

## Special Events

20 February  
Lent Study "A River Through the Desert" begins

Saturday 27 February  
8.00am Men's Breakfast:  
A Visit to Russia

Friday 6 March  
2.00 pm World Day of Prayer  
St Andrew's Uniting Church  
"Build on a Strong Foundation"

### PARISH CLERGY

Vicar.

Rev SHANE HÜBNER

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Sudanese Priest

Revd. Joseph Arou 0431 541 535  
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Chinese Priest

Revd. Esther Zhang 0405 602 439

Family Minister

Barbara Plumridge 9898 5193

Honorary Clergy

Rt Rev'd George Hearn, 9840 7816,  
Revd. Betty Bracken, 9939 5881  
Rev Alastair McKinnon-Love  
0438 323 059

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The Parish Office and St Peter's  
Church are at 1038 Whitehorse  
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Office phone: 9899 5122

The Parish Office is staffed on  
Tues 8.30am – 12.30pm  
Thu 10.00am – 2.00pm

# GOOD NEWS

好消息

WELPIATH



Parish Magazine of the Anglican Parish of Box Hill  
January 2021

## The Vicar Writes

On January 19 2021, I celebrated five years as Vicar of the Anglican Parish of Box Hill and I give great thanks to God for the privilege and honour and responsibility of this role. This parish is a wonderful and inspiring faith-community to be part of and I am looking forward to what the next five years and more will bring. I imagine we are all hoping that this year will be better than last year at least. We are in a transition period at the moment – slowly opening up and celebrating in person worship at St Peter's– while at the same time – maintaining our ministry of live streaming of worship. We will be doing this until at least Easter.



We talk about 'salvation history' as the Christian story from Abraham and Sarah to Jesus as the way that hope unfolded for us. We

can also talk about the Holy Land as communicating the 'geography of salvation' because the land itself has the potential to convey the gospel of Jesus Christ in a very powerful way. This at least is the testimony of many millions of pilgrims who come to these lands every year.

I have written this study course drawing on the ways in which the Land here has touched and deepened my faith over the past two years of living in Jerusalem and serving as the Dean of the College. I have also drawn on the ways in

which places back home, in Great Britain, have enriched my faith. My hope is that you will be drawn to think about the ways in which your own context and its geography can draw you into a deeper relationship with God this Lent.

This Lent series is called *A River through the Desert* because a Lent course should aim to water faith in the way that a river will cause the desert to flower and flourish in unexpected ways. I hope and pray that it will do so for you. In these very trying and testing days we stand in need, perhaps more than ever, of finding solace and encouragement in our faith that will give us the strength to endure these challenges. We know that God's grace is sufficient to help us whatever difficulties we face; may this course be a vehicle for God's grace."

Please consider signing up for this exciting course. There will be more details on our website and in the Parish Link.

For our Lenten study this year – beginning on 20 February 2021 at 10am in the church, our parish is offering the six week St George's College, Jerusalem course – ***A River through the Desert***. This new series focuses on the physical features of the Holy Land to explore our faith through Lent in Six Sessions.

**Week 1 The Desert**  
**Week 2 The Water Well**  
**Week 3 The Mountain**  
**Week 4 The Sea**  
**Week 5 The Road**  
**Week 6 The Garden.**

The author of the series, the Dean of St George's College, The Very Rev Canon Richard Sewell writes the following,  
"The Holy Land has been called (probably first by Eusebius of Caesarea) the fifth Gospel. The reason for this name is that, just as the written gospels testify to the word and works of Jesus Christ, so the land itself conveys that same message.

By the time you read this our parish will have farewelled Father Harry and Pam Kerr, who are moving to be closer to family. In the five years I have been Vicar Harry has been a mountain of support. He has always been ready to step in and lead a

service when needed. He has always been a trusted friend and provided good counsel. Not least among his gifts to the parish has been as editor of this magazine and his departing will leave big shoes to fill. I know that I will not be the

only one who will miss his presence in the parish. We all wish Harry and Pam many blessed years in their new abode. I ask us all to continue to pray for God's guidance and blessings for our parish for 2021 and the years to come.

**D**uring the last year, when we had "family month", people continued to express their interest in knowing more about Christian marriage. Also, we have an increasing number of people in the congregation, or attracted to the church, who have young children and new babies. So from January, we started an eight week course on marriage called "**Holy Marriages are the Happiest Marriages**".

It covered eight topics:

Week 1, **The problems and challenges of facing marriage today**

Week 2, **God's design for marriage and its purpose**

Week 3, **The foundation of and keys to successful marriage**

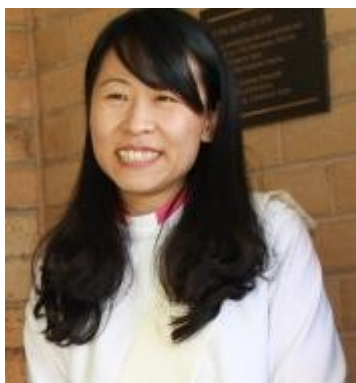
Week 4, **The roles of "husband" and "wife"**

Week 5, **Christian parenting**  
Week 6, **Sexual Saints**

Week 7, **"Fight a good fight" - dealing with conflict**

Week 8, **Building family worship**

## Esther writes



We draw from the Scriptures and some Christian books on marriage. We have had 17 attendees each week online. People are eager to nurture Christian faith in their married life, whether in an existing marriage, or as they think about a possible future. We thank God for their willingness to live out Christian convictions in the home and home relationships. Pray that we will follow Jesus in every area of our lives, to live a life to honor God. Here is the English book list, we also used some Chinese marriage books.

