

NewView

Glen Waverley Uniting Church Cnr Bogong Ave & Kingsway Glen Waverley 3150 Ph 9560 3580 Email: office@gwuc.org.au	Induction of Rev Neil Peters 2	Outreach BBQ Forum 6 Outreach: Kenya 2014 7 Inclusive Community 8	Playgroups 14 Book Review 15 Response to Book Review 16
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As we move through Lent towards Easter Day our theme of Reconciliation is an appropriate focus for our thoughts. At a time when we remember the broken relationships in Jesus' world we are reminded of our own, and we are inspired to make an effort to bring together those from whom we have been estranged. This often means that *we* have to be the ones to initiate reconciliation.

On a national scale, the Palm Sunday march is an expression of people's concern for the way in which our nation is breaching its legislated commitment to the 1951 United Nations Refugee Convention, and failing to uphold the rights of refugees to seek asylum. We have allowed the leaders of our major political parties, together with many voices from the media, to falsely create a belief that we are under threat of invasion. By the use of selective language and easy slogans ('Operation Sovereign Borders'; 'stop the boats') and a screen of silence using 'operational matters' as an excuse for lack of transparency, Australian apathy is enabling a great injustice to occur in sacrificing those currently arriving by boat to discriminatory treatment. The Palm Sunday march is evidence that there are those who are prepared to peacefully state that current policies do not represent their views at all, and to request more humane solutions.

This issue of *NewView* can be read as a cross-section of our church community's current activities and concerns. A report on the induction of Rev Neil Peters as Minister of the Word precedes Neil's own words on Reconciliation. These are augmented by reflections from others.

Reports from the Missional Groups provide a glimpse into some of our many activities. They are evidence that many of us have already taken to heart the suggestion that we each attach ourselves to the missional group that can best harness our personal gifts and interests. *'Do more than belong: participate. Do more than care: help. Do more than believe: practise. Do more than be fair: be kind. Do more than forgive: forget. Do more than dream: work.'* (William Arthur Ward)

Because ours is a large community and we cannot know everyone well, the regular feature Getting to Know You provides a chance to find out a little more about 'us'. This time we have the bonus of directing the spotlight on both older and younger members, whom we thank for sharing their stories with us. Any suggestions for future candidates or interviewees would be welcomed!

Similarly, book reviews of books you have read which have affected your faith journey are invited. This issue's book review provides an unexpected viewpoint, and there is some discussion arising from the last issue's review. These are all reminders that we are each following our own paths of understanding, but that we are united in our common goals despite our differences.

Our thanks to our contributors who have shared their stories, concerns and wisdom. They have each volunteered something of themselves and we honour that gift.

Robin Pope

WELCOME TO REV NEIL PETERS

On the last Thursday evening in January, an eager crowd came to Glen Waverley Uniting Church for a long-awaited event: the induction of Rev Neil Peters as our new minister. Many of us had already met Neil as he had made himself known to us when he visited a number of our events late in 2013 and we were keen to participate in the formal confirmation of his appointment in a service led by the Chairperson of the Presbytery of Port Phillip East, Rev Dr Paul Chalson. Balloons and streamers in liturgical colours symbolised both the celebratory mood and the significance of the occasion.



Rev Dr Paul Chalson & Rev Neil Peters

Following a welcoming hymn and greeting, prayers of thanksgiving and confession were offered. Eileen Scott read to us from the Scripture and this was followed by Rev Liz McMillan's preaching of the Word, inspiring us all to work together in support of Neil's, and our, ministry to the world.



Eileen Scott



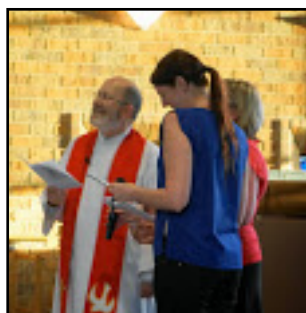
Rev Liz McMillan

An affirmation of faith was followed by an anthem sung by Free Spirit, and then representatives of the congregation and the ministry team brought forward symbols of Neil's ministry: the Bible, bread and wine, water, and the membership rolls.



Congregational reps Lois Hosking, Gail Irvine, Ross McKinnon, Neil Skilton with Rev Neil Peters

After an induction prayer with the laying on of hands Neil was presented to us as our new Minister. As a congregation we were charged with welcoming Neil into our homes; honouring his leadership; listening for God's word in his preaching; promising to provide for him; and to support him with our love and prayers. Neil was then welcomed by ministers and pastors from other congregations and the community. A particularly joyful welcome came from Rev Dr Warren Bartlett, on behalf of the ministers who had provided leadership through the interim until Neil's acceptance of the call to our congregation. Neil then briefly responded with an outline of his vision for our future together.

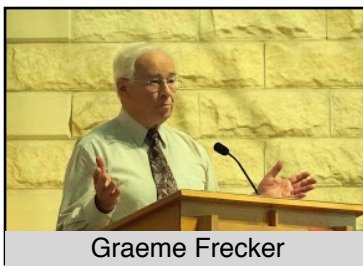


Rev Neil Peters, Belinda Clear & Alane Hearnshaw

Prayers of the people were offered by Graeme Frecker. A final hymn aptly titled 'Dreams and Visions', and blessings by the Rev Dr Paul Chalson and Uniting Voices concluded a happy event for us all. Welcome to Neil and Lynn and their two sons Dale and Craig!



A warm welcome from Rev Dr Warren Bartlett



Graeme Frecker

Thanks to Jit Tan for the photos

Robin Pope



Lynn and Neil Peters

RECONCILIATION - DARE TO DREAM

Reconciliation is one of those things that we affirm, desire, long for and yet it seems so hard to achieve. The Oxford Dictionary defines reconciliation as “make friendly after estrangement, harmonize, make compatible, show compatibility”.

