

INTERACT

The Magazine of the Endeavour Hills Uniting Church

April 2014 Vol. 16:No 3



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Please note:

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

THE EASTER EXPERIENCE



On a Friday afternoon, Jesus died on the cross. Interestingly, accounts of the discoveries at the tomb differ. While all of the Gospels do agree about the essential core — namely, that on the first day of the week, Jesus of Nazareth, who had been as dead as a doornail on Friday afternoon, was not found in his tomb on Sunday morning and that the reason was that God had raised him to new life — the Gospel writers are far more concerned with what this means to their readers than with “just the facts.” The earthquake in Matthew, for example, is not a description of

something that registered on the Richter scale, but instead is a theological claim. There was an earthquake at the crucifixion and an earthquake on Easter morning — signs that God was acting in the cross and in the empty tomb.

So, how is the resurrection of Jesus experienced? Matthew wants his readers to know that the risen Christ is experienced in mission. “Go, therefore,” Jesus tells the disciples, and they won’t go alone; he says “I am with you always” (Matthew 28:20). Building houses for Habitat for Humanity, sharing the gospel with others, teaching children and adults about the way of life found in God, offering shelter to the homeless, working for peace, hungering and thirsting for justice in the world — these are the arenas for encountering the risen Christ.

John, on the other hand, gives us four resurrection vignettes in John 20 and they form a kind of catalogue of ways to experience the resurrection. The “disciple whom Jesus loved” (almost surely John) looks into the empty tomb and this is all it takes. He is almost an intuitive believer in the resurrection faith.

(Continued on page 4)

The Easter Experience

For Mary Magdalene it takes more. She even sees the risen Jesus but it is only when he calls her name — only when the resurrection becomes a personal address — that she believes.

In the third vignette, the disciples, minus Thomas, are hiding in a locked room when Jesus comes to them. What happens next is a series of events and statements that evoke the life and faith of the early Christian community. Jesus says “Peace be with you” (the greeting of Christians to each other in worship). He shows them his hands and side (the Lord’s Supper — “this is my body”). He says, “As the father has sent me, so I send you” (mission). He breathes on them and says “Receive the Holy Spirit” (the giving of the Spirit in baptism), and he tells them whatever decisions and actions they make toward sinful people will be honoured by God (church discipline). In other words, the risen Christ is present when the community gathers for worship, service, witness, and life together.

In the last vignette, Thomas is presented as a hold-out who needs to see the mark of the nails and put his hand in Jesus’ side before he can believe. Jesus makes himself available to Thomas, according to his need. It is not clear if Thomas ever actually touched Jesus’ wounds. What is clear is that Jesus’ willingness to be available to Thomas in ways that he could understand, makes it possible for Thomas to believe. John’s four vignettes make the implicit claim that there are as many ways to experience the resurrection as there are people to come to faith; there are many pathways to belief.

For Christians in every generation, everything hangs on the truth of the resurrection. Without it, Jesus was a very good man and an interesting teacher, and Christianity is a coping device for getting along in the world as it is. With it, the world of sin and death has been invaded by the life-giving power of God, and all Christians are grounded in hope and empowered to resist the powers that hold us in the grip of death. This is the fact upon which Christian faith rises or falls — “Christ has been raised from the dead...so that God may be all in all.”

— Dr. Thomas G. Long, reprinted with permission from *Crossings Adult Bible Study* © Logos Productions.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE SINFUL NATURE IN HUMANS

The reality of the sinful nature brings with it many disappointing consequences. The first effect is that each and every person is born spiritually dead; that is, they are devoid of any spiritual life or desire for the things of God. Jesus affirmed this condition when asked by a person if he could first go bury his father before following Christ. Jesus responded by saying, “Follow Me, and allow the dead to bury their own dead” (Matthew 8:22). In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul (describing his readers’ condition prior to being born again) says simply “And you were dead in your trespasses and sins” (Ephesians 2:1).

The lack of spiritual life in a person results in behaviour that is both hostile toward God and mindfully ignorant of His truth. In Romans, speaking about the hostility and inability of spiritually dead people to respond to God, Paul says, “For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so” (Romans 8:6-7). The Apostle underscores the same fact in his first

letter to the Corinthian church: “But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised” (1 Corinthians 2:14). The final and natural consequence of the sinful nature is eternal death—an eternal separation from God. God’s wrath remains on those who are not born again (John 3:36), and so their destiny is only one of judgement, which is spelled out in the book of Revelation: “Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire” (Revelation 20:14-15)

The Cure for the Sinful Nature

Fortunately, there is a cure for the sinful nature and a way to escape the judgement of God. The cure is the new birth, which is described by the Apostle John in Jesus’ encounter with Nicodemus: “Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.’”

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Nicodemus said to Him, 'How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born?' Jesus answered, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a man is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, you must be born again. The Spirit breathes where He desires and you hear His voice, but you do not know from where He comes, and where He goes; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit'" (John 3:3-8).

The good news is that Christ's sacrifice supplies spiritual life for any person who calls on the name of the Lord for salvation. Paul says, "For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life" Romans 5:10) The Apostle also highlights this spiritual regeneration when he writes, "Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things have passed away; behold, new things have come" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

The Spirit of God takes up residence in each person who is born again, and supplies the power to not only defeat the effects of the sinful nature, but also to supply strength to defeat the old sinful nature's pull to do wrong in God's sight. Paul says it like this: "But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh" (Galatians 5: 16-17).

