

The Parish Magazine

Epping Anglicans

August to October 2026

Number 885

Saint Alban the Martyr
3 Pembroke Street
Epping

with

Saint Aidan of Lindisfarne
30 Downing Street
West Epping



**The congregations of Saint Alban's celebrated
the 130th Patronal Festival on 21 June 2026**

From the Editor

Welcome to the August edition of *your Parish Magazine*. It records the generosity of parishioners who give their time and skills to make the Parish vibrant and interesting. Our congregations are growing and all at Saint Alban's offer a warm and welcoming environment for those who come to us seeking a church 'home'.

We send congratulations to parishioner Robin Cummins for the award of a Medal of the Order of Australia in the recent King's Birthday Honours. See page 5 for more details.

Especially, Saint Alban's aims to nurture young people and we pray for the growth of our Sunday School and Youth Group – see pages 6 - 9. Read pages 34 – 37 for news of Isabel Li, one of our Organ Scholars. See page 36 to meet Edward Lawn who is the new Saint Alban's Archivist. These are young people who contribute their gifts to our Parish. May I note my sincere thanks to the retiring archivist, Brian Haywood, who has handled his responsibility with care and diligence.

Every time I look towards the production of the next edition of *The Parish Magazine*, I am overwhelmed by the kindness of those who support me. Thanks to you all.

The deadline for contributions to the next edition of *The Parish Magazine* is **2 October 2026**.

julie.evans@ihug.com.au

“The church on a hill”

Our mission

Gather

Grow

Go

To contact us:

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

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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.

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The Anglican Parish of Epping

3 Pembroke Street Epping, NSW, 2121, Australia.

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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>



‘Grow’ Sermon delivered on 8 February 2026

Editor’s Note: This is the second in a series of sermons delivered by the Rector in February 2026 on the Mission for Saint Alban’s which is: **Gather, Grow, Go.**

The ‘Gather’ sermon appears in *The Parish Magazine* Number 884, May to July 2026, pages 3-5.

In this sermon we are looking at the mission goal to GROW.

I want to begin by talking about Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury under Henry VIII, whose task—put simply—was to help grow the fledgling Church of England.

And what he primarily compiled was the first Book of Common Prayer – that set out the pattern of liturgy for the church and the Christian life that we still use today in our Anglican church, particularly traditional ones like ours.

Cranmer's Book of Common Prayer gave English-speaking Christians everywhere prayers in their own language for the first time in history. With the 39 Articles of Faith, the Prayer Book formed the theological foundation for the Anglican Church for just under half a millennium.

In its inception Cranmer’s desire was to:

Put Scripture back into the mouth and ears of ordinary Christians.

Cranmer didn’t see Scripture as just something read *before* worship — he believed **worship itself should be woven out of Scripture.**

In the Prayer Book, **almost every prayer is saturated with biblical language.** The liturgy *quotes, paraphrases, or echoes* Scripture constantly.

Even when Scripture isn’t quoted verbatim, its rhythms and imagery shape the prayers so instead of worship being a performance *around* the Bible, worship becomes a way of **praying the Bible.** This reflects Cranmer’s conviction that God’s Word is not only informative but *performative*— it does something to us when it is heard and prayed.

The Prayer Book we have today is a wonderful heritage from our Christian brothers and sisters who have laboured before us because they wanted the Lord’s people to grow in their knowledge, love and service of God. As Christians, we should always want to Grow, to set our eyes on the goal of becoming more and more like Christ.

- So, what does it mean to grow?
- Who are we aiming to grow?
- And how do we grow?

To sum up these three components, I’m defining the activity of ‘growing’ as this:

To Grow in our knowledge, love and service of God, individually and together, through hearing God’s Word and being transformed by his Holy Spirit.

I hope you can see four distinct theological ideas here. Let me explain why each component is important. First: *To grow in knowledge of God.* If you want to think about growing in maturity in Christ, one of my ‘go to’ books of the Bible is Colossians. In four short chapters you get a robust picture of what it means to not just accept Christ, but to live the renewed life in Him.

I originally included several readings from Colossians and it was hard to shorten it to two but I chose the two in the second reading today [Colossians 1:9-10, 3:14-17] because in them you not only see that these ideas of knowledge, love and service of God are Biblical ideas, but also the interplay of how these three ideas go together as a package deal. From Colossians 1:9-10 we see that Paul, and his partners in the Gospel, pray that the Colossian Christians will be first filled with the knowledge of God and His will, so that they might live a life of service worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to Him, and bearing fruit in every good work.

Valentine's Day is coming up. It's a dangerous season, fraught with dangers of buying unwanted gifts. After fifteen years of marriage, I'm pretty confident in my gift for my wife, because I'm filled with the knowledge of what she likes and doesn't like. It is the same with God, if we want to love and serve Him, we first need to KNOW Him.

Second: To grow in love of God. Colossians 3:14 illustrates how LOVE is an important part of Christian growth. As God's people we are called to 'put on LOVE' – which binds everything together in perfect harmony. In verse 15 we are called to "*Let the peace of Christ*" – that is the knowledge of the redeeming work of Jesus Christ, that brings peace between God and His people, rule in our hearts, leading to thankfulness.

Third: Service flows from knowledge and love. In verse 16 we are to let the word of Christ dwell in us richly. This knowledge of God's Word and his promises to us brings us peace that we have in the gospel and as his loved ones we can 'put on love', and LOVE comes when we know God's Word better together. Then out of that love we will serve God and one another – thanking and praising him, in Word and Deed, teaching and admonishing one another.

To grow in the Christians life, we must grow in these three things together: **knowledge, love and service to God.**

And as we are looking at these passages it is important to also see the collective language used in these passages. To grow as a Christian most certainly does have individual elements and responsibilities, but LOVE – compels us to not just think about our own spiritual needs, but also to consider others and therefore the inclusion of the definition of Grow is: **to grow individually and together.**

How do we grow in these things?

- 1. through hearing God's Word**
- 2. and being transformed by his Holy Spirit.**

To stress the first, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, from the second reading today, helps us to reflect on the place the Bible should have on our lives. "*All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.*"

All Scripture, that is every verse of the Old Testament and not just the New Testament – is inspired – that is to say God graciously and powerfully worked through His human instruments, the writers of the Bible, to give us His Word. All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be equipped for every good work and to become more like Jesus Christ.

I love this reminder in the Bible. If you want wisdom, you want to serve, you want to navigate how we should think about AI or how to raise our kids, or how to invest our money, go to work, spend our time in retirement or help to make any other significant decision, the Word of God can GROW you to be equipped to face the challenges, questions or acts of service of today!

Thomas Cranmer so thoroughly believed in this and in the Anglican church that he set up Morning and Evening Prayer services. His motivation in doing so were that:

- the whole Bible would be read regularly, in order
- that Scripture would be heard publicly, audibly, and continuously
- that lay people, not just clergy or monks, would be shaped by the biblical story.

In the original Prayer Book lectionary, the entire Old Testament was read once a year. The New Testament was read three times a year and the Psalms were read every month. This wasn't accidental. Cranmer believed habitual exposure to Scripture was one of God's main tools for forming Christian faith and character.

Here is a guilty secret of mine – I would love to have the capacity at Saint Alban’s to hold morning and evening prayer because 2 Timothy 3:16-17 convinces me of the wisdom of our Anglican forefathers in the faith. And as long as it is called ‘Today’ we should soak our ears, minds and hearts in the hearing of Scripture.

That brings me to the second way we grow – by **being transformed by his Holy Spirit.**

This is both to be clear in the work of the Godhead of the Holy Spirit and to remind us of 1 Cor 3:6-7:

I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth.

Growing as a Christian, just like conversion, is God’s work. We are involved, we are his servants, but ultimately, we need to rest and depend on God to give the growth, and I think one of the most powerful, practical expressions of this is prayer. I have seen this illustrated at our church. It is wonderful to say that our congregations are growing. Some people have thanked me for my leadership but I’m under no illusion, the key to our church growth, isn’t me. Rather it is the answered prayers of His Saint Alban’s family. My mind recalls the beautiful, longing and fervent prayers which our intercessors lead us in at our church.

Friends just as it is for our church, so it is for our lives and for those in our families. God, through the power of His Spirit is the one who Grows and transforms us and so as we Grow, let us not neglect to lean on and trust in the one who gives the Growth and sustains us in our times of need. As one church with many congregations, let us set our minds to continue to obey God and to follow in the steps of our forebears like Thomas Cranmer so we will continue to

Grow in

**our knowledge, love and service of God,
individually and together,
through hearing God’s Word
and being transformed by his Holy Spirit.**

Amen

Congratulations to Parishioner Robin Cummins OAM



In the King’s Birthday Honours 2026, a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) was awarded to parishioner Robin Cummins.

His award was for his wide-reaching service to veterans and the community, including his extensive service to Saint Alban’s Parish in many roles over many years.

Robin is a former Synod Representative, a former Parish Councillor, a former Warden, a former Treasurer, a former Parish Nominator, a former Altar Server, a former Lay Assistant and a former Reader. One of Robin’s highly respected duties at Saint Alban’s was to read the Ode on ANZAC Day and Remembrance Sunday.

As a Parish, Saint Alban’s is richer for the presence and contribution of Robin over fifty years.

Robin and his wife Margaret joined Saint Alban’s after their marriage in 1968. Margaret had been a parishioner even earlier than this and claims a seventy-year connection to the Parish. We send our congratulations and good wishes to them both.

Sunday School

Aimee and David Wong, Student Ministers



For Term 2, we looked at the story of Abraham, and especially God's promises to him. We saw how God called Abraham out of Haran and promised to make his descendants into a nation (a land, and offspring as many as the stars) whom he would bless, and through whom other nations would be blessed.

This great promise echoes through the Bible. Paul describes it in Galatians 3 as the gospel preached beforehand to Abraham. Ultimately, the promise found its fulfilment when Christ's death brought the promise of salvation to all people

During the term, we saw how God remained faithful to his promise, reaffirming and expanding it, but that Abraham had to be patient and continue to trust God in moments where it seemed as though the promise could not possibly be kept.



Aimee taught the children the song "God's People in God's Place"

Our memory verse for the term was:

"The Lord is trustworthy in all he promises and faithful in all he does." (Psalm 145:13b)

We used a song by Awesome Cutlery "God's People in God's Place" to connect this message to the story of how God remained faithful to his promise through the Old Testament, raising leaders such as Moses, Joshua, David and Solomon to lead his people. It was a delight hearing how some of the children would sing the chorus at home:

*God's people, in God's place, under his rule.
They will know his blessing, his blessing, his blessing.*



David read a bible story to a very interested group

We're grateful to the church for letting the children stay in class through the whole service; the extra time and the stability of staying in one place have been so helpful for settling the children and allowing more conversations to develop. We're seeing longer attention spans during the talks, and more engagement during the games, crafts and readings.



Carol led a morning's lesson for the children

It's been a joy watching the children continue to grow, ask personal questions about what it means to trust God, and listen to his word. We've also started to see signs that the children are more able to stay settled throughout the morning.



Jesus and his disciples went on to the villages around Caesarea Philippi.

On the way he asked them, "Who do people say I am?"

They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets."

"But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?"

Peter answered, "You are the Messiah."

(Mark 8:27-29)



Each week during Youth at Saint Albans, we wrote what we learned about Jesus from Mark's Gospel. By the end of the Term, we had a full picture.

Who is Jesus? You might have heard many different answers to this question. Jesus is understood as a prophet, a good teacher, and an example of how to live. But the Bible, and Mark's Gospel in particular, shows us that Jesus is much more than this. He is God's chosen King, who carries the power of God himself.

