

Monthly update

The Uniting Church in Australia

St Luke's Congregation, Highton



October 2023

Surprising Outcomes

So many books, films and television series are premised on a twist. You reach the end of a film or a book and suddenly things go in an unexpected direction. Agatha Christie is famous for doing this in her detective novels.

In *Murder on the Orient Express*, who did Hercule Poirot deduce with his little grey cells had done it? Everyone!

In *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*, who did Hercule Poirot deduce had done the deed? The narrator, Dr. James Sheppard, the person telling the story!



Have you ever watched the first *Planet of Apes* film? I never forget seeing it for the first time on television as a young person and being quite shocked by the last scene. Charlton Heston has crashed on a planet which is run by the Apes and in that last scene he comes across the remains of the Statue of Liberty and suddenly we realise that the planet is actually Earth!

Jesus' parables often contain similar surprising twists which are intended to have an impact on those who hear them.

The parable of the generous landowner (Matthew 20: 1-16), often called less accurately the parable of the laborers in the vineyard, well and truly fits into this category. (It was the Gospel reading set down in the lectionary for 24th September.)

The landowner is clearly a good man ... he keeps his word to all the people he employs. His wage for a whole day's work was seen as reasonable and fair. But because he chooses to be generous and pay all the workers ... no matter how many hours they worked ... the same amount, he receives complaints and not thanks from those who worked all day.

'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage?'¹⁴ Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you.¹⁵ Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?'

Jesus begins the parable with the words "the Kingdom of heaven is like," so clearly it is intended to teach us about the way God goes about doing things. And it underlines that God's way is not about us getting back what we put in.

One commentator I consulted mentioned that the Roman gods were seen in this latter way. You made a sacrifice to a god and the god was supposed to give you an appropriate

blessing in return. Often shrines to Roman gods had an inscription which in English read, "I give in order that you may give." I give to the god so I can get back from the god. A god was a bit like a modern vending machine!

The parable underlines that this is not the way the living God works. The abundant life Christ offers (in this world and the world to come) does not depend on whether one embraces it at 8 or 80, it is still the same abundant life.

The most genuinely saintly person or the most troubled person are offered the same life-changing love by God. God deals with us all graciously ... with undeserved favour. And we cannot overestimate the extent of that grace. (This, of course, has major implications for how we deal with each other!)

Paul Stephens

Minister in Placement

Coming Up

Services:

Sunday 8/10	9.30am	Sunday Service (Paul)
Thursday 12/10	1.30pm	Midweek service (Rev Kevin Yelverton)
Sunday 15/10	9.30am	Sunday Service (Rev Tevita Holani) Holy Communion
Sunday 15/10	7pm	House Church (Judy Clark) Led by Isabell and Steve
Sunday 22/10	9:30am	Sunday Service (Rev Narelle Collas)
Friday 27/10	4.30-7pm	Messy Church
Wednesday 1/11	7pm	All Saints day

Activities:

Wednesday 11/10	7.30pm	Seekers group
Saturday 14/10	1 - 5pm	Geelong Repair Cafe - Highton
Friday 20/10	12pm - 4pm	Collectibles
Saturday 21/10	9am - lunch	Collectibles
Friday 27/10	12pm - 2pm	Sewing group
Wednesday 1/11	1.30pm	Coffee & Chat
Saturday 4/11	6.30 for 7pm	Trivia Night for Armstrong Creek Uniting

Council News

Meeting held 20 September 2023

- * Information Booklet nearing completion
- *Linley Liersch and Heather Loader visited to talk about future mission directions
- *We have a new whiteboard in the foyer on which you can write down any issues/maintenance that require attention
- *Spring Cleaning – the Church is in need of a top to bottom clean – we will be asking for your assistance at a working bee in early November
- *Paul is taking holidays in October leaving after the service on Sunday 8 October
Kevin Yelverton will be taking the midweek service, Tevita Holani Sunday 15 October and Narelle Collas (Presbytery Minister) Sunday 22 October
- *We will soon be auditing the current chairs we have – a variety – some NOT stackable – others difficult to move on carpet, some where the covering is looking somewhat 'tatty'.
- *Please free to speak to Council members about any issues you would like dealt with.

