



BELMONT UNITING CHURCH

1st August Weekly Newsletter 2021

2021 - THE YEAR OF HOPE

Strength in Unity!

Such great joy and a tremendous relief to welcome the Premier's much-anticipated announcement of the easing of the restrictions last Tuesday. Mr Andrews took great pains in acknowledging the collective effort of every Victorian that has led to the lifting of the lockdown. There was a unity of purpose and commitment by every Victorian to doing the right thing by everyone, and for that I thank you. But unity is often easier said than done. The so-called 'freedom protest' we witnessed in the major capital cities in this country reminded us of how precarious and fragile unity can be. In his letter to the communities in Ephesus, St Paul too was clear and upfront with the fact that unity is something they struggle with.

Even for us, it is something that we still find hard today. Just look at the religious division around us, and consider all that divides us from people of other faiths – and even from other Christians.



Questions for reflection on this picture

How might this image represent the 'body of Christ'?

What gifts does God give to build up the body?

How might you help people to identify and use their gifts?

Paul's remedy for disunity in the communities of Ephesus is also a reminder for us that if each one of us has a role in preaching, cleaning, caring, welcoming (and so on) within the body of Christ, unity is achieved. Teaching, preaching, etc. were given to 'some' –

but there were many other gifts God give? Do we recognise and use all the gifts that God has given? How do we help those who have not yet discovered – or won't acknowledge – their gift to do so? How can we, as a church community, develop the sharing of leadership within the whole of the fellowship?

What does it mean to be part of God's plan in this place and at this time? The church is not simply a place to receive worship from the front – we are active participants in worship, and we are all commanded to proclaim the good news to the world around us. What does that mean for each of us in our daily lives? How might we encourage each other to grow, stretch, bend and fill the wonderful plan God has for us? St Paul reminded the communities in Ephesus that to speak the truth in love is to offer hope and life through the good news of Jesus. If we speak the truth in love within the framework of Paul's instructions (4.1-6), then we are speaking the truth about Jesus to build others up in faith and grace.

In Paul's community, everyone equips everyone else. He stresses that this can only happen if everyone plays their part (v.16). This is about both speaking and doing, making a community where everyone gets the chance to flourish and grow. This is strength in unity!



Latest on our Sunday Worship Services - more details on page 5

1 August - Online zoom service

8 August - In-person service - no morning tea

**15 August - In-person service with Celebration of Holy Communion
(Morning Tea to be advised)**

Worship At Home

Acknowledgement of Country

Today, as we gather together, we acknowledge the Wauthaurong Peoples, the first inhabitants of this place from time beyond remembering. We acknowledge that through this land, God nurtured and sustained the First Peoples of this country, the Aboriginal and Islander peoples.

Reading: Ephesians 4:1-16 - 'There is one body and one spirit.'

Call to Worship

There is one body and one spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling (Eph 4.4)

A prayer of thanksgiving for unity

Thank you, God, that the Christian Church is one, holy and catholic. And within the unity, there is such stunning diversity. We thank you for that diversity which so enriches the experience of Christian people. Thank you for the Uniting Church, with its life of worship and commitment to social justice; the Church of England with its liturgical tradition and rich history; the Baptist denomination, with its stress on the participation of the people and the centrality of the Bible; the Roman Catholic Church, with its wealth of spirituality that benefits us all; the Orthodox Church, with the ancient beauty of its worship; for Pentecostal and charismatic churches and fellowships, with their vitality of worship and openness to the Spirit. Thank you, Lord, for them all – for us all. Amen.

