



Corpus Christi Anglican Church, Garsfontein

Parish Magazine

Epiphany-Tide 2019

Rector:

The Revd Vernon Foster

082 306 2180

Assistant Priest:

The Rev'd Prof Stephen Verryn

Churchwardens:

André Joubert
082 493 7490

Obed Radebe
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Alternate:

Skamie Mthembu
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Parish Administrator:

Gwen Heathfield

Office Contact Details:

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Office Hours:

Monday 12-30 to 16-00
Tuesday to Friday

08:00—13:00

Parish Email:

corpus.christi@telkomsa.net

Postal Address:

P O Box 39845
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0060

Physical Address:

482 de Bron Road
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Regular Worship Services:

Children's Ministry.

Services to be advised

Other Sundays

07:00
Holy Communion (Said)

09:00
Holy Communion (Sung)
&

Sunday School / Teen Church
(in Government School terms)

Wednesdays

09:00
Holy Communion (Said)



Dear Friends,

It has been a year since coming "home" to be the Rector of the Parish that raised up my vocation. It has been a wonderful year of getting to know the parish and its people. Over the course of my ministry I have developed the practice of giving the Rector's Vestry report in the first letter of the year to the parish. Doing this gives parishioners opportunity to engage and discuss with me my assessment of where we have come from over the last year, and where I believe we, as a parish, should be going in the coming year and beyond. While Annual Vestry is often viewed as a tedious part of parish life, it is vital to the ongoing mission of the Church. The Annual Vestry meeting is a time to collectively engage with each other about the parish's participation in God's mission, and

how we resource that work – reflecting honestly about how we have managed in the preceding year. Please be reminded that our **Annual Vestry** is planned for **Sunday the 24th of February 2019** after the 9am service.

Generally speaking, the first year of service for a new Rector is one of observation. Of course, there are always some immediate changes, but nothing drastic. For the most part things have been running smoothly, but this should not lull us into a state of complacency. We cannot rest on what we have always done, and past successes because, as the well-known maxim goes, "if you do what you've always done, you will get what you've always gotten." With this in mind, it is my intention to restructure the way we have considered matters that are of concern to the mission and ministry of the Church using a model of Church work that I obtained from the now retired Professor Malan Nel in his book *Youth Ministry: An Inclusive Congregational Approach* – it considers the Church's mission (which should align with what we understand to be God's Mission) in terms of a number of functions. No model is ever entirely perfect, but this one does provide us with a way of ensuring our focus on being a Christian Community that seeks to love God, grow in faith and serve the world.

Worship –Our services during 2018 have been worshipful, and I am pleased to hear from some of you that attendance has remained good, even for the services that take place during the week. If we are going to be honest, we must first recognise that services are when most of the community are gathered together, and it is in that space that most of us should be inspired, not only to have a personal spiritual 'top up', but also to take the Gospel with us into the places where we work, learn and play – beyond the Sunday Church experience. This is aided by various activities and ministries in our regular cycle of worship.

Lay Ministry: The Laity are the people of the Church and Lay Ministry is the ministry of the people, meaning that everyone plays a part in the mission and ministry of the parish. The reality is that we give this work to a select few whom we licence to be Lay Ministers (but it remains the people's ministry). Our Lay Ministers have been, and continue to be people devoted to the ministry of the people, even though many of them are very busy and professional people beyond regular Church services. I wish to express our gratitude to them because without this team my work would be that much more challenging. Over the last year, I have interviewed most of them and am happy to have them licenced – we will be looking for an appropriate Sunday to do that. We also need to raise up more lay ministers.

Servers: One of the things that kept me focussed on a calling to Holy Orders was being a server. It was in that ministry that I learned about the acts of worship which I consider meaningful in my relationship with God today. What we need now are regular servers. I want to thank the small group of servers who are present from time to time, and it is my belief that we have a core group who can begin to grow this ministry in our Parish. Most parishes draw servers from the youth, but this does not exclude older persons who would like to offer service to the Church, but are not nec-

essarily confident enough to take speaking parts in worship. It is my intention to identify a team of leaders who can coordinate and inspire members to participate in our worship in this way.

