

Parish Life

JUNE 2020

A Message from The Rector

What a strange time it has been! Who would have guessed back in January, even February, that we would face the momentous alterations to our everyday lives as a result of Covid-19. And these alterations have significantly impacted the way we "do church" as well. The parish site has been closed down since mid-March. Services have been prerecorded on smartphones or cameras, posted on YouTube, and emailed to you with links and relevant attachments. We have established a parish contact network to ensure our ongoing connections. So much has changed so quickly.

However, as I observed in my Easter homily to you: *"Resurrection promises us, that although times can be dark, and troubling, can be filled with anguish, fear, confusion, or despair, God's love in Resurrection promises us that this situation, will not ultimately prevail or be victorious. Resurrection promises us that even death, will not ultimately prevail or be victorious."*

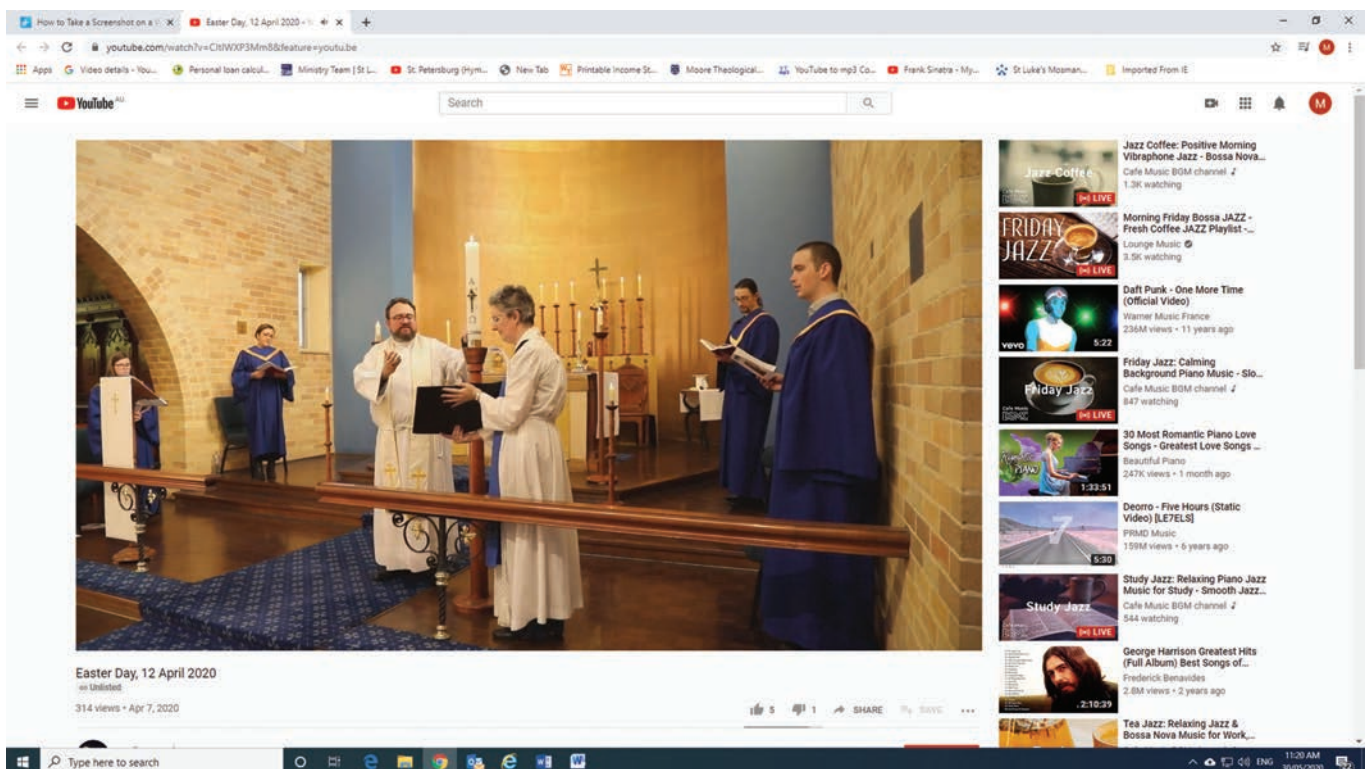
This does not make the dark and troubling times any less dark or troubling. But what it offers is the hope that they will pass, and the hope, that they will not ultimately win. John said:

"The light shined in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it" (John 1:5). This present situation is dark, but God assures us he will not let it overcome us."

