

Bishop in Council - December 2016 - Bass/Philip Island

Red Frog and Student Life teams are with us once again and working out of the Parish Hall in Cowes, supporting 'schoolies' who are visiting the Island.

Theos leaders have visited to finalise planning for the post Christmas season. They (Theos) and the SUFM team held a prayer dinner in the hall to bring friends and supporters up to date on their plans and needs. They all appreciate the strong support given by the parish.

We have arranged a visit by Dorothy Hughes with a view to establishing 'Messy Church' at Cowes during 2017.

We have been giving strong support to the Cowes U.C. in the establishment of a Monday night community meal. Much of the meal preparation is done in the Parish hall kitchen.

Rev. Greg Magee

Bishop in Council Report from: Leongatha - December 2016

What progress has been made towards achieving the priorities of the Diocesan Strategic Plan

The parish has been discussing its vision for some time now and the basic framework of this has been gradually implemented during the same period. The Vision will be the focus of teaching during February 2017. The area of welcome and integration is one focus. We have many with whom we have contact at all levels but only a small proportion progress to full membership. Second we are assisting all our members to identify and build on their strengths with a view to their being equipped as Christians in the workplace, community and parish.

Any steps forward in community engagement

The youth ministry team is making contact with an increasing number who attend many events. It's encouraging to see this ministry re-emerging after a number of years in abeyance. Contacts with others in the community continue to be made through our Sunday lunch and other activities.

Any new initiatives in parish life

We need to improve our communications within the parish. Not all are clear about our vision and the ministry team structures that undergird and deliver that. The budget provides for an additional half time lay person.

Any special or one-off projects undertaken (programmes, buildings, etc.)

Tarwin Lower has a very small extension planned to its kitchen.

Any special teaching series, discussions or seminars

We are planning to provide seminar(s) considering the issue of domestic violence during 2017.

Any pressing financial concerns

The parish continues to budget for growth although the targets of 2016-2017 are sustainable under the income achieved in the previous year. Vision Sunday at the start of February 2017 will focus on the priorities for this year and to encourage committed financial support.

Any new insights into ministry

Meeniyan Uniting Church has closed. The Catholic building has severe structural issues. This provides an opportunity for us to consider a new future in partnership if that is the best way forward.

Any births, deaths, marriages, awards or achievements for active parishioners

Any major parish event

Rev. Graham Knott

Bishop in Council - Mirboo North - December 2016

Parish Ministries:

Kate's Korner: This new venture has only been in operation for a few weeks so it will take time for people to feel comfortable to drop in on Fridays for a cuppa and a chat. Nonetheless, there have been the occasional visitors who are connected to other members of the church, and it has been good to have a space to allow them to chat and 'unload'.

'Brick' Club: This is a ministry towards parents and families of children who are on the autism spectrum. Having asked the mums (predominantly) about their response to this after school (Tuesdays) space, it has been received enthusiastically. It provides the opportunity for parents who are not able to socialise as much with each other as they would like, for support, friendship and encouragement. It also gives the children, and siblings the opportunity to socialise and play in a safe environment. We may have to change the name of the Club as it is a bit different to existing Brick Club organisations elsewhere. There should be a new name by next Report.

Men's Dinners: These have continued throughout the year bi-monthly, and the final one (with spouses) will be on Friday 16th December.

We have had a good range of speakers on topics ranging from Youth & Drugs Support, Climate Change Responsibilities, Asylum Seekers, and this month we will hear from our newly elected (Deputy Mayor) South Gippsland Shire Tarwin Ward representative.

Movie Mondays for Teens: This venture finished on Monday 28th November with 14 teens in attendance. Given that we had had up to 42 teens at times this is a significant drop in numbers but probably reflects the time of year (exams, sunshine!). We plan to look at running it again in Terms 2 & 3 in 2017 for short periods. This ministry

received a lot of very encouraging feedback from all sorts of people in the community.

Alpha 2017: We are planning to run an Alpha Course in early 2017 perhaps prior to and after Easter. There has not been an Alpha Course here for some years so we hope to take this opportunity to herald the gospel to a new group of people in our community.

Finances: At our AGM on 27th November it was noted that we had finished the year slightly down on Budget. Considering the massive job done by Wardens, Treasurer and others on the building works throughout the year, it seems that we came out of it pretty well. We are still paying our way with a full-time ministry and everyone seems quite 'upbeat' about how things are going in the Parish. There are still a couple of minor things to be completed re the building (exit lights in church, etc) which have delayed our Certificate of Occupancy (notwithstanding that the Building Surveyor died amidst all of this!). These things will be attended to in the near future.

Community Carols: This is an ecumenical event each year in the Shire Hall, with involvement at some level from all churches in the community. It will be held on the evening of December 18th and also includes members of the community who contribute items for the program. This year's program will focus on 'interviewing' the public who attend about the Christmas story, and adding all the bits of the meaning of Christmas (pre-prepared props) together to create the whole story on the night.

Special Events: Liz and I celebrated our 40th wedding anniversary on 13th December!

Rev. Geoff Pittaway



Bishop in Council Report

Parish of Westernport



What progress has been made towards achieving the priorities of the Diocesan Strategic Plan?

Any steps forward in community engagement?

