

Morialta Vision ... in the Wilderness

– by the gift of the spirit we have not lost the way!

A Publication of Morialta Uniting Church

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

Welcome to Vision in the Wilderness 16

– by the gift of the spirit we have not lost the way.

In this edition we present exciting news for those who have missed singing in church, and a new slant on the parable of “the wedding feast” to ponder and reflect upon. Also, concerns about balloons, people’s views on Jesus and the Crucifixion, and information about dining at Hope’s Café to help young people gain work experience.

We welcome your contributions – stories, events, photos and articles – less than 300 words is ideal and hand written pieces are fine. Cut off dates for future “VitW” are 6th and 20th November.

Either drop a copy into Nicole at the Office
or call me on 0427 122 106
or email me at snout-n-bout@bigpond.com.au

Go well and stay safe!

Afternoon Delights at Morialta

Sunday 8th November 2 - 4pm

Why not indulge in a Devonshire tea (or coffee) while enjoying musical entertainment from some of Morialta’s talented musicians in the Morialta church hall.

Bookings essential - seating limited
due to Covid precautions, so book early to avoid disappointment!

Tickets \$15 from the church office or
Judith Purling.

Proceeds support church projects.



Fellowship

From Margaret Clogg

At our October meeting, Gaynor spoke about her voluntary work at both the men’s and women’s prisons. It was a fascinating talk that gave an amazing insight into the needs of some of the prisoners. An interesting question time followed.

Our next meeting, at 10.00am on November 19th, is the AGM, and Gil Sullivan will talk to us about his life in music. Everyone is welcome to come along.

Fellowship bonbons for Uniting Communities

We will be making bonbons in late November. If you have cardboard tubes from paper towel, plastic wrap, alfoil, etc. (no toilet rolls please), could you please bring them to the church foyer and place them into the labelled cardboard box.

Singing in Worship at Morialta UC

Since our return to gathered Worship on 16th August this year the congregation has refrained from singing in response to ongoing concerns for our COVID vulnerable community.

Our services have been enhanced with video, musical items and a participating singer when our musicians play a song. While we have been able to hum, mouth the words, or clap to accompany the musicians and singer, there has been a significant desire for a more active involvement in worship.

After much deliberation at our last meeting, Church Council made the decision to re-commence congregational singing from 8th November. We will still remain seated during the singing and be encouraged to use low to moderate levels of volume. If you feel you would like to be removed from worship rosters due to this decision, please contact Bruce Ind.

Of course, this decision was not taken lightly. Church Council recognises the range of views held by members of our community, but, based on advice available through State and Synod sources, Church Council considered the risk of contracting COVID19 through this change in practice to be acceptable.

Morialta UC’s COVID Protocols remain in place. People are reminded to stay home if unwell, to register their attendance, use appropriate hand hygiene and maintain physical distancing during their participation in events at Chapel Street.

During worship the existing ‘music bubble’ will remain in place and procedures around the use of instruments and AV equipment will stay as previously observed. Given the range of views, relating to this matter, Church Council has undertaken to make face masks available to those who wish to wear one.

Given the extremely low level of COVID 19 within South Australia and the procedures put in place, to monitor and report transmission of this dangerous virus, as well as the realisation that COVID 19 will be part of our normal existence for some significant time to come, Church Council assessed the likely transmission of COVID 19 through the relaxation of this practice to be within acceptable limits.

Church Council will continue to monitor the situation, around COVID 19, as it applies in South Australia and will vary this and other decisions as required in response to any elevated risk.

It would be appreciated if anyone would like to donate sweets for the bonbons. We require packets of wrapped sweets - no chocolate. These can also be placed in a labelled cardboard box in the foyer.

Many thanks for your contributions!

Something to ponder

From Marie Elson

Ever wondered what would happen, if we treated the Bible like we treat our mobile phones?

- if we carried it around in handbags or pockets?
- if we turned back to get it, if we forgot it?
- if we flipped through it many times a day?
- if we treated it as if we couldn't do without it?
- if we never wanted to travel without it?
- if we bought new ones just to have the latest edition?
- if we used it in case of an emergency?
- if we groaned if we ever dropped it?
- if we always had it close by for easy access?
- if we used it to receive messages from the text? Text messages.

Oh, and one more thing ...

Unlike our mobiles, we don't ever have to worry about our Bible being disconnected, because Jesus has already paid the bill!

Also, He knows more than Siri, and is happy to be consulted 24/7.

Australians' understanding of Jesus

From NCLS

While 57% of Australians believe Jesus was a real person who actually lived, 22% believe he is a mythical or fictional character and 20% have no opinion. Source: 2019 ACS by NCLS Research (n=1,272).

However only 20% of Australians believe he was a normal human being while 9% more people (29%) believe he was a prophet or spiritual leader, but not God. Approximately 26% believe he was God in human form who lived among people in the 1st Century, and 21% do not know.

People with other views account for 4% of the population. Source 2019 ACS by NCLS Research (n=987)

Just under half (47%) of Australians believe the resurrection of Jesus from the dead happened, but only 23% believe it occurred as described in the Bible. The remaining 24% believe the story should not be taken literally. A third (33.5%) do not believe the resurrection took place and a significant 20% do not know.

