

Special Services

Every Sunday during Lockdown
9.30 am Live streaming of parish
Eucharist
11 a.m. Online morning Tea and
Catch-up time.

Details on the parish website:
www.anglicansboxhill.org.au

GOOD NEWS

好消息

WELPIATH



Parish Magazine of the Anglican Parish of Box Hill
May 2020

The Vicar Writes

PARISH CLERGY

Vicar.

Rev SHANE HÜBNER

(0432 681 177)

shane.hubner@hotmail.com

Sudanese Priest

Revd. Joseph Arou 0431 541 535

lokagai@hotmail.com

Chinese Priest

Revd. Esther Zhang 0405 602 439

Family Minister

Barbara Plumridge 9898 5193

Honorary Clergy

Rt Rev'd George Hearn, 9840 7816,

Rev'd Betty Bracken, 9939 5881

Rev'd John Stockdale 9890 8388

Rev'd Harry Kerr 9893 4946

ahmkerr@hotmail.com

Rev'd Alastair McKinnon-Love

0438 323 059

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The Parish Office and St Peter's
Church are at 1038 Whitehorse
Road, Box Hill 3128.

Office hours:

Tues 8.30am – 12.30pm

Thurs 10.00am – 2.00pm Office

phone: 9899 5122

As I write this piece for our parish magazine I can't *but* reflect like all of us on the COVID-19 Pandemic and the changes that it has wrought upon our faith community and indeed the world. The numbers are horrific – over 3 million people infected world-wide; over 200,000 deaths world-wide; close to 7000 Australian cases, and over 80 deaths in our country (as of the time of writing – 28 April 2020.) These deaths are tragic and every one of them represents someone loved and a family in grief. We have been fortunate so far as I have not heard of a death attributed to COVID-19 of anyone in our community or related to a member of our

parish. Regardless of our luck, we pray for those families directly mourning the death of a loved one that God may comfort them in their grief. Prayer is, and will remain, the foundation of our response to life in all its beauty and horror. Regardless of our age or situation we can all pray! May we take the opportunity presented to us to become more adept at and accomplished in – prayer.

We are also painfully aware of the changes wrought upon our society as we all endure the restrictions required to lessen the progress of the virus. We are experts in washing our hands and social distancing; and I believe we all know what 'flattening the curve' means! Our response in the parish is to do as much as we are able to do. Our communal life is restricted to a more 'online' mode. We have improved in our streaming of our Sunday Eucharist liturgy and I thank all involved. We have been able through the generosity of your donations to continue to feed around 80 people each week. We are maintaining contact via phone calls with the most vulnerable of our

community. For those without computers and smart phones in our parish we are providing a copy of the Eucharist service and the Link each week. I want to thank those parishioners who are making face masks and scrubs and those who are continuing to reach out to each other and offer support, guidance and care.

I have been reflecting upon the phrase I hear all the time in the

media: "we will get through this." I accept that these are hard times for many and I agree that the sentiment that 'if we all pitch-in and support each other and do what is asked of us by government authorities then we will survive' is fundamentally the



correct option but I don't for a moment think that things will ever return to how they once were three months ago! Life is life and change is the only constant. While the speed of change is rapid at the moment and we are definitely uncertain as to what the future looks like – it will be different to the past. While we 'bunker down' at home, we can't just let our lives be on pause until the pandemic has passed. Life is going on each and every day and I don't want any one of us to miss out on living each and every day to the fullest potential *even* in the midst of this pandemic. The Prime Minister is fond of using the imagery of a bridge to the post-COVID-19 world and getting everyone across that bridge to the other side. I agree but would add that the journey across may be more important than the destination. Given this thought there are three things I will leave with you to ponder as we with the presence of God with us live each day as fully as we can. First, we need to count our blessings. How blessed are we that we have each other; the shelters we enjoy; food on the table

and the material comforts of an advanced nation. So many in the world do not and I encourage us all to be humble before God and be thankful each and every day. Second, we need to know, if we didn't already, that life is fragile. We

need to remember that death will come to all of us and that each day is a gift not to be wasted. And finally, may we live each day as open and as generous as we can, knowing that the past is unchangeable and the future not guaranteed and that

the only time we have is the moment we are living now. What is God asking of me today is really the only question that need bother me. Blessings to all.
Shane

Good News during the Covid-19 pandemic

Sewing Scrubs, Margaret Dooley

One of the few good news stories out of the current pandemic is the way in which many people have banded together to help each other, their families, neighbours and random strangers.

One group that has formed is Rona Scrubs. You can find out about them on their website (ronascrubs.com) or their Facebook page. This group is harnessing the spare time and skills of numerous people across Australia to make medical scrubs for healthcare workers. They have been supported by Spotlight and their suppliers with donations of nearly 10,000 metres of suitable fabric, which the Ronascrubs volunteers have been distributing to volunteers with sewing skills and time to make scrubs that are needed in the local area. Other volunteers have bought or been given fabric from smaller stores and from the materials that many people have stashed away in their sewing cupboards.

When I heard about this group I decided to volunteer, and then contacted Jenifer at Dream Stitches to see if they had any unwanted cotton fabric. They offered a roll of orange checked gingham, and from it I have made a scrubs top, but I teamed it with tan pants rather than having all over orange check. It has been a chance to re-learn some forgotten sewing skills, and to keep busy doing something useful.

Michele very kindly agreed to be my small sized model, and she is wearing the finished combination in the photo below. The first two sets of scrubs are about to be delivered to Ronascrubs. In a recent email to me they said they had orders for 10,000 sets of scrubs, so there's plenty of demand.

This group is not making other personal protective equipment (caps, gowns or masks) but others are doing so. Jenifer, Barbara and the other tutors at Dream Stitches have just completed an order for 500 face masks for a Melbourne hospital.



Dream Stitches Sew Face Masks

Barbara Plumridge



Dream Stitches received a request on the 12th April to help out during the COVID-19 Pandemic by making face masks. This request came directly from a doctor at the Alfred Hospital, whose mother is one of the sewing teachers at Dream Stitches.

