

NEWSBEAT



NEWSLETTER FOR THE PRESBYTERY OF PORT PHILLIP EAST

FEBRUARY 2021



Meaningful send-off for Artful Faith teacher as she looks to pastures new. Find out more over the page.

No it's not Tracey Emin's handiwork... turn the sheets to page 7 to find out which church has used a bed to illustrate a faith idea.



"I wonder if..."

Cam Opie muses on what a unifying, spiritual and lasting celebration for the land we call Australia might look like

Our Uniting Church has a Covenant and Preamble to the Constitution negotiated with United Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress, which recognises explicitly the church's role with our First People in colonial dispossession, loss of culture, families, and connection to the land. It also commits to actions to work together, to listen, to learn, to respect, and to stand alongside in their search for justice, treaty, sovereignty, and a voice.

As an expression of these commitments, Willum Warrain Aboriginal Association and the Village Church, Mount Eliza, partnered on January 25 in inviting people to a nationwide live-streamed "Change the Heart Prayer Service" prepared by *Common Grace* and elders across the country. It was preceded by a smoking ceremony and truth-telling with Willum Warrain leaders in their Gathering Place.



This was followed on January 26 by a yarning circle and another smoking ceremony with more than 400 people - including local councillors, UCA members and the new Mayoress, *pictured right* - around the theme of "Change the Date". We heard that for so many First People, the day of proclamation of Terra Nullius, and the beginning of dispossession and persecution, was a day of mourning, a day when they often chose to stay home because of likelihood of intimidation and abuse, and when there were still so many gaps to bridge.

There is no consensus about a suitable date, but these sessions were seen as an uplifting and respectful commitment to share in discussion of not only alternative dates, but how we can ensure an inclusive celebration which properly recognises the oldest living culture.



I wonder if a new day of celebration of this land we now call Australia, may be more unifying, spiritual, and lasting if not based around a political decision or action.

I wonder if, together with our First People, this debate could reveal a day or season of new life and growth to celebrate and reflect together on our relationship to Country, and to each other.
Left: church and community gather. Top: Cam Opie shares a yarn



“Our Faith” - Understanding Core Christian Beliefs

What do Christians believe about God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit? What kind of book is the Bible? What does it mean to be the Church? And why all this talk about Mission?

In 2020 the UCA national Assembly released six short videos about basic Christian beliefs from a Uniting Church perspective. From Easter, Port Phillip East Presbytery will be offering these as a six session learning experience for groups, combining the videos with group discussion, personal reflection, and the option of online discussion. The series is suitable for people new to the Uniting Church, people exploring faith, those preparing for baptism and confirmation, or as a refresher in Christian faith. It is suitable for older youth through to adults.

The video series includes a range of UCA leaders - Presidents Deidre Palmer, Alistair Macrae and Andrew Dutney, theological college teachers including Rev Dr Geoff Thompson, Rev Dr Monica Melancthon and Rev Dr Tim Hein. There are also voices from a range of cultures and experiences, including Rev Dr Paul Dongwon Goh, Rhanee Tsetsakos, Rev Stu Cameron, Rev Dr Amelia Koh-Butler, Rev Eseta Waqabaca-Meneilly, Rev Steph Tai, Rev Dave Williamson, Rev Charissa Suli. Each video runs for about 7 minutes. They are already online here - <https://vimeo.com/showcase/6167719> The videos have the option of captions in English language.

The sessions include exploration of the Bible, Christian beliefs, the Basis of Union, and discipleship using a learning framework of God's Story - Our Story - My Story. Group sessions last for about 90 minutes. The group materials will be available online in the next month. The presbytery will offer a plan where you can choose between running everything locally or options that include local and online discussion. More details in late February.



by Dr Craig Mitchell
PM Church Development

This initiative is part of our presbytery focus on discipleship and builds on our learnings in 2020 about encouraging churches to explore ways of combining face-to-face and online faith development.

