

Nurturing our people in the Christian faith and reaching out to the local community in the power of the Holy Spirit.

**No. 234
April, 2014**





SIGN LANGUAGE

Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.

Matthew 5:11.

On Wednesday, March 12th, as I was busily putting the finishing touches on the order of service for the following Sunday, I was interrupted by the phone ringing. To my astonishment, I found myself speaking to a representative from Radio 2GB in Sydney, who wanted to know if I was happy to be interviewed by their afternoon presenter, Ben Fordham. The subject: “the noticeboard on the Doncaster East Road side of our property”.

Why would a Sydney radio station – notorious for its abrasive “shock-jock” presenters – possibly want to speak to us about our noticeboard? The answer wasn’t long in coming, as emails started appearing in my inbox, all of them objecting to our noticeboard message: JESUS & REZA: TWO REFUGEES KILLED BY GOVT POLICY. These emails, of varying degrees of coherence and abusiveness, all had certain themes in common: that it was preposterous (indeed, blasphemous) to compare Reza Barrati, the asylum seeker killed during the recent riots on Manus Island, to Jesus; that Reza wasn’t a “real” asylum seeker, but an “economic refugee”; that Jesus had never been a refugee; and that, in any event, “stopping the boats” had saved people from drowning at sea.

The reason for these similarities quickly became evident. One of the more articulate correspondents (who also saw fit to send their email to a number of other Mountview folk) attached an excerpt from a webpage operated by someone called Michael Smith

Mr Smith, formerly of the Australian Army, Victoria police, 2UE radio in Sydney, and 4BC radio in Brisbane, operates a website called *Michael Smith News*.

To say Mr Smith’s views are politically right-wing, anti-Muslim, and anti-refugee is something of an understatement; in any event, his attention had somehow been drawn to our sign, and it was a message to which he took considerable exception.

I won’t go into the details of the views Mr Smith expressed about Mountview and the sign, suffice to say that “rant” and “foul-mouthed” are both pretty good general and particular descriptions. It appears that Mr Smith will not tolerate any opinion other than one that endorses the “hard line” approach to refugees that both sides of Australian politics have seen fit to adopt. The fact that the Mountview sign was not only representative of such an opinion but also suggested that Reza Barrati was a direct victim of government policy sent Mr Smith into paroxysms of righteous indignation.

All the features of the aforementioned emails were part of Mr Smith’s tirade. The fact that these views were then unthinkingly replicated by Mr Smith’s followers in their emails to me is suggestive, both of the kind of audience Mr Smith desires and attracts, but also of the kind of society Mr Smith would like to see created: one where his views (and the views of those who agree with him) are the only views tolerated, and where any suggestion to the contrary is brutally put in its place. Ironic, given the frequency with which radio shock-jocks and their allies complain about their “right” to “free speech” being suppressed by “politically correct” types!

In any event, a quick search revealed extensive links between Mr Smith and 2GB; indeed, Mr Smith has a weekly Thursday afternoon spot with – you guessed it! – Ben Fordham. Obviously, someone at 2GB had seen Mr Smith’s rant and thought it would be a good subject for an interview. Given the links between Fordham, Smith, and the radio station, I smelled a rat – or, at the very least, an ambush.

.....cont

As it transpired, the interview did not go ahead. I got some advice from the Synod's Media Unit and insisted to 2GB that they understand that I would **not** be commenting as an "official spokesperson" for the Uniting Church; I also insisted on a copy or transcript of the interview. 2GB said they would get back to me, but never did. Perhaps they suspected I'd had some "coaching" and would not be quite so easy a target as originally thought; perhaps our little sign was just overtaken by bigger news stories on the day.

The emails continued to trickle in for the rest of the day then stopped. Aside from the 24 hours covered by that Wednesday/Thursday, I've not heard a peep out of either Mr Smith or his minions.

Reflecting on this episode, I am conscious both of my relief that it has blown over, and of the fact that being in the middle of it all was very stressful. That, of course, is part of the tactics employed by media organisations who favour the "shock-jock" approach to news: catch people unawares, panic them into saying something injudicious, then pillory them from the righteous position of self-proclaimed moral superiority.

But beyond this, however, it has helped me think through the issue of our noticeboard and the point and purpose of having provocative messages. Any sign that catches people's attention is liable to provoke a response – sometimes a **strong** response – to the contrary. But the very possibility of such a response ought not deter us from speaking truth to power, of saying those uncomfortable things which some may prefer were left unsaid. Which, of course, doesn't give us the right to say whatever we want whenever we want; it's just that the notion that we might "offend" someone with our messages **is not** a legitimate reason to not post them (just so long as we remember the difference between offending someone and **being offensive**).

Jesus warned his disciples more than once that they would be persecuted and abused for the sake of the Gospel (eg: Matt 10: 16-25). And whilst we must at all times remain humble and not confuse the promptings of our own egos with the imperatives of the Good News, we are nonetheless called to what Christian scholar Kerry Walters called "a life of precarity", a life where we are vulnerable to others for the sake of others (Walters' book, '*Jacob's Hip*', was prompted by the experience of being abused after speaking publicly unpopular truths). Jesus, after all, died as much for the sake of the Pharisees by whom he was condemned as he did for his followers and believers. And so, difficult as it may be, we are called to love those who hate us (Matt 5: 43-48) even if we can never be friends.

As I say, I am glad this has all blown over. I have no intention of taking up Mr Smith's rant, and its many abusive aspects, with him. With respect to the few emails from his followers that were coherent or polite enough to warrant a response, I kept my words and tone moderate. Not from any self-conscious display of piety, or because of a modesty to which I will not pretend. Rather, because there are some types and levels of anger and hatred and vitriol to which the only valid response is a silence that refuses to be co-opted. Moreover, I do not intend to stop posting provocative signs if and when appropriate.

Jesus' words in the Beatitudes say it all; Jesus knew that to be a disciple was to be one who is called into the ministry of being persecuted for the sake of the world, and for the sake of the God who is faithful to the world regardless of its faithlessness. The hate-filled nature of Mr Smith's response only confirms and affirms the importance and necessity of our present "roadside pulpit".

Brendan

For Reflection:

Grace to Follow

Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, Communion without confession, absolution without personal confession. Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate.

Costly grace is the treasure hidden in the field; for the sake of it a man will gladly go and sell all that he has. It is the pearl of great price to buy (for) which the merchant will sell all his goods. It is the kingly rule of Christ, for whose sake a man will pluck out the eye which causes him to stumble, it is the call of Jesus Christ at which the disciple leaves his nets and follows him...

Such grace is *costly* because it calls us to follow, and it is *grace* because it calls us to follow Jesus Christ.

(Dietrich Bonhoeffer in "The Cost of Discipleship")

I do not at all understand the mystery of grace – only that it meets us where we are but does not leave us where it found us.

(Anne Lamott from "Travelling Mercies")

Sacred Encounters

A debate persists about how God appears today, in "ordinary" life. Theologians talk about this as God's self-revelation. Do we encounter the Holy One when we knock at the door, seeking God's presence? Or do we get overwhelmed by God's self-revealing love, judgment, and grace that transform us like a refining fire, regardless of our will? How does sacred encounter happen and how do we respond?

Contemplative psychologist Gerald May suggests that we do not actually know sacred encounters when they happen. Sacred encounter, as May recounts it, is a unitive experience where self and God are not separate or distinguishable in the loving presence of the Creator embracing creatures. By the time we become aware of such a sacred encounter, reflecting upon it as experience, it is no longer happening. Awareness, in its very exercise, means an "I" is thinking about a "Thou," apart from itself. Sacred encounter, therefore, happens whenever God desires, but we become aware of it only after the fact, after we have regained control of our senses.

