

THE OLIVE BRANCH

December 2017 Brunswick Uniting Church Congregation Worship - 9:30 am

> Meditation

The Christmas Census Question

The relative importance of each character or thing mentioned in Luke's Christmas story can be gauged to a certain extent by the number of times they are mentioned.

So for example, top place on the Christmas story appearance chart with 6 mentions is shared between Jesus and God. Counting the rest up from the bottom: Joseph gets 2 mentions; Mary and the Manger get 3; 4 mentions go to David, Bethlehem, the Angels, the Shepherds, and one other thing. What else in the Xmas story is stressed by repetition as much as the shepherds and angels? The Census.

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered in a census. This was the first census and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns for the census. Joseph ... went to [Bethlehem] to be registered in the census with Mary. The action of Xmas is driven by a census.

2016 was census year in Australia and we have learnt a number of things about ourselves as a result. There were some hiccups (did you get in before the crash?), but at least our census has a firmer grip on reality than Luke's. His has the following anomalies:

1. Assuming that "all the world" means the Roman Empire, there is no evidence of one census under Augustus that took in the whole Empire.
2. The one and only census conducted while Quirinius was Governor in Syria effected only Judea, not Galilee (so wouldn't have included those living in Nazareth), and it happened in the year 6CE, ten years after the death of Herod the Great whom Luke says was alive at the time of the birth of Jesus.
3. There is no evidence of a census requirement by any Roman governor that people be registered in their ancestral cities.

Luke's historical facts about the census are dubious, which means that we are freed to focus on its narrative, symbolic, and theological function – the much more interesting stuff as far as I am concerned! Whether it happened or not, what does the census mean in this story?

The romans conducted censuses to regulate taxation and conscription. But that doesn't seem to be the point for Luke. No, for him, first of all it serves a simple narrative function – it gets Mary to Bethlehem so that Jesus can fulfil the prophecies saying the messiah will be born there. But it has a second function as well – a political one – the census means that the birth of Jesus happens in relation to the most important person in the world.

He only gets one mention in the story so doesn't make the league ladder of Xmas references, but Caesar Augustus doesn't need more than one mention – everyone in the ancient world knows all about him. He is Divine Augustus Caesar, Son of a God, Saviour of the whole world whose birth marked the beginning of good news of Peace for the world. Remind you of anyone?

In Luke's telling of Xmas, the most powerful and important man in the world, divine Augustus, puts everyone in their place, sends them to their family homes, counts them, registers them in a census. Everyone that is, except one insignificant baby, Jesus of Nazareth, who also will be called Son of God and Saviour, bringer of Good News, Prince of Peace.

Augustus puts everyone in their place, but Jesus is laid in a manger, because there was no place for him – no place in the Inn nor under the authority and power of the Emperor.

So the Christmas Census question is: Where is your place in the world? Where were you born? Were you born subject to the powers of the world? – or in no place – subject only to the love of the Divine?

Last year at our Christmas Eve Pageant the role of the baby Jesus was played by baby Shaylin an asylum seeker who is part of our congregation here. In the days leading up to the Pageant, Shaylin's parents received a letter telling them that their application for a visa to stay in Australia had been rejected. Thankfully 12 months later that decision has been reversed, but back then it was heartbreaking. Little Shaylin was born here, but was told there was no place for her here.

Like all powerful Augustus, the Department of Immigration and Border Protection said to Shaylin's parents, "Return to the place of your birth." But they can't – that is not their place anymore either. As people of no place they sat at the manger, the place of no place, Shaylin embodying more poignantly than we expected the one for whom like her, there was no place in the schemes of power.

The Christmas Census proclaims to us and to all who have no place: you are not ultimately subject to Augustus, to the powers of the world, for by God's grace, you are born anew into the life of the one for whom there is no place. And when the powers of the world try to put us in our place, as they do, we say we are people of the manger. And the good news of our peace lies there.

Ian Ferguson

> Worship Calendar

Advent

The season of Advent begins on **Sunday 3rd December**. We invite you to listen for the messages offered each week from the earth, Isaiah, John the Baptist and the Angel. Each week we will engage with the stories from the Christmas Bowl.

Our thanks to Melanie Drury and Ann Soo for the artwork for Advent and Christmas.



Sanctuary
by Melanie Drury

Blue Christmas

Blue Christmas will be held on **Wednesday 13th December** at 7:30 pm. This is a quiet service of reflection & meditation for people who want a space to grieve, remember loved ones who have died, look back over a difficult year, seek peace in troubled times or simply take some time away from the busyness of this particular time of the year.



Christmas Eve Pageant

Join us on **Christmas Eve** at 7 pm to participate in 'A message of hope and joy'. We have an excellent script and an enthusiastic group of young people taking part.

If you would like to get involved, offer to help or have any questions about the pageant please contact Saide Cameron (producer) 0407 096 743 or Caitlin Mullen (director) 0411 033 153

Christmas Eve

We gather again at 11:30 pm to welcome in Christmas Day with candle light and a celebration of Holy Communion.

Christmas Day

We celebrate the birth of Christ at our regular worship time of 9:30am.



January

We celebrate Holy Communion on **7th January** and look forward to welcoming Fiona Bottcher as our preacher on **14th & 21st January** while Ian is on leave.

Christmas Eve Meditation

With the reality of three worship services on one day we are offering a quieter simpler Meditation service at our regular worship time of 9:30am.

Please join us. Morning Tea will be provided as usual.

> Index

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| 1. Meditation | 11. Culture of Safety, Congregational Meeting | 19. Reports: Council, Worship |
| 2. Meditation, Worship calendar | 12. JAM News | 20. Reports: Worship, |
| 3. Special Events | 13. JAM News | 21. Reports: Worship, |
| 4. What does Creativity mean to you? | 14. JAM News | 22. Reports: Worship, D&E |
| 5. What does Creativity mean to you? | 15. Pastoral Care News | 23. Reports: Finance |
| 6. What does Creativity mean to you? | 16. CY&YA News | 24. Happy Birthday, Preaching Plan, Lectionary |
| 7. Sharing our Faith | 17. Presbytery News, Mulling News | 25. Christmas Worship |
| 8. Sharing our Faith | 18. Regular Events | 26. Diary |
| 9. Sharing our Faith | | |
| 10. Sharing our Faith | | |



> Special Events

Christmas Bowl FUNdraising Stall



After worship on **Sunday 3rd & 10th December** you are all invited to enjoy buying Christmas gifts for family & friends from the Bake, Craft & Preserves stall.

On **10th December** the stall will also feature a collection of



10 Christmas Cards created using Ann Soo and Mel Drury's Advent & Christmas artwork. They will be absolutely stunning. Here's a teaser or two.



Also check out the images in the worship calendar

You are also invited to make an offer for Cathy Lim's framed artwork from the Creativity Exhibition.

Proceeds will support the amazing projects sponsored by the Christmas Bowl. See JAM News, p 14

Carols at the Manse



Come and enjoy a relaxing evening of carol singing, poetry and stories at the manse on **Sunday 10th December**, 7pm

All the photos in this section are from the 2016 events.

Singing on the Steps



Join in the fun of singing Christmas Carols on the steps facing Sydney Rd after worship on the third Sunday of Advent, **17th December**.

We make a joyful sound and have fun singing all our favourite carols all while attracting the admiring attention of passersby.

Stewart Lodge Carols



Come along to Stewart Lodge (home to John, Rosemary, Tracey and many more), 85 Stewart St. Brunswick on **Tuesday 19th December** at 6:30pm to sing carols and then share in the joy and fun of gift giving and supper. (Bring a plate of supper to share.) See more [here](#).

OW Christmas Lunch



The Olive Way will close for the year on **Wednesday 20th December** with the annual Christmas Lunch. See JAM News, p 14 for information about how you can support the lunch.

What does creativity mean to you?

BUC Arts exhibition – its genesis and evolution



On behalf of the Brunswick Uniting Church Arts Committee, let me offer a brief description of how this BUC Arts Exhibition unfolded. The exhibition is not an end in itself, but is perhaps the end of the beginning phase of a transition from art as an adjunct to the life of BUC, to hopefully an era in which the creativity of all forms of art are understood as intrinsic to our common life.

There have been many tributaries that have contributed to the confluence of creativity that is this art exhibition:

- Artstop which provides a space through the ministry of the Olive Way and the resources of Artspace Victoria, to encourage participants to use and develop their own artistic talents and modes of expression.
- During the intervals when the Artspace program is in recess, Ann Soo (convenor of BUC Arts) Leanne Salau, and more recently, Philip Kreveld and Geoff Falk, have extended the opportunity for the Olive Way arts program to continue as The Olive Arts.
- The Christmas Pageant is another opportunity for art to be front and centre through Advent with our 2016 artist-in-residence, Simone Alesich gathering the SMP children to create a Christmas art installation last year.
- Ann Soo led another community arts experience by facilitating the creation of a most beautiful felted communion table overlay for Pentecost 2016.
- Our minister, Ian Ferguson has brought into worship the modes of movement and dance, and multi-media imagination to enrich the liturgy and proclamation of the Gospel.
- We have been encouraged and inspired by other art exhibitions, including at Exclusion and Embrace at CTM, Sacred Edge Festival in Queenscliff Uniting Church, Collins Street and Box Hill Baptist Churches, and by the knowledge, wisdom and insight of the Synod Arts coordinator, Christina Rowntree, who has been crucial to the curation of this exhibition.

We acknowledge the contribution of Simone Alesich for seeding and scaffolding the idea of holding an art exhibition. To Ann Soo, for convening and coordinating the exhibition with over thirty volunteers and together with Leanne Salau investing time, energy and commitment to community art to bring it to fruition.

Above all we acknowledge the imagination and creative effort of the artists who have been willing to submit their work in response to the question, "What is Creativity?"

So why have an arts exhibition in the context of an already vibrant faith community?

- Is it art for art's sake, and if so is that necessarily at odds with our participation in the Mission of God in the world? I think the answer to that question, is in part at least, yes! When we discover verbal and non-verbal modes of expressing that which lies in the deepest places of the human spirit, we are surely in tune with something that is much deeper and more profound than can be expressed solely in language.
- Or is the rationale of art as Creativity with a capital C, in other words participating imaginatively in the ever continuing in the Creation of and by the Eternal Spirit?

I think the phenomenon which is the BUC arts exhibition 2017 draws on both the drive to create works of beauty and meaning, and the longing to express the inexpressible depths of our communion with the Triune God whose being is creative community.

And that means that we, the observers and reflectors, belong in this creative community as we ponder the impact of these unique creations on our thinking, our feeling, our remembering and our hoping. As we all enter in our own way into this arts event, we contribute to the continuing creative work of the Spirit in our midst.

