

**EMMANUEL'S MESSENGER, SEPTEMBER 2025**

**Emmanuel's Mission Statement:  
To Know Christ and to Make Him Known**

**FROM THE RECTOR**

We recently culminated the festivities for our 170<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Many of you were there for the float in the 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade, for the Saturday Brunch where Canon Tim Naish spoke about the complexities of and call to serve a community and world from a missional perspective, and his Sunday sermons. We were greatly blessed by the generosity that brought him and Hilary here, and the efforts of many who served to make these events a great success. The question then is, now that we have celebrated such a milestone of faithfulness, what now? We carry on with doing the work of the church.

This is both a simple and a complex answer. The simple answer is that the work of the church contains the things we do naturally and regularly: visiting the sick and lonely, gathering together to worship God, breaking bread together, studying God's word, preaching the Good News about Jesus, and serving the community that we live in and reaching out in love to the larger world. The complex part of that is how we do those things. Each of those categories demands our full attention, understanding, creativity, and strength.

Each generation of Christians at Emmanuel has found creative ways to worship together, grow in their faith, and serve the Lord. Carrying on some of the history, yet reaching out to different people living in different times as they sought to draw the world into the worship of God. Even during my comparatively short tenure here, we have done our Christian work in varied ways. This work of seeking to live faithfully as the church will continue until Jesus comes again and we see its perfection in His presence.

Two areas where we are seeking to use our creativity to do something new are that we are doing the prep work to launch a third service. This would not be one that is pressed between our other services, but an afternoon/evening service on Sunday. We are still in the early phases, but there is a team looking into how best to carry this out. Another area that you will be reading more about soon is the launching of Emmanuel U. We are beginning with a six-week class taught by the brilliant Katherine Schuessler. We envision this class as an opportunity to get a taste of seminary coursework in a much more palatable framework.

God has gifted this church with 170 years of faithfulness; therefore, let us take up the mantle of leadership and seek to carry the church into the next generation with all the strength, joy, love, and creativity that the Lord gives us.

In Christ, *Seth*



## NEW CHURCH PHOTO DIRECTORY WITH UPDATED ROSTER



Emmanuel is doing a new pictorial directory. The photo dates are Wednesday October 8th and Thursday, October 9th. We want everyone to have a new picture made so that our new directory will be complete. This can't be accomplished without you!

A new pictorial directory will be a powerful tool in our church to help us know each other better. Our last directory was created in 2015 and is outdated. It is time for a new one.

Please make an appointment to have your picture taken. Millie will be in the foyer of Buck Hall for the next several Sundays from 9:15 to 12:30 to sign you up.

You can also sign up online through Emmanuel's website [www.emmanuelgv.org](http://www.emmanuelgv.org). Let's take this opportunity to make this directory the best yet. Please do not use your email address for your contact information, but use the telephone number where you can be reached by Re:MEMBER, the photo company. For further information, please contact Millie Beatie at 530-265-3112 or email [themadhouse86@gmail.com](mailto:themadhouse86@gmail.com)

### IN CONCERT!

**Jan Kraybill Organ Concert**  
**Sunday, October 5<sup>th</sup>, 3:00 p.m.**  
**Emmanuel Church**

The concert is FREE and the public is WELCOME!

Donations are always gratefully accepted at the door to help support Music @ Emmanuel events. Please invite your family and friends to enjoy this fourth return concert organist. Her concerts enrich our lives as well as bring beautiful music into the church. The concert will be followed by a reception and refreshments in Buck Hall.

### ST. CATHERINE'S GUILD

**Sunday, September 7<sup>th</sup> 10 a.m. Fellowship Hour**  
**and**  
**Tuesday, September 9<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 a.m.**



All ladies are invited to bring tasty treats for the 10 a.m. Coffee & Fellowship Hour on Sunday, September 7<sup>th</sup>. Since it's National Grandparents Day, perhaps make something you remember eating at their table! Treats savory and sweet, along with seasonal fruit and veggies, all make for a tempting variety for parishioners and visitors to enjoy.

All ladies are also invited to the Victorian Christmas Faire meeting at 11 a.m. on Tuesday, September 9<sup>th</sup> in Frank



Buck Hall. Come to share ideas and help plan for another successful fair to be held November 7<sup>th</sup>–9<sup>th</sup>. Feel free to contact Gloryanne Bryant at [gloryanneb@sbcglobal.net](mailto:gloryanneb@sbcglobal.net) with comments or questions.

