

**BULLETIN****Welcome to this week's Bulletin.****From David: A tea-bag in the sun**

The other morning I was sitting by a window in what we call the 'front room'; only because it's the one closest to the street and at the front end of the house. It faces North. It's the window which seems to catch most of the sun for much of the day.

On that particular morning the sunlight was glorious. I was taking a short break from some intensive reading: preparing material for church on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> August. A day on which we were going to be thinking about peace-making. It was the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Two moments in history well worth remembering. It was harrowing but necessary reading, so I had stopped for a break. I needed to re-assemble my thoughts and feelings by using a mug of tea and my favourite snack; two chocolate digestive biscuits. I had a biscuit in one hand and with the other, I was dangling a tea-bag in my favourite mug; a big Star Wars mug with a picture of Darth Vader on it. I've had the mug for years. **But as I dunked the bag of tea up and down trying release as much flavour as possible, I was ambushed by a memory.**

**A simple memory of when I was studying to be a minister.** We struggled financially like lots of poor students. I was married with 2 children and living on benefits. I know, get the violins out. Poor me. Poor me. Pour me another drink. For 2 days a week I lived 'in' the college. The rest of the week I was working in the parish. Whilst in college we had to look after ourselves with regard to morning tea etc. Every student had a personal cupboard. In mine, I kept a small tin of tea-bags and a packet of plain digestives. The cupboards weren't locked as people respected other people's privacy. Between lectures I would often find a sunny spot in the library, pull up a chair to put my feet on, make myself a cup of tea, and read through my notes again. Trying to retain what I had just heard – so much of it was new and exciting, and I didn't want to forget a moment of it. When I'd finished my break, I would put the tea-bag on a piece of paper on the windowsill and let the sun through the glass dry it out. During winter I'd put it near a radiator. Later in the day, I'd collect it and use it again. Sometimes I'd get 3 cups of tea from the one bag. I was trying to save money. Quite pathetic really but every bit counts! As my Nan used to say, "look after the pennies and the pounds will look after themselves".

**The memory that ambushed me was of a fellow student; his name was Bill.** I was a stranger living in Manchester. Bill was sort of local; he'd lived in that part of the country all of his life. He had grown up on a sheep farm in a little place called Higginshaw. He was a terrific table tennis player and taught me how to execute a wizard serve. I probably can't do it now. I digress. Like me, Bill was a big library user and had been

observing my ritual. One day, just before leaving the college for that week, he asked me what I was doing with the tea-bag. I told him it was an Aussie thing; improves the flavour.

A week later I returned to the college for the next round of lectures etc. I went to my cupboard during a break, and discovered that it was absolutely chockers with boxes of tea-bags and packets of chocolate digestives. There was also a note. It very simply said: PG Tips – full of pommie flavour.

**Little acts of generosity and kindness are like sunlight. They brighten up the day. They also dispel the darkness. Peace. David**

**CYBER – CHURCH                      Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> August at 10.30 am                      Bible Reading: John 1: 43 - 51**

From David: Hi folks, this Sunday we will continue the theme of enlightenment: how the light gets in and how it gets out. This time, we will spend a few weeks looking at *movies or more specifically, scenes from movies*. To start the process, I have asked my good friend Larry Marshall, who along with many other skills and attributes, is a wonderful film reviewer.

I am preparing a reflection on a text in John's Gospel, and Larry will add to our gathering experience by talking about a film that shaped his life. The two components complement one another.

In coming weeks I will be inviting others to identify a film that shaped or even changed their lives. If you would like to volunteer please let me know. Or, you can just wait and expect a call from me soonish.

Film is such a powerful art-form, and I'm sure it will enrich our experience of gathering together at this time.

The zoom waiting room will be open around 9.45 for some chat time, and we will 'gather' more formally at 10.30. David

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If you have not joined us before and would like to, please send David your email address so that an invitation can be sent to your inbox. [Saints163@bigpond.com](mailto:Saints163@bigpond.com)

**BIBLE STUDY GROUP                      Wednesday, 19<sup>th</sup> August 6 – 7pm**

A big thankyou to those members of this study group who have sent in their suggestion / requests for future study topics. Enough ideas for the next 12 months I think; a nice blend of biblical study (Hebrew and Christian) and concepts like Grace and Love. So, having read the suggestions a couple stand out as satisfying the interests of quite a few people.

Therefore, I propose that for the next 2 weeks we have a quick look at the prophets of the 'Old' testament (Hebrew Bible). Who were they? When were they around? What was the historical / religious context into which they were trying to speak? When were they written? Who wrote them?

