



**ST. GEORGE'S CHAPEL STREET**

**EAST ST.KILDA**

**GOD'S GIFT FOR PILGRIM PEOPLE**

***And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send and who will go for us?' Then I said, 'Here I am send me'. Isaiah 6: 8***

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**ST. GEORGE'S BURNLEY STREET**

**RICHMOND**

**GOD'S GIFT FOR PILGRIM PEOPLE**

***Jesus said to them, 'Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men' Matthew 3 :19***

**ST. GEORGE'S MULTI - CROSS CULTURAL**

**MISSION AND MINISTRY**

**St. George's brief history**

It gives me great pleasure to publish this brief booklet in 2014 about St. George's Mission and Ministry after

Rev John Bottomley's resignation from St George's Ministry.

In 1866 the British Government granted land to the Church of

England, the Presbyterian and Catholic and free the

Presbyterian churches at Chapel street East St. Kilda.

One acre land for St. George's church was reserved by the Government. This was gifted to St. George's Presbyterian church, even though Aboriginal people had inhabited the land for over 40,000 years.

Ten years later on 10 July 1876 a public meeting was held at the Army Depot orderly Room to form a Presbyterian congregation. Sunday services commenced in the orderly room on 13 August 1876. This meeting formed a relationship between St. George's church and the Army, which is still maintained to this day.

The foundation of the church was laid on 21 April 1877 and

the opening service was conducted on 1 October 1877.

This Presbyterian church had a large congregation.

St. George's church was built on the wealth of St. Kilda's Presbyterian congregation.

The church's design was English with ornamental Gothic design cresting on the roof.

The church organ was built to the design and specifications of the leading British organ builder T.C Lewis.

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The Church's Centenary year marked the transition for

St. George's from a Presbyterian Church to a congregation of

the Uniting Church in Australia.

The membership at St. George's reached its peak of 352 in fifty years in 1920. Later was over 300 for the next 15 years. There after there was a steady decline. It fell to 129 in 1978 it was 61.

The following years year it dropped to a mere 23 in 2002.

There are many reasons for the decline of members

The St. George's hundred years celebrated on October 1977

marked the transition for St. George's from Presbyterian church

to a congregation of the Uniting Church in Australia.

During the years 1879 to 2014, fourteen minister served at

St. George's including St. George's present first woman and

non Anglo Minister Rev Angela Rammani Tampiyappa.

The following Ministers served at St. George's;

Rev John Laurence Rentoul, Rev John Gorden Mackie,

Rev Alexander Skene, Rev Graham Hently Balfour,

Rev Andrew Gillison, Rev Thomas Glass,

Rev Andrew Rule Osbon, Rev William Allen Stevely,

Rev Samuel Lyons Mckenzie, Rev H Douglas Fearon,

 Rev James Villiers Mills, Rev Graeme Warne,

Rev John Bottomley, Rev Angela Rammani Tampiyappa

St. George's church published a book ,'Sorrow of Gifts','

'God's grace for pilgrim people' when it celebrated St. George's

125th Anniversary in 2002.

We are truly thankful to God and our founder members and Ministers who served at St. Georges in the past 137 years.

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Rev Angela Tampiyappa was called to serve as minister at

St. George's as a visiting Minister and later as a part time placement minister [.5] to serve at St. George's.

Only eight to twelve regular worshipers were attending the

Sunday Morning service at that time.

And the church profile mentioned about the Andrew Gillision's Memorial service and International nurse's Sunday service

held annually**.**

St. George's has a long history and traditional of Anglo worshiped community for many years. Throughout this period St. George's community have worked and worshiped closely with the War Veterans and Army personal next door, especially with their band

 at St. George's Annual Memorial services.

Thanks to Stuart Brian and Barry Pearce for their support in the past

at the Annual Memorial services

The International Nurses Sunday worship was introduced by

Rev John Bottomley as a result of his own experience while he was

at hospital for his heart surgery.

