Beyond 2020 Vision

A publication of Morialta Uniting Church November 2026

Welcome to our November edition!

Colin Cargill, editor and Helena Begg, publisher

In this edition Brian McLaren and Vance Morgan discuss doubt and certainty, and Richard Rohr reflects on how Empire Christianity buried the gospel message.

We also bring you a mix of justice, faith and general interest articles, together with local news and stories from our community.

The deadline for the December Vision will be 27th November. We'd love to have your input! Either drop your item in to the church office, or call Colin on 0427 122 106 or email him at snout-n-about@bigpond.com

The cost of doubt

Adapted from an article by Brian McLaren, Centre for Action and Contemplation



Doubt derives from the same roots as duo and double, suggesting that to doubt is to be in two minds. The two minds wrestle and writhe in tension, pulling you in two directions. You can see with eyes of faith and you can see with eyes of scepticism, leaving you with double vision or internal di-vision.

Before doubt, you simply believed. You were in one undivided mind, seeing with one vision, feeling a comfortable confidence rather than distress. But that innocence, that simplicity, that peaceful unity of mind and clarity of vision now slip away, the first casualties of doubt….

For many of us, faith is our map of reality. It tells us where we are, where we've been, where we're going, where to turn. But as soon as our trusted map stops matching reality, we feel disoriented. We have no idea where to turn, what to do, how to survive….

Failure of a mental map or worldview can be personally traumatizing. Even scientists, when their conceptual maps fail them and they must challenge some of their fundamental scientific assumptions, use emotionally charged language to describe the experience....

Albert Einstein … described the experience of coping with data that took him off the edges of his scientific map: "It was as if the ground had been pulled out from under one, with no firm foundation to be seen anywhere, upon which one could have built."

If the loss of a scientific map or model creates anxiety, how much more does the loss of a religious worldview? This loss threatens us with another even greater loss: the very loss of God or of God's favour, love, and protection.

While we were taught God is loving, gracious, and forgiving, the one requirement God demands above all others is precisely the thing that doubters struggle with most: God demands firm, unwavering faith, which we understood to mean correct beliefs. To question those beliefs throws open the terrifying possibility that God might at any moment turn against us and punish us if we don't get our beliefs straight and hold them tight, without doubt….

Doubt can breach the psychological fortress in which we've felt safe, tear up the internal map by which we've navigated the world, and threaten to separate us from God's favour and love. But questions and doubt are not the enemy of faith, they are a portal to a more mature and fruitful kind of faith – a path forward that can help sincere and thoughtful people leave behind unnecessary baggage and intensify their commitment to what matters most.

Peace

Adapted from an article by Rev John Gilmore, NCCA President

The hope and desire for peace are common human longings. It is something we seek in all areas of life.

We are sensitive to the levels of violence reported and experienced in families, communities and between people. How this violence is reported often increases our fear and even a sense of hopelessness. It is hard to know what to say in response to this ongoing reality.

The global crises in the Middle East, Eastern Europe, Northern Africa and Asia, [and even Australia of late], continue without abatement. We are all impacted by these situations.

We hear the words of Jesus when he says to his disciples: 'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid'.



These words of assurance were given to the disciples when they were facing conflict and turmoil. The outer realities of their lives remained the same. They were not rescued from the tensions that they were living with. Rather they were called to look beyond the circumstances and to find a level of peace that is the gift of the presence of Jesus.

The peace the world gives may be temporary and given without attention to justice or consideration of the impact of conflict on people.

The peace we pray for is a peace that takes hold in our spirit, it influences our actions and attitudes. It is expressed in ways that conflict is overcome, justice is served and the environment renewed.

Every small 'peace step' we take is important in the journey of peace.

