



# Morialta Vision

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## A Modern Day Parable?

Advent is a time for reflection and preparation for the celebration of Christmas, where we once again recall the Christ event of the Word of God becoming flesh and dwelling among us. When we sing the familiar carol "Away in a manger", we sing in verse 3 "Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask you to stay close by me for ever, and love me, I pray." Jesus can only "stay close by us for ever" because of his love, because of God's love for us. And the baby whose birth we celebrate at Christmas showed us, when he grew into adulthood, how much he loved and he cared for people.

Jesus was prepared even to die to prove that love and to fill us with his love, compassion and justice. We sometimes forget that Christmas is totally concerned with God's love for us and not just about someone in a fancy red suit with sled and reindeer carrying a pack of gifts for those who have 'been good'. I want to share a story with you from an unknown source. It is a 'true' story (perhaps a modern day parable!) - a church on the corner of a busy road in Sydney had lots of cars passing each day so it was decided to erect an 'Australian' nativity scene outside where everyone could see it. The woodwork and art classes of a nearby high school made life size figures, the shepherds were transformed into drovers, and the scene included a couple of sheep, a horse and a dog. The 'stable' was made of corrugated iron and there was a large sign fixed centre front saying 'Peace'. The manger was made of sturdy timber and in it a baby doll was placed on some fresh straw. It looked good and was certainly eye catching.

The first thing stolen was one of the sheep, then the sign 'Peace', and then the doll representing Jesus. Another doll was found and duly installed in the manger. The next day this doll was also gone and an empty Coca-Cola bottle was left in its place. (That's a parable in itself!) A handyman who was doing odd jobs in a nearby block of units was so angry that he said if someone provided another doll, he would fix it so that it couldn't disappear. Well, he certainly did. The minister couldn't believe her eyes when she went out to see what he had done - he had nailed a piece of timber across the 'manger' and he had then nailed the doll (Jesus) to this piece of wood. With the straw arranged around the doll, the wood and nails were unseen. "There you are" the carpenter said proudly, "he'll be able to stay forever now.!!" He was quite surprised when someone pointed out just what he had done.

I hope this makes you consider something new and fresh about Christmas this season.

Rev Bob Hutchinson



## 2017 Christmas Message from Stuart McMillan, President, Uniting Church in Australia

### The Gift of Love

Friends, in the letter to the Hebrews we read: "Let us consider [thoughtfully] how we may encourage one another to love and to do good deeds" (AMP 10:24).

In the past year, both here in Australia and globally, the ugly face of humanity has been on display. The hurtful marriage debate in Australia, attacks on the humanity of people of the Muslim faith, the horrible abuse of the Rohingya people, the tragedy facing millions of people seeking asylum and the inhumanity shown by some governments, including our

own, and the terrible trauma experienced by so many and revealed by the Royal Commission into the Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

Let us thoughtfully respond to the pain experienced by so many through seriously considering how we might encourage one another to loving actions and to good deeds, in response to a loving God, who in the birth of a baby makes possible a new beginning for all humanity.

At Christmas we give and receive, but the most important gift we have to give is love and likewise the most precious gift we can receive is unconditional love. This is God's gift in Jesus and it is my prayer on behalf of the Uniting Church in Australia for you and for all humanity.





## Chairperson writes...

December is upon us – the season of Advent is awakening our expectations once again, reminding us of God's grace towards all creation in the coming of Jesus: Emanuel, God with us. At Morialta, we've had an exhilarating time recently – the 2017 Mighty Magill Market in November was the most successful in recent times, connecting us with each other and with the community beyond and bringing in much needed funds. A week later we met together in our final congregational meeting for the year.

Here we identified an important task for the immediate future – we need to do some serious work to clarify our mission priorities for the next 5 years or so. We need to discern the mission priorities of all of us – as the congregation at Morialta working to build up the kingdom of God – to give us the firm foundation we need to make decisions on where best to use our resources of people, abilities and money in the immediate future. So I would like to

ask all of us to start thinking about these questions – and watch this space, as they say, for concrete steps we will take together early in 2018!



The questions we need to answer are big -picture questions: What is it we are picturing for Morialta at the end of the next 5 years? Are we picturing the congregation as "pretty much the same as now", trying to maintain everything we do at present ... but shrunken, having dropped things off as we and the church building get older, and moving towards eventual closure? Or are we picturing making some hard decisions now about where we discern God may be leading us, in our Morialta location and coming out of our Morialta way of being church?

This could enable us to prune some aspects of our activities to allow fertilisation and enrichment of others – and even planting of new seedlings, to test how they grow with us here. The web link at the bottom of this piece takes you to an article that has pushed my thinking about these questions (not necessarily in the directions the article advocates), in case you would like to add it to your Christmas holiday reading list. (Contact me if you would like a paper copy.)

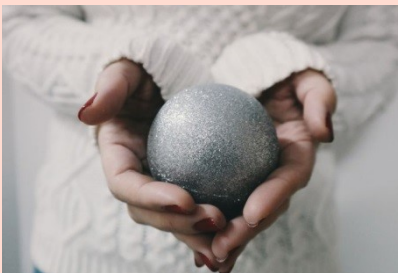
Warmest wishes from me and all the members of the Church Council for a blessed Christmas tide! And as always, please be in touch if you have questions, concerns or suggestions – or if there is anything Morialta-related that you would like to discuss – I look forward to hearing from you!

Margaret Cargill  
0439 954814

<https://www.eternitynews.com.au/in-depth/decision-time-for-uniting-church-in-australia/>

## How to reclaim the true meaning of Christmas

Based on an Article in the Conversation by Julia Baird December 2016



*Christmas isn't a time for preaching or proselytizing — or condemning "do-gooders" — but pondering mystery.* Julia Baird.

Many years ago, I attended the same church as Helen Garner, the Australian novelist, short-story writer, screenwriter and journalist. It was a delightful community of vagabonds, creatives, urban dwellers and misfits in Kings Cross, under the leadership of a minister who spoke in poetry and was ostracised in his home town because he believed women to be the equals of men. As the minister spoke, people who lived on the streets would wander in and out of the service, through the shafts of light dancing with dust that slice through old churches. One roguish gent would occasionally line up for communion, take the full goblet of wine then make a run for it, spilling red as he sprinted out the front door to the sunshine.

One of my favourite essays in Garner's wonderful book, *Everywhere I Look*, is about her friendship with another laconic, gifted writer, another Christian drawn

more to decency than dogma, Tim Winton. In it, she tells a story of when a flatmate of hers in the mid-1980s, a born again Christian, was salivating about the prospect of Winton coming to stay. She writes:

"The saved one was very keen to meet Tim, and had planned a weighty theological discussion: the big black Bible was on the dining room table when we drank our tea and ate our cake. I couldn't face it, and went for a walk around the big park. When I got home, Tim and the Bible were still at the table, but alone. Winton explained "we talked. And in the end I said to him, 'Why don't you give the book a rest? Why don't you let your life be your witness?'"

This was the story that flashed into my mind when I was watching a politician calling on people to "rise up" and reclaim Christmas from the politically correct. According to this man "The vast majority of Australian people want to hear Christmas carols, they want their kids to be brought up in a normal environment and they don't want to be lectured to by do-gooders."

To insist this is "reclaiming Christmas" seems to be missing the point.

Jarrod McKenna, a priest and co-founder of Love Makes a Way (comprised of Christians dedicated to getting children out of detention) came up with five steps to "Put Christ Back into Christmas". These were: Share with the poor; renounce war; welcome refugees; love neighbours and enemies; and live lives of enticing humble beauty.

