



Kairos



News in and around Camberwell Uniting Church

Volume 11 Number 3

Minister's Musings

Dear Friends in Christ,

I've been so very privileged to enjoy a wonderful time of long service leave. It has been as refreshing and enriching as I could have hoped. I'm sure there will be the chance to share some of the stories and images of our trip at a later time. The opportunity to travel, catch up with family; our son, living in Germany, and see some more of our diverse and beautiful world is, I think, one of life's best treats.

Travels always have their small bugbears; the constant security screening, the trouble to understand and communicate in places where the language is unfamiliar, living out of a suitcase; and other travellers will all have their own pet annoyances. But to be able to afford to travel, to be able to present a passport at any border control and gain entry, move freely – it's something we are particularly blessed with. But it's not the case for everyone and I found myself often reflecting on those who are stuck in places, through no fault of their own. I can't imagine what it would be like to have to flee my home. Or to then find that on arriving somewhere to be safe, I no longer had my liberty.

The issue of Australia's treatment of refugees is still in the news, still receiving some attention and deservedly so! Our new Uniting Church President, Dr Deidre Palmer has joined faith and community leaders in calling for children being held in detention on Nauru to be brought to safety in Australia. The latest call was made in front of Parliament House in Canberra at a rally organised by Rural Australians for Refugees. Dr Palmer calls on political leaders to act with compassion and decency.

"These children have sought the protection of Australia from situations of war and persecution. They should be treated with care and respect," said Dr Palmer.

"Our principled protest against their continued detention is not only rooted in the Gospel values we are called on as Christians to uphold - it is a fundamental and universal principle of human decency."

"For the love of God, now is the time. Let's get the Kids off Nauru."

A day before the rally, 6,000 doctors signed a petition demanding the children be removed from Nauru because of serious mental and physical health concerns. The Uniting Church Assembly also signed a letter to the Prime Minister Scott Morrison and Opposition Leader Bill Shorten from 62 faith-based organisations requesting urgent action to bring the children and their families off Nauru. It's good to see concern for a more humane treatment growing.

This is the text of the letter:

On behalf of the Uniting Church in Australia, I am grateful for the opportunity to add my voice to those of you gathered in Canberra, and across the country, to advocate for the children held in detention on Nauru.

The Uniting Church holds the firm belief that no child should be kept in detention. These children have sought the protection of Australia from situations of war and persecution. They should be treated with care and respect, regardless of how they fled or where they came from. They should be kept free from harm and given opportunities to flourish. Children living in detention on Nauru clearly do not have these opportunities.

Our principled protest against their continued detention is not only rooted in the Gospel values we are called on as Christians to uphold - it is a fundamental and universal principle of human decency. Now is the time for true leaders in our Parliament to step up, act with compassion and

decency and finally bring these children and their families to Australia with a view of finding them a permanent home. For the love of God, now is the time.

Let's get the Kids off Nauru.
Grace and peace,

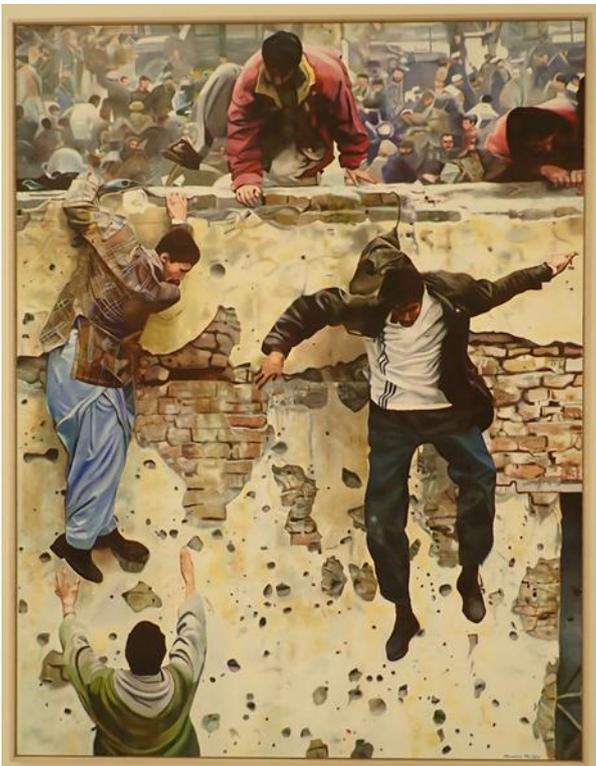
Deidre Palmer
President, Uniting Church in Australia

Our church, both locally and nationally has a name for doing our bit for refugees. For me, it's just putting our gospel into action; simply loving our neighbour. And having just passed Remembrance Day, when we reflect on sacrifices made to protect our freedoms, we might reflect again on what more we can do to protect the rights and freedom of others, particularly the most vulnerable. Can we do something more to stand up for innocent children held in detention?

