



# THE MESSENGER

Newsletter of

St Luke's Uniting Church

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WINTER 2015

## Minister's Message

Winter is sometimes thought of as a time of hibernation and retreat from the cold – we holiday in warmer climes, or we rug-up, enjoy a fireside hot chocolate and wait for spring (not that it's that much warmer at first). The supposedly quiet time is, at St Luke's, going to be an active one. I'll fill you in on two big things that are happening:

**Kids Hope:** After a long delay, training is complete and the Kids Hope program will begin at Essex Heights in Term 3, smack bang in the middle of winter. There will be more training opportunities later in the year for members of the congregation who would like to participate in the program, but for now, the four mentors who will begin working with children at Essex Heights next term would appreciate your support in prayer. Each of us has the task of selecting a prayer partner – someone to speak and pray with on a regular basis. We could also use some backup mentors who are willing to be trained to 'fill in' for a regular mentor during planned absences. I'd like to share a brief story from another Australian Kids Hope program that I received recently via email.

*Danny loves construction. He is 6 years old and doesn't deal with his anger very well. Seven weeks ago Danny and his mentor Sally, started a Lego project recommended for 8-12 year-olds. In the beginning if Danny got frustrated he would throw the pieces across the room. By the end he would either keep trying or politely pass the pieces to Sally for help. Today Danny and Sally proudly celebrated the completion of his project. They celebrated his perseverance (to keep trying even when it gets tough) and for persevering with an awesome attitude.*

*When they said goodbye, Danny gave Sally a lovely little hug and asked 'Do you see someone else now?' 'Nope,' she said. 'I see only you.' His smile melted Sally's heart.*

I hope to be able to share stories like this one from the interactions of our congregation's mentors and Essex Heights students as our program develops and our mentors spend time with the children they are matched with. One Church, one School, one child, one hour add up to one big difference in a child's life.

**Hearing the Hurt:** All of us know what it feels like to be hurt by the words and actions of others. Sometimes the hurt is small and easy to deal with, other times it's more complicated; too painful to dismiss but seemingly too hard to bring up without confrontation or embarrassment. The complication can increase substantially when the hurt involves the Church – the community where we are supposed to find comfort and safety, love and reconciliation. Unfortunately, too often the Church is a place where a culture of 'niceness' makes conflict and resolution hard to navigate, leading people to either internalise their hurt and carry on, express their hurt inappropriately and cause relational damage, or simply leave.

During August and September, our congregation will engage in a process of 'Hearing the Hurt'. This is an innovative, locally generated program intended to address hurt within and beyond the St Luke's community. It is designed to help us as a congregation improve our ability to helpfully hear others' hurt and appropriately express our own, to work through conflict and towards reconciliation. It is also intended to enable us as a congregation to offer an opportunity to people

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who have been hurt and left, to express their hurt and have it heard in the hope of them receiving the gift of healing.

Congregation members will have the opportunity to learn about expressing and hearing hurt, resolving conflict, forgiving and being forgiven, and engaging reconciliation, particularly within a Christian framework. We'll look at how we can be friends to those who are suffering, working with the book of Job in worship and in Bible study through August and participating in services of hearing the hurt for our St Luke's community and later for the wider community.

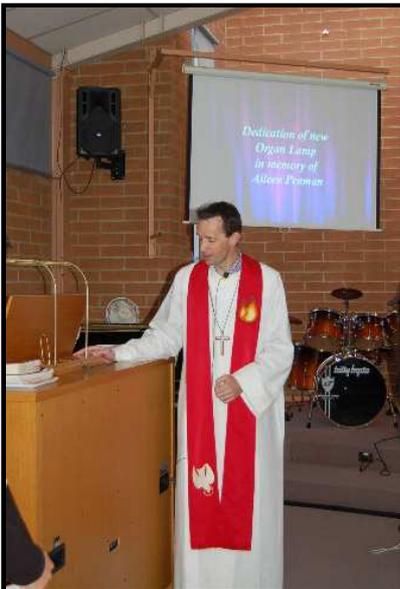
These programs are part of the Church Council's conscious efforts to engage with the broader

community in new ways; expressing the love of God known in the life of Jesus Christ and celebrated in our worship. This engagement is not aimed at recruiting new members or recalling old ones – its purpose is to help the congregation live out its calling to be the healing, reconciling Body of Christ in the world. We are not seeking to be heard but to listen, not to bring God's kingdom through our own efforts, but rather to turn our attention to the community around us and see where God is already at work and where we might find our place. I look forward to this time of exploration and discovery.

