

Newsbeat

NEWSLETTER FOR THE PRESBYTERY OF PORT PHILLIP EAST



Photo by Kim Cain, St Leonard's Brighton Beach

MARCH HEADLINES

BEAUMARIS
DEEP SPRING
COUNSELLING

TONGA APPEAL

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RESOURCES

PILGRIM
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CELEBRATING
CULTURAL
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UCA STYLE

PRESBYTERY
PRIORITIES
2021 TO 2022

MARCH 2022 ISSUE



Port Philip's East Presbytery's WHAT'S HAPPENING

An insight into what congregations
& people are doing

BEAUMARIS DEEP SPRING COUNSELLING

This counselling service has been operating out of St Martin's Beaumaris Uniting Church for about 20 years. Initiated by a church member, Peter Wicking and the late Rev. Barbara Higgins, and adopting the Cairnmiller model, it was to be a community outreach activity sponsored by the church with a minimal fee structure.

A room was allocated on the end of the St Martin's building to be shared by two psychologists, Mary Larsen and Geoff Hinde. With the changes to government regulations regarding mental health, the service could be offered at little or no cost to the client and this has continued to the present day. Mary and Geoff have since retired and a new team is in place.

Two years ago, the church agreed to expand the service, allocating a second consulting room. That has been completed and two new counsellors were added to the team. The Deep Spring team now includes Ailsa Drent, Alan White, and Chris Wood.

The counselling service has continued to operate throughout 2022, using online consultations. According to Ailsa the level of enquiries has increased considerably. "As psychologists we recognize that the most effective interaction occurs when it is face-to-face, but responses have been good".

For further information or to make an appointment, visit beaumarisunitingchurch.org.au.



Consultant rooms at Beaumaris UCA





Port Phillip East Presbytery's website has been updated with a suite of posts featuring resources for congregations and individuals observing Lent and Easter.

Check out ideas including Easter art on Pinterest, Jan Richardson's Circle of Grace book of reflections, David McGregor's instrumental music, Lent Event 2022, Repairing the Breach - a 7-week study guide, I Remember - 10 voices from Holy Week, 40 – a set of 40 images for Lent by Si Smith, Every Single Stone – a song about Simon's denial, the Lumo videos, a Holy Moly Easter, Building Faith for Lent, Where Your Heart Is, Life to the Brim song by Andrew Dutney, A Sanctified Art, and "What is Lent" – a video from the United Methodist Church in the USA.

Find these all at

<https://ucappep.org/lent-easter-resources>

WESTERNPORT to TONGA

Colin Watt, Secretary, Western Port Parish and Western Port Parish Op Shop, writes about supporting the relief efforts in the wake of the volcanic eruption in Tonga.

Following the recent Tongan volcanic eruption which caused a tsunami and dust cloud that devastated the island, the Western Port Uniting Churches and Opportunity Shop people combined to box up urgently needed items that had been donated through the Parish Op. Shop at Crib Point, for shipment to Tonga.

On Monday 31st January, fifteen members of the churches and Op Shop met at the Hastings Uniting Church to wrap, and box selected household goods and linen. Later that week, these labeled boxes were transported to Keysborough where the Mission Liaison Group (MLG) were packing shipping containers en route to Tonga.

MLG, a voluntary group has been supporting Pacific Island communities for many years, especially after natural disaster events and the Tongan eruption is no exception. Many communities have been wiped out due to the massive tidal waves. As volcanic dust settles over the landscape, crops will be severely diminished for many years. These people will be in desperate need of basic living requisites for some considerable time.

At short notice, the churches and Op Shop were pleased to load up these essential supplies and contribute to the Uniting Church relief effort via MLG, which continues to play an integral role in the health and welfare of Pacific Island communities.



Journey of Listening and Discovery

In the February issue of Newsbeat Presbytery Chair Tom Spurling invited readers to send in their stories relating to the relationship between First and Second Peoples. Here are the first two responses.

High Street Uniting Church Frankston minister David Fotheringham, soon to be Synod Moderator, shares a sermon from Season of Creation 2021. He connects the Genesis 1:26-28 reading with the concepts of Humanity and Earth.

