

# TRANSCEND: NOVEMBER - 2016

Ascot Vale Uniting Church Newsletter

60 Maribyrnong Road, Moonee Ponds

Services: Sundays 10 am

## Trust: A Psychology and Theology of Trust and Expansion

*"Trust shows the way"*

- Hildegarde of Bingen

*"Where there is fear there is no religion"*

- Mahatma Gandhi

*"Go your way. Your trust has healed you."*

- Jesus Christ

*"Trust in the Lord with all your heart...*

*Happy is she who trusts in the Lord...*

*He who trusts in the Lord will be enriched."*

- Psalm 3:5; 16:20; 28:25

*"What God does first and best and most is to trust his people with their moment in history. He trusts them to do what must be done for the sake of his whole community."*

- Walter Brueggemann

*"The immanence of God gives reason for the belief that pure chaos is intrinsically impossible."*

- Alfred North Whitehead

**A devastating psychological effect of the fall/redemption Christian tradition** is that religion with original sin as its starting point- that is religion built exclusively around human sin and redemption through Christ- does not teach trust. As theologian Matthew Fox points out in his book, *'Original Blessing'*, such religion does not teach trust of existence, or of body or of society or of creativity or of cosmos.

Rather evangelical and orthodox Christianity focuses on the death of Christ as a vicarious sacrifice for what we allegedly deserve from a righteous God- punishment and damnation for our sins!

**Such Christianity instills *fear***, fear of damnation; fear of nature- beginning with one's own, because it is supposedly fallen under the myth of Adam and Eve; fear of others; fear of the cosmos and of God.

**Many adults outgrow religions built on fear.** They grow into trust. What if Christianity was not meant to be built on psychologies of fear but on their opposite- on psychologies of trust and an ever-growing expansion of human goodness?

**Self-trust, other trust (not blind trust), and trust in God's unlimited love are things Jesus was big on.** The New Testament word most often used by Jesus for "faith", did not mean as Augustine thought, "intellectual assent". It is in fact a relational term; it means "trust" (pisteuein) in the original Greek. Jesus time and again assures people that "your trust has healed you." He recognized the saving and healing power of trusting in God's love. He also lamented how little trust he found among people, "O you of little trust."

**Catholic scholar of wisdom literature in the Old Testament, Roland Murphy**, wrote that the two most important factors in learning wisdom according to the scriptures are *"an openness to experience and nature, and a basic trust."* He elaborates that *"the reason for this openness is trust."*

PTO

USA Election Tuesday November 8th.

**The psychology behind progressive Christianity- a theology of original blessing-** is not a psychology of preservation, whether of innocence or money or reputation or status quo or personality or institutions. Rather it is the psychology of Jesus in the parable of the talents- that we are here to expand our personal gifts and capabilities, and not *“out of fear”* to bury them.

**Our expansion and possibilities have no limit-** for God is the creative presence indwelling and encouraging us all. That’s God’s grace. Julian of Norwich experienced this same sense of our bigness, in fact of our divinity. She wrote, *“We are of God. That is what we are. I saw no difference between God and our Substance but as if it were all God.”*

**Every spiritual and religious belief needs to be questioned** as to its psychological presuppositions. In traditional Christianity spiritual and emotional maturity have been so much less important than guilt. But a new era dawns- Christmas is coming. Christmas reminds us particularly of Mary, Jesus’ Mother, and of her son born into straw and starlight. Despite their humble origins Jesus and Mary had great trust in their Creator. They grew to understand the cosmic depth of their existence and the connection of their lives to God’s story. They grew in trust. So can we.

**The recovery of faith as trust-** trust in our essential spiritual nature and in a loving power greater than ourselves; a willingness to grow and expand; to cherish our own bodies; to learn from our experiences and to trust our feelings- may these gifts be yours this Christmas and forever.

