

NewView

September/October 2019

Our theme for this edition of NewView is “Hope”. Now it is not possible for me to know what each of you is hoping for so I decided to print a variety of quotes on the subject of hope. **My hope** is that some of these will be useful to you. The important thing is that you should never give up on your good hope.

1 Corinthians 13:1-13, which includes the well-known passage “So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love “

Many things are possible for the person who has hope. Even more is possible for the person who has faith. And still more is possible for the person who knows how to love. But everything is possible for the person who practices all three virtues. Brother Lawrence

Hope is called the anchor of the soul (Hebrews 6:19), because it gives stability to the Christian life. But hope is not simply a ‘wish’ (I wish that such-and-such would take place); rather, it is that which latches on to the certainty of the promises of the future that God has made. RC Sproul

And you will feel secure, because there is hope; you will look around and take your rest in security. Job 11:18

“We must accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope.”
Martin Luther King Jr.

“They say a person needs just three things to be truly happy in this world: someone to love, something to do, and something to hope for.”
Tom Bodett

“Everything that is done in this world is done by hope.”
Martin Luther

“I don't think of all the misery, but of the beauty that still remains.”
— Anne Frank, The Diary of a Young Girl

Thank you to all who contributed to this edition of NewView. Special thanks to Alanee Hearnshaw, Helen Stewart and Joanne Boldiston who, because of my illness, put it all together in record time.

Your guest editor, Peter Stewart

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NEIL'S MUSINGS

HOPE FOR OR HOPE IN WHOM



I am quite interested in some sports. You have hopefully noticed that I don't make mention of it that much from the pulpit. However, I am a passionate follower of my AFL football team and their ups and downs. They have been enjoying some success in recent years after years of struggle. But I remained loyal. I follow the tennis and am amazed by the skill of the top players, both women and men. I also enjoy cricket and have been following the Ashes series. I always hope that my team does well and when they don't win my hope would be that it is a close game. I enjoy the tension and excitement of a close game when either team can get up and win.

So in this sense, 'hope' is similar to 'wish for' or 'desire'. Lynn and I have a sick son, and we 'hope' or 'wish' or 'desire' that he will be restored to health in the near future. That is our longing. We also hope, like many parents, that our children will have fulfilling work careers and good, healthy relationships.

When it comes to the Bible, the word 'hope' is used in a different way. It seems to speak of a certainty, a confidence in what is hoped for. The hope expressed in the Christian faith is based on a trust in the promises of God. We read in Romans 5:13 "May God, the source of hope, fill you with all joy and peace by means of your faith in him, so that your hope will continue to grow by the power of the Holy Spirit".

However, our hope is not just based on the promises and faithfulness of God. Our own journey of faith, reading the Bible, seeing answers to prayer, being part of a worshipping faith community, and our experience of

sensing God's Spirit being with us all serve to strengthen our faith and give us confidence for the hope we hold.

So how would I describe my Christian hope? The hope of the gospel tells clearly that I am, and we are, loved by God, that God's Spirit is close and near, that I am of value as a person, that through my relationship with God I can live life to the full now (eternal life) and that life is more clearly offered in life beyond death. This is not just something that I wish for. My hope gives me a confidence based on God's revelation of God's self and my experience of God. The Christian hope is based on God's love, grace and mercy.

Neil Peters

How does our Congregation Reflect Christmas?

Christmas may seem a long way away, but the Ministerial Team are thinking how our congregation can



reflect what Christmas means. An idea is to have a display of Christmas Trees, and we are very excited to invite your group to consider making and decorating a Christmas tree that will be part of that display. This display will be advertised and open to the wider

community during the season of Advent and Christmas. The guidelines for being part of this reflection are:



- Each group would provide a homemade (be as creative as you wish) or bought decorated tree

- A written explanation of what the group does and what Christmas means to the group. The display set up is 29 November 2019 and pull down 4 January 2020.

- The trees will be displayed throughout the church complex so you may wish to elect whether the tree can be displayed inside or outside the church.



- This display will be a reflection of the congregation to our congregational members and to visitors from the wider community who may not be familiar with the Christmas story.

We hope your group will consider being part of this exciting reflection by registering your interest with the church office.

