



Petition to Archbishop in Council
for the amalgamation of
Saint John's Malvern East
and Saint Agnes Glen Huntly

ST AGNES[†]



Petition to Archbishop in Council, requesting the amalgamation of the parishes of Saint John's Malvern East and Saint Agnes Glen Huntly.

The Parish Councils of Saint John's, Malvern East, and Saint Agnes', Glen Huntly, respectfully Petition the Archbishop in Council to effect a formal amalgamation between the two parishes. This petition is made under the provisions of ss 72-79 of the Parish Governance Act 2013, which comes into force on 1 July 2014. It is asked that the amalgamation take effect from 1 October 2014. It is further requested that the Archbishop in Council prescribe a protocol in accordance with section 73(1) of the Parish Governance Act 2013, setting out the steps to be taken in order to give effect to the provisions outlined in section 79(1)(a) of the Parish Governance Act 2013.

ST AGNES[†]

1. BACKGROUND	4
2. RATIONALE	5
3. LITURGICAL LIFE	6
4. PARISH PROFILES	
Saint Agnes' Glen Huntly	7
Saint John's Malvern East	10
5. PROPOSED NEW STRUCTURE	13
6. PARISH DECISIONS	14
7. DIOCESAN DECISIONS	15

1. BACKGROUND

In late 2011, the Vicar and Wardens of Saint John's Malvern East were approached by Archdeacon Brad Billings, at the direction of the Regional Bishop, Paul White, concerning the possibility of closer co-operation with Saint Agnes Glen Huntly, with a view to potential amalgamation at some point in the future. Saint Agnes itself had already met as a congregation to consider this proposal and had agreed at a specially convened meeting to embark on this journey. The proposal was then presented to the Annual General Meeting at Saint John's in 2011, which gave unanimous support to working with Saint Agnes towards common goals.

Formal interaction between the two parishes began in early 2012, with an immediate focus on the provision of ministry to Saint Agnes during the then interregnum. A plan was developed for part-time ministry under the direction of Saint John's Incumbent, with a Locum Priest serving Saint Agnes three days per week. A formal Memorandum of Association for Shared Ministry was then finalised in July 2012, and adopted at a further meeting of Saint Agnes parishioners, and by the Vestry of Saint John's, later that month. Identical motions reaffirming the commitment 'to amalgamate' have since been agreed to at each subsequent AGM in both churches, including agreement 'that such steps be taken as would prepare for this to occur'. Finally, Rev. John Baldock was Licensed as Priest-in-Charge of Saint Agnes' on 1 November 2012, while continuing as the Incumbent of Saint John's, with a view to building closer cooperation and integrating ministry to the two communities. A small working group, authorised by both Vestries, has subsequently regularly met to address various practical aspects of joining together, in anticipation of Petitioning the Archbishop in Council in July this year, with a request to amalgamate on 1 October 2014.

2. RATIONALE

In so Petitioning the Archbishop in Council, it is noted that:

- a. This Petition follows on from nearly three years increasingly close co-operation between the two parishes.
- b. Agreement in both churches to seek amalgamation, reiterated at a series of parish meetings and at each subsequent Annual General Meetings over that time.
- c. Significant care has been taken, via formal and informal means, to engage both congregations in the amalgamation process and to communicate progress towards that goal.
- d. The primary oversight of each parish has been undertaken by the Incumbent of Saint John's, Rev. John Baldock, for nearly three years, and all liturgical and pastoral ministry has been shared between the two parishes for two years.

Further,

- e. The future mission of both churches is increasingly focused on the same target groups and geographical area, so that shared ministry is both desirable and inevitable.
- f. The culture and worship of both parishes are very similar, so that co-operation comes easily.

And finally,

- g. While the relationship between the two churches is good and co-operation is increasing, the full benefits of shared ministry will not be realised until the two churches are amalgamated.
- h. The current arrangement of sharing one Vicar overseeing two parishes is inefficient, exhausting and unsustainable. It weakens both churches, presents potential divided loyalties, and inevitably entails unnecessary duplication.