*(Lisa M Hess, an ordained Word and Sacrament minister in the Presbyterian Church, USA. –
reprinted from Seasons of the Spirit material)*

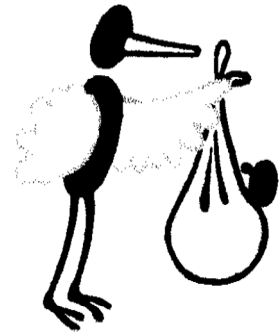
Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.
Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit.
The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise. *(Psalm 51:10-12, 17 – NRSV).*

PEOPLE

New Grandchildren

Denyse and Kelvin Ward are thrilled with the safe arrival of their ninth grandchild, born on 25th February, third child for Baden and Sally – Haylee Denyse.

Colleen and David Rowe are pleased to announce the safe arrival of their fifth grandchild, Giacomo Faugno, born in Perth to daughter Rebecca and her husband Mario, a little brother for Mattia.



CELEBRATIONS

(DETAILS OF CELEBRATIONS HAVE BEEN REMOVED FROM THIS PUBLIC EDITION)

Birthdays

Wedding Anniversaries

GOING FURTHER FUND

In planning the disbursement of this fund, Church Council has decided to establish a long term understanding with **NOCET**, the “**Loose Change**” organisation we have been supporting in Tanzania with an annual grant of \$600. Church Council wishes to widen the coverage of this fund and is seeking recommendations of suitable projects. Speak with Peter Cox or Geoffrey Willis. This fund is sustained by retiring offerings six times a year. The encouragement is to save up your small change for each offering occasion.

“Making News” - Travis is it!

It was with great joy that I announced to the Mountview Congregation that after a couple of months of searching, job applications and prayer, I was rewarded with an offer of employment with WIN News Bendigo. I was thrilled to be offered the position as Camera Operator and Editor, as it is something that took my interest during my course last year. The job requires me to go out and capture images for a range of stories and edit them into packages for the 7pm. broadcast. It is a very busy job and I have already learnt so much in just a short couple of weeks but am enjoying the challenge of learning the job and what Bendigo has to offer. A big thankyou to everyone at Mountview for keeping me in their prayers and thoughts: it was a great relief to know that people were thinking of me during this period of change. I look forward to settling into a new house and region and will stay in contact.

With my move to Bendigo it has left a gap in a couple of area in Mountview especially multimedia and assistant editor for *CONTACT*. The *CONTACT* magazine is a fantastic way for the Mountview Congregation to experience what has happened and is happening around them. Putting together the ‘*People Pages*’ was always a delight as I would remember everything that has happened in the church and the contribution that Mountview is providing to the local community every single day. It would be great if someone to come aboard working with Margaret and John to produce such a wonderful magazine every couple of months. If you feel that you could fill this role then please see them and have a chat.

Travis Cox

IN OTHER NEWS

PANCAKE DAY!

Sunday 2nd March the Monday Night Group along with some helpers again cooked up a storm to provide pancakes to raise money for the **SHARE APPEAL**. This year we used a ‘secret’ home made recipe from Michelle’s partner, Chris, to cook up some beautiful pancakes. Everyone enjoyed the smell, flavour and glorious toppings on offer, as well as donating to a great cause. In total we raised \$164 for SHARE - a great effort by everyone involved.



Monday Night Group

CONGREGATIONAL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

SUNDAY, MAY 4th, following Morning Worship.

Receive Annual Reports and Accounts.

(Reports and Agenda will be available on April 20th.)

THE MARRIAGE OF MICHELLE AND CHRIS

Michelle Jackson and Chris Molnar chose to be married on International Women's Day, Saturday, 8th March, 2014, when some 200 friends and family members comfortably filled Mountview Uniting Church in Mitcham on a sunny afternoon. Many from the Mountview congregation were present, indicating the regard with which Michelle is held in the local church.

The officiating minister was the Rev. Sandy Brodine, from the Banyule Cluster of Uniting Churches, with the Mountview minister, the Rev. Brendan Byrne also taking part.

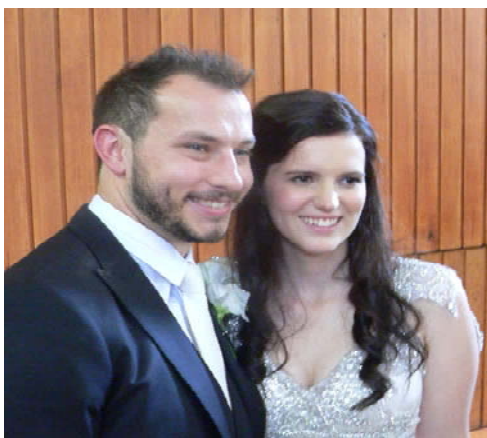


Outside, the sun shone in blessing as first the two bridesmaids, Anthea Tsimaras and Jessica Mills entered simultaneously from the north and south doors, followed similarly by the groomsmen, Mike Dewar and Aaron Maddern. Michelle's parents, Rob and Helen, coming in from the south door, and Jolan Molnar (Chris' mother) from the north, completed the wedding party, which assembled at the front where Rev Sandy was waiting for them. It was an interesting and different way of entry, and most emotive symbolic "handing across" of family members.

Michelle's long, shimmering white, sleeveless gown was topped by a sparkling beaded bodice. Her matching beaded hair clasp glowed with extra brightness against her dark hair. The bridesmaids wore sleeveless, street-length dresses. (Discussion with the girls after the ceremony about how to describe the lovely colour of their dresses, decided on either 'peach' or 'coral'. See the photo, and choose for yourself!) Colour was prominent in the church. The bridesmaids' bouquets and the vases of flowers were gaily and gloriously multi-coloured, and the sun embellished the bright church windows.

A beautiful new wedding banner adorning the wall behind the marriage party as they signed is the work of Margot Kemke, and to her we give great thanks. Bright summer frocks of the women and children also added to the joyous atmosphere, as people moved from the church to the hall to the tune of "*Somewhere Over the Rainbow*". There they partook of a very well catered afternoon tea. From the sound level, it seemed that a great many people were meeting friends in happy conversation.

We all wish Michelle and Chris well on their new adventure. Go with God!



On the order of service, was a notice headed: **About our Wedding Day...**

It was important to us to make thoughtful, ethical decisions wherever possible when planning our wedding:

*We have aimed for equality amongst all male and female participants and guests who share in our celebration.

*The bridal gown and accessories, bridesmaid dresses and accessories and groom's suit are all designed and made in Australia.

*Chris' wedding ring is created in recycled yellow gold by a local jewellery designer. Michelle's wedding ring is created in certified Fair-Trade white gold by a Sydney-based designer.

*Fair-trade tea and coffee is served at the afternoon tea and local catering

businesses have made the delicious food.

*The centrepieces for the reception are composed completely of second-hand and hand-made items.

*This booklet, the invitations and other stationery were printed on a range of 40%-100% recycled papers.

We recognise all the talented women involved in our wedding.

JOYCE SUTO CELEBRATES 90 YEARS.

MOUNTVIEW MEMORIES

When I arrived in Mitcham,
1960 was the year,
From Wales, then from Tasmania,
Both quite a way from here.
First came marriage and a job,
A daughter and a home;
Then we discovered Whitehorse,
And a white horse built of stone.
Then we came to Mountview,
Where, gathered into one,
Three Churches came together.
The Uniting Church had begun.
We worshipped God on Sundays,
And with weekday activities too,
A happy combined Congregation
Of all ages just grew and grew.
Our world is changing and we must too.
The years rolled by. I was alone,
But I take a backward look
At friends who cared, and the things we shared,
Some of which I wrote in my book.
Now changes have come as changes do.
And Mountview people have come and gone.
We are the Church and we will go on.