Normally, the Alfred's research laboratory workers use PPE equipment (so as not to contaminate their research experiments), but wanted to switch to reusable fabric masks to preserve PPE equipment, in particular masks, for when hospital staff work directly with patients. The hospital stressed that these masks would not be worn when working with patients.

Dream Stitches teachers, friends and neighbours set to work and between them produced 700 masks before ANZAC Day. This was a wonderful effort by many people.

The mother of the Doctor said "It is my prayer that we are never required to make them again - or our children or grandchildren. That means that the world won't ever have to go through another pandemic."

Trust

Gwen MacDonald

The word 'Trust' is very suitable for our present time and living conditions. I didn't realize how much trust I have had to put into my fellow man/woman, government, neighbours, family and friends during this period of the coronavirus.

Our daughter alerted us to the fact that we should be practising 'distancing' even from family members when they call. She has taken it very seriously and when calling immediately took up the standing distance from her parents by positioning herself at the end of the path to our front door, after quickly hanging two bags of supplies onto our front door knob. The visits were quite lengthy, but of course at a distance.

When our son arrived for his father's birthday hello, he brought a birthday sponge and waited for a cup of tea, all the time telling us that sitting round the table together was OK, as we were at least 15 inches away from each other. I only hoped the virus could not fly like the pictures on television.

The figures that have been quoted to us of whole nations succumbing to this virulent disease is very scary, especially when the deaths have been mainly for people in their 70's and 80's.

It is good to see the Prime Minister Scott Morrison facing up to the questions having taken responsibility for keeping us informed and showing a 'statesman' like stand. We need to have that with any disaster or major problem, especially one that could affect any of us who steps out of line and ignores the warnings.

He has copped a lot of abuse from people who lost homes during the bushfires, but all he could do would be to sympathize with the homeless, show his concerns and then give them some form of hope re financial aid when needed. I believe he is genuine and thank goodness has had the stamina to cope with the public meetings and answer all the questions from the Press.

Finally, we have to trust those living around us, and also trust ourselves not to break down with the enforced rules of distancing ourselves from others. I personally have found it to be a great time to rest, ring friends family and neighbours, also clean a few cupboards.

Learn to Trust Yourself.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING AMONG ISSUES ANGLICAN WOMEN TAKE TO U.N.

The Anglican delegation to the 64th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW64) will be urging states to act on issues such as domestic violence and human trafficking. The delegation are raising these, and other issues, to argue that girls and boys, women and men, should live and work in relationships that reflect love, dignity and justice.

Eight women from around the Communion have been selected by the Anglican Communion Office at the United Nations to engage in two weeks of advocacy, learning and fellowship. UNCSW64 was due to run from the 9-20 March in New York City; but late on Monday night (2 March) the UN postponed the meeting until later in the year because of the Coronavirus outbreak. The Anglican Communion delegation will not travel to New York this month but will continue their advocacy work.

Based on their experiences, the delegation have highlighted a number of priority areas for their time at CSW. These include freedom from oppression and human rights, domestic violence, sexual harassment, human trafficking, and the reintegration of mothers in education.

Other priority areas are indigenous women, sexual and reproductive health and health workers, media's impact on women and girls, the role of boys and men, and women in leadership.

Each delegate has identified specific advocacy points to bring to UNCSW64 in the hopes of changing their states. Bianca Daébs, a priest in the Igreja Episcopal Anglicana do Brasil, will denounce the increase in violence against women in Brazil. Amal Sarah from the Church of Pakistan will be advocating against the sexual harassment of women and men in Pakistan, and the shame that is attached to it. Unfortunately, Amal's visa was denied and so she will not be able to join the delegation in New York, but will participate from afar.

Navina Thompson, a priest in the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East, will be focusing on human trafficking. Martine Dushime from the Anglican Church of Burundi will be advocating for teenage girls and the need to prevent early pregnancies. Clare Hendricks from the US-based Episcopal Church will be speaking up for missing and murdered indigenous women in the United States. Robyn Andréo-Boosey from the Anglican Church of Australia will be asking the Australian government to invest more in efforts to equip faith communities to prevent violence against women. Bridie Boyd from the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia will be focusing on the negative impact that media can have on young girls and women. The Bishop of London, Sarah Mullally, will be speaking on women and health; modern slavery and women in leadership.

From Anglican Communion News Service

Covid 19 Pandemic

Autumn Reflections. Hilary Blakeman

We don't know how long this marathon Covid 19 event will last. The social changes for a corporate global society have shocked us into valuing people and time differently. Most of us are adaptable but this remains a difficult challenge for many. A great aunt wrote during 1943 "that she hoped to see family when this spot of bother is over" WWII lasted six years, we trust that this will not take as long. We are over 70 and "At home". In my grandmothers time an "At Home" invitation to chosen friends and family meant come and see us for a celebration. Nana would have baked a sponge cake. In 2020 "At Home" is a legal requirement to slow the spread of this very successful virus while vaccine research continues. No gatherings of more than 5 unrelated people. We have more time, so what else can we do? Well, I have not made a sponge cake!

At home volunteers are still cooking for others, sewing face masks, medical or laboratory scrubs on a small or large scale often using donated materials. We can phone, use on line technology, write letters or mail neighbours, each other, using on line technology to stay in touch, especially with children.

We shop for needs, not greed. Contactless payment is the new 2020 catchword. What is on the radio, TV or social media news? More updates to Covid 19 illness and research locally and globally. Weekend news still features local, national and international sports starting date conjectures! Different political leaders manage the pandemic according to their local advisors or despite the advisors.

Autumn is here, a time to harvest quinces, feijoas, potatoes, sweet potatoes, parsley, silver beet, tomatoes and basil. A season for birds to migrate nearer to us including yellow tailed black cockatoos, king parrots and clusters of currawongs. We enjoy kookaburras, noisy miners, magpies, galahs, corellas, crested pigeons and rosellas.

