# WELCOME BELMONT UNITING CHURCH

12th September Weekly Newsletter 2021

# 2021-THE YEAR OF HOPE

## 'Season of Creation 2021-Cross - Sign of Wholeness and Healing

I recently received the most heartening words of appreciation for how holding a small wooden comfort cross on the palm of his hand brings comfort and assurance in a time of great uncertainty.

So often, I wonder, when we think of the cross, what comes to mind? We may have a particular image in our mind's eye, or perhaps something we can see around us now in our church building. Or we might be wearing a cross either as a religious practice or an item of jewellery. We may be reminded of a film we have seen about the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus or of some music we have heard or sung about the cross.

In today's Gospel reading, in the second week of our Season of Creation, Jesus is beginning to take control of the story that others want to write for him. In hindsight, we know that Jesus chose to go to Jerusalem, where he was arrested, tortured, and put to death. We know too that on the third day, Jesus rose from the dead, offering us the gift of eternal life through the forgiveness of our sins. But when Jesus speaks to the disciples about his death, it comes as a shock. Surely death on a cross cannot be the fate of someone who is clearly the Messiah, God's chosen and promised deliverer? That was certainly Peter's first reaction.



Jesus responds by talking about his followers taking up their cross – not his but theirs, and ours. And when he asks us to take up our cross, he is not speaking metaphorically. We are called to be willing to suffer, actually suffer, for the sake of the Gospel.

There are millions of people worldwide where the good news of the Gospel is not received or experienced because they are suffering from the consequences of climate change. The exploitation of land, plants, animals and minerals for profit results in the loss of habitats that are homes for millions of species. We do not need to look far beyond our neighbouring low-lying Pacific Island nations to see the suffering. Their homes and their very existence are at risk due to climate change and global warming.

For most of us probably, the cost of discipleship that Jesus is calling us to, will not be onerous. But there are Christians all over the world who suffer horribly because of the injustices levelled against them.

Aware of the relative safety in which we live – even in this time of coronavirus pandemic – let us look for ways we can bring justice for the whole of God's creation. Let us pray for those for whom the cross is still a sign of discrimination, injustice and even death. Let us pray that the cross, as a symbol of God's promise of resurrection, will bring forth wholeness and healing for all people and the whole of God's creation.

Latest on our Sunday Worship Services - more details on page 10

The easing of restrictions from Friday 10 Sep has only allowed for a maximum of 20 people indoor to gather for worship. So, we will continue to worship online until further easing to the current restriction setting. Sunday 12th September - 10.00 am Online worship Sunday 19th September - 10.00 am Online worship Page 1

September 2021



## **Opening Prayer**

We greet you Holy One - Sacred Three Holy Mystery, Holy Wisdom, Holy Flame

Ancient of days
Ground of our being

We praise you (Daniel 7.9, 11, 22)

Jesus, bright morning star, Hope of our hearts

We praise you (2 Peter 1.19)

Spirit Holy, Advocate and truth Birther of love

**We praise you** (John 14.16-17, 21-21)

# Prayers of Gratitude and praise

Blessed Trinity

We praise you for coming among us in Jesus:

healing, teaching and feasting,

in friendship and fierce compassion. dying, rising and abiding with us now in friendship and fierce compassion.

We praise you for coming to us in Spirit Holy: drawing us ever closer to truth and grace,

burning away the fear, setting us free for love.

We praise you with all of creation.

We share our prayers of thanks for the times this week we have experienced love or witnessed beauty

Response: Amen

We praise you

# Readings from Sacred Scripture

Psalm Gospel

For these words of faith and Jesus the Word **Thanks be to God** 

silence after the reading

## Prayers for the earth

You call us into your love for all things and so we pray for our beautiful, broken world.

Kindle within us a flame of love for kindred, for friend and for foe for stranger, for neighbour and for ourselves

moment of stillness

We pray for those people and places on our hearts

May there be healing and hope, kindness and justice

We name those people and places

Response: May your kind kingdom come

May your loving will be done





Together let us pray as Jesus taught us:

Our Abba in heaven hallowed be your name your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever, Amen.

## **Blessing**

We bless ourselves, and one another, with your blessing:

May Blessed Trinity be with us all: may the Source of all be upholding you, may radiant Christ be infusing you, may Spirit Holy be encircling you, every step that you take in this stormy world. In the name of Christ. Amen.

