

The newsletter cover features a warm, autumnal background of orange and yellow leaves. Overlaid on this are several rectangular images: a close-up of wheat stalks on the left, a cluster of colorful autumn leaves in the center, and a white plate with a fork and knife on the right. The title 'St Mary's Grapevine' is written in a large, white, serif font across the center. Below it, in a smaller, white, sans-serif font, is the text 'BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF ST MARY'S ANGLICAN CHURCH, SUNBURY' and 'APRIL 2016'.

St Mary's Grapevine

BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF ST MARY'S ANGLICAN CHURCH, SUNBURY
APRIL 2016

Gavin's Grab

Well – it's been a great couple of months and there are more exciting things to look forward to.

1 Wedding Thanks

I'd like to begin "on behalf of my wife and I" to thank everyone who made our wedding day such a fabulous and godly celebration. Many of you put in a great effort from logistics support in setting up the church, afternoon tea, photographs, flowers, hospitality to Sharon's friends visiting from Adelaide, music, to Kim who did such a wonderful job in officiating.

It was truly a wonderful family celebration for all at St Mary's and a great witness to many who attended.

Some have asked about the origin of the poem Sharon and I read out at the start of the service, and for a copy of it. Sharon found the poem and we tailored it to reflect exactly how we felt about our beloved spouses who had died, Neil Venhoek and Vicki Ward, as we prepared for our marriage. In response to your requests, we have provided a copy in this issue of Grapevine. in Christ and with love, Gavin and Sharon.

2 Some New Appointments

Cath Fisher officially commenced with us on 3 April and has made a great start at our Sunday morning services, Wednesday service and at our Aged Care facilities.

To provide some office space for Cath, the Staff Team has conducted a cleanup of the large office room where the photocopier is placed.

Clarissa Burn has taken on the role of Kids Hope Co-ordinator and also Clarissa is now producing the Pew Sheet each week, enabling Narelle to focus on other administrative matters.

Elsa Phillips has taken on the role of Home Groups Co-ordinator.

Thanks Clarissa and Elsa for your faithfulness in serving God in these important ministries.

Gavin's Grab.....*Continued*

Parish Council also approved a grant, from Community Store Excess Funds, to enable us to support Niky Templeton in her studies at Ridley College and as she serves God amongst us. Nicky will be specifically involved with Kim in developing a clear evangelistic strategy for the 5pm Community, including some evangelistic initiatives that will be accessible for the wider parish. Nicky is effectively a second Ridley Student serving and training in our midst and it's a blessing to be able to encourage and support those who are training for future service.

3 Parish Council Actions

Parish Council met in early April and approved the following:-

- Grant to support Niky Templeton (as above);
- Engagement of Daniel Clements to review the PA and Audio Visual requirements in our church building;
- The purchase of 20 chairs, similar to those in the Memorial Chapel, to replace most of the lounges and couches in the Parish House. This will provide more comfortable and safer seating for all users of the Parish House;
- A National Church Life Survey for later in the year;

- Sponsorship for our musicians to attend a training conference conducted by Emu Music in Melbourne;
- A movie fundraiser for the State Youth Games;
- Mission giving for the April half-year being:-
 - CMS (for the Thompsons) - \$3,500
 - Prison Fellowship - \$500
 - Rotary Meals Kitchen - \$250
 - Celebrate Messiah - \$300
 - Ridley College - \$1,000
 - Anglican Overseas Aid (for Fiji) - \$1,000
 - Mission Aviation Fellowship - \$500
 - Sunbury Chaplaincy - \$450

4 New Building Progress

The Architects are progressing well with initial draft plans for the new building. We'll keep you informed when we receive them, as we enable everyone to comment.

We are also working towards a meeting with the Diocese in regards to the next steps we need to take.