News from the October Church Council Meeting

From Margaret Cargill

The full agenda of the October meeting is in the Church Council folder in the library, and the minutes will also be there once they are confirmed. In the meantime, here are some highlights:

- **Congregation Meeting and Blue Christmas:** Our December congregation meeting will take place on Sunday 13 December, immediately after worship, and Blue Christmas on Monday 14 December at 7:00pm – please note these dates!
- **Launching our Hidden Disability Sunflower support:** This will take place on Sunday 6 December with the inauguration of a Sensory Room at the rear of our worship area to offer a comfortable space for those needing it.
- **Holiday Fun Days:** We agreed to continue this successful program and appointed a review team of Jan Sillett, Jan Thornton, Anne Butler and Leonie Brown, subject to their consent.
- **Steering Committee for our Uniting Foundation Grant re bi-directional streaming with rural congregations:** These people were appointed: Margaret Cargill, Bev Tredrea, Jenny Swanbury, John Secombe, Helen Tucker from Kimba, Judy Laske from Orroroo, and Marilyn Martin and Cathrine Dinnie from Maitland.
- **Early alert for a BBQ lunch with our Netball Club friends and Student Accommodation Families:** Please reserve Sunday 7 February 2027 for this event!
- **A place to lie down if needed:** Four soft chairs without arms have been clicked together and placed near the windows in the foyer; please leave them together so that anyone needing to lie horizontally has a place. A pillow and quilt are in the LH end of the blue cupboard below the glass display case in the church foyer.

As always, if you have any questions, please talk to one of the members of Church Council: Bruce Ind (Chairperson), Margaret Cargill (Deputy Chair), Helena Begg (Secretary), Anne Ind and Leonie Brown (Co-treasurers), Rhonda Amber, Chris Ayles, Michele Bennier, Anne Butler, Austin Phoenix, John Secombe, Jan Sillett.

The lonely pawn: On faith, doubt, and meaning

Adapted from a post on Patheos by Vance Morgan

"Have you never felt like one of those pawns forgotten in a corner of the board, with the sounds of battle fading behind them? They try to stand straight but wonder if they still have a king to serve." – Arturo Pérez-Reverte



In the great game of life, most of us are lonely pawns. Pawns are the most plentiful, most restricted and least powerful pieces on a chessboard. It must often be tempting for a pawn to imagine that there is no point to the game, that other pieces with more options are the only ones that can make a difference, that perhaps the king who the pawn is assigned to defend does not even exist. And yet the pawn endures – until it is taken and removed from the board. No wonder we embrace stories that tell us otherwise, stories intended to convince us that there is something bigger going on in which each of us, often unwittingly and in ignorance, plays a part.

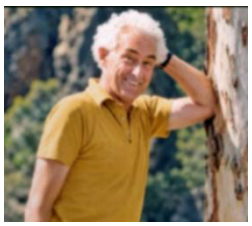
Doubt is not the enemy and there's a lot to be said for exchanging the challenge of freedom and responsibility for the security of what Dostoevsky calls "miracle, mystery, and authority." But to exchange freedom and responsibility for security and comfort, no matter how seductive, is to sacrifice both what makes us human and the heart of true faith. As Simon Critchley, writes:

It is the freedom of faith. It is the acceptance and submission to a demand that both places an intolerable burden on the self, but which also energizes a movement of subjective conversion, to begin again . . . Faith hopes for grace . . . Such an experience of faith is not certainty . . . and doubt is not the enemy of faith. On the contrary, it is certainty. If faith becomes certainty, then we have become seduced by the temptations of miracle, mystery, and authority . . . [Faith] is defined by an essential insecurity, tempered by doubt and defined by a radical experience of freedom.

In the midst of uncertainty and lack of information, each lonely pawn has a continual choice to make. Does my life mean anything? Can I make a difference? When considering these questions, it is worth remembering that even the lowly pawn, once in a while, gets to move one space diagonally and perhaps change the whole landscape of the game. True faith is a leap, but not into the security of collective conformity. Rather, it is a continuing commitment to and embrace of both freedom and responsibility–the choice to pursue that most elusive of goals: the meaning of my life.

