

# ANNUAL REPORT

ST MICHAEL'S NORTH CARLTON | 2021

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*PROCLAIMING CHRIST, BUILDING COMMUNITY,  
SHARING HOPE, SERVING OTHERS*



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## VICAR'S REPORT

STEVE WEBSTER

In this, my 15th year as your Vicar, the bishop of our Marmingatha Episcopate conducted the required review in committee with our parochial nominators (Chris Ward, Dianne Shay, and Anne West). It's with a thankful heart that I can report the Archbishop accepted the recommendation of the committee and granted me **another 5 year extension** beginning in December 2021. There are many opinions about how many years an incumbent should stay. There are some good examples of long term incumbencies in our diocese, and given the past two years of uncertainty due to the pandemic some stability in leadership seems right for now.



Penne and I (and Castro) are excited to have another opportunity to journey with you all into a new future. Soon we may have that sense of looking beyond the immediate management of the crisis that is the pandemic. The Covid-19 numbers in Europe, the UK, and the USA heading into winter sound a dire warning right now that we must not imagine freedom is anything but fragile. The lack of vaccines available to the world's poorest nations is another sign that we must look beyond our own patch and ask what God requires of us as global citizens, as human beings.

Yet, a new vision for our church's future can now be explored, given the privileges we have with easing COVID-19 restrictions in our part of the world for now. With the help of the Holy Spirit, let's prayerfully discern together the future path Jesus might lead us to tread.

Our annual report and annual meeting is **firstly a time for looking back** with thankfulness to God. Emerging from the world's longest Covid-19 lockdown in the third quarter of 2021 we cannot but review a challenging two year period. Those of us who bid 2020 good riddance have sadly not seen a new day dawn as yet! But new hope arises every day as the incredible provision by science of effective vaccines has begun to give confidence that we can enter public life again with relative safety.

While these lands now called Australia has been spared, in relative terms, the tragic and urgent medical crisis seen in other nations, the long-term costs of the pandemic on well-being and livelihood is becoming more apparent. There is much churches like ours could do to serve the changing needs of our local communities. Of course, the **urgency of partnering with Christian missions** internationally also needs refreshing in the light of the pandemic and its effects.

One of the **unexpected blessings** during the pandemic has been the ability to connect with **new "members"** because we pivoted to online livestreaming of worship services. We have made new friends in other parts of Melbourne and regional Victoria (and internationally!) via our online worship. Some of these have begun to contribute to our worship services via video and via Zoom, exercising their gifts for the encouragement of faith and the building of Christian community. Our challenge now, as people come back to church gatherings in person in person, is to work out how our online friends can keep connected and how best they can be incorporated into our church life in meaningful ways.

Counting heads at worship services is not my preferred means of measuring a church's health, at least not in isolation. Yet, it is still required by the diocese and with the impact of the pandemic is of greater interest to many people it seems. It has been difficult to count precisely the number of people joining us



for Sunday worship services during lockdown, and numbers during eased restrictions have been limited by density quotients and diminished due to hesitancy to return in person. In addition, there are “real-time” numbers online and then “catchup” numbers to report as many people “watch” the service at a time other than the advertised worship schedule. During the height of lockdown we averaged about 70 screens being watched online at 10am services and 18 screens for 5.30pm services. Many churches multiply online views x2 for reporting given there’s a mix of household numbers watching each screen. On top of that, a day later after every online worship service the number of views doubles most weeks for the 10am services as some people catch up and others far afield take a look at our worship for encouragement. There’s little chance of analysing the online congregation by way of any meaningful categories (e.g. our members? Age profile? Location?). Statistics regarding “engagement” reported by YouTube vary enormously after Sunday is over, suggesting that people watching after the fact pick and choose how much they watch of the whole event. In addition we have posted the sermon of the day as a separate video. In some cases these have received another 20 or so views by week’s end. All in all, there’s been more people “together” in worship services during the pandemic at St Michael’s each week than any other year in my time! But, the togetherness most people crave is the ability to join one another in person to give praise and thanks to God and find encouragement in the Scriptures with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Another blessing sparked by the lockdowns is the many **creative and innovative contributions** to worship and other ministries members of our church have made during lockdowns. There’s been a great variety of spiritual gifts and talents on display and in such things as inspiring songs for worship, sermons, kids talks, reflections on Scripture, contemplative devotions, intercessory prayers, interviews, newsletters, stories for kids, Kid’s Church materials, and more. How encouraging it has been when we were so despairing about not meeting together in person!

The parish council made a commitment to continue **livestreaming** our Sunday services even after people are return to in person gatherings. This **“both/and” approach** offers connectedness for those who for a number of reasons may not be able to join with others for worship face-to-face. Livestreaming gives an option to join us virtually in real time for our worship services and helps those who may take time to return to public gatherings. We will also continue to offer many of our meetings and courses for learning using an online format (like Zoom) as this has proved to make for greater convenience and higher numbers involved. Those with busy lifestyles and who live further from the parish geographically will benefit from these virtual, but real-time meeting formats.

Sunday **morning and afternoon teas** have been held via Zoom during lockdowns this year and have been an important comfort and help for many for whom “watching” church online is good for what it offers in content, but somewhat inadequate where interaction and the feeling of fellowship are concerned. Of late we have begun to experiment with **Zoom interviews** during the church service with church members who are more remote in geographical terms helping to bring a greater sense of drawing the virtual and in-person together in worship. This, along with the interaction of comments and greetings in the chat facilities and via WhatsApp and other social media platforms increases the sense of worshipping together at times when that’s not possible for everyone to do so in person.

It’s been exciting to see a new **tech team** take over the management of livestreaming via a roster for each Sunday service. Sundays and other occasions, including: Sam Edmunds, Kyria Webster, John Young, Dianne Shay, Cindy Shay, Peter Summers, Lachy Ward, Hany Messieh, Anne West, and Catherine Ward. Like TV directors and camera operators in one, these people have served us so well this past year in capturing in real time all the details necessary for keeping us “gathered” as we worship God.

Throughout the pandemic I have provided a brief **weekly video message** via the church members’ email bulletin on Thursdays as regular communication is vital during a crisis.



Our **staff team** has been brilliantly agile during 2021...

- ◆ **Our Assistant Minister**, Kim Messieh, has worked hard to try and keep many in our midweek community connected during lockdowns. **Kim** adjusted her hours and focus, when needed. During lockdowns when people were not allowed to enter our church site Kim: helped with pastoral care in our congregations; curated and creating resources for wellbeing and daily devotions; led many worship services and parts thereof on Sundays; and worked with the staff team to navigate the uncertainties in our short-term planning exercises. Post-lockdown, Kim adjusted swiftly to connect with people on site midweek as this is her primary focus. She has also resumed her chaplaincy role with the Carlton AFLW team. Now you'll see less of Kim in terms of Sunday responsibilities, so pray for her as she seeks to re-build volunteer teams and re-connect with our many visitors on site during the week (for playgroup, hire groups, neighbours, and the like).
- ◆ **Emma Sugars** worked part-time for a total of seven years as our Office Assistant. She concluded her time on staff in July 2021 having been offered a new job with a Christian agency (Prison Fellowship Victoria). Emma's ministry and positive influence extended far beyond her office work. She ministered to many of us, and many people in the wider community through her excellent admin, her online communications, her management of the hiring of our facilities, and her week-to-week interactions with many who entered our buildings. In the past two years she innovated our communications and admin infrastructure such that staff and volunteers can now use many of the systems that she set up for themselves with ease (e.g. edit the website, share the Google Docs, update social media, make online payments, and more). We ask God's blessing upon Emma and all her new endeavours and she'll be missed greatly in the parish.
- ◆ At time of writing **Catherine Ward**, our part-time casual Children's Ministry Assistant, has been accepted into the *Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts* in the UK. Congratulations are in order, indeed! She will leave Australia for at least 12 months at the end of 2021. What an exciting future awaits this talented young woman. Catherine grew up in our church, was part of our Sunday School and Youth Group, and demonstrates a strong faith in Christ, a personal commitment to justice and mercy, and, as we know well, exercises many wonderful creative gifts in the dramatic arts that she has gladly used for the building up of God's people. We pray God's many blessings on her as she travels into a new and exciting future on the international stage.
- ◆ **Other volunteers** who made up our **staff team** in pre-Covid years continued to make contributions to our church's life: Revd. Chris Appleby and Dianne Shay continued to assist in preaching, teaching and service leading, as well as helping to structure our sermon series'; Dianne Shay also graciously offered to take on the coordinator role for our Kid's Church during lockdown, and now we've seen Kid's Church return in person on Sundays with our excellent team of group leaders helping our church families know more about the love of Jesus; Revd. Greg Davies continued to offer pastoral care within the parish by way of phone contact; and Roslyn Loader (missions support, and Authorised Lay Minister) kept our prayers up-to-date for our mission partners and kept the channels open for communication with them too.
- ◆ There are, of course, many other coordinators of ministries who had to pivot to a new way during 2021, and I look forward to meeting with many of them face-to-face again soon post-lockdown.