To quote the Reverend Dr Michael Jensen, the rector of St Marks, Darling Point, "To rise up in support of Christmas would be to have a stranger at your table.

It would be to give each other non-consumable gifts, such as making a donation to the poor on each other's behalf. It would be to make peace between the members of your family who haven't spoken for years. It would be to look at the sorry world not as a thing to hide from, but as an opportunity for kindness and generosity."

Christmas isn't really a time for preaching or proselytizing — or condemning "do-gooders" — but pondering mystery. Like why it is we stand in throngs each year to sing about an infant birthed in a cowshed. As British priest and columnist Giles Fraser told the Guardian:

"I think what you have with Christianity is a sense that there is something more, something still to be discovered. Poetry does it, great music does it, and I think theology is of that order. It's not an attempt to describe the world in a scientific way. It's puzzling over the nature of things, and the best description I've come across is the Christian story, and particularly the story of Christmas."

At the heart of the Christmas story is a baby — *God as a naked, poor, newborn refugee. God as utter absence of power. Not a bearded patriarch obsessed with doctrine and church law, but a kid who grew up to teach in parables. Who told people to love, to train their hearts to be kind, to let their life be their witness.*

**That is how we can put Christ back into Christmas!**

And finally, as Charles Dickens uttered through the mouth of Ebenezer Scrooge in *A Christmas Carol* — "I will honour Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year" — even if you are spilling wine on red carpet as you run for the sun.



## Student Housing Project



*Based on an updated report to the November Meeting of the Congregation*

### The Houses

Rossdale Homes have been engaged as our builder. They are co-ordinating all aspects of the process. Decisions about design, materials, furnishings etc are ours.

The basic design has been chosen and some modifications have been agreed upon with Rossdale Homes.

The designs are displayed on the notice board in the foyer. Any comments or questions about the design are welcomed.

The detailed architectural drawings will be done now that building approval has been obtained from Burnside Council. The details of the fit-out and the ultimate cost will also be finalised during the next phase.

We will be seeking help in the next month or so, from the able bodied among us, to remove items worth keeping from the existing house before it is demolished.

Lesley Tideman will be submitting a grant application next year to cover the cost of white goods, other appliances and beds.

### The Timing

The application for building approval has been approved by Burnside Council.

The "best possible" time line has been posted on the notice board in the foyer. Due to the time taken to receive approval this has moved out by about one month.

Demolition of the existing house is likely to be done by mid January. Surveying, subdivision and soil testing will follow quickly.

The construction itself should take six months. Again, any questions about the timing are welcome.

*Chris Ayles*

*For the Project Team:*

*Anne Ind, Graham Buckton, and Chris Ayles.*

## A window made from broken glass

*Adapted from Wikipedia by the Editor*

On Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> December, the Rev David Purling ended his sermon with a story about a stained glass window made from broken glass.

This beautiful window is to be found in Saint Patrick's Cathedral (*Ard-Eaglais Naomh Pádraig*), which was founded in Dublin in 1191. It is actually the National Cathedral of the Church of Ireland, which is part of the world-wide Anglican Communion. I must admit that when I visited St Patrick's Cathedral in 1999, I was somewhat dismayed to find that, although it was named after the Patron Saint of Ireland, it was not a Roman Catholic Cathedral.

The window is made from broken glass to show how brokenness can be transformed into a thing of beauty. It is situated at the end the South Choir Aisle, inside the gate to the Lady Chapel. It commemorates Annie Lee (Guinness) Plunkett, wife of Archbishop Plunkett, and daughter of Benjamin Lee Guinness, grandson of the original maker of the famous health drink Guinness Stout. Annie was renowned for her charitable work, and is remembered here with a very appropriate text of scripture for her family, 'I was thirsty and ye gave me drink'.



## Revelation 7:9-17

*After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. (verse 9)*

John, in his vision in Revelation chapter 7, sees that 'a great multitude' gathers before the throne. Who are these standing before the throne? It was 'a great multitude': a crowd, a no-people, a throng, rather than a 'recognised people'. This communicates that it would be the 'no-people' who are uncountable, from all nations, from all ethnicities, from all peoples and from all languages that would stand before the throne. These are the no-people 'who have come out of great ordeal' (verse 14) worshipping God.

Today, there are 'no-people' of our times, who have been crossing borders and the seas with great risks, fleeing wars and poverty as refugees. It would be these 'saints' that would stand at the throne as 'a great multitude', for they died with no documents, passports or any recognition. On this day, let us accept the challenge to consider these refugees and such other people as 'people' and welcome them into our midst, for it is in the ministry of hospitality that All Saints Day will have its meaning and purpose.

*Adapted from Word for a Change (International Bible Reading Association) – Contributed by David Purling*



# MIGHTY MAGILL CHRISTMAS MARKET 2017

Huge thanks to all who contributed to a very successful Mighty Magill Christmas Market in November. As usual, it was a great community-building event and there was a wonderful atmosphere on the day as the eager shoppers burst through the front doors in search of bargains and Christmas goodies. The total raised on the day was the highest for 8 years, and with money still coming in from sales of leftover goods we will raise just over \$10,000!





## Paws for Thought...



I've told you before, it's no good watching the tree. It's not magic!

But you said there would be presents for us under it!

I didn't mean now. We have to wait for Christmas Day and you have to be good.

I guess I can do that! Are you sure about this?

Well, this is my 14th Christmas. When I was a pup, a long time ago, and before I started looking after Bruce, I can't remember too much about the day.

However, since I have been living with Bruce and Anne I have really enjoyed the time of year. When I was still able to get out I really enjoyed the Christmas carols.

Anyway, I was telling Wallace about the presents around the tree the other day and he thought they would come soon.

I hope I have sorted out his ideas, but, if he starts getting too interested in the Christmas tree at the church make sure you tell Bruce.

Anyway, I hope that you and your families are able to experience the Hope, Peace, Love and Joy of the season as you celebrate together!

*Keely*

## Morialta Mission Projects for 2018

Following our recent Congregational Meeting the team of Mission Projects have met to gather information on, and recommend to you, suggestions for projects in 2018.

Our first recommendation is for us to support the Northern Suburbs Dinka Speaking Faith Community. This community is led by Rev. Amel Manyon, the first Sudanese person to be trained and ordained as a Minister of the Word in the Uniting Church.

Many in this faith community have refugee backgrounds and are finding a place of support, hope and worship within this community. Worship is in the Dinka language as well as some Arabic and English.

This community serves a growing South Sudanese population at their new premises at St. Stephens Uniting Church at Elizabeth North. We would like to assist them in their task of refurbishing St. Stephens and supporting the ministry there.

The second project, from Uniting World, is Milne Bay Papua. We assisted with a project here several years ago when a clean water supply was needed for the people there. Uniting World has advised the following re Papua.

"For almost 20 years the United Church in PNG has been providing water tanks, gravity fed systems and taps close to homes. But hardware wasn't enough. People's behaviour needs to change. The "Rait Mama" campaign in Milne Bay targets women as change agents who encourage their families and community to wash their hands with soap, taking care with food preparation and toilet use. Finally we're seeing a decrease in water-borne disease as a result of the campaign."

We consider this to complete our interest in providing clean water and a healthy environment for the people of Milne Bay.

Uniting World has requested us to consider supporting Community Health and Nutrition in Timor Leste. This area has one of the highest children's malnutrition rates in the world. The major cause of death here is tuberculosis and diarrhoea is the sixth leading cause. Uniting World are supporting their partner church to provide health and nutrition education as well as access to clean water, latrines and healthy food.