See you then. David

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If you would like to be involved, just send David your email address [saints163@bigpond.com](mailto:saints163@bigpond.com) and he will send you an invitation

**The next *PROGRESSIVE CHRISTIAN NETWORK OF VICTORIA* meeting will be next Sunday August 23<sup>rd</sup> at 4pm via Zoom.**

**Topic: “Enchantment, Disenchantment, Re-enchantment. Directions toward the future of Christian faith” with Rev Dr Christopher Page.**

**The PCNV has a new website which can be accessed at: <http://www.pcnvictoria.org.au/>**

**The Newsletter has been recommenced and this latest edition is worth a read.**

**The Presbytery of Port Phillip East latest *Newsbeat* is accessible at <http://www.ucappep.org> There are interesting articles to read that relate to our Presbytery. These include the new COVID – 19 instructions from Synod. The *Frequently Asked Questions* features new advice on face masks used in work situations.**

***STOP PRESS !!!!! Janet and Brian are organizing another ZOOM TRIVIA EXTRAVAGANZA !!!!!***

**Date: Saturday 22 August 7 pm**

**Maximum team size: 6**

**App: Zoom. Link will be emailed**

**You can organise your own team or let Janet know if you want to be put in a team. Individual households is fine ... just 1 person can make up a team. Invite friends, family and neighbours to join the frivolity!**

**Points will be awarded for:**

- Loudest shirt**
- Best film referenced team name**
- Best novelty face mask**
- Fanciest trivia platter**

**Similar format to last time but different categories and activities. Please email Janet to join the fun: [janetsnashall@gmail.com](mailto:janetsnashall@gmail.com)**

***JANET NEEDS ALL EMAIL ADDRESSES) AND YOUR TEAM NAME.***

**0417670132 (J) [janetsnashall@gmail.com](mailto:janetsnashall@gmail.com)**

### **Campaign for More Social Housing**

**Even before COVID-19, almost 120,000 people were homeless every night in Australia. And that number is projected to skyrocket with one million Australians losing income as a consequence of Covid-19.**

**Will you contact the Treasurer and urge him to invest in social housing in the lead up to the October Budget? Join thousands of people and Australian organisations who are calling on Josh Frydenberg to create jobs and homes renters can afford.**

**Read more and sign the petition [HERE](#)**

## **The City of Port Phillip Multifaith Network.**

**This is a report written by Digby Hannah from St Kilda Baptist Church. Coralie is the St Kilda Uniting Church representative and endorses this report**

**The Port Phillip Multifaith Network** - a group which consists of representatives of the various faiths - have an active presence in the City of Port Phillip. This very diverse group meets every two months in order to consider issues of mutual concern. Coralie is a member and represents the Uniting Church.

How is our community managing the isolation imposed by Covid19? The experience of other faith communities is similar to our own. Leaders are finding new ways of communicating with their members, new ways of conducting worship and new ways of exercising pastoral care. There are added problems for many seniors who are not used to going on-line or don't even have the where-with-all to go on-line. New approaches are being devised to meet these needs.

Sherridan Green is a City of Port Phillip Community Development worker. She described a number of programs which the local council offer to senior members of the community. They can be viewed at the following link: [www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/activities-for-seniors.htm](http://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/activities-for-seniors.htm) There is also an annual Seniors Festival which will be conducted quite differently this year.

Brian Hanlon, Coordinator of volunteers at the Southport Community Centre described programs they are conducting to address the isolation which many community members are experiencing - especially, but not only, the older members of the community. They have been sponsoring a program of visitation, phone calls and the delivery of food and shopping to the homes of those who are not able to venture out.

Linden Art Gallery in St Kilda have taken many very effective initiatives lately to make their programs more multiculturally inclusive. The report shared by Jasine McNeill, their community engagement coordinator, made me wonder whether we at SKEB could give some deliberate thought to making our programs more accessible to people from other cultures and people who may not even speak English.

