

Minister's Word

As I mentioned in some recent sermons, this past month, as a Lenten Easter discipline I have been enjoying reading Jan Richardson's book *Circle of Grace*.¹ In it, she shares her own poem blessings reflecting on the Church's Seasons and selected seasons of people's lives.

I share "The Magdalene's Blessing" for Easter Day, an evocative imaginative reflection based on the story of Mary's encounter with Jesus in the garden in John Chapter 20.

You hardly imagined
standing here,
everything you ever loved
suddenly returned to you
looking you in the eye
and calling your name.

And now you do not know
how to abide this hole
in the center of your chest,
where a door
slams shut
and swings open
at the same time,
turning on the hinge
of your aching
and hopeful heart.

I tell you,
this is not a banishment
from the garden.
This is an invitation,
a choice,
a threshold,
a gate.

This is your life
calling to you
from a place
you could never

have dreamed,
but now that you
have glimpsed its edge,
you cannot imagine
choosing any other way.

So let the tears come
as anointing,
as consecration,
and then
let them go.

Let this blessing
gather itself around you.

Let it give you
what you will need
for this journey.

You will not remember
the words—
they do not matter.

All you need to remember
is how it sounded
when you stood in the place of death
and heard the living
call your name.

A meaningful Easter
to all and may you
find you are richly
blessed by all those
who love and have
loved you, and still
hear your name
being called to rise
and share the good
news that Jesus is
among us in Spirit
and in truth.



Rev. Lynette Dungan

¹ Richardson, Jan, *Circle of grace: A book of blessings for the seasons*, Florida: Wanton Gospeller Press, 2015, pp. 157–158.

Church Council Report

March 2023

Our Church Council (CC) meeting schedule for 2023 commenced on 1 February and was followed by our second meeting on 8 March. In addition to these standard meetings, we conducted the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of St John's Elsternwick on 5 March.

Key matters discussed and decisions made at two CC meetings and the AGM and progress since then are outlined below.

Future Ministry

CC has confirmed with Rev Lynette Dungan that she will continue her Supply Ministry to 30 June 2023 and with Karel Reus that he is able to continue taking one Sunday service each month for us.

Whilst it is possible that Lynette will continue her Supply Ministry beyond June, CC has decided it is prudent to review the last Minister Placement Profile prepared by St John's in 2013 and determine what has been achieved, what has changed, and what is still relevant for our church today.

CC is also looking at whether any changes need to be made to our current Supply Ministry priorities and to Sunday services – congregation members provided initial input to this matter at the luncheon following our recent AGM.

Meetings with Ormond Uniting Church

The first 2023 meeting scheduled for 1 February was cancelled upon advice from the Ormond UC chairperson in late January that Ormond wished to put any discussions on hold about a shared Minister and shared missional activities.

CC expressed its disappointment at this decision, but confirmed with Ormond it is keen to continue to build the relationship with Ormond by joining in each other's activities/events where possible.

Op Shop shopfront closure

CC has received updates from the Op Shop Management Committee about actions in progress to close the shopfront at 302 Glen Huntly Road Elsternwick at the end of March 2023 and hand back the property to the agent in mid-April 2023.

CC has been kept informed of the Committee's continuing discussions on whether a new Op Shop model might be able to operate out of

the St John's Glen Huntly Road property and whether the existing volunteers and staff members might be able to become involved in St John's and Caulfield South Community House activities.

Maintenance and Renovation program using Foster Street site sale proceeds

CC is working with Presbytery and Synod Property Services to progress a planned maintenance and renovation program using the \$250,000 allocated for this purpose from the sale of the Foster Street property.

CC is considering a two-stage program, with the first stage focusing on roofing and associated plumbing maintenance for the Glen Huntly Road and Kooyong Road properties, and exterior painting and a kitchen upgrade at the Glen Huntly Road property. The second stage is intended to focus on the church space at the Glen Huntly Road property, and the Jupiter Street manse.

Receipt of first M4M UEthical investment returns income

CC welcomed the initial payments totalling \$32,355 for returns on the Money for Mission (M4M) investments which were paid into the St John's NAB account in January 2023. M4M investment returns are due to be paid twice yearly in January and July plus an extra payment for franking credits around October. Estimated annual return from the Foster Street site sale outcome was \$87,000 over a seven year period.

St John's Annual General Meeting

CC was pleased with the outcomes from the AGM, including the re-election of the seven previous CC members and Geoff Paterson as Presbytery representative, the passing of the draft budget for 2023, and discussions during the meeting and at the luncheon after the meeting on achievements and future directions. It was noted also that Cathy did an excellent job with the Annual Report.

At the March CC meeting in the week after the AGM, Patricia was elected as Chairperson, Cathy as Treasurer, and Michael as Secretary for the coming year.