Colin Hunter





“What does Creativity mean to you?” Exhibition and Performance was held between 27th October and 5th November 2017.

The aim of the project was to make connections with the wider community as well as seeking to build community within the Brunswick Uniting Church programs and activities.

Contributors were invited to submit a new creative work responding to the question:

“What does creativity mean to you? - What processes help you engage creatively with life? What would you like to share with your community that might inspire the creativity of others? The work could be 2-D, 3-D or performance.

The original inspiration for the project began through ABCD discussions several years ago. The idea gradually grew based around several elements - the desire to connect the church more with the community and to challenge the sacred/secular divide; and a desire for an interactive exhibition that would challenge the separation of viewer and artist, and encourage everyone to see themselves as creative. The concept was developed by the BUCArts Committee with the aim of incorporating the many gifts of creativity within our congregation and to honour these through an interactive exhibition. Our hope was that participation would take the viewer from a passive role into a far more active one to becoming a creator themselves. The invitation to participate was extended to friends and contacts of BUC folk and included the Arts Access program ArstStop. We are grateful for professional advice from Chris Rowntree of the CTM Artful Faith Unit with installation of the works.

The exhibition was open to the public assisted by volunteer guides and a helpful prompt card encouraging the viewer to engage with the works. Forty-eight artists exhibited 73

works. Eleven ArtStop participants contributed 19 works and these remain on display in the Olive Way space. The works included numerous art forms – paint, pastel, charcoal, quilting, felting, handspun, basketry, knitting, cake decorating, photography, floral art, audio/video, collage, upcycling, sculpture. Performances were offered on opening night and a special performance evening. Twelve contributors offered spoken word, original poetry reading, dance, creative movement, an Interplay experience and a presentation by SROC.

The weekday opening times saw approximately 6-7 people attend each day, all from the community in response to a Sandwich Board on the footpath on Sydney Road. At other times the exhibition was enjoyed by Sunday congregations and regular users of the facilities.

The BUCArts Committee under the leadership of Ann Soo welcomed thirty-seven volunteers to make it happen. Every contribution whether large or small helped to make the Creativity Exhibition enjoyable.

Ann Soo with Helen Rowe





The art exhibition and performance night responding to **'What is Creativity?'** was a manifestation of the joy and creativity of our church community. As revealed in our mission planning process in 2016, we are a community of communities and this exhibition brought all those communities (and beyond) to be in one place; to share, celebrate and rejoice with each other for God's gifts to us. I believe art and creativity became the avenue to connect people to one another in a sacred place that is our beautiful church. The exhibition was a community event and we came together as a community to mount the exhibition in a very short space of time. This speaks of the cohesion that is our community - accepting those who can give a lot and those who can only give a small amount. All of it is valued.

Invisible barriers can exist and creativity can break down those barriers as we find out more about each other and see aspects of ourselves not always evident on the external. The exhibition broke down barriers whether it was age, race, ability, resources, gender, class - whatever division we were all there in one place as a people and as a community in Christ. I believe it achieved the aims.

I am blessed and deeply humbled when I see the Olive Way being the centre and heart of the exhibition. I strongly believe

that art is intrinsic and integrated to our church and worship life. The Olive Way artists work from the grass roots and have a home where people who experience marginalisation can be creative, be uplifted, valued and loved. The art in the Olive Way continues to be displayed and for celebration to continue. It was the best place to offer refreshments on performance night. Not only was it bridge between two large spaces (church hall and worship space) but the heart of our church where we provide welcome and hospitality three days a week.

I feel honoured to have been part of something that was so much larger than what could be created on one's own. I look forward to what will emerge from its inspiration. Many people were deeply touched.

My enormous thanks goes to our whole community for embracing this exhibition and for reflecting God's love in how we love each other and work alongside each other.

Ann Soo

And from Stefano (poet) on performance night (paraphrased)

'...I am accustomed to a pub crowd when I read my poetry. Tonight is different. We are already in a sacred place. This art makes this place more sacred'.



> Sharing our Faith

My “New Story”: Loving the Mystery at the heart of the cosmos and caring for creation

Recently I completed a short course on Eco-theology with a Catholic Theological organisation called Heart of Life. Eco-theology focuses on the interrelationships of religion and nature, particularly in the light of environmental concerns. It seeks an understanding of how our earthly home “oikos”, is related to the Mystery or Other at the heart of creation.

The course was a revelation in many ways, exposing me to new theological understandings which actually embrace the two great scientific movements of the last 300 years; the Theory of Evolution and Quantum Physics (which includes the nature and origins of energy and matter).

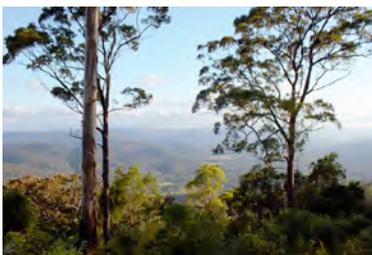
Key theologians which I came across included Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, Thomas Berry, Denis Edwards, Ilija Delio, the recently published Encyclical Letter on Ecology and Climate by Pope Francis called “Laudato Si”, as well as indigenous spirituality. Thomas Berry in particular talks about the need for a “New Story for humankind” which embraces our understanding of the source and purpose of life in light of the Theory of Evolution and Quantum Physics together with our Christian tradition. The New Story will guide us to really love the Mystery at the heart of the cosmos and care for creation.

In the light of my learning, I was encouraged to write my own “New Story” which I have included below. I would be happy to discuss this with anyone who is interested.



Before time began, a Mysterious Source released an energy of love which created a “Big Bang” and powered an irreversible evolution which continues today. Every aspect of creation has its origins in,

and has been shaped by Mysterious Source. Each creature is part of the same unfolding and shares its entire genetic origins with every other creature. So every creature, including humanity, is deeply inter-related. It is therefore immoral for humanity to use other creatures indiscriminately as commodities.



The unstoppable and uncontainable mysterious energy of love released by Mysterious Source in-dwells every aspect of creation and is the ultimate reality of the cosmos. It is part of every creature’s

nature and is within every creature’s being, and calls creation into ever increasing complexity and consciousness by gently and irresistibly “encouraging” matter, energy and creatures into relationship and self-offering love.

We can name the Mysterious Source or ultimate reality “God” who, as Trinity, actually dwells within in each creature and each creature is linked back to God through the Spirit.



Humankind is a later arrival in the evolving journey of the cosmos. Our challenge is connecting with the reality of the in-dwelling and uncontainable energy of love which calls us into relationship and self-offering love (which paradoxically involves taking up responsibility, being fully attentive, entering fully into relationship, and carrying the pain when things don’t work out as hoped).



The problem for humanity, with its capacity for ego-centricity, is that this reality is frequently unseen, forgotten or rejected. This is what we mean by sin. The mysterious energy of love will go on empowering the cosmos on its continuous irreversible evolution, but humanity may resist it because of ego-centricity.

Jesus can be the guide here, being the human embodiment of the Mysterious Source who, in a full and personal way named it “Abba” or loving parent. Through Jesus, in the Spirit, there can be re-remembering and a return to the in-dwelling reality - the uncontainable energy of love, characterised by creating relationships and self-offering love. This re-remembering happens because there is grace – no matter how far humanity strays from the energy of love, the love just keeps working within us. The love never leaves us, and when realised, humanity is “saved”.



It is not easy for humanity to “think” its way to re-remembering with Jesus and to return to the in-dwelling energy of love from Mysterious Source because the Ego is so dominant.



How can humanity allow the silent, “encouraging” presence of Mysterious Source dwelling within to become the reality? Contemplation is important here because when we quieten our minds, pay attention, listen deeply, and connect with the heart we really discover our true “undefended selves” (without any masks, illusions or attachments) and dissolve the barriers which

separate us from the love of Mysterious Source which is already there within us! In this way humanity can be re-membered with Jesus, and return to the purpose of creating relationships and self-offering love.



The vocation of humanity can become that of co-creator in the new emerging creation, living the way of Jesus in all we do; to be self-offering and relationship building, to share the wonderful story of creation through the gift

of creativity, and to work toward a future in which the whole of creation is Christ-like (which Teilhard de Chardin called the "Omega" of history).

Welcoming Ceremony

Twice a year we offer people who are new or newish to the congregation to participate in a welcoming ceremony during which they can name Brunswick Uniting Church as their spiritual home. And so we did this on **Sunday 12th November** with nine people participating. Ian invited them all to come forward, tell us their name, where they are from and why they have chosen BUC to be their spiritual home.

Clare Drew has been around for a couple of years having moved from Warnambool. She has been worshipping either with us or at Mt Waverly UC. She said *I'd like to make this my spiritual home because everyone has just been so welcoming and I love the outreach programs we have happening here. It's just a nice feel, a nice place to be and I've decided today is the day.*

Marcus is from NZ originally and has come here to study. He commented *I'm actually a bit new to faith so I've just come along to see what it's all about.*

Teck Lee is originally from Adelaide, from Brougham Place UC. He said that the reason he came here is because here we have congregation members here who have family members in his Adelaide congregation and we are very similar in many respects.

Tonia Ly and her son **Jacob** moved into the area recently. Tonia was looking for a church to call home. She said *I've been a couple of times and felt really welcomed. There's lot of creative things going on and I really feel welcome.*

Jessica Kvanskul and her daughter **Anye** came from Coburg UC and have been coming since the beginning of the year. Jessica said *we've felt very welcomed in the community here. We've made lots of friends already. Anye made friends straight away and we feel that this is the right place for us to continue in our faith.*

Courtney Rohde has been here for a couple of years already and has managed to accidentally evade every single one of the welcoming

The Mysterious Source shares the pain of the incompleteness of creation. But we have the promise of "Omega" where all will be redeemed and all will be complete, drawn into the spirit of the risen Jesus and made whole.



Those who co-operate with Mysterious Source can rest in the knowledge that they are working to further the goal of evolution which is to be drawn into wholeness in Jesus Christ – the Omega of history.

Richard Arnold

ceremonies since then. She is from Gladstone in central QLD and has been here since the beginning of last year. She and James moved here together. Courtney commented *I can say that we've found our home here. It's the first one we came to and knew from the first time. We feel so loved and it's good to be here.*

Jo Buchanan told us that she was lucky enough to be invited here by Wes & Una Trigg who live in the same retirement village as she does. She told us that it had been a long time since she has been involved in a church community. *My parents ran a mission, Dorcas St. South Melbourne in the 1940s & 50s. I was very involved in that naturally then there are other things that happened. I got married, went to Sydney, wasn't involved in church communities there at all. I was just in prison for five years. No not really. I went in to prison every week for 5 years teaching meditation to the inmates and loved that. Came here, met Una & Wesley. They invited me and I'm loving it.*

Anna Rowlands has been here for a while. She said *I've never been to a Welcoming Ceremony so here I am.*

After sharing their stories all the participants gathered in a group and were blessed by the children and the congregation as we sang 'May God's sheltering wings'

Saide Cameron



A bountiful conversation

Steph and I met for a smoothie at the Lux Foundry to have some Q&A time about her experiences in ministry this year. Rest assured that our smoothies with the delicious title 'Bounty' were very healthy. Here's a summary of our conversation.

