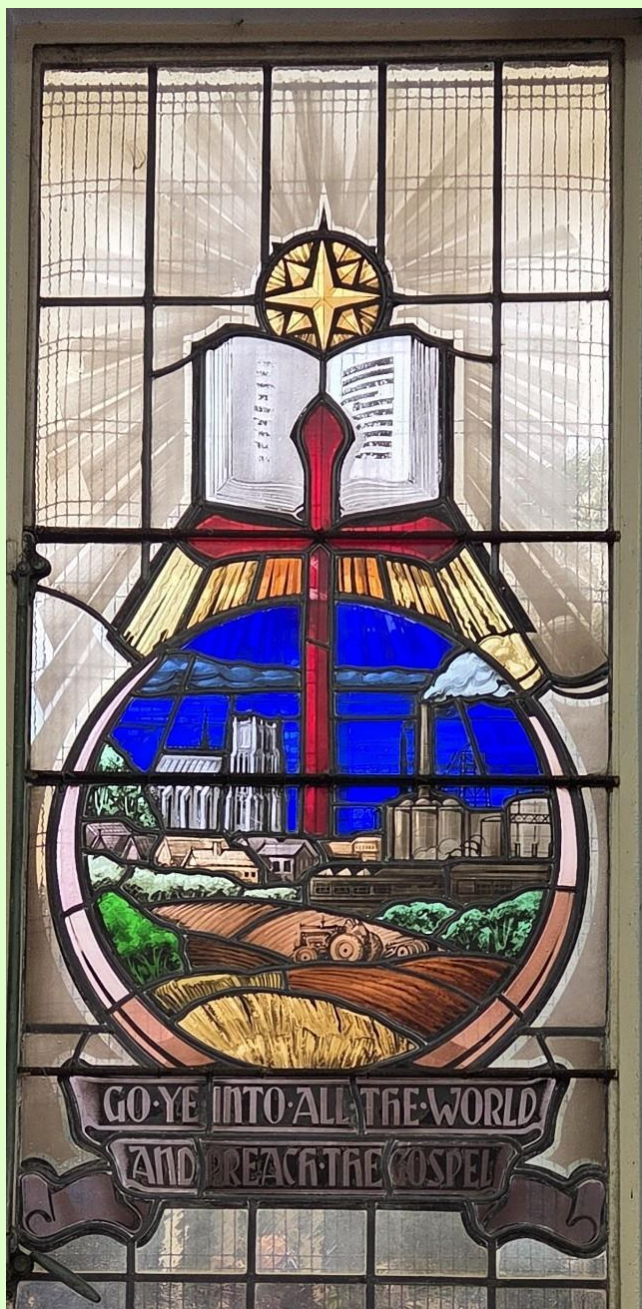


The Parish Magazine

Epping Anglicans

November 2025 to January 2026

Number 882



Window in porch of Saint Alban's

Saint Alban the Martyr,
3 Pembroke Street,
Epping

with

Saint Aidan of
Lindisfarne,
32 Downing Street,
West Epping

From the Editor



Last week someone told me gleefully just how many weeks were left before Christmas! Shops are already decorated for the festive season; some are playing Christmas music and catalogues are full of gift ideas. Yes – we are waiting for the celebration of God’s wondrous gift to us and to humankind – the birth of Jesus Christ.

But let’s pause for a moment and look back at the last three months at Saint Alban’s. It has been a busy time as usual and the following pages record celebrations, achievements and special events in the life of our Church.

You will read again, of the loving service given by so many within our Parish as we serve each other and Christ in our daily lives. Welcome to the November edition of your *Parish Magazine*.

Please contact me at julie.evans@ihug.com.au

Our vision:

*To be
“a city on a hill” -
a worshipping community,
loving Jesus
and
the people around us*

To contact us:

Contact Parish Administrator Tuesday - Friday on
(02) 9876 3362

The Parish Office is open Tuesday and Thursday 9.00am to 3.00pm.

Post Office Box 79, Epping NSW 1710

Email: office@eppinganglicans.org.au

Website: 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.

Published by:

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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, Colin Jones, Jess Li and Peggy Sanders. 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>



In April 2026, I have been graciously invited to give a seminar at Moore College to encourage students to consider student ministry and a future in our traditional and liturgical style of worship in churches like ours at Saint Alban's.

And although I am not a well-versed scholar on liturgical Prayer Book worship, and I would be a bit lost without the guidance of our Senior Liturgical Assistant, I want to take the opportunity to speak from the perspective of someone who has made this choice. Under God, I hope to persuade Moore College students to see the need and develop a willingness to serve in our style of churches in the Diocese and beyond.

I hope to encourage others with the following reasons:

1. Stole parishes help us reach the diversity of cultures in our city

Sydney being a multicultural city has people from all around the world, with many coming from cultures where religious places are less casual and more reverent in format. When we consider those who come from places with temples, mosques or synagogues or countries where Catholic or Orthodox Church are the norm, formality and seriousness are not off-putting, but in some cases are either neutral or comforting.

As I get to know people who have come and joined us at Saint Alban's, there are many who come from country towns where liturgical Anglicanism is the norm, or perhaps couples who have a blended church background with one being of a Roman Catholic background or others who grew up in the Orthodox church.

What I find exciting is those from all these backgrounds are so eager to grow and know God, they hunger to know God's word, are so ready to ask questions and are, in some cases, those who are most disciplined in our reading the Bible in a year plan.

Furthermore, at Saint Alban's we have also seen that for some Gen Zs (approximately 13 to 28 years), in the flood of information and the uncertainty of the world, there are pockets that are gravitating towards, and desiring, the historically rich traditional church.

Because Sydney is diverse, I believe that it is strategic to have a diverse portfolio of churches in Sydney: some big, some small, some in English and others in specific languages, and some casual and some with a more reverent tone. God has a particular role for Saint Alban's as He builds his kingdom.

2. Going to an unfamiliar church helps build your life with God

At first, I was hesitant to come to Saint Alban's because the style of worship was foreign to my previous church experiences, and I wasn't sure if I was the right person. However, being at Saint Alban's has taught me more about the living God. It has expanded my vision of our God who deserves all praise in every tongue and in every music genre, whether it be with drums and guitars or organs and choirs, with joyful dancing or choral reverence.

Paul's words and example that he becomes all things to all people so that he might win some has shown me the heart of God who calls on all people from every tribe and language and people group. (1 Corinthians 9: 22)

3. Lessons and principles I've learnt along the way

When navigating difference and expectations and culture:

- a) keep the main thing the main thing
- b) know where God wants to take things and learn to trust in God's timing
- c) genuinely love God's people
- d) put your trust in the power of God, the gospel and the Bible

- e) repent of what you need to repent of
- f) delight in what is good – and the great Biblically nuanced truths in the prayer book
- g) suspend judgement and be ready to have your assumptions corrected
- h) study and learn more about the substance and history of symbols before getting rid of them, because just as symbols have the capacity of being turned into something bad, they can also be redeemed for good.

4. The importance of understanding our Liturgical Anglicanism and preserving the institutional knowledge around crafting services from the Prayer Book

One of the key features of Liturgical Anglicanism is its connection to historical practice and what God has been doing in his church over centuries. It is more than a style of worship, but it carries a deep connection to our brothers and sisters who lived through the Reformation and fought for and safeguarded gospel truth.

I wonder if you have considered how important Saint Alban's is to the mission of God in our city. We have a chain of practice and a depth of liturgy that is precious and vital to pass on to the next generation. Once the chain of practice is broken it is hard to build it up again. If we want the lifegiving Gospel to be accessible to those who are more inclined to a liturgical prayer book and reverent style of worship, we need to ensure that a new generation is raised up.

5. God's sheep need to be looked after

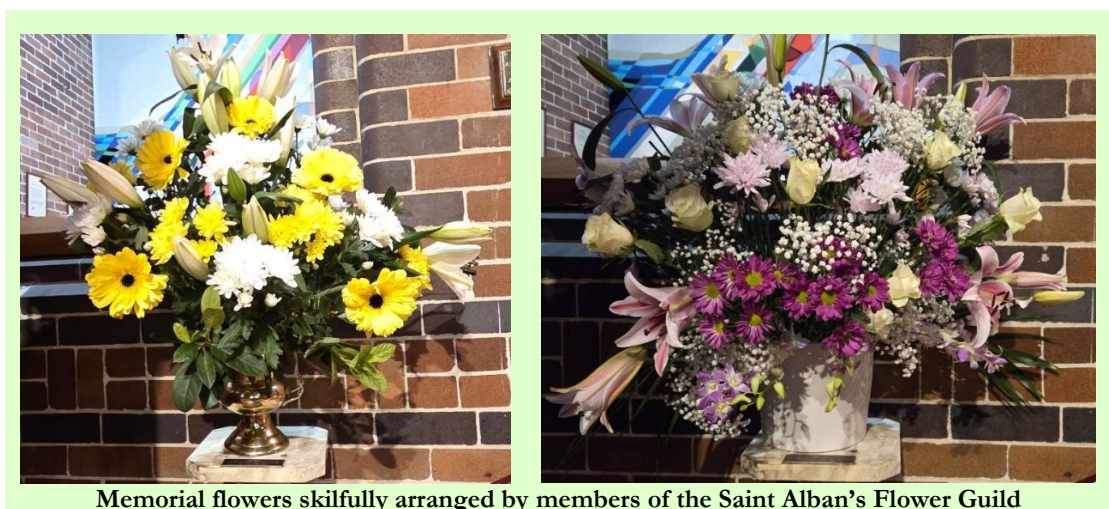
We need to be training and raising up the next generation for serving and leading our churches. I confess that I am a reader of the Sydney Anglican Southern Cross magazine and each quarter it comes out, the very first thing I do is look at the vacant parishes to find out what are the movements in our diocese. And don't worry I'm not looking for my next rectorship, it has been a habit of mine ever since I was a deacon. The number of vacancies among Stole parishes is high and this has been on my heart and mind.

One of the reasons I love being at Saint Alban's is the longstanding and tested love our parishioners have for God. They trust Him in prayer, they love Him, and they love others as themselves, they love good preaching and desire to live in the light of God's Word.

God's faithful flock need to be guided to Biblical nourishment. They need courageous and loving shepherds who are willing to follow the way of the chief shepherd and are willing to lay down their lives as living sacrifices for the welfare of the sheep. There is great joy in seeing people grow in their love for God, for one another and for the lost.

However, due to the liturgical and worship style, many Stole parishes struggle to find ministers who are willing to come and shepherd these flocks.

It is my hope that under God, Saint Alban's can play a key role as we expand our student minister program so that we are able to train and nurture more and more shepherds who are willing and able to shepherd flocks in traditional and liturgical styles of church, for the sake of building God's Kingdom.



Memorial flowers skilfully arranged by members of the Saint Alban's Flower Guild

Children at Saint Alban's

Doris Awad
Student Minister and Children's Ministry Worker



Editor's Note: Thank you to Doris Awad for leading the Sunday School Team of Laura Devine, Rebecca Lui, Carol Riyad and Amy Taylor who are rostered to support the Sunday School each week.

Thank God for another term at Sunday School. I am constantly amazed by how much the children are absorbing in the lessons each week and I am thankful for all the help and prayers you give.

Lessons

As we continue our lessons on Promises, the children have been learning about prayer and that they can turn to God in prayer no matter when and where, because he always listens. They've heard about how God rescued the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt, fed them manna and quail in the desert, gave them his law and promised to be with them every step of the way and give them the promised land. But we also saw how Israel disobeyed God time and time again. And despite all of that, God helps them bring down the walls of Jericho.

As we head into the festive season, our lessons shifted to focus on Jesus and how these Old Testament promises find their 'Yes' in Jesus. The promises made to Abraham of descendants, land and blessing are for us too because of Jesus. Through him we become the descendants of the promise, we are promised to live with Jesus forever in heaven and we can now enjoy God's blessings.

Memory verses

We have been learning to memorise three new Bible verses to show the children the value of God's word. Did you know that the command to 'remember' appears in our Bible over 1200 times? God wants us to remember what he has said about himself, and the promises he has made in his Word. In Term 3 the children committed to memory the following verses. See if you can too!