And then. . . stay or come for the Guild meeting beginning at noon. After a two-month summer break in meetings, come to hear and see pictures of where Barbara Boyer traveled! She is also planning a special lunch for us.

Please call Carey Daly at 530/277-5970 or send an email to [jimdaly@comcast.net](mailto:jimdaly@comcast.net) to let her know you'll be there.

### THE MEN'S CLUB Spaghetti and Bingo Night Saturday, September 13<sup>th</sup>

The Men's Club is pleased to announce we are having a Spaghetti and Bingo Night fellowship/fundraiser. It will be held in Buck Hall on September 13<sup>th</sup>. Dinner will begin at 5:30 followed by six games of bingo.

The dinner will consist of spaghetti, marinara sauce with meatballs on the side, bread, salad, ice cream cups, water, lemonade and coffee. Wine will also be available on a tip basis.

The cost is: Adults and Kids 12 Years and Older - \$15; Kids 5 to 11 Years Old - \$5; and Kids Under 5 - Free. Bingo cards will be sold at the event at a cost of \$1 per card, with a \$10 cash prize for the first five games. For the "Heavy Hitters", game six will be \$5 per card, with a \$100 cash prize!



Reservations for the dinner will be sold after each service from August 24<sup>th</sup> through September 7<sup>th</sup>. Buy early, as seating is limited. All parishioners, their families, and friends are welcome.

### ATTENTION SPD MARKET SHOPPERS THANK YOU!

For the first half of the year, Emmanuel Church earned \$815.03. Last year it was only \$382.70. That is a 113% increase! Thanks again for all who are participating in the Community Card Program at SPD Markets.

If you would like to participate in this program that pays the Emmanuel Church 3% for most purchases, just fill out a short form and hand it to the cashier. They will provide you with a Community Card. All you have to do is have the cashier scan the card each time you shop at the Grass Valley or Nevada City SPD Market. You may also just give them your phone number when you are checking out that should be in their records. You don't have to have your card with you

The short forms are available at the Connect Center table in Buck Hall or you can get a form from the SPD Market cashier. Here is the link to SPD Market for additional information: [www.spdmarket.com](http://www.spdmarket.com).

If you have any questions, please contact me. Spence Strickley 530-205-0937 or [srstric14@gmail.com](mailto:srstric14@gmail.com)

## FINANCES FOR JULY 2025

|                        |            |
|------------------------|------------|
| Actual July Revenue    | 31,104.70  |
| Budgeted July Revenue  | 35,730.00  |
| Actual July Expenses   | 32,520.28  |
| Budgeted July Expenses | 35,730.00  |
| July Net               | <1,415.58> |
| 2025 Total Revenue     | 237,241.11 |
| 2025 Total Expenses    | 240,966.16 |
| 2025 Year-to-date Net  | <3,725.05> |

*Remember that a good price  
is not necessarily what an object is marked,  
but what it is worth to you.*

## STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY, 2026

Our 2026 Stewardship Sunday will be on Sunday, October 26<sup>th</sup>. Additional information will be provided as we get closer to this date.



Stewardship Co-Chairs:

Spence Strickley      All Lehmkuhl



### WE GIVE OUR THANKS

For food that stays our hunger,  
For rest that brings us ease,  
For homes where memories linger,  
We give our thanks for these.

## THE WHOLE WORLD IN HIS HANDS

He's got the whole world in his hands,  
He's got the whole wide world in his hands,  
He's got the whole world in his hands,  
He's got the whole world in his hands.

He's got the little bitty baby in his hands,  
He's got the little bitty baby in his hands  
He's got the little bitty baby in his hands  
He's got the whole world in his hands.

He's got you and me brother in his hands  
He's got you and me sister in his hands  
He's got you and me brother in his hands  
He's got the whole world in his hands

He's got everybody here in his hands  
He's got everybody here in his hands  
He's got everybody here in his hands  
He's got the whole world in his hands



## SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS



|                               |                       |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 14 Frances diCristina         | 23 Adrienne Ybarrondo |
| 15 Gary Corbin                | 24 Dana Kennedy       |
| 19 The Rev. Philip Reinheimer | 24 Scott Scirpo       |
| 19 Spence Strickley           |                       |

## SUNDAY FELLOWSHIP TIME

Coffee and Fellowship Hour is a time enjoyed by all parishioners. There is a coffee hour after the 8:00 o'clock service and a coffee hour after the 10:00 o'clock service in Buck Hall with lots of goodies to enjoy. If you would like to participate, there is a list of group leaders and their phone numbers on the bulletin board in Buck Hall. Just give them a call. Or, if you are interested in starting your own group, please call Adrienne Ybarrondo at (530) 913-1773 for the 8:00 a.m. service and Linda Gearheart at (530) 913-9466 for the 10:00 a.m. service. Thank you.



