



InSpire



NEWSLETTER OF THE STONINGTON COMMUNITY UNITING CHURCH

Vol. 10, no 5

June 2024



GRANDMOTHERS FOR REFUGEES CELEBRATE 10 YEARS

Outside St Paul's Cathedral 2014 (See page 12)

InSpiring

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

Still Thinking – Peace in Jerusalem



In 2007 I had a three month sabbatically with one month spent in Israel. In Jerusalem I stayed

at St George's College in East Jerusalem. On the afternoon when I arrived, I was given a tour of the campus by the College Chaplain. After the tour I asked him about walking around the old city. Was it safe? Could I do it by myself? Are there any places I should, or more importantly, should not go? His answer was simple, *"Walk out the front gate of the college, turn right and about three hundred metres down Salahadeen Street you will see Herod's Gate. Walk through the gate and then just get lost in the city!"* While to a newcomer that was a bit frightening nevertheless, I took his advice and got lost in the Old City.

In fact, it would be difficult to get lost in the Old City of Jerusalem. Walled on all sides it has eight entrance gates (one is bricked up for theological reasons) and is an area of about a square kilometre. I don't think you really can get lost – as distinct from not knowing where you are – because the old city is a maze of never-ending streets, lanes, stairways and footpaths. And if you show any sign of not knowing where you are there is always a helpful local willing to take to one of the sacred sites - at a price of course.

Many will know that the old city is divided into four quarters – Christian, Armenian, Jewish and Moslem. One can wander freely between the quarters and while there are not clear boundaries between the quarters, they are each distinct in their own way. Now while it may be difficult to get lost physically in Jerusalem, it is certainly possible to get lost in the sheer diversity and complexity of the place. To the outsider everyone seems to get along well together, but as our lecturer and guide Rev Dr Kamal Farah said, "In Jerusalem we do not live together we merely co-exist." I suppose this is the technical meaning of the word tolerate. The three dominant religious faiths in Jerusalem presently tolerate each other.

Now while the old city is about many things the two that strike the tourist or pilgrim are commerce and sacred religious places. From the stalls that line the narrow streets traders will sell you anything if you can haggle with them to arrive at the right price – a skill I discovered I didn't have. But it doesn't take long in this city to get lost in the profundity of its religious significance. Much has been written about the importance of Jerusalem to Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Each religion claims a sacred connection to Jerusalem. Each faith feels a God given right to be here, in Jerusalem. It was a remarkable experience to in one day, visit the Western (Wailing) Wall; the Dome of the Rock; and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Each of these places sacred to its tradition and yet each has at some time in its history been occupied by at least one of the other faiths. While the city is central to religious faith and pilgrimage, war and conflict over these

sacred places has always been present in Jerusalem.

Two of our guest speakers during the course, one a Palestinian Christian, the other a Jewish educator used the same illustration about visiting Jerusalem. They both said, "After someone has been in Jerusalem for a couple of days, they feel they could write a book; after a week perhaps a chapter; after a month a sentence and after a year they struggle to find a word." And I know what that word is. I suspect we all know what that word is. It is *Al-Salaam*, in Arabic *Shalom*, in Hebrew, *Pax* in Christian Latin and *Peace* in English. All traditions see peace as more than the absence of conflict, more than mere tolerance and co-existence. Peace in Christianity, Islam and Judaism is the restoration to wholeness - completeness. The very experience of prosperity both physically and spiritually, but most importantly not just for me or for my tribe but for all people.

It was the Catholic theologian Hans Küng who said, "*There will be peace on earth when there is peace among the world religions.*" let us pray for the peace of Jerusalem, peace between religions and peace in our world.

Christopher



IN THE SEARCH FOR OUR NEW MINISTER

Food for thought from the following two articles that were published in recent issues of the

PRESBYTERY OF PORT PHILLIP EAST WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

On May 1, the opening article was written by Rev Robin Yang

CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF THE CHURCH

The landscape of the church is rapidly changing. As part of my Presbytery Minister role, I represent congregations and ministers on the Synod Placements Committee. This committee's role is to oversee the process that enables the placing of ministers in congregations and agencies. Being part of this committee has given me a unique insight into the changing landscape. Here are some stats.