The video series and discussion

guide were produced by Dr Craig Mitchell, Presbytery Minister - Church Development, beginning with his prior role with the UCA Assembly and completed in recent months. For more information, contact Craig. pm-cd@ucappeg.org



Christine draws her CTM role to a close

On Thursday 28th January colleagues, collaborators, friends and family gathered at the Centre for Theology and Ministry for a joyful and heartfelt conclusion of Christina Rowntree's work in the Synod over more than 20 years. Christina has been in an arts development role, firstly as Artful Faith Coordinator in the CTM and later in Theology and the Arts with eLM for the past 16 years. Prior to this she was in an events management role with the Synod. In March Christina will commence a role at Sophia's Spring at CERES in Brunswick as Ministry Coordinator.



A new presbytery website is in development and will be launched in March. This follows a survey last year about website purposes and audiences. The new site has been workshopped with the Presbytery Communications Team and some site users, with Craig Mitchell and Kelly Skilton taking the lead on its development and design. The new site will focus on resourcing minister and congregational leadership in ministry and mission, and provide a dynamic portal to the developing work of the presbytery. We're excited!

We are expanding our social media presence by adding Twitter and Instagram. You can now find and follow Port Phillip East Presbytery here:

Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/ucappep.org>

Facebook group for ministry agents - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1327677360638849>

Twitter - @ucappep

Instagram - @ucappep. #ucappep
[You can post your own photos to Instagram and tag them with #ucappep]

Youtube - <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCEgp40-CQLY9WVWBwWjMezA>

Join and and get connected.



Wesley College chaplain returns to parish life

IT was a bright start to the New Year for the induction of the Rev Graham Bartley at Coatesville Uniting Church. The service on Sunday, January 10 was led by Tom Spurling, Chair of Presbytery, and Rev Jay Robinson, chair of the JNC, who delivered the sermon.

It was pleasing to have 55 people from the congregation, Graham's family and members of Presbytery in the Chapel, as well as many also watching through Zoom.

Graham has spent the last seven years as a chaplain at Wesley College. He spoke about his time as a chaplain, his calling back into congregational ministry and his keenness to see what the future brings as we journey forward together. Graham has expressed his enjoyment of singing and making music, his love of leading worship that helps people open their hearts and minds to God and be revitalised for their mission and ministry, and how he enjoys helping people discover, rediscover and be renewed in the abundant life of Jesus.

The congregation is looking forward to the future as together we navigate the challenges and opportunities with love, faith and hope.

by Jeff Gardner, Coatesville Uniting Church



NB: Bradon French is the new Chaplain at Wesley College



Renovations breathe new life into Port Phillip East churches

A new chapter began with a Christmas service in the refurbished Sandringham Uniting Church, *writes Shirley Martin*. Thanks to Mercy Health it has been a smooth transition in spite of COVID-19. Photos show the entrance and Memorial Garden, a service in progress and the Weel-fitted kitchen. An office, storeroom and meeting room have been included. We hope friends can visit and see in the near future.

Pictured anti-clockwise from left: Entrance to new garden, the heavenly kitchen and members enjoying the worship space.



....WHILE BEAUMARIS STEPS UP ITS LOW-COST COUNSELLING

Deep Spring Counselling, an outreach programme at the Beaumaris Uniting Church, has just opened a second counselling room adjacent to the first and next to the car park. The service has been operating for 21 years, meeting the needs of the local community as well as taking clients from further afield.

Established in December 1999, as the result of a perceived need in the community, church records show that in its first year of operation the facility was used by 479 sessions - the one room being shared by 2 psychologists.

In 2006, with the introduction of the government's mental health plan which incorporated bulk billing and rebates, our practitioners were relieved of the necessity of assessing the ability of clients to pay for the service.

