

NEWSBEAT



DECEMBER 2015

NEWSLETTER FOR THE PRESBYTERY OF PORT PHILLIP EAST



A stocking filler that keeps on giving for one community garden. Dig around on page 5 for more.



Lights, camera... action. Point your lens to page 3.



Spring proves a busy time for PPEP

by Rev John Mann

AFTER a very quiet time all year with no inductions, our former Chair Rev Dr Paul Chalson found himself leading the Presbytery with two significant inductions of ministers into new placements and an ordination.

Berlin Guerrero came to the Presbytery from the Philippines with an extraordinary story of Christian commitment in a community under persecution. Rev Dr Sandy Yule, who preached at Berlin's service of ordination which was held recently at Glen Waverley Uniting Church, described how he first met Berlin who was in prison at the time. Sandy was part of an ecumenical delegation visiting the Philippines who had been concerned at the jailing of Christian activists under trumped up charges. Berlin who had been studying for ministry in the Philippines was forced to flee to Australia. Our Presbytery warmly received Berlin as a candidate for ordained ministry of the word and accepted him as ready for ordination some two years ago, but it has

taken a little while for a suitable placement to be found. Berlin has had such a mature and insightful journey into ministry, many have commented about him having some Nelson Mandela like qualities.

A wonderful service which included singing by a Philipino choir and liturgical dance was concluded with a fantastic supper provided by the Glen Waverley people and the Philippino community was assisted by the catering group from Noble Park Uniting Church to whom we are very grateful.

We congratulate Berlin on his ordination and send our prayers with him into his new placement in the Presbytery of North East at West Wodonga-Kergunyah-North Albury.

Cont. on page 2



If you would like to submit a news item for the Presbytery's monthly Newsbeat newsletter please send all articles and images to newsbeat@ucappep.org





Photos by Rev Swee-Ann Koh and Rev Jay Robinson

Berlin celebrates with family and friends



InterCultural Director Rev Swee-Ann Koh says: "It was a great pleasure to be part of the Ordination of Rev. Berlin Guerrero at Glen Waverley UCA! And so lovely that Aunty Denise Mary Champion and Ian Dempster (cover picture) were able to join for the occasion!"



OUR recent supply minister as Presbytery Minister Mission and Education, Rev Andrew Boyle was inducted into Ormond Uniting Church.

A large crowd sang joyously and reflected upon the words of preacher Rev Gareth Darlow.

Andrew will be living in the Presbytery manse at Hampton East as his ministry leads him into assisting the congregation determine its future through a potential, large property development.

Adding to the strength of the cross-cultural aspect of the Presbytery we celebrated the induction Rev (Papa) Uru Tairea at our Cooke Island Congregation of the Balkara Parish. Papa Uru comes to us from the Cook Island Christian Church (CICC) for a 4 year placement. His service of induction was lifted with tremendous singing by the congregation in typical Cook Island style and our new Presbytery Chair Rev Dr Robert Johnson preached some strong words of encouragement.

Spring proves a busy time for PPEP



Cameras at the ready...

Wherever you live there's a Nativity stable near you

IF you're looking for a great shot to send further afield or to post on Facebook then there's two churches running their popular Jesus in the Manger tableaux.

Both will be running on Saturday, December 5. Bethlehem in



Brighton, pictured above and left, runs from

10am-1pm in the grounds of St Andrew's Church, Brighton. While Chelsea Uniting Church's stable, snapped last year pictured below, will be in Chelsea Shopping Centre for much of Saturday, December 5. Great work across our churches this Advent!



BETHLEHEM IN BRIGHTON

**SATURDAY DECEMBER 5TH
10 AM TIL 1 PM**

FREE ENTRY

INTERACTIVE NATIVITY

LIVE MUSIC

ANIMAL FARM

NATIVITY PHOTOS

CAKE STALL

CRAFT ACTIVITIES

SAUSAGE SIZZLE

PLUS MORE

**PRESENTED BY THE COMBINED CHURCHES OF BRIGHTON
IN THE GROUNDS OF ST ANDREWS CHURCH
CNR CHURCH ST AND NEW ST, BRIGHTON**

Room at the inn...?

ENDEAVOUR Hills Uniting Church is looking for a short-term tenant for their vacant manse.