3. LITURGICAL LIFE

Saint Agnes Glen Huntly

Saint Agnes currently holds a single service each week, a Sung Eucharist at 9.30am on a Sunday morning. Additional services are held over Lent and Easter, for festivals, and on other special occasions. At present, Locum assistance is provided by an Associate Priest from Saint John's, Fr. Ken Hewlett, while the Vicar of Saint John's and Priest-in-Charge of Saint Agnes, Rev. John Baldock, Presides at the Eucharist on the third Sunday each month and on various other occasions. In their absence, additional assistance has been provided by Fr. Gary Bouma, also an Associate from Saint John's, and Fr. Jim Minchin on a casual basis. Part-time ministry is also exercised by an Assistant Curate, Rev. Jonathan Chamberlain, who will undertake a wider role in the parish once ordained Priest in late 2014. Finally, Saint John's Pastoral Associate, Winsome Thomas, also exercises pastoral duties in the parish on a regular basis.

Saint John's Malvern East

Saint John's offers a variety of services each week, principally an 8.00am Eucharist and 9.30am Sung Eucharist each Sunday. An 11.00am Children's Eucharist and 6.00pm Evensong are also held on the first Sunday of each month. In addition, a Eucharist is held each Thursday at 10.00am and on Friday's at 7.30am, and an abbreviated service of Compline, with time for Meditation, is held each Wednesday evening at 6.00pm. Twice-monthly services are also conducted in two local special accommodation homes, together with occasional services at Monash University. Further, the parish offers a rich series of special services, not only through Lent and on major festivals, but also marking significant public occasions and milestones throughout the year. Finally, the Tamil Christian Congregation of Victoria also uses Saint John's as the venue for its services two Sundays per month, for major festivals, and other private and community events.

4. PARISH PROFILES

Saint Agnes Glen Huntly

a. Clergy and Lay Staff

Rev. John Baldock, Priest-in-Charge.

Rev. Jonathan Chamberlain, Assistant Curate.

Rev. Ken Hewlett, Honorary Associate

b. Number of Parishioners

Saint Agnes has 27 parishioners on the Parish Electoral Roll. A further 25 or so people worship occasionally, or in consistent contact with the parish. Saint Agnes also has a loyal group of attenders at special events, arising in particular from its long service to those with HIV/AIDS and to the gay and lesbian community.

c. Number of baptisms in past 3 years

There have been 5 baptisms at Saint Agnes in the past three years.

d. Income of the parish

The income for the parish in 2013-2014, including from restricted use sources, is anticipated to be \$114,808, against anticipated expenditure of \$92,208, leaving an operating surplus of \$22,600. Restricted sources of income include an annual rent of \$22,035 from a Telephone Tower based on church land, and the interest from Bequests of \$7,931 this financial year.

e. Sources of Income

Saint Agnes enjoys income from four main sources, principally the Goodstart Early Learning Centre (\$51,000), rent from a Telephone Tower (\$22,000), members of the parish (\$14,000 in collections), and \$19,000 in general income, principally interest and rent of the Vicarage.

f. Current Parish Debts

Saint Agnes has no parish debts.

g. Clergy-Related Debts

Saint Agnes has no clergy-related debts.

h. Loans

Saint Agnes no loans with any financial institutions.

i. Parish Funds and Investments

Saint Agnes has current total assets of \$325,196, primarily held with the Anglican Development Fund.

j. Ministry Grants

Saint Agnes' and Saint John's together received a Southern Region Ministry Grant of \$2,500 and Curate Assistant Grant of \$5,000 in 2013.

k. Trusts

Neither parish operates any Trusts.

l. Parish Solvency

In purely financial terms, Saint Agnes is – and is likely to remain – financially solvent for the foreseeable future. The principle reason being that the parish operates with part-time clergy (3.5 days of a full-time position). The challenge facing Saint Agnes is not so much financial, as finding or freeing-up human resources able to focus more on mission and less on maintenance. The proposed amalgamation will combine the administration and ministry of the church under a single entity, broadening the human resources available for leadership in the parish and simplifying the oversight of two independent structures into one.

