



COMMUNITY

Quarterly news magazine of St Paul's, Manuka, and St David's, Red Hill, in the Anglican Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn

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Autumn 2017

The special place of Christmas in our lives

Large attendances at St Paul's and St David's again demonstrated the special place Christmas holds in our lives and especially for families. Media coverage and commentary underscored the season's significance.

Writing in the *Weekend Australian* Greg Sheridan observed: "Christmas survives as the most popular Christian festival, a symbol truly of universal appeal. For Christmas, as traditionally understood in Western culture, is the most radical event in human history. The wonders of Christmas are endless".

In a special article Peter Craven, commented: "It's strange how deep this story of the child in the straw goes with us. The idea of Christmas hooks the child's imagination like a mystery and thing of magic. Kids love a legend, and Christmas is a legend come alive.

"Childhood is the time of when we first feel the hush and stillness of the carols and perhaps ever after we hear them sing like an all but lost echo of innocence".

It is in this context of the secular, family and religious mixing together that the Rector, the Venerable Dr Brian Douglas, captures the spirit of the Christmas celebrations in the Manuka Parish: a time to gather together, to see those people who may have been far away during the year, a time of giving and receiving, and peace on earth.



Christmas is an important festival in the Christian year. It was when the divine came amongst us in the form of a child – Jesus. It is through this incarnation of the divine in human form that we know we are loved and wanted. God cares for us so much that God sends his own son (his own self) to live amongst us in human form and to experience the same joy and pain that we experience as human beings.

In the Anglican tradition Christmas is celebrated in white – the colour of rejoicing. We rejoice that the Christ-child is amongst us. We too gather as a family and welcome those we may not have seen throughout the year. It is a joy.

Children are invited to stand around the altar to take part in the Christmas Eve service celebrated by the Rector

This rejoicing has been felt in recent years at Manuka in the wonderful Christmas liturgy for children that we celebrate on Christmas Eve.

The service is a Eucharist so that parents can receive communion with their children in a setting that is suited to the children's needs and interests. As in other years the service attracted more than 400 people with hundreds of children present.

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CHRISTMAS IN OUR LIVES

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Year by year Nina Stevenson who leads the Pied Piper drama group coordinates a splendid nativity play. This year the play *The Reluctant Donkey* was no exception. Many children, and one parent (the donkey!) took part.

It delightfully and effectively told of the wonder of the birth of Jesus in a refreshing and intimate style. It was great fun with laughter and gasps of delight coming from the many children (and adults) watching.

Children are brought to the front so that they can be part of the action. They came forward for the Great Thanksgiving and stood around the altar with the Rector as the celebrant. It is wonderful to have them there and feel that they are intimately involved in the service.

The play is followed by a children's address on the meaning of Christmas. This year the Rector told the story of the snow geese and how a man while doubting the Christmas story also tried to protect a group of snow geese in his garage as they battled a vicious snow storm. It was only when he became like them and got down and waddled into the garage flapping his arms as wings that geese followed him to safety.

It was the next morning as the

snow geese flew off, rested, that he realised that Christmas is about Jesus coming to be like us and in so doing coming to save us. It was a moment of awakening for the man and perhaps for those who heard the story.

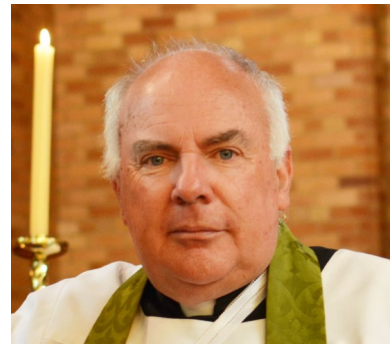
The midnight Eucharist drew another 400 people. The music, a setting by Haydn, including brass, woodwind and timpani was coordinated by our wonderful Director of Music, Matthew Stuckings and ably supported by our organists and choir.

It was a delight to see so many people present celebrating the birth of Jesus and enjoying the wonderful music at the same time.

Christmas morning saw some 25 people at the 7 AM Eucharist from the *Book of Common Prayer*. The 8 AM service had some 200 people present while the 10 AM service had another 400 people.

Again it was so wonderful to see so many people joining us for worship and celebrating the birth of the Christ-child. We are so fortunate that these people choose to be with us and we are fortunate that we have the chance to minister to them. Overall there were some 1400 present and 900 communicants. Praise the Lord.

The Rev'd Canon John Campbell led the service at St



David's on Christmas morning with some 60 people attending. St David's too celebrated the birth of the Christ-child and welcomed many into worship. We are blessed by this congregation among us.

Many people make Christmas work at Manuka – not just the clergy but also those who prepare the church, those who help with the services, who read, who welcome at the door, who ring the bells and who sing and make music.

Together we worship the Lord in spirit and truth and at Christmas we are richly blessed as we gather to know that God lives among us and gives us hope and promise.

May this rich tradition of worship and fellowship continue and give praise to God."

***The Venerable Dr Brian Douglas,
Rector, Manuka Parish***



"It is wonderful to have the children there and feel that they are intimately involved in the service."

