

VISION AND STRATEGY



PRAYING & LEARNING

This month we continue to celebrate our progress in growing and deepening our prayer lives, as well reporting on opportunities to move into Strategy 2 of our vision to fulfil the two great commandments: To love God with all hearts, mind, soul and strength and to love our neighbours as ourselves. Ideally, we will continue to grow and deepen our prayer as we look to begin new ways to Learn Christ. The August edition of this newsletter outlined the Learn Christ Strategy in some detail and was accompanied by a booklet outlining some recommended resources which you might like to try for yourself or in your church or organisation.

You can still find this information on the Diocesan website under 'Vision and Strategy'. We would love to hear about other resources that you are using, as well as your experiences of growing and deepening your prayer lives, so please do keep in touch via Bishop Ian's email address: bishop@bunbury.org.au

The Four Strategies

Deepening and Growing our prayerfulness as individuals, groups and churches

Learning more about Jesus Christ in order to become more like Christ

Growing in love for, and encouragement of, one another (within our churches and diocese)

Being salt and light in the places and among the people God has placed us (in our communities)

Prayer Beads in Busselton . . .



Rev Rose Guok from St Mary's Busselton reports that 60 "Prayer Beads" have been taken up by our parishioners. This is in keeping with the first strategy to deepen in prayer as a parish and as individuals. Each bead represents one person, so potentially, the parish of Busselton is now praying for 300 people.

Some of the St Mary's Ladies' Guild offered to help make these so it's also bringing people to work together for a good cause!

. . . And at Mother's Union

Wendy Mabey reports: Mother's Union held two Friendship Days this year - one in Brunswick and the other in Kojonup. Both days were attended by members from various parishes, including , Albany, Busselton, Boyup Brook, Bunbury, Colliie, Katanning and Mandurah. It was a relaxed day of sharing and fellowship, with prayerful meditation. We were delighted to have Rev Vicki Webb join us on both days and Rev Kevin Toovey at Kojonup.

Each day began with a service of Christian Discipleship and then Rev Vicki Webb instructed us about Prayer Shingles and the making of Anglican Prayer Beads Chaplets.

Tricia from the Bunbury Branch commented, "The planks of wood taught us to

look further than just the outside. We could see many different things in the wood grain . . . The bead prayer chains were really interesting and a great choice of beads got everyone going. Thanks to the organisers for such a pleasant and interesting mixture of MU persons whom we don't get to see very often "

A colourful array of prayer chaplets and beads were made by members. It was so good to see members from various branches joining together in fellowship



Photo: Beth Wootton



Our second strategy for our diocesan vision is: Learning about Jesus Christ in order to become more like Jesus Christ. For the past year we've been looking at our prayer and I hope that for all of you who have participated its been an exciting journey.

A Word from Bishop Ian

At the Cathedral we have very much enjoyed our Thursday morning prayer and we have seen some wonderful answers to prayer over the last few months. I encourage you to continue with the theme of prayer and if you have not touched it at all, not to feel that you can't still have a go at it.

The reason for learning about Jesus Christ is that as Christians we are supposed to be like Christ and that begs the question, 'How much do we know about Jesus Christ?' The August Newsletter shows that there are at least six ways we can learn more about Jesus Christ and I'm hoping that one or more of those will appeal to

you. The idea is not for us to feel that we're going back into a classroom but to engage in a voyage of discovery about this extraordinary Son of God, whom we worship Sunday by Sunday and who we pray to on a daily basis - Jesus Christ. He shows us what God is like so there probably isn't anything more important that we can do.

I commend this theme to you. I pray it will be an extraordinary opportunity for us all to learn about Jesus Christ and to become more like Christ. If there ever was a time when our world needs people who are being like Christ, now is one of those times.

God Bless you.

Getting Started with the 'Learn Christ' Strategy



The starting point for everyone, whether you are approaching this strategy as an individual, parish or organisation, is to read the August Vision and Strategy newsletter, which explains six different ways we can 'Learn Christ'.

DIOCESE OF BUNBURY AUGUST 2022 VISION AND STRATEGY

The next step is to peruse the accompanying Resources Brochure, which highlights a range of resources you might like to use to get started on this journey. Our hope is that there will be something of interest to everyone. We will be recommending other resources too as we go along and would love to hear your recommendations so we can share them in future newsletters.

DIOCESE OF BUNBURY AUGUST 2022 VISION AND STRATEGY

How to use this Brochure

The resources in this brochure have been chosen to help with steps 1-6 in the box opposite. Some resources will help with more than one of these steps. To choose a resource that will be most helpful to you, it is suggested that you decide which of the steps you would like to pursue, and then what kind of resource you would like to use - a book, study guide, audio-visual or digital resource. Some resources can be used together and this has been indicated for you. This is not a comprehensive list of resources. It is a spring board into the 'Learn Christ' strategy. More resources will be featured in future editions of the Vision and Strategy Newsletter. Please send us your recommendations.