With Every Blessing,
Fr Max

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Making change happen

Since the initial COVID-19 lockdown descended upon us all, it has become essential for new communication methods and skills to be employed. Our first attempts at recording services to email to parishioners and put up on the St Luke's website took us on a steep learning curve, indeed.

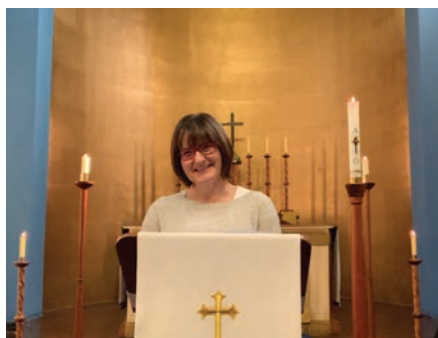
Mobile phones, new software and improvising in order to facilitate recording Morning Prayer became the order of the day. It was a daunting challenge for our Lay Minister, Natalie McDonald and for me. But, from humble beginnings – and with some valuable assistance from our Director of Music, Callum Close and our intrepid camera buff, Ian Dodd – we began to be able to include readings and prayers done by other people.

Then came Good Friday and Easter. These heralded our first attempts at including music – having our choristers singing, accompanied by Callum Close. As The Ascension of Our Lord and The Day of Pentecost approached, we boldly proceeded to extend the invitation already made to the Rev'd Canon Zoe Everingham from Grafton Cathedral, which she was happy to accept. Lockdown restrictions were eased just in time to make it possible for our guest to drive from Grafton to Sydney in order to record these two services.

Here are some photos to give you an idea of what it was like “behind the scenes” bringing recorded services to you all.



The Ascension of Our Lord - Left to right: Natalie McDonald, Lay Minister; Presider – the Rev'd Canon Zoe Everingham of Grafton Cathedral; Preacher – the Rev'd Dr Max Wood, Rector



Paula Turner – Reader / Intercessor



Ian Dodd recording our Eucharist services



Recording The Day of Pentecost – Photo (left to right): Deacon, Natalie McDonald, Lay Minister; Presider – the Rev'd Dr Max Wood, Rector; Guest Preacher, Rev'd Canon Zoe Everingham, Grafton Cathedral enhanced by our choir and guest musicians



Set up to record services without our videographer



Ready for action – choristers and videographer

Painting the hymns: bringing words to life at the console

As an organist, one of the questions I am most frequently asked (particularly by curious school children) is 'what do all the knobs and buttons do?' My general response is along the lines of 'these are called stops and they control the way the organ sounds.'

Perhaps unsurprisingly though, there is a much more complex and fascinating explanation – one that involves understanding wind pressure, pipe length and terms such as *mixtures* and *mutations*. Organists refer to this as registration.

An understanding of registration is part of an organist's bread and butter. At a simple technical level, when one presses a key at the console, wind moves through the pipe work and produces the sound heard. Broadly, these sounds can be classified as *diapason*, *flute*, *reed* and *string*, each category having its own unique tone quality. In turn, these categories may be expanded further by their country of origin- French, German, English and American instruments all use a similar nomenclature, but their tonal characteristics vary significantly.

Registration offers organists an orchestral sized palette of colour with which to 'paint' repertoire. Sometimes, a composer will prescribe the registrations to be used and at other times, these are left to the discretion of the player, who is then able to define the tonal journey of a work. An organ is capable of immense contrast and variety of sound, which may be exploited (for want of a better word) during services and the playing of hymns.