All the best, from Rev. Ron Rosinsky

## On the Grapevine:

### Worry:

**Norman Vincent Peale speaks of how we can become worrisome without realising it. But we can re-condition our minds.**

**“You become a worrier by practising worry.** You can change any habit with God’s help. You can become free of worry by practising the opposite and stronger habit of faith. With all the strength and perseverance you can command, start practising faith.

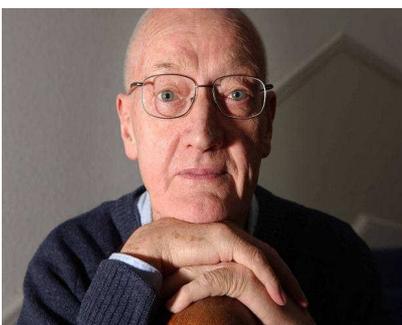
...One reason you are a worrier is that your mind is literally saturated with apprehension thoughts, defeat thoughts, gloomy thoughts. To counteract, mark every passage in the Bible that speaks of faith, hope, happiness, glory, radiance.

Commit each to memory. Say them over and over again until these creative thoughts saturate your subconscious mind. Then the subconscious will return to you what you have given it, namely, optimism, not worry.”



*Peale here describes one tool in dealing with anxiety, not the whole picture. For deeply seated anxiety more is involved, such as talking therapies; and understanding our anxieties and fears- where they come from, whether they are rational, and what they are saying to us about our life situation. The danger in using Peale’s approach alone is that we may be masking our true feelings.*

- From Ron



**“Christianity has had too much to do with men who spend a lot of time justifying the exclusion of women. Women’s spiritual needs are not best met by institutions that are essentially instruments of hierarchy and guilt.”**

*Bishop Richard Holloway*

## Worship Services & Themes- 10 am Sundays

**13 November- Family Service:** The Baptism of Nika Ghamaryari -'Carrying forward some powerful spiritual qualities' Luke 21: 5-19

**20 November:** Guest Preacher -Jeremiah 23: 1-6; Luke 23: 32-43

**27 November:** 'Audacity: a key virtue of a person of faith' Matthew 25:14-29  
The Parable of the Talents

**4 December- Communion Sunday:** 'Finding ways to leave self- destructive behaviours behind'  
Matthew 3: 1-12 ***Kid's Uniting Art Exhibition- after church***

## Kid's Uniting



10 am every Sunday in term;

Primary aged children: teachers: Caterina and Fiona

Confirmation classes: second and fourth Sundays; teachers: Caterina and Claire

## Kid's Uniting Art Exhibition

We are introducing an exhibition of the work that the children produce in Kid's Uniting. This would be on a quarterly basis.

It is an opportunity for adults of the church to see what Kid's Uniting is all about.

The exhibition acts as a bridge between both areas of church worship on Sunday. It is inclusive and promotes connection in the Sunday service, both between and with aspects of our worship platform-through the specific Bible readings of the day.

We invite adults to come and see our excellent work during the year. The first date for this inaugural showing is **Sunday, 4<sup>th</sup> December, after the service.**

I would encourage everyone to come and see our good work!

*From Fiona*

## Key Dates For Your Calendar:

**Saturday 26 November: Family Fish & Chips Night - 6-8pm at church, activities to be announced**

**Sunday 27 November: Garden Swap- 11:30 after church**

**Sunday 27 November: 'Blue Christmas' service- 7:00 pm**

**Sunday 4 December: Kid's Uniting Art Exhibition**

**Sunday 11 December: Sausage sizzle lunch & open house with 'Learning Land'- 11:30 after church service**

**Sunday 18 December: Shared community meal & Christmas carols service- 6:00pm**

## SOCIAL & ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE NEWS:

Greetings to you all:

**Great Barrier Reef Letter:** some time ago Clara and Rachel, two of our youngest members, spoke during a service of their worries for the future of the Great Barrier Reef, which is threatened by industrial development and by global warming. They have prepared a beautifully presented letter to the Prime Minister, asking him to protect the Reef.

