

# The Parish Magazine

## Epping Anglicans

### May to July 2026

#### Number 884



**Assistant Minister, Bill Walton**  
**Reading the Gospel**  
**10.00am Service 22 February 2026**

Saint Alban the Martyr,  
3 Pembroke Street,  
Epping

with

Saint Aidan of  
Lindisfarne,  
32 Downing Street,  
West Epping

## From the Editor



Since the previous edition of *The Parish Magazine*, the Parish has been extremely busy, as evidenced by the number of articles offered for publication. Thank you to all those contributors.

One article of note has been written by several parishioners, commenting on the first ever Saint Alban's Passover Meal held on Maundy Thursday, 2 April 2026. The meal, with narration, role play and readings was an appropriate and very moving lead-in to the Maundy Thursday Eucharist with Serving One Another. See pages 30-31 for this article.

I would also like to commend to you the three Reflections given by parishioners in Holy Week and thank those who were willing to share very personal thoughts with a wider audience. See pages 22-26, 28-29.

If there is an issue or interest about which you would like to write, please speak to me or email me at the address below.

[julie.evans@ihug.com.au](mailto:julie.evans@ihug.com.au)

*Our mission*

**Gather**

**Grow**

**Go**

To contact us:

Contact Parish Administrator Tuesday - Friday on

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Website: [www.eppinganglicans.org.au](http://www.eppinganglicans.org.au)

Our clergy may be contacted at any time:

The Reverend Phil Lui 0413 396 435

Saint Alban's Church is open for private meditation during the week, when the Parish Office is open. Our parish library is also available when the Parish Office is open. Meeting rooms, various sized halls and other facilities are available to hire. Please contact the Parish Office for details.

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The Anglican Parish of Epping

3 Pembroke Street Epping, NSW, 2121, Australia.

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Thank you to the authors of the various articles in this magazine and to those who contributed photographs to accompany their article. Photo acknowledgement also to Glyn Evans, Julie Evans and Jess Li. Thank you to the proof-readers.

The Parish of Epping is a parish in the Anglican Church of Australia. *The Parish Magazine* records recent events in the parish, gives details of parish activities and publishes articles of general interest and articles which set out opinions on a range of matters the subject of discussion within the Anglican Church community. It does not necessarily reflect the opinions of Clergy, Churchwardens or Parish Council.

The editor accepts contributions for *The Parish Magazine* on the understanding that all contributors agree to the publication of their name as the author of their contribution. Articles may be edited for space, legal or other reasons. *The Parish Magazine* is also available online at <https://www.eppinganglicans.org.au/parish-magazine>



### ‘Gather’ Sermon delivered on 1 February 2026

Today is our four-year anniversary. That’s right four years ago today, I started as the Assistant Minister of Saint Alban’s.

As with any anniversary, I think about the milestones:

- The first time I wore these robes and a stole
- The first time we shared Holy Communion
- I was priested in this church
- I was the Acting Rector of the parish, and
- I was inducted as the Rector in September 2024.

And, four years ago, our church was coming out of this weird thing called a pandemic and we were two congregations. We had one bishop and a deacon and at most seven kids in the Sunday School, three of whom were mine.

Today we have four congregations, two Priests, one Indonesian Pastor, one Assistant Minister and four Student Ministers, many more children in our community, and many more bush turkeys in our gumtrees!

As we have moved forward, one high value that the wardens, the parish council and I have had is that we grow as ONE church, which has led to concrete, strategic decisions such as running parallel services at 10.00am. The integration of congregations and staff is like a marriage or any relationship, they take not just the point of union, but work. And to help us move forward together, and so that we might stay on the same page, there is a need to refresh our Vision and Mission.

It is important for me to affirm that our Vision – and mission *“to be a City on a Hill, A worshipping community, Loving Jesus and the people around us”* has served us well for many years and brought us to this position today. However, we do need something now that translates more easily to other languages and helps you, newcomers and the ministry staff team to know where I’m leading us as the Rector of the Parish. And so, over the month of February, I will be introducing our new vision and mission (that is, what we want and how are we going to get there) and I will be explaining the Biblical foundations and the practical decisions behind these choices.

Solely because of organisational timing restraints, I will be first introducing our new Mission Statement of **Gather, Grow and Go** over the next three weeks and then our new Vision Statement in the fourth week. Something that you might appreciate over the next three weeks is seeing how these three activities *to Gather, to Grow and to Go*, run parallel with the shape of our Sunday liturgical Service.

Today I want to explain to you, the choice of the word *“Gather”*, which I’ve chosen from the Biblical word for *“church”*. When you see the word church in your Bible, the Greek word used is *“Ekklesia”*, which in direct translation means public assembly or gathering. Therefore, to gather is a synonym for church. However, church is more special than just *“Gathering”* in the Bible, not because of the activity, but who we are gathered around – God.

As you turn through the pages of the Bible you see this concept of church building. Let me briefly draw your mind to consider some of the times when people gathered *to* and *around* God:

- i. Adam and Eve in the Garden
- ii. When God’s people gathered around him at Mount Sinai in the Exodus
- iii. Churches in the New Testament
- iv. In Acts and Pentecost
- v. The New Creation in Revelation.

With these monumental events in the Bible take a moment in your minds to consider the scope of Jesus’ words in Matthew 18:20:

*“For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.”*

What we are doing right now, what you do when you visit a brother or sister in Christ in hospital to pray with them, when you meet for Bible Study or in the fellowship of a healing service ... these are no ordinary Gatherings. I know I’m preaching to the converted, but the activity of churching, of gathering, was, is and always will be a fundamental, theologically non-negotiable activity of God’s family. And so it should continue to be the way we act here at Saint Alban’s. In light of this, I want to speak about two verses in the Bible today that I think are formational as we define our emphasis on **Gathering**:

The first is from Hebrews 10:19-24 printed in your service sheets:

*“Therefore, my friends, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary”* (that is to say the Holy of Holies, in the Old Testament temple, where God Himself dwelt, where previously only the high priest could go once per year, after an atoning sacrifice). We have confidence to Gather to God Himself:

*“by the blood of Jesus,”* (shed on the Cross),

*“by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain (that is, through his flesh), and since we have a great priest over the house of God.”*

We are exhorted to do three connected things in verses 22-24 – each starting with a “Let us”.

First in verse 22:

*Let us approach (God) with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.* We know that Jesus has indeed paid it all.

Second in verse 23:

*Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope* (which Hebrews 3:1 and 4:14 tells us is faith in Jesus Christ). Like a small child holds onto the hand of their parents when they are coming up to something intimidating.

Let us hold onto our confession Jesus:

*without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful.*

Third in verse 24-25 our main encouragement for today as we think about Gathering says:

*And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day (that is Jesus’ return) approaching.*

Expressing love requires the embodied meeting-together to actively encourage and Sunday church meets this in a profound way of being together around God, hearing His Word, praying together and exhorting one another in truth. Having said this, some, especially due to health, cannot attend Sundays, but expressing Christian faith happens in relationship with others – it’s not a private faith that is simply a set of propositions held in isolation. And you will notice the use of the word provoke in Hebrews, it has that sense of egging on, of pushing one another’s buttons, but in a positive way. Shown perhaps in a word of encouragement, perhaps a prayer, perhaps a reminder of God’s character or verse from the scriptures.

David Wong, one of our Student Ministers, astutely pointed out to me the pattern on these three “let us” exhortations is:

- Faith,
- Hope, and
- Love.

And I hope like for me 1 Corinthians 13 jumps into your mind:

*“If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.*

*Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends. ... And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.”*

Now in reading this passage I’m not suggesting that church, gathering, is more important than faith and hope. This is not what Paul is saying in 1 Corinthians, but rather the value of love is in binding all things together. I know many of you have heard me say this in various contexts, but I regularly remind Christians that there is a fundamental part of being Christian and truly human by yourself and that is to love others. Thus, to gather in fellowship around God is as fundamental a part of being a Christian as Faith and Hope.

How often should we meet? Let us look at Hebrews 3:13: *“But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called ‘today’, so that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.”*

You might notice the call to do this “as long as it is called today”. Recently I have been reflecting on the wisdom of the Anglican Prayerbook that calls us to morning and evening prayer services each day. I’ll just park this idea for the time being because I want to get to one more verse from our Gospel reading: John 17:20 when Jesus prays not only for His disciples, but

*“also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one.  
As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.”*

And I want to stress that the eternal, gathered people of God is not just made up of the ‘Loved church family’ that we can see before us, but also the ‘lost sons and daughters of God’, who are yet to put their trust in Jesus. As the bell tolls for church, it does not just ring for the regulars, but also for the prodigal sons and daughters of God.

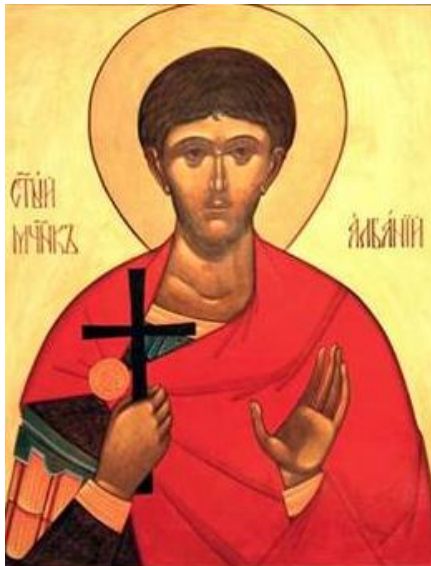
And so I want define who it is that we are welcoming as we do the work of Gathering as part of our strategic mission. We are:

**Gathering around God with the loved and the lost family of God.**

Dear friends, as one church let us set our hearts and minds to the mission of Gathering. Together, with our four congregations, two Priests, one Indonesian Pastor, one Assistant Minister, four Student Ministers and with the many children and youth in our community, but not with the many more bush turkeys in our gumtrees!

*“And let us consider how to provoke one another to **love** and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”*

Amen



**Saint Alban the Martyr**



**The Rose of Saint Alban**

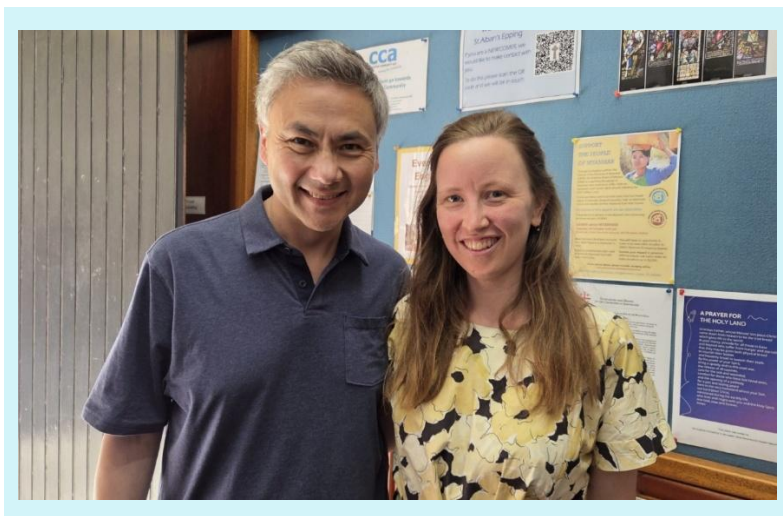
**The Rector, Churchwardens and Parish Council  
invite you to share with us our 130th Patronal Festival  
Choral Eucharist 9.30am Sunday 21 June 2026  
and to share fellowship over refreshments  
in the Parish Hall after the Service.**

***Preacher: The Right Reverend Chris Edwards,  
Bishop of North Sydney***



## Sunday School

### Aimee and David Wong, Student Ministers



In the first term of 2026 we looked through two sections of the Bible.

#### **The Church on Mission**

In the first half, we looked at *The Church on Mission*, through the lens of Paul's letter to the Romans. We learned that Jesus died for each of us, and that everyone needs to hear the gospel in order that they might trust in him and be saved. We explored with all of the children that each of them had sinned, as we all have, and that Jesus' death had paid the penalty for each of their sins. It was moving to see each of the children consider what this meant.

This message was reinforced through our memory verse for the series:

*"For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord."* (Romans 6:23)

We gave the children different ways of learning this. One week we gave them shuffled sheets of paper, each containing one word of the memory verse, and helped them to rearrange the words into the correct order. Another week we wrote the words of the verse on balloons, arranged so they could read the verse. We then progressively popped the balloons while the children kept reciting. We were so proud of the children when each one was able to recite the verse from memory by the end of the series.

In the final week of the series, we talked about how important it was for their friends to hear the gospel. The children wrote up lists of friends they knew who they had talked to about Jesus, or who they thought needed to hear about Jesus. We put these lists on the board and prayed for those named and prayed for them to hear the gospel. Over the summer the children had also watched video biographies of famous missionaries such as William Carey, who endured great personal loss in order to make sure people in India were able to hear the good news about Jesus.

*"How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!'"* (Romans 10:14-15)

#### **Luke's First Easter**

In the run up to Easter, we looked at Holy Week as presented in Luke's Gospel. We began with Palm Sunday's Triumphal Entry and re-enacted with the children the moment when Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey. Each child had some dialogue from Luke 19. We improvised a donkey using an office wheeled chair, and had the children throw sheets and towels in its path. We gave them party poppers and balloons to celebrate the arrival of Jesus, and shouted together:

*"Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"* (Luke 19:38)

The children then learned about the Last Supper and the Crucifixion, before joining the adult congregation on Easter Sunday to celebrate Jesus' resurrection.

# Australia Day Observance 25 January 2026

On 25 January 2026 Saint Alban's observed Australia Day. It was also a significant day as it was the first time our new Assistant Minister Bill Walton preached to the congregation. The Service included a special prayer for the Acknowledgement of Country, a prayer for Australia and a beautiful Australia themed hymn by the late Reverend John Seddon.



