

THE OLIVE BRANCH

February 2020 Brunswick Uniting Church Congregation Worship - 9:30 am

> Meditation

Reflections on a call

At the beginning of his ministry in Matthew's gospel, Jesus proclaims: "... *the kingdom of heaven has come near.*" Then he immediately calls four fishermen to follow him. The Reign of God has arrived, and it begins with a call to follow (Matthew 4:12-23).

The Call

The wider Uniting Church has called us as a congregation to send me to East Gippsland for 3 months to help support ministers and congregations there in the ongoing fire cataclysm [details here: <https://brunswick.unitingchurch.org.au/supply-ministry/>].

One of the many things I'm feeling on receiving this call is relief – here is something I can do – and what's more it is what I know how to do. Like fishermen being called to fish, I am a minister being called to minister. And that is a relief because before this call I was feeling a powerless sense of wanting to respond but not knowing how or where or to whom.

Place

Jesus left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the sea, writes Matthew. God's reign first arrives in Capernaum. It is there, in a small agricultural and fishing village on the road by the sea, that Jesus spends most of his ministry. There are larger cities in that Roman controlled territory, Tiberius and Sepphoris, the centres of Imperial political, economic, social and cultural power in Galilee. But Jesus doesn't move to them. He locates himself in a marginal place, with rural peasants not the urban elite, with the ruled not the rulers, the invaded rather than the invaders.

The Kingdom arrives in such a place as this. But, of course, the kingdom is not itself bound to a particular place or time or situation, rather it is the dynamic concept of "God ruling", of divine sovereignty, of God taking control and being in charge. The place of its inbreaking is on the margins, not in a throne room. It arrives where it is needed, where people are hurting, where the very earth and its creatures are crying out. Today, for us, that place is East Gippsland.

Unity and Community

One of my hopes in going to East Gippsland is that it might forge links between our community and the churches there. We are one church, the Uniting Church, a church that seeks to work for the unity of the divine reign in its current incompleteness – hence "Uniting" rather than "United". And so, I see Christ calling us all to a growth in unity and community.

The first act of the inbreaking divine reign is to gather a community. From the moment he calls the fishermen, Jesus will conduct his ministry in community. He will not be alone without followers until they all eventually desert him in the garden of Gethsemane. Until then, therefore, Matthew's story is not only that of the Messiah, but also of the messianic community which has been called to follow him. The inbreaking divine reign is communal by nature, the call of the Kingdom is a call into community. And I'm feeling that myself as I prepare to go to Gippsland. It's not just about me – it is also a call on my family, my congregation, my church.

Response

When I received the call, almost immediately I felt a YES inside. Many more people had to share that YES before I accepted the call (because the reign of God is communal by nature), but the feeling of YES in me was immediate. Like those first fishermen. They respond to Christ's call in an immediate, extraordinary and perhaps for us an unacceptable way – leaving everything, deserting their families and their livelihood. "Finally," I imagine them saying, "here is my direction, here is my community, here is the way to a life that makes a difference to the world. I can do nothing but follow even though I lose everything." Personally, I get to keep my family and my stipend – it's almost too easy! – except that it is not easy at all. It is huge. It is a call to join in with what God is doing.

This is so big that we might expect Jesus' first act to be a grand gesture, something really dramatic, a radical development in world history. Instead we get a call to four local fishermen. These first recruits to the divine sovereignty project do not seem like a world changing task force.

The divine reign has insignificant beginnings, like a mustard seed. The call is made not to governors and nobles, but to ordinary folk – it is made to you and to me. And it is a call to be who we are for God’s reign. Fishermen to fish, ministers to minister, and you to be you for the healing of the land, for the care of the hurting, for the nurture of creation.

Ian Ferguson (insights in this reflection are drawn from R.T. France The Gospel of Matthew, and W. Carter Matthew and the Margins)

> Worship Calendar

February

All Age worship - 2nd February

The first Sunday of the month, **2nd February**, is an All Age Service during which we will celebrate Holy Communion.

A very big day - 9th February

SMP Blessing - During worship on **9th February** we will bless the children who will participate in the [Sunday Morning Program](#). In particular the children starting school and moving from one age group to the next will be acknowledged and receive a gift. Parents and the congregation will make commitments to support and pray for the SMP.

Commissioning of Elders - At the Congregational Meeting in November we elected new elders: Joel Hallinan, Jessica Kavansakul and Maxine Loynd, and also re-elected Gwen Arnold, James Balsillie, Claire Foley, Karlien Kok, Helen Rowe, Amelia Ware, Shawn Whelan. They will be commissioned for their role during worship.

Confirmation - Michael Cameron and Bella Taranto will be confirmed.

Sending out - Ian will be blessed and sent out in response to his call to supply ministry by the Presbytery.

Ordination - Fiona Bottcher

Fiona will be ordained to the ministry of Deacon in a service led by the Presbytery of Port Philip West on **Sunday 9th February**, 2pm. Fiona is a long time member of BUC and served as our Olive Way Coordinator in 2016 before candidating for ministry. Fiona has accepted a call to placement as the Presbytery of Port Phillip West Mental Health Ministry Coordinator (Sunshine). In this role she will also be working with former BUC minister Ray Gormann in the Sunshine congregation. It’s a small world!

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Supply Ministry at BUC

During Ian’s absence from Brunswick, beginning **10th February**, two part time supply ministers will take different parts of his role. See the [Supply Ministry Update here](#).

Valentina Satvedi will work with our Worship and Discipleship and Education committees in a preaching and teaching role.

Yoo Mi Park will work with our Pastoral Care Teams in a pastoral support role.

23rd February - Transfiguration

Student House Welcome and Blessing - Each year we create a moment during worship to welcome new students to the program and to bless all students and the committee that supports them for the coming year.

SMP Commissioning - We will also commission the leaders and assistants of the [Sunday Morning Program](#)

Ash Wednesday

Join us for worship on **26th February**, 7:30pm as we gather to begin the season of Lent. Weather permitting, this service is held in our back garden.

March

Season of Lent

A season of preparation and discipline that begins with Ash Wednesday (**26th February**) and concludes at sundown on Holy Saturday (**11th April**). During the forty weekdays and six Sundays in Lent, the Church remembers the life and ministry of Jesus and renews its commitment to him in Christian discipleship.

The worship committee will begin planning for worship during Lent at our meeting on **6th February**. We welcome members of the congregation to this meeting. We will be sharing a meal from 6:30pm in the Youth Hall. RSVP to Saide Cameron, 0407 096 743, if you would like to participate. [Details here](#).

Welcoming Ceremony

Our first [Welcoming Ceremony](#) for the year will be offered during worship on **Sunday 29th March**. This is an opportunity for people new to the congregation to share your story and name Brunswick

> Worship News

Farewell

During worship on **Sunday 12th January** we farewelled Tim Hoffmann and Fernando, Michelle and Thomas Torres.



Fernando and Michelle are originally from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and participated in a Welcoming Ceremony on 16th September 2018. Fernando came

to study at the Centre for Theology & Ministry earlier in the year and Michelle arrived soon after and worked at Sunshine Hospital. We rejoiced with them at the birth of Thomas on 19th November that same year. And now sadly they are leaving us for Brisbane. Emily Evans offering the farewell said *'And now they are leaving for reasons that I still don't understand or approve of'*. Michelle will be working and teaching in a hospital there. Fernando will be working with the National Conference to establish a congregation with the Brazilian community there. He also commented *'The real reason why we are moving I also don't know. The same wind that blew us here to Australia is the same wind that is blowing us to Queensland. We don't have big plans. We will just be open to what will happen there.'* He invited us to all come and have a vacation with them and went on to say *'Thank you all for your kindness. We have been blessed to have been here with you.'* Speaking to his son he said *'Thomas this is your first church in your whole life.'* And to us again *'Thank you so much'*.

