

# Newsbeat

NEWSLETTER FOR THE PRESBYTERY OF PORT PHILLIP EAST



FEBRUARY 2024 ISSUE

## FEBRUARY HEADLINES

COMMUNITY TAKES  
TIME & PATIENCE BY  
REV JUDITH WATKINS

AN INSPIRATION FOR  
US ALL - BY VIVIENNE  
MOUNTAIN

WHAT IS THE PPE  
TEAM HOPEFUL FOR?

STARTING A NEW  
JOURNEY AT PILGRIM

LEARNINGS ABOUT  
COMMUNITY & NEW  
BEGINNINGS FROM  
CONGRESS

CORNISH COLLEGE:  
RENEWAL & NEW  
BEGINNINGS

THE SYNOD SCOOP

PPE DATES FOR 2024



# Port Phillip East Presbytery

## WHAT'S HAPPENING

An insight into what congregations,  
schools & members are doing

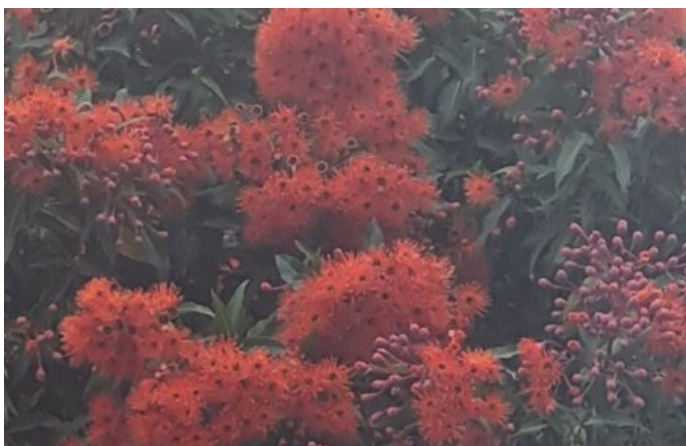
### COMMUNITY TAKES TIME & PATIENCE

*We asked Rev Judith Watkins how she could relate this month's theme about renewal and new beginnings to her position as chaplain at St Leonard's College.*

As staff gathered at school the week before students returned, I reflected on Jesus' ministry, and the community of disciples he gathered around him. Here's a little extract:

"I found myself thinking about community on an afternoon walk a couple of weeks ago. I love these flowering gums, and also the rainbow lorikeets that spend so much time in them. I stopped during my walk to watch the flashes of colour as they darted from tree to tree, and listened to them calling to each other, first one or two, then a huge cacophony of sound.

It reminded me of catching up with friends after we haven't seen each other for a while. It begins with a couple of people talking, and as our numbers grow, the volume grows as well. We have our own raucous delight in being together again.



As I stood watching and listening to the lorrikeets, I noticed one or two hovering around the edges. Maybe the crescendo of sound and activity is overwhelming, and they don't know how to join in. Maybe they prefer a calmer approach. It's not so different to people, in a way. Some of us plunge in with enthusiasm, and others of us hover around the edges. Different people make connections in different ways. Like the disciples, these lorrikeets are working out how the pieces of their community fit together, and as the year unfolds, we'll work that out as well. Forming community takes time and patience and kindness – with ourselves and each other – and with the students and families who also shape and make this community."

Each school has its own culture. St Leonard's College is a dynamic community which re-forms each year, with some people returning and others joining for the first time. Every year begins full of potential and possibility, some known, and some which will unfold, surprise and delight as the year unfolds.

The week before the students arrive, the staff conference is a time of ensuring we are ready to step into the year ahead. Lesson planning, child safety and first aid compliance, getting to know a bit about some of our students, meeting new staff, preparing for the big events which take place in first term. At the centre, for me as chaplain, is consideration of the ways in which the love, hospitality, peace and justice to which Jesus calls us might be shared and made known in this wonderfully diverse community of different faiths, beliefs and worldviews.

As we step into 2024, I anticipate that this year, as every other year, I will continue to learn more about what it means to share faith and nurture spirituality in this place. It is a deep privilege to walk alongside the school community in this role.



