



# Kairos



## News in and around Camberwell Uniting Church

Volume 9 Number 1

May 2016

### Minister's Musings



Warm Greetings,

As I write this little piece, in the background for me is an intoxicating mix of preparations for study leave, international travel and a visit to our son in Germany. These matters, looking forward, as well as the ongoing work of finances and leadership in the Synod and some wonderful events and enriching community happenings are all taking place at the moment.

In his poem, Ageing, Chris Darlington writes:

'Old age is like some frightening monster  
You try to run away from.  
But find your shoes are heavy  
As lead weighted diving boots.  
So your every move is suddenly in slow motion.

Then you realise in your head you're still young  
So what was all the fuss about old age?  
It's supposed to bring you wisdom?  
So give it time for all the comforts of knowledge  
To wrap you up in its knowing blanket.'

On April 10<sup>th</sup> we had the joy of celebrating and making a little fuss of some of our older, wiser members.



Our group of over 90's may be a little slower in their steps, but their stories, wisdom, memories and the warmth of connection bring so much to our fellowship. In the sharing of these times, we are wrapped up together in the 'knowing blanket' of God's wisdom.

Thanks to all who helped with organizing food and transport to bring us together.

Anzac Day will see Margery and I off for 4 weeks. I'll be on study leave and also some annual leave, as we will spend some time in Frankfurt on our way to Iona and then on to London for the first international Messy Church conference.

Iona is known to many in the church as a place that produces so many creative resources for worship. Some may know that the abbey there has roots that go back to Columba in 563 AD. A place of inspiration still, Iona is seen as the launching place for Scottish Christianity and is the resting place of some of the Scottish kings.

We will be resting in a small B&B, but also hope to connect with the community there and find a little inspiration and renewal as we go.

The Messy Church leg of this trip has a much newer story. It's just over 10 years old and from a beginning in the UK under Bible Reading Fellowship, there are now over 3,000 Messy Churches worldwide and it's growing at the rate of over 40 per month. I think we can safely say that there is something of a movement of God's Spirit

at work in this. In Australia we had two in 2011 and now have about 200. They operate in a range of parent churches and we have the most in Victoria (65) and within the UCA (Aust 77). Our Camberwell Messy Church is in its 5<sup>th</sup> year and is growing. After the conference in Hoddesdon (May 16 – 18), we spend time in Hampshire with Lucy Moore, the founder, doing some training. We'll be back May 26<sup>th</sup> with more to share.

Grace and peace.

**Rev'd Ian Brown**  
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### **From the Editor....**

Hello,

Welcome to the first edition of Kairos for 2016. What happened to the festive season, summer, and my new year's resolutions? Here we already past Easter, and the football season has started as well!

Included in this issue is an item that involved consideration and co-operation of all Christian churches. It is a small issue that looks like being agreed among all churches, but hopefully perhaps it is an encouraging sign of at least a tentative step to come together on some issues – to quote Australian singer/songwriter Paul Kelly, 'from little things, big things grow'.

But the journey is long, as, over Christmas I had cause to attend a funeral for a former work colleague who adhered to an older European orthodox-leaning church. The language, content and focus was light years away from where I was, and I found myself reciting the concluding parts of prayers on my own, as the aspects of resurrection and redemption were just omitted. I guess I will just have to be happy with small miracles.

Moving on however, it would be remiss of me not to make mention of the superb Easter program put together by our Minister, highlighted in the main by the services on the two principal days – the solemnity and sadness of the death of Jesus on the cross, and the subsequent celebration when he rose from the dead. Both services were quite moving and engaging, the respective Reflections among the best I have heard, and the singing of the choir was just sublime. I hope you were there to witness and be similarly impressed.

I contrast this with the impact of the increasingly secular nature within traditional Christian societies and the decline in even a basic understanding of Christian theology, which is perhaps illustrated best by a story, which always

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makes me simultaneously smile and wince, by well-known travel writer Bill Bryson, telling of when he went into a jeweller's shop in a town in northern Britain.

The customer ahead of him was there to buy a crucifix. He asked the shop assistant for a cross on a chain. The assistant went out the back to check. When she returned, it was with a question: "Would sir like it plain, or the one with the little man on it?"

