

# Parish Magazine

Anglican Parish of St Stephen & St Mary Mt Waverley



Easter 2018

## From Vicar Dianne

Dear Parishioners,  
I've been asked to summarize one of my sermons from a few weeks ago that seemed to be helpful to a number of people. It is based on Mark 1: 29 – 39, so it would be good if you could read from Mark first.

We live in a time when our health care has never been more advanced. And we hear on the news almost every week some new discovery. Like one last week saying they had discovered the protein that lodges in the brain that brings on Alzheimer's and they can detect that 20 years before it actually happens. I must admit I don't think I want to know 20 years in advance that I'm going to get such a diagnosis, but I get their point that this will become a point of new research and a possible cure.

So in the light of this wonderful medical care that we have today, what do we do with this gospel story of Jesus' healing?

Are we to believe that the healing Jesus offers is for the physical body only?

Many years ago a friend of ours, Linda, who was only in her mid-forties was dying with advanced cancer and her husband was, let's say, not an Anglican; he had been a minister in a different Christian Church. And people were coming from his church every day praying for the cancer to disappear and

that she would be healed. Well, she got sick of them coming and asked them to stop coming and instead asked for an Anglican priest, so we arranged for our local priest to visit and I used to go with him. Yes, he prayed for her – for her strength and courage for the coming weeks; for the presence of God to fill her life and to bring wholeness of healing into her life. We visited regularly until she died.

Yes, it is right that we should pray for the healing of our loved ones. And yes, we have come across the occasions where cancer or some other terrible invasive condition has been miraculously disappeared.

We have all stood either around a hospital bed or in the quietness of our bedroom and fervently prayed that our loved ones will survive. And so we should pray for them.

I have stood in the bedroom where palliative care nurses, who so lovingly care for the dying have created a mini-hospital. But, I have never experienced a healing where someone was restored to life immediately as if their disease where an interruption and now life could go on as before. I have laid hands upon the sick and prayed prayers for healing but no one has yet to cast their wheelchair aside to dance a jig again. We know that miraculous healing is rare.

So Jesus' healing must mean more than physical restoration because I have actually experienced people being healed; even though their physical condition did not change, at a more profound level they were restored to peace, wholeness of heart, and a readiness to face death with faith and acceptance. And this is what I saw and experienced with Linda.

So, let's look again at the story of Jesus healing Peter's mother-in-law.

Jesus restores her to her role and position in domestic society. The sign of her healing is not simply that her fever vanishes but that she is once again serving those in her home – being an effective part of the community. We mustn't forget that the healing occurs on the Sabbath when no work is permitted -- including the work of healing -- a great irony since the original purpose of Sabbath-keeping is that renewal, restoration and healing of relationships in God would occur as we take our place in the rhythm of God's Sabbath rest.

He reaches out his hand to touch the woman's feverish hand, surely shocking those present who knew that no woman was permitted to touch a Rabbi. Again, Jesus sets aside the established norm to bring into being that which God intends for every creature, life

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Any suggestions and  
feedback to  
helenedur@netspace.net.au

### From the Registers:

#### Baptisms:

James Maher (22/10/17)  
Oliver Johnson (29/10/17)

#### Funerals

Evelyn Cupido (6/10/17)  
Margaret (Peggy) Jessup  
(13/10/17)  
Monica Oorloff (18/10/17)  
Dorothy Ditchfield (22/11/17)  
Dilys Condell (24/11/17)  
Carol Louttit (28/11/17)  
Trevor Bickerstaff (8/1/18)  
Marie Williams – not held  
here (19/1/18)

#### Interment of Ashes:

Margaret Sparrow (3/12/17)

"May they rest in peace  
and rise in glory"



Farewell to our much loved  
**Trevor Bickerstaff**

**Ever considered making  
bequest to the  
Parish in your Will?  
Need more details, then  
please speak to one of  
the Wardens**

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abundant and wholeness. He heals this woman by restoring her to life in community.

You can see the implications of such healing for the person living with say AIDS who may not in our lifetime have his disease totally cured. And haven't we witnessed a major shift in society's understanding.

I can remember when AIDS became first known in Australia and there was talk of putting people with AIDS into a compound over in Western Australia. Well, I doubt many people would even give it a thought now. It is simply an illness that is controlled and managed like any other. And what about those with mental illness, or physical ailments, or chronic disease? They too can find life and wholeness in the community that embraces them in Christ, even if their physical conditions do not change.