In Youth at Saint Alban's this term, we have been discovering who Jesus is in the first eight chapters of Mark's Gospel. Each week, we read a passage from Mark and use five tools to help understand it:

- **Retell:** Retell the narrative and identify parts that are unclear or confusing.
- **React:** How are different people reacting to Jesus?
- **Reveal:** What is revealed about Jesus, through words and actions?
- **Reason:** What reason might Mark have for including this event?
- **Respond:** How should I be responding to what Mark uncovers about Jesus?

This method, known as The '5R's', is from a resource called Uncover (<https://uncover.org.au/mark/read/>), which was developed to provide a consistent, memorable way to read about the life of Jesus.

At Saint Alban's, our goal is

to see youth trusting in and committed to Jesus by teaching the Bible and growing relationships.

We believe that the best way to help our youth be committed to Jesus is to help them encounter him for themselves in the Bible. The 5Rs method not only helps them understand the text of Mark's Gospel but also provides a consistent tool our youth can apply to any story about Jesus. After applying it for ten weeks, we pray that they can open up a story about Jesus in the Bible and understand it themselves.

Across this term, we've seen that Jesus is the Son of God, he is compassionate, he can forgive sins, he is powerful to heal and provide, he spends time with sinners, he makes the blind see, and he is God in human flesh. We've also seen how we should respond to Jesus, recognising who he is, listening to his word, and producing a crop as we share it with others. Jesus speaks about this in the parable of the four soils:

Others, like seed sown on good soil, hear the word, accept it, and produce a crop—some thirty, some sixty, some a hundred times what was sown. (Mark 4:20)

Each week at Youth, we play games, study the Bible, and pray for each other. Together, these elements aim to help us know and love Jesus as our Lord and Saviour, and to love others as ourselves. Please be praying that our youth will be like the good soil where the gospel produces fruit and will grow in their trust in Jesus and in their desire to have their entire lives shaped by him.



A photo from our end of Term 2 social event:
dumpling making and board games

Parish Register

Holy Matrimony

Lekan **BAYODE** and Claudia **WIDJAJA**
on 24 July 2026

Service of Thanksgiving

for the life of The Reverend Jane Sheilagh **CHAPMAN**
on 21 July 2026



Our Services

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

You can also join directly just before 10.00am on Sundays by scrolling to 'Watch' on the Epping Anglicans homepage – the weekly Service Sheet and readings are 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 – 1 st and 3 rd Sunday 10.00am Sung Eucharist – 2 nd , 4 th and 5 th Sunday <i>The 10.00am Holy Eucharist is also streamed via Zoom.</i> Sunday School 10am in The Loft (above the Main Hall) Youth @ 10.00am 10.00am EPIC Indonesian Congregation 10.00am Chinese Congregation 6.00pm Taizé Service – Prayer with Songs from Taizé 2 nd 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

August 2026

Sunday 2 August	Tenth Sunday after Pentecost <i>Preacher: Dr Ruth Shatford</i>
Sunday 9 August	Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost <i>Preachers: Rector and Student Minister David Wong</i>
Sunday 16 August	Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost <i>Preacher: Assistant Minister Bill Walton</i>
Sunday 23 August	Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday 30 August	Saint Aidan's Day; Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost and Day of Prayer for Refugees <i>Preacher: The Reverend Paul Weaver</i>

September 2026

1 September to 4 October	Season of Creation
Wednesday 2 September	Ecumenical Season of Creation Service and Lunch [see page 39 for details]
Saturday 5 September	Eucharist for the Commemoration of The Martyrs of New Guinea 11am <i>Preacher: The Reverend Dr Erica Mathieson</i> [see page 39 for details]
Sunday 6 September	Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost and Martyrs of New Guinea
Sunday 13 September	Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday 20 September	Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday 27 September	Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

October 2026

Sunday 4 October	Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday 11 October	Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday 18 October	Twenty-First Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday 25 October	Twenty-Second Sunday after Pentecost <i>Preacher: Assistant Minister Bill Walton</i>

Sending Julie Out to God's People

6 June 2026
Pastor Kian Holik

We are thankful Saint Alban's hosted the recommissioning of Julie with the Church Missionary Society (CMS) to go back to Southeast Asia. There were about sixty people in attendance at the service, made up of members of the six supporting churches. The service was led by Dan Arthur, a representative from CMS and Pastor Kian Holik (EPIC at Saint Alban's) delivered a sermon to encourage Julie and her supporting churches. It was such an encouraging event for Julie and those who support her. We continue to pray for Julie's second term back in Southeast Asia as she is finishing her university study and planning future work in this region.



Part of the congregation at the Recommissioning Service



Well-wishers in the Main Hall after the Recommissioning Service for Julie

2026 EQUIP Women's Conference - *Who deserves God's mercy?* Gloria Walton, Student Minister with contributions from other attendees



**LEFT TO RIGHT BACK: Shirley Ma, Jane Bryant, Gail Naylor, Christina Thompson, Sarah Weaver, Gillian Taylor, Amy Taylor, Sabrina Simamora
LEFT TO RIGHT FRONT: Merry Imanuella, Rebecca Lui, Gloria Walton**

"I was struck by how God's heart is so full of compassion and mercy, even for the worst of sinners. This was such a challenge to my own heart to extend more of God's mercy to others, whether they are strangers or people who have hurt me." Name withheld

On Saturday 20 June 2026, eleven women from Saint Alban's attended the EQUIP Women's Conference with sisters from Epping Presbyterian Church and other churches. EQUIP has been running for over twenty years and is a wonderful way for sisters in Christ from all denominations to come together under God's Word. It was a great joy to go together with two women from the Indonesian congregation (EPIC), eight women from the English congregations, and one friend who was invited to attend. For seven of us, it was our first time, so although some of us weren't sure what to expect, by the end of the day we all really appreciated having the day to spend together in the Bible. As I weave this article together, I am delighted to include the voices of some of us who wanted to share our reflections with you so that you also may be encouraged.

"EQUIP is a Christian Bible-teaching ministry focussed on equipping women to know and love Jesus. The conferences are run by teams of volunteers and are ministries of Equip Incorporated. The annual flagship event is a large Bible teaching conference for women by women. As an exclusively online conference, EQUIP is live streamed into hundreds of churches and homes across Australia." Christina

"The program was well presented and thought provoking. I enjoyed the fellowship with members of other congregations." Shirley

Watching this conference in small hubs allows greater local fellowship and partnership. This also makes it easier to invite friends, to travel, and to reduce costs. (Previously, for many years, the conference was held in person at the International Convention Centre in the city, where attendee and parishioner Jane Bryant recalls attending, with the bonus of being able to fellowship and sing with so many women in the same room.) Epping Presbyterian Church very kindly hosted us again this year and prepared a delicious morning tea (9:30-10:00am) and lunch (12:00-1:00pm) including lamb and chicken skewers. There were two sessions (10:00am-12:00pm; 1:00-3:00pm) which each included two Bible talks, interviews, live panel discussions and songs. There were almost sixty ladies in attendance, and thousands more in other hubs around the country (and even overseas!).

"The program was well balanced with a good mix of personal reflection, prayer and Bible Study. There were no expectations, no pressure and no prior knowledge needed. The presenters spoke in depth about each chapter of Jonah but in a way that always pointed towards the big picture so it never felt too information heavy. It was wonderful to learn more about Jonah, how human he was and how much of ourselves we see in his actions. The best part was being able to spend it with other Saint Alban's women; learning together, sharing a meal and getting to know the members from our newest congregations as well." Amy

"I was a bit dubious at first that we'd need five hours to study such a short book of the Bible! However, after re-reading Jonah a couple of times before the day, I realised that there was a lot to unpack, and that there were questions that I needed answering. The presentation was very well done, with an excellent workbook to help us focus on the subtleties of the story in order to draw our conclusions. It was very thought-provoking." Name withheld



The hall of Epping Presbyterian Church during the Conference

The Bible teaching for this year's conference was on the book of Jonah. Last year, EQUIP was on Revelation 6-22, which was a continuation from the previous year's conference on Revelation 1-5.

The four talks this year followed the 'scenes' in the four chapters of the Book of Jonah and were given by women from different churches. The overall question for the conference was:

"Who deserves God's mercy?"

1. **A Big Storm:** Jonah 1 by Carmelina Read, Chatswood Presbyterian Church, Chatswood.
2. **A Big Fish:** Jonah 2 by Claire Gibson, Saint Andrew's Cathedral, Sydney.
3. **A Big City:** Jonah 3 by Christine Knobbs, Vine Church, Surry Hills.
4. **A Big Question:** Jonah 4 by Annabel Nixey, Crossroads Christian Church, Canberra.

"What struck me in the book of Jonah was realizing that, despite being a prophet and a proud Israelite with deep knowledge of the law, his prayer in chapter 2 reveals he was neither aware of, nor repentant for, his sin in disobeying God's command to go to Nineveh." Merry

"A few days after EQUIP, I thought of Jonah. God had a plan for everyone when He made us, and He wants us to follow His plan. Therefore, we must follow what God has planned for each of us by obedience. But Jonah ignored that. And yet, God's heart is so full of compassion and mercy even for the worst of sinners, and even those who harmed us. It is incredible, isn't it?"
Christina

The Bible readings were read by Roslyn Hicks, who has beautifully read the passages of scripture at many EQUIP Conferences. After each, we were given a question to consider, such as the end of chapter 4 when God asks, *"Should I not be concerned?"* for the people and animals in Nineveh (Jonah 4:11). We also had two minutes of personal reflection time after each chapter where we answered three simple questions, which helped us consider God's heart, and our own hearts, as we studied Jonah. The three questions and some of our responses follow.

1. What is your impression of Jonah in this chapter?

"He was sort of thankful but also proud and never apologised to God, unlike the Psalms." (Ch. 2)

"In his prayer he appears to lack humility, repentance and gratitude." (Ch. 2)

"He was brave enough, by God's grace, to go to Nineveh to obey God's will." (Ch. 3)

"His heart was so angry and so different to God." (Ch. 4)

"Jonah's heart is fickle and selfish." (Ch. 4)

After EQUIP, it was deeply encouraging to keep reflecting on what we learned. No one in the book of Jonah deserved God's mercy. Not the Gentile sailors, nor Jonah, nor the people of Nineveh... and not us. All of them had rejected God at some point, failing to love him and love others. And yet, God's heart is one of compassion that desires to show people mercy. As each of them turn to God and cry out to him, he rescues them (Jonah 1:14-17, 2:1-2, 3:8-10). That is why Jesus had to come. *"At the cross, God's justice and mercy meet."* Jesus pays the penalty for our sin by giving up his life in our place, turning away God's anger at our sin. And Jesus extends the invitation of forgiveness to us. All we have to do is turn back to God and accept his mercy. After that, by the help of God's Spirit, we seek to live our lives in thankfulness with hearts like God's. And we want other people to know Jesus and also receive God's mercy by turning back to him.

2. What did you learn about God's heart?

"Forgiving and patient." (Ch. 2)

"Ever-forgiving" (Ch. 3)

"God has compassion even on the worst of sinners. No sin is too great for his mercy to forgive" (Ch. 3)

"God turned from his anger and dealt gently with Nineveh and Jonah – and us!" (Ch. 4)

There were many challenges given to us that came out of the Book of Jonah. One was a challenge about our own hearts, and whether they are like God's in extending his mercy to others. When we meet someone we think is like the Ninevites, someone who has done awful things whom we don't think deserves God's mercy, is a part of us tempted to become resentful and ask God, "Really? Would you really save this person?" That's why Jonah was so angry in chapter 4. That's why he didn't want to warn the Ninevites of God's coming judgement. "I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity" (Jonah 4:2). But God's question back is, "Is it right for you to be angry?" (Jonah 4:4). Instead of being glad that God is a compassionate God who shows mercy, Jonah only wanted God to show mercy to himself and people he thought deserved it, not to those who were bitter enemies who had hurt his people. Jonah forgot that he himself didn't deserve God's mercy either. And neither do we. Nothing we do is enough to merit God's mercy on our own efforts. Each of us has sinned against God, ignoring him, rejecting his will, doing things that we want to do rather than what God wants us to do. And each of us has sinned against other people, not loving them enough, lying, being selfish, thinking hateful or unfair thoughts and so on. This is why all people need to turn back to God and apologise to him and ask for mercy. We were struck that our hearts can be just like Jonah's, and not very much like God's.

