



What's On...

Not all events are held each week - please contact the church office for details. COVID restrictions may impact some events, and they may not occur as planned.

Special Christmas Services:

12 December

2.30pm Carol Service

19 December

10am Live Nativity

24 December

Christmas Eve

7pm Worship

25 December

Christmas Day

10am Worship

31 December

New Year's Eve

11.15pm Worship

DECEMBER/JANUARY WORSHIP SERVICES

10.00am **Sunday**

MONDAY

10.00am **Playgroup**

10.00am **GOMERS**

10.00am **Leisure Time**

10.00am **Craft Group**

8.00pm **Badminton**

TUESDAY

10.00am **The Hub**

10.00am **Playgroup**

2.00pm **Mindful Meditation**

4.00pm **Meditation Online**

7.30pm **Bible Study /**

Intercultural Bible Study

WEDNESDAY

7.30am **Prayer Time Online**

1.30pm **Bilingual English Class**

8.00pm **Free Spirit**

THURSDAY

10.00am **The Hub**

11.00am **English Conversation Class**

7.00pm **Weekly Reflection Online**

8.00pm **Badminton**

FRIDAY

9.30am **Choir of Hope**

5.30pm/7.00pm **Uthies/Youth**

Welcome.

Glen Waverley Uniting Church is a faithful, Christ-centered community that meets God and shares in that unconditional love.

Ministerial Musings

Pastor Di Paterson



What an amazing year we have had. On again, off again lockdowns, low numbers to high numbers of Covid infections and the weather is certainly not what we are used to. Here we are on the homeward stretch towards Summer and we are having snow and hail and wind storms. At the moment it is fair to say that we do not know what tomorrow will bring. We had our annual walkathon in rain and rain, a glimpse of sunshine and more rain, a very wet day. But in spite of the rain, we walked because had we postponed, we were not sure what tomorrow would bring. It is still a little bit of a challenge to try to organise anything because we are not sure what tomorrow will bring. So, we are living in this interesting state of uncertainty. We could just stay at home, shut the door and wrap up in a blanket but, to quote Winnie the Pooh, "You can't stay in your part of the forest, you need to get out and see people." As we start to emerge from lockdown, that is exactly what we are trying to do, get out and see people, family and friends. Although we are moving with caution, I have heard a number of joyful stories of family gatherings after many months, and seeing new born babies, born months ago but held for the first time by loving grandparents.

As we move closer to Advent and Christmas, we continue to wonder what tomorrow will bring. We wonder whether we will be able to get back to "Normal Worship", whether we will be able to have Christmas celebrations with family and whether we will be able to go on our Summer holidays. We almost begin to ask the question,

"what is normal and how will we recognise it?" I saw a cartoon of Santa doing his Christmas run having to QR code at every house and the caption, "It's going to be a long Christmas Eve!"

Thinking of the first Christmas, we realise that there was very little about the story that was what we might term, "normal". Mary, visited by an angel and told that she was chosen to bring the Son of God, the Messiah into the world. Joseph, hearing this news tries to work out how to save Mary and to save face for himself. Their journey to Bethlehem for a badly timed census for them and the then finding no room for Mary to give birth, except a stable out the back, with the animals looking on. It is indeed a strange story and I feel sure that Mary and Joseph were also wondering what tomorrow would bring.

Just as Mary gave birth to Jesus on that first Christmas, we too will celebrate the anniversary of this event, it may not be the same way we have celebrated in the past, but it will happen. The celebration of the birth of Jesus, means that God came down and spent time on earth as a human. So, we have a God who understands the challenges we face each day. As we wonder what tomorrow will bring, one thing we do know, that whatever it brings we know that God is with us, Jesus will come, that's what tomorrow will bring..

Blessings Di.

We, the editors of the Kingsway, would like to thank all our 2021 contributors. Thank you so much for touching our hearts and minds with articles that helped us all through these Covid times.

With thanks to:

Neil Peters "As we re-emerge and again engage in the life of the congregation, let us commit to make real and deep connections with people. Personal encounters can be so enriching for us and the other."

Di Paterson "The next time you look at the night sky and see the stars, think of how they burn from the inside and how God's love can do the same thing for each one of us."