Travelling has a way of bringing us back to where we started and helping us see things a little differently as a consequence. So there's a little of the results of my travelling - I promise there will be more!

Grace and Peace,
Ian

- image from a contemporary art exhibition in
Strasbourg, France.



Christmas Services

Dec 23rd - 10am Carols, Christmas & Advent music

& **4 - 6 pm** all ages: 

- 24th 8 pm
Carols & Story for all ages

- 25th 9:30 am
Family Christmas Celebration

Peace and good will to all!

Join us to celebrate the light of Christ, born in our world 



From the Editor

Hello and welcome to our final edition of Kairos for 2018.

In reflecting on the year almost gone, I have noticed that many among us have been fortunate enough to travel in 2018. This includes trips to the far east and far north of Australia, travel (almost) to the top of the world (Iceland), visits to trace family histories in England and Ireland, travels across the cultural cities of Europe and the expanses of Canada, trips to more riskier spots (near the pyramids), and stops at many places in between.

In these uncertain times, it is a joy to welcome back travellers safely, and at last count we have everyone, and their luggage, back home safely.

For some amongst us though, life has not been so easy or kind and our prayers go out to those who have done it tough this year. As is my wont, I take note of other people's words that encapsulate aspects of life better than mine can – these I usually store away in a special place, and they are never seen again.

However, I recently came across a quote which I thought was worth keeping and repeating, and I think it was adopted by all of our people for whom 2018 was hard. It says "that most difficult thing – but an essential one – is to love Life, to love it even while one suffers, because Life is all. Life is God, and to love Life means to love God."*

Amongst others, one thing this says to me is that harder and more blessed than all else is to love this life in one's sufferings, particularly in undeserved sufferings. For no matter what we have suffered, we have known the most precious gift of all – Life! And those who have suffered this year (including their families and carers) have done so with grace and a positive attitude, in the knowledge (I hope) that they have our love and support.

In this context, the Kairos team trusts that all readers will find items of interest to enjoy reading, and which will distract you from the world at large outside for a short while at least. In particular we have highlighted achievements and special events in the life of members of our congregation.

This last edition of Kairos for 2018 contains much local news, reader contributions and personal achievements from among our congregation, and we wished to include them all while the information is still current. As a consequence the write-up of the last of the stained glass window tributes, which is proving a somewhat elusive trail to follow to conclusion, will be held over until 2019.

To all our readers, on behalf of the Kairos team, we wish you peace, joy, and love for the upcoming Christmas period. Our kindest thoughts and prayers as always go out to those in our community for whom these wishes prove difficult to realise, and whose faith has been sorely tested in the process.

Season's greetings to you all.

Ed

* The quotation is from Russian author Leo Tolstoy's epic novel "War and Peace". At 1,225 pages in its first edition, it requires dedication and perseverance to make it to the end. (by way of comparison, the combined total of pages in the Old and New Testaments of the Bibles in the church pews is 1,133).

War and Peace is regarded as a central work of world literature and one of Tolstoy's finest literary achievements. Originally published in 1867, it broadly focuses on Napoleon's invasion of Russia in 1812, and the impact of the Napoleonic era on Tsarist society through the stories of five Russian aristocratic families. Bonaparte's attempt to conquer Russia was foiled, to a great extent, because of the "scorched earth" policy of the retreating military and civilians, who set fire to the countryside, villages and cities rather than allow the French to take possession of them.

For those daunted by the book, it was made into
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a film in 1956, starring, among many other notable actors, Audrey Hepburn and Henry Fonda. However, even the film originally ran for 5 1/2 hours, but was cut down before commercial release to just under 4 hours! It is almost as challenging as reading the book!

At the conclusion of the film, following the epic battles which cost huge loss of life, the suffering of the Russian people whose land was invaded and destroyed, the destruction of the French army finally by the freezing Russian winter, the main two characters found true love, and the quotation from the novel referred to above was superimposed as last frame of the movie.

.....
Elaine Marion CLARKE (nee Hurd)
4/4/1928 – 8/10/2018



On Thursday 12 October, 2018, family and many friends gathered at Camberwell Uniting Church to pay their respects and farewell Elaine Clarke, wife of Jack, who had died four days earlier on 8 October.

The service was perfectly conducted by the Rev. Ivan Poole, standing in for Rev. Ian Brown, who was, at the time, temporarily unavailable taking long service leave overseas.

