# PARISH CONNECTIONS

# HEART SJAMES

### OCTOBER 2011



Photo: Christopher Shain

# JOIN THE NETWORK?

#### FR ANDREW SEMPELL

It is not surprising to be told that the ongoing development of communication technology is having a profound impact upon the world. The ability of people with common interests to interact with each other across cultural, national and distance boundaries is changing the way we understand society, ourselves and even the nature of human identity. People now talk about 'virtual communities' of people linked by mutual ideas and with a desire to share their views (and themselves) with others through the use of information technology.

The triviality and shallowness of some of these activities are often

criticised in the media, but there are also more profound engagements taking place. Many interactions are for good purposes such as academic collaboration, however others are more pernicious such as in the dark world of terrorism.

A concept that has grown out of these developments is that of the 'network'; an informal group of people who communicate with a view to working together for a particular purpose. Networks transcend traditional forms of social engagement and even political allegiances. They have the ability to connect people across cultural and national borders (and their controls), they are porous because of the ease by which they can include new people, and they have little structure thereby minimising the cost of their maintenance.

The church is as much caught up in this innovation as any other organisation. Part of the influence of a network is its ability to create new allegiances that cut across traditional and physical religious boundaries. Moreover, and arising from this, some networks have sought to create what is called 'realignment' as a way of describing the development of new hegemonies based upon particular theologies, practices or loyalties and supported by structures that operate outside the traditional or conservative organisational structures. While this may seem liberating on the one hand, it also has the potential of creating anarchy on the other. This is all challenging stuff, but it is not new.

St James' Church has certainly enjoyed the fruits of its networking. Many developments over the past thirty years have arisen from engagement with other churches and organisations both in Australia and around the world. Examples include the creation of the St James' Ethics Centre, the St James' Institute and the new music programs.

#### **TRINITY COLLEGE VISIT**

In the past month we have enjoyed a connection that has developed between Trinity College, Melbourne and St James' Church. The involvement of the Trinity College Choir at Choral Evensong and in the Bach & Beyond concerts was a huge success. Moreover, the leading of *The Word Translated* seminar by staff of the Trinity Theological School provided stimulating insights into the creation of the Scriptures and their use, and of the creation of the King James Bible in particular. Finally, it was a pleasure to have the Warden of Trinity College, Dr Andrew McGowan, preach at St James' on Pentecost 15. It is good to see this link continue to evolve, and see the benefits for those who have participated in these recent activities.

St James' will continue to look at how it might develop relationships with other networks in the future, both at the local level with other parishes in Sydney and beyond, and at a broader level with organisations and churches both nationally and internationally. Indeed, as part of this engagement, we look forward to hosting a conference of deans and rectors of parishes from around the world (including, among others; London, New York, Cape Town, Hong Kong and Wellington) next year.

Informal connections between churches, organisations and individuals are part of the world



Rev'd Dr Andrew McGowan, Warden of Trinity College

in which we live, and help provide communication on a very wide front. St James' Church looks forward to developing such links as will help us to be a centre of spiritual growth and transformation in the Anglican reformed-catholic tradition.



sung liturgically by the Choir of St James' in honour of the 400th anniversary of the composer's death

### **CHRISTIAN BEST PRACTICE**

Management often uses the term 'best practice' when referring to methods of operation by which a high standard of business procedure can be maintained. Benchmarking, (or assessment of performance against specific criteria), is the way of determining whether a business is indeed meeting the best practice standard. In other words, best practice is about setting a high standard of behaviour and ensuring that it is achieved.

In its own way, and over almost two thousand years of experience, the Christian faith has developed a type of best practice model not that the church has always measured up to this standard. Critics of the Christian church rightly point out its failings; from incitement to hatred of those who are 'different', persecution of dissidents and minorities, abuse of the weak and vulnerable (including children), and legitimisation of corrupt regimes and political practices — to name but a few.

That the church (as institution) and its membership sometimes fail to live up to its calling is unsurprising, at least to the extent that the Christian faith recognises the fallen nature of humanity. The church will fail to be what God wants it to be, however this should not provide any excuse for the toleration of bad behaviour — some things are simply shameful and have brought the body of Christ into disrepute. Nevertheless, while it is possible to recognise what is wrong with the church, 'best practice' may also help us to discern and maintain the good.

#### **CHRISTIAN VIRTUE**

It is not too difficult to come up with a list of Christian virtues such as; love, justice, selflessness, repentance, forgiveness and Godly obedience. St Paul accounts for these in several of his letters, calling them the 'Fruits of the Spirit' in his Letter to the Galatians (Galatians 5:22-23). Indeed, even from the earliest of times, there have been 'codes of conduct' for God's people such as the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:2-17), which have highlighted virtuous behaviour.

Jesus summarises Christian virtue in the two great commandments:

'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment, and a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' (Matthew 22:37–39)

These have provided the benchmarks for the Christian church down through history. This is the business of setting aside our own desires through repentance, discipline and prayerfulness and being attentive to those in need. Moreover, it is about being aware of our motivations and controlling our selfish desires and inappropriate behaviours.

However, Jesus tells us to go further; 'Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you' (Matthew 5:44) he teaches. Some have argued that this is an unattainable ideal, and therefore cannot be achieved in this world. However, like justice, this is the only way that we can honourably seek to live our lives. Indeed, while justice is sometime elusive we must never settle for anything less.

We all need guidelines and examples by which we may lead our lives. The Scriptures and the lives of holy people have provided the church with best practice models and benchmarks down through the centuries and are our primary

#### FR ANDREW SEMPELL RECTOR



sources for assuring the nature of Godly behaviour even today.

#### **FOLLOWING CHRIST**

As Christians, we are called to be disciples of Christ. A disciple is a follower of a leader who lives under some sort of rule; we therefore need to live our lives in obedience to Christ as revealed to us in the Bible and through the spiritual life of the people of God, the church. We do this in the knowledge that we are fallible human beings, but that, like the pursuit of justice, following Christ is the only path to true fulfilment in our lives.

Jesus talks about 'taking up our cross and following him'. In this way, we seek to identify ourselves with his sacrifice and make it our own. In daily practice, this means being more concerned with the needs of others rather than our own desires. However, this is required to be done in 'good faith', that is honestly, with a sincere heart and as a free choice. God does not coerce us into following Christ, (which would not be loving), instead we are invited to follow and the choice is ours.