How did you end up in Broome?

I was in northern NSW last year helping to prepare for my brother's love party, which is essentially a wedding. Felicity, my soon to be sister-in-law's mother, had just taken up a new role in the Uniting Church as Presbytery Minister in the Pilgrim Presbytery of Northern Australia. I took the opportunity to ask her to have a look at the Mission Planning Report I'd written for our congregation and give me some feedback.

Later that night she had what she described as a flash of inspiration in relation to her role, which was, initially, to find people to fill placements within the Northern Synod. She commented about the way that I had participated in the preparations, working with the family members involved in preparing for the wedding and taking time out when I needed. Noticing these things and reading the report led her to ask me if I was interested in filling the vacancy at Broome UC as a pastor.

I was surprised when she asked me and very flattered but unsure about my ability to do the role. Although I have a lot of experience in leadership and congregational ministry I had very limited experience in grief work and wasn't sure how I'd go with pastorally caring for a congregation in their situation.

What helped you to make the decision to go?

My initial response was 'I don't think so' but I agreed to pray about it. I found myself thinking a lot about the role in the following weeks. I talked to best friend, to Matt my partner and to a friend and her husband who are in ministry with the Uniting Church in the Northern Rivers area. The sense of niggling remained and I felt that to be like a calling. I also spoke to Shawn in his role as Council Chair. I also discovered that Rev. Helen Paine went to school with my mother's best friend. That family type of connection made it feel more real, more accessible.

I have always wanted to live in another country but the opportunity had never arisen. Going to Broome fulfilled this desire in some way because it was so far removed from everything that was familiar, particularly from living in NSW and Melbourne.

And finally my brother and sister in law and their family members live in the north working in mission type roles and I felt like it would give me a deeper understanding of their work and a connection to what they do.

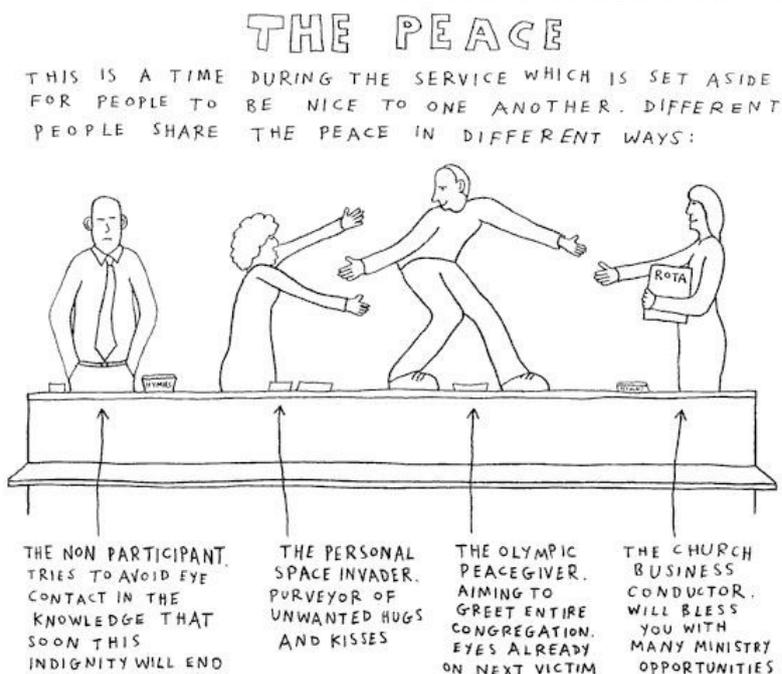
What strengths did you discover within yourself that you built on or didn't even realise you had?

At the pastor training we were invited to participate in a reflective time through art making. This was a three day process through which we built on and responded to our art and then shared with the other trainees. I started with an abstract painting that represented my faith journey. The next day I took it outside, stood on it, walked around, looked at it, took photos. I started developing a sense of being present in a new place. Finally I rolled it up and tied the ends with raffia like a Christmas bon bon.



This reminded me of family Christmas gatherings where our shared sense of humour gave life to our time together. I feel like my humour is a strength which I was able to bring to the congregation in Broome in a variety of ways, especially in light of the grief they were experiencing with Chris's diagnosis.

I found that I was able to laugh at myself as I was learning the ropes in leading and offering worship. One of my first children's times was about passing the peace which was a lovely icebreaker for the adults for later in the service.



Also, I discovered that despite not thinking of myself as a 'dog person' I was actually pretty good at looking after them. The community was tired of looking after Chris and Helen's dogs so it was quite a big deal for me to be able to give everyone a break from this. For me it was great company and a good excuse to go to the beach!

Tell me about something that you learnt or were reminded of.

At Broome the pace was slower than in Melbourne which took quite a lot of getting used to. It takes a long time for things to happen in the north. Things need to be discussed thoroughly before a decision can be made. I had lots of lovely opportunities to sit with people and I eventually got used to just being and listening as we sat.

I also learnt the importance of tea breaks. The Op Shop had been broken into and extensively damaged before I arrived. So many people were coming and helping with cleaning up and rebuilding. There was a lot to be done but there was always time for a break, always time to talk, listen and be present to each other. Another beautiful thing that happened was joining a group of women who went walking three mornings a week. I started to feel much safer in the neighbourhood. I noticed we walked a different route each day and that the women would take turns choosing which way we would walk. I learnt from them about the local area, the changes they'd lived through and when the season was right we collected berries from the native trees to make jam.

I think one of the most important things I learnt was the value of taking time and I hope that I can bring something of that back with me and nurture it.

How did you see God at work in people's lives?

I was really inspired by the faithfulness of the small congregation. They had a sense of despair with ministers coming and going, often not staying for more than two years. They had been excited about Rev. Chris & Rev. Helen Paine becoming their ministers and Chris's diagnosis after only two years of ministry was a source of grief to them.

Towards the end of my time in Broome the Presbytery asked me to run a mission planning program to help with the process of calling a new minister. Initially there was a sense of 'what's the point?' I was inspired by the way in which people took up the opportunity to plan for the future. They wanted to believe and to find hope in their time of grief.

How did you feel as your ministry drew to a close?

I felt and still do feel such an enormous sense of gratitude for the opportunity and the experience of ministry with the people in Broome and for the relationships that I developed. I saw so many inspiring examples of people working together, leading worship, volunteering in the Op Shop. I appreciated the strong sense of community and spirit. At the farewell luncheon the

children presented me with a letter that they had made in the shape of a dragon. I feel very sad that I can't just pop by and visit Cheryl at the Op Shop or share a meal with Nerilee or Dorothy and John, or a cup of Japanese Green tea with Mike, or walk along the beach with Bette and Spotty the dog.

Is there anything you would have done differently?

There was a woman who was a member of the congregation who had cancer. She stopped coming after Chris's diagnosis. I contacted her to offer support but I think I was too enthusiastic and she became defensive. It would have been better to create more space in the offering.

I also would have got all the kids and parents together right from the start so that we could build a sense of community and talk about how to support the children's ministry. It tended to be a bit ad hoc and not as satisfying as it might have been.

I offered this reflection to Steph . . .

It sounds like you offered a lightness, curiosity, desire to build community and a way for the congregation to give voice to their hopes and dreams through mission planning.

You received welcome, generosity of spirit, hospitality and new understanding of relationships.

So tell me about the move from ministry in Broome to ministry in Coburg.

Towards the end of my time in Broome I was offered a two year Mission planning contract at Coburg UC. The conversation about this position had already begun before I went to Broome. The job is to implement their Mission plan which is quite ambitious. I see my role as one of discernment and support, helping the congregation to identify where to begin, to build on the energy that is already there. I bring to the role my listening skills, strategic thinking, ability to facilitate and encourage people to take on roles and to help there to discern what gives them joy and where they want to serve. I think my time in Broome has equipped me to fulfil this role much more effectively than I could have done eight months ago.

How will you manage being part of two congregations?

Brunswick UC is my spiritual home, it's a place where I am nurtured and supported. I love being on church council and am looking forward to supporting the next stage of our mission planning through the implementation of our Strategic Plan.



Now that I have a significant pastoral care load at Coburg I'll be stepping back from pastoral care at BUC and will explore other options, maybe worship or discipleship & education. (Since this conversation Steph has been nominated and appointed as BUC's new Presbytery representative).

At Coburg UC I'll be in a different leadership role. At the moment they don't have a minister having just called Rev

Ron Rosinsky who will begin in March. For now I want to be available to listen and support the congregation through a time of transition. I also want to explore how we as congregations are part of the bigger picture and find ways to build relationships between us and support each other. One of the first ways this might happen is through youth group. I'm sure that there will be others.

Saide Cameron with Steph Gesling

> A Culture of Safety

Brunswick Uniting Church is committed to creating and sustaining a culture of safety in our gatherings and activities for all people of all backgrounds. This will involve how people speak to and behave with each other, how decisions are made, and how feedback is given and received. People will be welcomed to participate, share their views and express feedback, in the context of giving all others the same opportunities. Discrimination based on race, physical appearance, first language, disability, gender, sexuality, family background or economic situation will not be tolerated.

Children and young people will be especially valued, protected and nurtured at Brunswick Uniting Church, in cooperation with their parents or guardians. We make every effort to provide an environment of safety and support. Our children's and young people's activities will be deemed inclusive according

to normal age-group divisions. We encourage an environment and culture that allows children to feel free to report any safety concern, discomfort or inappropriate behaviour that they may be experiencing.

All key leaders and those who lead and assist in children's and youth activities possess a Working With Children Check. We have clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children. BUC fully supports and adheres to the Uniting Church [Keeping Children Safe Policy](#). We have guidelines on how to promote care, safety and protection for children and young people and clear directions on how to respond to a situation of suspected or actual child abuse. We regularly review our policies and procedures. The Synod of VicTas Culture of Safety unit launched a dedicated [Keeping Children Safe](#) website in June 2017.

