

Morialta Vision ...in the Wilderness

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

A Publication of Morialta Uniting Church

Issue 18 ~ 25 November 2020

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



Welcome to Vision in the Wilderness 18

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

“The evangel is complete only when the action of the gospel matches the message of the gospel.” Rev. Frank Byatt, 1954.

In this edition Sandy Boyce focuses on wise and intercessory prayer – based on an article by Walter Wink.

In the lead up to Christmas we provide examples of the “Christmas Bowl” at work and the joy and laughter that should be part of the Advent season.

Last edition we mentioned Ruth Dunning’s visit to Venice almost half a century ago. My maths was wrong – it was indeed less than a quarter of a century ago! ☺

We always 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 4th and 18th December, which will be our final editions for 2020.

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.

When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you? Matthew 25:39

Adapted from a Facebook post from Ruth Elizabeth Nowlan shared by Rev Sandy Boyce, Chairperson of Justice for Refugees SA (J4RSA)

Concerned about a few days lockdown? Then ... “spare a thought for the innocent asylum seekers who fled their country to seek safety in Australia and instead have been locked up in detention centres, motels etc for years and years, and others who have been living in Australia for ten years plus but are still no closer to seeing their families again. Our Government has the power to change this but they won’t, and by not changing these harsh regulations for

asylum seekers coming by boat they are actually tearing families apart. So, 6 days is nothing – thankfully for us it was even less, ... is it such a bad thing to have to stay home with your family for 6 days or more?

You’re not stuck at home, you’re safe at home. One word can change your attitude, and one cough can change your life.

– Timber Hawkeye

Some thoughts on prayer in difficult times

In April 2020, [Rev Sandy Boyce](#) wrote: We can't go back to the old way of things as if catastrophic bushfires, the climate crisis and COVID19 (and so much more) have not happened. Change is needed in every layer of our social fabric. We need wise leaders, and wise pray-ers. The late Walter Wink, in an article entitled ‘History belongs to the Intercessors’, said:

“Intercessory prayer is spiritual defiance of what is in the way of what God has promised. Intercession visualizes an alternative future to the one apparently fated by the momentum of current forces. Prayer infuses the air of a time yet to be into the suffocating atmosphere of the present. History belongs to the intercessors who believe the future into being. Even a small number of people, firmly committed to the new inevitability on which they have fixed their imaginations, can decisively affect the shape the future takes. In the New Testament, the name and texture and aura of that future is God's domination-free order, the reign of God. Intercession changes the world and it changes what is possible. It creates an island of relative freedom in a world gripped by unholy necessity. A space opens in the praying person, permitting God to act without violating human freedom. God invents history in interaction with those "who hunger and thirst to see right prevail" (Matthew 5:6). How different this is from the static god of Greek philosophy that all these years has lulled so many into adoration without intercession! When we pray, we are engaged in an act of co-creation, in which one little sector of the universe rises up and becomes translucent, incandescent, a vibratory centre of power that radiates the power of the universe. History belongs to the intercessors, who believe the future into being. If this is so, then intercession, far from being an escape from action, is a means of focusing for action and of creating action. By means of our intercessions we veritably cast fire upon the earth and trumpet the future into being.”

Walter Wink (1992), *Engaging the Powers: Discernment and Resistance in a World of Domination*, Fortress Press, USA.

Rev Sandy Boyce is a Minister at Pilgrim Uniting Church, Adelaide.

Not even the Mighty Magill Garage Sale!

Due to the two day lockdown we were unable to hold our planned garage sale, but we now have craft items, Christmas gifts, books and plants for sale in the church hall.

You are welcome to come and browse any morning during the week, but **not until after 10:30am on Mondays or Wednesdays.**

Come and grab some bargains!!



Jim Miles – 94 and still helping others

Adapted from an article by Rachel Moore, *The Advertiser* October 30, 2020

Every Thursday afternoon, the 94-year-old hops in his car and drives to Aldi to collect food to deliver to the Salvation Army, as part of his OzHarvest volunteering role. His involvement with OzHarvest came about after he learned there was excess food in the town making its way to landfill.

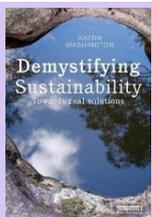


While Jim has been doing this for the past three years, he has been selflessly helping others all his life. In 2000 he was named Victor Harbor Council's citizen of the year in recognition of his volunteering.

Jim has been nominated for News Corp's Thanks A Million campaign, which highlights individuals helping support and keep their community safe throughout the pandemic. He also volunteers at Encounter Centre, an organisation which provides programs for people with a disability. Jim and his wife of 66 years, Melva, are both an inspiration to everyone around them.

For many years the Miles were members and leaders in our community, from Magill Methodist days through to Magill UC. Both also played key roles in our community services. Jim has also been involved in Unity & Friends, a group who seek to be faithful to Christ and walk with GLBTIQ people, their families and friends.

Our congratulations to Jim and Melva – long standing and very valued friends of many of us still worshipping at Morialta.



