



Anglican Church of St John the Evangelist

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RECTOR'S QUARTERLY LETTER January 2018

Dear Friends,

I hope that this letter finds you well rested after the Christmas and New Year period, and that you had a wonderful Christmas and New Year. It is important to let you know about a few things that have happened and are happening in the first quarter of this year.

Office News

I am delighted to announce that Mrs. Penny Sutherland has taken up the churchwardens and my offer to be our Office Administrator. She will be with us, initially, on a six-month agreement with an option to renew. The reason for this is to allow us rethink how the parish administration can be more strategic and allow us to focus on the mission critical aspects of what we do as a Parish. Penny will assist the churchwardens and myself with key projects and we will reassess this approach midway through the year. Penny brings excellent strategic and administrative experience from her senior corporate roles and is keen to support the Parish. Please make her feel welcome, and say hello to her when you are next in the office. **Her days and hours will be Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9am – 2pm.** It is my intention to have Penny manage my diary, so I would appreciate all requests for meetings with me to go through her please, this will assist me in making sure I do not either double book, or miss an appointment.

Organ

I am delighted to inform you that a major donor has come forward to help us achieve the organ replacement. This person has pledged a little over 25% of the estimated total project cost and has also offered to guarantee the loan we would need to take out. This is a significant contribution to the organ replacement project. Our donor wishes to remain anonymous and we are extremely grateful for the support. Please join with me in thanking our Lord for the provision of this person and their very generous donation. With the existing pledges and the Music Association's current \$200k in cash (raised from your support so far), we are moving steadily toward a viable financial proposal on the organ replacement project. I am proposing to release a letter, shortly, about the organ which will outline the process I intend to follow regarding the provision of information regarding the project and decision-making. Please read it, and if you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Youth Ministry

I am also releasing a letter to you regarding Youth Ministry in the Parish. Please read it and if you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Wotton Foundation

After a long lead up, I am pleased to inform you that the Wotton Foundation has been established, with the final aspect of receiving tax deductibility status in the process of application to the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission. We expect this process to be completed by Lent. The Foundation is a charitable trust named in honour of

our former rector the late Fr Roy Wotton which will be focussed on delivering and funding specifically to those in need, including and commencing with the Warrior Welcome Home project. In time, we want the Foundation to be self-funding, seek donations from outside the parish, and look to sources of income to fund benevolent and welfare needs beyond the capacity of our current budget. The Foundation is managed by a charitable trustee company set up by the Churchwardens, the current directors of which are Churchwardens James Winter and Chris Russell, and Nicola Chau is the third director. More information will be provided on the Wotton Foundation once tax deductibility status is confirmed.

Pastoral Care and Chaplaincy

Over the few months, as we have listened to the Parish, the churchwardens and I have had realised the increasing demand for Pastoral Care. I am very grateful for the efforts of those who are and have been part of Pastoral Care focus and they have done a wonderful job, but there is a growing need for dedicated administrative oversight and better resourcing and organising delivery of Pastoral Care, as the need grows. Hence, we have decided to appoint a dedicated person in the office with the responsibility for the administration of the Pastoral Care. That role will report monthly to the Rector and the Churchwardens on how we are meeting your needs. So we will have better understanding of your needs and a clearer system of communication to allow us to respond to those needs. We will have more to say on this as we finalise the responsibilities and fine tune the new Pastoral Care plan. But be assured we recognise this has to be a priority for our Parish and we will resource this area as needed. We are very pleased to advise that Cynthia Keithly will take on the role as Pastoral Care coordinator from 1 February. Cynthia has prior experience in a similar role and is working with us to finalise the new plan. The full details of the new Pastoral Care plan will be released in February, and I will commission Cynthia into this new role in Church in February.

As second aspect of our support of our Parish community (at home or in hospitals and other places such as even the workplace) is chaplaincy. This is beyond the often “practical” aspects of pastoral care, and requires a specific visiting chaplaincy programme for individual one on one support, or with couples or families for prayer, reading the Bible, discussing your faith, specific spiritual needs, or just for personal support. We have chosen the title chaplaincy deliberately as we understand chaplaincy is not pastoral care on its own but spiritual support. Chaplaincy will be a separate area of focus to supplement pastoral care. We are very pleased that Jennifer Lum has agreed to take on a dedicated chaplaincy role within the Parish and help us develop our chaplaincy programme. Jen will be visiting people on a regular basis, and supplementing and supporting the chaplaincy role of our priests. Jen will also liaise closely with Cynthia regarding the pastoral care needs of our parishioners, whom she and our clergy are visiting.

