

# Cluster News SEPTEMBER 2022

**Welcome to the September Cluster News,** keeping us informed as we continue to get to know each other a little better.

The 3 Church Councils are getting to know each other, building relationships and friendships as they meet regularly for a shared meal prior to their meetings, reviewing the Proposal being prepared by a hard-working writing group. We will all vote on this Proposal, before the end of the year, to answer the question **“Do we want to become one congregation?”**

Phil McCredden, our consultant, continues to guide and encourage through this process which is new and quite challenging. Your prayers are very much appreciated.



The Spring weather is typically Spring-like! The gardens are flourishing with the sun and rain and the slightly warmer and longer days... and **DAYLIGHT SAVING BEGINS ON SUNDAY 2<sup>ND</sup> OCTOBER** when clocks **“spring” forward** one hour.

You won't want to be late for  
**Together at 10 at Forest Hill!**

## **This month, we witnessed the close of the Second Elizabethan Age.**

### **From our Presbytery News.**

“We join in solidarity with the people of Britain as we mourn the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth..... No doubt there will be changes ahead, and we share with people of all faiths in praying for peace in our time.”

### **From Archbishop of Canterbury, Most Rev. Justin Welby at the Funeral of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth at Westminster Abbey, 19<sup>th</sup> Sept.**

“She was joyful, present to so many, touching a multitude of lives. We pray especially for all her family, grieving as every family at a funeral including so many families around the world who have themselves lost someone recently.

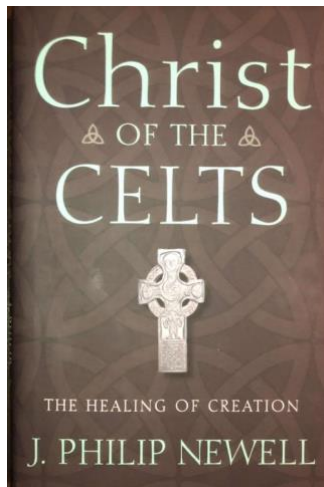
May God heal their sorrow, may the gap left in their lives be marked with memories of joy and life.

Service in life, hope in death. All who follow the Queen's example and inspiration of trust and faith in God, can with her say, “We will meet again.”

## Pilgrimages and Celtic Spirituality –

### *Rev Tina*

During 2018 I went to Iona, Scotland to attend a week led by J. Phillip Newell about Celtic Spirituality. He has written many books, including Christ of the Celts. I'm drawn to Celtic spirituality and was left with lots of seedlings and a poem I'd like to share with you.



*\* Holy listening to what is beyond what we know and are told*

*\* We need to cultivate a beginner's mind*

*\* God is in all things*

*\* Everything is sacred*

*\* A church without walls*

*\* Nature is sacred*

*\* The essence of our nature is God*

*\* We are born into the world as an*

*expression of the divine*

*\* George Macleod spoke of Iona as a thin place – just a piece of tissue paper between things spiritual and material*

*\* Seek out wild places*

### **Seeking within the Holy Spirit.**

Deep within the heart,  
of the breathing  
body,  
of the longing  
soul,  
of the wild land,  
of the creatures,  
moulded into its  
breath,  
all woven  
together,  
by a silent golden  
string,  
of God's love for all.

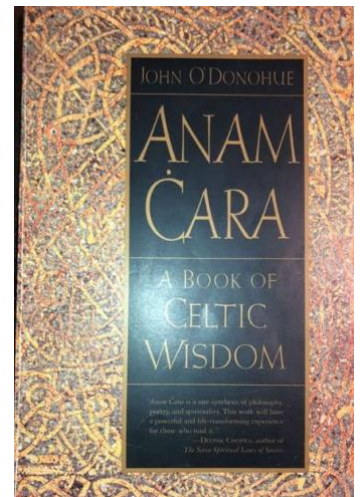


Guests join the Iona community and contribute to cleaning and cooking and attend daily worship. Workshops have been held on worship and one on cancer in the past. Guests spend a day on a pilgrimage around the island.

There is something very special about Iona with its legends about forty dead kings being buried beneath the small hill beside St Orans, a 12th Century tiny church in the graveyard next to the Abbey. There are highland cows and sheep on the island and pilgrims are free to roam wherever they please. Tales of sacred springs and holy mountains add to the mystery of Iona.

There are stories about Aiden and Cuthbert who lived in small wooden and stone huts and built stone chapels on Iona and Lindisfarne around 635 CE. They formed Christian Communities and introduced Christianity to a people who were deeply connected to the land.

More recently I've been reading a book called Anam Cara or "soul friend" by John O'Donohue. A book of Celtic Wisdom. We are all in need of a soul friend, someone who we can share our deepest longings about God with, who will listen with their heart.





These are some photos from Iona. I will share more during the fellowship presentation at Forest Hill next month. I will be focusing on Celtic Spirituality during Spring and while using Synod's **Season of Creation** materials for worship.



### Chand's Story

As a much-loved member of the Blackburn North /Nunawading Uniting Church, the late Rev. Chand Prasad had much wisdom and many experiences she was able to share with us.

A memorable story concerns her grandmother, an Indian lady who as a young, recently married woman, in 1910, set off on a long journey with



her husband and a large group of people, to Delhi for a relative's wedding. As there was quite some time to fill in before the wedding celebrations, they accepted an offer by a British company, to have a holiday in Calcutta with paid work for the men on a ship in port. During this time, the families were invited to a great celebration on board the ship, the SS Satlag. Greatly excited, all were enjoying this special evening until they realized the ship was pulling out of the port. There was no way back! They were all on their way to Fiji to work as indentured labourers in the CSR sugar plantations there and a vastly new way of life.