Music Ministry: This is a ministry that is absolutely vital to facilitating a good encounter with our Lord as a gathered community of faith – in fact music is often cited as a reason for people leaving one church and going to another. “*Those who sing,*” said St. Augustine of Hippo, “*pray twice.*” Saint Augustine meant that singing adds to our praise and worship of God—that our voices are gifts, with which we can make music to the Lord. Sung prayer expresses the joy of the heart, the happiness resulting from one who has encountered Jesus Christ and experienced his love.

While making it clear that there is much we can and should do to improve this ministry in our parish I do want to acknowledge the commitment of those, musicians and singers alike, who are able to contribute to this ministry. We have been blessed over many years with the long-standing devotion of Jeanne Jackson, who became music director two decades ago when we were struggling to find someone to lead and coordinate the church music. Jeanne has stepped back from this ministry but continues with the onerous task of choosing appropriate hymns for our services. We have also been blessed with the gifts of Gavin Isaacs, who despite other commitments has continued to offer his gift to our worship when he is able. We have also had Ruth Loubser, who isn’t a member of our parish but has been very gracious in offering her gifts as well.

Sacristy: The Sacristans are a group that are often taken for granted because we don’t see them doing their work. We must express our gratitude to Gillian Sole and her team for the quiet dedication to the holy vessels and other symbols we use at the centre of our worship.

Midweek service and Glen Haven are services that take place regularly and have been a source of wonderful ministry.

Social Responsibility – Tumelong is the Social Responsibility wing of our Diocese. The work is focussed on four important aspects: Care and Relief, Capacity Building, HIV/Aids (dread diseases) and the Environment. These four foci of Tumelong should inform and challenge our Social Responsibility work. One thing we do need is to be represented in the organisation “Friends of Tumelong.”

Another focus of our Social Responsibility over the past few years has been Maboloka Haven. We have given a considerable amount of resources to this very worthy cause. This is not something I think we should abandon, and I believe that we should continue with activities that we have been involved in like the Christmas party. We thank Evah Radebe and her “Elves” for all the hard work put into making the annual Christmas party such a resounding success.

A further challenge for the parish is to increase our awareness of, and response to, the call on our Social Responsibility where we are. I believe we need to begin assessing the needs of the community closer to home – there are some activities that our parish is not directly involved in, but we do provide the spaces for ministry e.g. Alcoholics Anonymous of which there are now four groups. It is easier to give to a project that is far removed from us and where we engage only a few times a year. It is much more challenging to face the real, and often ignored, social needs on our door step on a daily basis. Are we making a difference in Garsfontein and surrounding Suburbs that fall into the boundaries of our parish?

Formation and Teaching – In terms of parish life this is very broad, because everything we do, from worship to administration, should be used as opportunities for forming our Christian faith and teaching others about the Kingdom of God.

Children’s Church – This ministry is doing very well with a great team coordinated by Penny Craven. One of the challenges is that they seem to be outgrowing the barn, spilling onto the covered parking next to the Barn. This is not a problem because I believe it to be indicative of growth. With this growth it is necessary to begin assessing if our spaces are sufficient for the ministry and to think about what sort of property development is needed to accommodate, not only the Children’s Church, but other groups that use our facilities.

Youth – This is a ministry that the Church has and always finds difficulty in solidifying – it is a ministry that seems to be adrift with little or no direction. Our Youth should be a priority ministry and I believe we need to pay careful attention to this group, not only because they are the future of the Church, but because they are very much a part of the present of the Church. We need to help the leadership find cohesion and traction as we take this ministry seriously and forward. This will involve identifying, equipping and empowering a leadership team.

Baptism – Last year we didn’t have many Baptisms, well, not as many as the Church had on the First Pentecost. This is an activity that is ongoing. In the Baptism service you may have noticed that the questions I pose to the parents and Godparents about committing by example and teaching to raise up their children to live according the God’s laws as loyal members of the Church, I also pose to the congregation. I believe it takes a village to raise a child, so to my mind the whole community must be held accountable and responsible for raising and forming those who are Baptised, whether in infancy or in adulthood. I have been impressed by the practice in this parish that those seeking to present children for baptism or who themselves wish to be baptised are asked to be regular contributing members of the community for a period after baptism. We shall continue with this policy. I would like to offer our gratitude to Donovan Rogers for facilitating the Baptism preparation in 2018.

