

# THE LINK

## **The Church of the Good Shepherd**

### ***Anglican Parish of Plympton***

### ***Diocese of Adelaide - South Australia***

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#### ***A WORD FROM OUR PARISH PRIEST, FATHER MICHAEL LANE***



Dear Good Shepherd Parishioners,

When I wrote for the *Autumn Link*, some of the impacts of the COVID 19 pandemic were beginning to dawn upon us. The church was about to close, but how completely the physical doors of the church and other organisations were closing, had not been fully processed. Many of us were left pondering about how to go about our ordinary everyday activities like shopping or visiting a doctor - whilst avoiding a potentially life-threatening disease. Many of us watched the news in shocked disbelief as we processed just how serious this pandemic was. Many people were frightened, anxious, and very proactive about taking expert advice on isolating as much as possible. Some, not many, were incredulous and dismissive of the whole

thing. They were few, but they were nevertheless there, making things uncomfortable. We saw glimpses of just how ugly and divisive some points of view can be, even arguments that the loss of life was a small price to pay to keep the wheels of commerce turning. Making a profit was more important than saving lives. Elements of the media presented the young as resenting prioritising the preservation of the lives of elderly and vulnerable people.

Fortunately, the Australian Commonwealth and States leadership rejected this view on both humanitarian and economic grounds. Not all nations have been so fortunate. We have seen from a distance, the ugly price paid for institutionalised racism, and the pervasive turning of a blind eye to entrenched disadvantage. Yet, we too know that our own nation has similar challenges, both historically and at present.

The *Black Lives Matter* movement has highlighted something that all Christians know. Whilst we are all made in the image of God, and we all matter, the teachings of Christ unequivocally champion the needs of the poor and the vulnerable, and that those on the margins of society matter to God all the more. Christians should have no trouble understanding the challenge of the core message of the *Black Lives Matter* movement, aligning as it does with Christ's teaching.

And now, it feels as though we have emerged relatively unscathed. Life is not "normal", but we are okay. We in Australia, especially in South Australia, have much to be grateful for. We thank God for the medical, supermarket and other front-line workers, together with decision makers; and everyone who took the very real threat seriously. We have only to look overseas to know and to be reminded of, how bad it can be.

I continue to be thankful that in my *mind's eye* I have always imagined that I wanted to live in the immediate vicinity of my parish – if, and when I had one. Most of my priestly peers seemed to warn me off this idea, however other colleagues thoroughly affirmed my desire to live within my parish community. I have found

being next door to the church a wonderful thing. One of the best aspects of this Covid-19 shut-in period, has been the ability to easily, as part of my daily *at home life*, say regular *Morning and Evening Prayer* in the church, and to live stream this via *Facebook*. This began as my vision of a way to keep everyone in the parish connected in a low-key, limited numbers kind of way, with regular ongoing acts of worship, spread over the whole week, and whole day. It was a pattern that I maintained for ten weeks, and I found it both sustainable and sustaining, through challenging times. I thoroughly enjoyed the experience of preparing and saying the daily office. In the first week this was shared with Susan Smith, sometimes Marilyn. However, when the ruling came to close our doors. no worship, not even private prayer, was to take place. Then came the message that worship could be conducted, but only with those essential to the worship and its recording present. Without any high expectations, and with my laptop under my arm, I went into the church to see if the recently installed Wifi extender would work. Whilst I knew that it worked intermittently in my church office, no-one was more surprised than I when *lo and behold*. with a single click on the *Good Shepherd Facebook* page I successfully streamed an *Evening Prayer* service(!). A parishioner or two immediately acknowledge my presence, and over the next few weeks many parishioners, family, friends, friends of parishioners, long past members of the *Good Shepherd* community, and people from overseas, dropped in on *Morning and Evening* services at different times - some people from the Philippines and South America, not the least bit comfortable with our Christ the King/Ascended Christ sculpture. Apart from a glitch with the Chrome search engine, I had eight weeks of easy live streaming. For this I am grateful too. These last few weeks have seen many breaks in transmission but have also coincided with my return to regular days off, which has also been a good thing. Overall, I have had a positive experience. Even though I have long said the daily office on my own, saying it to a virtual audience, has been all the more rewarding. However, it was great when we were able to re-open the church for worship.