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#### LEIGH HESS

For me travelling is all about satisfying a long held desire to visit the unknown. Seeing places of interest which have held a fascination and meeting the people who live in those places. Delving into their culture with an open mind and being receptive to their way of life. Turkey has always been fascinating for me and in Turkey there are some of the world's best preserved Roman ruins. These ruins are not only the remains of some of the most important ancient cities but also some of the most important religious icons the world has to offer. This year Turkey made it to the top of my holiday list and so for three weeks I toured by bus around the country, visiting those sites which have only lived inside a text book up till now.

You may think three weeks a long time in Turkey, but geographically the country is surrounded by three main waterways, north on the Bosphorus leading to the Black Sea, south on the Mediterranean and west on the Aegean, with a lot of agriculture in between. Unlike Australia, land holdings are mostly small and unfenced with the owners living in their local villages, and who travel to their holdings on a daily basis. So no combine harvesters — here mostly tractor pulled appliances are used to take up the wheat crop, which occupies a great proportion of the agricultural output of the country. As you might expect I did see the odd donkey pulled cart, but Turkey is a modern country with the greater proportion of the population being Muslim, who have a very secular outlook.

The tour started in Istanbul, and trekked from east to west. Every day was full of highlights and the first day didn't disappoint. It began

# **TURKISH DELIGHTS**



with a cruise on the Bosphorus, which took us north, right up to the entrance to the Black Sea. Then we went on to a little town called Iznik, formerly known as Nicaea. Here I saw the remains of the Church of Hagia Sophia, scene of the first great ecumenical Council held by Constantine 1 in AD 325. Sadly not much is left now, only some very faded frescoes, and a couple of floor mosaics.

On the way to Cappadocia the tour passed through Bursa, home of the Silk Trade and then Ankara, the national capital. While the mausoleum of Ataturk was impressive, the highlight for me was a visit to the Museum of Anatolian Civilisations, and here I saw original artefacts which I have studied and which were only pictures in text books before.

Cappadocia was remarkable, a valley set between two ancient volcanoes. As a result of an ancient eruption the

Library of Celsius, Ephesus

famous Fairy Chimneys have evolved from the eroding volcanic ash. This dramatic scenery is riddled with caves and troglodyte dwellings, rock carved churches and the Goreme open air museum.

A trip to a country like Turkey is not complete unless you go to school, so the tour attended Carpet School,

#### Fairy chimneys, Cappadocia



Pottery School and Leather School. The intention was that one would part with a serious amount of money and I'm proud to say that I resisted two out of the three. The other cultural highlight of Turkey is, of course, belly dancing. At the folklore show the tour attended, guess who was picked from the audience to dance with said belly dancer? What a HOOT!!! On a more serious note the dance ceremony of the Whirling Dervish sect was a very moving and spiritual experience.

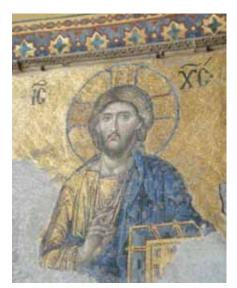
Throughout the trip the tour visited many Roman ruins including Aspendos, site of one of the best preserved amphitheatres, the extensive ruins of Perge, Heiropolis built on the limestone terraces in Pamukkale, Aphrodisias with its temple to Aphrodite and in Pergamon the Asclepion, the ancient centre of healing. However the highlight for me was Ephesus.

Kusadasi is located on the Aegean coast and presented another opportunity for a swim in one of the world's most exotic locations. Kusadasi was a staging point for a visit to Ephesus. We all have our special travel location list and one of those locations for me is Ephesus. During my undergrad life I wrote a major paper on Ephesus and it has remained a favourite in my mind since then. I got a little emotional once there; I just couldn't believe I had actually arrived. Walking the streets the ancients walked and gazing on the facade of the Library of Celsius, just seeing the remains of the Artemisium and the super sized amphitheatre was incredible. To say it was spectacularly amazing would be an understatement.

Turkey would not be complete without a trip to Troy and a photo shoot of the famous reconstructed wooden horse. On the way to Canakkle the tour visited the House of the Virgin Mary, reported to be where she spend the last years of her life. At this point the trip was drawing to a close however a couple of important sites remained to be seen.

The tour bus crossed the Dardanelles Straights by ferry and onto Anzac Cove and Lone Pine Cemetery. While here we also visited the New Zealand memorial and the Turkish memorial. Gallipoli was very moving and the bus was very quiet on the drive into Istanbul.

Although Istanbul was the end of the trip we still had two days of the tour left and they included visits to the better known of the sites



Mosaic of Christ, Hagia Sophia

of the Old City. The Old City is bounded by the Bosphorus and the Marmara Denizi, so never too far from the water. Here we visited the museum of Hagia Sophia, the Blue Mosque, and the Topkapi Palace and of course the Grand Bazaar. Once the tour had finished I spent another three days in Istanbul. During this time I visited the Summer Palace and the Cisterns, I found a wonderful Coptic Church, I lunched in some great cafes and spent more time in the Grand Bazaar. Fortunately my hotel had a rooftop terrace where meals were served and I spent each night there just watching the traffic on the Marmara. It was magical.

Photos by Leigh Hess



#### Whirling Dervishes



#### **KAREN FINCH**

Regulars at St James' will be familiar with Juris Balodis, who is a member of the cadre of readers and intercessors who contribute each week to worship on Sundays. His commitment to the St James' community has moved into a new phase as he has recently been appointed verger and will be sharing hours with Graeme Reid. The verger's position is one of a long line of 'service' positions held by Juris over the years.

The son of post-World War II Latvian migrants, Juris grew up in Sydney's west. His first language was Latvian, and he remembers his first day of kindergarten as one of misery, being unable to communicate or understand anything people said to him.

Juris went to the University of Sydney and, in the tradition of many students who are unclear as to their path in life, completed an Arts degree. From there he went on to a succession of jobs across different industries, regretting that he'd not done a Dip Ed and become a teacher. At 30 something (his words, not those of the writer!) he changed direction, did a short hospitality course and moved into the hospitality industry, winding up as the manager of a small hotel in Bankstown.

