

Volume 3 Issue 3

June 2011



From the Minister

My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me ...I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand. (from John 10:27,28)

No one will snatch them out of my hand, Jesus declares to the people as he teaches in the temple; my hands are holding hands.

Holding hands. Remember as a small child, having our movement monitored as our tiny hand is enveloped in the much larger hand of someone who loved us enough to keep us safe from traffic or strangers or just wandering off and being lost

Holding hands. Finding someone we want to share our life with and announcing to all the world that we think this is the one, by wandering through the streets oblivious to all others and proudly holding hands with the one we believe

will make our life complete.

Holding hands. As someone breaks that awful news to us; a friend, a companion, walking with us through the hard times, reminding us we are never alone, that the darkness isn't all there is to life; helping us to hold on to hope as we hold on to their hands.

Holding hands. Sitting by the bed of someone in pain, tired out from illness and distress. Letting our hand holding theirs be the connection with life and health and the world that still exists outside their constricted world.

Jesus says "My hands are holding hands, just as God's hands are holding hands." Holding hands that do not let go of those who want to stay safe within them. Holding hands that carry us through events that threaten our very existence.

We know God's hands are holding hands because Jesus' hands are holding hands and whatever is true of Jesus is true of God; whatever we know of God is true of Jesus.

To follow Jesus, is to place ourselves where the holding hands of God may be the only security we know.

To follow Jesus, is to place ourselves where we are prepared to hold the pain and suffering of others in our own hands.

When Jesus calls us to follow Jesus calls us to unite ourselves with him, to make our own hands holding hands, hands that show care and love, hands that offer life and not death.

Because in following we discover what it means to be held in God's holding hands forever.

Diane

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Morialta Gateways Group & Progressive Christianity Network SA Exploring Open Christianity Winter DVD Series Monthly on Fridays

The series began in May with Exploring doubt and faith with Dr Val Webb:

After a time of putting questions under the rug, she experienced "an epiphany": maybe doubt was a positive. In everything we do in life, we use doubt, moving us from status quo to fresh ideas....so maybe this was God's way.

Val Webb published "Doubt" in 1995 – the first book to address doubt. It seemed to give people permission to ask the questions.

More on page 8

Friday June 24 Exploring the future of religion with Sir Lloyd Geering

A progressive awakening - Religion in a process of change - Some signs of hope

Friday July 22
Exploring Jesus and Paul
with John Dominic Crossan

Touching the ancient world - Non-violence and justice bring peace - A vision for saving the world - An alternative for the 21st Century

Where: Morialta Uniting Church, 26 Chapel Sreet Magill 5072

When: 7.30 – 9.30 pm **Cost:** \$8.00

Bookings: Morialta UC Office Phone: 8331 9344

Email: office@morialta.org..au

From the Chairperson

The decisions we make in our lives both as individuals and as a corporate response to situations have varying degrees of importance, but they all have some impact on us.

At Morialta, as with all communities and councils in the Uniting Church, we value consensus. In our lives together we have been responsible for a number of important decisions recently. I wonder if you have spent any time thinking about the way we come to a conclusion in these matters.

Steve Begg, who is Professor in Decision Making at the University of Adelaide, spent the morning of the recent Council Focus Day unpacking the processes we need to invoke in order to make the best decisions. Then in the afternoon, Reverend Christine Garner helped us to explore how

Discernment happens.

When confronted with the need to make a decision, first, any group should understand the Values that underpin its existence. We need to be clear about the Objective of the decision, and agree as a group. Next, it is important to look at all the Alternatives that present themselves as a solution. The best way to make the best decision is to gather as much Knowledge as possible to inform ourselves.

Of course, as a Community of Christ, we have another resource. Prayer, however you understand it, is just that resource. Our relationship with the Divine gives us opportunities not present in other groups.

Waiting on the Divine, one of the ways of defining Discernment, is not an abdication

of responsibility. As a church community we still need to inform ourselves, consider the objectives and be careful to listen to each other to make sure we all share common values. In doing this in an attitude of love and care it is possible to reach a consensus and make the best decisions for our community.

I'm sure members of Church Council gained much from our Focus Day. I hope that you will also think about how we use those orange and blue cards, and if you want to, have a chat with one of the Councillors to explore Decision Making and Consensus as we experience it in Morialta.

Bruce



David Purling writes ...

With the colder weather coming in, I remembered one of our friends in Aylesbury. It was the Tuesday afternoon Fellowship Meeting and he had come to pick up his wife. I was leaving at the same time, when a shower of rain started. He shrugged his shoulders, looked up and said, "Summer again!"

Many years before that, we had once been on a coach tour of the UK and had stopped in York. After visiting the Jorvik Viking Centre, where we experienced the site of a Viking village, we came out from it to find snow falling very softly.

It had been sunny when we went in. We commented to our Coach Driver, that during that particular day we seemed to have experienced all four seasons! He gave a wry smile, and said, "You know what they say? If you don't like the weather, wait ten minutes".

Well, I know we like to complain about the weather, and it is a topic for many conversations. We found that to be especially true in England!

There is a tradition in Filipino Culture which is said to be responsible for weather on a wedding day. Word-for-word translation of this tradition is "Rain go away!". It is a good sign when the sky is clear and the sun shines on the day of the wedding. That's why many couples follow this rite. They go to monks to present gifts to them. When the couple and their relatives present gifts to monks, they ask them to pray for good weather on the wedding day.

I thought I'd see what "Praying for the weather" turned up on the Internet. I found the following, which may be worth considering.

This was what one person wrote:

"I'm going to a festival tomorrow, but a hurricane is coming up the coast and is planned to drop rain on us. I'm bent on attending the festival. Would you pray for the weather to be good?"

Some responses were:

"Consider this: If there is a God and He wants it to rain tomorrow, no prayer will "change His mind", so a prayer would be a waste of time. If there is a God and He DOESN'T want it to rain tomorrow, then it won't rain and any prayer would STILL be a waste of time. Are you understanding this? EITHER WAY, REGARDLESS of God's intentions, praying would be a waste of time. If you can debate this, I urge you to and welcome it."

"I mean no disrespect when I say that if there were a god, he would have far bigger fish to fry than good weather for a festival.

My weather report tells me cloudy in the morning and sun coming out in the afternoon...."

"What If I pray for you to have rain all day? Will it work? "

"You're better off throwing tons of ice into the ocean to weaken a hurricane."

"Doesn't God have a "divine master plan?"