Our **parish council** has been rock solid during this challenging year. The PC met regularly during 2021 with a keen eye upon the longer term effects of the pandemic on our ministries and mission. Anne W (warden) has chaired our meetings with the ability to prioritize agenda items and help us to keep meetings to efficient time, with clear guidelines and important documents delivered ahead of time. John S (warden) has majored his duties on property management and maintenance this year. As well as organising trades and supervising necessary maintenance works (sometimes remotely during lockdown), John has put many hours of personal practical effort into caring for our grounds and facilities.



Special thanks go again to Peter S who has worked hard to keep **financial reporting** up-to-date for the wardens as is the honorary treasurer's role. The continuing difficulties that come with a sub-standard provision of service from the diocesan payroll authority was exacerbated further with the departure of our office assistant from staff. Peter, in his fifth year on PC, was assisted by Kerryn M, our sessional bookkeeper for more than 3 years now. Kerryn's role is vital for keeping the treasurer's role within reasonable parameters in an increasingly regulated financial reporting environment for churches.

I'm grateful for the partnership in ministry I experienced with the members of PC this year. With **John, Anne, and Peter** there was also **Jack V, Katja W, Mary Ann L, Barbara W, and Emilie F**. Together, we weighed up prayerfully how to navigate the present and plan for a very different future, all the while aware of shrinking resources in terms of available people and diminishing financial resources due to the pandemic.

Though we did not believe it right to set a vision/action plan beyond our current means when many other churches are struggling to meet their budgets and reach their goals, the PC set a date for a prayerful **review of our parish's resources and situation** to take place in **March 2022**. In the meantime, you'll see in the treasurer's report that the budget for 2021/22 does **not** include provision to replace our office assistant (Emma), **nor** does it include provision for extending the contract of our assistant minister (Kim) who completes 3 years of ministry among us on May 28 next year.

The **vision/action review** in March will give **opportunity to assess**, at that time, whether there are positive signs of recovery and growth such as new volunteers midweek, greater numbers worshipping together, faithful prayer and devotion to God, and signs of new people being welcomed into our company. If the signs are good, and we are of a common mind and spirit, the new PC may set goals and a budget that is more bold and growth-oriented for the second half of 2022.

For now, while online offerings are lagging behind last year's budget target by some \$3000 per month and hall hire income is next to zero, we will reign in the expenditure and allow for recovery to take place. Yet, we've already seen the positive energy of people returning to church meetings and midweek activities alike. The review in March will indeed be significant for our future together. Even with the unexpected imminent departure of Catherine Ward from our staff (and our congregation for a time!) the new budget still carries an **expected financial deficit** (see the finance report). We are confident that we can draw down a small percentage of our **cash reserves** this year to help us get through the necessary time for recovery and growth that will come. For now, we are **grateful** to God for those who have been willing and able to give **regular financial gifts** that enable us to continue our church operations and ministries, albeit to a diminished extent during the past year.

We were able to continue to gather together a small group of church members to tackle another online unit of the **Ridley Certificate Course** this year. An excellent new unit prepared and presented by The Revd. Dr John Dickson on the person and work of Jesus was really engaging and informative.

**Small group** leaders/hosts have kept contact with their groups during lockdowns, and in some cases have maintained meeting frequency using Zoom or other virtual means.

Through it all, 2021 challenged our dependence on God as much as 2020 did. The longer term impact of the pandemic upon people's livelihoods and wellbeing is unfolding before our eyes and may raise issues for us in the coming year that we haven't yet anticipated. But, for now we give thanks to God for the blessings received amidst the challenges and hardships. Let's keep praying for God's comfort, for the hope of the Gospel, and for faith for the road ahead.

Steve Webster—Vicar



## ASSISTANT MINISTER

KIM M

'It's all just a little bit of **history repeating**'. As I reflected on last year's annual report, words to describe life and ministry during COVID-19 and lockdowns appear to have already been used. The hope of putting 2020 behind us and emerging triumphant evaporated as the year unfolded. However if you remember, summer was open, we had Christmas with friends and family, sport was played, some had holidays, activities resumed in term one and we celebrated Easter together. In August we were even able to fit in a lunch after church! The good news is we are open again and summer is spread out before us.



As we emerge, I feel we're more aware of our own needs and that of the wider community. We know it's ok to feel how we feel. A recent ABC article spoke of bears adapting to life out of hibernation as 'walking hibernation'. After emerging they spend a period of time not eating much, not roaming far and sleeping much of the day in an effort to reacclimatise to life on the outside. This has been reflected in many conversations I've had. When I've shared this example there's an overwhelming response of fascination then identification. Mostly I think it gives us all permission. That it's ok to emerge slowly, not have to do everything at once. A sense of being gentle with ourselves as we feel our way through to the end of the year. The freedom to choose our connections thoughtfully.

The mental wellbeing of individuals and communities right around the world has been discussed openly. I think this openness allows us as a church sitting in North Carlton / Princes Hill within Melbourne, an opportunity to play to our strengths. Finding mindful ways of being present, contemplative ways of praying and reflecting, and noticing creation around us mean we are well placed to offer these gifts of Christianity to each other and our community. For myself, I have grown plants from seeds, watched Melbourne's Peregrine Falcons hatch, grow and fledge, documented the seasonal movement of the garden at St Michael's through a series of photos, kept online bookstores in business, walked Covid-safely with my neighbours, kept cafes in business, as well as losing myself in craft when a holiday wasn't possible.

Earlier in the year a group of us participated in a Ridley Certificate subject entitled: Jesus. It was informative and nourishing to delve deeper. I've greatly appreciated the quality of the Ridley presentations as well as Steve taking the time to lead and teach us throughout.

The vision/action plan - 'a time to heal, a time to plant', offered opportunities for people to connect with plants and each other as a way of being present and finding healing. Excursions to Planted Places at Collins Street Baptist Church and the Healing Garden at Heide were appreciated by those who could attend. We needed to cancel the Contemplative Prayer session based on our bible garden as well as the tour of Bishopscourt Garden, but I still hope we can reschedule in the new year.

Cataloguing the bible garden through the seasonal year is something I've cherished. As I write this in mid-November the bees were buzzing and agapanthus buds opening as I walked around this morning. Before Emma Sugars left, she was able to help collate and format many photos and reflections relating to the biblical plants. I hope to complete a vision of capturing the sounds and stories of the plants in potentially audio/podcast style as well as visual images on our website. Maybe our community could access all of this through scanning a QR code as they walk past? At the very least being able to access our garden



online allows us all to stay connected no matter where we live. However if you find yourself close by at anytime, take a moment to sit on the stone bench at the end of the path. Notice how the wind blows through the leaves and how each plant produces flowers and fruit according to their type.

‘September Rhythms’ was designed as a way of individually and together reflecting throughout our day as God instructed Joshua in ch 1 v 8. It offered a way of structured pausing when we needed to take a breath and to reorient our thoughts.

