

# NewView

Our theme of 'joy' for this Advent season did not attract the number of contributions we usually receive. Is this a sign of the madness which seems to grip our society at this time, making us constantly busy with break-up parties and shopping? Neil's reflection (p.2) on what brings him joy at this time highlights the simplicity of what elicits pleasure, rather than the noisy barrage of advertising we constantly endure which implies that happiness, or joy, can be purchased along with the obligatory 'celebration' to mark the end of the year. Graeme Frecker's article (p. 3) takes us back to a time when bringing joy to others was instilled from an early age. My own feeling about this season is that the birth of a child should always be a cause for joy; but with this particular, special birth I particularly celebrate the fact that it was a *human* birth, so the child Jesus who grew to be a man knew first-hand about all the joys, tribulations, successes, disappointments, fun and sadness that make up this experience we call 'life'. He knew and understood the human condition and its difficulties and still was able to provide a model of how we can live our lives true to our faith.

There is a great deal of material here which reminds us of how busy our church is, and how many people give their time and talents for others. We have reports and photos from many of our groups to keep us informed of those activities outside our personal sphere. We are also brought up to date with news about our local Church Council elections and there is a copy of the UCA Assembly Vision Statement which provides us with a view of the direction the wider church will take. To prevent this becoming one of those many vision statements we have seen - in the workplace especially - quietly relegated to a dark drawer and conveniently forgotten, we will need to be vigilant in our pursuit of our goal of a "Just Australia".

Other articles on our need to develop suitable protocols for the use of technology (p. 8), and the update on the lack of protection for whistleblowers (p. 12) are also cause for serious thought.

My heartfelt thanks go to Peter Stewart for taking care of the September issue of *NewView* while I was away. Notwithstanding the sudden illness which incapacitated him he still managed to produce a document for our readers. A couple of articles missed the publication due to Peter's illness, and are included in this issue. One was a book review which Peter had written (p. 10) and the other a reflection by Ross Mackinnon on the theme of 'hope' (p. 12).

May your Christmas be filled with joy and peace.

*Robin Pope*

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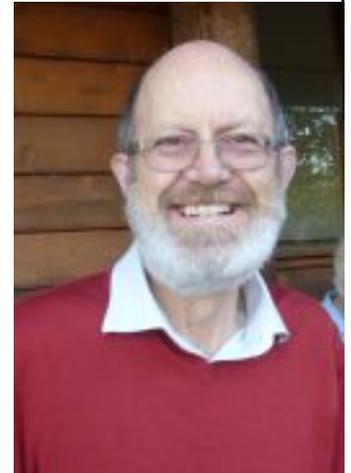


## JOY AND CHRISTMAS

Many would think of joy, peace and goodwill as being associated with Christmas. Christmas is a special time of the year. It is a time when we often can catch up with family and friends. Also, many of us look forward to relaxing after Christmas.

Here are some moments when I feel a sense of Joy in the Christmas season.

- A large congregation singing carols with joy and enthusiasm.
- Hearing an engaging and meaningful reflection on Christmas.
- Helping someone to have a more joyous Christmas.
- The wonder and delight of young children experiencing Christmas.
- The joy when the present you gave hits the mark.
- Spending time with my family.
- Eating Christmas desserts (yum).



However, the real joy of Christmas for me is the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. The angels say to the shepherds that the news they are about to share will give great joy, not just to the shepherds, but to all the people – the news of the birth of a child, God's chosen one, a saviour, Christ the Lord.

But this is not just news of great joy because of the birth of this special baby. The joy and the good news are because of who Jesus is, his life, and his ministry. Jesus both spoke and lived his message which brings joy and hope to us. His message is really one that offers us the gift of life in all its fullness. Jesus actively encouraged living the values of God's Kingdom – the values of righteousness, justice, peace, transformational love, acceptance and inclusion as well as radical hospitality. These are the values that we are challenged to live by, and not just at Christmas time, but all year round.

When I see these values being lived out in the people around me, that gives me great hope and joy. I know that for each of us our small contribution of living these values can make a big difference in the lives of others. We sometimes hear the expression 'a fair go'. I think living Christian values means 'a fair go' for everyone. This means some might need to be willing to step back, or at least make space for others, in order that everyone, not just some, gets 'a fair go'. Christmas is about a way of life as much as it is about the birth of a child, Jesus.

I was at the Leisure Time Christmas break-up. I asked the guests at my table what was good about Leisure Time this year. The agreed view was the relationships. We come and talk and make friends here and we are not lonely. The activities and nice lunches are secondary. The relationships are primary. I think for many of us our relationships give us great joy. And our faith is based on a relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

I hope you have a blessed and joyous Christmas and a healthy new year.

Neil

Our Theme:

JOY

## THE J-O-Y CLUB

These things happened when I was a primary school student at State School 1542 in Brighton. My memory recalls my years in Grade Five or Six, when I would have been eleven years old.

Across the road stood the Church of Christ where my family attended Sunday worship. "Attendance" in those days meant 11 am for Communion, 3 pm for Sunday School, followed by a Gospel Meeting at 7 pm. Sunday School brought together about 100 young ones, and is the setting of my story. The scholars joined together in prayers, songs, and stories reflecting our Christian faith as in "grown-up" worship.