As expected, it was a traditional service of music, reflections of a life well lived by a much loved lady, and with a high level of family input and involvement. It was mentioned that they were a very close knit family, and that was on full display.

The Bible Readings and a poem were read by three of Elaine's grandchildren, and the Reflections on Elaine's life were provided by daughter **Jenny Parsons** and grandson Andrew Kerr. Jenny's eulogy is reproduced below (with her permission), for those who were unable to attend, or who would again like to hear a daughter speak from the heart about her mother.

"Elaine Marion Clarke nee Hurd was born on 4 April, 1928 – the eldest child of William (Bill) Lewis and Amy Isabelle Hurd at Arncliffe, NSW. Brother Frank joined the family in 1930, and in 1933 the family moved to Lockhart, where the final member of the family, Beverley was born in 1935.

Elaine attended MLC Burwood, NSW from 1939 - 1942 as a boarder, and then moved to MLC Hawthorn from 1942 until 1945, where the family lived at 2 Westbourne Grove, Camberwell.

Bill and Amy headed up to Wagga Wagga in 1946 when Bill was appointed Chief Water Supply Engineer, Southern Riverina.

Elaine, in the meantime, undertook her Bachelor of Music at Melbourne Conservatorium at Melbourne University from 1946 to 1949. For her first two years of University, Mum boarded at the Princess Mary Club, which was located next to Wesley Methodist Church, Lonsdale Street. In 1951 Mum moved to the family home where she lived with Beatrice Peverill (Beatrice's son Mark was my husband David's best man at our wedding), Shirley Cosgriff, Shirley Marquis (later to marry Elaine's brother Frank) and Irma Rashleigh. Later co-tenants were Muf Forestier, Margaret Hendry and Margaret Lyons.

After completing her Bachelor of Music Elaine then began teaching – a passion which she carried on both professionally and in everyday life. Elaine taught at MLC Hawthorn, St. Margaret's Berwick, Tintern (where I believe I was put in my bassinet under the piano when a babe), until her final teaching position at Melbourne Girls' Grammar.

During her teaching at Tintern, Elaine was the accompanist for a mixed choir at East Malvern Church. Requiring male voices for their annual Christmas Concert, one of the choristers spoke of a bass who'd sung previously with the choir when the bass's father was minister at the church. This bass of course, was Mum's beloved Jack. As it happened, Jack's Aunt Doris was great friends with Bill and Amy and had been soloist and chorister in Bill's choir at Lockhart.

With many singing engagements together, Jack and Elaine tied the knot on 21 May, 1955, here at Camberwell Methodist Church. Married by Jack's father Henry Clarke, bridesmaid was Helen Begg – Jack's cousin and daughter of Doris. Jack and Elaine moved into 2 Westbourne Grove and first I appeared in 1958, Kate in 1961, and Peter in 1963. We moved to Queen's College in 1964 and David joined the family in 1966.

I said I appeared – all four of us were adopted – or as Mum referred to us one day in conversation “they're all ready made!” I said to Mum – sounds as though we're cake mixes – just add water and shake!”

I've heard of other parents having perhaps two children who are adopted, but for a family to

have four adopted children was a very rare thing – and it just speaks volumes as to the wonderful parents Jack and Elaine were. I believe that I was one of the luckiest babies when I came into the Clarke household. I remember also very clearly going to the Queen Victoria hospital with Mum, Dad and Kate to “pick” our baby brothers.....Peter and David.

Mum and Dad kept the house at Camberwell and returned there in 1989 when Dad retired from Queen's after 25 years of dedicated service. Throughout all this time family, music and faith were integral parts of Mum's life. As we grew up, Mum ensured we were well dressed – even making Kate and I matching dresses, knitting matching cardigans and making us pinnies to cover our school uniforms.

Music was a major factor in our lives – Mum founded and conducted the Victorian Girl Guide Choir from 1961 to 1975. At Queen's College she not only conducted the College Chapel choir from 1967 to 1977, but she also provided supper for the students after chapel – when everyone was invited to go “Clarkeing”. Us kids were given VERY strict instructions we weren't allowed to touch the food – melting moments, raspberry slice, sponge with jam and cream, cheese biscuits.....they were for the students!

The Victorian Welsh Choir for Mum and Dad was a wonderful time of music and friendship, and we thank Fal and the choir for singing today. Camberwell Methodist, which became Camberwell Uniting, has been a very large part of our lives, with Sunday School, church picnics, choir practices, cricket matches and church services. Mum and Dad were stalwart members of the congregation all their lives. And we thank you all for your love, support and prayers for both Mum and Dad over these past years.