m. Maintenance of buildings and grounds

The maintenance of the buildings and grounds is undertaken by a mixture of professional and parishioner assistance. In general, the buildings and grounds are in good condition, notwithstanding the need for ongoing maintenance. Current priorities include addressing aging internal electrical wiring and painting the exterior doors and sanctuary area of the church. Sufficient funds, however, exist for this work and quotations are currently being obtained.

n. Payment of annual diocesan assessment

Saint Agnes is up-to-date with assessment payments.

o. Parish offices and lay leadership

Saint Agnes maintains a small parish office staffed by a single volunteer assistant approximately 1.5 days per week.

With respect to lay leadership within the parish, Saint Agnes unquestionably benefits greatly from a small team of dedicated and competent individuals, who demonstrate a high level of commitment to the church. That said, three Vestry positions remain un-filled this year, along with one Warden position. While parish volunteers contribute many hours to the upkeep, decoration and administration of the church, considering the limited human resources available, there are few free hours for extending the mission of the parish beyond current activities.

p. Mission of the Parish

Saint Agnes has limited opportunities for mission to the wider community. The geographical area covered by the parish is one of the smallest in the region. Moreover, the area has experienced significant demographic change in recent years, with the gradual extension of Melbourne's Jewish community into the area and a significant increase in the local Asian population, particularly from the Sub-Continent. Neither group offers significant opportunities for mission, but indeed reduces the potential pool of Anglicans in the area.

That said, Caulfield Racecourse and Monash University either border or are partly encompassed within the parish boundaries. Both have significant staff numbers, and in the case of Monash, a large student population. Ministry to the University has been a priority over the past year, with the appointment of an Assistant Curate, shared with Saint John's, an important element of this strategy. The aim is that contacts made through campus-based study and social programs will connect with parish initiatives targeted to the student population. While the close proximity of Saint John's to the University will likely result in more students attending programs in that church, Saint Agnes too is well-placed to serve the student population, with a significant number residing in the cheaper accommodation available in the vicinity of the church.

Further, Glen Eira Secondary College is situated within the parish as well, and an approach to the school offering ministry will be made once the Assistant Curate has completed the necessary requirements for accreditation by Access Ministries.

Finally, very substantial housing and retail developments have now begun on the former racecourse car parks and on the edge of the racecourse reserve itself, heralding a significant influx of new residents into the area. In each case, these new developments lie between the two churches and provide the possibility of increased participation in both centres.

In each setting outlined above, however, the opportunities for mission available to Saint Agnes will be enhanced by a close or closer association with Saint John's. Monash University, for example, sits between the two churches, but is located within Saint John's parish, which oversees chaplaincy to the campus. Similarly, the administrative offices and most of the stables at Caulfield Racecourse are located within Saint John's boundaries. And while Glen Eira Secondary College is located within the parish of Saint Agnes, part-time ministry to the church, recently provided by retired clergy, is not ideally suited for ministry to the school.

q. Mission Action Plan

A Parish Consultation was undertaken by Archdeacon Brad Billings on 18 December 2011, following the resignation of Rev. David Still as the Priest-in-Charge of Saint Agnes. A report on the consultation was then distributed to the parish in the week before Christmas, and this has formed the basis for subsequent mission planning over the past two-and-a-half years.

This initial framework has now been expanded to include: an Outline for Co-operation between Saint Agnes and Saint John's (18 January 2012), addressing the general intent of working together, guiding principles, a schedule of services, and an overview of general governance and administrative procedures; an outline of a Centre for Liturgy at Saint Agnes, drawing on the teaching and liturgy skills of the late Fr. Ron Dowling, Locum to the parish in 2012-2013 (18 January 2012); a general descriptive document, outlining the opportunities for mission in the area created by the partnership, clarifying priorities, and further steps towards co-operation (23 May 2012), and a detailed Memorandum for Shared Ministry, describing how the two parishes would co-operate on mission to the local community (28 July 2012).

