

Anglican Church of Australia
Missionary Diocese of Tasmania

*preparing for the
biggest day of your life*

*PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS
SYNOD 2008*

ahealthychurch... transforminglife

preparing for the biggest day of your life

INTRODUCTION

My son is a romantic person. It was their third wedding anniversary. He wanted to surprise his adored wife. Do you know what the symbol is for the third anniversary of a wedding? (Great! I see there are some romantics here.) The symbol is leather. Now you romantics, think of leather; think of ..? –cow! Now think of cow; think of dairy products. Think of dairy products; think of King Island! King Island cream, King Island double brie cheese, King Island yoghurt. The romantic idea is now in place. Earlier this month on their wedding anniversary we received a telephone call from ..? - King Island! What fun. What happiness.

We recalled their wedding day and all the fun and excitement of that precious celebration. Cars with ribbons, flowers, decorations at church and the reception centre, family and friends excited and looking so well dressed! What will the bride wear? The 'boys' looked terrific in their special clothing. And of course, the mothers of the bride and groom looked smashing.

As the bride entered the church we were all agog at her beauty and her beautiful bridal dress and outfit. We were all just so happy and with smiles wider than the church doors. Marvellous! It was a wonderful wedding.

How do you think we might have felt if the bride had entered in tracksuit and sneakers, obviously having a 'bad hair' day? What a letdown. How bad. How sad.

THE ULTIMATE WEDDING

Now let me tell you about another wedding celebration. God has a wedding celebration prepared for his bride. Who is the bride? We are the bride. Praise God. Will the bride be at her best? But of course, yes! Every bride wants to be at her best. Well then, how are our preparations going? Let me remind you of the ultimate wedding. This prophetic preview comes from the Revelation to John chapter 21 -

Revelation 21: 1-5

¹Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. ²And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,

“See, the home of God is among mortals.

He will dwell with them;

and God himself will be with them;

⁴ he will wipe every tear from their eyes.

Death will be no more;

mourning and crying and pain will be no more,

for the first things have passed away.”

⁵And the one who was seated on the throne said, “See, I am making all things new.”

Praise God! What an amazing wedding. What a smashing wedding! And it is our wedding! We are the bride! Wow! I am so excited. The ultimate wedding. Praise the Lord.

GET READY! THE CHURCH I IMAGINE

Today I have been imagining what we as the bride of Christ will look like. So let us do some pre-marriage counseling. Settle back, make yourselves comfortable, hold hands if you like!

Every bride wants to be healthy on her wedding day. I can imagine a healthy bride, a healthy church. What is health? Health is loving relationships, compassion, service, justice, joy, sustainable life patterns, forgiveness, hope, transformation and growth in Christ likeness.

As bride, our first preparation for the wedding is to commit to being a healthy church.

1. *A HEALTHY CHURCH:* We will nurture, sustain and create Christian communities so that they will be places of spiritual transformation doing vital ministries with their wider communities.
The body of Jesus is life giving.

'Healthy church' is our expression for the normal functioning of church life as God intended it. The word "health" is an attempt to capture a biblical concept. The term itself is not the critical issues. Leading indicators of church health include: The Centrality of God's Word, Passionate Spirituality, Fruitful Evangelism, Spirit-filled Worship, being Great Commission Driven, Leadership Multiplication, Church Planting, Stewardship of Resources, Intentional Disciple-making, and Loving Relationships.

2. *A CHURCH IN MISSION:* We will bring good news of Jesus Christ to all places and people of Tasmania.
We offer the embrace of Jesus to all.

Bethlehem Street Live is a creative mission telling out the Christmas story in an engaging and memorable way. Using the church building at Snug a living village, Bethlehem Live, was built using the voluntary skills of many young and not so young Anglicans. Schools were invited, buses arrived and the bubbling excitement of young and old soon filled Bethlehem Live. My thanks to Helen Phillips for her outstanding leadership of this innovative mission venture.

