

# 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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## Welcome to Vision in the Wilderness 19

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

This will be our penultimate ‘Vision in the Wilderness’ for 2020. (Not a word you can use very often!)

The Advent themes of hope, peace, joy and love can all be expressed through the tradition of the Christmas Bowl and the Uniting Care Christmas Appeal and we commend these to you.

If you have Christmas or Advent stories that you would like to share with us, the cut-off date for the next (and final) edition for 2020 will be **18<sup>th</sup> December**. Either drop a copy into Nicole at the Office or call me (Colin) on 0427 122 106 or email me at [snout-n-bout@bigpond.com.au](mailto:snout-n-bout@bigpond.com.au)

Go well!

Helena and Colin

## Christmas can be a difficult time for many people in our community.

### Uniting Care Christmas Appeal

This year especially, we think of those who are doing it tough for the first time and are bracing themselves for a very different Christmas. For people facing financial stress, many will struggle to access daily necessities, such as food, essential items, and even a safe place to live.

### But you can make a difference!

The Target Christmas Appeal has proudly partnered with UnitingCare Australia for the past 29 years to give customers the chance to support a better Christmas for those in need. Giving to the appeal will help make Christmas a better day for thousands of people and families who might otherwise go without.

The UnitingCare Australia network is one of the largest networks of community service providers in Australia with many well-known services such as Lifeline, Wesley Mission and Uniting Communities. They support 1.4 million people every year across urban, rural and remote communities and have over 50,000 staff and 30,000 volunteers assisting our most vulnerable.

100% of all contributions go directly to UnitingCare Australia and their national network of community service providers, who have been at the front line of service provision for over 100 years. All donations to the Christmas Appeal are allocated to the State or Territory in which they are made.

<https://www.unitingcarechristmasappeal.com.au/donation-page-2020>

## Advent stories of hope, peace, joy and love

From Crosslight – Vic/Tas Synod of the UCA

For Christians the birth of Jesus is not just an historical event to be marked on Christmas Day but an ongoing story of the way that God is at work in the world. The period of Advent leading up to Christmas is for many an important time to reflect. “We slow-down in order to see the many places that messages of hope, peace, joy and love are being born in us, in our world, and in the church.”

Here are three stories about the traditional Advent themes of hope, peace, joy and love to show us how God’s life has been born in the church and reaches out to the world.

A story of joy and love featured a border collie named Rose who was travelling with her owner in his car when he stopped briefly to run into the supermarket to grab a paper. When he returned both car and Rose were gone. The 80+ widowed owner’s church swung into action and the entire community turned out to find Rose. Both dog and owner were ecstatic to be reunited, even if the car was still missing.

A story of peace and love was entitled “Balloons over Bendigo”. It related how Faith and Community Leaders in Bendigo came together to fill the air with coloured balloons carrying the message “Racism has no place in Bendigo”. This was in response to anti-Islamic black balloons which had been tied to several councillors’ homes the previous week following the decision to approve a mosque being built in the city.

A story of hope, love and justice came from a young mum watching a documentary about the garbage dump children in Cambodia. ... *looking through my TV into the eyes of a toddler who spent her days scouring through the waste, I realised the little girl would never attend school, grow up malnourished and have little hope for a home, warmth or comfort. I looked into the eyes of my own child, who is no different and yet he will live a very different life. While I can never hope to save all the children that live on the garbage dumps, I can strive to bring hope and justice to our community and the world around us.*

Advent is a time of hope, peace, joy and love and concern for our neighbour – it is about the other, not about us.

## Bonbons for Uniting Communities

From Margaret Clogg - Fellowship

On a very hot Saturday, 8 members of Fellowship had a productive day making 370 bonbons for Uniting Communities. Fun and Fellowship was had by all. Thanks to all who donated cardboard tubes and sweets for our ‘elves’.



## Colin Sampson 1946- 2020

*Adapted from an article by Jenny Swanbury*

Colin was born in Orroroo Hospital and grew up on his parents' farm near Orroroo. Early primary years were enjoyed at Wynflete (one teacher, fourteen students), then it was bus to Orroroo Area School. However, at the end of second year he was expected back on the farm.



