WELCOME BELMONT UNITING CHURCH

19th September Weekly Newsletter 2021



'Season of Creation 2021-COVID - Self Care

This article first appeared on the Diakonia UCA Newsletter (September 2021) which was forwarded to me by a colleague at the beginning of the week. It is a timely reminder of the importance of self-care for us all especially in this time of uncertainty.

This has been an elongated, difficult time with the COVID pandemic. Tara Parker-Pope, writing in NY Times says: What's the most important lesson of pandemic life? I would argue that it's this: Self-care isn't selfish. During Covid-19, we've learned that we are all connected and that taking care of ourselves — staying safe and staying well — is a way to care for our community. Taking precautions is a way to keep ourselves, our loved ones and our neighbours from getting sick and avoid overwhelming our health care system. One of the challenges of 2021 will be to continue making self-care a priority once the pandemic has passed. (Ed: if only it had passed!)

If you're someone who has always said you don't have time for self-care, or that self-care seems selfish and self-indulgent, you're not alone. "One of the things that you come across all the time is the idea that 'I can't invest in things that are good for me, because it's taking away from my ability to do what I need to do at work," said Kelly McGonigal, a health psychologist and lecturer at Stanford University. "Wouldn't it be great if we learn to lean into our interdependence, and that we can actually take some kind of joy in knowing that when I take care of myself, I often am also taking care of others?"

We need to redefine what self-care is. Self-care is not just making time to recharge your batteries with a nap, meditation or by taking a break from your family — although all those things count. Self-care ultimately is about setting priorities, setting boundaries and finding purpose. "Everybody understands that relaxation and rest are important," said Dr McGonigal, whose latest book is "The Joy of Movement." "So there are aspects of self-care related to sleep - everyone should take a bath, light candles. There's this idea that we need to calm down. But what can you experience today that is going to fill you with the positive emotions you need to do the most important things in your life? It's about refuelling yourself in order to engage with life." Take care everyone, and stay safe!



Latest on our Sunday Worship Services - more details on page 3

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 19th September - 10.00 am Online worship

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.

Prayer of Approach

We come to our holy God, knowing our weaknesses and our anxieties, carrying burdens of our own and those of others. We come asking for God's grace and wisdom, needing strength and sustenance for today. Heavenly maker, draw near as we draw near to you. Through Jesus we pray. Amen.

A prayer of thanksgiving

Thank you, Lord, of life, for all that you give us. Thank you for the gift of your Son, to save us, heal us and teach us. Thank you for the gift of your Spirit, to guide us and remind us of what is truly important in our lives. We are so grateful for you, and for all the blessings you provide. Amen.

Notes on the Bible readings Wisdom of Solomon 1.16–2.1,12-22; James 3.13–4.3,7-8a; Mark 9.30-37

After Peter's declaration of faith, Mark presents Jesus and his disciples journeying south towards Jerusalem and to his Passion. Jesus confronts them with his forthcoming suffering, death and resurrection, but the disciples fail to understand and are afraid to ask; instead, they get caught up in petty arguments about which of them is the greatest. Jesus addresses their jealousy by teaching about humility, love and generosity, and says that true disciples will accept those who are childlike in his name.

Jeremiah, like Jesus centuries later, realised that people were plotting his downfall, and so reflects on how he is being led 'like a gentle lamb' to the slaughter. But Jeremiah trusts in God, confident that God will protect him. In the Wisdom of Solomon, the 'ungodly' set about testing the 'righteous man', to see if God will come to protect him. In their wickedness, they are unable to see the 'secret purposes of God'. Psalm 54 is a lament from someone who is under attack, but who calls on God and entrusts himself to God's care.

James contrasts earthly wisdom which brings envy, selfishness, boastfulness, falsehood and disorder, with wisdom from above, which brings purity, peace and gentleness. In identifying what is important we can be lured into mistaking earthly wisdom for God's wisdom. We can easily get wrapped up in petty arguments based on envy and selfishness, and lose sight of the common good and the importance of mercy, gentleness and peace.

A personal prayer

Uphold my life, O God; remind me of your faithfulness. When I am overwhelmed, anchor me to your hope.

When I feel weak and inadequate, sustain and reassure me. Remind me that in my weakness you show your strength. Give me a new perspective, I pray. Amen.

Questions for reflection

- How do you deal with difficult situations?
- Can arguing ever be positive?
- ► Are you sufficiently humble?