Gary Thomas - **Sacred Marriage: What If God Designed Marriage to Make Us Holy More Than to Make Us Happy?**

Jimmy Evans - **Marriage on the Rock 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary: The Comprehensive Guide to a Solid, Healthy and Lasting Marriage**

Matt Chandler - **The Mingling of Souls: God's Design for Love, Marriage, Sex, and Redemption**

Jefferson Bethke and Alyssa Bethke - **Love That Lasts: How We Discovered God's Better Way for Love, Dating, Marriage, and Sex**

Wayne Mack - **How to Develop Deep Unity in the Marriage Relationship**

Raymond C. Ortlund Jr. - **Marriage and the Mystery of the Gospel**

Ron Hunter **The DNS of D6: Building Blocks of Generational Discipleship**

John Gottman - **The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work**

## DR JASPER CORNISH Philip Dooley

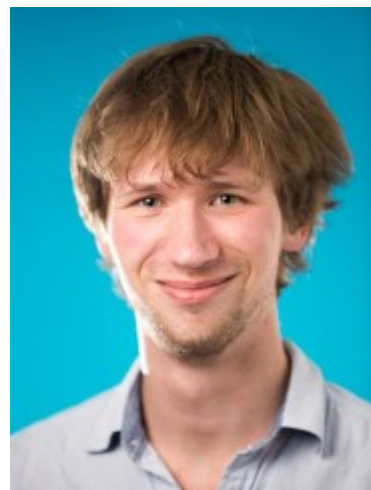
Dr Jasper Cornish, (son of Cecilia Joyner and Kim) has recently been awarded the PhD degree for a thesis entitled "Haploinsufficiency of Murine Nfkb1 Confers a Defective Immune Response and Diverse Late-onset Complications".

The experiments described in his thesis were undertaken through Monash University at the Burnet Institute, over a period of four years. The project sought to enhance our understanding of the disease "Common Variable Immunodeficiency," which affects 1:20,000 people, and can significantly shorten their lifespans. Jasper identified multiple immune defects that arise from the most common genetic cause of CVID; which are expected to contribute to

the disease and may offer avenues for future treatment.

He has presented the findings of his experiments in a series of communications at prestigious Australian and overseas institutes and conferences. Since the acceptance of his thesis, Dr Cornish has undertaken interviews with three research laboratories of international status and accepted a position at Melbourne's Walter and Eliza Hall Institute.

I am sure that the congregation of our parish church feels justify proud of Jasper's achievements. Warmest Congratulations, Jasper, from all at St Peter's



# Christmas Eve Children's Service

Stars were the theme of the Children's Christmas Eve Service.

The Church was decorated with the Nativity Scene, beautiful flowers,  
a Christmas tree  
and of course, lots of Stars.

Children helped light the Advent candles.

Father Shane talked to the children about the importance and symbolism of stars  
in the Christmas story.

We all then made origami stars to take home.



## Dream Stitches

BARARA PLUMRIDGE

**T**he quilts that were made during the year were sent to Gippsland for Anglicare to distribute to the bushfire victims with Christmas hampers.

Dream stitches classes in 2021 will be split and held on 2 mornings each week. The aim is to start with the mothers with pre-school aged children on Friday the 5th February, the other students starting on Tuesday the 9th. It looks at this stage as there will be approximately 12 students in each class.

Teachers have been investigating the possible use of technology to enable the program to run more like a classroom setting, with students all working on the same project at the same time, hence less need for one on one teaching, to enable social distancing.





## WORLD DAY OF PRAYER, VANUATU 2021

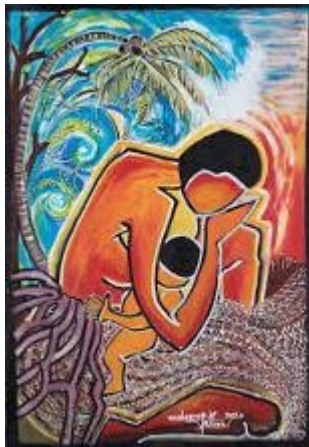
**"Build on a Strong Foundation"**

This year the service is prepared by the women of Vanuatu.

**Friday, 6 March, 2 pm**  
**St Andrews's Uniting Church**  
909 Whitehorse Rd. Box Hill. Opposite tram terminus.

All parishioners are invited to attend.

*Jan Gunst rep*



### Samaritan purse shoe boxes

Plenty of "back to school" bargains available now, ready to start filling your box. Good value at Big W, OfficeWorks and others. 47 boxes last year was a great result. Hopefully, with no problems this year we can exceed this number.

Jan Gunst coordinator.

## FUNDRAISING



### Hilary writes

Welcome to our new world of 2021. Our Parish has enjoyed many previous years for social and fundraising events. Those years are happy shadows behind us as we look forward to our new light filled normal!

Any and all activities will be subject to Government and Diocesan Health rules. I hope that we can have an Autumn Fair this year, a pie drive, a gardening bulb drive and other activities.

I apologise in advance for all the lack of information at this time.