We submit these projects for Morialta for 2018 and would love to get your feedback. This is an activity that we need to engage in as we seek to serve Christ in our world.

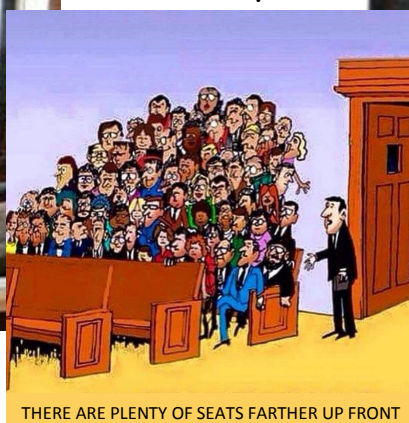
*Beverley Tredrea for MUC Mission Projects Team.*

## BEYOND OUR WALLS CONTINUES TO BE APPRECIATED AT WOOMELANG UC



David Purling preaching via BoW

Is this Morialta UC on BoW days?!



Jey Edwin playing via BoW



## Hope in the Darkness: An Advent Reflection for Those Struggling With the Holiday Season

Sometimes life just hurts. I wish there were a more delicate way to say that. I wish there were a clever way to explain this fact away – maybe some whimsical cliché that we can all have a chuckle over? But I’ve got nothing. The truth is there are days when the burden of life can weigh on us so heavily that we’re not sure how we’ll lift it, much less carry it around.

Around the middle of December it can be easy to be swept up in the holly, jolly tide of Christmas cheer. If life has dealt you a good hand, it’s a quite enjoyable time of the year. But if life has dealt you a bad hand, then that tide of Christmas joy can feel like it’s drowning you.

### What are we to do as faithful Christians?

For starters, we can call to mind that Advent is a season for people who are in darkness, waiting for the sort of light that will save them. You can’t commercialize or turn a profit on this sort of thing. Living in darkness and waiting for a great light isn’t very easy to market either. Maybe that’s why it’s so easy to forget (or avoid) this reality when we’re rushing through the season’s numerous to-do lists.

Author Taylor Caldwell writes, “I am not alone at all, I thought. I was never alone at all. And that, of course, is the message of Christmas. We are never alone. Not when the night is darkest, the wind coldest, the world seemingly most indifferent. For this is still the time God chooses.”

This season is still the time God chooses to bring the world’s greatest hope into the very darkness of life that can seemingly weigh us down every day. There is, indeed, hope for those who live in darkness. May we stand in solidarity with those for whom darkness is an all too familiar reality this season. And may we all experience the Light of hope together. Amen.

*Rev. Ben Gosden, Covered in the Master’s Dust - United Methodist Church in the USA*

## How to pick an ethically raised ham this Christmas

Increasing interest in animal welfare means that there are a range of options for where your ham comes from this Christmas. You’ll find hams from four main production systems on supermarket shelves: conventional, sow-stall free, free range and “outdoor bred/raised indoor on straw”. So what do these labels mean?

### Conventional and sow stall-free hams

Conventional hams come from pigs farmed in intensive systems, where both sows (mother pigs) and their progeny (the pigs that your Christmas ham comes from) are housed indoors.

Piglets are weaned at around 3 to 4 weeks of age and then housed either in groups in pens on slatted or concrete floors, or increasingly, in large sheds like aircraft hangars with a deep layer of fresh straw on the ground. In the past one of the main welfare issues with pig farming was the confinement of pregnant sows in stalls. However, several years ago Australian pork producers voluntarily moved to ban sow stalls, so that over 80% of pig production in Australia is now “sow-stall free”. This figure will be 100% by 2019, but already most supermarkets claim their pork products are sow-stall free. On some farms sows can spend up to five days in a “mating stall” after being mated, to prevent fighting before implantation of the embryo in the uterus occurs.

Many farms in South Australia are not only stall free, but the sows spend their gestation period in social groups in straw-based shelters. These are sheds shaped

like a hangar with a thick layer of fresh straw for the pigs to lie in and play with if they so desire. The deep layer of straw allows pigs of all ages to find a comfortable temperature for resting and sleeping. If you purchase a ham from your local butcher, it is more likely to be from one of these superior animal welfare farms.

Before giving birth, sows are moved to a farrowing crate, where they remain until their piglets are weaned at 3 to 4 weeks. The purpose of the farrowing crate is to provide maximum welfare for piglets and prevent them from being crushed. The piglets are provided with a warm draught-free environment, while the sow enjoys cooler temperatures. Although the sow’s movement is restricted, she must be given ample room to move and lie down comfortably, with access to feed and water 24/7.

### Free-range hams

While there are some free-range Christmas hams in the major supermarkets, just 5% of the Australian pig herd meets this criterion. In free-range systems, such as the RSPCA-approved outdoor system and Australian Pork Certified Free Range, both sows and piglets live outside in paddocks with access to shelters, wallows and shade. However free-range pig farming is challenging in many parts of Australia, because of the hot climate or cold winter nights. The best place to buy free-range hams is at farmers’ markets, specialist butchers and from small-scale pig producers. When you buy at a farmers’ market, ask about how the pigs are raised and whether they are free-range.

### Outdoor bred

A few hams maybe labelled “outdoor bred/raised indoors on straw”. Hams with this label come from production systems where the sows live outside under free-range conditions.

Piglets are born outside, but are moved inside after weaning and raised in groups on straw or other litter.

### So what ham should I buy?

You can vote for better animal welfare by buying the most ethical ham you can afford, whether that’s a sow-stall free ham from a supermarket, or a ham from a straw based system or a free-range system, from a specialist butcher or at a farmers’ market.

### Do you want to buy an Australian ham?

If you want to buy an Australian ham, remember that pork cannot be imported into Australia on the bone. So look for ham on the bone, or labels such as “Made from 100% Australian pork” or the square pink “Australian Pork” label.

Currently up to two-thirds of processed pork (including ham and bacon) is imported as boneless frozen pork so consumers need to check carefully if they want Australian bacon.

*Based on an article from the Conversation by Rachel Carey, Christine Parker, and Gyorgy Scrinis, December 2016 and adapted by the (unbiased) Editor.*



## Hope in the Desert

Raymond A Foss (1960-)

There is hope in the desert -  
the long suffering of the people of God  
hope in the promise of rain,  
of reconciliation,  
of being back on the path to Zion,  
back in union with God.  
Even in the midst of winter, there is hope  
in the coming of the Christ-child,  
the shoot of Jesse, made king once more  
the king in the manger, warm in the stable  
straw  
the swaddling clothing, foretelling his  
burial;  
but hope in the death and resurrection  
fulfilling all the law, all the prophets

our hope in thee alone, Lord Jesus  
hope in the grace of God  
Like the Christmas cactus,  
bearing flower in the dead of winter  
we are reminded each Advent  
of the hope in the desert  
the shoot bearing life,  
bearing witness  
to our salvation  
for the promises fulfilled  
the promises kept  
by God alone.

Published in Raymond A. Foss  
Poems (December 10, 2007).  
Other poems published in "Poetry  
Where You Live - May 26, 2009"



## Oh Christmas Tree, Oh Christmas Tree..... Where did you come from?

Adapted from "www.whychristmas.com/customs" and other sources by the editor

The evergreen fir tree has traditionally been used to celebrate winter festivals (pagan and Christian) for thousands of years. Pagans used branches to decorate their homes during the winter solstice, as it made them think of the spring to come. The use of evergreen trees to symbolise eternal life was a custom of the ancient Egyptians, Chinese, and Hebrews. Tree worship was common among the pagan Europeans and survived their conversion to Christianity. Scandinavians decorate the house and barn with evergreens at the New Year to scare away the devil. The Romans used Fir Trees to decorate their temples at the festival of Saturnalia and Christians use it as a sign of everlasting life with God.