"The prophets are those rare individuals who see reality in its fullness and dimension, rather than in dualities like totally right or totally wrong, all good or all bad." - *Richard Rohr*

Victor Noel Ready (1928 – 2026)



Vic was born in Sydney where he studied carpentry as a young man. On completion of his training he was sent by the Methodist Church to Papua New Guinea to help rebuild church facilities damaged during the war. It was here that he met Ruth – a nurse-midwife – on the back of a 'ute'. Ruth was also working with the Methodist Church.

Ruth and Vic returned to Adelaide to marry and Vic was asked by the church to work at the Kuitpo Colony, a great social experiment of the twentieth century. The colony was established during the 'Great Depression' as a place that welcomed men from across the country who were unemployed or had been recently released from jail. Later they also welcomed recovering alcoholics. Later the church invited Vic to become maintenance man at Lentara Homes for children in Magill, where, amongst other things, he built a 'flying fox' for the children to use. It was here that Vic and Ruth became part of the Magill Methodist/Uniting Church.

When Lentara closed, Vic worked at Resthaven and later with the Salvation Army as a counsellor before 'retiring' to work at Bennett's Magill Pottery.

Vic touched the hearts of hundreds of people, including many of us who worked and worshipped with him and Ruth at Magill/Morialta Uniting Church.

Vic was an elder at MUC for many years, as well as a fine violinist in the "band". He was very involved in the day-to-day life of the church and community – gardening, fixing, doing odd jobs and just being there to help and to chat to 'others'.

Vic never gave up learning and was forever questioning and seeking answers. One of his great delights was just to go 'bush' and explore the plant, animal and insect life that made up that small piece of creation.

Vic lives on in our memories as one of the wise men we have encountered, who shared with us his joy of life, wisdom and love.

… And what did you want [from this life]?

To call myself beloved, to feel beloved on the earth. – Raymond Carver

Vic was certainly beloved!



Drawing by Vic's grandson (1997)

Our differences must never become our divisions

Adapted from an article by Jaswinder Singh, CEO and co-founder of Sikh Volunteers Australia published by Interfaith Council of Victoria

Across the world, we are witnessing growing uncertainty. Economic pressures, wars, migration and rapid social change have created genuine concerns in many communities. At the same time, groups promoting racial superiority, exclusion and hostility towards migrants and minorities are becoming increasingly visible.

Australia is not immune to these tensions. As a migrant, a Sikh and someone who has spent many years serving the community, I believe people have every right to discuss immigration, housing, security and national identity.

But we must never cross an important line.

A debate about immigration policy must never become hatred towards an immigrant.

Concern about extremism must never become suspicion of an entire faith.

Economic hardship must never become an excuse to blame a neighbour because of their colour, accent, religion or country of birth.

Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji taught us the importance of remaining in dialogue while we share this world – to speak, but also to listen.

When society becomes divided, our instinct can be to shout louder. But our teachings encourage us instead to listen, recognise the humanity in one another, and respond with truth, compassion and humility.

Our traditions also teach us to stand against injustice and oppression. Freedom is meaningful only when we defend it not just for ourselves, but for others.

We cannot ask society to respect our articles of faith and identity while remaining silent when another community is targeted for looking, praying or living differently. Migrants, too, have responsibilities: to respect our laws, contribute to society, respect others' freedoms, and participate in our shared community. Sometimes the person we disagree with most is the person we most need to sit down with.

Our children will inherit the Australia we create through our words and actions today.

Who is my neighbour?

In essence Jesus says "I do not know his name; he is anyone toward whom you are neighbourly. He is anyone who lies in need at life's roadside. He is neither Jew nor Gentile; he is neither Russian nor American; he is neither Negro nor white.

He is a 'certain man' – any needy man – on one of the numerous Jericho roads of life." So, Jesus defines a neighbour, not in a theological definition, but in a life situation.

– Martin Luther King



June Thompson (1930-2026)

June was a valued and loved member of Magill/Morialta Uniting Church for many years, although she had been unable to attend services and functions in person since before COVID.

