

THE OLIVE BRANCH

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

> Meditation

St Oran Speaks

I recently spent some time in Scotland and on the Island of Iona, a place totally immersed in rugged coastal beauty and an ancient spirituality that is expressed in the Christian community that flourishes there today. A community committed to working for peace, social justice and the renewal of worship.

On Iona there is no escaping God in the everyday everything around you. The rocks, shorelines, hills, dirt, sheep, fishing boats, skies, buildings, all call to a sense of something divinely great. Even inside the buildings the vast outside is just within reach through windows, in stone walls, in candle light and in the sound of the wind. Inside the Iona Abbey itself stone walls weep after rain and ferns and moss grow from walls and window ledges, slowly turning them to soil.

There is a lot I could say about my few days of pilgrimage on this beautiful island but for now I want to share a story of a little known Saint whose presence I felt from the first day I arrived. Perhaps it was in the sense of a very grounded, honest, sometimes messy spiritual reality that speaks from the raw energy of a landscape that is as harsh as it is beautiful, that his story touched me.

I arrived at Iona in the late afternoon on a day where the sunlight and dark grey sky hung together in poetic tension. As I walked towards the striking Iona Abbey, I found myself drawn to a much smaller, simple stone building that stood in an old cemetery.

The building is St Oran's Chapel, the oldest building on the island and named after one of the original twelve monks who travelled to Iona with St Columba, and died not long after.

Surprisingly, on this particular afternoon there was no one else around and I had a strong desire to contemplate and pray in this very old space, my recent acceptance as a Candidate for Ordained Ministry filling my thoughts with questions and doubts that I was keen to explore.

I won't dwell on what came to me through this time of prayer, but it felt a bit like an untangling. An unraveling filled with an honest, grounded humility, unflinching in the face of our suffering and witnessed by feet firmly planted in the reality of a God drenched in humanity. It also left me feeling curiously drawn to St Oran, this lesser known monk of which there is little written.

The few "official" accounts tell a simple story: He died soon after his arrival with St Columba in 563 AD, the first of the monks from Ireland to die at Iona. It is said that soon thereafter, Columba saw Oran's soul ascending to heaven following a battle between angels and devils.

However, alongside this tidy account exists a mysterious myth that tells a much more intriguing story. It's a seldom-told story of devotion, faith, loyalty, sacrifice (some might say murder) and embarrassing heresy.

The story goes that when St Columba first arrived at Iona, he set about building a new chapel by the shores. However, he was frustrated to find that after each day's hard work, he would wake the next morning to find the walls had crumbled and collapsed over night. This went on for some days until on one mysterious night St Columba heard a voice, a message that some say came from a mermaid spirit, telling him that no walls that he built would stand until a living sacrifice was offered to the land.

The next day St Columba relayed this news to his fellow monks, and – as the more popular of the myths tell – one of his most faithful and devout monks, Oran, was quick to offer himself as a sacrifice. Thus Oran became a "foundation sacrifice" for St Columba's chapel, one of only a few recorded in Great Britain, and was buried alive under the chapel's foundations.



The details of what happens next varies but the essence of the story is this:

St Columba buries his beloved and faithful friend Oran and the walls of his chapel stand strong, as promised. Three days later, Oran “rises from the dead”, either because his friend digs him up, wanting to see his face one more time, or, more dramatically, Oran’s face suddenly comes smashing through the chapel’s wall. Either way, Columba is surprised, and perhaps a little annoyed, to find his friend very alive and keen to share his experiences of the afterworld. Oran has cautionary advice that he desperately wants to impart to his dear friend Columba. The wording between the different accounts varies but the message is clear:

“There is no Hell as you suppose, nor Heaven that people talk about”.

Or: “There is no such great wonder in death, nor is Hell or Heaven what it has been described.”

And the memorable: “The way you think it is may not be the way it is at all.” This last one being my favourite.

The rattled Columba, shocked by the heresies spoken by his friend and fearful of what other outrageous things he might say, was keen to silence him as quickly as possible. He did so either by quickly burying Oran under more earth and mud, or by digging him up and re-burying him in nearby consecrated ground. Either way, Oran was never heard from again.

This local legend is where an old Scottish saying was born, which, written in our own vernacular reads: “Kick some mud in the mouth of Oran will you?” said when a person is saying something controversial or uncomfortable, something that challenges popular belief.

St Oran’s tale is one that we see playing in our own lives today, as our personal faith is challenged by different religions, new scientific understandings and a lifelong of cultural prejudices. The more set we become in our own beliefs, the more easily offended we are and the more natural it becomes to be like Columba and kick some mud in the mouth of Oran.

I hope St Oran’s story stays with me as I move into a new period of formation and discernment. I hope that I will be able to listen carefully to the things that make me feel most uncomfortable, that I won’t be afraid to question my own beliefs and that I’ll be constantly reminded that there’s a lot about ourselves, and God, that I simply don’t know. And that sometimes “I don’t know” is the best answer.

And as a postscript, it so happens that I am writing this in on October 27th – the official Feast Day for St Oran – a coincidence that is not lost on me.

God bless you St Oran, may your story and simple message continue to be heard.

Amen.

Fiona Bottcher

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> Culture of Safety

Keeping Children and Vulnerable Adults Safe

If any member of the congregation – young or older has concerns about the safety of our children, in particular relation to child sexual abuse, or the safety of vulnerable adults, you may speak to Helen Rowe in confidence about your concern. Helen is the Culture of Safety Concerns 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 on mobile number 0423 009 813.

> Worship Calendar

Blessing & farewell

And after a month full of blessings in October we will acknowledge, bless and farewell Sarah Tomilson as she concludes her time with us as a student minister on **Sunday 6th November**. The focus of Sarah's placement with us has been in ministry with the children.

Stewart Lodge Carols Launch

The Stewart Lodge Carols have been part of our feast of Carol Singing for many years now. Richard Arnold is organizing and hosting the carols. During worship on **Sunday 13th November**



an appeal to raise money for the Gift Bags will be launched. Each Stewart Lodge resident receives one of these eagerly anticipated bags. Be ready to contribute to the retiring offering. See more [here](#) and also Special Events, p6.

Christmas Bowl Appeal

Liturgies for the worship resources for the [Act for Peace Christmas Bowl](#) appeal have been written by Saide Cameron and Steph Gesling. These liturgies will shape and contribute to worship beginning on Christ the King Sunday and concluding on Epiphany. It was quite a privilege to be invited to contribute to this resource and we are looking forward to seeing how they take shape in our own congregation.



The resources are available on the Act for Peace [website](#)

Blue Christmas

This year Blue Christmas has moved to a Wednesday evening - **14th 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 for '**A call through time**'. Come and find out how the characters in the Nativity discover that they are called to be makers of joy, love and peace.

A fabulous group of like-minded creative people gathered for the Pageant Production meeting after worship on 23rd October. We discussed the script and the various ways that each of us will contribute to the pageant including music, dance, props,

Reign of Christ

The liturgical year draws to a close on **Sunday 20th November** as we reflect on the Reign of Christ.

We will also launch the Christmas Bowl Appeal. The Christmas Bowl theme for the service, prepared by Steph is 'God's family - We are called to love and be loved.'

Advent

This year our worship will be shaped in part by the Christmas Bowl liturgies written by Saide.