Ignorance can be bliss for some, I guess. And as I said earlier, ahead is a long and winding road.

I hope you enjoy this edition of Kairos.

**SE**  
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### **The date of Easter**

It was reported (*by Nick Miller in "The Age" 17 January*) that the Archbishop of Canterbury (the Most Reverend Justin Welby) had revealed that the heads of the Christian churches are close to sealing a deal to fix the date of Easter, ending more than 1,000 years of confusion and debate.

The agreed date would most likely be the second or third Sunday in April.

The change was expected to be formally made within the next five to ten years, although it was admitted that churches had been trying to agree on a date since the 10<sup>th</sup> century.

Archbishop Welby, Pope Francis, Coptic Orthodox Pope Tawadros and the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew 1 (head of the Greek Orthodox Church) are all working towards a common date.

If they can reach a deal, it will end one of the most noticeable rifts in the church, and have flow-on effects for schools, businesses and the travel industry across the Western world.

For one and a half millennia, for Anglicans and Catholics, Easter Sunday has been the first Sunday after the first full moon following the spring equinox – a convoluted formula which means that the date can vary by more than a month from year to year (e.g. In 2016 Easter Sunday fell on March 27. Last year it was April 5, next year it will be April 16).

At the same time, the Eastern Orthodox Church Easter uses the old Julian calendar, meaning that this year, Orthodox Easter Sunday falls on May 1.

In May last year, Coptic Orthodox Pope Tawadros 11 wrote to the papal nuncio, Egypt,

proposing a common date for Easter. Mr Welby also discussed the idea with Pope Tawadros recently in Cairo.

In June last year, Pope Francis also signalled his desire to set common dates for Easter. To a global gathering of priests in Rome he joked that Christians could say to one another "When did Christ rise from the dead? My Christ rose today, and yours will rise next week."

Mr Welby said it looks like a promising chance of unifying and fixing the date on which Easter is celebrated by the global Church. "At the moment most of us spend this part of the year saying 'now when is Easter this year'....., and Pope Tawadros has put forward the idea to the Eastern and Western Churches that it be fixed somewhere around the second or third Sunday of April. We have agreed to support that."

The Anglican Church has warned the UK Government that agreement was "coming up". It said that it expected the change in five to ten years' time, not the least because people have printed their calendars that far ahead. And school holidays etc are all fixed and it would affect many other things.

Mr Welby said he would like to see the change made before he retired. "Equally, since the first attempt to do this was in the tenth century, it still might take a little while."

Once the churches agree, governments, including Australia will have to pass or amend legislation in order to put it into effect.

*(I think this is a great step forward for Christian churches, I wonder they can get it over the line after all this time! Ed)*

**A Pleasant Sunday lunch – 10 April 2016**

On 10 April, following discussion at Church Council, it was decided to hold a lunch after the Sunday service to celebrate the contribution of several of our most senior (i.e. over 90 years old) members of our congregation. Our guests of honour were:

**Dorothy Docking**

(our Centenarian) came to Camberwell in 1964 with her husband Frank. When I first came to Camberwell you would be greeted by Katie Derrick outside the front door and Frank would be sitting on the seat inside the door doing the same - greeting all who came. Dorothy was

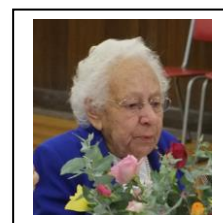


always around greeting, offering hospitality and participating in whatever was going on, particularly in the Women's Guild and Flower Roster.

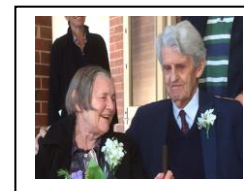
**Hedley Hatch** came to Camberwell with his wife Joyce in the 1960's. Hedley has always been a voice in any discussion in the Congregation. Hedley has made a tremendous contribution in many ways some obvious - and others not so. He was our Treasurer for many, many years – and also was on the Property Committee and Church Council. Hedley was also active on working bees, official or unofficial, when he and Ray Ham would come to do some gardening or patch up the plaster in the South Hawthorn Hall before it was painted - a job needed to be done and so often Hedley helped get the job completed.



