



Mount Martha Uniting Church

Keeping in Touch

April 2026

Sunday Worship: 10.00am

Minister: Rev. Peter Wiltshire Contact: Mobile 0425 747 437 Email pwiltshire@ymail.com

DATES FOR THE DIARY

MEETINGS

Executive Leadership Group Bimonthly

Pastoral Care Group
Bimonthly

Worship Committee
As required

Mission / Outreach Group
As required

OTHER ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

Honeypot Play Group
Monday 9.00—12.00

Bible Study / Discussion Group
Tuesday Fortnightly:
5.00—6.30pm

Table Tennis
Tuesday 1.30-3.00pm

Badminton
Tuesday 7.30—9.00pm

Working Bees
Productive Garden / Peace Trail / General Maintenance
Monthly: Tues. 9.00-12.00

Days for Girls
Monthly, 1st Friday

Dine Out
Wednesday Monthly

Men's Coffee Group
Friday fortnightly 10.30am

Ladies Coffee Group -
Friday Fortnightly 10.30am

2026

MOVING FORWARD WITH PRAYER AND ACTION

“Happy New Year Everyone” and welcome to our first KIT for 2026.

Since our last KIT we have celebrated Christmas, reflecting on the meaning of Christ's birth in our world, our church and in our own personal lives.

In December we elected our church office bearers and committee members for 2026 and in February we celebrated the many events, achievements and blessings of 2025 through reports to our Annual General Meeting. The leading and presence of God was clearly evident through the church and community partnerships that occurred in 2025

We now look forward with expectancy to the leading of God in the next phase of our journey as a congregation. As our dedicated and faithful MMUC pioneers recognized, our efforts are not ours alone. “Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders will have toiled in vain...” Psalm 127:1,2 (The First Thirty Years, P. 8)



BUT, how do we recognise God's will and direction? How do we hear God speaking? These and other questions of faith and life are not always easy to answer.

We all have different experiences of faith with different understandings and insights to share. In this issue of KIT, look for our new segment, **“Questions of Life and Faith”** - an opportunity to share, focusing initially on PRAYER. In future editions, further questions are invited for consideration as we grow together in faith.



May you know God's presence and rich blessings in the year ahead.

In this edition of KIT, look out for our regular items:

From the Minister's Desk;
Recent Events; Community;
Coming Soon; History Continues;
Who's Who at MMUC?

And much, much more ...

A WORD FROM OUR MINISTER



From The Minister

The special feature of this edition of the KIT magazine is the contributions from members of the Mount Martha Congregational community on their perspectives on prayer.

Quaker author and philosophy of religion scholar Douglas V. Steere concedes that there are many different approaches and dimensions to prayer.

However, grounding all approaches, Steere maintains, is the intentional practice of cultivating a relationship with God.

The practice of prayer is public and private, communal and solitary.

The architecture of prayer is as expansive as the scope of human imagination, encompassing the lived experience and deepest longings of the human journey.

People indeed come to prayer out of many different necessities and impulses of the soul.

Some prominent questions regarding prayer in our modern era are these:

What are the expectations that we have about prayer?

What do we think we are doing when we pray?

Is there a right way to pray?

Does prayer change anything?

Are words necessary when prayer is being offered?

From whence does the impulse to pray arise?

Is prayer merely a shopping list being offered to the Divine?

Spiritual guides have historically offered the advice that we begin our prayers *“where we are in life, with that which matters most.”*

Spiritual theologian Meister Eckhart puts it this way, “our opening and God’s entry is one breath.” There is generosity of spirit and inclusivity in Eckhart’s perspective, that even the anguished prayer of the uncommitted can be a moment of opening, a threshold of commitment.”

Thus, I commend this edition of the **KIT** magazine to your enjoyment, nourishment and reflection.

Grace and Peace: Reverend Peter Wiltshire



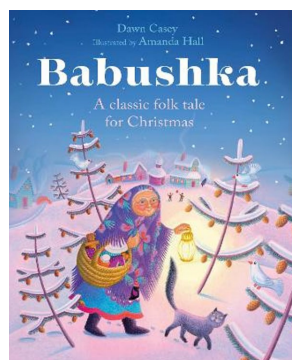
CHRISTMAS 2025 CELEBRATIONS

Mt Martha Uniting Church



The Family Christmas Service at Mt Martha Uniting Church was a time of great joy, celebrating the birth of Jesus.

Together with carol singing and Christmas readings, Rev. Peter Wiltshire shared the story of Babushka with the children.



This is a beloved Russian Christmas folktale about an elderly woman who is too busy cleaning and doing her household chores to join the Three Wise Men seeking the baby Jesus. Later however, she embarks on an endless journey of her own, hoping to find him. On her journey she gives away gifts that she had meant for the Christ child to children in

need. She never finds the Christ child but continues her search, bringing small gifts and comfort to children each winter, embodying the spirit of giving. (Adapted from description of the story by author Catherine Flores.)



An eager group of children, guided by Peter Hough then shared in re-telling the Nativity story, whilst searching for Angels, Shepherds, Wisemen, the Star and finally Mary and Joseph, all located around church building.



BUT WHERE WAS BABY JESUS?

He was missing from the manger, unable to be found!



SO, a search began, as the children left the church building and made their own journey to Bethlehem (along the Peace Trail) in search of Baby Jesus.

Finally, Baby Jesus was found at the end of the trail in an old shed representing the stable, surrounded by fluffy lambs and other soft toy animals.



Spontaneously, each child waited



their turn to nurse Baby Jesus before he was returned to the church and

laid in the manger, reunited with Mary and Joseph. The response of the children was a very moving experience to witness.

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS

Continued...



In a brief craft session, fridge magnets depicting the Nativity scene were made by the children and



displayed to the congregation before families joined together in celebration of Jesus' birth with the carol "Away in a Manger." The children car-

ried the grocery contributions to the altar for blessing before being delivered to the Mornington Support Centre for distribution amongst Mornington's more needy population.



A Christmas Blessing was delivered to the congregation by eager children using a range of soft puppets. (An adaptation of the popular cockatoo blessing, well known to the children.)

It was indeed a special time shared by all as we celebrated God's love

for his people shown through the giving of his son Jesus.



Grocery Deliveries to Mornington COMMUNITY SUPPORT CENTRE

A few days prior to Christmas our donated groceries were gratefully received by the Mornington Community Support Centre who provide assistance and support to an increasing number of needy people on the Mornington Peninsula.



CHRISTMAS 2025

Christmas Dine-Out for MMUC Ladies



In December 2025 the women from Mt Martha Uniting Church gathered together at a Mornington restaurant for a “Ladies Dine-Out.” It was a night of shared fun, friendship, celebration, chatter and relaxation for one and all. Christmas bonbons, hats, jokes, Christmas cards, chocolates ... all contributed to a most enjoyable evening. Thank you to Wendy and her team of helpers for a lovely touch of Christmas for our ladies.



DAYS FOR GIRLS—A Celebration of Shared Community / Global Action

“Days for Girls” continue to meet on the first Friday each month, producing an amazing number of Hygiene/Sanitary Kits for girls in many overseas countries, thereby enhancing both their educational and daily life opportunities. They recently packed 500 kits that are currently in transit, to be distributed to women in a refugee camp of Congolese folk looking for a better life in Burundi.

New helpers are always welcome for a range of activities including sewing, overlocking, threading, cutting, folding, packing ... Jobs for all abilities and interests!!! It is also an opportunity to meet new friends from different churches and community groups. See Hazel Ewing for further information.

