate.

It must be said that Mum forged some wonderfully enduring friendships with many of the ladies from the Fellowship group. It is inspiring to appreciate that some of her friendships have been steadfast for over 50 years. Whilst Mother had many friends, she used to mention that she had a select group of 'special friends'. Joyce Gough and Audrey Brockfield in particular maintained their deep friendship with Mum throughout her entire life.

In keeping with her deep sense of compassion, Mum volunteered her time for many years both in the Nearly New shop in Rosanna, as well as in serving meals and arranging the roster at 'Open House' in Ivanhoe.

Mum and Dad's eldest son, John, married Teena Swain on August 21st 1976 at St Augustine Catholic Church in Burke Street, Melbourne. In due course, Mum's first grandchild, Megan, came into the world in 1984, followed by her second grandchild, Adam, 4 years later. Both of my parents adored their first two grandchildren and both forged strong bonds with them. Teena has often remarked at how enthusiastically Mother accepted child-minding duties for her grandchildren.

Throughout the 80s and 90s, Mum and Dad travelled widely both within Australia and overseas. On a trip to Japan in the early 80s, Mum and Dad met an American couple from California, Karl and Dianne Burchardt, with whom they established a lifelong friendship. When Dad finally felt that international flights in cattle class were simply too uncomfortable for him, Mum, still bitten by the international travel bug, embarked on an extended European holiday with her cousin, Sylvie.

Mum and Dad were overjoyed to learn that my younger brother, Peter, and his wife, Tracey, produced another grandchild for them in 1998 with the birth of their daughter Caitlin in Perth. Four years later Mum and Dad were equally delighted when Peter and Tracey's second daughter, Amy was born in 2002. With Amy, my Mum and Dad's grandchildren tally grew to four.

In 2003, Mum and Dad moved from their home in Buckingham Drive, Heidelberg into a retirement unit at Viewbank Gardens in Viewbank. The unit was immediately adjacent to their friends, Bill and Barbara Howard, who they had met sometime earlier through the Life Activities Club Heidelberg (known as LACH). Together with the Howards, Mum and Dad were very active members in a number of the activity groups within LACH, including the caravanning, camping and travel group as well as the entertainment and armchair travel groups. Mum was a convener of one of the armchair travel groups for many years.

In 2009, my parents celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary. They enjoyed receiving what we all hoped would be merely their first letter from the Queen, together with letters from various Federal and State dignitaries. Clearly, the State considers 60 years of marriage to be as much of a personal milestone as that of attaining the age of 100.

Mother's beloved husband, Frank, suddenly passed away in 2011, aged 87 years and 8 months. Sadly, this was over 12 years shy from when we could expect the next letter from the Queen.

Mum's reaction to Dad's passing was somewhat curious in that at first, she seemed to be remarkably stoic in the face of such a grievous loss. Over the next year, however, Mum confided that she felt that she was no longer coping well with the demands of daily life.

Sometime in 2013, Rose and I invited Mum to move in with us in our home in Beaumaris. Mum occupied one of the upstairs bedrooms, with her own deck overlooking the swimming pool. After she had a

number of falls whilst in our care, it became increasingly clear that we would need to consider moving Mum into a nursing home. Hence, it came to pass that the fateful decision was made to place her in the care of a nursing home, Regis Brighton.

To lessen Mum's anxiety about her new accommodation, I did my best to visit Mum up to 6 days a week. Using her walker, she would enjoy accompanying me on the 200m walk to a cafe in Bay Street Brighton. She would even enjoy the sub-standard cappuccinos on offer and perhaps not entirely because she was normally greeted with a kiss from the manager, who was at least 40 years her junior.

While mother was resident in Regis Brighton, her grandson Adam married Chrissy Hatswell. Mother's first great grandchild, Lincoln was born in 2016 before being joined by his younger brother, Hudson in 2018.

I also recall that, not long after mother moved into Regis Brighton, the office manager remarked that the average tenure at a nursing home was 2.5 years. Mum ultimately settled in well into her new life in Regis Brighton in which she was resident for nearly 7 years. Once again, she batted above her weight by exceeding the average nursing home period of residency by more than a factor of two.

My brothers and I are now orphans, but each of us has benefited from our Mother's love and counsel for over 60 years. Megan, Adam, Caitlin and Amy have lost their grandmother, while Lincoln and Hudson have lost their great grandmother. For me, the sense of loss could not be greater.

Emulating the closing remarks my elder brother, John, delivered in his eulogy for our father 9 years ago, Mum was not merely the best mother we ever had, she was the best mother for whom we could ever have wished.

Mum, I loved you beyond any measure.

There are many more tributes:

From Joyce Gough

Dear Doreen,

What wonderful memories I have of our 60 year friendship beginning with Ladies' Evening Fellowship and later Banyule High School.

Your contributions to St John's Parish were numerous. No one would comment on the shiny brass at the altar which you and Eileen lovingly shined for many years but your turn on the flower roster was always commented on. It would take you two days to complete – Friday to empty the vases and collect fresh flowers and Saturday to complete the arrangements before the many brides arrived in the afternoon. As you were not known for your punctuality I think sometimes you would pass the bride in the church driveway! Whenever we were catching the train to meet up with Mona in Geelong, I always had to give you 10 minutes grace so we wouldn't miss the train.

Whenever I was celebrating a special occasion at Sevenoaks, you lovingly provided the flower arrangements and all you asked for in return was my Ginger Slice which was a favourite of yours and Frank's.

One Sunday morning at church we noticed a beautiful black dog wandering around and after you mentioned it to your

family, they went down with a length of rope and 'Shep' found a forever home for many many years. Shep even survived playing with a snake in your back garden, which gave you much pleasure, tending and working for many hours.

You were a loyal and longtime member of St John's Fellowship. Your sincere prayers and gracious demeanour while you held office as President many times, were much appreciated by all our group. You were always first to put your hand up when a home was needed for a Committee Meeting, L.E.F. Meeting or Crazy Whist Night, and the very enjoyable slide nights of your overseas travel.

Also, every year when we had our Christmas Breakups in St John's Hall, you would spend hours redecorating the statue of the Madonna for everyone to admire when they passed through the door.

We did miss your friendship when your health began to deteriorate and you were eventually cared for at Regis. Many of the L.E.F. girls enjoyed having lunch with you over the past 7 years, your birthdays were made special with Bruce's and Rose's hospitality and you were so fortunate to have the love and care of your extended family, and especially Teena.

Doreen, I treasure your cards and gifts, especially the Friendship book which you gave me many years ago. I will close with one of my favourite quotes:

*Don't walk in front of me,
I may not follow.
Don't walk behind me,
I may not lead.
Walk beside me;
And be my friend.*

My grateful thanks for our years of friendship as you are now at peace and in God's presence. Love, Joyce

From Audrey Brockfield

Over the years I've spent very happy times with my dear friend Doreen, when she would pick me up to do our duty at Open House.

She also planned the roster for the meals for the members of the LEF prepared once per month for Open House.

We went together to polish the brass at St John's as it was good to have the company and have a great chat.

We went to watch the Australian Tennis for a few years, as Doreen was given free tickets from June Sharam at the Op Shop in Rosanna.

These days were lots of fun.

I have so many happy memories of my dear friend, who was so bright and friendly with everyone she met; and she did so much charitable work.

Love, Audrey.

From Lillian Casey

I have been thinking of Doreen all day and feel so sad that we the LACH members cannot be there with Bruce to farewell her.

About 20 LACH members usually attend to farewell one of our members.

We have known Doreen for many years, meeting regularly for cards, walks and Slide evenings of which she was Convenor for several years. During these evenings husband Frank often fell asleep and Doreen

would awaken him for supper. Her cream cheese and walnut sandwiches were always the first plate to empty.

We were able to attend Frank's funeral which makes it so sad we cannot do the same for Doreen.

When Doreen moved into the village, her neighbour Bill, used to bring Doreen to our social events and as she could never manage to be on time, Bill, never known for his patience, would sit in the car muttering.

For all that we all were very fond of Doreen and will miss her.

We all send our condolences to Bruce and his brothers.

From Doreen's granddaughters

Peter wants to thank you mum (and Dad) for everything you did for us boys while we were growing up, and into our adulthood, he hopes you know how much he appreciates it. He and Tracey and the girls have wonderful, warming and funny memories of all of the times we shared together, they loved your trips to Perth, and also loved the times they spent in Melbourne, both at Heidelberg and Viewbank.

Amy in particular remembers the lovely smell of grandma and Grandpas home and how at home it made her feel, she also loves

her memories of the special shopping trips she would take with Grandma to visit the \$2.00 shop in Rosanna Road.