### **ADVERTISING**

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#### **FROM LATVIA WITH LOVE** – IN CONVERSATION WITH JURIS BALODIS

At this stage, feeling he needed to do something to make a contribution he packed his bags and headed for post-Soviet Latvia, hoping to be able to be part of the rebuilding of the country. What was intended as a short trip turned into thirteen years, with very few trips back to Australia. His first job was teaching English to students from all walks of life. With the collapse of the collective economy that was part of the Soviet model, thousands of people were out of work, so he found his students to be highly motivated, as the country was opening up to visitors and tourism was clearly going to be a new source of jobs. When he moved on to a job at the newly built Radisson hotel in Riga, many of his students followed him and he set up makeshift classes in the hotel's function rooms. After leaving the Radisson, he continued teaching at a university in the regional city of Valmiera, where the first tertiary tourism program was being offered.

Juris came to the Anglican Church while in Latvia. Religion under Soviet rule had been outlawed. Those who had maintained a religious practice did so secretly at home, maintaining the party line in public. The prevailing social attitudes in Latvia are very conservative and efforts to move the church into contemporary awareness of inclusion and social change have resulted in demonstrations by Christian extremists and skinhead groups. The now Anglican minister was originally with the Lutheran church, but was made to leave due to his stance on homosexuality. The Anglican congregation was supportive and allowed the participants to hold services at the conclusion of the first and second gay pride marches to be held in Riga.



Photo: Carole Rudd

This was supported by the Anglican Archdeaconry of Northern Europe.

Juris returned to Australia in 2008, enriched by the experience, but needing to, effectively, start again on his career path. While he misses the white Christmases, he enjoys the much more relaxed and friendly environment of Australia and the open nature of Australians after 13 years of living in a society where people are still very withdrawn about their private lives after decades of Soviet rule.

You will find Juris on duty during the first half of the week and occasionally on weekends if there are extra things going on. Otherwise, he will still be popping up doing the readings for services as he has done now for some time.

## **RETURN OF THE MEARS BELL**

A bell cast in 1820 by Thomas Mears at the Whitechapel foundry in East London was hung in the tower of St James' Church and was used as a service bell until the installation of the present ring of eight bells. With a diameter of 27.55 inches (70 cm) it is estimated to weigh about 4 ¼ cwt (216kg).

It is one of the earliest bells in Australia. It seems likely that it was in use at St James' from an early stage, perhaps from the original consecration of the church in 1824, but detailed records are still being sought.

A similar bell is installed as the clock bell at St Matthew's, Windsor. A 19th century rector of St Matthew's records that his father, an earlier rector of St Matthew's, told him that the two bells arrived in Sydney on the same vessel, but no documentary evidence has yet come to light.

During the installation of the current ring of eight bells, the Mears bell was taken down and stored on the floor at an upper level of the tower. Some damage was evident, with two of six 'cannons' (loops cast at the top of the bell to



At the foundry

attach it to a headstock) missing and a full thickness chip through the crown of the bell.

The bell and clapper were returned to the Whitechapel foundry for refurbishment and fitting of a new headstock and bearings, and provision of a new wheel and frame. The original clapper has been fitted with a modern top end so that the sound of the bell should remain as it previously was. It has now been returned, and is temporarily on display in the crypt entrance. The metal frame components are in the covered courtyard. The bell will be installed in the tower when scaffolding is erected for replacement of the church roof. We plan to hang it in its new frame on the level above the existing ring of eight bells. It will be used in its original role as the service bell and will also be available for full circle ringing as a teaching bell.



Left: Before restoration Right: Unpacking the bell after its

safe return



### A REFLECTION ON 'SYDNEY ANGLICANS'

#### SYDNEY ANGLICANS AND THE THREAT TO WORLD ANGLICANISM: THE SYDNEY EXPERIMENT MURIEL PORTER

Anglican Contemporary Ecclesiology Series, Ashgate Publishing, Burlington, UK, 2011.

Muriel Porter's latest book is available in a handsome hardback as well as a paperback edition. It is a well researched and perceptive analysis of the unique status of the Diocese of Sydney vis a vis the international fellowship of churches known as The Anglican Communion. Moreover, Porter's book is timely, in the way that it provides the first carefully researched analysis of how the Global Financial Crisis which caused such destruction to the world's financial markets had such a major impact upon the finances of the Sydney Diocese. For this section of the book she has made good use of articles and reports from the Australian Financial Review.

In an introduction to the book, Professor Martyn Percy of Cuddesdon Theological College at Oxford draws attention to the risks that Sydney poses to Anglicanism to-day, traditionally a religion regarded as comprehensive, eschewing extremes and firmly based on the threefold cord of Scripture, Tradition and Reason. This goes back to the formative days of Anglicanism when Queen Elizabeth I was being pressured by the Roman Catholics to restore England to the Papacy and by the Protestants who had been influenced by Luther and Calvin and who wanted a more Protestant Anglican Church. She resisted both and espoused the via media which has characterised Anglicanism ever since.

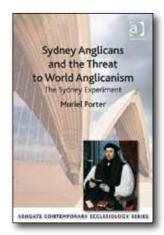
The Diocese of Sydney can be justly proud of its achievements over the

years: its stress upon evangelism, the establishment of retirement villages throughout the Diocese inspired after the war by Archbishop Howard Mowll and his wife Dorothy, interest in youth work, pastoral care for university students in colleges such as Menzies at Macquarie University and New College at the University New South Wales, provision of low fee paying Anglican schools and expanding welfare work through Anglicare. But we don't hear or read about all this in the secular media. What we do hear are reports about moral and financial scandals which occur too often in the life of the church.

It was in the mid-1930s that Archbishop Howard Mowll and TC Hammond, Principal of Moore College, put the *imprimatur* on Sydney's long-standing evangelical tradition. This evangelical ideology has expanded considerably since those days, excluding women from becoming priests and those whose sexuality is different; when it comes to the point that those who deviate or disagree with the dominant ideology are in error.

When he went as an observer to the First Vatican Council in Rome in 1870 the British historian Lord Acton coined his now famous phrase: 'Power tends to corrupt: absolute power corrupts absolutely'. Whether it be politics or religion, Acton's words still reverberate.

Porter discusses in detail the way in which the financial crash impacted upon the Diocese. In the secular realm, when the crisis occurred, the Federal Government acted



swiftly and effectively to protect the nation's economy and it has received widespread approval for its action. At the same time the Diocese, in spite of being backed by substantial assets found itself facing a \$160 million loss, hanging by a thread and severely chastened. As JK Galbraith points out in his study of the Wall Street crash in 1929, it was the widespread practice of borrowing 'on the margin' that brought down Wall Street in 1929. When the stock market was rising, the financial advisors for the Diocese joined forces with mammon and engaged in what can only be called speculation, always a risky business. The result was they were forced to sell at the bottom of the market.

