



# BELMONT UNITING CHURCH

7th March Weekly Newsletter 2021

## 2021 - THE YEAR OF HOPE

### Reminders for doing HOPE

#### Helping Other Possibilities Emerge

- St Luke's Innovative Resources - provided by Lorraine Leitch

#### When our confidence is shaky...

- Everyone is important
- Everyone has strengths
- Everyone needs resources
- Everyone makes mistakes
- We are more similar than we are different



#### When problems get the upper hand...

- Problems can blind us from our strengths
- Problems can blind us from other people's strengths
- Problems can blind us from what works
- Problems come from trying the wrong solution
- All problems have exceptions which give clues to solutions

#### When people let us down...

- Blaming makes things worse
- People are doing the best they can
- We can all do things which aren't good for us
- There are good intentions behind every mistake
- Changing habits can be hard work

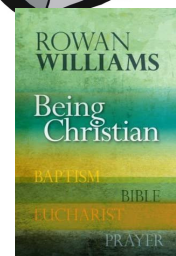


#### When we think we've tried everything...

- Change only happens when it is noticed
- Noticing change generates hope
- Big changes start with small changes
- The solution is more important than the problem
- The power for change is within us

This year's Lenten Study will be held at 5 pm on Sunday afternoons in the Church hall, in safely distanced seating, on the four Sundays Feb 28, March 7, March 14 and March 21. The study book is Rowan Williams' *Being Christian* and it is about strengthening the practices that underlie our lives as Christians. It has been borrowed for free from the Otira library so there are no costs for participants. We will look at one of its four chapters each week. They are on Baptism, Bible, Eucharist (communion), and Prayer.

We propose that you bring a sandwich for yourself and that we stay on for this self-supplied light meal after the study session. Tea and coffee will be served in paper cups in a Covid-safe way.



## Lenten Bible Study

Please let Ikani or Cherry (phone: 5245 8225) know if you would like to take part in this Study.



## Belmont Uniting Church March Roster 2021



Date	Time	Leader	Leader's Steward	Readers	Greeters & Ushers	PowerPoint	PA Operator	Organist
Mar 7	10.00am	Rev. Ikani Vaitohi	L. Jackson	J. & D. Stephens	J. Oman J. Ferguson	R. Ferguson	G Schneider	L. Rankin

Date	Communion	Flowers
Mar 7	L. Moss, A. Merritt J. Jeffers, R. Pearson	R. Buckwell

Date	Time	Leader	Leader's Steward	Readers	Greeters & Ushers	PowerPoint	PA Operator	Organist
Mar 14	10.00am	Rev. Ikani	Bev. Dickie	Rev Ivy Goodwin	H. McCann C. Schaller	R. Ferguson	R Bunting	L. Rankin

Date	Communion	Flowers
Mar 14	N/A	R. Buckwell

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

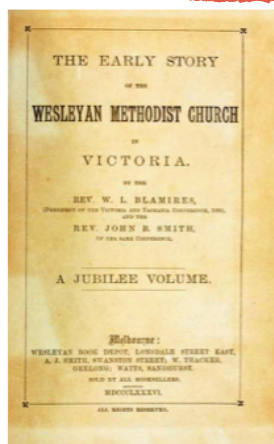


Sunday 28th February - Gil Lovell (80)  
Thursday 4th March - Beryl Hair (92)  
Thursday 11th March - Fay Harper  
Friday 12th March - Terese Wilby

Our Harvest Festival Service will take place at 10 am on Sunday, 21st March.  
Donations of tinned and packet food for distribution by Uniting will be gratefully received on the day of the service. Alternatively you will have the opportunity to donate cash in a retiring offering. This will be used to purchase food vouchers.

Please note we will NOT be receiving any food on the day before the service, as has been our usual practice. Please bring the food as you come to church on the day! More details given next week.

This collection of food is a project of the Mission and Outreach Committee. *Jean Murray*



Sharon Welgus read this book recently and was taken by the first-hand account of "The Early Story of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Victoria. Sharon's book review is on page 4

## Prayer Points For the Week

Dear Father God, Thank You for Your unfailing love for us, Your blessings and goodness.

