

Beyond 2020 Vision

A Publication of Morialta Uniting Church

August 2024

Morialta Uniting Church—follow us on Facebook or check out our website at www.morialtauca.org.au

Welcome to our August edition

Colin Cargill, Editor and Helena Begg, Publisher

Our lead article comes from Richard Rohr from the Centre for Action and Contemplation. In 'Evolving Faithfully' Rohr marvels at the way our body takes care of itself over time. Rather than magical, it is a universal pattern of growth and healing.

Most of this edition is taken up with events of importance and a mix of articles from Morialta folk. Enjoy!

The deadline for the next Vision will be 30th September.

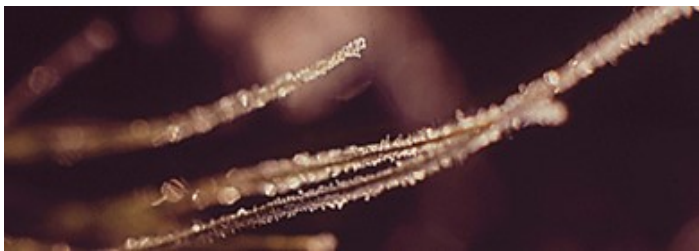
Either drop your contributions in to Nicole at the office or call/email Colin on 0427 122 106 or snout-n-about@bigpond.com

Go well.

Evolving faithfully

Adapted from an article by Richard Rohr from Centre for Action and Contemplation – he is well known to members of Gateways.

Jesus said, “I have come to cast fire upon the earth, and how I wish it were already blazing.” —Luke 12:49



The inner process of change and growth is fundamental to everything, even our bodies. Having undergone several surgeries, cancer, and a heart attack, Rohr has been consoled by the way his body takes care of itself over time. In religion, however, many people prefer magical, external, one-time transactions instead of this universal pattern of growth and healing – which always includes loss and renewal. This is the way that life perpetuates itself in ever-new forms: through various changes that can feel like death. This pattern disappoints and scares most of us, even many clergy who think death and resurrection is just a doctrinal statement about Jesus.

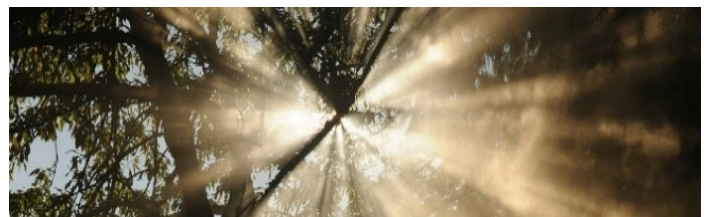
Religions tend to idealize and protect the status quo or the supposedly wonderful past, yet what we now recognize is how they often focus on protecting their own power and privilege. God does not need our protecting. We often worship old things as substitutes for eternal things. Jesus strongly rejects this love of the past and one's private perfection, and he cleverly quotes Matthew (15:9) to do it: “In vain do they worship me, teaching merely human precepts as if they were doctrines”. Some Christians seem to think that

God really is “back there,” in the good ol' days of old-time religion when God was really God, and everybody was happy and pure. As if that time ever existed! This leaves the present moment empty and hopeless – not to speak of the future.

God keeps creating things from the inside out, so they are forever yearning, developing, growing, and changing for the good. This is the fire God has cast upon the earth, the generative force implanted in all living things, which grow both from within – because they are programmed for it – as well as from without by taking in sun, food, and water. Picture YHWH breathing into the soil that became Adam (Genesis 2:7).

There is not a single discipline studied today that does not recognize change, development, growth, and some kind of evolving phenomenon: psychology, cultural anthropology, history, physical sciences, philosophy, social studies, art, drama, music, on and on. But in theology's search for the Real Absolute, it made one fatal mistake. It imagined a static “unmoved mover,” as Aristotelian philosophy called it, a solid substance sitting above somewhere.

To fight transformative and evolutionary thinking is, for Rohr, to fight the very core concept of faith. I have no certain knowledge of where this life might be fully or finally heading, but I can see what has already been revealed with great clarity – that life and knowledge always build on themselves, are cumulative, and are always moving outward toward ever-greater connection and discovery. There is no stopping this and no returning to a static notion of reality.



“Change is the law of life. And those who only look to the past or present are certain to miss the future.”