Tim has been a member of our congregation since 2011. In recent years he has actively participated in the Olive Arts Collective community and late last year held an independent exhibition of his art which many members of the congregation attended. Tim shared a poem at the Service of Solidarity on 24th November. Tim is moving to Thailand. Tim shared *'I am leaving for reasons of love to live permanently in Thailand and I'm taking my reference books with me just in case I do do further study. I want to thank you as a community for your support individually and corporately and I've really loved my time here. Of course I will come to visit back to Australia three or four times a year'*. Tim gave us a painting from his collection as a parting gift.



We sang 'For you deep stillness' and Saide prayed *'God of love and possibilities, we pray for Tim as moves to Thailand. We pray that he may know your presence as he explores this new way of living. Be with Fernando, Michelle and Thomas as the wind blows them, as God's Spirit blows them to Queensland. May the possibilities that emerge for them be life giving for them and all the people they encounter. Amen'*



Saide Cameron

> JAM News

Olive Way

We have a long running in joke in Olive Way that when we think of a certain person that we haven't seen for a long time, they will inevitably show up the next day. Barry says it's a bit like we're offering up a prayer for that person. I call it 'summoning by thought'. It is a joke, of course. If there is a particularly challenging personality who gives us a hard time and that we really don't want to see Bev will sometimes say to me, 'Now don't you summon them by thought!'

So it was really special to see one of those that we had missed from Olive Way for quite some time appear on the first day of opening this year, seemingly summonsed by thought. Around the middle of the year he had completely, it seemed, dropped off the face of the earth. But there he was, rabbiting on as though he'd not missed a day.

Another lady, who has been a stalwart of the place, ended up getting a housing commission house in Kensington after living in a rooming house in Brunswick for nearly 10 years. The house came up suddenly after only being on the list for a few months and naturally she leapt at the opportunity. I anticipated we

would see her less, having a greater distance to travel to Brunswick. Of course, just thinking of her the night before, she appeared the next day, 'summonsed by thought' as it were.

There are many other people who come and grace us with their presence for some time, then disappear for a time. Although we don't seriously believe we can summon them by thought, we do think about them. We do care, and we do celebrate when they walk back through the door. Whether they are here or absent, we don't forget anyone who comes, even for a short time. We know they only a thought and a prayer away.

Peter Blair, Olive Way Pastor,
0431 193 810

From the committee

We met for an al fresco BBQ hosted by Ray & Saide Cameron for our January meeting. We enjoyed a lovely meal including pavlova made by Ann Soo. Consider this encouragement to think about joining the Justice & Mission Committee.



Olive Way

Christmas Lunch co-hosted with the Brunswick Salvation Army Corp was attended by 120 people and enjoyed by all. The Salvation Army Band played accompanied by BUC singers before the meal and SROC offered a performance. Peter Murphy and his team of helpers served up a delicious meal and practical gifts were gratefully received. See the story in the [Advent & Christmas special edition](#), p 7



The Olive Way steering committee (OWSC) continues to provide oversight and support for the program, leaders and volunteers.

BUC Arts

We discussed the **mural project** for our storage sheds and will recommend that the Council underwrites the cost of this project with a FUNdraising event to hopefully raise the substantive amount required. The Olive Arts Collective has submitted a very exciting proposal '**Go paint the sheds**'. We will appoint a creative lead for the project to be supported by Ann Soo and Leanne Salau.



Saide and Ann will meet with Rachel Edward, Arts Access Co-ordinator to formalise arrangements for the revamped NDIS funded program to be run by **ArtStop** on Tuesdays during school terms and to develop a new Memorandum of Understanding.

Olive Arts Collective will be operating on Wednesdays throughout the year with any breaks to be agreed by the whole group. As a result to cuts to funding for other art groups the OAC has been welcoming previous participants of those groups giving our community the opportunity to much needed support for people who live with and experience many varied issues.



Saide continues to provide oversight of the shared use of the storage spaces available in the sheds, galley space and within the Youth Hall. The goal is to ensure that OAC, the ASWC and Artstop all have sufficient space to store the resources for their programs and thereby leave the Youth Hall itself uncluttered for all regular and occasional users. Wall space for displays have been allocated to the OAC, SMP & YUCY and ArtStop. Check out the displays from time to time whenever you are onsite.

Feeling Creative? We are looking forward to supporting members of the congregation to offer their creative gifts and skills through projects and workshops. See the '[Feeling Creative?](#)' post for details.



FUNdraising

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the **Act for Peace Christmas Bowl Appeal** during the Advent and Christmas seasons. A total of \$5,476.45 was raised comprising \$2,465.55 (FUNdraising) and \$3,010.90 (donations).



Wayne & Susan Matthews have offered to host a **BBQ & Pool party** event on **29th February**. Donations from this fabulous community event will be directed to the 'Go paint the sheds' mural project. [More details here.](#)



The Olive Art Collective is considering options for providing support to **Bush fire relief**. More details to come.

Our congregation will once again have the opportunity to support the **Lenten Appeal**. The preserves stall will be available as usual however we will be resting the bake & craft stall. The FUNdraising team will be seeking other opportunities for the congregation to support this appeal.



Later in the year the FUNdraising Team will offer '**one big event**'. Details will be discussed and shared when available. If you have any suggestions please contact Saide, saide.cameron@bigpond.com

Climate Action

The JAM committee affirms that *'Climate change is a justice issues for and with our neighbours'*. We have responded to the prompts provided by the Climate Action Group with our ideas including:

- developing a sister relationship with an island nation and/or country congregation
- offering a weekly vigil on the steps with artwork displayed in the Tower Room window
- offer a climate change theme with the World Wide Knit in Public Day
- add Richards letter to politicians to the Earth button; this has been done. [Check the button here](#) on our website



- create postcards that people can write on and send to politicians
- create bookmarks with a link to our Earth button on one side
- and slices of Ann's paintings on the other
- invite LMAW and ARCC to participate
- offer cold drinks and scones with jam & cream in the youth hall with the invitation to appreciate our murals and any other artworks we have available to display
- open the worship space for prayer and reflection - the worship committee will be responsible for this space and whatever happens there with respect to the season of Lent.

To make all this work we need many hands. See the [list of tasks here](#). If you can help in any way big or small please contact Saide Cameron, saide.cameron@bigpond.com

Saide Cameron

Sydney Rd. Street Party

Every year we join in the massive celebration of community on the **first Sunday in March, 1st March**. We seek out ways to invite the wider community into conversation with us. This year we agreed that offering a climate change theme was the more than obvious thing to do. To that end we will

- invite passersby to write responses to "What is one thing you can do in response to climate change?" and place them on the rainbow

Speaking Out against Coal

On **Saturday 7th December**, Jamie Thom participated in **The Counihan Gallery Speak Out – Language & Liberty** (as part of their 2019 Moreland Summer Show exhibition). His spoken word contribution was delivered on the speaker's plinth outside the Brunswick Town on Sydney Road to a small audience. It was based on his presentation 'As People of Faith' at the BUC "Let the earth speak" exhibition last October, and contained the two pieces he wrote while participating in blockading the Adani workers camp near the Carmichael mine site in central Queensland.

