

NEWSBEAT



AUGUST 2018

NEWSLETTER FOR THE PRESBYTERY OF PORT PHILLIP EAST



Why Somers gets better and better every year. Lead on to page 5 to hand it to those who make it all happen.



She's just come back from the West Bank, and enthralled listeners at Mount Martha UC. A story in pictures on page 3.



Grim reminder of Manus and Nauru engages whole community

AN installation marking the fifth anniversary of people seeking asylum being detained on Manus Island and Nauru at St. John's, Elsternwick has drawn much interest.



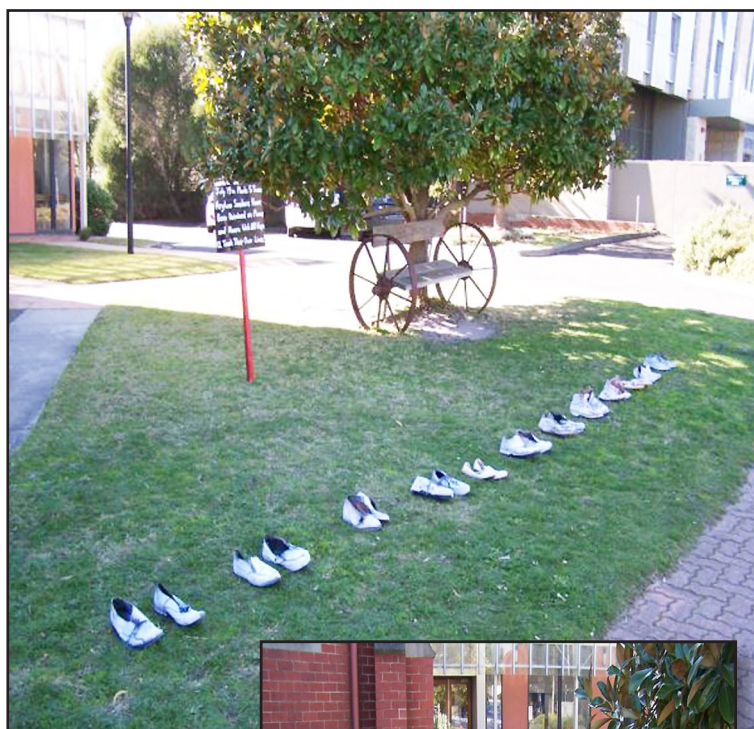
Women unite

In the middle of Assembly week, after votes from the floor, Dr Deidre Palmer announced President-Elect for the 16th Assembly would be Rev Sharon Hollis. Rev Hollis is the third woman as President-Elect, and the first ordained woman. She is also VicTas Synod's current Moderator. For more details of the Assembly meeting and outcomes affecting our presbytery congregations and the wider church turn to page 4.

The anniversary was on July 19 and, during those five years, 12 detainees have taken their own lives.

So 12 pairs of shoes (mainly donated by St. John's Op Shop), represented those 12 men and have been lined up in front of the church, along with a simple sign. It has proven to be a powerful statement, which has had people stopping as they drive past, crossing the road to look and hundreds have responded on the Facebook page of 'The Side Door' Social Justice Hub.

'The Side Door' is based at St. John's, with a number of community organisations represented on the Steering Committee.



Stepping forward together

At its meeting last month Presbytery endorsed a model for its structure for the next five years. A model known as the Governance and Ministry Leadership Model was adopted, as outlined in the Ecclesia Leadership Stage 2 Stream B Report. This recommendation was the result of the work of a Task Group which met over a two-day intensive and considered some of the various options



possible as part of our Cultivating a New
Cont. on back page

"I really wasn't sure what sort of response we might get," said Rev. Philip Liebelt, minister at St. John's.

"But we are certainly encouraged to have similar installations in the future." Having recently hosted a successful 'Reconciliation Q & A' event, between Reconciliation and NAIDOC Weeks, one possibility could be to make a statement on the lack of progress that has been made in response to the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

Port Phillip East Presbytery's vision & purpose: "Encouraging, resourcing and giving pastoral oversight to communities of faith and ministers entrusted to our pastoral care."



Bubbly Pastor breathes new life into family and children's ministry

by
Glynis Ramsay



L to R – Rev Ineke Gyles, Community Development Worker Riak Gordon Kiir, Rev Ann Simons and a few of the children bubbling away.