June was born in the Huner Valley of NSW, and grew up in the coal mining city of Cessnock. It was here that, as a young woman, she met and married Cyril. After Cyril was injured in a mine accident, they followed his brother to South Australia and settled in Magill.

Community service was a long-term part of June's life and she delivered 'Meals on Wheels' for the Norwood Branch for over 35 years. She was also a founding member of 'Coffee Corner', where she cooked and helped serve meals and did the weekly shopping for supplies, aided by Cyril. Cyril also joined the 'washing uppers' and was a great support to the team. Later June became a regular customer at 'Lunch on Chapel'.

June had a beautiful singing voice and was a member of the choir and singing group at MUC for many years. She was also involved in the Fellowship Group and a much-admired and loved member of our community.

You can watch June's service of celebration of life at https://streaming.naoca.com.au/e/7ae73380-719c-4ed9-bc9f-11847e62f080

Friendship Group



On October 15th, 15 members of the Friendship Group had the pleasure of listening to a very entertaining and knowledgeable speaker who explained the history of The Clipper Ship 'The City of Adelaide'.

The ship was built in 1864 and made 23 historical voyages, bringing thousands of emigrants to South Australia. The magnificent sailing ship was almost scrapped in Scotland, but was rescued and brought to Adelaide, where she is being lovingly restored by numerous "professional" volunteers. The ship is now berthed at Dock 2 at Port Adelaide.

Following the meeting, 10 members stayed for lunch and continued with much fun and fellowship.

The next meeting will be the AGM on Thursday, November 12 at 10.00am. Margaret and Ray will speak about their many years as volunteers for Guide Dogs, including puppy raising and short-term boarding.

Everyone is very welcome to come along.

Presbytery Meeting



Adapted from Words from Wimala

The Wimala Presbytery gathered at Broadview UC on Saturday 17th October. Forty-eight members and eight visitors attended in person, and 4 members and one visitor attended online.

A significant highlight of the morning was a Bible reflection from Rev Prof Bart Bruehler, who explored the connection between evangelism and Christian community. He encouraged us to consider how hospitality, generosity, unity, and faithful relationships provide a powerful witness to God's love.

A significant piece of business considered by the Presbytery was the outcome of the Presbytery Review and the recommendations regarding staffing arrangements. Members approved several important changes designed to strengthen ministry leadership across the Presbytery. Regional Coordinator positions will be known as Presbytery Minister positions, increasing staffing to two half-time Presbytery Ministers, and expanding the allocation for the Chairperson of the Pastoral Relations Committee. The Presbytery Standing Committee was also authorised to finalise the revised 2027 budget to support these changes.

Several reports were received which highlighted the breadth of ministry taking place across the region and provided valuable updates on governance, finances, and strategic priorities. Encouraging stories about online worship services were presented and Denica Patselis, our Young People and Family Learning and Information Officer, was welcomed.

A revised membership rule, that will allow lay-led congregations to appoint an additional representative, in lieu of an ordained minister, was also adopted.

Presbytery Standing Committee members are Bruce Ind (Morialta), Simon Story (Alberton Village Church), Sandra Webb, (Yorke Peninsula), David Badger (Barmera-Berri) and Leon Green (West Lakes United)

The 2027 meeting dates will be 1 May and 23 October.

Places of Wonder

Contributed by Ruth Dunning

Surely the Royal Church of Saint Chapelle in Paris is one such place – a blaze of light, described as a "medieval jewel" and "one of the greatest architectural masterpieces of the Western World". It was built in 1248 by King Louis IX (Saint Louis) to house Christ's Crown of Thorns and other relics.

It actually consists of two chapels, one atop the other. The lower one was for servants and commoners while the upper one was only for the king and the royal family. Here there are fifteen magnificent stained-glass windows separated by the narrowest of columns that soar fifteen metres to the star-studded roof. The windows, which cover nearly the whole wall area, portray over 1,000 religious scenes from the Old and New Testaments in a kaleidoscope of red, gold, green, blue and mauve colours.