Sue Anderson

Secretary

Congregation News

Mission Outreach

REFUGEE SUPPORT

September was a sad month for two refugee families who have been part of the life of St Luke's.

Terzai Amayliek's mother died in Egypt. We are so thankful that after a 23 year separation mother, daughter and grand daughter - Sara - were reunited in December.

Terzai with her Uncle, at considerable expense, travelled to Sudan to farewell her mother and make sure that she was buried with her husband and brother. We continue to pray for the family. Terzai is grateful for the help she received from the family of St Luke's.



Only a couple of weeks ago tragedy struck for Naw Pu and her family when her eldest son, Maw Saw could no longer cope with his life and committed suicide.

A number of St Luke's people attended the funeral at Lara. A lovely service (not in English), beautiful singing and a variety of people speaking and praying.

Here is a photograph of the family at Pawk'har's wedding. Maw Saw is next to his sister. Our prayers continue for Naw Pu and her family too.



Sue Anderson

ST LUKE'S CHAPEL COLLECTIBLES

Hello Readers. Thank you for your interest and taking time to catch-up on our Collectibles September news. While you are reading below, the Collectibles Team is busy preparing for our next open sale days in October.

Our next opening in **OCTOBER:** Friday 20th Oct, between 12 noon and 4.30pm; Sat 21st Oct, between 9am and lunch time.

This month special thanks go to everyone who donated bundles of tea towels for the Chapel Room. The Chapel Room is set aside especially for newcomer families who need to stock up their home on basic items, such as Linen, bedding, pots and pans, crockery, cutlery, dishes, towels and furniture.

We also applaud Lena and Ari, and their 3 primary school children who – without fail – arrive to pack up the collections from the Lane Memorial at the close of Saturday sales.

Lane Memorial Meeting Room (adjacent to the Chapel). Because of our large range of collections, we continue to use the Lane Memorial meeting room to feature and display our collections of vintage and retro hard to find treasures.

Potted Garden Sales: Excitement grows after a bleak winter, when Spring arrives with promises to decorate our potted plants with flowers... just in time for sale! Potted plants make great birthday gifts, remembering every sale benefits Refugees and Asylum Seekers. We are also happy to receive potted plants from your garden to help raise funds.

Men's Shed continue to support our needs. A touch of paint, a broken lock, reworking a glass display cabinet, lifting heavy furniture – are but a few of our needs. Always their members are willing to offer a hand.

Do you know: Every Wednesday morning, the Chapel is open to receive donations that go directly to needy families, or donations for our Chapel Collectibles where income from sales go directly to support our Refugee Ministry.

Come and Visit: Maybe you haven't visited our Chapel Collectibles for a long time, or you have never visited. Why don't you make a plan to visit. If our open sale days are not suitable, we are happy to give you a private tour at a time to suit yourself. Knowing about and seeing our Collectibles will help you to encourage others to visit and to enjoy all that we have to offer.

Linda Salamy and Rae Anderson (Collectibles Co-Ordinators)

Mobile: 0413 888 884



LEGACY AUSTRALIA

On Sunday 17 September the Legacy Centenary Torch Relay passed through Geelong on its 50 000 km journey around the world.

The relay began on April 23, in the lead up to Anzac Day, at Pozieres British Cemetery in France, then continued to Belgium and the United Kingdom before travelling to all of Australia's Legacy Clubs. Its final stop will be at the Shrine of Remembrance on 13 October.

The relay is a 6 month campaign to pay homage and acknowledge veterans' families, saluting their sacrifice.

Below you will read the 'royal seal' of approval and a photograph of Paul Anderson supporting one of his Junior Legatees (from a few years back) who carried the Torch.