Photo by Colleen Rowe.

Joyce Suto

Joyce is pictured reading her 'occasional' poem to the Mountview members who gathered after worship on March 23rd to honour her 90th Birthday. John Williams lead the celebration, commenting that although 90 years on, Joyce was not old, only elderly. He wondered whether Joyce, as a librarian, was familiar with Victor Hugo's works, particularly the well known '*Les Miserables*', for in it he had written a line specially for her, although he hadn't put in her name as a leader. Hugo wrote, "*When grace is joined with wrinkles, it is adorable.*"

John explained that a person passes from being elderly to being old when they turn to recharging what is passed rather than expecting more joys ahead. John affirmed that Joyce is elderly, not old, and she is still Mountview's resident poet, writing verses noting special occasions. True to form, Joyce read the poem above.

PLEASE TAKE NOTE

EASTER SERVICES

MAUNDY THURSDAY, April 17th, 7:30 pm.

(Ecumenical March of Witness, 11:00 am.)

GOOD FRIDAY, April 18th, 7:30 pm.

EASTER DAY, April 19th, 9:30 am.

GOOD FRIDAY MARCH OF WITNESS

MOUNTVIEW FOLK ARE ENCOURAGED TO JOIN THE ANNUAL MARCH
ALONG WHITEHORSE ROAD FROM NEAR THE NUNAWADING UC TO
TO ALL SAINTS ANGLICAN, MITCHAM.



Organised by St. John's Catholic Church, the march follows the traditional Stations of the Cross. Each participant has a booklet describing the historical event at each of the 14 stations and prayerfully weaves it around current everyday life issues, stimulating much personal thought. The march is supported ecumenically by the same group of churches covered in our weekly prayer cycle. Our minister, Brendan, will be the leader for one of the stations. This is a huge event requiring police supervision and road closures because of the very large crowd. Space, however, is unlimited. It is a contemplative public witness, walking behind a cross.

- **Minister on leave:** Rev. Brendan Byrne will be on leave on Sundays 27th April and 4th May. John Williams will lead worship on the 27th and Rev. Gavin Blakemore on the 4th. Gavin is Minister to Wesley Mission Victoria. The May Communion service will on the 11th.

"CONTACT" FILES

The official historical files of issues of "CONTACT" are now housed in the church office. A partial index has been compiled for each group folder to assist in locating information.

Copies must not be removed from the office.

PROPERTY MATTERS

➤ WESLEY MISSION DEVELOPMENT.

Discussions re the proposed Special Accommodation for Women and Families on a portion of the Mountview House land were suspended while the Synod property divestment program had been resolved. Wesley has subsequently tabled an architect's concept for nine units comprising a mix of single and double bedroom units in a twin two-storied layout. Further work on this is underway to improve the car park arrangements. Outwardly, it has the appearance of a normal residential development. Wesley wish that the term "refuge" be no longer used as this has connotations of high security and potential further abuse incidents. It is short term accommodation for women and families in need of special care while adjustments are being negotiated. Other high security arrangements are being established in discreet locations for families deemed to be in need of protection.



We have met with the Presbytery of Yarra Yarra and presented the proposal, highlighting the fact that all financial and operational aspects are the responsibility of Wesley, but that the venture is a missional partnership arrangement. The draft lease agreement is being vetted by legal advisors to confirm that the rights and obligations of both parties have been clearly expressed.

➤ TOWN HOUSE PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT 77-79 Doncaster East Road.

Church members may have seen the "Notice of Application for a Building Permit" displayed on the fence of the property facing the parking access laneway. The proposal is for six two storey units facing the Mountview property with vehicle access from the laneway, i.e. the developers are seeking approval for the laneway to become a two-way suburban street. Church Council has acted on this immediately and has lodged an objection with the Whitehorse City Council, recommending the application be refused and that the development be redesigned on the basis of an internal roadway. The document lodged with the Council provided an historical summary of our use, construction and maintenance of the lane. It listed many reasons for the objection focussing on traffic safety, pedestrian safety night and day, garbage collection, incompatible garden development, illegitimate parking, construction damage and hazards, drainage, neighbourhood amenity and responsibility for future maintenance by Council.



COFFEE URN!

- A NOTE TO ALL SERVING IN THE KITCHEN.

To prevent damage, please follow these instructions in this order:

- First - add water to required level.
- Next - plug into power and switch on.
- **Turn off and unplug** immediately **before** drawing off coffee (it will remain hot during the serving time.)

Church Council News



Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Services. Although it seems some time back, we should note that the Christmas worship services were well received by the congregation. Of special mention was the participation by members of the Monday Night Study Group and the musical leadership of the MUC Band.

Centre 81. The wonderful work of community support which Centre 81 provides continues apace. This year will mark Centre 81's twenty-fifth anniversary and plans are underway to celebrate this milestone. We give thanks to all those who support the work of Centre 81 as receptionists, committee members and to those who donate food to stock the pantry. It is hoped that the Whitehorse Community Chest will again provide some funding and Des Kidd and his team of door knockers are preparing to participate again. Members of the congregation kindly provided a baby shower for a deeply appreciative Centre 81 client.

Music Together is well underway again. There are two full classes on Monday mornings, including some new families.

Mission to Young People and NCYC. Members of our Monday Night Study Group spent some of their holidays as leaders of Beach Missions and reported on their experiences at worship on 23 February. At the same service, Liz Moore told of her experience as a member of the UCA's National Christian Youth Convention in Sydney.

Mountview on Show: Mountview hosted two workshops for UCA folk in recent weeks. The Synod Commission for Mission's Work and Faith Workshop was held on 21 February and the Presbytery's Ethics Training Workshop on 18 March. Both workshops used many parts of the complex for different sessions. The organisers (and Church Council) thank all the Mountview folk who assisted in the kitchen, set up meeting facilities, and helped out in any way. Ministers who attended the Ethics Workshop spoke favourably about the layout of furniture in the worship space. Brendan and Sandy appreciated the help of those who looked after Sophia so that they could both attend the Ethics Workshop.

Sponsorship Agreement with Loose Change: Church Council has approved the establishment of a sponsorship arrangement with the Loose Change Organisation for the support of the NOCET Orphanage in Tanzania. The agreement will provide \$600 per year from the Mountview Going Further Fund to help run the Orphanage. Sheryl Taylor of the Loose Change Organisation, who has spoken to the congregation on a number of occasions, is very grateful for Mountview's willingness to enter into a sponsorship agreement because it will give some future certainty to the Orphanage as it seeks to serve its "family" of young people. At this stage, the NOCET Orphanage is the only project funded by the Going Further Fund. There is scope for one or two other worthy causes which might also be supported by the Fund – any suggestions of suitable outreach projects will be welcome.

Pancake Day Aids UnitingCare. Our thanks to the Monday Night Study Group for serving pancakes for morning tea on 2 March. Not only were they beautifully prepared and served, but the gold coin donations raised \$168 for UnitingCare projects.

Wedding Bells. Congratulations and best wishes to Michelle Jackson and Chris Molnar who were married on 8 March at Mountview. The service was conducted by the Rev Sandy Brodine with the Rev Brendan Byrne leading the prayers of the people. Afternoon tea was served in the Hall by the folk of Mountview. Congratulations also to Rob and Helen who have gained another son. It was wonderful to see the members of the Monday Night Study Group in their finery as they graciously acted as ushers for the occasion.

