

# Community

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*A tale of two churches, a memory of war, and 100 years of public worship: a celebration and a commemoration*

*Quarterly publication of Manuka Parish of St Paul's and St David's, with St Luke's Deakin, in the Anglican Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn*

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## A memorable event: St Paul's and St David's celebrate a century of public worship



There have been many significant events at St Paul's. The celebration in a combined service on Sunday, 3 August, to mark 100 years of Anglican worship 'south of the Molonglo' must rank among its most memorable for all that it embodied in worship and the history of the Parish of Manuka: from the regular pealing of the bells before the service to the celebratory lunch. "Wonderful is the simplest summary!" a parishioner commented, representing a transition from the original tin shed to a church that has played a significant role in the life of Canberra over the last century.

The commemoration in its significance had three dimensions to it: the parish presence over the last century, serving a growing frontier community, the 75th anniversary of the laying of the foundation stone of St Paul's church, and the recognition with the rest of the world of the start of the First World War at the same time the parish was being established.

The liturgy of the sung Eucharist, the flower

arrangements, the music and the singing, with special arrangements for the occasion, the trumpeting of the organ, the combined voices of St Paul's Choir and Igitur Nos Chamber Choir, the gathering of clergy and parishioners from the past and present, and the Sermon speaking of the tale of two churches—the original corrugated iron shed, humble and unpretentious, sitting beside the newer grander building—which put the celebration in its historical context all contributed to the expression of the church's spiritual contribution to the life of Canberra.

A large congregation had gathered at St Paul's for a combined service to celebrate a century of public worship in the Manuka Parish. The service began in the open outside the church at the Foundation Stone laid 75 years ago where the Rector, the Rev'd Dr Brian Douglas offered a Prayer of thanks for the Parish and for the church which

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*Photo by Christine May of her flower arrangement of the Paschal candle at St Paul's altar*

## Church growth, decline, and revitalisation



A question is being asked: “Does the Anglican Church of Australia need revitalisation? What would be required to achieve it?”

The conversation, reported in this issue, provides an inevitable and contrasting backdrop to St Paul’s celebration of 100 years of public worship in the parish and Parish Council’s consideration of how to make ends meet to finance its vital missional purposes and continued vitality demonstrated in the church’s activities.

The issue of church decline was the focus of Diocesan leaders and ministry development officers when they met in Brisbane in May. General synod in July discussed, among other issues, the viability of existing structures. In his presidential address, the retiring Primate, Dr Phillip Aspinall, spoke of every Primate and General Synod having wrestled with the unity and diversity of the church and with its dispersed authority structure. “How,” he asked, “do we cohere in the face of diversity and difference and with very weak national offices and instruments?”

A UK report to the Brisbane meeting argued that growth often depended on whether parishes had a clear sense of purpose, were culturally willing to adapt and innovate, and were intentional about making growth a priority. Overcoming decline often meant refreshing parish life and pursuing new ideas.

“The church is declining,” it said, “because generations of church goers are not being replaced: the church is not keeping young people in their teens and into young adulthood.” The challenge was to identify how the church can invest in young people to encourage them to continue to explore faith. Since developing a youth ministry requires financial resources, dependent on voluntary giving, Parishes confront particular challenges in the face of decline, such that St Paul’s and other parishes are now wrestling with.

Wayne Brighton observes in his report on the Queensland conference that the most challenging aspect of revitalisation may simply be whether Anglicans are prepared to join God in working differently in a changing world. It was in this challenging environment that St Paul’s looked back on a century of achievement with the same enduring message of hope that it had brought to a cluster of emerging camps evolving into communities from a tin shed which had become the centre of Anglicanism on the south side of the Molonglo River.

“The time has come for The Anglican Church of Australia to be purposeful about its mission and ministry to the whole nation, confident in the God we trust.

“Let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, Looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith” (Heb. 12:1-2)

*Report of the Viability and Structures Task Force to the General Synod*



(Continued from page 1)

had encouraged so many in faith and for its witness over the years.

The welcome at the foundation stone over, the congregation moved into a very full church, many perhaps a little surprised as they passed the baptistery flower arrangements to learn from the



photograph behind the flowers the very reason for the service: discovering for the first time that the original tin shed built in

Kingston had in fact sat for a time alongside St Paul's.

The shared impression of the service was of the eminent suitability of the hymns, "their ability to be sung by ordinary mortals with ordinary voices". Chris Erskine's organ playing and his arrangements were simply brilliant.



In his address to an attentive congregation, Archdeacon Emeritus Michael Whiting spoke of his family's long-term intimate involvement with Anglicans south of the Molonglo. As priest-in-charge his father, Canon Tom Whiting, had commenced the fund-raising and steered the early parishioners to build "this place of worship" in the late 1930s. He noted that the inscription on the memorial west window, installed to commemorate the 50th anniversary, generously recorded that his father "*inspired the*

*building of this church in 1939.*"

Archdeacon Whiting likened the progress of St Paul's to the biblical image of a journey, a metaphor of the expression of Christian faith.

"Everyone," he said "knows the experience of being on a journey – we have some distance to travel and hurdles to overcome; we have set out with a goal, a destination in mind. Ever since Jesus made the greatest journey of all to Jerusalem, His followers have adopted the metaphor of a journey as an expression of the Christian life."

