

Alberton Lutheran Parish



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The Messenger March, 2007 - May, 2007, Issue 1.

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From Pastor's Pen

It really helped me to fast track back into Parish life after holidays with Lenten activities, and more particularly, with a new initiative of our parish called "Shedmen."

"Shedmen" is the gathering of men of all ages, to share in the mutual enjoyment of one of our favourite places...our sheds. Some guy's shed may be big, another guy's small; but it doesn't matter! Sheds serve the function of personal space and are places to go and think, be with a mate, potter around, maybe even create.

"Shedmen" works on the principal of sharing. We get together at 6:00 pm and start the night with a simple, hearty BBQ and fizzy drinks, after asking God to bless the food and fun. The host tells us a bit about his shed and his particular interests that take place in his shed. (Our first shed experience was at Bevan Eggert's shed. He really knows how to turn his hand to woodwork of all kinds; and was happy to conduct several little tours of his workshop on the night. We had A guest speaker in the person of Ian Watson, A truck driving instructor, who owns his own business and is passionate about Truck driving, Aussie Rules and Jesus. He shared how his life has managed to incorporate all these loves in ways that have helped to enhance people's lives. He was great! – one of that breed of 'true blue' Aussie blokes, who are sincere and full-on.

It was inter-generational – the youngest was about 13 and the oldest there about 78. There were over 50 men present and they were relaxed

and interacting - comfortable in a place which was used and homely and rustic and welcoming.

It reminded me of my Seminary studies where we learned about the "Zohd" – the "Circle of Men" who gathered around the campfire at night when the people of God were nomads, wandering in the wilderness and later settling the Promised Land.

Though they were nomads, (didn't even have sheds to call their own ☺) they had the camaraderie, the mateship and attitude of passing on important life skills: from how to raise sheep, to how to know and love God.

"Shedmen" struck me as just that; and I thank God for everyone who showed up and had a good night with their sons; their mates; and their new friends; and God to boot.

Believe it or not much of the wisdom literature, Psalms, Proverbs and several other Old Testament writings; and Jesus talking to the crowds are examples of this gathering of men who, in being amongst men, are inspired by the God who gave us life. I don't think the nights are necessarily about talking scripture to one-another; but the passage that comes to my mind after the night is this:

Your love has given me great joy and encouragement because you, brother(s), have refreshed the hearts of the saints. Philemon v7

*Yours in Christ,
Pastor Greg.*

Pastor Greg Vangness

PARISH MATTERS



NEWS FROM LORDS

As you are aware, early in November last year an amended application was submitted to Gold Coast City Council. This amended application addressed the issues raised from the information requests generated in the original application.

We received our Acknowledgement Notice on 16th November and were advised of two additional referral agencies, namely Department of Main Roads and Queensland Transport. The Referral Coordination Officer granted the inevitable extension of time in which the referral agencies have to respond. We finally received notice of additional information requests on the 19th February.

Since then I have met with our Town Planner, Legal team and LEQ to ascertain the significance of these additional requests and what bearing they have on our approval processes and timeline. Because the information requests have been made they must be responded to before we can move into the period of public advertising.

I have been assured that many of these requests are normal in the sense that they are procedural, technical or even in some cases reflect an incorrect reading of our documentation. Unfortunately I am also assured that this is quite normal for applications across most local government jurisdictions (as both St Mark's and Redeemer can attest). **It is also true to say that the Office of Urban Management and the impact of the South East Queensland Regional Plan remain a particular concern.**

Our consultants have provided a suggested course of action to pursue from here and this process will be discussed at our upcoming School Council meeting. The timeline is unavoidably lengthy.

On a positive note, enrolment interest remains high from both new families to the area and existing locally located families. We continue to

have two and three families making enrolment enquiries at the school office each week.

The process of policy and procedure documentation for the school is continuing, the public website and intranet has been mapped out, and a number of conversations have been had with potential resource suppliers so that we are ready to commence in an appropriate manner. We are receiving very positive comment on the new Prospectus and suite of enrolment information.

