

# St John's Anglican Church Bentleigh



## PARISH NEWS

**Easter - May 2021**



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www.stjohnsbentleigh.org  
www.facebook.com/st.johns.bentleigh  
9557 2226  
Vicar: The Revd Dr David Powys,  
0491 723 174

### **Our Purpose:**

**'To be a centre of God's love and hope in Bentleigh'**

## From The Vicar

Dear people of St John's,

Every era has its hypersensitive topics. Looking back over the last decade or so, leaving aside COVID which has been such a preoccupation in the last year (though if I have to watch another jab on the nightly news I may scream), there are two topics that come first to my mind as prime candidates as the most hypersensitive topics of our time. Both are important topics, and I do not want in any way to minimise the importance of either. I do however, want to suggest the need for an informed Christian perspective on one of them.



When topics become hypersensitive, thinking and judgement can become distorted, and it is possible that there has been some overreaction in relation to each of the two topics I am going to mention. You can make your own judgment about whether this has been the case in either, both, or neither cases.

The first topic which comes into my mind is abuse, and particularly sexual abuse. It would be very difficult to deny that this is not a very sensitive topic in modern Australian society, and I would say that this is rightly so. I make no comment about this topic.

The second is suicide. This was almost universally a taboo subject until quite recently, and it remains taboo for many people. As a Christian leader I think it important that the taboo be lifted, not least so as to allow better informed, and more timely care for those impacted by, and those contemplating, suicide.

There was a time when those who took their own lives were denied Christian burial. I am glad those times have passed. We now realize that many things can lead a person to take their own life. These include a quite short period of mental illness or of uncharacteristic distorted thinking. There's also prolonged suffering and hopelessness. We also realize that the chief victims of suicide are not the person who successfully in taking their own life, but those who loved and cared for them. I suspect that as a society and church we have not focussed sufficiently on these victims, probably because of the taboo that still surrounds this topic, albeit to a lesser degree than previously.

I hope that I have made it clear that I am not unsympathetic to those who succeed in taking their own lives, to those who attempt it without success, or to those near and dear to these people. We have all known some times of discouragement and despair, and if we are honest have had at least fleeting thoughts about whether taking our own life is an option. Most of us, in doing so, quickly realize that it is not, because of the pain and consequences for others. There is something profoundly helpful, and right, and indeed Christian, about such thinking.

I probably don't need to point out the ways in which this topic has influenced much debate and discussion, as recently as in international news in the last week. There is enormous power in mentioning suicide or the possibility of suicide. When this takes place in order to seek assistance, this is right and good. However, it can be mentioned (including in generalized contexts) as a 'slam dunk' contribution to discussions and debates, and one to which it is very hard to make any response.

What is my point? It is this. We must talk about suicide, and care for those contemplating it or impacted by it. We need to reduce the taboo. But we also need to resist those who would use suicide, or the prospect of suicide, to manipulate and control others, or advance their own particular cause or campaign. We need also be wary of any tendency to endorse, let alone celebrate suicide, under any circumstances.

My belief is that we would be in a better position if we as a society regained a deep and profound sense that human life is 'in God's image' and sacred (ie belonging to God, rather than to anyone else), and of God's passionate love for all, including the 'poor in spirit'.

If this piece has been distressing to any reader, you could call one of the usual agencies, but you might like to start by giving me a call (0491 723 174).

In Christian fellowship,  
David

## Talent Catalogue

St John's has its first ever Talent Catalogue, which is the final fundraising activity within the Building Appeal. A copy of the Catalogue, issued earlier this week is attached. If you already had a copy you may like to pass one of them to a friend or neighbour who may be interested. In the catalogue you will find 'advertized' a range of fascinating 'products and services', with the proceeds going to the Building Appeal. You could book for a laneways and byways walk, order a pair of woollen socks, buy a High Tea, order some aromatherapy creams, or order a quiche or cake or muffins etc. There are many other offers in the catalogue. The order deadline is quite tight (28 March if not sold out prior), so please don't delay.



[ Photo Alexander Scutt ]

Apart from raising funds for our Building Appeal, this activity should connect parishioner in all sorts of ways, enriching our fellowship.

# **PALM SUNDAY (March 28th)**

**Usual morning services (8.30am & 10am)**

**Passiontide Music Service - 7.30pm**

## **HOLY WEEK**

**Maundy Thursday (April 1st) at 7.30pm**

## **GOOD FRIDAY**

**April 2nd at 10am - a short family devotional service**

**Noon to 3pm - Three Hour Service**

**(including hymns, reflections, prayers and silences  
with people able to come and go as suits)**

# **SUNDAY EASTER DAY (April 4th)**

**Dawn service 6.00am**

**Usual morning services (8.30am & 10am)**

**Then the Potluck Lunch 11.30am**

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Please  
remember to sign  
up so we can set  
up!!!!