The addition of the second room means that Deep Spring can now offer specialist services in a setting which clients often describe as peaceful and serene.

by Geoff Hinde



Flash mob for Fiji springs into action

How many of us can really imagine the devastation caused by a cyclonic storm with winds reaching 350 kph? And how many of us really understand all of the damage done?

When Cyclone Yasa passed over Vanua Levu, the second largest island in Fiji, it not only smashed houses apart, blew down coconut and banana palms, whipped trees out of the ground, but it had one other effect non-islanders know nothing about. When cyclonic storm winds pass over the ocean, they lash salt-laden spray up into the air and deposit it on land as 'weed killer.' Unhappily, that 'weed killer' poisons the ground crops and can effectively poison farmlands for up to a year. The result? Houses gone *and* food production gone.

Mission Liaison Group in conjunction with Rev. Chris Meneilly went into action. Chris contacted the Fijian Methodist Church to make sure that the authorities would accept a shipment of cyclone relief goods. MLG purchased a container and organised - through Presbytery and a local group interested in the preservation of the 1873 church building on the Keysborough South Samoan Uniting Church site - a 'flash mob' day was set for Saturday, January 16th. A call had gone out to congregations, the local Fijian community and the community group interested in the old church building and the nearby fire brigade. Substantial donations of money, food and goods began pouring in.



On the day almost 60 church and non-church people signed in to help pack cartons and move them into the 20' shipping container. An additional 40' container has also been ordered. That will mean all those goods still coming in will add to the 'mini mountain' and the double-size container will be filled

The next part of the story is one of bad news and good news. The bad news? The next vessel to call at Suva – arriving mid-February – was already booked out. The two containers will arrive in Suva in the first week of March – a fortnight later than hoped. The good news? A long-term MLG supporter has paid for the cost of the 40' container as her gift for Fiji cyclone relief.

On behalf of Mission Liaison Group, the local Fijian community and those who will benefit from the work put in, the money donated to make it happen, and the goods donated, we are very grateful for everything God helped make it all possible.

Words: Ann and John Connan

Image: Margery Kennett

Let the bells ring out for Climate Action

On **March 11** join faith communities around the world for the biggest-ever multi-faith Day of Action called **Sacred People, Sacred Earth** as part of a program to encourage nations (including our own rather reluctant Australian Government) to join a stronger fight to overcome the worst aspects of climate change.

Please ask those in your congregation to sign a bold new multi faith statement, launched on the day, signatories will also include globally recognised faith leaders. You can join the Day of Action by making your church one of hundreds of places all around the world 'sounding the alarm' for the climate at **12 noon**. Ringing bells if you have them, playing bagpipes or instruments, singing... all publicly.

This is being organised in 14 countries by a network of organisations known collectively as GreenFaith International. Here in Australia the organisation leading the way is the Australian Religious Response to Climate Change (ARRCC). Find out more at repeat Zoom sessions. Session One Wednesday February 10, 6pm <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88286606513> and Thursday February 11, 1pm <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82875503797>





New year, new you?

Check out the new learning opportunities through Pilgrim Theological College on their website link at pilgrim.edu.au

Andrea scoops UCAF award

Candidate Andrea Mayes has been awarded this year's UCAF Pastoral Theology Prize and is also looking forward to supply ministry in Port Phillip East Presbytery before ordination.



She says: "I grew up near Canberra and my first career was working in environmental policy and programs for the Australian Government. In 2010 we moved from Canberra to Melbourne. I am married to Stephen and we have two daughters, Lucy, Year 12, and Jenny, Year 9. In 2011 I felt a call from God towards fulltime ministry. I live in Endeavour Hills and have been involved with children's ministry at the Endeavour Hills Uniting Church. As I explored my call to ministry I did voluntary pastoral carer at Casey Hospital and Dandenong Hospital. I also trained to become a Spiritual Director through WellSpring. In 2018 I started formal training to become a Deacon in the Uniting Church enjoying student placements at Dandenong Uniting, Hampton Park Uniting and St Andrew's UC in Berwick. At the end of 2020 I finished my training and was approved for ordination when a suitable placement becomes available. In 2021 I will be doing supply ministry for both Heatherton Dingley and Sandringham Uniting churches. I am really grateful for the UCAF Pastoral Theology Prize. I am particularly keen to explore the links between environmental issues and theology. The first book I plan to purchase is an Earth bible commentary on the book of Jonah, written in 2020 by Jione Havea."