However during one service every month we scholars became the JOY Club. Our worship leader, Mrs Bessie Meadows, brought the JOY Box centre stage, as a symbol during a short devotion. It looked like a money box about the size of a laundry basket, but was richly decorated.

To begin our devotions the JOY Club leader would give a brief homily about our duty as Christians to care for others. As we had birthday presents we should share with others who had none. Then she would give a Birthday Card to the girls and boys who had birthdays during the past month, and invite them to put a small coin in the JOY Box for the poor people.

As the birthday people went to the Box the rest of us sang endlessly:

Hear the pennies dropping

Listen as they fall

Everyone for Jesus

He shall have them all.

Dropping, dropping, dropping, dropping ....



I don't know if Jesus got the money, so I prefer to see the JOY Club as a mini-welfare program.

Clearly the Box was not a fundraiser. In devotions the leader brought out a deeper purpose to check that we had our life priorities correct. She gave us the acronym JOY as a mantra, using Bible verses to reflect Jesus' Great Commandment *to love thy neighbour*.

**J** **Jesus first:** *that in all things he might have the pre-eminence* [Colossians 1:18]

**O** **Others second:** *let each esteem the other better than himself* [Philippians 2:3]

**Y** **Yourself last:** *it is more blessed to give than to receive* [Acts 20:35]

I doubt that "pre-eminence" and "esteem" meant much to us tweenagers. Even so, we listened and then recited the verses as a mantra to end our devotions. Did we understand?

**EPILOGUE** In his birthday month my gang invited Cleve, one of our school mates, to join us at Sunday School. He sat quietly with us and joined in the ritual without being briefed. He watched birthday people dropping their pennies into the Box. To our surprise when everyone had made their contribution Cleve walked to the Box and began to fill his pockets with the loose change.

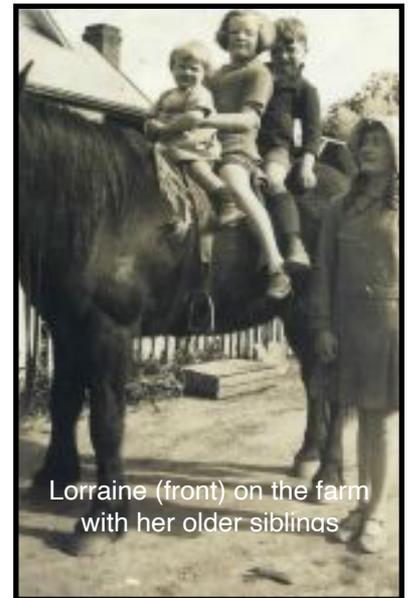
*Graeme Frecker*

## Getting to Know You:

The Bartlett story reminds me of the old adage *There is many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip*, because changes have been thrust upon them so often, confounding their expectations and requiring huge adjustments to a new set of circumstances.

But let's start at the beginning...

Warren notes that it was the war which brought him together with Lorraine. Born in 1930 to the family of a dairy farmer, Lorraine lived with her parents, and her six siblings on their farm near Craigieburn. However, the prospect of war brought about a dramatic change, because when her older brother decided to enlist, her dad now had no-one to assist with milking the cows and maintaining the farm, so he sold it and they moved closer to the city, to Preston. On completing her primary school locally, Lorraine moved on to Coburg High School - necessitating a ride to the station on her bike, then a trip by rail motor to Coburg, followed by a walk. She attended to Form 4, completing business subjects and her Intermediate Certificate which qualified her for the job she obtained at the Board of Works (MMBW), beginning just short of her fifteenth birthday. There she stayed for 7 years, working in various departments until her marriage to Warren in 1952. She recalls that her work mainly required typing, especially rate notices, as part of a large pool of typists. This preceded the days of computers, or even the first photocopiers, when duplicates could only be produced by using carbon paper. On her marriage she received the silver tea service which was then given on 'retirement for marriage'.



Lorraine (front) on the farm with her older siblings



Little Warren

In the same year Lorraine was born, Warren also entered the world. His was a musical family, and he remembers, as a child, often falling asleep at night to the background of his mother's piano playing. An accomplished pianist, she not only taught piano, but also trained a male quartet with whom his father sang. They were active in the musical life of the Preston Methodist Church, which Lorraine's parents joined when they moved to the city.

It wasn't long before Warren noticed the new arrivals to the congregation. 'That boy keeps looking at you', teased Lorraine's little sisters; Warren freely admits he was smitten from the start! Church was a social hub then, and attending the Christian Endeavour group brought further opportunities to get to

know each other.

Warren attended West Preston State School. As a young boy he proudly marched with his father on Anzac Day, remembering the injuries he had suffered and the friends lost in France in World War 1. At Northcote High School his interest in mathematics was nurtured by a gifted teacher who inspired him to take three mathematics subjects for his matriculation. A good scholar, he had been dux for several years at high school and he now gained entrance to



The high school years

## Lorraine and Warren Bartlett

Melbourne University to study for a double degree in Arts (majoring in mathematics), and Science (major in physics), where he again achieved the top score. This success enabled him to obtain a position at the Commonwealth Aircraft Factory at Fisherman's Bend, with an expected future career using his maths talents.

