

HOLY COVENANT ANGLICAN CHURCH

a place for everyone



**REST
GROW
TRANSFORM**

THE 2020 STEWARDSHIP CHALLENGE

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WHAT IS THE CHALLENGE?

WELCOME

When describing God's kingdom, Jesus often used the image of a banquet to convey its nature and significance.

The next time you put on a dinner, don't just invite your friends and family and rich neighbours, the kind of people who will return the favour. Invite some people who never get invited out, the misfits from the wrong side of the tracks. You'll be—and experience—a blessing.

Luke 14.12-14 The Message

For Jesus, the banquet spoke of how life in God's kingdom is about invitation and challenge. God's banquet is an opportunity ripe with promise, hope, love and vitality.

The image is an invitation to rest. When we rest in Christ, we find ourselves renewed, refreshed and recreated. We become who we were created to be.

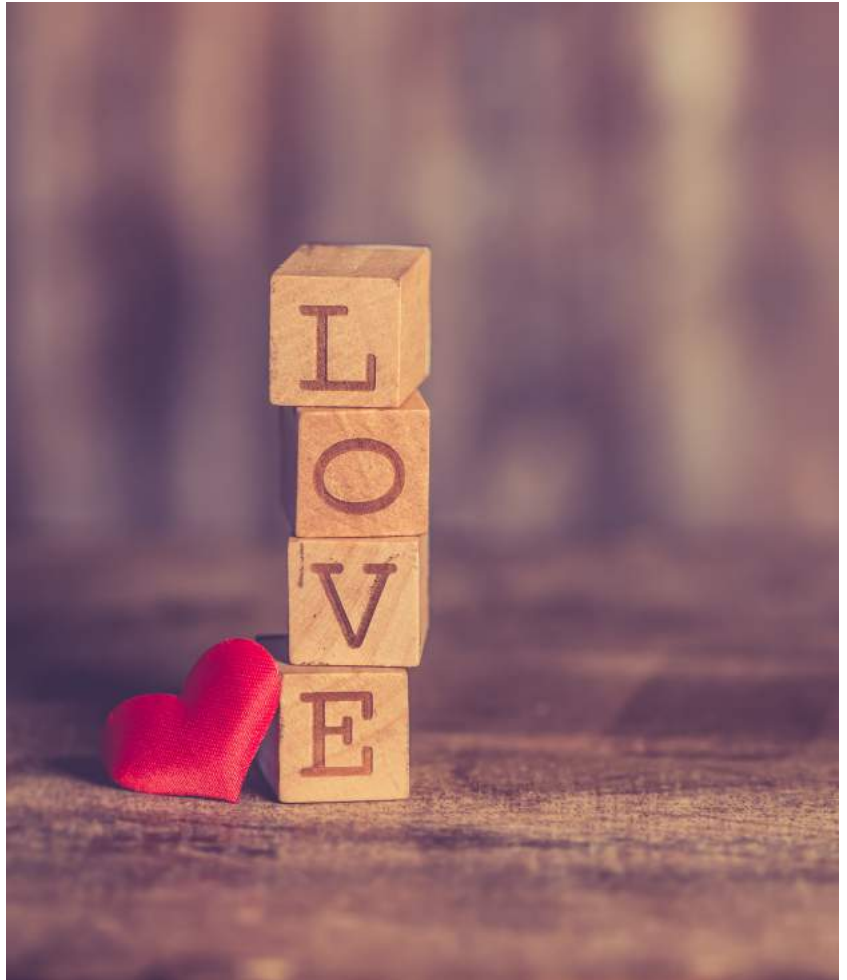
But the banquet presents us with a twofold challenge. We are challenged to grow in God by developing the kind of social, emotional and spiritual maturity that makes us good people. We are also challenged to join with God's Spirit to bring peace and justice in the world. We are blessed to be a blessing to the world around us.

So thank you for making Holy Covenant a special place where everyone gets to rest, grow and transform the world.



WAYNE BRIGHTON

Rector of Holy Covenant Anglican Church



THE STEWARDSHIP CHALLENGE

Mention the word stewardship and the first thing everyone thinks about is money. Yet money was often the last thing on Jesus' mind.

Jesus spent his ministry speaking about faith, hope and love. When people start to follow him, their priorities around time and energy change. They stop worrying. They start to love others. They become more open minded and warm hearted. Out of this gratitude and generosity, they start to use their money differently.

This stewardship challenge is in three parts.