- Between 2016-2023, the number of ministers that retired was 129.
- In the same period, there were 44 new ministers who graduated from our Theological College (exit candidates).
- Half of all congregations in our presbytery have supply ministry arrangements and are without a permanent ministerial agent.
- Placements Committee currently has 21 congregations and agencies seeking a minister.
- Last month, only two placements were offered names for conversation.
- There is a significant list of ministers who are unable to find a placement, many of whom are from CALD (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse) backgrounds.
- There is a significant increase of Ministry of Pastor positions in the Synod and influx of ministers from other denominations.

These statistics paint a landscape of a church where the number of ministerial agents is shrinking, aging congregations are unable to afford a placement, ministers are unable to find a placement, shift to laity stepping into leadership, challenges in overcoming cultural differences, adapting to embrace new expressions of church and faith, equipping new and existing ministers to lead in a changing society and world. All this happens in the context of a future church that is not clear or yet to be imagined.

It speaks to a time of transition and change that can leave us feeling uncertain, anxious or even

fearful. It is important to acknowledge these trends are NOT related to any single issue but rather a complex interrelated set of issues.

The landscape is changing. But we choose how to face it. The Holy Spirit is at work, and we can have full confidence in the Holy One who calls us by name. As a Presbytery we have considered Faithful Futures and Act 2. The Assembly meeting in July this year will discern together how we respond. Let us pray for this meeting, pray for our church, and pray for our future. Let me leave you with Yahweh's words to Joshua 31:6, *"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."*

Robin Yang

Presbytery Minister Church Development

In the issue of May 15, the opening article was written by Rev Anneke Oppewal

Two weeks ago, my colleague Robin Yang wrote about Placements committee and how difficult it is at the moment to find appropriate and life-giving matches for both ministers looking for placements and placements looking for ministry agents. With more ministers retiring than ministers entering their first placement there is an issue of less ministers being available for placement across the Church. That however is not the only issue. The time fractions placements have been able to offer have been steadily and

significantly reducing and full-time placements becoming available are more the exception now than the rule. More and more ministers from thriving Culturally and Linguistically diverse Congregations are entering formation and looking for a placement within the wider Uniting Church, with little experience of the culture of the white Anglo side of our Church and sometimes come with an accent or a theology that feels unfamiliar when they enter conversations with Joint Nominating Committee (JNC)'s. They are also, often, relatively young people with a family to support that will need full-time employment, while the full-time placements that are available will often be looking for people who will match their own demographic, which, if they are not Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD)-ethnic specific congregations, more often than not, be white Anglo.

If the Church were a business we would probably be 'rationalising' the many, small, part time placements in congregations, maybe sell a couple of buildings, and put some communities together to make up a placement that can afford to pay a full-time stipend and take it from there. However, the Church is not a business and the many small communities that make up the Church are each in their own right unique, and, each for different and various reasons, important to those who gather in them as well as to the community around them that may be renting their buildings or benefit from their presence, availability and outreach for a whole host of possible reasons that make it difficult to just 'shut up shop and move somewhere else'.

So far, these small, often very part time, congregations have been, in a vacancy, supported and cared for by retired ministers or lay pastors who lovingly bring their experience and expertise to bear. Many of those happily prepared to take the service most Sundays and help with pastoral care where needed and appropriate while lay people do the rest. However! With over 30 vacancies in the Presbytery and some of our retired ministers getting older, it has become harder and harder to find retired ministers or lay pastors that can look after these congregations. With the pressure on lay people in congregations increasing. (In CALD congregations a similar but a different thing is happening with government visa regulations making it very hard to call a linguistically and culturally appropriate person from outside Australia to one of our Churches here, but that is another story, better told another time).

Could these small, part time congregations not share a minister? Offering a minister a full-time stipend and the congregations a full-time person to support them in ministry? What may seem an obvious solution unfortunately will often cause more stress for both minister and lay people involved in the congregations that share ministry and leave everyone disgruntled and unhappy in many cases. The time of worship, the frequency and number of Church Council meetings, the difference in culture and priorities between congregations only some of the more obvious reasons why these combination ministries don't tend to always work.

