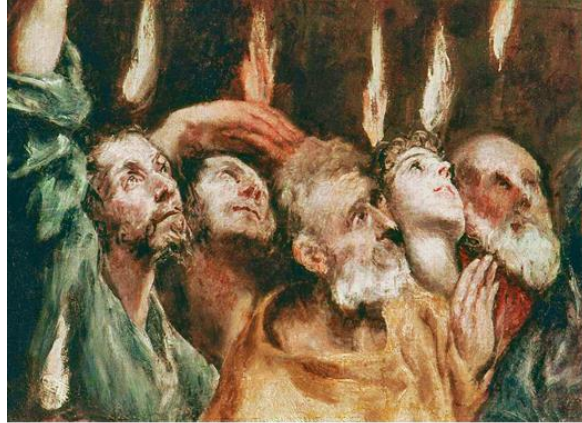


**Whitehorse Uniting Congregation
Written Worship
Sunday 28 May 2023
Pentecost**



Pentecost (detail) by El Greco

Image RCL

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Introit – 407 Breathe on me Breath of God

Chet Valley Churches 2021

Written by Rev. Edwin Hatch 1878. Music by Charles Lockhart (who was blind) around 1810.

<https://youtu.be/r8mCs-QHELw>

Welcome

May the worship bless you this Pentecost.

Acknowledgment

We acknowledge those who were here before us, the first inhabitants of this place.

We honour them for their custodianship of the land on which we gather today.

Call to Worship

On this day, The Lord's Day, we gather in this place.

**Though we have different gifts,
we are blessed by the same God**

On that great day of Pentecost the disciples gathered together,

**though uncertain, they trusted in God's future
though many, they were one in Christ**

On the last day of all time,
God's sons and daughters will be together in one place

**Until then,
we will talk of God's dreams,
with every breath we take,
in every moment we live.**

Prayer

Astonishing Creator at Pentecost,
 you could have been calm, cool, analytical,
 but you decided that we no longer wait and unleashed the Spirit, into our lives.

Living water,
 like an artist using a variety of mediums, you proclaim good news to us,
 to those who hunger for hope, you offer the banquet of Justice,
 to those who are parched by loneliness, you offer the precious cup,
 overflowing with your Living Water.

Unbridled Spirit,
 you calm us when we are racing around,
 you come rushing through our soul's backyard,
 transforming us, holding us in salvation's Life of newness.

May our words please you, God in Community, Holy and One,
 as we pray as Jesus taught us...

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
 your kingdom come,
 your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
 Give us today our daily bread.
 Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.
 Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.
 For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen

Prayer of Confession

Lord we are called to be one body, yet there are times when we live our lives in ways that cause disunity and
 sometimes our desires, wants and choices cause hurt and division.

Lord, we seek unity. We ask for your forgiveness and your grace to forgive.

Lord, we come before you in this moment of silence,
 confessing our brokenness and need for your love and transformation, and for your healing and mercy

Silence

Assurance of Forgiveness

Hold out your hands, if you feel comfortable.

On this day and every day, God stands, arms wide open to embrace us
 heart wide open to forgive us, and this is our good news:
 God's glory is forever, God's grace will never end,
 we will rejoice in God's healing hope, as long as we have breath. Amen

Prayer of Offering

May our gifts join your dance of healing and hope, for those living in despair.
 May our voices join the multitude of languages, crying out for Justice.
 May our hearts embrace those you are bringing into our community.
 On this great day of Pentecost and in all the days to come.
 By the Spirit's grace, we pray. Amen



Image RCL

Invocation

Come Holy Spirit our Souls inspire

Verse 1 hymn 396 (adapted)
said Prayerfully.

**Come, Holy Spirit, our souls inspire
and lighten with your heavenly fire:**

Hymn 396 Veni Creator Spiritus sung by Choir.

Readings Pentecost NRSV Updated

Acts 2:1-21

2 When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. **2** And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. **3** Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. **4** All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

5 Now there were devout Jews from every people under heaven living in Jerusalem. **6** And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. **7** Amazed and astonished, they asked, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?" **8** And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? **9** Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, **10** Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, **11** Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power." **12** All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" **13** But others sneered and said, "They are filled with new wine."

14 But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them, "Fellow Jews^[a] and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. **15** Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o'clock in the morning. **16** No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel: **17** 'In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.

18 Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy. **19** And I will show portents in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and smoky mist. **20** The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the coming of the Lord's great and glorious day. **21** Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.'

1 Corinthians 12:3b-13

3 Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says "Let Jesus be cursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except by the Holy Spirit.