# QUOTE OF THE MONTH:

“The church isn’t just a particular building or congregation but the spiritual fellowship of all who belong to Jesus Christ. If we belong to Christ, we also belong to each other.” – Billy Graham

## AN INSPIRATION FOR US ALL

### “A Symphonic Odyssey with Professor Brian Cox”

*Vivienne Mountain from St Leonard’s Brighton Beach shares her thoughts after watching the spectacular collaboration between Brian Cox and the Sydney Symphony Orchestra. You can watch it yourself on ABC iView at [iview.abc.net.au/show/symphonic-odyssey-with-professor-brian-cox](http://iview.abc.net.au/show/symphonic-odyssey-with-professor-brian-cox)*

This program brings the latest understanding of cosmology using images from the Hubble and the James Webb space telescope. Brian Cox presents the visual images of the cosmos with words of awe and wonder. Our night sky is a place beyond our understanding. His words are enhanced by the music of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra.

He concludes the program by quoting from the introduction from at the opening of the United Nations COP 26 meeting calling on us all to value the Earth and humanity in the face of the expanse of the Cosmos:

“It is possible that there is only one civilization in the milky way galaxy. That’s us. That the earth is the only place in the galaxy where conscious life exists. This idea matters. How should we behave politically, towards each other and towards our planet? “Imagine the earth is the only place in the galaxy where intelligent life exists; where atoms have come together to think and feel and bring meaning.

We are tiny fragile things, a mote of dust, orbiting around one star amongst 400 billion. We must consider ourselves and our world to be inconceivably valuable.”

My first response to this amazing presentation is humility and worship, recalling the psalmist’s words:

“When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is mankind that you are mindful of.” (Psalm 8:3).

Secondly, I respond with renewed attention to my responsibility as a caretaker or steward as co-creators with God to protect and sustain life. Environmental action is part of our calling.”





# WHAT IS THE PPE TEAM HOPEFUL FOR?

*The theme this month in Newsbeat is “New Beginnings & Renewal.” So when they stop for a moment in their busy lives at work, what are the teams ‘Hopes’ for 2024?*



My hope for the new year is that reconciliation of differences and a commitment to work for peace across the world will figure large in our personal, church and internationally world wide communities. That love and compassion will lead our thoughts and actions in every aspect of our lives.

**Rev Anneke Oppewal, our Presbytery Minister Pastoral Care**



Hope for me is something that I can look forward to and I hope that 2024 will be another prosperous year for the Presbytery with the complete PM team. I hope that I walk with God more closely so that He strengthens me physically and spiritually so that I can be more joyful and grateful every day.

**Anne Kim, our Presbytery Secretary/Administrator**



Hope is commonly used to mean a wish : its strength is the strength of the person's desire. But in the Bible hope is the confident expectation of what God has promised and its strength is in His faithfulness. It's hoping for something new.

Psalm 147:1 is one of my favorite verses in the bible, because in life, whatever life throws at you - good or hard we need too look to;

“The Lord delights in those who fear him, who put their hope in his unfailing love.”

**Sarah Manase,**  
**Communications Officer**



I am greatly encouraged by the dedication and commitment of our team of Presbytery Ministers, and all the members of the Presbytery Committees who give of their free time, often working unseen. I think we all know that there is much to do, and there will be many difficult decisions to make. But my hope is that we really can work together with Congregations and Ministry Agents throughout the Presbytery. Building trust and working together in further developing, building and fulfilling God's mission in their communities, making a difference, knowing that God is always walking with us.

**Pastor David Higham, Chairperson Elect Port Phillip East Presbytery**



My hopes are that all congregations/parishes within the Presbytery remain financial strong, enabling them to carry out their mission internally and to the wider community. To be able to some additional members for the Finance & Risk Committee. That the new Presbytery Ministry team continue supporting and developing projects to help congregations spread the love of God to the wider community.

**PPE treasurer - Jeff Gardner**



Hope for me is looking to the future. It is that feeling of expectancy that comes at the beginning of a new year or a new time in our lives. For me, hope is something I definitely feel as I begin to get to know a more broader side of the presbytery, a region filled with passionate and faithful people in all roles within the life of Christ. Looking for hope is something I work hard at cultivating and I love seeing the glimpses of hope in the eyes of those around me.

**Rev Jay Robinson - Presbytery Minister-Team Leader**

As we get underway, I am hopeful that the various Church Developments - some years in planning - that are now commencing (and continuing in some instances) will finalise frustrations and EXCITE our congregations to new prospects for mission.

I am also HOPEFUL that we can find additional members for our Property Committee, as like all our presbytery committees, we are attempting to do more with less - a situation that we are finding more difficult to handle. Hope like Moses in God's challenge to him to 'lead the people to the promised' - God is always with us!

Hopeful Blessings to all.