If you are celebrating a birthday, wedding anniversary, or other special event that you would like to share with your fellow parishioners, you are welcome to bring a cake, cupcakes, or other item to share at the Fellowship hour following the service that you attend.



## SPONSOR THE ALTAR FLOWERS



Altar Flowers

Do you have a birthday or anniversary coming up that you would like to celebrate by donating to the flowers which grace the altar on Sundays? Our flower ministry is committed to presenting beautiful bouquets each Sunday and they are funded by the donations which we make to sponsor flowers for each Sunday.

If you would like to sign up to have a loved one or a special event remembered in the church bulletin made visible with flowers, the sign-up sheet is on the wall in Buck Hall. Choose your special date. The suggested donation is \$35 but you are welcome to offer more if you like, although the additional money does not make a larger bouquet but goes to fill any empty days. Contact the church office (530-273-7876) with any questions or to sign up remotely. Thank you! The Flower Guild

## NATIONAL GRANDPARENTS DAY

Sunday, September 7th

National Grandparents Day was established by President Jimmy Carter in 1978, championed by West

Virginia advocate Marian McQuade, to honor the contributions of grandparents and foster connections between generations. McQuade started campaigning for the holiday in 1970, wanting to alleviate loneliness and to recognize the wisdom of the elderly. After West Virginia made it a state holiday in 1973, McQuade continued her advocacy, leading to Congress's resolution and Carter's 1978 proclamation.

Grandparents Day has three distinct purposes: to honor grandparents; to give grandparents an opportunity to show love for their children's children; to help children become aware of strength, information, and guidance older people can offer. This holiday honors grandparents and their important contributions to our families and communities.

Grandparents Day is celebrated in September on the first Sunday after Labor Day. The President has to proclaim Grandparents Day each year because Congress passed a law authorizing annual proclamations after a joint resolution in 1978, establishing the holiday to honor grandparents and to recognize their invaluable contributions to families and society.

The forget-me-not is the official flower associated with Grandparents Day. This small, blue flower symbolizes devotion, love, and respect, and its name is a gentle reminder for grandchildren to remember and appreciate their grandparents.

*Following is the history of the founding of Emmanuel Church written by Sandra Spargo through an interview with Roy Tremoureaux, and a collection of his historical books. Roy's family helped establish our church. Read about the families whose names appear on our stained glass windows.*

**EMMANUEL EPISCOPAL CHURCH**  
**Grass Valley, California**  
**Beginnings of Emmanuel Church**  
**By Sandra Spargo**

**Special for Emmanuel Church's 170th Anniversary Celebration, August 16, 2025**

Roy Clinch Tremoureaux, Jr. is the fifth generation of his family to attend Emmanuel Episcopal Church of Grass Valley. His story tells of three, first-generation families, who were founders of the Church.

The Jenkins, Watts, and Attwoods brought their mining expertise, Christian faith and values, reinforcing the early community's fabric of spiritual, social and economic stability. These families played an initial role in the beginnings of the Church and of Grass Valley.

**John Jenkins** - Roy's local genealogy began in 1850 with John Jenkins, his great, great grandfather and his great, great grandmother Mary Ann. John moved from Cornwall to Brazil and back to Cornwall. He and Mary Ann moved on to Mineral Point, Wisconsin, where their daughter Elizabeth Jane was born. About 1849, John moved to Grass Valley. Mary Ann and Jane followed by wagon train three years later. Daughter Emily, Roy's great grandmother, was born in Grass Valley. Throughout the 1800s and 1900s, men emerged from the mines and transitioned their hard-work ethic and entrepreneurship to prominent community positions. Such was the case with John. He ranched south of Grass Valley, where he also mined, raised livestock and operated three stamp mills, a blacksmith shop and a lumber mill. He owned a butcher shop in Grass Valley.