We are lucky as we are all allowed out for one hour daily exercise. Myriad families are walking their dogs, running, playing on the grassy flats, stepping over the creek stones, looking in old logs for termites and slaters to feed their skinks at home, playing tennis, dads and mums bike riding or scooting according to their youngest ones' skill level. Apparently bike sales have increased by 84%! We believe it. Outdoor playgrounds are off limits for children.

Children have chalked signs on the bridge over the freeway, "smile", "wash your hands", "don't worry be happy" and made wigwams on the local oval.

Children's education continues. In Victoria most children are being home schooled by their parents using home computers which gives them a chance to see other school friends. Schools remain open for vulnerable children unable to learn from home as are the children of essential workers. This has been a huge learning curve for all involved and daily adjustments continue.

Church buildings are closed however church continues "At Home". Our services are possible due to very hard work by those with abilities which could manage a great result in a short time frame. There are multiple resources for those able to go on line for prayer, reflective practices and art relevant to the church seasons and celebrations.

**Does anyone
know how long
toilet paper will
last if you freeze
it?**

Half of us are gonna come out of this
quarantine as amazing cooks and the
other half is gonna come out with a
drinking problem. There is no in
between

**So technically
showing up at the
bank in a mask and
gloves is ok now.**

OFFICE SPACE RENOVATION UPDATE Garry Plumridge

For many years, the parish has received income by renting out the office space built at the north end of the St Peter's Hall. The offices comprise an entry and reception area, 6 individual offices, a meeting room, a conference room, plus a toilet and kitchen, over 150 square meters in total.

Family Access Network (FAN) was the only and long-term tenant, but moved out in January to new accommodation in Harrow Street (owned by the Whitehorse City Council). We were fortunate that, without the need to advertise, Gateway Local Learning & Employment Network expressed an interest in renting the offices and accepted our terms.

Gateway Local Learning and Employment Network (LLEN) is one of 31 Victorian LLENs. The goal of the LLENs is to improve outcomes for young people, 10 – 19 years old, by increasing opportunities for their participation, attainment and successful transitions in education, training or employment.

With our approval, FAN had left some of their desks and other office furniture in the offices. Gateway want only some of this furniture, so the remainder has been dismantled and transferred to St Philip's for later sale or scrap.

The offices were last renovated a bit over 17 years ago when the four offices at the Whitehorse Road side were built, so they were overdue for repair, painting and recarpeting to bring them back to a reasonable standard.

The work required included, cleaning walls and ceilings, patching walls, removing the carpet, repairing the floor, cleaning blinds, cleaning windows, and sanding walls, doors and window frames in preparation for painting.

Superior Impressions completed the painting of the areas with high ceilings, ie the entry and reception area, the meeting room, the conference room and the hallways. New carpet tiles have been installed by Hoskins Carpet Gallery. I can recommend the work of these firms. Both were easy to work with and responsive to our needs.

To reduce the painting cost, the parish undertook to repaint the 6 offices, the toilet and the kitchen, which, as I write this report is almost finished. Unfortunately, social distancing rules have slowed our work effort, and has also meant that Gateway cannot complete their arrangements to move in.

I would like to thank the following who have helped me with this renovation: Len Manzie, Rob Kennedy, Kim Cornish, Cecilia Joyner, Michele Mitchell, Barbara Plumridge, Alasdair McKinnon-Love

SHARE THE EASTER SPIRIT Janet Hubner

Did you notice, in the weeks leading up to Easter Day, that one TV channel's celebrities encouraged us to stay at home but 'share the Easter spirit'? It got me thinking: what is the 'Easter spirit'? Or, at least, what do those celebrities mean when they tell us to share it? My first reaction, I have to admit, was cynical. I've never before heard the expression 'Easter spirit' – is it a generic description devised by a secular society to justify its continuing celebration of the most important Christian event? Does the phrase refer to relaxation (long weekends), getting back to nature (camping trips), sweetness of life (chocolate) and family feasts? Or maybe, in our pandemic times, they may have been referring to a spirit of sacrifice, an obvious Easter theme when we think of the crucifixion, and a discipline that we are all practising to some extent now. So how could I receive their well-meaning message in the spirit (pun intended!) in which it was given?

After much pondering on ideas of new life arising out of death and taking up my cross to follow Jesus, I decided to go to the source and see whether the gospels talk about an Easter spirit. And the answer is yes, they do. In John's gospel, Jesus 'breathed on them' and said 'Receive the Holy Spirit' (Jn 20.22). The Easter spirit is, in fact, the Holy Spirit – God dwelling in me, God enlivening me with holiness of spirit, God calling me into relationship with God's very self and under God's reign.

When we speak of 'Holy Spirit' we are usually referring to God, but how I would expect God's spirit of holiness to reveal itself through me? Immediately after Jesus breathed the Holy Spirit (or the divine Breath) into the disciples, he explained what that Spirit is for: 'If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained' (v.23). Is forgiveness part of the true spirit of Easter? Certainly, we understand the resurrection to be a demonstration of God's forgiveness – after all, Jesus could have arisen from his grave to condemn those who rejected. We are given the Holy Spirit so that we may forgive, as Jesus did, as God does. Even before Jesus breathed the divine Breath into his friends, he reassured them of the spirit in which he greeted them: 'Peace be with you' (v.19). Christ's spirit is peace, the Spirit is forgiveness; through forgiveness we have peace, with God, with one another, with ourselves.

Don't we need that spirit at this point in time! Maybe we are in each other's company more than usual and have more opportunities to forgive one another! Maybe we resent hardship, or mere inconvenience, that has come to us because of restrictions imposed on us, so we could forgive others for what's happened to us. Maybe we are facing ourselves without distraction for the first time in a while and find that we need to forgive ourselves for our own shortcomings or poor decisions.