Tess Jonker and family "The Glen Waverley Uniting Church has been an amazing community connection for us and we look forward to many more years being members of the Church."

Ross Mackinnon "We are centred on the person of Jesus Christ as witnessed to in Scripture and God's mission to bring wholeness to all of Creation."

Glyn Howells "...in a sunny break overlooking the brimming creek, we shared our concerns for people and situations near and far, prayed in turn, sang and worshipped together amid a chorus of frogs ... glimpses of the annual retreat to the Strathbogie Ranges."

Anne Cook "Distillation of peace that eases, unexpected, across these Covid Days.", from Anne's poem That Fall Unexpectedly.

Annette, Martin, Nathan and Daniel "We were thankful we could still share in church together from our couch, comfy and connected, and the time gifted weekly to maintain children's programs was a huge blessing."

Bill Norquay "The recent COVID lock downs have seen this part of our life ripped up and it is hard to take. The interaction we need as humans has been taken from our lives and we are hurting, socially, mentally and spiritually by this lack of fellowship. While our need to socialize varies greatly from person to person the need is always there"

Lynn Peters "Sometimes we can just be so busy, and it can be very helpful to think about what is important rather than simply what is pressing. At the same time, we need to maintain a good balance of activity and times for relaxation and rest."

Susan Karoly "Daily contemplative prayer keeps us grounded through the inner peace from God. This inner peace then shines forth from our deepest soul towards to all we meet."

Mirini Lang "Next time we are out in the garden, let us appreciate the mental health benefits of gardening and plants. God knows we are meant to be in community with nature. He designed us to be that way."

Sue Morgan "The message is simple - stay connected, keep busy and be active. That sums up what I experience as a volunteer and the benefits that I have gained from my various involvements - a sense of being part of a community, a sense of purpose even in isolation, some wonderful friendships with folk I might not have otherwise got to know...."

Greg Cottrell "The tough times have actually been where Greg acknowledges he has grown the most as adversity is a great teacher if we are a student of life and want to learn."

Ineke Gyles "God has actually shown us from whence comes our hope, today, tomorrow and for the future and where we might feel and see God at work in our community through his Spirit."

Faye McDougall "Homelessness is often just as a result of a tragic turn of events, a poor decision made or difficult home life. There but for the grace of God, go I."

Sony Simanjuntak "...we had the bible study in Indonesian but then other GWUC's members who are not Indonesian speakers joined us. So, our bible study becomes bilingual (Indonesian and English). Thanks to God, Daniel is happy to do the study in both languages. We all love our zoom meeting times."

Peter Cheung "I found in caring for traumatized individuals that those who had strong faith in God, who firmly believed that God would guide them

"Kingsway" is a bi-monthly magazine of Glen Waverley Uniting Church. It is designed to provide a voice for the church community to share activities, thoughts, celebrations, stories and the faith journey, and will present to the church community the quiet achievers and achievements in the life of our church. "Kingsway" has a multi-generational, multi-cultural and missional focus and is designed to build community, lift the spirit and strengthen our faith. If you have an item, article or notice that you think will be just right for "Kingsway", please contact Joanne Boldiston (office@gwuc.org.au) or David Fraser (davidfraser60@gmail.com).

through their struggle with adversity, had invariably shown much more resilience and responded much better to my caregiving than I initially expected."

Elinor McCluskey De Garza "On any given day my work varies from counselling an individual and gradually seeing them make significant positive changes in their life, to assisting a person 'sleeping rough' find a pathway to permanent accommodation. The privilege and honour of journeying with people through this 'helping profession', gives me purpose in my work and meaning in my life."

Daniel Sihombing "I remember the trees in our churchyard and the leaves that are falling. Bogong Avenue is one of the busy roads in this area, with a lot of people coming around from different ethnic backgrounds. I pray that the healing of the nations can also be witnessed here; a foretaste of what is to come. Amen."

Donald Lang "We shared our vulnerability and fear of infection when we transitioned from thinking COVID was rather remote and then suddenly an outbreak occurred in Colac and Beac. We enjoyed the support we received from each other in the messages and looked forward to receiving a response from each family."