There is plenty going on in the Parish as we continue to serve God and reach out to our community with His love.

in Christ
Gavin

Warden's Wrap

The leaves are changing colour and the nights are a bit cooler so winter must be on its way! Generally autumn is a time for tidying up the garden and doing projects around the house that might need attending to before it's too cold and wet. The Warden's task was to conduct an audit of the buildings that St Mary's is responsible for i.e. the Community Store, Parish Hall, Parish House, Vicarage and of course the church building itself. The audits are carried out in accordance with the Anglican Diocese requirements and includes all the OH&S areas that are common to most public buildings such as escape plans, fire extinguishers and any obvious hazards. Any areas that need attention will be fixed but of course this all takes time but fix it we will with a lot of help from the St Mary's staff and volunteers. Of course OH&S is an ongoing process, so if anyone has seen something which they think needs attention please let one of the Wardens know.

Enjoy the gardening!

God Bless

Wendy, Noel, Geoff and Max(emeritus)

CMS Missionaries

An update from our CMS Link Missionaries- Ken and Ally Thompson, working in Cambodia

Dear friends,

We (Ken, Ally and Kia) write this having just arrived in Australia for a quick visit to participate in the wedding of our son Alan and Rachael Atkinson. The service will be held at our home church of St. Marks, Emerald on the 9th April, 11 am.

We have attached a few photos showing some of the exciting things that have been happening in Mondulkiri in the last month.

Cambodia and many of its neighbouring countries are suffering a mini drought. After a very short wet season we have had no rain for 5 months and our wells and those of many villagers are likely to run dry this year if rains don't come soon. It is a struggle for many people to keep young fruit trees, dry season vegetables and new plantings for coffee and other young tree crops going. We see families whose wells are already dry carting 30lt jerry cans of water on their motorbikes from lakes just for household use every day.

Please pray with us:

- For drought breaking for Mondulkiri, Cambodia and the region
- For Ntuk Nti and especially the new dorm parents, that all will be well while we are away and good routines will be established.
- That all will go well with Alan and Rachael's wedding and that they will have many fulfilling and happy years together.
- For Calvin as he travels by himself from Malaysia next weekend to be Alan's best man at the wedding.

with thanks,

Ken and Ally and Kia

If you would like a CMS box to support Ken and Ally's work in Cambodia please speak to Pam Allan, our CMS coordinator, or call her on 9740 0958



Above- Elders from each of the 6 largest village churches commission Bunad and Thari for the task of dorm parents at Ntuk Nti



Above- Candice (STW) with dorm students to whom she is teaching English



Above- Groups practice songs to be preformed at the Bunong NT dedication in May

Just Married

A selection of Gavin and Sharon's favorite photos from their Wedding-Sunday March 13th, 2016 at St Mary's

"God has put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see and fear and put their trust in the Lord."

Psalms 40:3



Sharon

You were not in the plan.
 My story did not write the way I penned it.
 I penned happily ever after.
 I penned the fairytale ending with the same man
 I married at 20.
I penned 1 man, 1 love, and 1 life.

Gavin

My pen stopped working at 54 and I was forced
 to re-write my story in the middle.
 My story up to that point had been a best-selling
 novel of love and adventure and ended in a sad
 and tragic way.
 Best sellers often do.

Sharon

You weren't supposed to die when you did.
 You weren't supposed to leave us alone on this
 earth to find our way without you.
You did.
 I know you didn't want to go.
 I know you didn't choose to go.

Gavin

The soul within my earthly shell still thinks of you.
 I never wanted more. I never expected more.
 Continuing the story didn't seem possible or even
 tolerable.
 I had my fairytale – it just ended too soon.

Sharon

In the time after death I found my true self.
 Grieving makes you stop and take stock of who
 you've been, who you are, and who you want to
 be.
 I slowed down, I listened to God's voice,
 and I found my own way.
 It's quiet after death in the wee hours of the night
 when you can't sleep and your heart aches from
 not being able to speak the words you
 desperately wish you that you could.

Gavin

The moment came where I felt ready to move
 forward towards the life God wanted for my
 remaining days.
 That didn't have to include anyone other than
 my children and myself – for the first time in a long
 time I was ready to write my story alone.
Enter you – the woman who came after.
 You stepped into my novel in a slow and gentle
 manner.
 You showed grace towards my grief.
 You were patient with my uncertainty.
 You showed a quiet understanding,
 an ability to listen,
 and allowed for space where it was necessary.