Culture of Safety Contact Person

If any member of the congregation – child or adult - has concerns about the safety of our children, particularly in relation to child sexual abuse, or the welfare of vulnerable adults, you may report this in confidence so that support can be provided. You may speak to Helen Rowe in confidence about your concern. Helen is the Culture of Safety Contact Person appointed by Church Council. Brunswick Uniting Church has a process for following up any concerns raised. Please contact Helen in person or by telephone at 0423 009 813

> Congregational Meeting

Our Congregational Meeting was held after worship on **Sunday 26th November**, chaired by Shawn Whelan (Chair of Church Council deputising for Daniel Broadstock) with minutes taken by Saide Cameron (Congregation Secretary). Twenty nine people attended the meeting with twenty two apologies offered.

The two main agenda items for the meeting were Election of Elders and the Strategic Plan 2018-21.

Nine people were nominated for the role of Elder, four of these were new nominees, the other four returning. Gwen Arnold, James Balsillie, Daniel Broadstock, Behzad Farhangi, Claire Foley, Helen Rowe, Kate Scuyll, Linda Wannan and Shawn Whelan all received the required majority and with Steph Gesling will be our ten Elders and our Church Council for 2018. We offered our congratulations to all. Thanks to Natalie Sims and Julie McKinnon for being scrutineers for the election.



Shawn presented the Draft Strategic Plan. The main focus of discussion was around the themes presented in the plan. After some insightful and thoughtful conversation the meeting agreed by consensus to add two further themes focussing on partnerships and creativity. The final strategic plan is available [here](#).

Other items included electing Steph Gesling as one of our two Presbytery Representatives. Kate Scull is continuing as one of our PRs whilst Jane Allardice has concluded in the role.

Shawn thanked Jane for her work in the role. He also thanked Ray Cameron and Ann Soo, who have concluded their time on Council after 5 and 2 years respectively, for their amazing gifts and the unique perspectives they brought to the role of Elder and in contributing to the work of the Council.

Ian closed the meeting asking that everything discussed be held in prayer. The minutes of the meeting are available [here](#).

Saide Cameron

From the committee

The Justice & Mission Committee met at Meredith's home in Carlton North on 9th November and enjoyed the view of the city from their third floor open doors. As always we discussed the work of the various committees we are responsible for.

Richard Arnold continues to support the **Olive Way Ministry** as Chairperson of the Olive Way Executive committee.

- Position Descriptions have been developed for different volunteers - Kitchen Assistant, Kitchen Hand and Volunteer Leader.
- We sought the Church Council's support for Mental Health Training for Volunteers to be offered in 2018, see p14.
- Work on the design concept for Olive Way Kitchen renovations will begin soon with support from Olivia Potter
- The Olive Way Christmas Lunch will be held on Wednesday 20th December. See further on for ways to support the lunch. The Olive Way will reopen on 8th January.
- We are delighted (overjoyed actually) that Ann Soo has offered to be the Deputy Chair of the OW Executive Committee. She will join Richard Arnold (chair), Peter Blair (Co-ordinator), Mal Rowe (Finance) and Kirsty Bennett (JAM). This committee meets monthly.
- An OW Steering Committee comprising the Executive, Peter Murphy, 2 volunteers and 2 guests will meet quarterly.

The **Food Co-op** continues to explore options to support the purchasing of products with a combination of members sourcing items when doing their own shopping together with the potential for a paid person to take care of other products.

Work is continuing on the **Outdoor Play Area**. We have been told that the working group will be making a presentation to Church Council in December.

The FUNdraising Committee will focus their remaining energy for the year on supporting our fundraising for the **Christmas Bowl Appeal** through stalls after worship on 3rd & 10th December, Carols at the Manse on 10th December and sharing the stories of the work of the Christmas Bowl.

Stewart Lodge Carols

Come along to Stewart Lodge on **Tuesday 19th December**, 6:30-8:00pm to sing carols and then share in the joy and fun of gift giving and supper. Bring a plate of supper to share.

You can participate by:

- Coming along and singing carols on the night
- Helping with the packing of the bags on **Sunday 10th December** at 11.30 am
- Helping prepare and share supper before the presentation of gifts

We are looking forward to **Stewart Lodge Carols** on 19th December. Richard Arnold and Ray Cameron launched the appeal during worship on 12th November. Packing the bags will happen after worship on 10th December in the West End. Contact Richard, 0407 796 429, if you can help. We have approached local businesses for contributions as well this year.

We are continuing our work on **raising awareness of homelessness** by seeking a suitable award category to nominate Vince for. Possibilities are Disability Service and Mental Health. Applications are due next May.

We have prepared our **Budget** ready the December Council meeting taking into account gifts, banners, window displays and mental health training.



We discussed the **exhibition** and the impact it has had on our congregation and the wider community. During worship on 12th November we publicly thanked Simone Alesich and Ann Soo for their inspiration and implementation respectively that gave this wonderful celebration of the creative arts both life and form.

Following on from this and in discussing the **Draft Strategic Plan** we offered a recommendation to Church Council requesting that 'healing through creativity' be recognized as a key ministry of our congregation.

We finished up by discussing the Tower Room Window displays, Stop Adani actions and issues relation to the men on Manus, see Abi's story next page.

Saide Cameron

- We also invite you to make a cash donation toward the 70 gift bags (each valued at \$30) which we will give to each of the residents.

Sunday 3rd December will be the final opportunity to put your donation in the special retiring offering box at church after worship. You can also make internet transfers to our bank account, as long as they put "Stewart" or "SLodge" in the description field. Our bank account is ANZ Brunswick branch BSB 013236 account 008687863.

For further information contact Richard Arnold on 0407 796 429 or email richarn50@gmail.com

Crisis on Manus

(Please note this contains distressing content and reference to physical and psychological violence)

What is happening?

As you probably know, the situation for the refugees and asylum seekers on Manus Island has become increasingly critical over the last few weeks.

For three weeks hundreds of men remained in the closed detention compound without sufficient food, water, shelter or medical care, refusing to leave because they knew where they would be taken was worse; that they would simply be moving from one prison to another.

On **Thursday 23rd November**, after weeks of intimidation, police and immigration carried through with their threats - entering the compound and attacking the people inside. The men, who are committed to peaceful and nonviolent resistance, were beaten with metal poles, dragged onto buses and taken into the local town of East Lorengau against their will. Anyone who was seen to be taking video of the violence against them were also immediately beaten, and many of the phones that they use to document and communicate with were destroyed.

As of today (**Tuesday 28th November**), all the men are now in the new centres or in the community. A large group was simply left on the side of the road as the 'new accommodation' is not equipped for them, with insufficient or non-existent food, water and facilities (including not enough beds). Many have communicated that their situation now is even worse than the siege of the last few weeks.

On top of the insufficient facilities and care, they are suffering the injuries from being beaten and the psychological trauma from the terror of last week, and are living with the ever-present fear of attacks and violence from some locals.

Above all else, however, as Behrouz Boochani has said, they still do not have freedom:

"The issue is plain and simple. We did not come to Australia to live in a prison. The peaceful protest by refugees is not because we want to remain in this prison. We are resisting because we want freedom in a safe environment. The core concern is freedom ... only freedom. The rest of what you hear are just peripheral issues."

Behrouz Boochani (award winning journalist and refugee on Manus)

As of today they have been peacefully protesting for their freedom for over 118 days. Their untiring and peaceful resistance has been incredible, and has inspired many in Australia to stand in solidarity with them.



What can we do?

So what should happen now? How can these people be resettled with safety and freedom?

Although New Zealand have offered to resettle 150 people, Australia continues to refuse to such an arrangement. And even if New Zealand were to take 150, there would still be hundreds of people without freedom and safety. The US deal is also often quoted as a solution, however the process is immensely slow, and there is no real guarantee that anyone else will be resettled let alone all the people who need freedom.

Many advocacy groups are calling for the men to be immediately brought to Australia, as this is the only way to get all the men to immediate safety. From there, those who wish to can stay, while other resettlement arrangements can be made for those who do not want to stay in a country that has treated them this way.

There have been many and diverse protests during this time, including weekly rallies organised by the [Refugee Action Collective](#), vigils and creative civil disobedience organised by [Love Makes A Way](#), and many others such as blockades and cello playing direct action! These protests are ongoing, and anyone can join in! There are many ways to be involved.

On **Monday 4th December** I will also be running a flash mob (dance) as a protest, to the [music](#) of my friend Moz who is one of the men on Manus. Anyone who's keen to be involved please contact me! (See below)

To hear about other upcoming actions, follow the Refugee Action Collective (Vic) and/or Love Makes A Way on Facebook or sign up to their mailing lists.

You can also ring Malcolm Turnbull at (02) 6277 7700 to call to Bring Them Here.

If you'd like daily updates on the situation from the people experiencing it, you can follow @ManusAlerts on the Telegram app, or follow Behrouz Boochani or Walid Zazai on Twitter.

If you'd like any more information on what's happening or how to get involved, please feel free to email me at

abi.bannon@yahoo.com

Abi Benham-Bannon

SAVE THE DATE

Standard Mental Health First Aid Course

Learn skills and gain confidence to assist visitors to the church, friends, family and co-workers experiencing mental health problems. This course will be of assistance to volunteers of the Olive Way and others who interact with visitors to the church.

Mental health first aid is the help provided to a person who is developing a mental health problem, experiencing a worsening of a mental health problem or in a mental health crisis. The first aid is given until the appropriate professional help is received or the crisis resolves.

Where **Brunswick Uniting Church**

When **Friday 2 March and Saturday 3 March.**

Time **9.30 am to 3.30 pm each day**

Cost **TBA**

Participants will learn the signs and symptoms of mental health problems, where and how to get help and what sort of help has been shown by research to be effective

Course Information

- 12-hour Standard Mental Health First Aid (SMHFA) course
- Course topics cover: developing mental health problems, depression, anxiety problems, psychosis and substance use problems, as well as suicide and other mental health crises.
- Participants are required to purchase a copy of the Standard MHFA manual
- Participants are eligible to become an accredited Mental Health First Aider.

Participants will need to attend all sessions to become accredited.

This is a 12 hour course.

Please contact Richard Arnold (richarn50@gmail.com) or Peter Blair (peteblair75@gmail.com) if you are interested.

Christmas Bowl Appeal

The [Christmas Bowl appeal](#) is a much-loved tradition through which 1,800 churches from 18 denominations come together in a powerful demonstration of faith and love to help some of the world's most vulnerable people.

Every year we support the Christmas Bowl Appeal financially by making purchases at the **FUNdraising Stalls** after worship on **3rd & 10th December**, singing **Carols at the Manse** on **10th December** and making our own tax-deductible donations either online or using the envelopes provided at worship.