The great news is that the sinful nature can be defeated by the One who did not inherit a sinful nature from His earthly parents (Jesus was born of a virgin). Through His finished work on the cross, Jesus, being sinless, satisfied God's wrath for sinners and rose again to offer life to those devoid of spiritual life.

In conclusion, the fact that each person ever born possesses a sinful nature is verified by human experience and the Word of God. The good news is that Christ provides a way of conquering the inherited sinful nature and a victory that can be experienced both in this life and the next. No matter how sinful the person is, Jesus can defeat the sin that enslaves him.

Laksman Pethiyagoda



HOLY WEEK/ EASTER SERVICES 2014

PALM SUNDAY APRIL 13

DANDENONG NORTH 9 AM

ENDEAVOUR HILLS 11 AM

MONDAY APRIL 14

ENDEAVOUR HILLS7.30 PM

TUESDAY APRIL 15

DANDENONG NORTH7.30 PM

WEDNESDAY APRIL 16

ENDEAVOUR HILLS7.30 PM

MAUNDY THURSDAY APRIL 17

DANDENONG NORTH7.30 PM

GOOD FRIDAY APRIL 18

DANDENONG NORTH 9 AM

ENDEAVOUR HILLS 11 AM

EASTER SUNDAY APRIL 20

DANDENONG NORTH 9 AM

ENDEAVOUR HILLS 11 AM

CHURCH NEWS

SERVICE TIMES: In future Contemporary-Style Worship will be held on the LAST Sunday in the month.

USAGE OF EX-CHILDCARE SPACE: There is a timetable on the Notice Board and page 14 of Interact, showing the current use of our Church building. The arrangement with the **Jesurans** will be reviewed in three months.

All groups using the church have access to the kitchen and toilets. Certain cupboards have been allocated to the different groups and these are labelled. Please make sure any food left in the refrigerators is labelled “Church” and watch the ‘use by’ dates!

PRESBYTERY: Presbytery has now moved in and has exclusive use of the ex-Childcare Office and Nursery, and will use either the pre-school room or the church for any meetings. The telephone has been re-connected at its expense. Presbytery anticipates that the space will be needed for about four months; however, this time may be extended if necessary.

CLEANING: From Friday the 14th March, Sandra (who has been cleaning the Childcare area for a few years) has started cleaning the whole building – so no more cleaning roster!

STORAGE: We are gradually making use of the extra **storage** areas – if you are looking for something, there is a list on the board in our church office. This will change from time to time as we re-organise.

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

CHURCH COUNCIL REPORT

12th March 2014

Devotions were led by Rufane Smith.

Ministers Report. During Holy Week the Monday and Wednesday services will be at Endeavour Hills and the Tuesday and Thursday services at Dandenong North.



Two baptisms will be held on 23rd March: Sefita Daniel Tualí, son of Marina and David, and Christopher-Sione Niumataevalu Manuofetoa, son of Finau and George. This will be followed by a shared lunch.

Any children attending Somers Camp this year will have the cost subsidised by the church.

The funeral of the late Mrs Yvonne Sleeth is to be conducted at our church on Friday 14th March.

Worship. The Contemporary Worship Service will now be on the last Sunday of each month, instead of the 4th Sunday.

Music. It is important that any music that is copied is recorded and reported. There is a book for this purpose near the photocopier. Please ask Marion Ward if you have any queries.

Property and Finance. The installation of a rail to help people up and down the steps at the front of the church is being discussed. From mid-March Presbytery will be using part of the former Childcare area and the Jesuran group will also be using this area. Cleaning will now be done professionally instead of by our volunteers. The remaining toys from Childcare have been distributed to several groups caring for children and some will be sold on the trading table.

Sunday School. Extra help with Sunday School would be appreciated.

Fundraising. The International dinner at Dandenong North on March 29th will be to raise funds for the victims of the typhoon in the Philippines.

Judy Hopkins.

Minutes Secretary.

I WAS BORN A CHRISTIAN

“The word ‘Christian’ implies Christ’s-one or belonging to the household of Christ. The biblical meaning has been distorted and confused beyond belief. But even in the original sense of the word, to say that one has been ‘born a Christian’ is not accurate. Being born in a Christian home no more makes you a Christian than being born in a hospital makes you a doctor. Physical birth has nothing to do with our relationship with God or our future destiny. Though the term is used of entire nations, rightly understood, it can only apply to an individual. Some supposedly Christian nations have perpetrated terrible crimes in the name of Christ. Others are morally corrupt.” (Cross, 1996).

Contributed by Elke Beecher

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THE WIDOW AND THE GARDEN



Mae belonged to our little country church. A widow, her only son had long left home. She lived in a tiny cottage in a quiet street. She was faithful. Whatever the season, her garden was a picture. I remember the hollyhocks, huge stems covered with various coloured flowers – lots of little birds and butterflies. One day she asked me to come around and bless her garden and cottage. I read some of Psalm 127 including, ‘Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain who build it.’