**Assistant Minister Bill Walton in the pulpit**



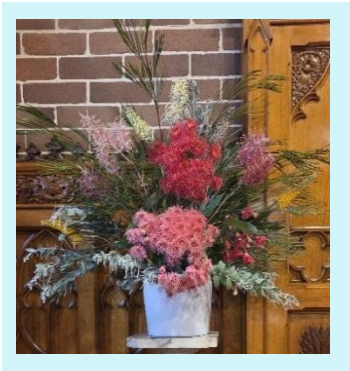
**The Church was decorated with Australian native flowers**



**Assistant Minister Bill Walton read the Gospel at the 10.00am Service.**



**Christine Pan accompanied one of the hymns during the Service**



## Youth at Saint Alban's

Bill Walton, Assistant Minister



In February, Saint Alban's re-launched a youth group parallel to the Sunday 10 am service. With a small group of high schoolers, we have been reading the narrative of Jesus' death and resurrection from John's gospel, as well as building relationships and playing games to enjoy our time together.

*But why focus on building up a youth group at Saint Alban's?*

Just like Sunday School, youth group enables us to grow young members of our church in ways that suit their developmental and social ages and stages. At Saint Alban's, our goal is to see youth trusting in and committed to Jesus by teaching the Bible and growing relationships. There are lots of parts to that goal!

Firstly, we want to see our youth **trusting in Jesus**. Many of our youth are at a stage where they are thinking about faith for themselves, considering whether to take on the faith of their childhood as their own. As a church, we want to present the voice of Jesus from the Bible in a clear, relatable, and appealing way, standing out above all the competing voices from friends, school, media, and so much more! Furthermore, we want to see youth who aren't currently at church come and hear the gospel and know Jesus, and, through them, whole families as well.

Secondly, we want to see youth who are **committed to Christ**. As our youth make big decisions about their lives, we want those decisions to be through a Christ-centred lens, committing to serving him in every part of their lives. One of the main ways we grow commitment is by meeting as a youth group each week during school terms. Hebrews 3:12-13 and 10:23-25 remind us of the importance of regularly meeting to resist the temptation of sin and encourage each other towards love and good works. In the busy lives of many families and teenagers, we want our youth to prioritise their relationship with Jesus and their relationship with others in His family. Our leaders and youth can be great examples of this to one another, showing what committing to Jesus looks like in their current and future stages of life.

Thirdly, we focus **on teaching the Bible**. In 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Paul reminds Timothy of the importance and sufficiency of Scripture to the life of godliness. The Bible, as God's word to us, will bring changes in young hearts, taking teenagers from death to life and equipping them in faith for a life of service. This starts with the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus; however, it goes further to helping our youth understand the whole of the Bible and its complete teaching for life with Jesus.

At Saint Alban's, we read the Bible in youth group through Bible Studies. We engage with a passage together, seeking to understand what it teaches about God, ourselves, and Jesus. We then seek to apply what we've learned to our lives in the coming weeks and pray to our Heavenly Father with thanks and for his help to do so.

Finally, we are focused on **growing relationships**. A core part of youth at Saint Alban's is discipleship, with teenagers having leaders who guide them in following Jesus. Yet this extends not just to relationships between leaders and youth, but also to those within the group. Opportunities for fun, games, and social activities are part of building relationships and growing a community of youth who encourage each other in their walks with Jesus.

These four aspects:

- 1) Seeing youth trusting in Jesus
- 2) Seeing youth committed to Christ
- 3) Teaching the Bible
- 4) Growing relationships

are at the centre of youth group at Saint Alban's. We would also love to invite you, as our wider church family, to partner with us as we grow our youth this year. You can do this in two ways:

Firstly, if you are a parent or grandparent of teenagers, or have teenagers in your life, please invite them along to youth!

We run during the 10.00 am service at Saint Alban's in the Main Hall. In Term 2, we will look at the first half of Mark's Gospel (chapters 1-8) and answer the question, 'Who is Jesus?' Each week there will be Bible study, games, snacks, and lots of fun – and we'd love many more youth to join us!

If you have questions, or want to find out more, please get in touch with me by emailing: [bill@eppinganglicans.org.au](mailto:bill@eppinganglicans.org.au)

Secondly, please pray for our youth! We would love your prayers that our youth will trust in and commit to Jesus, love the Bible, and grow in relationships with each other.

Thank you for your partnership in the gospel – with us and with our youth at Saint Alban's!



On Sunday 29 March, The Reverend Phil Lui and his wife Becky hosted a lunch for young adults of the parish.

Would you like to contribute to the next edition of  
*The Parish Magazine?*

Ask yourself:

- ✚ What am I looking forward to in my Church life?
- ✚ How can I contribute to the growth of my Church family?
- ✚ Do I have an interesting journey of faith? Would others enjoy hearing my story?
- ✚ Is there someone who has influenced me and my religious faith? An author? A preacher? A friend?
- ✚ Is there a Christian book or author I would like to review?
- ✚ What would I like to see in future editions of my Parish Magazine?

**The deadline for contributions is**

**3 July 2026**

Please contact the editor Julie Evans via email [julie.evans@ihug.com.au](mailto:julie.evans@ihug.com.au)  
or via the Parish Office

Photographs are also welcome.

## Reaching the Majority in Indonesia

### Pastor Kian Holik, Indonesian Congregation



Indonesia is widely known as the largest Muslim-majority country in the world. A 2018 report by the Pew Research Center found that 93% of Indonesians say religion is very important in their lives. This places Indonesia among the most religious nations globally—alongside Pakistan (94%), Ethiopia (98%), Nigeria (88%), and Honduras (90%). This contrasts sharply with places such as Western Europe, East Asia, and Australia, where only 10–18% say religion is very important in their lives.

Indonesian Muslims in Australia form a vibrant and growing diaspora community. Many live in major cities such as Sydney and Melbourne. They often maintain a strong cultural and religious identity through Islamic study groups (*pengajian*), student associations, and community organisations such as the Indonesian Muslim Community of Victoria. These communities frequently focus on education, family life, and celebrating important religious seasons like Ramadan within Australia's multicultural society.



**The Indonesian Muslim community at Macquarie University at the end of Ramadan celebration.**

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, around 100,000 Indonesians currently live in Australia. While many maintain their religious identity through various organisations, the diaspora environment often provides greater openness in exploring faith. Many Indonesian Muslim communities in Australia focus on community building and social support, often expressing a more moderate and non-political understanding of Islam.

Living in Australia also allows greater opportunities for interfaith interaction and exposure to different worldviews, including Christianity, compared to some areas of Indonesia. Some Indonesian Muslims may feel tension between maintaining their cultural identity and adapting to life in a diverse society. For some, this leads to stronger religious commitment; for others, it opens space for deeper spiritual exploration.

Because Australia provides freedom to explore religious beliefs without the legal or social pressures sometimes experienced elsewhere, there have been instances of individuals exploring Christianity and even coming to faith in Christ within diaspora communities.

### Reaching Indonesian Muslims in Our Community

We are very thankful that our parish is located near Macquarie University, which hosts a significant number of students from Indonesia. As a residential university, many of these students live nearby in suburbs such as Eastwood, Epping, Marsfield, and Macquarie Park. This proximity provides valuable opportunities for building relationships with the Indonesian community.

Since 2016, Indonesian Christians have developed a warm relationship with a local pengajian (Islamic study group). Over the years, we have supported several of their community events, particularly during the fasting month of Ramadan and the celebrations at its conclusion.

During the COVID lockdowns, we were still able to express care and friendship. I was permitted to travel as a recognised spiritual leader, and I delivered *takjil* (sweets for breaking the fast) prepared by Indonesian Christians to members of the Muslim community. For some Indonesian Muslims, this was the first time they had ever received a gift from Christians. Praise God for this opportunity to demonstrate Christ's love in practical ways.

This relationship continues today through ongoing connection with community leaders and shared events. One example is our collaboration during Indonesia's Independence Day celebrations in August. These gatherings include cultural performances, games, food stalls, and activities for children. Funds raised from the event are donated to a literacy charity in Indonesia.

In another instance, members of an English-speaking congregation donated winter jackets for Indonesian Muslim women when the community was still gathering in Eastwood. Acts of generosity like this have helped strengthen trust and friendship between our communities.

We thank God for these relationships and pray that they will continue to grow as the Indonesian community settles more fully in Epping.



Kian (third from left back row) is pictured with the executives of the Indonesian Muslim Association group.

### How You Can Pray

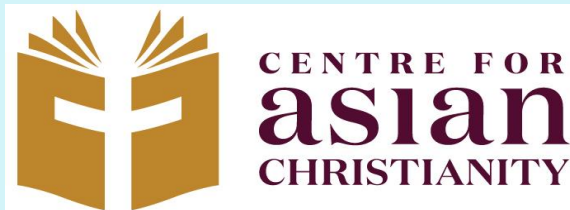
- Pray that these relationships with the Indonesian Muslim community will continue to grow in trust and friendship.
- Pray that many Indonesian Muslims will become open to exploring the Christian faith, both in Australia and when they return to Indonesia.
- Pray that those who encounter Christians will come to understand that Christianity is not merely a set of rituals, but a living relationship with Jesus Christ.
- Pray that God will give us wisdom and creativity as we seek to share Christ's love with our community for the glory of our Lord Jesus.

# Training Future Leaders in Indonesia: Visit to Jaffray Theological School Pastor Kian Holik

In early March 2026, I had the privilege of traveling with my colleague Bill Walton, Assistant Minister of Saint Alban's, to Jaffray Theological School in Makassar, South Sulawesi, Indonesia.



This visit was part of my teaching ministry with OMF International in partnership with the Centre for Asian Christianity (CAC), an initiative established by Brisbane School of Theology. I have had the privilege of serving on the CAC board for the past five years.



CAC's vision is to be an Australian hub that helps accelerate gospel growth in the Asian church. One of the key ways it does this is by equipping Christians for ministry in Asian contexts. As part of this work, CAC partners closely with Jaffray Theological School to help train future leaders for the Indonesian church. This year marked my fourth visit to Jaffray to build relationships and teach students.



**Robert Alexander Jaffray (1873-1945)**

## **A School with a Mission Heritage**

Jaffray Theological School traces its roots to the work of Robert Alexander Jaffray (1873–1945), a Canadian missionary from the Christian and Missionary Alliance. Earlier in his ministry, he founded the Wuzhou Bible School in southern China, which later developed into the Alliance Bible Seminary in Hong Kong.

Jaffray had a strong vision for training indigenous church leaders and expanding gospel ministry through publishing and church planting. After many years of ministry in China, he sensed a growing burden for Southeast Asia. In 1928 he first arrived in Samarinda, East Kalimantan, and began laying plans for gospel ministry in what was then the Dutch East Indies.

In 1932, together with former students from China, the Makassar Bible School was established under the China Foreign Missionary Union. Its purpose was to train national leaders to serve churches across Indonesia, particularly in regions such as Kalimantan, Sulawesi, Papua, Bali, and Timor.

Today, Jaffray continues this missionary vision. Its graduates serve across Indonesia and beyond, with a particular focus on reaching areas that have received less gospel witness. The school seeks to form leaders who are spiritually mature, rooted in God's Word, and passionate about bringing the gospel to those who have not yet heard it.

## Teaching and Encouraging Leaders



During this visit, I had the opportunity to teach all undergraduate students during the morning chapel sessions. Most of them came from East Indonesia, majority from West Papua, where the most eastern provinces in Indonesia are situated. My lectures focused on integrating theology and practice, particularly on the theme: What is God's will for our lives?

We explored the biblical and theological foundations of discerning God's will and applying these truths in ministry and life. It was encouraging to see how warmly both students and faculty received these sessions.

In the evenings, I also taught at YPRI [Yayasan Pelayanan Reformed Indonesia - literally, Reformed Ministry Indonesia Foundation], a mission training school for local lay leaders established by Jaffray in partnership with Middle East Reformed Fellowship (MERF).

The program equips lay Christians for missionary service in each of their contexts. All of them were excited on sharing the Gospel to their community in so many creative ways.



Another highlight was connecting with the local International Fellowship of Evangelical Students movement (known in Indonesia as Perkantas), where I shared about mission opportunities among the Indonesian diaspora around the world. I also challenged them to think strategically on how to bring the Gospel to the different corners of the world.

In between teaching sessions, I had many opportunities to reconnect with local pastors and church leaders—some of whom I had known from earlier ministry connections before moving to Sydney twenty years ago. It was a joy to encourage them and continue strengthening partnerships for gospel ministry in Makassar. Praise God for this privilege and thank you for praying for us.

## Visit to Jaffray Theological School

Bill Walton, Assistant Minister



**Bill with some local durians; a delicious (but very smelly) fruit**

*“If you leave this city and drive hours and hours on end, you will see lots of people who will never meet a Christian or hear the gospel unless something dramatic happens.”*

That was the summary I heard from a local in Makassar about the state of Christianity in Indonesia. It is at the heart of Jaffray’s purpose to train and send graduates across Indonesia and beyond. It is also why our partnership as Australians with churches around the world (such as Indonesia) is so important.

My trip to Makassar was great! As Kian mentioned in his article on previous pages, we attended Chapel, met with local pastors, and spent a lot of time with the faculty at Jaffray Theological School learning about the joys, challenges, and opportunities of serving in Indonesia. I also attended classes at Jaffray and enjoyed hanging out with students – including playing two hours of basketball in Indonesian humidity!

Being involved in the life of Jaffray Theological School was the highlight of my trip. I stayed on campus, which, along with a café underneath my room that sold \$1 ice coffees (I definitely had way too many!), gave me a wonderfully immersive experience.