Sue Anderson

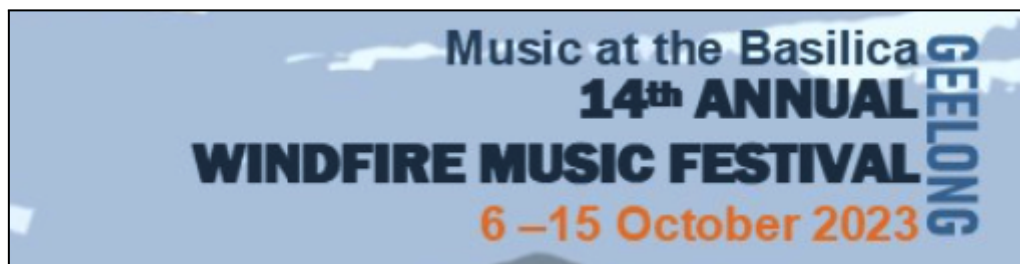


Pastoral Connections

Can you believe it? "Christmas Is Coming"

With this in mind Valerie Grills, on behalf of Pastoral Connections, will again have a selection of Leprosy Christmas cards during the second half of October into November. Cards will be arriving in mid October, and will be available following Sunday services and the Mid-week services.

For information or to order by phone call Barbara Cox on 0425 849 904.



Music at the Basilica is proud to present the 14th Annual Windfire Music Festival. Experience a diverse range of concerts ranging from love songs of 17 century England to music for a brass ensemble. We have 6 great concerts featuring local and national and internationally acclaimed performers. We have the Excelsis Choir and the Melbourne Women's Choir. Do not miss your chance to hear these fine musicians perform. For more details and ticket information, visit www.musicatthebasilica.org.au

TRIVIA NIGHT

NOV 4

Fundraiser for Armstrong Creek Uniting at St Luke's
6.30 for 7pm start

Contact Ray Nicholls to book R.Premierbook@gmail.com 0408 702 241



© Carindale, Carina

FELLOWSHIP LUNCHEON

On September 10th 2023, Pastoral Connections hosted over 80 people at a fellowship luncheon in the St. Luke's hall. One focus of the gathering was the acknowledgement of some of the people who were involved in the **construction of the Worship Centre**, 40 years ago between January and August 1983.



Between 1972 and 1976 discussions took place between members of the former Presbyterian and Methodist congregations (at this time St. Luke's Uniting) regarding uniting the worship and Sunday school onto one property. At a congregational meeting in October 1982, approval was given for the construction of a new Worship Centre on the Barrabool Road site, at an estimated cost of \$276,000.

Planning and Appeals committees were established and included representatives of both congregations, and by January 1983 the first sod was turned at the Barrabool Road site and construction began. The construction team consisting of John Findlay – estimator, Doug Green – structural work, Bruce Nankervis – electrical work, Graham Reid – plumbing work and Neil Reid – brick work, began work and by August that year construction was completed, coming in just under budget.

It was a privilege to host all but one member of the construction team at the luncheon. The one exception was an apology from Neil Reid who was away travelling.

One interesting fact relates to the excavation work for the foundations of the property.

At the time the church was being constructed, the soil that was excavated from the site was transported across the road to be used in the construction of the retaining basin. In a storm that swept through the area in 2016 it was that very basin that held fast and prevented serious flooding along Barrabool Road. The adjacent picture shows a kayaker on service basin during heavy rain in 2016.



PASTORAL UPDATES

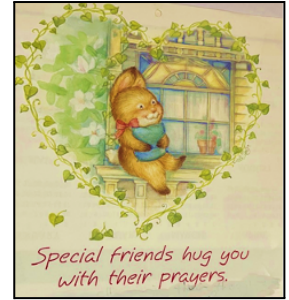
Have you recently changed your address, home phone number, mobile number or email address? If so please let us know by contacting the following people.

Barbara on 0409 037 190 or Pam on 0407 557 933.

PRAYER POINTS

Praise and Thanksgiving

- Praise for the fellowship and sharing that took place at the 10th September Fellowship luncheon and for the 80 people who were present. The opportunity was taken to recognise and acknowledge those who were part of the construction team who worked on the building of the Worship centre 40 years ago. (4 of the 5 major construction team members were able to attend.)
- God of creation, open our eyes to the beauty of the gardens and fields that surround us at this time of the year in particular the canola fields that are a sea of yellow.
- Constantly remind us Lord, of our opportunities to share your love and concern for one another, by asking RU OK, then listening to the answer and following up the reply.
- We give thanks for the Legacy Centenary Torch Relay that passed through Geelong, on 10th September while on a world tour. The relay recognised 100 years of support for widows and children of deceased and incapacitated service veterans, Geelong Legacy was one of the first groups established.
- We give praise and thanks those who have recovered from debilitating illness and those who are still receiving treatment. We are blessed and give thanks for the medical facilities and specialists that are available and easily accessible for treatment in the Geelong area.



