

A PRAYER OF THE PEOPLE

PREAMBLE to the STORY and SYMBOLISM of the windows

At the outset of undertaking to design these windows for St. Jude's, I invited the Parishioners to submit any key words or concepts they would like me to consider.

Being familiar with St. Jude's Mission Action Plan, in conjunction with the Key Words put forward, I felt moved by the apparent deep care, importance and concern held by the people

- For **Creation** – the environment, both local and more broadly, the Earth.
- For **children** and the more senior parishioners
- For the **Aboriginal** history of the area.
- To be an **INCLUSIVE** and **WELCOMING COMMUNITY**
- Along with other **religious** or **spiritual** references.

As I pondered these, a set of themes emerged, resulting in the designs you see around us.

1. **CREATION** – an ongoing story.
2. Spirit of **ST. JUDE** – in our church.
3. **WELCOME TO ALL** – community.
4. Spirit of God in - **OUR LOCAL ENVIRONMENT.**
5. **TREE OF LIFE** – care of the ENVIRONMENT – TREE of LIFE
6. **JOY AND PRAISE** – each new day a gift.
7. God WITH us and IN us – **INTO THE FUTURE.**

I began designing and it wasn't long before I felt that the overall design was emerging as

“ A PRAYER OF THE PEOPLE.”

.... **A prayer of hope, gratitude, trust, love for God, Jesus and all people** in St. Jude's, the broader neighbourhood community and for **Creation** – the **Environment.**

.... **A prayer of commitment** – to each other, to all people and **future generations** and to **care for the Earth**, this amazing & beautiful planet, which sustains, nurtures & supports us.

.... and **which is under grave threat** due to much unwise human behaviour.

Throughout the windows are visual references to the way in which **THE WORD of GOD** is spoken uniquely to us through our **AUSTRALIAN LANDSCAPE**. Gum blossom, for example, can be seen as symbols of **NEW LIFE/ RESURRECTION** in the seasonal life-cycle of **GUM TREES**.

Other symbols appear as subtle references to various aspects of Spiritual and Religious life, e.g. Water (Baptism), fire (Pentecost/ Confirmation), stars (spiritual light), fish and plant life (providence) etc.

The Dominant Symbol, **THE RAINBOW RIBBON**, has many layers of meaning. However, in essence, it symbolises **THE SPIRIT OF GOD**. It first appears in the CREATION WINDOW when it emerges from **THE SUN**, or **BIG BANG**. It then weaves through, in and around the design elements in each of the 7 windows which together make up the overall design.....
CREATING, MAKING SACRED, SUSTAINING and ANIMATING ALL THAT IS CREATING INTO THE FUTURE.

The Alpha and the Omega, Infinite.

Below each window is the STORY and SYMBOLISM which has emerged, revealing meaning for me, and has found expression in shape, colour or movement as the process unfolded.

However I strongly encourage you to

'ALLOW THE WINDOWS TO SPEAK TO YOU FIRST'

before reading my words.

They may hold a personal 'Word of God' for you.

Perhaps in a word or feeling.

Designing Artist - Gail Donovan
July 2022

With deep gratitude, we acknowledge the generosity of the MacLeod family who have graciously donated the windows in memory of Nancy, Ian and Jennifer.