In our prayers

HAMPTON Uniting Church has been supporting the Dinka Language School established at Pakenham UC and have kept up communications with them. They also enjoyed a recent visit from Riak, pictured above, to hear more on the school. In a recent message to Riak, they referenced the terrible murder of 19 year old Sudanese girl Laa Chol a few weeks ago. "As she was from Pakenham, we thought there was a good chance that Riak would know her, so I e-mailed to ask." writes Ian Menzies. "As you can see from the reply below, this is sadly the case."

Hi Ian

Good morning. Thanks, Ian for email. I was in shock yesterday, when I received call from relative. I am confused Ian, What to do! Yes, she is from our community, and next door to my house. I support them, dropped her siblings to school sometimes, when their mum at work. Laa's mum she is a single mother. Dad living somewhere here in Melbourne. He came when he got news. This a second girl within this month in Pakenham south Sudanese community. We facing many challenges with south Sudanese teenager. Please put our community in your thoughts and prayers.

Editor's note: May we all keep Riak, Laa's family and the South Sudanese community in Pakenham, and beyond, in our prayers.



L to R – Somers Camp Leaders Daniel and Maggie, Jo Crisp, Mercy, Josh, Lysa and TJ

LAST Sunday Jo Crisp led a Somers Camp worship service at Pakenham UC where she, and camp leaders Maggie and Daniel, interacted with the four kids who went on camp.

The impact of the camp was so profound that the children already have plans for returning next year!

The second half of this special service on July 29, was dedicated to the commissioning of Jo as Children and Families Pastor. Rev Ineke Gyles, on behalf of Port Phillip East Presbytery, and Marie Harding, Chairperson of the Officer Pakenham Mission Area Church Council, spoke of the many blessings Jo would be offering to the children at Pakenham. During the laying on of hands, Mercy and TJ had been invited to represent the children, and the other children participated by surrounding her with bubbles – spirituality through the eyes of a child! Jo accepted a call into Children and Families Ministry, and has been serving as Pastor, at The Avenue Uniting Church in Blackburn since 2013. In mid 2017 she completed further study at Pilgrim College and later was the successful candidate for a new 10-hr/week position at Pakenham. At her recent review meeting, those from the church concluded it was a blessing for our mission area, and Jo felt the call to this position was the right one. Jo now continues to serve in both congregations in a Children and Families Ministry role.



L to R, Mary and Jan (two of the Children and Families Ministry Team Members), Marie (Chairperson OPMA Council Chair), Pastor Jo Crisp, Rev Ann Simons, Rev Ineke Gyles



Laa Chol, 19, from Pakenham in Melbourne's outer south-east, died after she received serious injuries at EQ Tower in A'Beckett Street in the early hours of Saturday. Picture: Instagram, words ABC

If music be the food of love... let's play!

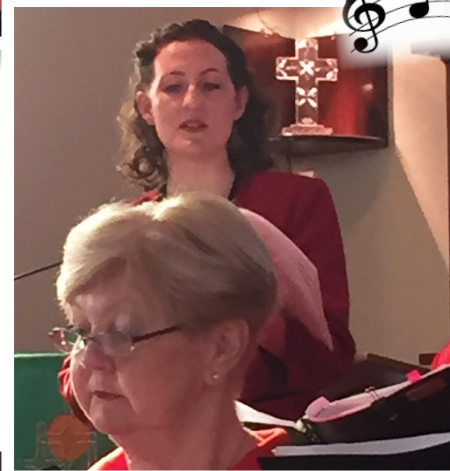
HYMNFEST 2018 at St Andrew's Berwick UCA was a great success, with a full and overflowing church. The choir had additional members from the other local churches and community, and looked smart in their new red or black St Andrew's Berwick choir polo shirts.

Monique Churchill was our guest soprano, pictured right centre, who sang beautifully, and we all wanted to hear more from her. I am pleased to say that will happen again, as she has asked to join our UCA congregation!

Ably organised and conducted by our Musical Director Matthew Clark, we were joined by his grandmother Valda Clark from St Luke's Mt Waverley UCA on piano. We also had my band Journey Bound sing, and we reprised our songs at the joyful Narre North UCA 'Songs and Scones' event with the Vanuatu boys last weekend, too.