In the Statement from the Heart, prepared by First Peoples at the 2017 National Constitutional Convention at Uluru, there is a word about the ongoing sovereignty of the first people. The Statement says

“This Sovereignty is a spiritual notion: the ancestral tie between the land, or ‘mother nature’, and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who were born therefrom, remain attached thereto, and must one day return thither to be united with our ancestors.”

In Genesis 1, this reading sets up our understanding of the plurality of humanity in all of whom we encounter God’s image, who are made to reflect God’s nature; and the gospel reading brings home that being made to reflect God’s nature means service and love, generosity and justice, as Jesus both taught and modelled.

It reminds me of the Biblical words in Genesis about how from dust we are made and to dust we shall return, although ‘dust’ doesn’t seem quite as rich a concept as ‘land’.

The Genesis reading has been interpreted many times as being a license for some people to colonise and dominate.



Read more carefully, though, we find that God created the plurality of humanity and gave all of us not just power but responsibility for the earth from which we were formed, and for all of its creatures. The First Peoples of this land never ceded that responsibility or gift.

We have a responsibility to finally learn from First People’s wisdom, to hear First People’s stories, and to accept the invitation towards Makaratta. May God give us grace to walk together.

Read the whole sermon on the [Presbytery website](#).



Rev. Wendy Snook, until recently the minister at St Andrew’s Uniting Church, Berwick, discovered a little family history before it was too late.

My father Keith Linton Parker was born on the lounge at the Claytonvale/ Westall flower farm in 1937. Before he died, I asked him if he knew the Aboriginal people of the area. He said “Of course! We had Queenie working in the house.” This was the first I had heard about Queenie, so I asked him more.

Queenie was a Bunurong woman who lived in the house and worked as a domestic helper while the children were young. She was well treated and appreciated, according to my father. He did not know about her pay or her family situation, he being young at the time.

But he said it was common for Bunurong Aboriginal people to work seasonally on the farms, and come and go as they wished. He didn’t know exactly where Queenie went after World War 2, other than she went to stay with her family again, and perhaps married.

There were other local Aboriginal people around working as farm hands and flower cutters, etc., before WW2.

The Second World War changed things considerably, so there were fewer workers available on the farm then and afterwards. But my father described the relationships of the family with the Bunurong as normal, friendly, respectful, and matter of fact.

So the Bunurong were in the homes and farms of the early Methodists in PPE in the nineteenth and early and mid 20th centuries.





This month Port Phillip East Presbytery invites congregations to pray for Pilgrim Theological College, the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania's theological college based in Parkville, Melbourne. Look out for the Pilgrim Theological College Course Guide for 2022 in your church foyer or download it from the Pilgrim website.

Many classes can be taken as award subjects (as part of undergraduate or graduate courses) or audited – sitting in to learn. Look out for special lectures.

Pilgrim Theological College is a community of education and formation for people learning the journey of faith. It offers the highest standards of scholarship in theology, philosophy and ministry in today's contemporary world.

Located at the Centre for Theology & Ministry beside Melbourne University, the College's courses offer a community of learning, formation and discipleship.

As well as studying with academic experts recognised around the world, we believe learning is about community. That's why Pilgrim Theological College offers evening, day and online classes, with on-campus access to the Dalton McCaughey Library – one of the greatest theological libraries in the Southern Hemisphere.

International students are welcomed and supported by the Pilgrim faculty in any areas of study which students may find challenging. For students who live in regional areas, struggle to attend regular classes, or who have limited mobility, online courses in theology are available, providing a flexible, ecumenical, world-class standard of theological distance education.

Pilgrim Theological College is one of many colleges that form part of the University of Divinity in the Australian cities of Melbourne, Adelaide and Sydney.

The staff at Pilgrim Theological College would love to meet you in person or via video-call to get to know you and together find a suitable starting point for your theological studies at Pilgrim. You can find them at the Centre for Theology and Ministry, 29 College Crescent, Parkville VIC 3052.

