

David Purling writes ...

BRIDGES

I read a prayer, and was immediately transported back to Wales!

This was the first view we had of Thomas Telford's Pontcysyllte Aqueduct near Llangollen. The two 'dots' are people walking along the tow-path.



Our friends persuaded me to walk the whole length of the aqueduct. It was really cold and the wind was such that I kept a hand on the railing for the whole way both over and back. Another factor that made me hang on, was the sheer height of the structure, and looking down made me just a little nervous!

My friend was there to encourage me to complete the walk.



On the other side we discovered the story of Thomas Telford's Pontcysyllte Aqueduct.

The name is in the Welsh language and means "Cysyllte Bridge". For most of its existence it was known as Pont y Cysyllte ("Bridge of Cysyllte"). The

literal English translation of *cysyllte* being "junctions" or "links".

According to usual interpretation, the term *pontifex* literally means "bridge-builder" (*pons + facere*)

Christmas reminds us of Jesus, and the witness of the New Testament writers:

"Therefore, brothers and sisters, holy partners in a heavenly calling, consider that Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession..." (Heb 3:1)

and that as his followers

"we are a chosen race, a royal priesthood [bridge builders], a holy nation, God's own people..." (1 Peter 2:9)

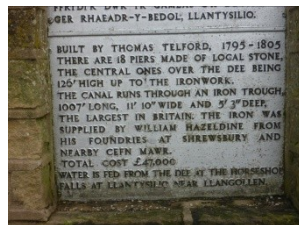
In thinking about Bridges, I thought about how we at Morialta are constantly making links in the way we encourage friendship, support and hospitality.

I conclude with the prayer:

"Heavenly Father, we give thanks for that vision which inspired Thomas Telford and others to build the bridges that helped communities to grow and society to develop.

Help us, as we face the challenges of today, to keep faith in your Son, Who spanned the gap between heaven and earth, and so to build bridges instead of walls in our broken world, for the sake of your kingdom. Amen."

Stephen Wigley, Wales Synod Chair



The Axial Age

It seems to me quite extraordinary that from 800BC to 200BC human kind developed self consciousness, a consciousness of their own existence. This laid the spiritual foundations of the great religions.

A German philosopher first recognized that this development had occurred simultaneously and independently in China, India, Persia, Judea and Greece.

Karen Armstrong, a learned theologian and historian, makes the Axial Age a point of discussion in her book, 'Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life'. She draws attention to the history of those times when thinkers such as Confucius, Buddha and the prophets of the Old Testament were trying to cope with the changes occurring, not least, the invention of iron which led to increasing aggressiveness. At a time 'When power was shifting from king and priest, palace and temple to the individual and the market place', they created the Golden Rule, 'do unto others as you would have them do unto you'

Dare we believe we could be entering a second Axial Age? I would like to think so. A new Adam? Are there signs? The internet and social networking, universal knowledge and globalization could be signs. If only an age could dawn bringing universal mindfulness and justice with us all going about our lives expressing compassion and actively discarding prejudices.

Christmas is a time to explore such hopes.

Arthur Tideman

Karen Armstrong's book, 'Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life', is available in the Church library

THE BRIDGE BUILDER

An old man going a lone highway,
Came, at the evening cold and gray,
To a chasm vast and deep and wide.
Through which was flowing a sullen tide
The old man crossed in the twilight dim,
The sullen stream had no fear for him;
But he turned when safe on the other side
And built a bridge to span the tide.

"Old man," said a fellow pilgrim near,
"You are wasting your strength with building here;
Your journey will end with the ending day,
You never again will pass this way;
You've crossed the chasm, deep and wide,
Why build this bridge at evening tide?"

The builder lifted his old gray head;
"Good friend, in the path I have come," he said,
"There followed after me to-day
A youth whose feet must pass this way.
This chasm that has been as naught to me
To that fair-haired youth may a pitfall be;
He, too, must cross in the twilight dim;
Good friend, I am building this bridge for him!"

Will Allen Dromgoole

From the Chairperson



I joked with somebody earlier this week that it didn't feel like June already, when it is, in fact, December! We say it every year, but it is true. Time is going more quickly and 2012 is no different to earlier years.

The challenge for us all is to do the best with this limited resource.

There is no doubting the benefit that comes to the community through time spent on the many activities that emanate from Chapel Street. Regular activities like Coffee Corner, Fellowships, Friendship, Paper Recycling and on and on, as well as the special events like *Just Kaleidoscopic* and the Tour, and all the many others

which provide opportunities for members of the congregation and beyond to enjoy fellowship and experience friendship.