Deb Leigh "I have great opportunity in my work as an osteopath to aid people in the physical recovery of injuries, to listen carefully to their emotional and mental

health issues and show care and compassion. Thank you Lord for putting this desire in my heart and for granting me the gifts to fulfil it."

Belinda Clear "...just maybe this wasn't the "right" path. (I write "right" path in inverted commas because I no longer believe that there is one "right path", just a whole lot of twists and turns in the rich journey that is life!) Sadly conversations about the life direction one is steering in are very rarely had until a roadblock proves insurmountable."

Steven and Janice Fraser "We will most likely have more topics to address in the coming years, more concessions to make but at the same time, we know that together, blending our different traditions and cultures, we can make the most of this life as a mixed-race family."

David Williams "After many years of teaching watercolours and practising it, one gathers many observations, reflections and opinions. Working with adults and children provides a strong contrast of the enthusiasm, application and personal reactions to the paintings produced."

Alison Barr "Looking back at epidemics.....the time of the "Spanish" flu in 1919-20..... the closures in Victoria did NOT include churches - as long as you wore a mask."

Rebecca Cornall "Actually, as I look back on the times during the lockdowns that I had with my children, it has actually been a gift, all that extra time that I would never have got to spend with them otherwise."

Tom Rose "...he started talking about his experience too, another two fellows stopped and joined in, then another two - here we were sharing experiences talking about how it felt, openly and honestly sharing how it was for them individually and for their place in the town, country blokes sharing their pain and laughter!"

Graeme Frecker "In game after game the warriors grant me no respite. I am grateful my maker gave me such a tough hide, for I'm belted and bashed within a stitch of my life - though my welts go unnoticed by the barracking tribes."

Jemma Graham Thanks Jemma for the children's activities.

Thank You!

WOOFUS!..... WALKIES

Yan Emms

Woofus's ears stands up and the tail starts wagging madly. There is JOY and it energises the room. Nothing beats an exercise partner waiting at the door, willing to participate at a moment's notice, to keep you and I motivated. My heart gladdens and the mist of lockdown number 6 lifts, as we make our way to the footpath, where other pet owners nod to each other in recognition of our shared salvation. Put away our phone and simply enjoy being in nature, as much as Woofus is doing. Taking the time to notice different sounds, smells and sights, does wonders. This mindfulness helps me to de-stress and relax.

Research by the University of Western Australia has shown that owning a pet can benefit not just the owners but the community. It was found that pet owners, particularly dog owners, were more likely to acknowledge and greet others in the street, exchange favours and socialise with neighbours. But we probably already know this, with over 3.6million Aussie households having a dog and 2.9 million homes sharing theirs with a cat or four!!!

We have a living, breathing friend that listens unconditionally with a sympathetic ear and encouraging us to feel better with their licks and soft nudges. There is much comfort achieved as we stroke and cuddle our pet. This bond with our pet, especially for people dealing with anxiety, loneliness and depression has been shown to lower blood pressure and increase our levels of serotonin and dopamine, meaning we can feel happier and more relaxed. Many establishments like hospitals, hospice and retirement homes, now use the services of a therapy dog. Here the clients can

affectionately and boldly, cuddle, kiss and stroke these furry friends to their hearts desire and have a happy conversation piece with others until the next visit.

Many stories in the wellbeing section of our newsfeeds have attributed a change in their lives for the better, after they brought home a pet. For those who lived alone and were feeling depressed, many found a purpose, a responsibility and having a structure to their lives by following a daily rhythm caring for something that depended on them for all their needs. They then also started to care better for themselves by getting outside to shop for food and eating regularly when they fed their pets.

Pet ownership not only provides us with companionship but benefits us physically, psychologically and socially. Children who grew up around animals are also more likely to be fitter, have a stronger immune system and develop fewer allergies. Kids (and adults) have also reported having higher self-esteem and optimism than households without a furry, feathered &/or fishy family member, as well as less boredom, loneliness and despair. The benefits of pet ownership are innumerable, but the feeling we receive from unconditional love, empathy and companionship that they provide, is truly a gift to us from God.



"Squared off" and finished.