Registrar Erlinda Loverseed can connect you to the appropriate Course Coordinators or the Academic Dean for specific matters relating to teaching and learning. Her office is open from Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm and she can be contacted by phone, 03 9340 8892, or by email, registrar@pilgrim.edu.au.

For further information or to download a copy of the 2022 Course Guide, visit the Pilgrim Theological College website:

<https://pilgrim.edu.au>

You can also follow the College on social media channels:

facebook.com/PilgrimTheologicalCollege

twitter.com/PilgrimTheolCol



Pilgrim People Profiles

We were able to attain some insight into the college this month from the teachers, students and researchers themselves. We contacted people who are undertaking study or research in an undergraduate degree, a graduate degree, and a PhD at Pilgrim Theological College.

Robyn Whitaker is Senior Lecturer, New Testament, at Pilgrim Theological College, University of Divinity. She specialises in the Book of Revelation with particular attention to the visual culture in which the text emerged and the visual rhetoric of biblical literature. She has published on Revelation, Luke, and Mark's gospel, and each week co-hosts a podcast on the lectionary readings: bythewell.com.au

"I've been teaching New Testament at Pilgrim Theological College for almost 4 years. At the moment I'm teaching a class on the Book of Revelation, which is the text on which I wrote my PhD. Later this year I'm teaching Introduction to the New Testament and also a new unit on Doing Public Theology (with my colleague, John Flett).

One of the things I love about teaching is watching students make connections and have those "aha" moments about the Bible and faith. It doesn't matter how well someone thinks they know the Bible, there is always more to discover. I try to use a range of styles in the classroom as everyone learns a bit differently. One of the nice things about working at Pilgrim is we have small classes and diverse students, so that allows for some creativity.



At the moment I'm writing a book on how to read the Bible. It looks at what the Bible is (and is not) as well as how the Bible itself gives us clues for how to interpret it. It is written for a general audience, so I hope it will be a good resource for the church as we continue to grapple with issues of interpretation in the modern world.



In April 2020, Peter Whitefield discussed the tricky dynamics of life being a chaplain for the Melbourne Welsh Church, and being in a motorcycle club at the same time. Of course, this is no ordinary 'bikie' gang, rather they are known as God's Squad Christian Motorcycle Club. It may not be normal attire for a Pilgrim Theological College Bachelor of Ministry student to be in, but Peter isn't your stereotypical biker or bikie.

"I find studying at Pilgrim challenging and rewarding. As a mature aged student, and having left school at fourteen, fellow students and lecturers are supportive and encouraging. I work full time at Melbourne Welsh Church and the units I have taken are invaluable to the ministry there."



Students of 2022



Cathie Lambert has recently submitted her PhD thesis at Pilgrim Theological College. She was the recipient of a three-year scholarship covering fees and some living costs. Her topic is the beguine mystics of the 13th century and their relevance for de-churched women today. She is now working with the Spirited Project, exploring how family and friends of people living with dementia can best provide spiritual care for their loved ones.

“I began my PhD in 2018 with Pilgrim Theological College. Early discussions with people about pursuing higher degree research indicated that finding the right supervisor was key to having the necessary support for the process. I was fortunate that staff and students from Pilgrim were willing to sit with me and listen to my musings before I was even an enrolled student. I felt part of a community of researchers before I had even embarked on the journey.

Throughout the last four years of my research, I have felt supported and encouraged by all staff at Pilgrim and given opportunities to share and test my findings with them. In turn, they have been excellent exemplars of working collaboratively as a staff, but also with their ecumenical peers. One of the joys of being a PhD candidate through Pilgrim has been the wider community of research students in the University of Divinity. Even though I live in Western Australia, I have felt part of the community and fully supported by my peers.

I have recently submitted my thesis and I am extremely grateful for the care, challenge and wisdom of my primary supervisor, Professor Katharine Massam. Herself and other academic staff of Pilgrim have shown interest not only in my topic and my research, but in my life and aspirations moving forward. Being a research student at Pilgrim has taught me so much and introduced me to a wonderful, professional team of theologians.”