My biggest learning was that a Bible College in Indonesia looks very different from one in Australia.

In my Moore College cohort in Sydney, the average age was close to 29, and almost everyone had completed a prior tertiary degree. In Makassar, students were 18-22 and had come to Bible College for their tertiary studies *instead* of attending university. These students would be trained in one of three streams: Christian Education (to be a Christian Studies teacher), Theology (to become a Pastor), or Church Music. Furthermore, many of them are the children of pastors and are being trained to step into their parents' roles.

I’m not sure what you were like at 22, but I definitely wasn’t ready to lead a church!!



**This was the building I stayed in at Jaffray Theological School, including the location of my new favourite coffee shop!**

This is one of the big challenges for Jaffray and its graduates. Sadly, some graduates leave their studies without the maturity required for their pastoral role and fall into significant sin. This is why it’s so important to invest time and energy in helping these graduates grow in maturity and godliness during their studies so that they can serve their church members faithfully and wisely. Australians (and other foreigners) contribute to this through a relationship of **Partnership**. Under local leadership, foreigners work alongside locals, complementing each other and utilising the gifts, skills, and opportunities we have to serve and grow the Indonesian church.

One of the great privileges of studying the Bible at Moore College is that we can go deeper during our education and training, due to the different backgrounds, ages and education levels of our students. We can use this to help mature and grow students at schools such as Jaffray to be faithful pastors in the long term. But we also learn alongside our Indonesian brothers and sisters, who have so much to teach us.

They model standing firm in Christ amidst significant challenges of persecution. They show us a heart that longs for many people in their villages, towns, and countries to know the gospel. They teach us culture and language which enables foreigners to serve effectively in an unknown context.

The goal is that together, we will support the local Indonesian church to keep growing and equipping itself. C, a lecturer at Jaffray, is a great example. C is from Australia and has been in Makassar for 10 years. He started as an undergraduate New Testament lecturer but has steadily been training up local and other foreign lecturers to teach these courses. He is now writing a commentary on 1 Corinthians in Bahasa (Indonesian) alongside two local lecturers to provide a much-needed resource for the local churches. He is a wonderful example of Partnership – he asks, “*Where can I serve?*” not just “*What do I want to do?*” As Australians, we have many opportunities to partner with the global church to help them reach people in their countries who might otherwise *never* hear the gospel of Jesus.

There are many ways we can partner, but one of the best ways is through prayer. And I’d love to share about two people I met during my trip to Makassar, whom I ask you to pray for:



**Bill and Kian spending time with some church leaders**

Y studied at Jaffray and now leads a local church in Makassar. Y is involved in Sunday Services, Bible Studies, and pastorally caring for his church. Y loves soccer and will often play locally as part of his outreach to the community.

Y is a young graduate, and he shared some of the challenges of being a young pastor in his church with me. He is still learning to manage his energy so he can love both his church and his family.

He is learning to lead much older members of his congregation in godliness and in the knowledge of the Bible.

You might like to pray this prayer for Y and many pastors like him.

*Heavenly Father, thank you for Y and the many graduates of Jaffray Theological School. We pray you would grow them in maturity, protect them from sin, and help them learn more about you through the Bible. Please equip them to lead their churches faithfully, and may many in their surrounding towns, cities, and areas bear the good news of the life, death, and resurrection of your son Jesus. Amen.*

P is a first-year student at Jaffray Theological School. I met P attending a Greek class, as he was keen to practise his English! As I was writing this article, I asked P if he would like prayer for himself from the church in Australia and he said this:

*“Please keep this campus in your prayers, that God strengthens us for the ministry ahead.”*

What a great prayer! You might like to pray this prayer for P and the other students of Jaffray Theological School.

*Heavenly Father, thank you for P and the many students currently studying at Jaffray Theological School. Thank you for their growth in knowledge and love for you. Please strengthen them for the ministry ahead in whatever context you place them. Please keep them grounded in the truth of Jesus, knowing your continuous goodness and faithfulness. Please keep them safe, healthy, and provided with the essentials they need to serve you as future leaders of your church. Amen.*

Thank you for your partnership with me, Kian, and the church in Indonesia!

## Preachers at Saint Alban's

On 8 March 2026 **The Venerable Brett Hall** preached again at Saint Alban's. His visits are popular with parishioners and he was warmly welcomed. In February 2026 he was collated as Archdeacon of the Northern and South Sydney regions. He will continue to work as the episcopal assistant (EA) to the Bishop of North Sydney, Chris Edwards and the Bishop of South Sydney, Michael Stead.



The Venerable Brett Hall is pictured with the Rector Phil Lui



On 1 February 2026 the parish welcomed back **The Reverend Paul Weaver** who had been absent from our services since October 2024 while he was Acting Rector of the Parish of Saint George's in Paddington.

Father Paul preached on 1 March, 29 March and 12 April and the congregation looks forward to having him share his insights and reflections on many other occasions.

## Special Sundays



On 1 February 2026, The Reverend Phil Lui gave prayers and a blessing for students, teachers and all involved in education as Term 1 began for NSW schools, Sunday School and Everyday English classes



On 15 March 2026 Saint Albans celebrated Mothering Sunday. The preacher was Dr Ruth Shatford (LEFT) pictured with Jane Jones who was distributing simnel cake provided by the Mothers Union. Mothers Union members offered the Intercessions at both services on this day.



### Readings for Fourth Sunday in Lent

1 Samuel 16:1-13  
 Psalm 23  
 Ephesians 5:8-14  
 John 9:1-41

Today's Gospel reading, generally referred to as the story of Jesus healing the man born blind, seems inordinately long for telling such an event. We find that the passage is actually about so much more than a physical healing.

The context is interesting. The man did not approach Jesus, seeking healing, but we are told Jesus and his disciples were passing by and saw the man. The streets would have been very crowded, as it was both the time of harvest festival and Succoth, commemorating the people's forty-year journey from Egypt to Canaan. Throngs of people descended on Jerusalem to celebrate over a week. It was one of several Torah-commanded pilgrimages.

As was the custom, there would have been tents and booths erected everywhere, as many people celebrated in an outside style of living for the week. There were two special ceremonies, held on the first and the last days, the first described in the previous chapter of John. It was the procession from the temple to the pool of Siloam, where the priest carried aloft a jug which he filled with water from the pool to take back to the temple for the ceremony of the feast of the tabernacles. The arriving pilgrims began their actual pilgrimage at the pool, which they used for ritual purification before they walked the almost two kilometres uphill to bring their offerings to the inner court of the Temple Mount and to visit the Temple enclosure. The second special ceremony was the illumination of the temple, where four giant torches on candelabras were lit from a ladder about 25 metres tall, to burn from dusk to dawn in a spectacular fashion. Water and light featured large in this festival and there is considerable reference to Jesus as water and light throughout John's gospel.

In the previous chapter, we have Jesus intervening in the episode of the woman taken in adultery. In that chapter, he declares himself the light of the world and reveals to the Pharisees who he is. He then manages to get away to avoid a near stoning, but their unrighteous anger grows, foreshadowing progress on the road to the cross.

The blind man was probably a familiar sight to those who lived in the area, without opportunity to do much else than beg. When Jesus saw the man, there was an immediate response to him, although there was no apparent similar compassionate response from his disciples. They saw the man as a curiosity, and assuming his affliction was connected to sin, asked Jesus who had sinned – the man or his parents. Interesting that some of the Jewish people believed you could sin before birth. So, it would in their view have been possible for the man to have sinned prior to his birth, resulting in his being blind right from birth. Jesus firmly said neither had sinned and thus caused the blindness, but it happened so that the works of God may be displayed in him. It was not that God had made the man blind so God could show his glory. God had sent Jesus to do the work of healing in order to show God's glory. To clarify, let me read again what Jesus said: *"so that the work of God might be displayed in his life, we must do the work of healing in order to show his glory."* And so Jesus initiated the encounter that led to his healing of the blind man. The way Jesus healed him is memorable, as it is curious, although it was not unknown in its day.

At first I found myself wondering if it was necessary until I realised the coherence of it all. Jesus spat in the dust to make mud which he put on the man's eyes and then told him to go to the Pool of Siloam, meaning "sent" to wash the mud off. There is no record of the man being elated or rushing home, now able to see. It is just recorded that *"he came home seeing"*. The neighbours were curious, but at first do not seem to have spoken to the man, falling instead into gossipy argument with one another as to whether it actually was their neighbour. *"Isn't that the man...?"* *"No! It just looks like him."* When the man insisted he was the one, their curiosity was aroused to know how the miracle had been wrought and where the miracle worker was. The next thing, the poor man was brought to the Pharisees. This does not bode well! It has the hallmarks of some sort of rough justice in the making.

The day this occurred was the Sabbath. Spitting on the ground and making mud hardly sounds connected, but the word for kneading bread is the same word used for making the mud. And the rules about keeping the Sabbath spelled out specifically that you must not knead bread on that holy day. So, this opened the way for some of the Pharisees to say that Jesus was not from God, as he did not keep the Sabbath, although the Sabbath was never intended to preclude acts of mercy and necessity. Others reasoned that a sinner could not perform such signs and so the Pharisees were divided. From either party, there is no interest in the man born blind, no compassion, no real recognition that God had been at work in him. They still did not believe he had actually been born blind, so sent for his parents, who should have been the ultimate authority on the question. The parents agreed he had been born blind and could now see, but opted out of any other discussion, for fear. They knew the Jewish leaders were going to put out of the synagogue, out of their community, anyone recognizing Jesus as the Messiah, so as people say, they threw their son under the bus.

Against the background of growing tension in the story, the healed man was strong and resolute. You can't help but admire his fearless steadfastness. When asked a second time what Jesus had done, he replied *"I have told you already and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples too?"* This drew a tirade of abuse. As the Pharisees tried to regain their stance of authority, and I suspect, dignity, the man said, *"If this man were not from God, he could do nothing."* You can almost feel the rage in their response: *"You were steeped in sin at birth; how dare you lecture us!"* And they threw him out. Earlier on, they had asked the man's opinion as to who Jesus was, but when they do not like the answer now, they pull rank and turn on him. How dare he presume to have a view on it and tell them.

Did Jesus deliberately set the scene we have just witnessed? Some scholars think he meant to unleash controversy on the Sabbath. The priest had just drawn water from the pool of Siloam, 'sent', to take back to the temple for the ceremony and then Jesus sent the man to the pool to bathe his eyes in it, to complete his healing action. The early readers of John's gospel will have noted that twenty times, John describes Jesus as the one sent from God.

When we think of the man being given his sight, we think of his coming from permanent darkness into light and we think of Jesus as the light of the world.

This story, this miracle, is rich in imagery and allusion. We are warned not to be spiritually blind as the self-assured Pharisees were. We see Jesus' compassion spontaneously given, so different from the response of all the others who were involved in this episode – the disciples, the Pharisees, the parents. We see the man engaging evermore deeply, as his awareness of Jesus progresses. It was his spiritual sight that Jesus healed too. The healed man saw Jesus first as a man, then as a prophet, and then the man became a seeker, then a believer, calling him Lord, and then a worshipper.

There is much for us to ponder in this quite complex story in the way it challenges and teaches us. Are we open, with our spiritual sight restored by Jesus, to see others as God sees them, not as interesting examples, or sinners or whatever, but as made in his image and cherished of God, who calls us to show his love for them and draw them into worship of him?

Would you please turn with me to our second reading from Ephesians 5: 8-10:

For once we were darkness, but now in the Lord we are light. Let us live as children of the light – for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. Let us try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord.

Amen





The Ecumenical Palm Sunday Procession began with a brief service outside Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic Church

Congregations participating in the Palm Sunday Procession came from:

\*The Catholic Parish of Epping and Carlingford

\*The Epping Uniting Church

and

\*The Anglican Parish of Epping.



The Procession reached Saint Alban's



The Reverend Phil Lui, The Reverend Paul Weaver and Assistant Minister Bill Walton



The Sanctuary at the 10.00am Service

### Music for Palm Sunday

Christine Pan, a student of the Music Director Chris Czerwinski, played processional music after Gospel reading (Menuet by J.S. Bach) and the last hymn.

Organ Scholar Enoch Pan played two hymns when the choir had harmony to sing, so Chris Czerwinski could conduct, and Chris played music before the service and the first hymn.

Enoch Pan also played the accompaniment for the choir's communion motet, Charles Gounod's Laudate Dominum, and postlude (Adagio by J.S. Bach), and St Anne's Mass.



Christine Pan at the organ



The reading of the Gospel 10.00 on Palm Sunday

# Holy Week Reflection Monday 30 March.2026

Aimee Wong, Student Minister



The Reading:

## Isaiah, Chapter 42, beginning at verse 1 (42.1-9)

At college this term, we've been pondering a little what the Bible means by 'faith'.

We talk about faith in lots of ways, don't we?

This week my husband, and fellow student minister, David and I have been part of a mission week where we've spent some time getting to know Muslims in the western suburbs of Sydney.

Most people we talked to have 'a faith' of some sort - mostly not a Christian one - but some sort of faith in someone transcendent. Even our most atheistic friends and families might express faith in themselves or perhaps a spark of goodness they see in humanity.

Theologians have spoken about three 'types' of faith.

- I can have faith that Phil, the Rector of this parish, exists.
- Secondly, I can have faith that Phil is indeed the true Rector of this parish, in other words, I can assent or say that it is true that he is the Rector, not simply that he exists.
- Finally, I can have faith that Phil is the not only the true Rector who exists, but because of who he is, I will act accordingly, in relation to my position - for instance, returning my signed contract to him, or turning up to student ministry lunches at the time when he asks us to (although there's probably a little more of a question as to whether he'll turn up at the agreed time...)

