

Newsbeat

NEWSLETTER FOR THE PRESBYTERY OF PORT PHILLIP EAST



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MARCH 2023 ISSUE

Port Phillip East Presbytery's WHAT'S HAPPENING

An insight into what congregations,
schools & members are doing

DOG CHURCH

No, it's not a misprint! Dogs and God. The first of many services to come at Heatherton-Dingley Uniting Church.

On Saturday 18th February, Heatherton-Dingley UC hosted its first bi-monthly Dog Church worship service in their church hall. Imagine eleven people and seven dogs seated in the round for praise and prayer. The brief, interactive service was informal, conversational and reflective, with exploration of the character of God and the natures of dogs. Minister Andrea Mayes said that during prayer, the dogs quietened along with their owners. And yes, you can change the words of hymns to include dogs.

Heatherton-Dingley has had a long history of reaching out to dog owners. For over ten years the church has held bi-monthly "Bark and Chat" morning teas. As well as being a time for friendship, these gatherings raise money for animal charities. The guest speakers have included the "Story Dogs" team who arrange for school children to read books to dogs. "Bark and Chat" is also a time to acknowledge dogs that have died.

At last month's Dog Church people decided to collect food and other essentials for Pets for the Homeless. "Bark and Chat" and "Dog Church" will continue to look for ways to support and build relationships with dog owners and dog lovers in the area.

Dog Church had been an annual event. Now it will be a new kind of community of faith. And all God's creatures said "Woof! Woof!"

If you would like more information please contact Rev Deacon Andrea Mayes on 0408 615 939.



FRIENDSHIP AND FEASTING

Rev David Higham from Seafood UC Pastor & Presbytery Supply Minister at PPE shares of a joyous occasion.

For some years now the Frankston Cook Island Christian Church has held services at Seaford on Sunday afternoons using the Uniting Church building. In recent months as Covid restrictions have eased, the two communities have grown closer together, and on Sunday 5th February shared in worship together.

It was a heart warming occasion with the Seaford chapel full as both congregations came together to worship God. Ministers from each church led different parts of the service, with prayers in two languages. The hymns "How Great Thou Art" and "Amazing Grace" were sung in both Cook Island Maori and in English. What a joy to listen to the enthusiastic singing of our Cook Island friends as they gathered at the front of the Church and sang "Eli Eli Lama Sabathani" in Maori!

Rev Joseph guided the English speaking people in singing a simple song of praise "Aro'a mai te Atua iāku" (My God loves me) in both Maori and English, teaching the Maori pronunciations and actions to go with the words.

Prayers for others involved lighting taper candles as people came forward to make their own prayers to God.

The service was followed by a shared lunch, a veritable feast, provided by members of both congregations; a great time of fellowship which many were reluctant to leave. When we did leave we made promises to each other to join again, and again.



A FLIPPING GOOD TIME AT BEAUMARIS UC

Pancake or Shrove Tuesdays are celebrated around our Uniting Church communities and congregations. Many keep the yearly tradition and also raise money for Uniting Care.

Pancake Day came early for Beaumaris when the traditional Shrove Tuesday Pancakefest was held after the service on Sunday February 19th.

As well as our own congregation, we were glad to welcome members of the congregation of St Michael's and All Angels (the local Anglican parish) along with their vicar Rev Wayne Walters.

The pancakes were cooked and served by joyful volunteers led Wendy Hinde, a stalwart of many previous Pancake Day Celebrations. A variety of toppings were served on both normal and gluten-free pancakes, washed down with a choice of beverages.

We were entertained by our resident house band led by Alison and John Davies. Many enjoyed the chance to participate in community singing whilst others listened on with pleasure.

This is one of the many worship/charitable activities the congregation has enjoyed participating in for many years. The event is a chance for the community of believers to come together in fellowship, with the added benefit of raising money for Uniting Care.

Written by Graeme Webster Secretary, Parish Council



A YEAR OF THANKFULNESS



In 2022 Julian Hamilton embarked on a Year of Thankfulness. Every day of 2022, Jools posted on Facebook something for which he was thankful.

“Jools” Hamilton is well known in PPE after multiple ministry connections with Murrumbena UC and Glen Waverley UC. A Methodist minister from Ireland, Jools (also known as Rev Dr Hamilton) has also been a keynote speaker at three UCA National Christian Youth Conventions. We think that’s a record!

We asked Jools why he started his Year of Thankfulness.

