

UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA YASS PARISH



OCTOBER 2020

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As part of God's people we are called by God, empowered by the Holy Spirit, to share the love and grace of Jesus Christ, within our community through regular worship, faithful witness and humble service.

From the Minister:

What do I write for my final piece for the newsletter?

I have been asking myself this question over the last few weeks. Even now as I sit down at my computer to write it, I must admit I am still not really sure what to say. One thing I do know, is that it is getting harder to think about saying goodbye to the church and community we have called home since January 2015. With this in mind there is a phrase from my time at college which keeps coming back to me "*Community of the heart.*"

It was my first year at college and one of our lecturers was sharing with us about what it means to be part of a community. It was not just the geographical place in which you find yourself living in, but he spoke about community being a group of people who hold a special place in your life. A community of the heart is a group with whom you hold a special bond, a group who has accepted and welcomed you, a group who has helped you grow and formed you, it is a group who you love and loves you for who you are. As I look back on nearly six years of life and ministry here in Yass and Rye Park, this community of faith has come to be a community of the heart for me.

From the moment of my first (and only) conversation with the JNC in November 2014, there has been a real sense of welcome and hospitality. It was a hard thing for us to move with three kids aged 7, 3 and 1 month, especially moving away from parental and family support. However, the community we found ourselves in welcomed and accepted us, give us space and offered to help out. From having meals brought over to offers of babysitting, from people doing our washing to chatting over tea or coffee, our experiences of welcome and hospitality have been overwhelming and much appreciated.

Being my first placement, there was much for me to learn about ministry and leadership. There was also a lot for me to learn about myself not only in ministry, but also as a husband and father in ministry. Over the years I have grown in confidence in worship leading, preaching, leadership and connecting with community. These gifts have been nurtured and encouraged by many people in the congregations, and for this I am truly grateful. By helping

me grow in these areas I have been formed and strengthened in new ways. While I know there are areas of ministry I have been lacking and I need to work on, I thank you all for the grace shown to me as I learn, grow, stretch and challenge myself in ministry.

There are many memorable moments in ministry here. I remember my very first Sunday of leading worship, driving out to Rye Park on a sunny and beautiful February morning and confronting my fears of preaching on a passage I had sworn to never preach on again. I also remember the first Frontier Services outdoor service where a few of the more 'mature' members of the congregations had fun on the jumping castle.

It has been a real blessing to have been supported in ministry by strong and capable lay leaders who are always willing to use their gifts in leading worship, preaching, prayers, music, running meetings, and pastoral care. Thank you to all who have been alongside me in ministry, I could not have done many things without your support, encouragement and willingness to step into the roles required.

There is so much more I can say, but it is very hard to put into words in a succinct way, plus my eyes are starting to feel a little watery...must be the blossoms on the trees getting to me.

Thank you all for allowing me to be in ministry with you. It has been such a privilege to share our lives together. As a family we will always treasure our time with you, and we sincerely thank you for all you have done for us. It truly has been a wonderful season of our lives and ministry.

My heart is full with the knowledge that there is a community of the heart for me and for the whole family here in Yass and Rye Park.

Grace and Peace
David, Gillian, Phoebe, Harry and Hannah

From the Chair of Church Council:

I hope this newsletter finds you well and that things are improving by the time you read this.

David's Completion of Ministry with us

As you now know, we are losing our wonderful minister, David, who has led us brilliantly through this Covid period of constant change. We will miss him and his lovely family immensely. The Facebook services which I had thought would never work for our church have really been very good and have helped to keep us connected. For those of you who aren't able to connect in this way, I hope you have been able to get a printed copy or a CD of the service. If you have had this, and would like it, please contact David. Also our zoom coffee after the services has been a great way to see people and talk with them informally. If you don't get the link for this, again please ask David to send you one. It is easy to just click the link and join in. No software is needed.

A small group is working with David to hopefully be able to keep filming the services when he has completes his ministry with us. They are looking to purchase equipment and gain the knowledge so that even when we return to face to face services, we will be able to continue providing the Facebook to our congregation and to the other interested members of the

community. We see this service as an important mission for our church with weekly numbers of about 200 devices, so probably even more people.

David's final service will be on **25 October** and will probably be on Facebook unless Council decides at the next meeting to reopen church.

Covid Matters

Your Parish Church Council met on 9 September and talked at length about Covid matters. As you know we have a Covid Safe Plan written and the churches are set up for us to enact this as soon as Council feels it is safe to do so. We also have completed a Covid Response plan.

Council made the decision that it is still too early to return to face to face services, but this will be reviewed at our next meeting on 7 October. When we return, we will need to take bookings for Yass as the following numbers are allowed in our church buildings: Rye Park maximum 24 people and Yass maximum 28 in the main part of the church and 4 on the platform. Singing, chanting, group responses will not be allowed, so some of you may prefer to continue online where you can sing in your lounge room. You will need to sign into the building, sit in allotted seats, and communion will be quite different. It will not be the old services we love for a while yet. All procedures will be made public before we meet again face to face. If you do need to enter one of our churches or hall during this time, you must sign in and out and sanitise your hands. This is a legal requirement so tracing can be done if we do get a case of Covid-19 in our congregation.

