



# Cluster News

## May 2022

### Welcome to the May Cluster News.

What a beautiful Autumn we have enjoyed. Now, as the leaves fall and the nights become chilly, we are reminded that "Change is a constant". The delights of hot soup, warm homes, winter woollies await us. So too, we can look forward to continuing warm fellowship, closer working togetherness within our Cluster and mutual encouragement as we seek to be faithful, in our neighbourhood, to Christ whose name we have taken as Christians.

*Anne and Elaine, Editors.*

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### Family, from Rev Tina



*My great-grandmother Alice Mackintosh  
from Yackandandah*

I grew up with stories about my ancestors. About Alice Mackintosh whose father James Mackintosh came from Dundee in Scotland – on my father's side and Louis D'Assonville a merchant from France who lived and traded in Mauritius and his granddaughter Marie Louise who settled in Melbourne, and many other ancestors. We all have ancestors with a narrative, a family history. In the same way our church has a history and narrative. My family has changed over time and my siblings have married people from Philippines, Italy and Macedonia and my husband is

from Singapore and daughter-in-law from Japan, are migrants, like my ancestors. Many of our families have changed over time as has the Australian community and as churches are transformed and come together like families, they too will change.

We are a cluster of churches who have come together in the hope of forming one family and are slowly getting to know one another, mainly through worship, hospitality, studies, walks, groups, meetings, and more. It's a bit like families who eat together and spend time together and get to know one another over time.

I've been doing a case study over this semester about two communities who are experiencing a lack of food and after exploring why have found out they need to come together so they can grow more food. The problem was one community was good at growing small crops like berries, veggies and herbs and the other was good at farming, keeping cattle, growing wheat and fruit trees. They discovered if they came together and helped each other out they would solve the problem by mixing the farming and skills, where some were able to do the heavy tasks and others had the knowledge to grow certain crops. There would be enough food for everyone. They both valued sharing and caring and decided they needed to help one another out, where there was crossover with people sharing tasks so there was enough food for both communities. Before they focused on solving the problem, they spent time crossing over into each other's community and getting to know one another. They did this by cultural exchange by having regular concerts, dances and singalongs with high tea, plant and craft festivals, excursions, meals together, film nights followed by discussion and a meal and more. This sounded familiar, with my own family, my childhood churches experiences and what we are doing. These are some great ways to get to know one another, which are like family and friends getting to know one another. The case study made me wonder what kind of activities we like being involved in and how we can cross over into each other's communities

and have some fun getting to know one another as one large family.

I've been reading the feedback form the surveys and workshops and overall, there is a gratefulness for sharing and caring for one another. A gratitude for history, place and community and an openness to caring and sharing for people within the three cluster communities. This week's gospel from John is about Jesus praying for us to become one united community in Christ. Let us continue our journey with trust, prayer and hospitality towards each other as family and friends.

## The 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly of the Uniting Church in Australia met on the Sunshine Coast

this month with the theme, "Dwelling in Love"

President Sharon Hollis said; "*We have dwelt together in love because the Holy Spirit has dwelt with us, and guided us, and remained with us.*" There were four days of discussion, Christian community, worship, prayer and discerning the will of God for the Uniting Church in Australia. One of the most significant moments was a historic renewal of the covenant between the UCA and the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Congress.

The 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly will take place in 2024 and will be hosted by the Synod of NSW/ACT.

### The Assembly asks..." Join us in prayer for

- Assembly members as they travel back to the lands on which they live.
- The ongoing work of the whole Church as we continue to discern the future of the Uniting Church in Australia.
- The many and varied expressions of the Uniting Church in Australia across the country as together we seek to participate in Christ's mission in the world through worship, witness and service."

## Regional Council learns from others

As you know, the Regional Council meets monthly at one of our churches on a rotating basis, however, in February this year we met at the Manningham Uniting Church in Templestowe. Why would we go there, you ask. To learn!

Manningham Uniting Church has been through the process of joining congregations together and their management/joint council team invited us to see their new campus and talk about the process of bringing people together. It was a fabulous day and very reassuring to know that many things we might see as

problems can be resolved with patience, time, discussion, etc.

A number of us took notes. Perhaps it is helpful to share some random comments or learnings with you here, although this list is just the 'short' list! Food for thought as we continue on our cluster journey, step by step, together.

- Remain flexible, make mistakes, learn from them, resolve to go forward
- Provide social interaction opportunities.
- Adaptability is important, things keep changing
- Nothing will be the same for anyone
- Prioritise battles – let the small things go
- It's important to build trust and work together
- There was no significant progress until there was unity and one church council
- Decide what you have, where you're going, what you need to get there
- Sometimes things resolve themselves over time
- When dealing with people at a time of significant change, we have to consider emotional responses from diverse demographics – this can take time
- Hold conversations, however difficult.
- Mistakes are important, learn from them. Have realistic timelines
- Discuss conflicting issues
- Change and transition take time.