**Gavin Faichney**



Often hope can seem fragile, weak and easily broken by challenges and troubles facing individuals, congregations and the wider church. I continually remind myself that enduring and lasting hope is anchored in Christ and fanned by the Holy Spirit. As I look across the Presbytery, there is much to be hopeful for and I look forward to partnering with the new PM team, Presbytery leadership and congregations in faithfully following the call of God.

**Rev Robin Yang our Presbytery Minister - Church Development**

My hope for Port Phillip East in 2024 is for what is not yet seen. For the working of our new Presbytery Ministry Team of Jay, Anneke and Robin, our new Chairperson of Presbytery, David, and Chairperson of Pastoral Relations Committee, Cam, supported by Anne and Sarah. For what their gifts and skills as individuals will bring out of them as a team and inspire in us as members of Presbytery and Congregations of the Presbytery. My hope is for all that God will do in and through these leaders that facilitates growth and learning in all who exercise ministry in our Presbytery, and that we as members of Presbytery can see and celebrate what God is doing among us.

**Rev James Douglas, Presbytery Chairperson, Pastoral Relations Committee(soon to be finishing this role)**





## CHRISTMAS LUNCH AT HAMPTON PARK UC

*It's so nice to see our congregations planning and organising events with one another. Rev Dr Ji Zhang was apart of the Christmas Lunch and has provided some awesome photos.*

Volunteers from 4 churches in the Casey-Cardinia Region and the wider community came together to serve 120 people.

It's always nice seeing

We acknowledge that all photo's have been photographed by Rev Dr Ji Zhang.

Thank you!



## STARTING A NEW JOURNEY AT PILGRIM

*At Pilgrim, we're looking forward to welcoming our students for the start of the year – whether they are stepping into theology and ministry studies for the first time, or they're already well on the journey.*

Have you heard of Egeria, the 4th century woman who pilgrimaged from Spain to the Holy Land? Or Tumupu Kea, the 19th century Cook Islands missionary who sailed to Papua? Can you imagine how they felt as they took a new direction? The Christian story is full of new beginnings where people step out in faith. Sometimes they step out uncertainly, not sure what the new direction will mean for their lives. Sometimes it's spontaneous, a sudden realisation about where they need to be.

We understand that beginning a new course of study can be a little daunting, so we make Pilgrim a very friendly space to explore and be yourself as you go deeper into the bible, ideas, and the story of Christianity.

So, join us in encouraging our students as they start a new year and make a new beginning.

*If you're interested in coming to Pilgrim, check out our website [pilgrim.edu.au](http://pilgrim.edu.au) or give us a call on 9340 8892.*

We'd love to hear from you.

*Kerrie Handasyde*

*Academic Dean / Associate Professor of the History of Christianity at Pilgrim Theological College*





## Pilgrim Theological College 2024

### Courses – Learning Options

**Face to face:** come to the Centre for Theology & Ministry in Parkville to be in the classroom for the whole semester

**Online-Synchronous:** be available online throughout the semester at the time indicated on the timetable.

**Online Asynchronous:** study online in your own time.

**Blended:** study with a mix of in your own time and at a time designated.

**Intensive Units:** be present in the classroom or online on the dates specified.

For timetable & information on courses visit [pilgrim.edu.au](http://pilgrim.edu.au)



## LAY EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES 2024

If you want to go deeper in your understanding of the Old Testament or the Uniting Church, what about studying one of the courses offered by the Synod this session?

### Understanding the UCA. February to June 2024. Led by Mel Perkins. Cost \$40.

The first online tutorial is on 27th February, and is open to all those who register. For a summary of what is covered, and registration, follow this link: [events.humanitix.com/understanding-the-uca-guxhe2kf](https://events.humanitix.com/understanding-the-uca-guxhe2kf)

### Exploring the Old Testament. February to May 2024. Led by Linley Liersch. Cost \$50

Textbook 'Studying the Old Testament' by Rhonda Burnette-Bletsch.

The 10 online tutorials are weekly from 26th February to 6th May, and the Presbytery will also arrange small group learning tutorials on demand.

The course outline is available as a PDF on the Synod website: [victas.uca.org.au/exploring-the-old-testament](https://victas.uca.org.au/exploring-the-old-testament)

Register at: [events.humanitix.com/exploring-the-old-testament](https://events.humanitix.com/exploring-the-old-testament)

Note that *Exploring the New Testament* will be running in the second semester, and *Exploring Worship in the UCA* is scheduled for later this year. Contact Mel Perkins at eLM [mel.perkins@victas.uca.org.au](mailto:mel.perkins@victas.uca.org.au) or MLDC chair, Ennis Macleod at [ennisrm@gmail.com](mailto:ennisrm@gmail.com).