UCA Safe Church Training Module 1

All CC members plus Ken Wallis as Safe Church representative for the congregation have now completed Module 1 of the Uniting

Church's national training program. *Recommencement of Cuppa and Chat* CC is exploring how Cuppa and Chat can be recommenced sometime after Easter. Contact has been made with Victoria on the Park and whilst the response has been positive, the logistics of how residents there can again participate are still to be planned.

Frequency of Church Council meetings

CC has decided that as 2023 is shaping as a busy, important year for St John's that it will meet monthly on the second Wednesday of each month.

Michael

Social Justice Calendar

April 2023

- 2 Palm Sunday
- 2 World Autism Awareness Day
- 4 International Day for Mine Awareness
- 7 Good Friday
- 9 Easter Sunday
- 15 Deaths in Custody Final Report
- 22 Earth Day

May 2023

- 1 International Workers' Day (May Day)
- 3 World Press Freedom Day
- 13 World Fair Trade Day
- 15-21 National Volunteer Week
- 16 International Day of Living Together in Peace
- 21 World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development
- 22 International Day of Biodiversity
- 26 National Sorry Day
- 26 2017 Statement from the Heart made at Uluru
- 27 1967 – Referendum allowing laws for Aboriginal People and to be included in the Census
- 27-3 National Reconciliation Week
- June
- 28 Pentecost Sunday
- 28 Reconciliation Sunday Uniting Church

Source: Justice and International Mission
<https://tinyurl.com/4rv6a2jb>

Bible word

The Cross

The four different forms of the cross are the Latin, commonly used as the Christian cross, St Andrew's in the shape of an X, St Anthony's in the shape of a T, and the Greek cross with cross beams equal in length



Latin, St Andrew's, St Anthony's and Greek crosses

Crucifixion on the cross was practised, especially in times of war, by the Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Egyptians and Romans. Before he was crucified the prisoner was scourged with a lash and then tied or nailed to the cross. They did not die from loss of blood but heart failure and took two to three days to die, often hastened by breaking of legs and adding a fire at the foot of the cross to allow suffocation.

For the first three centuries after the crucifixion, the cross was an important symbol in Christian private devotion. The Latin cross as the crucifix with Christ's body on it was thought not to be developed until the fifth century but was not used on church altars until the thirteenth.

The Roman Emperor Constantine used the cross on his coinage. His devotion to the cross was said to have come from a vision of Christ's cross emblazoned in the sky. With his help the cross became a reigning symbol of the church. Since then, craftsmen have embellished the Latin cross in many forms such as Patriarchal, St Peter's, Maltese, and the Anchor.

The word *cross* is often used figuratively to represent the Gospel as in Paul's Letter to the Galatians chapter 6 verse 14 and for suffering in the Letter to the Ephesians chapter 2 verse 16.

Patricia

We need to find God, and
He cannot be found in
noise and restlessness.

Mother Theresa

The editors, Andrea, Patricia and Geoff,
thank all *Link* contributors. Thanks to
Colin for his proofreading.

The Moore Family

By Ian McKellar

In the 1850s, Victoria's gold rush began with increasing numbers of migrants arriving in Port Phillip Bay and immediately setting off for the goldfields in Central Victoria. Among them were the brothers, Isaac and Hugh Moore from Northern Ireland.

They arrived in 1852 and went almost straight to Heathcote and from there to nearby Fryerstown. Rather than trying their luck at digging for gold they opened businesses as hotel and storekeepers. Hugh engaged another Irish migrant, Fred Spinks, to manage the Heathcote store. Spinks had arrived in 1861 with his sister Harriet to join several of their brothers already in the town. Next, we learn that Hugh Moore had married Harriet Spinks at Carlton and was now living nearby leaving the running of the country store to local managers.

Recently their great grandson, Ian McKellar, researched and recorded a family history which he has published under the title *Moore and Moore*. This book has been compiled from family records and research by family members. Ian has recently returned to live in Elsternwick and, with his wife Margaret, is a regular attendee at St John's church.

Hugh and Harriet then went to live first in Carlton and then to East Melbourne where their first child, a daughter, Anna Mary, was born in 1867. Another daughter, Harriet, was born there in 1868 but she was sickly and failed to improve. A move to the country was recommended.

Accordingly, a four-acre block of land was purchased on Glen Huntly Road, near the Elsternwick railway station and an architect and builder engaged to build a substantial home. They named this house *Glenmoore* which still exists and is lived-in by descendants of Hugh and Harriet to this day.

Their remaining children, Hugh (1870), Eva (1871), Emma (Isabel) (1873), Winifred (1877) and May (1879) were all born here. All except Hugh survived to a healthy old age, but young Hugh died in 1870 at the age of only four months.

A photo of *Glenmoore*, Elsternwick in 1875 is shown, with Hugh, Harriet, and four of their children (Figure 1). The verandah was later moved from the south-side shown, to the

east-side, when the land in front, was sold off for shops along Glen Huntly Road. This subdivision left only a few metres of land in front of the original front door, which Harriet took great exception to. She refused to live in this house for long after that, preferring to rent a mansion in Toorak instead.