"Those first Anglicans who journeyed to this new Capital of Australia a century ago must have sought assurance and comfort in their faith – a faith teaching them that now they live a life of grace but when they reach their spiritual destination a life of glory awaits. Well may those early settlers of the Limestone Plains, with a slightly different emphasis, have said with King David, 'Who am I, O Lord

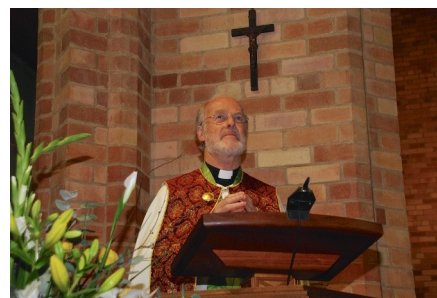
God, and what is my house, that you have brought me thus far? (1 Chronicles 17.16)"

If there is an enduring impression of the service, it is this, as one parishioner put it "So, this

wonderful commemoration left me often tearful - I sing Abide With Me at funerals - as well as happy and glad that I was there! The subsequent meetings at the morning tea really topped off a wonderful morning".

### Another Dimension

There was another important historical significance attached to the celebration, the coincidence of the outbreak of World War 1 and the beginnings of the Manuka parish. For some the service was a prelude



to a ceremony across the lake where the Australian War Memorial recognised the losses in the First World War, with the subsequent turning off of the lights in London into darkness. St Paul's made its own expression in word, sacrament and music to that memory.



### Clergy past and present

Of the 75th anniversary of the laying of the foundation stone of St Paul's church, Archdeacon Whiting said his father recalled that as 1938 came to a close speculation grew about the date for the opening and dedication of St Paul's. Eventually Sunday August 6, 1939, was chosen. This day had special significance for many of the congregation. It was the Sunday nearest to the anniversary of the commencement of the Great War. Many of the menfolk had served in the Empire's Forces; and many of the womenfolk could recall the tragic loss of life that had ensued.



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He recalled what Bishop Burgmann, in his sermon 75 years ago at the opening and dedication ceremony, and very much then in the shadow of another dreadful European war, had said: 'Sacred places have their value. They tell us the story of the hopes and aspirations of our forefathers, the pioneers of the race ... we build our churches...(and) they bear witness of our belief in life, in the ultimate triumph of life over death'.

"What then", Archdeacon Whiting asked. "constitutes this life of grace in which we now live? It is the same Spirit of God that St Paul meets on that road to Damascus, our guide the moment we say 'yes' to the words, follow me, and begin our journey. God is always on that journey with us, sharing our inner wrestle. Our journey needs its places of rest, recollection and veneration: its tin sheds and its brick magnificences, but our God is no more of one place than another.



"A place such as this is for us on our journey, (and others who will join us in the future), where we can pause and recollect, greet each other and pray, share the holy meal and be nourished. Let us praise those who have gone before us and have shared in this place whose journey is over, who not only know the grace of Almighty God but share in the full blaze of His glory: the chosen of God, the children of the promise".

***Contributors in story and photos:  
Rob May, Peter McDermott,  
Graham Lindsay, Peter Hodge***



***Gwen Jackson (1925) and Frank Colwell (1933) were presented with copies of Eddie's book in recognition of their long association with the church.***



***The Rector of Manuka Parish, the Rev'd Dr Brian Douglas, was celebrant and the Rt. Rev'd Professor Stuart Pickard, the Bishop assisting***

## A New Chapter

To coincide with the celebration, Eddie Braggett has written the next chapter of his history *Camps, Settlements and Churches*.

As he records, the church's task has not been easy but the way the clergy and laity have provided an Anglican presence in the inner-south for 100 years is testimony to faith, devotion and perseverance, marked by the enhanced profile St Paul's has achieved in the national capital.

It no longer serves only a local need mainly for those living within walking distance of the Manuka precinct: it is now a city church with territorial and national characteristics and responsibilities, drawing its numbers from a wide geographic area. It is frequently required to assume a cathedral-type role and to host significant commonwealth and territorial functions. It is home to university graduations, parliamentary church services, ecumenical gatherings, and highly acclaimed musical concerts and recitals, its bells pealing out over Manuka with a welcoming resonance.

The new chapter begins with the departure of the Rev'd Dr Scott Cowdell in 2007 and the arrival of the Rev'd Dr. Brian Douglas in the following year to take the Manuka parish into a new stage of its development and consolidation. With the church's centenary rapidly approaching, the Bishop had sought a new rector who could consolidate past achievements and lead the parish with foresight and innovation into its second century. The Rev'd Dr Brian Douglas with his extensive background and qualifications was considered to be a most appropriate choice.

Eddie's chapter now brings the history to a reflective conclusion for the century it covers. It is intuitive in covering the main issues that have contributed to the life of St Paul's and St David's during that period, building on the past. At the same time it is recognition of the personal commitment and efforts of the Rector and parishioners together in partnership in maintaining the church's sacramental worship at a time of significant social change.

# Anglican Church at the crossroads

A report to the General Synod of the Anglican Church in Adelaide in July described the Anglican Church of Australia as being at a crossroad. “For over 30 years it has been slowly declining and the time has come for a revolution if it is to be a strong and sustainable church for the future,” the report of the Viability and Structures Task Force said.

Nearly all of the 23 dioceses were reportedly experiencing significant challenges about their future. Every diocese was facing major issues in relation to their mission and ministry.

“It may not be economic or resources issues, but it may be rapid urban growth and the inability of the parish system to keep pace,” the report said.

“As the nation has changed dramatically over the past 60 years, so, in many ways, has the Church. “Our message may be the same, but the context and the mediums for the message have undergone immense change”.

In the large urban cities of modern Australia, the Church has struggled with the rampant growth of population, the increasing diversity of cultures and the development of secularism. The Church no longer enjoys the status it once did in the nation.

“While the majority of the population do not go to Church and the number stating no religion in the Census is growing, people are still hungry for meaning and purpose in their lives, but do not believe it will be found in the Church.