Involving and training up more lay people would be a great way forward (the priesthood of all believers finally fully exercised) were it not that many of those lay people have been working their socks off for years already, at full capacity and aren't particularly keen to train for and take over the role the clergy used to fulfil in their community.

Just painting the situation in a few broad brushstrokes (there is more and it is a lot more complex than I have room to explain here) will hopefully have made you realise there are no easy, short cut solutions. There is nothing for it than to rethink the Church. But how?

As a Presbytery we are encouraging congregations to work together, share resources and support each other in ministry as much as is practicable. To get to know the neighbours and relax expectations about what we as a community or a Church are able to offer. To focus on the important stuff and perhaps ease on the not so important. To look for what is life giving and let go of what drains the life out of us. But still.... Where is this all going to go?

Two thousand years ago a couple of Jesus followers were meeting in an upstairs room. They didn't have a building they could call their own, they probably rented the space or got it for free from a friend that happened to have it available. Nobody had been trained or accredited and most of them probably had very little idea about starting an organisation or running a community or planning outreach or strategising their way

forward. And yet it happened. In fits and starts, and over a very long time, a community took shape that carried the gospel over the space of two thousand years. I derive comfort from that thought, and encouragement.

What Jesus asked us was to love. To love God and to love one another. And continue to live the way he showed how into the future. Nothing more, nothing less. Don't be afraid, I will not leave you orphaned says Jesus, the Spirit will come and fill you with life and you will find a way into the future to live out the love I have commanded you to exercise among each other.

Will you let yourselves be filled?

Anneke Oppewal
Presbytery Minster Pastoral Care

OUR NEW LOOK WEBSITE

A big thank you to Rosemary Grenness for re-vamping the Church website!

[Home | Stonnington Community Uniting Church \(stonningtonchurch.org.au\)](http://stonningtonchurch.org.au)

The purpose of the website is to

- * Help people
- * Welcome visitors to the Church & increase ongoing participation
- * Create an online presence commensurate with the values and beliefs of the Church

- * Promote the activities of the Church
- * Promote the facilities of the Church
- * Promote the diversity of the Church

Please take a look, and think what content you would like to be featured on it.

**STONNINGTON COMMUNITY UNITING
CHURCH COUNCIL REPORT**

Joyce Jenkin

Council noted with sadness the passing of our friend and fellow councillor Noel Dennis, we expressed thanks for his faithful service over many years and we extend our sympathy to his family.

We welcomed Alison to the position of Deputy Chair of the Council.

Rosemary Grenness has agreed to be our web master. The work she had done to revamp the site is outstanding! It was agreed that we will approach the groups that use our facilities on a regular basis and offer them the chance to have a brief statement on our site plus a link to their sites.

The application for a PWMU Cookbook grant on behalf of ASRC was successful.

Council approved the draft Congregational Profile prepared by the Joint Nominating Committee,

The Annual Meeting of the Congregation will be held on 23rd June.

SOMETHING FOR THE SPIRIT

Lorna Henry

Our form of meeting took a new turn this month. We did not meet on the third Sunday as usual, but on the fourth Tuesday and we saw a film!!

The plan was to go as a group to see the film, then meet for a meal and discussion afterwards. So, on Tuesday 28th May about 10 of us went to the Palace Cinema in Balwyn to see 'The Way, My Way', a film about walking the Camino pilgrim trail in Spain.

It is an Australian film, a semi-documentary made by Bill Bennett about his own experience walking the pilgrim path about 10 years ago. He puts an actor in to play himself, but most of the other people are playing themselves.

Bill sets off with no clear idea of why he is doing it or what he hopes to get out of it. Obviously, he meets several people along the way, and he is affected by these encounters. At the end, he has an emotional moment of personal insight.

After the film we met around the table at the home of Alan and Maria Sandbach. Themes bubbling to the surface as we considered the lives of those on the walk were: being in a situation outside our normal way of life, living with the bare minimum, persistence in the face of hardship, the need for forgiveness, walking as a means of consolation in sadness and loss, and the possibility of seeing oneself in a new way.