**The City of Port Phillip Council has agreed to support the Multifaith network in their proposal to host the next Victorian Interfaiths Network Conference for 2021. If this bid is successful it will require a lot of commitment from the members of our Port Phillip network as the conference is quite a major event.**

At the previous meeting of the Multifaith group, the CEO of the newly established PRIDE Centre in St Kilda described the various programs being made available to members of the LGBTIQI community. **The Pride Centre has approached the Port Phillip Multifaith Network requesting their involvement in a fundraising effort in which different groups pledge to raise money to support a chosen aspect of the work of establishing the Pride Centre and making it fully functional.**

### **ABC: Fight for Planet A - Our Climate Challenge**

**The ABC has begun airing a 3 part series that started on Tuesday Aug 11, showing us how we can all be part of reducing our collective carbon emissions:**

- by understanding where our energy comes from**
- how transport and travel emissions affect our health**
- understanding the carbon footprint of the food we eat.**

**The series is hosted by Craig Reucassel from The War on Waste and The Chaser. It is available on Iview**

## Consultation on Synod's Position on Climate Change

The Synod Justice and International Mission (JIM) Cluster believes there is a need for the Synod to update its position on the urgency of addressing the causes of climate change and the actions that need to be taken in response. The JIM cluster is keen to hear the views of Uniting Church members on what action the Synod should take on climate change. A consultation paper can be downloaded from the website <https://justact.org.au/climate-justice-creation/reports/>. The page also provides details on how to provide your views on what position the Synod should take on climate change.

Hardcopies of the consultation paper can be ordered by contacting Mark Zirnsak on 0409 166 915 or e-mailing [mark.zirnsak@victas.uca.org.au](mailto:mark.zirnsak@victas.uca.org.au)



**Watercolour by Robert Hoskin: A reflection of Jacob's crossing of the River Jabbok - the angel assisting an exhausted human**

Prayers from World Council of Churches



**The people of Beirut are facing crisis after crisis. Can you help with a donation.**  
[fundraise.unitingworld.org.au/beirut](https://fundraise.unitingworld.org.au/beirut)

*"The situation here is terrible, with one crisis piled onto another. The city, including our churches and schools, have sustained a heavy, heavy blow. I don't know how we'll emerge from this." - Rev. Nishan Bakalian (Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East).*

Already facing an economic crisis made worse by the COVID-19 pandemic, the people of Beirut are now reeling from an explosion that left 158 people dead, 6,000 injured and 300,000 homeless.

Your gift will help alleviate the suffering of people affected by the explosion; addressing immediate needs and helping with the longer-term rebuilding and rehabilitation. Please join us praying for the victims and those affected by this disaster, for the wellbeing of the people in Beirut and for our partner churches as they respond to people's needs.\*

We plan to work through our **Act Alliance** partners in Lebanon to support churches and church agencies in Beirut to respond. We will update this page with more details of the exact activities as the humanitarian response plans are developed and details of the implementation partners become available.

We have written to churches in Lebanon to express our sorrow and solidarity. While we do not have existing programs in Lebanon, due to the strength of Uniting Church connections via Lebanese diaspora we are fundraising to support affected communities.

*\*Donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible in Australia. Please give generously*

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*Rev. Gaby Kobrossi (Chairperson) of the Middle East National Conference and Minister at Bankstown District Uniting Church shares his prayer for Beirut Remembrance Week*

**On this day**, violence created chaos, destroyed lives, and generated fear.

**On this day**, We remember the cries of the people caught amid fire and dust, the families whose loved ones never returned home after that day, the shared mourning of a frightened Lebanon.

**On this day**, We remember courageous men and woman who worked tirelessly to save lives, seek the lost, and heal the wounded. We remember with confidence that hope is still God's way.

**On this day, we pray...**

Heavenly Father, Your Love never fails;

You are the source of all mercy and giver of comfort;

Today we come before you with heavy hearts as we remember the events of 4/8

Father we bring before you the people of Beirut, Lebanon

Unite us in solidarity with our Brothers and Sisters in Lebanon

We grieve with those who still mourn,  
And share memories with those who cannot forget.  
May we draw strength from those who bravely responded,  
And gave their lives to save others.  
We remember their generosity and hospitality.  
Above all God may we remember your faithfulness  
Help Lebanon to trust in your unfailing love.  
May Lebanon find peace, harmony and serenity.  
May the beauty of Lebanon be restored.  
May your peace shattered in Beirut be renewed.  
Through Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the World.  
Amen

The Church Council would like to thank those who have continued to support our church financially over the last few months while we have been in lockdown – it is very much appreciated. Contributions to support the work of the church 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)

As we gather in our various places via Zoom, we acknowledge the *Yaluk-ut Weelam Clan of the Boon Wurrung People* as the traditional custodians of this land on which our church building stands. We give thanks for their commitment to nurturing this land over many generations. We honour the sacred stories that belong to this land. We pay our respect to Elders past, present and for those emerging who will lead their communities into the future. We commit ourselves to empowering children to continue the journey of reconciliation on this land.