

# INTERACT

The Magazine of the Endeavour Hills Uniting Church

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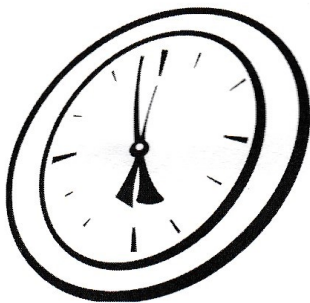
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
SAFER THAN A KNOWN WAY .....	3
BEING SALT AND LIGHT .....	5
THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH.....	6
ALL HEAVEN’S MEDIA.....	7
GIVING WHEN WE THINK WE HAVE NOTHING TO GIVE .....	8
CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING.....	9
QUOTES & COMMENTS .....	10
‘BE HOLY, BECAUSE I THE LORD YOUR GOD AM HOLY’ .....	11
NOTICE BOARD .....	12-13
FIRST FRIDAY LUNCH .....	14
ENDEAVOUR HILLS UNITINGCARE NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE.....	14
GIVING LOTS? GOOD FOR YOU! .....	15
A MOMENT WITH LAULETI.....	16-17
FAITH .....	18
CARTOON CORNER.....	19
DIFFERENT GIVERS, DIFFERENT GIFTS .....	20
THE HOLY SPIRIT .....	21
SHARING GOD’S BLESSINGS .....	23
FOR OUR YOUNG PEOPLE .....	25
LECTIONARY FOR FEBRUARY .....	26
FAMILY PRAYER MINISTRY .....	27
PLANNED GIVING .....	27
ROSTERS.....	28-29
ENDEAVOUR HILLS UNITING CHURCH SERVICE TIMES .....	30
PRAYER CHAIN.....	30
CHURCH COUNCIL AND OFFICE-BEARERS.....	31
INTERACT PUBLICATION AND DEADLINE DATES .....	BACK COVER

Please note:

The views in the articles included in this publication are not necessarily those held by the  
Endeavour Hills Uniting Church.

## SAFER THAN A KNOWN WAY



Historians tell us that on New Year's Eve in the year 1000, a crowd gathered in Rome, waiting for the world to end. Midnight came and went. Finally, Pope Sylvester II blessed the crowd and sent them home. More recently, in 1999 we prepared for Y2K and expected all our computers to crash. Then in 2012 many wondered what the end of the Mayan calendar might portend. But, despite the media

coverage and all our preparations, nothing happened. (I'm not so sure that God follows our calendars, anyway.)

Although we have navigated dozens of "end times" in human history, many people still have "end time" apprehensions. Things seem to be getting out of hand. Climate change, rogue nations with chemical weapons, corporate downsizing, asteroids — what's next?

Maybe you were glad to see the New Year arrive: out with the old, in with the new. We got out the noisemakers at the stroke of midnight. But later in the day we noticed not much had changed. The bills are still there. The "question" in the x-rays is unresolved. The conflict with your in-laws or colleague continues to fester.

In Jeremiah's time, things weren't going all that well either. Moral deterioration, Baal worship, corruption in government: each had exacted its toll on the spiritual fibre of the nation. A century earlier, the Northern Kingdom had fallen into the hands of the Assyrians. Then Judah was conquered by the Babylonians and thousands of Jews were sent into exile. The country was in a shambles.

In the midst of all that, God raises up a prophet to speak God's word to the people. "Sing aloud with gladness," Jeremiah shouts. He tells the desolate to

*(Continued on page 4)*

## **SAFER THAN A KNOWN WAY**

rejoice. He urges the fearful to take heart and the despairing to celebrate. What is this, the power of positive thinking?

We'd like to believe that. We who have been raised on the therapeutic model are led to believe that progress in life is psychological; that success is dependent upon our inner states. We create our own future, if only we believe in it enough.

But in reality, I am not the 'master of my fate', nor 'the captain of my soul.' "Bootstraps religion" is on a collision course with the God of the Bible. The truth is, God is God and we're not. God is guiding history.

There's more. God's involvement is more than a vague influence; it is an active, purposeful, personal involvement. The God of the Bible is not a spectator God who sends sympathy cards when we go through deep waters; God goes there with us.

The coming of Christ at Christmas was not accidental; it was the fulfilment of promises made by God over the centuries; and at Christmas, God leaves the safe immunity of heaven and takes on the world's suffering and pain.

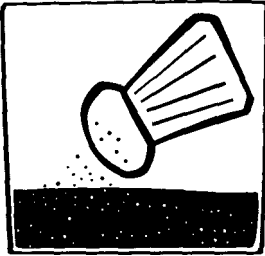
Faithfulness to faithless people is costly, but God keeps every promise because God actively and personally works in history to ensure that it is so.

During a Christmas broadcast in 1939, King George VI quoted the following lines from a book by Louise Haskins: "And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year: 'Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.' And he replied: 'Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of God. That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way.'"

You do not know what path lies ahead, what joy and what pain the new year shall bring. Even now, as you look at your life you may be anxious for tomorrow. To you, my friend, God is saying the words first spoken through Jeremiah: "Sing with gladness. Rejoice in the days that are coming." The God of history who guides the stars in their courses and our steps day by day is the God who transforms a community of hurt into a community of hope.

— *Daniel Thimell, excerpted with permission from The Clergy Journal, © Logos Productions.*

# BEING SALT AND LIGHT



Juan is the salt of the earth. In any group, his presence is unobtrusive but essential. Things seem bland when he is gone. He isn't fancy, pretentious, or expensive, but through his steady presence, his words, and his deeds, flavour is added to our lives.

He doesn't do it by calling attention to himself. He seems to know that you don't need too much of him.

He attends to what is needed, speaks a choice word, gives you freedom to be yourself, and stays around long enough to help. He isn't silent, though. You know his faith and what he stands for. He is always ready to spread that word around.

And Maya — she is the light of our lives. Everything brightens when she walks into the room. She finds good in the worst people. She finds hope in the darkest moment. She is not a blaring, blinding light, but a warm fire we are drawn to.