Nobody is really sure, but using Fir trees as Christmas trees probably began about 1000 years ago in Northern Europe. The modern Christmas tree is frequently traced to the worship of trees by Vikings and Saxons in pre-Christian winter rites. An alternate theory suggests that it was the "tree of paradise", which was featured in medieval mystery plays performed on 24 December in celebration of Adam and Eve. A tree decorated with apples and wafers (to represent the Eucharist and redemption) was used as a setting for the play. Like the Christmas crib, the Paradise tree was later placed in homes. The apples were eventually replaced by round objects such as shiny red balls.

Modern Christmas trees originated during the Renaissance in early modern 16<sup>th</sup> Century Germany, where they are now called Weihnachtsbaum, Tannenbaum or Christbaum. Some claim that it was Martin Luther who was the first to bring a tree inside, and the first to add lighted candles.

The tree was traditionally decorated with edibles such as apples, nuts, or other foods. In the 18th century, it began to be illuminated with candles which were

ultimately replaced by Christmas lights after the arrival of electricity. Today, there is a wide variety of traditional ornaments, such as garlands, tinsel, and candy canes. An angel or star is often placed at the top of the tree to represent the archangel Gabriel or the Star of Bethlehem from the Nativity.

Lighted candles were still used in Switzerland when we lived there and one Christmas morning Margaret and I had the excitement of watching the church's Christmas tree burst into flames as the preacher (standing with his back to the tree) was saying the benediction. The congregants were torn between dousing the tree and the preacher with water, or allowing him to get to the amen and hope for the best. Our patience was rewarded and no serious damage was done.

Although the tradition of decorating homes with evergreens was long established in England, the custom of decorating an entire small tree was unknown until some two centuries ago. The credit goes to George III's German-born wife, Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, who introduced a Christmas tree at a party she gave for children in 1800. At first the custom did not spread beyond the royal family until Queen Victoria, who had a tree in her room every Christmas, married her German cousin Prince Albert. By 1841 the custom had been taken up by the wealthier middle-class families and for once the 'trickledown' effect seems to have worked.

But my favourite story about the legend of the Christmas tree comes from Germany.

*"Once on a cold Christmas Eve night, a forester and his family were in their cottage gathered round the fire to keep warm. Suddenly there was a knock on the door. When the forester opened the door, he found a poor little boy standing on the door step, lost and alone. The forester welcomed him into his house and the family fed and washed him and put him to bed in the youngest sons own bed (he had to share with his brother that night!). The next morning, Christmas Morning, the family were woken up by a choir of angels, and the poor little boy had turned*

*into Jesus, the Christ Child. The Christ Child went into the front garden of the cottage and broke a branch off a fir tree and gave it to the family as a present to say thank you for looking after him. So ever since them, people have remembered that night by bringing a Christmas Tree into their homes!"*

## Tannenbaum

Tannenbaum (with 2 'ns') is not only the German word for "Fir Tree" but it is also the name of the Centre for Interreligious Understanding (but with one 'n'!). This is a secular non-profit organisation that works to promote mutual respect and understanding and fight religious prejudice in workplaces, schools, health care settings and conflict zones. Its headquarters are in New York and it was founded in 1992 by Georgette Bennett in memory of her late husband, Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum. Tanenbaum's activity revolves around five programs: religion and diversity in the workplace, religion in education, religion and healthcare, religion and conflict resolution, and the religious roots of prejudice and interreligious affairs.

Tanenbaum's Peacemakers in Action Network is a group of individuals who are fighting violence and intolerance in some of the most dangerous conflict areas around the world.

*Organisations such as Tanenbaum will be needed as Americans struggle to come together and bridge the schisms that have opened up in their society.*





## Church Council News

One of the requests that we received from many of you in our recent survey was for more local news. So in future we plan to publish all relevant reports presented to Church Council and Meetings of the Congregation. The first such report is from the Social Justice Team who reported to November's meeting of the Church Council. We have also published a report on the Student Housing Project presented to the meeting of the Congregation.

### Social Justice Mission Ministry Team Report to Church Council: November 2017

#### Key activities

- The treatment of Refugees continues to be one of our major priorities. As a member of Justice4RefugeesSA, which is a community group, we have access to current information on the refugee situation and planned community action. Members of SJMMT attended the recent "Welcome to Australia" rally and joined with members of Pilgrim Uniting Church to walk behind their banner. We also support the Spire program operated by Clayton Wesley Uniting Church and our group continue to be active letter writers to MPs expressing our concerns. Over recent days some of us have also been active in phoning our local MPs to express our disquiet over the situation in Manus Island.
- Environmental issues also continue to be a priority for our team and we maintain close links with the Synod's Environmental Action Group (EAG). Rev Brian Polkinghorne was our guest preacher on Social Justice Sunday and

presented the case for creation care based on biblical teachings.

- During July, when Morialta was without a minister, we took responsibility for 3 of the weekly services. Rev Jenny Swanbury led a special service on 9<sup>th</sup> July to celebrate the end of NAIDOC Week (2<sup>nd</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> July) and Rev David Purling led the service on 16<sup>th</sup> July. We also invited Sam Chan to preach on the last Sunday and lead a service on the 2<sup>nd</sup>-Gen program being run in the SA Synod.
- Members of SJMMT have also expressed our dismay at the Government's response to the Uluru Statement and earlier we published an article in Vision about "Treaties between Colonisers and Indigenous Nations" based on the experiences of the US, Canada and New Zealand. The latter was to inform and encourage discussion among members of the Morialta Community.

#### Issues of concern

Our major issues of concern are the treatment of refugees held on Manus Island, the Government's response to the Uluru Statement and the ongoing lack of commitment to dealing with Climate Change.

#### Ideas and plans for addressing concerns

We plan to discuss at a future meeting how best we can involve other members of the congregation in the concerns we have expressed above. This may be through an email network or via small regular discussion groups, but we are open to suggestions.

#### Key plans for the next six months

- This year we will again promote the Christmas Bowl at Morialta in the lead up to Christmas, but we will no longer participate in the street appeal. Our decision to withdraw from the street appeal was based on the poor response seen from the public in recent years.
- We have offered to run a study during Lent in 2018 based on the "Australians Together: bringing Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians together" campaign, with a possible repeat later in the year. The study is being promoted by Churches and Indigenous Groups.
- We are also considering opening the Church from around 8.00 to 9.30am one morning each week during Lent as a quiet place for reflection, meditation and a silent space. This suggestion came from a discussion about the need for peace and understanding in society and how we can promote it. Further discussion with other groups is planned.
- A Sunday Forum is being planned for Social Justice Sunday on 23rd September 2018 – the theme for the service and the topic for the forum will be decided after further discussion.

#### About our team's work

The SJMM Team acts on behalf of Church Council to promote issues relating to justice, human rights, reconciliation, the environment and ecumenism.

#### The SJMM Team

(Bruce Ind, Judith Purling, Jenny Swanbury, Bob Hutchinson, Christine Secombe, David Purling and Colin Cargill)

## Gallivanting in the Grampians



Hitting the road!

Many thanks to Bev Tredrea for organising and leading another successful church tour in November. Here's a selection of photos from the trip.



