



TRANSCEND

FEBRUARY
2019

Ascot Vale Uniting Church Newsletter

60 Maribyrnong Road, Moonee Ponds

Services: Sundays at 10am

Lying Fallow.

Rev. Gordon Bannon

Firstly I want to say how honoured I feel to be among you. I am enjoying getting to know you as a community of faith and beginning to feel my way into the Ascot Vale Community.

There is much to learn and much to do.

Somewhere recently I saw a quote, "Don't just do something, stand there!" It is a quote which turns the usual comment "Don't just stand there, Do something!" on its head. I guess it has been a temptation for me as I am beginning in Ascot Vale to try to be seen to be 'doing lots of stuff; to be working hard. It is easy to be misled into seeing my value just in how busy I am.

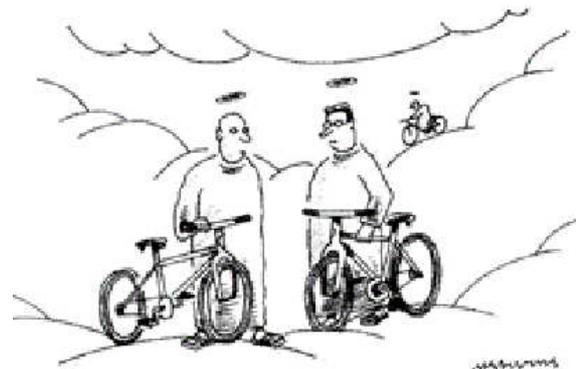
I am not alone in this way of being. I think many of us were raised in churches where we were taught the good old protestant work ethic.

We think that if we just work a little harder we can change the world and perhaps we even think that somehow we can work our way to 'heaven'.

As well as our religious heritage, our society also values 'productivity' as the highest value. It tells us that the more we can produce, the busier we are, the more we are worth.

Yet I am reminded that our Christian tradition also has a rich history of advocating for the place for 'being' and 'stillness' as against just 'doing more' and being task oriented. At times I have found the concept of taking space for just 'being still' an enormous challenge. The religious idea of taking time just to 'be', whether that is in prayer or meditation or contemplation, is very counter-cultural.

Jesus taught us a new way. In Matthew's story about Jesus, Jesus advises his followers not to get carried away with worrying and doing, but to rest in the Creator. He himself took time to pray, time away from the crowds and the busyness and be still. He took time to be with the Divine.



"I was hoping for eternal rest."

One of Mary Oliver's best known poems is called 'Wild Geese'. In it she says.

You do not have to be good.

*You do not have to walk on your knees
for a hundred miles through the desert repenting.
You only have to let the soft animal of your body
love what it loves.*

(see full poem on next page)

There is an old fashioned concept in farming and gardening that I have always struggled to apply. It is the concept of letting the earth lay fallow for a while. I am always filling up my empty garden beds. I find a garden bed empty of productive plants to be a bit offensive and yet the earth needs rest. This is also the way God made us. This concept of letting the earth lie fallow is even in the Hebrew Scriptures where God tells the Jewish people that every seven years there will be a year of Jubilee in which (amongst other things) the earth must be rested. In some ways the church garden has been going through just such a time.

In a time when we may feel as a church community that we are struggling, the impulse is to feel guilty; that we should be doing more and working harder. But perhaps the real challenge is to rest in the Grace of the Eternal.

Contd. P 2

I find myself constantly challenged to take seriously the importance of stillness and rest for my spirituality and to know that, when I am laying fallow, I am still valuable.

Many of us face the challenge of finding our value when we can no longer do the things that we have been used to being able to do. For some of us it can be a Divine challenge to find our worth in a place where we are forced to slow down. In a world where people are sometimes only valued for what they can produce, our faith challenges us to see a deeper and divine worth in ourselves and in others and so to live differently and more fully.

I will leave you with one of my favourite Leung prayers.

“Dear God,

*We pray for another way of being:
another way of knowing.*

*Across the difficult terrain of our existence
we have attempted to build a highway
and in so doing have lost our footpath.*

God lead us to our footpath:

*Lead us there where in simplicity
we may move at the speed of natural creatures
and feel the earth's love beneath our feet.*

*Lead us there where step-by-step we may feel
the movement of creation in our hearts.*

*And lead us there where side-by-side
we may feel the embrace of the common soul.*

Nothing can be loved at speed.

