

# The Parish Magazine

## Epping Anglicans



Saint Alban the Martyr,  
3 Pembroke Street,  
Epping  
with  
Saint Aidan of Lindisfarne,  
32 Downing Street,  
West Epping

**November 2020 to  
January 2021**  
Number 862



Illustration for Zoom service for Saint Aidan's Day  
30.8.2020 – Michael Marzano

In Covenant with the communities of the Roman Catholic Parish of Epping and Carlingford,  
the Uniting Church Parishes of Epping and West Epping, and the Baptist Parish of Epping

## From the Editor



The following prayer was used recently at a Sunday service during the Prayers of the People:

*Almighty God, in your wisdom you have so ordered our earthly life that we must walk by faith and not by sight: give us such trust in your fatherly care that in the face of all perplexities we may give proof of our faith by the courage of our lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord.*  
**Amen.**

This edition of *The Parish Magazine* has articles by many who have always put their trust in God's fatherly care. I thank them for sharing their experiences with us and strengthening us all to grow in faith.

Sincere thanks to all those whose support, assistance and encouragement have enabled this third COVID edition of *The Parish Magazine* to reach the printer and be uploaded to the web!

**Julie Evans**

Please contact me at [julie.evans@ihug.com.au](mailto:julie.evans@ihug.com.au)

*Our vision:*

*To be a  
Worshipping  
Recognisably Anglican,  
Multi-racial, All-age,  
Gathered,  
Christian Community*

*“a city on a hill”*

To contact us:

Current Parish Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 9.00am – 1.00pm

At time of writing, for all communication please telephone Parish Office (02) 9876 3362 and leave a message.  
Post Office Box 79, Epping NSW 1710

Email: [office@eppinganglicans.org.au](mailto:office@eppinganglicans.org.au)

Website: [www.eppinanglicans.org.au](http://www.eppinanglicans.org.au)

Our clergy may be contacted at any time:  
Ross Nicholson 0407 916 603  
Paul Weaver (part-time) 0408 285 776

Saint Alban's Church is still not open for private meditation. Our parish library is open Tuesdays and Thursdays 9am to 1pm. Meeting rooms, various sized halls and other facilities are available to hire. Please contact the Parish Office for details.

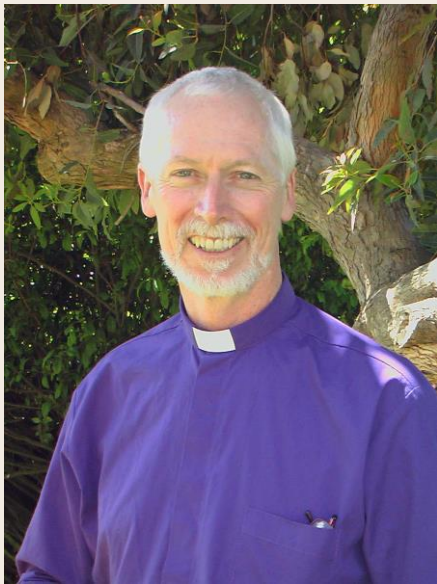
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Thank you to the authors of the various articles in this magazine. Thank you to those who contributed photographs: Doug Carruthers, Glyn Evans, Julie Evans, Ross Nicholson, Peggy Sanders, and Sarah Weaver. Thank you also to the proof-readers.

The Parish of Epping is a parish in the Anglican Church of Australia. *The Parish Magazine* records recent events in the parish, gives details of parish activities and publishes articles of general interest and articles which set out opinions on a range of matters the subject of discussion within the Anglican Church community. It does not necessarily reflect the opinions of Clergy, Churchwardens or Parish Council. The editor accepts contributions for *The Parish Magazine* on the understanding that all contributors agree to the publication of their name as the author of their contribution. Articles may be edited for space, legal or other reasons. *The Parish Magazine* is also available online at <http://www.eppinganglicans.org.au/keep-informed/parish-magazine/>



In the Alpha Course, the host Nicky Gumble tells the anecdote of a European au pair who calls out to her misbehaving English charges, 'What are you doing on earth?' Any frustrated parent would know exactly what she meant to say. But that faux pas (just to squeeze in another French phrase) can actually be a powerful question to ask. There could be at least 7 billion answers to that question, and every one would be unique.

At the beginning of October we began a sermon series where we looked at mission and ministry and then examined what God's purpose for the Church is. The Bible could quite accurately be described as God's mission plan. At the very beginning we see our Creator God at work calling the universe into existence. Into the vast expanses of space God creates a perfect world fit for the thriving of human beings. It is the perfect place in which the first humans could exercise their own creativity, experience deep relationships with one another and with their Creator, and put their own stamp on creation. The Garden of Eden was that first expression of God's people, in God's place, for God's purposes.

Jump to the end of the Bible and we see the same picture. A perfect world where God walks with his people and they rule over a new order. Of course, a lot happens in between that first and last chapter. The perfect world is corrupted by human sinfulness. The creation turns from order to chaos. Relationships are strained and broken. The intimacy those first humans shared with God has now turned from blessing to curse. Work has turned to toil. Life is terminated by death.

But if the perfect start is to be complemented by a perfect ending, something must have taken place in between. That 'something' is God's mission plan to once again bring God's people, into God place, for God's purposes. Through the ministry, death and resurrection of his Son Jesus Christ we see how God's purposes have been unfolding in history through his people Israel to that climactic moment. With the coming of the Holy Spirit we see how God's people, the Church, are called into God's mission. We are given the opportunity to be partners in God's mission, to join with God in bringing the Kingdom of God into lively expression on earth now and forever.

What are you doing on earth? If you are a disciple of Christ, if you have become a citizen of the Kingdom of God, the answer to that question would be to be part of God's continuing mission on earth. What you will be doing is what the Bible calls ministry, the service of God and others. Ministry will have literally billions of different expressions as each follower of Jesus uses their unique spiritual gifts, natural talents and acquired skills, experiences and abilities to fulfil five purposes for God's people:

1. To praise God in worship
2. To prepare one another for service
3. To provide God's love and care to others
4. To proclaim the good news to the spiritually lost
5. To party with God and his people now and into eternity.

That au pair got the big question right. But we all know what she meant to say don't we? It's the question we ask when we are interrogating those who are not doing what they're supposed to. In your walk with Jesus, are you clear on what you are doing on earth? Or are you concerned God is asking '*what on earth are you doing?*' However you answer those questions can I encourage you, as you read this edition of our Parish Magazine, to be looking at the stories and pictures to see how those five purposes are being fulfilled in the life of God's people in God's place here in Epping. Then think about ways you can join in with God's mission here on this earth.



# The Importance of Remembering

The Reverend Paul Weaver



As many readers will be aware, for the past 20 years I have represented Sydney Diocese on the NSW Council of Christians and Jews. Some parishioners have attended our annual commemoration of the Holocaust: a very moving service reflecting on the evil that was done and the lives that were lost – 6 million Jews and 5 million others who were not acceptable to Hitler's distorted views.

At the end of the service, a leader holds a candle in front of the assembled people and proclaims: *"Never again!"* Everyone responds echoing those words: *"Never again"*. The Holocaust is an unspeakably evil thing, but it must be remembered. To forget it would make our world more open to another monster wanting to wipe out the Jews or some other community. We must never let it happen again.

Of course, there have sadly been, even in the past century, other attempts at genocide. Hence the importance of refusing to forget this terrible thing. All people are made in the image of God, and all nations and communities matter.

One of the things that particularly struck Sarah and myself when we visited Berlin last year was the prominence given to the memory of terrible times. It is not easy for people there to forget the evils of Hitler and the Holocaust, nor the oppression of the years of the Berlin wall. There are powerful monuments and memorials, and informative museums, which hopefully will not only remind those who lived through these experiences, but will educate younger people, lest they get caught up in the politics of hatred and exclusion.



**The powerful Holocaust Memorial with its 2711 grey standing stones, not far from the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin: from outside it looks like a huge grey cemetery, but when one walks along its uneven pathways dwarfed by the stones, it is quite unsettling.**

Memory is a very significant aspect of our humanity. On Anzac Day and Remembrance Day, as well as other significant occasions, we take time to remember our own country's experience of war, and especially the lives that were lost in war. Once again it is right that we remember these things: partly because we have so much to be thankful for, partly because we need to acknowledge the terrible cost of war, and partly because we need to be warned about the evil and the reality of war, so that our leaders realise the importance of seeking peace and justice, and steering away from violence and oppression. It has often been observed that if we fail to learn from history, we will be doomed to repeat the mistakes of the past.

Of course, not all memories are memories of bad things. Sarah and I enjoy reading through our travel diaries and looking at photos, recalling many wonderful experiences. And we enjoy looking at photos of family and friends, and of special occasions. Our lovely memories are part of our life treasures. As time passes, we are beginning to find that our memories are already not as efficient as they once were. Names and details don't come as quickly and easily as they once did, although the loss is not great at this stage of life. Nevertheless, I hope that our memory will remain strong for a long time. It brings joy in so many ways, and sustains the sense of who I am. And I realize how important it is to show patience and understanding to those who have difficulties with their memory.

One aspect of memory troubles many Christians. This is the memory of past hurts. Should we not "forgive and forget"? I actually do not think so. Jesus certainly calls us to **forgive**, and that can be a great challenge when we have been badly hurt. But God's forgiveness of us through Christ – not to mention the clear teaching of Jesus – makes clear the importance of showing forgiveness as an expression of our Christian love and discipleship. And when we find it hard to forgive, we need to ask God to help us let go of our continuing anger we can easily nurse, and that desire to get back at the person who has hurt us.

But I don't see anything in scripture that requires us to **forget** the hurt that has been done, and I would never want to lay that on anyone's conscience. In fact, remembering the hurt will sometimes be an important thing to do. There are lessons that we may need to learn, and warnings that we may need to heed. Forgiving a brutal partner does not mean that we should continue to live with them, where danger lies. Remembering the brutality will help us keep in mind why it would be unwise to return to such a person. Many of us were impressed when families of victims of recent terrorist murders spoke of forgiving the perpetrators of these dreadful crimes. But that willingness to forgive the sin did not mean that the crime should not be punished by the authorities. We must be ready to forgive – or to ask God to help us reach that point – but the memory of evil we have experienced may well remain.

God's forgiveness through Christ is at the heart of the Gospel, and memory itself is central to the Gospel. For the Gospel is based not simply on doctrines and ideas, but on actual events: the life and ministry of Jesus, his sacrificial death on the cross, and his wondrous resurrection, triumphing over death itself. We remember these events and give thanks for them. That is not surprising, for the Bible itself is a narrative: it is the story of God and the people whom he has created and whom he loves. And it is the central events of that narrative which bring us peace and hope and purpose. We **look forward** to God's promised blessings because we **remember** God's past blessings, and we remember how he has kept his promises of the past. That gives us hope.

And so it is not surprising that our central service of worship is a service of remembering. The Eucharist – literally the "thanksgiving" – takes our minds and hearts back to that last supper of Jesus and his disciples. The bread and wine sacramentally express our connection to the Jesus whose crucifixion we remember in this service. "*Do this in remembrance of me*", said Jesus. Therefore, we must continue to do.

Memory is a great blessing. There are things to learn and warnings to heed from our memories. But there are also many blessings to remember and appreciate: above all the wonderful blessings of the Gospel of Christ.

Small sections of the Berlin Wall remain standing, to remind people of the days when it divided the city and its people. Some parts are graffitied, but one section has been turned into a gallery of wall paintings, often of remembrance or of the quest for true peace.



## Children at Saint Alban's

### Amy Taylor, Children's Ministry Worker



With 2020 drawing to a close, I've found myself looking back at our crazy year of Sunday School. We've gone from face-to-face craft projects like the fan-favourite Naaman in a Cup to Zoom where we've completed more find-a-words than I've done in my entire life.

In Term 1, we started off by looking at children from the Bible and how their faith in God inspired the adults to believe as well. With seven months over Zoom, I've found this is reflected in our very own Sunday School. The children's willingness to adapt to their new situation and the excitement they still get from seeing each other over Zoom has encouraged me to persist and explore new ways of having fun on-screen.

It's proven that God doesn't stop just because His world does. When times got tough for Jesus, he didn't throw in the towel and think it was all too hard. Instead he carried on and adapted.

On the topic of adapting and experimenting over Zoom, the Sunday School is preparing to embark on a Zoom Christmas Pageant. The plan is to put together an animation of the nativity story and to then record the children saying their lines from our Zoom sessions. This also gives us a bit of freedom when it comes to the look of our characters. After last week's discussion, Gabriel will be sporting a fetching pair of rainbow wings.

We're all looking forward to trying something new and are thankful that we can still spend this time together.

On behalf of the Parish, the Editor congratulates Amy for her ingenuity and perseverance, and thanks her for her dedication to the children of Saint Alban's.

## The Parish Register

### The Faithful Departed

Jean McLean **CAMERON**  
on 22 September 2020

Pauline Margaret **FRAZER**  
on 24 September 2020



## Beethoven 250 Concert

To celebrate the 250th anniversary of the birth of Beethoven in December 1770, Lachlan Roots (Baritone) and Paul Weaver (Piano) will present a concert of songs and piano works by Beethoven at **2pm on Sunday 13 December**. All are welcome, subject to COVID precautions, and donations are invited to Christian Community Aid.



