



The Anglican Parish of

Holy Trinity Lara with
Christ Church Little River

Vicar's Annual Report 2012

At the Opportunity Shop Annual Meeting on Tuesday I spoke about the former President Jimmy Carter who wrote a book entitled "Living Faith." Known for his deep religious convictions, and in some quarters mocked during his presidency for his declaration that he was a born-again Christian, he was something of a curiosity as President.

In the opening pages, he wrote: *In this book I explore some of the ways my Christian faith has guided and sustained me, as well as the ways it has challenged and driven me to seek a closer relationship with God and my fellow human beings.*

President Carter also wrote, *"To me faith is not only a noun, but also a verb." He went on to say, "In Christian tradition, the concept of faith has two interrelated meanings, both implying fidelity: confidence in God and action based on firm belief."*

For Christians, there has always been the challenge to hold the two dimensions of faith in proper balance--being and doing. To the Christians at Rome who lived among competing cultures, loyalties, dogmas, and moralities, Paul wrote a letter to remind the church and its followers that it is not enough to "be right" but to "do right." Paul reminded the church there are ethical implications of faith and that these result in practical applications in living.

Each week in church we pray the Lord's Prayer, *'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your Kingdom come, you will be done on earth as it is in heaven'* Some believe that the purpose of Jesus life among us was primarily to try to help us get to heaven after we die. However, throughout the New Testament we know that the purpose of Jesus life among us was to teach us how the kingdom of heaven can happen here on earth while we are here.

As Christians, as kingdom people it impacts upon who we are and what we do, that through our faith in Jesus we now look at the world with a kingdom perspective and that we look at the world in a different way.

Moreover, it impacts upon what we do, when we give a cup of water, when we clothe the naked, when we live out the way and example of Jesus, we manifest the kingdom of God here on earth.

President Carter is correct. Faith is not just a noun but a verb as well. It is what you do as well as who you are. It is who you are as well as what you do. So in saying this here is my Annual Report for 2012 on our faith in action as God's people here in community where he has placed us.

Service Statistics:

There have been 160 public services, 110 public Sunday services, both these exclude weddings, funerals, private baptism and services in residential facilities, with the yearly total of 2638 people attending all Sunday services. Christmas Day/Christmas Eve 227 people attended across the Parish and 103 attended Easter Day/Eve services. There have also been 45 public services held at St Laurence Park throughout the year which includes 17 services held by Bill O'Brien on the first Sunday in the month in the hub at St Laurence Park.

Book of Common Prayer:

Due to the low numbers who attended this traditional service which was held on the first Sunday of the month at 5 pm at Holy Trinity after some discussion at Vestry it was determined that we would no longer continue with this service at this time.

Midweek Service:

The attendance at mid-week service has fluctuated throughout the year and at times attendance has been quite low, although the Bible Study component that was offered at that time might have contributed to low numbers. This Holy Communion service at Holy Trinity

offers a more contemplative and at times interactive style of worship with Taize' music incorporated into the service.

Worship Committee:

The Worship Committee, which includes Tricia Peart, Jennie Window and Ebony Smith and I meet monthly mainly to set the Worship calendar for the year and to discuss the first Sunday of the month Worship service which has had a variety of themes throughout the year. Such as Grandparents Sunday, Lent, Palm Sunday, Trinity Sunday, Sea Sunday with Noah Park as guest preacher and Harvest Festival. We also had a visit at Holy Trinity from the members of the Lara Lodge on August 12th although this was not a Prayer and Praise service. I would like to thank Kieran Murphy who for most of these services has sung and played piano. We have had been blessed by this ministry. Saints Days were also celebrated on various days throughout the year and alternated between Christ Church and Holy Trinity; these services were followed by a meal either at Lara or Little River Hotel. Many thanks also to Tricia, Jennie and Ebony for your support and creative ideas throughout the year.

Due also to the passing of our Parish Organist David Wade in April we now use recorded music for our Sunday Worship. We give our love and sympathy to Jenny his wife and give thanks to God for David's dedication to this aspect of worship and that we were privileged to have experienced it.

Prayer, Praise and Proclamation:

One of the aims from last year was to develop the Prayer, Praise and Proclamation service on the first Sunday of the month at Holy Trinity and Christ Church which was contemporary in style, with an essence of traditional worship ideal for, but not limited to young families. With the cessation of BCP at Holy Trinity on the first Sunday in the month Christ Church reverted back to a service of Holy Communion although with the same theme that was used at Holy Trinity. Although one of the goals was to provide a service that was suitable for all ages, which at times has been reflected by those who attended, it has I feel achieved in providing an alternative style of worship.