It is disappointing to hear a number of rumours about the future of LORDS. I have yet to hear one that is based on fact. I know that these also reflect the uncertainty of the medium to long term future of life in the agricultural sections of our community. Please direct your questions to Andrew Dart (Chair of School Council) or myself. Perhaps you could drop into the School Office in Mirambeena Drive and see the preparation work that is being done.

I earnestly ask that you uphold the members of the School Council in your prayers. They deserve your support for the manner in which they have conducted themselves during this time of frustration and for their unending commitment to developing a Lutheran school to serve our community. I must admit that I have never been involved in a process as lengthy or frustrating as this in almost 30 years in the education sector.

Garth Hunt
Principal

Parish Youth and Young Adults

This year looks like being another exciting one within the youth area of our parish. We will be continuing with our monthly Friday night and weekend youth meetings with some fun and exciting events planned. We are also looking forward to the continuing of a variety of young adults bible study groups and the creation of a couple of new ones. Looking forward to seeing all of you there and would love to hear about any new people who would like to join any of our groups. The Youth are also searching for some new ideas of things to do so if anyone has any great ideas or things that they would like to do with the youth we would love to hear about them. See you soon!

A-Team Fun In 2007!

Have you heard about the fun that is enjoyed at ATEAM each month? ATEAM is for young teens in years 6-9 and we meet on the 2nd Friday night of each month. Our aim is to have lots of fun while also spending time learning more about Jesus and how much he loves us.

In 2006 the ATEAMers had a great time with pool, movie and games nights, bowling and a special mission night. 2007 is gearing up to be even bigger and better! We have a full year program ready to role and are looking for eager teens ready to have fun! If you know someone who might be interested in coming to ATEAM please let Pastor Greg, Laura Kleinschmidt or Bec Ludcke know so that we can add them to the mailing list!

Also, if you are interested in helping to lead we would love to hear from you! Our next meeting is at the Alberton Church Hall on March 9th as we delve into some movies and popcorn! We'd love to see you there!!!

God Bless, Laura & Bec

New Confirmees

We welcome our next group of young confirmees, Katie Ferguson, Holly Fischer, Tessa Douglas, Jessica McCloskey, Brianna Keith, Kyle McConnell, and Justin Huth. These young people are attending Confirmation classes, and will enjoy Confirmation Camp on the 5th, 6th, 7th May Labour Day weekend and then will be confirmed as members of their congregations. Alberton's Confirmation Service will be on Sunday 27th May and Woongoolba's Service on Sunday 3rd June. Please remember these young people in your prayers.

The Season of Lent

The season is in full swing leading up to Easter celebrations.

In February, we celebrated Shrove Tuesday at the St. Peter's Hall, Alberton. Just over 20 Young Adults joined in this festive night which goes back to Old Testament times in its origins. It was a time of preparation associated with the Exodus from Egypt; and more specifically with the Passover, and God's urging to cleanse the house of all yeast products and prepare for God's deliverance from slavery. WE celebrated

the knowledge that because of the atoning death of Jesus and His wonderful resurrection, God passes over our sin and gives us life. Mind you we had fun flipping pancakes and enjoying goodly amounts of Maple syrup & other goodies.

The next day was Ash Wednesday, which leads into the Season of Lent. We focused again, on the suffering of Jesus for our sakes.

Lenten services are now being conducted in the parish and use the format of a Lenten Service of Prayer and five studies over the next five Friday nights. The themes are Prayer, Stewardship, Work, Love and Godly Living. Services are held on Friday nights at the two church venues on an alternating basis.

Sundays in the Season of Lent follow celebration Themes. Interestingly, they are not included in the season of Lent but were deliberately set as days to contrast the weekly practice of penitence. This Lenten Season the Sunday sermons follow different themes all based on the common questions: "What shall we celebrate today; and how shall we celebrate?"

If you would like copies of the studies, please contact Pastor Greg, who will be happy to provide you with the series.