The house was eventually passed to their second daughter Harriet, who married Percival St John Hall in 1895. They had four children, Doris, Hugh, Joyce and Owen.

The second photo (Figure 2) shows the verandah on the East side of the house, in 1912, and shows Owen, Hugh and Joyce (left to right), three of the Hall children sitting on the lawn. Perhaps Doris aged 15 was taking the photo.

Glenmoore then passed to Hugh Hall, who continued running the family law business from it, and enjoying hobbies of photography, ballet photography, sculpture, and many others. He married Joyce Watkin in 1934. Joyce had two children, Rex and Felicity, and Felicity (Campbell) took ownership when Hugh died in 1967.



Figure 1 *Glenmoore* in 1875



Figure 2 *Glenmoore* in 1912

Recent events

Photographs of recent events:
Morning tea conversations, Audrey's birthday and helpers (1, 2 and 3); Friday Friends Barbecue (4); Friday Friends at Café Bliss (5 and 6); Church in the late afternoon (7); Annual Meeting lunch (8)



Happy Birthday Audrey



Presbytery Report

The first 2023 Presbytery-in-Council (PiC) meeting for Port Phillip East Presbytery was held at Glen Waverley Uniting Church on 19 March. This was a hybrid meeting which I attended in person. The meeting commenced with a service that included the reading from Samuel 6: 1–13 while the Moderator, the Rev David Fotheringham, preached the sermon.

Standing Committee Commissioning

This Committee, which coordinates the Presbytery's work between PiC meetings, was elected at the December meeting and commissioned at the March meeting.

Standing Committee members for 2023 are:

- Chair, Dr Tom Spurling
- Deputy Chair, David Higham
- Treasurer, Jeff Gardner
- Chair, Mission Leadership Development Committee Ennis Macleod
- Chair, Pastoral Relations Committee James Douglas
- Chair, Property Committee Gavin Faichney
- Sam Joo
- Joy Blamires.

The Standing Committee is able to co-opt two more people. Chris Begg was re-elected as Chair of Finance Committee.

Presbytery Annual Report 2022

The meeting approved this report which details both the broad range of Presbytery activities as well as its finances. Of interest are the Presbytery projects in the growth suburbs and Casey–Cardinia and a New Housing Estates Network – see page 14 for more details.

A hard copy of the Annual Report is in the Presbytery folder in the East Room. I can supply a digital copy.

Changes in Port Phillip

The Presbytery heard an account of changes to three churches in the City of Port Phillip.

These are St Kilda in Chapel Street near Carlisle Street, South Melbourne in Dorcas Street, and Port Melbourne in Bay Street.

In future, worship will occur in South Melbourne under the title *St Kilda South Port Uniting Church* while other ministries and activities will be conducted at all three locations.

The image at right is part of the sign outside St Kilda South Port Uniting Church.

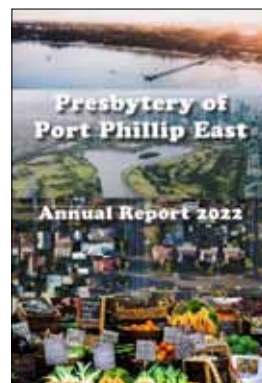
Exploring local mission

Presbytery Minister Dr Craig Mitchell took the meeting through examples of mission in a range of settings. These included a cafe in North Clyde in Melbourne's south east where the Baptist church and a developer are working together; to four lenses for mission from Dr Sam Wells, Vicar of St Martin-in-the-Fields encapsulated by terms *being for being with, working for* and *working with*;¹ and the Fremantle Cluster of churches, and the establishment of a Laundry Bus, which is also operating elsewhere.

Synod Disability Action Plan

This document was distributed for Church Councils. After messages and statements from the Moderator and Assembly, the document discusses the theological background, posing the question: *Who is the God we worship?* (p. 11). This is followed by the question *What response is needed?* (p. 13), with more detailed suggestions for church councils, presbyteries and synods on pages 14 to 23. This document is available at <https://tinyurl.com/fe9erxac>

¹ Dr Sam Wells <https://tinyurl.com/2rf7k78n>



Geoff

Church calendar

Easter in context

April this year brings us to the closing days of the 40 days of Lent. The final week of Holy Week starts with Palm Sunday and Passion Sunday, where *passion* means sorrow.

Holy Week continues with Easter Monday, Easter Tuesday, Easter Wednesday and Maundy Thursday. Maundy comes from the Latin word *mandatum*, or commandment reflecting Jesus' words "I give you a new commandment" (John 13:34-35).

Good Friday is the day of Jesus' crucifixion.

Easter in words

The readings are for Special Days that are not in the Roster on the last page.