Caitlin says the girls feel blessed to have grown up around a side of the family that always supported their love for music and how last year, when visiting Grandma and playing Canon for her, Grandma remembered that a lovely little girl used to play that piece for her. Caitlin says that's the power that music, or at least the piano, has on our family.

Amy and Caitlin both loved attending those big family events such as your 60th wedding anniversary, where they got to hang out with all of their cousins and extended family, always lamenting when we had to go back home to WA at leaving more than half of their family behind.

Tracey thanks you for introducing her to the Heide Museum of Modern Art and its surrounding house and gardens (one of her favourite places in the world) and has many fond memories of walking through the gardens with you there.

We all would have loved to live closer together. Our drives through the hills, both in Perth and Melbourne were treasured days (sometimes very long days) and the girls loved exploring Grandma and Grandpa's

Cellar in Heidelberg looking at all of the old family treasures buried there. We will miss you very much Mum and Grandma, your always smiling voice and your big hugs.

We also want to thank Bruce, Rose and Teena for the extraordinary care they gave to you over these many years.

We love you...

From the funeral:

A Reading from the Second Letter of St Paul to Timothy, Chapter 4, verses 6–8

Read by Rose Lockie

*The time has come for me to be gone,
I have fought the good fight to the end;
I have run the race to the finish;
I have kept the faith;
All there is to come now is the crown of the
righteousness reserved for me,
which the Lord, the righteous judge,
Will give on that day,
and not only me
but all those who have longed for His
appearing.*

A video recording of the funeral may be viewed at <https://vimeo.com/channels/1619541/446672156>

FOR SALE

Because there have been no *mainly music* sessions since before Easter, we have had no attendance fees coming in. We would still like to give the families each a Christmas book as is our custom. These generally cost about \$3.75 each. We will need 50.

The Parish, too is experiencing reduced income, so I am offering 2 lightweight quilts (made from fabric remnants) for sale (with a third to come), to raise money for the Christmas books to give to the families.

Nine-patch quilt – 150 cm × 210 cm – **\$75**
(machine pieced and quilted)



Hexagon quilt – approx 90 cm × 180 cm – **\$100**
(hand pieced and quilted)



Rosemary Bellair, 9459 5394

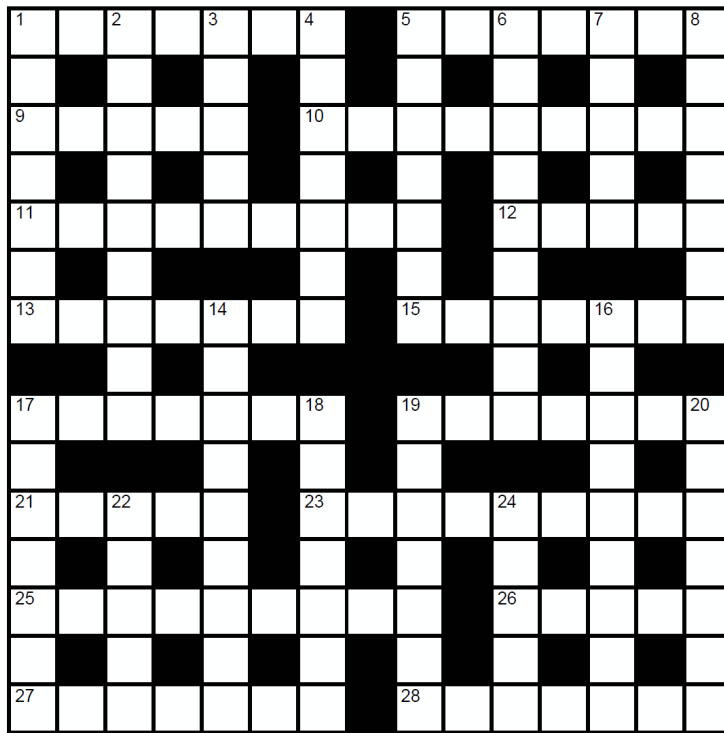
BIBLE CROSSWORD VI

Across

- 1 Purifies (7)
- 5 Tainted (7)
- 9 Forbidden objects of worship (5)
- 10 Abundant (9)
- 11 Wife of David (9)
- 12 Lift up (5)
- 13 Grapple (7)
- 15 Lack of rain (7)
- 17 Sennacherib's realm (7)
- 19 Domain (7)
- 21 Biblical clothing (5)
- 23 Supplant (9)
- 25 Announced (9)
- 26 Tamar's brother (5)
- 27 Person seeking redress for wrong (7)
- 28 Decorates (7)

Down

- 1 Colourful arc seen after the flood (7)
- 2 Forehead ornaments (9)

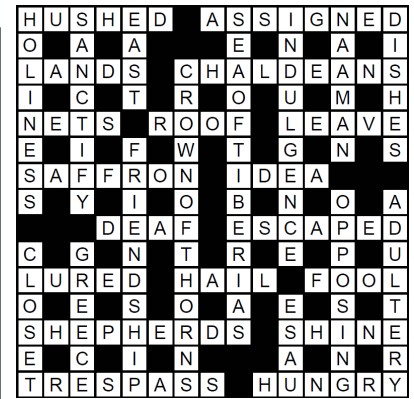


by Philologus

© BiblePuzzles.org.uk

- 3 Bird homes (5)
- 4 Greatest in status (7)
- 5 Servant (7)
- 6 Time of day (9)
- 7 Ruth's mother in law (5)
- 8 Lineage (7)
- 14 Separating wheat from chaff (9)
- 16 Legion's people (9)
- 17 King who was almost persuaded to be a Christian (7)
- 18 One more (7)
- 19 Pummelled bread (7)
- 20 Grass clippings (7)
- 22 Holy book (5)
- 24 Barter (5)

Answers to last month's puzzles:



Bible Word Search mystery answer:
GOOD WORKS

Last month's anagram:

- aceept _____ patience
- deiknss _____ kindness
- eeeglinsst _____ gentleness
- fgist _____ gifts
- aelnr _____ learn
- cefnoos _____ confess
- ehnost _____ honest
- horrstttuwy _____ trustworthy
- chirst-eikl _____ Christ-like
- aehhly _____ healthy

Bible Word Search – Philippians

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_Philippians_0.htm

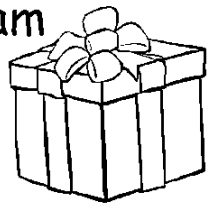
E T H E M R E P U T A T I O N
 F G O S P E L R I A M P R S O
 I R S E M A R E E K E H A E I
 R E A T C U P C C J N I S R T
 T L C E R N R H I A O L E V A
 S I R X G E A M R E E I A I C
 T A I U L L N R U O S P C C I
 R J F L O A A G B R D P O E L
 I R I T R B N D T M I I N H P
 V I C A Y O J G N H E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

- Amen, Ashamed,
- Caesar, Christ,
- Epaphroditus,
- Esteem, Exultation,
- Gladness, Glory,
- Gospel, Hope,
- Humbled, Jailer,
- Joy, Labor, Mark,
- Mercies,
- Murmurings,
- Peace, Philippi,
- Preach, Rejoice,
- Remembrance,
- Reputation,
- Resurrection,
- Riches,
- Righteousness,
- Sacrifice, Service,
- Strengtheneth,
- Strife, Strive,
- Supplication,
- Tongue

Unscramble the letters to find the words in our

A Free Gift Anagram

www.dltk-bible.com



- achiinrst _____
- aabelluv _____
- aehrt _____
- elov _____
- aeehn _____
- aeelnrt _____
- efginorv _____
- afilmy _____
- aeprry _____
- aceln _____

'Flawed Saints'

Homily for the Feast of St James

by Patrick Senn, 26 July 2020

Luke 9:51-57

Introduction

The challenges of the global pandemic have been a real test for everyone, but especially for leaders. And we have seen many leaders crack and fail under the pressure. Specifically, we have seen many flout their very own rules and restrictions. Earlier this year, the chief medical officer of Scotland resigned. The rule she set out was that you are only allowed to travel if it is absolutely necessary. She then was caught visiting her second home on a weekend. The same thing happened in New Zealand: the government gave guidelines that you only use your car for essential activities, and exercise in your local area. On the first weekend of the restrictions, the health minister drove with his family to a beach more than 20km away from his home. Another time, he was photographed riding his mountain bike outside his local area. Jacinda Ardern refused his resignation, but demoted him. And the same thing again happened in our own country: back in April when all states had lockdown restrictions in place, the NSW arts minister Don Harwin was spotted at his holiday home. He denied any wrongdoing, but was fined \$1,000 and resigned. In each of these cases, and there are others, the public cried 'Hypocrites', 'sack them', and that the law applies equally to all.

