

# Morialta Vision

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### From the Minister

#### A Christmas Reflection and Prayer

The Christmas story is very simple: it tells of a birth, the birth of a first child to poor parents with an uncertain future. So what is it about the story that holds such appeal, that has allowed so many other stories and traditions to grow up around it? Why does it have such a place in our hearts?

Perhaps it has to do with the way it taps into our deepest longings, those things we desire that can help us cope with just about anything: love and trust.

There is much generous love in the story, and with it a sense of wonder that God could be so intimately involved with something so simple. Shepherds are amazed, wise men are humbled and a young woman treasures all these things in her heart.

In the midst of the love we are all invited, just like the people in the story, to trust that God is here and cares deeply as each of us deals with the joys and sorrows, the hopes and disappointments of everyday.

This story affirms that we all have a value and a unique dignity, that lifts us up and empowers us to move beyond ourselves, and to take the risk of reaching out to others, always trusting that God is present in the simple stuff.

On a personal note, Lachlan and I would like to pass on our very best wishes for you and your family and friends. Thank you for the love and support you have shown us both, as we have settled into our new family here at Morialta. We look forward to the coming year and all that will unfold in our journey together.



Lord,

*As we celebrate another Christmas*

*Help us to live each moment gratefully*

*May we have the faith to trust in the gifts you have given us*

*May we have the hope that overcomes the dark thoughts that sometimes cloud our vision*

*May we have the love that makes our world a better place.*

*We make this prayer through Jesus our brother, born for us again in Bethlehem. Amen*

With love and blessing

Rev Steve



## Worship with the children

The children led us in a Christmas worship service, re-telling the story of the birth of Jesus, our Saviour coming to us as an infant, through a short nativity play, song, prayers and reflections. They helped us to celebrate the event with the angels who sang praises to God; to reflect on the event with Mary who

pondered on what had occurred; and to reflect on the event with the shepherds who went out telling others what they had seen and heard. Christians reflect Jesus, the Light, when they stay close to the light source, and when they demonstrate the attitude and actions of Jesus. The children used mirrors to reflect light, symbolising letting their light shine in front of others."



Merry Christmas  
And  
Happy New Year



**David's Musings...****It's December already!**

I remember one Christmas Day when we were having Christmas lunch under our apricot tree. It was a hot day, and reasonably pleasant under the shade of that apricot tree. But then something happened that really attracted our attention.

There was a willie-wagtail nest in our tree, and our eyes were inextricably drawn to what was taking place. There was a willie-wagtail. And then we saw to our great delight, that this was a mother and she was about to teach her 2 little babies to fly the nest.



There was a fairly new baby peeping out of the nest. As we continued to observe nature taking its course, we happily watched mother willie-wagtail teaching her chicks to fly. One of those little chicks was very nervous and tentative and teetered on the edge of the nest before 'taking the plunge'. Meanwhile, the mother flew from that nest in our apricot tree, to another tree in our garden, to encourage the chicks to follow and learn to fly. The other chick didn't take long to catch on.



And here they are, both arriving on the tree they had planned to land on. Well I remember that Christmas day of 1995.

Perhaps seeing the mother's patience and determination was a great symbol of what the day was about anyway.

A blessed Christmas to you.

*David Purling*

**Church Quiet Area**

It has been happening for centuries that people have been finding quiet sanctuary in their church. It has been happening over the years at Morialta too. People have used the quietness of the Church to contemplate in their situation.

Beginning from February 2015, the aim at this time is to have a specifically designated quiet space within the Church. This can be used by anybody as a quiet area to pray, to just think, perhaps to meditate, to read the Bible, or to read or reflect on a recent service or something else perhaps from the

Church library, to light a candle for someone or something, or even to talk.

The Quiet Space will initially operate each Sunday for approximately 30 minutes immediately after the conclusion of the 9.30 am Service. The area to be used is the eastern transept where the 8.15 morning Service is held. It will be centred round the communion table there. There will be a resource person available in support if needed.

If this can be helpful for you, you are very welcome to use this space.

