



BELMONT UNITING CHURCH

21st March Weekly Newsletter 2021

2021 - THE YEAR OF HOPE

Harvest Festival Thanksgiving Service

This Sunday, our congregation is celebrating our Annual Harvest Thanksgiving offering. In previous years, the fruits of our garden, donation of money and other food items were collected and donated to Uniting for the care and support of those less fortunate in our community. Let us continue to bring tinned & packet food items and financial offering as part of our Thanksgiving celebration this year.

In our Thanksgiving Service in 2019, the late Brian Wood was interviewed.

So, I think it is important to be reminded again of some of the rich and meaningful histories behind this important Harvest Thanksgiving Service.

The history of the Harvest festival goes all the way back to the wanderings of the Israelite in the desert. In the Jewish year, there are three major festivals or feasts every Jew celebrates each year as it appears in the book of Exodus, and they are the Passover, which is the remembrance of the Exodus from Egypt, the festival of Pentecost or the offering of the first fruits, also known as Harvest festival, - this festival usually takes place in the first spring month of the year, which is around April. Pilgrims to the temple in Jerusalem would take their offering of the 'first fruits' as gift offering them back to God to show their gratitude and acknowledge their dependence on God. When the pilgrims arrive, the Levites and the priests meet with the group before the entrance. You might recall that the Levites are one of the twelve tribes of Israel who descended from Levi one of the sons of Jacob, and it is their responsibility revolves around the restoration of the temple as a house of worship. So these Levites would sing songs of praise as pilgrims enter the temple with their basket of offering on their shoulders. These offerings are handed over to the priests who place these baskets on the altar before offering the prayer of confession to God in the words of Deuteronomy 26: 3-10, which recalls God's deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt. What becomes so clear in all these three major festivals and celebrations is that, at the heart of each celebration, is the offering back of thanks and praise for God's provision, seen as a gift from God, whether it is the deliverance from Egypt or the offering of the first-fruits, they are all God's provisions.

As we offer our thanks this Sunday, we recall with fondness the late Mr Brian Wood's comments to us during our harvest Festival in 2019, when he reminded us all that "we would do well to consider where our food actually comes from. Some of us will say," Oh, they are from the Supermarket, of course!" But as we know, they are only delivering it, or in other words, they are the end of the supply chain."

Brian reminded us that as we give thanks for the harvest, we must not forget the farmers who have to work in all sorts of weather and for long hours. To remember the welfare of their families whose incomes and welfare depends on good seasons. That our farmers compete with other farmers around the World, our labour costs are generally much higher than in other countries, and therefore our farmers find it difficult to compete profitably.

Let us give thanks for God's provisions, for the food received today, for the money donated and for our farmers all around this great nation.

Rev Ikani Vaitohi



HARVEST THANKSGIVING SERVICE - THIS SUNDAY, 21st MARCH



To share the message of HOPE, you are invited to bring tinned and packet food (see below) as you come to church on Sunday, leaving your donations in the church foyer. Alternatively you may wish to make a cash donation in the red buckets before or after the service. All donations of food, plus the Food Vouchers purchased with your cash donations, will be taken to Uniting for distribution to those who need a helping hand. **To keep everything as safe as possible, we are limiting the handling of the food and unfortunately this year we cannot receive any fresh produce from your garden.** However, you are encouraged to share your garden produce with friends, neighbours and family, with a message of HOPE. Uniting Barwon (at Grovedale) would appreciate the following items of non-perishable food: rice, white sugar, long life milk, coffee, tea bags, tomato sauce, peanut butter, toilet paper, toothpaste, shampoo, conditioner, laundry powder or liquid. **THANK YOU** for your continued support and generosity.



