

NewView

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Judging by the response to our theme for this issue, we see that **change** is apparently a hot topic for many of us at the moment. Certainly, any comparison of our daily lives with past decades seem to indicate that we are confronted with change on a daily basis, and the rate of change seems to be increasing exponentially! Much of this has been caused by technological advancements, particularly in the digital technologies which have made incursions into how we communicate with each other, how we are entertained, how we record our lives, how we conduct our businesses, or even our church services - and in a myriad other ways. These new technologies have forced us into developing new social protocols. No doubt many will remember the late 1980s and the annoyingly loud conversations conducted in public by those early owners of mobile phones who were keen to impress everyone with their ownership and demonstrate how technology was a familiar part of *their* lifestyle. All we could do was grit our teeth and move elsewhere. Nowadays, you can catch a suburban train in Sydney with designated 'talk-free' carriages: an indication of new protocols which have arisen to cope with the constant presence of technology.

Because our world is now more linked, ideas spread more rapidly. A short time ago some social changes, such as the recent postal vote approving same sex marriage, seemed decades away. Di Paterson (p.2) draws our attention to some of these matters which will be the subject of discussion at both Synod and the national UC Assembly. Community values have changed rapidly in many areas, and this has resulted in new laws which bring new responsibilities to communities such as ours, as Warren Greenwood spells out for us (pp. 5-6). At the same time, we are cautioned to remember that a church is not a business, but a community tied together by the 'servant love' which Jesus practised to all regardless of differences (p.6)

Sometimes the changes in our lives are a deliberate undertaking we make to 'be a better person'. They may not be huge, but they are meaningful to us, perhaps being a determination to overcome a personal failing. These can be some of the hardest changes we make! (I find the reminder that 'we are a work in progress' a great encouragement here!)

The world's headlong rush into change hasn't been an unqualified success. As a species, humans seem enraptured with innovation to the detriment of our environment - Anne Cook's observations (pp.3-4ff) about our plastic-choked world are a stern warning.

Not all change is annoying or damaging or threatening. Consider the advancements in medical research which has seen dramatic changes in the treatment of some of our most common ailments. We are thankful for these improvements which provide longer and better quality of life for many people, and at a local level we are grateful that Neil has been a recipient of these advances.

'Change is more fun to do than to be done', quips an engineer (p.4). If we choose to make dramatic changes - like migrating to another country (pp.8-9) - we start stronger than when it is unplanned. But some changes are not by choice: they are thrust upon us. We develop health problems; we suffer loss through death or broken relationships; our jobs are made redundant; sometimes natural disasters overtake us (p.7); many have to leave their homes to flee from danger (p. 15). That is when, as a faith community, we need to practise the compassion and tolerance we talk about. Let us all be instruments for a kinder, more loving world.

Robin Pope

Di's Musings on Our World of Change



We thank Di for her contribution in place of Neil's regular 'Musings' - and the ministry team for taking up those extra responsibilities arising from Neil's absence. How blessed we are in our leadership!

My, the pace of change in our world is just so overwhelming! Some change has been amazing, supportive and life giving, but it has been just plain hard work to get our heads around other changes. I thought maybe it is because I am getting older but technology has just raced ahead. I am sitting writing this article on my computer and I will send it through via email. Gone are the days of writing letters that took forever to get to far-flung countries. I can email my son in Canada and he can reply in a matter of minutes. Recently a friend who does not own a computer was amazed that I could prepare a slide show on my computer!

Our world has changed dramatically as well. Many countries have new names and new regimes. Terrorism has become a regular fear as many people are killed or injured so that someone else can make a point or a statement about their ideas or beliefs. As a post-war Baby Boomer I am aware that the weekly encyclopaedia that dad bought for me is very out of date. These days I can Google and get the information I need immediately. Mind you there are some things that Google can't answer!

Our community has changed: Australia is now a multi-cultural country and Glen Waverley is a very multi-cultural suburb. Different foods, different languages, different faiths and different ways of being. As a child, most people I knew went to Church, and now in my suburb there are fewer Churches and more Buddhist Temples, a Mosque and a Sikh Temple, and statistics show that there fewer people attending Church regularly.

Technology, education and amazing breakthroughs in medical science are changing the way we see life, the way we live life and the way we enjoy life. The mobile phone has had an enormous influence on our lives and daily we see people walking along concentrating on a screen and not always aware of what is around them. It seems we have more technology to keep in touch but many people are lonely because they don't have the opportunity to interact with people.

As a Church, we are aware of the importance of community as we share regularly in a community of faith. It is through the amazing advances in technology

that we can change the opportunity for worship to so many faithful people who worship with us, through the broadcast ministry.

Jesus came to show us the great love of God, how to look at our neighbours and how to love and care for each other and how to welcome the stranger. As a church we are also contemplating a huge question. This year, at Assembly, the Uniting Church is considering the question of same gender marriage. Last year, the law changed and it is now legal for same gender couples to be married. These marriages can be presided over by a civil celebrant but at this stage, not by a Minister of the Word.

Over the last year or so, the Church has looked at the challenge of same gender relationships: where that fits in society and where it fits into our faith community. Some of you may have attended the seminar we held at GWUC, led by Rev Dr. Sunny Chen, who walked us through marriage through the history of the Bible. You may have also seen the interview on TV, with Rev Dr Robyn Whitaker, who discussed her journey, through study and prayer, to a place where she is comfortable with the question of same gender marriage.

