



Vicar's Annual Report 2014

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.

Each Sunday in worship as God's people we pray the Lord's Prayer, as our ancestors have done down through the centuries. N.T. Wright encapsulates the Lord's Prayer as follows. *"We must conclude that the Lord's Prayer is an invitation to share Jesus' own prayer life — and with it his agenda, his work, his pattern of life, and his spirituality. It is the Son inviting his followers to share the intimacy of his own life with the Father."*

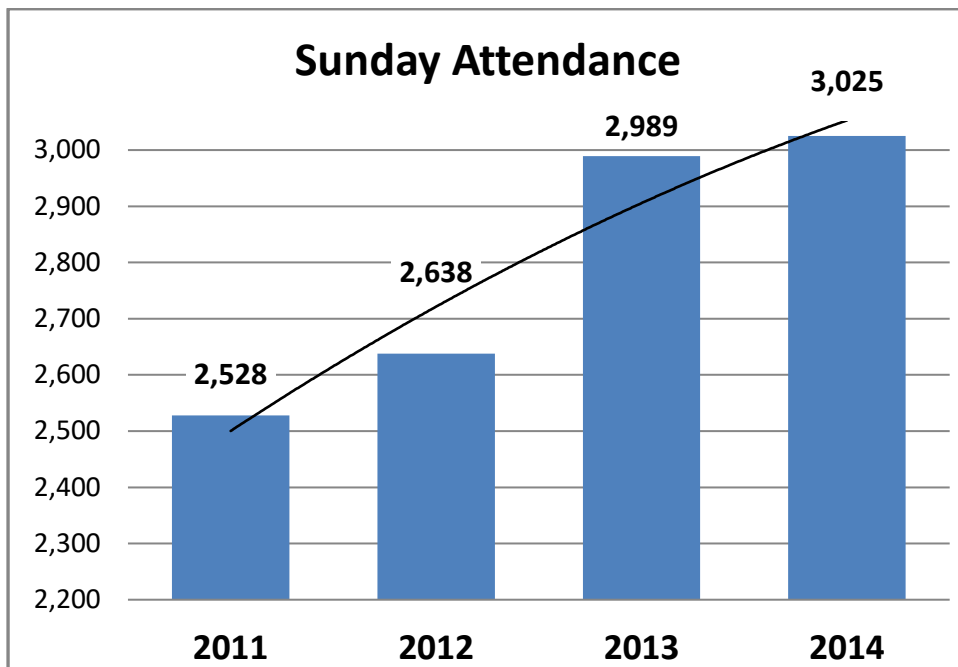
The Lord's Prayer marks out Jesus' followers as a distinct group not simply because Jesus gave it to them, but because it encapsulates his own mission and vocation. And it does this in a form appropriate for his followers, which turns them into his co-workers and fellow-labourers in prayer for the kingdom. For if we truly pray it we might also have to do something about it, to become part of God's answer to our own praying.

As God's people we are here because of our ancestors, those who prepared the way for us to be where and who we are. As a consequence, we too gather together and prepare the way for the ones who come after us. Are we being faithful in this mission?

Parish Statistics:

There have been 165 public services, 104 public Sunday services, both these exclude weddings, funerals, private baptism and services in residential facilities, with the yearly total of 3025 people attending all Sunday services. Christmas Day/Christmas Eve 229 people attended across the Parish and 89 attended Easter Day/Eve services. There have also been 41 public services held at St Laurence Park throughout the year, these services also includes services held by Philip Starks on the first Sunday and the fifth Sunday in the month in the hub at Costa House.

"Encourage one another and build each other up"



Worship:

One of the film clips that I have used to start worship of a Sunday is called Moments.

It states "As we gather together we are experiencing a moment given to us by the hand of God. A moment when heaven touches earth and when people respond with praise, a moment when God speaks through his word and the people respond with surrender a moment of praying and growing and loving, and you are in the moment and it is not random or routine it is for your benefit and his glory, you can pour yourself into it, or let it pass you by, please don't let it slip away every moment matters and God is inviting you into this one."

