

NewView

Glen Waverley Uniting Church Cnr Bogong Ave & Kingsway Glen Waverley 3150 Ph 9560 3580 Email: office@gwuc.org.au 	Renewal			
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Our worship services this month have drawn on the ideas of the Seasons of Creation, and the cycle of death, or dormancy, followed by renewal of life and growth. This cycle affects us through nature's seasonal cycles, and also within our personal and collective lives. No doubt all of us have experienced times when things seemed moribund, or close to death, and then some event, inspiration or challenge has led us to a new venture with renewed vigour. We have seen this occur dramatically in the last two weeks with the replacement of our prime minister. Clearly there was a groundswell of opinion within the government which judged that it was headed in the wrong direction and needed to reinvent itself. I was fascinated to hear Malcolm Turnbull actually say, 'You have to have turnover and renewal', when he announced his new Cabinet.

On the larger world stage we are seeing other attempts at renewal, with millions of people on the move after assessing their situation in their war-torn homelands as being untenable. What desperation they must feel to arrive at the momentous decision to abandon all that they have known and worked for in the hope of a new life which holds future safety! The news coverage has shown families with babies and young children, aged parents, the disabled, all fleeing towards an uncertain and unknown life, and one which will undoubtedly be difficult and possibly disappointing.

In this issue of *NewView* we find plenty of references to lives and events which have been reimagined or renewed. Neil speaks of possible opportunities for renewal at GWUC (p. 2). Rowena Allen's story (pp. 3-4) is a reminder of the support that helps individuals to renewal. Many of the reports of events at GWUC remind us that for our faith to be meaningful we need to review our *modus operandi*, and sometimes be aware that that which may have served us well in past years needs to be renewed or reinvented so that it is relevant to today's needs. The report on 'What kind of Australia do we want to be?' (pp. 10-11) takes up this challenge, as does the Multicultural Forum report (p. 6). Attempts at changing our approach and outlook are also implied in the Intergenerational Night (p. 7), the visit of the 'Q group' to the Coptic Church (pp.12-13), and the consideration of changes to the COP funding (p. 15). Additionally, our recent Church Council elections provide another opportunity for a renewal of approach. These are all heartening signs that collectively our faith community is trying to renew its perception of what a life of faith looks like in practice in today's world.

Robin Pope

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Neil's Musings

RENEWAL – YES PLEASE

The word 'renewal' is not unique to, but has a strong association with, matters of faith. We sometimes hear political parties speak of renewal and they are usually referring to bringing in new members of parliament. In terms of faith it can have an association with a significant new beginning, or a new or fresh experience of God. An experience of 'renewal' can give us a real lift and renewed energy in terms of our faith and our life. We might find we have new confidence in God and a real desire and energy to know God more fully and to live out our faith with renewed enthusiasm.

When I was looking at some Bible verses about renewal I realised that renewal is a way that God works with us during what might be termed 'normal' or 'ordinary' times rather than just at special times. During my time in my first parish a former minister of that parish visited Lynn and me and gave us a poster which contained a verse from the Bible. The verse was Isaiah 40: 31: '...but those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint'. This was given to me as a reminder to whom I should turn for strength and as an encouragement in ministry. If I waited on the Lord, if I trusted in the Lord, I would receive more than enough strength and energy in order to serve. But what I had to do is be prepared to spend time with God and not try to do everything in my own strength.

Romans 12: 1 - 2 is one of my favourite Bible passages. Verse 2 declares 'Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God – what is good and acceptable and perfect'. Do not conform to the values and ways of this world. Instead allow God to transform you by the renewing of your minds. If that is to happen then we need to know God and walk closely with God. We need to be reading the Scriptures, praying and sharing with our Christian brothers and sisters. We need to be spending time with God and listening for the prompt of God's Spirit. I do desire to live within the values of God's Kingdom which will then demonstrate before others a life transformed by God. I do not say this with any sense of arrogance but with a simple desire to love and serve God.

The Faith Development Missional Group has established a task group to plan a day of Reflection or a Retreat Day for members of our congregation. The day will be held in early November (See pa. 11). For some people this might just be a time of real refreshment and renewal as we move toward the season of Advent.