Geoff Lacey explains: "As the holiday period is approaching, and taking into consideration the position of the manse, we would ask if anyone in the Presbytery knows of any students, visiting families etc. who might be able to live in the Endeavour Hills manse for a few months. Please contact gandjlacey@ozemail.com.au

Mission and Education returns to the heart of church life

THE Port Phillip East Mission Development Committee is exploring ways of resourcing congregations in the area of mission.

In 2015 we have held workshops with Gerald Rose and John Flett on our changing contexts of church life and mission. This is the first in a series of Book Reviews that we hope will add to conversations and reflections around the Presbytery. Send your comments to the MDC c/o Newsbeat.

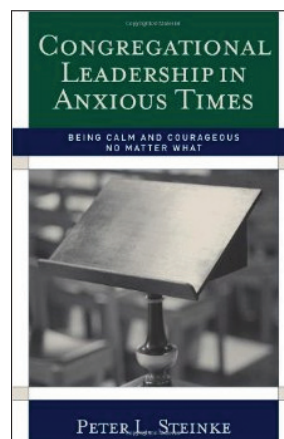
I have heard it said that in times of crisis the most effective form of leadership is to be 'a non-anxious presence'. Peter Steinke describes the non-anxious leader as one who works at gaining sufficient self-control to hold back immediate reaction to challenge

and make enough space to be able to offer a clear-eyed response without retreating from the conflict and the people.

This book describes the many facets of crisis or challenge to a congregation in these changing times, explores how the pressure of crisis might play out in a wide variety of responses, and uncovers the qualities of leadership which are best suited to converting difficult times into opportunities for learning and deepening maturity in decision-making and

relationships. The story of Moses and Aaron is used to explore the difference between accepting the challenge to work through the pain of crisis to a new and hopeful future and seeking to survive through keeping the peace. Steinke uses a very readable mixture of his extensive experience with congregations in crisis, through Bowen Theory, neuroscience, emotional development, Scripture, humour and wisdom. There are valuable checklists to help readers reflect on their own personal experiences and circumstances. The Postscript is a useful essay on narcissism and the problem it poses in congregational life. While it might be impossible to be totally 'non-anxious' and remain human, Steinke encourages, teaches and applauds us on the way to becoming 'less-anxious' as leaders; "Amen" to that, say I.

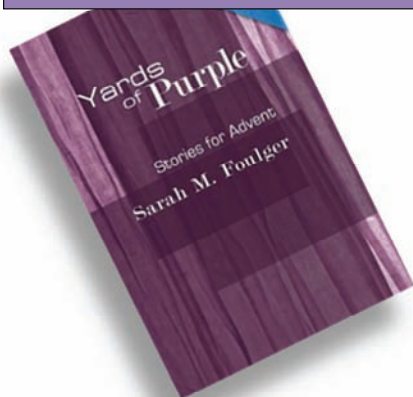
by Christine MacDowall



Another

Four Yards of Purple

Readings of Stories for Advent from the book by Sarah M. Foulger



2 pm Tuesday 24th November 2015

'The Wait'

Jeremiah 33: 14 -16 Luke 21: 25 -36

2 pm Tuesday 1st December 2015

'Silver and Gold'

Malachi 3: 1 -4 Luke 3: 1 -6

2 pm Tuesday 8th December 2015

'Festival Day'

Zephaniah 3: 14 -20 Luke 3: 7 -16

2 pm Tuesday 15th December 2015

'Suspension of Disbelief'

Micah 5: 2 -5a Luke 1: 39 -45

Including:

- > time to listen to each story read aloud
 - > time for reflection and conversation
 - > time for a simple afternoon tea
- Each session will finish about 3:30 pm

Please feel free to attend any or all of the readings

There is NO CHARGE for this program

Stories carry the power to touch our hearts and minds more deeply than we know. In YARDS OF PURPLE, Sarah Foulger blends the truth of everyday experience with the ancient wisdom of the Scripture to take us on a series of memorable journeys. The stories are perfect for reading aloud with persons of all ages.

At the time the collection of stories was published, Sarah Foulger was Associate Pastor of the First Congregational Church of Camden, United Church of Christ, in Camden, Maine.

Inquiries: 0403 727 080 or 9598 3369

Family values

IF you're looking for resources for Children & Family Ministry look no further than Chris Barnett at the Centre for Theology and Ministry 29 College Crescent, Parkville, 3052. Tel: 9340 8806. To be added to his monthly e-mail bulletin write to Chris.Barnett@ctm.uca.edu.au or visit www.ctm.uca.edu.au

THE recent Presbytery meeting at Pakenham UC saw some exciting developments for 2016.