Warren Greenwood
Chairperson, Property Committee

It is exciting to share with you, that under the October lockdown rules, and while the buildings were empty, our contractor Carpet Call were able to finish our 5 year carpet replacement project by completing the worship area, Inner vestry and room 2, using the same carpet tiles that were used in the chapel, foyer, fellowship and office areas.

carpet project from the current annual budgets. Our estimates have been very close and the total carpet project, since 2017, has cost a little more than \$63,000.

In addition, Victorian Building regulations and Synod building requirements have changed since 1991, and a very visible step edge is now required. Broadloom carpet does



30 years ago, on the 1st December 1991 when we opened these buildings, the property team led by Trevor Nixon had selected an excellent New Zealand woollen broadloom carpet that has worked brilliantly for us. With an average of 4000 people a month using our building, the carpet they selected has given us solid service. But it was time to replace it and so we first trialled a carpet tile in the chapel in 2017.

We received encouraging feedback on the selected tiles. Carpet tiles also gave us the extra protection that stains and damage would not require whole rooms or areas to be replaced, but just the damaged tiles. We then replaced the fellowship area in 2018/2019 and the foyer and office in 2020.

Over the last 14 years the property committee and treasurer have been reporting to the congregation that we had been putting aside small amounts of money from our annual budgets into a "*Deferred Maintenance Reserve*", to cover future large replacement tasks such as chairs, office equipment and carpet. We estimated that it would cost us between \$60,000 and \$70,000 to replace all the carpet, and so we had saved up this money for just that purpose. Having this fund means that we have not had to find the cost of the

not give this clarity. When our building was completed, it was adequate to just have broadloom carpet steps, but now we have to have step designs that make the edges very visible to those with limited or ageing vision. Some churches chose to attach yellow stick-on step tape. We believed this was not suitable for our property and in particular for the sanctuary steps and so has been looking for other better options. During the carpet replacement project, our contractor found aesthetically more acceptable options that still met the OHS and building regulations. They were installed in the foyer in 2019 and then he found a "bendable" version that has been used on the sanctuary steps. We are very happy with the end result. One unexpected outcome of the project was that the new carpet tiles enable the pews to slide much more easily when being moved. But, that also means that when you wish to stand, be careful, as pulling on the pew in front of you will cause it to move. We are looking at some options to keep the ease of movement but retain some stability. As they say, "Watch this space for an update".

If you have any questions on the carpet project please do not hesitate to talk to me.

Navigating the Landscape--Building intercultural communities.

Jan Clear & Glyn Howells

On Wednesday 3 November, Glyn, Daniel and Jan attended this workshop, on Zoom. Later, they met and discussed Glen Waverley Uniting Church in light of what they learnt in the workshop. This is their report.

The workshop began with a welcome from Dev Anandarajan, the Intercultural Leadership Development Co-ordinator for the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania. Rev. Eseta Waqabaca-Meneilly did a short Bible Study on Mark 7: 24-30 about the Syrophenician woman who asked Jesus to heal her daughter who was possessed by an unclean spirit. How can one interpret what Jesus said to her: "...Let the children first be fed, for it is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs". Can Jesus' initial response

Key tools for evaluating what we do as a congregation were provided by Rev. Dev Anandarajan who contrasted the terms *multicultural* (superficial), *cross-cultural* (half way) and *intercultural* (profound mutuality and equality).*

In **intercultural communities** there is comprehensive mutuality, reciprocity and equality; no one is left unchanged in the intercultural process; racial and cultural power imbalances are addressed; people are able to learn from each other and lead toward the transformation of all peoples.

At the other end of the spectrum, in **multicultural communities** we live alongside one another...often there is superficial celebration of food, folk and festivals without deep learning... power

Gospel building blocks to create intercultural communities".

The first building block was RECONCILIATION-THE PAST.

The Bible reading was 2 Corinthians 5: 14-21. This reading reminds us that if anyone is in Christ, that person is a new creation. God gave us the ministry of reconciliation and we are God's ambassadors of reconciliation. In Christ, God reconciled himself to all people. The love of Christ compels us to action.

Task: Randall challenged us to identify someone in our personal network with whom it is difficult to engage and think about how you will approach this person from now on.

