

Christ Church Freemantle

Sunday 26th July; Dedication Sunday – 7th Sunday after Trinity

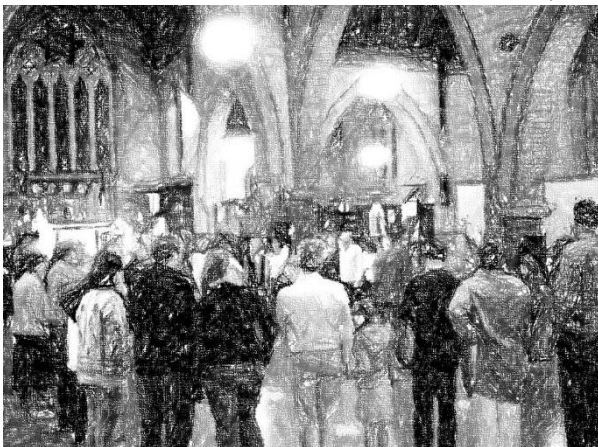
A sure foundation

One hundred and fifty-five years ago this week our church building was consecrated after a long four years as a building site. Even then, the building wasn't finished, only a few windows were stained glass, most of the carving on the pillars hadn't been completed yet. It would be two years before the organ was added and ten years before a spire was even built. It seems that change has been the only constant and the building has always been a work in progress; even now we are still working hard to make sure the building is in a fit state to pass on to future generations.



To me, the love many have for this building isn't really about the beauty of its glass or the grace of the arches. It is what it symbolises – all those people who have worshipped in this place, all the joy and sorrow that these old stones now contain. Last Sunday's reading included the apt words from Genesis where Jacob exclaims *'Surely the Lord is in this place—and I did not know it!'* And he was afraid, and said, *'How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.'*

A small but determined church community has existed in Freemantle since the mid-1850s, meeting in upper rooms, laundries, and school classrooms, borrowing benches from local inns for services, and dealing with an often ill or absent priest



in charge, working hard to build a church building and to keep the community going. I feel there is a sense of determination here still. This year, whilst we were unable to worship together for several months, we were still a church community, showing concern for each other and the place we serve.

Although we don't have a priest in charge at the moment, we are still a church family and incredibly lucky to have Eileen and Ian amongst us as retired clergy doing all they can to support and encourage us.

Over the last 155 years there have been seventeen Rectors, forty churchwardens and most importantly, thousands of faithful souls coming through these doors seeking God and his people. It seems so very apt that the first holy communion service for some months will take place today on our Dedication Sunday. Maybe this is the Sunday to rededicate ourselves to His service, whether we are at church or whether we are at home.

Liz Coe