When he returned to minister at St. George's he organised annual thanksgiving service for nurses at St. George's church.

**St. George's Mission and Ministry**

We maintained a very good relationship with St. Michael's Grammar school. They were our tenants for nearly forty years,

and they used the church for their music school during the week days including Saturdays.

The congregation found it hard to have any other activities in the church building other than on Sundays, but whenever we needed the space for special meetings we negotiated with the school and used the church building.

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Minister Angela felt the importance and need of St. George's outreach ministry.

The Church profile mentioned that the Creative Ministry Network was St. George's Outreach ministry.

Later Angela was told it was not St. George's Outreach ministry but an agency of the Uniting Care of UCA

We were praying earnestly for God's guidance for us to move in a new direction. In 2006 the Nepean Presbytery was concerned about our congregation's decline in numbers.

We knew about the challenges before us and it would be a rough path for us to undertake new ventures.

This booklet portrays how the Church Council, Congregation and Minister have worked together in the Ministry and Mission at St. George's, also indicates the imaginative mission that has been developed in the past few years, and the future direction of

St. George's mission.

In August 2006 Angela Tampiyappa received a letter from the retired Major Robin Smith the Secretary of the Royal Australian Artillery Association requesting us to organise a worship service at St. George's for the young Army Soldiers and their families.

The connection between St. George's UCA and Royal Australian Artillery at the Army Depot has rooted in a shared history.

**The Royal Australian Artillery Parade service** was held on February 2007 with the Army band.

Rev Don Ekitoelagi former Director of Multi - Cross Cultural Mission and Ministry of the UCA Synod of Vic-Tas delivered the message at the Worship service.

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**Turning point to St. George's Outreach Ministry**

**Multi cultural and Cross cultural Ministry** was officially acknowledged in the Uniting Church in 1985 when the Fourth Assembly adopted a statement beginning ,The Uniting Church is a Multicultural Church. This statement reads; ' The Uniting Church seeks to be open to change that the Holy Spirit will bring to the

church because of the creative contribution of people of different racial and cultural groups to its life'.

Minister Angela approached the Director of the Cross Cultural Mission and ministry of the Synod and informed him about her

passion towards the development of the Multi- Cross Cultural Ministry at St. George's.

Rev Don Ekitoeagi attended St. George's Sunday worship services

for a couple of times and met with the Church Council

and discussed about this new venture .

It was not easy for an Anglo mono cultural traditional worship community to accept the changes.

We faced many challenges ahead of us.

As one of the smallest congregations in the Presbytery,

St. George's future mission direction and Outreach programs give testimony to how God can grow **His peaceable kingdom from**

**a mustard seed.**

**Mission and Outreach Ministry**

At a time many in the wider church seem preoccupied with survival,

St. George's lived through the past years with small numbers of worshippers while engaging with and supporting faithful and imaginative and outreach initiatives that are the essence of

Christian discipleship.

At the beginning there was no much response for the change.

But after much prayer and discussions the Church Council

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agreed to form the Multi - Cross Cultural congregation.

It was understood that whatever communities that would be involved in this initiative will be encouraged to be an

integrated part of the Congregation and therefore operate within

the Church Council of St. George's Congregation in

East St. Kilda

The former Centre for Creative Ministry, now Creative Ministry Network is a Uniting Care Agency was evolved at St. George's

during the time of John Bottomley's ministry and continued as partners with St. George's. St. George's financially supported

the Creative Ministry Network for many years. Beneficial use of the St. George's property at Hotham street East St. Kilda was transferred to the he Creative Ministry Network and

St. George's continued to collaborate in helping organise the Annual Memorial services.

In 2006 Rev Angela had a conversation with John Bottomley

and shared her past ministry in a war torn country of Srilanka and served seven years as UCA Vic-Tas prison and hospital

chaplain in Melbourne. During their conversation, John felt that

St. George's Annual Memorial service of remembrance to

'heal the wounds of war' on the anniversary of Andrew Gillison's death called forth Angela's own need to pray for peace in Srilanka and around the world. St. George's is unique in undertaking this ministry for peace in Srilanka.