Launceston Church Grammar School

Tuesday, 18th March 2008 was a day of celebration and significance in both the life of the Launceston Church Grammar School, School Church and in the lives of two of its students, Brittany Gray, grade 12, and William Teare, grade 10. The day started with a senior school Easter Service. The Chaplain, Scott Sargent, spoke on the need to make a response to God's offer of reconciliation that comes through Jesus' death and resurrection. At lunchtime Brittany and Will, members of School Church since its inception in March 2007 made a very public response to Jesus by being baptised in our new pool.

Will and Brittany have grown through the ministry of School Church and now have a leadership and mentoring role with younger students who attend. School Church started with eight students last year and has grown to over twenty five regular

attendees, many of whom do not come from Christian homes and who do not have opportunity to experience Christian community in any other way. This is bringing Church and the Gospel to them. At the request of Brittany and Will an invitation was extended to the school community to witness their baptism and many non-Christian students turned up.

To Tasmanians in need. I yearn to offer the embrace of Jesus into disadvantaged areas of Tasmanian community through local mission projects, innovation and church plants.

Church plant into new areas. Parishes continue to discover ways of doing mission. The modelling of mission and the learning gained is vital for us to continue being the Missionary Diocese of Tasmania.

3. *A CHURCH OF DISCIPLES:* We will provide quality resources that enable all of us to live our faith more deeply, living holy lives in Christ in Tasmania.
We nurture the mind of Jesus in all we do.

'Discovering Christian Maturity' is a course in the basics of Christian discipleship that I have recently delivered with Canon David Rietveld at Wellspring Parish. It is an excellent discipleship resource. I am offering to teach it in your parish.

The 'Certificate of Ministry and Theology' is another resource that the Ministry Council is developing. It has 19 people enrolled in its initial stage and will become more widely available through the coming year. The certificate is biblically based and takes advantage of the Moore College distance education course. This is the same basic course that I completed prior to leaving for missionary service in Argentina. The course served me well. I have every confidence that it will us serve well. Our aim is to have 100 participants by the year 2010.

Revd David Rogers-Smith and the Parish of Riverlinks are coordinating this ministry for us. I encourage you and your parish to take up this opportunity to grow in discipleship.

Additional Services Working Group As I travel around our Diocese I have experienced some exciting old and new worship styles. This is an encouraging sign of our health. Part of the genius of Anglicanism is to value the traditions, prayers, liturgies and hymns of the universal Church while at the same time responding to cultural change. This gives a richness and a depth to our corporate worship which steers a course between shallowness on one side and irrelevance on the other. For three hundred years the 1662 *Book of Common Prayer* was a defining feature of Anglicanism. The 1978 *An Australian Prayer Book* sought to update services but continued the practice of the 1662 *Book of Common Prayer* in providing every worshipper in every Anglican church with a single book that contained all the services of the church. The 1995 *A Prayer Book for Australia* by contrast functioned more as a resource book offering a wide variety of liturgical services, with the full version generally only in the hands of the clergy. The next stage is website-based liturgical resources which are constantly being updated.

In order to facilitate this trend I have appointed an *Additional Services Working Group* under the chairmanship of Archdeacon Andrew Lake. This Working Group will draw on existing resources in the Diocese as well as create additional orders of

pastoral services and Sunday services for authorisation and dissemination across the diocese. I am pleased to announce that the Venerable Jill McCoy, the Very Reverend Dr Lindsay Stoddart and the Revd Sheelagh Shaw have accepted my invitation to that Working Group.

I commend the forthcoming motion on this strategic matter to the Synod.

4. *A GENEROUS CHURCH:* We will release and share our abundant resources with one another so that our communities of faith, every congregation, agency and school will realize their fullest potential for ministry and mission. *The heart of Jesus.*

The Imagine Project aims to grow new local mission projects in our Diocese. With the help of the New Ministry Development Fund, to which many of our parishes have contributed and our partners, the Bush Church Aid Society we have been able to seed fund and establish three projects across Tasmania. The Somerset Project is a congregational plant in the parish of Burnie. The Huon Project is a fresh expression of our church life seeking to minister in new ways to groups in the Huon Valley. In our attempts to carefully plan the Launceston Project the amazing potential of a ministering community in and around the Launceston University is emerging. The three mission projects are a snap shot of the possibilities for mission which exist in Tasmania. Our hope is that as we watch and learn from these three initial projects, many others will emerge across the Diocese.