Photos: Les Bohm



IN CONVERSATION

God's messengers on a journey together

Alipate and Erin Tuineau's pathway to shared ministry

For the Rev'd Alipate Tuineau and his wife, the Rev'd Erin Tuineau, their return to Canberra and St Paul's continues a shared spiritual journey which began while they were studying at St Mark's Theological Centre. That journey together continued when they were ordained deacons in the Rockhampton Diocese and priests in the Bendigo Diocese, leading to their being appointed to a joint ministry between the two parishes of Charlton/Donald and Inglewood in the Bendigo Diocese.

Parishioners of St Paul's have welcomed Alipate as Assistant Priest in the Manuka parish, joining the Rev'd Kelvin Harris as Deacon Assistant. Alipate will be remembered for his time as vergers at St Paul's, part of his continuing preparation for ministry. Erin is to become the second chaplain at Radford College.

Alipate and Erin come from different cultural backgrounds; they also came to God in different ways. Alipate was born in Tonga, "a beautiful island in the Pacific", the youngest of four children. His eldest sister is an Anglican nun (Community of Sacred Name) who looks after the orphanage children in Fiji.

Erin was born and raised in Lismore (NSW) and has a strong Christian and visual arts background which she has consolidated in extended theological studies.

"In my art, teaching, and counselling work, I always wanted to help others explore a deeper part of them, and in some way discover who God was for them." She adds: "I have always loved art, and I was passionate about investigating the relationship between art and spirituality."

The journey of my life, Alipate says, has been amazing because it was not straight forward. "God gave me a hint which has lead me to my destiny," a call he received when he was a young boy about seven years



The Rev'd Alipate Tuineau, celebrant at his first service at St Paul's

old. "Most Sundays," he recalls, "our parents took us to Sunday School. Once a month the priest in charge would give a little reflection from the bible. This time he told the stories of how God called his messengers, such as Moses, Samuel, and David.

As he concluded his stories he asked: 'Who would like to be a priest in the future or who would like to be God's messengers?' And up went my hand. The priest did not say anything; he probably thought I was too young to understand what a priest is".

When he left school Alipate, after working in his father's business, was offered the opportunity to work for the Westpac

“After seven years serving in the bank I started to wonder whether I was called to be a banker or to follow God's ministry in the church”

Bank in Tonga. While there the youth members of his congregation, St Paul Anglican Church, selected him as youth leader. It was then that he was attracted to church ministry. "After seven years serving in the bank I started to wonder whether I was called to be a banker or to follow God's ministry in the church.

As I discerned the future ahead of me my mother reminded me about my childhood in Sunday school and

my eagerness to be messenger of God. I now had clear vision of where I was heading".

His brother, who was working for Defence in Canberra, and knowing of his interest, suggested he should study in Australia. Alipate saw it as a new challenge, leaving his family, friends, and congregation and a life that he was used to. Enrolling at St Mark's in 2003 he moved into theological students' accommodation which he saw as an opportunity to learn from other students "as we discussed what our challenges through their ministry were. We shared the same commitment, "to live a life that dedicates ourselves to God". It is through this community of students living together that he met Erin, also a student of St Marks.

As part of his placement he had the opportunity at St John the Baptist Church, Reid, to act as a deacon on most Sundays. He took the same role at St Paul's where, as well as being vergers, he helped out with weddings and funerals and looking after the church grounds.

"This was a great experience for me to work in these two different churches where I learnt to communicate with people and lead services", he said.

When he and Erin finished their studies at St Mark's they planned to explore ministry opportunities in different dioceses, moving first to Rockhampton, "a blessing for us to start afresh in a new place and a new environment".

Erin Tuineau's parents both had a strong Christian faith. She was baptised and confirmed in the Lismore Anglican Church. She says: "I chose not to go to church between the ages of 12 and 20, although I continued to have conversations with God during my adolescent years".

Erin moved through a progression of appointments before discovering her purpose. She studied Visual Arts at Southern Cross University, in Lismore, adding a Bachelor of Secondary Education "so that she could work more with other people".

It was around this time that she decided to return to church. Soon she was co-leading the Anglican Church youth group in Lismore. When she finished her teaching degree she

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Adding a literary dimension to Christian enlightenment

The methods of theology, history, philosophy, literature and poetry are the tributaries which flow into the river of Christian belief and knowledge, to keep alive our appreciation and understanding of the “word”. We draw from this river the refreshing waters of the spiritual springs.

Just as a river responds to the environment through which it flows, sometimes with lush growth, sometimes in drought, able to recover when refreshed, so it is with the “word”. As facets of cultural life these tributaries, in a relationship with each other through language, lead somewhere together.

Poets have always drawn upon the religious heritage; religion, in turn, has always expressed its deepest convictions in dramatic form and in language which rises to the poetic. We can speak of this intersection as the aesthetic dimension of language involving imagery, metaphor and analogy, where the natural and the supernatural merge, hinged between the spiritual and the material. This connection can further Christian enlightenment and enrichment.

The latest issue of *St Mark's Review* sets out to explore some of the fertile ground in an edition devoted in two parts, to “Poetry and the Sacred” and “Literature and Theology”.

The articles include both poetry and prose reflections from various Christian traditions, as well as from Jewish, Hindu and Buddhist backgrounds. “There are also,” as the Editor, John Foulcher, who has published 10 collections of poems, says, “several who would describe themselves as agnostic but for whom a concept of the spiritual life is essential”.

