

NewView

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About three years ago I realised that, with increasing age, I was not going to be able to continue maintaining my large garden, cleaning my house gutters or sweeping the leaves off the skillion garage roof, so I took the uncharacteristically prudent step of moving to a retirement village. What I did not appreciate at the time was the support that such a community provides. Apart from organising activities for each other to provide for a wide range of interests and skills and to enable new relationships to form, the care for each other has been evident all along. When I lost my beloved partner Graham early this year my neighbour opposite called in regularly to give me a hug and check on my well-being. Apart from the wonderful people I already knew, others in the village offered their sympathy and kind words. I didn't know any of these people well, but they all offered support: ordinary people, helping others without any fanfare, as they saw the need. It is not just a community of people sharing a geographical locality, but a *living* community of people looking out for each other. How blessed I am to be a part of it!

Community is about relationships, which is sometimes challenging for us as individual members when we are confronted with different or new ideas. It carries both individual and group responsibilities for working towards a harmonious whole.

Our church community at GWUC is a living community. As a large faith community, we cover a huge range of different understandings and religious beliefs (as discussed by Bill Norquay p.10), but despite this variety of faith positions, we all belong to a coherent community. The logo of The Hub (p.4) illustrates this: 'Hospitality - Understanding - Belonging', as does the story about Molly. It is important for us to support each other and those outside our walls who can be strengthened by a shared cup of coffee, a meal (p.5) and a chat. It gives each of us a sense of belonging, of being surrounded by other people who know us as we are and care about us, despite our differences. Neil Peters (p.2) and Anne Cook (p.3) both write about earlier times when life seemed simpler and communities were bound by more face-to-face interaction than we have in today's device-driven culture. The story of Bobbie Rooks' life (p.6) speaks of wonderful community concern for others outside the church walls. We have opportunities to contribute to a safer world by prevailing upon our elected leaders to work towards a nuclear-free planet (p.12).

There is evidence in this issue of many small ways in which people contribute to provide an enriched life for us here at GWUC and in the wider community. I estimate that about twenty people have contributed to the production of this issue of *NewView*. Other examples here of people's contributions to our community are Bill's bookcase (p.15) and the multitude of preparations for our forthcoming fete; David Fraser's encouragement to make use of the library (p.13); the information about food safety from our Careful Kitchen Crew (p.14); the sharing of musical gifts (p.15) and writing (pp.7,11,15); people who share their personal reading (p.8) and faith understandings (p.9) because they feel it might broaden the understanding of others as it has for them. Let's continue to recognise the importance of relationships and, as Neil suggests, 'affirm each other and live together in unity and love'...as an 'expression of a vibrant Living Community'. *Robin Pope*

Neil's Musings

The Impact of Living Communities

Just over 40 years ago, when I was a teenager, our family joined with seven other families for a two week caravan holiday. Eight caravans travelling together were very noticeable for other drivers on the road. Most families came from Castlemaine and we did a tour to Broken Hill and the Flinders Ranges. The main organiser didn't like holidaying on his own. His son drove a ute with an outback toilet and generator to power the vans so we were self-sufficient.

We quickly formed a close-knit community. We knew some people but not everyone. The group of forty people were drawn together through a common desire to explore, to have fun, and we included everyone. I will never forget this holiday. We enjoyed each other's company. We laughed, we cried, we served one another, we helped each other out. The teenagers enjoyed getting together each evening. People were in one another's vans. Every night there was laughter and fun. As I look back I can honestly say it was an inclusive, cross-generational living community.

The youth group that I belonged to and later jointly led developed a strong sense of community. We worked hard to include and accept people, to build strong relationships, to nurture faith. We supported each other in times of crisis. We acknowledged the achievements of each other. A few of my close friends today come from that time in youth group. We have celebrated weddings and babies and we have mourned together. This was a faith forming time for me and I look back and see that youth group as an expression of a living community. Five members of that group went on to serve in some form of ministry.

I have a desire to see congregations as living communities. This would be so fitting as we follow Jesus Christ, the Living Word. Philippians chapter 2 encourages us to have the attitude that Jesus Christ had. The passage talks about experiencing the love and strength that Christ offers. The passage then talks about how we relate to others. We are urged to have kindness and compassion for one another. We are to have a sense of unity. We are to be humble and willing to honour others rather than pursue selfish ambition. We are to look out for one another's interests and not just our own. All this will help build a sense of community. We are not bound to live by a set of rules as followers of Jesus. Rather we are to adopt a pattern of life based on the teachings and the life of Jesus. We will develop different Biblical insights and theological understandings. As followers of Jesus we can strongly affirm each other and live together in unity and love within a congregation or Christian community. We can be an expression of a vibrant Living Community.