Advent 1, 27th November: Keep awake! Be ready!

We are called to walk the path of peace

Advent 2, 4th December: Prepare the Way

We are called to repentance

Advent 3, 11th December: Rejoice and be glad

We are called to lift up the lowly

Advent 4, 18th December: Emmanuel 'God is with us'

We are called to be followers of Christ

We are also excited about collaborating with the SMP program in relation to the sculpture project developed by Simone Alesich.

Student House Farewell

During worship on **Sunday 27th November** we will farewell SH members Abi Benham-Bannon, David Stephens, Caleb Pratt and Lloyd Pendergast.

costumes, set design and publicity. The cast is almost finalised and a rehearsal schedule will be available soon.

If you 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

The Light shines in the darkness

We are called to celebrate the glory of God

Christmas Day on a Sunday - Ian is happy!!

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

> Sharing our Faith

After the Camino

As I was preparing to undertake the pilgrimage Camino de Santiago I reflected on what it would mean for me being a stranger in a strange land. With limited language skills, how would I be able to communicate and negotiate all of the things that I would want and need. Also how would I know where to go, would I get lost, who would support me.

There was a range of things that I reflected on whilst on the Camino, which I may share at a later point in time. What I'd like to share are my thoughts on Community, Relationships & Waymarkers.



My first night on the Camino in Saint Jean Pied de Port (France) was at the Beilari Albergue. This Albergue has a communal evening meal. The purpose of this is to intentionally get to know pilgrims that will be heading off at the same time; the following morning. During that meal we formed a small community. We shared who we were and where we were from and a little bit about why we were undertaking the pilgrimage. Over the course of my pilgrimage I met a number of these people on multiple occasions, in fact two of them I met in Muxia before I returned to Santiago, others I never saw again.

The Camino in some ways is like a condensed life. There is a beginning and a destination, and the pilgrims are on a journey through that life. The pilgrims and those within the Spanish community all want you to succeed in reaching your destination. The following are a number of ways that a pilgrims are supported on their journey:

- Books containing descriptions of the routes, including maps, these may take the form of hard or soft copy. I also had an iPhone app that had the Camino Frances route, and via GPS it indicated where I was. These show the route, and some also provide elevation details.

- There are signs everywhere in a range of shapes and sizes, indicating the path that you need to follow. There are the professionally provided ones, in the road or footpath, as well as waymarkers. There is also a vast array of yellow arrows painted on almost everything. In fact some people have said that on the



Camino Frances a map isn't required as the signage is so thorough.

- As you walk each day there are usually pilgrims ahead of you and behind you. If there aren't any, then you may need to consider if you are off the track. Noting that as a pilgrim you are walking in the same footsteps of countless thousands of pilgrims over the ages before you.



- Some people you will meet and form a relationship with such that you walk together for companionship.
- The locals provide guidance and direction to pilgrims. If asked they will provide guidance and sometimes they will just call out if they see a pilgrim that didn't observe and follow the signs.



- Pilgrims are met (and encouraged) by other pilgrims and locals continuously, Hola, Buenos Dia, Buen Camino; Hello, good day, good journey

If I now step back from the Camino and compare this with our own lives ...

- Destination, we are all going somewhere, do we know where that is, do we know how far along our journey we are?
- What information do we have access to that will assist us in our journey, to plan and then to provide guidance along the way?
- Signs, what signs or waymarkers are within our journey, how do we know we are on the desired path and what are the way markers that indicate aspects of significance?
- We live within a community and have relationships with people. How do these people support us on our journey? Do they know where our destination is, where we are right now and the joys and struggles we are facing? If we never share our lives with them then they won't know, to be able to support us. What is the quantity of our relationships, deep and meaningful, shallow and superficial? Where are we on our faith journey and do we share that with others?

I leave you with the message that I sent to the hospitalero at the Bielari for new pilgrims. I'll let you replace key words that would make this relevant to our lives at BUC; Camino/Life's journey, Bielari/BUC :

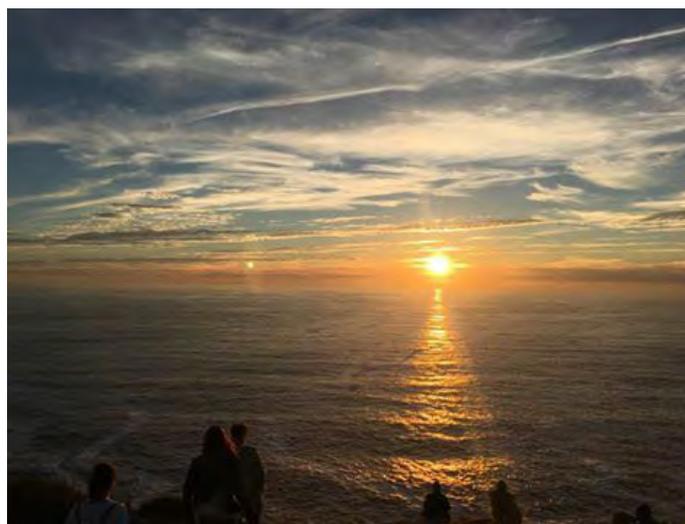
As you now enter your Camino and the creation of the family at the Beilari know the following. As you made the decision to commence at the Beilari you have already opened yourselves up to the Camino and what lies ahead. There is a community of

pilgrims, all of you are travelling along the Camino, in part, or the Camino Frances. As you travel you will meet people everyday. It will be your choice as to how much of your life you share with them and whether you allow them in or not, just as it is theirs. However that community is able to support you in your journey if you let it, be open to what lies ahead. As you travel, know that the community, both those travelling the Camino and those that live along it, want you to reach your destination. They can guide you on the path if you are open to their guidance.

Buen Camino

Are we equipped to be able to provide the companionship and guidance/wisdom that others may need on their life's journey?

Ray Cameron



> Mission Planning News

The final workshop in the Mission Planning process was held after worship on **16th October**. Each of the workshops have taken a different shape offering us the invitation to participate in the mission planning process. This workshop was contemplative in style.

After a fun warm up exercise we sat in a circle and responded to slightly adapted versions of the Questions of the Week that have been offered in the Olive Press.

Each question was offered on a different coloured piece of paper and we wrote our answers on the same coloured paper. I found this to be a really helpful exercise as it gave me the opportunity to reflect on our congregation in a variety of ways.

Steph and Shawn gathered all of the reports, responses, thoughts and ideas to prepare a report for the Special Church Council meeting on 25th October. In November a report will be made available to the congregation prior to the Congregational Meeting on 20th November. It's sure to be engaging reading.



Saide Cameron

> Special Events

Crafternoon

Learn how to make these great gift cards plus other lovely gift ideas to be sold at our Christmas stall which will be held on the first two weeks of December.



We have made it easy for you (ideas, shopping, sample item) and welcome all skill levels or even if you would like to learn a skill. please join us as your interest and effort is all we require. We will be holding a crafternoon on **Saturday 12th November**, 1:30-4:00, but if this is not your preference, we also invite you to craft from home!

Just let us know if you are interested by sending us an email or come and see us any time after church.

Ann Soo and Glenice Cook

Christmas Bowl

Every year we support the [Act for Peace Christmas Bowl Appeal](#) through by engaging with the projects that are supported, through our prayers and with our FUNdraising.



