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UNITING CHURCH

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'Living Streams - Giving Life'



See Christmas
in a new light

It's EXTRA Ordinary

Diary Dates

2008

Celebrate in Worship - It's EXTRA Ordinary

Wed 24 Dec 7.30 pm Christmas Eve

Thurs 25 Dec 9.00 am Christmas Day

Sun 28 Dec 9.30 am

2009

January - 9.30 am Worship

February - December 8.15 am & 9.30 am
Worship

Tues 27 Jan 9.30 am
Playgroup commences

Wed 4 Feb 12.00 noon
Coffee Corner and Friendship Centre

CHURCH OFFICE
HOLIDAY CLOSURE

Closes Tues 23 Dec 1.00 pm

Reopens Tues 27 Jan 9.00 am

Acknowledgments

David Purling for the cover
photos of the waterfall, and
for those accompanying his
article.

Brian Corrigan for the
numerous photographs that
he contributed to this
edition.

Lorraine & John Powers for
their regular Library Page
contributions

The various other
photographers and writers
that provide us with
enjoyable items for each
edition.

Deadline for February Edition Wednesday 4 February 2009

If you would like to contribute an item,
please send as Word documents either:
by email to the Vision Receiver,
Sharon Mackenzie, (craig_sharon@picknowl.com.au).

**Please do not attempt to format or use other
software**

OR

In hard copy via the Vision pigeon-hole - please allow
more lead time for word processing.

NAME LABEL



Morialta Vision

Christmas Edition



Volume 1 Issue # 7

December 2008

A Word from Our Minister ...

Dear Friends,

With each of my children I can
remember that magical time
when I held them and looked at
them and they looked back with
that, oh so intense, gaze.

Watching them, love becomes
more possible, more real, more
certain.

They lay in my arms quietly,
taking in the noises around them,
and trying to make sense of all
that light and all that they could
now see, however imperfectly.

And no crying they make.

This is the image that *Away in a
Manger* gives me, when we get to
that line, "no crying he makes". It
is an image of vulnerability, of
possibility and also of quiet
attentiveness. And it draws from
us a response of love.

Of course there was crying at
times. All healthy, human babies
cry; it is part of how they
communicate, how they enable
their parents to learn how to
care for them. But there were
those moments of quiet wonder
shared with his mother and
father, and maybe those who
came to visit.

No crying he makes.

Jesus, was more than a baby in a
manger, but the attentiveness
with which he viewed the world,
his desire to draw that response
of love continued through his
life. We hear times when Jesus
did indeed cry, when he was
moved deeply and responded
with compassion.

Jesus came near to people with
the good news of God's love, in
a deeply human fashion. We are
invited to join with Jesus in this



human endeavour of attending to
those around us, responding
with compassion, bearing God's
love to those in need, whose
crying we see.

This Christmas season may you
know those moments of quiet
wonder, when God's vision of
love, of peace, of joy and hope,
seem so much more possible,
more real, more certain.

Grace and peace.

Diane



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Christmas Messages from Australian Church Leaders

From the National Council of Churches in Australia - 9 December 2008

The message from our
government and business
community this Christmas is:
"Spend up big for the sake of the
country." Will we be rich or
poor? This seems to be the
ultimate economic question. No
matter how well off we become
we still fear losing it all.

On the one hand we must save
for the future. On the other we
must spend as much as we can
for the present, and Christmas is
given as the reason. The
message seems to be how we
manage our economy and
provide for ourselves.

But that's not the
message. Christmas is about our
God who is incredibly generous,
loving, and unreasonably
extravagant toward human
beings. Christmas says 'thank
you' for his astonishing daily
gifts. God has spent up big on us,
and he continues to spend up big.

Christmas is a Christian festival
that celebrates a divine life, the
life of God's Son, born in the
most unlikely circumstances, and
given for the sake of the
world. There is no greater gift,
freely given, that once received
lasts for eternity.

Celebrate and spend this
Christmas, if it's good for the
economy. But even better, say
thank you to God, because that's
good for the soul and for your
life.

Rev'd John Henderson, General Secretary
National Council of Churches in Australia



David Purling writes:

I didn't know anything about butcherbirds and then we saw this one... he/she looked so friendly.



We were enjoying a picnic with our friends up in Queensland. May be that's why the Butcherbird was being so friendly! The chance of a scrap from the rich tourist's table so for me it was on to the web to look up Wikipedia (the on-line free encyclopedia).

Here are some of the facts about Butcherbirds that I discovered, which you, no doubt, probably already knew!

Butcherbirds are magpie-like birds and are native to Australasia. Their closest relatives are, in fact, the Australian magpie.