I think the Bible speaks of faith in God in similar ways.

Shockingly, demons believe that God exists. They even testify that Jesus is truly the Son of God.

But they do not relate to him as they should: in worship, and active trust.

I have been pondering this as my husband and I have been reading through the Lenten Readings in John's gospel. At various times, we've both been conscious of how easy it is to slip into a mere lip-service agreement of what God says. A sort of 'nodding along'. I catch myself reading, agreeing, knowing it to be good news *in my head*, and rolling over to go to sleep thinking, *"I've read some good true words tonight. Go me. That's gotta be good."*

But is this the sort of belief God calls for? I've felt challenged, because the way I approach the Scriptures is actually so often similar to those demons who professed of Jesus: *"You are the Son of God"!*

So, we've tried to ask each other each night, a question that I've found really helpful for moving away from mere assent - nodding along - to actually exercising faith that trusts and depends on our good God.

The question is:

**How would someone know that I believed this part of Scripture by looking at my life?**

**How would someone know that I believed this part of Scripture by looking at my life?**

So, as I reflected on our first reading, Isaiah 42, I asked myself this same question.

I considered the tender gentleness of the servant that Isaiah speaks of.

*“A bruised reed he will not break”* – how beautiful that it is not in the character of this tender, yet mighty judge, to take a needy and desperate soul and break him in half.

*“A dimly burning wick he will not quench”* – it fills me with relief that it is not in the character of this tender, yet mighty judge, to take a needy and desperate soul and snuff him out.

### **So, how might someone know that I believed this part of Scripture by looking at my life?**

If I *didn't* believe this, I could be tempted to think that the answer to the problem of injustice is *somewhere out there*. In activism, politics, in finding a solution to all of these horrendous wars. Or maybe I'd be tempted to believe that the answer to the problem of injustice is found *somewhere in here*. In greater self-awareness, in higher resilience, techniques, friends, relationships to help me deal with the injustice of this world. But see: the answer is not out there, but in the servant.

### **So, how might someone know that I believed this part of Scripture by looking at my life?**

Maybe it will look like not sharing the world's passion for finding an answer to justice here on earth.

Maybe it will look like a quiet confidence and joy in the justice-bringer, Jesus, in offering to pray for someone as they experience injustice.

Maybe it looks like praying for Jesus' return, more than asking God to improve my circumstances.

Maybe it looks like simply waiting.

I know, and I hope you do too, that we are safe in the arms of Jesus: the one who would not break a bruised reed, but at Easter we remember that he would be broken himself in the place of many bruised reeds.

From our final hymn tonight:

*Can we find a friend so faithful  
who will all our sorrows share?  
Jesus knows our every weakness:  
take it to the Lord in prayer.*

*What a friend we have in Jesus*  
Joseph Medicott Scriven 1819-1886 Public Domain

Thank you for listening. I would love to speak to you if any of what I've said has resonated with you. May God bless you and grow you in delight of His Son this season.



**Part of the Sunday morning congregations enjoying the 'second half' of Church – morning tea – after the 10.00am service on Sunday 12 April 2026**

# Holy Week Reflection Tuesday 31 March 2026

Gloria Walton, Student Minister



The Readings:

John 12:20-36

1 Corinthians 1:18-31

Isaiah 49:1-7

## Jesus came to die on the cross

Good evening, everyone. I am Gloria Walton, one of the Student Ministers at Saint Alban's, and I am married to Bill, the Assistant Minister here. Welcome to all of you, whether you have been coming to Saint Alban's for many years, are visiting after some time away, or are new, it is so great that you can join us. I am very thankful for our Rector Phil who has invited me to share a reflection this evening as we approach Easter.

I have a question for you today – what is the most glorious moment of your life?

Here are a few people's answers: *“getting into the Guinness book of world records”*; *“every moment with my beloved”*; *“finding out my granddaughter didn't have cancer”*; *“when I overcame my biggest fear, stage fright”* and finally *“when you look back and see how God was protecting you all this time”*. Well today is the Tuesday in Holy Week as we approach Easter, a high point in our church calendar and we will get to see what Jesus calls the hour for him to be glorified.

A few weeks ago, Peggy Sanders, Senior Liturgical Assistant at Saint Alban's, Dr Ruth Shatford and The Reverend Dr Barbara Howard shared with the staff team some of the joys of the Anglican liturgy and traditions, and something I am very encouraged by is the Lectionary, where we get to hear four parts of the Bible read every service. The Bible readings are all part of God's precious Word to us, as God speaks to us and enables us to draw near to him. And today, I thought would share some of my reflections from today's New Testament and Gospel lectionary readings as they point to Easter.

Please turn with me to the Gospel reading in John 12, which was read so clearly by Peggy during the service. Last year at Bible College, we had the great privilege of studying the Gospel of John, and the First Letter to the Corinthians, and tested out our newfound skills in the original language of ancient Greek. Thankfully, the English will suffice for us today!

As I read today's passage, I thought about where chapter 12 sits amidst the rest of the book of John. Throughout the Gospel of John, Jesus has done incredible things, like healing the crippled and blind, feeding thousands of people, teaching people about God, explaining he is the Son of God, raising a dead man back to life and saying that anyone who believes in him has eternal life. Earlier in John 12, Jesus arrived in Jerusalem in a grand procession a few days before the Passover meal, with people blessing him as someone who has come from the Lord God himself and as the King of Israel! All this time, Jesus has been hinting at an hour to come when he will be glorified, and in this passage, God shows us what this hour will involve.

The first thing that stood out to me is that Jesus came to die on the cross, which is the hour of his glorification. That's probably not what you were thinking of as the most glorious moment of your life... follow me to verse 23. *“Jesus answered them, ‘The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.’”* Recently, I have been trying to grow some indoor plants. The seed first needs to be buried in soil and essentially 'die' before new life and glorious fruit can grow. But is Jesus just speaking metaphorically here? Well, he continues to explain in verse 32. *“And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.”* He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die. After all this build up, the man who calls himself the resurrection and the life, who can raise another man from the dead just one chapter earlier... this man is going to die?

And we are not the only ones to ask this question. God helps us by showing us the crowd's reaction. Read with me in verse 34. *"The crowd answered him, 'We have heard from the law that the Messiah remains for ever. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?'"* People have started hailing Jesus as the one who comes in the name of the Lord, the promised king who would rule over God's kingdom forever, the Messiah (in Hebrew) or the Christ (in Greek). But they rightly ask: how can this promised king be lifted up in death if he's going to rule forever? Similarly, the Son of Man refers back to a vision in Daniel 7 verses 13-14, *"one like a son of man... He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed."* Jesus is saying that he is the Son of Man, who will rule over all nations forever. But somehow, his moment of glory and triumph, greater than anything else he has done, will involve his death.

And I really appreciated that this links beautifully to one of the other lectionary readings, which Margaret Cummins read in such a lovely way. Please turn to our third reading, 1 Corinthians 1. Follow me from the beginning at verse 18. *"For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God."* You see, in many ways, the cross looks like utter weakness and foolishness doesn't it? Why would anyone, let alone a king who has authority over the entire world, be willing to die an excruciatingly shameful, painful and public death on a cross, reserved for only the worst of criminal foreigners?

Thankfully, God doesn't leave us in our confusion but goes on from verse 22. *"For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling-block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength."* You see, God has chosen to use this foolish, weak and implausible message of a crucified Christ, so that it wouldn't be based on human wisdom or power that people come to know God. God completely upturns our world's way of valuing things and instead shows that it is only those who will trust in him, those who believe, who will be able to hear this message and be saved. In fact, God chooses people like us, not because we're particularly wise or powerful or because of our family backgrounds, or because we're particularly good or impressive, but out of his love and grace. What an incredibly humbling but also comforting thing, that God chooses to save people out of love, not because of anything we have done to make ourselves more acceptable to him!

*Further reflection after Tuesday in Holy Week.* There are many times in my life when the message of a crucified Christ really does seem weak and foolish. I am tempted to be ashamed of a message that others may deride as illogical and have at times remained silent when people scoff about our Lord Jesus Christ. Using authority and power to serve in the most humble and demeaning ways is alien to much of our current culture where rulers are often portrayed as oppressive. Jesus' death on the cross may feel dour compared to cheerful chocolate bunnies, or irrelevant to a society that desires to progress away from the recesses of history. I wonder if you also ever feel the tension of what seems wise in the world's eyes, compared to what is wise in God's eyes? Yet for all our world prides itself on its wisdom, power and status, our Creator and Redeemer God far surpasses any human. I can forget this at times, because I still live in this world, and sometimes, the world's 'wisdom' does seem to make a lot of sense.

Seeking security and significance in this world does seem to work – at least for this life. But if we extend our eyes and timelines beyond this life to eternity, then our lives in this world seem so short in comparison. In the infinite rope that stretches to eternity, our lives span not even a millimetre, not even a speck. God's wisdom and timing far exceed any human worldly wisdom. If we truly wish to be wise, we need to see with eyes fixed on the crucified Christ to realise that living God's way, in his strength and wisdom, has eternal value that far outweighs anything this world's strength and wisdom can acquire. After all, this world has still not found a way to cheat death, nor make itself acceptable to God by its own doing. But because of the cross, Jesus can give eternal life to everyone who believes in him and make us beloved children of God! I find passages like this so helpful to keep reminding myself to look beyond this life to God's eternal kingdom, and I hope you will also keep looking to eternity serving our crucified and risen Christ. *But let us return to our lectionary readings now.*

The more I re-read John 12, the more I have been struck by the fact that the cross was what Jesus came for. Follow with me to Jesus speaking in verse 27. *"Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say - 'Father, save me from this hour'?" No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name.'* Then a voice came from heaven, *'I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again'*. Jesus' death was not simply a tragic accident, or the result of political rivalries. Jesus willingly came to die in accordance with God the Father's plan, which would glorify both Jesus and the Father. Jesus shows over and over that he is in control during the events that lead up to his betrayal, arrest, beatings and crucifixion.

Jesus explains to us the fruit that will come from his death in verses 31-32. *“Now is the judgement of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out.”* I think Jesus is saying here that on the cross, he will bear God’s judgement and anger against everyone in the world for all the things we have done wrong, especially the way we fail to treat God rightly and love him as our Creator and Ruler. Jesus’ death will also drive out the ruler of this world, the devil, because Jesus will be glorified and instated as the true ruler of this world. And I’m really amazed that Jesus also said that all kinds of people will be drawn to him because of the cross, and that’s exactly what we see in the first lectionary reading from Isaiah 49, and what we also see at the beginning of the John passage in verses 20-21, as people from foreign nations including Greeks were starting to come to Jesus.

So finally, what can we all take from our readings today? Jesus told the people in verse 36 *“Believe in the light, so that you may become children of light”*. How will you see the cross? Do you think the cross is the hour that Jesus is glorified? The cross seems like weakness and foolishness from the world’s point of view. The most powerful ruler of the world, able to perform spectacular miracles, who claimed to be one with God, yet willing to suffer and be shamefully killed on a cross? Or is the cross God’s wisdom and power that completely upturns human standards – that Jesus would be willing to take on the punishment that all people deserve – so that God can bring people from all nations back into right relationship with him as his children?

A striking thing for me is that Jesus tells us that we must follow him in a way that also looks upside down in the world’s eyes, and yet in the grand scheme of God’s wise plans for eternity, is truly the wisest decision of all. From verses 25-26 *“Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honour.”* Whatever we have in our lives now, even if they are good and wonderful gifts from God, pale in comparison to being with Jesus for eternal life. And God will honour us as we follow Jesus, even if we may seem shameful and foolish to the world. What a great challenge but also comfort it is, for me and, I pray, for you all, to know that we have eternal life as we serve our crucified Christ. Thank you for sharing in my reflections on God’s word, and I pray this encourages your own reflections also.

## Safe Ministry

The Parish of Saint Alban’s with Saint Aidan’s Epping NSW is committed to the physical, emotional and spiritual welfare and safety of all people, particularly within its own community.

If you have any questions or concerns you can contact the Rector, The Reverend Phil Lui  
on 02 9876 3362 or email [phil@eppinganglicans.org.au](mailto:phil@eppinganglicans.org.au)

You can also contact the Diocesan Safe Ministry Team  
on 02 9265 1604 email [info@safeministry.org.au](mailto:info@safeministry.org.au)  
or to report abuse 1800 774 945 email [abusereport@safeministry.org.au](mailto:abusereport@safeministry.org.au)

## Parish Register

### Holy Matrimony

Benjamin **DOWSON** and Natalie **RORING**  
on 21 March 2026

### The Faithful Departed

Elaine Frances **TAYLOR**  
on 28 February 2026

Barbara Ann **STANNARD**  
on 19 April 2026



## Our Services

Information about ways to join us in the church or on Zoom is in the Weekly Bulletin, which can be found on the Parish website <https://www.eppinganglicans.org.au>

You can also join directly just before 10.00am on Sundays by scrolling to 'Watch' on the Epping Anglicans homepage – the weekly Service Sheet with readings is also available there.