“In considering collation of this issue”, Foulcher explains, “I thought of Australian poets who were not only concerned with the spiritual or religious dimensions of life, but those whose work was among the best this country has to offer.” As a result of their response there is a treasury of

Australian poems to illustrate the broad theme.

So what is it about poetry which makes it so instructive for our spiritual existence? A conversation between the Editor and a poet, Geoff Page, who has published 22 collections of poetry, seeks to shed light on the connection from the practising end of the poetic spectrum.

Kevin Hart, a poet, academic and university lecturer, in an essay around the central theme of “Poetry and the Sacred” discusses the connection between prayer, the poetic impulse and religious practice in the creation and appreciation of poetry.

Hart approaches a number of fundamental questions about the relationship. It is not a matter of a doctrinal theme in a poem, he writes, but the proximity of poetry and a properly basic religious activity—prayer. He asks can they converge completely? He suggests they can and examines the nature of prayer as “an ascent of the mind to God”.

There is no shortage of poems, he suggests, in the Christian tradition that are “religious speech acts, addresses to God and the Saints, and, therefore, may be called prayer, memorable and lyrical”.

Judith Beveridge, the author of six collections of poetry who teaches post graduate poetry writing, considers the ways in which the components of poetry incarnate spiritual impulses.

“Throughout history,” she writes, “poetry has always been the most powerful and effective form for addressing and exploring deep spiritual questions as an ‘interpreting spirit’, something which will help move, uplift and carry lived experience into rhythms and tones which allow both the writer and reader to feel as if they are in communion and intense dialogue with the world around them. The patterns of poetry lead to insights and revelations which may



not be attained or reached through logical or rational methods alone.

“We need the poet’s eye,” she argues, “to explore, to celebrate, to make the familiar extraordinary and to make space for the inner life”.

Mark Tredinnick in his own “The Gospel of Mark: what I believe and how I work”, looks through the lens of what is his own writing gospel at the nature of poetry itself and reflects on its intrinsic value in enhancing all human endeavour, classifying its purpose under a number of headings, describing what a poem “is”.

“Poetry tells the big story small; fiction (most fiction) tells a small story big”.

His contribution represents a personal manual for the budding writer with only a tenuous connection in name and title to the actual Gospel of St Mark, though none the less valuable in its imagery for a prospective poet.

Each writer arrives at the question from different angles; each uses poetry as a doorway into firmer understanding of life beyond—or embodied—in the material. Poetry comes to point to a deeper understanding, to another world.

The observation is made that as always with the poetic sensibility, the connection between the spiritual and poetry is best expressed in metaphor rather than in argument. Metaphor allows for endless possibilities; it escapes the cage of defining statement.

The secondary but equally important theme of “literature and theology” is directly explored through an analysis by Chris Armitage, an adjunct sessional lecturer in Biblical Studies at St Mark’s, of the novels of two significant writers in his essay entitled “The twitch on the thread: Evelyn Waugh, Graham Greene and the grace of God” who, in his precise analysis of the novels, conjured up

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GOD'S MESSENGERS

(Continued from page 3)



taught visual arts to children in Years 6-11, in an Anglican School for one year.

"While I did enjoy working with young people, I did not feel that teaching was my calling", she says.

She returned home to Lismore and trained by distance education as a pastoral counsellor (through St Mark's Theological College) and worked part-time as a high school counsellor and after-school care in

Lismore.

When a priest from the Lismore area suggested that she think about studying theology she began to realise that "my passion for exploring God with others could be expressed more fully in the life of the Church".

She moved to Canberra and began studying theology at St Mark's. While in Canberra she was a 'student minister' in three different parishes, "where I learned how to assist in leading services and preaching".

She says: "I wrestled with God about my call to ordained ministry, while I was doing my training: in time I began to realise that saying 'yes' to this call would allow God to use all of who I am for others, not just part of me".

When she met Alipate her focus in life became "much more than my study". In 2011 they were married in Lismore and in 2012 they remained in Canberra so that she

could finish her Masters of Theology", beginning their journey in life and ministry together.

After being ordained a deacon in Rockhampton in 2013 and being appointed to Gladstone, where Alipate was also Chaplain to seamen at the busy port of Gladstone, in Queensland, Erin "experienced a strong sense to explore my calling to be a parish priest". In 2015 Alipate and Erin accepted the opportunity to go to the Diocese of Bendigo where they were ordained Priest.

"Life," Erin recalls, "took a surprise turn when we found ourselves looking for ministry work in the Rockhampton Diocese. While it seemed a little daunting to enter into a new place with new people, God has given me the courage and the eyes to see that no matter where we go God's love is at work". Each day has been "an adventure together, full of challenges and blessings".

THE LITERARY DIMENSION

(Continued from page 4)

vastly different worlds.

He asks the question: is there such a thing as a "Christian novel"? However much they might dislike the label, Armitage argues, almost without conscious intent the Christian novelist portrays divine action through the lives of characters.

Both writers were converts to Catholicism. Despite their profound differences, Waugh and Greene portray the grace of God pursuing and ultimately embracing their characters. For both God's grace is ultimately inescapable. Armitage uses vignettes from three novels of each author to illustrate his conclusion.

