

# NewView

<b>Glen Waverley Uniting Church</b> <b>Cnr Bogong Ave &amp; Kingsway</b> <b>Glen Waverley 3150</b> <b>Ph 9560 3580</b> <b>Email: <a href="mailto:office@gwuc.org.au">office@gwuc.org.au</a></b> 	<b>Respect</b> Neil's Musings 2 Laele Pepper on respect 3 Poem on respect 4 Val Webb on respect 5 <b>Getting to Know You:</b> John & Barbara Thompson 6	Refugee Week 9 <b>Reports</b> Walk for Chaplaincy 10 Ecumenical Choral Festival 12 Australia's Biggest Morning Tea: The Hub 14	<b>Getting to Know Our Church &amp; Activities</b> Our Tennis Club 15 Giving Thanks: Marion 16 Organ Fund update 16 A Pew Thanks to Bill 17 Action for Refugees 18 Act for Peace 19 Pastoral Notes 20
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'Respect', I thought, seemed a promising theme for this issue of *NewView*. After all, the issue comes out at a time when we celebrate the foundation of the Uniting Church in 1977. And that can only have happened because the representatives of the three churches concerned - Congregational, Methodist, Presbyterian - *respected* each other's positions. They understood that although they each had their differences in history, traditions and practices, what brought them together was a recognition that what they shared was stronger than their differences. They shared a belief in the primacy of the life and death of Jesus.

I checked out my trusty Oxford English Dictionary (OED): **To respect** (*v. tr*) **1.** *regard with deference, esteem or honour* **2 a** *avoid interfering with, degrading, harming, insulting, injuring or interrupting* **b** *treat with consideration* **c** *refrain from offending, corrupting or tempting (a person, a person's feelings etc)*

Somewhere in the darker recesses of my mind a light bulb went on - a 'Damascus' moment - and illuminated some unpleasant memories. An imaginary discussion with OED ensued:

Self: So, our church came together in a spirit of respect for each of the constituent churches. I wonder if that should extend to the attitudes of each of the individual members of those founding churches?

OED: Correct, if you think respect is important.

Self: You mean that at the personal scale I should show respect by *honouring* other people's experiences, traditions and understandings? (gulp)

OED: Correct.

Self (recalling some unkind comments made about other people's choices and practices): And that means 'not insulting, degrading or harming those experiences/traditions/ practices' by what I *say*??

OED: Correct.

Self: (light slowly dawning) And not only by what I say, but *how* I say it?

OED: Correct. Characteristics of speech such as tone of voice convey meaning as strongly as the words.

Self: You mean respect is not the same as tolerance?

OED: No, it's stronger. Tolerance 'endures, *permits* (a practice, action, person's doing)' although it should 'forbear to judge harshly or rigorously (person, religious sect, opinion)'. *Respect* is a transitive verb, so it requires an object. You respect something by treating it with deference or honour, by speaking about it in a positive way and manner, 'with consideration'.

Self: Er - you mean I should follow the example of those who accept where each of us is and meet us at that point? *Is that what respect involves?* Blimey! [*sl. Ausf*] I've got a bit of work to do!

OED: I'm only a dictionary, but within the parameters of my expertise that appears to define the situation.

Self: And not only meeting others at their point of understanding, but actively *honouring* that (OED mutters: 'Respect highly, confer dignity upon') by 'treating it with consideration'.

OED: You're moving beyond my field, but you seem to be slowly cottoning on (*v.i. sl. 'understand'*) to the implications of the verb (and noun) 'respect'. Here endeth your lesson... *Robin Pope*

## Neil's Musings on Respect

Respect is very important. One can receive respect for the role one carries out. For example, we can have respect for the office of Governor General. For many of us respect is offered because of our observed behaviour and interactions with people. The way we relate to others, communicate, act with grace and humility, can indicate that we respect others and we would hope to receive respect in turn.



It is important that we show respect to all members of our congregation. We are all created in the image of God. We are all in need of God's grace and love. None of us needs to feel superior to others. None of us should feel the need to put ourselves down. While we are all different, with different skills, passions and gifts, we are also all required in order to make up the Body of Christ. No person is more important than anyone else. I believe that respect should be a mark of any church community.

I recently attended the Synod meeting in Box Hill. The membership of Synod is made up of about 300 people, both lay and ordained, male and female, younger and many older, city dwellers and rural people, professional and unskilled, from many different ethnic communities and first Australians as well. It is a rich tapestry of people from a cross section of a wider community. Within this diverse community many and varied opinions are held on some significant matters.

I see a great deal of respect shown toward others at a Synod meeting. Members are free to ask questions of reports and speak to proposals that are being put forward for the Synod to consider. The members listen carefully to speakers and show them great respect. Even when we do not agree we listen to the differing voice with respect. I cannot recall anyone speaking out in anger at the Synod meeting. Some people spoke from the heart and with passion. Sometimes people shared their pain and struggle with a proposal. They could speak like that knowing that they would be heard. Sometimes they shared their enthusiasm. Sometimes we just had to continue to listen so that we could prayerfully find the way forward.

I observed great respect in the way people at the Synod meeting spoke, listened and worked together for the church that they all loved. In the midst of our listening we were listening for the voice and the prompt of the Spirit of God. While it can be hard work, at times frustrating, this is also the church working very well together.

Let us continue to work and serve together, showing one another the respect that each one is entitled to receive.

*Rev Neil Peters*

## Respect: Laele Pepper's thoughts

How would you define this term? From a relativist point of view, respect has to do with acceptance and inclusion, whatever the background you come from. So people of all faiths, or no faith, are respected for their beliefs and fully accepted, without any attempt to change their minds. All things are OK and all standards are acceptable to the relativist. That is where our larger society seems to stand.