3. What did you learn about your heart?

"Can be as reluctant as Jonah to be out of my comfort zone." (Ch. 1)

"I am much more of a sinner than I tend to think. And in Jesus there is a greater message I must respond to than the Ninevites." (Ch. 3)

"Too concerned with small things and not God's will" (Ch. 4)

"I don't deserve God's mercy. I get angry at the wrong things. I need my heart to be more like Jesus." (Ch. 4)

One of the women interviewed shared that her challenge is being "benignly neglectful" of sharing God's mercy with the people around her. This can be from personal discomfort, fear of awkwardness or because they've hurt her or those she loves. Then she shared a story of a Christian couple, whose son-in-law mistreated their daughter, stole their life savings, and then turned their grandchildren against them. Amidst their deep pain and everything else they've done in this situation; they continued to pray for him that he might turn back to Christ and experience God's mercy. As much as he has hurt them, they know his deepest need, like everyone else, is to turn back to God and receive God's mercy. Isn't that an amazing thing for them to pray? The interviewer commented, "It's hard to hate someone you pray for." As people who have experienced God's mercy, God is slowly changing our hearts to be people who extend God's mercy to others. Our motto needs to be "Salvation comes from the LORD!" (Jonah 2:9). As we share about Jesus with others, they can receive the mercy and salvation that comes from our Lord God.

Overall, it was a deeply stimulating and encouraging day. God's word is truly living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, penetrating to the heart (Hebrews 4:12). We all had a wonderful day and are glad we attended. Some of us have already saved the date for EQUIP 27, Saturday 19 June 2027! We hope you will join us next year. For more information about EQUIP, visit their website www.equip.org.au/ Each year, the livestream is made available for about 6 weeks to give people flexibility in when to watch it with others, so even if you are not free on that day, it can be watched privately or in other hubs in the weeks following. We pray that our reflections and encouragements from Jonah may be enriching and thought-provoking for you as well!

"Thank you for warmly welcoming me and including me in the St Albans' group for Equip 26. My overwhelming feeling was how good it was to leave the world behind for a day and sit at the feet of Jesus with many likeminded sisters in Christ."
Name withheld

"I was very impressed, they put a lot of work into the talks and videos and we just get to soak it up. Last year was so comforting and encouraging and heightened my view of God. Of course, I would go to EQUIP again because they're talking about the Bible! Time spent in the word of God is such a valuable use of your time, it is well worth it for anyone who can go." Christina



The Story of Saint Alban

“Among the roses of the martyrs, brightly shines Saint Alban”



A Saint Alban's Rose

The patron Saint of our church is Alban, the first-recorded British Christian Martyr. He lived in Verulamium, the region that is now known as St Alban's, forty kilometres north of London. During the 3rd century CE Diocletian, during his rule as Roman emperor, oversaw the last major persecution of Christians.

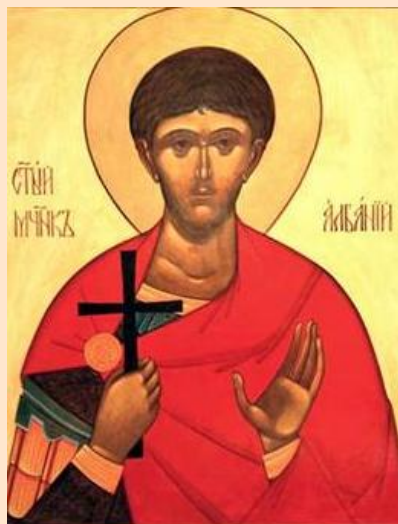
It was in this time that Alban gave shelter to a fleeing Christian priest. Alban was so impressed by man's faith and piety that he found himself emulating him and soon converted to Christianity.

The authorities searched for the priest and Alban protected him, exchanged clothes with him, and was himself arrested and put to death.

As with all good stories, the legend of Saint Alban grew with time. The Venerable Bede, writing in the 8th Century elaborates the story, adding that the river miraculously divided to let him pass when the bridge was blocked by the mob who had come to see Alban executed and a spring of water appeared to provide a drink for the saint. It is a quote from the Venerable Bede in the heading of this page.

Bede also adds that the executioner's eyes dropped out as he beheaded the saint, a detail that has often been depicted with relish since. At the time of Bede there was a church and shrine near the spot, pilgrims travelled to visit, and it became an established place of healing. Bede describes the hill as *“adorned with wild flowers of every kind”* and as a spot *“whose natural beauty had long fitted it as a place to be hallowed by the blood of a blessed martyr”*. There is an even earlier record of Saint Germanus visiting the shrine around 429.

Alban was probably buried in the Roman cemetery to the south of the present Abbey Church of Saint Alban in the UK. Recent finds suggest an early basilica was built over the spot and later a Benedictine monastery was founded, probably by King Offa around 793. This was replaced in 1077 by the large Norman church and monastery, the remains of which are still partly visible in the tower and central part of the present cathedral.



Painting of Saint Alban in the Abbey Church at St Alban's



The beheading of Alban – illustration from an illuminated medieval manuscript

Acknowledgements

1. Image on left from Saint Alban's Museum Accessed 30 June 2026 <https://www.stalbansmuseums.org.uk/portrait>
2. Image on right, the martyrdom of Saint Alban from a 13th Century manuscript of The Life of St. Alban. Scanned and slightly cropped from: Richard Marks and Nigel Morgan, The Golden Age of English Manuscript Painting, 1200-1500. Accessed 30 June 2026 Public domain <https://picryl.com/media/dublintrinitycollegemsc40lifealbanfol38rmartyrdomalban-5e4e01>

Saint Alban's 130th Patronal Festival Sunday 21 June 2026

Procession, Festival Eucharist and Rededication of the Parish

President: The Reverend Phil Lui, Rector

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

Clergy: Pastor Kian Holik, The Reverend Simon Pei

Assistant Minister: Bill Walton

Music Director: Chris Czerwinski with Saint Alban's Choir

Organist: Organ Scholars Isabel Li and Enoch Pan

Setting: Dudman



The Reading of the Gospel by Pastor Kian
at the 9.30am Service on 21 June 2026

On 21 June 2026, Saint Alban's celebrated its 130th Patronal Festival.

The first Anglican services in Epping commenced in 1891 in a private home; later in a specially built wooden hall.

In June 1896 the Anglican community began to erect a permanent church which was opened and dedicated on 11 October of that same year, 130 years ago. Today, the Parish Office occupies the first church building.

The foundation stone of the current church building was laid on 6 June 1923. It was completed that year and opened on 20 December 1923. After the extension to the church, and the addition of the spire, the church was dedicated on 12 March 1961 and after all debts were repaid the church was consecrated on 12 May in 1968.

Bishop Chris led the Rededication of the People of the Parish to the Service of Christ
See the cover of this edition for photograph of all congregations of Saint Alban's



All the congregations of Saint Alban's, including the Indonesian Congregation and the Chinese Congregation joined together in worship on this day. The printed Order of Service was in English: however, bible readings and prayers were read in English, Cantonese, Mandarin and Bahasa Indonesian. We gave thanks that we could celebrate God's goodness to the Parish in its diversity and unity.

A delicious lunch, provided by members of all congregations, was enjoyed in the Main Hall after the Service.



Bishop Chris preaching from the pulpit



Bishop Chris pictured with Parish Council member Selina Leung



LEFT TO RIGHT: The Sanctuary Party: Pastor Kian Holik, EPIC Indonesian Congregation; Assistant David Tait; The Reverend Simon Pei, Chinese Congregation; Assistant Minister Bill Walton; Server Sarah Weaver; Crucifer James von Stieglitz; Bishop Chris Edwards; Server Mark Taylor, The Rector, The Reverend Phil Lui; Senior Liturgical Assistant Peggy Sanders

From the Saint Alban's Archives

Brian Haywood Retiring Archivist



At our Patronal Festival on 21 June 2026, we celebrated 130 years since the laying of the foundation stone of the original Saint Alban's Church 19 June 1896. Please see pages 15-17 for more about Saint Alban and the 2026 celebration.

The details of the Foundation Ceremony taken from the *Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate* of Saturday 27 June 1896 are printed below. Epping was known at the time as East Carlingford.

Photos of the first church appear on pages 19 - 20

FROM THE *Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate* Saturday 27 June 1896 page 10

East Carlingford New Anglican Church

In March a very successful tea meeting and entertainment were held in connection with the movement for the erection of a new Anglican Church. On that occasion Mr R Hilliard J.P., expressed the hope that the church would be completed by next spring. This hope is not likely to be disappointed for such rapid and successful strides have since been made that the energetic secretary, Mr W D Loveridge, and his able committee workers were enabled on Friday Last to have all arrangements completed for the laying of the foundation stone of the new edifice. The ceremony took place in the afternoon of that day, in the presence of a good gathering of residents and visitors, who assembled on the site already described in these columns, fronting Pembroke Street close to the station.

The Primate of Australia (Dr Saumarez Smith) was present and performed the ceremony of laying the foundation stone, which was a beautiful, polished trachyte, kindly given by Messrs Loveridge and Hudson, the well-known proprietors of the Bowral trachyte quarries. Accompanying the Primate were the Revs Alfred Yarnold (North Sydney), Rural Dean H H Britten (Ryde), W A Charlton (Balmain North), E H B Claydon (Burwood) and Jones, and several well-known lay readers, whilst apologies for non-attendance were received from Archdeacons Langley and Gunther, the Revs G McIntosh (Pennant Hills), R King (Hornsby), and David Fulton and from His Honour Judge Docker, who enclosed a cheque towards the building fund.

Before calling upon the Primate to lay the foundation stone, Mr R Hilliard, J P, gave some very interesting details of the progress made in church matters in the district since the first Sunday School and service were held at his house some 5 ½ years ago. The attendance at both grew so encouragingly that worshippers were compelled to leave his premises for that of a hall erected on his property fronting Essex Road, and subsequently it was found necessary to move in the building of a more commodious place. No sooner was this necessity acknowledged, than a committee was appointed to which the people gave every assistance in the way of gifts and cash donations, so that they were now in the happy position of being able to go on with a building that would comfortably seat 175 people.

This building was being erected for use as a School Church, the day being looked forward to when they would be able to erect a church in front of it on the same site. It was proposed to call the new structure St Alban's School Church, and he had very great pleasure in calling upon the Primate to lay the foundation stone.

The Primate performed the ceremony in accordance with the usual order of service for such occasions. It had given him great pleasure to listen to Mr Hilliard's address, and he hoped to see a continuance of the good work when the new School Church, to be known as St Alban's was completed. The ceremony concluded with the singing of the well-known hymn "Saviour, Blessed Saviour".

In the foundation stone script bearing the following was placed:

"This foundation stone was laid by William Saumarez Smith, Primate of Australia, on Friday 19th day of June 1896, and named as St Alban's Church School, East Carlingford. Rev H H Britten, incumbent, Messrs R Hilliard, H A Brigg, A Newham, trustees; Messrs Butler, Stephenson, Kingscote, Argent, Dalton, Mortley and Plant, committee; H A Michael, hons treasurer; W A Loveridge, hons secretary."

