



# The Westerly



PPW & PWV Newsletter No.2

18th Feb 2021

## Lenten Reflection

**By Rev. Jeanne Beale (Deacon—PPW Presbytery Minister)**

Lent is usually a time for prayer and renewal; inviting us to “look again” as we listen to the stories that lead us to Easter Sunday. However, Easter Sunday is not the day after Ash Wednesday; we have the period of Lent to remind us that turning to face Jerusalem was a tough journey.

It is usually at this time, we are invited to consider making our own sacrifices for the period of Lent. It feels a little rough thinking about giving up something for Lent in the time of a global pandemic and writing this during yet another lockdown; some may argue that these conditions are presenting us with enough reminders of sacrifice that no more needs to be given up!

### We have already given up:

- Planning holidays; because just when we do, they can be ripped out from under us, or cut short to get home quick!
- Planning big celebrations; weddings, parties, or just a dinner party with friends.
- Planning for meetings and worship in person; our face to face Presbytery in Council meeting shuffled to on-line is a perfect example.
- Personal contact with loved ones; especially those interstate or overseas; or this week, more than 5 kms away!
- Greeting people with affection; do we hug, shake hands, elbow bump, wave and smile (tricky behind a mask).
- Feeling safe to go shopping; the kick-back with regard to Covid restrictions leaves many having no regard for the safety and health of others.

*(Use this space to mentally add your own.....)*

And yet, amid the groaning and confusion, there is still room for us to be more intentional about our journey toward Easter. The first followers of Christ experienced confusion and frustration as they journeyed with Jesus, back to Jerusalem; back to a place of fear.

Perhaps this year, we might focus on a deep seated fear of our own and consider what we might need in order to journey toward our own Jerusalem? Perhaps a better way to identify with the suffering of Jesus may be: instead of giving up something we enjoy (chocolate), we seek to address a personal fear (looking in the mirror).

Many people have had deep fears ignited during this pandemic. Lent offers us a perfect opportunity to look our fears in the face, name them, wrestle with them in the weeks ahead, and with the amazing hope in the risen Christ, surrender our fears to God in the assurance of new life.

Lent speaks to our personal lives, but also to our community lives. Lent provides our communities of faith with opportunity to identify our corporate hopes and fears, and likewise wrestling with them in the weeks of Lent, and together, hand them over to God this Easter. **May this time of Lent bring a journey to renewed Hope and new life for us all!**

**Amen.**



# Church Council News

## ADMINISTRATION - PROPERTY



### Heather Loader

*PPW Secretary—Administrator*

**Money for Mission Program:** As we return to face-to-face gatherings it would be a great time for you to think about your missional activities into the future and assess your property requirements for the delivery of mission. We are still working to locate property that is in excess of missional and worship requirements that could be divested into the Money for Mission Program. It is a great way for Congregations to earn an income from property without having to worry about maintenance and management.

**Essential Safety Measures:** As we return to face-to-face worship and activities now is the time to think about Essential Safety Measures. Some of these legislative required safety measures were not undertaken throughout the COVID-19 lockdowns. It's time to check your exit signs, fire extinguishers, electrical testing and tagging and first aid kits to ensure they are current.

The Victorian State Government have announced changes to the **Residential Tenancies Act (RTA)** that will increase mandatory safety obligations. If you rent a house/townhouse or unit/apartment to tenants in Victoria, you are directly affected by the changes to the smoke alarm requirements and electrical and gas inspections. The regulations will be effective from 28<sup>th</sup> March 2021. Mandatory electrical and gas safety checks will be required every two years with a report being produced containing the gas plumber and electricians licence details who conducted the tests. All of this new legislation applies to all manses owned by the Uniting Church (this includes manses utilised for the housing of Ministers). Congregations must act now to ensure compliance.

**Occupational Health and Safety Inspections:** Elnura Dulakovic, the Synod Safety Officer, has advised that Occupational Health and Safety inspections of Uniting Church properties will recommence this year. You will be contacted to arrange inspections if required.



