

TRANSCEND: MAY

Ascot Vale Uniting Church Newsletter 2015

60 Maribyrnong Road, Moonee Ponds

Services: Sundays 10 am

PENTECOST

“My heart is moved by all I cannot save: so much has been destroyed
I have to cast my lot with those who age after age, perversely,
with no extraordinary power, reconstitute the world.”

- Adrienne Rich

Pentecost: a tale of increased intimacy and connection

Intimacy does not refer to sex alone, but is an all encompassing experience that saves us from a life of isolation and mental disturbance. But it demands self awareness and openness, and an emotional maturity that seems elusive. But with God's help all things are possible.

We all have an innate desire to connect with the other, a desire for deeper union. The ancient Greeks spoke of many kinds of desire and connection, but two in particular were *Eros and Agape*. Eros was the bodily desire to be connected, but it also meant the desire to be connected to the creative energy or word of God active in life. For example it meant to participate in the greater experiences of faith, hope and love which draw us beyond the narrow interests of self pre-occupation. Agape was the desire for God, and it was about enacting that God like love for others which is unconditional, not based on the other's perceived worthiness or outward appearance. The Greeks, and the Bible, called these two kind of connections *ektasis*, or what we would call in English 'ecstasy'. No, not the pill, but an experience of the deepest connection with another.

This is the heart of our upcoming Christian celebration of Pentecost: a breakthrough bond of intimacy and fellowship amongst early Christians, despite the worst circumstances. The birth of the Christian spiritual movement was inaugurated by the Pentecost experience of the power of the Holy Spirit- God's Spirit- to cut through human divisions and rivalries.

People from “every nation under heaven” were gathered in Jerusalem, and after the Holy Spirit came upon all of them, each one was “amazed and astonished” to hear those gathered there speaking in their own native language. (Acts 2: 3-8; 12,13)

This represents the stunning end of the Old Testament Tower of Babel where people could only understand the language of their own tribe. All the divisions that it stood for were overcome. Christians did not lose their diversity, but now they were united as never before into a single purpose: they had one faith, one Lord- Christ- who pronounced an end to all kingdoms based on injustice and domination.

Intimacy and Egoism

One barrier to intimacy is one's own mind. Biblical scholars Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan have pointed out that the word *egoism*, while not a Biblical word, does name a central theme of Christian thought about the human condition. Egoism means being centered entirely in the anxieties and pre-occupations of the shallow self, the fearful self and it's concerns and desires. This can take the form of someone being led by the false God of the accomplished self, the outwardly successful self and all it's achievements.

At what point does the inner self and what it wants shrivel and die?

In marriage counselling for example I tell couples that to have a happy relationship they need to embrace all forms of intimacy- physical and sexual, emotional and verbal, and spiritual. Then we identify any barriers to better and deeper intimacy. These can come in the form of unreasonable expectations that one has for their partner, and experiences that shape these expectations. For example, growing up in an abusive household could cause you to believe that a high degree of conflict is normal. This verbal and emotional conflict could be a frightening relationship deal breaker for your partner.

As we all know developing greater levels of intimacy in long term relationships is hard work. It's been compared to a piece of art. The end result- the relationship- depends on how good your relationship artistry skills are. Skilled relationship artists have relationships that bring life to themselves and everyone around them. Most marriages are beautiful works in progress. *The point is, the relationship depends on how good your relationship skills are.* Those who aren't particularly adept with basic relationship skills are more likely to create a muddled mess. But the overwhelming majority of relationship problems can be worked through if you have the right skills. An example is the ability to communicate over say, money, without becoming hostile. This requires a minimal level of emotional and spiritual maturity from each person.

Some people just carry their immaturities and irrational responses from one relationship to the next. Nothing is learned, no flowers are blooming. *You might say that the Pentecostal moment of awakening to greater levels of intimacy is always postponed.* And in our secular society we often lose our connection to our soul, to the earth, and our bond to other people.

Christianity: breaking down barriers to intimacy

But throughout history people have worked through barriers to intimacy, and overcome the terrible isolation and alienation between classes and groups of people.

Paul called this the ministry of reconciliation. In his second letter to the Corinthians he said it was not only at the heart of Jesus' work, but is our high calling- the ministry of reconciliation. That means bringing people together in a kind of mutual reverence for the personality of each one.

Here is the real joy in life: treating others at a centre within themselves that goes beyond all vice and virtue, beyond all good and evil. That's grace.