The Missioner Bishop – Training and Projects is a step of faith based on the premise that we need to be doing some new local mission projects in partnership with others and then taking the learning from this to the Diocese. I am grateful to St John's Launceston for sharing their gifted rector for the benefit of the Diocese.

The Missioner Bishop – Stewardship is a gift to the wider Anglican family from our welfare and advocacy agency – Anglicare Tasmania. This extraordinary gift is a first in the Australian Church and is very generous. It is a truly outstanding example of risk taking in mission. An act of faith by both the Board of Anglicare and its CEO! Thank you.

The Cambodia Project is taking shape as a strategic mission partnership with the Diocese of Singapore. A second visit is planned next month led by Canon Rietveld. Tim Wherrett of Wellspring is coordinating the project for us and I encourage you to contact him for further information and participation. As a further link between the Dioceses of Tasmania and Singapore, Gayelene and I are the keynote speakers at the Diocese of Singapore St Andrew's Cathedral Camp next month. Please pray for us as ambassadors of the Gospel and Tasmania, 8 to 14 June.

Parish Giving. Would every parish give 10% of their live giving to Christian work outside their parish? Two of our parishes have given generously to the West Coast Parish to help build a hall at Strahan. This project will facilitate children's ministry and hospitality. Another parish has given very generously to the Pastoral Support and Assistance Scheme.

Bush Church Aid (BCA) is a special mission partner to Tasmania. BCA is a long term partner and friend through supporting clergy, training, attendance at The

Gathering, the Anglican Rural Community Development Project and assisting in recruiting clergy and lay ministers. I express my sincere appreciation to the Bush Church Aid Society on behalf of the Diocese of Tasmania.

5. *A PROPHETIC CHURCH:* We will dialogue with one another and our communities on difficult issues and questions of faith. This is an especially significant role for lay people.

The voice of Jesus.

Issues at the Pub

On 7 Feb this year a pub ministry began at Cygnet with a gathering of about 50 people to discuss the community's response to climate change/peak oil. The meeting was advertised as being the first in a series of conversations to discuss issues of importance to the community with the inclusion of Christ's perspective.

The challenge which sparked this ministry was that of sharing the gospel message among those in the community who don't attend Church. The message is too precious to be repeated only among those who already have an active relationship with the Lord Jesus.

Ouse Hospital The proposed closure of the Ouse Hospital by the State Government has caused great anxiety and Anglicans are at the forefront of fighting for the provision of adequate community health services.

Local radio stations and the local newspapers are ideal vehicles for communicating with our local communities. Anglicans are doing this: from George Town to Hobart. On the internet Christian 'bloggers' are seizing the day with the Gospel. Praise the Lord for all of you. We want even more Anglicans to take hold of these opportunities.

ABC News – a 'prophetic church' gift on my Birthday – Chris Jones and I led the ABC evening news with our participation in issues of justice: Affordable Housing and Work Choices legislation. Chris' prophetic participation related to Affordable housing and to Housing Advocacy Day when the community sector descended on parliament house and had appointments with all the Tasmanian politicians. My participation was with cleaners and their need for working time tables that allowed them a fair day's, or more often a fair night's, work. The Cleaners gave me a wonderful birthday present – a plaque in thanks for my support for their 'Clean Start' campaign.

6. *A SERVANT CHURCH:* We will reach out to our communities, networks, state and world with the gospel of justice and peace.

The hands of Jesus.

Hutchins Community Chaplain

It's really good when someone gets a great idea. Just imagine an Anglican school like Hutchins. A building starts to arise next door to them. Will it be a chemist? A post office? Or even a McDonalds? No, it is an aged-care facility! Revd John Goodwin has an idea: that the students of Hutchins not only experience Christian faith within the four walls of St Thomas' Chapel, but develop relationships with the aged-care residents.

