

# St Margaret's Anglican Church Eltham

## the Parish Matters

Celebrates parish life and reports important items from the most recent Parish Council meeting  
 Find us on the web at [www.stmargaretseltham.org.au/](http://www.stmargaretseltham.org.au/) Facebook at [www.facebook.com/stmargaretseltham](http://www.facebook.com/stmargaretseltham)

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

St Margaret's Anglican Parish Eltham acknowledges the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nation as the traditional custodians of the land on which we worship. We commit to working for reconciliation and justice for Aboriginal people. Diversity and inclusivity are important to us at St Margaret's.

### Prayer at the time of choosing an incumbent

Bountiful God,  
 give to this parish a faithful pastor  
 who will faithfully speak your word  
 and minister your sacraments;  
 an encourager who will equip your people for ministry  
 and enable us to fulfil our calling.  
 Give to those who will choose, wisdom,  
 discernment and patience,  
 and to us give warm and generous hearts,  
 For Jesus Christ's sake. **Amen**

## First Meeting of the New Council

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**Please don't forget and add to the tubs for food in the Foyer each week. For the LINC basket and St Mark's Fitzroy and is distributed by Anglicare**

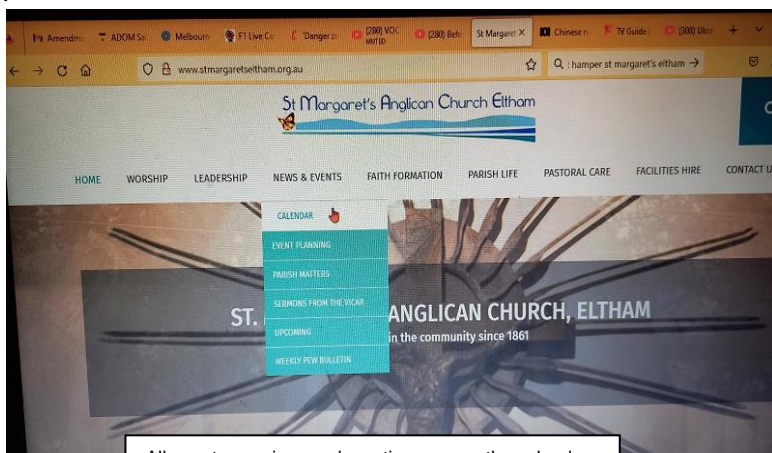
The first meeting of the 2022-23 Parish Council was chaired by the Revd Linda. After the opening prayer and acknowledgement of country she welcomed the newly elected councillor  
 → Coralie Carew  
 as well as re-elected/appointed councillors:

- Robert Mackenzie,
- John Humann,
- Tony Michaelson,

- Harry Watson and re-elected/appointed wardens:
- Kathleen Toal,
- Helen Robertson and
- Sally Petty.

Did you know there is a short profile of these people on our website. We will try to have a summary in next February's PM.

Harry Watson was appointed Parish Secretary by the meeting. John Humann has been appointed Treasurer by the wardens. It was noted that Parish Councillors were commissioned on November 27<sup>th</sup>.



All events, services and meetings are on the calendar

Thanks were noted from two of our Mission fund recipients, Anglicare Victoria and Anglican Overseas Aid

Of the five Heart Edge Projects, only the Concert for Fund Raising which supports our student scholarships, was discussed. The event will be in September and several suggestions, about how it could build on the success of the recent concert, were discussed and to be used to promote an even more exciting event.

In her report the vicar noted that the Revd Joy Sandefur will be officiating at the December 11 services and at all the Sunday services during January. There will be no Wednesday services in January during the vicar's leave, which is from Boxing Day until January 30. The office will be closed until January 23. During this time there will be no data projection in the services and the congregation is requested to use the prayer books and share the hymn books.

We received the first report of the Marketing and Communication (MAC) subcommittee. Several new brochures for 2023 were under review including for Taise and Faithful Women. The need for calendar coordinating the several calendars was discussed. Most of us found the calendar on the website very helpful. (See above page 1)

The Do Justice committee gave an update on the progress in Nillumbik Shire and the diocese on their respective Reconciliation Action Plans. There will be an extended conversation about this at their next meeting

It was agreed to have our first Taise service on Sunday 29 January. This will be coordinated by Helen R.

The diligent, time-demanding and successful endeavours of our acting vicar were acknowledged. Our sincere thanks were noted for the significant contributions of retiring Councillors Mandy Stevens and David Tuke (as Secretary). Fortunately, both of them plan to continue in their many roles for the Parish other than council.