“I started it because my brother-in-law did it! That’s the simple truth ... and I wanted to do it because the ‘science of happiness’ work (particularly Sonja Lyubomirsky - sonjalyubomirsky.com) ... speaks of the practice of gratitude helping make people happier. And I want a happier world.”

Here is one of Jools’ daily posts:

Thankful for a lot today

A little luxury

A little theatre trip with great production

A little walk with a little surprise inspiration

A little reminder that you never know when things will happen that might change everything

A little fun and laughter

A little hospitality received

A lot of littles that add up to a lot of thanks.

[Photo above: Jools preaching at Murrumbena UC in 2019.]

On 1 January 2023, at the end of his Year of Thankfulness, Jools posted this on Facebook:

“This is it. The end of a year of trying to deepen my thankfulness and appreciation of life in small ways, by finding something every single day to be thankful for.

Gratitude deepens almost everything in life. It has been scientifically tested, and has been proven to multiply itself many times over. It adds to physical well being by strengthening emotional and social well being. It has power to heal, to bind together, to bring perspective and to grow empathy and understanding.

I don’t know if this year has made me a better person, but I know I’m glad I tried to be a more thankful person.

And God looked and saw that it was Good.

I find it hard to imagine God looking at Gods handiwork, claiming it Good, and not having gratitude in the centre of the Spirit. Truth, beauty, goodness- all flowing through with gratitude. That’s a picture.

So today I am thankful for thanks. The challenge to be more full of gratitude.

The messages I have received all through the year from some of you saying ‘thanks for the thanks.’ They have meant a lot.

I think I’ll take the learning forward ... maybe more gratitude actions will surface over the coming weeks. But for now, from our house to yours, Happy New Year. Go grab some gratitude, and take 2023 by the gym gear”.

How about trying a week or month, even a year of thankfulness yourself?

Here is the surprise inspiration from Jools’ little walk.



PRACTISING GRATITUDE

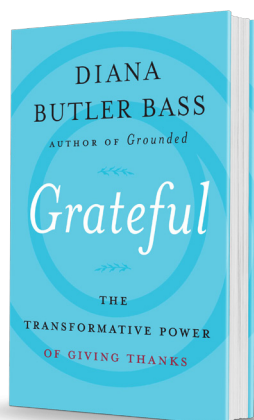
“Even in difficult times, gratitude can still frame our days, making us stronger and more able to face personal challenges and work on behalf of the common good.”

“Grateful: The Subversive Practice of Giving Thanks,” Diana Butler Bass

Turn Off. Tune In.

“Turn off the news sometimes” Since leaving prime time current affairs, veteran journalist Leigh Sales realises that daily broadcasts of global crises might be bad for our mental health. The TV news cycle focuses on 1 in 10,000 disasters and not on everyday events. Crises make headlines and drag us back to see what tomorrow’s dreadful spectres might be. Can you imagine “Stunning Sunset” as a newspaper headline?

Diana Butler Bass was sacked from her job - an unwelcome shove into reassessing life. “I learned new things about myself, about God, about life—all of it possible only because I was fired. I feel thankful.” When Diana also felt bombarded and disillusioned by the harsh side of US politics, she turned not to denial of reality but rather to a different view of the world. In her book *Grateful*, Diana invites people to see life as gift and all people and Creation as sharing that gift. Thankfulness is thorough – it sees everything.



“Gratitude is not a psychological or political panacea, like a secular prosperity gospel, one that denies pain or overlooks injustice, because being grateful does not “fix” anything. Pain, suffering, and injustice—these things are all real. They do not go away.

Gratitude, however, invalidates the false narrative that these things are the sum total of human existence, that despair is the last word.

Gratitude gives us a new story. It opens our eyes to see that every life is, in unique and dignified ways, graced: the lives of the poor, the castoffs, the sick, the jailed, the exiles, the abused, the forgotten as well as those in more comfortable physical circumstances. Your life. My life. We all share in the ultimate gift—life itself. Together. Right now.”

A Community Practising Gratitude

Both Bass and Sales suggest that to see the positives in our world might require practice. In the Christian tradition, prayers of praise and thanksgiving cultivate both a turning to God and to the world with an openness to finding goodness, even in the most difficult times. There are many times in which I arrive at church not feeling thankful. I need the practiced gaze of a community to help lift me out of wallowing self-pity or loss. As a person who has experienced deep loss and grief on several occasions, I’m not expecting a quick fix. But the company of those who can look up and out and see beauty and goodness has been vital for my very survival.

