

From the Minister

Dear Friends,

What does getting ready for Christmas mean at your house, in your family? Decorating the tree and posting Christmas cards? Making Christmas goodies and wrapping presents? Planning menus and drawing up shopping lists? Sending our donations to share our good fortune? All this and more?

In our house we share the preparations. Nicola has promised to put up the tree and usually wraps all the presents ... except those that are for her, of course. Kim will start reviewing his recipes and choosing some new experiments to go with old favourites. And I will start making frequent visits to the shops to buy the presents to wrap and the food to cook. Oh! and cook some mince pies as well.

At the heart of what we are doing is a desire to do things well so we can show our love to our family and friends. And we want to do it well, get it right, make it all perfect. And sometimes our drive for perfection gets in the way of showing the love that we so want to share. We spend so much time getting ready, we busy ourselves so much, we leave no room to welcome others, to welcome love into our lives.



Spend a moment, with me, reading this poem by Madeleine L'Engle, reminding ourselves that God does not call us to be perfectionists, but participants in loving the world, even in the messiest, most unready places.

God did not wait till the world was ready,
till ... nations were at peace.
God came when the Heavens were unsteady,
and prisoners cried out for release.
God did not wait for the perfect time.
God came when the need was deep and great.
God dined with sinners in all their grime,
turned water into wine. God did not wait
till hearts were pure. In joy God came
to a tarnished world of sin and doubt.
To a world like ours, of anguished shame
God came, and God's Light would not go out.
God came to a world which did not mesh,
to heal its tangles, shield its scorn.
In the mystery of the Word made Flesh
the Maker of the stars was born.
We cannot wait till the world is sane
to raise our songs with joyful voice,
for to share our grief, to touch our pain,
God came with Love: Rejoice! Rejoice!

This Christmas, may you and all your family have cause to rejoice, however ready you may be.

Diane

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WE CONGRATULATE LORRAINE POWERS



Australian Church Library Association
2011

Margaret Stiller Innovation Award

Lorraine has demonstrated outstanding initiative in developing new strategies for church libraries.

She has been an active ACLA member since 1993. She has assisted with the development of the Magill-Morialta Uniting Church Library and is now its co-manager. She continually presents new strategies for promoting resources in her

library and shares these ideas with other church librarians. Lorraine also develops ways to attract the interest of new persons to church libraries through literary focus luncheons, a book bank, displays and on-line promotions. As Promotions Officer on the ACLA National Board, Lorraine inspired others with creative, practical initiatives. These included the design of the ACLA logo, and the development of outlets for "Barossa Women" in country areas.



David Purling writes ...

In my photo this time, I reflect on the work of a Bee I saw whilst climbing at Morialta.

I quote some words from "Roots for Worship", with my adaptation.

"This is the creation celebration
the living harvest.
The circle of life
pouring out its labour of love
witnessed in the apple, the almond
the orchid, the brazil nut,
the kiwi fruit, the celery,
the strawberry, the pawpaw,
the mustard, the rapeseed
the broccoli and cauliflower,
the cabbage, the coconut
the coriander and macadamia
whose existence depends on one insect:
the bee.


Talking of bees: What does a queen bee do
when she hiccups?
She issues a royal pardon!

Why do bees hum?
Because they've forgotten the words!

There are ants and beetles,
and wasps and humming birds,
and blow flies and hover flies
who pollinate many things,
but in all of God's creation
none of them is a patch on one pollinator,
on whose busyness the fragile and tender
web of life,
including us, depends:
the bee.

Talking of bees: What are the cleverest
bees?
Spelling bees!

God of honey and halleluiah,
of grain and grape, of ocean and orchard,
we praise you for the abundance of life,
and pray that the gifts of the world



are not just shared, but shared justly.
God of beehives and breadbaskets,
of living webs and the weaving of life,
of ecosystems and economy,
we praise you for the wealth of the planet,
and pray that this wealth is not just a
promise,
but is full of promise for all.
God of bumble bees and blue whales,
evolution and environment,
ice-field and star-field,
we praise you for the sheer wonder of the
world
and pray that this wonder is not about our
wealth,
but the wealth of our generosity.
Hear us, O God of hope,
O God of promise, so be it.
Amen.

Reflection - A Different Pair of Glasses

The very best comedians derive their material from searingly accurate observations of people going about their everyday lives. Attitudes, habits, speech and mannerisms all come in for ridicule; we laugh out loud, not usually in a cruel way, but more in acknowledgement that we too have just the same eccentricities and foibles in our behaviour. The good comedian somehow helps us into an empathetic relationship with the otherwise unknown object of ridicule. Indeed in a recent speech made in Sydney, the Israeli author and academic Amos Oz cited a sense of humour as one of the key elements that can provide an antidote to fanaticism - because, he said, a sense of humour requires imagination, an imagining that helps us to see from outside ourselves. This in turn fosters empathy and a willingness to look at things through a pair of glasses other than our own.

Hardly had David and I set foot in Amsterdam in June than we were all but bowled over by two very tall Dutchmen as they came streaming around the corner immediately in front of us, each with a son in his early teens leading the way. Nothing unusual here you might say. The Dutch are a singularly tall race of people. What confronted me though, was that they were all in obviously Orthodox Jewish dress: wide brimmed black hat, black suit, flying side ringlets. In cosmopolitan and touristy Amsterdam they seemed to fit very well with a description that I subsequently read in George Eliot's book 'Daniel Deronda', when the eponymous hero describes the Jewish religion as "eccentric and fossilized." A bit weird even.

Then a few days later we visited Amsterdam's Jewish Historical Museum. In truth I expected to find a re-telling of the horrors suffered at the hands of various anti-Semitic regimes, most notably the Nazis. But the Museum had a quite different focus and tone. Set within an old Synagogue, refurbished after its sacking in WWII, it set out, in a quite brilliant way, to explain the meaning of being Jewish. This process was facilitated by numerous lecterns, each of which interactively illustrated different aspects of the Jewish faith,

be it Shabbath, Passover, the Bar Mitzvah, Yom Kippur, marriage, whatever. At each lectern there were four options to select from: the rituals, personal reflection, personal memories or archival footage.

