

THE OLIVE BRANCH

August 2016 Brunswick Uniting Church Congregation Worship - 9:30 am

> Meditation

What I believe prayer is and isn't

An independent study showed that patients in a Korean experiment who were prayed for showed recovery rates twice as high as their counterparts who were not.

A friend who knows I'm interested in these things recently sent me this piece of spurious information from the Internet. And it wouldn't surprise me if those prayed for did heal faster, or had better recovery rates than the others.

But it gives the wrong impression of prayer. Most of us, I suspect, think of prayer as a kind of shopping list. We tell God the things we want, and then wait for God to do something. This view is only strengthened by the fact that many people, even quite thoroughly secular ones, find themselves uttering desperate little prayers when they are in a really tight corner, like 'please God, oh please, don't let her die'.

Prayer is not a shopping list or an emergency button. It's what you do to develop a relationship and to let some of the big strong power of love that is God filter in to your life and the life of those around you.

To me, prayer is something I do every day, whether I feel like it or not, just as I talk to the members of my family every day, even if I'm feeling grumpy and would much rather spend the day alone.

Prayer is often a completely silent thing, a meditation or contemplation: just breathing quietly, being conscious of God all around me, breathing God in, storing up strength and patience and love to face the day.

Other times prayer is exultant and joyous, praising God for all the wonderful things and people, opportunities and happiness that fill my life. Still other times I let all my anger and despair hang out, asking God why such terrible things crush the innocent. Or else I just lie like something washed up on a beach, feeling swamped by depression or loss, or full of hateful emotions for another human being.

I find that when I pray for situations I am involved in, I change. If I pray about some conflict that seems irresolvable, something in me softens and bends. When I pray for strength simply to tackle

the daily round with grace and humour, there is more chance that this will in fact happen.

It's not a simple cause and effect thing. It's not as though if I pray in the morning I'll have a good day, and if I don't, I won't. But if, over days and weeks I make a habit of stilling my mind and spending time opening my heart to the great good power at the heart of the universe, things are noticeably different. There is a quality to my relationships and my work that is lacking if I don't make time for prayer and simply run frazzled, from one thing to another.

So, what about those Korean patients? Over the years I have been involved in praying for many sick and dying people. Sometimes they are healed physically, other times people of enormous faith, my mother being one, die. But the prayers make a difference. Prayer always makes a difference, because it activates the part of us that is not closed to wonder and possibilities and the unexpected. The regular practice of prayer lets something into our lives that is life-giving and healing, whether or not the healing is physical.

And to me, ultimately, prayer is all about deepening my relationship with God. There are other ways of doing this: talking to other Christians and people of different faiths, attending worship, reading the Bible, or sitting in front of a candle. But I believe that God is the creator of the universe, the great loving heart beating at its centre, the power for love that fuels all that is good in the world, the being that was personified in Jesus of Nazareth, who lived with such freedom, integrity, courage and love. This big and boundless God calls forth my allegiance and my worship, and is a source of grace in living that I cannot do without. That's why I pray.

Clare Boyd-Macrae

First published in The Melbourne Age on 2/3/2002.
Later included in the collection, "Three gates to paradise", 2006

Clare will be the keynote speaker at the Meditation Day on Saturday 20th August, see page 8.



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> Mission Planning Co-ordinator

Hi everyone! I've been employed half-time until the end of November 2016 to help the Church Council, the BUC congregation, and the various groups and individuals within it, to create a plan to engage with people and with God's mission.

I'll be inviting a prayerful approach to these questions:

What are our strengths? How can we celebrate the ways we are already a part of (and being transformed by) what God is creating in us and in the world around us?

How do our current programs, committees and expressions of faith impact on the world outside our walls? How could we engage with others (including those in the community around us) in our lived expression of God's mission?

What does our story as a congregation teach us? Who are we? Who are we called to love and serve?

What's next?

These questions and a range of other input will help to facilitate our thinking and planning for 2017-2021. The answers to these questions, and the prayerful planning we do together, may lead to developing additional activities or programs that connect with new groups of people outside our congregation.

Alternatively, it might mean rethinking and reshaping - or simply "deepening" - some of the many things we're already doing.

Is Brunswick Uniting Church like Martha?

Rev Ian Ferguson spoke in his sermon on July 17th about the story of Mary and Martha.

We heard that Martha was distracted by her 'many tasks'. The word is diakonia, literally "her great service". We also learnt that Diakonia is one of the earliest words for Christian ministry (Acts 1:17,25) Jesus himself says, "who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one at the table? But I am among you as one who serves." Jesus is a Martha.

So the problem (maybe we also sometimes see this as our problem as a community) is clearly not what Martha is doing, we are all called to be in service like Martha, but we need a bit of Mary and the good Samaritan in there to keep us aligned with God's love. Loving the Lord with all our heart, soul and mind, and loving all humankind as you would love yourself, or as you would love a member of your own community.

The story of Mary and Martha reminds us that worship and service, love of God and neighbour, are like sisters who live together under the same roof - sisters seeking harmony, so that our love of God and our love of neighbour are intimately related flowing into and out of one another. In the words of Hildegard of Bingen, we are like "feathers on the breath of God", carried on the divine breath into our loving of God and neighbour.



Save the dates

The following dates have been set aside for congregational mission planning. Some groups, committees and ministry teams will have additional opportunities for reflection on mission and planning.

Sunday August 14th

Mission planning session 1, *after worship*

Saturday August 20th

Introduction to Christian Meditation, 9:30am-2:30pm

Saturday September 10th

Mission planning session 2, *time to be advised*

Thursday September 29th

Bible study: 'God's mission', 7:30pm

Sunday October 16th

Mission planning session 3, *after worship*

Sunday November 20th

Congregational meeting, *after worship*

> Worship Calendar

Baptism

On **14th August** we will celebrate the baptisms and confirmations of Jacky Magessa and Saeed Lashgari.

Refugee Sunday

On **28th August** we will join with other congregations to prayerfully remember the challenge of the journey that refugees often face, to celebrate their contributions and to pray with hope & longing for all who wait in refugee camps.