Our family is very close knit – we will miss our Patriarch and Matriarch – dada and mum, pa and granny. They are forever in our hearts.....Heaven is now a richer place with mum and her beloved Jack reunited. The choir practice is underway – Mum is encouraging everyone to breathe from their diaphragms – Dad and David have a strong bass line going..... Sing with love, laughter and music forever in your hearts.

We miss you Mum – love you to the moon and back.” Jenny

Kate's son Andrew Kerr also spoke of his recollections of his grandmother. He spoke very well, with many anecdotes that resonated with many family and friends in the audience. I had hoped to include Andrew's comments; however I

understand that his eulogy grew from some handwritten shorthand notes, the finished product of which was unfortunately not ready in time for publication.

Elaine passed away peacefully at the Hedley Sutton residential aged care Community, aged 90. She is finally re-united with her beloved Jack.



PS. It would be remiss of me not to mention the extraordinary, moving and most fitting end of the thanksgiving service.

Following the concluding Hymn (Abide with Me) and the Blessing and Committal, the pallbearers prepared to exit the Church, followed by the immediate family, and then, as would be expected, by the remainder of the mourners, departing orderly to the rear of the Church.

As indicated in the Order of Service, this Recessional was to be done to the song "Working Man", played from a CD, and sung by Jack Clarke as a soloist, accompanied by Elaine on the piano, and backed by the Victorian Male Voice Welsh Choir.

Members of the Welsh Choir had already paid a musical tribute during the service and were seated as a group at the left front of the church near the choir stalls. They had not begun to depart when Elaine's coffin and the family had exited, and the rest of the congregation were still listening to Jack's beautiful bass tones, when something about the music changed, and the whole congregation felt it at the same time.

In keeping with the music of the CD, the Welsh Choir commenced to sing their accompanying vocals as recorded on the CD, giving the song a stereophonic sound which resonated throughout the church, and was mesmerising in its beauty. The congregation remaining in the church stopped where they stood, and did not move again until the song finished, when they burst into applause for such a spontaneous and moving tribute. It was a most wonderful send off.

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Camberwell Refugee Support A Refugee's Story

A Fund Raising Event, sponsored by the Camberwell Refugee Support Group and hosted by the St John's Asylum Seeker Support Group, was staged on Sunday 28 October at 2.30 pm at St John's. The Rutherford Room was a beautiful setting and the set up was ideal in terms of seating, microphone, and projector.

Donations from the event were to be donated to the continuing upkeep of the Refugee House (Illoura), including support to the residents living there, and repairs to the spouting. Illoura residents were invited to attend.

Helen Howells (from St John's Anglican Church) was MC for the event, and Margaret Watters (CUC CRS Chair) provided the context for the event. Afternoon tea was provided by St John's, Highfield Road and Camberwell UC. Approximately 60 people attended the event.

The Event was headlined as "A Refugee's Story".

Nayran Tabiei, a Syrian refugee, was duly introduced by Helen, who shared in her introduction, her impressions about her recent meeting with Nayran. Currently Nayran works for the 'Free to Feed' organisation each Sunday, 8.30 am – 1.30 pm and week days in child care.



Pictured: Helen Howells and Nayran Tabiei
Nayran welcomed the opportunity to tell her story.

In Margaret's words, "*Nayran told a gripping story of her family's abrupt dash from Syria, the breakup of her family (her three sons went to Iran) and her arrival with her husband and daughter in a boat which was broken up, leaving its occupants in the water at Christmas Island. She left us to imagine the horror.*

In her speech she concentrated on how they had been supported on Christmas Island and where she is now. She is adamant about looking forward and is working in childcare and various other refugee supporting roles with great energy and optimism, in spite of being on a limited term visa and with no certainty about her own future.

She expressed profound gratitude at the opportunities Australia offers her and the obligations on refugees like herself to contribute

to the country giving them refuge. The audience was swept up by her address and then her frank answering of questions.

When she was thanked for her impressive presentation her response was that she was glad to have the opportunity to tell her story and express her appreciation of what Australia means to her.”

The afternoon tea was very successful. It gave people from a range of organisations a chance to network. A member from a Baptist group of refugee supporters in Ashburton has already made contact in the hope of establishing links with our group.

A sum of \$1695 was collected and passed on to the Camberwell UC Council for the maintenance of Illoura.

There was so much enthusiasm about the success of Sunday afternoon’s gathering. The support of the CRS group with their presence, their food and/or donations was excellent. Prior to the event we had talked about a modest afternoon tea, however the food was beautiful thanks to the generous people who supplied it.

After the presentation Graeme Pratt thanked the speaker and presented her with flowers and petrol money.

We were also lucky that Helen Howells was able to recruit Nayran, and what an inspiring person she turned out to be.