1 Thessalonians 5: 16-18a, *'Be joyful always, pray at all times, be thankful in all circumstances'.*

Joshua 21: 45, *'The LORD kept every one of the promises that he had made to the people of Israel'.*

2 Corinthians 1: 19-20, *'for it is Jesus who is the "Yes" to all of God's promises'.*



Carol Riyad taught the children that God saved people from all over the world



The children enjoy games at the start of each lesson

Season of Creation

During the Season of Creation, Laura Devine took the children out into the Church gardens to appreciate God's creation. Laura writes:

During September, as we sit in the Season of Creation, our church garden has become more than a place of beauty — it has become a sacred space of wonder, learning, and encounter with God. The garden is alive with the cascading blooms of wisteria, the timeless fragrance of roses, and the quiet strength of Australian native plants. Every corner holds an invitation to pause and notice. Even the wandering bush turkey and the tiny ladybug glistening in the sun remind us of the intricate and joyful diversity of God's world.



The beauty of God's creation

With the children, we opened the Scriptures to the beginning: *"God saw all that he had made, and it was very good"* (Genesis 1:31). As we read the Creation story surrounded by flowers, trees, and creatures, those words came alive in a new way. The children eagerly explored the garden on their treasure hunt, discovering the beauty and uniqueness of God's work. Each twig, flower and creature became a doorway into a deeper awareness of the Creator.

A soft breeze moved through the garden as we stood together, feeling the breath of God in the wind — the same breath that brought life into being. In that stillness, creation became something we could not only see but feel. It was a holy kind of quiet, filled with the rustling of leaves, birdsong, and children's laughter.



The children explored the garden

To deepen this experience, the children were invited to create their favourite part of God's creation using craft materials — pipe cleaners, coloured paper, leaves, and of course, plenty of googly eyes. Some made birds, others flowers, insects and animals. It was a joy to see their faces light up as their imaginations mirrored God's own creative heart. Their crafts were not just art projects — they were small acts of praise, reflections of a world "very good."

Watching the children captivated by awe and wonder was profoundly moving. In their delight and curiosity, we caught a glimpse of the kingdom of God — where creation is not simply observed but celebrated as an extension of God's own love.

The Season of Creation invites us all to return to that posture of reverence. As Genesis reminds us, creation is good because it flows from a good and loving God. To walk in the garden, to feel the wind, to listen, and to create alongside the Creator — this is prayer in its simplest form. May we continue to open our hearts to encounter God in every petal, every creature, every gentle breeze.

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

Sunday at Saint Alban's

8.00am Holy Eucharist with Hymns
10.00am Choral Eucharist – 1st and 3rd Sunday
10.00am Sung Eucharist – 2nd, 4th and 5th Sunday
The 10.00am Holy Eucharist is also streamed via Zoom.
Sunday School 10am in The Loft (above the Main Hall)

6.00pm Taizé Service – Prayer with Songs from Taizé
2nd Sunday of February, April, June, August, October and November

Thursday at Saint Alban's

9.30am Reading, Reflection and Prayers for Healing on Zoom
10.30am Eucharist with Prayers for Healing

November 2025

Sunday 2 November Tuesday 4 November

All Saints *Preacher: Michael Walsh*
7.45pm All Souls
Preacher: Dr Ruth Shatford

Sunday 9 November

Twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost, Remembrance Sunday
Preacher: Army Chaplain The Reverend David Schweinsberg

Sunday 16 November

Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost

Sunday 23 November

Christ the King – The Reign of Christ *Preacher: Pastor Kian Holik*

Sunday 30 November

First Sunday of Advent – 8.00am Eucharist; 10.00am Morning Prayer, Advent Hymns, Prayers and Readings

December 2025

Sunday 7 December

Second Sunday of Advent

Sunday 14 December

Third Sunday of Advent 10.00am *Sunday School Presentation*

Sunday 21 December

Fourth Sunday of Advent
8.00am and 10.00am *Preacher: The Reverend Michael Robinson*
7.45pm Festival of Lessons and Carols

Wednesday 24 December

Christmas Eve 6.00pm Children's Service; 9.30pm Festival Eucharist

Thursday 25 December

The Birth of Our Lord: Christmas Day – 8.30am Festival Choral Eucharist

Sunday 28 December

First Sunday after Christmas
President and Preacher: The Reverend Michael Robinson

January 2026

Sunday 4 January

Epiphany of Our Lord
President and Preacher: The Reverend Bruce Hunter

Sunday 11 January

The Baptism of Our Lord

Sunday 18 January

Second Sunday after Epiphany – Aboriginal Sunday

Sunday 25 January

Third Sunday after Epiphany – Australia Day Observance

Guest Preachers at Saint Alban's



Longstanding friend to Saint Alban's, The Reverend Bruce Hunter, has been guest preacher on a number of occasions this year.

LEFT: Bruce greeted parishioner Jane Bryant after the 10.00am Service on 3 August 2025

BELOW: Bruce greeted parishioner Christine Murray after the 10.00am Service on 28 September 2025



The Reverend Graham Thomas, Arden School Chaplain, pictured here with the Sanctuary party, preached on 10 August 2025

Mothers Union Saint Alban's Epping Branch

100th Anniversary – 17 August 2025

Glenda McSorley MU Diocesan President



Glenda McSorley cut the celebration cake at morning tea

Good morning. I bring you greetings on behalf of the Executive and Members of Mothers Union Sydney as we mark 100 years of Mothers Union Sydney ministry here at Saint Alban's. Congratulations! What a privilege it is to note that for generations women have been gathering, praying, serving and sharing in support of Christian marriage and family life.

I have been asked to speak briefly about Mothers Union and have three points.

The first is **Beginning in faith**

When Mary Sumner, the founder of Mothers Union, had an inspired idea 149 years ago, in Old Alresford in Hampshire, to bring mothers in her community together to pray and encourage each other, to learn from the bible and to share ways to bring up their families under God, she was stepping out in faith.

Mary was well read and educated in the classics. She was the wife of a well-regarded clergyman who truthfully preached the gospel. She had connections and was a mother and grandmother, she knew and had concern for all families, for their day to day needs and most of all for their eternal future. In this semi-rural setting, Mary stepped out of the social mores of the times crossing class barriers and gathered women together from amongst her family and friends and local area and community. She began with prayer and bible reading and they considered ways to make the task of bringing up children under God more effective and accessible. She wanted to grow the kingdom and follow God's plan for families so that all society would in turn, flourish.

And so began the Union of Mothers. Mary was nervous about public speaking but encouraged by her husband she settled her nerves and stated in a series of talks that "*Together, by the Grace of God...we can calm each other when we are afraid, strengthen each other when we are weak and work together to raise our children to the glory of God. Unity is strength*". She believed wholeheartedly that Christian marriage and family life was God's plan for the whole community to thrive. To say that our Father God blessed her ministry is an understatement.

By the turn of the century the Mothers Union had 60,000 members in 28 dioceses in the United Kingdom and was quickly spreading through the Empire via the wives of British soldiers and public servants posted overseas. Mary couldn't have imagined how God would bless her small, inspired idea. Today, we have more than 4.37 million members in 84 nations across the world.

Mothers Union continues as a Christ centred, and prayer based, grass roots organisation with members living and volunteering in their local community seeking to support families and Christian marriage through biblical teaching, education and literacy, health and social justice all underpinned with the gospel and prayer, women to women, just as Mary had imagined. Each diocese is different and today many of our members who live in developing countries serve in extreme situations impacted by war and by poverty or by persecution. Our members are often the only conduit by which health and education is delivered. Mothers Union is the only Christian organisation to have a permanent seat at the United Nations with currently four delegates writing submissions on all issues relating to women and families.

My second point is **Persevering in Faith**. Through the years, the members of Mothers Union Sydney have faithfully served, upholding its aim and objects.

The Aim: the advancement of Christian religion in the sphere of Christian family life.

The Objects:

- * to uphold Christ's teaching on the nature of marriage and to promote its wider understanding
- * to encourage parents to bring their children up in the faith and life of the Church
- * to maintain worldwide fellowship united in prayer, worship and service
- * to promote conditions in society favourable to stable family life and the protection of children
- * to help those whose family life has met with adversity.

We long for Christian parents to be equipped and confident as they bring up their children under God in our modern world and we want to support families at their point of need. Mothers Union Sydney, here in Epping, has been a fine example of the broad ministry of our organisation through the years.

From its beginning, as a small gathering of women meeting around biblical teaching and prayer, supporting each other and their community, they sought to serve our God together. The members were involved in supporting the families of post World War 1 soldiers and helping those in their community struggling through the Depression. It is recorded that the members were faithfully involved at the Carlingford Church of England Children's Homes providing educational grants and sharing their gifts with everything from visiting, helping with reading and writing, organising fetes to darning socks! American Teas were held as fundraisers for the Homes and The Boys' Choir sang for the group. They were committed and a constant source of encouragement and practical help to the children. They were there, present and persevering in supporting the children and staff of the homes not occasionally, not for a term, but constantly over many, many years.

At the outbreak of World War II, the Epping members embraced the mothers and children left behind as sons and fathers fought on the European and later Pacific fronts. Internationally, midday prayers were initiated with members stopping at noon to pray systematically for the men serving in battle zones, for women and families at home and for peace. This prayer activity continues around the world to this day in the Wave of Prayer. During the second World War all our members were called to be undaunted and uncompromising; prepared for every sacrifice they may be called on to make; ceaseless in prayer; patient in tribulation; cheerful in spirit and unshaken in faith.



Saint Alban's Mothers Union members with Glenda McSorley after the 10.00am Service on Sunday 17 August 2025

The members at Saint Alban's faithfully followed that directive and the branch grew and flourished. Hospital Visiting and the Court Ministry were added to their activities along with other Anglican and secular outreach.

Through the years a focus on supporting families has continued and seen many opportunities for partnership bear fruit, and today members still offer a handmade gift and Gospel, and a prayer card, when they visit new parents at Royal North Shore Hospital, The Sydney Adventist Hospital and Norwest Hospital.

This is a wonderful witness to patients and staff alike.

Members here pray; and they support families through our shop in the city, through Parish Partnership Workers, through special projects near and far. In recent years that has included 'An egg a day' for 75,000 children in Rwanda; sewing machines and the upgrade of dormitory and bathroom buildings at a Mothers Union Sewing School in Mara Diocese, in Tanzania, allowing girls to be trained in literacy and tailoring so they can have a sustainable future and do not have endure child marriage.

Our members have also supported The School of the Good Shepherd, a Christian school in Lebanon near the Syrian border with originally 360 and now 640 refugee children attending a school staffed by local Christian teachers funded by Mothers Union Sydney.

Currently, our project is Intsika in South Africa, an after-school care and education facility providing support for families living in a very poor area. The project supplies food for families and educational programs to enable children to be well prepared to attend public schools. And, closer to home, we have funded and provided for translation and for big print bibles at Nungalinya College in Darwin so that our indigenous sisters have the gospels and the psalms in their heart languages. God continues to use the gifts and skills of women here in Epping on the ground.

There have been many amazing and wise women who have served and are serving here and I would particularly like to mention Marge Jenkins, Epping Branch's longest serving member, Marge joined in 1960. Thank you, Marge for your faithful example and wonderful witness, for your generosity in sharing your time and skills as you persevere in your walk with the Lord here in this community and through Mothers Union Sydney in Epping and beyond.

My third point is **Looking to the Future in Faith**

As Mothers Union Sydney looks to the future in faith, there will be changes. We are part of an ever-growing ministry turning to online avenues, we are partnering with like-minded organisations to connect with other younger parents who long to bring up their children under God and who see value in what we stand for but who don't necessarily want to be a member of a branch. We are looking at providing what they need when they need it. The world and its values are not ours. But Christian families want to be supported and encouraged and equipped to do a good job and, when things go astray, they desire resources which are helpful and relevant. We work hard to support parents in these times.

