

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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**Covenant God, may we find ourselves trusting you
when evidence says don't.
May we find ourselves following you
when the world says not to.
May we find ourselves living with the impossible
when everything else says we can't.
May we hear the promise in our souls,
and live it in the world. Amen**
c. Wood Lake Publishing Inc 2012

**St Margaret's Parish
Annual General Meeting
Sunday 21st October 2018 at 10:45am
following combined service at 9:00am**

Notes from Parish Council Meeting

Parish Council met and we are thank Mary Ann Wilkie for providing dinner

Family and Children's Ministry is being led by Margie Dahl. The group meeting with Margie agreed that the best way forward is probably to introduce an all ages worship service every second month. Developing a drop in time for carers and young children will also be undertaken.

Marketing and Communication: We affirmed that any group or member of St Margaret's wishing to produce or circulate communications material with St Margaret's name on it, must first go to the Communications Committee (preferably via the Parish Office) We also noted the need for this process to be timely so that groups are not hampered in advertising.

Finance Committee: Parish Council endorsed the idea of printing slips to be placed in the Offertory Plate, indicating a donation made via ADF or direct debit. This would be would be an indication to visitors and others that the offertory was "alive".

There is to be a Joint Churches Carol Singing event planned for Saturday December 8, 15 & 22 in Central Eltham between 11:00am and 12 noon. This will be accompanied by a nativity photo opportunity.

Discipleship Reports by parish groups were discussed and we were pleased to see the dedication of groups working for Gods mission here.

Food Collection

Collection for the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre

The Do Justice Group invited parishioners to contribute food and toiletries to the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre. The foodbank and community meals program offers food security to over 700 people per week. Most of these people have no income at all.

75 volunteers, 10 of whom are people seeking asylum, prepare lunch each day for around 240 people. That's over 61,250 meals per year. For many, this is their only real meal per day.

The centre has been blessed by the donation of access to land and infrastructure to grow vegetables. The garden is cared for by volunteers, including ASRC members seeking asylum who use the opportunity to share their skills, unwind and connect with others in the community. This provides up to 40 crates of produce for the centre each week.

Parishioners of St Margaret's responded generously to the invitation to donate, and an estimated \$600 worth of products were collected. Margie Dahl and Jenny Disney took the products to Footscray and were warmly welcomed and shown over the facility. The Do Justice Group thanks everyone who contributed.

It was a magnificent achievement. If you were not able to help at the time, you can make a contribution on line at <https://www.asrc.org.au> or ring them on 9326 6066.

Margie Dahl

Parish Ladies Fellowship Lunch

On 4th September 36 ladies attended our lunch. Franciscus Henri, a member of the Open Door Singers Group, donated his time and talent to entertain us with music and song. Plenty of hand clapping, toe tapping and audience singing was heard. An enjoyable day for all. \$541.00 was raised on the day. Funds donated to charities. (See AGM report)

Barbara Talbot



NAIDOC FORUM, 2018

On a recent Sunday afternoon some 85 people came to hear three Indigenous women speaking in our church in a program arranged by St Margaret's Do Justice group, Eltham Amnesty and Nillumbik Reconciliation group. The St Margaret's Banner and the altar was draped in indigenous flags.

The women who spoke came from a variety of backgrounds but all three were speaking on the theme. *"Because of her we can."* Aunty Irene Norman is a Wurundjeri woman who spoke of the way her grandmother taught her weaving and knitting which became the keys to the successful woven, crocheted and ceramic pieces she makes today. She spoke with passion on how the Mullum Mullum (indigenous) Cultural centre has become a lively hub for the Aunties and Uncles to teach younger people, both in crafts and, personal development and in recognizing the songlines of their ancestors as they travelled from the Yarra River near Bulleen and Warrandyte to the Dandenongs.

