

A Mouse Tale



A mouse looked through the wall to see the farmer and his wife open a package. What food might this contain the mouse wondered.....he was devastated to discover it was a mousetrap.

Retreating to the farmyard, the mouse proclaimed the warning: There is a mousetrap in the house! There is a mousetrap in the house!"

The chicken clucked and scratched, raised her head and said, 'Mr. Mouse, I can tell this is a grave concern to you, but it is of no consequence to me. I cannot be bothered by it.'

The mouse turned to the pig and told him, 'There is a mousetrap in the house! There is a mousetrap in the house!'

The pig sympathized, but said, 'I am so very sorry, Mr. Mouse, but there is nothing I can do about it but pray. Be assured you are in my prayers.'

The mouse turned to the cow and said, 'There is a mousetrap in the house! There is a mousetrap in the house!'

The cow said, 'Wow, Mr. Mouse. I'm sorry for you, but it's no skin off my nose.'

So, the mouse returned to the house, head down and dejected, to face the farmer's mousetrap . . . alone.

That very night a sound was heard throughout the house -- like the sound of a mousetrap catching its prey.

The farmer's wife rushed to see what was caught.

In the darkness, she did not see it was a venomous snake whose tail the trap had caught. The snake bit the farmer's wife.

The farmer rushed her to the hospital, and she returned home with a fever.

Everyone knows you treat a fever with fresh chicken soup, so the farmer took his hatchet to the farmyard for the soup's main ingredient.

But his wife's sickness continued, so friends and neighbors came to sit with her around the clock.

To feed them, the farmer butchered the pig.

The farmer's wife did not get well; she died. So many people came for her funeral, the farmer had the cow slaughtered to provide enough meat for all of them.

The mouse looked upon it all from his crack in the wall with great sadness.

So, the next time you hear someone is facing a problem and think it doesn't concern you, remember ---- when one of us is threatened, we are all at risk.

We are all involved in this journey called life.

We must keep an eye out for one another and make an extra effort to encourage one another.

Remember. . . Each of us is a vital thread in another person's tapestry; our lives are woven together for a reason.

One of the best things to hold onto in this world is a FRIEND.



Good Shepherd Church

Anglican Parish of Bundaberg West

George & Takalvan Sts. Bundaberg

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Churchwardens:
Ian Lohse Ph 41 512210
Russ Ford Ph 41544157
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Parish Office: Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday 9am – 12 noon

Email address: goodshepherdwest@bigpond.com

Web Site: www.goodshepherdbundaberg.org

The 'family church'.. where you're a stranger only once.

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

1ST FEBRUARY, 2009

*The Good Shepherd Family — our purpose is to grow together in Christ,
to worship and learn, to be the Good News.*

PARISH FAMILY NEWS!

Celebrating Birthdays

4th Ian Lincoln
6th John Marles
Mabel Matthews

Best wishes from us all!



Second Verse of Happy Birthday

Happy Birthday to you
To Jesus be true
May God richly bless you
Happy Birthday to you!



New Arrival

We rejoice with **Ian, Jan & Stan Lohse** as they celebrate the birth of their darling little grandson and great grandson **Cade Austin** who was born in England last week to very proud parents **Kym and Glen Riemer.**



Congratulations from all the Parish Family

Sincere thanks to you all from the Lohse Family for your prayers for Kym and her precious little boy.

We welcome members of the Anglican Men's Society to our service today.

The first meeting of AMS for 2009 is the AGM and lunch on Tuesday February 10th at 11.30am for 12.15pm.

Please phone Howard Kingston 41523530 by NEXT SUNDAY 8th for catering purposes.

Please stay for the Annual Meeting after the service today.

COAT—Thank you to all who are supporting the Chinese Orphans Assistance Team—those who have pledged and those who give when they can—your donations make such a difference to these little children's lives.



There is a sign-up sheet on the table beside the "COAT COT". If you would like to support these children in 2009 please add your name to the list.

The "Cookie Jar" now has a dual purpose!

It's no longer just saves the men from mowing but now also pays to save the ladies from the heavy cleaning of the church.

Feed the Cookie Jar notes or coins and help to offset this cost.

Rosters for February / March are available today. Please collect your copy.

For your Diaries:

Mayoral Prayer Breakfast

Monday 9th March—6.45am to 8.30am.