A good example is our series of podcasts '*Timeless Parenting*', an intergenerational format which allows for input from across the different age groups, just as the Titus model recommends. Our highly regarded February seminar, this year had more than 1200 attendees in person and online, and our parenting courses with subjects relevant to today's parenting, are presented in a friendly, well-researched, up-to-date manner appropriate for the Australian context. Our Facebook pages and Christian Parenting Australia give us other connections to families.

Mothers Union Sydney tries all manner of initiatives, building on the works and ministry of those who have gone before us and using the skills and gifts of those God has placed around us now. All is underpinned with the faithful prayers of members. More than anything else we need to pray constantly...

Last month Mothers Union Sydney sponsored an online pre-recorded NSW State Conference for the national body Anglican Mothers Union Australia. It was a first in that online format with more than 400 women from coastal, rural, regional, remote areas and the cities of NSW gathering around Ephesians 2:8-10 –

"For by Grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is a gift from God-not the result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God has prepared for us to do".

We are reminded that our work and ministry is a response to God's amazing GRACE.



Glenda McSorley addressed the 10.00am congregation on Sunday 17 August 2025

Our three excellent Sydney speakers at the conference, The Reverend Marge Mills, Archdeacon Kara Hartley and Ruth Baker challenged and encouraged us to look outside the church gate, to recognise what good works we should and could do and to be bold and faithful as we share the saving love of Jesus and his plan for families.

We were reminded that we are examples of lifelong, faithful walking with him and we should rejoice in that. Many younger people now have not had the blessing of grandparents and parents who prayed or were part of the church so, we can step up pray for them. The wonderful thing about the Ephesians verses is that all we do is not in our strength but in His.

Just as Mary Sumner, all those years ago, saw a need for families to not just hear the gospel but to live it, sharing it across the generations, so too the women here in Epping have, for a hundred years, followed Jesus in their day to day lives. Inspired by prayer and good works they have lived the gospel grounded in biblical teaching. So, we look forward in Faith to what God has planned for us to do here in Epping, in Sydney and beyond.

We believe truly that God has a plan for Mothers Union Sydney, for he keeps sending people and resources and opportunity and ideas and it is good...sometimes daunting but all good! We would love for you to be part of that plan. Please pray for the extension of the Kingdom, especially for Christian parents as they seek to bring up their children under God in a sometimes-hostile world. Pray for continued and new open doors and opportunities. Pray for boldness. If you would like to know more about what we are doing look at our website www.musydne.org.au

I want to close by personally giving praise and thanks to our Father God for the faithful witness of all Mothers Union Sydney members here at Saint Albans, Epping, and for 100 years of prayer, of love, of care and concern, of hospitality, of fun and laughter, in fellowship for Christian marriage and families and for each other. What a blessing! Amen.



**Dr Ruth Shatford made
a celebration cake
to acknowledge 100 years of service
by Saint Alban's Mothers Union**



Elizabeth Jenkins (LEFT), President of the Saint Alban's Branch of the Mothers Union, thanked Glenda for speaking at the morning's Service and for attending the celebration.

Mothers Union Northern Region Area Day

Jan Boyley

On Tuesday 9 September, members of Saint Albans Mothers Union (MU), hosted the Northern Region Area Day. Members from five MU groups in the region joined us.

The day began with a Communion service and was followed by a talk from our Diocesan Treasurer and past President, Wendy Mayer, based on the passage from Philippians 3 Verses 4b-14. The talk was titled 'Keeping on, Keeping on'.

With the way God has worked in our lives in the past, we have got to know Jesus as our Lord and Saviour. We therefore can continue as we get older or things change in our lives, to 'keep on keeping on' in His strength, by going about our lives in fresh ways and not giving up.

The talk was followed by questions for discussion in small groups which delivered interesting answers. Book reviews followed and videos of MU work, after which we moved over to the hall for a late morning tea or brunch!



Longstanding member Marge Jenkins, surrounded by Saint Alban's MU members, cut the celebration cake

Although we had had a celebration cake on 17 August when we celebrated 100 years of Mothers Union at Saint Alban's, we had a second cake on the Northern Region Area Day so we could celebrate our 100th Anniversary with MU members from our region.

Marge Jenkins, who has been a member of the group for 65 years, was given the honour of cutting the cake.

A lovely time of worship, discussions and fellowship filled our time together.

The beautiful cake was made by Elizabeth Jenkins and decorated by Jan Boyley



Saint Alban's Mothers Union 1925 – 2025

Elizabeth Jenkins - President



After an initial gathering in December 1924, the inaugural meeting of Saint Alban's Epping Mothers Union was held in March 1925. Mrs Carver, the wife of the then Rector George Albert Carver, was elected as President, a position she held for the next five years. The aims of Mothers Union were described at the time as the following: to uphold the sanctity of marriage; to awaken in all mothers a sense of their great responsibility in the training of their children, the future fathers and mothers; and to provide a place where mothers could unite in prayer and seek by their own example to lead their families in purity and holiness of life.

It is to be noted that even in the very early days single women were encouraged to join as associates and were made most welcome.

From the very beginning Mothering Sunday was observed on the fourth Sunday in Lent, a time at which the congregation are reminded of the Church as our spiritual mother and all we owe to our earthly mothers. In 1931 it was expected that mothers would attend on this day at the 11am service with their children, and that all parents would attend Evensong. It was stressed that this day had nothing to do with the American Mother's Day which has gained in popularity over the years. Today Saint Alban's Mothers Union members provide Simnel Cake to our parishioners to mark Mothering Sunday and its significance.

Mention was made in 1931 of the annual Festival of Sydney Mothers Union Service at Saint Andrew's Cathedral, at which the members of Saint Alban's Mothers Union were encouraged to attend. This Festival Service is still held annually, and our current members continue to attend this beautiful service.

When the Depression of the early 1930s caused severe poverty for many, Saint Alban's Mothers Union, under the leadership of the President Mrs Abram (wife of the then Rector Oscar Abram), became involved with the Carlingford Church of England Children's Homes and assisted by helping to organise a fete for the Homes. American Teas to raise money were held on a regular basis, and the boys' choir from the Homes entertained those present. Our members spent one afternoon per month darning socks for the children and provided money for one boy to assist his education. Money was raised for distressed families in the Parish and material for garments was donated to those in need. Membership of our Mothers Union was around 40 during those years.

In 1934 The 'Call to Renewal' was sounded from the mother branch in England. A service and quiet afternoon was held, with mothers to give special consideration to the importance of their roles as Christian mothers.

In 1935 the ten-year anniversary of Saint Alban's Mothers Union branch was celebrated. Two other branches joined us to mark the occasion: Saint Paul's, Harris Park and Holy Trinity, Erskineville. Saint Alban's provided car transport for the women from Erskineville, who were regarded as being less fortunate than the members from Epping.

While guest speakers generally conducted either a Biblical address or Bible study, on occasion a more secular topic was covered. In December 1936 Mr E. Figgis spoke on the subject 'Better Food for Better Health'.

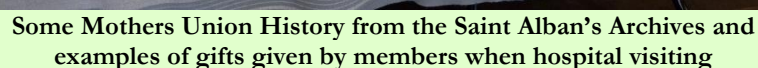
1939 brought the outbreak of the Second World War. The Diocesan Secretary of Mothers Union sent a request that all mothers set aside a period at midday each day to pray for peace, and to pray for the mothers and wives of sons and husbands engaged in the European conflict. They were reminded that our Lord taught us to pray even for those who by the tragedy of war might be called our enemies. The December 1940 meeting entertained wives and mothers of men enlisted in the armed forces from within the Parish. These afternoon teas were held regularly during the war years to boost morale and support the women at home. Mothers Union members at this time were called to be *undaunted and uncompromising, prepared for every sacrifice they may be called on to make, ceaseless in prayer, patient in tribulation, cheerful in spirit, and unshaken in faith*.

1946 saw an excellent roll call at the first meeting of the year, with the end of wartime duties by many members. The Post War Baby Boom saw increased membership of Saint Alban's Mothers Union, as most mothers were still at home with their children and not employed in paid work. As recently as 1984, we had 34 members.

We support the Sydney Mothers Union Shop in Town Hall Arcade in the city, by providing items for sale and working in the shop as volunteers. We also bake for the special Market Days which are held before Christmas each year outside the shop.

Mention should be made of our most longstanding member, Marge Jenkins, who has been with Saint Alban's Mothers Union since 1960, an incredible 65 years. We offer Marge our congratulations and a sincere thank you, for all she has done and continues to do over these many years.

Acknowledgement: The writer acknowledges extensive use of archival copies of the Weekly Bulletin of Saint Alban's in the writing of this article.



Sermon 31 August 2025

Dr Ruth Shatford

Saint Aidan of Lindisfarne - 12th Sunday after Pentecost and Day of Prayer for Refugees



Dr Ruth Shatford pictured with The Reverend Phil Lui

Editor's Note:

On Sunday 31 August Dr Ruth Shatford, much-loved parishioner at Saint Alban's, and regular parish preacher, shared God's message at both the 8.00am and 10.00am services. The congregation was celebrating Saint Aidan's Day and the 12th Sunday after Pentecost and recognising the Day of Prayer for Refugees. Ruth's words were greatly appreciated by the congregation.

Readings:

Jeremiah 2: 4-13

Psalms 81: 1, 10-16

Hebrews 13: 1-8, 15, 16

Luke 14: 1-14

Let's try to picture with some accuracy the scene in today's gospel reading. One commentator describes it as being the equivalent of lunch together on a Sunday after church. Typically, the seating was on couches arranged in a large U shape with low tables in front. The host, or the most important person there was reclining in the middle of the curve of the U. This makes good sense of the request of the mother of James and John on another occasion asking Jesus to grant that her sons be seated one on the right and one on the left of Jesus.

For many of the Pharisees, observance of such rules constituted religion. I wonder what the menu was... Because this was on the Sabbath when no work was allowed, the food would all have been prepared the day before. If you wanted the food still somewhat hot, it was permissible to keep it warm by keeping it in your clothes, among pieces of fruit or among pigeon feathers.

So Jesus was invited – no mention of his disciples. Some of the scribes and Pharisees thought him dangerous and irreligious, so they watched him, like a hawk. The word used here for “watch” means to do so with interest and sinister espionage. It was not the casual way you would happen to notice with passing interest, another guest. He was being carefully watched. Some scholars think that the man with dropsy who was right in front of him may have been used to set Jesus up. Dropsy, the serious retention of fluid in the tissue, was thought by some in those days, to be the result of consuming contaminated cooking oil, a failure to follow the dietary and cooking rules. In that time others saw it as a divine punishment for sexual immorality. So maybe this man was seen by some present, as blameworthy and deserving of his dropsy?

Clearly intending to heal the man, Jesus asked the learned ones if it was lawful to heal on the Sabbath Day. Even if they had not been present for some of the other Sabbath healings, I have no doubt that they would have heard about them. There are six on record before this one: there was the healing of Simon Peter's mother-in-law who was ill, the man with the withered hand, the woman bent double for eighteen years, the paralysed man at the pool, the man born blind and the demon-possessed man in the synagogue at Capernaum.

The Pharisees usually fought for the rights of the poor against the wealthy. They were effectively a political and social movement within Judaism, nationalists who disliked anything foreign. They knew that Jesus was popular in some quarters and so were watching to see what he would do here. Jesus put two questions to them. Before he healed the man, he put the question as to whether it was lawful to heal on the Sabbath. After Jesus had healed him, it is possible Jesus sent him on his way or perhaps the words mean released his grip on him. It looks as if Jesus was now turning to address the influential men who were there. He then personalized the more general question he had asked. It was no longer “*Is it lawful?*”, but “*If one of you has a son or an ox that falls into a well on the Sabbath Day – a common occurrence with so many open wells across the countryside – will you not immediately pull him out?*” Did you notice that the two responses were the same? “*But they were silent*”; and “*They had nothing to say*”. They had been worrying about the rules that they thought constituted religion, rather than acting with compassion and mercy. They worried about how many steps you could take on the Sabbath and whether you could swat a gnat!