Today, we commemorate St James the Great, apostle and martyr, also someone in leadership, also someone who erred and failed. We actually already encountered James a few weeks ago in the passage where at Jesus' command a miraculous amount of fish is caught. Afterwards, Peter, James and John leave everything to follow Jesus. They hear him proclaim the kingdom of God and see its power in the healings and exorcisms. And so we come to our passage in chapter 9.

Luke 9

"As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem." The time is come for Jesus to die for the sins of the world, and he sets out for Jerusalem, the holy city, the place of his death. On their travels, Jesus sends two messengers to go ahead of him to make preparations. In the ancient world, you could not jump online and book your accommodation in advance. You need someone to physically go ahead and inquire for a place to stay. However, this is a Samaritan village! Any ancient Jewish reader would immediately see a red flag. This is the village of the enemy.

It has been said that 'relatives fight worst of all', and this is true. We all know families that treat each other worse than strangers. This is the case here: Jews considered Samaritans not real Jews, nor real Gentiles. They had some Jewish ancestry, but also Gentile. Basically, they thought of them as half-breeds. Of course, in return the Samaritans despised the Jews, and they had their own rival temple and system of worship. Just think of the profound differences in our country between the coastal cities and the rural areas. When Scott Morrison won the election

there was real shock and surprise in our big cities, and urban dwellers were dismissed as elites out of touch with the rest of the country. The Samaritans despised the Jews along with Jerusalem, with all of its elitism and snobbish superiority.

So, it is no surprise that the Samaritans did not welcome Jesus "because he was heading for Jerusalem." And this is no small thing. Still to this day, the culture of the Middle East is one of honour and hospitality. Rejecting someone like this is a scandal. Even westerners can imagine how rude it would be if you booked a hotel, turned up, and then were not welcomed.

It is here we encounter St James and his brother. Considering how shameful the rejection of the Samaritans is, we can understand their response. They have been with Jesus; they have seen his power, they know his authority. And now he has been totally wronged. Why don't we, like the great prophet Elijah, call down fire from heaven onto these rotten Samaritans. Their response also gives us an insight why they were called 'The Sons of Thunder'. But, their response is a clear failure on their part. They have followed Jesus but they clearly have not listened to him. They already forget what Jesus commands his followers: "But I say to you that listen, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you."

A Flawed Leader

Like all the leaders I mentioned earlier, there are clear guidelines for James to follow, but he quickly abandons them to maintain his own honour. The problem is not so much with leadership, but with human nature. When leaders, whether in the first or in the twenty-first century, fail, they are just doing what is normal for us. After all, we are sinners. And in recent times there have been so many, not just leaders, who flouted the rules. Think of the five young people who tried to sneak into Queensland hiding in a minivan, or the men trying to get into SA on a train, or the people having parties in their homes. We are sinners. We all have broken God's commandments, we all have done things of which we are ashamed. The leaders and people of today are no different from the leaders and people of the ancient world, including the apostles. In fact, we know James will continue to fail, asking Jesus for glory and power and ultimately forsaking him the night before his death. We also know, that James will boldly go on to proclaim the gospel, and die a martyr for his Lord. What then is the difference between him and our modern leaders?

In the recent examples of leaders who erred, they responded in two ways: one, they resigned, crushed by the law, unable to fulfil its demands, judged in condemnation. The other response, deny any wrongdoing, and justify yourself by rationalising that you have not done anything wrong after all.

The good news is that Jesus came to save sinners. For us Christians, in the communion of saints, we are not trapped between these two burdening options. It is crushing to know you have failed, condemned by the law. It is exhausting to lie to ourselves and rationalise. Jesus came to put an end to the curse of the law. He died, condemned in our

place, so that we are embraced despite our unworthiness. And it is this gift that makes the difference between St James and our modern leaders. It is the grace of God that transforms us so that we can love God, and love doing what is right, and, like St James, be resolute in following God wherever he calls us, even when it means death.

Conclusion

On this feast of St James the Great, we encounter a flawed man. Just like the leaders of our day who fail, St James also cracked under the pressure, unable to fulfil the law. This is not a problem unique to leadership, it is a problem of human nature. We are sinners, and doing the right thing, as we are constantly asked to do these days, is not natural to us.

But Christ died for us, in our place, condemned by the law. He exhausted the law's power so that we are no longer stuck between its crushing condemnation, nor our own exhausting self-justification. A Christian saint is not someone who is perfect, but someone who experiences the free grace of God and is thereby transformed.

St James experienced this grace, and because of it loved his Lord so much, even to the point that he was beheaded for it.

AMEN.



St James the Great, sculpted by Gil de Siloé, 1489-93, alabaster with gold paint

Originally from the tomb of Juan II of Castile and Isabel of Portugal, Carthusian Monastery of Miraflores; now in The Cloisters, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

Photograph by Steven Zucker

The Eighth Sunday after Trinity

2 August 2020

by Denise Nicholls

Philippians 1:3–11, 27–30

³ I thank my God every time I remember you.

⁴ In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy ⁵ because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, ⁶ being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

⁷ It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart and, whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God's grace with me. ⁸ God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus.

⁹ And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, ¹⁰ so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, ¹¹ filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.

²⁷ Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in the one Spirit, striving together as one for the faith of the gospel ²⁸ without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you. This is a sign to them that they will be destroyed, but that you will be saved—and that by God. ²⁹ For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him, ³⁰ since you are going through the same struggle you saw I had, and now hear that I still have.

Good morning, friends! As Patrick mentioned, today we start a short sermon series, throughout the month of August, on the little letter of Philippians. I thought at this time, 'I'm in need of encouragement', and I know that many of you are as well; and I could think of no better part of Scripture for us to spend some time in—as we gather worshipping God, hearing from his word and applying it to our lives—than this wonderful little book of Philippians.

As we navigate our COVID shutdown here in Melbourne, it's a great letter to read, because the apostle Paul himself wasn't so much in lockdown as in lock-up: he was in prison, probably in Rome, as he wrote this letter to his friends; and it is a letter that is full of joy. That word 'joy' is mentioned sixteen times in just these four short chapters of Scripture. He writes a letter to his friends to encourage them—and so I want to encourage you as well, over the next few weeks, to read through the letter of Philippians. Only four chapters: it will probably only take you 20 minutes. Read it each week, and be encouraged by God's word.

Today we're looking at just a small section of chapter 1, and we're looking at what Paul prays for his Philippian friends. So I want to look first of all just at **How does Paul pray?** and then **What he prays.**

But first a little bit about the church at Philippi. The church was founded by the apostle Paul, in the country of Macedonia. Philippi was a leading city—not the capital city but a leading city. It was a Roman colony. Now when we hear the word 'colony' we may well think of the very many negative conno-

tations we have of colonialism and colonisation: that idea of an imposition of power by force by one power over another and the people there. We may also think of destruction of culture that has happened with our indigenous brothers and sisters here in Australia with the colonisation of the British in the 1700s. But for the Philippians, to be a colony of Rome was something rather different. To be allowed to bear that name 'colony' was something in which they rejoiced, because it was something of which they could be proud. They were regarded as Romans—as citizens of Rome—and they had all the rights of any other citizen who is in Rome. It really meant that Philippi was a little Rome on the outskirts of the Roman Empire.

We know quite a lot about the church that was founded in Philippi from the book of Acts—how Paul brought the good news of Jesus Christ to Philippi. You can read about it in the book of Acts: and there we read about Lydia, the first convert, the woman who was a dealer in purple cloth. In Acts chapter 16, it tells us she was a worshipper of God, and that the Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message, and that she and her whole household were baptised; and she invited Paul and Timothy and those travelling with him—probably Luke the writer of Acts as well—into her home. A leading citizen of Philippi became a follower of Jesus.

During their time at Philippi as well, Paul caused quite a commotion, because there was a young woman who was a slave, and who used to make quite a lot of money for her owners by predicting the future; and as she saw Paul and his compatriots travelling around and walking around the city, she kept running after them. In Acts 16 verse 17 it tells us she followed Paul 'and the rest of us' shouting, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who are telling you the way to be saved". She recognised them as bearers of the salvation message of Jesus, coming from God. Paul got a bit tired of her haranguing him like this, so he ordered the spirit to be quiet, at which point the spirit left this woman—and so the owners of this young woman who was a slave were furious with Paul, because there had gone their money-making opportunity from their slave. This ended up with Paul and his friends in prison: they had their feet in stocks and they were put in prison.