4 Now there are varieties of gifts but the same Spirit, **5** and there are varieties of services but the same Lord, **6** and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. **7** To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

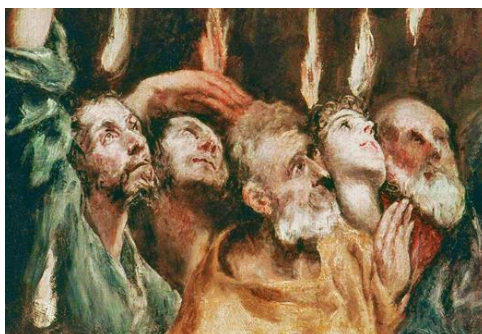
⁸To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, ⁹to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, ¹⁰to another the working of powerful deeds, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.

¹²For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

John 20:19-23

¹⁹When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors were locked where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” ²⁰After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” ²²When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.” New Revised Standard Version, Updated Edition. Copyright © 2021 National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

Young at Heart – What’s Pentecost?



Pentecost (detail) by El Greco

Image RCL

This Sunday we remember and celebrate God’s gift to us in sending the Holy Spirit to us where we are one in God and one people united in the Spirit. Today we begin a journey with the entire Uniting Church with Uniting in Prayer. We will have an introductory video about it during notices. I invite you all to be part of this. The Holy Spirit reminds us, values such as love, grace and generosity are part of us because they are core values of the Holy Spirit. Prayer is the foundation of all we do in the name of Jesus. Prayer is when we talk to God and listen with our hearts. We are drawn into the lifegiving blessings God offers all the church. I have included an all-age resource for you to use for the next 26 days as we journey and unite in prayer with all members of the Uniting Church. Believe as a new church we will be blessed.

Song: This Little Light of Mine

Odetta – (Eileen ML aka Adamfulgence) 2013 with a short story at the end

A Beautiful version – Google the story behind this song said to be written by Harry Dixon Loes, but it remains anon.

<https://youtu.be/J2kDsQGeoLU>

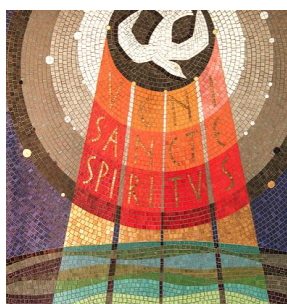


Image RCL

Sermon – Rev Andrew

In German there is a word zeitgeist; you may know it. Zeitgeist. It means the spirit of the times, the spirit in the air. Of course, the spirit of our time – whatever time in history that might be – doesn’t just descend on us as hapless victims but is the outcome of the ideas and beliefs that we affirm and embrace – maybe given to us by others – family, schooling, church, the media. These ways of thinking about the world though is like the air we breathe, the water we swim in – we affirm and embrace the zeitgeist often without questioning this spirit or interrogating its origins.

Maybe the term we in the church use for the zeitgeist is simply the expression: the world. There is something about this term, the world, which implies a kind of blindness to the way things are. Blindness to the zeitgeist. But we in the church are no less likely to be seduced by the zeitgeist of our time than those who are not part of the church. We have to be alert; watchful.

If you have been paying attention to the news in the last week you will know that the highly respected aboriginal journalist Stan Grant has been attacked and victimised as a result of comments he made during the broadcast of the coronation on ABC TV. As a consequence of the extreme vilification towards him, and his family and the lack of support he has received from ABC management – who encouraged him to comment on the legacy of colonialism on indigenous people during the coronation broadcast, Stan has stepped out of the journalistic world for a time. He has done so with great dignity, without recrimination, or bitterness, but with great sadness. One of his reasons for stepping out is he says to reflect on his own role as a member of the media, of the fourth estate, who Stan says are as much of the problem in creating the climate of bitter vitriol as anyone else. In a piece published by the ABC last Friday Stan wrote about the role that the media has come to play in public life:

the media has turned public discussion into an amusement park. Social media, at its worst, is a sordid spectacle. A grotesque burlesque. Lives are reduced to mockery and ridicule.

I want no part of it, Stan writes. I want to find a place of grace far from the stench of the media. I want to go where I am not reminded of the social media sewer.

In a way what Stan is saying that the media have come to play a role in our society that is debauching us; that it is corrupting the zeitgeist of our time; corrupting the spirit of our time.