Belmont Uniting Church March Roster 2021



Date	Time	Leader	Leader's Steward	Readers	Greeters & Ushers	PowerPoint	PA Operator	Organist
Mar 21	10.00am	Rev. Ikani Vaitohi	Liz Moss	R. Ferguson J. Ferguson	R. Jeffers J. Jeffers	R. Ferguson	B. Jennings	C. Collins

Date	Communion	Flowers
Mar 21	N/A	J. Jeffers

Date	Time	Leader	Leader's Steward	Readers	Greeters & Ushers	PowerPoint	PA Operator	Organist
Mar 28	10.00am	Rev. Ikani Vaitohi	L. Jackson	G. Allen	R. Bunting L. Jackson	R. Ferguson	M. Richards	A. Ingles

Date	Communion	Flowers
Mar 28	N/A	J. Jeffers

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

Prayer Group on Zoom

You are welcome to join our minister in his weekly morning prayers, praying for our community and the world.

Time - Every Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 7.00 – 7.30am

Prayer requests: Write your prayer requests on the Prayer Request Book available in the Church foyer.

Zoom Link: <https://zoom.us/j/93397494266?pwd=MlFRMUZCQVl3SjVtWjQwOGY4bnN6Zz09>

Meeting ID: 933 9749 4266, Passcode: 1234

PLEASE NOTE

**Annual General Meeting
Sunday 28th March**

Presbytery Pastoral Care Seminars

16 Apr - Friday 9:30am-12:30pm

22 Apr - Thursday 6:30pm - 9:30pm

Speak with Ikani for details

SOCIAL JUSTICE MEETING

Notice of meeting: Monday 22nd March at 7.30. 1 Perth St. Belmont.
0414431006

If any members of the congregation are interested you are very welcome to join our group.

Please bring along any ideas to add to our discussions and plans for the year.

Prayer Points For the Week

Loving God, we live in a fear-based world where many people have legitimate concerns for the future of our nation, our world and our families. Help us to know that You are our Protector and Comforter in these difficult times.

Dear Lord, thank You for Your eternal love which is infinite. May we never take it for granted but during Lent spend time to pause and reflect on Your love and when opportunities arise help us to graciously share that love with others.

Dear Heavenly Father, guide us each day on our personal journey of faith. May we be prepared to serve You faithfully, trusting Your Word and reaching out to others in a compassionate and loving manner.

Peter Woods



CHOCOLATE



If you are purchasing chocolate keep an eye out for an ethically produced product. Supermarkets stock some chocolate with these logos. Buying goods with these labels helps support the growers – usually poor farmers who in the past have not received a fair price for their cocoa.

Belmont Uniting Evening Fellowship

1:30pm Wednesday 24th March

Guest Speaker - Jean Murray (All Welcome)

Advance Notice - 7:30pm Wednesday 28th April

Guest Speaker - Ian Henricus

"Cycling in France" (All Welcome)

Lectionary Reading

March 21 - Lent 5

Jer 31: 31 - 34

Psalm 51: 1 - 12

Heb 5: 5 - 10

Jn 12: 20 - 33

March 25 - Annunciation of
Is : 7 - 14 the Lord

Ps 45 or 40 5 - 10

Heb 10: 4 - 10

Lk 1: 26 - 38

March 28 - Palm Sunday

Is 50: 4 - 9

Psalm 31: 9 - 16

Phil 2: 5 - 11

Mk 14: 1 - 15

March 29 - Holy Week

Is 42: 1 - 9

Psalm 36: 5 - 11

Heb 9: 11 - 15

Jn 12: 1 - 11

Greetings all,

As our kitchen remains closed for the time being, some of you have enquired about take away coffee being available after our church service on Sunday morning.

I have spoken with the owner of Cafe CBD, Sandeep Kumar and he is happy to come in and take orders from us on Sunday mornings. To do that we will need to make at least 20-25 orders to make it viable for him to come in on Sundays.

He will pick up our Orders from Church at 10.15am and will have them ready by the end of our Service around 11.00am.

So this email is for indication only as to how many of us would like to order a coffee or sandwich on a Sunday.

You can reply directly to Ikani or his email ikaniv@bigpond.com or mobile 0432 680 028

Please refer to the brochure attached for information on price and types of coffee available.



Kids Milkshakes from \$4.00 Large Milkshakes/Spiders
\$6.00 Thick shakes \$7.00