Rev Neil Peters

Reminiscing on Living Communities Large and Small, Then and Now

Mum was a Myer's girl. Societies place their restraints. She left work when she got married. During WW2 Jan Peerce's rendition of *The Bluebird of Happiness* was popular with housewives. The radio announcers forewarned listeners of what times the song would be played. A later generation ridiculed the blue bird and sent telegrams hoping it pooped on the wedding cake. Out of work hours Dad was a photographer and member of the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria. We clambered around shorelines in search of seaweed specimens and bushwhacked parts of Beaumaris looking for wildflowers and birds. The houses later built on that land are now being replaced by flats and mansions.

When I was young I belonged to the Argonauts Club and earned Blue Certificates for contributions read over the wireless. I wasn't allowed to join the lucky group of girls who owned the popular bluebird jewellery or a Queen Anne bed and dressing table. Some of the class went out from lessons to learn the fife. Today it's after school ballet, football, basketball etc. etc. At school we had collections of swap cards. In the 80s our daughter collected Tazos. Over the centuries dolls have moved from clay and wood, from rag to celluloid, from Barbie, to Cabbage Patch, to Design a Friend.

Bill grew up in Abbotsford during and after WW2. He bought a deactivated bomb from Tim the Toyman's shop, located in a laneway that ran from Flinders Lane to Collins St. A disposal shop in Gipp St, Collingwood sold surplus war clothing such as khaki great coats and dispatch-rider hats. Of a Sunday afternoon his grandmother went to hear the Yarra Bankers who gathered down in Batman Ave. From their soap boxes the speakers addressed the crowd. The debates about communism were heated. If the crowd got its dander up they threw the speaker into the Yarra. In the sixties Bill and I went to see the event. The crowds were no longer as passionate. An elderly identity, Arnold, was asked to give us a word on 'Religion'. By keeping up the tradition for so long, the fire had gone. These days we have taken to throwing App-located Yellow Bikes in the river.

These days the slogan *Good rowing Argonauts* will only be understood by older Australians. Young people have difficulty comprehending the sentiment and psychology behind the wartime need for the promise the bluebird brought. But the 'Silent Generation's' world has long gone; we've moved through Baby Boomers to Gen Z. Immigration and the refugees have brought a rich diversity to Australia. None of us would really want to return to wartime austerity. However, as idiosyncrasies come and go, some things stay the same.

Anne Cook

PROMINENT PROTRUSION

I have a family face
 Though lined, it still lives on.
 Years do not erase the trace,
 Nor does oblivion.
 Despite the human span,
 It lingers through the years;
 Through many a partisan,
 The feature still appears.
 Prominently secured;
 Of endurance I am sure,
 By family genes ensured,
 Through ages evermore.
 That's what the good Lord chose,
 I have grandfather's nose.

Anne Cook

PSALM 139:13-16 (NRSV)

For it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; that I know very well. My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes beheld my unformed substance. In your book were written all the days that were formed for me, when none of them as yet existed.

Spending Time with our Neighbours



The Hub has been operating for over 8 years and during this time many people have been given a cuppa and a biscuit, and enjoyed some company at The Hub. One of our very early visitors to The Hub, who still calls in every now and then, is Molly. We used to refer to Molly as 'The Bread Lady', as quite often she would have a loaf of bread with her as she had been shopping and was on her way home.

Molly is 98 years old and lives near the church. She has 4 children, 10 grandchildren and 16 great grandchildren. Some of her family live in Melbourne, but others are interstate and overseas.

Molly likes to walk for 1 hour every day, looking at the lovely gardens and talking with people she meets. She usually walks 30 minutes before lunch, then 30 minutes in the afternoon. Molly can be seen walking down the Kingsway, at The Glen and the surrounding streets. It is usually on her way home from her walk, that Molly calls in at The Hub. She loves to have a cup of tea – weak black with a little bit of cold water – and a biscuit, and always enjoys a chat. One day Molly had been out to lunch with her daughter and after the meal Molly suggested that they didn't have a cuppa at the restaurant, and instead, on their way home they stopped in at The Hub and enjoyed a cuppa - and a biscuit of course!

Molly likes to come to our Special Morning Teas at The Hub. She doesn't mind where she sits, and even if she doesn't know anyone at the table, people always speak to her. She says it's the friendly atmosphere that enables people to talk and share with each other.