An ode

to Neil and Vicki

Sharon

You are not him and for that I'm thankful.
 You are your own amazing self and we are
 creating our own amazing story.
It can't be easy to be the man who came after.
 I want you to know that I want you in our story.
 I want you to know that as difficult as life has
 been – every day with you tops my grateful list.

Gavin

People like to compare relationships and make
 the person who came after feel "less than".
 I am thankful to God; he has placed you in my
 life. You are in my life because I made room for
 you and you made room for me.

Sharon

I've picked up the pen and continued to write
 with an intense fervor and fire.
 The man that came before made me better able
 to love the man that came after.
 Life's been a journey, I've seen joy, I've seen
 deep grief and sadness, but I know that as God
 continues to write my story, he has a plan and
 purpose for our story.

Gavin

To say I never think of the woman who came
 before is foolish. Once you love someone they
 stay with you forever as a piece of your soul.
 To say those thoughts betray the woman who
 came after is equally foolish.
 I spend every day writing new adventures,
 chapters, and creating new memories with this
 woman I chose.

Sharon

You don't replace the man who came before
 with the man that came after. You honour the
 past, learn from the experience and move
 forward with God's help.

Gavin

Love is not mutually exclusive and human beings
 are not replaceable. I'm not moving on – I'm
 moving forward, with God's help.
 I'm writing a new chapter with a woman who has
 the emotional capacity and understanding to be
 the woman who came after.

Together

We trust in God to lead us into the future

Welcome Cath

St Mary's welcomes Cath Fisher as new Assistant Minister
By Nicola Templeton

Cath Fisher officially started as Assistant Minister with us at St Mary's on Sunday 3 April. Her work will mainly focus on supporting the ministry with Gavin at the 8.30am, 10.30am Sunday congregations and the 10am Wednesday congregation. Cath is new to some of us but to others, she is an old friend returning to work with a church community she has for some years now regarded as 'her home'.

Following her gifting and love Cath initially studied piano and flute at Melbourne University before attending the Canberra School of Music (now the ANU School of Music). After graduation Cath worked as a music teacher and freelance musician.

Ministry in a sense came left of field to Cath. As a music student she had attended Christian Union meetings run by the Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students (AFES). The on-campus bible studies encouraged people to ask about faith and God – giving space for questions such as 'what's the practical point of being a Christian?'

It also helped that the Independent church she attended in Canberra worked through whole books of the bible, something that at the time, Cath found revolutionary.

At one point in time, Cath says it 'looked like God had answered lots of my prayers - then it all fell apart. I wanted to know how you understand God in those circumstances. I loved learning about the bible and being able to freely ask: "how does it (the bible) all work". Though I had grown up in a Melbourne Eastern Suburbs Christian family, it wasn't until I was in Canberra, that I felt I could reinvent myself and even ask myself whether I (really) wanted to go to church anymore?'

During her time as a music teacher Cath volunteered to work at the Australian National University with AFES. This work gave her a solid grounding in thinking and teaching biblically and it also showed her that Christian women need Christian women to talk to. Her one-year role was part of answering that need and was a training ground that God would use in years to come.



At the end of that year with AFES, Cath worked in an office before enjoying travel overseas for two years. Questions about her future, faith and God continued to nigggle her. In response to these questions on her return home she enrolled at Ridley College, initially completing a two year Grad Dip. Being back in Melbourne also gave her the opportunity to play for the Preston Symphony Orchestra.

'I love the experience of being part of an orchestra where you have a really big sound,' she says.

As a musician studying theology Cath struggled financially. But an unexpected decision provided a way through. Through her musical abilities she joined the Australian Army Band as a reservist playing flute. The remuneration paid for her college fees, accommodation and life. Things continued until one day her car engine blew up and an expensive repair bill led her to seriously consider an offer to enlist as a full-time Army musician for three years. On advice and seeking God in prayer, Cath took the offer and signed up.

Cath says it was during these three years that she began to reflect on whether she should stay in the secular workplace as a Christian or perhaps work in full time Christian ministry?

Welcome Cath.....continued

Cath says it was during these three years that she began to reflect on whether she should stay in the secular workplace as a Christian or perhaps work in full time Christian ministry?