Sharing the Word

Ephesians 4.1 moves into the 'practical' part of the letter, beginning with an appeal to the Ephesians to live lives worthy of their calling. The note Paul writes from prison adds moral weight to his appeal. If Ephesians is a genuine letter of St Paul, this imprisonment is in Rome. Verses 2-7 give some indication of what he means. He looks for personal qualities of humility, gentleness and patience; for compassion towards fellow Christians; for commitment to living in, and making the effort needed to maintain, community life. He repeats one of his major themes – the unity of the Church. Note the list of 'ones' (vv. 4-6): one body, Spirit, hope, Lord, faith, baptism, and one God and Father of all. Behind such an impassioned appeal lies the awareness that in the Church there is always the tendency to divide on many issues and for numerous reasons. Paul appeals to the Ephesians to avoid division and to recognise that diversity is a gift from the one God through Christ (v. 7). The reference to Christ 'descending' as well as 'ascending' is important. Were the Ephesians inclined to focus on the Christian life as a victory, picturing Christ as an emperor handing out the spoils of victory? The letter's readers are reminded here that 'descent' and 'emptying' were an essential part of Christ's ministry. Verse 11 lists the diversity of gifts given to the Church to enable it to function properly, though we cannot recover any precise job specifications for these titles. It seems much of the trouble then (and now?) is about power in the Church. Who has it? How is it used? And who wants it? These gifts are there, Paul insists, to equip the people, 'the saints', for their service of Christ in the Church and the world. They are for building the body of Christ, not for personal aggrandisement. Verse 13 is an amazing statement of the transformation or growth which 'Paul' expects to see in individual Christians and in the Church community. Verse 16 picks up the picture from the end of chapter 2. The body grows when each part works as it should. Here we inevitably think of the Church as the 'body of Christ', painted more fully in 1 Corinthians 12.12-21 and Romans 12.4-5.

Prayers of Intercession

Parent God, we think of divided families, where one person is cross or hurt by someone else. You have given us families to love and care for each other. Please help people to come together and forgive each other so that they can live happily together again. Thank you that Jesus died to forgive us and to help us forgive each other.

We pray for divided countries, where one group of people is at war with another. Loving God, we pray that people will put down their guns and leaders will do all they can to help people come together and live in peace.

Almighty God, we thank you for your great love and care for everyone and we think of people we know who are ill. Please come to them now with healing power – take away their pain, give them peace and let them know just how much you love them. Amen.



Belmont Uniting Church August Roster 2021



PLEASE NOTE!!!



Due to the fact that Rev Ikani and family have only just completed their isolation there can be NO In-Person Church Service on August 1st but there WILL be a Zoom Service on August 1st and an in-person Service on August 8th.

Date	Time	Leader	Leader's Steward	Readers	Greeters & Ushers	PowerPoint	PA Operator	Organist
Aug 8	10.00am	Rev. Ikani	J. Jeffers	G. Allen	R. Bunting	R. Ferguson	G. Schneider	L. Rankin
					L. Jackson			

Date	Communion	Flowers	No Morning Tea
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Aug 8	N/A	E. Wood	
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Date	Time	Leader	Leader's Steward	Readers	Greeters & Ushers	PowerPoint	PA Operator	Organist
Aug 15	10.00am	Rev. Ikani	J. Ferguson	R. Ferguson	C. Schaller	R. Ferguson	R. Bunting	L. Rankin
					B. Couper			

Date	Communion	Flowers	Morning Tea (to be advised)
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Aug 15	Ros Buckwell, L. Jackson	A. Ingles	
	D. Stephens, R. Pearson		

If for any reason you are unable to attend your rostered duty, please endeavour to swap with anyone & contact the worship leader and the Newsletter Editor too.

Prayer Points For the Week

Dear God, You have promised to walk life's path with us and show us the way. Even when the path looks uncertain and frightening, help us to focus on You and Your promise, for You are our strength and shield.

Loving God, forgive us when we fail to prioritise time with You. Everyday may we know the importance of investing time in our faith, reading and exploring scripture, also spending time in prayer.

Dear Heavenly Father, we pray for disaster - relief workers who go into quite difficult situations around the world to help people whose homes have been destroyed and who have to rebuild their lives.

Peter Woods

Lectionary Readings

Aug 1 - Pentecost 10	Aug 8- Pentecost 11	Aug 15 - Pentecost 12	Aug 22 - Pentecost 13
2 Sam 11: 26 - 12: 13a	2 Sam 18: 5 - 9, 31 - 33	1 Kgs 2: 10 - 12, 3: 31 - 33	1 Kgs 8: 22 - 30, 41 - 43
Psalms 51: 1 - 12	Psalms 130	Psalms 111	Psalms 84
Eph 4: 1- 16	Eph 4: 25 - 5: 2	Eph 5: 15 - 20	Eph 6: 10 - 20
John 6: 24 - 35	John 6: 35, 41 - 51	John 6: 51 - 58	John 6: 56 - 69

Prayers For Others

John and Doreen Stephens - our special prayers continue for John.