So we had Lydia, the slave woman, and now the jailer; and what happened when they were in jail was again an extraordinary happening of the Holy Spirit. There was a great earthquake and the jailer—listen to what it says in Acts chapter 16 verses 27 and 30: the jailer woke up, and when he saw the prison doors open he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, because he thought the prisoners—Paul and his friends—had escaped; but Paul shouted, "Don't harm yourself: we are all here"; and then in verse 30 the jailer asks, "What must I do to be saved?", and Paul says, "Believe in the Lord Jesus"; and so that night the one who had been the jailer took Paul and his friends to his home, bathed their wounds, set a meal before them, and he and his whole household were baptised.

So the church at Philippi: this little church, people from different walks of life, but all believed in Jesus as their Saviour; so Paul and

Timothy and Luke, directed by the Holy Spirit, went to Philippi, and God opened people's hearts to hear the message of Jesus.

Paul, as I said, was probably in prison in Rome as he wrote this letter to his friends. They had sent a gift to him to care for his needs, by their friend Epaphroditus—and we'll hear about him later in the letter—and so Paul writes to encourage and to respond to the gift that he had received.

Sometimes we think, "How can I pray? What can I pray for somebody? How can I pray for them?" Well, let's look at HOW the apostle Paul prays for his friends in Philippi.

Even though he's in prison, he says he prays with **joy**. Verses 3 to 6: *I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.* He is thankful to God for his friends: he is thankful for their partnership in the gospel—another key word that is used throughout the Letter of Philippians. We know what the gospel is, don't we—the good news about the Lord Jesus Christ; and so Paul can say, even from being in prison, that he can pray with joy.

What gives you joy, in the midst of COVID-19, and throughout 2020 as we feel its effects? Of course we are all looking forward to the birth of baby Senn. Many of you have commented on how joyous it will be to welcome a baby into our midst. Watching Mabel play with other dogs, getting filthy dirty in the mud, gives me joy in seeing her just be in the moment, and to be what she is, just a dog enjoying life. Joy: it is something that is wonderful; but the joy that Paul speaks of is even more wonderful, as he speaks of joy in Christ Jesus. He speaks of God's work in their lives—the evidence of God's work in their lives because they have been partnered with him in the spread of the gospel. Here was a little church who, having grasped the reality of what it is to be known by the true and living God and brought into his family through his Son the Lord Jesus Christ, will do everything to try and share this good news with others; and so they supported Paul financially and prayerfully in his ministry.

Paul is also confident that he can pray with joy, because he knows that God will keep them safe, as he is. He will bring them to completion because they share in God's grace with him. He says in verse 7 'all of you share in God's grace with me'. It's not as though the apostle is the only one who has received God's grace, but all of his children, the people of Philippi. So Paul prays with joy.

We can also pick up that he prays for them **frequently**. 'Every time I remember you—it's not as though he forgets about them sometimes, but when they are brought to mind he prays for them.

He prays for **all** of them. He doesn't just have favourites within the church, whether it be the jailer, or Lydia, or anybody else: he prays for all of them; and we see how important that is later on in the letter, where we see that there's some tension between two of the key women leaders in the church. And he prays for them with the affection of Christ Jesus: that overflowing love that is from God himself, and allows us to love our brothers and sisters in Christ.

So how can we pray as we apply this to our lives, if we model our prayers on the apostle Paul? In our prayers for people, we should be praying **frequently**: that means, regularly. Not once a year regularly, but all the time, every day. We should be praying with **joy**, knowing what God has done in our lives, and as we see what he is doing still, in the lives of our brothers and sisters here at church, in the lives of people throughout the world. We should be praying with affection for **all** Christian brothers and sisters within our wide church family. I know that you do that as you pray for Tavis and Kate and for Suse; how we have shared ministry with them, and how we have partnered with them in their work of sharing the good news of Jesus with people in the Northern Territory, and equipping our indigenous brothers and sisters in their work, and for the people of Southeast Asia. And we should also be praying for the breadth of the church, with all with whom we share God's grace.

So how does Paul pray, and how can we pray? With joy, with faithfulness and trust in God.

Secondly, WHAT is it that Paul prays for them? Sometimes we can say, "Well, I don't know what to pray—I don't know how to pray". It's great sometimes when I say to people, "How can I pray for you? What's happening in your life?" Sometimes people are a bit taken aback: "Oh—oh—oh—you really want to know what's happening for me?" We should be asking people how we can pray for them.

Yes, of course we can bring our individual and our immediate concerns to God. We regularly have our prayer list in our church bulletin updated, so we can bring those brothers' and sisters' specific needs before God in prayer—and that's right, because God is interested in you, as he is interested in all his children, and all his creation. But as all the prayers of scripture do, this prayer that Paul prays for his friends in Philippi lifts our eyes beyond the everyday and immediate, to the things that are also on God's agenda.

Let's see what he says: it's in verses 9 through to 11. This is what Paul prays: *that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.* What a great prayer! This is a great prayer that we can pray for each other; for our church leaders. Paul's saying that their love may abound: may be **growing**. It's not that it stays at one size—their knowledge and love with God, and their depth of insight into their salvation, and into the Bible story of salvation—it's that their love for God, and Jesus, and all God's people, would be *abounding*. It's growing: it's a seed metaphor—that it starts and continues to grow and bear fruit.

So he's praying that they would grow in faith. He's praying that the excitement of having to come to know Jesus as their Lord and Saviour would give them an insatiable thirst for more. For us too, as we keep growing in faith, what will help us is to keep returning to where we find the stories of faith. We need to read and study our Bibles as we come before God in prayer. That will enable

our love to be abounding—to be growing—in our knowledge and depth of insight into whose we are and who our great God is, and his desires for us, his desires for his world.

He prays that they may be abounding in love and growing in depth of insight and knowledge, so that they can discern what is best. I wonder, how does our knowledge of God through his word—through his Spirit—how does our knowledge of God and the Lord Jesus Christ shape our lives? Does it inform our lives? Paul prays for his friends that they would grow in knowledge, so that they could discern: make good and wise and right decisions in every part of their lives. So for us: what we read in Scripture should inform our minds, our hearts, and our prayers, so that we ask God to guide us to have good discernment, based upon what we read in his Word.

And he prays this so that they would be pure and blameless on the day of Christ, ready for the day of the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. He's not asking them to pray for sinless perfectionism, but rather, knowing that they are filled with the spirit of righteousness already that comes through the Lord Jesus Christ, that that will be what they put on—that would be like their little surplice that they put on; and that they are filled with the fruit of Christ's righteousness: not their own, but trusting in Jesus.

Again and again in this letter, you will see that it always and forever comes back to Jesus' work in the lives of his people. And so Paul encourages them in this. It always comes back to Jesus' work in us, and it always redounds to the praise and glory of God. It is Jesus who does the work in his people, and who will keep them pure and blameless as they grow in knowledge and love of him.

In the middle of the chapter—please read that for yourself—Paul talks about the reality of his own situation: of that there were some competitors to him; that he himself was in chains for proclaiming the gospel; and he says to them he'd love to be restored to them. But then in verse 27 he says, *whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ.* In times of joyfulness,

in times of struggle and suffering, whether Paul is released or not, he encourages his Christian friends to conduct themselves in ways that are worthy of the gospel—that good news of the Lord Jesus Christ.

This prayer that he prays for them is a model of prayer for each of us and for each other, that we too would live lives in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. In our times of COVID, when we are uncomfortable in our masks, walking along the street with our glasses fogging up, as we long for an end to level 3 restrictions and want to go back to catching up with friends over a cup of coffee or a meal, for us as God's people, in this time, in this place, how can we glorify God in Melbourne, in our own suburbs and situations, here, in this month, in 2020?

We all have God's grace already; and so Paul encourages his friends to display that grace—most importantly for today, pray for each other and for ourselves, that we would grow in the knowledge and love of God, that we may be abounding in this knowledge, so that we can discern what is best. Be pure and blameless, and be filled with the fruit of the righteousness through Christ, and that this would result in praise and honour to God. Paul always brings everything back—our apostle is so wise: God's made him very wise—and he brings everything back to the person and work of Jesus. He encourages his friends that this is their Lord whom they serve, and so that's why he can pray for them this prayer, knowing that God by his Spirit will equip his people to live out whose they are.

I'm going to conclude by praying for us this prayer: *Our God, we pray for each other and for ourselves, that our love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that we may be able to discern what is best, and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God. Amen.*

Please do be praying through and reading through the letter of Philippians in the next few weeks. I'm sure you will find it really encouraging.