But even there, this country has some unwritten rules which govern our behaviour. For example, we do not deface graves- we respect the dead no matter how they behaved when alive. We have also come over the last years ( twenty, thirty, even forty?) to respect women more. We no longer approve of men beating women inside a marriage, and indeed at last our politicians are passing laws against such behaviour, largely thanks to the efforts of women such as Rosie Batty. Quite a contrast to what was once acceptable. So relativism is not always a bad thing if it can lead to improvements in the way we behave. But by whose standards? I bet the men who might like wife maltreatment are not happy.

Let's get back to the topic, respect. Does beating a grown person show respect for them? No, not by any modern standards. Nor by older ones. So was woman beating always disrespectful, although sometimes tolerated by other men and by some women too? The answer is yes, because no matter if tolerated or not, beating another person of similar age is *always* disrespectful.

You will notice that children have been omitted from the discussion. Pure relativists say beating or smacking children shows no respect for them and so eschew the practice completely. Their 'standard' has quite easily become the norm and so many modern children do pretty much as they please. But is letting children run free showing them respect? Is it teaching them how to live in a society where there has to be a certain respect for others, rather than our doing just what *we* want? They are not idle words. In the Old Testament we read 'He that spares his rod hates his son: but he that loves him chastens him betimes' (Proverbs 13:24). The questions become, 'When, and how, and how much should discipline be administered and by whom?' to bring a child into line and yet show him or her due respect? Individual parents have some decisions to make here, some parents in line with the OT and others in line with modern lawmakers (relativists).

So we turn to the broad sweep of Christian behaviour. There is much less relativism shown in the Gospels, more of absolute standards. For example in the New Testament, Jesus treats all people with absolute respect and encourages His followers to do the same. He does not check whether they believe in God before he helps them. He respects the thinking of women, even to telling the woman at the well all about the Kingdom and sending her back to tell the men. And notice that she has a checkered history, which he guesses, but does not reject her because of it. He respects her as she is.

It is only when we get to the ingrained Jewishness of St Paul that we have injunctions for half the population to be quiet in meetings and to cover their heads in respect. Paul reflects the attitudes of his times much more than Jesus ever did. But were these attitudes respectful towards everyone, men *and* women? You will decide according to your ideas of respect.

Respect meaning acceptance is not an easy concept as some of these questions show. Even Christians have a very dubious history of rejection of other systems and attempts at conversion of people who disagreed with them, showing little or no respect for other ways to believe. Maybe we are now a little further along the way to respecting others' beliefs? Many Christians cling to absolute standards and reject all relativism. This may be at our peril, since we must also live in a society where, for the moment, relativism and its norms holds sway.

We have talked about respect for others and their views. What about self respect? This seems to mean recognizing that we have one body, mind and soul, and that we must care for and nourish these three while we have life; that we must to some extent love ourselves, but in a balanced way.

# Respect, continued

*Body:* We have all seen the results of those who love the body most and nourish it beyond its needs. Advertisers play on this self love, encouraging us through the food and fitness industries to deify our bodies and make them "perfect". Surely we need to eat, to wash, to exercise, but not to excess.

*Mind:* The mind needs stimulation and exercise as we are able. We have all by now heard of the importance of puzzles, language learning and musical instruments in keeping brains stimulated. What of those who work at repetitive jobs or jobs which offer little stimulation? They too need to be aware of the importance of mental stimulation and give up some of their spare time to mental exercise of their choice. But beware. Passive reception of the efforts of others does not count, so just watching without participation is probably not exercise.

*Soul:* This is the hardest because in some ways it is the most elusive. We can nourish the quicksilver soul by participating in worship. But what can we do alone? Reading good books, absorbing uplifting music, taking in scenes of sea, mountain and rolling hills, and perhaps painting or drawing them, looking carefully at a flower or insect and marvelling at its design, meditating... Once begun, the list of possibilities grows. The main thing is to praise the Maker.

It is possible to get right out of balance with these three, body, mind and soul, and at different times in our lives to focus excessively on one to the neglect of the other two. Those of you with teenagers may notice a great focus on body and a neglect of mind and soul, for example. But as we become adults we need again to respect and nourish all parts of ourselves in a balanced way, to respect the gifts we have been given.

*Laele Pepper*

*Respect, with the June Normandy Landing in mind*

## GRANDPA'S RATTAN CHAIR

Old Mavis leaves the rattan chair  
 beneath the gnarled gum tree,  
 where Harry used to linger,  
 remember army mates,  
 while the full moon, meant at Normandy,  
 cast soft beams on his head.

Last year in June, Harry sat  
 rug-covered in the cold.  
 Mavis clung onto his hand,  
 as he prayed for friends and peace,  
 named the comrades far away  
 where perpetual darkness shrouds with soil  
 those who cannot tell  
 when summer warms their bones.

Tonight their grandson held her hand,  
 while they placed a crimson rose  
 on Grandpa's rattan chair.

*Anne Cook*

## And more concerning Respect, from Val Webb

Val Webb is a theologian and author of many books which you may have already encountered. The release of her latest book, *Testing Tradition and Liberating Theology: finding your own voice* was followed by an address given at Merthyr Rd UC, Brisbane. This considers the question of 'theological hospitality', which is an issue all congregations face. Webb's concern is that in the diversity of our congregations, 'indestructible walls are built within communities as theological sides square off' (p. 1). What she has to say is pertinent to our examination of *respect*, particularly in our respect for each other's views and practices.

She identifies several areas where differences can cause division, particularly in how we read the Bible, or how we see faith and salvation; and she reminds us that 'there has never been only one theology over time' - although of course we tend to think that what we have been taught is *the* correct theology!