The atmosphere at lunch must have been tense and uncomfortable. Having silenced the learned and the powerful, Jesus turned his attention to the other guests whom he had been watching and told them a parable, directly inspired by their behaviour. Having finished that, he turned to his host and spoke to him, not in a parable, but with direct instruction. So, as spectators today, we see what happened to the man with dropsy and what do we learn, having looked on and listened at this luncheon party? Accusations are frequently made against the Pharisees, such as in Matthew 23 where the charge was made of hypocrisy. *“You tithe mint and dill and cumin but neglect the weightier provisions of the law: justice, mercy and faithfulness”*. We are called on to set priorities rather than adopt what can become petty little rules, thinking that they honour God. Jesus was subverting the whole approach driving his culture and its values.

The parable about the choosing of seats teaches us not to be self-vaunting but, in all modesty, and thinking of others, to take a lowly seat. In the household I grew up in, if someone was self-vaunting, my parents always quoted the Town Clerk of Lismore, who was asked at a council meeting about who was to be seated on the dais at the public function in honour of the Duke of York, later to be King George VI. Duly noted in the local newspaper was his answer: *“Well, there’ll be meself, the duke and the mayor.”* It is interesting that the gospel speaks both of being humbled and being humiliated. In practice, I suspect that learning to be appropriately humble generally prevents being humiliated. It is understandable that this parable is sometimes referred to as the parable of the Great Reversal.

And what do we learn from Jesus’ instruction to the host? He turned upside down everything that the people at the lunch would have thought correct protocol. He shatters their understanding of fellowship and hospitality, when he says who should be invited. This is a directive to concrete action. It was a blueprint for a radical new hospitality that is an extension of the message of Jesus of compassion, mercy and care for the poor and underprivileged – an aspect of how Luke understands discipleship. This is a focus on serving those in need rather than seeking social status through hosting and receiving guests. Self-righteousness and hypocrisy are exposed. The law certainly does not forbid healing and helping on the Sabbath. We are called on to serve those who cannot reciprocate, showing true generosity motivated by love with no expectation of anything in return. On this Saint Aidan’s Day, I note that Aidan, an Irish monk who evangelised the Anglo Saxons in Northumbria, not only spread the faith to the nobility, but in the spirit of the Great Reversal, included the socially disenfranchised, including children and slaves.

Let me now conclude by returning briefly to the concept of the Great Reversal. It is a hallmark of Luke’s gospel. Some say it is the interpretative key both to Luke’s gospel and to his other book, the Acts of the Apostles. In essence, it tells us that the Kingdom of God, in all its fullness, will confound our expectations. We are introduced to the concept early in the gospel in the song of praise that Mary sang on learning she was to be the mother of the Lord. Mary’s lowliness, which in human eyes would have surely disqualified her from being considered for such a role as she had, is exactly in Kingdom terms what made her ideal for it! Mary, young, female and poor represents the least powerful and the most insignificant. The divine inclination towards the marginalised and oppressed is further exemplified in Jesus’ words and actions as recorded by Luke. Jesus’ kingdom vision is both religious and social. Jesus’ teaching that day at lunch comes to us today as well. We are to embrace a spiritual shift that calls also for social transformation where believers are called on to live out these values in our relationships and our communities. We need to avoid that arrogance and pride that give a false sense of security and well-being that would prevent us from recognising our dependence on God’s mercy.

And, in the words of the song of praise that Mary sang: *“My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord: my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour; for he has looked with favour on his lowly servant.”* Amen



Ruth greeted parishioners after the service

Everyday English Multicultural Day 20 August 2025

Rema Gnanadickam



Rema Gnanadickam in her sari

On Wednesday, 20 August, the Everyday English group with members from many countries, had a fitting celebration of cultures. Rather than the usual classes, students were asked to bring something of cultural significance from their country that they could show to others, speak about their country, and also bring some culturally appropriate food that could be shared during the morning tea break.

A world map was displayed on the whiteboard so that speakers could point to the geographical location of their country on the map. There were a few lead questions that were put to each speaker by Sarah Weaver, such as:

*What was an important event in your country's history?
Who are some important/famous people from your country?
What is an item or object from your country that you would like to speak about?*



Students listened with interest to Christine

Christine Murray talked about Australia, about Federation in 1901, and the Olympic Games in 2000 and about the athlete Cathy Freeman who won the 400m race. She also spoke about the history of the country and about the First Nations who lived on the land before the arrival of the first tall ships from England. The students were given practice in the iconic Aussie greeting: 'G'day Mate'!

Two students from Iran, Souri Shirazi and Noya Faraje, spoke about the ancient country of Iran once known as Persia.

They displayed a picture of the Cyrus Cylinder and explained that it was a record of the first enshrined law in their country and a national symbol. It is often described as the "first charter of human rights" {British Museum quote}.

They also showed us pictures of a beautiful Persian cat, some saffron for which the country is famous, and offered us samples of a crystal sugar that people in Iran eat with their coffee or tea.



Souri and Noya presented, with Sarah asking questions

Oksana Shumilova and her son Mefodii gave a presentation on Russia. Oksana spoke about Russia being the largest country in the world with about 140 million people of different nationalities speaking different languages, though Russian is the official language.

Russia is part of Eastern Europe and Asia, and near her home city there is a special monument that marks the line between Asia and Europe. Of the famous people in Russia, she mentioned Yuri Gagarin, the cosmonaut, who was the first person in space.

Mefodii showed us pictures of some traditional Russian dishes and the beautiful, patterned Russian spoons.



Oksana Shumilova with her son Mefodii



Ran Li read a poem in Mandarin

Ran Li recited a famous poem in Mandarin, quite familiar to students from China.

This piece praises the unique beauty and expressive power of the Chinese language.

Gillian McLennan spoke about her homeland, South Africa, and about Johannesburg, where she was born. She showed us on the world map where South Africa is located, at the tip of the African continent.

She talked of the way South Africa was first colonised by the Portuguese and the Dutch, and later the British, who had many skirmishes with the Dutch settlers and the indigenous people.



Gillian McLennan spoke about her homeland South Africa

South Africa is well-known for its gold, diamonds and now the wine industry. Gillian spoke about Nelson Mandela, the first black president, and explained that modern-day South Africa is known as the 'Rainbow nation' as it is a multicultural nation with people from all over the world.

Rema Gnanadickam [see page 18], dressed in an Indian sari. She showcased a few handcrafted items like a children's game of noughts and crosses made of painted wood, and a brass lamp which is found in many Indian homes and used during Hindu worship. She spoke about India being a populous land of many languages and ancient cultures, which became one country only after it was occupied by the British and how famous people like Mahatma Gandhi liberated the country through non-violent means. She demonstrated an Indian dance as well!



Zhongmin Wang painting (above) and his beautiful fans (below right)

Perhaps the highlight of the day was an art demonstration by Zhongmin Wang, one of the students, who demonstrated his exquisite brushwork during the morning.

On display were several painted fans, and everyone went round to his display to watch him paint.

He painted several fans and pictures on the day and presented them to people. Oksana's son Mefodii was the delighted recipient of one such painting.



Mefodii with his mother Oksana displayed the fan given to him by Zhongmin

LEFT: Zhongmin Wang presented Rector Phil Lui with a painting for Saint Alban's

After the presentations, Rector Phil Lui said a word of prayer. This was followed by a feast of food from different countries. We are grateful to the parishioners who took the time to be present and mingle with the students. It was truly a great occasion enjoyed by all!

Wattle Day at Everyday English Classes

Christine Murray



The author, left, and guest speaker Jennifer Farrer

On 1 September 2025, parishioner Jennifer Farrer visited the Everyday English classes to speak to the students about Wattle Day.

Ruth Tsai brought in a beautiful bunch of local wattle and Jennifer brought some sprigs of different types of wattle with her. The students were very keen to hear about Wattle Day and its significance. Jennifer told them that many years ago it used to be a very special day in schools and children would dress up to mark the day.

Using her sprigs of wattle, Jennifer told the students about the way their green leaves and yellow balls of flowers were the inspiration for our national colours of green and gold. She also drew their attention to the different types of leaves and the various arrangements of the flowers. Jennifer pointed out that there are over 1000 species of wattle in Australia so you can find wattle blooming somewhere in Australia at any time of the year.

This is one reason why wattle is our national flower, a concept that intrigued many of our students. From as early as Federation in 1901 the wattle was considered as Australia's national flower and it was on 1 September 1988 that the wattle, or *acacia pycnantha* to give it its botanical name, was officially proclaimed to be Australia's National Floral Emblem.

The highlight of Jennifer's visit was her gift of colourful Wattle Day badges for every student. What a successful event – an interesting talk AND a free gift!

We are grateful to Jennifer for the gift of her time and knowledge.



Jennifer Farrer speaking to the students

Karibu* from Kenya October 2025

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:** According to Ian, Karibu means 'welcome' in Swahili, 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's a joy to once again share stories from our ministry in Kenya with the Saint Alban's Community. We value your prayers and support as our family seeks to bring gospel hope to vulnerable communities here in Kenya through Banda Health. This quarter, I'm including stories of some of the health education and social impacts our ministry is having.

The difference that Banda Health makes

As I write from our home in Kilimani, Nairobi, there is the noise from a 14-storey construction across the road. Kilimani is something of a construction zone at the moment [see photo below]. It used to be farmland! Working in construction in Kenya does not incorporate all the protection and safety measures that Australia has. Many of the construction workers live in slum areas like Kibera.

One day, I was 'ambushed' by Philip (not his real name) a construction worker, as I was walking home. He explained that he had an accident, falling a number of storeys while doing construction work. Philip was hoping to recover enough to return to work. His shoulder bone was literally sticking out! I asked Philip how he remained so joyful, as he must be in such pain.

Philip's reply demonstrated a deep faith in the Lord Jesus despite suffering. I chose to gather up some food from our pantry to help Philip feed his family for a few days and prayed with him, then released him on his way.

People like Philip often can't access the healthcare we take for granted in Australia. So, it's for people like Philip and his family that Banda Health exists: helping low resource clinics in the slums offer good, affordable healthcare within walking distance of his community.



Construction site without safety measures

This year, the Banda team celebrated 2 million clinic visits completed with Banda Go - a cloud-based digital solution for low resource settings! It was an awesome milestone to reach for the combined visits from the almost 150 clinics that use Banda Go. Banda Go helps clinics by keeping medicines and supplies in stock at all times, so patients can receive the right treatment right away. Waste and theft are reduced, so patient costs stay as low as possible

Equipping Kenyan Missionary workers

Earlier this year Theano travelled to coastal Diani (near Mombasa) to undertake an extensive series of lectures on Community Health, equipping Kenyan Missionary Workers with skills to reach their communities by addressing the myriad of social and health issues. We had such fun learning about nutrition and malnutrition, diseases of poverty, safe motherhood, thriving child health, water and sanitation. We explored key concepts like empowering the target populations, program sustainability, 'First do no harm' taking a low-resource strengths-based approach, and other foundational principles of health promotion and development.



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: class photo; health project class presentation; care of the infant – we blew bubbles reminding students that like bubbles babies are fragile and beautiful and need special care and loads of love; carrying a baby close to the mother promotes secure attachment and parental bonding.