For an opportunity to find out more about the Christmas Bowl you are welcome to attend the [Frank Byatt Memorial Lecture](#) on **Sunday 13th November** where Rev Dr D'Arcy Wood will speak on - 'The Christmas Bowl: what it was and what it is.'

Congregational Meeting

A congregational meeting will be held after worship on **20th November**. The agenda for this meeting include the annual Election of Elders and presentation of the Mission Planning report.

Christmas Bowl FUNdraising Stall

After worship on **Sunday 27th November and 4th December** you are all invited to enjoy buying Christmas gifts for family & friends from the Bake, Craft & Preserves stall. All proceeds will support the amazing projects sponsored by the Christmas Bowl.

Singing on the Steps

Join in the fun of singing Christmas Carols on the steps facing Sydney Rd after worship on the fourth Sunday of Advent, **18th December**.

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

(Let's hope for better weather than last year's extreme heat which cancelled the event.)



2014 Singing on the Steps

Election of Elders

Ideally our Church Council is made up of 10 Elders providing leadership and oversight of the ministry and mission of our congregation through our committee structure. Later this month information about current membership of Council, continuing and concluding Elders will be provided in a separate email.

Meanwhile here's the timeline:

- **23rd October - 6th November** – nominations called. Nomination forms will be available at worship and also included with the email noted above.
- **6th November** – nominees announced by group email after worship.
- **13th November** – agenda published with profiles of nominees.
- **20th November** – Congregational meeting and election.

To be eligible for the role of Elder you must be a confirmed member of the Uniting Church or a confirmed member-in-association, ie confirmed in another denomination.

Congregational Lunch

After the meeting everyone is invited to stay on after the meeting or a Bring a Plate to Share picnic lunch.

OW Christmas Lunch

The Olive Way will close for the year on **Wednesday 21st December** with the annual Christmas Lunch. Details next month on how you can support this wonderful celebration.

Stewart Lodge Carols

Come along to Stewart Lodge (home to John, Gavin, Tracey and many more), 85 Stewart St. Brunswick on **Wednesday 21st 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](#).



Carols at the Manse

Come and enjoy a relaxing evening of carol singing, poetry and stories at the manse on *a date to be fixed*.



2014 Carols at the Manse



> A Season of Creation

Throughout September & October we have participated in the Season of Creation in worship, in theological conversations & a Bible Study hosted by the Discipleship & Education Committee and at a workshop hosted by the Justice & Mission Committee.

Read on for stories about the October events.

Creating connections with the more than human world



9th October

As part of our bi-annual Blessing of the Animals we joyfully blessed our animals. Charlie and Fergus Moorhouse led us in a time of [thanks and blessing](#), speaking about our love for our animals, the companionship they offer, the way they make us laugh, their unconditional love, the way in which they teach us to live in the moment and remind us of our responsibility to care for creatures who are dependent on us. They concluded giving *'thanks for the connection we have to the animal kingdom and their centrality to the world... their souls, even if we don't completely understand their language.*



Charlie and Fergus then moved among the congregation blessing the pets who had come to the service and also those who had stayed home.

During a time of confession we opened our worship to the creatures that live beyond our homes with a particular focus on birds as we listened to Tameka read a [litany of birds](#) accompanied by magpie song after which she sprinkled salt into the water bowls which people had brought symbolising the tears of creation mingling with the tears of God.

And in our [Prayers of the People](#) Olivia prayed for the new creation of peace during which water was poured into the bowls as a sign of our prayers for the renewal, unity and harmony of all creation.

After the service we were offered [blessing postcards](#) featuring delightful drawings by Amelie and Matilda Brown.



Creating cooler homes for Summer

19th October, 7:30pm

A small group joined Lucy Best to learn about easy and efficient ways to keep your home cool in summer at this community workshop facilitated by Lucy Best. Lots of the ideas were familiar but we all came away with something to think about and implement in our own homes.

A really great service that they offer is EcoMad which involves a consultant coming in to your home and looking over everything that could be fixed, changed or altered to make your home cooler in summer, warmer in winter and just generally more energy efficient. The report identifies items that the householder

can easily do and others that might need the assistance of a professional tradesperson. I think we are all going to access this subsidised service.

Lucy is the Communications & Community Engagement Manager for the Positive Charge Team, a not-for-profit energy saving and sustainability advice service, run by [Moreland Energy Foundation Ltd](#) and supported by local councils. Check out the website for lots of great services and ideas.



Creating care for the environment



23rd October

For our annual Walk or Ride to Worship Sunday we joyfully gathered on the steps (very thankful that the rain had eased off) to participate in Blessing of the Bikes (and other forms of wheeled, non-motorized transport!)



Ian proclaimed

*Brunswick Cyclists, ride out and know that God rides with you!
May your wheels turn for life, in peace, on the journey of renewal
May you meet the Christ of humility and compassion on the road.
And may the Spirit of creation abundantly bless your going out
and your coming in from this time on and forevermore.*

He then moved among the gathered crowd sprinkling us with water saying 'Ride in joy, peace and safety. In the name of Christ.'



Creating harmony with all creation

30th October

To conclude the series we will welcome Graeme Garrett as our preacher as we bring all our reflections on creation together. See the story in the December Olive Branch.

Creating a community garden

date to be advised, 7:30pm

This event is still in the pipeline and will now occur beyond our Season of Creation. David Stephens is collaborating with Lentara to ensure that any community gardens that we develop reflect our relationship with the Asylum Seeker Welcome Centre.

> Happy Birthday

Patrick Boreham-Delaney, Tim Budge, Barb Collard, Esther Hollis, Pippa Kramer, Fiona Macrae, Fergus Moorhouse, Elaine Potter, Felix Rugel, Robyn Sampson, Janet Watson-Kruse, Lillian van Tatenhove, Darren White

> Pastoral Care News

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

Gathering as Community

The **Cafe Style Morning tea** held after worship on **2nd October** featured readings from Giovanni, Gavin & Richard.

Their poetry was incredibly moving as they offered us a glimpse into their lives, their passions and dreams.



The **Working Bee and Lunch** after worship on **9th October** was a great way to be in community.

The wind was a bit overwhelming but lots of tasks were completed including emptying the stone pit, rehanging the shade sale, weeding and cleaning. There will be another Working Bee.

Genevieve ensured that a fun time was had by the young people while their parents worked hard at the Working Bee.

Julie and the YUCY crew gave the Blessing of the Bikes banner a make over in preparation for this year's event.

We enjoyed a BBQ lunch which we ate indoors to get out of the wind.



The next **Congregation Lunch** will be held following the Congregational Meeting on **Sunday 20th November**. Bring a plate to share and enjoy a picnic on the lawn (weather permitting, we will move indoors as required).

Contact Rachel if you have any questions, 0405 191 213

Compassion - Love and Support

We pray for Cathryn Goode, together with Lillian and Alex following the death of Eleanor Goode, mother and grandmother on **Wednesday 19th October**. The funeral to celebrate Eleanor's life was held on 24th October

We also pray for Matthew Cameron and Lydia Jacka as they prepare for their wedding on **Saturday 26th November**.

We wish them much joy and happiness in their life together.