“Gratitude is, however, more than just an emotion. It is also a disposition that can be chosen and cultivated, an outlook toward life that manifests itself in actions—it is an ethic.” Diana Butler Bass

Ethics and action. Deborah Meister points to gratitude as a road to justice.

“Gratitude gives birth to justice. We praise God’s faithfulness and thank God for the gift of life. A grateful heart holds no resentment, anger or fear of being cast aside. When we can let go of selfishness, God’s justice will reign. The oppressed will be free and the poor will be fed. We can become instruments of peace and justice in the world.” *Living Faith*, Deborah Meister, 2018.

After Easter, our PPE focus on the Christian practices of Prayer will include an invitation to you to cultivate gratitude as a habit of communal discipleship.



CELEBRATING NEWNESS!



Celebration is energising! The St Kilda South Port union is a significant story of three local congregations choosing in a relatively short time to take a leap of faith together. On Sunday 5 March, the Presbytery celebrated the new congregation of St Kilda South Port at the South Melbourne Uniting Church. Beginning with a smoking ceremony led by Wurindjeri man Daniel Ross, people processed into the building for a communion service where stories from Genesis and John spoke to us of new journeys and new life. Ministers John Tansey and Alex Sangster preached in dialogue, and the new combined band provided wonderful music. Presbytery Chairperson Dr Tom Spurling and Secretary Anne Kim led the formal recognition of the new congregation. While Sunday worship will be held South Melbourne, all three church premises will be well used for ministry and mission.



BE THANKFUL!

Rev Robin Yang from Parkdale UC reflects on Paul's word in 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18.

**“Be joyful always, pray at all times,
be thankful in all circumstances.**

**This is what God wants from you
in your life in union
with Christ Jesus.”**

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (GNB)

Whenever I read these words of Paul, I find myself deeply challenged at the words - “always”, “at all times” and “in all circumstances”. It is easy to give thanks when our own wellbeing, our relationships and our congregations are going well. It is another thing to be thankful during the storms of life.

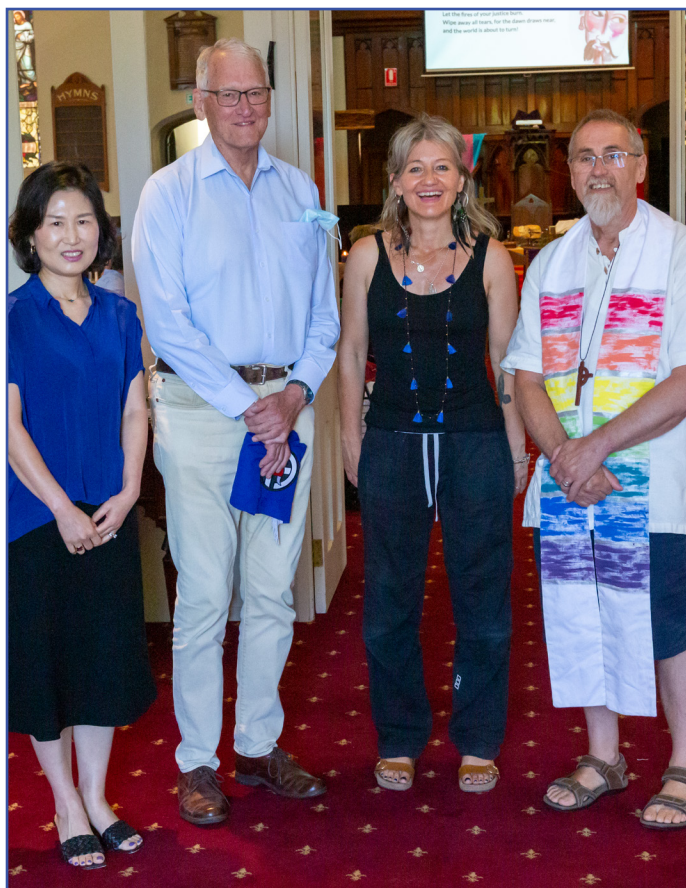
Yet Paul's call to us as followers of Christ is to “be joyful always, pray at all times and be thankful in all circumstances.” How might we seek to do this during this season of Lent and beyond?

In her book, “*The Hiding Place*,” Corrie ten Boom shares a time when she and her sister Betsy had just been transferred to a German prison camp called Ravensbruck during World War 2. The barracks were extremely overcrowded, and flea infested. They had smuggled a copy of the bible into their barracks and inspired by Paul's words from Thessalonians, they gave thanks to the Lord for that smelly, dirty, flea-ridden place.