In addition to most of the committee and others named, there were present: Alderman E Terry, Mr G M Pope, J.P., Mr Benson senior, Mr F W Thacker, Mrs R Hilliard and the Misses Hilliard, Mrs H A Michael, Mrs Nichol, Mrs W D Loveridge, Mrs J and Miss Sonter, Mrs Argent, Misses Brigg, Miss Pope, Mrs Howes, Mrs and Miss Price, Mrs Hill, Mr T J G Dole, Mr Garrard, Mr Crandon and others.

The contributions placed on the stone amounted to £31, which amount, together with that already in hand, will undoubtedly be sufficient to defray all expenses in connection with the erection of the building, which is now being proceeded with entirely under the supervision of Messrs R Hilliard, H A Michael and H A Brigg, three gentlemen, who, as a sub-committee, have undertaken to see to all requirements in connection with the carrying out of the work. The site on which it stands is undoubtedly a magnificent one, and there is plenty of land to allow of additions or the erection of a large church at any future time.

After the ceremony and service in connection with the laying of the stone, the children numbering over 100, adjourned to the Hall in Essex Road, where they were regaled with cakes, sandwiches, tea and fruit etc, in abundance. Later on, Mr W H Rowsell began a most interesting magic lantern lecture to an audience which not only packed the building but also formed an overflow outside the doorway and windows. The lecturer was accorded a hearty vote of thanks; various other motions of a similar character being proposed in favour of the Building Committee, the Ladies, Mr Hilliard and the secretary Mr W D Loveridge.



Written on back of photo:
The Church on the Hill 1896

This building now houses
the Parish Office.

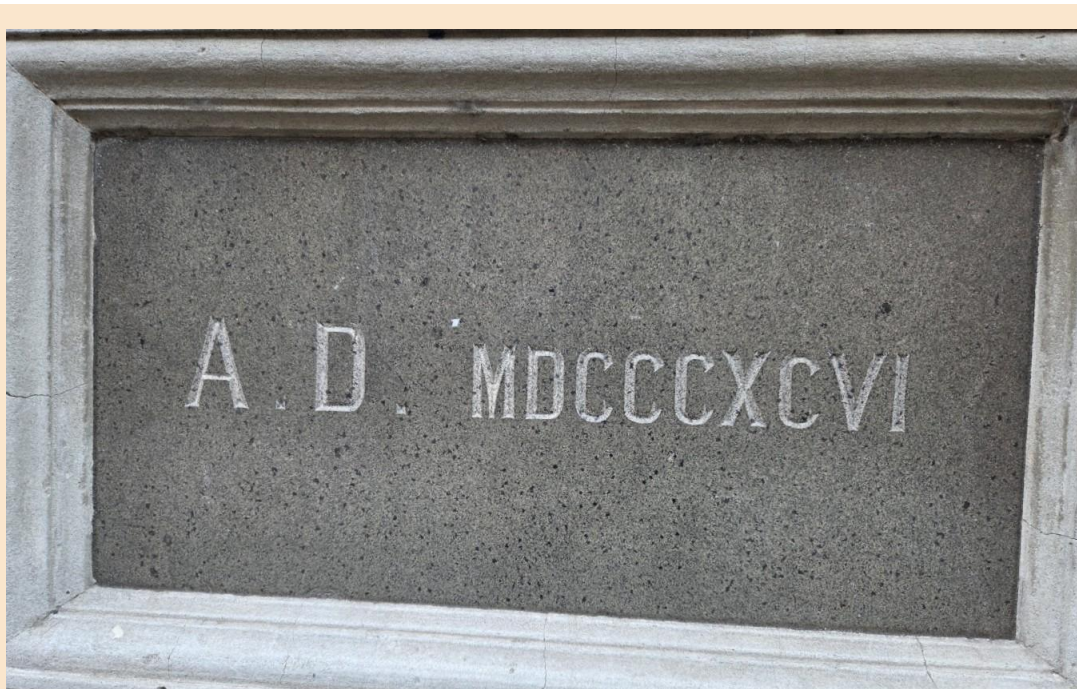
In 1923 the current church
was built to accommodate
the growing congregation.



Interior of the first Saint Alban's church (photo undated)



Interior of the first Saint Alban's church 1918



Foundation Stone of the first Saint Alban's Church, still clear on the front of the building now used as the Parish Office. It only displays the date of the laying of the stone – 1896.

A 1896 newspaper reported that other details were on “*a script*” placed in the foundation stone. There are no available records to say whether this script has ever been removed or whether it remains in situ.



Both the 1896 church (LEFT) and the newer 1923 church before the addition of the western extension and spire. Photo dated 1934



On Sunday 26 April 2026, there was an observance of ANZAC Day at Saint Alban's.

The Ode was read, at 8.00am by James von Stieglitz and at 10.00am by Ken Bock OAM.

At 8.00am a minute's silence was observed, flanked by recordings of The Last Post and The Reveille.

At 10.00am Edward Lawn played The Last Post and The Reveille.

LEFT: The Sanctuary



ABOVE: Sanctuary flowers



RIGHT: Edward Lawn at the Font, itself a War Memorial, and standing below the World War I Honour Board



The congregations of Saint Alban's gathered for morning tea 26 April 2026



The entry Procession on the Day of Pentecost



The Reading of the Gospel on the Day of Pentecost



Thanks to the Flower Guild for the bright floral arrangements representing
*"what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them.
 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit" Acts 2:2-3*



Readings for Sixth Sunday of Easter

Acts 17:22-31
Psalm 66:7-19
1 Peter 3:8-22
John 14:15-21

Given that today is the sixth Sunday of Easter, we might have expected that the gospel reading, and that from Acts, would be narratives of one or more of Jesus' resurrection appearances. Instead, the gospel is a segment of what is generally called the 'farewell discourse', which occupies chapters 13 to 17 of John's gospel, when Jesus was preparing his disciples for the time he would no longer be with them.

So although we are well into the season of Easter, the gospel reading is located in the Upper Room, just before Jesus' betrayal and death. So why choose this reading for this Sunday?

It is always instructive to try to understand what the text would have meant for those who heard it when it was said, and then to try to understand what it means for us in our day. And you will have noticed in the place of an Old Testament reading, we have a passage from The Acts of the Apostles that I referenced, the passage where Paul is preaching in Athens. He says *"God himself gives all people life and breath and everything else. God did this so that people would seek him, and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us. For in him we live and move and have our being."*

Our lectionary today seems to be looking forward in time rather than relating as a narrative, something that had happened in the recent past. In the gospel reading, Jesus tells his friends *"Before long, the world will not see me any more..."* another comment about the future. My reading of this set of passages for today is that it is intended to encourage us to thoughtfully prepare ourselves for Pentecost and the coming of the gift of the Holy Spirit, which we celebrate in two weeks' time. So, what should we set our minds on from these readings that will enable us to welcome the Holy Spirit at Pentecost? There are several names by which the Holy Spirit is known – the Paraclete, the Advocate, the Counsellor - probably not adequate in itself to describe the work of the Spirit. The word Parakletos in Greek meant someone called in to help in time of trouble or need. Have you ever noticed that Jesus said he would give his followers **another** advocate? The first given to them was Jesus himself. And then before his ascension, returning to God, Jesus promises *"another"* advocate to stand with us, his followers, during the interim time between his two comings, his coming into the world as a human being and his return at the end of the age. Despite these words of comfort, Jesus told them the disturbing news that there would be a separation. Easter would bring a joyous reunion, but the resurrection appearances would not continue forever. As the years passed, people would be called on to believe in a Jesus **they** had never seen or heard. Jesus' words and actions would be conveyed to them by a tradition in a world that could seem indifferent or even hostile to a message about a crucified Saviour.

The Paraclete will fill the absence left by Jesus. Philip says: *"Show us the Father."* Jesus told him they could not see the Father but that by knowing the Paraclete, they would know Jesus and in knowing Jesus, they would know the Father. It reminds me of the clever and insightful title of Bishop John V Taylor's book *The Christ-like God*. We are given two great gifts – the Father's gift of the Son and the son's gift of the Spirit. Again, we recall another of Bishop Taylor's books, this one on the Holy Spirit, that he called *The Go-Between God*. Everything about Jesus, the Word of God, makes God known to us. One commentator says it is no wonder the early church sought to clarify their understanding, as the disciples sought to accept their role of continuing God's presence in the world. Jesus, the exalted Lord of the Church, has ascended to heaven and God now continues present with his people through the Holy Spirit.

Christians' understanding of this developed over several centuries. The doctrine of the Trinity, seeking to understand the mystery of the nature of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, was formulated in the middle of the second century and formally defined in the councils of the Church in Nicaea in 325 CE and further in Constantinople in 381 CE.

Three times in this relatively short reading, Jesus' disciples are commanded to love Jesus and to keep his commandments. There is the promise of the divine presence for those who do. In verses 15-17, there is the promise of the Paraclete coming to dwell. In 18-21, we are told Jesus is coming to dwell and in 23-24, we are told the Father is coming with Jesus to make in us a dwelling place. The Paraclete will be the presence of Jesus, while Jesus is absent. So, Jesus saying *"I am coming back to you"*, is not a contradiction to the Paraclete being sent.

The Old Testament theme of God with us, as in Isaiah 7, is realized in the Paraclete who remains with Jesus' disciples forever. It is a profound insight that the real gift of the post resurrection period was a union with Jesus that was not permanently dependent on a bodily presence. John seems to have realized that the post resurrection appearances were not, as it were, an end in themselves, but they initiated and pointed to a deeper type of ongoing presence. Love motivates the keeping of the commandments and love is the substance of Jesus' commandments.

The Easter message is that life, rather than death, has the final word. Faith is a relationship with a living being, a Jesus who is not absent, but present. Otherwise, faith is reduced to nothing but the memory of a Jesus, who died long ago. It is the Spirit who makes the presence of the living Jesus and his Father known. Jesus said: *"On that day, you will realise that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you."* As John describes it, it is a relationship of love: *"He who loves me will be loved by my father, and I too will love him and show myself to him."*

People had tried to destroy Jesus, snuffing out love and hope by putting him in the place of utter rejection, humiliation, shame and death. Instead, we celebrate his resurrection and prepare for the coming of the Holy Spirit. Jesus says to us: *"If you love me, you will keep my command."* For John, the test of love is obedience. *"Whoever bears my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me."* The Spirit makes the presence of the living Jesus and his Father known. God has given the gift of love unstintingly through the death and resurrection of Jesus, and it is this love that gives us life. The Spirit is the Advocate who brings that love and life to us in this Easter season.

And from Ephesians 6: Peace be to us all, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Guest Preacher at Saint Alban's



The Rector Phil Lui pictured with David Luis

David Luis from Anglicare preached at Saint Alban's at both the 8.00am and 10.00am services on 17 May 2026.

David and his family live in the Hills area and love to see churches partner with Anglicare and the valuable services it offers to engage with the needs of our city, so that people know Jesus.

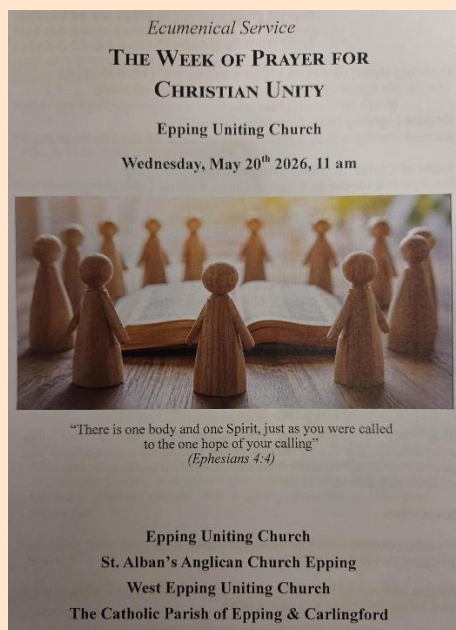
Prior to Anglicare, David served with the Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students (AFES) in Sydney and Geelong, supporting and serving local and international university students, physically and spiritually. Throughout his time in campus ministry, David helped foster partnerships between individuals and local churches with university student group movements.