Any time you wish to discuss ideas please contact me on 0400 635 600 or

[cchrbr@hotmail.com](mailto:cchrbr@hotmail.com)



## ST PETER'S PARISH MEN'S BREAKFAST, SATURDAY, 27 FEBRUARY 2021

The speaker will be HARRY KERR

### Visiting Russia and the Baltic States

We will gather in the Undercroft for Breakfast at 8.00 am.  
Please book with Ken McDonald. 9077 8809

### Humour

How does Moses make tea? **Hebrews** it.  
England has no kidney bank, **but it does have a Liverpool.**

I tried to catch some fog, **but I mist.**

They told me I had type-A blood, **but it was a typo.**

Jokes about German sausage are **the wurst.**

I know a guy who's addicted to brake fluid, but he says he **can stop any time.**

I stayed up all night to see where the sun went, **and then it dawned on me.**

This girl said she recognized me from the vegetarian club, **but I'd never met herbivore.**

- When chemists die, they **barium.**
- I'm reading a book about anti-gravity. I just can't put it down.
- I did a theatrical performance about puns. It was a play on words.
- I didn't like my beard at first. Then it grew on me.

# IN THE NAME OF JESUS?

## A Statement on events in the US from Nathan LeRud Dean of Portland Oregon

***We are Trump's army.  
We are God's army."***

In the context of the last four years, Wednesday's events – an attempt at an armed takeover of one of the core institutions of American democracy – shouldn't come as a surprise. In one sense, and particularly for many Americans who don't happen to be of European descent, the events that occurred this week are simply the latest example of a litany of horrors that began in 1619 when the first slave ship landed on North American shores. Because let's be clear: this is white supremacy at work.

Let me speak directly to my fellow Christians: it's not enough for well-meaning Christian people of either (or neither!) political party to cluck their tongues, long for a more peaceful day, wonder "why we can't all just get along" as Jesus intended, and go about our business. And to my colleagues in the clergy (and to myself): it's not enough for Christian preachers and pastors to get up into our pulpits on Sunday, preach a barn-burning fire-and-brimstone sermon denouncing the evils of white supremacy and white nationalism (or let's call it what it is: Christian nationalism) and then sit down while our progressive members shout "Amen!" and feel like finally the Church is saying something. "Saying something" has gotten us nowhere.

So let me be as clear as I can, for members of this congregation who are wondering where the Church stands on issues of terrorism, fear, and racially-motivated abuses of power, and for members of the larger public who may be listening in to hear what we have to say right now about Jesus (you know, that guy whose name was invoked on Wednesday on the signs, tattoos, and lips of many of the so-called "revolutionaries"): Christian Nationalism is a perversion, an infection, and an illegitimate hijacking of the Christian faith, the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, and the life, ministry and ongoing witness of Jesus Christ in the world.

I made a sacred promise at my

ordination to the priesthood to uphold all these things, and it would be dereliction of duty and of my vows not to denounce Christian Nationalism in the strongest possible terms, not to stand against it with every fibre of my being. The very fact that the name of my Saviour is being invoked by those who pledge allegiance to a reality TV star who refuses to let go of his office is a desecration of that Holy Name.

That desecration has been going on for a long time in this nation. President Trump is a symptom, not a cause: focusing this moment on him and his manoeuvres is precisely what he wants, and risks dulling each of us to the real danger we are in, and blinding us to its true source. Many Christians (I count myself among them) have tended to try to get along with our "right-wing" siblings of varying stripes. They are not our enemies, easily dismissed as "crazy people" out there who take to the streets and wield the signs—they are our fathers and mothers, our grandparents, our crazy Uncle Bills, our police officers, our Sunday School teachers and our friends. Many of us grew up in homes that taught some soft—and often unwitting—version of this form of popular Christianity: the belief that Christianity is the "one true religion" of America, that God has a plan for this nation, and that that plan involves the policies and politics of the so-called religious right: whether that's abortion, same-sex marriage, or an unshakable faith in American capitalism. Ex-Right Wingers like me know that this belief system lies at the heart of much of what we were taught about what it means to be a Christian, and in many ways, an American. Many of us are working to disentangle what it means to be white with what it means to follow Jesus – and we know that what happened on Wednesday in the Capitol Building is not an aberration or the actions of a few rotten apples from an ultimately healthy bushel. These so-called "Bible-believing Christians" are doing exactly what their churches have trained them to do. We know this because many of us

were trained the same way. I certainly was.

I intend to repent and to make amends to those whom Christianity has hurt as a result of these toxic beliefs. Some of those individuals harmed by toxic Christianity are the very ones who invaded the Capitol Building on Wednesday. But all of us have been damaged by these pernicious teachings – perpetrators and victims of violence alike. And I want to go on record: people of faith—whether that's faith in God, faith in Jesus Christ, or simply faith in American Democracy—should be alarmed, unsettled, angry, and vigilant in the months (and probably years) to come as this newest version of American heresy raises its head and gains traction. Our resistance cannot be passive; it must be active - and compassionate.

Our tradition is being stolen from us and handed to a lynch mob. Christian Nationalism is a cancer on the American soul, and if those who gathered at the President's rally are to be believed, "this is the beginning of the second American Revolution." I do not believe that to be the case – but I take the threat seriously, because I recognize where it comes from. I know that the only thing that will prevent further violence, insurrection, and chaos is if individuals and communities of faith stand up and refuse to let our traditions, our scriptures, our beliefs, and our families be further desecrated by the evil being practiced and preached in the name of Jesus Christ.

-Nathan

# And in Australia , Harry Kerr

We have been horrified by the mob invasion of the US Capitol, by events leading up to it and by the behaviour of former president Trump. Could it happen here? Dean LeRudd's statement highlights slavery and racism and Christian collusion with them as the core reasons. Racism by white people towards black people, Latino people and Native Americans has been described as America's Original Sin. Is it Australia's original sin? Our treatment of Aboriginal people from the early days of colonisation, driving them off their lands, violence and murder, poisoning of food and wells, the stolen generations certainly point in that direction. Aboriginal stockmen had their wages stolen and never repaid. We are very slow to listen and act on the Uluru Statement from the Heart and to recognise that Australia is their country which has been taken from them. Too many Aboriginal young people are in prison.