The pastoral side of parish life seems to have, on balance, been managed well and I have had positive feedback. The *Pastoral Care* Team was instrumental with a quick initial response, followed by regular follow-up each week or so. I am deeply grateful that this structure, which has been in place at *Good Shepherd* for decades, worked so well. The Autumn *Link's* publication was perfectly timed for the early days of the *Shut Down*. Colin and Chris worked hard to ensure that everyone who needed to, received a hard copy. Keeping in touch with parishioners was greatly facilitated by the use of *email, Facebook, the Parish Pew Sheet*, and via the *Website*, as well as one on one phone calls. *The Pastoral Care* Team backed this up in various ways, including regular text messages and emails, depending on people's needs. I was concerned for parishioners who were dependent on phones, but feedback from them indicated that they were faring well, better than I expected.

I was grateful also for the worship resources prepared by *St Peter's Cathedral* Team, and Archbishop Geoffrey and Bishop Denise's sermons. I also know that many of our *Google savvy* parishioners quickly tuned into their preferred forms of online worship, resources and communication. On the whole parishioners seem to have navigated the time of shutdown, isolation and careful engagement with the wider community well. Whilst some are relatively undisturbed; others remain anxious and alert. We can learn to appreciate and to be grateful for all the different ways in which we have engaged and managed this time.

There is no doubt that we as a parish and members of the wider South Australian and Australian community, have a good deal to be grateful for, especially in the context of global communities' experience of this pandemic. The Commonwealth's *Job Keeper program* has protected this parish and the Adelaide diocese from a financial crisis, and for this we give thanks. That said, we can be sure that there will be future challenges, and possibly disturbing decisions that will need to be made for the good of us all. We pray for God's guidance, wisdom, and deep peace.

*Michael*



## **BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS REPORT**

At the February *Vestry* meeting I reported that we would finally be going ahead with the outside painting of the Rectory. Quotes were received and approved. Many thanks to Mary Clasohm for her recommendation of *Pre Painters*. Unfortunately, along came *Covid-19* and we had to wait until May before the painter was able to start. Father Michael and Carol were happy to have the painter on the premises. He worked alone and lived nearby, so did not need to access their home. The cost was \$7,522.90 for the outside of the entire house, carports and gutters. We also had some minor repair work done to the roof thanks to Harold's brother!

The annual white ant treatment has been completed in both the Hall and Church. The Rectory will be done, as *Covid-19* virus restrictions lessen. Repair work on the pointing of the roof at No 9 will commence shortly, as this also had to be delayed.

Many thanks to the Gardening team of Michael, Harold, Chris and Susan, who have been doing a fantastic job of replanting the front gardens. They have put so much hard work into these areas, which are looking fantastic.

*Fran Kerwin*

## **VALE MARJORIE EILEEN SMITH OAM**



**Marjorie Smith (and Beverley McDougall) at a Church of the Good Shepherd function in 2011.**

**Passed away peacefully at Resthaven, Westbourne Park on Sunday, 28th June 2020, aged 93 years.**

Born in the small village of Mexborough in Yorkshire, UK, seeing service as a nurse during World War II, and presented with an *Order of Australia Medal* in 2005, for her outstanding service to *Carers Association of SA*, Marjorie Smith was a woman of substance. Her contributions to society in general (and to the parish at CHOGS in particular) were widely known and appreciated. An accomplished chef, community volunteer, past President and member of ZONTA for over 30 years, participant in all aspects of parish life, Marjorie's resilience and positive outlook, ready

wit and willingness to contribute made her a much loved member of our congregation who was always great company and who was rarely seen without the characteristic smile that lit up her face.

***Marjorie, how we will miss you(!)***

## Lessons from the Pandemic – What is “normal” – Is God calling us to do things in a different way?

I have noticed that there are still people in the community who for many weeks have been using phrases like “*when we return to normal*” or “*I can’t wait to get back to how things were.*”

Perhaps it is natural for us to resist change and to enjoy the easy familiarity of what we have been used to. But I do not think Covid-19 is going to give us any choice. Things, many things, will be different, or will happen in different ways.

