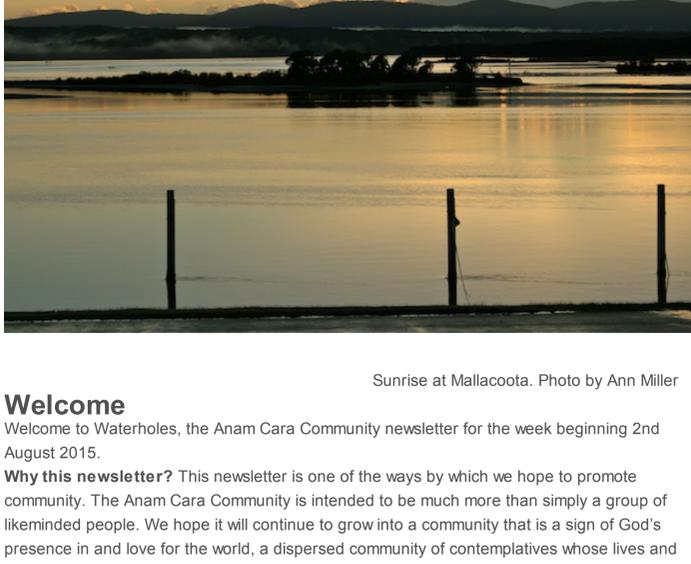


Anam Cara Community

Waterholes: 1 August 2015



Sunrise at Mallacoota. Photo by Ann Miller

Welcome

Welcome to Waterholes, the Anam Cara Community newsletter for the week beginning 2nd August 2015.

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 Community Events and news

August Quiet Day 'What We Discern'

Explore together the readings for the 12th Sunday After Pentecost.

How might we use our time to cultivate wisdom in loving others, doing justice and worshipping God?'

'Explore Jesus words. . 'I am the living bread that came down from heaven.'



Led by

Brian Turner, Jane Macqueen & Kate Campbell

Saturday 15th August 2015
St James Anglican Church, Traralgon.

9.30/10.00 am – 3.30 pm

What to bring: your lunch, pen & notepad.

Tea/coffee/water & Morning Tea provided.

Donations welcomed nil - \$15 depending on means.

To let us know you are planning to attend or for further details, contact:

Brian Turner: brianaturner126@gmail.com

Jane Macqueen: jemacqueen@gmail.com

Kate Campbell: kxcampbell55@gmail.com

Val Lawrence: vglawrence@dodo.com.au

The Abbey Feast 2015

See invitation and details following the Scripture and photo reflection.

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:

- The parishes of Korumburra, Lakes Entrance/Metung and Leongatha.
- Bishop Kay and her extended family as they mourn the death of Bishop Kay's mother.
- Cheryl Russell in her ministry as Diocesan Director of Professional Standards.
- David Head to be inducted into the parish of Morwell on 14th August.
- Brian, Jane and Kate as they prepare the Quiet Day for 15th August.
- Thanksgiving for successful surgery for Anne Turner, continuing prayers as she recovers.
- Brian Turner as he struggles with a bout of pneumonia and pleurisy.
- Associates who have asked for our prayers: Sue Hopkins, Chris Venning, Norma and June.
- For the people of Nepal & Vanuatu struggling to recover from the devastation of natural disasters.
- All families around the world touched by tragedy as a result of the inhumane actions of others, all suffering following the terrorist attacks around the world. The people of Israel, Palestine, Yemen, Pakistan, Nigeria, Syria, Iraq, hostages and prisoners and those suffering who are known only to God.
- For all refugees and asylum seekers for safety, protection and just treatment. For all in positions of authority to form policies with justice and compassion.

Some of our Associates are in a place where we are privileged to offer ongoing prayers for them:

- Anne Turner as she faithfully continues her ministries of soul care and prayer and journeys with her deteriorating body.
- Larissa Dial and her family as Larissa continues to struggle with relapsed ovarian cancer and receives palliative chemo.

A number of parishes in our Diocese are seeking new incumbents. I include this prayer to encourage us in our prayers for the diocese and for wisdom and discernment for all clergy appointments advisory boards.

A prayer at the time of choosing an Incumbent.

Bountiful God,

give to these parishes faithful pastors

who will faithfully speak your word

and minister your sacraments;

an encourager who will equip your people for ministry

and enable us to fulfil our calling.

Give to those who will choose, wisdom, discernment and patience,

and to us give warm and generous hearts,

for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

Prayer of the Day.

