

# St Margaret's Anglican Church Eltham

## the Parish Matters

Celebrates parish life and reports important items from the most recent Parish Council meeting  
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**God of Power and love,  
who raised your Son Jesus from death to life,  
resplendent in glory to rule over all creation:  
free the world to rejoice in his peace,  
to glory in his justice, and to live his love.  
Unite the human race in Jesus Christ your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever. Amen..**

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### *The Uplifting Octave Before Easter*

#### **Sunday – Palm Sunday**

We gathered in the Courtyard by the Outdoor Cross, blessing and waving Palms and woven Crosses from the same palms, singing songs and Hosanna to our King. Once within, we read the Passion again, the long form story of what was to come this week.

At the conclusion of the Service; we commissioned a newly made Banner to represent the people of St Margaret's sending this group forth to join with the Anglican Diocese under their Banner marching proudly in the annual Palm Sunday March for Peace, with special focus on the plight of refugees in Australia.

At this we joined a rainbow coalition of Churches and groups, from the Vatican Flags of yellow & white, our fellow Anglicans and other Parishes, to the socialists with their red through to our Blue and white, St Margaret proudly identifying our sturdy little band.

#### **Monday – Babbette's Feast**

We gathered in the Church to watch a rather old but very beautiful movie – Babette's Feast; set in a very cold, severe northern Scandinavian Jutland. Two elderly sisters maintain the memory and cult around a demanding and rigorous form of Church, led by an aging but charismatic Pastor – their father. Glimpses of another, outside world of the late 18<sup>th</sup> century intrude into this setting, culminating in the mysterious arrival of a young woman (Babette) who changes everything.

Upon the anniversary of the Pastor's death – Babette gathers the folk for a feast like no other, sustained on the winnings of a lucky lottery. The Folk are crusty, difficult, fearful of what might happen, but determined to celebrate their late founder's Anniversary. Babette has been working for months putting together the feast – the like of which had never been seen outside the grandeur of Fin de Siecle Paris; never mind this far north.

Babette gave her all to the Feast, transforming the Folk; their life, their very prayers given new meaning and depth by the end. The road to Emmaus story reflected in their deep love for each other as they went afresh into the cold northern night, full of hope and mission; a new understanding of their old prayers ringing in their ears.

#### **Tuesday – Tenebrae**

We gathered again in the Church, dark and quiet save for candles burning upon the Altar. The ancient service of Tenebrae (The Darkness) held early in Holy Week since medieval time and before was again with us. Selected readings and Psalms alternated with Taize chants, each time a candle extinguished – representing symbolically the gathering power of darkness as the Holy Week progresses to its climax. Like those original apostles, candle by candle is extinguished in turn, until finally the largest – the Christ Candle - remains alone. This Candle is not extinguished – but hidden behind the Altar – representing Christ gone from us for a time. A crash of thunder wakes

. the dead (and some sleeping disciples with a start). There the Service finished and all depart in silence, reflecting on all they experienced

#### **Thursday – Maundy**

We gathered again in a lit and festive church, but with a sense of foreboding at to what lay ahead. A Garden of Repose set up at the back held a clue; bowls and towels a confronting message. The Readings told of the Great Mandate; which we prayerfully did – we washed each other's feet or hands. A simple act of service – but that is what we are instructed to do. Once the Service was ended – our simple task to strip bare the Sanctuary; remove every last vestige of colour and decoration, even the very chairs we had just used in the Liturgy. All was left bare and desolate.

At the end – we too went out into the Garden, walking behind the Ciborium held aloft in a quiet procession to wait with Him in the garden. Candles lit among the greenery, we read psalms; chanted Taize songs and waited, one by one leaving quietly – going out into the night.

Across the road – the bright light and rowdy revelers at the pub reminded one of those Roman Guards and household servants we encountered earlier in our Readings. Life indeed goes on – unaware of the drama within.

#### **Friday – Cross & Procession**

We gathered again in a bare and vacant church. The Sanctuary light out, bare wooden cross and no relief in sight. We read the passion of St John, staring in the Garden with the Arrest, the long story read in parts, ending in Jesus burial – the women carefully noting where the body was placed.

