



St Paul's Church, Rondebosch

Parish Newsletter June/July 2016

Let us pray for this Parish:

“God our Father, the giver of every good gift, graciously regard the needs of your Church and guide with your heavenly wisdom the minds of those responsible for choosing a rector for this parish; send us a faithful pastor to feed your flock and to lead us in the way of holiness; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

This is the prayer which we need now. One of our churchwardens and lay-ministers, will be away for a month until mid-July - we wish Carol Hartley a really good holiday, a complete change, and good fun with her family. We pray for the complete recovery of Val Heighway, our other churchwarden, who is not well following surgery that was not as straightforward as expected. Lesley Munro, who specifically said “**not** a churchwarden” has been called in to help, and a very small group of Parish Councillors do what they can. Without a rector, there is much more work than usual.

Thank you!! To Darron Misplon most of all, but also to the wonderful priests who not only come to preside and preach at our Eucharists but make visits too – Erica Murray, Bob de Maar, Elizabeth Cherry, Clive McBride, Nicky Ing, Ivan Weiss. Thank you to Arlene Christian in the office – who has been told, very firmly, to take leave during the school holidays and to those who take turns in manning the office while she is away we are blessed to have such willing wonderful people here. You are all greatly appreciated.

The Olive Grove: It has been suggested that this should become a pleasant area for use by everyone in Rondebosch, a place to sit and relax – or even study in the sunshine. In that case, it must be clean, with shade and grass but no litter. The Lease has been discontinued so the parish mended the netting – and of course it was cut open again 2 days later! St Paul's cannot afford palisade fencing which we know is the only answer. The Heritage Board is being approached. One or two people who still sleep on our steps still foul, litter and are often bad-tempered but most of them have moved away to other areas because they know that they are not welcome on the grounds at St Paul's. The "problem" has been displaced, not solved. The GSCID van has had to move its van next to the flower-sellers.

We have witnessed a miracle!

but a Rondebosch resident remarked

"The Church grounds have had a VERY BAD HAIRCUT!"

This is not a bad description but you can be sure that it was necessary because, when the grass was cut, so much rubbish was revealed that hundreds of rubbish bags had to be carted away. Teams of **Straatwerkers**, deployed by the Groote Schuur Community Improvement District (GSCID), worked hard and cheerfully for over two weeks, all day and even at the weekends! For this amazing effort our parish paid not a single cent! it was paid for by the GSCID from money which had been given to them. The parish of St Paul's cannot thank them enough: Anthony Davies was the inspiration (may God bless him) and Charl Brook and Ingrid were among those who led the work.

THANK YOU ALL!

Please, when you meet **Straatwerkers**, perhaps along Belmont Road, or near the river – anywhere – give them your best smile and thank them for what they are doing to clean up the town. Remember – they are **vagrants who are working**, for all of us, wonderfully useful! It is a modern miracle. God smiles at them and in them.

When we get rain, the plants will re-grow. At present street people should not sleep on the church grounds at all – we cannot have that mess again. There are Havens (nearly heavens) and the subways are open at night. Ingrid and Charl of the GSCID, armed with torches, go out a couple of nights a week in the small hours, checking under bridges and in doorways. They know nearly all of the people individually, over 70 of them just in Rondebosch.

The excellent work given by the team from St Paul's which, every month, provides soup and/or sandwiches to the poor of the parish, chiefly at the Police Station, is most valuable and will continue. U-turn vouchers are freely available.

St Paul's hopes to work with other NGOs and churches in the area. Please help us with contacts. Carolyn Neville tells us about Observatory. At a "Level 1" haven, always full, there are single beds and no drunkenness is allowed. At a "Level 2" haven the people must be prepared to accept advice for rehabilitation.

No vagrant ever needs to be short of food or clothing. This is the result of the partnership between the Community Improvement work (CID), Civic Association, U-turn, Loaves and Fishes (the churches).

St Peter's Church in Mowbray gives a meal at 6.30 every Thursday – all kinds of lonely people come and sit down to supper with members of the congregation. Relationships begin to form.

International students in Observatory offer "Meal on the Village Green" or "Breaking Bread" on Friday afternoons – with music, perhaps a band. Students mix with other people. Now the homeless people no longer harass the students to ask for money!! An NGO is being formed and they hope to introduce washing facilities. What can the students in Rondebosch do?

Ask the "vagrants" what they want and they reply

Choice where to be A Toilet and shower just to get clean
Somewhere to do their washing otherwise it is the river
Lockers because they do not trust each other

The Bell

Wayne said there was something wrong with it because it did not ring properly and anyone could see that it was crooked. Someone should just “get up there” and have a look, he said. So someone did!

Mark happened to be really good at climbing trees, with a great head for heights. He had experience with ship-building in the Cape Town docks. Balanced precariously on ladders, he nearly reached the top. “Come down, come down” we cried from ground level, terrified. Nothing could be done without a proper scaffold, which some of you would have seen. Mark took photographs of the broken “iron arm” of the rocker to which the bell is attached and the rusted pipe which housed the rope. These have been posted in the church – have you looked at them? The damage **had** to be fixed because the roof tiles were being damaged every time we rang the bell! Rather a lot of expensive copper was used in the repair, and work had to be done inside the church behind the organ to fix the pipe. Mark found the way to get behind the organ and below the bell-rope on the inside by crawling through a dark hole in the dark. A secret passage!

Now the pull is straight and the bell rings true! Let us hope that it will last for another 100 years or so.

Ironically one of the local residents telephoned in to say that the bell-ringing on Sunday mornings woke her when she wanted to sleep in. “That is my free day, my only day to sleep late, and that bell rings and rings and wakes me up!”