Christmassing in Olive Way

Last week in Olive Way I sat talking with a lovely elderly Italian lady who I'd gotten to know over the year. We were talking about family, and as the conversation progressed she talked about her daughter saying that she had two daughters, but lost one many years ago to a snake bite in Myrtleford at a young age. I could sense that it was a difficult topic for her, and there was much pain that she still bore from losing her young child. I carefully and subtly moved the tissues just in case she needed them. The emotion was still very real for her, and the pain very great, it was a difficult story to hear. And perhaps the most heart-breaking part of it was how preventable it was. Through a combination of medical incompetence, slow response times, and lengthy delays the daughter was unable to be saved and died after about a week of being in a coma.

As she told the story she reached for the tissues and dabbed at her eyes. The anniversary of her daughter's death is fast approaching on December the 7th. "*Christmas is a very difficult time of year for me*", she said. I could not begin to imagine the amount of pain she must have felt. Having children of my own I have a pretty good idea of how hard it would be. "*We will remember you on December the 7th*", was all I said. But I could hardly get it out. Now I needed the tissues.

Christmas can be a very challenging time for people. For many people it is a glaring reminder of how lonely they feel, and for those like the Italian lady at Olive Way, it is the reminder of past griefs at a time when others are celebrating. The Olive Way Christmas lunch is a chance for people on the edge to be brought to the centre, to be celebrated and made a fuss of. It won't take away the pain that they carry, but is a reminder that they need not bear it alone.

This year's Christmas lunch will be held on the **20th December** in the hall. Last year Olive Way hosted around 130-140 people, and we would anticipate a similar number this year. We will need all hands on deck to help out with setting up, shopping for supplies, helping out Pete and Hannah in the kitchen on the Monday (18th), serving, cleaning, and packing up at the end. Please let me know if you are able to help out, and for how long.

I can be contacted by mobile (0431193810) or by email at peteblair75@gmail.com.

Peter Blair, Olive Way Coordinator

We also support the appeal by becoming informed about the countries and people who will receive the money that we give. These stories will be shared each week in our Olive Press newsletter and spoken about during worship. We will also pray together during Prayers of the People.

Please take the time to read about the work being done by our partner organizations in Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Myanmar, India, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Gaza, Jordan, Iraq, Indonesia, Vanuatu, Tonga and with refugee communities in Australia.

Find out more [here](#).

> Pastoral Care News

From the committee

At the oversight Pastoral Care committee on 2 Nov 2017 we welcomed both Tess Alston to her first meeting, Stephanie Gesling back onto the Committee from her posting in Broome and Ian Ferguson and Jane Allardice safely back from their separate travels. The ministries of Hospitality, Compassion and Community were reviewed as usual. Trish Graham's locum placement in Ian's absence was considered a great benefit and success. A key activity at the meeting was to review the Church Directory (a recommendation from the August Joint Pastoral Care meeting where all teams were present), in order to identify those people whom we had not seen or heard of for a while with a view to following them up. This has commenced.

The following were also reviewed/discussed:

- The Church council Strategic Plan with feedback emailed to Shawn – a practical, achievable plan that suited Pastoral Care well

Compassion Ministry

The Crisis Care Team continued to work behind the scenes responding to needs of several within the congregation. Visits to BUC members in hospital were made, support provided for a death in the family of one member and several phone calls were made and food was delivered. The team enjoyed working with Trish Graham in Ian's absence.

A ministry of personal prayer is also offered through which members of the congregation, friends or family are prayed for on a daily basis until a request is made to be withdrawn. We feel blessed that this is a service which is constantly used and also blessed by those offering to pray. It is a personal and confidential act and we do not need to know why you have requested prayer if that is your wish. We believe that God knows the innermost workings of our hearts. If you wish to be included and prayed for or wish to join in praying, please just telephone or email Glenice Cook or Leanne Salau. Each Friday the Prayer group will be emailed the names of those participating. If you know of someone who may need prayer please feel free to ask them if this would be helpful and forward their name to us.

Jane Allardice

Community Ministry

The **Notoriously Nourishing November Dinners & Lunches** over the weekend of **10th-12th November** provided 41 people



with the opportunity to share a meal in five different homes. Thank you to guests and hosts. This is always a lovely way to spend some relaxed time getting to know people.

- It was recommended that lamps – tall and Table lamps – be purchased for Olive way in order to provide better ambiance than neon lights for relevant evening meetings. After the relevant parties were consulted and agreement reached along with identified power points and locations for the lamps they were purchased and installed and we hope you find they provide a welcoming light to your evening meetings in Olive Way
- The Welcoming Ceremony/Pastoral Care Service. This was held 12th November where 10 people were formally welcomed as part of the BUC community. The service in general had an emphasis on pastoral care and several of the pastoral care team members participated in the planning and in the service. Thank you to all who took part.

Jane Allardice

Hospitality Ministry

BUC as usual, continues to welcome new people each week, along with those visiting. It reminds me of the Living Waters, refreshing our congregation with new life. When there are several new people on the one Sunday, the Hospitality team is grateful for other congregation members who initiate a welcoming face to and conversation with these new people.

The Hospitality team met 22 November where amongst other things, the newcomers list was reviewed and follow ups organised when contact details were available. The next meeting will be late January 2018.

If you are new or newish and have yet to obtain a name tag or to get onto the BUC email list, please ask for the Newcomers Card to complete, from the welcomers at the front door on a Sunday morning or contact Jane Allardice or Ian Ferguson. Equally if you wish to become more engaged with the activities and life at BUC, the Hospitality team would love to assist you – Ian Ferguson, Jane Allardice, Ray Cameron, Sheila Calwell, Graham Lawrence, Alyce Verheijden and Michael Rigby.

Glenice Cook

After the **Congregational Meeting on Sunday 26th November** we enjoyed a delicious lunch of pastries and falafel balls purchased from A1 Pastries followed by fresh fruit. Again it's always enjoyable to share a meal together.

Saide Cameron



Student House News

SEMESTER TWO IS FINISHED!! Congratulations to all the students who are finished with the big stressful uni year, both in the student house and the broader BUC congregation, of which there are many! A special shout out to those who have finished their WHOLE COURSE, including Steph, Sam and Emily. Well done, truly, what a huge feat.

Amidst the celebrations, it is also a time of change for the Student House with these students moving on to post-study life, and Beth heading off to Panama. The SH Committee have



been interviewing applicant and gearing up for the transition, and planning a farewell blessing for the outgoing students.

There's also been time for fun however, we had a very sweet and fun Halloween party complete with decorations - see pic and thanks Green House! We talked about the Pagan/Christian roots of All Saints and thought about the saints in our lives.

YUCY and Older Youth News

Perhaps the most exciting study news is that we have 4 wonderful members of our congregation who have just finished their VCE!! What a huge achievement Josh, Hannah, Gen and Jacqueline. I'm sure many of us can't believe you're old enough to be finished school, we're so proud of you and can't wait to be around for what the future holds.

Given the many intense exams and assignment of senior high school years, the OG (older teenagers) had some Sunday afternoon study sessions leading up to exams in the Youth Hall. I'm stoked to say some study was done amidst snacking, chatting, snapping and napping! See pics.



And finally, as for YUCY, everything is chugging along magically, we've had some great catch ups in Term 4 including an excursion to Laser Tag - see pic! Plus we're headed to our camp in Daylesford on **Friday 1st December**. Very excited for that and our final YUCY for the year, our Christmas YUCY on Dec 15th. If anyone is interested in becoming a leader of a Friday night fortnightly or monthly, please get in touch. By no means do you have to be a young'un yourself, we're an ever-expanding group and it would be great to have more BUCers on board!



Student House Faith Spot

Hi, I'm Andrew, a member of the student house in Brunswick. I moved from Bundaberg, Queensland this year to begin my Masters Degree in Production Design for Screen at the Victorian College of the Arts. What is that? In film or television a Production Designer is the member of the crew responsible for the overall visual look of the production. At uni I do everything ranging from CAD modelling to location scouting and construction.



Recently, I put together the pageant set for Christmas at the church and I have also been involved with YUCY activities. I was also involved in the production of two films this year at the VCA (Lieutenant at Arms and Colony) which will be showing at the ACMI in December between the 8th - 17th. I will be back in the student house next year after I have completed my eight week film internship.

The student house has been the biggest blessing for me this year. I don't receive any support from the government and the load of my course really impacts my ability to work part-time. Without this outreach from the church, I probably would have been unable to continue my study.

Having come from a small Uniting Church in Bundaberg, I am constantly in awe of how truly alive your church family is; your combined voice as you sing songs during the service is so full of passion and conviction. Knowing that a Uniting Church community exists like yours fills me with a hope and excitement for this denomination and encourages me to maintenance my faith, particularly when I begin to become consumed by my work.

Anika Jensen, Youth and Student House Co-ordinator

> Presbytery News

ROADTRIP! For me, the stand-out feature of our Presbytery's meeting on Saturday 18 November was the extra company: Fi Bottcher and Carlyne Nunn, as ministry candidates, had been invited to speak to the Presbytery about their experiences over the past year. Naturally, all of us Brunswickers (including Ian Ferguson) drove down together so we could have a good chat en route.

It was great to hear about the experiences of our Presbytery's five current candidates studying and growing together (we actually have six candidates total, but one is on study leave). It was apparent that they have formed a tightknit, supportive little community, and also feel well supported by their teachers and others in the church. Speaking with me afterwards, Fi wondered how useful such a five minute recap could be, in which they all said variations on 'It's been great, I've learnt a lot'; but actually I found it was quite useful. Despite the similarity of the candidates' experiences, I felt that the short reflections managed to provide Presbytery at least a glimpse of each candidate's individual personality and growing wisdom. Since Presbytery will have important roles and responsibilities in later decisions about whether to ordain these candidates, getting to know them a bit along the way will surely help our discernment.

Most of the rest of the meeting was 'business as usual', i.e. hearing reports and a special presentation or two. The Presbytery committees recently responded to constructive feedback by making their reports a little more detailed and informative. This means the reports convey a better sense of the work that goes on between Presbytery-in-Council meetings, and it's quite amazing to see just how much is going on in God's church across our Presbytery. As a special presentation, Peter

Gador-Whyte told us about 'Starting Rite', a 5-week program aimed at spiritual nurture for the very young (0-9 months old) and their parents, which he recently travelled to the UK to learn about. Next year's Presbytery education program will include an opportunity to learn to run this course.

Finally, there was a strong 'sad but grateful' vibe at this meeting. Ian Pooley was thanked for serving as an excellent Presbytery Treasurer for 10 years; Jenny Trehwella finished up her brief term as our Presbytery Minister-Pastoral Care (Supply); and we finished with a 'severing of the ties' service for Adam McIntosh, whom we released from his ministry as our Presbytery Minister-Mission and Education to answer a new ministry call in Queensland. During Adam's 5 years with us, he's helped guide and inspire the Presbytery to adopt and start implementing our new, bold missional focus (see our 'Regenerating the Church' website: <http://www.regeneratingthechurch.org.au/>). It's sad to see him go but, as Rose Broadstock said, he's done his job here well; so well that he can leave now knowing the work will not falter without him!