There is a Taizé chant we sometimes sing together on Sunday nights with the words: God is forgiveness, dare to forgive and God will be with you, God is forgiveness, love and do not fear. (You can listen to a version online.) I think this chant perfectly sums up the Easter spirit, and I find it perfectly applicable to these strange times So, with my cynicism faced, confessed and forgiven, I embrace the Easter spirit.

Peace be with you, receive the Holy Spirit, forgive the sins of any.

"REVELATION," AN OPPORTUNITY MISSED?

Harry Kerr

Revelation is the title of a series of 3 ABC television programmes created by journalist Sarah Ferguson on paedophile priests in the Roman Catholic Church. I didn't watch them all. They were well done but very gruelling. They consisted of interviews with Catholic priests now in prison. Sarah Ferguson subjected them to probing questioning about what they had done and what they felt about it. The final interview was with an alleged victim of Cardinal George Pell, not the witness at his trial. This interview gave a grim picture of what such abuse does to a person and why he felt unable to go to the police and be involved in a possible trial. Sarah Ferguson is an excellent journalist and nothing I say should be taken as criticism of her. Her interviews were well done. They took us to some very dark places to which we need to go but would prefer not to go. My question is

1. Did the programmes tell us much that we didn't know already through the proceedings of the Royal Commission into Institutional Child Abuse?
2. Did the focus on the Roman Catholic Church mean that opportunity was lost to investigate child abuse and paedophilia in a wider context and in greater depth?

By focussing on the Roman Catholic Church the programmes gave the impression that child abuse is a Roman Catholic problem. Certainly terrible things have happened in the Roman Catholic Church worldwide. It is also true that terrible things have happened in the Anglican Church and in other churches. They also happen in schools, youth organisations, in the medical world, in the sporting world, in the entertainment world (remember Rolf Harris), in the ADF, in orphanages and care homes. If we include adults, particularly women, among those who suffer abuse, we find it happening in many workplaces. People who I have encountered in my ministry who have suffered abuse have been abused in none of these places. Tragically they have been abused within their own circles of family

and family friends. Some people believe that this is where most abuse happens. It is impossible to know as most will not be reported. Welfare agencies tell us that many homes are dangerous places for children.

Abuse is not a church problem. It is a human problem which involves the whole of society. The questions are: *What does it mean? Where does it come from?* Most difficult of all, *what can we do about it?* This is not to let the churches off the hook. By any standards we should be better. If we are true to our own vision of life and of humanity, these things should not be happening among us and if they are, they must be swiftly dealt with. The bottom line is that the church must be a safe place for everyone, especially for children and a place where others can find refuge, understanding and healing.

Where does abuse come from?

I am not an expert in these matters. People in the Roman Catholic Church who have thought about this, point to the very top-down power structure in the Catholic Church. Decisions come down from the Pope and the Vatican, through the bishops and priests to the people. Local churches, even local bishops and national churches have a very limited say in what happens. However this means that bishops and clergy see themselves and are seen by the people as power figures. Wherever there is power we can expect to find abuse and corruption. It may be that abusers act as they do because they have power over others and misuse it in this way. This is true to a lesser extent in the Anglican and other churches. We do have elected parish councils and synods which diffuse the power but they don't stop the abuse. It seems that wherever people have power over others, in the family, in the church, in other organisations and institutions, we can expect to find abuse. It is endemic to the way we use and misuse power. We know from the Royal Commission that when confronted by abuse, organisations and churches behave in the same way. They act to defend the

organisation by cover up, by denials, and by moving offenders somewhere else where they offend again. They also rely on abused people feeling shamed by what has happened. They are therefore reluctant to report it and if they do, they will not be believed.

Why do people abuse?

This is a question about which we know very little but it is one which demands deep research and understanding. I do not know if much has been done on this but there are some anecdotal pointers. People who have worked with abusers tell us that they often don't see that they have done anything wrong. Some of them operate in "paedophile rings," groups of paedophiles who work together. Within the group it is accepted that abuse of children is what you do and so individuals are encouraged and reinforced in their behaviour. A prison chaplain suggested that abuse is an addiction like alcoholism: Churches have attempted to deal with abuse by enforcing strict behaviour codes among clergy and church workers. We have police checks, Working with Children checks and attend regular educational seminars. There are now Professional Standards Tribunals which deal with complaints and can remove offenders from ministry. This has been going on for some years but I don't know if any evaluation has taken place or any assessment of how effective these measures are in reducing abuse. If abusers do not feel they are doing wrong and if they are addicted to abuse, how much effect will these measures have? I don't know the answer but surely we should attempt to find out. I wonder if we need to look deeper. What do we really believe as Christians about sex and sexuality and what does it say about our vision of God and of our humanity? In Genesis chapter 1 we read: *So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.* In chapter 2 we read: *Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh.*

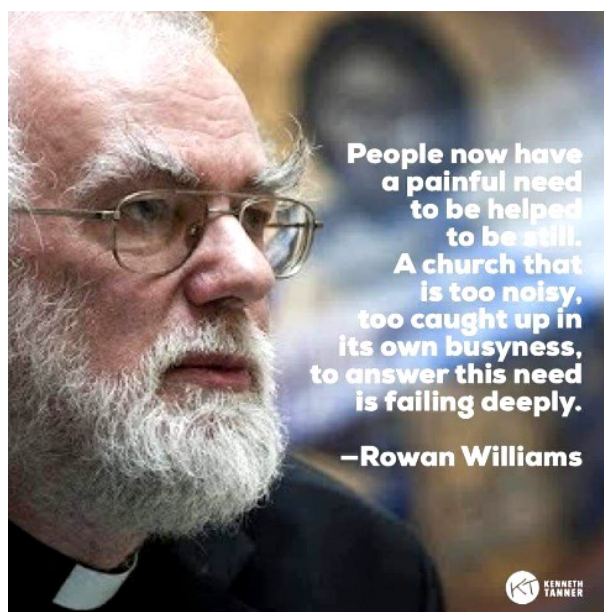
Man and woman coming together in love tell us who God is and what God is like. Jesus affirmed this in Mark chapter 10. He added the words: *So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.* So the coming together of two people in love creates a new reality which reveals the life and love of God. The Song of Solomon is a beautiful celebration of a loving sexual relationship between a young man and a young woman. It is unlike anything else in the Bible and we don't read from it much in church. It was probably included in the bible because it was believed to be a picture of the relationship between God and humanity.

