

NEWVIEW

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Coping with Change

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Although I didn't know it at the time, when I was born, change was part of the deal; change goes hand-in-hand with being alive.

As a child, I confronted change daily as I expanded my knowledge, experiences and understanding of the world about me. Mostly, this was exciting, but sometimes anticipated changes created anxieties within me (would I cope with the work in the next grade?). I was supported through these times by my family and close friends. Often, as the enforced change became more familiar to me, I discovered unexpected pleasures in new things (Grade 6 was manageable after all, and the teacher read us some gripping stories!). Being a child, most changes were initiated by events or circumstances outside my control: my father went to war and returned quite changed; school *had* to be endured etc.



In changing circumstances, I found strength and comfort in familiar routines, rituals and associations which gave me a foundation from which to adapt as needed. Just as the rhythms of the natural world – the arrival of day and night, the changing of the seasons, the cycles of birth and death – provide a constant background to our lives, so the little daily routines and practices that made up my little life helped to remind me of who I am and where I belong. However, even familiar activities have been modified over time, as I realise they have outlived their usefulness (I suspect my morning bowl of cereal has been my longest-surviving daily ritual).

Now, reviewing my life as an older person I am amazed at all the changes I have experienced, when considering the activities which now form my daily life, the locations I have lived in, and the technologies that have been introduced in my life span (plastics, antibiotics, television, space travel, electronics...). My beliefs and my faith, in association with my understanding and experience of my world have continually had to be adjusted as I have encountered new ideas and knowledge.

I have also realised that in later life, as in childhood, change is often not optional: it is frequently connected to loss. We lose loved partners and friends; our health, strength, skills or memory may become compromised. Any of these can precipitate radical change in our lives. But, as I also found in childhood, I find unexpected delights in adjusting to change: making new friends; finding inventive ways to do old tasks with an ageing body; watching and helping new generations emerge and blossom; exploring our shrunken world on the internet. In conjunction with continuing involvement in old interests (music, gardening, craft etc) life is exceedingly rich.

As changes have appeared to gather speed, I have also become aware that *some* change is optional; often there are choices, and we can even change our minds! I have said a limited 'yes' to computer technology; but a firm 'no' to mobile phones. However, I want to make Francis Macnab's suggested commandment, 'Be alive to new possibilities' a future guiding light. The articles in this issue mostly tell stories of how, as a church community, we are opening up to new possibilities, coping with change and supporting each other in that.

Robin Pope

Being and Changing

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

The Woman at the Well

We believe in God the creator
who created water for us in diverse forms;
creeks and currents,
springs and spas,
ponds and puddles.
Without this gift of water, we would perish.
We believe in Jesus,
baptised by John in the waters of the Jordan,
and sent by God to bring Living Water to all people.
This Jesus spent time
chatting with a Samaritan woman at Jacob's well.
His contact with her so refreshed her
that she was able to start life anew
and, in turn, give new life to her community.
We believe that our contact with Jesus
enables us to do likewise.
We believe in God's Spirit
which has the force of a thundering waterfall,
ready to be used to renew the world,
if only we would let it.
We believe that God calls us all
to work joyfully to create communities
where the river of water of life
gives fullness of life to all people. Amen.

-
Ross Mackinnon, July 2009

Seeing Knowing Acting Being

I am what I am
A tree in plain view,
But what do you see
Of me and the tree.

I am what I am
I am what I know.
Are you as water?
Or only the snow.

I am what I am
Action from seeing.
A bit like the tree
Here in my being.

P. G. Baker

ACCEPTING AND AFFIRMING CHANGE

Accepting and Affirming Our Brand of Church

'*The Lord hath yet more light and truth to break forth from his word*' (TIS 453) is one of my favourite hymns. It is based on a farewell sermon by Pastor (not Bishop) John Robinson to the Pilgrim Fathers, as they left the shores of England for the new colony of America in 1620. Although much has changed since then, the words have an eternal ring to them. We cannot escape change. It is with all of us, in both our secular and sacred lives. While we might wish for, and occasionally have some influence towards, the rate of change to be slower, we know that the world we leave will be quite different to the world in which we arrived.