But the first of their life's turning points then occurred. Warren was now a local preacher and much influenced by his friendship with Rev Eric Darbyshire, to whom he attributes a large part of his decision to candidate for ministry, instead of taking up his job offer. By this time Warren and Lorraine were engaged to be married, and that presented a hurdle: since no married students were admitted to Queen's College, a probable engagement of a further three years lay ahead! On advice from the principal of Queen's, they married immediately, forcing synod to reconsider their 'no married students' policy when considering his candidature.

They married in 1952, when Warren began his studies for Bachelor of Divinity at Queen's College. In April 1953 Paul was born eight weeks premature, with his survival not a certainty at all. He remained in hospital for 3 months before they were able to bring him home in July. But soon another unexpected event turned their lives upside-down. Warren was taken out of college by the Methodist Conference, and sent to Cobram, which was without a minister and facing financial difficulties. The financial problems were solved by introducing a Wells Campaign for promised regular giving, but they remember this period more for learning to provide a pastoral ministry to their parish by visiting their homes and learning about the needs and concerns of their parishioners. In giving and receiving warm country hospitality Warren had to develop skills in moderation, when he realised he had gained 16 kgs in weight. Lorraine was partner in the hospitality, while caring for little Paul, who was joined by Diane, 3 weeks early, in 1955. Additionally, Warren had to complete his theological studies privately in readiness for ordination. He remembers Cobram's tolerance of their young city-bred minister. On reporting being bogged and pulled out by a farmer who used 'his horse and a tow-bar', there was laughter. "That's a swingle tree, son, not a tow bar."

After five years at Cobram Warren was invited to move to Prahran, an invitation he was keen to take up; but again the Methodist Conference intervened by sending him to Colac instead. The arrival of Wendy completed their family in 1959. It was during those years, and also after several encounters with psychic experiences, that Warren decided he needed to further his understanding in the field of psychology, so he went to Melbourne University to enquire about enrolling. When they learned of his science background he was offered a position as a senior tutor instead! The Methodist Church gave their consent for a 2-year period, recognising the pastoral work, akin to a chaplain, that he could do. It ended up lasting 25 years - by which time Warren had completed his Ph. D in psychology in 1972, and was Head of the Department. Once again, their initial plans had been worked out in an unexpected way.

In 1988 (eleven years after the Uniting Church had been established), the synod wanted him to conclude his work at Melbourne University and appointed him to Horsham, where his ministry was informed both by his previous parish work but now also his practice in psychology.



Lorraine and Wendy, with Diane and Paul

His time in Horsham also led to working co-operatively with other denominations and faiths and their leaders, especially through assisting those who had suffered childhood sexual abuse. His church council encouraged him to work with this damaged community. He found that many had a need for a symbolic, ritual cleansing in order to move on, and he devised appropriate ceremonies to mark this turning point in recovery. Sometimes he went to Mount Arapiles for these occasions, for he found it to be a 'healing mountain', a source of calmness and sustenance for troubled souls. He would like to have continued his work there, which was encouraged by his church council, but change was on the horizon.

In 1994 he was asked to accept nomination as Moderator of the Victorian and Tasmanian Synod, to take up the position for the first three-year appointment, it previously having been for only one year. It was a tough job, with decisions having to be made to maintain the integrity of what the Christian Church represents, having to stand down ordained ministers guilty of sexual abuse of parishioners. These cases generated strong feelings, but he reluctantly accepted the responsibilities of the role. A happier memory of that period is of the unexpected friendship he formed with the Catholic Archbishop Frank Little, through working with a group of Heads of Churches.

After completion of his term as Moderator, in 1997 they moved for a final appointment to Croydon Uniting Church, where union of the participating denominations had still not been achieved. It can be a difficult time for congregations with so much of their past vested in traditions and property, and friction is often generated - a problem still being addressed today as shrinking congregations are forcibly amalgamated. Pleasingly, with positive support and a willingness by parishioners to address the problems head-on, it is a thriving community today.

In looking to the future of the Uniting Church, Warren expresses some pessimism, feeling that our leadership sometimes lacks the courage to make the necessarily tough decisions that will ensure the church maintains its relevance in a world of rapid transition. Looking back on his own faith and how it has changed and grown with life experience and knowledge, he sees the dangers of staying embedded in past practices and traditions which have little functional relevance to following generations.

Just as Warren retired from active ministry in 2000, and they moved to their retirement home in Glen Waverley, the expected calmness of retirement was disturbed by finding he had prostate cancer (at the same time as his son was diagnosed with the same problem). Happily, his treatment was successful and their house has been a good base for them until now, with ample



space for Warren's woodworking tools in the garage. But change may be needed again. As they approach 90 years of age, health and mobility issues increase, and the stairs in their house are a problem; nor are they within walking distance of shops. However this couple has been adjusting to change all their married life together, so whatever their future, they have a proven track record of coping with the unexpected. We wish them well in their decision-making, and thank them for the living expression of their faith expressed through their long combined, loyal service to their church.