In addition there has been a long tradition of slavery in Australia in the capture and exploitation of South Sea Islanders. Our treatment of Asylum seekers can only be described as evil. Our Federal Constitution came from a determination to establish the new Commonwealth of Australia as a bastion of white civilisation in the Asia Pacific. This was one of the

driving forces behind our participation in the First World War. In the USA, other forces are at work. Traditional industries are disappearing. People see their jobs disappearing overseas. They know that white Americans will soon be outnumbered by African Americans, Latinos, Asian migrants and Native Americans. They know that America's influence in the world is in decline following several disastrous wars. There is a huge and growing gap between rich and poor. The so called basic wage is a joke. The health system is only for those with money. Government policy is dictated by wealthy individuals and corporations. Gun control is very lax. Rightly or wrongly people feel their very identity is being undermined and stolen from them. They are angry and confused.

Is Australia heading that way? We can be grateful that we have universal health care, an almost liveable basic wage and reasonable gun laws. However there are warning signs. Wages are depressed and more and more enterprises are underpaying their workers. It is becoming more difficult for younger people to get a proper job and buy a home. Here too traditional occupations in manufacturing and mining are in decline and under threat. We too see expressions of racism in the abuse of Indian players at the cricket, in the appalling treatment

of Adam Goodes and in the demonisation of South Sudanese young people.

The American system of government is quite different from ours. The US president has immense power and influence without reference to Congress while an Australian Prime Minister is subject to parliament. However we need to be on the alert. When people see change they don't understand, when they see their way of life and their identity being undermined, when they miss out on new technology and new jobs, they become confused and angry. They can be exploited by unscrupulous politicians and media into taking destructive action. Christians need to be alert. These things matter to us. The way of Jesus is the way of inclusion and justice for all. It means standing with people who are being pushed to the edge. Pious injunctions to "come together" are no use to people who are down. They need to know that somebody cares.

## TRAVEL ALL OVER THE COUNTRYSIDE – PART 2

Dianne Armstrong

I have had cause to reflect on our recent Season of Creation, to give thanks to our Creator God for our home in this marvellous Country, and especially for my own blessings in exploring some of the wonders of this ancient land.

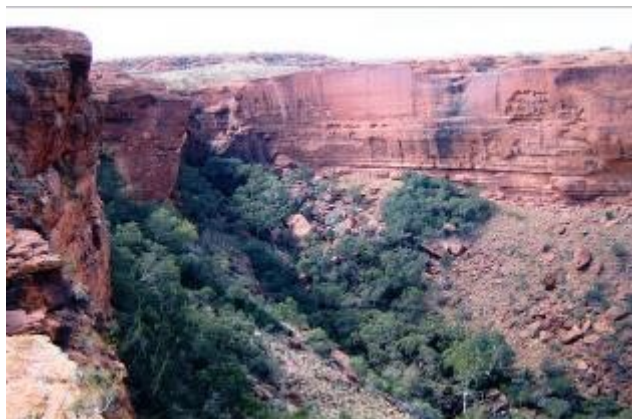
Many Australians visit Canberra and we did the mandatory tours of Parliament House and the War Memorial. Miriam had a particular interest in the paintings of Sir William Dargie, who was a cousin on her father's side of the family. His painting of the Queen hangs in Parliament House, and as he was a War artist in WW11, there were paintings done in places such as New

Guinea. Thredbo was an interesting village to see on the way home with good walking tracks and a view of Mt Kosciusko with some snow, even in November.

The desert featured again with Uluru, with quite a different look one day during a sunrise camel ride, having a purple hue and a cloud formation stretching across the top. I am not in a hurry to have another camel ride, as the one following came too close to me, slobbering over my leg! We also took a short walk with Aboriginal guides at the base where they explained through an interpreter the places which

were of great significance to them including a cave. We later did the full circuit walk taking in the wonder of caves, pools and the magnificent colours. When travelling in a mini bus to our sunset tour of the nearby Kata Tjuta (Olgas) we were surprised to experience a hail storm in the desert. Kings Canyon was a truly spectacular walk one morning, rising at 4 am, taking a Coach from Sails in the Desert to a cooked breakfast at Kings Canyon resort. Not such a great plan when you then have to climb "Cardiac Hill" to begin the walk. The driver did his best to recommend the walk at the





one, a sculpture of The Waiting Woman, forever looking out to sea for her loved one. The lengthy drives continued but we were now headed in a southerly direction to Cape Leeuwin where the Southern and Indian Oceans meet. The huge Wave Rock, which I managed to climb, became more

base if you have any cardiac issues. I am pleased that despite struggling initially with Cardiac Hill, I was able to enjoy the magnificent scenery from there onwards. Another great experience was the Sounds of Silence dinner in the desert with views of Uluru and Kata Tjuta at sunset, and an astronomer to guide you through the magic of the stars. My car was in demand again on a journey to Kangaroo Island via Robe and Victor Harbour in South Australia. I've never achieved such a tight park in my life as I did on that ferry, but with the help and guidance of the staff, everything was possible. A nice Winery was soon discovered for lunch, the New Zealand fur seals were in abundance as were the disease free Ligurian bees, and the sheep's milk cheeses were memorable. The Flinders Chase National Park had the spectacular and enormous Remarkable Rocks, but I do recall feeling uneasy as we drove alongside a controlled burn near the Park entrance. I am thinking of the devastating bush fires in that area in 2020. There was special interest on our return with a boat trip in the Coorong, when we went through a lock to see the Murray River mouth near Goolwa.