Reconciliation is sought within many aspects of life. Sometimes relationships within families are fractured and we long for them to be restored and reconciled. Sometimes we experience strained relationships at work – maybe someone is not pulling their weight or maybe there are personality clashes which lead to ongoing friction and tension.

International relations are another area where reconciliation seems so far away, almost impossible despite hours of talk and negotiation. Will we ever be able solve the tensions in the Middle East when there is so much mistrust, hatred and an apparent desire not to give ground? I didn't live through the World Wars but I have lived through many regional conflicts and wars in my life time. Why can't we learn from the past? Why is it that we can't resolve disputes through dialogue and negotiation all the way through to just and equitable resolutions?

Australia is a multicultural and multi faith society and we have to work hard to ensure that we are a tolerant and harmonious society. We need to be able to have a respect for all people. There has been a lot of work done by community leaders, government and churches to bring a much closer relationship between indigenous Australians and non-indigenous Australians. Within this work we have used the word “reconciliation”. I have in my office a document called “The Path to Reconciliation” which is dated 1997. This is an important and ongoing work for community, government and church.

There is much discussion in the media at the moment around the tension between freedom of speech and racial vilification. Are we free to say what we like, or is it right to have some constraint on what we can say because of the power of words to demean and harm people?

Sometimes conflict arises within the church. This is really hard for the church because we are supposed to be a loving and accepting community. The church community should be committed to intentionally trying to resolve conflict, which takes hard work and effort in order to bring reconciliation and justice. There are times in the church where we have to work to address fractured relationships between ministry agents (minister, pastor, youth worker etc) and members; or between members and members; or between ministry agents themselves. As human beings we sometimes act or speak inappropriately and unfortunately it happens in the church. Last year the Synod established a Code of Conduct which sets out what is expected in terms of acceptable behaviour and respect for others within church communities. The Church Council is currently looking at this document. In an ideal world the church would not need such a document. However, the church should use these expectations to ensure that it is a welcoming, accepting, inclusive and safe place for all who come among us.

Why should the church be concerned about reconciliation? 2 Corinthians 5: 17-20 speaks of reconciliation. The passage declares that in Christ we are a new creation and that we have been reconciled with God through Christ. We have experienced God's love and forgiveness and importantly we are entrusted with the message of reconciliation. The challenge given to us is that we are to be ambassadors for Christ as God reaches out to others through us. **We are to be ambassadors representing Christ to one another and to the community in which we live.** Are you ready to be entrusted with the message of reconciliation and to be Christ's ambassador? In this context what we say, what we do, and how we live together really matters. I feel the weight of this responsibility as a minister. I need to set an example. However, it is not just up to me. We are all ambassadors representing Christ. May the Holy Spirit help each of us live the life of a faithful witness, servant and as an ambassador for Christ.

Rev Neil Peters

FURTHER THOUGHTS on RECONCILIATION

Reconciliation

Is it being a friend
a 'mate',
as close to the other
as with self?

For me it has been a number of
significant 'with' moments
turning points
along the journey of life.

With...

With God over time
helped by an uncle,
and many others
through the spoken
and written word.

Nature through
visits to the farm
fishing trips
and reading the gospel
by Middle Harbour
early in the day.

My father only
after his death,
mother and siblings
in mid-life.

Denise 'life-partner'
through children
grand children,
and our lives together
two as one.

People along the way
indigenous and others
through education
work
hobbies and interests

This is my experience
and journey to date.
What about yours?

P G Baker

Courage to be Reconciled

At the service of thanks to the 'Three Amigos' (interim ministers) in January, one of the Amigos spoke of crucifixion and resurrection. He explained that in Hebrew, crucifixion is understood as 'being in exile', while resurrection is understood as 'returning from exile' ie returning to homeland.

Now Jesus was a Jew and I could see how that interpretation fitted with Passover celebration i.e. from slavery to freedom. My mind skipped ahead to other parallels:

estrangement to reconciliation
fragmentation to wholeness
dominance to empowerment
thought patterns that destroy, to
thought patterns that nurture.

In the sermon, another of the Amigos indicated that after all that had gone on at GWUC over the past twelve months, we hope that much of the old victim mentality [my words] would have died. The question is, will we have the courage to be resurrected? Resurrected as a group?

What a concept! Much to ponder. The spontaneous applause that followed indicated our acceptance of the challenge.

So, in the words of a chorus I heard once, may we be
free from the chains of the past
free to be lovers and givers and friends
free to be people at last.

Many thanks to the Three Amigos: Evan, Brace and Warren.

Pamela Longmuir

RECONCILING THE NATION

In 1967, a referendum was held on the status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. Australians voted overwhelmingly to count Australia's First Peoples in the census and enable the Federal Government to make laws for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

However, the 1967 referendum didn't recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in the Constitution or remove sections that discriminate on the basis of race.

In 2008, the then Prime Minister and Opposition Leader apologised to the Stolen Generations. The Parliament's recognition of past wrongdoing was a significant moment for the nation and demonstrated the potential of a powerful symbolic action to contribute to a more reconciled Australia.

Recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and removing race from the constitution presents an historic opportunity to address the unfinished business in our reconciliation journey. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples have been calling for Constitutional change for decades.

In 2011 the Government established an Expert Panel, made up of members of Parliament from across the political spectrum, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander elders, community leaders and respected legal experts. Consultations were held in 85 different communities across metro, regional and remote Australia. There was overwhelming support for change.

In January 2012 the Panel presented its report. It unanimously endorsed a specific proposal to amend the Constitution. If adopted, this amendment would:

1. Recognise the prior occupation and continuing cultures, languages and heritage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.
2. Acknowledge the continuing relationship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to these lands and waters.
3. Remove the section [25] that talks about States being able to ban people from voting based on their "race".
4. Remove the capacity of governments to make laws to the detriment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples or the people of any "race" [section 51, xxvi].
5. Insert a protection against discrimination on the basis of race, colour or ethnicity.

