

The Monthly Magazine of the Anglican Parish of Northern Albury – Diocese of
NORTHERN LIGHT

Wangaratta.

St Mark's North Albury – St James' Lavington- St John's Thurgoona – St Paul's Jindera
September 2017

“TO KNOW CHRIST AND MAKE HIM KNOWN”

From our Priest:

In a recent talk that I gave in Albury I tried to describe what Christianity meant to me when I first encountered it and experienced the risen Messiah as a person I could have a loving fellowship with.

I suggested that it was like the sun rising. Imagine that you are sitting watching the sun rise; the beauty can be breathtaking, even overwhelming. The slowly you realize that not only is the sunrise beautiful but that it also lights up everything else around you. So grass looks green and vibrant colours abound in flowers, bark and rocks. The texture of the environment where you are suddenly comes to life; shadows create shapes and sculpt the light. The whole scene emerges from the enveloping darkness, revealing unimaginable depth and beauty.

I borrowed the metaphor from C. S. Lewis (1898-1963) who I expect is known to many of you. He wrote, “I believe in Christianity as I believe that the Sun has risen, not only because I see it, but because by it, I see everything else.” Lewis was an Anglican layperson and great apologist for the common Christian faith shared by all Christians that he called ‘mere Christianity.’ His biographer Alister McGrath commented that, “These carefully crafted words express Lewis’s core belief in the rationality of the Christian faith...The Christian faith was, for Lewis, like a lens which allowed things to be seen in sharp focus. Its capacity to illuminate and make sense of reality was, he argued, an indication (but not a proof) of its truth.’

Lewis is making a couple of points. First, it makes good sense to believe in God. Second, belief in God gives us a way of framing the world, allowing us to see it in all its dimensions.

The modern world is anxious to confine Christianity to a corner of the house called ‘private faith’ not to be allowed into the public places in the house. And sometimes we Christians have agreed with that, much to our detriment.

What I have discovered over time is that the rich depths of the Christian faith summed up in the glorious vision of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who creates, redeems, transforms is beyond measure beautiful and illuminating. Furthermore, this God is ever-present with us in loving personal fellowship and yet remains beyond us as the ground and order of existence in the universe.

On the other hand the great high priest of militant atheism, Richard Dawkins, has quite logically pointed out that without the Christian vision of God the Sun the universe “has no design, no purpose, no evil and no good, nothing but blind pitiless indifference.” His logic is impeccable.

I wanted to make one point to my audience that morning. We have the Sun so how do we help other Australians let the Sun rise in their hearts and especially their minds to share the beauty and wonder that we see.

That is the priestly and prophetic ministry of our church in Northern Albury. It is sometimes called evangelism. It is our common calling to first live in the light of the Sun and then invite others to do the same.

With much affection,

Colin and Jeanette

The Friends Wander Albury....

**“Get together, unwind and take it easy.
Because life isn't about stress,
it's about living”**

There are benefits to our health when we take time and don't feel the need to run to a rigorous timetable..... August provided a “please yourself” sort of outing – punctuated by meeting to eat and drink. The basic structure involved visiting MAMA and the Library/Museum to look at the latest exhibitions and a number of us did that – in separate groups. Other people went shopping!!!!

We set the day in motion by meeting at the quirky Betty Windsor and Sons Coffee Emporium for Jarrod's good coffee and cakes, surrounded by waving Queen Elizabeth figures, royal memorabilia from Queen Victoria onwards, and art deco lighting. One of two large groups in the cafe, we filled half the space and lingered long after the other group had left. Lunch was at a long table in The Laneway at The Bended Elbow where Jill and Karen were able to catch up for a while, taking time out of their otherwise busy days. Jane also had an agenda, but gave herself enough space to meet us in the morning for coffee. The advantage of a local activity is that members are able to come to whatever part fits in with their schedule. It makes for a relaxing time where people can run errands in between if they need to - which some of the members did.

MAMA's current exhibitions range from bright and vibrant paintings, thought provoking B&W photographs from Taiwan to a huge installation involving timber - from the tip – and running water. The Library/Museum's main offering is on the topic of entertainment during war – Boer to Afghanistan. The posters, performers and memorabilia.

