



TRANSCEND

Ascot Vale Uniting Church Newsletter

JULY - 2017

A New Reformation?

“Whatever your views happen to be about practical theology, don’t think a nation can live without religion...

When you give up religion you give up any kind of idealism.”

- Harold Macmillan, one time prime minister of Britain; a man who saw a lot of wartime killing and suffering.

Macmillan saw religion as having practical value, as a saving power and activity for humankind: it kept idealism alive. It still does, and we need it.

Human relations have become decidedly inhuman. Take the daily litany of human aggression, destructiveness and drug fuelled violence, immature and irrational behaviour in marriages and families; and selfishness- accompanied by near complete abandonment of those ‘old fashioned’ items- ethical integrity and a moral compass. This shows that the ideal of what we should be is a bit like the Western Bulldogs hopes for another premiership- a forgotten or lost dream. We need the ideal, and a strong and active faith to live it.

The numbers are in from the recent Australian census. No surprise: about a third of Australians when answering the religion question ticked the box, “no religion”. For decades individual Australians and successive generations within Australian families have been losing their commitment to formal religion. In fact many had nothing to lose; they never had it to begin with. And I have noticed within the Australian population a deeply anti-religious attitude, and an understandable skepticism toward institutions. But ask your typical Australian if they are “spiritual” and invariably they will answer yes. There’s a disconnect here.

Rabbi Michael Lerner (2000) wrote,:

‘Tens of millions of people are already involved in some form of spiritual practice. Many people have turned to the realm of Spirit to try to make sense of the pain and suffering they’ve experienced. Others have sensed there is something deeply missing in their lives... Still others turn to Spirit because they are overwhelmed by a sense of awe and wonder at the glory of the universe.’

We the Church should be one of those institutions at the creative centre of this spiritual awakening. We can be listening, learning and respectfully sharing our unique Judeo-Christian insights and stories. We already see the danger of not doing so: a church can become a kind of cultural ghetto firmly beached in ‘Sleepy Hollow’.

pto.

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



Rev. Ron Rosinsky

Coming Events

Sunday July 9
Soul Group 11.45-1pm

Thursday July 20
Finance Meeting 7.30pm

Saturday July 22
Men’s Group

Sunday July 23
Kid’s Uniting continues

Sunday July 23
Church Councillors & Elders 11.45 –1pm

Saturday July 29
Family Fish and Chips
Movie Night

Sunday July 30
Garden Swap
after service

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

D. H. Lawrence described that spiritual process:

'As we live, we are transmitters of life, and when we fail to transmit life, life fails to flow through us.'

So we desperately need a second Christian reformation. The last one was five hundred years ago. Modern Christian reformers and those who desire a more civil society would do well to ask Karen Armstrong's question: ***'Does your religion work?'*** Those who regard themselves as spiritual could ask themselves a similar question: ***Does your form of spirituality, yoga, mindfulness or religious practice work?*** How do you measure that?

Religious institutions do not work for the greater good or I daresay even help the individual deep down if they have these characteristics:

- Do its teachings support one's ego-centricity and exclusivism, while fuelling discrimination against others? The 'other' being people of difference, often in terms of religion or class, gender or orientation, race or political party. Ours is supposed to be a ministry of reconciliation between different groups and people, finding common ground, building good will.
- Do its adherents, like a dysfunctional parent, impose scriptural teachings and interpretations that reasonable minded people have outgrown and rejected?
- Does it repress intelligent debate, thoughtful discussion and inclusive leadership?
- Are its adherents continually supporting a patriarchal, homophobic, authoritarian, male dominated institution? Are its practices incompatible with fairness and an inclusive generosity?
- Does it declare support for *'eternal truths'* while suppressing scientific discovery, and scholarship about who the historical Jesus really was?

