



THE ADVOCATE

Inspired by God's love, through worship, prayer and scriptural reflection, we seek to live our Christ-centred values by meeting the needs of our communities through serving and accepting others.

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April 2020



He is Risen

The angel said to the women, 'Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay.'

Matthew 28: 5 - 6



Inside the Advocate this month



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Safe Church Safe People

BY REV DAVID STILL

Since taking up the role of Safe Church Officer just over a month ago, the world has turned upside down. No one was really expecting that we would be dealing with a Pandemic running rampant throughout the world. As I write, a number of Churches and some Dioceses within the Anglican Church have decided to close for the time being. This is not yet the case for the Diocese of Wangaratta.

If we do have to close our churches to public worship, and already, there is a significant restricting of what the activities are that we can conduct, whether they be services, pastoral or social activities, we still need to keep in mind and act according to the Safe Church Standards that have been established over the last few years. If there is pastoral visiting in the home, the needs of the person in the home are paramount. Our Parishes will need to sort out other ways to maintain contact with those who we cannot see as easily as we are used to doing. Those who are visiting will still need to be authorised and licensed where necessary.

As most, if not all, of our Parishes have people who are vulnerable, especially those who will be stuck at home on their own, we as the Church need to make sure that we take care of them as safely as we can, while still seeking to be the Church as much as we can.

If we are collecting email addresses or encouraging people to be on Facebook so that we can livestream or email, we also have to be conscious of our privacy requirements and not taking advantage of people who may be vulnerable in some form. It is in difficult times that we need to be just as careful about making sure that we have Church that is safe for all.

Mothering Sunday in Central Goulburn Parish

BY DIANE GRANT

A little lift to the spirits at Nagambie and Seymour was given on Mothering Sunday 22 March, by the ladies of the parish.

Wendy McCullough, Marlene Brew and Di Grant

at Nagambie made posies for St John's mums, and the Hospital and hostel. Anne Foote in Seymour made their posies, and Jenny Moran from Avenel and Mary Greenshields from Seymour made the simnel cakes.

Thanks to them for their efforts made with love and to those who donated flowers or greenery.

Pic. Di Grant and Marlene Brew with their posies they made for St John's folk, the Nagambie hospital and hostel.



World Day of Prayer at Kilmore

BY CAROLINE BURGE

The annual ecumenical World Day of Prayer this year was hosted in Kilmore by parishioners of Christ Church. It has been a number of years since Kilmore has hosted this event, and what a joy it was.

Convenor for the day was Christ Church parishioner Sherine Copeland who co-ordinated other churches in the district to participate and be part of the occasion. With only two places of worship operating in Kilmore (Anglicans and Catholics), it was wonderful to welcome members of the Uniting Church and Gateway

Church from Wallan, as well as members of a local Pentecostal gathering, and residents of the local Blue Cross Nursing Home.

The World Day of Prayer banner, made specially for the occasion, depicted the people and culture of Zimbabwe. This was processed through the church at the start of the service by the three Leaders of the day - Patty DuPlooy, Leonie Dunlop (from St Patrick's) and Caroline Burge.

As well as the talents of Suzy Callaghan who made the banner, Patty DuPlooy added her artistic talent by preparing and decorating stones to

give out as a memento of the occasion, as Zimbabwe means "house of stones".

Parish Priest, Rev André DuPlooy visits the Residential Care Home each week, and organised for Blue Cross to provide a mini bus to bring some of the residents to the service. One time parishioner June Clark (now a resident at Blue Cross) was one of the Readers for the day, while her fellow residents looked on proudly at 'one of their own'. It was a joy to also welcome the amazing Nell from Blue Cross who has recently celebrated her 101st birthday.