What have remained with me are the words of a middle-aged Jewish man talking about his faith and demonstrating how it impacts on his life through the week. Each morning, noon and evening he sets himself apart, dons his prayer shawl and ties on his tefillin - one on his forehead and one bound about his non-dominant hand and forearm, all done in the most intricate and prescribed way - and immerses himself in the set prayers for the day. It requires discipline, devotion and deep commitment.

In fact, when questioned about his celebration of Shabbat, he described it as a day of rest, of reflection, of connecting with family and friends, a day that had space away from the work and disciplined worship ritual of the other six days. A day of rest did he say?? This, for me, was seeing things through a very different pair of glasses. For most of us, our Sabbath is when we busy ourselves about the Church; this is the day of concentrated effort of faith and learning. For this Jewish man, the Sabbath was a leap for joy day, a day to reflect on faith and to cherish family, very much as the Genesis story suggests, a day of rest and reflection after the hard striving of the week. This was not 'eccentric and fossilized' at all. His faith was at the same time both devout and exuberant, it was fervent and it was deeply human.

I had never looked through Jewish glasses before, and I think I learnt something.

Perhaps one spiritual exercise that we could practise, would be to exercise our imaginations, to step around and look at things through someone else's glasses. We might even see ourselves from the outside and have a good laugh. And we might just learn something profound.

Continued on next page ...

From the Chairperson

When I was young I really wanted a Zorro Costume for Christmas. However, the only person I told was the Jolly Red Gent. Instead of the mask and cape there was a lovely big book of stories in my pillow case. I was most ungracious in accepting this very suitable gift from Father Christmas. How could he get it so wrong?

Maybe that is why I think communication is so important. Morialta is a vibrant community that has so many activities and projects going on all the time. It is important that we all take opportunity to keep up as best we can.

The Newsletter, Vision, the Noticeboards, and Meetings of the Congregation, as well as our Website, are primary means for this purpose.

However, how do we get the message out to the community? Of course, the obvious answer is to continue to be the friendly church we all experience. Another important way is to take advantage of the 'postcards' available through our Synod Office. Over recent years we have letterboxed our neighbours and given postcards to members to distribute to their family and friends.

The message of Hope that the Postcards contain may be just what somebody needs at this time.

For my part, I hope you all have opportunity to experience that Peace, that comes from a real relationship with the Divine expressed through the teachings of Jesus, this Christmas.

Bruce



reducing the OHS issues related to carrying the heavy mats. To add interest we also have a caterpillar painted on the mat. Thank you to the men who raised the gate that opens over the surface.

Playgroup finishes the year on 13th of December with Brian Hogben playing the part of a man in a red suit who brings gifts.

Jackie and I would like to thank all the people who have brought morning tea to playgroup during the year. This is a wonderful support! We are also very grateful to the assistance given by Carole Lyons.

Tables and Trolley

In addition to looking out for the green caterpillar you can soon look out for some new tables. We received a grant from Grants for Seniors. Our application was for some light weight foldable tables that were also sturdy enough to support senior people who lean on them and wide enough for wheel chairs. We were successful with the grant and the tables will arrive soon.

Because my worship commitments are elsewhere I take this opportunity to wish all of you health and happiness for the festive season. I thank you all for the support I have received this year,

Christine Ostle



Community Centre News



Community Garden

I don't want to harp on Community Garden news but it is a big undertaking that is going to bring our church into the public eye!

I was glad of the opportunity to worship at Morialta on the weekend after the big launch because it gave me opportunity to thank the many people who had helped make the launch very successful.

The garden project moves into a new phase with a Management Committee replacing



our initial committee. I have been elected as chair person of this Committee. I have been heartened by the level of enthusiasm amongst the Interim Management Committee members.

Playgroup

One of the heavy duty tasks in setting up playgroup each week has been that of carrying out one metre square blue mats that interlock into a six square meter surface which softens the landing for young children using the slippery dip, jumping mat and other boisterous equipment. We now have a permanent rubber surface, thus

from previous page ...

At the very least we will get a new perspective, or maybe we might gain an insight and learn a lesson to be treasured.

The following words from Psalm 119 capture some of the flavour of what I heard from my Jewish brother on that June day in Amsterdam:

"I treasure your word in my heart, so that I may not sin against you.
Blessed are you O Lord; teach me your statutes.
With my lips I declare all the ordinances of your mouth.
I delight in the way of your decrees as much as in all riches.
I will meditate on your precepts, and fix my eyes on your ways.
I will delight in your statutes; I will not forget your word."

Alison Lockett



Intuition

When I was a teenager I thought my mother was intuitive. As I left for dancing classes she would say, 'Now you be good'. How did she know I liked to hug those young, pretty partners while learning the foxtrot? I thought she extended her intuitiveness when she 'read' her life directive tea leaves in the bottom of her cup. Today I know her appeal to me to be good was her worldly, motherly wisdom and the tea leaves her fantasy. Tea bags put an end to that.

I have found a number of thoughtful writers that believe intuition has a much deeper meaning. They see it as a pathway to the essence of the existence of life. For us Christians I interpret that to mean a pathway to help us understand God.

Jean-Paul Sartre, a great French philosopher, describes an occasion when he was confronted in a park with the root of a chestnut tree. 'All of a sudden it (the root) lost the harmless look of an abstract category... It was kneaded into my existence. I became lost in it.' Sartre claims that experience was an expression of his intuition. He was molded by that experience 'beyond his sensibility' into the one existence of life with the chestnut tree.

Such an experience is not confined to philosophers. We have all perceived fleeting moments when we sense the presence of something More - but very rarely share them with others.

Intuition, not dreams, illusions or hunches, seem to be a pathway to those special moments. A pathway to God

I remember a similar experience I had which is still a part of my existence. In the early 1980s I found myself alone in a wood near Pulborough in England where I was revisiting, with happy memories of 1975, a house where my family lived which had its own meadow, grazed by deer from the wood. The day was warm, cloudless and without the slightest breeze. Silently walking on a well worn path covered in leaves I was thrilled with the renewed experience previously shared with my inquisitive and chatty family.

Suddenly, ahead of me, I was aware of a branch protruding about half a metre into the pathway with perhaps 20 leaves which were shaking. I have no idea what kind of a tree it was. I stopped. I carefully looked for other movement. Nothing moved. I stood transfixed. Those leaves captured my whole attention until I perceived a direct connection, a physical bond. The leaves became intimate with my life so much so that today, 30 years later, those exclusive, shaking leaves are still a part of my existence, my intuition.

