



St Mary's Grapevine

BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF ST MARY'S ANGLICAN CHURCH, SUNBURY
MAY 2019

Gavin's Grab

Greetings everyone,

I trust everyone was able to take some time over Easter to remember and reflect upon God's amazing love and grace for us all through Jesus work on the Cross and his powerful resurrection.

I'd like to update you on a few Parish matters:-

Chibobo Community in Zambia

I had a long conversation recently with Staivous Mulumba, the Director of Help Ministries Projects (HMP) in Zambia, and he advised me of the following:-

1 Food for the hungry

Many of you contributed to the funds we sent over to HMP to help alleviate the food shortage due to the Zambian Governments decision not to provide farming assistance to those in need.

When the funds arrived, local bureaucracy delayed the purchase of much needed maize for households. Finally when permission was received, the Government had created a huge increase in the price of maize.

HMP took this issue to the Chibobo Community via a representative Board and they decided to allocate funds to the most needy households for the purchase of fertilizer and other inputs to enable the planting of crops for food for the coming year. They said that a bag of maize will feed us for a month but fertilizer etc will enable us to be fed for the next year. This is a great local decision. In the end 355 households in the Chibobo area received these funds and crops have been planted and are growing due to good rains.

Staivous thanks everyone who contributed to this need with deep gratitude.

2 Chicken Project

You will remember Narelle organised a number of events to raise funds for a Chicken Project to be run by HMP. Staivous reports the Community have now constructed a Poultry House and we have sent the funds over this week to enable the purchase of chickens etc to begin the project.

The money raised through the sale of eggs (which will be the only locally grown eggs – if that is what you call egg farming) will assist care for the orphans, the establishment of a fish farm and other farming activities to raise funds and to feed people.

This project is assisting HMP towards greater self-sustainability.

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Katherine Christian Convention

Thankyou for your prayers for Narelle Riley, Kim Burn and I as we attended the Katherine Christian Convention over the weekend of 4 and 5 May. The Convention is held at the Katherine Show grounds and involved over 800 Christians from many Indigenous Communities from the Northern Territory, WA, Queensland and even South Australia. There was a great Kids programme run by Steve Urmston and youth programmes along with the main programme involving a speaker, singing, dancing and sharing groups. The latest edition of the Kriol Bible was also launched. We spent our time serving as welcomers and security on the entrance gates, and serving meals and snacks in the Canteen - so we didn't get to see much of the convention itself, but it was wonderful to witness people worshipping God and being encouraged in their faith. We had the wonderful privilege of speaking with a number of the attendees and ministering at various times with them. The volunteer army, supporting the Convention, included a group of over 20 from a church in Maitland and also a group of BCA Nomads. The over-all sense of the Convention is that we are all brothers and sisters in Christ and any differences of nation, church denomination, community or skin colour are completely irrelevant. It was a blessing to be part of this and we will pray and process our experience, in particular the next steps in what and how God may be calling us as a church to be involved in.



Professional Standards Seminar

I recently updated my Professional Standards qualifications by attending the Seminar conducted at St Mary's. Although I had heard most of what was said before, I found it very helpful to hear it again and to be reminded of the high importance of ensuring our church is a safe place for all who are vulnerable. I encourage you to attend the Seminar (if you haven't already) and to consider attending again (if you haven't been for a few years).

Mission Philosophy

At St Mary's we are engaged in a number of mission activities. I recently reminded Parish Council of my views on how we respond to God's call on us as a Parish and as individuals to be people of mission, reaching out to others with God's love and gospel of salvation through Jesus, Here's what I wrote:-

We are a people focussed on bringing and sharing God's love (the Gospel) through Jesus with all people. Therefore I have been keen to create possibilities for everyone to be involved (as they are able). In doing this we have:-

1 – Local Mission Activities (e.g. Kids Hope, Careworks, Chaplaincy Support, Friday Friendship Lunches, Sing and Soup, Sunfest, Refugees etc, etc and now the Winter Night Shelter). We have also run a variety of evangelistic courses (Alpha, Introducing God, The Banquet) and then followed up with various discipling activities. We will continue to actively do this locally.