Colin loved the family and community life of his growing up in the country, particularly being with his extended family and neighbours. He enjoyed the freedom to experiment with engines and at about 10 years of age organised a Fiat generator driven by a Villiers engine Mark 10 on wheels to charge a battery for spotlighting. Soon after he put together his first motorised vehicle: a wooden box towed by an Allen Oxford motor scythe, soon upgraded to a Heaslip three-wheeled trailer again towed by the motor scythe.

Life changed dramatically when his mother died at the age of 39 years. It was a devastating time and the family moved to Springton. Later Colin moved to Adelaide where he met and married his wife Helen. Colin and Helen lived in Rostrevor where Lisa, Tasha and Karl were born. Sadly, Colin and Helen later divorced.

Colin went to night school for ten years to study motor mechanics and Chris Ayles was one of his lecturers. He worked with Jaguar at Bryson Industries, Ken Eustice and then Taylor's of Medindie with Land Rover and Peugeot. Later he transferred his Peugeot skills to Australian Motors and finally Jarvis. Colin twice won the Peugeot Australian Technical Advisor Award for highest level of Peugeot Technical Skill and Knowledge – which took him to Paris twice.

Colin began tuning in to the Sunday evening Maughan Church worship service on Radio 5KA, and after six months he decided to anonymously attend an evening service to see for himself. But his anonymity was blown at the door when he was welcomed by his former Orroroo School principal Ken Templer. Colin stayed until Maughan Church closed and we at Morialta were blessed when he found his way to Chapel Street.

Colin treasured not just the spiritual and social messages found in worship, but the encouragement, the education, the friendships and sense of community. Colin also valued pastoral care, both the receiving and the giving, and was a team leader at Maughan with Jenny Swanbury. Jenny and Colin continued a close and supportive relationship over many years, with Jenny also coming to Morialta after retirement.

Colin was an integral part of the Gateways family, often taking our discussions into complex territory with his questions from 'left' and 'right' field and his sense of the practical. He was also a valued member of the A-V team as a camera operator for BOW (Beyond our Walls) and streaming worship service.

Colin's openness and honesty made him one of the most sincere and supportive friends anyone could wish to meet.

## Uniting Care Christmas Hampers 2020

*Adapted from Newsletter article by Rhonda Amber and Jan Sillett*

Due to COVID-19 our Christmas giving will be very different this year. Registered clients with children will be given a Kmart voucher for each child and a bonbon, thanks to our church community. Registered clients will also be able to come to our centre where they will receive a Foodbank voucher depending on the size of their family to spend at the large Foodbank truck parked in the carpark. Clients will be able to choose food staples and Christmas fare to the value of their vouchers. If the centre receives any additional gifts of food or toys these will be available outside for clients to share.

### What can you do this year?

The option preferred by Uniting Care is gifts of money which will help to cover the costs of both the children's vouchers and the Foodbank vouchers. Jan Sillett and Rhonda Amber will happily collect this from you, but let them know if you would like a receipt.

If you know of someone who is facing a tough Christmas please encourage them to register with Uniting Care for help at Christmas.

## A Different Kind of Request

It has been a difficult year for full-time residents in Aged Care Nursing Facilities. Visits from family and friends have been restricted and residents have been confined to their rooms for long periods.

Modelled on a campaign by GetUp, the Social Justice Team, together with Pastoral Care Team and Fellowship, are encouraging members of the Morialta Community to send a Christmas card to individual residents in aged care nursing facilities in our area.

These include:

Warinna Court Residential Care facilities  
ACH Group Milpara  
Lutheran Homes Glynde

### How to get be involved

Contact the office by email or phone to register your name and the number of cards you would like to write. (We suggest 5 – 10 each.) You will then receive a list of names from one Facility. Write a message in the card and place the card in an envelope with the person's name and Facility name on the outside.

You can either deliver cards to the office or direct to the Facility. Cards dropped into the office will be delivered during the week prior to Christmas.

To assist you, Cynthia Story produced some beautiful cards which are available at the office for a small donation. Proceeds will go to the Christmas Bowl.

## Sunday Prayer

*Dr Deidre Palmer President of the Uniting Church in Australia*

Gracious and loving God, You call us to love you with our whole being, and to love our neighbours as ourselves.