This is the true purpose of healing that Jesus offers then and now -- that you and I and all persons would find a place to serve freely and with gratitude; restored to community and focused upon a larger world than self alone.

We are made whole in Christ, in order to be agents of healing in the name of Christ -- proclaiming good news by the way we live with others and for others.

Linda taught me a great deal in her dying. I witnessed her go from a state of anger, to acceptance and deep peace. One day, only a couple of weeks before she died, she said to the priest, when he touched her heart and said her, "how are you going in here". She said lovingly, "I know what my vocation will be in heaven, I will be forever praying for the world." She was healed and

made whole of her disease.

And I might say she taught me how to shut up and not have the need to have incessant talking when we visit the dying. Linda gave a lot of healing to me in her dying.

But, what kind of healing in the Spirit of Jesus may be asked of us? I don't know, but I do believe that if Jesus still has hands that offer a healing touch they are your hands and mine; if the living Christ has eyes that look with mercy upon the suffering to offer hope, they are your eyes and mine -- and if we turn our eyes away we are failing to use for others what Christ has given us.

Whilst, all true healing is the work of Christ. Each of us need to ask ourselves now, "Where is Christ at work healing me? In what aspect of my life do I feel his touch, do I see his light? How is Christ now at work in my life to change me so that I become the person God wills for me to be?"

Each of us would do well to spend some time with this question both today and in days to come: "Where is Christ at work healing me?" How can I announce the good news of this healing - this transformation that Jesus Christ brings to all?"

Will you let Christ begin his healing work in you today? Amen.



### Holy Week Services

Palm Sunday – 25 March –  
9.45am Joint Service followed by  
Brunch.

Monday of Holy Week – 26 March –  
Holy Communion 7.30pm

Tuesday of Holy Week – 27 March –  
Holy Communion 7.30pm

Wednesday of Holy Week –  
28 March – Holy Communion  
10.00 a.m. and 7.30pm

Maundy Thursday – 29 March –  
Holy Communion 10.00am and  
Stripping of Altar and  
Holy Communion 7.30pm

Good Friday – 30 March – 9.00am  
Way of the Cross  
St John's at 11.15am

**Easter Vigil – 31 March – 7.30pm**

**Easter Sunday 1 April –**

7.45am, 9.00am & 10.30am

If asked on the occasion of a Golden Wedding what attributes made for a happy life together, here is a ready answer.

4 cups of Love

2 cups of Loyalty

3 cups of Forgiveness

1 cup of Understanding

2 spoons of Hope

2 spoons of Tenderness

4 quarts of Faith

1 barrel of Laughter

Take Love and Loyalty, mix together with Faith, Blend it with Tenderness, Kindness and Understanding.

Add Friendship and Hope, sprinkle abundantly with Laughter.

Bake in sunshine and serve daily in generous helpings.

# The Ladies Guild

Firstly, we would like to wish everyone a Happy 2018!

The Guild meets on the second Thursday of the month at 2.00 pm in the Parish Centre.

We are a relatively small group and would like to thank here all Parishioners who support us in raising funds for the Church.

The Guild will be manning the Lions Club Opportunity Shop in Wadham Parade Mt Waverley from Monday 30 April to Friday 4 May. We would be grateful if you could sort out any belongings you may have for us to sell and deliver them to the shop on Tuesday 24 April – and say there that they are for St Stephen and St Mary's week.

On Friday 25 May at 10.00 am the Guild will be holding a morning tea and showing fashions by Tillow. Brands including Threadz,

The ladies were deeply saddened by the passing of Di Scrivener early this month.

Di has held the position of Secretary and, more recently Treasurer, for the Guild. She will be greatly missed. (She is also well known for her wonderful sponges)

Our sincere condolences go to John and the family.

Janice Miller

Black Pepper, Equis, Renoma, Bromley, Elegant and KT Creations will be on display. Please join us for this fundraising event in the Parish Centre. There will be a cost of \$10.00 per person.

Janice Miller.



A little bit of wisdom from the Miller's

"What a lot of wisdom and commonsense there is to be found here. To apply just a fraction of it each day to the people close to us could bring enormous benefit.

The year is past; what did you give? What did you gain, and what regret? Was it a year you would like to live right through again or just forget?

Were there mistakes?