They are mid-sized, growing up to 35cm in length, and their colour ranges from black-and-white to mostly black with added grey plumage, depending on the species. In the photo you can see that they have a large, straight bill with a distinctive hook at the end which is used to skewer prey. They have beautiful high-pitched songs of great subtlety. They are insect eaters for the most part, but will also feed on small lizards and other meat.

How did they get their name? Some of you know, but I didn't. They get their name from their habit of hanging captured prey on a thorn, tree fork, or crevice.

This "larder" is used to support the

victim while it is being eaten, to store prey for later consumption, or to attract mates.

Although woodlands are the butcherbird's natural habitat, like many similar species, they have adapted well to urbanisation and can be found in leafy suburbs throughout Australia.

They are opportunistic and intelligent, showing little fear and readily taking food offerings to the point of becoming semi-tame, although this practice should not be encouraged. They will often reward these offerings with "thank you" songs. Let me emphasize what Wikipedia said again – Butcherbirds are "opportunistic", "intelligent" and "they have adapted well to urbanisation".

May be we could learn a thing or two.

How are we doing with respect to climate change, and the environment?

"Look at the birds of the air..."
Matthew 6:26a.

WORSHIP

The fourth Sunday of Advent will mark the last time the Morialta Congregation will meet together in the three worshipping communities that have nurtured us for quite a few years. The 8am community has offered a quieter more intimate time and has nurtured these early risers. At 9am, much creativity has been used to offer worship to people of many ages, and while traditional in many facets, it has also provoked new ways of exploring the gospel together. Later, at 10:30, the more traditional shape and style of worship has enriched the faith of this group.

The decision to move to two worship services, and the enthusiasm that many people have shown at the new possibilities this provides, augers well for worship that will continue to strengthen our faith and prepare us for participation in God's mission in the world. Worship should always be connected with mission. In worship we set aside time to come together to encounter God in a particular place so we can learn to better recognise God's presence in all the places and moments of our lives. We recall how God has been with us in the days just passed, and prepare ourselves to respond to God's call in the time ahead.

After our holiday mode of worshipping in one combined service at 9.30am in the hall, on 1 February we will begin our two new worship services at 8:15 and 9:30am. New routines may have to be established to enable us to be at church at these new times and new connections will hopefully be made as we find we are worshipping alongside new friends. New traditions will be started as we work out together what quiet and meditative worship will be like at Morialta and the different ways we will use the gifts of people of all ages. New possibilities for worship – at these times, or maybe even at others - may unfold in the months that follow.

As these changes take effect, there may be times when things feel so different and we will miss the way things used to be. My prayer is that we will respond to these graciously, aware of the needs of others in our community as well as our own needs. Please let me or David, or an Elder know if there is something you are really unhappy with (or something that you think is going really well), but also take the opportunity to notice what other people value and find uplifting.

I am looking forward to working with many of you next year in preparing and leading worship, and to being continuing to be part of a congregation that is so active in its participation in worship, in mission and in care for one another.

Diane



Thanks to WA Synod for encouragement to share TTL

The Transit Lounge

...because life is more than a destination



The Transit Lounge Christmas Edition: Belonging

Tuesday 16 December 2008

Christmas Traditions

Meera Atkinson

People often define themselves according to their sense of belonging, especially at Christmas time. They characterise themselves according to their family ties, friends, race and religious beliefs. In this Christmas edition of the *Transit Lounge* we explore what it really means to belong. Christmas traditions

Our Christmas celebrations still retain the roots of a pagan solstice event that was co-opted by the Roman Church. *The Transit Lounge* looks at four Christmas traditions: the tree, Santa Claus, giving gifts and kissing under the mistletoe.



The Christmas tree

Since ancient times, evergreen plants and trees have been used as festive decorations, seasonal markers and symbols to ward off evil spirits, witches, illness and ghosts. In the case of the Celts, temples were decorated with evergreen branches as a sign of everlasting life.

In the 7th century, an English monk who was living in Germany used the triangular fir tree to represent the Holy Trinity: God the Father, Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit. By the 12th century, Central European Christians were hanging it upside down from the ceiling at Christmas. Martin Luther is said to have initiated the decorating of the Christmas tree with candles to illustrate the twinkling of stars.

In the 1960s, fake trees made of plastic and synthetics became popular. Though they have the advantage of being reusable year after year, fake trees are not biodegradable. In many parts of the world, people have replaced the evergreen Christmas trees with local varieties, such as the gum tree here in Australia. Whatever kind of tree is used, with fairy lights and an angel on top, nothing says Christmas like the sight of the good old Christmas tree.

Santa Claus

The idea of Santa is based on a real monk named Nicholas, renowned for his generosity, especially towards children. Legend has it, Saint Nicholas (as he became known) travelled widely giving gifts. The name Santa Claus is a contraction of Saint Nicholas.