Holy Monday Is 42:1-9; Ps 36:5-11; Heb 9:11-15; Jn 12:1-11

Holy Tuesday Is 49:1-7; Ps 71:1-14; 1 Cor 1:18-31; Jn 12:20-36

Holy Wednesday Is 50:4-9a; Ps 70; Heb 12:1-3; Jn 13: 21-32

Maundy Thursday Ex 12:1-4, (5-10), 11-14; Ps 116:1-2, 12-19; 1 Cor 11: 23-26; Jn 13:1-17, 31b-35

Holy Saturday Job 14:1-14 or Lam 3: 1-9, 19-24; Ps 31:1-4, 15-16; 1 Pt 4: 1-8; Mt 27:57-66 or Jn 19:38-42

Ascension Day Acts 1:1-11; Ps 47 or Ps 93; Eph 1: 15-23; Lk 24: 44-53

Easter in song

Each YouTube link is to a congregation or choir rendering Easter Hymns with *Together in Song* numbers in brackets.

Palm Sunday

Ride on, ride on in majesty (348)

<https://tinyurl.com/c24v6eu2>

Maundy Thursday

An upper room did our Lord prepare (536)

<https://tinyurl.com/4n84sr7t>

Good Friday

Were you there when they crucified my Lord (345)

<https://tinyurl.com/4hht53ae>

Holy Saturday Easter Eve

By your kingly power, O risen Lord (386)

<https://tinyurl.com/mryzrptz>

Easter Day

Jesus Christ is risen today (362)

<https://tinyurl.com/2p8xysk3>

Ascension

Lord enthroned in heavenly splendour (520)

<https://tinyurl.com/ms6xjeve>

Pentecost

Spirit divine, attend our prayers (406)

<https://tinyurl.com/2p9axwa4>

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This most sombre of days is called *good* Friday in the obsolete sense of the word good – connoting something holy or pious.

Holy Saturday is centred around the tomb while Easter Day is the day of resurrection.

Fifty days of Easter follow which includes eight Sundays. The fortieth day after Easter Day, this year on 18 May, is Ascension Day which marks the Resurrection and Ascension of Christ and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Easter Season concludes on the Day of Pentecost on 28 May.

Easter in images



Easter Day 2022 at St John's decorating the cross with flowers and ribbons



The Pentecost by Salomon de Bray (1597-1664).
The Metropolitan Museum of Art.
<https://tinyurl.com/762xkztu>

Geoff

From the wider church

Snippets from the Uniting Church Australia-wide



How the Uniting Church addresses disasters

How do we in the Uniting Church help people affected by disasters be they floods, tsunami, earthquakes, typhoons or drought?

One avenue of assistance is through Act for Peace which is the international humanitarian agency of the National Council of Churches in Australia (NCCA). The NCCA comprises nineteen member churches including the Uniting Church in Australia.

Act for Peace's vision is a world where everyone belongs. It aims to create together a world where people uprooted by conflict and disaster have a safe place. The organisation's three goals are safety in exile, a place to belong, and reduced displacement.

In FY 2021–2022, Act for Peace worked in these nineteen locations or regions: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Gaza, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Kenya, Myanmar,

Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Thailand, The Philippines, Tonga, Ukraine, West Bank, and Vanuatu as well as regional foci in Asia and the Pacific. In Australia, the focus was on refugee rights, helping communities be better prepared for disasters, and to increase the impact of emergency response work.

Act for Peace in 2021–2022 benefitted from the donations of 26,794 supporters, churches, organisations and schools which donated \$6,670,2128 and \$47,670 gifts.

Act for Peace is a member of two alliances which provide assistance to overseas countries in times of need. One is the ACT Alliance which is part of a network of 127 countries. The second is the Emergency Action Alliance of 15 leading Australian-based aid organisations which use their reach and resources to target emergency responses.

Türkiye–Syria Earthquake

The photos (right) show the damage wrought by the February earthquake in southern Türkiye and Northern Syria.

At 4.17 am and 1.24 pm local time on 6 February, a magnitude 7.8 earthquake struck the cities of Pazarçık and Elbistan in Kahramanmaraş region. Devastating impacts were felt in 11 neighbouring Turkish provinces and neighbouring northern Syria. On the 22 February, Hatay (pictured) in the south west was hit by a 6.4 magnitude quake.

For perspective, Victoria's most powerful earthquake since 1900 is the 5.9 Rawson quake in 2021.

After the first quakes, the Government of Turkey issued an alarm calling for international assistance.

An estimate by Reliefweb was that 41,156 people had lost their lives, 108,068 were injured, and 139,000 buildings had collapsed or were heavily damaged.

Early responses by ACTAlliance included winterisation packs that contained blankets, pyjamas and blankets, ready-to-eat foods, meal kits, medicines, and multipurpose cash support.

You can support Act for Peace and its partners by making a donation at actforpeace.org.au

Photos show February 2023 earthquake damage in Hatay region, Turkey

Source: Voice of America. Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International licence.



Geoff

Scattering the ashes of Allan Terence Casey

Allan Terence Casey died at 8am on Thursday 21 May 2020.

His daughter Anne, who lives in Norfolk, requested that his ashes not be scattered until she was present. Of course, COVID interrupted travel so March 2023 was the first time she has been able to return to Australia for a visit.