Neighbouring Developments. A property developer has proposed to build six two-story units on 77-79 Doncaster East Road (on the northern side of the right-of-way). Our Property & Finance Committee and Church Council have reviewed the details of the proposal. Although Mountview is not against the establishment of units on the block, it has been decided to lodge an objection to the proposed use of the right-of-way for entry and exit to each of the units. The developer's idea is for each unit to have a driveway off the right-of-way which, we believe, will create many traffic safety and amenity problems, especially at times when vehicles are also entering and exiting the Mountview car park. A formal objection has been lodged with the Whitehorse City Council.

NOT IN OUR NAME.

On Sunday, 9th March, members of the congregation were given the opportunity to sign the following petition, 'NOT IN OUR NAME'. Other local churches were also doing likewise.

"We, the undersigned, publically declare:

- *to the Australian people,*
- *to the Federal Coalition Government,*
- *to the Federal Opposition,*
- *to all refugees currently held in offshore detention centres:*

THAT WE BELIEVE THE FOLOWING ACTIONS OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ARE IMMORAL, INHUMANE AND INCONSISTANT WITH OUR HUMABITARIAN OBLIGATIONS UNDER INTERNATIONAL LAW:

1. *The ongoing incarceration of refugees in offshore detention centres, with consequent distress and physical injury, and the recent death of Reza Berati one of the refugees in our care.*
2. *The continual demonizing of refugees, and the framing of the refugee issue as primarily relating to Australia's sovereignty, rather than as a worldwide tragedy demanding a compassionate global response.*

We state that these actions should not have taken place in our nation - or indeed in any civilised society – and though they have been enacted by a democratically elected government, we reject them and declare they are NOT IN OUR NAME.

We call on all thinking and concerned citizens of the nation to raise their voices in protest against the shameful actions of this government and its agencies, and to make peaceful but urgent representation to their local members on this vital issue; the moral integrity of our country is at stake and our role in the concert of civilised nations."

The petition sheets were presented to Mr. Michael Sukkar, Federal Member for Deakin, by representatives from local churches on the following Friday. A summary of the conversation with Mr. Sukkar is on the next page.

WALK for
JUSTICE
for
REFUGEES
PALM SUNDAY MARCH
2pm, April 13, State Library
corner Swanston & La Trobe Sts Melbourne

organised by the Refugee Advocacy Network
act for peace
Australian Churches Together
Victorian Council of Churches
150 TRADES HALL
O'basp
Call Chris 0403 913 163 or Marie 0439 282 673 for more information



Members of the Mountview Social Justice Group intend participating in this forthcoming rally on Palm Sunday and they encourage others to join with them.

Watch the weekly notice sheet for a suggested time to gather on Mitcham railway station to form a party.

DELEGATION TO OUR LOCAL THE FEDERAL MEMBER, Mr. MICHAEL SUKKAR.

Members of the delegation represented Social Justice Action groups from;

All Saints Anglican, Mitcham. St John's Catholic, Mitcham.

Mountview Uniting, Mitcham St. Thomas, the Apostle, Blackburn.

The delegation was assembled very quickly in response to Manus Island events and was to convey the views of the group regarding current refugee policies. The appointment was obtained by All Saints Anglican, Mitcham.

The petitions from each of the congregations, "Not in Our Name" signed on March 9th were received by Mr. Sukkar.

The group had a prepared six-point statement to work through. Mr. Sukkar's responses broadly covered the points.

[Note: This is a very condensed summary of a 45 minute session. The delegation was listened to and was graciously granted an extension of the allotted time. The words attributed to Mr. Sukkar cannot be taken as factual and are based on brief notes and memory recall.]

We questioned the legality of the policies and actions of the Government against the UNHCR Refugee Conventions. Mr. Sukkar responded along these lines:

Your statement is fair enough, but we must recognise that those conventions were laid down reflecting the situation arising from WW 2, quite different from what is currently happening. Ultimately it is the aim of the Government to not require any off-shore detention. We take no comfort that they are there and that they have been there for six years.

Currently there are approximately 30,000 on-shore detainees and 8000 off-shore. What program is there in place to process those? Cannot the timing of that processing be accelerated?

A cap has been set on the annual intake. Processing, accepting and absorbing refugees is very costly. We have a limited humanitarian intake. Those places are totally taken up by those already here, therefore we are not able to take any who have been processed and declared legitimate from any of the UNHCR camps. We have taken in many, such as the 200 or so Burmese families in the Deakin electorate, in recent years. Possibly, temporary protection visas are available for some already here, the Government expecting that many of those will return to their country of origin when conditions change. Legally, receiving countries may determine refugee status in regard to the country of departure, not the country of origin. Australia relaxes that and is prepared to assess the situation back to the country of origin. That is how we received many Burmese. We also have to separate out 'economic refugees' from those fleeing political and religious persecution.

We have been informed that there is a very high cost of keeping asylum seekers in detention. We object to the diversion of overseas aid funds to pay for detention costs. Would they not be better directed towards assisting resettlement of asylum seekers already processed by the UNHCR either in Australia or in another country of choice?

People who have already arrived by boat, or overstayed visas, number more than the budgeted humanitarian intake, for which there is a cap. There is a huge cost in resettlement for those accepted under the humanitarian program - housing, health, social service, education, language training, child care etc. Those people have more than filled the quota. The previous government's refugee and asylum seeker program cost \$11billion. That cost must be cut.

Australia is a wealthy country with an already diverse population. We are in a position to take far more. Is it your policy to increase the quota?

Mr. Sukkar claimed that Australia stood high on world terms regarding its humanitarian intake, he said, "at about number three, behind USA and Canada." A rally pamphlet was shown to him showing Australia, at 49th on a population base and 91st on a wealth base. He offered no response.

He accepted a list of questions to which he will reply after receiving advice from the Minister for Immigration.

HANDEL'S "Lenten Piece"

George Frederick Handel was a failure. Bankrupted, in great physical pain, and the victim of plots sabotaging his career, the once-great composer scheduled a "farewell" appearance in London in April. To the London elite, it looked like this "German nincompoop", as he was once called, was through. This summer, however, he composed *Messiah*, which not only brought him back into the spotlight but was deemed by some to be "an epitome of Christian faith".

Discouragement came early. His father wanted him to be a lawyer, not a musician. Even after he took up a musical career (becoming the composer for England's Chapel Royal), he preferred the old-fashioned operas to the more popular music of the day – which often meant playing to empty halls. (In his own mind, he joked, an empty venue would mean great acoustics.)

He didn't joke for long. In 1737 Handel's opera company went bankrupt, and he suffered what some believe to have been a mild stroke. But to make matters worse, his latest musical fascination – the oratorio, a composition for orchestra and voices telling a sacred story without costumes, scenery, or drama – was his most controversial yet. His first oratorio (actually, the first of its kind in English), *Esther*, caused outrage by the church. A Bible story was being told by "common mummers", and even the words of God were being spoken in the theatre.

In 1739, advertisements for *Israel in Egypt* were torn down by devout Christians, who also disrupted performances. All of this angered the devoutly Lutheran Handel. As his friend Sir John Hawkins wrote: "Throughout his life, (he) manifested a deep sense of religion. In conversation he would frequently express the pleasure he felt in setting the Scriptures to music, and how contemplating the many sublime passages of the Psalms had contributed to his edification."

Deeply depressed and now threatened with debtor's prison, Handel was visited by his friend Charles Jennens, who had written a libretto about the life of Christ with the text completely taken from the Bible. "Would Handel compose the music for it?" he asked. Handel answered that he would and estimated completion in a year. Handel began composing the *Messiah* on 22 August 1741, and worked like a madman, obsessed. He rarely left his room and rarely touched his meals. But in 24 days he had composed an immense physical feat. When he finished writing what would become known as the Hallelujah Chorus, he said, "I did think I did see all Heaven before me, and the great God himself."