In confronting these differences within our communities she warns against the practice of using labels or names to describe the ideas of others that differ from our own: 'although [labels and names] make handy shorthand tools, they often become a negative naming of the enemy rather than useful descriptions; and this does not make for theological hospitality...[it] builds borders rather than hospitable bridges. Instead, we can label particular positions someone holds on some issue, thus specifying what part of a label we mean, rather than describing their total personhood by one stereotype.' She sees the label 'Christian' as providing particular pitfalls! (p. 6) Sometimes we have to stop and listen rather than continue to make assumptions about where others are. She points out that most Christians with different doctrinal understanding nevertheless share the same concerns for justice, integrity and living the way of Jesus.

She raises the difficulties posed by statements of doctrine, such as are found in the Basis of Union of the Uniting Church, and places these in their historical context. She then boldly states: 'Whatever the denomination, control of theology by explicit or implicit claims of minimum belief requirements or adherence to non-negotiable doctrines needs to be challenged by both clergy and laity. Many clergy are afraid to raise new ideas in their parishes either because powerful lay people in their congregations expect theology to be what they believe; or because of possible reprimand from the church hierarchy.' Her concern is that no genuine *debate* takes place if rules say we cannot question, and it is insufficient just to turn our backs on traditional claims we find difficult. 'If outdated arguments are not challenged, their influence remains in minds trained from childhood to believe them. When slavery was challenged, it was not enough to stop talking about slavery – an argument against slavery had to supersede the old truth...The land mines strewn throughout our hymns, bible readings and creeds have to be diffused in preaching so that they do not continue to kill and maim conscientious Christians who do not know how to avoid them. This is theological hospitality.' (p. 8) 'I think the emphasis on belonging rather than believing is a good start – hospitality is about relationships rather than essential beliefs...I keep coming back to Jesus' command to love God and love your neighbour...do to others as you would have them do to you. I often ask people in communities where theological diversity successfully exists, "what holds you together"? Invariably the answer is love and *respect* from shared experiences...It means we take others seriously, not overlooking or belittling them, especially not with obtuse theological arguments or religious rules. The more respectful we are, the more each will feel free to contribute and both are transformed...*Respect is also about true listening – caring enough to listen tells me you care what I think.*' (p. 9)[my emphasis] Hospitable listening is also not waiting for an opening to interrupt, argue, correct or leave, but genuine hunger to learn from the other. And we are not listening hospitably if we listen only through the filter of our beliefs and agenda. When we do talk, compassion does not judge or manipulate, but invites further revelations. Our views might be couched in different language and concepts, but our struggles as human beings are similar and we learn techniques for survival and flourishing from others. *Hospitable listening leads to compassionate speaking* [my emphasis]...To nourish...is to allow someone to tread a path different from our own – the bravest thing parents must do and what churches must learn to do. Theological hospitality allows someone else's convictions to stand alongside your own.' (p. 10)

If you would like to read the full text of Webb's address, email [popesr@aapt.net.au](mailto:popesr@aapt.net.au) and I will send it to you.

Robin Pope

## Getting to Know You: Barbara and John Thompson



John and Barbara are both South Australian by birth, John entering the world on the coast near Victor Harbor, and Barbara beginning life inland at Burra, then a rural township but once the site of a major copper mine.

John's father worked for the Post Master General's Department (PMG, now Telstra), and was often away during John's early life. In 1928 he was transferred to Gladstone (S.A.) and there John received his schooling. When World War 2 broke out, John was only 14 years old, and he had dreams of enlisting and flying when old enough. Meanwhile he

successfully sat for his Leaving Certificate and the entrance exam for the PMG and at the age of 16 years 9 months transferred to Adelaide to begin his training course as a Junior Mechanic. His was a 'restricted occupation' during the war years so he was eventually accepted for training in navigation/wireless with the RAAF, but the war ended before he could complete the course. Still pursuing the dream, and despite having passed his exam for Division 3 in the PMG, in 1946 he enrolled in aeronautical engineering at Adelaide University. But with demobilisation after the war, and many ex-pilots and aeronautical engineers looking for work, jobs for the inexperienced were impossible to find. There was, however, a shortage of people with engineering knowledge so he easily obtained work in that field with various companies, eventually becoming State Manager for Mills Scaffolding for seven years.

Barbara's connections with Burra were strong. Her mother came from a local property; her paternal grandfather was the Methodist minister and her father became mayor. She attended school in Burra until Form 2 (Year 8) when she was sent to Adelaide as a boarder at MLC. After completing high school she returned to assist her father whose duties in public life necessitated assistance with his business. She attributes her subsequent activities to the example set by her parents, who were always involved in community affairs - her mother was still conducting a choir at age 88! Participating in groups which improved local life seemed 'the natural thing to do'.

After a year at home Barbara returned to Adelaide, where she worked in the finance department of Goldsbrough Mort for eight years. She quickly became involved in the social club at her workplace, becoming secretary; she was also busy at her local church, participating in and organising tennis and table tennis activities.

Barbara met John through a mutual friend. She was to be bridesmaid at the friend's wedding, and John was to be best man. John's version of their encounter is that he asked the groom to explain his duties as best man, and was told that he 'had to care for the bridesmaid', an injunction he took literally! They married at the Redruth Methodist Church in Burra, and built a home in the Adelaide foothills where they expected to put down permanent roots. Their daughter Marion was welcomed

## Getting to Know You: John and Barbara Thompson

in 1957, followed by Peter in 1961. Barbara joined the church choir, and assisted at the Sunday School, as well as joining the organising committees of the local kindergarten and primary school.