Hence, while the parish lacks a formal Mission Action Plan, many of the elements involved in formulating such a document have been completed over the past two years. Furthermore, in a context where Saint John's already has a well-developed and recently-reviewed plan, the process moving forward would be to incorporate new elements, focused on serving the community around Saint Agnes, into the existing plan, rather than to develop a separate document at this stage.

r. Other Matters

There are no other matters needing to be addressed at this point.

4. PARISH PROFILES

Saint John's Malvern East

a. Clergy and Lay Staff

Rev. John Baldock, Incumbent.
Rev. Jonathan Chamberlain, Assistant Curate.
Rev. Sathi Anthony, Honorary Assistant.
Rev. Dr. Gary Bouma, Honorary Associate
Rev. Ken Hewlett, Honorary Associate
Ms Winsome Thomas, Licensed Pastoral Associate
Emily Vigon, Business Manager.
Rebecca Rees-Gibbs, Office Assistant.

b. Number of Parishioners

Saint John's has 119 parishioners on the Parish Electoral Roll, with a further 320 or so people in consistent contact with the church. The parish also has a unique place in the local community, as the host for two annual State-school services, which have helped position Saint John's as the 'church' of the local community. Christmas in particular sees a very large number of people attending services, with close to 2000 people visiting Saint John's for school and parish events around that time of the year.

c. Number of baptisms in past 3 years

There have been 61 baptisms at Saint John's in the past three years.

d. Income of the parish

The budget for the parish in 2013-2014 foresees income and expenditure of \$268,700. In addition, donations for the restoration of the church, paid directly to the National Trust or via the Parish Foundation, anticipate a further \$40,000-\$50,000 in income during the year ahead.

e. Sources of Income

Saint John's receives income from a number of diverse sources, including the Academy of Dance and Movement (\$38,000), regular hall bookings (\$56,000), planned-giving contributions (\$94,000), general collections (\$23,000), fundraising (\$36,000) and a further \$25,000 in general income, including the interest from bequests.

f. Current Parish Debts

Saint John's has two loans for building and restoration works, as indicated below. It has no other parish debts.

g. Clergy-Related Debts

Saint John's has no clergy-related debts.

h. Loans

Saint John's has two loans for building and restoration works. A loan for the restoration of the church tower, initiated in 2004, stands at \$259,457. A loan for a new Vicarage roof and guttering, initiated in 2013, stands at \$88,507. While the parish has sufficient funds invested to more than cover both debts, both loans were undertaken to share the burden of substantial maintenance and restoration costs over a generation.

i. Parish Funds and Investments

Saint John's has current total assets of \$865,457, primarily held with the Anglican Development Fund. While legally independent of the parish, The Saint John's East Malvern Foundation holds a further \$218,414 in investments, designated for the long-term mission of the parish and the maintenance of its buildings.

j. Ministry Grants

Saint John's and Saint Agnes together received a Southern Region Ministry Grant of \$2,500 and Curate Assistant Grant of \$5,000 in 2013.

k. Trusts

Neither parish operates any Trusts.

l. Parish Solvency

Saint John's is, and is likely to remain, financially solvent into the foreseeable future. While the parish has faced the challenge of significant restoration costs in recent years, most of this expense has been met by parishioner donations and fundraising, now totaling more than \$865,000.

At the same time, recent emphasis has been given to building-up a corpus of funds to help sustain mission and maintenance into the long-term, with a significant body of funds now set aside for this purpose. The interest from these investments already help contribute to parish initiatives and the costs of restoration.