Problems also arose over the administration of St Andrew's House, a multi-storey office block behind the Cathedral which contains the Cathedral School and the Diocesan offices. It was built in the early 1970s following the Whitlam Government's purchase of the church's forty acres of property in Glebe. Later on, the problem was compounded when the Standing Committee recommended the sale of the jewel in the Diocesan crown. Bishopscourt in Darling Point valued at \$24 million. In spite of these serious financial crises, as Porter states, the Diocese has continued

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# THE BISHOP'S ART

Bishop Alfred Holland, a member of St James', is having an exhibition of his paintings at the 307 Art Gallery in Northbridge.

In regard to his motivation to make paintings and his subject matter, he says,

I have always been intrigued by the human ability and gift for creating works of art and the sheer wonder of music, literature, sculpting and building. From the beginning, our earliest ancestors — once they had finished their hunting, fishing and scavenging — turned to make marks and shapes on the walls of their cave-homes and blew into reeds to make interesting sounds. No doubt human creation simply mirrors the works of the Creation: yet there is still mystery and wonder about the gift.

A great pleasure for me is to have a brightly-whitened canvas (the larger the better), and sense the beauty of colour in the paints and then to begin placing marks, lines, shapes and forms on the canvas. Often, the emerging combination of shapes and colour suggest a theme from literature or a biblical incident, or nature, and music. It's not done without frustration and struggle yet sometimes the finished work brings immense satisfaction. If it pleases others then that's a bonus too.

The Exhibition opens on Friday 21 October at 6pm and runs for three weeks to 9 November at the 307 Gallery, 307 Sailors Bay Road Northbridge. The website will show opening times. Bishop Holland welcomes his fellow members of St James' to visit the Gallery and share his own delight.





#### SUE MACKENZIE

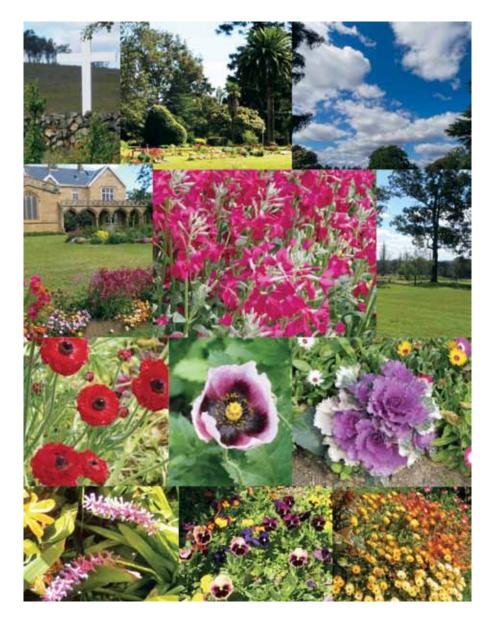
Seek and you will find -Abundance! Listen and you will hear -A choir of angels! Delight in the Lord -And you will be satisfied! The richness of God's love Is spread abroad -Above in an azure sky; Before in fields of green; Beyond in hills of muted Purple. Our senses glory in the creation Made in Christ; Through Christ; For Christ: An expression of God's love -That we are called to share.

Reflections on Is.55:2b, 10-13; Colossians 1:15-20; John 10:1-18.

Written at St Mary's Towers Retreat Centre. 10/9/2011.

Words and photographs: Sue Mackenzie.

# **GOD'S LOVE IN ABUNDANCE**



#### A REFLECTION ON 'SYDNEY ANGLICANS' continued

to provide financial support to 'small Australian rural dioceses that are effectively Sydney satellites' as well as supporting GAFCON, an evangelical rival to the Lambeth Conference, while at the same time holding back part of its assessment to the General Synod.

The responsibility for what took place has been said to be that of the Archbishop, with whom 'the buck stops'. This is not really true, for when it comes to complex financial questions he relies on his advisors. Clearly, that is where the fault lies. He received bad advice. A problem is the policy, as Porter suggests, of appointing only 'trusted insiders' who are ideologically sound, to membership of the key committees of Synod. In days past, when Archbishop Hugh Gough appointed Mr FE Trigg, a prominent city accountant and Bursar of St Paul's College within the University of Sydney to revamp the finances of the Diocese, it benefited substantially from Trigg's advice; and when the SCEGGS Diocesan girls' schools were in trouble over misappropriation of funds it was

Bishop Donald Cameron, a former accountant who got them out of trouble. If Sam Trigg and Donald Cameron were still around the present disaster may not have happened. There were also others in days past such as Sir Kenneth Coles and Sir Vincent Fairfax who gave sound advice to the Diocese on matters financial.

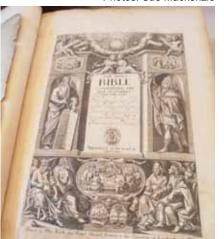
Muriel Porter's book is a good sequel to the Cable/Judd study *Sydney Anglicans* (1987) and an important contribution to the history of the Diocese of Sydney.

## THE WORD TRANSLATED

Four hundred years after a group of churchmen and scholars were commanded by King James I to prepare a new English translation of the Holy Scriptures, people on the other side of the globe still find their work so extraordinary that they will set aside a day to explore this significant event in English history and culture — and, of course, religion.

And so over 40 people gathered at St Paul's College on Saturday 24 September for the St James' Institute seminar, *The Word Translated: Reading the King James Bible Four Hundred Years Later.* The seminar was led by three leading scholars from the Trinity Theological School in Melbourne, and Dr Ivan Head, the Warden of St Paul's College. All four presenters were entrancing teachers with a firm grasp of their subject matter.

We began the day in ancient Alexandria and heard how the Septuagint was conceived; the first Greek Old Testament. Dr Andrew McGowan, the Warden of Trinity College, then took us on an historical journey up to the Latin Vulgate Bible and enlightened us on how the canon, the officially recognised or accepted books of scripture, for both the Old and New Testaments, evolved.