We had a prayer of blessing for her little cottage and her. Over a cup of tea she said, “Now it is really the Lord’s. This is what I want to do; I want to offer my home as a place of meeting and fellowship to as many as I can.” She invited one or two for her special afternoon teas – a chat, maybe a reading from scripture or a poem. The minister was always welcome, which probably was not good for his waistline as she offered the best scones and jam, all homemade, accompanied by a cuppa from a well-used silver teapot with a hand-knitted cosy. And then there was the tour of the garden. This was a widow’s gift of gratitude to the Lord for all her blessings.

Reflection: At the Lord’s Supper we often hear the words from Psalm 116: “What shall I give to the Lord for all his benefits to us?” And reply, “I will take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord.” Thus, spiritually refreshed, we return to the community. What can we give back to Him for all He has and is doing for us?

Bill Pugh

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 the 18th April.

Please contact Heather Kimber

Phone : 9796 8154

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!!!

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.

Notice Board

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



**12.30 PM ON THE FIRST FRIDAY
OF EVERY MONTH EXCEPT
JANUARY**

Various people take turns in organising the First Friday Lunch. Everybody is welcome, and you are invited to bring your friends too.

Check Notice Sheet on Sunday prior to lunch for name and contact details of Organiser and venue of lunch.

Contact Organiser by 5 pm on the Wednesday preceding the lunch if you can come.

USAGE OF CHURCH BUILDING

Sundays	11 am	Worship EHUC	All Areas Except Presbytery Office
	3-6:30 pm	Jesuran Worship Service	Church
Mondays	7-9 pm	Jesuran (Assimilation) (6-8 people)	Pre School Area
Tuesdays	7:30-9	Beta Bible Study	Meeting Room (1 st and 3 rd Tuesdays)
	7:30 - 9	Property & Finance Committee Group	Meeting Room (4 th Tuesday)
Wednesday	10-12 noon	Bible Study	Church and Meeting Room (except during School Holidays)
	7-9 pm	Jesuran Music Group (6-8 People)	Pre-school Area
	7:30 – 9:30 pm	Church Council	Meeting Room (2 nd Wednesday)
Thursday	7:30 pm	Singing Group	Church (not every Thursday)
Saturdays	9.30 am – 2:30 pm	Jesuran Worship	All except Pre- School and Presbytery Areas
	4 – 6 pm	Jesuran (Computer Classes)	Pre School Area
Monday-Friday	Business Hours + meetings	Presbytery	Back Office, Nursery
		Other areas for meetings as necessary	
ALL GROUPS will have access to toilets and kitchen.			

WHY GIVE?



Why give? What's the point? It's a simple matter of fairness. Sure, I've worked hard. But millions of people in the world have worked their fingers to the bone all their lives and their children still starve. So much of what I have – clean air, adequate food, health care, education – comes to me because I happen to be Australian. If you have the attitude that everything you have is a gift, then you are more likely to want to share it with people who haven't had the same luck.

It's not just an attitude thing though. There's a secret about this giving business: once you get in the habit of giving money away, you are rewarded a thousandfold, though not necessarily in monetary terms. However, I have found that when I do give away regularly, things just seem to work out financially. But that's not all you get by way of return. It feels good to give, and not just in a warm, fuzzy, self-righteous way.

Reflection: Once you start giving money away, it starts to lose its hold on you. When I worry and fuss about money, grab it and fret and say I can't possibly afford to be generous, I become tight and mean and anxious. When I choose to give, in both a planned way and also spontaneously, I am gifted with a lightness of heart and a breadth of spirit. I feel I am mistress of my life and my money, that it doesn't have me in a stranglehold of worry and relentless work. That's the secret of giving, but you won't know until you try.

Clare Boyd-Macrae

SUNDAY SAINTS



When my wife and I were at an Otway parish, our organist lived in the hills above the church. She was a wonderful organist, pianist and singer; a farmer's wife who loved animals and birds. Many hours were spent caring for injured sheep or cows. Each and every one had a name.

Bible studies and sing-alongs

at her place were special as we met all her farmyard friends. Every Sunday she would arrive at our little church early. One Sunday she didn't arrive on time. We were concerned. Maybe the car would not start or she was not well? We began the service without her...and then she arrived – all was okay with her, she had stopped to rescue a cow caught in the cattle grid. God would understand. Such acts were typical of this lovely saint.

Jesus was criticised by the hard-hearted Pharisees for healing the sick on the Sabbath. And his reply was, "If any one of you had a son or an ox that happened to fall into a well on the Sabbath, would you not pull him out at once on the Sabbath itself?" And they were silent.

Reflection: Lord, we think of those who must work on Sunday while we are at church: doctors, nurses, ambulance drivers, members of the CFA and SES, and anyone else who is on duty on a Sunday. Bless and keep them safe. We praise you for the St Francis of life who care for all creatures great and small. Amen.

Bill Pugh

THE EQUAL DIVIDE

I have come to realise that it is the small and unnoticed things that are at the heart of a faithful Christian life. Jesus talks about the kingdom of God being like 'yeast in the bread', the small almost unnoticeable element that makes flour edible. More than being edible, it sustains us.