*Baptisms, weddings and funerals may be arranged with the Rector.*

**For further information on Parish matters please telephone Parish Office: (02) 9876 3362**

### Our regular services

<b>Sunday at Saint Alban's</b>	8.00am Holy Eucharist with Hymns 10.00am Choral Eucharist – 1 <sup>st</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday 10.00am Sung Eucharist – 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday <i>The 10.00am Holy Eucharist is also streamed via Zoom.</i> Sunday School 10am in The Loft (above the Main Hall) Youth @ 10.00am 10.00am EPIC Indonesian Congregation 10.00am Chinese Congregation 6.00pm Taizé Service – Prayer with Songs from Taizé 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday of February, April, June, August, October and November
<b>Thursday at Saint Alban's</b>	9.30am Reading, Reflection and Prayers for Healing on Zoom 10.30am Eucharist with Prayers for Healing

### May 2026

<b>Sunday 3 May</b>	Fifth Sunday of Easter <i>Diocesan Day of Prayer for the Spread of the Gospel</i>
<b>Sunday 10 May</b>	Sixth Sunday of Easter <i>Preacher: Dr Ruth Shatford</i>
<b>Thursday 14 May</b>	Ascension Day
<b>Sunday 17 May</b>	Sunday after Ascension Day (Seventh Sunday of Easter) <i>Preacher: David Luis (Anglicare)</i> <i>Week of Prayer for Christian Unity</i>
<b>Sunday 24 May</b>	Day of Pentecost <i>Week of Prayer for Reconciliation</i>
<b>Sunday 31 May</b>	Trinity Sunday and Harvest Festival <i>Preacher: Assistant Minister Bill Walton</i>

### June 2026

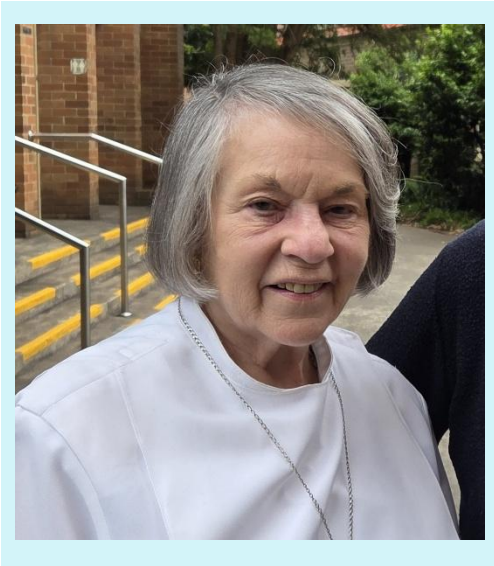
<b>Sunday 7 June</b>	Second Sunday after Pentecost
<b>Sunday 14 June</b>	Third Sunday after Pentecost
<b>Sunday 21 June</b>	Saint Alban's Day – 9.30am 130 <sup>th</sup> Patronal Festival <i>one service only in parish</i> (See page 5 for more information) <i>Preacher: The Right Reverend Chris Edwards, Bishop of North Sydney</i>
<b>Sunday 28 June</b>	Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

### July 2026

<b>Sunday 5 July</b>	Sixth Sunday after Pentecost
<b>Sunday 12 July</b>	Seventh Sunday after Pentecost and Sea Sunday
<b>Sunday 19 July</b>	Eighth Sunday after Pentecost
<b>Sunday 26 July</b>	Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

## Holy Week Reflection – Wednesday 1 April 2026

Peggy Sanders, Senior Liturgical Assistant



### Reflecting on Mary, the Mother of Jesus, and His Followers at His Death

Each year as we hear again the events leading up to the Crucifixion of Jesus, and particularly as we walk through each of the events from Palm Sunday to Good Friday during Holy Week, I often find myself thinking that while we never know what is in store for us, Jesus did know what was to come, and the suffering and the desertion He would face, and the courage He would need to obey the will of His Father, even as such a young man (Luke 22:42, Philippians 2:8).

But what about Mary his mother – how did she feel as her son faced betrayal, humiliation and ultimately His death?

As each of my three children in their turn reached the age of thirty-three, I found myself thinking more and more about Jesus' mother, Mary. I contemplate - what must she have been feeling as she saw this devastating end to her son's life – hung on a cross like a common criminal – the end of a life with so much promise? What was she going through? What did she make of what was happening around her? Had she realised he was troubled in the days before his arrest, had she reached out to him wanting to do what she could to help him? Had she begged him not to walk into danger? She was, as we know, near him at the time, and at the foot of the cross as Jesus said

*"Woman, behold your son!"* and to John *"Behold your mother!"* (John 19:26-27).

And later *"It is finished"* (John 19:30); and *"Father, into your hands I commit my spirit"* (Luke 23:46).

If Mary was in John's care after the Crucifixion she cannot have been sheltered from the discovery of the missing corpse; once there was talk of Jesus having appeared – what longing she must have had to see Him again; when Jesus presented himself alive to His apostles and followers, including her – were there any special experiences dedicated just for her; after Jesus' Ascension when she was with the disciples praying – what was she really thinking it was all about? Did she determine, as we often do with our loved ones, to find ways to keep His memory alive?

Mary may have been called by God to bear a Son and name him Jesus (Luke 1:31; Matthew 1:21), she may now be a saint and adored by many, but at the time of her son's death, resurrection and ascension **she was a mother** – a mother who had experienced an unusual conception; found herself in a somewhat less than ideal place to give birth; had many interesting visitors wanting to see her baby, and indeed worship him; been forced to flee and live in exile because of threats to the life of her son; been frantic with worry when her twelve year old son was not with them after the visit to Jerusalem for the Passover; spent three feverish days of searching before finding him in the Temple; been astonished when she witnessed his understanding and his answers, and then saw the amazement of those who heard him (Luke 2: 41-48); suffered his rebuke *"Why were you searching for me?" "Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?"* (Luke 2:49); a mother finding herself puzzled and lacking understanding at what her son was saying to them; a mother who also enjoyed the obedient son growing in wisdom and stature in her home (Luke 2:51-52); and later while developing an appreciation of his special powers, urging him to use these powers at the wedding in Cana – saving the hosts the embarrassment of being labelled poor hosts (John 2:1-11).

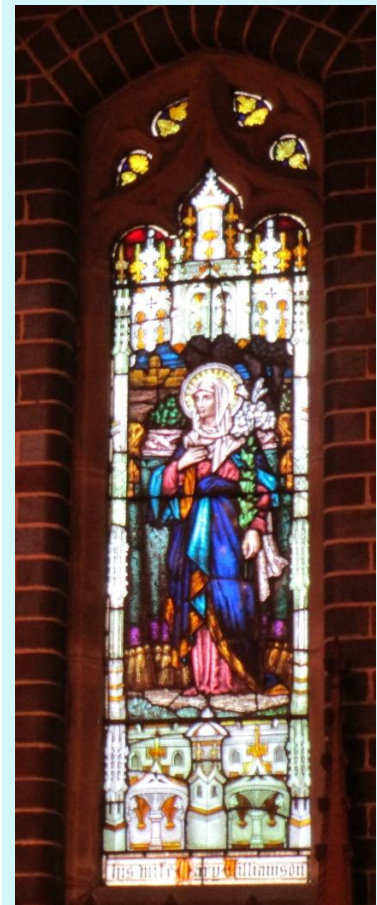
Particularly with the birth of my children, and then my grandchildren, the phrase from the time of Jesus' birth *"and Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart"* (Luke 2:19) strikes a chord and resonates with me each time I hear it – as parents and grandparents we want to remember everything about our children – well predominantly the good things that are said about them; the cute or clever things they say or do; and like Mary, we may even have experienced the panic when a child appears to be missing when on an outing – and that mixture of relief and anger we feel when they reappear! For Mary even though frantic with worry when Jesus was lost after the visit to the temple *"he went with his parents and was subject to them"* and Mary continued to treasure all these things in her heart (Luke 2:51).

What do we really know about Jesus' mother Mary? To be honest, not a great deal, but I am sure I am not alone in contemplating and wondering about her life with Jesus, and particularly her life after Jesus' life here on earth.

In her acceptance of God's command, Mary prophesied, "*For, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed*" (Luke 1:48), although we can only surmise that she would not have foreseen how she would be venerated, or really have understood what her place in history would be.

We say her name in each of two creeds said regularly – the Nicene and Apostles, in the Great Thanksgiving, and of course when we recite or sing 'The Magnificat' ('The Song of Mary') particularly in Evening Prayer. There are the places named after her, the places dedicated to her, the hymns in which we speak of her, the variety of depictions of her, the stained-glass windows, the statues, the mystique surrounding her. But I started this reflection contemplating **the human mother**.

So while **we** now know why **we** are followers of Jesus – He died and suffered for us and rose again .... when we commemorate the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, the various trials He was subject to, the humiliation, the desertion, the journey to the cross, the lying in the tomb and the rising again - while Jesus knew what was to come for Him, and although He did try to prepare His disciples in His teaching and His actions, at the time of His Crucifixion we should also remember the men and women who were Jesus' followers. As He went around the country preaching and performing miracles, they were eager in following Him, hanging on every word - what were they now thinking and feeling and how were they reacting? Particularly those closest to Him - as well as Mary His mother, there were His disciples, and Mary, Martha and Lazarus, and Mary Magdalene, and all the others – **they were all human** – we can imagine the confusion, the fear, the bewilderment, and the disappointment that they must have been experiencing – many would have been far too frightened to have admitted that they had ever followed Jesus, when we know that even His closest disciple, who had declared so confidently that he would never desert Him, three times denied knowing Him (Matthew 26:31-35; 69 – 75; Mark 14:26-31; 66-72; Luke 22:31-34; 54-62; John 18:15-17; 25-27).



Mary portrayed in a window in the Sanctuary of Saint Alban's

As we contemplate these human reactions ... we can ask ourselves, where would we have stood at such a time? Would we have been standing at the foot of the cross, or would we have been hiding back in the upper room? I am not overlooking, of course, that these same men and women, and particularly His closest, after Jesus' resurrection, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, were able to bring many to understand Jesus' teaching and to follow in 'The Way', and to stand against the disbelievers and prosecutors.

But what about us - even now, how certain can we be of always feeling confident in professing our faith. When we are challenged about our beliefs are we able declare them with certainty? Well maybe not always .... we are after all only human, but with God's grace, and the power of the Holy Spirit, armed with the Scripture, and by surrounding ourselves with good teachers and fellow travellers on the way, may we have a clear understanding of the sacrifice that Jesus made for us.

So in the simple words of the hymn we sing in tonight's Holy Week Service:

*Lord Jesus Christ, you have come to us, you are one with us, Mary's son; cleansing our souls from all their sin, pouring your love and goodness in, Jesus, our love for you we sing, living Lord.*

Words and music by Patrick Appleford (1925-2018)

And now O God, we ask that walking with Jesus through Holy Week your sure grace will strengthen us in our weaker moments, and each day our hearts will be renewed and filled with your love.

Amen.

# Passover Meal, Maundy Thursday 2 April 2026

## Comments from Parishioners

During the Passover Meal, we connected with the Jewish roots of our faith and ‘joining the Old and the New Covenant’, with symbols of food and drink, we moved through various stages of the meal from the ‘Lighting of the candles’; to the ‘Cup of Sanctification’ – symbolising setting this time aside for God and fellowship; to remembering ‘The Passover Story’ – recalling how God brought His people out of slavery, oppression and trials; to the ‘The Seder Plate’ – the eating of unleavened bread, the bitter herbs, and the dipping of these in vinegar and eating them with the unleavened bread. We also ate the sweet haroseth - as a reminder that even the most bitter labour is sweetened by the promise of salvation – it was true for the people of Israel, as it is true for us in Jesus Christ.

We moved through the next stage of the Passover Meal – ‘The Cup of Praise’ or thanksgiving – where we were reminded not only of the thankfulness of the Jewish people but of Jesus’ giving thanks at The Last Supper; then the main ‘Passover Food’ was served – the lamb, as God commanded His people at the time of the liberation of the Jews from Egypt to take a lamb for each household, and for us symbolising Jesus as the Lamb of God. The meal ended with us drinking again from our cup – once for ‘The Cup of Blessing’ and once for ‘The Cup of Melchizadek’ who gave bread and wine to Abraham and blessed him; and as Jesus gave bread and wine to His disciples.

**Peggy Sanders**



The meal was held in the Old Sunday School Room

Talk of perhaps holding a Passover Meal on Maundy Thursday was fulfilled this year. We were given written information that explained the eight parts of the meal, the roles of the participants, the term definitions, and the elements of the meal. Thanks to Father Phil and Elizabeth Jenkins the event was organised, and those privileged to attend found it both interesting and memorable.

Reading the roles required fitted the Lui family perfectly. Becky played the Woman of the house, the youngest child, Timothy, asked questions such as; “*Why is this night of the Passover different from other nights?*” The second youngest child, Tyndale, asked, “*Why do we eat unleavened bread?*” and the eldest child, Calvin, asked, “*What is the meaning of the bitter herbs?*” Becky quoted from scripture the answer to each question as they occurred throughout the meal.

A team of parishioner-helpers did the catering, decorated tables, and brought the whole evening to fruition.

A unique experience, thank you!

**Margaret Cummins**

I was delighted that we had the meal based on the traditional Jewish rite. This was because in my faith, I place heavy emphasis on our Lord Jesus as the fulfilment of all the Old Testament prophecies. In a way, the Passover symbolism of Christ as the Passover Lamb is perhaps the most important of all metaphors used to describe Christ.

I particularly identify with the Passover symbolism. I am often sad that we don’t make enough use of “Hymn of the Risen Christ” at Easter time with its bold opening statement “*Christ our Passover has been sacrificed for us*”.

I believe that more Christians should be conscious of Christianity as the fulfilment/culmination of Judaism. Every Christian should visit a synagogue at least once in their life and feel humbled.

Yes, let’s have the Passover Meal again next year (provided of course that the Lord has not returned in the meantime!)