> Children, Youth & Young Adult Ministry News

Student House

It's very much the pointy end of semester and as per usual, everyone's juggling a lot more than just uni! In mid October we welcomed Bethany Davey into the Green House, we're very excited to have her join the bustling community. Bethany won't be the newbie for long as we'll sadly be saying goodbye to four of our students at the end of this semester.

David, Abi, Caleb and Lloyd will be finishing their courses and heading off into the world! We'll be sending them off with our

blessings at worship on November 27th. Next year will see a lot of change in the program, with 4 new members and some new ideas evolving out of the Student House Review, it's sure to be a time of growth and further reflection on our mission in supporting young Christians.

If you know a young person who is moving to Melbourne next year for tertiary student and would be interested in becoming a part of the Student House community as part of the life of BUC, please do get in touch. We'll start interviews this month!

YUCY and OG

What can I even say about the teenagers in our community. Ahhhmazing. The last month has seen some rad catchups for both the YUCY and OG crews.

The wise old OGs were spoilt by a Japanese dinner at the Calwell's. We had some frankly awesome conversations about pretty much everything and got the catch up! Josh is in a tight band, Hannah is repping her amazing social justice mind and Gen is, as usual, disarmingly insightful and hilarious (pretty extremely woke too). Best of all, after dinner we got to SWIM in the SPA. I know, it was amazing.

We also chatted about the possibilities of attending NCYC in January 2017, stay tuned on that one!

As far as the younger YUCY crew go, we've had some great times at the first 2 meet ups of term 4! At the last YUCY night, we played pretty much every game you can think of and were excited to have 3 new rad ladies come along to hang out!

We've been having such a great time at YUCY this year, and so much of that is due to the commitment and care of Brianna

Bartley and Michael Cameron who are always becoming better and better youth leaders. It's rad to be able to welcome new "apprentices" such as Chantelle Matthews to the fold and join our crew moving into next year.



Anika Jensen
Student House & YUCY Co-ordinator (and Twister Supervisor)

> Student House Faith Spot

Caleb Pratt

Hello BUC community.

Just a quick update on what's going on in my life. As some of you would know I'm in the student house program. But I am coming to the end of my degree this year so unfortunately I will be moving out soon. It's a busy time of the year for me. I just returned from a week holiday up in Port Douglas with my family. And now I'm heading into my exam period which will go for the next three weeks. I'm excited to be finished with the course and for the journey that lies ahead.



As it's my last few months in the house I'd like to say thank you to everyone who I met throughout my time in the BUC community. Everyone has been so welcoming and interested in what's going on in my life over the last two years. Special thanks to the finance committee for including me in meetings and letting me see how things operate from a finance perspective.

Thank you to everyone and I pray that the rest of 2016 is a fantastic one for all of you.

> Nourish



Toasties & chats beforehand



Toasties for Thomas with Theo,
Thanks Emily Evans



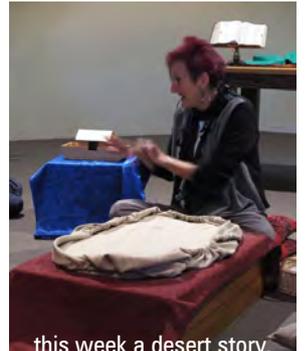
Thomas Dan-U'Ren checking our voice levels,
red voices are for outside



gathered for a Bible story



God around us, a gesturing prayer



this week a desert story,
last week was Noah



Julie lays out a river in the desert,
Lillian watches up close.



Abram and Sarai go on a long journey
Thomas Byard leans in to listen



like the sands in the desert
and the stars in the sky



Fi tells us about a desert animal,
Oscar thinks he know what it might be



The animal has big eyes and big ears and
big back feet to hop on



Everyone is guessing big animals
but it is a tiny one



It's a Spinifex Hopping Mouse,
so wonderfully made for living in the desert



communion around the table together



Ian breaks the bread, then we pass it around
(thanks for making it for us Saide!)

> Olive Way News - almost 10 years old



This Outreach Ministry of our Church began in 2007 because we wanted to connect with the Brunswick Community. The Mission Statement offered our focus - "The Olive Way has been developed as a means for the Brunswick Uniting Church to engage the community of Brunswick, particularly those "at the edge" of the community. It will aim to reveal

the love of God to all people. It will do this by offering hospitality and a listening ear, by providing an opportunity for people to give expression to their spiritual needs, and by helping people to connect with the Brunswick Community"

Well known Church Missionaries and Outreach Workers over many years have talked about their feeling the presence of Jesus as they comfort and respond to people in need. So it is with Olive Way workers and volunteers. The personal worth of all visitors is acknowledged and responded to with deep respect. We experience personal enrichment as we seek to enrich the lives of others.

Some visitors to Olive Way sleep rough, many live alone and some live in boarding houses. But they seek a connection with others that they don't find in their daily lives. Faces light up when we call them by their first name. Few surnames are known but that doesn't matter. This anonymity enables visitors to freely share something of their journey with us. Some tell us they feel safe amongst us. Others tell us that we are like family. Another told us she appreciated being made a cup of tea because no-one else in her life does that for her.

Those rostered on have been thrilled on recent Thursdays - the busiest day - to see a room full of visitors from all backgrounds, some of other faiths and others of none, sitting and talking as they accept hospitality.



The numbers of men and women who come are now fairly even. Many are transient but others have been coming since inception. Tuesdays for snacks and fruit is quieter with 20-25 visitors. On Wednesday the average is 30 with 25 staying for a cooked lunch. On Thursdays, again for snacks and fruit up to 40 and more often come.

Our program is currently enriched by two creative initiatives.

With backing from Arts Victoria we have conducted an "Arts Access" initiative on Wednesdays that offers a chance for visitors to express their feelings through painting, drawing and poetry.



On Thursdays Damian leads the SROC - "Sydney Road Opera Company" where people together tell stories of their lives and from their stories songs are written which become the basis of the SROC musicals - both are very creative outlets. This year has also seen the introduction of some short courses including dance classes, table tennis and piano lessons.



All the needs of visitors cannot be met and sometimes we recommend other agencies. This cross connection with other specialist services is something we aim to develop further.

There is usually a sprinkling of Olive Way visitors at Church (or afterwards for morning tea). For some there is a rekindling of a religious experience in younger days. Others are searching for new meaning. It is also another sign of the safety and family dimension of their experience at Olive Way. During the week, when it seems appropriate, we offer prayer with visitors in the Church.

It has been suggested that Olive Way (along with Asylum Seekers Welcome Centre) can be identified as part of BUC's DNA. We only know that the commitment of this Congregation to support these programs has made an enormous difference to the lives of many hundreds of people over a long period and that this is openly acknowledged by our visitors when one of us leaves or at other special celebrations.

Thanks be to God for this call to Outreach Ministry amongst Brunswick people and others travelling through.

The Staff and Volunteers of Olive Way.

> Food Co-op News

Last month we let you know about the hoped-for changes in the running of Food Co-op. There was a busy hum at our October distribution day as members considered various options for involvement in tasks that keep the Co-op going month by month. Thankfully it looks like a couple of the ongoing monthly jobs will be covered in 2017 and the monthly rosters for the first six months are gradually filling. We do need a small oversight Committee and there is a need for a person to take on the role of co-ordinator of the various roles and tasks. This is a volunteer role, a Co-op members and they would generally facilitate and co-ordinate the various roles.