“The alternatives that people have today to explore meaning are as

diverse as our multi-cultural society.

The issues for the Report were to look at current diocesan structures and ask if they were sustainable to advance our Church’s mission and ministry in the years to come.

The report noted that despite the issues and challenges we face, the Anglican Church of Australia, across the country, had many loyal and committed members doing all they can for the Church and the Gospel.

***The Rev’d Susan Bridge and Matthew Stuckings attended the General Synod meeting in Adelaide. Susan writes:***

The report of the Viability and Structures Task Force was addressed there first, in 25 small groups of 10, carefully organised to have a mix of representation and then in business sessions.

These small groups met for a total of 6 hours over four days, and came up with a great many ideas that will be available to the group of seven who will be charged to carry the conversation forward.

Overwhelmingly General Synod members valued this process (diversity is usually more on display than unity at General Synod!). The challenges are real, with several dioceses facing significant problems.

Bishop Ian Palmer gave a moving account of the financial troubles in Bathurst Diocese; others also face real threats.

There was support for greater cooperation or integration of functional operations including financial and compliance matters.

The Tri-diocesan Covenant between Canberra and Goulburn and Bathurst and Riverina is a useful model of this type of co-operation.

The General Synod resolved, among other things, to request the Provincial bodies within the Anglican Church of Australia to each institute a review of the number and boundaries of dioceses in their respective Province, using as a guide the viability criteria developed by the Task force.

Specific issues to be considered by the Standing Committee include the provision and training for bishops, other ordained ministry, registrars and senior administrative staff.

All dioceses are being asked to consider in a comprehensive and holistic way how General Synod can address the needs of dioceses seeking help with financial difficulties, risk management, governance concerns professional standards and operational viability. We can expect to discuss these matters at our Synod when we meet in Goulburn.

There is a tension in the Anglican church between those who would defend the current decentralised diocesan model and those who favour more centralisation and a more meaningful sense of a “national church”.

Considering the structures, including the question of how far the stronger dioceses have a responsibility to help the weaker ones, raises these differences of opinion and sometimes reveals a shameful mistrust between us.

Further conversations, such as the small groups process in General Synod, are needed because there is a growing sense that we can’t stand at this crossroad and fail to take any path at all.



# Revitalising the Church

**How to revitalise the Anglican Church was the focus of a meeting of diocesan ministry development officers in Brisbane in May. As Wayne Brighton reports on the national conversation, there are lessons to be learnt for all parishes faced with decline in numbers and resources and the need to consider reducing programmes and services, while maintaining the vitality of the church's central purpose**

The relationship between “busyness and effectiveness” stood out at the meeting. Without exception, diocesan leaders spoke about how parish life seemed busier than ever and yet parochial vitality seemed to be diminishing. Dioceses are addressing this problem in distinctive ways.

The first solution focussed on improving the quality of congregational life. The Rev'd Dr Ralph Bowles spoke of how 60 parishes or 44% of ministry units in the Diocese of Southern Queensland voluntarily participated in a diocesan Natural Church Development (NCD) project.

NCD is designed to help congregations grow by addressing the factors that hold parishes back. It explores congregational life, identifying eight mutually dynamic factors associated with growth. These include: empowering leadership, gift-based ministry, passionate spirituality, effective structures, inspiring worship services, holistic small groups, need-oriented evangelism and loving relationships. All eight factors are considered vital to experience dynamic growth.

Parish members complete a survey once a year to provides a more fulsome picture of parish life to complement the clergy's own subjective impressions.

According to Dr Bowles, the health of participating parishes has lifted substantially over the past two

to three years. The feedback from the annual survey has allowed parish leaders to make better decisions. It has encouraged them to focus on addressing key problems and by setting new priorities the quality of parish life has improved overall.

Dr Bowles noticed that the profiles of Anglican parishes in Queensland were similar to Anglicans elsewhere. The lowest scores were associated with passionate spirituality and need-oriented evangelism.

Parishes had benefited from a renewed emphasis on Bible reading and learning how to share stories of faith.

Based on congregational scores, Dr Bowles classified parishes into four broad categories: those with the least capacity requiring “intensive care”; those with a low capacity or marked imbalance in their scores, also in need of profound change.

The diocese's goal was to get these parishes into the third zone where a parish is viable and sustainable. The vitality zone was the final category where parishes had well developed and balanced strengths. These parishes experience significant numerical growth.

Poor health, in both a congregation and an individual, was the cumulative result from years of poor decision-making and

avoidance. Recovery was a slow process and not always guaranteed. Nevertheless, the process appeared to help parishes find their own solutions by cutting through the “busyness” of parish life.

Such feedback helped parishes to set new priorities by focussing their decision-making on those elements that would make the biggest improvement to their overall effectiveness.

Three things struck me about Southern Queensland's approach and its relevance to us in southern NSW and the ACT.

First, if the diocese wants to address the health of its units it takes a substantial upfront investment of money and time by both central agencies and parishes.

All too often, leaders want instant results without considering what kind of long-term investment is required to produce the desired harvest.

The danger is that congregational attention, diocesan funds or episcopal patience will expire before the majority of participants have attained the requisite level of health to achieve numerical growth.

Second, improving the health of congregations requires cultural change, in particular truth listening. Repentance, a feature of the UK, allows congregations to be open and honest about what is working and what is not. Although painful, truth-listening allows congregations to reshape their common life in more productive ways.

Third, improving health can be a cooperative and collaborative exercise. With so many parishes sharing the journey, I hope that they are finding opportunities to share ideas and solutions with each other.