Both places are worth strolling round for leisure and pleasure.



The Library Museum



MAMA



We collected well over \$100 which Jeanette took for Food Bank – and Jill donated her relish

Jeanette came out with us for the first time and joined in with the chaos and chatter that is the hallmark of our group!! Jeanette intended to be at Jill's place last month but was unable to make it due to a nasty virus – one which has affected a number of the Friends. We were pleased to see Noela and Elizabeth were fit enough to come along in August. Both have been very sick with this virus since our day in Jindera – Elizabeth confined to bed and Noela in hospital. Our oldest member Mary was unable to make it this time due to illness.

So - everyone is looking forward to Spring and the retreat of winter ailments!
And our first trip is a drive out in the countryside to Culcairn.
Carpool Jindera 9.30am. Annette is organising.....
Culcairn Bakery then a tour of the historic Station Master's House.
And the old and rather grand Culcairn Hotel for lunch.

There will be time to investigate the Red Cross Craft Shop, the Anglican Op Shop and we hope to get “Edna Goes to Africa” to open. This is a second hand shop alleviating need in African countries.
Annette's number for bookings – 0456 370 257

A Dog's Purpose? (from a 6-year-old).

Being a veterinarian, I had been called to examine a ten-year-old Irish Wolfhound named Belker. The dog's owners, Ron, his wife Lisa, and their little boy Shane, were all very attached to Belker, and they were hoping for a miracle.

I examined Belker and found he was dying of cancer. I told the family we couldn't do anything for Belker, and offered to perform the euthanasia procedure for the old dog in their home.

As we made arrangements, Ron and Lisa told me they thought it would be good for six-year-old Shane to observe the procedure. They felt as though Shane might learn something from the experience.

The next day, I felt the familiar catch in my throat as Belker's family surrounded him. Shane seemed so calm, petting the old dog for the last time, that I wondered if he understood what was going on. Within a few minutes, Belker slipped peacefully away.

The little boy seemed to accept Belker's transition without any difficulty or confusion. We sat together for a while after Belker's death, wondering aloud about the sad fact that animal lives are shorter than human lives. Shane, who had been listening quietly, piped up, "I know why."

Startled, we all turned to him. What came out of his mouth next stunned me. I'd never heard a more comforting explanation. It has changed the way I try and live.

He said, "People are born so that they can learn how to live a good life -- like loving everybody all the time and being nice, right?" The six-year-old continued,

"Well, dogs already know how to do that, so they don't have to stay as long."

Live simply.
Love generously.
Care deeply.
Speak kindly.

Remember, if a dog was the teacher you would learn things like:

When loved ones come home, always run to greet them.
Never pass up the opportunity to go for a joyride.
Allow the experience of fresh air and the wind in your face to be pure Ecstasy.
Take naps.
Stretch before rising.
Run, romp, and play daily.
Thrive on attention and let people touch you.
Avoid biting when a simple growl will do.
On warm days, stop to lie on your back on the grass.
On hot days, drink lots of water and lie under a shady tree.
When you're happy, dance around and wag your entire body.
Delight in the simple joy of a long walk.
Be loyal.
Never pretend to be something you're not.
If what you want lies buried, dig until you find it.
When someone is having a bad day, be silent, sit close by, and nuzzle them gently.

There comes a time in life, when you walk away from all the drama and people who create it. You surround yourself with people who make you laugh, forget the bad, and focus on the good. So, love the people who treat you right. Think good thoughts for the ones who don't. Life is too short to be anything but happy. Falling down is part of LIFE...Getting back up is LIVING..

Hymns for healing

When you are in the dark of the night both literally or figuratively, God can heal with hymns. When you can't sleep because of the darkness try a game of 'categories' with a difference. There is only one category, which is hymns, and you start with the letter A and go down the alphabet.

A, yes you can hardly go past "Abide with me". Here we read, "when other helpers fail and comforts flee, help of the helpless, O abide with me". God is reliable, so if man has let you down don't fret hang on to the Lord – a good way to start.