As a result of participating in multi-faith action Jamie was arrested and pleaded guilty online to trespass ([see court order here](#)). This resulted in a fine \$600 (plus an offender levy of \$125.80). He has paid these fines himself, but if you would like to support his action please donate to the Wangan and Jagalingou Traditional Owners, who are fighting to defend their lands from Adani <https://wanganjagalingou.com.au/donate/>



Jamie Thom



2040

If you missed seeing this movie when it was screened at our church last year, you can now catch up with it for free via Moreland Libraries movie streaming service Beamafilm. Go to <https://beamafilm.com/loginLib/moreland> and put in your Moreland Library barcode number then either create an account or, if you already have one, sign into your existing account.

Award-winning director Damon Gameau embarks on a journey to explore what the future would look like by the year 2040 if we simply embraced the best solutions already available to us to improve our planet and shifted them into the mainstream. Structured as a visual letter to his 4-year-old daughter, Damon blends traditional documentary footage with dramatised sequences and high-end visual effects to create a vision board for his daughter and our planet.

If you are not a Moreland Library member, click on the 'Choose another library' link to see if your local library offers this service

Christine Hornby



> Communication News

The Olive Harvest

The Olive Harvest is our fantastic collection of Annual Reports. It contains reports & stories that give full expression to our mission and ministry for the year.

The collection will be published on **Sunday 9th February** in time for the AGM on **Sunday 23rd February**. You will receive the Olive Harvest in the same format (email or printed) as you receive the Olive Branch (monthly newsletter). If you also want it in the alternate format please let me know saide.cameron@bigpond.com as soon as possible.

Thank you to everyone who contributed a report. Please do take the time to read them.

Name Tags

They are so wonderfully useful. Here's a few examples

- You can confidently say hello to someone using their name
- New people and visitors know, at least by name, who they are talking to
- Name tags promote a feeling of belonging

If you have one please wear it. If you want one please email or call Saide - saide.cameron@bigpond.com, 0407 096 743. Choose your colour - red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, pink. If you want to colour co-ordinate with more than one colour just ask!

Meet the Team

Brunswick Uniting Church has a Ministry Team of an ordained minister and pastors, and many other volunteer leaders who share their gifts on Church Council, committees and other groups.

Our [Meet the Team page](#) invites you to get to know these people, their roles and the various ways they are involved in the mission and ministry of the congregation. The commitments made evolve over time and in response to our engagement within the church and beyond.

Also see the photo board in the Gathering Space with thanks to Ken Morrison for the photos.

Website

A wealth of information awaits you on our website. Start at the home page, delve deeper into opportunities for getting involved, explore worship, growing in faith, community and social action.

Join the Members area to learn about our committee structure, read stories, find out how to get reimbursed for costs on the Finance page, find the person you are looking for on 'Who's Who'.

Offer to learn how to blog and post so that this creative task is shared. Allow your voice to be heard.

Questions - Contact Saide Cameron, Communications Coordinator, saide.cameron@bigpond.com

The Olive Pages

The Olive Pages (Directory) is the collection of contact details for all people within the congregation. It will be updated during February and will be published on **Sunday 15th March**.

If you have recently changed any of your details (address, phone numbers, emails) please let me know. Otherwise you can simply check the copies in the hall during Morning Tea to either update or add your information.

The Directory is made available to everyone in paper copy unless you indicate that you wish to receive it by email only or both.

Simply contact saide.cameron@bigpond.com to let me know what you prefer.

Newsletters

Our congregation has two newsletters:

- the weekly **Olive Press** - available in printed form on Sundays, on the website accessible from the [Home Page](#) and emailed on Thursdays via MailChimp. If you don't yet receive it please email: saide.cameron@bigpond.com
- the monthly Olive Branch - available in printed form at worship and emailed on the first or last Sunday of the month. It is also accessible from the Members area - Publications section: [Olive Branch](#)



Communications Tasks

There are lots of ways that people can and do contribute to the communications ministry

- preparing slides for worship
- preparing the printed Olive Leaf for worship
- website administration
- preparing the newsletters
- preparing nametags
- managing photo permissions
- posting stories and events
- and lots more

To find out more or to offer to learn and take on a task please email saide.cameron@bigpond.com

> Pastoral Care News

Community

The Community Team provides oversight of all the ways we gather as community noting that many of these gatherings are self-sufficient and require nothing more from our team than acknowledgement and celebration.

Stewart Lodge Carols

The Justice & Mission committee organized this annual event providing the opportunity for joyful singing followed by gift giving and sharing supper. See the [Advent & Christmas special edition](#) for the full story.

Pageant Dinner

This very important meal is provided for cast, crew, choir and musicians between rehearsal and the big event. Thank you to Indra Liepens and Nicole Lowe for the delicious fruit platters and to Nicole Lowe, Kirsty Bennett and Maggie Haines for their assistance in setting everything up for the meal.



Coming up ...

Looking towards the coming months there continues to be a variety of ways of gathering and opportunities for supporting events and just simply getting involved.

Bring a Plate to Share morning teas



On the **first Sunday of the month** we are invited to **bring a plate to share for morning tea**. This has the double advantage of taking the pressure of the shrinking

number of regular morning tea providers and giving everyone the opportunity to contribute to our shared call to offer hospitality. Have a think about what you might like to offer and deliver it to the hall before worship begins. If you have any questions please call Saide, 0407 096 743.

Ordination Afternoon Tea



Fiona Bottcher will be ordained to the Ministry of Deacon during a Presbytery led service on **Sunday 9th February**, see page 2 for the details.

Our congregation will provide afternoon tea. Please contact Leanne Salau, 0449 912 092 or Julie McKinnon, 0404 563 398 to offer to bring a plate of food or help with setting up, serving or cleaning up.

Working Bee & lunch



The Property Committee invites everyone to stay on after worship on **16th February** to help out with a general clean up of the property including inside and out together with gardening.

The Community Team will host a simple sausage sizzle. We welcome the offer of fresh fruit platters and someone to cook the sausages. Please contact Saide, 0407 096 743 if you can help.

Annual General Meeting & Lunch

Our **AGM** will be held after worship on **23rd February**. The main agenda items for the meeting will be to receive The Olive Harvest, our collection of Annual Reports, together with the presentation of the 2019 Financial Report and 2020 Budget.



After the meeting everyone is invited to stay on for a **'Bring a Plate to Share'** lunch. All contributions are welcome.

BBQ & Pool Party

Everyone is invited to join in the wonderful fun of partying at the home of Wayne & Susan, Jacqueline and Chantelle Matthews on **Saturday 29th February**.



This will be a FUNdraising event, see page 3 for details. Bring dessert or salad to share. [More details here.](#)

Sydney Rd. Street Party

The SRSP is a wonderful event that sees Sydney Rd. closed from Moreland Rd. to Brunswick Rd on the **first Sunday in March, 1st March**. The Justice & Mission committee organizes a program of activities that encourages the wider community to engage in conversation with us. This year our theme is responding to climate change and the climate crisis. See page 4 for more information or [on the website](#). Get involved!!



MS Cycle

The BUC Cycle group enjoys occasional rides around Melbourne. See Regular Events. This group 'came to be' as a result of the [MS Melbourne Cycle](#) event held annually in March. Riding under the banner of 'Hunter Clan' a group of riders of all ages rides to raise funds to support those who live with multiple sclerosis and their families. This year's ride is on **Sunday 22nd March**. You can join the team (there are currently only six members) or support the team by making a donation. [Visit their page](#) - you can make a team donation or support an individual rider. Help them achieve their goal to raise \$1,500.