They shared scripture with other women in their barracks and were never caught or punished by the guards. It turned out the guards never entered the barracks because of the fleas!

Perhaps we struggle to always give thanks in every circumstance because all we see are the fleas. What would it take for us to look beyond the fleas to see what God is doing in us and through us, in our churches, communities and beyond? How might our perspectives change if we realised that the very circumstances we struggle with, are key to the releasing of the Spirit's goodness, mercy, peace, strength and love?

As we enter the season of Lent, my prayer for us all is Paul's words – to be joyful always, pray at all times and be thankful in all circumstances – for this is God's desires for all who are in union with Christ Jesus.



Presbytery Secretary Anne Kim, Chairperson Dr Tom Spurling, Rev Alex Sangster and Rev John Tansey at the St Kilda South Porth Celebration Service.

A Blessing for a New Congregation

*For you,
may the rippling waters of the bay
be as the justice
that spreads through your words
and deeds*

*For you,
may the gusting winds
from south and west
be as the Spirit
who stirs hope and compassion
in your hearts*

*For you,
may these timeless Wurundjeri lands
be as teacher
for your living in strong connection
with all Creation*

*In the name of Love
Amen.*

THANKFUL FOR COMMUNITY

Many congregations do piles of community activities. Hampton Park Uniting Church members have found the joy for themselves and their communities in creating a wonderful Community Garden.

At Hampton Park Uniting Church we are thankful for our community garden! Behind our church we have beautiful, landscaped grounds for the garden, with individual plots maintained by members of the community. We are currently further developing the garden grounds to include a paved area, a gathering lawned area, and potentially a firepit. Future plans include improving accessibility so that gardeners with limited mobility can use the space and plant crops in raised garden beds.

The diverse cultural backgrounds of our community gardeners result in a wide variety of fruit and vegetables being grown. Cultural knowledge about how best to plant, cultivate and cook the produce is willingly shared within the community. Around once a month the gardeners get together for a shared barbecue organised by our volunteer coordinator, Diane Leak. I asked one of our garden volunteers, Jacob, what he enjoyed about the community garden. He said that the best thing was just being there with others and having a sense of community. He also enjoys knowing that he is helping people and contributing towards the wider community.

We have a few raised garden plots set aside for growing herbs and vegetables for the *Open Up* community lunch held every Thursday during school term. Our volunteer lead chef, Doreen, is an expert in incorporating the produce into her recipes as she plans and cooks a free two course meal each week. Another garden bed is set aside for Playgroup use so that families can get a taste of planting, watering and harvesting vegetables such as snow peas and cherry tomatoes. The preschool children love being able to pick and eat their own produce!

*Written by Niki Oostwoud
Children and Families Pastor,
Hampton Park Uniting Church*



WHAT IS THE PPE TEAM THANKFUL FOR?

The theme this month in Newsbeat is "Thankfulness." So when they stop for a moment in their busy lives at work, what do the team think of?



One of the prime reasons behind people's constant discontent with life is not appreciating what you already possess. There are millions of things to be thankful for, and you will find them once you dig a little deeper into your life. For me I am thankful for my salvation in Christ and having a relationship with Jesus Christ, my beautiful healthy family, having a roof over our heads, laughter in our household and what a wonderful sunburnt country we live in. Very fortunate.

Sarah Manase, our Communications Officer



I am really thankful that my daughter has settled well in England even though it is her first experience being out of her comfort zone

Anne Kim, our Presbytery Secretary/Administrator



I am grateful for the three dogs that are part of our household at the moment. Love, happiness, energy, unconditional love and creative new challenges are flowing through our household in spades.

Rev Anneke Oppewal, our Presbytery Minister Pastoral Care

Following my shoulder surgery, I am thankful for surgeons and medical staff. I'm even thankful for my physiotherapist who has to be cruel to be kind!

Also, for people who intentionally pass on the faith to others through example, stories and spiritual companionship.

For the extraordinary courage of aid workers who I see on TV, serving in places of war, drought and disaster across the globe.

For church leaders who are willing to dream experiment in ministry and mission, even knowing that many experiments fail.

For music! All kinds of music. It sustains me, uplifts me, comforts me, heals me.