For the 5.30pm service we’ve tried to be creative when able to re-gather. During winter we offered soup on the first Sunday of the month as an extension of communion. Recently we held our first Supper Club after church where many people came and shared exciting news. Being able to share the news in person was appreciated by many. However our 5.30 congregation has members in Bendigo, Ballarat, Brisbane and soon Britain (London!). The importance of live-streaming our services can’t be underestimated and the WhatsApp group remains a good link for many near and far.

My role as Assistant Minister is best summarised as Midweek Chaplain. If it happens during the week, I’m usually there...except during lockdowns. This relates to the local football club, playgroup, people who hire the hall - especially Anna who runs AMS ballet for children and the families that come with them. Of late, I’ve been meeting one on one with several people from church on Covid safe walks around Princes Park which has been much nicer than FaceTime or zoom. As we become more present onsite again, my mind switches to how we can be a presence throughout the whole week. What does it look like to create safe and inclusive places for people to thrive during the week? For ourselves as well as the local community surrounding us.

What I am drawn to again and again are the people who call St Michael’s home and the causes we all support. The groups supporting climate action and reconciliation, those who are creative, who are teachers and parents. Those involved in big business, their own business, studying or retired. Everyone has gifts and experiences to offer and we are all richer when they are shared. Howard Thurman said, “Don’t ask what the world needs. Ask what makes you come alive, and go do it. Because what the world needs is people who have come alive.” Being able to combine midweek opportunities with our gifts and creative ideas is very exciting for me. A couple of years ago Steve and I had people from the community ask us both straight out and in round about ways, ‘how do you teach values to our children when we don’t go to church?’ At that point the idea of a library in our Wells Room began to germinate. What sort of books would it have? What would it look like to open up midweek? Given the breadth and depth of educators amongst us, I felt this idea had strength and as I’ve shared this idea, others have come on board too.

As this next year unfolds, I hope to share not only my ideas, but the ideas of others who dare to dream and share their gifts and experience.

### **Child Safety @SMNC**

As we look towards 2022 being open and with in-person events being the norm, we are reminded that programs onsite come with responsibilities. From what I have observed and heard before I started, the church community of St Michael’s takes the issues of child safety seriously. It’s this commitment to creating safe places for everyone, that provides a smooth pathway for our wider community to engage with us. And it makes the roles of everyone in leadership that much easier as we pursue best practice.

The aesthetics of the garden and church entrance are instantly pleasing to the eye. The fence provides safety for parents to allow their children to run free and discover as they play. The smiling faces and conversation conveys a sense of welcome and belonging. And our commitment to the Victorian Child Safe Standards that drives our policies and programs takes the trust people have in us deeper again.



The Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP) have released updated Child Safe Standards (Standards) in line with the rest of Australia. The seven Standards are now 11. Over the coming months we'll look to understanding the expanded Standards, the changes we'll need to make in response as well as the training required across our church. All required training for child safety is now online through the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne. The CCYP will also be releasing a video update on the Standards. Having such easy access is extremely helpful as we work towards creating a safe place for all children.

### **Carlton AFLW/VFLW Chaplaincy**

Season five (2020-2021) was able to go ahead between lockdowns albeit with increased Covid restrictions, ever changing fixtures, occasional empty stadiums and the possibility of going into hubs with 24hour notice, always likely.

Pre-season training started in November 2020 and it was a privilege to be welcomed into the Club for my second season as Chaplain. We spent six months of intense time together riding the highs and lows of not only football life, but sharing our personal lives and the rigours of juggling two jobs. Along with the 30 players, there were 30 staff and volunteers covering many specialties. Coaches, strength and conditioning, medical, management and wellbeing, of which I am part. With so many staff aimed at supporting the players at every level of their elite career, my role found it's rhythm in supporting them. I helped out the Dietician, and occasionally was the dietician, when she couldn't be there with making post training smoothies and coordinating game day food. I stood in for the Operations Manager at a VFLW match when the AFLW team travelled interstate. Pre and post games I helped load, unload, load and unload equipment. Made sure players wore the right socks and hair clips. Sat with players who were injured and waiting for the ambulance, as well as sitting with the families and friends of the team on game day to help create connections.

Hany has continued to come to almost all of the AFLW and VFLW games and because of this is welcomed in easily. We were able to end the season with a best and fairest event in person (last year was on zoom). Hany and I had a lovely night and it was good to end the season on a high. One of the staff members is also part of our local community allowing us to stay connected even during Covid with walks and picnics in our 5km.

Pre-season training started in October for season six (2021-2022) with games set to begin the second weekend of January. Although vaccination levels are 100%, we're being tested 4 times a week (1 x pcr, and 3 x rapid antigen tests) to ensure the health of individuals and the season continues with minimal disruption. I'm relishing the opportunity to tap into my nursing background as I oversee the antigen tests prior to each training session. The 10-15 minutes of waiting for these results 3 times a week provides opportunity for conversations, especially with those who are new to the team.

Part of my role this season will incorporate providing stronger links between the club and families. We hope to hold in person functions before Christmas enabling players, staff and families to get to know each other. In the meantime the welfare team has set up a families WhatsApp group as well as a monthly newsletter ensuring communication remains strong.

The VFLW season crossed over a few months with the AFLW season, going through to mid June. VFLW has a lot less staff and supports available and in this structure I am the wellbeing 'team'! I really enjoyed the season with this group. Half time oranges and protein slice for end of game went down a treat and cemented my position in the team.



Once a week I ran mindfulness sessions that included breathing techniques, body awareness, reflection and gratitude. A mix of staff and players dipped in and out throughout the season and the sessions were widely accepted and supported across the program. Training continued albeit individually during lockdown 4. Team connectedness remained strong with daily posts on WhatsApp to prove they'd completed their training sessions. I shared my protein slice recipe leading to online bake offs. The group asked me about meditation resources they could use at home but told me later they didn't get into them as they preferred my voice! This group is very easy to please. Pre-season starts soon. I'll be running mindfulness sessions once a week come January for any of the VFLW and AFLW staff and players.

I'll let you know in next year's report, how both seasons went.

Thanks to everyone who has been a support and encouragement to us. I look forward to many more in person opportunities to gather and take our relationships deeper.

Blessings  
Kim



# CHURCH WARDENS

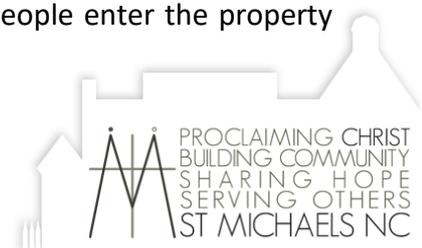
ANNE W & JOHN S

As churchwarden's over the past 12 months, we (John Sewell and Anne West) with willing support from others, have taken on responsibility for the oversight and maintenance of buildings/property, finances, and good order of operations of the parish of St Michael's North Carlton. COVID-19 continued to provide challenges and opportunities as we continually responded to the evolving demands posed by the pandemic.