*Worship & Faith Education Team*

**Advent Celebration****WALKING TO BETHLEHEM**

This year our carol singing was preceded by Messy Church with about 10 children enjoying their interpretation of the Nativity. We gathered on the front lawn of the student house for a sausage sizzle and then a program of carol singing and poems by Ann Weems. This was led by Bruce Ind and the group from Worship & Faith Education. We collected many pairs of



shoes which have been delivered to Soles 4 Souls at Port Adelaide Uniting Care to be sent to Tanzania in Africa to improve health and increase opportunities for education. Many thanks to those who contributed to this very pleasant evening.



*Bev Tredrea  
Worship & Faith Ed. Team*

**Away in a Manger**

Away in a Manger is always one of the first songs Christians will teach children in Sunday School and church. Little ones are able to learn the lovely simple tune and three short verses quite easily. The carols lyrics paint such a beautiful and serene picture and define 'Peace on Earth' more expressively than a sermon.

In 1887, James R Murray, an American hymn writer called the tune to 'Away in a Manger' Luther's Cradle Hymn. He also stated that Luther had written 'Away in a Manger' and sang it to his children. It's a mystery where Murray obtained this misinformation but the story stuck.

Two years before the song was published it appeared in the Lutheran Little Children's Book listing no songwriter for the words and the tune had been provided by J. E. Clark

However, probably the first two verses were written by an anonymous American in the mid 1880's and passed orally for years before being published by the Lutheran Church.

In 1892, a man called Charles Hutchinson Gabriel was music director of Chicago's Grace Methodist Episcopal Church and wrote many hymns. He came upon the original 'Away in a Manger' and then an unknown version with a third verse and published this new edition in his hymn book Vineyard Songs.

In 1945 Richard S. Hill, an American writer was sorting through old carols and determined that Murray was given the song and adjusted it for his book and was probably told the story about Martin Luther.

Sadly the unknown songwriter didn't live to see the song reach children around the world, yet while the origin remains a mystery, the song's message is so profound and strong and has become one of the worlds' much beloved Christmas hymns.

*Contributed by Dale Corrigan,  
adapted from Stories behind  
best loved songs at Christmas  
by Ace Collins.*



## In the Bleak Mid Winter

Come Christmas, we Australians are keen to make the Christmas story our own. We have wallabies hopping, kookaburras laughing and platypuses swimming. We have the north wind tossing the leaves, and drovers driving cattle across dusty plains. There are lizards crawling and cockatoos squawking. I wrote a carol once just like this. Indeed, who hasn't sweated through a hot Christmas Day, swotting away the flies and wondering why the family hasn't Australianised its menu as well!



At risk of being labelled an arch traditionalist, I do though sometimes long to sing carols like the one that begins "In the bleak mid winter." This is not just because there is more than one lovely tune to be sung to the text, nor is it to do with the sensitive, poetic quality of Christina Rossetti's well-known words. Somewhere in seeking to contextualise the Christmas story within our own particular cultural setting, I think that sometimes we have been at risk of throwing the baby out with the bath water. I realise this is a big call, but I nevertheless want to reflect on it.

As we read the story of the nativity in Luke's Gospel, we read not a story that is to be taken in every literal detail, but rather words that paint a beautiful multi-layered picture. Its poetry evokes a truth far more eloquent than the bare facts could ever conjure. The eternal mystery of the Divine come to earth is caught in images and shaped in metaphor. When, several centuries after the birth, the celebration of the high points of the Christian year were placed into the Julian calendar, the

metaphor was expanded, albeit probably inadvertently. For the Christmas story now came to be read in December, around the Winter Solstice, when in Northern Europe at least, winter had well and truly settled upon the earth. Daylight hours were few, the nights were endlessly long, dark and bone chillingly cold. People were hemmed in and isolated, deep snows covered the ground and chill winds moaned through bare-branched trees. Life became a struggle to keep warm, to find food, indeed to sustain life.

*In the bleak mid-winter,  
frosty wind made moan  
Earth stood hard as iron,  
water like a stone.  
Snow had fallen, snow on snow,  
snow on snow,  
In the bleak mid-winter,  
Long ago.*

Into this context of a dark, cold, fearsome, lifeless world came the celebration of the birth of the baby Jesus, to be the light of the world. The stark contrast could hardly be more powerful. Light into darkness, hope re-kindled from despair. A new seed, a life-giving seed is planted into the hard-earthen heart of humankind. The warm embrace of God's love is given, to thaw the chilled spirit of the unlovely, the unloved and the un-loving.