Monday 13 March, Labour Day, a public holiday in Victoria, was chosen and Marysville the venue, a place Allan loved. It was not possible to scatter his ashes at our former house so Stevenson's River was chosen.

About 20 family and friends gathered at the rotunda near the Marysville Grocer for a picnic at 12.30pm and at 2pm we gathered at the bridge (pictured below). Andrea read out some memories from Rev. Dr Lorraine Parkinson, a friend who now lives in Queensland and who was the officiating minister at Allan's memorial service. She also read out some excerpts from the original service as only 20 people were able to attend it.



Sign of the times



The day was beautiful; sunny, with no wind to blow the ashes back into our faces!

12 year old Sam, Andrea's grandson, threw the first ashes into the river with the spontaneous words "Fly free!" Such an appropriate epitaph for Allan, who loved flying and travelling.

Several others threw handfuls of ashes and Anne read a poem *Welcome Home*.



Some of us decided to go for a coffee to reflect on the afternoon. The consensus seemed to be that it was a successful event.

Vale Allan. Fly free.

Andrea

Ministry of flowers



CONNECTIONS	
SUNDAY NITE AT ST. JOHNS April 16 May 14 6pm 	 Sharing experiences about what is important in life. Bring some food for yourself or to share, and if you like a photo, music, poem etc. ... that has meaning for you. <small>Queries to Greg 0432 596 293</small>
ST JOHN'S UNITING CHURCH • 567 GLEN HUNTLY RD ELSTERNWICK	

Op Shop Thanksgiving



Rev Joan Wright, Alex Elliott and Manager, Cathy Hill sharing memories about the Op Shop in 2019

In 2000, Alex suggested to Rev Joan Wright and Church Council that St John's Uniting Church take over the lease for the Diabetes Op Shop that she had been volunteering at. Church Council approved and over the next 23 years the Op Shop has connected with many people in the community through volunteering, conversation, material and financial donations.

To celebrate the many amazing people and achievements of the past 23 years of the operation of the St John's Uniting Church Opportunity Shop Elsternwick there will be a gathering at the St John's Uniting Church Hall on Saturday 15 April at 5.00pm.

Cathy

World Day of Prayer



World Day of Prayer is held in many churches on the first Friday of March.

I attended the service at St Anthony's Catholic Church in Grange Road, Glen Huntly.

Each year focuses on a particular country which, in 2023, was Taiwan. The women of Taiwan had prepared the service and wish you "Ping-an." In Taiwanese, Ping-an means "May God grant you peace – a peaceful relationship with God and with one another."

The Christian women of Taiwan would like to share their experiences with you and bear witness to God's wonderful Grace and mighty works.

The Bible reading was Ephesians 1: 15–20.

We then heard stories from five Taiwanese women whose faith had inspired them.

Woman 1

Be good stewards of God's creation and that we protect the environment.

Woman 2

Fen-Jiau is a middle-aged indigenous woman. For decades she stayed home and cared for her family. She then decided to find a job to bring in needed income. She faced discrimination and felt pressure to accept poor treatment. She also worried that she was neglecting her family. Facing this dilemma, she trusted in God's guidance. She found a position teaching traditional weaving. Her strength and creativity thrived.

Woman 3

When she was young, her father asked her to get a job instead of letting her pursue her education. She, however, insisted on continuing her studies. She asked God to give her wisdom, to have a conversation with her father to change his mind. Gradually her father understood that girls are not inferior to boys. After graduation she went to work. She tries her best to convey that men and women have equal rights.

Woman 4

Sister Pearl is a hospital cleaner. She risked her life to clean and sanitise patients' rooms during the COVID-19 epidemic. She could not go home after work for she did not want to risk infecting her three young children. She prayed earnestly that the Lord of her life will be her strength.

Woman 5

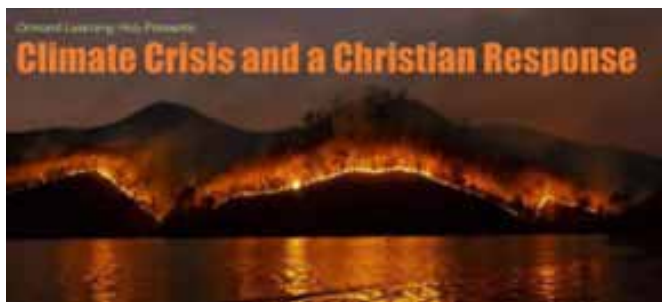
Though suffering a painful past Daiken refused to be silent, constantly thanking God for her recovery from the pain caused by the verbal and sexual abuse that she suffered when she was little. A teacher came to her rescue when she was 14. She also found support from social workers and people who cared about her. Through them, she experienced God's love and became a follower of Christ. She wants to encourage women who have suffered mental and physical abuse to trust in our Saviour.

Prayers followed each of these stories.