This is one area that we are focussing on with the lead up for Christmas. The parish does work out in, and for, their communities, but their sense of advertising the church is low. We are currently looking at how we invite the community into our church. Especially with Christmas coming soon.

Any new initiatives in Parish life?

On the 13th November, we trialled our evening contemporary service. Our purpose was to inform, engage, discuss, etc, with the parish the new service with the intent of running ongoing monthly (maybe fortnightly) from February 2017. The parish was very supportive of the time and style of the service. Feedback was very positive. This

has shown that they are on board for this venture. This was held at St John's Lang Lang, resulting in requests for a similar service for Koo Wee Rup.

Any special or one-off projects undertaken? (programmes, buildings etc)

No new programmes ... yet. *(See pressing financial concerns)*

Any special teaching series, discussions or seminars?

Any pressing financial concerns?

We can't afford inside toilets

Any new insights into ministry?

Any births, deaths, marriages, awards or achievements for active parishioners?

Rev. Colin Oakley

Bishop in Council Report from Parish of Wonthaggi & Inverloch

November 2016 – Rev. Graeme Peters

What progress has been made towards achieving the priorities of the Diocesan Strategic Plan?

Any steps forward in community engagement:

Our Monday night Community meal continues to open doors into broader community activities. After a quieter time in winter, numbers are back up around the 120 mark. We finish the Monday Night Dinners for the year with a Christmas dinner on the 12th of Dec. but will continue to do food rescue and distribution through summer. Meals will resume in Feb.

We have just had our annual fete which is a great opportunity for community engagement.

Again we will be bringing the entire Inverloch/Kongwak Primary School through the church for a special Christmas program, class by class, over the next 2 weeks.

We are also heavily involved in the running of community carols in Wonthaggi and Inverloch.

We will also be heavily involved in the distribution of 180 hampers to needy families in our communities.

Mainly music continues to grow and involve new families.

Any new initiatives in parish life?

Nothing new since the last report.

Any special or one-off projects undertaken (programmes, buildings, etc.)?

Work has begun on the upgrade to a ducted central heating system at Wonthaggi.

Various fences will be renewed this summer as they have been hard hit by strong winds and years of use.

As we connect soon to the NBN we will also need to replace our soon to be obsolete phone system.

Any special teaching series, discussions or seminars?

We are following the Sunday lectionary readings in most of the bible study groups.

Any pressing financial concerns?

All is going well. We finished the financial year slightly ahead of budgeted giving and in a solid financial position. We are steadily increasing the salary of Anne Perryman with the aim of building it up to eventually be half time.

Any new insights into ministry?

Not at this stage.

Any births, deaths, marriages, awards or achievements for active parishioners?

We have had a few significant birthdays, a few 80th 's and a 90th.

We will shortly be farewelling 5 young adults from our 11am Wonthaggi congregation as they are moving for work or study. This will have an impact on that congregation.

Any major parish event?

The team of Young People coming from Glen Waverley Anglican have had to cut short their visit due to some problems with leaders. They will be with us only for a weekend helping with Youth Group break-up and with Sunday services.

We will again be hosting the Inverloch SUFM from Dec 27th to Jan 6th as they stay at our Inverloch church.

Bishop in Council Report from: Yarram November 2016

What progress has been made towards achieving the priorities of the Diocesan Strategic Plan

This is the time of the year when things get very busy and we like to take advantage of people's interest in Christmas. It seems to be one of the rare times when people are happy to hear about Jesus and even to come to church. Our regulars often head off to Melbourne to Christmas with relatives while others who are visiting or wanting a bit of '*Real Christmas*' like to come to Christingle or Midnight Mass.

We have done a lot of amazing things this year and in particular we are reflecting upon the outcomes from three years working with the Strategic Plan. The quality of our mission has shifted from a 'come to us' attractional model to a 'go them' engaged model. We have opened the grounds at Holy Trinity for a community garden; coordinated The Christmas Tree Trail across local primary schools, Men's Shed, timber yard and traders association so that the main street comes alive with decorated trees. We have a presence at the Yarram Secondary College – honorary chaplaincy plus providing for the needs of students through our Socks and Jocks Sunday. Next year we will be expanding our ministry to assist the school with their breakfast program. We have strengthened our ties with the Tarra Festival. The Diocesan Strategic Plan has helped focus our decisions at parish council. It has enabled creative thinking and helped us say 'yes' to projects and 'no' to others.

During Advent we are offering Pray As You Go at a local café. This simple phone application allows us to be spiritual but not religious in a non-threatening environment.

Any steps forward in community engagement

We participated in the Yarram Halloween Event. I was invited to speak about its origins before people went off trick or treating. The Rectory welcomed trick or treaters with scary spiders and a note about All Saints.

Christmas Tree Trail

Rev. Jo hosts Pray As You Go at the Black Ram

Community Garden

Yarram Secondary College

160th Anniversary Christ Church, Tarraville especially the Civic Reception and Memorabilia Display in the historic Tarraville School House; just this week I had a delegation from Wellington Shire Tourism Board to Christ Church

Any new initiatives in parish life

Rev. Jo hosts Pray As You Go at the Black Ram

Any special or one-off projects undertaken (programmes, buildings, etc.)

