

# PRESBYTERY PORT PHILLIP WEST

29 MAY 2020—NEWSLETTER GOING FORTNIGHTLY—NEXT ON 11TH JUNE

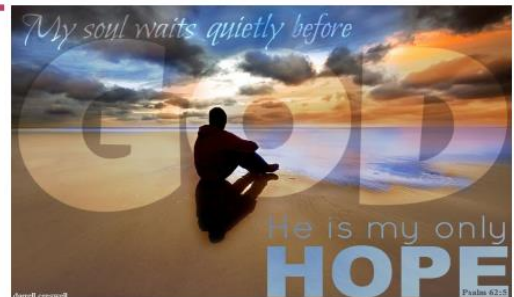


PRESBYTERY  
OF PORT  
PHILLIP  
WEST

## Waiting, Waiting, Waiting...

Rev. Narelle Collas

**How are you waiting for the restrictions to be lifted so that we can return to worshipping God together? Are you 'over' or tired of waiting?**



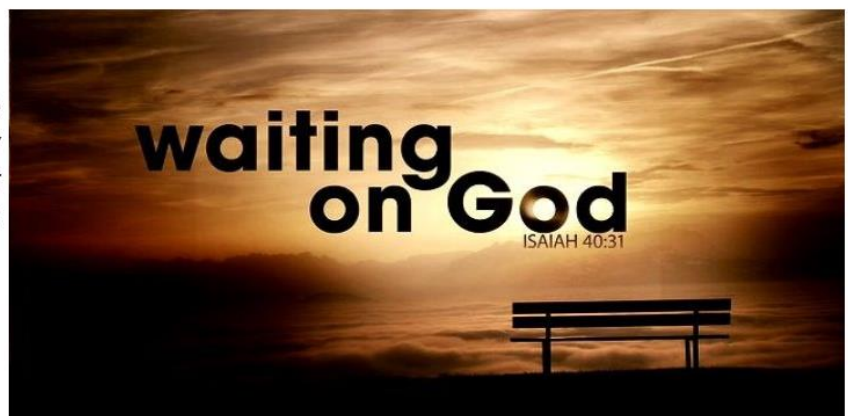
In this 21st century we are not so good at waiting, we want things instantly, at our fingertips, NOW!!! This Covid season has caused us all to wait, to be patient, to live in the liminal space, a place of transition, is the moment in time caught between then and now, the past and the not yet. Limina is a Latin word which means threshold and as we wait for the resumption of our 'normal' lives we are at a threshold of something new. Nevertheless, we are just not there yet. We are being told to wait.

This liminal space that we find ourselves in is often uncomfortable, like airports or waiting rooms. Or, as an engaged couple or a pregnant woman, these times remind us that we are not who we have been, and neither are we who we will become.

Our sacred scripture has a lot to say about waiting, being still, being patient. We are encouraged to use this liminal space by turning our focus onto our Lord and Saviour. Even though we recognise that it's countercultural, we know that waiting on God first is actually the wisest course for us to take. Why? It changes where we look. Instead of being focused on ourselves and our problems or frustrations, by using this time to focus on God we can acknowledge the vastness, the greatness, the omnipresence and omnipotence of our God. As Psalm 46:10 says, "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth."

Isaiah 40: 31

Encourages us that those who wait upon the Lord will not only gain a higher perspective but that we will also gain strength to face what will come.



**My encouragement for us in this time of waiting is to use this time wisely, and as the Psalms say "waiting upon the lord from where our hope comes for God is our help and our shield and God is with us in this time" Psalm 33:20, 38: 15, 40:1.**



# Mental Health Matters

Rev Fiona Bottcher [Deacon]

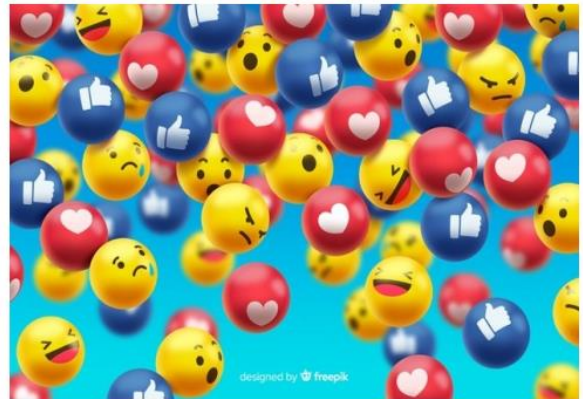
I'm afraid I have bad news. Your friends are doing isolation better than you are. We both know it's true, because it's right there on Facebook. There's your friend walking along the beach, baking bread, doing crafts. Yet you started with such good intentions, what went wrong?

Remember that feeling of "newness" that first came with staying at home? It was like the slate had been wiped clean. We could do things differently, we could re-create, we could shine!

But of course, Facebook caught up with us and at the same time news sites ensure that each hour is more alarming than the last. Catastrophe, nightmare, disaster and lockdown cast a dark shadow over all we do.

And although we all feel a great need for connection, the business model of social media and news sites hasn't changed: emotions create clicks. Except now our collective anxiety is heightened and we are more emotionally susceptible than ever.

Perhaps there's a need to be more intentional with our "online time" and to schedule time to disengage, to bring our attention to where we are right now. This room. These people. This newness, this Hope.