Next year's service will be written by the women of Palestine on the theme *Bear one another in love.*

Audrey

Climate Change at Ormond



Ormond Uniting Church recently offered a three-session series entitled *Climate Crisis and a Christian Response*.

The first week was presented by Nick Wadsley, a Glen Eira Council Climate Change Facilitator trained on how to have effective conversations on climate change, and how to provide tools and strategies to cut personal carbon footprint and advocate for strong climate action.

Week two, A Theology of Climate Change, was presented by Brad Denniston, the Ormond Learning Hub Facilitator. Through a series of images, quotes, videos and background information he led thinking around the question, "Can our understanding of God and Jesus help us to tackle climate change?"

Sunday Nite Live

Sunday 12 February

On Sunday 12 February we reinstated the shared meal, which had to be cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions. Six people enjoyed this. So much so that we didn't start the sharing of things meaningful to us until nearly 7pm.

The aim of Sunday Nite Live is to provide an alternative *worship* experience where people can share something meaningful to themselves in a respectful and accepting environment.

The night started with a discussion of Quakerism.

A modern rendition of Psalm 100 was then played which led into wide-ranging discussions which continued for the rest of the evening.

Topics covered were:

- Community
- How God brought us to this place
- Does church make us good?
- Belonging

Greg closed with prayer.

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Week three was led by Heather Baxter, a member of Ormond who has been actively involved at the Presbytery and Synod level to help churches respond to climate change. She led a very active conversation about practical actions we can take as individuals and as congregations.

The sessions attracted about 20 people each week from a number of local churches as well as some community members. It was interesting to hear the various insights and be inspired by the level of commitment participants have.



Ormond Uniting Church has recently installed an exhibition called *Environmental Activism Art* on their North Road frontage and within the church using artwork by Grade 5 children of 2022, from Murrumbeena Primary School.

Cathy

Sunday 12 March

Following the meal and conversation, Greg played an Eric Bibb's *Connected*. Two poems followed with an untitled one by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (Patricia) while Karel read his poem *My Faith*. Audrey reflected on the recent World Day of Prayer. The evening continued with two musical items: a song by Enya and Greg's own composition *Grace*. Silent reflective time and prayer concluded a very pleasant evening.

The next Sunday Nite Live is on Sunday 16 April at 6.00pm. Please bring food to share.

Andrea and Geoff

Envirotip

Tips for using your green bin

- Put your green bin out for collection every week to help avoid odours
- Use layers of dry materials between food waste
- Keep the bin closed and in a shady spot
- Freeze smelly food scraps.

City of Glen Eira website

Michael's New Zealand trip

There was no seeing in the start of the new year of 2023 for us – it was early to bed and to Tullamarine airport by 6.20am, courtesy of a kind friend, for our scheduled 8.25am flight on Virgin Airlines to Queenstown, New Zealand for three weeks away.

The first stage of our holiday featured a two-vehicle convoy containing eleven members of the Forbes family to Picton at the north of the South Island, via stopovers in Invercargill, Dunedin and Christchurch, for a new walking adventure on the Queen Charlotte Track.

Highlights were our dining experiences, with the younger members of our group proving to be adept at identifying wonderful places to satisfy their very healthy appetites.



Angela and Michael on Picton seafront

Sightseeing between meals included the southern port town of Bluff, home to acclaimed oysters and the ferry to Stewart Island which was clearly visible from an excellent lookout; the Catlins, home to many different coastal, forest and waterfall attractions; and Dunedin's hilly terrain with its Signal Hill vantage point to admire the city from above and the Otago Peninsula stretching out from the city. We subsequently visited the unique Larnach Castle (New Zealand's only castle) on the Peninsula but could not book onto a tour of the albatross colony located there.

Queen Charlotte Sound from the Track.



Christchurch's Riccarton's Westfield Shopping Centre gave people a chance to stock up on goods required for the walk, then picturesque Kaikoura further north provided views of dolphins frolicking close to shore and a nearby lobster lunch venue which took some people's fancy. As we got closer to Picton, the Awatere Valley and other Marlborough wineries were key features of the landscape.



Our walking group at Ship Cover at the start of the Queen Charlotte Track

Our Queen Charlotte Track adventure, a five-day self-guided tour with the Wilderness Guides company, began with a briefing and provision of our first lunch packs, then a one-hour boat ride up Queen Charlotte Sound to Ship Cove where Captain James Cook landed on five different occasions in the 1770s. We looked over the Cook Memorial erected there, read the information boards, and admired the tall Maori wood carving recognising the local peoples and the cove as one of the first major places of interaction between Europeans and Maoris.

Before commencing our walk in steady drizzle, our group now totalling thirteen, conducted our traditional ceremony with hand-knitted beanies by my mother presented to first-time walkers, in this case our nieces, Bridget and Natalia.

The first day on the Track took us to Furneaux Lodge, a distance of 17 kilometres. We

started with a gradual climb with the native forest sheltering us from the drizzle before we descended to Schoolhouse Bay (once the site of a school) where we enjoyed our packed lunches and skimmed stones across the top of the water. Another climb followed before we again descended to our first night's accommodation. The higher points did provide the occasional good view of Queen Charlotte Sound.