A Tideman

*We crave those moments of
soul connection when the
masks can fall away.*

*The sacred light of integrity
shines through all things*

*There are those with whom
our kinship runs like blood
roots in the ground*

I only have one question: God ... are you there?

All Saints Sunday 2011

I did not come from a church family but in my faith journey the saints of the church have become my faith family.

Saints do not say that there is only one way.

Thankyou Mum and Dad.

Saints do not judge or exclude.

Thankyou Auntie Hazel Ross.

Saints accept you as you are and acknowledge you whenever and wherever you meet. Saints celebrate and encourage your differences. Saints support and mentor you to take leadership opportunities.

Thankyou Rev. Kyle Waters.

Saints do not judge your theological rigour and allow you to interpret, comment and grow according to your own interpretation of the Word.

Saints stay with you at the side of your critically ill child's hospital bed praying with you through the longest hours you have ever spent.

Thankyou Rev. Don Howland

Saints support you through the hard questioning times and share their questions and journey with you.

Thankyou Rev. Dean Davidson

Saints tell you when you do well and when in their opinion you don't.

Thankyou Glad Mason

Saints walk alongside, sometimes carrying and sometimes being carried.

Thankyou Rusty Palmer

Saints offer advice but respect that it is your decision whether to act or not.

Thankyou Paul Keipert.

Saints are patient. Saints are kind. They do not envy or boast. They are not proud. Saints are not self-seeking and keep no record of wrongs. Saints delight in the truth. Saints protect, trust, hope and persevere.

To the saints of Morialta, those living and those cherished in my memories, I say Thank You

Jan Sillett

The Only Way To Travel

Whenever we travel we are faced with ethical dilemmas. This is particularly so when we visit less developed countries. Coming from a relatively rich nation, the obvious disparity in wealth (and therefore power) between us as visitors, and our host community, means we are never really treated as equals.

The irony when talking about ethical tourism is that any travel, however labeled, presents a moral dilemma when we consider the greenhouse gas emissions from air travel, as well as other environmental impacts from tourism. But change through globalization is also affecting even the remotest communities, their culture, their economy and their environment.

For those who still want to travel, one saving grace is that tourism can be justified through the opportunities it presents as a force for world peace and understanding.

Responsible (ethical) travel is based on willing and equal participation of the local community and should be socially and culturally acceptable to them. The travel activities should generate a fair return to the community for use of their skills and resources. Local communities should benefit. Responsible travel is environmentally and socially sustainable.

These are high ideals, but how can individuals have any influence on who participates or benefits and how can they minimise environmental and social impacts?

A few suggestions are

Before you go: Forget the glossy brochures and do your own in-depth research.

Learn about the social and environmental issues, the people, their history, and cultural practices.

Look at the websites of country specific NGOs and find out about ecotourism or other projects they are supporting.

Plan how you will meet local people. Getting involved in daily life is the best opportunity for spreading goodwill and friendship. You may have a special interest, a profession, a hobby or a religious affiliation that will provide that essential link to a local community or organisation. Learn enough of the local language to know a few words of greeting, common phrases of politeness, asking permission to take photos, and how to say a few sentences about yourself.

If you decide to join an organised tour, find

one with an ethos of responsible travel or with an element of conservation work. Ask questions about whether your money goes to locals or multi-nationals ie who owns the hotels and transport.

Take as little baggage as possible to reduce the emphasis on your comparative wealth. Carrying less also means fewer worries and will give your mind space to absorb and learn.

When you're there:

Respect traditional practices so you do not offend local standards by inappropriate behaviour or dress. Use locally owned accommodation, transport and restaurants and local tour guides.

When you return home:

Fulfil any promises you make, such as sending photos or goods.

If you saw things that disturbed you, join an organisation to actively campaigning for environmental and social justice and tell the tour operator so they can be more aware.

Western democracies assume a 'right' to travel. As tourists we also have a responsibility to behave in a way that promotes peace and goodwill, rather than resentment towards us and our way of life. Maybe the following cameo story is really what tourism is about – that is connecting people!

On my first visit to the city of Makassar in Sulawesi, I took a taxi from the airport to my hotel. As soon as we were in traffic, the driver asked me where I was from and when I replied Australia, his response was immediate and dramatic. For one horrible moment I thought he was going to leap into the back seat and hug me. He loved Australians. Some years earlier he had collected an Australian couple from the airport to take them to their hotel. Along the way he had managed to convince them that they should hire him as guide and driver. On their last day in Makassar, he took them to meet his wife and 4 children. While they were sharing food and drink, the woman from Melbourne was horrified to learn that the taxi driver's wife had no washing machine, so she immediately dispensed hubby and taxi driver to the white goods store to purchase a twin tub for the family. Now every Christmas there is a big package delivered to the family in Makassar from their adopted grandparents in Melbourne. To me that is tourism at its best.

Tourist Cameo Stories

The effect of tourism on economies can run deep.

After the first Bali Bombing, there was much concern about the fate of hotels and their employees, tour operators, restaurants and other people connected with the tourist industry. However, it went deeper than that and affected every village across the island. One of the hardest hit groups were small farmers who grew fruit, vegetables and produced meat for the hotels and restaurants. Many rural families moved into poverty and children stopped going to schools. Maybe this could have been avoided if tourists took their obligations more seriously.

Tourists from Australia created Bali as a tourist mecca for themselves. Yet after the first bomb Australians went from number 1 in tourist numbers to number 4, after Japanese, Malaysians and Koreans. We quickly deserted the Balinese whose lifestyles we had changed and allowed the terrorists to win. While the Balinese suffered deaths of friends and loved ones as well as Australians, many Balinese moved into long term poverty with a generation of uneducated children.

The effect of tourism on reefs in Fiji

A few years ago I was asked to review an Australian Government aid project in Fiji. The project was designed to investigate why the reef along the southern coast was dying. The project team had discovered that the problem was indirectly caused by the tourists who had come to snorkel and dive and enjoy the marine environment created by the reef. Because of the Reef and the tourists who wanted to visit, several major resort hotels had been built. The hotels did not provide accommodation for their staff who had built small houses along the many small rivers and creeks that fed into the ocean along the reef. Being Fijians, they had also brought their pigs and built piggeries. The effluent from the pigs drained into the rivers and the nutrient rich water was then destroying the reef. If the reef died this would end the need for resort hotels along that part of the coast. Too often tourism is only measured in economic terms, rather than looking at the effects on social structures, the environment and the livelihoods of the local population.