**Isabel Attwood** - Women were the foundation of church support. Their fundraising included Isabel Attwood and Jane Jenkins' participation. To defray the cost of the \$6,000 needed to build Emmanuel, the girls spent days traveling on horseback, asking prospectors to contribute. Perhaps the girls carried gold-nugget donations in leather pouches? Jane later helped to organize Emmanuel's first altar society.



William and Emily Watt took special interest in the Jenkins girls, Jane and Emily, so much so that they moved in with the Watts. Since the Jenkins' ranch was located four miles from Grass Valley, travel to attend school had proven difficult. The Watts had no children of their own and generously welcomed the girls into their home, where they grew up. Growing up included learning to be a young lady and the niceties of society, which were expected of them.

**William and Emily Watt** - Born in Scotland, William arrived in Grass Valley in 1852, having successfully partnered with his two brothers in several quartz mines. Although wealthy in his own right, he supported a fair wage for Grass Valley miners. They regarded him as one of their own and loved him for the special interest he took in their welfare. Watt's successful mining ventures, wealth and public service, no doubt, earned him community respect. Voters elected him to the California State Senate in 1861. He was appointed a regent to the University of California.

In 1869, when miners opposed the introduction of giant powder (dynamite), they looked to William for support. At the first public meeting opposing giant powder, miners passed a resolution recognizing William as an "eminent machinist" and "monarch of mines." He chose to support the miners' strike against giant powder. Although the strike caused investors to lose (Photo to right is William Watt) dividends, merchants to lose sales and miners to lose wages, William sustained mine owners' respect. He had mitigated a tense situation that led to a relatively peaceful determination. He sidestepped the giant powder issue in his mines by contracting with independent teams of miners to use whatever explosive they chose.



About 1873, hard times hit the entire country, including Nevada County. The opening of the transcontinental railroad caused an economic slump and a glut of goods and labor. Solidarity among miners had weakened due their continual movement from one district to another. In addition, later-arriving mining operators had learned to avoid giant powder's harmful consequences by ventilating the mines, thus splitting the opposition to giant powder. By this time, Watt had ordered the use of giant powder. The miners' union eventually reversed its resolution against it.

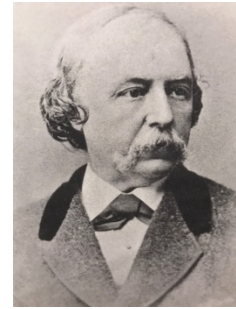
Throughout the community's turbulence, everyone admired William. A Nevada City newspaper wrote, "Probably no man in the state has expended more money in works of charity than William Watt. It is to his past enterprise and liberality that a great share of our present prosperity as a community is due."

Tragedy struck the Watt family and the community when William's horses were spooked, and he was thrown from his carriage into a pine tree. On July 9, 1878, Nevada County came to a standstill on the day of his funeral. Public and private buildings were draped in mourning, mines suspended operations and workers paid their respects. Miners called William "the representative miner." The funeral was the largest ever held in Nevada County. People as far away as San Francisco paid their respects at his casket for more than an hour. Hundreds attended the service at his grave site. A year later, a 34-foot-high monument was built at his grave site, bearing the words, "Friendship's Memorial." It paid tribute to Watts as a worker, who toiled with his hands in the mines and a champion of the poor, weak and oppressed. Although he did not attend Emmanuel Church on a regular basis with his wife Emily, he was considered a true Christian.

Emily Harper, Roy's great grandmother, moved to Grass Valley to join her first husband Harper in 1852. Her child died from a fever, and Harper died sometime later. In 1862, she married William at Emmanuel

Church. Emily lived a secluded life on French Avenue for 55 years.

The community recognized Emily's character as spotless and charming, and "as a noble woman who lived and died during bygone ages." Like her husband, she was a philanthropist. She generously and unfailingly gave quietly to Emmanuel Church and the Roman Catholic orphanage and school. She passed away in 1907, almost 30 years after William's death. The orphanage's children followed her casket, as men of Emmanuel carried her casket to the grave site.



**Melville Attwood** - At 26 years old, Melville Attwood moved from England to work for the Brazilian Exploration Company. Diamond deposits had recently been discovered. Returning to England, his mineral expertise expanded as manager and part-owner of the Eton mine on the Island of Man. There he married Jane Alice

Forbes. He later established the first smelter in Staffordshire and secured a British patent for processing zinc ore. By the 1850s, the mineral industry regarded him as one of England's foremost metallurgists.