2 – National Mission Activities (e.g. Supporting Ridley College, Prison Fellowship and Bush Church Aid; conducting visits to West Wimmera and supporting the Edwards family in Broome/Exmouth, Mission Aviation Fellowship etc, etc and now hopefully a connection with an Indigenous Community)

3 – International Mission Activities (e.g. Supporting CMS (Thompson and now Adams families), and supporting and visiting the Chibobo Community in Zambia. Chris and Grace Adams will be visiting us on Sunday 11 August.

My prayer and desire is and always has been that with this variety of Mission work, everyone can find their place and way they can be involved in Mission, as God calls them.

with God's blessings

Gavin

5pm Welcoming Team

Michelle Dennis- Welcoming Team Leader

Last November, Matt, Narelle, Clarissa and I headed over to the Christian Blind Mission headquarters in Box Hill to attend a seminar on "Becoming a Better Welcoming Church". This was a practical workshop designed to help us build a more welcoming and missional church community.

We were invited to explore ways to help people in our church reach into the community and be better at welcoming new people who turn up at church.

We came away so inspired by the speakers that we were eager to hear more about the program. A few weeks later we invited Craig Mawdsley, from Partners in Ministry, to come out and meet with us in Sunbury, and to have a chat about how we could start a similar program in our 5pm congregation.

Craig spoke to the three of us about gathering a team of people together that were gifted in the art of making newcomers feel welcome, and that have a passion for connecting visitors in to our church family.

We looked at how this new welcoming team would fit in with our existing vision for our church –

St Mary's is -

A community – encouraging fellowship, upholding each other in prayer,

Loving God – inviting others to worship with us, praising God, loving all people despite their background,

Following Jesus – serving others, obeying his teachings, helping others find their place in the body of Christ,

Sharing God's love with all – building relationships, sharing the Good News through bible studies, conversations, meals, etc

A team of about 14 people from 5pm were invited to come along to a workshop with Craig in our parish house in March, to explore ways our 5pm congregation could better connect our church community with our visitors.

Craig talked about statistics taken from the last National Church Life Survey, which revealed some fascinating insights in to how people choose a church, how welcome they feel, what things needed to happen to make them more likely to return, etc.


He emphasised, from studies done, that the first 10 minutes after the service is the crucial time to make sure we are connecting to our visitors and making them feel welcome. That is the time when a lot of visitors will gain an impression of our church, whether it be good or bad. This is the time when they may decide to return to our church if they perceive us to be a friendly, welcoming church, or not, so its very important that we strive to get this right.

So, what is the role of our new Welcoming Team? Obviously to make feel visitors feel welcome, but to also take that extra step and introduce them around to other members of the congregation that we feel they may connect with. We can ask them to fill out a Communication Card on the pews, so we can keep in contact with them.

Perhaps it may involve phoning or texting new visitors during the week to see if they would like to catch up, join a bible study, attend a home group, join the kid's music playtime, etc. It may involve explaining to new people where the toilets are, where the creche is, or perhaps guiding them in our communion procedures.

It may mean helping those with a disability into and out of our church, inviting them to the dinner in the hall after the 5pm service, or telling them about all the wonderful groups and opportunities we have at St Marys.

As a congregation we are all part of the body of Christ, each with our gifts and special skills, and we all have a responsibility to make our visitors feel as welcome as we can. As part of the new Welcoming Team, I'm excited about the possibilities that God can open us up to. After all, hospitality is a key part of our Christian service – "I was a stranger and you welcomed me" Matthew 25:35. I invite everyone to join us in thinking about how we can all be a welcoming church to our visitors.



"Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God."

Romans 15:7

Meet our Musicians

"Where there is devotional music, God is always at hand with His gracious presence." - J. S. Bach

Every Sunday and Wednesday they use their musical gifts to enhance our worship- now here's a chance to get to know a little more about some of our musicians!

Emma West

How long have you been involved in music ministry at St Mary's?

Since about 2013. Ian was a new baby when I started joining in with worship and with Music Playtime.

What instruments do you play?