Maybe an equivalent imagining for Australians would be to focus on the harshness of our summer. Throbbing gibber desert, ferocious gumtree fuelled fires, searing heat, prolonged drought, dusty paddocks denuded of their topsoil: all these are part of Australia's intimidating, unpredictable, life-sapping summerscape. The isolation and danger inherent in this may then present an alternative metaphor for the coming of the Baby Jesus. Rather than name Jesus, as the coming light of the world, we could pick up on another of the beautiful images captured in John's Gospel. Our Advent story might then welcome into our parched and crackling land Jesus as the wellspring of life, the living water, the life-giving stream, come to quench our thirsty souls and to revive our arid spirit.

Whichever contrast speaks more evocatively to us, this all becomes a secondary consideration, for as Christina Rossetti's carol concludes, its message opens out. Its words speak to all, no matter the time of year, the climate, or the location. All can grasp the overwhelming beauty of this nativity story, whether we are in ski boots or thongs. We can respond to the great love of God expressed in this story of humble birth in lowly manger, whether the sky is filled with falling snow or a clear blue infinity.

*What shall I give him,  
poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd,  
I would bring a lamb.  
If I were a wise man,  
I would play my part.  
What shall I give him?  
Give my heart.*



### In our sun-bleached summer

*In our sun-bleached summer  
Scorching wind that blows,  
Searing fire wreaks heartbreak,  
Bitter squark the crows.  
Dust whipped high,  
the paddocks bare,  
Dust on dust,  
In our sun-bleached summer  
Burnt and cere.*

*Into this harsh landscape,  
Breaks a baby new,  
Love within a hay shed,  
Recognised by few.  
Through the crackling,  
throbbing heat,  
God's love beams.  
In our sun-bleached summer,  
Living streams.*

*Alison Lockett*

### MISSION PROJECTS

The team would like to thank the people of Morialta for their generosity this year. A cheque for \$3600 has been sent to be divided between establishing a local school in Lingbong North India so that children can receive an education safe from human trafficking, kindergarten furniture for pre-school children in Tonga, and an education program in Baguio City

slums, in the Philippines, using trained personnel from our local church partner. You have given generously and our gift has been sent with love and compassion.

We are considering projects for next year and would love to get your comments. Our plan is to support the work of Frontier Services in Broken Hill, a peace building program in Ambon Indonesia with Muslim and Christian volunteers working in 23

peace making workshops in Ambon, working with the Methodist Church in Suva Fiji supporting education in the Nanuka Squatter Settlement.

We again look forward to your support and wish God's blessing on you all. May Christmas this year bring a renewed sense of wonder and joy.

*Beverley Tredrea  
for Mission Projects Team*

## EVOLUTION

When I was first introduced to evolution I learnt about Darwin and his finches on the Galapagos Islands and in practical classes I learnt more as I experimented with *Drosophila* Flies. After later reading I added fossils, Dinosaurs and DNA to my knowledge of evolution. Now I realise that even evidence evolves so that in my lifetime evolution has become known to cover all universal life. Say, 'Evolution' and I say, 'Universe, science, culture, human consciousness, wisdom, or to quote modern theologians, 'The ground of my being.' It seems to me that since the universe began 13.7 billion years ago, evolution has meant us and life on earth, to be and I believe that life is the expression of God.

Many people say it just happened. Others believe that God created all life 6000 years ago. For me the expression of God is life but hard to grasp when the scale of evolution covers the Universe down to our minute genes. I believe evolution can be known on an everyday scale.

For example, a month or so ago I travelled from Adelaide to Kimba on the Eyre Peninsular, a distance of nearly 500km through the productive cereal belt and into the pastoral areas. For much of the way green crops spread before me at least as far as Nectar Brook. The scene had evolved from the early 1950's when I first drove that way to work when the West Coast was still being opened to farming. Then the landscape was restricted to rather sparse, weedy wheat and barley crops on often eroded paddock and vast areas of mallee scrubs. Now the genetically improved, highly productive crops of cereals, oil seeds and pulse crops stretch as far as the eye can see. That for me is a sign of evolution and God within my grasp.