It's not just our little circle that benefits from her joyous countenance. She pays attention to everyone. She notices their particular struggle against the dark, their fear of the future, their confusion in the present, their regret of the past. She looks at it with them until they glimpse some hope, some possibility of change. She never pretends to be the source of light. She is reflecting the light of Christ, which fuels her life. And she lets you know that; not through T-shirts and bumper stickers, but in relationships.

People like this come to mind when I read Jesus' words in Matthew 5 about salt and light and about practising our righteousness before others. But these words also make me realise how private we are about our faith.

Several years ago, folks were wearing bracelets with the initials WWJD for "What would Jesus do?" It's not a bad question. But it's interesting how we don't ask, "What would Jesus say?" Lots of us tend to shy away from talking about our faith. We are terribly sensitive about lights that glare in people's faces; to too much salt dumped into a recipe. We shun the kind of righteousness that only demonstrates everyone else's faults.

*(Continued on page 6)*

*(Continued from page 5)*

## **BEING SALT AND LIGHT**

My hunch is that lots of us don't say much because we don't want to be associated with a narrow Christianity. We don't want to impose our beliefs on others or to look disrespectful, so we treat our faith as a private affair. What starts out as a sign of healthy respect can lead to a silence that prevents us from speaking a word of hope when people really need it.

For Jesus, the practice of faith was a public affair. He told his followers, "You are the salt of the earth. You are the light of the world." His followers were capable of changing the whole world. And he knew that the only way anyone would know Christ was through the words and deeds of those who continued his work after he was gone.

And so his words apply to us, "Let your light so shine...Practice your righteousness before others." We should constantly ask ourselves how we are salt and light and a demonstration of the gospel to others, both verbally and in our actions.

Think for a moment: when do you share your faith? When is that hard for you? Don't be afraid. Tell friends and strangers about the Christ you know, who welcomes everyone, who offers freedom from the past and hope for the future, who calls us to work for a world that is more just.

So be salt and light for others. It's no good to keep such gifts on the shelf, or under a basket, or to let them go stale. It is your business to share what you have. You are the bearer of Christ's grace, which is the crucial ingredient to abundant life.

— Anne D. McKee, *excerpted with permission from The Minister's Annual Manual*, © Logos Productions.

## **THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH**

**Worry does not empty tomorrow of its  
sorrow; it empties today of its strength.**

*Corrie ten Boom*

# ALL HEAVEN'S MEDIA



We were travelling up the highway on the way to camp on the Murray. We stopped in a small country town for supplies, and as we walked up the street we came to a butcher's shop. There was a large hand-written sign on the window not advertising bargains but exclaiming, "IT'S A BOY!" The proud butcher wanted his customers and all who passed by to know his good news.

Today, emails, text messages, social media, letters and cards celebrate good news. Some people even write messages in the sky. Christmas is a season of good news, exciting news of the joyous gift of the Lord Jesus coming as a tiny baby, born in the little town of Bethlehem. Prophets

and the faithful had waited and hoped for centuries for a saviour to come – the promised Messiah. First this news came to humble shepherds by an angel as they minded their flocks by night. "This very day in David's town was born your saviour who is Christ, the Lord." At that all of heaven erupted in one glorious chorus of praise.

**Reflection:** At Christmas we celebrated the great news of the coming of Jesus with carol-singing, worship, nativity plays and gifts. In many of our churches, gifts were given to those most in need. Reflecting on the joy we experienced over Christmas, may we remember the hope God has for the church and the whole human race – Glory to God, peace and goodwill among all humankind! Having received so much at Christmas, we can begin 2014 filled with the spirit of joy and generosity.

*Bill Pugh*

# GIVING WHEN WE THINK WE HAVE NOTHING TO GIVE



The other week I was walking down Swanston Street on my lunch break looking in all the shops for potential gifts I might buy for members of my family. The usual thoughts of how much to spend and what each individual member would like were racing through my head. At that moment, I saw a young girl of about 15 sitting cross-legged on the sidewalk. She

held a sign asking for money.

My heart sank and I thought: Shame on me! I was caught up in how much I have to spend on my family but then I realised that this 'how much' would actually be an abundance to someone like this young girl. Unfortunately I only had under \$10 on me to give her and the reality is that this would not have even bought her more than a coffee. I really wanted to stop and ask her what I could do for her but realised I would be over-involving myself. Or would I?

This moment has stayed with me for the last week or so and is a reminder to me that I am blessed. It's times like these that those of us with jobs and financial security can reflect on what we do have and be grateful – because it is abundantly more than many others. Imagine being 15 years old, homeless and alone over Christmas.

**Reflection:** I pray for all those who were alone and didn't feel the love they deserve over the period we call the 'happy season'. In 2014, may our hearts be open to the people society so often forgets.

*Laura Lindsay*



# CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

11th December 2013



Devotions were led by Gavin Bartholomeusz.

**Ministers report.** Pam Cowley will lead the service on 29th December and Elke Beecher on Sunday 12th January. Elke wishes to pursue accreditation as a lay preacher and Church Council supports her in this.

**Worship report.** Some people are not happy with lighting candles during prayer time. We will continue to pray for 3 families each week but the lighting of candles will be optional.

**Property and Finance.** There is concern that people rostered for cleaning do not have sufficient time to clean the floors adequately. Decisions need to be made regarding cleaning when the childcare centre is no longer operating.

**Childcare.** A group from Church Council will meet the staff at the end of the last day to provide a meal and present gifts and certificates. A service of thanksgiving for the work of the Childcare Centre will be held on Sunday 22nd December. A small group of Church Council and Property and Finance committee members will meet in the New Year to discuss options for use of the Childcare Centre space.

**Fundraising.** Lauleti has discussed with our families from the Philippines the possibility of some fundraising for the victims of the typhoon.