The Mitchell Family - both Heather and John's daughters Joanne (Cameron) and Lani (Rollauer) are dealing with health issues. Please keep their families in your prayers.

*"O my soul, bless GOD. From head to toe, I'll bless his holy name!
O my soul, bless GOD, don't forget a single blessing! He forgives your sins-every one.
He heals your diseases-every one. He redeems you from hell-saves your life!
He crowns you with love and mercy-a paradise crown. He wraps you in goodness-beauty eternal.
He renews your youth-you're always young in his presence."*

(Psalm 103:1-5)

→ NOTICES ←

SCONES, JAM & CREAM/SAVOURY OR PLAIN

Please be advised that due to the current snap lockdown, this fundraising is now postponed. A new date will be communicated to you when it is known.

The Social Justice Group is providing the morning tea as a fundraiser for the ALOLA Foundation.

This East Timor charity supports women and children in many aspects including assistance for victims of domestic violence, health and education. \$75 will provide a scholarship for a girl to stay in school and gain a qualification to prepare her for work.

We are asking, if you feel able, for a donation to go toward providing some \$75 scholarships. East Timor has a population of 1.3 million. Covid19 numbers are high but probably underreported. The Australian Government is providing some vaccine assistance.

BELMONT UNITING EVENING FELLOWSHIP

The next meeting of Evening Fellowship was to have been a Travel Talk by Raye Pearson on **Wed July 25**. Due to the close proximity to hopefully coming out of Lockdown 5 only hours before and of it possibly being extended anyway this meeting has been changed. Raye will speak at our meeting to which everyone is invited on **Wed August 25 at 1.30pm. Note change of time.**



Wonderful News - Just fantastic to see a healthy 2 year old Riley Swander in the paper with her family after receiving her 2nd liver transplant. Our prayers have been answered.



BUC FACEBOOK PAGE

Please follow, like or share our new facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100069883847973>

NOTICES continued.....



↓ NEWS FLASH ↓

In line with the lockdown restrictions, the in-person worship service for this Sunday August 1st is cancelled. Instead, you are welcome to join together online for a Zoom worship service at the same time of 10.00 am using this zoom link:

[https://zoom.us/j/99984774012?](https://zoom.us/j/99984774012?pwd=Ky85NGtwbnZqb1h2YzFGNDdDZEMlQT09)
[pwd=Ky85NGtwbnZqb1h2YzFGNDdDZEMlQT09](https://zoom.us/j/99984774012?pwd=Ky85NGtwbnZqb1h2YzFGNDdDZEMlQT09)

Meeting ID: 999 8477 4012 - Passcode: 1234

Any changes to this current arrangement will be communicated to you promptly. Thank you for your patience and understanding.



Oasis' Winter Supper and Games **Christmas in July**



On Friday, 24th July we held our annual winter event.

As you can see all sorts of hats and winter clothes were the order of the night. What do you make of Sue's hat? She has a new house. Does that give you a hint?

The night started with a chat and an icebreaker. The theme was Winter, past or present. Sharing involved lots of snow stories, both funny and moving, and there were also reflections of 'what made us smile' during the week. Sharing also featured the beauty of nature and family stories. Stories of 'kindness' deliveries that have happened in 'Lockdown' also featured in the chat. GingerBread, cards and messages of encouragement were all appreciated by the group.

We finished the night with a trivia game with activities like a Christmas alphabet, and standing on one leg and singing Merry Christmas. Don't wear your PJs on zoom as you might get caught out!

The night was fun! Next year I wonder if it will be in person? Maybe it will be our planned pizza night. Whatever it is, I look forward to the fun and friendship.



Seasonal Bouquet

Fresh cut flowers bring cheer and life to any space. It's easy to find a big bouquet in spring and summer. But in autumn and winter we do not have to be deprived of this joy. Make a bouquet of beautiful weeds, berry bushes, and autumn leaves, or explore arrangements with driftwood, orange peels, and shells. You can even get a little silly and make bouquets out of your own strange collections. Get some thin, sturdy wire and attach it to anything colourful. A dozen long-stemmed red buttons is always nice. Or try two dozen bright origami cranes. No matter what the season, there is always a bouquet of something beautiful to enjoy.



Lorraine Leitch has selected the above two items that may help you in the current climate.