There's more than one kind of Christianity. I suggest that your religion or spirituality works well if it:

- Makes you a more compassionate person. It puts you in touch with your best self; it brings forth your essential spiritual self;
- Helps you become an authority for your own life by becoming honest with yourself, taking responsibility for your actions and thoughts and their effect on others; in control of your own emotions;
- Helps you to cope courageously and creatively with your constant companions- anxiety and worry within, difficulty and uncertainty from without;
- Brings an inner calm to your mind, and a strengthening, healing peace to your body; renews your sense of a good meaning and hope for your life;
- Lifts you to an awareness of a deeper spiritual presence and calls you to be in harmony with it; reconnects you in deeper ways to others and to creation;
- Helps you learn from the great spiritual teachers. Naturally for Christians the Jesus of history shows us the path through life's uncertainties and tragedies to a God of love who is our Source.
- Gives you insights and inspiration to build a good society and a better humanity.

Our Church, AVUC, would support people within the energy of those ideals. We study, embody and put them into action. We do so through covenant relationships where we care for the soul of another, for their inner well-being, and through advocacy we care for the soul of the world.

In a time of persecution Christians heard God saying to them, *'Behold, I have set before you an open door that no-one can shut.'* (Rev. 3:8)

It echoed what Jesus said: *'I am leaving you with a gift- peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don't be troubled or afraid.'* (John 14:27)

Now there's idealism that saves!

All the best, Rev. Ron Rosinsky

CHURCH COUNCIL REPORT

Keeping Children Safe: The Uniting Church has responded to the issue of child abuse by producing an extensive Keeping Children Safe Policy. At our meeting last Wednesday your **Council adopted the Keeping Children Safe Policy, and the associated Code of Conduct in principle.**

We now have a number of other tasks to do, to satisfy all our legal and Synod requirements - and we are going to need help!

In the next few weeks, YOU may be asked, as an individual, if you can take on some small role in fulfilling our obligations as a church. Please consider these requests sympathetically! The process will be manageable if broken down into small parts which are shared around, but almost impossible otherwise.

Ron Away: Ron will be at an Airforce Training Camp for 6 weeks from 30th July to 8th September. He will be missed, but we are very fortunate to have Rev Mark Dunn and Rev Eileen Ray not only as friends and members of our congregation, but as relieving ministers during Ron's absence. Many thanks to them, and good luck, Ron!

Parents, we need your help! We ask all parents of young children to **put away any toys your child has been using** before you go home. This is a big help to the Minister and Elder on duty, who have many other things to do before leaving.

Secondly, we remind you that it is essential that parents **supervise their young children at all times** during, before and after the service. In particular, **make sure they do not leave the building**, as the car park can be a very dangerous place!

Cards for Direct Debit Givers: For those who have chosen to make their weekly offering by Direct Debit, it can be an embarrassing moment when Judith or her assistant waves the offertory bag in front of them. We don't like to look as if we are too mean to give! So Mark has kindly produced these cards, which can be placed in the offertory bag to indicate that we **are** donating to the church, though not in cash. Please take a card from the table at the door into the Worship Space as you enter.

Please consider using Direct Debit - a wonderful way of ensuring we support our church **every week**, even when we can't always be present. It is a big help to our Finance Committee who draw up the annual budget to know we have a consistent and dependable income. Peter will be glad to give you all the necessary details!

Support for Friends in Need: As you know, our fellow church member James Deng has been worried for his family in famine-stricken South Sudan. **Church Council voted to donate \$500** to help James answer their need. This is in addition to the extremely generous **\$950 donated by the people of our church.** As the drought in South Sudan is not yet over, we are looking at other ways of raising money. Any extra gifts will also be very gratefully received.

Musical Offerings: Councillors expressed their delight at the **recent additions to our music team.** Julian's sensitive playing has become an essential part of our monthly piano roster, and Timothy's original songs, and guitar accompaniment, supported by Lucas, are inspiring. We thank them very much for their dedication.

