

PRESBYTERY PORT PHILLIP WEST



OCTOBER 22ND 2020—NEWSLETTER NO.18

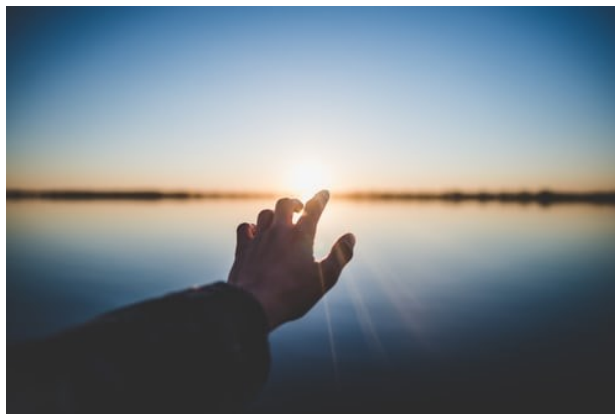
What good can come from this endurance?

Rev. Jeanne Beale (Deacon)

I had been sitting in our Labyrinth, pondering what might be a good reflection for this newsletter, aware that Melbourne has endured one of the longest lockdowns in the world! As I sat there, the above question began toying with me.

I had previously enjoyed the observation that this pandemic has certainly taught us, that when we have to, we can change, and in fact, we can do it quite well. Which was a lovely discovery indeed. However, the longer we as a church endure the restrictions imposed by this disaster, the harder it gets to remain uplifted when we are buckling under the 6-month slump (See p.5).

First I considered **James 1:2-3** *"My brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy, because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance"*, but then I thought 'that's not very uplifting Jeanne'. So instead I looked at where this endurance might lead us, and turned to **Romans 5:4-5** *"Endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us."* Which then invited these questions:



Courtesy of Unsplash Photo: Marc-Olivie Jodoin

What are the signs of hope that have arisen out of this time of endurance that we can hold onto?

Where has the Holy Spirit been at work sharing God's love in this difficult time?

I don't imagine for one second that I have all the answers, so I would love you to populate my Facebook post with your answers/responses. I think it will be lovely for us to be able to share with each other even the tiniest of glimmers – to quote the Hymn: Pass it on – *"It only takes a spark, to get a fire going, and soon all those around can warm up in its glowing."* Let us kindle a divine fire for us all to gather hope from.

I will post a few that I am aware of and then look forward to reading your responses. It will be lovely to compile a list for us all to celebrate where the Holy Spirit has been at work.

One last reflection I would like to share with you, and it stems from Andrew Hamilton's article "Putting a value on human life" <https://www.eurekastreet.com.au/article/putting-a-value-on-a-human-life> – Eureka Street Vol 30 No 19, which I summarise very loosely as follows: The two main world responses to Covid-19 with regard to human life is to either: have greater concern for economic wellbeing and thereby value the individual for their economic contribution, or, to have greater concern human life and a call to self-sacrifice for the benefit of the whole community. Our government has chosen the latter which endorses the greater value for human life.... This endurance is hard, but it is the choice of compassion; the heart of Christ's message. *May God bless you all as we come out of this lockdown with compassion.*

Mental Health Matters

Mental Health Matters

Rev Fiona Bottcher [Deacon]

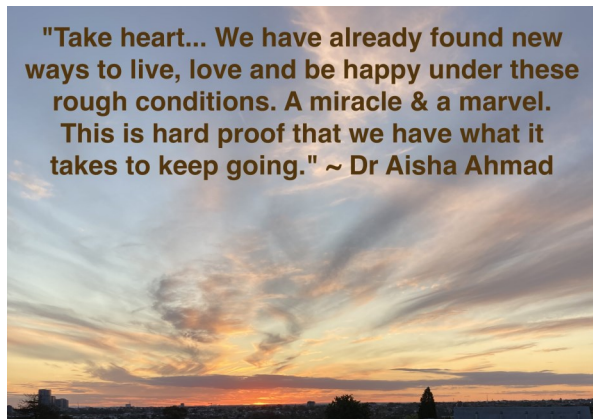
This quote from Dr Aisha Ahmad landed in my inbox four days before Dan Andrews announced his latest, and greatly anticipated, reduction in restrictions. Earlier that day, I had been reflecting on "restriction fatigue" and how I felt that both in my bones and in the sighs and restlessness of those around me.