> D&E News

Ian will offer another [Deepening Faith Series](#) for three weeks in **November - Wednesday 2nd & 9th and Thursday 17th**. Deepening Faith is a group meeting to explore together the teachings of our faith, and the way we love out those teachings.

> Presbytery News

On **Saturday 15th October**, Presbytery met for an Education Day led by Rev Dr Ian Robinson, who gave us a 'taster' workshop of his course 'Makes you wonder'. Ian said the course aims to put the 'evangel' back into mission, by empowering people to have faith conversations in a gentle, natural way that centres on building relationships.

Ian told us bluntly that the course was not 'impressive'. That was true in a sense – it wasn't dramatic or surprising. The course revolves around learning to tell and listen to stories in four steps: My story, Your story, The story (of Jesus), Our story (of the church). At the education day we did a couple of exercises from the course. For example, in one exercise we got in small groups to answer the question, 'Why are you still a Christian?' This helped us practice articulating some of 'My story'. Then we reported to the main group in a sentence the essence of what someone else in our group had said (which helped us learn to listen to other's stories) and Ian wrote these statements on a whiteboard. Finally, he changed the title to something like 'We love God because...' and we read the statements all together like a creed or communal prayer, then

Please pray for the ongoing ministry of the Food Co-op and the particular needs at this time.

A key aim of the Food Co-op is to reduce our ecological footprint on the Earth by purchasing food and cleaning products without packaging. The Food Co-op is a ministry of BUC congregation and is included in Week 4 of the Monthly Prayer Cycle.

Please contact Helen Rowe to hear more about how you can be involved as a purchasing member or in the running of your Food Cooperative on - Mobile: 0423 009 813 or email helen.rowe@rocketmail.com



discussed how that made us feel. It was such a simple exercise but, for me, it evoked an amazing sense of richness, showing the diversity of experience within our community and yet at the same time how we are beautifully linked together, unified by God's grace to each of us.

Hmm, I sound slightly rhapsodic. Well, that just helps explain why I was left with the sense that possibly this course is actually quite impressive. It isn't complicated; the underlying concept is so simple that you can find yourself thinking 'well, der'. But the very simplicity of the exercises shows that faith-sharing doesn't have to be difficult, scary or weird. In fact, evangelism shouldn't be pushy, intrusive or intolerant of other people's beliefs. Rather, it can flow naturally from simply being ourselves and sharing our own stories in caring relationships, where the other person's stories are equally shared and honoured.

In summary, the 'Makes you wonder' taster was a bit of an eye-opener, in its understated, 'unimpressive' way. It made me wonder (sorry) if this is a resource it would be worth looking into here at BUC.

Kate Scull

> Communication News

Annual Reports

The Olive Harvest is our collection of Annual Reports. All committees and groups are invited and encouraged to contribute to this collection which is then formally presented to the Annual General Meeting in February.

Next time you are meeting have a chat about how you would like to prepare your report and what you want to share.

Please contact Saide, 0407 096 743, if you have any questions.

Website

Well we had big plans for the website this year but for a whole variety of reasons the revamp has not happened.

Shawn Whelan, Matthew Cameron and myself are now hoping to give this work our full attention in the new year.

Saide Cameron

IN2ART



IN2ART sprang into life behind the closed blinds of the Youth Hall which transformed the newly renovated space (the blank canvas!) into a bohemian chic art gallery for the afternoon. The carpet was rolled up and sofas removed. Rustic wooden easels leaned comfortably decked with framed originals by our Artstop artists. Notes on the exhibition were hand written and in place. A long bench with damask cloth firmly held platters of fruit, vegetables, dips and nibbles ready for an afternoon of grazing. There were jugs of freshly picked flowers reminding us that it was spring. Outside, the weather was anything but serene although it did not seem to matter as someone had observed 'I have walked into an art gallery and I could be in Castlemaine'.

All the hours of dreaming and preparation had paid off and the IN2ART exhibition was ready to open its doors. As the first visitors stepped in, time slipped away as the afternoon blurred into a time of wonder, appreciation, laughter and tears.

The following pictures tell the story of an event which was the combined efforts of Arts Access Victoria, Artstop artists, Sydney Road Opera Company and Brunswick Uniting Church. It was about community building and communities coming together as visitors meandered to admire the art, share a conversation, catch something insightful or beautiful in the work around them.



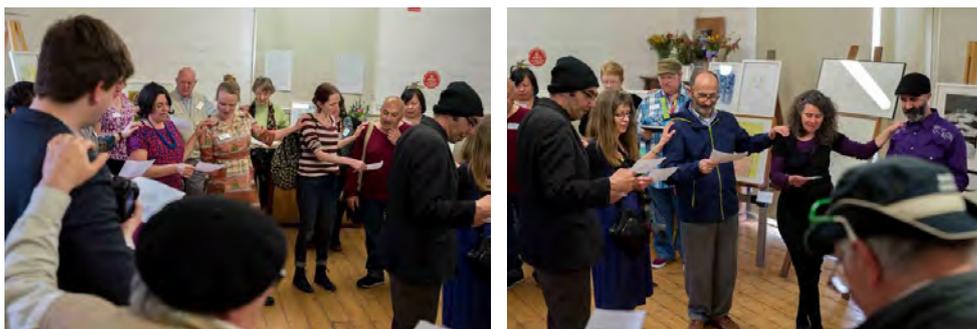
We were thrilled to welcome the Mayor of Moreland, Councillor Samantha Ratnam who offered an inspiring speech to the artists about the significance of art and its' home in the Brunswick area. In addition, we also welcomed David from Mental Health Foundation Victoria. This organisation is responsible for promoting Mental Health Week and hosts a yearly art exhibition to activate and promote the significance of mental health as an issue for everyone and work towards eradicating stigma about mental illness.

Ailey Ball from Arts Access Victoria was our emcee for the afternoon and created the welcome to all which brought this collaboration to a point of celebration.

Later in the afternoon, we were all transported by four of our Artstop poets to another place. We were transfixed hearing this poetry which was personal and drawn from rich experiences. It evoked different emotions in each of us but collectively the small hall erupted into applause and deep appreciation after the last words were said.



This spirit of creativity continued all afternoon. Damien Colerige and the Sydney Road Opera Company shared glimpses of 'their work in progress' including a witty piece about food, wine and life on Sydney Road and in contrast a powerful piece about depression. We stood in awe of the talent drawn from this newly formed group led by Damien on a Thursday afternoon at the Olive Way. So much of what we wish to express was captured in those vignettes and brought to life in their words. It was an overwhelming afternoon and some have commented that it was 'a kingdom moment' when we caught sight of what God had intended for us to be and how to be in relationship with Him and each other.



Our sincerest thanks must firstly go to the artists whose courage and creativity inspire us every week when Leanne and I volunteer at Artstop. Their generosity in sharing the inner parts of themselves expressed on paper is humbling to us all. Without Arts Access Victoria, we would not have an exhibition so our gratitude goes to them for trusting us with a

partnership and sharing the experience in bringing this amazing art out from SRS. The support from BUC is also deeply appreciated: to those who have so generously donated in time, money and effort- we feel the support which is fuel for us to continue the work.

Ann Soo and Leanne Salau

What is Church for?