The next Council meeting will be on Monday January 30.

The meeting concluded with the Grace

Harry Watson

## Christmas Thoughts and Holiday

Dear Friends,

I want to share with you some thoughts on the grace of presiding at the altar. Yesterday I was preparing a sermon and reflecting on Mary's 'yes', I found myself heading to the filing cabinet in the basement to look out some notes from my days of theological study. I rarely do this because university texts are so complex they are inappropriate for use

in explanations of 1000 words, which you know is the limit I set myself. To quote that well known Australian film "it was the vibe" of a particular poem that was drawing me. I can't believe that out of thousands of pages of notes I found what I was looking for.

It is a feminist theologian focusing on the role of embodiment and the Eucharist. Somewhere in my subconscious I had recalled the explanation of Frances Croake Frank who wrote:

*After the pain and the bleeding and the dying,  
"This is my body, this is my blood"?  
Well that she said it to him then,  
For dry old men,  
Brocaded robes belying barrenness,  
Ordain that she not say it for him now.*

Can you hear an echo of the words of consecration and the bitter undertone of one critical of a woman of the Catholic tradition which denies women the priestly role? We all have an opportunity to recognise the unique embodiment in the



Eucharist as we participate in it. We do that though gendered bodies. God chose to come live in this world in human flesh born of a woman. In the birthing and the dying, the secular and the spiritual were intertwined.

As I prepare for Advent 4 and focus on the gift of Love, my mind immediately turns to Mary and Joseph in a stable birthing Jesus. The human and the divine were enmeshed in him. It is through symbols that God is mediated to us today. Every time we reach out our hands at the Eucharist, we are initiated to a new beginning; a birth of sorts and our bodies are significant in that lived-experience.

As we approach the 30 year anniversary of the ordination of women, I am still awe-struck that I am graced to say the words of the Consecration Prayer. It has been my privilege to preside for so many weeks as your Locum. Now it's time for me to rest.

I am going to take a break from Boxing Day till January 30<sup>th</sup>. I leave you in the capable hands of Rev Joy Sandefur who will be with you on Sundays in January. I've told the wardens that they should contact me if any are facing a health-crisis during that time. I want to know!

I wish you and yours a happy, safe and holy Christmas

Revd Linda

## Flags of Australia

### Flags of Australia.

In 2019 the Do Justice Committee prepared a document for St Margaret's Eltham:

#### Pathway to Reconciliation from 2019

The document opens with the words . . . *In 2015 Archbishop Dr Philip Freier wrote a commendation for the inaugural Reconciliation Action Plan of the Diocese of Melbourne, which was presented to Synod in October 2014.*

On behalf of the Parish *The Do Justice Group* has been working through the actions set out in this document and reporting progress of these to Parish Council.

Under the section headed **Respect** – there is a Comment / Action: **Display Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags in the foyer of the church as a welcoming gesture.**

This year a flag stand was purchased to enable these flags with the Australian flag to be displayed for a funeral service held in July and also the NAIDOC event on the 24<sup>th</sup> July 2022. The flags have remained in the church until recently (as we prepare for Christmas) and will return later.

There has been much feedback of the appropriateness of the presence of these three flags being in the church.



There are three official flags in Australia: The Australian National Flag, the Australian Aboriginal and the Torres Strait Islander Flag. The Aboriginal Flag and the Australian Torres Strait Islander Flag were appointed flags of Australia in 1995. A

version of the Australian National Flag has been in use since 1901.

Kathleen Toal, for Do Justice.

## Memory Care Café in Action

The Memory Care Café continues to grow and flourish with the café on 15 November welcoming 14 customers plus 2 cares who had not previously attended.

We hosted 2 speakers being the Nillumbik Aged Care Navigation Officer and a representative of the Positive Ageing Advisory Committee.

Both speakers were warmly welcomed and provided current and valuable information to customers about new resources available to cares. Information was also provided about Nillumbik's Dementia Friendly Alliance known as 'Open Minds' who are officially aligned with Dementia Australia.

It is pleasing that the café is hosting a growing number of St Margaret's Parishioners as well as continuing to reach out to the local community. Promotion of the café will continue into the New Year with contemporary carer Information packs being distributed to medical practices within Eltham.

### Dates to remember:

**Tuesday 20 December will be the last café of 2022.**

**Tuesday 17 January-the café will re-open for 2023.** (i.e., 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month)

In 2023 the café will open on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month.

Thank you to everyone who has supported the café since its inception.