Yet I have been surprised about how some who have moved to online gatherings are still using old scripts.

For example, I have watched a number of online worship services from various denominations and from various parts of the world in the past weeks, and many of them are clinging to the same format they have used all their lives.

Such as still preaching twenty five minute sermons, forgetting that now we can fast forward when we have had enough, or that we can go and make a coffee while the priest continues past our ten minute attention limit(!)

This lockdown was an opportunity to try something new, but many groups and organisations have chosen not to do so.

***What might be some of the changes in churches when we reach the stage where there are no restrictions on numbers attending?***

Having been told daily for months about the need for good personal hygiene, hand washing and sanitizing, keeping 1.5 metres apart, and so on, I think it will be a long time before I shall rush to shake hands with, or hug, another person who is not a member of my immediate family(!)

But it will be hard not to do so, because we are so accustomed to greeting friends in this way. In Rotary, for example, it is a tradition that Rotarians greet each other with a handshake, but I understand that has been dispensed with for the foreseeable future.

For me personally, I think it is time to give the “*passing of the peace*” with a handshake or hug in churches an extended holiday while new cases of the Covid-19 virus are still appearing in Australia. I am pleased to see that we are in fact doing that at the *Good Shepherd* as people return to worship.

Anyway, my experience has been that it had become in many churches an impromptu chat time with people ranging around the church to exchange more than the words “*peace be with you*”, such as “*peace be with you what did you think of the Crows unbelievable hey?*” If in the future this custom becomes one that we can’t dispense with or postpone re-introducing, then I hope we will respect the decision of some in our midst not to participate in the traditional way.

Maybe occasionally, perhaps when there is a fifth Sunday, we could have a service of *Morning Prayer* instead of the *Communion* service. It has been great during the lockdown to watch and listen to Fr Michael’s online services. There is a rich tradition of *Morning Prayer* worship that we sadly miss out on with weekly *Communions*.

Given that most online services have been shorter than we are accustomed to, someone suggested to me that maybe traditional communion liturgies in our Anglican churches could be shortened. I am not sure how that would work in a church such as ours where we follow closely formats that have stood the test of time for longer than any of us can remember.

But if I were pressed to say what parts of our ‘*normal*’ liturgy I would be ‘*comfortable*’ omitting, I would say maybe the lesson from the Hebrew Bible (the Old Testament), and the psalm. My reason for selecting these two items is that we have them already printed in full in our reading inserts, and we are quite capable of reading them ourselves at home in the ensuing week. We would not be ‘*missing out*’ on them if they were omitted from the actual service...

However, as I can hear voices of disapproval even as I write this, maybe this is the place to stop and leave the future to whatever it will be....!

**Colin Ames**

Much admired by many people, and an important food source for a number of our Australian native birds, Grevilleas come in a variety of shapes, sizes and colours, and there's no denying the beauty of a grevillea bush covered in flowers. Grevilleas were named for Charles Frances Greville, a co-founder of the *Royal Horticultural Society* in London, who was born in 1749 and was a close friend of Sir Joseph Banks. We have over 300 species in Australia, and many cultivars. Among the grevilleas growing in the Spiritual Garden at the rear of our church are a number of grafted plants which have been bred to enable them to survive in poorer soils by grafting them onto the rootstock of an eastern Australian tree called Silky Oak, or *Grevillea robusta*, the biggest grevillea of them all. The story of how this practice came about is rather interesting and involves a man called Richard Tomkin, who lives in Queensland.

I first came to know Richard about thirteen years ago when I started trying to grow grevilleas in our garden in North Plympton. I became frustrated by my lack of success with the more spectacular "toothbrush" type flowering varieties like *Moonlight* and *Honey Gem*, which simply failed to thrive in our rather alkaline soil. My search for an answer led me to Gin Gin, a little town in the Bundaberg region in Queensland. Here, at his nursery called *Changers Green*, Richard Tomkin had been breeding and collecting many different hybrid varieties of grevilleas for over 35 years. He gave his new creations strange names, like "*Billy Bonkers*", his very first effort, which was named after a rather demented dog the family owned at the time. We have several dwarf *Billy Bonkers*, with their vibrant pink flowers, growing around the gazebo in the garden - have a look next time you are visiting.



