

Monthly update

The Uniting Church in Australia

St Luke's Congregation, Highton



June 2022



This year we celebrate Pentecost on Sunday June 5th. Pentecost is a Jewish feast celebrated 50 days after Passover and involves the offering of the first fruits of the harvest to God.

For Christians, Pentecost Sunday marks that event in the earliest days of the Christian Church when the Holy Spirit came upon the first disciples with an impact that was tangible.

Before the events of the Day of Pentecost that are recorded in the Book of the Acts of the Apostles, the first disciples were in waiting and keeping to themselves. After the coming of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost they were profoundly changed: still tongues were suddenly energised to proclaim the way of Jesus in words that could be understood by people from the four corners of the known world.

No wonder the book of the Acts of the Apostles could well be called the Acts of the Holy Spirit.

As we explored in worship on the Sundays leading up to Pentecost, the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth, the Spirit who empowers the church with courage, and the Spirit that touches hearts and souls bringing about transformation.

And as we also affirmed: despite everything, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, is with us.

Elvis may have left the building, but the Holy Spirit remains with us.

Office administrator: Robyn Hodge.

Office open hours: Tuesdays and Fridays, 9:30am–12:30pm

The Hebrew word for Spirit (Ruah) and the Greek word for Spirit (Pneuma) can also be translated *wind* or *breath*. In the book of the prophet Ezekiel (chapter 37) we read how Ezekiel had a vision of the Spirit of God blowing life to a valley of dry bones.

In these days where truth seems to be an optional extra in public discourse, when the Church seems frail and battered, when the only news seems bad, surely, we should be praying the traditional Christian prayer: "Come, Holy Spirit."

"Come Holy Spirit, breathe the life of God in us and in our world."

"Come Holy Spirit and renew our faith and fan the fire of the hope, peace and joy we find in Christ."

Paul Stephens, Minister in Placement

Image: <https://mlcauburn.org/holy-spirit-fire-of-pentecost/> Messiah Lutheran Church, Auburn, WA, USA

Readings for the Month

	<i>1st Reading</i>	<i>Psalm</i>	<i>2nd Reading</i>	<i>Gospel</i>
June 12 Trinity Sunday	Prv 8:1-4,22-31	Ps 8	Rom 5:1-5	Jn 16:12-15
June 19 Pentecost 2	1 Kgs 19:1-4,8-15a	Ps 42&43	Gal 3:23-29	Lk 8:26-39
June 26 Pentecost 3	1 Kgs 2:1-2,6-14	Ps 77:1-2,11-20	Gal 5:1,13-25	Lk 9:51-62
July 3 Pentecost 4	2 Kgs 5:1-14	Ps 30	Gal 6:(1-6),7-16	Lk 10:1-11,16-20
July 10 Pentecost 5	Am 7:7-17	Ps 82	Col 1:1-14	Lk 10:25-37

Diary

Tues 7/6	8.30 - 9.30	Prayers by the River (near Barwon Valley Fun Park)
Thur 9/6	1.30-3pm	Midweek Worship
Sat 11/6	12.00 - 5pm	Geelong Repair Cafe - Highton
Fri 17/6	1-4pm; Sat 18/6	Collectables sale
Wed 22/6		45th Anniversary of UCA
Wed 22/6	2 - 3.30pm	Coffee & Chat, St Luke's

Congregation News

Mission Outreach

Probably many people may not have heard of Asylum Seekers being locked up for years in the Park Royal Hotel in Melbourne until tennis player Novak Djokovic was held in detention there earlier this year.

A young man from Pakistan who arrived in Australia when he was 21 years old seeking Asylum was placed in detention and journeyed through the various detention centres operated by the Australian Government, including Manus Island before finally being placed in the Park hotel. He was released the week prior to our recent elections, given \$350 and told he was now responsible for himself, allowed to work but not study or to seek permanent residency, he is now 30 yrs old having spent a third of his life in detention although he has never committed a crime. He is looking forward to being mentally able to in time gain employment and enjoy playing cricket again.