Another name for Santa is Kris Kringle, derived from the German Christ-Kindl (Christ-child), which was introduced by the Dutch-German protestant reform movement to affirm Christmas as a celebration of the Christ child. This version of Santa was seen as the Christ child's chief helper but was superseded by the evolution to the Santa Claus we know today.

In the 1930s a Coca-Cola advertising campaign created the most iconic and lasting image of Santa: the beloved rotund and benevolent Santa of the western world. There has been some suggestion that Coke drew inspiration from Scandinavian elf mythology in the depiction of Santa with beard, rosy cheeks and red suit.

In contrast, the Finnish version of Father Christmas is

Joulupukki, who hails from a pagan Nordic shaman tradition. Joulupukki is far from the jolly fellow who sits adoring children on his knee. Rather, he wears a fur coat, mask and horns and goes about frightening children. He has little interest in milk and biscuits and would much prefer offerings of food and alcohol.

Christmas presents

The earliest association between gift giving and Christmas stems from the Roman festival of Kalends at the time of the winter solstice, where gifts were given to the Emperor by high-ranking officials.

Another source of this tradition is that on the feast day honouring Saint Nicholas, parents began giving their children gifts of chocolate and fruit. Over time, this practice blended with the Feast of the Nativity and morphed into the custom of a broader exchange of gifts. There is also a link to a medieval Kris Kringle legend in which the infant Jesus himself was seen as the giver of presents. This too contributed to Christmas Day being heralded as an occasion for giving gifts.

It wasn't until the early 19th century that Christmas became the advertising-saturated, consumer-driven silly season it is today. But try being cynical come Christmas morning when excited children tear the paper off their gifts and their eyes light up with joy.

Kissing under the mistletoe

Not known for its beauty, the use of mistletoe stems more from its medicinal and supposedly magical qualities. It was sacred to the Druids, who believed it offered protection from witchcraft. The ancient Romans saw it as a source of good luck. However, the kissing part comes from a Norse myth. When the god of the summer sun was killed by an arrow dipped in mistletoe, his mother cried so hard her tears turned the mistletoe berries from red to white, which miraculously brought the god back to life. She was so thrilled she kissed everyone who stood under it.

While not quite as popular in Australia as other parts of the world, the tradition of kissing under the mistletoe remains a romantic symbol of Christmas.

Discussion points:

What is your favourite Christmas tradition?
What is the 'true' meaning of Christmas for you?

Thanks to WA Synod for encouragement to share
TTL material. Ed

The Transit Lounge

...because life is more than a destination



The Transit Lounge Edition 43: Me and My Hat

Tuesday 4 November 2008

The significance of spiritual headwear

Meera Atkinson

Many Australians wear hats for fashion or protection against the sun, but there are those who don specific forms of headwear directly related to their faith. Here we talk to a Muslim woman who wears a scarf, a Sikh who wears a turban, a Catholic nun who wears a habit and a Jewish man who wears a kippah, about their relationship to their spiritual headwear.

Makiz Ansari, aged 28, is a teacher who wears a scarf in relation to her Muslim faith. Born in Kabul, Afghanistan, her family left when she was young and lived in India before moving to Australia. "Choice is important as to whether you wear it. It's expected that a girl wears a scarf when she enters adolescence but it varies from one girl to another," explains Makiz.

"I was 22. I was brought up in a Muslim family so by heritage I was a Muslim but not by consciousness. My spiritual awareness started at the age of 21. No one else in my family wore the scarf, not even my grandmother except when she would pray. It took me a year to get grounded in my understanding of Islam. The scarf was one of the last things on my list. There was a lot focus on my image and figure, a typical 21 year old girl. I was battling within me: should I wear the scarf or not? The day I put on the scarf it felt weird. It felt so natural. What it symbolised for me at that moment and from then on was that it helped me bring out my inner personality. It puts my sexuality at the background. It helps me remember my spirit.. This is an individual perspective. That's what the scarf has done for me but it doesn't mean anyone who doesn't wear the scarf doesn't have that focus on spirituality."

Sardool Singh is a Sikh man who came to Australia from India in 1954. He has always worn the turban, which is a long piece of material wound around the head, and wears it every day.

"Being a Sikh you are obliged to have long hair: we don't cut our beard or hair, to be the natural way we are born. Turbans keep your hair tidy and clean. You're supposed to brush it every morning and put a knot on top and put a turban on so the hair is protected. It's become an identity. It's part of getting ready in the morning. [Sikhism] is not part of Hinduism or any other religion. We believe in one God. It's a practical religion. We don't go on pilgrimages or have to do certain things on certain days or be up early in the morning. We don't have a lot of rituals. It's a very free religion. Wearing the turban keeps me aware of my guru all the time and it identifies me with the guru so there is no separateness between him and me. And when I see a Sikh in the street I am reminded as if I've seen my guru."

