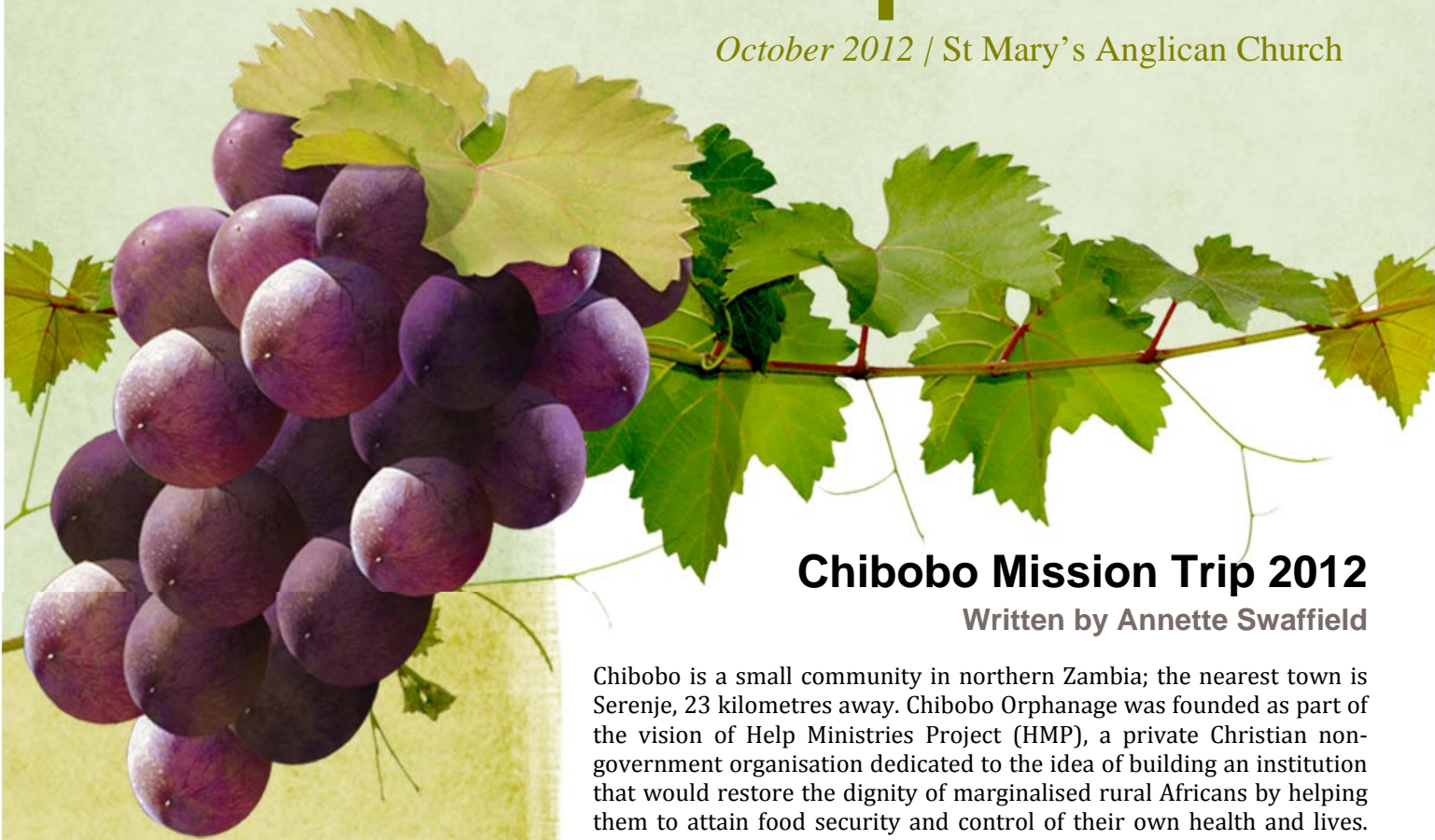


Grapevine

October 2012 / St Mary's Anglican Church



Chibobo Mission Trip 2012

Written by Annette Swaffield

St Mary's
is a community...
Loving God,
Following Jesus,
Sharing God's love
with all.