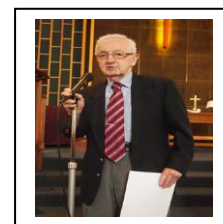
**Marj Wain** came to Camberwell Uniting Church at Union as a member of the Camberwell Congregational Church. Marj was a participant in all that was happening with her cheerful nature and friendly smile. Marj is the last surviving member of the Camberwell Congregational Church.



**Jack and Elaine Clarke** have been at Camberwell for many years - Elaine since she was 14. For a while when Jack was working at Queens College they were absent, but since retirement we have appreciated Jack's contribution to the life of this congregation through the choir with his wonderful voice, contributing thoughtfully to discussion groups, participating in the working bees and so on. Jack has a phenomenal memory for names and events and is a great source of knowledge and information about many in the church (he also contributed significantly to the writing of the history of Camberwell Uniting Church). Whilst not yet 90, it was a pleasure to have Elaine back at the Church, particularly after her many years leading the choir.



**Laurie Turner** has come to Camberwell later in his retirement and it is a pleasure to have him here. While during his ministry he was not directly connected to Camberwell, we have benefited from his involvement in various committees of the church and from when he was President of the



Methodist Conference and Moderator of the Victorian Synod of the UCA.

While it was not possible for various reasons for most of these special people to attend worship on the day, we do miss them and keep them in our thoughts, and thank them for the contribution they have made in continuing the hospitable nature and great fellowship that exists today here at Camberwell Uniting Church - it makes belonging a blessing for those of us who have come along later.

**Ruth Crawley**  
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## **Padre Gault update**

### **The story so far...**

The December 2015 edition of Kairos featured an article on Padre John Gault, whose service to the Church as a Minister and as a military Chaplain in the First World War is commemorated in a stained glass window at our Church.

Histories of the other windows may be forthcoming, however the Padre was featured as a consequence of the Church Office receiving an enquiry from his great granddaughter Louisa Gibbs, who is currently living and working in Senegal, Africa.

The article on the Padre resonated with many people in our church community, including:

\* **Wendy McLean**, whose niece and her husband, who are both doctors, are currently working on a cure for AIDS for children. The couple currently work in neighbouring Gambia, however their work takes them to Senegal from time to time, where they catch up with and attend the same church as Louisa and her family;

\* **Ruth Akie**, whose family has a copy of the Padre's Stunt Book;

\* **Margaret Watters**, whose friend attended MLC with Louise Joy, the Padre's great niece, who mentioned him in Crosslight in 2015; and

\* **Jack Clarke**, who credits John Gault's brother Ted (a doctor who practiced in India for a long time), for fostering his interest and encouraging him to utilise his musical talent in a Christian context (and how much richer are we for his taking this advice).

Readers might recall that Louisa indicated that she and her family hoped they might be able to visit and attend a church service over Christmas. This did not happen, and as events transpired, we had no contact with Louisa from September

2015 until an email finally came through on 28 January 2016.

## **A Christmas No-Show**

In this email, Louisa said that she and her family had had a busy time in Senegal and hadn't had a chance to respond to my September email. She said they did come to Australia at Christmas time, but were based at Yea. Her father-in-law had passed away and they needed to dedicate some time to his affairs whilst they were in the country, so unfortunately they didn't get the chance to set aside time to come and visit the window. "Next trip!" she said. "We would be keen to tie the visit in with a regular Sunday service when we do come".

In replying to her email, I indicated that we would all be pleased to know that they were all safe and well, that Camberwell Uniting was very sorry to hear about the death of her father-in-law. It also occurred to me that I had not sent a copy of the final article on her great grandfather to Louisa and her family, so I did so.

## **Good news and another coincidence**

Louisa responded almost immediately, very pleased with the article, and the extra information that had been unearthed about her great grandfather which her family did not know - the baptismal font and order of service were special treats in particular. And they now knew the Padre's connection with Camberwell.

Louisa also indicated that she was forwarding the article to her family, who will be "really interested". She also confirmed that Louise Joy is her mother's second cousin and they keep in touch. She was sure she would be interested in the article too - "Thank you - this is very special family information for us".