Robinson's words were to give heart to those pilgrims setting out for a very much changed world. Much of what he said was rather parochial, but one phrase does stand out: '*rather to study union than division*'. There has been some angst about the new 'branding' on the Church Bulletin, to say nothing of the changes in the Bulletin itself. I want to say how much the new graphical design appeals to me, and why it should be a symbol of union than of division. Aaron has commented that the 'Squiggly Thing' on the front page has a variety of meanings, and exhorted us to find our own interpretations. I have one that I would like to share with you.

I commented in the Congregational meeting last November that my vision was for a church that '**accepts** and **affirms**' its members. Aaron's chain does just that. For as a chain is only as strong as its weakest link, we must **accept** each other as members of that chain. We cannot be a chain when we are isolated links, and by joining together to become a chain, we **accept** how we '*might possibly without sin close with them*' (Robinson's words again). Thus we become useful as a chain, and as a tool in God's service.

But that is just a static view. A chain in a toolbox is not much use. If you want to tow your car out of a bog, you must put the chain into action. You must **affirm** that the links of the chain can and will do their job. So too we **affirm** the members of our church, that they are capable of being, and able to be, put to use in God's service. Just as the chain in the toolbox redeems its purpose in being in the toolbox when we use it, so too we are redeemed and **affirmed** when we are used in God's service.

So I think that Aaron's graphic shows us how much '*light and truth*' we are yet to discover in being the Glen Waverley Uniting Church. I find that both satisfying, and challenging. I hope you do too.

John Hurst

Becoming Older

Against the odds we're here
 Against the odds we thrive
 And so with every waking dawn
 It's good to be alive.

P G Baker

HELPING OTHERS to COPE with CHANGE

The Foos and Their Overseas Student Ministry 2003 - 2008

In 2010 Stella Wardjiman Quah proudly received her Ph.D. in Chemical Engineering at Monash University. This was after many years of working and studying part-time. Today she lectures at Monash College which is affiliated with Monash University.

However, Stella's story started in 1997 when she arrived from Indonesia to start her Year 11 studies at Taylor's College. She, with a group of other students, were part of the Student Homestay System. In 2003 they happened to be shopping in the Kingsway area when they noticed GWUC. They decided to start attending services here and this is when they met Vida and Michael Foo. Vida herself is from Indonesia and she and Mike had lived overseas when they were first married, so they fully appreciated how isolated overseas students feel. With some encouragement from Robert Elkhuisen, one of the Ministers at the time, Vida and Mike, in their usual hospitable manner, would invite Stella and her friends over to their home for an occasional meal. In time the number of students increased and so the unofficial Overseas Student Ministry was started.

Stella says that the Foos provided them a home away from home and were always there to listen to their problems and advise them if they were able. They also helped them furnish their accommodation, assisted them with their tenancy rights, celebrated birthdays and other festive occasions with them, took them to medical appointments and nursed them during illness, and even removed them from danger such as physical assault from fellow tenants! She and the other students became a second family to Mike and Vida, who also provided rides to the airport and a place to store their belongings when they had to fly home for the long summer break. Stella can attest to the fact that without this support, student life would have been very different. She is the only ex-student remaining of the original group. who have all finished their studies and returned home.

However, this has not been the end of the link between them and the Foos. Many of them have kept in touch with Mike and Vida, who have met up with them on their various overseas trips. Recently, the Foos have returned from Hong Kong where they were included as parents in the main bridal party at the wedding of one of these students. Many ex-students still keep in touch, sharing news of important events in their lives.

This was a little-known ministry at GWUC as no publicity was given to it. Michael and Vida deserve some recognition for the work they did with these students. Appreciation also goes to Stella for helping us tell this story which would otherwise have been buried in the archives.

Cynthia Chin

June Issue of *NewView*

The next issue of *NewView* will be in June 2012. As well as welcoming your articles about events, celebrations, concerns etc about our shared community and our lives of faith, we will have a section dealing with the theme of

Tradition

Helping Others to Cope with Change

The brochure and cards which suggest ways in which our Lenten offerings might be used, include information about the appointment of Rev Christine Senini to provide humanitarian chaplaincy on Christmas Island. Christine has written to Presbytery, providing insights into her work. The following are excerpts from her lengthy letter:

“...After three months of frustration, I have now found an alternative domestic/commercial internet (non wifi hotspot - but radio/satellite signal) and purchased an aerial which is hung out the window. Not pretty but so far it appears a little more effective.

“...To some extent I am limited to what I can say about the Detention Centre, the detainees, or my work with DIAC or Serco; and the current UCA policy here is that we do not take or publish photos of detainees until they have been granted a visa. To do so may put them or their families at risk.

