

# Beyond 2020 Vision

A Publication of Morialta Uniting Church

March 2025

Morialta Uniting Church—follow us on Facebook or check out our website at [www.morialtauca.org.au](http://www.morialtauca.org.au)

## Welcome to our March edition

In this edition Michael Clarke, Emeritus Professor of Zoology at La Trobe University, attempts to answer the question “Why do we care if a species becomes extinct?” A question that is taxing the minds of many scientists and non-scientists.

In Morialta news you will find a short history of MUC as we approach our 170<sup>th</sup> birthday, dates for our first concert this year, a special “Eid breakfast”, and news from Church Council.

## Why do we care if a species becomes extinct?

*Adapted from an article by Michael Clarke, Emeritus Professor of Zoology at La Trobe University, posted on ABC Religion and Ethics*

Science is well equipped to help us understand how dire the extinction crisis is. But whether we choose to act will come from motivations beyond science.

While recent reports highlight the frightening rates of species declines, species extinction has been the rule, rather than the exception, when we consider life on this planet. Some estimates suggest that over 99 per cent of organisms that have ever existed are no longer with us. So why is there such concern about the state of the world’s ecosystems and species declines?

We are in the sixth major extinction event in the planet’s history – the last one happened around 66 million years ago. Unlike the previous five, this one is of our own making.

Australians have eliminated more mammals than any other nation on the planet and we are the first nation to lose a mammal due to climate change: the Bramble Cay mosaic-tailed rat.



For most people their motivation to act does not come from science – it comes from somewhere else. Science is about discovering how the natural world *is*, but agnostic in regard to how it *should be*.

According to social scientists the answers to four key questions tells us a lot about people’s worldview:

- Are humans part of nature or separate from it?
- Do humans have any accountability or responsibility to a higher being, to ancestors, to a spirit power, or entity or force beyond humanity?
- Do all non-human organisms have intrinsic value (separate from their utilitarian value to humans)?
- Do humans have any responsibility to act in the best interests of future generations of humans, and if so, why?

**The deadline for the next Vision will be 28<sup>th</sup> March – in time for Easter.** We always enjoy reading contributions from you, our readers! Drop your contributions in to the office or call or email Colin on 0427 122 106 or [snout-n-about@bigpond.com](mailto:snout-n-about@bigpond.com)

May you make many wonderful memories in 2025!

*Helena Begg, Publisher and Colin Cargill, Editor*

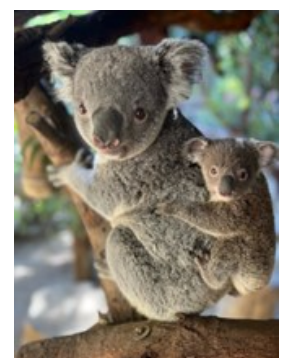
These questions will group people by their world-views which are shaped by cultural norms, and defined by acceptable behaviours. Different groups also trust some sources of information over others.

Rigorously collected, peer-reviewed evidence alone, dispassionately presented by a serious-looking person in a lab coat, will not be sufficient to move all hearts and minds. Hearts and minds are moved to act (or not) by the *interaction* between their worldview, culture and what they regard as reliable sources of evidence.

Whether we care or not about the demise of a particular species depends on both science and value judgements. Science tells us about its genetic distinctiveness, its material value or threat to humans, and its role in the ecosystem. Value judgements are likely to be driven by its aesthetic appearance (koala v legless lizard), its totemic significance for spiritual, cultural or nationalistic reasons, or if it has a high public profile

Regrettably, we can lose sight of the mystery that humans are made of the same stuff as the rest of nature – dust. We too easily slip into arrogant superiority over nature, based on a position of privilege, rather than one of humility, gratitude and responsibility. Some people treat the material world as if it is a disposable or expendable backdrop, separate from, and inferior to, the spiritual. Instead of “Love your neighbour as yourself” we chant “He who owns the gold makes the rules”. Our carelessness, negligence or greed deprive future generations of the options, wonders and pleasures we have enjoyed.