Photos: Sue Mackenzie



The Solemn Mock Procession of the POPE, Cardinalls [sic], Jesuits, Fryers, etc.: through [the] City of London, November 17th 1679 (detail)

Dr Dorothy Lee, the Dean of the Trinity Theological School, told us about the bibles produced in English before the King James Version (KJV) and in particular Tyndale's translation, the KJV itself, and those produced since, up to the present day. Perhaps the most fascinating part of her presentation was the study she led us through about how the first few verses of John's Gospel have been translated from the ancient Greek in these various editions, and what choices were made. What is clear is that the 'plain words of Scripture' approach to reading the Bible just does not, by itself, work — for what indeed is 'plain' and what indeed are the 'words'?

After lunch in the College's Junior Common Room or the quadrangle, Dr Ivan Head outlined what was happening politically in England, before and after the publication of the KJV — in particular the overwhelming fear and loathing of popery. His handouts of copies of ancient documents from the time added considerably to his presentation.

Afternoon tea, and then it was time for yet another perspective translating the Bible into music. Dr Andreas Loewe matched the quality of all the earlier presentations with a talk, illustrated by pictures and music, on Bach's *St John Passion* and his *St Matthew Passion*. The richness of Bach's work became more apparent and our future enjoyment of these Passions was enhanced. As Andreas reminded us, it was Martin Luther who said that word and music together were the most powerful way to approach the riches of the Scriptures.

The day concluded with a service of Holy Communion in the College chapel, using the Book of Common Prayer. For many, the old familiar words and phrases once again rolled off the tongue — learnt long ago in our earlier years but still, like the words of the KJV, deeply embedded into our spiritual hearts.

In an earlier email to the Institute's almost 100 Season Ticket holders I had said that this day, an annual highlight of the Institute's year, would be when their ticket really came into its own — it would be extraordinary value for money. Those who attended could not fail to agree. The day met our expectation as a highlight of the year. The time seemed to pass swiftly, the presenters were all most interesting, and we came away feeling greatly enriched and proud of our heritage as Anglicans.

#### **MEGWENYA MATTHEWS**

When creating a concert programme, chronological order is often a good way to go. The thinking behind the St James' concerts last week eschewed this approach and began with Charles Villiers Stanford (1852–1924), thence to Jonathan Dove (born 1959) then backwards in time to J S Bach (1685–1750). After interval we heard Johannes Brahms (1833–1897) and then Bach again.

The title is the clue to the programming, as all works have links to J S Bach. For this concert, the choir from St James', directed by Warren Trevelyan-Jones both already well known for their excellence in this series of concerts — were joined by the visiting Choir of Trinity College Melbourne directed by Michael Leighton-Jones.

## **BACH AND BEYOND**



Photo: Christopher Shain

his name' and 'put down the humble and meek' came as welcome oases of gentleness.

Next was the *Köthener Messe* by British composer Jonathan Dove, also sung by the Choir of St James' and also demanding virtuosity. It was commissioned by the 'Bach Festival Days at Köthen' and premiered in St and effective work and I hope we hear more of Jonathan Dove's music, especially his sacred works.

The remainder of the concert covered more familiar ground: both choirs were directed by Warren Trevelyan-Jones in an exhilarating and agile performance of Bach's motet *Singet dem Herrn* BWV 225,

# ...both halves of the double choir fearlessly exchanged musical ideas with passion and precision

Settings of the Magnificat bookended the programme and I have to admit I thought I was familiar with Stanford's musical style, but could not believe what I was hearing in this Magnificat in B flat for double choir Op.164. This amazing work in Latin (all other Stanford Magnificats are in English) was composed in 1918 and dedicated to his friend Hubert Parry. But right from the first few bars it is clearly a tribute to J S Bach at his contrapuntal best, with layered polyphonic strands pursued with high energy and antiphonal effects that almost became competitive. The 16 voices of the Choir of St James' were ideally suited to this challenge and both halves of the double choir fearlessly exchanged musical ideas with passion and precision. In fact, such was their robust sound, quieter passages translated as 'and holy is

Agnus Church Köthen in September 2002. Although scored for strings, recorders and harpsichord it is not really a neo-baroque work but rather (to quote the programme) 'a direct homage to Bach... but a dreamy meditation about his creative process'.

Yes, there were floating passages with snatched phrases from *Brandenburg Concertos* 4 and 6 and various preludes and fugues, but it wasn't always dreamy. Vigorous and insistently repetitive rhythms alternated with big blocks of choral sound in the *Gloria* and challenges for the harpsichordist Joanna Tondys and four soloists — Brooke Shelley, Natalie Shea, Richard Butler and David Hayton — were met with concentrated skill. The professionalism and musicality of all participants made it an evocative the one that inspired Stanford (see above). They were minimally accompanied by two cellos and chamber organ. Two lovely motets by Brahms *Es ist das Heil* and *Schaffe mir Gott* were sung *a cappella* by the Choir of Trinity College Melbourne under their Director Michael Leighton Jones. This is a larger, younger choir with a fresh and enthusiastic quality but the chromaticism of Psalm 51 sometimes eluded them.

Finally, both choirs came together again for Bach's *Magnificat in D* BWV 243. Trumpets, oboes and timpani joined the excellent Ironwood ensemble and soloists were drawn from the Choir of St James'. The final *Gloria* with both choirs in full voice was a fitting finale and St James' is once again to be congratulated on this series of choral concerts.

Following Christ is therefore not a fearful act; neither should it be half-hearted or apathetic. Rather, we are responding to the call of God out of a sense of love and generosity — giving of ourselves because of the sake of goodness itself while also knowing that nothing else will bring us satisfaction. Those who respond begrudgingly or in bad faith miss the full potential of what God's grace (or love) can do for us and therefore fail to see the point of sacrifice.

#### PRAYERFULNESS

In the spirit of the seventeenth century monk Brother Lawrence, we need to learn to 'practice the presence of God'; which is to become aware of God's involvement in every aspect of our lives. A life of prayerfulness is not so much focussed upon the ritual activities of the church as upon developing a growing awareness of God being present at all times and in all things; that is, in the worshipping community, in ourselves, in other people, and in the world about us. All these things need to be treated with respect, as if we are engaged with Christ himself.

In this approach, prayerfulness becomes less an action and more an attitude of faith that has the potential to permeate our whole being. We therefore do not just 'do' prayer, instead our lives 'become' prayer. Of course, such prayers can be for either good or ill. It is like Archdeacon Grantly in Barchester Chronicles who confesses that he is ashamed of his prayers; for he wants his father, the dying bishop, dead so that he himself might become bishop before there is a change of government and his own appointment would not be considered. Indeed, sometimes our prayers (as exposed through our desires) are less than admirable.