# LEARNINGS ABOUT COMMUNITY & NEW BEGINNINGS FROM CONGRESS

*I had the pleasure of meeting Palawa woman, Ms Ayla Williams, from the South-East of Lutruwita/Tasmania at our recent Synod Meeting and I asked her what the rest of the church can learn from the United Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Congress about this month's theme. She responded with a reflection on what we can learn from fire as a metaphor.*

“Within the tapestry of Aboriginal spirituality, the renewal of the individual and community finds resonance in the dynamic flames of a fire. The sacred act of controlled burning, an age-old practice, becomes an evocative metaphor for transformation and new beginnings.

As custodians of the Land, our Communities engage in cultural fire practices to nurture the health of the ecosystem. The flames, guided carefully by traditional knowledge, sweep through the landscapes with a purpose – what one may initially interpret as mere destruction.

The process of clearing the underbrush, rejuvenating the soil, and paving the way for the regeneration of native plants is a profound act of renewal grounded in an intimate understanding of interconnectedness – especially between Land and people.

The crackling flames of a fire echo the heartbeat of the Land, carrying whispers of ancient stories and wisdom. In bearing witness to this, we can be reminded of the cyclical nature of existence. What may seem like a temporary end is, in fact, a prelude to new growth and vitality. The ashes become a fertile ground for seeds, dormant but full of potential, to sprout and breathe life into the landscape once more.

Through the lens of cultural fire, renewal is not a singular event, but instead a continuous process, seamlessly woven into the fabric of everyday life. It can be interpreted as an invitation to embrace change with intention, understanding that the old must make way for the new, to ensure the perpetual flourishing of the Land – and its people.

In contemplating this cultural practice, I find inspiration in the harmonious relationship between fire, land, and how it relates to the human experience. It prompts reflection on the ways in which we, too, can engage in intentional acts of renewal, fostering growth and resilience in the intricate tapestry within our own lives.

*Written by Ayla Williams*

*Community & Cultural Resource Officer at Leprena UAICC*





# RENEWAL & NEW BEGINNINGS



*With the new year beginning at Cornish College, chaplain Rev Claire Dawe reflects on how the school's values relate to this month's themes.*

There's a very well-known prayer I often use at the beginning of the school year by Teresa of Avila.

*“Christ has no body but yours,  
no hands, no feet on earth but yours.”*

It is a prayer that recommits us to action, to acknowledging that faith is about being the difference in the world rather than just talking about what needs to be done. It's a good reminder that Jesus does not encourage us to be by-standers in the world but up-standers working for the good of creation.

A new year at school is a series of new beginnings and renewals, recommitting ourselves as individuals and a community to the wellbeing of self, each other and the world. Over the summer, students grow both physically taller and they develop emotionally and spiritually. In order to acknowledge and encourage this, we have a series of events in February.

The induction assembly for leaders in primary and secondary school is always a proud moment for parents, but emphasis is placed on everyone being a leader regardless of wearing a badge. This is because we are all called to act justly and step gently on the land, to use and hone the skills we have been given for the good of the whole of creation.

*“Yours are the feet with which he walks to  
do good.*

*Yours are the hands, with which he blesses  
all the world.”*

Our annual Smoking Ceremony and Welcome to Country led by Bunurong elders sets the expectation that we will stop and listen to First Nations Peoples, and work towards reconciliation. This is an important moment for our Years 6, 7 and 12 students as they listen to the words of today's Elders, whilst hearing the voices of generations of Bunurong people. They are invited to walk through the healing smoke of gum leaves as children have for thousands of years.

Some of our students are new to the school and so this is a learning curve for them, others have been with us from the Early Learning Centre and are renewing their commitment through these opportunities.

Before the academic year has even begun, we gather for Aboriginal Sunday or the Day of Mourning. This year, 350 faith communities around Australia joined together under the Common Grace banner to stop, listen, reflect and act.

*“Yours are the hands.*

*Yours are the feet.*

*Yours are the eyes.*

*You are his body.”*

So, a new school year might entail a new classroom layout, new friends, new teachers, new subjects. But it also entails renewal of what has been practised for thousands of years and re-commitment to care for the world, each other and ourselves.

Here's to 2024 and living out Cornish values of compassion, respect, integrity, and creativity, always with courage.



