



St Paul's Church, Rondebosch

Parish Newsletter

CARITAS

August 2018

WELCOME to the new Vice Chancellor of UCT, Professor Mamotegethi Phakeng, recently of UNISA where she was Vice-Principal of “research and innovation”. She faces great challenges at this great university and will often have to make important decisions very quickly. Such high authority can be a lonely job with great responsibilities. It is said that she can really get alongside students (and that her magnificent ear-rings are greatly admired by the women students!) She will need all our support and prayers. We especially thank you, Dr Max Price, for staying faithful to your care of students at UCT during the nightmare years of serious student protests aggravated by outrageous government “promises”. Somehow you managed to remain faithful in spite of disgraceful insults to your concerned authority. Not everyone agreed with your approach but you were consistent, understanding, and amazingly patient.

In 1845 a task-team in Britain was appointed to recommend guidelines for the admission of students to university. Their succinct report recommended that students should qualify on merit only, in Mathematics, English, Science and the classics, and that social distinctions should not be considered because the first purpose of a university was to develop thinking and research not social engineering! By contrast, developing countries like South Africa, attempt to correct social differences by giving preference to the disadvantaged and preparing them for employment. Both these purposes co-exist at UCT. Training in practical skills used to be offered, not by universities but through apprenticeships in Law Firms, Accounting Firms, Municipal services, and in Workshops for Engineering, Architecture and other disciplines. In 1994, with a tragic enthusiasm for change, the new ANC closed the engineering workshops, the nursing colleges, the teacher training colleges and, with disastrous consequences, discarded the apprenticeship system thus robbing our young people of a wealth of facilities for training-on-the-job. It was a great mistake! Now most school-leavers have to go to university to train before attempting to enter the job market. This does not suit the school-leavers and, perhaps worst of all, it has ruined the work ethic of many professions from train-drivers to teachers and nurses – and it distorts the true function of a university.

So let us pray for the Vice-Chancellors of all our universities and especially for Professor Phakeng. She has the unenviable task of reconciling a tangle of political agendas with the economic necessities of the university and the country's employment requirements.

This is the backdrop to the work of our young people who are bravely banding together and going out to help the poor “who are always with us”. They cannot be too highly commended for their work, given so freely with such enthusiastic hearts and hands.

Angela of F.O.C.U.S Youth says:

You should see the Shopping List

for the feeding of the 500

(sorry, we could not supply 5000)

To begin with, imagine collecting and slicing over 70 loaves of bread!

Then we had to have butter, peanut butter, jam, noodles, cheese spread, mayo, grated cheese, sugar beans, tuna, baked beans – and even some toothbrushes and soap!

We made mountains of sandwiches – over 500 of them!

We brought in our friends to help us because we couldn't possibly do it all by ourselves. People of the parish dropped in to help too. It was a busy, happy kitchen that day in spite of the bitter cold and the pouring rain! It was wonderful.

Then we had to learn how to deliver our good things, and that was not so simple. You cannot just hand over a batch of sandwiches to a group of people and ask them to share. O NO! A single vagrant, someone who has nothing permanent, will clutch all the sandwiches to himself as though he (or she) is afraid they will run away! We had to make them into packets and hand them out a packet to each person. It was one of those sharp learning curves which we hear about. Sharing is difficult to learn - perhaps the lesson of sharing was the secret of the great miracles of Jesus when He fed the multitudes!

We delivered to the night shelters in Wynberg, Lansdowne and Kensington, and we went to the street vagrants in Lansdowne, Kensington and Maitland!

Thank you to all of you in the parish who gave us money to buy what we needed, and to those of you who came to help. Thank you also to our own friends who came so willingly to make sandwiches. It was a good time for us all. Everyone helped, even if it was just for once. Although it was such a wet cold day, they all bravely faced the weather to support us either with help or to drop donations for our “Outreach Day”.

Please do not stop there because our drive for toiletries, 2 min noodles and canned food will be continuing until the end of July! Everyone needs more food in winter-time.

Thank you once again for making our first ever F.O.C.U.S Youth Outreach Day a great success - F.O.C.U.S Youth salutes YOU! “

THANK YOU, Angela and all who worked so hard.