First, it shows how we follow Jesus in our part of Belconnen by highlighting all the things we do as a parish together to bless others. It speaks of how we are God's banquet in our neighbourhood - it's a feast that isn't possible without your help and engagement.

Second, it invites you to consider our church's mission, vision and values. This is an opportunity to dream about what could be. How might we yet become a generous blessing in a hungry world?

Finally, it challenges you to consider how these hopes and dreams might be turned into reality by each of us using our time, energy and money. Will you take the challenge?

FOLLOWING GOD'S LEAD



OUR MISSION, VISION

STRETCHING INTO GOD'S FUTURE

The world we live in is often marked by scarcity, exclusion and loneliness. Thankfully, God hasn't left the world this way. God sent Jesus and they sent the Spirit and the Church to do something about it.

God leads through invitation and challenge. God invites us to the banquet of his kingdom. God makes room for us and others.

But we are also challenged to stretch into the opportunity presented to us. By listening to Jesus, we find our hearts stretched to make room for others. By making room, our minds are stretched to challenge the powers that make scarcity normal. God challenges us to become the banquet for a hungry world, a place of blessing in spaces of deprivation.

We are able to stretch into following God's lead by being clear about our mission, committed to our vision and grounded in our values.

The **mission** of Holy Covenant lets us know what we are to do, namely:

- grow in Christ together
- equip for service
- to care for all.

When we come to God's banquet table, we discover a purpose that's not only bigger than our own worries and fears, it's more exciting too.

Vision is about how we put our mission into action. It's what our mission looks like in everyday life when people put it into play.

Holy Covenant's vision is to be a place where everyone gets to rest, grow and transform the world around them.

Everything that happens should invite us to find our rest in Christ, the Lord of the banquet. Everything we do as a church should encourage people to grow deeply in God. By joining in with God, we are emboldened by the Holy Spirit to transform this world by working for peace and justice.

Our **values** underpin all we do. As a church, we value diversity and inclusion such that we allow people to exercise their gifts irrespective of

their age or able-bodiedness, their gender or orientation.

Everyone flourishes when we treat each other with dignity and compassion. This takes a commitment to nourish generosity of heart, mind and spirit. For it is only through our generosity that compassion and justice grow in this world.

God's banquet is not meant to be something distant or remote. Jesus' intention is that church should be a banquet for people right now. They are a little heavenly appetiser that helps people get their heads, hearts and arms around God's way of changing the world.

Holy Covenant has long been a place where everyone gets the opportunity to discover and share their gifts with others for one simple reason - you.

All your prayers, energy and engagement make this church possible. Put simply, without you and your willingness to stretch there would be no Holy Covenant.

SEEING OUR WORK



FROM DOOR TO TABLE

The table is prepared but who will come? Our worship services are geared to meeting the needs of different groups, depending on their age, background and experience.

Grounded in a generous and broad tradition of Anglicanism, many people from a variety of traditions call us home. We listen and follow God by using scripture, tradition, reason and experience together.

The **8am service** is the most traditional, following the Anglican liturgy closely and using hymns. A traditional service geared to those who find mornings difficult is held on **Wednesdays** at noon.

The **10am service** is designed with families in mind. Children and youth programs run during the first part of the service. The music and liturgy utilises a range of contemporary sources. Children are invited to receive Communion.

The **4.30pm Twilight Conversation** is an open-minded and relaxed space. It uses a conversation based format to encourage people to think aloud about Scripture and to share life together.

A range of volunteers make each service possible as welcomers, readers, intercessors, worship leaders, audio-visual technicians, musicians and those who love to share hospitality.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS

Our **Children and young adults** programs operate in the Rainbow Centre during each school term. We seek to provide age appropriate spiritual development with children and their families.

The children's program is designed for primary school kids. Two groups operate - for those from preschool to year 4 and those in years 5 and 6.

The program draws on the ecumenical *Seasons of the Spirit* package and Godly Play as the means to inspire wonder and creativity with God.

In any week, up to a dozen kids grow through this work.

Katherine Rainger has coordinated the group with help from a team of parent volunteers, who all find it an opportunity to grow as they serve others.

The **young adults program** provides a range of opportunities for those in middle and senior school (Years 7-12). It is a space where they learn how to read Scripture, pray and follow Jesus together.

During term time, a range of activities occur - from bowling and movie nights to camps out at Silverwattle. Young adults meet for Thoughtful Thursdays every fortnight for a time of deeper engagement and learning.