**Ken Bock**



Forty people were present for the meal



I really love symbols. So many truths are revealed through symbols. This was certainly the case at the Passover Meal on Maundy Thursday. Every element had a hidden meaning which was revealed to us at each stage of the meal. Whilst we learnt of the significance of the Seder (Traditional Passover Meal) in Jewish culture as the celebration of the Jews deliverance from slavery in Egypt, as Christians, we can relate this to Jesus' sacrifice for us. After the meal when we moved on to the Maundy Thursday Service, I understood for the first time how the Gospel narrative of the Last Supper followed exactly the ritual which we had followed just before in our own Seder. Thank you to all who were involved in the preparation for this meaningful event. I was particularly impressed with the beautifully diced haroseth. If you don't know what this is, come and find out next year!!

**Jennifer Farrer**

The Meal was beautifully cooked and presented and I remember dipping bitter herbs, reminding us of the bitterness of slavery and suffering, in a liquid before eating. I was grateful for the time and care spent on preparation by the cooks and servers of the Passover Meal. There was the intimacy of the small room in comparison with the Main Hall though this created more work for cooks and organisers.

**Margaret Foster**

It was a privilege to be able to serve fellow parishioners in this symbolic meal. We joked about changing our names to Martha but in a way even that seemed appropriate and an honour. It was as if we were truly sharing in the Last Supper, and it led beautifully into our Maundy Thursday Service.

**Elizabeth Jenkins**



**The Lui family were our hosts**

The tables looked stunning, decorated with fresh grapes, wheat, herbs, and tealight candles. Each place setting included a cup of haroseth – a mixture of chopped apples, dates, walnuts, pistachios, cinnamon, honey and a little sweet red wine - which represents the mortar used by the Jews building palaces and pyramids as slaves in Egypt. The centrepiece of the meal was the seder plate, featuring traditional symbolic foods: unleavened bread, bitter herbs, green herbs, haroseth, and wine or juice. Roast lamb and beautifully roasted vegetables were served to us by the volunteers who prepared the food.

Children played a wonderful part in the night, eagerly asking questions about the foods and their meaning. This sparked lively conversations and helped everyone explore the rich traditions behind the Passover celebration. The helpers made sure everything ran smoothly, adding to the joyful and memorable atmosphere.

Thank you to Elizabeth and her team for creating such a warm and engaging experience. The Christian Passover Meal was a fantastic way for our parish to come together, share stories, and celebrate faith. **Anne Lawson**

From the Passover Meal we moved into the church for our Maundy Thursday Service – in which we celebrated and recalled the institution of the Holy Eucharist. After commemorating God's great acts to rescue His people from slavery in Egypt during the Passover Meal, we were focussed on our Lord Jesus whose body was broken and blood shed on the cross to rescue us from the power of sin, and to bring us to eternal salvation.

As the hour of His death was approaching, Jesus ate the Passover Meal with His disciples and gave us the great example of His humility and service in the washing of the feet of His disciples, and He issued His commandment to serve one another, to love one another and to look after each other's needs. **Peggy Sanders**



The Cross in the Sanctuary on Good Friday was a stark representation of the Death of Christ



Saint Alban's held a solemn Service of Readings, Hymns and Communion on Good Friday.

Ken Bock (pictured) was the Narrator who linked the Bible readings and hymns.

Saint Alban's Choir sang three pieces:

- *Salutaris Hostia* (O thou the saving sacrifice)  
Words: Saint Thomas Aquinas with English text by Edward Caswall and J M Neale  
Music: Juan Cristostomo de Arriaga adapted by Alan Bullard

- *When Jesus Wept* by William Billings

and

- *Were You There When They Crucified My Lord* – an African American spiritual

# Easter Sunday Services

5.30am and 8.30am Sunday 5 April 2026



The 5.30am Great Vigil consists of four parts: The Service of Light; The Ministry of the Word; together with renewal of Baptismal promises; and the celebration of the Easter Eucharist. Over the centuries these elements have been arranged in various ways. To begin with the Service of Light suggests that all we do is seen in the light of the presence of the risen Christ. It is fundamental to this liturgy that it begins in darkness.

The Paschal Candle was lit from the burning brazier and used to light the candles of the Sanctuary party and the congregation.



ABOVE: Congregations at both Services renewed their baptismal vows

LEFT: Assistant Minister Bill Walton preached at both the 5.30am and 8.30am Services



ABOVE: The Sanctuary on Easter Sunday - 5.30am Service



RIGHT: The Paschal Candle with the talented Barbara Meintjes who decorated it



Assistant Minister Bill Walton holds the Paschal Candle in the Font



The church was decorated in bright, celebratory yellow and white flowers



The entry procession on Easter Sunday at the 8.30am Service

# Ecumenical Lenten Service 19 February 2026

Christine Murray, Parishioner



The Altar in West Epping Uniting Church

The Ecumenical Lenten Service for 2026 was held on Thursday 19 February at 11.00am at the West Epping Uniting Church. Participating clergy included Father Jim McKeon from the Catholic Parish of Epping and Carlingford; Reverend Sunny Lee from the Epping Uniting Church; Reverend 'Oto V Faiva and Pastor Jeane Finnegan from the Uniting Church of West Epping and Reverend Paul Weaver of the Anglican Parish of Epping.

The service opened with the now traditional lighting of candles by representatives of each church community and a welcome from Reverend 'Oto V Faiva.

The readings, sermon and prayers were shared by the clergy and representatives of the participating churches.

The service was followed by a lunch of delicious sandwiches and wraps, cakes and slices and beautiful fruit provided by parishioners of the participating churches. This proved to be an excellent opportunity for fellowship and promotion of ecumenical friendship between our local churches.

## Lenten Ecumenical Service



Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2026, 11am  
Carlingford - West Epping Uniting Church

Bringing together:

Anglican Parish of Epping, Catholic Parish of Epping and Carlingford, Epping Uniting Church, and Carlingford - West Epping Uniting Church

The Order of Service



Delicious food and ecumenical friendship

## Two Converts – Arthur and Paul

Bishop Paul Barnett AM



### Editor's Note:

**Bishop Paul Barnett AM** is an Australian Anglican Bishop, ancient historian and New Testament scholar.

He was the Bishop of North Sydney from 1990 to 2001 and was during that time a regular visitor to Saint Alban's.

He is a prominent historical writer on the rise of Christianity and the historical Jesus.

Bishop Barnett is a regular reader of *The Parish Magazine*. We thank him for becoming a contributor.

### Arthur and Paul

Australia's most famous convert is the Eternity Man, Arthur Stace, and the Bible's most famous convert is Paul of Tarsus. 'Damascus Road' is international code for conversion of any kind, a radical change of worldview. A musical, and now an opera has been written about Stace, and many documentaries as well. Eternity is a name for Sydney and even for various products, even for a brand of facial tissues.

I was an office junior in the city when the identity of the nocturnal Eternity chalk writer was still unknown and a matter of daily newspaper speculation. Who was this phantom chalk writer? The Herald ultimately revealed the mystery: it was Arthur Stace, a tiny man who wore a suit and tie and who rose before dawn in all weathers for his daily campaign. The enigmatic Eternity word kept appearing, though it was now matched by an equally elegant piece of yellow copperplate writing by a local wit – Maternity.

Eternity has become a kind of symbol for Sydney, but few understand that it was 'eternity' in alcoholic hell from which Stace had been delivered that was the inspiration for his relentless passion to bring this message to a hell-bound city. Stace was converted from alcoholism and petty crime through local preachers including John Ridley and R.B.S. Hammond and was barely literate. Paul of Tarsus was from a wealthy family, was highly intelligent and an accomplished biblical scholar and was converted from Pharisaism and murderous religious zealotry.

A striking contrast: Arthur Stace and Paul the Pharisee.

### A New Creation

Let me concentrate on Paul and his conversion and its implication for us.

Paul summed it all up in one short statement (2 Corinthians 5:17): *If anyone is in Christ he is a new creation.*

There are only six words here:    *ei tis*    *en Christō*    *kainē ktisis*  
if any    in Christ    new creation

Here is a splendid text for reflection. It invites us to explain in turn, 'if any' and 'in Christ' and 'new creation.'

*"If any"* highlights the mercy of God, rich and free for even the lowest of the low, as the grievously deceived persecutor Paul had been. *"In Christ"* is shorthand for belonging by commitment of faith and repentance to the crucified but risen Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth. *"New creation"* picks up Isaiah's prophecy of the new heavens and the new earth and indicates that the person *'in Christ'* now has the Spirit of the living God and is being transformed from what he or she had been into what he or she will be when God's ultimate new creation is finally revealed. In a word: redemption.

Yet however did Paul manage to convince *fellow Jews* about his message of the Messiah *crucified* – crucified *by the Gentiles* – the Gentiles their Messiah was expected to defeat? How, for example, did Paul manage to persuade synagogue-president Crispus (Acts 18:8) and other Jews in Corinth about this astonishing, contrarian message?

### Paul's personal witness

I think Paul then did *something else* when he went to the synagogues with his 'Christ crucified' message. As best as I can understand it, Paul introduced his *own story of conversion* as the living demonstration that in the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus the Christ that God had not been defeated but had actually triumphed.

Paul divided his life-story into two parts, 'before' and 'after'. Before Damascus Road was his 'former life in Judaism' (Galatians 1:13), first in Tarsus as the son of a deeply conservative Diaspora family (Philippians 3:5a) and then in Jerusalem as an eminent younger Pharisaic scholar and hate filled persecuting zealot (Philippians 3:5b-6). At Damascus Road, as he said, he was "*seized by Christ*" (Philippians 3:12) whereupon *subsequently* he became a love-controlled (2 Corinthians 5:14) preacher to others of the Jesus he had previously 'persecuted' (Acts 9:4-5; Galatians 1:13, 23), proclaiming him to all people – to the Jews first but also to the Greeks (Romans 1:16; 2:9).

The converted Paul who stood before Jews as the preacher of Christ crucified and risen as the fulfilment of the Scriptures was *himself* the living proof of the resurrection of the crucified Christ; and that God had not been defeated but had powerfully triumphed. The living evidence was the conversion of the Pharisee and persecutor who stood before them.

### The New Covenant representatively fulfilled in Paul

Here we must recall that Paul never denied his Jewishness. To the end he was a Hebrew, an Israelite, a son of Abraham (2 Corinthians 11:22; Romans 9:1-5; 11:1). We think of conversion as from (say) Hinduism to Islam, out of one religion into another. Paul, however, lived and died *as a Jew*.

Paul's conversion was not denominational but rather deeply personal, changing his very heart and his behaviour from the inside out. He lived no longer to and for himself but for the one who died for him and was raised alive for him (2 Corinthians 5:15). Love, not hate, now lay at the centre; Christ, not the law; the Spirit-freedom, not ritual.

My observation, then, is that Paul saw his conversion as an act of God that made him the living demonstration that in Christ crucified God had not been defeated nor had failed but had in fact had triumphed. Furthermore, Paul so wrote about his own conversion as a reflection of the fact that it was as true for other believers as it was for Paul himself.

### Editor's Note:

**Background information: Arthur Malcolm Stace (1885-1967)**, pavement scribe, was born on 9 February 1885 at Redfern, Sydney. He was raised in poverty and often in trouble with the law. He enlisted in the Australian Infantry Forces in 1916 and served with the 19<sup>th</sup> Battalion in France during World War I. He converted to Christianity and called himself a 'missioner'.

In the 1930s he heard the evangelist John Ridley tell a congregation in Burton Street Baptist Tabernacle that he wished he could '*shout eternity through the streets of Sydney*'. Stace was inspired! '*I felt a powerful call from the Lord to write "Eternity". I had a piece of chalk in my pocket, and I bent down right there and wrote it*'.

A 'birdlike little man with wispy white hair', Stace became known as 'the Eternity Man', one of the characters of Sydney. For a while he tried writing 'Obey God', but '*it wasn't as good. Eternity makes 'em think*'. His cryptic precept in yellow, waterproof chalk, written in copperplate hand, was inscribed on pavements from Martin Place to Parramatta, although he preferred the invitingly black surface of the pavements at King's Cross. '*Some of them concrete paths won't take it*', he complained. '*Too light to show up*.' It cost him '*six bob a day in chalk*' when he was '*running hot*'. His one-word message could weather three to six months; one in Surry Hills, he was told, lasted twelve.

In 1977 a brass inscription was unveiled in a paving stone near the Sydney Square waterfall. In the familiar copperplate hand it reads *Eternity*.

Extracts from the [\*Australian Dictionary of Biography, Volume 12\*](#), 1990 and online in 2006, written by Chris Cunneen.

## Chris Czerwinski – Music Director of Saint Alban’s

Article from *The Sydney Organ Journal* - Summer Edition 2025-2026



Chris Czerwinski is pictured at the organ in Saint Alban's Epping

**Editor's Note:** Chris was interviewed by Peter Meyer, the then editor of *The Sydney Organ Journal*, and his words were written up into this article.

I was born in Poznań, Poland - a city of rich history and music - and it was there that my musical journey began. I started learning piano with my dad, an amateur musician (a doctor for profession), and from the age of 7 under Prof. Irena Mondelska from the Academy of Music in Poznań.

Those early years shaped my love for Bach's music, so when I was about 14, Prof. Mondelska introduced me to her friend, Prof. Elzbieta Karolak, an organ teacher at the Wieniawski School of Music in my hometown.

I was admitted to the Wieniawski School of Music for both, organ as a primary and piano as a secondary instrument. In 1997, I was honoured to receive the Wieniawski School of Music Award for the best musical interpretation and best organ performance.

A year later, I won First Prize at the National Organ Competition in Częstochowa, Poland — a moment that solidified my passion for the instrument.

Under the guidance of Prof. Józef Serafin from the Academy of Music in both Warsaw and Krakow (where he was the Head of Organ), I graduated in 2000 with a High School of Music Diploma in Organ Performance.

As an organist, I've had the privilege of performing in major venues throughout Poland and abroad — in Russia, France, Holland, Austria, Germany, England and the USA. A few of my performances have been broadcast on Polish radio and television.