Margaret Watters

Camberwell Refugee Support Group

We have continued our bi-monthly meetings. Among the initiatives to support the residents in Illoura was the visit to Yarra Junction to the Mc Kay family’s organic plant farm.

Eric and Geoff took one of the men from Illoura for what was a social outing as well as a learning opportunity and then helped with the planting of the seedlings back here in Camberwell. Eril and Ruth shopped for cleaning materials and set up two baskets labelled ‘Kitchen’ and ‘Bathroom’!

Several of our members viewed the film ‘Border Politics’ and recommended that we cooperate with other Boroondara groups to show it as a fund-raiser next year.

Collection boxes have been made available for ‘Change for Refugees’ and the CRS has been pleased to see how well these have been taken up.

The main fundraiser this half year was the afternoon event, ‘A Refugee’s Story’ at St John’s, reported on separately in this edition of

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Kairos. The sum of \$1695.70 was collected for maintenance of Illoura.

Margaret Watters

The Immigrant Apostles’ Creed



I believe in Almighty God, who guided the people in exile and in exodus, the God of Joseph in Egypt and Daniel in Babylon, the God of foreigners and immigrants.

I believe in Jesus Christ, a displaced Galilean, who was born away from his people and his home, who fled his country with his parents when his life was in danger. When he returned to his own country he suffered under the oppression of Pontius Pilate, the servant of a foreign power. Jesus was persecuted, beaten, tortured and unjustly condemned to death.

But on the third day Jesus rose from the dead, not as a scorned foreigner but to offer us citizenship in God’s kingdom.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the eternal immigrant from God’s kingdom among us, who speaks all languages, lives in all countries, and reunites all races.

I believe that the Church is the secure home for foreigners and for all believers.

I believe that the communion of saints begins when we embrace all God’s people in all their diversity. I believe in forgiveness, which makes us all equal before God, and in reconciliation, which heals our brokenness.

I believe that, in the Resurrection, God will unite us as one people in which all are distinct and all are alike at the same time.

I believe in life eternal, in which no one will be a foreigner but all will be citizens of the kingdom where God reigns forever and ever. Amen.

(Rev. Jose Luis Casal, one time Cuban immigrant to the USA, currently Director, Presbyterian World Mission)

Many thanks to **Helen Martin** for this very thoughtful contribution.

It is taken from the August 2018 edition of “The Grail in Australia”, an ecumenical movement of

women grounded in the Christian faith and open to dialogue with women of other religious traditions while deepening our own.

Uniting Church Icons and an Icon for Ruth

Icons are sacred images of Christ, and the Saints, as well as depictions of scenes from the Scriptures. Icons are honoured in the church as aids to Christian devotion.

Uniting Church Icon School

There are three Uniting Church Icon schools. They form an ecumenical community of artists, primarily painting (or “writing”) in the Byzantine style. They currently have about 50 active members.

They meet in the hall at the Auburn Uniting Church in three groups, one day a month. All schools begin at 10.00 am and finish at 3.30 pm. There is an emphasis on the Byzantine style, with other traditions such as Coptic, Ethiopian and Norwegian also available.

Beginners are always welcome, and they do not need any prior artistic skill or experience, just patience. Participants are free to choose the icons they paint once they have completed their first exercise.

The first school began in 1995, and the enterprise has grown steadily ever since. From time to time an exhibition is organised.

The co-ordinator of the schools is Rev. Dr. Rob Gallacher, who has studied iconography overseas, and who has been painting icons for 25 years. Dr. Gallacher frequently speaks at meetings of interested groups around Melbourne and supplies icons to churches who want to use them in worship. Commissions are welcomed and icons are sold.

A Brief Introduction to Praying with Icons (by Rob Gallacher)

An icon is more than a work of art. Its purpose is to link the person praying with the unseen reality it represents. Commonly an icon is called a “Window on Heaven”.

Through it the viewer sees into the world beyond while, at the same time, the Spirit of God reaches out to incorporate the viewer in the eternal, transcendental world of God’s own being.

Kahlil Gibran says in The Prophet, “Do not think that you have God in your heart, but rather that you are in the heart of God.” This is contemplative prayer.

The justification for these images is based on the
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*incarnation. As the invisible God took flesh in Jesus so that believers might see him and know the Father, so an icon presents an image (of Jesus, or of a saint in whom the spirit of Jesus dwells) that the believer might look on and through the image and know God.**

Icon of Ruth, for Ruth

As good luck would have it, one of **Ruth Akie’s** sisters is Norma Gallacher, wife of the Rev Dr Rob Gallacher, and writer of icons. The icon of the biblical Ruth was written for our Ruth by Norma and Rob.