As Hindu people, the aspect of this situation which caused such guilt and sorrow was the fact that they had left their parents, without an explanation, without goodbyes, unable to fulfil their deeply felt obligation to care for them as they aged.

Chand's grandparents made the most of their new lives in Fiji, but that guilt would always weigh heavily on them.

On a transformational day for Chand's Grandmother, she happened upon an Australian missionary who was speaking to a group of people in the open air, illustrating his story with the aid of a flannel graph. Transfixed, she heard the story of the Prodigal Son. It struck a chord with her. Eagerly approaching the missionary, she asked to know more about the God who unbelievably welcomed back his son who had deserted him. She accepted this God of Jesus and released from guilt, was able to settle, build her life in Fiji and in the fullness of time, was able to introduce her granddaughter, Chand, to the God of Jesus.

Chand was educated in Fiji and later in New Zealand. She became a teacher, married Ray, a pharmacist and settled in Mitcham where they raised their family. They also enjoyed many visits to India.

Chand became a Minister in the Uniting Church, proclaiming God's love for all people

## Centre 81

There are many needs in our community and, as we know, it can be overwhelming when we see or hear of the need, but feel that we can't do any more at present There is only so much we can do at any given time and that's perfectly ok. A few people have asked if bank details could be provided to make a small donation online.

We provide them here without any expectation or pressure, just simply to provide that avenue for those who wish to use it.

Mitcham Uniting Church Centre 81  
BSB 033 117. A/c 329402

In all the work we do in our congregations, we all feel encouraged and grateful for any assistance given but we're also aware of the limitations which exist for each of us. With thanks,

*Lynne Rosenthal.*

## Working with Children Checks.

A little reminder.

Local newsletters two or three weeks ago brought AN IMPORTANT NOTICE ABOUT

WWCC for our leaders from our ministry team. It was a good reminder to us of our responsibilities to all children and vulnerable adults and we are grateful to all those who

have carefully maintained this useful way of showing our care. If anyone is finding difficulty or wondering if they need a WWCC, assistance and support are widely available.

## **Introducing: Jacinta Selvaratnam**

Jacinta volunteers as the Minutes Secretary for the Whitehorse Regional Council, is the Honorary Minutes Secretary for the Property & Finance Ministry Group at Forest Hill Uniting Church and a member of their audio-visual team, finalising PowerPoint overheads and ensuring the service runs with minimal disruption.



Until recently Jacinta worked for the Victorian Public Service. She now uses her skills to help the community by assisting adults from non-English speaking background to draft correspondence and complete forms.

Jacinta learned classical Indian dance at a very young age. Her love for dancing led her to expand her repertoire to learn many forms of oriental dance, traveling overseas performing with dance troupes and studying under Master teachers. During lockdown, Jacinta kept herself busy doing bead and sequin embroidery on exotic costumes for dancers. She also expanded her knowledge of dance rhythms by learning to play the Tabla (Arabic drums).

She made use of the long days of isolation to get to know her elderly neighbours. Cooking tasty Sri Lankan curries for them made her a welcome 'buddy' for those without family close by. Jacinta's adventurous streak has seen her climb Machu Picchu in Peru, camel trek with the Berber tribe in Morocco and hot air ballooning to view the fairy chimneys at Cappadocia in Turkey.

These days she's chosen a more leisurely lifestyle and keeps a low profile!

*Thank you, Jacinta, for all you contribute.*

## Trekking with David

David Rowe (Mountview rep on Regional Council) recently joined his walking group and completed a 220kms trek, beginning in Portland, in western Victoria and finishing in Penola, South Australia, where Saint Mary McKillop, founder of the St Joseph's Order of nuns, did most of her work. David's photos show the group in Portland, ready to set out, and several walkers on the way. Check with David to find out how long it took, highlights from the experience –and if he got blisters!



*Well done David!*



## Preaching Plan. October 22

	<u>BNNUC</u>	<u>Forest Hill.</u>	<u>Mountview</u>
<b>Oct. 2</b>	<b>Together @10.at Forest Hill Communion</b>		
<b>Oct. 9.</b>	Tina.	Peter.	Lay/Livestream
<b>Oct .16.</b>	Lay/Livestream.	Tina.	Peter
<b>Oct. 23.</b>	Peter.	Lay/Livestream.	Tina
<b>Oct. 30.</b>	Tina.	Peter.	Lay/Livestream
<b>Nov. 6.</b>	<b>Together @ 10 at Mountview Communion</b>		

### Ministry Team.

Rev Peter Cannon  
 Rev Tina Lyndon Ng  
 Ministers on Call contact 0403 225 257

### Regional Council Representatives.

#### **Blackburn North/Nunawading UC**

Elaine Hewson 0425 709 089  
 Anne Smith 9899 1932  
 George Manuofetoa 0404 884 140

#### **Forest Hill UC**

Daryl Hawkey 0419 607 085  
 Julie Hawkey 0488 460 875.  
 Joy Williams 0402 491 013

#### **Mountview UC**

Rob Jackson. 0413 599 047  
 Lynne Rosenthal. 0415 286 855  
 David Rowe 0411 268 680

### **This Preaching Plan is subject to change.**

With Together Services, the Ministers may choose rostered people from any of the three churches for readings and prayers.