It is also the small things that change the world. Small acts of compassion and kindness help foster a culture of love, and small acts that tackle the structural injustice in the world around us help spread that love to those more in need. These small acts seem so insignificant when compared to the size of the problem, but that is why it is at the core of a faithful life. 'Right relationships' are at the heart of Christian theology and when our relationships with God or each other are broken, it can result in unjust relationships, whereas if our structures are based on those things that characterise the message of the gospel, of love and compassion for one another and the world around us, then we can get closer to glimpsing the reign of God. When out of our sense of compassion we remind government to prioritise those around us who are hurting or do not have as much as we do, we are living a faithful life.

Reflection: "When someone strips a man of his clothes we call him a thief. And one who might clothe the naked and does not – should he not be given the same name? The bread on your board belongs to the hungry: the cloak in your wardrobe belongs to the naked, the shoes you let rot belong to the barefoot; the money in your vaults belongs to the destitute." St Basil. How can this quote be applied to the Christian life?

Cath James



A Moment with Lauleti

Can Easter Faith Impact on our Communities?

Grace and peace of the Lord be with you always !

I was inspired by the gutsy display of our national cricket team during the last Ashes campaign against England in Australia and the Test Series in South Africa (World No. 1 Test Team). They played extremely well under enormous pressure to win both series 5-0 and 2-1. The success of our cricket team really impacted on all Australian cricket fans, including myself. But the greatest impact of these two series was the promotion (through media) the cricket team made for Cricket. There was a world-record crowd that turned up for the Boxing Day Test in Melbourne! Cricket lovers are now tuning into cricket, even when our T20 Team is not doing so well in the current T20 World Cup. It is always great to be a supporter and a promoter of a winning team! I am wondering if we would be able, as followers of Christ (who defeated sin and death), to promote our Christian faith amongst the communities we live in, which seem to fail to recognise

the uniqueness and the appropriateness of the Christian faith for their lives. We are no doubt on the fringes of the communities that we are trying so hard to mark with our presence. It seems that some people are only interested in the church when there is a funeral, baptism or wedding.

But let's not forget that we are members of a Winning Team! Therefore we should feel great supporting and promoting it. The core of who we are and what we are promoting focuses on who Jesus was and what He did in his public earthly ministry, death and resurrection. In the midst of the pressures that are confronting the church today, we trust in the power of God's presence as we continue advocating and witnessing to God's grace and victory at all places and for all people. This ambassador-like mission and ministry that we are participating in could have a massive impact on people, reminding them of who we are (forgiven, restored and reconciled

(Continued from page 18)

A Moment with Lauleti

in Christ) in our relationship with God and others.

Our Lenten Journey (40 days and 40 nights) will soon be over and we will hear the message of faith expressed on the Easter Day:

“Christ is risen! Christ is risen indeed!” This great message resounds through the church in many languages all over the world. It is a day of transformation, moving from deepest darkness to brilliant day, from slumber to being awake, from the desert to fruitful vineyards, from death to life everlasting (resurrection).

Therefore, the energy and enthusiasm of the gospel message resounds through the Easter journey, as people in exile and despair, grief and despondency, are touched by the power of God who raised Jesus from the dead.

I invited you at the beginning of this Lenten Season, not only for a time of journeying and following Jesus’ path towards Jerusalem where he fulfilled the salvation process of humankind, but also journeying deep within ourselves

– to test and consolidate our faith. This Lenten Journey may bring various experiences that stretch, challenge and even frustrate us and make us stumble. Our journey also may have been full of challenging choices to be made, reinforced, refocused and recommitted.

As Christ’s followers, our Easter Faith in the Resurrected Christ is so significant in our witness and journey. We can even take risks as members of the winning Lord, who is powerful and is watching over us day and night. We can trust because we have a forgiving God caring for us. We can step out in faith because we have a God who promised to be with us to the end of the age. We can even take further risks because we believe in the one who took the most dangerous risk to die on the Cross, was buried, but was able to be resurrected (raised from dead and never die) for our salvation.

Praise be to God now and always.

Lauleti,

Your servant in Christ!

MANY LOAVES TO SHARE



Hospitality sometimes seems a dying tradition in Australia as people choose to eat out more than offer hospitality at home, and yet I have supped with the poorest people in the world. Their willingness to share what little they have, to bring out the best for a visitor, is an awe-inspiring gift. They do not worry

about whether they have used the right toilet cleaner before they invite someone around (mostly they do not have a toilet). They truly do share even when they have hardly any bread.

My strongest memory of Chile, which I visited some years ago now when I worked with the Anglican international development agency, AngliCORD, is the sharing of hospitality. We supped together in a kitchen, squeezed around a bench, 13 adults, one child and one infant sitting on stools, enjoying a tasty chicken broth, tender crispy chicken with potatoes and salad, and the traditional drink called maté.

Reflection: The gift of time. The gift of love. The gift of a smile. These are all loaves we have. In the world in which we live, where people have plugs attached to their ears, keep texting on their phones, rush purposefully from place to place, often oblivious to those around them, the willingness to stop and ‘be’ with another person is indeed a precious ‘loaf’. No matter what our life circumstance, our ability or disability, our age, our race, our education, we have loaves to offer another. What tools of hospitality do you have that you could share with somebody? Perhaps it’s inviting someone in for a coffee or a meal, or simply taking the time to ‘be there’.

Penny Mulvey

ALL ABOUT OTHERS

Often it's hardest to be generous when you feel that for whatever reason, entitlement should be given to you. For example: a birthday party. Shouldn't we get all the attention and the gifts? Shouldn't people bend over backwards to make us happy?