The Tasmanian community suffers from separation between age groups. Could Hutchins help break down this wall of separation? What would be needed? A person experienced with youth and seniors. Where is such a person? – our Bruce! Would he be prepared to take this risk in mission? Would Hutchins take the risk in mission? Yes and Yes! Praise the Lord!

Anglicare is partnering parishes in various outreach programs. A recent initiative called the ‘Anglicare Parish Grant Scheme’ offers the expertise of Anglicare with a financial amount up to \$3000 to assist parishes to bring the hands of Christ to local communities. The Board of Anglicare Tasmania Inc established this parish grant scheme to support parish based projects that compliment Anglicare’s mission policy. Applications are open all year but will be called for annually in February and each parish is limited to one grant per year. What an opportunity! Go for it.

‘Barnabas Column’- Stories of Encouragement There are many stories of God at work in the Missionary Diocese of Tasmania. Synod is a good gathering in which to tell our stories of God at work through his people. I have included in this address the ones sent in answer to my request to the parishes, some appear in our magazine, The Tasmanian Anglican, thanks to our editor Sheelagh Wegman. Erin Wilson has creatively displayed text and photos on our website at <http://www.tasmaniananglican.com/>

The Gathering 2008 - Beyond Imagination

“It was a long day but worth every bit of the effort.” The feed-back says the 2008 Gathering was a fantastic success. The feed-back group unanimously agreed that the benefits of 650 of us coming together from across the Diocese far outweigh the costs and effort involved. One person caught this by saying, “The Gathering was more than I could have imagined. I have come away blessed and more fired up.”

I hope that our theme verse from Ephesians will guide, motivate, inspire and work within us in the days ahead. Those of you who were able to attend may remember the theme “Beyond Imagination” and the verse,

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Eph 3:20-21

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, what does a marriage counselor do at the conclusion of a counseling session? A counselor always gives some things to go away and work on. I am going away to further develop a draft mission action plan that I am taking to Diocesan Council for their work. I have established a futures group to set up scenarios against which to review strategic plans. I have brought celebration and joy and inspiration through the recent Gathering, *Beyond Imagination*.

What are the marriage counselor’s final words? Is there love for each other? We will be known by our love. There is so much to draw us apart from Christ. There is so much to draw us near. Is there any married person here who has never has a fight with their spouse? Remember your first love.

In God the times of pain and pleasure, the triumphs and failures, and the gifts and grace given us by the Holy Spirit enable us to live beyond our wildest imaginings; beyond imagination to the ultimate wedding feast. Prepare yourselves. Bride prepare yourself.

And so I pray: [Ephesians 3:20,21]

Now to Him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

John Harrower
Bishop of Tasmania
Launceston, 23 May 2008

*'BARNABAS COLUMN'- STORIES OF ENCOURAGEMENT**PARISH OF SANDFORD*

At the end of 2006, Sandford Parish started a *Girl's Brigade* company. It was a small start-up, but by January 2007 they had a roll of almost 20 girls with 12-16 turning up each week. This was obviously a work of God. Leaders are hard to come by, and our Parish could only supply a few. So, other Girls' Brigade companies from across the river would help us while we helped them on their nights. 18 months on, this is still working well, and we are making wonderful inroads into the community. Most of the girls have no other contact with our church, so this is church for them. Things go up and down, just like any ministry, but God is blessing the work of our hands as he draws girls to our church.

KidzChurch at Rokeby was a start-up in early 2007. We knew we needed something for kids in the morning while the sermon was on, and so we flew by the seat of our pants and 'just did it'. 12 months on we average about 12 kids a week, sometimes more. We only have about half an hour while the adults hear the sermon and a couple of songs and announcements. If it is a Communion week, the kids will go back into church to have communion with their families. The Children's hall was a bit '*adult-ish*' and so a mural is in the throws of being painted at the moment. We hope this will give the kids a sense of ownership of their hall. It will be a picture of a glamorous castle with many windows. In each window will be placed a photo of a child who attends KidzChurch. That will make the wall a prayer wall so the Parish can come into the hall when the kids aren't there and pray for them.