Source: 2019 ACS by NCLS Research (n=1,272).

Another "Wedding Feast" parable

Adapted from a reflection by Kristin Gorton

The kingdom of heaven can be compared to... the mayor of a large urban city hosted a wedding reception for her daughter. She hired a wedding planner and the largest reception hall in town and invited CEOs, real estate moguls, and political leaders. But no one replied. So the mayor texted the wedding planner: "Message the guests again and tell them to come!"

But everyone ignored her. One flew his private jet to his luxury resort, another appeared at a fundraiser for her political opponent, another criticized the mayor on Twitter. The mayor was enraged so she had leaflets printed and handed out on street corners. She also posted it on social media.

Everyone was invited – joggers, cyclists, parents pushing strollers, people in coffee shops, people living under bridges, families at soccer practice, students – everyone. Buses went to nursing homes and to shelters and soon the wedding hall was filled with guests.

The place was packed! And then... the mayor noticed one person, someone who stood out in that beautifully diverse crowd – one person the mayor declared not welcome. But who was this unidentified person? If Jesus is comparing God's vision of heaven to this extravagant, wonderful feast... just who is it that is not welcome?

For us in the "Uniting Church", a denomination that declares, "whoever you are, you are welcome," the story is unsettling. Jesus tells us that *both good and bad people were accepted* – no matter your socioeconomic status, no matter your skin tone, no matter your physical or cognitive ability, no matter your sexual or gender identity, no matter your age – you are welcome. So, who is this interloper?

Could the person be the presence of Evil? Or oppression? Or scarcity? Might **these** entities be banished from heaven? The Jesus followers in the first century experienced imprisonment, torture, and death at the hands of the Empire. If that was the evil that you lived in fear of each day, just think of the immense, transformational hope that would erupt from envisioning this new, creative image of abundance and welcome for all.

A place with no evil. No hate. No fear.

Kristin Gorton holds a Master of Arts in Counselling and is a member of the American Counselling Association.

Strength and weakness

"Many people think that patience is a sign of weakness. I think this is a mistake. It is anger that is a sign of weakness, whereas patience is a sign of strength."

The Dalai Llama



Pope Francis, in a letter to the church said,

"For human beings to destroy the biological diversity of God's

creation; for human beings to degrade the integrity of the earth by causing changes in its climate, by stripping the earth of its natural forests or destroying its wetlands; for human beings to contaminate the earth's waters, its land, its air, and its life - these are sins."

Not the Mighty Magill Market 2020

Sadly, due to Covid-19, we will not be holding our usual Mighty Magill Market this year.

Instead we will be joining in the national Garage Sale Trail on Saturday 21st November from 9am to 2pm, taking all necessary precautions to keep everyone safe.

We are planning to hold outdoor plant, book and craft stalls on the day, so please start thinking about any items you can contribute.

More details will be available nearer the time., but in the meantime, if you have any questions, please talk to Helena (0422 383842) or Bruce (0413 606200).



Dining at Hope's Street Food

Hope's Café, corner Norwood Parade and Portrush Road (rear of Clayton Wesley Uniting Church)

Thursday and Friday evenings until 27 November

A social enterprise initiative to help young people gain work-experience and work-opportunities.

Support Fundraising for COFA on Thursday evenings (a \$10 surcharge to help COFA circles assist refugees, especially the new group of Naureans who had recently lost their housing-privileges).

Meals usually cost between \$10 - \$16 a head, BYO welcome.

Please book through Rebecca Walker

For more information contact Rebecca Walker

Phone 0499 338 836 or

email RebeccaW@unitingcommunities.org

Foreigners in a different land

"We all have stories and we all have ancestries and connections. To be foreign in a different land to where you're born usually comes with a lot of grief and loss and misfortune. If people had a choice to be safe where they are, where they're connected to their own history and ancestry, of course people would choose that."

Farida Ayubi who came to Australia as a 2-year-old with her Afghani parents and sisters. SA Weekend Magazine 17/18 October 2020

"Christians are not victims in Australia because of our faith, and we should not seek freedoms that are self-serving and come at the detriment of others in the community."

Simon Hansford – Moderator of the NSW Synod of the UCA, in response to legislation before the NSW Parliament.

Happy Halloween?

Halloween is celebrated each year on October 31. The tradition originated with the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain, when people would light bonfires and wear costumes to ward off ghosts. In the eighth century, Pope Gregory III designated November 1 as a time to honour all saints. Soon, All Saints Day incorporated some of the traditions of Samhain. The evening before was known as All Hallows Eve, and later Halloween. Over time, Halloween evolved into a day of activities like trick-or-treating, carving jack-o-lanterns, festive gatherings, donning costumes and eating treats.

As we learn to live with Covid 19, perhaps we should take some time on All Saints Day to be thankful for all the saints today who are caring for the sick, working to create a vaccine, making important decisions about how to keep people safe, and more.

Let's also keep in our prayers those in countries less fortunate than ours, who are really struggling with Covid 19.