B, Oh yes "Bind us together Lord" (also known as the bondage hymn!), this hymn helps us to realise the strength we can get from Christian fellowship. Fellowship is so important in encouraging one another.

C, "Come down, O Love divine". Here is the plea from the heart for help in the darkness. We can trust that if we call upon the Lord, the Comforter will draw near and kindle our hearts.

D, "Dear Lord and Father of mankind". This is truly an amazing hymn for help in healing. One verse stands out - "Drop Thy still dews of quietness, till all our strivings cease; take from our souls the strain and stress, and let our ordered lives confess the beauty of Thy peace. This verse helps us in the healing process by letting us know that we can leave our strivings at the feet of Jesus. There is also a clue to an important impediment to peace and that is 'disorder'. It is often helpful in getting rid of darkness, to be orderly in our lives, in our times of prayer, and our daily routine. Stress builds up when we leave things in a chaotic way.

E. Not many hymns start with e, but the old faithful "Eternal Father strong to save" teaches us that the God who stills the waves can still the flutterings of our hearts and give us peace.

F. Ah the hymn I sing with gusto (even if not aloud, for fear of waking others!) because it has been for me an important lesson in the power of healing through hymns. The hymn is "Father I place into your hands the things that I can't do" So often we strive and 'don't let go and let God'. Sometimes in the healing process we have to realise that the Father is the one who will help us when we can't help ourselves.

G. "Give thanks with a grateful heart" – nothing helps healing like being able to be grateful. As I read about Pollyanna, a creation of Eleanor H Porter, that if life gives you lemons one day, try making lemonade! So don't ignore the bad but find the good in bad situations.

H. "He's got the whole world in His hands" What could be more comforting than to sing this with real trust and belief. It reminds me of my Cursillo motto which was "You did not choose me, I chose you". This was accompanied in the leaflet by two hands holding something precious. Inside was the theme song produced for

that Cursillo. It went “Don’t you know that I formed you, Before you were born I knew you, Can’t you see that my plans for you are good.” The chorus followed – “Look and see I’ve engraved you on the palm of my hands. Look and see I’ve engraved you on my hands”. What encouraging words for the dark of the night.

I. “Infant Holy” – in that short little carol we can think and meditate on what God did for us by sending His Son as a helpless babe to pave the way for our salvation.

J. “Just as I am” God wants you to follow Him, and the way to start is just as ‘I am’ wants and all. Ask God to cleanse and guide you.

K. “King of Kings”. By now you should be able to sing this line in the hymn ‘Thou hast granted my request, Thou hast heard me’.

I could carry on but I think by now we have got the idea that in hymns, if we listen, we can find all the elements for healing,

However if you are still going and get to Z there is the final encouraging little chorus, sung long ago in Sunday schools. In this chorus which starts ‘Zacchaeus was a very little man’ are some surprising words our Lord said to the “runt of the litter”! Poor old Zaccheus, small in stature, despised, feared and hated. Yet our Lord chose him saying ‘Zacchaeus come down I’m coming to your house for Tea.’ So remember God calls us all and we don’t have to be worthy, learned or even tall – God wants us all to be healed and to follow Him.

(All the hymns can be found in ‘Mission Praise’ except for poor old Zacchaeus.)

Glenda Mitchell

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Important dates

The Bishop will visit the Parish on Sunday 24th September. He will take the services at St James’ and St Mark’s followed by a special morning tea.

JINDERA Spring Fete: Saturday 7th October 9am to 1pm. Many hands make light work.

Lay Ministry Invigoration Seminar

*to be held at Holy Trinity Cathedral Wangaratta on Saturday 14th October 2017 10am - 4pm
Cost \$20 Lunch, morning & afternoon tea provided. RSVP 6th October. Registration forms available in Parish Office.*

Topics include

Models of Lay ministry Intercessory prayer; Sanctuary liturgy; Strategic ministry;
Safe church requirements

Melbourne Cup: 7th November in the grounds of St James