Welcome lunches

Our first Welcoming Ceremony for the year will be held during worship on **29th March**. See page 2 for all the details.

We would love to be able to invite all those who are welcomed to a meal at someone's home. If you would like to offer to host a meal and be paired up with a newly welcomed person please



let Saide know, 0407 096 743.

Hosts will be encouraged to also invite other people to share lunch.

Good Friday Lunch

After worship on **Good Friday, 19th April**, we gather to spend time together enjoying home made hot cross buns and beautiful soups (thank you Ray and Alistair).

Everyone is welcome to the home of Adrian & Anita, 11 Hellers St. Brunswick from noon. BYO drinks and chairs.



Hospitality

The Hospitality team welcomes people who are new to the congregation and seeks to provide them pathways into the life of our congregation and community.

The work of the community team supports this ministry through oversight and support of the many ways in which we gather.

On 29th March there will be the first of our two Welcoming ceremonies. This is an opportunity for people who to share a little of their story and name the BUC congregation as their spiritual home. See page 2 & above for details of the Welcome meals.

If you are new or newish and wish to make yourself known to us or become more engaged with the activities and life at BUC, one of the Hospitality team would love to assist you - Ian Ferguson, Jane Allardice, Ray Cameron, Sheila Calwell, Graham Lawrence, Clare Keogh and Michael Rigby.

Ray Cameron

Compassion

We offer our love, prayers and support to **Julie Perrin and Andy Calder** following the death of Julie's mother Margaret (aged 94, 12/1). And also to **Meg Orton** following the death of her elder brother Richard, (aged 80, 29/1).

The Compassion team met with Ian after his return and were able to offer their support for his time away in Gippsland to support the Uniting Church in that area as it deals with the tragedy of the recent bushfires. He goes with our blessing. We look forward to working with whoever takes up the job to minister temporarily in the Pastoral Care Position.

Our usual work has continued and we invite anyone who would like prayers to contact either Glenice or Leanne. Glenice will be away for the first two weeks of February.

The Committee is aware that there will be many facing confronting situations both in the fire affected areas and locally. Please advise us if we can assist anyone in need.

Glenice Cook

> Culture of Safety Contact Person

If any member of the congregation – child or adult - has concerns about the safety of our children, particularly in relation to child sexual abuse, or the welfare of vulnerable adults, you may report this in confidence so that support can be provided. You may speak to Helen Rowe in confidence about your concern.

Helen is the Culture of Safety Contact Person appointed by Church Council. Brunswick Uniting Church has a process for following up any concerns raised. Please contact Helen in person or by telephone at 0423 009 813.



> Presbytery News

Jamie and Kate both attended the Presbytery in Council meeting on 30 November with the usual full agenda. Some items of interest included:

- Bruce Watson gave the chairperson's report including an anecdote about church life in modern times and the importance of communication... after a film crew hiring his congregation's buildings to film 'Bloom' totally freaked out the locals by leaving a prop coffin in the kitchen, resulting in morning tea getting cancelled
- John Evans brought forward new (or rather formalised) policies regarding the support and oversight of lay preachers, also noting, in relation to his recent car-jacking experience, that ministers are not qualified to determine if it is a fake gun
- The Administration, Property and Finance committee is working to make processes more streamlined for minor straightforward building matters
- Doug Whan presented the treasurer's report, thoroughly explaining the 2020 budget which is based on 6% of investment funds as at 30 June 2019 (a new budgeting strategy for the presbytery)
- Ian Pearse reported on various aspects of the Mission, Strategy and Education (MSE) committee's work. For example:
 - o Trang Vo had completed a project for the MSE collecting mission statements from each congregation and reported an overwhelming positive response from congregations to the Presbytery's interest in what they are doing
 - o Soon 6 people will have been trained to do intentional interim ministry projects
 - o Educational grants of up to \$500 are available for specific training
 - o Two new lay preachers were approved this year
 - o Ian commended the new Mental Health kit and mental health first aid training to us
 - o Our Presbytery strategy 'Regenerating the church' is recognised internationally (two people from NZ are coming in February to check it out).
 - o Reflections and questions raised by the Playdate café's closure (a presbytery mission initiative which has now concluded)
- Bruce Missen reported on progress towards the new mental health chaplaincy based at Sunshine UC and the hospital nearby; a support and reference committee has been appointed (including Ken Morrison from BUC) and a

"name" was expected to accept the call. (We now know the "name" was Fi Bottcher!)

- Rev Deacon Jeanne Beale (a Presbytery minister) mentioned Youth Connect, a roughly monthly service involving 6 groups of young people from Hoppers Crossing, Sunshine, Caroline Springs, St Albans, West Brunswick
- The Sacred Edge festival at Queenscliff was recommended to us. This annual Presbytery event will be held on May 1-3 2020 and features a strong indigenous presence, earth, climate, LGBTQI and refugee issues, and an art competition. Early bird tickets are available

Jamie and Kate also attended a special meeting of Presbytery held in October to call Rev Narelle Collas to the role of Presbytery Minister and Rev Linley Liersch to the role of Mission Development Strategist and eLM Liaison (eLM "equipping Leadership for Mission" is a unit of Synod that provides resources, education and engagement). These presbytery roles had been vacant for some time. Both Narelle and Linley accepted their calls and in January 2020 have joined the ministry team for the Presbytery working with Rev Deacon Jeanne Beale. Narelle and Linley will be formally inducted at the next Presbytery in Council meeting on 1 February 2020. Narelle was ordained in 2011 and comes to us from Western Australia; she has interests in spiritual direction, chaplaincy, discipleship development, and is a trained Lifeline counsellor. Linley was ordained in 2006, and has interests in supervision, mission strategy, and empowering lay people. She comes to us from the Horsham region.

Other Presbytery in Council meetings in 2020 are scheduled for 9 May, 25 July and 7 November. We will also both be busy participating in monthly Presbytery committee meetings. Kate continues on the Standing Committee where she has volunteered to help advertise upcoming events around the Presbytery by updating the PPW website and circulating a fortnightly email similar to the Olive Press to Congregational Secretaries, ministers etc (we'll see how long it takes to organise the digital access required!) Jamie was elected to the Mission Strategy and Education committee, attending his first meeting in January 2020 and beginning to learn about what the committee entails – he is keen for the presbytery to engage with climate action as part of its mission.

We are looking forward to the ordination of Fiona Bottcher as Deacon that will take place on **Sunday 9 February** at 2pm at Brunswick Uniting Church and her induction that will take place a week later at Sunshine Uniting Church at 2pm on **Sunday 16 February**.

Jamie Thom

> Children, Youth & Young Adult Ministry News

Hi there BUC folks,

Here's the CYYA news, starting with the youngest...

Olive pips / playgroup

A big thanks to Tonia Beggs for hosting a BBQ at her place, and in the large courtyard, after church on Sunday 9 February. Tonia has let many of you with pre-schoolers and infants know the details. If parents have any suggested improvements to the childrens' corner in the worship space, please let me know.

Sunday Morning Program (SMP)

During Advent, a number of SMP sessions were dedicated to contributing to the Advent tree installation in the worship space. About 15 of our regular SMP'ers were in the cast for the Christmas Eve Pageant, with rehearsals in December led by the sensational Director, Caitlin Mullen.