The film suggests that people, places, events and everyday things of the world are all sacred, or can be sacred if we stop to think and talk about them. Sometimes we find an 'angel' right there to help us in a difficult moment which is then a sacred moment.

The film is in no way 'religious', but gives a sense of the spiritual without naming it.

With sincere thanks to Maria and Alan Sandbach for the idea and for their warm hospitality.

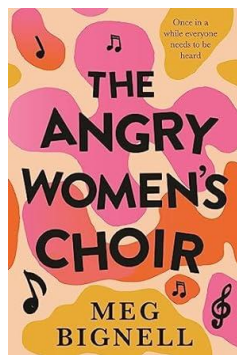
Our June meeting will take place on Sunday June 16th at 5 Vickery St. East Malvern.

LIBRARY NEWS

Faye Pattinson

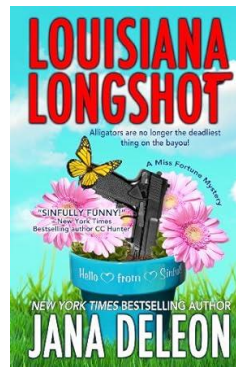
At the book chat on May 16, 2024, the following books were introduced and discussed.

Joyce:



(1) **“The Angry Women’s Choir”** by Meg Bignell. A heart-warming and uplifting story about a remarkable group of women who discover they are all capable of incredible things – if they’re

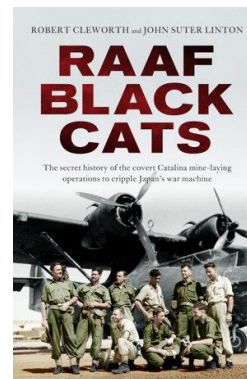
strong enough, and angry enough, to take up the cause.



(2) **“Louisiana LongShot”** by Jana DeLeon. CIA Assassin Fortune Redding is about to undertake her most difficult mission ever– in Sinful, Louisiana. Armed with her considerable skills and a group of old ladies

referred to by locals as The Geritol Mafia, Fortune has no choice but to solve the murder before it’s too late.

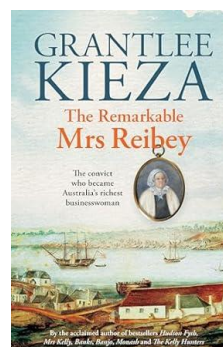
Kerry:



“RAAF Black Cats” by Robert Cleworth and John Suter Linton. The secret and dangerous operations of Australia's Pacific War Catalina crews told for the first time. Absorbing,

compelling and powerfully told, *RAAF Black Cats* is an important addition to our understanding of Australia's role in the Pacific War.

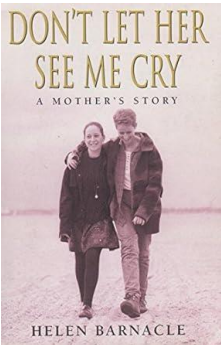
Jo:



(1) **“The Remarkable Mrs Reibey”** by Grantlee Kieza. The extraordinary story of Mary Reibey – immortalised on the Australian \$20 note. In 1791, teenage runaway and sometime horse thief Mary

Reibey narrowly escaped the English gallows with transportation to the brutal new penal colony at Sydney Cove. Within two decades Mary would

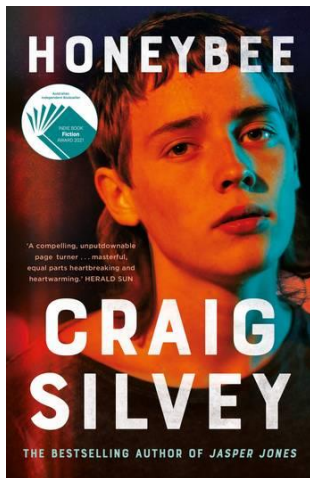
overcome the stigma of her convict past to become the richest woman in colonial Australia.



(2) **“Don’t Let Her See Me Cry: A Mother’s Story”** by Helen Baranacle. This is the gutsy true story of a woman's remarkable journey from a hopeless young heroin addict facing a prison

sentence with a newborn baby to a successful psychologist and mother and best friend to Ali – the daughter who gave her the courage and determination to survive.

