

BULLETIN***WELCOME TO THIS WEEK'S BULLETIN*****From David: Forced to leave 'home'.**

Leaving home because you want to or because you can, is a very different experience to leaving home because you have to; because 'home' is no longer safe for you. And, leaving 'home' has another dimension to it.

Being forced to leave home is the situation today for about 78 million people around the world of whom about 13 million are under the age of 18. If they are lucky enough to find a country that will open their doors (borders) to them, they are able to craft some kind of new identity and new life for themselves. But it's hard work and often a soul-destroying exercise. They live amongst us. Often keeping a low profile because it can take years to re-establish trust in society. Especially when your life experience has taught you that with a change in the political atmosphere, your neighbour can quickly become your enemy.

Since childhood, I have had the privilege of getting to know refugees. I grew up with refugees from Poland – Jewish and non-Jewish. I went to school with refugees from India and Pakistan. And in all of my ministries I have had the privilege of listening to and honouring the lives of refugees from all over the world. Which is one of the reasons why at this stage in my life. I personally disavow the concept of nationhood and like to think of myself as a citizen of planet earth. How grandiose is that some might say, but actually, I prefer to see it as a declaration of humility and humanity. I cannot think of any other way of stepping outside of all that comes with phrases like 'proud to be Australian, or Irish or French'.

Let me share with you a very brief story. For quite a few years my local doctor was an Australian from Sri Lanka. He had moved here via London in the early 1990's to escape the impacts of the civil war in his homeland. He still maintains a family estate near Kandy. His ties to Sri Lanka are very strong. We got to know each other really well once he learned of my interest in Sri Lanka. We talked about it whenever we met. His companionship was invaluable at the time of my cancer diagnosis. He had been a surgeon and was great support after the surgery and throughout my lengthy rehabilitation.

He had been especially interested in the reconciliation work a few of us were trying to do among the Sri Lankan diaspora in Victoria, as well as the work we were doing in Sri Lanka itself (our friend Larry Marshall did some brilliant work in this space). My Dr friend even came to our first Peace Building event with his wife and 3 children; an event which brought diaspora Sri Lankans together for a cricket match, followed by dinner and a concert. Sinhalese and Tamils and Burghers, young and old, Muslims, Christians, Hindus and Buddhists all in the one place enjoying each other's company.

Participating in the event was a huge step for him. A good man. A Buddhist. A good doctor. He was Sinhalese and very rarely mixed with Tamils, here or back home. He was of the 'professional' class. He had some very fixed views on who were the true Sri Lankans, how the war began, how it ended, who should govern and how they should govern. As do many Sri Lankans here and at home. I saw him a few days after the peace building event. He told me that he had felt quite overwhelmed by the experience of seeing so many people from his homeland putting the past behind them and getting along with each other – for the sake of a different future.

History certainly shapes us but it doesn't have to define us. I think for the first time he had come to understand that building the kind of society you want to leave behind for your children is more important than the historical circumstances of our birth.

Shalom

David

SUNDAY 14th June 2020: 10.30 am cyber-church

Bible Reading: Acts 9: 1 -30

This Sunday acknowledges the start of *Refugee Week*. I will do my best to link this theme with our continuing journey through the Book of Acts and the 'arrival' of Paul – the apostle to the Gentiles.

We will also share in Communion this Sunday so please have a piece of bread and some 'wine' on hand so that we can share this 'meal of remembering' online together.

A zoom invitation will hit your inbox around 9.45. The waiting room will be open then for anyone who wants to catch up before our gathering starts at 10.30.

See you Sunday

Bible Study group – Wednesday 17th June: 6 – 7pm.

This coming Wednesday is **session 3** of our exploration of the titles and names attached to Jesus after his death. Why the breakaway Jewish movement and the early 'church' felt they needed to talk about and present Jesus to the Roman Empire with titles and phrases that created so much theological confusion for the early church to navigate. Look forward to seeing you on Wednesday. **If you would like to be involved, send David your email address. Saints163@bigpond.com All welcome**

Refugee Week 14-20 June

This year's theme is **Celebrating the Year of Welcome**. The Justice and International Mission Cluster resources page, including actions you can take this week, can be found at: <https://justact.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/2020-June-Refugee-week-resources.pdf>. Over many years, at a local level, our church has supported the **Brigidine Asylum Seekers Project (BASP) in Albert Park**. **Please check their website <https://basp.org.au/> to find out ways that you could help.**

This Wednesday June 17th is Church Council. Please email/talk to David or any Council member if you have any issue/s you would like discussed.