Later, on a tour of Jerusalem, our leader took us along the Via Dolorosa (Way of Sorrows) following the steps Jesus took to Calvary. The first two Stations are located within the site of the Antonia Fortress (now a school courtyard) where Jesus was crowned with thorns, seven are located within the streets of the old City and the last five are within the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. The latter would astonish both Bruce and me later!!



The Church of the Holy Sepulchre – Wikipedia

An official description of the Sepulchre reads "It is a massive sprawling complex spanning approximately 1.25 acres. Rather than a single cohesive building, its layout is best described as an architectural jigsaw puzzle or a vertical labyrinth. Centuries of destruction, competing reconstructions, and shared denominational spaces have transformed it into a dense, cavernous network of cavern-like rooms, hidden chapels (about 30) and winding pathways." Another description reads "It can be pictured as a multi-tiered stone citadel built over an ancient rugged quarry".

We entered the Church and near the entrance is the Stone of Anointing – a polished pink limestone slab where Jesus' body was prepared for burial – the air was fragrant with myrrh and illuminated by eight hanging lamps. Some folk were weeping.

Nearby, up a steep flight of steps, sits Calvary. It is divided into two main chapels – Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox. A Greek Orthodox altar is built over the rock of Golgotha. Visitors can reach through a silver cased opening beneath the altar to touch the actual bedrock. It is an intensely sombre atmosphere richly adorned with heavy incense burners, golden mosaics and flickering candlelight.

We carefully walked up and down many steep narrow steps lit only by oil lamps, of which there are hundreds, past lofty pillars and dark grottos, finally emerging beneath the soaring sunlit dome of the Rotunda. Here stands a monumental shrine housing the remains of the rock-cut tomb and the marble slab marking the site of the Resurrection.

What an experience it had been – so much so that later we had felt compelled to return and enter again the meaningful yet mysterious Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

Needling for change

Adapted from an article in the Conversation by Stephen John Taylor, University of Otago

Knitting is often seen as a quiet hobby for the home and hearth. And for good reason: research suggests that it can be calming, aid concentration and create social connections.

But its quiet nature has also made knitting an unlikely tool for protest. During the French Revolution, women known as *tricoteuses* famously knitted while watching public executions. During World War I, Belgian women used knitting to record the movements of German troops and artillery.

Marilyn Waring, the renowned feminist and former National MP, was the first woman to knit on the floor of the NZ parliament, described her own knitting as a political act. In 1955, women in NZ staged a "knit-in" on railway tracks to protest the closure of the Nelson railway line, continuing for ten days before being arrested.

The pink "Pussyhat" became a symbol of the 2017 Women's March in Washington DC, where hundreds of thousands of protesters gathered following Donald Trump's inauguration.

Knitting has also been a source of cultural innovation. Māori women unravelled wool from imported knitted garments and reworked it into korowai – an example of one culture's materials being adapted for another.

These examples show how something associated with quiet domesticity can carry a very public message. Knitting offers a form of protest that does not need to be loud or confrontational to make a point.

The term for this is craftivism and in 2009, British activist Sarah Corbett founded the Craftivists Collection Collective to promote "the art of gentle protest".

In Australia, Christian social justice organisation Common Grace invited people to knit "climate scarves" for politicians, using coloured stripes to depict changes in average global temperatures over the previous century. One knitter described the scarves as a gentler way of communicating the urgency of climate change. In England, knitting was used to show solidarity with survivors of church abuse.

For generations, women have taken an activity often regarded as quaint and homely and carried it into public life – sometimes for comfort, sometimes for community and sometimes to make a political point.

Perhaps that's why, after all these years, a harmless pair of knitting needles can still get parliament in a tangle.