Junior Manase is a lay preacher in the Christian Congregational Church of Samoa, currently based at the Hampton Park Parish. He is also a full time furniture removalist, working around scheduled seminars and tutorials. Junior is a proud father of 3 beautiful children who inspire him every day.

“Talofa lava! My name is Junior, and I am currently in my second year of studies at Pilgrim College, doing a Masters in Theology (Coursework). My experience so far has been amazing to say the least, even in spite of the difficulties that online classes presented! In 2019 I obtained my Bachelors in Theology at Malua Theological College in Samoa. The classroom environment is very different there. It is a very distinct theology that they teach in alignment with the church’s goals to produce ministers who can cater to the spiritual needs of the samoan congregational context. Here at Pilgrim, I am fortunate to be able to converse and ‘talanoa’ with many people in many different walks of life and from many different faith traditions. This provides perspective, which helps me engage the gospel at a deeper level. Combine this with the expertise that the faculty bring here at Pilgrim College, I consider myself extremely fortunate to be here.”





International Womens Day March 8, 2022

Get on board and make a change.

IWD 2022 campaign theme: #BreakTheBias

Imagine a gender equal world. A world free of bias, stereotypes, and discrimination.

A world that is diverse, equitable, and inclusive.

A world where difference is valued and celebrated.

Together we can forge women's equality.

Collectively we can all **#BreakTheBias.**



Ormond UCA Learning Hub March 17, 24, 31 at 7.30pm

In this 3-week course we will delve into Luke's Passion, exploring the narrative movement leading up to it, the events of the crucifixion as Luke portrays them, the echoes of the Jewish story and what Luke is pointing to in his telling of the Passion.

Cost: \$30 for the course

Who: led by Rev. Andrew Boyle

Enquiries and booking to:

learninghub@ormond.unitingchurch.org.au



Help your families connect with each other and God's Word during the week! March 11 at 1pm AEDT

Kidology's Family Table Talkers are a reproducible tool designed to help families disconnect from tech and connect with each other and God's Word.

We live in a hurried culture, families are constantly on the go, and finding time to connect with each other and God's Word is a challenge.

These Table Talkers are designed to make it easier for families to connect around the meal table for meaningful conversation around a monthly theme. Every Family Table Talker includes a theme, a motto for the month, a victory verse, some goofy games, live chat discussion starters, a family challenge, and more! Their website has further details about their program on Family Table Talkers. [Click here to join.](#)



On-line Safety for Leaders of Children & Youth March 11 at 1PM AEDT

The National Safe Church Unit (NSCU) is partnering with the Office of the e-Safety Commissioner to deliver an online safety webinar for adults, particularly those who are leaders of children and/or youth as part of the Church. The Office of the e-Safety Commissioner leads and regulates online safety efforts by the Australian Government. This FREE webinar will...explore current technology trends and issues for young people examine the online environment and safe online interactions with children and young people help manage risks and support young people in a youth group environment highlight e-Safety resources for leaders of children and youth

The webinar will be 1 hour in duration and registration is via **e-Safety webinar.**

International Women's Day – March 8

International Women's Day, March 8, is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. The day also marks a call to action for accelerating gender parity. Significant activity is witnessed worldwide as groups come together to celebrate women's achievements or rally for women's equality.

This month we meet up with Rev Alexandra Sangster who has been working as a Minister of the Word with the Uniting Church in Australia for over 17 years and as an actor and facilitator for over 20. In February 2022 Alex was inducted as Minister with St Kilda Parish. She described the impact of Coralie Ling on her ongoing sense of call to ministry.

When I was experiencing my call, my terrible, frightening, wonderful, wild call, I was hanging out with an old shaman Methodist mystic minister called Rev Alf Foote and when I told him what was happening and he, in his wisdom, sent me along to the Rev. Dr. Coralie Ling who was, at that time, the minister at Fitzroy UCA: a radical feminist community.

I sat with Coralie and told her:

"I think that I am meant to be a minister".

And then I said: "I don't get the whole Jesus thing I haven't been baptised and I haven't read the Bible".

"Well", she said, "You might want to try coming to church first?"

"All right", I replied, reluctantly, "but if it's really boring, I'm not coming back."