Demystifying Sustainability: Towards Real Solutions by Haydn Washington

What is sustainability? Over the last few decades much has been said about the terms 'sustainability' and 'sustainable development', but they have become buried under academic jargon. This book is one of the first that aims to demystify sustainability so that the layperson can understand the key issues, questions and values involved.

Accessible and engaging, the book examines the 'old' sustainability of the past and looks to the future, considering how economic, ecological and social sustainability should be defined if we are to solve the entwined environmental, economic and social crises. It considers if meaningful sustainability is the same as a 'sustainable development' based on endless growth, examining the difficult but central issues of overpopulation and overconsumption that drive unsustainability. The book also explores the central role played by society's worldview and ethics, along with humanity's most dangerous characteristic – denial. Finally, it looks to the future, discussing the 'appropriate' technology needed for sustainability, and suggesting nine key solutions.

This book provides a much-needed comprehensive discussion of what sustainability means for students, policy makers and all those interested in a sustainable future.

Review adapted from *Occams Razor*

Playing away

From Fay Goldsworthy



Now Ted attended church each week with regularity.

His voice sustained the meagre choir with basic harmony.

But playing cricket was to him the first of all his loves;

on Saturdays you'd find him dressed in batting pads and gloves

but one thing troubled Edward's mind through sermon, hymn and prayer,

That heaven could not be unless there's cricket there.

One Sunday, after morning church the parson beckoned Ted and took him to the vestry where he smiled and kindly said:

"I've been in touch with heaven for you and some enquiries made:

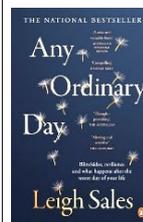
there is a heavenly cricket league with teams of every grade.

But that's not all," he added then, "I also have to say

they told me that they've got you down – to play next Saturday."

From *SonBeam*, monthly newspaper of the Oatlands-Bothwell parish. Edition No. 77. January 1986.

Book Review



Any Ordinary Day by Leigh Sales

Leigh Sales is the well-known presenter of the ABC program 7.30 and she provides a wide-ranging discussion of how people recover from catastrophic events in their lives and how they can be helped.

Much of the material is based on Leigh's interviews with the suffering, backed by the results of scientific studies. Leigh admits to being a journalist and that sometimes journalists fail to help.

Examples of unexpected nasty events are: the terrorist gunman making hostages of customers in the Lindt Café, Sydney; the Port Arthur massacre leading to John Howard's reforming of Australia's gun laws; the Australian medical student who almost froze to death in the Himalayas; the Lockyer Valley flood in Queensland; and the Thredbo landslide where a survivor saw his wife drown and later had the misfortune to lose his second wife to cancer.

A quote from a person supporting the grieving: "Somehow we need to be aware that we're mortal, that this time is finite. It's knowing this is all going to end, so let's make it matter."

Leigh makes good mention of people of faith, both sufferers and supporters. This book is not light reading, but contains a wealth of information helpful to those in the helping game.

Reviewed by Brian Forbes



Timeless stories of laughter during Advent

Adapted from a story by Esther Cohen, Chief Operating Officer for Episcopal Relief & Development.

It was the fourth Sunday in Advent, and our Christian Education team wanted to do something a little “different” for the children’s sermon. Christmas was just around the corner and the children were restless. It seemed like a good opportunity to be creative and interactive. So, on that fateful Sunday morning Miss Kathy pulled out a bag of animal puppets and told the children that they would be helping her recreate the scene at the stable where Jesus was born.

Each child happily reached in to the bag and pulled out a cute and clever hand puppet – lambs, cows, donkeys, birds – and anxiously awaited their chance to help tell the story of Jesus’ birth. Except Michael. Mischievous, clever, crafty Michael who reached deep into the bag and found a wolf puppet.



The re-enactment of the Peaceable Kingdom was anything but peaceful. The wolf did not lie down with the lamb. No cattle were lowing, and if the poor babe had been asleep, he would most certainly have been awake by the end of the children’s focus! Between the shrieking children and the laughing adults, there was not a dry eye in the house.

I love Advent and Christmas. The beauty of the sanctuary, lighted with candles and decorated with greens; I love shopping, and baking cookies, and thinking of friends and family, far and near. I marvel at the generosity of those who buy gifts of animals (in the name of friends and relatives) for unknown subsistence farmers – no wolves but plenty of adorable goats and pigs!

But in my house, the stories that we tell at Christmas – the stories that make us laugh until we cry, no matter how often they are told – are the stories of when everything went wrong. When the wolf ate the lambs during the children’s sermon. When the cotton ball-covered sheep left a trail of white cotton down the new red runner in the sanctuary. When the dog ate the plastic sheep in the manger. When we were utterly, amazingly, imperfectly human. I wish for you and your loved ones moments of great peace and comfort during the coming weeks. But more than that, I wish you great moments of laughter and riotous imperfection.

Joy to the World!!

“The Revised Library”



We have moved a few things around.

Travel books are in the Fantasy section,

Epidemiology is in Self-Help and Politics is in Sc-Fi. Good luck!



Blue Christmas at Morialta

Monday 21 December at 7.30pm

A service to remember loved ones, and give expression to the ‘blue’ feelings we may have at Christmas time.



