



Kairos



News in and around

Camberwell Uniting Church

Volume 7 Number 3

December 2014

Minister's Musings



Grace and peace.

The notion of pilgrimage was not one that I grew up with. John Bunyan's hymn, *'Who would true valour see'* with its hobgoblins and foul fiends was as close as I got. Pilgrimage sounded like a strange old-world practice, replete with old-world concepts and characters. Towards the end of high school, I remember meeting Geoffrey Chaucer, (14th century) with his tales of folk heading for Canterbury, 'full of devout homage', inspired by some force of nature in April, it seemed; 'Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages'.

So, we didn't 'goon off' to England, but the idea of pilgrimage did get opened out in a new way as we travelled through biblical lands, soaking in the rich history and being confronted by the current realities. With study leave and annual leave, a UCA ministers conference in Jerusalem and other opportunities beckoning, Margery and I had no hesitation in committing to as much of this journey as we could possibly squeeze in.

All travel is educational and all places and cultures have their own particular history, charms and graces. To travel in Jordan, Israel and Palestine is all this and then much more. I feel very privileged to have

had the opportunity. As with Chaucer's friends heading for Canterbury, there is benefit in the anticipation and preparation for the journey, there is the destination and events to take place there, but much of the richness of the experience is in the companions on the journey. We had three groups. One for the Jordan / Israel tour before the conference – 20 of us from across Australia, the conference, 60 ministers and partners, and 22 for the Palestinian Solidarity tour. As well as having new friends we have a shared story, a new depth of understanding, re-grounded faith and a renewed commitment to the peace process that is so sorely needed.

Highlights, pictures and stories will all get a good airing on December the 5th, 7:30pm at church.

To see springs in the desert, where ancient tribes are said to have been saved, like in the Exodus wanderings, to walk through the home of the ancient Nabateans (Petra), overlook the Jabock valley, Mt Nebo, the Jordan river, to swim in and sail on lake Galilee, wander the streets of Jerusalem, the Garden of Gethsemane, the Mt of Olives, are all special in a way that words can't convey.

Before we left there was a good deal of nervousness about the proximity of a war or two. Thankfully, the closer one in Gaza did end and ISIS came no closer, so there was a window of calm for travel. We all know

that peace in the Middle East is a fragile thing, easily broken. The recent violence in Jerusalem shows this yet again. At a distance, we wonder why Palestinians resort to violence, but having seen first hand the conditions under which they live; the restrictions, the discrimination, the provocation – it's little wonder there isn't much more trouble.

The apartheid practiced by Israel is disturbing to a depth that left us both disgusted and saddened. At the same time I was also full of admiration for those working to promote understanding and peace in such difficult circumstances. It was easy to walk the streets of Bethlehem: Palestinian, West Bank, majority Muslim neighborhood, and to feel safe. If in a small group, it wasn't uncommon for locals to strike up a conversation and invite you for coffee. There are some friendly Palestinians down the road from the Nativity square whose daughter and family live in Coburg, Melbourne.

For me now, the hope of Advent, with its emphasis on the hope of peace in Christ, comes with a renewed impact this year. It is too easy for us to take the peace we have for granted, and to want to put up a fortress around what we have, to protect it. But we have brothers and sisters in places without security and we who have, do need to share or we diminish our humanity with meanness. So this Advent, may our plans for sharing be wider than our family and friends, may we all pray, share and support efforts for peace in places like Palestine.

Warm Regards,

Rev'd Ian Brown

Hymns for all occasions

- Dentist** – 'Crown him with many crowns'
- TV weatherman** – 'There shall be showers of blessings'
- Building Contractor** – 'The Church's one foundation'
- Golfer** – 'There is a green hill far away'
- Politician** – 'Standing on the promises'
- Electrician** – 'Lead kindly light'

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"Journey to Bethlehem"

2014 - Biblical lands & current issues



In support of Asylum seekers
pictures and tales by Ian & Margery Brown

Camberwell Asylum Seekers Support Group invites you to a fascinating evening of images and insights from biblical lands today, with a focus on Palestine / Israel. A fundraiser in support of our work with some of the most vulnerable in our community.