Once at the Lodge, we appreciated the luxurious rooms and facilities. Several of us had a soak in the seawater to revitalise our weary legs and then proceeded to the hot tub to relax and warm up before enjoying a delicious dinner.

Pouring rain overnight and into the morning meant our next day saw us decked out in our wet weather gear. Thankfully an easier 11.5 kilometre day meant we arrived at our second night's accommodation at Punga Cove by early afternoon. The track followed the curve of the coastline with the water never far away and occasional coastal views, passed through some farmland in the early part, and featured lush coastal forest with ferns prolific in some damp gullies.



Start of Queen Charlotte Track on Day 2

Our accommodation included a restaurant overlooking the Cove with a balcony providing a perfect setting for a pre-dinner drink and chatting with guests post-dinner.

The third day took us on a challenging 23 kilometres, seven and a half hours trek to Portage on Kenepuru Sound. It included a number of steeper up and down sections as we traversed the ridgeline between Queen Charlotte and Kenepuru Sounds. One of my three sisters in our group who was experiencing back pain took a boat ride rather than walk this day. There were some beautiful views of the two Sounds,

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and also initially of the farmland at the top of the Kenepuru Sound. The lookout over the Bay of Many Coves was a highlight and great photo opportunity, then later in the day, the Black Rock Station and Shelter had us thinking of home. The final part of this day's walk was about 700 metres downhill on a sealed road which we all commented afterwards was the most difficult section for our bodies.

That night we celebrated our nephew's 29th birthday, and our coming rest day in Portage which enabled sleep-ins plus relaxing and fun time for all of us together, although the overcast, cooler and windy weather meant no swimming. A precedent may have been set for future walks.

Our final day on the Track featured another long distance of 20.5 kilometres to be completed in time to catch the 3.30pm boat back to Picton from the Track's end point at Anakiwa. Three of us started early at 7.30am, heading back up the sealed road out of Portage, then up and down two further sections with views over Kenepuru Sound, before crossing farmland, traversing native bush, and gaining views across Queen Charlotte Sound to Picton and smaller bay settlements.

Our Anakiwa end point was visible in the distance as we gently descended over several kilometres mainly walking in beautiful beech forest. Five of our group had caught and passed us as we completed our final leg past Davies Bay (where we could have had a swim) and a one-kilometre sign indicated we were close to the finish. Thankfully we each reached the boat pick-up point at least one hour early and were able to have a rest, cool drink and ice cream before boarding.

Back in Picton we enjoyed a traditional end-of-walk celebration at the Oxley Bar and Restaurant. The good food and the cocktails proved very popular particularly with our younger members. Natalia, an accomplished pianist, made use of the venue's piano, playing Happy Birthday for a member of another group dining there, and Dancing Queen which had diners singing along.

Our fourth walk in New Zealand had again gone very well, with the added luxury of staying in excellent accommodation each night, dining well each evening and during the day with our packed lunches, and having a rest day included, much appreciated by each of our group.

The next morning saw nine of us travelling on the *Interislander* ferry across Cook Strait on relatively calm seas to Wellington, whilst the remaining four hired a car and drove to Christchurch to pick up their flights home.

Our centrally-located accommodation in Wellington unfortunately turned out to be a motel also used as emergency housing for homeless people and in a state of disrepair – consequently I will be the butt of family jokes for years to come as the person who booked nine of us into it and did not read some scathing reviews in doing so!

Whilst other family members who had crossed with us to Wellington flew home in the following day or two, Angela and I continued our holiday travelling with Kiwi friends Christine and Paul whom I first met in 1982 on a Contiki Grand European adventure and with whom we last enjoyed time together in early 2020 on the Tongariro Northern Circuit walk in New Zealand.



Angela, Christine and Paul at the Lake ferry in Wairapapa region

Our North Island travels with Christine and Paul included being introduced to a unique retro venue, the Petone Rowing Club in suburban, bayside Wellington for a scrumptious breakfast, wine tasting at the Luna Winery near Martinborough in the Wairapapa region, seeing many rivers swollen from recent heavy rains on the east coast of the North Island, spending two fabulous overnight stays in Airbnb style houses in Greytown and Papamoa Beach near Tauranga, and two nights at the Ryan home in Havelock North including a dinner on one evening to celebrate their 44th wedding anniversary, a visit to their friends in Taupo, a walk around the base of Mount Maunganui, and many games of cards playing Liverpool Rummy and Hand and Foot.

The dreaded COVID virus disrupted our planned journey together all the way to Auckland, with the only one of us (Christine)

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who had not contracted COVID previously, testing positive on the morning of the fifth of our ten intended days together, after not feeling well for a couple of days previously but testing negative.