This year at Assembly, the delegates will discuss the changes that might need to happen to enable Uniting Church ministers to preside at the wedding of same gender couples. This is a huge change for us to contemplate as a people of God. Assembly might not be able to decide on this challenging new direction for the Church. Assembly will also need to consider whether they will allow Uniting Church ministers to make a decision of conscience as to whether they feel comfortable to perform a same gender marriage based on their faith and their understanding of relationships and marriage. This will require looking at the important wording within the Uniting Church Service of Marriage and seeking God's guidance to create a new and inclusive liturgy.

Whatever the decision of Assembly the outcome will have a huge impact on the Uniting Church, and on us, as the faith community at GWUC. How will it affect our welcome, our care for others and our acceptance of people who live a different lifestyle to many of us? Will we be prepared, as a church, to open our doors to a same gender couple who wish to marry? Will we be prepared to live out, by our actions, the love, grace and care we experience through our relationship with God? These are the questions we need to consider as we look at yet another change in our society. Jesus reached out and touched the sick, the sinner, the unclean, the other, and we are called to live by the example of Jesus, to reach out in love, acceptance, grace and welcome.

Change is all around us, change is a constant challenge to us. The big question for us is, how will we respond to the changes?

Di Paterson

Rime of the Great Pacific Garbage Patch

after Samuel Taylor Coleridge

It was a troubled, ancient man
Who grasped me by the arm
He held me fast down in the Mall,
With tale that did alarm.

I said, 'It's now near closing time,
I have no gift as yet.
It is my Mother's birthday tea.
I swore I'd not forget.'

With eye of steel he clutched my arm,
'There was a ship,' said he,
'My son did sail the ocean wide;
Hear his saga is my plea.'

Dad we set course for The States,
Drank well of wine and beer,
Then threw the empties overboard
With many a raucous cheer.

A monster Whale came from the deep
Its water-spout rose high;
And on each jet a beer can flung
Or bottle it did fly.

That night by moon, it pushed our boat
Its task to execute.
Past Hawaii it drove us on
With strength most resolute.

At last the sun came from the sea.
A gale blew strong and free,
The creature herded us towards
An island of debris.

The whale reared up with final heave,
We breached the great morass.
From the cabin I took my gun
Shot at the creature's mass.

The beast dived deep and disappeared
With one high spouting jet.
The Garbage Patch closed round our hull
Grasped us with fishing net.

All in the searing, summer sky
Strong sun at noon turned brown;
The wind choked with a dying sigh
Left us, held fast, to drown.

Day after day the ship remained,
Stuck in the dread concoction;
As if we were a plastic ship
Upon a plastic ocean.

Foul plastic, plastic everywhere
And all the air did stink
Foul plastic, plastic everywhere
No Perrier to drink.

Damned susurrations trapped our ears
In plastic symphony.
O Christ, the very sound brought fear
Upon that garbaged sea.

Repose! It is a wondrous thing
Much sought by one and all.
No gentle sleep came down on us
By day or dark nightfall.

It's right we've said to make this bling
We cannot get enough.
Our world has done a hellish thing
Adopting plastic stuff.

This albatross around our necks
Did thus our ship enslave.
Entombed inside most wasteful dross,
The Patch will be our grave.

Anne Cook © 2018

Plastic: The Albatross Around Our Necks?

Is all change good?

Genesis indicates God has given the earth, with its plants and animals, for us to care for and enjoy. Plastic became a wonder of the twentieth century. Disposable cutlery, plastic drink containers, plastic wrap, bags, toys etc. etc. While my rime is a parody on 'The Ancient Mariner' and the Pacific Garbage Patch, the poem is meant to highlight the serious issue of plastic pollution. Since I wrote the first draft of the poem back in January, plastic has become an even hotter topic.

There is debate as to whether The Patch is micro pieces of plastic worn small by the ocean currents or the general perception of actual plastic items. Found halfway between California and Hawaii, some say the Great Pacific Garbage Patch is undetectable by aerial photography. Other scientists suggest the Garbage Patch is twice the area of Texas, three times the area of France – 1.6 million square kilometres in size. It is not the only ocean garbage vortex. There

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are photos on the internet that show the oceans with floating chairs, washing baskets, plastic bags, fishing equipment etc. While plastic has its uses, discarded fishing net, toothbrushes, coffee cups and other floating or sinking detritus is not a change for the better, whatever the size of its pieces.

In Coleridge's poem, when the Ancient Mariner shot the Albatross and brought woe upon the ship, the crew hung the dead bird around his neck. The phrase, 'An albatross around the neck', has gone into our lexicon. Rather than shooting the bird, we are killing the Albatross with discarded plastic - the burden around our necks. The World War 2 site, Midway Atoll, is a sanctuary for nesting albatross. The stomachs of dead birds are filled with plastic pieces. A recent article in *The Age* described the fate of the shearwaters on Lord Howe Island, the chicks dying because the parent birds feed the babies with plastic mistaken for food. Seals, dolphins, and turtles also swallow plastic. When the floating plastic, with its particles and poisons, degrades further, the minute particles infuse into our oceans to be swallowed by fish. Three billion people around the world rely on the ocean for their food.