In September, 2007 we travelled from Perth to Denham in one day, 830km by Coach. Western Australia is not a State which you can cover in a hurry. The Monkey Mia beach in Shark Bay was our destination the next morning to witness the dolphins coming in to shore to be fed. This was followed by viewing stromatolites at Hamelin Pool, the oldest living organisms in the World, found only at that site and in Bolivia.

Geraldton, a major West coast port has a beautiful Catholic Cathedral and some large memorials on the waterfront for the 645 crewmen lost at sea on the HMAS Sydney during WW11. One memorial is the Dome of Souls, a sculpture of 645 seagulls, and another very moving

terrifying on the way down, when I was unsure about how I would safely descend. Miriam had already disappeared, but fortunately someone else took me by the hand.

The scenic Rottnest Island is a pleasant boat trip from Fremantle, and it is known for friendly little animals called Quokkas, which the Dutch explorers believed were rats, hence the name Rottnest. Another boat trip took us down the Swan Valley on a Winery tour and lunch, a very relaxing outing. The Nullarbor Plain was ours to enjoy on a return journey on the Indian Pacific train from Perth to Sydney. The food and the company of other passengers at meals was so enjoyable, the stops and excursions on the way were full of interest and included Kalgoorlie, around midnight, when we saw the huge mining trucks operating under bright lights in the open cut gold mine, the town of Cook with its 3 residents, Broken Hill and Adelaide. We travelled through the Blue Mountains to reach Sydney.



Our next Queensland holiday was in new territory for us staying in Townsville and taking tours to Ingham, watching the sugar cane harvesting, Braham cattle wandering and some even sitting on the road and the beautiful Wallaman Falls. Charters Towers was next on the agenda with its interesting historic buildings and the typical Queenslander homes with plenty of ventilation underneath. There is a lovely walk along the waterfront with a view of Magnetic Island which was our next stop via a short excursion on the ferry. We stayed at an Ocean front apartment on the Coral Sea and I rose early each day to take photos of the sunrise over the water. As the sun was going down the wallabies appeared on the rocks below our apartment. The peace and beauty of the scene contrasted to photos I had seen at the Maritime Museum in Townsville when it was the major port for Naval ships leaving for Papua New Guinea during WW11. The harbour was crowded with vessels and I believe my father, Stan Marshall had taken photos of Magnetic Island from such a ship, while on one of his journeys to New Guinea or Morotai. The other reminder of how different life was in this idyllic place is the Forts Walk with the ruins of the fort complex of WW11 on Magnetic Island. This is a steep but rewarding walk with a magnificent view from the lookout tower. When I retired in 2010 in order to assist in looking after my granddaughter, Jacinta, I firstly took a tour with Miriam of The Kimberley, beginning with Darwin. We visited the Adelaide War Cemetery where we saw the graves of many people, including a number of Post Office employees, who were killed during the bombing of Darwin in 1942. I was once again able to enjoy a boat ride down the Katherine (Nitmiluk Gorge) We then visited the Durack Homestead (formerly Known as Argyle Homestead. This was the home of the well respected Durack family, pioneer pastoralists from Ireland, whose history was written by Mary Durack including "Kings in Grass Castles". The grave of Mary Durack Miller has been moved to this site. During a boat tour on the Ord River to Kununurra we found that mango, citrus and sandalwood plantations were thriving as a result of the irrigation provided through the Ord River Scheme. Kununurra

was set up as the retail outlet for the rare pink diamonds and the less expensive Champagne and Cognac coloured diamonds mined in the Argyle Diamond Mine, which has closed operations in 2020. A lady in our travelling party whose husband was a partner in a large accountancy firm was fortunate to be given a pink diamond which she proudly showed to her travelling companions.

Further adventures on this tour were travelling on the Gibb River Road (sometimes unpassable) to our camping area in El Questro, Zebedee Hot Springs, the Coach driving through the Pentecost River, a visit to the Argyle Diamond Mine, a tropical downpour at Halls Creek and Fitzroy River, wearing the large Garden rubbish bags to sit on an open boat during rain while travelling down the Geike Gorge with its spectacular colours, driving down the middle of a flooded road after a lengthy wait for the traffic from the other direction, and finally seeing the Boab Prison tree, which was once used as a holding Cell. Broome was our final destination and it did not disappoint, with the Cable Beach often photographed with the camels, and the fantastic Cable Beach Resort where we could enjoy the view with a drink from the Sunset bar. The nearby Willie Creek Pearl farm provided an education in how pearls are formed, with human assistance. I think this was my holiday of a lifetime.

There was some cream on the cake to be savoured at the end with a stopover in Perth to spend a day



with a former work colleague from Prouds. She and her family were originally from Afghanistan and were strict followers of the Muslim faith, and I was able to observe her participation during the period of Ramadan. We were treated to a shared feast with her extended family in the Afghan tradition, and we were able to meet her new baby daughter.