Grace and Peace,

*James*

## *Memorial for Aileen Penman*



It was decided that a suitable memorial remembering Aileen's faithful provision of music in this congregation for around 24 years would be a brass light over the organ. The organ being the main instrument that Aileen played for us at morning worship.

Many members of the congregation contributed to the cost of this solid brass lamp on an oak base, made especially for us in USA. The total cost was \$655, which included the lamp, transformer, brass plaque and transport costs, and this was fully covered by members' gifts. The lamp was dedicated at the morning service on 24<sup>th</sup> May.

It was good that some members of Aileen's family were able to be with us on this morning.

*Joy Burman*



## From the Church Council

It isn't so much what's on the table that matters,  
as what's on the chairs.

*W.S. Gilbert*

How true this is, and, regretfully, we will have some people missing from our chairs at Church Council meetings, after the elections on 28<sup>th</sup> June.

Barbara Fowler has decided it is time to 'rest' from Church Council meetings. Barbara has been a vital part of St Luke's for many, many years – as an Elder and Church Councillor. Barbara has been the Community Activities Ministry Group Convenor, and has kept us all up-to-date with the various community activities which happen around St Luke's. We thank Barbara for her friendship, support, and willingness to take on many tasks, quietly and (she hopes) unnoticed. Thank you, we really appreciate your devotion and guidance as you contribute to St Luke's life. We know you are not leaving the St Luke's family.

The other person missing from the chairs at Church Council will be John Sale, who has indicated he does not wish to continue as Convenor of the Property Ministry Group. We all know just how much energy, time, expertise and effort John has expended in the property area over the past years, the upgrade of the manse, the organisation of quotes and co-ordination of the workers, the general maintenance and myriad repairs and improvements that just 'happened' because John saw a need. You will be missed, John, but we understand you have other projects to occupy your time, as your move to your new place. You also have a special place in St Luke's family – so a big 'Thank You' from us all.

Thanks to all the Church Councillors who have continued to represent the various Ministry Groups, and are willing to stand for re-election. Each and every one of you is contributing in a vital way to the life of St Luke's.

The Youth Ministry Group is 'resting', at the moment. There will be discussions regarding the future direction for the age groups involved in this activity. We thank Corrie and David Symington, who along with David Prince have been the steering group. Thanks also to members of the congregation who have been a regular support.

The Church Council has made a decision to financially support the Tent of Nations and the work Daoud is doing. We will have a retiring offering, on the fourth Sunday, for the next three months. Information will be shared with the congregation on the Sunday when we light the Nassar candle.

Thanks, as always, to James and Corrie for their leadership, care and listening ears. We wish you and your families God's blessing.

*Eunice Magee*

## Dedication of Pulpit and Lectern Falls

We are so fortunate at St Luke's to have a wardrobe of beautiful banners that we can use to dress our church. We change them to indicate, visually, the seasons of the Church's year and to mark Sundays or periods of special celebration. I think most of us appreciate seeing something different on the wall from time to time.

Some of our banners have been made by clever hands within our congregation, some we have bought and some have been presented in memory of people who have worshipped here and they're all precious and fragile. They need taking down and 'resting' at intervals.

But I have been aware for some time that we have very few pulpit and lectern falls so that, when the few we have are being rested, there are no others to take their places. When, therefore, I decided that I wanted to give something to St Luke's in memory of Jim, I thought some new falls might be something that everybody could share and enjoy.

Most of you know that, after he retired, Jim spent a great deal of his time crisscrossing Australia in his ancient and beloved Nissan – his 'truck' as he called it. At first he went with groups, once with Jim and Margaret Wilson, but often just on his own or with his trusted navigator, Kevin.

From Kakadu to the Kimberley, Cape York to Albany and home via the Great Australian Bight, from Uluru, across deserts, sandy and stony, along the Birdsville and Gunbarrel tracks or no tracks at all, he left little of Australia untravelled.