The main one is cello and singing, but since starting work as a music tutor at Red Rock Christian College I have taken up guitar, recorder and rekindled a previous acquaintance with the keyboard... I am becoming a jack of all trades, and you know where that leads you...

Do you have a preferred music genre?

I like good quality music in most genres, (other than death metal), but I love classical music, jazz, alt rock, funk - if it's fun or astonishing or speaks to my heart in some way then I love it. Paul Kelly's great; Ben Folds; Midnight Oil; Jars of Clay are great, and I recently rediscovered Switchfoot. One of my favourite pop songs ever is Caught In The Crowd by Kate Miller-Heidke.

What is your favourite worship song/hymn..... and is there a reason/story why it is significant to you?

Favourite worship song at the moment is Wood And Nails by The Porters Gate... my favourite hymn is probably Be Thou My Vision. I love it because it's simply a song of devotion and total trust in Christ, a hymn of abandoned reliance and complete allegiance. Love it.

How much time do you spend each week playing /rehearsing?

I don't spend enough time playing and rehearsing really, but am sitting down to the piano every day now. I play for assembly worship at school every week and at church 2 times a month

What instrument do you wish you could play?

I wish I could play the Double Bass, and one day I hope I will!

Best piece of music advice you've ever been given?

"Play every note as if you mean it". In other words, don't switch off to what you're doing when you are making music. Great advice for music and life too!

If you could play a duet with anyone (living or dead) who would it be?

Steven Isserlis- the worlds best living cellist, or Johann Sebastian Bach or Brahms.



Helen Gifford

How long have you been involved in music ministry at St Mary's?

We joined St Mary's in 1974 when we moved from Swan Hill- the vicar asked if someone was able to play the piano for the Sunday school. I then filled in for the regular organist and in the late 1980's I played for the Tuesday morning "pram mass". When the regular organist left, a roster was made with other organists and myself. This has changed over the years but I am still here and enjoy playing.

What instruments do you play?

I play organ and piano- and have played 3 different organs at St Mary's.

What is your favourite worship song/hymn..... and is there a reason/story why it is significant to you?

That's a difficult one to choose as I have many! Perhaps the tune "finlandie" played to "Be still my soul" or to the "Song of Peace"

How much time do you spend each week playing /rehearsing?

This varies a lot. I enjoy playing more as I have got older, and hope to spend more time, with a bigger variety of music in the future.

What instrument do you wish you could play?

Violin

Best piece of music advice you've ever been given?

Best advice was given to me by my father. When I stopped learning piano at age 16 he encouraged me to keep playing sometimes so I would retain what I had learnt.

If you could play a duet with anyone (living or dead) who would it be?

My father- with him on violin- and we would play "Jesu Joy of mans desiring"





Daniel Williams

How long have you been involved in music ministry at St Mary's?

Ever since the 5pm community began as a once-a-month Sunday evening gathering

What instruments do you play?

Guitar, drums and a bit o' bass

Do you have a preferred music genre?

I can't go past some good ol' Rock 'n' Roll

What is your favourite worship song/hymn..... and is there a reason/story why it is significant to you?

"In Christ Alone". It was beautifully sung by the congregation at our wedding and I feel it encapsulates the Gospel really well.

How much time do you spend each week | playing /rehearsing?

It varies widely depending on the week! I try to get at least an hour or two in

What instrument do you wish you could play?

The harp

Best piece of music advice you've ever been given?

You're not Jimi Hendrix - stop playing that guitar with your teeth!

If you could play a duet with anyone (living or dead) who would it be?

Paul McCartney

Carol Horman



How long have you been involved in music ministry at St Mary's?

I have been involved in music at St Mary's for maybe a year.

What instruments do you play?

I play the piano

Do you have a preferred music genre?

I love jazz, but only the light soft stuff

What is your favourite worship song/hymn..... and is there a reason/story why it is significant to you?

"God is my Strength" to the tune of dambusters. It brings me to the point of tears every time I try to sing it. It really portrays my love for God.

How much time do you spend each week playing /rehearsing?

I try to get to the piano every day and can play for an hour without noticing.

Best piece of music advice you've ever been given?

