



The Voice of St John the Baptist, Pinetown

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.
Rom.15: 13

From the Rector

CELEBRATION OF HOPE

I wish to thank everyone who contributed to the success of our Celebration of Hope weekend - the culmination of the year long Spirit of Hope focus. Jane Whitby played a key role in co-ordinating the activities, and she worked closely with a number of others to ensure that each aspect of the weekend ran smoothly. Well done to you all! The music was very meaningful and much enjoyed and appreciated. For this we have Christopher and the choir to thank. The focus and activities this year have certainly given us a solid foundation to build on and a confidence to continue to build on the identity and ministry and mission of St John's.

THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

The recent Diocesan Synod re-emphasised the focus on theological education that has been developing in our diocese.

Today the Anglican church is faced by a number of issues related to the interpretation and application of scripture. It is important that we are equipped to respond to these issues.

Here at St John's we will be offering theological resources to our members using our own clergy and lay people as well as outside resource persons. During the course of 2010 we plan to hold a number of forums in which people will be invited to present on particular topics and then invite discussion from those attending. The format could include a meal.

I will be making a modest start to this by using the Sunday evening slots of 8, 15 and 22 November (before Advent Sunday), from 17.30 to 18.30, to present three sessions on selected themes on the Early Church. The teaching will focus on the growth and development of the early church, its forms of ministry, its use of the scriptures, its relationship to the state, spirituality etc.

An effort will be made to relate these themes to contemporary developments within the church. All are welcome to attend.

Revd Dr Andrew Warmback
Rector



23 - 25 October 2009

What a wonderful weekend this was - a fitting end to the Spirit of Hope. The celebration began with a musical prelude, "Spirituals of Hope" by Christopher Cockburn and the choir. Many of the songs were familiar, but added depth was given with Christopher's explanation of the meaning within the meaning of the words.



Saturday dawned bright and sunny, and soon the tea garden was doing a roaring trade. A workshop was held during the morning, when Christopher co-ordinated the musical talent offered and worked out the music for Sunday morning. The guitarists from Caroline's 'school' were there, and were

the mainstay of the music, with some others - Don Hain on piano, Robin Inggs on drums and some very novel croaking frogs, controlled by Carol Scheepers and Heather Hubble.

Later on in the day, Christopher held "Music in the moment" when he played improvisations on hymns chosen by the audience. This was extremely entertaining, with an amazing rendition of 'Onward Christian Soldiers' the highlight (although others may disagree with this, as every improvisation was amazing!).

The displays in the church were truly wonderful - there is SO MUCH talent in St John's. They ranged from knitting and sewing, through pottery, painting, toy-making, jewellery - far too much to name them all. The various groups also presented displays: AWF, Ukukhuthaza, House Groups, Heritage, Youth, KidZown. The Environment group had a wonderful display in the foyer of the church. Everything was tied together with fabulous floral displays, each one cleverly designed to be representative of the display it was enhancing.



Many of the flower arrangements were done by members of the flower arranging classes held by Jane Whitby during the year.

Demonstrations of various crafts took place in the hall at intervals during the Saturday and Sunday, and many people went away eager to try a new skill.



At 13:00 a group of people lined up to ring the bell 350 times. This was in response to a campaign supported by Archbishop Thabo Makgoba, demonstrating our solidarity with the movement to reduce carbon emissions to 350ppm in the atmosphere.

At the Eucharist on Sunday morning the musicians who had come together on the previous day provided the music, together with Christopher on the organ, and gave a lively performance. The children illustrated the Celebration of Hope with colourful letters (picture at left top) and balloons. The bible was 'danced' through the church by Taryn Joubert for the reading of the gospel. All in all, it was a beautiful service, reminding us that St John's is indeed a worshipping family.

The weekend ended quietly on Sunday with Evening Prayer with Gregorian Chant. It was a fitting end to a wonderful weekend.

HERITAGE DAY - 24 SEPTEMBER 2009
Val Blore

I'm sure that those of us who met at St John's for a "Bring & Braai" lunch, and to share some of our background, had a most interesting and enjoyable time together - I certainly did! The weather was kind; Richard Clüver and the 'cooks' (Dominic Warmback and a school friend, Melvin Wright, Roy Brough, among others) did a fine job. We all relaxed and were able to get to know each other a little better.

I've been a member of St John's since coming to Pinetown in 1998. I joined the St John's Heritage group as soon as it started up in order to get to know other members of the congregation and to learn something of the church's history. I think the group has done a great job and I appreciate the interest and friendship it has provided. I joined other groups as well, of course - the AWF, Martha's Friends and a house group. So by now I feel very much part of the St John's family - a warm, caring family for which I am most grateful. Thank you, Lord!

