

# NEWVIEW

Glen Waverley Uniting Church  
 Cnr Bogong Ave & Kingsway  
 Glen Waverley 3150  
 Ph 9560 3580  
 Email: [office@gwuc.org.au](mailto:office@gwuc.org.au)



## Tradition

Tradition & the UCA	2
Why We Don't Let Sleeping Dogs Lie	3
Family Traditions	4,5
Outback Traditions	6
Different Traditions	7

## Missional News

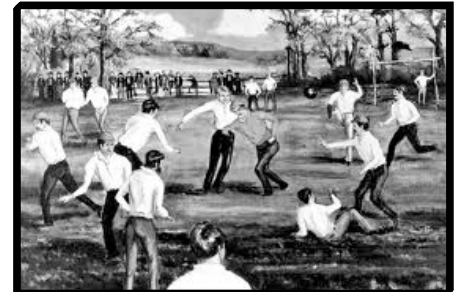
'Time and Space' Changes at Hotham Mission ASP	4 8
Support Legislative Reform	9
Write to End Bribery Launch of Community Hub	10 11

Cowes Getaway	12
GWUC's New Organ	13
Fair Trade	13
Pastoral Notes	14

This issue of *NewView* has a focus on tradition, i.e. those customs, practices or beliefs which have been handed down from the past. Traditions form part of our everyday lives. We have two contributors who record their importance at the very personal level of traditions observed within families, while Evan's recollections of our church's union contains observations at both the personal and national levels. There are also traditions observed at the international level, providing guidelines for international conduct.

Traditions have a positive influence in reminding us of what has gone before, honouring our past by helping us to see our lives as part of a continuous stream of human history. In observing traditions, as occurs in Cynthia's and Eileen's families, we acknowledge this connection with the past and play our own part in handing on values to posterity.

However, as Warren's contribution shows, every custom, practice or belief should be examined for its values and relevance to our lives and times. In the spirit of Christ's own example the history of the Christian church has shown a continuous concern for helping the poor, the sick, and the disadvantaged. This is a tradition which we continue today. However, there have been other traditions, such as using violence towards those who do not share our beliefs (during the Crusades, the Inquisition, or even in nineteenth-century notions of manliness and imperial militarism) which would be rejected by most Christians today.



Victimisation of left-handers is a tradition with a long history. Left-handedness was identified as being a sign of Satan (the Latin word for 'left' was derived from the word 'sinister'). Conversely, being right-handed was accepted as being 'as God intended'. Such prejudice is even found in the Bible: sheep on God's right hand, but goats on the left, doomed to everlasting fire. Many cultures share this tradition for a variety of reasons.

A tradition emerged of treating left-handed people as being deliberately sinful and evil. Having the left hand tied behind the back prevented any dangerous inclination to write left-handed. As a left-handed child I was subjected to ridicule, shame and raps over the knuckles for my persistence in using the left hand. When I trained to be a teacher in NSW I was informed I could not qualify until I learned to write on the blackboard with my right hand, on the specious and unproven belief that the children would copy me. I was fortunate to be finally inspected by someone unaware of this rule, and since I did not enlighten him, I successfully gained my qualification. (Perhaps this only proves I am as sinful and evil as the tradition claimed!)

This issue reminds us that traditions need to be re-examined and perhaps modified to accord with our current knowledge and understanding of our physical and spiritual worlds. Given the importance of traditions to the practice of our Christian faith, we should be wary of falling into the trap of blind acceptance simply because 'that is how we always do it', or even because 'that is what we were taught'. As active practitioners of our faith it is incumbent upon us to be conscious of what traditions we perpetuate, and why.

*Robin Pope*

# TRADITION

*Evan Laidlaw's ministry included four rural cluster parishes, one international ministry and two chaplaincy appointments. He generously responded to a request to reflect on the the significance of tradition in the events of Union.*

## **Tradition (or the U.C.A. 35 years later)**

When I was asked to put into writing some memories about the traditions that form the foundations of our faith, as well as those concerning the U.C.A. events of June 1977, I have to confess that my first thoughts went straight to 'Tradition', the signature score of the musical *Fiddler on the Roof* - to that piece sung by the dairy farmer Reb Tevye as he went on his rounds with his milk cans, and his horse and cart.

That actually brought me back to reality because *tradition* is about what we do, and how and why we do it; how we maintain our balance in both spiritual and social terms, and sometimes how we tend to take much for granted.

I became an ordained minister of the Presbyterian Church in 1968, nine years before Union, so there must be an element of '*I remember when ...*' in what I put before you.