Ruth brought it to our Church for Ian to bless, which he did on 5 August 2018.

Ruth subsequently placed her icon in her lounge room, where she sees it many times a day and where she can quietly meditate on it.

Ruth says “It is very significant to me because it was written by my sister Norma and her husband Rob. It is also special because it is based

on my namesake, the Biblical character of Ruth.

It reminds me that we are called to care for others especially in difficult times of their lives - regardless of race, age, religion or gender.

Ruth’s allegiance to Naomi is symbolic of family loyalty and care —which is very important to me.”



Pictured above are some of Ruth’s family and friends who attended Camberwell Uniting Church on the day of the Icon Blessing: sister Janet (Woolhouse), sister Norma (Gallacher), sister Fran (Keller), Rob Gallacher, Ruth, and

Bronwyn Long (longtime friend of Ruth and member of Surrey Hills Uniting).

* The information above relating to Praying with Icons was drawn from the Uniting Church in Australia Assembly Website. The general information relating to the Uniting Church Icon School was sourced from the Internet, including the UCA's Centre for Theology and Ministry Website.

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Sammy Stamp (or to give it its formal title) – the Uniting Church Adult Fellowship STAMP FUND

According to the Stamp Fund's website, "redemption and renewal are at the heart of the Christian story. Creating something good from what seems worthless or unsalvageable.

These themes are central to the story and teaching of Jesus, who called on his followers to assess value and worth far beyond monetary limitations, and recognise the loveliness of the poor and marginalised instead of being blinded by the grandiosity of the elite.

The Church's history is rich with traditions and practices which seek to revere, renew and build on the humble or modest. Sammy Stamp continues this tradition.

For more than 30 years, volunteers have gathered to collect, trim, sort and package stamps received from Uniting Church members and synod employees. The stamps are sold in bulk to stamp dealers, and stock books of stamps are sold to collectors, and the money is directed to various programs connected to the church.

Originally begun by the Presbyterian Women's Missionary Union, the Sammy Stamp fund became a project of the Uniting Church Adult Fellowship following Church Union in 1977. The program regularly raises in excess of \$20,000 each year.

Past projects supported by Sammy Stamp funds include overseas microfinance programs, clean water projects in South India and Papua New Guinea, appeals for natural disasters and projects funded through SHARE. Sammy Stamp has also assisted Frontier Services and several local UnitingCare agencies.

Through the act of first seeing the potential value in something that would otherwise be tossed in the bin – a stamped envelope delivered in our mail – value is created from virtually nothing to benefit those in need. Creating 'something from nothing' fulfils a very human desire to create; along with the will to care for those who most

need it, the act gives joy to everyone involved."

Camberwell Uniting Church

Lois Grenfell is the focus for all things 'stamps' at Camberwell Uniting. Formally Lois is one of many of "Sammy's merry band of helpers and supporters", which keep this ministry going in the Synod Office and all around Victoria and Tasmania.

The Uniting Church Network Magazine reported in August this year that sales had reached \$24,460 (same time last year \$17,230). By September this year, sales of stamps had reached \$28,870.

This is really impressive when you consider the decline in the number of letters being sent, while the demand for used stamps is remaining constant.

But you can help. Just remove the stamps from your mail and either hand them to Lois or place them in the Narthex.

Thanks Lois

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The Twelve Days of Christmas

Among the many mysteries which surround Christmas, there is one perennial question – what in the world do leaping lords, French hens, swimming swans and especially the partridge who won't come out of the pear tree have to do with Christmas? It is one Christmas Carol that leaves most people baffled every year.

Well, you are now about to become that much wiser.

Historians tell us that from 1558 until 1829, Roman Catholics in England were not permitted to practice their faith openly. Someone during that era wrote this carol as a catechism song for young Catholics.

The carol had two levels of meaning: the surface meaning plus a hidden meaning known only to members of their church. Each element in the carol has a code word for a religious reality which children could remember.

- The partridge in the pear tree was Jesus Christ;
- Two turtle doves were the Old and the New Testaments;
- Three French hens stood for faith, hope and love;
- The four calling birds were the four gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John;
- The five gold rings recalled the Torah or Law, the first five books of the Old Testament;
- The six geese a-laying stood for the six days of creation;

- Seven swans a-swimming represented the sevenfold gifts of the Holy Spirit – Prophecy, Serving, Teaching, Exhortation, Contribution, Leadership and Mercy;
- The eight maids a-milking were the eight beatitudes;
- Nine ladies dancing were the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit - Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness and Self-control;
- The ten lords are leaping were the ten commandments;
- The eleven pipers piping stood for the eleven faithful disciples; and
- The twelve drummers drumming symbolised the twelve points of belief in the Apostles' Creed.