End COVID for all

Earlier this year we highlighted the Micah Campaign *End COVID for all* – its not over until it is over for everyone. The campaign has been a huge success and the Government has just announced another \$550 million package to assist South East Asia with new development, security and economic programs. There have now been 5 significant commitments since Micah helped kick off the 'End COVID For All' Campaign.

However, announcements like these don't just happen overnight and Micah is grateful to all their supporters who have advocated for #AustralianAid for many years.

Micah think it's important to stop and say 'thank you' – so they are asking all their supporters to write to the Prime Minister, Foreign Minister Marise Payne and Minister for International Development Alex Hawke, to thank them for initiating the generous contributions being made by Australians.

Developing vs Developed

Rev Dr Paul Goh – Justice & CALD Multicultural & Cross Cultural CMC Officer SA Synod

The Developing vs Developed dichotomy still assumes a hierarchy between countries and implies that ‘development’ is a standard, linear process. It implies that ‘developed’ countries have finished developing and are the norm towards which all countries should strive. We know that this is not the case – there are many ways in which nations evolve over time, and each country has its own unique strengths and challenges.

My suggestion for an alternative term when referring to countries of Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Pacific, is ‘Majority World’. ‘Minority World’ is used when referring to Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand. The ‘Minority World’ is home to only 1/4 of the world population and controls 4/5 of the income earned anywhere in the world. The ‘Majority World’, on the other hand, is home to 3/4 of the world population, but has access to only 1/5 of world income. For me, using Majority World and Minority World reflects better than other existing determinations, this idea that power is distributed unequally, and that there are existing power dynamics that do exist and need to be dismantled.

References: <https://masalai.wordpress.com/2009/02/11/majority-world-a-new-word-for-a-new-age/>

<https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2015/01/04/372684438/if-you-shouldnt-call-it-the-third-world-what-should-you-call-it>

Christmas Bowl at Work - Peace Mail from Zimbabwe



Dear Friends,

My name is Nyevero. I am a farmer in the Masvingo region of Zimbabwe.

During the drought, my life was very difficult. We received little rainfall and all my crops permanently wilted so I had virtually no food to feed my family.

At times I would give the little food I had to my children, but my children were still in poor health and I feared for their lives.

My children stopped going to school regularly as they were too hungry. At times I wished I was dead because I saw myself as worthless to my children. But my life changed when I joined the conservation farming program.

Conservation farming has proven to be the greatest program! It is easier and more efficient than conventional farming which requires the use of the ox-drawn plough. I learnt to plant on a very small piece of land and dig planting stations which help to retain moisture in the soil. In comparison, conventional farming is done on a very big piece of land and it requires laborious work with little return. Now I am teaching my neighbours the skills I have learnt.

Now we have been trained in fish farming. We were given fingerlings and taught how to feed the fish, and how to manage the fishery project.

The projects help to provide extra nutrition for our families and additional income to send our children to school.

To the people of Australia, thank you so much. My family is healthy and my children even have food to take to school. I prayed that my way of life would improve, and now I thank God because he has given me wisdom and strength.

Maita basa (thank you), Nyevero

We shared this prayer in the first edition of *Vision in the Wilderness*, at the beginning of April, when Corona virus was very new to us. We think it worth revisiting now, as we adapt to the changing pandemic conditions, both here at home and around the world.

Prayer for a Pandemic

by Cameron Bellm

May we who are merely inconvenienced
remember those whose lives are at stake.
May we who have no risk factors
remember those most vulnerable.
May we who have the luxury of working from home
remember those who must choose between
preserving their health or making their rent.
May we who have the flexibility to care for
our children when their schools close
remember those who have no options.
May we who have to cancel our trips
remember those who have no safe place to go.
May we who are losing our margin money
in the tumult of the economic market
remember those who have no margin at all.
May we who settle in for a quarantine at home
remember those who have no home.
As fear grips our country, let us choose love.
During this time when we cannot physically
wrap our arms around each other
let us yet find ways to be the loving embrace
of God to our neighbour.
Amen

Cameron Bellm is a Seattle mom of two young boys. She is a great lover of Ignatian spirituality, Catholic social teaching, and strong black coffee.

God

“God is not a Christian, God is not a Jew, or a Muslim, or a Hindu, or a Buddhist.

All of those are human systems which human beings have created to try to help us walk into the mystery of God.

I honor my tradition, but I walk through my tradition, but I don't think my tradition defines God, I think it only points me to God.”

Bishop John Shelby Spong

Special Days in December

World AIDS Day – 1st December

The day provides an opportunity for people worldwide to unite and fight against HIV and also to remind people that the disease has not been eradicated.

International Day for the Abolition of Slavery 2nd December

The day is a reminder of the unfair treatment that people face due to threats, violence, coercion, or abuse of power. It is a day to commit to the suppression of traffic in persons and exploitation of prostitution of others.

International Volunteer Day – 5th December

International Volunteer Day provides an opportunity to appreciate the efforts of volunteers across a spectrum of community services.

Human Rights Day – 10th December

This a day observed to protect the fundamental human rights of all people and the basic human freedoms which should be available to them.