



BELMONT UNITING CHURCH

6th June Weekly Newsletter 2021

2021 - THE YEAR OF HOPE

World Environment Day June 5 2021

Since its beginning in 1974, June 5 has been designated by the United Nations as World Environment Day. Since then it has developed into a global platform for raising awareness and taking action on urgent issues from marine pollution and global warming to sustainable consumption and wildlife crime.

The earth is our home. We are part of the web of life; nurtured, nourished, and dependent upon the earth for our survival, but also caretakers and observers of its beauty.

The web of life, whilst incredibly resilient, is being threatened by companies who continue to unsustainably mine, log and pollute our rivers, oceans and the atmosphere when there are alternatives. It is being threatened by our insatiable desire to consume more and at cheaper rates falsely believing it will make us happy. It is being threatened because we have forgotten what our purpose in life is – to love God our Creator and love our neighbour as ourselves. To love our neighbour requires a healthy environment for us all to live in. To love our neighbour means we think of all God's creatures and the generations to come after us.

People at the forefront of environmental damage, Indigenous peoples and those most impacted by climate change, tell stories of forced relocation, changes to food production and water supply, acts of violence, destruction by mining companies and feelings of abandonment.

They are calling for justice; that we turn this brokenness into compassion, hope and loving action.

Now, more than ever, we need to recognise the effort of any one person or group alone is not enough and that all voices need to be heard. The contribution of every person and every community and group of people is vitally important, but we must combine and diversify our efforts.

The Uniting Church in Australia has a long history of caring for creation. There is hope in our stories, hope in the strategies we have to adapt to climate changes, and hope in the mobilisation of large groups of people for political change and the building of strong communities on foundations of collective decision-making and sustainable lifestyles.

As our theme for the year is HOPE, it challenges us to live as people of hope. There are many ways to care for the earth in our everyday life. Composting, gardening, taking more active and sustainable transport options (walking, cycling, public transport), holidaying domestically rather than internationally, switching to renewable energy, and reducing meat consumption are just a few examples.

I invite you to take time this week to think, pray and put into action at least one hope-full way of caring for God's environment. Happy World Environment Day everyone!





Belmont Uniting Church June Roster 2021



Date	Time	Leader	Leader's Steward	Readers	Greeters & Ushers	PowerPoint	PA Operator	Organist
June 13	10.00am	Rev. Ikani	G. Allen	G. Coomber	R. Jeffers J. Jeffers	B. Vaitohi	G. Schneider	L. Rankin

Date	Communion	Flowers
June 13	N/A	J. Sinclair

Date	Time	Leader	Leader's Steward	Readers	Greeters & Ushers	PowerPoint	PA Operator	Organist
June 20	10.00am	Rev. Ikani	Bev. Dickie	R. Ferguson J. Ferguson	E. Wood	B. Vaitohi	B. Jennings	A. Ingles

Date	Communion	Flowers
June 20	N/A	J. Kelly

Date	Time	Leader	Leader's Steward	Readers	Greeters & Ushers	PowerPoint	PA Operator	Organist
June 27	10.00am	Rev. Ikani	G. Coomber	N. Phillips	L. Jackson C. Schaller	B. Vaitohi	D. Zucarro	C. Collins

Date	Communion	Flowers
June 27	N/A	E. Richards

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.

Morning Tea Roster

June 13th

Heather McCann, Geoff & Janice Schneider

June 20th

Moana, Mona Lisa & Siale Vaitohi

June 27th

Aileen & Ray Bunting, Elizabeth Wood

Prayer Points For the Week

Dear Lord, we pray for the Drug and Rehabilitation Centre at Mt. Duneed, its director, Rob Litzke and the staff. Bless them in the difficult work they undertake in providing love, care, counselling, guidance, accommodation and medical assistance to people who are struggling with drug addiction.

Dear Heavenly Father, guide us to become obedient believers who reach out to others with love, joy and hope. Help us to be careful stewards of the gifts You have given us and may we share those gifts with a sense of real joy.