Uniting Winter Appeal – Spread the Warmth this Winter. Keep families warm this winter and enable ***Uniting*** to provide blankets, pyjamas, winter woollies and swags for everyone finding it tough right now in our community. \$29 provides 1 x warm blanket, \$100 provides warm pyjamas for a family of four, \$115 provides 1 x swag. Please donate online (<https://www.unitingvictas.org.au/spread-the-warmththis-winter/>) or drop off new items at any of Uniting's offices or Emergency Relief services.

MINDFULNESS BASED STILLNESS MEDITATION.

Online via ZOOM Monday to Friday 11am.

Teacher John Tansey, registered member of Meditation Association of Australia.

tojtansy@gmail.com

UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA. The national leaders of the UCA and UAICC have encouragement and some requests for Church members speaking out against racism. Three asks and a prayer for social justice

SHOW YOUR SUPPORT, CHANGE YOUR FRAME, CHANGE THE RECORD



UNITING CHURCH members are encouraged to take these three actions:

- 1. Show support.** Send your message of solidarity to the national UAICC. uaicc@nat.uca.org.au
- 2. Change your frame.** Update your Facebook profile picture that says what your Church has to say on these issues. We've designed two for you. Uniting Church against racism. Uniting Church against black deaths in custody. You'll find them among Facebook's frame options. (Just search for Uniting)
- 3. Change the record.** The "Change the Record" campaign is a national campaign for social policy measures that will reduce incarceration rates and deaths in custody. They are collecting petition signatures to

send to the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition. **Please sign the Change the Record petition on their website and support their initiatives.**

PRAYER FOR JUSTICE, SOLIDARITY AND WALKING TOGETHER AS FIRST AND SECOND PEOPLES

Dr Deidre Palmer and Pastor Mark Kickett

Creator God, our hearts are heavy for all the events that have impacted the world in the past few weeks that have caused us to ask the question, “Where is the God of Justice, Mercy, Peace and Love?”

We know deep in our heart that you are still all of those things (and more), and that scripture reminds us that you journey with us wherever we go and no matter what condition, or state of mind, or circumstances that we may find ourselves in, your presence is there walking alongside us and often times holding us up. (Ps 139:7f)

Creator God, we reach out in prayer for the lives of all people, in particular for the lives affected by injustice and the ugliness of racism, for we know and believe that you are the God who transforms lives and circumstances, and that through all of this the world may know and feel your healing and loving touch.

We give you thanks for the ministry of the UAICC.

We pray for UAICC leaders, that you will continue to sustain them with hope, give them strength and wisdom, as they minister to their communities and especially as they mentor younger leaders, and raise up the sacred stories of First People in this land.

We pray for all members of the Uniting Church, our congregations, councils, agencies and schools, that we may embody the Gospel of Christ in ways of compassion, justice, love and hope.

May your Holy Spirit be a loving presence throughout our world, bringing comfort to all those who grieve, and breathe new life and hope into situations of uncertainty and despair.

May your Holy Spirit renew us in heart and vision, that we might walk together as First and Second Peoples in mutuality, respect and delight in our shared life and destiny together.

Through Christ, our liberator we pray.
Amen.

If you are in need of pastoral care, please contact David Pargeter 0412 334 334 or email saints163@bigpond.com

Please visit our website: www.stkildaunitingchurch.org.au It is updated on a regular basis by Petra.

If you would like to make a contribution to support the work of the church, the best way is through bank transfer: 013 427. Acct 3108 34465. The only identification needed is ‘ offering’ .

By mail: PO Box 385, Balaclava 3183

Contributions to these bulletins welcomed – please send to desleighk@ozemail.com.au

(photos, articles, poems – anything you would like to share with others)