Christmas tree Display Team - Susan, Faye and Alanee

POTPOURRI OF HOPE

by Anne Cook ©2019



ELLUSIVE GRANDEUR

If God is true
and you have told
the little that you understand,
the revelation shocks,
causes backs to turn,
pronounce you live in fairyland
along with other fools,
who do not comprehend.
This life is all there is –
No prayer will ease the way.
No creator does exist.
No afterlife is planned.
And yet,
light glimmers in the Spring,
Summer, Autumn, Winter, too.
The colour tints the valley mist,
snowflakes drifting by,
sun sparkling on the waves
that tickle children's feet,
plays among the rafters
in the Halleluiah Chorus,
tunes the touch of a friend,
who plays the hands of Christ.
What use is Science to explain;
it has no formula.
But Love that fills with Hope,
knows where to place its Faith.

CITY OF DESIRE

Creation waits with batted breath
to see who enters on
that very narrow path,
not made by human hands.
It leads to city paved with gold,
gates of priceless pearl;
a crystal river passes through,
waters trees of healing balm.
If other towns exist somewhere,
to that I cannot tell;
I only know no SUV
will come to bear us there.
Hope is the fuel to drive me on,
where True Love is enthroned.

SUITE OF THREE HOPES

Image of hope – welcome,
with my perception entwine.
Comic or serious become
Preceptor of the Divine.

Seven treasures
in a biscuit tin –
feather, shell, pebble
and sea-ground glass,
gum nut, carapace
and butterfly wing.
In the hollow log,
till summer comes again.

Last night
as I drew the curtains
old deaf Alfie
passed our gate,
dancing a stiff-legged waltz,
terrier clasped in his arms.



Matsetsa Community Centre Swaziland

By Fairlie MacKinnon



Matsetsa Community Centre was the recipient of a grant from GWUC's COP funding in 2018. This has

enabled the Matsetsa soup kitchen to continue providing 50 daily meals to elderly people for the last two years. The soup kitchen is not only a place for food, but a meeting place for elderly people to spend time with their peers, thus ameliorating loneliness



and depression. The soup kitchen has evolved into a place where the bogogo (grandmothers) and bomkhulu (grandfathers) can engage in activities like gardening, handicraft making, growing vegetables in the garden and gathering firewood for cooking. In the words of our Swazi field tea, the centre has been a lifeline for the senior citizens in Matsetsa.

The photographs provide evidence of what we have been able to achieve thanks to GWUC's grant in 2018!

Generate an income and meet their basic needs.



Matsetsa is a rural area with little commercial activity and residents are mainly subsistence farmers. The profits generated from this project were

spent on basic needs such as sugar, soap, food items, water bills, hospital fees, clothes, grandchildren's school fees, bus fares and

Empowerment of 40 Swazi women in 2018. The grant enabled 40 women, mostly grandmothers, to design, create and sell a range of handicrafts to house repairs. One woman used her profits from creating bags to make Vaseline from Aloe, which has a higher turnover

Harnessed the existing skills of Swazi women and encouraged women to teach other women

1. Preserved traditional creative knowledge through generations Enabled vital social interaction and skills sharing between the elderly women. Our Swazi team observed how socially isolated elderly women now had a community and a sense of belonging and purpose, which served as protective factors against loneliness and depression. One of our Swazi team members noted: 'Having to get up in the morning and knowing that you had something to produce gave them a sense of purpose.' A sentiment echoed by the grandmothers: 'It is nice to know that one is going to the Soup Kitchen not just to eat, but to also make something to get a little money and spend time chatting with our peers. It chases away boredom and loneliness.'



2. Creative exchange of ideas and upskilling by attending regional fairs where the women sold their handicrafts alongside other vendors
3. Recognition of the women's skill: In August 2018, 14 women travelled to a local exhibition in the Big Bend (Manyonyaneni) and won prizes in the Best Design category. The women received monetary awards at another Regional Fair, which provided incentive to continue their hard work.
4. Display and sale of handicrafts in a variety of settings, including at the Reed dance, a national

event at Lobamba, and at the Ministry for Agriculture.