However, let us go back to the days when three Christian groups, who possessed three different cultural and socio-political histories, came together. The surprise was that these groups had ended up with three not-so-different theologies when they came together. Their responses to the Gospel had become a blend, which then evolved into something new.

It is worth noting that the Christian Church has always had a history of 'divide and splinter', when issues of doctrine, faith and orthodoxy were debated. That is just another way of saying that the Reformation was never a one-off event.

There is a great danger for those of us who were there to paint the picture of Union using pretty, glossy colours. For many it wasn't that way at all. For me, the two years before and after the event were anything but comfortable.

In 1975 I had moved from my first parish into an appointment as a Secondary School Chaplain. Many of the chaplains in the CCES at that time came from the three uniting traditions. Those of us who were Presbyterian were placed under great pressure, by a clique within our system, to stay out of the Union.

By the mid 70's the pressure created by the debate - between the Union and anti-Union elements - had become a quite unpleasant reality. Supporters of both sides were found to be in every congregation, and their children went to most of the private and state schools. The tension was constant. The closer we came to June 22 the sharper the rhetoric and anger became. Debates became vicious, heated and full of pain ... *I remember ...*

On the day of decision in excess of 20% of Presbyterian clergy and communicants voted to continue as Presbyterian. As well, some more from each of the three uniting communities chose to leave and to become members of more conservative denominations.

In the seven years after the event there was a great deal more debate about how the phoenix Church should-would-could function. This was normal. One may be able to legislate for an election, but not beyond that. It has taken some time to agree upon a system of worship and spiritual care that meets the needs of the faithful.

We are getting better at it, but I regret to say that we still have a way to go, because the goal posts *must* keep moving, and it will always be thus. Because of this, I am also of the opinion that we need, from time to time, to go back to some of the organizational methods that were used before Union, and to reconsider their value.

One of the key markers that was lost in the system we called Presbyterian was the way the

# TRADITION

functions of pastoral care and administration were kept completely separate. The women and men who worked in those spheres were selected according to their skills and experience.

The pastoral care group (Kirk Session), because it was involved in the private lives of the people in the Parish, was seen to a Closed Court. In this group the Minister[s] and the Elders together took responsibility for the spiritual care and well-being of the people. This court was responsible for the liturgical and sacramental quality of the worship. Each elder had a group of families that were to be visited at least once a quarter. The affairs and well-being of these families were considered to be discrete, and never to be discussed outside the meeting with anyone other than the minister or other elder[s].

Conversely, the minister[s] and the members of the Board of Management, comprised an Open Court, and had oversight of the church properties, finances, insurance and staff rosters. These two spheres of function did not over-lap.

Discussions about Tradition and Union will always include the question, 'What do I miss?'

Shalom

*Evan Laidlaw*

## Why We Don't Let Sleeping Dogs Lie

Early in life I noticed that men who accompanied ladies along a footpath usually walked on the gutter-side of the path. That, I was told, was the mark of a gentleman. It was much later when I discovered that there was a very practical reason for such behaviour. Long ago most roads were unmade and, in wet weather, passing carriages had a habit of spraying pedestrians with muck. So a gentleman made sure that he took the bulk of this on his clothes thus saving his female companion's clothes, which may well have cost more than his own, from such soiling. Nowadays, with sealed roads there is less chance of such sartorial distress and consequently the tradition of men gallantly shielding their ladies from sprays of mud and horse manure seems to have largely disappeared.

Traditions, whether about individual behaviour, the practices of organisations or our beliefs, arise out of our need to enhance our present life or the life to come. If they have practical benefits they survive. If they do not they are discarded. If, as has happened at various times in the life of some Christian communities, it was believed that human flesh is evil then the tradition of self-flagellation was seen as an important way of controlling fleshly desires. However, if we come to regard our bodies as essentially holy then self-flagellation is abhorrent. In other words, as our views about life change so old traditions cease to have value and are replaced by new ones.

For 2,000 years Christians have been worshipping God in just about every imaginable way. Some worship traditions have survived, some have been modified and some have been abandoned. Quakers use silence in worship and Pentecostals clap and dance. Catholics embrace a formal liturgy while some Orthodox priests have lived for years in solitude. What is right for you and for me? In part it depends on our own psychological profile. Noisy and spontaneous worship may suit me but not you, or vice versa. A prescribed liturgy may meet my need for a well-ordered life but not your needs. Is there a benchmark which can help us find out what is best for us? For me it is contained in the prayer of St Richard of Chichester.

