

JUNE 2018

GLEN WAVERLEY UNITING CHURCH

ANNIVERSARY

LETTER

Seas the Day

I can remember quite clearly the excitement in 1983 when the yacht "Australia II" was attempting to win the America's Cup. I had not been very interested in yacht racing, but this series, the best of seven races, really got me interested. Could the Australian boat be the first overseas boat to win the America's Cup after 132 years? I was glued to the television watching the tacking, the strategic moves, each boat desperately trying to find an advantage, seeking a slightly stronger wind and at other times covering the other boat. All the time both yachts zig-zagged around the course to the finish line. Australia II came from behind to win the series 4 to 3.

Rabindranath Tagore once said "You can't cross the sea by standing and staring at it". We are approaching the Anniversary of the Uniting Church. Recently I have been thinking back to the men and women who established the Presbyterian Church on this site. The same is applicable for those who established the Methodist Church. These men and women of faith could not have imagined how strategic this current site would be in 2018 as this community has changed enormously. Kingsway is busy and vibrant. To establish a new church involves risk, and vision, determination and a strong faith and an absolute trust in God. Those pioneers had to push out into the deeper water and trust in God.

As we look back at this congregation's history I suspect we have tacked in many different directions in order to strive toward our goal. Our goal might be to glorify

God in who we are and all we do as a people of God. We have probably encountered some choppy seas as well. Bringing together the Methodist and Presbyterian churches must have involved some bumps. "We have always done it this way!". And yet together, we are a stronger congregation, we have been more effective in our ministry and mission, and we have been able to achieve more together than separately. Our unity is a witness in itself.

As we look forward we still have some rough seas to navigate. We still have much to learn about engaging with our cross cultural and multi faith community. There is more work to do on being church when church is no longer at the centre of community life. How do we respond when many in society think that church is irrelevant? How does the church claim its identity when the church has been tarnished by cases of sexual abuse?

Dates for your diary.

24 June: Anniversary Service - 10am followed by lunch

1st July: Seniors Service - 2.30pm

29 July: 10am Service followed by Congregational meeting

15th August: Muffin Morning Tea at The Hub – 10am – 12noon.

18th August: Bush Dance – Time TBC

25th August: Interfaith Gathering - 6pm TBC

2 September: Fathers Day

22nd September: Moon Festival

14th October: Seniors Celebration - 2.30pm

20 October: Fete - 8.30am - 2pm

21 October: 10am Service

25th October: Seniors' Morning Tea at The Hub – 10am – 12noon.

8th - 13th November: Getaways Healesville

19th, 20th & 21st November: Children's Nativity Photos at The Hub – 10am – 12noon.

2 December: 10am Service followed by Christmas Lunch
Indonesian Christmas Worship & Celebration - 5pm

6th December: Christmas Morning Tea at The Hub – 10am – 12noon.

16th December: Seniors Carols, songs & shortbread - 2.30pm

23rd December: 10am Service

24th December: Christmas Eve Services 5.30pm & 11pm

25th December: Christmas Day Services 8.30am & 10am

30th December - January : 10am Services.

How do we maintain confidence and hope when the institution of the church is struggling? How shall we be the faithful people of God in these challenging times?

We do need to listen to each other, listen for the silent voices, listen for the prompting of God and prayerfully discern and navigate the way forward. We need to understand our day, our culture and our community. And as has happened before, we need to catch the winds of the Spirit. I am very hopeful and excited for our congregation's future. But we can't stand still. We can't look longingly back. As Mark Twain said, "Sail away from the safe harbour. Catch the wind in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover". Let's be willing to journey, enabled by the Spirit of God.

Neil Peters

on behalf of the Ministry Team

Join us for our
Anniversary Service
followed by **Lunch**

Our lunch this year is a communal feast with everyone invited to bring a plate to share.

To make sure we have a nice amount of sweet & savoury.

Surnames A - L = sweet

M - Z = savoury



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