We need to repent and return to ‘creation care’, humbly in partnership with a gracious Creator.



## Church Council news – End of February 2025 – Please read!

Planning has begun in earnest for our celebration, on Sunday 6th April, of the 170th anniversary of a church on this site.

- Mark Waters, now the EO of Uniting Care, has accepted our invitation to preach, and he and Jonathan, with Carole Lyons as worship leader, will plan a celebratory worship service.
- At its conclusion there will be a short ceremony marking the occasion and unveiling a splendid new artefact we have recently been given – architectural plans of the first church on the site – and a refreshed look for the church foyer to show it off!
- This will be followed by a shared lunch in the hall, organised by Lesley Tideman and her helpers, when we will be able to mingle with the visitors who have joined us for the occasion. Invitations will be sent to a number of well-remembered friends, and a general invitation will be published in the Synod's E-News, with everyone coming being asked to RSVP for catering purposes. Lunch will be provided, with an optional donation requested.
- An invitation! If you have family members or friends previously associated with Morialta or its precedent congregations who would like to join us for this major celebration, they will be most welcome – please make sure to register their attendance with the office by 31 March for catering purposes.

The next Sunday, 13th April, will be our AGM! One important event that will take place there is the election of members of Church Council. Our Council is small at present, and we would very much like to expand our numbers, as we prepare to welcome a new minister. If you, or someone you know in the congregation, demonstrates wisdom and energy for this role, please consider this an invitation to nominate them for election! Nomination forms will be available soon.

For more information on any of these items, please ask any member of Council: Bruce Ind, Margaret Cargill, Rhonda Amber, Carole Lyons, Chris Ayles, Helena Begg or John Secombe.

## Easter is coming!

*New life can rise up here and now!*

*Celebrate with us!*

**MAUNDY THURSDAY: An Upper Room Celebration**

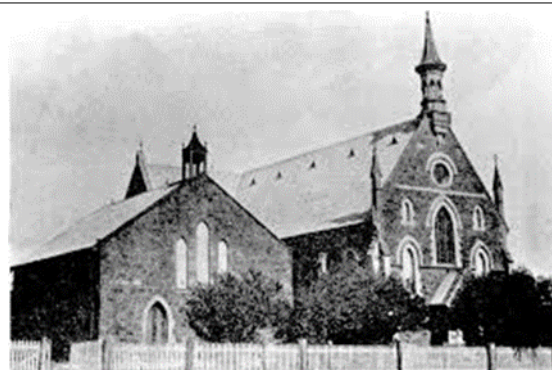
17 April, 7:00 pm, in person only

**GOOD FRIDAY: Scenes on the Journey to the Cross**

18 April, 10:00 am, live and online

**EASTER DAY: Celebrating the Feast of the Resurrection**

20 April, 10:00 am, live and online



### A brief history of Morialta UC – 170 years at 26 Chapel Street, Magill

Morialta UC began life as Magill Methodist Church when land was purchased on Chapel Street, Magill on 30<sup>th</sup> May 1854 and the foundation stone was laid on the site on 8<sup>th</sup> April 1855. The original church was used until 1875, when the current church was completed and opened.

In 1874 a decision had been made to build a new church, which is the nave of the present church. The first services in the new church were conducted on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> October 1875. The transepts were added in 1884 and the building remained largely unchanged for the next 90 years, until the interior was extensively renovated in 1974.

The steeple of the building had been removed in 1950 as it was considered to be unsafe and dangerous. The original church was used as a church hall until 1962 when, on the 28<sup>th</sup> May, it was destroyed by fire. A new church hall was built on the site and was opened on 10<sup>th</sup> August 1963.

Morialta Uniting Church was formed in 1990 when 5 Uniting Churches joined together. Before Union these churches had been Magill Methodist, Montacute Methodist, Newton Methodist, Rostrevor Congregational, and Finchley Park Presbyterian.

