

From the Minister

Greetings folks!

What a joy it is to be able to reach out to you through this column. I hope you have been able to enjoy the warm sunny spring days.

In our worship for the past few weeks we have been invited through the lectionary readings to dwell on hard and complex scripture readings which remind us to slowly and carefully discern the text rather than settling on a quick interpretation or verse-picking.

We have been reading on Jeremiah's text on *The Potter* (Jeremiah 11: 1-11), Jesus's *Parables of the Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin* (Luke 15: 1-10) and the *Parable of the Shrewd Manager* (Luke 16: 1-13).

In every reading there was a challenge of us to connect ourselves to the stories, to reflect on our attitude towards people or things around us. God is showing us how God sees us and all creation as precious, irreplaceable beings but at the same time continuously evolving and transforming. This is our call in our discipleship where we are repeatedly committing ourselves to learn and adapt, to find a new way of seeing and doing things, even from unexpected places and people.

As I continue to serve this congregation, I am deeply grateful for the responses and the words we shared during morning teas and in pastoral visitations or pastoral conversations. Nothing is more rewarding than to see how the Word sparks your thinking and furthers conversation, or the way your eyes twinkle as I brought the Sacrament of Lord's Supper to your home. I've come to know that some of you have experienced transitions from different states and congregations to come here at Hampton. Some of you have experienced life changing transformation due to aging and health issues. Every day we are reminded through the people around us, mostly from the younger generations, about how they think and approach things that are different than ours. In all that, I can hear a heavy sigh.

Lately with the Meditation group on Monday I have been connecting with those who come from different churches. We often shared how life styles can affect the way we

worship and see our faith; that while people are still looking for spiritual enlightenment, many are questioning the way traditional church worship connecting us to the deeper questions. They, too, had been in transition and transformative journey.

Last week, I attended one of the quarterly Presbytery

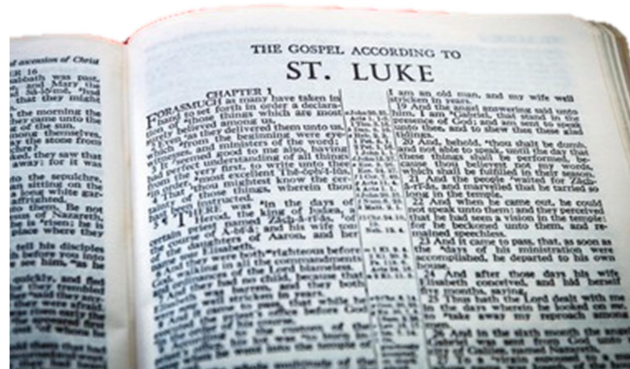
Meetings. There we heard some of our school chaplains within the Presbytery shared their experiences and thoughts. While this talk may not have a direct impact on our congregational life, it brings us a fresh vision of how the bulk of evangelism is no longer conducted in the church but could be in our schools.

So, I will conclude this sharing by inviting you to pray together for this transition period, not only for the church in Hampton or the Bayside Cluster, but also for many of us who are facing various challenges. We will pray particularly for Heather and Alan who are in care in separate hospitals at the moment, for Elizabeth, Evelyn, Margaret W, John and Helen, Lucy and Emily, and Ann.

May blessing and laughter and loving be yours.

The love of a Great God who names you and holds you while the earth turns and the flowers grow, this day, this night, this moment and forever.

Kharis Abadani



Hampton Uniting Church



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www.hamptonunitingchurch.wix.com/hampton-uca

WORSHIP Sundays 10am

Zoom <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/4111712080> Passcode uevX6a

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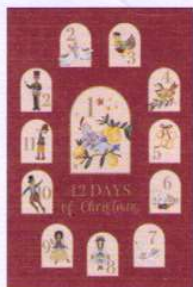
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Let Christmas wishes support those in need.



1 12 Days of Christmas

Sentiment: May the festive season bring only happiness and joy to you and your loved ones.



2 Australian Native Flora (Mixed Pack)

Native Flora sentiment: May you have a wonderful Christmas and a happy New Year.

Floral Joy sentiment: May the joy and peace of Christmas be yours throughout the year.