Finances

Offerings are still doing much better since more people have starting giving online through the bank account. If you have been saving up money at home, you can deposit it in the following account as you are able.

UCA – Yass Parish Account BSB number: 634 634 Account number: 100039947
with the reference Offering Yass or Offering Rye Park

Lesley also reported that the government Jobkeeper and Boost have helped us a lot through this period. The finance task group will meet before the next meeting to look at 3 scenarios that Lesley will budget for: no Supply Minister; 50% Supply Minister and 75% Supply Minister .

Moving ahead

We are meeting to update our mission plan, approved 2 years ago and then we will be forming a group with John Squires, Presbytery Minister—Wellbeing, to draft a Parish profile so we will be able to determine our needs and find a match for a new minister in the future. The next step after that will be to set up a Joint Nominating Committee to look at calling a new minister. This is a lengthy process.

AGM

As Congregations meetings will not take place until at least March, the Council agree to postpone the Council AGM until after these meetings. There are 4 people on Council whose terms are ending, and they are all from Yass congregation.

Ways we remain in contact:

- Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/Yass-Uniting-Church-228378387525290/?ref=bookmarks>
- Website - <https://yass.uca.org.au/> for information and to reach us through contacts
- Pastoral Partners – Contact Barry, Della or Sandra for more information

- Our newsletter continues to play an important role and is now on the website – contact Lee for more information or to contribute
- Prayer Group – currently meeting by Zoom on Thursdays at 9:30 – contact Suzie Graham for more information

You can find contact information for these people on our website using the dropdown list on <https://yass.uca.org.au/contact-us/>

Our next Council meeting will be held on Wednesday, 7 October, at 7:30 on zoom. We will be considering an opening date for face to face worship.

As always if you have any questions or comments, please contact me or another member of Council. I love hearing your ideas and questions.

(Sue Demoor)

Reflection: Thanks for the Memories. *(written for a Sunday on which Holy Communion was to be celebrated).*

On Wednesday last our Probus Club ventured out on its first outing since March. We visited the Central Coast and part of our trip was a cruise around the Brisbane Waters. The weather was perfect and the scenery idyllic.

Our cruise took us past Ettalong Beach and as it did, so many wonderful memories from my childhood came flooding back. You see, when we were just young children (all 5 of us) we went to Ettalong Beach for Christmas holidays.

That, in itself, was an epic undertaking. Packed suitcases carted on and off trains, a steam train from Strathfield to Woy Woy, a bus ride from Woy Woy to Ettalong Beach with the suitcases stuffed into a luggage rack attached to the back of the bus. Then, at last, the enjoyment of the beach, the water, the sandcastles etc, etc, etc. What wonderful memories.

Memories can be beautiful and hopefully all of us have beautiful memories that we can recall. Special events such as special birthdays, weddings, baptisms are commonplace in most families. They are treasures that we can fall back on when sometimes the going is a bit tough.

Not every memory is a good memory. We all, I am sure, have some not so good memories that we try and keep hidden deep in the background of our life experiences. That is fully understandable.

One factor related to memories is how we use them. Good memories allow us to approach life in a positive manner. They can teach us how to live life. They allow us to share happiness and experiences with others. They bring us and those with whom we share them with great joy.

So too, can bad memories be used for positive purposes. They can teach us lessons - lessons on what to avoid doing to prevent them happening again. They can help us increase our capacity to forgive. They can help us pass onto our children how to avoid some of the pitfalls of life.

In the Sacrament of Holy Communion we remember the great gift given us by our sacrificed Lord. This should be for us a living memory, and an ongoing, meaningful, part of our Christian life. An ever-timely reminder of the price paid by our Lord and Saviour for each one of us.

So, we may well say thanks for the memories, but we must be forever thankful for the great gift given us by our sacrificed Lord and never let it become just another memory. (GMP)



RYE PARK CONGREGATION October 2020

Not just a Church, but a Family.

Life continues at a COVID-restricted pace in Rye Park. We are staying safe and catching up with each other the best we can.

OCTOBER LECTIONARY READINGS:

DATE	DAY	FIRST READING	PSALM	SECOND READING	GOSPEL
4	Pent 18	Ex 20: 1-4, 7-9, 12-20	Ps 19	Phil 3: 4b-14	Mt 21: 33-46
11	Pent 19	Ex 32: 1-14	Ps 106: 1-6, 19-23	Phil 4: 1-9	Mt 22: 1-14
18	Pent 20	Ex 33: 12-23	Ps 99	1 Thes 1: 1-10	Mt 22: 15-22
25	Pent 21	Dt 34: 1-12	Ps 90: 1-6, 13-17	1Thes 2: 1-8	Mt 22: 34-46

To Think On:

A bird will build a nest in time for spring. Too early and it will be destroyed by the elements.