Kate Scull

Exiting Presbytery Representative

Learning more about other Uniting churches in the Port Phillip West Presbytery and meeting those involved has been a highlight for me. It has also been interesting to learn of the issues facing other UCA churches, to hear of the great programs being run in different places and to see the passion and energy put into making them work. Thank you for the opportunity to represent the Brunswick Uniting Church and I hope that in the future I will be able to do so again.

Jane Allardice

> Mulling News

On the weekend of the **25th of November**, a group of us packed up our beachwear and headed off to Queenscliff for the annual Mulling retreat.

We talked, we laughed, we ate, we admired the Moorhouses' décor, and we peered jealously through the security line of the Queenscliff Music Festival.

But the best summary of our weekend can be given by the note we left in the Moorhouses' guest book:

Things that happened this weekend:

- 4x random breath tests
- 3x ridiculously rich desserts
- 9x well-behaved Mullers
- 5000 (approx.) potato chips
- 5x collie dogs
- 1x handstand competition
- 6x swimmers
- 3x spoil sports (Kim's words. I beg to differ)
- 1x murder

Big ups to the Moorhouse family for their hospitality.

Daniel Broadstock



> Regular Events

BUC Cycle

Join an enthusiastic group of cyclists after worship every 5-6 weeks and explore Melbourne's bike tracks. We head off after worship and cycle for about two hours and usually stop off for icecream and/or a drink along the way. For more details contact Colin Hunter, 0407 522 587.

Our next ride is after worship on **Sunday 19th November**.

Singing The Sacred Harp

The Sacred Harp Singing is a group of people who meet to sing from a book called "The Sacred Harp". This music is participatory, a cappella, loud, folk hymn singing, which originates from the USA. The book "The Sacred Harp" is a collection of shape note songs from various sources, from the 1770's to the present day. All singers of all abilities are welcome to come as often (or as infrequently) as they are able.

The style of music sounds something like a cross between Eastern European and Irish folk music. For more information on Sacred Harp music please visit www.fasola.org

Come along & join us on the **first Sunday** of every month, from 4pm-6pm in the hall. Contact Natalie Sims or Shawn Whelan, ph. 9495 6120, or email sacred_harp@yahoo.com.au

Table Church

We gather to share a simple meal of soup & bread and dessert on **Sunday evenings**, (6-7:30pm), shaped by a liturgy that invites us to reflect on the week that has passed and to pray for each other. The shape of the evening is informal and low-stress.

Everyone is welcome and you can come every fortnight or just as you are available. If you are interested, or just want to know a little more, please contact Tim (0412 051 574) or Helen (0423 009 813).

Mulling

Our next gathering will be **Tuesday 5th December** from 7:00pm For details, contact Amanda Lees, 0403 240 445.

Meditation

There are a number of opportunities to be involved in Christian Meditation in Brunswick.

There are weekly meetings at 29 MacFarland Street Brunswick each **Wednesday** at 8am and 5.30pm (meetings go for 30 minutes).

The final Meditation sessions for the year will be on **Wednesday 6th & Sunday 10th December**. Sessions will resume on 4th & 7th February 2018.

New meditators are welcome and teaching is provided. For more information contact Richard on 0407 796 429

The Olive Way

Our congregation's outreach program is open on **Tuesday to Thursday** from 10 am - 1:30 pm. Community Kitchen, & Art programs - Wednesday, Writing Workshop - Thursday.

New volunteers are always welcome.

Contact Peter Blair, ph. 0431 193 810.

Book Club at BUC

No book club in December or January

7.30 – 9 pm, **Wednesday 28 February 2018**

Youth Hall, Brunswick UC

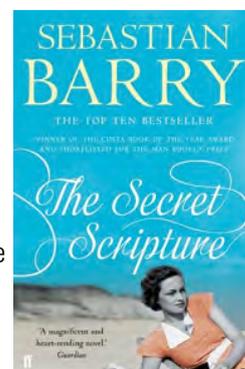
Our February book is 'The secret scripture' by Sebastian Barry.

Roseanne McNulty is nearing her 100th birthday in the mental hospital where she was committed as a young woman. Finishing up his case notes before the hospital is closed, psychiatrist Dr Grene finds himself intrigued by the story of his elderly patient. While Dr Grene investigates, Roseanne looks back on the tragedies and passions she has locked away in her secret journal, from her turbulent rural childhood to the marriage she believed would bring her happiness.

But when Dr Grene finally uncovers the circumstances of her arrival at the hospital, it leads to a shocking secret.

Everyone welcome. Faye or Christine would be happy to talk to you about book club if you would like more information.

Faye 9379 1317 faye.findlay18@gmail.com
or Christine 9386 8919 christine@hornby.id.au



Out and About Group

A monthly social group for older, active women and men. We visit places of interest or meet up for lunch or coffee. New members always welcome. See notice in the Olive Press or contact Helen Rowe for further information about this month's activity. Ph. 0423 009 813 or email helen.rowe@rocketmail.com

Brunswick Uniting Food Co-Op

PLEASE NOTE One week earlier than usual - Next Distribution Day - Saturday 9th December, 10 am - 12 noon. Then its six weeks until 20th January pick-up.

New members welcome! We buy in bulk and you bring your re-usable containers to fill with the quantity you want. Reasonable prices for products. We meet in the Olive Way space. Further information from Helen Rowe 0423 009 813 or Meredith Budge 0403 717 714

> Reports

Church Council

Dear Friends,

The big news from Church Council at the moment is the development of our new Strategic Plan. This plan is the product of various sources, including the Mission Planning Report, feedback from committees, and discernment by Council.

The strategic plan is available to be read in full, but briefly it is built around the following key commitments:

1. Maintain Sunday morning worship as the central branch of our life together.
2. Continue the missional programs and activities that are underway.
3. Continue reflecting on the 6 Themes of the Mission Planning Report in all that we do.
4. Pilot, and then embed, cycles of goal-setting and reflection in each of our major missional programs/groups.
5. Manage "growth" intentionally, focusing on sustainability and celebration of growth over raw numbers.
6. Maintain a sustainable pattern of income and expenditure.

The plan was considered and adopted at our Congregational Meeting on the 26th of November.

In related news, we are very excited to welcome Helen Rowe, James Balsillie, Gwen Arnold, and Claire Foley to Church Council in 2018, each of whom were duly elected as Elders at our AGM with the required majorities. Kate Scull, Shawn Whelan, Linda Wannan and myself were also returned as Elders and members of the Council.

Church Council congratulates everyone who was involved in organising, or submitted work to the BUC Art Exhibition. The event was a wonderful opportunity to explore the gifts of our congregation and connect with the community. Our arts space continues to grow as a vibrant new branch of mission.

In November Church Council also authorised the use of our tower window to support the YES campaign in the marriage equality plebiscite survey.

We are continuing to receive applications to replace Julie Perrin as Children and Families Ministry Coordinator.

We invite you to explore the many events and worship opportunities that we will be enjoying over the Advent Season in the lead-up to Christmas.

Fondest seasonal wishes,

Big Sec Broadstock

Worship Committee

We met in November for the final time for this year as a committee enjoy a meal together at the Manse. For our opening worship Ian invited us reflect theologically on the marriage plebiscite asking 'how did we connect to it?'

The main discussion item for our meeting was to **review our hopes & dreams for this year and to plan for next year.** Here's what we noted

1. Nurture new liturgists & prayer leaders - Anika has joined the liturgist roster; Olivia Potter and Kylie Doust have joined the Prayers of the People roster; the Exhibition and Pastoral Care services have provided other opportunities for people to be involved in leading worship.
2. Provide reflective services – a good spread of reflective services has or will be provided this year: Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Combined BIUC Sunday, Exhibition Service, Blue Christmas, Advent 4
3. Continue our exploration of engagement with/involvement of young people during worship – this has dropped off a little since Julie finished her ministry, we hope to re-engage when the new Children & Families Pastor is appointed
4. BUC Songbook project – Tune In is online and we are singing some of the new BUC songs more often, Ian is very intentional about selecting them
5. Acknowledgement of First Peoples – This is now a regular inclusion in our worship.

6. Explore relationships with other faiths - we feel that we haven't paid a great deal of attention to this hope.

Our hopes and dreams for 2018 are

1. Nurture new liturgists & prayer leaders - continue in this joyful task. Ian will offer formal training early in 2018.
2. Nurture our young people, children & teenagers - one possibility is to consult with Anika regarding the YUCY age group leading worship.
3. Use worship (liturgical) music more intentionally, for example for offering prayers & benedictions, singing the Lord's Prayer responsively, consolidating the newly introduced Holy, Holy.
4. Acknowledgement of First Peoples - explore using new shapes and words.

We noted that plans are well underway for the **Pageant** - A message of hope and joy - with rehearsals beginning soon.

Our plans for **Advent** are also well under way. We will be listening out for the messages from the earth, Isaiah, John the Baptist and the angel.

We discussed our **budget** for 2018, **preachers** for January while Ian is on leave and the upcoming **Advent and Christmas worship** calendars. Please check the Worship Calendar, p2, for all the details. We also set an early meeting date for 2018 because **Lent** begins with **Ash Wednesday** on **14th February!**



30/10 Pentecost 21 Matthew 22:34-40; Psalm 90:1-6,13-17 Worship was shaped by our exhibition for the final Sunday in October. Amelia Ware, Simone Alesich, Saide Cameron and Ian Ferguson met and planned how we would engaged with and respond to the incredible gifts offered by the people of our community. Such an amazing privilege (*and we didn't even discuss all wearing red and black!!*).

Ian spoke with the children about the three beautiful portraits offered by Phil Kreveld and Halloween and All Saints Day. He explained that Halloween means Holy Evening because it is the day before All Saints Day, a day on which we remember the saints. Responding to the question 'Who are the saints?' one of the children said that 'they are really special people who have done amazing things'.

Ian commented in this church we say that everyone is a saint because we are followers of Jesus and said this is time to remember that we are all connected through the community of saints and to remember the people are no longer with us. He then looked at the portraits painted by Phil, one of our volunteer artists with the Olive Arts program. The portraits are of Phil's father-in-law, a Jewish man, and step-daughter and of the blessing offered within them, a relationship between the old and the new. And finally he reminded us of Jesus, another Jewish man, who tells us to love God and our neighbour.