Dear God, You sent Your Son, Jesus, to earth so that we might have the gift of eternal life. Thank You, Father, for this priceless gift. Help us to share this wondrous message of Jesus with others so that they might accept Him as their Saviour.

Peter Woods

➔ **PLEASE NOTE** ➔
There will be no Church this Sunday morning 6th June as part of the Restrictions as set down by the Victorian Government.
➔ **(Refer to page 3)** ➔

BELMONT UNITING EVENING FELLOWSHIP

Advance Notices

Hopefully our next meeting is June 23 for 12 noon lunch at Moorabool Valley Chocolates.

Please confirm your attendance to Loris on 0418334994 by June 16th in the morning.

Please all meet at Church at 11:20am to car pool.

Wednesday 28th July - Raye Pearson will speak on her many travels.

Lectionary Readings

June 13 - Pentecost 3

1 Sam 15: 34 - 16:13

Psalms 20

2 Cor 5: 6 - 10

Mark 4: 26 - 34

June 20 - Pentecost 4

1 Sam 17: 32 - 49

Psalms 9: 9 - 20

2 Cor 6: 1 - 13

Mark 4: 35 - 41

June 22 - UCA Anniversary

2 Cor 30: 1 - 9

Psalms 127

Eph 2: 19 - 22

John 17: 1 - 11

June 27 - Pentecost 5

2 Sam 1: 1, 17 - 27

Psalms 130

2 Cor 8: 7 - 15

Mark 5: 21 - 43

NOTICES

Church Council Meeting

Church Council will meet on Tuesday, June 8th, at 7.30pm.
Reports and agenda items should now be with the Secretary.

Secretary Glen Coomber

NEWS FROM THE MISSION AND OUTREACH COMMITTEE

OUR WEEKLY COLLECTION OF FOOD FOR UNITING is cancelled this Sunday 6th June due to Covid restrictions and will re-commence when we return to Sunday worship in our church building.

OUR ANNUAL THANKSGIVING SERVICE will be held At 10 AM ON SUNDAY, 27th JUNE, when we will dedicate handmade and purchased goods, food and clothing for various organizations. This service will also celebrate the Anniversary of the Uniting Church. Your donations will support:

COTTAGE BY THE SEA - beanies, winter clothes and pyjamas for girls and boys sizes 8-16, socks and undies all sizes, toys, card games, colouring pencils, roll-on deodorant.

GEELONG YOUNG MUMS - clothing for babies and toddlers.

KALKEE AND AGED CARE FACILITIES - quilts and rugs.

UNITING (at Grovedale] - track suit pants all sizes, disposable nappies.

Please note: all clothing is to be NEW.

Clothing and donations can be brought to the church on Saturday, 26th June from 10 am to 11 am, or prior to the service on Sunday, 27th June.

If you prefer, cash can be placed in the red buckets in church foyer on 27th June for Food Vouchers (not for cigarettes and alcohol) for distribution at Uniting, or clothing for Cottage by the Sea.

IF THERE IS A COVID LOCKDOWN in place on the weekend of 26th and 27th June, we will have a DRIVE-THRU on the Saturday, from 10 to 11 am, to receive your donations of clothing and cash.

Please only support in whatever way you wish. There is no pressure - you are simply being given the opportunity. The response is up to you!!!

THANK YOU!

Members of the Mission and Outreach Committee

Jean Murray Ph 52 43 4103

IMPORTANT NEWS

As you may now be aware, the Victorian Government has announced updated news re COVID-19 for Regional Victoria from 6th June.

As a result, please note the following changes that are applicable to us:

Open for religious gatherings, with up to 50 people per venue and a density limit of one person per 4 square metres. (There will be NO in-person service this Sunday due to our membership number). Any changes to this arrangement will be communicated to you as soon as it is known.

All in-person meetings can take place with 1 person per 4m2.

