

TRANSCEND: JULY

Ascot Vale Uniting Church Newsletter 2015

60 Maribyrnong Road, Moonee Ponds

Services: Sundays 10 am

Devotional Reading for July

"I don't need to pretend to be someone else now that I am becoming content with myself."

Anonymous

If we believe deep down that we are worthless we may feel we have to cover up our failures. Sometimes we do this by becoming boastful and grandiose in our attitudes toward ourselves and others. Religiously minded people do this by becoming self-righteous. We protect ourselves by putting on airs. What a waste of mental energy! So much for Jesus' statement:

*"Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me; for I am gentle **and humble in heart**, and you will find rest for your souls..."* (Matt. 11: 28-30)

That's a statement about humility. Humility (humus) means earthiness, *not feeling less than others*. Humility is about living simply and honestly, without pretentiousness. Humility also removes a primary obstacle to our growth, *lack of self knowledge*. A healthy humility helps us grow in self understanding by seeing ourselves as we really are; we develop a more accurate and balanced knowledge of our strengths as well as our weaknesses. And we are safe in the fact that we are accepted unconditionally by our God despite our lack of self love. This is the meaning of the Christian concept of God's grace: this is what Paul meant when he sang out, *"since we are justified [by grace] through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."* (Rom. 5.1)

Author Karen Armstrong in her fine book, **'Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life'** points out that to grow in compassion requires accurate self knowledge; to be big- hearted requires that we know our weaknesses and shortcomings without castigating ourselves. It's then that we can relate to the weaknesses and shortcomings of others without being self righteous and insufferable.

Our emotional growth comes therefore from our points of weakness, honestly seen. This is why all 12 step programs highlight awareness of when we are powerless over certain situations or when our lives have become out of control. But eventually we come to believe that there is a greater creative power, God's presence and unconditional love (grace) that can restore us to sanity and bring our minds and bodies to peace and health. So growth comes from the point of weakness, and from our honesty, humility and faith. How refreshing is someone who is honest about their shortcomings yet self confident!

Other people may be taken in for a while by our pretensions and delusions. But sooner or later, our real feelings about ourselves will begin to show through, like an old painting that has been imperfectly covered over. Eventually we may begin to refuse positions of responsibility or 'sabotage' our relationships. We can get to the point where we dare not take risks, for we know we will fail. Our pretending and covering over our feelings of inferiority makes us lose touch with our real selves.

With God's help we begin to find and create ourselves anew, and we become humble in heart and deed, more modest in our dealings with others. We will feel a lightness to our being and will be more attractive because we are more real, more our true selves. And we will have something civilization sorely needs: humility and compassion to share. As we get well through our spiritual program we don't need to keep others at a distance through conceited behaviour. *Nor do we need to spend more energy enthroning our false frightened self. That energy can be better spent dethroning it. You have to lose your life to find it.*

"Failures are usually the most conceited of men [women]."

D.H. Lawrence

All the best as you grow in awareness and into your full stature, Rev. Ron

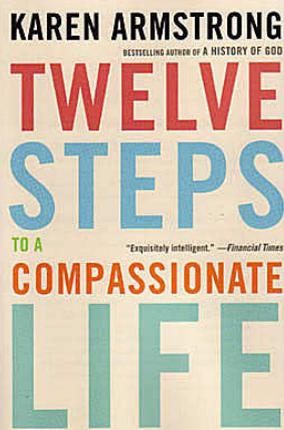
Dates for Your Diary

Sunday July 19th.	Kids Uniting Resumes
Saturday July 25th.	Fish and Chip and Fun Night
Sunday July 26th.	Working Bee at Church after Service
Sunday August 23rd.	A.V.U.C. Anniversary

Worship Themes and Readings

- 12 July: **Family Service- 'A threat to civilization: our habitual preoccupation with self'**
Ephesians 1: 3-14; Mark 6: 14-29- The death of John the Baptist
- 19 July: **'Compassion: the most reliable way of dethroning ourselves from the centre of the universe'**
2 Samuel 11: 1-15 David, Bathsheba and Uriah; Mark 6: 30-34; 53-56- Jesus feeds the five thousand and heals the sick.
- 26 July: **'Empathy and Compassion: reliable ways of escaping the chains of delusion'**
2 Samuel 11: 26- 12: 7a- "You are the man!"; John 6: 16-21
- 2 August: **Celebration of Communion 'Compassion and Mindfulness: reliable ways of escaping our mental prisons'**
Exodus 16: 2-4; 9-18- Our immeasurable ability to bear another's need and sorrow;
John 6: 24-35

Soul Groups



Study Topics- Steps Three and Four: 'Compassion for Yourself and Empathy'

Time and meetings: From 11:30 am to 12:30; on the first and third Sundays monthly in the multi-purpose room

Everybody is welcome to come and have a look.



Kid's Uniting

Parents and children, join your teacher, Caterina, each Sunday in term for this unique program. This term: living and learning our Judeo-Christian values through the stories of Ruth and Naomi, and the radical equality of early Christian Churches

CAKE STALL & SAUSAGE SIZZLE Saturday June 13th.