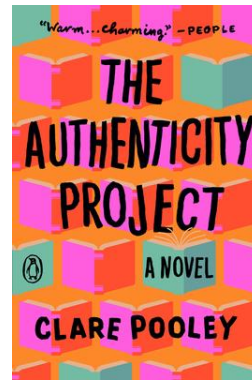
Sue McG:



“Honeybee” by Craig Silvey. At the heart of Honeybee is Sam: a solitary, resilient young person battling to navigate the world as their true self; ensnared by loyalty to a troubled mother,

scarred by the volatility of a domineering stepfather, and confounded by the kindness of new alliances. The story was inspired by a real-life event – which is re-imagined in the opening pages of the novel – where Silvey's brother and sister-in-law encountered a distressed transgender teen standing on the other side of a bridge railing.

Faye:



“The Authenticity Project” by Clare Pooley.

The story of a solitary green notebook- firstly left in a cafe and then passed on – that brings together six strangers and leads to unexpected friendships and even love.

Next meeting: Thursday 18th July.

AFTERNOON FELLOWSHIP

Lencie Harding

A pizza making afternoon was held on Monday 20th May.



The pizza base was made with flour, water and dried yeast and kneaded for 10 minutes; the dough was covered with olive oil and placed in a cling film covered bowl to prove.

We then enjoyed a cup of tea and chatting.

When the dough was ready it was knocked down on the oiled pizza tray and brushed with tomato paste. Everyone helped with the topping of sliced red and yellow cherry tomatoes, anchovies, hot Hungarian salami, chopped red capsicum and olives

Jo Miller brought her own gluten free roll which she topped with tomato paste and cheese.



The pizza went into a 170° oven for 15 minutes, removed to cover with grated mozzarella cheese

and together with Jo Miller's gluten free roll was returned to the oven for a further 10 minutes.

While the pizza was baking, Jan Riches read us an article from the Sunday Age 19th May - 'Pentecost marks the 'miraculous mayhem' of the Holy Spirit's descent' by Catholic educator and author Ann Rennie.

The new oven produced a perfect result and we enjoyed a slice of our creation.

Thank you to Jane Lama for helping to make the afternoon a success.

Additional note from Jan Riches

"Afternoon Fellowship members wish to thank Lencie for supplying some of the necessary utensils, plus all the ingredients for the pizza base and toppings and for demonstrating to us how to make this delicious pizza in our new oven."

AFTERNOON FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITY TABLE

Lencie Harding

I am pleased to report that the Opportunity Table on Sunday 19th May raised \$163.05 with thanks to everyone who brought and bought. Jan suggests that the 5 cents may have fallen into the cash box from someone's purse.

Treasurer, Jan Riches, has agreed to donate \$300 from the Op Table proceeds to SCUC to pay for a set of cookware for the new induction stove.

A cheque for this amount has been handed to Jane Lama.

SAMMY STAMP
Lencie Harding

Thank you to long-time supporter Faye Pattinson for another generous donation of stamps which she collects from a variety of sources.

Faye also donates a batch of used business sized envelopes which I recycle in my Sammy Stamp box to separate the different stamp values. This means that during a delivery to Brighton, the volunteers can just remove the filled envelopes from my Sammy Stamp box and process them when convenient.

The following is from Allan Clark's report for the June 2024 issue of the Uniting Church Adult Fellowship's magazine *Net Work*:

As you read this, winter has officially arrived, but despite this, Sammy Stamp's merry band of volunteers keep beavering on.

Up to the 4/5/2024, sales had reached about \$8,163 (same week last year \$10,899).

No further grants have been approved since last month so the balance in grants approved so far this year remains at \$11,900.

Last year, we gave a grant of \$5,000 to a Roman Catholic Order, Sisters of Mercy, in Australia and

New Guinea [Mercy Works] to assist West Papuan refugees living in challenging conditions in the western back blocks of Papua New Guinea. In a letter of thanks Sally Bradley writes: - "Dome 2 village in the far Western Province of PNG is a West Papuan refugee community facing daily hardship. It is an almost forgotten community with little to no government support.

Thanks to kind supporters, people like you; Mercy Works has started to partner with Dome 2 to improve the livelihood of their community.