Hospitality is an important characteristic of activity at Morialta. From the welcome we offer each other on Sundays to the generous contributions of food for special celebrations that come when requested, we show that we value each other and the connections we have with Morialta.

Christmas is an important time of connection. Most of us look forward to spending time with family.

I hope that you will all be able to enjoy that contact, but that you will also be able to find some time to spend on yourself, perhaps reflecting on the new understanding of the Divine that you have as a consequence of the messages of Peace, Hope and Love that we are fortunate to hear each week.

With the beginning of a new year there are many possibilities. May you find time for re-creation among the dreams that you have for the future.

Bruce.

Community Centre News



Christine Ostle, Community Centre Coordinator, writes

The Community Garden

Where does one begin to describe the large undertaking of the Community Garden?

A new community garden bed has been build at ground level and has been planted with zucchini, cucumber, corn and watermelons. A bollard has been erected in the middle of this plot. The bollard was painted in a joint venture between residents from ACH and students from Burnside Primary School, and supervised and funded by the Pepper Street Art Gallery. A new sign is soon to be erected on the garden's perimeter. An application has been lodged to incorporate. We have been visited by a number of people including Costa (from ABC TV) and the Premier, Jay Weatherill, and Grace Portolesi MP. SA Gardens magazine has learned about the garden and will feature a story in their February Issue. There is no doubting that the garden is placing our church before the local community in a new and exciting way.

Risk Management, Occupational Health and Safety, Managing Volunteers

Legislation in today's society makes many demands upon local communities about foreseeing risk and taking measures to prevent risk. Occupational health and

safety guidelines are much tighter than they once were. Volunteers now have a right to inductions and ongoing training. Liability at times of accident is vastly reduced if appropriate induction and training has taken place. I have constructed a draft Risk Management Matrix that the Church Council has adopted as a starting point to consider some of these matters.



We continue to rejoice that the Community Garden was initiated by our Community Centre, embraced and funded by Burnside Council, and now has its own Management Committee of which Christine is currently chairperson. A spectacular success, due in large part to Christine's vision, commitment and tenacity.

MISSION PROJECTS



The Mission Projects team would like to thank you for the wonderful support you have given to the fund raising this year. You have raised a total of \$4,768 which is to be sent to Synod office for distribution to Milne Bay Water Project, Women's Empowerment Project in the Solomon Islands, and Gaulim Teachers College in PNG.

Your attendance at Songs of Paul Kelly Cabaret, Kind - a -Blue Concert and the Pot Luck Teas have been much appreciated.

We also note the generosity of performers, "Summer Rain" and SAPOL Concert Band, who generously gave of their time and talents.

The Netball Club again contributed a significant total to our funds through the Mothers Day cake stall, as did your donations from cans and Mission Sunday.

A very big thank you for you care and concern for others.

Beverley Tredrea

Congratulations Christine!

on the award of the
Advanced Diploma of Community Sector Management.
Christine has successfully completed the extensive work required for this qualification.

Worship Reflection - Church Council**Happiness**

His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama (the current one) contends that 'the purpose of life is to be happy.'

Now let me confess straight up, I'm a big fan of happiness myself, mainly because it is so conducive to laughter, and laughter is scientifically and quantifiably proven to be one giant health kick. So it goes without saying, I'm right there. Laughter triggers the release of those delicious feel good endorphins, while simultaneously reducing the level of stress hormones. It even gives the internal organs a sweet little massage.

So happiness is a very attractive notion, and of course it is the critical ingredient that fuels much advertising, either overtly or covertly. I saw recently that I could put a spring in my step just by purchasing a designer shoehorn for the apparently reasonable sum of \$120. Personally, it would take the spring right out of my step if I had to pay that much! Domino's promise that a pizza with twice the cheese will deliver twice the happiness (until that is, it also delivers twice the heartburn, but they conveniently leave that bit out)!

And it's not just the advertisers who see a buck in the great yearning for happiness. Fridge doors and office walls are littered with magnets and posters that proclaim:

'Happiness is a fluffy kitten'

'Happiness is hot chocolate'

'Happiness is sunset over the sea'

'Happiness is a tidy desk'

'Happiness is waving goodbye to the in-laws!'

Yes, to a greater or lesser degree, the above might be happiness inducing, but such moments are usually transitory, caught in a flicker of time, wedged into the maelstrom of living. Indeed, to pursue happiness via external events, in material acquisition, in superficial contrivance, in a manipulation of circumstances, is to chase shadows, and dark shadows at that.