## Our Services

For information on our services please refer to the Epping Anglicans Website

<https://www.eppinganglicans.org.au>

or telephone the Parish Office 9876 3362

*Baptisms, weddings and funerals may be arranged with the Rector*

### Sunday Services

**8.00am**

Holy Eucharist in Saint Alban's church

**10.00am**

Holy Eucharist via Zoom *[Information about ways to join us is in the Weekly Bulletin, which can be found on the Parish website.]*

**10.30am**

From Sunday 29 November Holy Eucharist will be held in Saint Alban's Church

**Each Thursday**

Eucharist with Prayers for Healing is held in Saint Alban's church. *[There are prayers for healing and the opportunity to pray for those named during the time of prayer.]*

*The last service for 2020 will be Thursday 17 December. Service will resume Thursday 4 February.*

**For all services held in the church COVID safe procedures are being followed.**

### November and December 2020, January 2021

**Sunday 1 November**

All Saints Day

**7.45pm**

All Souls' Day Eucharist in Saint Alban's church.

**Tuesday 3 November**

*The list of people to be remembered will be placed on the altar. You may wish to bring a flower to place at the Sanctuary steps. Candles will be available to be lit in memory of a loved one.*

Sunday 8 November

Remembrance Sunday

Sunday 22 November

Christ the King

Sunday 29 November

First Sunday of Advent

Thursday 24 December

Christmas Eve *the times of services will be advised in the Bulletin and on the Website*

Friday 25 December

Christmas Day *the times of services will be advised in the Bulletin and on the Website*

Sunday 3 January

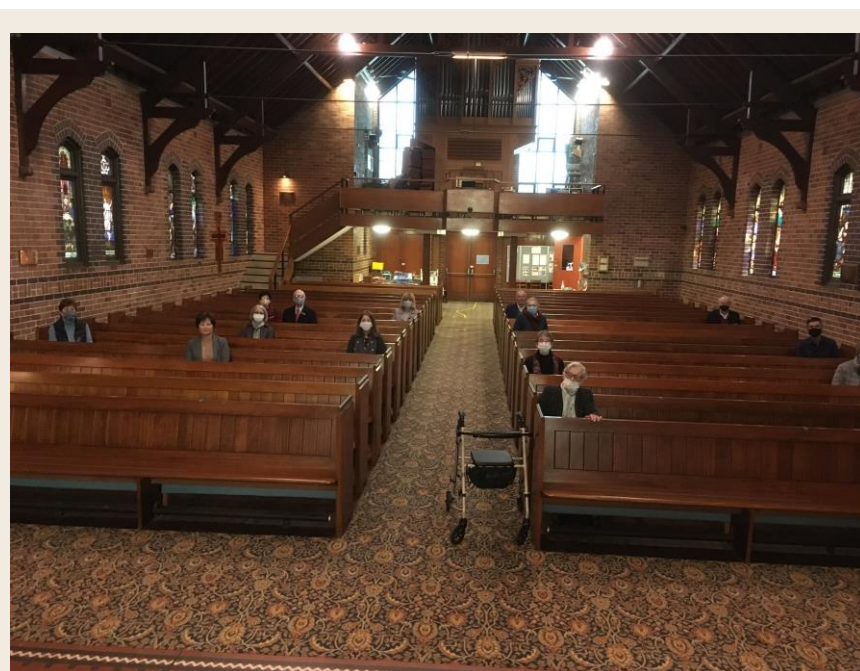
Second Sunday after Christmas – Epiphany

Sunday 10 January

Baptism of our Lord

Sunday 24 January

Third Sunday after Epiphany (Australia Day)



**6 September 2020 First service in Saint Alban's since March**

**'From little things ... ..'**

**By 18 October the congregation had swelled to 32.**

**Zoom Church continues.**

# The Festival of Saint Aidan - Bishop and Missionary

## Guest Preacher – The Venerable John Cornish

On 30 August 2020 we celebrated The Festival of Saint Aidan. The Parish came together on Zoom to celebrate the Patronal Service of Saint Aidan's West Epping. The guest preacher was The Venerable John Cornish, the previous Rector of Epping Parish of Saint Alban's with Saint Aidan's and currently Acting Archdeacon of the Sunshine Coast, Queensland. Printed below is the text of the sermon.



### Readings for Saint Aidan's Day:

- 1 Kings 8:22-30
- Psalm 97:16-23
- 1 Corinthians 9:16-23
- Matthew 19:27-30

It's good to be with you today in these strange times, even if it is only a virtual attendance. These things will pass.

Today, I am doing something that I have never done before.

Fr Colin Blayney, the former parish priest of Our Lady Help of Christian's Catholic parish in Epping, noted that, when I was the Rector, I always asked someone else to preach at one of the Epping Parish Patronal festivals.

Well as you can now see I am preaching here today at the bidding of your Rector. I thank Bishop Ross and all of the Parish community for this new personal growth experience. Also, this is only the second time I have preached via Zoom. You are never too old to learn new tricks!

Here we are in the midst of a great crisis of uncertainty. What is going to happen to you and me, the church, the country, and the world? It seems daunting, but we will get through it. The church has suffered over the years no less than in the time of Saint Aidan. The church had been driven out of Europe and most of Britain. The return of the church to the north began through the Irish monks setting up an outpost on Iona off the west coast of Scotland. From there missionaries were sent to the northern parts of Britain, with the Celtic version of Christianity. In the south the Pope had sent Augustine to re-found the Church of England, with a Catholic version of Christianity. Augustine became the first Archbishop of Canterbury.

At the request of Saint Oswald, King of Northumbria, Aidan was sent from Iona to revive the missionary work of Paulinus. He was consecrated a bishop in 635; he established his headquarters on the island of Lindisfarne, off the north of England east coast, from whence he made long journeys on the mainland, strengthening the Christian communities, founding new missionary outposts, and founding new Christian communities.

He carefully educated a group of twelve English boys to be the future ecclesiastical leaders of their people. One of those young boys was Saint Chad, who it is said was tireless in spreading the Gospel.

It is reported that Paulinus, Aidan's predecessor, was a thorny person but Aidan it is said was gentle in spreading the Gospel and won rapid success for his mission. We must always be aware of the way we are carrying out the Great Commission.

We can see that through the power of the Spirit, Christians can overcome the most of daunting obstacles. As result of the uncertainty around us, at this moment, the church will not be the same, post-COVID. But, be not



afraid, God is still in the midst of the chaos, even though we at first didn't know it! God is with us in our wrestling. Remember that out of the devastation and misery of the crucifixion came new life!

As we struggle to understand the present uncertainties and consider how to move forward, we have the example of Jacob who went to a solitary place to await an encounter with his brother Esau, whom he had cheated out of his father's blessing. Jacob found himself, as well as we do, at a spiritual crossroad in which we must answer the question, *"Where to from here?"* Crisis calls us to contemplation and encounter with their personal calling within God's possibility. The question for you and me is, whereto from here?

Jacob's encounter with a stranger in the night has all the characteristics of a dramatic revelation of the divine in human experience. Anxious about what lies ahead of him and worrying that after a lifetime of shady dealings, he seeks a solitary place in which ponder his future. The crisis that looms ahead strips him of his defences and scheming and awakens him to a *"thin place"* in which he comes to know both God and himself, for the first time. But, we should also be aware that Jacob's encounter with God left him with a limp. Yours and my encounter at this time may leave us with a limp. Limp or no limp we will go forward as Jacob went forward to great things.

We need to contemplate how to move through and out to the other side of these strange times, as members of the body of Christ who follow in the footsteps of Saint Aidan. A new way of spreading the Gospel may evolve.

When we are in tune with God's movements in our lives, we mediate power that transforms our lives and the world. This power does not insulate us from life's tragedies and failures, but it gives us insight and courage to respond to them.

God's revelation is ubiquitous, but God has a preferential option for the vulnerable, weak, and faithful. Isaiah notes that *"God gives power to the faint and strengthens the powerless"*. And *"those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint."* Openness to God's movements in the universe and in our lives awakens power, energy, and creativity that give life to our communities. We channel the divine energy to live it out in our time and place.

In Corinthians, Paul proclaims his vocation is to be *"all things to all people"* to promote the good news of God's salvation. This is not some sort of wishy-washy weathervane liberalism, but the recognition that just as God has a personal relationship to all things and all people, so should we. God's vision is both personal and global. God adapts to our situation, providing possibilities and energy appropriate to who we are and our personal context. My vocation is to reflect on the good news to build up Christian communities and inspire and support preachers.

I preach the same message of God's grace, personal and general, and God's evolving care for the world, wherever I go, but the style differs depending on context. My style and language might differ if I am speaking to children or advising someone in spiritual direction. We all have the same goal of enabling people to discern God's movements in their lives, but the pathway differs depending on who we are and to whom we are speaking.

God is a different God depending on God's relations and the unfolding events of our lives and the world. We all have a slightly different view of God. None of us have all the answers and we need each other and our differing skills and understandings. Remember Paul, a human like each of us, did not have all the answers. *"For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known."* (1 Corinthians 12:13)

Though God seeks wholeness everywhere, the nature of this quest is always intimate and personal. The same intimacy applied to Jesus' healing and teaching ministry and should inspire us in our own spiritual journey.

Our vocations are always contextual, rooted in our time and place. They are constantly evolving both personally and culturally. Healing is never solely for our personal aggrandisement; it issues in reclaiming our vocation or discovering our calling for our unique time and place. We receive God's healing touch so we can share in the healing of others.

Vocation emerges from prayer, from waiting on God, and a sense of God's movements in time and place. When we live out our new future, we gain energy and direction through God's Spirit to bring healing and wholeness to our communities and the world.

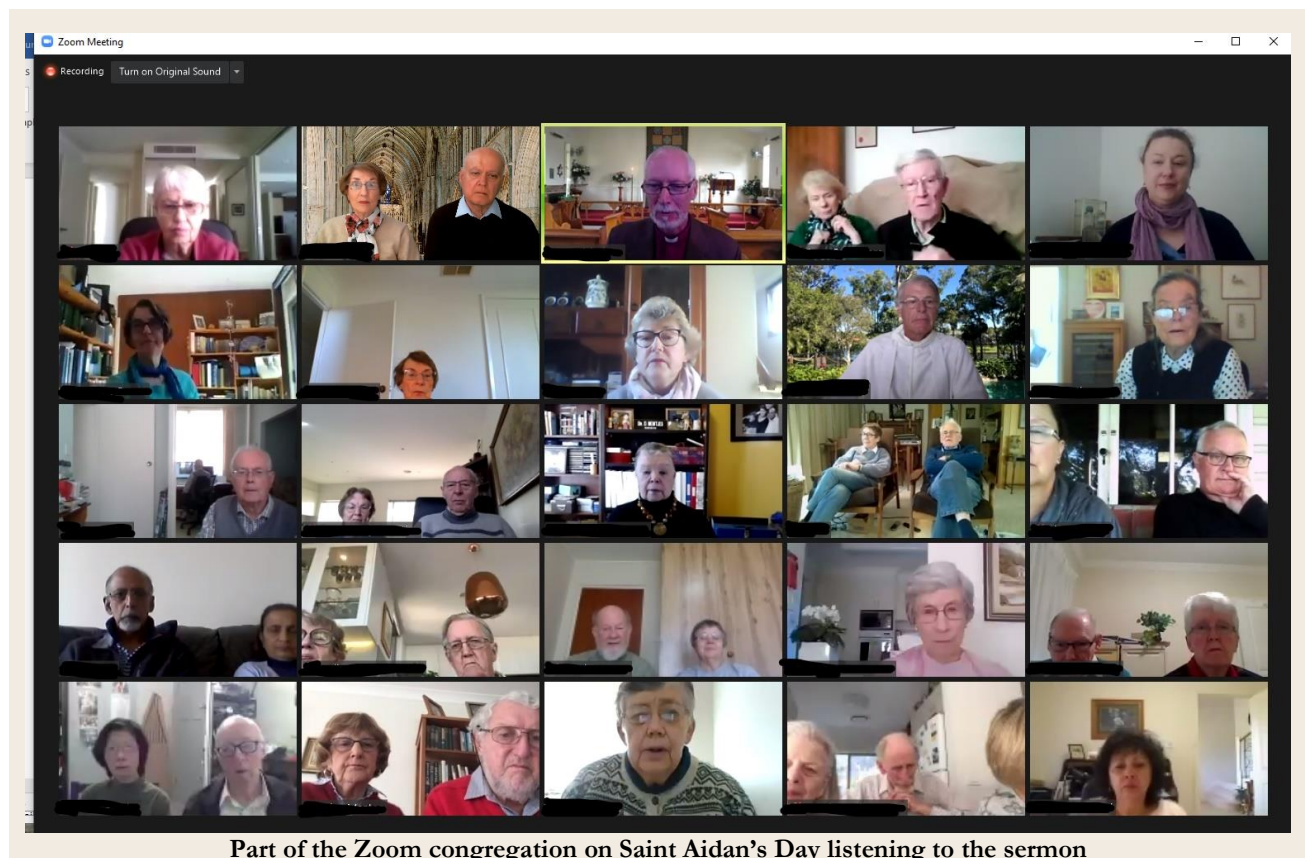
Psalm 97 speaks of God's presence in the non-human world and human history. *"Let the earth rejoice; let the coastlines be glad! All peoples behold God's glory"*. The whole earth is filled with God's glory, but the righteous, those who follow God's path, will experience the fullness of revelation. *"Light dawns for the righteous and joy for the upright in heart."* This is a guiding light for your search and for mine as we attempt to bring the Gospel to a changed world,

in Epping and wherever God may call us to be part of the Body of Christ. Will we say that it is all too hard and withdraw into our safety cocoon? Or will we sing hymns of rejoicing to tide ourselves over until God reappears again in glory and love?