A multi-faith call for a Fuel Treaty

From Australian Religious Response to Climate Change (ARRCC)

We stand united as people from many faiths and spiritual paths. The Earth is given in sacred trust for all living things - not as a commodity but as a gift to be honoured. Our traditions speak clearly - we have a sacred duty to defend the integrity of creation, and to protect human rights into coming centuries.

Our sacred texts call us to protect the Earth and all communities who are already suffering the effects of climate change. And yet, despite the clarity of science, we are failing our responsibility. Many governments, and vast financial interests, push back on the Paris Agreement's goal of a 1.5°C maximum by 2050, paying no heed to the stream of climate calamities that we daily witness. They place profit above life, stealing from our children and coming generations.

While the cost of action will be expensive, the cost of inaction will be astronomical on life and property over coming centuries. It is short-sighted and foolhardy to enrich the few at the expense of the many.

The transition towards renewable energy is a matter of survival. To continue expanding fossil fuels is to act without integrity. We therefore call on every government to act with courage equal to the crisis and to negotiate a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty that will:

- Immediately stop approvals of newer fuel projects;
- Rapidly phase out existing fossil fuel production, ensuring impacted workers are treated with dignity.
- Finance a global just transition to safe and affordable renewable energy for all people.

We plead with the leaders of every nation: Choose courage over complacency, protect our common home and act with urgency.

Trees for Life (TfL)

Many members of Morialta have been or continue to be volunteers and supporters of Trees for Life, a unique South Australian organisation dedicated to restoring the environment.

TfL planted their first tree on One Tree Hill in 1982 and since then over 40 million trees, shrubs and grasses have been planted.

Some of their amazing achievements include growing 35,330,142 seedlings, done by 1,190 growers. Around 6,827 hectares have been sown with 7,884,800 plants at over 5,489 sites around South Australia.

Bush for Life, an arm of TfL, is supported by 772 volunteers, and is protecting 240 sites across South Australia with a further 7,369 volunteers caring for bushland.

TfL also operate a seedbank with more than 462 species banked for the future, which amounts to 7,443 kg of seed collected and 33,224 hours given by volunteers.

Amazing achievements by an organisation that receives no government funding and is only supported by donations of talents, time, hard work and money!

If you would like to know more or support TfL, go to https://treesforlife.org.au/



Excerpts from letters home

From Ruth Pitt – while hitch hiking around Europe in 1966

On Sunday morning Joan rose early and went in to the Church of England communion service, while Marg and I slept in, and then left at about 10am to go to the Presbyterian Church. As usual we had 'followers' but this time one guy accompanied us right to the church and although he was Roman Catholic, he came inside. He sat through the whole service next to me, although he couldn't speak much English. He then accompanied us when we visited the Colosseum and Roman Forum – talk about a leech!

Anyway, he wasn't too bad a fellow – about our age, doing 4th year chemistry at the university - and we thought we'd make full use of him so asked him to take us to the Catacombs.

He went back to his digs for lunch and returned with 2 other guys – for the other two - and 2 cars. We then spent the afternoon driving along the Appian Way, being taken to the Catacombs and going for a drive down to the sea. All in all, having an enjoyable time for free. We're going out with them again tonight.

I remember he was a good-looking nice guy and I was sorry to leave Rome. Cheers, Ruth P.



The Catacombs in Rome

(Wikipedia)

Keeping your on-line life safe

Adapted from JIM's IT

Don't take the bait - Phishing is when cyber criminals use emails, texts or social media messages to convince you to share personal information or account details. They might pretend to be someone you know or a trusted organisation, like a bank or government department.

Stop before clicking on links, attachments or social media ads and ask yourself, could this be a scam?

Before sharing personal or banking information, validate who you're talking to using a trusted phone number or official website.

Banks and Government agencies will never ask for your PIN, password, or for you to log in over email.