I think we were all impressed by their awareness and concern. We would like to support them by attaching an additional letter stating we endorse what they've said, and detailing what we want the government to do about the situation.

You will shortly have the opportunity to sign this letter in support of Clara and Rachel, and of the Reef.

**Bring Them Here:** First: you will be aware that there have recently been more, and more shocking, revelations about conditions and treatment of asylum seekers in Australian Offshore Detention Camps on Manus Island, and particularly Nauru.

So Asylum Seeker Support Groups have initiated a "Bring Them Here" slogan and campaign.

In support of this campaign, we would like to amend the existing sign on the old church façade to replace "Let Them Stay" with "Bring Them Here". If you have any comments on this proposal, do let us know.

Secondly, a **Rally to support Asylum Seekers and the #BringThemHere campaign** will be held on **Saturday 5 November at 1 pm**, at the **State Library**. The Government and Opposition policy of calculated cruelty towards helpless people has to end; and the more of us who can show our indignation, including by attending such rallies, the quicker the end will come!

**Rain Water Tank:** it's always good to be able to lead by example! Having heard that Ascot Vale Uniting has a rainwater tank, friends who are members of St Michael's Anglican Church in North Carlton are now proposing to install a similar tank at their church.

**Thank you all as always for your support!** Dorothy Howes, Spokesperson.

## FREE MOVIE ON THE PROBLEM OF POKER MACHINES

### "Ka-Ching": an eye-opening experience.

Do you know someone who suffers from addictive gambling on poker machines? Or that **more than \$150 million was lost on the pokies in Moonee Valley last year?**

This 60-minute film on the dangers of poker machines will be followed by brief talks from people whose lives have been disrupted by poker machines, and from a professional problem gambling counsellor.

There will also be the opportunity for a chat over tea and coffee at the end.

This free screening is a community service by the Moonee Valley Greens, who want to raise awareness of a deeply destructive and growing problem within our society. Our own friend and environmental adviser, Bob Muntz, has been heavily involved in its organisation..

Please support him, and help address a real community need, by coming along to the church on **Thursday 17 November at 7.00 pm!**

Dorothy

## Problem gamblers and poker machines

- One in six people who play the pokies regularly has a serious addiction.
- Problem gamblers lose around \$21,000 each year. That's one third of the average Australian salary.
- Some poker machines can be played at extremely high intensity – a gambler could lose more than \$1,500 in just one hour.
- Young people (18-24 year olds) spend more on poker machines than any other age group. Many adult problem gamblers report having developed gambling problems during their teenage years
- Three-quarters of problem gamblers have problems with poker machines.

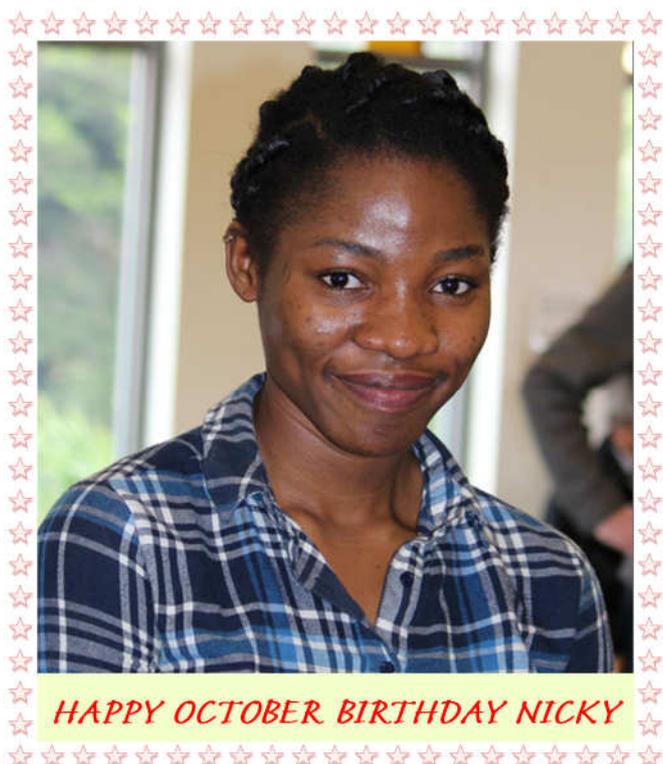
On Sunday October 9th we celebrated the Christening of Samuel, son of Gareth and Melissa Scott.