Molly and her family all love to come to the church fete. She thinks the blossom trees are always beautiful on fete day, as they are always 'at their best'. Molly wonders how it works out that they are so beautiful on fete day each year.

We always enjoy Molly's visits to The Hub. She is always cheerful as she joins in the conversation while enjoying her cuppa and biscuit. Molly said she has found the volunteers at The Hub very friendly and there is such a nice atmosphere. She appreciates The Hub volunteers who make her cups of tea and chat with her, but she also appreciates the people who work behind the scenes baking the biscuits. Molly really enjoys those home-made biscuits!

Thank you to The Hub volunteers and biscuits makers who continue to help so many people at The Hub. If you would like to help at The Hub, either on our regular roster, at our special morning teas or baking biscuits, please contact Judith on 9803 8373. She would love to hear from you.



Judith Greenwood

Indonesian Dinner

The 72nd Indonesian Independence Day in August was the reason for an invitation to our congregation to celebrate with the members of the Indonesian group who worship here.

So, on Saturday, August 12th, 150 people enjoyed a night of traditional music, song and dance, and a tasty meal of Indonesian food.

After dinner – rendang (dried beef curry), gado-gado (vegetables and sauce), mie goreng (noodles) and fried fish with sweet and sour sauce - Neil Peters welcomed everyone to the celebration. Greetings were received from Mr. Albert Abdi, representing the Consul General of the Republic of Indonesia, and Mr Pong Tsoi, a Monash City Councillor.



We then enjoyed a display of regional dances, including North Sulawesi and West Java, all showing the diversity of our neighbour nation. Community singing of Indonesian folk songs and our own Waltzing Matilda, and a parade of national and regional costumes brought the evening to a close.

Donations raised over \$1200, all of which was most generously given to support rural ministry in Indonesia and welfare in Glen Waverley.

Terima kasih - thank you - to the organisers for a wonderful evening.

Alison Barr



Getting to Know You: Bobbie Rooks

We have in our community here at GWUC someone whose life trajectory from a young age seems to have focused on quality of relationships. Perhaps Bobbie was influenced by the example of her father, who had served as a missionary in Sudan until shortly before her birth back in Victoria, in East Malvern.



When she was still a toddler her family moved to Sydney, where she began school, but this was interrupted by her father's next commitment to missionary work with the Methodist Church

in the islands north of Arnhem Land; consequently during their location at Milingimbi, Goulburn Island and Croker Islands her education continued by correspondence. However, in February 1942 the Japanese bombed Darwin and it was decided to evacuate the families back south. It was both scary and exciting for an eight-year-old girl to be taken out to a small boat at cover of night with her mother and two siblings, to climb a rope ladder to board the boat and then be taken in secrecy to a point along the coast where they were all landed. Little transport was available during this national emergency, so while they had a truck to carry their luggage the women and children were obliged to walk across country for days until they reached an army base on the highway south. Bobbie remembers one very pregnant lady was allowed to ride in the truck, but the rest of them trailed along behind the truck on foot. They were trucked from the army base to Alice Springs, and then sent by cattle train to Adelaide, where kind people met them with warm clothes. Meanwhile, their father escorted a group of aboriginal children overland on an historic journey.

The family stayed briefly with relatives in Kyneton, eventually settling in Box Hill, where Bobbie was enrolled in the Box Hill State School. After the isolation of correspondence school, she loved attending school with others, and progressed on to Mont Albert Central School where she was successful in sports and became Head Girl. From there to Camberwell High where the success was repeated, becoming Head Prefect and dux. She was attracted initially to nursing and spent a year training in the Children's Hospital, but was dismayed at how little time was available to talk

with the children to set them at ease and help them through a difficult time, so she changed her career. As a pre-school teacher her contact with children was more meaningful, and she enjoyed working first at the South Melbourne Mission and then at Orana, and later in child care in Port Moresby and Canberra.

In 1957 she married Jim Rooks, whom she had met at Sunday School and church, and so began her next career as wife and mother. She endured many miscarriages, but managed to bring three premature babies into the world. She and Jim also fostered children who were unable to safely stay with their own families, and eventually they adopted three of these children, offering them a stable and loving home, augmenting their family size to 8.

Jim was keen to pass on his financial skills and sense of 'being accountable' to the citizens of newly-independent Papua New Guinea, so in 1979 they moved to Port Moresby where Jim worked for SPAN Enterprises, an industrial and commercial arm of the United Church in PNG. They stayed until 1983 but had to return to Australia due to the illness of their eldest child.