Dr Craig Mitchell our Presbytery Minister - Church Development



REFLECTION ON WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP



Dr Vivienne Mountain sees herself as a shy woman whose Christian faith helps her to find a calling to identify with others who may have similar feelings. Here she shares parts of her life journey.

When I was young I remember that I was very shy and fearful. An only child from a complex separated family, my goal was to keep my head down and fit in. Leadership was certainly not my aspiration. There was terror for me at school, a great fear that I might be asked to stand up and read in front of the class.

However, at the age of 17, I went to a Billy Graham meeting and an image of God was presented that called me to have courage and step out into some change. I joined the local Presbyterian church, started reading the Bible and joined the youth group. Something did change through a strange mix of spiritual quest, intellectual stimulus and relaxing into a supportive social network.

When I was 19 I began my training as to be a teacher of infants at the Coburg Teacher's College, then married and had my own children, all in the challenging and developing context of faith. Through this time I realised that study was a great delight. While the children were young I completed a Bachelor of Education degree, then a Bachelor of Theology. I taught in a variety of schools and, overcoming and lost my fear of senior classes, I went on to teaching Christian and multi-faith Religious Education, Ethics and Philosophy. At this stage I completed my Masters Degree in Philosophy of Religion at London University. The shy girl gained enough courage to take on travelling alone.

I completed by second Masters in Creative Arts Therapy, which fed into teaching and faith development for students. This in turn led into my doctoral paper, "Investigating the meaning and function of prayer for young children coming from different multi-faith perspectives." So my interest and involvement ranged between study, education, leading chapel worship and pastoral care. The central focus was the spiritual care of children and there was delight both in interacting with children and condensing my ideas into writing and speaking at conferences.

What was probably the highlight of my working life came to me in my 60's. I was invited to develop subjects and teach at the University of Divinity. Wonderful, challenging students shared with me in establishing the first academic qualification in the area of Children and Family Ministry. My two subjects "Children's Spirituality" and "Trauma and Transition Issues for Children" were part of this qualification. These were busy, exciting years as I was also establishing a counselling business.

While teaching at UD I couldn't resist a further Masters in Theology, as research was needed into the Child Theology Movement. This research gave me a wide view of children's work in various protestant denominations. Further studies in Counselling and Professional Supervision are ongoing. I see this work as an extension of Christian faith and hope.

As the Principal of my old school said "Those to whom much is given, much will be required." My response of thanksgiving includes giving thanks for the countless women and men in my life who have inspired, taught and encouraged me.



OPERATION LARDER INCORPORATED

Dawn Peacock, a member of Frankston Uniting Church and now President of Operation Larder Incorporated, has found her purpose.



Dawn Peacock a member of Frankston UC and also President of Operation Larder Inc.

Fourty-one years ago the Congregation of the former St Andrews Presbyterian Church was challenged by Rev. Alan Coulson when he said “There are many people in Frankston who do not have access to adequate Food. What will you do about them”?

Operation Larder was born and Incorporated to the ACNC as a fully volunteer not-for-profit organisation. Operation Larder now operates from the High Street Uniting Church Frankston.

Initially, boxes of staple non-perishable foods were packed and given to the Frankston Council’s Citizen Advice Bureau to distribute. We later realised that this arrangement did not suit all folk in need.

Eventually the most efficient way to satisfy all was to have a Mini-Supermarket to allow folk to select the foods they preferred. We under took to supply 24 items of non-perishable food and 8 hygiene Items for the Community Support Frankston to distribute. We had a team of volunteers rostered to keep the shelves supplied.

All was going smoothly until along came COVID-19. For several weeks we were unable to to buy adequate food as supermarket shelves were emptied.

The State Government gave a large grant to Food Bank Victoria, hence food became cheaper and more readily available.

However the Uniting Church recommended that we were not to have volunteers over 70 years of age out in the community as they were at high risk of catching the virus. As our volunteers were mostly over 80 years of age, we had to change our system. Fortunately we had one ‘young’ lady who took on all the ordering and collecting the orders from Food Bank and various other suppliers. Without her the larder would have been unviable.

Where does the money for all this Ffood come from? The Frankston Council gives grants to us together with the Lord Mayors’ Appeal. We apply to philanthropic organisations - the Andrews Foundation, The Colliers Foundation and the Uniting Church Share Appeal.

Our budget is between \$50,000 and \$60,000 with various community groups also donating goods and money.

At Christmas, in conjunction with Community Support Frankston we pack over 1000 Bags of Christmas hampers so our clients can celebrate Jesus Birthday.

