



NEWSBEAT



APRIL 2020

NEWSLETTER FOR THE PRESBYTERY OF PORT PHILLIP EAST

Pointing a new lens at church worship

This issue of Newsbeat comes at a time of incredible change in our world. The Presbytery Ministers, Standing Committee and Communication Team wish to convey our gratitude to everyone who is working hard in the current challenging circumstances, and to offer encouragement to you all as members of the dispersed Uniting Church movement.

Like Christian communities right around the world, we are finding new and creative ways to worship, as we gather apart. We are seeing that people in our congregations are continuing to care for one another and stay connected with each other.

Most of us are on a steep learning curve as we try to work out what is best for our own congregation in the light of the abundance of resources increasingly available.

We are experiencing a time of rapid transition and significant change, from week to week, from day to day. May you be strengthened as you continue to serve in this challenging context.

Duncan Macleod
Presbytery Minister: Team Leader

THE Village Church in Mount Eliza went “live” on Facebook, streaming their worship service to the Internet with a congregation of 24 people scattered at a distance across the pews on the first Sunday after the COVID-19 closure. Cameron McAdam and team chose to lead a shorter service of about 40 minutes, with instrumental piano music rather than sung hymns.

Our churches have been scrambling over the last two weeks to work out how to worship in non-gathered ways. Whether old or young, the loss of a regular rhythm of worship loomed with a shared sense of anxiety, compounding the concerns about public health.

A few churches, such as Glen Waverley, already offered worship services or sermons online. Most others, like Mount Eliza, tried a simple setup of a phone, microphone and tripod. Yet even that was a steep learning curve.

Afterwards Rev Cameron McAdam said: “Livestreaming was way better than I could have ever imagined. I was feeling flat, because I feel like my whole week feeds in and out of Sunday and the church worship rhythm. In particular the engagement with people through worship. I expected it might feel really one-way, but I was so surprised by how the community felt so present. It was a brilliant idea of Steph’s to welcome people to church as they connected in, and I hope to expand that a bit this week. People messaged me throughout the service, and when I wasn’t speaking I was able to engage a bit. The comments were great to read afterwards, and the responses that people made during the service, the likes, hearts etc, were actually making people more engaged than normal. It was like an “Amen”, but that is not something that happens a lot in our tradition. I used a quote during the sermon, and a LOT of people responded affirmatively with likes and hearts. An unexpected positive outcome were the numbers of people engaging, way beyond those that would normally be present on a Sunday. It was quite remarkable. 642 views.”

As I have kept asking, we are focusing a lot on the physical or health implications of



by Dr Craig Mitchell
PM Church Development



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Cont. from front page

Covid, or the economic implications, all rightly so, but what are the spiritual implications. At

the heart of what we are trying to do is just keep the community together and connected across this time, and help us all wrestle and consider the spirituality of everything unfolding."

Frankston UC offered a telephone dial-in to their morning service, so that all members could easily listen in. That evening, the contemporary worship was held as a Zoom video conference, complete with singalong!

Not all congregations are going online. At Endeavour Hills, Rev Andrew Boyle distributed print materials by email and envelope to church members.

Tell us what you are doing and how you are connecting, and we will add details here:

<https://www.ucappep.org/covid-19-response/worship-services/>

Pointing a new lens at church worship

CHRIS Rowntree, of Ormond UC writes, "We worshipped at home this morning along with the dispersed Ormond Uniting Church congregation. The Congregation Directory represents our prayer for each member, and Van Gogh's image of the Raising of Lazarus can be used for Visio Divina after our meditative Lectio Divina in the Order of Service distributed to all via email or hand delivery. We Chromecast Uniting World's video for LentEvent to our TV."



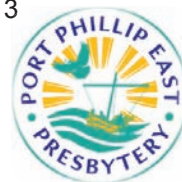
Follow up emails from members of Frankston Uniting Church: "I think it worked really well!! I look forward to next Sunday!! **jenni** Just to say THANK YOU and WELL DONE. I feel blessed.... Take care and keep up the good work. **Marg**



Learning to keep connected in the non-gathered church

Broadcast services on the first Sunday after enforced closure: Clockwise from right: Murrumbeena UC, Korean Church of Melbourne, St Leonards UC, Brighton and Frankston UC.





