

Newsbeat

NEWSLETTER FOR THE PRESBYTERY OF PORT PHILLIP EAST



SEPTEMBER HEADLINES

KIDS HOPE PROGRAM

DEATH CAFE AT NARRE
WARREN NORTH UC

ST LUKE'S
MT WAVERLEY
MONASH CITY
& VEMASSE
TIMOR-LESTE

PASTORAL PARTNERS
PROGRAM

NEW HOUSING ESTATES

FORMING FAITH
OPPORTUNITIES

QUEER ALLIES PEER
SUPPORT GROUP

SEPTEMBER 2022 ISSUE

Photograph from Shutterstock

Port Phillip East Presbytery's *WHAT'S HAPPENING*

An insight into what congregations,
schools & members are doing



Congregational members at Narre Warren North Death Cafe

A date with death

The idea for Death Café was originally conceived by Dr. Bernard Crettaz in 2004, but became more organized in London by Jon Underwood in 2011. It has now reached more than 60 countries around the world. Narre Warren North UC congregation and minister Rev Bruce Crowle have taken the plunge and organised a Death Café for their members.

Someone of wit has gone down in history as saying that the only two certainties in life are death and taxes. As human beings, especially as we grow older, we will all have some experience of loss, whether that be of a parent, a spouse, a close family member, and indeed as we age we begin to contemplate our own passing.

For many of us, the prospect of death holds some sort of fear and is often a subject we do not wish to discuss. However, over the past few months, death and dying has been the subject of conversation over a cuppa and cake at Narre Warren North UC.

With tea, coffee and cake provided, ten people turned up on the 14th May for two hours of discussion and storytelling which raised both tears and laughter, and gradually peeled back some layers of the angst this topic can arouse. Personal stories varied; funerals that were held in total silence, people's experiences with those who had passed, as well as the power of faith in times of death.

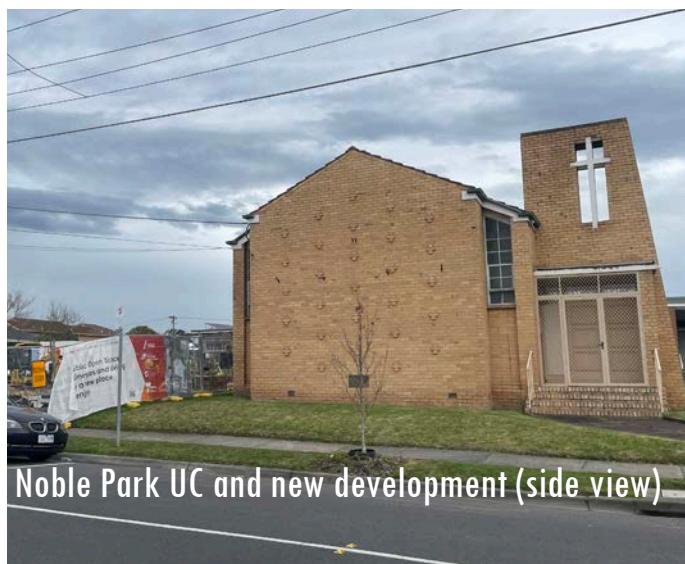
"At the time, we thought this might only be a one-off," Bruce said. After the first one was finished, many of the participants said they would like to hold it again, that they got a lot out of it. Many other people who had missed the first one for various reasons also asked if there would be a second one, and so that was held in June. Then we were asked, if there would be another, and so we held the third Death Café on 20th August.

Although it may be a topic of fear, it seems people do want to talk about what is certainly a personal and fascinating subject. I think that the setting helps greatly with this – it is just a group of friends sitting around having coffee and cake and a bit of a chat.

The fourth Death Café is coming up soon, due to continuing popular demand. All are welcome.

Noble Park UC New Development

The City of Greater Dandenong is creating a new public open space on the former tennis court site at St Columba's Uniting Church, 2A Frank Street, Noble Park.



Key design elements are:

- A flexible space that is paved and allows for a range of everyday or programmed uses to be facilitated for everyone to enjoy
- A high quality landscaped space which provides shade, colourful trees and garden beds.
- A relaxing space to enjoy gatherings with friends and family
- A seating wall that extends around the edge of the garden bed and stage
- A pergola with seating and tables below it frames the south-west corner of the site
- A variety of seating and table options.
- A timber stage
- Clear sight lines into the space to make it safe day and night.
- Provision of lighting
- The use of timber in the furniture and structures
- Umbrella sockets will be installed in the paving to allow umbrellas to be used for events, such as a market stall.