As he went Jim wrestled with questions of faith and spirit. You might remember how Judith, at his funeral, recalled that he would never accept the easy answer and kept pushing delving further. As he travelled the outback that restless, questioning Jim found some of his answers and certainly what he felt to be his spiritual

home. He came to love the silences and the great emptiness and age of the inland, the rocks, the waterholes and waterfalls, the deserts, the forests and the wetlands.

He also grew to love the people of the outback, black and white, and he made Aboriginal friends who took him to places that tourists don't get to see. They also gave him a special didgeridoo and you will see it in use by the Music Group on occasions during future services. He would have wanted it to be played even though he never mastered it himself.

Jim founded and valued enormously, his group of men friends who called themselves 'The Retreads' who meet to talk and discuss and support each other – they are still doing this – and the GRASS group who met with him, even in the Nursing Home, to talk about the things that really matter.

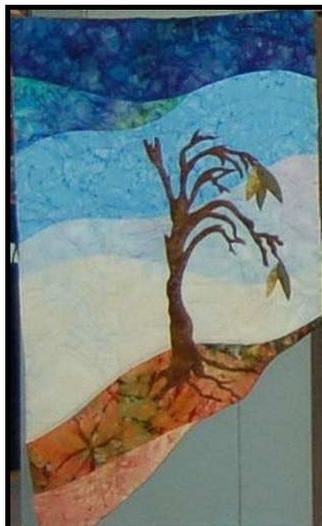
On his travels he took many hundreds of beautiful photos and I went to these to find something to give to St Luke's in his memory – for he also loved this place and you, the people of this community.

I found what I wanted but had no more chance of turning my idea into reality than flying to the moon, so I went to people who had the skills to do it for me. Heather Molinia listened to my ramblings and looked at the photos and out of it created the beautiful falls you see on the pulpit and lectern. I have asked James to accept them on behalf of the congregation and to dedicate them to the glory of God and in memory of Jim.

I do hope you will enjoy them – as reminders of the beauty and wonder of our land – or just as something restful to look at as you come to worship. And I hope that, as you do so, you will sometimes remember your friend, Jim McGeorge.

*Helen McGeorge*

*at the dedication of the Pulpit and Lectern Falls  
on 26<sup>th</sup> April, 2015*



## *A Brief Overview of Mary Sharp*

You all know me as Mary Sharp, a name I have had for the past fifty-two years, but I started life as Mary Staggard living in the semi rural area of East Oakleigh where my family ran a store at the corner of Huntingdale & North Roads near the railway gates. I don't remember a lot about life there but I know I started school at the East Oakleigh school.

Then the Second World War started and my father joined the army and my mother moved the family back to her home town of Geelong West. I spent the war years with my mother and brother close to numerous aunts and cousins living near the bakehouse which my grandfather had founded.

This was a happy childhood attending Ashby School, worshipping at Scots Church West Geelong, holidays at Lorne and Barwon Heads and a period of evacuation to Smeaton in central Victoria. I started secondary school at Geelong High School and rode my bike from Geelong West to East Geelong each day, this would be a challenge today but in war years traffic was very light in sleepy hollow.

When my Father was de-mobbed he bought a mixed grocery store in Ascot Vale, so we move back to Melbourne and I joined the busy Ascot Vale Presbyterian Church with its tennis club and PFA.

I developed life long friendships there and over the years weekends spent with five couples from PFA at their various locations round the State have been a highlight of our social calendar.

My secondary schooling was completed at the tiny Penleigh Girls School in Essendon. Today Penleigh combined with Essendon Grammar is a very large college but in my time it was very small, although we did have some luminary students such as the bookish Joan Hood, later Joan Kirner. In my final year at the school I was made Head Prefect and had to give pep talks to the school on important issues such as the need to wear hats and gloves to complete the school uniform, this was probably where I learned my dislike for public speaking.

After finishing secondary school I decided to take up nursing as a profession, not through the usual attachment to one training hospital but through the newly formed Melbourne School of Nursing where we trained in several hospitals including Royal Melbourne, Fairfield Infectious Diseases Hospital and the Children's. We still lived in nurses homes and experienced the life of all junior nurses, routine chores and strict discipline enforced by Charge Sisters and

Matrons: We were taught our place and not to step out of line. One morning I greeted Matron with 'Good Morning Matron' the response was 'I was not aware that I spoke to you nurse'.

On completing my certificate I undertook the second certificate, Midwifery, my family still finds it difficult to believe that there are people living today that I brought into the world.