In his role at Anglicare, David builds partnerships between Anglicare and local churches in the Northern Region. He will also be building up and supporting Op Shops.

Ecumenical Service for The Week of Christian Unity

Wednesday 20 May 2026

On Wednesday 20 May 2026 an Ecumenical Service was held at the Epping Uniting Church for The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Those attending came from the Uniting Church Epping, The Catholic Parish of Epping and Carlingford, The Epping Anglican Parish of Saint Alban's and the West Epping Uniting Church. Representatives of all churches contributed to the Service of readings and prayers. A luncheon followed - consisting of soup and bread rolls, sweet slices, fruit and juice. Each church provided part of the shared meal.



Cover of the Order of Service

The next meeting of the Ecumenical Organising Committee will be held on Friday 7 August 2026.

That meeting will plan the Season of Creation Ecumenical Service at 11.00am on Wednesday 2 September 2026 to be held at Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic Church in Oxford Street, Epping.

There will be a formal Service as usual, followed by a barbecue in the Church's lower community area.

Everyone is invited to attend.

See also the invitation on page 39.



LEFT TO RIGHT: Selu Latu, Student Minister, Epping Uniting Church; The Reverend Dr Sunny Lee, Epping Uniting Church; The Reverend Phil Lui, Saint Alban's Anglican Church Epping; The Reverend 'Oto V Faiva, West Epping Uniting Church; Father Jim McKeon, Catholic Parish of Epping and Carlingford; and Chao Zhou, Family Worker, Epping Uniting Church



All food items collected for Harvest Festival were given to Christian Community Aid in Eastwood

**Did you know
that the number
of people coming
to us at risk of
hunger has
grown?**

**Without your support we
can't help them.**

**By making a food donation to CCA
Community Hub's Pantry, you will
be helping those most in need –
children, families, and seniors.**

Your generosity can transform lives.

YES WE "CAN" PROJECT

Cooking Oil, Rice, Pasta, Long Life Milk, Tea/Coffee,
Breakfast Cereal, Canned Tuna, Pasta Sauce, Soup
Packets, Jams, Biscuits, Jelly Crystals, Tomato/BBQ
Sauce, Shampoo, Female Hygiene Products,
Deodorant, Toothpaste, Toothbrush, Others.

**DONATE
NOW**



CCANSW
COMMUNITY HUB



ABN. 27 755 348 253 | administration@ccas.org.au | ccas.org.au
12 Lakeside Rd Eastwood NSW 2122 | (02) 9858 3222

Thank you to those who brought in items
for our Harvest Festival display.

All non-perishable food items donated by
Saint Alban's parishioners throughout the
year are gratefully received by the Christian
Community Hub in Eastwood.

Items can be placed in the hessian bag at
the back of the Church or left at the Parish
Office.

Please continue to assist those people living
in our local community who are
experiencing food insecurity.

See www.ccas.org.au for more information
or to donate.

Lighting the Way for Generations to Come

150 Years of Mothers Union in the United Kingdom

In August 1925, Saint Alban's Branch of Mothers' Union celebrated their 100th Anniversary (*The Parish Magazine* No 882, November 2025, page 9-12). Glenda Sorley, Mothers' Union Diocesan President in 2025, said: "Generations of women have been gathering, praying, serving and sharing in support of Christian marriage and family life." This year in the UK, Mothers Union is celebrating 150 years of faithful service.

Mothers' Union [MU] is a women-led, international Christian movement dedicated to ending poverty, violence and social injustice in communities in the UK and around the world. Active for 150 years, with over four million members in approximately eighty-four countries, Mothers' Union works with people of all faiths and none, transforming lives, strengthening families and communities, and advocating for meaningful change. Rooted in kindness, faith and compassionate action, MU strives to create a better future where everyone has the opportunity and resources to thrive.

Mothers' Union equips members and their communities to recognise and utilise the skills, resources and talents around them. Through this process, people take ownership of their future, lifting them from dependency. MU also works extensively through lobbying and engagement with key decision-makers, especially governments, to address underlying issues and bring about systemic change.

This Work of Love

by Colin Bright
Newcastle NSW



Since eighteen hundred and seventy-six,
this work of love has grown;
from England's fields to distant shores,
its mercy has been shown.

In Australia's towns and country roads,
by city, coast and plain,
they carried hope to mothers' hearts
through loneliness and pain.

They knitted rugs and tiny clothes,
soft blankets, warm and small;
they brought their gifts to Baby wards,
and answered mercy's call.

They visited the young and tired,
the frightened and unsure;
they gave a meal, a gentle word,
and helped them to endure.

They stood beside the mother left
to face the world alone;
they brought her comfort, prayer and care,
and made her need their own.

They helped where money would not stretch,
where cupboards stood near bare;
they came with quiet, faithful hands,
and showed that love was there.

No trumpet sounded for their work,
no crowd stood by to cheer;
yet lives were changed by simple acts,
years by faithful years.

Christ was seen in cups of tea,
in wool, in food, in prayer;
in every visit, every gift,
in every burden shared.

So let us honour those who served,
and those who serve today;
the women who have held the line
when hope seemed far away.

For when we strengthen mothers' hands,
we strengthen home and land;
we mend the fabric of the world
with heart and voice and hand.

Lord, bless this Union's faithful work,
its past, its present call;
may love still bind, may prayer still guide,
and mercy cover all.

Acknowledgements:

1. Glenda Sorley's words and full speech in *The Parish Magazine* Number 882, Nov 2025 to Jan 2026 pages 9-12.
2. Other information is from the Mothers' Union UK website <https://www.mothersunion.org/about/>
Accessed 12 July at 1500 hours

Mothers Day Stall for Anglican Board of Mission Project

3 May 2026



A delicious array of jams and chutneys



Beautiful greeting cards and notebooks

On Sunday 3 May 2026, there was a Mothers Day stall in the Main Hall. It was held to support the Anglican Church in Melanesia. This is an Anglican Board of Mission Project to help address climate challenges, food security, water tank installation, disaster preparedness and positive parenting. Parishioner Jane Bryant, President of the ABM Auxiliary (Sydney), was the driving force behind the stall, and many parishioners made items to sell. Barbara Meintjes, who makes beautiful bead jewellery, offered the proceeds from the sale of all her creations to support the project. Jane Bryant thanked all the congregations of Saint Alban's for supporting the stall by donating and purchasing items. An amazing total of \$1367.15 was raised.



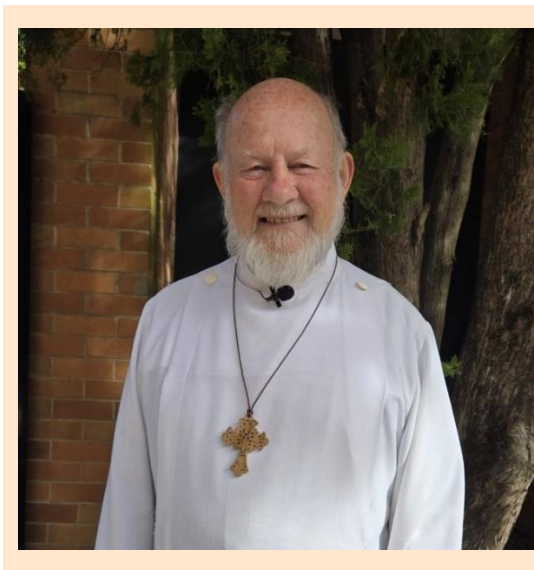
LEFT: Barbara Meintjes with her table of delicate beaded jewellery

RIGHT: Jan Boyley (left) and Jane Bryant were very efficient salespeople



Sermons: Bane or Blessing

The Reverend Paul Weaver, Honorary Priest



Father Paul writes:

I recently found this article which I wrote in 2006. It appeared in an edition of The Parish Magazine that year. The subject continues to be worth thinking about, and, having made a few minor changes, I thought that twenty years later parishioners might find it of interest.

It has been pointed out that sermons can be hard work, not only for the preacher but also for the listener. I am told that generations ago people used to go home after the morning service to have roast dinner and roast parson! The image of sermons for many people is of boredom, irrelevance and often unintelligibility. I trust that this is not the case for us!

Why do we continue to have sermons in church? Are they just an interruption to the liturgy? Are they simply a trial to be endured as part of the church experience?

If I thought that this was the case I, and many other preachers, would have given up preaching long ago. But in fact, I believe that the sermon is an integral part of any significant service. In this article I want to suggest why sermons matter, to indicate some things which are important to me as I prepare a sermon, and to share some thoughts on how we can get the most from the sermons we hear.

The Significance of the Sermon

We come together for worship as Christians because our relationship with God through Jesus is not merely as separate individuals, but as members of Christ's family. We come to express our relationship with God as we praise him and as we pray, and as we hear and respond to his word in the scriptures. We come to express our relationship with God and with each other as we share in Holy Communion, giving thanks for the blessings we have through Jesus, as members of one body in Christ, sharing in Christ's peace, and joining together in praise and prayer.

The sermon links the horizontal and vertical elements of our worship in a unique way. Of course, we hear the scriptures read and also express our belief in the triune God of whom they speak, in the words of the Creed. But in the sermon, the preacher, as a fellow member of Christ's family, shares his or her understanding of those same scriptures with the other members of the congregation, praying that through those words, God's spirit will speak to those who are present. The preacher speaks, praying that God himself will speak: a unique human and divine partnership.

Preparing a Sermon: One Person's Approach

I see preaching as a great privilege and a great responsibility, and my observation is that others whom I hear in the Parish believe it is too. We want – and try – to be good preachers! But what makes a sermon 'good'?

In my early days of preaching, I heard a description of a good sermon which has always stayed in my mind. It was called the 'Trim Test', after an advertisement for shaving materials which were popular at the time. The trim test suggested four qualities about a good sermon. Is it true? Is it relevant? Is it interesting? Is it meaningful? After over fifty years of preaching, I still think they are useful tests.

I seek to speak the truth by basing my sermons on scripture, rather than my own ideas. The lectionary itself is a great help because over time it takes us through the different parts of the Bible, so that we preachers don't just stick to our favourite parts or keep coming back to our hobbyhorses.

My normal pattern of preparation involves reading and reflecting on the set passages early in the week, as well as reading commentaries and other resources that will help me to understand the passages as clearly as possible, and to think about their significance for us today. Whether I preach on just one passage or aim to bring out themes and ideas that link the set readings, part of my aim is to deepen and clarify our understanding of scripture. I see my role as upholding and explaining the truth as we worship the one who is the source of all truth.

I seek to be relevant by considering how the scriptures link up with us as we live our lives in today's world. I believe that the Bible's message is always relevant. However, it comes from a very different context, and part of my role is to indicate how we can helpfully understand and respond to its message in our own context. The Bible's message often needs to be 'translated' into our own situation. We will need to grasp the principles, even when the details may seem strange or distant from our own experience. Part of my responsibility is to seek to bridge that gap, often by opening up the message of the writers and relating them to our own circumstances – our own faith and life experience, our Christian living, our place in the Church, our interaction with the world around us.