John F Kennedy, June 1963

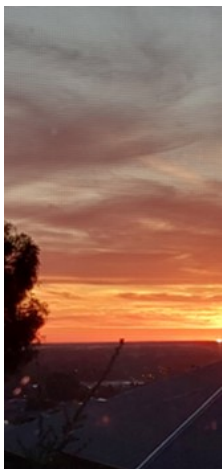
Farewell Rev Leanne and Scott



Rev Leanne and Scott were farewelled and presented with one of Bev Tredrea's 'eggs' at morning tea on Sunday 28th July.

A farewell message from Rev Leanne and Scott

As I sit at my desk, watching the setting sun, I am reflecting on the sun setting on my last six months (or thereabouts) of supply ministry with you all at Morialta. It has been a joy and delight getting to know you all, and I thank you for welcoming Scott and I into your midst. We have felt very much part of the Morialta community in these past months. I cherish the friendships that have been made, and those that have been re-



established. And I thank you for the grace that you have shown me as I learn at least some of what it means to be a minister in a larger urban congregation.

I want to encourage you in your faithfulness - to God, to the church, and to each other - as you navigate the changing times ahead. I am sure that as a congregation, and as individuals, you will keep your focus on Christ as you discern the way forward; that you will listen well to the Holy Spirit, and to each other; and you will continue to love one another as Christ has loved.

Once again, I share Paul's words from his letter to the Ephesians (chapter 3)...

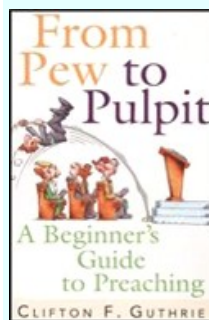
I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

Grace and peace to you all,

Leanne

Lay Preacher's Sunday



On the first Sunday in August the Uniting Church observes Lay Preacher's Sunday. But what do we know about Lay Preachers?

The ministry of Lay Preacher is one in which lay persons may participate in the proclamation of the gospel and in witness to Christian faith and experience, and for which they have received gifts and are called by the Holy Spirit.

The Uniting Church affirms the priesthood of all believers: that every member of the Church has gifts for service, and that all ministries have a part in the ministry of Christ. The Uniting Church provides for the exercise by men and women of the gifts God bestows upon them, including through specified ministries and the everyday vocations of Christian disciples in the world. (Basis of Union, par 13)

A member of the Church who is recognised as a Lay Preacher may conduct services of worship in the Congregation in which such Lay Preacher holds membership and in any other Congregation to which the Lay Preacher may be invited by the Minister, or where there is no Minister in placement the Church Council. (Reg. 2.2.3(b))

Anyone may undertake biblical, theological, and liturgical study. However, those people who feel a call to Lay Preaching must have this call confirmed by their Church Council, and recognised by their Presbytery. Lay Preachers in training (Lay Preacher candidates) and accredited Lay Preachers remain under the oversight of their Church Council and Presbytery.

Down the years Morialta Parish (Finchley Park, Magill, Newton and Rostrevor UCs) and Morialta Uniting Church have benefited greatly from the ministry, leadership and artistry of own Lay Preachers.

The late Fred Martin, Keith Shaw, the late Bill Matheson, Peter Thornley, Lorraine Powers, Neville Pope, Joan Wagner, Jan Sillett are among those who have served as lay preachers in recent years.

Our lives are the richer for their ministry.



Inscription over a church door in Cheshire, England

This is the House of God. This is the Gate of Heaven.
(This door is locked in the winter months)

Peterborough Daily Telegraph

News from Church Council at the end of July 2024

We are delighted to let you know that Peter Trudinger will be with us as 0.2 FTE Supply Minister for September and the first two weeks of October – as well as preaching on two Sundays in August! The search for supply after that time continues ...

- Sadly, still no news from our JNC (Joint Nominating Committee) re filling our vacancy ...
- A Child Safe UCA! Although we at Morialta have few children at worship at present, we are nevertheless committed to keeping child safety high on our agenda. Council is working through the *Principles of a Child Safe UCA*, looking at one per meeting. This month, the principle was “Our people are provided with ongoing education and training on child safety”. **So we ask you:**
 - * Do you feel confident that you have the information you need about our child safety policies and how to implement them?
 - * If not, how would you like to receive that information: in writing (maybe in a *Vision* article)? - In a workshop environment? - Or in some other way? **We look forward to hearing from you about this question!**
- The Interim Restructure task-group set up last month (John Secombe, Margaret Cargill, Brian Piller) has started work and hopes to present an initial report to the August meeting. The Resource Reallocation task group (John Secombe, Lesley Tideman, Michele Bennier, Joan Morrison, Colin Cargill) will commence its work in late August.
- As you will know from the newsletter item, our local colleague Rev Dr Paul Goh has been elected as the next President-elect of the Uniting Church. Council will send a formal letter of congratulations to Paul on behalf of everyone at Morialta.

