



# Surfcoast Uniting Churches

31st May 2020

Worship together is available via video services on the web each week from 9:00am

[www.surfcoast.unitingchurch.org.au](http://www.surfcoast.unitingchurch.org.au)

**Bellbrae is worshipping Live on Zoom at 11:00am Sundays**

**Airey's Inlet is Live on Zoom at 1:30pm Sunday**

**Minister: Rev. Suzie Castle**

**On leave: Monday 18th May- Monday 1st June**

**All other days: 0421023197 E: [suzie.castle@gmail.com](mailto:suzie.castle@gmail.com)**



**COME HOLY SPIRIT COME**

## A Reflection By Noni Johnson

If we look back into history we note that there have been many pandemics and each has had a great effect on many aspects of life - personal, Christian, political, economic and global. I'm sure we all believe that God can indeed use bad events, like pandemics, for good but some ask does he cause them?

In our last Aireys Inlet Zoom church meeting one member said, "we have had droughts, floods, bushfires, locust plagues and now a pandemic – surely God is trying to tell us something? We see in the Old Testament God sending plagues on Egypt. However, we know that the Old Testament must be interpreted in the light of Jesus and Jesus teaches us that we can be confident in God's love for his creation and his love for each one of us.

The Apostle Paul said in Romans 8, I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, *that includes COVID-19*, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Interpreting the bible through the revelation of Jesus matters when we come to understand the meaning of plagues and other natural disasters. In the Old Testament the writers believed if there was a flood, plague or pestilence then God was saying something through it. But in the Gospels Jesus never engages in sending natural disasters or turns anyone into a pillar of salt. If Jesus isn't into deadly retribution, nor, if we take him at his repeated word, is God the Father. We profess that seeing Jesus is seeing the Father. Jesus corrects false views of how God works in the world. God has not sent the pandemic upon us.

Some people believe that everything that is natural is good. As a scientist who worked mainly on neurotoxins, I have to tell you that is not true. The deadliest compounds in the world are natural. Puffer fish toxin, known as tetrodotoxin, is one of the most toxic materials known. Spider, snake and some aquatic venoms can cause almost instant death. Some minerals, radioactive materials, and the list goes on, are all toxic. As we are experiencing now some microbes – viruses like coronavirus are also natural and can be lethal. For some reason the world is full of dangerous things. There are all kinds of viruses that live in other animals and sometimes they migrate to humans. Ebola is a clear case where the virus came from monkeys in the wild. Poor people ate monkeys and became infected. Coronavirus will most probably be confirmed as being similar in its origin – a naturally occurring virus from animals.

There are laws of nature that need to be observed in order to stay safe. Don't jump off tall buildings, gravity will kill you. Avoid getting in contact with viruses and bacteria that can kill you. These are God given laws.

So I believe that God does not send pandemics but he can use them for good.

Pope Francis said, the pandemic is not the time of God's judgment, but of our judgment: a time to choose what matters and what passes away, a time to separate what is necessary from what is not. It is a time to get our lives back on track with regard to God and to others."

An article in the New York Times describes a Manhattan Lutheran Church that has lost 44 members of its congregation to Covid19 and still counting. The church is in mourning and individual members understand in a new way their mortality. They have a new sense of humility and realise they are not as powerful as they had felt before coronavirus. They are regaining a proper sense of the grandeur of the living God and their place as His servants in His creation. They are now filled with joy when members recover and they are thankful for the church community that prays for them and ministers to them, although at a distance through illness and in health. Being part of the one body of Christ is palpable and is sustaining those who suffer. God's church shows his love and care for us and through us, to the world.

A pastor from a church in Spain tells a similar story. He looks around him and notices two things, which might be useful for us as we plan our new path forward in our revised Surf Coast Uniting Church. He says:

- ◆ that churches that have a structure where members were part of small groups, are best able to respond in times of crisis with a sense of community, good pastoral care and mission work
- ◆ churches that emphasise personal commitment and are thankful for modern technologies were better able to be the light of the world in these times.

God is showing us new truths and I repeat Pope Francis' saying, **it is a time to choose what matters and what passes away, a time to separate what is necessary from what is not. It is a time to get our lives back on track with regard to God and to others."**

***We have a God who loves us and wants the best for us.***

**Lectionary Readings:** Pentecost: May 31st Acts 2:1-21 Psalm 104: 24-34 1 Cor 12: 3b-13 or Acts 2: 1-21 John 20: 19-23

**Trinity Sunday June 7th:** Gn 1: 1-2, 4a Psalm 8 2 Cor 13 11-13 Mt 28: 28 16-20

### The COOKBOOK PROJECT

Recipe Count is over 50 now – thank you everyone. We still need a few more soups and snacks and any chutney or pickle favourite recipes.