Archdeacon Dr Bran Douglas' "Pusey, poetry and Eucharistic

theology" provides a natural linkage between the two themes of the influence of poetry and literature. His study of the Eucharistic theology of the Oxford academic, Edward Bouverie Pusey, points to the link between Christianity and the Romantic Movement in English poetry.

For the Romantic poets, he writes, God was powerfully and really present in nature. It was in nature that the pattern of the divine was to be found.

The Rev'd Dr John Harris in his "William Shakespeare and the Geneva Bible" speaks of the Elizabethan era becoming a defining period of English history and society and of all the influences on the new and distinctive nature of this period, nothing was more important than the Bible.

This issue of *Review* is notable for its significant contribution to

appreciating with distinctively Australian voices, the interconnections that can enhance our Christian understanding, what T S Eliot called "the auditory imagination," the feeling for syllable and rhythm, penetrating far below the conscious levels of thought and feeling, invigorating every word, a "poetic vision" reaching for the possibilities of language towards what Charles Winquist, Professor of Religion at Syracuse University, called "the margin of transcendence".

As the editor concludes: "Perhaps it's this sense of incompleteness which is the attraction in the writing and reading of poetry in the way it points to a deeper understanding, to another world, while acknowledging the impossibility of making that understanding tangible".

ST PAUL'S WALKING GROUP

Regional history tour to Crookwell

The Walking Group's 2016 annual history walk to Crookwell had a special purpose: to mark the retirement and to acknowledge the organisational work of Michael and Margaret Roach, after 20 years' commitment to the walking group.

The walk was arranged by Tim Bailey and Patricia Laird with 17 of St Paul's stalwarts enjoying the outing. Over the years, Tim and Patricia have organised many interesting walking tours of country towns.

Our Crookwell tour commenced at 9.30 am at the Upper Lachlan Council's Visitor Information Centre in Goulburn Street, the main street,



where we met our local volunteer guide, Jenny Painter, a member of the Crookwell Historical Society. She had arranged a walking itinerary commencing in the north of the town with Kiamma Park wetlands and picnic grounds which extend along the Crookwell and Kiamma Creeks; and the Pat Cullen Reserve, all recently re-developed by local volunteers and school children.

Our next point of interest was the Goulburn Crookwell Railway Historical Society Inc. display held at the old Crookwell Railway Station where we met two local rail enthusiasts who spoke on the history, and development of the railway to Crookwell, and about their exhibition of photos and

memorabilia dating from 1902-1974 when a passenger and freight train service ran from Crookwell to Goulburn.

A group of 10 volunteers was originally formed about 2003 to look after the numerous objects. The railway link to Goulburn was a great boost for the development of the town and boon for its people. The railway freight service ran until as late as 1985.

Volunteers are currently restoring jinkers and hope to restore the line in front of the station, which is a very attractive and well maintained pioneer weatherboard building dating from 1902.

Walking on past the sports grounds and many beautiful old Federation houses, we came to the impressive and poignant Memorial Park and War Memorial. A captured German Minenwerfer from WWI is an unsettling feature in the Memorial's peaceful setting.

Next on Jenny's itinerary was the Lindner Sock Factory and Shop where we had the opportunity to buy locally knitted pure merino wool socks and scarves and to view the knitting machines. The group then had time to visit the quaint gift and novelty shops in the main street, later meeting at Crossroads Cafe in Goulburn Street for lunch.

After lunch Jenny took us through the south side of the town,

to modern St Bartholomew's Anglican Church in Denison Street. The Rector at St Bartholomew's is the Rev'd Margaret Campbell who previously assisted at St Paul's. One of the parishioners, Peter Cullen, was there to greet us and give some history of this interesting church, and its hybrid organ - with speakers and pipes.



Kiamma Park wetlands and picnic grounds

Then to the Temperance/Memorial Hall and Library, an important social and cultural hub; and to St Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Colyer Street; and finally to St Mary's Catholic Church, dating from 1891, in Wade Street.

Here we met Brian Cullen, a parish volunteer. Brian's knowledge of the history of this church, including a devastating fire in 1958 and the rebuilding of the church, was extensive and affecting. Stained glass windows powerfully portray the stories of Irish convicts in Australia. At St Bartholomew's, to mark the retirement and as an acknowledgment of the organisational work of Michael and Margaret Roach, the Venerable John Gibson made a speech and presentation on behalf of the St Paul's Walking Group, to thank them for their commitment over 20 years. Michael and Margaret are planning to take a well earned rest.

John Gibson also thanked Tim, Patricia, with the assistance of John Holthouse, for planning this particular walk.

Michael, in response, thanked Eddie and Kay Braggett for their support in convening the annual planning meetings; and Sally Dakin for her assistance in the preliminary reconnaissance of many walks.

Mary Pollard, Timothy Bailey and Narelle Gibson

Readers of *Community* will no doubt be aware that I am “retiring” from my unelected role of co-ordinator of the Church Walking Group.

I say unelected due to the fact that our dear friend Eric Wright started the regular walks and the concept has been a wonderful success. Eric started similar groups at Queanbeyan and in another Canberra Parish: he could see the need for Parishioners to have an opportunity to meet outside of Church.

This has proven to be good, as natural shyness has given way to ensuring a team spirit exists to overcome obstacles and problems.

What sort of problems? Well: how to cross a stream or navigate a track through the bush using sight of eye and a predominant landmark, a hill or abandoned farm house; no problems with assisting each other under or over a fence or gate; cleaning up after a few days in the Alps, creating and fostering teamwork.