# CONNECTING SUPERVISION AND CONTEMPLATIVE PRACTICES

***Dr Lynette Dungan reflects on the subject matter and process of completing her PhD. Her thesis explored improving the practice and outcomes for spiritual care supervisors and their supervisees.***

It is with much joy I celebrate passing my PhD: Supervising from a contemplative stance through La Trobe University Department of Psychology and Public Health. In this research, I interviewed ten professional spiritual care supervisors exploring what a contemplative stance could offer them and their supervisees, and what this approach may contribute to wider supervision, spiritual care, and public health.

The international examiners gave very favourable comments, including, how this thesis was timely, due to the emphasis paid to supervision by the Australian Royal Commission report on childhood abuse, which recommended that all in pastoral ministry engage in professional/pastoral supervision. And In addition, they noted how the thesis subject arose from my practice (as pastor, spiritual director, and supervisor) and so is relevant to, these and other spiritual care practitioners.

One examiner strongly recommended that I pursue publication and suggested six possible areas of interest for future articles, that she said, “will undoubtedly appear in due course”.

My journey as a part-time doctoral student, minister of the word, spiritual director, and supervisor over nearly ten years has presented many challenges.

These included juggling work and study, moving house, a car crash where my car was a write-off, the birth of my first grandchild, and the deaths of family and friends, Covid lockdowns and having to re-enrol when my candidature time lapsed.

I have not always felt supported in the journey or understood by others, yet as a supervisor colleague from interstate said to me perhaps the ‘D’ in PhD was for determination. I have been passionate about good supervision in all my years in ministry and have done advanced training to use my gifts for others.

I hope to continue to publish in this field (currently two international journal articles)

as there is little written about spiritual care supervisors and supervisees which include clergy, chaplains, and spiritual directors. And for those who want to pursue further part-time post graduate study, I encourage you to pursue your passion, find great supervisors and be prepared for the marathon as much as the sprints.

**Rev. Dr Lynette Dungan**



## DEMENTIA WORKSHOP

***The dementia workshop has been running for many years now and we thank Mt Waverley for hosting this event. Guest presenter this year is Dr Emily Rosenich who conducts research into the area of cognitive decline. For more details about the event see the back page.***



Dr Emily Rosenich is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow in Neuropsychology at the Turner Institute for Brain and Mental Health at Monash University. Emily's research, funded by the Alzheimer's Association, investigates how our lifestyles and our genetics interact to drive memory/ thinking loss and dementia. In addition to her scientific work, Emily is a passionate science communicator and advocate for women in science.





# RETIREMENT OF REV DEV ANANDARAJAN

*Rev Dev Anandarajan has had a huge impact within the UCA. With his various roles, and serving on the Assembly multi-cultural and cross-cultural reference committee, we wish Dev and his family all the very best for his retirement.*

Many in Port Philip East Presbytery may have been unaware of the breadth and depth of Rev Dev Anandarajan's ministry in the UCA and in the wider Church since he first felt the call of God to ministry at age 17. He shared with those gathered at St David's, Oakleigh on December 14th 2023 the importance of his father's words over his years of ministry. His father's advice to him was: "It's not what it is that should drive you, but what it should be, and what it could be." Although the service concluded his placement in Intercultural Leadership Development at the Synod, it was the celebration of Dev's ministry upon his retirement that will stay with those who attended.

Dev chose St David's as Balkarra Parish was his first Uniting Church placement. At that time in 1997, the parish was buzzing, with a St David's congregation as well as the Tamil Cook Islander congregations. Following his time at St David's, Dev went on to Leighmoor from 2002 to 2008, Koornang – now Murrembena Uniting Church – from 2008 to 2014, and finally VicTas Synod from 2014 to 2023.

Many people from these church communities were able to attend the service including Marg Edwards, Kelly Skilton, Faye Sanderson and myself from Koornang days. It was a splendid service which went for nearly two hours. The Church was full and it was just glorious when the congregation sang "To God be the glory" and "Be thou my vision," but the most uplifting hymn was Thanthen Ennai Yesuve, which Dev chose because it was sung at his ordination in Sri Lanka.

Rev Duncan Macleod in his role as Executive Officer of eLM, lead the service, first sharing a message received from Dev's brother on behalf of their mother and their other siblings. He then used a Q&A format getting Dev to tell stories about his life, from his calling at 17 years of age to his retirement from Synod. What an incredible life! But we all know that retirement is not the finish of one's life; as one Minister said, "retirement" is not a Christian word!