“People can often be confused about the role here, it is more than just visiting and spending time with the detainees, it is more strategic than that. An effective program of visiting would need 30 chaplains and given the overall cost of the placement here the Church is entitled to better value for money than just a 'daily visitor' (although that would be a perfect role for a part funded volunteer/s). The key opportunity here is to work within the often confused and complicated structures to provide opportunities that can improve the lives of the detainees while they are here.

“That said, I am active and well accepted in the two Churches on the Island (Catholic and the non denominational Christian Island Fellowship), and work closely with the Church representatives who also attend the Centres. Please remember them in your prayers also, they are:

1. Sister Dorothy, who is from the Sisters of Charity (Sydney) and is working on behalf of the Jesuit Refugee Service. Sister Dorothy routinely visits the Centres on Mon to Thur working through the compounds, and on Friday she takes a group of four allocated detainees (ideally a new four each week but allocated by DIAC) for a day out on the Island. While Dorothy, given her position, is more connected with the Catholics, amongst the 'clergy' she covers 'week day visits'.
2. Peter & Val Faulkner. Peter is a 'retired' Baptist pastor who is visiting his son who lives on the Island. He is now affiliated with the Christian Island Fellowship and attends the Centres to hold Bible studies and to evangelise. While he works with Christians and those interested in Christianity, amongst the 'clergy' he covers evangelising and baptisms.

“I pick up the rest concentrating my visits on the other faiths, the staff, on the weekends, and late at night; and back fill when the others are not available, but my emphasis is on an interfaith, non judgemental presence amongst the detainees, the detention centre staff, the community, the AFP, and the ADF. My dress of the day is my clerical collar which works brilliantly as an 'identity' for an Island Chaplain. The Muslim detainees happily accept me understanding that my collar means 'I am some sort of Imam (Christian equivalent)', and my collar never fails to make an immediate connection with the community, even if it is only initially 'polite curiosity'. For an Island that is full of people wearing uniforms my collar provides a distinctive, unique, and extremely effective signal (and reference point) of my presence, participation, and commitment to the Island.

“I am also working with the other faith groups on the Island (Bahai, Buddhist, Muslim) and after much hard work, am close to convincing the Imam to implement regular visits to the Centres.

“Perhaps the biggest challenge here is to create an understanding of chaplaincy, and in particular community chaplaincy (a concept that I think is not well understood anywhere). The other biggest issue here is earning trust and projecting a sense of permanence. To earn the trust of the community is an enormous achievement (without fail, the first question you are asked here is 'how long are you here for', usually followed by 'are you here to start another Church')...”

(Please hold Christine in your prayers as she serves the community on Christmas Island.)

CHANGE at the COMMUNITY HUB



The COMMUNITY HUB has changed!

In the past the COMMUNITY HUB and THE HUB were one and the same thing. Now, the **COMMUNITY HUB** is still the name of our Missional Group and the current "Hub" will be called **THE HUB**, which is what most people call it anyway.

Four groups now come under the umbrella of the Community Hub Missional Group. These are **Playgroup, Leisure Time, Cooee** and **The Hub**. Each of these groups is similar in that they all regularly invite people from the community into our church for their activities. Leisure Time and Cooee operate once a week and Playgroup and The Hub operate 3 days a week. Our hope is that these groups will be able to have activities together at different times and we will support each other in our desire to connect with the people in our community, and through our actions, show God's love to them. A special Launch Week will be held in April to start off this exciting adventure as the new Community Hub.

Here is some news from the four groups in the Community Hub and how the year has started off for each of them.

Leisure Time

Leisure Time resumed on 6th Feb with much happy chatter and catching up. As always, some guests told us how much they missed Leisure Time over the Christmas break.

Some guests are quite ill at the moment and we are providing some pastoral care to them and their families. We are delighted that we have been able to fill our volunteer roster for the year, and have welcomed four new volunteers to our driver list. Thank you very much! We also acknowledge and thank those volunteers who for various reasons have not been able to continue in 2012.

Playgroup

A number of new Mums and children have joined us this year. We are busy helping them to get to know each other and are encouraging them to meet at other times also. Many of the families are from overseas and are still adjusting to language and cultural differences. There are approximately 60 children involved in the 3 mornings of playgroup on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, 10am – 12noon.