Written by Rev Dr Sally Douglas
To be used freely, with acknowledgement
sally.douglas@pilgrim.edu.au







Date	Time	Leader	Leader's Steward	Readers	<b>Greeters &amp; Ushers</b>	PowerPoint	PA Operator	<u>Organist</u>
<u>Sep 12</u>	10.00am	Rev. Ikani	B. Dickie	I. Goodwin	H. McCann	B. Vaitohi	R. Bunting	L. Rankin
					C. Schaller			
Sept 12	2 Com	munion	Flowers		Morning Tea			
	N	N/A	S. Jennings		S. & B. Jennings			
			• •		M. Bullock			
Date	Time	Leader	Leader's Steward	Readers	<b>Greeters &amp; Ushers</b>	<b>PowerPoint</b>	PA Operator	<u>Organist</u>
<u>Sep 19</u>	10.00am	Rev. Ikani	L. Moss	R. Ferguson	R. Jeffers	B. Vaitohi	B. Jennings	C. Collins
				J. Ferguson	J. Jeffers		•	
<u>Sep 19</u>	Comn	nunion	Flowers	•	Morning Tea			
	N	N/A	K. Haas		A. & R. Bunting			
					E. Wood			
Date	Time	Leader	Leader's Steward	Readers	<b>Greeters &amp; Ushers</b>	<b>PowerPoint</b>	PA Operator	<u>Organist</u>
<u>Sep 26</u>	10.00am	n Rev. Ikani	L. Jackson	G. Allen	J. Ferguson	B. Vaitohi	M. Richards	L. Rankin
			-0-		L. Jackson			
<u>Sep 26</u>	Comn	nunion	Flowers		Morning Tea			
		N/A	K. Haas		G. Coomber			
					E. Wood			
					L. Moss			
m1 1	1	*11*	1 ( 1 '	C1 1		1 .	1 1	. 1

Thank you to these willing people for keeping our Church services going. If you need to swap please endeavour to do so or if finding it difficult phone Julie 0418996592

# Prayer Points For the Week

Loving God, You reveal Yourself through Your creation. The beauty we see around us during Spring is a reminder of Your majesty and goodness. We praise You because You are the Master Designer; day by day we are amazed with all that You have created.

Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for loving, accepting and approving of us just as we are. Help us to seek the best for each other; give us the strength and confidence to overlook offences and weaknesses so that we can honour You in everything we do.

Dear God, we thank You that Jesus clothed Himself with humility when He came to earth to live and die for all creation. Christ is our Master and great example; may we learn to clothe ourselves with humility so that we might grow in our faith to be more like Jesus.

Peter Woods

## **Lectionary Readings**

Sept 12 - Pentecost 16	Sept 19 - Pentecost 17	Sept 26 - Pentecost 18	Oct 3 - Pentecost 19
Prv 1: 20 - 33	Prv 31: 10 - 31	Est 7: 1 - 6, 9 - 10, 9: 20 - 22	Jb 1: 1: 2: 1 - 10
Psalm 19	Psalm 1	Psalm 124	Psalm 26
Jas 3: 1 - 12	Jas 3: 13- 4: 3, 7 - 8	Jas 5: 13 - 20	Heb 1: 1 - 4, 2: 5 - 12
Mark 8: 27 - 38	Mark 9: 30 - 37	Mark 9: 38 - 50	Mark 8: 27 - 38



There will be an online worship service for this Sunday September 12th. You are welcome to join together at the same time of 10.00 am and afterwards for a chat if you wish using this zoom link:

https://zoom.us/j/99984774012?pwd=Ky85NGtwbnZqblh2YzFGNDdDZEM1QT09 Meeting ID: 999 8477 4012 - Passcode: 1234

Online worship services will be available to be viewed via our website by 10.00am each Sunday. https://buc.unitingchurch.org.au

# Season of Creation

Poetry • September 12, 2021

# Being and Earth Being

Norman Habel

My church tradition largely ignored the reality that we are Earth beings, like other Earth beings, and focused on the belief that we, as human beings with souls, were superior and different from all other creatures. We were also told that some sciences, like psychology, verified this. Our kinship with the rest of nature was also countered by the doctrine of the *imago Dei*. This doctrine not only raises human status above Earth creatures but also provides a mandate to dominate non-human Earth beings and subdue Mother Earth. Listen to the text:

So God made humankind (adam) in his own image, In the image of God, he made them; male and female he created them.

God blessed them and said to them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill Earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves on Earth" (Genesis 1: 27 to 28).

Despite some efforts to soften this text, the verbs for have dominion/rule (*rada*) and subdue/crush (*kabash*) are harsh and overpowering. And this text has been used to justify human efforts to harness nature, exploit Creation, and bring Earth under human control.