Louisa then expressed her appreciation for the kind words about her father-in-law. She went on to say: "Some of the congregation may know him - Robert Catford, who was a Uniting Church Minister all his life. (I actually think someone from your congregation may have been at his funeral.)" What a small world we live in!! - Bob Catford was indeed a Minister at our Church for some time in 2008 and was known and respected by us all!

And in yet another co-incidence, when it was revealed that Louisa's father-in-law was Bob Catford, Ruth Akie's sister Fran said that she knew him not only as our Minister, but that he lived in the same residential village as she did. The connections have kept on coming.

## Sarah Wilson

Louisa and I touched on one other subject during our correspondence – Sarah Wilson.

In researching for my original article, I found a reference to a blog (a discussion or informational site published on the internet) by a person called Sarah Wilson, and wondered whether Louisa had seen the reference as well. As I received no reply to my query before publication of the December Kairos, I was reluctant to mention her, and eventually, as it was not central to the article, I erred on the side of caution and made no mention of it.

According to Wikipedia, Sarah Wilson is an Australian journalist, television presenter, blogger, media consultant and author of the best-selling 'I Quit Sugar' book. She was the editor of Australian Cosmopolitan magazine for four years until 2008, and the host of the first season of the cooking show, 'MasterChef Australia' in 2009. She is now the face and program developer for Foxtel's Lifestyle You channel.

Wilson has been the ambassador for Ride To Work, Dalai Lama Australia, Street Smart, Welcome to Australia, The Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation, and is a patron of Febfast. She frequently makes guest appearances on the Seven Network's Sunday Night, The Morning Show and Sunrise and The Ten Network's The Project. She currently lives in Sydney.

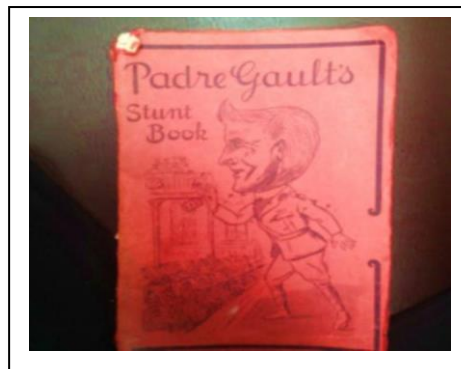
### Beautiful Brave Men

On 16 July 2014, Sarah Wilson posted an item on her website entitled: Beautiful Brave Men. She wrote:

A little tale. One day, a few months back, I found myself in Somerset, killing time after a three-day hike across moors and dells of England. I visited an antique fair where ladies with purple hair sold things that smelled of mothballs and the shoppers looked like a crowd from Antiques Roadshow. It was perfectly quaint.

I just chatted a bit. A lady heard my accent and said, "I've saved this for you." She grabbed my arm and dragged me to her pile of plastic boxes behind her stall of war memorabilia. "I promised I'd offer this to the next Australian I meet," she said handing me this tatty little book...

Sarah wrote on: Padre Gault was an Australian Methodist minister who wandered the trenches in World War I providing guidance and solace.



His Stunt Book was a collection of wisdoms and witticisms geared at providing solace to soldiers. I accepted the book, and paid her a few pounds for it and have been reflecting on it, sharing it with friends, since.

Her friends, having read quotes from the book, were universally moved by the soldier's and the Padre's insights. Their responses included:

\*That lady was waiting for you Sarah! If you hadn't arrived, she would have kept coming back till you arrived.

\*Would it be possible to share the contents of this book more broadly? i.e. track down the family of the author and ask permission to circulate?

\*This book you have is priceless. That God wanted you to have it is clear. Thank you for blessing us with sharing some wise words from so long ago. The timing is perfect.

100 years later, it is nice to know that the Padre's words still resonate with people.

### Oh well, we move on.....

As events transpired, Louisa did see Sarah Wilson's blog. On finding it, she wrote to Sarah – "but received a polite but short reply from her PA which didn't lead anywhere. I hope she is looking after that book though - its 100 years old and I'm not sure how many copies are left!" A little disappointing.

Louisa plans to keep in touch, but we will have to wait until next Christmas to meet her and her family.