But after only five years in their new home John was offered the position as Manager of the company he worked for, based in Melbourne. They rented for 6 months while their next house was being built, and in 1965 moved into their Glen Waverley home where they still happily live. They knew no one, and Glen Waverley was rapidly changing its character from a rural locality into an outlying suburb. Following their family role models they again became involved locally. They became members of the Glen Waverley Methodist Church (then situated in Springvale Road where the Ibis Hotel now stands), and Marion and Peter attended the Sunday School and then youth group. Barbara became involved in the Mothers' Club and later, the School Council of the Glen Waverley Heights Primary School where Marion was enrolled, and joined the committee of the Tally Ho Kindergarten which Peter attended. As still happens with parents today, the needs of the children led to other community activities and friendships, and when Marion joined Brownies, a long association with the Girl Guide and Scouting movement began. Barbara became president of the Glen Waverley Girl Guide branch, and when John saw their need for a meeting place he became chairman of their building committee. He was also involved in fund raising for the Guide Hall and became a member of the committee of 7th Waverley Scout Group when Peter joined cubs.

By the time Peter started school their home had been zoned for the Highvale Primary School area, and so Barbara became involved with that school, joining the school council, and the tuck shop and uniform shop committees. Meanwhile, in 1973, John decided to set up his own business, and the following years were devoted to its establishment. Peter, after studying engineering at Swinburne, and Business at Monash, joined his family's business which became a joint venture with a Swedish company. Eventually John sold out to them, but Peter still works for them as National Marketing Manager, based in Brisbane. On completing high school, Marion completed her degree in town planning at Melbourne University, and subsequently took up various positions overseas and finally Perth (WA). Thus John and Barbara have been provided with new destinations to visit as well as their five grandsons.

With the children both 'off their hands' by the 1980s, John and Barbara might well have felt they had 'done their bit' for the community at large. Instead, they used their extra time in new ventures. When Iris Pederick retired from Waverley Council she persuaded Barbara to consider involvement in local government. Barbara was elected to Council in 1985, became Deputy Mayor in 1988-9 and then Mayor in 1989-90, continuing a family tradition set by her father and, later, her brother in Burra. She remained on Council more than nine years, until the amalgamation in 1994.

While on Council Barbara had special connections with Highvale School, and this association has continued to the present, with the annual gift of a Year 10 scholarship. Through her council work she was instrumental in establishing the two Glen Waverley Probus Clubs, acting as inaugural President of the ladies' club in 1988. The Bone Marrow Institute was another focus, joining the committee, then occupying the chair as leader for eight years. She has happy memories of the support their fund raising provided, especially through the shop they staffed in The Glen. At first the funds were directed towards tissue typing, but when a particular need for accommodation in Melbourne was identified, a landmark achievement was raising \$50,000 in one year. This resulted in one of the accommodation suites being named 'The Waverley Suite'.

## Getting to Know You: John and Barbara Thompson

When Barbara became Mayor of Waverley in 1989, John chose to retire, although not to a retirement sitting at ease in a chair in the sun. His particular concerns have been for young people who need a helping hand through tough times. He feels that governments don't realise the value of early intervention and how it is of benefit to both individuals and the community at large. After 2 years tutoring at adult literacy he joined the committee of Wheeler's Hill Family Centre for 5 years and was then appointed Chairman of Waverley Emergency Adolescent Care and served in that role for 3 years. During that time he was appointed as WEAC representative to the committee of the Child and Family Care Network (CFCN). This network was a combination of several organisations mainly involved in child care and was originally Burwood Boys' (subsequently Children's) Home, founded in 1896 by a tea merchant, Robert Campbell-Edwards, and de-institutionalised in 1988. Over a period the combined organisation separated into individual operations and CFCN became Best Chance. John was a committee member for 4 years, treasurer for 5 years and Chairman for 5 years. He was Deputy Chair of Foundation for Homeless Youth when it built 15 houses. He has been acknowledged by the Master Builders Association for 24 years of service to the industry, and by Victoria Police for 20 years service to Neighbourhood Watch in many roles.

Barbara has been active in helping to establish the Monash Gallery of Art, and for 10 years was Chair of the Friends of the Gallery and remains a trustee of the Gallery Foundation. She is a long standing member of Beta Sigma Phi.

Such consistent and dedicated activity for the benefit of the community has been a hallmark of both their married lives. Barbara commented that 'in a sense, our community *is* our family'. It is pleasing to note that their dedicated and selfless work has been publicly recognised. Barbara was awarded the Caroline Chisholm Award in 2002 and this was followed in 2004 with an OAM (Medal of the Order of Australia). She is currently chairperson of the Eastern Region of the Order of Australia. In 2004 John's work was recognised by Monash Council with the presentation of the Sir John Monash Award, the 'most prestigious annual award' of Council. In 2005 he was a Victorian finalist in the award for the Senior Citizen of the Year. In 2007 John too was awarded an OAM. And then in 2015 Barbara was awarded the Sir John Monash Award for Outstanding Leadership. One cannot help but respect the amount of energy and commitment that these activities have demanded over many years.

Barbara and John have both demonstrated an awareness that the quality of community life is dependent upon community members contributing towards its betterment. They have continued what has become quite a long line of activity by members from Glen Waverley Uniting Church and the Presbyterian and Methodist churches which preceded it. We remember that Irene Marriott was only the second woman to be elected to the (then) Shire Council, working to establish basic facilities such as drainage, footpaths, kindergartens, playgrounds and Infant Health centres in Waverley. She has been followed by many other church members who have been active in what we now call 'outreach', working beyond the doors of the church and working to improve the lives of those in the community beyond. Cliff Baker's continuing work was recognised with the Caroline Chisholm Award in 2011. Two other members of our congregation, Iris Pederick and Graeme Frecker, are former mayors of Waverley. These and many others here have tried to fulfil what they see as a cornerstone of the mission of the church: to love their neighbours as themselves. Barbara expressed excitement at the many outreach activities in which our church is currently involved, seeing it as an expression of fulfilling our basic Christian calling. She and John have amply demonstrated that individuals *can* make a difference. We have cause to thank them for the time and effort they have donated over many years to our community life.