Kaye Mackinnon is supported by a team of leaders and helpers, but **there is a real need for one more committed leader and a few emergency helpers. If you can help, Kaye would love to hear from you.**

Cooee Scrabble Group

The Cooee Scrabble Group meets on Friday from 12noon – 3pm and **we would love to have some new people come and join us.** We have a BYO lunch with a cuppa and biscuits provided, and then enjoy a game or two of scrabble together.

The Hub

The Hub has started off the year with many people calling in and enjoying a cuppa, a biscuit and a chat. The Hub now operates Tuesday and Thursday 10am – 2pm and Wednesday 10am – 12noon. A number of people who have not been in Australia for long have been coming to The Hub to practise their English through conversations at The Hub.

Once again staff from The Body Shop at The Glen will combine with us as we participate in the Cancer Council Australia's Biggest Morning Tea at The Hub on Thursday 24th May, 10am – 12noon. Come along and bring your family and friends. Gold coin donation. Morning teas like this are one way that we at The Hub continue to grow our relationships with the people in our community.

For information about all these groups, please check the Community Hub notice board or contact Judith on 9803 8373.

Helping Others to Work for Change

Assisting Change for the People of Kenya

The following article provides the recollections and reflections of some of those from our congregation (Alanee and Joel Hearnshaw, Kat and Jason Mann, Pam and Lyn McDonald and Steve Fraser) who undertook the journey to the Mission in Action Orphanage in Nakuru, Kenya during December and January. Kat Mann had been on two earlier visits and made the journey for a third time; it was a 'first' for Pam and Lyn McDonald.

Kat begins the story:

When reflecting on our recent trip to Kenya and the theme 'Coping with Change', the 45 children of Mission in Action Nakuru Baby Orphanage come to mind. They are faced with change on a daily basis, whether it be a new carer, new volunteers or for some this year, entering into Baby Class at Primary School.

When I think back over the past three trips to Kenya, I can't believe that the babies who needed nappy changes on our first visit are now little people running around, talking and doing so much for themselves. We've also seen the development of Mission 2, an orphanage set up for the kids who were orphaned after the 2007 Post Election Clashes. Previously, these older children were too far away from MIA Orphanage to visit, and we enjoyed having them close by and in some cases were able to give them the opportunity to come with us on our deliveries.



MIA has taken steps to become more self sufficient by growing their own food, living off an underground bore for water and investing in projects such as a recently installed greenhouse and the beginnings of a water bottling facility. We've seen families in the local communities slightly improve their standard of living and admired their ingenuity in making ends meet during drought when their crops have failed.

One change our group was able to put into place was the building of the new Mission in Action playground. The children were rarely using the old rickety wooden play equipment, which in any Australian playground would have been deemed unsafe. The new plastic playground, made from fairly new technology in Kenya, has been a wonderful change for the children of MIA and the children in the surrounding area. Most say they love the 'twisty' slide the best. This is just one way in which we were able to close that gap between the play experiences of children in Australia and Kenya.



Pam reports on her most lasting impression:

The thing that stays in my mind about our trip to Kenya is that despite the poverty the people are making the best of what they have. I will not forget the kindness and welcome we received from all people. I now stop and think each time I take for granted all the comforts we have in life in Australia.

Take a moment to stop and think how fortunate we are in Australia!!



Helping Others to Work for Change

And Lyn provides his reflections

My time in Kenya was ... well, the same as many experiences of outreach, loving one another ... but then, quite different. Different?

Kenya is a 3rd world country. Pam and I had never visited such a country like this before. We did have an idea what we were getting into as we had read the blog intently for the previous visit. We talked to those who had been before. However we didn't expect to find the local people doing so much to help themselves. For example:

- There were five adults committed to running the Cherish Exchange Foundation which looks after street kids.
- There was a headwoman at the Dump. Although they live on a Dump they are a community looking after each other.
- Pastor Williams and his voluntary teachers at the Kerry Children Bible Ministry, Ponda Marli, the slum area.