NOT LOST: JUST LOOKING **Walk, trek or wander** *20 years* MICHAEL ROACH

It would be fair to say that our initial walks away in Alps or regional areas attracted our Parishioners in groups of over 30: good walking, shared catering and friendly conversation.

I realised that Eric was unable to offer his time to further co-ordinate the group and that is how I assumed the job. I shall not name our leaders, but readers are well aware of them and their work for St. Paul’s.

The leadership group now consists of over 16 keen gentle people who enjoy the environment and the company of their fellow walkers. Well done all!

I can recall that our early meetings usually consisted of four people, one being Mrs. Diana Colman. Diana was

instrumental in our gaining access to the lodge at the Alps, another unrecognised quiet worker for St. Paul’s.

So what do the walkers get up to on their weekends away and on their walks? The simple solution to this is to come on a walk and enjoy conversation relating to birds, cricket, rugby football, the environment, music, books, films, opera: the choice is yours.

Here is a snippet for you. I recall our Church service beside the river led by Bill Huff-Johnston, and our visit to our sister Church in Tumbarumba (lovely name). Have you been there? We were made

most welcome with a lovely service and morning tea.

Being co-ordinator has been a pleasure and my tasks have been made much easier by the loving support of Margaret and the co-operation of the Leaders and walkers.

Do keep an eye out for walks in 2017 and onwards: I promise a few Hills!

Thank you Editor for your support and that of our Rector and Christina in the Office. I cannot but mention that our friendly meetings have been Chaired by Eddie Braggett with his usual happy style. Sally Dakin scribed the proceedings without a worry, and then sorted the walks in a clear and timely style. Thank you both and also to our web masters, Peter Hodge and Christopher Deane: we would not be able to have operated without your collective efforts. Bless you Eric for your inspiring idea.

Michael (still with boots on)

Images from a journey

Westminster Abbey, London



The Vatican, Rome

***Photos: Peter Menham
“Just may be for the magazine”***



NARRATIVE

Revealing the Christian spirit

Literature engaging with the Bible

GEORGE MENHAM

In her collection of essays *When I Was a Child I Read Books* Marilynne Robinson, the American writer, essayist and Pulitzer Prize winner, observed that if Western history has proved one thing it is that the narratives of the Bible are essentially inexhaustible. "Every moment and detail merits pondering and can always appear in a richer light. We can bring our own feelings to bear in the reading of it," she said.

Drawing on these narratives and engaging with the Bible Marilynne Robinson has come to be recognised as one of the most important contemporary American authors and thinkers. She constantly speaks of the relationship between literature and God. Her interviews become in themselves a significant body of thought and ideas, illuminating with probing insight the sacred qualities of ordinary experience. In writing about her Christianity she expresses a strong spiritual sensitivity in eloquent prose that captures an "inner world".

Robinson sees her writings as a form of self-revelation. "We are collaborative creatures," she says. "When we can articulate what you can discover about yourself, you are giving articulation to 'the other', a kind of inter-mediating web between what is experienced, what can be articulated, and what becomes comprehensible". It is, she says, a real imagining within which there is a theological element. It is "God's way of revealing himself."

These strong Biblical connections are reflected in her celebrated book *Gilead* which won the Pulitzer Prize in 2005, described by one reviewer as "fiction's finest reflection on the sacramental life". The book reveals a great deal about her and her belief, symbolised by the transformation of the Biblical Gilead, itself laced with meaning, into the fictional Gilead of Iowa where the book is set. Having described Gilead as "the hill of testimony" the book is in its own way her testimony, "bearing witness", revealed through the central character of the book, Ames, a preacher. It is a

reflective book, a book about faith, told in the form of a meditative letter by Ames, to become his own "spiritual memoir".

Ames is in his mid-70s, his health is failing and he wants his son, now aged six, to know about him when he is not there. To Robinson, the narrative is a form of prayer, "to say something meaningful and true of personal experience".

As she explained: "The Grace of God speaks for him as a way of resolving and dealing with difficulty, comprehending faith, forgiveness and redemption". Most people, Robinson says, have a certain religious sensitivity.

In his memoir, Ames, the minister, touches on the meaning of friendship, beauty in the natural world, the rituals of baptism and blessing, and the healing he has sought and found, with echoes of the Biblical Gilead. In his attic there are boxes of sermons, "pretty nearly my whole life's work, which is an amazing thing to reflect on."

The idea of God, Robinson says, was always powerful to her, portraying the relationship of God to the world. She viewed this relationship as "something interesting and meaningful, the more you go into it is to discover its beautiful literature".

She speaks of having sensed God's presence in the mountains of Idaho long before she had a name for Him. "I was aware of the point of alarm of a vast energy of intention, all around me." She recalls her grandfather holding an iris blossom before her, quietly commending its miracle of form.

"God," she observes, "willingly floods our senses with his grandeur in such a way that we can take it in and reflect it back, his glory 'shining forth' as we participate in it." A lot of poetry and literature, she says, is an attempt to put into language the same revelation that occurs in other forms.