*O Holy Jesus, most merciful redeemer, friend and brother.  
May I know you more clearly, love you more dearly  
and follow you more nearly, day by day.*

If a form of worship enables me to utter that prayer with more and more sincerity then I embrace it.

*Warren Bartlett*

# TRADITION AND FAMILIES

## Traditions and My Family

The dictionary defines 'tradition' as 'the handing down of opinions or practices to posterity'.

Australia seems to be more interested in innovation than tradition. However, in some ways our lives are ruled by tradition. We live side by side with tradition, not recognising it as such until it comes up in discussion.

Tradition provides the structure, guidelines and discipline for government: for example, the Westminster system was inherited and works well in our democratic society. Recent events celebrating the Queen's Diamond Jubilee have highlighted the importance of tradition for the official head of state and the popularity of Her Majesty. To quote a Republican member: "Every time the Queen visits Australia she sets the Republican movement back 20 years."

Another aspect of tradition is in worship. Traditional music and liturgy give meaning and significance to worship services of a certain type. Yes, we must modernise, but at the same time we need that backbone of tradition.

Then there are family traditions, handed down through the generations. For example, our family Bible has been handed down to the eldest son ever since it was presented to a Methodist minister in 1894 by his father. This Bible holds a Family Register of births, marriages, deaths. It was brought to Australia in 1987 and has been carried into church since for all family weddings.

The christening gown is another tradition. Twelve babies in the family have been baptised in it by the age of three months (three generations). In addition it is a tradition for the eldest daughter to inherit her mother's engagement ring. One tradition which started with both my mother-in-law and mother, and which I have carried on is the wearing of a bracelet from which hang charms representing the birth of each one of my grandchildren.

These are important traditions in our family. Other people will doubtless have their own.

*Eileen Scott*

### Time and Space

Use the ladder  
To reach the window  
  
But what is the ladder  
And what the window  
  
The ladder is bones  
And the window  
Both passage and door

P. G. Baker

### Next Issue: Loyalty

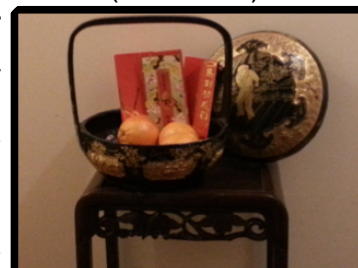
As the next issue of *NewView* will occur at a time when football fever is reaching its pinnacle, an appropriate theme will be **loyalty**. Is it the same as faithfulness? What is involved in 'being loyal'? In a world where commercial organisations are vying for customer loyalty we need to consider - apart from the merely venal - what attracts our loyalty. How does loyalty impact on our faith, our families, our workplace, our sporting allegiance? Has loyalty a place in our modern world? Can it be misguided? How does it affect your life? Have you an inspiring or personal story to tell about loyalty?

# TRADITION AND FAMILIES

## Traditions in My Family

In my earlier life I felt somewhat compelled to follow traditions. After moving to Australia, I felt I was free of these bonds. Yet, without realising it, I have been unconsciously retaining a few traditions from the past. In the early days of our life in a new land it was a 'fun' thing to do. But now, as I get older, I see it as an acknowledgement of my roots. It is easy enough to keep up some practices, which, hopefully, my children would like to carry on.

Starting with the birth of a child, it is customary to mark the first month of its life (full moon) with a celebration. Traditional food associated with this would be yellow or turmeric rice served with a chicken curry, hardboiled eggs dyed red and a special cake made of glutinous rice flour with a mung bean filling and coloured again either red or pink. This cuisine is more Hokkien which is the culture of both my mother-in-law and paternal grandmother. (Cantonese people normally make a savoury pork dish in a ginger and vinegar sauce.) Portions of these goodies are packed into special baskets and distributed to neighbours and friends.



On the eve of a wedding it has always been traditional to hold a pre-nuptial dinner. The groom's parents invite family and friends to the event which signifies the last time he will spend in his parents' home. Likewise, the bride in her own parents' home. A tea ceremony is normally held either before or after the wedding proper. The bridal couple serve tiny cups of tea to their elders according to pecking order, i.e. grandparents, parents etc. Then it is the couple's turn to be served by their subordinates. With each offering of tea, red packets containing either cash or jewellery are presented by the elders to the couple. The couple in turn present the younger members of the family with red packets of money (called *angpows*). The tea ceremony is actually the formal introduction of the bride to the groom's family (or vice-versa).