Calendar rounds off a year of creativity and unity

Covid-19 has caused endless difficulties for the Church as we experienced the eight months of lockdown in 2020. How to support each other and how to keep us together was quite a challenge?



Enter, the amazing Maskeraiders, the small group who thought outside the box. They started with handmade masks and choc chip cookies for everyone. Then spoons were delivered to encourage the people to decorate their spoon so that our congregation was "Attending Spoonville Church!"

When the Synod did not produce a Calendar for the year, the Maskeraiders went into action. They took photos, worked on meaningful captions, sourced the lectionary for the weekly readings, spent many hours working out the design and production. Phew!!!

Thanks to their amazing creativity, patience and large amounts of chocolate, the congregation was presented with their very own 'St Andrew's by the Sea' Calendar for 2021. We may be a small congregation but we have some amazing people who show God's loving care in their creativity. **by Pastor Di Paterson**



JOAN STOTT UCAF BURSARY

ARE YOU:

- committed to or already studying for leadership or theology within the ethos of the Uniting Church
- under 35 years of age

COULD YOU USE FUNDS TO:

- pay fees to your "Place of Study"
- pay for additional courses or resources

Apply now for a Joan Stott Uniting Church Adult Fellowship (UCAF) Bursary for study in 2022

CONTACT:

Lencie Harding for more information and an application form E:lencie.harding@gmail.com

Applications closing date is Friday 28th May

Book Sale

1000s of Secondhand Books

二手書出售

Glen Waverley Uniting Church
cnr Kingsway & Bogong Ave, Glen Waverley



**Saturday
27 February
8:30am-4:00pm**

Donations of books welcome
from February 22

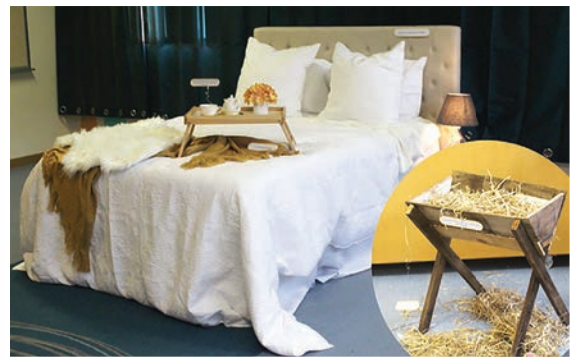
Covid restrictions may result in
cancellation. Please check at
www.gwuc.org.au



Proceeds to support the work of Glen Waverley Uniting Church

Taking faith to the people

Glen Waverley Uniting Church has a commitment to taking opportunities to engage with the local community as an expression of faith. After a tough 2020 for everyone they sought to engage through creative thinking. Rev Neil Peters explains: "Firstly, we had a growing Spoonville community around the roundabout tree for months during 2020. During December we placed on our lawns a Spoonville nativity. Many stopped to look, take photos, and had photos taken among the characters. Secondly, we created an Installation about the Christmas story. Seven stations were created that contrasted the story of the birth of Jesus with images of life today. Among each station were statements, information and questions inviting reflection and thinking about our values. It was a moving and thought-provoking exercise to take a journey through the Installation. A video of the installation was made and can be viewed on the front page of our website – <https://gwuc.org.au/> – see under Reflection video.



*Art work
inspires
folk in
Glen
Waverley*

Cornish teacher recognised for excellence

Cornish College has picked up another accolade in the form of a National Excellence in Teaching Award (NEiTA) for staff member Annemarie Denton.