Dec 5th 7:30 pm @

Camberwell Uniting Church 314 Camberwell Rd

Donation: \$15 supper provided contact: 9882 7441

From the Editor....

Hello and welcome to our final edition of Kairos for 2014. I hope you find some articles and items of merit and interest within. I sound like my father when I say 'how quickly this year seems to have gone by'. The upcoming festive season can be a strain on some, and the health of others may make it difficult to 'enjoy', however we pass on season's greetings to all in our community, and our kind thoughts and prayers for wellbeing are with you all.

The birds and (not so many) bees

It has long been said that breakfast is the most important meal of the day, and I subscribe to that view. And whilst I enjoy my cereal and fruit each day, there is

nothing I like more than to finish off with toast or a crumpet dripping with honey to have with a cup of tea or coffee. To me, honey is an unsung hero of a standard brekky. I think I may have been Pooh Bear in a previous life (without the weird friends). So you can imagine my concern over the last few months when I visit the supermarket and read the sign in the 'toppings' aisle, which says that *"due to unfavourable climatic conditions in the key honey producing areas local Australian honey is in very short supply....we sincerely apologise for any inconvenience caused"*. Inconvenience....what!!! Quel horreur!

I exclaim in French as I have just had a most enjoyable European holiday, mainly in France, but also including Italy and briefly Switzerland. Europeans do breakfast differently, having wonderful crusty bread, which generally gets covered with cheese or cold meat cuts, or in touristy places, jam or nutella. It is rare to find honey on offer.

A bee is the most important insect that transfers pollen between flowers and between plants, and honey bees in particular are among the best pollinators. Now in Europe, I began to wonder how widespread the honey shortage might be.

As a tourist with an interest in history however, it is obligatory to visit as many churches, castles and museums as possible. Nevertheless, even the most ardent visitor can be overloaded with yet another cold, stone castle, stripped of all its artwork and original features, another gloomy church or cathedral replete with dead saints and martyrs, or another dark and musty museum trading on faded glory.

However, a place in the Loire valley gave me renewed hope. Château de Chenonceau is an exceptional and popular site not only because of its original design, the richness of its collections, its furniture and its decorations, but also because of its destiny, since it was loved, administrated and protected by women, who were all extraordinary and who, for the most part have marked history.

The original Château was built in 1513 by Katherine Briçonnet, and successively

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embellished by Diane de Poitiers then Catherine de Medici. Chenonceau was protected from the hardship of the revolution by Madame Dupin. The iron, but very feminine, fist in the velvet glove has always preserved Chenonceau during times of conflict and war in order to make it forever a place of peace. It is truly a beautiful site.

Chenonceau Château also has an exceptional museum collection of the Old Masters' paintings: Murillo, Le Tintoret, Nicolas Poussin, Rubens, Le Primatice, Van Loo, as well as an extremely rare selection of Flanders Tapestries from the 16th century.

However, what struck me most about half way through our tour was the flower display in every sumptuously furnished room. They were stunning, not only adding light and life to the elegance of the castle, as well as being an exception to the rule of historical sites with no colour, but they also reminded me of a part of my life at home.

Every Sunday (and for every special event), there is a team of talented people in our congregation who prepare for our viewing pleasure and appreciation several floral arrangements, which I know are noted by most members of the congregation. The talent of this group, to not only prepare the displays throughout the year, but to do so up close yet have them still appreciated by those of us in the back pews never fails to provide a lift, or generate admiration for their makers' aesthetic and artistic abilities.



I would be most disappointed if the change in climatic conditions affects Europe in the same way as it has affected Australia, for the sake of those of us who admire one of nature's miracles (the pollination process and its impact on food and flowers) as well as those of us who won't find it funny if we can't get our honey.