I am quite sure that despite the power and the insistence of Gods call, if I had been sent to a more traditional congregation and minister I would not have stuck around.

The theology that I experienced in that place was one which challenged all my prejudices and preconceptions about Christianity as the home of homophobia and colonialism and conservative community and which inspired me to give my life to becoming a soul carer for the world.



Photo above of Rev Alex Sangster at her induction in St Kilda

Coralie Ling was the second woman ordained in the Methodist Church of Australasia and the first Methodist woman ordained in the state of Victoria. In 1977, she became a minister in the Uniting Church in Australia.

Coralie Ling baptised me, blessed me and supported me as I grew into the minister I am today. With her I discovered a god of many names and many colours, deeply grounded in deep earth and wild sky.

I also learnt how to sing strange Christmas carols with feminist rewordings and sit in a circle of faith with refugees from a tradition which had burnt or abused them.

And now these many years later I have the honour of working alongside her as we share the song of Sophia in St Kilda.



Photo above of UCA minister - Rev Coralie Ling





Australia celebrates Harmony Day on March 21, celebrating Australian multiculturalism, and the successful integration of migrants into our community. The day coincides with the United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. Here we're reprinting a speech made by Rev Dev Anandarajan for Sri Lankan Harmony Day in 2016, inspired by Martin Luther King's famous "I have a dream" speech from 1963. Dev is Intercultural Leadership Development Coordinator for the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania and a member of Port Phillip East Presbytery.

I have a Dream...

That one day Sri Lankans of all ethnicities and religions will hold hands and say we are different, but we are all proudly Sri Lankans.

That one day we will value each other for our rich cultural heritage, our religions, our languages and the contribution we make together for the welfare of the nation.

That one day we will take pride in the distinctiveness of our various cultural heritages and celebrate each one with pride.

That one day our children will learn not to categorize fellow Sri Lankans into ethnic or religious categories but value them all as children of mother Lanka.



I have a Dream...



I have a dream...

That one day we will say sorry for the pain we inflicted on each other, either by us directly or by others in our name.

That one day the Government of Sri Lanka will say sorry to the minorities for the discriminatory policies that marginalised them in their own country.

That one day all those who have suffered will receive justice.

That one day those who have inflicted pain will truly repent and be sorry for their deeds.

That one day those whose rights have been violated and suffered loss and pain will have the magnanimity to forgive those who have inflicted pain. Thus healing our community for the common good of all.

That one day our politicians will work for the common good of all and not create divisions to gain power by encouraging ethnic divide.

That one day we will rise up and say, "We will not let ourselves be divided one against the other" and courageously guard each other's rights as fellow citizens.

That one day, very soon, we will speak each other's language, or a common language which all Sri Lankans can communicate with, so that there may be greater understanding and fellowship to build a happy, peaceful nation.

That in our distinctiveness we will find our strength, in what is common we will find our identity, in our religions we will seek paths of truth, justice and peace, in our ideologies we will seek the welfare of all, and together we will make Sri Lanka a land of peace and prosperity.



CELEBRATING DIVERSITY UCA STYLE

Sylvia 'Akau'ola Tongotongo recently started in the role of Intercultural Communities Development Coordinator within equipping Leadership for Mission. She is moving to live in Malvern and has become a member of Port Phillip East Presbytery. Here Sylvia reflects on our Presbytery's mission priority of developing intercultural relationships, drawing on four sayings from her Tongan language.

The Uniting Church in Australia (UCA), in celebrating diversity is declaring its responsibility to be actively involved in embracing diverse perspectives, cultures, beliefs and values, affirming that differences are accepted, appreciated and celebrated.

We celebrate a diversity which as a whole, is greater than the sum of its parts – including ethnicity, race, colour, religion, belief, sexual orientation, age and ability to name a few. In our differences, we extend our horizons as we learn from one another. Increased awareness of others' differences means increased understanding and respect.

So rather than seeing our differences as something that keep us apart, let us embrace them, and celebrate them and let them unite us. We are many and we are one family of humanity working together for better. That, we celebrate!