The dictionary definition of happiness is surprisingly bland. It notes first up that it is characterised by luck, good fortune, or contentedness.

Does this mean that happiness is more good luck than good management, dependent on the throw of a dice? Now we all know, because it is our experience, that all the luck in the world does not deliver a life that is just one big happy party. Indeed life is a rollercoaster: we peak and trough through joy, disappointment, pride, grief, anger, success, self doubt, fear, delight, hurt. Many of us are more than adept at piling up worry upon worry. (As an aside, we might do well to heed Charles Dicken's pithy observation "I've known a lot of trouble in my life, most of which never happened!"). The spectrum of our felt experience is infinite.

The Shorter Oxford eventually lights on the word 'blessed' as an antiquated meaning of happiness. Well, it may not be much in contemporary use, but it does carry for me a more complex and much richer resonance. It's certainly a word that inhabits the Bible, most memorably in the Psalms and in the Beatitudes (at least in earlier translations). It speaks of a happiness that is experienced deep within ourselves. But it also suggests it is like a gift, a happiness that comes from beyond ourselves, a happiness that brings an abiding contentment, a surety that no matter which part of life's rollercoaster we are on, God is with us. God is forever our rock, our fortress, our comforter, our mother hen, our strength, our solace, our 'ever-present help in trouble.'

As we move towards Christmas, we recall the nativity story, a story that starts out with not much happiness in sight. It is a narrative of young parents among strangers, cast out into the bitter winter's night, footsore, apprehensive, alone, birthing by a manger 'rude and bare.' Yet in that bleak, earthy, makeshift maternity room, God is present, present indeed as never before. In the dark, dank corners of the stable, in the joy of the newborn baby's cry, God is present.

Or as Paul so boldly wrote to the Romans:

"For I am convinced that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

In this are we truly blessed. In this lies a deep and lasting happiness that is ours to claim. Sometimes I could almost laugh out loud for the sheer joy of it!

Alison Lockett



**O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.**

Rejoice! Rejoice!

**Emmanuel shall come to
you, O Israel.**

**O come, O dayspring, come and cheer
our spirits by your advent here;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night
and death's dark shadows put to flight.**

Rejoice! Rejoice!

**Emmanuel shall come to
you, O Israel.**

MIGHTY MAGILL CHRISTMAS MARKET 2013

*To market, to market, to buy a fat pig,
Home again, home again, jiggety-jig.*

Well – we didn't have a fat pig stall – but most other things were there in splendour!

Our Christmas Market was a great success, enjoyed by many, show-casing Morialta to the wider community, giving opportunity for greeting and goodwill to those we would otherwise not meet, and offering hospitality in a burst of colour. Success extended to the strong financial outcome of \$8,500 – an important contribution to funding our mission and our goal to *let the light shine*.

This is, undoubtedly, the occasion of the most concentrated effort and activity of all-who-can in the church family. Everyone who could be there was there - having fun on the day and displaying entrepreneurial and PR skills, and great good humour. And the collaborations and camaraderie in the days, and weeks, of preparation gave the typical boost to our already strong community spirit and sense of belonging.

Market day is the day on which the most people from beyond the church family come into the building, via the Plant Stall and the Sausage Sizzle, and look comfortable to be there. Most seem to have a practised route, as they head in through the front door and to the stalls in the hall. But this year, they hesitated, many with a gasp of pleasure, on seeing the wonderful treats in the foyer. Gift Boxes of Love, and the Christmas Gourmet Goodies offered good solutions for Christmas gift purchases.

The Stalls in the hall used the additional space to great effect. The more expansive pathways seemed to encourage people to spend time exploring the goods for sale, talking with friends and trying out items for purchase.

The Cake Stall was stocked to the hilt and staffed with brilliance, to the tips of the tinsel halos. The Boutique had a huge amount of clothing – always an amazement – and the space to display and try items worked to advantage. Bric-a-Brac was once again a great miscellany of goods to tempt many tastes. Hopes of seeing just the right item for a particular purpose or person was an enticement for many. Books, books, and more books! A browser's and reader's delight. Christmas Gifts and Crafts had an expansive range of woodwork, beautifully sewn items, jewellery and, this year, children's clothing and toys. A great collection!

The Sausages Sizzled, and the Plants were sold on the forecourt, in the sunshine and shade, presenting a typically colourful market presence on the streetscape.