5. Average profit from each item: SZL 65.00 per sleeping mat, SZL 35.00 per necklace, SZL 95.00 for a large floor mat, and SZL 55.00 for a small mat. As of mid-November 2018 (8.5 months since receiving the grant), half the handicraft stock has been sold and generated a collective income of SZL 12,885.00. Once the remaining stock has been sold, this will see a doubling of income. The women continue to use the raw materials purchased to create their crafts and this should keep them busy until at least mid-2019.
- 6 The greatest demand of all the handicrafts was for sleeping mats; many families cannot afford beds, so there is a need for sleeping mats.

The main market for selling items is in the local community. There is a demand for items like necklaces and beaded skirts in larger markets and at the Reed Dance event.

In practice, many of the handicrafts are time consuming to create and expected rates of production need to be adjusted accordingly. For example, a sleeping mat takes some time to create and typically requires two women working on each mat.

Lessons learnt:

There was a greater proportion of grandmothers than younger women among our Swazi Innovators for Change, and this needs to be factored into expected rates of production. For example, making ligcebesha requires careful attention and a fine needle with small beads is used. It takes 5 to 7 days for the old people to make a ligcebesha depending on the specific design. One grandmother expressed “Emehlo akasaboni kahle mntfwanami, sesiyafiyela.” (‘The eyesight is not as great anymore my child, we squint most of the time trying to find the hole.’) On the other hand, it was a strength of this project that we were able to include elderly women, who are most in need, care for several grandchildren, and lack the physical strength and career opportunities that younger women may have. Sale of handicrafts is dependent on local competition and seasonal demand (e.g. increased demand during the festive season). These lessons will inform the group’s strategy going forward.



GETTING TO KNOW YOU

by Alison Clarkson



Family

I was born on 23 February 1939 in Glasgow, Scotland, and named Morag Alison Brown. 'Morag' is Gaelic for 'Sarah', which was the name of both my Grandmothers, but I was always called 'Alison'.

My Mother, Meta, had been a nurse and theatre sister to an Ear, Nose and Throat specialist before her marriage to my Father, William Brown. Dad studied pharmacy and later medicine to become a doctor in general practice.

My maternal grandfather moved to Scotland from the family farm in Northern Ireland in the 1890s, to find work in a time of recession. He had three children by his first wife, 1 daughter and 2 sons, from whom I still have cousins in Ireland today. After his wife died the children were sent back to Ireland to their grandmother. Later Grandpa married my grandmother in Scotland and had 7 more children, of whom my Mother was 2nd eldest of 2 daughters and 5 sons. I have many cousins in Scotland from their families.

My paternal grandfather died when my Father was about 12, leaving 3 children, 2 sons and 1 daughter. Grandma Brown had a greengrocery shop to support her family. I had only 2 cousins on this side of the family.

Early impacts on my life

My Father served in the Royal Army Medical Corps, mainly in Egypt, during World War 2.

My Mother and I lived much of the time with her parents in the house at Shotts which my grandfather had built on 1-2 acres of land on which he grew vegetables and fruit bushes, e.g. strawberries, red currants and gooseberries. Grandma grew flowers and often sold them to people going to visit the cemetery on Sundays.

For about 2 years during the war when I was 3 or 4 Mum and I lived near Whithorn in Galloway at a 1-teacher school after my Mother replied to an ad for a housekeeper-companion, as the teacher's husband was also serving overseas.

I think our stay there was after the bombing of Clydebank, as the south-west corner of Scotland was a rural area and out of range of the bombers.



I have two memories of that time, a white West Highland terrier which was my companion and spending time in the schoolroom able to wander out when I got bored or tired.

Back at Shotts I remember playing with my cousins down by the burn behind the house, my Uncle George's ferret which used to dance, and Grandpa's dog which had puppies.

My aunt also shared the house with her husband who worked in the coal mines - a reserved occupation. Their older son was 1 year younger than I was. Another cousin, about the same age, lived with us, as his Mother had died. His sister was sent to her maternal grandparents. My aunt shared the care of the three of us and her younger son. I was always close to her, maybe because she did not have a daughter until later.

In early 1945 my father returned from overseas. My sister, Sheila, was born later that year. I do remember the bonfires which were lit to celebrate VE Day.

Education

After the war I attended various schools while Dad looked for a GP practice, finally settling in Greenock, on the River Clyde, 25 miles from Glasgow. Greenock was a big ship building town, with marine engine works and other associated industries as well as sugar refineries and a woollen mill.