## Maintaining Buildings / Property

Between the routine maintenance and unexpected repairs, we persisted to integrate environmentally friendly solutions as opportunities arose. Actions undertaken in the area included:

- ◆ **Solar Panels** were installed at both the church & vicarage – both are now working appropriately and not only reduce our carbon footprint, but save on power bills by offsetting costs and even sending some power to the grid for revenue in return.
- ◆ A separate **glass recycling bin** (purple lid) was received through Yarra City Council, along with replacement of two large general waste bins (that were previously in disrepair, being held together by tape).
- ◆ **Electrical works** were completed to: (a) replace lights with energy saving LED's above steps between church and office which were not operational and posed an OH&S problem; (b) replace two outdoor floodlights (not operational) near front entry of the foyer with two energy saving LED units to correct another OH&S problem and make for easier visibility upon entry at night; (c) rectify failed exit lights (only half were working as required during a power outage, thus failing to comply with safety regulations) by replacing all units with energy saving LED units throughout the buildings; (d) install an extra LED exit light above the door of the Resource Room leading to the Williams Hall to comply with regulations; and e) establish a routine inspection and test of exit lights as required by safety regulations with a log book stored in the church office to be filled out by a qualified electrical tradesman on a 6 monthly basis.
- ◆ **Unscheduled maintenance** included: a) further repairs to the Bell Tower (under warranty); b) a roof leak (above the heater on the south-west wall of the church space) following unseasonal summer storms; c) repair to a gas leak (a failed gas meter near the office entry); and d) replacement of a failed hot water service unit at the Vicarage.
- ◆ An Arborist was engaged to remove a **fallen tree limb** from the church lawn. They also provided a safety assessment of other tree limbs, and recommended removal of the most vulnerable limb of the gum tree overhanging electrical powerlines on Macpherson Street – this was subsequently attended to by CityPower after much investigation and negotiation by John Sewell.
- ◆ **Audio-visual cables** were installed underfloor in the church space, along with new flat screen monitors, HDMI processing equipment and several new wall terminals for connections. All this was to enable the technical operations of the equipment used for live-streaming to be re-located to the rear of the church so that when people were permitted to return to church we could continue to livestream. NBN speed was upgraded, and an extender for the router operation was installed resulting in a smooth transition to hybrid (in-person & virtual) worship services when lockdowns ended.
- ◆ **Some external painting** of wooden fascia boards on the church building was completed by a contractor to protect it from further weathering. In addition, the same contractor completed preparation and painting of several concrete window surrounds and concrete panels that border the brickwork near the South-west entrance of the church and near the Bible Garden. The latter was done to present a more welcoming appearance to the church façade as people enter the property from McIlwraith Street.



- ◆ **Regular site safety checks** (fire equipment & gas heating) were maintained. Electrician now attending every 6 months to complete a 90minute exit light test. Also planning for regular/annual gutter and solar panel cleaning (in Autumn 2022).
- ◆ Some items for maintenance and capital improvements were **placed on hold** due to re-occurring lockdowns and associated restrictions. This included some work at the Vicarage (e.g. sash windows need restoring on the Western aspect, and the perimeter picket fence needs painting). A Vicarage inspection (usually undertaken by churchwardens annually to assess any maintenance concerns) was delayed. When it is undertaken in December 2021 the wardens will review what might be required to bring property up to diocesan standards in the event of a future incumbency change. Such a report will enable financial planning to take place for future renovations or upgrades to the property. These will be followed up over the coming months.

### Finances

*Jobkeeper* payments (received from Sept 2020 through to March 2021) helped to ease our financial losses. These were the result of an application by the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne as a whole to the Federal Government. As the diocese is now an incorporated body, the overall estimated losses expected across all parishes and agencies of the diocese saw our parish qualify with all others to receive funds to offset employment costs during that period. Reporting from the government and the diocese was grossly inadequate throughout the scheme. It proved difficult to reconcile all financial matters relating to *Jobkeeper* but things are getting clearer just in time for the scheduled audit of accounts in Feb 2022. See the treasurer's report for more detail. A full reconciliation of the accounts will be prepared for audit in February 2022 and will subsequently be reported to the congregation. Internal financial control processes were constantly reviewed throughout the year, ensuring transparency and oversight of expenditure was carried out according to the standards agreed to with the auditor last year.

### Good Order

We supported the leadership of our worship services so that they remained flexible and agile during the ongoing COVID19 pandemic.

- ◆ A **COVID-Safe plan** was submitted to the diocese, a COVID-safety officer role was developed/implemented (including: ensuring those entering use the appropriate QR/Sign in methods; making hand-sanitizing materials available, ensuring correct mask protocols are followed, overseeing seating/social distancing as required, and ensuring that cleaning/disinfecting before/after events is undertaken. John Sewell is the designated officer, but each event or meeting or gathering must appoint a Covid-safety officer to manage these responsibilities.
- ◆ **Parish Council** meetings continued via Zoom throughout the year, (due to re-occurring lockdowns/restrictions with face to face meetings).
- ◆ New **hall hire terms and conditions** were developed. New conditions for Hall Hire included only having one group use building at a time; compliance with Church's QR code/sign-in; additional costs for cleaning/disinfecting, provision of site evacuation plans, COVID safety agreements, and new child safety regulations attended to.
- ◆ Diocesan Compliance / OHS Safety Audit inspection was completed. All major outstanding requirements were completed as per diocesan requirements.
- ◆ New **Child Safety** requirements / Safe Ministry Compliance has been updated and issued by the Diocese – largely administrative, and takes a significant amount of time to work through. Previous matrix (matching roles to compliance actions) needed to be updated, and new directions now include some mandatory training for people involved. The assistant minister, Kim Messieh, is assisting the vicar and wardens to implement the new requirements with all who are involved with children and vulnerable people in the course of their ministry and service.
- ◆ Bishop Genieve Blackwell requested Steve take on **role of Area Dean** of the Coburg Deanery - this



role primarily provides pastoral support to other clergy – including undertaking annual ministry reviews for each incumbent in the deanery. It's not anticipated to take away too much of the vicar's time in the parish, and it demonstrates a supportive role that our parish can play in the region.

- ◆ **Incumbency Committee**— was called to meet in July in light of the end of the vicar's 5 year extension to his license as incumbent (a review takes place after 10 years, then after each 5 year extension if granted by the Archbishop. There was broad agreement to extend Steve's tenure for a further 5 years from December 2021. Agreed, as part of this process to undertake a Vicarage inspection prior to December.

All **staff** have been rock solid in supporting operations throughout the past year – for which we are grateful and thankful. We acknowledge the resignation of Emma Sugars from role of Office Assistance/ Parish secretary has left a significant gap in the overall administration of the parish. This has resulted in a re-distribution of tasks and responsibilities among other staff and church members. Kim's employment contract (as assistant minister) has been extended to May 28 2022 which will take her to the full 3 year period hoped for when she was employed. This helps to ensure stability over the coming months as we transition to "COVID Normal" and helps to re-engage with people in our "mid-week community" on the church site as ministries, events and gatherings start again. Consideration of staffing needs (for the parish) will need to be considered as part of 2021-2022 budget planning process that is scheduled for parish council to undertake in March.

As mentioned in the beginning, there are a number of **willing people** who have supported many of the above actions and outcome. Thanks and appreciation must also be extended to some of these including:

- \* Peter Summers for his diligent and consistent work as Treasurer which underpinned most of the decision making.
- \* Steve and his team for ensuring the hall was cleaned and tidied in preparation for the returning groups, and Emma in developing the new hire contracts and protocols.
- \* Chris Reynolds and Greg Davies who completed the work of bolts and dust protectors on the Williams hall doors.
- \* Lawrie Smith for maintaining/trimming the hedge on the north border.
- \* Greg Davies for maintaining the Bible Garden.
- \* John Sewell for tending to weeding on the pavers, and weeding, edging and cutting of the church lawn.
- \* Cindy Shay who undertook a number of detailed cleaning and maintenance tasks (cleaning of ceiling fans, pendant lights, Wells Rooms, skirting boards, etc., and repainting of the chalk board in Wells Room, as well as lawn mowing and many other tasks)
- \* the St Michael's Maintenance Action Committee (SMMAC) team - David Wagner, Katja Wagner, Chris Reynolds and John Sewell for their support, keeping our 136 year old building and associated property and facilities in terrific shape.

We could not have achieved so much this year without their assistance.

With blessings  
Anne West & John Sewell  
Church Wardens



## PARISH COUNCIL

ANNE W

St Michael's Parish Council (PC) meets with Vicar regularly to govern matters of evangelism, discipleship, and pastoral care in the parish as well as matters of property, finance and operations. Despite limitations imposed by the pandemic, the PC team has supported a tremendous amount of work over the past 12 months, and worked collaboratively to enable St Michael's to evolve and innovate, grounded in our mission of Proclaiming Christ, Building Community, Sharing Hope, and Serving Others.