However, at least the Archdeacon was honest with himself — which raises the matter of humility.

#### THINKING NOT TOO HIGHLY OF OURSELVES

St Paul wrote to the church at Rome: "...not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgement, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned." (Romans 12:3)

Humility speaks so much more highly than words and is a window into our hearts for the rest of the world to see. To be sure, this is another attitude that relates to our self-understanding and spirituality. While prayerfulness is directed principally upon our relationship with God, humility is largely focused upon others, while at the same time being aware of our status before God.

As Christians, we are aware of our sinfulness, which causes breakdowns in our relationships with God and each other. In the light of this, we are called to repent (that is to make a decision to turn away from such behaviour) and seek forgiveness and transformation in our lives. We are aware that this is a continuing process worked out in our lives daily; a situation that only God can resolve. Such awareness should keep us humble, however all too often Christians (and corporately the church) behave in a manner that contradicts this - why?

A parallel to the church's obsession with worrying about 'who's in and who's out' is the attitude of 'I'm right and you're wrong'. This arises from a desire to be in control and is often indicative of a degree of insecurity about the process and effect of salvation and the role of the church in this. In an institutional context, it can lead to hubris as more exclusive claims are made for the 'rightness' of the organisation, its ideas and those that lead it.

There is no doubt that the church needs to hold fast to the truth of the Gospel. However, here the problem is not so much with a concern for truth and its discernment, but rather with how truth is regarded and maintained by a believer which is often about power. The general criticism of the behaviour of fundamentalists is that they refuse to engage in an honest and open way with criticism or different ideas from their own, often preferring to be exclusive, dogmatic and absolutist. Indeed, fundamentalists would seem to be happy to break any sort of relationship with others (who may disagree with them) in an effort to establish and maintain their position. In other words, they sin to maintain the purity of ideas. In a Christian context, this is indefensible.

Humility, therefore, arises out of love rather than fear. What is important is to be honest with others and ourselves before God, confess our faults, and seek to live Godly lives concerned with the well-being of others. Let God discern the truth for us and let us quietly pursue the path that leads to truth, through the guidance of God's Holy Spirit.

'Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.' (Philippians 4:8-9)

#### **KAREN FINCH**

The Blake Prize for Religious Art — as it was first known — was established by Michael Scott, a Jesuit priest, after returning from an art filled European tour that highlighted for him the lack of quality religious art in Australian churches. His good friend, Jewish businessman Richard Morely, donated £100 prize money, on the condition that his donation was anonymous.

Scott's concept was simple to offer Australian artists an opportunity to produce original religious artworks that local churches would buy. Initially, traditionalist criteria required that the works be figurative, devotional and liturgical. However, within a very short time, the modernist approach to art in Australia was reaching into Blake territory. Controversy was never far away as artists pushed 'acceptable' boundaries of what did and didn't constitute 'religious' art.

In 1961, in the face of increasing abstract entries, Scott stated on ABC Radio that, "no abstract work would ever win the Blake". Two weeks later, Stanislaus Rapotec was

#### 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BLAKE PRIZE

awarded first prize for his abstract expressionist oil, *Meditations on Good Friday.* Chaos resulted, with many of the Blake committee choosing to resign. Mark Foys Gallery, who had always hosted the exhibition, withdrew sponsorship. However, in the aftermath, it was decided that the artists should be the ones who decided what was 'religious' and how they chose to depict it in their work.

Today, the Blake is 'beginning to reflect that Sydney is right up there with London and New York as one of the most religiously diverse cities in the world'.<sup>1</sup> The days of having to be white, male and Catholic to gain entry are long gone, as are the strict 'religious' requirements, the current entries depicting interpretations of personal spirituality as well as those drawn from major world religions.

The winning entry, Khaled Sabsabi's Naqshbandi Greenacre engagement is a video installation twelve months in the making. A depiction of a group of Sufi Muslims involved in a tradition chant, it is characterised by a level of ordinariness that breaks down many of the barriers that can be



Simon McGrath, The Body and The Blood



Ella Dreyfus, *To see beyond what seems to be* 

caused by notions of exclusivity and secretiveness. The setting — a scout hall — and lack of pomp and circumstance, bring home the every day character of religious practice in this particular community.

Other entries continue the tradition of controversy. Simon McGrath's *The Body and The Blood* is, on the surface, a tongue in cheek poke at the sacraments of communion, portrayed as budget lines of sandwich bread and grape juice from Franklins. However, this is not quite as two-dimensional as it may appear, with layers of meaning about mass production, and a certain generic flavour to contemporary religious practice being possible interpretations of the piece.

Ella Dreyfus' *To see beyond what seems to be* is a subtle but telling layered print composition that juxtaposes a circle, a cross and a dollar sign in gelati pastels. At first glance it is softly pretty and innocuous, but as the layers emerge, it raises questions about money and religion that continue to play long after viewing.

The quiet poignancy of Brendan Murphy's *Gathered to Mourn*, a broken steel circle made up of matching component parts carries a universal message of loss, broken communities, lost loved ones and a circle forever incomplete. There are overtones of Holocaust memorials in this piece that speak to ongoing conflict and loss on a global scale.

Indigenous works are many, ranging from the traditional Arnhem Land coffin form, *Lorrkon* by Irenie Ngalinba, to the vibrantly contemporary abstract *Dibirdibi Country* by Mirdidingkingathi Juwarnda Sally Gabori — a reminder that for Australia's indigenous people, country is religion and spirituality combined.

The Blake is on at the National Art School Gallery in Darlinghurst until Saturday 15 October. There are pieces for the traditionalists, and those that continue to push the boundaries of what constitutes

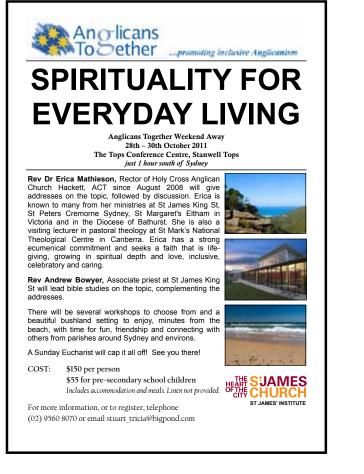


Brendan Murphy, Gathered to Mourn

to provoke thought, comment and controversy.