Stuart Ensor



News from Church Council

The Issues Discussion segment of our meeting has covered a variety of stimulating and challenging topics this year. At our August meeting the Council discussed the insert included in the July 'Crosslight' about the Royal Commission into the institutional response to child sexual abuse. In Victoria the Roman Catholic Church was asked to appear before the Royal Commission's hearings. In other states, other institutions appeared. The document from the UCA, entitled 'A Guide for congregations of the Uniting Church in Australia' outlines the processes that are in place and the resources that are available to turn to if the church needs to deal with any specific event. The information is outlined under headings – 'Receiving a disclosure', 'Reporting abuse', 'Care after hearing a

disclosure' and 'Telling your story to the Royal Commission'.

In September our topic was 'Faith and experience – making the most of it.' Ian introduced this segment with background material about the continuing conflict between the Palestinians and Israelis. We then considered issues which concern us individually and which confirm that faith and experience need to be the basis of our faith response and our actions.

At the April meeting of Council earlier this year, Max had expressed concern about the drop in our fixed income, especially in the levels of giving in the Planned Giving and Direct Debit areas. A power point presentation was developed and included in a document, with other relevant information, which was circulated to all members of the congregation. It was decided that this would be presented at the service on 19th October in the context of the need to review the giving of our time and talents (participating in the welcoming roster, other rosters, choir membership) as well as financial contributions. In responses received to date, a few people have indicated that they will move to the Envelope Scheme or to Direct Debit and others have indicated that they will increase their level of giving.

Action on property matters have included the placing of a gate lock and 'Private Property' notice on the fence adjoining the school, the ongoing search for the most appropriate solution to the requirement to place safety edging on all our internal steps and the completion of the internal painting of part of the church which was undertaken by Stuart. It has been noted that the external window frames of the Webster Room require repair and repainting. The Hall floor will be resurfaced during the Christmas holiday break and our BBQ, which caught fire while Camberwell Primary School was using it, has been replaced.

People might be interested to know that the old pew ends left over from the refurbishment were donated to a men's woodworking group at Glen Waverley UC. They have given us a Celtic cross made

from our wood which has been placed on the table at the rear of the church.

Elaine Robinson

Messy Church

The upcoming December 'Christmas' Messy Church will mark three years since the program commenced at CUC. What has it meant after this time?

Messy Church is Church for all ages. Our average attendance is 36. A few times we have exceeded 50. About one third of those who come are children (0-12) brought by their parents or grandparents. This year 38 different children have come along to Messy Church - some regularly and others irregularly.



About half of those who attend Messy Church are from our regular Sunday congregation. This group multi-task throughout Messy Church providing a warm welcome, coffee and chat, activity supervision, food prep, storytelling, singing and more. It is great to see the parents spontaneously joining in this multi-tasking. Some of the parents who now bring their children used to attend CUC when they were the same age.



The themes for each Messy Church vary widely. For instance in October we focused on the miracle of Jesus healing the 10 Lepers and in November it was the Old Testament story of Jonah. Providing activities -all relating to the theme- for a variety of ages is both challenging and rewarding. Each month we prepare a new story for the children and in so doing, re-engage anew with the story ourselves.



Messy Church always includes a 20 minutes Celebration Time, which is our worship time. This is often the only church the families attend we have been teaching the children the Lord's Prayer this year. It is lovely to hear them all join in.

Mealtimes are fun with favourite meals being BBQ sausages, tacos and baked potatoes. Catering is a challenge and Ruth Crawley works hard to make it happen. Lots of people are very generous in donating food and many help in the kitchen.

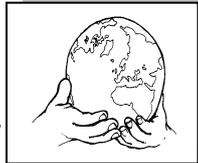
The support of our minister Ian and the hard work of Margery and her team I believe has made the program a success, evidenced by visits from other congregations to watch the kids have fun, and learn in a safe and healthy environment.



There is still more to be done in reaching into the community with the story of God's love especially now as Religious Education is being dropped at many schools.

Fiona Ensor & Margery Brown

News from CASS



Richard Peoples, the Retail Operations Manager for Lentara Uniting Care, was the guest at our August meeting. Richard described the work he and other volunteers do with the Bargain Centre which is an important fund raising activity for Lentara. The Centre employs six full-time and four part-time persons. People from Work for the Dole and Corrections Victoria programs also assist as part of skills training and second chance involvement. The Bargain Centre sells furniture and reasonable quality items such as clothing, bric-a-brac, crockery, ladies fashion and recycles items such as electrical cords, books and materials for rags. The current profit is \$175,000. The profits go back into the organization and unsaleable goods are sold overseas, with cloth coming back in return.