- Strengthen passwords - Use complex, unique passwords or passphrases for each account. Passphrases are more secure - they're a set of multiple words that are meaningful only to you. Also use a mix of uppercase and lowercase letters, numbers and special characters. Avoid using words or number combinations that are easy to guess, like a child or pet's name, or your birthday.
- Consider saving passwords in a Password Manager app on your device, which can help by securely creating and storing complex passwords for you.
- Strengthen your defences by setting up Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) on your online accounts - including email and social media. It adds an extra security check, such as a one-time code sent by SMS or an authenticator app, to help protect your accounts.
- Updating your software, operating systems and apps (including your banking apps) can be one of your best defences against potential security weaknesses. Turning on automatic updates on your computer, phone and other devices makes it easier.

Empire Christianity buried the Gospel Message

Adapted from an article by Richard Rohr, Centre for Action and Communication



Once Christianity became enmeshed with empire, we could no longer talk about the opening line of the Sermon on the Mount, "Blessed are the poor in spirit" (Matthew 5:3). Emperors don't want people who are poor in spirit. They want people who salute the flag and follow the rules.

Empire Christianity buried the gospel message because it needs clear judgments about who's in and who's out, who's right and who's wrong, who's our enemy and who's our friend.

An example of how thoroughly it infected the church is that in 1054, the bishop of Rome and the patriarch of Constantinople mutually excommunicated one another, with each side effectively calling themselves the winner – a triumph of dualistic, win-lose thinking. The Holy Roman Empire in the West and the Byzantine Empire in the East, basically stopped talking to one another.

The Holy Roman Empire transitioned into the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Similarly, the Spanish Empire brought its version of Western Roman Catholicism to the New World.

These empires handed on a reading of the gospel that did not threaten top-down power, war-making, or the accumulation of wealth. Until the 1100s, taking interest on a loan was considered material for excommunication? Now, it's the name of the game! We are so aligned with our current money-making system that much of Jesus's teaching, in which he says the top will be bottom and the bottom will be top, doesn't make a bit of sense to us. (Matthew 19:30, 20:16.) We don't agree with it, privately or publicly.

There are, of course, the outliers, those who remained outside of empire. In the Catholic world there were the desert fathers and mothers, the Celts, and the mendicant orders whose members take vows of poverty. In the Protestant world, non-imperial Christianity was probably best illustrated by the Anabaptist movement, which led to groups like the Mennonites, the Amish, and the Quakers.

These forms of Christianity emphasize things like a simple lifestyle, non-participation in war, not taking oaths to governments, and not saluting the flags and systems of this world. They weren't established by any state, nor did they enjoy the privileges that came from being the established religion of the Roman, Spanish, or British Empires. This is actually to their benefit because once you're established, you have to be careful! Your ability to speak truth will be highly limited. There's a whole bunch of things you cannot say anymore.



Congratulations to Margaret Dix on turning 90. We bestow an 'OBN' upon Margaret!



Our final concert for 2026

On Sunday 1st November, the 1st ILLUMINA VOICES with Illumina Hand Chimes provided us with a delightful, and at times an intriguing, afternoon of music. This was our final concert for 2026 and raised over $1000 for our projects.

Our first concert in 2027 will be a recital by our own Gil Sullivan tentatively in March. As 2027 will be the 200th anniversary of Beethoven's death, Gil will be performing an all-Beethoven programme.





Coffin Club

Anne B has been leading a group of us through 6 sessions about being prepared for the end of our earthly life. It's been a light-hearted look at living and dying, and what we need to think about to be prepared, and make the end of our life easier for others.

The most recent session included a demonstration of how to put on a shroud!



The paradox of our age

We have bigger houses but smaller families;
more conveniences, but less time.

We have more degrees but less sense;
more knowledge but less judgment;
more experts, but more problems;
more medicines but less healthiness.

We've been all the way to the moon and back,
but have trouble in crossing the street
to meet our new neighbour.

We built more computers to hold more copies than ever,
but have less real communication;

We have become long on quantity,
but short on quality.

These are times of fast foods but slow digestion;
Tall men but short characters;
Steep profits but shallow relationships.

It's a time when there is much in the window but nothing in the room.

His holiness the 14th Dalai Lama