**Web Site.** We have been included in an all-inclusive church web site.

*Judy Hopkins.  
Minutes Secretary.*

## QUOTES AND COMMENTS

The Star of Bethlehem plant is a lily that grows in several places around the world. The white star-shaped flower gives the plant its name. The bulbs, similar to onions or garlic, are often eaten in Syria, Israel, and Palestine, generally as a boiled vegetable.

*www.wikipedia.com*

We shall not cease from exploration  
And the end of all our exploring  
Will be to arrive where we started  
And know the place for the first time.

*T.S. Eliot, "Four Quartets: Little Gidding"*

The Bible's system of chapters was introduced in 1238 by Cardinal Hugo de S. Caro, while the verse notations were added in 1551 by Robertus Stephanus, after the advent of printing.

*www.cofcnet.org*

The spirit of Christmas needs to be superseded by the Spirit of Christ. The spirit of Christmas is annual; the Spirit of Christ is eternal. The spirit of Christmas is sentimental; the Spirit of Christ is supernatural. The spirit of Christmas is a human product; the Spirit of Christ is a divine person. That makes all the difference in the world.

*Stuart Briscoe*

Humour is like a feather pillow. It is filled with what is easy to get but gives great comfort.

*- Irish proverb*

The nature of water is yielding, and that of a stone is hard. Yet if you hang up a bottle filled with water above the stone so that the water drips drop by drop, it will wear a hole in the stone. In the same way the word of God is tender, and our heart is hard. So when people hear the word of God frequently, their hearts are opened to the fear of God.

*Abba Poeman*

You gain strength, courage and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You are able to say to yourself, "I have lived through this horror. I can take the next thing that comes along." You must do the thing you think you cannot do.

*- Eleanor Roosevelt*

God does not wait for us to become perfect and in possession of only high, pure thoughts and unmixed motives before [moving] through us. God waits only for the sign of faith.

*Eugenia Price*

# 'BE HOLY, BECAUSE I THE LORD YOUR GOD AM HOLY'

(LEVITICUS 19:2)

'Make every effort to live in peace with all and to be holy. Without holiness no one will see the Lord' (Hebrews 12:14).

The immense importance of 'adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour' (Titus 2:10) and making it lovely and beautiful by our daily habits and tempers, has been far too much overlooked. Why do secular, worldly people complain that so-called 'religious' persons lack sweetness of temper, kind-heartedness, unselfish and good-natured attributes, like those who make no profession of religion? Yet sanctification, in its place and proportion, is quite as important as justification. Sound evangelical and Protestant doctrine is useless if it is not accompanied by living a holy life. It is worse than useless, it does positive harm. It is despised by secular people of the world as an unreal and hollow thing, and brings religion into contempt. Much prayer is needed for a thorough revival of scriptural holiness. We need to search the Scriptures more with importunate prayer and to become more diligent in trying to find out what is 'the mind of the Spirit'.

What is the nature of true practical holiness? Holiness is the habit of being of one mind with God—the mind of God/Christ as described in Scripture. It is the habit of agreeing with God's judgement, hating what He hates, loving what He loves, and measuring everything in this world by the standard of His Word. The person who most entirely agrees with God, is the most holy person.

A holy person will:

- endeavour to shun every known sin and to keep every known commandment. 'I delight in the law of God after the inward man.' (Romans 7:22)
- strive to be like our Lord Jesus Christ
- seek meekness, the fruit of the Spirit, temperance and self-denial
- seek charity and brotherly kindness and a spirit of mercy and benevolence
- seek purity of heart with humility and have much faith in the Word of God
- finally a holy person will seek spiritual-mindedness. My soul clings to you; your right hand upholds me (Psalm 63:8) 'You are my portion O Lord: I have promised to obey Your Words' (Psalm 119:57).

Hebrews 12:14 does not teach that a sinner must be sinless to be saved. Salvation should result in a changed life through repentance (2 Corinthians: 17).

*Contributed by Laksman Pethiyagoda*

# Notice Board

## Sammy Stamp



Please save your used stamps for the Sammy Stamp Appeal—this has raised more than \$600,000 for needy

causes since it began.

Our thanks to Warren Ward who makes sure the stamps are not damaged and that there is at least 3mm around the perforations.

Please deposit saved stamps in the box marked “STAMPS” on the table in the Narthex.

## Trading Table

The next Trading Table will be on 9th February.

The takings for November and December were \$82.10 and \$115.20 respectively..

Please contact Pam Cowley

Phone : 9793 5997

Mobile: 0477 149 361

## Paper Collection & Packing

## Aluminium Can Collection

Paper Packing takes place at Dandenong North Uniting Church.

The next date will be advised in due course.



## Lawn Mowing & Gardening

Anyone noticed the “garden” lately???? If you have an hour or so to start on the weeds, that would be great!!!

## Sausage Sizzle

This has been booked at Bunnings, Dandenong for the 15th February 2014. This event is to raise money to send our young people to NCYC in January 2014.



The church and families will advance the money for NCYC which will be reimbursed after the Sausage Sizzle.

## Pancake Sunday

### Sunday March 16th

We need helpers to cook pancakes, and also 2 electric frypans. If you can help, please contact Heather Kimber 9796 8154.



# Notice Board

## Childcare Area

This area is still being cleared by Connections, and will hopefully be finished by the end of January. The Property and Finance Committee and Church Council are negotiating with a possible temporary tenant – watch the notices for more information. This will give us time to explore future uses for this area.

## Ash Wednesday Service

**5th March 2014**

A short service will be led by Rev. Lauleti Tu'inauvai at 7.30 pm.

## Web Site

The web site could do with more photos (with permission from the people concerned). Anyone who can take a few photos at some of our events –e.g. sausage sizzle, anything from NCYC, photos of children and youth activities, Trading Table, Praise Time Singers, Singing Group etc. Just look around. The more people involved the better our web site will look. (Please submit to Jean Lacey or Marion Ward). A big 'thank you' in advance.

## The Andrews Centre

We are continuing to take donations of food to the Andrews Centre each week, which is very much appreciated. Just bring any donations and leave near the door on Sundays.

## Wednesday Morning Bible Study Group

The group meets at the Church at 10.30 am (except during school holidays). Everyone is welcome.