Though the performance of the piece again caused controversy (Jonathan Swift, author of *Gulliver's Travels*, and then the dean of Saint Patrick's Cathedral, was outraged and initially refused to allow his music to participate), the premiere, a benefit performance on 13 April 1742, at Dublin's Fishamble Street was a sensation.

Still it took nearly a year for *Messiah* to be invited to London. Religious controversy surrounded it, and Handel compromised a bit by dropping the "blasphemous" title from handbills. It was instead titled "New Sacred Oratorio". But the controversy wasn't strong enough to keep away the king, who stood at the opening notes of the Hallelujah Chorus (although some historians have suggested it was because he was partially deaf and mistook it for the national anthem), a tradition ever since.

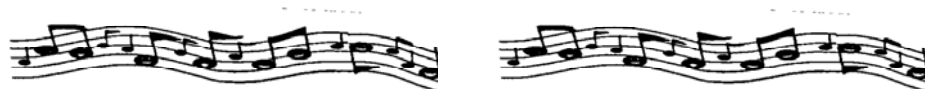
.....Cont.

Handel – cont.

Though it had met rave reviews in Dublin (“the most finished piece of music”), it was not very popular in London after its premiere. By 1745 Handel was again playing to empty houses and close to poverty. Not until his oratorio *Judas Maccabeus*, which was misunderstood by the English as a veiled nationalistic anthem, did Handel (and with him *Messiah*) reach the pinnacle of his career.

Until his death, Handel conducted 30 performances of *Messiah* (none at Christmastime for Handel deemed it a Lenten piece), only one of which was in a church, Bristol Cathedral. In that audience sat John Wesley. “*I doubt if that congregation was ever so serious at a sermon as they were during this performance,*” the founder of Methodism remarked.

(Reprinted with permission from “*A Bucket of Surprises*” compiled by J. John and Mark Stibbe)



CENTRE 81



This year, Centre 81 is celebrating the 25th anniversary of its opening.

At 12.30 p.m. on Friday May 9, in the Fellowship Room, at Centre 81, we will be holding a Celebratory Lunch.

Please, Receptionists, put on your thinking caps, and remind us of any one you may remember who was a volunteer over the years, and now is not on the Roster.



We would very much like to invite all who have served our Community by being involved at Centre 81.

Please keep this date free, and plan to be there, as this Outreach into our Community has been, and still is, a wonderful achievement for our Church Family. We are truly blessed that we have been part of God’s work in our local area, and we ask His continuing guidance and grace for the work that we are doing.

Please see Jill Kidd or Margot Kemke with any of your recollections, or for any additional information.

Jill Kidd. - for the Committee of Management.



The STORY of the RUTHWELL CROSS.

Soon after the deposing of King Charles II and the start of government by the Puritans, a motion was moved in the Assembly of the Church of Scotland severely criticising the Presbyterian minister of the congregation at Ruthwell, a township on the south coast of Scotland. He was accused of keeping in his churchyard an offensive engraved image and was ordered to remove it. It was a very tall stone cross bearing images with halos, which would have been acceptable to Roman Catholics, but at that point in history, their relationships with the Church of Scotland were very strained.

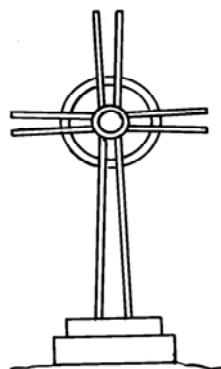
At the following Assembly meeting, it was announced that the offensive item was still there and “if the minister at Ruthwell did not remove forthwith this article of ‘popery’, he would be defrocked.”

When next the snoopers came, they agreed that the item was not to be found. The matter faded from memory until about 1820, nearly two hundred years later. Repairs to the church floors were being undertaken and the workmen uncovered a very long intricately carved cross with Biblical figures front and back which seemed to tell a story. Down both side faces were lines of strange characters. Although they could not understand its message or purpose, the minister and parishioners deemed it of high historical value and set out to erect it in the church. This was not a simple matter. It was so tall that a deep recess had to be dug into the floor and the roof above converted into a small apse. The floor recess was walled around with stonework leaving space so that all the carvings and lettering could be seen. An iron safety rail encircled the well. And there it stood – a very long slender mystery, but now protected from the weather.

In 1840, an expert in ancient Celtic writing translated the runic characters. The accompanying poem, “*The Dream of the Holy Rood*”, is his translation. He dated it from the early 700’s. Other scholars became interested in the carvings and interpreted the figures on the front and rear. They represent a summary of Jesus’ ministry and the crucifixion itself, far removed from the ‘popish’ interpretation of the puritanical zealots two hundred years before.

Further scholastic comparisons with other ancient stone relics suggest that this rood, or ‘Holy Cross’, was carved by the monks at an abbey at the Well of Ruth following their spiritual experiences at the Synod of Whitby in 664. The act of burying it in the dry soil under the flooring flag stones and then housing it indoors has preserved this fine sculpture work from weather damage. Much outdoor stonework in the British Isles has been seriously eroded by the contamination of the industrial age. The abbey at Ruth’s Well has long since gone, yet there remains this one spectacular relic.

John Williams



The Ruthwell Cross, St. John’s Cross at Iona, and Mountview’s cross are of similar height, two in stone and one in steel.



THE RUTHWELL CROSS

*The ancient Anglo-Saxon poem below is inscribed in Celtic runes on the two side panels of the **Ruthwell Cross**. It tells the story of the crucifixion from the point of view of the cross. It is the cross speaking.*

The Dream of the Holy Rood.

**Then the young hero prepared himself
that was Almighty God
strong and firm of mood
he mounted the lofty cross
courageously in the sight of many**

**I raised the powerful king
the lord of the heavens
I dared not fall down
They reviled us both together
I was all stained with blood
poured from the man's side**

**Christ was on the cross
yet thither hastening
men came from afar
unto the noble one**

**I beheld that all
with sorrow I was overwhelmed**

**I was all wounded with shafts
They laid him down limb weary;
they stood at the corpse's head;
they beheld the Lord of Heaven**

AN OPINION PIECE - A COMMENT REGARDING GMOs from JOHN WILLIAMS

Robert Fraley, Mary-Dell Chilton and Marc Van Montagu have been jointly awarded the 2013 World Food Prize, considered to be the Nobel prize of agriculture. Alarm has erupted amongst the opponents of Genetically Modified Organisms.

Fraley is the chief technical officer and vice-president of Monsanto; Chilton, the founder of Syngenta Biotechnology; Van Montagu, chairman of the Institute of Plant Biotechnology Outreach at Ghent University in Belgium. Their discoveries over the years paved the way for a host of other scientists developing the genetically modified food and fibre crops already used by some 17 million farmers across the world. The citation reads in part: *"making it possible for farmers to grow crops with improved yields, resistance to insects and disease, and the ability to tolerate extreme variations in climate."*

The awarding of this esteemed prize runs counter to the anti-GM food clichés..... *GM crops are unsafe to eat: GM crops are bad for the environment: GM crops are the tools of big business: GM crops exploit the poor farmer.*

In over 20 years, no one has yet found any GM crop unsafe to eat. GM plants are less stressful on the environment as the use of chemical fertilisers and synthetic pesticides is curtailed. (DDT has gone.) Not-for-profit institutes such as IRRI, CIMMYT, CSIRO are the developers and first multipliers of the superior seed stock. Subsequent hybrid seed stock developed and marketed by multi-national corporations offer a farmer a substantially higher return on his seed purchase investment. (Being hybrid, saving seed for the next crop is bad practice. First cross hybrid seed is an annual purchase, but the return is substantial. A poor farmer needs to be shown that instead of saving seed, he sells it and instead saves the money to buy next season's seed.)