Let's undertake that ministry of reconciliation, beginning with transcending our 'small self' and throwing out the heavy burden of egoism and irrational reactions. *Pentecost is our reminder that we can be a centred self without being self centred; that we can be our self and not lose our identity, and we can enter a deeper union with another.* If we have lost our connection to our soul, our ability to listen to our soul and what it wants, it can be regained through our spiritual practices.

Pentecost tells us that we can find a better union, to connect with another in a deeper way, while really listening to our best self, not our small self. The other person can do the same.

It's a choice. In choosing this we are saved from an existence of hollowness and shallowness which characterises so much of modern life. We can explore a fuller intimacy with others by unlearning learned reactions from our family history, and practising new ways of thinking.

It is no small matter that the history of civilization has been changed for the better by ordinary people who acted on God's call to intimacy, and have cleaned out and reset their minds.

They were called to greater levels of intimacy and union with each other, as Paul encouraged, "let your love be genuine... love one another with mutual [family] affection." (Romans 12: 9-10) "And this is my prayer", wrote Paul, "that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight, to help you determine what is best." (Philippians 1: 9-10) Knowledge and full insight into ourselves is just what we need to have the kind of intimacy with others that has eternity in it.

All the best, from Rev. Ron Rosinsky

Ron is away with the Army Reserve from Saturday, 23 May to Sunday 31 May.



Kid's Uniting

Teacher: Caterina Rosinsky

Themes: Women in the early Church;
Non- violence and social change;

Covenant relationships throughout the Bible= radical equality, unconditional love

ALL CHILDREN ARE VERY WELCOME

Soul Groups

Study topic: 'Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life', by Karen Armstrong

Chapters one and two: 'Learn about compassion' (including compassion for yourself); and, 'looking at your own world'

Time and next meetings: From 11:30 am to 12:30; on 3, 17 and 31 May, in the multi-purpose room
Everybody is welcome to come and have a look.

Study topic for 2015:

'Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life', by Karen Armstrong

Worship Themes and Readings

10 May: Mother's Day- Mums and Dads- developing emotionally intelligent parenting'

1 John 5: 1-6; John 15: 9-17

17 May: 'Preparing for Pentecost: having a trustful attitude toward your inner experience'

1 Kings 19: 4-16- the sound of 'sheer silence and hearing the still small voice'.

24 May: Pentecost Sunday- Lay led service

Acts 2: 1-21

31 May: Lay led service, celebrating the 'Share Appeal' and how we are making a difference;

Acts 2: 37- 47

7 June: During the service: 'In conversation with Rosemary Broadstock- 'Regenerating the Church'

After the Service: 'Knowing You, Knowing Me' lunch

Dates for Your Diary

Sunday May 11th.	Mothers Day
Saturday May 30th.	'Fish and Chip Night'
Sunday June 7th.	Special lunch after service
Monday June 9th.	Queens Birthday Holiday
Saturday June 13th.	Cake Stall & Sausage Sizzle—Union Road

Thoughts for the Month

Any religion which professes to be concerned about the souls of men [and women] and is not concerned about the social and economic conditions that can scar the soul, is a spiritually moribund religion only waiting for the day to be buried.” - *Martin Luther King Jr.*

Contrast two ways of living: who's more advanced?

Australia- 2015

“Fifty-five of Australia's highest earners paid no income tax at all during 2012-13, not even the Medicare levy. All earning at least \$1 million, they wrote their taxable incomes down to below the \$18,200 tax-free threshold...”

-Source: *The Australian Taxation Office (ATO), quoted in the Age Newspaper, April 30, 2015*

“Australian companies sent more than \$64 billion to related parties in Singapore and Switzerland, where they pay little or no tax at all.... Companies sent \$55.1 billion to Singapore in 2013. This is up from almost \$40 billion the year before...”

Companies such as Google, Apple, Microsoft, BHP Billiton and Rio Tinto have all admitted in recent hearings before the Senate that they are all under audit by the ATO for their use of Singapore “marketing” and “service hubs”, where they route hundreds of millions of dollars of income.”

- Source: *The Age Newspaper, April 30, 2015*

The Apostolic Church- 30 A.D.

“All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need...”

Day by day as they spent much time together...they broke bread from house to house, and ate their food with glad and generous hearts...and they had the goodwill of all the people”

-Acts 2: 44-47



CAKE STALL & SAUSAGE SIZZLE SATURDAY JUNE 13th.



Early notice!! This is one of our major fund raisers for the year, so it will be great for everyone to help in any way they can. This year we will combine it with a sausage sizzle

Items needed for the cake stall: cakes, jams, preserves, crafts, plants.

People needed for an hour or so to sell, or set up, or take down.

