

Surfcoast Uniting Churches

9th May 2021 Edition 116

Welcome to the Surf Coast Uniting Church newsletter.

All our sermons can be viewed at www.surfcoast.unitingchurch.org.au



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**SURFCOAST SERVICES each week: 9.30am at Airey's Inlet & Torquay.
11.00am at Bellbrae**

We acknowledge that we meet to worship on the land of the Wadawurrung people and pay our respects to their elders past and present, and emerging. Find out more at www.wadawurrung.org.au.

A reflection by Noni Johnson

I would like to tell you a story that took place in 1917, a little over 100 years ago, when my mum was 4 years old. Mum was born on the Canadian prairies, geographically almost in the middle of the province of Saskatchewan. The weather delivers great extremes - really hot in summer and amazingly cold in winter. I cannot imagine what the winters are like but to give me a glimpse into winter, Mum told me this: she said her family lived on a farm way out in the country. The house did not have an indoor toilet but an outhouse instead. The outhouse was in the yard a short distance away from the farmhouse. In winter, if there was a blizzard, it was impossible to see your hand in front of your face and if you stepped out of the house you could quickly lose your bearings and not be able to get back to the house. So, for the family's safety there was a rope strung between the house and the outhouse and in a blizzard, you had to hold onto the rope and work your way between the two places.

At this time, Mum had an older brother who was 11 and an older sister who was 9. Mum's Dad, his name was George, worked in the city and commuted by horse and buggy. The horse's name was Dobbin. Dobbin meant a quiet and prodding farm horse and was a very common name given to horses. This day George had finished work and started home when a blizzard hit. Anxiety started to rise. I am sure that George would have been scared and certainly, the family became anxious for the safe arrival of the horse and buggy. Time went on and it did not come. Risking their own lives, Mum's Mum, my grandmother and the 11-year-old brother, climbed up on the farm house roof and fixed in place the biggest lantern they could find, in the hope that George could see it and be guided home. Then the little family gathered around the fire and prayed ceaselessly for Dad's safe return. Meanwhile George had no idea where he was, if he was headed back to town or home or none of these and he started to suffer from hypothermia. As hypothermia progresses the person loses the ability to think straight and make good decisions. Eventually George was getting close to death and he just dropped the reins and Dobbin brought George home. The family working together got George out of the cart and into the house and eventually he recovered with thankfulness, with no lasting ill effects.

Thinking about this story now, I can see how we could look at it symbolically and see the basic truths it displays. It shows a normal day with normal people going about their daily business when one of the severe storms of life hits. It depends where you are in the storm how badly it affects you, but most importantly the people involved had no way to change the situation. They were powerless. The family at home did all they could, setting up the light and sitting beneath it praying ceaselessly for God's mercy and help but would have liked to have more control over the situation. As things worsened for George he dropped the reins - a complete surrender. No doubt he had been praying too. His action reminds me of the saying - let go, let God. To me the light is a symbol that reminds me of Jesus saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will have the light of life and will never walk in darkness". The light of the world allows illumination and focuses our sight on what is good and pure and true. Jesus also says, "you are the light for the whole world". We often respond with - what us? How can we do that?

Did you see the bright moon last week? We had the great pleasure to watch the bright radiant moon rise over the water. The moon, of course, has no light of its own. It shines by reflecting the light of the sun. In the same way Jesus is saying that if we are close to him we will reflect his light, his goodness and people will praise God seeing the reflection of his goodness in this way. However, there is one spectacular time when the light of the moon disappears. That is in an eclipse. This is when the world gets in the way of the reflection of the sun's light. It is the same for us. The world can get in the way of us reflecting Jesus's light. When we think that getting worldly riches will make us happy and spend all our efforts on getting riches. Same if we spend all our time in worldly pursuits and do not spend any time with Jesus. The worldly things can eclipse our relationship with Jesus and we will not be able to reflect his light. Jesus promises if we follow him we will have the light of life and see all that is pure, good and holy and be close to Him, who will be alongside us in all the storms of life. Jesus says he will be with us always. Why would we want to miss out on that?