Confirmation – This group suffers from the same challenges that the youth struggles with, mainly because they are the youth of our parish. Confirmation is the completion of the Baptism rite. That is very different from Confirmation being the destination in our Christian journey. In fact, when young people come to confirmation, they are confirming the faith into which they were baptised and confirming that they now own the journey that was begun for them in infancy for themselves. It is hardly surprising then that many of our

young confirmands wander off – they haven't been properly disciplined in the faith. Yes, they know what they believe but there is very little, if anything, after confirmation to keep them engaged and participating in the community of faith. This is where an effective youth ministry is so important. As a result of this assessment I feel we need something more. We will be offering Youth Alpha this year not as a substitute for confirmation preparation but as a sort of post-confirmation discipling course (see under Ecumenism and Evangelism).

Bible Studies – In a community where people are occupied with many things, and Church activity is just another item on a long to-do list, Bible Studies and teaching outside of Sunday church time is largely lost. This raises questions about members being able to grow in faith when we give our faith just a couple of hours on a Sunday. Successful churches, whatever that term may mean to you, have always had a cell group system where people are able to engage in fellowship and Bible Study with each other beyond the Sunday Church time. We have two Bible Studies meeting on a regular basis in our community and I would like to see more develop in time. With that, our decision to run the Lent Course after Church on Sundays last year was not a rousing success. There are too many distractions for effective teaching. This year the Lent Course will be offered on Thursday evenings and on Wednesdays after the Eucharist for those who are unable to travel at night.

Ecumenism – In my last placement at Trinity I had the benefit of an Ecumenical relationship with the Presbyterian Church. To be honest I found it difficult at first to share with another Church. The differences were just too stark especially considering that the formation I received was entirely Anglican in the Corpus Christi understanding of what church should be. Over time I came to value that relationship and the differences. I believe that we do not have all the answers as Anglicans and we need to engage with others in order to deepen our relationship with God and each other. There is much we can learn from others whose faith tradition is different from our own.

We do need to understand our Anglican heritage when working with others, not so that we can claim importance over others, but rather so that we can understand that which is good about our particular brand and that which hinders effective mission and ministry. That is why some years back we put together a series of articles (which have become something of a book) about who we are as Anglicans. Together with Les Rudman and Jeanne Jackson, I, along with the previous incumbent of this parish, have spent some time editing those articles. My thanks go to the dedication of Les, Jeanne and my predecessors for that.

We have opportunities to work with other denominations in our area. I have been attending the Ministers Fraternal called the Garsfontein Forum. There are opportunities to work, pray and worship with other denominations through these ecumenical relationships and the Love Pretoria East (LPE) organisation to advance the mission and ministry of the universal church.

Evangelism – over the past year, in assessing where we are in our collective faith journey, we have felt that we need to be better disciplined as we begin looking outward to the world we claim to serve as Christians. I feel that we need to do a bit of self-evangelisation. In the section reporting on Confirmation preparation I indicated that we would be offering the Youth Alpha Course as a post-confirmation discipleship course. You can watch the trailer for that on YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fyjL4NsAfM&t=12s>

Part of that would be to run a parallel course for the adults or parents. The trailer for that is also available on YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fViYK_Xb3Wg

A word of caution though – we may begin by doing these courses for ourselves as community but they cease to fulfil their purpose if we end up doing the course year after year for ourselves only, never to be transformed into apostles from being just disciples. The aim would be to use the Alpha series for, what it is, an evangelism tool. What we need to do is raise up a team who will facilitate the presentation of these courses.

Pastoral Care – This is essential to our community and essential to our Christian Faith. There are many members of our community who experience many different needs for a variety of reasons. We live in a world where the unholy trinity of Me, Myself and I is way more important than taking care of others in their needs. We have some very dedicated members who have done sterling work over the years – but we need new people to continue our pastoral care ministry.

