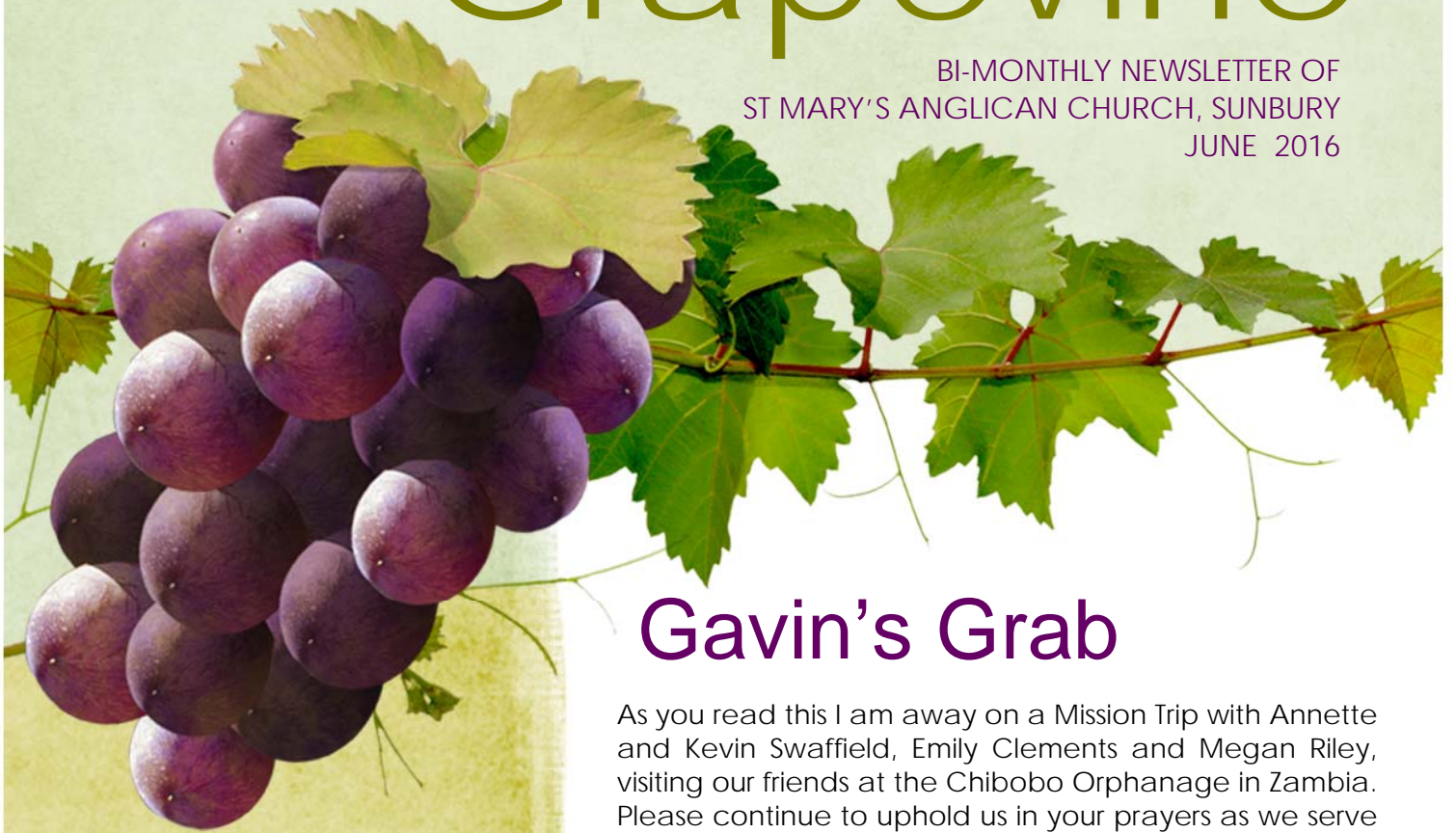


# St Mary's Grapevine

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



## Gavin's Grab

As you read this I am away on a Mission Trip with Annette and Kevin Swaffield, Emily Clements and Megan Riley, visiting our friends at the Chibobo Orphanage in Zambia. Please continue to uphold us in your prayers as we serve God and the people in this community.