The first wedding we had in the family (our son's) entailed us rounding up a 'posse' (family and friends) who had to proceed to the bride's home, en masse, to present an assortment of gifts (roast pig, fruits, liquor, cakes and money) which represented the bride's price.

Red packets also make an appearance at Chinese New Year when unmarried persons, as well as children, receive *angpows*. The celebrations last for fourteen days. My family gets together for a meal which I prepare using recipes handed down from my mother-in-law who was an excellent cook. Dishes like duck soup, fish custard, salad cups and chicken curry are relished by my children who used to turn their noses up at these when they lived at home. Now, however, they get to savour these only once a year!

Where death is concerned, I must admit I have always been traumatised by the events involved. In Malaysia, even if one is Christian, it has always been normal to have the deceased lying in state in his own home for at least a couple of days before the actual interment. Apart from the practice of sending flowers and wreaths, gifts of money placed in a white envelope are also commonplace. The money assists the family of the bereaved with all the unexpected expenses that arise owing to the event.

On the other side of the coin, apart from Asian traditions, my family has always celebrated Christmas on the eve. We have always had a roast turkey. But with the addition of extended family we have had to be flexible, thus resulting in, perhaps, a seafood Christmas lunch at times. However, since discovering how to produce a really moist and tasty turkey on the barbie, we will not be looking back!

So there you have it, a summary of my family traditions, some of which may not be text-book correct, but still what WE do in our family!

*Cynthia Chin*

# CONTINUING TRADITIONS

## 100 Years of Heroes, Heroines and Great Achievements

The history of the Australian Inland Mission, the Methodist and Congregational Missions that were the forerunners of Frontier Services and its soulmate, the Royal Flying Doctor Service, is an amazing portion of Australian history.

It is a story brimming with dedication, inspiration, perspiration, co-operation, traditional care and support for those living a tough life in harsh inland Australia. Enduring the pastoral patrols with their long journeys on treacherous unmade tracks, listening to and discerning the needs of people then taking appropriate action was the day to day work of Rev John Flynn and Rev Fred McKay, the distinguished founders of outback services.

Flynn's motto, 'For Christ and the Continent', was enacted in his life as a visionary, a statesman and a man of action. In emulating Flynn's example, McKay fulfilled his task with charisma, humility, perfectionism and competence. The invention of Alf Traeger's pedal wireless and the development of the Aerial Medical Services in 1928 (later, the Royal Flying Doctor Service) were other famous developments which further assisted their work.

The achievements and example of Flynn and McKay became the traditions and models for the many thousands of staff members, assistants and volunteers of the Inland Missions which became, after 1977, the Frontier Services of the Uniting Church in Australia.

### A Centenary Celebration

One hundred years of service to the residents of the outback is to be celebrated nationally and especially at Glen Waverley UC on Sunday September 30. We have planned an impressive program with a combined morning service led by Rev Paul Bartlett, a family BBQ luncheon and the exhibition of a large educational mural which will focus on the vital concerns of Flynn and McKay.

### Frontier Services Today

Frontier Services is now a huge organisation with a large, committed staff, and a host of helpers and supporters for those in remote Australia. Its impressive list of services includes:

residential and in-home aged and disabled care; remote nursing and health clinics; childcare and early childhood education for isolated families; migrant settlement assistance; student accommodation; provision of volunteers to help families in need; pastoral support; and community support for Aboriginal communities, isolated properties, mining sites and towns.

To support these works Frontier Services needs to raise millions of dollars each year. John Flynn's 'mantle of safety' continues; it provides a marvellous framework of support on the vast canvas of the inland, confirming his belief that 'If you start an idea, nothing can stop it.'

We should be proud of this remarkable Australian story which everyone is invited to celebrate at Glen Waverley in September.

*David Williams (Convenor of Planning Committee)*



# DIFFERENT TRADITIONS

## ISTANBUL, TURKEY A Land of Traditions

*Robert and Gael O'Brien recently visited Turkey, where they observed many traditions different from those familiar to us. Gael reports:*

Istanbul is spread around a bay where many ships are anchored. It is a big place situated on both sides of the Bosphorous Strait. One side is European and the other is Asian. It has been a big trading port and meeting place over many years. In the olden days it was the end of the Silk Road from China. There are two huge commuter bridges.

We stayed in the old part of the city which was very steep, winding and worn. We saw remnants of a huge city wall with huge gateway entrances. Housing was very poor and old, similar to that which we have seen in Russia and China.