In my Christian tradition, I now identify a range of texts, teachings, and attitudes that reduce Earth to a disposable body of matter. They also imply that Earth was created for humans to inhabit, tame, and harness while en route to heaven. The option that Earth is the true mother of humans – body, mind, and consciousness –was rejected as a residue of pagan thought.

**Being an Earth being in nature** After years of being conditioned to think of ourselves as superior beings, it is not that easy to come home to Earth and identify ourselves as Earth beings. Recent findings of ecology can help us. We belong,

after all, to a fragile web of interconnected and interdependent forces on this planet.

The common origin of all life, including humans, is now widely recognized by biologists and ecologists. Humans are "born of Earth," as David Suzuki and others write. The Earth, air, fire, and water that have long been viewed as the elements of creation are all necessary for humans (and indeed the whole planet) to exist. As David Suzuki and Kathy Vanderlinden write,

Air, water, earth, and fire – these are the substances that support life. Together with the sum total of that life, they maintain the planet, keep it fit for life. As we explore each element in turn, looking at its origins, its function on the planet and its intimate relationship with it, we will begin to understand our indissoluble connection with the centre. We are creatures of Earth and everything we learn about Earth teaches us about ourselves (*You Are the Earth*, Allen and Unwin, 1999, p. 38).

...Ecology makes it clear that we are born of Earth nurtured by Earth, and received back into Earth in death. We are Earth beings and Earth is our Mother. Every one of us is composed of the various elements of Earth, the very matter that this planet comprises unaware of this ecological mystery has long been recognized by indigenous people such as the Dakota. Luther Standing Bear once said,

Dakota children understand that they are of the soil and the soil of us, that we have the birds and the beasts that grow with us on soil. A bond exists between all things because they all drink the same water and breathe the same air (Suzuki, *You Are the Earth*, p. 52).

Birth is the mystery of endless expressions of life emerging from Earth. Earth is a massive womb from which an unlimited diversity of Earth beings are born. Humans are but one such child of Earth. And I am but one such Earth baby.





Rainbow of Mysteries: Meeting the Sacred in Nature by Norman Habel (p. 63–65).

Copyright © 2012 Norman Habel, CopperHouse, an imprint of Wood Lake Publishing Inc. Used by permission.



### **PRAYERS**

John Wilson - Our loving sympathy and prayers to Marlene and Tamara Wilson and families on the recent passing of John, a loving husband, father, grandfather and greatgrandfather.

Loved by all.

John and Doreen Stephens thank us for our loving prayers and messages of concern. Please keep them in your prayers especially as John has special radiation treatment -please pray for a successful outcome.

Church Council will meet on Tuesday, 21st September at 7.30pm.

The meeting will be held via Zoom.

Reports and recommendations should be sent to the Secretary by Saturday, 11th September.

\_\_\_\_\_





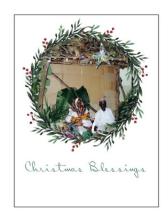
## CHRISTMAS CARDS available in pkts of 5 for \$5.

\*at this time we are also receiving donations for the Bushikori Christmas Fund. Tax receipts provided for specific donations..

For further information please contact Bill & Sue Jennings
Photo taken by Pamela Ferrar on her visit to Bushikori, nativity hut built by Grace Wandendeya,
models students at Bushikori, creative design by Layla Peacock, printed by Words With Heart



Bauble Card : insert May you sense His love and goodness in a very special way this Christmas season



Wreath Card: Insert May the blessing of peace, the joy of family, and the love of Jesus fill your Christmas season.

## Season of Creation 2021 Prayer

Creator of All,

We are grateful that from your communion of love you created our planet to be a home for all. By your Holy Wisdom you made the Earth to bring forth a diversity of living beings that filled the soil, water and air. Each part of creation praises you in their being, and cares for one another from our place in the web of life.

With the Psalmist, we sing your praise that in your house "even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young." We remember that you call human beings to keep your garden in ways that honor the dignity of each creature and conserve their place in the abundance of life on Earth.

But we know that our will to power pushes the planet beyond her limits. Our consumption is out of harmony and rhythm with Earth's capacity to heal herself. Habitats are left barren or lost. Species are lost and systems fail. Where reefs and burrows, mountaintops and ocean deeps once teemed with life and relationships, wet and dry deserts lie empty, as if uncreated. Human families are displaced by insecurity and conflict, migrating in search of peace. Animals flee fires, deforestation and famine, wandering in search of a new place to find a home to lay their young and live.

In this Season of Creation, we pray that the breath of your creative Word would move our hearts, as in the waters of our birth and baptism. Give us faith to follow Christ to our just place in the beloved community. Enlighten us with the grace to respond to your covenant and call to care for our common home. In our tilling and keeping, gladden our hearts to know that we participate with your Holy Spirit to renew the face of your Earth, and safeguard a home for all.