PC met via Zoom almost monthly. The meetings open with an acknowledgment of country, a brief devotion based on the Scriptures and a prayer. Agenda items are sent to all PC members in the week prior to meeting along with any relevant documents. The meetings begin at 7.30pm sharp and close at 8.45pm. Agenda items are set mostly by the vicar and churchwardens, but any member of PC can request an item be included. Each meeting also includes dedicated reporting on Reconciliation Action, Climate Action, OH&S matters, Safe Ministry matters, a warden's report and a vicar's report.

Throughout this year, Parish Council has considered the importance of **Pastoral care, future ministry opportunities** and **parish directions** in the current times, and how these essential aspects of Parish life could be supported within COVID19 restrictions. We took the opportunity to listen and reflect upon the fruits of 'Midweek Chaplaincy' through the lens of our assistant minister (Kim M), and consider the importance of stability within our leadership & ministry team, following the resignation of Emma Sugars, our Office Assistant and Parish Secretary, after a total of 7 years collective service. Emma went on to new employment in another sector of Christian work and we ask God's blessings on her and her ministries as she moves on.

Preparing for the **return of Face-to-Face worship** at St Michaels happened regularly, as we responded to each Covid-19 lockdown. Updating **livestreaming infrastructure** and embedding new volunteer roles (such as ushering, disinfecting) were key parts of ensuring long term sustainability, along with serving refreshments, and "doing morning tea" in a COVID-safe manner.

Early in the year, PC gave assent to changes to the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne's **Child Safety** regulation and procedures. As part of offering Safe Ministries, specific requirements (screenings, checks etc.) are required for various roles within the church. It will be a continuing piece of work to ensure we maintain compliance with the spirit and integrity of these regulations.

One of the most challenging tasks for PC this year was to balance the operational needs/parish priorities with an associated reduction in income (lost hall hire due to multiple lockdowns and a reduction in regular giving from parishioners). This resulted in frequent reviews of the financial situation – for which we are greatly indebted to Peter Summers (Honorary Treasurer) and Kerryn McCowan (Professional Bookkeeper) for their countless hours in preparing these reports and helping us to understand them.

Finally, one of the many privileges of being part of Parish council is hearing about the great work being undertaken in both the Reconciliation and Climate Action Groups. This included supporting a new and accountable partnership with Common Grace to encourage our Reconciliation action, development of various ways to acknowledge Country, and two occasions of joining with ARRC for the Sounding the Alarm campaign for climate action internationally. Early in the stewardship of this PC **Solar panels** were also installed on the vicarage and church roofs in January, as part of our commitment to climate action.

Another great privilege of being part of PC, is being able to serve the church with an amazing group of



people. Over the past year, this has included Emilie Franklin, Mary Ann Lyttle, John Sewell (Warden), Peter Summers (Treasurer), Jack Verdins, Katja Wagner, Barb Ward, Steve Webster (Vicar), and Anne West (Warden). Special thanks must be extended to Peter Summers for his work as treasurer. Peter has completed 5 years and to MaryAnn Lyttle, Katja Wagner, and Jack Verdins for assisting with the minute taking.

Congratulations are also extended to Steve on the extension of his tenure as Vicar of St. Michaels for another 5 years from December 1.

Anne West—Chair, Parish Council



# AREA DEAN'S REPORT

STEVE W

In January of 2021 the Archbishop appointed your vicar as Area Dean of Coburg Deanery. The area dean's role is essentially pastoral care for the clergy of an area of the Melbourne Diocese under the direction of the bishop. It's a significant, honorary, responsibility and offers service to many parishes in the inner north and west of Melbourne. The parishes included in the scope of the deanery include:

Suburb/area	Parish or organisation	Vicar/Locum	Other clergy & authorised ministers
MOONEE PONDS	St. Thomas'	The Ven. Vanessa Bennett Archdeacon	
DAREBIN SOUTH	St. James' Thornbury All Saints Northcote	The Rev Dr Ray Cleary	
MORELAND	St. Augustine's	The Rev Angela Cook	
ABERFELDIE	St. Andrew's	The Rev Michael Danaher	
ASCOT VALE	All Saints	The Rev Andrew Esnouf	
COBURG	Holy Trinity	Fr Farag Hanna	
STRATHMORE	St. Aidan's	The Rev Brian Higgins	
PASCOE VALE / OAK PARK Holy Trinity	Holy Trinity	The Rev Jenny Inglis	
BRUNSWICK	Christ Church		The Rev Jack Lindsay (Assist. Curate)
NORTH CARLTON	St Michael's		Mrs. Kim Messieh (ASLM)
TRAVENCORE	St. George's (Flemington)		The Rev Richard Murray
COBURG WEST	St. Alban's	The Rev Christine Silvester	
BRUNSWICK WEST St John Chrysostom	St. John Chrysostom	The Rev Steve Sonneman	
MORELAND	St. Augustine's		Ms Simone Turnbull (ASLM)
BRUNSWICK	Christ Church	The Right Reverend Lindsay Urwin	
ESSENDON	Christ Church	The Rev George Kirreh	

Deanery meetings are held monthly, mostly at St Michael's North Carlton, on the second Thursday of the month. The meetings include sharing in worship, learning from Scripture together, prayer, sharing a meal, and some formal discussion relating to matters relevant to clergy in our deanery.

Steve Webster - Area Dean of Coburg



## FINANCES

PETER S

### Actual results for FY 2020/21

It has been a challenging year, with our income unpredictable, unexpected maintenance expenses and nobody able to work in the office for much of the year to manage our paperwork due to Covid-19 restrictions.

Our income this year was \$242,034, of which approximately 93% was direct debit giving, 5% was special one-off donations, 1% was hall hire (a significantly reduced income on past years) and 1% was from play group. *JobKeeper*-related grants appeared in our books as a reduction in salaries this year.

Our expenditure was \$257,274, of which just under half was for staff. Other expenses included our 6.5% gift to other agencies and missionaries with whom we partner, 10% on building maintenance and 11% as our contribution to the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne to support the wider mission of the Church.

We made a net loss of \$15,240 and held \$ 131,713 of cash in the bank at 30th September 2021.

In summary, our financial report for the financial year 2020/21, actual vs budget, results were as follows:

- ◆ With the effects of COVID, giving was 7% below budget.
- ◆ On the expenditure side, staff expenses 30% below due to the diocese offsetting our costs via *JobKeeper* (counted as a reduction in expenses this year rather than as income).
- ◆ We had an expected capital cost of \$9,397 for solar cells, but this was covered by a donation and might reasonably be seen as an investment that, in addition to the environmental benefits, will reduce our future power costs.

The following is a summary of our income:

hall hire	\$ 1,988.00
interest	\$ 281.85
offertory	\$ 226,064.43
donations	\$ 12,000.00
playgroup	\$ 1,699.90
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 242,034.18</b>

The following is a summary of our expenditure:

assessment*	\$ 29,023.00
capital	\$ 9,397.27
cleaning	\$ 7,472.98
insurance	\$ 16,643.18
maintenance	\$ 26,267.40
ministry	\$ 11,051.29
missions	\$ 17,736.87
office	\$ 7,165.15
staff	\$ 120,714.00
utilities	\$ 11,802.82
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 257,273.96</b>

\*The Diocese of Melbourne assesses and receives a percentage of parish income to help fund it's operations and staff salaries, and to help support the mission of the diocese as a whole.



### **JobKeeper payments**

The Diocese of Melbourne applied for *JobKeeper* support from the Federal Govt due to its expected fall in overall income across the diocese during the pandemic. Individual parishes were not able to do so because the diocese as a whole is an incorporated body. In the case of our Vicar and Assistant Minister, these payments partially off-set salary costs for those staff in the parish accounts during the scheme. In the case of the two part-time staff, the contributions were paid directly to them, were in excess of their regular incomes during the scheme, and thus fully offset salary costs for those two staff in the parish accounts for that period. The diocesan payroll department reported that *Jobkeeper* contributions over the period of the scheme in both 2020 and 2021 that were assigned to our parish were as follows: The full financial report is to be audited in February 2022 and will be reported to the congregation and to the diocese at that time. The current, unaudited accounts are available by request to the treasurer or churchwardens. These will be on hand at the annual meeting.