Church is not simply supposed to be the place to which we head to on a Sunday morning. It is also to be the place that makes possible our obedience to the call of Jesus. Sometimes in the nitty-gritty of life we also need a change and a re-focus that is life-giving, recognizing that God has given us this community in which we are placed, at this moment in history.

Some of these worship moments throughout the year as is our custom, have contained a theme, some of which have followed the Church Calendar such as All Saints Day, Advent, Mothering Sunday, Trinity Sunday, while others have had included, Father's Day, and the Blessing of the Pets at Christ Church.

In the month of July we had a month of Mission with a guest speaker from four different Missions. July 6th David Spitteler Asylum Seekers, July 13th Noah Park Mission to Seafarers, July 20th ACCESS Ministry Chaplain Ronnie, Chaplain of Little River Primary School and on July 27th Esther Cohen Bushikori, with a retiring offering for each Mission. Asylum Seekers: \$266.45, Mission to Seafarers \$270.55, Access Ministry \$125.00 and Bushikori \$630.00.

On September 28th at Holy Trinity we held a service to remember members of the Emergency Services who have paid the ultimate sacrifice in service to the community, with the guest preacher Police Chaplain Gavin Baulch from the Werribee Police. This service also included a retiring offering towards the Police Blue Ribbon appeal.

"Encourage one another and build each other up"

At Holy Trinity our worship has been blessed through the assistance of pianist Kieran Murphy, Philip Starks who plays the clarinet during communion on the second and fourth Sunday's of the month and Bill O'Brien who leads to singing each Sunday.

A common theme that threads throughout each years' annual reports is the attendance for midweek service, however this in no way reflects the depth of the discussions and worship experienced by those who attend.

St Laurence Park:

Pastoral Care to the residents at St Laurence Park continues to be a significant area of ministry within the Parish with the Chapel of St Clair 9:30 am 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.

On September 24th Father Manoj from St Anthony's, Reverend Iose from the Lara Uniting Church and myself joined Bishop Philip Huggins as Bishop Philip dedicated a new Communion Table gifted from Tuckers Funeral Services to St Catherine's Chapel, this was followed by a sumptuous afternoon tea provided by the kitchen staff at Costa House.

The pastoral care to the residents at St Laurence Park would be quite challenging without the assistance of volunteers, therefore I would like to take this opportunity to thank those members of our Parish who assist with the Chapel services at St Catherine's, Doris Smith, Coralene Stewart, Brenda Darcy, Terri Bub, along with Archie Smith for his gift of music ministry which enabled this ministry to continue while I was away on Holidays. I would also like to thank Philip Starks for leading the worship on the first Sunday of each month in the hub at St Laurence.

Parish Opportunity Shop

What a blessing this ministry is not only to the Parish but to the local community. On behalf of the Parish I would like to take this opportunity to thank Dawn Teesdale for her dedication as our Op Shop coordinator, along with her mighty team of volunteers for whom we could not do without.

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

This ministry which is coordinated by Philip Starks continues to play a significant role in the life of the Parish as participants engage with scripture making connections between their faith and daily living and develop relationships with fellow participants in the group. There are currently two groups operating at the moment, which are studying 'Creating the Covenant' Bible Study on a Tuesday evening 7:30 pm – 9:00 pm lead by Philip Starks, and Thursday afternoon 1:30 pm – 3:00 pm lead by myself and when I am unavailable by Bill O'Brien.

Spirited Generosity

"And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough, you may share abundantly in every good work." 2 Corinthian 9:8

Over three consecutive Sunday's in September we ran our Spirited Generosity Campaign which focused upon Growing Generosity.

Joy Leggo the coordinator of the Stewardship program spoke on *"how we are seeking to grow the breadth of generosity in our Parish by increasing the ways people are invited to give, throughout the year. That growing generosity is at the very heart of the nature of God.*

"Encourage one another and build each other up"

Our challenge this year is to continue to decrease our debt. It currently stands at \$192,984, we could look at this as a burdened with the enormity of it all or we can look at it as something we need to manage for without that debt we could not be giving so generously back to our community."

