

Dean's Letter, May 14 2017

Dear Cathedral family

Thank you very much indeed to all who came to our Silver Wedding anniversary tea (and champagne!) at the Deanery last Sunday; and to all who so generously supplied eats and helped to arrange and serve the tea. The weather played ball, and we enjoyed the autumn sun for a couple of hours. What a celebration and landmark it was for Claire and me, and we are so grateful to the Cathedral family for your love and affirmation.

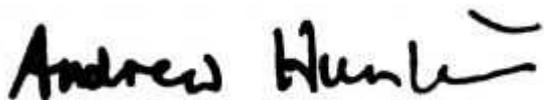
Marriage and family life is for me one of the greatest gifts I have ever received: being born into and brought up within a loving, stable family; meeting and marrying Claire, and being blessed with our two daughters; having an extended family of cousins and nephews and nieces, uncles and aunts. The Hunter and Nye families go back a long way together. Claire's father, Mark, came out to this country as an Anglican priest to work in the diocese of Kimberley and Kuruman. His bishop, John Hunter, was my grandfather. And even though our parents and grandparents have all died, we are very conscious of their love and support over the years. We have been shaped by them. My prayer for our two daughters is that they will find and marry someone special, and live with happiness and fulfilment and in peace; we look forward to grandchildren (but not just yet!)

The Introduction to the Marriage Service states the threefold purposes of marriage as follows: "The union of husband and wife in heart, mind and body is given for their mutual comfort and help in prosperity and adversity. It is given that they may know each other with delight and tenderness in acts of love. It is given that they may have children and bring them up in the knowledge and love of the Lord." (AAPB pg 461).

I acknowledge that as much as we celebrate marriage, a happy married life is not how it always works out. Singleness through divorce, widowhood, or circumstances is the experience of many; some have chosen to be on their own rather than remain in abusive relationships. Single parenting, children being brought up by grandparents, guardians, aunts, step-parents, is increasingly the norm. Our families in the Cathedral have many different shapes and forms. The children, teenagers and students who come to the Cathedral are from a variety of family backgrounds. And some communities have the pastoral reality of same-sex couples, with or without children. Will such couples find a community of welcome and worship – a place of Christian faith for themselves and their children – amongst us? I hope so.

I thank God for the gift of marriage and family life; my prayer for all our growing teens and wonderful young adults is that they will in time find the "right one" to accompany them through life. May we as the Christian community be an example of faithfulness and stability and commitment, welcome and love.

My love to you all

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew Hunter". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.