Guest speaker Major Alan Laurens from the Salvation Army.



Entry is by pre-purchased tickets at a cost of \$20 per person. Tickets available at Council Offices, Bourbong Street.

The breakfast raises funds for school chaplaincy.

The Combined Brisbane & Bundaberg Festival of Male Voice Choirs present

"Festival of Praise"



Moncrieff Theatre

Saturday 28th March at 7pm

Admission Free—freewill offering to cover costs appreciated



Keep this day free!!

The Combined Parishes Cent Sale

will be held on

Saturday 9th May at 1pm

in Christ Church Parish Hall.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

Needed—two ladies or gentlemen to represent our Parish at the planning meeting for the World Day of Prayer.

The Meeting is this Friday 6th February at 9.30am at Bundaberg Uniting Church McNaught Hall 34 Barolin Street.

Let the parish secretary know **TODAY** if you are able to represent us.

For you diaries:

The World Day of Prayer is Friday 6th March.

Fr. Rick's Bible Study Group will recommence this Wednesday at 9.45am in the hall.



Studying the book of Hosea— each Wednesday until Easter.

Ash Wednesday—25th February Services

9am & 6pm

Holy Communion & Imposition of Ashes



Family News!

Those of you who attend the Wednesday mid-week service will remember

Rose Clarke from Coolum who regularly attended this service.

Rose recently celebrated her 90th Birthday and sent Heather a copy of a newspaper article & her photo with her youngest great-grandson at the celebration.

.....continued

The problem arises when one knowledge-set simply rejects the other. Dogmatic fundamentalists on both sides insist that they, and only they, have any real hold on Truth. My friend, considering the tsunami, says that sin and death have to have caused the ocean bottom earthquake. But, I countered, tectonic plates are far, far older than humankind; they've been clanging into each other long before anything crawled out of the sea, much less stood on two feet and raised a fist to God. And tectonic plates are essentially innocent. This world is indeed a fallen and hurting place, but not because of them. Tectonic plates are just the way this world is built, and presumably our Creator wanted it that way. My friend simply would not go there. If tectonic plates don't fit into Genesis, then they're off his theological radar.

I think it is possible to have a theology in which scripture and science are not set at irrevocable odds with each other, but where they play with each other -- playing perhaps like lion cubs, a serious, intent, demanding, and quite rough play, but also perhaps playing in sheer fun. The two need to answer to each other as viol answers violin; they're both essential to the music of truth.

What kind of Creator would set tectonic plates lumbering into one another? What's the result of evil (the power of sin and death) and what's simply Creation doing its Creative thing, with humankind along for the sometimes dangerous ride? Were we once pure and sinless and immortal, and we fell? Or are we slowly blooming, with all kinds of retrogressions and deep errors, into what we are divinely called to become?

In some narratives of Creation, humankind's relationship with God is absolutely central. In a science-based narrative of Creation, humankind is a very late arrival and an opportunistic and aggressive species. And both versions are true.

We know that death is a natural part of all natural life. Even when nut-grass might appear to the avid gardener to be immortal, even individual nut grass plants must die. Is this our fault for our rebellion against God? Or is it simply the natural order of things? Maybe there's a different sort of death we're talking about. But in that case, what sort?

What on earth do we do with what Creation says to us, when we're willing to shut up and listen? Perhaps original sin is just as much our arrogance against Creation as it is our arrogance against the Creator. The two are not mutually exclusive, after all. In calling Creation fallen because it sometimes makes us suffer, haven't we set ourselves at the centre of the universe? When we say that our failure taints even tectonic plates, isn't that a whopping piece of human narcissism?

Aren't we dragging Creation down to our own level? And is that what our Creator wants of us? Maybe that's where the real sin lies. Whatever Creation is, it has God's fingerprints all over it. Who are we to pass our limited, self-absorbed judgment on what God has declared to be good?

I seem to make as much progress in fighting with rigidity within myself as I do in exploring in gentleness and openness. I have to know what it is I question, and that means accepting that what I question is important enough to argue with. I cannot reject either side, Scripture or science. I can only try to hold them together and work out my own reconciliation.

But it's in the struggle that I do my best God-thinking.