After the service we will share a Refugee Meal, hosted by the JAM committee. See page 5.

Holy Communion

We will welcome Rev. Dr. Sunny Chen to preach and preside over Holy Communion on **4th September**.

Welcoming

At least once, and often twice, a year we offer people who are new to the congregation an invitation to share their story and publicly express their desire to be part of this community and say that it is their spiritual home for now.

After people have shared their stories these questions are asked:

To those who are being welcomed: "Do you name the Brunswick Uniting Church congregation as your community of faith and do you commit yourself to actively participating within this community?"

To the congregation: "Do you joyfully receive these people as fellow travellers along the way of discipleship, and do you commit yourself as a community of Jesus Christ to maintain the life of faith?"

Our second formal welcome for 2016 will be during worship on **Sunday 11th September**.

Please note that this is not formal church membership although people who do have UCA membership are encouraged to do so.

Please contact Ian Ferguson 0438 547 842 to indicate your interest in participating in the welcoming ceremony.

> Pageant News

The worship committee hosted a Pageant Brainstorming gathering on **Sunday 17th July** with some very pleasing outcomes. We have established production team roles and discussed the concept for the whole pageant. Building on the 'We are called' themes developed for the Christmas Bowl liturgies the underlying theme for the pageant will be 'We are called to be makers of peace, joy and love.'

Caitlin Mullen has prepared a draft script which will undergo a consultative process with a number of people including the two YUCY groups.

Season of Creation

This year we are extending the Season of Creation to include October and also to explore a variety of creation themes.

Creating Welcome - On **11th September** in response to our **welcoming ceremony** we will reflect on the welcome that we offer and receive as God's people.



Creating justice, creating peace - To begin the [World Week for Peace](#) on **18th September** Tim Budge will help us to explore issues of peace and justice with particular reference to Palestine-Israel.

Creating connections with the more than human world - As part of our bi-annual **Blessing of the Animals** on **9th October** we will celebrate and consider our relationship with all God's creatures.



Creating better ways to manage energy will be the theme of a workshop hosted by the JAM committee and run by the Moreland Energy Foundation Ltd in the week following our **Ride to Worship Sunday** on **23rd October** after which we joyfully gather on the steps to participate in **Blessing of the Bikes** (and other forms of wheeled, non-motorized transport!)



To conclude the series we will welcome Graeme Garrett as our preacher on **30th October** as we bring all our reflections on creation together with the theme of **Creating Harmony**.

In the following week the JAM committee will host a workshop to help us consider how to further develop our community gardens in consultation with the broader community.

We've begun the process of establishing a timeline and will soon be sending out an invitation for people to get involved. Watch out for it and please do respond as soon as possible.

We are very grateful to Wayne Matthews who has offered to build a number of stage pieces for the pageant and other uses.

If you have any questions or comments please call Saide Cameron, 0407 096 743, Production Manager.

> Sharing our Faith

Prayers of the People

Loving God, we come before you with our prayers for the world, the church and ourselves.

Shine light in the darkness that seems to loom so bleakly in our world
Individuals who are alienated.
Communities that are mourning,
Politicians that seem unable to understand.
Shine light on anguish.
Shine light on doubt.
Shine light on fear.
Shine love.

As we seek a right path as a congregation,
As the Synod prepares for major change,
As the national church speaks up about justice,
Speak to the church.
Speak to anguish.
Speak to doubt.
Speak love.

We come before you as hurting humans.
Personal and political grief,
Private and national mourning
The burdens that no one else can see.
Sing to our hearts.
Sing to anguish.
Sing to doubt.
Sing to fear.
Sing love.
In Jesus name. Amen

Prepared for worship
by the Year 7-9
Sunday Morning Program Group
Sunday 24th July 2016



> Culture of Safety

IMPORTANT CHANGE FOR AUGUST - Culture of Safety Contact Person

From **22nd July to 30th August** Ann Soo will be the Contact Person for any concerns about the welfare or safety of children.

Keeping Children and Vulnerable Adults Safe

If any member of the congregation – young or older has concerns about the safety of our children, particularly in relation to child sexual abuse, or the welfare of vulnerable adults, you may speak to Ann Soo in confidence about your concern. Ann is the Safe Church Contact Person appointed by Church Council for the period **22/7/16 -30/8/16**. Brunswick Uniting Church has a process for following up any concerns raised.

Please contact Ann Soo in person or on mobile number 0422 842 244.

> Student House Faith Spot

Tabitha Robert

Hi! I am Tabitha and I recently moved into the student housing. I am thankful for the church for this accommodation.

I came to Australia from Sri Lanka last year and I am currently enrolled at the University of Melbourne and now am in my second year of my Bachelor of Science degree. I am keeping my options open at the moment as to what I want to after my degree, my aim is to be involved in the medical field.

I have enjoyed being a part of the community, even on the first day of attending church people were so friendly and I felt so welcomed. I enjoy the good company and food at our student house dinners every fortnight where we all get to come together and just relax .

My housemates are lovely and they have been so helpful and I am so glad that I am able to be a part of this great family. I still haven't gotten involved in a specific area at the church, but I am looking forward to getting to know more about being involved and helping out. Looking forward to getting to know more people at church



> Happy Birthday

Nick Allan, Rosemary Brown, Leisl Clapton, William Coulson-Burke , Kristin Dahl, Hannah Denison, James Dobson, Ian Ferguson, Jeremy Hardman, Ingrid Hollis, Christine Hornby, Chelsea Hunter, Lucie Kennedy, Rachel Kronberger, Bridget McNamara, Kilian McNamara, Clancy Moore, Andrew Moorhouse, Meg Moorhouse, Caitlin Mullen, Genevieve Mullen, Kirsten Parris, Philip Potter, Jan Sebastian, Monty Winkler

> Pastoral Care News

Pastoral Care

The new Pastoral Care Information postcards were launched during the Cafe Style Morning Tea on **Sunday 17th July**.