Masks - Indoors: Must be worn except in private homes or with an exemption.

Outdoors: Only required if you're in a crowded place where physical distancing of 1.5 metres cannot be maintained.



Worship At Home

World Environment Sunday

Acknowledgement of Country

Today, as we gather in our homes, 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.

Readings: Genesis 1:1-31 (or you may wish to read 1-4 and 20-31 to keep the reading shorter) Six Days of Creation and the Sabbath; Revelation 21:1-7 The New Heaven and the New Earth, Psalm 104 God the Creator and Provider

Call to Worship

Here we are Lord, gathering to meet with you in worship. Come amongst us, by your Spirit, as we pray, sing, listen and share. Open our hearts to fall in love with your creation again, O God.

Opening Prayer

Wonderful God, today we celebrate you. we celebrate your creation, we thank you that at the beginning of time you breathed life into us. we thank you that today you live amongst us walking with your creation day by day. We come to you in worship today God, ready to listen to your word and respond in love. Open our hearts today God, that we might love you and love our neighbour. In Jesus name we pray, Amen

'God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good.' In each of the passages we read today, we hear of God pouring life into creation. In Genesis 1, each aspect of earthly life is created, made to be fruitful and to thrive. At the hands of God, the birds of the air, the creatures of land and everything around them come into being. In Psalm 104, God's hands are at work in creation again, moving and shaping, setting light and dark, feeding and 'rejoicing in his works'. And in Revelation 21, God steps down to the earth and 'dwells' with people, seeking to make all things new, transforming their mourning and instead bringing the water of life.

Each of these encounters between God and creation paints a picture of a creator who gets stuck in the process of creating. God calls humanity to be among creation, that we too might marvel at its wonder, but also play a part in its flourishing.

Where do you find yourself in wonder at creation today? Where do you find yourself playing a part in the flourishing of creation? What are you being called to do?

As part of today's World Environment Day, we have begun in worship. Like the psalmist, we have taken time to marvel at creation and singing praise to the God who created it. But we're also invited to respond to the next part of our calling – to commit to playing our part in the flourishing of creation. How might we begin this today? As individuals? As community?

We are invited and inspired by a God who loves deeply each aspect of creation and longs to get stuck into its flourishing. How will we respond?

A Uniting Church in Australia Prayer 'For The Sake Of The Planet'

Creator God, breath and source of life, in love you called the world into being and in grace you made us and call us your children. We stand in awe of the wonder of your creation: its beauty and wildness; complexity and power; resilience and fragility.

We seek courage and forgiveness to be made whole. God of love, we pray for those people, communities and nations already suffering the devastating effects of climate change; and we pray for the diversity of life on earth, so much of it already threatened by our actions.

God of hope, we pray for the world's leaders Bless them with wisdom and creativity, and a shared vision of hope for all creation.

Creator God, we pray for us all, that we might restore our relationships with each other and work together to heal the earth. Renew us in your grace for the sake of your creation. Amen.

Letter from the Minister

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

Sunday Worship ONLINE 06/06/2021 at 10.00 am:

Sunday Worship Services:

Our experience of the last lockdown would remind us that after the lockdown was lifted, it took us a little while to get back to an in-person worship gathering. I encourage you to familiarise again with our online platforms especially our Zoom and YouTube pages. All online services will either be available live on Zoom or recorded and be made available on our YouTube page and website. Here are the links:

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC6mXx6ryplAegGlrhv3W2Lg>

Website: <https://buc.unitingchurch.org.au>

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/99984774012?pwd=Ky85NGtwbnZqb1h2YzFGNDdDZEMlQT09>

Meeting ID: 999 8477 4012 - Passcode: 1234

Pastoral Care:

In this period of lockdown, all support and care will be offered online via phone, email, text or other social media platforms. For all pastoral care matters - we will continue to utilise our existing network of support. Initially, you may seek support through your pastoral care visitor or your pastoral care cluster contact person; otherwise, you can contact Ikani directly. Please keep each other in your prayers as we navigate through this uncertain time together.