Do you really think you can ask God to

change his divine plans just for you?"

"Didn't the Focus on the Family folks already prove that that doesn't work when they asked everyone to pray for torrential rain on the Democratic Convention?"

"There's a drought on in a lot of places, princess. I really think god must be losing his sense of humor with these selfish requests."

What do you believe?



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Community Centre News

MORIALTA COMMUNITY CENTRE Se hibiditie of Sternish Likting Church

26 Chapel Street, Magili Phone: 8331 8344 Mice hours: Sam - 1pm, Monday to Priday

Broadband for Seniors

The Broadband for Seniors Project has been an interesting journey for us at

Early last year the federal government made two computers available to many centres that had senior people as clients. In that Broadband for Seniors scheme we were promised that full technical and tutoring support would be made available to the centres for one year. After the year had elapsed we, the centres, were advised that the computers would become our property.

Morialta joined the scheme late in its implementation and assumed we would

receive a full year of support. Subsequently we heard that the one year of technical and tutoring support started at the beginning of the project not at the time that we received our computers. It seemed, therefore, that we might receive only 6 months of technical and tutoring support before the project ran out.

The good news that we received last week from the Federal Government is as I quote below:

I am pleased to advise that the Government will invest a further \$10.4 million to keep supporting your kiosk and the other Broadband for Seniors kiosks already established across the country.

I want to thank you for your participation in this important initiative and I look forward to hearing about your continued success

Sincerely

Jenny Macklin

Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.





Other Community Centre Happenings

Internet Helpers — Peter Norman has been active as a patient and much appreciated instructor-cum-friend, offering advice, encouragement, and a good knowledge range to several internet explorers. Some may not have persevered without Peter's gentle encouragement — and they keep coming back! A good sign! Helena, too, is ever patient, helpful, and well-informed, and somehow manages to marshall her activities in both the Office and the Broadband corner when necessary.



Friendship Club - What a joy to have folk responding to an invitation to assist on Wednesdays! Who are they: Margaret Johnston, Marion Beard, Ruth Dunning and Betty Omond.

Workshop - We continue to receive inquiries and referrals for people to join in

the Workshop's activities. The facility is an asset, as are those who work (and play) in it!

Magill JP School - On 23 May Bev Tredrea and Christine took morning tea to the school for the staff. Food, prepared by Evening Fellowship, was enjoyed and a small but successful step was taken in connecting with the school.



TAFE Students

Edret Matanhire has completed her Diploma work at Morialta. She has contributed to Friendship Club, attended a range of network and planning events and her experience has been wide. Her assistance in Playgroup has been a joy for Morialta, and she will be missed.

In writing her thanks she said, "I have had a chance of learning and experiencing work in a community centre in Australia. I spent a lot of time comparing a community Centre in Australia and in my home country. I have learnt a lot of Australian lifestyles and cultures....words are not enough to express my thankfulness."

We congratulate Edret on her employment at Resthaven, Paradise.

Fanyu Kang will also complete the required period of field work at the end of June. She has been active in our programs, particularly in Playgroup, and has gained a wide range of experience, furthering her skills under Christine's supervision.

Community Centres SA Conference was run over three days, attended by Christine, and included a day of visiting in a diversity of centres across Adelaide and the hills. Morialta was fortunate to host the Morning Tea and was proud to showcase a number of activities and facilities, including Coffee Corner, Library, Workshop and the KUCA–Playgroup setting where fresh scones and fruit were served by Lesley and helpers. Information was exchanged and horizons widened

Speaker for Playgroup - Brain Development

Our two Students Edret and Fanyu were required by the learning goals of their TAFE Diploma to execute a small project. The project that we designed was that they invite a speaker to playgroup and organise all of the logistic arrangements needed for the day.

May 31st was a very successful day where Angela Stephenson of Staines Child Development spoke to the parents at Playgroup about their child's brain development and then demonstrated activities games and relational experiences that parents (and grandparents) could give the children to help them develop.

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Worship Reflection—Church Council

Where do you come from?

We measure our lives year by year, from birthday to birthday; from childhood to youth to adulthood to old age. But our memories do not store away years or months, or even weeks or days. They catalogue images or scenes or snatches of conversation and file them where it may take no more than the scent of a lilac to stir these fragments into consciousness.

Where do you come from? How do you answer that question? When you think of home, is it the place where you live? Is it the house of your childhood or the town where you grew up?

I grew up in Victoria. My early childhood memories are of a house that my father built in the western suburbs of Melbourne. a yard that had a large vegetable garden and several large flower beds. It was within walking distance of the local primary school (if 2 kilometres is considered within walking distance). It is the smells that stir the memory - but luckily most of the unpleasant and at times acrid smells from the industrial area through which I walked are no longer around. In my early twenties I worked in Hobart. My memories of this time are pleasant, but Hobart was never considered home. Was this because my three year stay was always going to be a three year stay? Was it because I was no longer living in a house but a boarding house? I returned to Melbourne and to my parent's, and several years later I married and moved to our own house at Heatherdale in the eastern suburbs - a property with many trees and large shrubs. Then three years later a move to Adelaide and our present house with large gum trees and access to many walks in the nearby hills. In recent years the house that my father built and the family lived in for over fifty years has been demolished and units built on the site. The boarding house in Hobart, while still standing is now a Salvation Army hostel, and the house at Heatherdale remains totally unchanged from the outside. All three places sadden me, but not because of bad memories.

Thomas Wolfe was right; you can't go home again. You can't go home again because it has changed and you have changed. Home, it turns out, is more in time than it is in space, more in events than in time, more in people than in events, more in our own minds than in people. Home is ours to create and to long for, to remember and to dream about.

Most of us were insulated as young children from the awareness of those three realities

that set the young Buddha on his spiritual journey; old age, sickness and death. Then when suffering intruded on our youthful innocence, we began to grow the shell that protects us from being wounded again. We don't just learn to protect ourselves from pain. We protect ourselves from joy and love. The soul's quest for home is not just a nostalgic longing for the way things were before we began protecting ourselves from the harshness of reality. We grieve for what is lost and yearn for that time again — we long for that child-time when our fears were more instinctive than learned and our hearts opened freely with unconditional trust

Where do you come from? Consider not just where you started your day or life but where you belong in the larger scheme of creation. It is, after all, integral to our human condition that we ponder our place in space and time — that we question beginnings and endings.