In the movie *The Little Princess*, a classic starring Shirley Temple, we have the story of a child who is sent to boarding school while her father fights at war. On her birthday he asks that they throw her a birthday party and she insists on giving everyone else presents rather than being given them. I also heard a story of an AIDS victim who was lying in a hospital bed and when the pastor came to pray for her, she told him about all the other sick people in her room and how they needed prayer.

Selflessness always takes people aback, perhaps because it's so counterintuitive; but the point is to stop the cycle of selfishness by giving when you feel least like you should be giving, because isn't that what causes the wealth divide in the world in the first place? Rich people feeling like they deserve their wealth and luxuries more than a person who cannot afford to eat or drink? If we break the cycle of selfishness by choosing to give up our own sense of entitlement, soon the world will catch on, and reaching out to others will be an automatic response, and not just seen as an altruistic move on the part of few.

Reflection: There is nothing wrong with feeling celebrated or enjoying the attention you're being given, but take a moment to think of others less fortunate during that time.

Carla Wells



PASSING ON THE GIFT OF GIVING



Sometimes parenting is pretty straightforward; “put your shoes on”, “eat your breakfast, please”, “time for a bath now”, and the ever-present, “no, you may not have a biscuit. It’s too close to dinner time.”

Sometimes parenting requires depth, thought and decisions about serious things. For my husband and me, one of the things we have thought a great deal about is the values we want to instil in our son. On what basis will he make decisions about who he wants to be and how he chooses to act in the world? For us, and for many parents, a conversation about values will be lifelong, but what we know for certain is that we want William to hold strongly to the value of generosity.

A generous spirit is a delight in a child. We all appreciate the toddler who shares her toys and gives freely the things she holds dear. We are all impressed by the teenager that understands that in giving he will experience the heartfelt joy that comes with an act of kindness. So, whenever we pass someone collecting for one cause or another on the street, we give William a coin or two to put in the bucket and we tell him that we always give to those who have less than us.

Reflection: Generosity is more than childish sharing or giving to experience joy yourself. Generosity is a way of life, and my hope is that William will live a life of generosity.

Alys Gagnon

CARTOON CORNER

Salt and Light by Jonny Hawkins



"Pastor, you'd be good at cards, since you really know when to fold your hands."

© 2013 Jonny Hawkins

Salt and Light by Jonny Hawkins



"We have an interim minister."

© 2013 Jonny Hawkins

Salt and Light by Jonny Hawkins



"It seemed so much bigger as a kid."

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Salt and Light by Jonny Hawkins



"I'm testing the power of prayer by not studying at all for my history test."

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PERFECT GIVING, PERFECT RECEIVING!



life, the people who receive these gifts and the connection between the two. One community developer, Bliss Browne describes her perfect image of Trinity as the recycling symbol – the three green arrows “circle dancing” in on each other. She believes this symbol reflects perfect giving, perfect receiving and nothing wasted.

One of my most precious experiences of a life of perfect giving and perfect receiving came in the form of a dear old friend. She encapsulated what I believe to be the ultimate act of generosity. People often make large sacrifices in their life to help others have a decent life. Some donate their money, some donate their time and some donate whatever it is that will give somebody a chance at life.

The notion of Holy Trinity came to be about 300 years after Jesus’ time. Eastern philosophers tried to explain divinity as “the dance”; the relationship between the giver of

Reflection: When my dear old friend passed away, I wrote something after her funeral. She was an expert at showing how a radical trust in God led her beyond her own agenda – led her to be an agent of hospitality to families on post-war farms across the Mallee, and to put aside a comfortable eastern Melbourne lifestyle to practice midwifery in Papua New Guinea. I think my friend embodied perfect giving, perfect receiving and nothing wasted. That’s generosity as I see it.

Adrian Pyle

DID JESUS CLAIM TO BE THE ONLY WAY?

In the final days of Jesus' ministry, He took his twelve disciples into an upper room, where He shared with them the Last Supper. After suffering for sin, He would be leaving to return to His Father in heaven. Jesus assured them He would prepare a place for them in His Father's house, and that they already knew the way there.

But Thomas, more inquisitive and analytical than the other disciples, tried to pin Jesus down. He wanted details: exactly where was Jesus going, and what path did they need to take to follow him?

Jesus answered Thomas with a statement that must have totally shocked him. Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me."

Jesus didn't tell Thomas that he needed to follow a particular code of behaviour, or list of rules. Jesus was pointing out to Thomas that there is only one way to God, and it is through Him (Jesus).

What was Thomas' reaction? He must have wondered what Jesus meant. How could Jesus Himself be the way to God, the truth of God, as well as life itself? All of the disciples must have been baffled at Jesus' strange answer.

Also, Jesus didn't tell Thomas that He (Jesus) is one of many ways, and that there is no ultimate truth. On the contrary, Jesus claimed that He alone is the truth.

Not only did Jesus tell Thomas that He (Jesus) is the life, but also He was clearly referring to eternal life. Jesus was not speaking of eternal life as a mystical place, but a life forever with Him. Every other religion referring to heaven or Nirvana is referring to a place, or state of mind. Jesus, on the other hand, was telling his disciples that heaven is an eternal relationship with Him and the Father.