MEMORIES OF ST JOHN'S

Irene Scoggings

On Sunday 22 November 2009 St John's will celebrate 50 years of worshipping in this church building. My daughter Diana was born on Saturday, 21 November 1959, and on the following day, the first service was celebrated in the "new" church of St John's. My husband, David, was a lay minister at the time, and I have a snapshot of him (with black hair!) walking in the procession from the old church to the new, with the rector, Revd Peter Clark and the rest of the congregation.

PARISH FINANCES - JAN - SEPTEMBER 2009

	Actual	Budgeted	Variance
Dedicated Giving	R470 610	R524 999	(R54 389)
Loose Plate	R31 687	R45 000	(R13 313)
Donations	R50 623	R37 500	R13 123
Total Income	R552 920	R607 499	(R54 579)
Expenses	R613 222	R651 796	R38 574

Deficit for 9 months: R60 302

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE DEATH OF THE MOTHER OF THE ANGLICAN ARCHBISHOP OF CAPE TOWN

The Anglican Church of Southern Africa announces, with great sadness, that Elizabeth Kedibone Makgoba, mother of the Most Revd Thabo Makgoba, the Anglican Archbishop of Cape Town, died peacefully of a heart condition, in the early hours of Sunday, 20th September, aged 80. Her funeral will be held in Pimville, at St Andrew's Anglican church, on Friday, 25th September at 8am. She will be buried at the Avalon cemetery in Soweto alongside her late husband, James Masilo Makgoba.

As Jesus Christ wept for his friend Lazarus, we weep with the Archbishop and his family at this time. We pray for God's comfort and blessing on them in their grief, remembering Jesus' words that 'blessed are those who mourn for they shall be comforted'. We ask that they may know in their hearts the full reassurance that he is indeed the Resurrection and the Life for all who put their trust in him, and that nothing, neither life nor death, can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

May she rest in peace, and rise in glory.

MESSAGE FROM JANE WHITBY
(convener of Celebration of Hope)

Just a huge, huge thank you to everyone who was in any way involved from the Clergy, my Committee Members, the Contributors to the Music Program, Set up People and Suppliers of props, Demonstrators, Tea Pourers and Suppliers of food, Talented People and Organisations who displayed, Transporters of articles and people, Flower Arrangers, Cashiers, Sam, Rose, Cleaner uppers, etc., etc., and to those who came to view. Special thanks to Christopher Cockburn, for his wonderful musical contributions. Please forgive me for anybody or anything I might have missed.

I am sure that as we are all individuals, we were blessed in different ways. I know I have learnt a lot about trust and faith. Bless you all.

GOODBYE!

By Sandy Wallace

In the past 10 months or so, I have been having a personally difficult time in my ministry in St John's. On Thursday 8 October 2009, after yet another lengthy discussion with Andrew, our rector, I decided to return my licence as a Lay Minister at St John's and also to resign from this church. I therefore hope that you will realise that this decision was not taken quickly or lightly.

I have been a member of St John's for 28 years and you have been a loving family to me. I, in turn, have loved you, and still do, and it has been a joy to me to serve you with the gifts that the Lord has given me.

I am leaving with a sad heart and with a wealth of memories, but, too, I am looking with expectation to what the Lord Jesus has in line for me as I now join St Agnes' church where I have been worshipping for some months. In the interval, I have continued doing Lay Minister duties in the retirement villages St John's has assigned to me to assist in the dispensing of the Reserved Sacrament. I thank the clergy for enabling me to do this during my time of decision.

My husband Stan will be remaining on at St John's and, from time to time, I will join him to celebrate festal occasions with you.

The most meaningful ministries that I have taken part in have been those associated with prayer and healing. It has been a great privilege for me to pray over the years for the times of sadness, hardship and joy experienced by St John's dear people, and to see the Father's great love for us all as He has blessed us through works of power through His Holy Spirit and in the Name of His precious Son, Jesus.

Wherever I go, to whatever church, I believe we are One in One Body, so I believe I am not separated from you.

I believe I have further growth to experience spiritually, so I am stepping out in faith. Irene McFadzean often used to encourage me with these words: "The joy of the Lord is my strength".

God be with you all!

SPIRIT OF HOPE

Richard Clüver, Churchwarden

With the fun and festivities of an outstanding Spirit of Hope weekend behind us, it is time to look forward to a new year in which the parish family of St John the Baptist can anticipate new growth and achievement.