At first glance, Peter's statement and question seem very self-promoting. The question, however, it is more his looking for re-assurance that they have indeed tried to follow Jesus. They had, in fact, left everything to follow him. While they had not always understood or chosen the proper course, they had sacrificed everything to follow him. We must not discount the great sacrifices these twelve had made. When Jesus is crucified, it had to make their devastation all the more severe. Jesus does not rebuke Peter. Instead, like he had done for so many others who were desperate for his care and cure, he affirms him. If we truly surrender our lives in obedience to Jesus Christ as Lord, personal and corporately, he promises us very much the same kind of blessing. Remember that as you work to follow in the stead of Saint Aidan. Just as we cannot out sacrifice God, neither can we begin to imagine his ultimate blessings for us who loved him and sought to faithfully follow him! Aidan gave great service and as a result the North of England rediscovered the Gospel of Christ.

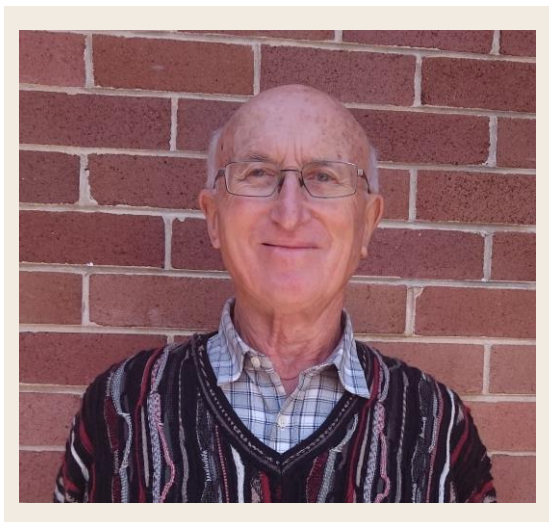
I call on you to commit yourselves anew to the mission of this Church.

In imitation of Aidan your patron, will you proclaim Christ by word and example, and seek to serve Christ in every person you meet, using your own special skills, even if you have a limp?



## Jams and Pickles

Jams and pickles are available to purchase from the church office (on Tuesday and Thursday mornings). The proceeds go to support Pastoral Care.



Amy Taylor, our Children's Ministry Worker, is doing a wonderful job keeping the Sunday School active on Zoom.

In the December 1983/January 1984 edition of *The Parish Magazine*, Nigel Hubbard described the Sunday School at the close of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

Nigel's article is reprinted below.

### ***'Winning the Little Ones' – Saint Alban's Sunday School at the close of the 19<sup>th</sup> century***

In an obscure corner of the archives room of Saint Alban's Epping there is a slim volume bearing the title: "*St Alban's Sunday School E. Carlingford Minute Book*". This tome has a soft black cover, its yellowing pages have red edges. In it are recorded in several hands the Minutes of Meetings of the Sunday School teachers at Saint Alban's Epping [as it is now called] between 3 May 1897 and 29 November 1901. The ink is invariably jet black, the handwriting sometimes spidery, more often scholarly – no doubt the product of writing lessons in some mid to late Victorian educational institution. The phraseology sometimes strikes the ear as quaint.

To browse its pages is to be transported to a world that few living can now remember – the time when Epping was a small village community based on fruit growing and the era when almost every boy and girl spent the hour from three to four on a Sunday afternoon at Sunday School.

One is struck by the solemnness of it all. Minutes were kept in a very formal fashion and always confirmed by the signature of the clergyman. Our Victorian forebears took religious education very seriously indeed. To be a Sunday School teacher was to assume a responsibility not lightly undertaken: by no means every applicant was acceptable. Much of the time was devoted to organising prizes, entertainments, the library and, inevitably, that highlight of the year the annual Sunday School picnic.

In 1897 the location of the picnic was Shepherd's Paddock, Meadowbank, and the organisation seems to have been rather perfunctory, although a Bible, prayer book or testament was presented "to each child to commemorate the Jubilee Year". (It was the sixtieth year of the reign of Queen Victoria.)

In 1899 planning for the picnic necessitated weekly meetings. It was decided at the meeting 20 November 1899 that the annual treat for that year would take place at Normanhurst or a similar locality on 16 December and Mr Loveridge promised to get out a circular to ask friends for help and to see the Railway authorities about cost, etc of transit.

Mr Loveridge reported to the meeting 27 November that the Railway authorities would put a couple of American cars on one train up and down to and from Normanhurst at a rate of fourpence return children and eightpence adults.

A subsequent report on 2 December revealed that the annual picnic had passed off successfully, 67 children being present and about 45 absent through pressure of sickness and pressure of work in fruit picking. There was an overabundance of supplies. It was resolved to pay Mr Dengate, the Verger, ten shillings for his cheerful and willing help to procure a few extra prizes for races which had been added to the sports program.



The Sunday School Library approached nearly four hundred books and subscription was sixpence a quarter. (One wonders how many of the children came from homes where books were almost non-existent.) The list of rules for the use of the Library was lengthy and formidable: one could not imagine modern youth responding enthusiastically to it.

Mr Hilliard, the Superintendent, reported at the meeting on 7 February 1898 that the Sunday School could not afford to pay for the printing of the rules for the Library and he would ask Mr Loveridge to multiscrypt a few copies and also that the Library would not be opened until March on account of the shelves being eaten by white ants.

There is in one place a list of pupils whose attendance had been deemed unsatisfactory. Next to each name is written an appropriate comment such as *"very irregular"*, *extremely seldom present*, *"book marked as attending in Beecroft"*, *"unable to bear of him"*, *"left district"*, *"has teacher anything to do with this?"*, *"left I believe"*. At least one youngster so listed, managed to live down his reputation and some years later became a churchwarden at Saint Alban's. The list ends with a self-congratulatory: *"The general attendance shows that the teachers have succeeded in winning the little folks"*.

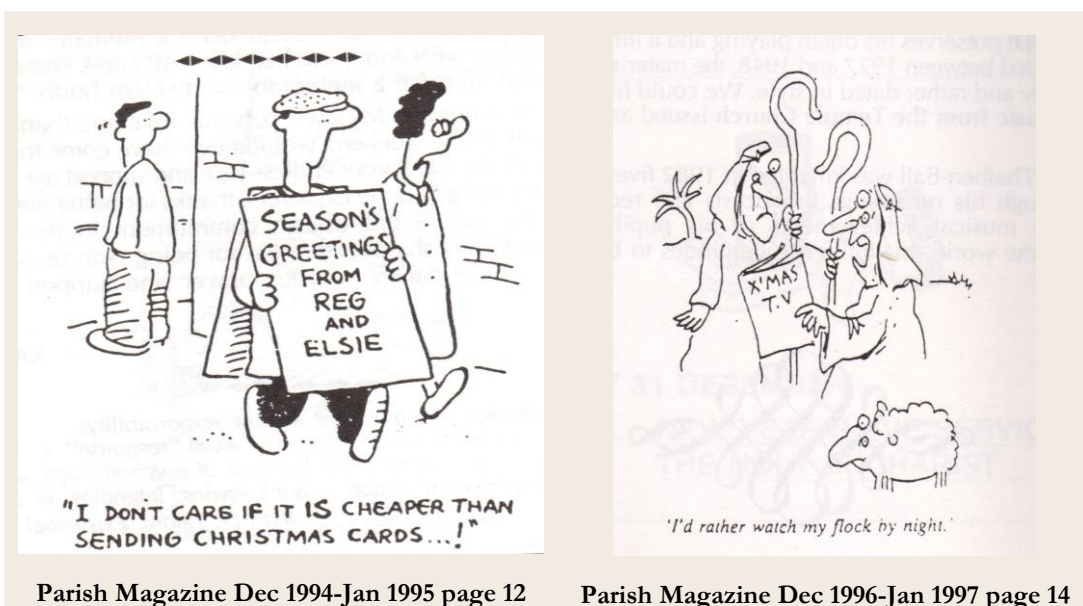
## Christmas Day in Sydney

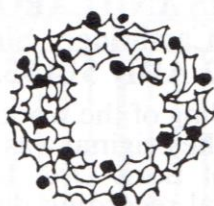
The Christmas editions of *The Parish Magazine* in 1993 and 1994 contained snapshots of Christmas 100 years previously as described in the newspapers of the time. One from 1894 reports that the occasion *'passed off in a quiet and decorous manner'* and that *'the trams ran fitfully as on the Sabbath'*. The second extract from 1893 described Sydney as it emerged from a depression with a major problem of unemployment such as we have now in the COVID-19 affected times of 2020.

An extract from Page 10 of the December 1894 - January 1895 edition of *The Parish Magazine*

*"The streets bore the appearance of a Sunday. There were respectably dressed congregations making their way towards the churches, there were the closed shops, the general quietness and relaxation from work; the trains ran fitfully as on the Sabbath. ... It was to be observed that many people who waited about the tram stopping places carried parcels obviously indicative of toys, whilst here and there a spray of holly recalled the day. Except for these reminders, however, Christmas Day 1894 passed off in a quiet and decorous manner. It would seem, too, that a majority of people preferred to spend the day at home. The harbour boats, it is true, were largely patronised and numerous picnicking parties were to be seen at the favourite beauty spots, but on the whole there was an absence of anything approaching a general stir and bustle and the day was marked by decorum befitting the occasion."*

Source: *Sydney Mail and New South Wales Advertiser*, Saturday 5 January 1895, page 47





## CHRISTMAS 1893

*By* Christmas 1893 the worst of the depression was over, but recovery was proving very slow. Newspaper articles discoursed on “the problem of the unemployed” while an advertising barrage proclaimed the virtues of Platypus Eucalyptus Ointment, “nature’s remedy.” George Robertson, a bookseller of George Street and soon to go into partnership with Angus, offered 68 “beautiful” Christmas cards for one shilling. Many advertisements required servants or offered situations such as: “Wanted: Good Sharp Boy to sell and deliver papers at once, 204 Parramatta Road.” The headlines at Christmas concerned an attempt to kidnap the daughter of President Grover Cleveland of the USA and an attempt by anarchists to destroy the Hotel de Ville in Paris by means of dynamite.

The **Sydney Morning Herald** reported thus on the festive season:

*Owing to Christmas falling on a Monday it may be said that there were two Christmas Eves this year and it may with justice be stated that the double event was celebrated in a befitting manner. Saturday evening was devoted to business combined with pleasure. Yesterday (Sunday) evening was spent for the most part in a more solemn manner. (Saturday) evening was warm, but that did not interfere with either the occupation of shopping or with the possibly more attractive way of passing the time, especially to the young people of admiring the display in the shop windows, so the streets of the city were thronged with a mixed crowd comprising people of all ages, either sex and all conditions in life. The volume of business done may have been less than that of other years but it can be safely stated that there was no diminution in the number of those who paraded the public thoroughfares . . . In the city the arcades as usual formed the centre of attention, each arcade being well decorated. Flags, flowers and devices in which the electric light formed a prominent part made these ever-pleasant resorts additionally attractive. As a rule good humour prevailed . . . In most Anglican churches . . . collections were made on behalf of the Clergy Widows and Orphan Fund of the Diocese of Sydney. The fund at the present time is paying pensions to eleven widows and six orphans.*

There was only one service at Epping over the Christmas season. A lay-reader, Joseph Cook officiated at Evening prayer, the attendance being 44 people. After church hours the weather was dull and there was a little rain.

Actual source: Sydney Mail and New South Wales Advertiser, Saturday 30 December 1893, page 1394  
[incorrect source quoted above in archival article] Page number correct as in source – may be a collection of issues.



## Some Reminiscences of Saint Alban's

Brian Manton



Brian and Jill Manton

Our family returned to NSW from Tasmania in 1979: me, Jill, four children, and two dogs. We chose to live in the Epping area because of local schools and access to my work in Sydney. Saint Alban's became our Parish church where we already knew the Haywood family [Brian and Deidre are current parishioners]. We moved into a house in Gloucester Road, with Helen and Roy Cooper and the Gillings – Stan and Dorothy – [all Saint Alban's parishioners] as near neighbours.

The Rector at that time was The Reverend Geoffrey Feltham.

I was elected to Parish Council, and a member of Synod. That was the time of high activity in regard to the ordination of women [MOW – Movement for the Ordination of Women] and I vividly remember asking Reverend Geoff for guidance about voting on this issue. His reply was *"Brian, you have been elected by the Parish, you must vote as your conscience tells you"*. Sound advice which caused me to give the matter much thought and prayer. Before going to Synod someone advised me that I would find 'our lot' easily as they would all be wearing black stocks, whereas the 'other lot' would be attired in a multiplicity of different colours, pink, pale blue, etc. An interesting experience!

Saint Alban's at that time had a very strong youth fellowship and I remember seeing them off on a trip to the snow and it needed two buses to carry them all. I have to say that a few years later, the youth group all migrated to the Baptist church – no denominational loyalty.

Around that time, early eighties, ARCIC (the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission) was active in the local area and we had some most interesting group discussions, with a sharing of Eucharist in both churches, and I believe this was the fore-runner of the covenant which has, in my mind, been such a strength in Christian sharing and caring for the local community.

The Organist and Choirmaster was Christa Rumsey and the organ was in the alcove on the south side of the chancel. None of our family were involved in church music at that time (although we did sing as a family at a social function in the hall, which event ended in a fit of giggles. We were singing a four-part version of 'Old Mother Hubbard' in the style of Handel!). I have a gap in my memory until David Rumsey arrived and the move was on then for a new gallery and a new organ! John Noller Senior was involved in the work on the gallery and he did not like heights. I clearly remember him asking me to scale up the ladder at the west end to take a tape measure for him. Halfway up I recall the ladder swaying in and out as I climbed further. The silly things one remembers!