Here is this week's try out recipe now that we can plan for 20 at the dinner table!. And if anyone would like a random recipe to test in their own kitchen, send us an email this week! [newsletter-surfcoastuc@gmail.com](mailto:newsletter-surfcoastuc@gmail.com)

#### Never Fail Pavlova from Mary Bremner

This recipe It goes against all the traditional rules of pavlova making, but I have never had a failure with it.

4 egg whites, 1 & 1/2 cups castor sugar  
1 tsp each of vanilla essence, white vinegar & cornflour,  
4 tbsp of boiling water



Preheat oven to 170 C. Lightly grease a heatproof plate and dust with cornflour.  
Put ingredients in bowl in above order and beat well with a mix master or hand held beaters until thick and fluffy - about 5 minutes. (Hint: add boiling water after a couple of turns of the beaters)  
Spread onto plate, doing some swirls around the edge with a spoon.  
Place in oven, turn heat down to 110 and cook for 1 & 1/2 hours.  
Leave to cool in oven for 1 hour. Fill with whipped cream and your choice of fruit.

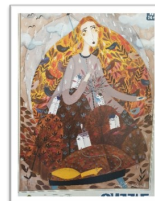


Another beautiful quilt made by Roma Julian. What have the men been making?

### CRAFT CORNER

#### Puzzle Sharing...

Would anyone like to borrow a puzzle as the rain sets in for winter evenings? Zip me a text and I'm happy to deliver. Tricia Genat. 0419 340056



### Community Messages:

**Torquay congregation:** Although churches have been allowed to open, due to the restriction still on numbers we will not be starting worship in church for a little while yet. **Bellbrae and Aireys** are continuing with their Zoom services too. But all going well, it won't be too long.

**Remember you can view services on line. Today Page 3 has clear instructions on how access them.**

**OP shop books** still available by appointment : call to Carleen on 0415173794

### National Reconciliation Week

National Reconciliation Week kicked off last Wednesday and this year the theme is **In This Together**, which is especially relevant during the current lockdown. This year marks the 20th anniversary of an event that continues to enable Australians to learn about our shared histories, cultures and achievements, and to explore ways of achieving reconciliation. Common Grace has collated some resources, including daily devotions, Bible readings and video messages, to help you and your congregation mark this important event.

[https://www.commongrace.org.au/reconciliation\\_week\\_2020](https://www.commongrace.org.au/reconciliation_week_2020) or UCA website



#### Noni's Prayer

Thank you, Lord God, for reminding us that we are not in control and must always be dependent on you. Thank you, God, for reminding us that we should be grateful for all things – for groceries, freedom of interaction with family and friends and good health. We thank you for reminding us life is fragile, and that we need to appreciate the miracle and blessing that you Lord have given us in creating us and sustaining us. We thank you for your church, through which you bless us and others. We thank you for nurses and doctors who are showing love and care to the sick at great risk to themselves. We thank you that you will lead us as we go forward on this journey with you. In Jesus' name, Amen

**Airey's Inlet** St Aidan's Church, 29 Great Ocean Road, Airey's Inlet. [aireysinletunitingchurch@gmail.com](mailto:aireysinletunitingchurch@gmail.com)