PARISHES OF SANDFORD & BELLERIVE & SORELL, RICHMOND AND TASMAN

The *Eastern Shore youth group* is an encouraging example of stepping out in faith and seeing God bless his work through our hands. In late 2006, Bellerive, Sandford & Sorell/Richmond/Tasman Parishes decided to work together to form an all-age youth group. By 2007 there were enough kids to split the group into a junior and senior youth group. Now in 2008, Sandford, Bellerive & Sorell/Richmond/Tasman run a combined senior youth group, but run separate junior youth groups. God just keeps bringing kids to our groups. He answers our prayers, but not faster than we can respond. This year we are seeing the senior youth group finally have enough leaders and Bellerive also stepped out in faith and employed a part-time youth worker. However, we now require even more because the numbers have increased 4-fold from last year! We couldn't have coped with these numbers last year. The leaders are excited, and wonder what God will do next. We look forward to seeing more of his blessing in the future.

PARISH OF FRANKLIN ESPERANCE

Spot the ball!

On Sunday 6th April members of local churches joined with Fusion to provide a fun day for families at the Franklin FOCUS. Our intention was to develop relationships

with families in our community by witnessing to them mainly through action - to show that as Christians we care about them and accept them unconditionally. It was a great opportunity for the church to be in the world.

Francis of Assisi and his disciples took the word of Christ literally. Their task was to preach, "using words if necessary," but declaring by word and action the love of God in Christ.

Activities included water volley ball, balloon sculpture, face painting, and water transfer races. The grand finale was a tug of war with an ignominious defeat of the adults by the children (assisted by a heavy scout master). Pride certainly came before a fall for the oldies!

We had many meaningful conversations with parents and children during the day. The organiser of the event commented that he had lost count of the number of positive comments about our activities. The Franklin postmistress wondered whether I was having more fun than the kids! God only knows what seeds were planted that day.

We thank God for Fusion (www.fusion.org.au), their staff and volunteers, and our Christian brothers and sisters in helping to build his Kingdom. We are already planning another event at Christmas. You too could be part of the fun! God bless you, Ray Metcalfe

PARISH OF RIVERLINKS

Kid's Church at St Oswald's

2007

Sunday 9th September was a special day at St Oswald's with the commencement of Kids' Church. Kids' Church is planned for 11:00 a.m. on the second Sunday of each month for the remainder of this year and more frequently in 2008 if the demand is there.

In attendance were 8 children and 6 young mums and dads along with 15 of the regular St Oswald's congregation who came to offer their support.

We commenced with two fun songs introduced by our musos Peter Stewart and Stephen Janes after which Anne Morley introduced the theme of the day "Love God and Love your neighbour" through a dramatized version of the Parable of the Good Samaritan [Luke 10: 25-37].

This was followed by a short prayer, another song and some fun activities where the children were asked to make a "heart shaped" hanging with the words of the two great commandments and/or to make figure cut-outs of "neighbours" and paste on a large display sheet and to record ways they could be a good neighbour. At the conclusion the St Oswald's ladies served heart shaped cookies, fruit and cordial for the children and tea and coffee for the mums and dads.

2008

We had a most encouraging start to Kids' Church at St Oswald's for 2008 with 20 children and 35 adults in attendance. When you consider only 15 were regular St Oswald's people we are reaching the wider community and meeting an obvious need. And what was even more encouraging is to report there were five new families in attendance.

It is interesting to reflect that of the 5 new families – 3 responded through our regular letter box drop, 1 family by seeing the Kids' Church notice on the church door as they walked past, and 1 by reading the Church Notices in the Saturday Examiner. Praise the Lord!

Jesus said, "The Kingdom of Heaven is like a great treasure". So treasure was our theme and the activities were based on a treasure hunt for the treasure pieces of love [by God and for God], love for one another, disciples and faith.

The story was of Bartimaeus and his healing by Jesus through faith. "Your faith has made you well".

Please continue to pray for Kids' Church for it to grow and for it to also minister to the young mums and dads who come along with their children.