Former chairperson, Rev Paul Chalson, explains: "I was very happy to install Rev Dr Robert Johnson as my successor as chair of the Presbytery of Port Phillip East at this meeting. This was a good end to what has been two years and nine months in an office in which I have been enriched and challenged. Thanks to all who have shared this journey with me."

On the same evening PPEP also discerned and agreed that Nathaniel Atem is ready for ordination as a Minister of the Word and is now waiting on a placement to be finalised.

NB: A short survey is soon to go out to discover people's preferences for presbytery meetings. Three of the aims of the survey are to encourage more widespread commitment, attendance and develop meeting content.

New chair installed at Port Phillip East Presbytery



Beer hops into action for cookbook and community garden

THE new community garden at Uniting AgeWell's Noble Park Community has been given a \$2,500 boost from the Maggie Beer Foundation.

This financial leg up comes hot on the heels of an exciting money-spinner set up by the staff - a stylish cookbook filled with recipes from family and friends called *From Seed to Table*.

It is understood Maggie, a renowned chef and food writer, was very impressed with the plans for the garden, which is part of Noble Park's 'From Seed to Table' project.

From Seed to Table is filled with recipes donated by residents, staff, clients and volunteers that have meaning to them, some of which have been handed down through the generations.

The cookbook is part of an overall project at Uniting AgeWell Noble Park Community designed to promote healthy eating, exercise and community engagement.

This includes establishing a full-scale community garden space with outdoor kitchen facilities, lawn bowls and Men's Shed.

It will encourage clients to exercise in the garden, cultivate relationships, and provide organic food to the Noble Park Community kitchen.

Community Programs Coordinator Michelle Thompson created the

culturally diverse collection with the help of volunteers.

"There is a lot of cultural diversity among our residents and the recipes reflect that.

"Our recipes range from Kotopoulo Kapama from Greece to Vindaloo from India to Pho from Vietnam and even the basic meatloaf and pavlova!"

UA was one of 10 recipients of the Maggie Beer Foundation's Wellbeing Garden Program, an initiative

that supports the development of gardens in aged care residences and encourages home grown fruit and vegetables. Construction is underway with landscaping to continue in the coming months.

The finished

space will encourage social engagement and connections between residents, family members and local communities.

The project also aims to participate in the free food movement, giving locals free access to the garden's bountiful harvest. This in turn will nurture and build community relationships, encourage healthy eating and increase social engagement.

From Seed to Table is now available in time for Christmas at \$25 a copy, with all proceeds going to the community garden. To secure your copy, please call the team at Noble Park on 9554 0717.



Uniting AgeWell

Your chance to campaign for the rights of refugees in Australia



The time, date and place have now been set for the **Melbourne 2016 Palm Sunday Walk for Justice for Refugees**. Please pop it into your diaries now and we really hope as many of you as possible can plan to attend. Please help us to get the word out by sharing the event via e-mail, Facebook, Twitter or good old-fashioned word of mouth. There will be more updates as planning progresses so, as they say, 'stay tuned!'

Date for your diary:
**Palm Sunday Walk
for Justice for
Refugees**
**Sunday, March 20,
2016, 2PM**
**@ State Library of
Victoria, Melbourne**

Musical plea for the eve of Christ's birth

Christmas Eve each year at 8.00pm, Seaford UCA hosts carols by candlelight indoors in the church.

The carols are well attended by church-goers and the community. Due to illness and age our previous musicians are unable to play this year and we are looking for an organist, pianist or musicians to assist us and play the carols.

If possible could you please circulate our need amongst the presbytery for a musician to help us out and play for our Carol's by Candlelight on Christmas eve.

For further details or information I can be contacted on ph: 0438 852 692 or email bboysbboys@bigpond.com

Thanks.

Kind regards, Bev.
Council Secretary
Seaford Uniting Church.

**Mt Waverley Chadstone InterChurch Council
invites you to**

**Community
Carols
in the Village**

Friday 11th December 2015
Hamilton Place, Mt Waverley
Come One, Come All!

Community Singing from 6.30pm to 8.30pm
plus a Children's Activity Tent
Please bring your own chair

Supported by Monash Council and Mt Waverley Traders

www.mtwaverleychadstonechurches.org.au

CITY OF MONASH

Security alert

CONGREGATIONS and church staff are being asked to be watchful about building use - particularly in the evenings - following a

break-in at Noble Park UC that may have occurred by



someone hiding in the building during evening activities.