Lastly, Jesus told Thomas that the only way to God is through Him (Jesus). If Jesus wanted to make it clear that He is merely one way to God, He would have qualified His statement. But He didn't; Jesus claimed to be the only way to the Father, as the Spirit of Jesus reveals to Christian believers through His Word.

Jesus spent three years teaching His followers about God, about Himself, and about us. These followers later wrote down what Jesus did and said in the New Testament. All Christian beliefs are based upon these writings of the apostles. So did the apostles teach that Jesus was the only way to God? Today we learn from the New Testament apostles, Peter, John, and Paul, who wrote extensively about Jesus.

Laksman Pethiyagod

FOR OUR TEENAGERS

DOES THE BIBLE SAY ANYTHING ABOUT DRUGS?

The term “Drugs” is used to cover a wide range of substances including antibiotics, aspirin, alcohol, caffeine and tobacco as well as illegal drugs such as cocaine, speed and marijuana. While there are a number of references to alcohol, there is nothing explicit about many of the other substances. Nonetheless there is sufficient instruction in the Bible so that follower of Jesus can determine how to think about the general topic of “drugs”. For example, following through the theme of alcohol, the apostle Paul encourages the followers of Jesus in Ephesians 5:18: Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.

There are two other principles which need to be taken into consideration with this issue. Followers of Jesus are encouraged to submit to the laws and authorities of the societies in which they live (Romans 13:1-5). The Bible recognises the authority of governments as given by God, for the purpose of the good ordering of society. As such, Christians should seek , wherever possible, to submit to the rules and regulations set by governments. Thus, if a government, in its wisdom, determines certain guidelines for the use of specific drugs, (for example, that marijuana is ‘illegal’) then Christians should respect the authority and decision of the government and obey that law.

Followers of Jesus need to consider the effects of their actions on others, both in direct consequence and by the example of behaviour that is set. For example, consider a group of Christians deciding whether to have a glass of wine with their dinner. One glass probably won’t get them drunk, and if they are over 18, then they are legally allowed to have it. But they also need to consider if having the glass of wine would be unhelpful for others – if they were having a recovering alcoholic over to dinner, then having the glass of wine would be unhelpful for the guest – and so they should abstain for the good of the alcoholic. The thinking should not be simply “What I can do”, but “What is the loving thing to do for others?”

These are principles that help us to work out how to live in the specifics of our day to day living. We need to be wise as we make decisions and this wisdom comes from God (James 1). So let me encourage you to read the Bible and understand these (and the other) biblical principles of living and then ask God to help you decide how to live wisely .

Answers are kindly provided by our friends at Christianity.net.au

Contributed by Phil Martin.

WELCOME EASTER!



All through March and part of April we've been observing the Season of Lent, so when Easter is finally here there are lots of great ways to welcome this joyful season! Try some of these ideas with your friends and family.

Read Some Books

This is a great way to explore the wonder, mystery, sadness, and joy of

Jesus' death and resurrection. This list is just a starting point. Public libraries have many fiction and non-fiction books on the new life, hope, and joy — all themes of Easter.

The Carrot Seed, Ruth Krauss

A Chick Called Saturday, Joyce Dunbar

The Easter Story, Brian Wildsmith

The First Easter, Catherine Storr

Family Story Bible, Ralph Milton

God's Love at Easter, Joy Morgan Davis

Hermie, a Common Caterpillar, Max Lucado

Inch by Inch, Leo Lionni,

The Parable of the Lily, Ivan Obolensky

The Runaway Bunny, Margaret Wise Brown

The Tale of Three Trees, Angela Elwell Hunt

The Very First Easter, Paul L. Maier

(Continued on page 28)

Welcome Easter

Plant an Easter Garden

Prepare for Easter by making a portable Easter garden. You can enjoy the powerful fragrance of hyacinths, the sweet scent of paperwhite narcissus, the cheerful colour of tulips, as well as other bulbs, if you plan ahead. Usually these bulbs are planted about six months before they flower, but if you refrigerate the bulbs you can get results in a matter of weeks.

This simulated winter is not required for amaryllis or paperwhites, which can be potted up according to package directions, watered, and set out in a bright spot. But in general, smaller bulbs like crocus, grape hyacinths, miniature daffodils, iris, and tulips are easy to force. Large, fragrant hyacinths are also easy. Whatever type of flower you decide to force, buy the largest size bulbs you can find. The bigger the bulb, the more flowers. Also, be sure the bulbs are firm, free from nicks and bruises, and that the roots haven't sprouted yet. If you want to try this activity, check online for specific instructions or check with a garden store.

Hot Cross Buns

Hot cross buns are part of many family Easter traditions. Originally eaten by the Saxons to honour their goddess Eostre; the buns are marked with a cross as it is believed the bun represented the moon and the cross the moon's quarters. To Christians, the cross symbolizes the crucifixion.

Traditional hot cross buns can be made from scratch, but this recipe can be made more quickly if you can't wait! Purchase frozen raisin bread dough and let it thaw according to package directions. Form into buns and bake according to directions. While the buns are cooling, mix some frosting using these ingredients:

1 cup plus 2 tbsps. powdered sugar

½ tsp, vanilla extract

pinch of salt

4 tps., milk, or enough to make a thick, pipeable icing

Place in a plastic bag and cut one corner so you can squeeze frosting on each bun, making a cross shape. Eat and enjoy!