We then had a day tour to the Benedictine Community of New Norcia, the only monastic town in Australia which was established in 1847 by Spanish Benedictine Monks, where we enjoyed a fine lunch in their Dining Room. This was followed by a tour of some of the magnificent Spanish inspired buildings including the Abbey Church, Museum and Art Gallery. Products from their famous Bakery and Olive Grove are available at the Visitor Centre. The care and education of indigenous children was part of their Mission, the Aboriginal schools closing in the 1970's. I have been saddened to read that this Benedictine community was identified by the Royal Commission as one of the

nation's worst historical child sex offenders. A grim past has also been recognised in Rottnest Island with the imprisonment and mistreatment of Aboriginal men and boys. In the great beauty of this Country we can't ignore some of the tragedies in our past whether it be in the often unknown impacts of WW11, or in our treatment of indigenous people. At the same time we celebrate the pioneers like the Durack's who had the courage to make a new life for themselves, and employed and had the greatest respect for our indigenous men and women. One Aboriginal of the Boontamurra tribe of the Cooper's Creek district, "Burrikin" or Pumpkin as his name was rendered by the Irish settlers became an invaluable assistant in all aspects of station work, and was a faithful right-hand man to Patsy Durack.



## ADVENT STUDY REVIEW: CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE CHURCH

### Janet Hubner

In Advent 2020, six parishioners met together to study ABM's *Climate for Change* booklet on the planet's environmental crisis. We had vibrant discussions about our individual responsibilities as Christians, the role of the Church (broadly) and the part our parish could play in how society handles this crisis. We had some differing opinions and some common views about what would constitute appropriate action.

This article represents my own thoughts and may not capture what the other study group participants thought. Interestingly, our conversation took us to what we think the purpose of Church should be, what is our 'core business' (to use a management buzz phrase!) and what do we think the Spirit is calling us to. From my perspective, I think we came to the conclusion that solving the environmental crisis is not the calling of the Church.

Educating people and leading behaviour change to solve the climate crisis is not the calling of the Church. There are experts in our society who are qualified and able to take on these very important responsibilities and we can listen to and follow their guidance. As individuals we can get involved however seems best to us, but as a Church we have a different calling. So what can the Church offer society on the issue of climate change?



### **Recognise and repent; recognise and rejoice**

Essentially, as individual Christians, as small parish communities and as a worldwide institution, our behaviour has contributed, along with the rest of society, to this crisis. We need, individually and corporately, to recognise how our actions have been self-serving and not life-giving. We need to educate ourselves about the effects of our actions and repent when we have put ourselves above the needs of others. We, each and together, need to think about how our lifestyle has contributed to injustice on the Earth and repent of our sins. However, we also ought to recognise our good work, how our parish wisely and carefully manages its resources, how we each are already bearing God's love and light to the world around us. Let us rejoice in all the good that we have and are, recognising that all good comes from God.

### **Tackle injustice**

Climate change will result in severe injustices for the poor people of the world. The effects of rising temperature on food and water supply, changing coastlines, and extreme weather will affect millions of people in unimaginable ways. Our calling, as Christians and as Church, is to minister to the poor and needy – this will be an immense task. Our calling is also to challenge policies, systems, attitudes and behaviours that perpetuate injustice. It's a daunting calling – but this is not new! This has been our purpose in the world as given us by Jesus: do for others what we would want

them to do for us; if you see a brother or sister in need, help them.

### **Perfect love casts out fear**

We have all seen the school students striking for the climate crisis. I admire their commitment and boldness and but I am also dismayed that our young people are so fearful of their future. Our biggest contribution as Church, as Christians, can be to infuse this issue with love. Just today I watched a YouTube video of a young woman speaking about climate change – she said *If you're panicking about the climate, don't bottle it up ... talk about your feelings and let them out.* Let's reach out to the young people in our families with love, asking them about their fears and listening to their answers. Let's tenderly love our earth, being conscious of how we use its resources. Let's love our global neighbours by thinking of them in our daily choices and behaviours.

### **Seek the Spirit's leading into holiness righteousness/ justice**

Let's listen with our spirit to the Holy Spirit for guidance in how to live, how to change our habits, where to direct our help, who to offer comfort to. Can we do this together as a community? Can we use the tools provided by the wider Church to improve our parish's stewardship of Earth's resources and minister to the needy? Can we encourage each other personally to seek the Spirit's leading into a holier life?

### **Trust in God**

Ultimately, all we can do is 'Trust in God and do good' (Ps 37.3); trust God for the grace to simplify our lives, reduce our use, leave enough for everyone and help those in need; trust God for a bountiful future for all the world; trust God for the human will to protect the Earth; trust God enough to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with God (Micah 6.8).

### **It's not just about the climate.**

There are many more issues facing society and maybe you care about some of these – reconciliation with Aboriginal Australians, domestic violence, war, refugees, poverty, homelessness, fair distribution of the COVID vaccine ... Would anyone be interested in joining me in a small (or large – there's no limit!) group to explore how our parish can respond to some of society's injustices, including but not stopping with climate change? Can we offer support to our dedicated church wardens and parish councillors by doing some research for them? Can we pray together about the issues that distress us and listen to God's voice calling us to greater love and justice in particular and specific ways?

If you are interested, contact me and I'll arrange a meeting of all those interested. We don't need lots more work to do, but maybe we can make a small difference with just a few meetings this year.

Janet Hubner,  
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## **THE FINAL CALL**

Harry Kerr

**Sermon at St Peter's, 24 January 2021**

Mark gets straight to the point. Jesus marches into Galilee and says: *It's time. The Reign of God is happening now. Turn around. Take a different road and change your life totally.* Then he taps 4 fishermen on the shoulder and says *Follow me.* They literally drop everything and go with the stranger, leaving home and family, leaving job and family business. Mark makes it sound so

simple. Yet it is a huge upheaval. Mark's readers would have known that this was a lifelong journey, which took them into all sorts of strange places to encounter all sorts of unexpected people. Jesus' call is not a call to live better or to be more religious. It's a call to surrender our whole life and take the unknown road wherever he takes us.