At the recent Congregational meeting I shared some opportunities that have been presented to this congregation that could enable the renewal of a former relationship or partnership. We are currently exploring an invitation for partnership with Glen Waverley Secondary College working in support of the work of the chaplain and raising money to support the chaplaincy program. Since the Congregational Meeting Alanee has received a request to resume the breakfast program that the church previously ran at the school. However, this time there is a desire for us to work with the chaplaincy and Student Well Being departments at the school.

Members from this church for three decades ran a CRE (Christian Religious Education) program at Glenallen Special School which only concluded at the end of last year. Since the Congregational Meeting the principal at Glenallen has sent a message to our church expressing the desire to re-establish a supportive relationship between our church and the school.

Here are two examples for a desire for a renewed relationship.

Rev Neil Peters

Changes to COP?

Some Suggested Changes to Congregational Outreach Projects' (COP) Guidelines by the 2015 COP Committee, and Responses

The COP Committee this year offered some suggestions to the Outreach Missional Group to consider as possible improvements to the COP guidelines. Outreach decided to bring these suggestions before the congregation via *NewView* with our considered responses.

The COP Committee raised three issues:

Classifications

The current application form requires the projects to be classified as either Local, State, National or Global. The Committee had problems with these classifications as the project bases for 'local' were Heathmont, Lower Plenty and CBD, all outside a 10 km radius from the church. It was suggested that we replace the current classifications with Glen Waverley area, Metropolitan, Victorian, Interstate & International, where Glen Waverley is, say, within a 5 km radius of the church.

Response

The Outreach Committee believes that defining local is not the best way to proceed. We do not want definition to bind us. We have always believed 'local' to be around Melbourne. Many members of our congregation live further than 5 kms from the church and we want them to feel that 'local' includes them. We believe that promotion and education are the way to address the desire for very local projects. We did think it would be helpful to change 'global' to 'international' and we plan to do that.

Local Content

The Committee found it disappointing that there were no applications which it considered to be local. Fete profits are largely generated in the Glen Waverley area. The COP Committee believes that steps need to be taken to encourage local participation and suggests two alternative ways in which this can be achieved. The first is to remove the need for a congregation member sponsor from the Criteria list. The other alternative is to retain the congregation sponsor requirement but make it clear to all congregation members that sponsorship can only be notional, with the application prepared by an organisation in which they are interested.

Response

The Outreach Committee acknowledges the desire within the congregation for there to be local projects being considered for funding. We believe it is important to have a congregation member as the sponsor. To remove that potentially encourages a great influx of applications and we would begin to look like other benevolent organisations. Certainly we can make it clear next year that a congregation member can receive assistance from an organisation that they wish to sponsor in relation to completing the application form.

Unspent funds

The Committee was somewhat disappointed to learn that around \$1000 of last year's fete profit had not been distributed and will be distributed this year. This occurs because fete profit is not finally determined until all income and disbursements are finalised. Could the cheque presentation be done 'just' before the end of the church's financial year?

Response

The end of the financial year is 31 December. December is already a busy month. We do not support a later presentation. However, in raising this matter with the Finance Committee the treasurer was willing to make a later distribution in accord with the COP Committee recommendations after the second weekend in December. This will address the issue.

If any congregation member wants to contribute to the conversation they can do so by writing or emailing the Outreach Committee through Rev Neil Peters.

Rev Neil Peters, Acting Convenor Outreach Missional Group

Getting to Know You: Rowena Allen

Sometimes when we look at people we forget that what we are seeing is a current snapshot that will soon be out-of-date. We forget that that old person shuffling along was once a vibrant busy adult, and before that was an eager child. It is perhaps easier for us to look at a child, full of promise, and speculate how that child will blossom and grow.

In the recent state elections the Labor Party promised that if they won government they would create a new position: Gender and Sexuality Commissioner. Bev Richardson alerted me to the fact that that position has just been filled by one of our past church members, Rowena Allen.



