

TRANSCEND: AUGUST

Ascot Vale Uniting Church Newsletter 2014

60 Maribyrnong Road, Moonee Ponds



Services: Sundays 10 am

OUT OF THE ASHES - NEW LIFE

“To cities filled with the homeless and impoverished, Christianity [Christians] offered charity as well as hope.

To cities filled with newcomers and strangers, Christianity offered an immediate basis for attachments. To cities filled with orphans and widows, Christianity provided a new and expanded sense of family.

To cities filled torn by violent ethnic strife, Christianity offered a new basis for social solidarity. And to cities faced with epidemics, fires, and earthquakes, Christianity offered effective nursing services.”

Rodney Stark, ‘Antioch as the Social Situation for Matthew’s Gospel’

Witness the timeless compassion of the early church. That’s our heritage and an ideal that we continually strive for in our ministries. Like our Christian forebears at Antioch and beyond, I seek your cooperation and leadership in helping people become resilient, spiritual and well balanced.

We are a team of Christians interested in the care of the soul, passionate about supporting and encouraging people as they grow into their full maturity and stature as compassionate people. I cannot do this on my own, and you shouldn’t have to. It means that we take our bond of Christian friendship seriously, as a family, and that we recognize the importance of each person and the gifts they bring. We are a family in which the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

I seek your participation and leadership in this family so that the whole of who we are together can be greater. We will continue to do what we have always done, to be champions for those who are being treated poorly, and reaching out to those who need help to be well balanced in their lives. This summons us together in worship, in service and in our small covenant groups, as well as in our private moments to be active in maintaining our own spirituality and growth.

Witness the remarkable resilience and faith of the people of Ascot Vale Uniting Church.

The 29 August, 2014 marks the tenth anniversary of the burning down of our church. On Sunday, 31 August we will commemorate that bleak event, and celebrate all of the wonderful ministries that have literally emerged from out of those ashes. Our story is worth telling and remembering. Perhaps to some it is just a curiosity, which points to nothing beyond itself; just some amazing people working together to take on the local Council and to rebuild their church.

As commendable as that is, it is still only a superficial assessment.

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Ascot Vale Uniting Church Rev. Ron Rosinsky avuniting@hotmail.com www.ascotvaleuniting.org.au	
ELDERS	
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From Pg. 1

The Ascot Vale story is a chapter in the larger weave or story of Spirit.

That Spirit shows that God always has more to say to us about life even after our crucifixions. And God works with us, even with us, through Her Spirit. In this creative endeavour we don't have to be perfect instruments of God's will, just attentive, responsive and possessed of a little faith. For God's Spirit holds within the deepest parts of our mind and soul the greatest possibilities of what we can yet become with His help. Life has to it an infinite creative possibility, because God is within it and beyond it. For example, God says to all people in the book of Revelation, and notably during a time of Christian persecution **"behold, I place before you an open door that no-one can shut."**

As people of faith we know to whom we belong, we know whose we are; then the gates of hell cannot prevail against us and we find that life is an open door through which we can explore new possibilities.

Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life."

He was saying that life has to it an infinite creative possibility, that God is that possibility, and therefore not even the cross could make him its prisoner.

In Jesus and in his followers' faith, hope and unconditional love would flow out to heal the wastelands of civilization. That's what happens through your ministries in this church.

So God's power is active even through Good Friday as it was on that black night ten years ago; to awaken compassion within each of us as we look to the Christ helpless and suffering, and to the church on Maribyrnong road left a smoking rubble.

Underserved suffering can be redemptive; it rescues one's life from a blind commitment to the goods of this world and brings us back to each other in our suffering and in our joy. Because we are people of the Easter faith, we won't be trapped by our tragic circumstances, nor will we let our mind become our prison.

I like the statements from the New Testament about the early Church because while they describe us they also challenge us. It's the spirituality and faith of the people of this Uniting church that has made our success possible. Let's strive to grow in that faith. Here are the New Testament principles:

Acts 2: 42-45: Charity for others pours forth from the Apostles and other Christians. How? The Christians **devoted** themselves to "the apostles *teaching* and *fellowship* to the *breaking of bread* and the *prayers*." In other words they were to be devoted to their spiritual formation. And the "believers held all things in common selling their worldly goods and possessions and distributing the proceeds to all as any had need."