Convenience or care? Stewardship of our planet may mean time spent rinsing a china mug or reusing a paper or cloth bag when shopping. Check-out assistants are handling our bag recycling efforts well now. At the South Melbourne Market paper bags are supplied or you bring your own bag. Recently, Coles, Woolworths and IKEA announced plans to reduce plastic use. On TV Coles suggested they are looking for ways to present fruit and vegetable without plastic containers and wrap. That's funny. I'm old enough to remember when green groceries and other items went into paper bags, butter was cut from a block and wrapped in paper, fresh bread was wrapped in tissue paper. Today, 8 Gluten free cookies or 12 pre-prepared meatballs come with three different layers of plastic. Change to a lifestyle of convenience inflicts a high price on the world God has placed in our care. Clearing the oceans is well-nigh impossible; the problem is so big. Clean-up solutions would bankrupt nations. An unpolluted world requires a major change in the way we use, or refuse to use plastic.

Good solutions are possible. Many countries, including Australia, are experimenting with recycling plastic bags for road making materials. I have a blue hoodie made from recycled drink bottles. There are many things we can do to be environmentally conscious. Most of us already attempt something. Let's keep looking for new ways to reduce our use of plastic, to be better stewards of our world. As a child a seaside treasure was a shell or piece of coloured glass worn smooth by the sea. Today throw-away plastic litters our oceans, rivers and holiday paradises. A change I'd like to see reversed.

Anne Cook

What is Change? Change Is..

Change is something that presses us out of our comfort zone. It is destiny-filtered, heart grown, faith built. Change is inequitable; not a respecter of persons. Change is for the better or for the worst [sic], depending on where you view it. Change has an adjustment period which varies on the individual. It is uncomfortable, for changing from one state to the next upsets our control over outcomes. Change has a ripping effect on those who won't let go. Flex is the key. Even a roller coaster ride can be fun if you know when to lean and create new balance within the change. Change is needed when all the props and practices of the past no longer work. Change is not comforted by the statement 'just hang in there' but with the statement 'you can make it'. We don't grow in retreat, but through endurance. Change isn't fixed by crying, worrying, or mental treadmilling. Change is won by victors not victims; and that choice is ours.

Change is awkward - at first. Change is a muscle that develops to abundantly enjoy the dynamics of the life set before us. Change calls on strength beyond anyone of us. Change pushes you to do your personal best. Change draws out those poised for a new way. Change isn't for chickens. Change does have casualties of those defeated. Change will cause us to churn or to learn. Change changes the speed of time. Time is so slow for the reluctant, and yet it is a whirlwind for those who embrace it. Change is more fun to do than to be done to. Change seeks a better place at the end and is complete when you realize you are different.

Change is measured by its impact on all who are connected to it. Change is charged when you are dissatisfied with where you are. Change doesn't look for a resting-place; just the next launching point. Change is only a waste to those who don't learn from it. Change happens in the heart before it is proclaimed by our works. Change chaps those moving slower than the change itself. If you can change before you have to change, there will be less pain. Change can flow or jerk, depending on our resistance to it. Change uses the power invested in the unseen to reinvent what is seen. Change is like driving in a fog - you can't see very far, but you can make the whole trip that way.

Change is here to stay.

*This piece was located on the website of the Institute of Industrial and Systems Engineers
<http://www.iise.org/Details.aspx?id=3290>
 by Graeme Frecker, and sent for our consideration on our theme.*

Coping with Change at Glen Waverley Uniting Church

Why do we do these things? Because it is the law or because it is the right thing to do?

Our building complex is more than a church. Government agencies now classify our facility as a 'public building' and following the UCA Safe Church procedures, we now have new, complex and in some cases expensive responsibilities to which we must respond. The challenge for us as a congregation is to meet those responsibilities with the least cost and most efficient manner possible. This task is overseen by the Property Committee, but we all have a role to play.

Some examples as to why we do what we do: The Uniting Church 'Safe Church' program has as one of its many aims, to provide an environment where everyone feels safe, is treated with respect and welcomed to participate in the life of the congregation. However, in implementing the Church's mission, we as a congregation must implement some actions that may cost us rental income and add an administrative burden on the office team. Now, if a prospective renter wishes to use any of our church rooms, and they are likely, or expected, to have any child under the age of 17 years attending, we must demand the leaders of that group show us proof that all of their leadership hold 'Working With Children' checks. This is non negotiable. We must refuse a rental lease until we have sighted this proof. This adds administrative tasks to the office team daily routines. This also applies to weddings and funerals that are not led by our own ministry team.

It is mandatory, but it is the right thing to do.

Monash City Council requires us to have a *Food Safety Program*, which they inspect 3 or more times a year. We must ensure all hirers and church groups follow this program. If a

Probus group wants to use our kitchen for morning tea or a lunch, our Careful Kitchen Crew, Property Committee and office team must ensure they follow the program. If they fail to meet the required standard, and we are inspected, we are accountable. This is a further demand on limited volunteer time and the Careful Kitchen Crew. Monash Council also performs building inspections to ensure we comply with regulations on Fire Safety, toilets, cleanliness and Emergency Services testing (evacuation plans, lights and clear doorways). So each quarter we have to inspect our safety equipment and record the outcome. As a consequence of this legislation, we were required to install a roof harness and ladder securing system to meet these requirements. That cost to our congregation was in excess of \$3,000.

It is mandatory, but it is the right thing to do.

Synod Risk Management reviews all instances of injury on church property. As a consequence of a serious injury to a member of our congregation in the recent past, we had to undertake a hall cleaning regime to minimise any further occurrences. So now, we must require that all hall users who serve food, mop the floor after each event. It does not matter if it is a hirer, UCAF, or Badminton. If food is served in the hall, the floor must be cleaned. If food is served in the fellowship area, the carpet must also be vacuumed after each event.