Inviting us into a time of reflection and engagement with the exhibition Ian commented *God loves us into being, Christ loves us into wholeness and the Holy Spirit empowers us to love God in return. And how do we show that love? We do what God does and one way of doing that is through the work of our hands, through human creativity, artistic creativity. And what a great expression of that love we see around us today. What is creativity we asked and this is the answer.* For the next twenty minutes we moved in three groups through the three spaces - worship, Olive Way and Hall to respond to different invitations in each space - *inviting God to speak to us through the artworks.*

5/11 Pentecost 22 Jeremiah 31:31-34; John 8:31-36; Romans 3:19-28 Ian told the children that we were going to build a church today asking what do we need, first response - people, and reminded us of the age old hand rhyme 'here is the church, here is the steeple, open the doors and here are the people'. Then together we sang 'I am the church, we are the church together' - lots of fun. Ian invited us to start writing words about what our church was made of on the cardboard people we had been given.



During his sermon Ian spoke about his recent wide ranging conversation with an Uber driver and the coincidence between the content of the conversation and the celebration of the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation. Ian explained that Martin Luther had nailed his 95 thesis to the door of All Saints Castle Church in Wittenburg on Halloween to *complain about the corruption and the commercialisation of the system of indulgences, specifically paying the church for the remission of punishment for sin which was big business in those days.* In the thesis Ian said that *Luther challenged the church to return to scripture, to scripture alone and Christ revealed in scripture as the basis for our identity, our shape, our purpose, our living and our teaching as a church.* And he reminded us of Jesus' teaching *if you continue in my word you are truly my disciples and you will know the truth and the truth will make you free.*

Concluding Ian reminded us that *we are a church built of justice, peace, forgiveness and hope. We're not about avoiding punishment, that's not why we're here. We're about life, new beginnings, new community. ... We are a church built of grace. We are a church built of faith and freedom, a church that knows the unconditional welcome of God. ... And this is all part of the gift of the Reformation to the whole church. That's who we are.*

Together we added more words to our people and brought them forward to symbolically create a church built of people and later celebrated Holy Communion.



12/11 Pentecost 23 Luke 14:16-23; Acts 2:41-47; Matthew 5:1-16 The Pastoral Care Committee helped to shape and lead worship with members of each of the teams - Hospitality, Compassion and Community - leading prayers. Steph reminded us of Jesus' words *'How I long to gather my people as a mother hen gathers her chickens under her wings'*. We enjoyed looking at photos of mother birds and their chicks being held and nurtured. Steph and Ian spoke with the children about being welcoming and taught his beautiful actions to bless the people who participated in the Welcoming Ceremony.



Beginning his sermon Ian spoke about hitchhiking commenting *'today I want to use hitchhiking as a metaphor for pastoral care and as a window to the divine'*. Three times during the sermon we were invited to share with our neighbours on three separate occasions responding to invitations to talk about our hitchhiking experiences, stories of healing hospitality and of giving and receiving hospitality. Along the way Ian shared quotes from our Pastoral Care Vision document, commented on the Wedding Banquet in Matthew's gospel and spoke about his own hitchhiking experiences – of receiving hospitality in Santa Fe and offering compassion in that space, of being part of a community of travellers in North Queensland and of the challenge of hitchhiking along the Great Ocean Road in a time when hitchhiking has gone out of fashion and eventually receiving a lift.



He concluded *Yes hitchhiking is out of fashion friends, as is the church. Most people have better places to be like the invited guests to the Wedding Banquet. ... Friends let's be the kind of vehicle on the road of life that offers the kind of welcome that we receive from God and who knows we might even find ourselves offering that hospitality to Christ himself. And let's build here a community where life is shared the way God shares her own life. A community of diversity, communion, creativity, openness, hospitality and healing love.*



19/11 Pentecost 24 Judges 4:1-24 During worship we joyfully celebrated the baptism of Nathaniel Hayek, third son of Eleni & Hilal and little brother to Charlie and Sebastian. Welcoming Eleni & Hilal and introducing Nathaniel, Kate Scull said he is a very happy and intelligent boy, a real charmer. We listened and responded, participating in this beautiful sacrament of baptism, welcoming Nathaniel into the family of God.



In his sermon Ian took us deep into the story of Deborah and Yael, two heroes in a time of war, exploring the violence of their stories asking *'Who are they and how do they speak to us of the liberating love of God?'*. To help with this exploration Ian introduced us to Diana, Wonder Woman, hero of WW1, commenting *Yes friends it just hit me during the week. Deborah the prophet is Wonder Woman, all the way down to the Israeli accent.* Ian warned us that Diana's story is also full of violence. She kills the baddy and struggles with the realization that this hasn't ended the war. Commenting on Steve's response to Diana's struggles *'It's not about what we deserve but what we believe'* Ian affirmed *that there is goodness and love in the hearts of humanity but there is also violence* (referencing the YES of the preceding week). *These stories say we need help, divine help to realise the fullness of peace, the perfection of love. These stories, Diana's and Deborah's, say there will be an end to war with God's help or with a god's help.* And finally he commented on Yael and her role in ending the violence asking *Dare we say she is Christ like, that God is at work in her, not causing her to suffer but suffering in her suffering and bringing peace out of the violence done to her? Maybe it's a stretch. Maybe we don't want such stories. But they are there if we need them.* Ian concluded his sermon with some images from Diana's final climatic battle with a CGI monster.



Eleni & Hilal provided a sumptuous morning tea to celebrate Nathaniel's baptism which included cutting a special cake.

26/11 Reign of Christ Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24; Matthew

25:31-46 Concluding the liturgical year we launched the Act for Peace Christmas Bowl Appeal. Jessica Kvanskul and Ian invited the children to ring the bowl and pray for each of countries and groups of people who will receive support through the Christmas Bowl Appeal: Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Myanmar, India, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Gaza, Jordan, Iraq, Indonesia, Vanuatu, Tonga and with refugee communities in Australia. Our Christmas Bowl this year is Colin Hunter's beautiful sculpted wooden bowl which was one of the exhibits in our recent 'What is Creativity?' Exhibition.



In the lectionary the final Sunday in the liturgical year is noted as Christ the King or Reign of Christ. On this Sunday Matthew's gospel offered us a story of judgement, of the Son of Man separating sheep from goats. Ian commented on the paradox of this story – the judgement within it and *the profound expression of merciful compassionate inclusive faith*. Ian said that he wasn't going to delve into the *metaphoric mechanics of the justice that Matthew presents us with today – the judgement* but did point us towards the Netflix series 'The Good Place', a very very clever satire which offers a way to explore the question of judgement.



Ian reminded us that we are called to live the good place into being, participating in it here and now. *That place variously called the Kingdom of Heaven, the Reign of God, the new creation. This world is not it yet, it's not it yet, but it has begun and by faith through grace we can part of it now in the power of the Holy Spirit until Christ comes to bring it to fulfilment eternally. That's the teaching. By faith we can live it now.*



He defined the characteristics of the coming kingdom: *the hungry are fed, the thirsty given water, the stranger welcomed, the naked clothed, the sick cared for, there is solidarity with the persecuted.* And he commented on *the corruption of Christendom in which the church identified instead with the first, the greatest, the most powerful.*

Concluding Ian asked us a number of questions about who and where we are as God's people, how we are involved in the church described in the beatitudes and invited us to 'Facebook' him with our responses.

Saide Cameron

Discipleship & Education Committee

What is the [Basis of Union](#)? And why should we care?

On **16th November** the Discipleship and Education held its last session of 2017 to explore this very question.



It's a question that's been on the mind of Geoff Thompson, one of our resident theologians and Professor of Systematic Theology at Pilgrim, who has recently published a book on this very topic; 'Disturbing Much, Disturbing Many'.

In short, the Basis of Union is the theological statement that constituted the grounds on which the majority of the Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregationalist churches came together to form the Uniting Church in 1977. It's our Magna Carta, our Declaration of Independence.

We had a great discussion, exploring the context of the Basis of Union and some of the theological ideas that it expresses.

Among the things that stood out for me was the process by which the Basis of Union was drafted. The impetus to union was so strong within the three denominations that they were committed to negotiate until the union was achieved. It wasn't an easy process or an inevitable one. It arose from a profound and sacred hope to overcome theological divisions.

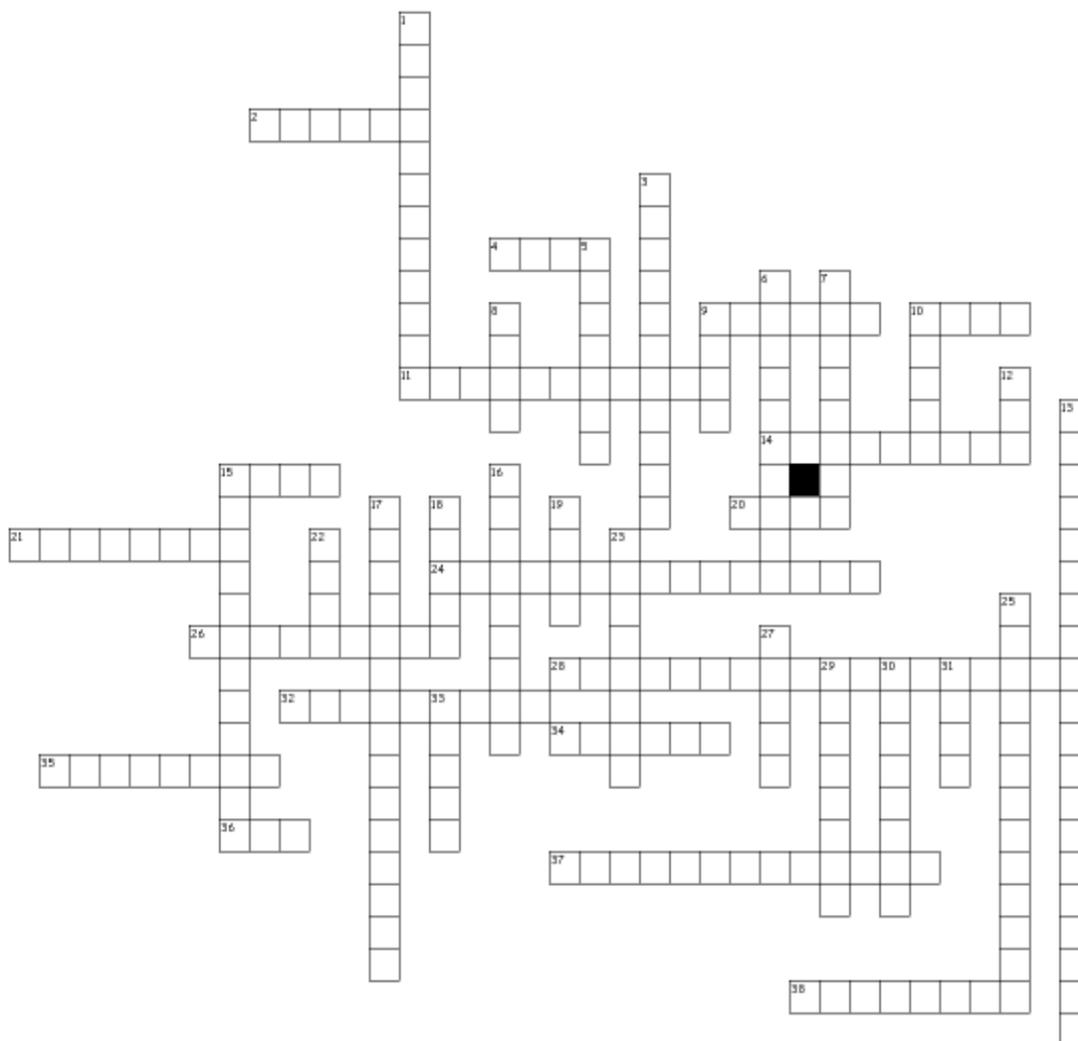
The Basis of Union isn't stilted or formulaic. It doesn't read like the creeds or a work of academic theology. It is a living attempt to rediscover the Christian faith and unearth what unifies all Christians together in the universal church.