Lentara Uniting Care is happy to organise a monthly pickup of goods from various collection points as they have two trucks collecting from clothing bins each week. We can also call and arrange pickup of goods and Lentara can also arrange to collect unsold goods from fetes. We decided to organise a 'Leave Here for Lentara Day' for the collection of goods such as books, clothing, small furniture items and electrical goods. In fact two collections were made, so we will certainly set a date early in 2015 for another collection.

By the time of our October meeting, our 'Silver for Asylum Seekers' appeal had raised \$271.90. We have set November 30th as the final date for the 2014 collection. This has been a successful campaign so we decided to continue it in 2015. Throughout November we are collecting gift vouchers or money for the purchase of vouchers for Lentara's Christmas gathering.

Our final fund raising effort for this year will be 'Journey to Bethlehem 2014' on December 5th which we are organising in conjunction with the Adult Group. Ian and Margery will be presenting images and insights from biblical lands today gathered from their recent trip to the area - the particular focus will be on Palestine and Israel.

Earlier in the year, we had offered to host an exhibition of art work done by asylum seekers at the Asylum Seeker Welcome Centre run by Lentara. Four of our members visited the ASWC to view the work. However, at this point there are insufficient suitable pieces for a display at CUC.

Most recently, on 12th November, our group and some other visitors from St Johns and Highfield Road UC, met with our local Federal MP – the Honourable Josh Frydenberg – to express our deep concerns about many aspects of the Federal government's programs relating to asylum seekers and to clarify the government's current position on asylum seekers.

Considerable time was spent preparing material to be covered in the 'respectful conversation' to cover areas such as the **Duty of Care** for children in detention (currently the Minister's responsibility); our **Right to Know** as tax payers and citizens about what is being done in our name; an explanation for the current **Tardiness in Processing**; the **Lack of Rights for Temporary Protection Visa holders**; the possibility of **Increasing the Resettlement Intake** and an explanation for the government's policy of **Forcible Returns**. Ian's opening comments reminded us all that we come to these issues with values shaped by traditional Hebrew and Christian heritage with their teachings of welcome for the stranger, hospitality and care for the poor and disadvantaged.

Josh Frydenberg outlined the government's current policy approach and answered our questions in some detail. Following this meeting we are preparing a formal letter to be sent to Josh so that he can supply us

with further information that he is able to access, and also forward it to the Minister for Immigration (Scott Morrison) for comment.

We concluded the meeting expressing the hope that Josh would take back to Canberra and share with his colleagues the sense of deep concerns regarding the issues surrounding asylum seekers that prevail in his electorate and throughout Australia. We have grave concerns about a new bill to be put before the Senate before the end of this year concerning amendments to and extensions of the Migration and Maritime Powers Legislation as an attempt to resolve the Asylum Legacy Caseload. We asked that the clauses in this bill be given careful and compassionate consideration in the light of various conventions to which Australia is a signatory and in the light of the pride we express in being a tolerant multi-cultural society with a reputation for fair play.

Elaine Robinson

This item was provided courtesy of Helen Martin, who recently received it from a friend. It is so clever, it makes me wish I had been there to see it, to participate in it, or to be smart enough to think of it.

THE SNEEZE

They walked in tandem, each of the ninety-two students filing into the already crowded auditorium. With their rich maroon gowns flowing and the traditional caps, they looked almost as grown up as they felt.

Dads swallowed hard behind broad smiles, and Mums freely brushed away tears.

This class would NOT pray during the commencements, not by choice, but because of a recent court ruling prohibiting it.

The principal and several students were careful to stay within the guidelines allowed by the ruling. They gave inspirational and challenging speeches, but no one mentioned divine guidance and no one asked for blessings on the graduates or their families.

The speeches were nice but they were

routine, until the final speech.