Sister Mary Madeleine, aged 35, is Dominican nun from Nashville, USA, who has been living in Australia for just over a year.

"The habit is a sign of our consecration to God, our concept of ourselves as the spiritual brides of Christ. The Catholic Church sees the habit as an eschatological sign, a sign of the kingdom. The habit also links into our vow of poverty because it's a way of testifying to gospel simplicity — I don't have to spend money on fashion. It's quite comfortable. Ours are white and full length to the ground. Our head covering would be called a veil. A woman's hair is so much a part of her beauty so for us our beauty is for the king, for Christ.. Because I wear a habit, people feel they can approach me. Every day people talk to me about faith, they ask me questions about Catholicism and Jesus. Every time I go out they ask me to pray for them. They relate to me on a spiritual level which is beautiful. Even people of other faiths have commented to me that they feel comforted by seeing someone in a habit. The habit makes people feel at home. If they need help they'll ask me because they see me as someone they can trust. The habit speaks to people of a loving heart and someone who is dedicated to Christ. It's a privilege honestly to wear the habit. It's an honour."

Joshua McCormack, aged 24, wears the kippah — a round skullcap that sits on the back of the head — or some form of head covering every day as an expression of his Jewish faith.

"You wear the kippah all your life, from as young as you can, from when the baby stops throwing it off. The idea of a kippah started to keep some kind of Jewish continuity going. There's also a deeper, mystical meaning where it's a reminder that there's something above you. When you go about mundane activities your mind isn't always on your religion or God — having a head covering is a personal thing that reminds me God is everywhere and there's a certain amount of responsibility to the creator of the universe."

Discussion points

Do you have special clothing or accessories that help remind you of your faith or responsibility in the world? Do you react differently to people who wear religious clothing or headwear? What does what you wear say about you?



From the Chairperson ...

December 2008 already! Where has the year gone? In January, with the year stretching out in front of us, the Church Council realized there was much to do. Alan's move to Enfield provided an opportunity for the Council to review the progress in Morialta's Mission Directions and to consider afresh our Ministry needs.

Starting with a special meeting in January the Council undertook a process of discernment throughout 2008 and you have been made aware of this in a number of ways during the year.

In 2009 there will be a couple of changes for Morialta.

Following the recommendations of the Worship Working Group and the decisions of Church Council, our Worship life will change from February. We will still have access to excellent preaching each week and be able to find expression in ways which are familiar, but there will be a space for us to consider other ways of bringing the community into contact with the Divine that means so much to us.

The other difference is in our 'staffing'. Following the process of Discernment undertaken by the Council during 2008 a

recommendation to change our Placement was adopted by the recent Congregation Meeting.

As a result of the decision Morialta will move forward with a Placement of one Minister, Diane, a Minister in Association, David, and a new role for a Community Centre Coordinator. These positions will continue to be supported by the work of our Office Coordinator, Val.

It is hoped that with the success that will come from the creation of the Morialta Community Centre we will be able to review our Settlement in the near future and reinstate our second ministerial placement.

This is only a brief report of two parts of a very complex whole. You should be proud of the talent and commitment of your Church Council who have worked carefully through the year to provide leadership to a terrific, committed and caring community.

Now as a last word, at least for 2008, I wish you and yours the Joy of the Season and the Peace that comes from knowing you are valued as members of a very special Church Family.

Highlights from Ministry Team Reports

Social Justice

The Social Justice Team's survey with the congregation over the recent 12 month period showed two key results relating to the energy we use to travel to and from Church, and our use of electricity during worship.

The most noticeable change over the period was that instead of just driving to Church and home again, many of us chose to do other things on the way home. One of the key ways that we can reduce our travel is to be more organised and do multiple things when we use our vehicle, rather than do one trip per activity.

The Sunday Forum held in September decided to present a series of recommendations to Church Council on ways that Morialta could reduce its footprint on the environment. These were mooted and following further attention in 2009 recommendations will be made.

Finance

The Finance Team's report to Council in October came prior to preparation of the 2009 budget and its presentation to the Meeting of the Congregation, so

the congregation is now more informed and has agreed to the 2009 budget.

In reporting on 2008 it was not surprising to hear that a number of expenses, including stipends and accommodation, had reduced or ceased following changes in our ministerial team. This, together with lower expenditure in some areas than anticipated, had meant that finances were more easily managed. Income was marginally below expectations and Envelope/Direct Giving had reduced as people's circumstances had changed during the year.

All in all, it was expected that the financial outcome for 2008 would be in contrast to that anticipated in accepting the budget twelve months ago.