When I return, Kim will begin 4 weeks leave, which brings me to my update.

Kim and I have realised that we will spend just 3 days working together between 21 June and 7 November. We have therefore spent a few hours together planning and preparing, along with the Wardens, for the oversight of the Parish during this period of time.

The details of our various absences are as follows:-

Gavin away in Africa:- Tuesday 21 June, returning to St Mary's on Thursday 14 July.

Kim away on Annual Leave:- Friday 15 July, returning to work on Thursday 11 August.

Gavin away on Long Service Leave:- Monday 15 August, returning to work on Monday 7 November.

In addition Cath Fisher is expecting her first child in late August and will be taking Maternity Leave... therefore...

Activities will continue as normal during my time away in Africa, however after that the following staff changes will occur:-

## Dates for your Diary

2 July-	Games night
4 July-	Parish council meeting
12 July-	Prayer meeting
20 July-	Mothers Union
21 July-	Sing & Soup
28 July-	Friday friendship lunch
31 July-	Service Leaders meetings
1 August-	Parish Council meeting
6 August-	Games night
9 August-	Prayer meeting
17 August-	Mothers Union
18 August-	Sing & Soup
26 August-	Friday friendship lunch
28 August-	August edition of Grapevine available for collection

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## Chibobo Mission Team Itinerary

### Saturday June 25 – Sunday July 3

Time at Chibobo village, completing a range of projects.

Taking part in church services and worshipping the Lord with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

### Sunday July 3

Local church services then drive to Lusaka

### Mon July 4

Fly to Livingstone.

### Tuesday July 5 – Thursday July 7

Camping Safari, Chobe NP, Botswana

### Thurs July 7 – Sat July 9

Victoria Falls & Livingstone

### Saturday July 9

Depart for Johannesburg/Melbourne from Livingstone. Kevin and Annette remain in Africa.

### Sunday July 10

Arrive in Australia- Gavin remains in Perth, Emily and Megan return to Melbourne



For full details of the 2016 Chibobo Mission team's trip details, team aim, team prayer points and individual team members' prayer points please collect one of the "Zambia 2016 Prayer Supporter Guides" from the church or office.

Gavin's Grab continued from page 1 ...

### A. Kim on Annual Leave (15 July to 11 August)

#### Matthew Browne

Matthew, our Ridley Student, will join the staff team for one day a week (in addition to his Ridley Student commitments). He will commence on Sunday 17 July and continue through until November.

Matt will take on responsibilities within the 5pm Community, with specific focus on the church service. He will oversee the Service Leaders, music, hospitality and assist with general pastoral issues.

### B. Gavin on Long Service Leave (15 August to 7 November)

#### Kim Beales

Kim will become Locum of the Parish and be working 6 days a week. He will take on all my responsibilities. He will alternate between 8.30am and 10.30am services, except when preaching in the mornings, of course. He will lead the Staff Team and work with the Wardens and Parish Council on all Parish related matters.

#### Keil Maslen

Keil will become Locum Assistant Minister and will work for 3 days a week. He will attend both morning services and preach and preside (as required) and take responsibility for the Wednesday service when Cath goes on Maternity Leave. He will also assist Robin Phillbrick and the team with services at the Aged Care facilities and assist Kim as required with weddings, funerals, baptisms, pastoral care etc.

#### Matthew Browne

Matthew will continue with his one extra day a week during my Long Service Leave.

### C. Funding of these Arrangements

The funding of these arrangements is covered under the Long Service Leave arrangements with the Diocese. Therefore there is no additional cost for St Mary's.

I had better go as Kevin is calling me to help him out with some more work at the Chibobo Maternity Clinic.

I will see you when I return.