Sometime after that several of us were involved in unloading the pipes from a container and carrying them into church with gloved hands to lay them on the pews as a prelude to the construction of the instrument! Both Jill and I became involved in the choir from that time, and thoroughly enjoyed this. It was at this time that David Rumsey introduced the choir to Orlando Gibbons verse anthem *"This is the record of John"*, and he asked me to sing the verse part. We sang it on several occasions, even after we had retired to Lake Macquarie and I was invited back. We also sang the Purcell *"Rejoice in the Lord always"* with Tony Gumbley, Lyn Bock, Jill Manton and me. We have many memories of singing with Tony and Jill Gumbley, Lyn Bock, Jane Noller, Dr Doug Carruthers and many others in that period.

Rosemary Blake joined David as assistant Organist and I remember her as a supreme accompanist. Our youngest son, Christopher, learnt organ from Rosemary for a while, and he also sang the first verse of *Once in Royal David's City* at the annual carol service.



All Saints' North Epping was still part of the Parish and there was a strong competitive attitude between the two. I remember a game of soccer between All Saints' and Saint Alban's. I think we must have had about 30 a-side. Quite a melee of players. I decided to have a go and take the ball with me. Well, I got a red card for 'over-zealous' play, and I think the referee who adjudged me was a young priest, The Reverend Paul Weaver. About this time our eldest, Tim, was helping with CEBS [Church of England Boys' Society] in All Saints' North Epping. Another name that springs to mind was Stewart Smith, who went on later to take up Holy Orders.

Although no longer living in Sydney, we knew of both Ben Edwards and Daniel Dries who were Organists at Saint Alban's. They each went into the Priesthood. Ben and his wife Kate moved to Orange and he was Chaplain at Orange Anglican Grammar School where our daughter, Nicola, was teaching. He was also Parish Priest of Saint John's Molong for ten years before moving to Saint Paul's Manuka in the ACT. Daniel Dries was at Christ Church Cathedral Newcastle Cathedral for a period (his wife Peta played one of the violin concertos there fairly recently), then All Saints' Belmont, prior to his appointment as Rector of Christ Church St Laurence in the city.

Saint Alban's had always had people interested in steam and steam trains! A trip was arranged to Mittagong by train as there was a Steamfest there. I took our youngest, Chris, and I was so disappointed that he was not in the least interested in the fascination of steam power! The return journey was memorable as word got around that our new Rector had been appointed and he came from Saint James, King Street. This was The Reverend Ian Crooks, who later I remember admonishing me for not pausing for twelve seconds at the colon when reading the Psalm. One other memory of that time was Father Ian's direction to the choir after the prayers in the vestry when processing up to the west door, as we were robed, we were to keep silent, our service had begun. Many of us found it difficult not to acknowledge the parishioners we passed on our way to the west door!

During Father Ian's ministry, in the early 1990s, I retired, and we moved to Lake Macquarie, to the Parish of Saint Peter's Swansea. Occasionally we would be called back to sing at Saint Albans when numbers were down, especially on High Days when incense was in use!

Earlier this year (2020) we met the recently ordained and newly appointed Sub-Dean of Christ Church Cathedral, The Reverend Angela Peverell, and discovered she had been in the Youth Fellowship at Saint Alban's in the 1980s. We had previously met her before she was ordained, when she and John Noller [an ex-parishioner and Master Server of Saint Alban's] ran a training workshop for Sanctuary teams at Morpeth. It really is a small world and there is such a strong connection between Anglican liturgy and Anglican music!

We still regard Saint Alban's as our 'family church' as our four children were no longer living at home when we moved to the Newcastle Diocese. As a result, whenever we are in Sydney or there is a 'special' service at Saint Alban's we love to attend and have always received a warm welcome. We have therefore been very privileged to be able to participate in the Zoom services during the challenging months since COVID-19 hit us all.



**The Rectory wisteria September 2020**

# Memories of Saint Alban's

Helen Cooper



**Helen and Roy Cooper mid 2000s; Roy died 2011**

We first came to Epping in mid-1953 to build a house in Dorset Street, in preparation for married life after Roy and I were married in December 1953 at Saint Andrew's in Roseville.

Immediately we had chooks and a vegetable garden. In 1954, life continued to be very busy as we worked on the house. At first we had no phone, no wire screens, no indoor toilet as the sewer wasn't connected until about 1958. I was always very tired – especially when very pregnant with our first child, Bryce, in November 1954.

After the birth of our second daughter Meredith in 1956, and with the house in better order, I began to get to know other people with children, some of them going to Sunday School. I remember the Sunday School at Saint Alban's having about 300 children at that time.

The very active Saint Alban's Women's Guild held street stalls and an annual fete, so I donated sponge cakes made with our own eggs and bought handmade children's wear and began to make friends. I had two more children, Guy in 1959 and Alison in 1964. All four children were baptised at Saint Alban's.

In the late 1960s I was elected to the Saint Alban's Parish Council, and then became the first female churchwarden at Saint Alban's. I was responsible for Property and always supported Roy as he spent many hours working in the Church and Rectory gardens.

A high point was my climb up inside the steeple to inspect its internal condition. I wasn't worried a bit about the climb as I'd climbed a lot of trees in my childhood. Another time, the ceiling in the study of the rectory began to drop and required structural repairs.

Once the children had all left home, I began the more arduous undertaking of jam making, in part because Roy had cultivated a small orchard of citrus trees in our garden. They produced abundant oranges, grapefruit and lemons, so I learned how to make marmalade. I had also joined the church choir sometime in the 1960s, and my jam was sold on the Choir Stall at the church fete to support the purchase of hymn books and music. Jam money in its own small way helped contribute to the new organ fund.

The centenary of our church in 1996 was celebrated with wonderful music, both choral and organ. We had a very special preacher on Saint Alban's Day, the Archdeacon of Saint Alban's Cathedral in England. We hosted him for the week. He shared the Walking of the Parish Boundary with the community.

The congregation of Saint Alban's has always supported pastoral care, and I've got so much out of my involvement over the past 65 years. Now I'm being supported by the Pastoral Care Committee. Being able to return to church services in early September means so much, in this COVID-19 year of 2020.

Saint Alban's has been the centre of my married life. Even COVID-19 has not been able to spoil the worship and friendship I treasure.



**Roy and Helen mid 1970s**

## Empowerment

(the process of becoming stronger and more confident,  
especially in controlling one's life and claiming one's rights)

Jan McIntyre

The *House of Welcome* exists to welcome, shelter and empower people seeking asylum and refugees regardless of their age, gender, sexuality, nationality or religion.

The parishes of Saint Alban and Saint Aidan have supported the work of the *House of Welcome* for several years now through auspices of the Pastoral Care Committee. Our latest appeal was somewhat different to other years due to COVID-19 and the restrictions placed on movement and gathering. As our church was closed during the appeal time, the committee members were unsure how people would respond as there was contact only via phone or Zoom; shopping restrictions...and finally no personal contact on Sunday mornings to collect donations or talk about the reason behind the appeal.

### ***Talk about “doubting Thomases”!!***

Once again, our parishioners were overwhelmingly generous in responding to the appeal for donations of cash, food, toiletries and cleaning items. The amount of grocery items was much lower than usual. However, our parishioners responded with an unprecedented amount of cash donations and we raised a total of \$1,235. Having been blessed with ‘tidy minds’, the Pastoral Care Committee decided, unanimously, to contribute \$65 to round this amount to \$1,300. This sum of money made a very substantial difference to the *House of Welcome* which was able to bulk buy the items needed for their clients. As mentioned in our appeal to the Parish, the requests for assistance have significantly increased since COVID-19 with the subsequent loss of jobs and the ineligibility of asylum seekers to apply for the Job Seeker allowance.

Miriam Pellicano, Executive Manager at *House of Welcome*, sent the following letter of thanks:

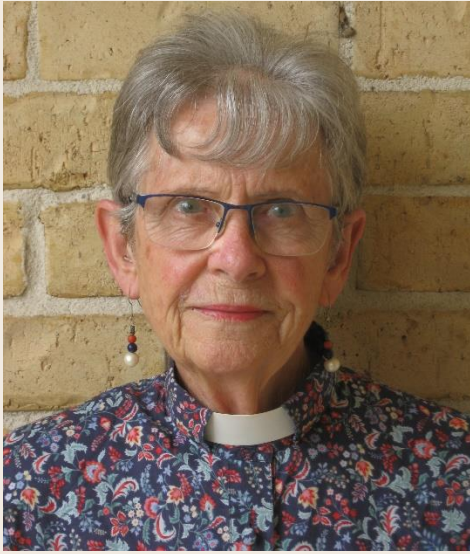
*“Could you please pass on our gratitude to your amazing parishioners who continue to serve and support some of the most vulnerable in our community – people seeking asylum and refugees. This year we have faced a number of challenges – as have your communities. The COVID crisis has changed our lives in unimaginable ways, putting strains and pressures on so many around us. What has emerged, however, is a ground swell of everyday people, like yourselves, who have rallied even more strongly together to meet the challenges of these times and ensure that nobody gets left behind. Thank you once again to your parishioners who have made all this possible.”*





## *In Defence of Doubt*

### Book Review by The Reverend Dr Sue Emeleus



The Reverend Dr Sue Emeleus has had an interesting and varied career. She has been a science teacher in Sydney, Tanzania and Papua-New Guinea; Assistant Minister in two Sydney churches and Anglican Chaplain to the Children's Hospital in Westmead.

Her doctoral studies concerned theological resources for those who accompany the terminally ill.

In other editions of *The Parish Magazine* Sue has reviewed and recommended books for parishioners. In this article she reviews *In Defence of Doubt – An Invitation to Adventure* by Dr Val Webb, first published in 2012 and reprinted in 2016.

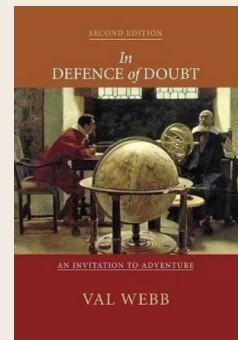
Dr Webb is an Australian theologian with a Ph.D in theology. She has taught in universities in both Australia and America. She is the author of ten books.

It is a huge pleasure to review a book by a good friend. Val Webb's books have been valued by many in Epping, and she has been a valued speaker at gatherings such as Common Dreams Conference. I began corresponding with Val while she was still living in the USA, after I read *Why We are Equal*, one of her earlier books published in 1998.

The first edition of this book was very helpful to me, and I think this later edition just fits our situation in 2020. It throws a lifeline to those caught in oppressive and imposed theologies. I am even more enthusiastic now than I was when I first read it.

In the course of the book, Val explains terms such as liberation and feminist theology, process theology, Thomas Kuhn's theory of paradigm shifts, what is meant by modern and post-modern thought and how they all relate to the tensions produced by doubt in the lives of all of us.

The style is simple with no complicated theologies to push, but along the way she gives a bird's eye view of many of the theologians who influence our thinking.



These theologians include John Cobb (expounding Whitehead's process theology), Charles Birch, Albert Schweitzer, Henri Nouwen, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Karen Armstrong, Rosemary Radford Ruether, Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza, John Dominic Crossan, Marcus Borg, Frederick Buechner, John Hick, Mary Jo Meadow, Rita Gross, Natalie Goldberg, Sallie McFague, Catherine Keller, Virginia Mollenkott, Richard Holloway and John Selby Spong.

Val Webb loves biographies and autobiographies. She tells a lot of her own story in the book and introduces other surprises such as the confessions of Mother Teresa, revealed in her letters. The book is worth reading just for these. Val has added another chapter of examples of doubters, with many more women included in this edition.

Messages about doubt are reiterated through the book:

- "doubts are part of an ongoing process of faith, but the first step is key- to accept that doubts are not negative but positive" (p76);
- "these moves were initiated by doubt composted over time, and both challenged the authority of a previous paradigm" (p82);
- "to doubt and work through our beliefs is not to lose faith. Rather, it is like running away from home, knowing we can come back home for dinner" (p84);
- "the element of doubt is an element of faith itself...One can never promise not to doubt" (p90);
- "most religious doubt is around traditional ideas about God and how God acts in the world" (p106);

- *“theology has never claimed a single image of God but rather has evolved through the centuries. The problem for doubters is that such evolution of ideas has not always been offered to those of us sitting in the pews” (p106);*
- *“doubt is being vindicated for what it is in most other disciplines, the honest, creative response to inconsistencies, out-dated truth and oppressive authoritarianism” (p173).*

Theologian Richard Holloway states: *“our doubts and loves can cause all sorts of lovely flowers to bloom, such as tolerance and compassion...faith has to be co-active with doubt or it is not faith but its opposite, certainty” (p173).*

Contributions to the cumulative message are made through stories from many other ancient and modern scholars: Frankie Schaeffer (son of Francis), Paul Tillich, William Cowper, Bertrand Russell, John Bunyan, Soren Kirkegard, Saint Augustine of Hippo, Thomas a Kempis, Edward Schillebeeckx, Schleiermacher, Dostoyevsky, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Anselm of Canterbury, Karl Barth, Tertullian, Rudolf Bultman, E.O.Wilson and Frances Ridley Havergal. Yet all these names do not make the book heavy. I found it riveting.