We have heard just now two accounts from gospel writers of the giving of the spirit. Firstly, from the gospel writer Luke – the account we know so well – set on the day of Pentecost, where the disciples are inflamed by tongues, as of fire. The other account of the giving of the spirit comes from the gospel of John, happening on the day of the resurrection where Jesus comes to the frightened disciples behind locked doors and breathes the spirit on them. As God at the creation breathes breath into the man of dust, Adam, so Jesus breathes the spirit into the disciples, bringing into being a new creation.

This giving of the spirit in the Gospel of John is a fulfillment of what Jesus has said to the disciples earlier:

'If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate,* to be with you for ever. This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be among you.*

We can be inclined to think about the holy spirit as some kind of disembodied spirit which roams freely about the world. Certainly, Jesus says to Nicodemus: *The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.'* But the teaching of Jesus about the spirit is that the spirit is that bond between the father and the son. As children of the father ourselves and as brothers and sisters of Jesus we can affirm and celebrate the presence of the spirit in us and between us, as Jesus says to the disciples in the room behind locked doors. *he abides with you, and he will be among you.*

This spirit of truth opens our eyes to the zeitgeist, the world's ways of doing things and enables us to speak and to act in ways that witness to the kingdom of God present here with us. The zeitgeist says – this is the way things are; we just have to accept this. But the Holy spirit of Jesus says - this is the way things are with the kingdom of heaven; will you join me in the sharing in God's deeds of power that show the grace and mercy of God. Jesus invites us to abide in this truth of the spirit of God; to both see the lie which often passes for the truth – to name the lie and yet also to live by love because we are committed to the way of Jesus; abiding in the father's love. So may we pray Come Holy Spirit, abandoning ourselves to the grace and mercy of God and living by God's spirit of freedom and joy.

Hymn 409: O Breath of Life come Sweeping Through Us

Sung at the EMU Conference Wales

Elizabeth Ann Head 1850-1936

https://youtu.be/l-r3xd9_P3k

Invocation

Come Holy Spirit our Souls inspire

Verse 2 Hymn 396 (adapted)

said Prayerfully.

**Come, Holy Spirit, our souls inspire,
Your blessed unction from above is comfort, life, and fire of love;**

Poem: When the Spirit Comes

Adapted Pentecost Liturgy, Soft Petals of Grace, Wild Goose, Scotland.

When the Spirit comes, she will put on dancing shoes,
on my two left feet, lace me up, and lead me out onto the floor,
where we will enter the Argentine tango competition.

When the Spirit comes, she will wander through the garden of my soul and as she opens her hands,
butterflies will skitter from withered hope to dashed dreams, breathing them back to life.

When the Spirit comes and finds me brooding,
by the stagnant pool of tears,
She will dive right in, drenching me with God's joy,
then teach me how to float on my back, (without sinking)
pointing out the flames flitting about our heads, like fireflies.

Prayers of the People – Trevor de Run

Loving God, we praise you for your creation and for all that you have richly provided. As we come to you with our prayers of the people, open our eyes to Your glory, open our minds to Your truth, open our hearts to Your love, and open our wills to Your control. Hear us and receive our prayers that we ask in faith.

Merciful God, we pray for your world and in particular today, for the African countries of Angola and Mozambique. Both Angola and Mozambique, were once united for four hundred years as part of the Portuguese Empire. At the beginning of the 21st century, both these countries were ravaged by internal conflicts and war, resulting in a large number of deaths. Angola has one of the highest mortality rates in the world, with almost 70% of the population under 24 years of age. Mozambique is one of the poorest and underdeveloped countries in Africa and is among the top ten countries with the highest birth rate in the world, with more than 45% of the children under 15 years of age. Both these countries have high HIV/AIDS rates among their populations. Give wisdom to the leaders and for all those in authority in both these countries, to work for the good of its peoples. We pray for the just governance, for greater political stability and justice of its peoples. For the reduction of poverty and for alleviation of its population existing below the poverty line. For improvements in the health and welfare system, and in particular for those afflicted by AIDS.

In our own country, we pray for our leaders. May those who are entrusted in office, work for the good of this country and its peoples. Give wisdom to those in authority and for all our peoples, a desire for righteousness and peace, and the will to work together in trust, in spite of our different origins, our different cultures, our different beliefs, that we may live together in love.

We pray for our Whitehorse congregation that we will continue to grow together. We pray for our members, for those who are sick, grieving, distressed, lonely, depressed or afraid, that they may be comforted, and their hearts lifted and filled with hope. We trust these people to your care O Lord. Bless those whom we have named in silence, that they may also know the power of your presence. We pray that you will provide, comfort and support. Let the light of your peace shine on them, and upon us as we seek to be your children. Inspire us to provide in your name.

