



St Mary's Grapevine

BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF ST MARY'S ANGLICAN CHURCH, SUNBURY
JUNE 2017

Gavin's Grab

Greetings everyone,

Did you watch the Royal Wedding? Sharon and I enjoyed watching it with our small delights to enjoy during the evening. I love the British pageantry (they do it so well). I was particularly interested in the sermon by Michael Curry. What did you think of it?

There has certainly been quite a reaction to it. Social media and the general media have expressed many views from "it was too long" and "what was he talking about?" to "how great was that"?

Of particular interest to me has been the response from the Christian community worldwide to the sermon. Some articles I have read have been very critical of the sermon because, while it focussed on love, it didn't specifically highlight the expression of God's love for all through Jesus' suffering death and resurrection for each of us because of our sin. In other words, some have criticised it as lacking the full gospel message. At some level that is a fair criticism as we should always try to speak of the gospel on all occasions.

Others articles have expressed that the same criticisms could be made of Jesus himself at the wedding in Cana (John 2:1-11) where he merely changed water into wine (as his first miracle); giving an early glimpse of who he was rather than spelling out who specifically he was (the Messiah) and a call for people to follow him. That is also a fair comment.

Whichever view you take, I thought his sermon was appropriate for the occasion (a wedding). It didn't contain the full gospel message but I thought was a great advertisement for God's love and for an engaging gospel, broadcast to the World, amidst the pain many have suffered through the church. We pray God's Holy Spirit works through the message and into the hearts of enquiring minds. Well done Bishop Curry!



In other Wedding news.....
Congratulations to Katherine and Jack Kovacevic, married on April 21st, and to Rachel and Shaun Cadday, married on May 5th, 2018



Gavin's Grab

continued....

Baptism, Confirmation and Reception into Anglican Communion

On 29 July at our 5pm service we'll be conducting a service of Confirmation, which can also include Baptism and Reception into the Anglican Communion. What do all these terms mean?

Well, let me start with Baptism. Jesus said to his disciples in Matthew 28 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you.' So as someone accepts Jesus as Saviour, we baptise them and they become members of God's kingdom and church. In the Anglican Church we also baptise infants, based on the faith of their parents. These infants are baptised into the covenant promises of God, much the same as Jewish children were circumcised into the covenant.

However, as infants who are baptised don't remember their baptism (like me), they must confirm their faith when they are in a position to do so. In other words, it's important they make a public proclamation of their faith in Jesus. In the Anglican church this is Confirmation and the Bishop (representing the wider church) confirms the person by laying hands on them and asking for God's blessing on them.

Some Christians are baptised in other denominations and we as the Anglican Church recognise that baptism. However, in order for the person to hold a position in the Anglican Church (including on Parish Council) or to work in an Ordained capacity and in other ways they must become a member of the Anglican Church and this is known as Reception into the Anglican Communion. Once again the Bishop lays hands on them and prays for them.

Christianity Explored

We all get one life to live. Deep down we're all asking the same question--what's it all about? Christianity Explored is a 5-week program that digs deep into life's most important questions, the Christian faith and what it really means to live an authentic life. This program is primarily for two audiences. Firstly, this course will serve as preparation for those seeking baptism and confirmation.

Secondly, this course will encourage those who are seeking to explore life's biggest question and the Christian faith. There are no strings or obligations attached. Bring a friend and come explore with us.

If you feel God's leading to be Baptised, Confirmed or Received into the Anglican Communion or just to explore the Christian Faith, please contact myself or Jeremiah Paul as classes will commence on Sunday 17 June.

Upcoming Sunday Morning Sermons and Guest Speakers

I trust you have enjoyed and learnt much from our recent Esther series. If you missed any of the sermons, they are available on our podcasts. The interest continues over the next few months with some very engaging guests and topics on Sunday mornings.

Sunday 10 June – We have Chris Mulherin visiting us from Christians in Science and Technology. Chris is a very engaging speaker, specifically on the topic of how Science and Faith work together. This is a great opportunity to invite any friends who might have questions or issues about the connection between science and faith. Chris will be available for a time of discussion and to answer questions following our Congregation lunch.

We then have a series on some of Jesus lesser known parables and what they teach us today. To conclude the Parable Series, Adrian Lane, from the Bush Church Aid Society, will be visiting us on Sunday 15 July. Adrian is also an engaging speaker and the parable he is preaching on is rarely spoken about and quite unusual.