We too hammered in the nails – rather starkly owing our own part on the events of that day long ago. Symbolic nails representing times we ourselves may have done the wrong thing

We then went down to Francis Xavier's Montmorency – and walked with them through the Stations of the Cross around Montmorency; startling café patrons, sleepy motorists and sundry other early morning folk - bearing witness to our story. Perhaps a pagan child saw us and wondered what we were doing...

#### **Saturday – Preparation**

We gathered again in that bare quiet church, starting with morning prayer. As folk gathered - a quickening tempo, the kitchen stirring with activity, flowers arriving, cleaning, resetting the Sanctuary and arranging color and light. Setting out the Paschal Candle, Easter eggs and buns, sweeping the leaves and petals away from the day before, twining the crown of thorns with flowers, replacing the baptismal water, a last touch of green – all was ready for the Dawn Vigil.

#### **Sunday – Dawn Vigil**

We gathered in the pale cool moonlight before Dawn, around the lit fire in the Courtyard, warming ourselves as did those servants and soldiers long ago. Our Cantor lit the Paschal Candle from the flames of the fire; proclaimed Christ the Alpha and the Omega, now risen and forever present. We processed in – our Cantor carrying the Paschal Candle high, we carrying our light symbolically, answering our Cantor with joyful

responses. Once within – our Cantor sang the Exsultet, high, clear and confident in the Risen Lord, ringing in the new dawn with an ancient song of praise.

We heard then the readings that cycle through the Old Testament promises, and rang out our Easter Bell as the Gloria awoke from its long rest over Lent, awakening our neighbors to Easter Day. Then we paused to reverence the Gospel – and told again the great foundation story of the Christian faith. The lights came on, we were saved.

We had breakfast together – much as did the original disciples might have, but instead a wonderful spread of croissants, muffins and fruit, wishing each other well at Easter; looking forward to the day of celebration, some with families, each in their own way carrying away carefully their own piece of the Light of Christ.

David Tuke

### *Keeping Up With Prayer*

#### **Prayerfulness**

One of the things we are called to do as followers of Jesus is to pray and work for peace and justice. We're invited to pray for our world, for our church, for those fellow-travellers along the way. One of the signs of a church that is looking for signs of hope and growth is that each person who comes knows that someone is praying for them. Here are some of the ways we are developing for prayer at St Margaret's.

#### **Prayer Buddies**

Since the beginning of the year you may have been present on the days when we have, at the end of the sermon, sat with someone, exchanged a prayer, and promised to pray for that person for the next month.

We've now done this twice, at the start of Epiphany and the start of Lent, and we'll be doing it again this Sunday 8th April. This is an initiative responding to the Growth Intentions, as well as being about encouraging all of us to pray for those around us. We are disciples of Jesus together, learning and growing.

#### **Praying for our Parish**

The Prayer Buddies are not the only way we can pray for each other. In the next couple of weeks we'll be launching "Praying for our parish", which means that we pray for a set number of people at St Margaret's every day. It's been an eye-opening task for me preparing this, making me realise the contribution each person who is part of our community makes to our life together. A large print version is available in the foyer and I encourage everyone to take the opportunity to check whether your name and tasks you do in the church are correct; as I did this from memory, I'm sure I've missed things, and I welcome your feedback so we can get things right!

#### **Praying Daily**

In the coming weeks, we'll be putting out suggestions for resources online and in print that foster daily bible reading and prayerful connection with God. This is important: how do we nurture relationships but by talking with and spending time with those who are friends and loved ones? It's the same in our relationship with God. My interest is that everyone who is part of St

## Pastoral Listening Skills Workshop

Saturday 28th April 9.00 am

Revd Jan Crombie will lead this Deanery organised event at St Meg's.

A great opportunity for everyone to improve.  
**Contact Jen in office to register or online**

Margaret prays daily in some way, so that we are together, going and growing deeper in our friendship with God and each other.

### Praying Meditatively

An important part of prayer is not just us talking to God, but learning to listen, and taking time in silence to hear God speaking to our hearts. We have the Christian Meditation Group which meets on Saturdays at 8am and on Wednesday mornings at 9:30am which provides a community and guidance in this ancient practice which is always new.