Our insurance excess has risen to \$5,000 per incident and would be even worse without this procedure. Yes, that's correct, for EVERY claim against the Uniting Church in Australia (GWUC) we will have to pay the first \$5,000 of that claim. Mopping the floor is suddenly a very low

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cost option. But the excess also applies to any injury anywhere on the property. This is why members of the Property Committee and office are constantly asking people to ensure vehicles are parked safely; why Property Committee reviews fete and other major event plans with the Church Council; why we ask people to avoid the use of ladders without help; and why we move items blocking doors and pathways and are careful with decorations. The financial cost to us for an injury could quickly drain our resources away from ministry and mission.

It is mandatory, but it is the right thing to do.

And finally, as a consequence of being designated as a 'work place', because we have 4 paid employees in addition to Neil and Alanee, if someone faints during worship on a hot day, and an ambulance is called, we now have to contact *Work-Safe* and advise them of the incident. And if it happens 2 or 3 times in a short period of time, we may have to face a *Work-Safe* inspection and provide reasons as to why so many people faint in worship. This was another reason why we recently installed air-conditioning in the church. Telling *Work-Safe* that it was because those persons may have not dressed appropriately for the weather, or not taken their prescribed medication or because they skipped breakfast, is not acceptable. We still have to report it to *Work-Safe*.

It is mandatory, but it is the right thing to do.

If you would like to know more about any of these or other events or actions that occur around you on the property, please talk to a member of the Property Committee or the office team.

Warren Greenwood
Chairperson - Property Committee

*He said to them,
'Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's,
and to God the things that are God's'.
(Luke 20: 20-26)*



Faces of Church

**I am a traveller on Jesus' way, a pilgrim,
early baptised and grown into the Church.
Yet along life's journey I have discovered
the Church may teach, but not prescribe.
My faith is mine alone and no other's, for
He comes to each, offering life to the full.**

**Down the years I played the Churchman,
presiding over councils and committees.
Then, I saw the gathering as organisation,
and devised faith programs for the believers.
Not ordained, but commissioned as Elder,
to walk with pilgrims discovering Jesus' way.**

**Nonbelievers see Church as mere institution,
unaware Jesus' kingdom is not of this world.
I came to know and understand the Church
presents two faces: the gathering's and mine.
I hold to my faith, yet in the power of the
Spirit
join with like souls to share His servant love.**

Graeme Frecker
May 2018

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Changes We Least Expect

Last weekend I was away with friends at a property just out of Yarra Junction. On Sunday evening we invited the managers of the site for the weekend, over for dinner with us. One of the managers talked about the experience of losing her house and the contents in Kinglake during the Black Saturday bush Fires. She spoke of the devastation of losing everything and how it is hard to live without those memories we collect over the years. Only a few months before she had moved many of her things to a safe house but assuming that the danger had passed, she brought her belongings back. She talked about how you begin to rebuild after such devastation and how to overcome the sadness of loss.

We talked about the funds raised to help the bushfire victims and she could not speak more highly of the process of distribution of the money. The thing she valued the most was the money put aside for counselling as so many of the victims of the fire were traumatised. Many of her neighbours lost everything but their double problem was that they were underinsured, so the loss was so much harder to handle. Her life has been changed forever, not by her own doing but as a victim of an unexpected tragedy. She has moved from her much-loved property in Kinglake to Pakenham as she could not begin to think how she could rebuild.

Changes are all around us but we can let the changes destroy us or we can, like the Phoenix, rise from the ashes of devastation and begin again. The care of friends, the support of family were all important factors in the rebuilding process and the opportunity to share the story with those who were prepared to listen and learn from her experience and how her life had changed forever in a way she least expected.

Change changes us, change gives us new experiences and change helps us to realise that we are truly amazing people, able to begin again after the good or the not-so-good experiences. We were all touched by the story, of the devastation, but mostly the story of the determination to build again in a new place and to work through the changes of her new life.

Di Paterson

Change in Sea Boundary

From the JIM Unit:

The Governments of Australia and Timor Leste have reached an agreement on the sea border between the two countries. The new border is approximately at the mid-point between the two countries. Previously the Australian Government had been arguing for a boundary that would have given it almost all the gas deposits under the sea between the two countries. The outcome will mean greater revenues for Timor Leste to spend on schools, health clinics and other social needs. Thank you to everyone who took part in support of this outcome.

Changes in UC Organisation

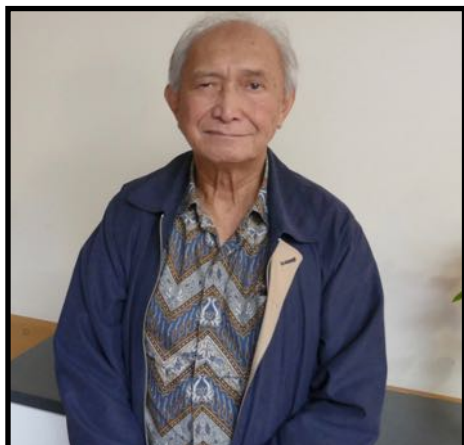
The Uniting Church synod is currently undergoing some major structural changes.

There is a new 'equipping Leadership for Ministry' (eLM) unit which will have various sections. One of these is the Priorities, Focus and Advocacy section.