This last year we have been working on the telephone ministry for which we thank the late Margaret Acres, who took care of it. Every week we have 8 families from our parish roll being prayed for. The intention is that these families get a call in the week that they are on the prayer cycle. It is a way of staying in touch with members of the parish in an environment where home visitation is difficult. The difficulty of doing home visitations can be remedied by reclaiming the practice of using the family cross. While we would not be able to make visitation to all 250 families on the parish role in a year we can certainly begin by reviving the practise. The pastoral needs of those who are house bound or in hospital are being met by various lay ministers and the rector as and when required on a regular basis. We have also in the last year asked for Volunteers to be part of the Good Samaritans who assess and meet the needs of those who require various kinds of assistance.

As far as possible, and it is only possible if we receive communication, we as a community continue with pastoral care. Sometimes, people do fall through the cracks. For this we can only repent and do better in the future.

Fellowship – Anglicans are good at fellowship and we have had wonderful opportunities to gather together after Church and at other times – these have been times to celebrate both our uniqueness and our diversity, both of which are gifts. This year some ideas for fellowship have already been put forward and we pray that these will bear fruit. We are in the process of establishing a branch of the **Anglican Women's Fellowship** and we will be robing (recruiting) members this year into that, and hopefully

this will inspire the men to form into a group as well – the newly established **Anglican Men’s Guild** in the Diocese might be something we can consider for our parish.

We also have the **Men’s Fishing Weekend** taking place again this year after 20 years of fellowship together.

Administration and Finance – Most of the Administration takes place in Executive and Council meetings. The day to day office work is done by our parish administrator Gwen Heathfield. Hers is the first face of our parish and she does a great job with that. I would like to thank Gwen for her diligence and flexibility with managing our parish office.

We also give thanks to the three councillors who are stepping down from council this year – Mulalo Mathode and Evah Radebe. We also give thanks to Les Rudman who has served as Alternate Church Warden. Their service has been immensely valuable to the parish as we experience a change in Rector and in Parish administrator.

At the end of October last year we elected a new parish council and we need to adopt the minutes and ratify that election at Annual Vestry. To be elected to serve on a Parish Council is a call from God to share in the servant leadership of Jesus Christ in His Church. The lifestyle of those nominated for election should be that of a Christian, as set out in paragraph 82 of the Catechism (An Anglican Prayer Book 1989, pages 434 – 5), so that they may in meekness and humility be able to draw others into following Christ in a similar fashion. In particular church leaders should be faithful and committed in the areas I have outlined in this report so far.

We need to recognise that Obed Radebe and Andre Joubert are not eligible for election as Church Wardens next year in terms of the Diocesan rules as they have both served five years in this capacity. They, along with Les Rudman, have served our parish diligently and with distinction. I’m sure that all of you will join me in expressing our gratitude for their work. We will have to identify and elect new Wardens for next year when we elect the 2020 council in October 2019.

Finances – The financial health of our parish is a matter of ongoing concern, however, I believe that the report on the finances will show that we are healthy thanks to the generosity of parishioners through their pledging and once-off donations. The budget, which is a guide for the resourcing of our mission and ministry, is funded by the pledges of parishioners. In the current economic climate of our country it is becoming more difficult to get parishioners to respond generously as financial resources are spread more thinly. We need to remember, in the face of demands being placed on our personal finances and in response to God’s love for us, that we must still give of our financial resources to God’s work and consider the claims of tithing (An Anglican Prayer book 1989 pg.434).

Quo Vadis (Where to from here)

With this rather lengthy report it is important for me to express how we are to participate in our Lord’s mission for this year. I hope that as I have outlined various aspects of parish life that some of the ideas and assessments I’ve made will somehow, by God’s grace, inspire and galvanise some action. Being a Church does not mean that members keep the pews warm on Sundays. Church should be a place where we learn how to build the Kingdom of God and where we are empowered to do just that. This year I hope that we will deepen our relationship with our Lord and be intentional about being disciples who are open to being sent (that is our apostolic heritage) as the King’s servants to call others, invited and those in the highways and byways, into the wedding feast (Luke 14:15-24).

