



Newsletter

August 2015

It takes strong winds to move a large sailing ship, but the captain uses only a small rudder to make it go in any direction.

Our tongues are small too, and yet they brag about big things.

James 3:4,5a ^{CEV}

www.tasmaniaphotos.com
Photographer: Dan Fellow

Our vision: **“Growing a community of faith committed to Christ and making him known”**

Linking ministering communities in East Launceston, George Town, Hillwood, Low Head, Pipers River, Riverside & Trevallyn



Yeast and Mustard

I can promise you this.

If you had faith no larger than a mustard

seed, you could tell this mountain to move from here to there.

And it would.

Everything would be possible for you.

Matthew
17:20 ^{CEV}

It can be difficult to see the impact that our actions have. I don't know about you, but I often find that I am very busy and active, but that it's hard to measure what sort of 'success' I'm having. I'm sure I'm not alone in looking around churches and ministries, and thinking, "We work hard, we plan and organise and promote, and yet people aren't coming!" It is easy to get discouraged.

I wonder if Jesus' disciples didn't feel the same way sometimes. They moved around a lot, they were opposed by the religious authorities and sometimes even by their own friends and family. When crowds gathered, Jesus never stayed to consolidate his gains, but would move on to a new town or region. Sometimes the crowds would dissipate before Jesus moved on, because they found his teaching too difficult to accept. Do you recall that scene, after Jesus has been

talking about the miracle of the feeding of the 5000, many of his disciples say, "This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?" (John 6:60). The fourth gospel records the effect this had on Jesus very starkly and simply:

From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him.

"You do not want to leave too, do you?" Jesus asked the Twelve. (John 6:66-67)

And yet, 300 years after these events were recorded, the message of Jesus had spread so far that the whole Roman Empire was talking of it. The people of Jesus had grown so great, that historians estimate that more than half of the Empire were followers of Jesus!

Jesus told two related parables that seem to explain this astounding phenomenon. These two parables give me comfort in my own ministry efforts today.

“The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches.”

He told them still another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into about sixty pounds of flour until it worked all through the dough.”

Matthew 13:31-33

This is the complete opposite of what would have been expected in Jesus’ day about the coming of the Kingdom. They would have expected an unmistakable display of power. Perhaps an uprising, or miracles, or a mighty victory. Strangely enough, the power, the miracles and the victories that did occur were not recognised by the people of the day. Jesus and his followers were despised and rejected. And as we’ve seen in John, they became despondent at times.

Even today, this ‘softly, softly’ approach is contrary to the way we do things in our culture. New products are introduced to the market with great fanfare, advertising campaigns and carefully thought out promotions. New movements are the subject of media scrutiny and debate, and are pushed aggressively through social media and targeted advertising. When something new is coming, you can be sure that lots of times, effort and money goes into making sure everyone knows about it.

Often in the church we adopt a marketing strategy, rather than a growth strategy. Churches launch new campuses, they market their small groups, or sermon series, or social services, or worship services, with all the zeal of Coca-Cola or MacDonald’s. Even smaller churches like ours are pulled in this cultural wake, and try to emulate this mode of mission.

Jesus said:

What is God’s kingdom like?

What story can I use to explain it?

It is like what happens when a mustard seed is planted in the ground.

It is the smallest seed in all the world. But once it is planted, it grows larger than any garden plant. It even puts out branches that are big enough for birds to nest in its shade.

Mark
4:30-32 CEV

*continued
from
previous
page*

Why did
Frosty the
snowman
want a
divorce?

Because he
thought his
wife was a
flake

Getting a job
in the Antarctic
in the winter
is great!

Why?

When the
days get short,
you only have
to work a 30
minute work
week.

The Kingdom way runs counter to this. It starts out invisibly – so small that it cannot be seen or detected. Yet by a miracle of the creator God, the coming of the Kingdom and the effect of the Kingdom is unmistakable.

This is a comfort, because I am reminded that my job is not to bring growth, or promote a product – it is to be faithful in telling the good news wherever opportunities present themselves. It is to be faithful in equipping and preparing other Christians to do the same thing. Our job is to be faithful sowers of mustard seeds. Our job is to be faithful ‘kneaders’ of dough – distributing the truth and love of the kingdom as thoroughly through our world as we can. The growth is up to God (1 Cor 3:6).

It is also a challenge, because it means that we must recognise that we do not control results. Our programs and activities may seem small and frail. We may be tempted to give up, or to despair. We may allow discouragement about results to infect our faith in

the message. We may allow our motivating love to sour into grudging obedience.