Ephesians 6:10-18: when everything was against them Paul encouraged Christians to "take up the whole armour of God", not to make war, but peace. They are to use the tools of non-violence and faith to reconcile diverse people, to help them find their destiny together. Those tools were:

- "fasten the belt of truth around you waist;
- Put on the breast-plate of what's right;
- The shield of faith;
- The helmet of salvation;
- The sword of the spirit, which is the word of God (the word or sword separates us from a blind attachment to church buildings or wealth; to a false sense of self- to false pride, envy, resentment or fear.)
- And, "as shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace." (That is the peace not just of first world corporate shareholders, but the peace and security of orphans and widows, of the unemployed and pensioners)

Lastly, Paul speaks of the last tool or "armour of God"- prayer.

Prayer would help people to be strong, "strong in the Lord and his power", in other words resilient. Through our spiritual practices we draw strength from a power greater than ourselves. In this power we have built a church and a congregation that we pray will be a place of peace and reassurance for all, a centre of joy to all.

From Pg.2

In the garden we are re-created; in the church in the garden, our church, we are restored. In our first period of ministry, over the past ten years, I hope it will be said that in us the forces of violence and destructiveness have met their match. And the next period of time whatever it holds, pray that it will be said that as we used the tools of non- violence and compassion, faith and courage those same forces had met their master.

All the best,
Ron

WORSHIP THEMES AND READINGS - Sundays 10.00 am

Worship service themes: 10:00am Sundays with coffee and tea to follow

10 August: Family Service- Lay led service

17 August: 'Daffodil Day: Interdependence and erotic justice' Matthew 15: 21-28

24 August: 'Finding courage to prevail with some joy to give' Matthew 16: 13-20

31 August: **Commemoration of the Burning down of Ascot Vale Uniting Church- giving thanks for the contributions of our members and friends.** Matthew 16: 21-28

Catered brunch to follow the service

7 September: Communion Sunday: ' Compassion, celebration and the recovery of Eros' ;
Matthew 18: 15-20

Poet Adrienne Rich's words aptly describe our spiritual journey as,

"...the passion to make and make again, where such unmaking reigns...the refusal to be a victim...we have lived with violence so long."

- Adrienne Rich

Kid's Uniting - Term 3: Sundays, 10 to 11 am

20 July – 14 September



Older children: teachers Noel and Claire

Topics: Two Sundays per month: **'Pilgrimage to non-violence: civil disobedience and non-violence for social change'** (Jesus, M.L. King, Ghandi and contemporary civil rights movements)

One Sunday per month: **'A purpose driven life', by Pastor Rick Warren**

Younger Children: Bernadette and Claire

Topics: Working for radical equality: the Hebrew Prophets and the early Christian Church .

Coming Events

Wednesday August 6: Pentecost Study, 7.30 at the church

Wednesday August 20: Pentecost Study, 7.30 at the church

Sunday August 31: 10th anniversary of the church fire

Ron will be away from September 8th. to October 8th. Rev. Mark Dunne from St Johns will be available in the event of an emergency.

COME AND CELEBRATE! on our THANKSGIVING SUNDAY: August 31st. 10am.



Sunday 31 August will be a special day at Ascot Vale Uniting. It is ten years since the old church was burnt down, and we will be celebrating the goodness of God, and the courage and dedication of our Minister Ron and our members, that enabled our church community, in spite of this disaster, to survive and thrive. We are celebrating our beautiful new church buildings, and all the good things that happen in them, and the wonderful people that meet and worship here. And we are particularly celebrating at this time the immeasurable contribution to our church community of our longest-standing and most faithful members.

In the course of a special service, these special people will be presented with certificates of appreciation, in gratitude for their devoted service to God and our church and community over many years. After the service, we will enjoy together some entertainment from parishioners, and of course a slap-up morning tea.

We, your Elders and Church Councillors, urge you not to miss this great occasion. Please do make every effort to be with us on this day! All contributions to the entertainment and the morning tea will be greatly appreciated – if you would like to play, sing, dance or otherwise perform for the occasion, please let one of us know. Any other suggestions will also be welcome.