As God's people our giving is a part of responding to the gospel call to be a part of God's Kingdom becoming reality. So that the life of heaven – the life of the realm where God is already King – is to become the life of the world, transforming the present 'earth' into the place of beauty and light that God always intended. So that God's kingdom may come, that his will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Mission

The Mission Group which meets on the second Saturday in the month which comprises of Wendy O'Brien, Philip Starks, Annette Wendleman, Denis Scott, Vernon Cohen, Joan Cohen and I all of whom are passionate mission focused individuals with the desire to raise the awareness of mission within our Parish through:

- Display boards have been set up in the Hall of Holy Trinity
- Christmas Shoe Boxes, of which 60 boxes were delivered to the Samaritans Purse from the Parish
- A group from church attended the CMS Autumn weekend was held the weekend of May 23-25 at Flora Hill Bendigo.
- The Op Shop continues to support Nungalinga College in the Northern Territory
- A mission month was held in July. On each Sunday, a speaker was invited to present the work of a mission organisation.

Food Relief:

The Lara Food Relief Program is coordinated by Helen Glare and with a team of volunteers operates out of the Parish Hall on every Monday from 10:00 am – 1:00 pm except on Public Holidays and approximately two weeks at the end of the calendar year. This social justice Food Relief provides food parcels and other support to those who present with stated need. This social justice outreach program is supported by parishioners and from local community groups such as CWA, Beta Sigma Phi, Second Bite and the Masonic Lodge.

Lara Food Relief also provides a referral service to other agencies offering support for clients suffering from, amongst others, homelessness, drug or alcohol dependency and gambling addictions.

Helen Glare, Gaye Mannock and I have also attended the Emergency Food Meeting at the Geelong City Council Chambers.

Social Committees

With the completion of the kitchen facilities at Holy Trinity we are now able enjoy the Parish Social functions in our own Parish Hall. This obviously excludes the much anticipated Pancake night at Little River on Shrove Tuesday. The Social Committee continue to provide much needed support to the Parish finances

Once again I would like to extend my deepest thanks to the Social Committee at Holy Trinity and the Parishioners at Little River for their continued support to the life of the Parish and for all their hard work throughout the year.

SRI (Special Religious Instruction)

SRI which was previously known as CRE (Christian Religious Education) has undergone a name change due to alterations to the Education Department policies and procedures around the

"Encourage one another and build each other up"

delivery of the CRE program. Some other changes that were implemented due to the Education Department policies at the start of term 3 is that we are no longer allowed to hand out stickers, Bibles or any other points or awards to the students. Although this has impacted in some way to the delivery of this program to the Lara schools it is fully supported by the Little River Primary School.

Minister Association

This year it has taken a few months before we have had the opportunity to gather together as a group of Christian leaders due to the business of Church life for all those involved. However, since June we have continued to meet monthly to discuss and prepare for the upcoming Lara Combined Churches Carols on December 21st.

Combined Churches Lara Carols

The Lara Combined Carols was held at Pirra last December through the generosity of L Bisinella Developments, the support of the Lara Community Bank, the Lara CFA and the Lara Masonic Lodge who assisted with parking. We were once again blessed with a lovely summer evening, in a fantastic setting, a well-rehearsed Choir and guest artist with myself as the MC. These Carols continue to provide an amazing mission outreach opportunity for the Churches of Lara, one we pray that will continue to grow and develop over the coming years.

In conclusion:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Philip Starks our Authorised Lay Minister for his ministry in the Parish, his gift of music, his preaching where I am given the opportunity to be fed and nourished by God's word through another, for his teaching and leading of the small groups and his ministry to the aged at St Laurance Park.

I would also like to thank the Vestries and Wardens of the Parish for their commitment of time and energy in the leadership of the Parish, to all those who assist with maintaining the Parish Plant from those who set up for worship, who clean the churches, buy and arrange the flowers, the Sunday PowerPoint operators, the many trips to the tip, the mowing of the lawns, the working bees on the garden, moving the groceries from the church into the food cupboard, and the list goes on. Thank you.



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