So how do we define our place? How do we figure out where we belong in all this boundless expanse of space? And time. How do we establish our sense of place in time? Now, instead of time that began with the event of creation according to myths handed down through centuries of religious tradition, we have time that probably did not begin at all, because to speak of a beginning is to speak as if time can be contained, and what we know is that there is no such thing as containing time.

Science has shaken religion's traditional capacity to provide humans with a sense of home in space and time. Instead of displacing religion, however, it has underscored how very little we know and how very mysterious is creation.

Western religion has failed to provide the sense of a familiar and containable home that used to be its stock in trade, and science has failed to replace what religion can no longer provide. The human spirit, however, continues to long for home and respond to the mystery of creation with a pilgrim heart.

What is home? What are you looking for in your quest for home? You are looking for a place where you belong. It may be an illusion. But you are looking for it anyway.

Are you looking for a place that feels safe and peaceful – safe from evil, safe from violence, safe from anxiety, safe from loneliness; no conflict, no division, no dissension. It may be an illusion.

Home is sanctuary. Home is also the feeling of acceptance. The quest for home is the need to feel that we belong. The quest for home is the need to feel safe. The quest

for home is the need to be accepted.

People who join faith communities - a spiritual home - bring all of these needs into their quest for spiritual growth. In many faith communities, weekly gatherings take place in a space that is called a "sanctuary." A sacred place, but even more than that, it is a place where we feel safe. Cast adrift on the great sea of limitless time and space, we look to spiritual communities for mooring. Those communities offer a kind of home to their members, who gather for potluck dinners, visit one another in hospitals, and join to celebrate or observe rites of passage. That isn't why we look for a spiritual home, we are drawn to a spiritual home because we are

We are castaways, and we are looking for news from across the sea. We still live our island life, but we know that to be a castaway on the remote little planet means to search for our spirit's home.

Our soul's journey home begins with a decision to embark on the search.

From: Pilgrim Heart, the Inner Journey Home by Sarah York.

John Powers

I search for Home, always for Home, unaware, of course, that I am already there.

Final verse from

Seeking and Finding

By Joyce Rupp



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Ecology

Sixty years ago I first heard the word 'ecology' in a series of lectures in the Botany course at the University of Adelaide. Dr Ray Specht, my lecturer, had researched the relationships between plants and their environments in the Adelaide Hills and wider afield in the eastern pastoral areas of South Australia. The science of ecology, the relationship between living organisms and their environment, was breaking new ground, essential studies for a budding agriculturalist.

Two generations later, ecology, unfortunately, has become a word of fashion with little science. And so we have eco-villages, eco-rubbish tips, eco-warriors, eco-soap powder and more.

These studies impressed me with the knowledge that ecology is a very basis science indeed and it has led me to understand that everything is related to lie and therefore ecology is a foundation stone of my Christian faith and another helpful understanding of God.

This replaces my early belief that I, with all humanity, was above the environment, at the top of the living pyramid, and that Homo sapiens could mould the earth to our needs. Ecology teaches us that this assumption is bias. All life is interrelated to the earth's environment.

As Christians, we need to recognize that our faith requires a just sharing of God's resources. As the theologian, Sally McFague, writes, "All creatures should have the hope (be saved) of a good life and therefore we must live with imitations".

Arthur Tideman.

Morialta's Website www.morialta.unitingchurch.org.au

Our second generation web-site was birthed in February and is doing well.

Check it out regularly, nurture it development and commend it to your friends.

Ongoing update and doses of information are necessary for it thrive, stay fresh and be current. Helena in the Church Office is the gateway for updating information. She works with a team of three other editors: Lorraine Powers, Sharon Mackenzie and Jill Pope.

This is your site to use!



Meditation

Cross - represents the crucifixion of Chris

Cross – represents the crucifixion of Christ Empty Cross – now risen Christ

Heart - For the love of the world and God

Pearls - The tears of Christ

Cream / white / slightly green Lilies -The Risen Christ - Joy, Peace, Purity, Goodness, Love, Hope

Tangled Vine - The "tangled world"

Red Rose - The blood of Christ

Helen Penhall

Christ has risen while earth slumbers, Christ has risen where hope died, As he said and as he promised, As we doubted and denied. Let the moon embrace the blessing; Let the sun sustain the cheer; Let the world confirm the rumour. Christ is risen, God is here!

Christ has risen and forever
Lives to challenge and to change
All whose lives are messed and mangled,
All who find religion strange.
Christ is risen, Christ is present
Making us what he has been —
Evidence of transformation
In which God is known and seen.

John Bell© 1988 The Iona Community (Enemy of Apathy p68)

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The Morialta Gateways group held their fifth retreat at the Kapunda Holiday Park during the week before Easter, aiming to share their fellowship and reflect.



Kapunda, the site of the historic copper mine which helped save South Australia from being bankrupt in the 1840s was also the home of Sir Sydney Kidman who owned 100,000 square miles of Australia and large mobs of the best working horses, sought after at yearly sales in the town. We were fortunate to be able to walk through his home, "Eringa", administrative centre of the Kapunda High School. The school proclaimed by Colin Thiele as, "In every way unique", has preserved the magnificent stained glass windows which will be returned to their original glory when the current renovations to the home are completed.

During our stay, we visited two historic sites in the nearby surrounding farm lands which revealed new insights for us into the lives of pioneers from whom we have inherited much of what we have today. Ten kilometres west of Kapunda, Lorraine

Gateways Retreat

Powers took us to her sacred site, Bethel (meaning the "house of God"), where her great-great grandmother lived and died in a Moravian Brethren community. Lorraine, John and a guide told us the story of those pioneers.

The Moravian Brethren were Protestants. descendants of the Bohemian Brethren who originated in Bohemia in 1457 from followers of John Huss. They were ruthlessly persecuted by Ferdinand II and believed their faith "held a direct illumination with God". Early in the eighteenth century, small groups of persecuted Moravians met in woods in Bohemia and Moravia. A leader was Christian David who fled as a refugee into Saxony and sought refuge on the estate of Count Zinzendorf at Hernhutt. Zinzendorf brought together the traditions Moravian zeal, practical service, simplicity and a commitment to worldwide Further persecution saw the mission. spread of the religion into neighbouring provinces like Silesia.

Silesian refugees came to Australia and established the Bethel community in 1854 on 1912 acres under the direction of a Pastor named Schondorf. The centre of the commune comprising the church, a substantial home for the Pastor and a school was managed by the community. In the beginning their spirits were high as they independently worshiped, supported by their Silesian traditions and their musical talents.