Once a myth takes root and spreads, it is awfully hard to dislodge. A mental barrier springs up when taking away the justification for castigating a nominal oppressor, such as big business.

There appears to be a senseless fight brewing regarding the place of Genetically Modified Organisms in regard to the ability of the earth's limited agricultural land to feed a steadily growing world population.

Why am I interested in this contentious subject? Most Mountview folk will remember that for many years of my working life I would go off overseas for long periods of time, sometimes months, on another United Nations sponsored agricultural or forestry project. During that period, starting in the Middle East, I was engineering the major tools of plant breeding research scientists to enable them to conduct cross breeding programs for vegetables, grain crops and fibre crops in total isolation from external contamination. For example, in the sophisticated computer operated greenhouse complex I designed and erected (funded by the United Nations Development Program), North Korean agronomists were able to grow and test rice crops at a rate exceeding three crops a year. For them, opportunities for traditional cross pollination methods in the open field came once a year over about a three-day period at about 10:00 o'clock on each day. These programs were frequently interrupted or destroyed by a monsoonal thunderstorm. But, in the greenhouse chambers, equipped with both day length shortening and lengthening capability (lighting and black out), heating and cooling, their experiments were safe from all weather situations, even snow. Within three years, they developed strains of rice which could be grown on salty marginal coastal areas, vastly increasing their nation's food stocks.

The success of that work attracted the attention of the International Rice Research Institute in the Philippines and the National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources in India. For these organisations, total isolation quarantine greenhouses and attached laboratories enabled scientists to carry out safe molecular biology research and to check that no 'trojan horses' had crept into their work or into the work of others involved in plant tissue exchange programs.

Along came - drought resistant wheat: rice able to remain standing in a heavy storm: rice able to fix its own nitrogen instead of being dosed with loads of fertiliser: wheat which aphids would not touch: wheat with high protein content: rice producing beta-carotene to overcome Vitamin A deficiency (blindness in infants): perennial rice for hillside growing, like a grass, feeding people and cattle and reducing soil erosion: cotton with inbuilt insecticide.

The technique for precisely drying rice seed at the International Rice Research Institute to prepare it for preservation in the gene bank was developed further for the vegetable farmers on the great Ganges plain in India. There they now have vegetable seeds free of congenital pests and of very high viability. After precision drying, these seeds are sealed in canisters for holding for the next planting. The dramatically improved viability factor has had the effect of increasing the land acreage by about 15% where there is absolutely no more available land - every seed a plant leaving no gaps in the row!

In 1961, there were 4.5 billion hectares of farming land across the world feeding three billion people. In 2011, just 4.9 billion hectares are feeding seven billion! Average calories for those three billion were 2189 per day, but by 2009, it has risen to 2830 calories per day - for more than twice the population! The 'Green Revolution' started this massive increase in efficiency. The work continues, and must continue, for the world still has vast areas of famine. Without clearing forests, from where may we obtain additional land? Fertiliser runoff contaminates water ways and encourages toxic algal blooms. Pesticide and weedicide residues detrimental to wild life (and humans) must be curtailed. Viable agriculture has to extend across marginal land. Rainfall variability is increasing, requiring plants able to hold viability over dry and wet periods. Fair quality land must yield higher returns without the environment being jeopardised.

Many of these production gains have come via taking a superior attribute of one plant and giving it to another. Gene transfer is the work of the molecular biologist. It is painstaking work, requiring extreme finesse and is usually

accompanied by a long string of disappointments with an occasional breakthrough, that breakthrough having to survive at least seven successive crop generations to prove both its truth and worth and to confirm no 'trojan horse'. Peer review is extremely tough. After the seven generations, produce is fed to animals, fish, poultry, etc. seeking any side effects. Finally, the plants go into production and the benefits made available to farmer and consumer.

Yet there are the sceptics who still claim GMOs are dangerous. They seem emotionally charged and become subject to fear, not able to analyse proven data, claiming conspiracy. I am aghast at their actions in destroying experimental crops, denying the right of others their choice between eating and starving, or in the case of 'golden rice', not being born blind! How dare they!

I know, that when I settle down to sleep each night, across the world there are millions who are also bedding down with food in their tummies through the works of the scientists I assisted. I rest easy, my work done.

Let GM labelling begin! I will choose it if available.



Absolute quarantine greenhouse complex at the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) in the Philippines. It is highly vandal resistant, even repelling blows from an axe! Typhoon winds of 250k/h left no damage when other structures were blown out. Secure molecular biology labs are attached via an airlock complex. The further building houses the gene bank where over 100,000 rice varieties are stored. The author replaced all the refrigeration equipment for this facility and reduced the holding temperature for the 50 year chamber to minus 20°C. Over three years, nine projects for IRRI were undertaken, many directed towards the security of the work in process.

BITS and PIECES

It's amazing what you find when you are planning to move house! I found two year's issues of *FOCUS*, the magazine of the Mitcham Methodist Circuit. The August, 1967, issue had an article on the opening and dedication of Mountview Church Centre which I quote for your interest: *Over 800 people sought entry into the new Mitcham Methodist and Presbyterian Church for the Opening and Dedication Service on Saturday, 8th July, (1967). It was an exciting occasion for all concerned. After some ten years a dream has been realized and this co-operative venture for use by the two congregations has been completed.*

The dedication of the buildings was performed by the Moderator of the Melbourne North Presbytery, the Rev. W. V. Howden. A significant moment in the service came when Mr. Howden and the President of Conference, the Rev. J. W. R. Westerman, handed keys of the buildings to the Rev. Neil Brown, of the Presbyterian Church, and the Rev. Norman Beurle of the Methodist Church. These two men had worked untiringly with a large band of laymen and women to make a vision a reality.

On the following day, at the Methodist service at 9 a.m., an estimated 600 people, including some 250 Sunday School children, met for worship. Again all the spare seating was in use, and children sat on the carpet down the aisle and in the front of the sanctuary area. Although the experimental order of service, with children leaving at two points, did not run very smoothly, and the unexpected numbers meant insufficient hymn books, and orders of service, no one seemed to mind. The feeling was of deep real joy.

As the Presbyterians arrived for their service at 10.30 a.m., they, too, filled the church, so nearly 1,000 people passed through the Mountview Centre on that memorable first Sunday morning.

"We have a strange illusion that time cancels sins, but mere time does nothing either to the fact or the guilt of sin. The guilt is washed out not by time but by repentance and the blood of Jesus Christ." *C. S. Lewis*

An article in *National Geographic* several years ago provided a penetrating picture of God's wings...

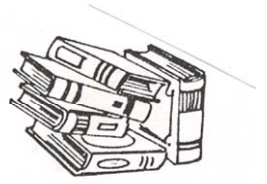
After a forest fire in Yellowstone National Park, forest rangers began their trek up a mountain to assess the inferno's damage. One ranger found a bird literally petrified in ashes, perched statuesquely on the ground at the base of a tree. Somewhat sickened by the eerie sight, he knocked the bird over with a stick. When he struck it, three tiny chicks scurried from under their dead mothers' wings. The loving mother, keenly aware of impending disaster, had carried her offspring to the base of the tree and had gathered them under her wings instinctively knowing that the toxic smoke would rise.