Your purchase helps people in crisis this Christmas.

Call us
1800 668 426

Visit
unitingvictas.org.au/christmas-cards



3 Christmas Bauble

Sentiment: Wishing you a very Merry Christmas and a joyous New Year.



4 Nativity

Sentiment: May peace be known in our hearts and homes, in our neighbourhoods, and in all nations this Christmas.

Bible Verse: 'He came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near.' Ephesians 2:17 (NRSV)



5 Peace Dove

Sentiment: May happiness be yours during the season of goodwill and may the new year bring peace and joy to you and your loved ones.

Each pack of 10 cards is only \$15. Free shipping included on all orders.



Scan to
order online.

If you are interested, please contact Margaret Ackland on 0429 136 629 or 9598 0190 or email margackland@bigpond.com by October 26, indicating your card choices and the number of packs required.



Uniting is the community services organisation of the Uniting Church in Victoria and Tasmania.



Uniting

Frontier Services BBQ

Our annual Frontier Services BBQ lunch was held on Sunday 7 September. Although only a small group, those present enjoyed their soup, BBQ lunch and a delicious dessert, all shared with much happy conversation.



Monies raised were combined with those from our last luncheon and forwarded on to Frontier Services. Thank you to Margaret and Ian for cooking and to those who helped on the day.

Online giving

Online giving is quite straightforward to organise and many of our congregational members now do so for their weekly offering. You can too! Simply set up a Direct Debit as follows:

Westpac BSB 033 055 A/c No: 112 529
Hampton Uniting Church

Please identify your payment as "Offering". Thank you!

Spring forward

Don't forget to set your clocks an hour ahead when you go to bed on Saturday 4th October, because Daylight Saving starts at 3am on Sunday 5th October. Although you 'lose' an hour's sleep, it does mean that summer is approaching... and more, if you forget, you will miss our 10am service!



Zoom in to worship

Our in-person worship services are also available via Zoom 10am Sundays.



To join simply copy or click on this link:

<https://zoom.us/j/4111712080>

Passcode uevX6a

To join in using your phone only, call 7018 2005 and when prompted enter Meeting ID 4111 712 080 # #
To mute/unmute yourself press *6

International Day of Non-Violence

On Thursday 2 October we celebrate the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi who helped bring forward the notion of "non-violence," and the tremendous impact this form of social response has had all over the world in the last century.

In 2007 the UN designated his birthday to commemorate an International Day of Non-Violence.



A Franciscan Blessing

May God bless you with **discomfort**
at easy answers, half-truths
and superficial relationships
so that you may live deep within your heart.

May God bless you with **anger**
at injustice, oppression
and exploitation of people
so that you may work for justice, freedom and peace.

May God bless you with **tears**
to shed for those who suffer pain,
rejection, hunger and war
so that you may reach out your hand to comfort them
and turn their pain to joy.

May God bless you with enough **foolishness**
to believe that you can make a difference in the world.
so that you can do what others claim cannot be done:
to bring justice and kindness to all our children and the poor.

Through the Lens Photographic Exhibition

The Southern Suburbs and Caulfield Photographic Societies' Photographic Exhibition at Murrumbidgee Uniting Church, 117 Murrumbidgee Road, will feature the work of award-winning photographers. It opens on Thursday 9 October from 7 to 8:30pm with guest speaker Vicki Moritz, acclaimed photographer and judge.

(If you would like to attend the opening, please RSVP by Monday 6 October to connect@murrumbidgeeuniting.org.au)

The exhibition will run from 9 to 19 October, open Sundays to Tuesdays from 12 to 4pm, and Thursdays to Saturdays from 1 to 5pm. Artist talks will be held on Saturdays 11 and 18 October from 2 to 3pm, where photographers from both clubs will share insights into their creative journeys.

Synod 2025

The Synod meets about every 18 months to hear reports, proposals and other matters that concern the general direction and administration of the Church's life. About 300 members attended Synod 2025 at the beginning of September – all of whom were appointed by their presbyteries. If you would like to know more, visit <https://victas.uca.org.au/?s=synod+2025> for many topic summaries and lots of further information.