<b>Jun-20</b>	\$ 36,000
<b>Sep-20</b>	\$ 41,818
<b>Dec-20</b>	\$ 27,300
<b>Mar-21</b>	\$ 19,800
<b>Total</b>	\$ 124,918

### **Budget for FY 2021/22**

Each year the parish council forms and adopts a budget to support the ministry objectives for the year ahead on behalf of the congregation for Oct 1—Sept 30. It is then reported to the annual meeting and communicated to the congregation alongside any given vision/action plans to encourage giving that will meet the proposed expenditure targets. The budget also helps the PC and staff to keep on track in expenditure through the year according to the expectations set. A summary of our budget forecast for the 2021-22 financial year is set out below.

Budgeted Income:

<b>donations</b>	\$ 0.00
<b>playgroup</b>	\$ 1,699.90
<b>hall rental</b>	\$ 8,000.00
<b>interest</b>	\$ 281.85
<b>offertory</b>	\$ 226,064.43
<b>Total Income</b>	\$ 236,046.18

Budgeted Expenses:

<b>assessment</b>	\$ 29,023.00
<b>capital</b>	-
<b>cleaning</b>	\$ 7,472.98
<b>insurance</b>	\$ 16,643.18
<b>maintenance</b>	\$ 18,919.32
<b>ministry</b>	\$ 4,620.02
<b>mission</b>	\$ 18,486.87
<b>office</b>	\$ 7,165.15
<b>staff</b>	\$ 136,375.24
<b>utilities</b>	\$ 11,802.82
<b>Total</b>	\$ 250,508.58

This budget assumes a resumption of hall hire in limited form, but no change in overall offertory from the 2020/21 year. Note that the monthly direct online offerings we would require to meet forecast expenditure is \$21K per month. In the last three months to the end of October we have received just



under \$19K per month in offerings (the basis of these budget projections in the tables below. This budget adopted by the PC does **not** include provision for replacing the office assistant role, nor does it assume a renewing of the assistant minister's contract when it ends in May 2020. Any changes to the current staff status would be the subject of discussion at the proposed ministry and finance review by parish council in March 2022.

This budget projects a **deficit** in the final results, which we will need to cover by drawing upon our cash reserves if income does not rise through the next year to meet the expenditure targets. We will monitor our income and expenses closely over the coming year and may adjust these settings if our finances allow (or require). See the Vicar's Report above for further information about the rationale that shapes this budget.

Peter Summers—Honorary Treasurer.

## PLAY GROUP

CATHERINE M

Playgroup takes place on the church site every Tuesday in school terms from 10am—12noon with a team of church members serving families in the local area. Playgroup 2021 started off really well and stuttered throughout the year! We had an average of approximately 23 children per week attending over 25 weeks throughout the lockdown-interrupted year so far. There are a few more weeks to go with our Christmas party on 14 December.

On occasions we used the local park to meet up but families feel a lot more comfortable and safe at the church property. Many of them waited for us to return to St Michael's Church site before they came back to playgroup.

Our WhatsApp group became a Signal group and has been useful to disseminate information and ideas for keeping kids busy during lockdowns.

The volunteers, along with Kim Messieh (staff) and Catherine Ward (staff), have kept in contact with most of the playgroup families with regular phone calls and cards posted to their home address. We have also delivered a packet of sunflower seeds for the kids to plant, some of which grew we are told!

It was as hard to plan for playgroup as it has been hard for everyone to plan for life in general. The families have been remarkably resilient and have kept our spirits up.

Our plans for Christmas include a playgroup party on 14 December. Di Appleby has kindly stepped in to buy and wrap presents for the children. Thanks to Kim, Catherine, Janette Allen, and Deepa Joseph for your volunteering, creativity and kindness during another difficult year. Margaret S, Hilary T, and Di A have been cheering us on and praying for the families throughout.

Catherine Merry - Playgroup Coordinator



## MISSIONS SUPPORT

ROSLYN LOADER

### My Role

As the Mission Secretary, I work together with others in the parish to encourage prayer support and connectedness with a selection of organizations and people external to the parish working for the good of others. I keep the St Michael's website updated with current information ([Check out the website here](#)). This role can be demanding and time consuming because of the number of supported services, and the large number of incoming documents to collate.

### Finances

We work within a finance framework as the Parish Council authorises a sub-committee to recommend financial contributions to those organizations chosen as those we support in any given year. The financial contributions given are divided up in differing proportions from an overall amount that is 6.5% of parish annual offerings. Parish offerings are currently somewhat reduced due to COVID-19 restrictions, so the overall contributions to these external mission groups for the year will also be slightly diminished.

### Current Organisations

There have been no changes to those organisations to whom we give financial, prayer, and relational support. These organisations are:

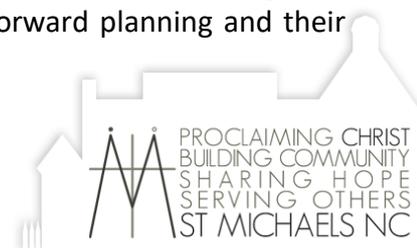
- ◆ Church Missionary Society
- ◆ Scripture Union Victoria
- ◆ Bush Church Aid
- ◆ Ridley College Melbourne
- ◆ Asylum Seekers Resource Centre: practical and social support for its members;
- ◆ Barbara May Foundation

In 2021, we also began a new 3-year partnership with Common Grace that includes financial contributions to advance reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples. This mission support is funded separately to the list above and is directly supported by the Reconciliation Action group (see their report).

During the extended lockdown period in Victoria there has been little change in the parish budget and the decision making process of the Parish Council. During this period I have received the newsletters of all the agencies we support. I forward this information to the church office to update the online parish news and prayer diaries. Most of these agencies are also trying to promote their profile and their budgets in challenging times.

Some info about some of those we support and partner with for your prayers:

- ⇒ Bush Church Aid, and particularly their work among first nations people;
- ⇒ the Barbara May foundation, with particular attention to the demands on their services in women's health in remote communities in many places, safety from climate change and civil strife.
- ⇒ The Church Missionary Society, with their passion for a world that knows Jesus, and particularly for Jon, Deborah, Ollie and Simeon, our link missionaries [with particular challenges as Ollie is at University in Kentucky], and through the monthly prayer night for Indonesia;
- ⇒ Scripture Union Victoria, with their passion to train young people to serve others, for linking with their international partners, local churches and chaplains. Bless their forward planning and their



ability to cope with the unknown because of lockdowns, and the appointment of leaders who are God's choice, for the unpredictability of the summer ahead, for new camps for families with challenges, and for sufficient staff to manage these demands, and for following up opportunities in new areas where local churches are developing continuing programs.

Roslyn Loader—Missions Support Secretary

## RECONCILIATION ACTION GROUP

JANETTE A

The 2020-2021 year has proved challenging for us all, not least because we probably expected it to be an upward and improving trajectory from the shock and upheaval of the outbreak of the COVID in 2020! Nonetheless, our community of faith, and the RAP group within that, has continued to seek God's light as we faced changes to circumstances affecting our hopes and plans. This account of our year of Rapping is offered as testament to God's Spirit acting within us, deepening our understanding of reconciliation.



**Membership** of the Reconciliation Action Plan Group has remained strong with Denise Nichols returning, and Jacqui and Katja Wagner, moving back from active involvement during the year. Thank you to them for their enthusiastic participation. We also, briefly, welcomed a member from the local community who was seeking a way to act for reconciliation. The way in which our actions for reconciliation are inevitably tied to our life at St Michaels meant that ultimately this was not a good fit for her. However, this does not overshadow the fact that what we do at St Michaels is noticed by the locals, and valued. This was a rather exciting thing to realise!