On **Saturday 8th October** the monthly Transform gathering was opened to the wider BUC community as Rev. Dr. John Flett (CTM) addressed the question 'What is Church for?'

He explained that this wasn't necessarily the question that needed to be asked. Instead he showed us a video of a 20 minute portion of 6 hour long church service asking several questions along the way. Watching it a second time he explained that for this community the church was everything, providing education, welfare, health, accommodation. He compared this to the place of church in our society where all these services are no longer provided by the church leaving some parts of the church asking the question 'What is church for?'. I found this to be quite an interesting, confronting and quite negative position.



Then on Sunday I attended the In2Art exhibition and launch. In the affirmations offered by Ailey, Samantha and Damien, in the paintings exhibited and poetry spoken by the ArtStop artists and in the extraordinary and deeply moving

pieces offered by SROC I felt very strongly that I had seen an answer to the question. The Olive Way is seen by many in the wider community to be a flagship program which speaks volumes of who we are as the people of God. In this space people find a home, a welcome, a place of healing and renewal, a place to explore and express their creativity, to give back in response to what they have received.

Attending this exhibition was a blessing then and I continue to experience it as a blessing.

Saide Cameron

Commissioning of Ministry

On **Sunday 16th October** we [commissioned and blessed the ministries](#) of Anika Jensen (Student House and YUCY Co-ordinator) and Fiona Bottcher (Olive Way Co-ordinator).

Ian explained that we were doing this belatedly because initially their roles were interim and then when the roles were formalised people's varying commitments meant this date ended up being 'the one'. He invited Shawn Whelan (Chair of Council) and the committees and volunteers that have supported them in their roles throughout the year to come forward. Shawn acknowledged the gifts that each bring to their role.

Anika responded saying that she is really passionate about community building and sitting with the doubts and joys and everything between of our faith as young people in the world.

Fiona responded saying 'God is love and he gave us Jesus, love made flesh so that we could see what love really looks like and to me love looks a lot like Olive Way. The community in sharing hospitality and compassion can be found in that space. And the love can sometimes be uncomfortable and sometimes messy but it can almost always be transforming and deeply rewarding. I think we are really blessed to have the unique space of the Olive Way to grow love and to share people's stories and wisdom and to walk with them for even a short time is such a privilege and I thank you all for the Olive Way space. It's a wonderful gift.'

Anika and Fiona affirmed their faith and we made promises to each other and prayed a blessing on Anika and Fiona's ministries.

At the end of the commissioning Ian commented that Fiona will be concluding her role as the Olive Way Co-ordinator at the end of the year as she turns her attention to her candidature for ordained ministry with the Uniting Church.

Saide Cameron

> Ways to give during Advent & Christmas

In addition to our support of the **Christmas Bowl** through the Crafternoon, FUNdraising stalls, Carols at the Manse and personal donations (see page 6) and **Stewart Lodge Carols** by making donations toward the Gift Bags (see pages 3&6) here's some information about a couple of other ways our congregation supports people in need at Christmas.

ReGen Hampers

Our congregation has been a supporter of the [ReGen](#) Christmas Hamper Appeal for a number of years. We have again been invited to participate.



Christmas brings joy to many families and celebrations of happy relationships and memories. But Christmas can be a very difficult and stressful time for many other families. Some of ReGen's clients have very troubled family histories. Others are acutely aware of their limited ability to thank their families or friends for their ongoing support and encouragement.

Ideally hampers need to be prepared by **Sunday 4th December** ready for distribution to clients. You can get involved in the Hamper project by

- Preparing a hamper and bringing it to The Olive Way in 2 green (or other colour) shopping bags.
- Making a financial donation to the Hamper project. Contact Saide Cameron to organize your donation.
- Organising with a couple of other people or families to prepare a hamper together.
- For a copy of the suggested contents of the hamper please email saide.cameron@bigpond.com

Target & Uniting Care Christmas Appeal

The campaign (previously Giving Box) is launched in all Target stores in early November each year and aims to make Christmas more special for the thousands of Australians who, for various reasons, are unable to celebrate Christmas with gifts.

[Uniting Care Australia](#) is one of the largest providers of community services in Australia, providing services to more than

2 million Australians each year. They provide services to older Australians, children, young people and families, Indigenous Australians, people with disabilities, the poor and disadvantaged, people from culturally diverse backgrounds and older Australians in urban, rural and remote communities.

For more information visit the Target website [here](#) and watch the video.

> 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 Helen (0423 009 813).

Mulling

This month we are meeting on **Tuesday 4th October**, 7pm at Sarah's home, 27 Laura St., Brunswick with Carlyne Nunn as our guest conversationalist.

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

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

Meditation

There are four Meditation groups available

With Andrea: **Wednesday** 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, Dance & Art programs - 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 23rd November

(final meeting for 2016)

Olive Way, Brunswick UC

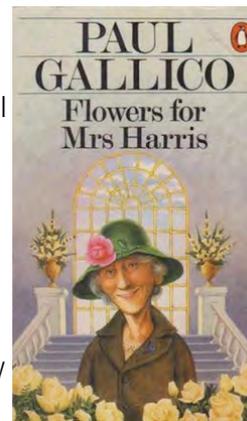
Flowers for Mrs Harris by Paul Gallico will be the focus for our discussion for the final book club meeting of 2016.

This joyous little book (only 110 pages!), written in 1958, is part travelogue, part romance, but with a serious message about the dangers of succumbing to the lure of pride and vanity. It is a great, easy read to finish the year.

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 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

Brunswick Uniting Food Co-Op

Have you been to Food Co-op yet?

Opening Dates: **19th November, 10th Decemeber**

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

Worship Committee

We enjoyed lunch at Thom Phat after worship on 23rd October for our monthly meeting. As we ate we reflected on the previous Sundays services and attended to a number of other important topics.

The Blessing of the Animals service was another opportunity to explore ways of involving **children in the planning and leading of worship**. This time Ian and Julie took a different approach and invited the children to undertake specific tasks. See the Season of Creation story, p7, for details.

Preparations for the **pageant** are proceeding beautifully with the script undergoing it's final draft before distribution to the cast, the cast is almost finalised, a production meeting has been held and plans for the rehearsal schedule are underway. We are very grateful to Wayne Matthews and willing volunteers for making rostra (stage pieces).

The **Season of Creation** is almost finished. This season has been a collaboration of the Worship, Discipleship & Education and Justice & Mission committees. Although the threads and connections of the season have not been strong or obvious we felt that each individual service and workshop has allowed us to explore how we participate in the dance of creation in a variety of ways.

2/10 - Pentecost 20: **Lamentations 1:1-6; Luke 17:5-10** Ian asked the children 'What's a lament?', and explained that it's an expression of pain and sorrow. He introduced them to the book of Lamentations which has, at its heart, a beautiful song of hope. Sarah and Ian invited the children to walk the cushion labyrinth which had along its way words and pictures of hard times and places in life. They passed the Cross and came to the heart of the labyrinth - the table, *'the place where we are fed with the love that gives us the strength to live in our lives'*.



Ian opened his sermon *'The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases comes the affirmation from the centre of the labyrinth of lament'* commenting that *'another way of saying this is that God is faithful, ever faithful'*. He explored the concept of faith in response to the disciples' request of Jesus *'increase our faith'*.