Following the birth of Morialta UC, further renovations were undertaken and a new foyer area was built to connect the church and the hall in 1994.

Happy Birthday Morialta UC and to all those who use this special place!



## Eid 2025 and an invitation from our Dawoodi Bohra friends

Margaret Cargill

As you probably know, the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan occurs at a different time each year because it follows a lunar calendar based on the moon. This year it began on 28 February, so we will be seeing our Dawoodi Bohra friends about the place at Morialta from then. They will celebrate the breaking of their fast each evening in the hall or the church, depending on what else is happening at Morialta, and the kitchen will be an important part of their activities!

The end of Ramadan is marked by Eid al Fitr (pronounced like 'eyed' in Arabic and like 'eed' in English) and this celebration falls this year on Sunday 30 March.

Our friends have issued a kind invitation to all of us to a special Eid morning tea (breakfast for them!) straight after our service on March 30<sup>th</sup>, the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent. As we will be using the church for worship that morning, the DBs will celebrate in the hall from 7:00am till about 10:30, and we, plus other invited guests, will join them after our service. We look forward to this event with eager anticipation!

## The holy month of Ramadan

From Colin Cargill

Ramadan is a time when Muslims around the world are connecting with their faith through fasting. The first night of the holy month of Ramadan began on Friday, 28<sup>th</sup> February after sunset and will end around 30<sup>th</sup> March, followed by Eid al-Fitr, the celebratory festival of breaking the fast.

For the month of Ramadan, Muslims wake early for 'suhur', a meal before dawn, then abstain from food and drink until 'iftar', a meal after sunset. In addition to the five daily prayers, Sunnis, the majority of the two major sects of Islam, also recite a special night prayer, called the Tarawih.

During my first Ramadan while working in Indonesia I had to fly from Kupang to Yogyakarta on an afternoon flight. When the meals packs were handed around I chose not to take one in deference to my fellow passengers who were fasting. But I noted that all my neighbours on the flight accepted a meal pack and stored it in their carry on bag for later. My neighbour asked me why I had refused and when I explained my reason, he thanked me for my understanding but suggested that I should take one and offer it to a fellow passenger. On another

occasion I was on a late afternoon flight and the meals were handed out but we had to wait for the captain to announce sunset, so we could eat.

Ramadan is a very important and special month for Muslims as many believe that abstaining from food and drink is a means to increase their spiritual experience and offer the best of themselves to God. It is equal to a declaration of faith ... It is part and parcel of being a Muslim.

Ramadan is also an opportunity for non-Muslims to share a cultural experience, no matter our religious background. We at Morialta will have an opportunity to share in an 'Eid breakfast' hosted by our Dawoodi Bohra friends on 30<sup>th</sup> March after church (see article above).

Sharing food with people of other faiths is a key feature of Ramadan. It happens everywhere, in mosques, in people's houses even in the air.

If you happen to be at MUC around sunset and meet one of our DB friends, try saying 'Ramadan Mubarak', which means 'Blessed Ramadan', or 'Ramadan Kareem' which means 'Generous Ramadan'. At the 'Eid breakfast' the greeting will be 'Eid Mubarak'.

## Breathing in the breath of God

Adapted from an article posted by spiritual writer Christine Aroney-Sine.

Sit comfortably with your feet firmly on the ground. Close your eyes. Take a few deep breaths slowly in and out. As you breathe in, be conscious of your breath passing in through your mouth or nose, filling your lungs with life-giving oxygen.

Hold your breath for ten seconds, then slowly breathe out, allowing the toxins in your body to be expelled. Imagine the tension, anxieties, and pressure in your body flowing out as you do so. Come to rest, calm your mind, relax your body.

Recite a breathing prayer and sit or stand quietly for a minute in the presence of the mystery.