The cards provide easily accessible information about who to contact for each of the components of our Pastoral Care ministry: Compassion, Prayer, Hospitality and Community.

Everyone is encouraged to take a card home and put it on their fridge or anywhere accessible. An [A4 format](#) of this information is also available on our noticeboard and on the [website](#).

During morning tea we were invited to respond to the questions: What do you think pastoral care is?, and What has been your experience of pastoral care?

Jane Allardice facilitated the conversations and has collated the responses which will be used by each of the groups that help to support the pastoral care that we offer to each other as a congregation and community.

Gathering as Community

There will be lots of opportunities, organized by different committees, to gather as community during term 3.

The first workshop for the **BUC Mission Planning Process** will be held after worship on **Sunday 14th August**, save the date and be involved in this very important initial gathering. Three more workshops will be offered at different times over the next few months so please attend at least one and lend your voice to the process. See page 2 for further information.

Refugee Sunday, 28th August will be an opportunity to show refugees that *'we're with them, not against them'*.

The JAM committee will be hosting a **Refugee Meal** after worship to raise awareness of the rations that refugees are provided with as well as raising money to support them.

Between morning tea and lunch we will hear from a guest speaker about the journey to Australia. There will be an opportunity for questions and then discussion during the meal.

The meal will offer two options 'Maya's Lentil Soup' and 'Fatima's Rice & Lentil'. The JAM committee will be calling for people to cook up a pot of one or the other and bring it along to share for lunch on the day.

Donations on the day, to support the work of [Act for Peace](#) with refugees, will be welcome.



Compassion - Personal Prayer Ministry

From time to time we are all confronted with situations which are stressful and with which we feel overwhelmed. The PC team has gathered together a group of caring members who have promised to spend some time each day lighting a candle and praying a prayer which includes the names those who have requested this.

This 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 please just telephone or email Glenice Cook or Ian Ferguson. Prayers will be offered every day and continue until you request to be withdrawn. 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.

If you would like to join this prayer ministry please contact Glenice, 0414 319 649.

Glenice Cook



Join in the fun of **Super Spicy September dinners** over the weekend of **9th-11th September**. These dinners are a fun and easy way to share a meal. All you need to do is offer to be a host or a guest and be prepared to provide part of the meal. All the information is included in the invitations which will be handed out for three weeks in August and then posted home if we somehow miss you in that time frame.

Responses need to be in by 4th September. Saide, Rachel and Caitlin will match up guests with hosts and then we'll send out all the details you need: who, when, where and what! Meanwhile if you have any questions please contact Saide, 0407 096 743.

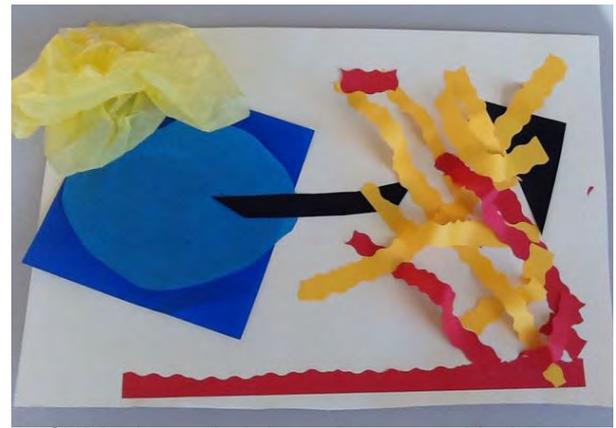
The Discipleship & Education Committee will host two theological conversations with Sally Douglas, **8th September** and Geoff Thompson, **15th September**.

A **Welcoming Ceremony** during worship on **Sunday 11th September**. See the worship calendar, p 3 for all the details.

Saide Cameron



Mary & Martha story - we focussed on doing only one thing and spent 10 minutes in silent art making !



SMP leaders made their own responses to Martha and Mary and the children described what they saw, e.g. "I think those wiggly lines are Martha going crazy ..."

SMP Briefing notes Term 3

Nine people came to the SMP briefing on **July 17** . We began with a chant the children have been practicing that introduces the bible There are actions that go with this that can be seen demonstrated by Hoth MacDowell with Julie on the fourth video on this [link](#). Shawn Whelan lead us in the Ameni chant complete with clapping patterns.

Teaching Materials

We are going between Roots and Spill the Beans, so leaders have a choice of what resonates most with them. We are also glad that Faye Findlay has been leading Godly Play sessions with the P-2 group twice a term. This term we are also teaching and revising the Lord's Prayer actions.

After church play activities

SMP assistants now have an additional and pleasure-giving duty. There are baskets with after church play equipment to go out. Weather permitting chalk and bubble blowing to be available outside. Paper planes, hoola hoops and table tennis are also ready for action. Thanks to Heather Tetu and Fiona MacDowell for donating great activities that can be used in this way.



Table Tennis equipment, located in the west end of the Hall

Equipment in the Youth Hall

The northern light in this space is a source of Winter delight. So is the reverse aircon heating which is instantaneous so long as you know where to find the remote control! It is stored on the right hand side of the new double doors. There is also a new vacuum cleaner (thanks Property Committee!).

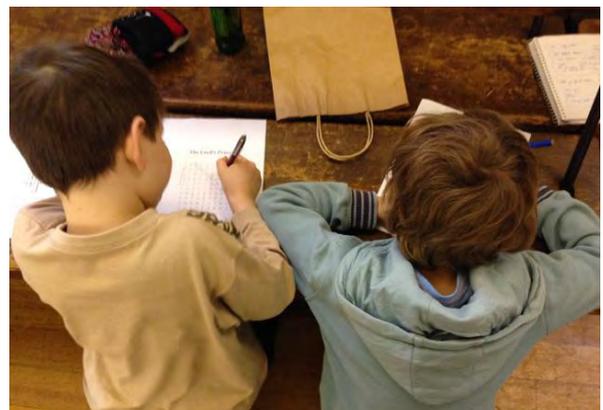
Safe church

Attendance roll marking is well in place. Due to new government legislation it is more important than ever that we keep up our processes for Working With Children Checks (WWCC) and note BUC as the place we do our volunteering. We are liable for extremely large fines if we do not comply, but the heart of this is that we want to maintain a culture of safety.