Did you cause pain? or

Withhold your love from someone dear?

Did your efforts seem in vain?

Remember you can't start anew.

Resolve to live a better way. Forget errors, sadness, too. Tomorrow is another day."

*Joyce Frances Carpenter*





## PARISH OF ST STEPHEN & ST MARY- GARDEN GROUP

From Blackberries, Bramble and  
Bracken -- to Banksia,  
Bottlebrush and Bird of Paradise.

A 24-year-story of "Treasuring  
God's Creation".

**1994:** Chris and Pam Knight initiated the "Landscape Planning Committee"--with support from students of the Landscape Department of Holmesglen College of TAFE (Waverley Campus).

240V power was enabled to both sides of the driveway -- thanks to energetic trench digging from several parishioners. This allowed improvement to church visibility from High Street Road. The massive 100-year-old cypress tree was felled after being deemed unsafe. A large piece of it was retained to enable a larger than life statue of St. Stephen to be carved by chainsaw artist Kevin Gilders. In one hand, St. Stephen holds some rocks, symbolic of those used to stone him to death. In the other, he has a palm frond.

**1995:** Enthusiastic new vicar, 32 year-old Jeff O'Hare, applauded the landscaping concepts. The bank was re-graded and 200 tonnes of clay and rubble removed. 200 cubic metres of soil and mulch were trucked in. A Garden Commission was formed -- for ongoing planning and development of the church grounds. Members -- Shirley Davies, David Davies, Helene Durkin, Neil Bruce-Gamble, Pam Knight, Chris Knight (Convenor), Prue Mackereth, Judy Matthews (Scribe), David Molineux, Jim Monaghan, Fr. Jeff O'Hare, Marj Poulton, Noel Runting, Beth Smith.

"A Plant Research Group" was also formed -- to select, collate and recommend the species to be planted on and above the bank. On 16<sup>th</sup> September 1995, the congregation marched down the



Planning Committee 1995

driveway after church. The great statue was consecrated by Rev Jeff O'Hare and Rev John Selvaratnam.

**1996:** The final design plan drawn up by Fr. Jeff. A small army of parishioners moved in to plant 400 plants -- many from parishioners' gardens. Red Camellias from Ian and Beth Smith's house ; Cliveas from Russell and Barb Payne's garden--the lovely orange blooms are used regularly in church flower arrangements. A path was formed along the top of the bank. Olive trees around St. Stephen added to the Mediterranean atmosphere.

The area under the southern Narthex windows was greatly improved. Now an attractive background to the Memorial Lawn. New magnolias, Dogwoods, Daphne and Rhododendrons - with an under planting of Azaleas. The Waverley Helpmates, a Disability Services and Support Organisation, came in to help with mowing the lawns, trimming, sweeping, mulch distribution. Still supporting us today.

**1999:** Complete re-furbishment of the Memorial Lawn. An advanced olive tree and agapanthus plants on the border -- both donated by parishioners.

**2002:** A seamless transfer of the St. Mary's Memorial Garden to St. Stephen's. Integrated perfectly.



1999 - 2002

**2008:** Mature gardens now providing significant foliage and flowers for use inside the church.

**2009:** The huge pine trees -- significant landmarks in Mount Waverley -- had to be removed. Dangerous and deteriorating -- and about to topple over on to passing traffic!!

**2011:** We acquired the Garden Shed behind the Old Hall. A major boon - now full of tools, wheelbarrows and much necessary equipment, also mostly donated.

**2018:** After a quarter-century of dedication by Chris and Pam, we are proposing to name the glorious embankment "**Knight's Knoll**". Who could disagree??

Graeme and Maggie Dellora --  
Garden Group Convenors



More pictures on page 6...

## 60TH BIRTHDAY OF MOTHERS' UNION

**Congratulations to the MU (Mothers Union) Branch at St Stephen and St Mary's which is celebrating its 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday in June this year.**

Mothers' Union began in our Parish in 1958 when the wife of the new Vicar, Mrs Clare Bodey, arrived at St Stephen's and started a new branch with just 5 members. Membership increased to around 50 members by its 25<sup>th</sup> birthday and currently MU has a membership of just over 20.