True Potluck means  
we could all have  
pavlova for lunch....



see page 11

## Holy Week and Easter services

Last year, due to the beginning of the COVID shutdowns, Holy Week and Easter were kept at St John's only in diminished and tentative on line forms. Hopefully we shall be able to compensate for that in some way this year by embracing these days with particular vigour. This time is one of holidays, but these days are also the most holy days in the Christian year. Will you resist the 'holiday activity' squeezing out 'holy day observance'?

- Palm Sunday 7.30pm, A Holy Week service made up of music and readings, in pattern similar to the Christmas Nine Lesson and Carol Service.
- Maundy Thursday 7.30pm, A Holy Communion Service focusing on the events in the Upper Room on the night before Jesus was crucified (Last Supper and Footwashing)
- Good Friday 10am, A simple devotional service suited to families, which will include Passiontide Hymns, and extended part enacted Passiontide reading from St John's Gospel, a sermon, a Good Friday Litany and concluding with an acknowledgement of the Cross of Jesus.
- Good Friday noon-3pm, a traditional Good Friday Three Hour Service, to and from which you are welcome to come and go as suits. It is made up of many short services, each with a hymn, a reading, a homily and guided and silent prayer.
- Easter Day 6am Easter Day Ceremonies around dawn and the Pascal Candle in preparation for the Holy Communion services later in the morning.

## Hymns Revival - next on 21 March



Our first *Hymns Revival* on 31 January was a great success, with St John's members and people from the wider community coming together to learn the parts for 4 lovely hymns and then singing the in 4 part harmony.

The coming *Hymns Revival* dates are this coming Sunday 21 March at 2.30pm and then Sunday 25 April at the same time, each with season appropriate themes. The hymns to be learned and then sung this coming Sunday are All glory, praise and honour, O sacred head sore wounded, My song is love unknown and Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim. There is no need to book, just come along – to sing if you can hold a note (even if you don't read music), or to listen if you can't.

St John's Anglican Church Bentleigh



Building Appeal 2020 –2021

*Building for Future Faith*

## Building Appeal Update - March 2021

It has now been over six months since we launched our St John's Building Appeal. Six months! I hear you exclaim.... Yes, it's true... In just over six months we have exceeded our original goal and challenged ourselves as a community to reach \$130,000. ***We are almost there.***

We have seen great change in our buildings thanks to the tireless work of the Building Committee and I would like to thank Terry and his trusty team for all their efforts.

Apart from the incredible amount of money raised, the highlights for me have been working closely with members of the Appeal Committee and also establishing some wonderful relationships with people who are new to our parish. The Art Show and Quiz Night have been fabulous occasions to strengthen connections, but incidental chats with people between our Sunday services have been equally important. New friends or old at St John's, we are working to the same goal—to be a centre of love and hope in Bentleigh and, through our appeal to build for future faith.

The fundraising work is not quite done and we know that what we have raised will not cover the refurbishment in its entirety. If you would like some information relating to leaving a bequest for the appeal, please speak to Roger McGrail.

Congratulations to us all and I can't wait for our Potluck lunch celebration where we will officially wrap up the appeal.

Heather Saba



Building Appeal Committee Chair.

### A Prayer for Our Building Project

Faithful God, you are steadfast and true.

Thank you for the faith and facilities passed to us by previous generations at St John's.

Be with us all as we commit to building our faith and service as a church, and to building facilities to enable and encourage this growth now and into the future. through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
Amen.

## Services on line

For nearly 8 months last year we videoed, edited and then each week placed a video recording of a Sunday service on YouTube. Some received the service hand delivered via USB sticks, and receiving the service on USB stick is still possible.

Since Christmas we have been broadcasting a Sunday service live each week to YouTube. This means that our services now go out in a more 'raw', but also more 'real' form. We can no longer edit out mistakes or disruptions! Broadcasting live became possible after installing special equipment. We are indebted to Anthony Lyons, our lead livestreaming team leader, for helping us go live. The recording equipment is largely invisible within the building, so it is possible to forget that some, possibly many, are still participating in St John's services 'virtually'.

We decided to commit to livestreaming, even though the restriction on live gatherings are relatively slight, recognizing that

- some are reluctant to return to live services yet, and appreciate being able to participate virtually
- some through age or disability are unable to attend St John's physically but would still like to participate
- some people are watching our services from other places, and though unlikely to attend St John's are appreciative of this ministry
- some may be thinking about becoming part of St John's and making our services available in this way provides a non-threatening way to 'have a look see'.