Gareth's Godmother, Chris read "A Celtic Blessing"

*May the strength of the wind and the light of the sun,  
The softness of the rain and the mystery of the moon  
Reach you and fill you.*

*May beauty delight you and happiness uplift you,  
May your wonder fulfil you and love surround you.  
May your step be steady and your arm be strong,  
May your heart be peaceful and your word be true.  
May you seek to learn, may you learn to live,  
May you live to love and may you love - always.*



**HAPPY OCTOBER BIRTHDAY NICKY**



**THE NEXT GARDEN SWAP  
WILL BE AFTER THE SERVICE  
ON SUNDAY NOVEMBER 27th.  
BRING ALONG PLANTS OR  
PRODUCE TO SHARE OR SWAP.**

### Patricia

Grey hair, kind eyes

And a friendly smile

She's the kind of Lady

That stands out by a mile

Soft voice, strong mind

And so very enchanting

Her home was open to all

And always inviting

Patricia never came alone

For her ever present friend

Was none other than -

The Oxygen Tank

Her main concern - for all of us was

That her 'Tank' made too much noise...

And that we couldn't hear the hymns...

Nor the Minister's voice

Unlike you all - I only met

Patricia towards her life's end

Yet, just like you, I hold her dear

And admire her inner strength

So, this is not a Good Bye

Just a farewell, our friend -

I believe that we all meet again

Somewhere - in the end

*In memory of Patricia, a member of our  
Congregation who passed away last year.*

*Dina*

## **“CHARTING THE FAITH OF AUSTRALIANS” BY PHILIP HUGHES. Christian Research Association, Nunawading. 2016.**

Rev Dr Philip Hughes has for many years been the senior researcher with the Christian Research Association.

In his book he says that research shows that in Australia:

20% of the population are involved with mainstream, Orthodox or immigrant religious groups; 5% with Pentecostal and charismatic groups;

25% describe themselves as “spiritual but not religious”;

and 50% are neither religious nor spiritual.

Just 16% of the population are involved in religious practices such as going to church services monthly or more often.

He describes research on the culture of young people aged 13 to 24.

“At the heart of youth culture is the fact that young people see themselves as putting their own lives together. Most contemporary young Australians expect to make up their own minds ... about what to believe and what religious practices, if any, to adopt.” “Even more than is the case among adults ... most young Australians do not have firm ideas about God and religion and most are not interested in the questions.”

“... while young people have widely different ideas or little idea at all about what the universe is all about, they have common ideas about what personal life is about.

Most young people see family, friends and fun as central to the life they want to attain.

The most common way of attaining such a life is through getting a good job which is interesting in itself and through which one makes some friends, but which also provides sufficient financial resources for one’s family, for enjoying oneself with one’s friends, and for special fun experiences such as travel, extreme sports, or whatever one finds to be fun.”

Philip Hughes also comments on the dominant impulse of self-preservation shown by many churches. “... it has ... been evident in many places that people in the churches have been more concerned with preserving traditions and buildings than in serving the communities in which they lived, or even supporting each other.”

*Taken from a book review in the Progressive Christian Network of Victoria Newsletter, Oct 2016.*

The AFL has finally achieved its wish with the introduction of football on Good Friday in 2017. In the first match North Melbourne will play the Western Bulldogs.

Nearly half of all Australians (45%) will experience some form of mental illness during their lifetime, and those that don’t will most likely know someone that does.

“The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog” was originally designed to test telegraph transmissions, and uses all the letters in the English language.

The word “jiffy” is actually a unit of time. It is the speed at which light travels one centimetre in a vacuum.