On-going works at Christ Church, Tarraville – interior painting done; exterior painting to be done; front fence refurbished; new signage done.

We hope to renovate the old toilet block and put in a much needed path from front gate to front door and around to the toilets

New spoutings installed at Holy Trinity, Yarram

Any special teaching series, discussions or seminars

Rev. Jo hosts Pray As You Go at the Black Ram

Any pressing financial concerns

A great many benefactors have helped with work at Christ Church and we have had a lot of free labour from Fulham Correctional Centre but there is so much still to do and no money to do it.

Any new insights into ministry

Any births, deaths, marriages, awards or achievements for active parishioners

25th November Laurence Wood, a long time parishioner who worked tirelessly maintaining the church and hall at Holy Trinity; we could do with some more like him in these days.

Any major parish event

160th Christ Church, Tarraville – 60 people to Civic Reception, 40 people to Evensong followed by sparkling refreshments; the whole parish pulled together

We now gear up for Holy Trinity centenary in 2018

Bishop In Council reports Western Region December 2016

Bishop in Council Report, December 2016 - Cooperating Parish of Churchill, Boolarra, Yinnar

Any steps forward in community engagement

Although we are unable to teach SRI in our local schools, Churchill Primary School, Yinnar Primary School and Boolarra Primary School have all agreed to participate in “Christmas Club”. Churchill Primary School students visit the church for a Christmas message and activities on December 1st and 8th. We go to the other two schools and present a similar program. All school communities are very supportive of this and today at Yinnar the principal is looking into the regulations to see if we can have longer next year!

Any new initiatives in parish life

Any special or one-off projects undertaken (programmes, buildings, etc.)

Our new Safe Church documents are well on the way with most people happy to comply. There are a few people resistant to our screening process for all volunteers helping with children’s ministry but we are working on that. It is a huge process going through forms, speaking with referees, etc but we are getting there. Our Child Safe Policy has been endorsed by parish Council after much discussion and a couple of changes. It is interesting trying to get some people to understand that this is government legislation. I have been using the “Notices” time and congregational meetings to introduce what we are doing bit by bit. I think I need another holiday!

Any special teaching series, discussions or seminars

Any pressing financial concerns

Any new insights into ministry

Any births, deaths, marriages, awards or achievements for active parishioners

Any major parish event

This summer we will again host the Blue Moose Mission at Churchill. The mission is aimed at secondary students and will operate from December 28th to January 8th. As they did last year, the team from “Youth Dimension” will operate a drop-in centre at the town hall each evening with games, music, food. Members of the team will also give their testimonies. During the day the team will be present in the community at the places our young people frequent (skate park, Lake Hyland, shopping centre). They will run a program at the church for primary age

children as well as taking part in our worship service on New Year's Day. Various members of our congregations will be involved in all aspects of the program.

Bishop in Council Report from Drouin for December 2016:

Any steps forward in community engagement

Next Friday (2 December) we complete our *second* term of our Pre-Schoolers program, SCAMPS ("Story, Craft and Music for Pre-Schoolers"). See earlier report for description of SCAMPS. In School Term Four we have reached the capacity of the group with fourteen children; and we would have to look to creating a waiting list with plans toward commencing a second session. We had a visit at SCAMPS from the Anglicare Community Development and Parish Partnership Officer, Cathrine Muston on 11 November. Cathrine was very encouraging, remarking on the quality of the program.

On Sunday, 13 November we held our second "Pleasant Sunday Afternoon" at Christ Church, Drouin—the idea being to provide the community with an opportunity to come inside and see the church building's interior and to enjoy the church community's hospitality and some entertainment at the same time. This time, a singer, Katie Marie, and Band provided the entertainment—they were excellent! Entry was by gold coin donation and the entertainment was followed by a very pleasant afternoon-tea in the Parish Hall—capably coordinated by our Opp Shop director, Pauline Davies. On Sunday, 20 November at 7.00pm we had our ecumenical patronal festival service "Christ the King". We had guests from St Ita's Roman Catholic Church, the local Uniting, Presbyterian and Baptist churches, Drouin Christian Fellowship and the Hope Church. We had one hundred and twenty attend including seven children who contributed by lighting large candles during one of the early hymns in the service.

On 24 December we are having a barbecue followed by a crib service.

Any new initiatives in parish life

The Rev'd Jenny Ramage, our new Children's and Youth Minister, has been with us for two months. Jenny has introduced herself to families who already have a connection to Christ Church through SCAMPS; she leads and coordinates our Kid's Church (Sunday School). On 7 and 14 December we are having after-school "Get Ready for Christmas" sessions for Years 3-6 where children will make Christmas craft, singing some Christmas songs and hearing Christmas stories.

We have recently purchased a movie licence in order that we can host film nights for youth and others.

Any special or one-off projects undertaken (programmes, buildings, etc.)

No.

Any special teaching series, discussions or seminars

On the first Sunday of October we kept a slightly early St Luke's Day and invited The Revd Lloyd George a member of our Wednesday congregation who is also the State Chaplain for the Order of St Luke to preach about healing. And then on Saturday 15 October, the Parish hosted an Order of St Luke Training Day (10am-4pm), also led by Lloyd George..