To do so requires that we remind ourselves of the tensions and turmoil which beset our congregation in mid 2008 when some long-standing parishioners left. Around this time, discussion took place around our worship music and traditional forms of music were favoured by many. Given the additional bonus of Christopher Cockburn in our midst as organist, it seemed to make sense to see the return of the choir to our biggest service of the week: the Sunday 9 a.m service, together with a better balance being struck between traditional Hymns Ancient and Modern and guitar-led choruses. Out of these changes was born the season of the Spirit of Hope, a year-long initiative within St John's aimed at achieving reconciliation within our parish family.

In searching for a central theme for this initiative, a number of us had been studying the Gospel of St Mark and had been moved by our Lord's injunction, when his despairing disciples had implored Jesus to send away the huge crowd that had gathered about him on the shore of Lake Galilee because the people were hungry and Jesus' small band of disciples lacked the means to feed them. We were reminded very forcefully of Jesus' response that, rather than call for outside intervention, they should use what they had ... and so happened the miracle of the feeding of the 5 000.

We had been thinking of calling in some high-powered theologian to lead a

mission. Now we saw Jesus' lesson as a message as to how we were to proceed. So we called upon the talent in our midst to stage a series of events that have seen the parish family repeatedly breaking bread together in fun and laughter and creativity.

We began the Season of Hope with a supper theatre in which our resourceful cooks emulated the feeding of the 5 000 by feeding the parish family a three-course supper for just a few Rands a head. And we followed it month by month with garden parties, a massively supported Shrove Tuesday evening featuring cultural foods as well as traditional pancakes, and so it went on. There was also the a fund-raising auction which raised money to feed AIDS victims, and a Jazz evening. All this culminated in our weekend long "Celebration of Hope" during which we rejoiced together in a festival of art, craft, music, talks about hobbies and the work of the many groupings within our parish family. Most important of all, we were growing together again through this time; learning to trust each other and love one another and marveling always how God's Spirit moved among us to ensure that each event happened without incident. There are too many stories to recall all of them here. of imminent disaster that turned to rejoicing when we all witnessed God's hand of blessing upon what we were doing; like the time when the Pinetown electric sub station exploded in the middle of our Jazz evening.

Without power to operate their amplifiers, our musicians could not perform. Then from our midst came a guest who had just bought a standby generator for his business. While someone went to fetch it, from our midst

arose one of South Africa's most famed story tellers, Gcina Hlope who led us in singing by candlelight until power was restored. Such affirmations confirmed for us all time and again that we were on the right path and, time and again when we worried that the next event might be a failure, we had simply to remind ourselves again of Jesus' words: "Oh ye of little faith.." When his unfailing presence in our midst turned each event into a triumph.

We have been richly blessed through a year of achievement and happiness. Now it is time to think where we go next. I believe it is time to take stock among ourselves. It is time to begin work, using our newly rediscovered talents.

For example, while we have been having fun, our congregation has been growing rapidly and we have become a congregation mirroring the rich cultural tapestry of modern South Africa. Perhaps it is time to start blending in the many and diverse heritages of our community to create a new way of conducting our worship; time to weave together our wonderful tradition of Anglican church music with the soul-stirring harmonies that so distinguish township services.

I believe it is St John's time to show the way forward in a uniquely South African manner and so I commend you all to put on your thinking caps and to get on your knees seeking God's direction for the new year that is at hand.

God has shown us his presence in everything we have done this past year. Now it is time to seek what he is calling us to do next for with God's hand upon us the future is surely ours!

BISHOP RUBIN PHILLIP

Bishop Rubin is currently visiting Bremen in Germany, where, on 30 October 2009, he will receive the Bremen Peace Prize in the category 'Public Engagement towards justice and peace'. This is a prestigious prize awarded every two years by the *Threshold Foundation* - "The courage to cross thresholds" - to honour people and organisations who contribute by their activities to peace, justice and the integrity of creation. 2009 sees the fourth such award, the first being presented in 2003. There are three categories, Unknown Peace Worker, Exemplary Organisation and Public Engagement.

Bishop Rubin's prize is in the category of Public Engagement towards justice and peace. He was put under house arrest for 3 years in the 1970's because of his protest work against apartheid. Nowadays he supports those who are still marginalized and are not benefiting from democracy in South Africa by visiting them in prisons and hospitals and offering legal support. In 2008 he campaigned against the xenophobic violence and for the protection of the refugees. Education on HIV/AIDS is also of primary concern to him.

The winners in the other categories are: Australian Susan Jennifer Gilbey in the category "Unknown Peace Worker" for her efforts advocating for the rights of asylum seekers; and the Bulgarian organisations Animus and PULSE Foundation in the category "Exemplary Organisations" due to their commitment in supporting women who become victims of trafficking and forced prostitution in Western European countries.

We of St John's congratulate Bishop Rubin on this award, and are delighted to see his achievements recognised in this way.

ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

Dot Sanders

At the 2009 Annual Desmond Tutu Peace Lecture on 13 October, given by Bishop Rubin Phillip, the focus was on the environment and its close link to social justice.

Bishop Rubin noted that all faiths have been vocal on political issues, but have lost their voices when it comes to the environment. "We must speak out," he said, because the world is heading towards destruction. If there is to be any hope for a future for anyone on this world, our quest has to become one for environmental justice - inextricably linked with economic justice.

Water availability is critical everywhere, but we continue to pollute our water sources with toxins, dumping of waste, over-use and the depletion of oceans by over-fishing.

Our present dilemma regarding power is like a hot potato - passed around among various bodies, many making suggestions but few taking any action. As leaders. Bishop Rubin said, "we must be strong in the use of all our power to stop the use of nuclear and fossil fuels to generate power." We have an almost unlimited supply of sunshine in many parts of our country for solar generation; we have famously windy, endless stretches of coast for wind generation; we have rivers for short-stretch turbines; we have mountains of waste for conversion. And all this technology for alternative power generation exists already, hardly any research is needed.

Global warming is very real, and is also causing conflict. Because of temperatures rising and the Sahara desert moving southwards, rural pastoralists have to move into

wetter areas to find grazing. There seems to be no room for this influx. Conflict arises, armed militias are sent in, and suddenly an area in Africa is deemed to be at war - often characterized by the ethnicity or tribal affiliation of those concerned, and by the role of armed militia with a particular political agenda.

Bishop Rubin concluded by saying: "We as people of faith are deeply concerned for the environmental justice linked to economic justice that makes for peace and which is part of the ethic that brings the world's religions together. Respect and compassion for all people must include respect and compassion for the planet that bears us, that nurtures and nourishes us, that provides the air we breathe to live, the water we drink to live, the food we eat to live, and the beauty that cherishes our inmost being. With all the brilliant modern technology that scientists have produced, we and all living things still need air, water, food, and beauty from this earth, our only home.

"I want to encourage you as we face the coming peril together. You see, it's not only about what 'they' must do - whether they be our own government or the United Nations or whoever. It's about what we can do - each of us as individuals, but above all each of us in community, whether as family, where we live, where we share our faith, where our ancestors come from. For that is our African way. We may occasionally feel close to despair, but together we can bring hope and beauty to each other and to the earth, our only home."

DATES for the DIARY

- 21 Nov.:** **GROWING THE CHURCH CONFERENCE:**
09:00 - 16:00 at St John's. Theme: "We offer ourselves".
- 22 Nov.:** 09:00: **MOTHERS' UNION** enrollment of the new group at St John's. We welcome the emergence of an MU branch in the parish and wish them well.
- 28 Nov.:** **DIOCESAN ORDINATION** at the Cathedral in Pietermaritzburg.
- 29 Nov.:** **ADVENT SUNDAY - 08:00 Service.** Start of Advent with children's participation.
PATRONAL FESTIVAL of the diocese: service in the cathedral, to which each parish is encouraged to send 2 representatives. If you would like to attend, please speak to one of the clergy.
- 4 Dec.:** **POTJIEKOS & 60'S SOUNDS NIGHT**
Watch the pew leaflet for details of this event.
- 13 Dec.:** 16.00 **ECUMENICAL ADVENT VESPERS** at Mariannahill Monastery
- 20 Dec.:** 16.00 **CAROL SERVICE**
- 24 Dec.:** 16.00 **CHILDREN'S SERVICE**
23.15 **MIDNIGHT CHRISTMAS SERVICE**
- 25 Dec.:** 8.00 **CHRISTMAS SERVICE**

MARRIAGE COURSE

A Marriage course & Preparation for Marriage will be held at St John's in 2010 after Easter. This course is intended for 'old' married couples and those contemplating marriage. It will be facilitated by couples in the parish. Anyone who is interested in doing the course or in attending the training for facilitators, please speak to Revd Caroline Beech.

THE LANTERN

We will produce one more edition this year in place of The Bell at the end of November. It will be sent to those on e-mail (i.e. those who already receive *The Bell* in this way). If you would like a paper copy please put your name on the list on the clipboard at the back of the church by Sunday 15 November. It will also be placed on the parish website - www.stjohnbaptist.co.za - for accessing and downloading. Contributions to this edition need to be handed into the parish office or e-mailed to the church at church@stjohnbaptist.co.za by Monday 16 November.

FROM THE REGISTER:

- R.I.P.:** Mavis Simons, died 8 October 2009
Revd Peter Mkhize, died 9 October 2009
Anna Kloke, died 16 October 2009
Elaine Richardson, died 14 October 2009 in Johannesburg.