Only Paul came with us to Papamoa Beach for two nights there before we took the InterCity bus from Tauranga to Auckland. For our final three nights away we stayed in the Viaduct area close to Auckland Harbour, its port and ferry departure zone. The boats (many of which were super yachts) moored in the port would collectively have been worth hundreds of millions of dollars.

The much improved, sunny weather we had encountered in Tauranga followed us to Auckland ensuring it was a very enjoyable stay. Highlights included a ferry ride across to Devonport on the northern side of the harbour bridge and a very enjoyable exploratory walk around this beautiful place, and a day at Auckland Museum taking in the Stonehenge exhibition, Maori Cultural performance, and the volcanoes exhibit which included a simulated earthquake experience. From the Museum, we walked back to the city centre through the Domain gardens which included the aptly named Lover's Walk.

We returned to Melbourne with Qantas on the evening of Friday 20 January to be picked up at the airport by our daughter Alice, and then home to a dinner cooked by our son Alex and his partner Mollie. It was a great way to end our holiday, ahead of our dog Monte's ACL surgery on the following Monday, and Angela's first day of work in her new part-time project role.

One week later we read with horror the media reports of record torrential rain in Auckland with loss of life, flooding, landslides, and other devastation. It reminded us once again that life is unpredictable and fragile.

Michael



Card playing during the trip

St John's Uniting Church, Elsternwick

Roster & diary dates for April and May 2023

April	2 Palm Sunday*	7 Good Friday	9 Easter Day	16 Easter 2	23 Easter 3	30 Easter 4
Leader	Rev. L Dungan	Rev L Dungan	Rev L Dungan	Worship & Nurture	Rev L Dungan	Karel Reus
Lectionary Readings	Is 50:4-9a; Ps 118:1-2,19-29; Phil 2:5-11; Mt 21:1-11	Is 52:13-53:12; Ps 22; Heb 10:16-25 or Heb 4:14-16; 5:7-9; Jn 18:1-19:42	Acts 10:34-43 or Jer 31:1-6; Ps 118:1-2, 14-24; Col 3:1-4 or Acts 10:34-43; Jn 20:1-18 or Mt 28:1-10	Acts 2:14a, 22-32; Ps 16; 1 Pt 1:3-9; Jn 20:19-31	Acts 2:14a, 36-41; Ps 116:1-4, 12-19; 1 Pt 1:17-23; Lk 24:13-35	Acts 2:42-47; Ps 23; 1 Pt 2:19-25; Jn 10:1-10
Prayer	Michael	Audrey	Patricia	Audrey	Cathy	Greg
Greeters	Wendy	Raj	Raj	Colin	Greg	Rhonda
Readers	Don	Patricia	Audrey	Michael	Wendy	Alex
Data Projector	Cathy	Geoffrey	Greg	Geoffrey	Geoffrey	Geoffrey
Steward/Offering	Cathy/Colin	Raj/Patricia	Raj/Andrea	Colin/Michael	Andre/Raj	Cathy/Andrea
Morning Tea	Rhonda/Patricia	-	Patricia/Pauline	Luchee/Denise	Audrey/Alex	Pauline/Colin
Flowers	Alex	-	Patricia	Pauline	Audrey	Rhonda
May	7 Easter 5*	14 Easter 6	21 Easter 7	28 Pentecost	Birthdays	Diary Dates
Leader	Rev L Dungan	Rev L Dungan	Rev L Dungan	Karel Reus	April Birthdays 29 Angela May Birthdays 8 Lee 11 Alex 15 Geoffrey 16 Don 18 Kevin 21 John 23 Greg 22 Lynette 24 Michael 25 Luchee 28 Margaret Mc	April 7 Good Friday @10 15 Op Shop Thanksgiving @5 16 Sunday Nite Live @6 28 Friends Friends @12.30 May 13 Mini Fete 14 Sunday Nite Live @6 26 Friday Friends @12.30 * Holy Communion
Lectionary Readings	Acts 7:55-60; Ps 31:1-5, 15-16; 1 Pt 2:2-10; Jn 14:1-14	Acts 17:22-31; Ps 66:8-20; 1 Pt 3:13-22; Jn 14:15-21	Acts 1:6-14; Ps 68:1-10, 32-35; 1 Pt 4:12-14, 5:6-11; Jn 17:1-11	Acts 2:1-21 or Num 11:24-30; Ps 104:24-34, 35b; 1 Cor 12:3b-13 or Acts 2:1-21; Jn 20:19-23 or Jn 7:37-39		
Prayer	Cathy	Greg	Michael	Audrey		
Greeters	Rhonda	Raj	Wendy	Colin		
Readers	Don	Audrey	Alex	Cathy		
Data Projector	Michael	Cathy	Greg	Geoffrey		
Steward/Offering	Andrea/Michael	Cathy/Raj	Michael/Cathy	Andrea/Colin		
Morning Tea	Denise/Pam	Audrey/Alex	Pauline/Colin	Rhonda/Luchee		
Flowers	Alex	Pauline	Audrey	Rhonda		