The same outreach experience? Well, you usually get some feedback from the people receiving the outreach. This time with a number of people in Kenya a real bond developed, a real 'love' in friendship. For example:

- the evangelists Joseph and Ibrahim – two real gentle men, who shared so much with our Group as well as their 'flock' in their communities. And did you see the letter of thanks, two A4 page sides hand written by Ibrahim thanking his God and the Group (all of you really) naming all the major activities we did with them. *If you didn't see the letter on the Outreach Notice Board, ask me.*
- Mary the hairdresser at Mission In Action (MIA) Orphanage who shared in a number of small ways (not only the hair dressing for Pam and Alanee) and who invited some of us into her home. That was a real act of friendship.
- Margaret who is the 'shopkeeper' at the Gatehouse, always with a smile and nice word, and who took some of us to her family farm community and introduced us to her two grandmothers, maternal 97 years old and paternal 105. Pam had the privilege of presenting a crocheted rug from Leisure Time to each of these women.
- Melanie, who was our guide, interpreter and good companion on many of our community visits outside MIA. We also met and got to know her husband Kim and two year old daughter Natalie. Melanie calls Pam and me, 'Mum' and 'Dad'. A bit of a joke because of our age? No! Melanie and her younger sister and two brothers are all orphans. We regularly share SMSs, emails and a number of phone calls with Melanie. Love? Yes!

I could go on and on! Loving one another, loving thy neighbour? Yes. A heartfelt experience? Yes! Will we ever be the same again? NO!



The Passion

I ever craved to ride a Harley,
for might and power was my dream
until I smashed into a tree.
He sought an ass, and rode in triumph.

I sourced ingredients like a gourmet,
and played the chef to all my friends
until I met the refugee.
He served a meal of bread and wine.

I suffered jibes from all my peers,
who mocked that I should better dress,
until I bought designer jeans.
He was stripped, made wear a thorny crown.

I reckoned fortune at each twirl
once captured by the spinning wheel,
until I lost all that was mine.
He watched the dice raffle his clothes.

I thought it cool to tweet some words
to keep her in her lowly place,
until she dosed herself away.
He was written off: 'The King of the Jews'.

Graeme Frecker



Write a Letter to Help Bring Change for Others

The following article from the UC Justice and International Mission (JIM) Unit mailout asks for our support in

Combating Family Violence

In Australia more than one in three women are subjected to intimate partner violence in their lifetime and one in four children and young people witness family violence.

Family Violence occurs when someone repeatedly uses violent, threatening, coercive or controlling behaviour. Violent behaviour includes not only physical assaults but an array of power and control tactics such as direct or indirect threats, sexual assault, emotional and psychological torment, economic control, property damage, social isolation and behaviour which causes a person to live in fear. In many cases this violence escalates when one partner leaves after the relationship ends.

For a woman to leave a violent relationship, she must re-establish her life and the lives of her children, frequently with very few, if any personal and financial resources. As a consequence, women are extremely vulnerable and are more likely to return to a violent relationship after leaving it if no on-going support is available.

The Australian Law Reform Commission (ALRC) recently released its second report looking into the treatment of family violence in Commonwealth laws, and to identify what improvements could be made to relevant legal frameworks. The ALRC made 102 recommendations with the overall aim being to increase the safety of those experiencing family violence. This means both safety from harm, but also providing victims with financial security and independence to allow them to leave a violent relationship.

For example, having to provide a partner's tax file number and proof of identity documents to access social security payments can be difficult as the violent partner may withhold this as another means of exerting power and

control. Similarly newly arrived residents or people who hold certain types of visas cannot obtain independent social security payments which does not then allow them to leave a violent relationship.

The recommendations look at changes to child support and family assistance law, employment law, social security law, superannuation law and privacy provisions in relation to those experiencing family violence.

The full report and summary can be found at: <http://www.alrc.gov.au/>

Please write to

The Hon. Nicola Roxon MP

Attorney General

PO Box 6022

Parliament House

Canberra ACT, 2600

Salutation: Dear Attorney General

Points to make in your letter:

- Express your concern about the effects of family violence on all family members and the need to keep women and children safe.
- Ask the Government to implement the recommendations from the Australian Law Reform Commission report to increase the safety of those experiencing family violence and having greater ability to leave a violent relationship.

Pastoral Ministry

Pastoral Outreach at GWUC

This article aims to both distinguish and clarify the many facets of Pastoral Outreach here at GWUC. You have heard the terms **Pastoral Care Committee and pastoral visitors** and more recently the **Pastoral Team** and you may wonder what different duties these groups perform.

Each of us has a responsibility for Pastoral Care here at GWUC, but in order to ensure loving and caring relationships are maintained within our GWUC community each group has been asked to care for its members and to notify the Ministry team or the office when people need extra assistance of any kind. This information is then passed on to one of the different pastoral care groups mentioned above for appropriate action.

