

grace church joondalup

DIOCESE OF PERTH
ANGLICAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA

Fourth Sunday after Pentecost
20 June 2010



My dear Friends

The AGM offers time to look back in thanksgiving and forward in hope. We assess our ministry and mission in the City of Joondalup, but also do some dreaming about the future. I am sometimes asked about the size of the parish. This is a question I find hard to answer because we never all gather at the same time! Of one thing, however, I am sure: while we are still a small Christian community, we have doubled in numbers over the last decade. This is slow but steady growth when you consider our lack of resources and the near invisibility of the church building. We can also be encouraged for another reason, namely that open churches are generally not growing by leaps and bounds in today's climate. Social researcher Hugh Mackay says, 'Religious growth at the moment tends to be at the fundamentalist end of the spectrum, because when people are feeling so destabilized, feeling so anxious, what they're looking for often is a complete system – some black and white simple certainty.' Well, this is precisely what we do not and cannot offer! While seeking to welcome all truth-seekers, we treat adults like adults and children like children. We offer no complete system because no simple certainties are to be had in the messy business of real human living. We know that the fundamentalist God is an illusion, an idol devised by our own anxiety, so we refuse to bow down and worship. This eucharistic community will continue to grow if only we keep our nerve, confident that intelligent faith is more vital than ever in a fractured and frightened world. Growth will also happen as the new church rises - a lovely house of prayer for all people.

with my love

David