The Attwood family's prospects suddenly changed when the health of Jane began to fail. Melville decided to sail his family to America, where a change in climate might improve her health. In 1852, they arrived in New York, where he was immediately hired to work on the Panama Railroad. While traveling to Panama, the passengers and crew came down with cholera. The family pulled through the cholera, and Melville completed his report on the railroad.

Afterwards, Melville and family traveled by steamship to San Francisco. Again, the family again pulled through another disease, yellow fever. The ship's surgeon succumbed, and Melville bravely took over the doctor's duties. He could not save everyone, including his young son Warrington. The loss and grief must have tested Melville and Jane's faith.

Melville's interest in mineralogy research brought him to Grass Valley. His name is among the first recorded in the rolls of Emmanuel Church. Although not American-born, he became a member of the vestry and was Emmanuel's first senior warden. He settled his family in Boston Ravine, a former settlement located one mile from Grass Valley. His arrival could not have been timed better, as quartz veins had been recently discovered. Since local mine and milling practices were primitive, his metallurgical skills were beneficial. Almost immediately, the Gold Hill Quartz Mining Company hired him as the superintendent and a trustee from 1853 to 1859.

In 1856, Melville was an officer of the Gold Hill Quartz Mining Company, when his company gifted

Emmanuel parishioners with land on which to build its permanent church. The property had been the site of the company's office. The gift came with a stipulation: The parish had to build a church edifice within 18 months of its acceptance of the gift. Early in January 1857, Emmanuel formally accepted the gift and passed a vote of thanks to the mining company.

In 1859, Melville worked as an assayer in a Grass Valley mining camp, when the Comstock Lode was discovered. While digging for gold, prospectors had been digging deeply and found a rich, black sand of black manganese mixed with a blue-gray quartz. They cursed, throwing away masses of the quartz. The quartz's blue dust covered everything and filled the air, making it hard for the men to breathe. J. F. Stone, a station keeper on the Carson River and formerly a quartz miner, was very curious. He asked B. A. Harrison, a rancher, to take blue quartz samples to be assayed in Grass Valley.

Harrison gave a quartz sample to J. J. Ott of Nevada City. The assay showed the gold to be worth \$840 a ton. Harrison wanted a second opinion and gave a sample to Judge James Walsh, a prominent miner and miller owner. Together, they took the quartz to Melville's assay office. Melville's correct assay differed from J. J. Ott's--the quartz contained gold, which ran about \$1,000 a ton. The quartz also contained almost 3/4 solid silver, which ran \$3,196 a ton! Prospectors and J. J. Ott had been looking only for gold!

Walsh was flabbergasted, wanting to profit quickly. He made a deal with Melville. The discovery was to be kept secret until he and Harrison could get across the Sierras to buy the lode from unsuspecting prospectors. In turn, the judge promised Melville two hundred feet of the quartz's vein. Walsh and Harrison hurried to pack a mule for the 150-mile trip. Melville followed. Riding with him was George Hearst, then a rising young miner of Nevada City. The discovery became known as the Comstock Lode. An interesting side note is that the Comstock helped to finance the Union side of the Civil War.

In 1860, Melville's investments allowed him to purchase the Gold Hill Quartz Mining Company. His mining accomplishments included a state award for the best quartz mill in the state and the best amalgamator. It is used to process gold in heavy sand, resulting in a gold recovery rate of 98 percent.

In October 1862, Melville's eldest son, Melville, Jr., died of a kidney ailment. The loss may have triggered Melville's sale of the mining company the same year and the family's move to San Francisco in 1863. Melville continued to extensively write publications, especially for the Mining and Scientific Press. He was a member of many scientific societies and was awarded medals and diplomas. He was well known up-and-down the Pacific Coast.

His friendship with the Jenkins family continued after he had moved to Sausalito in 1882. He gifted a lovely book entitled, "Popular California Flora" to Emily Jenkins, Roy's great grandmother.

In conclusion, the genealogy of Roy Clinch Tremoureux, Jr., shows the determination and grit that it takes to establish and sustain a church in the Sierra foothills of Northern California. Roy values these past friendships today, knowing that life was precarious during Grass Valley's rough-and-tumble days.