In March the Days for Girls group were visited by Pastor Vinnie Munyosi from Uganda who spoke of the work he is involved with through JENGA, helping children and women, including the aging and the vulnerable street girls in their communities. The elderly women, no longer able to work in the fields due to age, face loneliness, lack of adequate food and poor nutrition. Their children are unable to support them as they too are faced with food shortages. Similarly girls face days without sufficient food after long walks to school and back. As a result education is minimal and girls are married at 11 or 12 years of age. These are some of the people helped through JENGA with lessons in hygiene, provision of Days for Girls Kits, lessons on food production and use of sewing machines to become self sufficient. This gradually lessens the pressure to marry early and have children at a very young age.

We rejoice that our Mornington Days for Girls group, which originated many years ago at Mt Martha Uniting Church is able to reach out in a practical, potentially life changing way to girls worldwide.

PRESBYTERY VISIT to MMUC

Contributed by Julie Wiltshire

PRESBYTERY OF PORT PHILLIP EAST MEETING IN COUNCIL AT MMUC

What an honour it was for Mt Martha Uniting Church to be selected by the Presbytery of Port Phillip East to be the host for the annual meeting in Council. Saturday 31st January was the big day. And what a morning it was!



There was a wonderful gathering of people, approximately seventy, who came to enjoy and experience worship at MMUC, hear a talk and a visual presentation about our Peace Trail by Peter Hough and Rev. Peter, share in morning tea, walk the Peace Trail and then participate in the meeting.



The service was led by Reverend Peter Wiltshire and the beautiful music was played by Jenny and Noel Wolstencroft and very much appreciated.

The guests heartily sang the Gathering Song, *Community of Christ*,



allowing the Sanctuary acoustics to lift their voices and magnificently fill the space with joyous sound.



The scripture reading was presented by Julie Wiltshire. It was the story of "The Beatitudes," which later became the focus of the address,

Reverend Salesi Faupula, Moderator of the Uniting Church in Australia Synod of Victoria and Tas-



mania, addressed the congregation with a message titled 'Strong Enough To Stay'.

Later, he was interviewed about his life and faith journey, which was most interesting and he also offered a beautiful blessing in Tongan.

Following an excellent talk and visual presentation by Peter Hough about our Peace



Trail, many chose to walk it and experience it for themselves. There were many compliments about it and also much appreciation of our beautiful Church and setting.

The meeting included a ELM Presentation (Equipping Leadership for Mission) and the Commissioning Ceremony for Presbytery Leadership.

A most successful and enjoyable event for MMUC to have hosted.

~ Julie
Wiltshire



MT MARTHA UC PEACE TRAIL

A Report to Presbytery by Peter Hough



Mt Martha Uniting Church Peace Trail

The following is a brief summary of the presentation given to Presbytery on 29th January by Peter Hough, on behalf of the Mt Martha Congregation.

It was delivered in the context of a Presbytery meeting/worship at MMUC which specifically focussed around our use of the property for connecting with the local community, through the recent development of a Peace Trail.

A presentation was given covering aspects of:

- **The Vision of Founding Members**
- **Our Goal of Environmental Stewardship**
- **COVID and Changing Directions**
- **Fresh Beginnings and Renewal with The Peace Trail Concept**

• **Seasons on the Trail / Usage of the Trail**

Our founding members envisioned a Community Church, one which was **outward looking** and **a beacon for the local community**, standing on the bend of Mt Martha's entry roadway with a cross hovering above the Hopetoun Creek valley.

Inherent in the vision was recognition of a generous donation allowing purchase of a one hectare property for which we had the **responsibility of good Environmental Stewardship**. A number of early members were champions of the natural native and indigenous environment and care, whose legacy continues on today.

COVID was a challenging time for all, in many ways. Not surprisingly it was a period of challenges to the upkeep and management of the property. These challenges included understandable degradation, with much native loss and the over-run of kikyu grasses.

Yet COVID also led to an opportunity for discernment during periods of lockdown and isolation. During this time there were many contemplating the future of the church and notably what role its large grounds might play in a post COVID period within the Mt Mar-

tha Community.

Fresh life seemed to spring from the emergence from COVID and the recommencement of Church as we had previously known it. Yet for many there remained a yearning for more, **a re-invigoration of a faith community and its place within a sprawling Mt Martha community.**

And so the **Peace Trail concept was born** in 2023, proposed, supported and developed by the Church Executive Leadership team and a small enthusiastic group of members.

Planning recognised the opportunity to link existing infrastructure and points of interest via a 350 metre signed loop path, whilst adding further elements of reflective and aesthetic interest in a Trail which could meet needs for **recreation, reflection, remembrance and spiritual renewal**. It would provide natural native regeneration to the property through extensive plantings and weed management/removal.



THE PEACE TRAIL - Continued



Specifically, a **Trail Signboard** was erected at the commencement and a path cut through an existing **Woodland Corner** of the property. The existing **Memorial Garden** provided an important place of remembrance and the develop-



ment of a **Community Black-board** was the next reflection point allowing the posting of messages of good will and encouragement by Trail walkers.



A viewing point called the

“Growing Spot” was a quiet, seated area developed to allow vision of a field of growing native plantings in what was previously a barren landscape. This was followed by a stroll across an earth bridge created near a sometimes damp watercourse before looping back to a rejuvenated landscaped **Play Area** used by a newly formed **PlayGroup**.



Finally the Trail reaches the **Courtyard** between the Church and Hall, an area previously beautified through the tireless efforts of church members envisaging “Cinderella coming to the Ball.” This is now enhanced further through the addition of a **Productive Courtyard** of raised garden beds and passionfruit vines along



with a **Rose Garden** dedicated to those impacted by Domestic violence. The Rose Garden specifically upholds the positive attributes of women through named roses such as “Mother’s Love,” “Best Friend,” “Fearless,” and “Spirit of Community”.



Later a **Red Bench** was also to be added to the Trail as part of our annual White Ribbon Day events to promote community conversations about the impact of Domestic Violence.

Seasons of Significance on the Trail include **The Passion of Christ at Easter**, a **Community Celebration** mid-year coinciding with our celebration of community volunteering, **The White Ribbon** stand against domestic violence in November and a **“Journey to Bethlehem”** at Christmas.

THE PEACE TRAIL - Continued



Trail use however is open and invited all year round and at all times as a community, peaceful and/or reflective resource. Whether dog walking, flower spotting in Spring, supporting the happy sounds of playgroup children on

an adventure, remembering a loved one in the memorial garden or sitting in quiet reflection at one of the reflection benches on the morning following the Bondi shootings, the Peace Trail has meaning in many ways to many people.

We trust it will continue to do so and will evolve as we are led according to the needs and feedback of our community and ongoing open discernment. And ... maybe one day, even the possible appearance of Koalas travelling along the

Hopetoun Creek reserve onto our Manna Gum, Peppermint Gum and Swamp Gum plantings.

Contributed by Peter Hough



Memories



PRESBYTERY VISIT to MMUC

Who are the Presbytery? What do they do?

On Saturday, 31 January, the **PRESBYTERY** meeting was held at Mt Martha Uniting Church. **What is the PRESBYTERY and what is its role in the Uniting Church structure?**

UNITING CHURCH STRUCTURE (Taken from the Uniting Church website)

The Uniting Church is governed by four non-hierarchical, inter-related councils, each with different responsibilities:

- Congregational (local)
- Presbytery (regional)
- Synod (state)
- Assembly (national).



ROLES OF EACH of the COUNCILS (Taken from UC Website)

CONGREGATIONS - eg. Mt Martha UC We elect our own committees to take responsibility for local issues.

PRESBYTERIES - Mt Martha UC belongs to the Presbytery of Port Phillip East.