Photos courtesy of the Blake Prize

1. Droogan, J. 'Chants would be a fine thing: Sufi video wins Blake Prize', *Sydney Morning Herald*, September 16, 2011





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#### **ST JAMES' PARISH CONNECTIONS**

religious art. Given the room

for interpretation, this annual

exhibition will always challenge

artists, judges and viewers. It offers

another perspective entirely on how

people come to grips with concepts

of religious and spiritual meaning,

so it will always have the capacity

### **MUSIC @ ST JAMES' IN OCTOBER**

#### **CHOIR OF ST JAMES'**

The Choir of St James' continues to offer inspiring choral music of the highest standards. Here is their music list for this month:

#### SUNDAY 9 OCTOBER

**10:00AM – CHORAL EUCHARIST WITH CONFIRMATION** Mass setting: Stanford in B-flat and C Motet: Stanford – Beati quorum via

#### WEDNESDAY 12 OCTOBER

6:15PM – CHORAL EVENSONG Responses: plainsong Canticles: Wadsworth – Royal St George's College Anthem: Lassus – In pace in idipsum

#### SUNDAY 16 OCTOBER

**11:00AM – CHORAL EUCHARIST** Mass setting: Gabrielli – Missa Brevis Motet: Schein – Lehre uns bedenken

WEDNESDAY 19 OCTOBER 6:15PM – CHORAL EVENSONG Responses: plainsong Canticles: Palestrina 'quarti toni' Anthem: Victoria – Domine, non sum dignus

#### SUNDAY 23 OCTOBER

**11:00AM – CHORAL EUCHARIST** Mass setting: Gabrielli – Collegium regale Motet: Mealor – Ubi Caritas

#### WEDNESDAY 26 OCTOBER

**6:15PM – CHORAL EVENSONG** Sung by The Saint James' Singers Responses: Ferial Canticles: Stanford in C Anthem: How – Day by day

#### SUNDAY 30 OCTOBER

11:00AM – CHORAL EUCHARIST FOR ALL SAINTS'
Mass setting: Victoria – Missa O quam gloriosum Motet: Victoria – Gaudent in coelis
3:00PM – CHORAL EVENSONG FOR ALL SAINTS
Responses: Jackson
Canticles: Stanford – Magnificat for double choir in B♯ Holst – Nunc dimittis

Anthem: Harris – Faire is the heaven

#### WEDNESDAY 2 NOVEMBER

6:30PM – CHORAL EUCHARIST FOR ALL SOULS' Requiem mass: Victoria

#### WEDNESDAY LUNCHTIME CONCERTS

Experience the peaceful atmosphere of Sydney's oldest church as it is filled with music every Wednesday lunchtime between 1:15 and 1:45. A suggested donation of \$5 helps us cover the costs of putting on the concerts.

WEDNESDAY 12 OCTOBER WARREN FISHER – TENOR TONY LEGGE – PIANO

WEDNESDAY 19 OCTOBER SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA CHAMBER PLAYERS

WEDNESDAY 26 OCTOBER TONY LEGGE AND ANTHONY HUNT

WEDNESDAY 2 NOVEMBER ALISTAIR NELSON – ORGAN



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# **MUSIC NOTES**

The Bach & Beyond concerts with Trinity College Choir and Ironwood attracted good audiences and showed that the subscription series has continued to be very popular. Trinity College Choir had an extremely busy week with a Wednesday lunchtime concert and Wednesday Evensong in addition to rehearsals and both performances of Bach & Beyond.

The Victoria Festival – a collaboration between the Choir of St James' and St Mary's Cathedral Singers – was very successful, and isn't quite over yet. All Souls' Day (Wednesday 2 November) services will include a requiem by Tomás Luis de Victoria. Don't miss this special service – see page 2 of this edition of *Connections*. For those of you staying in Sydney over the holiday season, it's not too early to start thinking about Christmas. There will be carol services during Advent, in place of the usual Wednesday Evensongs and in January, 'tis the season of the orchestral masses! Spread the word – this is an exciting way to experience mass settings that you might not otherwise get to hear.

And lastly, keep an eye out – the 2012 music program will be released soon and you'll be able to start planning your concert attendances for next year. Maybe think about buying that someone you know who has everything a Friends of Music membership for Christmas, so they can enjoy premium seating and discount tickets for the year.

# **PLANNING AN EVENT?**





#### ST JAMES' CHURCH

The Church, which has superb acoustics, is an excellent venue for classical and contemporary music events.

#### THE CRYPT

This is a unique space, with a fully equipped commercial kitchen, that is suitable for a range of special events. Hire can include use of the adjacent covered courtyard.

#### ST JAMES' HALL

The Hall offers facilities for corporate style events, with AV and kitchen facilities available for use.

More information is available on our website: go to www.sjks.org.au and click on 'Venues' in the menu bar.

For all enquiries and bookings, telephone (02) 8227 1300 or email Stephen.Pearson@sjks.org.au



# **CLASSIFIEDS**

#### EREMOS RETREAT

**WEEKEND** Friday 21 October to Sunday 23 October. Maria Tal Cottages, Wentworth Falls. Registrations close 15 October. Register online at www.eremos.org.au

#### **EREMOS ANNUAL**

**GATHERING** 'Engaging the Sacred'. Sunday 23 October 12.30–4.00pm. All Saint's Anglican Church Hall, Hunters Hill. Registration by 15 October. <u>www.eremos.org.au</u>

#### KEEPING UP WITH ST JAMES'

There are so many ways of keeping up with what is going on at St James'! Have a look:

- Weekly Pewsheet
- Parish Connections
- Website: www.sjks.org.au
- Facebook the parish page and the choir page
- Friends of Music website: www.musicatstjames.org.au

# ST JAMES' INSTITUTE EVENTS



#### WHY DO GOOD PEOPLE SUFFER? A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF JOB

Thursdays 3, 10, 17, 24 November, 1.00–2.00pm

'What is Man that thou shouldest... try him every moment?' - Job 7:18

The existence of suffering in a world created by a good and almighty God is a fundamental theological dilemma, and perhaps the most serious objection to the Christian religion. In this study of the book of Job, Michael Horsburgh will lead an enquiry into why do good people suffer.