We pray for the other churches in our region, in particular for St. John's Anglican Church, Blackburn and in the presbytery, for the Knox Cluster of Bayswater Boronia Road, Ferntree Gully, Rowville and Scoresby Uniting Churches. Give their leaders the wisdom, that they will respond to your will for them and for their community. We also offer our prayers for the Students and Staff of the Pilgrim Theological College, Centre for Theology & Ministry in Parkville, Victoria.

Almighty God, we praise You for the way You can take the ordinary things and make them new; You are able to take ordinary lives lived by ordinary people and fill them with meaning; You are able to take lives filled with brokenness,

selfishness, and ugliness, and bring restoration and renewal of hearts and minds. We praise You for that love which passes all understanding, and which is filled with the power of the Holy Spirit. Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord, amen.

Hymn 418: She Sits Like a Bird
Ferryhill Parish Church 2021 Virtual Choir during lockdown
A lovely version.

<https://youtu.be/5EmkyT6uUZE>

Blessing

May the Holy Spirit come upon us, filling us with Joy, so we may dance for the Lord.
May the Holy Spirit bless us, so we may live out God's call on our life.
May the Holy Spirit bring comfort to the sad and lonely places within us,
setting us free and filling us with springs of living water, as we follow Jesus, on the road of life.
May the Holy Spirit open our eyes to the beauty of God's creation,
and bless us with courage, faith and life.
May the Holy Spirit pour God's love into our hearts.



Sending

God's glory has filled our hearts!
We will go to empty ourselves for God and others
 Christ has given himself for us!
We will go to offer ourselves to those in need
 The Spirit gifts us new life!
We will go to be a blessing to everyone we meet.

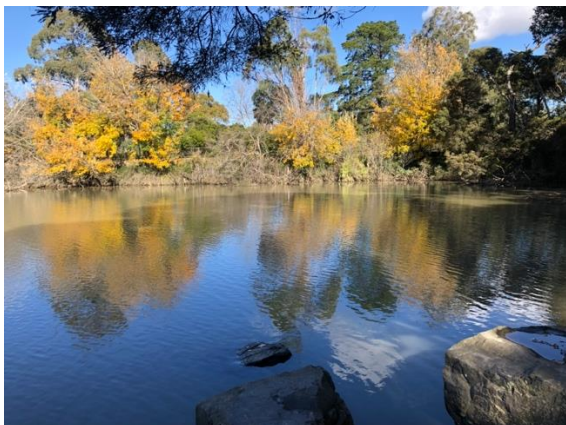
Hymn 778: Shalom to you Now – tMt video
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2oqiFenWxY&list=PL5dbbdzyKBag-mEd9qTgdyYNQLIsLD2rC&index=35>

Pastoral Care tips

The benefits of walking

It's good to get outside in the sun and walk, if you can or have someone walk with you. I often take a pastoral walk with someone rather than having a cuppa at a café or visiting them at home. Not only do we get a dose of vitamin B when we walk, we help keep our mind and body healthy and if we are with a friend it's good for us and if it's beautiful even better, it's good for the soul. I often walk my dog, Moses, and think over a sermon or pray at the same time. The photo is of the lake at Blackburn Lake Sanctuary. I was walking with one our members over a week ago (long before I tested positive for Covid, thank God). It was a beautiful autumn day. If we get a nice Sunday before

winter sets in, I'll organise a walk after church. Miss Lucy's opposite the main entrance, will hopefully be open for a cuppa.



© Tina Lyndon

The Voice

Be well informed before voting for the Voice.

Start early when it comes to understanding The Voice. The following may assist you and me, as we read it bit by bit over the coming months. I hope it's helpful. I've provided the following YouTube video.

<https://youtu.be/gYyePtuzU8w>

The University of Melbourne April 3rd, 2023

Centre for Comparative Constitutional Studies (CSSS)

Convened – Tim Goodwin, Barrister, Laureate Emeritus Professor Cheryl Saunders AO, and CSSS Director, Professor Jason Varuhas (Experts on Constitutional law).

I've watched it and it seems like a comprehensive history and review of Constitutional and legal rights of Aboriginals since the Constitution and review of The Voice. There are also some great questions asked towards the end of the presentations.

I've also included some links regarding the Constitution Alteration (Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Voice) 2023 and its background.