## Beta: Ladies' Bible Study Group

The group meets at 7.30 pm on the 1st & 3rd Tuesdays of each month (except during school holidays) at the Church. Please contact Mary Mehl: Phone 9791 5442.

## Coffee Break

This informal group gathers at 10 am on Friday mornings (except on the 1st Friday of the month) at Muffin Break in the Food Court, Endeavour Hills Shopping Centre.

Everyone is welcome, so if you are in the vicinity on a Friday morning around that time, please feel free to come and join in. You will be very welcome. No need to book!

# FIRST FRIDAY LUNCH

**7th February at 12.30 pm**



**376-382 Heatherton Road**

**Narre Warren 3805**

Contact Ursula by **5 pm** on **Wednesday 5th February** if you can come.

Email: [uebert@bigpond.net.au](mailto:uebert@bigpond.net.au) Phone: 9540 8497 Mobile: 0400 426 273

## **Endeavour Hills UnitingCare Neighbourhood Centre**

Address: 10 Raymond McMahon Boulevard  
Endeavour Hills 3802

Postal Address: P.O. Box 216 Endeavour Hills 3802

Telephone: (03) 9700 3789

Fax: (03) 9700 6754

Email: [ehunc@tpg.com.au](mailto:ehunc@tpg.com.au)

Web [www.ehunc.org.au](http://www.ehunc.org.au)

# GIVING LOTS? GOOD FOR YOU!



Giving of yourself is not just arbitrary politeness. People who live generous lives have been shown to enjoy greater health and happiness. The act of giving something, seeing someone else benefit from it and perhaps receiving their

The feeling of contributing something to the people around you, and the world, is vital to mental health. Without evidence that our existence is needed or matters, we human beings tend to wither, become ill, fail to thrive and lose the motivation to fully participate in life. The reinforcement that we're adding something, that we have something to contribute, is so important. The act of using what we have – our time, energy, talents, personality – in ways that benefits others is one of the best things we can do for wellbeing. Without this, it can be too easy to fall into an existential emptiness.

gratitude, all send a strong message to oneself – that what you do means something. Doing things for other people, contributing to a team or project, makes you feel like a part of something greater than yourself. It connects you to the greater story of humanity and life. When we use what we have to contribute, we find our place in the community around us.

**Reflection:** Truly living is giving of your time, money and talents in ways that add something to the world. Doing something good? Good for you!

*Anonymous*

# A Moment with Lauleti

## Taking up the challenges and the blessings of God's call ...

God continues to call us to amazing and challenging discipleship, apostleship, partnership, leadership, risk-taking mission and ministry as members of the Endeavour Hills Uniting Church congregation! We need to listen and respond to this calling from God.

During the season of Epiphany, manifestation of Jesus in the world) from January 12 to March 2, we are all reminded of God's call with the hope that we will be able to hear God's voice anew and respond accordingly to what He has provided and requires of each and every one of us (priesthood of all believers).

As we continue our Epiphany exploration and journey, we are invited and encouraged to consider how we might reframe or re-imagine the way we hear Jesus' call to follow:

- when we respond to Jesus' call, are we reluctant or joyous?
- do we feel as if we are going or coming?
- do we see ourselves being sidetracked from the future we planned or do we see ourselves stepping into a great light?
- would we be willing to leave the security of our everyday routines to follow Jesus if offered such a brief and unclear explanation?
- do we love God enough to put our discipleship and apostleship of Christ before our money-making enterprises?

Christian life today presents us with extremely challenging choices and decisions to make, needing our careful and prayerful listening and the right prioritising and discerning skills. Oftentimes we are overwhelmed by these decision points because we are uncertain about the right answer, or we regret having to give up options by picking one decision path. At the same time, "*hinge-points*" created by God present us with a blessing and a gift, offering moments for defining decisions and shining a clarifying light on our

*(Continued on page 17)*



## **A MOMENT WITH LAULETI**

path. For instance, Matthew 4:12–23, one of the lectionary readings for Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2014, signals a hinge-point for Jesus’ ministry. Jesus hears of John’s arrest and moves to the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali. Jesus takes up John’s call to change direction and calls his first four followers from their ordinary lives into extraordinary lives of discipleship. This call also serves as a gift and a blessing to Simon Peter, Andrew, James and John, offering clarity and creating a hinge-point for their lives. They have been living by default, and Jesus gives them this free gift of choice to follow and be equipped to become fishers-of-people.

Jesus’ call to the disciples in Matthew 4 also provokes us Christians of today to see both the challenge and the blessing of God’s call. I do not see the first disciples struggle with their response to Jesus’ call in Matthew 4, or maybe their struggle with the call was not recorded by Matthew. Yet, they responded “at once” and “immediately” left their nets and their families and followed Jesus.

Contrastingly, I know that we, in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, are struggling with following Jesus in various ways as we are moving from shadows into places of light in response to Jesus’ call. We are challenged with the diverse contexts of the world that we are living in today which is different from the world of Jesus’ time. Moreover, the worshipping community witnesses aspects of reluctance, excuses given and joys in the facial expressions and body language of those responding to the challenging call of Christ. God continues to call all people to follow and become “fishers of people” as the harvest is plenty but the workers are few!

As we journey in this New Year, it is my hope and prayer that we continue to respond to God’s call for us to participate, with the diverse gifts that God has gifted us, in God’s challenging and ‘full-of-blessing’ mission and ministry in and through the Endeavour Hills Uniting Church congregation.

In God’s mission and ministry!

Lauleti

# FAITH

‘Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen’ – this is from the letter to the Hebrews. The word substance means something tangible, able to be touched and handled – how does that apply to faith?

A World War II digger, a young man called up to serve his country, was negotiating a track in Papua New Guinea. This day, on the way to relieve forward troops, he trekked among vines, mud and jungle, always aware of the possibility of ambush. He was alert and apprehensive, wondering if he would survive the next bend or live to return home one day.