In closing his reflection, Dev's and long-time friend, Rev Greg Crowe, from Stonnington Community Uniting Church said:

For me Dev, you have been a Voice of one crying out, at times in the wilderness. Through the Splendor and Tragedies of your life, you have been shaped and formed (like all of us ordained into this Ministry) by the one who calls, and you have known restoration. Your experience of the one we call God has been one of faithfulness, and so we rejoice with you at the ending of one aspect of your life and the beginning of another.

After the formalities, people were asked to come forward to share stories and memories. Stories of Dev and his work were told and people shared some lovely things. One of Dev's duties at Synod was working with ministers from CALD backgrounds to find their place within the Church and advocating for them. One man came forward and spoke of his time with Dev, and a conversation he had "I'm from Africa, you're from Asia, but here in Australia we're the same". His gratitude to Dev was deeply moving. I told a few little anecdotes including when Dev would come to the Murrumbena Knitting and Craft Circle, and share time and stories and laughter with the knitters, sometimes admitting that he was hiding from something happening at home. Later when I was chatting with his wife, Dushi at suppertime, I realised she had not known about this. Oh dear!

Before the service ended, Dev spoke about how he had changed over his Christian journey, and, he hoped, for the better. The decision to retire was not easy for him, but his new grand-daughter was teaching him about new beginnings. Dev shared his father's advice: "It's not what it is that should drive you, but what it should be and what it could be" – a message for us all.

The service was followed by the most delicious of suppers and abundant chatter. We all enjoyed the Sri Lankan food, as well as what the Synod's caterers provided.

*Glynis Ramsay - Murrumbena UC*



# LIFE AND MINISTRY: MEN'S CONVERSATIONS IN A WORLD UNRAVELLING

Most of the challenges faced by ministry agents in the church in 2024 are similar whether you are male, female or non-binary. Nevertheless, there are some issues of life and ministry that arise for each gender that are specific to that gender, whether it is social perceptions of risk, or dealing with health issues.

Male ministers of the Presbytery first began meeting together three years ago around the theme of 'Men and Violence. In that time, we have enjoyed the gift of men talking together in a safe space to explore the inner life of our response to a complex world that can feel daunting, and at times, overwhelming.

Hence, male ministers in the Presbytery are invited to join our monthly morning conversation to reflect on how your faith supports and encourages your life and ministry in a world that continues to challenge us through its unravelling.

Our focus is on listening to each other's stories nonjudgmentally, and then listening again to what God may be doing in our lives and the life of the church.

It is fair to say that we are learning to pay more attention to the pain and aloneness of our lives and ministries. Paradoxically, this may also feel like a sacred space that makes our conversations an important commitment in our diaries.

*If you would like to join us on the second Tuesday of the month from 10.00 am to noon, call one of us and we can let you know when and where we are meeting.*

**Rev John Bottomley 0407 443 239;**

**Rev Paul Dau 0413 060 466;**

**Rev Greg Fry 0418 545 055; or**

**Rev Berlin Guerrero 0499 303 911**

## THE VOICE REFERENDUM A UNITING CHURCH REFLECTION

**Rev Sharon Hollis, National President UCA**

**SUNDAY 3 MARCH 2024 AT 2.30PM**

**FREE EVENT AT:**

Church of All Nations,  
180 Palmerston Street, Carlton.

Or for a Zoom link, email:

**[ken.barelli@bigpond.com](mailto:ken.barelli@bigpond.com)**

For enquiries call Ken on

**0418 317 942**

**VICTAS UNITING CHURCH HISTORICAL SOCIETY**



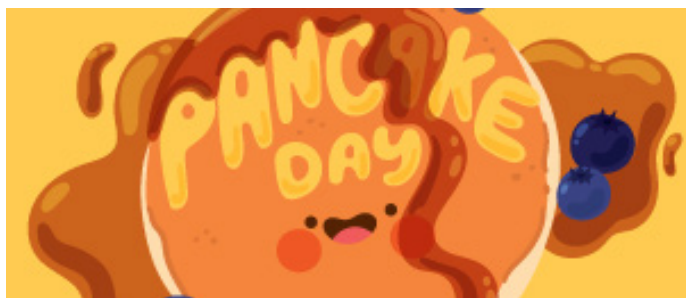




## THE SYNOD SCOOP

*Want to know more about what is happening across VicTas Synod? This month we look at Uniting's Pancake Fundraiser, a new name for Uniting News and a job vacancy at Assembly. Also eLM are also offering FREE Lent & Easter 2024 Resources.*

### PANCAKE DAY FUNDRAISER



Uniting's Pancake Day fundraiser ends on February 13, but events supporting it can be held until the end of April, with money raised helping people experiencing crisis, vulnerability and disadvantage.

