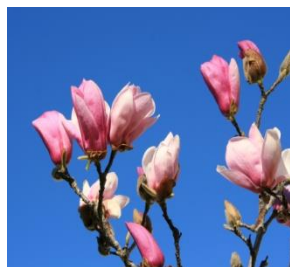




Ascension News
Church of the Ascension –
The Anglican Church in Hilton, KZN
Diocese of Natal in the Anglican Church of Southern Africa
Spring Edition September 2021



Spring is here.
A time for Spring Cleaning -
fresh ideas, renewal, refreshment, revitalizing.

COVID – yes, and very sadly, it is still with us and we are all learning to cope with such challenging, changed, and uncertain circumstances. I for one am feeling so cut off from news of our Church of Ascension community and not knowing what is going on in the lives of the family. Who has experienced pain, hardship, loss of so many kinds - alongside whom we would have liked to stand. For whom has there been joy and rejoicing, good news - with whom we would love to celebrate. I am sure I am not alone in these feelings. Won't you then be so kind as to email me your news to share with the C of A family
My email is bmdavidge@gmail.com

We need to personalize our newsletter. While the articles are always helpful and often illuminating, we are receiving our sound bites during the week and have our Sunday Sermons. I would like us to share so much more. Won't you think of a contribution. Share when God was with you in an amazing way or when you felt stranded in the wilderness. Have you got a tasty recipe your family love? Have you visited a wonderful little coffee shop or found a hidden gem in the Midlands?

Who has driven along Brindy Road recently? Read what Cath Conway has written for us.

Cath is convenor of Children's Ministry.



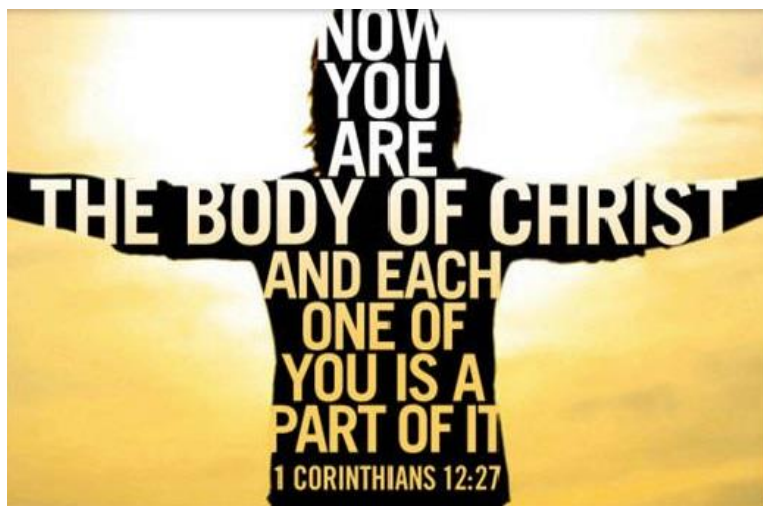
There are over 500 children that go to Laddsworth Primary School, and nearly all of them are driven along Brindy Road to be dropped off at school in the morning. During the Lent Course in 2019 I had it strongly put on my heart to put up a sign board next to this stretch of road. I felt God telling me that we must share the Word of the Lord with all that pass this way nearly every day of the year. My initial thought was - excellent idea, memory verses for the public! After some red tape and 2020, I put this idea on hold, but Jesus persisted. A friend invited me to the One Life Ladies

Sparkle Conference "Chosen" on the 7 Nov 2020. I decided to attend mainly to support my friend (I'm generally not a conference going type of person), and wow!, God really spoke to me. There were 3 different confirmations, speakers even saying the words 'signpost' and 'on the side of the road'. I sobbed, and asked God to please forgive me for my disobedience, for not trusting Him to make a way. I asked my friend to please hold me accountable that by the 2nd term this signboard must be up. I contacted a friend in the municipality, he put me in touch with the relevant authorities - and so the process begun. On the 5th April 2021 the sign was up, just in time for the 2nd school term! And the next event on the church calendar was Ascension Day, and so our 1st verse for our new Church of Ascension sign was Acts 1:11, "This Jesus who was taken from you into Heaven will come back in the same way that you saw Him go". God is so good!



Mission has been demanding this 2021 with many financial requests and needs. It is again time for us to prepare our Christmas gifts for Sizanani soup kitchen in Mphophomeni. Last year, through your generosity and a small kitty we were able to put together 100 little food boxes containing a cup cake (thank you bakers) and hot dog. Then a packet with toiletries, toys, school items, sweets, biscuits and a packet of crisps. Ladies kindly sewed pencil bags, We are needing those again. If you can donate this year anything you can send would be greatly appreciated.

We can always rely on Joan Mauck. How much of herself she shares with us as lay minister, parish councillor, spiritual advisor, creator of courses, sound bite contributor and most recently she stands behind the camera on Wednesdays filming the service for our online ministry. She has made a contribution focusing on Woman's Month.