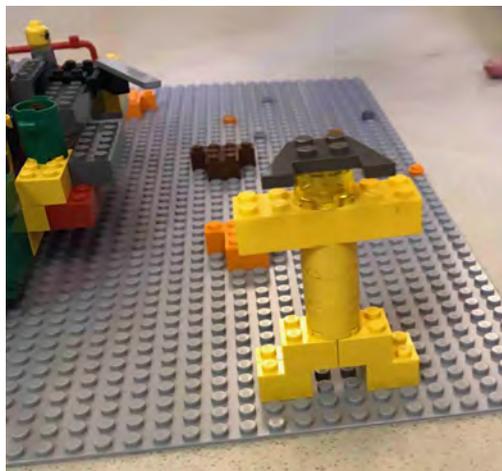
And the Pageant itself was a joy to be part of. A special [Advent and Christmas Olive Branch](#) has been compiled by Saide, and is well worth a read, including clicking on the link to the fabulous photos taken by Chris Magee.

Thanks to Saide and others for holding the fort with children's activities while I was on annual leave. January 26 saw our second Lego Masters challenge, depicting Jesus calling the fisher-folk in Matthew's gospel.

SMP resumes in all its glory on 9th February. The commissioning of all SMP leaders takes place on Sunday 23rd February.



Jesus futuristic fisherman



Jesus



Calling the fisher folk

Youth Group

We finished the year with an epic pool party at Adrian and Anita's place – with perfect weather and perfect ice-creams, courtesy of the Icicle Tricycle (for all your ice-cream needs).

We begin 2020 with another pool party, this time hosted by Susan, Wayne and Jacqueline Matthews on Sat 8 Feb from 5pm, including a BBQ. Venue: 5 McNab Way, Greenvale.

Contact Dave for a full Semester 1 program or [see it here](#).

Older Group

Ian has been hosting some great sessions exploring the Christian faith (with pizza). Following these sessions, a couple of people in the OG range (ie 16 to 23) will be going through the ceremony of Confirmation on Sunday 9th February.

We are hoping to run similar "exploring the Christian faith" sessions at the Student House in June – July for anyone in the OG age-group.



December Pool Party

Student House

In mid-late January, Hannah Friebel, Robert Sargeant and Sasha McGuigan have all moved in to the Student House. A few quick words of introduction:

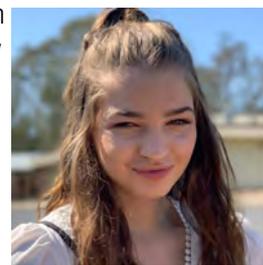
Hannah's great passions are psychology and dance movement therapy. She is also studying a couple of units of Theology at Whitley College. She also loves photography, art, music, and mental health advocacy. On her Christian faith, Hannah says: "I believe that my heart for justice is deeply connected to the heart of God, and that my expression of creativity is deeply woven in to my identity as a child of God."



Robert has just moved to Melbourne from Ardmona in the greater Shepparton region. He has been a member of the Mooroopna Uniting Church since he was three days old (apparently!), and has a passion for music – particularly guitar and piano. Robert is studying Audio Engineering at Collards here in Melbourne. He is a Queen Scout, and is the first student in my time to have hand-written his application.



Sasha is from Harrow, near Hamilton in the Western District of Victoria. Harrow has about 140 people, so moving to Melbourne will be quite a change for Sasha. Like Robert, she also has a passion for music, and like Robert she is studying a Bachelor of Audio Engineering at SAE. Sasha is looking forward to the music at BUC, and investing some of her time and energy in to our community.



We hope you all have a great year with us, and in your various studies. Coming up on Feb 15 and 16 is the Student House Retreat, generously hosted at the Anglesea beach house of Adrian, Anita, Dave K and Janet W-K.

Then on Sunday 23rd February we have the blessing of all the Student House residents for 2020.

Grace and peace,

Dave Hall

Pastor: Children, youth and young adults, 0417 310 128

davebhall1373@gmail.com

Climate of Hope - the video

The video is now [available here](#). Thank you to Adrian Brown for taking the footage and to Lydia Jacka who expertly edited all the pieces to create this wonderful record of our pageant.

The jokes simply don't get old. The actors are undeniably fabulous. Big Russ the Frog is absolutely classic. Watch it today and any time you need a good solid dose of hope - it is well worth setting aside the 35 minutes (congregational singing was for the most part not recorded) to watch it again or for the first time if you weren't able to be there on the night.

Thank you again to Caitlin for her inspired writing and directing. The kids love you and so do we.

Saide Cameron



For more on the pageant see the [Advent & Christmas Special Edition Olive Branch](#).

Chris Magee captured some wonderful moments.

Click here: <https://www.chrismagee.com.au/pageant2019>, and enter the password: climatewise to see all the pics.

(Chris can be hired for photography: 0401 164 877)

> Happy Birthday

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

February: Hamish Batch, Sarah Collard, Karin Coverdale, Ross Coverdale, Oliver Cumming, Betty Elleman, Samuel Hall, Flynn Masterton, Jesse Kruse, Nick Kruse, Helen Rowe, James Thom, George Tieman



> Regular Events

BUC Cycle

Join an enthusiastic group of cyclists after worship every 5-6 weeks and explore Melbourne's bike tracks. We head off after worship and cycle for about two hours and usually stop off for icecream and/or a drink along the way. Our next ride is the MS Cycle on **22nd March**. See Community News, p.

For more information contact Graham Lawrence, 0408 617 416.

Singing The Sacred Harp

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

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

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

Table Church

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

We are meeting on the **fourth Sunday of the month**.

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

Mulling

The Mulling Group (for 25-35ish aged people) meets (usually) on the **first Tuesday** of the month, 7-9pm. We share a meal and conversation. Contact Amelia Ware, 0428 143 800, for more information.

The Olive Way

Our congregation's outreach program is open on **Tuesday to Thursday** from 10 am - 1:30 pm.

- Meditation - Tuesday
- Writing Workshop - Tuesday
- Community Kitchen & Art programs - Wednesday
- SROC (drama group) - Thursday

New volunteers are always welcome.

Contact Peter Blair, ph. 0431 193 810.

Book Club at BUC

facilitated by Jeanette Acland

7.30 – 9 pm, **Wednesday 19th February 2019**

Youth Hall, Brunswick UC. We will continue our usual practice of meeting on the **4th Wednesday** from **March**.

To start the year, we will read the award-winning novel, Home fire (2017) by Kamila Shamsie.

The novel follows the Pasha family: twin siblings Aneeka and Parvaiz and their older sister Isma, who has raised them since the death of their mother; their jihadi father is also dead.

A suspenseful and fiercely compelling story of loyalties torn apart when love and politics collide.

Speak to Faye or Christine if you would like more information about book club. Faye: 9379 1317 faye.findlay18@gmail.com or Christine: 9386 8919 christine@hornby.id.au



Out and About Group

Out and About is a monthly social group for older, active women and men. We visit places of interest or meet up for lunch or coffee. New members always welcome. Our first meet-up for 2020 will be lunch at Marcella's restaurant in Brunswick on **Friday 21st February** at 12.30 pm.

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

Saturday Coffee

Join us at 2:30 pm on the **first Saturday** each month at a local café. Very informal and all women are most welcome. Contact Leanne Salau, 9386 1484

Olive Pesto

At Olive Pesto we 'Make, Learn, Laugh, Share'. Come along to the Youth Hall on the **second Saturday** of the month, 10am-noon. Contact Linda Wannan, 0405 470 568.