Three special 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebrations will take place in June

A fundraising **Old Fashioned Black and White Movie Night on Friday 1 June** with several old silent B/W trailers and an Al Jolson favourite 'The Jazz Singer' Tickets for this event will be for sale from late April. Watch the Pew Notices for more information

**Special 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Service on Sunday 23 June at the 9.00am Sung Eucharist.** If you know of any former members of MU or Young Wives Fellowship please spread the word and invite them to join us for the service with a special morning tea to follow. Beth has extensive experience with MU internationally and with migrant settlement programs in the inner city.

At the **MU meeting on Monday 26 June at 1.30pm**, Beth Hookey will be the speaker.

Beth Hookey, a former Diocesan President of MU will be the speaker.



**This year's theme is 'Following in Mary Sumner's Footsteps'**

Mary Sumner was born 1829 and grew up in a family of four children in Hertfordshire. Her mother was a woman of personal piety and faith who held mothers' meetings. This and the death of her infant brother may have inspired Mary to begin Mothers' Union decades later.

When her own daughter gave birth, she was reminded of how difficult she had found the burden of motherhood. She publicised a meeting of mothers in her parish to offer mutual support. This concept spread to several dioceses, then throughout the United Kingdom and later to countries in the British Empire.

She was a remarkable woman and influenced society by setting up what is now the worldwide fellowship of Mothers Union which has over 4 million members in 83 countries.

It is not easy to follow in the footsteps of such an inspirational woman. At our first meeting of the year we explored the theme and wondered what she would think about the changes and complexities of our society today. There is a 'footsteps display' of some of our thoughts on the wall opposite the noticeboard.

The collection of items for comfort packs for the homeless through Lazarus House is a practical way that we have been able to reach out. We thank all members of the Parish who have generously supported this appeal.

**A FEW DATES FOR YOUR DIARY** Perhaps you are interested in one of the speakers or simply want to belong to a caring group of women in the Parish. Come along and join us, or speak to Irene or any of our members to find out what we do in the Parish.

All our meetings are held in the Parish Centre and commence at 1.30pm on the fourth Monday of the month. Check the MU Notices for upcoming meetings and guest speakers.

## INSPIRING MUSIC IN WORSHIP

*Brian Copple, Director of Music*

The music ministry of a church exists for two primary reasons. The first is to bring out the voice and the engagement of the worshipers. The vocal and instrumental roles lead people in singing and help them find a voice for their own praise. The second purpose is to provide elements of praise and worship that are beyond the scope of what the worshiping members can provide. Some music requires rehearsal and may require more than average skill. The choirs and instrumentalists rehearse and perform so as to add

engaging elements to services of worship. When the groups perform in worship, it is not "mere performance" which emphasizes the players' and singers' talents. It is a performance that exists to draw people into an encounter with their Creator.

Here at St Stephen and St Mary, as your new Director of Music, I will strive to nurture and sustain a strong music program, not for reasons of congregational pride, but because I will seek to draw upon the gifts and talents that God has placed abundantly within our reach. A strong program also engages the congregation and the community: it fosters bolder

singing and spirited worship, it maintains creativity and interest, it draws in musicians and artists of all ages in the joyful activity of praising God, and it witnesses to the Gospel in ways that amplify within, and expand beyond the walls of the congregation.

In drawing upon the musical and artistic resources of this congregation, I invite you to enter into living God's call to flourish in the place where you are planted and become part of the music program at St Stephen and St Mary by contacting me at [music@stephenandmary.org.au](mailto:music@stephenandmary.org.au)



A group of five people, three men and two women, are standing behind a large, cut log on a street. The log is positioned horizontally, with its cut end facing the camera. The people are dressed in casual attire, including jackets and sweaters. The background shows a residential street with trees and a house.



2008





**The 2018 Diocesan Pilgrimage  
from Bethlehem to the  
Garden Tomb:**

**Following the footsteps of Jesus  
the Messiah.**

**A Tour led by Bishop Brad Billings  
and our Vicar,**

**Revd Dianne Sharrock,  
6 to 18 January 2018**

In this article I have condensed some of the many highlights from our Pilgrimage and in this brief summary will offer some snapshots of our journey that may serve as an incentive for others to make a similar Pilgrimage.