*Robin Pope*



## Refugee Week June 19 - 25; World Refugee Day June 20

**Refugee Week** has been celebrated in Australia since 1986. It provides a platform where positive images of refugees can be promoted in order to create a culture of welcome throughout the country.

Our ultimate aim is to facilitate better understanding between different communities and encourage successful integration, enabling refugees to live in safety and to continue making a valuable contribution to Australia.

The Aims of Refugee Week:

- To educate the Australian public about who refugees are and why they have come to Australia
- To help people understand the many challenges refugees face in coming to Australia
- To celebrate the contribution refugees make to our community
- To focus on how the community can provide a safe and welcoming environment for refugees
- For community groups and individuals to do something positive for refugees, asylum seekers and displaced people, within Australia but also around the world, and
- For service providers to reflect on whether they are providing the best possible services to refugees.

Refugee Week is a unique opportunity for us all to experience and celebrate the rich diversity of refugee communities through theatre, music, dance, film & other educational or cultural events which take place all over Australia and highlight the aims of the Week, as outlined above. Past events have included football tournaments, public talks and exhibitions as well as music and dance festivals, theatre projects, and film screenings. Refugee Week is an umbrella participatory festival that allows a wide range of refugee community organisations, voluntary and statutory organisations, schools, student groups and faith based organisations to host events during the week.

The theme for Refugee Week in 2016 is 'With courage let us all combine'. Taken from the second verse of the national anthem, the theme celebrates the courage of refugees and of people who speak out against persecution and injustice. It serves as a call for unity and for positive action, encouraging Australians to improve our nation's welcome for refugees and to acknowledge the skills and energy refugees bring to their new home.

It takes courage to be a refugee: As people who have faced persecution because of who they are (their race, nationality or membership of a persecuted group) or what they believe (their religion or political opinion), refugees need:

- The courage not to deny identity or beliefs in the face of persecution.
- The courage to leave all that is familiar and step into the unknown in search of peace.
- The courage to keep going in the face of devastating loss, difficulty and despair.
- The courage to begin again, to work hard and to maintain hope in an unfamiliar land.

It takes courage to speak out against injustice: In a world where refugees experience persecution in their countries of origin and often face discrimination, difficulty and rejection in places where they seek refuge, speaking out often requires courage. In Refugee Week, we acknowledge and celebrate the dedication and bravery of refugee leaders, advocates and citizens who draw attention to violations of human rights, support people at their time of greatest need and challenge callous indifference to the suffering of others.

The Refugee Week theme encourages Australians to celebrate the best aspects of our nation's welcome of refugees, frankly acknowledge unjust treatment of asylum seekers and refugees and commit to working together to ensure that we do better. We celebrate the positive contributions to Australian society made over the past 70 years by the 800,000 Australians who once were refugees, taking inspiration from the second verse of Advance Australia Fair.

*Information provided by **The Refugee Council of Australia***

# These Boots Were Made For Walkin'

Saturday April 30, 2016. To the relief of the dedicated walkers - and especially to Neil - the day started with bright sunshine with just a hint of chill in the air. Anticipation was high, and words of encouragement from the young people cheered the early starters, who assembled with Neil, ready to tackle the first lap. They paused for a photo before setting out down Bogong Avenue to Coleman



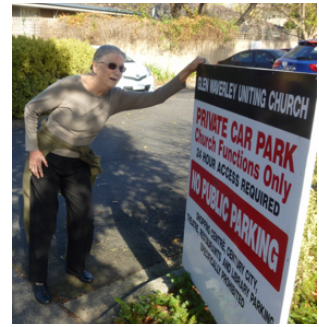
Parade, down to Blackburn Road, along to Waverley Road and home via Springvale Road. One walker with a pedometer reported that the lap took 26,000 steps, but I guess that those with shorter legs took more. The initial bunch spread out over the five km lap and straggled back in pairs, some looking a little worse for wear, although Neil seemed pretty relaxed and cheerful, and less in need of a drink than the dog!

Refreshments provided by Faye, Jan and Vida gave energy for Lap 2.



# in Support of School Chaplaincy

There isn't a photo of the commencement of Lap 2 because your reporter set out early, thinking she might delay the walkers with a slower walking pace. Accompanied by Deb Leigh she expected to be overtaken by the other Lap 2 walkers, but made it back still ahead of them - although there were some signs of stress. The other Lap 2 walkers soon came in led by Neil, who still had a spring in his step.



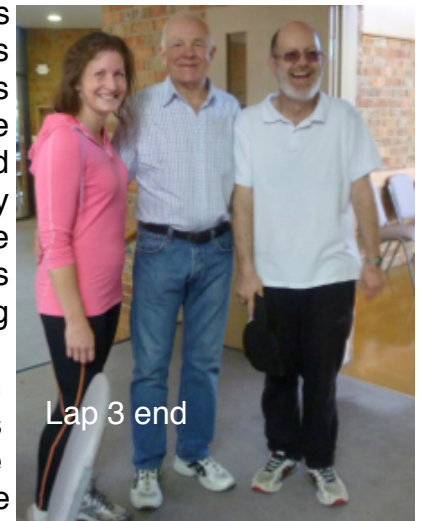
Lap 2

Lap 3 began with a smaller group. Having in mind that he had already walked 10 km at this stage, Neil had estimated that this lap would take some 10 minutes longer, but they did it in the same time as the earlier laps, and looked full of beans when they unexpectedly appeared in the foyer. Perhaps the broad smiles indicate joy at the impending conclusion!