I attended Greenock Academy from Primary 2 to Secondary 6. I enjoyed school and still have close friends from those days. I learnt Latin from Primary 7 (Grade 6) through to Higher level of the Scottish Leaving Certificate, also French from Secondary 1.

I enjoyed Maths and was fortunate to have a good teacher. My favourite subject was History, I think, because we had an inspiring teacher. I was not sporty, although I did play hockey in the 4th X1. I participated in the Debating and Scripture Union clubs.

Life After School

Outside school I was in the Guide movement from Brownies to Sea Rangers and sang in a church junior choir.

My education was widened through travel with my family to Europe, camping and caravanning in France, Spain, Norway and Sweden.

After school I studied for a Master of Arts degree, specialising in History, at Glasgow University and obtained my Secondary Teaching certificate.

I taught in Scotland for 3 years including after my marriage to Sandy in 1964. His full name was George Alexander Dingwall, after his father and uncle. He worked as a draftsman in mechanical engineering. We lived in Rutherglen, just south of Glasgow. Interestingly we were both known by our middle names.

In 1967 we emigrated to Australia as 10-pound migrants and I taught at MLC from May till December. In 1968 we moved into our house in Glen Waverley and I'm STILL THERE!! I also began teaching at Kilvington Baptist Girls' Grammar School where I became Vice-Principal in 1972 and retired in 1996.

Sandy and I were married for almost 42 years. We had no children but were involved with many young people as Cub and Venturer leaders in the Scout Association.

After Sandy died in 2006, I got to know Brian Clarkson. As our friendship developed, I met his family and in October 2010 we were married at GWUC. Sadly, the lymphoma which had been treated recurred. We enjoyed a short time together before he died in February 2011.

I do believe that the Lord works in mysterious ways. Despite the loss, I have been privileged to be part of a wonderful Australian family of Sue, Greg, Rodd, Noel and their partners, and I am blessed to be Grandmother to seven delightful children.

Church and Faith

As a child I attended Sunday School in the Church of Scotland (Presbyterian) and in my mid-teens the family joined the Baptist Church where I was baptised at the age of 16.

At university I joined the Student Christian Movement, which was a liberating experience, opening up new horizons of understanding my faith.

On my marriage to Sandy I joined the Church of Scotland and we both joined the Glen Waverley Presbyterian Church in 1968 and followed it into the Uniting Church in 1977. After 51 years here I'm still a member!

After retiring from teaching I had more time for involvement in the church, including study groups, UCAF, eldership and visiting and membership of Church Council. In 2002 I became Coordinator of the Ministry to Seniors as part of the Ministry Team.

The Lay Presiders Course enabled me to take Communion to people in hospital or house bound. I went on to study other subjects towards the Lay Preacher Certificate.

I have continued my involvement with the church as it has enhanced my faith journey, strengthened my faith through study, regular attendance and participation in worship, and enabled me to explore my beliefs in a supportive environment. I have a better knowledge of the Hebrew Scriptures and understanding of Jesus' life and teaching, and what it means to be a disciple.

God is my daily companion. I can talk to God at any time or just be still in God's presence, no matter what is happening in my life. I find strength and comfort in this verse from Joshua 1:9,

'Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.'

I appreciate the diversity of people and ideas within the Uniting Church in Australia, founded on the Basis of Union. I like the statement that we are 'a pilgrim people, always on the way to a promised goal' and the promise that the church 'has the gift of the Spirit in order that it may not lose its way.' (Basis of Union Par. 3)

I have been privileged to be a member of the UCA and have served on the Presbytery Pastoral Relations Committee and the Synod Placements Committee, as well as being a delegate to VicTas Synod meetings and to the national Assembly meeting.

My involvement in Glen Waverley UCA includes the Inclusive Community and Faith Development Mission Groups, through which I have come to know more members of the congregation. I am a host for Leisure Time guests once a month, and a member of the Leisure Time committee, as well as a volunteer for the Hub. Through both of these activities I have met people from the wider community and have been able to share my faith whenever they ask questions about Christianity.

I see GWUC as a caring community following Jesus' example of reaching out to those in need, both within and outside the church. I experienced this when Sandy was having chemotherapy once a week for six months at Epworth Hospital, Richmond. A roster of drivers took us there and back each week, as Sandy needed me to accompany him into the hospital. I was also supported and upheld in prayer during Brian's illness, and after he died.