## Don't Go Back!

By Rev. Linley Liersch

***Ministers and Church Councils...Don't go back to normal! Find a new normal.***

As your church councils are considering all the covid-19 restrictions and the return to worship. Are you considering how worship has changed for you over the last 2+ months. Those of you who were doing hand posted sermons. What were the positives? Perhaps your parishioners said they read it through the week and then again on Sunday.

Congregations who are doing on-line worship are reaching more people on-line that they ever were preaching on Sunday in the church building. Perhaps the local nursing home are viewing the worship too. Are you as a Church Council thinking about how you might continue your on-line presence? What normal tasks might you release your minister from to keep YouTubing Sunday's sermon!

This week we learned that there is a website called "www.localprayers.com" that lists all the churches in the area and links to their FaceBook page. If you do not have a FaceBook page for your church they are not mentioned. The site even rate the churches based on the activities they do and advertise on FaceBook.

Smaller churches may have found ways they can be church without buildings. Doing Prayer group and Bible Studies over zoom. They may now choose to sell the buildings that require high maintenance and meet in a café once a week for fellowship.

**As your councils of the church gather in the next few weeks consider a new way!**



# 9 minutes @ 9

*Empowering Spirit, as we come to this time of Pentecost we pray for ...*

- ✠ A fresh move of the Spirit across our Presbytery
- ✠ ministers and church councils as they deliberate and make decisions about reopening the church buildings.
- ✠ reassurance for people who are very fearful of going out of their house
- ✠ businesses as they navigate the reopening and lessening of the restrictions
- ✠ families coping with border closures and not being able to attend funerals of loved ones.
- ✠ People who are frustrated with waiting. May your Spirit of patience be with them

*We praise you for...*

- ✠ the great connections between ministers developing through this time and for ministers who are collaborating together in online worship.
- ✠ the people who connecting with our churches through online worship, some who have never explored faith before and some who have been involved but have dropped out of church attendance.

**Narelle Collas.**

## Intergenerate

### Australian Conference

**June 16 - 17th Cost: \$50.**

This two-day online event aims to help people understand the power of their family's story for faith formation. Featuring 14 expert speakers from here and abroad, topics will range from "the characteristics that make your church friendly to all ages" to "the benefits of growing faith at home" to "how intergenerational connections really benefit a faith community". For more information or to register, visit <https://www.intergenerate.com.au/events>. Including John Roberto and other people are people who write the books.

## Minister's Catch Up

**10th June**

**4 - 6 pm**

Join Zoom Meeting

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89318839998>

Meeting ID: 893 1883 9998

Dear Colleagues,

We are writing to let you know that a **Mentor Training Day** is being planned by Mel Perkins (Lay Ed), Dev Anandarajan (Intercultural Leadership) and Fran Barber (Continuing Ed.) for **SATURDAY JULY 25<sup>th</sup>**, from 10am -3.30pm. It could be face to face or via zoom, we will let you know closer to the date.

This training is open to both lay and ordained people who have a heart to help people discern the call of God on their lives. We need a number of mentors across the Presbytery for people in their Period of Discernment, people who are training as lay preacher, for ministers in their phase 3 (first three years in ministry). Please think about this training for yourself and for members of your ministry context. It would be good to ask leaders who you think would be excellent mentors, but who lack confidence in stepping forward for that role.

This mentor training will cover the specifics of Period of Discernment mentoring, Lay Preacher Mentoring, Reception of Ministers mentoring, and more generally, the practice of intentionally seeking mentorship, or of offer oneself as a mentor, and the skills required. We'll look at the biblical basis for Christian mentoring, and explore the intercultural aspects involved in mentoring. **Blessing—The Ministry Team**



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# Positives to come out of this lockdown: What your ministry agents are sharing!

Rev. Jeanne Beale (Deacon)

The following is a list of just a dozen of the insights gained from listening to our ministry agents across the Presbytery about the good that has come out of this crazy time.

- ◆ We have learnt that when we have to, we can change, and in fact we are very good at adapting.
- ◆ There is a new freedom to be creative in worship preparation and delivery.
- ◆ The ability to reach many beyond our gathered community.
- ◆ I am offering weekly drop-in times on Zoom for people to come in and chat, and they are! (When offered at the church building this rarely happened).
- ◆ People who are not physically able to come to church are now able to attend on-line
- ◆ It has been good to stop and reflect on where God may be calling us as God's church
- ◆ I am learning new skills!
- ◆ I am enjoying not having to spend long hours on the road to attend meetings/ training – I hope we can keep doing many of these on-line in the future.
- ◆ You can pop into meetings for the bits that you are needed for/or that interest you, and then you can leave.
- ◆ We are getting used to worship from home
- ◆ Congregations have grown (and for some, offerings have increased!)
- ◆ I am feeling like I have a lot to offer.



There is a lot more that could be added to this list, and conversely, there have been many downsides to this lockdown as well, however, we felt that it would be helpful to share some of the positive things we are hearing. Many of these points above have also been shared by some of our congregations and other places of ministry.

Has Covid-19 been a timely wake up call for God's church to stop and take stock of what our Ministry and Mission goals should look like into the future? How much of what we have been doing for "survival" needs to stay to give us life?

**Isaiah 43:19 'I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.'**

**HAS YOUR CONGREGATION DONE YOUR  
COVID-19 EASING OF RESTRICTIONS -  
CHECKLIST FOR CONGREGATIONS?**