Contact St Mary's

7 O'Shanassy St, Sunbury
PO Box 2049
Sunbury VIC 3429

03 9744 1347

email: admin@stmarysanglican.org.au
www.stmarysanglican.org.au

Chibobo is a small community in northern Zambia; the nearest town is Serenje, 23 kilometres away. Chibobo Orphanage was founded as part of the vision of Help Ministries Project (HMP), a private Christian non-government organisation dedicated to the idea of building an institution that would restore the dignity of marginalised rural Africans by helping them to attain food security and control of their own health and lives. Staivous Mulumba is the current Director of HMP.

St Mary's ran a mission trip to Chibobo orphanage in June 2008, and again in 2010. The Chibobo Team for 2012 was made up of 13 members, led by Mike Lampard and Annette Swaffield. Other team members were Ken and Gill Garth, Kevin Swaffield, Vicki Ward, Graeme Ward, Linden Johnson, Steven Klouth, with Ted Evans, Sharon Wakeham and Ken Wakeham from Eaglehawk Uniting Church. Larry Green was a non-travelling member of the team.

The team left Melbourne on June 26th, 2012 and spent a total of 10 nights at Chibobo before arriving home on July 15th.

The aims of this trip were to:

- rewire the orphanage, to a standard that would enable it to link into the electrical grid when the power comes to the village of Chibobo;
- educate the orphanage carers and children on the danger of electricity and provide safety procedures;
- reconnect with the Koala Club and teach craft skills as required to the local women;
- give assistance at the new Medical Centre if required;
- support and share our Christian faith with the community;
- build relationships with the orphans and the local community, spending time with the orphans and showing our care for them; and
- establish contact with the students who have been sponsored to attend boarding school and complete their High School education.

Continued on page 2...



Electrical Project

This was the major purpose of the team's time in Chibobo. Many hours were spent prior to departing Australia in planning the project, purchasing equipment, placing orders in Zambia, contacting many people for information, and ensuring that the team were prepared to undertake this enormous task. Under the direction of Ken Garth (works project manager) the team arrived ready to spend many long days and hard hours to complete this task, and were successful in leaving Chibobo in a much safer electrical condition than existed prior to our arrival, despite many set-backs and unforeseen problems. Work began on the day after our arrival, and over the next 9 days the following tasks were completed:

- A circuit of trenches was dug and underground cabling laid in conduit, connecting major HMP buildings to the existing generator.
- Distribution boxes were installed in the major buildings, internal wiring replaced and low energy lights installed throughout, along with new power points.
- Extra lights were installed in the dining room, dormitory hall and externally throughout the HMP area.

The team worked together well under uncertain and constantly changing conditions. 400 metres of pre-purchased electrical cable did not arrive at HMP, and there were other unforeseen situations. They demonstrated a high degree of adaptability, taking on jobs that were new to them. The eventual arrival of a local electrician, Mr Mumba, proved to be a valuable addition to the team and he has since returned to Chibobo to complete unfinished tasks when the cable finally arrived after the team's departure.



Koala Club

Koala Club was first formed during a team visit in 2008 when members of the mission team taught local people to sew, to knit, and perform other crafts. They have now obtained a certificate from the Registrar of Societies which enables them to operate as a club and access government aid for clubs. They have grown to approximately 90 members within the parent group and the 3 auxiliaries in the district. Gill, Annette, Vicki and Linden were able to meet with the women each afternoon and continued to be impressed with their knowledge, skills and willingness to be taught. Gifts carried over in our luggage were gratefully received, especially the wool.

The women presented us with many challenging requests including creating a pattern for knitted teddy bears, demonstrating how to apply lapels to jackets and how to make a polo shirt with tab front. We were also able to teach them how to knit slippers, make necklaces and hexagon patches to use in a variety of projects.

The Koala Club has expanded its nature to include developing agricultural skills whereby the women now grow maize, soya beans, beans, sweet potatoes and ground nuts. This provides more sustenance for those in the community, especially for the widows and the orphans of whom they are guardians.

We were able to encourage an association with another organisation currently working in the Chibobo community - COMACO - Community, Agriculture and Conservation Organisation. Through this link, the women were shown how to make and use compost. The mission team were then able to establish a compost pit and encourage the women to use this to improve their farming fields and to assist with the recycling of waste.

The women also requested cooking classes and we taught the making of flat bread. Relationships with the women were strengthened and enjoyed over many cups of tea (especially the Australian Afternoon teabags that we had carried over with us).

A real joy to us was seeing the women passing on their skills and teaching the older orphan girls to sew. They are now making their own skirts and selling them to other girls.