Whilst recognised for her Innovation in Online Teaching this year, we know many Cornish students, parents and staff - past and present - will agree that Annemarie has long been an innovative and exceptional teacher.



Annemarie, pictured here with Principal, Nicola Forrest, was selected from thousands of nominees submitted by parents, community members and colleagues. She is one of only 25 recipients across Australia and New Zealand.

"Cornish College [inspires me] with its inquiry, concept-driven approach to teaching and learning with sustainability as the overarching concept," said Annemarie.

"Being friendly and approachable with a sense of humour is crucial in teaching. This means getting to know my students and valuing their ideas and opinions in order to build trust... students need to know that they matter and that I genuinely care about them all. Teaching continues to be challenging, exciting and fun, thanks to the people and students I work with."

Sammy Stamp comes to our Presbytery

AFTER many years working out of 130 Little Collins Street, Sammy Stamp, has found a new home at Trinity Uniting Church, Black Street Middle Brighton.

Convenor, Allan Clark, says: "Due to the generosity of the



folk at Trinity UCA Sammy Stamp expects to open for business each Thursday from the 4th of

February 2021. Sales of stamps and other items will be available between 10am and 1.30pm. If you are interested in becoming one of Sammy Stamp's happy helpers, you can call in at any time on a Thursday between 8am and 1.30pm and check us out and enjoy morning tea. Sammy's helpers have made over \$1 Million available in grants for many worthy causes. For further information, contact Allan Clark on 03 9557 1008.

New beginning for Anne

Anne Kim has started as the new Presbytery Administrator, working three days a week. Ian Firth finishes in his role as Presbytery Secretary in March when Anne formally takes up the role.

Anne is a member of Korean Church of Melbourne, where she has carried various volunteer roles, including administrator, secretary of the Sunday School, secretary of the Christian Education committee, and organiser of key events such as the annual church camp. She demonstrates a warm, gracious and passionate faith in Christ that motivates her to help God's people grow in faith and effectiveness.



Anne was a Safe Church Project Officer for the VicTas Synod from 2016 to 2019, covering the Presbyteries of Port Phillip East and Yarra Yarra. Since 2016 she has been the part-time Administration Officer for St Andrew's Gardiner. Anne has tertiary education qualifications in business administration, mass media and communication, and marketing.

Anne's email address is secretary@ucappep.org. She will be working at the Presbytery office in Noble Park.

Presbytery meeting dates

The first Presbytery in Council meeting for 2021 will be on Saturday March 20, 10 am to 2 pm. All going well we will be meeting in person. Venue to be confirmed. Further meetings during the year will be held using Zoom on Wednesday evenings.



At the end of each year the Presbytery sends out the prayer calendar for use in worship. It is also uploaded onto the Presbytery website www.ucappep.org. Here's the prayer list for the next eight weeks:

In our prayers

7 February	Ministry Candidates undergoing theological training, including Duncan Turuva. Uniting CEO Bronwyn Pike & Executive General Manager Silvia Alberti.
14 February	St Mark's Chadstone congregation, Melbourne Fijian Uniting Church, including chairs Jan Heeley and Eroni Salabogi, Uniting Adult Day Centre program and Respite House, and the people living in Bayview Units.
17 February (Ash Wednesday)	Cheltenham-Mentone Uniting Church, including minister Greg Fry and chair David Johnston. Pray for chaplains to hospitals and homes for the aged in our Presbytery, including Alisha Fung at Noble Park.
21 February	Coatesville Uniting Church, minister Graeme Bartley and chair Richard Palmer. Pray for Cranbourne Uniting Church, including minister Ray McCluskey and chair Tony Duncan. Pray for Creative Ministries Network, including John Bottomley.
28 February	Dandenong Uniting congregations, Trinity and Fijian, including minister Berlin Guerrero, chairs Heather Johnson and Nigel Bitu.