*Robin Pope*

## Church Council Election Results

The following congregational members have been elected to the new Church Council:

- Ryan Chan (whom you are likely to see at the 5.30 pm service);
- Anne Cook (who often attends 8 am);
- Wendy Pepper (whom you are likely to meet at 9.15 am);
- Daniel Sihombing (regular preaching across all services);
- Sony Simanjuntak (re-elected, who attends 1 pm and is often at the 11 am service).

Photos of the new members are on the leadership board in the church foyer.

Each candidate received overwhelming congregational individual support for their election. This is a great signal to the new members that their contribution and willingness to perform those tasks are deeply appreciated.

They join those existing members whose terms are on-going: David Morgan, Alison Clarkson, David Fraser, Glyn Howells and Neil Peters and Alanee Hearnshaw (Ministry team).

Church Council farewells Angel Shea, Gael O'Brien and Ben Krieger with gratitude for all their work over a number of years in supporting the congregation through the Church Council.

Thanks are due to Warren Greenwood for conducting the election and the counting so efficiently.

On Sunday 19th October at the 10am combined service the new members were commissioned and the contribution of retiring councillors was acknowledged. The text of the acknowledgement is opposite.

*Glyn Howells*

Chair of Church Council

### Acknowledgement of the work of retiring councillors

“With today’s theme of gratitude it seems an especially appropriate occasion to thank retiring Church Councillors.

Ben Krieger has been on Church Council for two years and has been able to bring his professional experience to our team’s work. He has played a particular role in relation to church finances.

Gael O'Brien has made many contributions to Church Council; to everything she has brought a care for others that has enriched our life as a community. Not least among her contributions are the many thank you letters written on behalf of Council.

Over four years Angel Shea has worked at the coalface on a number of projects and activities in inter-cultural ministry. She has been a passionate advocate for the emerging Chinese fellowship and is giving splendid leadership in this and the Church’s weekly bi-lingual English class.

It is not always easy doing your job as a Church Councillor and we are grateful to Ben, Gael and Angel for their time and commitment and look forward to continuing the journey with them in our church.”

#### How many Christians does it take to change a light bulb?

**Charismatic:** Only one; hands already in the air.

**Presbyterian:** None. Lights will go on and off at predetermined times.

**Roman Catholic:** None. Candles only.

**Anglican:** Three. One to call the electrician, one to mix the drinks, and one to tell us how much better the old one was.

**Baptist:** At least 15. One to change the light bulb, and three committees to approve the change and decide who brings the meat and salads.

**Methodist:** Undetermined. Whether your light is bright, dull or completely out, you are loved. You can be a light bulb, turnip bulb or tulip bulb. Church-wide lighting service is planned for Sunday. Bring bulb of your choice and a covered dish.

**Lutherans:** None. Lutherans don't believe in change.

**Uniting Church: ???? (Answers to Editor!)**

## Worship and Technology: A Clash of Cultures

Smartphones, electronic tablets, social media such as Facebook, Tinder, Instagram, and communication tools such as YouTube, FaceTime and Skype (and many others) surround us and intrude on us on a daily basis. Some of us look for refuge from these intrusions in different ways. In our own homes: "I refuse to join Facebook because...". In our work: "I have told my boss that I will not answer emails on the weekend..." and in our worship: "Why do we put so much information on the screen during worship?"

Just remember, an electronic organ like ours was once *new technology* that some people did not welcome with open arms. They wanted a good old piano.

Often, although we can manage our own interface with this technology, we also wish and pray that others around us would support our desire for a *Technology Free Zone* concept. We want this zone to be in my train, my bus, my car, my shops or in my worship.

We get frustrated when the person ahead of us in the coffee queue looks for the right card to pay for their coffee and we have our cash ready. But the person behind us is frustrated with us and wants us to put our cash away and pay by card, as they believe it is much quicker.

Some of us do not like people taking photos in worship, and we all take a deep breath when someone else's phone rings in worship. (But we check our own just in case!!!!)

You may be surprised to learn that recently at Glen Waverley UCA we had a *drone* used in the worship space to film a wedding. (We did not approve this; it just happened). But the couple wanted this level of wedding coverage - which surprised me as they are very noisy toys and disruptive to other people at the service.

The challenge for us is that how I wish to worship may be different to how you wish to worship, and so compromise is essential, even when it leads to a less desired result.

If we look to our broadcast ministry, yes, we have cameras and microphones and computers etc in worship to support this ministry, which is used in places such as Beeac, Trafalgar, Garfield, Johnsonville, Bunyip, Boort, Kerang, Longwarry and in the homes of congregational members and overseas. Wow. So technology can be a positive contributor to worship. We use a portable phone to get closer to the children's address so that all our congregation can see the creative story unfolding in worship.

We see this as being inclusive, not intrusive. And people use their phones and tablets in worship to follow bible readings or look up information that has arisen during the sermon or conversations. Some look up the music being played or sung as they wish to know more about the song. This may not be how you or I like to worship, but for others it enhances their worship experience. Also remember that without these technology tools, we would have no hearing loop, no enhanced sound for those hard of hearing and no visual worship for those with limited eyesight.