Time: 9am to 12pm (Set up from 8:15am)

Place: 199 Union Road in front of Happy Receptions

Please bring items priced, and packaged ready to sell.

You can drop things to Candace's house during the week, or on the morning of the sale. We will also need people to help Michael with the sausages.

KNOWING ONE ANOTHER – KNOWING YOU/KNOWING ME



THE ELDERS INVITE YOU AND YOUR FAMILY TO A
SPECIAL LUNCH ON SUNDAY JUNE 7TH
AFTER THE SERVICE

AT 10.00AM, REV ROSEMARY BROADBENT WILL PARTICIPATE
IN THE SERVICE "REGENERATING THE CHURCH"

*ELDERS GROUPS TALK WITH YOUR ELDER AND OTHERS . GET TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER
A LITTLE MORE.*

CATERED LUNCH THROUGH TO 12.30PM OR WHENEVER YOU WANT TO LEAVE.

THIS IS A SPECIAL DAY !

IT IS ALSO A CELEBRATION OF THE EXTENSION OF RON'S MINISTRY AT ASCOT VALE
UNTIL MAY 2019.

PLEASE MAKE AN EFFORT TO BE THERE !

ASCOT VALE UNITING PLAYGROUP

The Playgroup is not running at present. None of the mothers involved was able to take over the position of leader.

We sincerely thank Andrea Draper for her work with the Playgroup over the past several years.

ANZAC SERVICE

A special feature of our service on Anzac Day was Ron interviewing Lacey. In her 25 years Lacey has experienced and overcome many challenges. Her story was inspirational and a tribute to her courage and inner strength. There are 12 children in her family and her parents have also fostered many other children. Lacey attributes her strength to the example provided by her father. Lacey is presently working as a Project Manager in Bendigo.



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING



Incoming Chairperson
Maria Dawes

Ken Roberts was
thanked by the
congregation



On behalf of the congregation Maria thanked Ken for his wonderful service to the church. Ken has been on the Council for 8 years during which he served as chairperson for 8 years and property manager for much of that time.

We welcome Maria as our next chairperson. Our church is fortunate to have young people moving into areas of church leadership.

FROM THE TREASURER

Offering envelopes

Offering envelopes for the period June 2015 through May 2016 will be available from Sunday May 3rd on the front table at the entrance of the church.

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

Donations

Church council recently approved donations of \$200 to relief in Vanuatu and \$100 to the Variety Club party for special children.

Correspondence thanking us for these donations has been received.

Meeting with UCA Funds Management

Our finance committee met last Thursday night with Michael Walsh, CEO of UCA Funds Management. Michael made a presentation on the role of UCA Funds Management.

We currently hold \$435,000 with UCA Funds Management split between cash holdings (one year requirements) and the balance in growth units (equity).

The finance committee will now review these holdings considering risk and returns, with a view to increasing our cash holdings to cover our projected deficit for the next five years.

Direct Credit

The finance committee is considering setting up an option for direct credit, using electronic funds for offerings.

This would involve setting up a program to debit your account, amount and frequency at your discretion, and credit funds to an Ascot Vale account at synod.

We need to establish interest for such a program.

If you are interested please see Peter Macdonald or Candace Elliot.

“THANK YOU” FROM KEN!

Thank you Friends at Ascot Vale Uniting Church Congregation for your kind words and signed card, that means so much to me.

The time was right to make way for young and exciting ideas.

I have been privileged to be Chairperson and Property Convenor.

Look forward continuing worship, fellowship and working together.

Kindest Blessings

Ken Roberts

GARDEN NEWS

Wondered about the black hoses snaking around the garden? Dina has been installing some drip irrigation to enable a more efficient application of water.

Dina was also seen concreting in the mail box. Thank you Dina!

ROSTER	SERVICE/ LEADER	COMMUNION ELDER	DUTY ELDER	MUSIC	WELCOMER	READER	MORNING TEA
10 May Family	Rev Ron		Angelika	Maria	Ken/Jenny	Barbara	Jenny/Barbara
17 May Pentecost	Rev Ron			Dorothy	Melita	Melita	Marycon/ Dina
24 May	Rev Ron		Noel	Candace	Robin	Chris	Chris/Angelika
31 May	Rev Ron			Candace	Dina	Bente	Bente/Fiona

NEED A NEW NAMETAG?

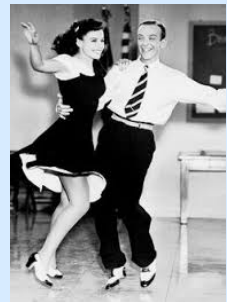
Haven't got one yet / lost the old one / changed your name???
Robin Waltrowicz will be happy to make a new one for you.