Lap 3 beginning

The final lap began with another bunch of walkers accompanying Neil. There were definite signs of jubilation and relief when they returned and the comestibles were enthusiastically devoured.



Lap 3 end

Thanks to Neil for his wonderful effort, to all those who accompanied Neil, to the ladies who provided the refreshments, to those who came to encourage the walkers, and especially to those who sponsored the walk and helped exceed the target. \$4604 was raised in total!

*Robin Pope*

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Lap 4



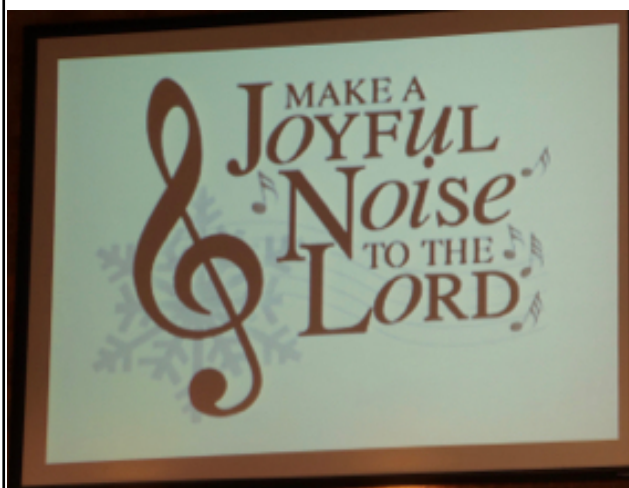
## Monash Ecumenical Choral Service

Thirty-four years ago when Christ Our Holy Redeemer Catholic Church planned to mark 25 years since the establishment of their local church, Angela Gilfedder was instrumental in setting up what became an ecumenical choral event by inviting other local choirs to participate in their celebrations. It was so successful and so enjoyed by the participants that it was repeated the following year - and so began thirty-four years of local ecumenical choral celebrations.



Angela Gilfedder

Time has taken its toll: choirs have aged and sometimes not been replaced; musical preferences in liturgy have changed; and church membership has altered. The numbers of participating choirs in this annual event have fluctuated over the years, but over the last decade it became more difficult to muster adequate numbers. And so with sadness it was decided to make the 2016 festival the final gathering.



On May 29 six choirs gathered at Glen Waverley Uniting Church to sing for each other and their assembled friends. The joyful singing of four congregational hymns gave everyone present the opportunity to lift their voices in songs of praise, led by our organists Geoff Willis and Robert Fleming. Each of the choirs sang two items, led by their own conductors and accompanists, and these provided an insight into the many different sacred musical styles which are used in worship today. Music by Mozart (eighteenth century), the singing of a psalm, and anthem styles from the nineteenth through to the twenty-first century demonstrated the breadth of the sacred

repertoire - and the words ranged from the twelfth century (Thomas Aquinas) to contemporary texts!

The participating choirs came from Holy Family Parish, Christ Our Holy Redeemer Parish, St Stephen's and Mary's Anglican Parish, St John's Uniting Church Mount Waverley, and Glen Waverley Uniting Church with two choirs. To mark the conclusion of these joint ecumenical festivals, the six choirs combined for a rendition of '10,000 Reasons for My Heart to Sing'. Finally everyone joined in the hymn 'Father bless us as we go', reminding us of the pleasure that these celebrations have brought us over the years.



Rev Neil Peters leading

*Robin Pope*

# Monash Ecumenical Choral Festival



Holy Family Parish

*Thanks to Jit Tan for the photos*



Christ Our Holy Redeemer Catholic Church



Uniting Voices, GWUC



St Stephen's & Mary's Anglican Parish



St John's UC, Mt Waverley



Free Spirit, GWUC

# Australia's Biggest Morning Tea at The Hub



## Australia's Biggest Morning Tea at The Hub

This special morning tea was held at The Hub on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> May. Many people attended despite the cold, wet weather, and a good morning was had by all. Donations of \$640.75 were received for the Cancer Council Victoria.

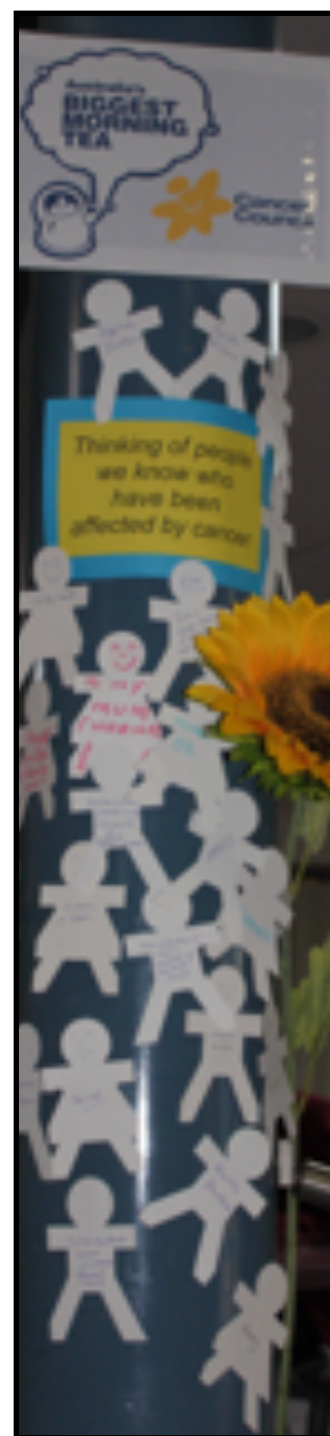
As a small activity for the morning, those who came were asked to write the name of a person or persons they know who had been affected by cancer, on small cut out figures. These were then placed on the poles in the fellowship area. People were sharing with others about themselves, their family or their friends who had been affected by cancer in some way.