Medical Centre

The Chibobo Medical Clinic, built with funds raised by Overnewton College, finally started operating in May 2012. Since then the new Medical Officer, Mr Geoffrey Mulenga, has seen over 885 patients coming from a radius of 5 – 7 km from the clinic, with many walking at least 5 km to visit. Illnesses treated include malaria, upper respiratory tract infections, wound infections, mastitis, intestinal worms, and services include pregnancy and delivery, testing for TB, and contraceptive administration. All visits and medications are FREE.

Chibobo was chosen to present the HIV-VCT Awareness Day (Voluntary Counselling and Testing) for the Serenje District on June 30th 2012. The St Mary's Mission Team 2012 were invited to attend the festivities. This is an annual event held throughout Zambia and it was seen as a great privilege to hold this day in Chibobo because of the Medical Centre now being operational. Over 560 people attended the event, which was seen as an excellent turnout compared to those hosted previously at other centres. People were asked to present to the clinic to be tested and at the end of the day 180 people were tested. There will be follow up testing and counselling for any who are tested positive for HIV.

The local school choir sang the Zambian National Anthem. The HMP children danced and told poems about the risk of unsafe sex. Various plays were put on by adults in the community and then the Chairman of VCT gave a speech on how to avoid AIDS.

On 7th July 2012 a celebration of the commencement of the Clinic was held. Again, the St Mary's Mission Team were invited to attend the festivities. It was a great day with many of the community attending. National Anthems were sung by the Zambians and Australians, poems recited, verses from the Bible recited and a message given by Staivous – reporting that the Clinic was already starting to bring about change in the community. Mike Lampard gave a wonderful speech and the team presented Mr Geoffrey Mulenga with lots of medical equipment and other gifts which they had bought with them in their luggage.

Everyone was invited back to HMP for lunch. It was a wonderful sight walking back to HMP with the road full of happy smiling people, some walking, and some riding bicycles. It had been a wonderful celebration and we know that the Clinic will be a great asset to the community.



HMP Orphans

One of the most rewarding impressions that the team have come home with is that of the love and care that is given to the orphans at Help Ministry Project. Those of us who have visited HMP previously were delighted with the very obvious improved conditions that the orphans now live in and the state of their general health due to improved diets, closely supervised health and living conditions and the relationships between the carers and the orphans. Each day, team members took any small opportunity to have time with individual orphans – teaching skills within the electrical project, reading, speaking English, playing soccer and other games, showing God's love for them whenever they could. Each evening, the team spent time with the orphans playing games and sharing our cultures. On one evening, Vicki taught the orphans about electrical dangers and how to keep safe with all electrical aspects. Linden also took the opportunity to spend time with the older orphans teaching them choral singing and it was a wonderful pleasure to hear them singing some of our well known hymns with a variety of harmony parts. Many gifts were presented to the orphans, which they were delighted and very thankful to receive. These gifts were carried over by team members or purchased in Lusaka with money provided by many supportive people in Australia, and reassured the community that they are well loved by all.

Chibobo High School

During Staivous' visit to Australia in 2011, a meeting was held to discuss the education of Chibobo Community students beyond Year 9 as there was no local school to provide this, and students had to travel to Serenje or further to obtain this. Very few students completed Year 12 due to the conditions in which the students lived and worked.

At this meeting it was decided to investigate the possibility of assisting the local community to build a high school for older students. Many meetings, many plans and much preparation have occurred since Staivous returned to Chibobo, so it was a real thrill for us to be able to visit the site of the proposed Chibobo High School and to see the piles of bricks that the community have already made. Each section (a geographical allotment) within the Community of Chibobo was asked to make and contribute bricks which will be used to build classrooms and teachers' houses. The plans have been submitted and approved and the building of the school will be conducted over 3 stages. Plans to begin stage one are well under way in Zambia and in Australia. However significant fundraising needs to be carried out to raise the \$100,000.00 required to build stage one of this school. A secondary school in the district will enable children to obtain education from Year 7 to 12 and will help to break the poverty cycle that exists in the community.



Chibobo Mission Trip 2012... *continued*

Sponsored Secondary Students

Twelve students are currently being sponsored for the final 3 years of their education (years 10 – 12) so that they may attend a Boarding School where they can learn in a safe and comfortable environment. Prior to this scheme being introduced, older students lived in shanty conditions, often encountering undesirable and dangerous situations, and did not finish their education. Sponsorship is provided by individuals or groups from St. Mary's Sunbury, Eaglehawk Uniting Church and Overnewton College. The two young women and four of the young men attend Mukando High School (50 kms north of Serenje), a new school established in 2011.