Pastoral Care Teams:

The Pastoral Care team is yet to be formed, formal training will be necessary to develop this essential ministry within the Parish over the coming year, especially with the redevelopment of the Parish Opportunity Shop, with the redirection of the Food Cupboard now outreaching to our local community at Lara/Little River and the receiving of a grant from Bendigo Bank for a fridge and freeze in the new building complex. A note of thanks to Lola Lewis and Barbara Thompson for the coordination of the donated food into the Food Cupboard and packing the hampers which have been dispersed throughout the year.

St Laurence Park:

St Laurence Park provides another significant area of ministry within the Parish with the Chapel of St Clair 9:30am on the fourth Thursday in the month, the Chapel at St Catherine's 11:00 am on the first and third Thursday of the month and 6:30 pm on the first Sunday of the month in the hub. I would like to take this opportunity to thank those members of our Parish who assist with these Chapel services, especially at St Catherine and a special thank you to Bill O'Brien for taking and leading the worship on the first Sunday.

S.A.L.T. Serving and Learning Together

This small group program which began last October with around seven members which meet on a Tuesday at 11am has grown to two groups. One which meets Tuesday night at the Vicarage at 7:30 pm which began with two members and now has seven members and another group which did meet on Tuesday but now meets Wednesday after the mid-week service at the vicarage with around 8 to 10 members.

Over the year our studies have included an Advent Study, a Lenten study "Faith Rudder a covenant with God by Bishop Bill Ray, Meeting the Spirit by Douglas Connelly and Spiritual Gifts by R. Paul Stevens.

Small groups have an essential component for the implementation of growth, both spiritual and numerical. These groups play an important role in helping each other hear and respond in practical ways to the needs of people within our community

Parish Logo, Web Site, Holy Trinity/Christ Church brochures, Worship Time Magnets

This year we developed a new Parish Logo which incorporates symbols of both Holy Trinity and Christ Church, the symbol of the Trinity for Holy Trinity and for Christ Church, the early symbol for Christ, the Chi-Rho which is the first two (capital) letters chi and rho (XP) of the Greek word "ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ" = Christ en compassed above the You Yangs and launched our Parish Web Site www.laralittleriveranglican.com.

The Parish Logo appears on the new sign at Holy Trinity and all our Parish Correspondence including the brochures for Holy Trinity and Christ Church, which have been produced along with the worship time magnets which were handed out at Back to Church Sunday and the Opportunity Shop business cards.

Church Life Survey:

Last year we participated in the Church Life Survey, the information gathered from this survey will be used by the Vestry and the Mission Action Plan group who were formed after the Vestry Day Apart to work with the Parish in developing a Mission Action Plan for the Parish. Members of this group are myself and Peter Jones, Helen Smith and Lee- Allen.



In September over three Sundays at Holy Trinity we held the first of a three year 'Spirited Generosity' campaign, beginning with a Bible Study on 'Imagining Hope', where we explored what the mission of God has to do with us personally and as a Parish. At the Parish day at Point Lonsdale we only had a chance to glimpse at the results of the National Church Life Survey. There will be further time spent on each component over the coming year at our Vestry meetings. From the first glance we discovered there are a number of things that we value as a Parish. Our values drive all that we do. In fact how we use money may reveal more about our values than anything we say. Jesus said "For where your treasure is there your heart will be also."

As Parish therefore it is essential that the way we use our resources reflects our values. Therefore, Helen, Joy and I have used these values which you have indicated are an important part of our identity here in Lara to develop our Mission Action Goals for the year.

These Mission Action Goals reveal what we as a Church believe God is calling us to in the coming year and highlights the resources we need to achieve this.

1. Worship

High on our results from the church life survey was worship. An essential component of how we express our love for God is through our worship.

2. Outreach

Highlighted in the survey was the need to outreach to young families in our community.

3. Caring for each other and those around us

To pastorally care for one another, which emphasizes the need to develop and increase our small group ministry in the Parish where relationships can be strengthened and nurtured.

4. Investing in the community.

One of the major tasks we will undertake next year as a Parish is the Op Shop building project which we hope to begin at the end of January or early February. We will project manage the Op Shop so it continues to operate out of the Hall so as to enable the continuation of our outreach to the community, through providing affordable clothing, food, counseling and spiritual support.

