



TRANSCEND

Ascot Vale Uniting Church Newsletter

FEBRUARY
2018

'Thanks for the memories'

"Now listen to me. You're going to make it. You know why? Because these are smart people who love you, and they've got your back."

- Aaron Sorkin, *The West Wing*

The problem with the 'self help, self improvement' scene is that it's based on a myth- that a person can change things all on their own. Unfortunately contemporary people are plagued by this illusion.

As author Steve Biddulph points out, when this solitary approach fails some people become demoralized and believe that nothing can be changed; they give up.

Over the years at Ascot Vale Uniting Church we have seen something different, something beautiful. We have witnessed and helped people within our caring community to come alive within themselves, with the help of a greater power, which is at work within all of us. Christians call it the Holy Spirit, Eternal Life, or "Dabhar" ("Word" in Hebrew), which means God's creative energy. We have seen it's re-creative power amongst us, manifesting the good, blessing people so that they can bring life's blessing to others. This blessing, like a new creation, is a healthy person who in their searching has found four key ingredients:

- A robust sense of self - the courage to be;
- A sense of community - a church family;
- A renewed sense of meaning and values;
- An audacious hope.

A Christian Church should be helping the individual and the community to discover and embody those four energies. I hope that can be said of Ascot Vale Uniting Church (AVUC), and that in these last fourteen years by our modest example the forces of aggression and violence have met their master.

President Barack Obama said recently that he saw a need for empathy in a society that he felt has an "empathy deficit". He also said that to live without empathy is to "sleepwalk through life". Sleeper awake!

Wherever there is an empathy deficit and people are sleepwalking through life, there will be a need for a progressive Church like ours.

At the heart of our message and the golden thread underlying the four foundational life searches mentioned earlier is the message of the Jesus of history. Surrounded by conditions of abusive power by the privileged, suffering and apathy, and factional violence, Jesus embodied absolute equality among all people and compassion. Compassion takes empathy even further. While empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of another, compassion literally means to suffer together.

60 Maribyrnong Road,
Moonee Ponds
Services: Sundays at 10am



Rev. Ron Rosinsky

Coming Events

- Feb 4: Kids Uniting starts
- Feb 10: Mens Group, 6 pm
- Feb 11: Planning after service
- Feb 18: Baptism - Bronte
- Feb 18: Planning after service
- Feb 25: Ron's last service
- Feb 25: Harvest Swap
- Mar 1: Rev Ian Collings starts
- Mar 23: Ron's Induction Coburg
- Mar 30: Good Friday 9.30 am
- Apr 1: Easter service 10 am

Ascot Vale Uniting is a safe place for all people to worship regardless of age, race, creed, gender, cultural background, or sexual orientation

ascotvaleuniting.org.au

In sharing our experiences of suffering and joy, we are set on the pathway to find hope, a fulfillment of our foundational life searches. In this regard, when recently reading Steve Biddulph's '*The New Manhood*', I was impressed with how similar his description was of the benefits of being involved in a men's group to being involved in a church. To paraphrase him and add my own commentary, I would say that if you really want to get your life moving in the right direction, consider remaining involved in a church. Because:

- Your life starts to make more sense as you and others share insights, lots of encouragement, and occasional kicks in the bum;
- Caring church groups create safety, sanity and a support network that is rarely found in the big world;
- This can accelerate you toward liberation, a freer and braver life and world; and,
- What you do in the world- community change is so much better, stronger and enduring if you belong to a group of men and women working toward similar goals. One's action in the world needs to be underpinned by self reflection and deep awareness; and,
- Worship and understanding the Biblical story take your mind off secondary concerns, and help you live in terms of the depth and energy of your soul. You become more full of life, part of the flow of the universe, and as a result have a greater impact for good. Worship also puts you in touch with the mind-bending beauty and mystery that is sacred; and a God of grace who accepts you at a place in yourself beyond all good and evil, virtue or vice.

The Christian faith and it's heroes remind you that there is a potential for your awareness and maturity, for your quality of life that are not yet included in your self concept. *What gives you life, breadth and depth?* Your life is much broader and deeper than you currently conceive it to be. Sleeper awake.

Kathleen Kennedy Townsend (daughter of Robert F. Kennedy) described her Church like this. Could it be an apt description of our Church?

"Throughout my childhood, I felt enriched and inspired by my Church, its teaching and its history...I was brought into a warm and welcoming faith, and a Church that embraced the world, and confronted evil in all its forms.