It is important that as a congregation we continue to support one another and to be ready to welcome strangers who come among us. It is often too easy for us to chat to those we know, instead of being aware of visitors.

Over recent months a number of new people have joined us. We must be ready to help them find their place among us and encourage them to be able use their gifts towards our activities.

This year at the meeting of the VicTas Synod, the theme was taken from Isaiah 43:19,

'I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.'

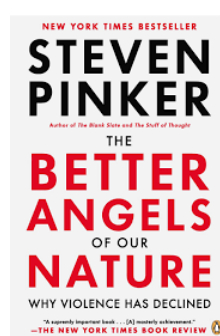
Our society has changed over my lifetime, and that of many of you. Even for younger generations life is changing. Sometimes in the church we want to cling to

how things have been in the past, that by doing more of the same we will attract more people to join us.

In the Bible study at Synod we were encouraged, instead of looking backwards, or inwards or even upwards, to look outwards. We need to re-imagine the church to find where the Holy Spirit is at work and to join in. We need to be Christ to the community and with the presence of God, the power of the Holy Spirit and the indwelling of Christ we can be open to the new things that God will do.

BOOK REVIEW

"The Better Angels of our Nature" by Steven Pinker



Reviewed by David Morgan

A few years ago, I read a book called "The Better Angels of our Nature" by Steven Pinker, and found it a source of hope. Pinker set out to collect data on violence in human societies over history, both recorded history and prehistory, such as looking for injuries on bodies preserved in bogs or graves. He came to the conclusion that violence of all sorts has decreased dramatically over time. We live in the least violent period of human history, and the downward trend continues.

Looking first at all violent deaths, he found between 15% and 25% of deaths in primitive societies were violent. This decreased to 3% for the period from 1900 to 1950, including both world wars. Current values are around 0.0001%. Separating out homicide in history shows 20-50 per 100,000 persons per year in medieval Europe. This steadily decreased after the renaissance to around 1 per 100,000 per year in modern Europe and Australia. The USA seems to be stuck around 5. Lynchings in the USA have declined from 150 per year in the 1890s, to none since 1960. Even abortions have declined world-wide, particularly in Eastern Europe and China. In Australia there has been a gradual decline over the last 20 years.

For most of history, war has been seen as a major function of governments. Alexander the Great was only great at waging war. In the 15th to 17th centuries, wars broke out between European nations at a rate of about

3 new wars per year. Only since the World Wars of the 20th century have wars become "unpopular" to the electorate. Killing and dying for God, King and Country has lost its appeal. Even WWII, with a record 55 million deaths, drops to ninth place among disastrous events if scaled by the population of the world at the time. The fall of Rome come 5th in Pinker's table. In 1984 Europe reached the longest period of peace between the major powers since Roman times. More recently the number of military personnel in both Europe and the USA has dropped to below half of their 1950s numbers. Pinker also celebrates a number of significant zeros about warfare since 1945.

These include:

- The number of nuclear weapons used since Nagasaki. In the 1950s the use of "tactical" nuclear weapons was seriously considered by all the nuclear powers. Now all declared nuclear powers have pledged not to make a first nuclear strike.
- The number of developed countries that have expanded their territory by war. In 1500, Europe saw a war between major powers in 75-100% of years, with boundaries continuously redrawn.
- The number of countries that have disappeared by conquest.

Slavery was considered normal and acceptable throughout most of history, including in biblical times, and is clearly approved in both the Old and New Testaments. From the mid-1700s countries began abolishing slavery, so that now no country has legal slavery, no economy depends upon it, and essentially no-one tries to justify it.

Judicial torture, that is allowing in court a confession obtained by torture, was accepted by most European countries until the mid-1600s. The number of such countries reached zero in 1850.

Capital punishment followed a similar but later decline, with the number of countries carrying out capital punishment falling from the mid-1700s, and the number with capital punishment on the books following from about 1925.

Other judicial practices that have gone from being widespread to being abolished are trial by ordeal, duelling, flogging, keelhauling, mutilation and public executions, including hanging, burning at the stake, breaking on the wheel and others.

For all the "back-stabbing" in current Australian politics, we fall short of historical norms. Pinker counts that 34 of 49 Roman Emperors were murdered. From 600 to 1800, about one eighth of European monarchs were

murdered, and 30% of them were replaced by their murderers.

