

Anam Cara Community



Waterholes: 24 June 2017



Waterhole on the summit of Mt Sturgeon with Dunkeld in the background. Photo Ross

Welcome

Welcome to Waterholes, the Anam Cara Community newsletter for the week beginning 25th June 2017.

Why this newsletter? This newsletter is one of the ways by which we hope to promote community. The Anam Cara Community is intended to be much more than simply a group of likeminded people. We hope it will continue to grow into a community that is a sign of God's presence in and love for the world, a dispersed community of contemplatives whose lives and action bring peace and healing to all of God's children. We are a Community of Prayer, and believe that as we pray together, God calls us deeper into fellowship with one another.

Who is welcome? The Anam Cara Community is proud to welcome anyone, from any background or faith community (or none!). We are an open and inclusive community that affirms the dignity and worth of all humans, the value of the environment, and seeks to model a way of living with one another and the world that points to the love and care of God for everyone. Individuals who wish to formally join the Community are welcome to become associates.

Coming Events

Dates for your diary:

1. Winter Quiet Day - Saturday 22nd July

Music, Christian Spirituality and Scripture A Personal Journal

Reflection by: The Rev'd Dr Dean Spalding



St Mary's Morwell

9.30am - 3.30pm

BYO Lunch - Donations welcomed nil - \$15 depending on means.

RSVP Jane Macqueen - jemacqueen@gmail.com or David Head - davidrhead51@gmail.com

2. Gippsland Diocesan Retreat - The Abbey of St Barnabas

Winter Earth and Pomegranates

Led by: The Rev'd Susanna Pain

5pm Friday 11th August - 3.30pm Saturday 12th August

For your prayers

Part of the joy of the Anam Cara Community is the gift of being called to pray for others. If you would like the Community to pray for you, or for someone else, please email or call Jane ([0411 316 346](tel:0411316346) or jemacqueen@gmail.com) who will add them to the prayer list, and ensure they are included in our roster of prayers.

At present, your prayers are asked for:

- Bishop Kay in her ministry and leadership.
- The registry staff, Brian, Annette, Kellie, Sue and David.
- Associates and Friends who have asked for our prayers:
- Anne Turner as she settles into her new home in Canberra.
- Norma and June.
- Grace and David as they mourn the death of John.
- For all who are suffering and grieving as a result of the actions of terrorists.
- For peacemakers in our world. For political leaders in their discussions and decision making.
- For all refugees and asylum seekers across the globe.
- Christians who raise their voices in advocacy for refugees and asylum seekers, for a stirring in the hearts of politicians and ordinary people.

Prayer of the Day

Gracious God,
we who were baptised into Christ Jesus
were baptised into his death:
we pray that, as you raised him from death,
so by the power of the Holy Spirit we may live the new life to your glory,
knowing ourselves to be dead in sin
but alive for you in Jesus Christ;
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Reflection

3rd Sunday after Pentecost.

Genesis 21:8–21; Psalm 86:1–10, 16–17; Romans 6:1b–11; Matthew 10:24–39.

God and Sparrows

Jesus proclaimed that God hears the voices of those in need, and responds. He spoke of the hardship that those who follow God's way of love and compassion would encounter. Those who break through the barriers of injustice do so at a cost, and at times they will be afraid. Jesus reminds his followers, then and now, of the metaphor of the sparrows – that God knows each of them. What's more, God has counted the number of hairs on our heads. God will be with us no matter what. We are urged to be courageous in what we do.

One could be quite confused and conflicted by today's reading from the gospel of Matthew, so we should do our analysis carefully. The "Prince of Peace" cites using a sword and the demolition of families, yet proclaims the never-ending compassion of God; then we hear that God does not stand by us in every circumstance. On one hand, Jesus speaks of reconciliation with God, on the other of separation from God. This is a difficult reading, and one that many of us might want to shy away from entirely. Context is always important, and with challenging texts even more so.

We know the community from which this gospel was written still had strong ties to Judaism. There were exacting obligations that one had to family and community within Jewish practice, and practicing Christian faith meant a divergence from the customs and traditions of parents, peers, and community. A sense of loss and conflict occurred within families and communities when people became Christian. We see and may experience similar situations within families today. Matthew says to his community, "come on this journey with your eyes open – there are consequences for stepping out from the cultural status quo, but there are also consequences for staying within it."

New Testament times were tough – the people lived in an occupied territory. Swords were seen on the streets of ancient Jerusalem in the way guns are seen on the streets of modern-day Jerusalem, so in verse 34 a sword offers a powerful metaphor of authority, strength, and force. Modern scholars suggest this text was a call to cut through unjust practices that were tied to tradition and culture. A society's failure to act in the ways of compassion and justice is not sanctioned by God. Just because something is the way it is does not mean it is right and just. Today's biblical scholars would not see this passage as a justification of war, but it has been used that way.

Fear is named and raised out of secrecy, uncovered and spoken about openly in the hope that it can be dealt with and not turned into something that festers and corrodes. Jesus offers this: even when the worst happens, you will remain precious to God; you will never be alone. However,

Jesus does not say that God will prevent sparrows from falling, nor the loss of hair. The disciples are not saved from persecution; they are held in the comfort of God as they endure it.