Morning Tea and Lunch of scones, freshly baked, as always, sandwiches and superb cakes, were served with a difference of style in the JK Café (*Just Kaleidoscopic!*), the church itself. This brought opportunities to enjoy again the decor from that 2012 production, complete with Purple People Eater, a *Sarah Retrospective* exhibition, Alison's art, wonderfully made quilts, crafts and beautifully produced items from our community groups, and with *Katrina's Music-on-the-side*. This new venture was deemed to be successful and enabled the greater space for the rest of the Market.

With a sense of *jiggety-jig*, or well planned management, the excess goods from the market were moved on to other outlets to

serve those who would benefit and enjoy them: Books went that very day to the Oxfam Book Shop, bric-a-brac and clothing was taken on Monday to Woodville Gardens U C Opportunity Shop, and sales of Gifts and Crafts have continued with considerable momentum at Morialta.

Again, let's celebrate this event, and the great efforts by all, our willing "volunteers", our whole church family!

We would be pleased to receive comments and suggestions for 2013, as they come freshly to mind while we enjoy the success of this year.



2011 National Church Life Survey

The Morialta Church Profile from the National Church Life Survey was an item for attention at the November Meeting of the Congregation.

Rev Diane Bury unpacked some sections, reflected on data, and shared some comments heard in the wider church. Prior to this, October's Vision showed the Summary of Moriata's Survey Results and two sections of the Snapshot. At the Special Meeting of the Congregation on 28 October we had a brief look at Snapshot elements.

Diane's Report in November

"Unfortunately I am not sure that the effort was rewarded by a significant amount of useful information.

One of the issues continues to be around language. Some of the phrases used are not part of the way we most naturally talk about our life together as a church or about our faith, and some interpreting needed to be done for most of us for at least some of the questions, and in talking to people afterwards it would seem that different people interpreted in different ways.

Some of what we learn from what is reported from the responses to the NCLS is supported by our own observations and by the Consultation Report undertaken this year, e.g. that we do not do very well at taking opportunities to nurture and share our faith; others seem at odds with those other observations and reports, e.g. NCLS does not seem to reflect worship as a strength, whereas the Consultation Report mentions how much the worship at Morialta is valued.

It can take a bit to interpret the reports from NCLS, too, to try and understand what they can and do tell us. The NCLS ranks each congregation on nine key characteristics, and compares our score to the average of all congregations who responded to the NCLS giving us a score between 0 and 10, where 5 is average. Our scores were average for Belonging; above average for Vision, Innovation, Leadership and Service; below average for Worship, Sharing Faith, Growing Faith and really, really below average for Inclusion, which is a puzzle until you look behind the report to the raw data and the question

that was asked: "If you knew someone was drifting away from church involvement how likely would you be to follow up on this?" I think I would be right in saying this is not what we would usually think of when we speak of inclusion.

The first method of reporting, a circular graphic, really just shows us the order of the scores for each of these characteristics; obviously something has to be the highest, something the lowest, and some things in between.

A second method of reporting shows us the change in score for each characteristic over last five years: the biggest improvement has been for Worship and Leadership and, surprisingly for Faith Sharing. The biggest drop is for Inclusion. Looking at these shifts can give us some useful information to reflect on, although more along the lines of pointing to some questions to ask rather than giving us answers.

Two of the questions gave us the opportunity to choose from a list supplied, which aspects of church life we most value, perhaps to be preserved or strengthened, and which aspects of church life we would most like to see given greater attention in the next 12 months.

Top 4 Aspects most valued

- Community care or social justice
- Practical care for one another
- Sharing in Holy Communion
- Preaching or Bible teaching

Top 4 Aspects you hope for and value

- Strong Community
- Nurturing worship
- Social action and aid
- Ministry to children and youth

It is worth noting that the second list does not necessarily mean that these things are not seen to be happening well already. In some cases the responses show that they are. These are the things that whether they are being done well now or not, that we believe we need to pay attention to as we move into the future.

There is some demographic information provided which includes the statistic that the average age of those who answered the survey was just under 70, which was lower than for many other UCA congregations.

There was a set of questions specially commissioned by the Uniting Church for congregations. It is interesting to see how typical we are, looking at two of these.

Firstly: *What are the most important aspects of being a Christian for you?*

For this question, two out of three of our top answers were the same as the wider church: Being part of a local church and Showing God's grace and love to others. But we swapped the wider church's Growing my relationship with God for Having values and a framework for living.