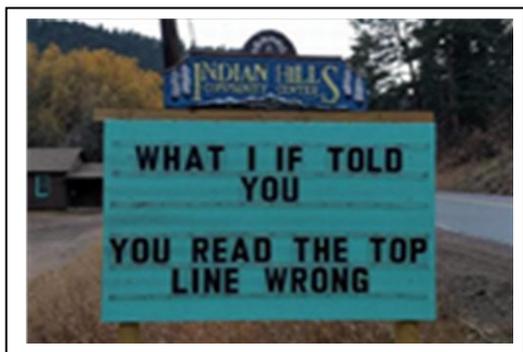
So there is your history for the day. This knowledge was passed on to me and I found it interesting and enlightening, and now you know how that strange song became a Christmas Carol.

Merry Twelve Days of Christmas everyone! (and remember, the twelve days of Christmas are the 12 days following December 25 – Christmas season runs until Epiphany on 6 January).

(from Methodist Central Hall, Westminster)

Thank you to **Margaret Bexley** for the history lesson. Timely, as well as informative.

Ed



Congratulations to Fran Reith

Established in 1888, the Victorian Artists' Society (VAS) is a not-for-profit association offering art classes, gallery hire, workshops and membership.

It makes an important contribution to the cultural fabric of Victoria, and plays host to exhibitions of national, international and historic significance.

Membership of the Society is restricted to 1000, and is open to all persons interested in the fine arts, with the emphasis on practising artists. The Society brings people together from all over Victoria who have a passion for the visual arts and who enjoy sharing activities, meeting together and pursuing art.

Their teaching program attracts students from metropolitan and country areas, and continues to have a far-reaching impact on artistic activities in Victoria.

The VAS Student and Teacher Exhibition 2018 was held from 26 July until 7 August this year.

Below is a photograph of the Society's Highly Commended Award Recipients for this year's Student and Teacher Exhibition, featuring our own Fran Reith, who won two such Awards.

Fran's Awards were for her Drawing, and for her Gouache painting.



For those who may not know, as I understand it, the term gouache was first used in France in the eighteenth century to describe a type of paint made from pigments bound in water-soluble gum, like watercolour, but with the addition of a white pigment in order to make it opaque.

Larger percentages of binder are used than with watercolour, and various amounts of inert pigments such as chalk are added to enhance the opacity. Gouache forms a thicker layer of paint on the paper surface and does not allow the white of the paper to show through. It is often used to create highlights in watercolours.

Fran was thrilled with her two Awards, and has been kind enough to share two photos of her award winning works, to enable us to admire and appreciate her talent.



“Sorrow” [Graphite]



" Still life with apples" [Gouache]

Well done Fran, and congratulations on your achievement!!

Messy Church Reports



Sunday 19 August promised **Mustard Wonders** and **Yeast Surprises!**



Taken from the Parable of the Mustard Seed, from Matthew 13: 31-32, (it also appears in the Gospels of Mark and Luke). The parable told by Jesus is as follows: The Kingdom of Heaven is like a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field. It is smaller than all seeds, but when it is grown, it is greater than all the herbs, and becomes a large tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in its branches.

Jesus wanted us to understand that every small good deed, and every act of love is important and can grow into something big; i.e. “From Little Things Big Things Grow”.

Our gathering activity this month was making bread - watching flour, yeast and water grow into something large, which is then cooked – it made delicious bread rolls.



Other activities included growing shoots from mustard seeds in CD cases on cotton wool using lots of water - shoots were to appear later and eventually grow into big trees; seed cases were decorated with fun stickers; branches for a big tree were made with cardboard rolls attached to a trunk to make a big tree; mustard seeds had to be found amongst many seeds of different sizes; leaves were painted on trees and birds made to sit on nests in trees with cotton wool in seed pods.

Foodcraft was decorating honey joys with strawberries and edible eyes to look like birds on nests. The celebration had two video stories: (i) Representing the growing of mustard seeds into trees for birds to nest in; and (ii) Making bread with yeast.

Two songs were sung, a story was read, and Ian talked about how big things can come from tiny things, e.g. friendship from a smile and many other examples!

Dinner was tacos, then cake and fruit. 23 Adults attended, with 14 children.



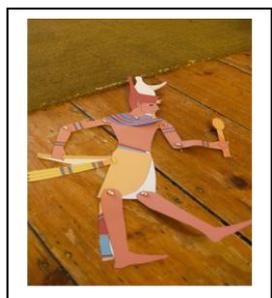
On Sunday 16 September, our Hero has a **"brother problem"**! What is his Story?