**Bellbrae:** Bellbrae Uniting Church. School & Anglesea Roads, Bellbrae

**Torquay:** Torquay Uniting Church, 27 Anderson Street, Torquay

**BELLBRAE BRIC-A-BRAC OP SHOP & BOOK ROOM:** Uniting Church Hall, School Road, Bellbrae. Ph: 5261 5139

**NOTE: All our churches & the OPshop are currently closed as per COVID 19 restrictions**

**Weekly offerings can be made via direct debit or credit to this account :**

**BSB: 083-929 and Account Number 93-009-8403**

**Please add notes to identify congregation: Aireys Inlet:3231 AI/ Bellbrae:3228 BB/ Torquay:3228 TQ**

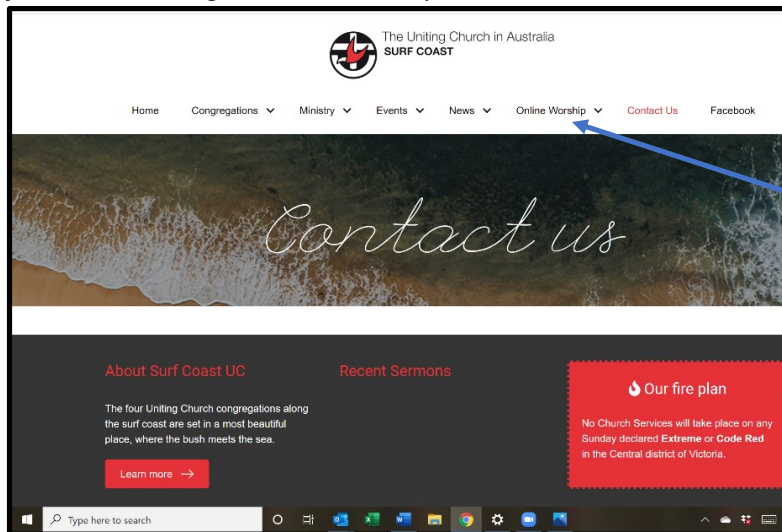
**NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS and all queries to:** [newslettersurfcoastuc@gmail.com](mailto:newslettersurfcoastuc@gmail.com) **DEADLINE: Thursday at 4pm**

Let's wear RED to celebrate  
Pentecost Sunday

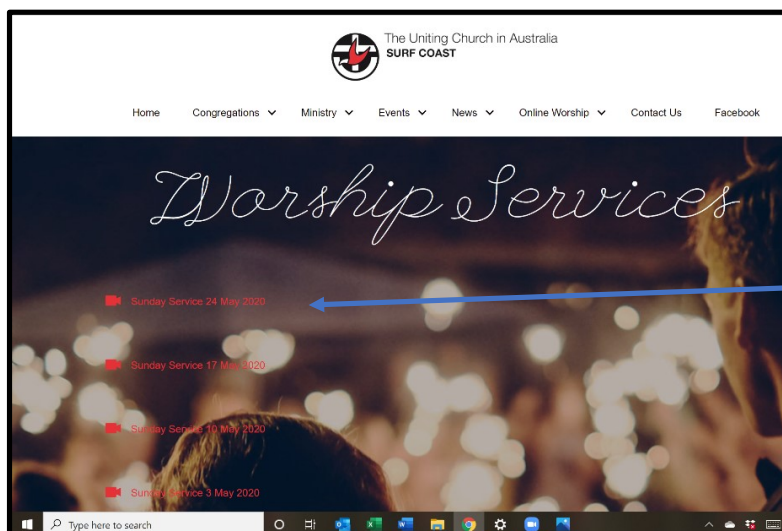


## How to access our Surfcoast Uniting services on our website

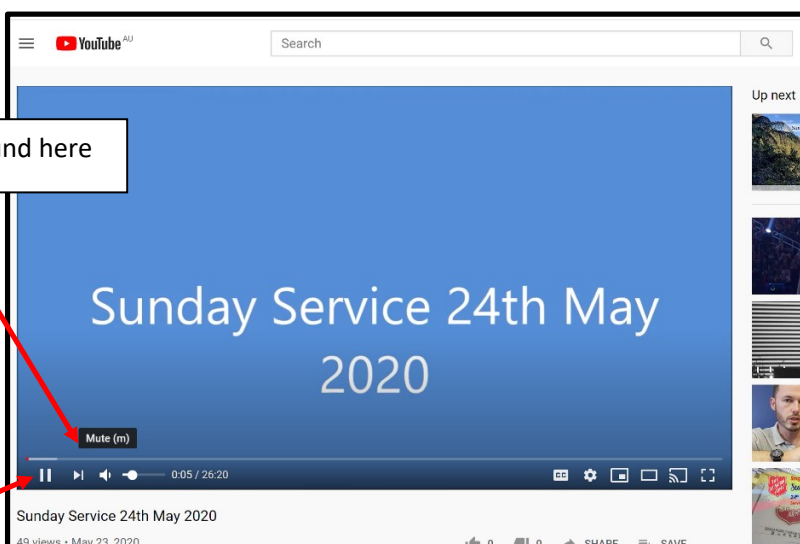
1. Our website is at <http://www.surfcoast.unitingchurch.org.au> Click on the link if you are reading this on screen). Or write in the address.



Click on the tab  
"Online Worship" and  
then click on Worship  
Services or Elouera  
Services



Click on the date of  
the worship service  
you would like to view.  
It will open as a  
YouTube clip and start  
immediately.



Check the sound here

And press the Arrow to play or  
pause.