BELOW: It wouldn't be one of Theano's classes without a Kahoot! Online quiz! Kahoot! Is a Norwegian game-based online learning platform. Learning games, also known as 'kahoots' are user-generated multiple-choice quizzes that can be accessed via a web browser or the Kahoot! app

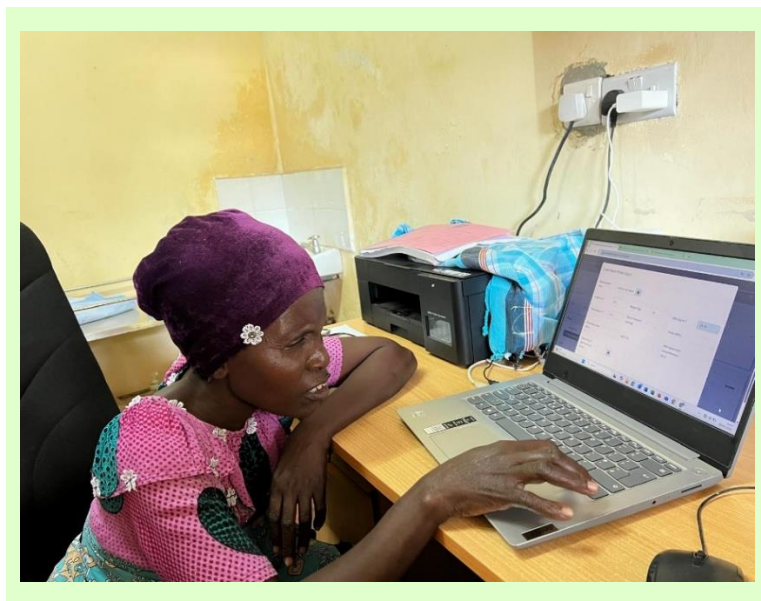


Theano with her friend Janet

Building Banda capacity and encouraging clinicians

While at the coast, Theano had the great joy of visiting Mwangaza (light) Clinic to see her dearest friend and nurse-hero Janet. Theno was privileged to sit in on a paediatric consultation - 4-year-old boy presenting with malaria, a swollen kwashiorkor belly indicating protein malnutrition and a fungal infection on the scalp and fingernails.

Aside from the health issues there, this month there were also social issues. The caretakers spent their days in rice fields and were unable to care for the children. Janet takes a holistic approach to health and aside from medicines and health education she will be undertaking a home visit to see what social interventions might support this vulnerable family. She is a true 'light' to her community!



Theano taught community health worker, Christine, how to use Banda Health to record patient observations such as patient weight, height, blood pressure, temperature, heart rate, and respiratory rate.

She squinted intently at the screen ... this is her first time using a computer!

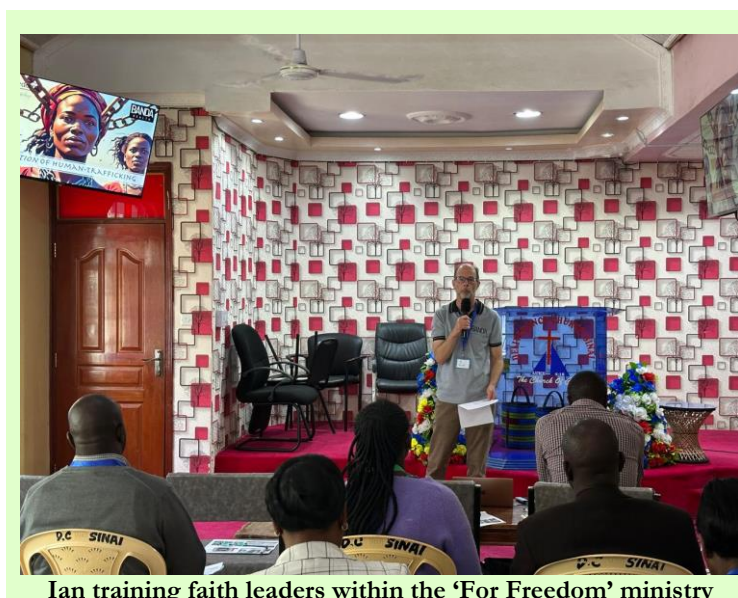
She's a keen learner!

Preventing Trafficking with Faith Leaders

In vulnerable communities like the slums of Nairobi, there is a particular vulnerability to trafficking, leading to modern slavery. Children and young people, women, people with a history of trauma or abuse, people with disabilities and refugees are groups at particular risk of falling prey to trafficking. These are the groups that commonly make up a large proportion of slum communities; and groups to whom Jesus particularly ministered that we read about in the Gospels.

SIM (Serving in Mission) itself has an outreach ministry called 'For Freedom' that focuses on preventing trafficking by addressing its causes. This year, with support from For Freedom, we were able to bring together some of the key relationships that we have been making in Kenya to facilitate training on the Recognition and Prevention of Trafficking for faith leaders who are ministering in these slum areas. Faith leaders are important because they are largely trusted by the community.

We partnered with a church that supports one of the Banda Health clinics in Mukuru kwa Njenga slum and a Kenyan survivor-led anti-trafficking organisation called Azadi.



Ian training faith leaders within the 'For Freedom' ministry

The training happened at a church located in Mukuru itself and we had the benefit of speaking with survivors of trafficking, who brought lived experience to the training.

This was the most amazing ministry event we have had in Kenya, as various church pastors called the training 'eye-opening' and one pastor called for 'a new paradigm' for the church to respond to victims of trafficking. One participant said: *"I thought trafficking was just something overseas but now I realise it is right here with us"*. Pastors made commitments to take action in their ministry spaces, and we are now looking at rolling out this pilot project to other vulnerable communities. What an amazing movement of the Spirit to bring diverse people and organisations together to have a real impact on the most vulnerable.

Integral Mission

The stories told in this article illustrate the benefits of integral mission, which is the hallmark of our ministry here in Kenya. The Banda Health team is an amazing group of committed Christians, working through software, health and social ministry to expand the kingdom of God, often in least reached communities.

If you would like to support or get in touch with us, you can contact us via <https://sim.org.au/ratcliff/>. Our work has been approved with SIMaid, SIM Australia's aid and development arm. Donations for our support are now tax deductible in Australia.



Dima, Kwale County where Mwangaza Clinic is located

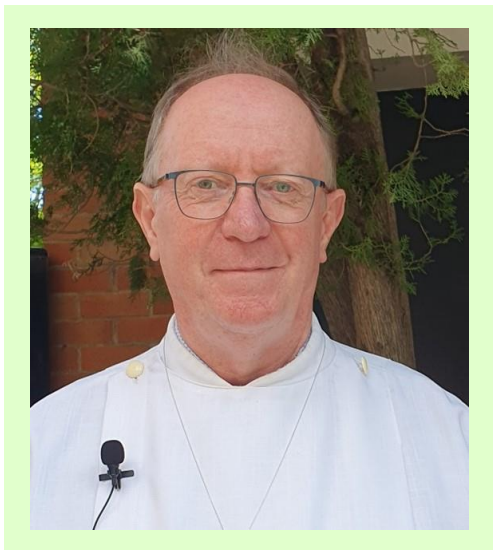


Diani, Kwale County, where Theano carried out community health training

Editor's Note: Ian and his parents, David and Jan Ratcliff, were longstanding parishioners of Saint Alban's from 2002 – 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.

A Layperson's Guide to the Lectionary

David Tait – Warden



I often think that children at school today have it far harder than I did when it comes to researching for an assignment. In seconds they can call up, on their computer, answers to any questions they have.

But how do they distinguish what is worthwhile and that of dubious quality? A couple of keystrokes and they are presented with papers by government agencies, PhDs, any number of experts on a subject.

They also get the work of some dude from Arizona whose only qualification is a million followers on TikTok, but who is happy to share his view on a subject about which he knows nothing of worth.

AI, currently, may not improve things, as it can struggle to be discerning.

Back in my school days when an assignment was given, there was a mad rush to the library to secure the appropriate volume of the World Book encyclopedia or the handful of books on a subject. Or you would write a letter to a government agency, which saw an envelope of pamphlets arrive a week or so later. You might visit a travel agent so you could cut out pictures to paste in your work (you had to convince them you were going to Europe). And there were project kits (remember them?) from the newsagent, a curated collection of information and assorted pictures.

Wouldn't it be good if someone put together a project kit to help us read the key passages in the Bible and group related passages and ideas in a logical order? Well, that is where the lectionary comes in.

Introducing the Lectionary

If you ever get a feeling of déjà vu about the bible readings each Sunday at Saint Alban's, then it is because we generally follow the Revised Common Lectionary (RCL) at each of our services. The RCL would be correctly described as a table (rather than a list) which assigns readings for a particular day or date and time. The lectionary follows a pattern, so over three years you will come back to the beginning and thus the readings will repeat.

Many religions that have holy texts have prescribed readings. In Judaism a certain chapter of the Torah is read each day. If you have ever been to a Synagogue, you would have seen how the scroll is rolled forward for the reading. In the Christian church there is evidence that some sort of pattern to readings may have been in place from as early as the second or third century. By medieval times there are bibles where within the margins there are directions for the reading of certain sections on particular days.

A Brief History of the Revised Common Lectionary

The RCL, which we use today, evolved from the 1960s. A group of reformed churches in North America were working on developing/improving the existing Roman and other lectionaries and achieve some harmonisation across denominations. At the same time the Roman Catholic Church was making improvements of their own and the first group recognising the significant good work already undertaken, decided to base their improvements on the new Roman lectionary. Within the Anglican Church in Australia, we currently follow the 1992 revisions.

Structure

Without going into the minutiae, the lectionary for Sundays and certain Holy Days is based upon a three-year cycle commencing with the First Sunday in Advent. The three years are described as Years A, B or C and the distinguishing feature is that one of the three Gospels of Matthew, Mark or Luke is the chosen gospel in each year. The Gospel of John is included across all three years, mainly at Easter.



The author, David Tait, holding the bible for the reading of the Gospel by Senior Liturgical Assistant, Peggy Sanders, Saint Alban's Day 23 June 2024

In addition to the Gospel readings, there are Old Testament readings, Psalms and New Testament readings set as well. After Easter, (for the Season of Easter) the Old Testament reading is replaced by a reading from the book of Acts.

Often there are also alternate readings. These are so that if you attended say a morning and evening service the readings would differ. There is also a two-year cycle of readings for days other than Sundays and Holy days and these cover each of the offices (times) of the day. All together that is a very extensive choice of potential material to cover.

The order of the lectionary is not sequential or linear, i.e. it does not necessarily move through in the order written. Instead, the grouping is based upon themes and relationships between the texts.

Because some holy days have fixed dates (so may not fall on a Sunday, e.g. Christmas) and others have moveable dates (e.g. Easter Sunday from late March to late April) the RCL makes provision for these movements. There are sufficient readings to accommodate the period from After Epiphany to the latest date that Lent commences, but where Lent falls early the readings are not used. This can at times (when Easter falls early) lead us to feel that we move very quickly from Jesus' birth, childhood and then to his last days in a matter of weeks. Similarly, the period after Pentecost until Christ the King varies in duration, so enough readings are assigned to cover.

Will I hear or read the whole bible if I follow the Lectionary?

No. If you attended or read every Sunday and Holy Day and heard all assigned readings you would hear an estimated 3.7 per cent of the Old Testament and 40.8 per cent of the New Testament. If you also heard or read all the weekday offices, this would increase to 13.5 per cent and 71.5 per cent, respectively. (Note: these figures are based on the Roman Lectionary, but the RCL would not differ significantly).

Advantages and Disadvantages of Lectionary Use

Like most things in life there are advantages and disadvantages to using the Revised Common Lectionary.

What are the disadvantages to using the lectionary?

- Storylines can be broken, requiring either prefacing or a willingness to read beyond the set verses. Some story lines can be broken due to movable feast dates.
- At times, the group of readings may seem to have only a loose association. For some groupings a link may not be at all obvious to lay person (and sometimes the preacher!).
- There are large portions of the Old Testament that are excluded.
- If you are only reading or hearing the Sunday readings, there are large portions of the New Testament not covered.
- It can be harder to preach on a series from a single book.

What are the advantages to using the lectionary?

- Congregations are in communion with others across many denominations through shared readings and learnings. You could speak to someone in another country from another denomination and compare what they were taught.
- For intercessors it allows the Prayers of People to be more easily linked to the readings and sermon themes.
- Very often the paired readings make sense and complement each other (e.g. the Old Testament foretelling of the coming of Christ and the New Testament fulfillment).
- They may follow a longer narrative and give greater variety.
- The RCL includes some difficult readings that might be otherwise avoided.
- Following the RCL can avoid being focused on a narrow reading of the Bible (e.g. only ever hearing preaching based on Paul's letters).

If you want to learn more about the lectionary there is plenty of material available on the internet (including by that dude in Arizona). A good place to start is: <https://www.commontexts.org/rcl/>

In 2025, Father Phil suggested that you might like to read the bible from cover to cover following a daily pattern. If that sounds too daunting, then perhaps following the lectionary, where you can follow the readings for each day, might be a place to start.