Written by Dawn Peacock



BEYOND THE PEWS: THE IMPACT OF PUBLIC THEOLOGY

How do you see theology and its impact on society? Rev Dr Robyn Whitaker, Associate Professor from Pilgrim Theological College, shares her point of view.

Theology is everywhere. I do not mean formal written books on the subject. I mean the kind of theology is speech about God and matters related to God, such as the theology found in a line from singer Lady Gaga's "Born This Way" which proclaims "I'm beautiful ... 'cause God makes no mistakes".

As Christians, we can fall into the trap of thinking theology is our thing. But it is not just the church that thinks and speaks about God. Pop songs, movies, books, art, politicians, and even sports people do theology – they talk about God and things to do with God. Sometimes that theology is wonderful and life-giving, but other times it can be ignorant, harmful, or even hateful.

Theology in public is happening all around us. According to the census, the number of practicing Christians is declining, yet the evidence also shows that the use of religious and theological language in the public sphere has dramatically increased in the last decade in Australia. People are doing theology in public: sometimes with us and sometimes despite us.

Last year, partly in response to these trends, Pilgrim offered a new unit called *Doing Theology in Public* which will be offered again in 2024 through Pilgrim Theological College. Co-taught by Robyn Whitaker and John Flett, the unit was designed to help upskill current students, candidates, and those in active ministry to think about how they are public theologians. Students in the course heard from well-known public theologians or public religious voices like Tim Costello, Rod Bower and Meredith Lake.

We practiced writing opinion pieces for the popular press with the help of an experienced editor and we reflected on the places where we are already engaged theologically with the public (buildings, funerals, rallies, social media, and even our clothing).

As one of the teachers of the unit, what surprised me is that people who are already highly skilled at doing theology in their church settings found it incredibly challenging to adapt their modes and ways of communicating to speak theologically to a much wider audience.

In their book, "For the Life of the World", Miroslav Volf and Matthew Croasmun write that theology is something that offers "genuine value – and not just for the church, but for the world" (p. 59). Theology, for them, casts a vision of what constitutes a flourishing life. They argue that this is precisely what the church should be doing.

In its best form, public theology sees theology as a gift that the church offers the world. It is a way of taking the wisdom of the Christian tradition and putting it in constructive dialogue with the contemporary world. It is not saying we Christians have all the truth. Not at all! Nor is it primarily about conversion or evangelism.

One of the hallmarks of public theology is entering into dialogue with others knowing we have something to offer but equally willing to learn and be shaped by the experiences and traditions of others.

We live in an era where Christians have been told to keep their faith private. Faith, we are told, is a private matter, something to be tolerated if you just keep it to yourself. Faith, however, is always public. It is not something that should be compartmentalized or privatized. Thinking of ourselves as public theologians shifts our worldview and helps us be more intentional about speaking in ways that can be understood outside the church.

Written by Robyn Whitaker

Associate Professor of New Testament at Pilgrim Theological College



ORMOND ADVOCATES FOR CLIMATE CHANGE



During 2021 the Ormond UC Climate Change group worked with the congregation to design a banner, which is displayed on the outside of the church (facing North Road).

This banner reads: 'Unite For Stronger Climate Action – NOW!'

Last year, with the assistance of Glen Eira City Council, a local school was identified that expressed a willingness to work towards a visual display of caring for the environment.

The Grade 5 children of 2022, from Murrumbeena Primary School, worked on the topic of environmental sustainability and created an exhibition called 'Environmental Activism Art'. This enabled individuals to choose what to create and how to do it .and it provided an excellent example of how artwork can be used to express opinions on important issues.

After the conclusion of the 2022 school year, more than 60 posters were provided to the church and these were photocopied to be used both inside and outside the building.

Display boxes were constructed, and mounted on the exterior wall, underneath the Climate Change banner, facing North Road, so that on Sunday, February 26, 2023, following the service, which was focused on Lent and climate change, and a shared morning tea, the congregation moved outside for the launch of the Climate Change poster display. Several of the posters had been showcased during the sermon using a powerpoint presentation, while other posters were displayed inside the Church.

Kelly Heffner, Senior Sustainability Officer, from Glen Eira City Council, officially launched the display and some of the reflections from the artists were read out. These thoughts, from Grade 5 children, were very powerful.

The posters will be rotated every couple of weeks and the external display will continue throughout Lent.