### Prayer for Healing

Many may not realise, but another ancient practice of the church has been the laying on of hands and anointing with prayer for healing for the sick. If you've got a serious concern, or would like healing prayer Robert or I would be delighted to hear from you, as this ministry is a joy. It often (but not always) goes alongside reconciliation (confession) as part of the healing process of owning up to the stuff we've done wrong and seeking God's forgiveness. And while the Anglican rule of thumb is: "all may, none must, some should," I'm available for this ministry if that's a form of prayerful holding you find you need.

### Prayer Chain

Another way we can pray for those in need is through the Prayer Chain, managed by Glenys Collis. Prayer requests are forwarded to Glenys who sends out an email asking for prayer from a confidential list of pray-ers. If you're interested in being part of this list, or if you have a serious urgent need for prayer, contact Glenys (0407398948) to be part of this ministry.

Revd Keren

## Notes from March PC Meeting

### Growing in faith: Ephesians 4:25-32

- The passage shows us how to live as a community and how to be more intentional with our actions towards others in a Godly way.
- We recognised that this can be difficult sometimes to hold all of this in the balance.

### Mission:

- **Month 3 - Growth Intention III. Community Cohesion**

A cheaper estimate has been obtained recently to make the external door automatic and that this will be referred to the Property Committee

Combined Sunday services breakfast – this is working extremely well and the PC recognises the great work of Mitzi and others in organising this.

### Feedback Box:

- There were no forms in the feedback box;

parishioners are encouraged to offer feedback - good news and ideas as well as problems

**Event Planning forms – PC approved.** Thanks to those who completed forms with attention to detail.

- **World Labyrinth Day: May**
- **Commemorative Service: Aug 2018**
- **100 Years of WW1 Service: 10 Nov 2018**
- **Planned Giving Dinner :20 July 2018**

### Financial Report:

- The reports were discussed. The accounts are in good order. A thank you to David Pryor for his work in compiling these figures.

### Discipleship:

Communications – a successful meeting of the new communications committee. In future the development of flyers or advertising material will be finalised by this committee

Do Justice –. Peace March is organised for Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> March as a parish event

Pastoral Care Team needs new members because of ill health and retirements at a time when demand for services is high.

Property Committee –, Keren, Sally and Mandy to progress the work of the Children's Play area

Finance Committee – discussion about the need to acquire a Parish Debit card for the role of finance, maintenance and kitchen management. PC approved PC approved the recommendation that a minimum of 10% of fund raising activities should be allocated to Mission

Hall hire income and associated costs: further exploration is needed about the wisdom of hiring our facilities *and* maintaining availability for our own mission

Early May there are seminars for clergy and a seminar for Parish Council members regarding church law matters and on Pastoral Listening

In Shirley's absence the Vicar will appoint Melissa Laidlay as Warden in a temporary capacity.

Shirley Nash

## Council Appreciations

A regular item on Parish Council's agenda is to recognise and express our appreciation to specific people. In this issue **we report the thanks given at the Easter Services** prepared by **Keren and Sally**.

It seems a long time ago since **Ash Wednesday**. But, as always, we need to thank a number of people who have contributed to our experiences this Lent.

**Shrove Tuesday** – Do Justice group and Margie Dahl in particular and all who contributed to the supper and reflection on the plight of flood-affected Bangladesh.

Jean Taylor for her untiring assistance in creative projects for Ash Wednesday and through to Easter.

The regular services, the Taize with Helen Coutts on recorder and thanks to Heidi for her leadership and enthusiasm.

To all who assisted in making the palm crosses, and to Graham Constantine for cutting palm fronds. Thank you Angela for the greenery especially the bamboo. To those involved in the Palm Sunday march: the Do Justice team who created the banner.

**In Holy Week**, we did the film reflection on Monday night watching and talking about Babette's Feast. Thank you to those who came.

We have again experienced the quietness and peace of **Tenebrae**, thank you Mandy with Alan White's guidance.

The deeply moving **Maundy Thursday** service saw us clear the church. And sit in Watch singing Taize. Thank you to those who helped to set up the church. And to Heidi for the Taize help.

The sadness of **Good Friday**, thank you Robert for your words. Thank you, John Winkett for making the cross into which we could hammer nails and Adrienne for organising John's Passion.