Moreover, while the human resources available to the parish are less than what ideally would be available, the current Vestry has by the far the youngest mean age in more than 10 years, giving hope that a new generation is emerging that will take responsibility for the parish in future years.

m. Maintenance of buildings and grounds

The maintenance of the buildings and grounds is undertaken by a mixture of professional and parishioner assistance. In general, both are in good condition. Notwithstanding this, major restoration work is still required to the north transept of the church, which it is hoped will commence in late 2016, once the restoration of the west wall of the building is complete. Other substantial maintenance works have been undertaken in the past two years, including the replacement of the Vicarage slate roof, repainting much of the church interior, repairs to the chapel floor, new carpets, new Vicarage gutters, a new cap on the church tower, painting of the exterior woodwork of the church, significant landscaping with a new cement apron to the church hall carpark, and repainting the entire exterior of the Vicarage, among some of the works recently completed around the site.

n. Payment of annual diocesan assessment

Saint John's is up-to-date with assessment payments.

o. Parish offices and lay leadership

Saint John's parish office is staffed by a part-time Parish Administrator, with advanced bookkeeping skills (2.5 days per week), and a part-time Administrative Assistant (1.5 days per week). Saint John's is also fortunate to have a significant base of competent and dedicated individuals, with a wide-range of skills relevant to the mission and administration of the parish. All positions on Vestry are filled, and have been for many years, and the mean age of Vestry members is the lowest in more than 10 years. Lay members of the Parish also exercise key leadership roles in the areas of pastoral care, outreach to the marginalised, the Opportunity Shop, and ministry to infants and the student population.

p. Mission of the Parish

The mission of the parish takes its shape with reference to both the history and culture of the church and its strategic location near Monash University, the Caulfield Plaza, Caulfield Racecourse, and the Caulfield station.

First, the worship of the church is intentionally different from Saint John's neighbouring congregations, to reinforce diversity and avoid duplication.

Second, church programs are increasingly focused east and south, towards areas of new growth and where children, families, and young adults are more concentrated.

Third, mission to the community is guided by a strong desire to show that our actions match our words, so that the beauty and warmth of the worship at Saint John's is visible too in our pastoral care, hospitality, and outreach to the community.

These commitments find expression in enhanced programs to young families, including a growing playgroup, a large parish camp, dedicated family Services, and targeted events for children and young people.

Our work around Monash University has also greatly expanded in recent years, centred around a weekly support program for international students and substantially increased chaplaincy services. The parish has recently initiated a weekly Bible-study series and in second semester is planning to present the Pilgrim discipleship program for new enquirers.

In addition, pastoral care and support for the vulnerable has also increased in the past two years, with the help of a two-day-a-week Pastoral Care worker and an active Pastoral Care team. Saint John's now runs a weekly lunch for the homeless and vulnerable, a casserole bank, a monthly service and meal for the elderly shut-in, a women's support group, and a food bank for emergencies.

Finally, Saint John's has long been admired as a place of beauty and inspiration in the local community. Well known for its vibrant musical life, a wealth of talented artists regularly grace special occasions and enhance our life together. As part of its mission strategy, Saint John's operates as a major performing arts venue in the community, with masterpieces of choral, vocal, and instrumental music regularly performed in the historic and resonant Church sanctuary.

q. Mission Action Plan

With assistance from a consultant from KPMG, in 2008 Saint John's undertook as a substantial Strategic Review of the parish and its mission. Involving extensive consultation in small-groups, it identified a range of strengths and weaknesses, along with opportunities for growth and outreach.

Our progress in meeting targets and addressing our weaknesses was then reviewed in 2013, resulting in further consultation and a parish-wide meeting late last year. On the basis of both the review and this consultation, our Parish Mission Plan is again being updated, with a view to better identifying measurable goals and assigning clearer and more direct responsibility for implementation. This process will result in a further parish meeting to review the Plan in November 2014. The document presented to this gathering will also seek to harmonise the mission of the two newly-amalgamated parishes around shared needs, opportunities and priorities.

r. Other Matters

There are no other matters needing to be addressed at this point.