Ian then took us on a journey through the labyrinth to walk the path of faithfulness. He said that *'Faith manifests itself in faithful behaviour'*. Along the way we encountered stories of faith from Luke's gospel including the faithful friends lowering the paralysed man through the roof to be healed by Jesus, the woman who had been suffering haemorrhages reaching out in faith to touch Jesus, the woman who bathes Jesus feet with her tears and anoints him with oil, her life transformed by faith in Jesus, and the disciples in boat in the midst of the storm being asked by Jesus *'Where is your faith?'* Ian used each of these stories to explore and give depth and meaning to how we might live faithfully.



Returning to the disciples' request *'increase our faith'* Ian reminded us of Jesus' response *'If you had faith the size of a mustard seed ...'*. He wondered if this means that Jesus is saying we can *'exercise the creative power of the divine all with faith the size of a mustard seed's worth of faith'* and said *'yes I think he is'*. Ian spoke of the ways that we do already reshape our environment and then asked *'but can we bring peace in the chaos, heal the deep division that tear humanity apart, ... create and renew the world as God does? With faithful love, yes we can says Jesus.'* He commented that it's not about how faithful we are but how faithful God is reminding us that *'At the heart of labyrinth is the steadfast love of the God never ceasing.'* He concluded inviting us to pray a prayer of confession and to *pray for new life and hope out of our human weakness and vulnerability*.

9/10 - Pentecost 21: **Psalms 148; Genesis 1:24-31; John 1:1-5; Isaiah 11:6-9** Our Blessing of the Animals service was a wonderful celebration of our relationship with our animals and an opportunity to explore our connection with the more than human world. See the story in 'Season of Creation', p 7.

Sarah quoted from St. Francis Assisi's hymn 'Canticle of the Creatures' to begin her sermon commenting that his legacy continues in our Blessing of the Animals. Acknowledging the animals with us for the service she asked *'What is this about, our connection with animals?'*. Sarah reminded us of the joy we feel when encountering animals in the bush and the excitement experienced by overseas visitors when they see our unique animals for the first time. Turning our attention to the *'progressive symphonic sweep at the beginning of the earth in the Genesis reading'* Sarah highlighted the interconnectedness of all things and then in the *'grand cosmic prelude to the Gospel of John'* that Jesus is *'part of the creative life that started all life.'* She explored the



discomfort we often feel in relation to the gift of dominion over everything and shared that Hibert, in his article "Reclaiming the World Biblical Resources for an ecological crisis", draws our attention to what it means to be made in the likeness and image of God in the context of dominion. Sarah wondered 'What does it really mean if each one of us takes seriously that we have the divine spark of God with in us?'

Concluding Sarah commented on our connection to the earth and its particular expression in this service in all its *chaos and wonder and noise and barking and furry creatures and lizards*. Speaking of the blessing bestowed first by God and the continued blessing of the Word of Jesus Christ she commented that it is an acknowledgment of the sacredness of dominion and our stewardship of the world and that through this blessing we have a *glimpse into the heart of the Creator God who is at the heart of all our lives in the continued renewal of the world*.



16/10 - Pentecost 22: Jeremiah 31:27-34; 2 Timothy 3:14 - 4:5 Worship was led by the Ministry Team. They began the service bringing forward and naming the symbols of ministry.

Julie and Anika explored what it means to be holy with Julie explaining that she wanted to be taller (6'4") so that she could be holy like Nadia Bolz-Weber. They invited the children to line up so that Anika could measure them, amidst much hilarity, to see how holy they were.



Anika explained that Nadia said you can't climb the spiritual ladder, that there is no competition in holiness. Julie reminded us of the words in Pathways to the River - 'God made us so we are made to take God as a gift to others'. One of the children replied 'My Mum said that children are the best gifts in the whole wide world'. We shared the peace and love of God with each other.



Following this wonderful celebration of holiness (yes we are all holy, no matter how tall we are) we then commissioned and blessed the ministries of Fiona (Olive Way Co-ordinator) and Anika Jensen (Student House and Youth Group Co-ordinator). See page 16

Ian began his sermon quoting from the Basis of Union reminding us that 'we are a pilgrim people always on the way towards a promised goal'. He asked 'So pilgrims how do you find your way? ... do you have a map?' He then referred us to the map, which has been forming on our wall as part of our Mission Planning process indicating that we would be invited to contribute to the map, and we began doing so by creating a spiritual map on the pieces of coloured paper we had been given when we arrived.

Ian went on to offer a meditation on maps with a particular focus on the map of Cowombat Flat and its relationship to the land which it attempts to depict. Ian said that if the Bible is God's map we're in trouble because it is also fixed on paper and asked 'If the Bible is not a map what is it?' We then looked at the painting 'Warlugulong by Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri about which Ian said 'there's so much going on here. It's a map of country but it's also a map of Tjapaltjarri's soul and of his people's pilgrimage though life. Here is the their faith, their relationships and their law, their ceremonies, dances and sacred stories all sung onto this canvas'. He commented I think the map for living that our Christian faith offers us something like this. Our map is shaped by the sacred stories that we get from the Bible and the teachings about God and Jesus and faithful living that arise from the Bible have been shaped by tradition.

Reflecting on the letter to Timothy, the Creation story and Jesus breathing on his disciples behind locked doors Ian said that Scripture is God breathed and that 'we can only read and use the Bible therefore to help direct our living when we understand it in this way, when we understand the spirit of God to be breathing through it and through each of us and through the community of Christ's people the church in a dynamic way of interpretation between its world and our world. A God breathed Spirit dance of interpretation informing our faith map for living.



Ian then invited us to write a God breathed moment on our spiritual maps and to place it on the extension of the Mission Planning map as an offering of our lives, of our pilgrimage to God.

23/10 - Pentecost 23: **Joel 2:23-32; Luke 18:9-14** Ian and Daniel invited the children to join them whereupon Ian sneezed several times eliciting the standard 'Bless you' response from Daniel. With the children then they explored blessing, wondering what a blessing is. They said there are three things to know about blessing - opening ourselves to the presence of God, the rising up of joy that bursts out of us and love coming to our hearts and coming out of hearts, the love of God coming to make everything new. They agreed that the greatest blessing is Jesus. They commented that in blessing our bikes after the service we are caring for the earth and asking God's blessing in our riding. We sang 'May God's sheltering wings' using gestures that captured the essence of the three parts of blessing.



'It's raining for the prophet Joel this morning, lots of rain, just like us' said Ian opening his sermon. He then repeated words from the prophet Joel and having read the whole book of Joel commented *'I found some strikingly relevant content there'*. He spoke of Joel's lament for the land in the wake of extreme weather conditions (locusts, drought and bushfires) noting that we too are increasingly familiar with these conditions. He wondered if we would go where Joel does claiming that *this is the Lord's doing*. In response to this wondering Ian spoke of the three movements in Joel beginning with judgement and ending with the grace of rain and renewal and in particular the pivot point, the returning to God – *At its heart Joel's prophecy is about the relationship of love that we have with the living God.'* Ian spoke of the relationship between people turning away from God and the drought stricken place they found themselves in. He said *'This is the overarching teaching of all Scripture. It teaches of God who is faithful, steadfastly loving, gracious and compassionate. A God who provides a way out of the desert, a way back into the soul drenching showers of love. We call that way Jesus Christ.'* Ian invited us to look within to find the dry hard place within ourselves and spoke of the fear that is that place for him and then spoke of the returning. He asked *'What in your life gives you that deep sense of refreshment, renewal, resounding joy, the outpouring of divine expansive grace?'* He shared a beautiful story of hospitality offered to him, a moment of grace in his life.

