

**Blessing of the Fleet**  
**Walpole**  
**Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2011**

**Welcome and Recognition of Country:**

Harold Luxton

**Opening Remarks:**

Councillor David Tapley,  
Manjimup Shire

**Opening Prayer:**

Gracious God,

We ask your presence upon this event  
of the blessing of the emergency services fleet.

We thank you for the awesome beauty of this green  
and brown land of tall trees and shy orchids,  
of native fauna and livestock, of floods and fires.

We thank you for our ocean, rivers and inlet  
of calm and storm.

We thank you for our family friends, neighbours and visitors who share this place.

And today we particularly thank you for those

who care for the environment, who protect and rescue. We pray for all present  
and for those who cannot be here today,

especially those absent because they are at this moment giving of their skills, knowledge and courageous  
effort to care for and rescue those in other communities.

God of grace be with us we pray.

**Amen.**

We come together to bless our emergency services in what we are calling the Blessing of the Fleet. This is an ancient practice in which both the church and the community come together to seek God's blessing, proclaim pride and gratitude for the courage and commitment of those who undertake risky work that all might benefit, and to celebrate a way of life that binds a community together. Traditionally the blessing of the fleet takes place in small ocean side communities who depend on fishing and marine trades for their livelihood where there has been recognition of the importance of a way of life that brings wellbeing for all by the risk taking work of the few.

This morning we also come to ask God's blessing on those who give their time and talents working as both career and volunteer workers in our emergency services. In particular we ask for God's blessings on those who work with the **Ambulance service,**

the **Bush Fire Service,**

the **Department of Environment and Conservation,**

the **State Emergency Service,**

the **Marine Rescue,**

the **Police,** and the **Silver Chain.**

As a community we want to acknowledge your dedication, skill, generosity and courage in undertaking work, paid and unpaid, that serves our community. We express our gratitude for the work done by the many agencies here represented that protects us, rescues us, and brings comfort as individuals and as a community that lives in a beautiful but remote and vulnerable part of the world.

Today we also want to acknowledge that many of those services represented here are staffed in part by volunteers, those who give time, skill and commitment above and beyond the demands of their daily lives. We wish to honour the volunteers in our community and the crucial role played by those who give freely of themselves for the benefit of the all. In recognition of National Volunteers Day the Community and Resource Centre have been able to access funds which has contributed to the costs of today's celebration. We thank the CRC for their role in making today's event possible.

As you wander around many of the services represented here this morning will have information about how you might volunteer and join company with the fine folk you see in uniform.

And I want to acknowledge the family and friends of those who work in these services and the sacrifice they make in sharing their loved ones with the community. Today we also acknowledge and remember those who have died serving their community.

In a moment I am going to pray for God's blessing on our workers and their vehicles. Then I will walk to the head of the parade and bless each vehicle as it passes in an ancient ritual of sprinkling with holy water.

We are particularly mindful this morning that some are not here because they are busy doing the very work of fire fighting in other communities. They are very much included in our prayer for blessing.

Later at 12:30 in the Anglican Church there will be a brief service of Thanksgiving if you wish to join us.

**Blessing of the Fleet:**

God of boundless love,  
in the beginning you created all that is,  
bless this land and ocean that we know as home;  
you have given us gifts and free will to develop them, bless those who use their gifts to serve the community; you have called us to live in families and communities, bless those who support and love those who work in these emergency services;  
you have given us the creativity to create  
and use these vehicles,  
bless them to our use and for the service of this community.

And may the blessings of God Almighty,  
Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier of all Life,  
Bless and keep you and those whom you love  
now and always.

**Amen.**

## Service of Thanksgiving for Emergency Service Personnel St George's Anglican Church 12:30

### Welcome:

To event

To place

### Praise and Thanksgiving:

Let us thank God, the Creator of all that is,  
For the gift of life in all its varied forms;  
for our continued share in the continuing work of creation;  
for creative vision and inventive skills;  
and for the many emergency services and professions  
who care for our environment and our community.

**We give you thanks and praise.**

Let us thank God, the Redeemer of all,  
For all who work our farms and forest, our oceans and our rivers;  
for those who make their homes and livelihood in this community;  
for those who visit and recreate in our beautiful landscape;  
and for those who support, protect and care for all in this community.

**We give you thanks and praise.**

Let us thank God, the Spirit that sanctifies all life,  
For the call to belong and serve expressed in this community  
by so many career and volunteer personnel  
who give their energy and time to gaining the knowledge and skill  
to care for the environment, manage its dangers, respond to its awesome power for  
destruction, and to protect lives and livelihoods.

**We give you thanks and praise.**

**Amen.**

### Music:

For the beauty of the earth.

### Reading:

### Reflection of Scripture:

Confession of our Failings and the Desire for Forgiveness:

God Almighty,

Creator of this and all worlds

We seek forgiveness for all those times and ways  
in which we have failed to recognise and respect the power,  
the uniqueness and the vulnerability of your creation.

Help us to honour all that you have made.

God of grace, in your mercy,

**Here our prayer.**

God the Christ,

our brother and our friend,

We seek forgiveness for all those times and ways in which we have failed to recognise our  
neighbours and strangers as made in your image and have failed to be generous and just  
with others and ourselves

Help us to honour all to whom you have given breath.

God of grace, in your mercy,

**Here our prayer.**

God the Spirit,

Sanctifier of all life,

We seek forgiveness for all those times and ways in which we have denied life and love to  
flourish in our relationships with others and ourselves and have settled for less than joy and  
hope in our homes and community.

God of grace, in your mercy,

**Here our prayer.**

**Amen.**

God is slow to anger and full of compassion, forgiving all  
who humbly repent and trust in his Son as Saviour and Lord.

God therefore forgives you in Christ Jesus,  
in whom there is no condemnation.

**Amen.**

Prayers Seeking Blessing and Protection:

Gracious God, Source of all being,  
You give life and are present at its ending,  
we pray for the safety and health of all in our community.  
We pray for all who serve our community through our emergency services that you may  
bless them and protect them from harm  
in carrying out their duties.

God of grace,  
**Bless us and protect us.**

Gracious God, Companion on our journey,  
You give wisdom to the humble and faithful, we pray for those who lead, administer and  
manage our emergency services that they might know your wisdom. We pray that our  
leaders might be blessed and strengthened for their work.

God of grace,  
**Bless us and strengthen us.**

Gracious God, comforter,  
You grant us the joy and comfort of family, friends and neighbours.  
We pray for those who love and support all those who serve our community. Bless them  
and comfort them in the knowledge of their share in the work of supporting those who  
serve the community.

God of grace,  
**Bless us and comfort us.**  
**Amen.**

Music:  
Joyful, joyful we adore you.

The Blessing:  
May the blessings of God,  
Creator of all that is,  
Redeemer of the world,  
Spirit sanctifying all that has life,  
be upon you and all whom you love,  
now and forever.  
**Amen.**