In 2013, as an interim step towards a referendum, the parliament unanimously passed an Act of Recognition which has three key features:

1. It expresses parliamentary recognition of the unique place of Australia's First Peoples;
2. It provides a mechanism for continuing the work of the Expert Panel, through a review and reporting process;
3. It has a 'sunset clause' that sets a timeframe for advancing towards Constitutional change.

The Government, Opposition and Greens have committed to holding a referendum to change the Constitution before the next Federal election.

Source: www.antar.org.au

Thanks to Donna Vanclay for providing this information

Outreach Missional News

The Inaugural Quarterly BBQ Forum 2014

featuring Dr Chris Drummond

A sunny afternoon on Sunday 30 March saw an eager gathering of nearly 50 church members congregate for a pleasant Sunday afternoon luncheon followed closely by an inspiring talk by Dr Chris Drummond. The meal consisted of a barbecue menu and vegetarian Singapore Noodles provided by Mrs Vida Foo.

Dr Chris opened her presentation with a brief precis of the countries that she, and husband David, have worked in during their years with Medicines Sans Frontieres, the World Health Organisation and various allied agencies. Chris has worked for these agencies in countries such as India, Maldives and Indonesia.

All present were greatly informed and intrigued by the considerable volume of statistics that represented research into the traumas following natural disasters such as the Gujarat earthquake. The analysis presented showed the time scale for the rates of casualty identification immediately following the traumatic event. Also Chris made mention of the high level of resilience which people suffering from these natural disasters can, on occasions, exhibit.

Questions from the floor were taken by Dr Chris and they related to the need for birth control in the third world as well as issues relating to the purchase, in Australia, of ethically produced clothing and food in the light of all that she has seen.

Now you know more information about the movements of Drs Chris and David make sure you stop them next time your paths cross and seek more information. Copies of the afternoon's presentation are also available from Heather in the office.

The next Quarterly Barbecue Forum will be held on Sunday 29 June 2014 and will feature Mr. Mohammed Isah, Programme Manager of the Lentara UnitingCare Asylum Seeker Project. Mr. Isah is himself a former asylum seeker and provides an excellent insight into the plight of those attempting to enter Australia.

Andrew Hosking

ORGAN FUND

Due to recent generous donations, the Organ Fund has now reached \$15,000. These funds help to replenish the general parish funds originally spent on acquiring the instrument.

Geoff Willis

Outreach Missional News

LOVING ONE ANOTHER : KENYA 2014

God is calling us to assist others in Kenya again this year.

We are in regular contact with Kenyan leaders (our friends) of children's organisations and so we have knowledge of some of their current needs.

For **Cherish Exchange Foundation** in Nakuru our first priority is to raise \$AUS10,000 for a year's Food Program towards breakfast (a mug of porridge) and lunch (see an example in the photo) for 110 children who attend the Cherish Exchange Foundation school. We have applied to COP 2014 for part of this money.

Does \$10,000 sound a lot to you? It works out to be about 25 cents per child per day!

The kitchen we designed and assisted in building in June 2013 is working well as the kitchen and for a lunch area for the children and also as a community centre. However the two 1,000 litre water tanks included at the end of the kitchen collect insufficient water and so Cherish still has to buy water. Our UCAF will provide some of the necessary funds to replace the existing tanks with a 6,000 litre tank (and we will use the existing tanks elsewhere).



Moses Kombo (Chairman of Cherish) realises that Cherish cannot exist on donations alone so Cherish have bought a 5 acre farm (shamba) for the sole purchase of growing crops and keeping a few cows and goats all to raise money towards getting Cherish to be self sufficient. As you can see by the photo there is LOTS of work to do to turn the shamba into an income producing venture.

We hope to raise funds towards the buildings needed: a store with small office (\$5,000+ labour); a toilet, 3 cubicles (\$900 + labour), a simple room for caretakers/workers accommodation and a cow shed (both not yet estimated). Enough about Cherish.

We will (of course) visit our friend Pastor William of **Kerry Children Bible Ministry**, just about a kilometre up the road at Ponda Mali (suburb) from Cherish. Kerry Children aims are similar to Cherish in trying to educate street children and provide them with breakfast and lunch. The Pastor is a quiet man-of-God and sometimes the way is very tough. This year he has endured a dislocation, death of a son and currently hypertension but still puts God's children first. We don't plan any projects with the Pastor as the GWUC Young Adults provide some support.

If you followed our travels in 2013 you will know about **Kivuli Projects** at the little outback town of Ndaragwa, 3 hours drive from Nakuru. Moses Kombo made a visit to Kivuli and was appointed one of their directors on the same day! Kivuli are keen to add to their existing Solar systems, both lighting for the dormitories and for water pumping. They already own a 0.37kW, 240 V AC water pump and they wish to power this from a solar system (cell and battery 12V DC) with an inverter to convert the DC to AC. Interesting!

We are happy to accept donations towards the above Cherish Projects. Please give the money (cash or cheque) to Heather Hon in the Office marked **Kenya Cherish** and indicate if you would like a GWUC receipt or not (Church receipts are NOT Tax Deductible).

We would be pleased to talk to you if you would like to hear further about these Projects. During our previous visits we provided regular emails about our activities. If you would like to be on the list to receive such emails please advise us (with your email address)

Lyn & Pam McDonald (lynmcd@chariot.com.au)

INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY

Morning tea after 11am was held on 9 February and 9 March. We have been very surprised at how popular these have been and we have decided to make morning tea a light lunch. On 9 March, members attending 11am service had the opportunity to meet Stan Ford's family and to say good-bye to Stan. The next morning tea will be on 13 April.