Living God,

whose Son Jesus fed the hungry

with the bread of his life

and the word of his kingdom:

renew your people with your heavenly grace,

and in all our weakness

sustain us with your true and living bread,

Jesus Christ our Lord;

who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,

one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Scripture Reflection

10th Sunday after Pentecost

The Rev'd Chris Venning, Uniting Church

2 Samuel 11.26-12.13a; Psalm 51.1-12; Ephesians 4.1-16; John 6.24-35

David and Jesus

An aspect of preparing these Scripture Reflections for *Waterholes* I have come to appreciate deeply is the challenge to find connections between all four readings, something I would rarely attempt in my usual preparation for Sunday services. Today's Hebrew readings focus on David, arguably the most significant character in the Hebrew Scriptures or Old Testament after God and the promised Messiah. In fact there is a beguiling connection between David and the Messiah, who often appears in prophecies as the Davidic King, the promised king born of David's line. But if David is depicted as the archetypal king and even described as 'a man after God's own heart' (1 Samuel 13.14, quoted also in Acts 13.22), how do we square this with today's Hebrew readings that reveal David as an adulterer and murderer? We find in these readings, though, a ready connection and parallel with the lurid stories and descriptions of violence and disaster that populate the press and much other modern media.

As Schehezarade, the Persian Queen of *1,001 Arabian Nights*, preserved her life through her wonderful and suspenseful story-telling, the prophet Nathan takes his life in his hands in telling a parable which excites David's interest and indignation but ends with him being confronted with his adultery with Bathsheba and murder of her husband Uriah. Our Samuel reading does not gloss over David's great sins but it also demonstrates the depth of David's commitment to God: 'I have sinned against the LORD' (2 Samuel 12.13a). Today the media still sometimes focus on the sexual scandals of celebrities, but more often on violence and natural disaster which have greater shock value. Yes, we the public need to be kept informed but it is difficult not to see circulation and profit as major motivations also. Our reading has elements of both sex and violence, centred on the king's court.

The theme is picked up again in Psalm 51, especially verse 4, where David confesses: 'Against you, you alone, have I sinned!' (NRSV) The reader is tempted to ask what about his sins against Bathsheba and Uriah? But here again, as in 2 Samuel but expounded and expanded in his own words, we see David in his dark sinfulness, his heart cry for forgiveness and his longing to know again the joy of God's salvation. This is a psalm richly layered in its emotional content and its spiritual intent. There is a lot of 'gospel' in this psalm! Here, perhaps as much as anywhere in the New Testament, we find deep reflection on God's love and mercy - and human sin and guilt, confession and cleansing, faith and forgiveness. For all his sins - and they were very great - David knew that experience of which Luther wrote under the tutelage of the Apostle Paul, that we are 'always sinners, always penitent (sorry for our sin), always righteous (because of Christ)! If David could be forgiven so can we! If David could find God's grace for confession and cleansing so may we!

This is a good point at which to segue to our New Testament readings. It has been said, simplistically but perhaps helpfully, of the relation between the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament: 'The New is in the Old concealed, the Old is in the New revealed; the New is in the Old contained, the Old is in the New explained'. In the Gospel reading John 6.24-35 we are introduced to Jesus, the bread of heaven (v32), the bread of life (v35). The wilderness it follows soon after the feeding of the 5,000. From their reference to manna in the wilderness it is clear that Jesus' listeners have been dazzled by the prospect of further miracles. One of my early college principals and mentors Geoffrey Bingham told the story of a friend whom God had given a gift of healing. He said, 'Geoffrey, don't ever ask God for the gift of healing' and went on to tell of the heartbreak of seeing many healed of a wide variety of ailments but few come to faith. There is a Gospel parallel in the healing of the ten lepers, only one of whom returned to thank Jesus.