*God lead us to the slow path; to the joyous insights
of the pilgrim; another way of knowing:
another way of being.*

Amen.”

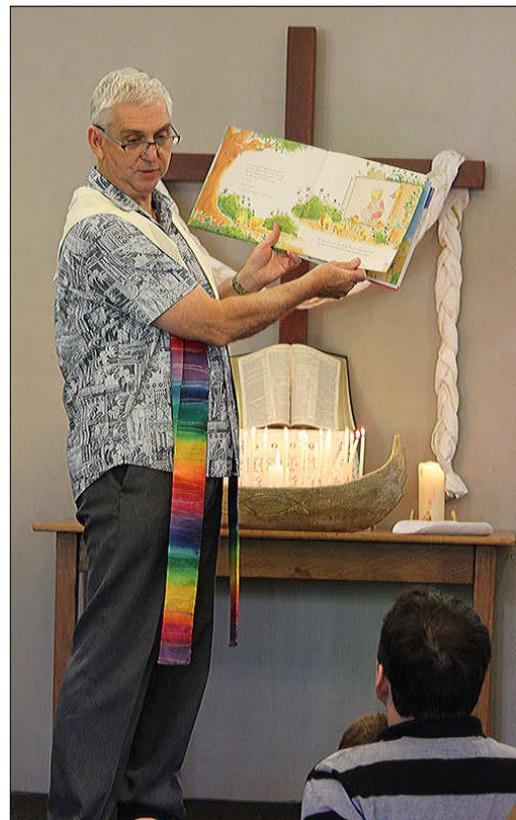
Blessings

Rev Gordon Bannon



Wild Geese – Mary Oliver

You do not have to be good.
You do not have to walk on your knees
for a hundred miles through the desert repenting.
You only have to let the soft animal of your body
love what it loves.
Tell me about despair, yours, and I will tell you
mine.
Meanwhile the world goes on.
Meanwhile the sun and the clear pebbles of the
rain
are moving across the landscapes,
over the prairies and the deep trees,
the mountains and the rivers.
Meanwhile the wild geese, high in the clean blue
air,
are heading home again.
Whoever you are, no matter how lonely,
the world offers itself to your imagination,
calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting
over and over announcing your place
in the family of things.



On Sunday January 13th 2019 Gordon conducted his first service at Ascot Vale Uniting. It was lovely to meet Gordon's wife, three daughters and sister-in-law who came to the service.

Gordon's Induction Service will be at Ascot Vale Uniting Church on Sunday February 3rd at 2pm.

INDUCTION OF OUR NEW MINISTER

*Rev. Gordon Bannon
This special service will be on
Sunday February 3rd
at 2pm
It will be followed by afternoon tea.*

There will be no 10am service on that day

Garden Swap

The next Moonee Valley Garden Group Garden Swap will be on Sunday March 31st. following the service at 11.30am.

Bring anything garden or food related to swap with others! Seeds, seedlings, fruit, veggies, cuttings, succulents, worm juice, fertilizer, gardening magazines and books, jam, chutney, favourite recipe, eggs, pots, tools etc.

Come along and share your knowledge and learn from others.

For further information speak to Eileen Ray.



A truck load of tree mulch has been delivered. When we have some cooler days, volunteers will be sought to spread it in the garden.

To control weeds we will be putting a layer of newspapers/cardboard under the mulch.

COULD YOU PLEASE SAVE NEWSPAPERS AND CARDBOARD FOR THE GARDEN

Birthdays of the Month



Happy January Birthdays Hurriyet, Joyce and Robbie



Kid's Uniting

We have a modern Sunday school program held during the service. Our teachers provide a program featuring yoga and guided meditation, and learning about key Biblical stories in a supportive and creative environment.

This term's program commences on February 10th.

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

NOTES FROM CHURCH COUNCIL

On 23 January we welcomed our new minister, Rev Gordon Bannon, to his first meeting of AVUC Church Council. Much of the meeting was spent planning for Gordon's Induction on Sunday 3 February, and discussing the renovations needed to the Manse. These include re-surfacing the cork tiles in kitchen and dining room, replacing carpets in all four bedrooms, some repairs to the laundry, and some interior and exterior painting. We plan to employ Hamid to do the painting, and thank him for his willingness to undertake this work.