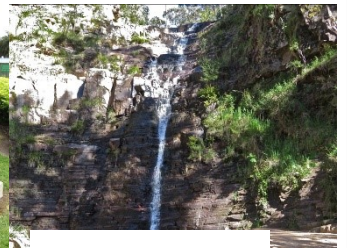
Halls Gap Zoo



The Big Koala



Chinese Heritage Centre



Mackenzie Falls



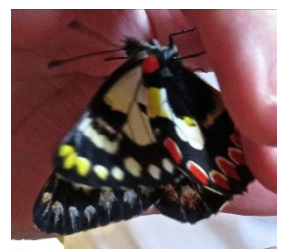
Coonalpyn Grain Silos



Pebble Church



Wolf in sheep's clothing (Bible Museum)



Butterfly Garden





**"Only love can drive out hate"  
The more hate we see,  
the more we must love**



The President of the Uniting Church in Australia, Stuart McMillan, joined with The Grand Mufti of Australia, Dr Ibrahim Abu Mohamad, to condemn the horrific attack on worshippers at the al-Rawdah mosque in Egypt and lament the terrible loss of lives. They expressed their horror at this act of evil directed at worshippers as they gathered for prayer inside the mosque.

Mr McMillan urged Uniting Church members to join with all people of faith in praying for those who lost their lives, for all those injured and for their families together with the people of Egypt as they come to terms with this act of violence.

Dr Ibrahim pointed out that this terrorist attack had targeted innocent and devout worshippers during a time when Muslims were fulfilling their obligatory prayer ritual on a Friday. "Many people around the world, in particular Muslims, have been victims of terrorism."

The President expressed the Uniting Church's solidarity with the Muslim community in Australia, and globally. "As Muslims and Christians, we share a deep desire and hope for peace in our world. At this time, we call upon and join with people of faith and goodwill everywhere to pray for peace to prevail."

"The more we see evil and hate perpetrating violence and death, the more we must embrace one another in love."

*From UCA Assembly*

## 2017 Christmas Message from National Council of Churches in Australia

Can you imagine the love and reverence with which the angel said Jesus' name, when the angel spoke to Joseph?

*"You are to name him Jesus for he will save his people from their sins."* (Matthew 1:21)

Can you imagine Joseph's tone of voice when he told Mary the name given for their child?

Can you imagine Mary, aware of the child growing in her, speaking Jesus' name? First with Joseph in the intimacy of their home, and later to the shepherds and the Magi.

We can imagine them all looking at the baby, saying Jesus' name with that same angelic reverence and love.

It is always very beautiful for us to hear Jesus' name spoken with adoration. Our spirit soars, yes?

This is one gift we can all give, one form of evangelism we can all share this Christmas and into 2018.

As we know, our Australia needs to hear Jesus' name re-said with love and reverence. So there can be salvation. So there can be healing and wholeness.

May it be so.

Amen.

*Bishop Philip Huggins, President NCCA*

*NB. In the Western Church, Christmas is celebrated on December 25. Most Orthodox Churches will celebrate the Feast of the Nativity on January 6.*

## An ancient African saying

**If you want to go fast travel alone, if you want to go far travel together.**

## How much do you know about the structure of the Uniting Church?

*Based on an article by Susan Burt, Coordinator, Urban Mission Network*

The Uniting Church in Australia is organised not in a hierarchy, but with groups (often a mix of men and women, lay and ordained) making decisions, usually by consensus, in each area of the church's life. In South Australia we have Networks that are overseen and supported by the Presbytery and Synod. At a national level we have the Assembly

### Mission Networks

Mission Networks are uniquely deployed in South Australia to resource and support congregations who have a similar ethos but aren't necessarily close geographically (such as those in a Presbytery would be). There are currently eight mission networks in operation in South Australia.

**The Urban Mission Network** comprises congregations, faith communities and agencies located mainly in civic and regional centres and on main thoroughfares. Members of the Network share a clear understanding of being called to give witness to the love of God in Christ as word and deed in environments that are primarily urban, secular, and culturally diverse. Network members have a sense of mission in the wider community and share a conviction that we must engage with that wider

community in order that the Gospel may bring about both personal and social transformation. You can find out more about Urban Mission Network here

<http://www.urbannetwork.org.au/index.php?page=about-us>

### Presbytery

A presbytery is a council of the Uniting Church which has oversight of congregations, ministry and programs within a region. Notably the placement of ministers, establishment, amalgamation and disbanding of congregations and support of congregational life are all part of the Presbytery's role.

All of South Australia is currently organised as a single Presbytery with additional congregational support and resourcing being offered by Mission Networks.

### Synod

Each state in Australia has a state council known as a Synod. The role of the Synod is to support community services, mission planning, theological education and administration relating to finance, property and ministers.

### National Assembly

The national body of the Uniting Church is known as Assembly. Assembly's role is to support the Uniting Church, its agencies and associated organisations throughout Australia.



## Seminary of the 3rd Age Re-thinking Faith in the 21st Century

You are invited to participate in the inaugural program of the Seminary of the 3rd Age.



The program, conducted by respected theological scholars and leaders, offers persons of any faith, or no faith, the opportunity to explore and reflect on questions of faith and spirituality relevant in the 21st Century. The seminars are designed to enable free discussion and debate as to what faith, spirituality and identity might mean amid the paradox of knowledge and mystery we now associate with the 21st Century.

The Seminary of the 3rd Age is supported by Progressive Christianity Network of SA, a network that recognises the evolving nature of spirituality and also values intellectual honesty, recognising the contribution of science and history in informing our worldview. Each seminar topic runs for 4 weeks on a Thursday evening during the months of March, May, August and October.

### The Curriculum or Program:

#### March – The God Factor – Re-thinking the Mystery called God

- March 1 – *The Indigenous God of Abraham: Norm Habel*
- March 8 – *The Gods of Abraham, Moses and Joshua: Norm Habel*
- March 15 – *The Personal God of Jesus: Michael Trainor*
- March 22 – *The God of Metaphor and Mystery: Bob Kempe*

#### May – The Interpretation Factor – Re-thinking How to Read the Bible

- May 3 – *'In front of, inside and behind' the Text: Norm Habel*
- May 10 – *An Eco-Reading of Luke: Michael Trainor*
- May 17 – *A Gnostic Reading of John: Robert Crotty*
- May 24 – *A Counter-Empire Reading of Romans: Bruce Grindlay*

#### August – The Jesus Factor – Re-thinking the Bloke Called Jesus

- August 2 – *Rabbi Jesus- Radical or Heretical? Vicky Balabanski*
- August 9 – *Jesus, the Stoic Sage: Vicky Balabanski*
- August 16 – *Theo-political Reading of Parables of Jesus: Bruce Grindlay*
- August 23 – *Findings from the Jesus' Seminar: Don Hopgood*

#### October – The Soul Factor – Re-thinking Spirituality

- October 4 – *Doing theology as a spiritual adventure: Bob Kempe*
- October 11 – *The Spirituality of Aborigines: Mark Kickett and Ivan Copley*
- October 18 – *The Innate Spirituality of Affection: Sean Gilbert*
- October 25 – *Earth Spirituality: Jana Norman*

### Seminar fees

Individual seminars cost \$15 (\$12 concession) or \$50 for 4 seminars. The full program costs \$175. You are free to attend any seminar and participants can attend occasional seminars or full topics.

The launch of the Seminary of the 3rd Age will take place at 7.30pm on February 22 at the Effective Living Centre, launched by Lynn Arnold and with a taste of the year's menu.