Ko e Ngaahi Pou Tu'u Loto he Mo'ui 'a e Tonga, 'o tatau pe he 'aho 'alomalie mo e 'aho 'o e faingata'a.

(Pillars of strength for a Tongan is the same in glorious days and days of disaster).

These are not fixed structures like the pillars of a house but are strong ingrained foundations on which character, values, and attitudes are built on for Tongans. There are many, but I will briefly mention three:

Ko e 'Otua mo Tonga ko hoku Tofi'a.

(God and Tonga are my inheritance)

This is the Tongan coat of arms on its National seal. It embraces and reflects a nation that believes in God who created, and is creating and protecting Tonga and its people

It also captures the spirituality of the people in the connectedness of each life to the environment and creation, with respect and appreciation that words are often inadequate to explain yet seen demonstrated in ways of living.



Rev Sylvia 'Akau'ola Tongotongo is the Intercultural Communities Development co-ordinator within equipping Leadership for Mission.

Tonga mo'unga ki he Loto.

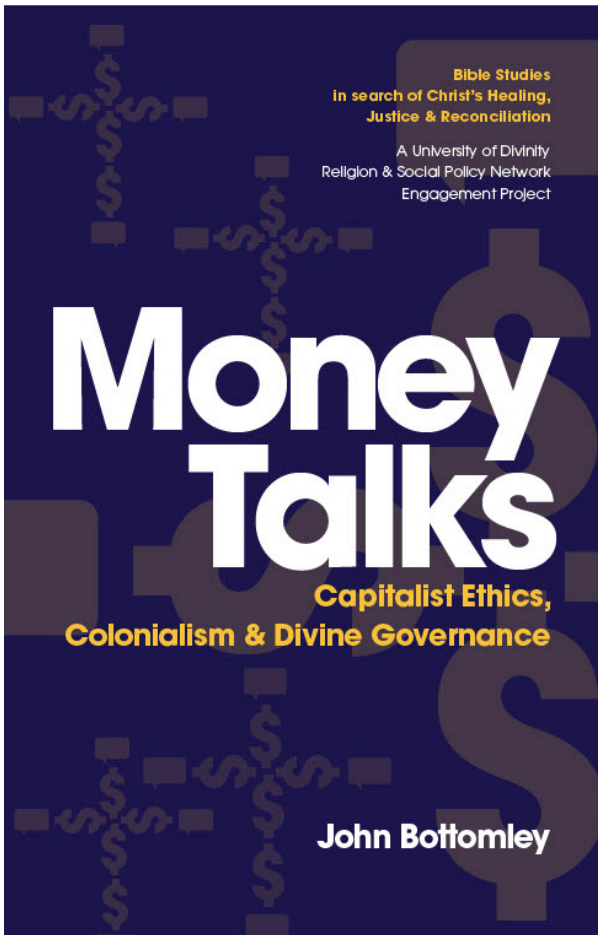
(The mountain of Tonga lies in the hearts of its people).

Tonga is a group of low-lying islands with no mountains (except deep sea volcanoes that erupt and form new islands). Tonga is vulnerable to natural disasters and climate change. Tonga mo'unga ki he loto posits that the strength of each individual is in the heart. The tallest mountains to climb, the biggest challenges, are in the heart, and the most glorious mountain top experiences, the causes for joy and celebrations are also in the heart. In the time of disaster like the recent tsunami, when people are expected to find refuge on higher ground that isn't there, it means going deeper and tapping into the mountain within, that becomes the source of resilience and wisdom in the times of need. Similar to where there's will, there's a way.

Nofo 'a Kainga.

(Living in Community as Family).

Living in community as family envelops inclusiveness. Everyone matters, everyone counts, and all work together for the good of all. Living as family is the reality of being multicultural, intercultural, inter-generational and where the richness of diversity is witnessed. Living as family assures safety and security, respect for self and for each other, someone always has you back. A community that is family is strong, vibrant and happy.



John Bottomley is a member of the Creative Ministries Network congregation in Port Phillip East Presbytery. He has recently published “Money Talks”, a Bible study on capitalist ethics, colonialism and divine governance. The book is available for sale from Coventry Press.