Colin Cargill

More ethical tourism stories from Bill & Doreen Matheson appear on the next page

Interfaith Symposium – Adelaide

Recently David Purling, Mohammad Farooque and I attended a one day Interfaith Symposium sponsored by the Multi-faith Association of SA. It was a great day with a Keynote address by Stephanie Dowrick, a panel session with six faiths represented, various options in small groups and music provided by a Hindu devotional music group, the Beit Shalom Choir and the Catholic African Choir - not to mention the magnificent exotic lunch.

For me, the most interesting session was the panel discussion with representatives from the Muslim, Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist and Baha'i faiths attempting to answer the age old question "Why do good people suffer?"

From the Buddhist's perspective, Buddha began the 45 years of his teaching ministry with "an exposition of the 4 noble truths – suffering, origin, cessation and path". For Buddha "birth, old age, sickness and death are all suffering. To have contact with something hateful, to part with someone you love, or to not get what you want, are all suffering". In short being human is suffering. On the issue of goodness, the Buddhist priest declined to judge who was good and who was not good.

In a similar way, "Baha'is understand that we all experience suffering, both individually and collectively. It is a natural consequence of life; we can take steps to lessen the impact, but we cannot avoid it. It has purpose too, as it can draw us closer to our Creator and help us to refocus on more important aspects of life".

Hindus also seem to be comfortable with this reasoning. From their perspective "we cannot hold God responsible for suffering

and injustice because God loves all equally". However, "Hinduism says that the reason for the suffering and inequalities may be found in the conditions before our birth.... Suffering is part of life and is the cumulative effect of good and bad carried out over past lives."

Moslems on the other hand tend to see Allah's (God's) hand in everything that comes to us in life. The expression "Insha'Allah (or Inshallah)" can mean "If Allah (God) wills" or "When Allah (God) wills" or even "If Allah (God) wishes". While I find this concept hard to accept, my observation from working with many Moslems is that this concept does help Moslems accept adversity and suffering more calmly than I.

For the Christian, the answer to the question of who is good can vary from almost no one (we have all sinned) to most people being essentially good. However, most of us hurt others as we go through life and that hurt brings suffering. In many cases suffering is caused by the selfishness and evil of others. Careless use of a motor car, abuse of power, greed and excessive wealth, dishonesty in a relationship are all examples of hurt causing suffering. The Christian response is to affirm that God has entered into our tragedies in the person of Jesus Christ. Hence Christ turned the concept on its head by saying that good people will suffer and should in turn relieve and carry the suffering of others. "If anyone would come after me they must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me...." (Luke 9:23,24).

Buddhists also believe that "the ultimate objective is to compassionately strive to

ameliorate the suffering of all living things whether we think they deserve it or not". As Mike Pietsch (Chaplain Uni Adelaide) put it – maybe the question should be "Why are the good NOT suffering?" Mike also used Bonhoeffer's life as an example of how God can create something new and wonderful out of suffering.

A Jewish Rabbi quoted by Rabbi Kaminsky gives three statements which cannot stand simultaneously: "God is all powerful" "God is all good" and "Bad things happen to good people". In Deuteronomy we read many times that sinners are punished and the good are rewarded. Hence "anyone who suffers must have sinned". However, this does not explain suffering or enable people to live with it. "The only way forward is to let go of the idea that God is all powerful, which only leaves us with our faith".

Rabbi Kaminsky also quoted a Rabbi Harold Schulweis, who tells a story about a boy who was hit by a car and lay in a coma. Sitting with the boy's mother the Rabbi said "It must be so difficult for you to hold onto your faith after what has happened". "On the contrary," exclaimed the mother, "I have never experienced God so deeply as I have in the faces of those who have come to comfort me".

While faith is a comfort for many of us, it seems that the reality is that if we are to experience life and "ameliorate the suffering of others", we will experience suffering. But, like Rabbi Kaminsky, I am comforted by the sense that God is my comforter.

Colin Cargill

Continued from previous page...

Ethical Tourism::

Stories from Doreen and Bill Matheson

Bill and I visited friends who were working in Tonga. While there we went to the Arts and Crafts market. As soon as the stall holders saw that we had local money and not Australian dollars they lowered the price.

In 1989 we visited the Thorpes in Vanuatu. They taught at Matuvulu High School on Santos Is. for three years. While we were there the High School students went on an excursion to Champagne Beach. A tourist boat was in and we all went on board the liner. The students practised their English on any tourist who would cooperate. Some of the tourists visited the beach where the locals had set up stalls to sell their wares. Most people don't have jobs to bring in money. They grow their own

food but need a little money to buy thongs, shorts, tee shirts and material to make their clothes.

Also we visited friends who were working in New Guinea. The locals took every opportunity to sell what they had made. Enid and I were wandering around looking at the scenery when a little girl appeared and threw a mat on the ground and laid out her necklaces. Of course we bought one each.

After the Bali bombing our daughter, Anne, read about the hard time the locals were having because there were few tourists. So Anne, husband, Tim, and son Sebastian, decided to visit Bali. When they ordered a meal the cook raced out and bought the ingredients and cooked it for them. They could not afford to keep any food on hand.



WAIKERIE FRUIT PROJECT



What is the Waikerie Fruit Project...

The Waikerie Fruit Project is a cooperation between the Uniting Church (SA Synod) and Almost Organic and involves fruit growers from the Riverland

By buying products available through the Waikerie Fruit Project, congregations throughout SA have an opportunity to support Riverland growers to receive a fairer price for their produce and to support them financially. While the majority of the money raised is returned to the fruit growers, a percentage of the money goes towards providing medicines for a Medicine Shop on Numfor Island, Papua – Indonesia, whereby medicines are able to be sold at affordable prices and additional medicines purchased.

The Drought...