During November 2021, the Noble Park community was invited to participate in a pre-design consultation process, with the opportunity to share their ideas on the design for this new public open space. More than 230 members of the community, including leaders from St Columba's and Presbytery, took part in an online survey, a series of online workshops, a children's workshop and two weekend on-street surveys. People freely shared their thoughts, ideas and design preferences for the disused tennis courts at 2A Frank Street. Council was very pleased with the level of interest in this project, receiving a diverse range of feedback for the new space.

The main themes and ideas that emerged from the community's feedback provided council with clear direction on the design direction for this new open space.

It's hoped that the new implemented changes will be in place by November.

www.greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/frank-street



Changes in the Mission Liaison Group

Change is inevitable. Following recent unprecedented events, many businesses and organisations have had to make adjustments to staffing arrangements in order to adapt to these changing times. The Mission Liaison Group (MLG) in Keysborough is a testimony to an organisation that has withstood many challenges and changes throughout its operation. John Connan writes about the changes in operations and volunteers.

My first experience of Mission Liaison Group. was way back in November 1967: Many people have come and gone since then. Not one of those I met that night is alive today.

Time brought change to what MLG has done over the last 57 years. Its major focus and drive is assisting our Pacific partner churches. Throughout the years that assistance has changed – in what the Group does, how it's done, who does it, as well as who receives it.

The people involved have changed. I re-joined in 2005 on retirement. My wife Ann is the only one of those who made up the MLG volunteers then who is part of the volunteer team today.

Over the succeeding years Denise, Heather (one), Heather (two), Joyce, Helen, Kisa, Brenda, Rona, Vivienne, Janet, Margaret and Hilary have joined for one or two days a week. Barrie joined twelve years ago.

Recently Heather (two) persuaded Paul from the Coatesville congregation to join up as muscle-power to help pack shipping containers. Barrie at 88 decided it was time to retire and Paul at 25 takes his place as chief packer. The ladies' chief task is sorting donated goods and packing them into cardboard boxes – although Hilary does also help Paul.

We can always do with help from people who have a little time to spare – especially from those who can do the heavy lifting! We're on site at 176 Chapel Road, Keysborough, on Tuesday and Thursday mornings, 8.00 am to 10.30 a.m.

Times change. Challenges change. People change. MLG keeps on keeping on.

Things may change but God's mission of love and service continues.

*By John Connan, Convener of Mission Liaison Group
Second Life Pasifika*

Phone 0419 572 936



The morning tea at which Barrie (right) announced his retirement.

St Luke's Mt Waverley & Vemasse, Timor-Leste

St Luke's Uniting Church, Mount Waverley, has partnered with Monash City Council to establish a Friendship Group with the Vemasse district in Timor Leste (East Timor). Heather Spurling writes about the Monash Friends of Vemasse.

There are numerous reasons why many Australians have become personally involved in Timor-Leste's struggle to become a thriving independent nation.

One overriding factor is that Timor-Leste is our nearest neighbour and one of the poorest countries in the world. Many Australians would like to stretch out the hand of friendship.

To provide a framework for friendship to exist, Friendship Groups between Australian and Timor-Leste communities were formed. There have been many East Timorese studying in Victoria and one such was person was Alex Freitas who came from Vemasse, Timor-Leste.

By chance Alex met Allan Clausen, a member of St Luke's Uniting Church, Mt Waverley in 2004. Alex was invited to speak about his Vemasse community at St Luke's and suggested that it would be a great help to Vemasse if a Friendship Group could be formed.

Allan took up the challenge and with the support of St Luke's Uniting Church a group was formed with members from both the church and the Monash Community.

Friendship Groups are mostly connected between a local Victorian Council and a community in Timor-Leste.

After a visit to Vemasse by four members of the Friendship Group the Monash City Council was approached and an agreement of friendship and support was signed between Monash Council and the Vemasse Belun [local committee] in 2009. This has recently been renewed.

Although the Friendship Group has an agreement with the Monash City Council, St Luke's Uniting Church has continued to support the funding activities of the Monash Friends of Vemasse (MFV) both through individual members and the congregation's social justice committee. It is considered to be one of St Luke's community outreach activities.

Since this time, MFV has supported the Senior High School by helping with payment of some volunteer staff, scholarships for students, reconditioned computers, and other educational items. Also during COVID 19 it has provided sanitisers and masks and, after the recent floods, given support to Vemasse students caught up in Dili.

Last month MFV sent 10 reconditioned laptop computers and office furniture to the secondary school.