If you are participating in our services live, please let us know from time to time, including any feedback you may have.

## Sale of Surplus Playgroup toys and equipment

After many wonderful years of offering a playgroups ministry at St John's we find we have a large amount of free play equipment which will be surplus even if we return to this sort of ministry offering in the future. Surplus items will be available for inspection and purchase next Sunday 21 March from 9.30 – 11.30am in The Cooper Centre and Saturday 27 March 9am - 12pm in Activity Centre. The timing is intended to assist members of St John's who may be interested. Please let others who may be interested know. Please see the panel on last page.



## Stewardship Review

St John's has a strong tradition of taking commitments seriously, including those of individual members as part of the wider work of our church. Stewardship Reviews have taken various forms over the years, but they have been life-giving, not least because they give people who might otherwise just be 'attenders' the opportunity to become 'active members'. The focus has been two-fold – on financial giving (where everyone differs in terms of capacity) and on practical participation in ministry (where people's gifts are as varied as the parts of the body).

A stewardship review is overdue at St John's. The delay came from COVID. Wendy Leggett is already giving leadership in this area (you may have received letters from her). The dates have now been set for our review for this year. Commitments of time and abilities and of money will be sought on Sunday 30 May, when our guest preachers will be our link missionaries Derek and Rosemary Snibson. The two Sundays prior (16 and 23 May) will also be important. On those dates important information will be provided about the process and how to participate.

The hope is that this review will equip us to work together maximally for God's Kingdom in this place in the year ahead.

## Activities Centre

One of the main aims of Stage 3 of the St John's building works is to make the Narthex better suited as a place for St John's activities catering for the wider community. The building works will, as much as possible, open up the Narthex to community view, though there is a tension here between the needs of the parish and the heritage considerations. (Aside: some may have seen that St John's appeared on the ABC news a fortnight ago, as we seek to work out the tension between preserving the heritage of the building and ensuring that it serves current needs.) A limiting factor is the huge blank cream-orange brick wall along the Tucker Rd side of the Narthex, which we have not been allowed to build across or penetrate. The increased visibility will come largely through the new entrance to be constructed in Stage 3.

In the meantime the Activities Centre is already in operation in an initial way. There is a community morning tea each Wednesday at 11am, a Lenten Study Group has been meeting there on Tuesday evenings, we start to resume *Alpha* soon, and most importantly free Maths and English tutoring is being offered for senior school students from 3.30 – 5pm on





Thursdays during term time. Please put the word around about this tutoring – it is a fantastic service to the community.

### **Recitals & Concerts Series**

On 11 April we have the first in a series of Glen Eira Council supported professional level recitals and concerts. These are set for that day (see below) and for 6 June and 10 October.

## ***Magnificent Miniatures in a Smaller Space***

***April 11 at 2.30pm***

**CALVIN BOWMAN**



[Photo Terry Lane]

A variety of organ & piano pieces by Bach, Galuppi, Distler, Binge, Bowman and others

***St John's, cnr Tucker and Centre Rds Bentleigh***

***Tickets \$10 (\$7 conc, u18 free) at door***

Calvin is a soloist, accompanist and chamber musician, and organist and director of music at St Andrew's Brighton. He has been a piano soloist with major Australian orchestras and appears regularly with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra on the Melbourne Town Hall organ.

### **Messy Church**



We still hope to resume *Messy Church* services on Sunday afternoons soon, though there has been a delay as we sought our approach to children's and families' ministry. If you would like to be advised when *Messy Church* will next be held, please leave a message at the office.

## **St John's Day**

St John's Day has been kept at a variety of times in past years, probably because the set dates are not very convenient. The Book of Common Prayer date is 27 December, but there is a modern provision for it to be observed on 6 May. In Australia this has tended to compete with Mothers' Day. This year we will observe our Patronal Festival on 2 May (avoiding Mothers' Day on 9 May). We shall have a guest preacher at the second service (time to be confirmed) and in all probability a shared lunch following. Please watch for details, but mark the date in your diary.

## **Midweek service and cuppa**

Live streaming has meant a slight reduction in the number of offerings of Holy Communion services on Sunday, though there is always at least one Holy Communion service offered each Sunday. The times and pattern of the Sunday morning services are being reviewed by Parish Council this week following a survey of Sunday worshippers, so things may change. If they do not, and in any case, please be mindful that there is an alternative time to join in a Holy Communion service each week. This is at 10.30am on Wednesdays. A small but significant congregation has been gathering at that time for the last three months, and the short service is now followed by a cuppa together. This service may suit people who find earlier times difficult.