The story is of Joseph and his brothers from the Old Testament (Genesis Ch: 37) and the jealousy that happens in families. Essentially, Joseph was his father's favourite and his brothers hated him for it.

Activities for the day included: Pyramid making using connecting sticks; making an Egyptian cut out figure with articulated joints; building a colour

block Pharaoh figure using ears of wheat in a bucket; and making a material coat of many colours (squares joined together and modeled by Aimee), like the coat of many colours that Jacob had made for his son Joseph, which caused much jealousy between his brothers.

Foodcraft involved icing biscuits in the shape of a man (Joseph), and decorating them with mini smarties. Thanks to Helen for making the biscuits.



Celebration was a video -"God's story - Joseph", and dinner was mini-pizzas and fruit.

Thanks to all 18 adults who helped and participated with the 10 children.



Sunday 21 October was focused on **"Fruits of the Spirit"**.

The Fruit of the Holy Spirit is a biblical term that sums up nine attributes of a person or

community living in accord with the Holy Spirit, according to chapter 5 v22-23 of the Epistle to the Galatians: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control".

Activities included: giving everyone a cape onto which they could place stickers of fruits after each activity; matching fruits and their trees; decorating honey joys with a smiley-face sticker; using patience to fill a balloon with playdough by cutting at the neck; exercising self-control by making a small box and picking up smarties with a straw, dropping them into the box and saving them until dessert; demonstrating peace by sewing a dove and stuffing it with cotton wool; picturing love by scratching hearts from special black paper; then being given two lollies and having to give one away (generosity/ goodness); showing gentleness/kindness by making a woolly lamb from lambs' wool and pinning it onto sheep; and finally gaining an understanding of

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faithfulness and being trustworthy by being led around the church blindfolded.



For the Celebration, there were words spread around the church, which when put together, spelt out the "fruits of the spirit." Ruth told one of Jesus' story about doing, not just talking - a story of bearing fruits in action.

Songs were sung, followed by a prayer, finishing with the Lord's Prayer.

Dinner was fish fingers, fruit and honey joys for 20 adults and 5 children.



On Sunday 25 November we held a **Messy Advent**. The theme for the day was centred around preparation for Christmas.

We had a bumper crowd of 23 adults and

20 children, including two new families (from Camberwell Primary).

We began by preparing food, in this case making lamingtons, including dipping in chocolate and coconut (which became our dessert later).

Other activities included: writing something special on a tag and placing it on our Christmas Tree; making star decorations out of CD covers; painting a nativity scene on plastic to look like stained glass windows; filling baubles with coloured beads etc. for use as a tree decoration. Most popular was making a personalized Christmas Card for someone special.

The Celebration in Church involved a video of the angel coming to Mary to tell her she would be having a special baby; and a second video of an angel coming to Mary's cousin Elizabeth saying she would also have a baby (to be called John, later to be known as 'the Baptist'). We sang two songs, and Ian told of preparing for the coming of Jesus.



We then returned to the hall for dinner of hamburgers and salad. And self-made lamingtons!

Our last Messy Church for 2018 will be held on Sunday December 23, when we will have "Messy Christmas" with a focus on Christmas games and fun.

Thanks to Margery and Ian, those who worked with the children across a range of activities for the year and made their Messy Church days so rewarding, and to Ruth, Jenny, Alex and all others who worked in the kitchen on Messy Days, feeding generously all who attended.

Thanks also to those who made and brought food, and those who cleaned up afterwards – it is such a great and enjoyable team effort. Well done for 2018 – just Messy Christmas to go!

Fiona Ensor

(More) Announcements from Church Bulletins

- The Rev. Merriwether spoke briefly, much to the delight of the audience.
- Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our church and community.
- The concert held in the Fellowship Hall was a great success. Special thanks are due to the minister's daughter, who labored the whole evening at the piano, which as usual fell upon her.
- For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs.
- Please place your donation in the envelope along with the deceased person you want remembered.
- A bean supper will be held on Tuesday evening. Organ music will follow.
- Pot-luck supper Sunday at 5:00 PM - prayer and medication to follow.

A final word

This publication is a team effort. It benefits enormously from those in our church community who supply items of interest which are always appreciated. Please maintain your enthusiasm, and thank you all for your contributions this year. Thank you also to all those who gave us feedback during the year.

I am indebted to Carolyn Harris for her support, advice and after hours assistance, as well as her positivity and enthusiasm which makes putting together this publication a pleasure. Similarly I appreciate the advice, wise counsel and quality input of our Minister Ian. Thanks so much, Carolyn and Ian.

And finally thank you, dear reader, for taking the time to savor the product of our labours. We hope it continues to meet your needs and expectations.

Ed



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Messy Church:
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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