Social distancing baptism (courtesy of Glenn Farrington)

The Ninth Sunday after Trinity

9 August 2020

by Denise Nicholls

Philippians 2:1–13

Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion,² then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind.³ Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves,⁴ not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

⁵ In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

⁶ who, being in very nature God,

did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;

⁷ rather, he made himself nothing

by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

⁸ And being found in appearance as a man,

he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death – even death on a cross!

⁹ Therefore God exalted him to the highest place

and gave him the name that is above every name,

¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

¹¹ and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

¹² Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed – not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence – continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling,¹³ for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfil his good purpose.

Well, especially this week we keep hearing, 'We're all in this together'. The cry of 2020 in the 'coronamide' times, that we are in this together; except of course when it violates my plans, or interferes with what I perceive as my rights; except when it's inconvenient for me to wear a mask, or to stay socially distant, or to obey the rules and stay where we should. Right now we are in the midst of stage four restrictions (from Wednesday night they kick in) and we will be in this time for six weeks. We need to be doing what we can to obey the guidelines that have been set before us, in care of all in our community. We've had messages of unity from far afield which is lovely.

Today we turn to the beautiful passage of Philippians 2: this hymn or poem to the Lord Jesus Christ; and in this wonderful little section of Philippians, it's an encouragement that the apostle gives to his friends about how they are in it together with Christ—they are united with Christ—and how that unity is to play out in every part of their lives. Today we're just going to look at two very brief points: 1. **Unity with Christ**; and 2. **The model of Christ's service**.

First of all, unity with Christ, looking here at verses 1 to 4 then 12 to 14. In verse 1 Paul reminds his friends in Philippi that they are already united with Christ. He says to them in verse 1 *if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, [if] any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, and if any tenderness and compassion*. Paul here is reiterating the fact that his friends in

Philippi, who have trusted in Jesus as Lord, who have come into the kingdom of God—they have unity with Christ already; and so he encourages them in that. He encourages them, knowing that they have Christ's love (and they know that because they have the comfort of Christ's love); that they share in the same spirit; and in this sentence Paul uses a series of question-like statements, and the phrasing of it in the original language is all expecting the answer **yes**—a bit like a rhetorical question for us.

Because they have that unity with Christ, because they do share in the same spirit, because they do have the comfort of Christ's love, then the unity that they have with Jesus means that they have unity with each other, as part of God's family through Christ.

In verse 2 he goes on: *then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind*. They are to be like-minded in their faith. Of course this isn't saying that they are to be clones, and all dressed the same way, and all have the same likes about food and such. They can have their own views; except with all these differences, the thing that binds them together is this one thing: their common faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and that they share in Christ's heart, mind, and spirit.

We know that as well, don't we? Think of all the churches that you have been to across your life: whether you've been here, a member of the Banyule parish, at St John's or St Andrew's or Holy Spirit, for 60 years, or 10 years, or five years, or whether you've come here later and you've been a member of other churches—you know that we're not all the same. Patrick and I often joke about the fact that he and I are so different! We're different in many ways; and yet the bond that we share is the bond of having that same Christ as Lord—we are like-minded in our faith.

Well what does this look like? Paul speaks to his friends in verses 3 & 4 how this unity is shown out. Verses 3 & 4: *Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others*. In the Roman world—and remember Philippi was a Roman colony so they glory in all things Roman: they were very nationalistic about Rome—in the Roman world humility was a weakness; and yet for Christ and his followers humility is what we seek to display, for it's what our Lord displayed. Humility isn't putting ourselves down; rather, as that wonderful writer C.S. Lewis has said, 'Humility is not thinking less of yourself, but thinking of yourself less': putting others first.

In verses 12 & 13 at the end of our reading today, it tells us this is how we are to live out our faith: this is how our faith shows out in our lives. And it's not something we do on our own, willing ourselves to be godly, willing ourselves to be humble. No, in verse 13 Paul encourages his friends: *for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfil his good purpose*. It is always God's work within us. We do not rely on ourselves—we can't revive ourselves—we always rely on God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit; and it is the Holy Spirit of God who is working within us to will and to act according to the good purposes of God the Father.

Well secondly, Paul moves to this beautiful hymn of praise to the Lord Jesus. You know, what's been really interesting is even in the last few years there's been a new job that is quite influential in the world. I've even seen on the internet that people style themselves as being an 'influencer'—a social media influencer. That can be their job from which they can make money. A role model for others: someone to emulate. We all know role models in our lives, don't we, positive and negative. During the civil rights campaign in the 50s and 60s in the USA, Martin Luther King Jr had that attitude of non-violence and non-violent protests, and his followers emulated him as a role model and also adopted that attitude of non-violence; as did Gandhi and many other people—positive role models.

We know that there can be negative role models as well, and that often young people in the media are accused of doing the wrong thing, that they should know that they are a role model to the younger generation. I'm thinking particularly of our footballers: those young men and women who by dint of being very good at their profession of being a footballer, have to take in mind that they also will have young people who will look to them; and unfortunately as they, like we, have feet of clay, we see that they too will fall short, breaking the law, or even the COVID restrictions just recently. These aren't good role models.

Now for us, Jesus is our model of life. Let me be clear and say, though, that Jesus is not *just* a role model for life. Some people who aren't followers of Jesus—don't proclaim to be Christians—say, "Well, Jesus is a good model: that's how we should live". No, Christians affirm that Jesus Christ is our Saviour. He is our Lord and King. But he is also a model for his disciples: his followers—us, his people—and his model is one of humility.

We have these clear instructions from our apostle Paul in verse 5: *In your relationships with each other, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus*; and here we move to that beautiful poem in verses 6 through to 11. This poem which speaks of the cross of Christ, and the meaning of the cross of Christ, and what it cost the Lord Jesus.

Verse 6: *Jesus Christ who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross*. Here we have this song of praise to the Lord Jesus, who speaks of him as true God and true man, the one who was with God from eternity, the one who was totally equal with God, very God and very human. And rather than exploit his 'God-ness', his divinity, rather than use this for his own ends, he laid aside his rights and his own interests in service of humanity. He became a living breathing human being. More than that, he became a servant. More than that, he became that place of humiliation and faced even death, even the cursed death on the cross; and on the cross he stands in the place of all humanity—which is why he can truly proclaim, as he lay truly dying, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

In your relationships with each other, have that same mindset as Christ Jesus, not

seeking to exploit his own position, his own authority, his own power, but he became humble and laid it aside, in service of others.

The hymn continues (verse 9): *Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.* The Lord Jesus who laid aside his power, his authority, who took on our human nature, who died, who was resurrected and ascended, has been exalted by the heavenly Father himself. He is truly Lord, before whom every knee should bow, and every tongue will confess, at one point, that Jesus is Lord, and that will be to the glory of God the Father. There's that image in Scripture in the Book of Revelation on that last day, that all people who have ever lived will acknowledge that, yes, Jesus is Lord.

This is our Lord, whom we follow, whom we love, and this is what the Lord Jesus did for us. This is how we have become united with him, and with each other, through our Christian faith, and this is to be the mindset of humility that we Christians are to show towards one another, and so it's right that we praise and worship our crucified, risen, ascended and exalted Saviour and King Jesus Christ, in very nature God, who did this for us.

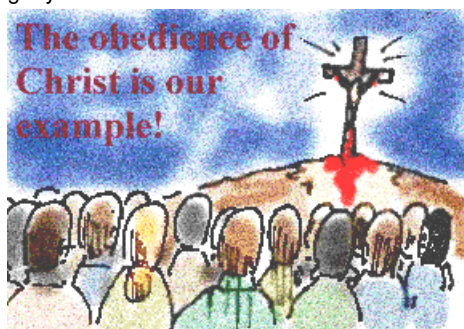
So as God's people, as we look at this wonderfully encouraging book of Philippians, we see that the Lord Jesus Christ is the model of how we are to live. It is he who has secured our unity with him and with each other, and because of him and his Holy Spirit living with us, we can serve each other, and ask that God will continue to make us like Jesus in humility.

This week as I've been preparing this sermon, there's a lovely song that was written in 1998 by a young bloke in Australia called Mark Peterson, and I'm just going to sing that song to you now:

*Jesus Christ, in very nature God,
Did not grasp hold of His place on the throne,
But took on the nature of a servant,
Made himself nothing, born as a man.
Being found in appearance as a man,
He was obedient to death on a cross.
There he died, God the Son, the maker,
A humble servant, showing the way.*

*Therefore God exalted him
to the highest place
And gave him the name above all names,
So that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bow,
In heaven and on earth
and under the earth,
And every tongue confess
That Jesus is Lord,
To the glory of God the Father.*

We confess that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.