At last, on 7 January 2018, after the long flight from Australia we arrived in Israel! Our plane circled above the city of Tel Aviv, whose high-rise towers reflected the early morning sunshine. On landing at Ben Gurion airport our excited group met our local guide, collected our luggage and boarded our 'Guiding Star' Tour bus. In contrast with the stylishness of Tel Aviv, the arid landscape outside the city appeared rocky and inhospitable, yet in the explanations given by Saied, our wonderful tour guide, and observed through the eyes of faith, Israel and Palestine revealed itself as a place steeped in history and richly layered with spiritual significance.

Our first stop-off was at the old port city of Jaffa for a refreshing stroll around its ancient precincts. It was here, as cited in Acts 9:40, that St Peter was called upon to raise Tabitha from the dead and St Peter's Franciscan Church is his memorial.

Some of us purchased souvenirs from local stalls, enjoyed views across the Mediterranean Sea, explored the laneways and saw the house of Simon the Tanner mentioned in Acts 9:43.

We travelled on, and for the next two nights we stayed at St. Gabriel's, a Palestinian Christian Hotel in

Bethlehem. From our hotel balcony the contemporary city skyline of multi storied buildings; solar-panelled houses, spires and minarets looked so unlike the 'Christmas Card' imagined images of the peaceful little town of Bethlehem where Jesus was born.

Modern Bethlehem is situated at the heart of the ongoing conflicts between Palestine and Israel, and to our dismay, a massive concrete security wall encloses this city causing loss of Palestinian land and increasing controls over the freedom for workers and travellers to cross the Israeli border to the West Bank. On Monday 8 January, our formal Pilgrimage commenced at a peaceful setting near Shepherd's Field. Perhaps this is the location where St Luke, (2:8-20), described that a vast host of angels proclaimed the good tidings of the birth of the Messiah to shepherds watching their sheep at night. Centuries later, our group gathered in an ancient cave chapel, and assisted by Bishop Brad, our Vicar Dianne celebrated the Eucharist. It was a deeply moving experience to be in this unpretentious setting where nearby, the gift of the Messiah was revealed to those humble shepherds.

Later that day in the Judean Desert, and in contrast to the hallowed atmosphere at Shepherds Fields, we climbed and explored the massive ruins of King Herod's fortress palace. Returning to Bethlehem, we visited one of the major Christian pilgrimage destinations at Holy Nativity Church. This Byzantine Basilica houses what is supposed to be the traditional birthplace of Jesus. After waiting in slow moving queues, we shuffled down a narrow stairway and crowded into a dimly lit cave to venerate the richly ornamented site of Jesus' birth. Despite the antiquity and splendour of the church and the wonderment of

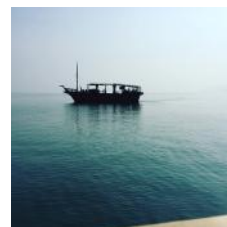
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Saeid our Tour Guide



Dianne celebrating the Eucharist at  
Shepherds Field



Sea of Galilee



Church of the Holy Nativity, with  
Jeanette Hamilton kneeling to  
touch a silver star that marks the  
spot of Jesus (supposed) birth



Church of the annunciation  
Nazareth

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our being in this place, it was a leap of faith in this lavish silver- gilded setting to envisage what is described in the Biblical account, (Luke 2:11-14) as the lowly place of the Messiah's birth.

Each day during our Pilgrimage, Bishop Brad circulated a sheet of information about the places we were about to see and provided each of us with a Liturgical booklet to accompany a daily prayer service appropriate to each of the religious locations we visited.

This booklet included a précis of the three instructional talks given by Bishop Brad Billings and was a useful devotional guide and a souvenir of our Pilgrimage.

On Day 11, leaving our hotel before dawn to avoid the crowds, we entered old Jerusalem. Taking turns to carry a wooden cross, we processed solemnly along old Jerusalem's dim and congested laneways following the route taken by Jesus as he bore his cross along the Via Dolorosa toward the place of Crucifixion at Golgotha. This traditional re-enactment of Jesus' walk culminated at the ancient Crusader-built Church of the Holy Sepulchre, long believed to be the site of Christ's crucifixion, burial and resurrection. It was an emotional experience to explore the interior of the Church, to pray at the various chapels, to see the Chapel of Adam built against the rock of Golgotha and to enter the shrine containing Christ's Tomb in the Church Rotunda.

This vast holy Basilica is administered by six Christian denominations, Armenians, Greeks, Copts, Roman Catholics, Ethiopians and Syrians. The Church is unlocked each day by a 'neutral' Muslim key holder whose family have performed this task for several generations.