Having a separate and specific chaplaincy role allows to focus on this area on its own as a priority for the Parish. Jen will also be commissioned into her chaplaincy role in February. Of course mine, Fr Rob, and Fr Ernest’s roles in pastoral care of the parish will not be compromised. We recognise our limitations, especially me, and feel this is the best way to give pastoral care the important place in our parish life that it and you deserves.

Please keep Cynthia and Jen in your prayers.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank Elizabeth Kelly for her excellent oversight of Pastoral Care up to this point. She has worked tirelessly and quietly in the background and I am deeply grateful for her ministry.

Annual Vestry Meeting

Please note the AVM will be on Palm Sunday the 25th of March after the 9.30 am service. Please take note of the Organ and Youth Ministry Letters as they will form an integral part of the AVM. Also, if you are responsible for a report please make sure that you have them in to the office by 15th of March for promulgation on the 18th of March.

8 am Readings

Some people have asked if the readings for 8 can go back to the King James Version. The short answer is, not in the immediate future. One of the guiding principles of the BCP was that the language of the bible should be that of the current day. The KJV of the bible was how people spoke in those days, we don't do that now, and for many the language of the KJ bible is unreadable or incomprehensible. The liturgy of BCP on the other hand is quite frankly the best of the English language and expression of the liturgy. This will not be altered, and in any case, I am not allowed to by Canon Law. However, the lectionary is a different matter. The BCP Communion Lectionary was predicated on the assumption that everyone who went to Communion had been to Morning Prayer beforehand. At Morning Prayer, the Old Testament and New Testament were read from as well as the Psalms in their turn. As that lectionary was based on a multiyear cycle the readings for Holy Communion were based on a one-year cycle. Those who attend BCP here at St. Johns and do not attend Morning Prayer get a very truncated version of the Gospel. Having the New Testament and Gospel from the three-year cycle allows those at 8am to get a broader view of the scriptures, and brings the whole of the parish into alignment with respect to the New Testament and allows those at 8 am to make more sense of the Shofar. By keeping the readings to the New Testament and the Gospel only retains the integrity of the BCP Communion Service.

Web site and social media

You may notice that there are a few changes to the web site. This is to get our message out consistently across the whole of the parish. One addition has been my Blog Site. I will be updating this at least monthly, more likely fortnightly or weekly. I will also have a video blog as well. We have also updated our social media presence and are better utilising Facebook and Instagram, as social media is a significant part of how many of us now communicate and connect. Please "follow", "comment", "like" and "share" so we can spread our presence and impact.

Monthly Themes

As I foreshadowed in the Parish Review it is my desire to take you all on a journey with me through the year. To this end each month will have a different theme. January is about Resolutions, February is about Reflecting, and March is about Regret. The web site will reflect these themes, as will my messages on the PB, and the web site. My blogs will reflect these themes as well. Our Social Media presence will assist us in this as well.

Parish Visiting

As you may recall, last year I commissioned a number of visitors to various hospitals. This year, I am pleased to announce that more volunteers have come forward, meaning we can now visit from Hornsby, down to the SAN which is wonderful. Clearly, we always need more volunteer visitors so let us know if you can help out. Again, more on this as we finalise the new Pastoral Care Plan and the visiting chaplaincy role is formalised.

Access to the Rector

This year I would like to have a go at reinstating a regular time when you know I will be in the office and you can simply come by and have a chat, ask questions, or share your thoughts. I plan to set aside Monday morning for this time. Of course I am always contactable when needed, as are Fr Rob and Fr Ernest. Please email, message, or text me if you would like to come see me or need to make contact. Or contact Penny in the office to make an appointment. We are here to serve you, so please contact us.

As you can see, we have been busy and are prayerfully seeking to discern how we can continue to renew and improve our efforts to support the needs of our Parish. The above and the continuing success and development of Father Ernest's ministry to our Chinese community have been wonderful and much needed developments for our Parish in 2017 and now in 2018.

God is truly with us and leading us in His works and we must respond to His calling on our lives and of our Parish.

With every blessing to you all,

Fr. Keith