With God's blessings

*Gavin*

# Apologetics

By Ros Armstrong

Apologetics? What's apologetics? It sounds like "apology", but are we sorry for something?

Apologetics is best explained by the apostle Peter, who wrote:

*"... Always be ready to make your defence to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and reverence..."*

(1 Peter 3:15-16 (NRSV))

"Defence" here is in Greek word "*apologia*" which is where "apologetics" comes from. So, as Alister McGrath (a noted apologist) puts it, apologetics is about explaining, commending and defending the Christian faith against misunderstanding and misrepresentation.

And, given the quote from Peter, all Christians should have some grasp of apologetics and be able to explain their faith. This task is one that can be easier said than done, especially in an increasingly secular society. With many detractors and questioners, it can be hard for us to know what to say and when.

Fortunately, there are resources out there to help us. One of them is the Apologetics unit of the Ridley Certificate course which we will run at St Mary's in Term 3. Usually only those enrolled online in the unit would be able to take part. However, we have received permission from Ridley to allow others to join in as well for a donation which will be

passed on to Ridley.

This is a great opportunity then for anyone to learn more about apologetics and how to answer questions about the faith (or maybe answer some of your own questions). Topics covered include: the reliability of the gospel accounts; Jesus as the only way to God; suffering; miracles; science and Christianity; the contribution of Christianity to society.

The unit will run on Wednesday evenings in the Parish house, 7.30-9.30pm, from July 20<sup>th</sup> to August 24<sup>th</sup> inclusive (six weeks).

For more details or to express an interest, please contact Ros Armstrong [rosarmstrong@stmarysanglican.org.au](mailto:rosarmstrong@stmarysanglican.org.au)



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# The Banquet & The Course

*By Kim Beales*

We had a fantastic night out for **The Banquet**. 135 people attended, and we enjoyed some delicious food, generously made and served by a large number of volunteers. A group of musicians performed some magnificent live music, and Kim told some stories inviting people to explore the life of Jesus. This has resulted in a number of people joining us over recent weeks for **The Course**. Each week there has been a presentation about the Christian faith, a simple meal and table discussion. Emma West has also coordinated a children's group, and Larry Green and Sue Allaz have assisted with a creche. It has been a fantastic time for the community, and wonderful to see people working together so well to create a context for people to explore the message of Jesus.



## Coming Soon in October

The Course in its present form is effectively a "pilot course". Once completed, we will do a review of the process and the presentations, and look at what might be learned for the future. We will run both The Banquet and The Course a second time with the wider parish, beginning in October. This will be a fantastic opportunity to connect friends and family with the church. Please begin praying for some people you may like to invite. If you are interested in being part of a team that runs The Course, please be in contact with Kim at [kimbeales@stmarysanglican.org.au](mailto:kimbeales@stmarysanglican.org.au)

# CMS Bendigo Autumn Weekend

By Cath Fisher

On Saturday 21 May, six St Mary's people attended the CMS conference to hear from two missionary families working in Indonesia and bible talks from Rev Dr Rhys Bezzant (Ridley lecturer). The aim of CMS is *A World that Knows Jesus*. The day was an excellent and exciting way of hearing how God is using the missionaries to help people understand who Jesus is and to strengthen the faith and witness of the Christian church.

Here are some reflections on the day:

Pam Allan: "The day was a valuable indication of the work of CMS, hearing about the lives of missionary families serving abroad and those within Australia. Two in particular struck relevant chords with me. Amongst many salient points spoken by Rhys was the comment "N comes before Y in the alphabet so it's quite OK to say NO at times, don't overload yourself!" Good advice for us all! The other speaker was a lady, working in Australia with MENTAC (Mentoring Across Cultures), who related how she was sharing fellowship with Buddhists when one of them commented that Buddhists believe the spirit stays within the body for three or four days following death to which she immediately replied "We Christians believe that the spirit leaves the body at death". This comment poured cold water on the conversation, stopping it dead. Asking more questions and showing an interest in what the other person had to say could have opened the line for questions about Christianity - she blew that opportunity by coming in too quickly. How often do we miss out on the chance to be "missionaries" within our circle of family, friends and acquaintances by speaking instead of listening?"

