

Anam Cara Community



Waterholes: 22 July 2017



Tamar River, Launceston. Photo Val Lawrence

Welcome

Welcome to Waterholes, the Anam Cara Community newsletter for the week beginning 23rd July 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

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.
- Dean Spalding as he leads the Quiet Day today and all who are receiving from his ministry.
- Associates and Friends who have asked for our prayers:
- Kate and her mother Letitia.
- Grace and David as they mourn the death of John.
- Joan Smith, thanks for a lessening of sciatic pain on walking and standing, and prayer for the improvement to continue.
- Norma and June.
- For peacemakers in our world. For political leaders in their discussions and decision making.
- For all refugees and asylum seekers across the globe.

Prayer of the day.

Saving God,

in Jesus Christ you opened for us a new and living way into your presence:

give us pure hearts

and constant wills to worship you in spirit and in truth;

through Jesus Christ our Lord,

who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,

one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

Reflection

Genesis 28:10–19a; Psalm 139:1-12,23-24; Romans 8:12-25; Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43.

Throughout his life, Jacob has tricked his way into being the recipient of blessing and honour. At Bethel, a holy place, God freely gives Jacob a blessing, without being manipulated and manoeuvred into it.

Jacob has proven to be self-interested and cunning, not a person for whom we would hold much affection. Once again he has cheated Esau, this time out of their father's blessing (Genesis 27), the affirmation of Esau's inheritance. With the help of Rebekah, he has fled from home in order to avoid Esau's ire. He is on route to Haran, where he has family (Abraham and Sarah lived there before they set out on their journey), in the hope that there he might find a wife and settle. After putting as much distance as he can between himself and his brother, he settles down for the night. He rests his head on a stone and falls into a dream-filled sleep.

In the Hebrew scriptures, dreams were considered visions and messages from God. Jacob dreams of a ladder (or stairway or ramp) with angels ascending and descending between heaven and earth, a sign that this was a "thin place," a gateway between heaven and earth. While angels were often seen as God's messengers, these particular angels are not – they do not speak on God's behalf; God speaks directly to Jacob. God's promise to Abraham of land and a multitude of descendants is re-stated. Additionally, God promises to be with Jacob always, and reassures him that one day he will return home. The language used here is found elsewhere in Genesis (22:17; 26:2–3; 28:13) and identifies God as the same God who spoke with Isaac and Abraham; so Jacob inherits the promise given to his family.

Waking up awestruck by the dream, Jacob takes the stone that has been his pillow, anoints it with oil, and forms an altar. He calls the place Bethel, House of God. He promises that as God is faithful to him, so he will be faithful to God.

You can run, but you can't hide. We know the truth of this. We understand the implications of facing the reality of one's situation. Some may have found new strength and courage in meeting a challenge in life. Some may have known the pain that comes when a person runs away from a struggle to an unhealthy place. Some may have agonized while watching a loved one suffer the consequences of her or his actions.

Jacob was awestruck when he awoke from his dream. It is not likely that this means he thought his dream was awesome (though it certainly was) rather that he was struck by the immensity and intensity of the deep connection with God that he had experienced. It was unsettling, it shook him to the core, it was frightening. Because of this, one might look to describe God in this encounter as having been powerful or almighty, yet the text says "God stood beside him" and the words

God speaks are not commanding, but relational and invitational. They hold promises that are not tied to conditions and are full of gentle reassurance – “I am with you,” “I will keep you wherever you go,” “I will not leave you.” God assures us with the same promises God gave to Jacob – “I am with you,” “I will keep you wherever you go,” “I will not leave you”

Psalm 139: 1-12, 23-24 holds great comfort as it declares God’s intimate knowledge of and care for us. Yet such intimacy can be intimidating. Being totally open to another’s gaze leaves us vulnerable. The psalmist speaks of both the comfort and the awe that comes in knowing God, and being known by God.

Paul also speaks of the intimacy of our relationship with God. In Romans 8:12-25 he states that as we are adopted into the family of God we are fully known and fully accepted. He proclaims the hopeful promise that there will be a time when all creation is free from suffering.

In **Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43** the landowner warns the labourers from being too zealous in their desire to cleanse the fields from weeds. He reminds them much damage will be done to the wheat if they rush in; they are advised instead to wait until harvest, when they will be better able to discern weeds from wheat.

Making life connections

God promises to be with us, even when we do not understand how or why.

Reflection: What have you learned during your lifetime about how God comforts, strengthens, challenges, and guides in times of vulnerability?

What does it take to live with openness to the mysteries of God’s leading and presence?

“I am with you,” “I will keep you wherever you go,” “I will not leave you” – these are the words that God speaks to Jacob in his dream. God speaks these same word to us. Can you hear them?

God, you open the door to the sacred and invite me in.

You offer me peace and reassure me that I am always in your loving embrace.

I am grateful. Amen

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

Photo Reflection



The final ascent to Mt Warning, a hard climb. Photo Ann Miller

Further opportunities for Spiritual Nurture

1. St Paul's Cathedral, Sale.

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 susanna.pain@gmail.com

2. The Abbey of St Baranabas

The Abbey Feast

Rev Nikolai Blaskow will be our Chef!

Come and celebrate with other Friends of The Abbey as we enjoy the chef's gourmet creations:
4 course meal with wine.

12 noon,

[Saturday 19 August 2017](#)

\$55 per person

Funds raised for The Abbey

Phone: [5156 6580](tel:51566580) 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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