I want to personally thank all of you for the wonderful remarkable memories that I have of our time together, and for your friendship. You have been a great Congregation! I also thank you for your leadership and support. Each of you have helped to pull things together, and lead by the appeal of your personalities, your warmth, your commitment and ideals. Please give my successor(s) that same wonderful level of support.

I most warmly invite you to my induction at Coburg UC. It will be held on Friday, 23 March at 7pm. Would love to see you. Please continue to love each other with '*family affection*', to use Paul's description of early Christians' bonds with each another. All the best for the future!

Rev. Ron Rosinsky

"Thanks to the power at work within all of us which is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine." (Ephesians 3: 20)

Worship Services & Themes- 10 am Sundays

4 February: Communion & baptism of Declan, Bernadette & Ryan's son. Mark 1: 29-39

11 February: *Evolution Sunday, Celebrating the contributions of Charles Darwin*
(DOB: 12 Feb, 1809) & other scientists. Psalm 50: 1-15; Mark 9: 2-9

18 February: Baptism of Bronte deGille. *'From emotional child-hood to adult-hood: the hero's journey'* Mark 1: 9-15 Baptism & temptations of Jesus- *beginning of Lent*

25 February: Ron's last service: *'From chaos to community, and a braver, freer life'*
Mark 8: 27-37: "Is anything worth more than your soul?"

30 March: Good Friday Service, 9:30am

1 April: Easter day service, 10am

WELCOME REV. IAN

A warm welcome to Rev. Ian Collings who will be our supply Minister from **1 March - 30 June**. Ian will be taking the Sunday services and providing one day per week of pastoral work and support; Chief among Ian's many roles, he was Minister of St. John's UC in Essendon throughout the 1990's; Ian brings great experience and ethos to the AVUC role, having achieved several decades of successful parish ministry and providing strong pastoral care.

Kid's Uniting

A modern Sunday school program



**Kid's Uniting for term one: 10am,
Sunday 4 February - Easter Sunday, 1 April.**

Join your teacher, Fiona, for one of the most contemporary Sunday school programs in Melbourne. Featuring yoga and guided meditation; and; learning about key Biblical stories in a supportive and creative environment.

RON'S INDUCTION AT COBURG UNITING CHURCH

Friday 23 March, 7pm: Induction of Rev. Ron into Coburg U.C. featuring Rev. Mark Dunn preaching ALL WELCOME!



Address: 21 Victoria Street, Coburg,

PLANNING FOR OUR FUTURE

11 & 18 February: You are encouraged to stay for an after-church Discussion with Rosemary Broadstock.

Rosemary is the Presbytery development worker. She will lead us through a discussion about missional planning and goal setting for AVUC.

This is part of the process involved in obtaining a minister.

Harvest Swap

The next Harvest Swap will be on February 25th following the service.

Bring along plants or anything else related to gardening to swap or share.

Come and meet people who share an interest in growing plants.

Get advice from some of the more experienced growers.

How are Ministers appointed?

The Synod has a Placements Committee that oversees the process of appointing Ministers. Ministers rarely “apply” for positions. It is the Placement Committee’s role to match minister and congregation and request that they have a “conversation” with each other to discern whether they should be in ministry together.

The minister submits a general profile about their gifts, skills and ministry practice to the Synod Placements Committee. The Placements Committee receives similar profiles from congregations requiring a minister. It is the Placements Committee’s role to consider the gifts and skills of ministers, and the needs of each placement, and recommend to the Joint Nominating Committee the names of ministers considered suitable for ministry in that placement. The minister is then asked to enter a conversation with the congregations Joint Nominating Committee regarding the ministry placement.

It is through this conversation that minister and congregation decide whether this is the best placement for the minister. This conversation is different to an interview process, The minister and congregation meet as equals, together deciding if this is the best placement for them.

Ascot Vale Uniting’s Joint Nominating Committee is:

Dorothy Howes

Michael Long

Fiona Prendergast

Angelika Ranellone

Eileen Ray

Francois Grobler

There will also be representatives from the Presbytery to assist in the process.

Men’s Group

All men welcome



Saturday 10 February, 6-10 pm

Dinner (Menulog) & discussion.