Secondly: *Which of the following aspects do you most like about the Uniting Church as a denomination?*

When it comes to what we value about the Uniting Church, even more so than the wider Uniting Church, we overwhelmingly chose Inclusiveness of all types of people. And for us Openness to different Biblical viewpoints, Willingness to try new forms of church are valued much more highly than in the wider Uniting Church in South Australia.

While it is interesting to explore and reflect on the NCLS report, as I said earlier, I am not sure that the amount of useful information we garner from doing so really honours the amount of time and thought that we all put into answering the survey. In four years time, I would encourage us to think carefully about whether we would choose to participate in the NCLS again.

And what does all this tell us?

Well, yes, there are things we could be doing better, in particular, like many Uniting Church congregations, we struggle with attracting children and young families, and we need to offer more opportunities to nourish and grow our faith, and to become more confident about sharing our faith.

It also tells us that there is much to celebrate about our life together at Morialta, including the emphasis on living out our faith through our focus on Social Justice, our shared sense of vision and our willingness to give new things a try (that's what innovation is about). What I know, from this report and beyond it from a variety of other sources is that Morialta is an active, welcoming, caring, inclusive and faithful congregation genuinely trying to live out God's love we see in Jesus, to be Living Streams Giving Life.

Rev Diane Bury



Listen to the Silent Night. Sing the Song of the Stars.



Property

Looking Back and Going Forward

2012 has been an outstanding period for Property development!

We've seen it happening! But to hear and read about it heightens our awareness of what has been achieved with the goodwill, skills and energies of the Property Team, augmented by several others in the congregation, and by sources beyond. There have been new developments and a myriad of maintenance tasks which support our safe and efficient activities.

As Chris Ayles, Leader of Property OMT, reported to the Congregation, there were around forty maintenance jobs



completed as well as the development projects described below. This began in January, progressing the building of the new storage shed and at the same time cleaning up and painting woodwork and walls in the Student Houses. During the year the ageing wallpaper in one of the Chapel Street rooms was stripped and repainted, with a much improved result. Installations on the church property included sensor operated lighting at the rear of the church, important for health and safety, rubber matting in the play area

of the rear building for Playgroup, a generously donated air-conditioner installed within, and the replacement of the stolen water heater. The material for the redeveloped pergola has now arrived and the work will be done shortly.

In the church the long-throw lens was placed with its necessary fittings, greatly improving projection and freeing-up the sanctuary area. In the hall we have been enjoying the clarity of the new projection screen, a wonderful new ceiling and lighting, and the ceiling trusses will be painted in January to complete the internal work. More recently the addition of the new roof is ensuring that leaking through



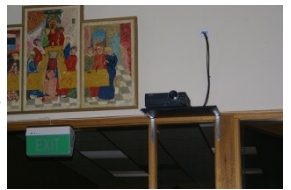
the old, deteriorating iron, will cease, no longer risking damage to the new ceiling tiles, and the insulation will bring considerable benefit.



At the front of the church the garden is flourishing and the new sign was installed in time for the Premier's visit for the Save the Murray forum. The seat by the foyer window, the outcome of a bequest from the estate of Glad Mason, provides a pleasurable resting place for many. Di and Ken Mason tried it out recently, with approval.

Amongst the maintenance list, not detailed, have been the constant repair works on all our properties, typically done with little notice and no fanfare. We are grateful!

To add to the long list of property improvements, Chris indicated a further generous offer - one to be welcomed and definitely not refused! The Square Dance Clubs, Wild Frontier and Kanella Squares, offered to install a new timber floor in the hall, at their expense and with their labour, supported by Morialta folk. It will be laid over a resilient base layer, completely covering the existing floor tiles. The folding doors into the Blue Room will be adjusted to allow clearance for the timber floor. These tasks are scheduled for immediately after Christmas, including the removal of the old cupboards on the northern wall, and the work will be completed in the week of 14 January. The new floor was initiated by the square dance clubs for reasons of health and safety and duty of care to their dancing members, and then considered and agreed by Church Council.



And – a note for your March diary, with the firm date yet to be given:

We hope you will join with others in the congregation in a social night with the Square Dance members, either participating in the dancing, or enjoying it with onlooker status. This will enable us to say *Thank you* and to contribute to Supper.



O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

One of the loveliest old carols still sung all over the world is 'O Come, O Come, Emmanuel'. A popular hymn, it dates back to the 9th century and is especially important in Catholic church celebrations and represents different biblical roles of Jesus. With the universal nature of faith presented, it crosses from a Latin hymn sung at masses to a carol translated into many languages being embraced by every Christian denomination.