Rev Mat Harry from the Synod's *equipping Leadership for Mission* project writes that recent meeting was "nothing short of a cultural shift. The Spirit is moving – even captured in the theme *Pilgrims of the Spirit*!"

By consensus the Synod decided to work intentionally on five goals (including renewing discipleship, and establishing at least five new Christian communities). All five of these are connected, overlapping and woven together in ways that mean when we work on one, we work on others.

Coordinated Ministries:

To enable coordinated ministry and mission in geographic areas such as Local Government Areas by 2030 to be attentive to renewing discipleship, and to the life and needs of the local context;

Respecting Country:

To honour the Church's Covenant with the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress, by the end of 2028 all communities of faith will listen to and be able to tell about some of the histories of the Country on which they are located, and will be invited to develop local and appropriate ways to respond;

Intercultural Leadership:

By 2028 to:

- be providing appropriate intercultural leadership formation and equipping for all ministry agents and congregations; and
- develop intercultural networks for worship, witness and service;

All-Age Growth:

To have at least one all-age community of faith that is interactive, diverse, inclusive and transformative in 80% of Coordinated Ministries by 2030;

New Communities of Faith:

To establish at least five new Christian communities by 2030.

This is a huge cultural shift. There will be a huge amount of work to be done, but consensus on the floor of Synod for such a priority is a change to be celebrated.

The UCA's response to the crisis in Palestine

Since the horrific attack on Israel by Hamas militants on 7 October 2023, followed by the devastating military retaliation by Israel in Gaza, the Uniting Church in Australia Assembly has sought to respond to a worsening conflict situation with a commitment to justice and peace.



The Assembly has spoken out on the unfolding humanitarian crisis, international law, the release of hostages, its rejection of antisemitism and racism, and the urgent need for a just and lasting peace for all in Palestine and Israel. These actions are grounded in our Christian faith and in our commitments to justice, human rights and human dignity. They build on long-standing official UCA positions on Palestine and Israel going back to 2008.

As the Uniting Church in Australia, the Assembly calls for:

- An immediate ceasefire and the uninhibited flow of humanitarian aid.
- An end to the occupation of Palestine, and the lifting of the unlawful blockade on Gaza.
- The immediate release of all Israeli hostages, and all Palestinians held without charge or trial.
- Accountability, including sanctions, where international law is violated.
- The protection and affirmation of Palestinian rights and freedoms.
- Justice through the International Criminal Court and International Court of Justice.
- An end to any remaining weapons exports to Israel and greater transparency over Australia's weapon exports.
- A renewed international commitment to a just and lasting peace.



Fear not

The Bible is packed with references urging us to 'fear not'. Why? Perhaps those who lived in biblical times were continually afraid?

I would be, if I had to live in those times.

Everything was edgy. Subsistence living made even the weather terrifying and health was an ongoing concern.

Dangers abounded, from lions and adders, through plague and pestilence, to famine and warfare. The unknowns were many.

Psalm 91 is sometimes cited as *"the most powerful prayer in the Bible"* as it declares safety, protection and a long life would be given to those who *"abide in the shadow of the Almighty"*.

Recently I came across a discussion about another facet of fear I hadn't considered before: self-consciousness.

This trait was described as a *"cruel thief in the night who robs us of success"* that, if overcome, enabled one to *"evolve from a person into a personality"*.

No abiding in shadows here, then.

This new perspective seemed to me to be putting forward a challenge for openness in our faith: a sharing with others of God's role in our lives, not just keeping it quietly to ourselves.

A challenge, indeed, to 'fear not.'

Ian Menzies

Birthday greetings

Congratulations to those who are celebrating birthdays this month:

- 28 September **Malcolm Adams**
- 15 October **Gail Dinning**
- 18 October **Heather Wynne**
- 20 October **Anneke Oppewal**
- 22 October **Tim Angus**



If you want the rainbow,
you've got to put up with the rain.



LECTIO DIVINA

Lectio (reading),
Meditatio (reflection),
Oratio (response), and
Contemplatio (rest)
are the four phases of
Lectio Divina (Divine Reading)

Our Lectio Divina group
meets in the Parish Centre
from 2-4:30pm on the second
Wednesday of each month.