That's what the [Basis of Union](#) is.

Why should we care?

Maybe you don't. But give it a read before you decide.

Daniel Broadstock



Across:

- 2. Annual financial plan (6)
- 4. Our Aussie accounting system (1.1.1.1.)
- 9. *"I am the! You are the!"* (6)
- 10. A BUC healing ministry which grew in 2017 (4)
- 11. Zappy stuff supplied to us by Origin (11)
- 14. Gifts for which no goods or services are expected in return (9)
- 15. A frequently-appearing female name in the New Testament (4)
- 20. "Not rents but": Abi manages this part of the Student House(4)
- 21. The church equivalent to business "equity" (3)
- 24. Weekly worship source of some income (6,9)
- 26. Composers of music we perform receive these from us via CCLI (9)
- 28. Publication 'marketed' by Wesley and more recently Faye (4,4,2,3,5)
- 32. Our "laid-back multi-cultural suburb" (Google) (9)
- 34. *"Come to the feast of heaven and earth, come to the table of"* (6)
- 35. The City to which we pay property rates (8)
- 36. Supervised worship fun for young 'uns (1.1.1.1.)
- 37. 3 Previous Treasurers and continuing supporters: ...(3),.....(5) and(5)
- 38. Tabitha processes these on three Fridays a month (8)

Down

- 1. Hospitality, compassion, food. These are all ...(8,4)
- 3. Fun times and product sales which raise funds for mission (11)
- 5. One of minister Ian's three possible citizenships (7)
- 6. "We acknowledge and respect the people of the Kulin nation" (10)
- 7. Ethical investors looking after our savings for long-term use (1.1.1.5)

- 8. Rhymes with "juicy", a camp/group for Young Adults (1.1.1.1.)
- 9. Anika is supervised by this active committee (1.1.1.1.)
- 10. Stop! (5)
- 12. Lovely cosy heat source (3)
- 13. The church equivalent to business "profit and loss" (6,3,11)
- 15. Surplus some years ago was put intoto spend on mission (7,5)
- 16. An attitude, differing from an attitude of "scarcity" (9)
- 17. Missions outside our church which we support are called this (7, 8)
- 18. "..... of Nazareth announced the sovereign grace of God whereby the poor in spirit could receive God' love" (s.2. The Basis of Union)
- 19. What group says there is a way to help asylum-seekers? (1.1.1.1.)
- 22. The peripatetic one (4)
- 23. *"I am the church! You are the church! We are the church"*! (8)
- 25. Increased greatly as a means of giving this year (6, 6)
- 27. As part of our support of Melbourne City Mission, the they pay us are more-than-reasonable (5)
- 29. This Drop-In mission was 10 years old in 2017 (5,3)
- 30. Julie M and Al H organise this superbly (4,4)
- 31. "The UC acknowledges that the Church has received the books of the Old and New Testaments as unique prophetic and apostolic testimony, in which it hears the of God and by which its faith and obedience are nourished and regulated." (s5, Basis of Union) (4)
- 33. Supplied us by Yarra Valley and used lots, especially at baptisms! (5).

We wish you the gifts of Joy, Peace, Love, and Hope this Christmas.

> Happy Birthday

December

Louise Adams, Laurence Alvis, Rachel Beagley, David Brown, Ben Calder, Andrew Calwell, Glenice Cook, Mikul Denison, Caro Field, Gaia Kramer, Jacqueline Matthews, Wayne Matthews, Adam Moorhouse, Charlie Moorhouse, Hamish Moorhouse, Daniel Whelan

January

Simeon Baker, Gabriel Brown, Matilda Brown, Tameka Brown, Daniel Clough, Sheryll Coulson, Patrick Denison, Yvonne Groot, Lucy Hardman, Evan Kramer, Patrick Macrae, Peter McKinnon, David Moorhouse, Linda Wannan, Joshua Winkler

> Preaching Plan

December 3	Ian Ferguson Advent 1, Holy Communion	December 24	Pageant, 7:00 pm A message of hope & joy	January 7	Ian Ferguson Baptism of Jesus
December 10	Ian Ferguson Advent 2	December 24	Ian Ferguson, 11:30 pm Christmas Eve, Holy Communion	January 14	Fiona Bottcher, Epiphany 2
December 13	Ian Ferguson 7:30 pm Blue Christmas, Holy Communion	December 25	Ian Ferguson Christmas Day	January 21	Fiona Bottcher Epiphany 3
December 17	Ian Ferguson Advent 3	December 31	Ian Ferguson Christmas 1	January 28	Ian Ferguson Epiphany 4
December 24	Richard Arnold Advent 4, Meditation				

> Lectionary

Advent

A season of preparation, beginning on the fourth Sunday before Christmas, in which the Church recalls its hope and expectation in the coming of Christ, past, present and future.

Date	Day	First Reading	Psalm	Second Reading	Gospel	C
3/12	Advent 1	Is 64:1-9	Ps 80:1-7, 17-19	1 Cor 1:3-9	Mk 13:24-37	P
10/12	Advent 2	Is 40:1-11	Ps 85:1-2, 8-13	2 Pt 3:8-15a	Mk 1:1-8	P
17/12	Advent 3	Is 61:1-4, 8-11	Ps 126 or Luke 1:47-55	1 Thes 5:16-24	Jn 1:6-8, 19-28	P
24/12	Advent 4	2 Sm 7:1-11, 16	Lk 1:47-55 or Ps 89:1-4, 19-26	Rom 16:25-27	Lk 1:26-38	P

Christmas

The Christmas - Epiphany season includes Christmas Eve/Day and the twelve days of Christmas. It recalls the stories of the birth and infancy of Christ. The church in this time celebrates the wonder of the incarnation; the season concludes with Epiphany.

Date	Day	First Reading	Psalm	Second Reading	Gospel	C
24/12	Christmas Eve	Is 9:2-7	Ps 96	Titus 2:11-14	Lk 2:1-14 (15-2)	W
25/12	Christmas Day 1	Is 62:6-12	Ps 97	Titus 3:4-7	Lk 2:(1-7) 8-20	W
	Christmas Day 2	Is 52:7-10	Ps 98	Heb 1:1-4(5-12)	Jn 1:1-14	W
31/12	Christmas 1	Is 61:10-62:3	Ps 148	Gal 4:4-7	Lk 2:22-40	W
1/1	Naming of Jesus	Num 6:22-27	Ps 8	Gal 4:4-7 or Phil 2:5-11	Lk 2:15-21	W
1/1	New Years Day	Ecc 3:1-13	Ps 8	Rev 21:1-6a	Mt 25:31-46	W
6/1	Epiphany	Is 60:1-16	Ps 72:1-7, 10-14	Eph 3:1-12	Mt 2:1-12	W

After Epiphany

A period in which the Church reflects on the manifestation of Christ to all people. The baptism of the Lord is the first Sunday of this period. On the last Sunday, we hear the readings for the Transfiguration of the Lord. The length of this period varies depending on the date of Easter.

Date	Day	First Reading	Psalm	Second Reading	Gospel	C
7/1	Baptism of Jesus	Gn 1:1-5	Ps 29	Acts 19:1-7	Mk 1:4-11	W
14/1	Epiphany 2	1 Sam 3:1-10(11-20)	Ps 139:1-6, 13-18	1 Cor 6:12-20	Jn 1:43-51	G
25/1	Epiphany 3	Jonah 3:1-5, 10	Ps 62:5-12	1 Cor 7:29-31	Mk 1:14-20	G
28/1	Epiphany 4	Dt 18:15-20	Ps 111	1 Cor 8:1-13	Mk 1:21-28	G



Blue Christmas
Wednesday 13th
December, 7:30 pm
a space to reflect

Christmas Eve
11:30 pm
Candlelit service
Holy Communion

Christmas Eve
Pageant, 7:00pm
A message of
hope and joy
Come dressed as angels,
shepherds, wise ones ...

Christmas Day
9:30 am
Celebrate!

Christmas Worship at Brunswick UC
Join us, all are welcome

Brunswick Uniting Church, 212 Sydney Rd.



December Diary

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Advent 1 December 3 9:30 – Ian Ferguson HC 10:45 – FUNdraising Stall 4:00 – Sacred Harp 5:00 – Indonesian W’p	4	5	6	7	8	9
		10:00 – Olive Way	10:00 – Olive Way 12:00 – Community Dinner	10:00 – Olive Way 11:30 – Roof! with SROC		10:00 – Food Co-op
Advent 2 10 8:15 – Meditation 9:30 – Ian Ferguson 10:45 – FUNdraising Stall 11:30 – SL gift bag packing 5:00 – Indonesian W’p 7:00 – Carols at the Manse	11	12	13	14	15	16
		10:00 – Olive Way	10:00 – Olive Way 12:00 – Community Dinner	10:00 – Olive Way		
		7:30 – Church Council	7:30 – Blue Christmas HC			
Advent 3 17 9:30 – Ian Ferguson 11:00 – Singing on the Steps 5:00 – Indonesian W’p 5:30 – Beers & Carols	18	19	20	21	22	23
		10:00 – Olive Way	10:00 – Olive Way 12:30 – Christmas Lunch		3:00 – Pageant Rehearsal	
Advent 4 24 9:30 – Richard Arnold Meditation Christmas Eve 3:00 – Pageant Rehearsal 7:00 – Pageant 11:30 – Ian Ferguson HC	Christmas Day 25	26	27	28	29	30
	9:30 – Ian Ferguson					
31 9:30 – Ian Ferguson 5:00 – Indonesian W’p	January 1	2	3	4	5	6
					2:30 – Coffee	