Presbytery leaders are asking congregations to please review church security and the access of internal door keys in light of such potential criminal behaviour.

For help and advice on such matters Victoria Police offers downloadable security fact sheets at http://www.police.vic.gov.au/content.asp?Document_ID=40398

In *Sharing the Darkness*, Sheila Cassidy, one time Nun, then Medical Director of St Luke's Hospice in Plymouth, wrote movingly of an experience on Christmas Day in the Hospice.

David, who suffered from a malignant cancer in his mouth, had tried desperately to maintain his independence as an out-patient. On Christmas Day he was forced to come in for treatment. A single man, he was accompanied by a community nurse. David handed Dr Cassidy a bottle of champagne with a scribbled note attached: "I appreciate all you are doing for me."

Sheila wondered about Christmas dinner and asked whether he could manage a little liquid turkey. She was almost reduced to tears when he replied: "Thank you, but a little watery porridge will be fine."

On Christmas Eve, in our city there will be homeless, sleeping under a bridge, outside a church, or railway station - anywhere there is shelter.

In the morning they will waken, pack up their meagre possessions and walk the streets, hungry, hoping to be invited to have a meal prepared by mission, church, street kitchen or charity.

There will be people on board ships, or on tour, who cannot face being home at Christmas, having Christmas dinner with strangers. There will be service men and women overseas, away from families, sharing Christmas dinner with each other, with loved ones in spirit, and in their prayers.



As often as you did it for one of my least brothers, you did it for me.

Reflections on Faith

Everywhere, Christmas Dinner will be happening, joining families near and far in the spirit of giving and sharing. Sadly, many will eat and drink too much and miss the reason for celebration.

A long time ago a hassled innkeeper found room in a stable for a refugee family. The wife was pregnant. During the night a child, a son, was born. Maybe the innkeeper did not know of the birth till the

morning. But the stable inmates, God's special creatures, were there. Angels kept watch. The little family was safe.

Later that day as Sheila cooked and ate Christmas dinner with the various members of her family she could not put out of her mind the man whose

mouth was full, "not of Christmas food, but of a foul necrotic tumour".

In the home, in spite of his disfigured face, David was accepted, loved

and cherished, as he had never felt before. A little watery porridge, was Christmas dinner for David, as he joined his new family, sharing Christmas in the caring atmosphere of St Luke's Hospice.

How grateful should we be, as we enjoy the smells, sight and delicious taste of Christmas dinner, around the table with our families! We should be mindful of those who have not the means, nor the ability to appreciate the delights and treats of Christmas dinner as we do.

We should especially be thankful for God's special Gift of the one born in that stable, whose life has made Christmas, a joyous celebration of songs and carols, of giving and receiving, ever since.

Meaningful Christmas

Gifts... When you give a gift through the Everything in Common gift catalogue, you're directly supporting the work of the Uniting Church's overseas partners as they

alleviate poverty, respond to injustice and share the good news with their own communities.

From Bee Hives to School Books see the range of gifts available starting at just \$10, go to <http://everythingincommon.com.au>

You can make an even bigger difference by holding an Everything in Common Gift Stall in your community.

Call the team at UnitingWorld on 02 8267 4267 or email fionaj@unitingworld.org.au to receive everything you'll need.

A Prayer of Faith

I thank Him for the atheists and agnostics who keep believers from believing the unbelievable, forcing us to prove our faith by the beauty and grace we bring into the world.

I thank him for all the defeats and failures that make leadership so difficult, because the hard things are the only ones worth doing, and because all genuine achievement involves taking risks, making mistakes, and never giving up.

I thank Him for the gift of faith, which taught me to see the dazzling goodness and grace that surround us if only we open our eyes and minds.

I thank Him for helping me to understand that faith is not certainty but the courage to live with uncertainty; not a destination but the journey itself.

I thank Him for allowing me to thank Him, for without gratitude there is no happiness, only the fleeting distraction of passing pleasures that grow ever less consequential with the passing years.

Amen



Quote

"With hurricanes, tornadoes, fires out of control, mud slides, flooding, severe thunderstorms tearing up the country from one end to another, and with the threat of bird flu and terrorist attacks, are we sure this is a good time to take God out of the Pledge of Allegiance, our Constitution, our prayers at the beginning of the deliberations of our parliaments and our courts?"

Jay Leno

of the month...



Trinity mixes it up in dramatic style

TRINITY Dandenong Uniting Church has been exploring new and interesting ways to share the Gospel recently.