If you have a concern or question, please raise it with your local representatives on the Regional Council. We're doing this together and, as my husband said to me one day, "I'm not a mind-reader; if you want something done, you're going to have to tell me what it is."

*Lynne Rosenthal, Mountview rep on Regional Council*

### This prayer was offered by Phil McCredden as our Regional Council met to discern the way forward.

*We plant the seeds that will one day grow.*

*We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise.*

*We lay foundations that will need future development.*

*We provide yeast that produces effects far beyond our capabilities.*

*We cannot do everything and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that.*

*This enables us to do something, and to do it well.*

*It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way.*

*An opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest.*

*Archbishop Oscar Romeo*

## **Introducing Anne Smith, BNNUC's representative on Regional Council.**

I came to BNNUC with the Blackburn North stream in the merger with Nunawading. But church membership was really a continuation of the Methodist worship (prior to Union) begun in a small wooden building in the north country irrigation area between Rochester and Echuca. Dairying was the chief occupation, with regular demands every day of the week. But the church was a family gathering place with parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins. My seat was with my grandparents (our family overflowed the small wooden pew) and two fond memories are of my grandfather's gift of a lolly, often a peppermint, to suck during the sermon, and his strong tenor voice as he enjoyed singing the hymns.

I was fortunate to find friendly and comfortable congregations in different places during primary (TITC) teacher training and while at various teaching appointments, then after marriage settling in a family home in Blackburn North. The family eventually comprised four boys, all of whom have been settled in their own adult life for many years, and to whom I am indebted for five interesting grandchildren. They are all growing very quickly too.

When the boys were at school, I resumed full time teaching till retirement. This was rewarding, and holds fond memories of a variety of schools, and many diverse pupils and their families. Many migrant families were part of these, especially Vietnamese boat people in the 80's and later Chinese families, mostly from Hong Kong. And I have seen a development from the domination of a curriculum to be strictly followed to learning taking much more notice of the needs of individual pupils. I believe teachers today are very highly skilled and hard working, and I watched in awe as they coped during the lockdowns of the Covid emergency.

Retirement has brought its joys, too. I have had involvement with two Probus groups, and relished participating in their interesting activities. I have delighted in some travels, both within Australia and overseas. Always there has been gardening, and with a move to a unit, pleasure in setting up a new garden. With growth here have come changes of microclimate, resulting in a challenge to continually develop plantings – but also bringing delight in the beauty which abounds. Family continues to be a comfort and help, though sometimes a source of challenge and learning to adapt to change. They are so wise in the strange ways of technology!

Always there is change, so learning must continue, and life has many joys, specially this one –



*Great Grandma Anne with Gene.*

## **CENTRE 81, an open door for coffee and care.**

Centre 81, the Outreach Centre of the Mountview Uniting Church, was born on July 16, 1989, as the vision of a group of very dedicated and hardworking members of the Church.

From that date, we have worked amongst our own Congregation, and members of the wider Whitehorse Community, in providing a range of services to anyone who wishes to access our services.

Centre 81 is run by a committee of four, together with a team of Receptionists, many of whom have been volunteering since Centre 81's inception. The Receptionists work together in pairs, to try to bring about some degree of normality to our visitors, by making our space a warm and welcoming place to be, even if it just for a "cuppa", and a listening ear.

From that "cuppa", the real reason for the visit may surface, and we are able to follow through from there, whether it is a food parcel from a well stocked pantry, or providing access to furniture and household goods, or counselling, whether it be financial, or family related matters.

That is where our Ministers may be called upon, to offer deeper counselling or advice.

Covid 19, saw the closure of our very successful Charities Christmas Card Shop, which ran, prior to that for 21 years.

Fortunately, Covid 19 did not stop the gifting of very beautiful Christmas Hampers to our clients, and other families within our local Community. We also support the Victoria Police through Whitehorse Churches Care, with their distribution of Food Hampers to needy families and lonely singles.

The Wesley Uniting Refuge for Women in Crisis (next to Mountview) also receives practical care from Centre 81.

There have been many highlights over the years, which have brought much joy to all our Mountview Members, and particularly those who volunteer at Centre 81, but perhaps receiving a Deakin Community Award, on March 28<sup>th</sup> this year, for our work within the Community, brought great satisfaction, and a continuing relevance, as we seek to serve our Lord, in the Community around us.

Please pop in for a “cuppa and a chat” —we would love to see you.