I wonder if anyone, looking at little Rowena who attended Sunday School and then Youth Group at the Springvale Road Methodist Church in the 1970s and 80s could have guessed her future path? She was raised in the church family, with her mother teaching at the church kindergarten and a frequent contributor to church activities, so Rowena's movement through to the youth group and other activities seemed a natural progression. She participated, as our young people do today, in the summer camps, which led to a strengthening of her faith and resulted in her becoming active in voluntary youth ministry. Her association with the youth group and its activities introduced her to issues of social justice, and a growing determination to assist those who were disadvantaged. Her leadership qualities must have been

soon apparent and recognised, because in about 1990 she was sent as an international delegate to a Christian Conference in Asia - a groundbreaking experience for her.

At about this time she applied as a candidate for ministry in youth work, and was accepted, but she deferred and her life soon took a slightly different, although related, path. At the National Christian Youth Convention (NCYC) in Canberra in about 1992 Rowena had come out. This was a brave move for the time, but made possible through mentoring from Reverend Dorothy McCrae-McMahon, who helped her to see that she didn't have to make a choice between her sexuality and her faith: she could acknowledge who she was, and retain her spiritual life. As she acknowledged in an interview for *Crosslight* in August, she found this support 'lifesaving, life giving'. and she was able to move forward with a clearer idea of who she was, and the future focus of her work.

She gained a position with UnitingCare, and was posted to Shepparton, where she set up Cutting Edge, adjacent to Wesley Church, to provide support for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transexual and Intersex (LGBTI) rural youth. She worked there for 15 years, honing her skills in advocacy and support, drawing on her own experiences and the skills she had already acquired in youth leadership. 'Nearly everything I do, I got from the church', she said to *Crosslight*.

As her skills and knowledge grew so did the breadth of her experience and her competence, and she was called to serve in various consulting capacities. She co-chaired the Uniting Church network of gays and lesbians, working towards helping others work their way through the minefield of social and church expectations. She was appointed chair of the Victorian LGBTI advisory committee for health and well-being, and also became commissioner for the Skills Commission in education.

Rowena has more than twenty years of advocacy experience in support of LGBTI people and this provided the basis for her successful application for the newly created position of Gender and Sexuality Commissioner. Her personal and professional experiences* have enabled her to identify the times and places where LGBTI people are at their most vulnerable. She particularly sees the 'safe schools' initiative as needing a continued focus for changing attitudes, and also rural communities.

Since her appointment to her new position Rowena has paid tribute to the pioneering work of the Uniting Church in recognising the needs of LGBTI community, especially in its work in aged care. She rejoices in the church's recognition of diversity: 'That is the Uniting Church. We are social justice focussed...' she commented (*Crosslight*, p. 10).

When I asked Rowena what she would like to see the church do in support of her position, she provided some simple but effective advice for us: '**Keep listening**' and '**Keep the conversations going**'. We would do well to follow her counsel in this and other areas, as well as sexuality, as we learn to accept the diversity and differences of humanity in its many forms.

And as we look at the young people in our midst, we should remember Rowena's journey, made possible through guidance, acceptance and encouragement. Perhaps there is another future commissioner at GWUC today!

* See 'Walking the talk on gender', *Sunday Age*, August 30, 2015, p. 12 for fuller details.

Robin Pope

The Mentor

A mentor is one, who
guides without leading,
knows before asking,
answers without telling.

A mentor is –
often general
seldom specific,
reflective and
even ethereal,
more concerned with
feelings than words.

Mentors come and they go,
some stay for a while,
no two are the same
but all help us,
in the search
for our self
and life's journey.

Mentors can be in
our past, present or future;
they are people we meet, or
the figures, words or feelings
of our travels, dreams,
meditations and prayers.

In life we know that
what hurts us, or another
is not to be trusted,
so with our mentors:
Our spiritual guides?

P G Baker

Multicultural Forum at GWUC

On August 23 Rev Hoon You presented his thoughts on multiculturalism in the Uniting Church. He asked us what kind of multicultural church Glen Waverley believes that God is calling us to be.