What about faith now? He was desperate. But then he came upon a makeshift set-up – a table, seat and small stove. “Like a hot drink, digger?” It was the Salvos – out there on the frontline with a pen, Red Shield notepad and envelope. They offered the chance to write home – a promise to send it back down the line to be posted to Australia. It was reassurance. The digger never forgot that. A smiling face in signature uniform later rattled a tin at the pub. And when a similar figure knocked at his front door for a special appeal, he reached deep into his pocket and gave. Great generosity begets generosity.

**Reflection:** It’s a simple story, yet profound. A story of substance and evidence – humanity, spirituality, hope and connection. Not a bad working definition of faith. Lord, bless each of us in this church with even the smallest mustard seed faith. And together, empowered by the Spirit, we will move mountains. Amen.

*Bill Pugh*

# CARTOON CORNER

**Salt and Light** by Jonny Hawkins



**“Somebody misplaced the podium. I guess we need to form a pulpit search committee.”**

© 2013 Jonny Hawkins

**Salt and Light** by Jonny Hawkins



**“Careful, honey, she seems a little bitter.”**

© 2013 Jonny Hawkins

**Salt and Light** by Jonny Hawkins



**“That’s because that’s the ‘Gray Issue’.”**

© 2013 Jonny Hawkins

**Salt and Light** by Jonny Hawkins



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# DIFFERENT GIVERS, DIFFERENT GIFTS



As always, I received wonderful Christmas gifts this year, and what a variety! The usual bookstore gift

certificate from my grandmother, clothing from my parents — a wonderful treat for someone who hates to shop for clothes! On the practical side, I received a new lawnmower. On the more whimsical side, I got a gargoyle, a stuffed animal, a book on medieval Japan, and some postal commemoratives.

Your Christmas goodies are probably just as diverse and eclectic. After all, a good gift is not just something grabbed off a shelf; it's a unique expression of the giver. I suppose that's why the wise men bring different gifts to Jesus. One gives gold, because even the Messiah has to get by in the world. Another brings frankincense because he loves to watch the sweet smoke rise during prayer. Being a practical wise man the third gives myrrh which can be used in many ways — to freshen clothing, to anoint tired feet, to perfume the sheets, even to prepare a body for burial.

They bring different gifts because the wise men are different people, and since

the gifts come from the heart, they fit the baby perfectly. Gold for King Jesus, the rightful ruler of Israel, frankincense for Christ, the high priest, and myrrh, an embalming spice for the Saviour who dies for the sins of the world.

The story of the wise men and their well-chosen, well-fitted gifts is an annual invitation for you and me to do likewise, to look into the treasure trove of our lives and to bring out those gifts that will serve Christ well.

And why not? Why not lay your gifts at the feet of the Christ? Do you worry that you have no gifts worth bringing, that other people's gifts will outshine yours?

Shame on you, oh ye of little faith! Every one of us comes into this world with precious gifts, particular talents, and unique potential. God has seen to that, and God does not blunder! You have gifts that are pleasing to your Lord, gifts that are fitting, gifts that are needed.

What about the church — does it just happen by chance? Is it a random gathering of folks from a certain neighbourhood who share a common taste in religion? No way! God has called and chosen each one with great care, so that together we may provide every gift needed to build the church, serve the community, and praise God. You are God's gift to the world and to the church, and every gift is needed.

*(Continued on page 22)*

# FOR OUR TEENAGERS

## THE HOLY SPIRIT



The Bible presents the role of the Holy Spirit as a continuation of the work of God the Father and Jesus, the Son, in the lives of the believer. As such He is an essential companion of every Christian and is the guarantee and means by which we persevere to the point of reaching heaven. Let me explain.

When we come to the New Testament, John describes Jesus in a very evocative way. In John 1 Jesus is described as God's Word who is God and

who became man and dwelt with us. Here John sees God coming to dwell with his people again. Jesus did all that God had done at Mt Sinai - telling people about God and about how they were to live as his people. He gathered around him his disciples who became the first "Christians". On the eve of his death, he gathered with them and spoke to them about his departure (John 13-16). As you can imagine they were grief stricken. Jesus promised them another companion (or counsellor) to take his place and who would be with them forever - the Holy Spirit (John 14:15-31). The Spirit will dwell with(in) them (vs 17-18), and teach them and remind them of Jesus' teaching (vs 26).

This is, of course, what happened at Pentecost (Acts 2) with astonishing results. The disciples were turned from scared people cowering in a room for fear of the Jews, into the people who courageously proclaim the news of Jesus despite all that happens to them. The Spirit in them enabled them. It is by the Holy Spirit that God (the Father and the Son) dwell with us, his people, and continues to teach us, helping us to stay true to him. That is why we need to the Holy Spirit.

As such the role of the Spirit is multi-faceted.

*(Continued on page 22)*

*(Continued from page 21)*

## **THE HOLY SPIRIT**

Through the Bible, the Spirit teaches and convicts us of the truth and assures us that we are saved (1Jn 3:24, 2Cor 1:22, Eph 1:13; 4:30).

It is the Spirit in our lives that unites us to Christ in his death and resurrection (Rom 6:1-11, Gal 2:20). Being 'in Christ' by the Spirit secures our completeness (Col 2:9-10). Being 'in Christ' by the Spirit unites us with others (1 Cor 12:12-13, Eph 4:4-6).

He empowers us to do what is right, live in faith and do good works (Ro 7:18, Eph 2:4-10). It is always God's work in us that means that we are saved in Christ and living new lives for him. It is the Spirit that makes Christians aware of their sin and empowers them to turn away in repentance.

It is the Spirit who distinguishes us from unbelievers (Eph 2:12, 1 Cor 15:21) and empowers us for mission in the world (Acts 2:1).

The Spirit is an essential part of the Christian life. The Spirit is how God works in his people until the second coming of Christ. The Spirit helps Christians to understand the word of God and live it out in their lives today.