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| Date | Time Lead | ler | Leader's Steward | Readers | Greeters & Ushers | PowerPoint | PA Operator | <u>Organist</u> |
|---------------|------------------|----------|------------------|-------------|------------------------------|-------------------|-------------|-----------------|
| <u>Sep 19</u> | 10.00am Rev | . Ikani | L. Jackson | R. Ferguson | R. Jeffers | B. Vaitohi | B. Jennings | C. Collins |
| | | | | J. Ferguson | J. Jeffers | | | |
| <u>Sep 19</u> | Communion | | Flowers | | Morning Tea | | | |
| | N/A | | K. Haas | | A. & R. Bunting | | | |
| | | | | | E. Wood | | | |
| Date | Time Lea | der | Leader's Steward | Readers | Greeters & Ushers | PowerPoint | PA Operator | <u>Organist</u> |
| <u>Sep 26</u> | 10.00am Rev | 7. Ikani | L. Moss | G. Allen | J. Ferguson | B. Vaitohi | M. Richards | L. Rankin |
| | | | | | L. Jackson | | | |
| <u>Sep 26</u> | Communion | | Flowers | | Morning Tea | | | |
| | N/A | | K. Haas | | G. Coomber | | | |
| | | | | | E. Wood | | | |
| | | | | | M. Bullock | | | |
| Date | Time Lead | ler | Leader's Steward | Readers | Greeters & Ushers | PowerPoint | PA Operator | Organist |
| Oct 3 | 10.00am Rev | . Ikani | H. McCann | C. Rankin | R. Bunting | L. McCann | B. Jones | C. Collins |
| | | | | | R. Pearson | | · · | |
| Oct 3 | Communion | | Flowers | | Morning Tea | | | |
| | R. & J. Ferguson | | B. Coomber | | L. & C. Rankin | | | |
| | T. Yates | | · | | A. Merritt | | · | |
| | H. McCan | n | | | · | <u> </u> | | |

<u>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</u>

Prayer Points For the Week

Dear Heavenly Father, we praise You for Your unconditional love for us. Thank You for Your promise that You make all things work together for our good, even our mistakes. We believe that nothing is too difficult or too complicated for You.

Loving God, so often our fear of failing keeps us from having the courage to step out in faith. We thank You that You never abandon us and may we remember that You are with us every step of the way, encouraging us and moulding us into the people You have created us to be.

Dear Lord Jesus, we pray that You will draw close to people who have lost loved ones in recent times. May You enfold them with Your loving arms, giving them peace and comfort in their time of sadness and loss.

Lectionary Readings

Peter Woods

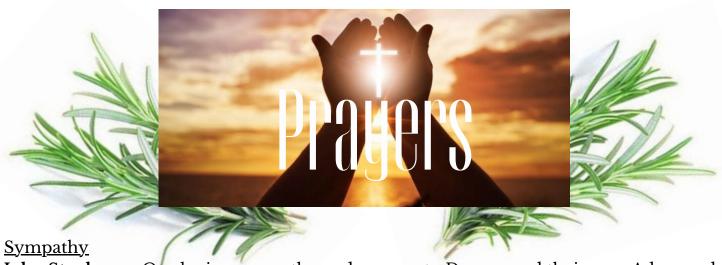
Oct 10 - Pentecost 20 Sept 19 - Pentecost 17 Sept 26 - Pentecost 18 Oct 3 - Pentecost 19 Prv 31: 10 - 31 Est 7: 1 - 6, 9 - 10, 9: 20 - 22 Jb 1: 1: 2: 1 - 10 Jb 23: 1 - 9, 16 - 17 Psalm 1 Psalm 124 Psalm 26 Psalm 22: 1 - 15 Jas 3: 13-4: 3, 7 - 8 Jas 5: 13 - 20 Heb 1: 1 - 4, 2: 5 - 12 Heb 4: 12-16 Mark 9: 30 - 37 Mark 9: 38 - 50 Mark 8: 27 - 38 Mark 10: 17 - 31



There will be an online worship service for this Sunday September 19th. 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



John Stephens - Our loving sympathy and prayers to Doreen and their sons Adam and Bruce and families on the passing of John after a long and hard fought battle with illness. John was a devoted husband, father and grandfather and a life time member of this church holding many executive positions.

Pauline Davies (née Foster) - We also extend our loving prayers and sympathy to Ian, Wayne, Craig and Michael Davies and families on the passing of their dear mother, grandmother and great grandmother Pauline who was a devoted wife to Peter (dec) and a life time member of this church.

Our prayers continue for Marlene Wilson, John Jr. and Tamara and families following the funeral of **John Wilson** on Wednesday September 15th. May they find comfort in their many happy memories of John and his wonderful service to the community.



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

Zoom.

Reports and recommendations should now be in the hands of the Secretary.

Belmont Uniting Evening Fellowship members please be alert for an email or call next Tuesday re a possible meeting on Wednesday September 22 depending on restrictions.

Lorna Francis 100

Our prayers and best wishes go to Lorna Francis as she celebrates her 100th The meeting will be held via birthday on Saturday 18th September.