The Brigidine Sisters have rented a unit for him and a friend in Melbourne but he had no furniture. Through a network of contacts including Wesley he made contact with Ken Anderson, asking Ken if he could visit our Men's Shed to obtain some furniture and household goods. Our new friend arrived with some friends before lunch with a large Budget rental truck and left at 2.30pm loaded with a complete house lot of furniture, bedding and kitchenware, a lot of which had just been recently received as a donation from the estate of a man who came here as a refugee himself after the Second world war.

During loading, Ken discovered that he was short of a double bed mattress (he had the bedhead and base only). Upon hearing about our shortage, a lady from within the Highton community suggested that we go to Sandman and buy a mattress and charge her account. Sandman were so supportive of this story and generously offered to deliver the mattress at no cost, plus Sandman donated pillows as a part of their contribution towards the work provided at St Luke's. Thank you to the very kind and generous lady and also to Sandman.

Rae Anderson

St Luke's Chapel Collectibles

When volunteers make a commitment towards taking care of needy people, wow There is a story to tell.

This story is about a small group of volunteers who faithfully give their time and energy towards raising funds for needy people, which is not only rewarding for the receiving families but is also enabling St Luke's to be a church that is attempting to live out God's mission in the community.

It seems that there is no end to our initiative, as we continue to receive donations of household items from families who de-clutter or downsize – some suitable to be given to newcomer families, whilst some items are sold as a part of our Chapel Collectibles. Funds raised go directly into our Refugee Ministry Fund.

The work of receiving, sorting and preparing for our monthly open day sales is an enormous task. Luckily, people from within our community have offered to help and have stepped-up to share the load. Jobs include: washing glassware, sorting cutlery (thanks to Val McKenzie who gave us 2



hours last week and cheerfully sorted some for us), boxing and resting Collectible items... and the list goes on.

I understand that there can be no easy outcomes until much continuous and time consuming work is completed. Our May sales bought in over \$3,500. However, talking, sharing and listening to peoples' stories is another way in which we can be a church within our community – stories mainly influenced by the eclectic collection of vintage or retro goods on sale in the Chapel.

June opening: Friday 24th. June between 1pm and 4.30pm.
Saturday 25 June between 9am and lunch time.

On both days we will welcome back the **Cottage by the Sea** ladies selling jams, sauces, pickles. There will also be sales of paintings, books and furniture.

Forward notice to July when once again the Chapel Collectibles will be featuring **Christmas in July**. Last year's event was overwhelming and we look forward to another amazing display of all sorts of Christmas items. If you are planning to change your Christmas decorations this year and don't know what to do with your old decorations – drop them off to us and we will try to sell them and raise money for our needy newcomer families. That is what our Collectible sales are all about Raising much needed money to support people in needan important way to live out St Luke's Mission within our community.

Once again we continue to thank our small team of volunteers, and of course Men's Shed who consistently respond to our many requests for help to upgrade our displays. Also our customers are thankful that we have a Credit Card facility available.

Why don't you plan to pop into the Chapel and say 'hello' and take a look at our Collectibles. A warm welcome, and a surprise awaits you.

Linda Salamy and Rae Anderson – Collectibles Co-ordinators.
Mobile: 0413 888 884

Reconciliation on Right Track

As our First Nations people mark two important dates on their calendar this week, Tasmanian indigenous spokesperson Alison Overeem urges Uniting Church members to continue driving the change towards reconciliation. National Reconciliation Week runs until June 3.

The theme of Reconciliation Week this year is "Be Brave. Make Change" and Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress Leprena Centre manager Alison says it's a theme that also lays down a challenge to Australia's Second Peoples on recognising the need for change in their approach to indigenous relations.



As First Peoples mark Sorry Day today, Alison says it's time for Second Peoples to do more of the heavy lifting on issues surrounding reconciliation and indigenous rights in general.

"Achieving reconciliation, as far as I'm concerned, isn't the job of First Peoples," Alison says.

"(Second Peoples) need to reconcile with their own account of the history of this land and I think there is a whole lot more that needs to happen around that before we can be in true reconciliation with each other.