What we have known as the Justice and International Mission Unit has now moved into this new section. It has meant that the JIM Unit has also physically relocated from the 130 Little Collins Street office to the Centre for Theology and Ministry in Parkville. The number of staff in the JIM unit has been reduced from 4.6 to 1.6, but it is hoped that there will eventually be three specialist social justice staff in the eLM Unit.

Rev Nigel Hanskamp is now the manager of the social justice staff in the eLM. Dr Mark Zirnsak and Denisse Sandoval are the two continuing staff in the Jim Unit. It is yet to be decided if the JIM Unit will remain as a separate entity.

Getting to Know Lucky Kalonta



Lucky Kalonta's background would be a surprise to the average Australian. Most Australians know Indonesia as the country with the largest Muslim population in the world, but Lucky comes from Northern Sulawesi, an area close to the Philippines which is predominantly Christian. The location has been crucial in its history, as it became an important centre for spices, rice and gold which attracted ships from Europe seeking goods for trade. Although the Portugese and Spanish plied the waters of the 'Spice Islands' from as long ago as the sixteenth century, it was the Dutch in the seventeenth century who had the greatest influence, after they overcame the Portugese and Spanish influence. Through the Dutch East India Company they effectively governed North Sulawesi for about 300 years, during which time Dutch Protestant missionaries were active in converting the local population to Christianity. At the 2010 census 68% listed themselves as Christian (63.6% claimed to be Protestant, 4.4% Roman Catholic), 30.9% were Muslim.

Lucky's home city was Tondano, where his family had been Christian for generations - his grandmother was a Christian. It was a city which was home to many religions, and Lucky remembers the big mosque where the Muslims worshipped. When Lucky was born in 1945 the Japanese who were occupying his country had only just surrendered, and in

the following post-war years Indonesia gradually became a republic under the presidency of Sukarno, a nationalist who had welcomed the Japanese as a means of eradicating the hegemony of the Dutch and to bring the scattered islands of his nation together under the umbrella of 'guided democracy', which effectively became a dictatorship. Sukarno was no economist, but he did improve Indonesian education, and Lucky was a recipient of those improvements when he attended primary and secondary schools in Tondano.

In 1964 Lucky was selected to attend a work camp in Bali organised by the World Council of Churches to assist Indonesia's recovery after the massive year-long volcanic eruption of Gunung Agung. Lucky remembers being impressed by the coming together of young people from seventeen nations, all working for a whole year to re-establish life in the devastated countryside, under the leadership of an Australian, Rev. Caulfield Crow. Lucky was assigned to the pig pens on a farm, caring for 2000 pigs.

Returning home to Tondano, he completed his secondary education before moving on to tertiary studies. He graduated from Teachers' College in 1968.

By this time, Sukarno had been overthrown by Suharto and the country was undergoing an anti-communist purge. Lucky chose not to teach but became involved in politics, and began work as a journalist. In 1970 he moved to Djakarta, but his idealistic hopes for his country as a place of moderation had been shattered. Meanwhile, he had made an extensive visit to Australia catching up with old friends from a visiting Christian youth group in 1970; liking what he found here, he determined to make Australia his home. He returned to Indonesia to prepare for the move, and he arrived here in December 1972.

Lucky had only a little English (learned at

Getting to Know Lucky Kalonta

school), and this quickly improved as he obtained work in various mining towns such as Tennant Creek and Alice Springs. In 1975 he came to Melbourne, the city which has been his home ever since. He recalls that the Asian population then was just beginning to expand, and the few supermarkets were not yet providing for them as well as now, so he had to travel in to China Town in the city to buy the rice he needed!

Lucky's new work was with the railways, with whom he worked for the next 10 years. Socially, he linked up with a few Indonesian friends who were mostly from the Indonesian Christian Youth Movement, and in 1988 they took over the old Methodist Church in Spring Road, Malvern, establishing the first Indonesian congregation in Melbourne. He also maintained his work in the media sector on a part-time basis, writing for an Indonesian publication, and working in TV and radio.

After 10 years he moved to a job with Telstra where he stayed for a further 10 years. He spent his final working years in the supply area of the automotive industry, finally retiring in his late sixties in 2014.

Throughout his years here he has maintained his contact with family in Indonesia, visiting twice a year when his parents were still alive. His continuing work in the media has kept him involved in events in Indonesia as well as Australia, and in retirement he is able to devote more time to these efforts. He is involved with two community radio stations, has a regular TV program on Channel 31 every Sunday (8-9am) and writes for an Indonesian magazine and newspaper. He does not spend all his retirement in desk-bound activities, however, as he walks 7-8 kilometres every day to ensure he keeps active.

The Spring Road congregation eventually found the maintenance on their property was too expensive to continue, so they had to sell it and look elsewhere. Since then they have had a number of 'homes', from Caulfield to Camberwell. In 2017 they moved to Glen Waverley Uniting Church, where they now hold their weekly worship services at 1 pm every Sunday.

Lucky continues to be a leader in his Indonesian congregation, actively assisting in working out their program. With his multicultural and multifaith background it is no surprise to find that Lucky is keen to make links with the English-speaking congregations in our community. He points out that 80% of the Indonesian congregation also speak English, so that on the second and fourth Sundays of the month the preaching is in English. Lucky suggests that those who find they are unable to attend the morning worship services will find a warm welcome at 1 pm. There are also some who can translate in 'real time', so there is no need to fear you won't understand if that week the service is in Indonesian. He looks to a future in which the two congregations make stronger links by combining in various activities and sharing in cultural exchanges - an event is planned for later in the year. He has demonstrated his enthusiasm and support for our community in a practical way, as he walked six of the eight laps of Neil's Walkathon (see photos pp. 10-11)!