Food Co-op

Saturday 15th February, 10 am - 12 noon in the Olive Way.

Members of the congregation are invited join us in February to see how the Food Co-op operates and perhaps consider joining as a Member. Food Co-op's key values are reduction of unnecessary packaging of basic food items by purchasing in bulk and distributing to Members, and an aim to reduce food miles by obtaining locally produced foods.

Regular Members are asked to plan their shopping list and label containers before arriving at Distribution Day. Scales will be available on the day to pre-weigh containers. Further information from Helen 0423 009 813.

> Reports

Church Council

Our 2020 Clear Vision Team looks like this

A sincere welcome to new members of Church Council:

- Joel Hallinan;
- Jessica Kvensakul; and
- Maxine Loynd.

Thanks to those Elders who remain on Church Council for another year:

- Shawn Whelan, Interim Treasurer;
- Claire Foley, Secretary;
- Gwen Arnold;
- James Balsillie;
- Karlien Kok;
- Helen Rowe; and
- Amelia Ware.

There will be the announcement of our two Co-Chairs after the Leaders' Retreat in early February.

Church Council is supported by, and relies upon, the wisdom and ministry provided by:

- Ian Ferguson – our Minister of the Word since 2013;
- Dave Hall - Pastor to our Children and families, Youth and Young Adults (CYA);
- Peter Blair – Olive Way Pastor.

Church Council wishes to sincerely thank and acknowledge the incredible time, energy and knowledge of retiring members of our Council:

- Daniel Broadstock, Secretary – retired from Church Council;
- Linda Wannan, Treasurer – retired from Church Council; and
- Kimberly Fraser – retired from Church Council.

Daniel and Kim are travelling overseas, and we wish them safe travels. We are pleased to note that Linda remains within our Congregation, still active in her various other roles and in particular as a member of the Finance Committee, thanks be to God.

Church Council also wishes to thank and acknowledge Shawn Whelan who has retired as Chair of Church Council and continues now as interim Treasurer. Shawn has pro-actively engaged in succession planning for others to take on the role of Chair.

Visit the [Meet the Team](#) page for photos of your Elders. Also have a look at the Photoboard in the Gathering Space.

Supply Ministry

Most of you will, by now, know that the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania has asked Brunswick Uniting Church to support the Presbytery of East Gippsland by releasing Rev Ian Ferguson to provide three month's supply ministry in Bairnsdale.

We all know that East Gippsland has been hard hit by the fire disaster and the Uniting Church has very few experienced

ministers on the ground there. Currently, the only UCA ministers in placement east of Sale are an exit student in Orbost and the Frontier Services High Country Patrol Minister who has been stranded in Mallacoota. A number of congregations are vacant.

Church Council has approved the four recommendations below, by consensus:

Recommendations:

1. That we agree to release Ian for 3 months from early February
2. That Ian convene a "Supply Arrangements Team" including Ian (until he goes), one of the co-Chairs, and a small number of key people from the Ministry Team and other committees (Worship, D&E, PC), who could take a lead on planning our own supply arrangements and keep in touch during the period of supply
3. That this Supply Arrangements Team confirm the actual start date, once our own supply arrangements are in place or they are otherwise confident that the transition will be manageable
4. That members of the SA Team be delegated to inform all relevant people at Synod & in Gippsland, Church Council and committee chairs, and members of BUC

Bushfire Response – are you called?

Speaking from the point of view of BUC, Ian's absence will be a very big challenge for us all. It is a time to count our blessings and reach out, as we are able, to the people of East Gippsland.

Please prayerfully consider, and keep an eye out for any extra ways you may be able to assist over the next three months in and around our Church. There will be many gaps in various rosters. If you have felt helpless during the bushfire crisis here is a simple and practical way that you can assist survivors of climate crisis – by assisting right here in your own community.

Contact myself or Saide if you would like to take up this challenge.

New meeting date

Church Council will now be meeting on the first Wednesday of every month. This has changed from the long-standing tradition of meeting on the second Tuesday of the month.

Those dedicated Report Writers within our congregation will have already received an email from me about how this change affects your due date for Reports. Please contact me if you did not receive this email.

Merri Street Project

Church Council has approved a proposal by the Merri Project Steering Group to proceed with a Feasibility Study of two related options:

1. Firstly a study be commissioned to investigate the options and impacts of renovating and extending the cottage at 4 Merri St to accommodate a Ministry Centre (two offices, and flexible meeting/counselling rooms) together with Uniting's Asylum Seeker Project (two offices, a meeting room and food bank). The study should include investigation of options to connect the cottage to the existing ministry office & youth hall building, reuse of the existing ministry office, possible co location of the Food Co-op with the Food bank and/or a space for the Sunday Morning Program.
2. Secondly, a study to consider demolishing and rebuilding (or else extending) the Youth Hall in addition to renovating the cottage.

I look forward to bringing readers of the Olive Branch up to date with our monthly article.

And for myself

- I would like to personally acknowledge the privilege it is to be a member of BUC Church Council.
- It is a great blessing to be able to be involved in the workings of a Church congregation and extended community.
- Not all churches operate within this type of framework. Not all churches are willing to share the power.
- I love the way BUC seeks to hold true to our mission and our goals. Church Council strives to reflect on our goals as an on-going process – holding true to our call.

Claire Foley, Secretary, Church Council 2020, 23 January 2020
foleyclairep@icloud.com

Property Committee

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

- The work on the operable wall in the hall is complete.
- Large toilet paper dispensers have been installed in all of the toilets
- The Hall spire has been cleaned out, the bell made operable, spikes installed to prevent pigeons roosting on the ledge and a ladder has been purchased and installed in the spire for safe access to the higher levels.
- A role description for the Garden portfolio has been created and the committee is seeking someone for the volunteer role.
- The lawn mower has been serviced.
- The defibrillator has been registered on the Ambulance web site. Awaiting validation from Ambulance Vic.
- Pest controllers attended to the student house due to carpet moths.
- Carpet replacement has been undertaken at the student house, due to carpet moth damage.
- Working bee has been announced for Sun 16th Feb, to held in conjunction with a luncheon.
- Rubbish bins are now located on the south side of the hall, to minimise non church usage.

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

- The emergency lighting in the church requires replacement due to failing the run-down test.
- Laurie to investigate the requirements to repair, 1) stone capping on west wall, 2) lintel over west door entrance in the welcome space and 3) key stone repairs/replacement in a window in the chapel space.
- Hatch above the east doorway between the church and the Olive Way to be finalised. Latches have been purchased, to be installed.
- Student House painting quotes being obtained
- Replace the faulty water tank pump in the south water tank.
- Finalise the repairs of the damage after the break-in, modifications to the hall door lock which isn't working.
- Oversight the installation of a 3-phase power outlet for the Orange Sky mobile laundry service.
- Prepare a project plan for the Climate Action requirements for the church's properties to be carbon neutral and then positive.
- Review the Synod's OH&S document and prepare a plan to align to their requirements. This includes the preparation of an annual Emergency Services Measures report. We are trying to participate in the Synod pilot for this activity.
- Preparing a planned maintenance list of 2020.
- Organise to have property maintenance reports prepared as preparation of the immediate and longer-term maintenance of the church's properties.
- Attend to the damaged church laptop that is used for the slide presentation on a Sunday morning.
- Attend to the damaged sound system which is currently has a number of issues, buzzing in the fold back, mixer controllers not operating correctly, wiring causing noises, etc.
- Organise the steam cleaning of rooms in the student house.