**Partnership** with Common Grace was formally established at the end of 2020. This is a financial partnership of three years, enabling our community of St Michaels to support a Christian group working for justice for Indigenous peoples, refugees and asylum seekers, sufferers of domestic violence, and supporting or creating action to limit climate change. The RAP group hopes that our partnership, as a church, with Common Grace will bring you opportunities to become involved in acts of reconciliation. More can be read about their campaigns and how you can be involved here; <https://www.commongrace.org.au/justice>

Brooke Prentis, an indigenous woman, leads Common Grace. She was going to speak in person at a celebration service in May, and also run a day workshop on "Listening to the Statement from the Heart". Covid outbreaks meant it was postponed until August, before being postponed again. We did have the opportunity to interview Brooke via Zoom, to introduce Common Grace to the congregation, and this was played at a service in May. The work of Common Grace, from an on-line prayer vigil on January 25<sup>th</sup>, also attended in person at St Michaels by about 12 people, to the #WearTheScarf campaign aimed at highlighting the need for action on climate change, are ongoing and supported by people at St Michaels.

We hope that we can revisit the plans for an in-person celebration with members of the Common Grace community next year!

**Acknowledgment** is a foundation for reconciliation. The RAP group worked on the wording for several forms of acknowledgement which are now used in services, at meetings, on the website and the St



Michael's signage. The beautiful images used in every service with the acknowledgement of country have been supplied by many members of St Michaels and are a wonderful way to contribute. Please add to the library of images anytime by sending yours to the office, labelled with 'acknowledgement of country' and your name.

Another action we undertook this year was to explore the ways in which Indigenous Christians express **theology**. After reading Garry Deverell's "Gondwana Theology", we met with him via Zoom to discuss his approach to and desire for a liturgy that is centred on Christ, yet more culturally welcoming in its use of language and actions. We also read an article by Rev. Graham Paulson, "Towards an Aboriginal Theology" and "Anaditj" by Rev. Dr. Denise Champion. What actions we might take in response are unclear, however we invite anyone to also read and pray about how we acknowledge the ways in which our past or present community worship may exclude Indigenous peoples.

**Allying** ourselves with Aboriginal clergy and supporting them is one clear action that arose as we discussed liturgy with Gary. Through discussions with Steve as well, maintaining connections with Aboriginal clergy has become an important objective. This resulted in reflections on the role of the Anglican Church in modelling reconciliation action and land ownership. Dianne Shay also attended the Zoom meeting with Gary, and crafted a question to raise in Synod on St Michael's behalf, in support of a motion put by Gary Deverell to Synod in 2019. This experience has challenged us to continue to reflect on how we acknowledge that the land we worship on was never ceded: how we can seek out, listen and respond to the experience and needs of Indigenous clergy. We will continue to 'watch this space' as the Diocese responds.

**In conclusion**, an apparent slowing of momentum as we understand what living in a COVID world has been, has at times been disheartening, particularly as we try and organise the launch of our partnership with Common Grace. At the same time, the COVID years have been a good reminder that slowing down and learning about your place helps you care for country. It has also highlighted the importance of self-reflection and the ongoing journey of learning and unlearning that reconciliation is for settler folks.

Written with thanks to all members of the RAP Group: Mary Ann Lyttle, Julian McCoy, Barry McGaw, Denise Nichols, Peter Summers, Sharyn Young, Hannah Young, and Andrew Allen.

Janette Allen, Chair 2021.



## SPORTS CHAPLAINCY—CFC MEN'S TEAM

STEVE W

I've now completed 16 years as honorary chaplain for the Carlton AFL men's team that has its home at Ikon Park within our parish boundaries. As in 2020, the AFL faced another turbulent year responding to ever-changing Covid-19 related restrictions. For much of the year I was not even allowed to enter the Ikon Park facilities as only a small number of paid staff were permitted to be around the players. But for the weeks when I could be on site for training and for home based games it was back to normal in many ways, helping out with the smooth operations of training sessions with coaches and players, and offering the trusted presence and conversation a chaplain can bring to any group.

When out of lockdown, during the football season, I give 10-12 hours of volunteer time to this role. I'm registered as a sports chaplain with Sports Chaplaincy Australia and benefit from its growing network of chaplains around the nation involved in sport from local to elite level.

Steve Webster

## WALKING GROUP

AUDREY L

Nearly twenty years ago when Roslyn Loader first started worshipping at St. Michaels, she invited a few of us to join her for a Tuesday morning walk. Who would have thought that after a few years we would expand from an original group of 4 to over twenty-five members! Thank you, Roslyn!

Despite the many challenges we have faced this year, the walking group has nurtured and encouraged its members throughout. We've kept walking every Tuesday, sometimes just in pairs, and kept in contact with each other via phone calls, emails and even zoom.

We've evolved into two ability levels... an 8:00am departure group and a shorter distance 8:30am group. At the moment we come together as one group to enjoy a cuppa at a local cafe at 9:15am.

We feel very fortunate to live in such a walkable area with interesting streets, Melbourne Uni, Princes Park and Royal Park to explore, but we are hoping to soon return to our pre-covid rambles along the rivers and creeks within an easy drive from St. Michaels Church. New members are very welcome.

For more information, do contact the church office via email.... [office@stmichaelsnc.org.au](mailto:office@stmichaelsnc.org.au)

Audrey Lile



## CONTEMPLATION AND BIBLE GARDEN REPORT

GREG DAVIES

Although there was little regular work on the garden during the last lock down most of the plants have continued to mature and now stand as a welcoming vital feature of the west face of the church grounds, Some more work will be required to overcome some of the difficulties with the red grape, fig and papyrus. The details of this will follow later in the report. In addition more progress has been made in presenting the garden on the Spirituality hub of the Church website. Many images of the garden are available through the seasons and as well material is available for reflection and study.



**The fig tree** - The tree has struggled to grow and develop as we had envisioned. The most likely explanation is competition with the creeper fig which covers the laneway. A helpful passer-by suggested we try planting the fig in a large pot. Both trees now are destined to provide shade for any who wish to pause and sit on the basalt bench and ponder scripture as did Nathanael. (See website for a guided meditation on Nathanael's encounter with Jesus).

**The grape vine** - The visual impact of the grape vine has been diminished due to its location behind the buttress on the corner of the church building. Come Winter we will move the grape vine to the west side adjacent to the now disused north door of the parents quiet room.

**Papyrus** - We are regenerating the papyrus plants. The rhizomes were too crowded and needed thinning. There are many spare growing shoots available for members to try growing their own. Contact Greg for more info.

Last year infestations of fruit fly diminished the apricot and pomegranate.

We are all grateful to all those who have contributed to the health of the garden and maintained its amenity. As the garden develops, so we hope it provides a place and an atmosphere of peace and tranquillity for the benefit of our local community and for the congregation.

Greg Davies

## NATIONAL TRUST: PIPE ORGAN

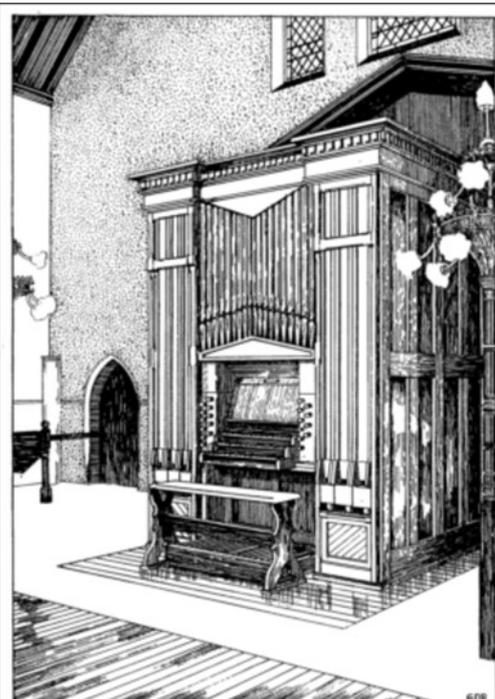
STEVE MANDERS

### Pipe Organ report (supported by the National Trust of Australia (Victoria))

Sadly 2021 has been another quiet year for St Michael's pipe organ, with many limitations on access to and use of the instrument due to COVID-19 restrictions. It is likely to require tuning and possibly some spot cleaning of dust and dirt that may have accumulated in critical locations (such as the insides of pipes) before sounding its best when restrictions are lifted. It is possible other problems may emerge when it receives more extensive use again due to lying idle for some months. However it sounded satisfactory and without any substantial issues when I last played it a few months ago.