The key to this is *how* the technology is used. The technology is not the problem, but how we use it determines its value. For me it is bit like the difference between "Money is the root of all evil" vs "The LOVE of money is the root of all evil". Our understanding and how we use this technology is key, not the technology itself.

For those people separated from loved-ones, Facebook, Skype and other social media tools are invaluable. Letters are too slow and too expensive. But when people expect all of us to use Facebook and Skype, we have a problem. No, I do not want to use Facebook.

Recently I was unable to see photos of a new child because the parents chose to ONLY display them on their Facebook account - and I do not follow dozens of people on Facebook. So I did not see the photos. I use Facebook because I have to, not because I want to.

There is however, something we can do to respect each other's diverse expectations and to minimise how we can negatively impact others around us. We can be discreet in wanting to take a photo of a loved one being inducted, singing or participating in worship. Avoid standing in front of others or blocking the congregation's ability to see a baptism or activity by holding up a tablet to use the camera. Standing in front of our cameras to photograph an activity denies the many many viewers and those in the worship space an opportunity to enjoy the event. Be discreet, not intrusive.

Other ways we can be discreet are to consider the following. On arrival to worship, avoid loud and noisy conversations as others in the worship space may be praying and preparing for worship. Loud reflections on the previous day's football scores may be intrusive to them. We can ensure we turn off our own smartphones, tablets and other reminder devices to minimise them going off during worship. Many of us use these tools as a calendar or as a medication reminder. That is great - but we can turn the sound down or off.

How we configure our tools is also very important. Maybe change our phone ring sound so that it is not intrusive or disruptive. Some of these technology tools have a keystroke noise - turn it off. Then when you use the phone or tablet the people around you are not disturbed by the clicking.

All phones and tablets have an "Aeroplane Mode" that stops them receiving messages. Use it in worship. And if it is important that you receive these reminders, then make sure your sound is turned down or off, and then place the phone in front of you so you see it light up rather than hear it go off. And if you do not know how to do these adjustments, talk to family or friends or go back to the Telstra, Optus, JB HiFi or other store where you purchased it and ask them to show you.

Technology in worship is not the problem. It is how we use that technology that will determine how it is received. If we ourselves are respectful of those around us in worship, they, hopefully, will be respectful of us.

*Warren Greenwood*

### **Organ Fund - Update**

Due to further generous donations, the Organ Fund has passed \$20,000 and now stands at \$20,775. This money helps to replenish the general parish funds originally used to purchase our instrument. The Fund remains open to accept donations, and specific stops can still be sponsored.



Please contact me with any queries.

*Geoff Willis*

### **Sammy Stamp Report**

With the removal of the Synod Offices to the new building on the Wesley site at 130 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne, about April 2020, Sammy and his helpers are in the process of finding a new home with the assistance of Rev Dr Jenny Byrnes.

Up to and including 3/10/19, sales had reached \$29,286 (same week last year \$37,343).

No further grant applications have been received for approval since [the] last report so the total approved so far this year remains at \$32,500.

*Allan J Clarke, in Network, UCAF Magazine*

## Book Review: John Barton, *A History of the Bible* Penguin Random House, Harmondsworth, 2019

Book Review

This book was strongly recommended to me by a retired professor of church history. The first thing that attracted me to the book was the author's credentials. His expertise, knowledge and authority to write such a book are unique. John Barton was the Oriel and Laing Professor of the Interpretation of Holy Scripture at the University of Oxford from 1991 to 2014. He has been a priest in the Church of England since 1973. He has written several books and he is co-editor of the Oxford Bible Commentary and editor of the Cambridge Companion to Bible Interpretation.

Barton states his purpose as, "Among other things, this will, I hope, dispel the image of the Bible as a sacred monolith between two black leather covers, recapture the sense of it as the product of a long and intriguing process, and illustrate the extraordinary variety of ways in which it has been read over the centuries." He goes on to say, "The Bible contains many elements which are problematic for Jewish and Christian belief. ... At the same time I aim to show that the Bible is an important source of religious insight, provided it is read in its original context and against the conditions prevailing when it was written."

The book is 613 pages long, organised as follows, with 10 pages of illustrations and 6 pages of maps:

- Introduction: The Bible Today
- Part One: The Old Testament
- Part Two: The New Testament
- Part Three: The Bible and its Texts
- Part Four: The Meanings of the Bible
- Conclusion: The Bible and Faith
- Notes
- Further Reading
- Bibliography
- Biblical References
- Index

Barton tells the story of the Bible, explaining how it came to be constructed and how it has been understood, from its remote beginnings in folklore and myth to its reception and interpretation in the present day. He describes how and when the narratives, laws, proverbs, prophesies, poems and letters which comprise the Bible were written, what we know – and what we cannot know – about their

authors and what they might have meant, as well as how these extraordinarily disparate writings relate to each other. Untangling the process by which some texts became canonical and were included in the Bible and others weren't, Barton demonstrates that the Bible is not the fixed text it is often perceived to be, but the result of a long intriguing evolution.