*Wayne Brighton*

# What does the Anglican communion look like

The Anglican Communion is a global phenomenon found in more than 165 countries and across six continents. Current estimates reveal around 85 million Anglicans in the world with almost half of that number in Africa.

The Anglican Communion is organised into 38 self-governing provinces of which the Anglican Church of Australia is one. The provinces share much in common including doctrine, ways of worshipping, mission and a focus of unity in the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The other instruments of unity as they are called are the 10-yearly Lambeth where the Primates of the 38 Provinces meet for fellowship and common purpose, and the Anglican Consultative Council, a broadly representative group of clergy and lay people which facilitates cooperation across the Communion.

The Anglican Communion is not controlled by a central authoritative body or person but works together as a loose federation of churches in communion with the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The Anglican Communion is not unified on every issue and issues such as human sexuality have in recent years caused tensions between the provinces. Despite this the provinces acknowledge their emergence from the Church of England and a closeness to the doctrine and practice of that church, although in practice this varies considerably from province to province, often reflecting local issues and particular contexts while at the same time affirming the catholic concepts of the historic episcopate, the sacraments and the

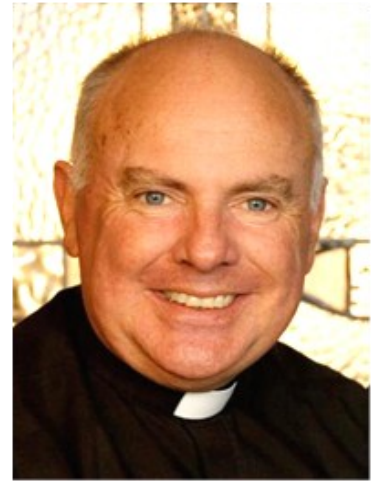
reformed concepts of the centrality of the Scriptures.

Often the provinces were the result of British immigration and colonialism and the work of various missionary organisations. The result has been a tolerance for indigenisation which goes back a long way in Anglicanism.

In the United States of America, for example, the particular form of the Episcopal Church dates back to the time following the War of Independence in 1776. In other parts of the Anglican Communion, such as Africa, there is much enculturation of local tradition in the modern workings of the Church.

Technically the Anglican Communion came into existence in 1867 when the then Archbishop of Canterbury, Archbishop Longley, called together the Anglican bishops of the world at the first Lambeth Conference partly in response to calls to work out how the independent churches of the Anglican Communion were to work together.

This consultative body of bishops has met regularly at approximately 10 year intervals. Lambeth Conferences do not legislate or make binding conditions for the whole Communion but rather serve a purpose of mutual support, study, worship and consultation. Clamours from some for the Lambeth Conferences or the Primates Meeting to provide firm and strong centralised decision making powers for the Anglican Communion have generally been



**The Rector of St Paul's, the Rev'd Dr Brian Douglas.**

resisted.

The Archbishop of Canterbury has no real power outside the Province of Canterbury in England and operates in the Communion as the first among equals but with a status appropriate to this important and ancient position.

The Anglican Communion works together by normative authority and rejects the concept of coercive power.

The Anglican Communion does have a world secretariat – the Anglican Communion Office – in London, but the real power of the Anglican Communion lies in the provinces and indeed in the individual diocese.

This focus on the individual diocese is particularly apparent in the Anglican Church of Australia where there are checks and balances to preserve individual diocesan independence in the Constitution of the church which dates from 1962.

The Anglican Communion maintains a comprehensive web presence where there is a wealth of material about this world wide communion of Christians in the Anglican tradition.

([www.anglicancommunion.org](http://www.anglicancommunion.org))

# Striking the balance

George Menham

The report of the Task Force on Viability and Structures considered at General Synod in July speaks of striking a balance between theology, ecclesiology, economics, missional capacity and the number of Anglicans. It saw the need for the church to become more adventurous and flexible in structures and initiatives to connect with local communities.

Balance has many dimensions to it. In worship it is a balance between word and sacrament, the material and the spiritual; within the congregation it is a balance between receiving and giving; in the diocese it is a balance between doing and being; there is a balance between place and human wellness; a balance between the unity of believers and a radical missional edge; the balance between growth and a church in decline. It is in the end “a balance in harmony with God and creation”. Achieving the balance in who we are and what we do requires prayerful reflection on how we perceive, maintain and build the identity and visibility of the church “in thought, word and deed”.

These issues are comprehensively covered in the Task Force’s report with its focus on the viability of existing structures—specifically the Diocese and the Parish.

The Rt. Rev’d Professor Steven Pickard in a theological reflection argues that on balance when we consider current developments in church life it is a “mixed bag” with an overriding sense that “we are a church in transition”. There are, he says, no simple pathways.

“Perhaps,” he says, “we might best depict the Church’s present challenge as one of re-seeding”.

He goes on to ask: “Is it possible for the Church of Jesus Christ to recover a pace, rhythm and presence in step with Christ?” The visionary of the book of *Revelation*, he says, captures it well: “Behold, I am making everything new” (21.5). It requires an imaginative moral vision, generosity of heart and great patience, spiritual discernment and a deeply humbling activity in the church.”

On the one hand, therefore, we can talk of the vibrancy of the church embodying how it celebrates the word of God. Viability, on the other hand, is directed towards structural arrangements as vehicles of mission. This represents another balance to be achieved. “I know it is naive to just say ‘trust the spirit’ one Parishioner observed, “but God is never going to be ‘non-viable.’”

“The criteria for viability”, the report said, “present mighty challenges for dioceses which must be addressed if they are to be the vehicles of mission, rather than just geographical entities”.

Structural viability is one aspect: the other is the message we seek to proclaim, how to convey it and to whom.