It is clear the effects of the recent drought in the Riverland is not finished, especially for those who have continued farming but with new or increased debt and overheads due to borrowing larger amounts of money to buy water or chemicals. It is envisaged the impact of the drought will really hit hard when drought assistance offered to fruit growers for the last three years ends on 31st March 2012 despite the results of the harvest. As a result of the recent drought, four processing sheds have closed down including one in Waikerie. Due to the determination and resilience of many fruit growers in the midst of adversity, many have planted new or alternative crops including walnuts and organic vegetables.

Making a difference in Papua...

With every sale through the Waikerie Fruit Project, 5% goes towards funding the

purchase of additional medicines for the community Medicine Shop on Numfor Island, Papua – Indonesia.

The shop is open Monday – Saturday from 10am – 2pm and stocks a wide range of medicines. People travel long distances, including remote villages in order to purchase medicine at an affordable price. It is hoped the medicine shop may be open more often in order to meet the growing needs of the community.



As the Medicine Shop is the only place on the island for medicine supplies, financial support received through the Waikerie Fruit Project is helping to empower the community and save lives.

Prayers for Papua ...

Like our brothers and sisters in the Riverland, our brothers and sisters in Papua are also in need of our ongoing prayers. The political situation has deteriorated and the leadership of our partner church the GKI continue to face intimidation often on a daily basis. The Uniting Church through Uniting World (an agency of the National Assembly of the Uniting Church in Australia) continues to offer support, encouragement and solidarity in the midst of the difficulties that are faced.

For more information ...

If you are interested in finding out more information about the Waikerie Fruit Project, contact Jennie Hosking: jhosking@sa.uca.org.au or if you are interested in finding out more about the Medicine Shop on Numfor Island or about Papua, Indonesia, contact Adam Tretheway: atretheway@sa.uca.org.au

May you know your support is saving lives, families and communities by not only helping fruit growers in the Riverland but also helping to provide medicines for people living in remote communities on Numfor Island.

Thank you Morialta for your ongoing support of this Project.

Jennie Hosking

Prayer points:

- ◇ Fruit growers still struggling from the after-effects of this year's drought.
- ◇ Fruit growers affected by the recent storms in the Riverland.
- ◇ Fruit growers as the drought assistance program comes to an end next year.
- ◇ The outreach of the Medicine Shop on Numfor.
- ◇ Additional staff to be found to extend trading hours of the Medicine Shop.
- ◇ Our partner church in Papua, the GKI.

And this was the moment

When a few farm workers and three

Members of an obscure Persian sect

Walked haphazardly by starlight straight

Into the kingdom of heaven.

UA Fanthorpe born 1929



EXHIBITION 2011 sometimes a season

What is so special about the Morialta Church Family?

No doubt there are other congregations that live out their Vision in creative and exciting ways while supporting one another as circumstance dictates, but I see the members of Morialta doing this on a weekly basis.

In the time leading up to the Market and Exhibition there was even more activity around Chapel Street than usual! People dropping off 'stuff' for the Market, others preparing the hall and environs for the day, while in the Church, a transformation was taking place as the creativity of our congregation and others was displayed with great colour and imagination. Our familiar array of stalls, were all stocked-to-the-brim, and staffed by members who were obviously pleased to be there doing the job on this once-a-year occasion.

I know I say it every year, but I'll say it again. The money raised by the event, although important in supporting our life and mission, isn't as significant as the sense of Community that is engendered. And what a great occasion, once again, to have those beyond our church family, living in our area, coming inside to join the market throng.

A rough calculation on the number of people involved with supporting the Market and Exhibition gives a total of around 100! I think that is amazing. Equally impressive is the clean-up afterwards.

I'm sure that all involved on the 19th November would have gone home tired, but I hope you're all filled with a sense of achievement as a consequence of your contribution. What's more, there are less than 50 weeks to the next one!

Bruce

& Christmas Market



Newton Methodist-Uniting Church 100 Anniversary Celebrations



What a great day and way for Worship!

In the Morialta Church, dressed for the occasion with the Exhibition which included Newton Memorabilia, we gave thanks for the Foundation of the Newton Church 100 years ago and the continuation of the Congregation into the Morialta Uniting Church. Rev John Lawrie conducted the 8.15 am service with 14 present and Rev Dr Geoff Scott preached at the 9.30 am service with 160 attending.

The celebrations were a joy, thanks to the enthusiastic team of David Lockett, Ruth Dunning, Pam Ayles, Graham Vincent, Lorraine Powers, and John Powers as Convenor.

A highlight was the glossy reprint of "Newton – A Family Album of Memorabilia" by Ruth Dunning which was launched with obvious pleasure by Rev Elwyn Penna. A grant of \$500 from the UC Historical Society assisted in financing the publication which achieved its target of being cost neutral. A few copies are still available at \$15. The cover design and layout is the work of Val DiGirolamo.

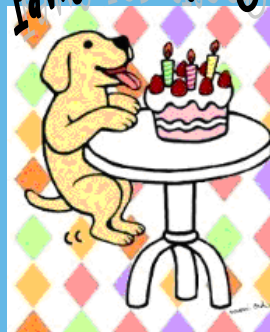
Morning Tea gave opportunity for much conversation and reconnection. The anniversary cake was ceremonially cut by 97 year-old Mildred Bradshaw, who expressed her delight and honour in this role. Congratulations to our organisers and our good wishes to all Newtonians!



Sarah Heatley's work, in this, her final year of the course for Bachelor of Arts, has been a major, exciting contribution to the Exhibition, *Sometimes ... A Season*. It has been varied and of high quality, showing artistry in textiles and photography. Some of her exhibits are featured here.



Paws for thought



Now, I don't want you to think I'm vain. Although I do like to look my best, there are limits. It was my birthday on the 21st November. I turned 8 years old. Bruce made me a cake, well, that's what he told everyone, but he wouldn't let me have any. Apparently, chocolate isn't good for dogs. Not even a small piece. I had to make do with a Pig's Ear.

A Pig's Ear! When everyone else is eating cake! I don't think that is very fair. It was all I could do the day after to stop myself from 'helping' Bruce brush his head on some low branches.

However, after thinking about it I realize that Bruce and Anne are doing what they think is best.

And, there was also a silver lining to my Birthday! When I take Bruce to some of the places we visit I sometimes get time to play with a lovely, colourful, soft toy that squeaks. I don't have many toys, but I have one of these now because Anne bought me one! I really enjoy annoying Bruce with the squeak.

Keeley

from Morialta's Exhibition

... Let's go fly a kite ...