Very good wishes and blessings to all.

Sheila Cheary

## Pastoral Care

The Pastoral Care team is hoping to reach out to most of the 30 plus people on our list before Christmas. It has been very tricky visiting or taking communion to those in aged care. Apart from the facility's entry conditions, including a RAT test, declarations and mask wearing, which cost time and effort, it seems that the four or more facilities we visit have been in lockdown more often than not. This has been due to Covid, flu and gastro. So, it's still very tough for our past congregation who are now residents (and of course those not from St Margret's too). The cards sent at these times by the team are a small reminder of the

church's love for them. Our top card senders are Helen C, Adrienne and Sheila.

A reminder that during the Christmas period when the office is closed and Linda is taking a well-deserved holiday, the team members can be contacted via the Parish website or by 'phone. A reminder the team is Mary Lynton-Moll (for the Prayer Chain), Adrienne and Harry Watson, Helen Costello, Jenny Gillett, Sally Petty and Sheila Cheary. Their numbers are in the Parish directory, or if you have misplaced it leave a message on 9439 9059

Harry and Adrienne

is the end result of hours of work by the women who steadily completed the tapestries, quietly sewing at home then meeting weekly to show the progress they had made. The second feature that I love, is the music of the service. Sometimes when I attend church on a Sunday, I hear young pianists who have been awarded scholarships to play at the service and I am in awe of their musical skills. However, every Wednesday when I attend church, I am moved by Glenda's quiet piano playing. The piano gently "sings" as she improvises in her playing of hymns and Bach songs before, during and after the service. Each service ends with the singing of Shalom, where we ask for peace, serenity and well-being for each other. We are in no doubt we are in a holy space. And we thrive on it!

Jenny Disney with help from Helen R

### Jenny Disney's Three SM's Highlights

What I have loved about St Margaret's.

Anthony and I first started attending services at St Margaret's in 1973, just after we settled in Eltham. For a number of years in the 1990s we attended the Research church and it was there that we attended the monthly "Working Bees," caring for the native plants outside and the furnishings inside.

I would list these small gatherings, as well as extended light teas after the Saturday night services, as probably my most memorable experience. There was the possibility of extended discussions and talking to each other as well as the way we looked after the beauty of the church and its surroundings. But there was more: the fellowship and support of the congregation. During this time Anthony was unwell for several months and eventually had a major operation and several months of chemotherapy during which time I was lovingly supported. For the last few years, I have regularly attended the Wednesday morning service and have enjoyed once more the intimacy of a small group sitting around a table drinking coffee and sharing food, and with everyone being willing to support each other.

I value immensely being a member of firstly St Margaret's Anglicare Auxiliary and for the last 20 years, the Anglicare Victoria Partnership Group of Anglicare in Eltham. After I retired in 1999, I decided I would join a church organisation. Anglicare beckoned. The auxiliary raised money by having cake stalls in Eltham, selling Christmas cards and having lunches in members' homes with an Anglicare speaker coming to talk of the work of the organisation. This year our AVPG has made the decision not to have fundraising events but to concentrate on what we do well: from parishioners giving donations of food, men's jocks and school stationery for two homework clubs, and from parishioners and friends the many knitted and sewn clothes. The most unusual collection was 115 pairs of ladies' shoes which very quickly were distributed to refugees. For me, the generosity of parishioners and friends stands out very clearly as a form of recognizing the plight of people in need and being willing to support them.

We worship in a beautiful church, now located within a garden mostly of Australian native plants shaded in parts by the huge old oak tree. There are two features of the church service that I particularly like. Firstly, in the church are the kneelers made in the 1990's. Each one

### Season ends e.g. Faith Issues Supper

Our Dr Geoff Sandy is nearly always enthusiastic and dramatic (see inset at our yearend supper) and he has convened Faith Issues this year with great success.



There are well over two dozen on the mailing list for the twice a month meetings and attendance is 12 to 23. Mostly over 20 lately. Presentations have been made through the year by about a dozen speakers, largely from within our group, affirming our faith and sometimes testing it. I think it's fair to say it's become a pillar of our church, thanks to Geoff, who is a qualified lay reader amongst his many other qualifications.

The last meeting was led by the Mackenies on the religions of South Africa, where about twice as many as here (per 1000 population) are practising followers of a very diverse range of mostly Christian faiths. Our wind-up supper followed, a little more lavish than usual!



Editors Sally and Harry-> This edition Harry

Pics: Liz P, Kathleen, Harry and website,

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Let us know what you would like more of (and less?)