Grass Valley was built upon the gold rush, prospectors representing all walks of life from all over the world. Fortunes were made and lost overnight, men flooding barrooms and jostling for a place to eat and sleep--many a time having neither. As years passed, the townspeople grew a new appreciation of their mining neighbors. They were no longer raw, unskilled young men who prospected to make their fortunes and leave. Now, they were skillfully trained, hard-rock miners or unskilled laborers who came west to better themselves and the lives of their children.

**Acknowledgement** - My thanks to author and historian Gage McKinney for referral to his book, *Crosses in a Gold Field, 150-Year History of Emmanuel Episcopal Church and Grass Valley*, 2005, and for his excellent advice.

My thanks to Roy Tremoureux, fifth generation member of Emmanuel Episcopal Church, for the interview of July 19, 2025. In addition, lending valuable books from his personal library: *American Heritage*, April 1959; *The Saga of the Comstock Lode* by George D. Lyman, 1934; *The History of the Comstock Lode 1850-1920* by Grant H. Smith, July 1, 1943; and *Popular California Flora* by Volney Rattan, 1



Photo taken by Darryl Welborne, August 2025

*For the members of Emmanuel Church  
who were unable to attend services on  
Sunday, August 17, the following is the Sermon that  
The Rev. Dr. Canon Tim Naish shared with us.*

**“Not Without Us”**

**A 170<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Sermon  
The Rev. Dr. Canon Tim Naish**

17 August 2025

Isa 5:1-7, Heb 11:29-12:2, Lk 12:49-56

[Canon Tim began with thanks for the invitation, welcome and generosity which he and his wife Hilary received in Grass Valley.]



“Canterbury Cathedral has about 20 smaller chapels around the building, as well as its main altars in the Nave, Quire and Crypt. One of my favourites is at the farthest east end, behind the high altar and the space where Thomas Becket’s shrine was, for over 300 years.... Originally it housed the crown of Becket’s head, which was sliced in the attack on him in 1170.

More recently it has been rededicated as the Chapel of Saints and Martyrs of Our Own Time.

There we tell the stories of some of the martyrs of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. Men and women from across the world: Uganda, France, Iran, the Solomon Islands, and many other places. There are two Americans, Bishop Charles Guerry of S Carolina who in 1928 was shot dead by one of his own priests for proposing the appointment of a black suffragan bishop; and Jonathan Daniels, an Episcopal seminarian who in 1965 was killed in Alabama while shielding a young black fellow civil rights protestor from a racist attack.

I hope you might be beginning to make connections with our Epistle reading from the letter to the Hebrews. What a gift this passage is for us on this day of celebration. I wondered about choosing something specific from Scripture for the day, but as so often, the lectionary provides what we need. This part of the letter does in its own context what Canterbury Cathedral is doing in that chapel for its context within the Anglican Communion, and also what we are doing here in Grass Valley today, in this context.

It looks back with thanks, looks forward in hope, and in the light of all this asks how we are to live in the present.

This passage is in a part of the letter that is exploring faith: believing and living in the promises of God even when the proof of those promises is not humanly evident. It commends the faith of the community’s forebears, especially when times were difficult.

We can do the same. For Gideon and Barak and Samson and company, we can name William Kip and William Hill and Melville Attwood, and later Rosette Johns and Frank Buck, and many others. But note too that there are many in the Epistle who are nameless; and there are many in Grass Valley in the history of this Church whose names may be unrecorded or who played what may seem a smaller part, but for whose faith we give thanks. In some cases, they will have been the forebears of you who are here today. Their specific demonstrations of faith may have been less spectacular than shutting the mouths of lions or being sawn in two or accepting destitution, but no less real. In each context what faith requires of us varies through time and place. But in whatever way, faithful people in Christ build a community that endures. The celebration of a significant anniversary is a big thank you for such faith.

As we celebrate, we need to be aware of the nature of hindsight. Those whom we remember gratefully today had to search in their time, for godly vision, had to make tough decisions, to overcome serious obstacles. They had no special holiness in advance, they often made mistakes, they were not perfect.

Just as we pursue visions, take decisions, struggle with challenges, in our time. It’s only looking back, that we can see how God’s Spirit was present and directing through people’s choices. The great American writer Marilynne Robinson has recently written about the Book of Genesis, and makes this point very well. How in the case of Jacob for example his deviousness and trickery still are seen to be at the service of a greater good. So, in celebrating those who have gone before us we celebrate God’s love in and through their strength and weakness. And we recognize that they in their time were like us today.