The congregations commitment to peace began over 90 years ago, when St. George's Minister Andrew Gillison was courageously killed at Gallipoli in the act of rescuing a wounded soldier. Angela too served in a war country for many years.

Srilanka is a country where Christians have learned to live more openly with other religious traditions and where Eastern culture and tradition meets the West

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**Festival of Lights Service**

**'The first Festival of Lights' service** held in November 2007

at St. George's East St. Kilda UCA, reflected this Srilankan

[and hopefully Christian] openness by inviting speakers from Buddhist and Hindu and Islam religious backgrounds to share

their perspectives on peace with a Christian speaker.

**St. George's published a small book called** **'Simple and Quiet sisters; Peace and love require no weapons**'.

At the 'Festival of lights' in 2008 at St. George's the Chief guest

was the Governor of Victoria Professor David de Kretser.

Guest speaker was Bishop of Jaffna Diocese of Church of

South India Rt Rev Dr Daniel Thiagarajah.

The program for the Bishops's visit has attracted support from

the Moderator, Assembly of the UCA and Synod international

 mission staff, the Victorian Council of Churches, and the Latrobe University Srilankan Peace Dialogue Consultation groups.

John Bottomley and Pastor Anto Samuel visited the war torn

Srilanka in 2009. John wrote an article about his visit to Srilanka

We celebrated this festival for five years and formed a Srilankan partnership program with the Jaffna Dioces of Church of South India.

Nithi Kanagaratnam went to Srilanka, as a missionary . Dr Mrs Thaya Thiyagarajah was the Chief guest at St.George's

last Festival Lights service in 2011 and Victor Karunairajah

was the Guest speaker. Angela visited Srilanka several times.

**Nieuan language worship community**

In 2007 Rev Ikitoelagi Don suggested the need of the Nieuen

language community to gather for worship service on Sunday with

the opportunity available at St. George's.

Don begun with a small group of Niuean Christians in 2008

to worship at 4.00pm once every two weeks as a gathering of people

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seeking to connect with their faith in God through their cultural and spiritual framework.

Minister Angela Tampiyappa always participated at the worships and lead the services with a prayer by making personal sacrifices. She finishes her morning service on Sunday and stayed until 4.00pm when the Niuean language service commenced.

A couple of the younger leaders from the Niuean Language community attend the morning services in support of the traditional service of St. George's because they also are the ones

with competencies in the English language to provide a connection with the Minister and members of the Council

should there be conversation that need to occur between the

Council and the Niuean community.

Today some of them attend the morning worship services and

special combined services like fifth Sunday worship service,

Christmas, Carol service and Children's gift Sunday, Easter and

Good Friday, Annual Memorial service, Annual Artillery Parade services, and some serve as Church Council member and

St. George's Church Council employed Rev Molesi Tamate

as a Niuean worship leader.

**International Students Community**

Proposal for an International student community at St. George's East St. Kilda was suggested by a couple from Indonesia Bernas Hasibuan and his wife Caroline Hasibuan.

The couple have had numerous connections with international mission organisation.

If we can backtrack for a moment to say, how the initial conversation was with the Rev Jonathan Pattiasim,

Rev Angela Tampiyappa and Rev Don Ikitoelagi.

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The idea was to look at ways in which of the fine leaders of the Indonesian community can possibly kick start a ministry for

student, artist and migrant in the area.

The vision of this outreach ministry is to bring people into

 relationship with Christ Jesus.

**This youth group was named as 991 contemporary Worship group. 991 is about the parable of the lost sheep. The shepherd leaves the 99 and go in search of the 1 [one] lost sheep**

Bernas as a music leader and lay preacher and a pastoral carer for the members of his local church. St. George's Council agreed to accept

him as a Outreach Coordinator with the approval of the

Presbytery and he was commissioned by the Port Phillip East Presbytery as a Pastor.