At that stage I did not feel that hospital life was for me and I was selected to go on to the third certificate, Maternal & Child Health, completion of which opened the door to a rewarding and challenging career over many years.

I was fortunate to get a post with the Broadmeadows Council who gave me responsibility for Infant Welfare Centres at Broadmeadows, at that time a rapidly growing Housing Commission area, plus a part-time centre conducted in the Scout Hall at Oak Park as well as visiting new mums in newish areas like Greenvale and West Meadows. Broady were good people to work for and I enjoyed my years with them.

Late in 1960 I was invited to attend the Scotch College dedication by Rev Norman Faichney of the new pipe organ in the memorial hall, two and a bit years later I returned to the Scotch Chapel to be married, at that stage I did not know I would send three sons to the school.

In 1962 we built the Ashwood house which has served us well for over 50 years. We always had made roads, so avoided the winter mud problems experienced by so many St Luke's folk, we had electricity and water but were advised not to install a septic system as the sewer would be available within a year, it arrived years later and we had a pan service for those years; life in the sixties brought its challenges.

We had joined the Burwood Presbyterian Church but John McArthur said that was not acceptable and we should transfer to St Luke's, advice we have never regretted, we attended one service in Surrey Road and then the little timber building was relocated to Essex Road and the halls were built.

Our suburbs grew and new neighbours joined the community, so commuting to Broadmeadows daily in our Morris Mini also had its interesting aspects.

By 1965 we were thinking family so I left work at Broadmeadows, Peter joined the family and Rob arrived a few months later and the twin girls two years after that, four children under three meant that life was busy and then Graeme joined us four years later.

For my sins I learned to sew and progressed through making children's clothes to school costumes to formal dresses to bridesmaid frocks to bridal dresses and curtains for the family as they grew and established their own homes.

Once the family had got to school I was able to become a 'Mid Week Lady' at the tennis club but then I felt I should return to Maternal and Child Health Care, initially with Moorabbin and then Waverley, in a number of Centres for over 20 years. Some of you may remember me at Outlook Road.

Norma Robinson suggested to me that I should take the role of Pastoral Care Co-ordinator at St Luke's, 'there isn't much in it' but Brace Bateman had other ideas and Pastoral Care became a major time

consumer, I am still involved in Pastoral Care but not in the co-ordinator role.

Although I have been retired for many years I still run across mothers who tell me of their 'baby's' progress, often they are now parents themselves. Infant welfare has been a most rewarding career.

In recent years we have received enormous support from St Luke's. At times of family tragedy Ineke, and later Judith, gave us strength to get through.

Our role as hands-on grandparents for our grandchildren following the tragic death of Elise is gradually easing and life is less hectic.

All in all, I have been very fortunate to have enjoyed a loving family, lifelong friends, a rewarding career and a wonderfully supportive community at St Luke's.

*Sharp Family*

## *Book Review*

One of the most interesting plane trips I have ever had was from Armadale to Sydney. I was seated next to a Sikh (his head dress gave it away). I told him that I knew next to nothing about the Sikh faith and asked him if he would explain it to me, something he was very happy to do. Amongst other things, he said that Sikhs were different to Christians in that they do good for the sake of doing good whereas Christians only do good so as not to go to hell. He was surprised when I told him that many Christians I knew did not believe literally in hell and so we explored something of the differences in belief and practice within Christianity. This led him to explain differences between various branches of Sikhism.

Unfortunately such opportunities do not happen often enough. But there is a need for us to better understand the faith which underpins the lives of many of our neighbours. My teenage years were spent either in boarding school, a community of people very homogenous in faith matters, or at home in Balaclava where the population at that time were mostly main-stream Christians. What a different community we live in today. I was recently surprised to see a Mormon church in a moderately sized country town. Our contemporary society is much more diverse than the one I used to live in.