Hoon then enlarged our understanding of the term 'multiculturalism', a word based in the study of sociology, and used in the Uniting Church's declaration as a multicultural church thirty years ago. When interviewed by the Joint Nominating Committee for his former position at Monash Uniting Church, Hoon admitted that he was indeed not multicultural, but monocultural. He acknowledged that Korea's 5000 year history had created a very successful monocultural and racist society and that, having been educated in this monocultural society, racist inclinations still existed in the back of his mind. He noted that it was his duty to carefully bury these sometimes, because having grown up in a monocultural society, racism is a habit.

Turning to our Australian context he noted that although Australian-born citizens comprise the majority there is still a lot of fear expressed by Australians of minority groups (recent arrivals). There are various concepts of multiculturalism. An older model has been of assimilation, where all the members of a society bring their differences to a 'melting pot' where individual colours disappear.

Another model, known as the 'minestrone soup model', brings all the different cultures together, but each retains its own characteristics, like the vegetables in minestrone soup whose individual textures and tastes can be enjoyed even though they all form part of the same soup.

He noted that a Christian multiculturalism, of accepting and loving each other together, has sometimes been likened to a tree, forming the family of God. However, his preferred image is that of a garden, because flowers have different colours and can even be of a different kind, but all need God's water, light and soil to grow. He likened multiculturalism within a church to managing a marriage, where the bride and groom come from varied family situations (from different cultures), and *they have to learn together how to negotiate and how to listen*. It is important to *recognise the differences*, and to have conversations from different perspectives, because we have so much to learn from different positions.

Another key ingredient in a relationship-building process is respect. 'What do you think?' is a useful question in starting a conversation.

Hoon felt that over the last 30 years the Uniting Church has not done a great deal to implement its declaration. The Assembly website has some great documents but he has found congregations he has visited do not seem interested. The 13th Uniting Church Assembly used the theme 'One body, many members: Living faith and life cross-culturally', and the UAICC now refers to the 'Process for respectful consultation', which Hoon believes is crucial not only with aboriginal interactions but also when interacting with other cultures. 'Jesus Christ is the common ground we stand on' he said.

Hoon closed with a prayer:

'Let us put on the clothes of Christ, and live as equals with everyone.
Let us put on the clothes of Christ and reunite the family of God.'

We thank him for his challenging words.

Andrew Hosking

Intergenerational Dinner

On the 31st July 2015, we went to the Intergenerational Dinner at the hall. When we got there, there were 2 pieces of paper on each table. The 'Find Someone Who' paper challenged us to find someone who:

- can bake
- owns their own business
- likes yellow
- and many other challenges. The results created conversation and noise. It was very enjoyable to do! The second sheet was a 'Find A' sheet, where we had to find different objects from people on that table. Things like a shopping list, a hair brush or a 20c coin from 1986!



There was also a competition to build a bridge out of straws or icy-pole sticks resulting in some very unusual and cool creations. I wonder how long they lasted...

The meal was hamburgers, which we constructed ourselves. Mine was delicious!!!

The highlight of the evening would have to be the magician – The Candy Man! He made things appear and disappear. He even turned 1 star into 32 stars! It was awesome (and I'm not just saying that because the magician is David Chandler – who just happens to be my cousin!)

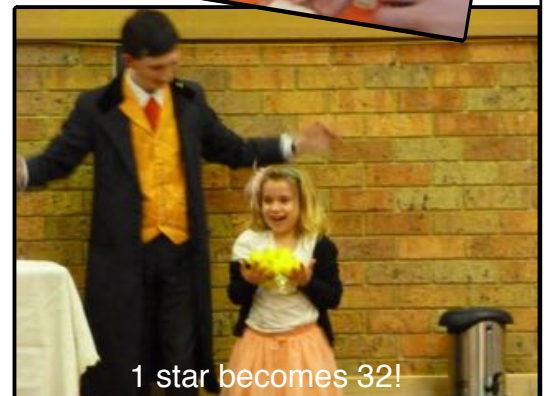
It was

very entertaining for everyone.

About 80 people attended and it was great to see a wide variety of ages at the Intergenerational Dinner. I think it was a great success!



