

# PRESBYTERY OF PORT PHILLIP WEST

22 April 2020



## Naming our Grief and Loss

Rev Jeanne Beale [Deacon]

As we prepare to revisit the Emmaus story (Luke 24:13-35) this weekend, we as a church are also on a journey. Perhaps like Cleopas and his companion, we are grieving over “things that have taken place in recent days” (24:18) and concerned for our world and our church going forward. What is always helpful in times like these is to name our grief.

In our shared experience of Covid-19 and the temporary closing of our places of ministry, it is anticipated that 4-6 weeks down the track, experiences of grief and loss might begin to creep in. The Ministry Team is very aware of the amazing efforts our ministry agents and church councils are going to, to maintain community and worship in various ways, and in many cases, exciting new ways! However, it doesn't hurt to pause and name our grief; it honors our story and the changes we are going through.

There are five types of grief, and depending on our own circumstances, we may be experiencing several types at the same time. It is also helpful to know that no two people grieve exactly the same way, we are unique individuals and each story is our own.

The five types of grief are:

- 1. Anticipatory Grief:** The kind of grief that is a long time coming
- 2. Sudden or Traumatic Grief:** Loss that occurs with no warning or with little time for preparation
- 3. No-End Grief:** Grief that goes on and on, a sort of perpetual sorrow
- 4. Near-Miss Grief:** Facing the possibility of death or disaster and narrowly escaping that fate.
- 5. Pathological Grief:** The kind that keeps a person from functioning, a disabling sense of distress and impairment of mind and body.

Storytelling is the means by which we make meaning. Many will share in the ANZAC story later this week and take time to reflect on and honor the sacrifice that many made. When life throws tragedy, grief and loss our way we turn to “story telling” to make sense of what is happening to us. Our narrative of the past takes on a different color. The narrative that we had for the future is irretrievably broken. The task of living into the future demands the making of a new narrative, the new story of me and the new story of us. The task of living into the future also demands the integration of the old story. Putting our story together is a major part of putting ourselves back together. I pray that when the conclusion to this enforced transition period comes to an end, we take time to tell the story of this journey, and how it plays into our future.



## When someone dies during COVID 19

Rev Linley Liersch

Based on the resource: Sadness, grief and being there & adapted for local needs.

*If someone you love dies in this time of COVID 19, of whatever cause, our normal ways of coming together as family and friends will be impacted. At this time, it is still possible to have a very small funeral held at a church or cemetery that may be led by a minister or pastor. You may be able to watch the service in some way, but that will be different from being there with your family and friends. You may get a recording of the service or be able to read the words that were shared.*

*Please see the attachment sent with this newsletter for more information.*



# There's a difference between a peace-keeper and a peace-maker

Rev. Ron Rosinsky, Minister, Coburg Uniting Church, Australian Army Reserve Chaplain



Peace is not the product of terror or fear.

Peace is not the silence of cemeteries.

Peace is not the silent result of violent repression.

Peace is the generous,  
tranquil contribution of all  
to the good of all.

Peace is dynamism.

Peace is generosity.

It is right and it is duty."

— Archbishop Oscar Romero

There's a difference between a peace-keeper and a peace-maker. A peace-keeper conforms to the ruling class, even when the social order is unjust; even when one's own mental health and well-being is sacrificed by another, or when terror and fear are one's daily bread. The peace-keeper allows an individual or a class of people to dominate, to live their lives at the expense of others.

Anzac Day and the passion of Christ on Good Friday ask us pressing questions: Do you live your life guided by your God given intuition and passion to make things right? How do you relate to any imposed system? Does that system operate like a machine state, robbing you of your heart and compassion? Will you make use of the system for the attainment of human purposes, to build a humanity based in compassion. Civilization does not proceed from an imposed system, but from the human heart.

The world is full of people who have stopped listening. They have stopped listening to themselves and to the new creation within their souls. They have listened only to the world of commerce, or to their neighbors, or to the machine to learn what they ought to do; how they should behave and what values they should live for.

Jesus returned from his temptations in the wilderness no longer a boy- no longer a cog in the machine of the Roman empire. He confronted the Jerusalem elites, and the central economic and political institutions centered around the Temple. He refused to collaborate, and he became an enemy of the state. He was a peace-maker.

The peace-maker breathes God's promise of justice and peace to the spirit of humankind. In striving for what is just and true and perfect, they recall to the minds of all people what is possible, the best and the highest. The peace-maker reminds humanity of what God must be like. They create a will and a mind that is good toward oneself; toward others, including the enemy; and good toward the earth, and life and living. This is my sacred remembrance, and the meaning of my prayer for peace on Anzac Day.

"Blessed are the peace-makers, they shall be called sons [and daughters] of God." -Matthew 5: 9

## #STANDTO

ANZAC Day 2020 will not look like the ANZAC Day that so many of us are used to participating in. There will be a Dawn Service, wreaths will be laid, the last post will be played, a minute of silence in memory of the fallen will be observed, but the service community and the public will be asked to stay at home.