In the name of the One who came to proclaim good news to all creation,

Jesus Christ. Amen.

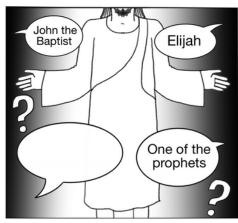


## ROOTS Activity sheet



### Mark 8.27-38

Jesus is walking with his disciples and wants to explore who people think he is, and what it really means to follow him.



Jesus asked his disciples, 'Who do you say I am?' Who do you say Jesus is? Write your answer in the speech bubble.



Jesus warned it would sometimes be difficult and dangerous to follow him. Help him find his way to the crown.





Peter calls Jesus 'Messiah' which means leader or king. Draw a crown shape around the word, 'Messiah' and decorate it.

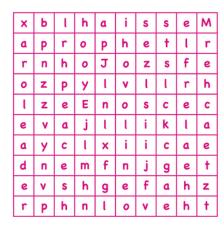


son leader light Messiah healer king love prophet teacher peace

Elijah

John

Can you find all the ideas people had about who Jesus was in this word search?





## Mark 8.27-38

e disciples learn the power of words they consider who Jesus really is.



Draw patterns or colours to show how Jesus makes you feel.

Jesus makes me feel:



Think about the people you chat to the most. List their names in one column and the sort of things you talk about in the other. How differently do you talk to these people? Is that a good thing?



Talk What are your favourite and east favourite words?

**Make** a list of some really positive vords that you will all use this week. 'ou could even make a tally chart.

Pray Cut out words from newspapers and magazines to form a short prayer, asking God to help us :hoose our words carefully.

Crack the code to find what Peter replied to Jesus' question, 'Who do you say that I am?'

A	В	C	D	E	F	G	Н	ı	J	K	L	M
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
N	0	р	Λ	D	c	т	11	W	11/	v	ν	7
	U		Ų	1	3	ı	U	V	W	^	T	L

25 15 21 18 5 20 8

13	5	19	19	9	1	8

Name	What we talk about

# THE LEITCH CHRONICLES

### LIFE AS ART

Our life is a work of art. Step back and see this for yourself, by making a collage. Start with a big piece of cardboard. Look through magazines for pictures that capture different elements of your life – the people, places, and things you love; the adventures you've had; your achievements and accidents. Add phrases, feathers, glitter, and pictures of your own. Include images that represent your inner life, hopes, and dreams. Find images to represent your bright side and others that convey your shadow. When you've done, take a good look at this masterpiece of your life. Then give someone you love a guided tour. This life collage can be fun to make alone or with friends (according to restrictions.)



## **SYNCHRONICITY**



Are you so busy planning your life that you miss the magic of it? Pay attention to the things you have no control over – no, not death and taxes, but the signs of a friendly universe. That's where the richness lies. Take special note of the little synchronicities and happy coincidences that abound all around you. Notice if people suddenly show up from the past, or someone calls just as you think about them. Notice the opportunities that show up just when you need them. The more you look for synchronicity, the more you'll find. Eventually you may find the littlest things shimmering with meaning and enchantment. Always remember, God moves in mysterious ways, so it is important to be alert to these moments.

## RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS

My neighbour recently received a box of gifts which lifted her spirit during lockdown. The box contained individual chocolates, wrapped hand baked biscuits, fruit and vegies and positive sayings such as "make each day your masterpiece", I've got nothing to do today, but smile", "stop waiting for tomorrow". Imagine how your neighbour would feel if something suddenly appeared in their letter box.





This is 47 years ago and is interesting. More papers from the files of my mother Rhonda Bateup.

## Geelong District WAOM Fellowship Day 1974

Eighty members attended the Fellowship Day of the Geelong Methodist Women's Auxiliary of Overseas Missions. Mrs Edna Hoe, president of the Executive, opened the meeting, welcomed all present, and then handed over the day to Belmont Methodist, the host auxiliary. The President, Mrs Rhonda Bateup, conducted devotions, using 'kindness' as the theme.

Mrs Myrtle Barnes and Mrs Miriam Moore, then gave a most interesting talk about their recent work party to Fiji. The work was not without some frustration and much humour. The love of the Fijian people made parting very sad but the party had shared in a wonderful experience.

After lunch and a cuppa the stall was well patronised. A beautiful display of Fijian and Tongan handcraft was very much admired by all present.

The afternoon program began with a devotion and an offering. Mrs Eldridge, accompanied by Mrs Hair delighted the ladies with a bracket of lovely songs.