SMP attendance

We have a number of families away on extended holidays at present and our attendance has been smaller than usual. We miss some of our regular companions but wish them well in far places. There is also something special about occasionally being a very small group.

Please note there will be no SMP on July 31 due to a shortened service.



Sometimes there's a quiet pleasure in being a small group ...

> JAM News

JAM/ABCD had a most enjoyable gathering in July at the student house in Brunswick. We met over a delicious potluck dinner and spent the next two hours exploring lots of exciting ideas! We reviewed the pre-election forum and decided it would be great to host another one in the lead up to the council elections in November. Meredith shared photos and stories from her visit to the "Collaboratory" in Seattle late last year which triggered a stimulating discussion around ways to continue opening up BUC for more artistic and creative community activities.

We discussed ways to help grow the art-stop program for the wider community; to create more community garden spaces at the front of the church; support the food co-op to grow, support interfaith activities and host community conversations that promote civil dialogue across a range of controversial and sometimes divisive topics.

We also had practical discussions about contributing to the community fundraiser in August; hosting the Refugee Meal after worship on 28th August; participating in the Season of Creation in September & October, and hosting a forum to learn about the implications of a Treaty vs Constitutional changes for Aboriginal Australians. It was a wonderfully warm, engaging and safe place to share and test our ideas.

We are a diverse bunch of young, older and in between – brimming with great ideas and a proven record of getting things done with the minimum of fuss – and we'd welcome new members. We sort of fit between many of the other groups that do great things at BUC and find ways to support and build on their efforts. So why not think about joining us? We meet as required which is somewhere between 4-6-8 weeks and we all share a passion for community and for making a difference.

Meredith Budge, Saide Cameron, Kirsty Bennett, Leanne Salau, Abi Benham-Bannon, Dave Stephens

> D&E News

A creative springtime feast of Bible and theology!

2 exciting presenters will lead us in exploring our faith in engaging and accessible ways.



Sally Douglas, Minister of the Word at Richmond UCA, did her doctorate on the way early Christians understood Jesus to be Sophia, Woman Wisdom. She will help us explore how this radical idea might inform our faith and worship.

Geoff Thompson, Professor of Systematic Theology at Pilgrim College, will help us explore how the teachings and truth claims of our faith interact with our modern pluralistic world.



2 Thursday evenings: Sally Douglas **8th September**, Geoff Thompson **15th September**, 7:30-9:30pm @BUC.

> FUNdraising News



We are looking forward to the Sausage Sizzle & Busking FUNdraising event on **Saturday 6th August** at the Woolworths Supermarket on Albert St.

We'll be providing gluten free and vegetarian options. We are raising money for the [Act for Peace Syria Appeal](#)

The final event in our FUNdraising Calendar will be a series of Act for Peace Christmas Bowl Appeal events in **November-December**. More news on that in the October Olive Branch.



The previously advertised Jumble Sale has been withdrawn from the calendar. It may well appear on the 2017 calendar.

Saide Cameron



> Olive Way News

Ladies and gentlemen, it is with much excitement and anticipation that I introduce you to (drumroll please) ...



The New Olive Way Couch!

It's definitely a crowd pleaser getting a big thumbs-up from all who have sunk into its inviting leather loveliness. If you haven't checked it out yet, come in and treat your, er, backside, soon! And why not join us for a toastie and cuppa while you're at it, perfect!

And just when you think it couldn't get much more exciting, there's more:

New Dance & Movement Classes have started!

Every Wednesday at 11:00am.

All abilities, no experience required, lots and lots of fun. So why not come in from the cold and get your body moving before joining us for lunch? The perfect winter remedy!

Our doors are open to everyone and we hope to see you at Olive Way soon.



Fi Bottcher, Olive Way Coordinator

feigh.b@gmail.com 0421 027 467



> Special Events

An Introduction to Christian Meditation

Saturday 20th August, 9:30 am - 2:30 pm, Brunswick Uniting Church

Guest speaker: Clare Boyd-Macrae "My life and writings as a Meditator"

Register with Rev. Richard Arnold, 0407 796 429 or richarn50@gmail.com

Registration is free. BYO lunch and snacks. Tea & Coffee provided.

Program includes keynote address, time for meditation and a panel session.

Read more [here](#).



The Musical

Based on the novel by Peter McKinnon and adapted for the stage by Marcy Paynter.

Don't miss the World Premiere Season: **September 2-18**.

More information [here](#).

Induction - Ian David

On **Sunday 10th July** it was our great delight to attend the Induction of Ian David Turnidge, called to be the Minister of the Word for the congregations of Cowes and San Remo.

The Church was full to overflowing and there was a real sense of welcome and anticipation. Rev. Ross Stanford from Wonthaggi delivered a challenging message recognising that 'to be a Christian in today's world is not always easy but amidst all the opposing forces he felt authentic faith was still yearned for.' He went on to assure Ian 'We gain strength of the inside of our being, external things cannot hurt us. We need to pray for one another.' He urged Ian to pray for his people and share the joy of Christ. He concluded that it will not be easy but Christ has already done the work. He assured Ian of the support of his fellow Ministers.

Ian responded citing that he recognised the face of Christ is seen in even the smallest gesture and recalled the time a faithful member of his childhood congregation offered him a 'Nice' biscuit with such love on her face that he still recalls it.

He said he was ready to open every door (including the 22 in the manse) and is excitedly anticipating what is behind each one.

The church was commended for having the courage to invite an 'Exit student' with whom they were ready to grow.