FOR OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

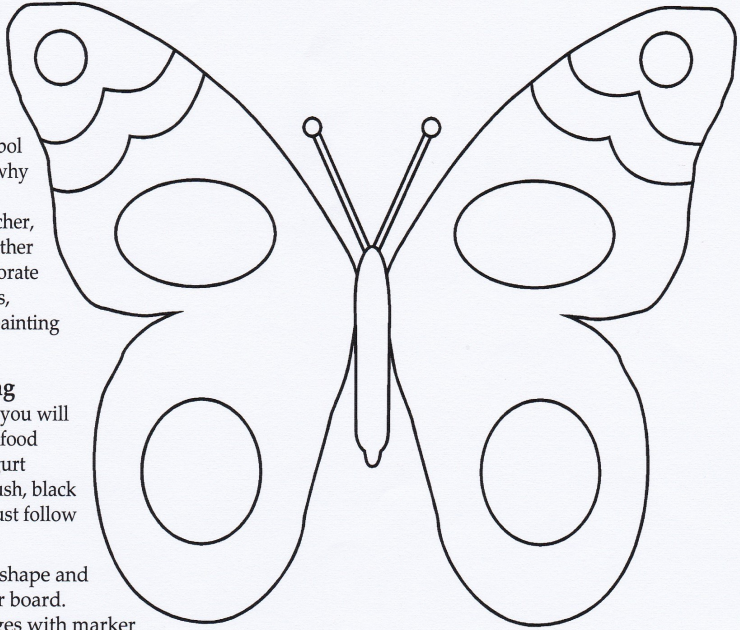
Butterfly Symbol

A butterfly is a great symbol of Easter. Can you think why this is? Talk with a friend, parent, church school teacher, or pastor about this and other Easter symbols. Then decorate this butterfly with crayons, markers, glitter, or sand painting (see below).

Butterfly Sand Painting

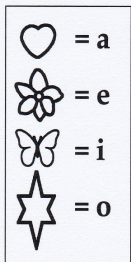
To sand paint a butterfly, you will need: poster board, sand, food coloring, small jars or yogurt containers, glue, paint brush, black felt pen or crayon. Then just follow these directions.

1. Cut out this butterfly shape and mount it on the poster board.
2. Draw over design edges with marker or crayon.
3. Color the sand: (a) put small amount of sand in container, (b) add several drops of food color and shake, (c) put sand on newspaper to dry. Do the same for each color.
4. Paint small section of design with glue. Let it set up and become tacky. Sprinkle with desired color sand. Let dry. Gently shake off extra sand. Repeat for each different color until the surface is all covered with colored sand.
5. Allow the butterfly to dry flat overnight, especially if the layer of glue was thick.



Jesus' Prayer

While he was hanging on the cross, Jesus prayed to God. Use this symbol key to fill in the missing letters in the message.



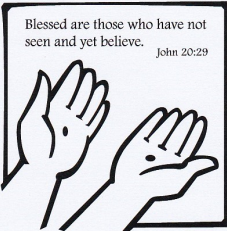
F _ th _ r f _ rg _ v _ th _ m; f _ r th _ y d _
 n _ t kn _ w wh _ t th _ y _ r _ d _ _ ng.

Luke 23:34

Answer: Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.



Lectioary for April

Date		Readings
<p>Lent 5 6th April 2014</p>		<p>Ezekiel 37:1-14 Psalm 130 Romans 8:6-11 John 11:1-45</p>
<p>Palm Sunday 13th April 2014</p>		<p>Matthew 21:1-11 Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29</p>
<p>Easter Sunday April 20th 2014</p>		<p>Acts 10:34-43 Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24 Colossians 3:1-4 John 20:1-18</p>
<p>Easter 2 April 27th 2014</p>		<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

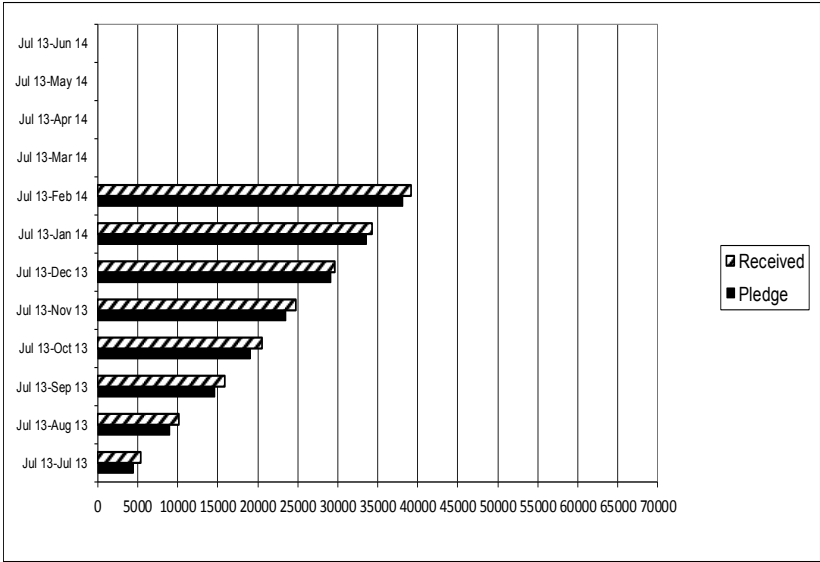


In our Family Prayer Ministry we pray for three families of our congregation every week, from Sunday to Saturday. This is in addition to our Prayer Chain Ministry, and other special requests mentioned during Worship Services.