At this time of upheaval and distress for nations and people across our world, may your love hold us together.

May your love be the lens through which we see each other and your world.

Lord Jesus Christ, you are present with us, as one who knows our suffering. Bring comfort and peace to all those who are grieving the loss of loved ones, work, connection and hope for the future.

May we embody your compassion – responding to the suffering of our neighbours, our families, our friends, and strangers with generosity.

Life-giving Spirit, you weave us together as the Body of Christ. Strengthen our life together, even though we are physically separated. Nurture us in faith and discipleship, that we may bear witness through our living, to your abundant grace and liberating hope for all people, and the whole creation.

Through Christ our Life and Hope, we pray. Amen



### Introducing Alice Kroker

My name is Alice and I'm looking forward to joining with your community while Bob is on leave in January and February. I'm a candidate for Minister of the Word and have been studying at Uniting College since 2016.

Earlier this year I completed my thesis on the topic of 'the impact of liminality and doubt on personal theology' as part of my Masters of Theological Studies. I've previously been in supply ministry at Unley and Christ Church, as well as guest preaching in numerous places.

Prior to studying ministry and theology I was in the science field, researching a potential cancer drug target.

I live with my two guinea pigs, Caesar and Cinnamon, and enjoy puzzles, reading, and walking along the beach or to visit the ducks that live at my local park.

### Life is an Advent season

*From CONNECTIONS, 11-28-93*



Life is a constant Advent season: we are continually waiting to become, to discover, to complete, to fulfill. Hope, struggle, fear, expectation and fulfillment are all part of our Advent experience.

The world is not as just, not as loving, not as whole as we know it can and should be. But the coming of Christ and his presence among us – as one of us – gives us reason to live in hope: that light will shatter the darkness, that we can be liberated from our fears and prejudices, that we are never alone or abandoned.

May this Advent season be a time for bringing hope, transformation and fulfillment into the Advent of our lives.

## Old-fashioned, spiritual Christmas?

*John R. Brokhoff, in "Preaching the Parables"*

What has happened to the old-fashioned, spiritual Christmas?

The cause is our disregard of Advent. The church set aside this four-week pre-Christmas season as a time of spiritual preparation for Christ's coming. It is a time of quiet anticipation.

If Christ is going to come again into our hearts, there must be repentance. Without repentance, our hearts will be so full of worldly things that there will be 'no room in the inn' for Christ to be born again.... We have the joy not of celebration, which is the joy of Christmas, but the joy of anticipation.



As a Christian, Rev Frank Byatt believed he had a responsibility to share the joy of his Christmas with our brothers and sisters in urgent need. That's why on Christmas Day in 1949, he put a Bowl of Remembrance on the dinner table and asked his family to 'share your good dinner with hungry children in other lands' by placing a gift in it. Frank knew that when Jesus called us to love our neighbours as ourselves, he meant **everyone** on God's Earth.

Life in post-war Australia was hard. People didn't have a lot to spare. Yet Frank, and thousands of others, shared what they did have with their neighbours across the seas. With the arrival of a pandemic, many Australians are again facing hardship, but Frank's legacy has never been more important. For vulnerable communities around the world, the effects of the pandemic are catastrophic. Already struggling, they are now being pushed to the brink without the support they need to survive.

Let us continue to share God's love and respond as the church across Australia and commit to loving our neighbours around the world.

This year your gifts to the Christmas Bowl will:

- help girls in Afghanistan to keep learning and restore their hopes for the future;
- help Rohingya refugees have the right to live as human beings and shape peaceful futures;
- help returned Sri Lankan refugees build the safe, joyful lives they deserve;
- provide Syrian refugees living in Jordan with training, food and healthcare – including masks and hygiene kits.

## Advent

At this Christmas when Christ comes, will He find a warm heart? Mark the season of Advent by loving and serving others with God's own love and concern.

*Mother Theresa*



## Some “different” Christmas traditions

Adapted from Team Wunderlust

**Japan** – Forget the Christmas turkey. For many Japanese, traditional Christmas dinner is Kentucky Fried Chicken. Due to a clever marketing campaign, convincing locals that fried chicken is a traditional American Yuletide feast, reservations have to be made to eat at a KFC on Christmas Day. Even the Colonel dons Santa gear.