Women

I am a woman. I was born as such on the 12th of September 1960. My mother, convinced I would be a boy, had chosen the name Paul. But a surprise was instore, I was not a boy! So they threw some names in a hat and out came Joan.

However, I grew up with a whole gang of boy cousins and so I too regretted being a girl, I wanted to be like my cousins. And for the most part I was; I enjoyed building forts, playing games that involved shooting others with plastic guns and then yelling at them that they were dead and should fall down and them yelling back that I was a bad shot and had missed. I had a passion for Matchbox cars and had quite a collection. On my tenth birthday my mother gave me a cowboy outfit complete with two revolvers, holsters, neck tie, leggings and Stetson. I wore this to my 10th birthday party... everyone else came in frilly dresses, bobby socks and patent leather shoes. I am surprised that my mother allowed me to wear my outfit and I never remember feeling in

the least bit embarrassed. I do not think I would have been as happy for my son's to have worn a distinctly female outfit to their birthday parties. I was what people called a tomboy and I was blissfully happy. As time rolled on so the fact that I was a woman become more and more obvious. I was sent to a girl's school which did not teach Physical Science and typically concentrated on typing and accounting. When I left school, I was one of the very few who went on to university most of the other girls worked in offices; usually in government service. My options really were; teaching, nursing or secretarial work. It never entered my head to do anything else. Once qualified and married I was employed by the education department but only as a temporary teacher, because I was married I did not qualify for a permanent post. In addition, since I was a woman, I could not be the breadwinner, which I was, so I did not qualify for a housing subsidy only men received such an allowance. When I fell pregnant the state medical aid would not pay for my pregnancy they only paid for the pregnancy of the wife of a male teacher. Yet no one seemed to find all this unfair.



Later I joined a church in which women were to keep silent in the assembly, they could not pray, they could not preach, they could not serve communion and they could not participate in decision making in the church. They were to be submissive to their husbands... which essentially meant that

wives, if they were good, would do as they were told. The men seemed to forget the part about loving your wife as Christ loved the Church; that is willing to give up their lives and power for their wives.

There came a time when I could no longer be in such a church but it has taken years for me to see myself as a separate human being who does not in some way need to serve the needs of the males in my life.

However, I do not regard myself as a feminist. I regard myself as one who needs to honour the dignity of all people and who must value women and men equally. Scripture reminds us that we are to treat each other with love and compassion. There are loving and compassionate men and women. Equally there are bigoted, vengeful, arrogant men and

women. There is always the fear that when we take up the rights of women we may behave towards men with the same lack of recognition and respect that we blame them for. We need to be for the unity and equity of all humans.

Each and every person we meet has suffered some form of alienation. Every single one. The men we meet have had to deal with things that we have never faced. If you are in the later decades of your life, then you will know that your male friends went into the army and we did not. There is no doubt that for many of them that was a place of alienation. Many boys have suffered at the hands of violent bullying. Alienation is integral to life. If we can find in each other our common experience of alienation then we will understand the wounds that drive us. The way we do this is to listen to each other's stories and know that we are not alone but we are also not victims, we are individuals with enormous capacity for good if only we would recognize it in each other.



Wrote to Merriel Newmann on hearing the sad news that she and Clyde were leaving. She replied:

Hello Mary,

Yes, we are moving to Waterfall Gardens retirement village mid Sept! We've decided to move closer to our girls who are in Hillcrest and Dbn North! God has gone before us and everything is falling into place, from selling our home to buying a gorgeous cottage overlooking the Kloof Gorge!! We are so blessed! It's not easy leaving Hilton and C of A. However this property has become too much for us and it's time to downsize.

I'll put together an article in the next few days! As you can imagine things are rather chaotic here!!!

Thanks for thinking of me!! Love Merriel

Herewith is the message Merriel has sent us:

MY 24 YEARS AS A MEMBER OF THE CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION



24 years ago Clyde & I moved to Hilton to start a new business. We had bought into an Industrial Signage franchise & our allocated area stretched from Hammarsdale to Estcourt, so Hilton seemed a sensible place in which to base ourselves. There was no time

for socializing, but the one thing we did do was join the Church of the Ascension. Rosemarie Bullock was the Parish Administrator at the time & she phoned to welcome us to C of A & also to invite us to a House Group which she & her husband Frank were leading. That turned out to be the start of an amazing Spiritual journey for me. Stuart Meningke, who was the rector at that time, discerned something in me that I was unaware of. He became a wonderful spiritual mentor for me. I was lacking in confidence & it took a great deal of persuading before I agreed to train as a Sacristan! Four years later I was licensed as a Layminister! As they say, “the rest is history” My involvement at Ascension has meant a lot to me as I have experienced the most incredible Spiritual growth. I have made some wonderful friends & had a lot of fun. I am a firm believer that the best way to get to know people is to work with them. On the practical side I led the weekly banking team for a number of years, & got to know some wonderful folk sitting across the table & counting money!!!. Covid 19 has robbed us of a great deal, but hopefully as people become vaccinated & the positivity level drops, it will be possible to once again meet socially at Church.