It was at his mum's house in Gin Gin that Richard first saw varieties like *Honey Gem* and *Coconut Ice* growing in her garden. Captivated by their beauty, he set off to buy some for himself, but found that they were not easily available. That's when he started propagating his own, and in time he had 40 or 50 plants. However, the ones Richard really wanted to grow were the Western Australian varieties with their amazing flowers. These WA grevilleas thrived in the sandy, free draining soil of their home state, but they were not happy in other soils, so Richard decided to graft them onto Silky Oak rootstock. As he puts it: '*Silky oak roots will handle wet*

*feet, rot, and all sorts of diseases, whereas the piece on the top won't.*' Richard loves the fact that grevilleas attract birds "by the the million" and that the plants come in a range of sizes, from small groundcovers to trees that grow up to twenty metres high, which means there is a grevillea to suit every garden.

He is the epitome of patience, allowing new grafts to grow for several months to see the results, and sometimes discarding them because they have too many prickles, or are not colourful enough - or because he simply doesn't like them. He believes that you need to be brutal to get the best results, and he also explains that these plants sometimes grow at their own rate, with nothing apparently happening for months, and then suddenly they are off. Experience has taught me that this can certainly happen - and not to get too discouraged if progress is slow. Keeping an eye on them and not allowing them to dry out for, as Richard says "*days, weeks and sometimes months*" is occasionally necessary before they decide to grow.

I am on Richard's mailing list, and although he is semi-retired these days, living at Bungadoo, about 20 minutes from Gin Gin, he still dabbles in grafting, and from time to time I receive lists of what he has available - which invariably include tantalising new varieties, and I need to resist the temptation to find a space in the garden for "*just one more*".

When I first became interested in obtaining some grafted grevilleas, my husband Harold and I visited Richard at his nursery in Gin Gin and brought back a box of twenty-two seedlings for our garden in North Plympton. We combined this visit with one of our driving trips from Adelaide to Queensland in 2013, to see our family who live in Woombye on the Sunshine Coast. From Woombye to Gin Gin is a three-hour trip, so we decided to travel up to Gin Gin, stay overnight and make a leisurely trip back the next day, planning to arrive in Woombye by early evening. Little did we know that we were about to embark on something of an adventure(!). We started off mid-morning, and although it was raining fairly steadily we didn't think too much of it. We arrived in Gin Gin on time and spent a pleasant couple of hours with Richard at his nursery, before heading back to our motel for the night. When we got there, the place was packed, and I remember thinking it was a good thing we'd booked. A large number of people had arrived



Bees enjoying the flowers on *Grevillea Bush Lemon* in the Spiritual garden at CHOGS

from outlying areas, looking for accommodation for the night. When we set off next day along the Bruce Highway towards Woombye, the rain was still drumming down, and although there was a lot of water on the roadside, the highway was still clear. However, by the time we reached Gympie, two hours south of Gin Gin, we knew we were not going to be able to continue. The road out of town was impassable and we started looking for somewhere to spend the night.

Every square inch of accommodation in Gympie, including the Civic Centre, was full - not only with workers and visitors, but also locals who couldn't get back to their homes on the other side of town. After a fruitless search, we ended up parking (along with several other cars) on the upper levels of a 3-storey car park in the centre of town. At the bottom of the building were male/female toilets which, thankfully, because of the situation, the Council kept unlocked and lit up during the night. Once parked, we ventured down to the main street of Gympie. We waited and watched with local shopkeepers as they cleared goods from their shops, keeping an anxious eye on the water slowly creeping up the street toward them. We got the feeling that we were watching a well rehearsed routine, as show owners moved belongings, aiming to get anything they could above ground - and I began to feel very sorry for the people of Gympie. Fascinating, was watching the clothing shops, which whisked racks of clothes up towards the ceilings with pulleys, where they remained until the waters receded.