For more information, or to provide your feedback or comments, talk to any member of Council: Rhonda Amber, Chris Ayles, Helena Begg, Margaret Cargill, Carole Lyons, John Secombe.

Great Songs from Great Musicals Sunday 18th August at Morialta UC



Join us for lunch at 12 noon, followed by an afternoon of favourite musical clips.

Tickets \$20

**Bookings essential
by Monday 12th August.**

Book through the church office or at church on Sunday.

Mark your calendar for *Guess Who's Coming to Lunch* on Sunday 22nd September—more information soon!



Homelessness Week 5th—11th August

The theme for 2024 is ‘Homelessness Action Now’. During the week homelessness services, and community groups will be raising awareness of the impact of homelessness, the solutions needed to end homelessness, and advocate for change via national and local community events, media and social media activities.

While food and clothing are often valued donations, money allows services to be flexible and respond to client needs in specific ways, when needed. If you are unable to donate money, it's a great idea to call services and ask what they are most in need of, as this can change over time.

The lack of stable housing and access to proper healthcare often exacerbates existing health issues or leads to new ones. Chronic illnesses, malnutrition, and exposure to harsh weather conditions pose severe threats to the well-being of the homeless.

People become homeless for lots of different reasons. There are social causes of homelessness, such as a lack of affordable housing, poverty and unemployment; and life events which push people into homelessness. People are forced into homelessness when they leave prison, care or the army with no home to go to.

More information is available at <https://homelessnessaustralia.org.au/homelessness-week>

Lord, hear our prayer for all women and men, boys and girls who are homeless this day.

For those sleeping under bridges, on park benches, in doorways or bus stations.

For those who can only find shelter for the night but must wander in the daytime.

For families broken because they could not afford to pay the rent.

For those who have no relatives or friends who can take them in.

For those who have no place to keep possessions that remind them who they are.

For those who are afraid and hopeless.

For those who have been betrayed by our social safety net.

For all these people, we pray that you will provide shelter, security and hope.

We pray for those of us with warm houses and comfortable beds that we may not be lulled into complacency and forgetfulness.

Jesus, help us to see your face in the eyes of every homeless person we meet so that we may be empowered through word and deed, and through the political means we have, to bring justice and peace to those who are homeless.

Amen

News from Kimba Uniting Church

With great joy our friends at Kimba UC commissioned Rev Gary Ferguson as Specified Lay Pastor (0.4) commencing on 1st July 2024. Rev Rebecca Purling conducted the commissioning and Rev Paul Turley preached.



The future is in God's hands but the mission lies in ours.

The commissioning was followed by a magnificent lunch and we join our friends in hope and excitement as they begin a new phase in their journey with Gary. Morialta UC's Church Council sent greetings and warm wishes on behalf of the congregation.



Gary with Nita Ramsay (Secretary Kimba CC), Rev Paul Turley, Rev Rebecca Purling and Brett Francis (Chairperson Kimba UC).

Pastor Gary was previously a Bush Chaplain from Ceduna Remote Area, SA. While in Ceduna he wrote the following article for Frontier News.

"I found Easter to me stands for hope and new beginnings. It is the season of hope for farmers around Australia. If they get a good opening rain, it will be the time to sow new seeds, and shower them with love and see them through the growing season. It is also the time to sow new hope for the future, and the time to get on with a normal life. This Easter, I will be grateful for all the doctors and the nurses around rural and remote Australia. I hope they will be able to see the light at the end of the tunnel. They have often been overlooked, as the world got busy coping with the COVID-19 pandemic. In our small country town, it is important that we look after and care for each other. Easter Sunday will fill us with hope. Let us bring hope to those who have none left. Let us turn up at the door of those who need us the most. The need is great in the Ceduna Remote Area."