In **Genesis 21:8–21**, jealousy is eating away at Sarah; it brings about the exile of Hagar and Ishmael, but God has compassion on them and promises a nation for Ishmael. God is with Ishmael as he grows. This story of conflict has a historical legacy that still bleeds into conflicts in the Middle East today.

Psalm 86:1–10, 16–17 opens with words that could easily be the cry of Hagar or persecuted disciples, but that still declares trust in and praise for God's goodness.

Paul's explanation of a new way based on grace in **Romans 6:1–11** confirms that when we share the cost of discipleship with Jesus we live with Christ and are alive to God.

God calls Christians to act courageously for the sake of God's realm, but this may bring us into conflict with unjust political agendas and laws. It may even bring conflict into our homes, congregations, or neighbourhoods. To complicate things, God does not have perfect people with whom to work – just us. God welcomes and uses awed people, and promises to hold us in care as we muddle our way through fear, awkward and disruptive situations, and conflict toward the way of grace.

Loving God,

**May we think on sparrows and the hairs on our heads
and remind ourselves of your care for the world.**

May we be open to courageous yet compassionate action when you call us.

May we feel the love you continue to have for our imperfect selves. Amen

Material from *Seasons of the Spirit* - [SeasonsFUSION](#) a resource for congregations published by Mediacom Education Inc.

Photo Reflection



Photo Jane Macqueen

Further opportunities for Spiritual Nurture

1. St Paul's Cathedral, Sale.

Contemplative Worship Service

The last Sunday of each month 5.00pm

In the Lady Chapel

Christian Meditation 7.45am - 8.15am every Wednesday

Christian Meditation is a spiritual wisdom and a practice leading from the mind to the heart. It is a way of simplicity, silence, stillness and openness to God. It can be practised by anyone, wherever you are on your life's journey. It is only necessary to begin – and to keep on beginning.

Contact: Susanna Pain susanna.pain@gmail.com

This practice is in the tradition of the World Community for Christian

Meditation <http://www.wccm.org/>

Evening Prayer with focus on intercession 5.15pm Mondays

AWAKEN Spring Festival - Speakers with ideas to stretch stimulate and nourish

Saturday 16th September 2pm-5pm

Robyn and Alan Cadwallader

Body and Soul - the conflicts and the gifts of the past

Saturday 21st October 1.30pm - 5pm

The Earth is the Lord's - Listening to God in Scripture and Creation

Graeme Garrett and Jan Morgan

Alice Springs desert retreat for body and soul 24th - 29th September 2017

Details from Susanna Pain

2. The Abbey of St Baranabas

- The Gospels Speak - Addressing Life's Questions

The Rev'd Canon Professor Dorothy Lee

Saturday 17th June 9.30am-3.30pm

Cost \$40 including light lunch. RSVP 13th June

Phone: 5156 6580 Email: info@theabbey.org.au. www.theabbey.org.au

3. Meditation - the chapel of St James, Traralgon

A group of people who are exploring the inner journey regularly meet for prayer and meditation together. We meet twice a month on the 2nd and 4th Monday mornings [at 10 am](#). During the hour we spend together we share the reading of scripture, prayer and music. There is a long period of silent meditation. To sit in silence together before God helps us to recognise God in the complexities of our lives. In the depth of our being there is always a sanctuary filled with God's presence. We can go there in silence to be and to listen. All are welcome.

4. Bass Hill Hermitage

Thinking about making a silent Retreat?

Bass Hill Hermitage is on the Bass Coast, near Phillip Island. The Hermitage has its roots in the traditions of Christian Spirituality. It is a perfect place to reflect, pray and deepen your relationship with God. Beginners, as well as experienced retreatants are welcome. They offer **directed and self-guided retreats as well as on-going Spiritual Direction and Supervision.**

The Hermitage can also be booked for a 'Quiet break' or some 'Time Out'. Visit the informative website:

www.basshillhermitage.com.au for more information.

Support on the journey

The Anam Cara Community's ministry is to be a support to those who are on the inner journey into God. Each person's journey is different, and we recognise that there are some for whom the Christian tradition is difficult or not supportive. We're committed to finding ways to hear the needs of each Associate, and support them as we can.

Contacts:

- Website: www.anamcaragippsland.org
 - To subscribe to or unsubscribe from the mailing list contact Jane
 - Soul carer (Community Leader): Jane ([0411 316 346](tel:0411316346) or jemacqueen@gmail.com)
 - Secretary / Librarian: Sue [03 5182 5542](tel:0351825542)
 - Treasurer: Kate
 - Postal mail: Anam Cara Community c/o PO Box 928, Sale, VIC 3850
 - Diocesan Director of Professional Standards (*to make complaints or express concerns about our ministries*): Ms Cheryl Russell [0407 563 313](tel:0407563313), cherylr@gippsanglican.org.au
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Love and prayers

Jane Macqueen

On behalf of the Servant Leaders

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