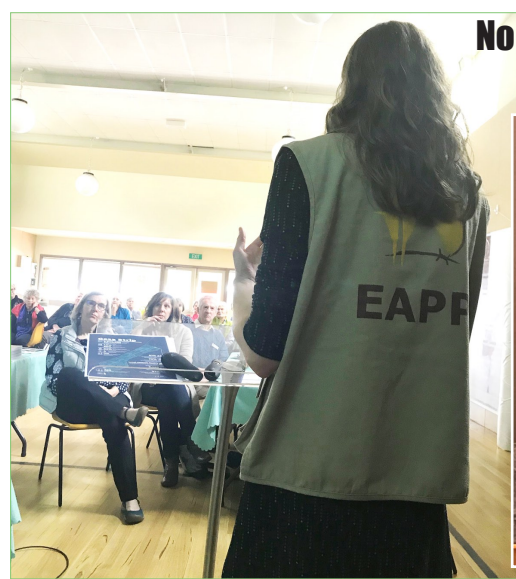
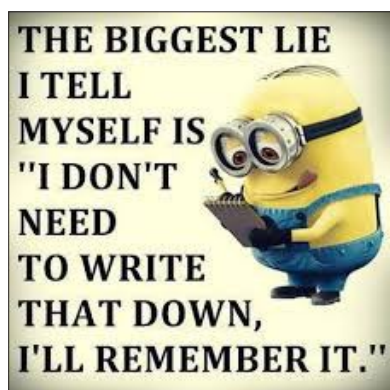
Music really brings people together!

by Rev Wendy Snook



From the top: Journey Bound entertain the crowd, Monique Churchill hits the high notes and the choir put their voices together for Glory, Glory Hallelujah.

Laughter lines



No EAPPI ending in sight in Gaza



Mt Martha UC hosted Act for Peace and one of their recently-returned Ecumenical Accompaniers to Israel and Palestine, Monica Keily, on their Fifth Sunday Lunch in July. Learning more on the history and problems in Gaza had a profound effect. The \$550 raised went to Act for Peace.

New directions for our church



THE 15th Triennial Assembly meeting - was recently held in Box Hill, Victoria. Dr Deidre Palmer was installed as the 15th President of the Uniting Church in Australia at St Michael's Uniting Church in

Former Assembly President, Stuart McMillan hands over the mantle to Dr Deidre Palmer



Melbourne. She comes with an illustrious background, including Christian Educator, Social Worker and Moderator of the Synod of SA. In sharing her theme of Abundant Grace, Liberating Hope, Dr Palmer says: "In a time where we could focus on scarcity – fewer people and less financial resources – God's gift of abundant grace calls us to be a people who share gifts, resources, time and energy generously."



There were 58 Proposals discussed and votes cast.

These are six key issues agreed upon, but for the full list of Proposals and other aspects of the 15th Triennial Assembly visit <https://uniting.church>

- To affirm the First Peoples of Australia, the Aboriginal and Islander Peoples, are sovereign peoples in this land.
- A Day of Mourning to occur on the Sunday prior to 26th January each year, and to engage during worship services in activities such as reflection and discussion of the profound effect of invasion and colonisation on First Peoples.
- 'Statement of Access and Welcome' as a starting point for further conversation and action regarding justice and equality for people with disability.
- To adopt the Statement on Domestic and Family Violence.
- The 15th Assembly of the Uniting Church in Australia has agreed to hold two equal and distinct views on marriage to honour the diversity of Christian belief among its members. Meeting for the first time since last year's change to Australian marriage laws, the Assembly, resolved to allow its ministers the freedom to conduct or refuse to conduct same-gender marriages.
- The proposal regarding Climate Change was referred to the Assembly Standing Committee for further work.

Spotted at Assembly



Looking to the future

President Palmer met with the young adult cohort of delegates who made up 10% of membership of the 15th Assembly.

They asked the President frank questions about her hopes for the future of the Uniting Church. She then heard some of their challenges and their thoughts for the direction of the Uniting Church.



The pastoral letter from the President about the recent Assembly decision regarding marriage has now been translated into the following languages:

Chinese (simplified and traditional), Fijian, Indonesian, Korean, Samoan, Tongan and Niuean. A Filipino translation to come. All translations may be viewed or downloaded. *For the full letter and translations visit www.ucappep.org/newsbeat/nationalassembly *

If congregations are not clear about these decisions or if they are causing problems or distress we can offer you support.