The Pastoral Care Committee is one of the committees that reports regularly to Church Council. There are thirteen members who meet on the first Tuesday of the even months. This committee has several aims: to maintain our membership rolls; to co-ordinate the visitation program; to promote and co-ordinate prayer ministry; to respond to supportive care needs; to foster all programs that provide pastoral care within our church community; and to receive reports from the following sub-committees: seniors' ministry, bereavement support, membership rolls, welcoming and newcomers, visitation, welfare, card ministry, supportive care link, prayer ministry, cradle roll, The Pastoral Team and Inclusive Community. Sometimes these reports don't require any action but we receive them and so are aware of what is happening in these areas and able to pass the information on to the Ministry Team.

There is also a dedicated group of approximately 60 **pastoral visitors** who seek to develop relationships within our church family either by telephone contact or visiting people in their homes. Support and encouragement for visitors is provided through Visitation Workshops several times a year.

It would be wonderful if we could find some more people who feel that pastoral visiting is something that they could take on to replace visitors who have retired because of health problems or other commitments. If you are interested in doing this please speak to Heather, in the office, or Jenny Vass for more details.

Groups within the church will soon receive a letter asking them to appoint a **pastoral care representative** for their group. This person will liaise with supportive care link and the pastoral care committee to ensure a swift response when people have pastoral needs.

The Pastoral Team has seven members and these people work closely with the Ministry Team. They are often the first point of contact when issues arise and members of the Ministry Team are unavailable. The members meet monthly with the Ministry Team and have been making a concerted effort to visit members of the congregation who don't have visitors. The Pastoral Team members are not just pastoral visitors, although most members do that as well, but they have been commissioned to work with the Ministry Team and the Ministry Team discusses possible new members for the team before those people are approached.

A small group of people involved in pastoral care met with the Ministry team a couple of weeks ago and discussed pastoral matters, including the groups mentioned above. As a result of that conversation, we decided to write this article to clarify what is happening with pastoral care within our church community.

The Pastoral Care Committee plans to have a close look at the sub-committees that are represented on P.C.C. and see if some would be better under the umbrella of another missional group. We are also looking at the possibility of changing the name Pastoral Care Committee to something else as it often gets confused with the Pastoral Team. When we have some recommendations, they will be presented to the missional groups, Elders, Church Council, the Pastoral Team, the Ministry Team and the congregation.

If you have any questions or suggestions about pastoral care or would like to take a more active role within our community, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Jan Clear

Children and Families Ministry

It takes a village to raise a child ...

Our world has changed much since the days when many of us who are adults now, were children. The lives of children have become much more complicated, with the impact of media, social networking and the generally busy lives that we all have. Just as our world has changed, so has the way we engage children in learning about the Christian faith. On 26 February, Gail Irvine and I headed off to Mt Evelyn to a seminar that dealt with just this. We wanted to share with you some of the ideas that we heard about.

The speakers challenged us to think 'BIG' when we are interacting with children. For every child that we come into contact with, we are potentially affecting many other people, that child's family and their friends. Although it may not be noticed until many years down the track, we are also potentially having an impact on that child's future. This all sounds a bit scary doesn't it?

When you really think about it though, it is not so scary! Much of what children learn is through the relational interactions they have with others. It is important to allow children to dream and explore and to listen respectfully to their dreams and explorations. Who knows which of these dreams may eventually come to fruition?!

'What can I offer to children?' I hear many people ask. That answer is as simple and as complicated as You and Your Stories. The children in our community can learn so much from the honesty that comes from the stories of our lives and the way we live our lives. Children learn just as much from hearing of our failures as they do from hearing about our successes. It helps them realise that they are OK!

My challenge to you is to take a moment and just spend some time chatting to a child. You never know what impact you could have!!

Belinda Clear

Children and Families

DAVID AND GOLIATH

Floods, floods everywhere

Solidarity

Reconstruction funds need to swell

Dig deeper you folks

The poor digging for more

They know poverty, hunger, homelessness

Despair.

Their cry goes on unheeded

Yet knowing the sufferer they dig deeper

Sacrificially give

Towards the reconstruction funds

Whilst the ones

Who rape the land for her riches dig deeper

Fill their well lined pockets;

The billion dollar racketeers of banks

Live in their sanitized dream homes

Moan about the rain that spoils their newly washed cars

Down a couple of drinks

Soak in their jacuzzis;

And we busily set up funds to help the 'Unfortunates',

Candlelight vigils

Unable to sling a stone at Goliath's head.