What does it mean to 'Learn Christ'?

1. To learn about Christ through reading the Bible, listening to the teaching of wise Christian leaders, and discussing what we are learning with others.
2. To be taught in Christ, as Christ dwells in us through the Holy Spirit.
3. To be at peace and confident in our relationship with God and the Holy Spirit, through Christ.
4. To experience the height, depth and breadth of God's love for us.
5. To put off the old ways of thinking and behaving and put on Christ's righteousness and a renewed mind.
6. To become more Christlike, living a life of love.

Bishop Ian has made a short video introduction to the Learn Christ strategy. You can find the link on the website or on You Tube at www.youtube.com/watch?v=wSWU0HCCaoQ

LEARN CHRIST



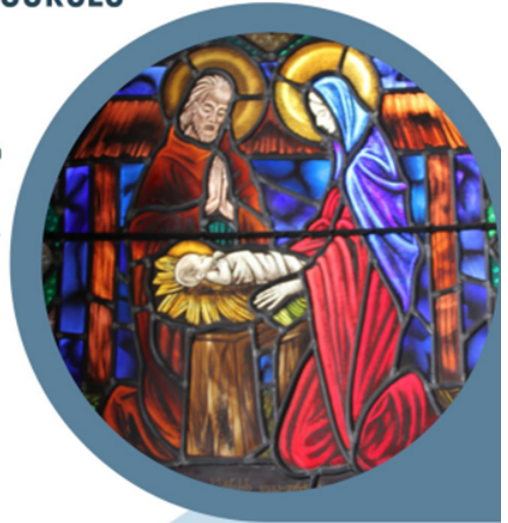
ADVENT RESOURCES

6 Reflections

One reflection for each week of Advent, including Christ the King and Christmas Day

Each reflection focuses on a lectionary reading for the week, a piece of Christian Art, a short reflection and a prayer

Starts from 20th November 2022



AVAILABLE EARLY NOVEMBER 2022

Contributors:

- Rev Paul Bartley (Williams)
- Rev Sally Buckley (Denmark)
- Bishop Ian Courtts (Bunbury)
- Rev John Jones (Albany)
- Rev Genevieve Milnes (Kendenup)
- Rev Vicki Webb (Kojunup)

The nativity scene, stained glass window St Mary's Kojunup. Picture supplied by Sandra Pedler

bishop@bunbury.org.au

www.bunburyanglican.org

The August newsletter and Resources Brochure should be available from your church or organisation. They can also be found on the Diocesan Website - just click on the 'Vision and Strategy' tab on the home page. Copies of our home-grown study notes for this strategy are also available to download from the website.

You may wish to invite others to join you in reading a particular book, watching a film or using a set of study notes. You might like to ask your parish or organisation leader what plans they have to explore "Learn Christ" as a community.

Future newsletters will also highlight initiatives that are happening around the diocese so that we can share ideas and encourage one another along the way.

Please let us know how you are going with this strategy by emailing bishop@bunbury.org.au.

Lay Retreat 2022

The Diocesan Lay Retreat was held on the first weekend of August at the St John of God retreat centre in Shoalwater, led by Revs Vicki Webb and Kevin Toovey, Sue Roberts and Karen White. 24 people gathered together to pray, rest, listen or create. The theme of the retreat was 'Sacred Spaces of Retreat' with various prayer stations and activities to prompt prayer and reflection, including a guided walk in the labyrinth and guided meditation and contemplation. Individual Spiritual Direction sessions and anointing prayer for healing were also offered.



Rachel Sambell from Mt Barker (Southern Ranges Parish) shares with us her reflections from Friday evening prayer in the chapel:

"The team had laid out the most beautiful display on the altar to reflect upon. A gold satin cloth spread across the altar and fell down from it in a river of fabric. Overlaying it was a black chiffon cloth and under the chiffon, many, many electric tea light candles shone. There were also some tealight candles on the gold satin where there was no black chiffon. Hidden amongst the fabric, gold and black, were little gold stone/glass buttons.

The whole image reminded me of the beginning of the gospel of St John, chapter one, verse one:

Verse 1 In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God....

Verse 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Also, the gospel of St Matthew, chapter thirteen, verse forty-five:

Verse 45 Again the Kingdom of Heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.

In Evening Prayer, we read, there is a time to lay things down. I wondered what it is God is asking me to lay down. My troubles? Am I hoarding my troubles, or worries, to use a more modern word? Am I worshipping my anxiety? I sensed as I read the liturgy, God's Spirit moving in me to think upon taking up teaching more pupils the piano. To lay down my thirst for knowledge, biblical, linguistic, Hebrew, Greek or otherwise. That I would take that up again at a later date, later time.