Our Presbytery is a regional council responsible for the oversight, support, and mission strategy of congregations. They govern, nurture ministry agents, manage placements (settlement of ministers), and facilitate co-operation between congregations, playing a crucial role in maintaining the church's life and mission within their assigned geographic region.

SYNODS—Mt Martha UC belongs to the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania

There are six Synods in Australia:

- New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory
- Northern Synod
- Queensland
- South Australia
- Victoria and Tasmania
- Western Australia

Our Synod meets every 18 months and comprises about 400 ministers and lay people from across Victoria and Tasmania. They are responsible for oversight, administration, and mission, connecting congregations and presbyteries. It provides governance, develops policy, manages community services, and supports the church's faith and witness within its region.

ASSEMBLY

The Assembly is the **national council** of the church, acting as the highest decision-making body on matters of doctrine, worship, government, and discipline. While the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania handles regional administration, the National Assembly provides overall direction for the entire Church. The national Assembly meets every three years and is chaired by President, Reverend Charissa Suli. The President has a fixed three-year term.

MEET THE MODERATOR

Rev. Salesi Faupula

Read his message to the Presbytery Meeting.

The Moderator of the [Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of Victoria and Tasmania](#), is the elected leader responsible for providing spiritual and pastoral leadership, promoting the Church's mission, and representing the Synod in the wider community. Elected every three years, the Moderator chairs Synod meetings and offers guidance to members. The current Moderator, Reverend Salesi Faupula was elected in August 2025.

Moderator: Rev Salesi Faupula

Born in Tonga, Salesi moved to Australia as a child as his father Haloti, a minister with the Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga, undertook missionary work with the Methodist Church.

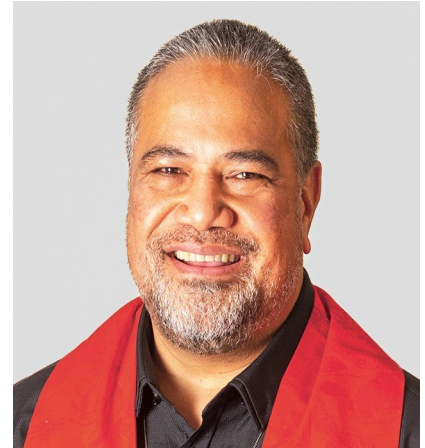
Salesi's Uniting Church journey began on Sydney's Northern Beaches, and he was ordained as a minister in 2012.

"I made a vow at my ordination in 2012 that I would make myself available and commit myself to serving God," he says.

"I believe that God calls me into this role of Moderator and continues to equip me for it, and that is where my faith lies."

"The connections and relationships I have formed in congregational ministry, at a presbytery level, and within the Synod itself, have been very important to me and will continue to be as Moderator."

"The inclusivity and diversity of the Uniting Church is something that I have always found heartening, and, in 1985, the Church declared itself to be a multicultural church and that journey continues."



Information taken from the Uniting Church Website

REV. SALESI'S MESSAGE

Delivered to the Presbytery Meeting at MMUC

Strong Enough to Stay

Matthew 5:1-12

Jesus goes up the mountain and sits down.

It's a small detail, but it matters.

Jesus doesn't stand above the crowd or speak at a distance. Jesus sits, and people come closer,

close enough to listen carefully.

And when Jesus begins to speak, the opening words are not instructions or expectations.

They are words of blessing.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit. Blessed are those who mourn. Blessed are the meek.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness."

For many here, ordained ministers, lay preachers, people steeped in the life of the Church, these words are deeply familiar. They have been preached, taught, wrestled with, returned to again and again. They are not new.

Rev. Salesi's Message Continued

And perhaps that is precisely why it matters to hear them again, not as a general teaching, but spoken into *this* moment, *this* gathering, *this* work.

Because before anything is asked of anyone, something is first named: this is where God is already present.

To the Presbytery gathered here today, and to those from the Mount Martha Uniting Church who are with us this morning, thank you for the invitation to be here and to preach. There is something quietly fitting about this gospel text, one of the lectionary readings for the coming Sunday, meeting us at this point. These are words Jesus speaks to those who draw close to listen, to follow, and to take responsibility for the care of others, and they sit naturally with a Presbytery gathering as it comes together for its work.

We hear them here, in this place, within the space of Mount Martha Uniting Church, which is hosting today's meeting. That hospitality matters. It reminds us that whenever the Church gathers to discern, to deliberate, and to decide, it does so in real places, made possible by people who offer space, presence, and very practical care.

And we hear these words in the present moment, a moment that carries weight and complexity, inviting careful attention to where God is already present, and to how faithfulness might be lived now.

The wider world is not short on strain.

Across communities and across the nation, there is grief in the wake of violence.

Fear surfaces easily.
Relationships feel fragile.
Public trust feels thin.

Racism continues to wound.
Nationalism promises clarity, but often narrows compassion.
Public conversations feel sharper, quicker to judge, slower to listen.

None of this will be unfamiliar to those who minister, preach, and lead. It is the landscape in which ministry now takes place.

And it is not unlike the landscape into which Jesus first spoke these words.



The crowd on that hillside was unsettled and diverse.
Not everyone there was a disciple.

Some came curious.
Some came desperate.
Some came angry.
Some came hopeful.
Some were longing for political change.
Some were longing for healing.
Some were simply trying to endure.

They lived under occupation.
Their land was controlled by an empire.
Economic pressure was constant.

Social boundaries were sharp and unforgiving.

They knew the promises of God, and they knew how long those promises had felt delayed.

So when Jesus said, "Blessed are the poor... blessed are those who mourn...", people leaned in.

Not because the teaching was new, but because it spoke truthfully into the moment they were living.

What Jesus offered was not an escape from their world. It was a way of seeing that world differently, as a place where God's future was already pressing into the present, quietly and steadily, even while much remained unresolved.

That matters for a gathering like this.

Presbytery work unfolds amid complexity, uncertainty, and competing expectations. It involves long conversations, careful discernment, and decisions whose consequences are rarely simple. Those here know this well.

Into that kind of space, Jesus speaks blessing.

"Blessed are the meek."

Not as an abstract virtue, but as a lived posture.
Those who stay open when closing off would feel safer.
Those who keep listening when certainty would feel easier.
Those who remain present when stepping away might feel tempting.

Rev. Selesi's Message Continued

There is a Pacific proverb that names this kind of strength — some here will already know it:

Pikipiki hama kae vaevae manava.

Canoes on rough water, lashed together, sharing breath and strength so that no one faces the storm alone.

It's a helpful image for leadership and discernment in the Church, especially for those who know that ministry is rarely sustained alone.

Later in this service, people will be commissioned into roles of responsibility, Chairperson, Deputy Chair, Secretary, and members of the Standing Committee. Some are stepping into these roles for the first time. Others are continuing. One has agreed to take on another term.

For people who know the demands of leadership, choosing to stay is not a romantic idea. It is often a quiet, costly decision.

Staying looks like showing up again.

Like holding space.

Like remaining engaged when the work is unfinished and the outcomes unclear.

Jesus has a word for that kind of faithfulness.

“Blessed.”

And that word reaches beyond those being commissioned today.

It rests with all who preach, pastor, teach, lead, support, question, and remain committed to the shared work of the Church.

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness.”

These are people who continue to care.

Who resist indifference.

Who believe that how the Church lives, listens, and relates still matters.

They long for something truer, fairer, more whole, even when that longing complicates ministry rather than simplifying it.

Jesus then speaks of misunderstanding, pressure, and cost.

That too will be familiar.

Some in the crowd nodded.

Some felt uneasy.