In 24 years there are many memories, but I’ll choose a few that were special. I helped Rosemarie with the first “Christmas Shoe Box” project, which over the years morphed into the ‘Sizanani Christmas Party’, now ably run by Mary & Jenny. To witness the joy & excitement on the faces of over 100 children, for whom this party with gifts was

probably the only Christmas they would experience, will stay with me forever.

Another special memory is of being part of the 'Christian Interpretation of the Pesach' (the Passover meal), with all its wonderful symbolism, organized by John & Ann. Helping Ann set tables & serve food, reading one of the Bible lessons .. again memories that will stay with me. I have been privileged to be the Parish recorder for a number of years, I have taken communion to the sick and for a couple of years I organized themed monthly 'Quiet Mornings'. I have attended many courses, the most recent being Joan's Christian Mindfulness Course, which I heartily recommend to anyone who hasn't already experienced this course.

I will certainly miss C of A with its' beautiful Church building, magnificent organ, & wonderful people. I believe that our move to Waterfall is God directed, so I have faith that we will find peace & happiness there!





Introduction to Enneagram

And its use in personal and spiritual growth

The Enneagram is a valuable tool for personal and spiritual development.

► Come and find out more at our next course.

► 25 September 2021
 ► 9.00am-3.00pm
 ► Cost: R250.

Which includes a light lunch, teas and resources.

► 80 Cedara road: Hilton.

To book, Msg Joan Mauck on 0798971143

Joan Mauck will be doing her Introduction to Enneagram course for all who are wanting to go.



Mary has asked me to add a bit of news at the end of this letter and write an article on my family's covid experience.

I am very loathed to do this, as I feel we have been far better off than many and not as lucky as some who hardly felt anything.

It all happened while our province was burning, when I felt the first signs of what I was to discover was covid, which I promptly put down to my allergies playing up.

My "allergies" became worse and worse with excruciating pains in my legs and a cough to beat any horse with pneumonia. I finally accepted that it may well be Covid when my taste and smell disappeared. By that stage it was impossible to get to the hospitals as none were doing tests as staff could not get to work and many of the hospitals were very difficult to get too.

Panic did not ensue as in the back of my mind I still did not believe I had covid. Finally when the way was clear to Greys feeling like an

exhausted wrung out rag I went for a test, which believe it or not was positive. I had by this stage generously shared it with my husband and the children were graced with my generosity for sharing too. After phoning the Doctor and being prescribed with the usual covid cocktail of vitamins, Cortisone and nebulizers, myself and Brendan started our journey soon to be joined by the children.

At this point I have to thank my amazing neighbours who constantly checked up on us phoning to check oxygen levels and get a daily report on how we were and running around collecting medicines and groceries and in general just looking after us.

It is amazing how isolated you feel as every one of us had different symptoms and strange things happening to one's body and the doctors who are snowed under did not seem to have an explanation as to why you felt like you did or how to solve it. The more you look at the internet and ask questions the more you realize how little is known about this disease and how to treat it. I think the worst is when it is your child who has sore lungs and is struggling to breathe that you feel at your most helpless as you have no answers to help.

After 22 days of quarantine we finally were released back to our lives. Two of the family feeling fine while two of us still struggle with post covid, it takes much longer to get over this dastardly bug than I thought possible!

I must say all the prayers from many folk in our parish and all the people who offered support and meals was amazing and a big thank you to you all, you know who you are.

As I said at the beginning of this I feel extremely bless that none of us ended up in hospital and we all are recovering be it slowly but recovering. Such blessings having caring friends.

I can honestly say I have no idea how I contracted covid but I can say that I thank God that we got through it as so many we know and miss have not.





Parish News

Just a few bits of news so we can keep you all updated.

We will miss: Bill McQuade
Rory Randall
Beauty Hlatshwayo
William Shaw
Gil van der Hoven

Rest eternal grant unto them O Lord, and may light perpetual shine upon them.



We also have a lot of Parishioners who have moved over covid to various spots and hope you are all settling into your new places well, but in particular we would like to wish Clyde and Merriel Neumann happy moving and hope they make many new memories in their new home, as they will be leaving us in mid September to relocate to Waterfall to be closer to their children. (As you have read above). Thank you for all your work here at CoA Merriel and Clyde for your quite back up. You will be missed.



The installation of the new Bishop Nkosinathi Ndwandwe on the 11 September at 10h30. A Zoom link will be provided.



As you have seen from the last letter that was sent out- we will be having a farewell service for John and Ann Alexander on the 10th of October 2021 at 8.30. As we thank them for their time at Ascension, as their team work with Paul and Nobuhle guided us through pastoral care, uplifting sermons and many a Fun event. Please come and join us to say farewell to John & Ann as their time of ministry ends at the Church of Ascension.