Communication and Administration

The Team has encouraged ministry teams to use the expertise available in the Church Office in preparation of pamphlets, posters, tickets, questionnaires, etc. This has been done to good effect with colourful pamphlets and papers to promote Morialta's programs.

Since Olive Walton retired as Archivist a replacement person has been sought, but as yet without success. The role requires someone with a love of history and an interest in recording, plus the skills and care to undertake this task - important in preserving our history as a church.

Development of the Library has continued, thanks to Lorraine and the Library group. Encouragement was again given to explore the excellent collection for devotion, reflection and spiritual journey.

The Library committee would welcome more members and there are some support tasks to be done.

Morialta Vision, in its changed format, has struck a positive note. The team is particularly appreciative of the contributions from writers, photographers, ministers, leaders and team representatives who report on Morialta's activities and also prompt our thinking and action in our daily lives.

Note - If you are interested in archiving, library support or writing for Vision, talk with Mary



Reflection

from Advent Readings from Iona
by B Woodcock and J Sutch Pickard

She was childless - but in no way was she barren.
It was just the way life had worked out:
No life-long partner, though several strong and lasting friendships.
No children, though years of congratulating and encouraging
Folk of her generation who did become parents.
Yes, there was a sense of what might have been,
Month by month her body had prepared for the possibility of life -
She knew it was in working order.
But the right relationship, the right time, never happened.
She believed that she would have been a good mother
So sometimes, in low moments, she felt incomplete.
And yet...no one would have called her barren.

To her friends' children she was an adoptive aunt:
source of surprises when they were little,
A wise listener and vital ally as they struggled through adolescence.
She was often much easier to talk to than their own parents.
She offered unconditional love.
How could she be called barren? Her adult friendships were
creative:
In them she and others grew through sharing of interests
and care for each other.
She was a teacher: all over the world now
there are people who write to tell her how much they owe to her:
insights that changed their lives, confidence to be themselves,
courage to take new directions.
All her life she has been a source of life.
She is childless, but she is not barren.
And God is not finished with her yet.

**Morialta's Advent Celebration**

On the evening of Advent 2, about 65 members of our congregation gathered in the hall, decorated with 17 small Christmas trees, to celebrate the coming of this important season. David Purling led the evening in inimitable fashion, in which we sang carols, and were entertained by players and singers. Neville gave us a quiz to challenge our brains, and then a Christmas supper was presented in full festive fashion. Judith Purling commented on the beauty of the extensive range of trees done by members and church groups, and presented all with certificates of merit. The atmosphere was one of Christmas cheer, love and friendship.

Cynthia Story



Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the Christmas hampers for distribution through UnitingCare Adelaide East.

GOD ...

We, the Morialta Church Family, worship God collectively (through Jesus) but ultimately we have our own uniquely personal relationships with God which are difficult to articulate from within us.

If we ask sources in the wider community to help us share our God, what do we hear? Would we gain added meaning to our worship?

You might like to hear from writers when asked, "Is there a God?".....and then judge for yourself.

Michael Williams who lives in the United Kingdom writes, "God will always be beyond our grasp, but always within our experience, as a necessary impossibility, that calls us beyond ourselves."

On the other hand Robert McDonald from Scotland writes, "Considering the never ending plight of humankind God can nowhere be perfect, supreme or any of the qualities that Christians define as God. Definitely not worth worshipping at any rate."

In reply, Mark MacCallum, from New Zealand says that it seems not just probably, but absolutely certain, "that God's actions would sometimes be beyond our limited comprehension. This fact does not eliminate the problem of evil (McDonald's argument) for the theists, but it does reduce its force."

"None of this", he says, "proves God's existence, but it does go some way towards indicating why I find a rather traditional image of God a plausible, even probable, hypothesis. And by this

traditional image I mean a good God who has purposes and gives us purposes, who has a moral sense and who has chosen to give us a moral sense."

Does this help? For me, at my age I no longer need debate. It is interesting but now I know there is a *Somebody* for me who is 'the ground of my being'.

Arthur Tideman

More arguments for the existence of God can be found in the May 2008 edition of *Philosophy Now* a magazine available in most libraries or you are welcome to borrow my copy.

GOD our deliverer, whose approaching birth still shakes the foundations of our world, may we so wait for your coming with eagerness and hope that we embrace without terror the labor pangs of the new age.

Janet Morley, All Desires Known

**Encouraging each other in ministry and mission, sharing resources and providing mutual support**

The Urban Mission Network comprises congregations, faith communities and agencies located mainly in civic and regional centres and on main thoroughfares.

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.

The Network maintains its pattern of support and encouragement to congregations through the monthly bulletin and through major gatherings hosted by different Congregations who share their ministry and mission experience.