All went well until the 1870s when the younger people persuaded the hierarchy in Hernnhut, Saxony, to send a new Pastor with more fluency and style. This created divisions at Bethel, made more difficult in the next generation when the community accepted a German speaking Lutheran Pastor whom the younger people could not understand. Further dissention occurred when two itinerant Gospel Preachers, with different styles and message of worship, infiltrated into the community.

And so the Moravian Brethren began to



scatter leaving behind a beautiful church in the solitude of the countryside where we Gateways were able to explore and reflect on the Christian strength of Lorraine's forebears.

Anlaby Station, the other country site of



historic significance that we visited during our Kapunda stay, had an entirely different beginning. Never-the-less it made an important contribution to the infant Three years after the first Colony. settlers arrived at Adelaide the Dutton family arrived from New South Wales having walked their way with 18,000 sheep and settled on a pastoral lease of 1.29 million acres north of the Barossa Valley. They developed the first Merino sheep and Clydesdale studs in South Australia, shore 60,000 sheep annually and employed 70 people. On holiday times they managed to travel the world in their own ship.

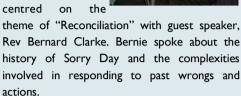
When I visited in 1954, to give soil conversation advice, the grandeur of the Anlaby garden surrounding the comfortable homestead was still a world recognized site. Fourteen gardeners maintained the orchid and vegetable hot houses, fruit orchards, the rosaries, the arboretum, fish ponds and the deer park, all overlooked by a folly. The current owners are busy restoring the whole garden. Geoffrey Dutton, the great Australian author and historian and his wife Ninette, the late owners of Anlaby, became totally absorbed in their literature leaving a ruined garden and a small 250 acre sheep enterprise.

Continued on page 7 ...

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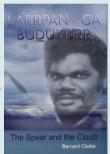
Reconciliation

This year the annual combined meeting of the Social Justice Mission Ministry Team and the Evening Fellowship centred on the



Rev Bernard Clarke, Dip Social Studies, AM, is the writer of *The Spear and the Cloud*, published last year. He served the Methodist and Uniting Churches in Northern Australia from 1964 – 1980, first as a social worker and then as Director of Mission. His Indigenous colleague, Gatjil Djerrkurra is quoted on the back cover of the book:

"If we want to break from the colonial past, and begin anew, then we will have to walk together — hand in hand and side by side — a truly reconciled nation."



Who benefits from Poker Machines?

Although debate on the evils versus the benefits of poker machines is nothing new, it has gained a new life following attempts to set limits on how much a person can lose in a session of play.

Growing up in NSW, I well remember my father resigning from the RSL because the local Ex-Servicemen's Club installed poker machines when I was a mere teenager. His concern was not only for problem gamblers who could lose the weekly food money, but also for the livelihoods of the local restaurateur and publicans. Braidwood only had two hotels, and only one of them survived the first decade of poker machines. The one restaurant was also unable to compete with the cheap meals subsidised by poker machines that were served by the club dining room. The hotels recovered only after they were able to install machines many years later.

When I was a University student I lived in St Andrews College opposite the RPAH Club, and many Andrewsmen joined the RPAH Club, not to play poker machines, or even enjoy the amenities, but for the cheap meals subsidised by the gamblers. The story was the same in many country towns across NSW, where children's sport flourished and locals benefited from fantastic sporting amenities, which were only dreamed of before poker machines arrived.

What was forgotten, of course, both by us students at St Andrews and by many communities across the state, was that a few gamblers, many who could least afford it, were subsidising and funding our new lifestyle. The hidden downside was children going without food because their parents were spending the pay cheque at the local club. Our neighbour, the local dairy farmer and milkman, often provided free milk to several families after the weekend losses.

Fast forward to the current debate, and again we see a similar situation where clubs (and now hotels) are able to offer vastly improved amenities for customers along with very reasonably priced meals. But it is not just pubs and clubs that benefit. Two of the largest owners of pokies are the two major supermarket chains, Coles and Woolworths, especially the latter.

If we are opposed to gambling and poker machines, and if we want to see legislation passed limiting losses and even banning problem gamblers, then maybe we also need to look at who makes the money and who benefits by way of cheaper meals, greater amenities and (maybe) lower food prices. We could just be an accidental recipient ourselves.

I know my father would be chewing your ear about it after Church every Sunday!

Colin Cargill Leader SJMMT

Continued from page 6

These two pioneer sites offered a message for me. The Brethren and the Duttons came from afar with great faith, courage and hope, determined to do their best to fulfil the potential that God's creation had given them. Circumstances changed but their endeavourings have given the next generations an opportunity to follow freedom to reach their potential knowing the pioneers' achievements and experiences. They ventured, we have gained.

Arthur Tideman.



Beauty in Spent Places



Dyed fabric wall hanging by Sarah Heatley inspired by the Kapunda mine site

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Musings





Two weeks ago, at my home church I was introduced to Mohammed, a visitor that morning. Discovering that he was from Bangladesh we were able to engage in conversation about Nobel Peace Prize Winner, Muhammed Yunis, founder of the Grameen Bank and micro-credit. I asked him what had brought him to the church that day. He told me that as a Muslim he prays five times a day, and that during his early prayers that morning he felt moved to experience prayer in a Christian community. He had driven past the end of the road and seen a sign pointing to the church. He particularly appreciated the inclusive language of our worship. As we continued our conversation and our understanding of God, I spoke of us all being on a spiritual journey and that we have different pathways to God. He challenged me and said, "No, no, we don't have to search for God - God is there embracing all that is." I think he was trying to say was that I was starting from my own individual place as a human but he started from God. Reflecting on the way home I felt that this stranger had blessed and enriched me.

The Easter story of the dejected disciples journeying to Emmaus has long been dear to me; how they were walking towards the setting sun and darkness in grief and despair, when a stranger came alongside who journeyed with them and helped them to understand events. After inviting him in and sharing a meal, they recognise who this is - the risen Christ. Their lives are transformed, and full of hope and joy, they travel back to Jerusalem with good news towards the rising sun blessed and enriched. When I look at how my life has unfolded I see many turning points where hope and a new direction have emerged from situations of darkness or despair. Some have been

dramatic, some gradual growth and

awareness. From my roots in England the

Spirit of God has always been present,

embracing me and coming alongside in troubled moments, waiting for the invitation to reveal God's self.

