

St John's Cranbourne June 2018 Newsletter

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GROWING PEOPLE, BUILDING COMMUNITY

26 May 2018

Dear Friends,

Winter is upon us, and it seems to have arrived early this year. For church people it seems that winter has come in more ways than one, with some church leaders disgraced, with local congregations having to spend more and more energy on compliance requirements, and an increasing stridently claim from some quarters that religion in general, and Christianity in particular, is bad for people. Under these circumstances it is important not to become discouraged. The truth of Christianity is not dependent upon the condition or popularity of the church, but rather on the great saving acts of God. On that great day when our Lord Jesus comes again, opinion polls and skepticism will be of no account – all that will matter will be whether or not we have held fast to the one who will then be recognized indisputably, by all, as saviour, Lord and judge. In the meantime, through wintry as well as brighter times, let us not fail to meet together and build each other up in faithfulness and joy, in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. This is particularly important during the winter period, when illness and travel can significantly impact congregational sizes. Travel will take me from Cranbourne for the coming 5 weeks as Penny and I enjoy travelling in the Mediterranean region. In my absence, Simon Elliott, our assistant minister, will be locum.

Fifth Anniversary Celebrations

Large congregations came together on the morning of Sunday 29th April when (a little belatedly) we kept the fifth anniversary of the dedication and consecration of the new St John's Church and Education Centre, and also our patronal festival. Bishop Paul Barker preached and presided, and a combined choir sang the rousing anthem 'Rejoice the Lord is King'. A lovely sit-down hot meal for 190 people was served punctually by a hard-working band of members at noon, and a delightful time was had by all. The day concluded with a smaller, but enthusiastic *Songs of Praise* service, featuring some of our best loved hymns and songs.

The Fifth Anniversary Thank Offering summed to \$12,870, which was itself a great encouragement.



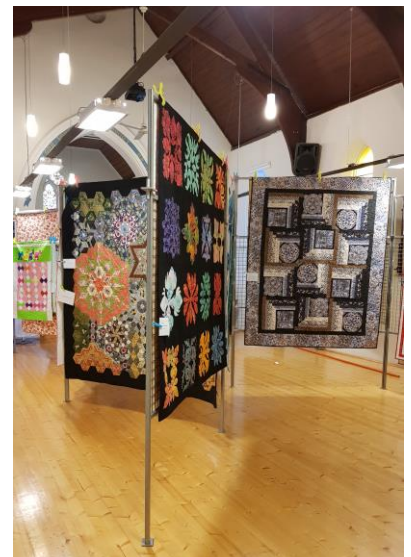
St John's Quilters' Exhibition

Where in Cranbourne, or indeed in the South East of Melbourne, would you find the highest concentration of quilters? Quite probably at St John's Cranbourne when the St John's Quilters are meeting, particularly on certain Saturday mornings. A large number of people from the wider community are fully involved, and most welcome. They take the group's size to approximately 50 members.

A recent highlight for the group was their Quilt Exhibition in mid-April. This made the most of recently acquired frames/screens to display quilts, the frames being financed by council grants. This year all the quilts came from St John's Quilters, and the new frames were all utilized. This was a tremendous effort. Experienced quilters submitted their beautiful work. The challenge for all members was to create a quilt 17" x 17" based on 'Red', and they enjoyed this challenge, with many interesting and lovely challenge pieces submitted.

Nancy Leonard was the first winner of the Julie Wallace perpetual trophy.

This exhibition generated a profit of \$2,154 to go to Blairlogie Learning and Living.



Vicar's Art Exhibition

I successfully applied under the Casey Arts Spaces Program to conduct an exhibition of my own works in the Cranbourne Library. Twenty-one pieces are currently displayed there, in an exhibition running until 7 July, with nine others that would not fit in the library displayed in the St John's old church and office. The exhibition is titled *Celebration of Light*. A flyer is attached. These pieces are each for sale, with all proceeds going to the St John's Fifth Anniversary Appeal. Purchases, by payment in full or by deposit, can be arranged through the parish office, with pick up from after 7 July. Please encourage all interested people to have a look. There are numbers of works depicting local scenes. Phone enquiries during my absence can be directed to Peter Giles on 0408 333 266.

Evening Church

Evening Church is shorter and less formal than either morning service, yet still includes key elements of the morning services and modern music. We are three months in, with *Evening Church's* congregation made up partly of people who regularly attend in the morning but who had other morning commitments on the Sunday in question, and others for whom this is their main service. The service is now starting at 5.30pm, and will continue at that time until daylight saving resumes.

Long standing St John's member Peter Giles recently commended *Evening Church* to all of us ...

For a few weeks now I have been attending the 5.30 service at St Johns.

I would like to say how much I enjoyed it, it is a lot more casual than the earlier services, with a talented group of young musicians and singers providing the music. The service goes for barely an hour, so we can easily get home for Sunday night's tea.

Can I encourage members of our Church to support Simon our assistant Minister and our young musicians at this service whenever possible? As these people are the future of St Johns.

Religious Freedom in Australia

It is said that a frog can die in water that is brought gradually to the boil, without realizing its peril. Religious freedoms in Australia designed to protect minority groups, including people of non-Christian faith, appear to be under increasing threat, with those who were once in the clear majority (mainstream Christians) being amongst the likely victims. Many do not realize that 'the water is getting hot'.

You are invited to add your name to a petition at St John that makes the point that by Federation the following freedoms had been clearly established in Australia, and that these freedoms should be defended:

1. Freedom of worship
2. Freedom to read Scriptures in public
3. Freedom to interpret the Scriptures without government interference
4. Freedom to choose or change your faith or belief
5. Freedom to preach and try to convince others of the truths of your beliefs
6. Freedom to build churches, synagogues, mosques etc
7. Freedom from being required to affirm a particular worldview or set of beliefs in order to attend university, hold a public sector job or stand for election.

Full details, and copies of the petition that you could present to friends, can be found at OurReligiousFreedom.org.au.

With every blessing,



David Powys, Vicar

Postscript from our assistant - A closer look at the book 2 Corinthians

During the time that David is away over June, at St John's we will be having a look at the book of 2 Corinthians. It is understood that Paul wrote four letters to the Corinthian Church, we have two of them in the New Testament, 2 Corinthians is thought to be the fourth letter written. 2 Corinthians deals with many issues that the church is facing and reassures them of his great love for them, while establishing his authority from God as the Apostle to the Gentiles. There are some visiting missionaries who had recently come into and been accepted within the church at Corinth who were trying to harm Paul's reputation.

The key issues that will come out in the passages that we look at will be:

- The centrality of Jesus in the message of the gospel and the power of God that makes it known.
- The eternal perspective that a life of faith enables us to have.
- What it means to live as a new creation, who is in right relationship with God.
- Paul's love for the Church at Corinth.
- The privilege of serving the gospel of Jesus Christ.

We look forward to God growing his church to be more like Jesus as we hear God speak during June.