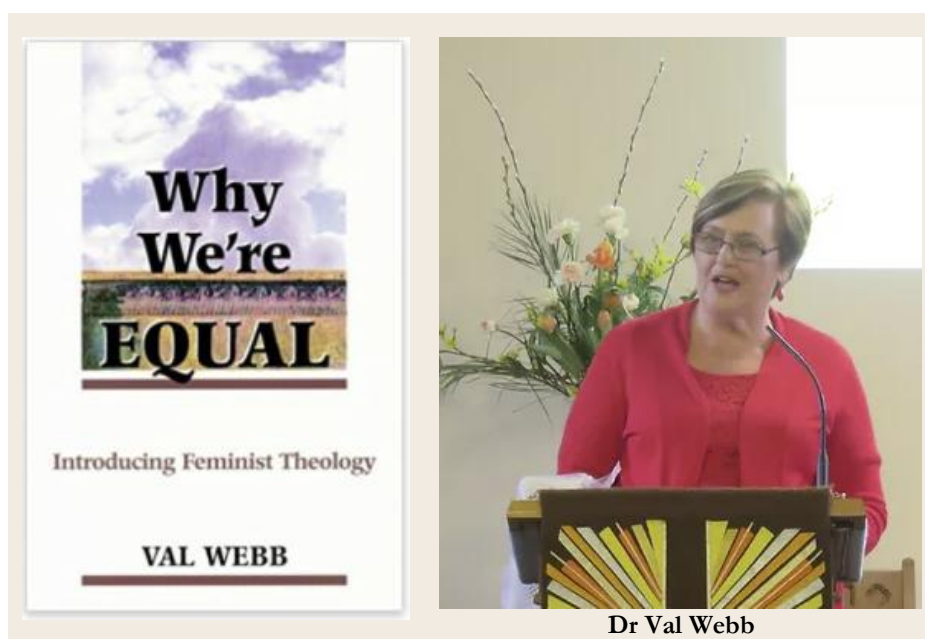
I would be surprised if parishioners could read this book and not see themselves described in many places. This is especially true for me when Val describes the pain that often accompanies a person being deemed to have lost her faith because she has rejected some of the beliefs she once held. I warmed to her description of a compassionate and hospitable community that gives space for doubting. She encourages us all to sign up for Karen Armstrong’s Charter of Compassion. Leading up to her discussion of interfaith dialogue, she points out how all the faiths include the golden rule as part of their belief. I enjoyed her division of responses to interfaith dialogue as being from exclusivists, inclusivists or pluralists.

I quote her last paragraph in full. *“The invitation to doubt has been extended, to cherish and nurture doubts as sacred gifts that lead into richness and freedom. Freedom is to doubt so boldly that all issues of belief and faith can gain a hearing. What is the promise? Not constant sunshine, instant success, unlimited wealth, immortal health or a personal genie. Rather, it is the hope that, if we open the windows of our lives and allow fresh winds to blow through- and sometimes cyclones, tornadoes and thunderstorms- we will also recognise a caress that lightly touches our face, or the inner joy of interconnectedness with the universe and with something many call God” (p186).*

You will be fortunate to arrange to get a copy of this book, but if not, look back at the quotes from the book in this review. They provide good material for reflection.

## References:

1. *In Defence of Doubt – An Invitation to Adventure* by Dr Val Webb, published 2012 and re-published 2016 by Morning Star Publishing Pty. Ltd.
2. *Why We’re Equal – Introducing Feminist Theology* by Dr Val Webb published 1998 by Chalice Press
3. <https://www.valwebb.com.au/> Accessed 6 September 2020 at 1200hrs



Dr Val Webb

## A Concert of Piano Solos and Duets by Australia's Favourite Composers

On Sunday 27 September 2020 at 2.00pm Paul Weaver and Bruce Wilson presented a piano concert in Saint Alban's Memorial Hall. Seating and procedures were in accordance with COVID-19 regulations and about 60 people attended. The program featured solos and duets by Beethoven, Bach, Mozart, Tchaikovsky and other greatly loved composers, including a couple of Australians.

Donations were invited and over \$800 was raised for the Rough Edges ministry of Saint John's Darlinghurst.



The socially distanced audience appreciated the variety of pieces and the skill of the pianists.

They enjoyed being able to gather together for an afternoon's entertainment.

Paul and Bruce wearing their musical themed masks!







## **We acknowledge domestic violence exists, is wrong and must stop.**

These are the opening words of a policy on responding to domestic abuse prepared by the Sydney Anglican Diocese and released in 2018.

Parish Councils were asked to consider the document and adopt a policy for their parish. It is important that we know how to respond compassionately when we are made aware of such abuse, and how to direct people to appropriate services.

Our Parish Council agreed to adopt the proposed parish policy included in the diocesan document and this is reproduced at the end of this article.

## **Why do we need such documents and policies?**

Sadly, we are becoming aware of just how widespread the problem of abuse within the home or close relationships is. Unfortunately, no segment of society is immune to the problem and we know that such abuse does occur in the homes of some professing Christians including clergy households. Rosie Batty's recognition as Australian of the Year in 2015 played a major role in bringing the issue of domestic abuse into the public arena and recognised the need for widespread understanding and support services. The current COVID-19 restrictions have meant abusers and victims have been thrown together with limited time apart and the incidence of abuse has risen.

## **What IS domestic abuse?**

"It is a pattern of behaviour based on exerting power and control over another, causing fear and intimidation" (Safe Ministry, Anglicare statement). As such it encompasses much more than physical abuse, and can also include emotional (blaming and attacking self-worth), verbal (swearing, shouting, criticism), social (isolating from family or friends or from leaving the house), economic (controlling all money), psychological (threats, etc), spiritual (justifying abuse on religious grounds) and sexual abuse.

## **Responding to an abuse situation**

The very nature of the abusive relationship makes disclosure extremely difficult and so it is very important that we as individuals and a church are able to respond compassionately and helpfully when we become aware of someone in this situation. As well as listening to and acknowledging the person's story, one of the best things we can do is to know of, and guide the person to, appropriate help and resources. A part of the Diocesan materials is a very helpful chart of key telephone numbers and websites. Copies of this document are on noticeboards and in toilets at Saint Alban's and Saint Aidan's.

\*A copy is also included at the end of this article. \*

Top of the list is **1800respect (1800 737 732) a 24-hour national helpline**. We can all remember this.

With the permission of the person disclosing, you can also help them make contact with one of the people in the parish with relevant counselling experience – see list at the bottom of the parish policy on page 23.

Domestic abuse is sadly all too prevalent: it is always wrong and can never be justified by scripture. We have the opportunity to reach out with God's love to those who are suffering. Let us all be prepared to do so if and when the situation arises.

Below is a summary of our parish policy – the full document is available from the Parish Office.

## **Epping Anglican Parish Policy for responding to Domestic Abuse**

**All forms of domestic abuse are wrong. Perpetrators must stop.**

1. The primary focus of this Policy is abusive or intimidating behaviour inflicted by an adult against a current or former spouse or partner. (Abuse involving children should follow child protection procedures.) Domestic abuse includes but is not limited to emotional, verbal, social, economic, psychological, spiritual, physical and sexual abuse. Such behaviour often seeks to control, humiliate, dominate or instil fear in the victim.
2. **We are committed to safe places which –**
  - Recognise equality amongst people
  - Promote a culture of healthy relationships of mutual responsibility in marriages, families and congregations
  - Ensure that all people feel welcomed, respected, and safe from abuse
  - Strive to follow good practice in protecting those experiencing domestic abuse
  - Refuse to condone any form of abuse, and
  - Enable concerns to be raised and responded to clearly and consistently.
3. **We uphold *Faithfulness in Service* as our national code of conduct for clergy and church workers, specifically its affirmations that –** such workers will not abuse positions of power, they will be law abiding citizens, and will not practice any forms of domestic abuse themselves.
4. **We recognise that domestic abuse requires a serious and realistic response –**  
Our church recognises that all forms of domestic abuse are wrong and cause damage to victims, and if observed by children are a form of child abuse. We are committed to working in partnership with victims and specialist agencies and seeking advice from expert professionals in the field. We also commit to appropriately addressing any mistakes made in our dealings with victims.
5. **We respect people who come to us for help –**  
We will value, respect and listen to both victims and perpetrators while maintaining distance between the two and in no way condoning any form of abuse.
6. **We uphold Scripture and its abhorrence of abuse in our words and public statements –**  
In our teaching we will make clear that any form of domestic abuse is wrong and can never be justified by scripture. We will also provide information on available support services.
7. **We ensure safety first by –**
  - Ensuring that those who have experienced domestic abuse can find safety and informed help as a first priority, and can continue to stay safe
  - Taking it seriously
  - Getting help from outside
  - Keeping it confidential
  - Challenging inappropriate behaviour with care, but only in a way that does not place any individual, especially a victim, at increased risk.
8. **We offer pastoral support to those in our care by –**
  - Offering informed care enabling all victims to access appropriate care
  - Being guided by the victim and never pressuring them to reconcile with the perpetrator
  - Understanding that reconciliation comes with conditions
  - Coordinating the care appropriately.

The full generic document can be found on the diocesan website  
<https://www.sds.asn.au/responding-domestic-abuse-policy-appendix-6>

**In an emergency, when safety is at risk, please call the Police on 000  
or to discuss your situation contact any of the listed numbers on the following page.**

## Domestic Abuse – key telephone numbers and websites for help

AGENCY	CONTACT DETAILS
<b>1800 Respect national helpline</b> 24 hour national number for sexual assault, family and domestic violence counseling and advice.	<b>1800 737 732</b> <b>1800respect.org.au</b>
<b>Anglicare Domestic Violence Adviser</b> Advice to clergy and lay ministers in the Anglican Diocese of Sydney especially for domestic abuse in a church-related setting.	<b>0438 826 556</b> (business hours)
<b>Daisy App</b> The Daisy App connects people who may experience violence or abuse to support services in their local area. It was developed by 1800RESPECT and is free to use and download. It includes some safety features to help protect the privacy of people using it.	<b>Free to download from iPhone App Store &amp; Android Google Play</b>
<b>Child Protection Helpline</b> Contact this helpline if you think a child or young person is at risk of harm from abuse.	<b>132 111</b> <b>reporter.childstory.nsw.gov.au/s/mrg</b>
<b>Lifeline</b> 24 hour telephone crisis line.	<b>131 114</b> <b>www.lifeline.org.au/get-help</b>
<b>NSW Domestic Violence Line</b> 24 hour number for comprehensive information and referrals to nearby support services, for all categories of domestic violence.	<b>1800 65 64 63</b> <b>domesticviolence.nsw.gov.au/get-help</b>
<b>NSW Rape Crisis Centre</b> Counseling service for <b>anyone</b> in NSW – men and women – who has experienced or is at risk of sexual assault.	<b>1800 424 017</b> <b>www.nswrapecrisis.com.au</b>
<b>No To Violence: Men's Referral Service</b> Telephone counselling, information and referral service for men using violence in families, male victims, and for their friends or relatives.	<b>1300 766 491</b> <b>ntv.org.au</b>
<b>Professional Standards Unit</b> Advice about abuse involving clergy or church workers in the Anglican Diocese of Sydney.	<b>9265 1604</b> <b>safeministry.org.au</b>

### Within the parish you can contact:

Rector: Bishop Ross Nicholson on 0407 916 603

The Associate Priest: The Reverend Paul Weaver on 0408 285 776

A female Anglicare counsellor is working part time in Epping Parish and can be contacted through the Parish Office on 9876 3362.

Jenny Nicholson (a registered nurse who has worked in parish ministry for many years), and Sarah Weaver (a General Practitioner with experience as a counsellor) are also available to speak to people seeking help in this area. Contact Jenny or Sarah through the Parish Office.

**The Resilience Centre** <https://www.theresiliencecentre.com.au> is a well-established practice in Epping with experienced psychologists who could be contacted for help.



# The Potential Oxford Vaccine and the Transforming Love of God

## The Reverend Dr Cathy Laufer

Saint Alban's parishioner Meryl Smith writes:

*During this global COVID-19 pandemic as scientists struggle to find a vaccine, many people are debating the morality of using a vaccine derived from an aborted foetus. A friend of mine recently sent me the following article which I found most helpful and thought others may also be interested in it. The writer is Cathy Laufer, priest-in-charge of the parish of Holy Spirit Church Coolumb Beach on the Sunshine Coast, Queensland, and a lecturer in theology at St Francis Theological College, Brisbane. She is the author of 'But What If She'd Said "No"? Backstories to the Bible'. Reprinted with permission from 'anglican focus', the online magazine of the Diocese of Southern Queensland.*



**The Reverend Doctor Cathy Laufer**

Various church leaders in Sydney have written to the Prime Minister expressing concern about the ethics of accepting the potential Oxford vaccine, should it prove successful against COVID-19. This concern is based on the use of cellular material that can be traced back to a foetus electively aborted in 1973, which is a common practice in medical research. Anglican Archbishop Glenn Davies told ABC's AM program, 'to use that tissue for science is reprehensible'. Meanwhile, Catholic Archbishop Anthony Fisher, in an interview with ABC Radio's *Religion and Ethics Report*, said he believes it would be ethical for a person to accept the vaccine if there was no alternative. However, he added that he feels many people would be 'troubled' because they could feel 'complicit' in the abortion.

I understand the Archbishops' desire to address the possible crisis of conscience for some people of faith. However, in my opinion they have missed the theological crux of the matter.