During "lockdown" it has been incredible to witness how well we have all adjusted to our "new normal" and the innovative and creative ways teams and congregations have come together to care for each other and the world. But this hard work, with all the upskilling, time management and juggling that it demands, has come with a cost.

Perhaps your response might be "I haven't been working that hard" but I wonder whether in trying to maintain "business as usual" we have set ourselves too high expectations in our longing to go about our normal lives during a global pandemic.

In these next weeks, I invite you to be kind to yourself, and to carry another quote from Dr Aisha Ahmad with you: "Manage your expectations. Tackle less challenging projects. Now is not the time for perfectionism." And may the peace and love and God be with you.

"Take heart... We have already found new ways to live, love and be happy under these rough conditions. A miracle & a marvel. This is hard proof that we have what it takes to keep going." ~ Dr Aisha Ahmad



The Nurture and Spiritual Guidance of Children

Nov 25-27, Dec 1,2, Parkville

Chose a Subject

This excellent [professional development opportunity](#) from **Pilgrim College** is for **Ministers, Chaplains, Pastors, Thoughtful Practitioners** and **Christian Educators** and. Especially suitable for **church-based, school-based** and **community-based** expressions of ministry, participants will...

- Develop more richly theologically-informed practice in relation to the spiritual nurture of children
- Examine links between Scripture, theological thought, spiritual and psychological development
- Explore spiritual formation processes in the educational, congregational and missional settings
- Increase their capacity for care of children in the context of family, church and broader society

More information: [2020 Intensive](#) or e-mail Erlinda.loverseed@pilgrim.edu.au

The Graduate Certificate in Ministry with Children and their Families

Enrol in a course

The Graduate Certificate in Ministry with Children and their Families is Australia's only tertiary Award focused on ministry with children and their families. Offered through the University of Divinity, it is suitable for: **Ministers, Chaplains, Pastors, Thoughtful Practitioners** and **Christian Educators** and. Especially suitable for **church-based, school-based** and **community-based** expressions of ministry

The Graduate Certificate in Children and Families Ministry is an opportunity to: Enhance your ministry skills and increase your capacity for engaging ministry.



PILGRIM
THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

Pastoral Care Seminars - 2020/21

The Presbytery of Port Phillip West is delighted to offer a series of Pastoral Care Seminars to our Presbytery. This series of seminars seeks to equip participants with the skill of listening with empathy – a skill that bridges the wide caverns of communication break-down. Rev Narelle Collas and the Rev Jeanne Beale (Deacon) Presbytery Ministers for the Presbytery of Port Phillip West will be leading these seminars and both have been teaching this material for over twenty years. **Who should come to these seminars?** Ministers, Church Councilors managing conflict and change, Elders, Pastoral Carers, all interested.

Seminar 1 Listening Lab: Rapport Building and Relationship Development. Thursday Oct 29, 6.30 - 9:30pm or Friday Oct 30, 9.30am – 12.30pm (Or at beginning of 2021) *Seminar 1 is a prerequisite for further seminars* This seminar will take us through the basics of “Active Listening” and then teach participants two pastoral skills to try-out on their family and friends: simple easy tips that can transform conversations. We will also walk through the four stages of a relationship, look at healthy and struggling relationships.

Seminar 2: Life Commandments: Listening to ourselves, understanding what makes us do the things we do. Thursday Nov 26, 6.30 - 9.30pm or Friday Nov 27, 9.30am - 12.30pm This seminar helps us to identify the scripts in our heads that control our behavior patterns. At certain times in life, some of these scripts can stop working for us, and may in fact become destructive. Understanding why we do, say or think of things the way we do, can unlock a path out of a confusing transitional time. Seminar two is especially helpful to unlock the life commandments that keep us locked into certain behaviors or thought patterns. Life-draining behaviours and replace it with something that is life-giving.