During 2008 we've met at St Andrews Glenelg, Christ Church Wayville, St Johns Prospect and the Adelaide Korean Church. These times of gathering together and getting to know each other have enriched our imagination and inspired us to reflect on the life of our own congregations.

St Andrews shared their story of close involvement with the civic and business community of Jetty Road which has led to public recognition and appreciation of the community chaplaincy model developed over the past ten years.

Christ Church shared the ten year story of the Effective Living Centre and St Johns Prospect spoke of how they are developing community partnerships to establish a healing centre and the struggle to renovate a building to provide accommodation for this program.

Our friends at the Adelaide Korean Church hosted our final Network gathering for 2008 and gave a snapshot of their many programs which include English-language classes for women and Korean-language classes for children, playgroup, and the Stone-pillow Dream Mission Centre, a guest house which provides accommodation for first arrivals until they become settled.

The first gathering for 2009 will be hosted by the Yilki congregation on Thursday 26th February at 6.00 pm and we look forward to hearing their story of being a neighbourhood church. All are welcome at this gathering. Please speak with Mary, Bruce or Christine if you'd like to come.

South Australian Council of Churches - Christmas Bowl 2008

Many thanks to the volunteers, who either collected, coordinated, walked the streets of Adelaide taking money to the Bank, and/or helped at the Bank last Friday for our Badge Day. To date we have banked over \$10,000 from around the city and suburbs. It was a great effort by all and without the many volunteers who give up their time, this would not be possible

And - you may be interested.....in Christmas Bowl Gift Cards

Queensland Churches Together/**act for peace** has produced gift cards that you can buy from QCT. When you give them a card, your friends and family will then be donating to a project supported by the Christmas Bowl. The gift of money spent on the card supports the activity shown on the card. This is one way that you can help people around the world, let them know that God loves them and that someone is thinking of them this Christmas. Please make sure you buy yours soon!

Orders should be placed quickly by phoning: (07) 3369 8573 Alternatively you can post it to: *act for peace*, PO Box 2045, Milton QLD 4064 or email on cws@qct.org.au or have a look on line at: <http://www.qct.org.au>

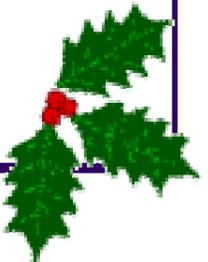
There are five possible Gift Cards -
\$25 buys one counselling session for a survivor of the Sudan conflict.
\$50 goes towards building a Rainwater Harvesting Tank in Zimbabwe.
\$74 will feed a family living on the Thailand-Burma Border in a refugee camp for one month.
\$150 will provide the set-up cost for a Kiosk in Timor Leste to establish a small business.
\$300 will provide sewing machines and materials for a group of five people in Timor Leste.



Once again Morialta folk were in action collecting for Christmas Bowl at two points in the city. Well done all!

Brian's excellent pictures have captured the brilliant smiles and public-appeal qualities of these willing collectors. Just a few are shown.

Thanks are due, too, to Brian for his thoughtful organization and support of this important opportunity to assist giving to others in so much need.



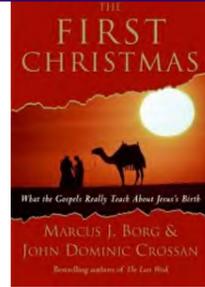


Morialta Uniting Church Library
Living books ~ giving life



Advent/Christmas

O come O dayspring from on high
And cheer us by your drawing nigh.
Dispense the gloomy clouds of night
And death's dark shadow put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel!
Shall come to thee, O Israel!
O come, O Come, Emmanuel!"



The First Christmas by Crossan & Borg enriches our understanding of Jesus in desperately needed ways.

Readers will find here profound and convincing insights into the meaning of Jesus' birth – and life – for the early church, and will be challenged to discern their meaning for the world today.



Summer Reading ...

Interesting books to entertain or inform you ... some light - some deeper



Reinventing the Bush
By Marg Carroll

Meet a new generation of pioneering young Australians creating exciting possibilities in our outback and bush communities. A book full of inspiration and hope.

Queen Noor Memoirs of an Unexpected Life Leap of Faith by Queen Noor.

Leap of Faith is the dramatic and inspiring story of a western woman's remarkable journey into the heart of a man and his nation. The man is King Hussain and the nation is Jordan.

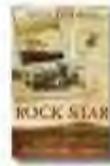


Human Rights Overboard
by Linda Briskman

For the first time, the oral testimony and written submissions from the inquiry are drawn together in the one vital book which stands as an indictment of Australia's refugee policy.



Rock Star
by Kristin Weidenbach- The story of Reg Sprigg – an outback legend



When or Where
by Anita Shreve

Powerfully drawn together once again, Charles and Sian are forced to come to terms with the nature of erotic love and betrayal, moral quandaries in an age of shifting values, and the elusive nature of time.