As important as financial support is, friendship is considered to be the top priority. To this end, members of MFV have visited Vemasse on a yearly basis and have indeed become firm friends with the local teachers. This close friendship has meant that interaction between MFV and the Vemasse community has also included their local Community Co-operative, a very valuable development.

MFV has witnessed an improvement in the wellbeing of the people of Vemasse during their time of friendship, which is most heartening.

For more details visit the Monash Council www.monash.vic.gov.au/Friends-of-Vemasse

*By Heather Spurling
St Luke's Uniting Church, Mount Waverley*



Heather Spurling with high school students from Vemasse, Timor Leste



The Kids Hope mentor program is a fantastic way for your church to connect with your local community and to provide support for children in their primary school. Craig Mitchell writes.

The formula is pretty simple.

One adult. One child.

One hour per week.

The formula is pretty simple. One adult. One child. One hour per week. Being a mentor is firstly about offering friendship and encouragement.

Students are given time out of class to spend an hour with their mentor each week. They are usually referred to the program due to difficulties at home or at school. As a mentor, you're not there to be an expert at fixing their problems, but by being a caring presence you can help build their confidence, willingness to communicate, and ability to relate to others. To know that an adult is concerned for their well-being makes all the difference in the world.

What do mentors do?

Chat with their student. Tell stories. Play games. Go for a walk around the school yard. Talk about life. Make jokes. Do a puzzle together. Kids Hope provides training and support. We know from experience that being a mentor is often as rewarding for the adult as it is for the child.

Kids Hope was started by World Vision but has since become an independent charitable organisation. About 200 schools around Australia participate, with the Uniting Church being one of the largest contributors.

Several schools in Port Phillip East Presbytery are involved, some for over a decade. A church may have just a few mentors, others have more. Many mentors are retired people with time on their hands and a desire to put something back into the local community.

The following schools have expressed interest in having mentors from Kids Hope. If one of these schools is near to your church, please consider joining the program. Don't contact the schools. The first contact is with Kids Hope Community Engagement manager Tim Smith who will explain the program to you and what is involved. Kids Hope undertake the initial negotiations and setup with the school.

- Westall PS – Clayton South
- Crib Point PS – Crib Point/Hastings
- Elsternwick PS – Elsternwick
- Yarrabah Special School – Chelsea
- Cardinia PS – Cardinia/Pakenham
- Rosewood Downs PS – Dandenong
- Wooranna Park PS – Dandenong
- Kingsley Park PS - Frankston
- Cranbourne West PS – Cranbourne
- Mt Waverley Heights PS – Mt Waverley/Chadstone
- Athol Road PS - Springvale

CONTACT DETAILS FOR KIDS HOPE AUSTRALIA

Contact Tim Smith, Community Engagement manager for Kids Hope via email on tim@kidshopeaus.org.au.

Or to find out more head to their website kidshope.org.au

Kids Hope – a mentor's story

Kids Hope is a valuable program that I am very proud to be a part of. As the Coordinator at Mount Waverley Uniting Church, I enjoy working with members of my congregation who have volunteered to help a child by training them and supporting them with ideas and resources. It is quite a challenge matching a child with the right mentor, but with God's help we have made some good partnerships over the eleven years of our program.

We have developed a strong relationship with Mt. Waverley Primary School and are greatly valued. I personally feel Kids Hope has given our aging congregation a wonderful way to be visible in our community, by helping the local school with some of their vulnerable children. The program involves the whole church- mentors, prayer partners and congregation who support us.

I am also proud that our church has been able to support another small, regional congregation by paying for their Kids Hope fees. I am also a mentor and have had four students in the eleven years since we began. It is a wonderful way to give back and has been a meaningful opportunity for me to help a needy child by being a positive, caring role model.

I feel I have been able to help develop their resilience, confidence and good self talk by the trusting relationship we establish together.

I look forward to my hour each week! There is nothing better than seeing the big smile on my student's face when they ask if I come see anyone else and I say, "No, I am only here for you!" or each week when I arrive! I enjoy our talks, cooking, craft, games and helping with some of their learning. One of my students said to me, "Thank you for never giving up on me."

My first student is now 18 and recently asked me to be a reference for him when applying for a job. I also keep in touch with another student whose mother recently died. She thanked me for being at the funeral and she knows I am here for her if needed. It feels good to give a child hope!

By Kathy Ferguson

*Kid's Hope Coordinator
at Mt. Waverley Uniting
Church (formally St. John's UC)*



Why mentors are so highly valued

Below are some testimonies from students that love seeing their mentors every week. Take a read and see why mentors are so valued.