The second building block was



2019 Intercultural Christmas Celebration

be seen other than as a deeply ingrained cultural prejudice against an 'outsider' to the chosen people? What message does it have for us that by transcending the rules about purity, Jesus saw the woman, talked to the woman, heard her voice and healed her daughter? Was Jesus' own understanding transformed by the courage and humility of the 'outsider'? This insight was inspiring: highlighting Jesus' acceptance and willingness to truly see, hear and respect people whether they were Jews or Gentiles.

differentials are not addressed. Anglo Celtic and western forms dominate so that other cultures are siloed and genuine sharing is not evident in the ethos of the congregation as a whole.

In **crosscultural communities** there is some reaching across boundaries; participants are trying to build bridges and relationships. WHERE DO WE STAND AT GWUC?

Rev.Dr. Randall Prior who was a minister in Vanuatu in the 1980's was the main speaker. His theme was "Three essential

INCARNATION -THE PRESENT.

The Bible Reading was Acts 2: 1-11. On the day of Pentecost, the believers, the Galileans are filled with the Holy Spirit and all who have gathered from near and far are astounded that each-can hear in their own language.

A stumbling block to building relationships with those from other cultures is the way we focus on what we have always done--that is the right way. Questions that we need to ask are "Does our worship give voice to the diversity in

our community? What do we need to change to celebrate diversity and more generally how do we present ourselves to the wider community?

The third building block was ESCHATOLOGY -THE FUTURE.

The Bible Reading was Revelation 7:9-10. A great multitude gathered from every nation, tribe, people and language. They cried out "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne and to the Lamb". God's work is done; it has been completed – we are drawn to celebrate, enjoy and share. Randall challenged us to try other activities and forms of worship that aren't familiar to us and although we are not sure if they will work, to rely on the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Following the lunch break there were two short presentations by Rev. Sylvia Akauola Tongotongo and Rev. Valentina Satvedi.

Sylvia spoke of hidden conflicts which I'm sure we can all relate to- for example "Come if you are fully vaccinated". She emphasized LISTEN/LEARN/LIVE. She saw the church at its best when we embrace everyone --young, old and those from other cultures. This is part of our PASTORAL CARE. Moving from a multicultural community to an intercultural community has challenges. For example, what has happened before to "Embracing Diversity"?

Valentina spoke about "deep listening" in building up relationships, intentional worship and providing sacred, safe, caring and brave spaces (freedom to voice an opinion) within our communities. She also said that we need to have a long-term commitment to "Bridging Gaps in Love" which is a stepping stone to "Building an Intercultural Congregation". Although our leaders are pivotal in the community, we all have responsibilities. We all need to LISTEN, OBSERVE AND EMBRACE. Everyone wants to feel part of the community and have their gifts acknowledged.

Another inspiring feature of the workshop was the closing prayer with people saying the Blessing in their own languages--an uplifting conclusion.

We (Jan Clear, Glyn Howells and Daniel Sihombing) would love to talk to you and hear where you think we are in terms of an intercultural community and what you think we should do next. Please talk to us.

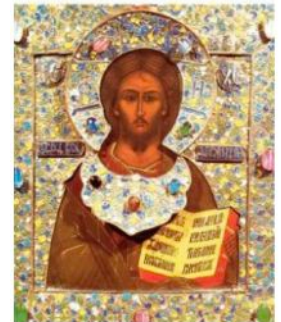
For a fuller outline go to: <http://wiki.gwuc.org.au/gwuc/MultiCrossInterCultural>

FAITH DEVELOPMENT MISSIONAL GROUP BLOGSPOT

Ross Mackinnon

METROPOLITAN ANTHONY
OF SOUROZI

School for Prayer



Many years ago, I read **School for Prayer**, a small book by Metropolitan Anthony Bloom, an Orthodox bishop. In it was this story which can help us to pray, especially during the busy-ness leading up to Christmas. Metropolitan Anthony writes:

Soon after my ordination, I was sent to serve in a retirement home. After worship, an old woman came up to me and said, "Father Anthony, I would like to learn how to pray. What can I do about this? I have already asked those who knew something, but I never received a sensible answer, so I thought that since you probably know nothing, maybe you will accidentally say something useful."

"What is it that you would like to learn?" I asked. "Well," she said, "I pray all the time without ever feeling God's presence."