Anne and Ian Morley

PARISH OF KINGSTON

We had a wonderful Passover Dinner this year which involved much of the parish.

It was evangelistic

(talked about the connection between the exodus and Jesus)

It was fun

(we did a drama of the exodus story)

It was inclusive

(we had kids do an action song called "Pharaoh Pharaoh")

It was friendly

(we had lots of wonderful conversations)

It was an act of worship

(and help in the main church auditorium)

It was about service

(many, many people volunteered and helped to do the work as a body)

We have a furniture ministry in the Parish of Break O'Day. We have two depots, one at the Anglicare office and the other a shed that we use courtesy of former parishioners who now live on the mainland.

This is a regular happening—maybe twice a week or more sometimes, we load furniture from the shed in Stieglitz.

All the furniture is donated—and we give it away as well. It ranges from whole households as estates are closed, or people move or renovate—it varies greatly.

The other area is carpet—old carpets are thrown away—recycled by us as new is laid. All the carpet in the renovated Anglicare Parish centre is recycled carpet.

We also do new fridges, washing machines and microwaves if there isn't any on hand and the monies are available.

Celebrating St Columba's Day 2007 at Pyengana

"Taking risks, letting go, casting off, trusting to God— all these are suggested by the metaphor of pilgrimage." - Ian Bradley in his book- Colonies of Heaven About Celtic Christianity

With few expectations, the God inspired activity - Celebrate St Columba's Day with stories, songs and a walk to St Columba Falls - was a wonderfully nourishing and satisfying experience. Listening and speaking; sharing stories of loss and longing; sharing not only the bread and wine...but scary sharing of ourselves with strangers and seeing the face of Christ in the unknown, surely a moment of sheer joy which gladdens the heart.

An important element of the vision for the event was to use it as a starting point to re-engage at a deeper level with the local community. Significantly, the church of St Michael and All Angels is positioned in splendid isolation on the Tasman Highway, a symbolism, I suspect not lost on the locals, who may from time to time express negative and positive feelings about the perceived lack of connectivity between church and people in their day to day lives.

Responses filtering back have been wonderfully encouraging and humbling. 47 people attending the service which had splendour, tradition and real warmth and Rev. Kent Small's stories of the life of Columba captured the imagination and the hearts of the people.

The dynamics changed over lunch, 45+ people, not the same group, but some different smiling faces were there. Mairi and David sang beautiful Irish and Scottish songs during lunch which moved some to tears. and again, informality was the norm. our hosts, Jon and Lyndal Healey could not have been more helpful in both the planning and the quality of the meals.

We approached St Columba Falls in the late afternoon chill and gloom worthy of an Iona pilgrimage in winter which was a most appropriate conclusion to a risk taking but enormously satisfying day for everyone. For those who are fretting at missing out, we have been inundated with requests to make it an annual event.

Isabel Telford

SOMERSET PROJECT

Since the beginning of the year we have picked up 2 or 3 families who have youth. Other children who have been with us longer are fast growing up. We find ourselves needing to start a youth ministry—what a wonderful problem to have!

A couple move to the area and come to Connections as a spiritual home. The pregnant wife suffers some illness before the baby is born and the church rallies around with offers of help. After only a few weeks of them being a part of us their child is born—and the church rejoices with them at the gift of life.

PARISH OF BELLERIVE

In 2007 St Marks Bellerive started a lunch time group at Bellerive Primary school called Jaffa (Jesus A Friend For All) program. After a slow start with half a dozen kids, we saw the group grow three times the size into a thriving ministry. Last year St Marks gave out over 24 Bibles to students attending the group and this year the group is continuing to grow. CrossWiReD youth ministry which is run through St Marks has begun to see the benefit of this ministry, by having Jaffa kids now keen to attend the youth groups and learn more about our wonderful God.