Mrs Betty Ferguson then spoke of the work party in Tonga. The huge amount of building materials and large quantities of cement mixed by hand was staggering to the listeners. A handsome set of buildings were later dedicated with thanksgiving. The friendships made are very real to all team members who lived in Queen Salote College in Nuku'alofa for 6 weeks.

Miss Julie Bateup told of her wonderful experience living in a remote village in Tonga, with 3 other work party teachers, at the home of Rev Sentuli Koloi and his family who looked after them so very kindly. The group ran talks with ideas and tips for lessons for Sunday School leaders and children.

Mrs Molyneaux, Executive Treasurer, was presented with \$120, raised from the stall and the collection. Then the Benediction brought a very happy and informative day to a close.

-----

## 16 years ago - Guild's 100th Birthday - From the Geelong Advertiser Wed 15 June 2005

The writing on the cake said it all: "Happy Birthday." People flocking to Belmont Uniting Church Guild's 100th year milestone were in the mood to celebrate yesterday.

Guild secretary Muriel Bullock said she expected about 70 people at the lunch, "The Guild is about service and fellowship," Mrs Bullock said. "We raise funds and give them to worthy causes." Participants at the lunch included the Guild's oldest member, Mrs Myra Gaylard. The 98 year old said she enjoyed the many friendships she had made through the Guild.

The Guild has undergone many changes since it first started as Belmont Women's Guild in 1905 one of these being the inauguration of the Uniting Church in 1977.



Secretary -Muriel Bullock



The Centenary Cake

Abridged by Julie Ferguson



As of 11:59pm Thursday September 9, lockdown restrictions only apply to Metropolitan Melbourne and Shepparton.

# The following COVID-safe restrictions apply in Regional Victoria (except Shepparton) from 11:59pm on September 9:

- Stay at Home requirements have been lifted, and the 5km travel limit has been lifted.
- Masks must be carried at all times and must be worn at all times indoors and outdoors by Victorians aged 12 years or over unless at home, or when visiting an intimate partner's place of residence, of if an exemption applies. Face masks are recommended for primary school aged children indoors or outdoors unless at home or if an exemption applies. Face masks may only be removed to eat and to drink non-alcoholic beverages.
- **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 with up to 20 persons per venue, plus those workers necessary to conduct the ceremony. COVID Check-in marshals must ensure all attendees check-in.
- Funerals (indoors or outdoors) maximum of 20 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 10 people and those workers necessary to conduct the wedding. Children under 12 months are not counted in the cap. COVID Check-in Marshals must ensure all attendees check-in. Dancefloors not permitted.
- Work: if you can work from home you should work from home. Offices may return with 25% or up to 10 people if the total workplace is 40 persons or less. Density quotient of 1 person per 4sqm applies. Permitted worker permits are now only required for people who live and/or work in Metropolitan Melbourne or Shepparton.

### **WORSHIP SERVICES**

### Religious gatherings and ceremonies are

permitted with up to 20 persons per venue, plus those workers necessary to conduct the ceremony. COVID Check-in Marshals must ensure all attendees check-in using the Services Victoria app (see p4).

As of 10/09/2021

## Do face masks have to be worn at all times during worship?

Yes. Masks are currently mandatory in all settings, apart from at home, unless an individual has a valid reason for not wearing one. Ministers or other faith leaders may remove their masks whilst leading worship, as teaching/broadcasting/public speaking are valid exceptions.

## Can we gather for morning tea afterwards?

As seated service is currently available in cafes etc for up to 10 people indoors and public gatherings outdoors of 10 people are also permitted, it is possible to gather for morning tea, providing there is a maximum of 10 people inside and 10 people outside with all attendees seated and socially distanced, and with all food and drink served, rather than available buffet style.

As of 10/09/2021

### Can we sing?

Singing is permitted, but facemasks must be worn at all times.

### **FUNERALS**

Funerals (indoors or outdoors) may be held with a maximum of 20 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. Funerals at private residences are not permitted. Any additional requirements if any attendees are from Metro Melbourne are yet to be announced.

As of 10/09/2021

## Is it permitted to provide transport ("give a lift") to people?

Where possible, treat passengers in your car who are not members of your household as if they were travelling in a taxi:

- Your passenger should sit in the back seat to maintain physical distancing
- Everyone in the car should wear a fitted face mask unless they have a lawful exemption
- Increase ventilation by opening windows wherever possible. Avoid having air-conditioning set to recirculate air.
- High touch surfaces in the vehicle should be cleaned and sanitised regularly (eg door handles, seat belts etc)

### Physical distancing signs

All church buildings must display signage showing the maximum number of people who can be accommodated in any space.