Shrove Tuesday Neil, John and Peter made many pancakes and we sold them to members of the congregation, playgroup families and members of the public. Community Hub volunteers made tea and coffee. We raised \$250 for Uniting Care. Children and Families made pancakes and gave donations on the following Sunday and we appreciated their support.



Munch with a Bunch Lunches are organised for members of our Asian community and those who dine alone. These are held about every six weeks. Inclusive community committee members have been delighted at the responses each time we have had one of these functions. A new member, Helen, commented at the last lunch, how good it was to meet others in such a delightful setting (RSL Glen Waverley). Need more details? Contact Jan 9803 6820

Community Fun Night Friday May 2

How well do you know other members of our congregation: youth, young families, older folk? Inclusive community committee has organised a dinner and fun night. Alanee and Belinda have planned the activities so there will be many laughs and time to get to know others better. Dinner will begin at 6.30pm and the evening will conclude at 9pm. We can provide transport too. Enquiries Jan 9803 6820.

Combined Lunch Sunday April 6

This is our first community lunch for 2014 and will follow the combined service and congregational meeting. We will make our own rolls and there will fruit salad and jelly.

Support

The Inclusive Community committee is ready to organise support. This may be prayer support through the prayer chain, bereavement support, support for Newcomers who may need help with their English or help with everyday matters, introductions to one of our many groups, adopted grandparents. A member of our congregation said how great it was to receive bereavement support from someone who was compassionate and understanding.

Pastoral Care

In August last year, we invited Sharonne Price, founder of Pastoral Partners in South Australia, to visit us and conduct weekend workshops. Following a very successful weekend, groups of people have met to learn more about the program and how to care for others and for themselves. Our last session was held on Sunday 16 March. Pastoral Partners maintain contact with clusters of four or five units (singles, families, couples). We have many avenues of Pastoral Care within this congregation that are working well so we plan to concentrate initially on people who have no pastoral contact.

Barbara, Faye, Alison, Jan, Marj, Elwyn or Gail would be happy to answer questions about any of these activities.

Jan Clear

Getting to Know You: Wendy & Graeme Pratt

SHARING LIFE TOGETHER WITH FAITH

Entrance to the Pratt house is over a tiled porch to the front door. The tiles made by Wendy and laid by Graeme depict many significant features and events of their life together, tangible evidence of their story of mutual love, co-operation and support.



Their separate lives began half a world apart just before the outbreak of World War Two, Graeme's in Essendon in early 1938 and Wendy's in Ashford (London) in 1939. Wendy's childhood games - hopscotch, hoops - in wartime London were played on the bombed-out sites of former neighbourhood buildings near the three-storey flats where her family lived. In 1951, after Wendy had completed primary school and her 'Eleven Plus' exam, her family migrated to the opportunities offered in Australia, where an aunt of Wendy's had already settled. Soon after obtaining employment her father purchased a home in Burwood East on the corner of Blackburn Road and Burwood Highway, now the site of a service station. She completed her schooling at Camberwell High (which then terminated at Form 5), where she particularly enjoyed studying biology and where she played violin in the school orchestra. On completion of high school Wendy worked from 1956 to 1962 as a medical laboratory technician at the Baker Medical Research Institute at the Alfred Hospital, assisting both a scientific and a medical doctor in their research into haemophilia. During her time there she completed adult matriculation and a medical laboratory technician's course at RMIT.

Meanwhile Graeme had spent his earliest years at Somers before moving to Burwood where he started his education at Burwood Primary School, and Sunday School at the Methodist Church on Warrigal Road. He remembers a boyhood typical of the relative freedom of those days, climbing pine trees in the schoolyard, playing games of backyard cricket, belonging to boy cubs and scouts, and fishing at night with his dad. He too attended Camberwell High and played violin in the school orchestra, but moved on to Melbourne Boys' High School. His aptitude for sports was soon encouraged, as he represented both schools in school athletics and swimming. He also enjoyed the challenges of studying mathematics, physics and chemistry. After matriculation he began his long association with Melbourne University, where he continued to pursue his sporting interests in parallel with his academic studies.

Wendy and Graeme met each other through the youth activities of the Burwood Circuit of the Methodist Church. Wendy remembers Barbara Morris and her brother Lindsay as significant leaders of church life who organised youth teas and youth camps which she attended. Graeme was encouraged by Ted Brown, a communion steward at the Burwood Church who encouraged Graeme's interest by getting him to assist in worship services. From these early beginnings, both Graeme and Wendy became so committed to their faith that by 1960 they had both become accredited lay preachers, and were used in taking services in the Burwood and Malvern - Gardiner areas. In those years when money was harder to come by, and when public transport was less well provided in outer suburbs such as Burwood, they each purchased a Lambretta scooter which enabled them to be far more mobile than earlier generations of young people. Graeme's was eventually superseded by an Austin Lancer which he drove to the Youth Convention in Brisbane in 1960.



Wendy (on left) with her sister, January 1962

In 1962 Graeme and Wendy's wedding was a shared first (with Wendy's sister) in the newly-opened East Burwood Methodist Church, whose A-frame structure is still a landmark. They moved to their current home in Glen Waverley, where they lived briefly in a caravan on the site while the finishing touches to their home were completed. In accordance with the practice of the times Wendy ceased her employment when she became pregnant, although she was able to fill in for brief periods later. The arrival of David in 1962 and Philip in 1965 completed their family, which now also includes 5 grandchildren and 1 great-grandson.