Robinson is concerned with how we should live, with the idea of the

world as a sort of gift to us, which requires us to notice what we have been offered, to study it, to appreciate it and to dramatise its textures and contours. Her essays, like her novels, are concerned with belief and tradition, with the relationship between God and the mind and the word. Her imagery portrays the mysterious and the concrete.

"Everything for me," she says, "comes down to the idea that people are images of God". She adds: "As religious people, I think we ought to be sensitive to the fact that the universe is beautiful at every scale".

Churches, she says, are responsible for a huge amount of benevolent energy. "They really do feed the hungry and clothe the naked and visit the prisoners, all those things they are supposed to do".

When asked whether she thought of herself as a religious writer, she said: "It seems to me that anything that is written compassionately and perceptively probably satisfies every definition of religious whether a writer intends it to be religious or not". You have to have a certain detachment, she said, in order to see beauty for yourself rather than something that has been put in quotation marks to be understood as "beauty."

"Religion," she said, "is a framing mechanism. It talks about the arc of life and the quality of experience in ways that I've found fruitful to think about. Religion has been profoundly effective in enlarging human imagination and expression. Meaning doesn't simply generate itself out of thin air; it's sustained by a cultural framework. There is a visionary quality to all experience. It means something because it is addressed to you".

She cares a lot about Christian thought. "I believe that people are images of God. There's no alternative that is theologically respectable to treating people in terms of that understanding. It's not any loyalty or tradition or anything else; it's being human that enlists the respect, the love of God being implied in it".

The conundrum of Anglican identity revisited

THE REV'D DR JOHN MOSES

The spectrum of Anglican theology is extensive and there is no readily discernible consensus about what constitutes Anglican identity. There are many ways of understanding the Bible, creation, the nature of faith and the function of the church. In short we are forced to live with diversity and how Anglicanism was “transported” to Australia, and how it took root and grew into a uniquely theological diverse church.

It is well known that some Roman Catholics in contrast to some liberals still experience great difficulty in trying to comprehend the Anglican Church which recites the catholic creeds in its liturgy but refuses to submit to the Papacy. Paradoxically it would appear that neither do some Evangelical Anglicans endorse the Anglican comprehension of “catholicity”.

Elderly Anglicans have experienced the opprobrium of being regarded as “Romanisers”, and as people who relegate the Bible to a secondary level of importance below the Church but nevertheless for them Church and Bible have always stood in a reciprocal relationship.

Archdeacon Brian Douglas’ *The Eucharistic Theology of Edward Bouverie Pusey* makes this point emphatically. Dr Douglas is one of the foremost and internationally recognised Anglican scholars in the country. His latest work on the leading theological mind in the Oxford movement, lives up to the high standards that he has already set.

The focus in this book is on the core component of Christian worship, the Eucharist. In doing so he examines very perceptively the role that Biblical scholarship had played in the evolution of Pusey’s thought.

One learns that Pusey was far from being a “Romaniser” and that through his studies in Germany in particular for the purpose of becoming more proficient in the Old Testament languages he became closely and warmly associated with the leading German scholars of the day. They were all Lutherans from Berlin, Göttingen and Bonn universities.

Pusey was, in short, an ecumenist before his time and clearly one who grasped the importance of “looking over the fence” to bring new ideas into the country to avoid inward-looking stagnation. A church is like a lake; if it is not fed from a stream of fresh water it will become brackish and eventually become incapable of supporting life in any form and will die. And judging from the vigour of scholars like Dr Douglas and many others it is far from dying.

It is impossible not to be impressed by Dr Douglas’ research. He is certainly a scholar who “looks over the fence” having carried out his studies extensively at Oxford. And by publishing in the prestigious series, *Anglican-Episcopal Theology and History* edited by Paul Avis, he has certainly received the highest stamp of approval.

In subjecting the evolution of Pusey’s thought on the nature of the Eucharist Dr Douglas has conscientiously re-examined the work of previous scholars as his exemplary

“literature review” illustrates and he finds that not a few have been unjust to Pusey in their possibly over-hasty assessments.

By virtue of his encompassing research he has put all others in his debt and written a work that should be required reading for all schools of thought in Anglicanism. This is because his diligent re-appraisal shows that Pusey was the product of a family whose ancestors in their religious practice were always focussed on the Eucharist as the central form of Anglican worship. So he was born with a reverence for the Eucharist in his blood.

In short, Pusey’s extensive scholarship on the Eucharist represents a continuum, not innovation. Neither could he ever be accused of being a “Romaniser”. As such Dr Douglas’ work projects Pusey as an archetypal Anglican and an independent and creative theologian whose work over 100 years ago anticipated what was said about the Eucharist in the *Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) The Final Report*.

Dr Douglas devotes considerable space to explain the nature of Pusey’s Eucharistic doctrine. One is reminded that it was formulated in parallel to the Romantic Movement in English poetry. To this extent it is an expression of the *Zeitgeist* when William Wordsworth, John Keats and Samuel Taylor Coleridge became towering literary figures.

For Pusey and his colleague John Keble who is famous also for his Christian poetry, God’s handiwork in Creation is not only grasped scientifically, that is with the *ratio*; the cosmos is a work of art whose beauty can be comprehended intuitively. So it is with the Eucharist.

In this regard Pusey formulated the concept of “moderate realism” to sum up his understanding of the sacrament. The *real presence* had nothing to do with a fleshly presence nor was it explained in terms of “accidents” and “substance” but the elements nevertheless experience an inexplicable change that is not transubstantiation in the former Thomist definition.