Paul, Timothy and Epaphroditus

16.8.20 (During the Lockdown)

by Helen McAlley

Philippians 2: 14–30

¹⁴ Do everything without grumbling or arguing, ¹⁵ so that you may become blameless and pure, 'children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation.' Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky ¹⁶ as you hold firmly to the word of life. And then I will be able to boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labour in vain. ¹⁷ But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service coming from your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you. ¹⁸ So you too should be glad and rejoice with me.

¹⁹ I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, that I also may be cheered when I receive news about you. ²⁰ I have no one else like him, who will show genuine concern for your welfare. ²¹ For everyone looks out for their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ.

²² But you know that Timothy has proved himself, because as a son with his father he has served with me in the work of the gospel. ²³ I hope, therefore, to send him as soon as I see how things go with me. ²⁴ And I am confident in the Lord that I myself will come soon.

²⁵ But I think it is necessary to send back to you Epaphroditus, my brother, co-worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger, whom you sent to take care of my needs.

²⁶ For he longs for all of you and is distressed because you heard he was ill. ²⁷ Indeed he was ill, and almost died. But God had mercy on him, and not on him only but also on me, to spare me sorrow upon sorrow. ²⁸ Therefore I am all the more eager to send him, so that when you see him again you may be glad and I may have less anxiety. ²⁹ So then, welcome him in the Lord with great joy, and honour people like him, ³⁰ because he almost died for the work of Christ. He risked his life to make up for the help you yourselves could not give me.

A few years ago, my husband Peter and I were on holiday in Clare South Australia, with our daughter Sophie and her family. One evening we sat outside with a fire, over which we roasted marshmallows. As we sat there, we watched the stars coming out, it seemed one by one. How beautiful they were, and how brilliant the evening sky was as it got darker; and the stars seemed so much brighter than they are in the big capital cities. God made the stars and we should praise Him for His wonderful and amazing creation.

In our reading today from Philippians, we find Paul writing to his beloved fellow-Christians at Philippi:

'Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe as you hold out the word of life.'

We are to be like those beautiful stars; and how is that to happen?

We are to do everything without complaining or arguing. Paul's readers would have been well aware of those Old Testament stories of the Israelites who continually complained to Moses and also to God: 'We have no food to eat. We have no water. You've sent us out to die in the wilderness'.

The Israelites had seen so many amazing demonstrations of God's power, yet they refused to trust Him to supply their basic needs. In their murmuring and complaining, they were saying in effect to God, 'We don't trust You to look after us'. As we look at their situation we might think, 'How can they be so lacking in faith?' But are we any different from what they were? All of us could probably recall times when we have been especially conscious of God's goodness and guidance in our lives, yet so often, when a new test comes, we act as if God could not, or would not, help us in that situation. We may murmur and complain about our circumstances and enjoy rehearsing our problems to others. Our behaviour is sinful and it can be a bad habit that we have got into. We need to confess our sin to the Lord and ask Him to help us to trust Him whatever we are facing. This doesn't mean of course that we never share our problems with others, but we need to do it with the affirmation that we know that the Lord will help us in that situation. Sometimes we might say to the Lord, 'I don't know how I'll get out of this situation, but I'm trusting You to help me and I refuse to worry about it'. This can become a new habit that can replace that old complaining one, and as we practice the habit, it becomes second nature to us to trust rather than to blame our Lord.

As we practise this habit, in a world which Paul describes as 'crooked and depraved' we 'shine like stars as we 'hold out the word of life'. Our trust in the Lord becomes a witness to others. They see that we are different and, as we share our faith with them, when appropriate, they too may want to know more about our wonderful Lord.

The Israelites were an example of what not to do as God's people. But there are three people in our passage today who are good examples for us to follow and they are Paul himself, Timothy and Epaphroditus.

Paul is writing from prison. It would not have been a nice place to be. And he knew that at the end of his imprisonment, he would probably face martyrdom. And that is what actually happened. Paul does not focus on this as we might expect. For many years, he has focused on the Lord, and now that he is in trouble, we might call this his automatic reaction or a response that had become habitual. He thinks of the Philippians eager that they continue in the faith. As he thinks of their service for God which has resulted from their faith, he writes, 'I am glad and rejoice with all of you'.

We can learn from Paul here. When things are difficult, we need to remember that whatever happens, whether we live or whether we die even, we are the Lord's and He will care for us. Like Paul, we can trust in the Lord and can continue the work He has called us to do. I love that verse, 'Trust in the Lord and do good'. We can know that the Lord has our worries and concerns in mind and can think of what we can do to help or support others. At this time of COVID, it may be something simple like ringing someone who is feeling lonely and vulnerable, it may be praying for others or it maybe praying for and supporting missionaries, which is exactly what the Philippians were doing as they supported Paul and sent a gift so that his needs could be met. Maybe they had learned from Paul how to care for others.

Then we have the wonderful example of Timothy. Paul describes Timothy with these words:

'I have no one else like him who takes an interest in your welfare. For everyone looks out for his own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. But you know that Timothy has proved himself, because, as a son with his father, he has served me in the work of the gospel.'

Paul did not have biological children, but Timothy was like a son to him. As with Paul, Timothy's story inspires us to look beyond our own needs and interests and to think instead of the interests of Jesus. Timothy would have had many situations in which he made the decision to be faithful, and over time, it would have become his automatic reaction to put the work of God first. With God's help, we also can choose to put the Lord first in our lives.

And then we have Epaphroditus. The Philippian Christians were so grateful to Paul for bringing them the gospel that they decided to support him financially. They sent this gift with Epaphroditus who was a member of their own congregation. They also decided that Epaphroditus would help Paul with his domestic skills while Paul was under house arrest. Paul describes him to the Philippians as 'your messenger whom you sent to take care of my needs'.

Some time after leaving Philippi, Epaphroditus had fallen ill. The commentator G.B. Baird believes he fell ill on the road from Philippi to Rome, where Paul was. His friends in Philippi got to hear of his illness. Maybe someone coming in the opposite direction warned them that Epaphroditus had become ill and would not be able to minister to Paul as they had hoped. He may have asked that the church send someone to collect the gift and take it on to Paul. The church members were distressed at the news they got about him, but were not able to provide a replacement. Epaphroditus did recover, however, and was able to complete the journey to Rome, but he knew his friends in Philippi would be anxious about him. He was eager now to stay with Paul and be of service to him as was the original plan. But Paul knew that his friends in Philippi would be anxious about him and wanted him to return home, rather than selfishly keeping him in Rome. We too need to learn to be unselfish like that.

Paul explains further that this faithful servant had been ill and indeed had almost died, explaining, 'He almost died for the work of Christ, risking his life to make up for the help you could not give me'.

Along with Paul and Timothy, Epaphroditus is such a wonderful example to us today. He considered his own needs as secondary to the work of supporting his wonderful friend and missionary Paul. He was willing to die for the work of Christ. Can we too see the work of Christ as being of paramount importance so that we are willing to do whatever God shows us, to be obedient, with his help, in every one of life's situations? It means for us to keep close to the Lord in prayer and being familiar with His word and being willing to obey any promptings of the Holy Spirit.

Shall we pray: *Dear Lord. We thank you for the wonderful examples of Paul, Timothy and Epaphroditus, ordinary people like us, who made the decision to put you first in their lives. May we too put you first in our own lives? And help us especially to do all things without murmuring or complaining, so that we will shine like stars in the world and may we have many opportunities to share the gospel with others.*

We pray in the wonderful name of Jesus. Amen.



Epaphroditus, 15th C

PRAYER IN A TIME OF EPIDEMIC DISEASE

Lord Jesus Christ, healer and friend, come and care for all of us through the danger and uncertainty of the coronavirus epidemic.

To people who are sick, bring healing.

To people who are displaced, isolated, or cut off from family, friends or work, bring comfort and companionship.

Work with medical staff as they care for the sick, and protect them from harm.

Give skill and fruitful research to scientists as they search for treatments, prevention and a cure.

To public health authorities, give wisdom to decide the best ways to manage both this crisis and our anxieties.

When communities are fearful, give a calm spirit, and kindness to neighbours and strangers.

Through this testing time, and through all the risks we face together, teach us once again how we can love one another as you have loved us.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

A prayer for each day at 1900 hours as we offer prayers for our nation, amidst COVID-19

Gracious God,

We give thanks anew for your providence and presence.

We prayerfully seek your grace, amidst COVID-19 here and overseas.

We pray for those in need of healing.

We pray for your peace with those who are anxious or grieving.