She could have flown to safety but had refused to abandon her babies. When the blaze had arrived and the heat had scorched her small body, the mother had remained steadfast. Because she had been willing to die, those under the cover of her wings would live.

"He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge." (Psalm 91:4).

MOUNTVIEW LIBRARY

Recently we had a visit by a niece of Ray Nicholas, a Sister formerly at the Evangelical Sisterhood of Mary in Germany and now at the Church of the same name at Theresa Heights in NSW. Born in the aftermath of World War Two in Germany, the Sisterhood now includes Sisters from many countries and many denominations, also a small Brotherhood.



These are two of their publications:

I Will Pour out My Spirit (R.E.Davies)

A comprehensive analysis of religious revivals in many lands from biblical times right up to the 20th century.

Realities – Down Under

A collection of testimonies of God's faithfulness from the Evangelical Sisters of Mary in Australia.

-O-O-O-O-O-

Camel, Train and Aeroplane – The Story of Skipper Partridge (Arch Grant)

First appointed by John Flynn in 1917 as Patrol Padre at Oodnadatta, and later at Alice Springs, Skipper carried the Christian message through the vast Inland. At first he travelled with his much-loved camels, later using cars and then aircraft. He played a large part in the lives of those in remote places, even assisting Alf Traeger to set up pedal radios. This book gives a firsthand account of the work of Patrol Padres from the early days to the 1950s.

Dementia: Frank and Linda's Story - New Understanding, New Approach, New Hope

(Louise Morse) Their story should give support and encouragement to those caring for loved ones "in the land of shadows".

Clinging to the Wreckage - (John Mortimer)

John Mortimer is a playwright, novelist, lawyer, creator of the lovable *Rumpole of the Bailey* and much more! His life story is exhilarating, hilarious and wise.

CHURCH



LIBRARY

ENJOY THE BOOKS!

JOYCE SUTO (Librarian)

BRENDAN'S BOOKSHELF – A SERIES

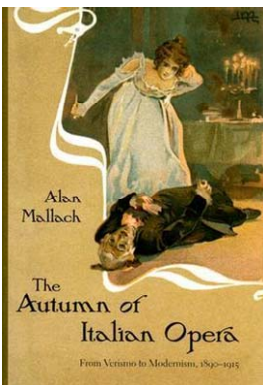
The Sparrow by Mary Doria Russell. Black Swan Books, 1997. Can you imagine the story of Job rendered as a science-fiction space adventure? Former linguist and paleoanthropologist Mary Doria Russell did, and the result was a splendid and beautiful meditation on the nature of human frailty and faith, all set within the alien context of a non-human world. *The Sparrow* tells the story of humanity's first contact with an alien culture, and of a renegade mission to the planet Rakhat lead by Jesuit priest and scientist Father Emilio Sandoz. There, tragedy befalls Sandoz and his companions, and a train of events is set in motion that will radically transform Rakhat's bi-species, hierarchical society. Although set in outer space, *The Sparrow* and its sequel *The Children of God* is intensely human, a story of faith, humility, and human fallibility in the face of cosmic suffering and hardship. Moving, compelling, beautifully written and heart-wrenchingly poignant. Highly recommended.



Them: Adventures with Extremists by Jon Ronson. Picador, 2001. When English journalist and documentary maker Jon Ronson decided to explore the world of religious fundamentalists, conspiracy theorists, race supremacists and other similarly exotic creatures of the “lunatic fringe”, he can hardly have imagined the ordeal that lay in store. But from the forests of northern California to the backstreets of London, Ronson tracks down and interviews would-be jihadists, self-proclaimed mandarins of the New World Order, and, that most curious of contradictions, a “moderate” leader of the Ku Klux Klan. Along the way, Ronson also unexpectedly learns many things about himself and his own attitudes to life, including the human tendency toward compartmentalising people into “us” and “them”. By turns disturbing, funny, challenging, and insightful, *Them* is a must-read for those wanting to explore the Twilight Zone of the human mind.



The Autumn of Italian Opera: From Verismo to Modernism, 1890-1915 by Alan Mallach. Northeastern University Press, 2007. Between 1890 and 1920, Italian opera underwent what even many at the time thought of as a golden age, when a succession of composers - Puccini, Mascagni, Franchetti, Catalani, Giordano, Cilea, Leoncavallo and others - produced a string of operatic masterpieces that took the world by storm. However, by a clever combination of history, politics, sociology, and cultural criticism, Alan Mallach demonstrates that this “golden age” was, in fact, opera's last hurrah – and that the very forces which drew it to the centre of social discourse would just as quickly exile opera to the outskirts of popular culture. Powerfully evoking the doomed beauty of *fin de siècle* Europe, this is an engaging read for anyone interested in the 19th century, European culture, or social history.



from the EDITOR

Travis Cox is making the news in Bendigo (see "Making News" P6.) and we wish him well in his new appointment. I want to record my thanks to him for lifting from my shoulders the collection and presentation of Mountview's local news in the 'People Pages'. Travis is now too remote to have his ear to the ground as to what is going on amongst our readers. Thank you, Travis.

I am looking for another hand to be raised. It is small but a good place to start in writing.

A couple of articles in this issue cover contentious matters. I would really love some responses for the next issue.

Margaret

+++++



2013 – Another BUMPER Year for SAMMY STAMP

I am pleased to report that due to continued support of Church and non-church groups, individuals and businesses, scattered about Victoria, Tasmania and indeed, Australia, sales have reached a record of \$48,321.98, (Last year, \$42,616) We thank all involved. Acknowledgment of a new Victorian group (Sammy's Flippers) generous recent donation of over \$13,000 from their activities to our sales figure above is given with thanks.

Sales since 1977 now total of \$705,503.79 plus with interest \$737,151.36. I wish to also thank the volunteers from our pool of about 40 persons who come in on a Thursday to trim, sort and sell the stamps received so that many worthy causes can be supported.

I also thank members of Synod Staff, as well as the U.C.A.F. Council for the assistance given to help our work to continue.

Below is the lists of grants approved during 2013 totalling \$37,200 (last year \$39,705).

SHARE/UnitingCare Community Options - Tasmanian Bushfires Appeal.	\$2,000
Glen Waverley U. C. - to help build a kitchen in Kenya to support street children.	\$2,000
SHARE/UnitingCare East Burwood Counselling - support for its service.	\$3,200
Leighmoor U.C. - assist in upgrading kitchen for their 'men's shed'.	\$2,000
Supporting the Vanuatu Prevention of Blindness Project.	\$1,000
Mission Liaison group - towards transport costs of sending charitable goods overseas.	\$2,000
Uniting World - midwives for Sth Sudan; child education, India; business loans, West Timor.	\$1,000
Frontier Services: - towards night flying training for Centralian (Alice Springs) Patrol Padre.	\$5,000
High St., (Frankston) U.C. - to establish a maternal healthcare program in Nth India.	\$2,000
SHARE/Lentara UnitingCare - to assist the operations of Brimbank (Sunshine) 'Men's Shed'.	\$4,000
SHARE/Uniting Church - N.S.W. Bush fire Appeal.	\$5,000
SHARE/UnitingWorld - Philippines Typhoon Appeal.	\$5,000
SHARE/UnitingCare Werribee Support and Housing - replenish food voucher supplies.	\$3,000

\$37,200

This brings the total of grants approved since 1977 to \$686,175.

Allan J. Clark
Convener, Sammy Stamp.



FUNNIES

So Grateful

The old woman had been going on a bit, so when she asked, “Have I ever told you about my lovely grandchildren?” one of the listeners replied, “No – and may I say how truly grateful we are about that!” (Have I ever told you about my lovely great-grandchildren? M.W. Ed.)