Our Bush Chaplains fulfil a role that most people would struggle to do—visiting people on properties for a cuppa and a chat, they are often on the frontline for identifying issues. They lend a sympathetic ear and can refer people to other service providers as appropriate. They provide practical, pastoral and spiritual support to those in need.

Travelling tens of thousands of kilometres every year, our Bush Chaplains collectively visit thousands of families and individuals (including farmers and miners), but getting to remote locations is one of the biggest expenses. From just \$10 per month, you can gift an extra tank of fuel for one of our Bush Chaplains to help keep this important ministry on the road.

Some of our Beyond Morialta Mission Projects fundraising goes towards supporting Frontier Services.

Towards a Net Zero Church

From SA Synod



At its annual meeting in June 2022, The Synod of South Australia adopted the Synod Climate Action Plan with an aim to become a net zero emissions church by 2040.

In December 2022, the Synod Standing Committee asked the Environmental Action Group (EAG) to form the core of the Synod Climate Action Working Group to facilitate the development, implementation and monitoring of the Synod Climate Action Plan, initially over three years. To read the full text, type *SA Synod Climate Action Plan: 2022-2023* into your search engine.

Since 2023, a pilot program coordinated by the EAG, involving five congregations, has been undertaken to identify the current contributors to carbon emissions from church activities; to establish a base line from which to measure future improvements; and to begin the task of fixing them. This work will be completed by August 2024.

Next steps for Morialta

Morialta UC's Church Council has accepted the invitation to undertake the same audit and evaluation process that has been undertaken by the five congregations already involved.



The commitment is not large and will not involve significant funding or resources. It will need communication with the congregation about the aims of the program and the process to be applied; the approval of the Church Council; and a small group of volunteers to conduct the audit process and consider any immediate improvements that can be achieved.

The first step will be for a team from Morialta UC to meet with members of the Climate Action Working Group, who will help get the process underway.

If you would like to be part of this team, please contact Colin Cargill on 0427 122106 or email snout-n-about@bigpond.com.

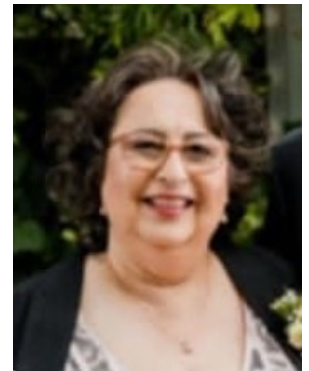
Happy Birthdays!



Jan celebrated her 90th birthday with her family



Ray celebrated his 80th with cake at church



Sharon celebrated her 60th birthday

Building an alternative culture

Contributed by Gaynor Hallows

“The culture needs an alternative to itself, not an echo of itself. And that’s what the Gospel offers.”

Quote from Pastor Carey Nieuwhof.

How do we promote an alternative culture - individually and institutionally? Here is an alternative narrative to consider:

- Instead of violence – peacemaking;
- Instead of greed – generosity;
- Instead of hate – compassion;
- Instead of judgement – acceptance;
- Instead of competition – cooperation and fairness;
- Instead of manipulation – transparency;
- Instead of exclusiveness – inclusiveness;
- Instead of individualism – community minded;
- Instead of power – humility;
- Instead of reflecting culture – be counter cultural;
- Instead of punishment – forgiveness;
- Instead of propaganda – truth and plain speaking;
- Instead of fake news – authenticity;
- Instead of elitism – egalitarianism.



Hope

I would give to the human race only hope.

I am the woman offering two flowers whose roots are twins.

Justice and hope – hope and justice.

Let us begin!

Alice Walker quoted by Lowitja O’Donoghue



Safe Church Screenings

Renewal time for many of us – please read on!

Many of us at Morialta need screening checks so that we can perform our tasks in the congregation:

Working with Children Checks,

Working with Vulnerable People checks

and/or General Probitry checks.

For many of us, it will soon be time to renew these checks. We will receive a reminder from the synod office responsible for screening, the UC SA Screening office, from this email address: ssu@sa.uca.org.au. However, you may also get a reminder from the government office responsible, the Department for Human Services Screening Unit, and this reminder may come before the Synod one. The advice we have received is for us NOT to respond to the Department reminder, but to wait for the Synod one and respond to that when it comes.

If it all seems too much to manage, just forward the message you receive to Margaret Cargill (m.cargill47@gmail.com) or give me a ring (0439 954814) and we can do it together!