Pastor Craig Semple, Baptist Church, Cowes, offered this prayer to close,

Help me to journey beyond the familiar and into the unknown. Give me the faith to leave old ways and break fresh ground with you. Christ of the mysteries, I trust you to be stronger than each storm within me. I will trust You to be stronger than each storm within me. I will trust in the darkness and know that my times, even now, are in your hand. Tune my spirit to the music of Heaven, and somehow, make my obedience count for you. Amen.

from Celtic Saint Brendan

Glenice Cook

BUC Mission Planning



During worship on **3rd July** Ann Soo announced that Steph Gesling had been appointed as our Mission Planning Co-ordinator. The focus of the role is to 'assist us to collaborate, pray and think about missioning in new ways as we look to create

our future vision for Brunswick Uniting Church'. Ann offered these words from Steph's application '*The idea of enabling people, from across the Brunswick Uniting Church communities and beyond, to build connections and to think creatively and prayerfully about the future excites me. I would love the opportunity to work with the Brunswick Uniting Ministry Team and with the Church Council in consultation with internal and external communities to create a plan to engage with people and with God's mission. I am drawn to relational organising and to working with organisations that value diversity and working together for the common good.*'

Later in the month on **17th July** in the context of the theme of 'love for God and love for neighbour' Steph's role was acknowledged.

Steph affirmed the consultative nature of the role and the opportunity to come together to dream. She also acknowledged the generous donations made in 2015 which had allowed the



role to be developed. She encouraged us to see this process as a way to look at what we have and respond to that commenting that it might just mean deepening what we are already doing or that there might be new things that we are called to be part of in terms of God's mission in the world.

She offered these questions that we might consider during the process:

She offered these questions that we might consider during the process:

- How does what we do impact on the world outside our walls and our group of current members?
- How do we engage with others including the community around us in our lived expression of God's mission?

Ian then invited us to stand as he and Sarah gathered up the feathers that we had placed on the table as a symbol of our offering, feathers on the breath of God, representing each of us and the love that we aspire to, the love of God and of neighbour. He and Sarah then showered them in blessing over Steph.

Ian prayed for blessings from God in our discernment of where God's breath is blowing us right now and into our immediate future as a church.



Saide Cameron

Five Leaf Eco-Awards

During worship on **Sunday 17th July** Jessica Mothorpe, Director of Five Leaf Eco-Awards, presented our congregation with three awards. Five Leaf Eco-Awards is an ecumenical environmental awards program that Jessica founded in 2008, as part of her conviction that God is calling the church to do much more for the earth and her creatures.

Jessica commented that one of the privileges she has in her role is seeing the bigger picture. Attending the multi-faith climate convergence in Rome in 2015 showed her how much the little things that we do in our communities actually are adding up and building a movement for change. Jessica observed that it this movement has gained even more momentum since the Pope released his encyclical.

Taking pleasure in presenting the awards to her congregation Jessica said that she did so against the backdrop of global movements and new hope from grass roots religious organizations. We were presented with three awards:

- Basic certificate for a variety of initiatives including completing an energy audit, installing solar panels and a water tank, creating a community garden and the Indigenous Recognition Sculpture Garden and running the Food Co-op (now in its 16th year)
- Eco Worship Award for our participation in the Season of Creation and integration of environmental themes into worship
- Eco Congregation Award for our commitment to Green Power & renewable energy, sharing food & resources, travelling to church sustainably through Ride to Worship and a commitment to sustainable practices

Jessica also complimented us for the work we do for our community and for refugees.



Farewell

On a Sunday of special moments, (17th July again) Ian invited Giordana to come forward. Giordana has been a member of our congregation for about three years and in that time we have prayed for her as she undertook research in the Solomon Islands for her thesis in 2014.

Giordana is returning home to New Zealand to be with her family. In saying goodbye to us she thanked everybody for their welcome. She said *'this is a community that has a lot of people coming and going so it's great that we feel that we can come and go as it's time for us to go. I've appreciated everybody here, everybody has taken time to speak to me and to know about me, my life and what I'm doing. And now it's time for me to go home.'*



Ian prayed a blessing on Giordana as she prepared to leave *'Living God bless Giordana as she returns to be with her children in New Zealand, carry her safely by your Spirit and may she know herself always connected with us through the grace of your love and your Holy Spirit in this place and your family throughout the world. We give thanks for all that we've shared. Bless Giordana and her family, grant them joy in this new start in their relationship. In your name Amen*

Deb & Mikul

During worship on 24th July Deb Blackmore & Mikul Denison shared the news of their next overseas missions. From Deb ...

I will be working with ICRC again as the Health Program Manager based in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Mike is accompanying me as a spouse and will not officially have a role in Bangladesh at this stage but we are looking at other things he may be able to do. He will continue to do a couple of short missions to other countries whilst we are away (North Korea and possibly Ukraine again).

My role will involve working closely with the Bangladeshi Red Crescent Society in the support of 2 hospitals in the south of the country in Cox's Bazar and in the roll out of first aid programs for villagers throughout the country. Cox's Bazar, which borders Myanmar/Burma, has a high number of Rohingya Refugees who access the hospital services in addition to the local population. The first aid programs are being established to try and help the communities manage first response care using local resources in a setting where there are frequent natural disasters and increasing political violence.



Saide Cameron

> Regular Events

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 alternating on **Friday** (7-8:30pm) **and 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 week/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 Ann (0422 842 244).

Mulling

This month we are having the Mulling Winter Dinner. It's **Wednesday** (note change in day, just for this month) **3rd August**, 7pm at the Charles Weston Hotel, (Cnr Charles & Weston Sts, Brunswick, just opposite Barkly Square). \$12 pies (\$15 with a pot of beer). Thanks!

Mulling is our monthly catch up/discussion/mulled wine appreciation club for young adults 25-35.

We usually meet on the first Tuesday of the month.

Talk to Sarah Curnow for more info, 0422 223 842.

Meditation

There are four Meditation groups available

With Andrea: **Tuesday** at **9.30am** in the Youth Hall. Contact Andrea Alvis, 0413 950 619, for more information.

With Richard: **Wednesday** at **8am** or **5:30pm** at 29 MacFarland St.

On-line every **Monday night** at **9.30pm** to **10.00pm**. Contact Richard Arnold, 0407 796 429, for more information.

The Olive Way

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

New volunteers are always welcome. Contact Fiona Bottcher, ph. 0421 027 467.