One of the most challenging parts of the preacher's task is to be interesting! A particular story may be seen as amusing or corny, helpful or irritating, insightful or trite to different people. Preachers bring their own personality and experience to the sermon, and so do the listeners! What is interesting to one person will not necessarily interest someone else. That is part of the variety which is part of our shared humanity. People also react in different ways to Beethoven and the Beatles, to Shakespeare and Stephen King! Our sense of humour and the issues that matter to us will vary from person to person. Having a number of different preachers in our Parish may enable different members of the congregation to be reached in particular ways.

I have heard many preachers with excellent reputations and realised that only a very few have the natural ability to grab and hold all their listeners throughout a sermon. When I was at the Cathedral, I discovered that some people thought I spoke in a simplistic way or even talked down to people, while others appreciated the fact that they could understand me, and I didn't go over their head. We preachers take what we have to offer, pray for God's help and seek to communicate in as helpful a way as we can.

How can I be meaningful? I try to be clear and understandable, without being too simplistic for most people! I try to ensure that there is some sort of logical flow to my sermons, and sometimes I will structure my sermons around a number of specific points for people to take in. In the pulpit I try to engage directly with the people with whom I am seeking to communicate for a sermon is not a lecture! Nor is it a Bible study, where people go step by step through the verses. The congregation needs me to have done that in my preparation, and to have found an approach that will be helpful for my listeners. I am sharing with members of my family in Christ: I am in a relationship with my listeners, as we are together in relationship with Christ. I try to use the scriptures to help people understand more about our faith, or to think about our faith or our lives or about particular issues in a different way. I may seek to encourage people or challenge them, perhaps to get people thinking and asking questions.

How long should a sermon be? How long is a piece of sting? I grew up on twenty-minute sermons. Some churches have thirty- or forty-five-minute sermons! Others have ten minutes or less. In this parish I decided that around 15 minutes was best. It has a lot to do with people's expectations. Many of us may happily listen to a talk of 30 or 45 minutes in another situation but transplant the talk to a church (with admittedly hard pews) and call it a sermon, and it can seem very long!

Listening to Sermons

Few sermons in my experience have nothing worthwhile to say. If we listen expectantly, and pray for both the preacher and ourselves, we may well be in a better place to hear something that will deepen our understanding, challenge our thinking, stir us to action, or encourage our faith. And if you give us preachers feedback that will help us know how we are doing, what you found helpful and what you have taken in, this will help and challenge us too. (Be honest – but not ungracious in your criticisms!) Preaching and listening is a partnership: we all have a part to play in making sermons effective.

A Concert in Tribute to Bruce Wilson

26 April 2026

On Sunday 26 April 2026, a concert was held in Saint Alban's Hall as a tribute to the late Bruce Wilson, a parishioner of Saint Alban's for many decades. Bruce's four children and two of his grandchildren joined The Reverend Paul Weaver to entertain a large audience which included Bruce's wife Ida. Over eighteen years until Bruce became unwell, he and Paul Weaver had combined their talents to perform regular piano concerts to raise money for various charities.



The performers in the concert

LEFT TO RIGHT:

Helen Rose Wilson – flute and piano

Paul Weaver – piano

Rhonda Wilson – bassoon

Allan Wilson – bass guitar

Alistair Coomber – trombone and piano

Carol Coomber – clarinet and piano

Victoria Norris – clarinet

The program was varied and included musical delights by Beethoven; Mozart; Bach; Schubert; Dvorak and Strauss as well as other composers perhaps lesser known but all thoroughly enjoyable. Each piece featured a different combination of performers.



Bruce's three daughters and granddaughter joined in an arrangement of the Quartet in E flat major by Ignaz Pleyel

All performers joined in a Strauss March to conclude the concert. Ida Wilson looked on proudly.

Donations for the wide-ranging ministries of Anglicare were accepted on the day, and a total of \$1001 dollars was raised.



A Parishioner's Review of the Concert

Meredith Lawn



On the afternoon of Sunday 26 April, parishioners and friends were treated to a joyous concert in tribute to Bruce Wilson featuring music for piano, flute, clarinet, bassoon, trombone and bass guitar, presented by Paul Weaver and members of Bruce's family, including two who live overseas.

The standard of musicianship from all performers was outstanding and the program was delightful. Paul Weaver began the concert with a sensitive performance of the much-loved *Moonlight Sonata* by Beethoven. This was followed by Mozart's *Divertimento No.4 in B flat Major* performed by Bruce's daughters Helen Rose Wilson on flute and Rhonda Wilson on bassoon and Bruce's granddaughter Victoria Norris on clarinet. It worked very successfully with this combination of instruments. Paul returned to the piano for Busoni's arrangement of J. S. Bach's Chorale Prelude *Sleepers Awake* with Bruce's grandson Alistair Coomber playing the chorale melody on trombone. Paul and Helen Rose then performed the substantial *Fantasie in F minor* by Franz Schubert, recalling the many concerts of piano duets presented by Paul and Bruce over the years.

After interval, we enjoyed a *Quartet* by Ignaz Pleyel for flute (Helen Rose), two clarinets (Carol Coomber and Victoria) and bassoon (Rhonda). In a change of style, we heard from Bruce's son Allan Wilson on bass guitar accompanied by Alistair on piano, playing *How Deep the Father's Love* by Stuart Townend. It was explained that while the lyrics were about God's love for us as our Heavenly Father, they also reminded Allan and Alistair of Bruce's love as their father and grandfather.

Paul then offered Samuel Coleridge-Taylor's piano version of the spiritual *Deep River* as a nod to Bruce's involvement with the choir, who has sung the spiritual several times. *Russian Rag* by Elena Kats-Chernin followed in a charming arrangement for clarinet, bassoon and piano performed by Bruce's three daughters. Then Helen Rose and Carol relived their high-school eisteddfod days by playing the piano duet *Slavonic Dance Op. 46 No. 8* by Antonin Dvorak.

The concert ended with the whole ensemble performing Johann Strauss Sr's *Radetzky March*, which was often played by Paul and Bruce as an encore to their concerts. It was an energetic and fitting way to close the concert, with the audience joining in with enthusiastic rhythmic clapping.

It was special to see Ida Wilson enjoying the concert from the front row. Interestingly, the piano used in the concert had previously belonged to Ida's mother and was donated to the Church by the Wilsons in the 1980s. I think we all left the concert with a feeling of gratitude for Bruce's significant contribution to the musical life of our Parish and with the reassurance of knowing that his musical legacy lives on in his children and grandchildren.



Ida Wilson (seated) surrounded by her musical family

Sounds of Young Hearts Spring Concert

Margaret Cummins, Parishioner



LEFT TO RIGHT: Isabel Li,
Amberley Ma and Eukai Miao

The battle through the end of week peak hour traffic on 8 May 2026 to get to The King's School Recital Hall by 6 pm was all but forgotten once we were seated comfortably in our reserved front row seats for the *Sounds of Young Hearts* Concert.

Friends Geoff and Sue Dornan, Elizabeth Woutersz and I were so effusively welcomed when we arrived, and this continued when Eukai Miao a co- founder of *Sounds of Young Hearts* gave his introductory words.

The program started with an Irish Gigue Medley, absolutely delightful. Then a rising star young pianist from The Conservatorium, Emma Rose Koeswandy, left us all speechless with her polished performance. A young man Ray Yu gave a tuba solo, quite haunting to hear the instrument with no other accompaniment. Esther Yang played a cello bracket, again very interesting to listen to that instrument as a solo performance.

The final performance prior to an interval break was from *The King's Singers*, a barber shop group, and it was sheer delight to listen to the assembled male voices singing in harmony.

During the interval break the simple but nourishing food provided was enthusiastically consumed by lots of hungry young performers. They are really quite young, and all have very bright futures ahead of them no doubt.

We then listened to two string quartets with violins, viola and cello. A piano quartet with flute, viola, and cello finished the program. At the conclusion we were thanked profusely by both Eukai and Isabel Li for attending and supporting *Sounds of Young Hearts*. Great credit is due to these young people in their organizational skills and their very fluent way of speaking to their audience.

The money raised is to support The Kings Music Friends Group which supports music events at The King's School.

Although Isabel did not actually perform in this concert, she performed in her own concert, *MARIMBA around the WORLD*, at Saint Alban's Church on Sunday 7 June at 12.30 pm. It proved to be just as enjoyable as this concert, as we experienced an afternoon of "*rhythm, resonance and reimagination*".

Sounds of Young Hearts is a group founded by three enthusiastic secondary school students who want to contribute to their community and beyond by enabling talented young musician to entertain with their music. The group aims to deliver enjoyable and high standard performances while providing opportunities for these young people to showcase their work and have experience in public performance. They held a previous concert in 2025 at which donations raised were given to Saint Alban's. The three young musicians are: Isabel Li – one of the Saint Alban's Organ Scholars, Eukai Miao and Jervis Lee.

Editor's Note: See page 37 for details of Isabel's concert at Saint Alban's on 7 June 2026.



The organisers and performers who contributed to the success and enjoyment of *Sounds of Young Hearts* Spring concert.

Julliard Summer School in New York

Isabel Li, Saint Alban's Organ Scholar



Isabel leaving for New York

The Juilliard School is a private conservatory for performing arts in New York City. The Summer Music in Percussion program is from 5 July to 25 July and is a three-week program where I will have the opportunity to learn from, and work with, world-class musicians. It prepares advanced high school percussionists (typically ages 14-18) for college auditions and careers in music through master classes, orchestral training, and world music exploration.

To apply for this program, I submitted four audition videos. For percussion, these four videos were one snare drum piece, one two-mallet piece on the marimba, one four-mallet piece on the marimba and one timpani piece. Along with these recordings, I also submitted an artistic resume which presented my background and accomplishments, along with an introduction video which described a musical moment of which I am extremely proud.

As a part of the program, I will be participating in the summer orchestra, where every week over the span of the three weeks, we will learn new repertoire with a new conductor and perform at a concert on the Saturday afternoon of that week at the Juilliard School. We will also have two concerts at the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts in New York. In addition to the orchestra, I will also participate in three masterclasses; three private music lessons with current Juilliard College Faculty and guest artists; clinic sessions with special guest artists and chamber ensembles with the other percussionists. Instruction and master classes are led by prominent musicians from groups like the New York Philharmonic and Metropolitan Opera Orchestra.

From this vast range of experiences, I hope to gain not only a better understanding of solo repertoire on percussion but also learn new and different techniques and methods of playing percussion instruments. I am also very grateful for the opportunity to learn and work with world-class percussionists through the masterclasses, lessons, clinic sessions and ensemble rehearsals, and so through this experience I look forward to being able to collaborate and work with my teachers and peers.

Thank you to John Hanna from the Facebook page of Sydney Organs for permission to reproduce the photo below. Isabel Li is pictured with her mother Jess at Juilliard School where Isabel played vibraphone in a concert of the Summer Music Symphony Orchestra during her Summer School at Juilliard.



Welcome to the new Archivist at Saint Alban's!