Thank You for Your faithfulness to guide us and see us through times of uncertainty, for lifting us up and setting us on high. Thank You for Scripture that comforts and reminds us of Your promises, plan and provision.

Thank you for taking away our fears and worries, the what-ifs, and reminding us that our help comes from You.

Help us be a good steward. In Christ's Name, Amen.

*Peter Wood*



Australian Red Cross is looking for Community Visitor Volunteers to visit socially isolated older people.

If you are interested please call 0451309028 or see [vicsocialconnections@redcross.org.au](mailto:vicsocialconnections@redcross.org.au)

### From the Treasurer

Offering via Direct Debit—Our bank details are:

Account Name: Belmont Uniting Church

BSB: 063-504, Account No: 00902634.

### PLEASE NOTE

Congregation Meeting - Sunday 14th March  
Annual General Meeting - Sunday 28th March

### Presbytery Pastoral Care Seminars

11 Mar - Thursday 6:30pm - 9:30pm

19 Mar - Friday 9:30am-12:30pm

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

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

*Speak with Ikani for details*

## Lectionary Reading

March 7 - Lent 3

Ex 20: 1 - 17

Psalm 19

1 Cor 1: 18 - 25

Jn 2: 13 - 22

March 14 - Lent 4

Nm 21: 4 - 9

Psalm 107: 1 - 3, 17 - 22

Eph 2: 1 - 10

Jn 3: 14 - 21

March 21 - Lent 5

Jer 31: 31 - 34

Psalm 51: 1 - 12

Heb 5: 5 - 10

Jn 12: 20 - 33

March 25

Is : 7 - 14

Ps 45 or 40 5 - 10

Heb 10: 4 - 10

Lk 1: 26 - 38

March 28

Is 50: 4 - 9

Psalm 31: 9 - 16

Phil 2: 5 - 11

Mk 14: 1 - 15



### Do you need a recliner??

The Church has received a call offering a recliner in pristine condition that is movable and reclines completely. If interested please phone or see Lorraine Rankin.



### Church Council met on 2 March.

- The budget for 2021 was approved.
- Committees and groups are asked to refrain from holding meetings during Holy Week (29 March to 3 April).
- An election for Church Council membership will be held on 28 March.
- Recognising the disruption caused last year by COVID-19, current Church Council office bearers and Committee Convenors were requested to remain in their roles for the remainder of 2021 (please contact the Secretary if this is not possible for you).
- The Harvest Thanksgiving Service will be held on Sunday 21 March 2021.
- The Executive Committee, with representatives from the Property and Finance Committees, were asked to consult with Synod and Presbytery about maximising income from the congregation's property portfolio, and report back to Church Council.
- Three members of the congregation have recently retired from longstanding leadership roles; arrangements are in hand to recognise their service.



### The Transport Roster

This column of your Roster is no longer applicable as those requiring transport are now permanently coming with other church members. If anyone should require transport in the future please phone Jeannine Oman. Thank you.



A huge thank you to Jeannine and Ikani for their completion of the main roster. It is an extremely difficult task and we say a huge thanks!



Hi from Traralgon

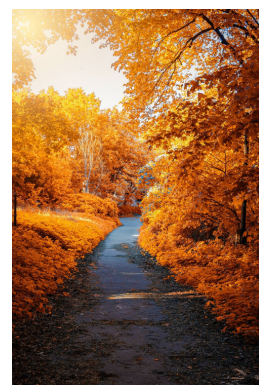
I think Liz & Geoff have been in contact with Costa from "Gardening Australia" to enter the next Australian Gardening Awards!!!! It's looking great, all the hard work is showing. There's no truth in the rumour that Geoff is sitting there in the garden admiring the effort. Well done.



A Liz Aitken Quilt

### **John Keats, 'To Autumn'.**

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,  
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;  
Conspiring with him how to load and bless  
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run;  
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,  
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;  
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells  
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,  
And still more, later flowers for the bees,  
Until they think warm days will never cease,  
For summer has o'er-brimm'd their clammy cells ...



