

Alistair was awarded an AO in 2017 for contributions to church and community but he has decided to join the ranks of Australia Day award recipients who are handing back their awards. in response to the “upgrading” of Margaret Court’s Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) to the highest award of Companion (AC).

“I feel compelled to take this action as a Christian leader. To its shame, the Christian church has often perpetuated teachings and practices that marginalise and exclude people. I long for the day when people will associate the Christian church with the spirit of welcome, inclusion and grace reflecting the God we worship.”

We respectfully acknowledge the Yaluk-ut Weelam clan of the Boon Wurrung – the Traditional Owners of Port Phillip. We pay our respects to their Elders and community - past, present and emerging. We acknowledge and uphold their continuing relationship to this land.

| Date | 31 January | 7 February | 14 February | 21 February | 28 February |
|---------------------------|------------|------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| <i>Worship</i> | Robert H | David | David | David | David |
| <i>Assistance</i> | Mary | Randall | Melissa | Roma | Mary |
| <i>Welcome at door</i> | Melissa | Mary | Roma | Maureen | Wendy |
| <i>Flowers</i> | Desleigh | Deb | Desleigh | Maureen | Roma |
| <i>Coffee</i> | Darren | Mark | Roma | Louise | Randall |
| <i>Rubbish collection</i> | Randall | Randall | Darren | Roma | Randall |

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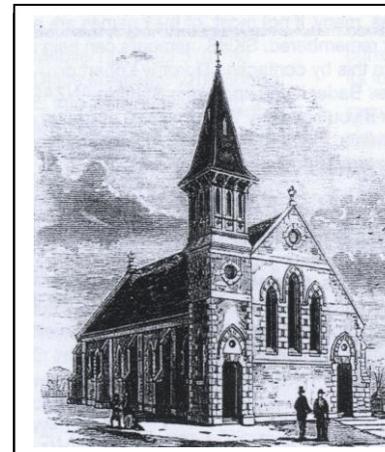
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VISION STATEMENT:

As a community of faith, the St Kilda Uniting Church Parish Mission strives to do what is just, to show constant love and to walk humbly with God.

NEWSLETTER DETAILS:

Desleigh Kent is the editor and distributor of the Newsletter. .If you would like to receive a copy of the church newsletter each week or if you wish to be removed from the list, please contact Desleigh: desleighk@ozemail.com.au
Contributions to the content are also welcomed.



**St Kilda Uniting Church
Parish Mission**

NEWSLETTER

Volume 56 Issue 01

Sunday, 31 January 2021

EPIPHANY 4

Welcome to our first Newsletter for the year, and the first since closing the church on March 22nd 2020! The Bulletin used during COVID time has now been put to rest!

David will return next week after having a well-deserved break. This morning Rev Dr Robert Hoskin will lead our worship, so we welcome him and you all. Please stay afterwards for tea/coffee and conversation.

Bible Readings: Mark 1: 21-28 pg.665 *The Inclusive Bible*

From David: 2021 has begun and it’s almost February!

As you know I have been on a few weeks leave. I took the opportunity to visit Victoria; spending a few days in different places. Ocean. Lakes. Forests. Rivers. Mountains. Beaches. We certainly live in a beautifully diverse land and it was great spending time appreciating it. But two images in particular have embedded themselves in my memory. **One is of burnt-out forests on the slopes of Lake Mountain stretching as far as the eye can see.** A landscape covered in tall silvery skeletons – the remains of once leafy gums standing like sentinels on the sweeping slopes ravaged by the fires of Black Saturday 10 years ago. They looked like sun-bleached coral beds glistening beneath a deep blue sky. Cont....



Cont.....The under-storey was clearly coming up but it was taking a long time.

Driving through the rolling valleys of Bruthen I was captivated by forests of blackened tree trunks covered in soft green re-growth. These were the forests burnt in last year's horrendous bush fires. **As you can see, 12 months later and the bush is regenerating.** But it looked strange. The trees looked like upside down green lollipops with a black stick reaching for the sky. It was like something out of a science fiction movie (The Day of the Triffids) and I expected the trees to start walking at any moment. It was eerie - but it was also strangely beautiful.



I was reminded of biblical images of dry bones coming back to life; of resurrection and new life emerging out of hopelessness. I was reminded of earth's capacity and willingness to never give up. I think we all know that there is something spiritual about the land but letting it speak to us and sustain us is something else. May 2021 be a year of regeneration in every sense.

Shalom,
David

From Robert:

This month (January) we have been focusing on the nature of call, first with Jesus' call as he encountered the joy of Baptism and the harsh experience of the desert. Christian life is such that we experience both joy and sorrow in our own lives. We then thought about the statement "What good can come out of St Kilda", words taken from a reading in John's Gospel.

Last week we joined the rest of the UCA in mourning the history of our relationship with Aboriginal peoples but exploring what a commitment and call to Reconciliation might be for St Kilda Uniting.

Today's reading is difficult to say the least, for we are not in the business of exorcism (Mark 1: 21-28). It illustrates a Jesus and context remote from our own world, which is often the case. **I want to explore what this might mean for faith filled conversations, which might be regarded as part of the Christian call.** Robert

HYMNS/ SONGS. On screen

Tis: 607 Make me a Channel of your peace

Tis: 755 You shall go out with Joy

NOTICES:

BIBLE STUDY: Recommencing this Wednesday 3rd February from 7.30 to 8.30 pm on Zoom.

A change of plans regarding topic. In the absence of any other suggestions, **I thought we could spend some meaningful time between now and Easter exploring the concept of discipleship.**

We use the word disciple quite a lot and often quite loosely, but what does it mean? Every religion and world view has disciples, but what makes a disciple different to a follower. Where does the word and concept from? Does it have relevance for a 21st century faith?

I will send an email invitation to the same list as last year - if you would like to be added to the list please send me an email.

If you no longer wish to participate let me know and I will delete your address. Meanwhile, enjoy the rain and remember to smile.

Best wishes
David

FILM GROUP will recommence this Tuesday afternoon. Several interesting films are on offer at Elsternwick from 1pm. Please contact Mary if you would like to be added to the list for notifications. brimary@iprimus.com.au

It is wonderful that we can gather quite freely at church now but there are still rules that are important still to follow;

- At the front door there is a book to **record the name and contact details** of all who attend the church. The **QR Code** is also there for those who would like to use it.
- **Hand sanitizer** is on the table also – please use it when you enter
- **We no longer need to wear masks at church except when singing so please have one with you.**
- **It is essential that if you are feeling unwell, please stay home**
- Please try to maintain **physical distancing** - hugs and handshakes will have to wait a bit longer!
- We can now have tea and coffee after the service – if you can bring your own cup that's all the better.

The latest **CROSSLIGHT** is now available online at <https://crosslight.org.au/>. Hard copies should be available at the church from **next Sunday**. An interesting article in this edition is a letter from **Alistair Macrae, minister of Wesley Uniting Church Melbourne, and a past president of Uniting Church in Australia** that was printed in The Age last **Wednesday 27th January**.