

# HOLY COVENANT ANGLICAN CHURCH

a place for everyone



## SUNDAY 24 MAY 2020

### SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

#### A UNIFYING VISION

*That they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I in you, may they also be in us. (Jn 17:21)*

*This we know, all things are connected like the blood that unites one family... Whatever we do to the web [of life], we do to ourselves. (Chief Seattle)*

*While approaching oneness Cecily remembered she'd left the bath running. (cecily.com.nz)*

Today we conclude our mini-series on Jesus' final words to his disciples. Strictly speaking, as a prayer these words are addressed to God. Yet surely they are meant to be overheard! What are we to make of them in our time?

At the end of the previous chapter Jesus has referred to the persecution and scattering his followers will soon face. His last words to them, 'But take courage, I have conquered the world', certainly take the longer view, the larger, deeper view of what they will experience. In chapter 17 Jesus reiterates the themes of divine presence, mutual indwelling and love between his followers that have coloured chapters 14-16. He then takes the 'teaching' to a deeper level, articulating a sublime vision of evolving union with God that is not confined to this little band of followers and that has inspired mystics and theologians to unpack its meaning over the centuries.

Julian of Norwich, English mystic and theologian who lived in 14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> C. England, was very influenced by Jesus' teaching about 'oneing'.

She preferred the word 'oneing', the participle version of the verb, to the abstract noun, 'union', to refer to the life of mutual indwelling with God. Like Jesus, she takes the long view when she says in the context of the Black Death and an oppressive church: 'All will be well; all manner of thing will be well'.

What Jesus has been saying in these chapters about loving one another cannot be reduced to 'playing nice'. Something far more radical is required – a profound shift in the way we see ourselves, God and the world around us.

The recent bushfires and Covid19 pandemic have highlighted just how connected we are to each other on the planet. God knows we need reminding. Part of me dares to hope and pray that some of the 'unifying' ('oneing') spirit we have witnessed during these crises might remain after the immediate threat abates. Yes I know, the same conditions have also produced a polarising spirit, but we have been warned about spiritual warfare!

*Frances MacKay.*

#### CORONA STAY-IN: 8 SUNDAYS

In recognition that our congregations contain many people who are vulnerable to the coronavirus, at the Diocese's request, we have ceased physically meeting for public worship. We will continue to worship online via ZOOM video conferencing. To join us, use the link below.

<https://zoom.us/j/8820962366?pwd=YUpja05YTXFCN0N4MGRiSFVIRll0Zz09>

Meeting ID: 882 096 2366

Password: 033643

For Kid's church the meeting room is at 9.30am:

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/417454216?pwd=NlFwSktMWUNBS0Y2NHVxemd5MW0wZz09>

Meeting ID: 417 454 216

Password: Kidschurch

#### SUNDAY 24 MAY

8am Holy Communion

10am Holy Communion

Celebrant and Preacher:

The Venerable Dr Wayne Brighton

5pm Twilight Conversation

#### SUNDAY 31 MAY

##### PENTECOST

8am Holy Communion

10am Holy Communion

Celebrant:

The Venerable Dr Wayne Brighton

Preacher:

The Venerable (EM) Anne Ranse OAM

5pm Twilight Conversation

#### Bank Details for Direct Debit are:

Bank: Commonwealth Bank

Branch: Jamison Centre, ACT

BSB: 062 907

A/C No: 802 588

Name: Holy Covenant Anglican Church

**RECTOR:** The Venerable Dr Wayne Brighton, 0407 408 333, [rector@holycovenant.org.au](mailto:rector@holycovenant.org.au)

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**WEBSITE:** <https://www.holycovenant.org.au>

# EMERGING FROM ISOLATION

## Living COVID Safe

It is sobering and disconcerting to watch the toll taken by both the coronavirus on vulnerable people and the economic consequences for those who work in occupations that have shut down. That such radical medicine was necessary speaks to how dangerous outbreaks can be.