We were ten minutes walk to the famous 'Blue Mosque' a beautiful building with breathtaking decorations, hand done in blue, white and red. The Ristam Pashe Mosque we visited had turquoise tiles over all the walls - really something. You need to take off your shoes and wear a scarf over your head as a mark of respect. They are happy for you to visit as long as there is no service of worship taking place.

Five times a day, a caller sings from the Minaret of the Mosque to call the people to prayer. It is a haunting, plaintive call but very lyrical. They can use loud speakers but it must be a person singing the call; no recordings are allowed.

Friday prayers are very important in Istanbul. The Mosques overflow with worshippers praying at the entrance outside the Mosque. Before entering the Mosque, followers wash at special taps with antique brass turning handles.

A trip to the Bazaar was interesting. We were given pomegranate tea to try and some genuine Turkish Delight and it was delightful too. The Spice Market was an amazing sight with any and every spice you could think of.

One day we did a full day trip south to Gallipoli. It was five hours each way on the bus but it was worth it. It is a peaceful, lovely place with sad vibes. We went to Lone Pine and saw the grave of Simpson (as in Simpson and his donkey) who was only twenty years old when he brought wounded men back to camp from 'no-man's land' on his donkey.

Izzat was our Turkish guide, an expert on battles who taught us a lot about the different landing places, monuments, valleys with names like 'Shrapnel' and 'Monash' (Sir John Monash and his men fought there.) We saw where the commemorative services are held. Tiers of red seating were being put out ready for the Anzac Services. There was a beachside memorial where Queenslanders were buried. We saw memorials to New Zealanders and a Turkish memorial.

Our last (5<sup>th</sup>) day there we visited the Water Cisterns which were built by the Romans to supply water to Istanbul. It is still working today - very impressive and clever.

Overall, we found Turkey a fascinating, scenic place with many different traditions which we will never forget.

*Gael O'Brien*

## MISSIONAL WORK: OUTREACH

### ‘THERE WAS MOVEMENT AT THE STATION ...’: CHANGES AT HOTHAM MISSION ASP

At a public meeting held recently by the Outer Eastern Asylum Seeker Support Network of Hotham Mission ASP, supporters were brought up to date with the greatly expanded work of the agency by Helga Svendsen, the newly appointed Director of Hotham Mission Asylum Seeker Project.

Hotham Mission ASP continues with its old program of providing housing and support for asylum seekers who have mostly arrived by plane. These are provided with housing and a Basic Living Allowance of \$145 a month (\$33/week) while they await a decision on their application for residency.

Hotham Mission ASP now also works with the Federal Government in finding housing for the unaccompanied minors and families with children who are being released from detention into ‘community detention’. Vulnerable adult males (men who had been in remote detention centres for long periods and who had been assessed to be in most need of support to regain their strength and health) are also being released under this program. Currently about 400 people a month are being released into community detention, and about 150 of these come to Melbourne. This is creating a huge burden on support agencies.

‘Community detention’ requires asylum seekers to live in designated houses, so their whereabouts are known to the authorities, and they may not take up employment. Their rent and utility bills are paid by the government and they receive 70% of Centrelink for food and other needs. Those who are granted Bridging Visas obtain 90% of the Centrelink payment. Hotham Mission ASP works in conjunction with the organisation Life Without Barriers, which assists in providing social back-up. Those who obtain a Bridging Visa have access to an Asylum Seeker Transition program for about 6 weeks to assist them in adjusting to and learning about life in Australia, but after that period there is little support beyond the financial, so many fall through the cracks.

The extra work load has required a doubling of the staff and organisation of Hotham Mission ASP. Apart from the new Director, they now have 18-20 caseworkers, another Housing Officer, a Volunteer Co-ordinator and a Grants Officer. Some longstanding staff have also moved on. We are sad to farewell Samantha Charlesworth who came to GWUC to speak in our worship services, and who also ran an information session for us. She has been a constant enthusiastic and informative supporter of the Hotham Mission ASP support groups and will be greatly missed by us all.

Hotham Mission ASP are now having finding it impossible to fit all of their staff in their North Melbourne office and are currently on the hunt for more spacious accommodation, so if you own or know of any real estate that is available for lease, please contact them at [asp@hothammission.org.au](mailto:asp@hothammission.org.au) or call (03) 9326 8343.

Similarly, if you own a rental property you might consider using it for the community detention program. The Commonwealth Government provides commercial rental rates for properties made available under this program. The Homestay Scheme, under which individual households welcome asylum seekers into their homes to assist in their transition to the community, is another valuable avenue of assistance.