The tipping point

Joy completes her journey to ministry just prior to presbytery halting gatherings... for now

THE ordination of Joy Blamires at Leighmoor Uniting Church was an adventure in creativity and safe practice as we started to prepare for a new way to meet together as the church.

The day before Joy's ordination by the Port Phillip East Presbytery it became clear that

it would be unwise to bring a lot of people in a vulnerable age bracket to meet in a small church building. We worked with a tech consultant on the morning of Saturday, March 14 to set up video and sound equipment to make it possible to broadcast the service live, particularly so that people from St Mark's Mornington, Joy's first placement, could be part of the service. Everything was ready, almost. Five minutes before the service we realized that the live broadcast had a glitch. We tried to fix things but time was running out. We moved to Plan B: stream live to the Presbytery Facebook page using an iPhone. We managed to get that stream going using my iPhone, starting out with a



**by Duncan Macleod
PM, Team Leader**

hand-held arrangement. A camera tripod was brought in to stabilize the picture, with Blu Tack and elastic holding the phone in place. When battery levels dropped, Anneke Oppewal's iPhone was brought into action, with quick learning about the importance of unlocking screen orientation. Over 500 people have watched the video, still hosted in its three sections on the Presbytery Facebook page.

Communion was served, with celebrant Rev Cameron McAdam and team using hand sanitizer and sterilized gloves. Joy was greeted by colleagues and friends. No hugs

or handshakes— just hands on hearts and warm smiles. Joy is now ready to start as a Minister of the Word, but in an environment none of us have ever expected.



To watch the recording of Joy's ordination click on <https://www.facebook.com/ucappep.org/>



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Induction of Rev Ian Stewart at Southern Mornington Peninsula Congregation

Port Phillip Presbytery is inviting you to this induction at **2 pm, Sunday April 5.**

The induction is being held as a Zoom video meeting, but allows participants to phone in as well. You can join in any time from 1.45 pm.

Join Ian's Zoom induction service on your computer, tablet or smartphone, by clicking on this link:

<https://zoom.us/j/250166978>

Meeting ID: 250 166 978

Join Ian's Zoom induction service on your phone (audio only) by dialling one of the following numbers:

03 7018 2005 Australia

08 7150 1149 Australia

02 8015 6011 Australia

and enter the meeting ID: 250 166 978



Below is a diagram explaining how easy it is to set up a Zoom meeting through your computer (or tablet or smartphone.) You can make the image bigger by using the zoom option on the top of your pdf screen. Or visit www.ucappep.org/ for larger version.

HOW TO ACCESS ZOOM



BY KELLY SKILTON

START HERE

Welcome to Zoom. To get to your meeting, there are two options:

1. Click the ZOOM link that might have been sent to you; or,
2. Go to your internet browser and type in: zoom.us/join

A display window will appear. Here you can enter the Meeting ID number. Then click 'JOIN'.

Await your HOST to begin your gathering

If this is your first time using Zoom, follow along to POINT 2. If you have been on Zoom before, you may SKIP TO POINT 4.

- 2 When you are joining Zoom for the first time, you will need to download a file. This process is slightly different depending on what device or program you are using.



COMPUTER • When you download this file off the internet, make sure you save the file (this can be anywhere, but a good place to keep it is the Applications Folder). These steps should be written on the screen as you wait for the download to complete. Once downloaded, saved and opened you can move on to POINT 3.



SMARTPHONE • You can get Zoom from either the App Store or the Google Play store. To set up, there are simple prompts to follow.

- 3 You will be asked how you would like to join your Audio (sound). The best option is to click 'join audio via computer'. (You can select the 'automatically join via this method' for next time.)