Some wondered whether this way was worth it.

Jesus did not rush past that reality.

Jesus blessed it.

Blessed means held.

Held within God's faithfulness.

Held within a story larger than this moment.

Held within a hope that keeps beginning again, even when progress feels slow.

This is not optimism.

It is hope shaped by resurrection, the kind that keeps people en-

gaged, listening, discerning, staying.

And there is freedom here as well.

No one is asked to carry everything alone.

No one is asked to be heroic.

There is room for honesty, for weariness, for beginning again, something many here know intimately.

“Blessed are the poor in spirit.”

Because God meets people who know they need one another.

So the invitation of the Beatitudes, spoken into this gathering, is not to be impressive, or original, or novel.

It is to stay.

To stay connected.

To stay discerning.

To stay bound together when the waters are rough.

Strong enough to stay.

Sharing breath.

Trusting that God's future is already unfolding among us.

The kingdom of heaven is near, because God remains faithful, and Christ meets the Church in the middle of the work.
Amen.

By Rev Salesi Faupula

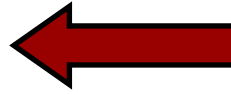
*Preached on January 31st at the
Presbytery meeting of Port Phillip
East at Mount Martha UCA*

We thank Rev. Salesi Faupula for sharing his message with us at MT Martha UC through our KIT magazine.

WHO'S WHO at Mount Martha Uniting Church?



We rejoice with our dear friend **Jill Rendle**, as we read of her early years, migrating from Argentina with her young family to settle in Australia. See Page 15



CONGRATULATIONS and best wishes to our friends **Jill Dunn, and Hugh Wistance** on some very special birthday celebrations.



Congratulations also to others known to us who have enjoyed special celebrations in past months



SPECIAL CONGRATULATIONS on a well deserved nomination for our much loved church member Janet Hough, recognised by the Mornington Council for service to the community.

May each of you know God's Blessings and our thanks as a congregation. Our lives are greatly enriched by knowing you.

Our Friend Jill Rendle

A huge step with her young family -
from Argentina to Australia in search of a new life.



Jill's family came from the French part of Switzerland. Back then their surname was Bideleux which was French.

The family moved to England. Jill's grandfather went to Argentina as an Engineer at the time the Argentine Railways were built. Jill's great aunt also went to Argentina and started a dancing school. Jill started to learn ballet at the age of three. Later she went on to learn highland dancing.

Jill's father was born in London and went to Argentina when he was seventeen. He returned to England three years later when the First World War broke out. He served in France, Palestine and Egypt and was away for five years. He then returned to Buenos Aires.

Jill's mother was born in Argentina of British parents. Her Spanish was limited. Jill and her sister went to an English school where

they studied English subjects in the morning and Spanish in the afternoon. Jill enjoyed sports at school and managed to win the Intermediate Athletics Cup in 1952.

The St Andrew's Society held a competition once a year for Scottish Verse, Singing and Dancing. In 1954 Jill was successful in winning the Sir William McCallum Cup for dancing.

Jill taught English to Spanish speaking children at St Peters and also at other schools. In the mornings she taught 12 English speaking pre-schoolers to read and write at her home.

At the age of 22 Jill travelled to England to visit her sister living in Coventry. She also went to Scotland. Then with a friend, she travelled to Europe visiting France, Italy, Austria, Germany and Holland before returning to the U.K. Her return trip to Argentina was on a cargo ship taking 4 weeks and stopping in all the ports.

Jill completed a secretarial course and then was employed as Secretary to the Financial Manager of J.P. Coates for a period of three years. However, she missed teaching children and returned to that occupation. Not long after, she met her future husband Tony who was born in Buenos Aires of British parents. They subsequently

married and had two children.

Although Argentina is a beautiful scenic country, Jill and Tony experienced a dictatorship—Juan Peron—who ruined Argentina financially and economically so Jill and Tony decided to move to Australia.

Tony came first, looking for employment and made arrangements for their first home to be built. Six months later, Jill joined Tony with their two children who were 5 and 2 at the time. They became Australian citizens.

After many years they decided to move to Mornington where Jill is living now. Dorothy Cohen, a now deceased member of Mt Martha UCA invited Jill to join the church Table Tennis group with whom she enjoyed many happy Tuesday afternoons. Jill subsequently joined Mt Martha Church Congregation.

Jill said she has met many wonderful friends in the area and loves Australia.

Thankyou to Margaret Barker for assisting Jill in the compilation of this wonderful story depicting some of the events leading to Jill's life in Australia. We are so pleased to have Jill with us at Mt Martha Church. Thank you for sharing your story Jill.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Happy Birthday Jill Dunn



JILL DUNN'S 90TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

On Sunday 22nd February, following our Church Service, we gathered as a community for a wonderful celebration of Jill's 90th birthday, which was to follow on the 24th February.

As is the norm at Mt Martha Unit- ing Church, we had an abundance of fine food to tempt our taste buds and went home gastronomi- cally satisfied as well as being socially and emotionally nour- ished.

There were brief speeches made by Julie Wiltshire, who is Jill's Pastoral Carer, Margaret Barker, a

very close friend and one of the organisers of the celebration and a response from Jill.

It was abundantly clear that Jill is a valued and very much loved member of our community, who embodies the Christian values we aspire to. She lives her faith through her actions – her kind- ness, caring, empathy and com- passion have been bestowed on so many of us, along with her fantas- tic sense of humour and hard work ethic.

Margaret spoke of her friendship with Jill over many years and the beautiful walks they share togeth- er, with Jill introducing Margaret

to so many new places to walk on the Mornington Peninsula.

Jill thanked the MMUC commu- nity for the warm and friendly welcome she and Harvey received when they arrived here and the beautiful friendships that have been established since then.

Rev Peter gifted Jill one of his Cockatoo Blessings to round off the speeches for this treasured friend of so many.

A special thank you to Sandra Martin for taking some snapshots of the event.

Written by Julie Wiltshire



Memorable Moments

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

Hugh Wistance

Mary and Hugh Wistance recently celebrated two very exciting birthdays. Their trip overseas to visit family, included a most memorable experience - a combined celebra-

tion for their son's 50th birthday and for Hugh's 80th birthday. It was a very special time shared with family and friends. Congratulations Hugh. Happy 80th Birthday.



CONGRATULATIONS JANET

on your Citizen of the Year Nomination

Each year as part of the Australia Day celebrations at the local level, the achievements of **“outstanding individuals who make extraordinary contributions to our community,”** are recognised and celebrated.

Although only one person receives the official Australia Day Award it is a wonderful opportunity to recognise the amazing work done in our community by many, many people.

DID YOU KNOW?

Earlier this year, **JANET HOUGH** was part of that outstanding group of people **nominated** for “Citizen of the Year,” in recognition of her contributions as a Paediatric Physiotherapist, her research and advocacy in raising awareness of MND and her involvement in various other volunteer activities.

Congratulations Janet. This nomination was greatly deserved. The work you *have* done and *continue* to do, greatly enriches the lives of many in our local community and beyond.

Thankyou also for your amazing contribution to **our** lives at Mt Martha Uniting Church.



QUESTIONS OF LIFE AND FAITH “PRAYER”

Welcome to our new segment, “**Life and Faith**,” enabling us to share with each other our experiences and insights on specific questions raised by the congregation.

Our first area of exploration is **PRAYER** and related questions.

Thank you to all who have contributed. May your contributions encourage prayerful contemplation and discussion as we seek to draw nearer to God, as individuals and as a church community.