PARISH OF WELLSRING

As part of our efforts to engage with a changing world, Wellspring has begun exploring mission teams as a means to reconnect with our communities. Mission teams attempt to connect with people outside church circles through meeting them where they are. There have been some initial gains. Several new mission teams have started this past year. New teams include:

- one team reaching out through and to young mums—which has resulted in some great new relationships being built through play groups,
- one team reaching out to the live music scene in Hobart. Through the relationships of this group, one person has already come to Christ. This guy continues to follow Jesus and has become part of the Wellspring church community,
- one team reaching out to outdoor adventure types,
- one team reaching out to struggling school children through ‘kids hope’—a mentoring program. This has been instrumental in growing an

excellent relationship with the partner school, which has just now 'opened the door' to the good news of Jesus, by allowing us to present at a school assembly.

Adrian Nickols is using his business administration skills to serve God overseas. He has just left to spend four months in Bolivia and another four months in Ecuador working with a mission that seeks to alleviate poverty through micro financing, and an organization that runs orphanages. His role will be to help the orphanages become self funding.

KIDS HOPE MENTORING PROGRAM

In April 2007 Holy Trinity, Hobart commenced a mentoring program known as World Vision—Kids Hope. In this highly practical missional program, the church adopts a local school and volunteers from the church spend one hour a week with one child who is struggling with their school work.

This mission has been continued by Wellspring Anglican. Both the mentors and kids have found the mentoring hour to be a highlight of their week, and some of the kids have recorded astronomical improvements in their literacy levels. As a result, we have gone from having virtually no relationship with the school, to having an excellent one where our church is held in very high regard by students, teachers and the whole school community.

CO-OPERATING PARISH OF ALL SAINTS ANGLICAN CHURCH AND ST ANDREWS UNITING CHURCH SWANSEA

The annual Holiday Activities were at Swansea in January. These activities have been held for the past 50 years. This year there was a change of leadership and Anne Breadmore took over with the assistance of Jenny Ivey.

Anne attended the Holiday Activities or Beach Mission as it was known then as a child 40 years ago. It was good to see that God touched her life all those years ago and now she is working for His glory with the children of today.

The activities this year were again a great success and Anne's children were among those taking part.

PARISH OF ST GEORGE'S BATTERY POINT

One particular source of good news over the last year has been the Playgroup that Jo and I started last September. A diocesan new ministry grant got us a fence built and a bit of green thumbing transformed our secret garden into a place that looked welcoming. Playgroup at St George's is now largely self-sufficient – Playgroups Tasmania, our posters and flyers, and word of mouth keep new people coming along every week and the \$3 from each family covers our basic running costs.

Our Playgroup has two concerns that shape its existence. On the one hand, we want to assist mums, dads, and caregivers to stave off cabin fever as they work at caring for little ones; providing a context for them get out of the house and share with others in their situation. On the other hand, we want to help the kids and the parents feel comfortable around St George's to help them cross the bridge to the kids' church we run on Sundays.

To me it is a great encouragement that since we began we have had contact with more than 30 families who wouldn't otherwise have stepped foot at St George's.

Paul Chew

PARISH OF CIRCULAR HEAD

It all started in 2004 - I went to Church, after admittedly not going for some 10 years or so. I encountered not exactly what I expected, and a congregation of 10 to 15 (older people).

I now have younger children and would like them to experience some sort of Christian outreach and thought that "my" Church would be the answer to this. Well not at all!! The service attended had NO children, NO teenagers, NO youth, I'm 35 and was the youngest in the congregation. So I rang around some of my old friends from our youth group days, to see if they were interested in providing contemporary worship for families and children.

So, after a few sing-a-longs, barbeques, teas and a trip to witness Burnie's Rock the Flock, *Bop with God* was formed. All this was under the unforgettable guidance of our enabler Peter Adkins. Our monthly service was organized to be in the parish hall, as we thought the Church was a little too constrictive & daunting for our families (but 2008 has better ideas - we're back in the Church). At Bop with God there's craft, lively singing, stories, skits, memory verses, interactive prayers and is always followed by a shared lunch. Our attendances average from 40 to 50 people of all ages 0 to 91 to be exact.

But... we felt more was needed. So a trip to Hobart was organized otherwise known as our 'Church Crawl'. We needed some fresh ideas, and felt that other churches could help us to accommodate all ages. Hence ½ Eleven was formed - a contemporary, prayer book orientated service.