*Arthur Tideman.*

## From the Chairperson

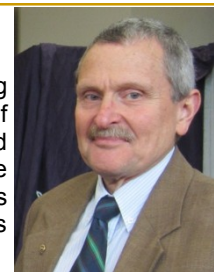
Do you feel like you are constantly living with challenge? If it's not your health it's your family, if it's not your family it's trying to get rid of those last few grams that will not budget particularly at this time of the year. And so it goes!

On top of all those challenge's there are those questions of Faith that continually exercise our minds and hearts. What is the true meaning of Christmas? How should I respond to the commercialization of Christmas and cope with the stunning lack of reference to Jesus and the Nativity in the popular media? These are just two questions that occupy me at this time of year.

And then there is the big question. How should I respond to all that I have come to know about the birth, life and death of Jesus in the light of present social context within Australia and beyond?

Fortunately, I belong to a caring community of Christ, like you, that gives permission to ask questions and share concerns. The questions may not be the same for everyone and the answers probably will be different depending on all sorts of things, but hopefully there will be

an ever-deepening understanding of each other and ourselves as we share our concerns and questions together.



Yet another challenge that faces us in 2015 is the gap between our expected expenditure and income. While there have been some actions taken to decrease the deficit members have been encouraged to consider their giving with the possibility of increasing it by at least 10% so that Morialta may achieve a balanced budget and continue to exercise its Mission. I encourage you to consider this further challenge and respond, as you are able.

Finally, regardless of the challenges and the questions that may exercise you, I pray that you experience the Hope, Peace, Love and Joy of this season through the relationships that you share with your families, your friends and your God.

*Bruce Ind*



## Jan The Jam Lady writes...

I suddenly find I have a new persona! Lorraine has given me the dubious distinction of calling me "The Jam Lady", which comes with the responsibility of making sure jams and other goodies are produced for sale to support the library.

Some wonderful ladies have produced a steady stream of quality products for a long time, but it would be great if more people would come forward to help in this endeavour. It doesn't have to be an onerous task—if you are making jams and preserves for yourself perhaps you could make a few extra for the library.

If you can help or are looking for some recipes then Jan would love to hear from you on 8431 5132. Jams, jellies, pickles, conserves, sauces all welcome to help raise funds for new books and materials for the library. Please label the jars, including a list of ingredients.

*Jan Thornton*



## Community Centre News

Play group has continued as a strong ministry all year with new parents and children joining regularly. Jackie, our Playgroup Coordinator, began the year by undergoing shoulder surgery and then later in the year had a baby. We have been fortunate to have new volunteer helpers, particularly after Jackie left. During the year a creative new way was found for providing morning tea with volunteers preparing goodies and leaving them in the Kooka Room fridge before Playgroup. This has resulted in the mothers continuing to get home baked food and our busy volunteers are able to provide the morning tea in a timeframe

that suits them. The Playgroup celebrated their 10<sup>th</sup> Birthday with a party which was a great success. Face painting and shaped balloons added to the fun.

Conversational English Groups commenced on Sunday mornings and have been highly valued. Many thanks are extended to Margaret Cargill for coordinating a great team of enthusiastic facilitators.

The expo was a successful event with fifteen exhibitors appreciating the opportunity to promote their services. Over 70 people who attended flowed through the foyer and hall with a cheery

buzz of activity.

There is great interest from the participants as well as additional exhibitors to repeat the expo for another year.

I have represented the Community Centre on various forums, for example the Eastern Region Health Consultation, and Senator Penny Wright's Sustainability Forum.

I take this opportunity to wish you all a Happy Christmas and look forward to the New Year.