Another four young men attend Serenje Boys High School and places were obtained for a further two young men to attend there in the new term.



Our visit to Chibobo occurred over the President's Day (a long weekend) and all 12 of the sponsored secondary students were able to be back in the Chibobo Community for the 4 days. This provided the opportunity to meet with them, a particularly special occasion for those in the team who are their sponsors. This group of young students are a very impressive group and all know and understand the significance of their being able to attend secondary boarding schools to continue their education. Meetings were held with the students and with the guardians of all orphans in the district. Personal gifts from each of the sponsors were presented to the students by their sponsors or sponsor representatives, along with uniform items and school stationery. Sponsors also visited both schools. This area of support is gratefully and widely appreciated by the students, their guardians, the Chibobo community and the schools that they attend.

Worshipping

On both Sundays while there, the team joined with the HMP Community Church to worship.

It was a wonderful opportunity to worship with another community and to be included in their service. Vicki Ward and Ken Wakeham both gave their testimonies. Mike and Annette both gave words of encouragement, and team members did bible readings and provided prayers. Worshipping in the church that the 2010 team helped restore, among banners provided by St. Mary's and other groups, added to the beautiful surroundings in which we worshipped.

All too soon, it was time to leave. An hour flight from Serenje to Mfuwe then on to South Luawanga National Park, where we spent 2 days debriefing and evaluating the time and work at Chibobo while enjoying the magnificent work of God's creation – the environment, the animals and the weather each day. This was followed with a flight to Livingstone where the team assimilated back into a more familiar environment – crowds, shopping, paperwork and busy timetables.



While this team consisted of 13 visible members, it also consisted of many other members (invisible to others but their presence felt by the team.)

Your gifts, your thoughts, your interests and your prayers were at Chibobo with us each day and we thank you for the support you gave us before, during and after our mission trip to Chibobo.

National Church Life Survey (NCLS)

By Gavin Ward

Thank you to everyone who took the time to fill in the NCL Survey in November last year. The results of the survey took some time to be returned to us and as we have them now I would like to pass on the key results to you.

Before doing so I would like to make a couple of comments.

1st - number of responses.

The survey was completed by 107 people who were in attendance on the Sunday and Wednesday mornings of that week in November. Therefore there is no input from the Prayer and Praise with Preschoolers and Youth and Young Adults congregations. In addition, our combined Sunday and Wednesday attendance average is around 165. Together with the combined average attendance at both PPP and Y+YA (85), this means a significant number of regular members were unable to take part in the survey. In summary the results should be considered in the above light.

2nd - Overall View

Notwithstanding the above comment, the result of the survey will provide valuable feedback for us all, and in particular myself, the staff team, vestry and key leaders as we continue to establish the ministry priorities for the years to come.

With that said, I would like to share with you my reflections on the survey results.

A New Friends

Of those present on the morning of the survey 34% were new to St Mary's over the last 5 years. Of those who had joined St Mary's, 21% had come from another church (perhaps having moved into Sunbury from somewhere else or transferred from another local Church) while 13% had joined, not having attended church 5 years previously.

I am encouraged by this figure as it demonstrates that we are a church that encourages people to come to know Jesus as Saviour and/or return and reconnect with Him again through our ministry.

Let's continue to make this a priority as we move forward and reach out into the community of Sunbury and surrounding areas.

B Core Qualities

The Core Qualities are divided into 3 groups:-

- Internal Qualities – that measure whether we:-
have an alive and growing Faith;
experience vital and nurturing Worship; and
have a strong and growing sense of Belonging.
- Inspirational Qualities – that measure whether we:-
have a clear and owned Vision;
experience inspiring and empowering Leadership; and
are open to imaginative and flexible Innovation.
- Outward Qualities – that measure whether we undertake:-
practical and diverse Service;
willing and effective Faith Sharing; and
intentional and welcoming Inclusion.