We pray you will continue to strengthen and sustain all those who are serving in response.

We pray for your Holy Spirit's discernment amidst the many choices and decisions facing our national, community and medical leaders.

We pray we each might see quickly what more we can do to help those who are vulnerable.

This prayer for our nation in the family of nations, with all that is on our hearts, we gather now and pray through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

The Eleventh Sunday after Trinity

23 August 2020

by Denise Nicholls

Philippians 3:1–12

Further, my brothers and sisters, rejoice in the Lord! It is no trouble for me to write the same things to you again, and it is a safeguard for you. ² Watch out for those dogs, those evildoers, those mutilators of the flesh. ³ For it is we who are the circumcision, we who serve God by his Spirit, who boast in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh — ⁴ though I myself have reasons for such confidence.

If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: ⁵ circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; ⁶ as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless.

⁷ But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸ What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ — the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. ¹⁰ I want to know Christ — yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, ¹¹ and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.

¹² Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.

If you were asked to prove your identity, you might reach for a number of documents: either a birth certificate, a passport, a driver's license, or something of the like. What about if you were asked to prove your faith? Well, some of us wear a cross and we might point to that; or some people might have a fish sticker on the back of their car—that used to be very common in the late 1900s like the 1980s and 90s; or it might be some behaviour that you do, such as abstaining from alcohol or other things.

Is there something to which we can point as a physical example of faith in Christ? Well, there's not. Whether we wear a cross or not, whether we have a fish on our car or not, our faith in Christ—our inclusion in the people of God—is simply based upon our faith in the Lord Jesus.

I had Mabel at the vet this week, and as I spoke to the surgeon before he was about to operate on her—she's fine now, thank you—but I did say to him I'd been praying for God to guide his hands, and I was delighted by his response. He said, "Oh, I'm a Christian too. I'm a Catholic, and I pray every time I scrub up for every surgery, that God would guide my hands for these precious little pets" of the people that he's working on.

Whether we wear something as a symbol is neither here nor there. In fact, do we need to do *anything* to ensure that we trust in the Lord Jesus Christ? We need to do nothing except have faith in Jesus.

The situation for Paul's friends in Philippi—the Gentile Christians who had come to put their faith in Jesus—Paul was worried that some other Christian believers might come and tell them that they needed to obey the Old Testament Law as well: that they needed to keep the Torah, along with the deal of circumcision, to be a real deal Christian. They expected that Christians had to follow all the commandments of the Torah; but Paul is very strong in this beautiful section of Philippians, where he says to his friends, “It is only Christ: you need add nothing to him”, and so he encourages them to rejoice in the Lord.

So we'll just look at three brief points today: how Paul encourages his friends to rejoice in Christ alone and gives them a warning; he gives them an example from his own life; and then he praises God for God's gift of righteousness through Christ.

Firstly, verses 1 to 3 of our passage. A familiar theme in Philippians that Paul returns to: joy—an outpouring of joy—in the salvation that Jesus has brought to them. So he says, “Rejoice in the Lord!” Further, he says it's no problem for him to say these same things again to them, to remind them that their faith, and their inclusion in the people of God, is all because of the Lord Jesus Christ; and in fact he says it's a safeguard for them, to remind them that they need only Jesus. They don't need to add anything to Christ, despite how ‘good’ those things may seem.

Well, Paul launches, after he says to his friends to rejoice in the Lord, he launches into a warning with very strong language. In our version it says, ‘Watch out for those dogs, those evildoers, those mutilators of the flesh’. In the original Greek, Paul says, “Watch out for them! Watch out for them! Watch out for them!”, three times. What was happening here is that the Philippians weren't trying to be tempted away from following Jesus, but it was an internal fight among the early Christian believers, those who had all put their trust in Jesus, some from a Jewish background and some from a Gentile background. Now of course the Jewish background people were used to following the Torah. They were used to those signs of membership of God's people—circumcision for the men—but Paul was concerned that this same influence might come to the people in Macedonia, and that they might be encouraged that they too had to obey the Torah with circumcision to have that physical sign and seal that they were indeed the people of God.

But contrary to that, Paul identifies with his Gentile Christian brothers and sisters. He says in verse 3, “It is we who are the circumcision, we who serve God by his Spirit, who boast in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh”. Circumcision was a rite practiced by not only Jews but also some Arabs in the ancient world; but for the Jews (and we know, still today) it's a key symbol of their inclusion in God's people of the Jewish nation. But Paul says here: true circumcision, true inclusion in the people of God, is not because of a physical sign or something done to the body, to the flesh; but only by God's holy people—whether they are Jewish background or Gentile background—boasting only in Christ Jesus, who serve God by the Spirit.

It's interesting, isn't it: even though the word ‘Trinity’ is not mentioned in the Bible, we have the idea of the Trinity even here in

this one verse, where it speaks of God, the Spirit, and Christ Jesus (Messiah Jesus).

Paul was worried that for these Philippian Christians, they might be tempted to see this as an attraction as—well, probably not so much for the men—but as a physical emblem of them belonging to Christ, a true mark. But Paul says, no, the contrary.

So point two: Paul, the true blue Jew (verses 4–8). I don't know if you know that musical *Annie Get Your Gun* and *Anything You Can Do I Can Do Better*: that song where people are one-upping each other on what they can do. ‘I can shoot a sparrow, with a bow and arrow’; and I forget what Howard Keel says in response—look it up on YouTube, it's a fun old movie. But Paul here, he lists out, he enumerates, he gives a list of, seven things. He says, “Look, I know all about obeying the Torah. I know about doing things according to the flesh”. He says, “Listen to me, I know all about this—as if that was important”. He is the real deal.

And so this image we have, is of Paul listing out his ‘credits’: what he could claim as something good that he has done. A bit like on your bank statement—you know, we have that great thing of *credit* when money goes into our bank statement or into our superannuation, and then we have the *debit* when the money goes out; so we've got a ledger of credit and debit, profit and loss. Paul says listen to the things that he can claim as credit: circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews—no blow-in, no convert, the real deal—, scrupulous in obeying the law (that's why he belonged to the Pharisees), zealous for God's name (which is why he persecuted the church), and according to obedience—the righteousness that came from the Law—he could say that he was faultless.

So he says this list of things that were to his credit. But then in verse 7 he shifts to what he now considers loss. He says, “But whatever were the gains to me, I now consider them loss, for the sake of Christ”. What is more, he says, “I consider *everything* a loss, because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ”.

What he used to glory in—those physical badges of honour, that keeping of the law—he says he now considers garbage, or dung. He says it's useless now, it can be thrown out: not even useful for recycling (in our terms), it has to go straight to landfill, compared with knowing Christ Jesus as Lord, the Lord in whom we and they rejoice.

And that's why he said to his friends, “Rejoice in the Lord! Not in your keeping of the law, but only in Christ Jesus”. What he used to consider gain, what he used to glory in, is now of no use, compared with the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus his Saviour. And no wonder he encourages his friends to rejoice in the Lord.

I wonder if there are some things we need to let go of, some things that we glory in? Whether it is our church attendance (even though that's a great thing), whether it is wearing a cross, or clearly identifying as a Christian. They're fine things; but we know that those things don't matter a whit, except for the Lord Jesus.

Thirdly, Paul praises God for the righteousness through Christ, and how that is God's gift to you. In verses 9–12, he explains to his friends that being part of God's chosen people, being part of God's family, inclusion in the kingdom of God, is not through obeying the law—the Torah—but is God's gift through Christ Jesus.

In verses 9–10 Paul continues “. . . and being found in him (that is, Christ), not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. Yes, I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death”. Paul wipes away all the credit. He's willing to do that: he says he has lost everything, for the surpassing greatness to know and be known by Christ Jesus, to be in Christ, united with the Lord Jesus; and that this is a gift that God gives to his people—that inclusion in God's family and the people of God.

Notice, too, Paul does not shy away from Jesus' death, his sufferings, or his resurrection—but rather, this is the basis of salvation that he tells his friends; this is the basis of their righteousness, their ‘right-ness’ with God. Nothing that they can do in their flesh, or enact, but simply trust and faith in the Lord Jesus.

And so Paul can say, knowing that Christ Jesus has taken hold of him, he presses on, presses on in life—remember he's in prison—but he presses on towards the goal, to win the prize for which Christ Jesus took hold of him.

What comfort to know that Jesus has taken hold of us. In my early twenties, when I had first become a Christian, I was quite worried that I couldn't hold on to Jesus, and actually said to the curate at the time, with whom I was quite friendly in my church, “What if I can't hold on to Jesus? You know, what if I can't do it?” and he looked at me and he shook his head. He said, “You don't have to do it, Jesus holds on to you”. Aaah, what a relief! Praise God that Jesus is the one to hold on to us.