**BOOK REVIEW: 'The Early Story of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Victoria' (1888) by Rev. W. L. Blamires and Rev. John B. Smith.**

They had, for the time, very enlightened views about the Aborigines. They believed that Aborigines had equal rights with the white settlers, that they should receive land in compensation for what had been taken from them and that anyone who killed an Aborigine should be prosecuted for murder. They advocated for them with officials, magistrates and wrote letters to the editors of the fledgling newspapers. The residents of Portland and Warrnambool worked hard to help their plight, with ongoing debate in the papers. They insisted on translators being present when Aborigines went before the magistrates. A mission was established near Birregurra (Buntingdale – Google it for an article) which only lasted ten years for a variety of reasons, but the aim was not only to equip the local tribes to live in this new world but also maintain their culture. Several examples of atrocities are listed in the book, which the local ministers were vocal about.

In Melbourne, they held open air church meetings and tent meetings when visiting speakers came, sometimes with short periods of revival that led to many converts. Just when they had established a strong circuit of churches, the gold rush turned everything on its head. They switched their resources to establishing new churches on the goldfields, as well as day schools (primary) and Sabbath schools. In Melbourne, they built an accommodation centre for new arrivals and set up tent churches besides the hundreds of people camped along the Yarra. They also sent people to meet each new ship as it arrived to locate any Methodists and offer support to any who needed it. One effect of the gold rush was to bring money into the churches for the building of new churches, which were barely adequate when the revival came.

Revival came to Melbourne through the Methodist churches. In 1859, a revival had begun in the USA that spread to Northern Ireland, the UK and protestant churches in Europe. Then it came to Melbourne and swept through the churches like a Holy Spirit pandemic. It began in Brighton Methodist. The church started to have meetings every week night that went until 10:00 or 11:00 pm, with people weeping and crying out to be saved. There were prayer meetings again at 6:30 am and this went on for weeks. Then it spread rapidly through other churches in the Melbourne area. Like the revivals overseas, the conviction of the Holy Spirit fell on people in the streets, in their homes, on the train, in work places and they cried out to God to be saved. It spread down the Yarra to Williamstown then to Drysdale and the Bellarine Peninsula. The nightly meetings began in Drysdale, affecting the character of the whole town. So many were converted that the next census return for Drysdale showed 42% now considered themselves Wesleyan. The revival spread to Geelong, with nightly meetings held in the Mechanics Institute for many weeks with people from all denominations attending.

There was no predicting which churches would be touched in this way and it didn't depend on the preaching, because even ordinary preachers had people bursting out of their seats to go down the front for prayer for salvation. The revival spread throughout the state, in country towns and the goldfields areas. It lasted three years at this intensity and at the end of that period membership of the Wesleyan Methodists had doubled, as had the numbers attending Sabbath school. The whole church was energised and inspired. So many young men trained for the ministry that Victoria could not only meet its own needs but send ministers to other states and to overseas mission fields. It touched other denominations too, but it was mainly in the Methodist churches.

The book also details the contribution of Methodist schools to Victoria. At one stage, there were more Methodist schools than for any other denomination. Then, schools became 'free, compulsory and secular' in Victoria and they faced the modern issue of religious instruction.

There are chapters on all the main country areas, including Geelong. They also give credit to lay people and church administrators who helped establish the church.

Purely from an historical view, this gives wonderful, first hand detail of the life of Victoria. From a Christian point of view, it shows how God was active in the European history of this state right from the start. I am sure there are great stories from other denominations as well.

The good news is that you can download this book for free. It has been digitally photographed to preserve it by the Digital Archive at the University of California. This means the odd word or sentence is a bit hard to read, but you can manage. It was written in 1888, so the language is old-fashioned, and I admit I skimmed through all the annual conference reports. In between those reports is a very exciting story of God's empowerment and direction. You can download in different formats, such as a PDF file to read online or in a Kindle version. Here's the link.

<https://archive.org/details/victormethodism00blamuoft>

If you don't know what you're doing, just click on the full text option on the right.

Alternatively, there are copies of the book for sale on eBay from \$24 to \$70.

*Sharon Welgus*