The writer to the Hebrews, and we here today, celebrate the particular nature of God’s love. We can do that in many and diverse contexts, because Christian Scripture and faith insist on God’s love as particular; as well as universal. Our particular celebration of the story of faith in the Emmanuel Grass Valley local context affirms the nature of God’s personal love. We give thanks for the story that has led us here, for the erection of this beautiful and holy place 170 year ago and for the worship, ministry, fellowship

and mission that has flowed from it. In a way this your story and each of the local stories of faithfulness around the world needs to be woven in to the fabric of that Chapel in the Cathedral that is the Anglican Mother Church, had we but the scope and vision to do so.

The chapel reminds us all as Anglicans together across the world that each context has something to contribute to a worldwide story. As we celebrate the local, the particular love of God for God's people here, at the same time we can and must rejoice on the overarching and all-embracing nature of that love. It is not exclusive to us. It is shared.

And the letter to the Hebrews as part of the Scriptures reminds us further that shared remembering, shared endurance, shared joy are at the heart of Christian faith, at the heart of what it means to be truly human. We are in it together. With our neighbours here locally, with our fellow Christians across the world, with the great communion of saints across time. Notice how the writer puts it after listing those who have gone before. He says: 'all these, commended for their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had provided something better so that they would not, without us, be made perfect. NOT WITHOUT US. We are in it together.

And this being in it together is rooted in Jesus. After remembering the faithful ones before us who have led to this moment, the Scripture continues: 'Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses let us run with perseverance our race, looking to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.' Through my boyhood and teenage years, I was raised in a Christian youth movement which had those three words 'looking to Jesus' as its motto, underneath a shield logo. As it happens, my group leader was also my dentist, and each time now when I read the words 'looking to Jesus' I think of leaning back in the chair and seeing in the upper corner of the room that shield and motto; because he had it there on a wooden board as a witness.

The toothache was my own. Only I could physically feel it. The fear was my own. But I entrusted myself into the hands of a skilled helper, who would work with me and for me on the difficulty. That's a tiny picture of the way life is, and especially the life of faith. We are mutually dependent; our lives are bound together. Locally, and yet also globally. These days, the survival of our planetary home on the basis of the way that we together occupy and use it makes that clearer than ever.

We celebrate and give thanks today not just as an historical event. We do so because we are looking to Jesus. Jesus' endurance of the cross, his taking upon himself the weight of the world's suffering, opens up the way to joy. Our shared past, present and future is in him. We are the body of Christ. And though we

begin in celebrating the faithfulness of those who have gone before us through 170 years, we are drawn through the shared story of our locality, of the Anglican Church worldwide, and of the body of Christ to celebrate the greater faithfulness of God in Christ towards us.

The body of Christ has myriad members, across centuries and geographical and cultural boundaries of all sorts. But the head of the body is Jesus Christ, in whom we participate as we come forward to receive the bread and wine that are his body and blood. This sharing, which includes all those who have done the same in this holy space over the decades, is the source of the joy set before us. Let us continue to look to Jesus:

- We look to Jesus in the past, to his incarnation, his sharing our joys and sorrows, to his life, showing us a way to live in communion and trust with the Father, and to his death on the cross.

- We look to Jesus in the present, reminded by that death that we will face challenges. Today's Gospel reminds us that to live faithfully and truthfully will bring us into opposition and division and that we cry to God for the gift of his Spirit to discern the true way of peace.

- And we look to Jesus for the future, rejoicing that he is risen and has taken his seat at the right hand of the Father. We look forward in joy, anticipating the glory that we cannot fully understand or describe. This is the glory and the joy for which God the creator has made us and God the redeemer has saved us; the joy of which God the Spirit gives us glimpses in all kinds of ways as we journey onwards.

I retired in March from my role at Canterbury Cathedral, and have since moved away. But I have to be back there on September 4<sup>th</sup>, and I will go once again to the Chapel of the Saints and Martyrs of our Time, and there pray for you, for the people of Emmanuel Grass Valley, past present and future, in confidence that through 170 years and more to come God is leading you in Christ into the joy of all his saints.

Let us pray now:

Living God, we heard your people described as your beloved vineyard. I see them in another image as your goldfield, chosen and precious in your sight. Thank you for their story, which reaches 170 years old this year. May you pan and mine and refine them to shine in your service today and make them ready for the freedom of the glory of the children of God which you promise as the goal of your creation, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

*joy*

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