Settling in Canberra, they joined the South Woden United Church, a remarkably ecumenical congregation which embraced Christians of many persuasions. They had no church building and met in school halls; every two years they took a vote of their members to decide whether or not to build a church. It was regularly rejected, members preferring to use their resources to spend it in action helping others. A member of their congregation alerted them to the need for local palliative care nursing, and set up a volunteer system to assist patients who needed someone with them at all times. Bobbie signed up, 'not really knowing what I was letting myself in for', and did the training. The work often required her to move



Bobbie, Samantha
Chelsea, Chloe

Getting to Know You

into a patient's home as a carer of the dying and their families. She found this 'so amazingly worthwhile' that she gave up paid employment so she could volunteer full-time, both in homes and at the hospice which they later acquired.

When Jim and Bobbie retired to Bright, the Hume Region was investigating setting up a palliative care system and had contacted Canberra for advice. Hume Region was put in touch with Jim and Bobbie, whose administrative and palliative care experiences assisted them in establishing their own network.

However, Jim's deteriorating health meant they needed to be located closer to the medical services Melbourne offered, so they made the move to Highvale Retirement Village in 2001. To their surprise they found they had family connections with many people at GWUC, so they chose to join our community as their spiritual home. Six good years were enjoyed here before Jim passed away in 2007. Bobbie met Graeme Schober here at GWUC, and they married in 2013.

At GWUC, Bobbie has continued her activity in grief support as well as work with the asylum seeker support network, Leisure Time, and as a steward at GWUC and Strathdon.

Bobbie recalls her mother telling her that she had been born with a caul, a rare occurrence when a baby is born with a membrane covering the head and face. Customary belief said that this was a sign of good luck. In times past, a caul was treasured and often passed on to mariners to protect them against the dangers of the sea. Whether or not there is any substance to these ancient beliefs, Bobbie feels that she has been blessed in her life, and is thankful. From early adulthood she has understood the importance and value of connectedness and this has been reflected in her own life, in providing a safe and stable home for many children, and in her many professional and voluntary activities.



Robin Pope

What's in a Name?

Yours I think is quite clear,
mine not so.

My name,
that I did not choose,
has been used
to define me;
in relation
to parents,
siblings,
and a complicated
capitalist society.

Once these parameters
had been established,
and then overcome;
by forgiving
and being forgiven,
it was time for me.

Time to address the journey
as embodied spirit;
serving those I love –
and the others given,
through the transcendent
into my care.

Then owning my name,
to give thanks;
for the opportunity,
to manifest the transcendent
while an element in
and of the creation.

P G Baker

Book Review: *A Good Death*

Rodney Syme, *A Good Death: An argument for voluntary euthanasia*, Melbourne University Press, Carlton Victoria, 2008.

In my opinion, *A Good Death* is a good read. By that I don't mean it's an easy read, although the words are simple enough and well put together; but rather, it's good because it speaks in gentle terms about one of the things we find hard to talk about: death! And if I need one exclamation mark for the word death, I might need to add another one if I used the full title: *A Good Death: An argument for voluntary euthanasia*.

So, if you will bear with me a little longer, you might be interested to know that the word euthanasia actually comes from Greek and means 'good death'. The term was first used by the historian Suetonius, when he described how Emperor Augustus had died 'quickly and without suffering in the arms of his wife, Livia'. It was first used in a medical context by Francis Bacon in the 17th Century.

In this book Rodney Syme shares stories of many individuals whom he has assisted to make end of life decisions. As a doctor, he found himself confronted by those who wished to have control and choice about their end of life and who wanted to have this happen in a dignified way. Yet, while Dr Syme is clear about medical terms and expectations, he does not write in a purely medical sense, but shares the stories of those he has known with compassion and care.

As well as reading the stories of terminally ill people over a 35 year period, you also get a sense of the story of Rodney. Being first confronted with the prospect of voluntary euthanasia as a younger doctor who felt completely out of his depth, he has come to be a firm advocate for voluntary euthanasia and its importance as one (and only one) avenue of palliative care that should be available to patients.

Throughout this book, Dr Syme advocates for the autonomy of individuals who should be able to make their own end of life choices, and includes information for those who might be wanting to have this discussion with doctor, family or friends.

So *A Good Death* is a good read for a number of reasons. It encourages us to think of what is, after all, the one reality that will come to all of us. It invites us into a place where difficult conversations can begin. It shares stories of 'good death' and also of wonderful living on that final journey.