In response their positivity, strength and resilience are undeniable.

Easter is indeed a journey of transformation from darkness into light, from despair to hope.

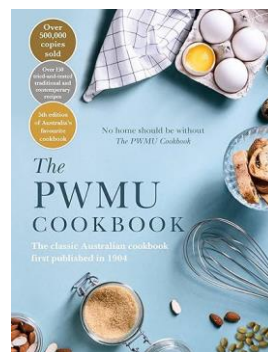
I hope you too, are inspired by the people of Dome 2."

Sally Bradley RSM
Executive Director.

Finally, please keep those stamps etc. rolling in to 44A Seventh Street, PARKDALE, 3195.

Allan Clark
Convenor

PWMU Cookbook grant success



Lencie drew our attention to this opportunity and we applied successfully for a grant of \$5,000.00 for the Asylum Seekers Resource Centre.

SUCC has been a staunch supporter of ASRC for many years, especially through our weekly food donations. We also gave them a once-off grant last year when they were threatened with closure due to lack of finance.

In addition, SCUC has supported the activities of the Grandmothers for Refugees to raise money for refugee support organizations, including the ASRC and the Brigidine Asylum Seekers Program. So it seems appropriate to run this brief account of the GFR.

Who Are the Grandmothers for Refugees?

It all began around a kitchen table in early 2014. A small group of women met because they were outraged at the children being held in detention by the Australian government. They had heard reports of the terrible effects of this cruelty. They had seen the heart-wrenching drawings by these children and they were angry! They were inspired by The Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo in Argentina.

These grandmothers decided to do something. After much hard work, Grandmothers for Refugees, a non-party political advocacy group divided into Federal electorates was established. Meetings, vigils and marches were held. The group spoke to and wrote to politicians. They handed out leaflets and letterboxed their neighbourhoods. Dressed in purple they went in their hundreds, to Canberra where they sang in Parliament House. Members also hosted public

forums with refugee advocates, told stories on face book and various websites, wrote to newspapers and organised petitions to government.

The Grandmothers group grew quickly, increasing from about 500 at their inaugural meeting in September 2014 to over 2000.

In Rwanda, the Hutus referred to the Tutsis as cockroaches. Our government used the same tactic by referring to refugees and asylum seekers as “illegals” or “queue jumpers”, despite the fact that it is not illegal to seek asylum in Australia nor has there ever been a queue!

So, our work must continue.

Today we seek to consider the approximately 12,000 asylum seekers, some of whom have been waiting for over 10 years for a fair assessment of their claims and to attend family reunions with those who have already been given permanent protection. We also seek to transfer to Australia those detainees, released but unsupported in Papua New Guinea, and who wish to come here. Our work includes the humanitarian need to transfer those in detention on Nauru and to have them processed in Australia, without the penalty of boat arrival, just as those other applicants who have arrived by aeroplane.

The Higgins group meets on the second Tuesday of each month at a member's home in East Malvern.

Membership is not restricted to Grandmothers, you can also become a FROG (friends of grandmothers).

For more detail see.

<https://www.grandmothersforrefugees.com>

Marie Martin



Eleven members of Grandmothers for Refugees (Higgins and Kooyong), one from Labor for Refugees, and two from the Centre for a Compassionate Society had an animated, respectful discussion with Minister for Immigration Andrew Giles and Michelle Anand-Rajah, Member for Higgins.

CHORISTERS NEEDED

We are recruiting singers for our little Choir!

Our wonderful organist and choirmaster, Colin Jenkins, comes one Sunday a month, and consequently the choir sings only once a month. The music Colin selects is mostly from the

traditional church choir repertoire, and is easy to sing.

We would like to recruit occasional choir members to swell our ranks. There is no need to be a church member. It will be preferable if they can read music, but it is not mandatory.

The commitment for singers is minimal for the standard monthly performances; they just come at 9.30 am on Sunday morning, practise for 30 minutes or so, and sing from 10.30 am. Colin circulates the score and a recording in advance for reference. More time is required from September when we start preparing for the Carol Service in December, but still no rehearsals during the week.