In the first chapter of his letter to the Ephesians, the Apostle Paul reminds us that
“Christ rules the church.

The church, you see, is not peripheral to the world:
the world is peripheral to the church.”

This quotation, taken from “The Message” translation by Eugene Peterson, gives us a new clarity.

We should not be afraid to speak out because we are in the Body of Christ, the church, and we are central to the world around us!

Ask any estate agent – Position, Position, Position. And St Paul’s has a central position in the heart of Rondebosch. It looks as though we are on an island but that is far from the truth because the church grounds are more like an artery, a passage of life. We are in the middle of traffic congestion (the fence is bent again), platoons of vagrants and hungry students jay-walking among the taxis illegally parked on red lines.

Every night our grounds are invaded by vagrants – and don’t imagine that these regular sleepers are all “nice people”. They may have been born lovely innocent babies but most of them now are druggies, drinkers, their minds half gone and they cannot be trusted and they leave a terrible mess of cigarette butts, bits of plastic, piles of poo and broken bottles. You should have seen the size of the huge axe which was found in a bush next to the War Memorial – it was a lethal weapon! Our Lord was quite definite about the sanctity of the Temple – we do not quite know if He lost His temper but we do know that He threw out, most unceremoniously, the people who defiled the House of God. Our church is being defiled.

A huge pile of Kentucky Fried Chicken waste was discarded, presumably by vagrants, one Saturday night in July. We need to be part of Rondebosch Village and not a “whited sepulchre” isolated on an island in the middle of mayhem. We need to share ideas. Is it time to convene some kind of civic social meeting in order to share ideas? Do we confront the City Council and the traffic department? Do we have a public meeting with all the Rondebosch people to see what should be done? Do we go to the Diocese and to the Heritage authorities to insist that our grounds are fenced off? Do we involve the City Building Department to pass our Hall alterations so that we can have a resident caretaker? Do we formally charge the people who break the law either by trespass or by traffic offence? Complete fencing is beyond the parish purse but may be the first answer.

Do we continue to say nothing? What does our Parish Council say? What have you got to say? Remember that the parish does not have lots of money. We only just keep afloat at present.

It is interesting that our lovely young people did not take sandwiches to supply the vagrants of St Paul’s Church!

Please – we need opinions and helpful suggestions.

Phone Rev Reeva. Or Margaret at 671 4573 leaving a message if no reply.

Who uses our Church and Hall?

Ballroom Dancing classes

John Hugo-Hamman teaches Ballroom Dancing in the Hall every day of the week to one or two or three people at a time. He is so pleasant and adaptable that we hardly notice when he comes and goes and although we may disturb him a bit when we go through the Hall to the office, he never seems to mind. If we have a “parish function” in the Hall, he will move his class to another time or go to the meeting room upstairs.

John has just returned from Thailand where he won a Prize for his work. We are proud to have him with us. We all love John and can recommend him for his teaching. Who wants to learn to dance? Have people forgotten about music and graceful movement? The emphasis nowadays seems to be on physical fitness and yoga and Pilates and all kinds of other exercises. Dancing before the Lord is a religious offering besides being good exercise to lovely music, giving one presence, poise and self-confidence. John also gives classes to students up on campus. Worth knowing.

Bridge Club on Monday afternoons

The Bridge players have been meeting for years. At present there are about 5 tables every Monday beginning about 1 p.m. The “regulars” would happily welcome new-comers. It is a good place for meeting friends and to get *the little grey cells* to keep working. Of course it helps if you can already play but people who used to play and want to re-learn their skills are welcome.

They are looking for more players at present because they are “down” to only 4 or 5 tables each week and there is space for more. So if you are free on a Monday afternoon, come and join them. You get a good tea as well, although you must pay for it. The money goes to Church funds. Cynthia Derham and Lesley Munro, our faithful bakers, have been doing Bridge Club teas for “ever” and their contributions are greatly appreciated.

There are also more occasional uses for our Church Hall:

BLOOD TRANSFUSION

We have been hosting this for more years than I can remember. Don't forget to give your blood when the team is there. Perhaps you are, like one of our church-wardens, a regular giver. I think that Carol Hartley gave blood weekly for years! It is life-saving to someone “out there” and costs you nothing except half an hour of your time.