Website: stlukesuca.org.au **Email:** info@stlukesuca.org.au **Ph:** 5244 2997

“For me it’s about people reconciling their perception of the true history of Australia and acknowledging that they live on land that was never ceded by First Peoples.

“There is a lot of commitment and openness to this (from Second Peoples) and once we have a cultural appreciation of the true gifts and ancient wisdom of the First Peoples, we then have to decide what we are going to do with it.”

Reconciliation, says Alison, must start at a local level and involves everybody becoming “warriors for change”.

“So the question becomes what is going to change for each individual, congregation, church and Synod that indicates a commitment towards reconciliation,” she says.

“It’s about an emphasis on what changes we make once we have reconciled in our own minds the true history of Australia and the impact of invasion and colonisation, and then what we do with that awareness.

“Having said that, change may be happening slowly, but it is happening.

“There are pockets of amazing and transformative change and we now need to see it spread more widely.”

Alison has posted reflections on National Sorry Day and National Reconciliation Week which can be [read here](#).

Article from [Crosslight](#), May 26, 2022.



In September 2020, [Common Grace](#) put out a call for Christians across these lands now called Australia to mix their creativity with their enthusiasm for creation and climate justice and knit scarves that tell the truth of our warming climate. We are now seeking more climate scarves to gift to our newly elected MPs and Senators. You can register to receive the [climate scarf pattern here](#).

Pastoral Connections

It has come to the notice of Pastoral Connections that Patti Tinney has moved to Melbourne to be closer to her daughter Janie. When speaking to Janie she asked if I would pass on Patti’s best wishes to her friends at St. Luke’s, and to thank everyone for their love and care of Patti during her long association with St. Luke’s and her stay at Warrailly.

Pam



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PRAYER REQUESTS (from Wednesday Prayer Time)

Praise and Thanksgiving

- We give thanks for the good work being done locally to support refugees and the Qld flood victims. Farmers offering truckloads of hay for stock, BlazeAid mending fences, Doctors offering their services in rural areas and so much more.
- Give thanks for the life and witness of Ray Ballagh, who passed away on 17th May.
- Praise God for the medical facilities and specialists that are available to us here in Geelong.
- Thankyou Lord for those people in the congregation who offer their services in so many ways. Doing the little things that not many people know about. May they be blessed with good health and the will to continue to volunteer and be available.
- Offer praise to the Lord that the Biloela family will be returning 'home' to the arms of those who have fought so hard for them. May they once again know peace and security as their case is processed. We pray for other families in the same situation who continue to live with uncertainty.
- We marvel at the wonders of nature. The rainbows, the showers and the sunshine, the beauty of the colours of autumn, and the special joy of sharing a coffee or hot soup with friends.

General Prayers

- Of late our prayers are again focused on a mass shooting in Texas. So many innocent lives snatched away. There are no words that can ease the pain of parents and loved ones at this loss.
- We pray for our newly elected government, that they will show compassion, and that honest and inclusive dialogue will occur around climate change and international relations. We also pray that our politician's will keep the best interests of all people and our country uppermost in their discussions and negotiations.
- We pray for truth and justice for those people who no longer feel they have a 'voice' in their own country. We ask that anyone seeking refuge in our country will be supported and feel safe.
- We hold in our hearts and prayers those we know, and those we don't know, who are unwell, or requiring ongoing treatment. We think of all people heading off on holidays after the lifting of restrictions, may they travel safely.
- Our heartfelt prayers are for the people of Ukraine who are deeply impacted by the ongoing fighting. We think of their families now scattered across so many countries. Lord, we pray for an end to this battle and we think of those who have been lost. May dialogue begin in pursuit of peace.

Pam Seller

OUR PRAYER FOCUS FOR THIS MONTH. ¶ PENTECOST. ¶

Lord, we thank you for the transforming work of your Holy Spirit in our lives, and through our lives, toward others. ¶
We thank you that you have given us the boldness to proclaim the Gospel through our lives. ¶
Remind us how to use your power to do the work you have given us. ¶

Amen. ¶