For further information and to view the posters please look at the [Ormond Uniting Church website](#)

Written by Marg

“Gratitude is complicated. Feelings of dependence—and interdependence—can be both elusive and resisted, mostly because they are caught up with soul-crushing ideas of obligation and debt. But if gratitude is mutual reliance upon (instead of payback for) shared gifts, we awaken to a profound awareness of our interdependence. Dependence may enslave the soul, but interdependence frees us.”

“Grateful”, Diana Butler Bass

Continue
To let gratitude be the pillow
Upon which you kneel to
Say your nightly prayer
And let faith be the bridge
You build to overcome evil
And welcome good

“Continue” Maya Angelou, 2016





An afternoon with
Vince Ross

Your invitation to a special gathering

Tuesday 14 March

2-3:30pm in the Parish Centre

Hampton Uniting Church, 17 Service Street Hampton 3188

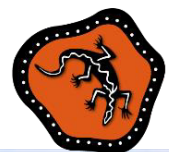


Vince Ross is an Aboriginal elder and founder of the Narana Cultural Centre in Grovedale, Geelong. He is a musician and author of his soon to be published autobiography 'The Murrumbidgee Boy' Honoured with the rare distinction of being the recipient of the Salvation Army's *The Order of the Founder*

TEMILA YARNA

[Madi-Madi language]

[LISTENING TALK]



Proudly supported by



Learn about Vince's life experiences, his wisdom, strength and insights for our pathway together for the future.



Afternoon tea

NARANA SHOP

Entry by donation at the door or to BSB 033 055 Ac 112529

For catering, please register your intended attendance at

<https://www.trybooking.com/CFZKI> or RSVP to Ian Menzies 0403 727 080



AT WORK WITH JOHN'S GOSPEL

Today, even after all the disruptions caused by the COVID pandemic, people are more than ever re-examining their attitudes towards work and employment. So this is a good time for Christians to examine what, if anything, our faith has to do with work, and what Christ calls us to do and be in our daily work - whether we work from home, at home or out of the home, and whether we are paid or unpaid.

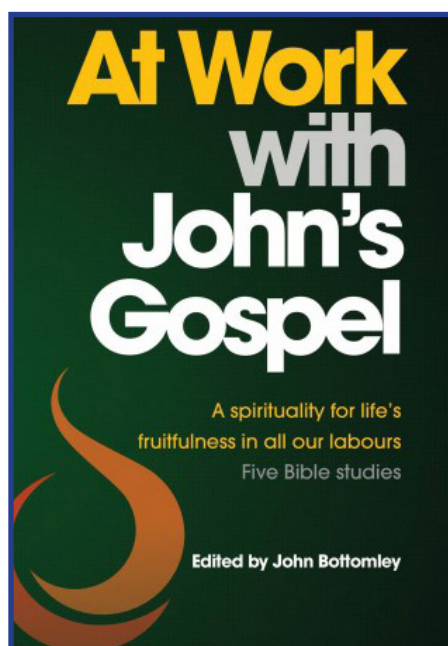
John Bottomley, with input from others of the Creative Ministries Network Congregation, produced a series of five Lenten study which reflects on the interconnection between the work we do, whether paid or unpaid, and the purposes of God in our lives. The studies focus on the Lenten readings for 2023 from the Gospel of John. Readers are guided to walk in the shoes of the key characters in these readings, and to examine the connections with their own experiences of paid, unpaid and volunteer work.

Churches very rarely articulate connections between the gospel imperative of faith, and the living of that faith in our working lives. Bottomley says, "Let this study lead you to a deeper understanding of God's intention for our created order and its life-giving grace for economic, social and environmental practice."

In the book "At Work with John's Gospel", the reader is encouraged to listen to the ancient gospel wisdom that still speaks fruitfully in our varied contemporary circumstances in the nexus between working and faith in Christ.

The study is available through Coventry Press.

Click here for further details coventrypress.com.au



Presbytery in Council & Committee Meetings 2023

Please put the following dates into your diaries, where relevant.

The **Presbytery in Council** meetings for this year are expected to be face-to-face and/or zoom meetings.

- **Saturday March 18**
- **Wednesday June 21**
- **Saturday August 19**
- **Wednesday November 29**

At the first Presbytery in Council meeting of the year, Saturday 18 March, held at Glen Waverley Uniting Church, we will be discussing vision & strategy for 2023, commissioning new Standing Committee members and dealing with the financial report.