Members of the congregation of all different ages and cultural

backgrounds worked together on a short play. The Youth Service was led by Trevor and the Dandenong UC youth group by a drama based on Mark 10:46-52 - The Blind Man; Bartimaeus is healed by Jesus.



Come join with us to sing real

Christmas Carols

Sunday, 13 December at 10am

Guest Artists

**Coatesville Primary
School Choir**

&

**McKinnon Secondary
College Choir**



*Join with us on Christmas Day
at 9.30am*

Bentleigh Uniting Church, 497 Centre Road



Give a card for hope and dignity

Share's 2015 Christmas card range is now available.

Each pack of 10 cards is only \$8.50.

To order: Call 1800 668 426 or Visit <http://shareappeal.org.au/get-involved/buy-christmas-cards/> for the range of cards available in 2015. A mixed pack of 10 cards, containing two of each card, is also available (Please note: mixed packs and Peace & Joy now SOLD OUT)

By purchasing Share Christmas cards, or making a donation, you are helping to support community programs that make a real difference, offering long-term practical solutions to those in need, and ensuring that all people regardless of race, religion, gender or age can live a life of dignity and hope.

Changing places

A RECENT trip to India provided a fantastic opportunity to visit the Mother & Child Health Clinics Project and time to delve deeper into the work and lives of those involved.

High Street Uniting Church, Frankston, St Kilda Parish Mission and others across the Presbytery have been fundraising and supporting this work for nearly two years now and the progress has been outstanding. The project benefits 11,000 women and 7,000 children through mobile health posts for mothers and babies in 30 poor and oppressed Dalit villages in the Punjab. Supervisors have teams of people who do monthly visits to all the villages to develop health of the community education and support. It is a rolling program of ante and post-natal care and education, nutrition, contraception, immunisation, support for HIV/AIDS patients, female empowerment and gender equality programs along with environmental, sanitary and health education. It is making a real impact in these rural communities.

I was taken to the Field Office by the inspirational project leader, Dr Alma Ram, where I interviewed the supervisors, through Alma's interpreting, to unearth more about the project work. Two supervisors Ranjit

and Daniel, focus on maternal and child nutrition and health

and keeping the villages across their districts clean and hygienic through education programs and 'clean village' competitions. Sabeena focuses on mother and child health and her team promote the gender equality and anti-domestic violence programs. A government helpline has been set up for women who fall victim to domestic violence and project workers ask village women to repeat the phone number so they will know who to call, if necessary.

Teena works with widows in 25 villages. She explains: "I provide information and help on how to claim pensions and have set up an advocacy group called

Single Women With Strength in Groups. She says: "One widow was married to a labourer and she didn't get money that had been set aside for her in the event of his death, so we are advocating for her in this matter. I really like this work because I am really helping."

Two supervisors run the HIV/AIDS program and they help HIV positive people to claim their rights, medical treatments and prescription drugs. They also educate families and communities against stigmatisation and reconciliation. Sapna adds: "Much of our work is based on friendship to deal with sadness and problems that arise from being HIV positive. Sometimes they will share information with us they feel they cannot share at home." After the interviews we shared a delicious lunch, prepared by Alma's daughter, Karuna, before heading off to a village in Ghurdaspur to join in a community meeting. The meeting - in this instance on gender equality and domestic violence issues - was mainly for the women in the village, but men were most welcome and many attended. It was very humbling, and a real privilege, to hear women of all different age groups debating issues of culture and gender in relation to their place in society, historical references and future implications along with the struggle of work, motherhood and family life.

by Helen Beeby



Experience India – April 7th-21st, 2016

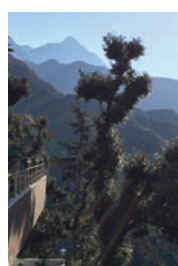
Join us for a journey that combines sight-seeing with support for the Mother & Child Health Clinics program in North India.

As part of Uniting Journeys 'responsible travel' initiative, this 14-day trip will take in majestic New Delhi, golden Amritsar, historic Shimla and spiritual Dharamsala.

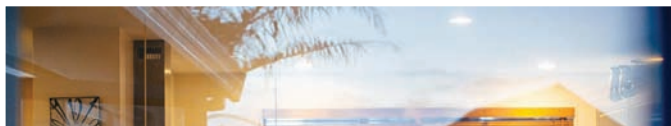
Cost \$4,500 – includes flights, accommodation, transport and most meals - plus a fundraised donation of at least \$500 to the project.