Jerry Platt has led the team of more than a dozen young people who are growing into tomorrow's leaders today.

Katherine and Jerry are stepping down in 2020. The challenge will be to find new leaders who can build on these strong foundations with our children, young adults and volunteers.



Godly Play is a play-based approach to biblical story telling that invites wonder and engagement by using drama and wooden toys

SEEING OUR WORK

PASTORAL CARE

BY THE BELONGING AND CARING TEAM

Pastoral care is a practical way for members to show their love for one another, often at times when it is most needed.

As a community we seek to be there for one another by:

- giving a listening ear when bad things happen
- helping those who feel helpless to find a new future
- being a friend to those confined to hospital or at home
- providing meals through the casserole bank
- helping those without transport get to church
- providing special prayer through the prayer vine when needs arise.

Pastoral care works when everyone helps out. You might wish to donate a meal or join the prayer vine. Making a friend by visiting someone in hospital always makes a difference.



Pastoral care comes in many forms. Simply taking friends out to Floriade is a practical way for many to experience love and support

HOLISTIC CARE NURSING MINISTRY

NURSING PEOPLE BACK INTO LIFE

Our dream is to help people in our community who may be struggling to improve their quality of life. We cannot fix their problems but we can offer friendship, practical support and encouragement.

Consequently, we offer friendship and practical support to vulnerable elderly clients and their carers across the Belconnen community by:

- providing respite care for those living at home with a life-limiting illness, old age and time out for their carers through the **Covenant Care Day Hospice & Respite Centre**
- enabling people to enjoy monthly social outings to cafes, gardens, and musical performances
- helping people in their homes with emotional and practical support through regular visiting

and phone calls, decluttering, shopping, transport to appointments and provision of meals.

By easing social isolation and loneliness, people find new strength to make decisions about their lives and find fresh opportunities for healing and peace.

Day respite care is important as it provides a safe space to escape the confines of home to enjoy the kind of things that everyone takes for granted - like entertainment, activities, a chance to talk or to be quiet, a hot meal and to nurture our souls by praying or meditating.

For full-time carers, it gives an extended worry free period where they get to enjoy life too, whether it is by having coffee with a friend, catching up on tasks or simply getting some much needed rest.

It doesn't take much to help a person in need, you don't need special skills or training. A listening ear, a little patience and the willingness to give a little time and practical support can go a long way.

Funding for this work is received each year from a local foundation established by a generous donor. The program's operations also depend on many volunteers from the parish and broader community who give generously of their time and energy to help others.

You can join our team at our day respite centre or visit an elderly person in their home to offer friendship and practical support. You can do as much or as little as you choose at times that suit you.

SEEING OUR WORK



Members of the SHOVEL team have transformed the overgrown and under-utilised space behind the Rainbow Centre into a space where creativity and creation are celebrated

COMMUNITY GARDEN

BY THE SHOVEL TEAM

Our community garden planted its first seedlings in January 2019. Since then it has welcomed five people with no connection to church.

Members of the community garden share an interest in:

- using sustainable gardening practices to grow our own food
- swapping knowledge and tips about gardening
- cooking nutritious meals
- having fun.

We aim to use the time, talents and resources that God has given us to nurture and care for the earth and each other. Using sustainable gardening practices, we hope to tread lightly on the earth, giving back a little more than we take, while nurturing the body, mind and spirit.

Anyone with an interest in sustainable vegetable growing is welcome to join us, regardless of knowledge or experience. Members can share in tending and harvesting community plots and, in addition, can rent their own plot. Basic tools are provided.

FRIENDSHIP GROUPS

CAFE CRAWLING IN CANBERRA

Canberra is a city that is always changing. People move in and out for work opportunities constantly. People experience times of busyness and loneliness. All this mobility means that the city can be a hard place for new people to make friends.

A feature of life at Holy Covenant are the Friendship Groups. Friendship groups give everyone the opportunity to meet others and share life together.

Some groups like to explore cafes together. Others walk and hike together. Have a Good Yarn is a knitting group most recently established. These groups draw people from across our congregations and the community.

Friendship groups give us the opportunity to share life together. Sharing life is how we develop our discipleship. We learn how to listen and love one another. We also get to invite and meet new people.

While some groups last only a few months, others have lasted more than twenty years. However long they last, such groups build bonds that can last a lifetime.

In 2020, a variety of new groups will form. Grow Groups will be focussed around leadership. Others will offer bible studies and the opportunity to explore faith for the first time.