"Imagination is the highest kite one can fly."
Lauren Bacall

"Throw your dreams into space like a kite, and you do not know what it will bring back, a new life, a new friend, a new love, a new country."

Anais Nin, French-born American author, 1903-1977.

"Don't be afraid of opposition. Remember that a kite rises against the wind not with it."

Winston Churchill,

"You will find truth more quickly through delight than gravity. Let out a little more string on your kite."

Alan Cohen

THE KITE SONG

sung to the tune of "Twinkle Twinkle little Star"

Crafted, shaped with love and care.
By community who share.
Their hope is that I will soar,
know your life and show your power.
Head and heart new freedom found,
feet remaining on the ground.

Spirit lift me, lift me high.
Fill my being, help me fly.
Now I see your world anew;
with a view inspired by you.
Keep this vision strong in me.
To fulfill what I might be.

Strength derived from wooden cross;
myst'ry of both gain and loss.
You enhance me, you inform me,
Make me, shape me and reform me.
Help me keep this insight found,
when I'm back there on the ground.

Chris Ayles
October 1999



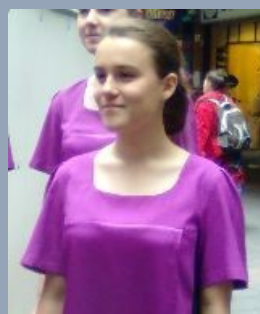
Congratulations Katrina Mackenzie

Katrina has graduated from Year 12 and is looking forward to tertiary studies in 2012.

She is also saying "goodbye" to her long and rich membership of the Australian Girls Choir, beginning in 1999 when she was barely 5 years old.

On completing Year 12, along with other student-singers, she received a trophy which listed her experiences in the Choir, including: Bel canto for 3 years; Belare, the dance group for a year; four interstate tours; singing in performances and with artists, including *The Boy from Oz*, *Celtic Women*, *Andre Rieu*, and *Leo Sayer*.

We look forward to hearing more from Katrina in 2012!



New Ceiling for a New Year

Do you remember the story of Henny Penny? That poor chick thought the sky was falling.

Be assured that the sky, and the hall ceiling, are not falling, even if our first steps towards its replacement may suggest that.

If you were one of the many who attended the November Meeting of the Congregation you will know that we anticipate that this project will be underway in the early weeks of January – a wonderful New Year happening.

After lengthy and very helpful consultations with an acoustic engineer and discussions with Architect, Paul Gillett, advice from ceiling experts and lighting designers, we considered the advice and quotations. Church Council agreed to proceed with the project, taking into account several very generous gifts. And, in this instance, we were exceptionally well supported by Synod's approval process.

The planned installation, including micro-fibre panels, insulation, and replacement of the very aged lighting should improve the area markedly. Given that the old polystyrene panels no longer meet building regulations, this is a necessary duty of care action.

We are hopeful that the acoustic properties of the materials will give the best advantage in what is a very challenging area – one in which we all love to engage in simultaneous animated conversations!

Demolition of the existing ceiling will be done by the subcontractor, not by our own people – a wise step given the intense level of physical activity required.

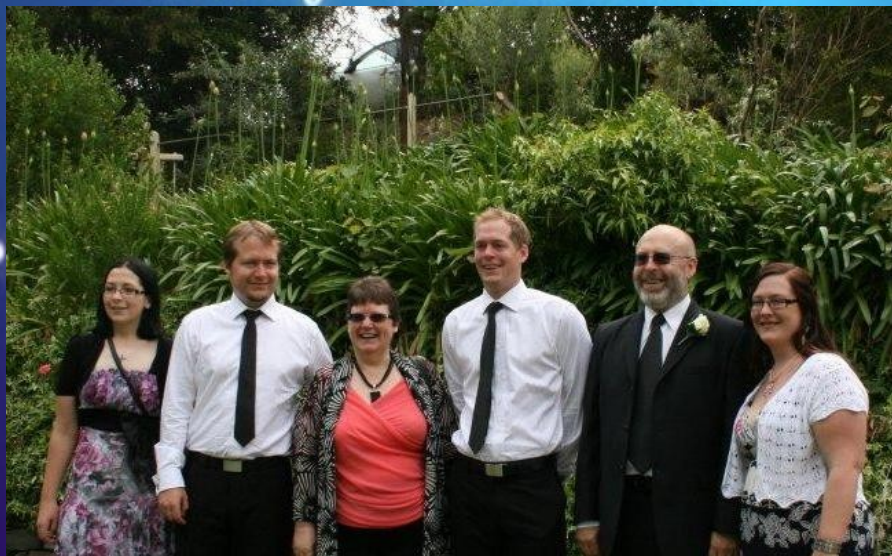
So – we look forward to the work being done early in January with the assurance that we can all "put up with" and work around the short-term inconveniences....gladly.

Mary



Morialta Magpie

Merry Christmas:



The Bury family at the wedding of Simon, son of Diane & Kim on 12 November 2011



Congratulations!
Rachelle Clarke & James Foley are engaged.

Fred Martin was presented with a quilt for comfort in his new care residence. Margaret will bring him to church on Sundays.



Sue Fuss celebrated Paul's birthday & we wished him happy birthday in his absence.



Keeley celebrated her 8th birthday on 21 November



Brian and Rhonda attended the Probus Christmas luncheon

Evening Fellowship—AGM
Arlene Lomman, President; Bev Tredrea, Secretary; Margaret Clogg, Treasurer.
Committee members: Joan Wagner, Jenny Barabas, Dale Corrigan.
Margaret Whibley and Joy Minchin elected in absentia.



Christmas Bowl Collectors Tiffany, Margaret & David, in Rundle Mall



Open Garden Party at Jan's Garden



What could be more delightful on a sunny day in Spring than to enjoy God's creation in Jan's beautiful garden.

The roses were blooming, the creek was running, a few ducks were swimming, and further away there were lambs to captivate the children.

Jan was our generous, gracious and hospitable host,. She opened this beautiful garden once again, having tended it lovingly, along with helpers and family. It was "a picture".

More than 150 people explored, shared conversation and enjoyed the afternoon tea. Many were friends and family, and a large number were friends in the wider community.

Young musicians with stringed instruments indulged us with easy listening music.