My childhood was loosely connected to the local parish church, 'Low' Church of England, my faith simple and uncluttered. Later as a teenager, 6 years at an Anglo-Catholic grammar school gave me a thorough grounding in doctrines, liturgy, ecclesiology and dogma, the creeds, the catechism, the 39 Articles of Faith. I understood how sinful I was and that believing without questioning was the way to salvation. I asked lots of questions but the standard answer was 'Christine, you just have to have faith.' How I obtained this faith remained a mystery.

As a young adult I chose freedom and adventure - it was the 60's after all! I rejected the church, it was of no use to me....except on the odd occasion when I would long for something holy, or sacred, or peaceful, and sitting in a quiet church gave a moment for reflection. For ten years I led an itinerant lifestyle, working in hotels as a book-keeper, for travel companies as a tour guide and any place I found myself where there was work for a season and new faces and places; London, the island of lersey. Paris. Geneva. the Swiss alps. the Italian lakes, Milan, Rome, Venice to name a few. It was a time of adventure and risk, restlessness and searching, learning about life, finding myself in some tight spots, growing up and learning responsibility. Religion had no place and although I could never deny the existence of God I didn't make the time or have the inclination to pursue it further.

With a voyage to Australia in 1971 came love, marriage and security. A nurturing relationship with Peter, (also a migrant), the birth of two children, and the death of both parents back in the UK, brought maturity and a place and time for reflection on the big questions of life. This was where the serious spiritual journey had its roots. At first it was tentative but over a period of about 6 years it developed into a serious yearning for understanding. In these years I revisited the Anglican Church in Australia, high Anglo-Catholic and the Evangelical wing. Neither of these satisfied. I sampled the Baptist and the Pentecostal no, not for me. I thought 'there must be somewhere where I can learn about God.' So that Sunday I walked into Blackwood Uniting Church – and the text for the day – 'the road to Emmaus.' I knew that day, 5 May 1984, that this was the place. I read the Basis of Union - what an inspirational document. I wanted to know more so I enrolled in a Lay Education Course. Little did I know that II years later I would be ordained as a Minister of the Word in the Uniting Church, having done five and a half years of theological training. Ministry took me to Elizabeth, the North East of England, Westbourne Park, Berri and Barmera, Port Pirie and Victor Harbor, and then to retirement and occasional short-term 'supply' placements.

So now I find myself in the progressive wing of Christianity, still asking questions, still learning and meeting fellow travellers on the journey, still looking to Jesus of Nazareth as my model for life, more aware of the spirit of love and life each day. God is so much more than I can ever adequately describe or understand, but now I know that 'getting it right' is not the purpose of faith

Let me finish with another chance encounter - this time in Sydney on a Friday night in 2006. I was walking past the open door of Pitt Street Uniting Church just as people were going in. Curious, I went in. That night I was blessed by the guest speaker, Amy-Jill Levine, an American theologian, a lewish woman who has made the New Testament her life scholarship. When asked why, having studied Jesus, she remained a lew she replied, 'Well, lesus was a lew!" and that being lewish is part of her being, her essence, who she is. In the same way Mohammed is a Muslim and I am a Christian. We are each being true to who we are but open to recognise each other as brothers and sisters of faith on the journey of life with the God we discover in our own particular paradigm.

Christine Garner

Reproduced with the writer's permission From PCNetSA Newsletter, May 2011.

Think on this

John Dominic Crossan calls the Emmaus road story

"the metaphor is condensation of the first years of Christian though and practice into one parabolic afternoon

And perhaps more helpfully

Emmaus never happened, Emmaus always happens"

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Exploring Doubt & Faith with Dr Val Webb

In this first session of the WINTER SERIES Dr Val Webb is interviewed by Rev Dr Christopher Page. These selected statements and paraphrases may whet the appetite for the following sessions with other theologians.

Experiencing Doubt

Val Webb recalls her early experience in the church with her family, doing Science at University, and all the way having questions, but trying to fit them into her belief system. She recalls herself, using Spong's statement, as a "God-intoxicated child." She says she would look for signals from God, looking at the stars, the sky, and the possibility of light coming down.

As technology became important and as she progressed in her scientific studies, the questions were there: Was Jesus God? How do we know the Bible is true? As she worked seriously on these questions she found herself taking the blame and thinking she would have to be a better person.

Her whole life was in the church..."everything I did was there". The whole struggle was, "How can I feel as confident about what people believe?"

In her book on Doubt she sees doubts as an intricate part of the Christian faith. For her it was a long process which involved trying to balance what was being said in a literal sense. She refers to a constant struggle. Everything had to fit into the belief system. It took a long time "to give myself permission to ask the questions...".

After going to America and a time of putting questions under the rug, she experienced "an epiphany": maybe doubt was a positive. In everything we do in life, we use doubt, moving us from status quo to fresh ideas....so maybe this was God's

Val Webb published "Doubt" in 1995 – the first book to address doubt. It seemed to give people permission to ask the questions.

Thinking Theologically

In responding to questions of lay people "doing theology", she says that it's important that we all do theology. Basically, all of us has a theology. Theology is talking about God - it's not really any more than that. Each of us has a theology whether we would spell it out

or not. What we need is for it to be encouraged, to grow, to evolve.

So, how can lay people move forward in thinking theologically? She says people need to be encouraged to do their own theology, to read books. To have everything hang out is a most freeing thing, being able to ask the big questions. We've grown up in a context where there have been questions which are acceptable to say in a group and some that are not. She notes that in any other field we would encourage people to open up all the questions.

In response to the question: People ask then - Is this just a thing in the head? Isn't it more to do with the heart? Val Webb suggests that we think about it as an arc. It starts in the heart.

She suggests that there is a difference in faith and belief. We can have faith, we can intuit faith in something bigger than ourselves, but belief systems then have to be adapted. Doubt is actually the catalyst between the two; it starts in the heart and then goes to the head to answer the questions that are in the heart. She says that she reaches a point, of "I can live with that". She talks about taking in information, composting it within self, that it takes time, leads to fresh ideas, is incorporated, and then gets to a stage where how we live is important.

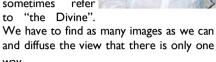
The conversation goes on to talk about prayer, re-imaging God, and the question, Who is God for you today? She recalls the images of an external God, a God out there and beyond, manipulating the world and that this doesn't work in a scientific age. She says that whatever we do with images and with anthropomorphic images, we have to get beyond these. We need images which have God as part of everything, in the centre, and this needs to be apparent in our God language.