The Sunday Philosophy Club
by Alexander McCall Smith

Who is the man who tumbled to his death in front of the sleuth Isabel Dalhousie's very eyes, after a concert in the Usher Hall. Did he fall or was he pushed?



Q is for Quarry
by Sue Grafton

"One of the more empathic sleuths on the block, Grafton's heroine is also genuinely believable, full of quirks and all too human foibles....."

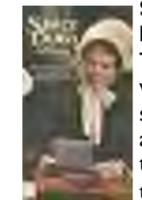
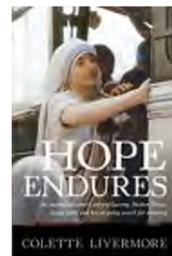
Falling Angels
by Tracy Chevalier

(Author of Girl with a Pearl Earring)
"Through the various voices contained in two middle-class households, Tracy Chevalier combines a galloping plot with a quiet understanding of the profound changes heralded by the death of Queen Victoria."



Hope Endures
by Colette Livermore

An Australian sister's story of leaving Mother Teresa, losing faith, and her on-going search for meaning.



Sister Dora
by Jo Manton

This is the first full biography of a remarkable woman; beautifully, sensitive, with a strong sense of humour, Dorothy Pattison. She joined a pioneer Anglican sisterhood which sent her to nurse in the heart of the Black Country in the Midlands of the UK.

Morialta Evening Fellowship 2008



I have pleasure in giving this report for the year's meetings which have been diverse, with the added bonus of fun and friendship. Meetings have been well attended with between sixteen and twenty-six present.



The "Olympics Down Under" event combined with Tea Tree Gully Fellowship was a huge success. Many "nations" marched into the arena, all with the flags of their country held proudly aloft. The Flame was lit with due Ceremony and the Queen spoke words of encouragement to all participants. Medals and flowers were presented to all winners. Arlene Lomman and Joy Machin, the hard working organisers of this spectacular event, were congratulated.

My grateful thanks to Ruth Pitt, Arlene Lomman and Margaret Boundy for their help in taking notes and to the Committee which would have to be the best Committee a Co-ordinating Secretary ever had - reliable, uncomplaining and ever willing. Also, thanks to Rev. Diane Buy for attending this AGM once again.

Last year's Christmas dinner was a wonderful effort by Aileen Brogan and Aileen James who organised the entire feast.

We began the year in a relaxed style with twenty-four members and three husbands meeting by the Duck Pond at Hazelwood Park to chat or walk or both. The committee recommended that we sew and knit for UnitingCare during the year and at the Christmas in July dinner we brought winter goods which included beanies, scarves, pillowcases, money bags made from silk ties, knee rugs and children's clothing to name a few. Colin Cargill spoke on the different ways of celebrating Christmas he has experienced in Bali, Tonga, Switzerland and two completely different celebrations in America.



Mark from Norwood Garden Centre spoke on drought-proofing the garden and gave out plastic bags full of useful goodies such as Seamungus Tonic made from composting seaweed and fish. We combined with the Social Justice Group once again and three speakers came from the Quakers, The Society of Friends.

A fun night was "How well do you know your Partner?" and the men surprised us all by knowing the dates of their wedding days.

Annelise, a delightful and enthusiastic young lady spoke of her two summers on McQuarie Island, one as a Ranger, and showed beautiful slides of the wildlife. The speaker from "Angel Flight", a pilot who transports patients from country areas to hospital for treatment or family members to visit loved ones, also showed slides and was no less enthusiastic.

We did two catering jobs, one for the Boundy's 50th Wedding Anniversary and the other, a Farewell Party given by Clayton Wesley for Kym Whittington. This is the reason that we have funds to donate to charities.

Our bonus outings have also been diverse. Anne Leach gave a knowledgeable talk on "What is Art?", greatly enjoyed by all, and many interesting exhibits were brought for display. The visit to the Jam Factory also showed many differing art forms and the Film Evening with 18 attendees at the Trak Cinemas finished with coffee and cake outside while enjoying the mild evening.

My thanks to all who contributed in any way to the success of the 2008 program, and best wishes to the Office Bearers of 2009.



Marg Ulyett
Co-ordinating Secretary

Photos - Fellowship celebrated Christmas with festive food and great entertainment, featuring local artists.

MISSION PROJECTS says "Thank you!"

To the congregation for the generous support and participation in our program of events. You may be interested in this summary.