Bettina King was sponsored by Amnesty International to come and speak. She campaigns for Amnesty on Indigenous rights. From her opening sentence she held the audience spellbound. She started by saying "I was born in a public hospital..I was taken from the nursery when I was two days old and given to a white family to be their daughter". A very stark way to describe how indigenous mothers and babies were treated under the Stolen Generation policy. Because she lived with a white family she learnt English, and after being reunited with her birth mother in her twenties she has worked in the field of human rights throughout Australia.

The third speaker was Jacqui Katona, who is now lecturing at Victoria University while undertaking a law degree at Melbourne University Like Bettina she grew up in Adelaide learning English (as well as 3 or 4 Indigenous languages) In the 1990s she was living with her father in NT and volunteered to help some of his family in the Kakadu Natural Park who were having a dispute with a uranium mining company .She went to help and together with Yvonne Margarula, one of the 20 Mirrar women who lived near Jabiluka, organized protests and stopped the mining at Jabiluka, was recognized world wide and won the US Goldman Environmental Prize in 1999.

These three women are certainly role models who can be looked up to and inspire others .

Finally the Rev'd Jim Houston who some in the parish will remember being with him when he was baptized at St Margaret's in the 1980s and later taking services at the Research church, held a Q&A session. (This provided a link between Christian spirituality and the indigenous spirituality expressed in the smoking ceremony at the beginning and the didgeridoo playing throughout the afternoon.

Thanks to all who helped: the members of the Do Justice Group, and from the parish: Mary Ann Wilkie and Mitzi Tuke; The Nillumbik Reconciliation Group(specially Jan Aitken and Diana Warrell who did the flyers) and The Eltham Amnesty Group.



Jacqui Katona, Bettina King, Aunty Irene Norman and Richard Williams pic. Diana Warrell.

EVOLVING BIOLOGY, EVOLVING THEOLOGY

Saint Margaret's Faith Issues Group, September 2018

On Sunday evening commencing 7.30pm on 30 September 2018 two presentations and a discussion on the topic was Evolving Biology, Evolving Theology were given. The evening was organised by the Faith Issues Discussion Group of the parish. It was held in the hall. In attendance were over 60 persons. After great insightful presentations and a lively discussion a lovely supper was served.

The first presentation was authored by David Tuke but was presented by Tim Beattie as David had just experienced a health problem although he was in the audience. David and Tim are both qualified scientists. To the accompaniment of beautiful slides depicting images of early beginnings of the universe and the flowering of life on earth, David and Tim gave all present a grand sweep of the origins of the universe. The first second of time gave us the foundation of the laws of physics which set in motion the formation of the stars and planets, which in turn provided conditions for life to eventually burst in profusion on our own planet in a remote corner of the universe in a small galaxy. The first presentation examined human stories, myths, narratives that arose to comprehend the universe and our place in it. Then later a description of how modern science developed and evolved to examine and understand the physical nature of the universe was provided. The first presenter invited us to ponder how it is that life emerged from the dust so that it may speculate and observe itself. The first presentation emphasised Science.

The second presentation was given by the Revd. David Sullivan who was until recently vicar at Saint Matthews Panton Hill. He explored our spiritual intuition and God's creation and belief that the universe has agency in God. David examined the ancient world and deity and the Genesis account of creation which is similar to other ancient creation stories. A key difference between other ancient accounts and Genesis is that with the former the image of a deity was placed in a "temple" but with Genesis the image is humanity. He also stressed, as with the ancients, our understanding of origins is best thought of as functional in nature rather than material. He contended that science and our spirituality complement each other and draw synergy from each other. The presentation demonstrated that the theological underpinnings of science are that God created a rational and intelligible universe which humankind can investigate. The second presentation emphasised Theology.

Both presentations sought to cover the "middle ground" between science and spirituality and belief in God, and invited us to consider that science and belief in God are in fact complementary. They each draw strength from each other. At times people may experience challenges in attempting to reconcile the two and often treat them as if they are mutually exclusive which they are not. The slides of the development of the early universe were again displayed and accompanied by a reading from chapter 1 of the Gospel of John.