A particular joy was the participation of people who had been members of earlier youth groups at Morialta. Thanks to Jan for her resourcefulness and invitations to this wide range of friends!

What a gift we received that day! It will live in our memories.

Internet News Sources

Provided, for information only, by the SJMMT

At a recent meeting of the Assembly Uniting Justice Reference Committee, the question was asked – *How can we obtain a more accurate and broadly based news service covering Australian and world events?*

In response UJ has prepared a list of websites for anyone who is interested. While the list is not exhaustive, and some of the sites not without bias, it does provide a range of news sources from which you can choose to supplement local TV, radio and print media.

ProPublica:	http://www.propublica.org
Eureka Street:	http://www.eurekastreet.com.au
Inside Story (Australia):	http://inside.org.au
New Matilda:	http://newmatilda.com
Sojourners:	http://www.sojo.net
The Conversation:	http://theconversation.edu.au
Films for Action:	http://www.filmsforaction.org
Global Issues:	http://www.globalissues.org
NEF:	http://www.neweconomics.org
The Drum:	http://www.abc.net.au/news/thedrum
ABC Religion & Ethics Online:	http://www.abc.net.au/religion
The Monthly:	http://www.themonthly.com.au
The Punch:	http://www.thepunch.com.au

We are connected to
one another and
to God
by our capacity
to see beauty.

Google – Everything in Common ...



to get to the Uniting World website and others which give access to the gift shopping catalogue that can make a difference



the twelve days of christmas

What do they mean?

Today, most people identify with the song *The Twelve Days of Christmas* as a carol sung during the festive season to celebrate Christmas. The origin behind the song, though, tells a different story.

During the period of Puritan rule in England, it was strictly forbidden for Catholics to practise their faith. So from 1558 until 1829, when Parliament finally emancipated Catholics in England, being Catholic was a crime punishable for jail or even death.

Since Catholics could not practise their faith in the usual way, they taught their children “nonsense” songs which, on the surface, had no meaning, but which would remind Catholic children of their faith. These came to be known as “catechism songs”.

The Twelve Days of Christmas was a catechism song, with meaning which is not widely known today. The symbols used and their meanings are as follows:

THE twelve days of Christmas are celebrated from December 26 until January 6, the traditional day for celebrating the coming of the wise men to worship Jesus.

THE “true love” referred to in the song is actually God, the one who gives the gifts.

THE “me” receiving the presents is every baptised person.

THE partridge is a reminder of Christ – a mother partridge will literally give her life for her children. The pear tree in which the partridge sits is a reminder of the cross on which Christ was crucified.

2 turtle doves – the Old and New Testaments.

3 French hens – the three gifts of faith or theological virtues of faith, hope and charity.

4 calling birds – the four gospels.

5 gold rings – the first five books of the Old Testament or the Torah.

6 geese a-laying – the six days of creation.

7 swans a-swimming – the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit: prophesy, service, teaching, encouraging, giving, leadership, mercy.

8 maids a-milking – the eight beatitudes of Jesus.

9 ladies dancing – the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

10 lords a-leaping – the 10 commandments.

11 pipers piping – the 11 apostles that remained faithful to Jesus.

12 drummers drumming – the 12 beliefs found in the Apostle’s Creed.

The Spirit Level

Why Equality is Better for Everyone

Richard Wilkinson & Kate Pickett.

These people have between them spent 50 years researching equality and the lack of it in Western countries. I regard this book as the best I have read this year. It is not an easy read as there are many graphs and statistics.

Their conclusions are that equality is best for all including the rich. In areas of community life and social relations, mental health, general health, life expectancy, educational performance and social mobility, all are better in more equal societies. Whereas in areas of drug use, violent crime, teenage pregnancy, imprisonment and obesity, are all worse in unequal societies. In other words life is better for all in more equal societies and not as much money needs to be spent on prisons, drug rehabilitation, etc., there is more to spend on health and education, etc. Where bosses receive three to ten times the remuneration as their average employees, life is better for all in every way. In contrast with countries where bosses receive five hundred times the remuneration of their average employee, society is worse.

Constantly the USA and Portugal came out the most unequal and had the worst outcomes in all areas. Australia has been becoming more unequal since 1970 and did not come out well compared with some other countries.

The two countries to perform the best are Japan and Norway followed by other Scandinavian countries. The only area where Japan did not come out well was in the position of women. Two hundred other studies have come to the same conclusions about equality and good outcomes.

As for the developing world, the results would most likely be similar as the important factor in the developed world was not how rich or poor the country was but how evenly the income was distributed.

The authors did not suggest the best ways to achieve equality, but said each country would need to work out which way they could achieve this end.

I borrowed this book from the

Campbelltown Library.

More information is available at the Equality

Trust web site: www.equalitytrust.org.uk

Doreen Matheson



God sent us a Saviour

If our greatest need had been information,
God would have sent us an educator.

If our greatest need had been technology
God would have sent us a scientist.

If our greatest need had been money,
God would have sent us an economist.

If our greatest need had been pleasure
God would have sent us an entertainer

But our greatest need was for God’s
forgiveness,
So he sent us a Saviour.

From Helen Stephens

Morialta Uniting Church Community Library



Well, folks, it's almost the end of another year, and December is traditionally the time when we sum up what we have done during the year.

So here it is! Some of what we have achieved this year!

We have

- added a library page to Morialta's Website
- engaged in extending our number of large print books to meet the needs of those who visit the library on Wednesdays for Coffee Corner
- added some "Quick Reads" and some "Audio Books" to our collection
- and we are in the process of purchasing a barcode scanner to make the processing of books procedure easier.

Are we open on Sundays during December and January?

Yes, the Library is open on Sundays and when the office reopens on 23 January. If a Librarian is not in attendance please use the after hours borrowing book.

Browse through the "Great Summer Reading" Guide to help you decide what you would like to read and visit the library website. The "Great Summer Reading" Guide will also be displayed on the board outside the library.