Lectionary Readings

May 9 : Easter 6	May 16: Easter 7
Acts 10: 44-48	Acts 10:44-48
Psalms 98	Psalms 98
1 John 5:1-6	1 John 5:1-6
John 15: 9-17	John 15: 9-17

Preaching Roster

May 9: Easter 6	May 16: Easter 7
Airey's Inlet 9.30am & Bellbrae: 11 am with Noel Patchett	Airey's Inlet 9.30am & Bellbrae: 11 am with Rev Suzie Castle
Torquay 9.30: Rev Suzie Castle— Holy Communion	Torquay 9.30: Rev Suzie Castle Video sermon



Plan your Month: Diary Dates

Bright & Beautiful High Tea

Mu-

sic, coffee, cake, strawberries & savouries

Oak Tree Place, 25 Anderson Street, Torquay

Saturday 8th May at 2.30pm

Tickets: \$12.50 or \$15 (with sparkling wine) per person

Proceeds to UNITING family services, and Surf Coast UC benevolent fund.

FOR TICKETS: Phone or text Tricia Genat: 0419 340056 email: patricia-amgenat@gmail.com OR click [here](#) at

<https://surfcoast.unitingchurch.org.au/event/bright-and-beautiful-high-tea/>

A FEW SEATS STILL AVAILABLE!

DINE OUT is continuing every month on the second Monday.

The next one is on **May 10th** at the Jan Juc Beach Hotel at 12 noon. Call Jean Elder on 0409969392 to RSVP.

All very welcome



Bellbrae Op shop & Bookshop Roster: Remind your friends to drop in and browse...

Sat May 8th: Jane, Karlene and Carleen...Doreen, Ro and Anna

Sat May 15th: Val, Bev, Carleen—Joan, Lyn, Helen

Several folk have asked what a volunteer does at the OP Shop. One serves behind the counter. Most items are priced. Another person currently stays outside ensuring people complete the QR code check in and the numbers in shop stay within Covid rules. The third person is the shop keeper in the Book shop.

It is a very easy job, and new people would be rostered with the more experienced.

Please consider helping by contacting Bev on 0419221514



Uniting needs the following:



Tinned peas, carrots, green beans, (420gm tins), ar (1 kg) vegetable oil for cooking, Tomato sauce, Cornflakes, Instant coffee (150gm), tissues, Toilet rolls, toothpaste, laundry powder or liquid (small).

Most items to be left at the Harpers front door (53 Cowrie) but margarine, butter & cheese need to be handed to Robyn personally.

THANK YOU!

PLEASE NOTE THIS EVENT IS ON AT WESTERN HEIGHTS UC, NOT THE LOCATION MENTIONED IN LAST WEEK'S NEWLSTETTER

Volunteers are needed to assist Sylvia Peck in contributing to the afternoon tea for 50 in the shared Pentecost Service afternoon tea.

Mixed sandwiches, different slices and savoury scones are required. A sign up sheet will be at Torquay UC this Sunday or contact Sylvia at jspecky@bigpond.com.

Greater Geelong Combined Pentecost service



WESTERN HEIGHTS UCA,
MAY 23RD @ 3PM FOR A
WONDERFUL TIME OF
WORSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP

LEFT OVER FOOD WILL BE
DONATED TO LAZARUS HOUSE.

We are blessed to have representatives in our congregations preparing a space of hospitality at the pentecost service. These reps will be seeking help with baking and creating. We say thank you for sharing your gift of hospitality.

suzie.castle@gmail.com

Sammy Stamp –

would like to thank the Uniting Church on the Surf Coast for the continuing support with stamps. It is very much appreciated and will assist in raising funds for many worthy causes. Since Sammy Stamp started in 1977 it has raised \$1,014,656.00. Sales for 2020 were down a bit at \$19,252. Some of the areas that Sammy Stamp has helped – Uniting Vic/Tas Bushfire Relief Appeal for both Immediate use and Recovery Assistance; Uniting World; Mission Liaison Group for transporting charitable goods overseas; Vanuatu Prevention of blindness project; Uniting Vic/Tas Christmas Appeal to assist those in need; & High Street Frankston UC for Operation Larder to care for the disadvantaged people. These totalled \$32,000 and were the Grants approved during 2020.

Airey's Inlet St Aidan's Church, 29 Great Ocean Road, Airey's Inlet. 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

Weekly offerings can be made via direct debit or credit to the congregation account :

BSB: 083-929 and Account Number 93-009-8403 Please add notes in the deposit area to identify your congregation:

Aireys Inlet:3231AI, Bellbrae:3228BB or Torquay:3228TQ

NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS and all queries to: newslettersurfcoastuc@gmail.com **DEADLINE: Thursday at 4pm**