General Prayers

- We continue to prayer for calm and wisdom in the lead up to the Referendum vote and that all views will be respected. Guide us as we consider our own personal votes.
- Pray for peace in the world. For those citizens who are living in war-torn countries where there are few medical facilities, fresh food, or adequate housing. Pray for all children and elderly displaced or injured by civil unrest, dysfunctional households and the loss of family support. Especially we pray for all those affected by the floods in Libya and Greece, and the earthquake in Morocco where more than 3,000 people lost their lives.
- Gracious God our thoughts and prayers are with those depressed, lonely or are homeless that they may find shelter and support. We offer prayers for those charities and individuals who minister to the needs of each person. Pray that there will be financial and practical support from the community and government to continue their valuable outreach.
- God of mercy and grace, strengthen and uphold those families, known to us, who have recently suffered tragedies with the loss of loved ones. We embrace and hug them with our prayers.
- Lord, we seek the wisdom to know what is best for the future direction of the Uniting Church. We pray for senior members of the church leadership as they consider the best path forward.

*******Reminder all prayer requests remain confidential*******

Any names mentioned are with the permission of those involved.

Victorian Council of Churches

"The Voice" Referendum will be held next week, Saturday 14 October 2023

"We want to live on our land, our way." These are the words inscribed on Vincent Lingiari's grave. It was the simplicity of these words that made Senator Pat Dodson plea, lament and reflect deeply. Senator Dodson writes about his life long before the referendum, even before the 1967 Referendum. Although some attempt to erase and distance the history and policies of this country, Dodson reminds us of how recent are these atrocities. Such as witnessing the forcible removal of children when he was young. He remembers the highs and lows following the 67 Referendum, the guarantees and broken promises. Ultimately these were betrayals based on a lack of advice from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. "I have come to accept without qualification the recommendation to enshrine a voice in the Constitution because it represents the outcome of a comprehensive democratic process by First Peoples who continue overwhelmingly to support it". Senator Dodson believes this is the path towards a reconciled, healed and proud nation - one with a future where everyone is respected and recognised.

Read the full article in [The Monthly](#) (free access)

PREACHING FROM THE HEART resource

This is a project of the Creative Ministries Network in response to the invitation from the Statement from the Heart to join Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on a movement of the Australian people to a better future. You will hear God's unequivocal 'yes' to the Statement from the Heart in the twenty sermons from Indigenous and settler preachers as they reflect on what this journey means for churches and the nation. Download [here](#). **Highly recommended!**

Videos

Church Leaders say 'yes' to the Voice - St Paul's Cathedral Melbourne

Here's a [Youtube link](#) to the event.

Tim Costello AO on the Voice to Parliament (Youtube link [here](#))

'Ask us first' Monash Law video on the Voice to Parliament (Youtube link [here](#))

Misleading Soundbite # 1: ["But we don't have any details!"](#) (20 mins)

Misleading Soundbite # 2: ["This will divide us by race"](#) (30 mins)

Any further videos in this series will be on this [Youtube channel](#).

VCC E-News #22.23 (2nd October 2023)

Readings for the Month

	<i>1st Reading</i>	<i>Psalm</i>	<i>2nd Reading</i>	<i>Gospel</i>
Oct 8 Pentecost 19	Ex 20:1-4,7-9,12-20	Ps 19	Phil 3:4-14	Mt 21:33-46
Oct 15 Pentecost 20	Ex 32:1-14	Ps 106	Phil 4:1-92	Mt 22:1-14
Oct 22 Pentecost 21	Ex 33:12-23	Ps 99	1 Thes 1:1-10	Mt 22:15-22
Oct 29 Pentecost 22	Dt 34:1-12	Ps 90:1-6,13-17	1 Thes 2:1-8	Mt 22:34-46