Cost: Free of charge

Venue: St. James' Hall, Level 1, 169 Phillip Street, Sydney



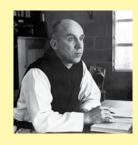
#### BELIEVING, BELONGING, BEHAVING, BECOMING: THE UNIQUENESS OF CHRISTIANITY

Saturday 12 November, 9.30am–4.00pm

In recent years, sociologists of religion have begun to explore the similarities and differences in the great religious traditions in terms of the 'four Bs' of faith. Led by Dr Douglas Golding, this one-day seminar will follow in their steps, reading from the Scriptures of Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

Cost: \$50 (\$25 full-time students & Centrelink pensioners) including lunch & teas.

Venue: St James' Hall, Level 1, 169 Phillip Street, Sydney.



#### LIVING AND PRAYING: GUIDED MEDITATIONS

Saturday 26 November, 10.00am-4.30pm

The writings of Thomas Merton, the American Cistercian monk, will guide the meditations, silences and praying of this reflection day in the church and grounds of St John's Balmain. Come prepared to look outwards and inwards. The day will be led by Father Martin Davies.

Cost: \$50 (\$25 full-time students & Centrelink pensioners) including lunch and teas

Venue: St John's Church, cnr Birchgrove Rd and Spring St, Balmain. (Transport available)

FOR ALL EVENTS: Call 82271300 or email institute@sjks.org.au for further details / registration.

### **MILESTONES**

#### BAPTISMS

William Sebastian Bryce Meads	17 September
Stevie Lillian Donald	.17 September

#### WEDDINGS

#### **MEMORIAL SERVICE**

Phillip David Jack	23 September
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### NEXT EDITION

The next edition of Parish Connections will be published on **Friday 4 November**.

Deadlines: Advertising: 21 October Editorial: 27 October

Phone Karen on 8227 1301 or email karen@sjks.org.au

### WARDENS' HALF-YEARLY REPORT

#### **RICHARD GILLARD**

Since our last report, we need to thank those who are no longer part of the parish team for the long and continued support they have given St James'. Thomas-Andrew Baxter, Robert Head, Frank Tamsitt and Jim Cameron have left us, leaving big gaps to be filled. We thank them for their devotion to St James' and its parishioners. In their places we have welcomed Stephen Pearson, our new Business Manager, Karen Finch, our Communication & Publicity Coordinator, Juris Balodis and Craig Thacker, our two new vergers. Welcome to St James', and we wish you a productive time with us.

As has been advised recently, the sale of the East Lindfield property has been scheduled for October, and will strengthen the financial position of the parish. A possible purchase of a property in the inner west will give us a residence closer to the church and in a more appropriate location.

It is pleasing to see that after some months of concern, offertories and

stewardship have increased and firmed. In the current financial situation, it is easy to understand how giving can weaken, but the support shown by parishioners is encouraging.

Our applications for assistance from Federal, State and Local Governments for funds to restore the church roof, have all met with positive responses. All three have provided impressive grants.

The management of St James' Hall is planned to pass from the Glebe Administration Board to the parish. This appears to be a progressive step and has required the formation of a working group to negotiate on behalf of the parish.

Music at St James', as expected, continues to develop well. We have our new Organist, Alistair Nelson and Organ Scholar, Jessica Lim, now in place and we look forward to them sharing their talents with us.

The formation of the St James' Singers moves from strength to strength, as they provide sound music leadership for the 9 o'clock congregation. Robes will soon be complete and will bring the Singers brightly into view in the chancel.

Recent concerts by the St James' Choir have been most successful, and gained the choir and the church a reputation for fine music and hospitality. These necessitate a great deal of work from many groups. We thank Warren, the choir, the Friends of Music and the many supporters for their devotion to music at St James'.

We will soon see the fruits of some recent bequests, in the form of hearse lights and a funeral pall. These will add a further dimension to our ability to produce meaningful funerals and memorial services.

This does not pretend to be a concise account of the events of recent months. If you desire indepth information on any issue, please contact a Parish Councillor or Warden who will be pleased to help you further.

## **ARPA AWARDS**



Well, it's official. St James' *Parish Connections* is an award winning publication! At the recent annual conference of the Australasian Religious Press Association, *Connections* picked up a Highly Commended in the Best Original Artwork category for a drawing by Fr Paul West in the December 2009/January 2010 issue. We also won Gold for Phillip Jones' review of Rupert Shortt's *Rowan's Rule* in the October 2010 issue.

Congratulations to Fr Paul and Phillip for their excellent contributions!

Photo: Stephen Webb

# PARISH WHO'S WHO AND HOW TO CONTACT THEM

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	The Reverend Andrew Bowyer	8227 1305
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BUSINESS MANAGER	Stephen Pearson	8227 1311
SECRETARY/OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	Dianne Ward	8227 1300
ACCOUNTANT	Michelle Chan	8227 1302
COMMUNICATIONS & PUBLICITY	Karen Finch	8227 1301
HEAD OF MUSIC	Warren Trevelyan-Jones	8227 1306
ORGANIST	Alistair Nelson	8227 1300
ROBERT BLUNDEN ORGAN SCHOLAR	Jessica Lim	8227 1300
VERGERS	Graeme Reid Juris Balodis	8227 1312 / 0412 295 678
CHILDREN'S MINISTRY COORDINATOR	John Wiltshire	8227 1300
HONORARY ASSOCIATE CLERGY	Bishop Ken Mason, the Reverend John Deane, the Reverend Dr John Beer, the Reverend Ron Henderson, the Reverend John Spooner	8227 1300
RECTOR'S WARDEN	Beverley Simpson	9362 9440
PEOPLE'S WARDEN	Richard Gillard	9955 3597
PEOPLE'S WARDEN	James Balfour	9880 7803
HEAD SERVER	Richard Gillard	9955 3597
DIOCESAN READER	Michael Horsburgh	9660 5396
PARISH READER	Paul Lee	8227 1300
HONORARY ARCHIVIST	Rosemary Annable	8227 1300
ST JAMES' NETWORKERS	Chris Cheetham	0407 017 377
SR FREDA COORDINATORS	David and Robyn Carver	9817 5685
HEAD SIDESPERSON	Daniel Ferguson	9745 3959
BELL TOWER CAPTAIN	Chris Palmer	9331 4642
HEALING — GUILD OF ST RAPHAEL	Nanette Danks	9428 3920
CONSERVATION APPEAL COMMITTEE	Fiona Balfour	fiona.balfour@bigpond.com

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