This is a scholarly book, well researched, as evidenced by the 86 pages of notes, bibliography and biblical references at the end. However, at the same time, it is written in plain no-nonsense English and is easy to comprehend and very readable. It is not a book you would read cover-to-cover in one sitting. Some people would read it from beginning to end, ten or twenty pages a day. I prefer to choose one of the many topics that interest me and then read just that topic at that time.

I found the book fascinating. It changed the way I view the Bible and I learnt a lot of things I did not know before.

A review by *The Guardian* said: "Fundamentalists will not be queuing up to buy *A History of the Bible*. But for believers of a more open disposition, and non-believing lovers of great literature, reading it will be a revelation and a delight." Also, "Two aspects of his account are particularly impressive. One is its phenomenal range of learning. The other is the moderation and quiet wisdom with which it conveys that learning ... So this is a heavy book from which believers and non-believers can both learn. And its overall message is deeply and laudably tolerant."

I recommend this book to anyone interested in gaining a fresh look at and a greater understanding of the Bible. The hard cover edition is available at:  
Book Depository (online, ex UK): \$41  
Angus and Roberson (Sydney warehouse): \$41.50  
Available as e-book at:  
Booktopia: \$17.99  
Amazon Kindle: \$17.99

*Peter Stewart*

## Vision Statement from the Assembly of the Uniting Church in Australia

### Our Vision for a Just Australia

We see a nation where each person and all creation can flourish and enjoy abundant life.

The Uniting Church in Australia believes the whole world is God's good creation. Each person is made in God's image and is deeply loved by God. In Jesus, God is completing the reconciliation and renewal of the whole creation.

Our vision, grounded in the life and mission of Jesus, is for a nation which:

- is characterised by love for one another, of peace with justice, of healing and reconciliation, of welcome and inclusion;
- recognises the equality and dignity of each person;
- recognises sovereignty of First Peoples, has enshrined a First Peoples' voice and is committed to truth telling about our history;
- takes seriously our responsibility to care for the whole of creation;
- is outward looking, a generous and compassionate contributor to a just world.

### Seven Foundations for a Just Australia

#### A First Peoples' Heart

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, nurtured and sustained by God before colonisation, are celebrated at the very heart of what it means to be Australian. First Peoples' sovereignty is affirmed, First Peoples have a voice in the decision making of our country and are living out their right to self-determination. As First and Second Peoples, we walk together, creating socially just and culturally safe relationships, listening and learning from one another.

#### Renewal of the Whole of Creation

We seek the flourishing of the whole of God's creation and all its creatures. We act to renew the earth from the damage done and stand in solidarity with people most impacted by human-induced climate change. Government, churches, businesses and the wider community work together for a sustainable future.

#### A Welcoming, Compassionate and Diverse Nation

We are a nation of diverse cultures, languages, faiths, ethnic groups and experiences. We celebrate and value the strength of this diversity. We see this diversity reflected in our leaders, key decision makers, institutions, industry, sports and media.

We are a compassionate nation, where every person who seeks refuge here is treated fairly and made to feel welcome and safe- regardless of their country of origin or mode of arrival.

#### An Economy for Life

Our government makes economic decisions that put people first: decisions that are good for creation, that lift people out of poverty and fairly share our country's wealth. The economy serves the well-being and flourishing of all people.

#### An Inclusive and Equal Society

We live together in a society where all are equal and free to exercise our rights, regardless of faith, cultural background, race, age, sexual orientation and gender identity. We defend those rights for all.

#### Flourishing Communities: Regional, Remote, Urban

We live in communities where we are connected and we care for one another. In communities all over Australia, from our big cities to remote regions, we seek the well-being of each Australian and uplift those who are on the margins.

#### Contributing to a Just and Peaceful World

Australia acts with courage and conviction to build a just and peaceful world. We are a nation that works in partnership with other nations to dismantle the structural and historical causes of violence, injustice and inequality. Our government upholds human rights everywhere, acting in the best interests of all people and the planet.

## Reflection on HOPE

**Ross Mackinnon's reflection at 8 am  
service on Sunday July 8**

[This piece was meant to be included in our last issue, but was not able to be included. The message is as relevant now as then!]

In today's reading, we heard of the 70 disciples who were sent out in pairs to heal and to bring peace. Travelling in pairs was a clever strategy as each person had some moral support. When people who are not used to leading worship are asked to lead worship, it is always a good idea for them to share the job with someone else.

The 70 disciples were also instructed to travel light. When we are trying to pass on the Christian message, we should also travel light. We should concentrate on loving behaviour to others and not on explaining centuries of heavy doctrine and tradition.

When I reflected on today's reading, I asked myself – What is the fundamental message we should pass on today? The 70 disciples were asked to pass on peace, and we should still do that. But, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez gave me another idea. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez is a young US congresswoman. She is impressed by Swedish schoolgirl Greta Thunberg who has led thousands of students around the world to strike because of political inaction on climate change. After meeting Greta Thunberg, Congresswoman Ocasio-Cortez said:

*I learned that hope is not something that you have. Hope is something that you create, with your actions. Hope is something you have to manifest into the world, and once one person has hope, it can be contagious. Other people start acting in a way that has more hope.*

And that leaves us with two key questions: In spreading the Christian message - Do I dare to hope? Do I dare to act?