Let's stop for a moment to look back over our lives at the moments

when God came and invited us to follow down a different road. God's call isn't a once off. It keeps coming again and again. It is a call to do something or leave where we are and go somewhere else. It is the turning points in our lives; a particular course of study, a chance meeting with someone significant, our first job and second and third jobs, losing a job, the moment we meet our partner and decide to share our lives.

God comes also in the dark times: when a marriage breaks up, at times of grief and loss and disappointment, times of pain and illness in ourselves and in people close to us, in the expected and in the unexpected. As we look back, we see an unfolding story of walking with Jesus further and further along the road to new places and new people, deeper and deeper into the mystery of the life of God. Sometimes we welcome it with joy. Other times like Jonah we want to run away and hide.

As you know, Pam and I are in the process of downsizing and moving to a new place. Many of you have successfully negotiated this turning point and you know all about it. When we moved to our present home we thought at last a home of our own. We planted a garden. I painted the outside of the house all by myself. There comes a time when you realise that the energy is running down, that the house and garden is becoming too much. What was a pleasure is now a burden. The process of downsizing means we part with things that carry with them the story of our journey together.

Right now I realise that with this move, we are entering the final stage of the journey. I am facing the question: *What does this mean? What is God's call now in this final stage of the journey as we wait for what one writer has called 'the last bus', when we prepare to go on a journey from which we will not return?*

I believe the church has let us down. I include myself. We are not bad at ministering to people at the point of death and through their funeral. We do not encourage each other to face and reflect on the last stage of the journey and explore what it means for us. We collude in the denial of death. These days, people don't die. They *pass*. But people of faith are more and more talking about *going to God*, faith in journey's end. That is not easy at a time when the mystery of God, humanity and the world is sidelined. What do we think as we look forwards to the end of the journey as we look back on the road along which Jesus has lead us? We might be with the writer of the book of Ecclesiastes. He (or she) said: *the days of trouble come, and the years draw near when you will say, 'I*

*have no pleasure in them The strong men are bent, and the women who grind cease working because they are few, because all must go to their eternal home, and the mourners will go about the streets; and the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the breath returns to God who gave it. We will disappear. Nothing makes any difference.*

It may be helpful as we look back and look forward to the last journey to what the call is what has always been. God takes us to places we don't expect and to which we may not want to go. Jonah didn't want to go to Nineveh, but it was the most important journey he ever made. People come into our lives. Some will bring life and love. Others would suck us into darkness. We have seen times of unexpected joy and shattering sorrow but God knows us and never lets us go, even when we feel we have lost him. The letter to the Hebrews gives us a vivid description of what faith looks like. *Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.* He retells the journey of Abraham: *By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to leave everything and set out for a place that he was to receive as an inheritance; and he set out, not knowing where he was going. For he looked forward to the city that has foundations whose architect and builder is God.* He also reminds us: *For here we have no lasting city, but we are looking for the city that is to come.* Everything in our lives is significant but nothing is permanent. St Paul reminds us: *the present form of this world is passing away.* We are on the way to God who is always ahead of us and always with us. There is always letting go. Like Nathaniel in last week's Gospel, God knows who we are. God's plans take shape. The long road is God's road to the heart of God. Dag Hammarskjöld, the United UN Secretary General who was killed in a plane crash while on a peace mission in Africa, said in one of his reflections: *For what has been, thanks. To what will be, yes.*

You remember the committal in the book of Common Prayer: *FORASMUCH as it hath pleased Almighty God of his great mercy to take unto himself the soul of our dear brother/sister here departed: in sure and certain hope of resurrection to eternal life, through*

*our Lord Jesus Christ,* These are words of hope. This is the final goal of our journey. We don't know what it means or what it will be like. We do know God travels with us and God will be there.

In one parish, a very old and very devout lady used to come to the Wednesday service. She always said she was *rarin to go*. One Ash Wednesday, after I said the words: *Remember you are but dust. To dust you shall return.* She said: *I wish you wouldn't say those words. They sound so cold and lost.* She was wrong. The earth to which we return is Holy. The earth is full of the life of God. God created us out of the dust of the earth. The dust to which we return is the arms of God gathering us to Himself in love.

I would like to finish with two more texts which have come to mean more and more to me. The first is a reading for All Saints Day from the 1<sup>st</sup> letter of John: *Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when Christ is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is.* The second is from 1 Corinthians 13, Paul's great hymn to love which really describes the life of God, what love is. But it goes forward to a climax: *When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. For now we see in a mirror, dimly. Then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known.*

# PRAYING WITH JAZZ FOR LENT

Rose Marie Berger

**J**'s music pleasure, prayer, and praise in one? WHEN THE CHAOS gets too much, I listen to jazz. I'm not an aficionado. I just know that brave jazz refreshes my freedom. Lately, I've been listening to a lot of jazz. The stay of execution offered by a COVID-19 vaccine allows for a giddy, perilous optimism. Even a minute crack in our coronavirus armor brings up emotions too dangerous, too chaotic to express: A trembling wave of the suffering we have endured, heavy across the shoulders like the splintery weight of the cross. For ballast against overwhelming rage, I turn to *The Five Quintets* by poet Micheal O'Siadhail: "Be with me Madam Jazz I urge you now, / Riff in me so I can conjure how / You breathe in us more than we dare allow."