Sources:

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Parish Register

Holy Matrimony

Thomas **NG** and Christy **POON** on 11 October 2025



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

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

Denise Pigot, Parish Administrator – 30 Years of Service

This is a very special year for Denise Pigot, our Parish Administrator. In August this year we celebrated her service to the Parish for over thirty years! She has made a huge contribution to the smooth running of the Parish during that time, supporting four Rectors: The Reverend Ian Crookes, The Reverend John Cornish, Bishop Ross Nicholson and now The Reverend Phil Lui, as well as several Acting Rectors.

For details about Denise's contribution to Saint Alban's, see the previous edition of *The Parish Magazine*, Number 881, August to October 2025 pages 8-9.

On 10 August 2025 at the 10.00am service, Denise's 30th Anniversary in the Parish was recognised within the 10.00am Service and at a morning tea which followed.



Denise with The Reverend Phil Lui



Denise received a blessing during the 10.00am Service



Denise with The Sanctuary party and Guest Preacher The Reverend Graham Thomas



Denise with her father Tom Nowland, her husband Mark, and her son Timothy

Anglican Board of Mission Sydney Auxiliary Lunch

16 September 2025

Jane Bryant, President and Saint Alban's Parishioner



The Sydney Anglican Board of Mission (ABM) Auxiliary held a very successful Mission Lunch on Tuesday 16 September at Christ Church St Laurence, raising \$690.00 for ABM's Reconciliation Fund which is the special project for this year.

This project supports The Reverend Gloria Shipp's 'Walkabout Ministry' in the Dubbo region as well as evangelism and pastoral care initiatives. Money was generated through lunch donations and a Lucky Draw Opportunity Raffle for heritage items.

Prizes included an Australian blown glass vase; a stainless-steel coffee pot; a porcelain cup, saucer and teapot set; a cashmere scarf; an embroidered clutch purse and a crystal glass jewellery box.

Our Guest Speaker prior to lunch was Larissa Minniecon, a Kabi Kabi, Gureng Gureng, Ambryn, Zenadth, Kes woman. Larissa is the Truth-telling Advisor and Reconciliation Missioner for ABM as well as an Indigenous Emergency Relief and Community Support Worker. Larissa is a respected emerging Christian leader who has a rich ministry heritage. Her parents, Pastors Ray and Sharon Minniecon have given over forty years of service. Her grandfather also was a Pastor. Larissa spoke about her heritage and life and the challenges she and Indigenous people face every day.

After her talk, Larissa answered many questions in a very open and warm-hearted manner, giving her audience of thirty people much to consider and think about.

Saint Alban's parishioners supported this event by purchasing tickets in the Lucky Draw in the lead-up to the event, and five were able to attend the lunch. Four parishioners were fortunate to win prizes. At the conclusion of her talk, Larissa was thanked with a small posy of flowers.



Larissa Minniecon is pictured with Auxiliary President Jane Bryant

Everyone enjoyed the delicious light lunch and opportunity to chat. The Auxiliary was very appreciative of the support from Christ Church St Laurence staff and parishioners for this event.



Inaugural Pipe Organ Championship Event at Ryde Eisteddfod

Anthony Stavrinos – *The Weekly Times*

The City of Ryde Eisteddfod Inaugural Saint Alban's Competition (16 Years and Under) was held at Saint Alban's Anglican Church Epping on Saturday 23 August 2025.

In this inaugural event, competitors played two pieces – a North German Baroque piece and part of an Organ Trio Sonata by J S Bach. The competitors also gave an appropriate introduction, providing a special insight to the works being presented to the audience.

The adjudicators were Paul Dyer AO (Australian Brandenburg Orchestra and Choir), Neal Perez Da Costa (Sydney Conservatorium of Music) and Stacey Yang (Eastman School of Music, New York).

Adjudicator Chair Mr Dyer commended all competitors for their very high level of performances at such a young age and thanked teachers and parents for their support.

The winners, pictured below were Cynthia Bui (first), Isabel Li (second), John Paul Foong (third), Enoch Pan (fourth) and Ashley He (fifth). Cynthia Bui received the award for the Best Bach performance. The Audience Choice winner was Isabel Li, and the Audience Choice runner-up was Enoch Pan. First, second and third award recipients were invited to perform in recital at Saint Andrew's Cathedral, Sydney.



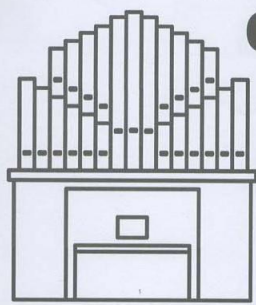
LEFT TO RIGHT BACK: Neal Peres Da Costa, Stacey Yang, Paul Dyer AO and Chris Czerwinski
LEFT TO RIGHT FRONT: Ashley He, Isabel Li, Cynthia Bui, John Paul Foong and Enoch Pan

Saint Alban's Music Director Chris Czerwinski thanked sponsors for their generous support of this inaugural competition, and volunteers who assisted with the organisation of the event.

Eisteddfod Secretary Suzanne Mazlen said the Solo Organ Competition demonstrated the Eisteddfod extending its presence and embracing another fine music area.

Editor's Note: Thank you to Anthony Stavrinos of *The Weekly Times* for permission to use his article.

Saint Alban's Organ Scholars Recitals



Organ Recital

Performed by:
Isabel Li (I & II),
Christine Pan (III & IV)
Enoch Pan (V & VI)

St Alban's Anglican Church
AUGUST 11:30 SUNDAY
3rd AM 2025

Program:

I. J.S. Bach
Trio Sonata in G major, 1st Mov, BWV 530

II. Dieterich Buxtehude
Praeludium in G minor and 2nd Fugue, BuxWV 149

III. Domenico Zipoli
Verso in E minor

IV. Georg Muffat
Fuga in D major

V. J.S. Bach
Trio Sonata in C major, 1st Mov, BWV 529

VI. Nicolaus Bruhns
Praeludium in G major and 1st Fugue

Special thanks to organ teacher, Krzysztof Czerwinski

Recital 3 August 2025



Saint Alban's Organ Scholars Isabel Li and Enoch Pan with organ student Christine Pan



Recital 4 September 2025

Enoch Pan gave a recital at Saint Andrew's Cathedral arranged as part of his participation in the Ryde Eisteddfod.

He is pictured LEFT at the organ and ABOVE with his teacher Chris Czerwinski



**Isabel Li and Enoch Pan with Tim Attridge
in Galston Uniting Church**

Tim Attridge is a British organist and composer. He has a background of church music and also other genres. For all his life he has been interested in composition either for his own enjoyment or to cover specific needs (solos, 3-part pieces etc.) This has led him to writing a Requiem, a Missa Brevis, assorted anthems and carols, organ music and secular/folk songs as well as about fifty hymn descants.

In April 2023, a family friend of Saint Alban's Organ Scholar, Isabel Li, sent Tim a video of Isabel playing Tim's composition *Sortie* on the organ at Saint Joseph's College, Hunters Hill.

Tim loved her version of it and that began a conversation about Tim's visiting Sydney at some time. Eventually, 2025 was chosen and it was decided that the beginning of July would be suitable because, as opposed to our typical summer, Sydney's winter would be no problem for an Englishman, and it was during school holidays for Isabel and fellow Organ Scholar Enoch Pan.

Tim flew to Sydney and spent seven days here balancing his time between experiencing playing organs (privately) at various venues, and local sight-seeing – including the Harbour Bridge Climb.

Organs visited were at All Saints Anglican Church Hunters Hill, Saint Stephen's Anglican Church Willoughby, Saint Alban's Anglican Church Epping, Hunter-Baillie Memorial Presbyterian Church Annandale, the Sydney Opera House, the Sydney Town Hall and Saint Matthew's Windsor which is the oldest Anglican Church in Australia, where services commenced in 1821.

An early Saturday morning Opera House visit on 12 July was arranged by Murray Allan -- who maintains the organ at Saint Alban's as well as the Opera House Grand Organ -- and Isabel and Enoch were invited to join Tim there.



**Enoch, Tim and Isabel at
the Opera House Grand Organ**

Sydney Organs Group arranged for a well-attended concert, featuring a number of Tim's works at Galston Uniting Church on Sunday 13 July 2025. The pieces were played by various organists including Enoch and Isabel.

Reference: Tim Attridge biography <https://timattridge.musicaneo.com/about.html>
Accessed 19 October 2025 at 1420hrs

Season of Creation Ecumenical Event

4 September 2025



The Season of Creation
1 September – 4 October 2025
A time for Christians to come together
in prayer and action for Creation.

On Thursday 4 September 2025 an Ecumenical Event was held at Saint Alban's. It was organised by the communities of the Catholic Parish of Epping and Carlingford; the Epping Uniting Church; West Epping Uniting Church; and the Anglican Parish of Epping. This event was to mark the beginning of the Season of Creation 2025.

The Symbol for 2025 is the Garden of Peace, symbolised by a dove carrying an olive branch bringing life to the Garden of Peace. In the Biblical story of the flood, the dove plays the role of the blessed messenger: sent out by Noah it returns to the ark with a fresh olive branch in its beak signalling that the flood is receding. As the flood story begins with a situation where "the earth is filled with violence" (Genesis 6:13), the return of the dove with the olive branch came to be known as a sign of new peace.

The ecumenical event began with responsorial prayers and a psalm which were followed by three readings: Isaiah 32: 14-18, Philippians 4: 5-7 and John 14: 15-17. Members of the different Ecumenical communities in attendance were responsible for different sections of the event. Those gathered were then privileged to listen to three young people representing Sydney Alliance [<https://www.sydneyalliance.org.au/>]. Bella, from South Korea, Kim from Vietnam and Scarlett from China shared their experiences in caring for the earth in their home countries and shared with the group their hopes for the future for our common home. These young people are international students studying social work at the University of Western Sydney, and Sydney Alliance is facilitating experiences of community for them. When they had spoken to us, there were many questions asked by the listeners and much lively discussion.

Following the discussion there were prayer asking the God of Creation to help us all to take care of the earth and all living things upon it.

A delicious lunch was available to conclude the event, and all in attendance had the opportunity to chat to new and old friends.



A group of about fifty people listened attentively as Kim spoke of his experiences in his homeland Vietnam

Season of Creation Bushwalk

5 September 2025

Robyn Conliffe Parishioner

On Friday 5 September nine walkers enjoyed an easy one-and-a-half-hour stroll in the Field of Mars, Gladesville with our experienced guide, Saint Alban's parishioner Jennifer Farrer. The walk was arranged as part of the celebration of the Season of Creation being celebrated by the Ecumenical communities of the Catholic Parish of Epping and Carlingford; the Epping Uniting Church; West Epping Uniting Church and the Anglican Parish of Epping.

We were encouraged to use our five senses, sight, taste, smell, touch and hearing in this beautiful, untouched environment and to appreciate the beauty and diversity of Creation.

Three varieties of wattle were seen. Bush tea leaves were tasted and smelt. Birdsong was heard in the bushes but not seen. Moss and paper bark were felt by all. We learned that in times gone by paper bark was used by Indigenous women to carry their babies.

"Thank you" Jennifer for guiding us on our walk and for sharing your extensive knowledge of the flora and fauna found in our backyard. Thank you also for the photograph which accompanies this article.

Editor's Note: On Tuesday 30 September another group of walkers under the guidance of Jennifer Farrer started at Waterloo Park, Marsfield, walked to Brown's Waterhole and then along the Busaco Trail which follows the Lane Cove River, before returning to the starting place. We are grateful to Jennifer for her expert guidance.