VOTING STATION

The vote is valuable and, in the context of the centuries, a modern treasure. We have the opportunity to choose whom we want to govern us, and, although we have little choice about the detail of our laws, we can influence the general direction. Apartheid would not have happened if the voting had been against it. We have definite choices – so make sure that your name is on the roll and that you use your vote wisely. Our church Hall is used for this excellent purpose.

THE POSTCARD SOCIETY

Yes. There is such a thing and it meets every month. I am not really informed about what they do, but the members are really keen about stamps and dates etc.

PARISH BREAKFAST

Don't forget this happy Meal of the Month.

Enid, Joan, Lesley and many other helpers put together the eggs and the bacon, the toast and the pancakes, the butter and marmalade, the coffee and tea, and

YOU

are the Kings and Queens for the occasion

on the 29th July

**and there will be Mass in the Lady Chapel at 8 a.m. for those who love
spiritual nourishment first**

WELCOME TO ALL

Parish Matters

It is a miracle that anyone can get out of a warm bed to come into a cold church on a dark wet winter's morning in the middle of the holidays, but they come faithfully in the half dark, wrapped in woollies and ready to worship. My family and friends are always amazed to hear that 30 people or more have turned up to worship so early in the day. "Are they mad?" they say. Some of us don't actually feel very holy at the time – we wish we were still tucked up in warm beds not kneeling and shivering in a huge church. Thank you to all who come, and "Well done". The presence of this dear faithful congregation enriches our communion and represents the core of our "body" in the parish.

We have been treated to some great sermons recently. Rev Reeva always gives us a good story but it was left to Fr Darron to get us off the pews! His enactment of the mice and the cheese got us all laughing and swooping. It is better still when there is a sermon to make us chuckle as we learn. Thank you, both Reeva and Darron, for your excellently high standard.

WELCOME HOME Carol Hartley, who has been away for a month, seeing her family in both Canada and England, travelling long distances in spite of some rather urgent happenings to her health and her flights being disrupted by a fire in the Frankfurt control tower. Travel advertisements do not say much about the hazards of flying! Thank God that you are safely home. She returns to a garden which has enjoyed rain and to Anhouse, which has not really enjoyed her absence. Carol "cares" about people, intensely and actively and has been missed by many friends.

The Parish Council is concerned about our finances. Some people do not pay what they have pledged to give and this plays havoc with attempts to budget. The regular expenses have increased, like everyone else's, with the rising cost of living.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

(This debate, based in New Zealand where Dr Sean Davison took pity on his mother, was published over the internet on the ACSA website.)

There is hot debate between Bishops in the Anglican Church in New Zealand. Some say that, for people with a terminal illness, assisted dying could be “a good and moral choice”. They say “our views are shaped by pastoral experience with dying people and wanting to honour their consistent desire to remain in charge of their lives and dignity for as long as possible. There is a wide diversity of views on assisted dying in our churches.”

On the one side of the debate:

Society gives people the right to make choices and take responsibility for their lives. Why should this right be denied when facing suffering and certain death?

How do we maintain the principle of the worth of each individual along with adequate care for those in stressful situations?

We follow a God who is all about ending suffering rather than intending it or insisting it must be endured. Why should the “right to life” becomes a duty to go on suffering?

The dignity of patients to make decisions in their own interest is fundamental to our humanity.

Others say

that they recognise the distress of patients and families but believe that allowing assisted dying could have unforeseen consequences and could damage society.

that there is a moral principle. “The protection of human life is a fundamental cornerstone of society. If assisted dying is allowed then it could become socially acceptable and end up as “death on demand”.

that more money should be put into help for the terminally ill and their families.

Overall it is clear that there is no single Christian position on assisted dying. Christians do, however, believe in the dignity of the dying person so that they can maintain control over their lives until the time when they cannot continue to do so. To prevent suffering from pain is a duty of all medical staff.

Dr Sean Davison is quoted as saying - “I feel the law should be focused on humanity, about the sufferers, the people like my mother who are terminally ill and want to choose their time of death and the manner of their death. This suffering should not continue. . . The law has been found guilty of inhumanity and injustice.”