At the conclusion of the two presentations questions and comments were directed at the panel. It consisted of the two speakers David Sullivan and Time Beattie with Lyn Beattie and David Tuke. The Faith Issues Group thanks these four people who are regulars at the fortnightly discussions of the group. Thanks are also given to Margie Dahl who ably chaired the presentations and questions. Thanks also to other members of the group who also assisted with such a successful evening David Pryor, Liz Pryor, Jan Kerr and Geoff Sandy. Thanks to all who contributed to the supper.

Ringling The Bell For Peace..... 1918 & 2018

by Kathleen Toal

Remembrance Day – 11th November 2018 marks the centenary of the signing of the Armistice between the Allies of World War 1 and Germany. The Armistice took effect at the 11th eleventh hour (Paris time) on the eleventh day of the eleventh month in 1918. The actual signing of the Armistice had occurred at 5.00 am in a Railway carriage in the forest of *Compiègne*. The Armistice brought to an end four years of brutal fighting – almost 62,000 Australians died fighting and amongst those who returned many had been injured.

Over the last four years across Australia there have been many Commemorative Services including the Landing of the ANZACS at Gallipoli on the 25th April 1915, The August Offensive 1915 (Battles of Lone Pine & the Nek), Battle of Beersheba, various Battles on the Western Front in France and Belgium, including the Battles of the Somme, Fromelles, Pozières, Ypres, Menin Road, Passchendaele, Zonnebeke, and more recently the Battle of Le Hamel, and Hundred Days Offensive.

At the time of World War I the Shire of Nillumbik and Montmorency (now part of the City of Banyule) were part of the large Shire of Eltham – the Eltham Council Chambers were located at that time in Kangaroo Ground and Eltham was a small town within the Shire.

The news of the Armistice was greeted with much joy and celebration throughout the towns of the Eltham Shire . . . the local newspapers reported these celebrations in great detail – at Eltham . . .

*“Upon the receipt of the news half-an-hour after announcement in the City as to the signing of the Armistice, the bell of St Margaret's Eltham was set going and rung until the bell rope **BROKE**. Some 60 people had then assembled and joined in a special service of thanksgiving in the Church, conducted by the Vicar . . . The Scouts with all the available young men and the*

local schoolmaster paraded the street singing patriotic songs, accompanied by the Scout drum and impromptu instruments and kept going for hours,

The surrounding hills were lit up with bonfire light and everything tended to a fitting proclamation of the glad tidings for which after the four years of anxiety and suspense everyone could truly rejoice.”

In 2018 one hundred years later Eltham will remember the sacrifice of those soldiers

and nurses who fought in World War 1 and subsequent wars - at St Margaret's on Saturday 10th November the bell will be rung at 1.55pm just prior to a Thanksgiving service of Remembrance; and on Sunday morning, 11th November at the War Memorial Tower, Kangaroo Ground a Remembrance Day Service commencing at 10.45am. The Tower was dedicated in 1926 to remember all the people from the Shire of Eltham who had paid the supreme sacrifice in World War 1.

An invitation is extended to the communities of Banyule and Nillumbik to attend these Remembrance services – please wear a red poppy for remembrance.

References:

Fri 15 Nov 1918 - Eltham and Whittlesea Shires Advertiser and Diamond Creek Valley Advocate, page 2.

Kathleen Toal has a Diploma in Family Historical Studies and enjoys researching local history, she also has a Bachelor of Business (Accounting) Graduate Diploma of Education (Women's Studies), Kathleen lives in Eltham with her husband Gary, and they have 3 adult children and 7 grandchildren who they adore.



Kathleen submitted this article for Your Child magazine. Republished with permission

Wise Faithfuls - Helen Symons

Helen Symons learned to read music before she could read books. She had the good fortune of being born into a very musical family. Her parents enjoyed singing, especially duets and they hosted monthly musical evenings where everyone performed. And, of course, Helen sang in the church choir where her Dad was the vicar. Helen's singing teacher was a friend of her the family and it was he who encouraged her to sing publicly while she was still quite young. She learned early to sing well and not to strain her voice.