So if you meet up with Lucky or any of the other members of the Indonesian congregation, greet them as fellow travellers on our individual faith journeys, recognising all that we share in that faith and in our experiences in the wider Australian community.

Robin Pope

Walking with Neil for Chaplaincy



At 8 am on April 28, 25 people and 3 dogs (not all captured here) gathered in support of Neil's 3rd Great Walkathon for Chaplaincy and the breakfast program at Glen Waverley Secondary College, and SRI in schools. Jackets were the order of the day!

Some departures, some new arrivals, and some hardy stayers (Neil, Lucky, Lindsay, Lyn P, Robert, Debbie, Lyn M, Mike, Hannah, Amy) were still going. 32 people set out on Lap 4, having refuelled at morning tea.



Now it had started warming up a few jackets were being shed. 17 people set out on Lap 5.



Certificates were presented to all those who completed the whole 20k: Neil & Lyn P, Robert, Lindsay, Michael, Lyn M, Debbie, Hannah, Amy. Here are the two youngest proudly displaying theirs.



Thanks and congratulations to all those who came to support Neil in this effort, which raised \$3567. All those who came and walked, and those who supported with refreshments and vocal support contributed to the camaraderie, the purpose and the fellowship of the day.

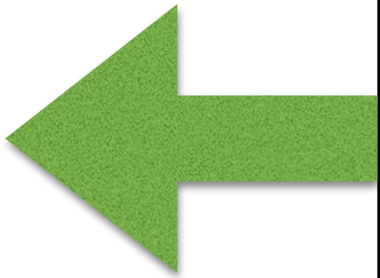
Well done Neil, and Glen Waverley Uniting!
Photos of walkers by Jan Clear (apart from the last blurry one!)

at Glen Waverley Secondary College

Lap 1 down, only 7 to go! After a brief break and drink, and some changes of walkers, 23 people set out on Lap 2, with Max for canine company.



Supporters and walkers were treated to some refreshments by other willing volunteers



A slightly different 17 people and one dog lined up for Lap 6. Note the ten people who have walked all morning: Lucky, Deb, Robert, Lindsay, Lyn Maslen, Neil & Lyn Peters, Amy, Hannah and Michael.



For the last lap, 8 people lined up for the photo, but we missed the 4 eager beavers who had set out early!



After a magnificent lunch and a rest, 12 people assembled for the second-last lap, Number 7.

A Visit to Doncaster Mosque

On Sunday April 15 2018 many mosques opened their hearts and doors for the Islamic Council of Victoria 'Victorian Mosque Open Day Project, which I think began in 2017 and proved so successful - with hundreds of Victorians visiting a mosque close to them - that it was repeated again this year. It was partially an attempt to counteract the rise of Islamophobia in Victorian communities.

A couple of my good friends suggested we go along this year to support the event, to meet some of these good folk and see for ourselves something of their activities; so we chose to visit Doncaster East Mosque.

We arrived about 10.30 am and were greeted warmly by several people when we entered. We were then given a short tour of the area, the main interest being their Prayer Room. Before entering we removed our shoes as an act of respect. The Prayer Room was one long room divided by a very simple thin curtain: one side is for women, the other for men. There was a raised area with a type of pulpit where the Imam stood during prayer time. The lower area was situated so the people would be facing Mecca as they prayed. I found this area rather plain in appearance, compared to our churches. The more impressive area was a new extension designed as a multipurpose building. It was very high with lots of light coming in, is almost twice the size of our hall at G.W.U.C. and is used partly as a sports area. There was a great deal of activity taking place, and a play area for young children was included in the space. Like us, they hire the building out for public use.

We were ushered to a part of this area which had been set aside for a talk, led by a young man who was a lawyer together with an articulate young woman who was wearing a hijab. They explained some of their beliefs and we noted that there was no sign of male superiority or dominance as they shared the time equally. Their presentation was followed by question time from the audience.

The call to prayer was then announced and we were invited to share this with the faithful in the Prayer Room. My female friend and I joined together with the women on one side of the curtain,

while our male friend was on the other side. Those who were young or agile had prayer mats and knelt, while older ladies sat on chairs and bowed at the appropriate times while we two just stood at the back and bowed as best we could while watching the others. We felt it was good to have been offered the opportunity to experience this time with them.

Our visit concluded with a shared lunch and we found the folk very ready to chat with us, showing hospitality and friendship just like that experienced here in our church.

We three then went away to talk and to discuss what we had experienced.

Firstly we found it somewhat restrictive, and would thus find it hard to live with. We would struggle with the need to comply with the dietary laws, the dress code for women, and the strict prayer regime. Nevertheless they seemed to have a sincere willingness to witness to their faith.

We also were aware that although many Australians have preconceived notions about Muslims and terrorism, there was no sign of aggression towards us. There seems a real need to build mutual trust between our communities.

Thirdly we noted how as a community they too are struggling with a modern world, but also have to contend with having so many diverse cultures and ethnicities contributing to Islam. It is difficult to establish what arises from 'culture', and what is 'belief'.

A concluding thought: there are an estimated 187,000 Muslims currently living in Victoria, and over 600,000 nationwide (2016 census). Have you met one? or two or three?