Ed

### Communion in the Trenches

The text below is quite moving and is an excerpt from "The Sacrament", taken from *The Spectator newspaper in December 1915*. I am indebted to **Kathleen and Margaret Bexley** for passing this on to me, as I can visualize Padre John Gault comforting the surviving soldiers at the end of

another day of a war they thought would be over by Christmas.

*"We were fairly fagged out, all of us, after a heavy day of it. One by one we scraped the thick, clinging mud off our boots as best we could and took our places at the mess-table. It was a door resting on biscuit boxes, but we ate what lay on it ready for us thankfully as if it had been polished mahogany covered with the whitest damask cloth.*

*It was frightfully draughty, and through a shell hole in one wall came the fitful, silent gleams of the Verey lights as they rose and fell over the trenches. There was an extraordinary silence, broken by nothing louder than the crack of a rifle now and then and the fitful noises of the wind. The guns had stopped their barking and roaring after 50 hours of ceaseless shelling.*

*The orderly had a fire going and was clearing away our plates and things when a step upon the stairs turned my eyes to the door. It opened, and an officer came in. We all stood up, and he held out his hand and told us to carry on. The officer took a box that was in the corner by the fire, and drawing it out, sat down upon it.*

*He stopped and asked me for the bread. I passed it to him on the plate, and, feeling ashamed that I hadn't thought of it before asked him if he were hungry, adding: "I've been so thoughtless." He checked me with a glance.*

*Looking round on us all, he said: "I want you all to drink a little to cheer you up. After all, where is The Faith today if it's not to be found among you? Come, let us all take a little bread together and remember the day of agony when the Soldier Son died. Try to remember that He of Galilea was none other than the Lord of Hosts, the Lord strong and mighty in battle. Think upon the coming day when He shall come in power; when the graves that sprinkle all these plains shall open and give up their ennobled and glorified dead; when the corrupt matter that made the shell of man shall at the great Call be made eternal and incorruptible.*

*And let us be forever done with the fictions and fallacies of the blind leaders of the blind. Come," – and he took the bread, and in his strong but scarred hands broke it, passing it to each one of us. He got up himself to do it. Then he poured out the wine into a tumbler, and we took it one from the other and drank it silently.*

*"No need," he said as he took the cup from the Major, "for solemn feelings and such like is there? The thing is to go on to the end, however bitter it may be."*

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This deeply personal and individual moment provides stark contrast with the words of the men's military leaders, who took the view that "it takes 15,000 casualties to train a Major General", and from Lord Kitchener after the loss of over 11,000 men in four days just outside Fromelles, who stated "but it isn't the men I mind (losing). I can replace the men at once, but I can't replace the (more than 216,000) shells so easily." If the men only knew.

Ed

### **A Heart Rending Complaint!**

Oh, give me your pity, I'm on a committee,  
Which means that from morning to night,  
We attend and amend, and contend and defend,  
Without a conclusion in sight.

We confer and concur, we prefer and defer,  
And reiterate all of our thoughts,  
We revise the agenda with frequent addenda  
And consider a load of reports.

We compose and propose, we suppose and oppose  
And all the points of procedure are fun!  
But though various notions are brought up as motions,  
There's terribly little gets done.

We resolve and absolve, but we rarely dissolve  
Since it's out of the question for us,  
What a shattering pity to end our committee,  
Where else could we make such a fuss?

With thanks to **Lynda Shore**

### **Where Golf & Religion Collide**



## **CASS**

CASS continues to meet bi-monthly to seek to provide ways for CUC to support asylum seekers in Victoria.

Its most recent fundraising event was the 'Pleasant Sunday Afternoon', comprising a musical program by the Immanuel Singers and High Tea on 28 February.

The event was very successful, raising over \$3,745, which was very pleasing. The success was in part the result of the choir not accepting a fee, and the fact that all the food was donated. This was yet another example of the generosity of the Camberwell congregation in both material and hands-on efforts.

There was a bitter-sweet aspect to the afternoon, as the early negotiation with the Immanuel Singers was one of the last things Elaine Robinson did on behalf of CASS. The success of the afternoon is a fitting part of her legacy.

Negotiations are underway regarding further fundraising events, and the group is appreciative of the ongoing support of the Camberwell congregation.