Any pressing financial concerns

With our two part-time paid administrators (.16 and .33; or six and twelve hours per week, respectively) we need to release some more funds to the working account from which our treasurer makes payments.

Any new insights into ministry

Our openness to strangers, newcomers and people from the wider local community—including ecumenical welcome—brings a real vitality to our church in terms of ministry, worship and mission.

Any births, deaths, marriages, awards or achievements for active parishioners

The funeral of Alex Michael ("Mick") Fox was held on Thursday 13 October. The service was taken by Revd Canon Amy Turner (the Rector was on Clergy Retreat).

The funeral of a baby girl, Stevie Awty, who was 14 weeks old was held on Thursday 3 November with a large attendance (380) followed by refreshments at the Drouin Football Club. The family are

greatly involved in local football and netball clubs and community support for the family has been greatly evident. The family were very pleased with the service and are receiving ongoing pastoral support.

Since the last report we have baptised one child: Eden Moira Campbell (13 November). We had seventeen children and about a hundred adults attend Eden Moira's baptism—conducted by Revd Jenny Ramage.

Any major parish event

Christ Church's patronal festival – Christ the King on 20 November (see above in Community Engagement).

Bishop in Council Report from: Moe/Newborough

What progress has been made towards achieving the priorities of the Diocesan Strategic Plan

Nothing spectacular

Any steps forward in community engagement

None

Any new initiatives in parish life

At the combined AGM - Petitioning the BiC to enable the formation of a new Parish

Any special or one-off projects undertaken (programmes, buildings, etc.)

Antiques Show. Organised by the Moe Parish

Any special teaching series, discussions or seminars

Deanery workshop on **Diocesan Strategic Plan**

Any pressing financial concerns

Yes as usual.

Any new insights into ministry

Yes. Rediscovering old insights!

Any births, deaths, marriages, awards or achievements for active parishioners

None

Any major parish event

None

December Bishop In Council Report For St Mary's Morwell

Our recent Annual General Meeting went well with good numbers attending. Basically, our annual attendance figures have gone up with fewer dying or leaving the parish than are joining the parish which is a good sign. Our Offertory for the year was pleasingly above the budgeted amount and our hall hire use has increased considerably. Overall it has been a good year.

The leadership of the Youth Group continues to be a concern. Numbers attending have increased substantially from around 3 to around 10 youth, but the Rector, David Head, no longer feels, at his age, appropriate to the task! The youth however seem to greatly enjoy the organized events, but finding an appropriate younger youth leader is important in the long term and with that a leadership succession plan in place if possible.

Our Sunday School has been operating mostly twice a month with two different teachers and a variable number of children. One of the teachers plans to take up higher degree studies next year and wants to take a year off Sunday School. The Reverend Kathy Dalton has agreed to be the principal Sunday School Leader for the year taking two classes a month and hopefully include some Koori Children as well in the program. Kathy is doing her Certificate 4 in Ministry next year through Wontulp College and completed her Cert 3 this year.

The proposed sale of the parish rental property in Princes Drive has reached a stalemate somewhat due to the possible downturn in Morwell's future with the closure of Hazelwood. A new lease agreement is being negotiated for the next two years with the tenant under a new Estate Agent manager.

Bishop in Council Report: Nar Nar Goon & Pakenham East. December 2016.

Any Steps Forward in Community engagement:

As part of the sub-committee of the NNG Progress Association, we have had meetings with Cardinia Shire Strategic Planning and South East Water with regards the future infrastructure requirements for Nar Nar Goon's expansion.

The final draft of the Township's Concept Plan is currently being drawn up.

St John's Church continued their annual Volunteers Morning Tea for those involved in Op Shop activities.

Cheques for CFA Stations at Nar Nar Goon and Tynong were gratefully accepted by their representatives.

Our activities continue to be well publicised in the local "Goon News."

The Cornerstone Community has organised an opportunity to co-ordinate a series of community events – the Photography Project and the Mural Fun Day, for December and January, under the New Neighbourhood Project.

This is part of the Cardinia Shire's ongoing program to encourage communities within new estates, in co-operation with CoDesign Studio. A new website was designed and uploaded to promote the events and display the residents' photographs and mural concepts; as well as being an opportunity to develop networks within the community.

www.cardinialakesresidents.org

Members of the Episcopal District will also be involved in assisting with the Nar Nar Goon Christmas Festival on 4th December.

A community grant application has been submitted to Anglicare to enable regular Men's Breakfast Meetings at NNG and Cardinia Lakes to increase community engagement with local men and youth through informative sessions on men's issues.

The Ladies at St John's held another Bikers Breakfast on the 5th November with two dozen attendees from Churchill to South Yarra, and though the miserable weather kept numbers low, the fellowship was excellent.

Any new initiatives in Parish Life:

The 5pm Cornerstone Church had been seriously considering a move to Hollins Children's Centre as the home church was feeling comfortably full around the dining table, and to attract younger families through an 11am morning service at Cardinia Lakes.

The St John's congregation had initially agreed to a change in service time from 10am to 9.30am, but had a change of heart after one family from Kooverup said they wouldn't be able to attend if the time was changed.

So the discussions are continuing.

Any Special One off Projects:

The plans for an Op Shop alongside the church towards the front of 8 Main Street, NNG, have gradually evolved to include facilities for a Sunday School in the proposed development.