The Sea of Galilee is the largest freshwater lake in Israel and is most

closely associated with Jesus' ministry as its natural features remain much as they were in the time of Jesus.

Galilee and its environs are the key settings for many of the miracles and healings in the Gospels, and for me it seemed to hold a numinous, timeless quality. I could readily imagine Jesus' presence here as he called his fishermen disciples to follow him, preaching, healing, calming a storm and sowing the seeds of his teaching along the shores and on the waters of this large fresh water sea.

Our group stayed near Galilee for several nights at a comfortable Jewish Kibbutz Hotel.

At Ginosar Hotel we enjoyed delicious kosher meals and travelled out from here each day to the nearby places well known from the Gospels. We visited the Church of the Beatitudes, Capernaum, Tabgha - the traditional location of the miracle of the loaves and the fishes, the Church of the Beatitudes and the Church of the Primacy of St. Peter and the old city of Tiberius.

There were so many wonderful and unforgettable highlights in our Pilgrimage, and as most Pilgrims would agree, there are one or two places that loom largest in one's imagination.

The Sea of Galilee and its nearby sacred locations would be my choice and as the weather was perfect we went on our boat ride on that sea.

As I contemplated the imagery of Jesus' post resurrection passage in St John 21.1-25, a sense of numinous 'presence' was tangible.

At home we may imagine Jesus in heaven on the right hand of God the Father, but by this lake one could feel a perceptible sense of Jesus the Man, walking the dusty roads from ...



Ruins of the Synagogue at Capernaum,



The Church of the Beatitudes at Galilee



Exterior of the Holy Sepulchre Church



Entering the rock cave at the Garden Tomb in Jerusalem.



Carrying the Cross along the Via Dolorosa



Part of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre

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December '17

## Our Trip to Sri Lanka

After nearly 60 years in the land of Oz, Avril and myself decided to take a holiday in Sri Lanka (Ceylon), the country of our birth. We left Melbourne at 12.30 pm on 17 December and, after nearly a 11 hour flight, arrived in Colombo the following morning at around 4.30 am (Melbourne time).

The sights and landscapes of Sri Lanka were enjoyed by our group, consisting of Avril and myself, our son and daughter with their partners, and two of our grandchildren. Our fortnight-long adventure back to our homeland was one that has filled us all with memories to last a lifetime...

A barefoot salesmen, endless spreads of tropical produce, an odd stray dog roaming the aisles, and a poignant aroma of fish in the air. Large grins, whistles and shouts of encouragement from all directions, to 'buy, buy buy!' as the colourful saris, piles of sandals and trays of meat-filled pastries tempt us to draw near.

Surrounding Colombo's Pettah Marketplace are the city's bedlam roads – packed with trucks, motorbikes, men pulling wagons, and of course, the iconic tuk-tuks. It is still barely possible to comprehend how people drive through these streets, when road rules are almost non-existent and people go about using the simple pretense of 'whoever goes, goes!'

It fascinated me watching our driver, Janaka Wijerathna, expertly navigating the chaotic streets and narrow laneways, passing by other vehicles and pedestrians with only centimetres to spare!

As well as being an exceptional tour guide, Janaka also quickly became a good friend, and shared his passionate faith in God with each of

us. We were encouraged to hear of his daily morning ritual of awakening at 3am for three hours of prayer and worship – (which he insisted was still not enough time!) His devout belief that God is his sole provider and strength through life was an inspiration to us all.

Janaka delivered us to many popular tourist destinations (including an Elephant Orphanage, Gemstone Factories and Museums), as well as places where our childhood memories were recalled and much reminiscing was evoked.



Welveridaal Church

A visit to Wolvendaal Church, built in the late 1600s by the Dutch who occupied Sri Lanka after the Portuguese and the Church where I was confirmed as a young teenager, was particularly moving for me. It was also incredible to be driven along roads that I recall cycling down during my time as a young boy scout – reliving these youthful adventures in my mind. And it was a privilege to enter and be toured by the Head Nun at Avril's cherished secondary school – 'The Holy Family Convent,' as well as to drive by the location of Avril's first home situated nearby, on 'Moors Road.'