Before we begin exploring how organists are able to bring hymns to life through registration, it is important to understand two key areas: a) the evolution of music in Christian worship and b) congregational music within a liturgical context.

The singing of hymns stretches into antiquity. Scholar Herbert Lockyer notes, 'music, both

vocal and instrumental, was well cultivated among the Hebrews, the New Testament Christians and the Christian Church through the centuries¹. There is extensive biblical evidence of hymns being sung in the First Temple of Solomon (2 Chronicles 5:11-14), as songs of praise and triumph by the Israelites after their Exodus from Egypt (Exodus 15:20-21), at the Last Supper (Matthew 26:30 & Mark

14:26) and throughout the Book of Revelation as songs of praise to the Creator, the worthiness of the Lamb and proclamations of God's justice (Revelations 4:11, 5:9-10 and 16: 5-7). Indeed, in his treatise on Psalm 104, St Augustine states:

'Know ye what a hymn is? It is a song with praise of God.

If thou praisest God and singest not, thou utterest no hymn ...

A hymn then containeth these three things: song and praise and that of God².

Music has played an important role in the expression of faith and praise since the earliest days of the human religious experience. King David is acknowledged to have first used music to accompany ritual. Scholars credit King David and the Tribes of Levi for the formation of the bedrock of Judeo-Christian hymnology³.

Theologians Brian Wren⁴ and Jeremy Begbie⁵ have written extensively on the centrality of music in Christian worship. They both agree that congregational song is indispensable in public liturgy and place immense focus on the ways that music assists in conveying deep and complex theology.

At the very heart of a liturgical organist's work is the ability to lead the congregation and bring theology to life. Contrary to popular belief, the playover of a hymn is to not only set the tempo, but also the mood and 'feel' of what is about to be sung.

Parry's *REPTON* (Dear Lord and Father of mankind) is a fine example of this. The melody during the Playover be played on a solo stop to 'teach' the congregation, before registering a 'rich' sound that feels like it is 'hugging' those singing the text. In the fourth verse, 'drop thy still dews of quietness | till all our strivings cease', one may adjust the registrations to

be more reflective and introspective, using the swell boxes to crescendo during the line 'take from our souls the strain and stress, | and let our ordered lives confess' moving into 'the beauty of thy peace', before settling the repetition of the final line with the prior reflection. The fifth verse of this hymn is enjoyed by all organists, building the registrations in each line, culminating in a cascade of reeds and heavy pedal during 'earthquake, wind, and fire', before a similar introspection as the end of the fourth verse, welcoming the Lord's 'still small voice of calm.'

The opportunity to paint the words of hymns are heightened during Advent and Lent, when we, as Christians, are preparing for the Lord's coming

and crucifixion. In the second verse of Silent Night for example, one is able to create a subdued sense of wonder by adding reeds on the swell and a rumbling pedal stop. A soft 32' pedal stop fills a building with a huge presence for the line 'Shepherds quake at the sight', while slowly opening the swell box and exposing the colour and 'punch' of the reeds during 'Glories stream from heaven above'.

When we are next able to gather for worship and are singing hymns together, take a moment to read ahead and listen to the ways in which the organ responds – you might be surprised by what you hear and feel.

Callum Close
Director of Music



¹ Lockyer, H. J. (2004). *All the Music of the Bible: An exploration of musical expression in Scripture and Church Hymnody*. Hendrickson Publishing, USA.

² Murray, J. (1907). *Dictionary of Hymnology*.

³ Hesks, I. (1994). *Passport to Jewish Music: Its History, Traditions and Culture*. Greenwood Publishing, USA.

⁴ Wren, B. (2000). *Praying Twice: The Music and Words of Congregational Song*. John Knox Press, USA.

⁵ Begbie, J. (2000). *Theology, Music and Time*. Cambridge University Press, UK.

St Luke's Mosman Music Association Inc.