*Breathe in the breath of life*

*Breathe out your cares and concerns*

*Breathe in the love of God*

*Breathe out your doubts and despairs*

*Breathe in the life of the creation*

*Breathe out your fears and frustrations*

*We sit quietly before the mystery*

*that gives life and love to all creation*

*We sit in awe of the One who formed us in our mothers' wombs*

*We sit at peace surrounded by the One*

*who fills every fibre of our being*

*Breathe in the breath of life*

*Breathe out your tensions and turmoil*

*Breathe in the love of God*

*Breathe out your haste and hurry*

*Breathe in the life of the creation*

*Breathe out your work and worry*

*We sit quietly before the mystery*

*that gives life and love to all creation*

*We sit in awe of the One who formed us in our mothers' wombs*

*We sit at peace surrounded by the One*

*who fills every fibre of our being.*

## Live-stream worship

From Cynthia Story

Tuning into our online video of a Sunday worship service is mostly a bitter/sweet feeling!

For so many years Morialta church was a very large part of me. Reality is so different now – I watch the worship service online, with much thankfulness for the technical know-how that means, once more, Morialta surrounds me.

The music is different, but people are the ones I knew well – worked with, sang with....for many years.

Words to hymns might be changed, but the words read from the Bible still have their familiar style and rhythms, lights, darks, and amazing beauty. Orders of service have their ever-present solidity, making me feel that whatever else might change, these simple and beautiful rituals will always be with us, leading onwards week upon week- rising and falling, light into dark and back again.

I haven't forgotten the prayers – the immovable link between the Holy Spirit and ourselves. The opportunity to dwell in the silence, and weave ourselves into it. The quiet surety that everything we know is one, held firm in our hearts.

There should always be the glory of flowers - arrangements showing us the pride of the season that envelops us for this day – each week a new sunburst of many colours, radiating love and care.

There are always the thoughts from the mind and heart of the minister, caressing a message found in a deeper knowledge of the sacred word – a revelation with new and precious meaning.

The people as they turn to leave, show faces of light and peace. They take with them, comfort, joy – and love. This is the triumph of the day!



## Friendship Group

From Ruth Pitt (Photo by Ray Clogg)

At our first meeting for the year, in the evening, twelve members ate their lap-teas and chatted in the Thorndon Park Reserve, surrounded by birds. The program for 2025 was distributed and discussed. Tea, coffee and treats were then enjoyed with more chatting at the Reservoir Hotel.

Our next meeting will be held in the church hall at 10 am on Thursday 20th March. Arlene & Rhonda will help us to craft creations for Easter. Those who bring their lunch may then stay for more conversations. All welcome!



## MUC concert series begins in May

The first MUC concert for 2025 will be on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> May at 2.00pm and will feature Leigh Newton.

Leigh is a South Australian singer songwriter who is known for his songs published in various church song collections. His first album, Christmas in the Scrub came from wanting to write carols for families in this place where the weather can be brutally hot and the animals are distinctly different. In previous years he has played at various Adelaide Fringe and Fringe for Kids events.

Leigh describes himself as a Progressive Christian, which led his songwriting to the need for peace where he published a collection called The Peace Songbook. It also takes him into issues of climate along with environmental and social justice for marginalised groups. Leigh was part of the well-known SA bush band, Three Corner Jack. He accompanies himself on piano and guitar and will have other musicians playing with him.

Leigh has published 8 albums, variously for children, families and adults.

Leigh and his wife, Tanya Wittwer, were youth workers at Magill (now Morialta) Uniting Church in the early 1980s in the era of Rev Rob and Vivienne Davies.

## My sincere thanks—from Colin Cargill

Thanks to all you lovely people who are part of the MUC family who sent messages of concern and encouragement while I was in the RAH, and after my return home. Your thoughts, prayers and concerns, and your positive vibes, worked wonders and helped me stay positive and cared for.

We are also fortunate to have world class 'ambos', a world class hospital staffed by amazing people, and a world class health service! I am very grateful to be back home and making good progress.