SEEING OUR WORK

RAINBOW FELLOWSHIP



Humanity is diverse. Everybody is a gift and we all have different strengths and abilities.

People with disabilities can have a hard time in church life because their gifts and strengths are rarely recognised or used. Programs can struggle to meet the social and spiritual needs of adults and their families living with disability.

Rainbow Fellowship is a space geared to helping adults with an intellectual and/or physical

disability explore both growing in community and sharing faith.

It builds community and participation through sharing Bible stories, activities, afternoon tea, prayer and companionship.

The group meets on the first Sunday of every month from 3.30pm until 5pm.

It welcomes support workers and family members who wish to assist regardless of faith or background.

PLAYGROUP

Every Friday morning from 10am until 12 noon, the worship centre is open for a playgroup for pre-school aged children from the neighbourhood.

Registered with ACT Playgroups, a small team of volunteers provides a simple, non-religious program led by Christine Mitchell and Doreen Matters.

As families arrive there is free play and craft activities using Holy Covenant's flexible indoor and outdoor space. Kids and carers sing a welcome song with music followed by craft and games. Snack time, served by volunteers, is always well liked. The morning ends with story time and song.

The program allows carers to socialise, and to have fun together with their children.



RESOURCES GROUP

A PRACTICAL APPROACH TO FAITH

Keeping Holy Covenant's facility in top shape in the work of the Resources Group. This group helps keep our building tidy and up to the demands of its users.

Working bees are organised regularly to take care of all the odd jobs that need to be done. A team of volunteers keep the place tidy for Sundays, putting out the chairs each week.

In the past year, the team has renewed the external fascia near the labyrinth. The tile roof was cleaned. A porch was also built over the kitchen door, making it easier to get in and out when the rain arrives.

Most recently, the group cleaned the pergola and is replacing the shade-cloth that will cover the children's play area and reduce glare from the sanctuary.

More could be done. In the next few years the Rainbow Centre will need more work and our chairs will need replacing.

SEEING OUR WORK

NURTURING HEART, MIND AND SOUL

Faith grows best when we take time to nurture it. Holy Covenant nurtures our faith in many important ways.

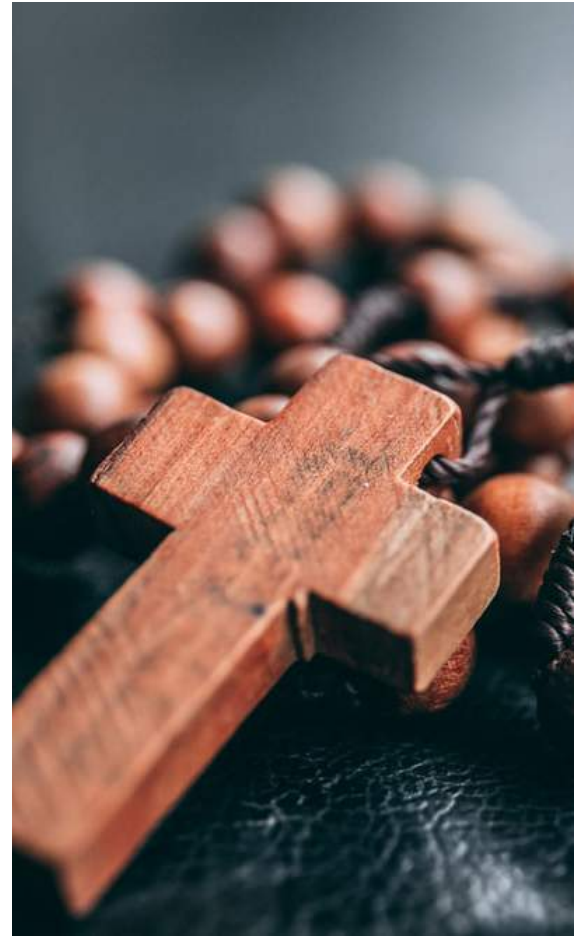
Meditation is a way to nurture faith through silence and learning how to listen to the deep, constant presence of God in our lives. A group operates every Tuesday from 12.30pm and another on Wednesdays from 6pm.

A **reading group** allows people to explore the thoughts of inspirational writers like Joyce Rupp and Joan Chittister. By cultivating the heart through prayer and spiritual reading, our lives are opened up to good

works and enriching our communities.