The Bible study arises from two years of research John has been involved with as a member of the Religion and Social Policy Network of the University of Divinity, into the harm caused in and by the finance services sector following the Banking Royal Commission. The study is published as an engagement project of RASP, with a foreword by the University’s Vice Chancellor, Peter Sherlock. (read in the right column of this page).

The University of Divinity has published an interview with John on the research and engagement behind this Lenten study:

<https://vox.divinity.edu.au/news/interview-with-john-bottomley-about-his-new-publication-money-talks>

Order the book online at Coventry Press:

coventrypress.com.au/money-talks

You shall have no other gods before me. (Exodus 20:3). No slave can serve two masters... you cannot serve God and wealth. (Luke 16:13). The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. (1 Timothy 6:10)

These three biblical texts are keys to understanding the five studies offered in Money Talks. It is not possible for a disciple of Jesus Christ to replace the worship of God with the worship of wealth.

The studies acknowledge that, like most people, Christians find it difficult to talk about money but here there is both a new and an old context for such a discussion. The 2018 Banking Royal Commission alerted us to the use and abuse of money as the source of profound harm in Australian society, while Indigenous perspectives highlight colonialism’s priority for economic growth over social and environmental justice, prompting deeper reflection on the issues of wealth that are at the heart of the studies.

The Gospels of Luke and John invite reflection on how the teachings of Jesus call us to reflect seriously on the attraction of wealth and the need for individuals and churches to get our priorities right in this area. The studies also focus on the business ethics, powerlessness, responsibility, forgiveness and wellbeing experienced by employees in the finance sector, when treatment by their employers resulted in threats, job losses and personal tragedies. Using actual case studies, groups are asked to reflect on their own experiences of acting with integrity and compassion in challenging life situations. Suggestions for personal and congregational practical action are also provided.

Australian churches need to be talking about money as a central part of their mission to pursue justice. In the context of Scripture, churches need to talk about how biblical testimony speaks to the just and unjust uses of money in our society today...

When Christians come together to talk about money, we are called to bring our hearts and minds, bodies and souls to the conversation. I pray that you are able to enter into these studies in ways that celebrate and draw upon the lived experience of each person present.

**Professor Peter Sherlock
Vice-Chancellor, University of Divinity
Melbourne**



The Uniting Church in Australia Assembly (our national connection) is inviting people under 18 to share your thoughts about the Uniting Church and our future.

The Act2 project is a conversation taking place across the whole of the Uniting Church to help us think, pray and listen to what God is saying about how the Church might look in the future.

Your answers could be written or maybe you'd like to get creative and send in a drawing, a photo, a montage, a craft project, a poem, a song, a paragraph, video clip or any other creative form.

Your response will be inspired by these questions:

1. What is great about my Uniting Church?
2. What are my hopes for the Uniting Church?
3. What is my prayer for the Uniting Church?

The Assembly will collect submissions and create a digital display on its website. The artworks will be shared in some form as part of the reconvened 16th Assembly in May.

Prizes will be awarded for the first submission received from each Synod in two categories, 10 years and under, and 11-18 years.

Entries must be received by 31 March 2022.

Read more and submit your work online at

<https://uniting.church/act2getscreative>



Church Council Training in March

Port Phillip West Presbytery is hosting a three session training course for church councils led by Rev Terence Corkin. Two evening sessions are being held at Hoppers Crossing Uniting Church and on Zoom, Thursday March 17 and 24. The full day workshop on Understanding & Responding to Conflict will be run in-person only at Hoppers Crossing, Saturday March 26.

Register online at

<https://www.trybooking.com/BXHDP>

Vision, mission principles values, & priorities

At the Presbytery in Council meeting in March 2021 we tested our thoughts on a shared vision, shared mission principles and shared mission values, and approved strategic and operation plans for 2021. We'll be reviewing the work of 2021 and considering mission priorities for 2022 at our Presbytery meeting on Saturday March 19.

We'll be looking at some mission priorities that will shape the work of our committees and ministry team.