Future Plans

A young minister asked an elderly parishioner what plans he had for the future. The old man replied, shaking his head, “At my age I don’t even buy green bananas.”

Confused Theology

Did you hear about the agnostic, dyslexic insomniac who lay awake at night wondering, “Is there a Dog?”

Chamber of Horrors

I took my mother-in-law to Madame Tussaud’s Chamber of Horrors and one of the attendants said, “Keep her moving, we’re stock-taking.”

Lost Luggage

Explorers in South America are said to have discovered several lost airstrips. They also reported having found a mountain of ancient lost luggage.

The scientific theory I like best is that the rings of Saturn are composed entirely of lost airline luggage. (Mark Russell)

And God said...

As God once said, and I think rightly... (Attributed to Margaret Thatcher)

Fence-sitting

Some people say that is a God; others say there is no God. The truth probably lies somewhere in between. (W.B.Yeats)

LECTIONARY



LENT

A season of preparation and discipline that begins with Ash Wednesday and concludes at sundown on Holy Saturday. During the forty weekdays and six Sundays in Lent, the Church remembers the life and ministry of Jesus and renews its commitment to him in Christian discipleship. The season is the traditional time to prepare for baptisms and confirmations to be celebrated at the Easter Vigil or on Easter Sunday, or during the season of Easter.

Date	Day	First Reading	Psalm	Second Reading	Gospel	C
March 5 2014	Ash Wednesday	Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 or Is 58:1-12	Ps 51:1-17	2 Cor 5:20b – 6:10	Mt 6:1-6, 16-21	P
March 9 2014	Lent 1	Gn 2:15-17; 3:1-7	Ps 32	Rom 5:12-19	Mt 4:1-11	P
March 16 2014	Lent 2	Gn 12:1-4a	Ps 121	Rom 4:1-5, 13-17	Jn 3:1-17	P
March 23 2014	Lent 3	Ex 17:1-7	Ps 95	Rom 5:1-11	Jn 4:5-42	P
March 25 2014	Annunciation of the Lord	Is 7:10-14	Ps 45 or Ps 40:5-10	Heb 10:4-10	Lk 1:26-38	W
March 30 2014	Lent 4	1 Sm 16:1-13	Ps 23	Eph 5:8-14	Jn 9:1-41	P
April 6 2014	Lent 5	Ez 37:1-14	Ps 130	Rom 8:6-11	Jn 11:1-45	
April 13 2014	Palm Sunday Liturgy of the Palms	Mt 21:1-11	Ps 118:1-2, 19-29			P
April 13 2014	Passion Sunday Liturgy of the Passion	Is 50:4-9a	Ps 31:9-16	Phil 2:5-11	Mt 26:14 – 27:66 or Mt 27:11-54	P
April 14 2014	Monday in Holy Week	Is 42:1-9	Ps 36:5-11	Heb 9:11-15	Jn 12:1-11	P
April 15 2014	Tuesday in Holy Week	Is 49:1-7	Ps 71:1-14	1 Cor 1:18-31	Jn 12:20-36	P
April 16 2014	Wednesday in Holy Week	Is 50:4-9a	Ps 70	Heb 12:1-3	Jn 13:21-32	P
April 17 2014	Maundy Thursday	Ex 12:1-4, (5-10), 11-14	Ps 116:1-2, 12-19	1 Cor 11:23-26	Jn 13:1-17, 31b-35	P
April 18 2014	Good Friday	Is 52:13 – 53:12	Ps 22	Heb 10:16-25 or Heb 4:14-16; 5:7-9	Jn 18:1 – 19:42	W
April 19 2014	Holy Saturday	Job 14:1-14 or Lam 3:1-9, 19-24	Ps 31:1-4, 15-16	1 Pt 4:1-8	Mt 27:57-66 or Jn 19:38-42	W

EASTER

The great fifty days of Easter includes eight Sundays beginning with the Easter Vigil and concluding on the Day of Pentecost. The season celebrates the Resurrection and Ascension of Christ and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

April 20 2014	Easter Day	Acts 10:34-43 or Jer 31:1-6	Ps 118:1-2, 14-24	Col 3:1-4 or Acts 10:34-43	Jn 20:1-18 or Mt 28:1-10	W
April 20 2014	Easter Evening	Is 25:6-9	Ps 114	1 Cor 5:6b-8	Lk 24:13-49	W
April 27 2014	Easter 2	Acts 2:14a, 22-32	Ps 16	1 Pt 1:3-9	Jn 20:19-31	W
May 4 2014	Easter 3	Acts 2:14a, 36-41	Ps 116:1-4, 12-19	1 Pt 1:17-23	Lk 24:13-35	W
May 11 2014	Easter 4	Acts 2:42-47	Ps 23	1 Pt 2:19-25	Jn 10:1-10	W
May 18 2014	Easter 5	Acts 7:55-60	Ps 31:1-5, 15-16	1 Pt 2:2-10	Jn 14:1-14	W
May 25 2014	Easter 6	Acts 17:22-31	Ps 66:8-20	1 Pt 3:13-22	Jn 14:15-21	W
May 29 2014	Ascension Day	Acts 1:1-11	Ps 47 or Ps 93	Eph 1:15-23	Lk 24:44-53	W
Jun 1 2014	Easter 7	Acts 1:6-14	Ps 68:1-10, 32-35	1 Pt 4:12-14, 5:6-11	Jn 17:1-11	W
Jun 8 2014	Day of Pentecost	Acts 2:1-21 or Num 11:24-30	Ps 104:24- 34, 35b	1 Cor 12:3b-13 or Acts 2:1-21	Jn 20:19-23 or Jn 7:37-39	R

Mountview Church Mitcham

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http://www.mountview.unitingchurch.org.au

MINISTER:

Rev. Brendan Byrne 9873 1150 (office) / 9874 0362 (home) / 0408 081 869
minister@mountview.unitingchurch.org.au

CENTRE 81: Monday to Friday 10am to 12.30pm 9873 1726

CHILDREN'S and YOUTH MINISTRY:

Monday Night Small Group - Simon Plumridge.....
BUGGSS (3 years to Grade 5) – Sue Terrill, Daniel Jackson
MUGGs (Grade 6 to Year 8) – Michael Plumridge

CHURCH COUNCIL:

Chairperson
Rob Jackson

(PERSONAL DETAILS HAVE BEEN DELETED)

Secretary
Geoffrey Willis.....

Treasurer
Peter Cox

Finance & Property
Don Bain

Music Ministry
Geoffrey Willis



CHURCH OFFICE:

CONGREGATION:

Chairperson
Tim Menger

Secretary
Lynne Rosenthal

CONTACT:

Editor: Margaret Williams

YARRA YARRA PRESBYTERY REPRESENTATIVES:

David Rowe
Geoffrey Willis

MULTI-MEDIA:

Rob Jackson

PROPERTY BOOKINGS

Don Bain (temporary) 0447 312 996

LEAD STEWARDS:

John Cosstick, Peter Cox, David Rowe. Dana Nicolau.

MEMBERS' ROLLS & STEWARDSHIP RECORDER:

David Rowe

WEB MASTER:

Des Kidd

WEEKLY NOTICESHEET:

Lynne Rosenthal (1st half of year)
Margaret Cosstick (2nd half of year)

LIBRARIAN:

Joyce Suto

CONTACT is the bi-monthly magazine of Mountview Uniting Church, Mitcham.

It is issued on the first Sunday of the months of February, April, June, August, October and December.

Contributions for the next issue will be due on **Sunday, 17th May, 2014.**