The **Pastoral Relations Committee** (PRC) meets on first Wednesday of each month. Therefore, it will be appreciated by PRC that any profiles, supply forms and any related matters and applications are to be forwarded to Anne Kim, the PRC correspondence Secretary by the previous week of a PRC meeting.

The **Mission and Leadership Development Committee** (MLDC) meets on the first Tuesday of each month. Ennis Macleod is the incoming Chairperson.

The **Synod Placements Committee** meets on the third Wednesday of each month. It is important to allow the Presbytery Pastoral Relations Committee adequate time to deal with requests and any expressions of interest from congregations and ministry agents so that they can forward them to the Placements Committee on time.

The **Property Committee** meets on the third Thursday evening every month. Application forms and inquiries need to be sent to the Property Committee Secretary, Ian Cayzer, a week prior to its meeting date.

The **Standing Committee** gathers on the second Tuesday of each month and their first meeting for 2023 will be on Tuesday 14 February.

Presbytery **Newsbeat** is released in the first week of each month. Your stories, articles and photos need to be sent to Sarah Manase, our Communications Officer, before 25th of every month.

DIARY DATES

Glen Waverley UC Used Book Sale

Saturday March 4, 8.30am-4.00pm
cnr Kingsway and Bogong Ave, Glen Waverley

eLM Induction and Commissioning Service

Tuesday 7 March, 4pm (5.30pm followed by refreshments)
CTM Building at 29 College Cres, Parkville
In person, Yuma Auditorium and online via Zoom

The Northey Lecture 2023 - Death and Beyond: How to Talk Eschatology

Thursday 9 March 2023 at 7.30 - 9.00 pm (supper to follow).
Live Stream at Murrumbeena Uniting Church, 117 Murrumbeena Rd Murrumbeena

My life after Politics - Rev Brian Howe

Sundau 19 March, 2pm
CTM Building at 29 College Cres, Parkville

Annual Life Creative Arts Festival

Saturday 17 March from 10am-4pm or/and
Sundau 19 March from 10am-3pm
Hampton Park Uniting Church
(1 Coral Rd, Hampton Park)
To make a booking click below:
trybooking.com/events/landing/1016939

JOIN VIC TAS UC HISTORIAL SOCIETY

As a member of the Uniting Church you are invited to join our Uniting Church Historical Society. The Society wants to enrich all church members with a better understanding of our unique heritage.

The VicTas Uniting Church Historical Society are also organising a final talk in his three-part series, Uniting Church Minister and former Federal Member of Parliament Rev Brian Howe will talk about life since leaving politics in 1996. The FREE event will be held from 2pm on Sunday, March 19 at the Centre for Theology and Ministry (29 College Cres, Parkville)

You are invited to attend live or register online via email to ken.barelli@bigpond.com or feel free to call Ken Barelli on 0418317942

Contact UCHS Membership Officer Clive Jackson on 03 9569 9178 or download the membership form on the Synod website victas.uca.org.au/synod-archives



Uniting in Prayer March

Each week congregations are encouraged to include their neighbours in their prayers. The Presbytery's prayer calendar covers congregations, schools and agencies of the Uniting Church in our Presbytery and Synod. You can check the calendar on the Presbytery website.

March 5	Beaumaris congregation - Rev Chris Cohen (Supply), Chair Nick Toovey
March 12	Presbytery Leadership - Chair Dr Tom Spurling, Deputy Chair David Higham, Treasurer Jeff Gardner. Presbytery Ministers Rev Anneke Oppewal, Dr Craig Mitchell, David Higham (Supply), Secretary Anne Kim, Communication Officer Sarah Manase
March 19	Transfiguration of Jesus
March 26	Brighton Trinity congregation - Rev Kevin Kim, Chair Ms Helen Wells Brighton St Leonard's congregation - Rev Kim Cain, Chair Peter Hunkin



Prayer of Thankfulness

*God of the past, the present
and the future,*

*we thank you that you love
us faithfully and uniquely.*

*You loved us before we knew
anything about you;
you care for us in every
moment of our lives;*

*you know our deepest
thoughts, our highest hopes
and our greatest fears;*

*you know the best and worst
in us, and still you love us.*

*Thank you that you never let
us go.*

*Thank you for the plans and
promises you have made for us,
which give us hope for today and
tomorrow.*

*God of our past, our present and
our future,*

*receive our thanks and praise
which we offer in Jesus' name.*

Amen.

Source: World Day of Prayer

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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