Other news: extra solar panels are to be installed on the church roof by a firm recommended by Judy. Thanks to Candace for this initiative, which should reduce our electricity bills significantly.

Council approved Gordon's request for \$500 for a drip watering system which he will organise for the garden. He has already arranged delivery of about \$300 worth of free mulch. When in place, these should relieve much of the burden of watering, and enable us to concentrate on developing the garden to its full potential. Thank you Gordon!

Our generous benefactor Dr Kean Soon, of the Melbourne Heart Foundation, has a new son. We have sent a congratulatory letter to Dr Kean Soon and his wife and a small gift for baby James.

Our next Social Event will be a shared BBQ lunch after the normal service on Sunday 10 February. Lunch will be followed by a concert featuring our musicians Timothy, Michael, Julian, Candace, and Matt Julius, who led services for us last year. We are envisaging this occasion as our church's welcome to Gordon, so we hope as many people as possible will come. Thank you Michael for organising this event.

With best wishes to all, and God bless,

Dorothy (Church Council Secretary)

*Thank
you*

Sincere thanks to Rev. Ian Pearse who provided outstanding pastoral care while we waited for Gordon to commence at A.V.U.C.



Additional solar panels will be installed at the church starting February 26th

12 fresh tips for an energy-efficient summer party (or church function)

With the long days, sunny skies and several public holidays – summer is the perfect time to host a party. Don't worry – all that socialising doesn't have to come with higher energy costs.

Here are 12 fresh tips to help you throw that perfect energy-efficient summer party.

1. Thinking about the menu? **Go meat free.** Meat, cheese and eggs have the highest carbon footprint while fruit, vegetables, beans and nuts have much lower carbon footprints. There are lots of yummy veggie recipes you can use instead!
2. **Skip disposables:** Instead of using single items why not bring out the fine china and cloth napkins?
3. Cooking for your guests? **Go al fresco!** – Cooking outside will avoid trapping extra heat inside your home and sending your air con into overdrive!
4. Need to use an oven? **Cook when the temperature drops** –in the evening or at night when the southerly breeze hits.
5. Stocking up on food and drinks? Reduce your carbon footprint by **shopping locally.**
6. **Avoid overloading your fridge and freezer** – leave about 20% free space around your food for air circulation. If you need extra space, use an esky and then use the melted ice on the garden!
7. Got lots of leftovers? **Re-heat them using your microwave** instead of your stove or oven. This will save energy and time!
8. Running a pool pump? **Reduce your pool filter running time** to the safe minimum set out in the manual. If you have solar power then set your pool filter to run during daylight hours, so that you can use the free power your system generates from the sun.
9. Preparing tea or coffee for your guests? **Only fill your kettle with cold water** and the amount you need. Use your kettle instead of the stove to boil.
10. Feeling the heat? **Use your aircon and fan at the SAME time.** It'll help your aircon run more efficiently and will allow you to set the thermostat to the most efficient temperature 24-27 degrees. Every degree lower increases the cost by 10%!
11. Cleaning up? **Wash your dishes using the dishwasher.** You'll use less hot water than washing them by hand and you'll save time, which means more time for socialising! Make sure you scrape debris off your dishes and load the dishwasher so that it is full, without spoons or bowls leaning in to each other, which can prevent the water from getting through and washing them adequately
12. Has the conversation switched to why the weather is so much hotter than it used to be? Be informed about Climate Change.

Need more tips? Our energy experts are here to help!

Give us a call on 1300 23 68 55

Visit our website mefl.com.au

or email us. info@mefl.com.au

Moreland Energy Foundation (contributed by Bob Muntz)



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.

Elliott Nutt family trip to Cambodia



We were fortunate to explore Cambodia this January to experience what it is like in Cambodia. We did so much more than just visit temples! We spent 5 days in Siem Reap area. Here's the photogenic Banteay Kdei temple built in the 12th Century with long corridors of arches. It was very peaceful in comparison with the nearby Ta Prohm temple made famous in popular culture after the filming in 2001 of the movie Tomb Raider



We spent 10 days on an Eco-tour run by the Sam Veasna Center and travelled to remote national park areas to see endangered birds. Here we stayed in accommodation organised by the local communities. Sometimes it was simple huts, sometimes tents with cots and all the food was made by local people. Here the girls are enjoying their birthday dinner at Tmatboey. We brought a birthday cake from Siem Reap in an esky and had to keep it cool for a few days as there were no refrigerators where we were staying.