Topic: *‘Finding real male friends: they help you live a braver and freer life’*

Where: 50 a Maribyrnong Rd. Moonee Ponds

We celebrated the baptism of Rashed Assadinejad





MY YEAR WITH KIDS UNITING

Fiona Mary Prendergast

I always start by reading the message from the Bible and focus on its application to real life. The message is then related to the children so that they can make a very real connection. They can rely on the Bible for guidance in their life.

The experience of yoga, meditation and positive affirmations will serve the children not only now, but also in their future. These practices also support their discovery of the Divinity within.

Through the felt sensing of the Holy Spirit these other forms of worship help to remove the barriers of other spiritual methods and give acceptance of other faiths. Also if the children experience a period in their lives of questioning and choose another spiritual path they will not abandon God altogether. But find

what resonates within their expression of Spirituality. I focus on spiritual teachings that will serve the children for their lifetime. Rather than religious dogma. The children are encouraged to participate in class and be a part of a supportive group. They teach each other yoga and read out and share positive affirmations with each other.

There is a very strong Art component with Kids Uniting and they embrace it. We also have exhibitions of their work throughout the year and invite the whole Church to come and view their work.

We work with and employ a theory called Godly Play. It is influenced by the Montessori Method. It encourages the children to participate with the message through play, symbols and representations of the Bible story.

At the end of the year we have a Christmas party and make meaningful decorations.

It is important to maintain this format and footprint that we have all created together in Kids Uniting. I hope and pray that the children will be brought back to their time with me and that we all planted the seeds of a meaningful connection to God and Jesus, for their whole Spiritual Journey on Earth. For me it is important to maintain this format. Together we have built and created a solid foundation at Kids Uniting, for a lifetime of faith with both God and Jesus.

I appreciate your continued support in this responsible work.

Thank you from Fiona Mary Prendergast

* At each lesson the children acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which the church is built and learn to pay their respects to past and present Elders.

Acknowledgement of Country



We acknowledge and give thanks that the land on which our church building stands is country for which the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nation are the traditional custodians.

We honour their elders past and present and commit ourselves to work for reconciliation and justice.

'Transcend' is published on the first Sunday of each month except January. Articles, photos and other contributions are welcome.

Email them to the Editor, Robin Waltrowicz no later than the Wednesday before publication.

To receive a monthly copy of Transcend by email Contact: avuniting@hotmail.com

'Oh what a night!'

Saturday 27 January- A successful family barbecue night and concert.

The evening was a full of fun and energy, music and lots of free food.

A heartfelt thanks to all who contributed food and helped out.

Well done.

The evening featured a free barbecue and concert, a great outreach.

The concert featured our AVUC band, 'The Winter Months', playing popular cover music and debuting their own original songs.

About sixty people attended, over half of them teenagers;

The Winter Months band comprises, Timothy, Lucas and Rohan, all of whom kindly play for church services. Their name is taken from a quote by singer Lauryn Hill,

"After winter must come spring, change it comes eventually."

Ron



WE SAY FAREWELL TO DINA

On January 7th our congregation said farewell to Dina. She has served our church in many ways over the past few years. During the service Ron interviewed Dina and we heard of her many difficulties growing up in Communist Europe before she came to Australia. On behalf of the congregation Michael thanked Dina and wished her every happiness in her move home to Wollongong. Michael presented with her with a Bunnings gift voucher in appreciation of her work here.



Dina has settled in well in Wollongong and sent the following message.

Thank you all, Candace especially.
Two pot plants are decorating my entrance, yellow orchids my living room
and herbs my kitchen. A daily reminder of you, our time together and of
your thoughtfulness.
Stay well and happy.
Miss you heaps.
Always,
Dina

SAMMY STAMP CONTINUES TO RAISE FUNDS FOR COMMUNITY PROJECTS



For more than 30 years church members around Australia have been saving stamps for the Sammy Stamp Program. Our church has a collection box in the gathering space. Volunteers and Synod staff process the stamps. The stamps are collected, sorted, trimmed and packaged by an enthusiastic group of around 40 volunteers who meet at the Synod Centre each Thursday. The stamps are eventually sold and the money raised directed to a wide range of programs connected to the church.

In 2017 approximately \$50,000 was raised. Since 1977 the total raised is \$873,133.

Some examples of the projects supported:

Water projects in P.N.G.; Peace in Sth Sudan; Vanuatu Prevention of Blindness; Cyclone Relief; India Women's Support Program; Water Supplies; Music for Disabled; etc.