All welcome - RSVP essential: 8271 0329, [office@effectiveliving.org](mailto:office@effectiveliving.org) or talk with Colin Cargill for more information.

## Awakening Prayer

Presence of Possibilities,  
**Open us with holy surprise.**  
 Source of Imagination,  
**Colour us outside the lines.**  
 Nearness of Neighbour,  
**Dance us into spacious love.**  
 Abundance of Choice,  
**Convict us into mattered living.**  
 Path of Pilgrimage,  
**Walk us into spirited experience.**  
 Mystery of Emergence,  
**Startle us into awakening.**  
 Practice of Presence,  
**Be our eternal now. Amen.**

*by Diana Butler Bass*



May you awaken to the mystery  
 of being here  
 and enter the quiet immensity  
 of your own presence.  
 May you have joy and peace  
 in the temple of your senses.  
 May you receive  
 great encouragement  
 when new frontiers beckon.  
 May you respond to the call  
 of your gift  
 and find the courage  
 to follow its path.

*from Eternal Echoes,  
by John O'Donohue*



## Playgroup Happenings

Our Tuesday Playgroup children had an exciting morning when they had a visitor from Playgroup SA, who led a Messy Playgroup session.

Santa also paid a visit and handed out gifts at their last session in December.



## Fellowship News

The Fellowship Group elected a new committee at their AGM in November. Margaret Clogg is the President, Margaret Dix is the Secretary and Kath Cheel is Treasurer. The Committee Members are Margaret Whibley, Joan Wagner, Dale Corrigan and Arlene Lomman.

After the AGM, Rev Bob Hutchinson gave a very interesting talk about the earlier years of his life and the meeting closed with supper and informal chatting.

Our very successful year concludes with a Christmas Break-up on December 20th.

*Margaret Clogg*



## Bon Bon Time

In early December, 12 friends from Morialta met at Kingsley and Helen Stephens's home and made Bon Bons to support the Uniting Communities Christmas Appeal. Christmas is a time of joy for many of us, but it is also a time to remember those who are struggling on a day to day basis.

We made 338 Bon Bons. Kingsley and Helen have been organising the making of Bon Bons with friends since the 1980s. Thank you to everyone who helped in making the Bon Bons, also to those who supplied cardboard tubes and lollies and a big thank you, on behalf of Uniting Communities.

*Rhonda Amber*

## Bush Psalm (23)

The Lord is my guide through this wide, red land.

He leads me to grassy camping grounds where I can rest.

He shows me the way to refreshing water of a billabong where I quench my thirsty Spirit.

He is the travel guide who maps the corrugated track for me to follow, for there is danger from my enemies of heat and inexperience and mechanical failure.

It comforts me to know that all throughout, he never leaves my side.

You are present in the hospitality around the camp fire of a cattle muster – you heal my wounded spirit with oil of your grace, so that I can be certain of your goodness and mercy as long as I live, and reserve a place in your house without walls forever.

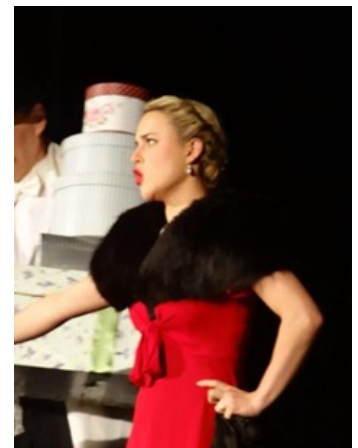
*Linda Sutton (contributed by Elizabeth Trigg)*



## Katrina Mackenzie as Musette in Co-Opera's Production of La Bohème

A feisty, beautiful and pensive Musetta (Katrina Mackenzie) in Co-Opera's production of La Bohème, an opera in four acts, composed by Giacomo Puccini.

The story is based on a collection of vignettes portraying young bohemians living in the Latin Quarter of Paris in the 1840s. The story focuses on the relationship between a poet and a seamstress (Rodolfo and Mimi), ending with Mimi's death. Musetta is a singer who befriends Mimi, while teasing her lover Marcello.





## What is Advent and why the Advent Wreath?

*A Lutheran perspective - source  
Pastor Greg Page, Holy Cross  
Lutheran Church Murray Bridge*

The meaning of the word **Advent** is that of a 'coming' or an 'arrival'. The whole focus of the season of Advent is in the celebration of the birth of Christ (*the First Advent*), and the expectation of the return of Christ (*the Second Advent*). The Advent season has the spirit of expectation, anticipation, preparation and longing. There is also

the hope that the Messiah, the anointed one, will come to bring peace and righteousness to the world.

An **Advent Wreath** is a symbolic way to portray the significance of the Advent season. The circle of the wreath reminds us of the unending nature of God. The circle itself represents eternity.

The green of the wreath represents renewal, newness, and the hope we have for eternal life. The light of the candles remind us that the light of the world is coming through the birth of God's Son.

The three purple and one pink candle tell us of the four Sundays of Advent.

They also symbolize the four centuries of waiting that God's people had to endure between the prophet Malachi and the birth of Christ.

The white central candle is the Christ Candle which is lit on Christmas Eve or Christmas morning.



## Leaning into the Spirit: Discernment, decision-making and reception

*Fourth International Conference on Receptive Ecumenism*

About 150 people gathered in Canberra from 6-9 November to explore Receptive Ecumenism. Although about half of the people were from Australia, others came from the continents of Asia, Europe, North and South America and Africa.

This was the first international ecumenical conference held in Australia since the World Council of Churches General Assembly in Canberra in 1991, and it took place just a week after the commemorations of the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation.

Each day began with prayer, followed by deep, rich and considered Bible Study, led by the Reverend Vicky Balabanski of the Uniting Church.

Invited speakers included The Reverend Professor Dr Michael Welker (he is German and a double doctor) from Heidelberg University (Germany), and Professor Paul Murray from Durham University (UK), who discussed the criteria for Receptive Ecumenical Learning.

Dr Stan Chu Ilo (DePaul University, Chicago), The Reverend Professor Dr Mary-Anne Plaatjies (Van Huffel Stellenbosch University, South Africa and Co-President of the World Council of Churches), and Dr Paul Pulikkan (University of Calcutta Pontifical Seminary, Trichur, India) explored Receptive Ecumenism through the legacies of European missionary zeal and culture.

Ecumenism has come a long way as evidenced in a statement by Prof Welker that "There would be no need for Martin Luther to nail his theses to the door in 2017." But we still have a way to go to meet God's command for one church.

Other highlights were:

- a paper entitled *The Receptive Ecumenical Spirit: The Role of the Virtues in Guiding Receptive Ecumenical Discernment and Decision-Making* by Dr Antonia Pizzey, Australian Catholic University. The four virtues being humility, hospitality, hope and love.
- a workshop entitled *Receptive Ecumenism in Mission: A Practical Example from Sweden* led by Dr Sara Gehlin, Church of Sweden, and a team from the Christian Council of Sweden/Swedish Mission Council.

Colin Cargill

## From Synod - Support for Eco-theology

The Uniting Church has a remarkable and honorable history in supporting justice through care and concern for the environment. We remember the 1991 UCA Assembly statement of "The Rights of Nature and Rights of Future Generations" and the 2006 Statement "For the people and the planet".