## Bible facts for your next quiz night

Contributed by Margaret Whibley

Did you know that Psalm 118 is the middle chapter of the entire Bible?

Psalm 118 verse 8 is the middle verse in the Bible.

Psalm 117 is the shortest chapter and Psalm 119 is the longest.

There are 594 chapters before Psalm 118 and 594 chapters after Psalm 118.

The central verse of Psalm 118 is: "It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in man."

If you add up all the chapters except Psalm 118 you get a total of 1188 chapters.



### Art exhibition - Palestine: "A land of three faiths"

Palestine is the home of three major religions that are closely related to the land, its people and their history. This exhibition will feature artworks by artists with backgrounds in the three religion.

The Exhibition will be in place at the **Palestine Centre for Peace, 60 Frome Street, Adelaide.**

**From 1<sup>st</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> March:** Monday, Wednesday, and Friday: 10am-4.30pm and Saturday-Sunday: 4pm-8pm

### Christmas Bowl at work - Vanuatu

*Helping communities be disaster ready – your impact.*

Climate change is a key driver of displacement for our Pacific neighbours. Rising sea levels and increasingly frequent extreme weather events are forcing more people to flee their homes than ever before.



Act for Peace supports local partner Vanuatu Christian Council (VCC) to provide prevention and preparedness programs which are key to increasing communities' resilience, ensuring they can respond and recover effectively.

With your support, VCC have been able to upgrade community facilities used as emergency evacuation centres across four islands of Vanuatu, to ensure they are safer and disability accessible, including installing ramps, shutters and toilets.

With your continued support, we are working together to help shape local solutions for climate displacement.



### Who is my neighbour ?

*Adapted from an article in 'Living Faith' by Raj Nadella*

As Christians we have a particular responsibility to vote, not just for ourselves but with sensitivity to the Body of Christ around the world. Voting in democratic systems models a nonviolent transfer of power. We vote for ourselves *and* for our neighbours. We vote because elections afford us an opportunity to pursue a just and fair future for our communities and country. Elections can give legislative framework to a full range of our faith commitments; ensure that our public institutions serve the poor rather than exploit them; and shape our country into the multiethnic, multi-religious, economically equitable democracy it is intended to be. Our votes *can* contribute to the transformations we envision.

### "Go and do likewise." Luke 10:37

*Adapted from an article by Rev John Gilmore NCCA President*

One of the more distinctive aspects of the way that Jesus engaged with people is seen in his asking of questions. There are times when his response to a question was with a further question or with a parable. When Jesus makes a statement, it is direct and clear. We can see this in the conclusion of the parable of the Good Samaritan 'Go and do likewise'.

Questions cause us to think. They can open up dialogue that results in a growth in mutual understanding between the questioner and respondent. Engaging in such a conversation is based on a willingness of all parties to listen and come to an appreciation of the perspective of the other. The goal of such a sharing is not necessarily agreement, but to respect and learn the other's point of view.

The opposite of this is a one sided 'tell' where one person has no interest in the perspective or understanding of the other. A 'tell' is driven by a pre-set agenda and does not allow for disagreement. It does not increase mutual understanding or deeper relationships.



Sadly 'tells' are driving the public discourse around us. They dominate media and politics, both local and international. The decisions that flow are not shaped by the local context or realities or the needs of the most marginalised. How different it might be if we, together, could hear the words of Jesus and respond by 'going and doing likewise'.

## Protect Creation - Fossil Fuel Treaty Now

### A Social Justice issue... and a message to all political parties

Margaret Cargill, for Church Council

Yes, there is an election coming soon, and there are many big picture issues in contention, one of which is the severity and impacts of climate change. In this context Council has agreed that we will again display above the foyer door the banner we were gifted earlier by ARRCC – the Australian Religious Response to Climate Change – which says “Protect Creation – Fossil Fuel Treaty Now”. Be assured that it will not be our own people climbing up to mount it, but employed handypeople!