Miles Davis' *Sketches of Spain*, particularly "Solea," is a mainstay for this kind of Lent. A reviewer described this 12-minute composition—part flamenco, part blues—as "a revelation of spirituality in solitude." According to the liner notes, the rhythms were so complex that some in the orchestra found it hard to stay in tempo. But Davis' trumpet cuts like a sword of truth over the martial clatter of hooves on cobblestones and Calvary's unrelenting military tattoo, while the snare keeps up a marching beat toward the inevitable outcome on Golgotha. Davis seems to "capture" the crucifixion in complex *cante jondo* ("deep song"). Suffering does not have the final word. The melody is so strong, Davis said, "that the softer you play it, the stronger it gets." I've also been listening to the sacred choral music of cool jazz legend Dave Brubeck. Brubeck not only pioneered the 1950s West Coast jazz sound but made art that deepened faith immersed in justice. Raised as a Presbyterian, he joined the Catholic Church as an adult. His experiences in World War II, where he led the first racially integrated Army band, became fodder for his songs on the



tragedy of war and the things that make for peace. War changed him. Surviving war changed him. "Fifty-six million people died because they forgot

'Thou shalt not kill,'" he said. In 1968, Brubeck composed an oratorio to "remind people of the true beliefs of Christianity." *The Light in the Wilderness*, Brubeck's first sacred choral work, opens with his complicated and unnerving soundscape of Jesus' baptism and wilderness temptations. "The temptation to rationalize one's compromising as a means to gain idealistic ends is the theme of the wilderness dialogue between Jesus and the Devil," wrote Brubeck in the performance notes. The chiasmic hinge of the oratorio speaks directly to the horror of war in the section "Love your enemies," with the baritone soloist repeating the call "Love your enemies and do good to those who hurt you."

Despite similarly themed later works, it's *The Real Ambassadors*, written by Brubeck and his wife Iola in the late 1950s, that I've turned to during the four years of Trump's assault and our long year of isolation. *Ambassadors* is a collaboration with Louis Armstrong (also a Catholic). Brubeck intended the work as a satire of the State Department's Cold War "cultural diplomacy" programs. The government sent Black jazz ambassadors around the world while maintaining Jim Crow America at home. At the 1962 Monterey Jazz Fest, Armstrong's interpretation of the piece "They Say I Look Like God"

brought the audience to their knees. What Brubeck wrote as parody, Armstrong sang straight. The chorus opens with a medieval plainchant rendering from Genesis 1:27 ("In God's image, he created them"). With Brubeck's spare piano as intermediary, Armstrong's Third Ward-inflected bass vocals rolled like a king tide: "They say I look like God. Could God be Black?" Armstrong sang. "You raised us from the dust and breathed a life with trust and gave to man the great choice to be alone on earth or one with Thee. ...When will that great day come? ... When God tells man he's really free." In the recording, you can hear his voice drop with emotion in repetition of the final phrase, "really free."

Jazz is the consummation of all that is truly human, the best of our polyphonic harmonies, a wild, joyful freedom born of shared suffering. "Is music pleasure, prayer, and praise in one?" asks O'Siadhail. "The horns and harps of paradise play jazz."

*Rose Marie Berger is senior editor of Sojourners magazine, a contributor to the Catholic Nonviolence Initiative and author of [Bending the Arch: Poems](#) (2019). See [www.sojo.net](http://www.sojo.net)*



# A Christmas Poem

Kaitlin Hardy Shetler

Sometimes I wonder  
if Mary breastfed Jesus.  
if she cried out when he bit her  
or if she sobbed  
when he would not latch.  
and sometimes I wonder  
if this is all too vulgar  
to ask in a church  
full of men  
without milk stains  
on their shirts  
or coconut oil on their breasts  
preaching from pulpits off limits to the Mother  
of God.  
but then i think of feeding Jesus,  
birthing Jesus,  
the expulsion of blood  
and smell of sweat,  
the salt of a mother's tears  
onto the soft head of the Salt of the Earth,  
feeling lonely  
and tired  
hungry  
annoyed  
overwhelmed  
loving  
and I think,  
if the vulgarity of birth is not



honestly preached  
by men who carry power  
but not burden,  
who carry privilege but not labour,  
who carry authority  
but not submission,  
then it should not be preached at all.  
because the real scandal  
of the Birth of God  
lies in the cracked nipples of a  
14 year old  
and not in the sermons of ministers  
who say women  
are too delicate  
to lead.

If I could tell the world just one  
thing  
It would be that we're all OK  
And not to worry 'cause worry is wasteful  
And useless in times like these  
I won't be made useless  
I won't be idle with despair  
I will gather myself around my faith  
For light does the darkness most fear  
My hands are small, I know  
But they're not yours, they are my own  
But they're not yours, they are my own  
And I am never broken  
Poverty stole your golden shoes  
It didn't steal your laughter  
And heartache came to visit me  
But I knew it wasn't ever after  
We'll fight, not out of spite  
For someone must stand up for what's right  
'Cause where there's a man who has no voice  
There ours shall go singing  
My hands are small I know  
But they're not yours, they are my own  
But they're not yours, they are my own  
I am never broken  
In the end only kindness matters

## **Hands**

In the end only kindness matters  
I will get down on my knees, and I will pray  
I will get down on my knees, and I will pray  
I will get down on my knees, and I will pray  
My hands are small I know  
But they're not yours, they are my own  
But they're not yours, they are my own  
And I am never broken  
My hands are small I know  
But they're not yours, they are my own  
But they're not yours, they are my own  
And I am never broken  
We are never broken  
We are God's eyes  
God's hands  
God's mind  
We are God's eyes  
God's hands  
God's heart  
We are God's eyes  
God's hands  
God's eyes  
We are God's hands  
We are God's hands  
**Jewel, Hands**