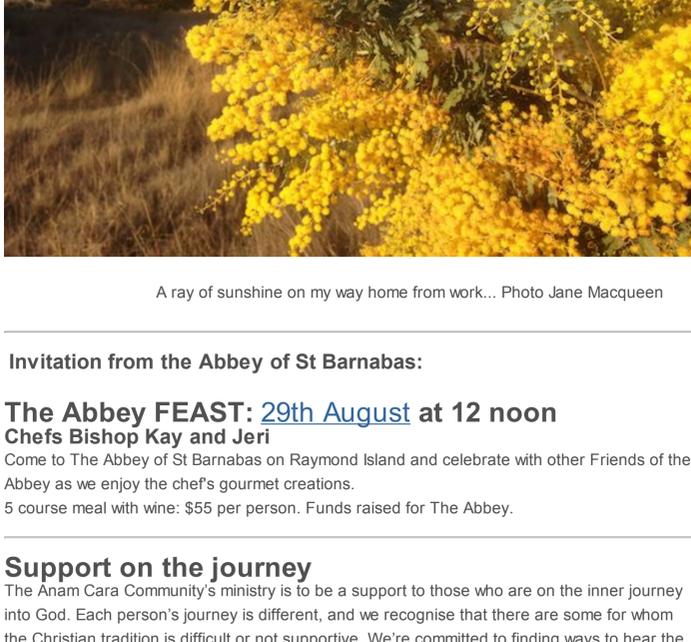
Jesus picks up the reference to manna and uses it as a symbol to speak of his Messianic ministry, how he is 'the true bread from heaven' (v32) given to them by his Father. This heavenly 'bread of God' gives life to the world (v33). His hearers' response: 'Sir, give us this bread always.' It's difficult to know how material or spiritual may have been their thinking at this point, but even if they were expressing a spiritual longing Jesus' next words suggest they were still in the early stages of a journey toward understanding God's kingdom and Christ's mission. Most of us have long been aware that the name of Jesus' birthplace Bethlehem means 'house of signs' - something that adds its own symbolism. In John's Gospel the miracles are called 'signs' - they point to and teach us truths about Messiah. In Chapter 6 the Feeding of the 5,000 is followed by Jesus teaching that he is 'the bread of life' (just as in chapters 8 & 9 the healing of the man born blind parallels Jesus declaring himself to be 'the light of the world'). The symbolism continues to impact on the modern Church - it speaks of our need for spiritual nurture, not least in the Lord's Supper or Eucharist where we feed on Christ in our hearts through faith. The confession and cleansing of our first two readings are grounded in Christ's act of sacrificial love in dying on the cross (a future event for David, a past action for us - but one that transcends history!)

The Epistle, Ephesians 4.1-16, features one of the better known Pauline passages concerning the Church as Christ's body, maintaining its unity in the Spirit and building itself up through the exercise of spiritual gifts and ministries. This fourth and final reading contains a not unusual blend in Paul of mysticism and practicality. Like a modern politician the writer uses repetition to underscore the principle of unity: 'one body and one Spirit...one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all...' (v4-6). There follows a quotation (v8) of Psalm 68:18 which in the Davidic psalm refers to the LORD's victory and gift-giving but is here applied to Christ giving gifts to his Church (v7f.) The goal is spelled out in v13. It is that we all 'come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ'. This personal spiritual journey is paralleled by the corporate evolution of the Church, 'the body's growth in building itself up in love' (v16). Visible to faith, but often contrary to outward appearance, the Church of Christ moves on toward the great climax of history when Christ's victory on Calvary will become apparent to all and will bring an unimaginable renewal of creation, human and other!

Let's recap. Our Psalm has a direct relationship to the reading from 2 Samuel. The latter gives us the context of the Psalm, the scribes' story of Nathan and David - and within this story is Nathan's powerful parable of the two men and the poor man's little ewe lamb. The Psalm recounts David's heart-rending confession of sin against, ultimately, God (as he acknowledges). But we also note that he neglects to name Bathsheba and Uriah, against whom he has also sinned greatly. These readings tell a remarkable but very human story which we can readily apply to our own lives. In the Gospel we are directed to the one who procured our (and David's) forgiveness and nurtures and feeds our faith, Jesus 'the bread of life'. Finally, we reflected on the Church as Christ's body and the spiritual gifts he gave that also help to nurture the Church's growth toward maturity in Christ. PT Forsyth spoke some words to those in ministry that we all do well to reflect on: 'It is Christ's Church more than yours. He is the real Pastor of every real Church, and the Bishop of its Minister. You are but his curate.'

Lord, give us humility to confess our sin, and maturity to journey more closely with Jesus!

Photo Reflection



A ray of sunshine on my way home from work... Photo Jane Macqueen

Invitation from the Abbey of St Barnabas:

The Abbey FEAST: 29th August at 12 noon

Chefs Bishop Kay and Jeri

Come to The Abbey of St Barnabas on Raymond Island and celebrate with other Friends of the Abbey as we enjoy the chefs' gourmet creations.

5 course meal with wine: \$55 per person. Funds raised for The Abbey.

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.anamcaragippisland.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, PO Box 708, 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), cheryl@gippisanglican.org.au

Love and prayers

Jane Macqueen

On behalf of the Servant Leaders

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