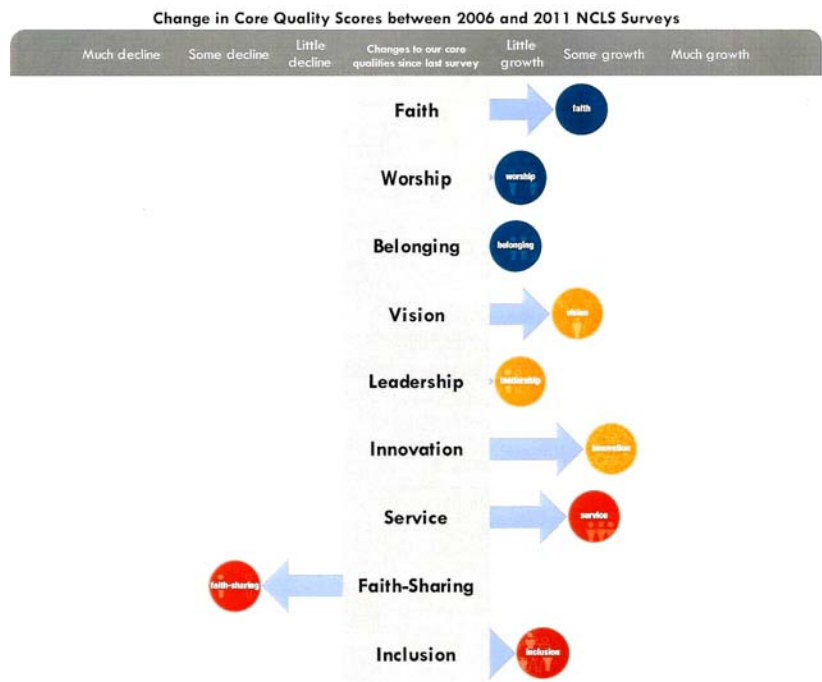
C Core Qualities - Change Over Time

This chart shows how St Mary's has changed over the 9 Core Qualities of a healthy church from 2006 to 2011.

It's encouraging to note that all but one of the elements has moved (if even only slightly) towards growth and health.

Big moves to growth have occurred in:-

- Faith (possibly reflecting the number in Home Groups, those who have attended various courses and events we've offered including Apologetics Training, Alpha, Prayer Retreat Days and Hitchhiker's Guide to the Bible and the various sermon series we've done);
- Vision (in particular with the focus on supporting Kim and his congregation planting work),
- Innovation (which reflects the positive response to such changes as God's Gang Services, Question Sundays, Paws on the Lawn and the Wednesday service moving to Goonawarra Gardens quarterly etc)and
- Service (which seems to reflect so many people involved in supporting Chibobo Orphanage in many ways and in Kids Hope as either a mentor or prayer partner).



National Church Life Survey (NCLS) continued.....

Faith Sharing has shown a decline, which also is highlighted over our past few Natural Church Development (NCD) surveys. Since the NCLS survey was conducted we have had two Alpha Courses which has seen people come to faith or be strengthened in their faith. Many of us involved have seen God's hand at work in people's lives. Interestingly, 20% of those surveyed believed that we should give more attention over the next 12 months to encouraging (and training) people to share their faith or invite others to church. We will reflect on this.

D Core Qualities – Your Strengths

This chart shows the Core Qualities in a general picture moving from greatest strengths to not as strong.



Once again this shows that we are a Parish where people grow in their faith and then put that faith into action by serving God in this world, however this action doesn't seem to necessarily include sharing our faith with others in word.

There were also two other responses (from 40% of survey participants) that we should focus some attention on:- Encouraging people to discover and use their gifts, and Ensuring new people are included well in church life.

E Summary

Thank you to everyone who took part in the Survey. The results show St Mary's as a very healthy Parish, but there are always things we need to be attending to. The Leadership team will use this information as we prayerfully consider the future and next steps for us as a Parish.

If you want to look at the data in more detail, then see Narelle in the office for a copy of the report.

Voices For Justice

By Sarah Graf



Sara Graf is one of our young adults from Sunbury. In September she met with Australia's federal leaders in Canberra to advocate for the world's poorest people and call on the government to fulfill our promise to meet the millennium development goals. Australia has committed to eight goals in order to halve world poverty by 2015. Sara is part of a movement of Christians from around Australia called the Micah Challenge who care about social justice. Sara wrote these reflections from her first trip to Parliament House.

I met with Rob Mitchell, our local federal MP. He made the following pledge, saying "I support the millennium development goals... and believe that as a matter of decency we should be supporting those around the world that are in need more than us."