Writer Karel Schoeman, who ended his life in May this year, described his decision to fast until death in a final letter:

“This is at least a dignified way to end life, which cannot be said for the alternative methods that are available in the current circumstances in South Africa”.

(I have a specially soft spot for Karel – he supported schoolchildren with donations through the African Scholars’ Fund for over 40 years! A most generous man.)

STUDENTS Welcome back!

Hope you had a good holiday and are now ready for work with a capital W

Here is a message for you!

If you live in a student residence, please invite Rev Reeva or Fr Isaiah to a meal with you there - breakfast, lunch, or dinner, it doesn't matter. What matters is meeting students and what could be a better way than over a plate of soup or even baked beans on toast!! It isn't the food, it is the contact that we seek. Just invite someone to join you for a meal - a small thing to ask. It would also work in a block of flats where many students live.

So give this a thought, please! This could be your "mission" and it is an easy way to help with no strings attached.

The special student services on Sunday morning seem to be working well and from July 29th will continue at 11 a.m. See you there!

THANK YOU, GOD, FOR THE RAIN!

Wasn't it wonderful? Some gusty winds, a few branches down from the trees but now we have pools of water on Rondebosch Common and the grass is green again. Unfortunately tiles have been blown off our roof so there are even more leaks and buckets on display in our lovely Church. That roof will have to be mended soon or the wood will rot and that would be really bad. On a Sunday morning earlier in July the Main Road at the Fountain was under about 2 ft of water because, although the Liesbeek had not flooded, the gutters were blocked! Cars were floundering. Huge rainbows radiated across Devil's Peak, a glorious sight.

Did you hear about Noah when the ark finally came to a halt on Mt Ararat after 40 days of heavy rain? He let all the animals out and told them all to "Be fruitful and multiply". Then he heard the sound of quiet sobbing in the bush behind him so he looked down and saw two little snakes crying their eyes out. "What is the trouble?" he asked. "We can't multiply" said they, "we are adders." "Do the best you can" replied Noah, "and God be with you."

Six months later he returned to the same place and the ground was swarming with snakes. Noah could hardly walk without treading on one. What happened? Noah looked around and found the two original snakes. "Goodness me" he said, "how did you do that?" and they replied

"We found a log!"

(Remember school Maths?)

**U C T BIG BAND
will be here
in the Parish Hall
on**

Friday 7th September 18.30

so come for great music and lovely fun!

R120 per ticket. You can book your table, preferably for parties of about 8-10, and you will be able to buy good food that night.

Company and candles and music. Doesn't it sound good.

This is the fifth year that we have had the pleasure of hosting Mike Campbell and his players.

Enquiries: Enid Taylor 083 2877 876

There are still a couple of spaces for the Bus Trip to the West Coast August 10-12 and there might even be a free one up for "grabs".

It should be fun. With all this rain there should be flowers. If not, it is all still lovely and fresh and we are going to have a good time.

Don't be shy, JOIN US.

Rector: Revd Reeva Mulder 072 3987483

St Paul's office: Ph 021 6894720 email: stpauls@netdial.co.za

Contributions received with thanks at the A/C St Paul's, Standard Bank, Rondebosch, 71488928

The Opera Singers

Most of them studied Opera for many years, in the Eastern Cape or at the College of Music here at UCT, but now they hardly ever get a chance to sing and there is no opera company in the townships. But they cannot stop singing, so they have got together and they are singing together, as though they are making their own opera company. They are competent, they are trained and, best of all, they are enthusiastic! Most of them live in Gugs and other nearby places. During the week they rehearse here in St Paul's Church because it has lovely acoustics.

Magnifico! We shall want a concert from them soon, and they have said YES.

They will be singing some Sacred Songs at the 9.30 a.m. service on Sunday 29th July. Wonderful! Sing before the Lord. May this be a Prelude to a proper Opera Concert in our church.

COME WITH YOUR FRIENDS ON 29TH JULY

9.30 A.M.

Rejoice before the Lord

“You love God as much as the one you love the least.” (Fr Huge)