Kids Hope really made a positive impact on my childhood. My mentor Max really helped me throughout primary school, and is like a father to me. We still catch up to this day and have such a strong relationship. I would have been completely lost without the Kids Hope program, and I love everything they do. It made my childhood really happy and it gave me something to look forward to every week. I would recommend this program to anybody and it will always have a special place in my heart.

Jack (18)

I have participated in Kids Hope from grade 2 all the way to year 6, with my amazing mentor Margaret. I honestly would not be the person I am today if I had not spent all of those years in primary school spending time with her. Every single week I would always look forward to my session, where we would do many games, crafts, learning, and even just a good chat. When I first met Margaret I was a very shy and quiet person. By grade 6 I was so confident around not just my mentor, but everyone else.

Lucy (13)



The environment, First Nations peoples and urban planning

Presbytery chair Tom Spurling reflects on a connection between development of new housing estates, and the challenges of environmental responsibility and indigenous knowledge.

If you had visited the South Eastern parts of our Presbytery 30 years ago you would have been impressed with the rolling plains and farmlands. Now there is extensive urban development. We are proposing to the Synod that we collectively work on a strategy to develop a Christian presence in these new housing areas.

This was on my mind when I read the [2021 State of the Environment Report](#). It makes difficult reading! It starts off by saying: “Overall, the state and trend of the environment of Australia are poor and deteriorating as a result of increasing pressures from climate change, habitat loss, invasive species, pollution and resource extraction”, and goes on to document the evidence for this conclusion.

The report also made me think about the connections between it, the [Samuel report](#) reviewing the [Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act](#) (1999), the [Victorian Planning and Environment Act](#), our Presbytery’s ‘Listening to first peoples’ mission priority area, and our recent proposal to the Synod Standing Committee to address a Christian presence in new housing estates.

State of the Environment reports have been published in Australia every five years since 1996 as required by the EPBC Act but this is the first report have a separate chapter entitled ‘Indigenous’. One of its findings is:

“Indigenous people have cared for Country across generations for tens of thousands of years. With decreasing health of Country, Indigenous people continue to seek a larger role in managing its recovery back to health. Indigenous people seek greater participation in Australia’s environmental management system. Respectful use of Indigenous knowledge, recognition of Indigenous knowledge rights, and Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledge systems working together will lead to positive change.”

The Samuel report predicted this finding. It recommended that ‘To harness the value and recognise the importance of Indigenous knowledge, the EPBC Act should require decision-makers to respectfully consider indigenous views and knowledge’.

This State of the Environment report has, like previous reports, a chapter entitled ‘Urban’. One of the findings of this chapter is that a nationwide approach to urban growth and resilience is needed.

This section notes that

“The largest populations of Indigenous people in Australia live in urban environments. The social and economic disadvantages experienced by Indigenous people and the efforts of successive generations to address these issues are well documented. The ongoing expansion and development of urban areas disproportionately impact Indigenous people’s sense of cultural connection and identity through the disruption and destruction of culturally significant places and landscapes.”

Urban development in Victoria is the province of the Planning and Environment Act (1987). This has a list of eight objectives of planning in Victoria. These objectives do not include any reference to indigenous people or heritage nor any reference to the need to ensure that new housing areas develop as vibrant communities.

It may be that as part of our work in our mission priority areas we lobby the Victorian Government to amend its planning act to include reference to indigenous knowledge and heritage as well as a specific requirement for planning to include community resilience.

Tom Spurling



Mission in new housing estates



Presbytery Minister Craig Mitchell reflects on the opportunity to work together in responding to the rapid growth of new housing estates across Victoria.

Across Victoria there is rapid population growth on the fringe of greater Melbourne and in regional cities and towns – including Ballarat, Bendigo, Phillip Island, Inverloch, greater Geelong, the Surf Coast. The rate of growth of new housing estates in our Presbytery alone is mind-boggling. The Casey-Cardinia region is expected to grow by 50% in the next 20 years. The Presbytery Standing Committee, Mission and Leadership Development Committee and Presbytery Ministers team are working together to explore possibilities for mission in these areas.

When people move into a new suburb or township, they are creating a new life. They are open to new possibilities. People seek new friendships and a local community life together. They often have new jobs. They form and join sporting teams, parenting huddles, and all kinds of interest groups. They also bring family and financial challenges – it's not all sunshine and freedom. People also bring their own richness of culture, abilities and wisdom to a community. If you've been to new suburbs, you'll know that they are also often jam packed with designer-cloned homes, small yards, and little in the way of community spaces and facilities. Certainly few churches.