And that's what Paul says in this last section that we're looking at. He presses on in life, keeping trusting in Jesus, so that he keeps taking hold of Jesus; but Jesus has taken hold of him. Jesus keeps hold of us. Yes of course we are to walk in obedience; but everything we have is a gift from God.

Now I don't know much about mathematics, but I do know this one thing: if we want to add anything to the cross of Christ, as something we need to do to make it effective, then we've taken away. In the Christian gospel, to add to Jesus, is to subtract from him.

Rather, we see in this section what Paul is doing: he's laying out for his friends what Jesus has done for them. Christ Jesus has accomplished everything for us. We *are* in God's family. We don't need to have any confidence in the flesh, we don't need to wear a symbol, or keep the Old Testament Law. There's nothing that we do! Our **confidence** is only in the gift of God, the gift of righteousness that he gives to his people, through the Lord Jesus Christ. And so, as Paul encourages his friends, I encourage you today, this week, to rejoice in the Lord who has done all this for you. Amen.

Parish Council Notes

Zoom meeting of Monday 20th July

COVID-19

- Parish was supposed to open this Sunday.
- Another possible \$5000 grant: to investigate.
- Group met on re-opening, now delayed by the second lockdown.

Finance report

- Emmi will contact Sue Ellen to ensure she is receiving JobKeeper payments.
- People have been very generous in giving. Our finances are OK.
- We are especially thankful to Emmi for her extra work during this time in securing us the government grant, while at the same time being a frontline health worker.

2020 Property review deferred to next meeting

Op Shop

- Discussion with BSL re MOU or contract: still waiting on a beginning document.

Vicar's report

- Have been feeling quite 'down' the last month or so, don't feel I have been as productive. Closure of NSW border cut me off from family and most friends: felt angry then sad.
- My friend Evonne died from a brain tumour. Funeral thankfully live streamed.
- The prayerful support of Patrick, and weekly Zoom catch up and prayer with buddies, have supported me greatly. Used Diocese's professional support program, found it helpful.
- Starting to feel more like myself again, looking forward to put-off strategic tasks.
- Philip Trowse asked for his name to be taken off Holy Spirit board...maybe St John's too?
- Baby Senn's arrival is imminent! When born, Patrick will take 3 weeks paternity leave. I've planned a 4-week program on Philipians.
- Church opening – who knows?!?
- Zoom meeting re *mainly music*. Looking good for 2021 at Watsonia and Rosanna, but too few to restart Heidelberg this year. I want to work towards a solution for 2021.
- Sunday Club has had 3 weeks break, will restart Sunday 26 July.
- Thursday Bible study has resumed – using the sermon for the week.
- Face-to-face visits stymied by the move back to level 3 COVID measures. Phone calls and texts from parishioners indicate thankfulness for our online ministry.

Wardens' report

- *New diocesan safety inspection 1st July*
– That we hunted the reports up and started addressing things is points to us, but much of what we did was found to be wrong. Incident report forms from diocesan website were the wrong ones. FES has not put the right fire extinguisher signs up, though paid to.
– Draft evacuation diagram made, got feedback.
– Told we can't use photoluminescent signs at Holy Spirit (though fine elsewhere), because high-maintenance illuminated type is in Certificate of Occupancy. Will see if it is possible to amend the Certificate.
– New safety reports have been sent to us.
- Need to organise a safety induction system, since safety equipment is usually not visible from worship areas.
- Andrew collecting information on our bills; will investigate Diocese's cheaper utilities plans.
- New email addresses to be available soon.

57 Gloucester Drive

- Heater has now been serviced.
- Upstairs shower repair completed.
- Oven blew a fuse. Could not find the cause, but now working again.
- Lease expires 20th September. Tenants to be offered a further lease, but house may be needed for the next curate.

St John's

- Guttering to be cleared.
- Car park: 2 quotes. Find, consult civil engineer.

30 Invermay Grove

- Carport quote confirmed, expects July start.

80 Watsonia Rd

- 'See-out' fabric suggested for front awnings.

Holy Spirit

- Rubbish behind op shop cleared.
- Nothing from BSL.
- Report of overflowing church gutter in heavy rain: blocked downpipe? To investigate.

General Business

- Training on using the defibrillator will cost \$20 a head. We'll pay for hall users to do it.
- St Peter's Knayana continues to stream from their parsonage for now.

Zoom meeting of Monday 24th August

Child safety, professional standards

- All parents of children in Zoom Sunday School filled in form. Parents present in background during sessions.

Finance report

- To deposit cash & cheques in safe into bank.
- Hold AGM electronically, or delay it to early next year? Emmi has no preference.

Vicar's report

- Thankful for the support of Parish Council – my mood and outlook is much improved, feel so much myself again.
- Series on Philipians has been well received, and both Bible study and the Sunday club are studying the same passages.
- Thankful to Helen McAlley who assisted in two weeks' recording while Patrick on leave.
- Stage 4 restrictions have had little effect upon our provision of weekly services, Bible Study and Sunday Club for the kids – in fact there has been some growth! A family in Watsonia asked about our online services, and their daughter has joined in Sunday Club.
- We have all been concerned for Emmi, since she contracted COVID-19. No temperature today! Lots of phone calls and contact from her Church family, and practical care from work colleagues. Please keep praying for her.
- I took the funeral and burial of Doreen Rumpf, who died from COVID-19, on Friday 14 August. The impact of COVID-19 on friends and family, and their non-ability to farewell their loved one at funerals has been cruel. Since March, we have lost Merle Lindgren, Steve Allen and now Doreen Rumpf – and those who have known and loved them have found it very hard not to grieve collectively.
- I decided to recommence our monthly prayer meeting for mission by Zoom on Saturday 15 Aug. I think this will grow in number.
- I plan to try and have a Parish Zoom lunch in the near future.
- Diocese has advised: can do AGM by Zoom, or delay till early next year – thoughts?

- Phoebe Clara Senn's arrival has brought great joy to all! So much thankfulness and joy that a new baby has come into our midst – all keen to see her and rejoice in her baptism.

Op Shop: Still waiting for Mark Lane.

- Face-to-face visits again stymied by restrictions. Phone calls and texts from parishioners indicate thankfulness for our online ministry. I had been delivering the DVDs, but now can only put in letterbox or under the door.
- Folk in Aged Care homes also thankful for continued DVDs and hard copies of services.
- Again, I am thankful to our anonymous donors for their financial support of the DVDs.
- Participating in the Diocese's review of Clergy Legislation. Significant changes, including:
 - If all clergy are to be treated as employees, rather than office holders
 - Composition, voting of Incumbency Committees (now to be called Parish Nominators)
 - Extension of an Incumbent after 10 years
 - Retirement age of clergy and lay ministers
 - Dealing with pastoral breakdown in a parish
 - The composition of the Diocesan Tribunal.

Wardens' report

- Safety matters to wait until after lockdown.
- New email addresses are now available.
- *57 Gloucester Drive*
– Tenants offered 6-month lease but have declined and will go on periodic tenancy.
- *St John's*
– Our iNet account and the Telstra account for 9455 3045 have been cancelled.
– Glenn has cleared the guttering. Roof in good condition, most guttering reasonable, but rust holes in the narthex area.
– Peter Harper has pointed out that some exterior woodwork of the church needs attention, to prevent need for much more serious work later. Some of the bell tower louvre slats have rotted and need replacing, before framing starts rotting (much more expensive). Also window frames need repainting before rot sets in. He considers we should also fix the guttering, downpipes and missing render, check the slates, and repaint the walls. He offers to lend us some of his scaffolding free of charge, though we would have to pay for the labour and works. No quote yet, but it will be substantial.
– Our car-parking arrangement with the courts expired 24th July, but we expect it to be extended to 5th October.
– Discussed Andrew's progress on finding an engineer to investigate our car park.
– Beekeepers' lair: A window was broken by our rough sleeper (who told us and offered to pay). It has been repaired.
- *St Andrew's*
– Glenn cleared guttering on S side, & cut back overhanging branches. Some guttering is bad. Unable to access N side, but guttering there is even worse. Loose ceiling boards at the east end refastened. One downpipe still blocked.
- *Holy Spirit*
– NBN has arrived at Watsonia, so current op shop phone service will stop after about the end of 2021. Will we need internet?
– Meetings with BSL: As usual, no progress.

Mission Action Plan

- Denise has started work on it.

General Business

- Diocesan Legislation Review noted.

Minutes by Denise & Patrick, précis by Editor