KEILOR ROAD UNITING CHURCH UCAF.

INVITE YOU TO A MUSICAL AFTERNOON

The ever popular **ODD BODS** are back.
Enjoy a warm and cheerful afternoon of songs and music.
Don't forget our famous door prizes and afternoon teas as well.

Tuesday JUNE 2nd at 1.30 pm



STRATHMORE UNITING CHURCH OVERSEAS MISSION



You are invited to a Mothers and Babies Fundraiser

Monday May 18th. at 1.00pm at Strathmore U.C,

Come and hear Helen Beeby speaking on a project to help Mothers and Babies in India.

Helen is the Editor of the UC Mission newspaper and the UC is fundraising for 16 mobile Maternal and Child Health Clinics to travel the Punjab in Northern India.

They plan to provide free medical care and health education for families in need

Donation \$6.00

Everyone Welcome

Ascot Vale Uniting Church

Rev. Ron Rosinsky

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ELDERS

Peter Macdonald

Angelika Ranellone

Melita Long

Michael Long

Dorothy Howes

Noel Lloyd

Dina Monaghan

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

Email to the Editor

Robin Waltrowicz

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Bassett Gallery Yarraville

Presents a vibrant solo exhibition
by local artist

Patricia Stewart



Meet the artist
2pm Sat 2 May
closes Sat 16 May

Hours:
Tues - Friday 10 am - 5:00 pm
Saturday 9 am - 4pm
Closed Sunday & Monday
0417016641

An antique dealer is walking through town and sees a cat drinking milk from a saucer in a shop window. He is shocked when he realizes that the saucer is very rare and expensive. He enters the shop and asks the owner "Hey, I really like the cat. Would you be willing to sell it to me?"

The store owner replies "Not for sale."

The antique dealer thinking quickly responds "I'll give you \$100 for it."

The shop owner agrees and the antique dealer grabs the cat. He acts like he is about to leave then adds "Oh, would you mind throwing in the saucer, the cat seems to like it."

The shop owner replies "No, that's my lucky saucer. I've sold hundreds of cats since I got it."

Celebrating Anzac – Another view



Now that the centenary of Anzac is over, it may be a good time to consider again how and why we honour those who served at Gallipoli.

It's great that we are now recognising the sacrifices of women and aborigines, and of our former enemies, the Turks. But there are others who sacrificed their lives in a different way – the thousands who survived, but came back so psychologically wounded that their and their families' lives were shattered; the hundreds who committed suicide because they could no longer bear their memories and nightmares. We should remember and honour them too. And we should ask: Are we offering our Vietnam and Afghanistan veterans the counselling and support they need now? Do we realise what we are asking today's young soldiers to face, when we send them to fight overseas?

It's often said that our nation was born at Gallipoli. But Australia had become a nation 14 years before, at Federation. The typical Anzac qualities of courage and comradeship had evolved before the war, and can be expressed equally well in peacetime. Our nation achieved, both before and after the war, many ground-breaking social reforms like free, compulsory and secular education, the eight-hour working day, the basic minimum wage and the right of women to vote.

We also have world-first medical triumphs, such as Howard Florey's work on penicillin, that have saved countless lives. We don't need to rely on a disastrous and destructive episode like the Gallipoli campaign for our identity and self-esteem.

And while celebrating Anzac Day draws some Australians together, for others, such as conscientious objectors and descendants of our one-time enemies, it is alienating. In the same way, Australia Day (which they see as Dispossession Day) is alienating for aboriginal Australians. We need an occasion for celebration which we can *all* share.

What did our Anzacs and other war heroes see themselves as fighting for? Probably not for stone memorials and solemn marches, but rather to defend the Australian way of life as they knew it.

Our Founding Fathers had a vision: of creating a new society, free from old-world divisions, where the gulf between rich and poor would no longer exist, and where there would be equal opportunities for all. But 100 years down the track, the gulf has widened, and many Australians are denied a fair go by their poverty and lack of education.

In allowing this to happen we have failed to honour those who have suffered and died for this country.

I would like to see a more restrained annual commemoration of Anzac Day, the abolition of Australia Day, and its replacement with a National Federation Day on which all Australians could celebrate.

We would remember and be thankful for our constitutional freedoms, positive achievements and peaceful multicultural society, and commit ourselves to work for a fairer and more compassionate Australia.

That would be a day really worth celebrating!

Dorothy