



St Paul's Church, Rondebosch

May 2016

There is a green hill
which is not far away
but in the centre of Rondebosch
just above the Main Road.

St Paul's is a place of memories and history
with other disciples, seekers, our friends.

Countless prayers, thanking, interceding, sometimes desperate from
the depths of soul, have been offered here.

It is a holy place . . .

**O God, now you have sent us a new spirit, the Holy Spirit,
to change us completely. You teach the feelings of our hearts
and the reasonings of our minds. You teach our very souls.
Help us now, with this new inward surety, to apply what you
have taught us to our actual lives . . .**

(from the Collect for Whitsun, slightly paraphrased)

. . . because in our actual lives of every day we live among the people
of the town, in streets and shops and business, surrounded by traffic,
governed by computers and WiFi. Rondebosch is no longer a little
quiet village. Life here is noisy and fast, traffic laws ignored, beggars
are everywhere – and so is their litter. Of course our church grounds
must continue to be a thoroughfare for the people of Rondebosch but
they have, however, become a home for vagrants!

We are all God's children. Charity begins here. What should we do?
Your suggestions are welcome.

Vagrants sleep in our doorways, among the trees below the church, in
the olive grove and in the graveyard. The litter is appalling - nests of
pillows, of cardboard, of old shoes, plastics, bottles This
“people” problem is quite literally on our church doorstep, with all the
cigarette butts and even faeces. Ask the 8 o'clock people, especially
those who come early! One nest was so firmly established that there
was a “mobile” hanging from a bush above the bed! One can laugh –
but is not funny to clean up the excrement. Our Russell and Colin
were revolted – and nearly resigned! The problem cannot be ignored.

What would Jesus do? When He healed 10 lepers, only one
responded. He sent the devils from the man “possessed” into a herd
of pigs who jumped off a cliff. There is, however, no cliff nearby (and no
Gadarene swine at hand). Nearly all the vagrants are on drugs and drink,
their eyes dull and dazed, hardly able to stand up straight. After
years of abuse, many have lost the power of what minds they had.
Professional help is essential and we do not have this expertise in the
parish. We must consult.

THANK YOU

**The Police, the GSCID and Social workers from the City Council
have been very helpful.** Each vagrant has a special history and
deserves individual attention. Many have schizophrenia. Very few
will be able to return “home” or readmitted to hospital. Most are
alcohol and drug dependent. A large Shelter is planned in Claremont
but nobody knows when it will be ready. Sadly, most of the vagrants
who are offered space in a shelter refuse it, preferring the streets.

The GSCID have sent in a team to remove huge sacks of litter.
Thank you to them and to some of our own parishioners who, armed
with gloves and plastic bags, filled rubbish bags and bins.

The Parish Council will erect a bigger and better signboard stating that this is private land and a Heritage site. The Police said that they would like the parish to charge a vagrant with trespass as an example.

Regular “sweeps” by the Police are needed, especially at night.

What can I do – or not do?

**Do not give money to beggars.
PLEASE TELL YOUR FRIENDS
Give U-turn vouchers instead.**

These can be exchanged for food or clothing. A book of 10 vouchers costs R40. There are some free samples available from our office and stewards. Try using them although you may find that beggars prefer cash because then they can buy drugs, cigarettes and drink.

At a café in Kommetjie is posted a large notice about vagrants:

Do not give them money

They spend it on alcohol, drugs, women.

They come back for more.

IT IS AN ABSOLUTE NO-NO!!

(so we are not the only ones with this problem!)

It was staggering to hear that a vagrant in Rondebosch can make R200 in one day! Apparently students are a particularly soft touch because they are full of conscience and kindness. When I went to the U-turn offices in Kenilworth they gave me a stern lecture.

The OLIVE GROVE has to be fenced and maintained. Quotes are being considered. If you know anyone who might help with the cost of fencing (about R30 000) this would be great – we already have one donor. We also need a Caretaker living in the church grounds. Plans to make a flat within the present Church Hall have been suggested but no progress on this has yet been reported.

Who is this ?

You will know her by her stately bearing as, like a tall ship she sails across the chancel, crowned by yet another wonderful head-dress. For many years she worked in the communications unit at UCT and then her boss, Helen Zille, recommended her to be protocol adviser to the Speaker of the House of Assembly, Max Sisulu. For 6 years she worked closely with him, even once accompanying him to Mexico, and came to admire both the promptness and carefulness of his decisions in such a whirl of politics and how testing it was to the Christian faith. When Max “went”, suddenly and sadly, she left too. She is a resilient lady, coming from a strongly Anglican home, happy that the forms of liturgy express her strong faith. Her family are scattered, some still in Zimbabwe, though her son is here in Cape Town. She has fascinating stories to tell, always with a chuckle and a smile. Who is she? Thenjiwe Kona (and I knew her mother in Que Que in the 1950s ! MEIsworth)

FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Here is your chance to say your piece . . . give some feedback! What do you really appreciate about St Paul’s? The organ voluntaries? The lovely old building and its altars? The friendliness in the porch? Lesley’s cookies on sale after the 9.30 service? the beautiful secretary? Or is it the careful following of the liturgy?

By contrast, what should be added to, or changed, at St Paul’s? If you have ideas which could be helpful, please give them.

There are some people who cannot get to church. They need lifts. Would you be prepared to help? It depends, of course, upon where they live – and where you live.

“What is important quality would you like in the next rector?”