The Field of Mars walkers were members of the Ecumenical community

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

The deadline for contributions is

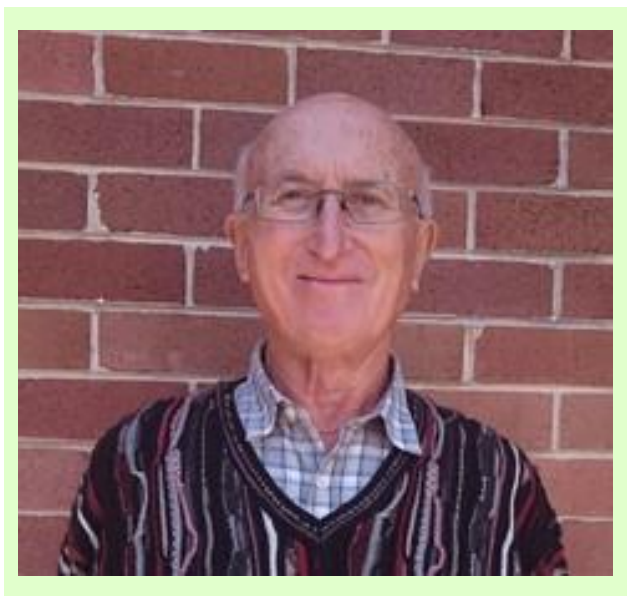
9 January 2026

Please contact the editor Julie Evans via email julie.evans@ihug.com.au
or via the Parish Office

Photographs of Parish events are also welcome.

From the Saint Alban's Archives

Brian Haywood Archivist



This year what is now called the Anglican Board of Mission (ABM) is celebrating 175 years of Australian Anglicans participating in mission, both here and overseas. Its first name was the Australasian Board of Missions and later the Australian Board of Missions.

It seems likely that Saint Alban's became involved with ABM in 1928 following a pastoral letter from the Archbishop of Sydney, John Charles, as a result of a motion at Synod calling for a Combined Campaign for Missions.

Sunday 25 November 1928 was designated as Missionary Sunday, and all clergy were requested to preach 'Missionary Sermons' on that day.

A Women's Auxiliary of ABM was established and met on the first Tuesday of each month for many years. At that time, parishioner Harry Williamson gifted his home 'Crohamhurst' in Pembroke Street, Epping to ABM when he and his wife retired and moved to Wamberal. 'Crohamhurst' was situated at the east end of the Church and was demolished in the 1960s to make way for home units.

The article to follow, reprinted from the **Epping Parish Magazine** Number 666 Oct-Nov 1928 tells us more about this organisation and its connection to Saint Alban's.

"CROHAMHURST" — THE A.B.M. HOSTEL FOR MISSIONARY TRAINING

Harry Weldon Williamson was a worker and benefactor of St. Alban's Epping in the years following the great war. Born in Greenwich, England in 1864, he came to Australia with his parents in the early 1880's and inherited from his father, Henry David Williamson, a flourishing oil merchant's business. His first marriage to Lillia Creed produced his only child, Percy. In Melbourne in 1904 he married Ethel Mary Fowler.



In 1916 he and his wife moved from Lewisham to "Crohamhurst" in Pembroke Street, next door to where St. Alban's Church now stands. He became active in parish life and served as a churchwarden. In 1920, when St. Alban's was raised to full parish status, he and Mr. Harry Pepperday became its first lay synodsmen. In 1923 he was a guarantor for £1,500 which enabled the building of a new parish church. He also gave the altar, retable and altar cross as well as the three east windows (in memory of his parents) featuring "Christ the King", "King David" and the "Blessed Virgin Mary".

His generosity also extended to the Australian Board of Missions. In 1929 Mr. and Mrs. Williamson left Epping to live in retirement at Wamberal (where Harry Williamson died on 16 September, 1937) and the A.B.M. was delighted to receive as a gift their fine home "Crohamhurst" and its lovely grounds. The Board determined that these facilities should be used as a hostel for the training of women missionaries "to fill the need that missionaries should be tested for fitness and also have specialised training before being sent to the mission field."

The ceremony of blessing and dedication was performed by the Primate Archbishop John Charles Wright on 13 August, 1929. The **Church Standard** thought the site "ideal, well elevated and in the environment of a pleasant country suburb within easy reach of Sydney." The **A.B.M. Review** of September, 1929 published a photograph and account of the opening ceremonies, which Harry Williamson was unable to attend because of sickness. The parish of Epping donated the kitchen furnishing, while Saint James Church, King Street gave the furnishing for the Chapel of Saint Clare, "its English altar fully adorned with frontal hanging and ornaments. Conspicuous is a beautiful new altar piece, a copy by a new process of the famous Dresden painting of by Reubens of the Blessed Virgin and Child with attendant angels" as well as cross, candlesticks and vessels.

The aim of the Hostel was to be "a place of quiet, concentrated preparation for missionary service, giving opportunity both for the deepening of the personal life and also for training in doctrine and practical matters." The candidates studied Holy Scripture, nursing, first aid, infant welfare and mothercraft. There was also a refresher course for missionaries on the field. There was great importance attached to the Chapel with its emphasis on the quiet, orderly life, the daily services, the Eucharist and meditation. Bishop Gilbert White, who lived in retirement across Pembroke Street, became the chaplain. It was a work very dear to his heart and his "wise counsel and loving sympathy" were much appreciated. Miss Millicent Herring, B.A., formerly a missionary in India was appointed Warden. Students had to pay their own fees or were supported by parish or diocese. Training period was normally at least six months.

The hostel cost £750 a year to operate and an appeal was made to ABM Women's Auxiliary to undertake responsibility, as far as possible, for its maintenance. Although once in the early 1930's the hostel closed briefly for lack of funds, Women's Auxiliary maintained support not only financially but with tremendous personal concern.

After Bishop White became ill and died in 1933, the Rector of Epping, the Revd. O. V. Abram, who was a member of the ABM New South Wales Committee, agreed to act as honorary chaplain. Many of the lady trainees formed strong links with the parish church (such as Sunday School teaching). One such, May Hayman, was to become one of the New Guinea Martyrs and is commemorated by a stained-glass window in the north wall of the church. Occasionally ABM received expressions of appreciation from ex-students of "what the time of preparation has meant to them personally, stressing particularly the great need of time for quiet study and for special training and for opportunities to develop the religious life."

In September 1938, the training hostel was transferred to Stanmore and "Crohamhurst" was sold, later to be demolished in the 1960's for home units. Increased costs influenced the decision to move to Stanmore; it was also felt that a location nearer the city would be more convenient especially for students attending lectures in anthropology and tropical medicine at Sydney University. During its years at Epping the hostel performed a vital work for ABM and had a significant impact on the life of the parish of Epping.

— Nigel Hubbard

From the *Epping Parish Magazine* Number 666 October – November 1986 pp 8 - 9

New Norcia – A visit to Australia's only monastic town

Geoff Dornan Parishioner



Saint Gertrude's College – New Norcia

New Norcia is located 132km northeast of Perth. It headlines itself as 'Australia's only monastic town', a claim which is verified by its history, purpose and seeming absence of anything similar in Australia. It is the location of a Benedictine monastery established in 1846 by Spanish monks as a mission to the Aboriginal people. With the building of schools, housing, churches and various factory facilities, the monastery soon took on the functions of a complete town.

During a recent road trip from Perth to Geraldton, my wife Sue and I took time to visit New Norcia. We found a serene place with a fascinating history of serving both the aboriginal and white communities and with some intrigue and some dark episodes. The first sight of baroque, gothic and various ecclesiastical buildings in a Spanish style, all in a remote setting in the Australian bush, is somewhat surreal. Certainly, it is worthy of a visit and an understanding of New Norcia's unique place in the history of Australia.

The Catholic order known as the Benedictines was established by Saint Benedict (AD 480 to 543) who lived in Norcia, in the region of Perugia Italy. [Its traditional Latin name is Nursia.] He laid down a long list of rules for his followers, but their lives were dominated by two disciplines, work and prayer. Today, Benedictine communities of both men and women are found worldwide still underpinned by Saint Benedict's principles.

New Norcia was established by two Spanish monks who came to Australia as missionaries assigned to the Bishop of Perth, John Brady, by Pope Gregory XVI. Dom Rosendo Salvado and Dom Joseph Serra were monks from Galicia, in northwestern Spain when the new Spanish republic undertook a dissolution of religious orders similar to what had transpired in England by Henry VIII 300 years before.

The two monks went to Italy where the Pope assigned them to missionary duties in Australia. They quickly set sail for Fremantle along with other monks and an order of nuns to establish missions in and around the new colony of Perth.

In 1846, Salvado, Serra and two other monks set off from Perth to commence missionary work with the Yued aboriginal people. After various disasters of accidents and fires, Salvado and Serra decided that, rather than utilizing mobile camps to follow the nomadic aborigines, they would construct a permanent mission station to provide services, accommodation and work for monks and aboriginal people.



**Dom Rosendo Salvado
Founder and Abbot**

Over time they built the monastery buildings, chapels, churches and facilities for a large range of trades such as blacksmithing, tailoring, laundries, furniture making and fine art facilities with painting and sculpture. There was also a winery and the production of olive oil. Residential educational facilities were established in 1861 for aboriginal girls (Saint Joseph's) and boys (Saint Mary's).



The Abbey Church – Inside is the tomb of the founder Rosendo Savlado

Dom Rosendo Salvado became the Abbot of the monastery for life and remained until his death in 1900 at the age of 86. He made a number of trips to Spain and Italy to raise funds and recruit new monks. At one point there were 70 monks, the vast majority from Spain, living and working at New Norcia. Hence the language spoken was Spanish. They lived a structured life with seven prayer sessions each day as per a rigid timetable laid down by Benedict. Many of the monks had backgrounds as artisans, tradesmen or farmers so there was good mix of skills available for the mission to operate its factory like facilities and its 13,000 acres of agricultural land, as well as to train aboriginal people so they no longer depended on their nomadic lifestyle.

Building works were continuous and accelerated when a decision was made in the early part of the 20th century to extend educational facilities to the growing white community. Saint Gertrudes School for girls was built followed by Saint Ildephonsus School for boys to provide residential schools for rural and remote children of Western Australia farming communities. An order of Spanish nuns ran the girls' school.

Both schools are beautiful classical buildings with highly decorated gilded chapels in the style seen in Europe. The artistic work was done by resident monks who had come from Spain and were trained in traditional methods. Their work is stunning and remains today as part of the delights of visiting New Norcia.

The passage of time has seen the best days of the New Norcia monastery and its work pass into history. The schools eventually closed in the 1970's, the trade operations diminished, and the number of monks fell dramatically. What is left is a complete town of beautiful but mainly unused buildings, chapels and churches seen only by tourists, a monastery with a large library and seven ageing monks, and about 800 acres of land no longer used for agricultural purposes.

New Norcia's legacy is recorded however in a wonderful museum with a collection put together over the past 180 years. The monks were reputed to never throw anything out and hence there is an extensive array of museum items from the day to day lives of the community and many religious artifacts. One item of note is a pectoral cross from Spain, given in 1901 to Dom Torres, the Abbot at the time, by Pope Pius X during a Vatican audience. It is made of wood, metal and glass inlaid with pearls and amethysts. On the reverse is a small piece of wood on grosgrain ribbon, a piece from the One True Cross, the wooden cross on which Jesus was crucified.

There is an impressive collection of religious artworks, some dating back hundreds of years which the monks obtained in Spain and other parts of Europe. This collection is renowned Australia's premier collection of religious art. It gained unwanted notoriety in the 1980s when 28 paintings were torn from their frames and stolen by thieves (from Sydney!!). Fortunately, all but one were recovered and restored to their former glory. This story is reported in Marc Fennell's documentary 'The Mission', available on SBS On Demand.



Pectoral Cross



Many religious artefacts in the New Norcia Museum

The story of New Norcia is further explained by an extensive collection of photographs of the missionary staff and the aboriginal and white people they served. There are group photos, shots of day-to-day activities as well as major events, celebrations and services. The photo collection reveals a vibrant and caring community over a long period of 150 years or more.



Cemetery at New Norcia

Particularly revealing are the portraits and profiles of the monks who left their lives and families in their native Spain to serve in Australia, never to return to their homeland.

There's a touch of sadness about the onsite cemetery where there are more than a hundred graves with Spanish inscriptions thus creating thoughtful reflection on the personal sacrifices made by such devoted people.