Book Club at BUC

7.30 – 9 pm, Wednesday 24th August
Olive Way, Brunswick UC

We have chosen a page turner for August... The storyteller by Jodi Picoult. After befriending an old man in her town, Sage Singer is deeply shocked when he begs her for a terrible favour—until he shares his darkest secret with her. This novel asks us to consider: What do you do when evil lives next door? Can someone who's committed a truly heinous act ever atone for it? Can evil ever be forgiven? Can murder be justified?

For more information speak to Faye 9379 1317 faye.findlay18@gmail.com or Christine 9386 8919 christine@hornby.id.au



Out and About Group

A social group for older, active women and men. The group meets monthly to visit places of interest or simply enjoy sharing experiences over coffee. There is no membership fee. Some activities may involve an entrance fee or refreshment purchase. New members are always welcome.

Contact Helen for further information. Mobile 0423 009 813 or email helen.rowe@rocketmail.com

August activity – 'Dome to Dungeon Tour' at the State Library. **Friday 5th August**. Meet by 1.30pm in the foyer of the Library. cnr Swanston and Latrobe. Full details [here](#). RSVP essential. Maximum of ten people can join the tour.

RSVP to Leanne Salau ASAP at leannesalau@hotmail.com

Brunswick Uniting Food Co-Op

Have you been to Food Co-op yet?

Opening Dates: **20th August, 17th September**

Olive Way, Saturdays, 10 am – 12 pm.

For more information speak to Christine Hornby, 9386 8919 or Nicole Lowe, 9354 5045

Saturday afternoon coffee

Meet at Manakish, 161 Sydney Rd. Brunswick, at 2:30 pm, usually on the **first Saturday** each month. It's very informal, and all women are most welcome. For any queries regarding transport, contact Leanne Salau, 9386 1484.

> Reports

Council

Dear friends,

The highlight of the past month has been welcoming Steph Gesling into her temporary role as Mission Planning Co-ordinator. Steph has made a flying start as she works with us toward developing our new strategic plan and leading us in a process of ministry discernment. We invite you to the congregational forum on 14th August to contribute to this process, and to speak with Steph at any time about your hopes and dreams for Brunswick UC. If you wish to know more about Steph and her role you could do no better than to listen to Ian's sermon on 17th July, in which Steph formally introduced herself in this capacity.

On a related note, at our last Council meeting we shared a meal with Rev. Adam McIntosh (Presbytery Minister for Mission & Education). He shared his insights with us from his work throughout our Presbytery (and beyond), helping the church to focus on "mission" in all its forms. The current Presbytery Strategy and new Synod plans encourage thinking about new forms of church and new ways of living out God's mission in the world. He encouraged us to continue with an outward-looking approach rather than inward-looking insularity, and offered to be a "critical friend" in our process of discernment and planning.

Council also spent some time considering how best to manage our donations to the Asylum Seeker Welcome Centre, and agreed to do some further thinking about how we can ensure all members of our community feel safe and welcome.

Hallelujah brothers and sisters, **Daniel 'Big Sec' Broadstock**

Worship Committee

Olivia opened our July meeting by reading a poem based on story of Martha and Mary from a book called 'Dad & Daughter'.

We welcomed Steph Gesling to our meeting in her Mission Planning role. Steph will also be attending our August meeting during which we will have the opportunity to talk about mission within the context of worship.

We welcomed Julie Perrin and Sarah Tomilson to our meeting to further explore the participation of and engagement with **children in worship** as part of the continuation of Pathways to the River and the orientation and process of making the church the village in which children can grow. We discussed a number of possibilities including how we might create and offer multi-generational worship, ensuring that roles within worship are meaningful and inter-generational and being intentional about exploring different shapes and forms of offering worship.

We heard with great interest from Julie about a new idea forming for a **mid-week story telling** service and the possibilities that such a service might bring for inviting children and adults into sacred experiences and offering opportunities for greater connection through the week.

Having particularly enjoyed the planning team approach for Holy Week, Pentecost Sunday and Creation Sunday we decided to look for other Sundays on the **worship calendar** for which this style of planning could be adopted. In the coming months this will include the Reflective Service on 31st July, Refugee Sunday on 28th August, World Week for Peace on 25th September and Blessing the Animals on 9th October. We have asked Julie to assist us with providing names of young people who might be

interested in being part of these teams. Charlie Moorhouse joined the team (Ian, Saide and Steph) to plan worship for 31st July. The planning was a lot of fun for everyone involved with special thanks to Meg for her inspiring suggestions.

David Stephens has been working with James Clough and Andrew Moorhouse (Property Committee) to set up **lighting for the Tower Room window**. Ian shared his not so impossible dream for more flexible lighting in the worship and gathering space.

We also discussed plans for the Pageant Brainstorming event, creation of stage pieces and the Season of Creation and noted the baptisms of Jacky and Saeed on 14th August. See the Worship Calendar, p3 for further details.

You may have noticed the introduction of a **baby grand piano** in the music pit. We have agreed to host the piano in our worship space for Jacob, a local musician on a three month trial. Jacob will join the music roster bi-monthly and has made the piano freely available for use by musicians from both congregations.

We are trialling '**white text on black**' slides for a couple of months after positive feedback from the 'Fruits of the Spirit' service. We have already received further positive feedback. If you have any comments please let a member of the worship committee know.

Ian will be away **on leave** for four Sundays across August-October. On two of these Sundays worship will be planned by worship teams. We will welcome Sunny Chen and Graeme Garrett as preachers on the other two.

3/7 – Pentecost 7: **2 Kings 5:1-14; Galatians 6:7-18** The first week of July is NAIDOC week and so we began worship with Hannah and Julie acknowledging this as Ian played the didgeridoo. Julie and Ian invited the children to enter into the story of Namaan through a very engaging story telling experience. The children were given roles, lines and actions drawing us into this familiar story in a new way. We prayed together in response singing 'I am a child of God'.