To my mind, we need to do two things to guard against bitterness and to maintain the joy of working together with God on his kingdom:

1. Pray! If God is in control of results, then we need to be asking him for results. In doing so, we need to be aware of his agenda – it is not record attendances or phenomenal giving, rather it is transformation in the lives of men, women and children. Much of this transformation may not be visible to us, at least not in the short term.

2. Remember that we are not God. If the work of building God’s Kingdom in a partnership, we need to be aware of what part is our responsibility, and what part is God’s. We might need to adjust our measures of success, so that we can recognise that we are successful when we are faithful to God’s calling. Growth (or otherwise) in our churches and ministries is entirely a matter for God.

James Oakley

Tactics

Mark McCrindle's research shows that Australians are far more open to the gospel than the media makes out. About 64% of all Australians describe themselves as 'Christian' rather than any other religion or of no faith. Of these, about 60% describe themselves as 'spiritual' rather than being committed to organised religion.

That works out that over 38% of all the people we meet are likely to have an interest in spirituality from a broadly Christian basis. We need to be better equipped to step into this massive opportunity.

Yet we still rarely receive training for the pointy end – how to verbally share faith when a moment of opportunity arises. Given that we now live in a culture filled with anti-Christian rhetoric, we desperately need to sharpen our verbal skills.

Now here is the good news: you can purchase just about all you will ever need for about twenty dollars. Duck down to Koorong and order a copy of Greg Koukl's book,

Tactics: A Game Plan for Discussing Your Christian Convictions (Zondervan).

This book will help you to think clearly, and come across as inoffensive as is possible. (The gospel will always offend at some level!) You will learn of various strategies that will make you more effective in a variety of situations.

You have heard the phrase, "throw down the gauntlet". A gauntlet was an armoured glove worn by medieval knights. When a knight threw his gauntlet into the arena he was challenging another knight to pick it up and prepare to fight.

So often unbelievers throw in an argument that challenges us to prove what we believe. Koukl reckons believers should not try to defend the faith per se.

Rather we should ask our friend to explain why he feels his position is compelling. Koukl says, "All I want to do is to put a stone in someone's shoe."

When are your eyes not eyes?

When the cold Antarctic wind makes them water!

What's an ig?
A snow house without a loo

What do you call fifty penguins in the Arctic?

Lost! RE-ALLY lost



Riverlinks

July 2015	
1st Sat	Women's Breakfast – 8:00am at St John's L'ton
2nd Sun	Preaching Workshop – 2:00pm in the Parish office Messy Church – 4:30pm at St Aidan's
3rd Mon	<i>(each Monday)</i> Child's Play at St O's
4th Tue	<i>(each Tuesday)</i> Prayer Group – 1:00pm at St MM G/Town Home & Study Groups – 1:45pm at Igglesden's home – 7:30pm at Booth's home – 7:30pm at in the Parish office – 7:30pm Stanford's group at St Aidan's
5th Wed	<i>(each Wednesday)</i> Healing Service – 10:00am at St Oswald's Men's Shed – 1:00pm to 4:00pm in Riverside Home & Study Groups – 7:30pm at Stott's home – 7:30pm St Oswald's
6th Thur	<i>(each Thursday)</i> mainly music – 10:00am at St Aidan's
7th Fri	<i>(each Friday)</i> KYB Study Group – 10:00am at Baptist Church George Town Fellowship Night – 6:30pm at George Town Re:Fuel – 6:00pm at St O's Trevallyn
8th Sat	
9th Sun	

July 2015	
10th Mon	Cadorna – 2:00pm
11th Tue	
12th Wed	<i>(each Friday)</i> Re:Fuel – 6:00pm at St John's Launceston
13th Thur	Crafty Circle – 10:00am at St David's Parish Council meeting – 7:30pm
14th Fri	
15th Sat	St Oswald's Fellowship Group – 2:00pm Ainslie Service – 2:15pm
16th Sun	
17th Mon	
18th Tue	
19th Wed	
20th Thur	PresCare Legana – 10:45am Chaplaincy Luncheon – 12:00pm at St MM's George Town
21st Fri	Fellowship Night – 6:30pm at George Town

The **deadline** for the September Newsletter edition is **24th August**

Calendar

August 2015	
22 nd Sat	
23 rd Sun	CCCGT Combined Service – 2:30pm at Anglican Church
24 th Mon	
25 th Tue	
26 th Wed	
27 th Thur	Crafty Circle – 10:00am at St David's
28 th Fri	
29 th Sat	
30 th Sun	Riverlinks Together – 10:00am at St Aidan's
31 st Mon	

September and other dates 2015	
9 th September	Bishop's Regional Farewell at St John's
12 th September	Mission Shaped Taster Day at St Aidan's
12 th - 18 th October	Seniors Week in Riverlinks
14 th - 16 th October	Clergy Conference