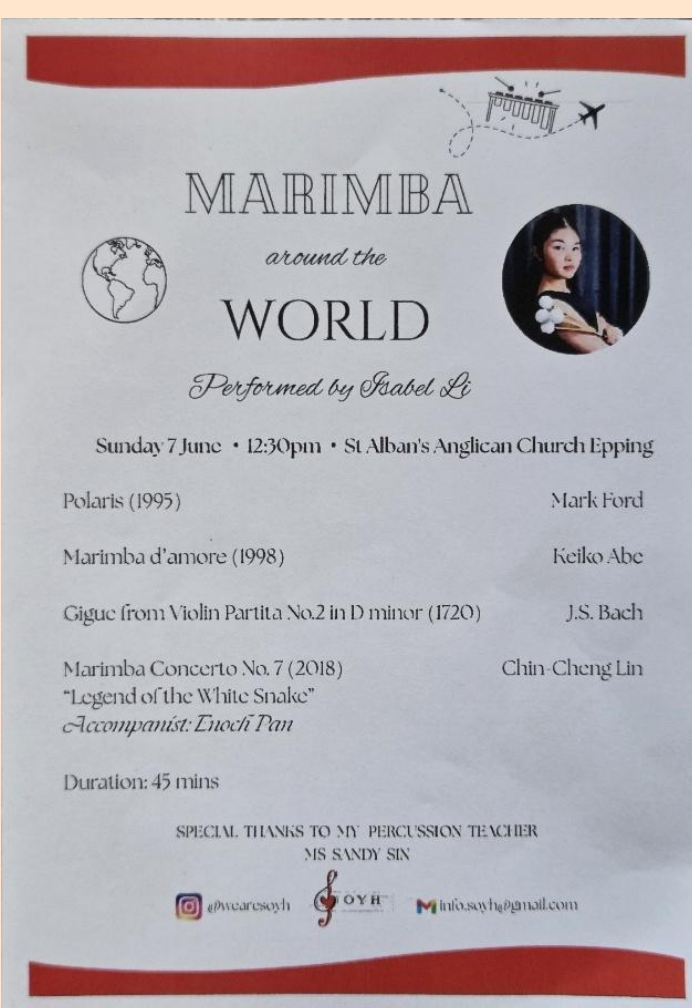
Welcome to **Edward Lawn** (pictured left) is taking over the position of Archivist from **Brian Haywood**. We give our sincere thanks to Brian for managing this responsibility for more than seven years. We appreciate all the work he has done for the safekeeping of church records.

Edward comes to us with enthusiasm for what the position entails. He recently completed his university courses and is very well qualified with a Bachelor of Design from University of NSW and a Master of Information Studies (Records and Management) from Charles Sturt University. He will be ably assisted by **Meredith Lawn**, who works at the State Library of NSW as Specialist Librarian, Original Materials – Manuscripts. Meredith is also highly qualified with a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) University of Sydney and a Graduate Diploma in Information Management – Archives University of NSW.

We sincerely thank both Edward and Meredith for beginning their Archives ministry for the benefit of current and future parishioners.

Marimba Around the World

Recital at Saint Alban's by Isabel Li



The poster for the 'Marimba Around the World' recital features a white background with a red wavy border at the top and bottom. At the top center, there is a small illustration of a marimba with an airplane flying above it. Below this, the title 'MARIMBA' is written in a large, serif font, followed by 'around the' in a smaller, italicized font, and 'WORLD' in a large, serif font. To the left of the title is a small globe icon, and to the right is a circular portrait of Isabel Li. Below the title, it says 'Performed by Isabel Li'. The date and time are listed as 'Sunday 7 June • 12:30pm • St Alban's Anglican Church Epping'. The program list includes: 'Polaris (1995)' by Mark Ford, 'Marimba d'amore (1998)' by Keiko Abe, 'Gigue from Violin Partita No.2 in D minor (1720)' by J.S. Bach, and 'Marimba Concerto No. 7 (2018) "Legend of the White Snake"' by Chin-Cheng Lin, with 'Accompanist: Enoch Pan'. The duration is listed as '45 mins'. At the bottom, there is a section for 'SPECIAL THANKS TO MY PERCUSSION TEACHER MS SANDY SIN' with social media handles for @pwcarecsoyh, OYH, and info:soyh@gmail.com.

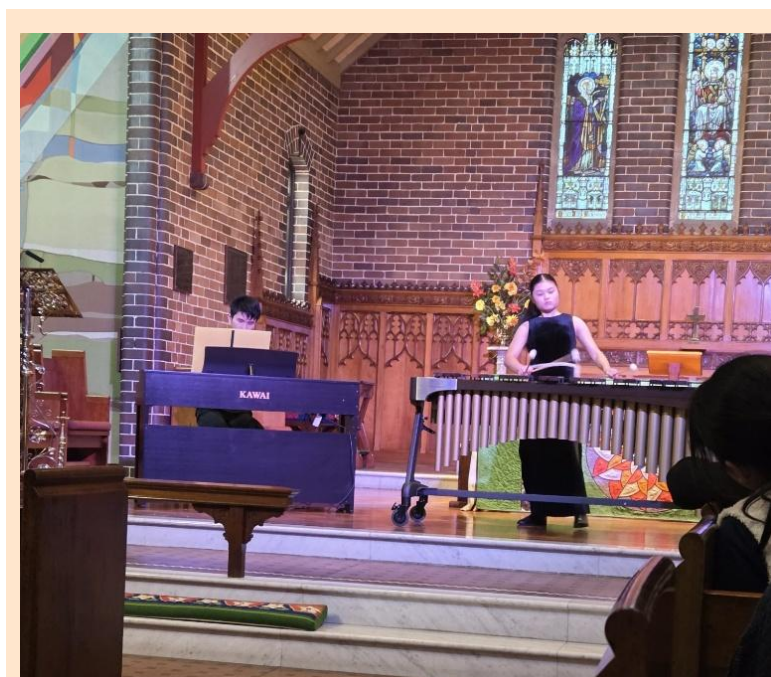
Program for the Recital

On Sunday 7 June 2026, Isabel Li, one of the Saint Alban's Organ Scholars, introduced a large audience to the marimba.

The marimba is a large percussion instrument with wooden bars. You strike the bars with soft mallets to make sound. It looks like a giant, wooden piano. It produces a warm, rich tone.

The marimba is one of the instruments which Isabel plays as part of a percussion ensemble.

The music produced was melodious, and watching the skill of the player was mesmerising. The concert was enjoyed by all in attendance.



Isabel Li played this piece accompanied by Enoch Pan on the Keyboard



**Ian and Theano with their children
Trinity (LEFT) and Ollie**

Parishioner Jan Boyley extended a warm welcome to all present at the Mission Morning Tea held on Saturday 18 July, and a special welcome to our guest speakers, Ian and Theano Ratcliff, who serve with Banda Health, a Christian NGO supporting primary health clinics in some of Kenya's poorest slums. It was lovely to have them with us on this occasion, and all present were eager to hear what they had to tell us about their work, undertaken under the auspices of SIM Australia [Serving in Mission] <https://sim.org.au/who-we-are/>.

Theano is a paediatric nurse, lecturer and nurse educator who spends her time empowering and supporting local Kenyan healthcare workers. Through her work with low-resource clinics, she is helping them meet the complex needs of vulnerable slum communities. She supports clinicians and lectures in community health and research.

Ian, an environmental and social justice lawyer, spends his time building strategic gospel-shaped partnerships with the health clinics that support the needs of vulnerable communities in Kenya. He is also enthusiastic about working as SIM's Ministry Point Person (MPP) for Creation Stewardship & Care. This role provides environmental training and resources to SIM workers engaged in environmental projects around the world.

Ian and Theano explained to the audience that 60% of the urban population of Nairobi live in a slum. They have particular contact with those living in Mathare slum which is a collection of slums with a population of approximately 500,000 people. For those living there it is all they have ever known. There is no running water, and electricity, if there is any, is carried by a mass of illegal wiring. There are no roads, no drains, no sanitation. Unemployment and drug use are high. Malaria is rife. Banda Health Clinics aim to improve health outcomes in such areas. There is also gang activity in Mathare, and the place is quite dangerous as everyone is simply trying to survive.

Theano introduced us to a young man called Balala who in his younger days had been a member of one of these gangs. There had been serious flooding in Mathare some time ago and Balala felt he had to save as many people as he could. He was unable to swim so asked a friend to hold on to a rope tied around his waist. He rescued many from drowning that day and believed he had been called to do this. He is now a strong Christian and not only has he become almost a part of the Ratcliff family, Ian has taught him to swim!



**Theano and Ian shared slides and information
about their work
"Under African Skies".**



**Mathare slum - six kms northeast of
Nairobi's city centre**

Ian told us that Balala now teaches the Korean martial art of Taekwondo to boys in the slum to help keep them out of the trouble he fell into at a young age.

Ian's works to bring 'Gospel shaped hope' to these communities, to bring the light into the darkness. This is done through partnerships both informal and formal. Informally, connections are made to people and communities, and formal connections are made through organisations like Banda Health. Also, workshops are held to train faith leaders in the slums in order to help deal with the terrible scourge of human trafficking.

One informal partnership is that with Destiny School, <https://destinyeducationcentre.org/> a school for the children of the Mathare slum. Parents are unable to afford uniforms or textbooks or basic supplies, but the philosophy of the school is that the place you come from should not stand in the way of unlocking opportunities in life. Children learn in safety and with support.

Quite apart from the academic side of the school, a connection has been made between the school and Eden Thriving's Environmental Programs which encourage communities to find creative solutions in the face of diminishing resources. Their outdoor programs equip young people with the practical actions that restore, instead of destroy, their environment. With compassion and creativity, Eden Thriving is addressing the environmental roots of poverty and biodiversity loss, reconnecting people to the life-giving relationship between land and lives. <https://edenthiving.org/about-edenthiving/>.

Ian concluded the presentation with a request for our prayers of support and suggested that all of us should always be aware of God's call, whenever it might come and for whatever purpose.

Both Ian and Theano are passionate about justice, mercy and seeing vulnerable communities transformed through the compassion of Jesus. Going as missionaries to a foreign country is a calling from God and people like Ian and Theano answer this call, giving up their comfortable lives here in Australia, leaving behind loved ones and the familiar to go to the unfamiliar; for instance, they need to learn a new language and come to understand a new culture.

They work in God's name and have done so for the past two years under the auspices of SIM Australia [Serving in Mission]. To do this they have to raise 100% of their support, which is no small task. They intend to return to Kenya and have committed themselves for another two years. We pray that Saint Alban's parishioners will continue to invest in their financial security.

Editor's Note: Ian and Theano do not receive a salary from their mission organisation. They have to fundraise all of their living costs in order to be in Kenya - this includes Kenyan Government visa costs; school fees for the children, housing and ministry costs. At the Mission Morning \$1,500.00 was raised to assist Ian and Theano reach their target to allow them to fund themselves over the next two years. If you would like to support them to continue their work you can contact them via <https://sim.org.au/ratcliff/>. Their work has been approved with SIMaid, SIM Australia's aid and development arm, and donations for their support are now tax deductible in Australia. You can contact Ian at ian.ratcliff@sim.org and Theano at theano.ratcliff@sim.org.

Two dates for your diary



Immersion in Living Water
EZEKIEL 47:9, 12

Living Water
Season of Creation 2026

To mark the Ecumenical Season of Creation
we invite you to attend a Service and Lunch
Wednesday 2 September 2026 at 11.00am
Our Lady Help of Christians
33 Oxford Street, Epping
All welcome — please invite your friends

Commemorative Service for the Martyrs of Papua New Guinea 2026

The Anglican Board of Mission Sydney Committee invites you to a Holy Eucharist to mark the 84th Anniversary of the Martyrs of Papua New Guinea.

to be held at **Saint Alban's on Saturday 5 September at 11am**
(followed by refreshments).

Presider: The Reverend Phil Lui
Preacher: The Reverend Dr Erica Mathieson
Honorary Assistant at Saint James King Street, Sydney.



Everyday English End of Term Celebration

Sarah Weaver, Class Teacher

Our Wednesday morning English classes have had another busy term with about fifty students in four classes each week. We have learnt about everyday activities and jobs, times (dates, days of the week, months, etc), and special events.

For the final class this term, on 1 July, the students and teachers described weddings as celebrated in all the countries from which our students come, and in Australia. Several people dressed in national clothes and brought special items and photos to help explain some of the customs. It was truly a celebration of different cultures.