She refers to Paul Tillich's terminology for God: "the ground of all being".

God has to be seen to be involved in everything across the universe, every moment... Science doesn't have to control what we say about God, but at least in a scientific age we need to have language..... She reflected on terms such as energy, life, breath - all metaphors.

Metaphor is very important in concepts of God, in ancient times picking up images from the contexts: in Hebrew times, "Father" meant the head of a clan, having a more organisational meaning than the modern term; the idea of "King" didn't come until later when there were more settled communities with kings.

So what would fit today i n metaphors to explain God? She says: So that's why I talk about God and our We universe sometimes refer



Rethinking the Bible

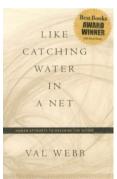
Val Webb says that we have to be very honest with ourselves. The Bible has been seen as inspired and not to be touched. Therefore all experiences have had to fit.

She says that it's like "putting an octopus into a bucket". It doesn't fit.

What follows in the conversation is informed and wisely provocative. It challenges us to consider the context in which we read the Bible, taking account of the strong differences in the culture and practices of the time.

As the study notes with the DVD say:

Val Webb said that the Bible is the story of a people in touch with God, told in their culture, their language and their experience. We need to tell the story in our culture, our language and our experience.



Some of Dr Val Webb's Publications

- Like Catching Water in a Net
- Stepping out with the Sacred
- In Defense of Doubt
- Why We're Equal: Introducing Feminist
 Theology



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Melva Freeman-Resthaven

30 Years of Volunteering Awarded

At the Resthaven Leabrook Volunteer High Tea, one of the Volunteer Years of Service Award recipients, Melva Freeman, was presented with a 30 year award. Many of you know Melva Freeman and her life of community work as featured in the Morialta Uniting Church project last year. To commemorate 30 years with Resthaven Leabrook, Melva was presented with a silver platter with her name engraved and 30 years of service, along with a 30 year badge and certificate. The Volunteer High Tea was an opportune time to recognise and celebrate with Melva, other award recipients and Leabrook volunteers. We congratulate Melva, thank her for her dedication, energy and spirit and support of Resthaven Leabrook all these years. This support has included active membership with the Leabrook Friends of Resthaven group, including the Shop Chattery, the Sunday Devonshire Tea afternoons including the roster coordinator extraordinaire and many fund raising events. This special lady is a most deserving recipient. Melva's family have been long associated with Resthaven and continue to do so, with her two daughters also volunteering with Resthaven.



Melva Freeman with Volunteer Dorothy Wilson, Resthaven Leabrook Volunteer High Tea



I don't roll in anything smelly and I try to keep myself clean, so why does Bruce want to give me a bath so often?

I guess I shouldn't complain, he does use warm water, but, it's WINTER! I know I go places that other dogs don't and I need to look my best at all times. After all, you never know when you will be on television, However, I hope I won't need another wash for a while.

I have worked out the signs and the other day, when he got the hose out I tried to make myself scarce. Unfortunately, he found me. I realize there is no point resisting so I went outside. If I stay still it is over pretty quickly, but have you ever tried not to shake with water tickling you?

Anyway, after he finished rinsing me off I got a little of my own back. Shaking myself dry all over Bruce! He needed the towel as well as me; well maybe not quite as much as me.

Before I go, I wonder if you could help me? When you see us would you mind telling Bruce how clean I look so he won't want to wash me for a while?

Keely



Netball Club Report

The Morialta Uniting Netball Club is now exactly half way through the Winter Season. This winter we have nine teams competing in the SA United Church Netball Association (SAUCNA) competition. Three of these teams play in the Open competition held at the courts on Anzac Highway. The remaining six teams play at suburban courts in the junior grades. This year we have one team in the 15 & under section, two teams in the 13 & under section, two teams in the 11 & under section and one new team in the 8 & under section. We currently have four teams that are in the top four in their grade with three other teams starting to move up the ladder after a slow start to the season.



Recently we had eight of our players attend trials for the SAUCNA representative teams and the results of the trials will be available in the next week or so. We wish the girls all the best in the attempt to represent the Association in the Combined Australian Netball Association (CANA) National Championships which will be held in Adelaide in October this year.

In May, Emily Johnson and Emily Dansie represented CANA in the 13 & under touring team in Fiji. Together with Jude Johnson (coach of the 15 & under CANA team) they had a wonderful experience which I am sure they would love to tell you about if you see them around the church. A good way to start the conversation will be to ask about the frog found in the sandshoes at customs on their way home!

The players really enjoy it when members of the church drop in to watch them so please feel free to come and watch a match or two or even spend some time at training. Open teams and the 15 & under team train at the church on Wednesday nights from 6.30pm whilst the remaining junior teams (and our development squad of 4-7 year olds) train on Thursday nights from 5.30-8.30pm.

I am sure that you will join with me in wishing all the teams the best of luck for the remainder of the season.

Sandy Barker

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Morialta Maep Over 80's Afternoon Tea Brian Corrigan captured the moon.



Guests shared precious pieces and stories.



Maurice Cundy and Mary Tugwell



15 May 2011

Holli Kate. baby daughter of Michael and Katie Freeman, and God-Daughter of Nicola Bury.



Adam Yearsley was Confirmed and the Congregation welcomed him into Membership on Sunday 11 June.



Jan Thornton was winner of the Lucky Door prize

Thanks to the Sponsors!



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URBAN MISSION NETWORK



From the Urban Mission Network Report to the Morialta Congregation

Gatherings are the Network's flagship event and there are four each year, hosted by our congregations and centred this year around the theme 'sharing resources'. Gatherings are for everyone, not just leaders, and are a wonderful opportunity to catch up with folks from other congregations and share conversations about what we're all doing and how we're doing it.

The first gathering for 2011 was held at Christ Church at the end of February. 'Putting legs on the Local' was the catchy phrase on which the challenge to congregations to ask themselves 'what is God doing at our place'. There were local stories about the Candlelight Reflection at Modbury and the cafe at Greenock provided practical examples of fresh expressions of ministry in those congregations.

The second gathering was hosted by Clayton Wesley in May. Our Christine Ostle was one of the speakers, not about her work at Morialta, but about the life and mission of the Glengowrie congregation where she is in Placement.

The paid Administrators who staff the offices in some of our congregations continue to get together ever three

months or so. This small group of women have developed strong bonds of friendship and support through these quarterly gatherings. Helena is an active contributor to this group.