At GWUC, you can continue to make contributions of clothes, linen and food to the boxes in the foyer; and by purchasing your honey from the supply in the foyer, you will be assisting in asylum seeker support. Volunteer workers can email Leeanne Keam at [Leeanne.asp@hothammission.org.au](mailto:Leeanne.asp@hothammission.org.au).

Tax deductible donations can be made to Hotham Mission ASP:

**Share (Hotham Mission ASP),** Reply Paid 4355, Melbourne Vic 3001.

*Robin Pope*



# MISSIONAL WORK: OUTREACH

## Supporting Reform of Asylum Seeker Detention

'It's both the physical and mental well-being of clients that's affected. And you can see it change in the space of a week. If I go off shift and come back a week later, I will see the changes...over time good relationships change. People revert into their shells, they become introverted, they stop talking. And then some people start to be admitted into mental health institutions...The longer they're here, the more they need medication. They go to the health clinic to get drugs just to get through it.'" (*Immigration detention centre employee in a submission by the union "United Voice" on the impact of prolonged detention n asylum seekers*)

At the end of March the Federal Parliament Joint Select Committee on Australia's Immigration Detention Network released their report into the system of detention for asylum seekers. While the report falls well short of the Uniting Church's position that asylum seekers should only be detained briefly while health and security checks are carried out and then placed into the community, it did make a number of positive recommendations to improve the current situation.

Among the 31 recommendations were:

- The relevant legislation be amended to replace the Minister for Immigration as the legal guardian of unaccompanied minors who are asylum seekers in the immigration detention system.
- As a matter of policy, the Department of Immigration and Citizenship accommodate detainees in metropolitan detention facilities wherever possible, in particular children and families, and those detainees with special needs or with complex medical conditions.
- Asylum seekers who pass initial identity, health, character and security checks be immediately granted a bridging visa or moved to community detention while a determination of their refugee status is completed, and that all reasonable steps be taken to limit detention to a maximum of 90 days.
- The *Australian Security Intelligence Organisation Act* be amended to allow the Security Appeals Division of the Administrative Appeals Tribunal to review the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) security assessments of refugees and asylum seekers.

**Significant community pressure in support of the above recommendations will be needed for any of them to be implemented.**

### What you can do:

Write polite letters to:

The Hon Chris Bowen  
Minister for Immigration and Citizenship  
PO Box 6022  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Salutation: Dear Minister

### Points to make in your letter:

- While expressing your on-going opposition to mandatory detention of asylum seekers who arrive in Australia by boat, welcome the recommendations of the Joint Select Committee on Australia's Immigration Detention Network.
- Urge the Federal Government to implement the recommendations to provide greater care and more respect for the human rights of asylum seekers.
- You may wish to highlight the implementation of specific recommendations listed above.

*Uniting Church in Australia, Justice and International Mission unit, May 2012.*

# Write a Letter to Help Bring Change for Others

## The Justice and International Mission Unit (JIM) May news sheet *Just Focus* asked for support in **Ending Bribery by Australian Companies**

The Federal Government has indicated that it plans to bring Australian law in line with UK law and ban Australian companies from paying any form of bribe to foreign officials under the defence of it being a 'facilitation payment', even where such a payment is illegal in the country it is being made in. In theory, 'facilitation payments' are about assisting a foreign official in completing a task they would do anyway, such as issuing a permit or licence for an activity. However, UN bodies and organisations that have experience with combating corruption say such 'facilitation payments' are just as corrosive as other bribes.

A number of Australian mining companies operating in Africa have come out publicly opposing the Federal Government's plans, saying that 'facilitation payments' are necessary for them to do business in developing countries.

The UN Office on Drugs and Crime have stated that "a facilitation

payment is simply another term for a bribe."

Global anti-corruption organisation Transparency International (TI) has stated facilitation payments are found to be harmful, as they are funnelled up through the system and help nurture and sustain corrupt bureaucracies, political parties and governments.

TI's Business Principles for Countering Bribery argues that facilitation payments are a form of bribery and that companies should work towards their elimination. Allowing facilitation payments undermines businesses trying to carry out their operations ethically and can undermine efforts by governments to stamp out corruption in their public service.

The Certified Practising Accountants Australia have publicly urged the Australian Government to ban facilitation payments.

The Australian Council of Super Investors (ACSI) published a report

in October 2011 that found while more Australian companies are now prohibiting bribery than five years ago, they still lag behind their international peers. They found 59% of ASX 200 companies with international operations prohibit bribery, but only 16% of ASX 100 companies prohibit facilitation payments, and only half restrict or control them. It was found that 28% of the ASX 100 do not publicly disclose policy that prohibits either bribery or facilitation payments.