Juli from the Indonesian congregation wore traditional dress and explained some of the local wedding customs.



Lillian (RIGHT) brought a traditional Chinese red dress similar to one of the three different outfits a bride would wear for different parts of the wedding celebrations.



ABOVE: We heard about special wedding customs from our Iranian students.

LEFT: Arefah dressed in a magnificent red velvet and gold coat, gold scarf and hat worn in Iran for ceremonial occasions.

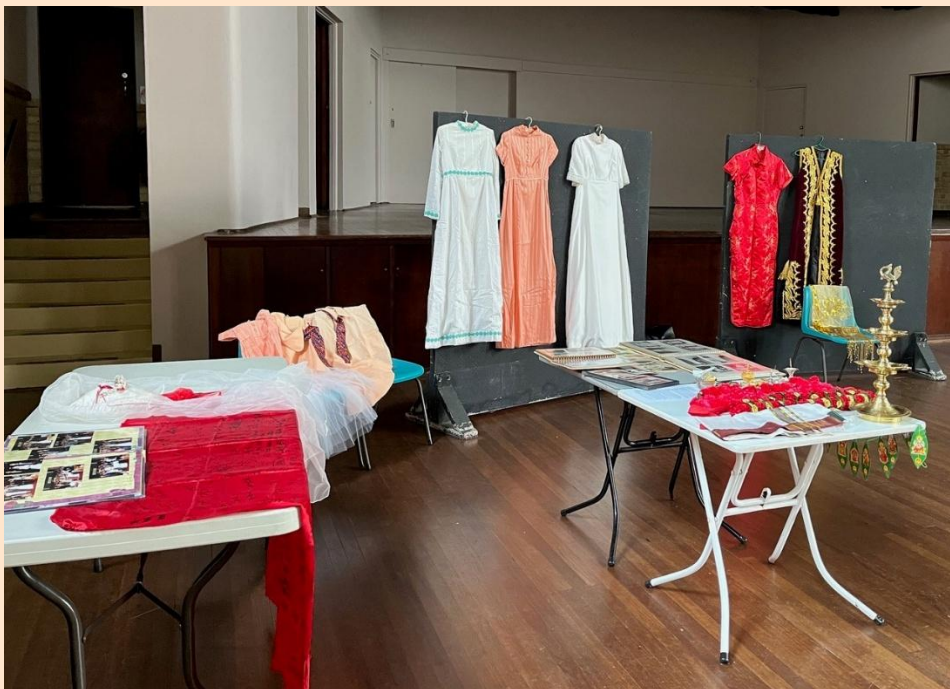


Rema and her husband Ravi dressed in beautiful traditional South Indian outfits for a special occasion. They demonstrated and explained some of the special objects and customs that take place in a South Indian wedding.



Our Japanese students, Mashasi and Masafumi, with help from Chrisella, talked about traditional Shinto weddings. They explained that many younger people chose much simpler (and cheaper) weddings nowadays – but still include some traditional customs.

Christine and Sarah, two of the teachers, then talked about traditional Australian church weddings – especially in the early 1970s. They both brought their wedding dresses and ‘going away’ outfits and plenty of photos!



The three dresses hanging in the centre were from Sarah and Christine. The tables had displays of photograph albums and objects of significance for weddings in the countries represented in the presentations.

Morning tea began with a grace said by the Rector.

Some parishioners joined us for a wonderful morning tea of assorted national foods that the students had made and brought to share.

There were more opportunities to chat about weddings and other aspects of life in different countries – and a chance to practise English conversations.

Thank you, teachers, helpers, students and parishioners!

A Scottish Sabbath in the Bush

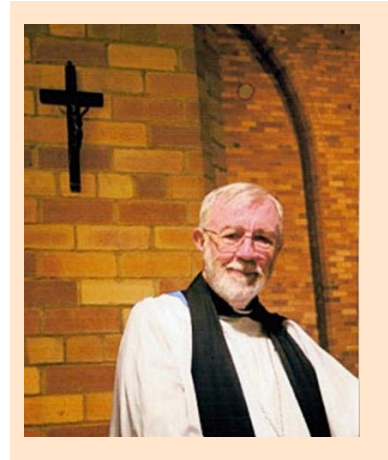
Father Robert Willson

Editor's Note: Father Robert Willson was Chaplain and a teacher of Divinity and History at the Canberra Girls Grammar School for seventeen years.

When he retired, he pursued his interest in history and has been a regular contributor to *The Parish Magazine*.

Father Robert recently told me that this will be his last contribution.

Sincere thanks to Father Robert for his interesting and thought-provoking articles over many years. We send him our good wishes.



He writes:

Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy. (Exodus 20: 8)

How do we spend our Sundays? Our forefathers called it the Sabbath. Our parents called it Sunday. We just call it the weekend, and we joke that if New Zealand is 'the land of the long white cloud', Australia is the land of the long weekend.

In Scotland the Christian Sabbath was a notably different day to the rest of the week and people took the commandment very seriously. These customs came to Australia with the Scottish and North of Ireland pioneers.

Recently I was reading an illustrated Sydney paper, *The Empire*, for 30 April 1872, on microfilm in the National Library. It is like a window opening into the past. There I found a marvellous description of a bush Sabbath 150 years ago. A travelling reporter reached the homestead of a vast Station near Obley, in the Dubbo district. There he met an Ayrshire settler named Hugh Strahorn, owner of the cattle and sheep station called 'Wandanondong', sometimes spelt 'Wandoo Wandong'.

Our traveller described the homestead, substantial and comfortable, and with a large and valuable library. The Scots have always been great students and readers. Outside there were the usual sheds and an excellent orchard. It was Saturday night when the reporter arrived and he was received with warm hospitality for the evening meal. After dinner the men devoted themselves to serious reading while the young ladies in the family played the piano. That piano and the library would have come by bullock wagon across the mountains and the plains, long before the days of the railway.

Before retiring that night the visitor said that the next day he planned to be off early on the next stage of his journey. Mr Strahorn was shocked and said in his rich Ayrshire accent: "Nae, mon. Ye wadna travel on the Sabbath. Ye'll ha' nae luck". He would not hear of any travel on Sunday, so the visitor remained for the day. He wrote later that he would never forget that Sabbath in the bush as long as he lived.

Sunday in the Bush

Sunday morning, and by 7.00am all the hands were up and dressed as if about to attend a place of worship, though there was no Kirk for many miles. The reporter recalled that there was what he called "*a halo of peace and contentment which hung over the silent homestead all day*". But this was Australia and far away to the south, in the foothills of the Harvey Ranges, a large bushfire was raging and threatening the valuable fences. But Mr Strahorn and his sons watched it without making any move. Eventually a boundary rider was sent off to check on it. He returned in a couple of hours to say that it was at least six miles from the boundary fence and posed no danger.

A short time after dinner that Sunday night the Strahorn family, together with a lady visitor and the reporter, assembled around the meal table. A big family Bible, a book of sermons and a Prayer Book were produced. Two or three chapters of the Scriptures were read by one of the younger members of the family, and then a sermon, followed by the prayers. The whole service lasted three quarters of an hour.

Family devotions like that were a great tradition and were widely followed in colonial Australia. If one lived in the bush far from any Church one read a sermon. William Hamilton, pioneer Presbyterian Minister in Goulburn, published a book of sermons in 1846 for the use of lonely settlers. Bishop Broughton records that he led family devotions on his long Visitation journeys through the Australian bush.

Robbie Burns

All this reminded me of the famous poem by Robbie Burns, *The Cotter's Saturday Night* which I tried to learn by heart years ago. (A cotter is a peasant farmer in the Highlands). The year 2009 marked the 250th anniversary of the birth of Robbie Burns in 1759. Just down the road from where I live in Canberra is the Canberra Burns Memorial and one of the panels on the base has the theme of this immortal poem, showing the family at their devotions with the open Bible before them. Take time to read the poem over. You will find it on the Internet.

*The priest-like father reads the sacred page,
How Abraham was the friend of God on high...*

My McClymont ancestors came from the village of Tarbolton in Ayrshire and would have known Burns. He farmed near the village. My ancestor George McClymont, born about 1801, used to lead family devotions and sing a metrical psalm, so beloved by the Scots. Two friends were passing the open window one summer evening and heard him, and one remarked: "*Weel, if his Maker's pleased with that, He's easily pleased!*".

The travelling reporter continued his journey on the Monday, deeply moved by his Sabbath in the bush with the Strahorn family.

Dr Jessie Aspinall

There is an interesting link to the story about Wandanondong. Five years later that living room on Wandanondong Station was the scene for a wedding. Helen Strahorn was married to the Reverend Arthur Ashworth Aspinall on November 22, 1877. The celebrant was Reverend Dr John Dunmore Lang. Aspinall was then the Presbyterian Minister of Forbes. The couple had a large family of boys and one girl. One boy was killed in the Great War, but all the rest became medical doctors, including the daughter, Dr Jessie Aspinall, who succeeded brilliantly in her medical studies.

After her graduation with honours, she was at first refused permission to practice by an all-male medical board and the row over her exclusion tore the Australian medical profession apart (Read the full story in Volume 7 of the Australian Dictionary of Biography or at <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/aspinall-jessie-strahorn-5077>). Eventually, aided by her father, she overcame all opposition and had a long and distinguished medical career.

Her father A A Aspinall, is honoured as the founder and first Principal of The Scots College, Bellevue Hill (see Australian Dictionary of Biography <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/aspinall-arthur-ashworth-5076>). I remember his portrait hanging in the Assembly Hall in my school days. Later I learned the story of his struggle to win recognition for equality for women in the medical profession in Australia.

Aspinall believed what Saint Paul wrote to the Galatian Christians in chapter 3 verse 28: "*There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female: for you are all one in Christ Jesus*".

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 or email info@safeministry.org.au
or to report abuse 1800 774 945 or email abusereport@safeministry.org.au

Parish Directory

Rector	The Reverend Philip Lui BAppSc, BD
Honorary Priest	The Reverend Paul Weaver BA,BD,ThL, AMusA
Assistant Minister (part-time)	Bill Walton BEng (Hons), BD (Hons), PhD Student University of Sydney
Student Ministers	Doris Awad BA, BEd, BTh Student at Moore Theological College Gloria Walton BMed/MD (Hons), BTh/MTh Student Moore Theological College Aimee Wong BMus, MA, BTh Student Moore Theological College David Wong BSc, ACA, Adv Dip Student Moore Theological College Pastor Kian Holik BSc, MTS
Indonesian Congregation	
Chinese Congregation	The Reverend Simon Pei BE Arch; M Arch; BTh
Lay Assistant	Ruth Shatford AM (Diocesan)
Sanctuary Assistants, Servers	Godfrey Abel, Ross Beattie, Licette Bedna, Pranat Bhonsle, Ken Bock OAM, Anne Lawson, Peggy Sanders (Senior Liturgical Assistant), David Tait, Amy Taylor, Mark Taylor, Christina Thompson, Kim Turner, James von Stieglitz, Sarah Weaver
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, Glyn Evans, Meredith Lawn, Selina Leung, Jonathan Malota, Christine Murray, Peggy Sanders, Amy Taylor, Gillian Taylor, John Williams and Yosua
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., BMus, MMus (Birmingham), MMus (Sydney)
Assistant Organist	Christopher Wagstaff B.Mus (Hons, First Class), L.Mus
Organ Scholars	Isabel Li and Enoch Pan
Caretaker	Kari Hewitt
Editor	Julie Evans
Archivist	Proof-readers Glyn Evans and Peggy Sanders Edward Lawn BDes, MInfoStud (Rec&ArchMgt) assisted by Meredith Lawn BA (Hons) USYD, GradDipIM – Archives UNSW

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