Ian acknowledged that this reading of Joel becomes a metaphor for our spiritual lives but reminded us that *'the extreme weather events Joel describes are also part of our physical world'* and addressed the growing challenges of climate change and the impact of our turning away from the qualities of compassion, wisdom and love on the suffering of the world. Returning again to and commenting on Joel and his vision of God's abundant rain he concluded praying *'Thank you living God for the love that makes all things new. Help us to join the flow, the falling flow and the rising that is your way of abundance in Christ Jesus, in his holy name. Amen.'*



In preparation for blessing of the bikes Ian invited us to move to the Baptismal font where he poured and blessed the water.

Recordings of the sermons are available on our website [here](#)

Saide Cameron

Property Committee

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

- The contractor has completed the roof works.
- Church's phone service isn't noisy currently.
- The vertical grill has been installed on the storeroom window.
- Blown globes in the church have been replaced.
- A working bee was held.
- Weeding and tidying was done.
- The stones in the pit in the front yard of the youth hall have been bagged up and are being removed.
- Shade sail on the north side of the youth hall has been reinstated.

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

- Assess rising damp damage at a number of locations.
- Finalise the church roof project; synod report, slate tiles & repairs to stain glass window.
- Determine action to be taken in relation to the church spire.
- Manse cracks filled and painted.
- Organise to have the faulty down light dimmer replaced as required. Operational dimmer is currently set up to operate both sets of lights.
- Re-measure the moisture in the soil under the church.
- Continuing Investigating childproof locking arrangements for the gates on the youth hall front yard. Self-closing arrangements can't be installed; "Please Close the Gate" signs are to be installed.

- Update the cleaning contractor arrangements, currently in discussions with Fresh Start Asset Services, Lentara’s cleaning social enterprise business. Contract has to be restructured due to the organisational changes in the UCA agencies.
- David Stephen and Nick Burnham have developed a proposal for the lighting arrangements for the tower room to complement the displays. The proposal has been approved by Church Council.
- Repair the heater on the south wall in the west end of hall. Initially the gas is ignited, however it won’t maintain the gas flow.
- Finalise the insurance claim associated with the break-in.
- Investigate the professional cleaning of the hall kitchen multiple times per year to maintain them in a clean state. Jenny to ascertain if another clean is required. Intention is to split the costs with main users of the kitchen. Ian and Shawn to negotiate with the ASWC and BIUC.
- Investigate cigarette bins for the front of the church near the indigenous recognition sculpture garden.
- Fiona will commence her candidacy next year and will be stepping down from the committee. Seek a replacement.

Ray Cameron

> Preaching Plan

November 6	Ian Ferguson Holy Communion	December 4	Ian Ferguson Advent 2, Holy Communion	December 24	Ian Ferguson, 7:00 pm Christmas Eve Pageant
November 13	Ian Ferguson	December 11	Ian Ferguson Advent 3	December 24	Ian Ferguson Christmas Eve, Holy Communion
November 20	Ian Ferguson Reign of Christ	December 14	Ian Ferguson, 7:30 pm Blue Christmas	December 25	Ian Ferguson Christmas Day
November 27	Ian Ferguson Advent 1	December 18	Ian Ferguson Advent 4	January 1	Ian Ferguson Christmas 1

> 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
2/10	Pent 20	Lam 1:1-6	Lam 3:19-26 or Ps 137	2 Tim 1:1-14	Lk 17:5-10	G
6/11	Pent 25	Hag 1:15b - 2:9	Ps 145:1-5, 17-21 or Ps 98	2 Thes 2:1-5, 13-17	Lk 20:27-38	G
13/11	Pent 26	Is 65:17-25	Is 12	2 Thes 3:6-13	Lk 21:5-19	G
20/11	Reign of Christ	Jer 23:1-6	Lk 1:68-79	Col 1:11-20	Lk 23:33-43	W

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
27/11	Advent 1	Is 2:1-5	Ps 122	Rom 13:11-14	Mt 24:36-44	P
4/12	Advent 2	Is 11:1-10	Ps 72:1-7, 18-19	Rom 15:4-13	Mt 3:1-12	P
11/12	Advent 3	Is 35:1-10	Ps 146:5-10 or Lk 1:46-55	Jas 5:7-10	Mt 11:2-11	P
18/12	Advent 4	Is 7:10-16	Ps 80:1-7, 17-19	Rom 1:1-7	Mt 12:18-25	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
25/12	Christmas Day 1	Is 9:2-7	Ps 96	Titus 2:11-14	Lk 2:1-14 (15-2)	W
	Christmas Day 2	Is 62:6-12	Ps 97	Titus 3:4-7	Lk 2:(1-7) 8-20	W
	Christmas Day 3	Is 52:7-10	Ps 98	Heb 1:1-4(5-12)	Jn 1:1-14	W

November 2016 Diary

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Pentecost 24 Oct 30 9:30 – Graeme Garrett 5:00 – Indonesian W’p	31	November 1	2 10:00 – Olive Way 12:00 – Community Dinner	3 10:00 – Olive Way	4 7:30 - YUCY	5 2:30 – Coffee
Pentecost 25 6 9:30 – Ian Ferguson HC, AA 4:00 – Sacred Harp 5:00 – Indonesian W’p	7	8 10:00 – Olive Way 7:30 – Church Council	9 8:00 – Meditation 9:30 – Meditation 10:00 – Olive Way 12:00 – Community Dinner 5:30 – Meditation	10 10:00 – Olive Way	11	12 1:30 – Crafternoon
Pentecost 26 13 9:30 – Ian Ferguson Stewart Lodge Carols Launch 11:-00 – Pageant Cast M’g 5:00 – Indonesian W’p	14	15 10:00 – Olive Way	16 8:00 – Meditation 9:30 – Meditation 10:00 – Olive Way 12:00 – Community Dinner 5:30 – Meditation 7:30 – Worship C’tee	17 10:00 – Olive Way	18 7:30 - YUCY	19 10:00 – Food Co-op
Christ the King 20 9:30 – Ian Ferguson Christmas Bowl Launch Congregational M’g Bring a plate to share Picnic Lunch 5:00 – Indonesian W’p	21	22 10:00 – Olive Way 7:30 – Property C’tee	23 9:30 – Meditation 10:00 – Olive Way 12:00 – Community Dinner 7:30 – Pastoral Care C’tee	24 10:00 – Olive Way 5:00 – Pageant Rehearsal	25	26
Advent 1 27 9:30 – Ian Ferguson Christmas Bowl Stall 5:00 – Indonesian W’p	28 5:00 – Pageant Rehearsal	29 10:00 – Olive Way	30 9:30 – Meditation 10:00 – Olive Way 12:00 – Community Dinner	December 1 10:00 – Olive Way	2 4:30 – Pageant Rehearsal 7:30 - YUCY	3 2:30 – Coffee