These are the dates for choir under Colin's direction for the rest of the year:

June 9

July 21

August 18

September 15, plus rehearsal for Carols after the service

October 13, plus rehearsal for Carols after the service

November 24, plus rehearsal for Carols after the service

December 22 AM & 7.00PM [Carol service]

If you would like to join the little choir, please contact Alison on 0458 585 862, or by email: fuyusona57@gmail.com

Getting to Know the Regular Users of our Church

MUSICAL SOCIETY OF VICTORIA

The Musical Society of Victoria Malvern Centre holds regular concerts at the Stonnington Community Uniting Church. The Musical Society of Victoria was established in 1861 to present concerts, to protect the rights of musicians, and to further music education. The MSV had a very important role in shaping and supporting the growth of instrumental music in Victoria in the early days.

[Home - Musical Society of Victoria \(msv.org.au\)](http://msv.org.au)

The basic aim of the Society, that is “the general advancement of musical art” has remained the same ever since. Currently in 2024, there are six centres across Melbourne offering regular concerts, which allow young musicians to attend and perform, while providing listening opportunities to the members and the public. The MSV also offers a series of annual awards and competitions. The prize winners’ concerts are often held at the Stonnington Community Uniting Church.

The MSV Malvern Centre conducts most of its activities at our church. Upcoming 2024 concert dates in our church are as follow:

On Sunday 9 June, they will hold two concerts. The 2:30pm concert goes from 2:30pm- 3:30pm, for younger performers or less advanced students. The afternoon tea will be served at 3:30pm after the first concert and everyone is welcome. It is great opportunity to meet other

musicians and it's the highlight of coming to the concerts for younger musicians. The next concert starts at 4:00 and usually go for 90 minutes. The 4:00pm concert participants are in general older and the repertoires are more advanced.

The July 12 concert is a special soirée which is not scheduled for our annual concerts but a spontaneous one. This is the concert for young children who are new to MSV and want to experience performing in front of audiences. We welcome anyone who is AMEB grade 6 and under to come and perform, it is an evening concert starts from 6:30pm- 8:00pm depending on how many people sign up. They charge \$5 for audience for the soirée.

FORTHCOMING CONCERTS

The VicTas Uniting Church Historical Society is holding what will be a rousing sing-along of 20th century hymns in our Church Sanctuary on Sunday 30 June, 2.30 pm. Guaranteed to make the rafters ring!



Karl Jenkins' *Requiem* (2005)

If you missed Karl Jenkins' *The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace* (1999) performed by the Victoria Chorale last month, you can still enjoy Karl Jenkins' *Requiem* (2005) which is being performed by the Glen Eira City Choir on Saturday 22 June, 2.30 pm at St Andrews Anglican Church, New St, Brighton. It has a strong Japanese flavour, featuring haiku texts, and including shakuhachi flute in the accompaniment, played by Anne Norman.

See page 18 for details.



COMMON THREADS

Our constant little group met on Thursday 23 May, and enjoyed fellowship, busy threading activity, cream cake and yo-yo biscuits.



Sue's squares have been joined up by Dawn to make a lovely rug.

Jubilant Jo! She sewed up five blankets with KOGO squares in one month! Wonderful work, thank you, Jo!



Dawn lent her aesthetic talent as we spent some time laying out a bag of 90 (!) squares into a nice formation, which Jo and Alison are going to tackle as a joint project.



Next meeting will be Thursday 27 June, in the Margaret McKinnon Room, 10 to 12 noon.

Feel free to come and join in the fun of making things and join in the conversation.

COFFEE SOUL-SEARCH
Tuesday 11 June from 2 pm
@ Fergus Coffee, 301 Wattletree Road



Our informal gathering over coffee on the second Tuesday of the month will again be held at Fergus Coffee in Wattletree Road (near the corner of Tooronga Road). Please feel free to drop in on Tuesday 11 June from 2 pm for a chat and a catch-up. They close at 3 pm, so we won't be able to linger so long... You can visit contact@ferguscafe.com to see the menu.

Next time we might try yet another venue, so any suggestions will be helpful.