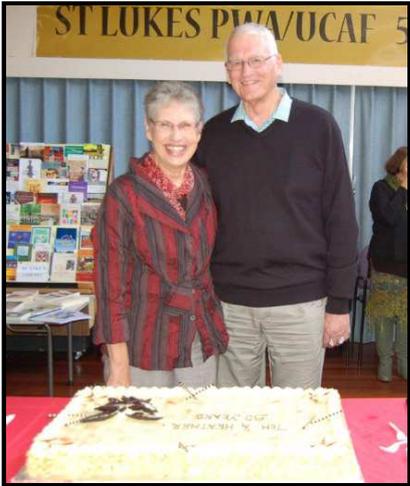
What do we know of the faiths of the people who now live around us? There is a book in the St Luke's library which can help: 'Does God live in the suburbs?' The book reports conversations between the author and individuals drawn from most of the major faiths practiced in Melbourne. The people chosen to be interviewed are not 'the professionals' of the faith groups but are mostly laypeople with a strong commitment to their faith. Interestingly the person chosen to speak about the Uniting Church was Margaret Watson, a long time member of St Luke's and known to many of us.

The author reports that 'Each interviewee was asked a set of common questions covering personal background, history of the faith, beliefs and values, rituals and the meaning of God' (p.xii). However, there is great deal of variability in the chapters explaining the various faiths. The issues of importance to the individuals being interviewed do come through quite strongly. Some talk about their personal devotional life: 'When we go on holidays, we always give thanks to God for the opportunity of going, and pray for his presence with us.' Others reveal their beliefs about how we should be living out our faith.

In short this is an interesting book for us to explore so that we have a better understanding of the faith and practices of the people who now form our community. I hope you find it as informative as I did.

*David Symington*

# CONGRATULATIONS!



In April, Heather and Tom Spurling celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary, and the St Luke's family were there to help them enjoy their special time.

We all enjoyed the cake - thank you!

Our love and best wishes to you both for many more years of happiness together!



## Tuesday Circle

A very successful 'Big Morning Tea' was held in June raising money for cancer research. The speaker was Val Worrell, who is the world champion hammer thrower in the over 80 category, and lives locally at Rowville. We had lots of fun and raised \$299.

*Barbara Fowler*



## Church Managers' Door Roster 2015

2015	<i>Captain</i>	<i>Team Members</i>		
JANUARY	Byron Savory	Janice Savory	Rena Douglas	Arthur McQuiggin
FEBRUARY	Gavin Faichney	Ros Faichney	Tom Spurling	Heather Spurling
MARCH	Don Sharp	Mary Sharp	Yvonne Smith	Laurie Smith
APRIL	John Sale	Jean Sale	Tony Lucas	Scilla Lucas
MAY	Ian Jobling	Margaret Wilson	Gwen Kay	Yvonne Jeffs
JUNE	Jim Douglas	Clair Kendall	Ken Kendall	Rennus Crossley
JULY	Geoff Brien		Gay Taylor	Alan Taylor
AUGUST	Edna Deans	Lois Brown	Sandra Matheson	Graham Lawrence
SEPTEMBER	Eunice Magee	Beverly McArthur	June Bann	Roger Browne
OCTOBER	David Symington	Allan Clausen		
NOVEMBER	Barbara Fowler	Geoff Swan	David Langley	Ann Langley
DECEMBER	Byron Savory	Janice Savory	Rena Douglas	Arthur McQuiggin

*Managers are expected to be in attendance at least 30 minutes before the commencement of any service.*

*Should a manager be unable to attend with their team, they are expected to arrange a substitute and advise their team.*

*More people are required to participate in this important activity, please encourage others to consider.*

*Everyone is expected to familiarise themselves with the 'Duties of Door Managers' by reading the orange folder.*

*For more information, please speak to Bob Kay, 9836 5520.*

**ADDITIONAL PEOPLE ARE REQUIRED FOR THIS ROSTER AS A TEAM OF FIVE WOULD BE IDEAL.**

### **OPPORTUNITY SHOP**

*July 2015*

A reminder that St Luke's will be at the Lions Club Opportunity Shop, Wadham Parade, Mount Waverley from:

**Monday 20<sup>th</sup> July to Friday 24<sup>th</sup> July.**

Suitable goods include – good quality clean winter clothing, linen, DVD's, bric a brac, kitchen items, books, vases, etc.

Goods need to be to Lois Brown by Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> July. Please ring 9808 1224 to arrange a suitable time to deliver goods.

If you are available for a shift at the shop (three hours or part thereof) contact Rosemary McQuiggin, 9890 0919, to put your name on her roster.

This is an opportunity for St Luke's to receive outside money to meet our financial commitments and we appreciate your help.

*Lois Brown*