### Jeanne Beale

*Presbytery Minister*

### Safe Church

Have you checked the expiry date on your WWCC lately? When you are renewing your WWCC could you please ensure you update the Synod address **130 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne, 3000**. Here is the link to the new Synod address and what needs to change. <https://ucavictas.org.au/keepingchildrensafe/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/SynodNewAddress.pdf>

Directions on how to renew your WWCC as well. <https://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au>

You can renew your card online from six months before its expiry date until three months after it has expired. It's illegal to do child-related work after your card expires unless you've lodged your renewal. If you still intend to do child-related work after your card has expired, you'll need to start a new application.

There may be new people stepping into leadership roles as well - not only do they need a WWCC, but have they done the Safe Church Training? If you need a refresher course, or have new people to be inducted please let Jeanne Beale know in PPW or Colleen Barker in Western Vic.

There are plans for a new national Safe Church Training program to be coming out this year, which I imagine we will all be asked to do, but no sign of it as yet, so the one that VicTas has (show) is still current for now.



### Joint Ministers Retreat—Save the Date

PPW & PWV ministers retreat for 2021.

Norval House Hall's Gap **Sunday**

**September 5th—Wednesday 8th 2021.**

The theme of the retreat will be 'Renewal'.

Hope that you will make this a priority



# Mental Health Matters

REV. FI BOTTCHER (SUNSHINE MENTAL HEALTH)

In Lent, we hear an invitation to “give” and “give up”. We ask ourselves how we can give more to the needy; through donating our time or money or becoming more involved in the life and mission of our churches. And many of us will observe the “40 day fast” of Lent which in our modern culture often means giving up chocolate, coffee, or Facebook (or even all three!)

But what if you are someone who is in need? What if you have nothing left to give, exhausted from always giving but rarely receiving?

I wonder if the language of “picking up” and “putting down” is a more useful, inclusive way of inviting people into Lent? As we prepare to deepen our relationships with God, sure, we could “pick up” a commitment to give more, but we could also “pick up” meditation, walks with friends, quiet times of prayer. Similarly, we could choose to “put down” our prejudices, our self-criticism, or perhaps the barriers we build between ourselves and others.

**Let our invitation into Lent be an invitation to walk with Jesus; creating hearts and minds to receive the love God and to truly love our neighbours as ourselves.**



## Lent in a Bag

Rev. Narelle Collas

There are a number of resources online about Lent in a Bag. This is about providing physical objects for members to have at home along with daily or weekly bible readings.

The bag contains 6 small items to be used as symbols to focus individual, family or group meditations and conversations during the Season of Lent.

### How to use 'Lent in a Bag':

Choose one night of the week and invite those around your table to pick one of the symbols as a starting point for whole-table conversation.

For individual devotion (daily or weekly), choose one of the symbols for reflection as you make your way through the season of Lent. How

does your interpretation of the symbol change over time? How does the symbol connect with the Bible readings?

Use each symbol as a conversation starter during weekly Lenten suppers or small group gatherings with your congregation.

### Contents may include:

Sand – for the wilderness

Rock – transformation

Shell – baptism

Human Peg Figure – Jesus was fully human and fully divine

Candle – Light

Seed/ Bulb and soil – growing

Cup for water



# Our Activities



## ACTIVITY FOR THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY

Saturday 20th 9:30 am

PWV Presbytery AGM at Dunkeld Community Centre



New Chairperson Installed Rev David Carter. Gippsland fires support.

Saturday 20th 3:30 pm

Messy Church National Conference



Wednesday 24th 9:30 am

Pastoral Care (Seminar 2 Daytime)



Friday 26th –Sun 28th

SYNOD



Synod  
2021

Meeting virtually (online) Friday 26 to Sunday 28 February 2021

## Concerned about the Climate Crisis we are facing?

**On March 11 join faith communities around the world for the biggest-ever multi-faith Day of Action on the climate crisis called Sacred People, Sacred Earth.**

Please ask others in your congregation to sign a bold new multi faith statement the signatories to which will also include globally recognised faith leaders - and ask as many people as possible to sign this too. This will be launched on the day.

And join the Day of Action by making your church one of hundreds of places of worship all around the world 'sounding the alarm' for the climate. You can do this by ringing bells if you have them, playing bagpipes or other instruments, singing, or anything else, as long as you do it publicly.

[Brunswick](#) UCA has a video has a 4 min video you can use in your worship service.



[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dTxBFOT\\_NGjvKdId-k9udraxjMjL73as/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dTxBFOT_NGjvKdId-k9udraxjMjL73as/view)

**Click on picture for link to register.**