The writer of the carol is unknown but he was probably a monk or priest who would have penned the words before 800 AD. He would also have been a scholar with a rich knowledge of the Old and New Testaments. When the hymn was completed, it was soon taken up by many European churches and monasteries to become an important part of church life.

Many people of the Dark Ages did not read or have access to the Bible, so song was a fine example of how the Old and New Testament views of the Messiah came together in describing the birth and life of Jesus.

'O Come, O Come, Emmanuel' brought the story of Christ the Saviour to the people through the dark centuries of ignorance and now ranks as a most important song in the history of Christian faith.

Based on the writings of the book 'Stories behind the best loved songs of Christmas'.

Found by Dale Corrigan.



Paws for thought ...

Of course, that means that I won't be able to get out as much, but that is just one of the sacrifices I am prepared to make.

Well, it has taken a long time, but, I've finally got them working together. I don't know. They are alright at home, but when we go out they never seem to be in the same place at the same time. It takes a lot of my time to keep a check on them both.

It's bad enough when I take Bruce out by himself!

Fortunately, I will have some help from early next year.

Now that I have trained Bruce properly I will be able to leave him in Wallace's care and concentrate my efforts on Anne.

I hope I get a chance to see my friends at Morialta from time to time. I'll have to get Anne to bring me to church some time.

Anyway, I will still keep in touch. I'm not sure if Wallace can write. So I will be staying on as your Pup Reporter!

Have a good Christmas. I will. I get a roast dinner on Christmas Day!

KEELY



Membership Welcome, Colin!

The Morialta Congregation received Colin Sampson into its Membership on Sunday 25 November. Colin's membership was transferred from the previous Maughan Uniting Church and he has been worshipping with us for sometime. He was introduced by Elder, Chris Ayles, received by our ministers, Rev Diane Bury and Rev David Purling, and greeted by Elders on Church Council. We all join in welcoming Colin into this church family and assure him of our support as a member.



Kangaroo Island Idyll

Enjoyed by all in every way – scenery, company, cuisine, and with warm leadership and tour guidance by Bev Tredrea



Morialta Magpie



Jesse!
Happy 16th Birthday.



Congratulations Barry!
Happy 70th Birthday!



Jordan - A Kingly presence!



Erin and Paige - Thank you for
leading in Worship.



What a clown!

Phil Johnson starred in the Community CPS Credit Union pageant - accredited with a Diploma of Clowning on completing the Clown School course! Who said that clowning was not a serious matter!

Lighting of the Loving Tree at Mary Potter Hospice
Morialta's Harmony Choir members, Anne Ind and David Purling were singers and presenters.



For Dot Adams at Gleneagles
A loving message from the Morialta family - a quilt by Judith.



Carols in the Car Park

Games, Sausage Sizzle, Readings and Carols
First Sunday in Advent
Enjoyed by many including folk from St Edwards and Clayton-Wesley





In the November Bulletin of the Urban Mission Network the Rev Alan Biglow was celebrated as a minister in the Network. The statement of introduction:

Rev Alan Biglow has served in rural, suburban and urban churches in North America and Australia. He is currently minister at Enfield UC and is a member of the Stillpoint Spirituality Centre Ministry Team.

His interests include Russian and South Australian history, the Arts, Cricket and fulfilling all whims of the family dog.

As a former minister at Morialta, Alan holds a special place in our hearts.

Alan writes ...

A recent meeting of a Council of the UCA was perhaps the most intense I had experienced in over twenty years. After a particularly harrowing session, which was filled with a constellation of negative feelings, a convenor of a working group got up to present their report and began by cracking one-liners. That leader had wisely intuited that the Council needed the healing power of humour in order to conduct its work in a positive way. The mood immediately began to lighten.

Fun and laughter are divine graces that can be lost in the serious business of mission and ministry for all sorts of reasons. Several years ago an elder from the Woodville Gardens Church had a go at me for using humour in worship. In his view Jesus never laughed – he was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief". But I wonder if Jesus could have survived three years in ministry without quite an amazing sense of humour. Imagine him keeping a sombre face as he watched the headwaiter at the wedding at Cana as 2400 litres of vintage wine showed up out of the blue; or the tax collector Zacchaeus climbing out on a limb in his Armani suit; or Peter with his foot in his mouth one more time; or in his telling a bad joke about a camel going through the eye of a needle. Imagine Jesus looking stern when the children came for a cuddle, or with a sad or judgmental face on when he was at the parties he

frequented so often he was accused by the good religious folk of being a drunkard and glutton. No, Jesus was not accused by his enemies of being a bore, but of being too dynamic and filled with life to be safe.