## **Home Communion**

The vicar is now able more freely to take Holy Communion to the housebound. If you would like to be included in his monthly round, or know of someone else who would appreciate that, please leave a message at the office.

## **Confirmation enquiries**

The vicar plans to offer confirmation preparation for young persons (he suggest 13 years or older) this term. If you or anyone you know would like to join in, please contact him (0491 723 174). The prayer book reminds us that in the case of people baptized as infants "In due time these children should make their own response to God, and be prepared for confirmation" (A Prayer Book for Australia p 52). The prayer book, and possibly more importantly Christian theology, does not countenance infants being baptized but not then continuing their faith journey, to confirmation and beyond.

## Alpha possibility



With restrictions being lifted St John's hopes to offer *Alpha* to start in the coming month or two. The venue will be the Activities Centre (ie Narthex). Please leave your name at the office (9557 2226) if you would like to be advised of details once determined.

## St Christopher's

A lovely final service for members of St Christopher's Bentleigh East was held on Sunday afternoon 7 March. The building was as full as it could be for the occasion, and a strong bond and sense of fellowship was evident between the gathered congregation. Bishop Genieve preached and presided, and amongst other things mentioned that as much soil as possible from the St Christopher's Memorial Garden will be moved to an extended memorial garden at St John's as soon as this is convenient. The extension at St John's will not disrupt the existing garden, but will be a lawn extension reaching a defined distance towards the old kitchen area. The records associated with the St Christopher's Memorial Garden will be housed at St John's. This is all very fitting, now that the St Christopher's parish area has now been incorporated into the St John's parish.

## 40th Anniversary celebration

This photo was taken on Friday 5 March after a special service at St John's to mark the fortieth anniversary of the ordinations as deacon of vicar David, recent locum Philip Higgins, our archdeacon Howard Langmead and Grant Edgcumbe and Peter Martin. These five, unusually, between them have 'clocked up' nearly 160 years of full time parish ministry in this Diocese, most of those years as a vicar in a Melbourne parish. Happily they were joined by our Parish Musician Alex Scutt, who was himself celebrating his 37th anniversary of ordination to the diaconate. Bishop Genieve is also in the photo. She celebrated and preached at the service. Thanks to St John's for providing the location for this celebration.





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Sausage rolls or chocolate cake  
How much food will St John's make?  
Come and eat a mystery meal  
Then stage three will start for real.

Come and join us for a potluck lunch to celebrate  
St John's Building Appeal

BYO Drinks

Sunday 4th April—11.30 am

Bring a surprise plate of something savoury or something sweet to share  
Please sign up on the notice board so we can set up!

Don't give away what you 'll bring to munch ....  
Potluck may mean a pavlova lunch!!!

\*\*Non cooks can be catered for, please speak to Heather or Jill

### **Stage 3 Building Works Report**

There is nothing to see yet, but the progress has been significant, all of it behind the scenes.

Stage 3 follows the stages where the worship area was renewed (though there is still new heating to be installed) and the hall was 'made new' (at least with regard to the roof, windows and whole of the interior). It will involve building a new kitchen and bathrooms accessible from both the Narthex and the hall, and a new, attractive and clear entry point from Tucker Rd which will maximise the visibility of activities in the Narthex, and Tucker Road driveway works. Additionally it will see the conversion of the old kitchen and adjacent areas into hall storage, a renewed small meeting room and a toilet to service this space and The Cooper Centre.

The plans have been finalized and have been with the Council planning department for more than two months. Some minor additional information was sought and then supplied. Assuming that the plans will receive planning approval in the form submitted, or in a very similar form, a building surveyor has been appointed, and an engineering company also, the latter to complete needed engineering calculations. Our architect is preparing more detailed plans and specifications in readiness for the project to go to tender. Timing will depend upon the Glen Eira Planning Department's response, but we could conceivably go to tender in just over a month, though this is very optimistic. The actual commencement of the site works will depend on finding a suitable builder and this builder's other commitments. We are keen that the project advance as quickly as possible with the likelihood that builders could become quite busy later in the year. Our architect will supervise the site works. Parishes are required to appoint an independent supervisor for such works, and we have had good reports about their past performance in this capacity.

An important aspect of the build will be providing for the ongoing usage of the site, for church purposes and for use by hall hirers. This will probably mean temporary barriers and periodic changes of access, and will require careful planning for continuous access to amenities. There will inevitably be some inconvenience, but hopefully the gain will far outweigh the pain.