From her family, Helen also gained a love for learning. She followed her brothers to study at University High school and then went on to train as a teacher. Her mother was a teacher, a strong, determined and inspirational woman and her two sons and Helen all became teachers. For many years, Helen taught English, history and social studies at Montmorency High School. She also taught music for a short time. She chuckles at the memory of driving her car to a school that was just around the corner. She had to carry so much stuff to carry that walking was not an option!

Ron and Frank, Helen's brothers, were very protective of her. They took her to car and motor cycle races. Although Helen was never very sporty, her brothers taught her to play cricket, bowling left handed but batting right handed! But she admits that she was never a very accurate bowler. Frank was a keen lacrosse player tried to teach her to cradle the ball, but this sport never really appealed to her, and she was too short for basketball.

Christian faith was integral to Helen's life. From a young age, Helen had a wide knowledge of hymns and other church music. Her Dad was an accomplished preacher. The fact that he didn't enter ordained ministry until he was in his 40s meant that he had a wide life experience on which to draw and he had a very good reputation for his pastoral work. Helen married John, a fellow teacher at Brunswick Girls School. They shared a love of music, with John accompanying her at her singing lessons. They had four children, John, Liz, Michael and David. Eventually Helen and

John divorced, but they remained on good terms until his death.

St Faith's was Helen's spiritual home for many years. She took on a variety of roles – vicar's warden, vestry, synod representative and chairperson of the kindergarten committee – all while continuing to teach. Life in a small parish was very demanding, and Helen was relieved to move to St Margaret's. Her favourite Bible story is Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan.

Pride and Prejudice is Helen's favourite book with the Poldark series coming close behind. She has wide tastes in reading and especially likes a good murder. She devours books by Ruth Rendell, Agatha Christie, Kathy Reichs, P D James and others. She also enjoys television dramas such as Foyle's War. Music continues to be a great love. She contributes to worship at St Margaret's by playing the organ and the piano and singing, although arthritis now makes this difficult. ABC Classic FM is on her radio all day. While Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, Handel and Schubert are her favourite, Classic FM has widened her horizons by playing music that she would not have chosen.

She really enjoys concerts by the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and going to see films with others from St Margaret's and discussing them over a meal afterwards.

While Helen has not had the opportunity to travel overseas, she has travelled extensively within Australia. The highlight of her trips was travelling on the Ghan to Darwin. She has also been on bus trips to Deniliquin, Swan Hill and the Alpine Way and next year she is planning a trip to Beechworth.

I asked Helen who were the five people, living or dead, whom she would invite to a dinner party. She chose Jane Austen, J S Bach, Mozart, Queen Victoria and Ben Chiffley. Chiffley, because he was especially revered by her Dad. Helen takes an active interest in politics. Tony Abbott, in particular, makes her cross, along with other politicians who deny climate change.

Family continues to give Helen great joy. Her children John and Liz live close by and have blessed her with grandchildren. Altogether,

Helen has six grandchildren. They all go out for dinner together to celebrate birthdays. Sadness and difficulty have been a significant part of Helen's life. Her eldest sister, Betty, died at the age of just 13. Her Dad was killed in a scooter accident. Her son Michael took his own life five years ago, leaving a wife and two young daughters. Her happy memories are of Michael as a rosy cheeked, curly haired baby who was always getting into mischief. Her youngest son, David, lives with difficult

mental health issues. And yet, Helen continues to smile her warm smile. As she says, if you smile at people, they will smile back at you. But I think it is more than that. Helen's faith has given her acceptance and courage in the face of adversity and tragedy. Helen's family life, music, faith and teaching are an example of how to live a full Christian life.

Margie Dahl

Ed this edition: Sally Petty