Fr. Rick



From Fr. Rick

There is a reputable strand of theology which firmly believes that all suffering goes back to humankind's turning away from God and trying to put humankind in God's place. This is a position I agree with on most levels. You can't live in this world and not see the power of sin; it's boldly out there. Toxicity floods our societies and our relationships, and too often Creation itself, where we have abused it.

But is Creation itself swamped by sin? Many think so. I can't quite go there.

Many of you know that I follow the sciences with interest. I have often said that if I were starting again I would be a scientist. When someone gets an allergy, my immediate response is "aren't you glad that your immune systems are working. How can we get them to not be so sensitive?!"

Or When someone gets cancer, I think in terms of genes switching on that should be switched off or vice versa. The events causing cancer are complicated and not fully understood, and I don't know them in any detail; but my understanding is that cancer is a natural process gone very wrong, and that the factors involved are complex. Cancer is tragic, no doubt about that; it can be redeemed, I believe; but is it the product of sin, particular or generalized? I don't know.

What about that devastating tsunami of 2004, the one that killed hundreds of thousands in southeast Asia and eastern Africa. I was really angry when someone suggested in the Diocesan newspaper that it was a result of the sin of these nations, most especially the so-called 'sin' of adhering to Islam. Was this tsunami the product of sin and death? Many still believe that it was -- that in an unfallen world, death would have no dominion.

I have problems with that. I have problems because I do believe that science has provided us with a set of data that can, on the whole, be relied upon, and the data strongly suggest that Creation simply is, neither wicked nor ethical, but simply there in all its beauty and muddle and complexity. The moral interpretation we slap onto it is just that -- our interpretation. The spider eating the fly is neither guilty nor innocent, just hungry, and the fly's suffering (hopefully brief) is simply a condition of life.

Those who wrote Scripture (and my friend does accept that Scripture was written by people, divinely inspired) had no notion of tectonic plates; how could they? Neither did the great theologians over the ages. A volcanic explosion was an act of God, pure, plain, and simple, and likely God's punishment for sin.

These wise and holy people explained nature as best they could from a moral and spiritual point of view, but they couldn't explain what they didn't know: that bubonic plague is caused by bacteria; that rabies is viral; that malaria involves parasites transmitted by mosquitos; that earthquakes and volcanoes and tsunamis result from the blundering about of chunks of the Earth's crust. And then there's astronomy...

Which does not make our forebears stupid or naive (the opposite error). In many, many ways, our ancestors had insights and observations of the most profound emotional and spiritual wisdom. They built magnificent structures, physical and intellectual, with the tools and materials they had and with sheer genius. They had skills that we can no longer aspire to. We've gained in some areas of knowledge and understanding; we've lost in others. Third-world weavers, sitting at "crude" hand looms, can still produce webs of a complexity that no Westerner can begin to emulate. I look at the brush strokes in a piece of really good 17th-century painting and realize that those techniques have been lost to us.

Continued.....

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

Sentence: Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and curing every disease and every sickness.
Matthew 9:35

Readings Today

Old Testament: Deuteronomy 18:15-20
Psalm: 111 page 343
New Testament: 1 Corinthians 8:1-13
Gospel: Mark 1:21-28

Readings next Sunday

Old Testament: Isaiah 40:21-31
Psalm 147:1-11 page 377
New Testament: 1 Corinthians 9:16-23
Gospel: Mark 1:29-39

**We are to follow the truth
in a spirit of love;
so may we grow in all ways
into Christ who is the Head.

The path of the just grows ever
brighter, like the light of dawn
opening out into a full day.**

YOUR OFFERTORY TRUST

When we place our offering in the collection plate each week, we are not technically giving to the Lord; we are just taking our hands off what belongs to Him. As Benjamin Franklin once said: "If your riches are yours, why don't you take them with you to the other world?"



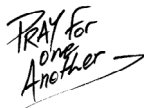
ABM REFLECTIONS ON TODAY'S READINGS

Simeon and Anna respond to God's call. They are open to seeing the Messiah and praise him. Yet the praise is countered by the sharpness of the prophecy about the rising and falling of many. In mission we are called to recognize Jesus in our midst. Salvation is not just in recognizing Jesus but in seeing the changes that this can entail and the hard decisions that have to be made. Mission is not risk free.

- Pray that we can be risk takers for the sake of the gospel.
- Give thanks for the many Papua New Guineans who have answered the call to leadership.