Why do we have a Church bell? Bells resonate with people! We like to Ring in the New Year. We toll the bell sadly for someone who has died, and ring it happily to celebrate a wedding. Many will remember how the bells of Britain rang, in joy and relief, in triumphant victory in 1945. Most of all, we ring the bell when God meets us in the mystery of the Holy Eucharist. We are stunned by the miracle.

There are wonderful hymns in the Anglican Church. We can learn more about them.

“The King of Love my Shepherd is”

The author of this metrical version of Psalm 23 was Henry Williams Baker (born 1821), eldest son of Vice-Admiral Sir Henry Lorraine Baker. He was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge before entering the ministry of the Church of England. In 1851 he was appointed Vicar of Monkland in Herefordshire and remained there until his death in 1877. In 1859 he succeeded his father as 3rd Baronet.

Sir Henry was a hard-working promoter and editor of his church's new hymnary, *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, which was published for the first time in 1861. Among his own contributions were several new translations of Latin and German hymns.

The hymn tune known as **Dominus Regit Me**, is as popular today as it was in Victorian England. It was composed by a contemporary of Henry Baker, John Bacchus Dykes (1823-1876) who was Vicar of St Oswald's in Durham and at one time Canon-Precentor of Durham Cathedral. Of the high church tradition, he did not get on too well with his Bishop.

Dykes was an organist, violinist and pianist, but is best remembered for his prolific output of hymn tunes. Many of these were closely bound up with **Hymns Ancient & Modern** but also found their way into the hymn books of other denominations. While some modern musicologists have been keen critics of hymnists in the Victorian age, at least one of them has described **Dominus Regit Me** as “an almost perfect melody” with one regret – “the stagnant bass in the last line”!

Thank you, Marjorie Bull, for this contribution.

AWAKENINGS

All of us have had “awakenings” during our lives, times when an experience suddenly makes everything absolutely clear. Such a moment of revelation can be quite trivial, but it can also be life-changing. Perhaps you remember Arthur Clarke’s Space Odyssey which ends with a horrific whirling descent through a black hole in the universe to an awakening in utter stillness. The silence is broken by the cry of a new baby! A new birth! Indeed, that is exactly what happens when we die – our last awakening!

These familiar words come from one of John Donne’s poems –

*Bring us, O Lord God, at our last awakening,
into the house and gate of heaven,
to enter into that gate and dwell in that house,
where there shall be no dark nor dazzling but one equal light;
no noise nor silence, but one equal music;
no fears nor hopes but one equal possession;
no ends nor beginnings but one equal eternity;
in the habitations of Thy Majesty and Thy Glory, world without end. Amen*

Every week there is a list of people who need our prayers, many of whom are preparing for their “last awakening”. We remember them, and their families and carers. This translation from The Message (the Bible translated by Eugene Peterson) gives a fresh interpretation of a very familiar psalm, especially for carers!

*“I’m not afraid when you walk at my side.
Your trusty shepherd’s crook makes me feel secure.*

*You serve me a six-course dinner right in front of my enemies.
You revive my drooping head; my cup brims with blessing.*

*Your beauty and love chase after me every day of my life.
I’m back home in the house of God for the rest of my life.”*

Lex Alport

It was in 1984 that Lex returned to Cape Town from Austria, where he had spent 25 years studying and working. The “Boy with the Golden Voice” had carved out an illustrious career for himself in opera, and had trained and sung with many famous people in Vienna.

How lucky it was for us that Lex, a deeply Christian man with a strong faith, chose to make St Paul’s his spiritual home. He served both Christ and the church faithfully all the way until the end.

Apart from his beautiful baritone voice, Lex had many other talents and so involved himself in every aspect of life at St Paul’s. Who could forget his beautiful singing in the choir, his pancake making at our monthly breakfasts, his apple strudel and home-made croissants at the Food Fair? At all events Lex could be found - setting up and decorating the hall, blowing up balloons until he felt dizzy, carrying heavy tables and chairs like a man half his age, giving the verger a lift home at the end of a very long day, or painting banners to advertise functions before helping to string them up between the trees in the church grounds!

When the sacristans were desperately looking for some younger person to assist them, Lex (at the age of 75) volunteered and came along regularly on Saturday mornings to be a member of the team.

We have him to thank for the pergola over the veranda at the hall and the vines which were planted to provide shade.

Most of all, Lex loved and was genuinely interested in people. He made friends wherever he went and people loved him back. His family and friends were of the utmost importance to him and he loved them with all his heart.

For all this and so much more, we will miss you Lex.

Joan Freislich

STUDENTS

Anhouse had a burglary! It was thought that the property was secure but a crowbar was used to prise apart the bars of an old gate on Stanley Road. Two laptops were stolen! The students were shocked, and so was Carol. New and better security arrangements are now in place. It is such an indictment of our society that we have to live defensively like this . . .

Most of the Anhouse students are staying on during the vacation because they are working and/or it is too expensive to go "home".

It is so good to see students coming to our services and all of us hope that they feel welcome here. We really do pray for them when they write their exams, and therefore we shall really want to know about their results. Meanwhile, may they have a happy holiday break so that they can return refreshed in July for the rest of the year.

Dear Lord, please give the students peace to study, to think and to work so that they may finish their courses with success and go on to the next year with a sense of accomplishment, and joy in Your service.

God bless them. They carry our hopes for the future with them.

How do we introduce St Paul's to the hundreds of people who live in the flats around us? We open our doors in welcome not only for services but for breakfasts and food fairs - but we need to visit people too, to go out to them, quite simply in love and caring.

Helpers needed: Tea people on Sundays, Choir members, more Sacristans. And a gardener! Or two! Please don't be shy!

Do you want to keep the name CARITAS for this newsletter?

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