Letterbox Access: Only two keys can be supplied with each traditional padlock. But because many of us have to be absent from time to time, we need more than two people able to open the letterbox. Council has therefore voted to obtain a **combination lock.** This will mean we can choose, say, four responsible people who can get mail out of the box without the nuisance and potential loss of keys associated with passing them from one person to another.

Best wishes to all, Dorothy Howes, Secretary to Church Council

Church Councillors & Elders Meeting: Sunday 23 July 11:45-1pm-

Forward planning for roles and responsibilities

Church Council Meeting, 7:30, 13 September



Harvest Swap

The next Harvest Swap will be on July 30th 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.



Three of our excellent musicians –Lucas, Tim and Stephen

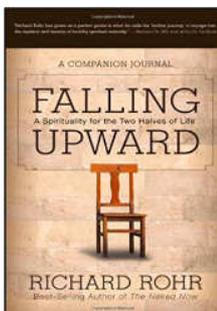
Men's Group



Join us on Saturday 22 July:
Dinner & Discussion

Possible topic of discussion: How have the role models, *John Wayne, Lone Ranger*, for being a 'strong man' changed? Have they changed?

SOUL GROUPS



You are welcome to come along on the second Sunday each month for discussion, spiritual formation & inner well-being.

Next meeting- Sunday 9 July
11:45am

Topics of Current discussion:

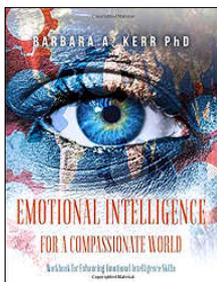
'Falling Upward- A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life',

Richard Rohr

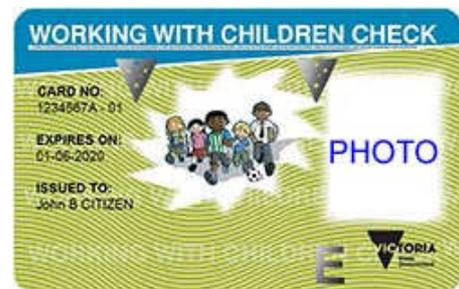
&

'Emotional Intelligence for a Compassionate World',

Barbara A. Kerr



Working With Children Checks



If you are required to have a Working With Children Check, please complete it urgently.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF LAND



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.

NEED A NEW NAMETAG?

Haven't got one yet / lost the old one / changed your name???

Robin Waltrowicz will be happy to make a new one for you.



THE ENVIRONMENTAL LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven ...

You are also at home in the air, soils, forests, deserts and oceans,

Hallowed be your name ...

By the care we take of your creation,

Your kingdom come ...

All that you see is good.

Your will be done on earth as it is heaven

Your will to till and care.

That all may have sufficient to live life in fullness.

Forgive us our trespasses ...

Our greed, our exploitation, our lack of concern for other species and for future generations,

As we forgive those who trespass against us

By reconciliation with justice and peace

the temptation to equate dominion with exploitation,

And deliver us from evil ...

The evil of destroying your gift of creation,

For yours is the Kingdom ...

Yours Lord, not ours,

begun humbly at Bethlehem and climaxed in the cross and the resurrection,

For ever and ever ...

You were the beginning and you are the end

Amen

And so be it.

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT SHINGLES?

Did you know that.....?

97% of adults have the virus that causes shingles within them.

1 in 3 adults may develop shingles in their lifetime.

The risk increases with age, particularly over the age of 70.

Most people with shingles develop a painful rash. The pain can be excruciating.

Up to 20% of adults with shingles develop long term nerve pain.

There may be even more serious complications.

There is a vaccine available for adults aged 50 years or older, that can help prevent shingles and its complications.

While being vaccinated cannot guarantee that you won't get shingles, it does reduce the probability and seriousness.



Shingles vaccination is free to those aged 70.

Free catch-up vaccination is also available to those aged 71 to 79.

ASK YOUR DOCTOR ABOUT IT.