*Contributed by Phil Martin*

*(Continued from page 20)*

## **DIFFERENT GIVERS, DIFFERENT GIFTS**

How dull my Christmas would be if I only received sweaters and socks! On the other hand, how skimpy my wardrobe would be if I only received books and music! Then again, how much fun I would miss if I only received lawnmowers! It is the coming together of different gifts from different hearts that makes the season so full.

Maybe that's the most compelling reason why you and I ought to resolve to be good stewards of our time, our talents, our treasures — because there is so much joy in the giving. There is so much fun in serving God. Nothing else will make you feel so good.

Have no doubt, the church is built up and sustained by your gifts. And there is joy for you and me, joy in the well-chosen gift, the well-fitted gift, the heart-felt gift, joy in every gift gladly given to God.

*Faye Neff, excerpted with permission from The Minister's Annual Manual, © Logos Productions.*

# SHARING GOD'S BLESSINGS



In February, many people give valentines to their friends and family. Some valentines are funny and some are sweet. They are one way to tell people “you’re important to me!”

Jesus doesn’t say anything about valentines, but he does tell people that they are important to him, and to God. In Matthew 5 you can read some of Jesus’ words of love and encouragement. Sometimes this passage is called the beatitudes, which means “blessed.”

Read Matthew 5:1-12 and think about the blessings Jesus talks about. Notice the people that Jesus is blessing. Try writing beatitudes of blessing and encouragement for people you know. You can also use some of these ideas to share God’s blessings with others.

## Notes of Blessing

Think of someone who is or has been a particular blessing to you. Make a valentine or a card of appreciation. Tell what the blessing was, the difference it has made in your life, and how it inspires you.

You could make a card by folding a piece of construction paper in half and decorating it. Or you could make a roll-up card by cutting a long piece of paper in half. Draw pictures and print a message along the long edge; then roll it up and tie it with a ribbon.

## Blessing Bags

Jesus tells us we are the light of the world. One way we can share this gift of light is to celebrate our ordinary blessings together by candlelight with our families. Create a blessing bag that you can use to celebrate blessings together with your family.

Find a paper bag and write a message to your family on the outside, such as “Our Family Blessing Bag.” Decorate a sheet of paper or a square of cloth with

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## SHARING GOD'S BLESSINGS

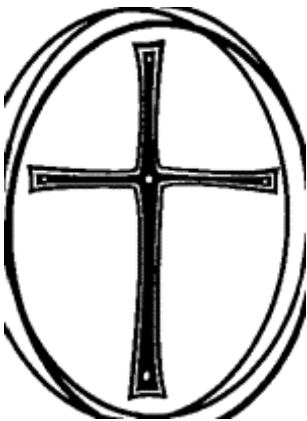
Christian symbols such as the fish, cross, triangles, or circles, or write words of thankfulness or blessings on it. This will be your table centerpiece.

Write down the words of the prayer under Praying Together or write a prayer of your own. Find a small candle and place all these items inside the blessing bag. When you are ready to share the bag with your family, place the centerpiece on the table and set the candle and the prayer on top, and ask an adult to light the candle. The blessing bag will help the family remember to pray before the meal and talk together about their blessings. For an added adventure, try eating the meal by candlelight!

### Blessing Reminders

We can use our gifts to bring light to the world and bless the people around us. Make small gifts to give to people as a reminder of God's blessings and your love. People who enjoy reading often appreciate having bookmarks. Use stiff fabric, recycled cardboard, or foam craft sheets. For gardeners you can decorate small flowerpots with acrylic paints. Fill the pot with soil and seeds or small plants.

— Jill Abenth, excerpted with permission from *Come Join the Circle*, © Logos Productions.



### Praying Together

We can give help to people in need.  
That is a blessing!  
We can be loving in word and deed.  
That is a blessing!  
We can work for what is right.  
That is a blessing!  
We can trust God with all our might.  
That is a blessing!  
Amen.

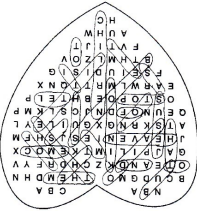


# FOR OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

## Word Find

Find the words from Matthew 19:14.

**But Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs."**



Answers

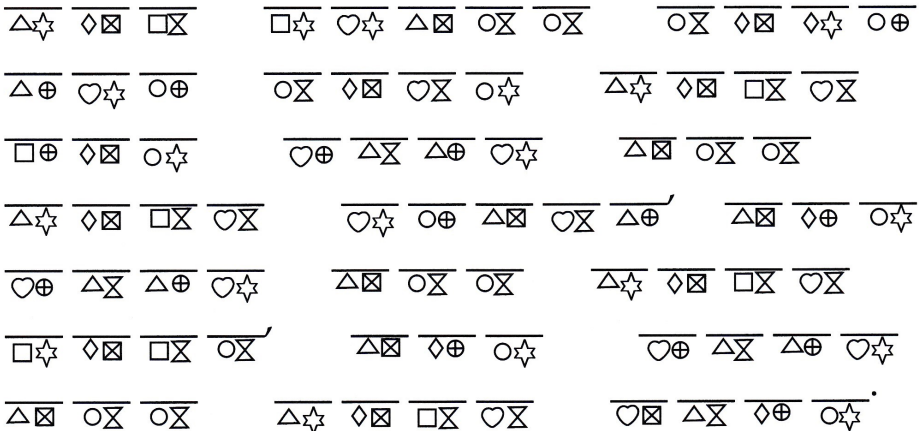


## That's What Jesus Said

Jesus was asked which commandment in the law was the greatest. His answer is found in Matthew 22:37. Follow the symbols key down and across to find the letters to fill in the blanks.

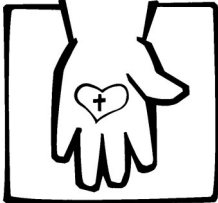
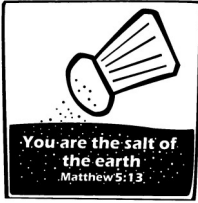

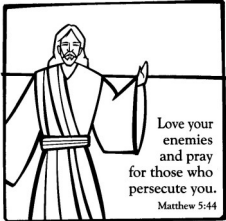
Answers: You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.