'I knew people who were Army chaplains so I was aware of the role. However when I joined the Army Chaplain's Department there were only two full time women chaplains. When I joined it became three!'

The Army paid for her to re-enrol with Ridley College where she studied for a further three years.

In 2010, as part of her training with Ridley College, Cath completed a year placement with St Mary's, Sunbury. The experience would lead to Cath returning to complete a two-year curacy at St Mary's from 2012-2013.

However, the Army called in on their investment and after completing her curacy, Cath was posted to Townsville in 2014. Once again her love of music led her to play flute with the rather grandly named Barrier Reef Orchestra and also the Townsville Concert Band. Describing her northern Australian musical experience as playing with a 'bunch of really friendly people,' Cath found the 'social aspect and having something to practice for' helped with her routine.

But it seems the lure of Sunbury overruled even the Army's plans for her life. Cath met Keil Maslen also an Army Chaplain and the couple married at St Mary's in Oct 2014. The attraction of being able to live in a place that still feels like a country town but just a 30 minute drive to Melbourne and one that offers affordable housing just made sense, to them both.

'The people of St Mary's is a huge pull factor,' Cath says. 'We do feel very loved and we would love this to continue.'

We would love for people to pray for us and I'm sure our little 'sproglet' (Cath and Keil are expecting their first child in late August) would love cuddles later in the year.'

And music? Has she had a chance to connect with local Sunbury musicians yet?


'Sadly it's on the back burner. But I'm sure at some point in the future there will be an opportunity,' she says.

FRIDAY APRIL 29TH- APPROX 6.30PM

EDDIE THE EAGLE

ALL TICKETS \$15.00*
*IF PURCHASED ON THE NIGHT FROM THE ST MARY'S TABLE IN THE FOYER AT READING CINEMAS SUNBURY

FUNDRAISER FOR THE ST MARY'S TEAM ATTENDING STATE YOUTH GAMES



New To Our Family

We are all delighted to welcome Jeremy David Beales, born on 7th April, weighing 4.32kg (9lb 9oz), a new son for Kim and Kate Beales and baby brother for Amelie and Zac.



Upcoming Events

For more information and details on upcoming events keep an eye on the pewsheet and "Like" our Facebook page

28 th April-	Lions Hostel Service- 3.00pm
29 th April-	Friday Friendship Lunch- 12.30pm
29 th April-	"Eddie the Eagle" movie fundraiser approx. 6.30pm (TBC)
7 th May-	Games Night- 8.00pm
10 th May-	Parish Prayer Meeting- 7.30pm
11 th May-	Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Service at St Mary's- 7.30pm
15 th May-	"The Banquet" @ 5pm
17 th May-	Riddell Gardens Service- 10.30am
18 th May-	Mother's Union Quiet Day
19 th May-	Sing & Soup- 12 noon
22 nd May-	"The Course" @ 5pm
26 th May-	Lions Hostel Service- 3.00pm
27 th May-	Friday Friendship Lunch- 12.30pm
2 nd June-	Games Night- 8.00pm
6 th June-	Parish Council Meeting- 7.30pm
10-13 June-	State Youth Games- Lardiner Park
14 th June-	Riddell Gardens Service- 10.30am
14 th June-	Parish Prayer Meeting- 7.30pm
15 th June-	Mother's Union
16 th June-	Sing & Soup- 12 noon
21 st June-	Chibobo Mission Team depart, returning July 10 th
22 nd June-	Wednesday service to Goonawarra- 10.30am
23 rd June-	Lions Hostel Service- 3.00pm
24 th June-	Friday Friendship Lunch- 12.30pm
26 th June-	June edition of Grapevine Published

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The Banquet & The Course

On May 15th, the 5pm Community is hosting a community banquet. The plan is to invite friends for a celebratory meal, at which Kim will tell some stories, and let people know about a 6 week course we will run from Sunday May 22- June 26th exploring the Christian faith. We will run this course as our 5pm service for the six week period. It is effectively a "pilot course", which we will repeat again on a weeknight in October. Please be in touch with Kim if you are interested in assisting with hospitality, discussion leading or any other aspects.

Please pray for this time, and if there are people in your networks who you would love to see involved, this would be a great occasion to bring them along.