Our Parish Prayer

Father God, equip our Good Shepherd family with the resources we need. Empower us all by your Holy Spirit. Strengthen, protect and guide us – especially in our times of need. Remove the obstacles that would block our endeavours to do your will. Make us one, within the fold of your church. We ask in the name of Jesus our Lord. Amen.



Pastoral Focus Prayer.

God our Father,
Grant us the skills to serve your church;
The ears to hear the calls for help;
The lips to speak your words of truth;
The eyes to see the needs to fill;
The feet to go to those in want;
The mind to meet the doubts we find;
The heart of love to share your peace;
The hands to work without reward;
We ask this only to do your will,
Through Jesus, our Saviour, Redeemer and Friend. Amen.



Prayer of Evangelism.

Heavenly Father, Set our hearts on fire to go into the world in your name. Grant us wisdom, and the confidence to speak your word. Give us the strength and the will to continue through all circumstances. Help us take the Good News to all who will listen, so they may know Jesus as their Lord and master. May we glorify your name in all we say and do. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.



In your prayers, please remember:-

Our Parish Family prayer list this week (from our parish directory – to show we care)

Joyce Albrecht; Barney & Charlotte Bryan; Gloria Finger; Darrell & Ann Hoffmann; Claire Lamb; Bill, Jan & Erin Lawrence; Geoff and Olly Powell; Audrey Stephenson; Wanda Taplin.

Absent Friends: Parish Family not with us today.

For those in need:

Prayers for Healing: "Come to me all who labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest"

Olly, Julia; Jodie; Sophie; Bridget; Ernie; Toni; Glenice; Alison; Barney; Ruth; Ros; Judy; Richard; Sherryll; ... (and those known only to the Lord).

Thanksgiving for prayer's answered: Kym—for the birth of her little boy Cade Austin

Special Needs:

Kim, Nicky, Fiona, Bruce & Ros; Jonathon, Courtney & Jayden; Tammy; Kym; Bonny & children; Joyce; Richard; David; (& those known only to the Lord)

Our School Chaplains: Fr. Andrew, Annette, Teresa, Steven, Paula, Kelli, Adrian, Brenda, Grant, Noel, Craig, Marion, Lisa, Ian, Ruth & District Co-ordinator Judi Wenn

Our Link Missionaries with CMS – Shirley Gent in Pakistan and the Hayes Family – Bruce, Libby and their children Daniel, Julia, Stephanie & Ruth in Nepal **and BCA Missionaries** - the Keith Family—Rev'd Mike, Chantalle and baby Rachell in Lightning Ridge.

Years Mind – we remember- (i.e. the anniversary of the death of a loved one):-

William Rieck; Digger Thiele;

Thanksgiving for the Life of: Wendy Fisher

This week in the Parish:



Monday	10.00am	Pastoral Focus Visitor Mater Hospital
Tuesday	9.00am	Sewing Circle in the hall—Contact Marg Tuffield 41556616
Wednesday	9.00am 9.45am	Mid-week Service Bible Study in the hall
Thursday	7.00am	Pastoral Focus Home Visits & Bedside Communion Mater Hospital
Friday	7.00am 8.00am 9.30am	Prayer Group meet in the church Bedside Communion Riverlea & Gracehaven Planning Meeting for World Day of Prayer
Saturday	7.00am	Church Service followed by Men's Breaky in the hall—Contact Bill Lawrence 41543173
Sunday	7.00am 9.30am	Holy Communion Service Family Communion Service & Sunday School & Baptism Saraya Grace Wilson

Men



Our Men's Breaky recommences next Saturday 7th February with a Communion Service at 7am in the church followed by Breaky in the hall.

Men—come along & enjoy fellowship with other men in the parish. It's great fun!!!

Laughter is the shock absorber that eases the blows of life.

One Sunday morning, a mother went in to wake her son and tell him it was time to get ready for church, to which he replied, "I'm not going." "Why not?" she asked. "I'll give you two good reasons," he said. "One, they don't like me, and two, I don't like them." His mother replied, "I'll give you two good reasons why you should go to church. One, you're 54 years old, and two,

**WHAT YOU ARE IS GOD'S GIFT TO YOU
WHAT YOU MAKE OF YOURSELF IS YOUR GIFT TO GOD!**



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