

Anam Cara Community



Waterholes: 27 May 2018



Ducks lined up in the botanic gardens, Carins. Photo, Julie Brackenreg

Welcome

Welcome to Waterholes, the Anam Cara Community newsletter for the week beginning 27th May 2018.

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.

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:

- Diocesan Administrator, Philip Muston and the registry staff, Brian, Annette, Sue and David.
- Thanksgiving for the election of The Rev'd Dr Richard Treloar as the thirteenth Bishop of Gippsland. Prayers for Bishop elect Richard, his wife Leanne and children Rachel and Nicholas as they look toward new beginnings.
- Associates who have asked for prayer: Norma, June, Fiona Barry, Chris Venning and Val Lawrence.
- For peacemakers in our world. For world leaders in their discussions and decision making.
- For all who suffer as a result of violence.
- For wise and compassionate counsel and some direction and hope for the future of refugees and asylum seekers across the globe.

Prayer of the day

O blessed Trinity,
in whom we know the Maker of all things,
seen and unseen,
the Saviour of all, both near and far:
by your Spirit enable us so to worship your divine majesty,
that with all the company of heaven
we may magnify your glorious name,

saying, Holy, holy, holy.
Glory to you, O Lord most high. **Amen.**

Reflection

Trinity Sunday Rev Chris Venning

THE MYSTERY OF THE TRINITY

Isaiah 6.1-8

Psalm 29

Romans 8.12-17

John 3.1-17

Today is Trinity Sunday. What we call the Trinity is one of the great Christian mysteries. The word, which comes from Latin, simply means Three in One or Three in Unity. Did I say 'simply'?! I'm not sure we can call anything about the Trinity simple. In Christian theology or teaching it refers to God the Father (or Parent), Son and Holy Spirit. From its beginning the Church has debated the nature of God, and while we may cringe at the notion of many gods (as in Hinduism), can we not understand why Jews and Moslems regard us as polytheistic – worshipping more than one God?! A problem for Christian theology has been that the nearer we come to a clear statement of the Trinity the more likely we are to fall into what the Church has historically condemned as heresy. Theologically, perhaps we need to be content with the statement that God is three Persons in one Godhead. But God has made us curious, enquiring beings who are always seeking to understand more fully. One fruitful way in which many have been nurtured in understanding, and especially experiencing, God is by hearing or reading of other people's encounters with God. In today's readings we have four such examples: The prophet Isaiah's vision in the Temple; the Psalmist's (traditionally David's) experience of God in creation; Paul's teaching about being led by the Spirit as God's children; and Jesus teaching Nicodemus about spiritual birth and God's kingdom.

Meeting God in a vision Isaiah 6:1-8

There are numerous examples in Scripture and history of people being addressed by God in a vision or dream or just voice. The Patriarchs, Prophets (like Isaiah) and Apostles are classic examples but not the only ones. In church history, too, we find many such testimonies, especially in times of spiritual renewal. Some historians have suggested that the revivals in Britain and the American colonies in the 17th and 18th centuries persisted longer in regions like Wales because they were less exposed to the philosophical and scientific revolution commonly called the Enlightenment or Age of Reason. But that seems to ignore the evidence that many communities affected by revival were among the most highly educated, such as in New England and Scotland. Perhaps the conflict was one of head and heart, of mind and mysticism. But even this is often contradicted by the fact that many leading mystics like St Hildegard of Bingen were among the most educated and brilliant citizens of their age. Whether in dream or a sensed presence, in vision or voice, some of us have experienced God in mystical ways that would be very difficult to explain.

Maybe the mystery of the Trinity is itself emblematic of the mystery of God and of our understanding and experience of God.

Meeting God in creation

Psalm

29

I have read that some of our parents in the faith saw the Bible as God's first book of revelation, and Creation as the second. Certainly, many of us can relate to the words of the English hymn-writer and poet Dorothy Gurney:

The kiss of the sun for pardon,
The song of the birds for mirth,
One is nearer God's heart in a garden
Than anywhere else on Earth.