Our discussion in Council focused on the central importance to us as Christians of protecting creation and standing with those most affected by damage to it. Uniting World’s ‘Lent Event’ that we will participate in soon will emphasise the importance of actions in support of this ‘standing with’. But what is this ‘treaty’? Please read on.

#### What is the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty Initiative?

It is a global effort to foster international cooperation to accelerate a transition to renewable energy, end the expansion of coal, oil and gas, and equitably phase out existing production in keeping with what is needed to address the climate crisis. It builds on decades of calls and campaigns for a fossil fuel phase out and fair energy transition by government, civil society, Indigenous, grassroots and other leaders – particularly from the Global South and aims to compliment other movements.

In order to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement, we need international cooperation to explicitly stop the expansion of fossil fuels and manage a global, just transition away from coal, oil and gas in a manner that is both fast and fair, so that no worker, community or country is left behind.

The Treaty is not an organisation, it’s an idea backed by a growing global network of governments, civil society organisations, academics, scientists, youth activists, health professionals, faith institutions, Indigenous peoples and hundreds of thousands of other citizens globally. Together they have joined a global initiative building momentum and diplomatic support behind this big, bold idea commensurate with the scale of the crisis we face.

Nation states that have signed the treaty include Vanuatu, Fiji, Tuvalu, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Niue, Timor-Leste, Antigua and Barbuda, Palau, Colombia, Samoa, Nauru, and Republic of Marshall Islands, as well as WHO and the European Parliament.

If you have any questions about any of this, please speak to any member of Council.

### Is there a piano in this room?

“For Muriel” (Cynthia’s mother), from Cynthia Story

For most of my life, I shared my living quarters with a piano. It gave our house something special, this warm, brown wooden piece of furniture. Of course, it looked totally solid, mystifying, enigmatic... until it was opened.

That was the phrase – one ‘opened’ a piano. A range of shining black and white... they were called keys... and when a music teacher was acquired – well – it was still a mystery and would need to be explained!

I don’t remember the first time I heard the piano played. I’m sure we didn’t have the arrival of this magnificent monster to our home when I was small, young - 7 or 8 years old? At primary school.

My Mum played, and my older sister had already started lessons from a piano teacher not too far away. It wasn’t long before our house was filled with wondrous sounds, tinkling, delicate sounds, up and down, loud and soft, rumbling, they could be glad, mad or joyous!

I must have been about 7, too young to have many memories of those years, but I do recall being insistent about having piano lessons, and my mother eventually gave in, and made plans for me to begin. I remember my first lesson – I actually learned a whole piece of music – I think it had a range of 3 notes!

After a few months, I confess to feeling frustrated at my slowness, and became impatient and disenchanted because my fingers wouldn’t play the keys as fast as I wanted – I badly wanted to achieve the standard my sister had – her fluency and the beginning of a most important development – style.

My parents decided that 12 months away from learning piano would be good for me and the general peace of our home, and rest for the intricacies of our piano from my too energetic attempts at artistry!

Well then, that 12 months passed, and I once again undertook the learning of the First Piano Book.

Years of ups and downs followed – I was in love with the action of my fingers playing – and this attitude of mind took me ‘so far’. But there was no brilliance, no explosion of incandescent light! That was what I wanted to feel, and I was greatly disappointed.

The strange, somewhat comforting idea that stayed with me while there was still a piano in the house – was that I still had the magic of the music with me. A very sobering thought but still enough to comfort!

Besides, I had learned to sing – I didn’t need a piano, guitar, flute – my instrument was contained inside me!

However, what I am really trying to say, is that whichever house I sought in the years afterwards – there needed to be a room for the piano – to be honourably called the Music Room.