[Click here to register.](#)

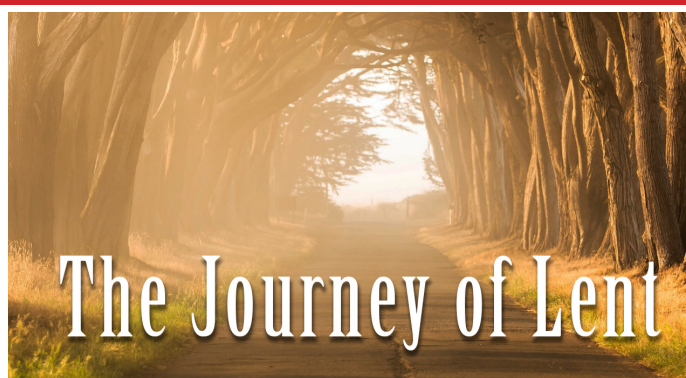
### UC ASSEMBLY SEEKING PART-TIME ROLE

The Uniting Church Assembly is seeking a part-time Communications Officer to support the communications work required ahead of the 17th Assembly meeting from July 11-16.

[Read more](#)



### LENT & EASTER 2024 RESOURCES



The Journey of Lent

Here you will find resources for worship leaders to use to encourage people to worship and pray together as a gathered community or at home. eLM has also provided lots of Lent & Easter Resources.

[Click here to view the resources](#)

# Presbytery in Council & Committee Meetings 2024

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 16**
- **Wednesday June 19**
- **Saturday August 17**
- **Wednesday November 20**

At the first Presbytery in Council meeting of the year, Saturday 16 March, location to still be confirmed, we will be discussing vision & strategy for 2024, 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 is appreciated by the committee that any profiles, supply forms and any related matters and applications are 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 final Wednesday of each month. Ennis Macleod continues in her role as Chairperson.

The **Synod Placements Committee** meets on the second 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, a week prior to its meeting date.

The **Standing Committee** gathers on the second Tuesday of each month.

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.

Contact: [comms-officer@ucappep.org](mailto:comms-officer@ucappep.org)

## BE THANKFUL!

*Rev Robin Yang, Presbytery Minister - Church Development 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.





# DIARY DATES

## **Creative Spiritual Practice – Endeavour Hills UC**

Thursdays 7-9pm

Hosting Cothumos spiritual art journalling

Further info [cothumos@gmail.com](mailto:cothumos@gmail.com)

## **Mission Meals Project**

Thursdays 5.30 - 7pm

St Kilda South Port, 325 Dorcas St, Sth Melb.

Contact Rev Alex Sangster 0411 292 273

## **Simple Body - Meditation Videos**

Mindfulness meditation by Rev. John Tansey

four times a week on [YouTube](#)

## **UCA Assembly Retreat**

1-4 February

## **UCA Assembly Raise our Tribal Voices Conference**

5-8 February

## **Event 1: Pancake Day Lunch with the PM Team on Shrove Tuesday**

## **Event 2: UCA Assembly Anniversary of the Apology to Stolen Generations**

13 February

## **Ash Wednesday**

14 February

## **Lent begins (until 28 March)**

Starts 14 February

## **Catch Up Ethical Ministry Refresher**

15 February at 9.30am online

## **World Day of Prayer**

1 March

## **International Women's Day**

8 March

## **Harmony Week (including International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination)**

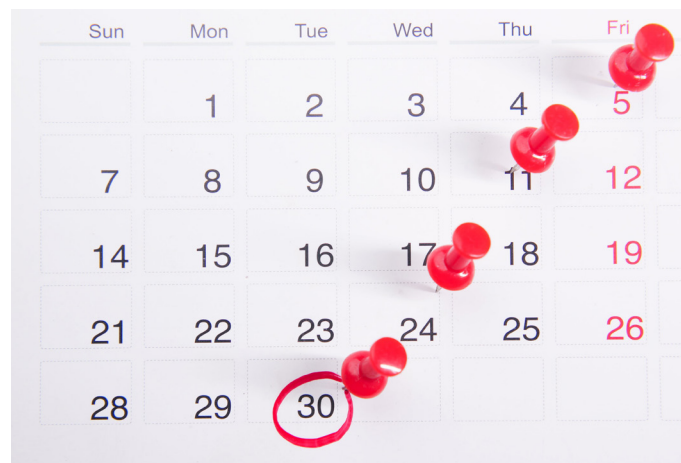
21 March

## **Palm Sunday**

24 March

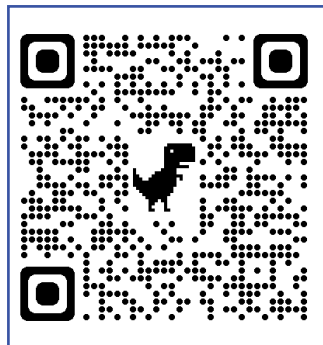
## **Somers Camp.**

1-5th July 2024 (More details to come)