- 4 If you are having trouble with hearing or seeing, make sure your volume and camera are switch 'ON'. You may also want to check whether you have muted your camera or microphone in point 5.3

- 5 Once in Zoom, there are some extra buttons that we can use to help us all have a respectful time together (particularly as we cannot see body gestures when we are behind our screens):

5.1 • RAISING OUR HAND
These buttons will allow our host to know when there is someone who would like to speak next in line.



5.2 • CHAT MESSENGER
You can type to one another. Click this button, and then select either EVERYONE or THE NAME of who you want to type to.



5.3 • SOUND & CAMERA
These buttons, when a red strike is through them, mean you are turned off to others.



Rebuilding after trauma

"I returned after two weeks in New Zealand last Saturday, March 21, to a very different Melbourne. Now I am in self isolation for 14 days."

Margery Kennet, St John's UC, Mt Waverley



Editor's note: I asked Margery to send some photos of her NZ trip as a reminder of times some readers may have visited and for a time when we can return.

From the top: Nelson Anglican Cathedral at sunrise; Christchurch Cathedral nine years after the earthquake. Planning is under way for the new one. They worship in a "Cardboard Cathedral" for now; Mt Cook (under cloud) through a window;

Quote

"You gain strength, courage, and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You are able to say to yourself, 'I lived through this horror. I can take the next thing that comes along.'"

Eleanor Roosevelt
of the month

Reflections on Faith

Mighty like a rose

SO goes the song in praise of beauty. Wonderful displays in our gardens. Special gifts for celebrations. Decorative vases in homes.

In a corner of our garden beside the laundry grows a tiny rose bush in splendid isolation, except for a rosemary herb bush just near. Such delicate green leaves. It would be so easy to neglect it as not important. Yet twice a year it produces the most beautiful roses, colours of orange, yellow and pink, so delicately formed into a display of blooms surely no artist could paint.

In 1 Peter 4:10 Christians are challenged to be good stewards of the manifold grace of God. The word manifold or varied could also have in it the idea of many coloured. What a wonderful concept! God's Grace is varied, manifold, many coloured, free and undeserved - available at all times and in all seasons. As our little rose flowers, it reminds me of an Almighty Creator, whose -presence is

there all the time, sometimes hidden, sometimes unseen, but ready to display his creative presence in the small and the big. What is our response to this overwhelming gift?

Reflection: Ernest Dugmores hymn expresses it well.
Almighty Father of all things that be,

Our life, our work, we consecrate to thee.

Whose heavens declare thy glory from above,

Whose earth below is witness to thy love.

by Bill Pugh

Sign of the times...

Chinese artist Herro Zhao, who worshipped for a time at Stonnington Uniting Church, has sent through some of her amazing drawings of her time while quarantined in China for COVID-19. Here is one that expresses all of our feelings beautifully.



As Lent began...



A ROBUST group of people enjoyed the annual Pancake Night at the Beaumaris Uniting Church and we were delighted to raise in excess of \$400 for Uniting, to help families in crisis.



**Submitted by Alison Davies,
Secretary of Beaumaris Uniting
Church on March 7, 2020**

This annual event in the church calendar brings together members from our Playgroup and other local churches. Live music by church members added to the ambience of the evening.



A Holy Week Prayer

God of mystery
Beyond our comprehension
always behind and before us,
always beneath and above us
You confound us

Who are you, who shapes
such unlikely images of yourself
and then risks all
so we might inherit your true
likeness?

Who are you, who sends
your rebel child to live down our
street
and then dares us to reclaim
our true childhood through him?

Who is he, this God-Child
who frustrates his parents
hangs around with the wrong
crowd
questions the town council
is picked up by the local cops
and through all remains a source
of goodness, compassion and
truth?

God of stories and histories,
open the door for us
to re-enter and re-live this 'unholy'
week
full of longing and loss,
lies and truth,
shame and forgiveness,
trust and rejection.

In these coming days
we may both lose ourselves
and find ourselves
in the dusty arena of grace.
This will be one crowded hour.
Walk it with us, we pray.