Over 40 folk attended the workshop for Congregations with Heritage Listed Buildings. There are quite a few churches in South Australia that are listed in State and Local Heritage lists and their Property Committees face financial and regulatory challenges as they maintain, restore and use these marvellous old buildings for modern ministry. This workshop addressed some of those core issues and gave opportunity to hear from some experts and to share their own experiences. Mary and Rob represented Morialta.

Now, what's been my role in all this, what have I been doing? I'm the Network Coordinator and am paid for 20 hours work each week and I work some additional hours in a volunteer capacity.

I'm the first point of contact for the Network, so I answer enquiries and I keep congregations in touch with each other and the Network through the monthly Bulletin and the web site. I do most of the planning and all the fine-tuning for our events — receiving RSVPs, briefing host congregations, coordinating speakers, organising technical and any other support, and so on. I manage the Network's finances and support the

management team through the agenda and reports for our monthly meeting – perhaps you've seen us when we meet here over a Coffee Corner lunch.

I have the privilege of representing the Network on the Presbytery Pastoral Relations Committee and Placements Committee and I'm on the Executive of those Committees. As part of that role, I generally represent the Presbytery on Joint Nominating Committees when any of our congregations are seeking to fill a ministerial placement and, in the wider church, have been part of teams conducting a consultation into the life and mission of congregations. Morialta pulls its weight in the wider Church - Bruce and Diane have also worked on Joint Nominating Committees Consultations.

Once a month I worship with one of the other congregations in our Network – I've been to Pilgrim and Port Elliot so far - and this year I am engaged with one of the others in the management team in a coordinated program of pastoral conversations with our ministers.

I love my job! Yes, being Network Coordinator is a busy role, but oh so rewarding and life-giving..

Christine Secombe



On 21 May Melanie Clogg, daughter of Ray and Margaret, married Brant Newman of Whangerie, New Zealand, at Morialta. Rev Diane Bury officiated.

Margaret and Ray were the proud and gracious hosts and it was Morialta's pleasure to be the chosen venue for the celebration. Our hall was the stylish setting for the Reception, adorned with fairy lights and wonderful decorations: flowers, candles, balloons, streamers and lighting.

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Urban Mission Network

Introducing Rev Sarah Williamson

Synod's Solidarity and Justice Worker



In support of the Urban Mission Network's objective of encouraging each other to address issues of social justice, and in seeking to strengthen Network ties with the Mission Resourcing Network, the

Synod's Rev Sarah Williamson, joined the Network Gathering at Clayton-Wesley in May. We are pleased to introduce her further in Vision.

Sarah is a Deacon, married to Dave (Synod Multicultural Worker) and has two gorgeous boys, Kaden (3) and Jai (1). South Australian born and raised, Sarah did her training and the last ten years of her ministry life in New South Wales and Victoria. She has also trained in her other love, Family Therapy, and is an accredited Sleep Talk TM consultant, a self esteem program for children.

In her Solidarity and Justice role, Sarah is currently focusing on two major justice areas:

Refugees/Asylum seekers

There are many vital ways to be involved with Refugees and Asylum Seekers – there are so many families both in our community and in Inverbrackie who would love the opportunity and support of building relationships with Australians. Let Sarah know if you wish to get involved.

Mental Health

Sarah is working on a mental health campaign "It's no secret" that is about to be launched. She is developing a number of strategies for the campaign to target depression and suicide rates, in particular — but notably

the point that "We need to talk" about these very important issues that affect one in five people. All of us are affected by mental illness at some point in our life, be it through our own health or that of a loved one.

Stand by to a State Candlelighting amongst other things.

Sarah has also been working with other organisations on 'Welcome to Australia', a great initiative that is spreading love



and positive messages of welcoming diversity and multiculturalism.

We are invited to check out the website <u>www.welcometoaustralia.org.au</u> and register our own welcome "party" (lunch, meeting, morning tea, worship service, anything!) as a UCA welcome. Whilst this is suggested before Refugee week, June 19-26, we a Morialta may take such an opportunity shortly after that date.

If you'd like to engage in Justice goings on – please email swilliamson@sa.uca.org.au.

Sarah is keenly looking for those who wish to engage or even just be kept informed. She is also looking to set up task groups in other areas such as "Greening the church", "Ethical Investing" and "Fair trade". If you/we have a particular background/interest, we are encouraged to contact her.

Pastoral Partners Seminar - Beyond Blue

By 2020 Depression will be the second most common illness for the community to cope with', so says Reverend Mark Boyce.

Mark, who is working in Mental Health chaplaincy within the Uniting Church, spoke to a number of Pastoral Partners and other interested members of the congregation on June 5th.

While he usually conducts a course over a considerably longer period, Mark took the participants through a number of resources he has found helpful when dealing with people who suffer from this affliction recognized in our modern world.

Although the seminar was contracted it was obvious that Mark's knowledge and

experience has helped many people.

Of course, it is not everyone who is able to offer the sort of support that Mark gives, but the members of the congregation who attended the forum are at least a little more informed about the signs and symptoms of Depression. If not able to help themselves, they know where they might go to get support.

Our Pastoral Care Mission Ministry Team is keen to hear from any member of the congregation who needs special care. If you are aware of friends who are doing it tough please let one of the members of the PCMMT know so support may be provided.

Our Morialta Church Library collection includes texts about Depression, including some Beyond Blue publications.

Lorraine Powers, Morialta's Librarian, asked Mark Boyce for a list of texts and suggestions for those which may be especially helpful. Talk with Lorraine if you are interested.



Telephone: 1300 22 4636 www.beyondblue.org.au

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New Zealand's Trees



Helen Penhall writes ...

During May, Bob and I visited the Waipoua Kauri Forest in New Zealand.

Wow! What a breathtaking and awesome experience to stand in the forest before this magnificent living tree that is more than 1250 years old and called "Tane Mahuta" or "Lord of the Forest". It was a very peaceful and sobering experience as I grappled with thoughts of evolution, time and relationships. Indeed, I am now not trying to live life in such a hurry and am considering much more about relationship and interaction.

To add to this wonderful privilege, we then drove on to visit the Kauri Museum at Matakohe. We were surprised at its size, the displays and the volume of information at the museum. It was well worth a second visit the next morning to find out more, about the gum digging industry and the peat swamps and the secrets that they revealed.



Congratulations to Casey Sullivan!