5. PROPOSED NEW STRUCTURE

a. Date of Possible Amalgamation

1 October 2014.

b. Name of New Parish

The Anglican Parish of Saint John's and Saint Agnes', East Malvern and Glen Huntly.

c. Boundaries of New Parish

It is recommended that the new parish encompass the same geographical area as that presently covered by the two separate parishes.

d. Change of Deanery

It is requested that Saint Agnes' Parish be amalgamated into the Stonnington Deanery.

e. Proposed Clergy Appointments

The following clergy are proposed for appointment within the new Parish:

Rev. John Baldock, Incumbent
Rev. Jonathan Chamberlain, Assistant Curate
Rev. Sathi Anthony, Honorary Assistant
Rev. Dr. Gary Bouma, Honorary Associate
Rev. Ken Hewlett, Honorary Associate

f. Proposed Lay Appointments

The following clergy are proposed for appointment within the new Parish:

Ms Winsome Thomas, Licensed Pastoral Associate

David Brennan, Organist, Saint John's
Yi-Shuen Chan, Organist Saint John's
Lance Nickson, Organist Saint Agnes'

Emily Vigon, Business Manager
Rebecca Rees-Gibbs, Office Assistant
Lance Nickson, Honorary Office Assistant

g. Proposed Sale or Purchase of Land or Buildings

It is not anticipated that any properties will be bought or sold as a consequence of the amalgamation of the parishes.

h. Capital Projects

There are no capital projects either proposed or affected by the amalgamation of the parishes. There are, however, two existing leases on parish property, one in each centre, that will in time need to be adjusted, namely, with the Academy of Dance and Movement at Saint John's, and the Goodstart Early Learning Centre at Saint Agnes'.

6. PARISH DECISIONS

a. New Wardens and Vestry Members

New Wardens and Vestry Members will be elected at the first AGM of the new Parish on Sunday 4th October 2014.

b. New Synod Representatives

On the grant of a Mandate by the Archbishop, new Synod representatives will be elected at the first AGM of the new Parish on Sunday 4th October 2014.

c. New Incumbency Committee Representatives

New Wardens and Vestry Members will be elected at the first AGM of the new Parish on Sunday 4th October 2014.

d. New Treasurer

A new Treasurer will be appointed in due time by the Wardens following the first AGM of the new Parish on Sunday 4th October 2014.

e. New Auditors

New Auditors will be elected at the first AGM of the new Parish on Sunday 4th October 2014.

f. Audited Accounts of the Previous Parish

The audited accounts of each parish will be undertaken by each outgoing Vestry, under the direction of the new Vestry elected at the first AGM of the new Parish on Sunday 4th October 2014. Comprising the full 2013-2014 Financial Year, the accounts will provide a consistent record of parish income and expenditure and a solid base for calculating the Parish Assessment moving forward.

g. New Budget

A new Budget for the combined parishes will be prepared by the outgoing Treasurer's of each parish, in conjunction with the Wardens, Treasurer, and Incumbent of the new Parish.

h. Consolidation of Bank Accounts and Investments

A strategy for the consolidation of bank accounts and investments held by the two parishes will be prepared by the outgoing Treasurer's, in conjunction with the Wardens, Treasurer and Incumbent of the new Parish. Existing Bequest Accounts will be maintained as separate entities within the new amalgamated parish.

7. DIOCESAN DECISIONS

a. New Assessment

It is recommended that the new Assessment for the parish be calculated consistent with the accounts provided by each parish for 2013-2014 Financial Year, with some compensation for the costs involved with amalgamation of the two separate entities. Copies of the Audited Accounts from each parish should be available to the Diocese by 30 November 2014.

b. Debts of Current Parishes

It is anticipated that the new Parish will meet be able to meet such debts as may exist out of the budget of the new parish. Such debts as may relate to Clergy or for LSL, assessment, car loans, or other such items, where feasible, will be met from the existing funds of each parish in which that debt occurs.

c. ADF and Other Loans

It is anticipated that the new Parish will meet be able to service such loans as may exist out of the budget of the new parish. It is anticipated that the ADF and other such bodies will need to note the name of the new amalgamated entity, but that new loan documents ought not be necessary.

d. Ministry Grants

Such grants as have been given relate to work across the two parishes. A Report on the utilisation of these funds will be made by the Incumbent of the Parish at the appropriate time.



ST AGNES[†]