Grace and peace, Rev Sharon Hollis, Moderator t (03) 9251 5217 e: Sharon.Hollis@victas.uca.org.au



Leading the way through empowerment

by
Meg
Ryan

For the past few weeks myself and approximately 150 others have been recovering from one of our favourite times of year. SOMERS TIME!!!!

Around 30 of that 150 can call ourselves leaders, and we



spend 2-3 months organizing, planning and preparing and then run the most amazing camp there is.

For those who don't know what Somers Camp is, it is Children's Christian Camp for kids in years 3 (8 year olds) all the way up to kids in year 9 (15

year olds). Leaders, campers and slushies (aka year 10 students in the transition stage of going from camper to leader) head down to just past the Balnarring area to Somers. That is where the fun begins; we spend the week exploring our faiths, all the while doing a multitude of games and activities.

For seven weeks prior to the June/July school holidays,

You're invited to

The Somers After party!!

August 12, 2018, 5:00pm to 7:00pm

High Street Uniting Church

Address: 16-18 High Street, Frankston, Victoria

right up until camp, every leader spends large amounts of their own free time creating games, activities, worships, a children's bible study, arts and crafts, mealtime entertainment and bedtime stories for the campers to experience that all connect to a central theme. This year the theme was "Somers Survivor".

We invited group of 10 of our retired leader to come back

help out with a new Carnival Night which was tremendous! The carnival activities included face paint, human bowling, fire twirling, banner making, disco and our new mascot Jumpy the Kangaroo. This

year I was also given the opportunity to see camp from a different angle. I was given the privilege of being a slushie leader this year. Which I can safely say was one of the most exhausting but rewarding years on camp I have ever had! Being a slushie leader means that I got to

work with a small group of 14 slushies, and our job on camp was to be the cleaners. We washed all the dishes, cleaned bathrooms and helped out around camp wherever we could. Sounds like rough work I know. But slushie year is all about transitioning between being a camper and becoming a leader.

So the slushie leaders help guide the slushies through this week of "work" while also trying to make it fun. Slushies also are

given the chance to help run activities, as a way of letting them learn how things are run on camp. Everyone who attends has a thrilling time at camp. It is a much loved experience!!



SOMERS TRIVIA NIGHT
You're invited to the 4th Annual Somers Trivia Night!

When: Saturday 4th August 6-9pm
Where: Mt Martha Uniting Church, 109 Bay Road, Mt Martha
Cost: \$10 per person or \$80 for a table of 10
Contact: ash.k.barrett@gmail.com for bookings

Come prepared for a BBQ, trivia, games and an awesome night of fun! Face painting will be available between 6 & 7pm for a gold coin donation. There will also be a raffle and silent auction running throughout the night. This is a fundraising event for Somers Camp.

SOMERS CAMP

Message

'To love is to let down the barriers that separate us from one another. It is to welcome others just as they are, with all their differences, their gifts and their weaknesses. Our community life with all its littleness and difficulties is a place of the presence of God.'

**Jean Vanier
of the month**

Church celebrity visits the Village

WHAT a coup for the Village Church in Mt Eliza, who on Sunday July 22nd welcomed the Moderator of the Victorian and Tasmanian Synod AND the President Elect of the Assembly, Rev Sharon Hollis.

The Village Church shared 5 of their vital ministries with the Moderator, their Kid's Hope mentoring program at Kunyung Primary School, their recent connection with Peninsula first peoples through the Willum Wirrain centre at Hastings and the plans to establish a bush tucker garden on the church block, their weekday playgroup ministry that provides an engaging place for children

and builds community amongst parents and care givers, their very active knitting group that provides endless knitted



" The Middle Years. "

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goods to people in need, and their Youth Engagement ministry which includes schools based work with at risk young people, youth camps, days out, pilgrimage of origin and pilgrimage to Uluru, as well as their Friday night Village Church youth programs.

The Moderator preached a message on Ephesians 3 and shared with the children and said: "It was a huge privilege to preach and do the children's talk at the Mt Eliza Uniting Church today. This community is a multi-generational

community who engage in a diverse range of ministry and outreach projects."

Over lunch the Moderator responded to questions and spoke about how she had become Moderator at such a difficult time in her life,



the church seeing gifts in her she was struggling to see and calling her in what she saw as a sign of hope. The Moderator also announced that

2018 is flying – high time to be a Safe Church!