Register through trybooking: <https://www.trybooking.com/BLUPF> **FREE Seminars.**

HOW TO DO COMMUNITY OUTDOORS | WEBINAR

This is for you if:-

- You want to hear tips on doing worship outside.
- What needs to be included for a gathering to be "worship".
- You want to be inspired with great ideas on activities.
- Ensuring gathering in small groups is as inclusive as possible.

Evesdrop on a chat with **Tanya Walker** and **Rev Mat Harry**
Live Tuesday 27th October at 7.30pm

Register for Zoom Webinar at
[https://zoom.us/j/95328191244?](https://zoom.us/j/95328191244?pwd=YUZyaHg3S0JhaHZicjFVNVFQLlFqUT09)
pwd=YUZyaHg3S0JhaHZicjFVNVFQLlFqUT09



Lay Preachers Chat

28th October 4:30 - 6 pm

Hosts: Mel Perkins, Linley Liersch & Rob Coulson

*We want to hear how you are?
What you are doing?
and learn together...*

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5946928859>

Meeting ID: 594 692 8859

Code of Ethics
November 6th 2pm
Topic Grooming
Booking on Trybooking:

<https://www.trybooking.com/BLMJ0>

Ministry Agents' Chat
11th November
4 - 5:30pm

9 minutes @ 9

PPW Presbytery Ministers pledging to pray with you twice a day...

We pray this fortnight for ...

- ◇ Students who are sitting exams both at high school and universities, it has been such a disrupted year, so we pray for clear minds.
- ◇ The opening up of restrictions; that people will continue to be responsible and follow the guidelines.
- ◇ Congregations within our presbytery working through mission studies: Glenroy/Pascoe Vale, Craigieburn/Wallan, Corio/Norlane, Footscray.
- ◇ Congregations who are in transition and seeking a new placement; Western Heights and Williamstown.
- ◇ Those people who have been struggling with the 6-month slump and especially those who are still scared to go out and mix with other people.
- ◇ We give praise for the Intercultural Forum, Code of Ethics, Advent Huddles, Safe Church Training and other great educational gatherings that help us to learn and connect with each other.

Narrelle Collas



Photo: Unsplash

Ben White

PPW Presbytery in Council

NEW DATE

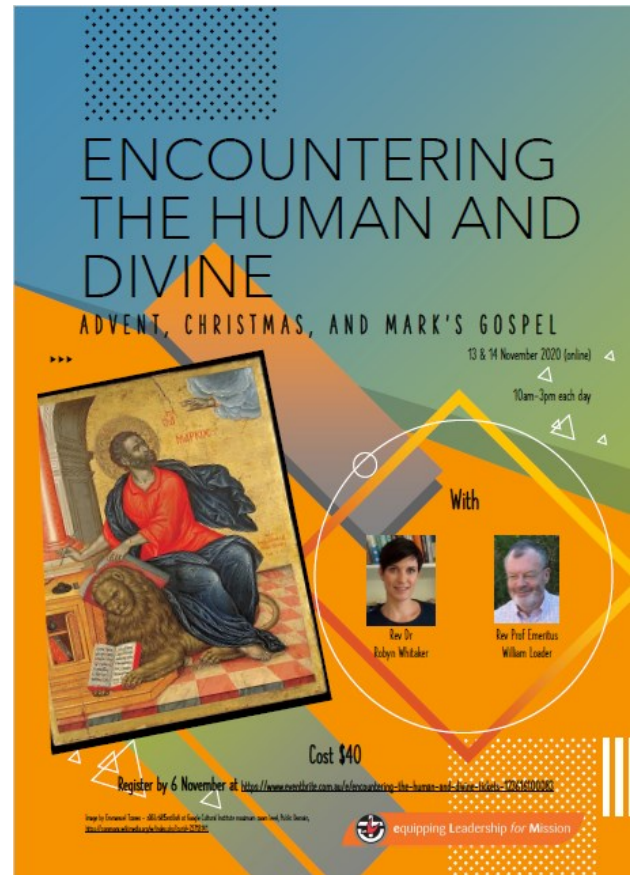
November 28th

9:30 Cuppa & Covid Chat

eLM Events

Fran Barber
(Continuing Education)

Lectionary Conference online: [Encountering the Human and Divine: Advent, Christmas and Mark's Gospel 2021](#) with Rev Dr Robyn Whitaker and Rev Prof Emeritus Bill Loader: **November 13 and 14**. This will be a great opportunity for refreshing the focus and themes of Mark's gospel to prepare for Advent and Christmas.