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Anglican Diocese of Wangaratta

LAST MONTH'S SOLUTION

Issue No. 0072

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CONTACT US

GENERAL ENQUIRIES, DESIGN & PRODUCTION
Fiona van Bree
Tel: (03) 5721 3484
registry@wangaratta-anglican.org.au
www.wangaratta-anglican.org.au

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EDITORIAL & ADVERTISING CONTRIBUTIONS
Diocese of Wangaratta
PO Box 457, Wangaratta VIC 3677
registry@wangaratta-anglican.org.au
Tel: (03) 5721 3484

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Contributions and photos are welcome (please limit to approximately 300 words) for consideration for publication dependent on space and content with the understanding that they may be edited. Pictures should be provided as a high resolution JPEG (200dpi) or Tiff if possible

SAFE CHURCH

The Anglican Diocese of Wangaratta has zero tolerance for abuse. We are committed to providing a safe, respectful, welcoming and positive environment for children and adults from all backgrounds.

If you have experienced abuse or suspect abuse may be occurring in a church setting or by a member of the church you should report this as soon as possible to the Director of Professional Standards on 1800 377 842 (1800 DPSVIC) or email professionalstandards@wangaratta-anglican.org.au.

For more information on our Safe Church policies and procedures contact the Safe Church and Systems Officer on 03 5721 3484.

Front page photo: Easter Garden by St Stephen's Sunday School Kids, Rutherglen, 2019.

Shrove Tuesday in the Parish of Kilmore

BY CARLOLINE BURGE

Shrove Tuesday, or Pancake Day as it is more commonly known in the community, was held at Christ Church on 25th February.

Being the day before Ash Wednesday, the church was officially cleared of all the flowers in readiness for the start of Lent. This was then followed by a pancake supper, following the tradition of using up rich foods such as milk, eggs and sugar before the fasting season begins.

Once everyone had their fill of pancakes of every shape and flavour, the burning of last year's Palm Crosses took place to make the ash for Ash Wednesday. Parish Priest Rev André DuPlooy gave an explanation of the purpose behind the burning of the crosses and lit the small fire. Parishioners then took turns in placing the crosses in the flames, remembering 'we are dust and to dust we shall return'.

Photo Below: Maureen Snowball and Suzy Callaghan watching over the pancake cooking



MU Australia
Part of the World Wide Mothers' Union

News from Mothers' Union

BY MARY MUNTZ

The staff at Mary Sumner House have used funds from Worldwide Mothers' Union membership to offer grants to overseas Dioceses when it became apparent that not all MU activities could be funded from local sources. In the early 1900's it was decided that there be a special correspondent in England representing each Overseas Diocese. From this group a correspondent was nominated to speak for members of each continent. This funding is used to support full time MU workers overseas. I am sure there must be a "waiting list" of projects to be considered. Australian MU membership has fulfilled this role for many years now and the workers from Mary Sumner House must have special talents to embark on varied programs where language, government laws, and the ability to train local members is essential. Funding from Mary Sumner House also makes it possible for members in disadvantaged countries to attend overseas conferences. In recent years Mrs Edith Koete, from the Province of Melanesia, Mrs Ida Baure, the Province of Papua New Guinea, and the Rev'd Iritana Hankins, the Province of Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia have attended some of the Australian Mothers Union Conferences.

Dr Robin Ray has taken on the role of Overseas and Northern Outreach Coordinator since she completed her time as MU Education Officer. Robin lives in Queensland and her interest in mission work began as a child when her mother kept an ABM money box in the kitchen and told her stories of missionary work. She trained as nurse and became a University Lecturer and has spent time in Hong Kong, Bhutan and Malaysia. She has worked in the Diocese of North Queensland for 12 years so will be familiar with the Torres Strait Islands and Northern Outreach.