The parish is where there needs to be an engaging, formative and consistent celebration, responding with a strong sense of meaning and belonging.

In its editorial vision,

*Community* has seen value in a continuing refreshment of faith together and how we are perceived from the outside.

Language in all its presentational forms helps us comprehend the complex way we come to know, understand and celebrate the “mystery” of the Divine.

The form of each language—sacred and public—serves a common purpose: to nurture the faithful within, to invite the lapsed back to church, and to reach out to the un-churched. They share common threads, to: inform, serve and transform.

Communication thus is important in itself as a vehicle to maintain and promote the vitality, viability and sustainability of the church.

While numbers attending church within the parish of Manuka are declining with significant consequences for resources, there is a paradox in the large numbers who celebrate the Christian festivals of Christmas and Easter.

The over-riding impression from the report of the 2011 *Church Life* Survey is that the Parish supports its present focus on activities central to its mission: faith, worship and belonging.

The inner life of the church was seen to be foundational. Overall there was a strong sense of satisfaction with what the church does, its most valued asset being seen as the traditional style of worship and music.

It is the aesthetics of the whole functioning of the church that communicates its value to the wider community.



# When the world is broken

Susan Bridge

**T**he confronting images will long remain in our memory: of wreckage strewn in the fields, of families seeking comfort and healing for the loss of nearly 300 people with the “downing” of Malaysian Airlines Flight MH 17, and communities wanting to know how to respond.

On the first Sunday after the disaster, the Rev’d Susan Bridge put the event into some kind of personal context, to understand confused feelings for which words were beyond immediate reach, as she reflected on the Old Testament story of Jacob dreaming of the angels ascending and descending on a ladder, a beautiful image in itself of activity and commerce between heaven and earth: “But the image of things going up and coming down from the sky is not so welcome this week”, she said.

I was struck by how distant the fighting in East Ukraine is to me. I have listened to news reports about the Crimea and the pro-Russian separatists taking various parts of the Ukraine in these last months and I have prayed with you about that and other trouble spots in the world; I have some small understanding about how tensions between superpowers can emerge in places like Ukraine, or ‘little Belgium’ 100 years ago. But for all that, the Ukraine is not part of my direct experience and to be honest, it is remote from me.

But getting on a plane from Amsterdam to KL on holiday or to attend a conference: that seems like something I might well have done or could do. There are so many innocent victims of war, and many whose deaths seem quite random or capricious, but somehow these 298 on Malaysian Airlines MH 17 seem a bit more innocent and their deaths seems so very capricious somehow. School teachers, a novelist, scientists and researchers going to the International HIV/AIDS Conference, 80 children, a young woman in her 20s who was a teacher at a remote school in the Northern Territory, a woman about my age from Canberra, people visiting family, attending a wedding, returning for the new school term. They are not quite so remote as most victims of war.

It can cause us to think again about the lives we have and how vulnerable we are. How helpless we are. In the old prayer book in the Great Litany there is a prayer: “...from dying suddenly and unprepared, Good Lord, deliver us”.

Even those of us who feel pretty secure can be reminded of the dangers in the world. And how random things can be.

As Christians, we are people who claim that God is in charge in the world. And God cares about the world and intervenes and acts in the world.

Difficulties in life, bereavement, illness, money worries can make us draw closer to God or shrink back. We can have our faith strengthened or challenged.

Abraham Lincoln is quoted as saying:

*I have been driven many times to my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I had nowhere else to go. My own wisdom, and that of all about me seemed insufficient for the day.*

St Paul names God ‘the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort.’ That might be the point of the story of Jacob’s ladder, *set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.*

The dream comes to Jacob at a low point in his life. God chooses this time to reassure him that he has a purpose for his life and that he can be confident that God will be with him.

The Hebrew understanding of God, as is ours, is of a God who moves towards us when all seems desolate, and reminds us that there is a purpose for our lives.

We see something of this in the psalm:

*If I ascend into heaven you are there:  
if I make my bed in the grave you are there also.  
If I spread out my wings towards the morning:  
or dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,  
Even there your hand shall lead me:  
and your right hand shall hold me.*

Our response in times of trouble is to remember that our God is ‘the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort’. When terrible things happen people will look to you and me to see how we respond. We are to be part of the means by which God’s compassion and comfort is experienced by others in the world.

The Father of compassion and the God of all comfort indeed lives within us as the Holy Spirit. This gives us the strength to be what God wants us to be as a church and as individuals.

**St Paul’s Manuka, 6th Sunday after Pentecost, 20 July 2014. The complete sermon can be read on St Paul’s web site.**



## Bell ringers from Bathurst and Orange visit St Paul's

**T**welve Bathurst and Orange ringers and their partners visited Canberra on 3-4 May on the first chilly winter weekend (although not quite as cold as Orange where it was snowing).

Two ringing sessions were held on Saturday where the focus was on mastering and handling the little Manuka bells. A Master Class on finessing of different skills was held at afternoon tea and we then progressed to more complicated challenges.

On Saturday evening 30 people enjoyed a very convivial dinner at Caphs in Manuka.

Sunday morning started with service ringing and then a further two hour training session. The attendance of several Manuka ringers at every session meant that the visitors were able to ring in bands with at least four experienced ringers which enhanced not only their skills but also their confidence.

We are anticipating a similar visit from the Griffith ringers later in the year.