This was a very radical idea both in Old Testament times and in the time of Jesus and the early church. It is clear that relationships between men and women were often not based on love and respect but on the needs of men, on alliances and property deals between families. Prostitution was a growth industry. The early church encouraged people to live according to the teaching of Jesus and showed a level of respect and appreciation of women which challenged the world around them. Unfortunately other ideas from the pagan world began to creep in. People believed that the body was evil and the mind was good. Women had to do with bodily things like giving birth so women were regarded with suspicion and needed to be kept in their place. The church looked back at the story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden when Eve ate the forbidden fruit and gave it to Adam. They both "fell" from the blessed state in which they started and we all inherited their sin. From this came the belief that everything wrong with the world came from Eve's sin and all women hereafter were Eve and likely to lead men astray. They needed to be tightly controlled and kept down. Children were born as the result of men giving in to the "Desires of the flesh" and were therefore seen to be tainted with sin. The baptism service in the Book of Common Prayer

begins with the words: *Forasmuch as all men are conceived and born in sin....* So children from day one are seen as sinners until they prove otherwise which very few people were able to do.

There have always been men who took these ideas to extremes. Women and children must be controlled but also punished for being who they were. We have to -day an active and very profitable pornography industry very available on the internet and we are told, watched by many men and boys. I saw a book by a woman who had investigated pornography reviewed in a church paper. I was able to borrow the book from the Box Hill library. Some of what she described was so horrible I could not go on reading it. Women are described as "sluts," evil and therefore men could feel free to do what they wanted with both women, girls and indeed boys. We are talking about cruelty, brutality and contempt. Remember the boys of St Kevin's College? The writer described how she visited high schools to talk to students. She described how young boys were coming to her in tears because they had explored pornography, become addicted and couldn't break the addiction. It's not surprising therefore that sexual abuse is so widespread. It should be said that it is not only about men. Women are involved also though not in so great numbers.

What can we do about it? I think we as church need to review our own attitudes to sex, sexuality and relationships. We are still ambiguous about it. We don't like to talk about it. We want to control people by telling them what to do and what not to do rather than encourage people to celebrate the beauty of their sexual relationships. When did you last go to a bible study or hear a sermon on the Song of Solomon? I have never heard of one. To be honest I have never preached on it either. Secondly the church has not always been good at modeling respect for women and children. Negative attitudes towards sexuality and women are still alive and well within the church. This is changing. Having women priests and bishops certainly helps. Old attitudes die hard. Why was ordaining women so fiercely resisted by many people and is still fiercely resisted in some parts of the church? We need to bring these issues out in the open and talk, think and pray about them much more than we do. We need to create good affirming role models for our young men and women and for our children. It would be good if Sarah Ferguson and the ABC were to make another set of programmes which could explore these issues in more depth and hopefully throw some light into very dark places.



SPIRITUAL COMMUNION, IS IT THE WAY?

Harry Kerr

In an excellent reflection on Spiritual Communion on Sunday, April 26, Alasdair quoted Church of England guidelines: *the term 'Spiritual Communion' has been used historically to describe the means of grace by which a person, prevented for some serious reason from sharing in a celebration of the Eucharist, nonetheless shares in the communion of Jesus Christ.* It is being encouraged now as public worship is not possible due to the Corona Virus. I don't wish to criticise Spiritual Communion or discourage people from taking part. I want to ask the question: *Is this the only way in which we can take part in the Eucharist in a time of lockdown?* Can we imagine a streamed Holy Communion which each person brings their own bread and wine which is blessed over the air by the priest? Would this be a valid Eucharist?

The Archbishop and Bishops are in no doubt that the answer is *No*. In their directions to the clergy they quote from instructions in the 1662 Book of Common Prayer: *There shall be no celebration of the Lord's Supper except there be three (or two at least) of the people to communicate with the Priest.* That seems to settle the matter. Or does it?

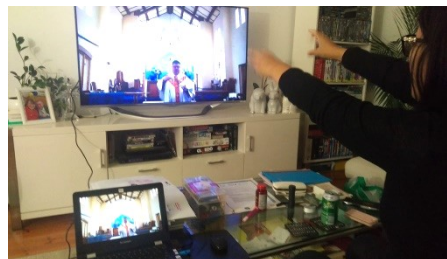
This instruction has nothing to do with "Spiritual Communion." It comes to us from the early days of the Anglican Church in the 16th and 17th centuries. People back then of course could not have imagined the internet, live streaming, Zoom or any of that stuff. This was the time of the Reformation, when the Anglican Church and the other Reformation churches were striking out in new directions. One of these new directions was a rethinking of the Holy Communion to go back to the Last Supper and the earliest days of the church. Before the Reformation, Holy Communion was a matter for clergy. The people did not receive the bread and wine except at Christmas and Easter. The priest would raise the bread and wine in front of the people to worship as the body and Blood of Christ but not partake. People believed that the bread and wine became literally the Body and Blood of Christ. There were fierce theological arguments about how this worked.

The reformers believed that the

Holy Communion was about the people and priest together remembering and celebrating the death and resurrection of Jesus. The whole congregation was encouraged not to worship the elements but to receive them and take Christ into themselves. The reformers intended that Eucharist be celebrated as the main service every Sunday, *The Lord's Service on*



the Lord's Day. People are slow to change and this did not happen. The main services became Morning and Evening Prayer. Often Communion was celebrated only once a quarter and at Christmas and Easter. In the 18th century the Evangelical Movement began the practice of celebrating Holy Communion early in the morning as we still do. Unfortunately people



got the idea the Holy Communion was only for especially holy people so only small numbers took part. I remember when I was young hearing people say that they didn't go to Communion because they weren't good enough.