## Churches Family Gold Coast Update

To all at Saint John's:

The Churches family is well underway in setting down roots in Bonogin, Mudgeeraba, on the Gold Coast. Vincent and Gina are loving Hillcrest Christian College and spotting local wallabies along the short drive to and from school. Vincent has joined a local running club, and Gina was recently inducted into the Hillcrest Knights netball team.

Our home farmyard is thriving with a bumper crop of: spinach, radishes, tomatoes, butternut, baby marrows, rocket, mint and rosemary. Our corn is now towering over me, and the trellis, which Vincent built late last year, is still standing / supporting our granadilla vines. Officiating over our veggie patch, we have our three gorgeous queens: Mary, Victoria and our favourite, Elizabeth. They are Isa brown hens. The most curious, loving and adorable girls, who produce approximately 21 fresh eggs, per week. Pets with benefits. However, they have recently taken to patrolling the neighbourhood, despite being positively encouraged to stay home with rice, oat and fresh mielie ice treats. Our neighbour across the street recently sent me a photograph of our girls, pottering around her open garage. I have since posted a message on our community Facebook group, introducing the new neighbourhood watch (feathered) gang, seen to be conducting open garage security checks, and offering complimentary gardening services, including aeration of soil and eradication of some insect pests and grubs.



Just 'an' Isa brown hen. Mary, Victoria & Elizabeth were away 'on duty'.

In other news, Simon has moved onto a new portfolio at Telstra, Connectivity, which is keeping him very busy, and I started a new full-time job at Superannuation Advice Australia (SAA), thanks to a glowing recommendation from David. Life is certainly (SUPER) busy, and I sometimes wonder what I ever did with my time, prior to working at SAA? The role is Marketing & PR Coordinator. I am enjoying learning about the business and hope to launch a Workplace Giving Programme, in the coming months. The difficulty being: Which local and deserving (as they are all equally deserving) charities to choose as beneficiaries?

We love seeing the reveals of all the phenomenal refurbishment work, as well as the return of wonderful community initiatives, to Saint John's. We would have loved to have participated in the high tea, quiz night, and more.

Still feeling very much connected to Saint John's, we have joined the Anglican Church of Robina. It is lovely and we are making some new connections, despite COVID-19 challenges. There exist many parishioners who have not (yet) returned to the church building. And some that have, often do not stay after the service and mingle, as in times past. I am slightly embarrassed to say that sometimes we are those folk, rushing home to put on a load of washing and prepare for the week ahead. No rest for the wicked... 😊

Sending much love and all our best wishes to ALL at Saint John's,

The Churches Family XXX

## DO YOUR BEST

This is my first year of mentoring.

Even though only 2 terms because of COVID I had an amazing time.

My young boy was Michael who was in his last year of primary school before going into high school. He was not too keen for going to high school and sensed he would repeat.

By the time we finished his whole attitude had changed. He said he is looking forward to going high school 2021.

I mentioned to him these words *do your best*. They were virtually the last words I used and emphasised on his last day with me *do your best*.

These words should be told every child. Not every child will be an achiever, *do your best*, for every child.

**Dan**

Currently St John through Kids Hope Australia mentors three children at Valkstone Primary School. Our mentors are Jean Phibbs, Roger McGrail and serves as Coordinator, Heather Saba. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Heather. Speak to our Kids Hope members for more information.





# HUGE TOY SALE

Sun 21 March 2021 9.30 - 11.30am  
(Cooper Centre)

Sat 27 March 9.30am - 12pm  
(Activity Centre)

Buy for grandkids,  
no reasonable offers refused!

## Bentleigh Kids & Craft Market

Saturday 27 March 2021 from 9.30am - 1pm

New & pre-loved items, Crafts, Plants and much more  
Sausage sizzle, Coffee, Tea & co

### Regular Worship Services:

Sunday morning services are at 8.30am and 10.00am

Wednesday Holy Communion Service 10.30am

### Online Giving: St John's Anglican Church Bentleigh

BSB 083 337 Acc. No. 51 5 354 967

### St John's Services On Line

You can access our weekly service as it occurs, or at any time afterwards, by going to <https://youtube.com/channel/UCwvuRjxqIX4njbwZJBqNXQ/live> . An easy way of accessing the services would be to subscribe to the St John's Bentleigh YouTube channel <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCwvuRjxqIX4njbwZJBqNXQ>.

**Vicar** - The Revd Dr David Powys 0491 723 174

**Children & Families' Minister** - (vacant)

**Parish Musician** - Alex Scutt

**Administration Assistant** -

Cindy Utari - 9557 2226

Tue, Thurs, Fri

9.30am-12pm, 12:30pm - 4:00pm