We conclude July with a couple of services where you get to choose the topic. The first is a Question Sunday on 22 July – so start thinking about those tricky questions you have and we'll try to answer them. Then the following Sunday we'll address a topic you provide us with – perhaps a burning question that many of you have or a difficult situation or theology you would like to hear about. Please let us know how we can serve you best on these two days.

I look forward to continuing to serve you, with the Staff Team, over the next few months.

Gavin

Chibobo Mission Team 2018



The 2018 St. Mary's team to travel to Chibobo in Zambia will be made up of Annette and Kevin Swaffield as team leaders with Mike Lampard, Sara Robinson and Steven Riley also in the team.

The team departs for Chibobo on Wednesday evening of June 27th and will return late Sunday July 15th.

During their visit to Chibobo, the team hopes to continue with projects connected with the Chibobo Secondary School which now has 120 students attending. Desks are an urgent need so work on these will be carried out along with any other requirements that may be asked of us.

We will also be helping to complete a new cooking kitchen at the HMP orphanage.

Re establishing friendships are being looked forward to as well as new friendships being established for Sara and Steven through evening activities with the children and their carers. The team will also be taking active part in worship services within the Chibobo community – preaching, readings, prayers and of course joining in with singing those beautiful African worship songs.

Please hold each of us in your prayers throughout our time that we are away.

A prayer supporters booklet will be available soon with day to day prayer requests for the team and for individual prayer requests from each of the team members.

The parish prayer meeting on **Monday June 11th** will be dedicated to praying for our team as we finalise our preparations for our mission trip. Please come along and show us your support by joining us in the church for this prayer meeting.

*“And let us not grow weary of doing good,
for in due season we will reap,
if we do not give up.”*
Galatians 6:9

Chibobo Chicken Project

Thank You to everyone who has adopted chickens and attended the recent events which have raised funds for the project – the Women's Breakfast and the Feathers and Finery High Tea.

As we go to print with this edition of the Grapevine, we have already generated over \$3000 towards the \$7200 required for the project, and this does not include funds raised from High Tea which is an EGGcellent and EGGrordinary effort.

Chickens are still available for adoption and gift-giving - please see Narelle in the office if you need any assistance.



Building Committee Update

Phil Stacy, Alan Phillips,
Ben Clements, Noel Sprague

The Building Committee give thanks to God for the planning approval received from the Hume City Council. We wish to thank all parishioners who have supported us through prayer over the application period. As a side note our architect informed us last week that a similar application from another church is still waiting on a response from another council.

I am reminded of Paul Whitakers words to us “No prayer, No Power, Some prayer, Some power, MUCH prayer MUCH power” The Building Committee cannot thank parishioners enough for your prayerful support over the past 8 months. So much more will be required once we reaffirm God’s plans for our future.

The planning approval contained several conditions; the following summarises those that impact upon us and those we are responding to within 60 days.

- 1) Fencing to site frontage – there will be none
- 2) Bollard lighting: we are concerned bollard lighting would be knocked over/damaged and propose in lieu to place lighting in the tree canopies as a continuation of the Council’s installation of lighting into the tree canopies in O’Shanassy Street.
- 3) Sealed car park: the Building Committee and Hume Senior planner, as per our January 2017 meeting, indicated a preference for a permeable surface without kerb and channels to maintain the village green feel. We are happy for the area to be stabilised with subsurface permeable reinforcing system.
- 4) Location of waste storage, architect will respond with this.
- 5) Landscaping: We will be seeking parishioner input to develop the landscaping plan for submission.

6) Operating Hours our architect explained that the planning report did not propose any specific opening hours nor did Hume CC enquire regarding this, indeed our architect requested that any site specific conditions should be run past them before being included in the permit (which did not happen). We understand that the opening hours within the permit were based upon traffic engineering framework of times in the car park assessments. David Wagner has spoken with Hume CC case Planning Officer Henry Dong regarding the hours and Henry advised that we should write in response with proposed hours. We have advised the following:

- Office 9am to 5pm
- Morning start can be 7am
- Midnight Christmas service
- Parties, music stopped by 11pm, out by 12 midnight.
- Easter Dawn service

In conclusion, request for 7am to 12 midnight 7 days a week plus extended hours.

The Building Committee has requested a special Parish Council meeting for June 18 to pause and reaffirm God’s plans for St Mary’s. The Building Committee plan to provide a suggested building staging and cost estimates for consideration. We are hoping our staging will minimise disruption to our parish operations, administration, pastoral offices and hall usage.

Gavin has spoken with several of the wardens regarding a prayer vigil to be led by Parish Council members and open to all parishioners. Please look out for this in future Parish correspondence.

Please continue to uphold the building works in your prayers.

Contact St Mary's

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