But it wasn't just the sights and cities that aroused our childhood memories – for the taste of Sri Lankan delicacies greatly assisted in this also! Dinner at the renowned 'Ministry of Crab' owned by Sri

Lanka's well known cricketer "Sangakarra" was a highlight, while hoppers, curries and sambols, and our favourite desserts (like watalumpum, love cake and brueder) transported us back in time, to when we would enjoy these delicacies on a daily basis.

Following our time in Colombo, we ventured to Kandy, where we were treated to Cultural Displays by the famous 'Kandyan Dancers' and walked through the historical Botanical Gardens in this region.

Our following 3-hour train trip to Nuwara Eliya (the 'Little England' of Sri Lanka) proved a treat, as it exposed the grandeur of the country's breathtaking mountain ranges, covered in endless greenery and Tea Plantations (the temperature in Nuwara Eliya was around 14-18 degrees). We stayed at the Grand Hotel built by the English planters when the country was ruled by the British. We were advised that the hotel suite allocated to us was used by the Queen on her visit to Sri Lanka. Avril was delighted with this information, (although we were not able to verify this advice). As it was Christmas time when we arrived at the Grand hotel, local church groups gave us entertainment by singing Christmas carols. The hotel was decorated lavishly with Christmas trees and other bunting.

It was at Pedro's Tea Factory that we witnessed the tireless work of the tea pickers, who carry up to 8kg of tea leaves on their backs, and must pick at least 20kg a day in order to earn their full wage- this work is done in rain, stormy Monsoon seasons, and the scorching heat of the Sri Lankan sun. We were advised that the tea pickers were paid a paltry sum of \$8 a day.

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Our day trip to Galle where the Dutch built ramparts to protect the city from erosion enabled us to witness the devastation caused by the Tsunami. Debris from this tragedy was still lying around in parts of the city... over 2500 people lost their lives in the disaster.

Our final stop was Bentota – a tropical paradise of pristine beaches and fresh thambilis (coconuts) on the South-Western Coast of the island. Here, Christmas was a day shared with family and the beautiful, friendly Sri Lankans we had the pleasure of befriending.

With bags packed with souvenirs, and minds packed with memories, we finally prepared for the flight back to Australia. The lengthy trip home gave me time to be thankful for the Sri Lankan culture that resonates within me, as well as reflect on the privilege we have of living in Australia.

We believe God's heart breaks for our brothers and sisters in Sri Lanka – as they dwell in poverty and in the deep trenches of Buddhism, Hinduism and other religions. We encourage you to pray for the touch of the Father in their lives. For this nation, the 'Pearl in the Indian Ocean,' is special in our hearts, and in God's also.



Botanical Gardens



Pedros Tea Factory

**Written by Hugh Foenander and his granddaughter, Kate.**

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from Jerusalem to Galilee to rest, meet with his friends and be refreshed by the beauty and peace of this lake.

In a moving final Valedictory service, Bishop Brad and Reverend Dianne celebrated the Eucharist within the site of the Garden Tomb. There is an early rock tomb here, which some claim to be the place where Jesus was laid after His crucifixion and from where he was resurrected. Several of us climbed into this narrow cave, noting the sign quoting St Luke 24:6, 'He is not here, He has Risen'!

In this commentary I can mention only some of my some personal highlights.

Yet we also visited Nazareth, Jerusalem, The Mount of Olives, the Judean Desert, Masada, Qumran, the Dead Sea, Bethsaida, St Georges' Cathedral, the 'Wailing Wall' – and more! Each in unique ways was awe-inspiring, fascinating and unforgettable.

We travelled around this country by bus and walked, climbed and walked; and over the two weeks, my

step counter calculated a distance of 47 Kilometres, even so, we barely 'scratched the surface' in our travels in this remarkable place.

Amongst the lasting blessings for me from our journey is a deepened and more informed faith in Christ, greater insight and knowledge of the Holy Land, enjoyable fellowship and life-long memories of many wonderful Pilgrimage experiences to the Holy Land.



View of the concrete security wall security wall



The supposed location of the birth place of Jesus in the Church of the Holy Nativity



800 year old Olive Trees



Bishop Brad Billings and our Vicar preparing for the Via Dolorosa Walk in Jerusalem



Cross was given to each of us by the owner of Guiding Star Tours



**Reducing waste –  
it's a good feeling!  
My ongoing journey with  
recycling, reusing and  
reducing waste.**



An unexpected side-effect of becoming greener is the associated feeling it brings.