★HAPPY★ BIRTHDAY!



TO PETER ON JUNE 25th.



Rev Mark conducting the service on Reconciliation Sunday



FROM THE TREASURER

Offering envelopes

Envelopes June 2017 through May 2018 are now available on the table in the gathering space.

Please take a set.

Direct Credit

A number of members are now using direct credit, using electronic funds for offerings.

If you are interested please see Peter Macdonald.

Income and Expenses - May 2017

Offerings	\$1,676
Fundraising	0
Appeals	0
Donations	\$1,100
Building Users	\$1,339
<u>Total Income</u>	<u>\$4,115</u>

Ministry	\$3,724
Mission & Service	\$1,375
Property	\$1,154
Other	\$1,105
<u>Expenses</u>	<u>\$7,358</u>

Deficit for April is \$ 3,243

Deficit for year through April is \$ 15,294

2017 Budget

2017 budget is - Income \$66,000
Expenses \$93,000
Deficit \$27,000

The budget was approved at the Church Council meeting on April 26th.

Donations

Melbourne Heart Institute (Prof. Keen Soon) donated a further \$1,000 during May.

Total donations from MHI since 2014 are \$14,700.

Synod Survey

The information for the annual synod financial and property survey is being compiled and will be submitted during July.

Finance Committee

The next finance committee meeting will be Thursday July 20th 7.30pm at the church.

Peter Macdonald– Treasurer

Cards are available for those using Direct Debit to place in the collection bag. They are on the table near the name tags.



The plastic bottles, bags and takeaway containers that we use just for a few minutes use a material that is designed to last forever.

These plastics:

- break up, not break down - becoming permanent pollution
- escape from bins, trucks, events etc. to become 'accidental litter'
- end up in waterways and the ocean - where scientists predict there will be more tonnes of plastic than tonnes of fish by 2050

We can help by:

- Avoiding products in plastic packaging and reducing plastic bags where possible
- Avoiding plastics that can escape as litter (e.g. straws, takeaway cups, utensils, balloons)

Recycling what cannot be avoided!



HELPING HAND COLLECTION BIN

Located behind our church garbage bins we have a collection bin from the Helping Hands organisation.

Please place in it clothing, small electrical appliances, kitchen utensils and other household goods in good condition.

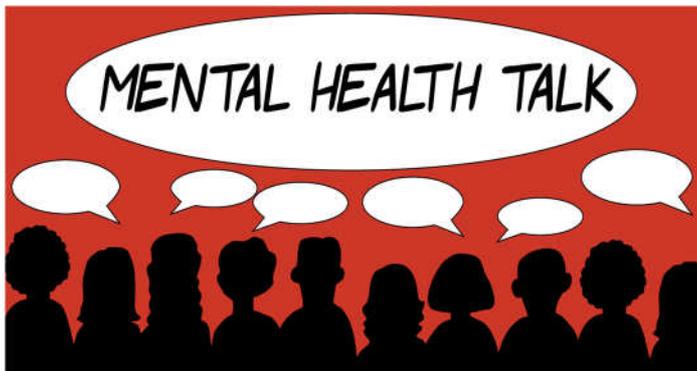
Electrical items can be checked and repaired and other goods are sold cheaply to those in need through their op-shop in East Keilor.

All sale proceeds go to charity.

PROPOSED DATE FOR CAKE STALL



**Saturday
September 16th**



Sharing our burdens

An estimated 45 per cent of Australians will experience a mental health condition in their lifetime. Most of us know someone who is affected by a mental health condition.

This struggle is sometimes a silent one. The person we sit next to on the train might be experiencing anxiety. The stranger we walk pass on the street might be going through depression.

It is easy to become preoccupied with our own suffering and forget that others are hurting too. But if we perform a random act of kindness, it reminds other people that someone out there cares for them.

So take some time this week to ask your friends if they are okay. You may notice that they are not their usual talkative self or that their smile is just a little bit forced.