Some of the workers!



1 star becomes 32!

Matthew Boldiston

Celebrating 6 Years at The Hub



It's hard to believe, but true, THE HUB celebrated its 6th Birthday in July! We had a wonderful Celebration Morning Tea which was enjoyed by many of our church people, regular Hub visitors and people from the wider community. The very tasty birthday cake came from our friends at Muddings Kingsway Bakery and was enjoyed by all.



Chatting at The Hub

The Hub has grown a great deal over the past 6 years and is now getting to be known by many in the wider community. People come to The Hub for many different reasons. Some come for the company - someone to talk with; some come for that cuppa and a home made biscuit; some come to practise talking in English which will help them to communicate better in every day activities; and some

come for some time out and to relax for a while during their busy day. Whatever the reason is for visitors to come to The Hub, they are all very welcome.

As Hub volunteers we are connecting with many different people and continuing to grow our relationships with them as they continue to come regularly to The Hub. Thank you to our many Hub volunteers who offer such friendly **H**ospitality, **U**nderstanding and a sense of **B**elonging to our many visitors each week.

The Hub Turns 6



If you haven't been to The Hub, come along one day. Bring a friend if you like, or come on your own.

Our Hub volunteers will make you welcome, give you a cuppa, and you can sit and have a chat for a while, or just relax amongst friends. The Hub operates on Tuesday and Thursday 10am - 2pm, and Wednesday 10am - 12noon during school terms.

Our special Seniors' Morning Tea will be held on Thursday 29th October from 10am - 12noon. All donations from this morning tea will be going to research into Motor Neurone Disease. Come along and bring your family and friends. All ages are welcome. Let's thank our seniors for all they do to help in our community, and support the research into Motor Neurone Disease. Hope to see you there!



Judith Greenwood - Co-ordinator The Hub.



Justice and Mission Convention

We received a letter and invitation to take part in a 'Justice and Mission Convention', to be held on the 12th of September at the Centre for Theology and Ministry, Parkville. This is an annual event, but we had never before been invited, so we decided to attend.

It was an exciting and full day. Registration at 9am, closing Worship at 3.30pm. The Centre is next to Ormond College, which we well remembered from the past. The theme for the day was: '*What kind of Australia do we want to be?*'

The **Introduction** was by a Panel of Speakers: firstly the President of the UC in Australia, Stuart McMillan, then the Hon. Dr. Andrew Leigh MD, and the National Director of Uniting Care, Lin Hatfield Dodds.

This Introduction gave us the direction for our thoughts and ideas. Some basic principles were proposed: There is a spirit of generosity; and we have to discover a creative way to use our resources. Australia is seen as an egalitarian community, and let us keep it that way. We do not want to have the very rich and the very poor. People have to be paid liveable wages, so that they can manage.

We have to prevent a cycle-of-poverty for the next generation. We have to challenge the Government about what we, the citizens of the community, want! We want a just and social human rights policy for refugees; no disqualifications and no abuse.

These are all very complex issues and we, as Christians, have to learn to 'love the unlovely'. We need to have compassion. We live in a diverse community and we have to clarify our vision. We must improve the conversation with refugees and allow them to contribute and do what they can do!

Then came the **Workshops**; and we had a choice of 5 subjects.

1. Caring for the vulnerable requires more than air
2. How should Australia treat First Peoples?
3. How should Australia treat refugees and asylum seekers?
4. Power to the People
5. What would it mean for Australia to be a good, global citizen?

We had chosen no. 5 and it was an excellent workshop, with about 20 participating and everyone contributing. We had a very capable leader (Denise), who is one of the staff. She had spread out across the table many colourful pictures of people, environments, happenings, etc. We had to choose which picture made an impression on us and why. In turn we were invited to *share* our thoughts, emotions and feelings.

It was very interesting to hear the differences and the wide vision of society and of our Christian values.

The leader put it all together, as a facilitator, and we moved on to the next point: How do we go forward from here? Time was too short to work it out, to come to a decision.