I have learnt many things during the four days in Canberra, but two stood out most to me. Firstly, learning that through tax evasion, multinational corporations rip out much more money from developing countries than what we are globally giving in overseas aid. We are pushing for the Australian government, and governments around the world, to develop a policy that will help stop these multinationals getting away with not giving these countries their much needed sustainable revenue.



Secondly, and most importantly, I have learnt that standing up for social justice issues by yourself is very difficult, but when given the chance to work with people to educate others, and encourage them to speak up too, it really can make a difference. Three hundred Christians spoke up to remind the government that we, as Australians, need to help those in need and to be the voice for the voiceless. I have learned that social justice is not just a side thing for me as a Christian, it is central to my faith.

What is a church?

By Kim Beales



I recently attended a church-planting course in Sydney. One of the questions we explored was the question, “what is a church?” This is an important question. It is important for my ministry, because I have a “church-planting” role. The approach we have currently adopted at St Mary’s is to plant new church congregations. The language of congregations is intended to convey a connection to a wider church body of people, which in our case is St Mary’s church. The Youth and Young Adults congregation is connected to both St Mary’s Anglican Church and St Andrews Uniting Church.

One of the underlying theses in the course I attended was that a definition of church must faithfully communicate the essence of what a church is whilst being fluid enough to allow for a variety of church forms, particularly forms that are tenable for rapid multiplication. For example, sometimes we confuse infrastructure, buildings, and culture with church. Yet a church doesn’t need to have a building, an employed pastor or a particular worship style to be a church. When we get bogged down on peripheries, the church planting process can be slowed down. The church is growing fastest in countries that lack many resources that Westerners may confuse for essentials.

What then is the church? I studied a variety of definitions. Some point to the Lord’s Supper as essential to the life of a church. Others point to the preaching of God’s word. The writers of one of the major texts I studied gave the following definition:

“A local church is a fellowship of believers in Jesus Christ committed to gathering regularly for biblical purposes under a recognized spiritual leadership.”¹

A definition of church

I have been working on a definition of church. Definitions are limited, and this definition doesn’t encapsulate everything that is important about a church. Yet I am finding this definition to be helpful in giving people insight into what we are planting together:

The church is the forgiven people, a community for others which exists through a mutual belief in Jesus as Lord.

How have I come to this particular definition?

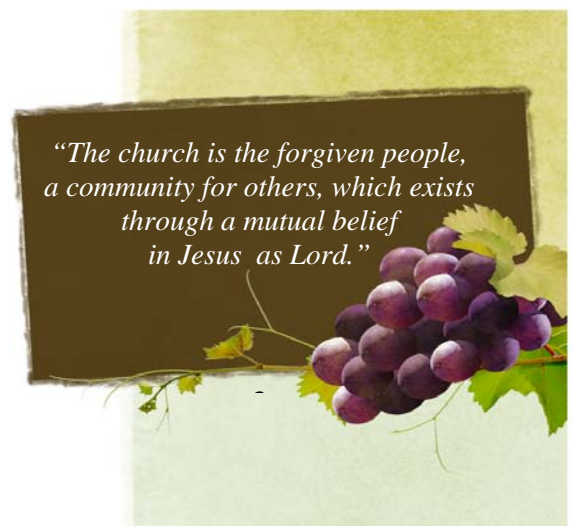
The church is the forgiven people: This statement was central to my recent article on young adults published in *The Melbourne Anglican*. Many Christians are disillusioned with church and end up leaving the church as a result. I think that this is often a result of their dreams for community being built on a poor foundation. Dietrich Bonhoeffer famously wrote, “He who loves his dream of a community more than the community itself, becomes a destroyer of the latter, even though his personal intentions may be ever so honest and earnest and sacrificial.”² The church is the forgiven people. To know and understand this foundational truth prevents disillusionment because the basis of our existence is not a unique quality or dream, but the forgiveness we have in Jesus. I have been seeking to plant congregations on this foundation. We are a forgiven people.

A community for others: The church is a unique community in the world, in that it doesn’t exist for itself. Our light is given that we may share it with others. I use the name “a community for others” to measure the way in which we shape our life together. In as much as we exist merely for ourselves we will not grow. The good news of Jesus, and even our fellowship is not a gift we keep to ourselves. If our life together is self-focused, and our various groups are purely based around meeting our own needs, then we need to repent. We are a community for others.