Social distancing restrictions are designed to slow the spread of any outbreak. Should someone get sick, such restrictions mean that fewer people will be exposed through inadvertent contact. Yet these restrictions leave churches caught between a rock and hard place. While churches provide solace, peace and encouragement they can also become places where the virus spreads easily, particularly when large numbers of people sit, sing, talk and generally spend 90 minutes in close proximity with others.

The ACT government is slowly easing restrictions on indoor gatherings. On 8 May, up to 10 people were permitted to gather for worship. On 30 May, the government anticipates moving to Step 2, which will increase this limit to 20 people. They will make a decision about moving to Step 3 around 19 June, which will increase the limit to 100 people indoors.

## Living with restrictions

Holy Covenant has begun the process of planning how our various ministries and groups might work in a world where being COVID Safe is a necessity.

While these relaxations are welcome, living with social distancing requirements will be difficult. The distancing requirement of having 4 square meters per person will continue to apply. This restriction limits Holy Covenant's seating capacity to 30-35 people in our worship centre. Seating capacity in the Rainbow Centre is also reduced greatly.

These limitations will affect many dimensions of our life together. Parish Council is working on a COVID Safe Response Plan which help us to identify how ministry and other activities can resume and operate in safe ways; reduce the risks of an outbreak occurring; and enable our community to respond effectively to any incident should an outbreak occur.



Photo: Marg and John Christensen

## Operating safely

The parish will find ways to operate safely. We are currently:

- exploring technology that will enable us to provide video worship over Zoom while having in-person attendance on Sunday mornings;
- exploring the means by which those who wish to attend, can attend when demand for seating greatly exceeds supply;
- how to operate children's and young adult ministries when kids touch everything;
- developing new ways to operate the Holistic Care Nursing Ministry when many volunteers and all participants are at risk;
- developing cleaning protocols that are effective but not excessive;
- maintaining attendance records for all groups to facilitate any contact tracing if required.

Even our worship will need to change. Holy Communion is likely be bread only for the foreseeable future. The greeting of peace is likely to be suspended. The video screen will replace prayer and hymn books at all services. There are technical challenges in providing music for congregational singing that works for those present and participating over video. Avoiding the rugby scrum at morning tea will be most difficult. Having room for guests and visitors at worship remains vital. Finding meaningful ways to connect with community members whose lives have been upended will be a priority, particularly as the cost of social isolation and economic loss mounts for many.

We continue to be the body of Christ, offering a place for everyone. Your prayers and patience are valued highly as we discover the opportunities for engagement in a world that has changed significantly for many.

*Wayne*



## FEEDBACK FROM APPRECIATIVE CLIENTS

Last week I mentioned the home delivery service that St John's Care volunteers and staff has started for significantly vulnerable people that cannot leave home. This service is only available during the difficult times experienced by people because of the COVID -19 pandemic.

There have been several deliveries made over the past few weeks of food donations from the community and I thought it would be nice to hear how appreciated those donations were.

The following are messages sent to SJC from people who have received food deliveries from us:

"You really went outside your job description to help me. I am in a hole at the moment and want to thank you for your generosity. Thank you again and I will see you when I pull myself together."

"Thank you so much for the food. You cannot know how much it means to me to have someone care enough to deliver me food."

"Thanks, and blessings for the hamper. I want you to know how appreciated the hamper is."

"Thank you so much for everything, this will keep us going for a while and the added chocolate was such a treat."

"I have been so sick and have an intellectually disabled son so I can't get to the shops. I have no family here and your delivery made me cry because I felt so special. Thankyou."

I think the above messages really highlight how appreciative people are for the donations of food from our community and that going that extra mile to deliver it makes all the difference. Thank you for both your food and financial donations to SJC. It means a lot.

Throughout Canberra there are other organisations and services that are helping with food and meal donations. This includes the Canberra Relief Network who source and deliver food hampers to St John's Care and other community service organisations, for pick up by or delivery to people experiencing food insecurity.

Our monthly community lunch may have been postponed until further notice, but the food is still being prepared and cooked by our amazing volunteers. The meals are divided into containers and frozen to give out to people which has been very popular with our clients.

