

PRESBYTERY PORT PHILLIP WEST

22 JUNE 2020



Come away and rest...

Rev. Jeanne Beale [Deacon]

Mark 6:30-32 - The apostles gathered around Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught. He said to them, "Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while." For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves.

Self care is a key focus in our ministerial code of conduct; we ministry agents are expected to maintain care of self, so that we can provide the best care we can for those in our care. Many of us have been working very hard to provide some sort of normality during this time of lockdown. The danger is, that as we seek to "return to normal" we will feel the pressure to not only slip back into old routines, but also, to continue some of the new normal that has made connections into our wider community. As ministry agents, most of us have been extending our care to a wider audience, our virtual congregations have grown, and we have a pastoral responsibility to more people than we did before this pandemic.



Come away with me and rest.

As we arise out of the ashes of Covid-19, there is a risk of burnout for our ministry agents and worship leaders. In seeking to care for the "old and the new" they may neglect care for self. Church Councils need to spend intentional time with their ministry agents to discern how best to move forward and embrace the new with the old. The pandemic has presented us with many new missional opportunities.

At this month's Presbytery/Synod Forum there was encouragement for: *Presbytery Standing Committees to expect that people will be tired and therefore easily exhausted. The whole Church in VicTas has not had a chance to put its feet on the ground, dealing with crises all year beginning with the bush fires and then the COVID-19 pandemic. We were encouraged to take this opportunity to think through how to address the issue of exhaustion/tiredness whilst continuing to provide authentic leadership.*

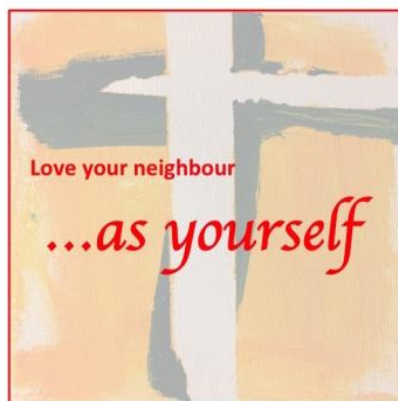
One suggestion I would like to offer is that over the next few weeks we give our worship leaders some "time out" from preparing worship services and we take advantage of the weekly worship being offered by the National Assembly (bringing us Sunday service from all over Australia) and then link up locally with our ministry agents and congregational members to discuss the service and connect with one another. (The service can be found on the <https://www.facebook.com/UnitingChurchAu>. This would provide some space to do some thinking about new models of being church locally, as well as offer some necessary self care.

Let's be gentle on ourselves and not rush things, we could have the opportunity to revitalise the church in ways we have been praying and hoping for, for years. Take time to do the dreaming.

Take the time to
envision a new way
of being Church!

Mental Health Matters

Rev Fiona Bottcher [Deacon]



"I'm so happy to have my faith back!" exclaimed Jane (not her real name), "I know that God loves and forgives me, and I understand why he had to punish me."

Jane has been consumed with guilt lately, to the point of believing that she has caused all sorts of calamities including our current pandemic. "I'm going to start again" she says, "I'm going to do good from now on because that's what God wants". I ask her what "doing good" looks like and she talks about love, care and compassion. "You shall love your neighbor as yourself", Mark 12:31. I ask her what she thinks of that last bit, "as yourself". What I ask, might it mean to receive God's unconditional love, care and compassion?

Jane looks at me intently and deeply. Her face is blank and her eyes hold mine as her mouth opens slightly. I wait. Then, suddenly, she smiles broadly, broken from the spell, and says enthusiastically, "I love your shoes, they're fabulous!"

When are we, like Jane, not able to receive? How do we make space for God to put life back into us - to receive as generously as we give?

Presbytery in Council

25th July 2020

Save the Date

PPW Messy Church Workshop!



June 25th 2 – 3:30 pm

Messy church, young families and Intergenerational ministry.

Let us do some problem solving together. All welcome.

Hosted by Rev. Linley Liersch & Chris Barnett (eLM Intergenerational Ministry)

Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89824457815>

After a great conference it is easy to loose all that great information.

Share what speakers you most enjoyed and why?

DEBRIEF



You enjoyed the conference and now you want to share what you learnt.

11am 24th June

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85024808356>

Host: Linley Liersch & Chris Barnett

9 minutes @ 9

Loving and compassionate God we pray for:

Our government leaders; that they will make wise decisions which affect us all and our economy

Our church leaders; President Dr Deidre Palmer, General Secretary Colleen Geyer, Moderator Rev Denise Liersch and General secretary Rev Dr Mark Lawrance. Give them wisdom and insight as they lead our church through these troubled times.

Our Presbytery Leadership; Chair Rev Bruce Watson, Ministry Team Heather, Jeanne, Narelle and Linley

Our ministry agents; may you sustain them and encourage them in their ministries

Our church councils, agency boards and school councils; we give you thanks for people willing to be leaders within our communities. Help them as they oversee decisions and directions for our ministry contexts.