Back at the car park we rang our children and explained the situation. They were concerned but also knew we were hardy enough to cope. Later, we heard that their friends were horrified, exclaiming: "Your parents spent the night in a car park (!!)" Why didn't they turn back when it was raining?" The explanation: "They're from Adelaide" was met with a nod of the head, and a knowing "Oh,,,,,,," as if that explained everything(!)

We were an assorted group of travellers who came together that night - I recall one lady on her way to a wedding. Another had two small dogs travelling with her. Nobody had a vehicle or bedding that promised them a comfortable night's sleep. Harold and I were travelling in our ute with a canopy on it, which provided some shelter, but which also contained several cartons of Adelaide wine for friends - which not only took up room, but which had also become rather damp, so moving them was not an option. Unlike me, Harold has the knack of being able to sleep almost anywhere, so he passed the night relatively well. I, on the other hand, spent a fitful night trying to get comfortable between the cartons, and pretty much aware of the nocturnal wanderings of our fellow travellers. At one point I heard a muffled groan and peered out of the side window of the ute to see the fellow opposite bounce out of his car, and stamp around noisily before laying a rug or sleeping bag on the concrete and wrapping himself up as best he could to keep warm. He was beside himself and I could relate to his frustration.

The interminable night ended and with it came the news that our children had managed to locate the friend of a friend who lived on the same side of Gympie as the car park, so later that day she was able to come and rescue us and we spent the next two nights at her house waiting for the waters to recede - bliss(!) On that morning, we returned to the main street and saw relieved shopkeepers who'd remained above the water line - and less fortunate others looking on as firemen moved up and down the street blasting sediment and mud from premises with powerful hoses. We decided that life in Gympie and the like is just too hard - these people had faced this situation four times in the previous twelve months. In Adelaide we pray for rain to start - these people pray for it to stop(!)

Eventually, the waters receded and two days later we were able to resume our journey. As we left Gympie, I was struck by a "FOR SALE" sign, three quarters of which was underwater, describing the land as "a wonderful building site for your new home" (!)

The trip back to Adelaide had its moments, and swollen creeks with vehicles lined up on each side became a familiar sight until we were some fifty kms south of Goondiwindi. Our vehicle's height allowed us to carefully negotiate creek crossings that cars could not, and we slowly progressed. Three days later, on the home stretch, we approached the quarantine inspection point on the border between Victoria and South Australia. As the inspector carried our precious box of twenty-two grafted grevillea seedlings into his office to check the accompanying paperwork, he looked rather perplexed. It was obviously not something he encountered every day. As required, the paperwork included the *Grower's Certificate* stating that the plants had "not been grown in a fire ant area". Interestingly, growers are permitted to send these plants from Queensland (via express post) to all states except Western Australia.

The story ends with an unexpected twist. When Harold was unloading the ute on the night that we arrived home, he called out to me "Hey, come and have a look at this". I peered into the back of the car and saw a juvenile cane toad hopping about. OH MY GOD - I could not believe it - conservationists at heart, here we were transporting this number one pest into South Australia. As it was, the man at the inspection point had taken our plants and paperwork away and pored over them for quite some time before returning and waving us on. I could just imagine the look of horror that would have appeared on his face if the toad had hopped into view at the wrong moment. We would probably have had to unload the entire contents of the ute and been there for hours while he went through everything with a fine toothcomb(!)

We could only surmise that the toad got on board at Harold's brother's place at Mt Glorious, near Brisbane, when wine cartons were being unloaded and the box of seedlings had been temporarily placed on the grass. A thorough inspection of the ute revealed the odious reptile to be the only passenger. We were familiar with cane toads, often seeing them on our Queensland trips, so I knew how to dispatch this one, but I still have nightmares thinking about what might have happened (!)



*Grevillea Moonlight*



*Grevillea Loopy Lou*



*Grevillea Flamingo*

The grafted grevillea seedlings flourished in the alkaline soil at North Plympton