**Norway** – Norwegians believe that Christmas Eve coincides with the arrival of evil spirits and witches. Hence Norwegian households hide all their brooms before they go to sleep. After all, nothing spoils Christmas quicker than finding your broom in broken pieces at the foot of a tree, trashed by some joy-riding witch.

**Greenland** – You can enjoy a Christmas dinner you'll never forget. Next time you find yourself complaining about brussels sprouts, spare a thought for the children of Greenland. Each Christmas, they have to tuck into mattak – raw whale skin with a little blubber – and kiviak, which is made by wrapping an auk (a small arctic bird) in seal skin, burying it for several months and eating its decomposed flesh.

**Guatemala** – Locals believe that the devil and other evil spirits live in the dark, dirty corners of your home. So, they spend the week before Christmas sweeping up and piling rubbish in a huge heap outside. An effigy of the devil is placed on top and the pile is set on fire. It's called La Quema del Diablo (the 'Burning of the Devil') and aims to burn all the bad from the previous year.

**Ukraine** – In addition to the standard tinsel, fairy lights and baubles, Ukrainians throw an artificial spider and web on the tree as well. The tradition comes from an old tale of a poor woman who couldn't afford to decorate her tree and woke on Christmas morning to discover a spider had covered it in a glorious, sparkling web. It's for good luck. It's not about poor housekeeping.

**Portugal** – During the traditional Christmas feast in Portugal, some families set extra places at the dining table for deceased relatives. It's thought that the practice will ensure good fortunes for the household. And you thought feeding all your living relatives was hard enough.

**Italy** – Unable to conclusively prove the existence of Santa, the Vatican decided to throw its weight behind something they'd had countless dealings with: an old witch called La Befana who delivers presents to children in Italy. The three wise men are supposed to have invited the witch to accompany them but she was too busy – so the legend was born.

**Germany** – On the evening of 5 December, German children leave a boot or a shoe outside their bedroom door. In the morning, if they've been good, they will wake to find the shoes filled with sweets. Alternatively, they may only find a branch.



## Cactus flowers and bees

From Brian Corrigan

Brian and Dale Corrigan have a cactus plant in their garden which flowers once each year. The flowers live for only one day and Brian is amazed at how much the bees enjoy them.

## Be Slavery Free



Be Slavery Free, formerly *Stop the Traffic*, is led by a coalition of civil society, community and other organisations working together.

The logo is drawn with one line which represents the one purpose for Be Slavery Free – to prevent, abolish and disrupt human trafficking and modern slavery. It also represents connectedness and strength through the simplicity of one line connecting people and creating the icon.

The one looping line represents 3 people. These people represent the partnership approach of Be Slavery Free with NGOs, business and activists. Our vision, mission and focus are on people. People are trafficked from a community to a community. When we have resilient communities, who know what trafficking and slavery is, and what to do about it – it can be prevented. We believe if you want to go far - go together.

The red and orange are colours of warning and signal the need to end this crime. Red is also the colour of fire and love, it is associated with energy, strength, power and determination. Orange is the colour of enthusiasm, creativity and optimism. In this spirit, we engage in our mission.

The members of the coalition include Act for Peace, Anglican Church of Australia, Asian Aid, AGRATH, Baptist Union, Dignity Freedom Network, ETIKO-wear no evil, The Freedom Project, HAGAR, NCJWA Victoria, Oaktree, Offspring, Project Respect, and Sisters of St Joseph.

You can support Be Slavery Free by purchasing Christmas Gifts from their Catalogue which can be viewed at

[https://issuu.com/fairtradeassociation/docs/fair\\_20trade\\_20christmas\\_20shopping\\_20guide\\_202020?mc\\_cid=28eeef13ea&mc\\_eid=07fbc1596e](https://issuu.com/fairtradeassociation/docs/fair_20trade_20christmas_20shopping_20guide_202020?mc_cid=28eeef13ea&mc_eid=07fbc1596e)

## On the lighter side...



“Hold on – we’re trying to work this out. You’re from 3 different royal households, and the baby counts as three people already...”

“Season’s Greetings looks O.K. to me. Let’s run it by the legal department.”