The Church and rear meeting room had split-system air-conditioners installed.

Any Special Teaching Series, discussions or seminars:

The Tuesday morning Alpha course has been completed with positive responses.

The Monday night series will continue after the Christmas holidays and still has a few more weeks to run.

Any Pressing financial concerns:

A new building to enable the continuation of the Op Shop is an urgent necessity as the unevenness of the current Op Shop's floor continues to become a growing concern and if closed would hinder the community engagement as well as the .

Any New Insights into Ministry:

After 122 years of an Anglican presence in the community, as the Nar Nar Goon township plans for a fourfold growth in population, we have an opportunity to ensure the church is prepared for the needs of those who will come.

Any Births, deaths, marriages, awards or achievements for active parishioners:

St John's was filled to capacity with more people filling the front lawn for the funeral of Nicole Chatfield.

Any Major Parish event:

The 2016 St John's Christmas Concert is being held at 1.30pm on 18th December.

Bishop in Council Report from: Neerim South November 2016**What progress has been made towards achieving the priorities of the Diocesan Strategic Plan?**

The parish members continue to meet together to worship God, to be a public witness, to study the bible, to encourage and build up one another and to engage with its communities in acts of loving service

Any steps forward in community engagement

We have mixed feelings about the building dispute. We are sorry that Alternate Dwellings has gone broke and many people have lost jobs and money as a result however this also gives us the parish an opportunity to recommence work using a different builder. The parish and community are keen to see recommencement of work ASAP. They have been very patient but their patience is running a little thin. Already a number of locals have approached me re possible ministry ventures for the new Ministry Centre such as a commencement of a monthly community meal program, a friendship group outreach as well as a good place for our youth work and a possible venue for cups of tea after funerals.

Any new initiatives in parish life

We have had a couple of movie nights that have proven quite successful – a movie then a discussion afterwards. We also enjoyed a progressive dinner in November.

Any special or one-off projects undertaken (programmes, buildings, etc.)

As above – re building project

Any special teaching series, discussions or seminars

Using the lectionary readings for Advent – last Sunday at one of our out centres we ended up having an impromptu discussion about hope and how God is with us during difficult times. After the sermon when I was asking for prayer points someone contributed about an issue that they had been dealing with a family member's sudden death and a close friend's suicide. It developed as a number of other folk also contributed that they had had some issues that they needed to deal with. This does not happen regularly but it was good to have positive feedback from the sermon and a chance to do some impromptu pastoral care. We prayed together, had a lovely greeting of peace, cut out a hymn and then had a very meaningful sharing of the sacrament.

Any pressing financial concerns

Not at this time

Any new insights into ministry

The need is even more to go out and be willing to share our lives with members of the community. Often folk are hesitant to commit to coming to church but they always appreciate a positive pastoral conversation down the street.

Any births, deaths, marriages, awards or achievements for active parishioners

No everyone well.

Any major parish event – No we are looking forward with great anticipation to the recommencement of building works and the opening of our new building

Bishop in Council Report from Trafalgar:**What progress has been made towards achieving the priorities of the Diocesan Strategic Plan**

See below

Any steps forward in community engagement

We partnered with the Battle of Trafalgar Committee to enable a community festival. This has made significant inroads in relationships with people especially from the Lions Club and has also cemented other relationships with community people.

Our Opp Shop continues to provide a place of welcome and ministry through friendly conversation etc, although there is further room to develop this ministry. I 'loiter with intent' there when I have a spare ½ hour and many pastoral discussions have resulted.

.We will be conducting 2 Christmas celebrations at local schools

Our young people will be making fairy floss at the Lion's Mardi Gras.

Any new initiatives in parish life

We are working through parent expectations and hopes with their children's learning via Sunday School and JAFFAS (afterschool program)

We continue to try to re-establish the youth group which was running successfully last year but had to go into recess due to leadership shortage. Friday 18th will see another small youth event.

The youth and family worker we appointed has not lived up to expectations and will not have her 6 month contract renewed. So we are again looking for another youth and family worker.

Any special or one-off projects undertaken (programmes, buildings, etc.)

Decorative night time lights have been installed in the Trafalgar Memorial garden. This was a donation from a family who have a number of member's ashes interred there. They are a pleasant addition- and the gardens are beautifully kept by a parishioner.

Any special teaching series, discussions or seminars

The ecumenical Alpha has continued at Thorpdale. It has been good to connect with two Anglicans from the 'wider congregation'; little support from the monthly congregation through.

A DVD discussion series 'Long Story Short' at Yarragon has been a very good way of encouraging deeper thought. It is a visual as well as verbal presentation and often gives new insights. One member of this group is a seeker, the others are either regular or occasional worshippers.

Any pressing financial concerns

No

Any new insights into ministry

There's a fine balance between letting people have enough room to exercise their ministry skills in their own way and being there to be supportive. I have been impressed by a couple of our lay leaders who are growing in their abilities and ministry.

Any births, deaths, marriages, awards or achievements for active parishioners

Long time Thorpdale worshipper, Doreen Savige, died after a period in care in Drouin and her funeral was a time of thanksgiving for a life well lived.

major parish event

On Sunday 16th October, we enjoyed the Bishop's visit. Two of our Sunday worshippers made their confirmation- Haylea Porter (14) and Shirley Gibson (80). It has been lovely to see each of these grow in their faith and come to this point.