Ray Cameron

Worship Committee

We enjoyed an al fresco BBQ hosted by Ray & Saide Cameron for our January meeting. For our opening worship Saide invited us to reflect on personal joys and challenges from 2019 and looking forward to 2020. We noted our joys – travel (New York, Mount Martha, England), choir (Natalie's and BUC), grandchildren and challenges – work place, family, life balance.

We did not meet in December and so enjoyed reflecting on all the worship services since mid-November. We noted the following (and also see the [Advent & Christmas Olive Branch](#))...

- the power of the Service of Solidarity (24/11) hearing from people within our congregation who identify with the LGBTQI community and noted our thanks to Claire Foley and Jenne Perlstein for their early work that contributed to this service happening. We hope to do something similar in the future
- the Advent tree was an amazing installation - our thanks to Amelia Ware, the Olive Pesto & SMP communities
- it was good to have families offering the Advent litany written by Saide
- we appreciated Shawn's song 'Come we pray' and wondered about the potential for its use in the future by changing the words according to the theme
- the Christmas Bowl stories were important to share but would have been enhanced with the visuals provided in the resources, it simply got missed this time round
- the focus on the Advent themes of hope, peace, joy and love together with the prophecies from Isaiah was strong and effective
- we appreciated the content, depth and teaching of Ian's sermons each week, great to learn about Hebrew poetry
- we loved the Advent choir - thank you to Elaine and everyone who participated, what a glorious gift.
- we loved celebrating Arvin's baptism (22/12) and were sad to farewell Daniel Broadstock (also 22/12).
- we loved having the church bell rung and hope for this to become a regular event, ie each Sunday!!
- the pageant was very well attended, about 300 people; our thanks to Caitlin Mullen-Beagley for so generously offering her time and creativity in this very special way
- the Christmas services were all beautiful, celebrating the gifts and message of Christmas through pageant, reflection, sermon and story and all in a way that offered something different for people who attended all services.

We reviewed our draft goals for 2020 and have agreed on the following goals which are also posted on the [Worship page](#) on the website:

1. Offer worship every Sunday, for liturgical festivals and in response to the world
2. Nurture new liturgists and prayer leaders
3. Include, interact and engage with our young people in worship
4. Explore age specific services through the year
5. Offer multi sensory experiences during worship
6. Ensure that diverse voices and representations are heard and seen in worship

7. Explore daily practices of faith

We reviewed the list of preachers that we invite when Ian is away or on leave and have added a number of names to the regulars we know and love.

We concluded our meeting reflecting on the joys and challenges for BUC from 2019 and into 2020. We noted our joys – Service of Solidarity, Season of Creation, Advent, Nilli's wedding, seeing the kids come down each Sunday and challenges – expressions of diversity, opportunities to hear each other's stories, connecting with the local indigenous community

The worship resources side of the Deaconess storeroom has been tidied by Ray & Saide Cameron, Helen & Mal Rowe. Dave Hall tidied the CYA side before going on leave. We are hopeful that the spaces can be maintained in a safe and uncluttered way. Natalie Sims has similarly tidied up our music folders.

The lectern has finally been shortened. Many thanks to Ian and Amelia who after much consultation and deliberation agreed that shortening it by 10cm would be sufficient. Clancy Moore of Quailwood Designs took the lectern away on 6th January and returned it on 18th January. Who knew that 10cm would make such a difference!!!! It feels good.

We are grateful to Clancy for his respectful work with the lectern and highly recommend him for any project with wood. Visit his website here: <https://www.quailwooddesigns.com>. And just a note that Clancy is Annie Quail's son and grew up in our congregation



Since our meeting we have appreciated the sermons offered by

- Valentina Satvedi-Leydon (5/1)
- Geoff Thompson (12/1)
- Graeme Garrett (19/1)

On **19th January** we farewell Tim Hoffmann who is moving to Thailand and Michelle, Fernando & Thomas Torres who have moved to Brisbane. See page 3.

Our Lent planning meeting will be held on **Thursday 6th February** in the Youth Hall from 6:30 with a light meal. This will be an open meeting and an invitation has been offered for people to participate. See the [event post here](#). A meet to plan for Holy Week will be organized in the near future.

See the worship calendar, page 2 for details of upcoming services.

Finally we recognize the impact of Ian's call to short term supply ministry on the worshipping congregation and will be working closely with and supporting Valentina and any others who participate in worship supply ministry in our congregation.

Saide Cameron

12th January, [Baptism of Jesus](#), [Matthew 3:13-17](#), [Acts 10:34-43](#) Saide invited the children to come and listen as Meredith read the story of Jesus' baptism from Matthew's gospel. Afterwards we sorted out where Jesus was baptized and then went up to the Gathering Space to talk about baptism in our church and in particular Artin's baptism on 22nd December. We also noted that Harry and Bruce Heathcote were with us and that they were the first children to be baptized in the font way back on Easter Day 2013. We wondered about the questions asked at baptisms and the responses parents and the congregation are asked to make. Saide affirmed that through baptism we are called to follow Jesus to work for justice and peace.



Geoff Thompson, a member of our congregation and Co-ordinator of Studies – Systematic Theology at the Centre for Theology & Ministry offer the sermon '[Recalling Jesus' baptism. Living out ours](#)' Commenting on the promises we make in a baptism service he invited us to *'hold the idea of "living out" our baptism until I return to it towards the end of the sermon'*. Geoff reminded us that all four gospels tell the story of Jesus' baptism while only two include stories of his birth. He went on to share some of the complex issues surrounding Jesus' baptism saying that *'New Testament scholars tell us that this language (in Matthew's gospel) is carefully chosen language. The declaration from heaven is not only a revelation of Jesus' identity, it is also his commissioning by God to fulfil his messianic vocation.'*



Geoff spoke further on the similarities and differences between Jesus' baptism and ours - *'The similarity is that both Jesus' baptism and ours is that both are a setting apart for a vocation. The difference is that Jesus' baptism was a baptism into the Jewish hope of God' coming reign announced by John. Our baptism is baptism into Jesus Christ, into his life, death and resurrection.'* He reminded us that *'Every baptism is not just about the person being baptised. It's also about the community into which the person is being baptised.'* Geoff shared three examples of how Christianity is perceived noting that *'some of the most vocal and most public forms of Christianity (and not only in Australia) are producing impressions of Christianity that have broken the connection between Jesus' living out his baptism and the church living out its baptism.'*

Geoff concluded *'To live out our baptism as a loving community of Christ is a calling to make Christ known through the community that we are. Christ who is fundamentally love and grace, who in infinite compassion forgives even us, who in boldness for God's rule speaks truth to power. That is how Jesus lived out his baptism. It is what we are baptised into, the baptism that we promise to live out. God help us to do so. Amen.'*

19th January, [Epiphany 2](#), [John 1:29-42](#), [Isaiah 49:1-7](#) Again Saide invited the children to come and listen to the Gospel reading. We noticed that this story also commented on Jesus' baptism. We wondered what it might feel like to have a dove descending and resting on us. Then we talked about Jesus invitation to John the Baptist's disciples to come and see and Saide commented that every time we come to church or any sort of church activity or any time we open our eyes to God at work in our world we are responding to the invitation to 'come and see'.