Check on your colleagues at school. Smile at a stranger. Talk to a homeless person on the street. Give a compliment. Express gratitude when someone helps you.

Most of all, share your time and attention with others. Listen to their stories. Everyone is precious and their voice deserves to be heard.

You may find that by caring for others, some of your own troubles will be soothed too.

ucavictas Pew Sheets

Uniting Church 40th Anniversary June 22nd



"All of this is us"

In 1977, the Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational churches came together to form the Uniting Church in Australia.

The 40th anniversary logo, can be viewed as a starburst, fireworks or a dandelion head whose seeds are spread on the wind. The image brings to mind celebration, diversity and all the varied parts of the Uniting Church. The colours remind us of the First Peoples, the red earth and ochre.

The tagline, "All of this is us", encompasses past, present and future – all that brought us together and formed us as we began, all that has shaped us has involved us over the past 40 years, and all that we hope for as we look to the future.

WE DEDICATE OURSELVES ANEW AS MEMBERS OF CHRIST'S CHURCH

The church is one body, made of many members.

Each of us adds something beautiful and unique to this community.

Though we are frail humans, God dwells on earth and makes God's-self known in sacred spaces and sacred moments.

God is with us, today, here in this place.

We promise to love as God's people, to sing, pray, listen, hear the words of scripture, and to share these things with each other so we may energise and deepen our faith.

We dedicate ourselves this day to serving each other.

We look forward to more years of service and worship together.

We dedicate ourselves anew to being Christ's people in the world.

Where there has been conflict among us, we pray for the softening of hearts and for reconciliation between us.

We pray for healing, peace and co-operation among us.

We covenant anew today, to share the ministry of Jesus with each other, and with the larger community around us, so that all who meet us may know, by our example, of his unconditional love and healing grace.

Filled by the grace and love of Jesus Christ, we dedicate ourselves afresh to God's service.

With God's help, may it be so!

'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

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

Philippians 4:7

Don't fret or worry. Instead of worrying, pray. Let petitions and praises shape your worries into prayers, letting God know your concerns. Before you know it, a sense of God's wholeness, everything coming together for good, will come and settle you down. It's wonderful what happens when Christ displaces worry at the centre of your life.

'The Message'

AVUC ROSTER, July-September 2017.
Please make your own arrangements for any necessary exchange of dates.

	LEADER	COMMUNION	DUTY ELDER	MUSIC	WELCOMER	READER	MORNING TEA
2 July Communion Kids Uniting Holiday	Rev Ron	Angelika	Angelika	Julian	Judy	Barbara	MaryCon /Bente
9 July Family Service	Rev Ron		Noel	Rob	Robin	Chris	Chris/Barbara
16 July Kids Uniting resume	Rev Ron		Dorothy	Dorothy	Jan	Jan	Angelika /Dina
23 July	Rev Ron		Dina	Julian	Cally	Dina	Judy/MaryCon
30 July Garden Swap	Rev Mark Dunn		Michael	Rob	Jan	Jan	Chris/Angelika
6 August Communion	Rev Ron	Dina	Dina	Julian	Dina	Angelika	Bente /Barbara
13 August Family Service	Rev Ron		Noel	Julian	Robin	Cally	Chris / Dina
20 August	Rev Ron		Dorothy	Dorothy	Ken/Jenny	Bente	MaryCon/Angelika
27 August Garden Swap	TBA		Angelika	Rob	Michael	Melita	Dina /Judy
3 September Communion	Rev Ron	Dorothy	Dorothy	Rob	Robin	Chris	Bente/Chris
10 September Family Service	Rev Ron		Michael	Julian	Peter	Melita	MaryCon/Barbara
17 September Kids Uniting on Holiday	Rev Ron		Noel	Dorothy	Judy	Ken	Angelika/Dina
24 September	TBA		Dorothy	Candace	Cally	Barbara	Chris/Judy