**Margaret Watters**  
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## **ECOS - English Conversation for Overseas Students**

ECOS began 29 years ago as an outreach of the South Hawthorn Uniting Church when the latter was still part of the Camberwell U.C. parish. As the name states, the aim has always been to help students from overseas who are studying in Melbourne, with their conversational English. When South Hawthorn merged with and moved to the Deepdene U.C. in 2008, ECOS has since been held there.

It is held from 6 – 9 p.m. every Friday night, apart from Good Friday and six weeks over the Christmas - January period. Everyone sits around tables and chats over a meal in an informal, relaxed, and friendly atmosphere. Nothing is structured. Some students are always keen to play Scrabble as an enjoyable way of extending their vocabulary. Six volunteers each week are rostered to converse with students or to do "kitchen duties".

A large number of members from Camberwell U.C. were volunteers from the inception of ECOS and have gradually reduced over time. Viti Rush was a very supportive volunteer and attended every Friday night until she very

regretfully decided to cease, at the age of 104, after breaking her leg. She made a good recovery but decided she was unwise to go out at night. She was a whiz at playing Scrabble with the students. She was always genuinely interested in and concerned for the students, and she was much loved, admired and respected by them.

Yunfei and his mother Lily from China attended ECOS regularly from his age of eight to twelve years when they moved to Canberra, and some of us have maintained friendships with them – he is now aged 20 and in his third year of study at the A.N.U. Yunfei and Viti had their birthdays a day apart, which were always celebrated at ECOS with a cake. When Viti turned 100 and Yunfei 10, they shared a wonderful ECOS party in the South Hawthorn U.C. hall. Lily and Yunfei visited Viti on their short return visits to Melbourne.

The student numbers currently fluctuate between four and fifteen, with ages ranging between 18 and 65. They come from countries including China, Taiwan, Japan, Korea, Thailand, Austria, France, Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and South American countries including Colombia, Chile, and Brazil.

Most of them study English at Hawthorn College in Auburn Road, a campus of Melbourne University; others at Swinburne and Melbourne Universities and city language colleges. Some of the older attendees just come to practice their English conversation as they find it difficult to find other venues where they can do this, and they obviously enjoy the company.

Their reasons for coming to Melbourne to study English are diverse, and they also arrive with varying levels of English language, from minimal to quite a high standard. There are some who come purely to take the opportunity of learning more about Australian culture and to enjoy the company of others. The volunteers themselves frequently say how much pleasure they receive from having the opportunity to meet and talk with people from all over the world and learn about different cultures from our own.

This year, five young adult Japanese students came for a one-month course in English. Others study English for six months or one year and then return home to pursue further studies or work. Others stay in Melbourne to continue their studies in degree courses at Universities in a range of disciplines, and some gain Permanent Residence (and even return to help on the roster!). Currently three men from Iraq have already begun, or are soon to begin PhDs in Journalism, Dentistry and Veterinary Science

respectively, upon completing a one year course in English.

Throughout the changing 29 year life of ECOS, there have been key people who have maintained an active and supportive commitment to ECOS and those who attend. Ten others and I have been attending ECOS since its inception. However, the single one constant and unifying force has been Barbara and Lindsay Herbert. They have been organising, leading, and, apart from their holidays or other special events in their own lives, attending ECOS and welcoming students to it, every Friday night. They go out of their way to drive people home or to public transport. They have quietly and unobtrusively supported students in many other aspects of their lives - offering friendship, hospitality, helping and supporting them emotionally, and in a range of practical ways: one-to-one English language help with assignments, completion of documents, and in a wide variety of other ways.

One Japanese ex-student who left Australia five years ago still regularly sends documents from her work-place (a government department) to have the English corrected! Some students, including Yunfei and others, have come to see Barbara and Lindsay and the ECOS volunteers as their "family" in Australia.

Long-standing friendships and connections have at times developed and some students who returned to their home-country or gained Permanent Residency in Australia and moved interstate to work, return to ECOS when visiting Melbourne, knowing it will always be there, that they will see some familiar faces, and receive a warm welcome. Some students have lived, and live in volunteers' homes.