We spent a lot of time in lovely forests and were disappointed to hear the song of chainsaws at times as illegal logging in the national parks is a big problem.

I hope I can put together lots of photos to show at a social night this year. There's so many interesting stories to tell about all we learned!

Candace



A New Year! Sometimes as individual friends of Jesus, and as churches, we feel a bit small. So many congregations struggling, not enough Ministers of the Word to go round.

A visit to the country changes that impression. Congregations are joining and sharing resources. Wonderful and inspiring worship leaders and lay preachers, a lectionary and biblical resources at hand. Caring, visiting and sharing the ministry of God's people.

As the People of God, together, in fellowship, the churches mission and outreach spreads, widens and grows. "Like a mighty army moves the Church of God!" We are spirit filled people. We are called to be a witnessing and sharing fellowship. TOGETHER, we are strong.

In 2019 let us celebrate our togetherness, praying, caring and worshipping. And keeping the doors of our churches wide open, welcoming and receiving. And moving out daily, witnessing, resourcing and building up His Kingdom. Realising our TOGETHERNESS.

With many songs of raise and grateful hearts, in faith we accept the challenges of 2019!

A Happy New Year. A Blessed New Life!

Reflection: New Year's resolutions are made and broken. Saint Paul, in his Letter to the Philippians made the best New Year's resolution of all: "but this one thing I do, forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus. Let those of us then who are mature be of the same mind". (Philippians 3: 13–15) *ucav pew notes*

A judge was interviewing a woman regarding her pending divorce, and asked, "What are the grounds for your divorce?" She replied, "About four acres and a nice little home in the middle of the property with a stream running by." "No," he said, "I mean what is the foundation of this case?" "It is made of concrete, brick and mortar," she responded. "I mean," he continued, "What are your relations like?" "I have an aunt and uncle living here in town, and so do my husband's parents." He said, "Do you have a real grudge?" "No," she replied, "We have a two-car carport and have never really needed one." "Please," he tried again, "is there any infidelity in your marriage?" "Yes, both my son and daughter have stereo sets. We don't necessarily like the music, but the answer to your questions is yes." "Ma'am, does your husband ever beat you up?" "Yes," she responded, "about twice a week he gets up earlier than I do." Finally, in frustration, the judge asked, "Lady, why do you want a divorce?" "Oh, I don't want a divorce," she replied. "I've never wanted a divorce. My husband does. He said he can't communicate with me!"

'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 at : avuniting@hotmail.com

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AVUC ROSTER Feb -March 2019.

DATE	LEADER/ Communion	DOORS	MUSIC	COUNTING	READER	WELCOMING	MORNING TEA
Feb 10	Gordon Michael	Fiona Chris	Julian	Robin	Chris	Robin	Chris Tupu
Feb 17	Eileen	Dorothy	Dorothy	Jean	MaryCon	Michael	Judy Tupu
Feb 24	Gordon	Candace	Candace	Michael	Clara Rachel	Ken	Ken Jenny
March 3 March 6 Ash Wed.	Gordon Angelika	Fiona Angelika	Rob	Benson	Kate	Judy	Chris Kate
March 10 Lent	Gordon	Candace	Julian	Judy	Angelika	Peter	Judy MaryCon
March 17 Lent 2		Dorothy Chris	Dorothy	Robin	Chris	Robin	Chris Tupu
March 23 Lent 3	Gordon	Candace Michael	Candace	Michael	Melita	Michael	Chris Ruth
March 31 Lent 4 Plant Swap	Gordon	Fiona Angelika	Rob	Jean	Benson	Ken	Ken Jenny

Roster for February March.

Thank you to all the people who let me know they were unavailable for various dates.

Please talk to Dorothy if you feel you could open the church or lock it up sometimes on Sundays.

Rob always appreciates help with the plant swap tables

Chris: waltrowicz@gmail.com

Thank you for stepping in when people are unavoidably absent.