Was given a picture which I have since printed, framed, and sitting on my piano. It is of an iceberg, (fitting since I recently returned from a holiday in Antarctica) showing the whole iceberg. What you can see above the water and what you can't see. What you can see is the performance. What you can't see is the practice. Performance is only 10% of the whole thing. Practice is 90%.

If you could play a duet with anyone (living or dead) who would it be?

If I could play a duet with someone living or dead it would be Victor Borge. He was the funniest most talented pianist/comedian ever.

**"As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace."
1 Peter 4:10**

Save the date! Sunday August 4th

Kara Martin will be our guest preacher and will also be running a workshop for us in the afternoon titled **"The Good, the Bad and the Redeemed of Work"** *We spend the majority of our waking hours at work, how can we use that time effectively as an opportunity to worship God?* This workshop will teach you the good of your work, how the process of working is cancelled, and how work can be redeemed. Kara Martin is the author of *Workship: How to use your work to worship God*, and *Workship 2: How to flourish at work*. She is also a lecturer with Alphacrucis and Mary Andrews College, and was formerly Associate Dean of the Marketplace Institute at Ridley College in Melbourne. Kara has worked in media and communications, human resources, business analysis and policy development roles, in a variety of organisations, and as a consultant. She has commenced a PhD program researching the variables for effective faith-work integration of workplace Christians.

Winter Night Shelter

Less than 2 weeks until the Sunbury Winter Night Shelter commences!



St Mary's will host the Winter Night Shelter on Monday and Thursday evenings, commencing from Monday June 3rd and running through until our final evening on Thursday August 29th, a total of 26 evenings that guests will be accommodated overnight in the St Mary's Parish Hall.

55 St Mary's parishioners have volunteered to be involved in the project- as shift workers, shift leaders, cooks, laundry assistants and drivers. This is a fantastic response but with it comes a massive workload for our amazing volunteer venue coordinator, Rod Smyrk, as he needs to ensure that every volunteer has completed the application form, and signed the volunteer agreement. If you haven't yet completed this, please make this your highest priority!

Everyone is invited and encouraged to attend the Winter Night Shelter commissioning service which will be held at the Sunbury Baptist Church, on **Sunday May 26th at 7pm.**

Lend me your hope

Adapted from Neil Anderson's book 'Victory over the Darkness'

Lend me your hope for a while
I seem to have mislaid mine.
Lost and hopeless feelings accompany me daily,
Pain and confusion are my companions.
I know not where to turn;
Looking ahead to future times does not bring forth
images of renewed hope.
I see troubled times, pain-filled days, and more tragedy
Lend me your hope for a while,
I seem to have mislaid mine.
Hold my hand and hug me;
Listen to all my ramblings, recovery seems so distant.
The road to healing seems like a long and lonely one.
Lend me your hope for a while,
I seem to have lost mine.
Stand by me; offer your presence, your heart and your love.
Acknowledge my pain; it is real and ever present.
I am overwhelmed with sad conflicting thoughts.
Lend me your hope for a while;
A time will come when I will heal, and
I will share my renewal, hope and love with others

Welcome to our Church Family

Praise be to God for the safe arrival of two beautiful little girls since our last edition of Grapevine!



Welcome to **Olivia Claire Smith!**
Born at 3.07am on Monday 18th March, weighing 7lb 3oz. A daughter for Lachlan and Elizabeth, and sister for Finn and Teddy!



Welcome to **Mercy Rose Browne!**
Born on Wednesday 8th May, weighing 9lb 10oz. A daughter for Matthew and Erin, and sister for Bella and Timothy!



"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead"

1 Peter 1:3

Congratulations Ros

Congratulations to Ros Armstrong who recently graduated from Ridley Melbourne with a Masters of Arts (Theology). Ros undertook 9 years of study which culminated in an 8000 word essay with the subject title "Understanding Honour Shame Culture for Biblical Interpretation in a dominant Guilt Innocence Culture"



Reconciliation

Danielle Johanesen- Parish Councillor

If you came to services on Easter Sunday, you would have noticed that all services started with an Acknowledgement of Country. The Acknowledgement of Country is said to remind us of Aboriginal peoples' history and culture, and of their connection to the land. It is said in a spirit of reconciliation and to restore Aboriginal peoples' place as original stewards of the land.