We believe that both the call of the gospel and the vision of our Synod offer an invitation to participate in God's mission in these places – firstly in seeking to contribute to the flourishing of human community through community development, and secondly in offering people the opportunity to experience and explore the life of faith, to know the goodness and grace of God. Community and communion.

These two emphases of fostering healthy communities and fostering growth in faith are not mutually exclusive, rather they are part of a spectrum of what we've termed "Christian presence." A detailed version of this spectrum is one of the missiological tools that we're applying to our Presbytery's work. [Tina Hodgett and Paul Bradbury, "Pioneering Mission is ... a Spectrum" in *Anvil: Journal of Theology and Mission*, Vol 34: Issue 1.]

We believe that alongside the work that we are doing with our congregations, part of the call to participate in God's mission in the world is an invitation to step out of our comfort zones and ask what the Spirit might be doing in these new estates and suburbs. To be honest, it would be easy to be consumed solely by our work with congregations. So we need to be intentional in stewarding some of our time, energy and resources towards God's wider work in the world.

This is not about buying land and building churches – instead it is about starting with the shape of local communities and talking with the people who are literally making them. It may involve a range of partnerships, whether that be starting a Messy Church in a local primary school, partnering with another denomination in a market garden, working with Uniting in co-located services, or providing support to new residents starting home fellowships.

We've started to learn from the mission staff of the Baptist Union of Victoria about their placemaking initiatives with one of the major housing developers. This is where the developer provides the infrastructure (for example a neighbourhood centre) and the church provides a community development worker. We recently joined colleagues from Port Phillip West Presbytery to visit one such project in Mirvac's Olivine estate in Donnybrook.

See more on the Presbytery website:

ucapnep.org/mission-in-new-housing-estates

Craig Mitchell

Forming Faith – Four Opportunities

Craig Mitchell, Presbytery Minister: Church Development, shared John Roberto's faith formation quadrant at the August 20 Presbytery meeting. Here he expands on ways we might explore opportunities to relate faith formation to people in different settings.

Last Saturday I spent time with a church council, and a perennial question was raised. "Why aren't more people interested in Bible Study?" We were discussing what it means for a church to see faith formation at the heart of its life together. Is Christian education just for the super spiritual? Are the disciplines of prayer only for the saintly?

US Catholic education John Roberto helpfully speaks about faith formation for all people in their differing ages and stages of life. In 2010 he gathered about a dozen Christian educators from across mainline US churches and produced the four scenarios for faith formation. Note that I have adapted his language.

The vertical or Y axis is about people's openness or otherwise to participating in organised religion. (eg. church). People above the line are open to participating in church activities, those below the line are not (at this point in time).

The X axis is about interest or openness to spirituality or explicit matters of faith. The quadrants indicate four kinds of people, or more accurately, four differing opportunities for engaging people in faith formation at any one point in time.

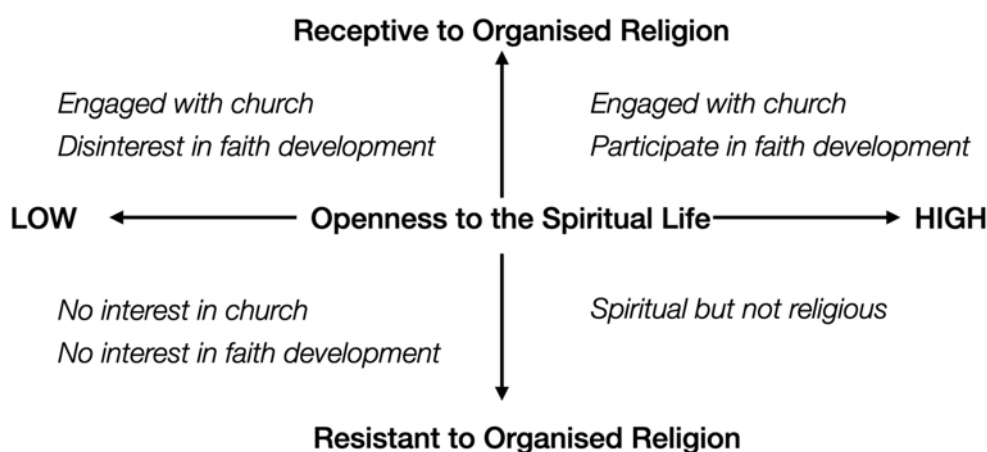
Roberto says that most of what the church offers is in the top right quadrant - activities with the church for people who want to grow spiritually. Bible study groups. Prayer groups. Retreats. Book clubs. What about those in the top left, who are happily part of the faith community but show little or no interest in such activities? How about the bottom right corner, those who don't think you need a church to explore spirituality?