God of all who fear and suffer,
may these days be
a watching and listening
for unexpected grace,
for unquenchable hope
for unreasonable truth
in the face of all
that denies abundant life.
We seek You, Suffering Christ.
Amen. A prayer by Craig Mitchell

Pastoral care in a time of human struggle



by Rev Anneke Oppewal

OUR world has been turned upside down and we are confronted with challenges nobody would have thought possible even a month ago. Suddenly we are live streaming, zooming, talking about communion in a dispersed community, wondering about continuing pastoral care in non-contact times, our outreach and our mission as a Church.

At this time it is as important to hold ourselves together as it is to offer others help and support. There are plenty of resources out there, some of which you will find on our website. There are plenty of stories, poetry, lament, prayers, praise and guidance for us to draw from in the bible and in our tradition. Prayer; a way to mindfully tend to ourselves as well as to others before God that can lift some of the burdens we carry and the anxiety that may be running rampant at this time. Knowing and envisioning Jesus beside you, remembering the imagery of the Good Shepherd in Psalm 23, or drawing strength from Paul's words to the Romans (Romans 8) that nothing can separate us from the love of God may be helpful ways to take a step back and tap into what our faith tradition has to offer us.

And as much as it is good to remember God's presence, it is also important to remember there are others around you. You're not alone. We are all in this together.

With ways of gathering and structures for pastoral care disrupted and limited it is time to become creative. To practice faith through cultivating loving kindness, calm, and care in new and different ways, or perhaps return to some ancient and long forgotten practices like phone calls, snail mail and letterbox drops. And to make a point of curbing our impatience, our irritation, our fear, and our anxiety when we are around other people. Find ways to stay home and care, to self isolate and create community, to feel out of your depth and hold others at the same time. We can meet this challenge together and go where we haven't gone before, as the body of Christ together.

Alive in God's love

Between the mistaken assumptions of Palm Sunday and the exuberant rejoicing of Easter Sunday lies the uncertainty, the dread, the not knowing what, of Good Friday and Holy Saturday.

With God's everlasting arms around us and Christ walking beside us, we need not fear.

Let us gather together as a dispersed people and allow our common story to bind us together.

Let us share lament and praise, fear, sadness, grief and gratitude, wonder and confidence in faith. Let us be present to each other and the world in prayer and attentive presence, be aware and alive to God's love.



JOAN STOTT UCAF BURSARY

ARE YOU:

- committed to or already studying for leadership or theology within the ethos of the Uniting Church
- under 35 years of age

COULD YOU USE FUNDS TO:

- pay fees to your "Place of Study"
- pay for additional courses or resources

Apply now for a Joan Stott Uniting Church Adult Fellowship (UCAF) Bursary for study in 2021

CONTACT:

Lencie Harding for more information and an application form E.lencie.harding@gmail.com

Applications closing date is Friday 29th May

When a world unites...

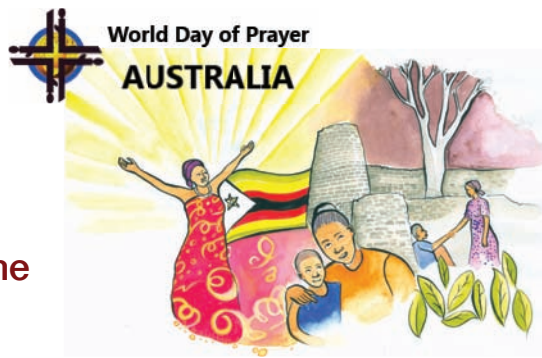
World Day of Prayer is a time of global Christian sharing and devotion - the ideal forerunner to the current climate

THE 2020 World Day of Prayer worship service was prepared by the WDP Committee of Zimbabwe this year and it proved to be a very moving, spiritual and distinctly African-flavoured experience. I attended the service on March 6 at St Paul's Anglican Church in Frankston.