Friendship Group

From Margaret Whibley

Our July Friendship group had a very successful and challenging time with a Quiz and Puzzle morning. Our numbers were down slightly, but 12 people participated and prizes were handed out to the contestants with the correct answers, and those who finished first.

Thank goodness for Dr Google who provided this information, and since some puzzles were quite difficult, everyone had to concentrate much harder than usual. Consequently there was peace and quiet, and we could actually hear a pin drop! Thanks for making the effort to attend on such a cold bleak morning.

At our next meeting we will have a speaker from Hearing Dogs, who will bring a dog with her and explain what is entailed in training dogs to help people who can’t hear. There will also be some merchandise which you can purchase if desired. Everyone is welcome on Thursday, 15th August from 10.00am in the hall at church.

A nurse's memories of her time in PNG

Adapted from a memoir by Ruth Pitt, nee Lewis (Part 1)

Ruth was nursing at the Port Pire Hospital when a patient gave her a book about PNG. Seeing an advertisement for nurses, she applied and in September 1967, she arrived in Port Moresby's Taurama Hospital Sisters' Quarters.

On her first day, in the obstetric ward, Ruth delivered babies, assisted by student nurses, with an audience of other mothers and their carers, and locals watching from outside. A new and different experience! Patients had to have a relative looking after them, who would sleep under the bed at night. It was also strange to see the new mothers yelling at their family, camped outside, from their beds.

After her 'orientation' Ruth went to Rabaul, on the Gazelle Peninsula, New Britain. Here she lived in a waterfront house close to shops and the United Church, where Doug & Jenny Hosking were working. Ruth and another nurse supervised the town clinic and also travelled with a locally trained nurse and two students to villages all over the peninsula to hold monthly MCH clinics. The clinics were held in village shelters or under trees on the beach. They immunised babies, checked and treated children for malaria, and chest, skin, eye, ear and gastric infections. Sulfadimidine for gastro came in 4-gallon cans as did peanut butter from which small balls covered in powdered milk were made for protein deficient toddlers. Skin problems were treated with gentian violet. 'Duck-diving' in the sea was recommended for children with chronic nasal discharge. Pregnant women were checked and received tetanus shots. A health talk had to be given at each clinic - in pidgin, which Ruth soon picked up and was understood by most mothers.



Korere Beach Clinic

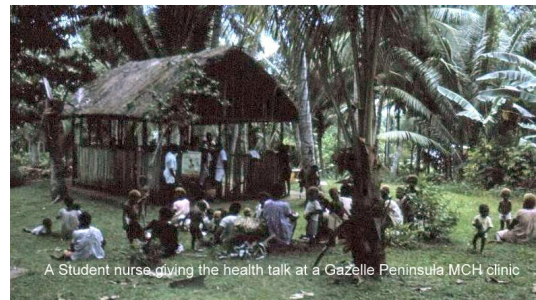
Three times a year they visited Watom Island where they held clinics on the beach and slept on the deck of the cockroach-infested boat. On one visit Ruth, with help, climbed the hill to

check the students at the Methodist school on top. If the child's birth date was unknown, they could start school when they could touch the opposite ear over their heads.

Ruth also ran a monthly MCH clinic for the expatriates at the town clinic, visited squatter settlements on the town's fringe to give health information, checked the young and referred concerns to the town clinic or hospital. The villages tended to be either Catholic or Methodist and clinics had to be located between them – so not to favour either.

Rabaul also had a great market for fresh food and souvenirs. One Saturday morning a nurse left eggs wrapped in banana leaves in the clinic kitchen and by Monday 6 chickens had taken up residence.

Social life was hectic – there were welcome and farewell dinners, parties and celebrations. Officers on ships in port also invited the nurses for drinks & nibbles. Most of the stores were owned by Chinese nationalists, and there was a Kuomintang club which held functions and served great food. On drives lots of evidence of the Japanese occupation during World War 2 was obvious. On Anzac Day Ruth attended the Dawn Service at Bitapaka War Cemetery, and watched the march in town then two-up at the RSL club.



A student nurse giving a health talk at Gazelle Peninsula MCH

In July 1968 Ruth's brother Mervyn came up to visit and they climbed 'Mother' an extinct volcano and looked over the rim of smoking 'Tovurvur' volcano. He enjoyed his stay and returned for 4 years to manage CPL plantations, then privately owned, all producing cocoa and copra.