# CASEY CARDINIA EMAIL UPDATE

The Casey Cardinia Regional Mission project is taking shape. If you are interested in keeping up to date with the latest news on the Casey Cardinia Regional Project, subscribe to our email list using the QR code or [clicking on this link](#). For further details, contact Rev Robin Yang or Rev Ji Zhang



## Uniting in Prayer February

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.

### **4 February**

St Leonard's College, Brighton - Principal Mr Peter Clague, Chaplain Rev Judith Watkins

Wesley College- Principal Mr Nick Evans, Chaplains: Bradon French, Kaylea Fearn, Peter Rivet

### **11 February**

Berwick (St Andrew's) congregation- Rev Dr Ji Zhang (Supply), Chair Rev Dr Tony Floyd

### **14 February**

University chaplains in our Presbytery - Ms Mandy Lake, Rev Jay Robinson

### **18 February**

Pilgrim Theological College- Head of College Rev Sean Winter, Faculty staff and students

### **25 February**

Beaumaris congregation - Rev Chris Cohen (Supply), Chair Nick Toovey



## A PRAYER FOR THE NEW YEAR

*God of endings and beginnings,  
God first and last,  
we pray for all who are  
marking the end of another  
year.*

*We pray for those who long  
for this year to end.  
Where there is sorrow,  
bring comfort.  
Where there is brokenness,  
bring wholeness.  
Where there is pain,  
bring healing.*

*We pray for those who  
look back on this year with  
gratitude.  
Where support and  
encouragement has been  
offered or received,  
sustain community  
Where life has been full of joy,  
sustain wonder.  
Where life has been awash  
with your presence,*

*sustain faith.*

*We pray for your world in all its  
glory and terror.  
Where there is war,  
may peace prevail.  
Where there is injustice,  
may your righteousness come.  
Where creation is breaking,  
may it be restored.*

*God of endings and beginnings,  
God first and last,  
as we stand on the threshold of a  
new year  
send us the gift of the Spirit to  
reassure us that  
by your goodness  
we dwell in your love.  
By your mercy  
sin is forgiven.  
By your grace  
your kingdom is coming.  
Amen.*

By President Rev Sharon Hollis



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



03 9558 4710



[www.facebook.com/ucappep.org](http://www.facebook.com/ucappep.org)



[www.ucappep.org](http://www.ucappep.org)



PO Box 696, Noble Park, VIC 3174

Email [secretary@ucappep.org](mailto:secretary@ucappep.org)

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

David Higham [chair@ucappep.org](mailto:chair@ucappep.org)  
Jeff Gardner [treasurer@ppe.victas.uca.org.au](mailto:treasurer@ppe.victas.uca.org.au)  
Jay Robinson [pm-tl@ucappep.org](mailto:pm-tl@ucappep.org)  
Anneke Oppewal [pm-pastoral@ucappep.org](mailto:pm-pastoral@ucappep.org)  
Robin Yang [pm-cd@ucappep.org](mailto:pm-cd@ucappep.org)  
Sarah Manase [comms-officer@ucappep.org](mailto:comms-officer@ucappep.org)  
Anne Kim [secretary@ucappep.org](mailto:secretary@ucappep.org)



# **Dementia Workshop**

## **Mind Matters: Recent Alzheimer's Breakthroughs and Establishing Brain Healthy Habits**

**At Mt Waverley Uniting Church  
482 High St Rd, Mt Waverley**

**1.30pm to 3.00pm on Friday February 16<sup>th</sup> 2024**



Dr Emily Rosenich is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow in Neuropsychology at the Turner Institute for Brain and Mental Health at Monash University.

Afterwards, please join us for a cup of tea or coffee and informal discussion.

Please advise Margery Kennett  
on 9807 4084 or [mbkennett@bigpond.com](mailto:mbkennett@bigpond.com)  
of your intention to attend.

*A gold coin donation would be appreciated.*