Saying 'no thanks' to a plastic bag is a good feeling – but you have to get in quick. Sales people are very fast with the bags and it's awkward to say no once your purchase is already in one!

Getting my reusable plastic bag (heavy duty plastic from European supermarket 'Lidl' 5 years ago) out of my handbag for the odd unanticipated purchase (eg 10 balls of wool on special at Lincraft) is a great feeling.

Taking my 'soft plastics' to the recycle bin in the supermarket feels good – and as 'War on Waste' indicated, Coles soft plastic recycling does actually get recycled (unlike some others).

Taking my veggie scraps out to my new worm farm is an enjoyable experience and 1000 worms was an excellent Christmas present.

Having a three-quarters-empty landfill bin and sending less to landfill is a good feeling.

My green journey is not a new thing, but it has ramped up in recent years: when the supermarkets started selling re-useable bags about 10 years ago I started off with a couple of their green bags, and as they introduced different colours. I got a couple of each, resulting in a lovely rainbow of re-useable bags. I even got a couple in France – a nice re-useable souvenir! As soon as these are emptied, they go straight back into the car boot so that I have no chance of forgetting them.

At about the same time, I put one of the more heavy-duty plastic bags into each handbag (I only have a couple mind you!) and I've even squeezed a small light-weight plastic bag into my wallet, so I am never without one and can say 'no thanks' to any more offered.

After watching 'War on Waste' on the ABC last year, I began separating my soft plastics – bread bags, frozen veggie bags, used glad wrap, chip packets, chocolate wrappers etc. These go into an old plastic bag, and when full, it goes into the car boot, ready to be dropped off next supermarket trip. I am now extremely low on plastic bags and will have to work out how to take my soft plastic to the supermarket when I completely run out. I still tie all plastic bags into a knot so that if they do escape and end up in the ocean, they look as little like a jellyfish as possible.

(Side note: I spent a fun few evenings learning from the internet how to make 'plam' – plastic yarn, from old plastic bags, and then crocheting it to upcycle it. I managed to use up nearly all my bags to make just one new one – and whilst this was quite fun, it is not getting to the root of the problem, which is avoiding creating a need to upcycle them in the first place!)

Doing the weekly shop, it is easy to forget about being green and automatically grab plastic bags for fruit, veggies etc and these were going straight into the bin. So my new rule is that unless I get more than 6 of an item, I don't use a bag. We are big apple eaters, so we do use a bag for them, but once emptied at home, it goes back with the 'green' bags to be re-used next time. It's a big improvement but not perfect. I'd like to see some sort of re-useable baskets in the veggie area that we could use.

Another problem in the supermarket is the amount of packaging that items come in – especially those items that have two layers of

packaging – cereals, items from the deli counter, some biscuits in plastic and cardboard etc. The majority is theoretically recyclable and goes into my yellow bin, but I wonder what happens to it at the other end, and how much really does get recycled, especially now that China won't take our waste and our green waste is mounting up. The more we can all look to buy items made from recycled materials, the larger the market for them will grow, and the more likely our recycling will actually be recycled.

Note also that if you put your recycling into plastic bags, it will go straight to land fill – it must be loose in the bin.

The worm farm was pleasantly simple to set up (as Irene has been telling me for some time) and my worms seem to be very happy and healthy! I collect the scraps for a few days and feed them twice a week. This is getting rid of apple cores, broccoli stalks, tea bags, eggshells, carrot tops, and various other bits, but the worms are not keen on banana peel, lemon peel or onions skins, so these are still going into the rubbish (for the moment). The worms also prefer to have their meals finely diced, so that's also a bit of extra chopping, but they're worth it. J

Between the soft plastic and worm food, this has cut the amount of landfill waste dramatically and the red bin is usually less than ¼ full. That gives me a very good feeling!

I still have various other things that I'd like to work on: Trialling reusable wrap in place of glad wrap – does anyone have experience of making their own beeswax wraps?

Setting up the compost bin for the kitchen scraps that the worms don't like – I have a compost bin but it's not working very well.

When you can physically see the results of your efforts, it really does make you feel good that you are doing your bit to help our environment and use the riches of the earth in the best possible way.

I'd love to hear how you are reducing your waste and if you have any other ideas to minimise what you are putting into your landfill bin. Drop me a line – [franludgate@netspace.net.au](mailto:franludgate@netspace.net.au) Watch out next month for our focus at church on recycling.

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