Traralgon Bishop in Council Report:

(Jeff is sick, so this is a transcript of a phone conversation.)

What progress has been made towards achieving the priorities of the Diocesan Strategic Plan

Going along as usual

Any steps forward in community engagement

Community Christmas lunch will be held December 9th

Any new initiatives in parish life

Another Bible Study group will start in the new year. A lay person will coordinate this.

Any special or one-off projects undertaken (programmes, buildings, etc.)

The garden in front of the church has been redesigned- in progress- first part landscaping has been finished but the planting will take place after the hot weather.

Any special teaching series, discussions or seminars

No

Any pressing financial concerns

There will be a deficit budget but even so AGM has decided to pay the full amount of diocesan assessment. Money held in reserve will be use to pay the deficit if necessary to balance the budget.

Any new insights into ministry

Any births, deaths, marriages, awards or achievements for active parishioners

Long time parish family member Elizabeth Edebohls is getting married this Saturday.

Jordan and Darah Breed's daughter, Sophie, was baptised.

Any major parish event

No

East Gippsland Regional Deanery Report

Avon Parish

The community of Avon continues to offer ministry as they have always done, a very active Parish who minister within the community with great joy and enthusiasm: absolutely wonderful to see and experience.

The Parish has experienced grief with the death of the Reverend Brian Turner and this will be ongoing. Brian was instrumental in developing new ideas, a deep pastoral care for all and very much part of and loved by the community and certainly worked tirelessly in many ways. Brian will be sadly missed.

The Parish hosted the Diocesan Strategic Consultation which was for the East Gippsland Deanery on Saturday 12 November and this was attended by a small number of Parishes a very productive day with wonderful insights for ministry hosted by the Revd Trevor Smith. It was sad to see that there were some Parishes not represented on the day.

On Sunday 20 November the AGM chaired by Heather Toms was held and the Parish community were extremely well organised and prepared with the presentation of the reports and all moved along very smoothly and graciously.

The Parish has set objectives for 2017 and are particularly increasing their prayer for a new incumbent. During this time of waiting, the Parish is committed to working together united in fellowship, to support one another, to grow and develop their ministry. Strongly supporting the Op

Shop, Mainly Music, Bible Reading Program, Mission Giving, 'Reach out' mission to embrace the community, writers for the media Town Crier and Website.

Considering that the Parish has a number of Priests who minister on a Sunday, the community is taking care of each other in a positive and compassionate way. It is difficult when the Parish does not have a permanent Priest as from time to time pastoral matters fall through the gaps, however all in all, the Parish is working well and all are keen to see God working within the Parish and outwardly in the community.

Bairnsdale

Tony Wicking reports:

Parish life has been governed by two major events recently.

150th Celebrations

As part of our 150th celebrations there has been some major work taking place around the parish. The rectory exterior has been painted. This was finished early in the year. Since then the inside of the church has been painted and recarpeted. This has added a much needed vibrancy and warmth to the church. It looks really wonderful.

In addition we held a Temple Day service on 30th October. Many of the old benefactors of the church who no longer attend regularly were invited back for a day of celebration. It was also used as a means to raise money for the 150th Fund. It was a good success and from all reports a good response. It was a bad weekend as it competed with many other activities taking place because it was the cup weekend. Some of our regulars were unable to attend.

We also combined Temple Day with a thanksgiving for 10 years of Johnno's (our Op Shop). Many of the volunteers attended.

Marilyn Wicking

My wife Marilyn who has been battling cancer for 16 months, decided not to have any further treatment. She died peacefully on 12th October at home. This has necessitated my absence from the parish for several weeks. Her funeral was held in the newly repainted church.

The parish have been very generous in allowing me time to be with Marilyn as well as doing a lot of work to get the church ready for her funeral. The carpet laying was finished the day before the funeral! My absence has created some concern within the parish. Thanks to the wardens who were able to hold things together as well as to the retired clergy who took services. It has been a wonderful example of the family of God working together to achieve two very good outcomes.

Future

We are now gearing up for our parish fair, AGM and the Christmas services. It has been and continues to be a busy time for us all.

Croajingolong

John Grace reports:

John has agreed to extend his time with the parish until the end of December 2016. He and Yvonne were able to have some time away in November for the baptism of their great granddaughter in Warrnambool, who had arrived from the U.S.A. for the event! Lay Reader Shirley Nation took the service in his absence. The Scripture Union Theos' team and lay leaders will look after January services. There is then the possibility of a couple of Uniting Church ministers providing some cover.

Heyfield Parish

The Parish of Heyfield too has a number of Priests who lead the services. With the death of Tim Stevens a Lay Treader and Deb Chambers' surgery, other people are stepping in to help where they can. It is difficult for the Parish to ensure that pastoral matters are not falling through the gaps. I understand that there is ongoing discussion with the Rosedale Parish for one day a week ministry in meeting the needs of the community.

The Parish continues to take care of the residents of Laurina Lodge, run their Op Shop and Saturday Market and overall with David Chambers and the Parish community working tirelessly, all are keeping the Parish stable.