THE POWER OF PRAYER 2026

Witnessed by George and Gwen Sayer

This is a personal experience shared by George and Gwen. The photos were taken on the day of dedication, showing the size of both the church and the congregation! The service lasted 3 hours. George and Gwen were both included on the platform and George had the privilege of being one of the speakers, his words being translated sentence by sentence. Not an easy way to deliver a message!



THE POWER OF PRAYER

The media are full of items about conflict around the world, and it would be easy to just give up hoping! But we must never give up.

Gwen and I spent a memorable part of our lives in the 1980s and 90s volunteering with the Slavic Gospel Association, spending time in the USSR before and after its collapse. Naturally, we think more often about Ukraine these days, but there are many Christians in both Ukraine and Russia. We love those we met in Kyiv, Odesa and the Crimea, and pray they survive the present war.

Try Googling “Bryansk – Chris-

tian Baptist Churches”. It is a city of around 360,000 and a significant industrial centre in Russia, 360 kms south west of Moscow. You will find there are FIVE Baptist churches there now! Thirty years ago, we were privileged to take part in the dedication of their Baptist cathedral.

We had been involved in raising funds to commence the construction of its basement years earlier, and even had an Australian working there for a year, with the power tools we “smuggled” to them in our carry-on bags on our plane to Moscow.

Under communism, that congregation had their first church demolished, its congregation violated and dispersed. But they never stopped praying. A long story, worthy of a cup of coffee, but they finally regained the prominent location, which is now the site of the cathedral.

Back in early 1989, the Ukrainian and Russian Evangelical Churches prayed together on the World Day of Prayer for peace and freedom. By the next year, we were able to freely take in Bibles to those countries controlled by the USSR. Surely, an answer to prayer.



Slavic Gospel Association (SGA) is an interdenominational evangelical mission (founded in 1934) that supports local churches in the former Soviet Union to share the Gospel, train pastors and provide humanitarian aid. - Taken from SEA Website)

PRAYER - Exploring and Seeking to Understand Life's Difficulties ...

Contributed by Josie Quayle

This poem and illustration are the work of Australian artist-philosopher, Michael Leunig. It can be found in a little book called 'The Prayer Tree' (1991). Leunig's prayer asks God to simply 'be with' people who are *exploring* ... seeking to understand the difficulties of life.

It is true to say that there is a certain acceptance in any exploration. We necessarily accept or open our minds to the uncharted when we explore. And often that exploration can be the antithesis of convention. So, we rarely fully explore without some fear.

Leunig's prayer is that our explorations be guided and consecrated by God.

God be with those who explore in the cause
of understanding; whose search takes them
far from what is familiar and comfortable
and leads them into danger or terrifying
loneliness. Let us try to understand their
sometimes strange or difficult ways; their
confronting or unusual language; the
uncommon life of their emotions, for they
have been affected and shaped and changed
by their struggle at the frontiers of a wild
darkness, just as we may be affected,
shaped and changed by the insights they
bring back to us. Bless them with strength
and peace.

Amen



PRAYERS for Ourselves and Others Reflections by Josie Quayle

'Thank you Lord for providing what you know this person needs.'

This was Josie's contribution for a congregational prayer for others, with the following explanation:

I think it's tempting to ask God for things we **think** we need, or others need. But really, **only God knows what's needed most**. This short prayer is said with that conviction, that God knows what is needed better than we do. The prayer also thanks God, not in anticipation, but as if it has already happened.

It's an act of reverence and submission, Faith and trust. And it's very empowering to the person praying.

There have been many times when I've felt this prayer was answered before I'd finished saying it.

**THE POWER OF PRAYER - Experienced
by Pam Sweatman during her recent surgery.**

Pam received many encouraging messages of love, including the following prayer during her illness:

“From all of us, we are thinking of you and sending strength and comfort for your surgery.
Wishing you a smooth recovery. We are here for you.”

THE POWER OF PRAYER



“Nobody knows what prayer can do—when somebody, somewhere prays for you.
Burdens are lifted and doors unbarred. Nothing seems quite so bad or hard

Nobody knows how God intervenes—working His wonder behind the scenes,
Turning the evil away from us, in a way most marvellous.

Clearing a path through the tangled track. Easing the strain on the breaking back.
When hope fades away and is lost to view—Nobody knows what prayer will do.

*We are so pleased to have you back worshipping with us again at Mt Martha Church Pam
and to know that your recovery is progressing well.*

**Finding COMFORT and CHALLENGE
through PRAYER,
especially when facing a world of despair.**

A Word from our Hymn Book: Together in Song, Hymn 689. Contributed by Beverley Winter.



Lord, hear my praying, listen to me;
you know there's evil in what I see.
I know I'm part of all that is wrong:
Still won't you hear my sorrowing
song?

Children are crying, hungry for food,
Sick from diseases - God are you good?
People are homeless, lost and alone:
God, are you hiding? Where have you gone?

Why do the rich ones steal from the poor?
Why do they build their weapons of war?
How can you stand the torture and pain,
Hope disappearing, freedom in chains?

Jesus remind us, that you are found
With those who cry, with those who are bound;
**Where there is suffering, you
will be there -
Help us to follow: Lord, hear
my prayer.**

(Robin Mann)



What is Prayer? Why should we pray? Our expectations of prayer ...



SOME QUOTES FOR REFLECTION - Contributed by Hugh Wistance

Prayer is not an occasional nod, given in passing to God. It's more like a marriage - a closeness of living, a constant receiving and giving. (Louie Horne, 1987. Religious Society of Friends (Quaker) in Britain.)

Prayer is not given to us to make life easy or to coddle us, but to make us strong, courageous, to make us masters of circumstance, not to change God's will, but to bring our wills into correspondence with His. (William Littleboy, 1937)

Prayerful Practices from Different Cultures

SINGING BOWLS AND HEALING - Contributed by Mary Wistance

In Asia, particularly in Tibet, the sound from the singing bowls is associated with chanting and praying.

With the spread of Buddhism around the globe, many have taken up this practice or just merely love the sound, without any religious significance. The sound resonates with the heart and lifts one's spirit.

I am using singing bowls to spread my prayers in a transient form and to improve health, more so psychologically. This can especially help people who are going through chemotherapy or just require moral support. It is always a great comfort to one, knowing that one is being prayed for and held in the Light.

May we all live, grow and be reborn in the beauty of the Light of Christ at Easter.



PRAYER

Praise and Thanksgiving – Offered to God for his many blessings

Repentance – We come to God seeking forgiveness

Asking for Others – Bringing to God the needs of family, friends & the world

Yourself - Laying our own needs before God



"Teach me your way, Lord, that I may rely on your faithfulness; ... I will praise you, Lord my God, with all my heart; I will glorify your name forever." Ps. 86

HOW TO PRAY

A Reflection by Scott Wagoner
(Quaker Pastor in U.S.)

Contributed by Rev. Peter Wiltshire

How to Pray?

A Lenten Reflection

Jeremiah 31

"A voice is heard in Ramah, weeping and wailing. It's Rachel crying for her children; she refuses to be consoled, because her children are no more." (Jeremiah 31:15, CEB)

Jeremiah offers us a glimpse of how to pray when you don't know how to pray. Sometimes praying is weeping and wailing and crying. Sometimes it's refusing to be consoled because sometimes you just can't spiritually bypass the pain. Praying is sometimes feeling our inward groans and deep sighs and realizing that this, too, is a prayer that the Spirit carries to the Divine (check out Romans 8).

Praying is not a performance to impress God or check our religious boxes. Rather, prayer is opening our soul to the One who dwells within - to the One who listens - and it's allowing our vulnerability to be met with grace.