In 1998, I was honoured to receive the Music Prize from Poland's Minister of Culture and Arts, followed two years later by the Music Award from the Minister of Culture and National Heritage, presented at the Royal Castle in Warsaw. Recognition like that gave me the chance to keep growing and learning and made me consider studies abroad.

In 2001 and 2002, I was awarded a scholarship to study at the Dartington International Summer School in England, where I continued my organ studies with Prof. David Titterington from the Royal Academy of Music in London. I also received a full scholarship to study organ at the Charterhouse Summer School of Music in 2003.

Around that time, I recorded a CD featuring the newly built organ of the Poznań Cathedral. To my great surprise and delight, the recording received the American Guild of Organists' Top Prize — the M. Louise Miller Scholarship Fund Award — in Connecticut, USA.

In addition to my organ studies, I explored voice and vocal pedagogy through private training with Robert Nakoneczny from the City of Poznań Choir School and the Poznań Light Opera. Later, I studied children's voice pedagogy at a summer school in Austria with Erzsébet Windhager-Gered and at Eastman School of Music with Christina A. Lenti.

The Austrian Evangelical Association of Musicians awarded me scholarships in 2002 and 2004, allowing me to deepen my studies in choral conducting (under Rainer Homburg and Matthias Krampe), voice (with Daniel Johannsen and Barbara Fink), and organ (with Jürgen Rieger). After an examination recital, I received the “C-Prüfung” Diploma in Organ Performance.

From 1997, I worked closely with the Poznań Cathedral Choir of Men and Boys for six years — first as principal accompanist, touring across Poland and Western Europe, and later as Assistant Conductor and a voice teacher. I trained the choir’s soloists and eventually founded the Poznań Cathedral Chamber Choir of Men and Boys, with whom I recorded a CD "The Soloists and the Chamber Choir of the Poznań Cathedral". One highlight of that time was conducting the chamber choir at the "Pueri Cantores" Directors’ National Convention in Działyński Palace, performing before choral directors from across Poland and abroad.

Eventually, I decided to leave my positions in Poland to pursue further studies in the United States. First, I travelled to Connecticut to participate in the Charlotte Hoyt Bagnall Scholarship Competition. The scholarship allowed me to study choral conducting privately with Richard Coffey in Connecticut and organ with Stephen Hamilton in New York City. During that time, I had a privilege to work as accompanist of the “New York Virtuoso Singers,” performing and recording a world premiere of Edward Smaldone’s contemporary choral and organ work.

A year later, I was awarded two major scholarships and the Eastman Professional Career Development Grant — to study at the Eastman School of Music, University of Rochester, New York. My mentors there included David Higgs (organ), William Weinert (choral conducting), Mark Davis Scatterday (orchestral conducting), Holly Bewlay (voice), Mary Alison Grandey (vocal pedagogy), and Stephen Kennedy (church music).

My time there was transformative - I won several prizes, including First Prize in The American Guild of Organists’ Competition in Buffalo, First Prize in The Haskin Memorial Scholarship Competition in New York, First Prize in West Chester University’s Organ Competition in Pennsylvania.

In 2004, I attended the Hochschule für Musik und Theater “Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy” International Summer Music Academy in Leipzig, Germany, studying organ with Jon Laukvik, Martin Schmeding, and Ullrich Boehme. Later, I moved to England to continue my choral conducting studies with Paul Spicer at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire (Birmingham City University). There, I also received an organ scholarship at Lichfield Cathedral (Harrison and Harrison organ) and assisted Director of Music at Lichfield Cathedral School, where I taught voice production, aural training, and music theory.

In 2005, I founded the Polish Baroque Orchestra, specializing in early music performance, and have served as its Artistic Director and Conductor for about two years whenever I was back in Poland. I had the privilege to conduct the orchestra for the President of Poland at a concert in Gdansk.

The following year, I established the Komorniki Festival of Organ and Chamber Music, an annual summer series of concerts held in Greater Poland, where I served as Artistic Director for 14 years until 2019.

In 2008, I was awarded a coursework scholarship at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, which enabled me to pursue advanced conducting studies with Professor Imre Palló. That opportunity brought me to Australia where I found a new home. During my time at The Con I served as Choral Conductor at Christ Church Anglican, Lavender Bay. After completing my studies, I started work as Music Director at Macquarie Chapel Presbyterian Church and continued there until 2022.

Today, I serve as Choral Conductor and Organist at Saint Alban’s Anglican Church in Epping, where traditional church music, the organ, and choral singing are deeply valued and appreciated. Thanks to the generous support of the Saint Alban's Rector, church wardens, choir members and the congregation, I was able to establish two organ scholarships and launch the new Saint Alban’s Organ Competition, in collaboration with The City of Ryde Eisteddfod.

#### **Acknowledgement:**

*The Sydney Organ Journal*. a publication of the Organ Music Society of Sydney, Volume 59 No 1 pages 33 and 34  
Thanks to Savvas Sousamidis, the current Editor, for permission to reprint in *The Parish Magazine*.



How did you feel when you walked into the church on Easter Sunday morning and saw the shining display of white and gold flowers highlighting the glow of polished brass and burning candles?

After the austerity of Lent, and the stark reminder of the cross on Good Friday, did you feel full of joy and rejoicing at Christ's resurrection?

Like all families, our church family likes to have our church looking its best, particularly for special occasions. Saint Alban's Flower Guild has a proud record of serving the church through flowers.

Depending on the church season, each week flowers are placed in the sanctuary and on the welcome table at the rear of the church. On feast days and special occasions, particularly at Christmas and Easter, a special effort is made to add to the celebration with flowers.

Have you noticed how the flowers change during the year? In Lent, all flowers are removed as we walk with Christ on his journey through the wilderness. Then at Easter the church is filled with pure white and gold as we celebrate together the risen Christ. Similarly, during Advent, our season of preparing for His birth, the flowers are more subdued until Christmas arrives, and we celebrate anew the miracle of our Saviour's birth. The soaring flowers at Pentecost remind us of the gift of the Holy Spirit. At Harvest Festival we add fruits and vegetables, and even manufactured foods, as a thank you to God for the bounty of our earth and His enduring goodness towards us. On Saint Alban's Day red flowers remind us of the blood of the martyrs. At all seasons of the church year flowers complement the liturgy.



**Pentecost 2025**

**Harvest Festival 2025**

National events and personal anniversaries are also marked with special flowers. On Australia Day the church is adorned with wonderful native flowers, while on Anzac Day and Remembrance Sunday red flowers and a laurel wreath remind us of the sacrifice made by others that we might be free. From time to time parishioners also mark special anniversaries such as the death of a loved one with memorial flowers, usually by the pulpit. All these are arranged by the Flower Guild.

Both the Old and New Testaments contain many references to the wonders of God's creation and the bounty of the earth. In the parable of the talents (Matthew 25: 14-30) Christ reminds us to use our abilities, albeit wisely, for God's glory. Over the years the faces in the Flower Guild have changed, and will continue to change, but our mission has remained the same: to use our talents to decorate the church each week to the best of our ability to the glory of God.



Saint Alban's Day 2025



Christmas 2023



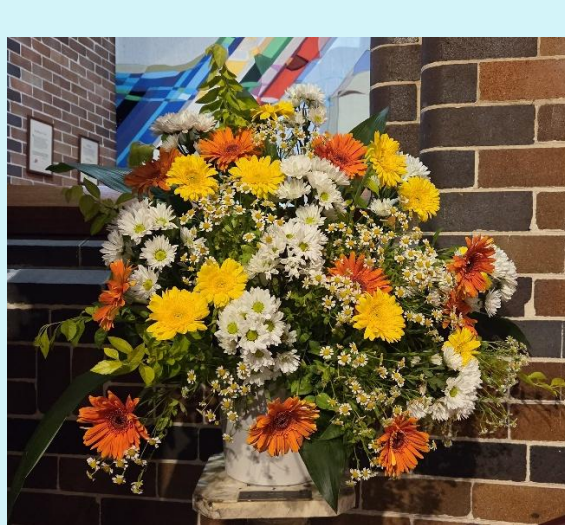
Remembrance Sunday 2025

Are you interested in the beauty of flowers, and in arranging floral displays?

No special abilities are needed, just a willingness to share your interest in flowers and to serve God and your fellow parishioners.

Please speak to Jan Boyley or any other of the current members of the Flower Guild: Bev Gibbs, Jane Jones, Irene Little, Margaret Pearson or Meryl Smith.

We would love to have you join us.



Memorial arrangements

## Karibu\* from Kenya

## Ian and Theano Ratcliff

### Following God's call to a nation of beauty and need



Ian and Theano Ratcliff with Trinity and Ollie

**Editor's Note:** Ian and his parents, David and Jan Ratcliff, were longstanding parishioners of Saint Alban's from 2002 to 2015, Jan also in the 1960s; and Ian 1995 – 2001 as well as being an occasional visitor after this. Ian was a member of the Saint Alban's choir, was on the Reading Roster and was a volunteer in the Parish Office among other ministries. According to Ian, \*Karibu means 'welcome' but it is a word that is used when you are inviting someone into your house, offering tea, asking someone to sit down, or in response to someone thanking you. It has a range of uses beyond the mere translation.

It is a great gift to be able to share once again with the Saint Alban's community about our journey of faith that has taken us to Nairobi, Kenya. We are always so thankful for the prayers and support of your community, as we seek to follow the Lord's calling.

For this edition of the Saint Alban's Parish Magazine, we highlight some of the events that have occurred in recent months through the connections that we have continued to make throughout our first term here in Kenya.

### Connections that Transform Communities

God has been using so many of our connections to bring blessing to vulnerable Kenyan communities in recent months. Here are some of the highlights:

**DESTINY SCHOOL:** The irony of the name '*Destiny school*' strikes us each time we visit. Nestled in the most impoverished of communities in Mathare ghetto, where gang life is active, 'chang'aa' illegal breweries prevalent and the social issues are overwhelming. We wonder what future destinies await these vibrant kids?



Destiny kids on Lake Naivasha



Destiny kids walk among giraffes

Amidst all this, God is on the move! Through our connection with a Christian environmental camp '**Eden Thriving**', 19 grade 5 and 6 kids from Destiny school participated in a *free* 3-night camp experience. Eden camp provided hot meals, hot showers and an immersive nature experience camping on the banks of the Malewa River. Imagine what it would mean for ghetto kids to see hippos and giraffes up close for the first time and to be surrounded by pristine nature! It's hard to articulate the joy we get when God uses us for His kingdom purposes!

That is not all. Almost immediately after praying with the Principal and her husband about the challenges faced by the school, Joy Divine (a community organisation that assists street-connected kids) met with us at the school and volunteered to partner with Destiny School to provide them with porridge, lunch and resources!



Part of Korogocho slum

**KOROGOCHO:** Korogocho is one of Nairobi's largest and poorest informal settlements which houses around 200,000 people in 1.5 square kilometres. It is located next to a large rubbish dump which can be an assault on the senses.

Pastor Joel informed Ian that many people are addicted to alcohol or a local drug called khat. As a result, you see men slumped by the side of the road. What can **Banda Health** bring to this lived reality?

Ian has been working alongside a local organisation *Development Associates International* [DAI] to pioneer a **servant leadership training course** for church and youth leaders which began over two days in April.

As twenty-five participants engaged with Ticha Masai about the nature of their leadership, the hunger for understanding and change was evident.

We are looking forward to facilitating the next tranche of training on our return in August.



RIGHT: Ticha Masai from DAI engaging with participants

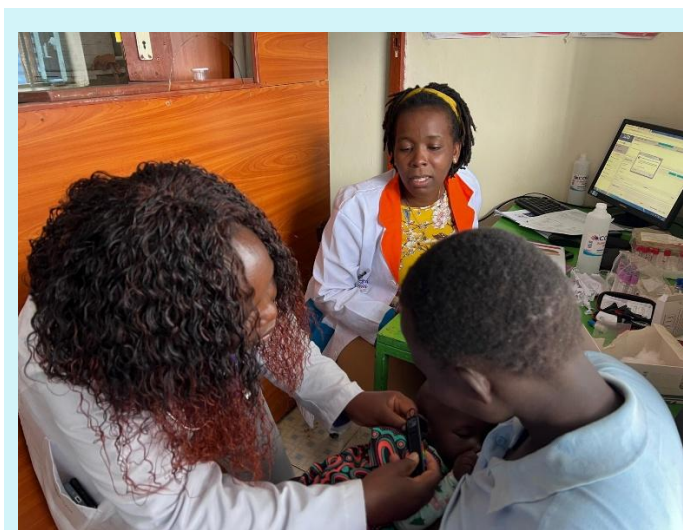
**MAAI MAHIU:** Maai Mahiu is a 'transit town' about two hours outside Nairobi. Trucks travel through Maai Mahiu on their way to and from Uganda, Rwanda and Western Kenya. This was the destination for our second workshop on 'Recognising and Preventing Human Trafficking for faith leaders in vulnerable communities' in April. Workshop participants are pictured below.



One of the participants from our pilot workshop last September specifically requested us to bring this workshop to Maai Mahiu and became a key community mobiliser. As one of the participants noted: “Maai Mahiu is a source, transit location and destination” for victims of trafficking. It was another incredible day where connections that we had made between community organisations, trafficking survivors, churches and Banda Health came together to build the capacity of faith leaders to address a very real issue in this community. We love to see the impact of this training on peoples’ hearts and minds. Next stop, Kwale County on the coast ...

### Ear and Hearing Care Training

As well as these ministry partnerships, Theano has been actively involved in finding ways to bring about Banda Health’s vision of good healthcare within walking distance of the world’s poorest patients. One outworking of her dedication this year was an ear and hearing care training event.



