

**BULLETIN*****WELCOME TO THIS WEEK'S BULLETIN*****From David: Be not afraid****Fear is a powerful motivator. It can also be a powerful de-motivator.**

Just a short time ago, the declaration of a Pandemic sent waves of fear around the world and within weeks produced a set of circumstances very few people could have imagined. Significant parts of the world went into lockdown. Along with the loss of life, the economic devastation has been enormous, especially in poorer communities that rely so heavily upon tourism for income. A friend of mine who operates a taxi in Phuket was telling me this week that he has had no income for 3 months.

**But as we begin to move out of social isolation, the fears that shut us down are also quite appropriately and understandably, holding us back from opening up again.**

So, we find ourselves in what is known as a liminal space – a ‘crossing over’ space. Can I risk it? Is it worth the risk? If I don’t go soon, will I ever go out again?

All very ‘normal’ responses, and over time some things will feel familiar again.

Over the last few weeks I’ve found myself thinking quite a bit about the nature of fear. Where it comes from and what it can do both negatively and positively. So, let me tell you a story from the other day, about fear.

Last Saturday I spent the morning going through some boxes in the garage. I had packed and marked them when we moved house 2 years ago. I knew I wouldn’t need what was in them but I packed them anyway. I just couldn’t bring myself to throw them into the bin. It would have been a bit like discarding a piece of myself.

One of the boxes contained little A4 exercise books from when I was studying for ministry. I became curious and flicked through one of them. I started reading a few pages of handwritten notes taken during a semester on the Hebrew Prophet Amos. Within minutes I was 28 again and sitting in a small meeting room, listening with so much concentration to Dr Ernest Moore. He was our tutor on the Hebrew texts. A short stocky elderly man with a gnomish-beard, impish smile and light grey eyes that glistened with life. He seldom sat down to teach. He would walk around the room and talk. Sometimes he would read a piece of text and then say nothing. None of us would interrupt the silence. We just waited. We knew that he was ‘chewing’ on something profound and that what was coming next was going to be worth more than gold.

He ‘loved’ the Prophet Amos with an obvious passion; especially the poetic ways in which Amos captured the moment in time. He regarded Amos as fearless in the face of power, and that he recognised that some values needed to rise above national interest. Corruption is a primary example. Amos railed against corruption and saw it as one of the most significant moral flaws in humankind – taking advantage of and exploiting others for personal benefit.

Ernie would read a line of text like this one (below) in Hebrew and then in English, and then pause:

*‘Hear this, you who trample the needy and do away with the poor of the land’.*

Sometimes Ernie would cry. He would say things like, “try for a moment to imagine the kind of courage it takes to stand up and say these words to the high priest, to someone who has the power to kill you. What we are hearing here, is the deep deep longing for people to be treated with respect”.

Then he would say, “your exercise for this week is.....”. And after this particular session (the one I was reading again as if for the first time) he said, “I want you to write a poem about fear”.

Here is the poem that I wrote that week, transcribed from smudgy biro into Gabriola 12 font:

## **Fear**

Some fears are imagined

Other fears are real.

But even the imagined ones are real.

Or they were once upon a time.

And may be again.

The experience of them lurking like shadows in the memory of a child.

Waiting unseen

Hiding

Ready

Always ready, to rise up from deep deep places

Unbeckoned

Unannounced

Unwelcomed

Ready to pounce upon whatever might be.

Holding back possibility

And in the quietest of voices

Whispering like screams

Be careful

Be cautious

Think before you leap

Then I leapt

Into the great known

And the shadows began to fade

Never disappearing – just fading

Growing smaller

Losing their strength

And again

And again

This time

Into the great unknown.....

....Losing their voice

Unable, perhaps no longer willing to pounce

And with every leap

confidence arrives

confidence grows

Then I leap again

**CYBER-CHURCH - SUNDAY 21st June 2020: 10.30 am**

**BIBLE READING:** Acts 25: 23 to 26: 13

This Sunday we acknowledge the 43<sup>rd</sup> 'birthday' of the Uniting Church in Australia, but we will be focussing on *'how the light gets in, and how the light gets out'*.

If you would like to join the gathering, send me (David) an email and I will add you to the invitation list. An invitation will be sent around 9.45am and our gathering will commence at 10.30am. **See you Sunday**

**BIBLE STUDY GROUP: WEDNESDAY EVENING AT 6 PM.**

Coming out of our *Titles of Jesus* series, a request has been made that we spend a couple of weeks exploring the whole *'Jesus Christ as Redeemer / Saviour concept'* and how we could deal with it from a Progressive Christian perspective – especially if we don't really believe it but many of our Christian 'friends / family' do. I will endeavour to trace the journey of sacrifice as it appears in religious history (especially Judaism) and its relevance or not for our faith journey. Should be an interesting couple of weeks I reckon.

If you would like to join in, send me (David) an email and I will add you to the invitation list. An invitation will be sent around 5.45 pm and our gathering will commence at 6.00 pm. **See you then. David**

**Church Council** was postponed last week and will now be held next Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> at 9.30am. Please email/talk to David or any Council member if you have any issue/s you would like discussed.

**PROGRESSIVE CHRISTIAN NETWORK VICTORIA**

Due to Covid-19, the next meeting of the **PROGRESSIVE CHRISTIAN NETWORK VICTORIA** will again be held remotely via Zoom on Sunday 28 June, 4.00pm to 5.15pm

Our theme for June will be: **REFLECTIVE WINTER JOURNEYING** : A time of stillness, imagery, poetry and commentary, as we reflect on the rhythm of the seasons. with Rev Greg Crowe, Rev Dr Julie Hall and Rev Dr Coralie Ling:

Please click on the link below, just before 4:00pm to join the zoom meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84788796207?pwd=TUE2TmdYVnFua29POTd6Mzl1WFBNZz09>

Meeting ID: 847 8879 6207

Password: 399472

**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.

**Uniting Church in Australia Assembly** <https://assembly.uca.org.au/news/item/3197-a-just-recovery-post-covid-19>

**The Uniting Church in Australia** has outlined a set of principles and key actions that will guide the way to a better future as Australia recovers from the coronavirus pandemic. UCA President Dr Deidre Palmer said the COVID-19 pandemic had highlighted the stark inequality and disparity in our Australian society and exacerbated the disadvantage faced by our most vulnerable people.

The document, ***Build Back Better: A Just Recovery, Post-Covid-19***, draws upon the Uniting Church vision for a just Australia based on our belief that each person is created in the image of God and deeply loved by God. As Christians, we see in the life and mission of Jesus, God's call for abundant life for all people and the renewal of the whole creation.

The Assembly has drawn the document together with input from across the Church, including from our agencies delivering community services on the ground, our Uniting Aboriginal Islander and Christian Congress (UAICC) and others working in the area of justice.

**The principles we believe will guide a better future are:**

Build Resilient Individuals, Families and Communities

Build a more equal society

Build a nation where everyone is respected and has a voice

Creative, collaborative and constructive leadership to rebuild Australia.

Build for a sustainable future. Download attachments: [UCA Vision Statement Post-COVID-19\\_Final.pdf](#)

Please visit our website: [www.stkildaunitingchurch.org.au](http://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](mailto:desleighk@ozemail.com.au)

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