An analogy. A child is killed by a drunk driver and the parents donate the child's organs. That child was 'innocent', died involuntarily, and as a minor could not give consent to organ donation. Do we refuse the organs? Certainly not! Through organ donation, other people can live because of the child's death. That does not deny the sinfulness of the driver's act, nor the pain and suffering of the child and parents. However, it can bring some level of meaning to a tragedy. In Gospel terms, that child has, involuntarily, been the Christ figure for those who receive the organs.

To the current issue. Yes, a foetus was aborted, decades ago. We do not know the circumstances, but we can say that the foetus was 'innocent' and did not give consent to the use of their tissue. But, through its use and the development of the cell line, countless lives have already been saved, including through the rubella vaccine for which there remains no alternative, as noted by Archbishop Fisher in his ABC Radio interview. Surely the Christian response is to see this in the context of Christ's death. The act of those who crucified Christ was wrong, but the result was and is life for countless millions. That is our faith.

The analogy is far from perfect. Christ died with knowledge, voluntarily giving his life. Neither my hypothetical child nor the aborted foetus had knowledge of impending death or the ability to give consent to the use of their bodies by others. However, that abortion has already occurred. We cannot give that foetus the life that was lost. Instead, we have a choice. We can either leave that abortion as a sinful tragedy or we can allow God to transform it into a life-giving one.

Refusing the Oxford vaccine, should it prove effective, is to allow sin, evil and death to triumph. Let us, instead, let God do what God does best – shine light in the darkness, bring good out of evil, turn death into life. Let us accept the vaccine as a product of both the God-given ingenuity of human beings, and God's own transforming love. And let us give thanks.

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## A Commemoration of the Martyrs of New Guinea

The Anglican Church world-wide celebrates the lives of the New Guinea Martyrs on 2 September each year. In August 1946 the clergy of the Diocese of New Guinea asked their bishop, Philip Strong (later Archbishop of Brisbane and Primate of Australia), to appoint a day for the Martyrs to be commemorated each year. The date (2 September) was chosen as that was the date by which time all were known to have died. In July 2004, the Catholic Bishops of Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands decided that the Catholic Church would also devote 2 September a special day of remembrance for the Martyrs of World War II.

Annually on the closest Saturday the Anglican Board of Mission (ABM), Sydney Diocesan Committee arranges for the Eucharist to Commemorate the Martyrs of New Guinea to be hosted by a parish in Sydney. Saint Alban's Epping hosted the Service in 2017 on the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary since the martyrs sacrificed their lives (reported in *The Parish Magazine* No 849) and on Saturday 5 September 2020 the Commemoration Eucharist was held at Saint Peter's Cremorne for the 78<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

The Diocesan Committee was very grateful to the Rector, The Reverend Tim St Quintin, and Wardens of Saint Peter's, Cremorne for agreeing to host the Service at short notice, when the Rector of Saint Mark's South Hurstville expressed concern at holding the Service in the Parish under COVID-19 conditions.

The Presider and Preacher was The Reverend Antony Weiss, Chaplain Saint Paul's College, University of Sydney, and Honorary Assistant at Christ Church Saint Laurence.

In the congregation of approximately 60, Saint Alban's parish was represented by Margaret and Robin Cummins, Graeme Durie, Barbara Raymond and James Raymond, and Peggy Sanders. The Commemorative Liturgy included the lighting of a candle for each of the twelve Martyrs: **John Barge, Bernard Moore, Margery Brenchley, John Duffill, Lilla Lashmar, Henry Matthews, Leslie Gariadi, Lucien Tapiedi, Henry Holland, Vivian Redlich, May Hayman and Mavis Parkinson.**

In addition candles were lit for the **Church workers of all denominations who died for their faith in New Guinea and the Solomon Islands during World War II;** and for the **seven Melanesian Brothers** who were murdered in 2003 when attempting to bring reconciliation between warring tribal groups in the Solomon Islands.



Father Antony Weiss

On behalf of the parish, Margaret Cummins lit the candle commemorating two of the martyrs, nursing sister May Hayman and teacher Mavis Parkinson. They are the two Martyrs who have the closest association with Saint Alban's as they were members of the congregation in 1930s while they were missionary trainees. May Hayman was also a Sunday School teacher at Saint Alban's.

A window in the church is dedicated to her memory by the Sunday School children (the window is fourth from the front on the northern wall of the church). May and Mavis were members of the parish community while studying at the ABM Training Hostel, which was established in Epping in 1929 and located one or two doors further down Pembroke Street from Saint Alban's. Later, the ABM Training College (The House of the Epiphany) was in Cambridge Street, Stanmore, until its closure in the mid 1970s.

The Saint Alban's Chapel is dedicated in memory of the New Guinea Martyrs. The wall hanging in the Chapel depicts the association of the Australian church with that in Papua New Guinea. This spectacular work depicts the two land masses of Australia and Papua New Guinea in brown and green, divided by a blue ocean. Both are united by a rainbow signifying the covenant between God and his creation. The red strand which joins the two land masses represents the blood which Christ shed for all, uniting us with the martyrs of the faith in one body (*A Walk Through The Church*, Nigel Hubbard).



At the time of their deaths Sister May Hayman and Father Vivian Redlich were engaged to be married; they had only become engaged just weeks before the chaos, death and destruction of the Japanese invasion. May Hayman and Mavis Parkinson were killed at Jegarata near Popondetta. Father Vivian was the priest at the Sangara Mission. *"It was believed for a long time that he was among the martyrs beheaded on Buna Beach. Decades of secrecy among the villagers around Popondetta began slowly lifting from 2005 to 2009 when the truth of the murder by local villagers was confirmed. .... It culminated in The Reverend Redlich's surviving relative, Patrick Redlich, a parishioner at Saint Matthew's .... West Pennant Hills ... travelling to Papua New-Guinea in 2009 for a forgiveness and reconciliation ceremony, which finally lifted 'the curse' that local villagers believed existed since the 1942 murder."* (Quote from *anglican focus*)

<https://anglicanfocus.org.au/2019/09/02/anglican-church-remembers-missionaries-on-new-guinea-martyrs-day/>



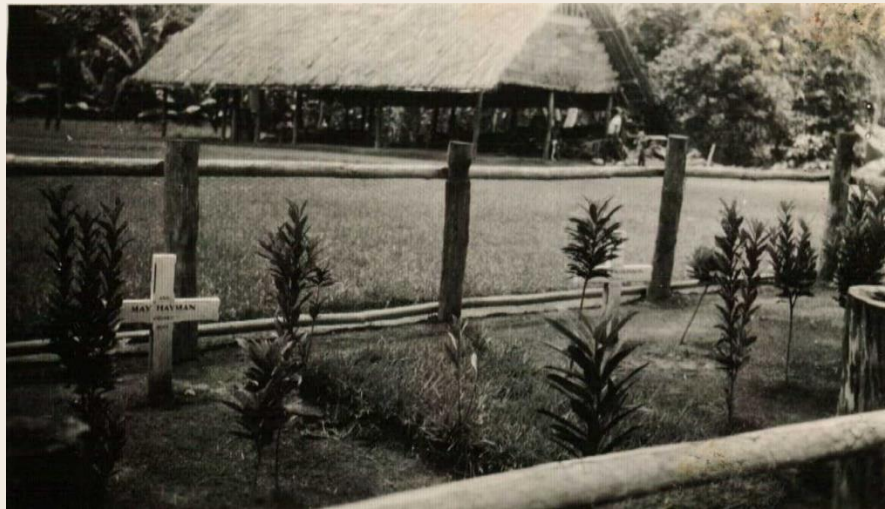




Father Vivian Redlich



Sister May Hayman



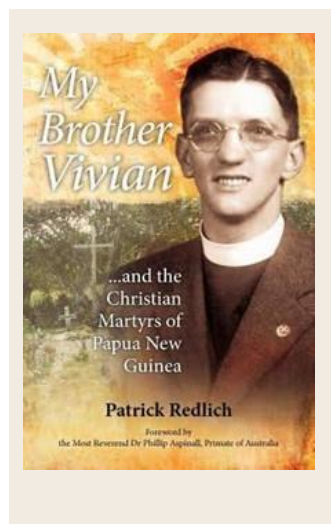
May Hayman's grave in Popondetta, Papua New Guinea

**AT RIGHT:** Patrick Redlich published a book in 2012 *My Brother Vivian, and the Christian Martyrs of Papua New Guinea*. Books cost \$25 and can be ordered through Peggy Sanders.

### The Martyrs Prayer

*And so we give you thanks for the whole company of your saints and martyrs in glory, with whom in fellowship we join our prayers and praises; by your grace may we, like them, be made perfect in your love. Blessing and glory and wisdom, thanksgiving and honour and power, be to our God for ever and ever.*  
*Amen.*

This article was written by Peggy Sanders, Parishioner of Saint Alban's and Secretary of the ABM Sydney Diocesan Committee.

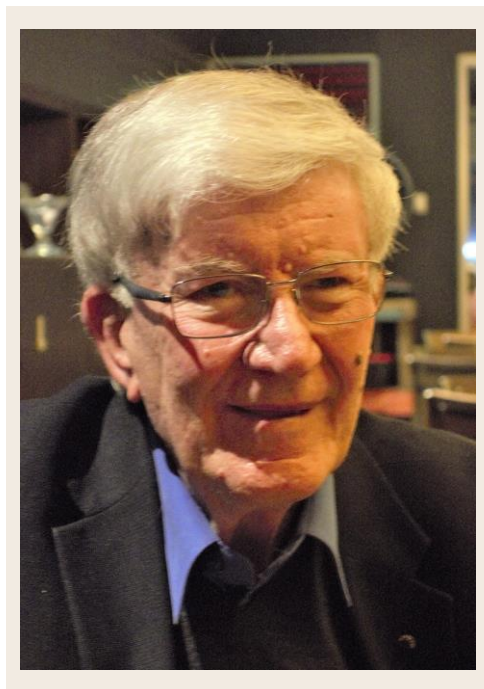


### Editor's Note:

Part 1 of a comprehensive History of the Choir of Saint Alban's was published in the previous edition of *The Parish Magazine*, Number 861, August – October 2020. Part 2 was planned for this edition. Because of the thorough and wide-ranging research needed for this undertaking, Part 2 is not yet available and will now appear in a future edition.

# A Reflection on Psalm 22: 4-10 in an Era of COVID-19

Dr Doug Carruthers



## *My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?*

This article is an updated version of a reflection given during Holy Week in 2014. I was reminded of it when considering the events of 2020.

To say that 2020 has been a year of anything but extreme anxiety would be denying the obvious. The year started with such an impact that at times our senses were overwhelmed by the sights and sounds that regaled us. We did indeed see day turn into an eerie night as vast parts of our country were consumed by a fiery cataclysmic event, the likes of which we had never before witnessed on such a scale. It was like a scene from some horror movie, but this was for real. Homes and farms literally blew apart and unfortunately lives of both humans and animals were lost. Amidst all this, people were asking – why?

Finally, the delayed rains came but with the earth baked solid the water merely ran over the ground creating flooding. Yet another cause of anxiety was upon us but how were we to know that the worst was still to come?

As silent as a thief in the night a new threat appeared - however this one was beyond our belief. As potent as any enemy we had ever faced, this one was invisible to the naked eye. The Coronavirus had arrived. Not making the usual impact on our senses it gave no clue as to where it was and where it would strike next. People again asked with increasing anxiety – why?

This is not a new question by any means. Generations and civilisations have pondered the same and apportioned blame when things go wrong and in doing so have devised various solutions to their perceived problem. So I ask myself – where do I stand with all that is going on around us? How have I coped with the anxiety that was part of my daily working life and not just at this time?

In Holy Week 2014 our then Rector, Father John Cornish, asked if I would do a short reflection on a Biblical topic that had helped me during my life's journey. I carefully chose a portion of Psalm 22 verses 4 - 10 and it is that reflection I would like to share in the midst of our current crisis. Why Psalm 22 and not another? I have found the graphic imagery: future revelations, depths of despair, the unfailing love of God and what God expects us to do to maintain that relationship, has been a source of comfort to me. I find it inspirational in both context and language.

The portion covers some seven verses which form three defined sections giving rise to a compact cameo of the whole psalm. There has been conjecture over the centuries as to who wrote it and what it all means. Personally, I regard it as a prophetic message from God, revealed to and recorded by King David, as to Christ's future suffering and rejection. Saint Peter when writing in Acts 2:30 would allude to this when he wrote: *"David being a prophet ... he foresaw and spoke of Christ"*.

It would appear that King David had a crisis on his hands and in verses 4 and 5 he is reiterating the covenant that God had with Israel. This is his religious background which was all encompassing. Note the language:

*"In you our fathers trusted, they trusted you and you delivered them  
To you they cried, and they were saved,  
They put their trust in you and were not confounded."*

Here the psalmist has created an overview, the 'Big Picture' if you like, of what has to be done to derive the benefits of the past relationship. However, moving on to verses 6, 7 and 8 we are confronted by a totally changed approach by the psalmist. We are made aware of what his current crisis is and the bewilderment that has ensued. In his depths of despair, he is basically de-humanising himself. The cause of his anguish is revealed.

*"As for me I am a worm and no man. The scorn of men and despised by the people.  
All those that see me laugh me to scorn, they shoot out their lips at me and wag their heads saying 'He trusted in the Lord – let him deliver him. Let him deliver him if he delights in him.'"*

Derided, mocked, vilified by all, the psalmist is now making a plea to God on a personal basis. He is desperate, but where is God in his hour of need? He may be the King, but his subjects are now against him. He agonises that his fidelity to God has come at a great sacrifice. Something must have happened.