On Sunday the 1st March we were entertained by the two Jazz maestros Andy Firth and Kevin Hunt. This was one of our most successful concerts with over 70 attendees. In addition, we made a profit.

If we have the opportunity for them to perform for us again next year, I highly recommend you see them.

At this stage, it is uncertain whether we will have another concert this year. However, if we do, you will be advised with plenty of notice.

In the meantime, you can help the Music Association by making a tax-deductible donation. You can do this either by sending a cheque to SLMMA Inc., PO Box 980, Spit Junction 2088; or by making a donation using a sealed envelope and dropping this into the church office, marked to my attention; or finally, by direct payment into our bank account, SLMMA, BSB: 633 000, Account No: 137000485. I will send you a tax-deductible receipt by mail, or email, so please confirm your preference and contact details.

On behalf of the Music Association, thank you for your past support – and I hope to see you at a concert soon!

*Phillip Seale
Treasurer, SLMMA Inc.*



Andrew Firth and Kevin Hunt in concert



Andrew Firth, clarinet and Kevin Hunt, piano



Post-concert refreshments

Around the grounds


Ian Dodd, our resident Parish photographer, recently came and took some snapshots, capturing some of the autumnal flowering plants and views around the Parish grounds. In these challenging weeks, this peace and tranquility has been a timely reminder that God is over all and in all things.



Around the grounds

Continued



Remember you
can follow
St Luke's on 

Editor: The Rev'd Dr Max Wood
Design: Debbie McLeod
Photos: Helen Bell, Ian Dodd,
The Rev'd Dr Max Wood

St Luke's Mosman Education Association Inc.



The Education Association has been doing good work with local schools in the Religious Education field (SRE) since it was set up over 11 years ago.

The object was – and still is – to meet all the expenses incurred in providing SRE to pupils attending Beauty Point and Middle Harbour Public Schools.

Before the Education Association was set up, the Parish provided teachers, when available, and paid the cost of books and other teaching materials itself.

The Education Association has saved the Parish in the order of \$100,000 during its 11 years. That is a very useful result.

And very importantly, we have been able to keep SRE available to children in those two schools.

It is entirely up to parents to decide whether or not their child attends SRE.

I have the numbers for the five years, 2012–16. Numbers attending averaged a little over 70 in those years. Not a majority, obviously, but a worthwhile number.

Peter Keenan, a former member of our Parish, did an excellent job teaching SRE for several years. He reluctantly retired due to the ill health of his wife, Robyn. We greatly appreciate Peter's involvement in this vital work, particularly as he had to travel a long distance on his teaching days.

A resident of Croydon, Peter now attends St Paul's, Burwood, which is closer to home as he cares for his wife.

Since 2019 we have relied on neighbouring parishes to provide SRE teachers. They have the qualified staff to do so. Their work is greatly appreciated.

The St Luke's Mosman Education Association Inc. continues to pay for all SRE books and other materials that are required, which is quite a significant cost. The Association also paid for the cost of providing a Kids@Church teacher at St Luke's on Sundays whenever we needed somebody.

Due solely to generous contributions from individual parishioners, the work of the St Luke's Mosman Education Association continues. Warmest thanks to them all.

Donations in excess of \$2 are tax deductible and may be left at the parish office during the week. A receipt will be issued by the Education Association in due course. Cash or cheque donations only, please. Please direct any queries to Don Menzies Tel: 9953 8028.

Don Menzies
Treasurer, SLMEA Inc.

St Luke's is a place of rich and diverse liturgy, where life and faith connect.

We are a progressive community that welcomes all people regardless of gender, age, race, sexual orientation or religion.

We support the full and equal role of women in society and in the ministry of the church.

The Parish is in association with the Mosman/Neutral Bay Inter-church Council and the NSW Ecumenical Council.

To stay in touch at St Luke's, check the weekly pew bulletin regularly, read the quarterly *Parish Life*, check our digital noticeboard in Bridgepoint and our website www.stlukesmosman.org and follow us on 