

WELCOME TO OUR

Heart Notes- Newsletter

NO.2

CARE MINISTRY AT ST PAULS CASTLE HILL

AUTUMN 2025



Silence and Solitude

Silence. In this chaotic, noisy world, especially in a busy city like Sydney, it's something we seem to have lost. Yet, silence is so vital for us in our christian walk. It's crucial that we take the time to pause, to be still, and to listen to our Heavenly Father. In a world constantly demanding our attention, silence has become a foreign concept to many of us, but it is something we must intentionally cultivate, a skill we must learn again. More than any generation before us, we need to discipline ourselves to embrace solitude and silence. It is, in fact, a spiritual discipline.

I've been deeply challenged by this concept this year, especially as the pace of life accelerates. I find myself longing for moments to sit quietly at the feet of Jesus, connecting with Him, hearing from Him. Jesus is our perfect example of this practice. He regularly sought silence and solitude to be with the Father. We see this in passages like Mark 1:35, Matthew 14:13, and Matthew 14:23, where He withdrew from the crowds to pray and be in the presence of His Father.

So, how do we do this practically? It requires intentionality. For me, it looks like carving out time to go on a prayer walk, sitting quietly under a tree in a park, or sitting on my swing chair on my front porch. In the words of Charles Spurgeon, we must "study oneself in the light of God's Word." Sometimes I bring my Bible and journal during these quiet moments to reflect and pray. But let's be honest: it's hard. Our calendars are full, our days packed with distractions, so being intentional is the only way I can make this a priority. And even then, I don't always do it enough. But that's where grace comes in.

So, what small step can you take today to find some time in silence? It doesn't have to be a grand gesture, but a simple, intentional pause to sit with God and hear His voice.

**As Psalm 46:10 says,
"Be still, and know that I am God."**

VANESSA



In this newsletter:

Silence and Solitude
Training update
Heart Team news
Meals Ministry update
Book Review and
Resources
H@H update



Coming Up This Quarter

Mental Health First Aid Course

Sunday 2-5pm. 25th May; 1st June and 8th June.

Serving Fair 25th May.

Find out more via the LOOP and our website or email Vanessa at vanessa.turner@stpauls.church



Grief and Loss Workshop

The Grief and Loss workshop held last month was well attended, with nearly 40 people joining over two Monday nights. Jeannie Smith, who previously trained pastoral workers at Mt. Druitt and Blacktown Hospitals, and Vanessa led the sessions. Together, we explored how to better understand and care for those who are grieving and experiencing loss.

It was encouraging to see the high level of engagement from the audience, who were eager to learn how to better support those around them. We hope to offer this workshop again later this year or next year. Several attendees mentioned that this session would be especially beneficial for younger people learning to gain an understanding in grief and loss in the lives of people around them.



Meals Ministry

A big thank you to the Meals Ministry team. The fridge became full of your delicious offerings over March, and most of those meals are now gone to where they were needed. So we can always do with some more. Also, a big thank you to those who participated in doing Meal Train where fresh meals were delivered to those in our church community who were in need. Our church is so blessed by all of you.

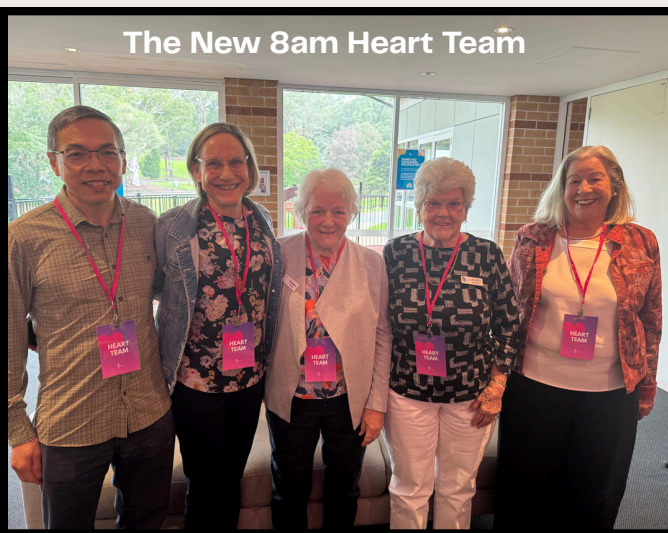
To find out more about Meals ministry or to join the team contact Vanessa:
vanessa.turner@stpauls.church





Lay Pastoral Team

Late last year, the Lay Pastoral team was created, consisting of six members representing all the services. This team meets with Vanessa once a month to go through the book, God's Love in Action. We also respond to and allocate pastoral care needs across the services. It's a joy and a gift to our church as they assist with pastoral care at St Pauls.

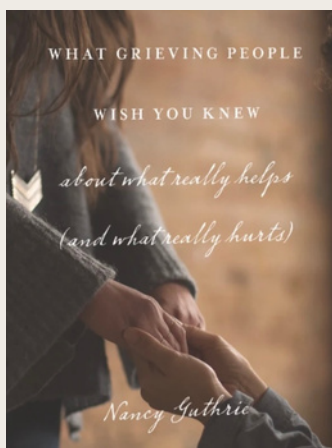


Heart Teams

It has been a true gift to witness the Heart Team in action this year. Their dedication and love for our church are evident in their consistent service, willingness to step in when needed, and their ongoing prayer and support.

The 6pm team is growing and now meets in the toddler room, with more young people responding to the sermon in prayer. Additionally, we are excited to share that a new 8am team has been formed, marking another step forward in this ministry.

BOOK REVIEW BY VANESSA



WHAT GRIEVING PEOPLE WISH YOU KNEW

Preparing for the Grief and Loss workshop led me to explore some great literature on the topic this year. One book I particularly love is by Nancy Guthrie, a gifted Bible teacher who, having lost two young children herself, compassionately and gracefully addresses the topic of grief and loss. She takes a practical, biblical approach, interviewing many who have experienced grief to understand what helped and what didn't. A common question in our workshop was "how we can support those grieving in more practical ways", and this book does an excellent job of providing those insights.





Help@Home

Despite the soggy, wet morning, it was a true joy to see all 30 people who registered for Help@Home. Dario and Robyn were incredibly grateful for the large turnout, especially since we had more people in need than usual. We are so thankful for those who took the time to serve and help others in our church community.

Helpful Articles as we care for others:

Learning to Lament

<https://au.thegospelcoalition.org/article/learning-to-lament-a-guide-to-praying-in-our-hardest-moments/>



Please be praying for our sports chaplains as they do amazing work in our community amongst various local sporting teams.