Service Times For Worship Centres

East Launceston			
2 nd	10:00 am 4:30 pm	Morning Prayer Messy Church	
9 th	10:00 am	Communion	
16 th	10:00 am	Inclusive Service	
23 rd	10:00 am	Communion	
30 th	10:00 am	Riverlinks Together	
George Town			
2 nd	9:00 am 9:00 am 10:30 am	Hillwood Pipers River George Town	Communion Morning Prayer Communion
9 th	9:00 am 10:30 am	Low Head George Town	Communion Together @ 10.30
16 th	9:00 am 10:30 am	Pipers River Baptist Church	Communion ABU Comb Service
23 rd	9:00 am 10:30 am 2:30 pm	Low Head George Town George Town	Communion Communion Comb Churches
30 th	-	No services	
Riverside & Trevallyn			
2 nd	10:00 am 10:30 am	Riverside Trevallyn	Communion 10.30 @ St O's
9 th	10:00 am 11:00 am	Riverside Trevallyn	Praise & Worship Contact Josh 0438 681404
16 th	10:00 am 11:00 am	Riverside Trevallyn	Communion Contact Josh 0438 681404
23 rd	10:00 am 10:30 am	Riverside Trevallyn	Communion 10.30 @ St O's
30 th	-	No services	
Each Wed	10:00am	Trevallyn	Healing Service
Peace Haven			
9 th	10:30 am	Holy Communion	
16 th	10:30 am	Morning Prayer	
23 rd	10:30 am	Holy Communion	



Please send articles, comments, information & photos to the Parish Office

399 West Tamar Hwy, Riverside - 6327 4742 office@riverlinks.net.au

Chaplaincy Lunch

(final one for 2015)

Thursday August 20th, 12 noon

St Mary Magdalene's Church
George Town

\$10 per head

Funds raised for School Chaplaincy
in George Town

*Help with catering and on the day
would be appreciated*

Contact Trish 0400 675362

A playgroup for
parents & caregivers
of children
birth - 5 years

CHILD'S PLAY



Mondays 9.30-11am

@ St Oswald's Church Hall
Bain Terrace, Trevallyn



\$2 per family per week



Further information contact
Naomi - 0417681022

Seniors Week in Riverlinks

14 October: Healing service, lunch and
Minds Matter Q&A with Dr George Razay

15 October: Card Making demonstration

16 October: Information on Dementia -
don't forget to come! (lunch included)
plus Pneumococcal vaccine info session

Gold coin donation to each day's activity

Book for 16 October through the Parish
office 63274742 or office@riverlinks.net.au

mission-shaped ministry taster

@ St Aidan's
21 Arthur Street
East Launceston



12th September

9:30 for 10am - 4pm

- worship
- presentations
- interaction
- lunch
- good coffee (& teal)



Meet the Northern Ministry
Cluster Team



Get a feel for what's possible



Set some priorities for your Parish



Bring a team to meet the team

Are you a knitter with time & spare
wool on your hands?

The Bell Bay Seafarer's Mission are always
in need of knitted beanies for visiting
seafarers. All colours, patterns & designs in
adult sizes will be gratefully received.



Beanies can be left with Anne at the Parish office

Please help!



"Tactics" continued from page 4...

He does so by utilising "friendly curiosity". People are not prepared for faith by being attacked. Rather than confrontation, get them thinking about their own statements. Gently, lovingly assist them to confront themselves.

Tactics can help the believer off the back foot and thus get your non-Christian friends thinking more deeply about Jesus. It looks at the patterns in which faith dialogues tend to go, shows how to think clearly when being pressured by an aggressive response, helps us address the different kinds of objections to faith and teaches an engaging, disarming style of encounter.

Are you well equipped to take the next opportunity to guide a friend a few steps closer to Jesus?

Jeff McKinnon

From July 2015 edition of "Catalyst - Towards A Missional Movement"



Bishop John's Regional farewell

will be held at St John's Launceston

Join in giving thanks to God for the ministry in Tasmania of Bishop John and Mrs Gayelene Harrower

Wednesday

9th Sept.