Vision

Our vision as a movement of the Uniting Church in this region picks up the three elements of the vision outlined by the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania, with the addition of a focus on building up healthy communities of faith.

As the Uniting Church in Port Phillip East

- Following Christ
- Walking together as first and second peoples
- Seeking community, compassion, and justice for all creation
- Building up healthy communities of faith

Mission Principles

We have adopted the seven mission principles developed across the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania, as a way of honouring the many ways we share together in God's mission in the world.

God in Christ is at mission in the world and sends the Church in the Spirit to:

1. Share the Good News of Jesus Christ
2. Nurture followers of Christ in life-giving communities of reconciliation
3. Respond in compassion to human need
4. Live justly and seek justice for all
5. Care for creation
6. Listen to each generation and culture so as to live out the Gospel in fresh ways.
7. Pursue God's mission in partnership



Mission Values

We reflected on the flavour of church we believe God is calling us to express at this time.

Growing a culture of local mission and ministry marked by

- Healthy relationships
- Lifelong disciples
- Collaborative leaders
- Active engagement with agencies, schools and each other.

Synod's Strategic Priorities

We also note that the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania has adopted the following three strategic priorities over the period 2016-2022.

1. Ministries which foster diverse gathered communities of renewal, Christian practice and mission
2. Culturally diverse mission and ministry
3. Mission and ministry with children, youth, their families and young people.

Our Emerging Priorities 2021

In March 2021 we also noted that the Presbytery Standing Committee was considering strategies for advancing the Presbytery's capacity in relation to:

- Connection with Uniting Church schools
- Connection with Uniting & Uniting Agewell
- Covenanting – First and Second Peoples

March 19 Presbytery Meeting

Port Phillip East Presbytery is meeting on Saturday morning, March 19, on Zoom, 9.30 am – 12.30 pm. On the agenda:

Reports from the Standing Committee

Overview of 2021

Priorities and projects for 2022

Launch of resources:

- Presbytery Property Manual for congregations
- Presbytery Risk Register

Feedback from 2021 Communication survey

ACT2 – future of the Uniting Church in Australia

Being a multicultural church,
growing intercultural relationships

Election of members for
Standing Committee 2022 (2 places available)

Election of members for the
Synod meeting in June/July 2022

Full members of Presbytery are lay people nominated by their congregation, ministers, people in Ministry of Pastor, and UCA people serving in long term supply. All others are welcome to come and contribute.

<https://bit.ly/ucappegmeeting2022>

Meeting ID: 922 3157 5032 Passcode: 074809

Tell us what's happening...

Port Phillip East Presbytery Office
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Uniting in prayer for March

Each week congregations are encouraged to include their neighbours in their prayers. The Presbytery's prayer calendar covers congregations, schools and agencies of the Uniting Church.

March 6	<i>Pilgrim Theological College: Head of College Sean Winter</i>
March 13	<i>Beaumaris congregation: Minister Scott Finlay, Chair Nick Toovey</i>
March 20	<i>St Andrew's Berwick: Chair Joy Jackson, and the new supply ministry team</i>
March 27	<i>Presbytery Ministry Team Duncan Macleod, Craig Mitchell, Rev. Anneke Oppewal</i>

*Oh God, creating Spirit.
We gather in your name
- people created in your
image.*

*Today, as we have just
witnessed, we want to
express thankfulness for
the astonishing variety
that we represent.*

*We are such a diverse
community.*

*We come from so many
backgrounds out of which
we have crafted so many
futures. We do so many
different things. Love
different things, places
and people.*

*And like us, faith
communities around
the world are made up
of people of different
languages, colours, cultures
and customs.*

*What an amazingly rich
world we live in.*

*We have been so deeply
enriched by ever-widening
circles of friendships and
colleagues. People so
different to ourselves who
have also been created in
your image.*

*Creating God, show us
your presence in those who
differ most from us, until
our knowledge of your love
is made perfect in our
love for all your children;
through your Son, Jesus.*

Amen.

PRAYER OF DIVERSITY

by David Pargeter, retired minister



The Presbytery office is at 1 Allan St, Noble Park.



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