Education for Ministry is an adult learning program that enables people to better connect faith, spirituality and daily life. It nourishes the mind by giving people the tools to interpret Scripture wisely and to develop the confidence to follow God in our daily lives.

We nurture the soul by providing **retreats** each year. Some are residential while others allow for a quiet day of reflection. **Parish camps** are another way we are nurturing our connection with God and each other.



ENRICHING OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

As a church we are committed to enriching our neighbourhood by being open and accessible to interest based community groups. A range of groups operate from our superb facilities.

A variety of **Yoga** groups operate on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Our peaceful premises provide an anchor for those seeking a place to stretch out physically and spiritually.

Gentle exercise classes for older people on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday afternoons allow for a different kind of stretching. Similarly, a **Tai Chi** class runs on Wednesday mornings allowing people to explore a different method of building body and mind.

For those looking for a challenge, **Scrabble** and **Mah-Jong** groups meet on Thursday mornings, giving many retirees an opportunity to stretch their mental muscles a little further.

YOUR INVITATION



BEING GOD'S BANQUET FOR A HUNGRY WORLD

Jesus' second banquet story in Luke 14 also brings both invitation and challenge.

God invites hungry people into a banquet - a new world where grace, peace and justice flourish. Without our presence, God's feast remains a promise that is unrealised and unfulfilled - after all an empty room only becomes a party when the guests arrive. The guests are participants one minute and the next they are the banquet - passing plates around, pulling up chairs, turning strangers into friends.

Nevertheless, the banquet invitation always comes with a challenge. Invitations arrive when people least expect them. People have to make room for the banquet in the midst of crowded and busy lives. The invitation arrives when we have already mapped out our future, like a newly purchased field. The request appears when we are already working hard - like having new oxen. The open door appears when our attention is focussed entirely on those good relationships right in front of us - like newly weds.

It's easy to laugh at these excuses and think that we'd respond

differently. But how often do we find ourselves challenged to sit down and share in God's banquet when we are surrounded by so many good and tangible things that consume all our scarce energy and attention?

For many people, church is a space they visit at Christmas or for a funeral. For many members, church is a space where we feel secure among people we know. The difference? People have become the banquet by getting involved.

Being church together is an invitation to a new way of life that comes with a challenge. The challenge is how to make room in our lives for new things, fresh priorities and people we don't yet know. From this perspective, church is a community we belong to whose mission, vision and values enable us to be secure and confident enough to share it with others.

In 2020, Holy Covenant seeks to enhance its capacity to be a place where everyone gets to rest, grow and transform the world around them. As God's banquet, we want to share God's deep and generous love so that God's Kingdom of grace, peace and justice might flourish.

In the year ahead, Holy Covenant seeks to enhance and develop fresh spaces where everyone can:

- **rest** in Christ. Rest is not simply the absence of activity but a shift in focus from the swirling world of meetings and deadlines to the quiet stillness of abiding in Christ's presence. It is in rest that we are renewed and recreated. As a community of busy, career people we often need to be encouraged and reminded to find rest in Christ.
- **grow** in God. When we are rested, we have the energy to grow. Learning to listen to what God is saying and having friends who support us when we follow God's call makes all the difference.
- **transform** through the Spirit. When the Spirit prompts us to step out in love the banquet grows stronger when people work for peace and justice in our world.

Holy Covenant is a centre for an open and generous Christianity. Your prayers, energy and investment will help our good things become stronger. Read on to find a few ways our team wants to strengthen our church in the year ahead.

A PLAN FOR 2020



RESTING IN CHRIST

In 2020, Holy Covenant will help us find our rest in Christ by:

- enhancing and developing our worship services by reinvigorating our music and sanctuary teams
- opening up fresh opportunities for connection and community between parish members by building our capacity for hospitality, welcome and inclusion
- offering retreats and camps throughout the year
- developing our capacity for communication, with each other and our neighbours, by using social media more effectively

GROWING IN GOD

Holy Covenant will help us to grow in God by investing more in developing new leaders. We will seek to enhance our capacity for ministry with children, young adults and parish members by:

- encouraging people to discover their gifts for ministry
- refreshing our small groups for friendship and spiritual growth
- providing Grow Groups which will help people attend to the rhythms of discipleship by learning how to listen to God and respond to that call for peace and justice together
- building our capacity for pastoral care by providing training for mental health and spiritual care, such as exploring *eCPR*
- recruiting new team leaders who can develop the children and young adult ministries in partnership with families with young adults in high school and university