Rohan Wickramaratne

Celebrations

THE GOLD FISH GROUP CELEBRATES CHINESE NEW YEAR

At the last luncheon of our Gold F.I.S.H. Group, fourteen of us meet at the McGregor's place. We normally bring along meat to barbecue and a salad or dessert to share. This particular time, as it is still within the period of Chinese New Year, I bring along a New Year delicacy called 'yee sang' to add a touch of foreign culture and some fun to the gathering.

Yee sang, meaning 'fresh fish', is a salad comprising finely shredded vegetables like carrot, white radish (daikon), cucumber, coriander, pickled ginger, yam and pomelo, to which is added crushed deep-fried wonton skins, roasted peanuts and sesame seeds, flavoured with 5-spice powder, cinnamon, pepper, sesame oil, plum sauce and lime juice. One also adds uncooked fish, normally salmon which has had a little brandy added to it (to cook it). In this case we did not include the salmon.



The various components are laid out on a large plate, the guests stand around the table and toss to mix the salad together with, you guessed it, chopsticks! This is called 'lo hei' and the 'ritual' is a symbol of abundance, prosperity and good fortune. Strangely enough, this custom is not a centuries-old one. It is said to have started in the mid-sixties in Singapore from where it spread to Malaysia!

After this Oriental entrée, which I believe is enjoyed by all, we continue with barbecued sausages, coleslaw etc. followed by a selection of tempting desserts.

However, it is not all play and no work as we later sit down with coffee and tea to discuss the upcoming annual Book Fair which the group, under the able leadership of David & Sue Morgan, has organised for the last couple of years. Various jobs relating to this are distributed and then we get out our diaries to set a date and place for our next lunch. Thus ends another FISH function!

Cynthia Chin

CAMPAIGN TO CHANGE THE CHOCOLATE INDUSTRY THIS EASTER

You don't have to stop eating chocolate; eat lots of chocolate but make it Traffik-Free! Many of the chocolate eggs on sale this Easter have been made with cocoa from plantations that use trafficked children to harvest the beans. Children are being trafficked and forced to work on chocolate plantations in the Cote d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast), where a large proportion of the world's cocoa is produced. The large chocolate companies such as Nestle, Cadburys and Ferrero Rocher have acknowledged this is a problem but are yet to demonstrate a real commitment to making change. Since campaigning started on this issue in 2001 the world's chocolate industry has earned \$1.2 trillion, while they have invested only 0.0075% in improving conditions in West Africa.

You can help change this.

1. Host a Fondue party

Choose a Sunday between now and the end of Easter to raise awareness amongst your friends, colleagues and community. Everything you need to hold a fondue party can be found on the website www.stophetraffik.org.au <<http://www.stophetraffik.org.au>>

2. Only eat Traffik-Free chocolate

To buy Traffik-Free Chocolate look for the Fairtrade <<http://www.fta.org.au/>>, Rainforest Alliance <<http://www.rainforest-alliance.org/>> or UTZ <<http://www.utzcertified.org/>> certification symbol. These marks mean the cocoa farms have been certified as not using trafficked child labour. Download *The Good Chocolate Guide* <<http://stophetraffik.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Chocolate-Guide-20121.pdf>> and ask your supermarket to stock these brands.

3. Tell Ferrero about our 'divine frustration' at their lack of action

Large chocolatier Ferrero Rocher is yet to certify that any of their so-called chocolate 'divine creations' are Traffik-Free. We want them to know that this isn't good enough and we are feeling 'divine frustration' at their lack of action! Join the Ferrero Frustration campaign, order postcards from australia@stophetraffik.org or phone Marylou on 03 9251 5271.

Alanee Hearnshaw



Celebrating Achievements

An Update from the Careful Kitchen Crew



Cynthia Chin and Margaret Fraser
(Founding member)

In early February, members of the Careful Kitchen Crew (CKC) met over dinner to celebrate a significant recent achievement, welcome some new members and farewell a long-standing member. It was wonderful to catch up on a more personal level (rather than just within the bounds of church meetings or duties) and share more than 'kitchen' stories!

From its humble beginnings more than 10 years ago with just a few dedicated church members, the CKC has gone from strength-to-strength.