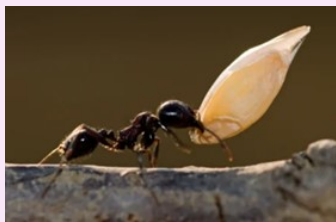


## ‘Alarming’ decline of seed-dispersing animals threatens Europe’s plants

Adapted from an article in *Science*, Vol 386, Issue 6718.

When hunters wiped out most fruit-eating birds in the tropical forest of Lambir Hills National Park on western Borneo, the skies grew duller – and in a few years so did the forest.

Without birds to spread their seeds, the diversity of fruit-producing plants declined, illuminating the critical importance of seed dispersal for ecosystem health. The movement of seeds across the landscape in animals’ guts is a glue that keeps ecological communities together and now, ecosystems in temperate climates seem to be coming unglued as well.



In a study, described as “brilliant and compelling” but also “alarming,” the decline in seed dispersers – not just birds, but also mammals, reptiles, and ants – could jeopardise the ability of plants to cope with

climate change or recover after wildfire, especially in Europe’s highly fragmented landscape.

Sara Mendes, a Ph.D. student and a community ecologist at the University of Coimbra scoured thousands of studies in 26 languages that mentioned terms such as seed dispersal or were focused on one of the more than 900 European animals likely to consume seeds.

Mendes then compiled a list of 592 native plant species that have mainly fleshy fruit to encourage animals to spread their seeds, as well as 398 animals known to transport those seeds. The team found that in all major biogeographical areas in Europe, from the Mediterranean to the Arctic, more than one-third of seed-dispersing animal species are ranked as threatened or are dwindling in numbers. For example, the garden warbler (*Sylvia borin*), a common migratory bird that spreads the seeds of some 60 plant species, is declining across Europe. The same is true for the redwing (*Turdus iliacus*), some populations of which migrate thousands of kilometres and could move seeds along part of their journey.

Mendes also found that more than 60% of the plants had five or fewer animals that eat and distribute their seeds, which could make them particularly susceptible to the decline or disappearance of any of these critical seed dispersers.

## The Roseto effect – The true cause of heart disease?

Adapted from a post by Marshall Chang on Unimed

What if you were told a way to eliminate risk of heart disease for people under 55, and halve it for people over 65, without reducing the amount of fat or alcohol consumed?

Well, a small town of Italian immigrants in Roseto, Pennsylvania, inadvertently figured out how to do this and the results have been scientifically confirmed and validated.



The study was instigated in 1964 because the town doctor was completely baffled by the Rosetans’ near immunity to heart disease. During the seven-year period (1955-1961) no-one in Roseto under the age of 47 died of a heart attack; there was a complete absence of heart disease in men under the age of 55;

and the heart attack rate in men over 65 was half the national average.

Researchers, of course, looked at the most obvious factor – diet. Being Italian immigrants, the researchers thought that the Rosetans must be eating a healthy ‘Mediterranean’ diet of fish, olive oil and fresh vegetables. Not so – the Rosetans did not have enough money for fish and ate high fat meatballs and sausages, with an average fat intake of up to 40% of their entire diet! The Rosetans liked to fry all of their food in good old lard.

What about lifestyle, and use of leisure and work time? The Rosetans worked in slate quarries or mines, renowned for having extremely harsh working conditions with high rates of on-site accidents. As for leisure time, the Rosetans loved their wine and cigars and consumed both with reckless abandon.

Ethnicity, water supply, and environment were investigated but none of these were significant.

However researchers did note that Rosetans had a remarkably close-knit social pattern and mutually supportive with strong family and community ties, where the elderly were not marginalised, but revered. Put simply, the Rosetans lived in brotherhood with one another.

So the researchers suggested that “the quality of family relationships and the social milieu may be pertinent to the occurrence of, or protection against, death from myocardial infarction.”

Many of their colleagues were cynical and the research had many detractors, but the results were validated 30 years later.