A lady from the wider community had come to The Hub morning tea for the first time. As she wrote a name on her little cut out figure, she asked if we were going to pray for these people. We certainly did.

On the following Sunday at worship, we prayed for people affected by cancer who had their names on the cut out figures from our Australia's Biggest Morning Tea at The Hub - another way that we are connecting with people in the wider community.

*Remember our prayer tree is at the back of the church, and if you wish, you are always welcome to write a prayer or the name of someone you want to pray for on a leaf, and hang it on the prayer tree.*

Judith Greenwood



# Uniting Church Glen Waverley Tennis Club

The Uniting Church Glen Waverley Tennis Club was formed in 1964 when a group of enthusiastic tennis players from both the Methodist and Presbyterian churches met to play on a private court.

From that small beginning the club grew and thrived as Glen Waverley expanded. At one time there were many adult and junior teams, making full use of our six courts in various locations. After losing the Tally-Ho and Springvale Road courts, enterprising members secured an agreement with the Education Department to build our present six courts and club house at Highvale Secondary College. The school has full use of the courts during school hours.

Being a church club, provision has always been made for social players. These days we never have full courts but we do field two men's teams in summer, and one team in winter. Four ladies still play socially on Saturday afternoons, but our Tuesday morning game has been in recess this year due to injury.

New members are always welcome. However, we do not have a coach so it is necessary to have a certain degree of proficiency. Annual fees are very reasonable.

We appreciate the valuable support given by the church family to our annual 'Pie Drive' which helps to keep the club financially viable.

If you are interested in joining, please contact Graham Pratt, Eileen Scott or Steven Emms.

*Eileen Scott*



# Giving Thanks

On Mothers' Day Marion Wadsworth gave special thanks:

Four years ago I left for a six week holiday in Europe. On the third day I suffered a massive stroke and was rushed to a German hospital for treatment. At first I was in intensive care, then down-graded until I left three weeks later with the help of my daughter Natalie. At the time of my stroke I was totally paralysed down my right side and I could not speak - only cry. I was helped with many more drugs than I would have received in Australia and my neurologist still says he will not change them as he believes that is how I am still alive today.

When I returned I had to change from Oakleigh Uniting Church to Glen Waverley as I couldn't get to Oakleigh UC on time and I knew GWUC had three services on Sunday mornings. I joined this church about three weeks before the fete in 2013. At that stage when everyone else was up to the fourth or fifth word of a hymn, I was still trying to sing the first word. Now I can sing along much better - I'm not far off. The first word I spoke after the stroke was 'Australia'. In the hospital I was taken to church, even though I couldn't speak, or understand German. I needed to be in God's House.

I've sold my large house and now live in a retirement village in Keysborough where I am very happy and have made many friends. I have also made many friends at GWUC but often still can't remember names.

So here I am four years later able to *walk* and *talk* and *take in* so much more. And I am a grandmother now, so today I celebrate not only Mothers' Day - Grandmothers' Day - but this life changing experience and my 4th birthday. Thanks be to God! I am truly blessed.

*Marion Wadsworth*

### Vacant Position

Are you interested in writing? Do you have time, once a quarter, to help produce *NewView*? Do you have ideas about how *NewView* can meet the needs of the GWUC community? Would you like to become a member of the editorial team?

If you answer 'Yes!' to **any** of the questions above, then please contact Robin Pope, ph 9753 3648 or email [popesr@aapt.net.au](mailto:popesr@aapt.net.au)

### Organ Fund Update

In response to recent queries, the Organ Fund has reached \$17,270 and remains open to receive further donations as situations arise. Individual stops can still be sponsored. All donations help replenish the general parish funds originally used to buy the instrument.

As an aside...Visiting organists playing our organ recently, for funerals and also during the recent Ecumenical Choral service, have all commented very favourably on the sound quality and versatility of our instrument.

*Geoff Willis*

### Federal Election 2016: Your faith, your voice, your vote

UnitingJustice has created a resource to help us consider our vote in the 2016 Federal election in terms of what we need to do, as individuals and as a nation, to ensure a flourishing society - one that is focussed on the good of all people and the planet, now and into the future.

You can download your free Federal Election toolkit from <http://www.unitingjustice.org.au>

or if you would like to be sent a paper copy, contact

Robyn Hosking (03) 9251 5271 or [jim@victas.uca.org.au](mailto:jim@victas.uca.org.au)



## A Pew Thank You

The Property Committee and I would like to acknowledge the awesome task that Bill Norquay has completed, where he has reduced the size of 14 of our extremely large (8 seater) pews to a more manageable and flexible set of configurations.

Why did we cut them? Nearly ten years ago, the then ministry team approached Property Committee with a series of questions about the worship centre pews. Would it be possible to substitute some of them with up to 100 or more individual chairs, or to cut the pews in half, so that the ministry team could offer more flexible worship configurations? It would also enable alternative gatherings, meetings and it would support the emerging need for an 8 am Contemplative worship service! It was readily acknowledged by all those people who have had to move these largest pews for the fete, funerals and various worship scenarios, that they were extremely difficult to manage (needing 4 or more people to safely lift them) There was a real risk of injury and the long pews did not support worship in the round and other configurations of worship.

Property committee looked at a large number of options, and identified some key concerns and limitations.

A key concern was that if we had 100 or more individual loose chairs in the worship centre, they would never be in the correct configuration for the next function. Although many churches have individual chairs, and many have the type that can be locked together in groups, in talking to these congregations we found that the chairs required 'someone' to be available to move them into the next desired configuration on a frequent basis. We searched through our church database, but we do not have a person named 'someone' who was available to do this heavy task, every day of every week, all year, at short notice.