Prayer can feel like a wilderness journey and being in a place



where nothing seems alive and we are stripped of all our defences and self-protective schemes. The wilderness is the absolute vulnerability because there are no maps or markers or trails. It's just barrenness that, at times, offers beauty. But as we are present to ourselves and offer what we feel, know, and long for, we are praying. In fact, the very act experience of longing is in many ways a prayer.

So sit with your longing. Sit with your grief. Sit with your weeping and wailing and refusal to be consoled. Sit with all of that and don't settle for nice, tidy, cleaned up words, and out of that you will discover that you have been praying all along, what the Apostle Paul refers to as "praying without ceasing".

As you reflect ... here is a beautiful prayer by Ted Loder to reflect on.

HOW SHALL I PRAY?

"Are tears prayers, Lord? Are screams prayers, or groans, or sighs, or curses? Can trembling hands be lifted to you, or clenched fists, or the cold sweat that trickles down my back, or the cramps that knot my stomach?"

Will you accept my prayers, Lord, my real prayers, rooted in the muck and mud of and rock of my life, and not just my pretty, cut-flower, gracefully arranged bouquet of words? Will you accept me, Lord, as I really am, messed up mixture of flurry and grime?

Lord Help me! Help me to be done with self-condemnation and self-pity, and accept myself. Help me to accept you as you are, Lord: mysterious, hidden, strange, unknowable; and yet to trust that your madness is wiser than my self-seeking sanities, and that nothing you've ever done has really been impossible, so I may dare to be a little mad, too.

How shall I pray?"

Amen

The WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2026

On 6th March people from the local churches gathered together at St Peter's Mornington, to **PRAY**. This year's service was prepared by the people of Nigeria. The theme of the service was: **"I will give you rest: Come,"** taken from Matthew 11:28. This is an invitation from Jesus to all who are burdened and heavy laden to come, just as you are, bringing all that weighs you down so that you may find rest. Christ meets us in our weariness.

This was a particular reality for the people of Nigeria. We learnt that Nigeria is the largest country in Africa by population (over 211 million people) but although Nigeria has the largest economy in Africa, many Nigerian people live below the poverty line. Women and girls face extremely difficult circumstances with healthcare and education difficult to access. Nigeria has one of the highest maternal and child mortality rates globally. Women and girls face discrimination and inequality. Girls as young as 12 face early marriage. Widows suffer greatly on the death of their husbands with lack of income and decreased social acceptance.

In spite of their hardships they rejoice and find comfort in Jesus' invitation to COME.

Throughout the service we heard stories of hardship and hope



shared by 3 Nigerian women. Through Christ's leading, their weariness was transformed into action with new optimism for the future.

The following is part of the closing prayer prepared by the people of Nigeria:

"Lord Jesus, you called us to come with all the burdens that weight us down. Here we are! Lighten these loads and help us to cast our cares upon you.

Holy Spirit, be our Comforter in times of distress.

When we cannot see a way forward, be our guide.

Grant us the faith to keep moving forward even when the path seems impossible.

Help us to be a light to others, sharing hope and extending a helping hand where we can.

We trust in your unfailing love and your promise that you will never leave us or forsake us. Amen"

The leader of the service concluded with this challenge to us all:

"God calls us to be co-workers in lifting each other's burdens. God calls us to be

- The friends who remind others of their worth
- The community that supports the vulnerable
- The voices that speak for the persecuted
- And the hands that offer hope to the struggling

Let us collaborate with God in bringing comfort and justice to our world. As the body of Christ, we are empowered by Jesus' promise: 'Come to me all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.' This assurance not only gives us peace but also propels us to action.

May we go forth as living extensions of Christ, bringing God's rest and relief to all we encounter. In this way we not only find our own rest in God but become channels of that divine rest for others."

Taken from World Day of Prayer 2026 Order of Service: Nigeria.

PRAYERS FOR OTHERS

Some Thoughts by Peter Hough

Over a lifetime of Christian living many have probably mused upon the role and importance of prayer. Life's busyness and fluctuating demands take their toll on regular prayer time and yet sometimes are the catalyst for recognising just how important dedicated space for prayer is.

Praying for others is sometimes described as an act of love, compassion and intercession with God. I am particularly conscious of the importance placed upon **listening** in prayer as a **two-way communication** with God and this discipline of listening has been a good backdrop to some recent, deeply personal exchanges which I felt worth sharing with you. For God, it seems, is sometimes there in the unexpected places and listening to others can help give us the impetus and wisdom for thoughtful prayer for others in their time of need.

In September 2024 a monthly **MND support group** commenced at Mt Martha Uniting Church. Motor Neurone Disease (MND) is a group of rare, rapidly progressive, and fatal neurodegenerative diseases that damage motor neurons in the brain and spinal cord. These nerve cells stop working, causing muscle weakness, wasting, and paralysis that affect walking, talking, swallowing, and breathing.

Facilitated by Janet and supported

by MND Victoria, the group has ebbed and flowed with numbers, but continued to be a reflective yet joyful, supportive group of people of all walks of life and stages on their life journey and MND journey. Spouses, partners, family members, carers and an MND Victoria co-ordinator have also attended. Together they have contributed and shared, as courageous people on unique pathways but sharing a common diagnosis.

Any particular personal faith has been varied and not necessarily frequently spoken of, yet the sharing that has occurred has been deep, sensitive, emotional and often at levels far beyond that imaginable from our brief, recent shared times, crossing life's respective paths.

This brief summary is intended to share just a small insight into these **blessed moments** in the hope that we are all strengthened by them and have a clearer understanding of the **power and purpose of prayer for others**. Names have been changed for privacy reasons.

HENRY

Henry was recently advised of his MND diagnosis. Along with his emotional family, he joined the group, struggling to understand how to deal with the shock, including obvious early evidence of its impact on his speech and swallowing. Others present with loss of

speech necessitating phone text communication, shared sensitively with him. Others embraced and provided empathetic support with their different pathways of deteriorating muscle function. There was episodic laughter and reminiscing of past adventures.

All of this concluded with appreciative embraces and handshakes between Henry and his family members with others present, marking the departure from that initial session.

ELIZABETH

Elizabeth has an unusually slowly progressive form of MND. She lives alone and continues to modify daily tasks to maintain independence and reduce fatigue. Despite some valuable family support and the support of friends, relationships have changed. She demonstrates a relaxed and enthusiastic sharing with a group of like-minded others where she doesn't have to explain herself, her condition or her difficulties. There is no judgement, no hesitation from others in openly hearing whatever she wishes to share. All uphold her and celebrate her slower than average progression of symptoms, learning from any suggestions she can make.

PRAYERS FOR OTHERS

Some Thoughts by Peter Hough (Continued)

TONY

Tony battles the stigma of being confused for being drunk due to his dysarthric speech. This is a particular issue for him as he maintains independent driving currently. The need for feeding through a peg feed with only limited oral intake of blended soft foods doesn't stop him making the most of travel internationally and locally. The loss of travel bags with his special dietary items on arrival at a distant destination just leads to a great story of innovation that he gladly shares with us via his phone, texting whilst we wait for him to enter his message and hear an electronic voice read it.

Tony inspires us. He was always a morning beach walker. Unable to do so now, he has a beach wheelchair which he takes to access var-

ious beaches every morning, still managing his kilometre of sandy beach travel.

STEVE

Finally, in an MND group committee Zoom meeting, **Steve** is seen in his small screen window to be attempting to catch the zoom group members' attention with his weak arm raised intermittently. On the past occasions he has been able to contribute, his keyboard texted speech has been slow and required patience from amongst all other Zoom participants to allow completion. On this occasion he has reached the end of the meeting before being able to attract their attention. "I've been trying to speak and you just don't listen to me!" is his message.