Heather Hon

From the Justice and International Mission Unit (Synod of Victoria and Tasmania)

Assisted Dying or Assisted Suicide? What position should the synod take?

The Victorian Government has brought to the Parliament a Bill to make assisted dying/suicide legal for people who are terminally ill and in great pain. The Synod of Victoria and Tasmania last considered this issue in 1995 and decided not to take a position. Should our Synod support or oppose such legislation? If the Synod supports the new law, what safeguards should apply to avoid people being pressured into ending their lives early?

To help members of the Uniting Church navigate these issues and have their say, the Justice and International Mission Unit has developed a consultation paper outlining:

- What the new law the Victorian Government is seeking to introduce would do;
- Theological reflections on the issue;
- Ecumenical positions on the issue;
- Examples of people's experience in Victoria under the current laws; and
- The experience of assisted dying/suicide laws in other parts of the world.

The JIM Unit is inviting feedback on the issue by October 20 2017.

If you would like a copy of the consultation paper to be posted or e-mailed to you please contact Mark Zirnsak:

mark.zirnsak@victas.uca.org.au or phone (03) 9251 5271.

God Has No Favourites

'Where was God when this happened? Why does God let it happen to such nice people?'

No doubt we have all heard these questions. Maybe we have even asked them. Why do little children get cancer? Why do people die in roadside bombings or terrible accidents? Why are some struck down with crippling illnesses in their prime? There seems no justice in this, and there seem no answers to what has been called 'the problem of suffering'.

(Just an aside: we can never know what dreadful things might have happened if we had not asked earnestly that they would not. This situation is impossible to verify experimentally of course.)

But unless you believe in an interventionist God, as some Christians do, you have to believe that God has no favourites. He knows the laws of physics, chemistry and biology as well as we do, or probably even better, and that these laws cannot be broken. They are fundamental to the working out of the Universe and must take their course. If two cars going in opposite directions on the same road crash head on, that is physics rather more than bad luck or even a malevolent providence. If one person gets cancer and not another, that is chemistry and genetics, not a choice. Of course we can pray that such things will not happen and provided the laws are not violated, they probably will not. But is arriving without mishap therefore the same as faith??

Many would say that the miracles of Jesus violated the laws of physics, chemistry and biology. Indeed, without violations, the concept of miracles seems meaningless. The causes of such happenings as Jesus wrought are for the pious to decide. Additionally many of us can attest to personal miracles in our lives. But the general principal remains: laws are immutable and are only broken by amazing interventions.

Or maybe by learning more than we know at present?

Since the mapping of the human genome, around the turn of the millennium, and before, medical science has provided us with seemingly miraculous 'cures' for many diseases and conditions, as witness transplants. When the proposal was put forward to map the human genome there were many naysayers and doubters. Yet look where that new knowledge is taking humanity in terms of cures for bodily ills, often without the insertion of spare parts into the body. Truly, the lame can walk and the blind now see. At whose will?

As we learn more of what God seems to want us to know, and apply it thoughtfully, we are able to advance humans (and animals) towards physical wholeness. We travel towards the day when the Kingdom will come all over the earth. The next great frontier of knowledge will be the human mind. Who amongst us knows how long it will take us to learn what there is to know? Or how to apply it while still retaining the marvellous diversity of creation?

In the meantime, and always, God does give us strength to cope with whatever the laws of physics, chemistry and biology mete out to us. With His support we cope with each day as it comes. We ask not to be cured, but to be delivered from temptation - perhaps the temptation of looking for shortcuts or instant relief. We ask to be delivered from evil, which must surely include cancer and car crashes, and hope or believe that for this day we will be safe.

And in the end we have to know that this is His world, not ours. We all need to thank Him for help to travel to and through this day. We must also encourage and support one another, especially those who face disaster, in the light of our present knowledge. *Laele Pepper*

Laele was a regular contributor to NewView. She submitted this article for publication before her recent death. It is published with the permission of her family.

Some Observations on Religious Beliefs

(Bill first presented these ideas to the Adult Group a few months ago and what follows are modified from notes Andrew Hosking took on that occasion)

For some time now I have had a strong feeling against people who declare that their religious beliefs are right and everyone else is wrong: 'If you don't accept my dogma, my doctrine, then you are doomed to death.'

I grew up in a good Methodist home - which is a silly thing to say because all Methodist homes were good. You went to church and Sunday school.