Union Road Cake Stall and Sausage Sizzle a raging success!

On June 13, 2015 we held our semi-annual fundraising cake stall on Union Road with a new twist—a sausage sizzle! Fortunately we had a mild, sunny windless day so it was no chore to stand out on the street with a smile. Our tried and true team of bakers and jam makers included Judith, Dianne, Heather, Michael, Chris, Joyce, Bente, MaryCon, Angellika and myself. This time we were also joined by a dedicated team of sausage sizzlers Michael, Dina and Noel. We sold 14 big cakes/pies, 66 plates of cakes/muffins/slices, 77 bags of cookies, 74 jams and chutneys and 200 sausages to raise \$1343! Many thanks to the smiling faces who stood out on the street including Chloe, Donna, Rachel, Clara, Chris, Fiona and Angellika. Apologies if I have forgotten anyone. That fact that such a small group of people can all pull together to raise such a large sum always brings a warm feeling to my heart. Thank you to everyone.

Candace



KAREN ARMSTRONG CHARTER FOR COMPASSION

Karen Armstrong the author of Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life has given a number of performances on 'Ted Talks' on the internet. To see and hear her explain her ideas -

Google : Ted Talks Karen Armstrong

FISH AND CHIPS & FUN NIGHT Saturday July 25th

Bring some food and join us for a relaxing evening of fun for all the family.

COME, STAY AND HELP

A Working Bee will be held on: Sunday July 26th from 11.30 TO 1.00.



We will clear out and tidy the storage cupboard in the Worship Space and the small vestry room.

Everyone is invited to help. There will be tasks for both big and small. We will work for a while then have lunch together.

PLEASE BRING SOME LUNCH TO SHARE.

'From the Treasurer'

Offering envelopes

Offering envelopes for the period June 2015 through May 2016 are still available on the front table at the entrance of the church.

Please take a set, alternatively see Peter Macdonald or Ted Jennings.

Donations

We have forwarded \$220 to The Share Winter Appeal including a donation of \$150 from Church Council

Direct Credit

Details of church account have been provided to those people have expressed interest in direct credit, using electronic funds for offerings. If you are interested please see Peter Macdonald.

Business Activity Statement

The quarterly business activity statement (BAS) is due to the tax office by the end July.

Synod Survey

The annual Synod Survey re our churches financial status is underway and will be completed by the end of July. I have 65 questions to respond to.

Reviews with UCA Funds Management

Church council has approved revision to authorised signatories for our funds held with UCA Funds Management. Appropriate paperwork is now being compiled for the changes. The finance committee is now reviewing our holdings split between cash holdings (one year requirements) and the balance in growth units (equity) considering risk and returns, with a view to increasing our cash holdings to cover our projected deficit for the next five years.

Finance Committee

The next finance committee meeting is Thursday July 23rd 7.30pm at the church,

Kind Regards, Peter Macdonald, Treasurer

PERFORMANCE AREA AT THE BASE OF THE TOWERS

Fiona is continuing to explore the possible development of the space at the base of the towers for artistic performances. She has received lots of suggestions. Please support her as she continues to research this interesting idea.

PRO SAME SEX MARRIAGE ARTICLE IN 'THE LEADER' NEWSPAPER



Photo by David Smith

Ron's article in the June Transcend has been taken up in the Leader Newspaper June 29th.

Our church Facebook page has further comments and a link to the full Leader article.

A CHURCH minister has declared his support for same-sex marriage and criticised those who've used the bible to attack gay and lesbian people.

Ascot Vale Uniting Church reverend Ron Rosinsky said it was discriminatory to not allow same-sex marriage, a concept designed for people who were committed to each other in a relationship as equals.

"It's discriminatory because it is barring the institution of marriage from gay people based on their orientation, not based on the quality of their character and not based on their commitment to each other," Mr Rosinsky said.

He said he believed selective bible passages had been used incorrectly to cast homosexuality as immoral when those passages were more likely chastising sexual exploitation.

"It's discriminatory because it is barring the institution of marriage from gay people based on their orientation, not based on the quality of their character and not based on their commitment to each other." — Reverend Ron Rosinsky



Visit our Facebook site [Uniting Church Ascot Vale](#) and follow the discussion on marriage equality or post some other comments .

UNITING CHURCH WITHDRAWS FROM 'ACCESS MINISTRIES'

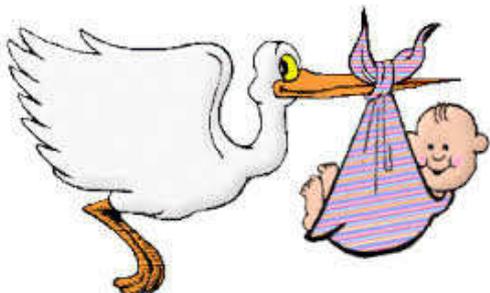
ACCESS Ministries provides Religious Instruction in State Schools. It has been supported by 12 Christian denominations: the Anglican Church of Australia; Australian Christian Churches (Assemblies of God in Australia); the Baptist Union of Victoria; Christian Brethren Fellowships in Victoria; Christian Reformed Churches of Australia; CRC Churches International; Churches of Christ in Australia; the Lutheran Church of Australia; the Presbyterian Church of Australia; the Salvation Army; the Uniting Church in Australia; and the Wesleyan Methodist Church of Australia.