In our own lifetimes we have seen a series of "rights revolutions" based on race, gender and sexuality, in an effort to prevent discrimination. Pinker speculates on the reasons for this "civilizing" process. He credits literacy, trade, weapons of mass destruction, and the reduction of superstition. Burning of witches requires belief that there are witches. But much of it remains difficult to explain. Also important are government, and an accessible legal system. If you know that a wrong doer will be punished, there is less reason to personally take revenge. Most murderers believe that their victims "deserved it".

Of course, all this is reason for hope, not complacency. There are still too many un-civilized behaviours in the world, but the long-term trend of history, in so many fields, is change for the better. There have been push-backs, notably Nazism in the 1930s and neo-Nazis and alt-right groups in our own time, but overall the trends are clear. I still wonder why it took Christians 1500 years to realise that owning your neighbour is not compatible with loving them.

Owl walking stick

by Bill Norquay

With many of the congregation now approaching the "senior" category I have made up this walking stick to be auctioned at the forthcoming fete.

The walking stick is hand carved from Tasmanian Myrtle in

the shape of an Owl. The face has been painted by David Fraser. The collar under the head is Sheoak. It is fitted with a non-slip tip and can be shortened if needed.

There has been quite a bit of work put into it and there will be a reserve price.

Also at the fete will be a range of wooden items (including crosses of various types) and some items that David has made especially for the fete





THE HUB
Hospitality - Understanding - Belonging
Celebrating 10 years of THE HUB
by Judith Greenwood

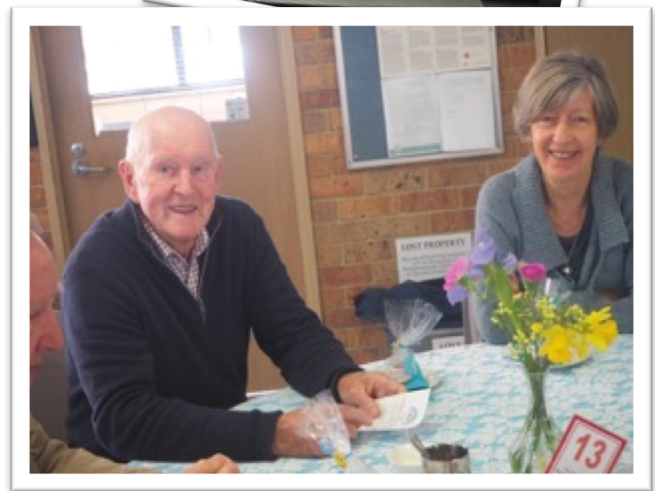
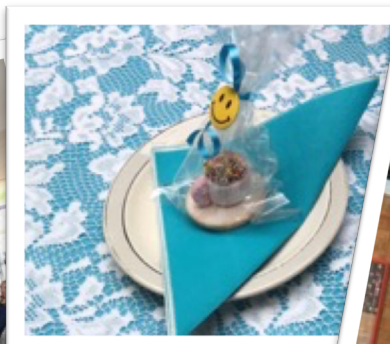


A special morning tea was held on 14th August to celebrate 10 years of The Hub. We had a special cake to celebrate the occasion.

The food was delicious, the atmosphere great, and the noise level indicated that everyone was enjoying themselves. Hub visitors, people from the community and GWUC friends all chatted away together.

We received \$1,285 in donations which was given for research into Parkinson's Disease.

Thank you to everyone who supported this special morning tea.





Hospitality – Understanding – Belonging

SENIORS' MORNING TEA

長者早茶聚會

Thursday 24th October 2019

10 am to 12 noon



*Come & share morning tea in honour of
our seniors who help in our community*

**ALL AGES
WELCOME!**

All donations to
research into
Motor Neurone
Disease

*For everything there is a season,
a time for every activity under heaven.
A time to be born and a time to die.
A time to plant and a time to harvest.
A time to cry and a time to laugh.
A time to grieve and a time to dance.*

Ecclesiastes 3: 1, 2 & 4, (New Living Translation)



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

*Susan Blair
Graham Ward
Graeme Pratt
Betty Evans
Cliff Baker
Graham Angus
Peter Riddett
Margaret Drummond*