I remember one of our ministers telling us that in the early days, when they came to saying the Apostles Creed, instead of saying 'the holy Catholic Church' one of his parishioners would instead say 'the holy Methodist church'.

When we were 12 years old we were encouraged to sign 'the pledge'. This included statements like, 'You will never touch the evil demon drink'. That bothered me for years to come but it doesn't bother me now. I will have a drink occasionally but I don't drink much.

My father was in the Orange Lodge. He had no problem with Catholics, but he had a strong dislike of the Catholic Church. My mother's sister had married a mad northern Irish Orangemen. To him there was not a decent Catholic alive. At that time the minister of their church was talking about the wonderful work of the missionaries and Father Damien's work with the lepers. My uncle stormed out of the church and swore that he would never go back while that 'so and so' was there. This to me was absolutely stupid.

When I started work I had to board with my brother-in-law's family, who were Baptists. To them the Methodists were all right but they were just not good enough to be Baptists. I attended some meetings at their church and on one occasion as I was leaving a minister grabbed my hand and asked, 'Are you saved, my son?' (This was to a 16 year old kid.) A little bit later on I was introduced to one of the 'leading lights' of the church. My brother-in-law's mother asked, 'Do you go to the Methodist Church?' Then she said, 'Oh! You haven't seen the

light yet.' This self-righteous attitude still grates on me to this day. Why can't people accept that we are all different and find different paths?

Vic Zammit started work the same year that I did. He was a good Catholic and he could not understand why everyone wasn't Catholic. I said to him, 'If you had been born in a Protestant home you would have been Protestant.' He replied, 'If I had been born in a Protestant home, as soon as I was old enough I would have left it and gone to the Catholic Church.' I said, 'Rubbish!'

In about 160 AD there was a guy called Irenaeus. He was the Bishop of Lyons and was probably the closest thing they had to the Pope in those days. He decreed that the church was the doorway to heaven and the deacons, priests and bishops had the keys to the doors. Unless you agreed with the deacons, priests and bishops you could not go to heaven. And anyone who disagreed with their edicts was a heretic.

And over the next few hundred years some other ideas of the church were created, such as limbo and purgatory. With limbo, if a child died before it could be baptised it couldn't go to heaven, it went to limbo. When you died you didn't go to heaven, you went to purgatory to clear yourself of your sins. At this point the Catholic Church developed a dogmatic religious mania which led to the inquisition.

There were Christians in France called the Cathars. They were very devout people but they did not accept the doctrine of the Catholic Church. To them the crucifixion and the resurrection didn't matter. To them it was how you lived your life that mattered. In the thirteenth century the church sent soldiers and basically massacred every one.

There was one instance when the inquisitors were present in the town. An old woman was there who was close to death's door, declaring that she was a Cathar, and someone told the inquisitor as they were preparing for a feast that evening. Documented in the Chronicles of the inquisition is the description of inquisitors racing to her bed. They took her out to the paddock and burned her at the stake and then continued on with their feast.

Religious Beliefs

The church became addicted to an idea of purity at this point, and sin became a great money maker. Basically the idea became that you could pay money to the church and receive remission for your sins when you died, with the purchase of indulgences. But not only that, you could pay extra and your poor old mother who was slaving away in purgatory would be released. It became their greatest 'milking cow'. This was what Martin Luther fought against.

About 100 years before Luther, a priest called Jan Hus also spoke out against the indulgences and he was taken to Rome and burned at the stake.

So much of what we believe today is as a result of what we have been taught. Whether it is right or wrong we don't know, but it becomes the yardstick by which we make judgements. So much of our beliefs can be a result of the teaching that was drummed into us by our parents, Sunday school, church etc. We can become prisoners of our birth.

Sunday school, church and youth groups instilled in us that the Bible was the Word of God. All religions claim that their writings are the Word of God, but in reality all are the writings of men. Of course, if it was the Word of God then it could not be challenged - for inconsistencies, such as are present in the differing nativity stories in the Gospels. These make it hard for the literalists to defend their position. There are 613 Holy laws in the Bible. Literalists may break these tonight by eating ham - punishable by death in past times.

In early days priests had massive control of the uneducated populace. To me, Jesus challenged that power of the priesthood.

In discussions I have had it has been questioned that if you were to take away the virgin birth, the resurrection, the miracles and ritual, then what is left of the Christian experience? In my opinion what is left of Christianity is all that truly matters: *how we should live and how we should live with one another*. God is bigger than Christianity and any other religions. No one has the right to say others are *wrong*, but we may disagree.

Bill Norquay

Pattern

He takes a pattern for each life.