A solitary student walked proudly to the microphone. He stood still and silent for just a moment, and then, suddenly, all 92 students, every single one of them, SNEEZED !!!!

The student on stage simply looked at the audience and said, "GOD BLESS YOU".....and walked off the stage.

The audience exploded into applause and gave the students a standing ovation. This graduating class had found a unique way to invoke God's blessing on their future with or without the court's approval.

This is a true story; it happened at Eastern Shore District High School in Musquodoboit Harbour, Nova Scotia.

The Christmas appeal of Act for Peace

Act for Peace is the international aid agency of the National Council of Churches in Australia and a member of the ACT Alliance, a global network of more than 130 Christian organisations, all working together for change.

We believe in a world where every person is free from suffering caused by conflict and natural disasters. Across the world, we work with local communities so they can prepare for emergencies and respond fast to protect the most vulnerable people when disaster hits. We also lobby governments and decision-makers for positive action which promotes peace and supports people affected by conflict and disaster.

Envelopes are available in the narthex for you to make a donation. These can be posted or placed in the offering plate.



**CAMBERWELL MUSIC SOCIETY'S
2015 SEASON OF CONCERTS**

Tuesday 3 March 'Song of Norway'
Alvin Wong (cello) + Glenn Riddle
(piano) play Grieg's *Sonata for Cello and*
Piano + Grainger's *La Scandinavie*

Tuesday 7 April Wilma and Friends - Horn
Trio
Violinist Wilma Smith with Andrew Bain –
Principal French Horn of the Los Angeles
Philharmonic and **pianist Ian Munro** in a
program of English Horn Trios.

Tuesday 20 October 'An American in Paris'
Elyane Laussade (piano) with a splendid blend
of musical gems from America and France
including *Rhapsody in Blue*.

Saturday 21 March New Zealand Chamber
Soloists
New Zealand's premier piano trio will perform
Beethoven's *Ghost Trio*
as well as Rachmaninoff's *Trio Elegiac No 1*.

Saturday 19 September The Sutherland
Trio
Caroline Almonte (piano), Elizabeth Sellars
(violin) and Molly Kadarauach (cello)
present a timeless program featuring Haydn,
Dvorak, Piazzolla and a new work
by Australian composer Paul Grabowsky that
bridges the past with the present.

Saturday 21 November The 'Archduke'
Marianne Rothschild (violin), Rosanne Hunt
(cello) and Glenn Riddle (piano)
present Bach's *Cello Suite in D*

MAXWELL HOUSE - Good to the very last
drop

BOUNTY -He is the quicker picker upper
THE ENERGIZER BUNNY - He Keeps
Going, and Going, and Going.....

Can you think of others?
Lois Grenfell

.....
.... and finally

Muchos Gracias

- (i) This publication owes much to its contributors. It benefits enormously from those in our church community who supply items of interest from time to time which are always appreciated even though sometimes there is not the opportunity or space to publish. Please maintain your enthusiasm, and thank you for your contributions this year. Thank you to all those who gave us feedback during the year – it only encourages us to do better.
- (ii) I remain indebted to Carolyn Harris for her continued support, advice and after hours assistance, as well as her unbounded positivity and enthusiasm which makes putting together this publication a pleasure.
- (iii) And finally thank you, dear reader, for taking the time to savor the finished product. We hope it continues to meet your needs.

Fifth Grade Assignment

Wouldn't this be great if it was taught in every school?

A fifth grade teacher in a Christian school asked her class to look at TV commercials and see if they could use them in 20 ways to communicate ideas about God. Here are some of the results:

God is like:

COKE - He's the real thing.

HALLMARK CARDS - He cares enough to send His very best.

GENERAL ELECTRIC - He brings good things to life.

SCOTCH TAPE - You can't see Him, but you know He's there.

VO-5 Hair Spray - He holds through all kinds of weather

December 2014

Ministry: Worship 10.00 am
Rev. Ian Brown 0439 931 080
Church Office: Tuesday & Friday
Phone 9882-7441
Email ucacamberwell@uniting.com.au

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**