Ear health training participants put skills into practice

In February 2026, **Banda Health**, in partnership with some dedicated Australian General Practitioners, hosted our first ever advanced clinician training intensive. We gathered twenty-six of Nairobi’s best and brightest doctors, clinical officers & nurses serving in slum and rural communities and undertook an in-depth 2-day training program on **ear health and deafness prevention**.

Clinicians are now equipped to screen for ear disease and prevent debilitating childhood deafness in their communities - they’re already putting their learning into practice! We love the excitement of participants as they report the improved health impacts resulting from this training.

### Home Assignment in Australia

There is so much more we could tell you about our time in Kenya ... and that opportunity is coming soon!

After just over two years serving the Lord in Nairobi, Kenya, the Ratcliff family is returning to Australia for Home Assignment. We will be in Australia for just under three months, sharing with churches and partners about our ministry in Kenya and beyond.

We are excited that the **Saint Alban’s Epping Mothers Union** will be hosting us for their brunch, to which all parishioners and guests are invited, on **Saturday 18 July!** Look in the church’s Weekly Bulletin for details. We are very much looking forward to connecting with the Saint Alban’s community that weekend and sharing more about what the Lord is doing through us in Kenya.

### Acknowledgements:

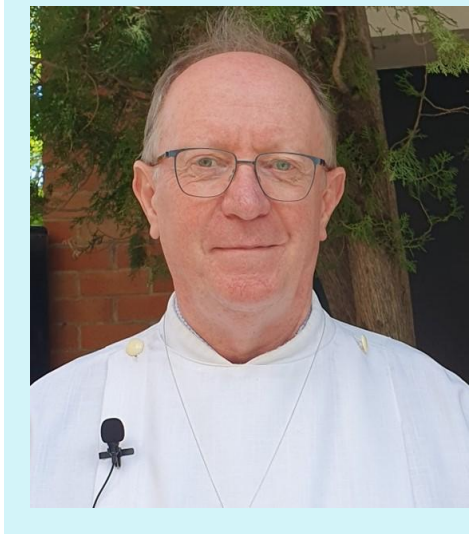
1. Photos of Maai Mahiu and Korogocho training are by Tohru Inoue, Serving In Mission
  2. Photos of the Destiny kids at Naivasha/Crescent Island used with permission by Destiny School
  3. Other photos are by Ian or Theano Ratcliff
- All photos are used with permission.



Destiny School – students devouring watermelon

# A Tiny Church, a Tiny Chapel and a Tiny Synagogue

## David Tait, Warden



Anyone who has travelled to Great Britain or Europe can attest to the fact that every city of any note has a cathedral to visit and admire. In Australia, cathedrals are a bit thinner on the ground, the result of a large land mass, with a small population.

However, dotted throughout the countryside are hundreds of small very humble places of worship. These served local communities in the days when travel was very limited. Today those small communities have largely disappeared (they appear on maps marked as a “locality”). Often all that remains is some brick fireplaces and chimneys in a field. At some locations, perhaps a fading weatherboard and iron roof church might be found, surrounded by long grass and a small graveyard with crooked headstones and rusting iron work. Some of these churches fall down due to neglect or termites. Some get converted to become a house. Some get carted off on a truck to become a wedding chapel in a trendy resort. And a few remain in use.

In my travels I will often look out historic small places of worship. Surprisingly some are left unlocked so the keen explorer can see inside. Following, is the story of two such places and a modern take on the theme.

The first is Saint Mary the Virgin Anglican Church at Gegedzerick. Now I initially thought that Gegedzerick was of Eastern European origin. It is in fact a local indigenous name meaning “wide-open spaces” (i). Gegedzerick is just off the Kosciuszko Road east of Berridale. Driving between Cooma and Jindabyne you pass the turnoff and can see its red roof off in the distance. It does indeed have a view of the “wide-open spaces”, looking southeast over the Monaro towards Nimmitabel and Bombala. The Church was built between 1849 and 1860 (ii). A vestry was added in 1912 (iii). It is built from rough stone, with a corrugated iron roof, painted red. There is a graveyard, partly surrounded by a dry-stone wall.

A few years back our family was spending Easter in the Snowy Mountains and decided to visit the local Parish. The Parish is large in area, but small in people (and probably always has been). Maundy Thursday was at All Saints’ Berridale (another small historic church). Easter Sunday at Saint Andrew’s Jindabyne (built after the old town was moved as part of the Snowy Mountains Scheme).

Good Friday was at Gegedzerick on a very foggy morning. The church was lit by candles, not for effect; it has no electricity. A local told me that can confound visiting speakers, keen to show a MS PowerPoint slide show. Ignoring the cars used as transport, the congregation emerged from the fog of the surrounding country to join in worship as they had for 170 plus years.



**Saint Mary the Virgin Anglican Church at Gegedzerick**

You could easily imagine them arriving on horseback. It was a very intimate and warm experience. A place of shelter from the wind, cold and vastness of the landscape, but also a place of community and continuity to the pioneers of the district.

The second location (the modern take) is not a religious chapel, but an art and sound installation at Cobar in western NSW, the Cobar Sound Chapel. When planning a trip to Broken Hill I remembered there was something unusual at Cobar. A few years earlier I caught the end of a programme on the ABC. It was a typical country town story of how an idea to build something (usually something BIG) to attract tourists played out. There was the determined driver of the idea (I think the local mayor). An enthusiastic committee. A bunch of sceptics who questioned the sanity and cost of the idea and the rest of the locals who watched on with amusement.



**The Cobar Sound Chapel**

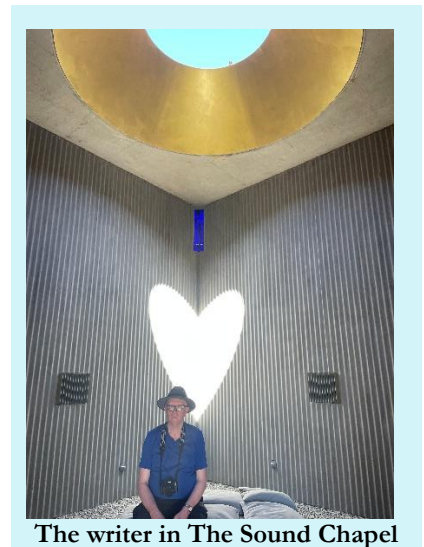
A disused, graffiti covered and rusting 100-year-old water tank has been repurposed. A doorway cut in the side. A concrete cube with an open dome roof (designed by renowned Sydney architect Glenn Murcutt) now sits inside the tank (iv). There is a gravel floor and a concrete bench to rest upon.

There are lines of poetry on the walls and there are four imbedded speakers. A sound scape was composed by Georges Lentz “String Quartet(s)” (2000-2023) (v).

The piece is 43 hours in length and plays on an endless rotation 24 hours a day, whether there is someone in the chapel or not (vi).

All this was built at some considerable cost (some mining companies assisted) and is at odds with everything you may expect to find in outback Cobar.

The purpose? Well to attract tourists of course. You can drop in at the local museum/visitors’ centre and after paying a refundable deposit for the key, you can drive to the site and let yourself in for a look and listen. It is a place to escape the heat, dust and wind. It is a tiny place that is so very ordered and neat; juxtaposed outside is the endless scrub, red dirt, rusting, decaying industrial machinery and flat open plain. A place to sit a while and think, to listen to the play of the wind from outside, the crunch of the gravel if you walk around inside, the soundscape. A place to watch the shadows change as the light comes through the dome. A place to read the poetry around the wall. To contemplate the indigenous peoples who lived on the land before mining and farming. It may not be a religious chapel, but it can be a spiritual experience.



**The writer in The Sound Chapel**

Broken Hill, the Silver City, is where I found the final place in this story. Mining plays a much-reduced role in Broken Hill today and it has lost some of its rough edges. It is no longer the hard-working, hard living city of the Australian ethos. When I was at school, in year 11, we watched and studied the 1971 film “Wake in Fright” based on the novel by Kenneth Cook (vii). It is set in fictional “Bundanyabba” (viii). It could be any outback mining town, Kalgoorlie, Mount Isa, but obviously is based on Broken Hill. I re watched the film recently and I do not know how our teacher could have considered it an appropriate film for 16- and 17-year-old students. It ticks off just about every warning on the list. That said, it portrays a certain time and place in Australia, and it was in this setting I found a small historic Jewish synagogue (built 1910, no longer in use), one of the remotest synagogues in the world (ix).



**The Synagogue in Broken Hill**

Broken Hill has long been a place that attracted people who were seeking to make their fortune, building a new life or escaping something.

The synagogue and the nearby Sulphide Street Museum (housed in the old Silverton Tramway Station) have the stories of the immigrants who came to Broken Hill. Particularly after World War II, people left a war ravaged and destroyed Europe seeking to put as much distance as they could between what they had endured and seen.

Some arrived in Australia in the major cities and then took themselves to even remoter locations. Broken Hill was about as far away as you could go.

In this place, alien to their former homelands, some found the familiar in a small Jewish synagogue of simple and humble design. It was a place of peace, the comfort of the old world in the strange new world in which they found themselves.

The synagogue is no longer used. It seemed to me both alien and anchored to this place: uprooted from the old world, the destruction of Europe and dropped into the Australian outback; uprooted from dry and rocky Israel, and surrounded by red soil, dust and heat of the outback. The story of the people who came to Broken Hill was often one of feeling totally out of place. They set about rebuilding the familiar around them, including their beliefs and religion. It was a humble space but reflected the importance of their need for community and belonging and the peace they found in this place.

On the walls of the Cobar Sound Chapel are some poetry quotations. One is from William Blake. It is from the frontispiece of his epic last poem *Jerusalem, The Emanation of the Giant Albion*' (1804-1820) (x):

*"There is a Void, outside of Existence, which if enter'd into Englobes itself & becomes a Womb ..."* (xi)

I cannot say that I fully understand the Blake quote. It points towards regeneration, new life and creativity. But I do see in each of the places I have visited a common thread. They each exist in the vastness of the Australian landscape. They are each 'a void' that is so different to what surrounds them. The open, windy, wild Monaro or the dust and heat of the western plains of NSW. They are a void into which one can step and be transformed by the religious tradition or the spiritual experience. They are 'wombs' that give life to community and belonging and continuity. Each of these places offers peace, calm, beauty, and safety. In the case of the church and synagogue they are links to familiar beliefs handed down over generations. They are places for gathering, places of sorrow, places of joy, places where people came and come together. The Sound Chapel has much beauty born from the experience of sitting quietly and thinking.

When I look at these small places of worship, I am often taken in thought to Peter Carey's book *Oscar and Lucinda* and the later film of the same name. The story culminates in a wager to build and transport a church made of glass; a church of great beauty, transported into the hostile vastness of the Australian bush. The venture fails, but the love between the characters survives. The glass church frame is covered in weatherboard and becomes a humble bush church surrounded by thistles (xii). It is these places that I am drawn to and each is worth visiting if you are passing by.

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# Parish Directory

<b>Rector</b>	The Reverend Philip Lui BAppSc, BD
<b>Honorary Priest</b>	The Reverend Paul Weaver BA, BD, ThL, AMusA
<b>Assistant Minister</b> (part-time)	Bill Walton BEng (Hons), BD (Hons), PhD Student University of Sydney
<b>Student Ministers</b>	Doris Awad BA, BEd, BTh Student at Moore Theological College Gloria Walton BMed/MD (Hons), BTh/MTh Student Moore Theological College Aimee Wong BMus, MA, BTh Student Moore Theological College David Wong BSc, ACA, Adv Dip Student Moore Theological College
<b>Indonesian Congregation</b>	Pastor Kian Holik BSc, MTS
<b>Chinese Congregation</b>	The Reverend Simon Pei BE Arch; M Arch; BTh
<b>Lay Assistant</b>	Ruth Shatford AM (Diocesan)
<b>Sanctuary Assistants, Servers</b>	Godfrey Abel, Ross Beattie, Licette Bedna, Pranat Bhonsle, Ken Bock OAM, Anne Lawson, Peggy Sanders (Senior Liturgical Assistant), David Tait, Amy Taylor, Mark Taylor, Christina Thompson, Kim Turner, James von Stieglitz, Sarah Weaver
<b>Sacristans</b>	Ross Beattie, Mark Taylor, James von Stieglitz
<b>Parish Administrator</b>	Denise Pigot Telephone: 9876 3362 Email: <a href="mailto:office@eppinganglicans.org.au">office@eppinganglicans.org.au</a>
<b>Honorary Parish Treasurer</b>	Shane Christie-David
<b>Churchwardens</b>	Elizabeth Jenkins – Rector’s Warden Noel Christie-David – People’s Warden David Tait – People’s Warden
<b>Parish Councillors</b>	Ken Bock OAM, Glyn Evans, Meredith Lawn, Selina Leung, Jonathan Malota, Christine Murray, Peggy Sanders, Amy Taylor, Gillian Taylor, John Williams and Yosua
<b>Parish Nominators</b>	Glyn Evans, Peggy Sanders, Ruth Shatford AM, James von Stieglitz
<b>Synod Representatives</b>	Doris Awad, Gillian Taylor
<b>Safe Ministry Representative</b>	Sarah Weaver
<b>Music Director</b>	Chris Czerwinski Perf. Dip., BMus, MMus (Birmingham), MMus (Sydney)
<b>Assistant Organist</b>	Christopher Wagstaff B.Mus (Hons, First Class), L.Mus
<b>Organ Scholars</b>	Isabel Li and Enoch Pan
<b>Caretaker</b>	Kari Hewitt
<b>Editor</b>	Julie Evans <b>Proof-readers</b> Glyn Evans and Peggy Sanders
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