Are you committed to being a Safe Church? If so, are you keeping up to date with policies, information for church councils and the Reportable Conduct Scheme?

Are you taking the necessary steps to be a Safe Church? Are you supporting safe leaders? Using Safe Places Safe Programme resources? Do leaders have their Working with Children Checks? Do you have a WWCC Contact Person? All details are available at <https://ucavictas.org.au/keepingchildrensafe/>

HAVE YOU HAD SAFE CHURCH TRAINING?

Attending Safe Church Training will help all appointed leaders understand the importance of Keeping Children Safe and their own responsibilities. The training is offered by ministry agents and others trained to lead.

Check our calendar for training events hosted by various congregations at <https://ucavictas.org.au/keepingchildrensafe/events/>

Or arranging Safe Church Training is as simple as completing a form at <https://ucavictas.org.au/keepingchildrensafe/safe-church-training/>

A local trainer/facilitator will be allocated to lead the training and resources will be available at the training event.

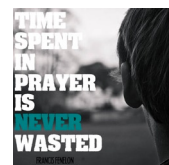


Uniting Church in Australia
SYNOD OF VICTORIA AND TASMANIA

the Village Church's Youth Engagement ministry had received a grant through the Moderator's Lenten Appeal, because this ministry had strong congruence with the Synod's strategic priorities, ministry with young people and renewal of Christian practice and mission.

by Rev Cameron McAdam

Source of life and love, we know that we are being raised up, not through our own hard-won worthiness, but because in the Son of Man you have called us out of the darkness and named us your children of light.



Amen

by Bruce D Prewer

LONG ago, in the 70s, we went to England. In the wintry gloom of a grey English afternoon in Sheffield, we happened upon a URC Church (United Reformed, being a fusion of Presbyterians and Congregationalists in England; the Methodists having withdrawn from union negotiations). The name of the church was, "The Michael Church."

A lady with stroller passing by asked what we were doing. After a brief discussion, she said she knew the way to the minister's house, if we'd like to meet him. So we made our way through the streets walking with her to the manse; then still with her up the garden path to the front door. To our surprise, she proceeded to open the door and invite us in. She was the minister's wife!

Some years later as a minister herself, she became known for her prayers in the style of Celtic Christianity.

These can be seen in her book, *The Green Heart of the Snowdrop* (Kate McIlhagga, Wild Goose publications).

For us in England in the month of January, it was good to be inside the warm manse and to experience their hospitality given to us strangers. The couple were members of the Iona Community, who are committed to welcoming the stranger in their midst, thus following one of the better commandments in the Bible.

They were careful to explain that the local church was not named after Saint Michael of all Angels. Rather it was the carefully chosen Hebrew word Michael, which literally means, "What is God like?"

Many years later when travelling through

Reflections on Faith

southern Spain, we found in our Lonely Planet guide book, the name of a church, which made us very curious. In Spanish culture, churches named after Mary, the mother of Jesus, proliferate. In our book these included, among many: Santa Maria del Mar, Santa Maria de Los Angeles, and Nuestra Señora de los Pastores. However it was the church named, Nuestra Señora de la O, that raised our curiosity.

Why give the name, "Our lady of the O" to a church? One such church was not far way in San Lucar de Barrameda, at the mouth of the Guadalquivir River.

After a train and bus trip, we duly arrived at this church and stood before the

massive church door. According to our Lonely Planet information this was the day of the week, other than Sunday, when the church was open to the public. Yet we

found the stout studded wooden doors shut. What a disappointment!

Then a Spanish couple arrived with leather brief cases and stood waiting outside the door. In a few minutes a little door in the big doors opened. A priest emerged to converse with the couple. I seized my chance and in broken Spanish explained that we'd come all the way from Australia and our guide book said the church was open on Wednesdays. He replied, "Mañana fiesta" (tomorrow is festival/feast). And then, "¡Hoy cerrado!" the latter meaning, "Today it is shut!" Then after

a pause, "But it is open for you. Come in!" He took us inside, turned on all the lights, and told us where to find him, when we were finished.