What matters here is genuinely engaging with people where they are at, not where we are at, in exploring what it means to experience a deepening relationship with God and a journey towards life in all its fullness.

In *Faith Formation 2020*, Roberto suggests a range of formation opportunities for each group or scenario. My table on the next page is slightly different (but not unrelated)

It would be easy to misunderstand this as labelling people. This is not some kind of spiritual personality test or formula! No does it suggest that people do not grow or change. Rather, here is an opportunity to think and act outside the box when it comes to fostering growth in faith.

These quadrants may be seen as stepping stones, not as containers. In all of the above, faith and the spiritual journey may be seen as part of all of life, of the whole person. What makes the difference is intentionality in providing experiences and resources to form people's faith, and providing spaces that are relational and conversational, and well as the freedom for people to explore in their own space and their own time.





Top right: Religion high, Spirituality high

Most churches offer activities or resources for spiritual growth in addition to worship services. However there are always opportunities to consider the breadth and depth of these. Seasonal study series. Daily devotional resources. Prayer triplets meeting over coffee. Short or longer term mentoring. Hosting a regional biblical teaching weekend.

Top left: Religion high, Spirituality low

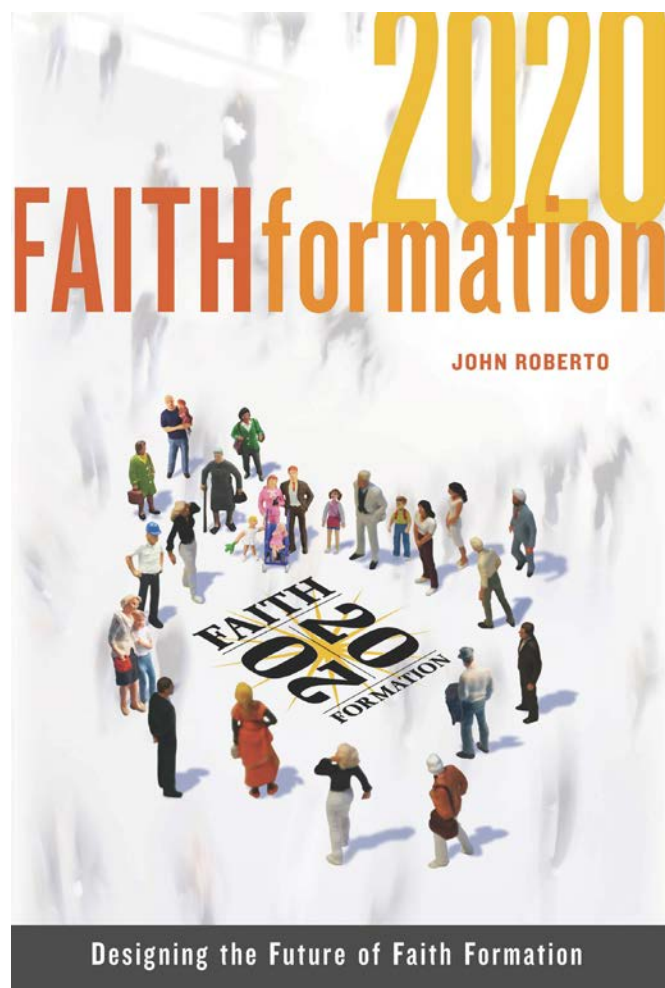
For those on the left of the Y axis, the spiritual is part of everyday life, yet rarely articulated. Faith-in-practice is the key. A work party where there is conversation about why we serve and what we are learning. Participating in Christian practices such as hospitality, generosity, environmental projects, social justice - all permeated with faith conversation, some prayer, and worthy questions. Developing leadership and gifts with the awareness that we are innately spiritual.

Bottom right: Religion low, Spirituality high

An outdoor labyrinth. An art exhibition. A prayer garden. Meditation in the park. Online resources for spiritual practices. Celtic or Creation-centred prayers. Timeless quotes from spiritual leaders through the ages. Spiritual expressions that are embodied, not just verbal. Partnering for multi-faith events. Nurturing the imagination and the senses as spiritual pathways.

Bottom left: Religion low, Spirituality low

The well-being of people and the planet are integral to our faith and spirituality. Many of these people willingly participate in seeking fullness of life for others, themselves, and our environment. When we grow into authentic selfhood and community, we are growing spiritually. As such growth is encouraged, there is opportunity to name and explore our connection with the God of life and God in life.



John Roberto's book, *Faith Formation 2020*, is a free download at www.lifelongfaith.com/books

Feel free to check out his other excellent books available for free as well.