The Parish conducted their AGM on Sunday 20 November and have nothing to report from that meeting.

Heather McDougall-Toms

Lakes Entrance

Barb Logan reports:

At our recent AGM we celebrated the growth of our community outreach. Our *mainly music* group has been growing all year and although we don't yet have a waiting list we are filling the space available! More men are connecting to the church through the op shop furniture shed which is now called the 'Men's shed'. Many more men are coming along to help and to talk. Men's breakfasts have also continued throughout the year. The St Nicholas' (Ladies) Social Group have also been active with interesting speakers and exhibitions at morning teas.

We are currently facing a dilemma at St Nicholas' Lakes Entrance in that we have recently had a few items stolen while the church is open. The church is open every day and we do not wish to have this limited because of robberies. It is a sanctuary and quiet, reflective space for many. The installation of a secure lock on one of the cupboards should help.

Our 125th Anniversary celebrations at St John's Metung on November 13th was a wonderful day, with Bishop Kay leading us and dedicating the two new leadlight windows. The church and hall were filled with about 150 people as community members and past parishioners, as well as the St Nicholas' folk, came along to celebrate and enjoy a morning 'high tea'. We made a colourful contribution to the front page of the local paper!

December will be a month for hospitality as we host a 'thank you' Christmas dinner for the op shop volunteers and a lunch at the Rectory for the *mainly music* volunteers as well as one for the musicians! We look forward to our Christmas services and outreach, especially the candle-lit Nine Lessons and Carols at St John's, which is always a lovely way to begin the week leading up to Christmas Day. St Nicholas' Fete will be held on Saturday 7th January.

Maffra

Janet Wallis reports:

What progress has been made towards achieving the priorities of the Diocesan Strategic Plan

In endeavoring to embody Jesus Christ, here and now, we held a community service of remembrance for All Souls Day. It was organised in conjunction with the local undertakers and attended by some 80 people.

Any steps forward in community engagement

Our mainly music team were invited to do a session at the Foothills Music Festival. It was a huge success, with several people participating for the first time. We have had one family join us for our regular session since then.

We are planning, with other Churches in town, to be part of the Community Christmas Celebration – we will offer “Photo with baby Jesus” – in the stable, and children’s craft, plus a take home show bag.

As our Christmas decorations go up, a nearly life size Nativity scene has been placed on the rectory verandah, complete with shining star and flood lights, to remind people of the reason for Christmas.

Any new initiatives in parish life

In thinking about social justice, we will run a “Useful Gifts shop” in church during Advent. This will be introduced at our family service, with people helping to make a goat and a sheep as part of the ‘shop’ decorations.

Any special or one-off projects undertaken (programmes, buildings, etc.)

Painting of the rectory is nearly finished. The painter, Jo Roberts has done a wonderful job, with great attention to preparations.

Any special teaching series, discussions or seminars

Advent Bible study is in full swing – the theme “God is with us” based on a study by Robyn Wilson.

Any pressing financial concerns

Having looked at financial statements for the past year, and considered budgets for 2017, we know finances will be tight and we need to be good stewards of our money.

Any new insights into ministry

Any births, deaths, marriages, awards or achievements for active parishioners

Any major parish event

The Parish is in the midst of celebrating. We have a couple of very busy weeks coming up:

November 26 Op Shop Christmas Party

November 27 Open Garden day at the local historical Boisdale House

December 3 Parish Fair (our major fund raiser)

December 4 Parish Christmas party, with carol singing, fun and games.

Omeo

Thelma has been quite ill with pneumonia but has still managed to continue ministering to the community. Last Sunday an Ecumenical Service, with the Uniting Church, saw a combined service at Swifts Creek followed by a picnic with carol singing. On Friday, the East Gippsland Mothers Union will come to Omeo for their last meeting of the year and at the service Thelma will admit two new local members.

The Parish Treasurer is delighted that they now have sufficient funds to erect the new retaining wall between the church and rectory at Omeo (with diocesan assistance). The community have been very supportive, with \$2000 raised from local collection tins. The op shop is also going well and recently asked Thelma if there was anything they might do to the rectory to make it more comfortable for her.

Pastoral care to the community and hospital ministry continues and Thelma has recently joined the local choir. They are giving the hospital patients and aged care residents a Christmas concert.

A wedding was held in Holy Trinity Omeo last month. It was small in the number of guests but the locals who came to see the bride doubled the numbers!

Orbost

Bevil Lunson reports:

All still going well in Orbost. We have our Fete coming up this Saturday, lots of activity, cooking, sewing, decorating, etc. Even though AusNet in its wisdom have decided to have a power outage for the whole weekend, we have organised SES to bring us a generator. So still having lots of activities as well as Waygara Petting Farm with pony rides for kids and Oz Carnies bringing jumping castle + so all organised.

Our 2nd Trash and Treasure shop is proving to be a very successful venture, and it has been very well received in Orbost. Sales since the opening, very encouraging, so at this stage opinions are that it will be a permanent fixture.

Our Annual General Meeting will be held on November 27th, and St James Christmas party will be held on 3rd December, with the Community Carols to be held on 4th December. St James turn to host this year.