To be continued. A copy of the full memoir with photos is available on request.

Who needs males? – An evolutionary scandal!

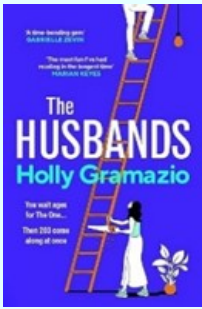
Adapted from an article by Phie Jacobs in Science News

"Though she be but little, she is fierce!" At half a millimetre long – about the width of a human hair - bdelloid rotifers (pronounced "dell-oid,") might be easy to miss. But these tiny freshwater animals are some of the toughest on the planet. Comprised entirely of females, they're particularly notorious for "stealing" genes from other organisms. That ability has allowed them to live an asexual life for 40 million years. They're the only major class of animals where no males whatsoever have been described or reported.

New research may explain how this weird little animal got to where it is today. According to a study published in *Nature Communications*, some bdelloids can protect themselves against infection using chemical 'recipes' pilfered from bacteria. The discovery is an "exciting example of foreign genes functioning in animal genomes," and could also help explain how this group of "ancient asexuals" has survived for so long.

Another wonder of creation!





Book review by Jill Kerr

The Husbands by Holly Gramazio

An exuberant debut that delights in how we navigate life, love and choice in a world of never-ending options.

“The Husbands” is about one woman’s journey through many husbands after her attic begins magically swapping them

around. When Lauren returns home to her flat in London one night, she is greeted by her husband, Michael. There is only one problem – she is not married, and she has never seen him before in her life! But according to friends, her much improved décor, and the photos on her phone, they have been together for years.

As Lauren tries to puzzle this out, Michael goes to the attic to change a light bulb and abruptly disappears. In his place a new man emerges, and a new slightly altered life reforms around her. Realising that her attic is creating an infinite supply of husbands, Lauren confronts the question: If swapping lives is as easy as changing a light bulb, how do you know you have taken the right path? When do you stop trying to do better, and actually start living?

I enjoyed this funny, quirky and original book – it is a light-hearted and entertaining read.

Holly is currently based in London, but has her family roots in Adelaide... Doreen must be very proud of her granddaughter’s debut as a novelist!

This book is available to borrow from the church library.

Interested in music?

Join Centre for Music, Liturgy and the Arts co-ordinator Craig Mitchell for a one hour zoom session to hear and see some of the new music being released in the “Walk as One” worship music packs. 17 songs have been released with more to come. Wonderful, contemporary, mainstream music from Australian and New Zealand authors. Easy to learn. This is music for churches of any size.

Free registration:

Wednesday 28 August, 7.30-8.30pm.

Register here - <https://www.trybooking.com/CTWRE>

Friday 30 August, 10.00-11.00am.

Register here - <https://www.trybooking.com/CTWRJ>

Reflection from Rev John Gilmore NCCA** President

I have had the privilege of being a guest at the 17th Assembly of the Uniting Church in Australia. Some of my friends ask why I accept these invitations. Some assume that the meetings have little interest or relevance to NCCA and others are content to know that the NCCA is there.

Those attending gave time and courage to together to explore new ways of expressing the Uniting Church’s identity and calling in Australia. Their commitment to Australia’s First Peoples runs deep, as does their multicultural identity.

Aren’t books wonderful?

What an astonishing thing a book is!

It is a flat object made from a tree with flexible parts on which are imprinted lots of funny dark squiggles.

But one glance at it and you’re inside the mind of another person, maybe somebody dead for thousands of years. Across the millennia an author is speaking clearly and silently inside your head - directly to you.

Writing is perhaps the greatest of human inventions, binding together people who never knew each other, citizens of distant epochs. Books break the shackles of time.

A book is proof that humans are capable of working magic.

Carl Sagan in Cosmos.



Invitation from Wimala Presbytery

We will be holding two online zoom sessions for those who would like to join in a conversation about your congregation or faith community needs. We hope to hear from you about areas of support that we can provide as a presbytery, this may take the form of digital and technological support, training opportunities, practical equipment etc. We heard about some ideas at our last Presbytery Meeting but would like to offer more opportunities to share and build upon the ideas.

Please go online to RSVP to one of the two sessions below.