There was a second Workshop after lunch. We chose the Indigenous Group with Ken. We considered words and language, recognising that language can be powerful and damaging and hurtful and that we have to be more careful in choosing our words and language. We, the Anglo-Saxons, are no longer the 'white masters'. Now it is a two-way thing, and *together* we are working on reconciliation and towards a fairer Australia. We need to have *respect* for each other and for the other points of view.

It had been a full day; we connected with many old friends during conversation at lunchtime. Many of our age-group were present, and younger ones. It was a worthwhile happening. We closed with a devotion on Mark 8:27-32.

Our faith calls us to live out the core message of the Gospel: to 'love God with all our hearts and strength, and to love our neighbours as ourselves'. What does this really look like? As faith calls us to confess Jesus is The Christ.

And the final Prayer to Do God's Will (Thomas Martin):

My Lord God,
 I have no idea where I am going
 I do not see the road ahead of me
 Nor do I really know myself,
 And the fact that I think I am
 following Your will
 Does not mean that I am actually
 doing so.
 But I believe that the desire to
 please You
 Does in fact please You.
 I know that if I do this
 You will lead me by the right road
 Though I may know nothing about it.
 Therefore I will trust You always
 though
 I may seem to be lost and in the
 shadow of death
 I will not fear for You are ever with me,
 And You will never leave me to face
 my struggles alone.

Amen

Donna and Fred Vanclay

Diary Dates

Saturday October 17, 8.30 am - 2 pm

GWUC Grand Fete

You can help by:

- **donating items for the Silent Auction**
- **putting aside items to be sold**
- **making items for the Craft Stall**
- **potting plants for the Plant Stall**
- **signing up to assist setting up**
- **assisting on the day**
- **helping to clean up afterwards**

Any questions or information?

Contact

Murray Lowe 9885 8514

Sue Morgan 9560 8024

Cliff Baker 9802 8990

Quiet Day for Reflection ***Saturday, 7th November 2015***

We are inviting members of the congregation and their friends to join us at the latest Uniting Church co-educational independent school, Cornish College, to have a quiet day for reflection (yes, a new term for a retreat). This day based on the monastic system of prayer, study, meditation and work, will give the opportunity to come together in the beautiful surroundings of the Sustainability Centre at the college. A leaflet giving more details of the day will be available shortly.

Susan Karoly
 Retreat Coordinator

'Q Group' Visits the Coptic Church

We have been brought up to think of the Christian church having its origins in Jerusalem and spreading out to the cities of the northern Mediterranean and Rome under the guidance of the disciples Peter, James, Paul and others such as Mark in Rome. Eventually it developed into what we know as the Roman Catholic Church that was later challenged by Luther, Zwingli, Calvin and Knox to create the protestant churches in the Reformation. However this is a very one-sided view created by the Roman church that rejected any orthodoxy (particularly Gnostic) other than their own as heresy. Until the end of the first century Christianity or the Jesus movement was one of the many sects of the Jewish religion and the separation did not really take place until the Jewish uprising when the Romans sacked Jerusalem. In 1945 in the Egyptian area of Nag Hamadi scrolls of Gnostic from the third century were discovered and these had no doubt been concealed by the early Copts.

We read that Joseph and Mary fled to Egypt and many scholars believe that is where Jesus received his teaching. At the time Annias in Egypt was a major Jewish educational centre with a temple similar to that of Jerusalem. That centre was not subject to the same destruction as Jerusalem and many Jews fled to Egypt, including followers of Jesus. In the separation from Judaism they created their own church, the Coptic Church, which, despite the many attempts from outside, especially Arabic Islam, has survived to this day. As part of our Friday morning 'Q Group' we have been looking at other Christian faiths and found there is a strong Coptic Church in Melbourne. The Coptic Church recently purchased the old Carmelite convent site at Donvale and have their own training centre there and are developing a Coptic centre in Lonsdale Street. As part of our interest we contacted the Coptic church and arranged a visit one Friday morning when they had their Mass. Ten of us attended and were made very welcome by the priests and even the Bishop who spent time with us after the mass to tour the facility including the Nunnery. Icons are a major part of the Coptic religion and they have their own Icon centre but the day we visited the Iconographer was not there, but we have since visited the Icon centre.