Elsa and Alan Phillips: "Being at the Saturday session of the CMS Autumn Weekend proved to be very interesting and informative. The program was well-balanced, with its mix of excellent Bible teaching and 'Missionary moments'. The mission focus on this weekend was on Indonesia, with the speakers being Jon and Deborah who, with their sons Oliver and Simon, are serving in the western area of Indonesia and Mark, who with his wife Louise and sons Joshua and Simeon are on their final 'home assignment' after serving for a number of years in the eastern area of Java.

We tend to think that the prime focus of missionaries would be on converting the people of other religions they are in contact with, but in their presentation Jon and Deborah and Mark all made the point that it is local Christians who are best placed to influence their predominantly Muslim neighbours as they do not have the problem of language and a different culture that missionaries face.

Their main role has been to raise up mission-minded leaders from the Christians they were working with, many of whom have first to come to a full understanding of their own faith.

It was very interesting to hear stories of individuals who became such effective 'missionaries' in their families and friendship groups when they came into a living relationship with Jesus. Jon spoke of his work at a Bible College where the rural students, mostly fresh from high school, come in for a four-year course which involves growing them as Christians but also equips them with farming and small business skills to support them as they return to the country areas where most people live. Another important aspect of the missionaries' work is their interaction with the Muslim people they meet - other parents at the soccer fields where the boys play, or Louise's students at the university where she was teaching English. Through simple friendly responses there are opportunities to speak of their faith in a natural way. Perhaps the most important outcome of this is that local Christians are realizing that you *can* be friends with Muslims, something they have been reluctant to do for fear of being influenced by them. In all of this, are there points to think about for our own 'mission' in Sunbury?

*Continued on Page 5 ...*

# An article from the "Huffington Post"

By Jamie Bruesehoff- Blogger, 'I Am Totally \*That\* Mom'

You are doing something really, really important. I know it's not easy. I see you with your arms overflowing, and I know you came to church already tired. Parenting is tiring. Really tiring.

I watch you bounce and sway trying to keep the baby quiet, juggling the infant car seat and the diaper bag as you find a seat. I see you wince as your child cries. I see you anxiously pull things out of your bag of tricks to try to quiet them.

And I see you with your toddler and your preschooler. I watch you cringe when your little girl asks an innocent question in a voice that might not be an inside voice let alone a church whisper. I hear the exasperation in your voice as you beg your child to just sit, to be quiet as you feel everyone's eyes on you. Not everyone is looking, but I know it feels that way.

I know you're wondering, is this worth it? Why do I bother? I know you often leave church more

exhausted than fulfilled. But what you are doing is so important.