Another couple Samuel Pajow and his wife Indra were also involved in the ministry. We were really blessed with their inspiring ministry

 at St. George's, more young people started to attending the Contemporary worship services on Sunday at 1.00pm. Bible study,

singing practice, prayer cells were conducted in homes.

A student music club was inaugurated in the campus, seeker service was the biggest event, where hundreds of young people attended.

One of the members of the contemporary worship has been elected as the Convenor of the Second Gen movement under the Cross cultural

Mission and Ministry Unit of UCA Vic- Tas.

The year 2010 proved to be an eventful, and largely, positive year in the 134 year life of St. George's.

The development of ministries through the 991contemporary worship group and the Niuean community continued positively.

Despite several difficulties that it faced St. George's is in a positive position to move forward in spreading God's message throughout East St. Kilda and beyond.

Minister Angela Tampiyappa maintain her enthusiasm and

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commitment towards building the church, and has St. George's thanks and appreciates her efforts.

Despite being employed in a part-time capacity, Angela maintains a serious work load to further St. George's mission and ministry. Her commitment in uncertain times has been unshakable. Mission and Outreach Ministry programs,

Angela was well supported by the Church Council and contemporary and Niuean Worship leaders.

Unfortunately the sudden death of Bernas at the age of fifty in 2011 shocked the whole congregation.

Samuel Pajow continued the Outreach ministry and he was commissioned as a Pastor in 2012. Because of Samuel's sudden departure from the country in 2013, the Church Council requested Junus Rohy temporarily continue with the Outreach ministry, he is a Church council member, a talented musician and helped Bernas and Samuel with his talents of music.

He was not commissioned by the presbytery.

Minister informed the Presbytery about the temporary

arrangement of Junus Rohy's involvement among the youths.

Our thanks to Charlie Navallo's greatest support towards

St. George's ministry among the young people since Samuel

 left the country.

St. George's organist William Kurowski played the historic Lewis at the morning worship on Sunday and we appreciate his services. Slowly and steadily St. George's started to grow numerically and spiritually.

**Wider Church Outreach Ministry**

St George's also focussed on its Wider Outreach Ministry by Angela conducting services like her participation: At the Windsor Armitage Nursing Home Ecumenical services.

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Local Port Phillip Council Multicultural and Multi faith net work

at St. Kilda.

Latrobe University on Srilankan Peace Dialogue Consultation .

And in the recent involvement with the Tamil refugees and supporting them in their difficult journey in life in Australia ,

We believe that the size of the congregation does not measure the faithfulness of our mission and outreach programs,

nor does it explain the rich diversity and imagination of our future mission and outreach programs.

We believe these are gifts of God for the building of God's Kingdom here on earth.

The Cross Cultural Mission and Ministry at St. George's sailed well.

As in the past years, the issue of the church property consumed

 a lot of time and energy, especially as it related to the rental arrangements with St. Michael's Grammar school.

Marg Neith who was St. George's property manger helped

and involved St. George's property issues in many ways

and our thanks to her. Finally a decision made by the Synod to sell some of the properties

in order to fund Synod's accumulated debt as a result they sold

St. George's property to St. Michael's Grammar school in 2014.

On the day when the UCA Synod of Vic-Tas announced that they would sell the St. George's property along with few other properties, the congregation felt that St. George's was one of the sacrificial

scaped goat to pay off the big debt of the UCA Synod of Vic-Tas

in 2014 February.

It was like a death sentence or we would say it was like Crucifixion. We felt it a great threat to St George's Mission and Ministry

and the loss of income which we received from the tenants.

The congregation still feel the pain and sadness.

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**The Bible is full of pilgrim people's faith stories** and struggles,

pain grief, joy, happiness, peace, jealousy, hatred, and victories

and many more.