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

Week beginning:	Families		
6TH APRIL	LACEY	MANUOFETOA	MARTIN
13TH APRIL	MATTHYS	MCADAM	MCNABB
20TH APRIL	MEHL	MOORE	MORLAND
27TH APRIL	NAUDE	NEAL	NORMAN
4TH MAY	O'KEEFE	PETHIYAGODA	PORCH
11TH MAY	REID	RODGERS	SAMUELS
18TH MAY	SHAW	SLEETH	SMITH
25TH MAY	SPENCER	SUMMERS	THOMAS

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.

April Rosters

April 2014	6	13 Palm Sunday	14 Monday	16 Wednesday	18 Good Friday	20	27
Bible Reading	Marion and Warren Ward	Lynne Bryan Murray John	Judy Hopkins	Cheryl Doddrell	Cheryl Doddrell Molisi Tu'inauvai	Pam Cowley Geoff Lacey	Wes & Jenni Porch
Communion Prep	Christine Summers Heather Kimber					Delilah Spencer Sandra Cox	
Communion Servers	Colin Wilhelms; Pam Cowley; Elke Beecher Judy Hopkins					Pam Cowley Rufane Smith	
Communion Steward						Brian Hall	
Counting of Offering	Pam Cowley Lynne Bryan	Patricia Matthys Clifford Naude				Manusiu Tu'inauvai Grant Allison	David Garnepudi Brian Hall
Door/Offering	Grant Allison	Andrew Moore				Christine Summers	Murray John
Early Word	N/A	Judy Hopkins			Lauleti Tu'inauvai	Lauleti Tu'inauvai	Lynda Greenstreet
Flowers	Lynda Greenstreet	(Artificial Flowers)				Anne Williams	Mary Mehl
Kitchen	YOUTH	Sandra Neal Joan Hansen				Elizabeth Moore Delilah Spencer	Jacqui Gacutan Mathy Watkins
Organist/Pianist	Olive Morland	Edith John	Olive Morland	Edith John	Olive Morland	Edith John	Band
PowerPoint	Jean Lacey	Marion Ward			Ursula Ebert	Andrew Moore	Patricia Matthys
Praise Time	Edith & Murray John	Tu'inauvai Family				Olive Morland	Band
Preacher/Duty Elder	Lauleti Tu'inauvai Judy Hopkins	Lauleti Tu'inauvai Diane Hall	Lauleti Tu'inauvai Judy Hopkins	Lauleti Tu'inauvai Cheryl Doddrell	Lauleti Tu'inauvai Cheryl Doddrell	Lauleti Tu'inauvai Pam Cowley	Lauleti Tu'inauvai Colin Wilhelms
Public Address	Paul Watkins	Warren Ward	TBA	TBA	Gavin Bartholomeusz	Colin Wilhelms	Geoff Lacey

May 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.

May 2014	4	11	18	25
Bible Reading	Stan & Sue Ashley	Lynda & Brian Greenstreet	Rufane & Michelle Smith	Mary Mehl Ashley Williams
Communion Prep	Patricia Matthys Pam Cowley			
Communion Servers	Diane Hall, Colin Wilhelms Geoff Lacey Cheryl Doddrell			
Counting of Offering	Leena Garnepudi Brian Hall	Sandra Cox Wes Porch	Patricia Matthys Clifford Naude	Brian Greenstreet Pam Cowley
Door/Offering	Grant Allison	Andrew Moore	Sandra Cox	Chris Summers
Early Word		Michelle Smith	Elke Beecher	Lauleti Tu'inauvai
Flowers	Elizabeth Kapitany	(Artificial Flowers)	Manusiu Tu'inauvai	(Artificial Flowers)
Kitchen	YOUTH	Sandra Neal Joan Hansen	Sue & Stan Ashley	Heather Kimber Pam Cowley
Organist/Pianist	Sue Reid	Olive Morland	Edith John	BAND
PowerPoint	Ursula Ebert	Patricia Matthys	Marion Ward	Andrew Moore
Praise Time	Michelle & Rufane Smith	Tu'inauvai Family	Geoff Harkness	BAND
Preacher/Duty Elder	Rev Lauleti Tu'inauvai Diane Hall	Rev Lauleti Tu'inauvai Judy Hopkins	Rev Lauleti Tu'inauvai Colin Wilhelms	Rev Lauleti Tu'inauvai Pam Cowley
Public Address	Paul Watkins	Colin Wilhelms	Warren Ward	Gavin Bartholomeusz

Endeavour Hills Uniting Church

Service Times

Sunday of the Month	11 am
1st	Worship Service with Communion
2nd	Worship Service
3rd	Worship Service
Last Sunday of the Month	Contemporary Style Worship Service (February to November)
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* 9700 7551

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 9700 1878

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

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 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:

Month	Deadline	Publication Date
May 2014	27th April 2014	4th May 2014
June 2014	25th May 2014	1st June 2014
July 2014	29th June 2014	6th July 2014