> Lorna resides at Highton Gardens, Highton and was previously at Costa Court Kalkee and lived in Roslyn Rd, Belmont for over 60 years with her late husband. Arthur.

She is much loved by her adult children Carolyn and Robert, their spouses, grandchildren and great grandchildren. Lorna was a loved Supervisor of Junior Tennis at the Belmont Presbyterian Church for many years in the 1960's and 70's and has contributed to the life of the Belmont congregation.



From Liz Moss' garden. Cantua buxifolia (Sacred Flower of the Incas) From the Andes of South America, pollinated by humming birds. Page 4

Season of Creation

Article • September 19, 2021

Seeking the Stars

What do you notice about the number of stars in a countryside sky compared to the number seen in a city sky?

In most situations, light helps us to see. But when it comes to looking at the night sky, light is actually a kind of pollution. It hampers our view of some of the spectacular wonders of the sky: stars, planets, and even galaxies. In most cities the sky looks as though it has been almost emptied of stars. Normally, about 2,500 individual stars are visible to the human eye without using any special equipment. But because of light pollution, you actually see just 200 to 300 from today's suburbs, and fewer than a dozen from a typical city. For most of human history, the phrase "light pollution" would have made no sense. Light pollution started becoming a problem about 100 years ago, when cities began using more and more lights (such as streetlights, building lights, outdoor lights, advertising lights for stores and businesses). Now there are so many lights, they can be seen from outer space.

What is light pollution?

There are three types of light pollution:

Skyglow is the garish colour seen overhead from artificial light scattering in the atmosphere. The reflected light masks the background stars. (From a distance you can see the glow of many cities in the night sky.)

Glare is light striking your eye directly from a source.

Spillover is light that extends beyond the targeted object.

How to tell if your community has skyglow

- Look at the sky after the sun has set. Do the clouds glow pink? If they do, that means there is too much light in the sky.
- ☐ When you look at the night sky, how many stars can you see?

What are the consequences of having too much light?

- In most cities, the sky looks as though it has been emptied of stars.
- Light shining into the eyes of pedestrians and drivers can reduce visibility.
- Scientists have determined that long artificial days, and artificially short nights, induce early breeding in a wide range of birds. And because a longer day allows for longer feeding, it can also affect migration schedules.

Bird migration, like most other aspects of bird behaviour, is a precisely timed biological behaviour. Leaving early may mean arriving too soon for nesting conditions to be right.

- Some birds become confused by the lights and fly into buildings, or fly in circles until they drop from exhaustion.
- Nocturnal animals are disrupted by the abnormal night lighting.
- Endangered nesting sea turtles, which show a natural predisposition for dark beaches, find fewer and fewer of them to nest on. Both the adult sea turtles and the babies that hatch from the eggs become confused by artificial lighting behind the beach and turn toward the road instead of the ocean.
- Some studies suggest human health is negatively affected because of disrupted circadian rhythms due to light pollution.
- It is a waste of natural resources. Fuel is burned that isn't needed.

What can we do about light pollution?

- Recognize the problem and make sure other people know about it.
- The next time you hear someone say, "The pink clouds after sunset are so pretty" tell them the truth. Their beauty is the result of pollution.
- Aim adjustable lights downward so they light the street below and not the sky above.
- □ Turn off unneeded outdoor lights.
- Use lower brightness levels.
- Aim billboard lights down instead of up.
- Install only fully shielded fixtures.
- Apply simple visors over existing lights.
- Find less offensive ways to express yourself than through landscape lighting.
- Ask your elected official to select public lighting fixtures that will save enormous amounts of energy and preserve the beauty of the night skies. (Many cities and towns have passed laws limiting lights at night, but making sure enough shine for safety.)

Of all the pollutions we face, light pollution is perhaps the most easily remedied. Use lights only when and where they are truly needed. Everyone deserves to look up at the infinite sky and wonder about God's unbounded universe!





The Beauty of the Sky

You will need 1 coin

1 button or marker

How to play

Start

Flip the coin. If it lands on heads, move 1 space. For tails, move 2 spaces. Follow the instructions on each square until you reach the finish!



Pretend to fly like a bird in the beautiful blue sky.

Say summer sunshine 5 times

Tiny twinkling stars gather in the sky.
Do you know a song about a star?

Thank you, God, for all the wonders of our sky.

Dance like a cloud going in and out of the light from the sun. It's nighttime. Close your eyes and go to sleep. Go back 2 spaces.

Name this wonder in God's creation and the letter it starts with. Go ahead 2 spaces.

> A rain cloud appears in the sky. Can you make the sound of rain?

You hear a loud clap of thunder. Go back 1 space.