Getting to Know You: Wendy & Graeme Pratt

The newly-weds joined their nearest Methodist Church on Springvale Road, where Edgar Derrick, the manager of Tally Ho Boys' Home is remembered by Graeme for his guidance. When her children commenced school, Wendy rekindled her active life as a volunteer, expanding into various community services, first at parish, then at presbytery and synod levels. She was particularly active in Waverley Emergency Youth Housing, and Genesis (which has since been absorbed into Uniting Church Harrison Services). She also served on Community Options Victoria which organised activities for seniors, and she was a founding member of the group which started up the GWUC Leisure Time program which is still active today. As an elected member of the Parish Council, her leadership qualities were recognised when she was elected chairperson in the 1970s.

In the little remaining spare time, Wendy shared her talents in floral art, assisting on the flower roster until recently. She suggested our practice of 'Thoughtful Flowers', which she had seen in operation at Kenilworth, where she and Graeme worshipped when they were in England for various periods. The other outlet for her artistic talents was in pottery, and she tutored groups at Fleet St Neighbourhood House and Potters' Cottage. She regards the time spent teaching pottery to disabled groups at Potters' Cottage as one of her most satisfying activities. Their home is enhanced by examples of her work.



Madonna & Child

Graeme was similarly involved in church leadership. He had been a member of the Leaders' Meeting at Burwood Methodist Church, then he and Wendy were both active in the choir and Sunday School at East Burwood. At Glen Waverley Uniting Church he has been an elder and a member of Parish Council. He continued as a lay preacher after the move to Glen Waverley, taking services around Victoria and in the UK where lay preachers are still more frequently engaged than in the Uniting Church in Australia. This opportunity to continue as a local preacher in the UK has provided considerable satisfaction. Graeme's sporting interests have been maintained in his support for the tennis club, acting as president (33 years at Burwood, 6 years at Glen Waverley!) and secretary (15 years). He still keeps active by playing regularly; and he is still a member of a choir, singing with Uniting Voices. Badminton, photography and model railways have also engaged his interest over the years.

Professionally, Graeme has been a lifelong scholar and teacher. He acquired two Bachelor degrees (science and arts) and a Diploma of Education before proceeding on to higher degrees: a Master of Applied Science (1975), and a Doctorate of Applied Science in 2001. As courses and faculties have changed and been rebadged, so has Graeme's career. His first appointment was to Caulfield Technical College and Secondary Teachers' College, then in 1963 he moved to the Faculty of Applied Science at the University of Melbourne. When the Faculty of Applied Science was abolished in 1969 he continued in Industrial Science, becoming Head of Department 1986-89, and Associate Dean of the Faculty. When Industrial Science closed in 1990 he transferred once again, to the Department of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering.



Over the years he has been engaged in research at the University of Warwick, so he and Wendy spent many extended periods at Kenilworth. He has found a by-product of his research has been to enhance his teaching by providing material examples and anecdotes to accompany the theory. He was appointed Visiting Professor to the University of Warwick in 2000.

On Christmas Day in 1992 a serious car accident dramatically altered the expected trajectory of their lives. Graeme was in hospital until the following Easter recovering from his injuries; he still bears evidence of this in the restricted movement of one ankle and one elbow, although he has managed to compensate sufficiently to continue playing tennis. Wendy's injuries left her in a coma for 3 months, and it was a further 13 months before she came home, now in need of the assistance of carers. Apart from memory problems she also found working on her beloved pottery wheel no longer possible, so undaunted, she switched to making hand-built pottery. Loss of hand strength has forced a later adjustment into mosaics as an outlet for her creativity.

Getting to Know You: Wendy & Graeme Pratt

In facing the consequences of this change to their lives, they acknowledge the vital support their faith has provided them over the years. While they regret being unable now to attend small group meetings, they see small clusters as central to church unity and coherence. Both still regularly worship at GWUC, mostly at the 11am service which best meets their worship and teaching needs; however, they affirm that we are fortunate indeed to have a choice of worship styles to cater for the diverse range of our congregation's faith needs. Consequently Graeme hopes we continue to provide for people's differing experiences by keeping the traditional going as well as the modern; he recognises the choice of music in worship as a central issue now and into the future. He also feels that as a group we need to 'step up to the plate' financially if we see the need for an expanded ministry team and he hopes we don't water down our 'essential message' in the desire to reach a broader audience.

We thank Wendy and Graeme for sharing their story with us. We honour their love for each other and the dedication they have to their faith, which has provided so much benefit to our church community and has continued to support them through their long partnership.

Robin Pope

Be a Good Egg this Easter

Did you know that much of the chocolate available in Australia comes from cocoa beans picked by children, many of whom have been trafficked or forced to work in exploitative conditions? It is estimated that there are at least 800,000 children working in the cocoa industry at present: 5-10% of these have been trafficked. To ensure that the chocolate you buy has been produced in an ethical manner, look for the following labels or logos: **Fairtrade, Rainforest Alliance or UTZ.**

In **2013** there were at least six slavery-free Easter eggs and rabbits, manufactured by Green and Blacks, Cadbury and Chocolatier.

In **2014** Haigh's Chocolate are proud to be the first Australian-owned bean-to-bar chocolate manufacturer to achieve international UTZ certification for ethically and sustainably farmed cocoa beans, which includes a zero-tolerance policy towards trafficked child labour. UTZ certification puts Haigh's at the forefront of a sustainable production program that spans cocoa-growing countries from Ghana in West Africa to Peru in South America.

UTZ certified cocoa has been used for all of the Haigh's 2014 Easter range, **including every Easter Egg and Easter Bilby.**

Source: www.acrath.org.au

Other ethical sources of chocolate are:

- Most Cadbury dairy milk chocolate made in Australia, and some Chocolatier products which have been certified by **FAIRTRADE**;
- All Mars bars made in Australia are now certified by the **RAINFOREST ALLIANCE**;
- All Nestle chocolate made in Australia and New Zealand is **UTZ Certified**;
- Haigh's is **totally certified**.