Apart from fine scholarship, looks, financial wizardry, patience, friendliness, generosity, humility and a few other things, we should not be particular. If he can preach a good sermon, sing and read music that would be helpful. He must never take offence but solve problems with reasoned diplomacy. And he should be handsome too! Of course it might be a woman appointed, in which case make it a pure soprano voice, shapely figure and definitely beautiful. The Archangel Gabriel might just qualify! Or St Theresa!

Meanwhile and more seriously

please let the office know if you or someone else needs a visit.

There are several lay-ministers who would be prepared to come, or other parish people. Regular visiting of the parish “flock” has not happened for some years, but there are always special people and special times where a visit is needed and appreciated. Try sending a request to the Wardens or the Secretary.

The beautiful readings for Good Shepherd Sunday remind us that we need pastors for the St Paul’s flock! (if you and I do not mind being called “sheep”) Visiting is tricky these days. Not only are people “not in” or “busy”, but it may not even be possible to ring the bell because the apartments are securely burglar-proofed!!

Does God call you, yes YOU, to make up a small group? Perhaps as students in a block of flats meeting before lectures for prayers? Or during a morning coffee-break where you work? Or at drinks time on a Friday before the weekend kicks in? perhaps to read a book together in the evening? perhaps just to sit still and listen to God . . . It doesn’t have to be “fancy” or “clever”. The first disciples were fisherpeople, not university scholars or Internet experts!!!

Give it a thought please.

The Holy Spirit is likened to FIRE and WIND. Have we forgotten this huge power? Look at Alberta in Canada, an inferno of wind and flame, of homes, animals, forests, earth itself destroyed! Or by contrast, think of early *homo sapiens* when he blew on the first small flame in his cave in the cliff. We all encounter God in some way, at some time, and He leaves His mark in us. This directly affects our lives, whether by a drastic change of direction or the steady growth of a whole new depth to our lives . . .and when His fire and wind possess us, we can be blown away by the results.

Here is a tall story of the rollicking 80’s

His family wisely left Germany in 1935 because his grandfather was Jewish. He became a Science teacher and, after a spell in Ndola, he taught at St Alban’s College, the church school like Bishops in Pretoria, for 34 years. 53 years ago a lovely lady came to do his make-up before he went on stage to sing in an opera and so they got married! When he retired he was asked just to “stand in” briefly at the Science Centre in Observatory and 11 years later he is still there, every day, all day – except when he travels to schools. He goes in the Science Bus, all around the Cape, taking his equipment with him – from Oudtshoorn to Knysna, from Ceres to Mossel Bay. He has been a faithful Christian all his life and a Churchwarden in three different parishes, but what he likes best is teaching schoolchildren about the wonders of Science. Detlef Basel is a happy man because his work coincides with his hobby.

The Science Centre, just below Groote Schuur Hospital on the Main Road in Observatory, is amazing – full of schoolchildren of all grades, excited and absorbed – and well worth a visit. Go and see!

Long lists of names appear on our pew leaflet each week and we reel off the names – indeed Reeler has been there for some time and it is appropriate to congratulate Lesley turned 80!! Happy Birthday to you! Since we have been praying for you and many others for a long time,

Intercession

is a form of prayer, of communication with our Father. We want to share with and support a person or perhaps a cause close to our hearts but, because we cannot see the full scenario, the understanding that “Thy will be done, not mine” is inherent to our prayer. Help us to remember this otherwise we might feel that our prayers have not been answered. God **does** answer but not necessarily in the way we expected! He answers in the best way for us, and we do not always know the best way.

We do not have to understand physiology to make our bodies work and, in the same way, most of our “soul” is unconscious but that does not mean that it does not exist. We, body and soul, spring from the great unconscious world common to all people, and of course from God. Fuelled by love, the prayers which we pour into this great unknown are channelled directly to God and to others as though through a vast aquifer system linking us all, through which we connect.

Intercession is when, God with us, we plead through that network, connecting with someone else. If you are in great need, tap into this great network of love, and use the huge support of friends and family, saints and holy people throughout the ages. They are all there. Just as you pray for them, they pray for you.

THE FINER POINTS

If we were asked to account for every little thing we do, I have no doubt that we would not be able to better the following artist who was asked by his Church Council to render a more detailed account after sending in his bill for £38.15s.6d for restoring a mural decoration in the Church. It goes as follows:

1. Corrected the Ten Commandments £5.10.0d
2. Embellished Pontius Pilate and put a new ribbon in his bonnet £1.0.0d
3. Put a new tail on Rooster of St Peter and mended his comb £1.5.0d
4. Replumed and regilded the wings of the Guardian Angel £7.15.0d
5. Washed the servant of the High Priest and put carmine on his cheeks. 10.0d
6. Renewed Heaven, adjusted the stars, and thoroughly cleaned the Moon. £3.5.0d
7. Re-animated the flames of Purgatory, and restored souls. £1.7.6d
8. Revived the flames of Hell, and put new tail on the Devil, mended his left hoof, and did several odd jobs for the Damned. £1.7.6d
9. Put new spotted dashes on the son of Tobias, and dressing on his sack. £5.6.0d
10. Cleaned the ears of Balaam’s ass and shod him. 14.0d
11. Put earrings in the ears of Sarah. £1.6.0d
12. Put new stone in David’s sling, enlarged the head of Goliath, and extended his legs. £2.5.0d
13. Decorated Noah’s ark. £2.5.0d
14. Mended the shirt of the Prodigal Son and cleaned his nose. 15.6d

Calamity Jane

(Thank you St Saviour’s Church, from your magazine long ago)