Mobile

The sky and everything in it tells of God's love and glory.

What you need

- ½ plain paper plate
- alitter
- · small self-adhesive stars
- yarn
- · craft foam

Instructions

- 1. Write, or have someone help you write, "The sky shows God's glory" on the paper plate.
- 2. Decorate the plate with star stickers.
- 3. Cut out a star, a moon, and a sun shape.
- 4. Punch a hole in each shape and decorate.
- Tie shapes to the plate with yarn.
- 6. Punch a hole in the top of the plate and tie another piece of yarn to hang.



Barwon Valley School-Bongo Music Project



Dear Ikani,

Friends you will recall that before the Covid 19 pandemic hit, our congregation supported the local Barwon Valley School by purchasing 12 bongos to kick start the bongo class project. I have recently caught up with the chaplain, Alyssa Mercer, Scripture Union Victoria chaplain who shared with us an update of the project copied hereunder:

Dear Ikani,

It was nice to chat with you yesterday. Here are a few dot points regarding the Chaplaincy program at BVS.

- Chaplaincy program at BVS has been government funded until the end of 2022
- The drums generously gifted to BVS by Belmont Uniting Church have been utilized in a Rhythm 2 Recovery program, a fun drumming club during lunchtime, and music classes.
- Alyssa Mercer (Chaplain) has recently completed the Rhythm 2 Recovery facilitators training, which has provided her with the skills and tools to run an effective therapeutic drumming group.
- Students participating in the Rhythm 2 Recovery program have commented on how much they enjoy creating their own rhythms, working as a team, and how they leave each session feeling calmer than when they arrived

Thank-you for your continued interest and support towards the chaplaincy program at Barwon Valley School. This is a vital ministry in the school that has benefited greatly from partnerships with and the prayers of our local churches. It is with great delight to inform you that the chaplaincy role at Barwon Valley School has been government funded until the end of 2022.

Due to extra funding we had received from local churches, I was able to participate in a Rhythm 2 Recovery facilitators training workshop. This provided me with the skills needed to run an effective therapeutic drumming program for our students. When not in lockdown, Sonya (Wellbeing officer) and I run a drumming group with some of our senior male students. Seeing the way this group interacts, works as a team to create beautiful music, and encourages one another, has been a real highlight of my time at Barwon Valley School this year. The students participating in this program have shared how they feel more present and peaceful.

Along with the drumming group, I also provide one-on-one mentoring for students and support to parents. Many of the children that I work with experience quite complex and challenging home environments. Having a positive adult relationship that listens and speaks life into them and their circumstances is very significant and can be life changing. This is what excites me, and where I feel like I partner with God, to release his truth and presence into our students' lives.

This term we have also built a partnership with Surf Coast Secondary College, who have provided us with frozen meals through their Chaplain (James Ashley) to distribute to families in need within our school community. This has been extremely beneficial during lockdown, by allowing us to check-in and care for students and families learning from home.

Areas where you can be praying for this ministry include:

- Students, parents and staff during current lockdown restrictions. Please pray for wisdom, patience, understanding, peace, and hope. Also pray for the ability for our students to return to school safely in the near future.
- The drumming group (once it recommences post lockdown). Please pray that the momentum that was built prior to lockdown will remain and the relationships within that group continue to strengthen. Also pray for an openness to share and trust amongst the students as we start to press into the therapeutic side of the program.
- Community engagement opportunities. Please pray for creativity and wisdom on how to navigate and engage with the local churches and community organisations during this tricky season.



As of 11:59pm Wednesday Sept 16, lockdown restrictions only apply to Ballarat and Metro Melbourne.

The following COVID-safe restrictions apply in Regional Victoria (except Ballarat).

- 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 Ballarat.

Schools

- Open for Prep to Grade 2, and for Year 12 only.
 Remote learning for all other levels.
- Open to children of metropolitan Melbourne authorised workers and vulnerable children
- Twice-weekly PCR testing for teachers moving between metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria.
- Density quotient of 1 person per 4 sqm applies in non-student areas.
- Face Mask requirements apply to everyone 12 years and over.
- Adult/Higher Education: Closed. Remote learning only unless permitted study.
- Childcare and Early Learning: Open for regional Victorian children; open for children of metropolitan Melbourne authorised workers, single parents and for vulnerable children. Twiceweekly PCR testing for teachers moving between metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria.
- Restaurants/Cafes: Open for seated service only with maximum of 20 outdoors and 10 indoors subject to density limits.
- Hairdressing & Beauty Services Open with a cap of 10 people. Masks must remain on during the service.
- Community Facilities Open with a maximum of 20 people per facility.
- Hospital Visitors: Unless end-of-life, 2 people per day may visit but only 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

Continued P2