Getting to Know You: Laura Morgan

Sitting in a coffee shop on Kingsway with Laura Morgan, my task today is to interview her about what she has been up to in the last few years, where she sees her life heading, and what she sees as important in her life. The sight of the two of us sitting in a café and chatting is not an unusual one. Laura and I have had many coffees (or iced chocolates) over the years, whether that be after 7pm services or maybe youth group on a Friday night. Laura and I have known each other a long time as we both grew up attending Glen Waverley Uniting Church. We got to know each other better, however, whilst completing a Youth Internship under Alanee's supervision at the church in 2008, in order to earn a Certificate IV in Youth Work.

This certificate in youth work is only a small aspect to Laura's work with children and youth over the years. After finishing secondary school in 2005, she embarked on a double degree of Sport and Outdoor Recreation and Primary Teaching at Monash University. During her time at university Laura had many different experiences. In 2008 she undertook an exchange semester in Canada. While in North America she also went on a couple of mission trips and on one of these built two houses in Mexico with a group of Uniting Church members. In 2009 Laura completed a 3 week teaching placement at Maningrida School in the Northern Territory. The town of Maningrida, a 550km plane ride from Darwin, sits on the north coast of Australia in the heart of Arnhem Land.

Upon returning to Melbourne and finishing off her double degree, Laura found that it was her time in Maningrida that had really stuck in her mind. So in 2010, she set off to Maningrida again, this time as a qualified, full-time primary school teacher. Laura taught at Maningrida School for two and a half years between 2010 and 2012, during which time she got to know the local community and the other school teachers, and went on many different adventures in her cherished Troopie 4WD. She especially loved teaching indigenous kids, becoming particularly close with some of the regular school attendees.

After coming home to Melbourne in mid-2012, Laura worked as a relief teacher for 6 months before finding a job through Access Ministries as a school chaplain. She currently performs this role, which she enjoys greatly, at Pakenham Lakeside Primary School and Upper Beaconsfield Primary School.

Laura sees her work as chaplain in these schools as giving her a chance to become more involved in the pastoral care of school students who are having a hard time or going through changes in their family life. She describes her role as similar to the role of small group leader at church. When asked to compare her role to that of her former role as classroom teacher, Laura says that she enjoys having the extra time to spend with those kids who need a little extra TLC. She also appreciates having the flexibility to be a little more creative in her role. On previous shopping trips together Laura has become excited at finding board games or picture books that she can use with these kids!

While Laura loves working with the kids in Pakenham and Beaconsfield, she tells me that at some point she would love to work with Indigenous children again, as she misses all her students up in Maningrida. In fact, over the Easter break she is flying back up to Maningrida just to catch up with them!

Laura's passion for teaching and helping children and youth shines through in many aspects of her life. Since graduating secondary school Laura has been involved in leading the church's youth group and small groups. She was also involved in the Kombi Krew, driving around Victoria in a Kombi to

Getting to Know You: Laura Morgan

perform random acts of kindness such as helping out with Habitat for Humanity. At the moment she attends Young Adult groups on Monday and Wednesday nights, as well as the 7pm Sunday service.

Discussing the importance of caring for and supporting children and youth, Laura says that she feels lucky to have had supportive youth leaders throughout her own youth. In fact, Laura tells me that it was her own experience of youth leadership which in part motivated her to give school chaplaincy a go; to pass on that care and support to others, who maybe don't have a youth group providing that support.

Wherever Laura decides to go next in her life and career, it is safe to say that she will somehow be involved in supporting children and youth and in making life a slightly better place for the kids that she comes across.



Laura at Maningrida

Bronwyn Lowe

Some Reflections on NCYC: Sydney, Jan 2014

Ben and Steph, who attended the NCYC in Sydney, offered these thoughts about their experience:



Steph and Ben on the road home

Ben:

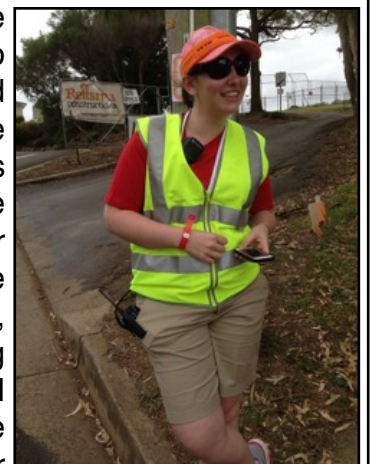
I liked the Babannas, because I got to hang out with my friends, have fun and get free lollies. I thought that the food was very good. I also really liked the community spaces (the cafe areas, both where breakfast was held and where Alanee had her activities), because we could talk without having to stick to a specific plan.

Steph:

I think that NCYC was an enriching experience that challenged us and brought us together. I liked the fact that it was multi-cultural and that even though we all came from different churches, we could come together at the rallies and have worship together in our own way. I also thought that it was cool that we all had communion at the same time, at one of the rallies. I liked that there were different types of worship, so we could see what it is like just to have music or to be told a story for worship. I enjoyed the fact that there were different activities to do in our spare time, such as learning about human trafficking and slave labour or getting henna tattoos. I really liked that we had community time every morning, where we came together with the same people and got to share and have fun.



Sarah, Ben, Felicity, Jason, Jayne, Alex, Rhian at NCYC



Nicole Robertson, NCYC Volunteer

Our thanks to Ben and Steph!

Community Hub

Snapshots from Wednesday Playgroup



Justine, from Korea, with Jenny and Jayden in Christmas costumes arranged by the Hub.

Justine says: I have been attending Wednesday playgroup since my daughter, Jenny, was 18 months old. She is now 4 and comes with her little brother, Jayden, who is 22 months old. This is a well organized playgroup lead by Rosalie and Helen, with Nancy and Kaye, ladies who volunteer their time to be with us.

I would really like to thank these beautiful ladies who really care about our kids and mums.

Nancy says: Playgroup is enjoyable for everyone involved: children, mothers, volunteers.