And there she was: a very large Mary dominating the church: a very pregnant, yet to be the mother of Jesus. The shape of her body gave us the clue to the puzzling name. In this tradition of Christianity, Jesus will be the perfect baby and therefore would require a perfectly shaped womb, not the usual pear shape. Her womb was perfectly spherical. After gazing at this figure, I looked down to see a brass plaque on a pillar, which said that in this Church Columbus and the crew of his ships attended their last mass in Europe, before sailing out into the unknown Western Atlantic. This profoundly affected us both. I recalled having learned as a child, the pithy rhyme, "In 1492 Columbus sailed the ocean blue."

Of course in our Protestant tradition, saints names can be few and far between, though sometimes they are in the names of Uniting Churches previously Presbyterian. Unless there are any named after Saint Mary McKillop, there are no Australian saints. So should we take up Robert's suggestion and call our church, "Grace"? Or should we create a new saint. In view of so many of us being in different ways supporters of the AIM, I suggest that one name could be the yet-to-be-canonised, John Flynn. Our name could become the Church of Saint John of Moliagull! Trouble is, next to nobody would know why. Maybe St Clare or St Francis, as we do have an environmental place in Mount Martha.

SAINTLY TRAVELLERS' TALES by Ian Higgins Mt Martha UCA



Planning Ahead Information Sessions

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Hear from our Palliative Care Specialist Kerry Whitlock, a local palliative service and Advanced Care Planning specialists.

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2pm – 4pm

Uniting AgeWell Noble Park Community

1312 Heatherton Road
Noble Park 3174

Light refreshments provided

9554 0700

unitingagewell.org/planning



Next month: **Grief & Loss**
Tuesday 11 September, 2pm – 4pm



Special presbytery meeting rubber stamps mission proposals and PPEP team set up

The Special meeting was called to consider the 2019 (and beyond) Mission proposals and the recommendations from the Cultivating a New Future report on the Presbytery Team Model.

Mission proposals had been received from the Dandenong, Karingal, Pakenham and Parkdale congregations. A representative from each congregation was invited to



by Ian Firth

address the Presbytery on their

proposal and why it was important.

Mission presentations from congregations are always an annual highlight. It's inspiring to hear of the great work congregations



- 15 August
- 17 October
- 12 December

**Presbytery in
Council meeting dates**

ALL meetings will be held at Noble Park Uniting Church, jct of Joy Parade and Allan Street and will commence at 7.30pm.

All ministers and presbytery reps are asked to attend regularly. Thank you.

are doing in their local communities. The Presbytery decided that all the proposals should be supported and they will now be considered by the 2018 Annual Grants Conference.

Stepping forward together

Cont. from front page

Future initiative.

Changes to Synod funding now mean that all its Presbyteries will be funded for the equivalent of two Presbytery Minister full-time placements, and an additional half-time position will be allocated to each Presbytery to work in conjunction with the Synod's equipping Leadership for Mission (eLM) unit. Further, applications for additional annual funding from a shared allocation can be made, but cannot be assumed.

Recognising that UCA Regulations require those in Team Ministry situations to have a 'Team Leader' nominated, the agreed

**by Ian Menzies
Member at Hampton UCA
and committee member for
Cultivating a New Future**

Model creates a position of an 'Executive' Presbytery Minister (working title) to act as such a Leader in overseeing the various 'tasks' required of the Presbytery, while the separate position of Chair will oversee the various 'governance' matters required.

It was also agreed that this Model will form the basis of the structure of the Presbytery for five years from its implementation, with a review to be conducted in the fourth year.

Using the Model

to shape the formation of all such roles, the Task Group hopes to bring recommendations on these to the Presbytery meeting on 15 August. Concurrently, additional consideration will be given to the role of Presbytery Chair. This role has greatly expanded over time and now carries significant secular legal responsibilities as well as the multiple roles prescribed by the UCA.

An overriding consideration of these efforts is the desire to be 'lighter and simpler' to enable creativity and agility to flourish.



New spots at St Leonards

TWO exciting ministry positions have become available at St Leonard's UC

- Children & Family Ministry Co-ordinator
- Youth & Young Adult Ministry Co-ordinator

This could be a Full-time position or two 0.5 positions.

Position descriptions available at www.stleonards.org.au.

Applications: Secretary St.

Leonard's Church Council,
2 Wolseley Grove, Brighton VIC
3186

Or email contact@stleonards.org.au

Initial inquiries can be directed to
Rev Kim Cain 0419 373 123

St Leonard's
UNITING CHURCH

Add more to life



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



The 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.ucappep.org and www.facebook.com/ucappep.org for news, events and more....