ACSI notes some Australian States define bribery to already include facilitation payments.

The not-for-profit international organisation TRACE interviewed 42 companies engaged in international business and found none of the companies that approached the issue of prohibiting facilitation payments carefully and comprehensively reported significant or prolonged disruption to their business activities.

### The Uniting Church's Position on Corruption

The 2007 Synod of Victoria and Tasmania meeting passed a resolution acknowledging '*there is a need to address corruption within developing countries to work towards the eradication of poverty*' and '*some wealthy countries continue to maintain laws and practices that foster, reward and allow them to benefit from corruption in developing countries*'.

The resolution commended the Australian Government for the steps it had taken to combat corruption globally and urged that a number of further measures be taken. It also lamented that church members had been the beneficiaries of

corruption in developing countries largely through the purchase of goods at lower prices due to corruption being involved in their production.

**Please write polite and respectful letters to**

**The Hon Nicola Roxon MP**

Attorney General  
PO Box 6022  
Parliament House  
Canberra, ACT, 2600  
Salutation: Dear Attorney General

**Senator the Hon. Bob Carr**

Minister for Foreign Affairs  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
Canberra, ACT, 2600  
Salutation: Dear Minister

### Points to make in your letter:

- Welcome the Government's proposal to bring Australian law in line with UK anti-bribery law and forbid Australian companies from making facilitation payments to overseas officials.
- Point out that facilitation payments are seen as bribes by bodies such as the UN Office of Drugs and Crime, and Transparency International, and are illegal in a number of countries where Australian companies would be making them.

# MISSIONAL GROUP: COMMUNITY HUB



The COMMUNITY HUB MISSIONAL GROUP celebrated their newly formed group with a Launch Week early in April. All of our groups – Leisure Time, Playgroup, Cooee and The Hub - joined in the festivities for the week.



Some of the activities included singing by the Playgroup children and Leisure Time guests, and bubble blowing by all the groups. The bubble blowing was very popular with all ages. The interaction of children and adults was good to see, especially the smiles on the faces of both age groups.

Our mascot Sasha (Greg and Judy's dog) was also a great hit and loved by all. Sasha has her own beautiful coat that has



on it the words "Community Hub Mascot." Thank you to Lois Hosking for making Sasha's special coat. Sasha looks very important when wearing it while going for a walk down the Kingsway, and people stop and ask "What is the Community Hub?"



For the four groups that are now a part of the Community Hub, it is great to be able to share ideas together and support each other as we connect in different ways with people in the community who come into our church. Thank you to the many volunteers who help each week enabling these activities to happen. You are wonderful people!

**Playgroup** meets Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday

mornings, 10am – 12 noon during school terms. It provides a happy and safe place for children to play and a friendly and supportive environment for parents and carers.

**Leisure Time** meets every Monday 10.30 am – 2 pm and includes morning tea and a hot lunch for seniors or housebound men and women. They enjoy games, craftwork, guest speakers and time to chat with friends.

**Cooee** meets every Friday 12 noon – 3 pm. BYO lunch with tea, coffee and biscuits provided. Following lunch, enjoy a game of scrabble.

**The Hub** operates Tuesday and Thursday, 10 am – 2 pm and Wednesday 10 am – 12 noon during school terms. The Hub, a meeting place for the community, offers a cuppa and biscuits, some time out in a relaxed space, some company, a chat, or a place to practice speaking English through conversation.

*For information about all these groups, please check the Community Hub notice board or contact Judith on 98038373.*



## SHARING SOCIAL LIFE

### The “Getaways” Get Away! – to COWES

For many years, they were the ‘Marysville Group’ – members of our congregation with caravans who escaped each year for a weekend of fellowship. Over the years, some have migrated to cabins, others with no caravan have joined them, and those of us with more recently acquired vans have also joined in. Whatever the style of accommodation, we have one thing in common – we jump at the chance to escape together for a few days of ‘RnR’ – and we now have a new name – the Getaways!