Craig Mitchell



ALL SESSIONS AT:
MURRUMBEENA UNITING CHURCH
117 MURRUMBEENA RD
MURRUMBEENA

THE PROGRAM

Training Sessions

Five sessions will be offered over 2 days/times. Sessions are:

1. Outline of the program.
2. First Principles - Images of Pastoral Care
3. The Art of Pastoral Care - Learning to Listen
4. Being There - Caring for the sick
5. Being There - Loss and grief
Where to from here?

Days and Dates

Friday 16th September
7.30pm to 9.15pm - Session 1

Saturday 17th September
9am to 5pm
Sessions 2-5
Where to from here?

Sunday 18th September
12noon to 2pm - all sessions include a light lunch
Session 1

Sunday 25th September
Sessions 2

Sunday 2nd October
Session 3

Sunday 9th October
Session 4

Sunday 16th October
Session 5

**IF YOU CAN'T MAKE A
SESSION YOU CAN MAKE IT UP
BY ATTENDING ANOTHER
TIME THAT IS BEING OFFERED**

WHAT IS THE PASTORAL PARTNER PROGRAM?

Pastoral care is at the very heart of congregational life. This program seeks to establish an ethos of care among the congregation by establishing and maintaining a network of pastoral care. By identifying those with the gifts and willingness to use them for others, this program offers TRAINING and SUPPORT to equip carers for the task. Establish a team of partners who will ensure that everyone in your congregation will be connected and cared for.

**REGISTER AT
OFFICE@MURRUMBEENAUNITING.
ORG.AU**

Big Poppy's 80th at Cornish College

Community connections are so important at Cornish College, with a unique bond between the College and our wider community. Tony Girt (Big Poppy) has been actively involved in our Early Learning Centre (ELC) program since 2010, when his eldest granddaughter started at the College.

Though all of his grandchildren have now completed their ELC years, we are just so delighted that Big Poppy continues to play a special role in our school, joining us for our weekly Dhumba-dha biik walks. The Dhumba-dha biik program at Cornish College teaches children to engage with and respect the natural environment.

He helps the children feel safe and supported as they grow in confidence to explore and learn. He teaches them how to look after the animals on our property, how to be safe around the edges of the lake or near the fire pit, supports them as they learn to take risks, climb trees, get stuck in mud or use the rope course.

Tony was a finalist in the McArthur Early Childhood Volunteer of the Year Awards in 2018 and he's definitely a winner in our eyes. We are so thrilled to celebrate Big Poppy's 80th birthday and his wonderful connection with Cornish College!

By Dennis Foreman, Director of Community Relations



Tony Girt (Big Poppy)
celebrating his 80th
Birthday

George's 100th at Mount Waverley Uniting



On Sunday 24th July at Mount Waverley Uniting Church, formerly known as St John's and High St Road, celebrations were held for George Sutherland's 100th birthday.

The congregation enjoyed morning tea after worship with cake and candles and the day continued with an open house for family and friends.

George began his working life at the age of 14 for Chamber of Australian Manufacturers Insurance, later being involved in management, and served in the Second World War.

George now lives independently, grows orchids, and walks to church every Sunday.

A great effort George.

By Brian Aldington

Farewell soon to our Presbytery Team Leader: Rev Duncan Macleod

Our Presbytery will farewell Rev Duncan Macleod as he moves into his new role as Executive Officer, eLM (equipping Leadership for Mission), commencing 1 February 2023.

Rev Dr Jenny Byrnes has retired from the eLM EO position, with 30 April 2022 as her last day active in the role. The updated placement profile was approved by the Placements Committee in November 2021. Discernment by the Placements Committee was undertaken and the role was advertised twice, but no appointment was made.

In May 2022, the Placements Committee resolved that the position be classified as a priority placement. This means that the Placements Committee could approach a person still within their first five years in a placement. Duncan was approached, and after discernment he agreed to enter a conversation. His appointment was confirmed by the Synod Standing Committee at its meeting on Saturday 13 August, and a letter of call was issued on Monday 15 August. Duncan has now accepted the call.

Duncan will be taking up a significant missional leadership role in the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania. eLM is focused on serving and resourcing the presbyteries and congregations, the individuals and groups across the Synod to increase their capacity to engage, lead and thrive as disciples in mission.

It has four streams:

- Education and formation for leadership (including Pilgrim Theological College)
- Priorities, focus and advocacy
- Relationships and connections
- Marketing, functions and administration (including Crosslight)

We in the Presbytery of Port Phillip East know that Duncan is well equipped to carry out this role with distinction. He takes on the role with our support and prayers. While we are sad to lose Duncan from his position as Presbytery Minister: Team Leader, we look forward to working closely with him in his new role.