St James Food Pantry has been very well visited for the last couple of months and the number of clients is increasing every week, with even more visits anticipated over the next month. We have sent in our application for further funding for next year, but will not hear any results until end of December.

Financially St James is doing very well, and some of the pressure to be continually fund raising has eased, which makes life much more pleasant for all of us.

Our daughter Claire gave birth to a baby girl last Thursday, and as Claire is a Community nurse, and her husband a local farmer, lots of members of the Community as well as all St James members very excited about that.

Paynesville

November has seen a number of special focus Sunday Eucharists. We celebrated All Souls' Day on 6 November, inviting relatives of people whose funerals were at St Peter's by the Lake in the last five years or so to come to the service as well as others that I have been in touch with who have lost loved ones. At this service we remember people by name and those present are invited to light a candle in memory and thanksgiving.

The local RSL has invited me to be their Chaplain, and on Sunday 13 November they held their annual church Parade where we celebrated Remembrance Day at the 9.30 Service.

We were pleased to welcome Bishop Kay on Sunday 20 November and on the 27 November we celebrated Advent Sunday with the AGM to follow.

St Peter's has offered much support and assistance to The Abbey Program over the last two months and were especially involved in the work of the Sustainability Festival on 29th October, 2016.

Advent preparations and celebrations include an Ecumenical Bible Study on Wednesday mornings, followed by our regular mid week Eucharist.

Morning Prayer is at the Abbey Tuesday – Friday mornings at 8.15am and at 5pm Monday – Friday we ring the bells at St Peter's – for the community to hear - for one minute - in prayer and solidarity with the many people across the globe who are seeking asylum or refuge, including those who are kept in detention on Manus Island or Nauru. This is followed by a short time of prayer and silence.

On Sunday night the 11 December we are looking forward to clowns Beans and Smudge who are visiting St Peter's by the Lake for the Family Christmas story telling followed by the BBQ.

On a pastoral note there are a number of our congregation who are not well, some who have faced emergency hospitalisation. I particularly want to record thanks for the life and work of John Maglen, Secretary to the Parish Council, who died on Saturday night 12 November 2016.

Edie Ashley
November 2016.

Rosedale

Lyndon Phillips reports:

Bishop in Council Report Dec 2016.

Parish paid off diocesan debt. Hip, Hip, Hooray.

St Mark's held a very successful 'Cent Evening' in November raising over \$950.00

SRI has almost come to its end at the local school. The youngsters really don't want to forgo their playtime.

Brekky Program (now Gov Funded) continues to be popular.

Op Shop has made an amazing turn around with very enthusiastic volunteers revamping the shop almost alternate days. The income has reflected this enthusiasm.

Laurina Lodge residents appreciate the fortnightly worship. Pastoral visits continuing on the Thursdays following the Laurina service.

I led prayers at the Remembrance Service again this year, always a privilege.

Finalizing the Community Carols Service, quite late in the organising due to the personal health issues of all the group members.

Advent and Christmas looking good.

Sale

Susanna Pain reports:

What progress has been made towards achieving the priorities of the Diocesan Strategic Plan:

Planning for a strategic Planning day in February

Any steps forward in community engagement:

Lunch Meeting with RC Dean and Uniting Church Minister to plan ecumenical events and engagement.

Planning involvement in Christmas Event on 10 December, and Community Carols on 13 December.

Any new initiatives in parish life

Breathing Spaces for reflection and prayer in Advent':

515pm-545pm Monday to Thursday - Reflection and prayer, using *Walking through Advent*.

Daily readings Jan Sutch Pickard

745am-815am Wednesdays - Christian Meditation,

730pm-9pm Monday evenings - Advent Study, led by Nikolai Blaskow

Sunday 5pm-6pm, 4th December - Healing Service. And every month

Planning Day 10am-3pm Saturday 4 February.

Planning Messy Church, and Contemplative Worship

Big Fair March 2017

Young Adults Dinner

Any special or one-off projects undertaken (programmes, buildings, etc.)

Giant Book Fair over a week in November

Pilgrim Spanish Dinner

Any special teaching series, discussions or seminars

Advent Study Group

Monday Evenings special intercessory prayer for Sale Parish, and for the district

Any pressing financial concerns

To pay off our loan, and increase income. Two units vacant and need letting

Any new insights into ministry

Slow and steady! Much visiting and building bridges, an incarnational ministry of love.

Any births, deaths, marriages, awards or achievements for active parishioners

Any major parish event

Kilmany Centenary coming up on 18 December. Service at 2pm.

Tambo

Ted Gibson reports:

The Parish of Tambo had its Annual Meeting on November 13th at St Columb's, Swan Reach.

A recent decision to support the HOPE project at Bairnsdale, being pioneered by Peter and Margaret Down, with a donation of \$5000 from the Bruthen Opp Shop.

St Columb's, Swan Reach, has recently had Air conditioning installed and the Church Hall exterior painted.

Cafe Church at St Mary's. Buchan, is held Bi Monthly, supported by the other two centres.

Prayer Books, Bibles and Hymn Books, from St Martin's, Lindenow, have been handed to Tambo Parish to augment their supply – along with Sanctuary items.

General maintenance has recently been done at the Rectory and Opp. Shop.

Barb Logan

Regional Dean