That fact that Neil Armstrong was the first man to walk on the moon is known by most people, but how many know that that last person to walk on the moon was Gene Cernan.

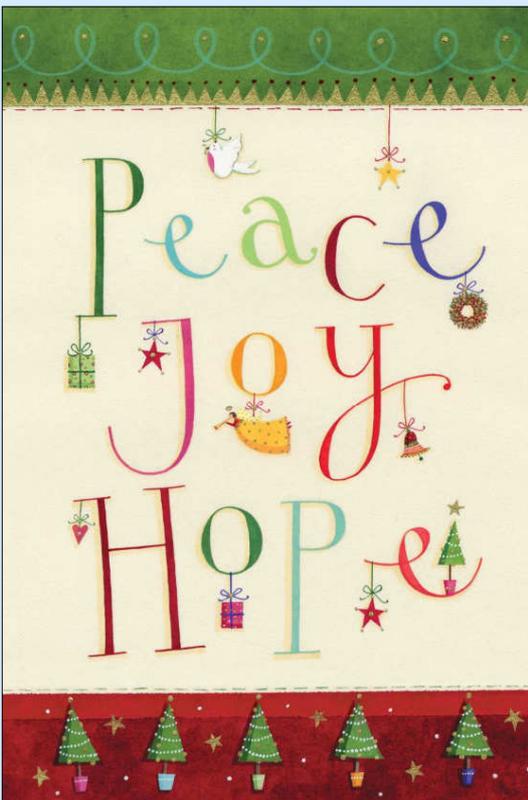
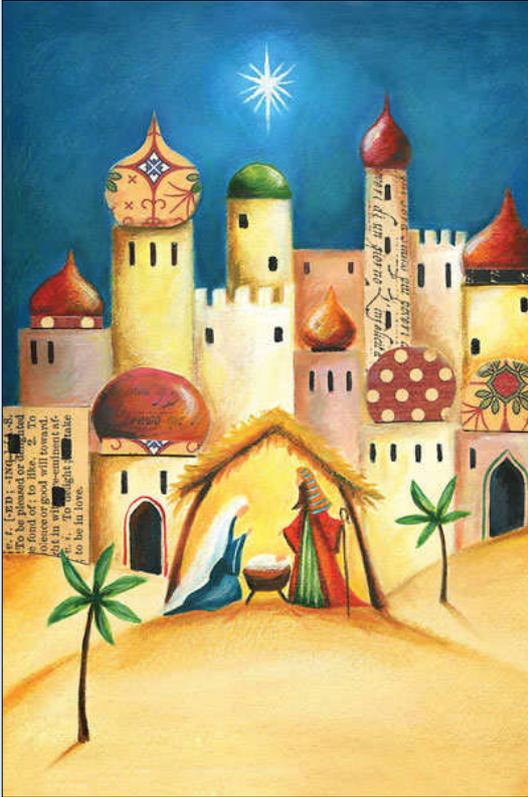
The dot on top of the letter “i” is called a tittle.

You can’t fold a piece of paper in half more than seven times.

Did you know that it’s impossible to lick your elbow?

Below is the range of cards available in 2016. A mixed pack of 10 cards, containing two of each card, is also available.

**To order:** Call 1800 668 426 or download the order form <http://shareappeal.org.au/get-involved/buy-christmas-cards/>



## FROM THE TREASURER

### Offering envelopes

Plenty of new envelopes for 2016/2017 are still available. They are on the table in the gathering space. Please take a set.

### Direct Credit

Several members are now using direct credit, using electronic funds for offerings.

This has significantly increased our offerings.

If you are interested please see Peter Macdonald.

### Income and Expenses –September

Offerings	\$ 1,786
Fundraising	\$ 100
Share appeal	\$ 20
Donations	\$ 1,700
Building users	\$ 4,080
Other	\$ 0

**Total Income** \$ 7,686

Ministry	\$ 3,648
Mission & Service	\$ 0
Property	\$ 1,626
Other	\$ 602

**Expenses** \$ 5,876

Deficit for year through September is \$ 15,092

### Donations

Donations during September included \$800 from the East Gippsland TAFE group and donations from several people following funerals conducted by Rev Ron Rosinsky.