A squirrel will take in nuts for Winter but will only gather when the harvest is plentiful.

A crane stands motionless in the water until a fish swims by.

A spider waits in its lair until an insect flies into the web.

A salmon must battle opposing currents but only when the time is right.

No beast of burden or insect will act too soon or too late because it knows when the time is right.

We know too, and there are certain things which are beyond our management which cannot be delayed or hastened. They will or will not happen and to attempt to hasten the process could snap the twigs of our nest.
(Giles Waggert)



More to Learn:

I once asked my 5 year old grandson what he had learned about the Easter story. He said it was about Jesus and the stone being rolled. I asked him what happened. 'Oh it's easy' he replied. 'A great big stone rolled down the hill and killed Jesus.'

Still got a bit to learn, methinks.....And so have the children who gave these answers to other religious questions.

*The Bible is full of interesting caricatures.
The first book of the Bible is Guinness.
Adam and Eve were created from an apple.
Cain once asked, 'Am I my brother's son?'
When Mary heard she was to be the mother of Jesus she sang the Magna Carta.
One of the opossums was Matthew. He was also a taximan.
Moses got the 10 commandments up Mount Cyanide.
Moses died before he ever reached Canada.
Christians can have only one spouse. It's called monotony.
Unleavened bread is made without any ingredients.
(Tom Gordon, The Very Life of Life, Wild goose Publications 2018)*

Reflection: On Singing Hymns

One of our God’s loveliest gifts to all people is that of singing. It matters not whether we sing well or beautifully or whether not so well or close to out of tune. All of us can open our mouths and sing – be it in public, as in worship, or in the privacy of a place chosen by us.

Essential to singing is that we have words and again the gift of writing the words is one of God’s great gifts to people. Have you and I stopped, from time to time, and thought that singing God’s praise and our faith goes way back.

Our Bible tells us that God’s people sang praise and honour to him. They sang through the desert, in exile, on the run, looking to the greatness of creation and then in the early Church and on it went and we are still singing praise and honour to God and about our faith and response to his love and our living for him.

So, then, have you stopped to think – what are some of my favourite hymns and songs of faith? Perhaps, you like me wonder why some aren’t in today’s hymnaries.

However, that does not stop us from singing those that mean much to each of us! Well, not for me – for example, I still want to sing the chorus – “ask the Saviour to help you, comfort, strengthen and keep you. He is willing to aid you, he will carry you through.” Yes, the hymn, “Yield not to temptation” from which that comes was excluded from “modern” hymnaries.

Are you like me and have your favourites? I have and indicated three I would love sung at my funeral. Maybe they would not be my families choice, but I would want them to know that they were important for my faith, ministry and theology.

Now to reflecting – why not compile your own list? Then think – why? Were they for or at an important time in your faith and life journey? It may not be easy to choose them. After all, it’s not like choosing your favourite food!

But as you put time and thought into that list – give thanks to God for the words and those that wrote them and that through the voice he gives you and me – sing them in worship and in private.

As you reflect on the words and sing them – be joyful! In both actions you are using some of God’s lovely gifts.

(Rev. Dr. Douglas Parker)



November Newsletter:

Please have all items for the November edition to the Editor by Tuesday, 27 October.

CONFLICT AND VICTORY

258 Yield Not to Temptation

Yield Not to Temptation, 11.11.11.12. with Refrain

HORATIO R. PALMER, 1868

HORATIO R. PALMER, 1868

1. Yield not to tempta - tion, for yield - ing is sin; Each vic - tory will
2. Shun e - vil com - pan - ions; bad lan - guage dis - dain; God's name hold in
3. To him that o'er - com - eth God giv - eth a crown, Through faith we shall

help you some oth - er to win; Fight man - ful - ly on - ward;
rev - erence, nor take it in vain; Be thought - ful and ear - nest,
con - quer, though oft - en cast down; He who is our Sav - ior

dark pas - sions sub - due; Look ev - er to Je - sus, He will car - ry you
kind - heart - ed and true; Look ev - er to Je - sus, He will car - ry you
our strength will re - new; Look ev - er to Je - sus, He will car - ry you

REFRAIN
through. Ask the Sav - ior to help you. Com - fort, strength - en, and keep you:
He is will - ing to aid you, He will car - ry you through.

On Old Age:

Racing drivers never get old - they just go round the bend.

Hairdressers never get old - they might curl up, but they refuse to dye.

Gardeners never get old - they just go to pot.

Golfers never get old - they just lose their drive.

Bakers never get old - they just knead a rest.

Vehicle mechanics never get old - they just lose their bearings.

Farmers never get old - they just go to seed.