*Julie Doyle  
St Paul's Manuka*



*Orange and Bathurst visitors with Manuka ringers including Liam Wyatt, James Heyes, Jim Waddell, Ted Reid, Susan Tonkin, Matthew Sait, Karen English and Julie Doyle.*



*A different view of St Paul's bell tower from East Hotel, where one of the ringers was staying*

## Women bishops for Church of England

**G**eneral Synod of the Church of England has given its final approval for women to become bishops. The vote to admit women to the episcopate was carried by the required two-thirds majority in each of the House of Bishops (37-2), the House of Clergy (162-25) and the House of Laity (152-45). As a result, the first woman bishop could potentially be appointed by the end of the year.

The vote comes 18 months after the proposal was last voted upon in November 2012 when the proposal failed to achieve the required two thirds majority in the House of Laity. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, said: "Today is the completion of what was begun over 20 years with the ordination of women as priests. It marks the start of a great adventure of seeking mutual flourishing while still, in some cases disagreeing. As delighted as I am also mindful of those within the Church for whom the result will be difficult and a cause of sorrow".



# Paul's spirit will stay on Scarface

Angela and John McKay

**C**aptain Paul McKay, at the age of 31, a respected Australian soldier, Afghanistan war veteran, and admired parishioner of St Paul's, was paid a special tribute by a small town in the United States when they celebrated their first Anzac Day to honour him. It followed his death on a remote mountain in upstate New York after he had become lost in freezing winter conditions in January. Paul's mother and father, Angela and John McKay, who live in Adelaide, share their message of appreciation which an ADF member read at the Anzac Day commemoration service at Saranac Lake's World War I monument at 11 AM on 25 April, 2014. Parishioners of St Paul's attended a football match in honour of Paul on Sunday, 29 June, to raise money for the Soldiers On organisation which supports Australian service personnel.



*Afghanistan War veteran Paul McKay.*

**W**e thank the community of Saranac Lake for taking the time today to honour Anzac Day and the significance that it holds to Australians and New Zealanders, and in particular our Defence personnel. And especially we want to sincerely thank the amazing community of Saranac Lake as a whole for the outstanding care and compassion they showed to our dear son, Paul.

Paul was in the township for less than a day and spoke to perhaps only three or four people, but the locals took him to their hearts and identified him as one of their own.

We know that Paul worked with U.S. Army officers while on deployment in Afghanistan and had a very high opinion of them. We often spoke to Paul of how much we liked the American people: we found them to be very warm, friendly, open, trusting, articulate, opinionated. They held their military in very high esteem. These were all characteristics and qualities that Paul himself valued greatly.

We particularly thank the mayor, Clyde Rabideau, for his commitment to honour the wish of Paul's friend to place a poppy in memory of him on Anzac Day.

For their outstanding efforts, dedication and commitment, we

thank Bruce Nason, the police chief, and all of the Saranac Lake police force who gave so readily of their time to help locate Paul; the forest rangers who all assisted in the search, and in particular Scott van



***"The place on Scarface Mountain where Paul was found. The cairn and wooden cross were made up by the park rangers. His best mate from the Army, Captain Andrew Evans, hiked to the site and sent the photo with this comment: 'It was a very quiet spot. Sadly I didn't find Paul there. I think I lost him a long time ago.'"***

Laer who finally managed to find Paul again; the serving Defence members; and war veterans and all the volunteers who gave of their time freely to assist in the search.

Sadly, Paul was never the same when he returned from Afghanistan. He retreated into himself and lived in a world of silence and sorrowful memories.

It was tremendously sad for us, as his family, who could remember

such a fun-loving person, to see him with no life in his face and no light in his eyes.

It was a testament to his bravery, his moral courage and his great inner strength that he lasted as long as he did. But he never complained, which ultimately was his downfall.

It is a measure of Paul's character that not only did he touch so many people's lives during his short time on earth, but even in his passing he has impacted for the better on people.

We sincerely believe that on the last day of his life, as Paul commenced his climb up Scarface Mountain, he would have experienced a peace and tranquility in the beauty and serenity of the Adirondack Mountains that had sadly eluded him for the last two years of his life.

We do not know why Paul chose Scarface Mountain to be his final resting place on earth. Six months after Paul was found there, we honoured his wishes when we climbed the mountain. As we scattered his ashes around the rocks a slight breeze caught some and blew them up in a spiral. It was as if we were releasing Paul's spirit where he wanted to be, free now to roam on Scarface Mountain.

# A Roman coin and the Gospels

Robert Willson

*The discovery of a gold coin inspires the Rev'd Robert Willson to recall the impact of Roman Imperial history on the Gospels*

Just before it closed in June, Beth and I attended the Art Gallery of New South Wales to see an exhibition entitled Hidden Treasures from the National Museum, Kabul (Afghanistan). It was a strange place to discover a Roman coin but there it was, with a story to it.

The ancient objects on view spanned Afghan history over more than 2,000 years before Christ, and up to 200 years after him. They were found in a Bronze Age village, as well as a Greek city founded by followers of Alexander the Great, a Silk Road trading settlement; and the grave of a nomadic chieftain and his family. While only a fragment is left, together they give us a glimpse of the complex ancient history of Afghanistan.

## Hidden treasures

Senior officials of the Kabul Museum, led by the Director, in great secrecy risked their lives to keep the most precious objects from being destroyed by either the Russian invasion or the Taliban. These treasures were hidden in the vaults of the Central Bank, and so preserved. They are now on a world tour to display them while the National Museum is being rebuilt.

One tiny object caught my eye among the treasures: a gold coin of the Roman Emperor Tiberius Claudius. Tiberius reigned over the Roman Empire from 14AD to 37AD. Apart from Augustus who was the Roman Emperor when Christ was born, Tiberius was the "Caesar" referred to in the Gospels. He became Emperor on the death of

Augustus, on 17 September, 14AD. That means that 17 September this year is the 2,000th anniversary of his accession to the purple.