	♥	♦	○	□	△
☆	H	V	D	S	Y
⊕	W	N	E	G	T
⊗	M	O	F	B	A
⊗	R	C	L	U	I





# Lectionary for February

Date		Readings
<p>Epiphany 4 February 2nd 2014</p>	 <b>Blessed are you !</b> <small>MT 5:11</small>	<p>Micah 6: 1-8 Psalm 15 1 Corinthians 1: 18-31 Matthew 5: 1-12</p>
<p>Epiphany 5 February 9th 2014</p>	 <b>You are the salt of the earth</b> <small>Matthew 5:13</small>	<p>Isaiah 58: 1-9a Psalm 112: 1-9 1 Corinthians 2:1-12 Matthew 5: 13-20</p>
<p>Epiphany 6 February 16th 2014</p>	 <b>Be reconciled</b> <small>MT 5:24</small>	<p>Deuteronomy 30: 15-20 Psalm 119: 1-8 1 Corinthians 3: 1-9 Matthew 5: 21-37</p>
<p>Epiphany 7 February 23rd 2014</p>	 <p>Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.</p> <small>Matthew 5:44</small>	<p>Leviticus 19: 1-2, 9-18 Psalm 119: 33-40 1 Corinthians 3: 10-11, 16-23 Matthew 5: 38-48</p>

# FAMILY PRAYER MINISTRY



In our Family Prayer Ministry we pray for three families of our congregation every week, from Sunday to Saturday. This is in addition to our Prayer Chain Ministry, and other special requests mentioned during Worship Services.

Please keep the families listed below in your prayers during the weeks indicated.

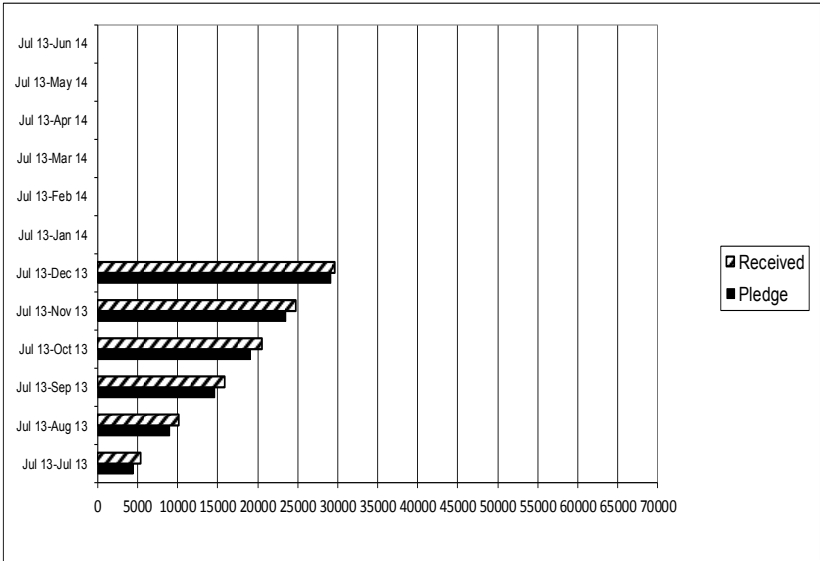
Week beginning:	Families		
2ND FEBRUARY	ASHLEY	BALTHAZAR	BARTHOLOMEUSZ
9TH FEBRUARY	BAXTER	BEECHER	BOTROS
16TH FEBRUARY	BRYAN	COWLEY	COX
23RD FEBRUARY	DODDRELL	EBERT	EDGECOMBE
2ND MARCH	GACUTAN	GARNEPUDI	GONSALVES
9TH MARCH	GREENSTREET/FISHER	GYLES	HALL
16TH MARCH	HANSEN	HARDING	HARKNESS
23RD MARCH	HOPKINS	JOHN	JOHNSTON
30TH MARCH	KAPITANY	KIMBER	KNIGHT

## Planned Giving



### Remember Your Pledge!

Would those of you who commit to Direct Debit giving in place of envelopes, please notify Brian Greenstreet for the church records. Thank you.



# February Rosters

## A Reminder

If you swap, would you please make a note on the Roster on the Notice Board? Also, it may be a good idea to make sure you are not doing conflicting duties!

For those needing access to the church, please note that **Jesuran Healing** is using our church every Saturday from 9.30 am to 2.30 pm.

February 2014	2	9	16	23
<b>Bible Reading</b>	Diane & Brian Hall	Lynda & Brian Greenstreet	Smith Family	Pam Cowley Mary Mehl
<b>Cleaning</b>	Anne Williams	Lynda Greenstreet	Rufane Smith	Mary Mehl
<b>Communion Prep</b>	Sandra Cox Delilah Spencer			
<b>Communion Servers</b>	Diane Hall, Judy Hopkins Cheryl Doddrell, Elke Beecher			
<b>Counting of Offering</b>	Lynne Bryan Brian Hall	Clifford Naude Manusiu Tu'inauvai	Wes Porch Pam Cowley	Brian Greenstreet Sandra Cox
<b>Door/Offering</b>	Andrew Moore	Christine Summers	Grant Allison	Sandra Cox
<b>Early Word</b>		Lynda Greenstreet	Michelle Smith	Lauleti Tu'inauvai
<b>Flowers</b>	Anne Williams	Lynda Greenstreet	TBA	Mary Mehl
<b>Kitchen</b>	Youth	Sandra Neal Joan Hansen	Elizabeth Moore Delilah Spencer	Jacqui Gacutan Mathy Watkins
<b>Organist/Pianist</b>	Sue Reid	Sue Reid	Edith John	TBA
<b>PowerPoint</b>	Marion Ward	Ursula Ebert	Andrew Moore	Patricia Matthys
<b>Praise Time</b>	Michelle & Rufane Smith	Olive Morland	Geoff Harkness	TBA
<b>Preacher/Duty Elder</b>	Rev Lauleti Tu'inauvai Diane Hall	Rev Lauleti Tu'inauvai Colin Wilhelms	Rev Lauleti Tu'inauvai Judy Hopkins	Rev Lauleti Tu'inauvai
<b>Public Address</b>	Paul Watkins	Colin Wilhelms	Gavin Bartholomeusz	Geoff Lacey