**The Stations of the Cross**. Thankyou Helen for organising readers. Thanks to Coralie and Liz for the hot cross buns and organising the morning tea at St Francis Xavier.

**Holy Saturday** saw workers putting back the church for the celebration of the risen Christ. Thank you Sally, Jean, Margie, and David for your splendid help.

So here we are on **Easter Day**. Christ is Risen, he is risen indeed.

We thank Mizi, David, Coralie and others for their work in organising the breakfast.

And David again for his wonderful Holy week story herein.

**Many have contributed** in many other ways, whether that be Jen in the office, the sacristans, greeters, communion assistants, musicians, readers, flower arrangers, and other tasks. Thank you to all.

But from us all, thank you to Keren who leads, inspires and teaches us

### *Stocktake of Our Growth Intentions*

Our Growth Intentions came out of Our Vision Day on July 15<sup>th</sup> led by Revd. Jan Crombie last year. It was agreed in her report that we should do a stocktake of progress after 6 months. As of March we are somewhat behind the target but 3 of the growth intentions action plans have been reviewed at successive 2018 Parish Council Meetings. These are the original plans and have had to be modified according to resources, but in general are the guidelines Council has been working towards with the help of many parishioners.

So far: the communications team are working on marketing. We're in the process of employing a pastoral assistant who will do great work towards some of the ministry actions in the first growth intention. Prayer buddies has started and is being done seasonally. The every-second-month parish breakfasts are blossoming. We had Frank Moloney for an afternoon seminar on Mark in March. Chris Winkett kindly and ably led the series of sessions at the end of last year for people to go deeper in faith. We're in the process of producing resources to encourage daily bible reading and prayer. This month parish council will be looking at the fourth growth intention to see what's happening and what needs to be encouraged or nurtured.

As a Parish member you may want to acknowledge which of these activities you know of, or have been involved in, by making a note in the margin. Of course you will find several have not started yet. You may like to pray about those things we are still hoping to see as the year unfolds.

## **I. Pathways to community connection**

1. All ages worship service once a month with kids involved in music, reading, have a sermon with kids focus but layered so adults benefit too, or something like Godly play.

2. Focus on marketing, communication and continued support of current entry point activities for all ages (ie: Taize, Labyrinth, Benedictine Group, Piece of Peace, Meditation, Social justice group, Book group etc)

3. Start ONE new activity to support Mums of young children/babies in the community, we like the idea of starting a Mums and Bubs group fortnightly. Have candle lighting, prayer, talk through each other's week, tea and coffee. Could have special sessions.

## **II. Growing in faith**

1. Parish-wide:

a. A special day of prayer (prayer)

b. Engage all parishioners in praying for each other (prayer)

c. Parish weekend on Mark (scripture focus)

d. Discernment of gifts

e. Discernment of learning styles

2. Small groups:

a. A six week group in faith exploration run by Chris Winkett

b. Review of what our small groups need for health

3. Individual practice:

a. Encourage daily Bible reading, prayer and reflection

b. Put together resources to support this, possibly on website

## **III. Community Cohesion**

1. Conducive worship environment

- Heating

- Sound - training announcers (intercessors, readers, those with general notices) how to: project voice, use the microphone effectively (self monitoring of adequate volume)

2. Prayer buddy system once a month during intercessions – people pair up and exchange prayer cards that have a simple prayer

3. Combined Sunday services breakfast to take place on a bimonthly (every two months) basis

4. Combined Parish Celebratory Worship

## **IV. Capability Review**

1. Update & Refresh Welcome Booklet

2. Review the previous Pathways report, and/or engage with it again.

### *Locking Up Hall and Foyer*

Most of us have to lock up our facilities occasionally.

**This is a reminder** because on several occasions recently the place has been left open.

**The check list is**

- **Make sure the kitchen outside door is closed.** It is always locked from the outside (Master key access only). **Often it has not been pulled shut**
- **Check each of the FIVE outside hall doors are pulled and bolted shut. (This includes the wet room door)**
- **Remember the foyer door needs locking with the key.**
- **If you don't have a key, lock the foyer door from the inside and leave** via the kitchen door

Ed this edition Harry Watson