Reflecting Well

The next time you check yourself out in the mirror, take a good look at the human being peering back at you. Search for everything that's beautiful in that face. Don't stop at just the physical beauty. What special inner beauty do you see in those eyes? What strengths, talents, and gifts? Take it all in. Now look at someone else in the same way. Admire that person's unique beauty, inner and outer. Consider how they, like you, have hopes, dreams, and an immense capacity for love, and how good it would be for the world if these were fulfilled. Don't stop. Look for beauty everywhere you go. You're sure to find it.

A Round Tuit

Once in the
dream of a night
I stood
Lone in the light
of a magical
wood,
Soul-deep in
visions that
poppy-like
sprang;
And spirits of
Truth were the
birds that sang,
And spirits of
Love were the
stars that glowed,
And spirits of
Peace were the
streams that
flowed
In that magical
wood in the land
of sleep.

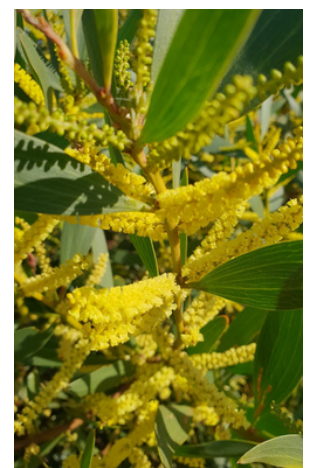
At
long last we have a
sufficient quantity for
each of you to have your
own. Guard it with your life.
These tuits have been extremely
hard to come by especially the
round ones. This is really an
indispensable item. It will help
you become a much more efficient
worker. For years we have heard
people say, "I'll do this as soon
as I get a round tuit." Now that
you have a round tuit of
your very own, many
things that have needed to
be accomplished can
finally be done!

Snow-cloud, a
rainbow, blue sky,
rain, all at one
time; the wet
streets shine in
pale gold
sunlight, a cold
breeze ruffles the
reds and yellows
of wet trees. The
yellow-throated
honeyeater
knows how to like
this place: he's
active, greedy,
and defines his
world with music.

Remember the wattle
when someone opines,
"Southern Australian winter gardens lack colour."
Wattle's gold delight is outside suburban frames.

Golden Wattle is rioting on the roadways
and appears in radiant patches of scrubland.
It is gleaming on the perimeters of playgrounds
and it glows while guarding graves and headstones.

Remember the wattle
bold hued and ringing against slate green feathery leaves.
Wattle's bright light can melt all chilly hearts
and will open wide the eyes of backyard gardeners.



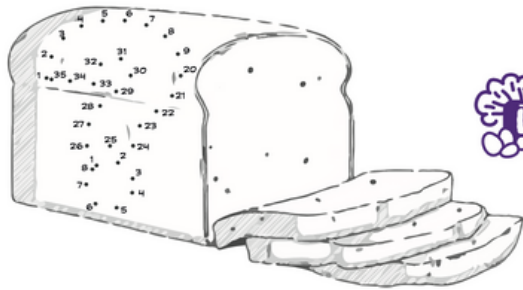


John 6.24-35

Jesus helps the crowd to see that believing in him, the bread of life, is the most important thing they can do.

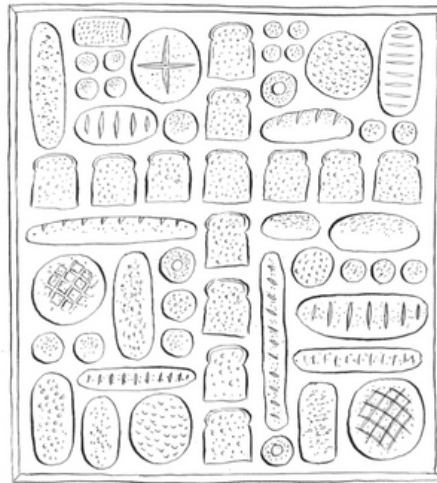


Jesus explains to the crowds that they need to believe in him, and calls himself the bread of life.



Colour in the bread shaped like this:

What other shape have you revealed?



Join the dots to see how people responded to Jesus' teaching.



Write a list of instructions for doing the works of God.

A crowd searching for Jesus found him in the town of Capernaum. ‘Rabbi,’ they asked, ‘when did you get here?’