Walking into the chapel our first impression was of the decoration with beautiful art and woodwork; there was smoke from the incense hanging from the ceiling. The clergy have quite ornate robes and men sit on one side, women on the other. There is an outer and inner sanctuary; the main altar is in the inner sanctum but is visible from the body of the chapel through the centre opening but there are curtains on the two side openings. There is a considerable amount of chanting and repetitiveness in the service, most of which is in English but a screen shows it in English, Greek and Arabic. They used the Lord's Prayer virtually the same as ours (several times) and they had their own creed that was similar to the Apostles creed but simpler, with no resurrection of the body, and a few other changes. There are numerous Icons around the chapel and at various stages the priest goes to one or the other and chants a prayer. During communion the bread is either placed straight into the recipient's mouth or onto a specially embroidered cloth and the recipient then takes it from there; they do not touch the bread. The wine is

spooned directly into the recipient's mouth with a long teaspoon.

After the service, when we were invited to tea/coffee and cakes, the priest had changed from white robes with embroidery to a black robe that was quite plain. The bishop came and joined us and we discussed the service and various aspects of the Coptic faith. They use the New King James Bible and appear to have no interest in the other gospels. Only men can be priests (most of whom are married with families) but women are equal. They have a nunnery there which we visited and the abbess showed us around, including their very ornate chapel.

On our second visit we were met by the priest and Bishop and went to the Iconography centre. The work here is incredible. The Iconographer trains 8-10 trainees in the art of the Icon and we inspected some of the finished and partly finished work. They are really beautifully done and the artistry is magnificent. In addition they design and make stained glass lead light windows and mosaic work. As part of the development of the Coptic Centre in the city they are designing stained glass windows five metres high and three metres wide. We saw the partially developed designs as well as two smaller ones that have been completed. The stained glass is designed here and a glass works in China produces the cut pieces for the Iconographer to paint. They are then baked before being assembled with the lead lines to complete the window, which is sandwiched between two sheets of plain glass. It is expected that the city centre will open in 2017. As part of our visit each of us was given a small copy of an Icon. We were in awe of the art of the Icons and the work being done and we came away with a deep respect for these very friendly Coptic clergy and the Coptic church, with a desire to know more and build a relationship between our church and the Copts.



Bill Norquay

Celebrations

We rejoice with the following members of our church family who celebrated these significant milestones:

Mavis Ambrose who celebrated her 90th birthday

John & Rona Pooley who celebrated 55 years of marriage together

Shirley Harding who celebrated her 80th birthday

Gael O'Brien who celebrated her 70th birthday

Don Wylie who celebrated his 80th birthday

Eileen and Neville Scott who celebrated 60 years of marriage together

Graham Lockhart who celebrated his 80th birthday

Pam McDonald who celebrated her 70th birthday

Yan Emms who celebrated her 60th birthday

Irene Marriott who celebrated her 102nd birthday

Note: Apologies to Heather and Alan Robison for the error in the last edition of NewView. Heather and Alan celebrated 46 years of marriage earlier in the year, not 40 years as stated.

Focus on (some) Forthcoming Fascinating Fete Features

Chess Set

Two of our members, David Frazer and Bill Norquay have worked together to design, build and decorate a unique chess set which is planned to be sold at the fete for outreach projects. Rather than have the conventional black and white chessmen that are identical to their counterparts these are separate designs, similar to two separate armies with their own uniforms and different facial features painted onto each one. As a result each piece is a distinctly different shape to its counterpart and is also a different colour scheme. The chess pieces are made from Norfolk Island pine (from a tree Bill had cut down). The chess board is also a unique design: the light squares are Norfolk Island Pine and the dark squares are Blackwood. Around the edge of the board is a thin strip of Jarrah and around the outside is a 50mm wide frame which is made of Kauri (New Zealand or Queensland - they are very hard to tell apart) from a pew removed from the Camberwell Uniting Church, giving it an ecclesiastical touch.