What happened next went just as she expected. I "blurted out" the first thing that came to my mind, "How can you expect God to be able to put in a word if you keep talking?"

"What should I do?" she asked.

I said, "Do this: In the morning, when you get up, clean your room, prepare yourself, put out of the way in some secluded corner everything that makes your room look messy, light your lamp, sit comfortably in an armchair and DO NOT pray. I know that you are good at knitting, so you can knit something calmly before the face of God and be silent. Look at the photos of your relatives, look out the window, do nothing else..."

A week later, I was at the retirement home again, and the old woman (I was already trembling awaiting her arrival) came and said, "It worked!"

I was completely amazed because although my hope was great, I did not know what to expect.

"How do you know that it worked?" I asked.

She said, "Well, I sat down to knit, and at first I only heard the sound of my knitting needles. Then this sound became a monotonous rhythm. I kept listening to it, and gradually, thanks to the quiet sound of my knitting needles, I suddenly felt how quiet it was around me. I began to listen to this silence, and suddenly it became clear to me that at the core of this silence there was someone's presence. And I realized that God was there. And then" she said, "I was still not praying but I just sat there, in God's presence."

School for Prayer is available from Koorong Books, 4-8 Vicki Street, Blackburn South, VIC, 3130 or online at: www.koorong.com

Kids Christmas Fun

Here are some fun advent ideas to do with your family to celebrate the countdown to Christmas together and spread hope, peace, joy and love.

- 1 Make a gift for a teacher/coach/coworker
- 2 Tell each other your favourite Christmas tradition
- 3 Write someone a letter to thank them for something
- 4 Cook something and take it to a friend or neighbour
- 5 Create and do a Christmas scavenger hunt
- 6 Gather some food to donate to a local Foodbank
- 7 Do some Christmas colouring-in together
- 8 Write some Christmas cards and put them in random mailboxes
- 9 Make a Christmas decoration to gift someone for Christmas
- 10 Reach out to a friend you haven't spoken to in a while
- 11 Craft a Christmassy pet toy to donate to the RSPCA or local animal shelter
- 12 Leave some candy canes on the cars parked in the street
- 13 Make gingerbread people that represent your family
- 14 Read someone a Christmas story
- 15 Draw a nativity picture and display it in your front window
- 16 Buy a toy to donate to the wishing tree
- 17 Use chalk to decorate the footpaths for Christmas
- 18 Have a silly Christmas themed family photo shoot
- 19 As a family, go for a drive to look at Christmas lights
- 20 Film a holiday greeting video and send it to friends and family
- 21 Play a game of Christmas charades
- 22 Have a Christmas movie marathon
- 23 Share your favourite Christmas memory
- 24 Have a Christmas song dance party
- 25 Merry Christmas!

Ministry Team

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**2021
Carol Service**

All are Welcome

2.30pm
followed by
afternoon tea

**12
December
2021**

**Come
let us
adore
Him**

All attending must be fully vaccinated

view online at
www.gwuc.org.au/live

Revised Common Lectionary - Year C

December 5

Advent 2 (purple)
Malachi 3:1-4
Luke 1:68-79
Philippians 1:3-11
Luke 3:1-6

December 19

Advent 4 (purple)
Micah 5:2-5a
Luke 1:46b-55 or Psalm 80:1-7
Hebrews 10:5-10
Luke 1:39-45, (46-55)

January 2

Christmas 2 (white)
Jeremiah 31:7-14
Psalm 147:12-20
Ephesians 1:3-14
John 1:(1-9), 10-18

January 16

Epiphany 2 (green)
Isaiah 62:1-5
Psalm 36:5-10
1 Corinthians 12:1-11
John 2:1-11

December 12

Advent 3 (purple)
Zephaniah 3:14-20
Isaiah 12:2-6
Philippians 4:4-7
Luke 3:7-18

December 26

Christmas 1 (white)
1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26
Psalm 148
Colossians 3:12-17
Luke 2:41-52

January 9

Baptism of Jesus (white)
Isaiah 43:1-7
Psalm 29
Acts 8:14-17
Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

January 23

Epiphany 3 (green)
Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10
Psalm 19
1 Corinthians 12:12-31a
Luke 4:14-21