Finally, God gave me the beginning of a prayer or poem, as I meditated upon the flickering light of the candles:"

***Jesus, Light of the World.
Shining inside of us.
Steady and clam
Fluid and dynamic
Burn brighter.
Burn strong,
Until all my dross is gone
and anything that is left is
There by your will alone.
Come Lord Jesus***

Fasting Prayer in Coodanup



Linley Matthews Want, priest-in-charge at Church of the Way Coodanup reports: Every year we embark on a 21 day Fast and recommend the Daniel Fast. The Daniel Fast is based on the prophet Daniel's diet as recorded in the Book of Daniel in the Bible. It's a type of partial fast that focuses on vegetables and other healthy whole foods but leaves out meat, alcohol and rich foods. Many people in our church join in but some aren't able to. We give commitment sheets to everyone to fill in and they place their prayer needs before God. When we look back we can see how God has answered prayer.

We have so many testimonies of answered prayer. Every second Sunday we have a Word and Worship service which includes testimony. Sharing testimony is part of our DNA and we see the goodness of God in our midst often". Some of these testimonies are shared on this page.

Do you have a testimony that you would like to share?

Please send it to bishop@bunbury.org.au

Kendall's Story

"We were praying for \$100 which we were short for our home deposit. We shared with family and even suggested the children contribute from their pocket money but we all prayed earnestly. (That's how tight money was and how close to our goal we were). Then coming home the next day to a letter in our letterbox that was stapled around the edges and inside was 2x \$50 notes and inside the words written were "I will answer them before they even call to me. While they are still talking about their needs, I will go ahead and answer their prayers!" (Isaiah 65:24). We still don't know who dropped that money off - it was an anonymous gift that no family members contributed to."

Amanda's Story

"When I went to the petrol station I asked the Lord to make it clear to me if he wanted me to pay for someone's petrol. I had done it a few times before at this station and didn't want to be religious about it and just do it out of habit. When I went in to pay for my fuel the lady at the counter looked very angry. I heard a customer apologise for driving off without paying. The lady at the till was very aggravated and agitated. The guy then explained that he couldn't pay the bill, and would have to come back at the end

of the week. THEN IT "DAWNED ON ME. This was the Lord making it VERY obvious that I needed to pay for this man's petrol. So I came out from behind the shelves and let them know that I'd be paying the bill. The lady at the till looked so relieved. I knew that this was 100% what the Lord was saying to me. The man who couldn't pay had his mouth wide open and was saying "What? No you don't have to do that!!" The other customers that had gathered by now were looking at me! It was such a lot of fun. I couldn't believe the Lord was answering my prayer so clearly. I then had the chance to tell the cashier and the other customer that I had, just 5 minutes before, prayed to God to show me if he wanted me to pay for someone's petrol. The customer whose petrol I had payed for asked to speak to me outside. He asked if he could pay me back. I was again able to tell him what I had prayed. And that God had wanted him to be blessed. It's been a benchmark to build my faith and I'm praying some crazy prayers these days."

Carole's Story

I lost my husband to brain cancer and was surprised and blessed with two new babies to my children who were trying to conceive. The babies have filled us with joy in losing Steve. These answers are a result of prayer and fasting in the 21 day fast.

Explore Prayer Day

37 people, ordained and lay, gathered at St Boniface Cathedral on Saturday 17th September for our first 'Explore Prayer Day'. The day was the inspiration of the Goldsmith Deanery and was organised by Rev Mavis Tyler. The programme ran from 9.30am -2pm and a number of different prayer workshops were offered.

Each workshop ran for 40 minutes with the aim to 'try it and see'. The types of prayer explored included: kinesthetic prayer, encouraging children to pray, using prayer beads. praying with icons, contemplative prayer, praying with drawing, healing prayer, praying with the Lord's Prayer and music and prayer. Each workshop was repeated to enable more people to attend each workshop.



Prayer and Drawing workshop led by Sue Kalab

At the end of the day, everyone gathered together to feedback their experiences. Here are some of the comments that were made:

- *"This has been enlightening. Everything was beautifully prepared and presented"*
- *"I like the variety - such different topics"*
- *"I learnt something new at each one"*
- *"Everything was completely useful".*
- *"Praying with icons really opened up my mind".*
- *"It was good to have people from different churches in the diocese here"*
- *"The sense of everyone praying together in a group - there's power in that . . . even in meditation, doing it silently together was supportive".*

This was first time such an event has been held in our diocese and many commented that they would like it to happen again.

Anne Coutts, who led the feedback session, left us with these questions: How can we do this more often? How do we give more opportunities for people to pray together?



Photos courtesy of Chris Morgan