Let us join with Rev John van de Laar, of South Africa, in praying:

'May our capacity for love and friendship be stronger than our tendency to hatred and divisiveness'.

Heather Wilkins

Extending Our Grace Margin

The following was preached by Rev Dr Apwee Ting, from the UC Assembly Resourcing Unit on Sunday June 10 2018 at the Indonesian Fellowship at Glen Waverley UCA. It is so relevant to our theme of change that we decided to reproduce it in full.

It is based on 2 Cor. 4: 15: 'For it is all for your sake, so that as grace extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.'

Last week I had a couple hours conversation with Rev Stephen Tanuwijaya about the journey of his Indonesian congregation, Agape Church. Agape Church in the past two years has been worshipping at Wesley Mission (Uniting Church) in Sydney even though Agape is not a Uniting Church Congregation. Agape Church and Wesley Mission are currently on an intentional journey of discernment, which both hope will result in Agape becoming an official part of Wesley Mission. Agape is a growing intergenerational church. They have a range of activities for youth, children and adults. For Agape the main concern is the future of their (up to 150) children where English is the main language.

For Stephen one of the strongest points to join Wesley Mission is that in the near future Agape's children can worship at Wesley International Congregation. He believes that Indonesian children who were born in Australia need to worship with an English speaking congregation for their faith formation, growth and witness.

The story of crossing over to those who are different from you is very common for migrant people. And the story of embracing those who are different from you is very common for established English speaking congregations. I call this meeting place of crossing over and embracing others a 'space for grace'.

This is what Paul wrote to the church in Corinth: *For it is all for your sake, so that as grace extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving to the glory of God (2 Cor 4:15).*

In the midst of poverty, rejection, persecution and theological differences, Paul encouraged the church in Corinth to extend their hospitality and grace to those who are different from them.

Church is a place for every one who has found (accepted) God's amazing grace in Jesus Christ. Church is called to extend their grace margin to those who are different from them. Church is not only a place for those who have similar language, culture and status.

Church is built on the foundation of Jesus Christ. Our unifying identity is in Christ.

Extending our grace margin is a sign of our witness and thanksgiving to God.

Extending our grace is our calling in Jesus Christ. There is no other choice except to extend our boundary. We are encouraged to include those who are different from us: different in cultural, lingual, economical, political, theological and philosophical backgrounds.

Diversity is a sign of the kingdom of God.

Lastly in verse 13, Paul said: '...we believe and so we also speak'.

We only speak what we believe. If we believe that God in Jesus Christ has called us to extend our grace more and more, let us speak about it.

Let us behave like what we say. Then believing becomes our life style. Extending our grace margin becomes a day-by-day activity.

Looking at Glen Waverley Uniting Church, I strongly believe that God is doing amazing things by extending the congregation's grace margin. There is a sign of diversity in every aspect of ministry here. I give thanks for this.

Rev Dr Apwee Ting

Change is Needed for our First Peoples

This is a summary of an article issued by the JIM Unit in April 2018. The Uniting Church Assembly will be considering the Church's relationship with our First Peoples, so this piece is timely.

First People deserve decent jobs: Reform the Community Development Program

...The Community Development Program (CDP) is a Commonwealth Government program that has resulted in discrimination against and exploitation of many First People who have been locked out of the normal job market. The CDP commenced on 1 July 2015, replacing the Remote Jobs and Community Program (RJCP) which ran from July 2013 to 30 June 2015.

The CDP is targeted towards job seekers, both First Peoples and non-indigenous, living in remote regions and who are in receipt of Newstart Allowance, Parenting Payment or Youth Allowance benefits. A total of 42 providers deliver the CDP program across 60 regions in more than 1,000 communities. Around 37,000 people are in the CDP, more than 80% of whom are First Peoples.

The UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of Indigenous Peoples, Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, has said of the CDP:

The rate at which jobseekers within the Programme are penalized is around 27 times that of mainstream, predominantly non-indigenous, jobseekers. In practice, these requirements are discriminatory, being substantially more onerous than those that apply to predominantly non-indigenous jobseekers.

Examples of discrimination are:

- People on the CDP are forced into Work for the Dole labour straight away, which is not the case with people seeking work on Newstart who are not on the CDP;
- People on the CDP are given fewer options than people seeking work elsewhere in Australia, such as training, voluntary work or participation in non-vocational support programs;
- People not on the CDP who are under 25 can undertake voluntary internships for up to 12 weeks with a business and will receive an extra \$100 per week to their Newstart...while CDP participants can be forced to work for businesses with no extra payment.

The results of this discriminatory treatment mean that while CDP participants are only 5% of people seeking employment nationally, they get 60% of the social security penalties imposed...and nearly 80% of the more serious penalties. Fines imposed on First People jobseekers under the CDP scheme are blamed for driving up hunger and poverty in some remote First People communities.

The CDP creates the opportunity for employers to substitute paid CDP workers for paid employees...rather than employing people who work under normal employment conditions. CDP participants are a cheap form of labour as an alternative to employees working on the minimum wage.

First people communities and organisations have had little say in the design of the CDP and have no genuine decision making power over the type of projects, works and activities that are undertaken.

Many First People on the CDP report that it is demoralising and disempowering.

What you can do:

Write polite and respectful letters to:

Senator the Hon Nigel Scullion
Minister for Indigenous Affairs
PO Box 6100
Senate
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600.