Items required: Pasta sauce, 500ml oil, toothpaste, full cream long life milk

Kind regards,

Steph Stephens,

SJC Community Worker

## I WILL NEVER LEAVE YOU NOR FORSAKE YOU

*Joshua 1:5*

In the darkness it's always hard to find something unless you know exactly where it is. You can't see it yet you know it's there.

It's like the sands on the deep ocean floor that you know are there but you can't see them. The stars in the day sky – they are still there but you can't see them. The sun behind the dark storm clouds, it's there you just can't see it. The baby bird in the egg- it's there but you can't see it or the flower in the bulb – they are there but you can't see them either.

So it is with God. It doesn't matter how hidden we might feel he is, he is still there. In dark days, in storms, in troubled times or when we close our eyes to sleep, he is still there with us and all we need to know is we only have to reach out our hand and he will hold it.

May the lord of peace himself give you peace at all times and in all ways.

*Anne, servant of the lord.*

From my blogspot of reflections :

<https://comewalkwithme-reflections.blogspot.com>



## FROM THE ACTING TREASURER

Dear friends

At the halfway point in May, income was on track to meet our budget. Most of this was from regular direct givings. Several more parishioners have commenced direct giving and we are very grateful for this.

We are receiving the JobKeeper supplement via the Diocese and this certainly makes a big difference to our fortnightly payroll bill.

If you would like to make your offerings by a regular direct credit, the parish bank account is with the Commonwealth Bank at the Jamison Centre. The BSB is 062 -907 and account number is 00802588. Please contact me if you have any questions about this process.

Blessings.

Paul Shelley

Warden and Acting Treasurer

# GROWING HOLY COVENANT

## Change happens

Most change happens slowly. Whether it is physically, mentally, socially or spiritually, it's easy to miss change when it is happening. For most of us, the biggest change is ageing. We only notice it when we try to do something that we once took for granted, like trying to read a restaurant menu without our glasses!

The same thing happens in churches. Congregations have many good years growing that they seldom notice when ageing occurs. But as friends moved on and kids leave home, fewer newcomers take up those now empty spaces. Yet the choir keeps getting smaller and the budget stretches less. People make do until as can't continue any more.

## Growing a church

Parish Council is exploring ways for Holy Covenant to grow. What this means is helping new people get involved with God's work. Joining a church can be seen as a four-stage journey. The challenge is how we help people move from one stage to the next in ways that are natural and inviting.

The first step in joining a church is **awareness**. People won't visit if they don't know you exist! When people see that a church lives in their neighbourhood may decide to visit. In times gone by, weddings, funerals and baptisms were the initial point of contact for people who had some background in faith. As spirituality has become a personal choice, fewer see or feel the need to visit somewhere they've never been before.

**Arrival** is the next step. Once a person has decided to visit a church, they must then navigate challenges like car parking, and building access to experience us. The choice to stay or go is made quickly, often by the end of the first song. By the time morning tea starts that decision is made. This is why finding the best way to welcome guests is important.

**Belonging** is the long stage that unfolds next. People might come for the music or the preaching. They stick around because they meet people and make friends. They want to know how and why we work the way we do. Throughout this stage, people ask themselves, can I fit in here? Small groups and social activities create opportunities for people to meet people they can connect with.

When someone knows how the family works, they often want to start **contributing**. This is more than just going on a roster. It's about finding and sharing their gifts with others. In a transactional world where utility is king, discovering and exercising God's call in our life can sound

strange because few of us get to do things that bring joy and delight. Helping a church to grow is an opportunity for us to grow as individuals as we do things that we may not have ever had the opportunity to do before.

## Making it work

Despite the coronavirus affecting our ability to meet in person many things designed to help us grow have launched in 2020.

- new signage has gone up on Redfern Street
- our website and Facebook pages have been reworked
- music and worship patterns are shifting with ZOOM

Ultimately, churches grow because people connect with people who help them become aware, venture out to arrive, settle in and belong and contribute in fresh ways.