When the heirs of Augustus died the Emperor was forced, against his will, to adopt Tiberius as his successor. The Gospel of Luke (chapter 3, v 1) dates the beginning of Jesus' ministry in the fifteenth



year of the reign of Tiberius. By this time Tiberius was an old man and there was almost constant intrigue concerning the succession, and even plots to kill him.

## Whose image?

When Jesus was challenged about the hot issue of paying tribute taxation to Caesar, which the Jews bitterly resented, he called for a 'tribute penny', a silver denarius, asking whose image was on it (Matthew 22, 17-22). It would have been the image of Tiberius with the Latin inscription

"TI.CAESAR.DIVI.AUG.F.  
AUGUSTUS".

This translates as "Tiberius Caesar,

son of the divine Augustus, Augustus".

Jesus made the famous judgement: "Pay to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and to God what belongs to God." This means that Christians have a duty both to the state and to God.

## Roman power politics

In the Gospel of John, Chapter 19, Tiberius Caesar again figures at the trial of Jesus. It is clear that Pilate was afraid of the implications of condemning Jesus and tried hard to release him. But the crowd had a trump card. They shouted that if Pilate let this man go, he was no friend to Caesar. This was a dangerous threat, and for a particular reason which takes us into murky Roman power politics.

By the time of the trial of Jesus, about 33AD, Tiberius had retired to the Island of Capri near Naples. Tiberius left a man named Sejanus, the praetorian prefect, in charge in Rome. Sejanus, according to the historian Philo, was militantly anti-Jewish and was apparently responsible for the appointment of Pontius Pilate as procurator or governor of Judea. He was making all such appointments in the name of the Emperor.

Sejanus was tempted to hatch a plot to speed up the death of Tiberius and hoped to succeed him as Emperor. The aged Tiberius got wind of this and moved with lightning speed. He sent Sejanus a letter praising him for his distinguished service to the Emperor in earlier years and commanded the unsuspecting Sejanus to read it aloud to the Senate.

Suddenly the voice of Sejanus faltered as he came to a paragraph

*(Continued on page 13)*



## ROMAN COIN

(Continued from page 12)

exposing him as a traitor. That was the signal for soldiers to seize him and kill him and throw his body into the Tiber. His wife and children were also executed.

### No King but Caesar

If Sejanus had appointed men like Pilate to positions of authority then such men were also under suspicion of high treason. So the words of the crowd in Jerusalem were extremely dangerous for Pilate. He dared not let such a report reach Tiberius. He pathetically asked the crowd: "Am I to crucify your king?". In a display of cynical hypocrisy they shouted: "We have no king but Caesar".

These fascinating details of the impact of the Roman Imperial story on the Gospels all came back to me as I saw this beautiful gold coin of Tiberius. The mine from which the gold came was probably in northern Spain, the main source of Roman gold. How did the coin reach Afghanistan? Almost certainly along the trade route known as the "Silk Road".

In 1996 under the southern approach to the Sydney Harbour Bridge another Roman coin, from the Republican period, was discovered. Probably it also reached Australia by the trade routes in south-east Asia and across the continent among the aboriginal people. But the one from the Afghan Museum is a link to the Gospel story.

**For further fascinating reading, go to Google and key in Pontius Pilate and Sejanus and Tiberius.—RW**

## In the name of....

Writing of the Feast of Trinity at St James Church, Sydney, Fr John Stewart, associate rector of St James, told the story of a newly ordained curate officiating at his first wedding. The bride processed into the church; the first hymn was sung; and as he began the service, the curate realised he couldn't remember the groom's name. What to do?

The young priest brazened it out. Looking intently at the groom he said: "*And in what name do you wish to be married?*"

Now it was the turn of the groom to go blank. He cast his mind back to the night of the rehearsal. Nothing came to him. There was a pause. The congregation began to murmur. The curate looked pleadingly at the groom. The groom looked blankly back at the young priest.

Then, like sunshine that emerges after the rain, the answer dawned on him. Straightening his shoulders and giving a faint cough he said in a loud, clear and confident voice:

*"I wish to be married in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."*

**From Parish Connections, June/July 2014**

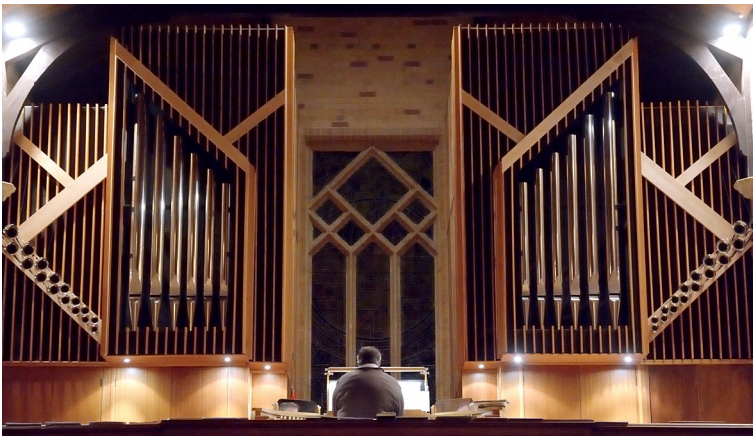
## HIGH FLIGHT

Oh, I have slipped the surly bonds of Earth  
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings;  
Sunward I've climbed, and joined the tumbling mirth  
Of sun-split clouds, - and done a hundred things  
You have not dreamed of—wheeled and soared and swung  
High in the sunlit silence. Hov'ring there,  
I've chased the shouting of the wind along, and flung  
My eager craft through footless halls of air...