**We remember the SA Synod of 2014:**

*The Uniting Church's commitment to the environment arises out of the Christian belief that God, as the Creator of the universe, calls us into a special relationship with the creation – a relationship of mutuality and interdependence. We believe that God's will for the earth is renewal and reconciliation, not destruction by human beings.*

**In June 2014, the Synod of South Australia resolved to:**

- "Encourage the Uniting Church SA Presbytery and Synod and associated entities to renew their commitment to:
- Model ways of living and working that minimise our impact on the climate;
- Include matters of environment and lifestyle change in prayer and worship, study, and communal decision making; and
- Affirm the establishment of a task group to further the work of education, advocacy and research into the climate impact of the church and concern for the environment".

**And we endorse and support the statement of the National Council of Churches:**

*"We anticipate a day when congregations of all churches in Australia are;*

- sensitive to the voice of Earth calling us to tell her story and to heal her ecological wounds caused by human greed
- ready to respond to the word from the Scriptures enjoining us serve and preserve our home and keep this sanctuary unpolluted
- willing to explore a theology of God in creation, with the cosmic Christ reconciling all things and the Spirit animating Earth and
- moved to follow the lead of congregations and communities that have initiated programs of healing and pathways of celebration".

**Proposal:** That the Synod of SA:

- acknowledge and thank Uniting College for their present work in the area of eco-theology, and
- encourage Uniting College to continue to reinforce eco-theology as core to ministry training.



## 2017 Global Hunger Index: How well are we doing to overcome world hunger?

*Authors: Klaus von Grebmer, Jill Bernstein, Naomi Hossain, Tracy Brown, Nilam Prasai, Yisehac Yohannes, Fraser Patterson, Andrea Sonntag, Sophia-Maria Zimmerman, Olive Towey, Connell Foley*

The Global Hunger Index is used to capture the multidimensional nature of hunger. The index is based on four component indicators—undernourishment, child wasting, child stunting, and child mortality. The improvement noted below reflects progress in each of these indicators according to the latest data from 2012–2016 for GHI in countries where hunger is prevalent.

However, while the 2017 Index shows long-term progress in reducing hunger in the world, the advances have been uneven. Millions of people still experience chronic hunger with many regions suffering an acute food crisis, even famine.

According to 2017 GHI scores, the level of hunger in the world has decreased by 27 percent from the 2000 level. Of the 119 countries assessed this year on the GHI, one falls in the extremely alarming range; 7 fall in the alarming range; 44 in the serious range; and 24 in the moderate range. Only 43 countries have scores in the low range. In addition, 9 of the 13 countries that lack sufficient data for calculating 2017 GHI score – including Somalia, South Sudan, and Syria – raise significant concern, and in fact may have some of the highest levels of hunger. The countries with the highest GHI are Central African Republic (51), Chad (43.5) and Sierra Leone (38.5). For more information go to <http://www.globalhungerindex.org/>

## The contribution of livestock to both equality and inequality in the Ancient and Modern Worlds

*Based on an article in Science: Vol. 358, pp. 850 and reviews written about rural poverty alleviation*

It appears that economic inequality has deep roots, and that livestock may have played an important part in determining whether a rural community in the ancient world became affluent or failed to thrive economically. This is in contrast to our modern world where farmers often tend to be poorer than their urban cousins, and livestock plays a significant role in alleviating rural poverty in developing countries.

To quote a well-respected and experienced Professor of Rural Development – “Crops are essential in alleviating malnutrition and maintaining human health, but it needs a combination of crops and domestic livestock for poor rural communities to really prosper and become truly sustainable.”

A recent report published in Science sheds further light on the role of livestock in economic development in the ancient world. Based on archeological studies of 62 sites in North America and Eurasia, the report concludes that ancient societies tended to be less equal than previously thought, and one of the drivers of inequality was the ownership of domestic and draught animals. Researchers collected data on house size distribution from 62 archaeological sites in North America and Eurasia dating from before 8000 B.C.E. to about 1750 C.E. From there, they calculated each site’s Gini coefficient, a standard measure of inequality ranging from zero (perfect equality) to one (a single person has all the wealth). Inequality tended to gradually increase as societies transitioned from hunting and gathering to farming, supporting long-held hypotheses about how agriculture intensified social hierarchies. About 2500 years after the first

appearance of domesticated plants in each region, average inequality in both the Old World and the New World hovered around a Gini coefficient of about 0.35. This figure stayed more or less steady in North America and Mesoamerica. But in the Middle East, China, Europe, and Egypt, where people had goats and pigs for food, oxen to plow more land, and horses to travel long distances, inequality kept climbing, reaching an average Gini coefficient of 0.6 around 6000 years after the start of agriculture. However, by contrast these numbers are below the wealth inequality seen in many countries today.

<http://www.sciencemag.org/about/science-licenses-journal-article-reuse>

## And – humans have also relied on dogs for even longer!

*Science Vol. 358, pp. 854*

What may be the world’s earliest images of dogs on leashes have been discovered in northwestern Saudi Arabia. The depictions, carved into rocks at two sites in the Arabian Desert, appear to date from around 8000 years ago and feature medium-sized canines – with pricked ears, short snouts, and curled tails – in hunting scenes. The pictures also feature what appear to be leashes leading from the necks of several dogs to the waists of human hunters. If the dating is confirmed, this would be the earliest evidence for dog leashes in the archaeological record by thousands of years. Scientists speculate that these early dogs may have helped humans survive in this harsh landscape.

<http://www.sciencemag.org/about/science-licenses-journal-article-reuse>



## Before we say good-bye to 2017

*Source unknown*

Prince Charles was visiting a hospital in Edinburgh meeting doctors, nurses and patients. After observing all sorts of illnesses and injuries he finally arrived at a ward full of patients with no obvious sign of injury or illness. He greeted the first patient and the patient replies:

*Fair fa your honest sonsie face,  
Great chieftain o’ the pudding race,  
Aboon them a you take your place,  
Painch, tripe or thairm,  
As langs my arm.*

The Prince was confused, so he just grins and moves on to the next patient and greets him. The patient responds:

*Some hae meat and canna eat,*

*And some wad eat that want it,*

*But we hae meat and we can eat,*

*So let the Lord be thankit.*

Even more confused, but trying not to show it, Charles moves on to the next patient, who immediately begins to chant:

*We sleekit, cowerin, timorous beasty,*

*Thou needna start awa sae hastie,*

*Wi bickering brattle.*

Now alarmed, Prince Charles turns to the accompanying doctor and asks “What kind of facility is this? Is it a mental ward?”

“No” replies the doctor. “**This is the serious Burns unit**”.

**Happy New Year from the Editor and the Publisher!**



# Morialta Magpie



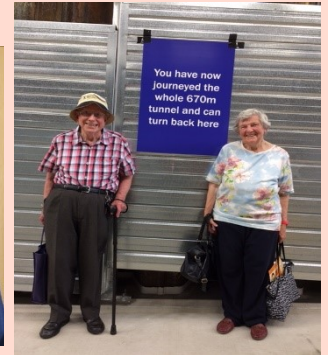
Congratulations to Damian Sillett and Sally Milan on their engagement.



Congratulations to Sarah Heatley and Tim Whiting who were married at Kelso, near Bathurst NSW, in November.



Merv Boundy was made a life member of his stamp club.



Brian and Dale Corrigan took the opportunity to walk through the new Obahn tunnel.



Kenny performed in Elder Hall with other piano students.