All welcome, regardless of age, gender, dietary preferences etc. Alison

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

From Margie Mitsikas

Hi Alison,

I hope our congregation are aware the Senate have just passed the Immigration Bill, a truly unjust piece of legislation that has the potential to cause great harm to a great many people. It is not too late to speak out however as it was not agreed to in its present form by all the Senators on the committee.

If you choose to publish this opinion piece, please leave the following contact details in case

someone who reads this also wants to voice their opinion on this new Legislation to our MPs.

From: Margaret Mitsikas

<margie.mitsikas@aph.gov.au>

Date: 6 May 2024 at 5:53:22 pm AEST

To: a.albanese.mp@aph.gov.au

Cc: Michelle Ananda-Rajah <michelle.ananda-rajah.mp@aph.gov.au>

Subject: Immigration Bill: So like the Boats!

There are many similarities between this Bill and the boats bringing refugees to Australia:

Promoters of the current Bill, like the people smugglers who provide a boat, want people to believe the boat will lead them to safer shores (for the Bill - better Border protection would you believe), despite the vehicle being carelessly constructed for the task, and potentially liable to sink due to holes and stormy weather ahead. The Bill too may sink, drowning many on board.

The boat and the Bill may survive and reach its destination, but at what cost to those who hoped for safety and compassionate help to enable them a life free from fear and trauma?

The boat's pilot / the Bill's Minister, will be given extraordinary powers to override any objections about human rights being ignored, and the INTERNATIONAL agreements signed to protect human rights.

No doubt he will be generously remunerated for his perilous job, and for turning a blind eye to the

inhumanity inherent in implementing the orders.
He may of course go down with the ship.

If the Boat/Bill lands, instead of joy and safety the refugees and asylum seekers will find persecution of a different kind from our Government:

- * being not welcomed but treated as criminals;
- * imprisonment if they do not agree to be returned to probable danger or death, despite Australia having laws declaring the innocent should not be imprisoned;
- * unable to bring families they hoped to also rescue from the perils they had left behind,
- * or being separated unjustly from their family already in Australia;
- * years of waiting for work permits or permanent residency permits, and many other horrendous situations.

Listen Members of Parliament:

DO YOU HEAR THE PEOPLE CRY??

Australians everywhere can hear the voices.
What does this Bill say about us and 'a fair go'?
Where is compassion in this Immigration Bill?

LISTEN TO US TOO, WE VOTE.

From Margaret Mitsikas, Box 24,
332 Waverley Rd East Malvern, 3145 Victoria

A WORD FROM THE EDITOR

Please feel free to send me your news items and photos for *InSpire*. We also welcome letters and articles, so if you feel inspired, do write about any topic of interest to you to share with our readers. *Letters to the Editor are also welcome.* We can also promote your events at a modest or no fee!

Deadline for the **July 2024** edition of *InSpire* is **Monday, 1st July**. Articles should be emailed to the Editor, Alison Tokita, at fuusone57@gmail.com where possible, or they can be given in person.

KARL JENKINS REQUIEM

...a musical tying together of different cultures...



2.30PM SATURDAY 22 JUNE 2024

**ST ANDREW'S ANGLICAN CHURCH
228 NEW ST BRIGHTON**

Glen Eira City Choir with Bendigo Chorale

Conductor: Elena Varshavskaya ~ Pianist: Berta Brozgul

Soprano: Lisa Ann Robinson, with Phoebe Paine & Chloe James

Shakuhachi Master: Anne Norman ~ Harp: Katia Mestrovic

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CALENDAR JUNE 2024

SUNDAY 2nd	11 AM	EUCHARIST & COMMUNITY LUNCH
SUNDAY 9TH	10.30 AM	CHURCH SERVICE
TUESDAY 11TH	2.00 PM	COFFEE & SOUL AT FERGUS COFFEE 301 WATTLETREE RD
SUNDAY 16TH	10.30 AM 5.00 PM	CHURCH SERVICE SOMETHING FOR THE SPIRIT
MONDAY 17TH	2.00 PM	AFTERNOON FELLOWSHIP
SUNDAY 23RD	10.30 AM	CHURCH SERVICE
THURSDAY 27TH	10.00 AM	COMMON THREADS
SUNDAY 30TH	10.30 AM	CHURCH SERVICE