One detects in Pusey’s writing an anticipation of Rudolf Otto’s “sense of the numinous”, an awe-inspiring act of worship which defies explanation. The Church simply obeys the dominical injunctions: “This is my body; this is my blood”. And here is well known Anglican teaching.

One can see how it irritated the Roman Catholics in the past and still affronts the literal Evangelical mind as well because it shies back from dogmatic utterance and absolute certainty. Poetry does not convey certainty, but it may well mediate reality. Theologians of the Oxford movement, led by Pusey and Keble, invite us into that reality.. Dr Douglas has illuminated Anglicanism and given us all spiritual and intellectual nourishment. It is indeed a challenge to widen our horizons.

*First published in St Mark’s Review No. 238
December 2016*

Remembering the Reformation

Ahead of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2017 the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, and the Archbishop of York Dr John Sentamu issued a joint statement on the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.

This year, churches around the world will be marking the great significance of the 500th anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation in Europe, dated from Martin Luther's 95 Theses protesting against the practice of indulgences, on 31 October 1517 at Wittenberg. The Church of England will be participating in various ways, including sharing in events with Protestant church partners from Continental Europe.

The Reformation was a process of both renewal and division amongst Christians in Europe. In this Reformation Anniversary year, many Christians will want to give thanks for the great blessings they have received to which the Reformation directly contributed.

Amongst much else these would include clear proclamation of the gospel of grace, the availability of the Bible to all in their own language and the recognition of the calling of lay people to serve God in the world and in the church.

Many will also remember the lasting damage done five centuries ago to the unity of the Church, in defiance of the clear command of Jesus Christ to unity in love. Those turbulent years saw Christian people pitted against each other, such that many suffered persecution and even death at the hands of others claiming to know the same Lord. A legacy of mistrust and competition would then accompany the astonishing global spread of Christianity in the centuries that followed. All this leaves us much to ponder.

Remembering the Reformation should bring us back to what the Reformers wanted to put at the centre of every person's life, which is a simple trust in Jesus Christ. This year is a time to renew our faith in Christ and in Him alone. With this confidence we shall then be ready to ask hard questions about those things in our lives and the life of our churches that get in the way of sharing and celebrating faith in Him.

Remembering the Reformation should also lead us to repent of our part in perpetuating divisions. Such repentance needs to be linked to action aimed at reaching out to other churches and strengthening relationships with them. This anniversary year will provide many opportunities to do just that, beginning with this Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

We therefore call on all Christians to seek to be renewed and united in the truth of the gospel of Christ through our participation in the Reformation Anniversary, to repent of divisions, and, held together in Him, to be a blessing to the world in obedience to Jesus Christ.



A letter from Finland

To: The Venerable Dr Brian Douglas

I visited your church and took part in your Palm Sunday Service during my short stay in Canberra last spring. As we are now approaching another big celebration for us Christians, I want to tell you, and your congregation that the Palm Sunday will always have a special place in my heart.

When I visited your church, I was in Australia for a business trip. I was in charge of a business delegation led by our Minister of Defence and I was under a lot of stress. The Palm Sunday morning was the only time I had for myself during our hectic visit. My hotel was across the street from your beautiful church. Your notice on the palm Sunday Service caught my eye so I decided to attend.

And I am so glad I did! I felt so welcome! Members of your congregation were all so kind and thoughtful and made sure I was not left alone and was able to understand and follow the service. I truly enjoyed talking to many after the service. On a business trip you seldom get to meet "normal people" and learn from them, but that is what happened to me on the Palm Sunday at your church. You are all such wonderful ambassadors of your beautiful country and Christian fellowship. The Service and the people afterwards truly were life saviors for me then!

As we are approaching Christmas, I want to send you my best wishes for all the members of your congregation. While you are starting your summer holidays, we are in the middle of the darkest season here. The days are very short and we seldom see the sun. All this changes now during Christmas week; the days will get longer and we will find happiness in the holidays and all the snow, which does make Finland a true Winter Wonderland.

One of my most beloved Christmas carols is "En etsi valtaa loistoa" (I seek no Gold or Majesty) which is composed by one of our great composers, Jean Sibelius. I want to share the third verse with you to wish you all a Merry and Blessed Christmas:

*To one and all this time of year
Come blessed Christmas peace!
Come youthful spirits, hearts of cheer
And joys that never cease!
Almighty God, to you we sing,
Be with us now, immortal King!
May one and all this time of year
Have peace and Christmas cheer!*

Tuija Karanko
Secretary General
Association of Finnish Defence and Aerospace Industries,
AFDA

BROWSING

A treasure on a book stall

ROBERT WILLSON

Nearly 400 years ago an Anglican priest in a tiny obscure parish in the west of England was scribbling in a large book. He was writing down what he called *Centuries of Meditations*.

The priest was Thomas Traherne. Here is a sample of what he wrote:

"By Love alone is God enjoyed, by Love alone delighted in, by Love alone approached or admired. His Nature requires Love, thy nature requires Love. The law of nature commands thee to Love him: the law of His Nature, and the Law of thine."

Traherne wrote other works, both verse and prose but little was published in his lifetime. The great body of his writings in manuscript form appeared to have sunk without trace.