The Overseas Project the Anglican Mothers Union Australia members have been asked to support is the parenting program in Papua New Guinea. Mrs Rose Sitae, the Provincial President and Mrs Ida Baure, the President of Popondetta Diocese are to meet with Kathleen and Lena from Mary Sumner House to evaluate and make any changes to the Parenting Program materials developed for use in Melanesia. The approved program will be trialled in two parishes in Lae, in the Diocese of Aipo Rongo. We are asked to pray for the team as they work through the local issues of marriage break down, polygamy, unplanned pregnancies and child abuse to find the best way to present this program locally.

from the Bishop



Who would have thought a few weeks ago that Churches throughout the world would be forced to close their doors and services during our holiest time would be suspended? Who would have thought that the many worldwide regulations would, in a physical sense, prevent us from worshipping collectively as the people of God? Who would have thought that people would not be able to enter a sacred space just for a prayer and the lighting of a candle? We have all been privileged over so many years to participate in the Paschal Mysteries and I am sure that this still resonates deeply within each one of us. Things might happen in different ways for different people, but we are still united in our prayers, grounded within our faith and assured of God's love for all of God's people.

Easter, celebrating resurrection and life, comes after a period of pain and death. Easter joy is a result of the pain of Good Friday. This serves as a reminder that we are always in a process of transformation and change and that things will not always remain the same.

Easter therefore brings about hope and opportunity, change and challenge, even in the face of uncertainty and adversity. It reminds us that newness and renewal can arise from existing hardships - which, through God's grace, become opportunities.

As a Good Friday people, we are people of the cross and, as Easter people, we are people of the empty tomb, signifying the resurrection. Though the tomb may be empty, our lives are filled with the glory of God who calls us from sorrow to joy; from darkness to light; from confusion to certainty.

During these trying times of great uncertainty, I pray that we will be grounded in the faith into which we have been baptized and confirmed and that we hold on to the promises of Jesus who will be with us every step of the way.

We sincerely hope that the Easter joy will bring about the good news of a vaccine and an end to COVID-19.

Thank you for understanding the measures we have had to implement and, even though we do not know exactly when we will be able to join for corporate worship, I do pray that it will be soon. This is possible when we follow the lead of those in authority and with the expertise to devise measures that will stop the spread of the Corona virus - staying at home and following basic hygiene practice.

Thank you also to all members of our congregations for the financial generosity in ensuring the ongoing ministry within our parishes, even under difficult constraints. Thank you to our all our clergy for the innovative ways of keeping the gathered people of God together, even when we are confined to our own spaces.

May we all experience the joy of the resurrection as we continue to share the story of hope, opportunity, change and challenge.

+ Clarence E Bester
Bishop of Wangaratta

Bushfire Relief Fund

If you would like to make a donation to the Diocese of Wangaratta Disaster fund for Bushfire relief you can do so by making a direct deposit to the following account;

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Anglican Diocese of Wangaratta SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

Our new Bishop – Clarence has reviewed the terms of reference for the SJC to explore how we could be more meaningful and inclusive in the Diocese. Information about the changes will be circulated for consideration at our next Synod. Watch out for details.

Our current priorities are:

- **Refugees** – a very active ecumenical group has started out of the SJC in Wangaratta and we are exploring how we can become more realistic and welcoming communities to so many displaced vulnerable people that we can reach out to support. If you are interested in this action and would like to join in please contact me (Suzie Don Leonard)
- **The Environment** – once again plans are being put into place to prepare how to “Care for Creation” for Synod and a subcommittee is being recruited to do this. Contact our Champion, Gill Baker if you are interested
- **Aged Care** – the majority of our Diocesan membership are Seniors and we need to be mindful of our ageing members. A subcommittee to drive this action is being formed to design how we can do this through the Diocese. Contact me (Suzie) if you are interested and have ideas on how we could present this to Synod.
- **Palestine** – Action around increasing awareness and advocacy is being reinstated as a SJC priority. As the Champion of this group Val Edwards will be setting up a subcommittee. Please contact her if you are interested if she hasn’t already been in contact with you.
- **Information dissemination:** - Information from the SJC will be shared via the Advocate, Ad Clerum and our Face book page @Micahcp6
- **Bush fire recovery** – Unfortunately our Diocesan Bush Fire fund raising Jazz Concert scheduled to be held on 16 April has had to be postponed owing to the Corona Virus. The Key performer has offered to come to us at a later date – Watch out for details

In conclusion, the Corona virus is getting us all to slow down and reflect. It is giving us the opportunity to take time out and give ourselves, our families, communities, the nation and the planet we live in, time to work out our priorities, not panic. It may also be a time to tighten our belts financially and spend on what we really need. There are many who cannot afford to spend big and stockpile. Social Justice is also about looking after each other and ensuring our limited resources can go around to meet all people’s needs.