**Some of those stories are St. George' stories too**.

The last couple of years we were **struggling** with the sale of

St. George's property and it was a shocking news to the congregation and people concerned.

Like St. Paul we were **puzzled** at the cross road of our journey.

Paul was a Jew and belonged to a wider Jewish community,

highly educated man with a sound knowledge of Judaism, lawyer

and a young energetic Pharisee.

He thought all what he was doing in the name of God and according to the Jewish law and regulation and his community's decision was right for his **human understanding**, but he failed to **understand the divine nature** of God, there was no God's love and wisdom in his behaviour of what he did in the name of his Jewish faith community.

While he was on his journey to persecute the little people called as Christian, he was struck by a light and he was blind.

**He** **heard the voice** **of Jesus**, and he felt how wrong his decision was and his whole thinking about his behaviour according to his Jewish law and regulation. His Jewish communities decision of persecuting and killing and scattering the Christians to fulfil their own desire, commitments and pay off their debts was wrong in the sight of God.

The decision was made by the UCA Synod of Vic-Tas to sell the property and later St. George's property was sold.

St. George's congregation suffered in great pain.

St. George's congregation is moving into a new direction to an **unknown territory.** We knew we are not alone and mostly

**God's presence** would be with us in our pilgrimage.

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There is another story about a Samaritan woman. She came to Jesus begging to heal her child, Jesus said, 'how can I give my children's food to the dogs'? Good question.

She answered 'Sir, the dogs eat the left over and the food dropped down from the table.'

Like the Good Samaritan woman, St. George's received a small

**left over** from the property sale. Let people take the lion's share

but we are **humble** enough to take the left over.

In the sight of God the faith of the Samaritan woman is 'great'

and Jesus confirmed it to his disciples.

We are called to serve God, and He is the provider.

He would provide us everything according to our needs through

his children, but sometime we try to secure our job and payment

rather than our call to serve God.

Abram, Moses were called by God to go to an unknown territory

and to **leave their comfort zone to serve God.**

Both obeyed God but it was not a smooth pilgrimage,

they met strangers and enemies and dangers and wild animals

and good people but they moved on and enter in to a land what

was promised by God. With faith and trust in God through our Saviour Jesus Christ

St. George's would move from East St. Kilda to Burnley street Richmond.

**We thank Richmond UCA Congregation and the Church council who were our Good Samaritan and we thank all who supported**

**us during the time of agony and transition caused by our own faith community**.

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We thank God and his faithful people who have committed to the life of St. George's Outreach Mission and Ministry.

***Happy the person puts their trust in the Lord.***

***And do not side with rebels who stray after false gods.***

***How many wonders you have done for us, Lord my God!***

***How many plans you have made for us; you have no equal!***

***[Psalm 40: 4 - 5]***

2013 - 2014 St. George's Members are;

Confirmed Members 37

Members in Association 12

Adherent members 18

Children 20

Following members of St. George's died in the past.

Bernas Hasibuan , Bessie Weaver, Betty Wright Gwen English, Margret Wood.

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**St. George's Church Council member in 2013**

**Minister Rev Angela Tampiyappa**

**Moira Gray**

**Rosemary Clencie [Elder]**

**Kathy Mann [Elder]**

**Peter Gray [ Secretary]**

**Jonathan Carter [Treasurer]**

**Molesi Tamate [Niuean Worship Leader]**

**Junus Rohy**

**Steve Pranaditha**

**Tena Tamate**

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**ST. George's Church Council members 2014**

**Minister Rev Angela Tampiyappa**

**Rev Molesi Tamate [ Niuean worship leader]**

**Charlie Navaloo [Secretary,Admin &Property manager]**

**Kathy Mann [Elder]**

**Kingsley Tampiyappa [Elder]**

**Jacquelin Palalagi [Treasurer]**

**Junus Rohy**

**Jean Gunston**

**Steve Pranaditha**

**Rev Angela R Tampiyappa**

**Minister St. Georges UCA**

**East St. Kilda**

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