

# Saint Mary's Newsletter: June 2019

**Vicar:** David Smithson 027 4213200 Fridays

07 8492761 Afterhours

**Peoples Warden:** Sally-Ann Riddell 07 8243850

**Vicars Warden:** John Heaton 07 8243996



## SERVICES FOR JUNE



### Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup>:

Queen's Birthday Weekend - NO SERVICE

### Sunday 9<sup>th</sup>:

10am Family Communion Service

Refreshments - Karen Boyer

### Sunday 16<sup>th</sup>:

10am Family Communion Service.

Refreshments - Muriel Riddell

### Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup>:

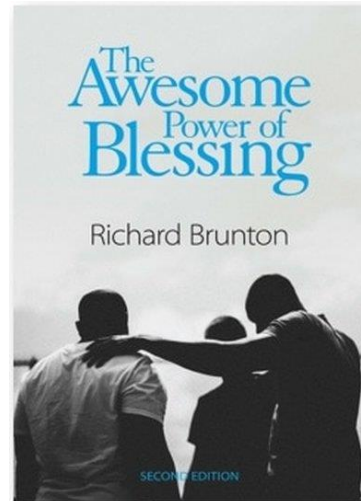
10am Family Communion Service.

Refreshments - Melanie Holdsworth

### Sunday 30<sup>th</sup>:

10am Fresh Expressions service.

Refreshments - Majella Heaton



**Salt & Light Bible Study group:** We continue through the booklet "The Awesome Power of Blessing". Will be meeting after church on Sun 9<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> June.



## Operation Safe Havens

St Mary's supports and financially assists Barnabas Fund. Here's how we have assisted through our giving as a Parish:

"It began in a bakery," recalled "Dina" from Syria. Two of her brothers were queuing to buy bread when they were killed in a drive-by shooting. The occupants of the car that had sped past, firing at the bakery, were terrorists from the Jabat al-Nusra rebel group. They drove on to the village where Dina lived with her husband and two children. Shooting and plundering as they went, the terrorists entered every home, gathered the Christians together and told them to leave and never come back, or they would be killed and their children raped.

When "Luko's" father died ten years ago, he and his mother were left without an adult male to protect and provide for them. That was hard enough in Middle Eastern society, but Luko tried his best to earn money while he continued his studies. But when the Syrian war began, their circumstances changed from difficult to dangerous, because of their Christian faith. "We live in fear in every situation ... Because of our religion we live in fear because we are a target for extremists," said Luko. "We try to get along with people from other religions, but we are always watching our backs," continued Luko. "I have been targeted and chased from my school by some young people, they asked me to withdraw because I am a Christian. They ended up saying that they would kill me if I didn't convert. "I attempted to avoid them at all costs; it reached to extremes when they followed me home and began kicking at my door, saying that they were going to kill my mother and me." Luko and his mother shouted their defiance but quickly the street filled with militants, who forced their way into Luko's home, threw all their property into the street, and finally threw out Luko and his mother too. Luko and his mother yearned to escape. Luko, by this time at university, longed to continue his studies and graduate. "We want to never be attacked because of being a widow and a Christian," he said.



Dina and family, Luko and his mother, are amongst many Middle Eastern Christians whom Barnabas Fund is enabling to re-settle in Australia, by helping with their airfares. This is the mission of our Operation Safe Havens – to rescue desperate Christians, suffering extreme persecution, and bring them to places of safety and freedom.

In March, Barnabas Fund set themselves a prayerful target of issuing 100 air tickets in the next three months to bring persecuted Middle Eastern Christians to Australia. As of 16 May, the total number of tickets issued was 78. Barnabas Fund is thankful to God, to the generosity of our supporters and to the wisdom of the Australian government for this excellent progress.

## This Month in Christian History:

*6<sup>th</sup> June 1844:* In London a young merchant George Williams and twelve co-workers established the Young Men's Christian Association to combat unhealthy conditions arising from the Industrial Revolution, the original missions of the YMCA was to improve "the spiritual condition of young men engaged in drapery and other trades".



## CHEQUES TO ST MARY'S :

If you are writing a cheque out for the parish, please ensure it is made out to: "Gordonton Anglican Church"

## Parish Giving

Please consider giving to the parish via Automatic Payment. Did you know that St Mary's has to pay for our Vicar and all other costs of running a Parish, as well as giving a proportion to the Diocese? Please help us to be sustainable by giving via Automatic Payment. It is an easy way to give and is useful for the parish in running its budget. The Parish Bank Account is:

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