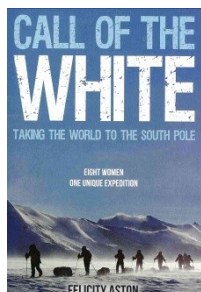
**On behalf of the library committee I extend to you
Joyous Christmas Greetings and a Happy New Year!**

books & dvds

go to www.morialtauca.org.au for more book and DVD reviews

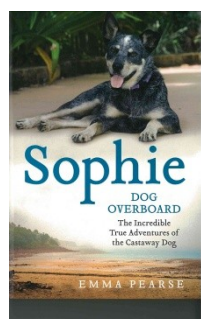
Enjoy these top reads,
chosen by Lorraine
Powers, plus the latest
DVD and CD releases

in books



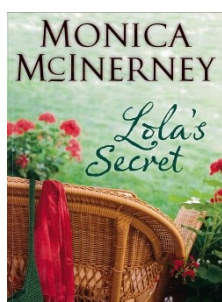
Call of the White by Felicity
Aston

Taking the World to the South Pole
Eight Women One Unique
Expedition



Sophie - Dog Overboard by
Emma Pearce

This a true story about Sophie, a
blue cattle dog who disappeared
overboard, out at sea. All possible
efforts were made by her family to
find her, but eventually she was
presumed lost at sea, but was she?

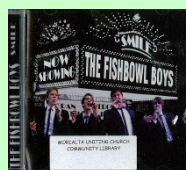


Lola's Secret by Monica
McInerney

"At the Valley View Motel in South
Australia's picturesque Clare
Valley, eighty-four-year-old Lola
Quinlan is up to her usual mischief.
She's sent her family away for
Christmas and invited a number of
mystery guests to come and stay.
But who are all these people, and
why aren't they spending the festive
season with their own loved ones?

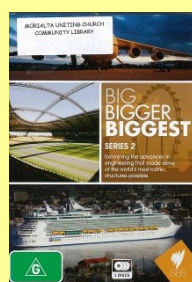
on cd

THE FISHBOWL BOYS SMILE



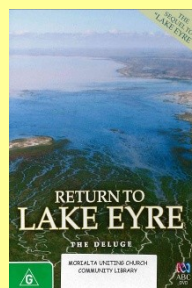
Enjoy again the sounds of *The Fishbowl
Boys* singing a *Crazy Little Thing Called Love*
by Freddie Mercury, *Tonight Tonight* by S.
Sondheim, *Blue Skies* by Irving Berlin,
That's Life by Dean Kay Kelly Gordon and
Goodbye World, Goodbye by Mosie Cister.

on dvd



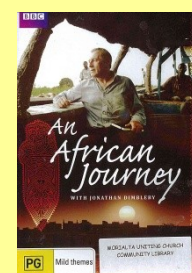
BIG BIGGER BIGGEST SERIES 2

In a second season of **Big, Bigger,
Biggest** we reveal the inventions that
enabled structures such as Submarines,
Aircraft, Cruise Ships, Dams, Tunnels,
Oil Rigs, Observation Wheels,
Telescopes, Space Stations and Domes
to grow in size and scale.



RETURN TO LAKE EYRE

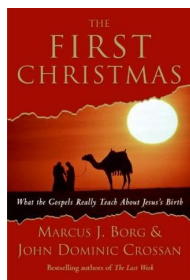
This ABC News documentary captures
history in the making, as the biggest
flows in 35 years course towards Lake
Eyre, sparking another tourist boom in
the dead heart. *Return to Lake Eyre*
shows nature at work on a grand scale,
peppered with very human stories of
survival and renewal beginnings of a
legend.



AN AFRICAN JOURNEY

with Jonathan Dibleby

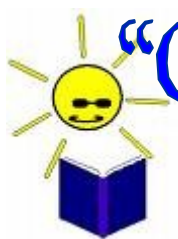
Advent/Christmas Reading



The First Christmas by Borg & Crossan 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.

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!

Come in and have a look at other books available for the Christmas/ Advent Season.



“GREAT SUMMER READING”

Reinventing the Bush by Margaret 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.



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.



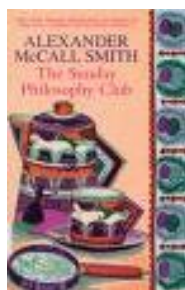
Human Rights Overboard by Linda Briskman

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.



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?



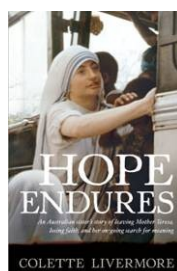
Falling Angels by Tracy Chevalier

(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.”



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.....”



Hope Endures by Colette Livermore

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

THE STABLE



The winds were scornful,
Passing by;
And gathering Angels
Wondered why
A burdened Mother
Did not mind
That only animals
Were kind.
For who in all the world
Could guess
That God would search out
Loneliness.

Sr. M. Chrysostom, O.S.B.
Robert, Cyril.
Mary Immaculate: God's Mother and Mine
New York: Marist Press, 1946



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Rev. Diane Bury Phone: 8165 0695

Rev. David Purling Phone: 8331 9344

Email: office@morialta.org.au

www.morialtauca.org.au

Living Streams ~ Giving Life

DIARY DATES

2011

Blue Christmas

A time to pause and remember

Wed 21 Dec 7.30 pm

Thur 22 Dec Church Office closes 1.00 pm

Christmas Eve Worship - Welcoming Love

Sat 24 Dec 7.30 pm

Christmas Day Worship - Sing for Joy

Sun 25 Dec 9.00 am

2012

New Year's Day Worship

Sun 1 Jan 9.30 am

Sundays in January Worship 9.30 am

Mon 23 Jan Church Office re-opens

Sun 29 Jan First Newsletter 2012

5 February Worship 8.15 and 9.30 am resumes

February Community Centre Programs resume

Recreation leave

Office Coordinator, Helena Begg - 2 weeks - early January

During January

Administrative requests to Mary Thornley

Pastoral matters to Rev Diane Bury & Rev David Purling



Acknowledgements

David Purling for the cover photo of the waterfall.

Brian Corrigan and others for the numerous photographs in this edition.

Texts from *Seasons of the Spirit*, Stories and texts from those identified throughout and all who have contributed in many ways to this edition.

Editor: Mary Thornley

Graphic Design: Val Di Girolamo

Deadline for the next Edition

1st February 2012

If you would like to contribute an item, please send unformatted as Word documents either:
by email to the Vision Receiver,

Sharon Mackenzie, (craig_sharon@picknowl.com.au)

Please do not format or use other software

OR

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

To discuss ideas for Vision articles contact the editor.



NAME LABEL