*Christine Ostle*

Morialta  
Community  
Centre



# Mighty Magill Market



Yes, that day arrived again in 2014. The Mighty Magill Market and Exhibition again saw the sense of community that is engendered each year. What a great occasion it was to have those beyond our church family, coming to join the market crowd. And a crowd it was, with hundreds over the day enjoying the excitement of taking home that piece of pre-loved treasure, that book that they had been looking for, the clothing that was just right, the plant that will transform the garden, that special Christmas gift box. Maybe they were more interested in the exhibition and relaxing with scones, jam and cream with their cup of tea. Whatever their interest everyone – visitors, stall helpers, organisers - had a great time.



## Paws for thought...

I know that Anne and Bruce only have my best interests at heart, but it does get a bit boring staying home all the time. After all it's not like I'm old. I only turned 11 in November!

Anyway, when they do take me out I really enjoy it. Just like the other day when we went to the 'Advent Carols'. Before that I helped at Messy Christmas, but my main role for the evening was to help run the carol singing. I really don't know how Bruce gets on without me being there. Wallace does his best, but I'm not sure he really gets it.

It was good to get out and see my friends from Morialta. I think it was a good night. I knew all the carols, but when I started singing at one stage Bruce told me to be quiet. Well, if that was the way he wanted it I wasn't going to try to improve the volume!

Seriously, I did enjoy seeing all my Morialta friends and I would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and I hope that next year will be really good for you as well!

Keely



Wallace: But he isn't singing in tune!

Keely: I told you, just smile and hum along.

Wallace: I hope John has turned his mike off!

Keely: I know that, boy and he told me to stop singing!

Keely: Too late to worry about that. Like I said, just smile at them all!

# Morialta Magpie



Happy 70th Birthday  
Cynthia Story



Congratulations to Pauline and  
Peter Norman on their 50th  
Wedding Anniversary



Happy 70th Birthday  
John Powers



Katrina Mackenzie starred as  
the 'Dew Fairy' in the  
Engelbert Humperdinck  
Opera, Hansel and Gretel,  
performed by the students of  
the Elder Conservatorium.



Santa paid a visit to the  
Playgroup.



Kenny Xu  
celebrated his  
7th Birthday!



Mavis Hayden  
celebrated her  
92nd Birthday!



Barry Peckham, John Prosser and Margaret Dix  
also celebrated birthdays recently!



Madge Hill & Laura Barkell  
enjoyed the over 80s tea!



Merv Boundy, Brian & Dale Corrigan and David Purling collected for Christmas Bowl in the city.

# Welcome to the Morialta Uniting Church Community Library

## From the Librarian:

Dear Readers

As I write this, the Christian year of 2014 draws to an end. It never ceases to amaze me just how many people are borrowing from our library. About 30 people a month are borrowing approximately 50 resources. I'd say that's a really good effort for a small church library. So all you readers, take a bow!

**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 and for "After Hours Borrowing" during office hours, but note that the Church Office will close on Friday 19 December and reopen on Monday 19 January.

So make your selections for holiday reading in good time and when there is opportunity!

**Just make sure you fill in the "After Hours Borrowing Book".**

## STEPPING THROUGH THE ARCHIVES

**What can I find that tells us something about celebrating Christmas in the past?**

*(From Magill Methodist Sunday School 100<sup>th</sup> Annual Report, 1<sup>st</sup> May 1955.)*

"In the early days picnics were held at Henley during the Christmas holiday week, the scholars being taken to the seaside in horse-drawn buses. Since then a considerable number of places have been visited.

The first Labor Day picnic was held at Beaumont in 1911, when seven trolleys and vans and one dray carried the scholars and their parents and friends to their destination. Our treasurer Mr R.J. Nightingale, would be interested to know that picnics showed a profit in those days.

It was the practice to engage a brass band to accompany the picnic and the minutes stated they were "requested to attend and perform". The after-picnic entertainment is older than our Sunday School records, which go back to the year 1869.