See you at the church on Sunday 31 August! (and of course before, we hope ...!)

Dorothy Howes, for AVUC Church Council and Elders

“You are better off to have a friend than to be all alone...

If you fall, your friend can help you up. But if you fall without having a friend nearby, you are really in trouble.”

- Ecclesiastes 4: 9-10

THE WEDDING OF MARJAN AND HAMID



On Sunday July 20th our church had the pleasure of hosting the wedding of Marjan and Hamid. This lovely couple are refugees from Iran who chose our church and were baptised here. Many members of our congregation happily volunteered to make this a memorable day for them. In a short time, a lovely wedding dress was organized, a suit for the groom, and Judith brought flowers for the church. Ron conducted a great service, Maria and Bente performed the music and Lodena translated key parts of the service into Farsi. We celebrated after the service with food and drinks and a beautiful wedding cake made by Isabella. Michael and Melita generously videoed and photographed the wedding. This was a great community effort and we were all privileged to share this day with Hamad and Marjan.



Elvis Gospel Night: Saturday June 28th.



We thank Neti Puamau for entertaining us with his Gospel singing following the Fish and Chips Night. Neti used his deep bass voice to entertain us with many of the beautiful Gospel songs recorded by Elvis Presley.

Heather Brehaut arranged the evening and accompanied Neti on the piano. Heather has a great interest in and knowledge of Gospel music.. She introduced each song with background information on the composer.

Sincere thanks to both of them for an entertaining evening.



MICROSOFT DISCOUNT TO UNITING CHURCHES

Microsoft software is available to Uniting Church congregations, agencies, members and ministers through a Microsoft 'academic' agreement at pricing levels significantly below retail. Information on the products available, terms of license, and an online ordering system all appear on this site:

<http://www.uniting.biz/>



The Ascot Vale Uniting Playgroup meets every Thursday at the church from 10:00-12noon
We welcome any mothers with babies.

The cost is \$3 a session and mothers are asked to bring a piece of fruit to share.

For further information contact Andrea. (email : avuniting@hotmail.com)

A man tied his Great Dane outside the grocery store and went inside to do some shopping. A little while later another man came over to him and asked if the Great Dane outside was his. He replied that it was and then the other man said, "Well I'm sorry to tell you this, but I believe my dog just killed your dog." The owner of the Great Dane looked at him and asked what kind of dog he had, to which he replied that he had a Chihuahua. The Great Dane's owner looked at the other man as if he'd lost his mind and asked, "How could that be?" The other man replied, "Well I'm afraid he choked on him."

The Richness of Resurrection



The articles on the Resurrection by Rev. Ron Rosinsky and Noel Lloyd have stimulated me to think more on this vital theme.

Resurrection and death are not two separate events . They are one event. They are inseparable from one another.

As you read this cells in your body are dying, and when they have died they will be replaced by other cells.

Later this year there will be thousands of hectares of farmland aglow with golden canola flower. When it is harvested the canola will die but the seed will be kept alive.

It will be sown in the ground, die, and there will arise thousands of acres of new golden canola.

This seems to be what Jesus was getting at when he said, 'Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground it abideth alone: but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit.'

Diarmuid O'Murchu is a Priest and a social psychologist. He has written:

'It is unlikely that we humans will survive the impending global crisis.

Whether it be a nuclear holocaust (possible but unlikely), chronic oxygen –depletion due to pollution of air and water (quite possible), or mass extinction possibly within the next fifty to one hundred years.

What bad news O'Murchu brings!

However, there is some good news.

As it is we humans who have brought this grave situation about, we can act to prevent any further damage to our home which is this world.

As the farmer acts by sowing canola seed that leads to the resurrection of thousands of hectares of golden canola flower, so we can take measures that can lead to the resurrection of the world. Then the earth will be safe for human and other species for thousands of years.

In John's Gospel, Jesus is recorded as saying: 'The works that I do ye shall do and greater works than these shall ye do.'

Could one of these greater works be to save human and other life from extinction?

Doug Lloyd.