Developing Grow Groups is a key part of our growth strategy. They enable people to connect life and faith with those in their networks. These groups help us to hear God and have the confidence to help others do the same. As we learn to listen, we might become more confident about sharing how God makes a difference in our lives. We might also become more assured in sharing our gifts and willing to explore new skills and talents. All of this makes for a richer experience for guests when they arrive.

I think growing a church is a bit like the field in the parable of sower (Matt 13.1-23). Every church wants to be good soil that can produce a crop 30, 60 or 100 times bigger. Only good soil doesn't simply happen by itself. People need to turn a field into good soil.

Good soil needs to be not simply receptive to guests but engaged with making life better in the neighbourhood. From this point of view, a church's programs and structures need ploughing. This is not easy when well-worn pathways are smooth and comfortable to those familiar with them. Good soil needs to have rocks and thorns removed. Our assumptions, vision and values can pose inadvertent obstacles to people looking for God. Good soil needs to be inviting so that seed gets planted, which means asking God to send new people our way.

Good soil helps people to understand the God who speaks in their life. Good soil makes faith tangible, hope realistic and love something experienced. In return it enables a harvest of faith, hope and love to burst out everywhere.

★★  
 ★ **FIND US ON FACEBOOK** ★  
 ★  ★  
 ★ Holy Covenant is plunging into the world of  
 ★ Facebook. The goal is to broaden our visibility  
 ★ and to help others peek inside to see what  
 ★ we're up to as a church. We are setting up  
 ★ some groups as forums where people can  
 ★ discuss ways of helping our community to  
 ★ grow stronger.  
 ★ So why not "like" us at  
 ★ <https://www.facebook.com/HcJamison/> and  
 ★ join in the conversation?  
 ★ ★★ ★★ ★★ ★★ ★★ ★★ ★★ ★★ ★★ ★★ ★★ ★★ ★★ ★★ ★★ ★★ ★★ ★★ ★★



Spark conversation in your faith community

A new study group will commence in June. *Animate Faith* is a 7-session program aimed at helping us to dig into questions we have about faith and spirituality.

Topics include seeing faith as a quest, reclaiming spirituality, the revolution of Jesus, life in abundance, thinking about cross, the Bible is worth reading, and the church as an imperfect family.

Sessions involve video, discussion and thinking aloud. The series is suitable for anyone exploring faith for the first time and everyone interested in discovering things afresh.

Interested? Email Wayne on [rector@holycovenant.org.au](mailto:rector@holycovenant.org.au) for more info and to join in over ZOOM. Meeting times are flexible but Tuesday or Wednesday evenings may work best with possible start beginning 1 June.

**HOLISTIC CARE NURSING MINISTRIES**

Management Committee is meeting via Zoom next week to look at how we are doing with our programs and clients while in isolation, any improvements we can make and what the future might look like when we can meet again.

We have come up with some possible ways of giving further assistance to our clients while isolated. We are hoping to access some more freezer space and cook meals for our clients to receive on a regular basis. Some volunteers are ready to bulk cook some meals to get us started. The clients and their carers have really appreciated the meals they have received to date. We are also looking at collecting a small selection of books that can be dropped off to clients on a rotating basis. We hope to have a Zoom Covenant Care get together in late June and are currently working out the logistics of this. If it works well and clients are keen, we will endeavour to do it more often.

Any ideas which the Committee develops on face to face meetings will feed into the work that the Rector and Wardens are currently doing on a parish wide basis.

We continue to call clients regularly, deliver meals whenever we have them and provide practical assistance such as transport to appointments and decluttering support. If you need HCNM help, our details are on the Bulletin back page.

*Rhonda Thorpe - Program Manager*

**NEWS FROM THE RESOURCES TEAM**

You may have noticed when watching the Zoom services that the shade sails had gone from the area behind the Sanctuary. They have been taken down temporarily so the external painting can be done. This project has been on our list since late last year and it has finally got under way.

Another external job that has commenced is the cladding of the southern and western fascias with Colorbond sheeting.