I will digress for a moment and have a brief look at the preceding psalm – Psalm 21 verses 3, 4 and 7.

*"For you came to meet him with the blessing of success and places a crown of gold upon his head.*

*He asked for life and you gave it to him.*

*For the king put his trust in the Lord."*

Here is detailed the crowning of David as King by God, and his close and trusting relationship with God on one hand is compared with the current depths of despair he now feels in Psalm 22. The psalmist is bewildered and asking why God would have let this happen. He is desperate for an answer. Perhaps the Kingship has gone to his head and God was now giving him a reality check? As Paul wrote in his first letter to the Corinthians:

*"God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, so that no one might boast in the presence of God."* So herein is a warning. Remember what comes from God and be thankful for His Blessing or ignore it at your peril.

When we move to Verses 9 and 10 in Psalm 22 the veil of woe has begun to lift. The psalmist recalls that he has always had a special relationship with God ever since his birth.

*"But you are he that took me out of my mother's womb, that bought me to lie at peace on my mother's breast. You are my God even from my mother's womb."*

He has realised that despite all that is going on, he has always been with God as his guide. His tone now begins to revert to that of a supplicant.

So, what do I draw from this psalm? In colloquial terms, what is the 'take-home' message? When things are going well, we feel blessed and praise God in thanksgiving for all the goodness bestowed upon us. However, what is our response when things seemingly go wrong? We all suffer periods of doubt, rejection, feelings of injustice or abandonment. What happens then? Do we blame God and reject Him? It is so easy to sit down, cry 'woe is me' and have a 'pity party'. This however does not bring us back into relationship with God.

Being a Christian is not an exemption from all the problems of human life. It is not a 'get out of gaol for free' card. All the more we need to address our problems in a confident manner and cast out pessimism, knowing that periods of doubt will strengthen our faith.

As our reading reveals, we all have our religious past to draw on as our foundation. The psalmist had his past to draw on. However, it was through his personal plea for a one-on-one relationship with God that led him to realise that God had always been, and was still, with him. It was this that allowed him to set things right.

Likewise, let us be assured that God is always with us, even in our darkest hours. As we continue our journey, let us remember our own relationship with our heavenly father. Let us pray that we will hold fast to His promise of love and trust and guidance and forgiveness, as was ultimately experienced by King David, to carry us through all the vicissitudes of life.

### **Christian Community Aid (CCA) Eastwood - Emergency Relief Program**

Each month CCA's Emergency Relief Program distributes thousands of dollars' worth of groceries and essential items to people in the community who are in crisis. CCA relies heavily on the generous donations from the community. Due to the recent increase in demand, CCA needs our help so that they can continue to provide immediate assistance to those in need. Help them to help others.

Please leave your donations in the CCA collection bag in the narthex before services or in the church office when it is open. You can also donate online. <https://ccas.org.au/> Thank you for your ongoing support.





For the last sixteen years, I have been making and selling Christmas puddings. I started off making 50 puddings a year, with many parishioners supporting my efforts by buying one or more puddings, or by making donations towards the ingredients. In the early days of the venture, Father Cliff Stratton, the then Associate Priest at Saint Alban's, threw out a challenge to me to raise the quantity to 100 puddings. So I did!

Around that time, the parish decided to support these efforts a little more formally. The Christmas pudding project became a parish venture, with money going through the parish bank account and the Parish Council affirming the groups I suggested we support each year. When we got to some 300 puddings each year, we decided that sufficient money was being raised for it to be divided three ways.

That gave each group a meaningful amount of money for its work. It was decided to give a third to a group close to home, a third to an indigenous project, and the remaining third to a third world work. From the sale of 400 puddings in recent years, we have annually given each group approximately \$4,500. The criteria for selection of recipients in a world of need have been need and worthwhileness. In all, we have given over \$165,000 to various groups. Some of those groups have provided a speaker for the occasional Women's Brunch Plus, which has then generated further interest in, and support for the group.

We have supported, among others:

- The Hamlin Fistula Clinic in Ethiopia
- A horticultural training project for troubled indigenous youth, the work of Bush Church Aid
- The provision of wells in Vanuatu, a project of Anglican Board of Mission
- The pre-school and feeding programme for Pygmy children in the Congo, the work of Dr Barbara Ferguson of Saint Mark's, South Hurstville
- The publishing and printing of books in their own language for newly literate indigenous groups through the acclaimed Indigenous Literacy Foundation
- The provision of books, and a contribution to the purchase of the little delivery van, for the Footpath Library, providing reading materials for street and homeless people in Sydney
- The training of Afghani women in English and computer skills to raise their chances of employment through the Support Association for the Women of Afghanistan.

This year the Parish Council was to continue discussing the rector's concern that the funds should go only to groups with a Christian affiliation, but obviously there have been more pressing issues on the agenda and I understand that the matter of pudding fund recipients has not been progressed. Every year, I have worked hard to sell up to 400 puddings, taking advantage of my attendance at several functions in the later part of the year to make sales. This has enabled me to sell perhaps 25 - 30 puddings in an evening or at a lunch event. Given that these functions cannot occur this year, the marketing of puddings on any sort of scale would not be possible.

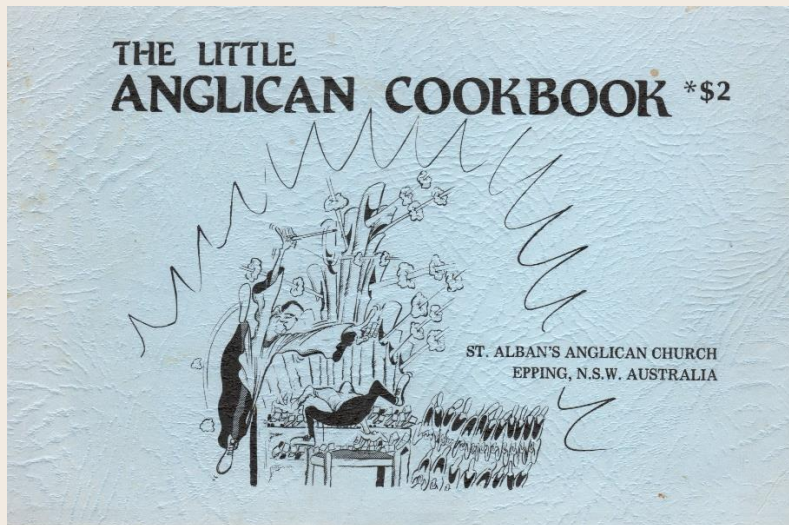
After a great deal of thought and prayer, I have decided to resume making the puddings, on a much-reduced scale, as a personal project, not as a parish project. That said, I do hope parishioners who have enjoyed a good Saint Alban's plum pudding regularly over the years, or who have given them as gifts to friends and family, will contact me about buying one (or more!) this year.

For the puddings I use the Dried Fruits' Board recipe used by my mother. That was the recipe for the very last plum pudding she made before her sudden death. She would have been thrilled at all the good the hundreds of puddings have done over the years. I would be happy to share that recipe with anyone who would like it, together with the substitutes I have devised to make the pudding both gluten-free and dairy-free if needed.

I wish to thank very warmly all those who have, with great generosity, supported the project over so long. I have appreciated not only your financial generosity but your support and encouragement.

Did you know?

Thanks to Margaret Foster



Front Cover

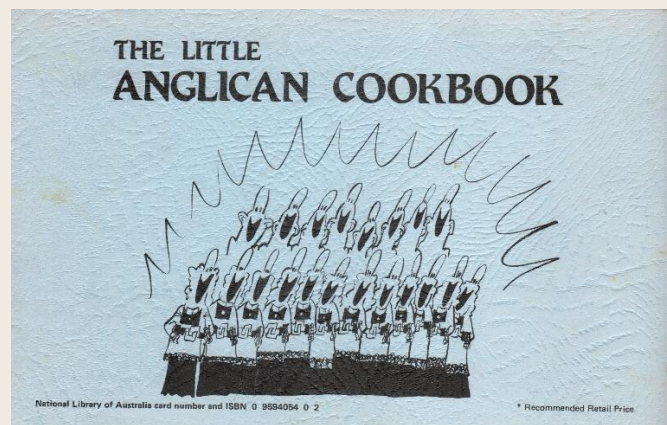
In 1980 in order to raise money for the purchase of a new organ for Saint Alban's, a cookbook was produced. Parishioners contributed their favourite recipes. The book cost \$2.00.

Some of the delicious recipes included:

- Coq-au-Vin
- Chicken Supreme Casserole
- Rabbit Pie
- Hawaiian Prawns
- Shepherd's Pie
- Lime Jelly
- Pavlova

**Garlic Prawns**  
5 cloves garlic  
4 tablespoons olive oil  
30 small prawns, shelled and deveined  
1 bay leaf  
4 tablespoons garlic oil dressing  
½ teaspoon salt  
¼ teaspoon thyme  
1½ tablespoons lemon juice  
freshly ground black pepper

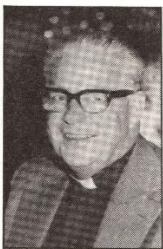
Heat the olive oil in a large frying pan. Saute the garlic cloves in hot oil for 3 minutes. Discard the garlic. Add the bay leaf and prawns and fry in the sizzling hot oil for 4 minutes until prawns are pink on both sides. Remove the pan from the heat and stir in the garlic oil. Season with salt, thyme and lemon juice. Serve in 4 individual small earthenware casserole dishes or ramekins. Grind black pepper over each dish just before serving.



Back Cover

At left: One of the popular recipes

**FOREWORD**



It is quite appropriate that a church should issue a cookbook in aid of its organ fund. Not only do we all take interest in what we eat but food and drink are powerful symbols in our lives and in all religion. Throughout our years they express a Providence that calls for our gratitude.

Eating and drinking, especially in company, can be a complicated and ritual experience. We enjoy not only what we feed on but the fellowship of the meal as well. At the heart of the Christian liturgy we are invited to share in a unique feast of praise and thanksgiving.

Our praise is offered best with music. At St. Alban's we make music joyfully, and take it seriously — both rejoicing in the Lord and offering our best to Him.

With our present organ no longer capable of doing its job, this publication is a contribution towards an instrument appropriate for inspiring richer worship and service for us and the generations to come.

St. Alban's, Epping  
December 1980

*Geoffrey Feltham*  
**GEOFFREY FELTHAM**  
Rector

THE LITTLE ANGLICAN COOKBOOK — 3

Foreword by the then Rector The Reverend Geoffrey Feltham

The book was published by

J Rawling  
Saint Alban's Anglican Church  
3 Pembroke Street  
Epping NSW 2121

Designed and Edited  
by George Jaksic

Cartoons by Noel Slapp



## Christmas

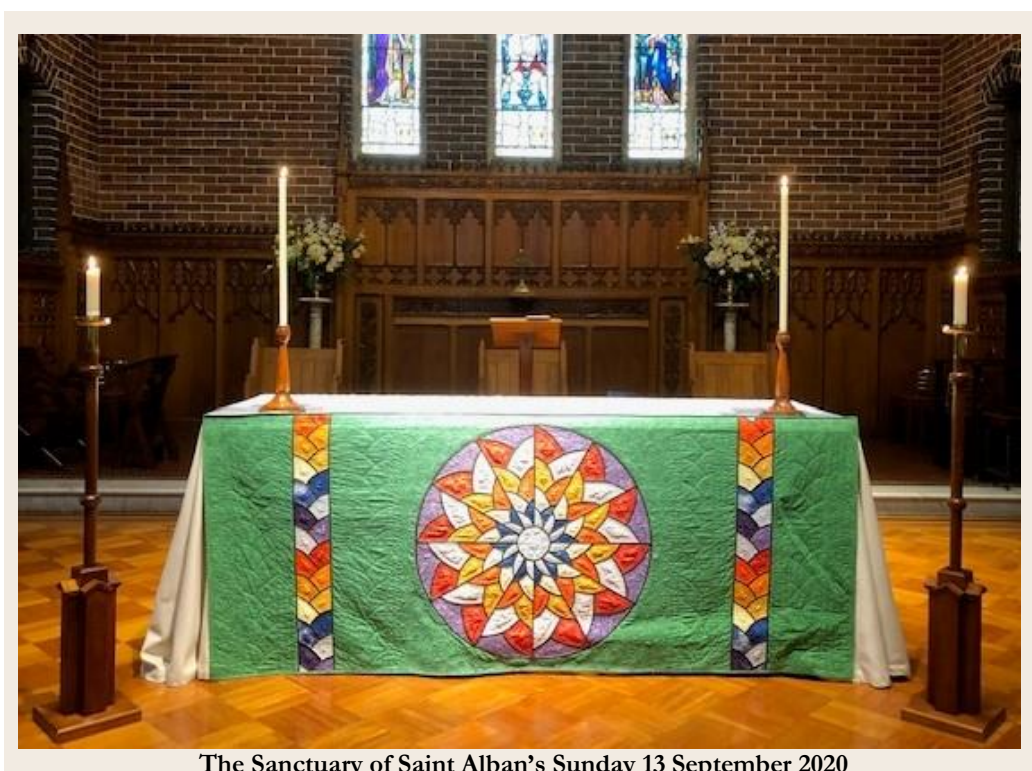


Carols,  
we're gladly  
singing. Hear the  
message that they  
bring. Ring out the news  
to everyone that God in his  
great love sent us His son. Born  
this day in a manger bare to give us  
life and light our way. May we our gifts  
now bring to Him and of His love forever  
sing, so here on earth His peace we'll bring.