Graeme Garrett, a member of our congregation, retired Anglican minister and author with a passion for the environment offered the sermon [Epiphany Witness](#). Beginning his sermon he said *'Christmas announces the coming of Christ. Epiphany asks, what does that mean? Our Gospel reading this morning is a first shot at an answer, with John the Baptist as the interpreter.'* He spoke also of the *'traumatic and tumultuous opening to the New Year it has been in Australia'*, of the loss experienced and courage shown in this and asked *'Epiphany, the meaning of Christmas. Mallacoota, the meaning of fire. How do we get these two realities into this one room, much less into this one heart?'* He spoke of our call to be Epiphany witnesses. He commented on the stories of John the Baptist and Jesus as those lived and died to be a *'light that shines in the darkness'* and of Isaiah's call to be a prophet noting that *'It's not straightforward, this business of being an Epiphany witness, even if you have the talent and vocation of an Isaiah.'* He spoke of how inadequate we feel in the call to make Epiphany witness and stated *'But what the Gospel story sets before us this morning is that God, which means grace, mercy and love, is present in our world, and that we are called to align ourselves with these realities wherever we can, and in whatever circumstances we are placed in.'*



Graeme concluded commenting that being an Epiphany witness means two things for us - that we need stand up for the uncomfortable truth that the catastrophe we are experiencing is a result of decisions that western economies have been making and that *'we are called to enact as best we can what we know of the grace, mercy and love of God in the situation we are in'*. He shared examples of the witness being shown in the current disaster and said *'Isn't that to see what grace means in a broken world? And isn't that quality of grace and love and self-giving what our world, what Australia, needs urgently in these times? Mallacoota and Epiphany do belong together. Hard, sure. Confusing, yes. But possible and real. The next day he (JB) saw Jesus coming towards him. Tomorrow can we see Jesus coming towards us?'*

26th January, Epiphany 3, Matthew 4:12-23, Psalm 27:1, 4, 13-14 Returning from holidays Ian and Dave invited the children to come and sit in the (cushion) boat surrounded by gloriously coloured fish. They retold the story of Jesus calling the fisher folk to 'Follow me'. We sang 'Sing hey for the carpenter' with actions.

The liturgy for our service was shaped by the 'Day of Mourning' resources offered by the UCA Assembly and UAICC in the lead up to and for Australia Day/Invasion Day. The prayer of confession offered Offered to the settler churches by Garry Deverell a trawloolway man and Anglican priest from trouwerner (Tasmania, Australia).

Ian's sermon [Reflections on the call of Christ](#), invited us to reflect on Christ's call on our lives in the context of his call to supply ministry in East Gippsland. The Meditation, page 1, is based on the content Ian's sermon. In addition he commented that *Christ's ministry in the world is about unity the unity of all things in love and peace, unity with God, unity within creation* and reminded us of the divisions in our world as we observe Australia Day. On Sunday he concluded with this invitation to us 'Sisters and brothers, siblings in Christ, listen for Jesus is calling you today and he simply says 'Follow me'.



Saide Cameron

> Preaching Plan

February 2	Ian Ferguson Holy Communion	February 26	Valentina Satvedi, 7:30pm Ash Wednesday	March 22	Valentina Satvedi Lent 4, Welcoming Ceremony
February 9	Ian Ferguson SMP Blessing, Confirmation Elders Commissioning	March 1	Valentina Satvedi Holy Communion, Lent 1	March 29	Valentina Satvedi Lent 5
February 16	Valentina Satvedi	March 8	Valentina Satvedi Lent 2	April 5	Valentina Satvedi Holy Communion, Palm Sunday
February 23	Valentina Satvedi Transfiguration	March 15	Valentina Satvedi Lent 3	April 9	Valentina Satvedi, 7:30pm Maundy Thursday

> Lectionary

After Epiphany

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

Date	Day	First Reading	Psalm	Second Reading	Gospel	C
2/2	Epiphany 4	Mic 6:1-8	Ps 15	1 Cor 1:18-31	Mt 5:1-12	G
9/2	Epiphany 5	Is 58:1-9a (9b-12)	Ps 112:1-9(10)	1 Cor 2:1-12(13-16)	Mt 5:13-20	G
16/2	Epiphany 6	Duet 30:15-20	Ps 119:1-8	1 Cor 3:1-9	Mt 5:21-37	G
26/2	Transfiguration	Ex 24:12-18	Ps 2 or 99	2 Pt 1:16-21	Mt 17:1-9	G

Lent

A season of preparation and discipline that begins with Ash Wednesday and concludes at sundown on Holy Saturday. During the forty weekdays and six Sundays in Lent, the Church remembers the life and ministry of Jesus and renews its commitment to him in Christian discipleship.

Date	Day	First Reading	Psalm	Second Reading	Gospel	C
26/2	Ash Wednesday	Jl 2:1-2, 12-17 or Is 58:1-12	Ps 51:1-7	2 Cor 5:20b-6:10	Mt 6:1-6,16-21	P
1/3	Lent 1	Gn 2:15-17, 3:1-7	Ps 32	Rom 5:12-19	Mt 4:1-11	P
8/3	Lent 2	Gn 12:1-4a	Ps 121	Rom 4:1-5, 13-17	Jn 3:1-17	P
15/3	Lent 3	Ex 17:1-7	Ps 95	Rom 5:1-11	Jn 4:5-42	P
22/3	Lent 4	1 Sm 16:1-13	Ps 23	Eph 5:8-14	Jn 9:1-41	P
25/3	Annunciation	Is 7:10-14	Ps 45 or 40:5-10	Heb 10:4-10	Lk 1:26-38	W
29/3	Lent 5	Ez 37:1-14	Ps 130	Rom 8:6-11	Jn 11:1-45	P

February Diary

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
February 2 9:30 – Ian Ferguson HC 4:00 – Sacred Harp 5:00 – Indonesian W’p	3	4	5	6	7	8
		10:00 – Olive Way 11:00 – Meditation	10:00 – Olive Way 10:00 – Olive Arts 12:00 – Community Lunch 7:30 – Church Council	10:00 – Olive Way 6:30 – Lent Planning		10:00 – Olive Pesto
9:30 – Ian Ferguson SMP Blessing Elders Commissioning Confirmation 2:00 – Ordination 5:00 – Indonesian W’p	9	10	11	12	13	14
		10:00 – Olive Way 11:00 – Meditation	10:00 – Olive Way 10:00 – Olive Arts 12:00 – Community Lunch	10:00 – Olive Way		10:00 – Food Co-op
9:30 – Supply 5:00 – Indonesian W’p	16	17	18	19	20	21
		10:00 – Olive Way 11:00 – Meditation	10:00 – Olive Way 10:00 – Olive Arts 12:00 – Community Lunch 7:30 – Worship C’tee	10:00 – Olive Way 6:45 – JAM C’tee		
Transfiguration 23 9:30 – Supply Student House Blessing 11:00 – AGM 11:45 – Lunch 5:00 – Indonesian W’p	24	25	Ash Wednesday 26	27	28	29
		10:00 – Olive Way 11:00 – Meditation 7:30 – Property C’tee	10:00 – Olive Way 10:00 – Olive Arts 12:00 – Community Lunch 7:30 – Ash Wednesday	10:00 – Olive Way		4:00 – BBQ & Pool Party
Lent 1 March 1 9:30 – Supply HC 12:00 – SRSP 4:00 – Sacred Harp 5:00 – Indonesian W’p	2	3	4	5	6	7
		10:00 – Olive Way 11:00 – Meditation	10:00 – Olive Way 10:00 – Olive Arts 12:00 – Community Lunch	10:00 – Olive Way		2:30 – Coffee