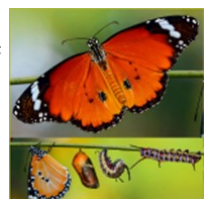
Session Times:

Weds 14th August 12.30pm OR Tues 20th August 7.30pm

You can RSVP online at : <https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=roDtqNz20kalje65rSzlotg58VjF3-JGgDot3oq3szpUMjNOS1QwUoFaUDdYTThaMjVSNFVQRoVWUS4u>

An email with the zoom link will be sent closer to the time.

What has remained with me is the courage of the questions being asked. The themes of the Assembly explored the link between identity and purpose. It is not enough to be confident in who we are, we also need to be engaged in the ‘what’ of the task and the ‘why’ of its importance.



These three concepts are challenging... Being clear about who we are, and out of this clarity having insight as to what we have been gathered for and how it all builds meaning.

**National Council of Churches in Australia

The Little Para Singers Concert

The concert on 21st July was a huge success. The music was a mix of musical genre and was enjoyed by almost 60 people, followed by afternoon tea.

Not only did we raise \$1174 in ticket sales, but the trading table also raised a further \$135.

Morialta UC will share half the ticket sales (\$587) with the Little Para Singers so the total for Morialta for the afternoon was \$722. Our thanks to Rev Leanne and Scott for making this concert happen.

Warm thanks also to all who contributed to the success in many ways including setting up the hall, projecting words, modulating the sound, baking slices, organising afternoon tea and cleaning up afterwards.

The Little Para Singers will present a “Choral Concert of Contrasts” on Sunday 7th September (7.00 to 8.45pm) followed by supper at the Playford UC. Admission \$20 (\$15 concession) - Bookings at Trybooking.com/CTTMX



Climate change and displacement are inextricably linked

From Act for Peace

As global temperatures rise, extreme weather events are increasing in frequency. When disasters like cyclones, floods or droughts occur, poverty and displacement are further intensified. According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, 8.7 million people had been forced to flee their homes by disasters at the end of 2022.

According to UNHCR, climate change is threatening human rights, increasing poverty and loss of income, straining peaceful relationships between communities and creating conditions for further forced displacement.

In the communities where Act for Peace works in Zimbabwe, poverty is widespread. In March 2019, hundreds of thousands of people lost their homes and crops were wiped out by weather events, leaving families without a secure source of food or income.

In April 2024, Zimbabwe became the third country in southern Africa to declare a national disaster due to El Niño droughts. Low rainfall is having a catastrophic impact on farm production. Estimates suggest 2.7 million people won't have enough food to eat.

We need to address climate change and commit to achievable, global targets so the world's most vulnerable communities don't continue to experience the worst impacts of climate-related disasters. We also need to work alongside communities, to build their resilience to extreme weather events and disasters, so they are empowered with modern, climate-resistant farming methods to improve their crop production and access to water sources, even during long-term droughts. This will help ensure they have a reliable food supply and income to provide for their families, even during major climate events.



*Developing water sources helps communities have improved access to water so their crops don't fail.
Mikaela O'Neil/Act for Peace*

Act for Peace works alongside their partner Christian Care Zimbabwe to support farmers with training in climate-resilient farming techniques. With a conservation approach to crop farming and small livestock, the project provides training and support for farmers to improve their production and access to water, increase their incomes, and become resilient to climate-related shocks. The project is locally led with community members involved in every phase of the development process.

When the community is empowered to take the lead, the immediate outcomes are more impactful. The outcomes are more relevant for the community when it's community-driven. They feel ownership over it so they can keep it going into the future.

If you would like to know more, or support the work of Act for Peace, go to <https://actforpeace.org.au/take-action/give/>

Refugees

By Brian Bilston contributed by Helena Begg
(Be sure to read to the end!)

They have no need for our help
So do not tell me
These haggard faces could belong to you and me
Should life have dealt a different hand
We need to see them for who they really are
Chancers and scroungers
Layabouts and loungers
With bombs up their sleeves
Cut-throats and thieves
They are not
Welcome here
We should make them
Go back to where they come from
They cannot
Share our food
Share our homes
Share our countries
Instead let us say
Build a wall to keep them out
It is not ok to say
These people are just like us
A place should only belong to those who are born there
Do not be so stupid to think that
The world can be looked at another way.

(Now read from bottom to top)

Brian Bilston is a British poet and author and known as “The Poet Laureate of Twitter”