Total amount raised was \$3185

Fundraising Events for 2008 raised the following :

Cans \$ 279.35	Pot-luck Tea \$ 711.00	Netball Stall \$543.75	Concert \$333.00
Fashion Parade \$441.55	Mission Envelopes \$267.00	Muffin Morning Teas \$609.35	

Funds were distributed to :

North Puton in the Philippines \$1085.00 North Korea: Rasun Children's Home \$1050.00 Cambodia: Resources for teaching \$1050.00

Additionally, the sale of Christmas Cards raised \$512 for National and World Mission

Congratulations to our enthusiastic and well organised team which works on our behalf and to Averil for providing this information.



Mighty Magill Christmas Market & Exhibition

Nearly 100 members of our congregation were busy in some way supporting the Market and Exhibition and making it happen with the style and Christmas cheer that we enjoy! Around \$8,000 was raised. Statistics aside, the event was a real success again this year. The feeling of community and the sense of 'bon homm ' makes Morialta a good place to be.



Throughout the day there were many little examples of what the event means to the local community. People come back year after year to get bargains from the Bric-a Brac Stall and an increasing number of our neighbours make a bee-line to the Sanctuary to experience the Exhibition.

We could sell double the cakes and other goodies that come in for the Cake Stall and the Christmas Gourmet Goodies, and the Gift Boxes are quick to move. I have it on good authority that the Christmas Craft group are already starting to prepare for next year which is a good thing because there are only 11 months to go!

While we did sell a lot to stuff on the day it is worth noting that the items we could not move were donated to Goodies at Clayton Wesley, Birthline on Magill Road and Oxfam.

Well done everyone!

Bruce



Abundance of God

No one can celebrate a genuine Christmas without being truly poor. The self-sufficient, the proud, those who, because they have everything, look down on others, those who have no need even of God – for them there will be no Christmas. Only the poor, the hungry, those who need someone to come on their behalf, will have that someone. That someone is God. Emmanuel. God-with-us. Without poverty of spirit there can be no abundance of God.

Oscar Romero, slain Archbishop of El Salvador, quoted by William Willimon in Watch for the Light

Life: Look Out!

Life: step forward! Separately, togetherly, march on. Linked by chromosomal lodes and thuds and Christmas pudding. Together bound, fiercely. Mysteriously webbed.

Still, alone and unique, we tread our precious path. Our own heart beat pounds the passing day 'til numbered day comes round. Life: look out!

Alison Lockett



In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God

Isaiah 40:1-5



Morialta Magpie



Do you recognise these folk?

Rev Elwyn Penna, who joined Newton in ministry in 1987, celebrated his 80th Birthday recently.

Family and friends joined with him, including his wife, Valmai, daughter Rev Rosemary Carter, also dear to Morialta, and a number of our continuing church family.

Happy Birthday, Elwyn!



Santa Visits Morialta Playgroup

Playgroup enjoyed another year of seeing the growth and development of little children and the sharing and support of parents.

A big "Thank you!" to Rev Diane Bury and Rev David Purling who visit the group regularly for morning tea, and to Bruce who visits with Keely. Also, thanks to the Paper Team and Property Team who helped with the purchase of an umbrella for much needed shade and our volunteers who provide tasty morning teas each week.

We have had the privilege of having some children attend our group now from birth until four years of age and now we see these children move on to kindergarten. For Faye, Margaret, Helen and the volunteers it has been a rewarding experience in watching their development.

On 8th December the Playgroup year was completed with a Christmas party of great food, good cheer, and a visit from Santa.

We look forward to the 2009 Playgroup year which commences on Tuesday, 27 January, at 9.30 a.m.

Helen Penhall.

Congratulations ...

to all our younger members who have completed studies, courses, gained awards and graduated. Happy Summer Holidays and Best Wishes for 2009!!

Definitions?

SECRET: Something you tell to one person at a time

WRINKLES: Something other people have, similar to my character lines

TOMORROW: One of the greatest labour saving devices of today

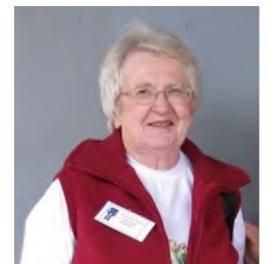


LONG SERVICE! Our graffiti removal specialists recognized!



It is fitting that two men of our congregation – Merv Boundy and Bob Lloyd - have been given awards for service to Magill, Campbelltown and Norwood, Payneham and St Peters Councils. The first award came from the Neighbourhood Watch Association for their effort as a team in a special award for conspicuous attention to detail in their duties in the Local Service Area! The second award, from the Norwood, Payneham and St Peters Councils Council, was presented by Mayor, Robert Bria, on 28 November for removal of graffiti, tags, etc. in the Eastern Suburbs. Both men received certificates of award. They've given over 11 years of service each – an outstanding record! They relish their contribution to this work, knowing that they are able to make the area a nicer place in which to work and live.

Campbelltown Council Graffiti line 8365 3147 (Office Hours)



Happy 70th Birthday Bev Tredrea!