A panda walks into a cafe. He orders a sandwich, eats it, then draws a gun and proceeds to fire it at the other patrons. "Why?" asks the confused, surviving waiter amidst the carnage. The panda pauses on his way out, produces a badly punctuated wildlife manual, and tosses it over his shoulder. "Well, I'm a panda," he says at the door. "Look it up." The waiter turns to the relevant entry and, sure enough, finds an explanation: "Panda. Large black-and-white bear-like mammal, native to China. Eats, shoots and leaves."

Albury to Mildura Tour



Uniting Churches in the Murray Darling Basin are working to address the many problems of this crucial river system.

They are striving for the building of a sustainable future, more resilient communities and a healthier Basin river system.

They invite you to a minibus tour along the Murray River from Albury to Mildura (August 31 to Sept 7).

This is an opportunity to get to know the river, its problems and some of the people concerned about it.

Highlights will include: meeting and sharing with churches; farm visits; sight-seeing; public forums about water reform; times for worship, discussion, reflection and more.

Accommodation will be mainly in cabins (twin share or double) with some single rooms available which may involve an extra charge. A reasonable level of fitness is required but it involves no long walks. Meals will be purchased by individuals along the way at extra cost to the registration fee.

Registration fee is \$700 until July 31st 2014 (\$750 from Aug 1st) and covers accommodation, transport and entry charges. Final payment due by August 14th 2014.

A detailed brochure is available at:

http://www.unitingearthweb.org.au/images/Albury-Mildura-Brochure_FINAL_allchurches.pdf

A separate coach tour, based in Echuca, will run from September 1 to 5 and depart from/return to Canberra.

For more information on these tours chat to Darren Creek.



Vale

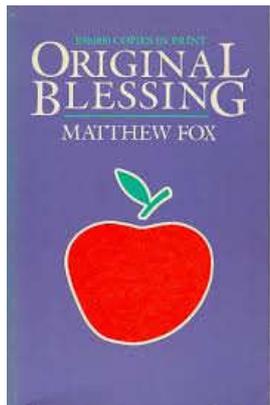
Andrew Condie, a past member of our church passed away on July 14th. 2014 at the age of 94. He was an active member of this church in the time before the fire and served the congregation as Treasurer. We extend our condolences to his family and to those who knew him.

“The greatest formal talent is worthless if it does not serve a creativity which is capable of shaping a cosmos.”

- Albert Einstein

PENTECOST STUDY

'Original Blessing: A Primer in Creation Spirituality'



The Pentecost Study continues. It has been well attended but is not too late to join in.

The next sessions are on August 6th. and August 20th.
At the church 7.30—9pm.

In this bestseller, named one of the "20 books that changed the world", maverick theologian Matthew Fox shows how Christianity once celebrated beauty, compassion, and justice; while providing a path of spiritual transformation and ecstatic connection with all creation.



Sincere Thanks

Thanks go to everyone who support Joyce's trading table either by donating items for sale or by purchasing 'the goodies' on offer.

To date over \$ 500 has been raised this year .

That amounts to a lot of jam and other goods.

Ted Jennings

M.V.C.C FORUM ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Council Chamber, Civic Centre Moonee Ponds

Wednesday Aug 20th. 7-9pm.

Come along to the next environment forum to hear from expert speakers, share ideas and let us know what you think about the future of climate change and what it means for Moonee Valley.

Topics to be covered:

- most recent facts on climate change
- trends for greenhouse emissions
- showcase of recent projects and achievements from around the world
- ways we can reach zero net emissions in Moonee Valley

Speakers include:

· **David Spratt** - David is a Melbourne based climate activist, writer and author. He was founder of the Climate Action Centre, runs the blog "Climate Code Red", is author with Phillip Sutton of a book of the same name. His work focuses on climate science, communications and climate movement politics.

· **Kirsty Albion** - Kirsty the National Co-Director at the Australian Youth Climate Coalition. She is passionate about empowering young people on the issue of climate change and in 2013 was awarded Young Environmentalist of the Year.

This is a FREE event, refreshments and finger food provided.

Please RSVP phone 9243 8888.

While creating husbands, God promised woman that good and ideal husbands would be found in all corners of the world.

.....And then he made the earth round— he's such a joker!