Ian began his sermon by sharing a story about Brenna being bullied due to her parents' hair length. He wondered about the cultural norms that allowed such a situation to arise and went on to speak about the cultural norms which informed the Apostle Paul's writings. Ian affirmed however that we do *'attempt to embody some of his more radical and counter cultural theological ideas'* and in particular reminded us of the teaching of the previous weeks that *'Grace trumps legalism'*. He reminded us of Paul's teachings about living by the flesh and living by the Spirit. Ian explored the impact of various forms dualism on our lives and shared the story of attending the 'Moreland says no to racism' rally in Coburg in May. He said in light of the counter rallies that were subsequently planned by the right wing racist Reclaims Australia and militant left wing Socialist Alternatives groups the rally *'risked embodying what it professed to oppose – division and conflict between left & right, black & white, Christian & Muslim; political and racial religious dualism in other words'*. Ian invited us to hear what Paul is really saying with respect to his dualism of flesh and spirit. *'When we live as though we are already part of (God's) new creation Paul calls it living by the Spirit. And when we live as though we were still part of the old broken world Paul calls it living according to the flesh.'* Ian went to speak about the rally and the 30 seconds of violence that erupted between the two counter-rally groups commenting that we didn't hear about the peaceful rally (*no story there*) but did about the violence because *our society seems to thirst for such stories of conflict. It looks for dualisms. It revels in the words of the flesh.* Ian concluded *'But there is a different story if we dare to tell it. If we dare live it. A story of the Spirit. Brothers and sisters, do you believe with Paul in the hope of the new creation? Amen*



The children participated in the prayers of the people floating candles in the bowl of water remembering that Namaan was washed clean in the humble waters of the river Jordan. We celebrated Holy Communion.

10/7 – Pentecost 8: Romans 6:1-11, Isaiah 43:1-7 We welcomed Rouada Elhajja and her son Joey Cassis for baptism making the familiar sacred promises and commitments to Joey.



'If you were a fish, what sort of fish would you be?', was Ian's opening question. He reminded us of the early Christian church's use of a fish as a way Christians recognizing each other and commented *'What a powerful symbol of who we are as baptized people. Fish in water.'* He then explored this through song (*In water we grow*) and film (*Finding Nemo*). Each scene and each verse offered us insights into the symbols of baptism and water. We encountered fear and redemption *'Finding Nemo is a double redemption story - Nemo and his father both need saving'*, Ian said. Fear continued as a theme alongside immersion as Ian asked *'Does fear separate us from the source of life'*. We watched Nemo being washed, decontaminated in the fish tank after his capture. Ian said *'I don't mind that as a spiritual metaphor. The cleansing of baptism washes us in the divine ocean of love and then we are sent out into the world to contaminate it with that love ... How might love's cleansing art work in our world through you and round you for recreation*

and renewal?' Dory and Marlin's tenuous relationship gave us the opportunity to explore the issue of trust and Christ's call to us in baptism to trust him to lead us into places we might not want to go.

Watching the final scene of the movie, an idyllic return to the beginning Ian commented on the transformation that Nemo and Marlin have undergone. He said that the final image takes us out into the open ocean ... into the big blue saying *'that's our ending too in a metaphorical sense. A return to the garden, total immersion in the divine love. Baptism says we don't have to wait until the end whenever that might be. No baptism tells us that loving immersion is happening now.'* He concluded *'So what will that mean for you today and tomorrow and for the rest of your life? To live as a fish in water, a baptized child of God?'*

17/7 – Pentecost 9: **Colossians 1:15-20 (21-28); Luke 10:38-42; also Psalm 62** Ian and Sarah invited the children to help tell



the story of Martha and Mary with each group inhabiting the role of one of the sisters and exploring the tasks that they had taken up. Sarah emphasized the importance of doing whatever you choose resting in God's love. She invited the children to take up a feather to help them remember that we are all carried on the breath of God. We sang 'Love the Lord your God' together and in a round with great delight.

Ian invited Steph Gesling to help him reflect on the story of Martha and Mary, reminding us that Steph is our new Mission Planning Co-ordinator. He began by offering an exegesis of the story.



Exploring the naming of Martha's role and the distortion often presented and felt that it is lesser than Mary's role of devotion Ian commented that *'The problem is clearly not what she's doing'*. He invited us to look at the story of the Good Samaritan that immediately precedes this story and asked *'So what is lacking in the devotion of the priest and the Levite and the service of Martha? And what is present in the service of the Samaritan and the devotion of Mary?'* Ian reminded us of the commandment to *'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength and love you neighbour as yourself'* commenting that *'our love of God and our love of neighbour are intimately related, flowing into and out of one another. Sisters seeking harmony, a harmony that's lacking this morning between Martha & Mary.'*

Steph shared her own Martha & Mary story and in relation to her Mission Planning role commented on the healthy tension of having a bit of *a bit of Mary and a bit of Martha in us*. Ian concluded commenting on the Martha & Mary's relationship as sisters living in the same house and said *'I like to think of our church as the house of Martha and Mary. Both live here in relationship with one another. The love of God and the love of neighbour working intimately together and each of us meeting Martha & Mary in ourselves and in one another so that the fullness of God's love and God's mission can be done. Sisters in harmony. Martha and Mary.'*

24/7 – Pentecost 10: **Luke 11:1-13; Psalm 85; Colossians 2:6-15** Ian introduced the Lord's Prayer to begin the Children's Time



explaining that we use it to recite it and also as a model for all our praying, about how to live prayerfully. The children helped us pray by enacting parts of it as we sang giving depth to the prayer in a very beautiful way. A video recording was made of the prayer. If you are interested in viewing it email saide.cameron@bigpond.com

Ian's sermon took a different shape for this service which he introduced by sharing with us that he is a trained dancer but that *all of us are embodied creatures of love who move in a*

divine grace of God, the divine dance of God. He explained that he experiences prayer in his body but that he also likes to move when he prays so that he can be part of the incarnate flow of divine wisdom. He then invited us into a dance that he had made, a *time of embodied prayer ... to engage with God's nurture and nourishment of us and of God engaging and entering into our trials, confronting the evils of the world*. Ian invited us to breathe deep and be open to the various movements of the Spirit among us.