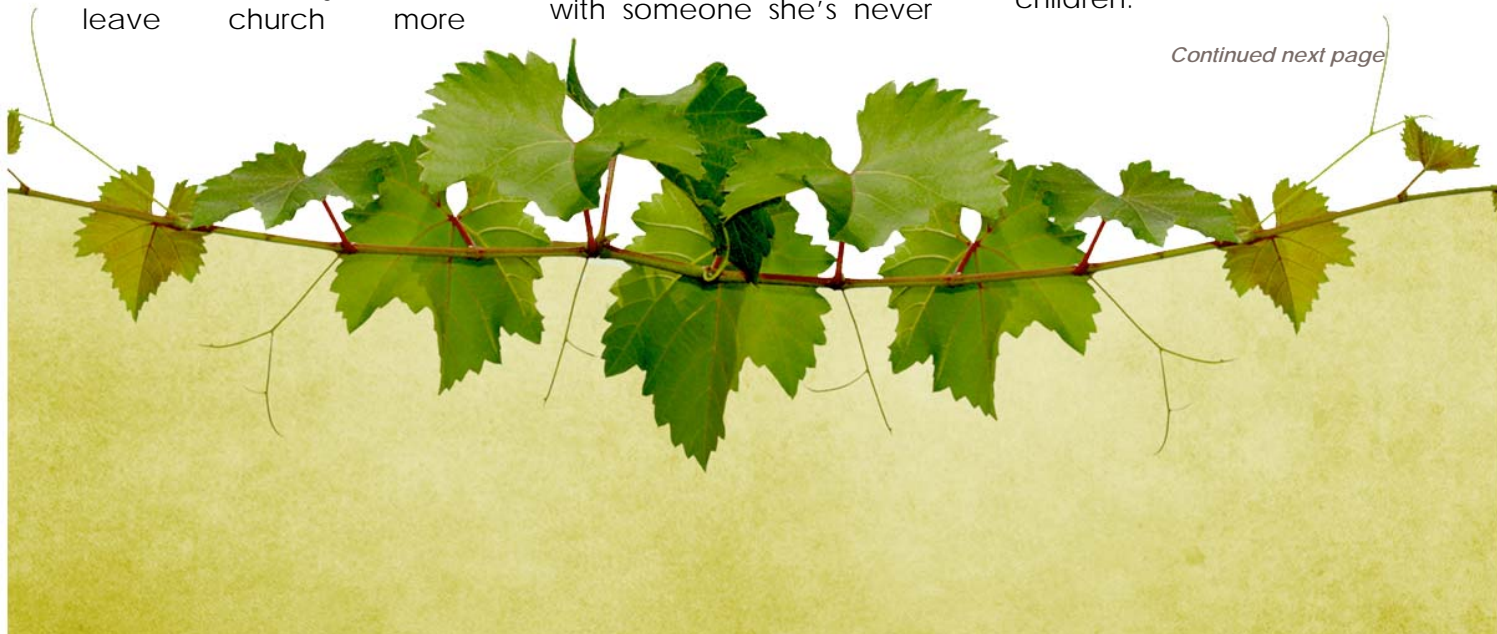
When you are here, the church is filled with a joyful noise. When you are here, the Body of Christ is more fully present. When you are here, we are reminded that this worship thing we do isn't about bible study or personal, quiet contemplation but coming together to worship as a community where all are welcome, where we share in the Word and Sacrament together. When you are here, I have hope that these pews won't be empty in 10 years when your kids are old enough to sit quietly and behave in worship. I know that they are learning how and why we worship now, before it's too late. They are learning that worship is important.

I see them learning. In the midst of the cries, whines, and giggles, in the midst of the crinkling of pretzel bags and the growing pile of crumbs, I see a little girl who insists on going two pews up to share peace with someone she's never

met. I hear a little boy slurping (quite loudly) every last drop of his communion wine out of the cup, determined not to miss a drop of Jesus. I watch a child excitedly color a cross and point to the one in the front of the sanctuary. I hear the echoes of "Amen's" just a few seconds after the rest of the community says it together. I watch a boy just learning to read try to sound out the words in the worship book or count his way to Hymn 672. Even on weeks when I can't see my own children learning because, well, it's one of those mornings, I can see your children learning.

I know how hard it is to do what you're doing, but I want you to know it matters. It matters to me. It matters to my children to not be alone in the pew. It matters to the congregation to know that families care about faith, to see young people... and even on those weeks when you can't see the little moments, it matters to your children.

*Continued next page*



## News from Cambodia

Dear Friends.

The last month has been full of many precious times for us that we will not easily forget.

Zion church, which is the church plant we have been involved with our whole time in Mondulkiri, has always struggled to grow in the highly mobile and secular community in which it meets. This last month however two new families from a nearby village have become believers and started to attend. We joined with some other church members one afternoon at one of these households where the family gathered all the things that they had previously used to influence the spirit world in their favour, put it all in a heap outside, and burnt it all along with Khmer style spirit house they had built in their yard. As we pointed to the cotton charm around his wrist and he eagerly took a knife and cut it off, we were reminded that Jesus said he had come to release the oppressed, and just how bound many Bunong villagers are bound in a complex web of fear.