Pepper Street Arts Centre

The Pepper Street Arts Centre is celebrating 25 years this week! The Arts Centre is a valuable community space that promotes local artists and hosts workshops for budding creators to develop new skills.

The Arts Centre building is a little bit older than 25, in fact, it is 138 years old!

Built in 1882, the site was originally the Magill village primary school and accommodated 150 pupils. By 1924, the school was overcrowded and some classes were moved to the Brougham Street community hall. Two years later, a new classroom was constructed on the corner of Penfold Road and Adelaide Street.

Junior students continued to attend classes in the 'old' school building until 1963. The site was then used by the Art Faculty of Wattle Park Teachers' College and later by the Kent Town Special School. In 1988, Burnside Council purchased the building and launched the Arts Centre in 1995.

Photograph: Magill Primary School, 1882

Information: Burnside Historical Society

Two more things we can do right now to help the world

From Reset – Digital for Good

Make informed decisions as a consumer and as a citizen:

The 100 largest companies in the world are responsible for over 70 percent of global emissions. So give preference to companies that act responsibly with sound environmental practices and support politicians who are committed to climate protection.

Get on your bike!

After walking, the bicycle is the number one form of sustainable transportation.

Connections between disease and climate change

Adapted from the Environmental Action Group Website

The world is in the midst of a disease pandemic which arrived when creation was already experiencing another major crisis, climate change. The emergence of the current pandemic demonstrates that humans, just like any other species, are vulnerable when placed in an unnatural or sub-optimal environment.

Recent research over the last two decades has shown the coronavirus family's presence and diversity in wildlife makes it a major zoonotic public health threat. Hence the unnatural environment created in a wet market (sub-optimal hygiene and a mix of animal species not normally in close contact) enabled a virus to jump species.

While climate change played no part, climate change is creating a sub-optimal environment for many species through warming oceans, changes in the relationship between temperature and altitude, and more severe and extreme weather events.

Both disease pandemics and climate change are complex and multifactorial events that are influenced by how humans live and relate to each other. While climate change did not cause COVID-19, it can be linked to other emerging diseases of plants and animals, including humans.

Extreme weather events, due to climate change, create conditions conducive to clusters of insect-, rodent- and water-borne diseases emerging in geographical regions where they were unknown.

Changes in climate also affect the seasonal patterns of disease through lengthening transmission seasons and affecting environmental and demographic thresholds. The seasonal patterns of cholera epidemics in Peru and Bangladesh; ciguatera (fish toxin) in the Pacific islands; Ross River virus epidemics in Australia; and dengue and malaria epidemics in several countries have lengthened and changed.

One commonality between the current pandemic and climate change is our failure to heed warnings. Human and animal health experts have warned us for decades about the emergence of new diseases and changes to the patterns of existing diseases. Similarly, climate scientists, geologists and meteorologists have been warning us about the connection between climate change and how we live and pollute the planet.

Perhaps an anonymous quote says it all – “When birds soil their nest, we know they are sick – humans have been soiling their nest since the industrial revolution!”

Fact sheets and other information about the Environmental Action Group are available at <https://www.environmentalaction.org.au/>

“No matter how educated, talented, rich or cool you believe you are, whether you do what's best for your community tells all”.

Anonymous

Balloons Fly – Seabirds Die

Adapted from an article by Anne Layton Bennett, published in the Veterinarian



There's no question balloons are fun – but discarded and degrading balloons can be harmful for our environment and deadly for wildlife.

The environmental impact of balloons has been debated between environmentalists and manufacturers for decades. Claims that biodegradable latex balloons are a responsible alternative to the mylar (plastic foil) product were tested recently by researchers at Hobart 's Institute of Marine and Antarctic Studies.

Researchers exposed balloons to freshwater, salt water and industrial compost before testing them for changes in mass, tensile strength and composition. Sadly, the results showed that balloons were the same size and shape after 16 weeks. The minor changes found were variable between balloon types and treatments, with composted balloons losing 1-2% of their mass, and some in fresh-water gaining mass, most likely due to osmosis. Even industrial compost methods didn't facilitate degradation.

While latex balloons are promoted as having a negligible environmental impact, due to latex being a natural product and thus biodegradable, this claim overlooks the manufacturing process. To create high quality, long-lasting balloons, latex is vulcanised with sulphur and treated with heavy metal compounds, waxes, antioxidants, plasticisers, flame retardants and the pigments.

If latex balloons do not degrade within acceptable composting guide lines, fragments can have a lethal impact on turtles, sea birds and marine animals.

Alternatives to balloons

- Hire a bubble machine or make DIY bubble solution by mixing dish soap, water and sugar or glycerine or corn syrup – lots of recipes online.
- Recyclable paper decorations – lanterns, paper balloons and bunting
- Fabric decorations – flags, banners and garlands
- Wooden decorations
- Flowers and plants

<https://www.reusablenation.com/zero-waste-living/6-alternatives-to-balloons-and-other-plastic-single-use-decorations>

On the lighter side...



“Do you guys know where I can get one of those gold necklaces with a “T” on it?”

“That’s a cross.”

“Across where?”