Page 34 *scattered words of praise, blessing and prayer* by Joy Brann AM 2019  
Thanks to the poet for permission to reprint.

**Editor's Note:** Sadly, this year we are unlikely to be able to sing as a congregation but we will all enjoy listening to carols and singing old favourites 'in our hearts'.

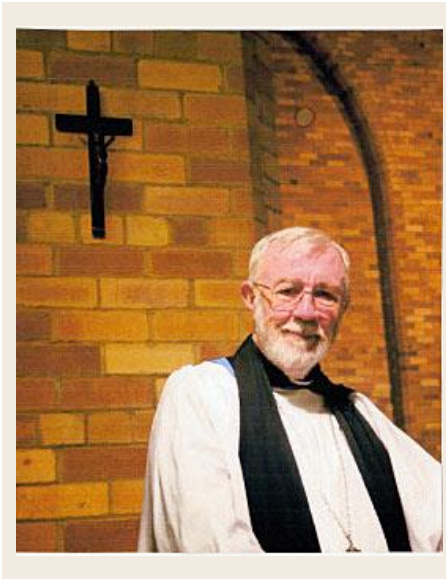


The Sanctuary of Saint Alban's Sunday 13 September 2020



# Devonshire Slaves and a Hymn Writer

Father Robert Willson



Father Robert Willson was Chaplain and a teacher of Divinity and History at the Canberra Girls Grammar School for 17 years. He has been a valued contributor to *The Parish Magazine* for some years.

My wife and I spent a week in Exeter, Devon, many years ago and we heard forgotten tales of fascinating characters from long ago. How many remember that Devon, along with neighbouring Cornwall, was once a target for pirates from the Barbary coasts of North Africa? Most have forgotten that it was a Devon man, The Reverend Sabine Baring-Gould, who wrote down so many tales of those dramatic years, as well as old folk songs. He also wrote some famous hymns, like 'Onward Christian Soldiers'.

The Moroccan corsairs spread terror as they searched for plunder, both material and human, along the coastal villages. Strong young men and attractive girls, especially those of high rank who might command a ransom, were their targets.

Joseph Pitts of Exeter, Devon, was a teenager in 1678 when a pirate ship targeted his fishing boat. Later he recorded that the pirates seemed like "*monstrous ravenous creatures*". He screamed in terror that the pirates might kill and eat them. His Master replied that on the contrary they would be taken to Algiers and sold in the slave market.

Joseph Pitts was a slave for the next fifteen years. His parents had long given up hope of ever seeing their son alive and the story of his escape from slavery after his conversion for a time to Islam, his pilgrimage to Mecca and his return home, makes a fascinating narrative.

The Reverend Sabine Baring-Gould would have heard this tale many times. He wrote a vast number of books but seems to have ignored this dramatic era. I have carefully combed the list of his book titles but I have found no mention of it. We wonder why.

In 1704 Joseph Pitts published his own account of his capture, captivity, and eventual escape. The book was called *A True and Faithful Account of the Religion and Manners of the Mohametans*.

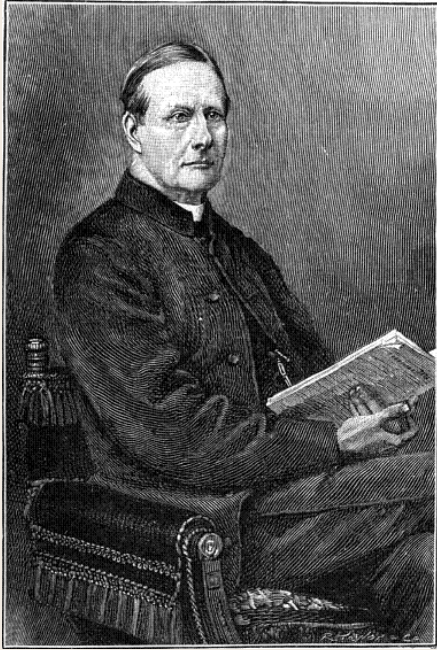


***A Sea Fight with Barbary Corsairs***  
by Laureys a Castro c 1681

For Pitts, a chance meeting in a shop in the Turkish port of Smyrna, site of one of the Seven Churches mentioned in the Book of Revelation, was the gateway to freedom. Eventually he was on a ship with a couple of other Englishmen who had planned to escape. Pitts' journey home nearly ended on the first night of his freedom in England. At that time the Press Gang was the established way of recruiting men for the Navy from the coastal ports of Devon. To his horror Pitts found himself arrested and thrown into prison by the Press Gang. One account states that only the intervention of an aristocratic patron secured his freedom and his return to Exeter.

Pitts wrote that the joy of his family and neighbours could not easily be expressed. The first words his father said to him were a quotation from the Book of Exodus: "*Art thou my son Joseph?*" with tears. "*Yes father, I am*". Pitt arrived home about 1694.

Joseph Pitts' book was the first and most detailed description of life under Islam. More than 300 years later, after years when Muslim countries have shaken off colonial rule, we have much greater understanding of Islam, but Pitts' account is still important.



Sabine Baring-Gould, engraving published in *Strand Magazine* No 28, p 392, from a photograph

While my wife and I were exploring Devon, I was reminded of the long history of slave raiding and capture by pirates from the Barbary coast. I knew that one of the most prolific writers on the history and legends of the western counties was a country clergyman, the very eccentric but learned Reverend Sabine Baring-Gould. He wrote many novels and these tales of slavery would have appealed to his imagination.

Baring- Gould lived from 1834 to 1924 and was himself a legend at the time of his death, known as one of the most colourful Church of England priests of his time.

When we saw the sign down a country lane leading to Lew Trenchard, a village and civil parish in West Devon, and Baring-Gould's Parish, we were eager to explore it. I vividly remember driving through an avenue of overhanging foliage until we arrived at the Parish, situated in a quiet and lovely valley of the river Lew. There was no real village, just the Rectory and the Church.

Lew House was the ancient building which became the Rectory for Baring-Gould after the death of his uncle in 1881.

Sabine Baring-Gould was born in Exeter in 1834 and was educated in Germany and France and at Clare College, Cambridge. He served in various parishes but when his father died, he inherited the family estate of 3000 acres at Lew Trenchard. As Lord of the Manor he had the church living in his gift. His uncle was the rector but when he died Sabine Baring-Gould appointed himself as rector. This arrangement was unusual but perfectly legal and he remained rector until his death. With a parish numbering only 250 souls he had lots of time for reading, writing, exploration of the countryside and collecting folk songs.

Professor Wesley Milgate 1916-1999, one of Australia's most distinguished literary scholars, wrote that the list of Baring-Gould's publications is of almost incredible length and variety. He wrote about 50 volumes of fiction and more than 100 volumes of history, folklore, travel and topography. In spite of years of research new discoveries are still being made of forgotten pamphlets he wrote. **[Editor's Note:** There is a great deal of interesting information about Baring-Gould and his writing output on the website of the Sabine Baring-Gould Appreciation Society <http://sbgas.org/>]

Baring-Gould wrote standing up at a vertical desk. He wrote several chapters a day and if he missed a day, he wrote double the next day to make up. Much research has gone into compiling a detailed bibliography of this prolific writer. The Scriptures speak of one who has the "pen of a ready writer" and Baring-Gould fits that description.

As a young man he had married Grace Taylor. They had 15 children, but the legend is that Baring-Gould could never remember the total of his family and often asked his wife if it was 15 or 16? One day they had a children's party at the rectory with children running everywhere. A little girl appeared, and the rector said majestically: "*And whose little girl are you?*" to which she replied: "*I am one of yours, Daddy*".

The tiny parish church is hidden in the woods and there the rector preached every Sunday. In an age when sermons often lasted an hour, he preached for five minutes. He made a single point and shouted it with all the fervour at his command and then sat down, leaving his congregation stunned. One old parishioner said that she could remember his five-minute sermons fifty years later.

When I was a boy in Sunday School we often sang his great hymn: "*Onward Christian soldiers, marching as to war...*" Sadly the words now seem inappropriate, even though the image of the Christian soldier is very strong in the writings of Saint Paul. That hymn, along with Baring-Gould's evening hymn: "*now the day is over, night is drawing nigh*", have both been removed from modern hymnbooks. In *The Australian Hymnbook* Baring-Gould is represented only by that lovely Basque Carol "*The angel Gabriel from heaven came*" (number 222). When "*Onward Christian soldiers*" was published and became popular, someone wrote to the author and complained about the



imagery of the Cross of Jesus going on before. The writer said that such images were ritualistic and not protestant enough. Baring-Gould replied that in that case the writer might sing “With the Cross of Jesus hidden behind the door”!

We spent a lovely hour in the ancient church and home of this eccentric but gifted Anglican priest. One mystery remains. Baring-Gould loved the traditions of his native Devon but seems to have ignored the dramatic story of the slave raids on the parishes along the coast. As far as I can tell they are never covered in his many writings. My copy of his book on Cornwall, *The Book of the West*, 1899, scarcely mentions them.

The explanation may be that the author of “*Onward Christian Soldiers*” was a little ashamed of the fact that the slave trade revealed that 17<sup>th</sup> century Devon was defenceless against these pirates. The story of the Spanish Armada and Sir Francis Drake were more inspiring. Perhaps Baring-Gould did not appreciate tales of Christians falling into the hands of Muslims and being converted to Islam. Conversion to Islam was a very sensitive issue for patriotic Christians at that time. It was all best forgotten. The Internet has many sites dealing with the bizarre story of Joseph Pitts, the history of slavery, and the life of Baring-Gould.



**Lew Trenchard House**



**Saint Peter's Anglican Church Lewtrenchard**

**Editor's Note: The different spellings for house and Church are accurate.**

#### Acknowledgements:

1. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barbary\\_pirates](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barbary_pirates) Accessed 10 June 2020 at 1150hrs
2. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sabine\\_Baring-Gould](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sabine_Baring-Gould) Accessed 10 June 2020 at 1210hrs
3. Sabine Baring Gould Appreciation Society website <http://sbgas.org/> Accessed 10 June 2020 at 1235hrs
4. Photo of Lew Trenchard House Accessed 10 June 2020 at 1250hrs  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lewtrenchard#/media/File:Lew\\_Trenchard\\_House.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lewtrenchard#/media/File:Lew_Trenchard_House.jpg)
5. Photo of Lewtrenchard Church <https://greatenglishchurches.co.uk/html/lewtrenchard.html>  
Accessed 10 June 2020 at 1305 hrs

## Will you write an article for the next Parish Magazine?

Contributions are invited for the next edition of *The Parish Magazine*.

**The deadline for contributions is 4 January 2021.**

#### Ask yourself –

- ✚ What has been my prayerful response to the natural disasters and the viral epidemic of 2019/2020? What helped me to endure? Have I been able to help others?
- ✚ What am I looking forward to in 2021?
- ✚ How am I staying in touch with my Church, family and friends during the Coronavirus pandemic?
- ✚ Do I have an interesting journey of faith? Would others enjoy hearing my story?
- ✚ Is there someone who has influenced me and my religious faith? An author? A preacher? A friend?
- ✚ Is there a Christian book or author I would like to review?
- ✚ What would I like to see in future editions of my Parish Magazine?

Please contact the editor Julie Evans via email [julie.evans@ihug.com.au](mailto:julie.evans@ihug.com.au)



## Parish Directory

<b>Rector</b>	The Right Reverend Ross Nicholson BCom, BTh, Dip A, MA
<b>Associate Priest (Part-time)</b>	The Reverend Paul Weaver BA, BD, ThL, AMusA
<b>Honorary Priests</b>	The Reverend Jane Chapman BA, MBA, CertIPP, Dip AngOrd, Dip Th The Reverend Valerie Tibbey ThDip
<b>Children's Ministry Worker</b>	Amy Taylor
<b>Lay Assistant</b>	Ruth Shatford AM (Diocesan)
<b>Sanctuary Assistants</b>	Godfrey Abel, Sue Armitage, Ken Bock, Noel Christie-David, Margaret Cummins, Robin Cummins, Graeme Durie, Anne Lawson, Michael Marzano, Lachlan Roots, Peggy Sanders (Senior Liturgical Assistant), David Tait, Amanda Turner, Kim Turner, Ian Walker, Sarah Weaver
<b>Servers</b>	Ross Beattie, Shane Christie-David, Graeme Durie, Judi Martin, Michael Marzano (Master Server), James Simpson, Christopher Tait, Mark Taylor, Penelope Thompson, James Von Stieglitz
<b>Parish Administrator</b>	Denise Pigot Telephone: 9876 3362 Email: <a href="mailto:office@eppinganglicans.org.au">office@eppinganglicans.org.au</a>
<b>Honorary Parish Treasurer</b>	Noel Christie-David
<b>Parish Councillors</b>	Glyn Evans, Felicity Findlay, Malcolm Lawn, Christine Murray, Peggy Sanders, Penelope Thompson
<b>Parish Nominators</b>	Robin Cummins, Graeme Durie, Peggy Sanders, Ruth Shatford, Meryl Smith
<b>Synod Representatives</b>	Michelle Lee, One vacant position
<b>Churchwardens</b>	
<b>Saint Alban's</b>	Noel Christie-David – Rector's Warden Graeme Durie – People's Warden Elizabeth Jenkins – People's Warden
<b>Saint Aidan's</b>	Ken Bock OAM – Rector's Warden Margaret Cummins – People's Warden Richard Ryan – People's Warden
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<b>Assistant Organists</b>	Lynn Bock, Tony Malin, Richard Simpson, Bruce Wilson
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