*Ross Mackinnon*

## Witness K to Plead Guilty

The increasing secrecy of our government, under the rubric of 'national security' continues.

In the April 2019 issue of *NewView*, we reported the case of Witness K, a whistleblower, and asked for letters to be written in his support. The October issue of *JustAct* (news from the Justice and International Mission Cluster) provides a disturbing update:

"In February, we requested that you write letters to the Commonwealth Government seeking the case against Witness K and his lawyer, Bernard Collaery, be dropped.

"Witness K exposed how Australian Government had bugged the offices of the Timor Leste Government to gain an unfair advantage in negotiations over the division of natural gas reserves in the Timor Sea.

"In early August, Witness K's lawyer told the ACT Magistrates Court that his client would plead guilty to the conspiracy, which he has been charged with. He will face a sentence of up to two years in prison as a result.

"Bernard Collaery is still fighting the charge against him.

"Senior figures in the Timor Leste Government have urged the Australian Government to drop the case against Witness K and Bernard Collaery.

"Details of the case continue to be stifled by the threat of the Commonwealth Government laying further charges for breaches of national security laws. The threat restricts what Witness K and Bernard Collaery can say publicly about the case.

"Thank you to everyone who wrote letters and signed postcards concerning this case. It is not too late to write a further letter or send off more postcards if you have not already done so."

Activities at the  
Glen Waverley  
Uniting Church

## Seniors' Concert & High Tea

On October 13 Seniors' Week was celebrated at Glen Waverley Uniting Church with a concert for seniors followed by a scrumptious high tea. Jan Clear welcomed guests and the Evans family from Warragul, who provided the entertainment for the afternoon. And what a treat they served,



demonstrating their musical talents, their flexibility and professionalism, down to the youngest family performers.

After the introduction by Mr Evans Snr, seven of the eight children played the first item on strings - only the baby did not participate, but no doubt will do so in the near future! Nor were their accomplishments limited to stringed instruments, as they also sang and performed items with the piano in different configurations - solos, quartets, sextets and septets. In addition, several original compositions were presented, all delivered with great warmth and skill.



Following the concert the audience retired to the hall to enjoy a magnificent high tea, organised by Faye Wagon and daughter Joanne Boldiston, and catered for by the usual willing helpers. If you weren't there, you missed a delightful afternoon!

*Robin Pope*



## GLEN WAVERLEY UNITING

If you attend Glen Waverley Uniting Church you know that when the Crab Apple trees bloom then it is time for our annual

### GRAND FETE

And what a variety of goods is prepared! The gardeners among us pot seedlings for the garden stall, the crafty ladies and men spend the entire year producing items for the craft stalls and the cooks make their preserves and jams. Later, saleable items for Trash 'n Treasure or clothes no longer needed are set aside; small furniture items are stored in garages and sheds; books are stored in boxes; collectable items are wrapped; jewellery is carefully sorted; our Beac friends scrape their premium sheep poo from sheds and paddocks; and ingredients for cakes, scones and the food tents are purchased.

A team of drivers with trailers transports the goods to the church in readiness for the big day.



Of course, preparations have actually begun months before! Tents have been hired, musicians organised, the animals booked, fairy floss machine rented, flyers have been letter-boxed and local businesses approached for donations to the Silent Auction.



Then on Thursday and Friday the sale areas are cleared, the goods are unpacked and sorted and set up (long hours of work for the large stalls such as Trash 'n Treasure, Clothing, Books etc) and our volunteer electrician tests the electrical goods for safety.

## FETE OCTOBER 19, 2019

Everyone rises early on Saturday, eager to see if the sun shining is this year. By 8.30 the doors are opened and the tidal wave of purchasers sweeps in! And let us not forget that after the fete closes at 2pm another lengthy physical effort restores the complex to its former condition, ready for the following day's worship services and the next week's activities.

Our fete is a recognised local activity which many support because they know the proceeds go towards helping people other than ourselves. Volunteers from many of our church activity groups come together to assist. It is a magnificent effort of co-operation and unity which raised \$27,282 for our nine approved Community Outreach Projects. Our thanks to Sue Morgan, Murray Lowe and Peter Anderson for their detailed planning and leadership and to those many unnamed volunteers who contributed in so many ways. WELL DONE GLEN WAVERLEY UNITING!



## Choir of Hope's First Public Performance

Deb Leigh, conductor of the Free Spirit choir, had a dream to start a choir for women who are recovering from difficult situations which may have included violence. The Choir was to provide a supportive environment where women may continue the journey of healing and rebuilding their lives. Glen Waverley Uniting Church have backed the initiative and the choir sang in our 11 am service on Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> November for their first public performance. It was wonderful, emotional and there was a lot of joy as the congregation listened and saw how much this choir meant to this group of women.