7:00pm

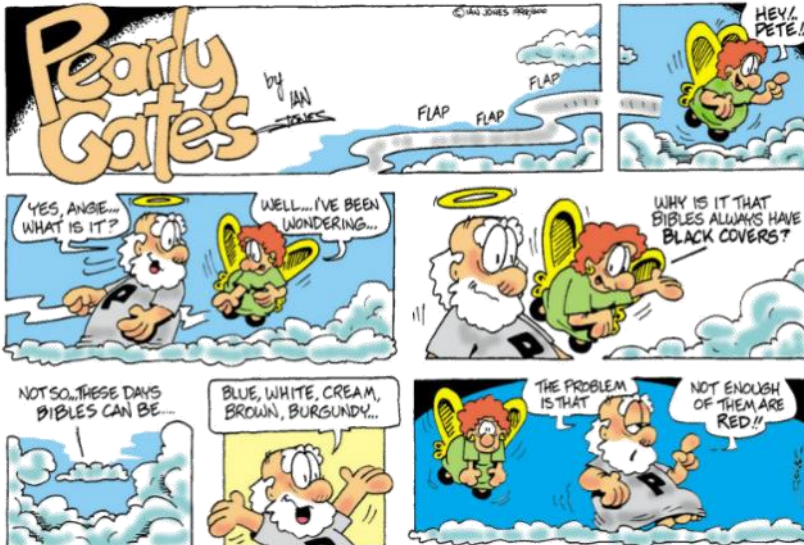
Service of Holy Communion followed by refreshments

RSVP to

Mrs Carolyn

McGinn

6220 2015



Prayer For Our Churches

Say That Again?

A plateau is the highest form of flattery

Have I told you this deja vu joke before?

Exaggerations went up by a million percent last year

Paul Cavanaugh shared the following prayer points at our Wednesday staff devotions:

These are my eight prayer requests for churches in 2015:

For greater emphasis on prayer. Many, if not most, churches have a woeful emphasis on corporate prayer. Churches who do not give prayer a high priority are churches without God's power.

For standing firm on biblical truth. Culture is trying to push our congregations away from the truths of Scripture. We cannot yield to that pressure. If we do, our congregations cease to be true, biblical churches.

For greater unity in our churches. There is too much infighting in many of our congregations. And there is too much disunity from church to church. The world is watching our fights. "Now this is His command: that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love

one another as He commanded us" (1 John 3:23).

For greater intentionality in evangelism. The typical church in Tasmania is doing very little to share the gospel of Christ boldly and intentionally. May we be so grateful for what Christ has done for us that "we are unable to stop speaking about what we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20).

For greater emphasis on groups. Churches should grow larger by growing smaller. A church member not in a small group is not fully committed to the body.

For membership to be more meaningful. For many churches, membership has become nearly meaningless. For others, membership is a perceived entitlement, much like club membership. I pray that membership in our congregations will become truly biblical as the Apostle Paul demonstrated in 1 Corinthians 12.

For clear plans of discipleship. Too many congregations cannot clearly articulate how members can become more obedient followers of Christ.

For more ministry involvement and impact in our communities. I pray that our churches will become known by the positive impact they have in their respective communities. As we obey Acts 1:8, we must first be obedient to our own Jerusalem.

These are my eight prayers for our churches.

- What do you think of them?
- What are your prayers for your congregations?

(Paul acknowledges his reading in this area from 'Lifeway Christian Resources', 'The Christian Leadership Journal', and many other who have written on the topic of prayer and work life.)

From Bishop John's blog 25/07/15
www.imaginarydiocese.org



Today is the Anniversary of my Ordination as Bishop of Tasmania on St James' Day, 25 July 2000.

As I reflect on that humbling, joyful, overwhelming occasion I am reminded of the St James The Apostle Day prayer (APBA page 616) and the prayer's ongoing seeking of God's strength for 'self-denying service'. May the Holy Spirit empower this spirit of Christ within and through me. Amen.

O gracious God,
whose apostle James left his father and all that he had, and without delay obeyed the call of your Son Jesus Christ:

pour out upon the leaders of your Church the same spirit of self-denying service by which alone they may have true authority among your people;
through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

Shalom,

Nostalgia isn't what it used to be...

Atheism is a non-prophet organization

Time flies like an arrow,
fruit flies like a banana

It's hard to explain puns to kleptomaniacs because they always take things literally

+John ☺

East Launceston

21-23 Arthur St
East Launceston
0438 378 233

George Town

3 Anne St
George Town
0439 821 038

Hillwood

Hall - Jetty Rd
Hillwood

Low Head

Low Head Rd
Low Head

Peacehaven

185 Penquite Rd
Norwood

Pipers River

School Rd
Pipers River

Riverside

399 West Tamar Hwy
Riverside

Trevallyn

34 Bain Tce
Trevallyn
0409 799 419

Parish office

399 West Tamar Hwy
Riverside
6327 4742
office@riverlinks.net.au

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**Newsletter deadline for
photos, articles, etc. is 20th
of each month unless
otherwise stated**



Contact us:
Parish Office (Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm)
6327 4742 office@riverlinks.net.au
Children & Young Families Ministry
6327 3482 kids_families@riverlinks.net.au
Website
www.riverlinks.net.au