Four years on... the contemporary worship team consists of Leighton, Jenny, Lisa, Marcus and Karen (who are all lay ministers for Children and Family Ministries within our Parish) and let's not forget the guidance of our enabler Jill McCoy.

Our Parish has gone from strength to strength, so much so, that our parish is now self-sustaining and growing. We have taken another huge step of Faith, within ourselves and our parish, to move further forward. Plans are now underway to extend our Church at a cost of around \$150 000+. Our parish has also accepted change greatly, the older congregation more so, than we could ever have comprehended. In saying this, we fully accept that traditional services still play an important role in our Church, but by providing these contemporary services, the life is remaining within our Church, making it much more viable.

God is working in each and every one of our hearts, 5 years ago we would never have dreamt that this would be part of our future. We are so thankful that our faith has grown and we are looked upon as the future of the Anglican Parish of Circular Head, and are honoured to be thought as such.

This is not so much of an individual faith story, as we feel that God wants us as team players. By working through each one of us, and with our own unique gifts, has been a huge Story of Faith – a gift from God.

Jenny Poke

PARISH OF ULVERSTONE

As a means of trying to 're-connect' a keen Christian family at Holy Trinity, Ulverstone, with a vibrant local community, the Anglican church has taken part in two community festivals, and put on a Teddy Bears' Picnic, among other events. In the Apex Community Christian Festival and Parade, the Rector entered the Parade on stilts, being billed as "Angels in the *height* adore him, Jesus Christ the Lord." This was followed with a contingent of church members providing food, games, massages, stilts, bubbles, Jesus All About Life balloons, Christmas literature, and a place to just sit, relax and 'chill out'.

At the Apex Festival in the Park in February, we again had a presence with free games and activities for the kids. Then, on April 12th, we held our first Annual 'Teddy Bears' Picnic', mostly in an attempt to re-connect with Baptism Families. Recently, we have been giving children a 'Baptism Bear' at their Baptism. We invited these, and any other Baptism families from the last four years, as well as the wider community, to come for a brief thanksgiving for our Teddy Bears in church, followed by picnic food, and Teddy Bear Games in the park opposite the church. Three of the Baptism families returned, along with 60 or 70 others (including humans!), and had lots of fun. We had the opportunity to promote our Sunday School, and other activities for Kids and Families, as well as catching up with church family, Baptism families, and wider community members, some from community Day Care and schools, and some just passing by in the park.

For Group Prayer and Discussion

Thank you for participating in this discussion group. The aim is to share responses to Bishop John's address and perhaps to collect some feedback. Please be sensitive to each member of your group. The time is very limited and I am sure that most people will want to make a brief contribution. The following questions may help to stimulate the discussion. The paper provided may be used to record comments. The sheets from each group will be displayed at lunch time for your interest. Please return the sheets to Arianne at the conclusion of your time together.

1. Bishop John is obviously deeply moved by the wedding day analogy. The image of the church meeting with Jesus fills our Bishop with thanksgiving. Please spend some time in prayer reflecting on this image and perhaps one or two would like to pray aloud sharing their response to God with the group.
2. What is one encouragement, learning, challenge or impression that you will take from the Bishop's address?
3. We were asked to consider the church as a bride preparing for her wedding day. Bishop John suggests that a well-prepared church will be a healthy church, a church in mission, a church of disciples, a generous church, a prophetic church and a servant church. The wedding day gets nearer every day. Where do you think the church should be focussing her energies? Your Parish? The Bishop and his team? Yourself?
4. Clearly, Bishop John hopes that we will be encouraged by the ministry stories shared. The exciting thing is that he cannot be everywhere and even so he was able to gather such an encouraging collection. Please take the opportunity of any remaining time to share ministry stories from your parish which may be a further encouragement to your group. (...and do please write them up and get them to Sandra!)

Please be encouraged to finish your group time by praying, saying the following words of encouragement together.

Now to Him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.
[Ephesians 3:20,21]