It's across the road from Frankston UCA, so everyone is well-acquainted and St. Paul's, with its stained and leadlight windows, is a stunning church. I love the ecumenical

and global flavour of this powerful annual service. Knowing that people the world over are sharing in this moment of unity. They always round off with the hymn The Day Thou Gavest Lord is Ended, which they played at my father-in-law's funeral a few years ago (he and I went to a World Day of Prayer service during his final visit to Australia) so I cry every time.

by Helen Beeby



Theme: "Rise! Take Your Mat and Walk" John 5:2-9a



Above: Zimbabwean-born minister's daughter Jocelyn Kanyonganise is interviewed by Geoffrey Johnston on her early life in Zimbabwe amid war and difficulty (they hid in the hallway as bullets fired outside the house), but surrounded by the natural beauty that Zimbabwe enjoys.



Using these times of self-isolation to enjoy a good book...

'Eleanor Oliphant is perfectly fine'
by Gail Honeyman

This is a lighter story, a beautiful read, although with some deeper themes lurking in the background. I so loved this novel, and Eleanor's character. A chance event and an ensuing friendship that develops with a work colleague is heart-warming as he offers her unconditional love and support so that she can find who she is and put her past demons to bed.

'A Little Life'
by Hanya Yanagihara

This is a hard read, very challenging characters facing very challenging, relentless even, life circumstances, including (spoiler) abuse. This is not a read for the faint hearted, it has very strong contemporary themes, but the writing is so good, it is beautifully written and contains gem after gem of excellent lines on which to reflect. It has one of the most profound pieces of writing about love that I have ever read; I sobbed as I read it. Just an incredible moment of love between a father and son, truly unconditional.

*Recommended by Rev
Cameron McAdam, Deputy
Chair of the Presbytery*

Current advice and information as it affects our community (as of April 1, 2020) - A Summary...

1. All worship services in church buildings were suspended from Monday 23 March.
2. It is no longer possible to meet together in our church buildings and we encourage congregations to continue to meet online and in small groups of people living in the same home.
3. All face-to-face gatherings, including council and committee meetings, Bible study groups, craft groups and non-associated groups need to be suspended. Consider online gathering arrangements, video conferencing or phone calls.
4. No outdoor church of any size activities including worship should be conducted as the priority at this time is the safety of the community and playing a part in reducing transmission rates of COVID-19.
5. There is a maximum of two essential personnel allowed to gather for the preparation of worship resources. Appropriate physical distancing must be adhered to (4 square metres per person and 1.5 metres apart), with strict hygiene practices.
6. If churches are producing printed resources, you can deliver them to members but with strict safety measures to comply with government regulations.
7. No more than 10 people may be present at funerals, excluding people running the service. We recognise that this is a most difficult restriction for our congregations and we encourage congregational leaders to, with permission, explore ways of enabling the community to grieve and the possibility of recording such events in preparation for memorial services in the future or find alternative ways of shaping a memorial or thanksgiving service online (see our webpage <https://www.ucappep.org/funerals-and-weddings>).
8. Weddings are permitted with only the couple, celebrant and witnesses (5 people maximum). The physical distancing rules apply.
9. All baptisms should be postponed until further notice.
10. It is now time for congregations who employ staff to move to skeleton staff only in your buildings – no more than two people working in the office at any one time. Please encourage staff to work from home as much as possible.
11. If anyone is in the high-risk category for COVID-19, they must not be present.

Please continue to be in touch with your presbytery to share resources, ideas and ways of pastorally caring for each other at this time. We are also available to talk matters through on the phone.

Contact Duncan Macleod, Presbytery Minister: Team Leader
on 0439 828 718

by **Duncan Macleod**
PM, Team Leader



May God bless you with vision
when you cast
out into uncharted
waters.

May God bless you with patience
when you navigate uncertain times.

May God bless you with discernment
when you look to the heavens for signs.

May God bless you with courage
when your friends are sick with fear.

May God bless you with trust
when you feel you are sinking.

May God bless you with hope
when you sense that Christ hears your
cry.

May God bless you with peace
when you find yourself on the way home.

May the Creator God
who brooded over the waters
and parted the sea,
the Christ who walked on the ocean
who is Living Water,
the Spirit who baptises
and fills to overflowing
be with you today and every day.

Amen

A prayer by Craig Mitchell



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....