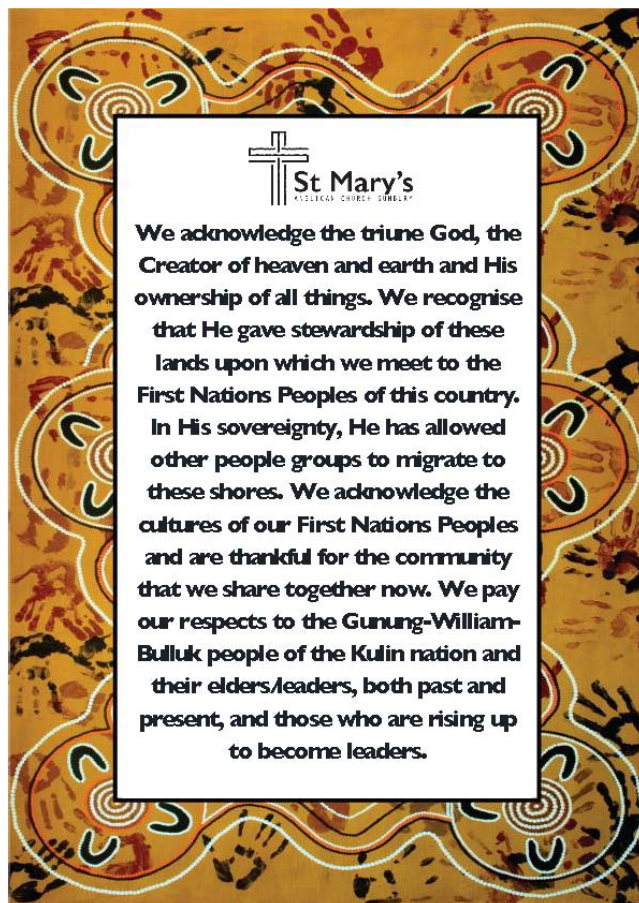
Much has been written about the hurts caused by British Colonialism on Aboriginal peoples. The dispossession, displacement and violence were compounded by subsequent Australian governments enacting policies that further dehumanised and alienated Aboriginal peoples. While this can easily be dismissed as history, the effects continue to this day.

As Christians we must seek to heal these wounds just as Jesus did when he sought out the lost, the hurting and the rejected during his ministry. In 2 Corinthians 5:18-21, Paul writes that Jesus gave us the ministry of reconciliation born out of Jesus's reconciling us to God through his crucifixion. In verse 20, Paul says that we are Christ's ambassadors for reconciliation.

This is not a passive thing, where we sympathise but take no active part. The message in Corinthians is one of action – ambassadors should be peacemakers, taking the steps necessary to bring about reconciliation.

When this issue was raised and voted on by Parish Council, we were concerned that without hearts for reconciliation that it would just be the right thing to do. Through prayer and discussion, we came to consider this a gesture of our willingness to be ambassadors. It is the first step in a longer conversation about how we as a church choose to engage with and minister amongst the indigenous peoples of this land.

The text for the Acknowledgment of Country was provided by the Bush Church Aid Society. The Aboriginal peoples mentioned were the Gunung-William-Bulluk people. This group, lived in the lands around Sunbury, they were part of the Wurundjeri people who along with other Aboriginal tribes formed the Kulin Nation.



We will be saying the Acknowledgement of Country on dates throughout the year that are important to the church and to Aboriginal peoples. These dates are NAIDOC Week, National Reconciliation Week and on National Sorry Day, as well as at Easter and Christmas. You'll have also noticed the notices around the church and on our website.

If you are interested in knowing more about the Aboriginal culture and history. I'd recommend the following books (although there are many more):

- Dark Emu – Bruce Pascoe
- The Tall Man: Death and Life on Palm Island - Chloe Hooper
- Forgotten War – Henry Reynolds
- Talking to my country – Stan Grant
- Am I Black Enough for You? – Anita Heiss

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