Things began to change in the 1950's and 60's. The Parish and



People movement in the Church of England which was part of the Liturgical Movement in the wider church, encouraged us to celebrate the Eucharist as a whole community of clergy and people. We see the result of this when we walk into most Anglican Churches to-day. The altar is no longer against the East wall but is now much closer to the people. The priest stands behind it facing the people drawing us into one community. He or she now longer stands with his back to us. The people take much more part in the service. They read, bring the bread and wine to the altar and take part in the distribution of the bread and wine. We take this for granted but it never used to happen. We used to say that priests **celebrate communion for the people.** Now we speak of priests **presiding at the Eucharist with the people.** People and priest together are the celebrant. The consecration, making holy of the bread and wine to become for us the body and blood of Christ, is no longer what the priest does on behalf of the people. It happens when priest and people together give thanks over the bread and wine. As we do, we not only remember the Last Supper. We are present as His disciples with the Risen Lord. *We know Him and receive him in the breaking of the bread.* As we receive his body we *become* His body in the world. We don't find it necessary to argue over the details of what actually happens. The Parish Eucharist is now the main Sunday service in most Anglican churches.

I would like to think that we can celebrate the Eucharist together in an online service in the present exceptional circumstances. After all God is not bound by time and place and maybe we do not have to be either in the celebration of the Eucharist.

There could be a powerful message here as we gather not in holy buildings but in our homes which become holy places and bring bread and wine from our own cupboards. There is another instruction in Book of Common Prayer which we seem to have forgotten: *the Bread shall be such as is usual to be eaten; but the best and purest wheat bread that conveniently be given.* The use of wafers and so called "communion wine," actually cheap Port, gives the impression that the Eucharist is

something apart from everyday life rather than that which makes everyday life holy. Maybe when we do get back to church we could arrange for a different person to bring a homemade loaf and a bottle of wine to the altar each Sunday. We could share what is not needed for communion at morning tea. A major problem with an online service in the present exceptional circumstances. After all God is not bound by time and place and maybe we do not have to be either in the celebration of the Eucharist. The alternative words at the breaking of Bread in APBA: *As the broken bread was once many grains which have been gathered together and made one bread: so may your church be gathered from the ends of the earth into your kingdom.* This comes from a very ancient source. There could be a powerful message

here as we gather not in holy buildings but in our homes which become holy places and bring bread and wine from our own cupboards. There is another instruction in Book of Common Prayer which we seem to have forgotten: *the Bread shall be such as is usual to be eaten; but the best and purest wheat bread that conveniently be given.* The use of wafers and so called "communion wine," actually cheap port, gives the impression that the Eucharist is something apart from everyday life rather than that which makes everyday life holy. Maybe when we do get back to church we could arrange for a different person to bring a homemade loaf and a bottle of wine to the altar each Sunday. We could share what is not consecrated for communion at morning tea. A major problem with online Eucharist is that not everyone is

connected to the internet. We would have to provide for them differently. Some parishes are delivering the blessed bread to them every week. Whatever we do we should not be bound by rules and customs from 500 years ago. God gave us imagination. Let's use it in partnership with God to feed God's people. Let Queen Elizabeth 1 have the last word: '*Tw'as God the Word that spake it, He took the Bread and brake it: And what that Word did make it, That I believe and take it.*'



BOOKS FOR LOCK DOWN

Harry Kerr

Cardiac Athletes, Advance of the Ambassadors Lars & Team

Cardiac Athletes, Advance of the Ambassadors, Lars & Team, Lars Andrews 2019

It is unusual, though exciting to be able to review a book written by a member of the parish.

Lars Andrews is a stalwart of the 8 am congregation. He is Chief Cardiac Physiologist at the Box Hill Hospital and founder, CEO & Editor of Cardiac Athletes, the subject of the book. His stepdaughter, Jennifer Ong, also an 8 o'clock regular, designed the cover of the book.

Lars is a keen athlete and sportsman. When he was 16 he had a serious accident when he suffered a broken spine. Recovery was long and took a lot of determination and hard work. It was this which led him to found Cardiac Athletes, an organisation which supports and advocates for athletes who have had or who live with serious heart problems.

We can all remember a time when heart attacks were either a near death or actual death experience. Those who survived found they had to lead limited lives and that many of their former activities were off limits. Modern medicine and surgery have changed much of that and most heart patients these days



can lead normal lives. For athletes of course things can be very different. When an athlete or sportsperson suffers a serious heart condition, the first thing they will hear from their doctor will be: *of course your running/ swimming/ riding football/climbing days are over. You'll have to lead a quiet life from now on.* The book is the big NO to this advice. It is a series of stories of athletes and sportspeople who have

overcome serious heart problems and who have managed to get back to their athletics. It is also the story of *Cardiac Athletics*, the organisation which supports and advocates for them.

Recovery, as Lars himself found, cannot be taken for granted and is not always straightforward. In the medical profession the old assumptions are alive and well. Many doctors simply write off athletes with heart problems. It is a struggle to get second and third opinions, to find doctors who will take a positive approach, who will design a process and find medication that will enable them to recover fully and resume their athletics and who will supervise and care for them while they recover and for the rest of their athletic career. It is struggle to find suitable equipment and facilities for them to retrain successfully. It is a struggle for peer support and recognition. This is a story of recognising and celebrating the stories of forgotten people. Lars writes as a man of faith and passion and we salute him.