As a faith community it may be time demonstrate caring and reflection to encourage calm and healing in ourselves, our families and our communities. Let us work together to spread calm and caring as our Social Justice action at this difficult time

Looking Down the Valley

BY REV'D DR EDWIN BYFORD



I am now up to my fifth or sixth attempt to get this column written. On each occasion another development in the spread of Corona virus has intervened to change my direction. By the time this is published and distributed there will have been many more developments and actions by governments and others to affect the way we conduct our day to day lives. This is a Lent in which it is most likely that our attention has not been focused on a journey to Jerusalem with our Lord. We have not been able to put immediate concerns for our own welfare and that of our communities aside as Covid 19 has impinged on just about everything inside and outside our homes. As I write this, I am not even sure that we will be able to gather together to celebrate our salvation in the death and resurrection of our Lord.

In normal circumstances I would argue that gathering together to celebrate the mysteries that are at the heart of our faith is of supreme importance. Being Christian is about belonging together as much as it is about belonging to the God and Father of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Christians have always identified themselves by the way they gather and relate to each other — we are brothers and sisters in the Lord. Most of us, most of the time, have been able to openly express our faith and gather with others with whom we share it. Mostly we gather together to do what has been done since the earliest days after the resurrection of our Lord. We gather to share fellowship, to share bread and wine and to reflect and pray about what it means to be Christian.

Over the centuries, even millennia, there have been times and circumstances when Christians, and our Jewish brothers and sisters, have been forced into, or chosen, isolation. But this is something that most of us will not have experienced. The extraordinary circumstances in which we find ourselves at the moment mean that we have to reimagine our ways of devotion to Christ and each other.

Many have walked this way before us. We can read of how Elijah fled, alone, from the wrath of Ahab and Jezebel, in the First Book of the Kings, chapter 19, and encountered God in the “still small voice” or “sound of sheer silence” on Mount Horeb. We can read of our Lord’s injunction, in the Sermon on the Mount, to go into our room and pray in private.

For hundreds of years the fourth Psalm has been said or sung every night at Compline with the beautiful words “commune with your own heart, upon your bed and be still. Offer sacrifices that are right and put your trust in the Lord.”

Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Terry Waite, while imprisoned, found that a discipline of prayer sustained their courage through the worst of trials. After his death, Bonhoeffer's Letters and Papers from Prison were published and there we read of the little rituals, of kneeling down and signing himself with the sign of the cross as he prepared to pray, that sustained him. Terry Waite found that he could recite by heart prayers and canticles and psalms of the Book of Common Prayer as he sat through four years in the dark basements of Beirut. Alone, and often in great anguish, they were sustained by words such as those at the beginning of the twelfth chapter of the Letter to the Hebrews, “Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses ... let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.”

Whether we can be with others or not to celebrate the great story of our salvation, we can be assured that that salvation is real. Christ went to the cross for us and for our salvation. God raised him from the dead and demonstrated that, indeed, the victory of the cross was not what it appeared. It was not the Principalities and the Powers that had been victorious but Christ Jesus, our Lord.

As Australians we are a crazy people. As autumn descends we celebrate the appearance of new life. In the midst of decay we proclaim that Christ is risen, that new and eternal life is abundant. The tomb is empty and we know that Christ reveals himself to those with eyes to see and ears to hear, even if it is in the sound of sheer silence. With that great cloud of witnesses we can join our voices to celebrate whether alone or together.

There will be a time when, again, we can break bread together. But whether or not it is Easter this year, we have the assurance of the words of the risen Lord, “And remember I am with you always to the end of the age.”

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