

I was heartened by the presence of so many Hawksburn parishioners in attendance last Sunday evening at Christ Church, South Yarra, for the official signing of the Covenant between our two parishes. It seemed to me to be an occasion which had good energy, and the fellowship afterwards seemed to demonstrate a good spirit in evidence between our two communities. I would also like to thank those who provided beautiful food for the occasion – the cooperation even in providing the supper was a good demonstration of the way in which our two communities can do good things together!

As I have mentioned many times along the way to this point, the Covenant that was signed last Sunday night has two main aspects to it. Firstly, it formalises (or normalises) many of the things that we *already* do together; things like Hawksburn's regular invitation to and involvement in Choral Evensong at CCSY; the shared arrangement of the Joint Mission Dinner, which is our alternate responsibility to host; involvement in the Ecumenical calendar of the suburb; and our shared occasions of retreat and Quiet Days. Secondly, the covenant is aspirational – proclaiming what it is we believe we could do *better together* in the future.

One of the most tangible ways in which the aspirational nature of the covenant can be seen is in the plan for a sharing of administrative and operational responsibilities. The Executive has decided not to replace the Office Manager position at this stage (Ruth having finished at Easter in preparation for the birth of their first child, due in May), and we are working with CCSY to increase the amount of administrative support provided by their full-time Office Manager, Mr. Lance Coughlin. Lance has been providing basic assistance to us up until this point, including the weekly printing of our pewsheets and worship booklets. In the future, it is envisaged that he will answer phone calls made to our number when there is no one in the office, and that he will deal with initial email enquiries about Crypt hire, joining the Playgroup, and people contacting us about pastoral services.

At this stage, it is a work in progress. There are some practical and technical issues which need to be ironed out, but I believe that this will provide us with an efficient system of administrative support in the future. I would welcome a further discussion with anyone about this, including any of the more “nuts-and-bolts” questions you may have.

Please keep the Ven. Brad Billings in your prayers this coming week, as he prepares for his Consecration as Bishop next Saturday.

May Catherine of Siena, Mark, and all the Saints walk with you this joyful Eastertide... *Sam*