For me, few places are as conducive to worship as where forest and lake/ocean and mountain meet. This is especially true of the forest grandeur of Australia's mountain ash or California's redwoods. But then I think of the privilege I have known in seeing the skies wrapped in the Southern Lights, or storms like that described in Psalm 29. Once, walking in an electrical storm in the forest reserve near our Watsonia home (my wife said I was crazy!) lightning struck a tree about a chain in front of me. The rain had just begun, and the lightning sizzled its way down the trunk, leaving it black and hissing! I suppose I had a momentary shock, but I was in such awe I almost forgot to feel afraid. Like driving in a taxi in Rome, being flung around high above Niagara Falls in a small helicopter or taking a bus up the single width mountain road to Machu Picchu in the Andes with an aggressive driver. Somehow such mad moments took on a mystical element, and the fear was swallowed in wonder.

Knowing God through the Spirit

Romans 8:12-17

Our readings from Paul's letter to the Romans and John's Gospel, while not explicitly setting out the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, draw together its cast of God the Father (verse 15), Christ (v17) and God's Spirit (v14). While Paul may be the Church's theologian *par excellence*, we need always to remind ourselves that he is not writing theological treatises (although his letter to the Romans at times has elements of this), but pastoral letters to the congregations in his care. Paul's priority here is to not so much to expound on the relationship between God the Father, Son and Spirit (although the connections are made), but to outline how God's Spirit works in our lives. Four times in as many verses we are told that through the Spirit we are made God's children (v14, 15, 16 & 17). But this is not an end in itself – by God's Spirit we are to put to death our sinful actions (v13). Led by the Spirit we have become God's children (v14); no longer enslaved by fear we cry, like Christ, 'Father! My Father!' (v15) God's Spirit unites with our spirit (v16), giving confidence we will share in Christ's blessings and glory; as we also share in his sufferings (v17).

Being born of God's Spirit

John 3:1-17

John's record of the conversation of Jesus and Nicodemus also has a focus on the Persons of the Trinity - God, Jesus and the Spirit - without naming God 'Father' or Jesus the 'Christ', although Jesus is called 'Son of Man' (v13 & 14) and God's 'Son' (v16 & 17). The passage also contains many mystical elements in keeping with our subject of THE MYSTERY OF THE TRINITY. Although highly literate theologically, Nicodemus takes Jesus' figurative language literally and thus misses the core of what Jesus is saying. This teaching of being 'born again' or 'reborn' is an important one but has sometimes been emphasised in Evangelical circles in a way that robs it of its mystery and turns it into something almost sectarian or cultic. For many of us the teaching has played a vital part in our connecting with God in Christ and our faith journey, but there are many other ways Christians are depicted as coming to faith. These include being adopted into God's family, trusting in Christ, being justified through faith, or becoming spiritually alive. Perhaps being 'born again' is best seen in a context of mystery, like the Trinity: 'The wind blows wherever it wishes... It is like that with everyone who is born of the Spirit' (v8).

***Lord, as today we contemplate the mystery of the Trinity we ask that you will help us to connect more deeply with you our God – Father/Parent, Son and Holy Spirit.
Amen.***

Photo Reflection



Gum nuts, Stratford. Photo Jane

Macqueen

Further opportunities for Spiritual Nurture

1. The Abbey

**A Hundred Years of Change - Music, Art, Religion and Journalism
1650 - 1750**

led by June Treadwell

[5pm Friday 13 July - 4pm Saturday 14 July 2018](#)

Cost per person

Residential: incl. [dinner Fri, breakfast & lunch Sat](#)

twin/share accom: \$135

single accom: additional \$35

Non residential: incl. [dinner Fri, B'fast & Lunch Sat](#): \$85

Come on a journey to visit musicians Barbara Strozzi, G.F. Handel, Francesca Caccini and the music making Nuns. Spend time with Johannes Vermeer in Delft and follow the accounts of diarists, Pepys, Evelyn, and Dr Nathaniel Hawthorne as they describe the Plague and the Great Fire of London. Finally join George Fox and William Penn at the

Quaker Meeting House in Jordans, Bucks.

2. St Paul's Cathedral, Sale.

- Christian Meditation

-[7.45am - 8.15am](#) every [Wednesday](#) AND

- [5.30 - 6.00 pm](#) every [Thursday](#)

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

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

Love and prayers

Jane Macqueen

On behalf of the Servant Leaders

*APBA & NRSV portions, TiS hymns 'Reprinted with permission.
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