### Cheques for Purchases and Services

I would appreciate help from all those with cheques from the church for goods, purchases and services that these cheques be presented as soon as possible and within the month the cheque is raised. This will save me carrying over outstanding payments from month to month.

Thanks.

### Finance Committee

The finance committee meeting scheduled for Thursday October 13<sup>th</sup> 7.30 PM was postponed until Thursday November 24<sup>th</sup> 7.30 PM at the church. Business at this meeting will include preparation of 2017 budget.

Kind Regards  
Peter Macdonald

## NEWS FROM THE MEETING OF CHURCH COUNCIL,

### Wednesday 19 October

We approved the purchase of a **gazebo** for the church garden. This will offer shelter from sun and rain for morning teas after church, open air services or a friendly chat or quiet meditation for churchgoers, Learningland parents or members of the community who are tempted to drop in. Many thanks to Dina for her work on this!

We are considering a proposal to alternate or replace the traditional version of the **Lord's Prayer** with a more modern version in use in a number of other churches.

**Arthur Gavriel** has undertaken the task of testing and tagging our electrical equipment. Thank you, Arthur, for your invaluable and expert help!

The students from **Gippsland TAFE** who stayed at the church while exhibiting at the Royal Melbourne Show were delighted with the accommodation, and proved responsible guests, who left the building in an immaculate condition.

### We have a number of special occasions coming up:

**Thursday 17 November, 7.00 – 9.00 pm** - free showing at AVUC by Moonee Valley Greens of the gambling awareness film "**Ka-Ching**". (see Social & Environmental Justice News)

**Sunday 27 November: "Blue Christmas"** organised by Eileen Ray.

**Sunday 4 December: KidsUniting Art Exhibition.**

**Sunday 11 December: Sausage Sizzle** to accompany **Learningland Open Day.**

**Sunday 18 December: evening service of Carols by Candlelight.**

We look forward to seeing you at these special events.

God bless you all - members of **AVUC Church Council** (Dorothy Howes, Secretary)

## AVUC ROSTER, Nov 2016 – Jan 2017

	LEADER	COM-MUNION	DUTY ELDER	MUSIC	WELCOMER	READ-ER	MORNING TEA
6 November Communion	Rev Ron	Dorothy	Dorothy	Rob	Cally	Cally	Angelika/Dina
13 November Family Service	Rev Ron		Angelika	Maria	Dina	Bente	Barbara/ Judy
20 November	Rev Ron		Dina	Dorothy	Robin	Chris	Chris/Bente
27 November Garden Swap	TBA		Noel	Candace	Peter	Marycon	Marycon/ Angelika
4 December Communion	Rev Ron	Angelika	Angelika	Rob	Michael & Melita	Noel	Ken/Jenny
11 Dec -Family Serv. Kids Uniting finish	Rev Ron		Dorothy	Maria	Judy	Candace	Judy/Chris
18 December	TBA		Noel	Candace	Ken	Angelika	Angelika/ Bente
25 December Christmas Day	TBA		Angelika	Dorothy	Peter	Barbara	Barbara/ Marycon
1 January 2017 New Year's Day Communion	TBA	Dina	Dina	Rob	Robin	Chris	Judy/Chris
8 January Family Service	Rev Ron		Dorothy	Maria	Dina	Dina	Ken/Jenny
15 January	Rev Ron		Noel	Dorothy	Judy	Marycon	Marycon/ Angelika
22 January	Rev Ron		Angelika	Candace	Cally	Cally	Bente/Fiona
29 January	TBA		Dorothy	Candace /Maria	Michael & Melita	Michael/ Melita	Dina/Judy

**Please make your own arrangements for any necessary exchange of dates!!**



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