We walked prayerfully to the Gathering Space, watched Ian offer his prayer dance after which we responded to his invitation to prayerfully touch the cross that he had danced with and then dip our hands into the life giving waters of baptism in the font.



Saide Cameron

Property Committee

The following activities have been undertaken/completed over the past month:

- The roof works have commenced; the works are estimated to take 8 weeks.
- Gutter on the youth hall to be replaced due to corrosion.
- Leaking down pipe from the gutter of the hall between the hall and the ASWC repaired.
- Replaced the thermostat controller of the church heater and provided the capability for the fan to operate without the heater, to move air in the summer.
- Tightened the flick mixer in the kitchen

The following activities are being attended to over the coming months:

- Organise to have the faulty down light dimmers repaired/replaced as required.
- Finalise the proposal to make the church more secure.
- Youth Hall works to continue, painting, flashing etc.
- Manse cracks filled and painted.
- Remeasure the moisture in the soil under the church.

- Investigating the professional cleaning of the hall kitchen multiple times per year to maintain them in a clean state.
- Continuing Investigating childproof locking arrangements for the gates on the youth hall front yard, self-closing arrangements.
- Worship committee is to engage Nick Burnham and investigate lighting arrangements for the tower room to complement the displays.
- Establish arrangements for the cleaning of the kitchen ovens and the sharing of the costs with the other two main users.
- Have the stones in the pit in the front yard of the youth hall removed, given away.
- Resolve the church's noisy phone service
- Repair the heater on the south wall in the west end of the hall. Initially the gas is ignited, however it won't maintain the gas flow.
- Investigate cigarette bins for the front of the church near the indigenous recognition sculpture garden.

Ray Cameron

> Preaching Plan

August 7	Ian Ferguson Holy Communion	September 4	Sunny Chen Holy Communion	October 2	Ian Ferguson Holy Communion
August 14	Ian Ferguson Baptism	September 11	Ian Ferguson Welcoming Ceremony	October 9	Ian Ferguson Blessing the Animals
August 21	Ian Ferguson	September 18	Tim Budge World Week for Peace	October 16	Ian Ferguson
August 28	Worship Team Refugee Sunday	September 25	Ian Ferguson	October 23	Ian Ferguson Blessing the Bicycles

> Lectionary

After Pentecost

A period of time that varies in length depending on whether Easter is early or late. In this period, the Church recalls its faith in the Holy Trinity. It seeks to relate its faith as a people of God to Christ's mission in the world. It commences with Trinity Sunday and concludes with feast of Christ the King

Date	Day	First Reading	Psalm	Second Reading	Gospel	C
7/8	Pent 12	Is 1:1, 10-20	Ps 50:1-8, 22-23	Heb 11:1-3, 8-16	Lk 12:32-40	G
14/8	Pent 13	Is 5:1-7	Ps 80:1-2, 8-19	Heb 11:29-12:2	Lk 12:49-56	G
21/8	Pent 14	Jer 1:4-10	Ps 71:1-6	Heb 12:18-29	Lk 13:10-17	G
28/8	Pent 15	Jer 2:4-13	Ps 81:1, 10-16	Heb 13:1-8, 15-16	Lk 14:1, 7-14	G
4/9	Pent 16	Jer 18:1-11	Ps 139:1-6, 13-18	Phlm 1-21	Lk 14:25-33	G
11/9	Pent 17	Jer 4:11-12, 22-28	Ps 14	1 Tim 1:12-17	Lk 15:1-10	G
18/9	Pent 18	Jer 8:18 - 9:1	Ps 79:1-9	1 Tim 2:1-7	Lk 16:1-13	G
25/9	Pent 19	Jer 32:1-3a, 6-15	Ps 91:1-6, 14-16	1 Tim 6:6-19	Lk 16:19-31	G

August 2016 Diary

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Pentecost 11 31 9:30 – Ian Ferguson Reflective Service 5:00 – Indonesian W’p Combined BIUC	August 1	2 9:30 – Meditation 10:00 – Olive Way	3 8:00 – Meditation 10:00 – Olive Way 12:00 – Community Dinner 5:30 – Meditation 7:00 pm – Mulling	4 10:00 – Olive Way 7:30 – D&E C’tee	5 1:30 – Out & About	6 10:00 – Sausage Sizzle 2:30 – Coffee
Pentecost 12 7 9:30 – Ian Ferguson 4:00 – Sacred Harp 5:00 – Indonesian W’p	8	9 9:30 – Meditation 10:00 – Olive Way 7:30 – Church Council	10 10:00 – Olive Way 12:00 – Community Dinner	11 10:00 – Olive Way	12 7:30 – YUCY	13
Pentecost 13 14 9:30 – Ian Ferguson (Baptisms) ** – Mission Planning 5:00 – Indonesian W’p	15	16 9:30 – Meditation 10:00 – Olive Way	17 8:00 – Meditation 10:00 – Olive Way 12:00 – Community Dinner 5:30 – Meditation 7:30 – Worship C’tee	18 10:00 – Olive Way	19	20 9:30 – Meditation Day 10:00 – Food Co-op
Pentecost 14 21 9:30 – Ian Ferguson 5:00 – Indonesian W’p	22	23 9:30 – Meditation 10:00 – Olive Way 7:30 – Property C’tee	24 8:00 – Meditation 10:00 – Olive Way 12:00 – Community Dinner 5:30 – Meditation 7:30 – Book Club 7:30 – Pastoral Care C’tee	25 10:00 – Olive Way	26 7:30 – YUCY	27
Pentecost 15 28 9:30 –Worship Team Refugee Meal 5:00 – Indonesian W’p	29	30 9:30 – Meditation 10:00 – Olive Way	31 8:00 – Meditation 10:00 – Olive Way 12:00 – Community Dinner 5:30 – Meditation	September 1 10:00 – Olive Way 7:30 – D&E C’tee	2	3 2:30 – Coffee