Yours in our Lord’s service,

Vernon G. Foster (Epiphany-tide 2018)

Dates for your Diaries: 01-02-2019—03 -201 2019

February 05	Lay Ministers Meeting	18-00
February 09	Diocesan Standing Committee	
February 12	Executive Meeting	18-00
February 14	Archdeaconry Council	18-00
February 15	VALENTINE’S DINNER (R150 pp)	
February 19	Council Meeting	18-00
February 22	Archdeaconry Clergy Meeting	09-00
	At Corpus Christi .	
February 23	Archdeaconry meetings	
	Fellowship of Vocation	09-00
	Lay Ministers	12-00
	Guild Leaders	14-00
February 26 -01	CLERGY RETREAT	

ATTITUDE.

An American salesman came to Africa and emailed his manufacturer. “I want to come home, nobody here wears shoes in this part of Africa”. So they brought him home and sent another salesman who shipped back order after order. He wrote home to his office, “Everybody here needs shoes!” Christians should always look for “the best side.” And there always is one.”

THE LAW OF HARVEST.

A man rocked a boat to see if it would tip. It did!! A labourer stepped on a nail to see if it would pierce his shoe. It did! A man looked into the gun barrel to see if it was loaded. It was! Last year a helper smelled escaping gas and lit a piece of oily waste to find the leak. He found it.! A young girl kept late hours to see if it would really injure her office work. And it did!, A young man tried drinking a lot to see if it would make him act like a fool. It did.

“Do not be deceived.” ..a man reaps what he sows....” Gal: 6: verse7. taken from The Sword Scrapbook.”

TUMELONG WHEELCHAIR MINISTRY 'TOPS and TAGS' 2018

We started collecting plastic tops and bread tags in 2015 when we needed to have 150kg tops or 15 kg tags for each wheelchair we were given.

But in 2016 the requirement was changed and since then we have needed 450kg tops or 50kg tags for a wheelchair! In spite of this setback, the project has grown enormously to meet this challenge, as more and more churches, schools and social groups have become involved.

I am responsible for collecting only in the east of the diocese (from Gezina to Ekan-gala) and I get bags of various sizes from nine churches, six schools, two retirement centers and four or five social groups. We have to sort every bag as we get extraordinary things in amongst the tops - clothes pegs and curtain hooks, metal tops, mahjong and domino pieces, marbles and buttons, metal badges, ear-rings, a 9c gold ring, a R6000 hearing aid, and sometimes coins! We store in boxes in our spare garage and approximately once a month Lucas Mthembu takes an average of 450kg to InterWaste in Germiston.

In 2018 we sent through 5320kg tops and 130kg bread tags - but we received only seven wheelchairs, so we are owed six to date.

We encourage members of congregations to let us know if someone in their community needs a wheelchair. We have given wheelchairs to the young and old - from a little girl of five to a granny of 93, from a teenage boy of 18 to a 58 year old victim of a high jacking. We have helped nearly 50 people to get independence and dignity.

And we have recycled several tons of plastic which would otherwise have been dumped in a landfill.

All we ask of people is that they save their plastic tops (please, not metal tops!) and bread tags and bring them to church. We are extremely grateful to all those who already do this!

Elizabeth Bojé



Reconciliation: The Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent, Book 2019

by Muthuraj Swamy

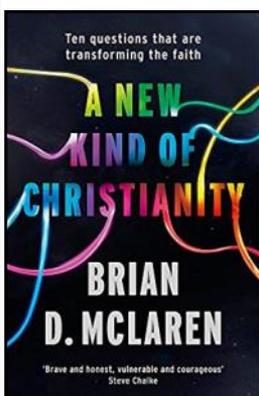
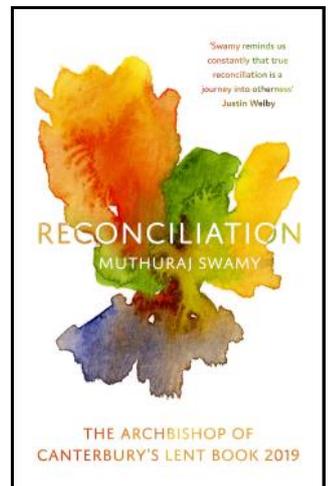
'Swamy reminds us constantly that true reconciliation is a journey into otherness' JUSTIN WELBY

Global in scope, but homing in on the role ordinary people play in conflict and division, Reconciliation enables Christians to engage confidently in a ministry bequeathed to us by Christ himself.