Nancy with Ashlee, threading fruit loops for necklace.

For the children there is the charm of having their mother's full attention as they run from one fascinating occupation to another. With the short attention span of a toddler they may thread beads, paint and play on the slide within the space of a few minutes. For the mothers, there is the pleasure of seeing their children happy and involved. At the same time they meet other young mothers whom otherwise they might not have met. For the volunteers there is the satisfaction of watching children have a good time in the happiest possible atmosphere.



Arshanna busy painting

Arshanna's mum, Manchula, says: Playgroup has been fantastic for both me and my daughter! We've met great people, made new friends and look forward to it weekly. As she has never been to childcare, playgroup has helped Arshanna learn important social skills prior to commencing kinder this year.

I would definitely recommend playgroup to anyone with young children.

Helen says: I love taking my girls to playgroup. They get to play with kids of their own age and I get to talk to other mums too. As I am a member of the GWUC Church community I also see my leadership in Playgroup as my ministry.



Helen with Ashlee, making a necklace

Charmarie (and daughter, Yenouli) says: We came to Australia last April. We had terrible homesickness at that time, specially my daughter, Yenouli, who missed her grandparents a lot. After a few weeks on the waiting list I could enrol my little Yenouli in the Glen Waverley Uniting Church Playgroup. It was like heaven for her, full of toys and friends. I felt better too, as I could meet people and make friends. We felt like Australia was a nice place to live after we joined this playgroup.

Thanks very much to all the leaders for their nice organisation of playgroup and their warm welcome.

Thank you to Kaye Mackinnon who organises the playgroups, and who obtained these snapshots for us.

Book Review

The following article was printed in the magazine 'St Mary's Matters', which is published by the continuing congregation of Fr Peter Kennedy in Brisbane. We reprint it here with permission from the editor and the author of the article.

The book is available at the Glen Waverley library, call no 923.45 AL

Robin de Crespigny, ***The People Smuggler***,
 Viking, Penguin Group Australia, 2012
 Reviewed by Peter Bore

At the age of 20 in 1991 Ali Al Jenabi was imprisoned in Saddam Hussein's notorious Abu Ghraib prison with his father, his grandfather and his younger brother.

After 4 years he was released. His father remained in prison. There was no news of his brother whom Ali last saw having his fingers chopped off one by one with an axe. Ali joined the resistance to Saddam Hussein and moved to Kurdistan.

When his resistance contacts started being imprisoned or murdered he realised that he must get out of Iraq.

He made several unsuccessful attempts to walk into Turkey usually with assistance of someone who, for some money, would assist with transport and knowledge of the less dangerous crossing points. He managed to get his family to Kurdistan and after several unsuccessful attempts he crossed into Iran and made more unsuccessful attempts to get into Turkey. He had taken many jobs over the years to stay alive, to finance his escape attempts and bring his family to Iran. Eventually he was able to get false papers and pay the airfare to Indonesia. There he was defrauded of his remaining money by someone who promised him a place on a boat going to Christmas Island.

In desperation he decided that the only way he would get to Australia (he had a sister there who had married an Australian) would be to organise a boat himself. Thus he became what some would term a people smuggler (Smuggling is an act of covertly bringing something into another country. Those who arrive on Australia's shores by boat come openly to places like Christmas Island, Ashmore Reef or, as we have seen recently, sail into a mainland

harbour.) Because there was such a demand from fellow Iraqis he organised a succession of boats. All were seaworthy and completed their journeys without loss of life, in part because he only sailed when the weather was good and took a route through smoother waters to Ashmore Reef. He charged what people could afford - in many cases that was nothing. Eventually he was betrayed to the AFP and arrested in Thailand when travelling on a false passport. As soon as his short sentence was complete his detention was extended and he was 'extradited' to Australia. He had never been to Australia and arranging for people to get on boats to Australia is not a crime in Indonesia.

Subsequently he was tried in Darwin. The prosecution amongst other things asserted that he was helping people to 'jump the queue'. When the judge asked for evidence to justify that assertion they had none. The trial was adjourned and the prosecution went back to Canberra for a week. When they returned they admitted that they could produce no evidence to support the queue-jumping claim. He was found guilty of people smuggling. It is evident that the judge had some humanity. He noted the predicament that Ali had faced, that he only took what people could pay, that he had not made significant sums of money for himself, that he used seaworthy boats and that most of the passengers were eventually deemed to be *bona fide* refugees. His sentence of 8 years came with a recommendation that he be given parole after 4 years. With time he had already been in prison he had only 21 months to serve.

On his release he applied for refugee status. He was assessed and then heard no more. Only when a *pro bono* lawyer took the immigration minister to court for failing to reach a decision after more than a year (when the government's own rules stated that a decision must be made within three months) was it revealed that his assessment had concluded that he met all the criteria for refugee status but the official who made that decision was moved elsewhere whilst everyone who Ali contacted about the decision claimed that the official was away or would be back soon but they could not help. Then when the minister (Evans) made a decision, Ali was declined refugee status and given a bridging visa which in practice means that he depends on the charity of his relatives who had by then been accepted as refugees.

Book Review & Response

In the words of Ali's lawyer, 'The only conclusion that I can draw is that he (the minister) has it in for you, or that he did not appreciate being forced to make a decision.'

An appeal to the next minister (Bowen) was dismissed.

Ali remains in limbo. His fiancée of many years was refused a visa to visit Australia. His father was eventually released from prison a broken man. Of his brother there is still no news.

Thanks to Heather Wilkins for pointing us to this review

Luck?

It is but sheer luck!

It is a chance happening!...

Wonder about people who believe in it

A constant stream of endless uncertainties

Wondering whether something will happen or not.

If anything 'good' happens for them

Then it is Good Luck, a lucky chance.