Casey is the winner in the

Allans Music-Billy Hyde Junior Piano Competition which is contested in two age groups:

five to eight year olds, and nine to twelve year olds.

Casey won the five to eight year old section and the prize of \$500!

UNUNUNUNUNUNUN

The competition was run over two nights. In the first round twenty children

competed, each playing one piece. Six were then chosen to compete in the final on the following evening. At this time they played two pieces, not including the piece from the previous night.

A "reputable observer" considered Casey the clear winner, not only because she played her pieces better than the other competitors, although one boy was very good indeed, but because she played in an extremely musical way. Her personality was evident and she presented herself well.

interaction of the state of the

Sunday 24 July 2.00 pm

Choral Concert for your enjoyment

Tickets - \$12.00 - including Afternoon Tea

The Lobethal Harmony Club Inc.

Bl .. dy Cat!



Coco is excelling herself. She brought home another snake the other day. This time she was not seen bringing it inside, but was fiddling around on the floor, under the dining area curtain and, on inspection, there again was a smallish snake. She was quickly shut in the bedroom and the Village Management was summoned. The manager with the maintenance man and gardener arrived with two long-handled spades and some was heard to mutter "bl..dy cat!" The same snake catcher as before was called and arrived quickly, this time armed with a thick black glove and a

clear plastic box, into which he put the lively Eastern Brown, and explained that it was this year's baby, recently hatched but already with deadly venom.

Only \$50 this time! "Cheaper by the dozen?", we asked. After all the visitors and snake in box had left, our neighbour came in and we had a nice cup of tea.

On reflection, we felt "Bloody cat" was unnecessarily harsh. Did not our cat again deserve a medal? She risked her life to warn us that highly poisonous Eastern Brown snake existed in our environment and that we should be alert. Surely a sacrificial Christian act. She is indeed our Brave Little Huntress and only has seven lives left.

We are going to buy a supply of Jelly Snakes for the snake catcher's children, just in case.

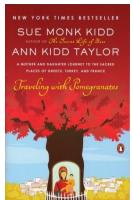
Jill Thompson.

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mustread

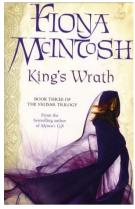
BOOKS TO SEE YOU THROUGH THE COLDER MONTHS



TRAVELING WITH POMEGRANATES

by Sue Monk Kidd and Ann Kidd Taylor

A mother and daughter journey to the sacred places of Greece, Turkey and France. A journey taken to rediscover and build a new relationship between a mother becoming an older woman and her daughter embarking on young womanhood.

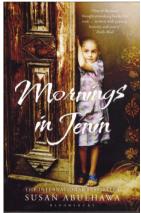


KING'S WRATH

by Fiona McIntosh

BOOK THREE OF THE VALISAR TRILOGY

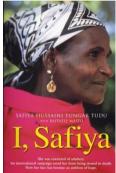
For those who enjoy fantasy here is the continuing story of Emperor Loethar and his enemy King Leonel. As the empire threatens to tear itself apart former enemies must now work on the same side and friends become the hunted to protect the imperial line.



MORNINGS IN JENIN

by Susan Abulhawa

Palestine. 1948. A mother clutches her six-month old son as Israeli soldiers march through the village of Ein Hod. In a split second her son is snatched from her arms and the fate of the Abulheja family is changed forever. Written from a place of pain, it takes us to the deep woundedness of the Palestinian people and permits us to share it with them.



I. SAFIYA

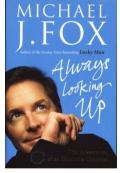
by Safiya Hussaini Tungar Tudu

Convicted of adultery, and facing being stoned to death, Safiya finds strength to fight for her life, to fight for justice, and to fight for the life of her little girl Adama.



by Geraldine Brooks

Brooks takes a shard of little-known history and brings it to life. In 1665, a young man became the first Native American graduate of Harvard. From the few facts of his extraordinary life, Brooks, creates a luminous tale of passion and belief, magic and adventure.



ALWAYS LOOKING UP

by Michael J. Fox

Written with a genuine wish to help others facing Parkinson's disease. He overcomes his own difficulties by looking on the bright side of things and "always looking up". He writes inspiringly with warmth, humour and incredible honesty.

LIBRARY FUNDRAISER!

SUNDAY II SEPTEMBER from 5.00 pm to 7.00 pm

I am getting excited already about our main fundraising event for the year. Following on from last years **High Tea and Literary Delights** which everyone seemed to enjoy I have been talking to the Library Committee about a similar event but including children this year. Pupils of *F Major Music* will entertain us and bring with them a musical and a literary delight and we will provide High Tea for them. Our Guest Speaker is Nina Corlett, a Christian Pastoral Support Worker (School Chaplain) who will talk to us about how books help children to grow, together with some "must reads" for children. I know it is a long way off but I don't want you to miss it! Please put the date in your diary now.

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Friday 5 August

DIARY DATES

Tues 21 June	Church Council	7.30 pm
Fri 24 June	PCNet/Gateways Winter Series at	7.30 pm
Sun 26 June	Pot Luck Tea	5.00 pm
Tues 19 July	Church Council	7.30 pm
Wed 20 July	Fellowship	7.45 pm
Sun 24 July	Mission Projects Concert Lobethal Harmony	2.00 pm
Sun 31 July	Pot Luck Tea	5.00 pm
Fri 5 Aug Sat 6 Aug	Music Hall & Dinner It's About Time	6.30 pm for 7.00 pm

Adults \$20
Children under 12 \$5
Three Course Dinner & Nibbles
BYO wine, soft drinks, fruit juice
Clock in from 6.30 pm
Take off 7.00 pm sharp
Morialta Uniting Church
26 Chapel Street Magill
Phone 8331 9344

Saturday 6 August



Deadline for August Edition 1st August 2011

If you would like to contribute an item, please send unformatted as Word documents either:

by email to the Vision Receiver, Sharon Mackenzie, (craig_sharon@picknowl.com.au).

Please do not format or use other software

OR

In hard copy via the Vision pigeon-hole
– please allow more lead time for word
processing.

To discuss ideas for Vision articles contact the editor.

Acknowledgements

David Purling for the cover photo of the waterfall.

Brian Corrigan and others for the numerous photographs in this edition.

Stories and texts from those identified throughout and all who have contributed in many ways to this edition.

Editor: Mary Thornley

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Living Streams ~ Giving Life



NAME LAREI