Our visit to New Norcia was enhanced by a stay in the visitor accommodation in the Monastery.

This accommodation is provided to travellers who come, as we did, to visit and explore the site and also to participants in the many activities such as seminars and retreats that are run by the Benedictine community. As expected, we had a sparsely furnished room and a simple meal with other guests. We were invited to attend evening and morning prayers with the monks in their private chapel. The prayers were chanted so it was a moving experience and a very different style of worship. For us it was a serene stay in a peaceful and mindful environment. We met some delightful people staying there and staying for many different reasons but mainly to take advantage of the opportunities for solitude, personal reflection, prayer and meditation.

Whilst the past dominates New Norcia, we were assured of a future for this and other similar communities. We were introduced to a man who was newly recruited and about to devote his life as a monk, to the principles of Saint Benedict and the glory of God. Hopefully the traditions continue.

References:

1. *A Town Like No Other- The Living Traditions of New Norcia*. David Hutchison, Benedictine Community of New Norcia. 1995.
2. *The Story of New Norcia* - Benedictine Community of New Norcia. 2004.
3. All photographs by the author.



The Men's Barbecue Group meets once a month, on the third Thursday, in the Seminar Room, to enjoy fellowship. More men are always welcome.

They bring their own drinks, and meat for the barbecue, as well as a salad or side dish to share.

CLOCKWISE FROM FRONT: Brian Haywood, Mark Gibbs, John Griffin-Miller (partially obscured), Ross Beattie, The Reverend Phil Lui, Stephen Ford, Keith Ryan, William Grove

Thanks to the photographer, Colin Jones, who is also a member of the group.

WILLS AND BEQUESTS

Have you considered adding a clause to your will that will grant a bequest to our Parish?

Doing so is a very easy way of supporting the Parish in meeting its financial needs even though when the Parish will receive the benefit is usually unknown.

The Rector, Wardens and Parish Council invite you to give this serious consideration. If you are about to prepare a new will or would be willing to add a codicil to your current will, they ask that you include or add a bequest in favour of the Parish. It is important, of course, that your principal beneficiaries be made aware of what you propose.

The possible wording of a suitable clause to go into your will could read as follows: -

"I give devise and bequeath the sum of (amount in words) Dollars (\$xxxx.xx) to the Anglican Parish of Saint Alban of 3 Pembroke Street Epping in the state of New South Wales for its general purposes. I direct and declare that the receipt provided by a Warden or the Treasurer at the date of payment of the bequest to the Parish will be a full and complete discharge to my Executor."

To insert the bequest wording into your new will, or to add it to your existing will, you should consult your legal adviser.

Should you wish to discuss this in general prior to taking any action, please contact initially any of the Parish Wardens or members of the Parish Council.

The Story of an Unforgettable Home

Father Robert Willson

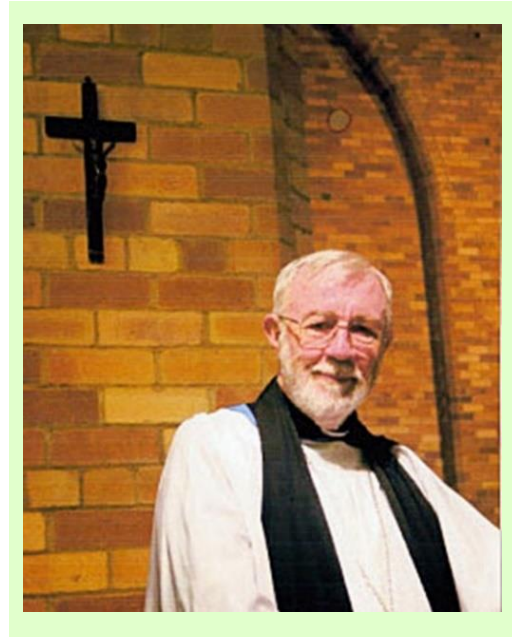
Editor's Note: Father Robert Willson was Chaplain and a teacher of Divinity and History at the Canberra Girls Grammar School for seventeen years. Now he is retired, he pursues his interest in history and is a regular contributor to *The Parish Magazine*.

He writes:

I have been reliving a memorable journey my wife and I made in the year 2000 to Italy and Sicily, an area rich in Christian associations and stories.

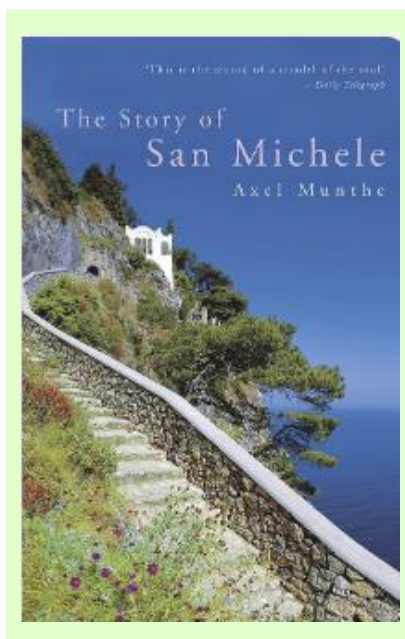
In Sicily we peered into the crater of Mount Etna on a quiet day, with tourists running for their lives a few days later, when the great volcano erupted. [See *The Parish Magazine* Number 880, May – July 2025 pp 40-42.]

But there were also memorable visits to places of rich human interest and great beauty. One of these was a visit to an island that inspired a famous book. More on that later!



The Emperor Tiberius

Our coach travelled up the spine of Italy until we came to Sorrento, overlooking the Bay of Naples. Across the waters was the famous island of Capri, filled with reminders of ancient Roman Emperors Augustus and Tiberius. These were the Emperors during the life of Christ. Christ was born in the time of Augustus and was on trial and executed in the time of Tiberius. At our Lord's trial when the crowd shouted to Pilate: "*If you let this man go free, you are not Caesar's friend!*", the Caesar referred to was the Emperor Tiberius. He was by then living in retirement on Capri but keeping a close watch on affairs in Rome for any sign of rebellion. Pontius Pilate knew and feared that.



A Swedish Teenager

Our story concerns another link to Capri – a Swedish teenager named Axel Munthe, born in 1857, and a student of Medicine. While visiting Sorrento he joined a party which visited the island of Capri.

He hiked up the steps to the ancient ruins of the Emperor's villa, especially a ruined chapel dedicated to San Michele. That visit changed the young man's life.

Munthe dreamed that one day he would return to Capri and restore those ruins and build a beautiful home to house his growing collection of archaeological treasures. It was no idle dream, and he did just that.

The famous book he wrote was "*The Story of San Michele*" published in 1929. Generations of readers, including my own mother, have loved that best seller, never out of print in nearly a century. My mother often spoke of the book but of course never went to Capri. I was determined to do so in memory of her.

A House of Treasures

My wife and I found the House and its treasures almost overwhelming. Munthe intentionally incorporated Roman ruins, mosaics, and other artifacts into the construction and landscaping of Villa San Michele. The Villa is now a museum, showcasing Munthe's villa, his collections, and the remnants of Tiberius' ancient structure.

Munthe planned it all so well. Once he looked out at a spectacular view overlooking the Bay and commented that that would be the place for a Sphinx. Eventually he found one and it stands there to this day. Of course, from Capri the visitor looks across the Bay of Naples to Mount Vesuvius. Over the years the buried city of Pompeii has slowly yielded many treasures, large and small.

These included not only Greek, Roman and Egyptian objects, but also objects from Islamic and Byzantine times. Some of them now rest in this Treasure House, some grateful gifts to Munthe from poor people he healed without expecting a fee.

The Man Behind It All.

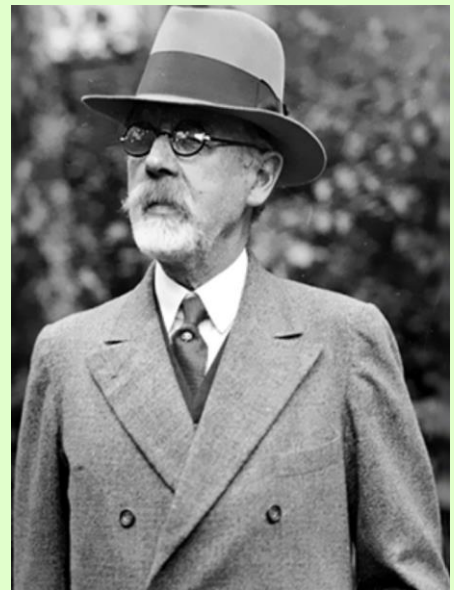
One can only really appreciate the home by recalling the man behind it. Munthe was not just a collector. He was a dedicated medical doctor. He had a practice in Paris and later in Rome using funds to help his vision.

He served with great courage in epidemics in Paris and later in Naples. Reading the book, I found that Munthe sometimes seemed to be willing to horrify his readers with descriptions of rabies victims, and euthanasia victims, and so on. I was repelled by some of this and wondered why my mother was so attracted to it!

As a medical doctor, Munthe saw so much suffering. He seemed to have found relief with his collecting activities. To handle and study things of beauty is, as the poet said, "*a joy forever*" [from John Keats' *Endymion*]. Some parts of the book are odd and inconsistent.

Photo credit:

<https://broadwayhistorysociety.wordpress.com/people-2/axel-munthe/>
Accessed 4 July 2025 at 1400hrs



Axel Munthe

Munthe became a British subject in World War I and was married for many years but once described himself as a single man. The last part of the book apparently includes visions of the afterlife.

Axel Munthe died in February 1949. His book continues to sell but his most lasting memorial is the beautiful villa on Capri. To spend time there is to experience an unforgettable man and his vision. We will never forget our visit.



Part of the Villa and gardens

Photo credit:

<https://www.capri.com/en/e/villa-san-michele-axel-munthe?srltid=AfmBOoqNXhHwclFNzA8cDAqNOI>

Accessed 4 July 2025 at 1500hrs

Parish Directory

Rector	The Reverend Philip Lui BAppSc, BD
Student Minister and Children's Ministry Worker	Doris Awad BA, BEd BTh Student at Moore Theological College Sydney
Lay Assistant	Ruth Shatford AM (Diocesan)
Sanctuary Assistants, Servers, Readers and Intercessors	Godfrey Abel, Sue Armitage, Ron Arnold, Ross Beattie, Licette Bedna, Pranat Bhonsle, Ken Bock OAM, Jane Bryant, Margaret Cummins, Margaret Foster, Rema Gnanadickam, Brian Haywood, Elizabeth Jenkins, Meredith Lawn, Anne Lawson, Christine Murray, Margaret Pearson, Giles Rowling, Peggy Sanders (Senior Liturgical Assistant), David Tait, Amy Taylor, Gillian Taylor, Mark Taylor, Christina Thompson, John Thompson, Kim Turner, James von Stieglitz, Sarah Weaver
Sacristans	Ross Beattie, Mark Taylor, James von Stieglitz
Parish Administrator	Denise Pigot Telephone: 9876 3362 Email: office@eppinganglicans.org.au
Honorary Parish Treasurer	Shane Christie-David
Churchwardens	Elizabeth Jenkins – Rector's Warden Noel Christie-David – People's Warden David Tait – People's Warden
Parish Councillors	Ken Bock OAM, Margaret Cummins, Glyn Evans, Christine Murray, Peggy Sanders, Amy Taylor, Gillian Taylor, John Williams
Parish Nominators	Glyn Evans, Peggy Sanders, Ruth Shatford AM, James von Stieglitz
Synod Representatives	Doris Awad, Gillian Taylor
Safe Ministry Representative	Sarah Weaver
Music Director	Chris Czerwinski Perf. Dip. (Wieniawski School of Music, Poland), BMus (Eastman School of Music, New York, USA), MMus (Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, Birmingham City University, England, UK), MMus (Sydney Conservatorium of Music)
Assistant Organist	Christopher Wagstaff B.Mus (Hons, First Class), L.Mus
Organ Scholars	Isabel Li and Enoch Pan
Caretaker	Kari Hewitt
Editor	Julie Evans
Proof-readers	Glyn Evans and Peggy Sanders
Archivist	Brian Haywood

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