The books is available from Lars, lars@cardiacathletes.com

Any Ordinary Day

Blindsides, Resilience and What Happens After the Worst Day of Your Life
Leigh Sales

Any Ordinary Day, Leigh Sales, Penguin Books 2019

Leigh Sales needs no introduction. She is a well known ABC journalist who presides over the 7.30 report and strikes terror into many a politician with her sharp questions. She always appears bright, sharp and on the ball but this is not the whole story. Her book begins with personal experience. When she was expecting her second child, she found herself in hospital, seriously ill and in great pain, her life in danger. She came through and her child came through but that wasn't all. The child developed meningitis which meant an extended stay in hospital. Her older son became ill and spend an extended period in hospital. Then her marriage of 20 years broke up. These events would be enough to sink anyone but she has come through and



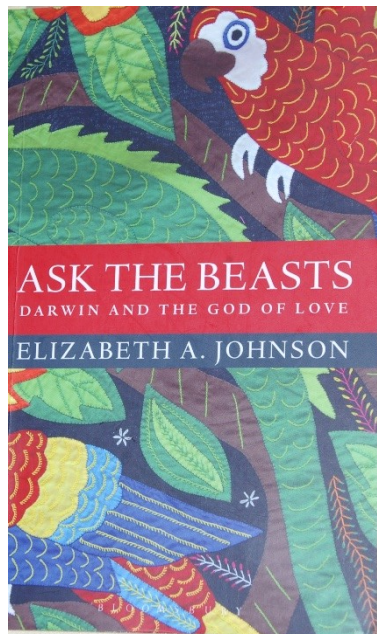
written this book. She explores the stories of several people who are struck by tragedy and crisis out of the blue, how they coped, what helped them, how they were able to move forward. She meets with Walter Mikac who

lost his wife and two daughters in the Port Arthur shooting. He went through some very dark times but went on to found the Alannah and Madeline foundation to help and support abused and traumatised children. She talks with the young man who watched his young wife die when they were both caught in the landslide in Thredbo.. She meets a young mother whose husband went for a morning surf and never came back. She talks with a survivor of the Lindt Café siege. She meets a woman in charge of a morgue who has to bring family members in to identify a loved one's body. She meets a priest who is around as a gentle support when tragedy strikes. It is a book full of tragedy but also love and hope and well worth reading .
I was able to borrow the book from the Whitehorse Manningham online

Ask the Beasts, Darwin and the God of Love Elizabeth A Johnson.

Ask the Beasts, Darwin and the God of Love, Elizabeth A Johnson. Bloomsbury Continuum, 2014

This is a more demanding book but a very worthwhile one. Elizabeth Johnson is Distinguished Professor of Theology at Fordham University, New York and a Sister of the Sisters of St. Joseph, Brentwood, New York as well as being a leading feminist theologian. She deals with an issue which has used up a lot of time and energy among Christians as well as causing deep division: the supposed conflict between the creation stories in the Book of Genesis and Charles Darwin's theory of evolution as an account of the origins of life on earth. The arguments this "conflict" has generated have been a complete waste of time and energy because they rest on a fundamental misunderstanding about what the Book of Genesis is saying.



Professor Johnson shows that Darwin's theories need not stand in against a religious belief in the God who created the universe. The title of the book comes from the Book of Job chapter 12: *'But ask the beasts, and they will teach you; the birds of the air, and they will tell you; ask the plants of the earth, and they will teach you; and the fish of the sea will declare to you. Who among all these does not know that the hand of the LORD has done this? In his hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of every human being.* Commenting on this text she suggests that: *If you interrogate the flora and fauna of land, sea and air, the text suggests their response will lead your heart and mind to the living God, generous source and sustaining power of their life.*

This is not the way contemporary Christians have been taught to think about God, humanity and creation. We think of God as the one who created the earth in order and set it going but who was primarily concerned with engaging humanity. God has given the creation to humanity to use for humanity's benefit. Good is separate from creation. God is static. God lives in heaven from which God sent Jesus to save us and where we eventually join him and leave creation behind. Professor Johnson sets out to challenge these beliefs.

She investigates Darwin's book *The Origin of Species* against the background of his diaries and the notes of his explorations as he travelled around the world studying the animals and plants which he found. She describes in great detail how Darwin discovered how living organisms change and adapt to changes in environment, how some species flourish and others disappear, what happens when catastrophe strikes, how variations develop and much more. However this is not raw science. She unfolds it like the development of symphony.

Darwin's theories created uproar at the time. However Professor Johnson points out that this was not what we might expect. Most of the criticism of Darwin came not from

the church but from fellow scientists who were wedded to the traditional reading of the Genesis creation stories. On the other hands some leading Christians, including a future Archbishop of Canterbury, were very interested in Darwin and wanted to know more.

It is worth noting at this point that Genesis 1 & 2 does not claim to be a scientific explanations of the origin of creation at all. Genesis was written when the people of Israel was in exile in Babylon in a foreign culture with very different values. It was written to draw the people who what their own faith said about the origin of creation: that it came from God who created a world of harmony in which every part was related and humanity was has a special part of play but was no separate form everything else. This picture contrasted with the Babylonian creation story . They believed that creation was the result of conflict between the Gods and that therefore conflict and violence was an essential part of being human, an idea which sadly is alive and well in our world today. Professor Johnson goes on to look at the origins of the universe itself, how it developed from the original Big Bang. How galaxies and planetary systems developed, how the right conditions came together to let life grow on earth. She speculates on whether similar

conditions may have led to the development of life elsewhere in the universe, something we will never know.

She now looks as how God might relate to all this. She suggests that we have to change the way we think about God. God is not apart from the life on the universe, reigning from his throne in the skies. She suggests that God *is* life and that God is there wherever life is and that his life is expressed not in distance but in presence, not in authority but in love. Jesus is the ultimate expression of the life and love of God. *All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people.* (John 1.2) The Holy Spirit is life coming from the father and the son. God's life is not fixed but is always evolving and becoming as God draws us into God's evolving and becoming.

I cannot do justice to this remarkable book in a brief article. I can only commend it to you and invite you to read it for yourself. You can get the book from www.bookdepository.com for 29 AUD

FROM PRISON RELEASES TO LOAN FORGIVENESS, A GLIMPSE OF JUBILEE A Trevor Sutton

APR 9, 2020

Catastrophe. Tragedy. Jubilee? There are many words that come to mind during the coronavirus pandemic, but jubilee is not one of them. Nothing about the present situation causes jubilation: There is a backlog of bodies overwhelming morgues. Parks, once places of blithe relaxation, are now field hospitals for feverish patients. An unprecedented number of unemployment requests threaten to overwhelm resources. And, yet, jubilee is appearing all around us amid the coronavirus pandemic.