The following information may be new to some people, so I will include this brief history of the instrument...

Our pipe organ is believed to be the smallest three manual organ in an Australian church, and was classified as "essential to the preservation of Australia's heritage" by the National Trust of Australia in 1989. FW Slater of Fitzroy commenced building it around the start of the 20th century, probably for his own residence, and it was completed by Frederick Taylor, an organ builder from Hawthorn.



OHTA NEWS

Organ Historical Trust of Australia

Volume 21, No.4

October, 1997

It was installed in St Michael's church in 1912, and originally stood in the south east corner of the church in front of the door to Nickson Hall, probably because there was no case covering the pipes and internal parts on the right hand side of the instrument. The case now present was built to match the existing one on the left hand side of the instrument as part of the 1997 restoration.

The restoration was undertaken by Ken Falconer of Stewart Organs in 1997 including relocating it to its current position. Ken Falconer maintained and tuned the organ until his retirement in 2012 and Campbell Hargraves has tuned and maintained the organ since then.

The organ restoration was supported by the National Trust of Australia (Victoria), which established a tax-deductible account which remains open and enables tax deductible donations to support organ maintenance. **All** organ maintenance costs since the restoration have been met from donations, mostly from parishioners. This account currently holds \$1,005.08 which is enough for roughly 12-18 months' tuning in normal circumstances.

While the organ is in very good mechanical condition, the accumulation of dust and dirt internally since the restoration has got to the point where thorough cleaning is desirable. It would be useful to install a covering that will catch dust and delay the need for the next cleaning, but not impede sound from the instrument. This is a task for an experienced organ builder maintainer. Virtually all of the 749 pipes need to be removed, everything vacuumed and the pipes replaced, each in its correct position.

Pipe organs can be played successfully by pianists with playing skills at AMEB grade 4 and above.

I am more than happy to provide an initial familiarisation session or two to any pianists interested in having a try on the organ. The pedals are not essential, and in my opinion are not as hard to play as they



might look! They are just scaled up keyboards with 'black' and 'white' notes suitably sized for feet. Have a closer look next time you're nearby! If you're interested in having a go, or just a closer look, please get in touch. I have also compiled a two page "How to play the organ" document which explains what all the knobs do, and which ones to use for whatever sound you're after.

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## KID'S CHURCH

DIANNE SHAY

Like many ministries this year kid's church was a bit of a roller coaster. Plans to start back in person in term 3 were underway and at our first day learning together after 15 months the kids chose what they wanted to study for terms 3 & 4. This turned out to be a blessing as the following week Melbourne re-entered lockdown. We made a decision to take kid's church remote and have sent a weekly Kid's church email each week in term.

### Teaching team

My thanks to Jacqui Wagner, Janette Allen, Shelley Knight, Catherine Ward, Cindy Shay and Dianne Shay for being part of our small and dedicated teaching team. We will miss Catherine greatly when she heads overseas in 2022 and thank her for her tremendous drive leading children's ministry for the last few years. (Kids talks can be recorded though. Just saying.)

We had plans this year for parents to assist with kids church on a rotational basis and will pick these up again next year.

A very heartfelt thankyou to all the parents who took on the task of teaching in the home from the weekly Kids Church emails in term 3 and the beginning of term 4. The emails included the theme, key points, activities and a memory verse. We'll continue to send the weekly emails as not every family can be at church each Sunday morning.

### Kids talks and songs

One of the most anticipated sections of services each week are the pre-recorded kids talks and songs. A huge shout out to Catherine Ward, Janette Allen, Dianne Shay, Steve Webster and our music teams for all the ingenuity, laughter and great bible learning. We hope to continue this in the new year although it may not be able to be as frequent as in 2020 and 2021.

### Child safe

St Michael's is a child safe parish and we are committed to creating safe places for our children to thrive. All teachers and assistants have completed necessary clearances for ministry and child safe training, and are fully vaccinated. We also continually look for ways to improve our child safe processes in meeting the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

Catherine Ward will relinquish her role as Child Safe Officer at the end of this year. We will let everyone know our new Child Safe Officer arrangements for Sundays and mid-week in due course.

Kooyoora and the Diocese of Melbourne have recently launched updated training online that all those in leadership in the parish, including kid's church teachers and assistants will need to complete by Feb 2022. If you'd like to be more child safe aware, everyone in the congregation will be given an opportunity to complete at least level 1 of the training. Safe ministry works best if we're all working together towards a goal of creating safe spaces for children to learn and grow.



## Bible lessons

Kid's church uses materials created by CEP (Christian Education Publishing) Over the Top ages 8-11. The materials are easy to adapt for our age groups with a good range of options to help us focus on one or two key points each session.

At the beginning of term 3, the children considered a range of options from the CEP materials and, on the basis they'd mainly learned from the Old Testament last year, chose 2 New Testament series for terms 3 & 4. Term 3 focussed on Jesus & his Disciples. In term 4 we're learning about Preparing for Christ's return.

Term 3 themes	Term 4 - themes
Making choices	Preparing for Christ's return #1 – the long journey
Follow the leader #1 – Jesus and his disciples #1 Jesus calls	Preparing for Christ's return #2 – being in God's family
Follow the leader #2 – Jesus and his disciples #2 Jesus calls Levi	Preparing for Christ's return #3 – we have a mighty helper
Follow the leader #3 – Jesus and his disciples #4 Zacchaeus	Preparing for Christ's return #4 – old becomes new (living for Christ together)
Break	Preparing for Christ's return #5 – living to please Jesus
Follow the leader #4 – Jesus and his disciples #5 Walking on water	Preparing for Christ's return #6 – ready for anything
Follow the leader #5 – Jesus and his disciples #6 Who am I?	Preparing for Christ's return #7 – King of kings (beginning, end, forever)
Follow the leader #6 – Jesus and his disciples #7 Failure and forgiveness	Preparing for Christ's return #8 – worthy to be praised
Follow the leader #7 – Jesus and his disciples #8 Peter's first sermon	Preparing for Christ's return #9 – all made new
Follow the leader #8 – Jesus and his disciples #9 Peter meets Cornelius	Preparing for Christ's return #10 – the good news
	Preparing for Christ's return #11 – good news for everyone

Dianne Shay

Kid's church co-ordinator

## SYNOD OF MELBOURNE DIOCESE

DIANNE SHAY

The Anglican Diocese of Melbourne has a system of synodical governance of our corporate life. This means that people in our congregations get a say in how we structure ourselves and engage with each other and the wider community. In addition to Steve as the clergy person from the parish, Dianne Shay and Noelene Horton were the elected synod representatives from the parish for the last term (a term is 3 years).

No synod was held in 2020. Earlier in 2021, synod was able to meet briefly to change legislation to allow for synods to occur remotely. The 2021 synod was held virtually using a specially developed app that allowed us to mirror the important democratic speaking and decision making that are integral to the synod process.



While not without its challenges (we now know where there's good and poor bandwidth across Greater Melbourne and Geelong), and 17.5 hours online over 4 days was a hard slog, there were also a number of things that were made simpler and clearer by the online move. [Online synod largely positive experience: survey - The Melbourne Anglican](#)

The synod dealt with a number of legislative changes including repealing outdated legislation and updating others. Significant motions relating to Prevention of Violence Against Women, Refugees and the setting up of a committee to consider the implementation of gender quotas on Diocesan bodies were all passed by the synod. Disappointingly, a motion on reaching net zero emissions wasn't put due to a technicality with the way it was worded. The 2022 synod will include significant reviews of legislation, particularly to clergy legislation, and most likely the Professional Standards Uniform Act which is currently being reviewed.

Dianne Shay

Synod member

## Contact Us

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The church office is only open occasionally.

Contact the vicar or a churchwarden for church site access.

[www.stmichaelsnc.org.au](http://www.stmichaelsnc.org.au)

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