But Thomas Traherne was a devout Anglican mystic. He loved the Anglican Church. The intense spirituality of his writings, now rediscovered in the last century, has made him honoured as a saint in parts of the Anglican Communion.

Recently I downloaded his *Centuries of Meditation*. Again and again he expresses rapturous delight in the simple glories of creation and the natural world. These glories, which we so often take for granted, lead Traherne to the sense of an intimate relationship with God. Those who know the poetry of William Blake and Gerard Manley Hopkins will discover the same deep feelings in Traherne.

The facts of Thomas Traherne's life are soon told. His parents were of humble birth and he was born in 1636 or 1637 but there is no record of his birth or baptism, so the date is doubtful. He was educated at the Hereford Cathedral School and at Brasenose College Oxford, after which he took holy orders and was ordained by the Bishop of Oxford in 1660. He served for ten years as the rector of the tiny parish of Credenhill in Herefordshire.

It is assumed that Traherne was a Royalist in his sympathies and as the Lord Protector, Oliver Cromwell, had deposed the monarchy after the Civil War and the King had been executed, this was a dangerous time. Traherne never mentions the chaos of the Civil War.

In 1667 Traherne became private chaplain to

Sir Orlando Bridgeman. Bridgeman was the Keeper of the Great Seal of King Charles II who had been restored to the throne of his late father in 1660. Bridgeman lived at Teddington near Hampton Court on the Thames.

Thomas Traherne died of smallpox at Bridgeman's home in 1674 and was buried in the Church. Years ago when my wife and I were exploring that part of London we visited the Church but there was little sign of Traherne's grave.

The story of Thomas Traherne might have ended there were it not for a remarkable discovery. On a winter's day in 1896 a man named Brooke was examining some manuscripts on a barrow of books about to be trashed in Farringdon Street, London. At first it was thought that they might be by Henry Vaughan (17th century poet) but eventually, after close study they were identified as by Traherne.

By coincidence at the same time a scholar was born in Western Australia who was destined to become a leading authority on this lost mystical writer. Her name was Gladys I Wade.

Miss Wade obtained her Master of Arts from the University of Western Australia and went to England on a Research Scholarship to study the newly published writings of Traherne. She followed his trail to Herefordshire and into Wales.

Her painstaking research was rewarded with a Ph. D. from the University of London. In 1946 her life of Traherne was published by Princeton University Press. I was delighted to discover an autographed copy of her book in a Sydney bookshop.

In 1940 Gladys Wade was appointed Headmistress of M L C Burwood in Sydney where she remained for a decade. It is surprising that she never followed an academic career. I wrote to the school in researching her life but they could not tell me much about her.

It is remarkable that after two centuries of total silence more and more manuscripts of Thomas Traherne are being discovered. One was rescued from a smouldering rubbish tip in Lancashire and another was found in the Lambeth Palace Library. Yet another turned up in the Yale University Library.

Who knows what else might lie undiscovered, perhaps even in Australia?

I warmly recommend *Centuries of Meditation* for quiet bedside reading. It is a great Anglican classic and an Australia scholar has helped to bring it to life for a new generation.

SERVICES

St Paul's

Sunday Services

7.00 am Holy Eucharist (Book of Common Prayer)

8.00 am Holy Eucharist (A Prayer Book for Australia)

10.00 am Holy Eucharist - Sung (A Prayer Book for Australia)

Choral Evensong

6.00pm Service of Choral Evensong on the third Sunday of the month, February to November

Prayers for Healing—

on the second Wednesday of the month immediately following the 10am Eucharist

Weekday Services

10 am Wednesday- Holy Eucharist

St David's

Sunday Service

8.30am - Holy Eucharist

Weekday Service

10 am Thursday- Holy Eucharist

ST PAUL'S PARISH COUNCIL

Members of St Paul's Parish Council are: The Venerable Dr Brian Douglas (presiding member), the Rev'd Canon John Campbell, Dr Ingrid Moses (Rector's Warden), Robert Deane, Peter McDermott (People's Wardens), Catherine Bohm, Christopher Deane, Peter Cumines, Sandy White, Mary Pollard (Parish Councillors), Duncan Anderson, Lorraine Litster (St. David's Wardens), Tony Ralli (Rector's appointment). Helen Raymond. (minute taker)

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OUR EDITORIAL PURPOSE

Communication is at the heart of our identity as a church.

As a news magazine *Community* is a tool of mission, a showcase of the Parish in all its activities. By sharing our experiences through reflective dialogue we renew that sense of journey to discover the mystery of the divine, connect with God, each other and the wider community, and nurture Biblical literacy and understanding.

The stories in *Community* reflect the unique position of St Paul's and St David's in the life of the Diocese and the nation. Its editorial content inspired by other contexts seeks to widen our Christian understanding, recognising the capacity of religion to nourish individual lives. It aims to enlighten in ways relevant to its readers and to be a window for others beyond the church to observe our participation as a vibrant Christian community.

As the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, said: "We believe in a God who speaks and calls, seeking to communicate more fully and effectively".

Community encourages the engagement of readers and contributors to reflect the richness and diversity of the Parish and to honour and proclaim an expression of faith in our life together.

Community

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St David's:

Warden and Associate Priest The Rev'd Canon John Campbell

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