My life is like a spiderweb.

Threads touch and part in endless dance

Weaving, spinning, stretching out

To fill my little time.

I often spin alone

But where threads touch,

Bonds of silk, or steel, are formed

New friendships grow,

Sometimes stretched but

Never broken.

The people from my past leap forth;

Old threads twist stronger.

I sometimes wonder at this marvel

These 'degrees of separation'.

Is it the hand of God

Responding to my need for pattern?

I hope that

Resurrection is patterned too!

L. Pepper

Writing Letters for a World Free of Nuclear Weapons

This guide was published in the JIM Unit's September newsletter:

'Leaders of all the nations of the world: please come and visit the atomic bombed cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. I want you to see what happened down here on the ground beneath the mushroom cloud, not from the perspective high above it: I want you all to see with your own eyes, hear with your own ears, and feel with your own hearts just how cruelly the atomic bomb trampled on the dignity of human beings. I want you to imagine how you would feel if your own family had been in Nagasaki on that day.'

Tomihisi Taue, Mayor of Nagasaki, 9 August 2017.

There has been great news this year with 122 governments from around the world agreeing to a new treaty to ban nuclear weapons. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons will strengthen the global stigma against the weapon and increase pressure on the nuclear-armed states to disarm.

The Uniting Church in Australia has a long standing position of seeking the global eradication of nuclear weapons. The World Council of Churches called for such a treaty at its global assembly in South Korea in 2013.

The new treaty prohibits governments that sign it from developing, testing, producing, manufacturing, transferring, possessing, stockpiling, using or threatening to use nuclear weapons. It prohibits them from assisting or encouraging anyone else from undertaking any of those activities as well. Governments that sign the treaty must also provide adequate assistance to victims of the use and testing of nuclear weapons.

The treaty puts nuclear weapons in the same category as other indiscriminate, inhumane weapons such as chemical weapons, biological weapons, anti-personnel landmines and cluster munitions.

Write polite and respectful letters to:

The Hon Julie Bishop MP
Minister for Foreign Affairs
PO Box 6022
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Salutation: Dear Minister

Senator the Hon Penny Wong
Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs
PO Box 6100
Senate
Parliament
Canberra ACT 2600
Salutation: Dear Senator Wong

Unfortunately, the Australian Government refused to be part of the negotiations for the new treaty. The nine governments that possess nuclear weapons did not take part in negotiating the treaty, along with 30 governments that support the US using nuclear weapons as a deterrent.

Australia must sign the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear weapons as it has signed the prohibitions on other abhorrent weapons. While it won't eliminate nuclear weapons overnight, the new Treaty is a powerful tool to facilitate nuclear disarmament and contribute to our global collective security.

'It is no longer a choice, my friends, between violence and nonviolence. It is either nonviolence or nonexistence. And the alternatives to disarmament, the alternative to a greater suspension of nuclear tests, the alternative to strengthening the United Nations and thereby disarming the whole world, may well be a civilisation plunged into the abyss of annihilation, and our earthly habitat would be transformed into an inferno that even the mind of Dante could not imagine.'

Rev Dr Martin Luther King, Jr., *Remaining Awake Through a Great Revolution*, 31 March 1968.

Points to make in your letters

- Express deep concern that the on-going existence of nuclear weapons poses a threat to humanity. Nuclear weapons by their very nature are indiscriminate and, if used, would kill large numbers of civilians as well as leaving a lasting radioactive legacy. Even today the survivors of the nuclear blasts at Nagasaki and Hiroshima continue to suffer the effects of the radiation they were exposed to.
- Ask that they support the Australian Government becoming a party to the *Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons*.

The Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP
Prime Minister
PO Box 6022
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

The Hon Bill Shorten MP
Leader of the Opposition
PO Box 6022
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Salutation: Dear Mr Shorten

Getting to Know Our Church: Library



Glen Waverley Uniting Church **LIBRARY**

**The church library, in the foyer,
is undergoing a make-over.**

Books are now sorted into categories, such as:

- *Families**
- *Ageing**
- *Counselling**
- *Leadership**
- *The Bible**
- *Meditations**
- *Children's books**

**All books will eventually
be linked to a category
by a coloured dot
making it easier to select
and return.**



**Please make use of our library.
Take a book at any time
and return it within two weeks.**



It's the Numbers That Count in Food Preparation

As the weather starts to warm up, our thoughts soon turn to picnics and BBQs with friends and family. Our Church Fete is also around the corner and naturally my thoughts have started focussing on the Food Safety aspects of the meals we share. I hope that the limited information to follow will serve as a gentle reminder that what looks, tastes and smells OK may still be a danger to the young and frail if not prepared, cooked and stored properly, as the warmer weather will quickly multiply any bacterial contamination that is in the food. Not wanting to be an alarmist, just bear in mind that microorganisms coexist with us and if kept in low numbers, our bodies are well equipped to cope with the toxins and harmful organisms we encounter.