The finish of our Lenten season is in the form of a community meal. You will see it advertised in the Messenger calendar right at the end of March! It's the **Parish "Guess Who's Coming To Dinner Event."** These nights are like a progressive tea to some extent. They start out at one of the church halls and progress to one home. You bring along a main meal and dessert which will be shared at your host destination for the night. Once at the hosts place, you remain there for the night with a group of people organized during the "happy Half-hour at the Hall."

These nights provide a ready-made "party" for the host homes and you are provided with a devotion and ice-breaking activities for the night. You will be amazed at the fun look forward to the next one that is offered. **So keep Friday, 30th of March free** and see if you can guess who's coming to dinner apart from yourself. If you would like to be one of the host families, just contact Pastor Greg soon and thanks. We would love to see plenty there.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT BETHLEHEM, WOONGOOLBA

The Bethlehem Pre-school & Kindy groups are filled to capacity this year, because of the new Prep Year. Many of the younger children enrolled have had to wait until 2008 to get a position. Our centre continues to be a great blessing to the families of our community.

The Bethlehem Ladies Fellowship is this year celebrating their 75th Anniversary. A Sunday morning worship service is planned to bring together the members, Pastors and their wives both past and present to be part of praise and worship time. Proposed dates are Sunday 20th May or 10th June 2007.

The Bethlehem Church Ramp will be commenced in early March. All building approvals have been obtained, and final decisions on the timber for ramp have been made. If you are able to assist with money to assist with the cost of the ramp, we would appreciate all donations be made to the Bethlehem Lutheran Church and given to or sent to the treasurer, Sandra Ferguson, 22 Helisma Court, Mt. Warren Park. 4207

Anniversaries - 2007 is going to be a year of celebrations at Woongoolba. We have the Ladies Fellowship's 75th Anniversary. The Church building celebrating its 100th year. The Congregation celebrating its 125th year, and the Bethlehem Pre-school & Kindy celebrating its 25th year. If you have any ideas for celebrating these special occasions, please share your thoughts by contacting Chairman, Lee Zipf.

NEWS FROM ST. PETER'S, ALBERTON

St. Peter's Ladies Fellowship:

Love – Joy – Peace – Hope : This is what we wish to share this year.

Our ladies are off to a busy start to 2007. Eleven ladies have become members for this year. At our first meeting each one received a small cross along with the poem "The cross in my pocket" to reinforce the theme of our devotion based on Psalm 26. A lot of things didn't work

out for Jesus, or so it seemed at the time. Tough times are times to cling to the cross. It is a time to know that without God, I cannot. My strength is in God in whom I trust and that gives me peace.

\$500 was sent off in donations: \$100 to the student pastor's assistance fund, \$200 to Mentawai Islands Student Pastors Fund, \$100 to the bursary fund and \$100 to Qld Aboriginal missions. It is with gratitude to our Lord that we are able to assist in fulfilling these needs.

Some of our ladies will be attending the Qld Retreat at Koojarewon on 9-11th March under the theme: "Wake, Arise, Shine!" so be sure to ask them all about it on their return.

It is hosted this year by the ladies of the Wide Bay Burnett Zone so you can be assured of some fun.

On 22nd March we are hosting the **Brisbane South and Gold Coast Zone Rally Day** under the theme of "Here I am, Send Me". Our guest speaker for the day will be Pastor Paul Hage. We begin at 9.30.a.m Morning and afternoon tea will be supplied but you are asked to bring your own lunch.

'**Mary and Martha's**' the recipients of our Harvest Thanksgiving goods were able to make good use of them at the Christmas camp held at Camp Bornhoffen in the Numinbah Valley.

During 2006 they were able to support 78 women and 117 children, survivors of domestic violence with accommodation and support.

Have you seen the Lutheran Women of Australia DVD – if not ask Pastor Greg for a loan of it. It will let you know what is happening with our Lutheran Women throughout Australia.

Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart. Psalm 37: 4

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