The joys, sorrows and concerns of the students' lives are shared in different ways. Some experience English language difficulties, home-sickness, culture-shock, and concerns about family or events in their home country. This month, the birth of one student's second child in his home-country was celebrated with a cake; a card and gift will be sent to his wife, and one volunteer crocheted a blanket for his baby daughter.

I have maintained my involvement throughout the life of ECOS, usually attending once every 4-six weeks as rostered, and have always found it a wonderful outreach of the church to support, while also personally benefitting and learning so much from it. This year I decided to make it a greater commitment, and have attended most Friday nights. I find it enriching getting to know

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at greater depth, some of those students who attend regularly, and learning more about their countries, cultures and their lives through the process of helping them with their English.

If you know anyone else who would be interested in helping with this program on a regular or irregular basis, they would be warmly welcomed.

(Barbara's phone number is: 0407 300 665).

**Marg. White**

### **Holy Humour**

A Sunday School teacher began her lesson with a question, "Boys and girls, what do we know about God?"

A hand shot up in the air. "He is an artist!" said the kindergarten boy.

"Really? How do you know?" the teacher asked. "You know - Our Father, who does art in Heaven".

### **Messy Church Reports, December 2105 – March 2016**

For each of the past four months, the Messy Church team has put together a diverse range of activities within overall themed programs.

The respective themes were:

*December 2015 - Christmas Eve.*

This year Messy Christmas was trialled on Christmas Eve. We started at 5pm with the meal. BBQ hamburgers and sausages, bread and salad were served on a very hot evening. Dessert was even more popular with our large number of children – ice cream in a cone with sprinkles. There was also fruit and meringues.

The activities started with making crowns, baubles with a candle inside and covered with washi tape, hanging on a stick. Chains were made from greeting cards and then there was a treasure hunt to help with the Christmas story. There were blocks for the little ones and making an angel decoration for older kids. Food craft was strawberries dipped in green chocolate on chocolate biscuits to look like a Christmas tree - quite delicious!





At 7pm the Christmas Eve Carol Service started in the church. Most people stayed on to enjoy carol singing and some more people came to join us. Wendy was on hand to provide the musical accompaniment on piano and organ and a story of the "3 Wise Camels" was told by Fiona. We sang "Aussie Jingle Bells", "Silent Night", "Away in a Manger", and several other carols. Ian gave us a few words about "Peace on Earth, a Messy Christmas Experience" as well as part of the Christmas Story. This was indeed a Messy Christmas for some 33 children and 47 adults.

#### *January 2016 - The Great Messy Banquet.*

This month our story centred on the parable Jesus told about the King who invited important people to his banquet but none of them could come - they all had great excuses. So he got his servants to go out and invite ordinary everyday people to the banquet.

Welcoming activity was a scavenger hunt, which helped tell the story. One of the clues was to find a "Silver for Asylum Seekers" sticker and then make a box to take home to collect 5c coins for Asylum Seekers.

Making cupcakes out of playdough was part of decorating the banquet hall, as well as making cardboard cupcakes and flower decorations from tissue paper. The final decoration was a piñata – broken to see what treats were inside.



For the celebration, there was a play about the parable with audience participation. We sang "God loves you" and "I cannot come to the Banquet". Ian talked about how Jesus told us that we are all welcome in God's family.

Dinner was party pies, sausage rolls, cocktail frankfurts, carrot and celery sticks and sauce of course. Pancakes followed as part of Pancake Day for the Lenten Share appeal, thanks to Ruth and Stuart. We had 22 adults and 14 children who enjoyed the whole experience.

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#### *February 2016 – Messy Saul and the Road to Damascus*

In the narthex people were greeted with paper scrunching - to be used later to re-enact the stoning of Christians that Saul authorised.

Then off to the hall to colour a piece of the road to Damascus, using plastic cobble roads. Saul, who was not a kind man, was travelling to Damascus with Ananias when he was struck by a bright light and was blinded for three days.

Flour, baby oil and colouring were a great medium to build the city of Damascus using moulds. The food activity was icing "Marie" biscuits and decorating with a jelly-baby-Saul, to show how Saul fell to the ground when God spoke to him.

A Saul spin toy had a circle on an icy-pole stick-decorated with stickers, so there was a face on both sides - one where Saul could see and one where he was blind. Finding safety pins in a tub of wheat with a blindfold was a challenge so we just knew how Saul felt.