Salutation: Dear Minister

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

Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

Points to make in your letter:

- Express deep concern at the discriminatory nature of the Community Development Program, which sees higher requirements placed on mainly Indigenous Australian in remote Australia than on people seeking employment elsewhere in Australia.
- Express deep concern that the design of the CDP results in Indigenous Australians being penalised at 27 times the rate of people seeking employment not on the CDP.
- Ask that Indigenous organisation be able to work with the Commonwealth Government to develop a new program to assist Indigenous Australians in remote Australia who are looking for work, such as the proposal put forward by the Aboriginal Peak Organisations Northern Territory in May 2017.
- Ask that the program move from a punitive, attendance-focused approach towards one which rewards participation in activities that are selected and valued by the community and, in turn, provide skills and experiences which improve the job-readiness and quality of life of all participants.

Refugees and Change

June 17 - June 23 was designated as Refugee Week, although it has passed unmarked at our church. At this moment the UNHCR records an unprecedented number of people - more than 65.6 MILLION - fleeing unsafe situations and facing an uncertain future as they seek a place to feel secure and free from threat. This is greater than the population of the United Kingdom, and almost three times Australia's! Of this number, more than 22 million are classified as refugees (ie they have fled to another country), and the remainder are displaced within their own country. A report by Amnesty International claimed that ten countries hosted half of this number in 2016 - all in the Middle East, Africa and South Asia. They are, in order, Jordan (2.7 million), Turkey (2.5 m), Pakistan (1.6 m), Lebanon (1.5 m), Iran, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Chad. 1 in every 6 people in Jordan is a refugee, and 1 in 11 in Lebanon. Syria, Afghanistan and South Sudan have been the greatest sources of refugees in recent years.

Because Australia is a long way from many of the trouble spots in the world, and because of the success of our Government's 'stop the boats' policy, Australians have mostly hardened their hearts to the realities of these numbers, while countries such as Italy and Greece have been accommodating a huge influx of people, chiefly from Africa. It has overwhelmed them economically and socially and since there is no co-operation between nations on a global scale, some nations have chosen to follow Australia's shameful example and close their borders. This week several hundred refugees were picked up by a boat which was refused entry to an Italian port, and eventually found acceptance in Spain.

It is not simply a matter of sending aid money. Rich countries cannot pay to keep people 'over there', Amnesty International has said. Amnesty proposed a solution, whereby the world's richest countries would find a home for 10 percent of the planet's refugees every year. They singled out Canada, which has resettled some 30,000 Syrian refugees in the past year, as a wealthy country doing its part.

Kathleen Newland, cofounder of the Migration Policy Institute, said, 'The more governments try to close off the routes, the more dangerous the alternatives become.'

For example, last year, according to humanitarian partner data, more than 87,000 new arrivals, including refugees and migrants, crossed from the Horn of Africa to Yemen. Yemen is historically a country of migration, refuge and transit for people fleeing the Horn of Africa. But more than three years of conflict have plunged the country into the world's deepest humanitarian crisis. In April 2018 UNHCR spokesman William Spindler said

refugees and migrants reaching Yemeni shores are routinely arrested, detained, abused, or extorted, and in some cases forcibly returned by the same smugglers who brought them to the country. In February last year, UNHCR launched a regional awareness campaign entitled 'Dangerous Crossings', designed to spread awareness among those contemplating the perilous journey to Yemen from the Horn of Africa.

Over the last few years, over 700,000 Rohingya refugees have fled from Myanmar, where they are not recognised as citizens, into Bangladesh where they are camped on steep hillsides subject to landslide in the monsoonal rains. Diphtheria has broken out in this, the world's largest refugee camp which according to Oxfam, houses a high percentage of pregnant women, new mothers and children under five. They are particularly vulnerable to sexual violence, since many of their men have been massacred in the ethnic cleansing which has been verified as having been carried out by the Myanmar military. The Australian Government has provided \$31.5 million since September 2017 for their assistance. The Government of Bangladesh has been trying to persuade the refugees to return to Myanmar but there are almost no guarantees of their safety if they do so.

Meanwhile, there are more than 1500 asylum-seekers and refugees still stranded in off-shore detention on Manus Island and Nauru. Since resettlements under the deal with USA started last September, only 139 refugees have left Nauru and 85 from Papua New Guinea's Manus Island. Only refugees can be considered under the deal with the US. Following the suspected suicide of an Iranian asylum seeker on Nauru, Refugee Action Coalition spokesman Ian Rintoul said, 'With so many nationalities being denied entry to the US, many [asylum seekers] are left thinking that there is only one way off Nauru now'. These people are *Australia's* responsibility!

What can we do, as individuals with a conscience and a commitment to living a life of compassion and justice, following the radical example of unconditional love that Jesus demonstrated?

- We must ring and write letters to our politicians urging international co-operation and better policies at home;
- we must join organisations active in advocacy;
- we must raise money for their efforts;
- we must make personal donations;
- we must welcome the strangers in our midst, regardless of their nationality, religion, skin colour or social class.

Will we continue to live our lives of comfort, turning our backs on these fellow humans, or will we take up the challenge on their behalf?
Robin Pope

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

Jillian Linda Ruzbacky

William Charles Dellap

Lim Swee Kim

*We celebrate the marriage of
Maric Stackpole and David Anthony Natasa*

Ka Yiu Cheung and Sa Shi Hau

*We record with joy the baptism of
Declan Robert James Notman*