Newsletter:

As it was in the past lockdown, our newsletter will continue to be published weekly and distributed to you via email. For those without email, the newsletter will be delivered to their mailboxes before Sunday as it will contain 'Worship at Home' materials for personal use. If you wish to share any community news, please forward them to Julie and Ray Ferguson.

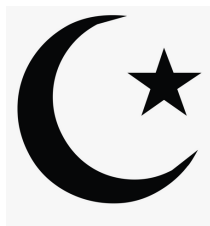
Minister:

If you have any questions about this information, please contact Ikani. Ikani is also available to be contacted any time for prayer, support and companionship on email: ikaniv@bigpond.com, mobile: 0432 680 028.

In this time of uncertainty, let us continue to be a community of hope by offering God's love, grace and mercy to each other and those around us.

Sincerely,

Rev Ikani Vaitohi



An Item of Interest

THE HOUSE OF ONE.

THREE RELIGIONS UNDER ONE ROOF.

Berlin is soon to become home to something truly unique. Jews, Christians, and Muslims are planning to build a house of worship there – one that brings a synagogue, a church, and a mosque together under one roof. The three separate sections will be linked by a communal room in the center of the building. This will serve as a meeting place, where worshippers and members of the public can come together and learn more about the religions and each other.

The House of One is the product of a grassroots group of three religious communities. The initial idea came from a protestant church community which then joined forces with a Jewish community - with a rabbinical seminary - and a Muslim initiative for dialogue.

<https://house-of-one.org/en>

supplied by Susan Rossiter

Lockdown pastoral letter from Moderator

SO WE DO NOT LOSE HEART. THOUGH OUR OUTER SELF IS WASTING AWAY, OUR INNER SELF IS BEING RENEWED DAY BY DAY. 2 CORINTHIANS 4:16A

This coming Sunday, one of our lectionary readings is from Paul's second letter to the Corinthians. We hear him writing from his heart to the community he longs to visit.

Times have been extremely difficult for Paul, but he speaks from the midst of his afflictions about the love, the grace, the mercy and the consolation he knows in God through Christ Jesus.

And even though his own troubles continue, he writes to these people he loves, to tell of his experience of the consolation and love of God, to encourage them, so that they might share in this experience of consolation through Christ as well.

It's as if Paul is reminding them of what they already know.

When we are in the middle of tough times, especially when it lasts a long time, or happens repeatedly, we can retreat into ourselves, or into our own small communities. It's easy to lose sight of our guiding lights that are beyond ourselves. We can start to doubt ourselves, or each other, or the faith that holds us. We can lose touch with who we are and the gifts and graces of God that we bear. We need reminding of what is true.

At the same time, in a strange way, it's sometimes when we are in the midst of tough life experiences that we can be more deeply in touch with our hearts than when life is running smoothly.



In the middle of his afflictions, Paul is in touch with the depths of his heart. He speaks from his heart to the hearts of those he loves. He reminds them of the God who loves them. He reminds them of the ground of their faith. He reminds them of the hope and confidence they share, and of why “we do not lose heart”.

As communities of faith, we can do the same. God speaks to our hearts through people of flesh and blood. From the midst of tough times, we can share in reminding each other of the things that hold us, of the God who holds us.

No matter where we are, no matter our situation, we can reach out to each other: to our family, friends, loved ones, those down the street or around the corner, to those far afield or across the waters, to strangers, to those who most need to be encouraged from the heart.

We can remind each other in words or actions.

We have the gift of each other. We can carry the gift of God to others, speaking encouragement from the language of our hearts.

On this page, many have written words of encouragement from the language of their hearts ... as a gift to us all. We are called into community in Christ so we do not lose heart. May you be encouraged, and pass this gift on to others.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you, and remain with you always.

Rev Denise Liersch
Moderator