This does not mean that ANZAC Day is cancelled. It just means ANZAC Day will be different. In 2020, on April 25, while you can't go to the Shrine of Remembrance or a local Dawn Service, the RSL is asking that instead you #STANDTO.

As the **Last Post is played** during the ANZAC Day Dawn Service walk outside, stand in your yard, driveway, or on your balcony and observe a minute of silence in respect of our veterans. Make sure that you snap a quick picture and share it on our [Facebook page](#).

Together, let's amplify our commitment to the ANZAC spirit.

## Lest We Forget

# Churches online

For tips for churches doing videos and things online

1. Get people to introduce themselves – have their names on screen. You are reaching people who don't normally come to church and may not know who you are.
2. If people are reading the bible – have it printed in large print and hold up near the camera so that they are looking at the camera
3. Have the words of the songs on the video (you can do this through PowerPoint or your editing software).
4. Make sure that you have the time of your service easy to find on your social media and website.

It is great to see congregations and ministers working together with online services.

Rev John and Judy Rigby are working together to put services together for **Airport West, Scots and Gladstone Park**. You can find them on [YouTube under Hume Area Uniting Churches](#)

**Bacchus Marsh Uniting Church** have a YouTube Channel. Click [here to view](#).

**Coburg Uniting Church** also have a YouTube Channel. Click [here to view](#).

**Queenscliff Uniting** are posting devotional material to their [Facebook page](#)

**St Stephens Uniting Church, Keilor** are posting their order of service onto the [Facebook page](#)

## 9 minutes @ 9

Prayer points for this week:

We pray for

- Our government leaders as they make the hard decisions for the good of all
- Our church leaders; President Dr Deidre Palmer, Moderator Rev Denise Liersch, and General Secretary Rev Mark Lawrence as they oversee the wider church and the implications for all of us during this crisis
- Our ministry agents and church councils as they try to find new ways of engaging with their members.
- Our ministry context treasurers, many of whom are worried about the financial impact of this crisis on our churches, schools and agencies.
- Teachers across our nation who are either teaching remotely or face to face, keep them safe.
- Those within our community who are grieving for loved ones who have died, grieving for a familiar past, grieving for the loss of physical contact, grieving for the loss of a job. God, you promise us that you are with us and that you comfort those who grieve.

If you would like to share your prayer points with us to be included in this weekly newsletter, please contact one of the ministry team.



*And the people stayed home.*

And read books, and listened, and rested, and exercised, and made art, and played games, and learned new ways of being, and were still. And listened more deeply. Some meditated, some prayed, some danced. Some met their shadows. And the people began to think differently.

And the people healed. And, in the absence of people living in ignorant, dangerous, mindless, and heartless ways, the earth began to heal.

And when the danger passed, and the people joined together again, they grieved their losses, and made new choices, and dreamed new images, and created new ways to live and heal the earth fully, as they had been healed.

—Kitty O'Meara

# Mental Health Matters

Rev Fiona Bottcher [Deacon]

Greetings and welcome to a new bi-weekly article focussing on mental health - a broad but relevant subject as we negotiate new ways of "being" and "doing" in these Coronavirus times.

I'm Fiona, a new Deacon ordained in early February. I began my first placement as the Mental Health Ministry Coordinator (Sunshine) on the 17th of February, four short weeks before social distancing measures were introduced. What a way to begin!

As the Mental Health Ministry Coordinator, I have three roles: establishing an "open-door" community, mental health hospital chaplaincy and a role in education and raising awareness throughout Presbytery. Social distancing has made the first two things tricky, so as I re-define my role, and get more involved than I'd ever chose in home schooling (yikes), here I am!



Next time I'll be focussing on grief and what we might learn from sharing grief stories. Grief can be a constant companion for those living with mental illness or chronic illness, and storytelling is a wonderful way of holding those experiences. In the meantime, if you would like to get in touch with me please do so at: feigh.b@gmail.com or 0421 027 467.

Peace and love, Fiona



a message from **Uniting**

Annette Kelly-Egerton  
General Manager  
West & North Victoria, Tasmania and Early Learning

Just to let you know that Uniting is thinking of all of you, our Church partners and as our key partners supporting our local communities. I just wanted to reach out and check in and share some of our resources. I know that you are supporting your congregations and many of these families who have grandchildren or children who they are looking after. Even though grandparents may not be able to physically see their grandchildren, they are still an incredibly important support to both their adult children and their grandchildren. It is important to support their well-being and reduce anxiety.

## Coloring in

Elizabeth Morgan House has produced the most beautiful pictures that can be downloaded and printed for children to color in [ctrl + click to access the pictures here](#).

## How to explain social distancing to children

[Click here](#) for a YouTube video

## Resources for children

The Council to Homeless Persons has collated a range of resources on COVID-19 for children and young people which can be accessed [ctrl + click to access this link](#).