TRANSFORMED BY THE SPIRIT

In the year ahead, Holy Covenant will encourage members to follow the Holy Spirit so that the world might be transformed by:

- being more visible and engaged with unchurched people in our own backyard of Belconnen
- offering the *Animate* course as a way of helping people learn more about faith, reading Scripture and spiritual practices
- enhancing our capacity to sustain missional initiatives, such as the Holistic Care Nursing Ministry and the Community Garden, and to initiate new ones as energy and capacity allow
- encouraging God's church to embrace diversity by attending to important social issues such as refugees, first nation's reconciliation and equality with gender and sexually diverse people

HOW YOU CAN HELP



BRIDGING THE GAP



As a church, your generosity makes all things possible. We have been blessed by how your gifts and giving have matched our expenses. The table below summarises our financial position for 2019.

ENGAGING FOR 2020

There are many ways to engage with our 2020 Stewardship challenge. You might want to:

- **read** through the challenge prayerfully. What areas catch your attention and imagination? Are there things undone that need attention?
- **ask God** how your energy, time and money might be invested in God's work through Holy Covenant.
- **decide** to act on God's calling by resolving to rest, grow or transform in some way.

You might act in a variety of ways, such as:

- **praying** regularly for our church to stretch further into God's vision
- **joining** a Grow Group and enhancing your discipleship journey
- **talking** with our ministry team about discovering your spiritual gifts
- **embracing** the opportunity to help a ministry become stronger by volunteering
- **reviewing** your giving, either by contributing through a regular deduction or providing a one time gift

2019 INCOME AND EXPENSES

Offertories & donations	\$233,500	
Fund raising & parish activities	\$14,800	
Other income (facility hire)	\$29,700	\$278,000
Salaries and related expenses ¹	\$166,800	
Ministry expenses ²	\$10,900	
Administration & property expenses	\$78,200	
Wider work and Calvary chaplaincy ³	\$22,500	\$278,400

¹ Salaries include full-time rector, part-time administrator, children's and young adult ministry workers

² Ministry expenses include provision for materials, training and other activities undertaken by the music, children's ministry, young adults and Rainbow Fellowship teams

³ As a generous church we aim to support a range of external ministries financially.

While your gifts of time and money enables our existing ministry to occur, Holy Covenant could enhance its ministry in some simple ways with a little additional support:

- an additional \$10,000 (+ 3.6%) would allow for more investment in leadership, training and opportunities for camps and retreats
- an additional \$30,000 (+10.7%) would allow not only for leadership investment but allow more capacity for music and enhancing our facilities
- an additional \$60,000 (+21.5%) would allow us to recruit a half-time person to enhance our ministry with children's and young adults.

HOW I WILL HELP

MY GIFT

Yes, I / we want to help Holy Covenant become a place where everyone can rest, grow and transform the world.

Name/s:

Best contact:

With God's help, my / our WEEKLY offering for the next 12 months will be:

	Other amount		\$80
	\$250		\$60
	\$200		\$40
	\$150		\$20
	\$100		\$10

A monthly offering = (weekly amount x 52) / 12

I / we would like to make our regular offering for support through:

	Direct Credit (our details below) Bank - Commonwealth Bank Branch - Jamison Centre, ACT BSB - 062 907 A/C No - 802 588 Name - Holy Covenant Anglican Church
	Direct Debit (please speak to the office for the form)
	Offertory envelopes (available early 2020)
	Cash/cheque in the plate
	The church's new online option

I / we would like to make a one time gift for the following:

Name/s:.....

Amount:

Area of ministry:

Thank you for being part of our community at Holy Covenant and for enabling a generous church to grow.

Giving regularly through an automatic deduction means that the parish can better meet its monthly expenses even when people are away. Offertories can fall behind during the winter months when up to a third of parish members are away either on holiday or due to significant sporting commitments.



OUR TIME AND PRAYERS

Good things grow through prayer. You might wish to pray the prayer below or commit to praying regularly for our church.

*Generous God,
you have given us so much.
Everything we have and are comes from you.
Through your goodness we have so much to share.
May we who struggle for time,
make room in our diaries for your banquet.
May we who struggle with change,
make room for new faces at your banquet.
May we who struggle with generosity,
find at your banquet
the chance to rest, grow and be transformed.
May all our offerings be used for your glory
and for the service of your kingdom.
Amen.*

I pray that God will enable the following things to grow at Holy Covenant:

1.
.....
2.
.....
3.
.....