Inside the Worship Centre, one of the Sanctuary chairs has been repaired and the lectern Bible is currently with the bookbinder to have the spine repaired.

We have not had a working bee for the past couple of months. However, one is being planned for Saturday 20 June to do some cleaning up around the grounds.

*Paul Shelley*

## PARISH CYCLE OF PRAYER

The weekly bulletin has lots of prayer points as we ask God for help in our world, nation, the Anglican Church and for members of our congregation by name.

We thought it might be appreciated to have a prayer cycle for all the ministry and groups that work through Holy Covenant and for those who lead them. Consequently, we'll be featuring some areas of activity each Sunday over a five week cycle. Why not follow up with a note letting someone know you've just prayed for them?

### PRAYER POINTS

#### IN THE WORLD

⇒ Teach your people how to live in harmony, and fill us with your truth, that we may be your witnesses to all the world.

#### IN AUSTRALIA.

⇒ We ask You to free those living with abuse physically, mentally or spiritually, from their oppression

⇒ Provide wisdom, peace and protection for the Australian people as the restrictions associated with COVID-19 are eased.

#### IN THE DIOCESAN CYCLE OF PRAYER

⇒ Diocese of The Murray

⇒ Tumut; Adelong; Tarcutta:

⇒ South-West Slopes Ministry District (the Parishes of Batlow and Tumbarumba

⇒ Ministry to prisoners and prison officers; Kairos ministry.

#### IN OUR PARISH AND COMMUNITY

⇒ Congregations – 12 noon Wednesday Pray that when we start again that those who attend will feel comfortable about coming and the change of service form.

⇒ Rainbow fellowship We look forward to when our delightful and vulnerable members of Rainbow Fellowship can return to Holy Covenant.

⇒ Meditation Tuesday Lunchtime; Pray this group as it takes a break during COVID 19

⇒ Meditation Wednesday evening Give thanks that this group has been able to meet via Zoom

⇒ EfM (Merri Bacon, Nich Hills) as they meet online with EFM Manuka over the next fortnight looking at the Uluru Statement from the Heart

⇒ Grow groups that we may be bold in facing the challenges and following the Spirit

⇒ For all members of our parish family including Mark and Allison Cooper-Stanbury; Kerin and Brian Cox; Catherine and Barnaby D'Crux; Judith Ann Daniels; Lou Daniels; and Steve Daniels.

⇒ We uphold those in special need of prayer including Dorothy Parsonage, Elizabeth Grant, Andrew Hill, Joh Sheehan, Phil Bloomfield, Judith Ann, Lexie Winders, Roger Hallows, Jenny Hall and anyone known to us personally.

#### COMMEMORATIONS

Thursday: **Patricia Bonnett (d. 2015)**

Friday: **Ken Mugford (d. 2005)**

### COLLECT FOR 6th SUNDAY OF EASTER

O God,  
whose Son, Jesus, prayed for his disciples,  
and sent them into the world  
to proclaim the coming of your kingdom:  
by your Holy Spirit,  
hold the church in unity,  
and keep it faithful to your word,  
so that, by breaking bread together,  
we may be one with Christ in faith and love  
and service;  
now and for ever. **Amen**

### READINGS

Acts 1.6-14

Psalms 68.1-10, 68.32-35

1 Peter 5

John 17.1-11

### MINISTRY TEAM CONTACTS

#### Children's Worker

Wendy Robertson

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#### Youth Leadership Team

Dougal, Celeste, Remus, Sarah, and Tobias.

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#### Wardens

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Joh Sheehan 6251 7151

#### Prayer Vine

Rosemary Kennemore

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#### Holistic Care Nursing Ministries

##### Program Manager

Rhonda Thorpe

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#### Holistic Care Nursing Ministries

##### Program Director and Chaplain

Venerable (EM) Anne Ranse OAM

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#### Honorary Priests

Reverend Anne Dudzinski

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Reverend Connie Gerrity

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#### Resources Team

0419255002

### BIRTHDAYS THIS WEEK

★ **Wednesday:** Zachary Browning

★ **Friday:** Melinda Ross