In surprising ways, 2020 is turning out to be a year of jubilee. Prescribed in Leviticus 25, the year of jubilee occurred every 50 years. The jubilee was a time of liberation throughout the land of Israel: *And you shall hallow the fiftieth year and you shall proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you: you shall return, every one of you, to your property and every one of you to your family. That fiftieth year shall be a jubilee for you: You shall not sow, or reap the aftergrowth, or harvest the unpruned vines. For it is a jubilee; it shall be holy to you: you shall eat only what the field itself produces.* (Leviticus 25:10-12)

The year of jubilee enacted several distinctive practices: On the year of jubilee, the ancient Israelites were supposed to leave the land fallow, remit debts, liberate slaves, and return property to its original owner. It was a year standing in stark contrast to the previous 49 years. Curiously, the jubilee is being put into practice amid the coronavirus pandemic. Though it breaks the logic of a pandemic, jubilee is blooming in this bleak moment in history. The "land is being left fallow" as many are not working or staying at home. Resembling what the Israelites did in the year of jubilee, yesterday's work is sustaining today's needs while in quarantine.

Many factories, stores, and markets around the world have shut down and the land is experiencing a partial sabbath rest. The rapid halt to work and income has left many people in financially precarious positions. This has led to another jubilee practice: Lenders are remitting debts in unlikely ways. Some – though not all – lenders are offering to forgive certain loans or allow for deferred payments. Banks and credit card companies are ostensibly working with customers to defer interest temporarily or allow for a few skipped payments. Insurance companies have waived certain copays and libraries are foregoing late fees. To be certain, a large gap remains between the present social realities and the full year of jubilee. Nevertheless, these offer a slight glimpse of the remission of debts that occurred in the year of jubilee: “In the jubilee it shall be released” (Leviticus 25:28). Slaves were to be released in the year of jubilee (Leviticus 25:54). In ancient Israel, it was not uncommon for individuals to incur such large debts that they would be forced to sell themselves into slavery. The year of jubilee, however, liberated all who were under the burden of indentured servitude or slavery. Again, the coronavirus has prompted a variation on this jubilee practice: Prisons are releasing thousands of low-level or nonviolent inmates. In an effort to mitigate coronavirus infection, prisoners are being released in numbers that were unimaginable just a few months ago. Is this full-fledged jubilee liberation? Far from it. Yet, some are experiencing jubilee as a result of the coronavirus.

Another jubilee practice appearing amid of this pandemic: Generosity is being practiced through the sharing of resources. Whether out of kindness or furtive marketing, companies are offering temporary

free access to paid subscriptions. Assistance programs are being

rolled out on a daily basis. Spontaneous acts of charity are happening as people make homemade facemasks. These pockets of generosity emerging as a result of the coronavirus resemble yet another the jubilee prescription: “If your brother becomes poor and cannot maintain himself with you, you shall support him as though he were a stranger and a sojourner ...” (Leviticus 25:36). The world is clearly longing for jubilee.

Jesus alluded to his ministry being the beginning of a new jubilee (Luke 4:16-21). He came to, “proclaim good news to the poor,” “to proclaim liberty to the captives,” and “to set at liberty those who are oppressed” (Luke 4:18). Jesus made the jubilee vision a reality by inaugurating a radically new and peaceable kingdom in the world.

[READ: Acts of Holy Saturday That Defy Despair](#)

As the body of Christ on earth, the church puts this jubilee into practice. Some of the jubilee practices of the church are so ordinary that they are easily overlooked. Nevertheless, these odd and ordinary practices are foundational to how the Christian community bears witness to the world both during times of pandemic and in far more ordinary times.

Worship is sabbath rest and fallow time for renewal. While the coronavirus has forced many to pause from a life of total work, this has been willingly practiced by the church over the centuries. In the words of theologian Marva Dawn, worship is “a royal waste of time,” showing the world what it looks like to engage in sabbath rest. The world is now getting a taste of

what the church has been doing for centuries.

Forgiveness, remitting sins, and enacting reconciliation, is another jubilee practice of the church. Long before the coronavirus prompted the forgiveness of loans and the absolution of late fees, the Christian community practiced forgiveness and absolution. Captives are released from shame and guilt as the good news of Jesus is offered to others. Sharing resources and table fellowship are yet other practices occurring within the Christian community. Wealth is redistributed through offerings, support comes through communal generosity, and needs are met by spontaneous acts of charity. The celebration of the Lord’s Supper, though many churches have temporarily suspended this practice on account of the coronavirus, ordinarily provides a visible display of table fellowship and unity.

Eventually, this coronavirus-induced year of jubilee will come to an end. Credit card companies will charge interest again. Libraries will impose late fees. Prisons will be full once more. The land will be worked and overworked. But the church – along with its peculiar practice of jubilee – will remain. It will bear witness to a greater and perpetual jubilee inaugurated by Jesus. And, in its odd and ordinary ways, it will bear witness to a world yearning for jubilee.

A. Trevor Sutton is a Lutheran pastor in Lansing, Michigan, and PhD student at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri.

I’m hearing more people, including fellow Liberals and progressives, saying “I’m ready for Jesus to return!” These are expressions of anguish, frustration, and despair about how bad things have become lately. My response is simply that Jesus returns through us. “Jesus returns every time we forgive ourselves and others, love unconditionally, extend mercy, offer compassion, act with loving-kindness, feed the hungry, protect the oppressed, heal the sick, visit the prisoner, speak truth to power, make peace, seek reconciliation, and pursue restorative justice.” ~ from chapter 10, “Kissing Fish: Christianity for people who don’t like Christianity” (Fritz Eichenberg) [March 26](#)