## NEW AUDIOS

**Back to Grassroots with Her Excellency the Honourable Quentin Bryce AC CVO**

## NEW DVDS

**Jobs – The inspiring true story of Apple founder Steve Jobs**

## SUMMER READING

### NON-FICTION

**FORBIDDEN LESSONS IN A KABUL GUESTHOUSE**

by Suraya Sadeed with Damien Lewis

This courageous and resourceful woman tells her life story, involving repeated and dangerous trips from the US to succour her needy fellow Afghans and commence the education of women and children under the nose of the suspicious Taliban. She was in the upper echelon of Afghan society but fled to the US in the chaotic situation after the defeat of the Russian invaders. As a US citizen in 1993 she set up a charity to aid Afghan children, which was generously supported by Americans. She describes numerous adventures while taking funds into Afghanistan in order to found clinics and schools and provide relief supplies in times of conflict and natural disaster. The Taliban were a major impediment to her work, but she concedes that their strict law and order was sometimes helpful. She pleads for a non-military solution to Afghanistan's problems, with respect for its culture.

*Reviewed by Bryan Forbes*

### FICTION

**THIS HOUSE OF GRIEF**  
by Helen Garner

On Fathers' Day 2005 Robert Farquharson veered off the highway five minutes from home into a dam drowning his 3 sons Jai, Tyler and Bailey, but managing to save himself. After a trial and several appeals, he was convicted of deliberately drowning his boys. Was he guilty or did he have a severe coughing fit and black out or did he drown them because of depression from the breakdown of his marriage and subsequent remarriage of his wife Cindy? It will be hard for you to decide!

*Reviewed by Margaret Boundy*

## THE LAST RUNAWAY

by Tracy Chevalier



Honor Bright is a modest English Quaker with a broken heart. Immigrating to Ohio with her sister, in the hope of making a new life, she soon discovers that 19th century America is a precarious place to live. It's people are practical and unsentimental, it's climate challenging. Moreover, it is divided by slavery, legal in the southern states, and opposed by many northerners.

One day a runaway slave appears in the yard of Honor's new family, and she must decide what to do. Thus she is drawn into the activities of the Underground Railway, a network of people helping runaways escape to freedom in the north.

I found this an interesting story - it is full of information about Quakers, quilt-making, and American history pertaining to the treatment of slaves. As Tracy Chevalier sums up her book, "The core of The Last Runaway centres on searching for freedom".

*Reviewed by Jill Kerr*

## AMAZING GRACE

by Bill "Swampy" Marsh



This book - Bill's 13th - is a series of yarns produced in concentrated form from many pages of transcript, both from face-to-face interviews and phone conversations. They are all about Faith and Friendship found in a collection of country-folk recollections and give a fascinating insight into a simpler way of living and believing.

Each chapter is a different voice, but no one is ever identified which I have found irritating. To have begun each story with a name attached (even if it were a bogus name) would have been a nice way to know that I was reading Joe's story rather than Fred's. However when you get to the anecdote about the mother who believed her bunions should be hit by the Bible, just think of it as Bill's account of his dear old Mum!

This is an easy gentle narrative for bed-time reading, and will give no nightmares or sleepless nights.

*Reviewed by Jan Thornton*

**For further book reviews go to**  
<http://www.morialtauca.org.au/resources/library/whats-new/>

Late breaking news.....!



**Congratulations to Bruce Grindlay, who has been awarded a Doctorate of Ministry in Mainstreet. His thesis title was "From Altar into the Agora: Toward a reframing of missional voice and posture of the Mainstreet."**

## Diary Dates

Fri 19 Dec 12noon	Church Office Closes
Sun 21 Dec 9.30am	Beyond our Walls Recording
Wed 24 Dec 7.30pm	Christmas Eve Worship
Thurs 25 Dec 9.30am	Christmas Worship
Sundays in January 9.30am	Worship in the hall
Monday 2 Feb	Community Programs recommence



### Fellowship Happenings

Members of Fellowship enjoyed their Christmas Dinner recently and also put together 187 bonbons for inclusion in the Christmas Hampers.



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a time to celebrate, and a time to reflect

## Living Streams ~ Giving Life

### Acknowledgements

Brian Corrigan, David Purling, Helena Begg, and others for photos throughout this edition. Stories and texts from those identified throughout. Thanks to all who have contributed in many ways to this edition

Acting Editor: John Powers  
Publisher: Helena Begg



**Deadline**  
for the next Edition  
**1 February 2015**

To discuss ideas for Vision articles contact the editor, Mary Thornley