You can help by saving all Australian and overseas stamps as well as Met cards.

It is very helpful if you also trim and sort the stamps as follows:-

- Leave the stamps attached to paper (buyers prefer them, less damage due to handling). Stamps off paper are also welcome.
- Trim the stamps and cut (not tear) around the stamp leaving a 3mm (1/8 inch) surround.
- DISCARD stamps which are heavily franked, torn, thinned, biro cancelled or sticky taped.
- Leave PRE-STAMPED envelopes intact as complete envelopes.

Please place your stamps in the box near the name tags.

We thank Jill Skews for coordinating this project.

Welcome to 2018

You may or may not bother to take on board any New Year resolutions this year, like aiming to achieve or experience new challenges. However most of us will pause for a moment to consider what is left on our 'bucket list' or to-do-list whilst we still enjoy good health and have the time to make necessary preparation.

It may be to enrol in a local U3A course for study or infotainment. Maybe a community choir has a place for you. A local gymnasium or walking group gives needed exercise and has a social side as well.

Whatever takes your fancy, keep in mind the words of a former President of the United States, Woodrow Wilson. He told the students at Swarthmore College: "Do not forget why you are here. You are here in order to enable the world to live more amply, with greater vision, with a finer spirit of hope and achievement. You are here to enrich the world. You impoverish yourself if you forget the errand".

The Friendship Book of 2017 containing this Woodrow Wilson quote, as well as many other inspirational quotes concludes: "May we always remember this one!"

Reflection

The past is behind us, in another country, as it were, so our option is to look forward, be more involved in God's wonderful world, consuming less, recycling more, and needing to look no further than your family and neighbours.

Christmas at Ascot Vale Uniting



AVUC ROSTER, FEBRUARY to MAY 2018

DATE	LEADER /COMMUNION	DUTY ELDER	COUNTING	MUSIC	WELCOMER	READER	MORNING TEA
4 February 2018 Communion KU resumes	Rev Ron Dorothy	Michael	Peter/Barbara	Rob	Robin	Peter	Anneke/Francois
11 February Family Service	Rev Ron	Noel	Dorothy/Jean	Dorothy	Michael	Angelika	Chris/Angelika
18 February	Rev Ron	Dorothy	Candace/Judy	Julian	Judy	Candace	Dorothy/Jean
25 February Farewell to Ron	Rev Ron	Michael	Michael/Jean	Candace	Robin	Chris	Ken/Jenny
4 March Communion	Rev Ian Collings Noel	Noel	Noell/Jean	Rob	Cally	Cally	Marycon/Judy
11 March Family Service	Rev Ian	Dorothy	Candace/Dorothy	Dorothy	Ken	Anneke	Anneke/Francois
18 March	Rev Ian	Michael	Francois/Judy	Julian	Michael	Michael	Hamid/Rashed
25 March Palm Sunday Garden Swap	Rev Ian	Noel	Peter/Barbara	Candace	Peter	Barbara	Dorothy/Jean
30 March Good Friday	Rev Eileen	Dorothy	Candace/Jean	Candace	Judy	Peter	Angelika/Anneke
1 April Easter Day	Rev Ian Angelika	Dorothy	Dorothy/Jean	Rob	Cally	Cally	Marycon/Judy
8 April Family Service	Rev Ian	Noel	Noel/Jean	Dorothy	Ken	Ken	Ken/Jenny
15 April	Rev Ian	Michael	Michael/Jean	Julian	Michael	Marycon	Hamid/Rashed
22 April	Rev Ian	Dorothy	Robin/Barbara	Candace	Robin	Angelika	Chris/Angelika
29 April Garden Swap	Rev Mark	Michael	Peter/Candace	Candace	Peter	Anneke	Anneke/Francois
6 May Communion	Rev Ian Dorothy	Noel	Noel/Judy	Rob	Judy	Noel	Dorothy/Jean
13 May Family Service	Rev Ian	Dorothy	Michael/Jean	Dorothy	Michael	Michael	Marycon/Judy
20 May	Rev Ian	Michael	Peter/Francois	Julian	Ken	Barbara	Ken/Jenny
27 May Garden Swap	Rev Eileen	Noel	Candace/Jean	Candace	Peter	Peter	Hamid/Rashed
3 June Communion	TBA Noel	Dorothy	Robin/Judy	Rob	Robin	Chris	Chris/Angelika

If unable to do your rostered duty, please arrange a replacement.