For some mission has come to mean the work that agencies and denominations do overseas. In this situation a missionary is someone who goes overseas or away from home to another country or culture to serve and preach the Christian faith. As a Parish this year we have been supporting The Mission to Seafarers in Geelong who through Noah's ministry reaches out across the world through the shipping industry. Yet, there is a bigger understanding of Mission. Mission is just not something we do. Mission is who God is. God is always working in the world; he just invites us to follow him and join him where he is, and to imagine the hope God has for the community where we live. Empowered and equipped through the Holy Spirit to accomplish God-sized tasks, working together as his Church in our community. Our Spirited Generosity Prayer for 2012 which is the Prayer from St Ignatius of Loyola.

*O My God, teach me to be generous:
To serve you as you deserve to be served;
To give without counting the cost;
To fight without fear of being wounded;
To work without seeking rest;
And to spend myself without expecting any reward,
But the knowledge that I am doing you holy will.*

Through this Spirited Generosity program we have had an outstanding and the best response we have had for a number of years. A special thank you to Joy Leggo our Imagining Hope Coordinator for her commitment to this ministry within our Parish.

Opportunity Shop:

The Opportunity Shop continues to highlight the current pastoral needs of our community and provides an essential outreach, not only by supplying low cost clothing and free food parcels for those in need, but also a listening and compassionate ear.

The funds raised by the Opportunity Shop enable us as a Parish to maintain fulltime ministry and to continue to operate actively and proactively within the local community.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Dawn Teesdale and her team of volunteers for the generous giving of their time and talents for the ministry they provide on our behalf, to our community.

With the plans for re-development of the Opportunity Shop reaching their final stages, building should begin early next year. Exciting times are ahead.

Parish Mission

This was the second year we supported the Mission to Seafarers in Geelong and we were blessed to have Noah and his family visit with us for Sea Sunday on the 1st July. Money was also raised for mission with an Inter Church Breakfast with guest speaker from Mercy Ships in February, David Spitteler from the Asylum Seeker Centre as a guest speaker on Saturday July 14th and a donation towards Samaritan House Geelong which supports the homeless in the Geelong region.

Social Committees

Throughout the year the Social Committee provides a number of fundraising activities such as the Karaoke night, the Op Shop fashion parade and the morning tea for Back to Church Sunday, Spring Dinner and the Beetle afternoon which also provided a time of fun and frivolity for those who attended. Once again we were blessed with good weather for the Little River School Fair which was much enjoyed and well attended by the local community. The Shrove Tuesday pancakes along with the Christ Church Market Day, were a great success. Thank you for all the hard work throughout the year by the Social committee both at Holy Trinity and Christ Church.

CRE

There are two CRE teachers within the Parish, Wendy O'Brien who teaches at Lara Lake on a Thursday and myself who teaches grades 5/6 at Little River Primary School on a Wednesday. In the coming year Access Ministry has implemented a CRE partnership which

requires each teacher to provide \$340 each to help support the program of CRE. Due to this the Vestry has suggested to the Parish Council that the Parish provide the funds to support this ministry. Which Parish Council suggests that the possible Mission Focus for the Parish be CRE for the next year.

As a Parish we also support the CRE at Little River by providing funding for the Children's books for the year and the morning tea for the teachers at Lara Primary School & Lara Lake Primary School.

Minister Association

The Minister's Association includes Pastor Rob Chaney from Lifeway Christian Church Lara, Iose Tuigamala from Lara Uniting, Father Manoj from St Anthony's Catholic Church, Ellie Griffin from The Gateway Church and myself. We have begun to meet on the first Tuesday in the month over a coffee at the Xpresso Café in Lara. Although we have only meet twice so far this year we hope through this group to nurture and support each other in our unique ministry that God has called us to, but also to seek ways that we can work together in outreach to the community of Lara.

Combined Churches Lara Carols and Easter Service:

This year the Combined Churches of Lara Carols was held at the Lara Lake Primary School with a number of our Parishioners in the Choir, I also spoke on the meaning of Christmas and this event was well attended by the community at large. The Combined Churches of Lara Easter Service was held at the Bisinella Community Centre on Good Friday; the service followed the Stations of the Cross. Although the aim is for an outreach to the wider community it was mainly attended by the local faith communities. I still see positive signs of the coming together of the Local Christian Denominations to worship as one.

Lastly I would like to thank the Vestries, the Parish Council and Parishioners for their work and commitment throughout the year. And to my faithful side kick George for his constant love and support, thank you.

As a Parish, we step out in faith to follow God where he is leading us in the coming year to use our money, resources skills and abilities I pray that we will continue to depend on God's guidance, provision, gifts, and power so as to bear lasting fruit for his Kingdom, in the place where he has called us.



The Reverend Shirley Littras
Priest in Charge
The Anglican Parish of Lara with Little River