The past 18 months have provided many inspirational and moving moments but through deep listening to the words, stories and sharings of others, I have been reminded of the importance of listening to truly communicate just as we should in our prayer life. I've been reminded that we need to deeply listen to the stories of those in need to better understand and appreciate their journey. I'm sure that our prayers for others undergoing difficult circumstances are enhanced through this deep listening as is our ability to strengthen relationships, foster selflessness, and mirror the example of Jesus.



PRAYER - Facing Life's Challenges with God by Our Side

When a fearful diagnosis
Wrecks havoc with our plans,
We pray to God, our Maker
Our future's in His Hands.

Every cloud has a silver lining,
Every shower is followed by growth.
Every prayer is heard and answered,
Such is God's love for us on Earth.

From "Dilemmas, Decisions, and Dementia."
John J. Hennekam.

Thank you so much John. This is a personal experience that many can relate to and draw strength from. At times like this we are especially conscious of the incredible love of God and the strength we receive to face both the known and the unknown. God is always with us..

A PRAYERFUL EXPERIENCE

Shared by Maree Walker

Praying with THANKS and APPRECIATION - Involving all our senses.

Excerpts from “**Secrets of the Lost Mode of Prayer**” by Greg Braden. “A Shortened version of “**Praying Rain.**”

At the time of a serious drought in New Mexico, Greg (author) was invited to hike through a valley that contained acres of desert sage.

After two hours, in the midday heat, Greg and David (his friend) stopped. On the ground was an earthen circle made of stones in perfect geometries of lines and arrows which had been there for hundreds of years. The stone circle was a medicine wheel. It had no power but was used as a focus for the one invoking the prayer.

David had been coming here as a young boy and was taught this way of praying. “**Today we pray rain.**” He removed his shoes,

placed his naked feet in the stone circle and honoured the 4 directions and all of his ancestors. Slowly he placed his hands in a praying position, closed his eyes and became motionless, slowing his breath. After a few moments he opened his eyes, took a deep breath and said, “Let’s go. Our work is finished.”

Greg questioned, “I thought you were going to pray for rain?”

David’s reply was, “I said that I would **pray** rain, **not pray for** rain.”

He explained, “I began to have the feeling of rain on my body standing with my naked feet in the mud, smelling the smells of rain and walking through fields of corn - because there had been so much rain.”

David was engaging all of his senses—the hidden powers of thought, feeling and emotion, as well as the senses of smell, sight, taste and touch that connect us and nature to the world.



David stated, “**Through our thanks we honour all possibilities.**” He felt extremely grateful for the opportunity to participate in creation. Feelings of thanks and appreciation are like the “AMEN” of Christianity.

Research has discovered that this quality of gratitude and appreciation releases the life affirming chemistry of powerful hormones in our bodies and strengthens our immune system.

A PERSPECTIVE ON PRAYER

by Rev. Dr Robert Johnson

Not long after I started following Jesus, I was asked to lead a Sunday School class. I agreed, but then they told me I would need to begin the class with prayer. I panicked! I didn’t think I knew how to pray. However, as I thought about it, I was pretty sure that praying was really talking with God, so I had a go at it. What surprised me was that it kick-started my personal prayer life. Along the way, I have learned a

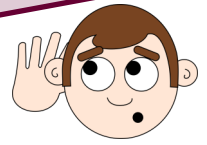
lot about prayer, and what does and doesn’t work for me. For some people, long periods of silent meditation works. Not for me - I am more likely to fall asleep! Praying with others can really help me – but not when others’ prayers become little lectures aimed at us or at God. I am very fortunate that Chris and I can pray together. At dinner each night we light a candle and bring the people we love, as well as people or situa-

tions across the world, to a loving God.

I have found that I am easily distracted, so a good way of praying for me is as I walk. The surface part of my mind is focussing on the walking, leaving the deeper part to be open to God. Over the years I am learning to say less and listen more, which is just as important in our relationship with God as it is with people.

PRAYING “GOD” FOR EACH OTHER

Hearing God Speaking to Us



PRAYING “GOD” FOR YOU A Word from the Editor

Over the past weeks I have felt richly blessed. In response to our new segment on “Life and Faith,” I have been privileged to be invited to the homes of a number of our church members. “Why? - To discuss KIT.”

“I would like to contribute but I’m not sure whether my article would be OK!!!” This is the response I have heard quite a few times. As I have sat and quietly listened to the potential KIT articles being read by their authors, I have been amazed at not only the variety of responses to “PRAYER” but also the depth of thought and wisdom being shared.

The result has been a two-way conversation in which we have each shared a very significant part of our lives. On each occasion, I have returned home thinking more deeply about these conversations.

One story I would like to share: In the course of conversation with a couple from our church, I was handed a book which I casually flipped through as we talked. It appeared to be a most interesting book which one could use for deep meditation. However, one line suddenly caught my attention. It was not, “I will pray for you” but **“I will pray GOD for you.”** In the weeks since that visit these

words have come back to me on numerous occasions.

How often we say to each other, “*I am praying for you,*” which is a deep expression of care for the other person and for their wellbeing. When we say these words, what we truly mean is encapsulated in the line from the book—“*I will pray God for you,*” for it is God who can truly meet that person’s need. As we open ourselves more fully to God’s presence, love and care, we are overwhelmed by an amazing peace which empowers us with the strength to face all situations, knowing we are not alone.

In response to this, my contribution to KIT is the following prayer from the book “Made for Goodness” by Rev Desmond Tutu. When we seek God, we are assured that he is with us every minute of every day, in all of life’s joys and sorrows. May we continue to **pray “GOD”** for each other.

HEARING GOD’S VOICE

“Let us turn into the stillness and listen to God speak with the voice of the heart.

*Child, do you not know my voice?
It bubbles up in happy laughter:
Listen to your children play.
It echoes in the songs of nature:
Stop and listen.
I speak as fresh rain on parched ground,
I speak as the summer breeze that*

*caresses the long grass,
I speak as the gurgle of the river over the rocks,
I speak in the warm smiles of welcome,
I speak in the tender touch of comfort,
I speak in tears of joy,
I speak as unquenchable hope.
I speak in the voices of those who challenge you,
Mine are the words of the loving rebuke.
I speak in the voices of those who take pride in you,
Mine are the words of honest praise.
My voice is the happy hum in your heart
When you know you have done what is right.
My voice is the churning in your spirit
When temptations seems ready to overwhelm you.
My voice whispers “courage”
When the path you must choose seems too long or too hard.
It is I who say, “Be still a while,”
When the frenzy wants to overtake you.*

*Have you not heard me yet?
I am very near.
I breathe in your breath,
I pray in your prayer,
Have you not heard me yet?
Stop and see.
Look, listen.
Yes.
That is me”*

OUR PRAYERS

From Mt Martha UC Congregation

Dear God, Father, Holy One, Friend, Comforter, Creator, Prince of Peace, Everlasting God, Savior, Almighty One, Lord, Abba ...

We address you with so many names and in so many of life's varying circumstances, knowing that in all of life's changes **you are steadfast** in your love and care for us and your world.

We bring to you our **praise and thanksgiving**. We bring to you **our needs and the needs of our world**. We come also **seeking forgiveness** for the times when we have not trusted you to guide our actions. Help us to draw nearer to you so that we may "see (and hear) you more clearly, love you more dearly and follow you more nearly, day by day."

We ask for **your grace** to acknowledge you in all that we do, think and say.

Lord, Abba,

We lay all the **world's challenges** before your Almighty and loving feet.

You know what we need right now.

Pour your love and protection over us all.

In Jesus' mighty name.