So we don't need to feel guilty about humour which is one of the components of abundant life. Isn't it interesting though, that when Christians get together to have fun we're often tempted to begin and end in prayer and perhaps have a mini-sermon in the middle! It's like fun on its own might be suspect. John Wesley would have disagreed. He was once walking into London and said to a companion that he felt the conversations held while travelling to be a waste of time. But then he went on to say but "sour godliness is the Devil's religion".

We're not talking about a laugh a minute or one unbroken good time here. Wise humour is the ability to laugh about ourselves as over-earnest people, with a lightness of heart, as we journey this serious and sometimes risky way before us. And we need to remember that sharing in Christ's abundant life is no selfish exercise, and will never really happen, until we travel with those whose dreams for life have become a nightmare. For the promise of eternal life is for all, and having received the blessing ourselves we are to offer it to others that their joy, and our joy, might be full now and forever.

There was once a Professor of Church History at Yale Divinity School who was dying. His family was gathered about the bed and one of them said, "I think he's dead". "Check his feet", another said. "They're still warm". "Well, no one can die with warm feet", was the reply. Then the professor stirred a bit and said, "Joan of Arc did." He gave a chuckle and died.

Sylvia G. Dunstan's hymn embodies this hope and vision:

*"O Laughing Light, O first-born of creation
Radiance of glory, light from light begotten
God self-revealing, holy, bright and blessed,
you shine upon us."*

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Multicultural and Cross-cultural Ministry - Uniting Church SA

For a wonderful 2012;
for all your support & involvement, prayer, practically,
and financially...

e Banjdit ye lesh
(thanks be to God!)

*May your Christmas be filled with
much love and joy, and 2013 be
birthed with great peace and hope.*

Dave Williamson
08 8236 4215 - dwilliamson@sa.uca.org.au

OMission
Uniting Church. **Uniting People.** Resourcing SA

**A message from
Dave Williamson, Mission Resourcing
SA**

**May your Christmas be filled with
love and joy, and 2013 be birthed with
peace and hope.**

**So many wonderful things have happened in
our life as a cross-cultural church in 2013.**

**Thank you for your part in realizing this
continued vision for the Uniting Church.**



From the Librarian

Dear Readers,

As this time of Advent comes to an end and the year of 2012 slips by, I rejoice at the birthing of an idea. The idea of "Library Helpers" and a whole new way of running the library is now in operation and working successfully.

I give my thanks to the Library Helpers and to members of The Library Committee for all that they have done to make this a successful year. I look forward to next year and a continuing growth of our library ministry at Morialta.

*On behalf of the library committee
I extend to you joyous Christmas Greetings
and a Happy New Year.*

Will the library be open for Summer Reading borrowing?

Yes, the library will be open on all Sundays during December and January. The Library is also open for After Hours Borrowing, but note that the Church Office will close on Friday 21 December and reopen on Monday 21 January 2013. So – make your selections for holiday reading in good time and when there is opportunity!

Just fill in the "After Hours Borrowing Book"

NEW AUDIOS

BBC EARTH – DAVID ATTENBOROUGH WILDLIFE COLLECTION
Kindly donated to the Library by Barry and Margaret Peckham

NEW DVD'S

SHE – WOLVES – ENGLAND'S EARLY QUEENS
SHAUN THE SHEEP – *Spring Lamb*
THE NOTEBOOK – a love story
MY SISTER'S KEEPER (Based on the novel by Jodi Picoult)
A TOWN LIKE ALICE
FREE WILLY – "The most rousing family adventure since E.T."
SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON
IT'S ABOUT TIME – Morialta UC Music Hall Production August 2011

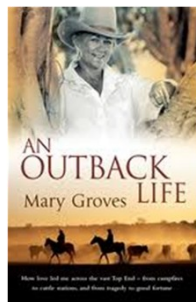
FOR FURTHER SUMMER READING REVIEWS PLEASE SEE THE WEBSITE

www.morialtauca.org.au

Summer Reading Guide

Many thanks to members of the Library Committee for writing these book reviews.

