



# Newsletter

Ocean Grove,  
Uniting Church in Australia  
Sunday May 31st 2020

The Reverend Robert (Bob) Thomas  
PO Box 176 Drysdale Vic. 3222  
(M) 0414 266 645 Email: bobuc3@bigpond.com  
**Vestry hours Thursday 12noon—2.00pm**

Office phone 5256 2477  
Email: oguc107@gmail.com  
Postal Address: PO Box 393 Ocean Vic. 3226  
Website: [www.oceangrove.unitingchurch.org.au](http://www.oceangrove.unitingchurch.org.au)

## Prayer in the time of Coronavirus.

God of love, God of grace, God of surprises,  
We are grateful for the moments of love and community we share.  
We know you are with us. We know the promise we have in you. Yet we  
live with our hurt in the present and uncertainty in the time ahead, and  
wonder what the future holds for us and our communities.  
We pour out our hearts and souls to you.....and pray:  
For your world, our peoples and all who inhabit the face of the earth;  
For those who are grieving for loss of loved ones,  
For those who fear for their safety,  
For those who feel most isolated and alone;

For those who give of themselves to support others:  
Health care workers, cleaners, teachers, truck drivers and delivery  
personnel, pharmacists, grocery sale assistants, phone counsellors,  
personal care assistants, those who prepare meals for emergency food  
relief.....bring your comfort, hope, strength, and healing love.

We pray for our communities of faith, that we may be beacons of hope-  
fulness, of promise, of pace with each other, and of inclusive love for  
neighbour.

We pray in the hope we know in Jesus, in whom we see and know the  
fullness of the grace and love of God.

Amen.

Denise Liersch

Moderator, Synod of Victoria and Tasmania 14th May 2020

## Stop Saving for a Rainy Day! It is raining now!

The passage from Acts 2: 42-47 is one of my favourite Bible readings, because it demonstrates the Christian community embodying the gospel. The people in the Lukan passage were obviously lucky, they still go to go out to the temple for worship.

In their homes they shared meals, this included Holy Communion because it speaks about the “breaking of the bread” with “thanksgiving”. Just as we are allowed to celebrate communion on-line and gather in our individual homes, where is bread is broken. We “virtually” share in this holy meal. Eating this holy meal remains a mark of unity, solidarity and deep friendship for the church today.

This early community continued to “gather together in close fellowship, sure has a different meaning these days! With our own households being too close for comfort, going stir crazy from a lack of outings. But in another way, gathering on-line as a wider church and missing that “close fellowship” of a face to face encounter. Indeed many of you are recording worship to an empty church and a camera, trying to call on the spirit to be present, not with those gathered—but with those in their homes.

Today, a few congregations are advertising ways to give money to the church and finding people far and wide financially supporting their on-line Congregation. The New Testament community shared what they had in common with each other. It was a very much a community that said: “This is ours and no one will go hungry today!” in fact, they would sell their possessions to provide for others in need. It is the Presbytery’s job to help congregations sell their unwanted land and buildings to provide for what each one needed. Now it is not just about saving for rainy day, for it is raining for the church now and there is need to share in Ministry and Mission today.

More than ever as a church, in a post Covid-19 environment, when we emerge from our bunkers.....we may need to share what little resources we have with the wider church. To sustain our church moving forward. Not holding tightly to what is ours, but always remembering it all belongs to God. We offer it all for God’s work with people across the church and throughout the world.

The Reverend Linley Liersch.

### JIM Group News

An email was received from Avaaz, a highly respected International Aid Agency. This was to alert supporters of the crisis in the world today requesting donations to support aid workers and also the provision of food.

"The U.N. is warning the world that it is on the brink of a famine of Biblical proportions with a quarter of a billion people staring starvation in the face."

This is besides the effect of the Covid-19. we decided to place this article in the newsletter realising everyone is not in a position to donate money or may have already contributed.

We do ask you to pray for the world situation at the present time.

Joan Calcutt, Yvonne Hargrave, Robin Munro, Lyn Mulligan, Carol Naylor, Pat Reid.

- Hunger, not disease, could emerge as the biggest killer in this crisis. All over the world, families are struggling to feed their children—not just in the poorest countries, but places like South Africa, India and Brazil!
- We would like to scale up a massive feeding programme to tens of thousands of hungry families in India and Pakistan; support farmers growing food in east Africa as they fight both the pandemic and a giant locust invasion.
- Be able to supply thousands of Rohingya refugees crammed into crowded camps with masks, soap and hand sanitiser; fund urgently needed supplies for heroic medics working in conflict zones like DRC, Yemen and Syria.
- \$8 feeds 50 people and \$80 feeds 500 people. These costs are estimates from Avaaz partners on the ground. They are based on the costs of providing each person with one meal, and include essential foods, like rice, lentils, oil and salt.

For more information or to make a donation, please visit [www.avaaz@avaaz.org](mailto:www.avaaz@avaaz.org)

### *Virtual* Reconciliation in the Park 2020

"In this together"

27th May—3rd June

Online event

[www.facebook.com/recinthepark/](https://www.facebook.com/recinthepark/)

[//djillong.net.au/virtual-reconciliation-in-the-park-2020.html](http://djillong.net.au/virtual-reconciliation-in-the-park-2020.html)

Featuring—Welcome to country, local performers, dilly bag making, native food plants, Johnny cake making, information about National reconciliation Week and much more.

## I can't wait!

For weeks I have heard people saying “I just can't wait for things to be back to normal.” I remember even saying that more than a few times myself. But as I've thought about our current situation I have realised how much I don't want things to go back to the way they were. Here are a few of my reasons.

- ❖ I hope that the next time a friend grabs me and pulls me in for a hug, I actually take the time to appreciate the gift of their presence and embrace.
- ❖ I hope that when school resumes and you are dropping your kids off, you take the time to thank the staff for their amazing gift that they give to your family.
- ❖ I hope that the next time I'm sitting in a crowded restaurant I take the time to look around at the smiling faces, loud voices and be more appreciative of the gift of community.
- ❖ I hope that when I am at the supermarket that I take a moment to acknowledge the necessities of life and the amazing people who work so hard to keep us supplied.
- ❖ I hope that I never again take for granted the ability to hop in the a car and visit a friend, go to the beach, a restaurant or a movie etc.

So, truth is, I don't want things to return to the way they once were. I hope and pray that we take the lessons and challenges of the past weeks and create a new normal.

My goal is to appreciate more, love harder, and truly appreciate the daily abundance of blessings that were so easily over looked just a few weeks ago. If someone tells you they love you, take it to heart!

Anonymous