The first has a comprehensive amount of background material about the Bill and The Voice and the second is about the Bill.

https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Bills_Legislation/Bills_Search_Results/Result?bld=r7019

<https://ministers.ag.gov.au/media-centre/next-step-towards-voice-referendum-constitutional-alteration-bill-23-03-2023>

https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Bills_Legislation/bd/bd2223a/23bd080

Comprehensive information from SBS

<https://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/when-will-the-voice-to-parliament-referendum-be-held/w2uyhixaz>

Presentations from Volunteers Sunday (more are welcome)

Poverty and Kids Hope

My name is Corry, and I'm the current coordinator of our church's Kids Hope Program in Burwood Heights PS.

Today's media is telling us that the cost of living is forcing many families into poverty. We are all feeling the pinch. So, what must life be like for those who have been in poverty for two or more generations?

Poverty is the lack of resources that influence achievement in life. For many kids these resources include not only lack of money.

They may also lack the ability to choose and control emotional responses or the intellectual ability and skills to deal with everyday life.

Spiritual, health & mobility resources may be limited.

But most importantly they lack **Support Systems & Role Models** – friends, family and viable backups in times of need. They lack frequent access to adults who are appropriate and nurturing and who do not engage in self-destructive behaviour.

Kids Hope gives us the opportunity to make a real difference. Each kid in our Kids Hope Program this year is chosen by the school and is 'living in poverty' by the definition I have just outlined. Our church/ We are providing mentors (8 at the moment) who spend one hour a week with one child as a supportive friend and role model.

With Prayer Partner support, we mentors put our prayers into action in the hope that these kids will not end up in the statistics for mental health issues, drug addiction or incarceration in our prisons, as so many of our kids caught in generational poverty do.

Kids Hope mentoring is so rewarding. We see the difference we are making...raising their self-esteem and confidence.

Corry Skilbeck

LinC Whitehorse

LinC (Love in the name of Christ), is a voluntary organization within the Whitehorse Council Community.

“ORDINARY PEOPLE doing ORDINARY THINGS, making an EXTRAORDINARY DIFFERENCE in our community”.

It's a volunteer organization with Volunteers from various Christian Churches in the area, i.e. Uniting, Anglican & Baptist at present. It's to assist people with practical short or medium-term needs.

Aim; to meet practical needs which are not met by existing community welfare agencies, to those in need, regardless of their belief, gender, or ethnic background.

The clients can be self-referred, or from an agency. The Referral Centre is located in a Mitcham Office.

This Centre is operated by two members, each Monday & Thursday morning from 9-12am. There's an answering machine to leave messages that come in, during the rest of the week. These are dealt with, the next day the Office is open. These can be from an agency or individual.

All volunteers are trained to help clients with care, compassion and without discrimination, respecting the client's confidentiality at all times. All volunteers have police checks, and most have working with children checks.

Services offered; Visiting/friendship, home help, transport to appointments/shopping, mowing & garden maintenance (not weeding), minor home repairs, and shopping assistance are mostly the requests needed at present.

LinC supports; families in need or difficulty, elderly & infirm, single parents, people with disabilities, people confined to home.

A recently started service is LinC Call. This service is for people who are shut-in, lonely, anxious, not able to get out of home, who would like a weekly phone call to hear from another person. All these volunteers are specially trained for this. They are matched up with a volunteer who has similar interests etc. so the call is positive for them.

There have been many members in the Mitcham Congregation that have been volunteers over the past 22yrs.

Unfortunately, there are only two of us at present, Eddie Short, who now only assesses larger jobs, and myself and I mostly work in the Referral Centre on alternate Thursday mornings.

LinC can be called on 9873 2293 at any time and if there's no-one there, a message can be left on the answering machine. We are looking for more volunteers. If anyone is interested, please speak to Eddie Short or me for more information.

Margaret Swain

Centre 81

I have enjoyed volunteering and being involved with Centre 81 - however I haven't been as involved as are Jill and the other members of the committee - especially during COVID-19 time.

Earlier on when Centre 81 was being set up, I did the Roster for the Volunteers. I found that it took a bit of juggling as I would be told when someone wasn't able to attend - sometimes at short notice - so then there was the need to ring around to find a replacement.

While having been a Receptionist once a month from the beginning - the lady who then for several years shared the time with me, didn't drive, and I would pick her up.

We found that shortly after Centre 81 commenced - that the Receptionists enjoyed having time together - first of all to be able to help anyone who called in - and secondly having the chance (if time permitted) to chat and get to know one another.

(And I am now guessing that if and when someone had health problems - it could have been a chance for the person having a problem to share it with another who would listen, and support). To me it is a very well supported

experience. **Aileen Youngs**