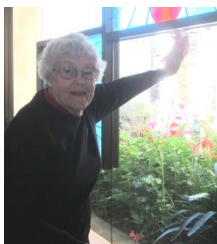
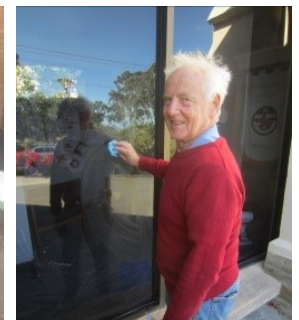


## Peace Lamp

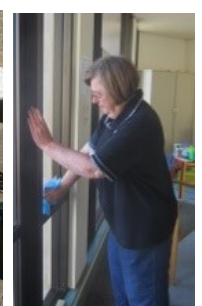
On the altar in the Eastern Transept of Morialta UC, you will find a Peace Lamp made by the people of the Christian village of Taybeh in Palestine. The "Peace Lamps" project invites us to use the Peace Lamp as a focus of prayer for peace in the Middle east.

## Words of wisdom

Cherish yesterday, dream tomorrow and live today!



Thanks to everyone who turned out for the November working bee to get us ready for the Mighty Magill Christmas Market!





# Welcome to the Morialta Uniting Church Community Library

## From the Librarian

Another year is nearly at its end. We look forward now to the next.

### Will the library be open for Summer borrowing?

Yes! The library will be open on all Sundays during December and January.

The Library is also open for "After Hours Borrowing" during office hours but please note that the Church Office will close on Friday 22 December and reopen on Monday 15 January.

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

If you are a **New Borrower** please leave your contact details at the back of the "After Hours Borrowing Book".

A **Summer Reading Guide for 2018** has been prepared for you by the eager members of the Library Committee to help you with your selections.

There are many new books, DVDs, Audiobooks and CD's in the library, so come in and browse!

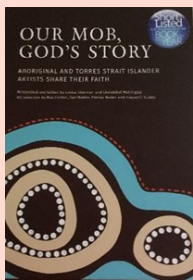
I am pleased to let you know that some new Aboriginal Literature has been added to our collection. I have been excited by the new children's books written by indigenous writers and I think they are too good for just the children to read. I encourage adult readers to look at them too!

**On behalf of the Library Committee and Library Helpers I wish you Joyous Christmas Greetings, Happy Holiday Reading and a Happy New Year.**

*Lorraine Powers*

## BOOK REVIEWS

### ABORIGINAL LITERATURE



#### OUR MOB, GOD'S STORY

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Artists Share Their Faith

Researched and edited by Louise Sherman and Christobel Mattingley

This is an art book with a difference, with 115 works in an exciting variety of styles and stories by 66 established and emerging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists.

It was published as part of the celebrations for the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of the Bible Society in Australia in 1817, Australia's longest living organisation!

All proceeds from the sale of the book will go towards the publishing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander scriptures, as currently there is only one complete Bible.

This is a beautiful and interesting book, and includes a list of the language groups represented by the artists, and an explanation of the symbols used in the paintings.

It was shortlisted for the Australian Christian Book of the Year, 2017.

*Reviewed by Jill Kerr*

### FICTION



#### THE VINTAGE SPRINGTIME CLUB

by Beatrice Meier

The author is a resident of Strasbourg and winner of a best screenplay award in 2013.

Here, in her first novel, she focuses on the adjustments five ordinary people have to make when they move into accommodation together in Cologne, Germany. I first thought this

might not be exciting reading, but the ups and downs of the plot keep one reading to find out what happens next. Philip and Ricarda continue a love affair which started in their student days. Uschi, purveyor of fine meats, suffers a stroke, but her flatmates insist on caring for her. Rough Harry offends everyone, but has his uses and is forgiven in the end. Eckart, a quiet vegetarian, appears to act as a helpful peacemaker. There is also a small dachshund, Ralf, and thankfully, a happy ending.

*Reviewed by Bryan Forbes*

### PSYCHOLOGICAL THRILLER



#### THE INNOCENT

by Ian McEwan

This psychological thriller is based on a true story but imbued with the kind of drama that only a writer of McEwan's calibre can create.

In 1954 a secret tunnel was built by the British and Americans in a joint effort to tap into Russian communications. This was called 'Operation Gold' and operated for only about a year, but is the basis for this tale of love, innocence, political games, sexual awakening and intrigue.

Nevertheless, this is more than just your average spy novel with a token love story, and will keep the reader spell-bound right up to the denouement.

This book may be hard to initially get into, but I would urge you to stick with it. If you enjoy twists, turns and hypnotic writing, creating a finely drawn Cold War atmosphere, you will not be disappointed. McEwan is the writer of some compelling books, and this darkly intriguing tale is undoubtedly one of them.

*Reviewed by Jan Thornton*



#### BIOGRAPHY SO ANYWAY...

by John Cleese

This is an in-depth, funny and well-written account of the life of John Cleese, famous British entertainer and humourist, who had a key role in such TV series as Monty Python,

Fawlty Towers and many others, and rubbed shoulders with the like of Peter Sellers, Ronnie Barker, The Goons, Marty Feldman and Michael Palin. Cleese was born in Weston-Super-Mare in 1939 into a family that had earlier changed its name from Cheese to Cleese to avoid annoyances.

He studied law at Cambridge when his dramatic talents were recognized and he was consequently recruited by the BBC. This later involved touring North America and New Zealand before he started work about 1966 on 'The Frost Report', leading to his main career.

The first Python stage shows were in the 1970's.

Quoting one reviewer: 'So, Anyway... glows with fairness, kindness, gentleness and loyalty.'

*Reviewed by Bryan Forbes*

#### Other new books include:

THE DOG WHO CAME IN FROM THE COLD  
by Alexander McCall Smith

STEPHEN FRY'S INCOMPLETE AND UTTER HISTORY OF CLASSICAL MUSIC  
as told to Tim Lihoreau

CARLY'S VOICE  
by Arthur Fleischmann with Carly Fleischmann

THE FIRST CASUALTY  
by Peter Greste

MATILDA IS MISSING  
by Caroline Overington

**More book reviews available at**  
<http://www.morialtauca.org.au/resources/library/whats-new/>



## Reflection

*Now is the time to keep awake.  
 Now is the time to prepare.  
 His coming is the advent of love,  
 His coming is good news for the poor.  
 His coming is the advent of hope.  
 His coming is good news for the  
 oppressed.  
 His coming is the advent of peace.  
 His coming is good news for all creation.  
 O come, o come, Emmanuel.*

*A call to worship from the Christmas  
 Bowl Toolkit 2017*



## Diary Dates

24 December 2017 7.30pm	Christmas Eve Family Worship
25 December 2017 9.00am	Christmas Day Worship
Thursdays 28 December to 25 January 9.30am	Morialta Music Time
Sundays 31 December to 28 January 9.30am	Combined Services
Monday 15 January 9.00am	Church office re-opens
Tuesday 23 January 7.30pm	Church Council Meeting
Wednesday 24 January 9.00am - 12noon	Kitchen Clean (All Welcome!)
Sunday 28 January	First weekly news sheet
Tuesday 30 January 9.30am	Morialta Playgroup Resumes
Monday 5 February 1.30pm	Tai Chi Restarts
Wednesday 7 February	Lunch on Chapel, Friendship, Workshop, all restart

### Acknowledgements

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Editor: Colin Cargill  
 Publisher: Helena Begg

## Living Streams ~ Giving Life

Morialta Uniting Church  
 26 Chapel Street, Magill

8331 9344  
 office@morialtauca.org.au  
 www.morialtauca.org.au

Minister  
 Rev Bob Hutchinson  
 8336 2676  
 minister@morialtauca.org.au



### Deadline for the next Edition

**10 February 2018**

To discuss ideas for Vision articles  
 contact the editor, Colin Cargill