Then an origami eye was made, to show that Saul could see after 3 days, and was then called Paul who became a great teacher about Jesus. We then re-enacted the stoning with our paper "rocks" - fun was had by all.



In the celebration we saw a clip of the Saul story which showed how Saul became Paul and wanted to be kind and teach people about the love of God through Jesus. We sang songs and Ian talked about the story and how Saul became changed by God to carry out his work and spread the good news of God's love through Jesus.

Dinner was hamburgers, fruit and biscuits which were enjoyed by all. 21 adults and six children participated.

#### *March 2016 - Palm Sunday/Easter Story*

The gathering activity was making palm leaves on the road to Jerusalem banner, and then into the hall to decorate palm tree biscuits (thanks Ruth).

There was a Palm Sunday scene using half a foam noodle as the road - decorated with palm leaves and a people backdrop. Jesus was added on the donkey. Great fun was had using large foam noodles to make donkeys decorated with eyes, a mane and ears! Large palm leaves were made ready to wave to Jesus in the story in church.

Stones were decorated with faces – Jesus said even the stones were listening when the disciples were not! We all then gathered outside to wave our palm branches and ride our donkeys as Eric took a video for Margery and Ian to take to England to the Messy Church conference in May!

In the celebration in the church, we heard the story from Palm Sunday to Easter Day – the resurrection - from a script by Ian and read by Fiona. The singing was excellent - we sang “He’ll be riding on a donkey when he comes “ (words by Ian to a well-known tune) and “Hey King, where’s your crown, where’s your Cadillac?”, then Ian spoke a few words about Easter and how Jesus died but gave us new life through his love.

The meal was mini pizzas with many toppings, salad, fruit and palm biscuits, for 23 adults and 7 Children. Thanks team kitchen!!



It is a large labour-intensive exercise to put on a Messy Church, but it is hugely rewarding for those young people who come and enjoy and for those who assist and contribute in so many ways.

As always, thanks go to all our helpers, particularly Marjorie who prepares most of the activities around the themes, in conjunction with her committee. Also to the people who came and assisted and facilitated in all of the activities, those who brought food and those who prepared it, and those who helped clean up afterwards. It is really a great team effort.

**Fiona Ensor**

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## Presbytery News

Camberwell UC is part of the Presbytery of Yarra Yarra. Ian, as our minister is automatically a member, and Ruth Crawley has been elected to be the Congregation's representative.

The Presbytery meets quarterly on a Saturday for most of the day. At the last meeting various reports were received, and after hearing a presentation from several members, Presbytery officially recognised *CafeChurch* as a Faith Community. It meets in and around Carlton and has a relationship with Church of All Nations.

At the end of the February meeting each year the new Office bearers and various Committee members who were elected at the November meeting are recognised. After three years as Chairperson, Beth Horsfield installed Rev Laleti Tu'inauvai as our new Chairperson for the next two years. Many at Camberwell will fondly remember Laleti and his family who spent some time with us while he completed his field placement at Camberwell. Laleti is currently the minister at Blackburn North/ Nunawading congregation.

**Ruth Crawley**

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## Holy Humour

A father was approached by his small son who told him proudly, "I know what the Bible means!" His father smiled and replied, "What do you mean, you 'know' what the Bible means?"

The son replied, "I do know!" "Okay," said his father. "What does the Bible mean?"

"That's easy, Daddy..." the young boy replied excitedly,

It stands for 'Basic Information Before Leaving Earth.'

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**Ministry: Worship** 10.00 am  
**Rev. Ian Brown** 0439 931 080  
**Church Office:** Tuesday & Friday  
**Phone** 9882-7441  
**Email** [ucacamberwell@uniting.com.au](mailto:ucacamberwell@uniting.com.au)  
**Website:**  
<http://www.camberwellunitingchurch.com>  
**Messy Church:**  
<https://www.facebook.com/camberwellmessychurch>

**Kairos** is the Greek word meaning "time", that is, those times which are turning points demanding decision while the opportunity remains. Although it refers primarily to the coming of Christ it may also refer to the present time in the life of our congregation.  
 Editor: Stuart Ensor