The next day Ken took another man from this village who has been a believer and member of Zion church for a few years to one of the large village churches where they were having a mass baptism. This was an important step for M'Berh Yerng, as his wife and in-laws have been committed Christians for some time and he had been more or less tagging along. Ken was able to share personal stories of his own faith journey with this man as they drove, and he was excited to meet others from his parent's village who were also at this meeting and to join thirty others who had come for baptism.

The preparations for the Bunong NT dedication that we have been working towards for months also reached fever pitch (excuse the pun). Dengue fever broke out for the first time in Mondulkiri Province eventually infecting nearly everyone at Ntuk Nti making it difficult to keep people on the task. Ally and Ken were spared but Candice our short term, after battling it valiantly for a week, was eventually evacuated to Phnom Penh and then back to Australia where she is now recovering. Aside from this distraction many of the volunteers from the villages on the venue preparation team came only a few days before the event or did not come at all. Praise God for a few people from one of the churches that put in a huge amount of work. Most things were achieved, some only minutes before they were needed.

Almost one thousand people turned up for the first day of the dedication and heavy rain made a lot of mud. Even though all paper work for the event had been properly submitted by the church leaders and approved, the provincial governor tried to shut the meeting down when it was brought to his attention how many Bunong people had gathered. Praise God that one visitor, who has worked with Hun Sen's cabinet of ministers for several years, was able to negotiate an over-rule of the governor's interference. The second day an estimated 600 people came for the parade and speeches. Some key people who had caught dengue were well enough by that day to give their testimonies and participate. We think that only the people in charge of venue preparation (i.e us) were aware of all the things that went wrong. So in retrospect (and after some rest) we can say that the event went very well with a bigger than expected turn out.

This last week we have been having some down-time in Penang as we join Calvin for his graduation week from Dalat International school. His graduation marks the end of our ten-year association with the school and we, along with Kia and Calvin have been saying goodbye to many friends, both old and new, especially dorm parents who have come to love our kids as much as we do.

We have finally bought tickets to return to Australia, leaving Phnom Penh 23rd August.

Thanks for thinking of us in your prayers,

Blessings,

*Ken and Ally*

*Editor's note- Ken and Ally will be joining us at St Mary's on Sunday November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2016*



## An article from the "Huffington Post"

*continued from page 4*

It matters that they learn that worship is what we do as a community of faith, that everyone is welcome, that their worship matters. When we teach children that their worship matters, we teach them that they are enough right here and right now as members of the church community. They don't need to wait until they can believe, pray or worship a certain way to be welcome here, and I know adults who are still looking to be shown that. It matters that children learn that they are an integral part of this church, that their prayers, their songs, and even their badly (or perfectly-timed, depending on who you ask) cries and whines are a joyful noise because it means they are present.

I know it's hard, but thank you for what you do when you bring your children to church. Please know that your family — with all of its noise, struggle, commotion, and joy — are not simply tolerated, you are a vital part of the community gathered in worship.

*Editors note-  
This article was submitted by a  
Grandfather from our 10:30am  
congregation.*



"It matters that children learn that they are an integral part of this church, that their prayers, their songs.....cries and whines are a joyful noise because it means they are present"

### CMS Bendigo Weekend

*continued from page 3*

The Bible study teaching was given by Rev Dr Rhys Bezzant from Ridley College, speaking on sections of Ephesians. Rhys managed to hold our attention even in the dozy hour after lunch, tying his teaching into day-to-day living, and illustrating it with some fascinating examples. (Did you know that at the height of the 'What Would Jesus Do?' movement the most stolen item from a Melbourne Christian bookshop was the WWJD bracelets?)

There was a very good feel to the day, with a warm welcome on arrival, magnificent country morning tea, and the lunch tables open to those who had ordered lunch or 'brown-baggers' like ourselves. And to top it off two bookstalls, one of new books and the other of second-hand books, so that I gleefully came home with an armful to go on our shelves.

We came home very glad to have had the invitation to be present."

It truly was an inspiring day and I hope you can join us next year!