Dear Lord,

We pray that people will see the **beauty and love** in the world and be encouraged to spread it.

Dear Lord,

Please **open our leaders' eyes** and let them see that peace is what we all need, and that they work towards that.

Thank you for Easter and the assurance of your ever abiding presence with us, in our joys and sorrows, in life's challenges and in life's celebrations. Help us to be more open to your word, your comfort and your direction.

"**Thank you HOLY ONE** for the acts of unsolicited kindness, the actions of holding space for one another, the ways in which respect and dignity are expressed through your church at Mount Martha, all offered in **service above self**."

Thank you Lord for **providing what you know we need**.



We know you hear our prayers. Thank you Lord, AMEN

Sharing with Each Other

Janet's Carrot Cake

This is it!!! - The delicious carrot cake recipe from Janet Hough.

After tasting the beautiful birthday cake made by Janet for Jill Dunn's birthday celebrations, requests were received for the recipe to be included in KIT. **ENJOY !**

JANET'S CARROT CAKE

Ingredients

185 g butter
1.5 cups castor sugar
3 eggs
2 cups grated carrot
3/4 cup chopped walnuts
1.5 cups SR flour
1.5 tsp mixed spice



Icing

60 g cream cheese
30 g butter
1.5 cups icing sugar.

Melt butter, add sugar, eggs, then all the other ingredients!!!!

Cook in Moderate oven 45 minutes.

Ice with cream cheese / butter icing when cool.

MORE RECIPES from MMUC Recipe Book, 1993

FUN WITH THE CHILDREN AT EASTER

ROCKY ROAD by Bronwyn Sanford

400 g milk chocolate
30 g copha
250g packet mixed white & pink marshmallows
1/2 cup coconut
1/2 cup crushed nuts
3/4 cup red glaze cherries

Line a lamington tin with foil.

Put chocolate and copha in glass bowl & melt in microwave for 2-3 minutes.

Allow to cool for 10 minutes, then carefully fold in remaining ingredients.

Spread into tin evenly.

Refrigerate until set and cut into bite sized pieces.

EASY CHOCOLATE FUDGE by Ruth Spencer

1 cup chocolate chips
1/2 cup condensed milk
3/4 tablespoon vanilla
1/2 cup chopped nuts
Melt chocolate over simmering water or in microwave on medium

Remove and stir in other ingredients.

Mix until smooth.

Spread into a swiss roll tin.

Chill until set.

Cut into squares.

Store in airtight container in refrigerator

HAPPINESS CAKE

2 tablespoons sympathy
2 tablespoons kindness
2 large spoonfuls of good temper
Heaped cup of tolerance
Generous helping of laughter & thoughtfulness

Mix the sympathy and kindness together.

Add the cheerfulness and tolerance.

Drop in a large amount of good temper.

Mix the whole lot together with laughter and good manners.

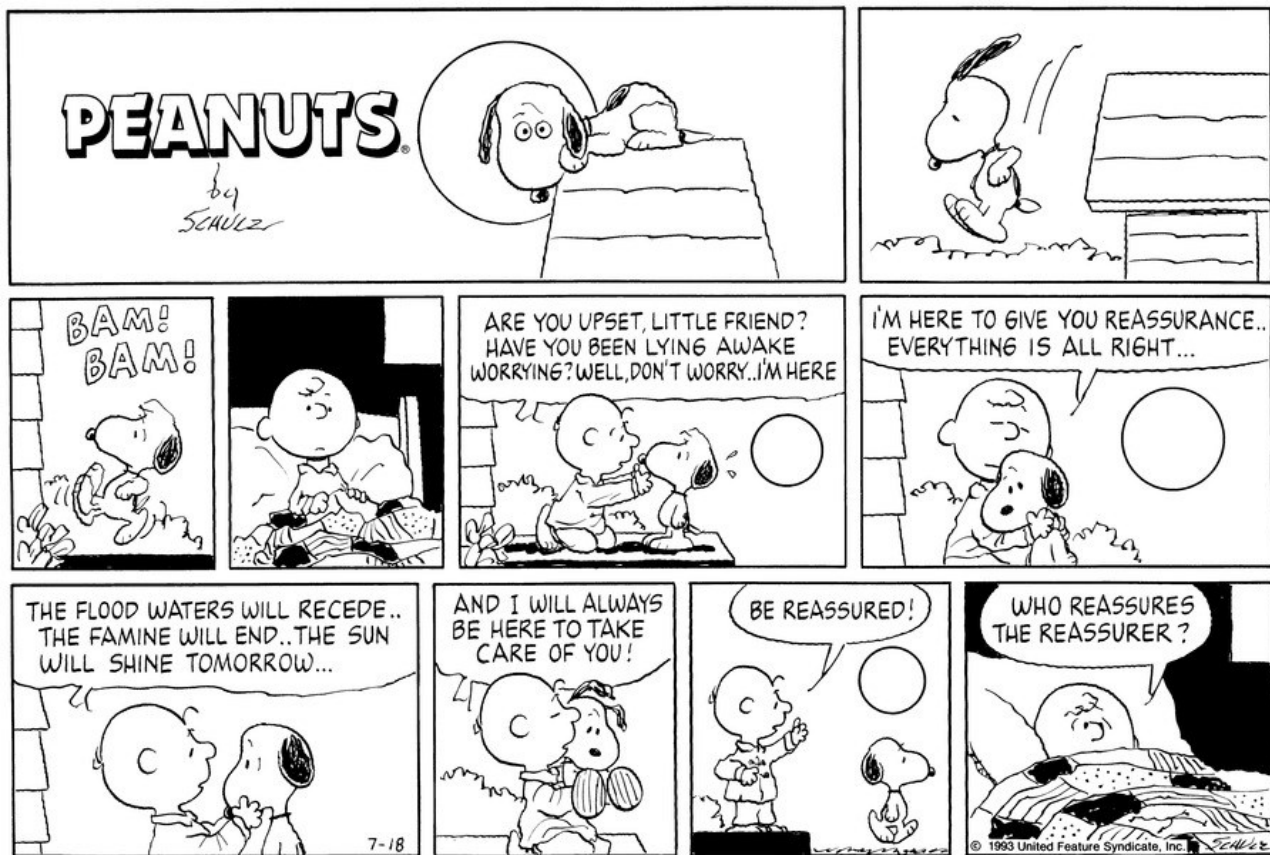
Share some amongst your friends.

Sharing with Each Other

Time to SMILE ...



Remember the wisdom of Charlie Brown???
We all need the support of a friend.



April 1960



Taken from: Peanuts by Charles Schulz. Gocomics.com/peanuts

Sharing with Each Other

Words of wisdom from Sandra



Prayer of St Patrick

**CHRIST BE WITH ME, CHRIST WITHIN ME,
CHRIST BEHIND ME, CHRIST BEFORE ME,
CHRIST BESIDE ME, CHRIST TO WIN ME,
CHRIST TO COMFORT ME AND RESTORE ME.
CHRIST BENEATH ME, CHRIST ABOVE ME,
CHRIST IN QUIET, CHRIST IN DANGER,
CHRIST IN HEARTS OF ALL THAT LOVE ME,
CHRIST IN MOUTH OF FRIEND
OR STRANGER**



Hi everyone. My name is Katie Koala. It was great to meet so many of you at the MMUC Bush Dance on 28th March. I had so much fun!!!

Thank you for your efforts to raise money for lots more trees for my friends, for my family and for me. Perhaps one day we will visit you along your Peace Trail at MMUC.

Look out for your next KIT in August for lots of news about our night of fun at the amazing Bush Dance.

**HAPPY
Easter**