

**BULLETIN**

**Welcome to this week's Bulletin.**

**From David: What can you see?**

Clouds come in all sorts of shapes and sizes. Some look light and fluffy, others appear menacing and apocalyptic. As someone who likes to paint seascapes, it took me quite a while to work out how to reproduce clouds on a canvass, and one thing I've picked up along the way is that while they are all made of the same stuff, they are not all created equal. Like us, they are full of light and dark and many shades of grey. They too have their shadow sides. They have soft edges and hard edges. Some suggest hot summer days while others with their low and threatening contours indicate an approaching storm. Clouds that is. Others, are so erratic and capricious that the human mind starts to see things.

The nature of clouds inspired this famous Peanuts cartoon by Charles M Schulz:

*"Aren't the clouds beautiful? They look like big balls of cotton... I could just lie here all day, and watch them drift by... If you use your imagination, you can see lots of things in the cloud formations... What do you think you see, Linus?"*

*"Well, those clouds up there look like the map of the British Honduras on the Caribbean... That cloud up there looks a little like the profile of Thomas Eakins, the famous painter and sculptor... And that group of clouds over there gives me the impression of the stoning of Stephen... I can see the apostle Paul standing there to one side..."*

*"Uh huh... That's very good... What do you see in the clouds, Charlie Brown?"*

*"Well, I was going to say I saw a ducky and a horsie, but I changed my mind!"*

**A few days ago a different kind of cloud appeared over Victoria, one we have seen before and now we are in lockdown for a 2<sup>nd</sup> time. Whilst not inevitable it was always possible that we would be in this situation again. Just when things were looking better and hope was taking shape on the near horizon, a darker cloud appeared and we have entered a new phase of lockdowns. But, this too, shall pass. And lighter brighter clouds will once again take shape on the horizon.**

Meanwhile, we continue to stay connected as best we can, digging deeply into our reserves of patience, goodwill and good humour. I suspect we may have exhausted all those possibilities for distraction because that is how we often cope with difficult situations, but perhaps this second phase might give birth to a second wave of deeper thinking. Using this time of isolation to think about and maybe write about wisdom; what

have I learned about myself during this time? What has this lockdown taught me about my strengths and weaknesses – when am I strongest and when am I vulnerable? What sustains me? What have I discovered about what is most important to me; what do I value most about my life and living.

These are just a few questions that might generate access to wisdom. May I encourage each of us to make some time to watch the clouds and think about life. I fully appreciate that this is going to be easier for some than for others, because our circumstances vary enormously, but unless we try to extract some wisdom from this ‘global moment’ then it will have been an opportunity lost.

Meanwhile, enjoy the beauty of clouds, if for no other reason than they are simply beautiful.

Shalom

David

### **Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> July**

**Cyber-church meets again this coming Sunday via Zoom at 10.30 am.** The ‘waiting room’ will be open from around 10.00 am.

**The theme for this Sunday is: To an Unknown God – The Apostle Paul’s famous speech in Athens. I will be exploring the relevance of this phrase for a 21<sup>st</sup> Century faith.**

See you then.

Peace

David

**BIBLE READING: Acts 17: 16 - 30**

### ***BIBLE STUDY /DISCUSSION: WEDNESDAY EVENINGS 6.00 – 7.00 pm***

We will start again on **Wednesday 22 July at 6.00 pm.** By request, our topic of study will be the **Holy Spirit.** An invitation will be sent out at 5.45pm on the 22<sup>nd</sup>.

See you then.

Shalom.

David

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)**

Grateful thanks to Jane from Sacred Heart for reminding me of this **Michael Leunig** prayer:

**Dear God,**

**we struggle, we grow weary,  
we grow tired, we are exhausted,  
we are distressed, we despair.**

**We give up,  
we fall down,  
we let go, we cry.**

**We empty, we grow calm,  
We are ready, we wait quietly.**

**A small, shy truth arrives, arrives within and within.**

**Arrives and is born: simple, steady, clear, like a mirror, like a bell, like a flame, like rain in Summer.**

**A precious truth arrives and is born within us, within our emptiness.**

**We accept it, we observe it, we absorb it.**

**We surrender to our bare truth.**

**We are nourished, we are changed, we are blessed, we rise up,**

**For this we give thanks.**

Michael Leunig, 1998, A Common Prayer: A Cartoonist Talks to God, Victoria, HarperCollinsReligious (Aust) P/L.

**Our Church community has a confidential list of its members contact details.** In this time of isolation during Corona-19 Stage 3 restrictions, if you would like to be connected are not on this list, please send me ([desleighk@ozemail.com.au](mailto:desleighk@ozemail.com.au)) an email with your details.



**When In Quarantine**  
**PEOPLE** who are in quarantine are not isolated if they have a Bell Telephone. ✕  
The Bell Service brings cheer and encouragement to the sick, and is of value in countless other ways.  
Friends, whether close at hand or far away, can be easily reached, because Bell Service is universal service.



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## **From the Uniting Church in Australia Assembly – [assembly.uca.org.au](http://assembly.uca.org.au)**

Uniting Church members are encouraged to support a campaign urging the Federal Government to ensure children seeking asylum in Australia are not left homeless and hungry by the impacts of COVID-19.

**In Australia there are around 16,000 children in families seeking protection. For many of those children, their parents or carers have lost work as a result of the pandemic and have been left with no income and no support.**

Assembly Associate General Secretary Rob Floyd, Chairperson of the Australian Churches Refugee Taskforce (ACRT) encouraged Uniting Church members to join others around the country calling on the Government to step in and offer support.

“This week, as we face the awful news of Melbourne returning to lockdown, we are reminded that going back to work is just not possible for many Australians. For many the financial impact will continue to be devastating and long lasting,” said Mr Floyd.

“We are thankful for the support the Government has provided to many Australians, but we know that still some people are falling through the cracks, and this includes children from families who are seeking permanent protection in Australia.”

“COVID-19 has taught us that our Australian [society is only as strong and healthy as the most vulnerable](#) in our community. As we noted in a recent statement on how we should seek to recover as a nation from COVID-19, when we take steps to support each other, everyone benefits.”

In recent months, charities have faced unprecedented demand for support from families seeking asylum. In many cases requests have trebled to help pay for rent, food and medicines.

“Many children living here in Australia have come from dangerous and often traumatic circumstances. On top of this, they live with the uncertainty of their resettlement in Australia. Facing a heightened level of anxiety with the spread of COVID-19, these young people now live with the fear of having nowhere to live and no food to eat.”

“This is not the situation we want young children in Australia to experience. All children deserve the right to a safe and secure home and the best opportunity to live a happy life. No child should be left behind.”

**The campaign led by the Refugee Council of Australia, is calling on the Federal Government to ensure adequate support is offered to asylum seeker families left out of work.**

**They are collecting signatures from members of the public and are specifically seeking support from educators, parents and students, and the relevant bodies representing them, for a joint statement addressed to the Prime Minister Scott Morrison and Minister for Families and Social Services Anne Ruston.**

**[SIGN ON HERE](#)**

*We respectfully acknowledge the Yaluk-ut Weelam Clan of the Boon Wurrung – the traditional custodians of the land on which we gather. We pay our respects to their Elders - past, present and emerging. We acknowledge and uphold their continuing relationship to this land.*