Recently there has been controversy about the content of the program and how it is taught. Parents are now required to opt in for their children to participate in R.E. As a result there has been a large decrease in participation.

The Program is presently being rewritten, however the Uniting Church has not been invited to be part of the process. Further details on the reasons for the withdrawal can be read on the UCAV website.

Congratulations

To Dorothy and Michael on the birth of their first grandchild Thomas Michael. Thomas weighed 8 lbs 2 oz and all are doing well.



News from the Social and Environmental Justice Group

Is Offshore Processing the Only Alternative?

Some weeks ago many of you signed a letter opposing Australia's current asylum seeker policy of Offshore Detention and Detention of Children. (In total 100 signatures were collected from AVUC members and friends).

We have received a most unsatisfactory reply to this letter from the Federal Opposition Leader, Bill Shorten. While giving vague assurances that Labour would seek to improve conditions for asylum seekers, Mr Shorten suggests that offshore detention is essential to prevent asylum seekers drowning while trying to cross the sea to seek safety in Australia. This is simply not the case.

There are better alternatives – some of which are listed in a booklet produced by a group within the Labour party itself, Labour for Refugees. They suggest, among other things, that the Australian Government should:

1. Use the money currently spent on offshore detention to help the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees process asylum claims faster;
2. Work with Indonesia to set up a processing system where Australia would assess claims in Indonesia before people get on boats;
3. Set a definite and reasonable time limit on the waiting period for resettlement, so asylum seekers have some certainty and hope for the future, and are willing to wait;
4. Only detain unauthorised arrivals in Australia for a maximum of one month (ample time for initial assessment), then find them accommodation in regional towns until their refugee status is determined;
5. Restore our humanitarian intake (which was reduced by the present government to 13,000 places) to Labor's target of 20,000 places.

We at AVUC are privileged – five recently arrived Iranian asylum seekers have joined our church. We have learned they are courteous, courageous, warm-hearted, intelligent people, our equals in every way. It is unthinkable that they might have had to bring up baby Nika on Nauru or Manus Island, in a mouldy tent, without access to working toilets, in constant fear of physical or sexual abuse. Yet exactly that is happening right now, in Australian-run detention centres, to people just like them.

Offshore Detention is cruel and wrong. You will shortly be invited to sign a letter urging Mr Shorten to develop an alternative, humane policy on refugees, so Australian voters have a real choice on this issue at the next Federal elections.

A **‘Rally to Change Labor's Cruel Refugee Policy’** will also be held at the ALP National Conference, Melbourne Convention Centre, at 12 noon, Saturday 25 July.

Your friend, Dorothy Howes

AVUC SERVICE ROSTER: JULY - SEPTEMBER 2015

12 July	Rev Ron		Peter	Maria	Cally	Cally	Ken Jenny
19 July	Rev Ron KU resume		Dorothy	Dorothy	Michael	Marycon/ Barbara	Marycon Barbara
26 July	TBA		Melita	Candace	Dina	Melita	Dina Fiona
2 Aug	Rev Ron Communion	Peter	Dina	Maria	Angelika	Barbara	Bente Marycon
9 Aug	Rev Ron		Michael	Maria	Melita	Michael	Angelika Barbara
16 Aug	Rev Ron		Angelika	Dorothy	Ken	Angelika	Ken Jenny
23 Aug	Rev Ron: AVUC Anniversary		Noel	Candace	Andrea	Dina	Dina Fiona
30 Aug	TBA		Dorothy	Maria	Robin	Chris	Chris Marycon
6 Sep	Rev Ron Communion	Melita	Dina	Candace	Cally	Cally	Ken Jenny
13 Sep	Rev Ron KU end Spring Festival		Michael	Maria	Dina	Candace	Bente Dina
20 Sep	Rev Ron		Peter	Dorothy	Robin	Angelika	Chris Angelika
27 Sep	TBA		Angelika	Candace	Peter	Bente	Barbara Dina

PHOTOS & ARTICLES FOR TRANSCEND PLEASE?

Robin would love to have more photos and articles to put in Transcend. Lots of people now have a camera in their phone. Photos of church activities, church people doing interesting, clever or amusing things etc would be suitable.

Just email them to me with some basic information or a caption.

rwaltrowicz@gmail.com

Ascot Vale Uniting Church

Rev. Ron Rosinsky

avuniting@hotmail.com

www.ascotvaleuniting.org.au

ELDERS

Peter Macdonald	Dorothy Howes
Angelika Ranellone	Noel Lloyd
Melita Long	Dina Monaghan
Michael Long	

*'Transcend' is published monthly
Articles and photos are welcome.*

*Email to the Editor
Robin Waltrowicz
avuniting@hotmail.com*