Deb said prior to the choir singing: "The Choir of Hope is an amazing group of women who have had the courage to

- choose to have hope in the midst of their circumstances
- choose to take action by arriving on the doorstep of Glen Waverley Uniting Church every Friday morning and step in to the unknown, alone – a choir newly formed this year, having no singing background, but with hope that things can be better than they were.

"The choir is more than the sum of its parts – individual women who have had feelings of isolation, grief, fear, some who have suffered abuse, and some who have supported women in difficult circumstances.

"It has become a choir – many voices joining together to speak out, speak up, sing in harmony, sing together and enjoy the myriad benefits of having music in your soul. More than being only about musicianship, the choir is about relationships, friendships, building each other up, encouraging each person to find their own voice.

"In the midst of our brokenness it is not uncommon to hear a cry of 'Where's God in this? I cannot hear God's voice'. If you have ears to listen, you will hear the voice of God right here."



## Final Indonesian Service for 2019

On December 1, our Indonesian congregation met for their final service for 2019. It was a magnificent celebration of the year past, and of the Advent season, as the sample photos below demonstrate! (Thanks to Lucky Kalonta for photos)





## CHRISTMAS AT THE HUB

The HUB has been a busy place over the past few weeks.

Children from Playgroup, Mini Maestros and some from the wider community came to have their photos taken dressed in nativity costumes. There were lots of lovely angels this year. Our thanks to Geraldine for being our wonderful photographer again. A donation of \$40 from some of the families was given to GWUC Welfare to help needy families at Christmas.

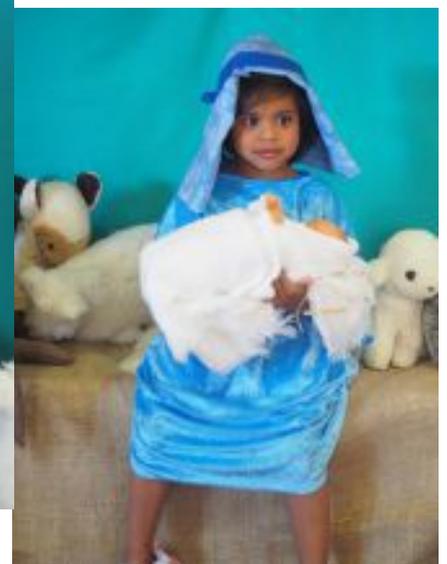
Our special Christmas Morning Tea at The HUB was a wonderful morning where people from the wider community joined GWUC people to enjoy morning tea and a chat at this busy time of the year. Donations received totalled \$960 which was also given to GWUC Welfare to use for needy families at Christmas.

Over 200 special Christmas Colouring-in books telling the Christmas Story were given to children at GWUC, Playgroups, Mini Maestros, English classes, Welfare and The HUB. Christmas cards were also given to each family in these groups, plus nearby shops in the Kingsway.

The HUB is in recess now and will resume on Tuesday 4th February 2020 at 10am.

*Judith Greenwood*

*Photos by Geraldine Fleming*



## HELP NEWVIEW!

*NewView* is a quarterly magazine of the Glen Waverley Uniting Church, distributed electronically and in paper form. It comes under the umbrella of the Communications Committee of this church.

*NewView* aims to:

- help to build a sense of community relationships within GWUC;
- get to know about each other's lives;
- keep the GWUC community informed about the many activities, projects and events which take place both on- and off-site;
- share the joys and sorrows of our community;
- start conversations within our community about issues of concern to us;
- provide information and ideas which help us to explore and grow our faith;
- provide links to material, events or decisions which are relevant to our community;
- help us understand the complexities of the work of the church.

Currently, *NewView* is produced by an editor, with the assistance of a proof-reader, and the invaluable support provided by the GWUC office manager (who prints and distributes). The written and visual material which is published is mostly contributed by members of the congregation. Some years ago a small committee was established to provide production support in various ways but since then, due mainly to ill-health, all but one of the committee have been unable to continue. It is time to look again to the future!

The current editor intends to hand over the reins to someone else no later than July 2021, as she feels it is time for someone younger to bring a fresh approach to *NewView* (or whatever future platform is used).

Would you like to be part of an editorial team?

Perhaps you can help in one or more of the following tasks:

providing reports  
of GWUC  
activities and  
events

being a  
*NewView*  
photographer

using your  
computer skills  
to design new  
page  
formatting

helping to edit  
submitted material  
(needs a working  
knowledge of  
English grammar)

being a 'scout'  
for contributions  
by approaching  
people  
directly

providing ideas  
for new material

assisting with the  
proof-reading

leading and  
co-ordinating  
the team

If you feel you would like to be part of, or lead, an editorial team, then for a confidential, obligation-free discussion, get in touch with Robin Pope, at [popesr@aapt.net.au](mailto:popesr@aapt.net.au) or 9753 3648. All enquiries welcome!

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

*We celebrate the marriage of*

Mengyang LI and Chun XIAO

We wish our readers a joyful Christmas and leave you with some photos (courtesy Ray Wagon) of some of our Christmas Trees which are on display in the garden, the foyer and the worship centre.