By the 1970s, Roseto had become increasingly ‘Americanised’ and the population had become increasingly insular and less supportive of one another. People now lived in nuclear families and households with 3 to 4 generations. Cohesive family and community relationships had disappeared.

Differences in heart disease and mortality rates between Roseto and neighbouring towns were also disappearing – and by the 1980’s Roseta was no different to the neighbouring towns.

The findings present irrefutable peer-reviewed statistical evidence of how our relationships in our community are one of the most significant, if not the main contributor to our health and wellbeing, especially in the case of heart disease.

Relearning how to make moment by moment choices to connect with the people around us at work, with family, even with the random people you pass on the street, has the potential to be the drops of water that will collectively create an ocean of change in the way we relate to each other, and ultimately to our collective health and wellbeing.

## The paraments for Lent—purple

Purple represents penitence and humility. It is used during Lent, but can also be used in Advent. While quite different and distinctive in feel, both are seasons of hope and anticipation.

**The Pulpit:** The traditional symbol of hope, the rainbow, arches against a sky bright with water droplets.

**The Communion Table:** A Christmas star and the Easter Cross are superimposed. At the centre sits a pictorial representation of our Church in its urban environment, endeavouring to live out the heart of the Gospel.

**The Lectern:** Within the three Sturt Pea flowers lies the potential and promise of new life.

**The Stoles:** Satin folds that imitate the flow of moving water are often draped on the speaker box behind the lectern.



## Social Justice Stocktake 2025

The Salvation Army's 2025 Social Justice Stocktake was completed by contacting over 16,000 Australians, across every single federal electorate. From the results they were able to build a comprehensive picture of what social justice issues people are seeing in their communities, experiencing in their own lives and, most important, what we can do about them.

The top individual (self) issues were mental health (40%), housing affordability and homelessness (37%), financial hardship and inclusion (32%), climate change (30%), and access to health care (30%).

The top community issues were housing affordability and homelessness (71%), mental health (58%), financial hardship and inclusion (53%), access to health care (50%), and alcohol and drug misuse (43%).

Other issues include inequality, racism, discrimination of LGBTQI community, treatment of asylum seekers, challenges facing older Australians, loneliness, challenges of unemployment and underemployment, and modern slavery in Australia.

For the full report go to <https://www.salvationarmy.org.au/socialjusticestocktake/>

You may wish to send a copy to your local MP and candidates asking what policies they have in place to tackle social justice issues in Australia.

## UCA supports Bishop Budde

President of the Uniting Church in Australia, Rev Charissa Suli, has written a letter of solidarity and support to the Right Rev Dr Mariann Budde, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Washington.

On 21 January Bishop Budde delivered a powerful sermon during the national prayer service held in Washington National Cathedral. To a congregation which included America's national leaders, she spoke truth to power and urged mercy and compassion for vulnerable communities - a message firmly grounded in the life, teaching and ministry of Jesus Christ. The sermon garnered global attention and provoked a firestorm of reaction including a call for an apology by President Trump himself, to which the Bishop responded: "I don't feel there's a need to apologise for a request for mercy."

The Right Rev Dr Budde serves as spiritual leader of 86 Episcopal congregations and ten Episcopal schools in Washington, D.C. She is the first woman elected to this position.

You can read the full text of the letter at <https://uniting.church/letter-to-bishop-of-washington/>

## As we look back

As we look back over time  
We find ourselves wondering  
Did we remember to thank you enough  
For all you have done for us?  
For all the times you were by our sides  
To help and support us  
To celebrate our successes  
To understand our problems  
And accept our defeats?  
Or for teaching us by your example,  
The value of hard work, good judgement,  
courage, and integrity?  
We wonder if we ever thanked you  
For the sacrifices you made, to let us have the very best?  
And for the simple things -  
Like laughter, smiles and times we shared?  
If we have forgotten to show our gratitude enough  
for all the things you did,  
We're thanking you now.  
And we are hoping you knew all along,  
How much you meant to us.

Clare Jones