The set has been displayed in the foyer and many have admired it. It will again be displayed closer to the fete. For those with a yen (or dollars) for chess and a liking for the game of chess this is your chance to get a very special work of art and make a great contribution to our outreach program.



Beeac Premium

*Spring has sprung and the grass is rising,
Vegetables, Roses, Rhubarb is straining
They want some help to rise high to the sky
And high quality manure is the focus of their
eye.*

*Now is your chance to order Beeac Premium
Sheep manure fresh from the country
pastures of friends*

*So add your name to the list on the office
counter*

And tell us how many \$8 bags you can use

*There is a constraint on how many orders we
can fill*

*The sheep have been generous, but within
the collectors' skills*

*You need to act sooner, rather than wait till
fete day*

*But you do not have to pay until your bag is
on the way.*

*Contact Warren Greenwood (0403 028 948)
for details or questions.*

Black Cockatoos

Sunday morning: sitting at the large native pine kitchen table looking out onto the garden. Nine panes of old glass frame the garden and to the right the neglected but beneficent greenhouse quietly warms the house through winter mornings.

The paved outside dining area is roofed by a vigorous wisteria. A maze of dark twisting branches extend like capillaries from the grey trunk. Over the next six weeks ten thousand petals will fall to form a lavender mosaic on the red bricks. Mauve salvia are already in bloom and most of the rose bushes are gathering their strength for their full spring blossoming; a few late autumn blooms in pale pink linger. The four metre high *cestrum newelli* is half pruned with bare canes: the remainder, another unfinished job, is an untidy canopy of leaves and red flowers still feeding the migratory eastern spinebill. Beyond, the heads of towering artichokes look out over the wide expanse of the lawn; pale headed Chinese lanterns attest to the good pruning they received a month ago, but the circular lawn in need of rain and care is buried by the heart shaped leaves of the judas tree.

In the evening, blessing pours from the air, when yellow-tailed black cockatoos wheel in on buoyant black wings from the mountains to the east. Summoned by their wailing 'kee-ow', like a world-weary pilgrim, one stops the last of the outside work and heads towards the massive blue gum that threatens the house from the south west, a silent witness to their daily vespers. Their farewell, audible but mostly out of sight, takes place high in the tree tops. Perhaps once in a year you'll see them descending into the forested space closer to the house. The pure, almost iridescent yellow-edges on their tail feathers are a stunning counterpoint to the charcoal of their bodies. Standing at up to sixty six centimetres these are not small creatures, but it's seeing the slow motion of their dark wings, like a pair of lovers caressing the evening air, that their powerful splendour cries out almost painfully in the languid darkening air. Wheeling with effortless mastery of time and space, closer to the ground their wings are massive and their grace presage some unspeakable beauty.

Later, satiated, in the still night lizards or small native mice scamper between the lining boards in the ceiling; through open windows the sound of a pair of powerful owls ring clear from the surrounding eucalypt forests. Sleeping outside in a tent one hears the resonant orchestra of frogs from the creek and the distant creek-filled dam. In season koalas utter their beast-like grunts from high in the ghostly white manna gums along the creek. Moons appear and disappear in monthly cycles; the Southern Cross wheels across the sky as the hours of darkness advance. On many nights, from behind the sleeping house, the three hundred billion stars of the Milky Way sweep across the glowing sky, the cold clarity of their ancient origins stretching away forever above the living forests and the dark mountains back to the beginnings of our dwelling in the stars.

Glyn Howells
Lima East Valley
April 2012

Glyn would be happy to hear from individuals, families or groups connected to GWUC who would be interested in using his mud brick house in the Strathbogie Ranges as a retreat. It is three hours from Melbourne.

for everything there is a season
and a time for every matter under heaven

We record with sadness the deaths in the past months of members of our church family and we extend our support and sympathy to their families

Joan Mabel Battison

Jack Harry Bartlett

We celebrate the marriage of

Robert William Fry and Carissa Skye Effemey

Steven Donald Fraser and Marie Nancy Janice Chung Sam Wan

We record with joy the baptism of

Charlotte Grace Emerson

Valentine Jean McClellan