If anything 'bad' comes to pass

Then they are at a loss.

But not so those whose lives are

Centred, anchored on 'The Rock'

Unlike a reed blowing in the wind,

But steady and sure through 'good' and 'bad'

Knowing the Lord has everything in Hand,

Freed of uncertainties of life

Living passionate lives

Being sure of what one hopes for

And certain of what one does not see.

Chance? Pah!

Rohan Wickramaratne

Response to Peter Stewart's Review of Michael Morwood's *It's Time: Challenge of the Doctrine of Faith* (Dec. 2013 issue)

It certainly was a challenging article in *NewView*. That was a big task, Peter, to write this book review. And for all Christians, good to take note of and *think* about what Morwood has to say, even if one does not agree or has a different point-of-view.

I would have liked to hear the opinions of the Friday Lectionary Study Group, and their deliberations or a valuation of his book.

But I was disappointed in Morwood's message. It would be interesting to hear some other comments, or points-of-view in this magazine.

To me, the most important part of our faith is Jesus Christ as God's Son. He lived a human life for a while, but at the same time He is part of the Trinity: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit: Three in One (in the article it mentions that 'Jesus was a deeply inspiring and courageous Jewish man...')

Our human mind cannot fathom the Trinity; we can only believe that God's Word is true. And our language is too concise, too short of words to be able to express the Godhead, the Creation and eternal life.

There is much in Morwood's expressions we can agree with such as : 'we are to establish God's way of acting', 'to love our neighbour' etc

In the conclusion Morwood says 'You will make sense of Jesus in the light of what we know today *or* you choose to stay locked into a religious imagination and worldview that are irrelevant in the modern world. It is as simple as that.'

No, it is not that simple. The scientific knowledge we have today makes us ever more in awe of God's creation and of His Majesty. Our challenge to be a disciple of Christ Jesus is even more difficult than it has ever been.

We live in connection with the past, like the Nicene Creed and the Apostles' Creed; that is our heritage. And we live in the present world as believers in Jesus Christ, and *towards* the future, which is in God's Hand. I can only pray: 'God help us, we *want* to believe!'
Donna Vanclay



THE JESUS COIN

How just are zealous Taliban,
to impose regime despotic?
Yet should we invade Afghanistan
to enforce life democratic?

When powers flout established norms
– ends justify the means, they say –
should we stand mute, as idle pawns,
or demand they act in a lawful way?

Sometimes it's tough to reconcile
the competing views in question.
The weak-kneed bow to common wile
often cowed by majority derision.

“Contemplate a simple coin”, He said,
“then pay tribute where it's due.
True deference to the Caesar head,
but with honour to the God-side too”.

Graeme Frecker, April 2014

Mark 12:

16 They brought one. And He said to them, "Whose likeness and inscription is this?"
And they said to Him, "Caesar's." 17 And Jesus said to them, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." And they were amazed at Him.

(Revised Standard Version)

Getting Away with the Getaways

As new chums to the Getaway scene Graham and I approached the weekend with some trepidation, but the beautiful drive to Inverloch down the inland Gippsland roads was a promising start to a companionable, relaxing weekend. We arrived on the Friday afternoon and soon realised that people arrived and departed as their time available permitted.

That night a large contingent of our GWUC group enjoyed a counter tea in a private dining room at the local pub. This was followed by the opportunity to share a games night back at the caravan park, organised by our indefatigable leaders, but the more slothful of us slunk back to our vans and cabins to watch the football.

Our organisers must have been in touch with the local council to ensure idyllic weather for our weekend, as Saturday was a pearler of a day which begged to be enjoyed in the sunshine. After pancakes at the local UC, we had a brief walk along the waterfront at Inverloch to walk off the indulgence. That afternoon we went for a drive to one of the many interesting spots around. We enjoyed viewing the riverside fishing spots at Lower Tarwin and the ocean beach at Venus Bay. We were impressed with the sensitive development of the beach areas, preserving the fragile beachfront but providing beach access, toilets and good walking paths.

Saturday night was a highlight of the stay, with a shared meal with about 48 folk in the covered area between the Lemke and Boldiston vans. For the princely sum of \$8 each, and a contributing salad, we dined in splendour on cold chicken and ham with a choice of about 30 salads, followed by dessert in edible dishes! We were delighted that Neil and Lynn Peters joined us for the meal. A trivia quiz confirmed our general ignorance!

Next morning after a quick visit to the Farmers' Market we trooped into the local Uniting Church, trebling their usual attendance. A wonderful service led by Rev Ross Stanford and accompanied by a volunteer pianist from the Catholic Church was followed by a shared lunch. The brilliantly sunny afternoon was spent in a variety of ways. We took advantage of the coffee facilities (\$1 a head for the weekend; hot water, tea, coffee and milk provided) in the communal area outside Lemke's, to sit chatting in the sun with folk as they came and went. Dinner that night was the first time we attempted any food preparation, and our departure the next day saw us packing up most of the food we had brought with us. We'll know better next time!

Our thanks to the Boldistons, the Lemkes and the Wagons for a warm welcome and unobtrusive organisation which ensured a relaxing time away. As first-timers we would encourage anyone to give it a try!

Robin Pope & Graham Pottenger

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 support and sympathy to their family

Florence Jean Cranston

Margaret Lois Walker

Fiona Emily Connelly

David George Mair

Theda Marie Howells

Joyce Isobel Hankin

SOMEONE NEEDING A VISIT OR PASTORAL CARE?

If you hear of anyone who is in hospital, or at home unwell, and know they would appreciate a visit from one of our Ministry Team please contact Jan Clear - 9803 6820, Alison Clarkson - 9560 3167 or Heather Hon in the church office - 9560 3580. If we don't know about it, we can't follow it up.

So don't keep it to yourself - LET US KNOW - and we will be more than happy to make contact.