This year, 46 members of our congregation spent between 1 and 5 nights at Cowes on Phillip Island, with an additional 16 day visitors. Despite some squalls and the ever-present threat of rain, we found lots of opportunities to explore, walk, shop, eat, play board games but mainly to chat! On Friday, Ineke dropped by for breakfast. On Saturday morning, we had a choice of markets – the Uniting Church monthly market in Cowes, and the Churchill Farmers Market. Rosemary and David Carter joined some of us on a 7km walk along the cliffs to Kilcunda, followed by our communal meal in the Recreation Hall at the caravan park. On Sunday morning, we dramatically increased the size of congregation at the Cowes Uniting Church, where old friends Joan and Fred Waine played leading roles in a very meaningful service. At other times, we defied the wind by remaining upright as we explored the Nobbies and Woolamai Beach, and enjoyed a hint of sunshine at Pyramid Rock and the wreck of the ‘Speke’. We got to know each other better, and enjoyed the relaxation and beautiful scenery. All who went had a great time and for that we particularly thank organisers Margaret Lemke and Joanne Boldiston.

Plans are already being made for next year, when we will return to Cowes for the weekend of March 23-24. Details are now available from Margaret or Joanne, and all are welcome to become fellow ‘Getaways’. There is a limited number of cabins, however, so be prepared to book early!

*Sue Morgan*



## GWUC'S NEW ORGAN

Given some recent queries, here is a thumbnail sketch of our new Johannus 'Sweelinck' organ.

Johannus is a large global manufacturer of classical digital organs, based in The Netherlands. Their 'Sweelinck' range is designed for medium-large churches; our organ was bought from Bernie's Music Land in Ringwood, and comes with good long-term support/service arrangements.

Our new organ has a similar number of stops/controls as our 1981 Allen had, plus features possible from 30 years' advances in digital technology. In particular, every note of every stop is the sound of a real organ pipe, recorded on organs made by the best organ-builders of each style. The characteristics of any individual note can be adjusted by the 'tuners' laptop computer.



The new instrument can be imagined as being 3 styles of classical organ in one, with just one in use at any given time - an Anglo/American 'Romantic' organ, a Symphonic organ and a Baroque organ - each with its own set of 'similar but different' stops. This enables the player to use the most appropriate style - e.g. for traditional hymns the restrained 'Romantic' sound is usually preferable, contrasting with the 'edgy' Baroque sound relevant for music by Bach, Handel, etc. For a good example, ask to hear the variation in the Oboe stop, across the 3 organ types.

Recent enhancements also give special help to pianists or keyboard players making the transition to hymn/song-playing on the organ: one special button can add the pedals stops, and another highlights the melody above the other parts, excellent to use with a new hymn/song. In addition, a variety of non-traditional sounds is available via the 'box of tricks' (Sound Module) which we've also bought. The latter greatly increases the ability of our organ to be played along with or to supplement our contemporary music groups.

The speakers for our Johannus are all new, and arranged differently from those of our Allen. Although using the same speaker enclosures as before (i.e. above the bands' drum kit, and above the choirstalls), most of the organ's mid-range and high-pitched sounds now come from the north/drumkit side of the church and most of the bass from a large single speaker above the choirstalls. This is not unlike what happens with a traditional pipe organ, where different stops sound from different parts of the church or organ. [An extreme example is St. Paul's Cathedral London, where rows of high-powered pipes are placed high in the dome and elsewhere]. Anyone wanting more technical details should speak with Ross Lennon.

Due to the prompt availability and rapid installation of our new organ, a program of fund-raising events isn't yet in place. An Organ Fund has been created, into which donations are encouraged, which will also reduce the impact of this purchase on our general funds. Anyone specifically interested in donating their favourite organ stop/sound should contact me for further details.

*Geoff Willis*

## Fair Trade

Fair trade is an organized social movement and market-based approach that aims to help producers in developing countries to make better trading conditions and promote sustainability. The movement advocates the payment of a higher price to exporters as well as higher social and environmental standards. It focuses in particular on exports from developing countries to developed countries, most notably handicrafts, coffee, tea, bananas, honey, cotton, wine, fresh fruit, chocolate, flowers, and gold.



You can support FairTrade's work in developing countries by purchasing products bearing the FairTrade certified label. On the supermarket shelves of Coles and Woolworths teas, coffees and chocolates can be found. Brands such as Oxfam Fair, Nerada Organic, Nature's Cuppa (Teas); Oxfam, Global Cafe Direct, Republica (Coffees) are available.

*Deidre Reynolds*

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

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

Donald Alexander Drummond

Jennifer Avril Whispott

John Marriott Sadler

Leslie James McIntyre

Peter Barr

Ailsa Marie Stewart

Louis Denham Joseph

Samuel Dennis Kelaart

*We record with joy the baptisms of*

Thomas Rowan Leister

Kim Liu

Oliver Thomas Cornall

Olive Armstrong

Amelia Lee Notman