Up, up the long, delirious burning blue  
I've topped the wind-swept heights and easy grace  
Where never lark, or ever eagle flew—  
And, while with silent, lifting mind I've trod  
The high untrespassed sanctity of space,  
Put out my hand, and touched the face of God.

*John Magee (1922-1941)*

*John Magee was a young spitfire pilot in Britain during the Second World War. He left a legacy as "the pilot poet". He wrote "High Flight" on 3 September 1941. Three months later he was killed in a mid-air collision over Lincolnshire. He was 19 years of age.*



*Photos by Peter Hislop of the orchestra in rehearsal*

## A music experience

The afternoon sun lit the stained glass window in the sanctuary of St Paul's for yet another "grand concert" conducted by St Paul's Director of Music, Matthew Stuckings, with organist Christopher Erskine joining the National Capital orchestra and Igitur Nos Chamber Choir.

More than 200 people, parishioners, music enthusiasts and visitors, witnessed the event, which has become a special feature of St Paul's as a venue, reflecting its own music tradition and wider appeal.

The performance in the church inevitably reminded one observer of the words of the spiritual essayist and novelist, Pico Iyer, for whom "music, like silence, is the language of dissolving." (*Portland Magazine* Winter 2012) .

Iyer wrote: "I step into the great vaulted space and very soon I am greeted by a voice which lifts and penetrates me all at once. The sound is so pure that it might be coming down from the heavens as much as rising up to them. The stained glass windows convey light, the possibility of even the foggiest surface being illuminated; the candles convey mystery, all we cannot and will never see fully. It is the music that makes me feel there is light and resonance within us all, a higher harmony, and not just outside."

Through his inspirational writing Iyer answers his own question: "How can contemporary writing convey the possibility of something more, if it refuses to believe in something beyond us that might be within us?"

# Kevin Stone retires from St Luke's

Parishioners of St Luke's, Deakin, farewelled their Priest in Charge, the Rev'd Kevin Stone, and Anne Stone, at a special service on 6 July. The Bishop of Canberra and Goulburn, the Rt. Rev'd Stuart Robinson presided at the service. "We sadly say goodbye to our much loved minister" St Luke's announced on its web site.

During the time of the Combined ministry District Kevin was also associate priest at St Paul's and was an important link between the Parishes of Manuka and Deakin.

A memorial board was also dedicated listing incumbents of St Luke's. The board was given by Will Palmer in memory of his parents, the Rev'd Canon Harold Palmer and Mrs Myrtle Palmer who were at St Luke's in the 1960's.

Nominators have started a search for a new minister. A Parish consultation in preparation for selecting a new Priest was held on Sunday 27 July. The Rev'd Connie Gerrity is returning as locum until an appointment is made.



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## Parish support for disaster recovery

In June two St Paul's parishioners, Les Bohm and Alison Waddell, joined about 50 other volunteers from regional New South Wales and the ACT for an introductory Disaster Recovery Training Day conducted by Anglicare. Interesting and engaging sessions during the day included a panel of three specialists from different organisations who would assist in a recovery centre and an opportunity for role playing an evacuation centre, with participants acting as victims, and representatives of different supporting organisations, such as Red Cross, Salvation Army,

Adventist Development and Relief Agency.

"It was not only a day of learning what our roles would be in the event of a disaster, should we be actively deployed, but also an excellent opportunity to enjoy fellowship with other like-minded Christians who have a desire to be of service to God by providing welfare to those in need. We were treated to fine hospitality by Parishioners of St Luke's Anglican Church, Junee," Alison said.

Major emergencies, such as floods, storms and fires, part of the Australian landscape, invite Christians to respond with compassion for those whose lives are affected.

Anglicare Disaster Recovery is working in partnership with the

Anglican community to provide an effective and co-ordinated response in Disaster Recovery when major emergencies occur. The programme provides recovery services caring for individuals and communities.

Anglicare's aim is to enhance its gospel ministry and practical effectiveness, by being well prepared to act when required. Disaster Recovery is strengthening its ministry capacity through training, equipping and resourcing teams of people able to serve.

Local groups of trained volunteers will play a vital role in delivering care and assistance to those affected by disasters. The one-day workshops provide an understanding of emergency management arrangements, disaster recovery and the role of teams in providing support.



## 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 Luke's

#### *Sunday services*

8 am Holy Communion

10 am Family Service

#### *Thursday*

10.30 am Holy Communion and Healing Service

## ST PAUL'S PARISH COUNCIL

Members of St Paul's Parish Council are: The Rev'd Dr Brian Douglas (chair), the Rev'd Susan Bridge, the Rev'd Kevin Stone, Dr Ingrid Moses (Rector's Warden), Robert Deane, Peter McDermott (People's Wardens), Catherine Bohm, Robert Bailey, Mary Pollard, Sandy White (Parish Councillors), Duncan Anderson, Lorraine Litster (St. David's Wardens), Tony Ralli, Peter Cumines (Rector's appointments). Helen Raymond.( minute taker)

## ST LUKE'S PARISH COUNCIL

Members of St Luke's Parish Council are: Edna Sturman, John Pilbeam, Alison Heath, Julie Hirst, Jenny Joyce, Chris Murray, Perry Wiles, Jacqui Marsden (Secretary)

## OUR EDITORIAL PURPOSE

*Community* aims to connect people with God, with each other and with our community by sharing experiences through reflective dialogue.

*Community* seeks to create a sense of encounter and belonging, to build relationships within the church and beyond, to recognise the capacity of religion to nourish individual lives, and to reflect the unique position of St Paul's, St David's and St Luke's in the life of the Diocese and the nation.

It will do this through stories of the Parish and the wider Anglican communion in ways relevant to its readers.

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

## Community

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