ONLINE [Labyrinth Training, November 17-21](#), 10am-1pm each day with Lauren Artress of *Veriditas*.

[PILGRIM THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE Handbook and TIMETABLE 2021](#) – a fantastic array of intensive, weekly face-to-face or online study options throughout 2021. Remember, you can enrol as an audit student, which reduces the cost. Consider inviting interested colleagues to enrol with you, so you can continue the conversation after the unit finishes in a Peer Learning Group (I can assist in the establishment and ongoing support [of Peer Learning Groups](#)).

A reminder that Robyn and my lectionary podcast, [By the Well](#), often with the help of a guest, continues to offer reflections on the week's readings and how they might be preached.

The 6 month slump - a normal phenomena

We are just over 6 months into this state of disaster, and experts are offering the insight that at this point many of us can slip into a 6 month slump. <https://www.mamamia.com.au/burnout-symptoms-and-cause/>

What we can expect is: People's emotions will be heightened and exhaustion, fatigue and burnout will begin to kick in. These experiences are a normal response to the 6 months (plus) of dealing with this pandemic - we need to be mindful that we are in this 6 month slump space, and seek to care for one another in light of it.

Note that some ministers and church leaders have worked flat out throughout the COVID-19 Crisis may now be hitting a slump at the moment. Ministers and lay leaders will have to listen to their body and mind may be telling them.

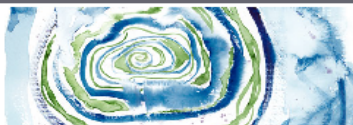
This is the time for those who have the energy to rise to the fore, so that those who are flagging can take a necessary "time-out" - please note that giving-in to this slump is not a failure, it is necessary for us to survive long term.

Perhaps too, as we hold this caring place of respect and love for one another, the awareness and example has the potential to support our wider community and give others permission to own the impact of the 6 month slump.

Please make use of the Presbytery focus worship services and invite your ministry agents and those who have been preparing worship, to have a few Sunday's off. Church Councils may need to give their ministers annual leave or study leave, Sunday off, at short notice. Congregation members can hold their leaders in prayer for strength, encouragement and resilience.

The PPW Ministry Team continuing to hold you all in prayer.

bethel
centre
COUNSELLING, EDUCATION, CARE



Creative Calm

A Bethel Centre group for those in ministry

Connect and unwind.

Sketch, knit, sew, journal ... Whatever your creative pursuit or aspiration, bring it along. Or be supported in choosing something to try.

No skill required – you don't have to be 'creative'!

You will come away with ...

- Ideas for refuelling and re-energising yourself.
- Strategies to make time for rest and reflection.
- How to use these strategies to form new habits.

Hosted on Zoom by Julie McDonald
Weekly for four weeks on Wednesdays 2-3pm.
November 11, 18, 25, December 2.
Come for one or more sessions.

Register now to secure your place by emailing
support@bethelcentre.com.au. For information,
call or text Julie on 0425 707 583.

The Bethel Centre's professional counselling, pastoral care, and education service offers quality care and support for congregations, individuals, and families within or connected to the Uniting Church Synod of Victoria & Tasmania. We support reconciliation and healing for hurt experienced as a consequence of church life.

Digital Church Planting Ideas

Jason Moore Tips

1. Make worship on-line interactive. Don't just do worship as normal and press record.
2. Importance of dialogue, not just monologue.
3. Allow people to participate, include the offering.
4. Keep experimenting. Don't get stuck in a format. Keep it fresh.
5. Always build on-line relationships. Talk to the camera.
6. Dream big and try something new
7. Do a technical run through.
8. Look for symbols around people and make them relevant.
9. Keep improving. Evaluate how it when look for improvements.

Digital Church Planting Conference 4th—7th November. <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/digital-church-planting-downunderparty-full-series-3-oz-cohorts-tickets-115873058437>