The Presbytery Standing Committee has commenced the process for finding someone to take up the Presbytery Minister: Team Leader role. We will keep you informed of our progress in this important task.

By Tom Spurling, Presbytery Chair

Duncan shared with us that he has been aware of the eLM Executive Officer position since November last year and considered applying each time it was advertised. However, he was committed to continuing as long as he could with ministry in Port Phillip East Presbytery. His sense of call to the eLM position grew, and in June he entered a conversation with the eLM EO Nominating Committee.

When Duncan begins the new role with eLM in February next year, he will have served four years in the five-year term offered by Port Phillip East Presbytery. He really has enjoyed his time in the Presbytery, working with a great team, capable committees, task groups and councils. He has valued the opportunity to get to know so many people in congregations, schools and agencies, and hopes that the connections he built will not be lost.

By Sarah Manase



QUEER ALLIES PEER SUPPORT GROUP

Over the past couple of years my two children have told me that they identify as part of the LGBTQIA+ community. This has put me on a steep learning curve as I wanted to understand what they are going through and learn how to best support them.

There are a number of online support groups but there are not many face to face support groups for friends and family (allies) of LGBTQIA+ people.

Heatherton Dingley Uniting Church has been happy to support me in setting up the Queer Allies peer support group which will meet for the first time on Tuesday 13 September.

We are inviting people from the community as well as people from the church to come together to share the journey of growing in understanding, acceptance and support for the queer community. Everyone is welcome.

Rev. Deacon Andrea Mayes

QUEER ALLIES PEER SUPPORT GROUP

For family and friends of LGBTQIA+ people to share the journey of growing in understanding, acceptance and support.

Tuesday 13 September 2022 (meeting monthly on 2nd Tuesday) at 7.30pm
Where: Heatherton Dingley Uniting Church
184 Old Dandenong Road, Heatherton VIC 3202.

For further details please contact
Rev Deacon Andrea Mayes 0408 615 939 or
heathertondingleyunitingchurch@gmail.com

www.heathertondingley.ucavictas.org.au

Calling for nominations

Nominations are open for the 2023-2023 period, for the roles of Presbytery Chair, Presbytery Deputy Chair, Chairs of Pastoral Relations Committee, Finance & Risk Committee, Property Committee, Mission Leadership Development Committee, Presbytery Treasurer, as well as two general places on the Presbytery Standing Committee.

Nomination forms must be submitted to Anne Kim, secretary@ucappep.org or PO Box 696, Noble Park, VIC 3174, by 5.00pm Friday 4 November, 2022.

You can access the documents relating to nominations on the Presbytery website: <https://ucappep.org/positions-available>, including the nomination form, the office-bearer position descriptions, and the PPE Presbytery Responsibilities and Delegations document.

Uniting in prayer for September

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 in our Presbytery and Synod. You can check the calendar on the Presbytery website.

September 4	Mt Waverley congregation - Rev Julie Ross, Rev Semisi Tauali'I, Mr Colin Adam St Luke's Mt Waverley congregation - Rev James Douglas, Ms Eunice Magee
September 11	Murrumbeena congregation- Rev Jay Robinson, Ms Kelly Skilton, Mr Zak Hanyin, Mrs Alison Campbell Rate
September 18	Narre Warren North congregation - Rev Bruce Crowle
September 25	St Columba's Noble Park congregation - Rev Bruce Monro, Dr Greg Wyatt Keysborough Samoan congregation, Noble Park - Mr David Ioelu

REFLECTION ON GIVING

"Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Giver of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change". James 1:17

*Beloved,
every little thing
is a signed card from
you.*

*Every blade of grass
and breath of air,
each moment has
your blessing in it.*

*Each bit and trinket
is a gift.*

*In every thought or feeling,
sight or sound,
there is what that thing says,
and what you whisper besides,
and there is you.*

*Even in the hurts and
disasters
there is your voice,
your calm hand,
the unfolding of grace.*

*At the end of the day
my heart is strewn with
wrapping paper.*

By Steve Garnaas-Holmes, www.unfoldinglight.net

Send your articles and photographs for Newsbeat, the Presbytery website and Facebook page, and weekly email, to Communications Officer Sarah Manase

comms-officer@ucappep.org



Visit the Port Phillip East Presbytery office at 1 Allan St, Noble Park.



03 9558 4710



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PO Box 696, Noble Park, VIC 3174

Email secretary@ucappep.org

Port Phillip East Presbytery Uniting Church in Australia Staff & Key Office Bearers

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