Biographies/Memoirs/Travel

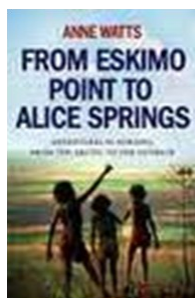


AN OUTBACK LIFE

by Mary Groves

A traumatic introduction sets the scene for an adventure filled story of a young Mary following a charismatic Joe Groves – horse breaker, drover, champion rodeo rider – into the Northern Territory outback. An indomitable woman, she spends forty years with Joe working extremely hard, for basic wages and enduring harsh living conditions. Gradually they get to a stage where they own their own stations. Whilst doing all of this they manage to raise four children,

Jenny Barabas



FROM ESKIMO POINT TO ALICE SPRINGS

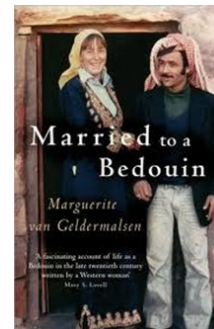
by Anne Watts

Adventures in Nursing from the Arctic to the Outback

This is a very readable autobiography by a caring and sociable person who gained an appreciation of the plight of indigenous people around the world during her highly professional working career. She dips intermittently into family background, beginning in Snowdonia, Wales, in the 1950's and there is some pure travel description, such as visiting India and the Himalayas, and joining a yacht to cruise from Los Angeles to Florida via Panama.

Of special interest to Australians are comments on the lot of Aboriginal people while she worked in the Alice Springs hospital in 1973 and revisited in 2009.

Bryan Forbes



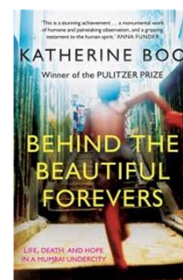
MARRIED TO A BEDOUIN

by Marguerite van Geldermalsen

The story of Marguerite a New Zealander who in 1978 meets then later marries a Bedouin souvenir seller from the historical site of Petra in Jordan. She lives with him in his 2000 year old cave carved into the hillside until the tribe is relocated in the mid eighties.

The book gives an interesting account of day to day life of the Petra Bedouin. Marguerite becomes part of a community very different to what she has been used to, with no electricity or running water, She learns to cook over fires, haul water on donkeys and learn Arabic. She becomes a resident nurse, and gives birth to three children. This is the story of an amazing woman.

Miranda Clarke



BEHIND THE BEAUTIFUL FOREVERS

by Katherine Boo

A Biography of Bombay

"Midnight was closing in, the one-legged woman was grievously burned, and the Mumbai police were coming for Abdul and his father. In a slum hut by the international airport, Abdul's parents came to a decision with an uncharacteristic economy of words. The father, a sick man, would wait inside the trash-strewn, tin-roofed shack where the family of eleven resided. He'd go quietly when arrested. Abdul, the household earner, was the one who had to flee."

This landmark work of narrative non-fiction tells the dramatic and sometimes heartbreaking story of families striving toward a better life in Annawadi, a makeshift settlement in the shadow of luxury hotels near the Mumbai airport.

Lorraine Powers

Love came down at Christmas,
Love all lovely, Love divine;
Love was born at Christmas,
Star and angels gave the sign.

Worship we the Godhead,
Love incarnate, Love divine;
Worship we our Jesus:
But wherewith for sacred sign?

Love shall be our token,
Love be yours and love be mine,
Love to God and neighbours,
Love for plea and gift and sign.

Christie Georgina Rosetti



DIARY DATES

2012

Blue Christmas

A time to pause and remember
Tues 18 Dec 7.30 pm

Fri 21 Dec Church Office closes 12.00 noon

Christmas Eve Worship – *Listen to the Silent Night*

Mon 24 Dec 7.30 pm

Christmas Day Worship – *Singing the Song of the Stars*

Tues 25 Dec 9.00 am

2013

Sundays in January Worship 9.30 am

Mon 21 Jan Church Office re-opens

Sun 27 Jan First Newsletter 2013

3 February Worship 8.15 and 9.30 am resumes
February Community Centre Programs resume

During January

The office will closed until 21 January.

A time for property projects and administrative organization.

Urgent administrative requests by phone or email.

Pastoral matters to Rev Diane Bury & Rev David Purling.



Acknowledgments

David Purling for the cover photo of the waterfall.
Brian Corrigan, Dale Corrigan, Chris Ayles and Helena Begg for numerous photos in this edition.
Stories and texts from those identified throughout and all who have contributed in many ways to this edition
Editor: Mary Thornley
Graphic Design: Val Di Girolamo

Deadline for the next Edition

1 February 2013

To discuss ideas for Vision articles contact the editor.

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Living Streams ~ Giving Life