To be the forgiven people is a response to the saving work of Jesus. To be a community *whose existence is based on the mutual belief that Jesus is Lord* is intended to address the need to make *mature* disciples whose lives are shaped in obedience to all that Jesus commanded. Our submission to Jesus as Lord is something we do together as church, and hence the word *mutual* in the definition. We are to help each other follow Jesus in all areas of our lives and not confine Jesus’ lordship to the areas where we want him to be king. He is the head of the church, and all aspects of our life together are to be guided by his will. Our church exists, because together we believe that Jesus is Lord.

Ideas for discussion

What I have written is not the end of the matter. You might like to discuss the above definitions in your home groups or among your friends. What insights do you find useful? What might you add, or express differently? How might our definition of church influence what it means to plant churches and congregations? And how might we grow together as the forgiven people, a community for others, and as a people who believe in Jesus as Lord? I’d love to hear what you come up with!



“The church is the forgiven people, a community for others, which exists through a mutual belief in Jesus as Lord.”

1. Ott, Craig and Gene Wilson, *Global Church Planting: Biblical Principles and Best Practices for Multiplication*, Baker Academic: Grand Rapids: 2011), 7.

2. Bonhoeffer, Dietrich, *Life Together*, translated by John W. Doberstein, (Harper: San Francisco), 1954, 27.

Prayer and Praise with Pre-schoolers (PPP)

By Klara Hahne

The concept of having a church service particularly designed for families with very young children is being met with enthusiasm.

Currently about 30 people attend each month. This has prompted the Mission Action Team to increase PPP meeting to twice monthly. PPP will continue to have one service a month consisting of songs, children's talk and prayer, then a time where adults have a bible talk while children are supervised by 'grandparents', followed by a meal for everyone. The second meeting will be a few songs followed by a bible study for adults while the children have supervised activities (without dinner). This will be fantastic as most families with young children find it very hard or impossible to get to night time bible studies. Kim is planning on presenting a bible overview over the coming months.

We currently have some great people playing a grandparent role. They attend the first part of PPP and during the adults' talk supervise the children while they play. To increase PPP to twice a month more people are needed to supervise the children. Ideally we would like 4 adults per service (so you wouldn't be on your own and parents are nearby). If you are interested in helping out with this please see Kim and Kate, Ros Armstrong, Ruth and Robin Philbrick or Klara Hahne. Our current Grandparents are Robin and Ruth Philbrick, Debbie Last, Pam Allen, Marj Stacy and Janet Minge. Feel free to have a chat to them if you would like to know what it involves.

We are currently trying to come up with a new name for PPP (Preschoolers prayer and praise) so put on your thinking caps and let Kim know if you have a suggestion.

The Mission Action Team is focusing on reaching out to families within Sunbury that have young children and don't currently attend church. The Team attended a day's training at Caulfield which looked at developing continuous pathways for people outside the church to come in contact with the church, hear the gospel, be disciplined and eventually serve within the church.

One idea to reach out to these families is to offer 2 sessions of child minding to parents so they can do Christmas shopping. The proposed date for this is Dec 15. Adults are needed to help out with this. If you would like to be involved please contact one of the Mission Action Team - Kim and Kate Beales, Ros Armstrong, Ruth and Robin Philbrick and Klara Hahne.

Dates for PPP for the rest of the year are

- Oct 14 - 4-5pm (no dinner)
- Oct 28 - 4-6pm (followed by dinner)
- Nov 11 - 2-3:30pm (possibly a picnic TBC)
- Nov 25 4-6pm (followed by dinner)
- Dec 23 4-6pm Christmas service

Prayer Retreat/Quiet Day

By Lesley McInerney

After leaving them, he went up on a mountainside to pray. (Mark 6:46)

Connecting with God through prayer is a joy and a privilege, and we acknowledge the importance of quiet time with God. But for various reasons many Christians find it hard to set aside quiet time for prayer and contemplation. Retreats are especially valuable for Christians who have a busy lifestyle and find it hard to set aside substantial blocks of time to be quiet with God.

St Mary's will be holding its Annual Prayer Retreat Day on **Saturday 10th November** at 78 Janette Court, Bullengarook, courtesy of Audrey Williams. The retreat will run from 9.30am to approximately 3.30pm and will be led by Cath Fisher.

More information will be available closer to the date. If you think that a day of quiet reflection and prayer is for you, please register either by completing the signup sheet in the hall or by emailing the office at admin@stmarysanglican.org.au.