Food Preparation:

- ✓ Always wash well fruit and vegetables especially if it is served raw. This removes the surface contamination of dirt and fertiliser residue. Buy from a reputable grocer if using bulk packs of pre-washed salad mixes.
- ✓ All utensils and containers that have contacted raw meat should be washed thoroughly and dried before reuse for cooked food.
- ✓ Do not wash raw eggs before storing away as the shell becomes porous allowing bacteria to migrate inside the egg.
- ✓ Wash your hands often, especially after handling raw meat.
- ✓ When preparing large amounts of meat, just take out what you need from the fridge and return the rest until required. Frozen food should be thawed in the fridge and fully defrosted especially for bulky items.
- ✓ I love to marinate the meat and baste it while cooking. However to avoid the raw meat juices in the used marinade re-contaminating partially cooked meat, always use fresh marinade to baste, and discard the marinade you used for the raw meat.
- ✓ Some dried pulses like red kidney beans contain natural toxins that can make people ill unless they are destroyed by soaking and cooking. Always follow the preparation instructions on the packaging.

Cooking:

- ✓ Cooking food thoroughly will kill most bacteria. To achieve this, the core temperature must reach 75°C or hotter. A probe thermometer reading at the thickest part of the food is ideal. Other ways to ensure thorough cooking may include-
 - ✓ Liquids should bubble when stirred;
 - ✓ Stews and curries should be stirred while cooking and steaming throughout when ready;
 - ✓ Combination dishes like lasagne & shepherd's pie should be steaming in the middle;
 - ✓ Processed meats like sausages and burgers should not be pink or red in the centre.

Storage:

- ✓ Always keep food covered and in the fridge until required. Place cooked and processed food on the top shelves above the raw ingredients to avoid cross contamination.
- ✓ Cooked food prepared ahead of time needs to be refrigerated once it has stopped steaming.

The information provided is only a general guide for home cooking. Please talk to a member of the CKC [Careful Kitchen Crew]

Yan Emms



With community within the Uniting Church in mind, Bill Norquay has sourced Kauri wood from the pre-loved pews at Camberwell Uniting Church and crafted it into a beautiful piece of furniture that is both functional and decorative. Bill has donated this fully Rotating Bookcase for our Silent Auction stall this year and I hope that you are able to bring home this piece of history to grace your living space. A reserve of \$200 has been placed on the bookcase and we hope to have it on display at GWUC on Sunday October 15.

Yan Emms

Free Spirit on the move

From time to time Free Spirit is invited to sing at other churches. Recently the group sang at Southern Peninsula UC (Rosebud), and also at St Michael's (Collins Street) by invitation of their new minister Ric Holland. Singing lively contemporary songs in St Michael's was quite an experience, given that the music performed there by others previously has usually been classical.

Geoff Willis

My Feet

(Apologies to Pam Ayres)

Oh, I wish I'd been kind to my feet,
I should have taken a seat
at a podiatrist's office,
and learnt with a coffee
how to care for my feet!

When I was young and silly,
I wore high heels willy nilly.
Pointed and chisel toes
were certainly the go.
It seemed to me, so smart -
now I shuffle around K-mart.
Oh, I wish I'd been kind to my feet!

Pointed toes in shoes we wore
never dreaming of bunions sore.
Down Collins St we would wander,
to Sportsgirl where we would squander
our money on makeup and clothes,
just enough for the rent to pose.
Oh, I wish I'd been kind to my feet!

At the counter we would stand,
work in the bank was grand,
never thinking of hammer toes
or hiding under coloured hose.
Oh, I wish I'd been kind to my feet!

'You have your fun, then you pay' -
all to my dismay.
My knees gave first, then my toes,
as everybody knows.
Arthur-itis keeps me company.
I just give him the cold shoulder.
There's life in the old girl yet,
so don't you folks forget!

Let's go!

Gael O'Brien

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

Irene McKitterick Marriott

Thelma Zenner

John Allan Stone

Vasanthia Malar Wilson

Laele Pepper

Peter James Bryan

Roger Coates