Jesus answered, 'I know that you're not really looking for me because you know where I come from, but because I gave you all the bread you wanted to eat. Don't work for food that cannot last. Work for food that is eternal and will last for ever; the kind of food that I am offering you, because it is from God.'

'How can we do the work God wants?' they asked.

'To work for God,' Jesus replied, 'you must believe in the one whom God has sent.'

'What sign will you give us to show that you really are from God?' they asked. 'In the desert, our ancestors believed in Moses because he gave them bread to eat; bread sent from heaven.'



'It wasn't Moses who gave them bread from heaven,' Jesus replied. 'God gives bread from heaven – real bread that gives life to the world.'

'Then, give us that bread always,' they said.

Jesus answered, 'I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry or thirsty.'

John 6.24-35

Did you know?

- 'Rabbi' is a term for a Jewish teacher, a title used for Jesus as a sign of respect.
- 'Ancestors': members of your family who have lived before you, also the people of Israel, whom Moses led out of Egypt and into the wilderness, where they spent 40 years.
- Something eternal lasts for ever, beyond the end of time.

COVID-19 VICTORIA

ALL VICTORIA | JULY 28, 2021

FAQS



Victoria Lockdown ended 11.59pm July 27, however significant restrictions remain in place until August 10.

The following COVID-safe restrictions currently apply in Victoria:

- **Stay at Home** requirement has been lifted and the 5km travel limit has been removed.
- **Masks** must be carried at all times and must be worn indoors and outdoors unless at home or with a valid exemption.
- **Visitors to the home** are not permitted. Intimate partner visits or single person bubble permitted.
- **Public outdoor gatherings** are limited to 10 people only.
- **Religious gatherings and ceremonies** are permitted for up to 100 people indoors and up to 300 people outdoors subject to the following:
 - A density quotient of 1 person per 4 square metres applies
 - A venue smaller than 100sqm can have up to 25 people per venue before the density quotient applies
 - COVID Check-in Marshals must ensure all attendees check-in
- **Funerals** – (indoors or outdoors) maximum of 50 people plus those required to conduct the funeral. Children under 12 months are not counted in the cap. COVID Check-in Marshals must ensure all attendees check-in
- **Weddings** – (indoors or outdoors) maximum of 50 people, including the two persons being married and two witnesses. The celebrant and photographer are not included in the cap. COVID Check-in Marshals must ensure all attendees check-in. Dancefloors are not permitted.
- **Schools** – All students return to face-to-face learning subject to 1 person per 4sqm in all non-student areas. Facemask requirements apply to everyone aged 12 years and over.
- **Adult education** – If you can study from home, you should continue to study from home.
- **Childcare and Early Learning** – may remain open.
- **Restaurants/Cafes** – Open for seated service only with a maximum patron cap of 100 per venue. Group limit of 10. Density quotient of 1 person per 4sqm applies. A venue smaller than 100sqm can have up to 25 people per venue before the density quotient applies. COVID Check-in Marshals must ensure attendees check-in. Dancefloors closed.
- **Hairstressing & Beauty Services** – Open. Can remove mask for services. Density quotient of 1 person per 4sqm applies. QR code check-ins are required. Venues can have up to 25 patrons before the density quotient applies.
- **Community Facilities** – Open with a density quotient of 1 person per 4sqm up to a maximum 100 people per indoor space and 300 people per outdoor space. Maximum group size: 10 people. COVID Check-in Marshals must ensure attendees check-in
- **Hospital Visitors** are only permitted for the following reasons:
 - As a parent, guardian or carer of a child who is a patient in hospital
 - To provide support that is necessary for the patient's emotional or physical wellbeing.
 - As a nominated person under the Mental Health Act
 - To provide interpreter or informal language support
 - For leaning to support the resident's care upon discharge
 - As a carer of a patient with a disability
 - Accompanying someone to the emergency department or outpatient clinic
 - As a partner of a pregnant woman or patient in a maternity ward
- **Care Facility Visits** are only permitted for the following reasons:
 - To provide care and support for the resident's physical and emotional wellbeing
 - To support residents under 18 years of age
 - As a nominated person under the Mental Health Act
 - To provide interpreter or informal language support
 - For learning to support the resident's care upon discharge

Continued P2



Uniting Church in Australia
SYNOD OF VICTORIA AND TASMANIA