# March Rosters

March 2014	2	9	16	23	30
<b>Bible Reading</b>	Judy Hopkins Heather Kimber	Sue Reid Catherine Gonsalves	Elke Beecher Colin Wilhelms	Pam Cowley Gavin Bartholomeusz	Tu'inauvai Family
<b>Cleaning</b>	Manusiu Tu'inauvai	Elizabeth Moore	Catherine Gonsalves	Cheryl Doddrell	Mary Mehl
<b>Communion Preparation</b>	Patricia Matthys Pam Cowley				
<b>Communion Servers</b>	Judy Hopkins Diane Hall				
<b>Communion Steward</b>	Brian Greenstreet				
<b>Counting of Offering</b>	Clifford Naude Brian Hall	Patricia Matthys Manusiu Tu'inauvai	Grant Allison David Garnepudi	Wes Porch Leena Garnepudi	Brian Greenstreet Sandra Cox
<b>Door/Offering</b>	Sue and Stan Ashley	Andrew Moore	Chris Summers	Sandra Cox	Murray John
<b>Early Word</b>		Sue Reid	Elke Beecher	Lauleti Tu'inauvai	Lynda Greenstreet
<b>Flowers</b>	Manusiu Tu'inauvai	Elizabeth Kapitany	Catherine Gonsalves	Edith John	Mary Mehl
<b>Kitchen</b>	Youth	Marion Warren Ward	Heather Kimber Pam Cowley	Naude Family	Manusiu Tuinauvai
<b>Organist/Pianist</b>	Edith John	Olive Morland	Sue Reid	Band	Edith John
<b>PowerPoint</b>	Andrew Moore	Jean Lacey	Ursula Ebert	Marion Ward	Patricia Matthys
<b>Praise Time</b>	Olive Morland	Murray and Edith John	Smith Family	Band	Geoff Harkness
<b>Preacher/Duty Elder</b>	Lauleti Tu'inauvai Judy Hopkins	Lauleti Tu'inauvai Diane Hall	Lauleti Tu'inauvai Colin Wilhelms	Lauleti Tu'inauvai Pam Cowley	Lauleti Tu'inauvai Pam Cowley
<b>Public Address</b>	Paul Watkins	Geoff Lacey	Gavin Bartholomeusz	Warren Ward	Colin Wilhelms

# Endeavour Hills Uniting Church

## Service Times

Sunday of the Month	11 am
1st	Worship Service with Communion
2nd	Worship Service
3rd	Worship Service
4th	Contemporary Style Worship Service (February to November)
5th (when applicable)	Worship Service
Wednesday Morning (during school terms)	10.00 to 10.30 am Morning Worship

## Prayer Chain

Endeavour Hills Uniting Church is fortunate in having an active Prayer Chain. If you have any Prayer Requests, please contact any member of the Prayer Chain listed below:

Mary Mehl .....9791 5442

Judy Hopkins .....9700 7551

Sue Reid .....9704 9195

Pam Cowley .....9793 5997

Manusiu Tu'inauvai ....9706 1881

## Church Council

### Minister

Rev. Lauleti Tu'inauvai  
9706 1881

### Chairperson

Cheryl Doddrell\* 9700 1674

### Vice Chairperson

Wes Porch 9706 1995

### Treasurer

Catherine Gonsalves 9796 9852

### Church Council Secretary

Patricia Matthys 9706 1649

### Minutes Secretary

Judy Hopkins\* 9706 1649

### Council Members

Gavin Bartholomeusz 9700 5015

Pam Cowley\* 9793 5997

Rev. Ineke Gyles 9703 1870

Jean Lacey 9700 7246

Rufane Smith 9704 5535

Marion Ward 97001878

Colin Wilhelms\* 9794 7175

### \*Elders

George Balthazar\* 9700 3998

## Our Web Address

The Endeavour Hills Uniting Church web page is available for viewing at <http://www.ehuc.org.au>. Church Council oversees its maintenance. Please send all correspondence etc. to the Secretary, Patricia Matthys. Email: [church\\_council@ehuc.org.au](mailto:church_council@ehuc.org.au)

## Staff/Office Bearers

### Congregation Chairperson

Brian Hall

### Congregation Secretary

Anne Williams

### Presbytery Representative

Gavin Bartholomeusz

### Editor Interact

Sue & Stan Ashley

Ursula Ebert

## Finance & Property Committee

### Chairperson

Geoff Lacey

### Treasurer

Catherine Gonsalves

### Secretary

Brian Greenstreet

### Committee Members

Brian Hall

Sandra Cox

## Work Groups

### Conveners

### Administration

Jean Lacey

### Hospital Visiting Team

Judy Hopkins

### Pastoral

Judy Hopkins

### Prayer Chain

Mary Mehl

## **Endeavour Hills Uniting Church Mission Statement**

**The Endeavour Hills Uniting Church...**  
**a worshipping, nurturing, learning community...**  
**an open door, reaching out to show Christ's face to all.**  
**'Together We Grow'**

### **Contributions to Interact**

Any material you may have to be included in Interact may be sent in one of two ways:

1. e-mail (preferred method) to [interact@ehuc.org.au](mailto:interact@ehuc.org.au) putting "Interact" in the subject line
2. leave in the green Interact folder which is located on the stand to the right of the kitchen window.

Your articles, notices, goods & services for sale etc. are very welcome. Please include your name, phone number & email address in case it is necessary to contact you.

Material should be submitted by 5 pm on the deadline dates indicated below:

<b>Month</b>	<b>Deadline</b>	<b>Publication Date</b>
March 2014	23rd February 2014	2nd March 2014
April 2014	30th March 2014	6th April 2014
May 2014	27th April 2014	4th May 2014