At the moment, we are open only on Tuesdays & Fridays, from 10.00 until 12.00 noon.

Blessings,

Jill Kidd for the Centre 81 Committee.



*Michael Sukkar, Federal Minister for Deakin with Jill Kidd, Margot Kemke, Sue Carter & Jenny Balshaw, Centre 81 committee members.*

### **The Serenity Prayer**

God, grant me the serenity  
to accept the things I cannot change,  
courage to change the things I can  
and wisdom to know the difference.

*Reinhold Niebuhr*

### **Introducing David Rowe, Mountview's representative on Regional Council.**



Colleen and I, both originally from South Australia began attending Mountview Church in the early 1980s. I joined Church Council in the late 1980s and have been continuously on Council since.

I represented Mountview on Maroondah Presbytery in the 90s and joined the Presbytery Property Committee, and eventually Presbytery Standing Committee, until Maroondah was combined with parts of 2 other Presbyteries to become Yarra Yarra. I also served on BOMAR as a Maroondah Presbytery rep for a number of years until the Presbytery restructure.

After Yarra Yarra Presbytery was formed, I served as Presbytery Treasurer for a number of terms and was a member of both Presbytery Standing Committee and Presbytery Resources Committee. I still serve on that Committee. Part of the responsibility of members of the Resourcing Committee is to represent Presbytery on building projects (Project Control Groups- PCG) where the value exceeds \$1million. In 2013 I joined the Wesley Lonsdale Street PCG that concluded in 2020 when the Synod office, along with Uniting, U-Ethical and Uniting Agewell moved into their new offices.

In 2017 I retired from fulltime work. Over my career I served in a number of roles as a Sales Representative, Systems of Work Analyst, Marketing Accountant, Supply Manager (including Leading the dairy industry response to dairy farmer blockades during the State of Emergency in

the early 1990s), Transport Manager, retiring from the role of Distribution Manager Victoria and Tasmania for a leading glass Manufacturer- where in 2002 I was project representative on a committee that designed and built a 52,000 square meter warehouse complex. I hold formal qualifications in Accounting and Transport Administration. I have been trained, among other things, in measuring and designing work systems, and Lean 6 Sigma.

On retirement I was asked to join the UCA Property Trust (Victoria and Tasmania). In 2018 I joined the Synod Property and Operations Committee, and the Synod Audit and Risk Committee. As well as these 3 Committees I still serve on Yarra Yarra Presbytery Resources and Property Committee. I am currently working on a number of projects for Synod and Presbytery with Banyule Cluster, Blackburn, Habitat, a school building proposal and I have very recently joined a committee looking at the future of the Ivanhoe Congregation site in the Banyule Cluster. Serving on these Committees has given me a more than an average understanding of the UCA regulations, particularly those relating to Property, Finance, and Church structures.

I have been a member of UCA Assembly attending meetings in Sydney and Adelaide. I also served as Volunteer Co-ordinator for the Melbourne Assembly in 2017.

Colleen and I have 2 married daughters and 5 grandchildren. Unfortunately, one of those families live in Perth and other than zoom meetings, courtesy of COVID, we have not seen them now for over 2 years. We are looking forward to a Perth trip sometime soon. The other family lives in suburban Melbourne and I particularly enjoy spending time with the 3 Grandchildren.

We are also members of the Maroondah Bush Walking Club and have taken part in a number of extended walks in various parts of Australia and overseas. We have only recently returned from walking around some of the historic sites of Sydney Harbour, and are planning to join The Aussie Camino walk later this year.

To keep my mind from getting stuck on finance and property I attend German language classes at U3A.

## Preaching Plan. May, June

	<u>BNNUC</u>	<u>Forest Hill.</u>	<u>Mountview</u>
<b>May 29.</b>	<b>Tina.</b>	<b>Peter.</b>	<b>Daniel</b>
<b>June 5.</b>	<b>Pentecost. Together at 10. at BNNUC (C)</b>		
<b>June 12</b>	<b>Daniel.</b>	<b>Supply.</b>	<b>Peter</b>
<b>June 19</b>	<b>Daniel.</b>	<b>Peter.</b>	<b>Tina</b>
<b>June 26</b>	<b>Daniel.</b>	<b>Peter.</b>	<b>Tina</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. Presbytery has indicated that finding a new supply person is extremely unlikely, so further changes are possible. Ministry Student with our Cluster, Daniel Farnsworth may assist in leading worship as his evolving learning plan allows.

With Together Services, the Ministers may choose rostered people from any of the three churches for reading and prayers. If rostered people do not hear from a minister (*or from the Ministers' Assistant at BNN*) for a Together service, you may be required next time you're rostered for a Together service!