The cost of cutting our existing pews was prohibitive, with quotes from upholsterers averaging to around \$250 per pew - and we had to deliver and pick them up.

Finally, what would we do with the 14 to 20 pews that we no longer required? They do not fit in other rooms and we had nowhere to store them. We could sell them (maybe) or we could do what? There were limited options.

The matter bubbled around for some time until Bill Norquay stepped forward one day and offered to 'have a go' at cutting the large pews into 2 or 3 unit configurations and doing the upholstery work. In mid 2015, Bill did a trial version on one old pew that had been damaged and the results were very encouraging, and so after approvals, over the past 10 months, Bill has completed this task.

Only the large 4 leg, 8 seater units have been effected at this time, and we now have a wide range of flexible and easy to move options available in the worship centre: 6 seater, 4 seater, 2 seater and some additional single seats.

As with many other tasks done by many congregational members, we would like to publicly thank Bill Norquay for this wonderful outcome for our congregation. A job really well done.

*Warren Greenwood, Property Chairperson May 2016*

## From the Justice & International Mission Unit

### Syrian Refugees Left in Limbo

In September 2015, in the wake of outrage over the drowning of Syrian toddler Alan Kurdi, former Prime Minister Tony Abbott announced Australia would take in 12,000 extra refugees fleeing conflict in Iraq and Syria. The Uniting Church in Australia and other churches applauded the Government's announcement to offer re-settlement to these refugees, recognising the devastating crisis happening in Syria.

However, since that time very few refugees have actually been resettled in Australia. The Uniting Church, along with members of the Victorian Council of Churches, are concerned at the length of time taken to process and resettle the refugees from both Syria and Iraq.

At the time of writing (May 2016), Australia has settled only 29 of the 12,000 refugees from the Syrian and Iraqi conflicts. Canada, on the other hand, has welcomed more than 26,000 people since November 2015. New Zealand has already resettled 82 of the 200 Syrian refugees it plans to resettle by the end of June. There has been no suggestion that Canada's or New Zealand's security screening has been less than adequate.

In February 2016, Paul Power, CEO of the Refugee Council of Australia, said, *"Our government is dragging its feet while the rest of the world is acting much more quickly to meet their promises to resettle Syrian and Iraqi refugees and allow them to start to rebuild their lives."*

Mr Dutton, Minister for Immigration and Border Protection, has commented that "Australia would not rush the processing of any referrals." The Refugee Council Australia has responded, stating: *"It is a shame for all concerned that the Australian resettlement program is so bogged down in bureaucratic delays, when the governments of Canada and New Zealand have proven that it is possible to move much more swiftly."*

We know there is no shortage of appropriate applications. Thousands were received from UNHCR and through relatives and communities in Australia in the three months following the Government's announcement in September last year.

Since the conflict began in early 2011 more than 10 million people have been affected. The ramifications of inaction are significant; as United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Antonio Guterres has stressed, *"This conflict has not only caused one of the worst humanitarian crises in decades, but it is also the biggest threat to global peace and security the world has seen in a long time."*

#### **What you can do:**

Write polite and respectful letters to:

**The Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP**, Prime Minister, Box 6022, House of Representatives, Parliament House, Canberra, ACT 2600

**Salutation:** Dear Prime Minister

**The Hon Peter Dutton MP**, Minister for Immigration and Border Protection, PO Box 6022, House of / representatives, Parliament House, Canberra, ACT 2600

**Salutation:** Dear Minister

#### **Points to make in your letter**

- Urge the Government to act on their promise to resettle the 12,000 Syrian and Iraqi refugees;
- express deep concern about the delay in processing the refugees, in comparison to countries like

## Social Justice

- Canada and New Zealand;
- encourage the Government to do all it can to speed up the process to bring people here to safety as soon as possible;
- highlight that the ramifications of inaction are significant as this is one of the worst humanitarian crises in decades; and
- reiterate that church communities from many denominations were grateful for the original offer and are still standing by ready to help.

### The Ration Challenge

Act for Peace is the International Aid Agency of the National Council of Churches in Australia. It is calling on compassionate people around Australia to take part in the Ration Challenge during Refugee Week, 19 - 25 June (or later, if it suits better).

#### **Show refugees we're with them, not against them**

Take the Act for Peace Ration Challenge and show refugees we are with them, not against them. Eat the same rations as a Syrian refugee (just a small amount of rice, beans, lentils, fish, oil and flour) during Refugee Week, 19-25 June 2016 and raise money to provide refugees with the food, medicine and support they need to survive.

- See more at [actforpeace.org.au/rationchallenge](http://actforpeace.org.au/rationchallenge)

When you sign up we'll send you an instructional toolkit with everything you need to know to take part, including a shopping list for you to buy the exact same rations Syrian refugees live on in refugee camps in Jordan.

Your ration pack ingredient list is designed to reflect, as closely as possible, what a Syrian refugee living in a refugee camp in Jordan survives on in a typical week. This is made up of the rations distributed by Act for Peace, including a small amount of rice, lentils, kidney beans, sardines, oil and chick peas. Also on the list are extra flour and rice, which represent food coupons sometimes distributed by the UN and other NGOs (which can be exchanged for food in local shops).

- Rice 1920g
- Flour 400g
- Lentils 170g
- Dried chick peas 85g
- Tinned sardines 125g
- Tinned kidney beans 400g
- Vegetable Oil 300ml

Find out more about the rations on page 8 and 9 of the Ration Challenge Toolkit.

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It's not too late! Have your ration challenge at another time! Why not sign up and get sponsors from our congregation, to raise money for the needs of refugees?

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 families*

*John Alfred Battison*

*Edward William Bedford*

*Maxwell Curnow Lee*

*Rajah Kumaran Wilson*

*Robert James Willmott*

*Frederik Karel Vanclay*