

Basket Brigade

It's that time of year again. Christmas angels flying over Charles Street and, just as exciting, it's the time when our church building is transformed into a food warehouse. All of last week our church chairs have been pushed to the walls and our communion table gently rolled to the front wall, and carton after carton of food and Christmas gifts are placed centre stage. So on Saturday our church was a bustle of noise and activity when people from the community were joined by people from Pilgrim to pack over 300 baskets that will be distributed to individuals and families doing it tough this Christmas.

And as I am reminded each year by Ron Batt, who co-ordinates the Basket Brigade programme Australia-wide, the baskets are sent out anonymously, a gift that is made purely for the sake of giving, quietly, without fuss or fanfare. Now Ron's motivation is secular but **As I See It**, it is a pure reflection of how God works in the world. It's about an unconditional love that flows out regardless of any return, God's unconditional love that is most clearly seen in the coming of the Christ child.

And whilst Ron and a large band of volunteers work tirelessly to bring Christmas cheer, your Church Council has been working hard at articulating a Pilgrim mission statement that seeks to reflect the very thing the Basket Brigade is all about. As I write this I hear PYPs mums laughing as they use our church kitchen. I hear Neville, a one-time visitor to Pilgrim who has been working all week with Ron, moving furniture, and I rejoice at the life and signs of hospitality that are a key part of who we are. Pilgrim is a Christian community that opens its doors to all unconditionally.

So here's what our church council has come up with, a statement of who we are and what we seek to express – the unconditional love of God in Jesus the Christ.

Pilgrim is a loving, prayerful faith community that seeks:

- To nurture , grow and share our faith through our relationship with God, taking seriously the Good News of Jesus the Christ.
- To promote wholeness in mind, body and spirit through worship, prayer and deed.
- To discern God's will for our lives.
- To live in enjoyment and hope.

Pilgrim is a loving, hospitable faith community that seeks:

- To model the life God calls us to lead.
- To be an inclusive community that welcomes, supports and nurtures all.
- To be a community that values theological difference and accommodates diversity.

Pilgrim is a loving, prophetic faith community seeking to share the Good News of God by:

- Seeking to promote and reflect God's love in the city of Launceston, being a haven in the city,
- Providing practical outreach,
- Working for social justice in the world,
- Embracing radical reform
- Loving locally, hoping globally.

Tony would be more than happy to chat about the above article.

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