Ten members representing different user groups now contribute to a wonderful stream-lined operation to ensure our kitchen and its users comply with requirements and standards of the Food Safety Plan. Members meet quarterly, share monthly kitchen monitoring duties, participate in regular kitchen spring cleaning, help to oversee some church events, and offer training or advice to congregation members.

The CKC's ongoing commitment to such high standards and the co-operation of all kitchen users in following the advice and guidelines provided, culminated in our recent Monash City Council **Golden Plate Award**. Whilst the council inspection is a necessary measure for the church to obtain its annual food provider registration/permit, it was wonderful to see our efforts rewarded in such a way. We scored 99/100 – WELL DONE EVERYONE !!

The evening also provided an opportunity to officially welcome **new members** Doug Newberry, Nicole Boyer and Sarah Lorimer to the group. With some sadness we also bade farewell to Cynthia Chin and thanked her for her contribution to the CKC over the past six years. The CKC is always open to suggestions, feedback or new members, so please feel free to approach or call any one of us (names and numbers can be found on the fridge in the kitchen).

We are blessed to have such a dedicated group of church members who volunteer their time so freely. We have developed firm friendships too and look forward to further developments and achievements for the group. Thank you to everyone and let's all continue in our commitment to the standards we have obtained.

Kelli Benjamin

Books to Read

Jonathan Sacks, *The Dignity of Difference: How to Avoid the Clash of Civilizations*

Revised Edition (London: Continuum, 2009), 216 pages

Jonathan Sacks (now Lord Sacks) is the Chief Rabbi of the Commonwealth. In *The Dignity of Difference* he tackles the worldwide issue of how to get on with those who are different from us. Globalisation and developments in Information Technology have made the world smaller and we are now in contact with people of very different cultures and faith and we 'must now make space for those who are different and have another way of interpreting the world'.

Jonathan Sacks' thesis is that we are all unique and all different and that God has created us so. We should not fear differences. We can get along with neighbours who are different if we are prepared to engage in *conversation* with them (p2). We 'must learn to listen and be prepared to be surprised by others' (p23). We need to get rid of 'the belief that those who do not share my faith – or my race or my ideology – do not share my humanity' (p45). Jonathan Sacks contends that '*God may at times be found in human other, the one not like us*' (p53) (his italics). He also makes it clear that looking at the world in this way is not easy or instinctive (p59). We have to be prepared to work at it.

The book covers a range of important issues – rapid change, insecurity, terrorism and violence, globalisation, the market economy, the dignity of labour, compassion, the haves and have-nots, the lost vision of the common good, education as the key to creativity, co-operation and the civil society, covenantal relationships, the loss of loyalty in society, conservation and environmental sustainability, conciliation and forgiveness, hope. Throughout the book, when discussing these issues, the author uses fascinating and apt illustrations from the Jewish Scriptures, from history and from the present day. The ultimate aim of all people is peace and Rabbi Sacks makes it crystal clear that people of all faiths have a big part to play in achieving this.

I found this book one of the most powerful, challenging and thought-provoking books I have read. I commend it to all who would like to bring the vision of world peace to a reality.

Reviewed by Ross Mackinnon

Two other books relevant to our consideration of 'Coping with Change', recently recommended to me (but I have not yet read) are

Keith Ward, *Re-Thinking Christianity*. Oxford: One World, 2007.

Ward is currently Professor of Divinity, Gresham College, London.

The other is

Harvey Cox, *The Future of Faith*. HarperOne, 2009.

Cox is Professor of Divinity at Harvard. There is also a 10 minute YouTube video available, in which he discusses the future of faith.

Perhaps someone might like to read and review one of these for our next issue, or provide a review of the material read for the Lenten studies - or of any other books relevant to our faith. RP

for everything there is a season
and a time for every matter under heaven...

We record with sadness the deaths in past months of members of our church family and we extend our love, support and sympathy to their families.

Grania Mary Lohning

Jean Mary Gunn

Ronald Edward James Major

Emma Rodenburg

Michael John Coles

We celebrate the marriage of

Nigel Wei Yoong Tan and Joanne Tiet on February 25

We record with joy the baptisms of

Ashlee Margaret Boucher

Oliver Thomas Cornall

Cameron Stuart Brown

We offer our congratulations to Lorraine and Warren Bartlett who recently celebrated 60 years of marriage.