Ourselves that we would truly be followers who reflect your ways within our community, Jesus our Lord. Make us more fully into your people, sharing your love and grace here and now so that this world can be transformed. **Narelle Collas**

Minister's Chat

30th June 2020

2 - 4 pm

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83812383589>

Meeting ID: 838 1238 3589



Two proposals for SYNOD

Mark Zirnsak at JUSTICE and INTERNATIONAL MISSION (JIM) wants to know if your congregation, school or agency is passionate about these issues before taking them to Synod. Respond directly to Mark.

JIM - Consultation on Synod's Position on Climate Change: The Synod Justice and International Mission (JIM) Cluster believes there is a need for the Synod to update its position on the urgency of addressing the causes of climate change and the actions that need to be taken in response. The JIM cluster is keen to hear the views of Uniting Church members on what action the Synod should take on climate change. A consultation paper can be downloaded from the website <https://justact.org.au/climate-justice-creation/reports/>. The page also provides details on how to provide your views on what position the Synod should take on climate change. Hardcopies of the consultation paper can be ordered by contacting Mark Zirnsak on 0409 166 915 or e-mailing mark.zirnsak@victas.uca.org.au

JIM - Consultation on regulating the online world to protect children and prevent harms: The Synod Justice and International Mission (JIM) Cluster has written a consultation paper for congregations and congregation members to reflect on what is needed to regulate the online world to prevent harms. The JIM Cluster intends to bring a proposal to the November 2020 Synod meeting, which would set the principles by which the Synod should support or oppose particular measures to regulate the online world. The Uniting Church's existing position as it stands is that the protection of children and adults from sexual abuse takes priority over other concerns such as privacy. The JIM Cluster is keen to speak with congregations and church members that have an interest in the issue. The paper can be downloaded from <https://justact.org.au/inclusive-equal-society/reports/> Or hardcopies can be requested by e-mailing mark.zirnsak@victas.uca.org.au or calling Mark Zirnsak on 0409 166 915.

"You need to break before you break!"

Rev. Narelle Collas



Many ministers and others have been working harder and longer through Covid. They have had to learn new skills in which to minister to their congregations or ministry contexts amidst the current restrictions. For some ministers they have had to cancel their holidays or long service leave due to the travel restrictions.

As a ministry team we want to encourage ministers and church councils to have conversations about time off and holidays. It is not good for the congregation or the minister if the minister does not take regular breaks.

There are physical reasons for holidays such as better overall heart health, better sleep, and reducing constant stress. As leaders within our community, a holiday gives us time for reflection, renewing our devotional life and to gain emotional energy. Holidays fill our emotional tank because we focus on things that we normally don't have time for. Slow walks in the evening. Afternoon naps. Adventures we can only dream about during our regular working year. Linger over coffee with people we love. We hold conversations we've been putting off because we just didn't have the time. These all replenish the emotional energy that we have expended through the course of a year.

Congregations also benefit when ministers take a holiday as people step up and try things like preaching, leading the service or being involved in pastoral care. Churches grow in health when they are less minister-centric and operating more like a body in which each part works in accordance with their role.

Have you heard your minister and or yourself say "I'll take my holidays when all of this is over"? We now know that the recovery from Covid is going to be long and drawn out so maybe we need to think about holidays now and possibly have a 'holiday at home'. They can be less stressful, cheaper and allow you more time by yourself (this may be difficult with a family) but taking some time to go to the beach or the mountains by yourself may give you that breathing space. Plan some special holiday excursions around where you live, places you have never been to or visiting people you haven't seen for a while.



Jesus in Mark 6: 30 – 32 encouraged the disciples to come away and rest. Jesus spent time alone in prayer. It is important.

Ministers are allocated 4 weeks annual leave, 2 weeks study leave, a weekend free of pastoral duties 4 times a year and regular days off each week. It is the responsibility of both the minister and the church council to keep a track of holidays and to send the leave forms through to the secretary of PRC. If you have any questions about leave/holidays then please contact one of the Presbytery Ministers. You can find the leave form and more details about ministers leave entitlements [here](#).

Supervision is self-care

It is now required that all ministry agents in placement have supervisors and take part in Individual Supervision—one on one support. Supervisors must be trained professionals. Supervisors list is available from Sharon Hollis email Sharon.Hollis@victas.uca.org.au. There is a movement away from peer or group supervision when on its own, but alongside individual supervision it is fine. You should be able to tell your supervisor anything. If you are holding back serious issues then you should work out why. If starting with a new supervisor you should have a preliminary chat to see if you are a good match. It is also the responsibility of the presbytery to ensure Ministers receive regular professional supervision. [Regs. 3.1..3. (a) (ii)]