All welcome

Presbytery

The Presbytery met by Zoom this month, with many highlights including the recognition of Rev Peter Rivett as a UCA Minister. Peter is currently Chaplain at the Elsternwick campus of Wesley College.

An inspiring discussion of the work of chaplains followed including outlining some practices being employed to engage students in learning about life and witness in the church.

Another highlight was the appointment of the Team Leader for the Casey-Cardinia Region, Rev Chang-Bae Byun.

A summary of the recent Synod was given and the meeting concluded with a hope for work on relevant and renewed church life to be inviting and relevant to young members.

Ailsa Drent



CHRISTIAN MEDITATION

Nurturing inner peace and deeper spiritual awareness

Mondays at 10 am or simply join us for Morning Tea at 10:45 am

The Bondage of Separation

A Reflection on Luke 16:19-31

the Gospel Reading for Sunday 28 September 2025

Without noticing, oh so subtly, we drift away. We step around each other, uncertain how to connect, not wanting to interfere, to bear responsibility, to navigate the uncertainties. We feel the chill of increasing distance, and snuggle up closer to our jobs, our worldwide web of acquaintances, our witty and clever opinions. Like adapting to the earth's dizzying spin, we barely notice how we slide inch by inch by slippery inch from fundamental human connections that are given to keep us steady in the world. We don't see or value the bridges God puts between us and among us, let alone walk across them. Even among others, we live as though alone. We think it is the life we prefer, going it alone, making our own private choices, sweet solitude becoming isolation. We place great value on being independent and free. Jesus, not so much.

He tells of a rich man, who has everything he wants and more. He dresses in purple and fine linen and feasts sumptuously every day. He has learned not to notice a poor man at his gate. Dressed in rags, longing for food and friendship, his body covered with sores, he is attended to only by the dogs who come to lick him. Both men die, that great leveller, and the scales fall away from the rich man's eyes. From a distance, he sees his poor neighbour Lazarus now being held and soothed by Abraham. Even now the rich man wonders not about his earlier blindness or his calloused treatment of Lazarus, but how Lazarus might serve him in his own distress. *"Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am in agony in these flames."*

But a great chasm lies between them, too wide now to be crossed. Such is the bondage of sustained separation, the utter depletion of our souls when we widen the zones of comfort around us and stay blind to each other's need. Our independence strangles us, cutting off our breath and silencing our solidarity. Every choice we make – where we live and shop and with whom we align ourselves, whether we speak up or turn and walk away – either widens or reduces the chasm between us. What we are able to SEE is determined by what we are striving to BE.

What we are able to SEE
is determined by what we are striving to BE

The places we go, or refuse to go; the words we use, or refuse to use; the actions we take, or choose not to take; these create the condition of our soul. Whether or not anyone walks beside us, we do not journey alone. Moment by moment, choice by choice, we build or bring down bridges of connection. We strengthen the bondage of our separation or we set each other free.

From the blog at InwardOutward.com



Agnusday appears with permission of Agnusday.org

October Rosters

Worship

October 26

Kharis Abadani

Anneke Oppewal

Communion

Margaret Pollock

Lectionary

October 5

Margaret

Ackland

Colour: Green

Lamentations 1:1-6

Psalms 137

2 Timothy 1:1-14

Luke 17:5-10

October 12

Gail Dinning

Colour: Green

Jeremiah 29:1, 4-7

Psalms 66:1-12

2 Timothy 2:8-15

Luke 17:11-19

October 19

Sue Dowling

Colour: Green

Jeremiah 31:27-34

Psalms 119:97-104

2 Timothy 3:14 - 4:5

Luke 18:1-8

October 26

Ian Menzies

Colour: Green

Joel 2:23-32

Psalms 65

2 Timothy 4:6-8, 16-18

Luke 18:9-14

There is a fine line
between a
numerator
and a denominator.

(Only a fraction
of people
will find this funny)

The Last Word

Most people are of an age where they use their phone camera to document the good times in their lives.

I use my phone to take pictures of labels that I can't read so I can enlarge the print.