The book issues a vibrant call to the church to support and strengthen relationships amongst church members; to cross borders to build connections with different denominations, and to maintain open attitudes towards our neighbours from other religions and ideologies.

Forty biblically-based meditations introduce topics such as Impediments to reconciliation, risking the self, humility and self-criticism, radical openness to the other and peace with justice. Questions for reflection are included, making Reconciliation suitable for use at weekly gatherings or for everyday devotion during Lent.

'A thoroughly biblical guide to reconciliation – its passions and problems, its complexity and utter cruciality. Dr Swamy offers new angles on old stories, prophetic messages, and a gospel wisdom on becoming people of peace.' PROFESSOR DAVID F. FORD, University of Cambridge



A New Kind of Christianity: Ten questions that are transforming the faith

By Brian D. McLaren

Ground-breaking author Brian McLaren, voice of the Christian emergent movement and author of the 'New Kind of Christian' series, poses ten controversial questions that could lead to a radical redefinition of the Christian faith. What is the overarching storyline of the Bible? What is the Gospel? Why is sexuality such a divisive issue among Christians? How should followers of Jesus relate to people of other religions? McLaren gives his own responses to these questions, inviting the reader to a new and generous way of thinking about Christianity.

FOR ALL MOTHERS OF EVERY AGE.

When God created Mothers, He was in the sixth day of overtime, when an angel said to Him; " You are doing a lot of fiddling around with this one ". The Lord replied: "Have you read the specs on this order? She has to be completely washable, not plastic, have 180 movable parts, run on black coffee and left-overs, have a lap which disappears when she stand up and six pairs of hands."

The Angel shook his head slowly and said, "a kiss that can cure anything from a broken leg to a disappointed love affair? Six pairs of hands? No way!!" "Its not the six pair of hands that worries me," replied the Lord, "its the three pair of eyes that Mothers have to have." "That isn't a standard model!, said the angel."

The Lord nodding said : "One pair that sees through closed doors when she asks what are you doing inside (when she already knows), another pair in the back of her head that sees what she shouldn't, but has to know, and of course one pair in front that can look at her loved ones and say, "I understand and I love you" without saying a word.

"Lord", said the Angel, touching his sleeve. "go to bed now, tomorrow..." I can't said the Lord, "I'm so near to creating something close to myself. I have already created one who heals herself when she is sick, can feed a family of seven on 500 gr of mince and can get a nine year old to stand under a shower." "It's too soft," replied the Angel, "But tough," said the lord. " you cannot imagine what this mother can do or endure." "Can she think." "Not only think, but she can reason and compromise." said the Creator. Finally the angel bent over and ran a finger across her cheek. "There's a leak ." he pronounced. "I told you, you were trying to put too much into this model."

"Not a leak," said the lord, "it's a tear."

"What is it for.?"

"its for joy, sadness, disappointment, pain, loneliness and pride."

"You are a genius.!" said the angel.



PREDICTABLE.

When you set your alarm at night, I bet you expect it to wake you up in the morning. Right? I suppose you also know that when it rains you also know that eventually the sun will shine sooner or later, and the same thing can be said about the rising and setting of the sun; you trust the morning will soon give way to night.

Why is it then that man can easily trust these facts of life but when it comes to faith in God, we feel uncertain?. It seems so much easier to trust the predictability of our alarm clock, because it is something we can feel; see , touch, smell, taste and hear with our senses,

Putting our trust in an invisible God seems too risky a proposition; we cannot see him or hear his voice audibly, as one would expect to hear a brass bell or the birds chirping. Thus, our faith and desire to do his will has to come from someplace deeper; our heart, mind, spirit and soul.. Agreed?

Tangible things have their place in society, but If we base our life solely on what we can understand, touch and see; then we must also deny that love exists, because love is as unseen as God is, and if we base all that is real on what we can hear, then when a dog trainer blows his whistle, which only a dog can hear, then we are also making a grave mistake. So too, are our feelings real, yet it is true that one cannot bottle and label emotions as grief, empathy, or guilt. Today, I encourage you to break free from your stereotype methods we tend to use to understand, and take the leap of faith which leads directly to God.

Taken from a book written by Melanie Schurr.(paraphrased)