This time we'd like some men/women to join us who can help BUILD a LOW WALL in front of the Field Office to stop the cows eating the grass & flowers...

For an itinerary contact Helen Beeby on 0434 412104 or helen.beeby@gmail.com



Venn internships point to an innovative way to explore faith



REV Jay Robinson recently went to New Zealand to attend the ANZTCA - Aotearoa New Zealand Tertiary Chaplains Association - Annual

Conference in Wellington. Rob Lingard and Rupert Bowd were there too. Jay says: "This site and group was recommended at the conference and it looks awesome as an experience for young Christians - have a look and see what you think."
<http://www.venn.org.nz/>



All things bright and beautiful down at Mount Martha

Look what happened at Mount Martha UC recently...

Members of the congregation enjoyed a great morning gathered in the sun - with just a few spots of rain - enjoying the song of the birds and the company of many four-footed creatures as they celebrated the blessing of the animals. Pictured is Rev Dr Paul Chalson giving thanks for this woman's best friend.

Special invite

An invitation for those people in the Presbytery of Port Philip East who would like to attend a special event in the life of the Presbytery of Gippsland as follows:

The Service of Ordination of Ray McCluskey as Minister of the Word. The service will be led by Chairperson of the Presbytery of Gippsland Rev. Jim Murray and will be held at: Traralgon Uniting Church, Park Lane, Traralgon on Saturday 19th December 2015. Commencing at 2.00pm.

Seeds of Hope



share
restoring life, joy, hope

Plant seeds of hope for future generations

Did you know that you can include a gift to Share in your Will?

A gift in your Will is a simple but powerful way that your support for Share can live on and on. Your support, through a bequest or legacy, will one day make a significant difference to the lives of disadvantaged and vulnerable people in our communities.

You will be planting seeds of hope for future generations.

To receive a copy of the free information booklet, *Sharing the Seeds of Hope*, or for a confidential discussion, call Helen from the Share team on **03 9251 5251**. Alternatively, you can visit www.shareappeal.org.au/wills



Dates for your diary

- Release of Pastoral ties/retirement: Rev David Peel - Sunday, 20th December at Bentleigh UCA.
- Release of Pastoral ties/retirement: Rev Eileen Ray, - Sunday, 27th December.
- MSR – Presbytery Briefing session - January 20th, 2016 at 12pm Synod office.
- St Andrew's Gardiner Congregation closure 10th April 2016.

Sharing helps us grow

WE'VE been seeing some fabulous activity and Sharing going on via the Presbytery of Port Phillip East Facebook page.

More and more churches are establishing their own pages and many are posting and sharing events, photographs and happenings across the PPEP page too.

We invite people to Share their Facebook pages and postings with the Port Phillip East Presbytery page.



Just search for Port Phillip East Presbytery on Facebook... or click on <https://www.facebook.com/ucappeg.org/>

To learn more about how to do these things on Facebook please e-mail Rev Jay Robinson - our Facebook expert - on jay@robinsonfamily.id.au



Baby Hugh is welcomed to the family of the church

Many of you will know Michael and Sherryn Downing from their years of service at Somers Camp, Michael's chaplaincy work and their involvement with the UCA in general. On Sunday, November 29 their gorgeous little boy Hugh, born in August, was baptized at High Street Uniting Church to a full house.

To celebrate the occasion there was a great Advent worship service, music and singing from Rev Jay Robinson, the 'Spotlight' young people and godparents Peter, aka PJ, and Elissa. It was a wonderful service spanning all generations. Another special baptism is planned for December at HSUC - Elijah Quantanillo



Walking the talk

WESTERN Port UC supported the first White Ribbon day march in Hastings. David Garnock shared about the shires statement about family violence acknowledging that while women are the majority of victims 85%, that men can also be victims. The annual 16-days of activism to stop violence against women in Australia begins with White Ribbon Day and will finish on 10 December - Human Rights Day.

The NEW Port Phillip East Presbytery website is an exciting additional resource tool for communication across our churches, agencies, schools and communities. We welcome submissions to the website, Newsbeat and Facebook, but should advise that photographs may be used across all unless instructed otherwise when submitted.

Visit the Presbytery website at www.ucappeg.org and www.facebook.com/ucappeg.org for news, events and more....

The views expressed by contributors and editorial to Newsbeat are not necessarily the views of the Presbytery.