

Weekly News Sheet

The Uniting Church in Australia

ST. LUKE'S CONGREGATION, HIGHTON

Sunday 1st April, 2018



Worship Leader: Rev. Paul Stephens



Easter Sunday -Holy Communion



Are you new to St. Luke's?

If you would like to connect with us, complete a pew card or please let one of the pastoral connections team know so that you can be included in our contact list and invited to join in.

The news sheet is changing to a monthly edition and our new deadline is the last Wednesday of the month. Brief, interim notices will be published in a single page weekly bulletin, deadline Thursday 9:00am, and announced prior to services.
mail items to news@stlukesuca.org.au

Congregation Reports and News

Lenten Offering 2018

This has been an annual event in the life of congregation within the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania. In response to God's love for all people and the giving of God's son to the world, an opportunity is provided for people of the church to make sacrificial offering to support important mission work. For 2018 the Lenten Offering will support the following projects:

- **Prevention of Blindness, Vanuatu** - staff, emergency patient transport, freight for essential equipment.
- **Covenanting, Community of Reconciliation** - for a part time indigenous staff member at Narana & provide leadership to pilot a project between the UCA and the Uniting Aboriginal & Islander Christian Congress, building a covenantal community of reconciliation.
- **Youth Engagement, Mt Eliza** - provide a part time youth worker to support the coordination of adventure-based learning programs for at risk young people in the community.
- **Regional Youth Ministry, Launceston Tasmania** - to bolster inclusion, participation through financial help with transport and assistance to attend user-pay activities, courses, accreditation and celebration to support leadership and retain older youth engagement.

The Mission Outreach Team support this 'Lenten Offering' conscious of people's financial situations

Mid-week Congregation celebrates 25 years of worship at St Lukes

In March, the Thursday mid-week congregation celebrated 25 years and in ongoing celebration, the present mid-week worship group have gifted a 'prayer candle cradle' to the wider congregation. Our hope and prayer is that in future years, the candles lit and placed in this 'cradle' will be a vehicle for prayerful reflection.

Playgroup & Preschool Training Day - 'Stories of Childhood' 28th April 2018 at Centre for Theology & Ministry, Parkville

The annual Stories of Childhood Playgroup/Pre-school Training Day, taking place in Parkville on Saturday April 28, is a great opportunity for any church engaged in ministry with young families. For ministers, pastors, leaders and team members involved in activities such as Playgroup, pre-school music programs and Sunday morning activities, Stories of Childhood will assist you and your church in connecting more deeply with the children and their carers you are called to serve. The excellent electives on offer across the day include:

- Multi-sensory play and storytelling
- Caring for others, caring for yourself
- Spiritual nurture of babies and their parents
- Engaging pre-schoolers in intergenerational worship
- From Playgroup to Messy Church – one church's story
- Playgroup Q&A – asking your questions, sharing your story
- More missional and strategic Playgroup/Pre-school ministry

More information and Registration:

www.ucavt.goregister.com.au/storiesofchildhood2018/registration
(Registrations can be made from April 3)

Nb. The next great Conference at the CTM after this will be the Make it Messy! (Messy Church) training event on Saturday 2nd June. Email to ann.byrne@victas.uca.org.au for more information.

Church Directory, Calendar and Contact information

The Members Area of the St Luke's website is where you will find a list of key church contacts, the monthly roster, and the online calendar showing when the St Luke's Buildings are in use. This area is password protected, email info@stlukesuca.org.au or call the office to have it issued to you. Printed copies of this information can be obtained from the Church Office during open hours. The Church Directory is will be available at the end of March for those who consented to be included.

Requests and Appeals

From Beth Allen, Pastoral Connections

ANNUAL ST LUKES PICNIC LAST SUNDAY

The weather wasn't conducive for 'picnicking' but a very enjoyable time was had by the 20 people who 'picnicked' in the hall enjoying good fellowship and food.

From Jean Daw

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

More volunteers are needed for Uniting Barwon's Opportunity Shop in Porter Ave, Belmont. It would involve being there at the Op Shop one half day per month. If you are able to help, please see Jean Daw.

From Rae Anderson, Mission Outreach Ministry Team

ST LUKE'S PILLOW BANK APRIL APPEAL

Pillow Bank Pledges introduced in 2017 has proved very successful. As we live out St Luke's Mission outreaching to Refugee, Asylum Seekers and other people in need, we provide new pillows. (Under strict health guidelines we can only provide 'new' pillows when needed). Will you pledge one (1) or two (2) pillows during our **April Pillow Bank Appeal**? \$10 buys 1 pillow, \$20 buys 2 pillows etc

Coming Events

Activity	Date
Annual Windfire Music Festival - 10th Year Mary's Basilica, 136 Yarra Street, Geelong	4th May 8pm
Malcolm John & Tom Healy conduct a choir of 200 voices from Geelong churches and community groups supported by Orchestra Geelong. Soloists are Sally Wilson, Lee Abramson and Manfred Pohlenz. All are welcome. Adults \$35, Concession \$30 Students free.	

From Beth Allan, Pastoral Connections

PRISON EASTER BISCUIT BAKE

A very big thank-you to all who baked biscuits over the past 2 weeks. The response was excellent, and 35 containers of biscuits were delivered to St. Johns, where they were sorted and packed ready for distribution by Prison Fellowship to all inmates of prisons in the greater Geelong area. We were a small part of a large army of biscuit-makers. The biscuit ministry certainly matters. It matters to the inmates who do recognise it as a message of care and concern (they are not forgotten), and it also matters because we get an opportunity to focus each prisoner (no matter how fleetingly) on what Easter is really about. It matters because it reminds us of God's goodness and his faithful provision.

From Jean Daw

UNITING WORLD EVERYTHING IN COMMON GIFT CARDS

Easter the celebration of new life and new beginnings.

If you're not a fan of chocolate or just looking for an alternative ethical gift this Easter, look no further than the range of Uniting World Everything in Common gift cards. Each card represents a gift that goes directly towards a life-changing project. Buy a gift and dedicate it to a loved one and you'll help create the kind of world we'd all like to be part of this Easter! Cards will be on sale in the hall each Sunday until Easter or contact Jean Daw.

FROM UNITINGWORLD – REFLECTIONS FOR THE SEASON OF LENT

It's not Polite to Talk about Money...but the Bible talks about money all the time!!!

I can remember being asked for my 'conversion story' at a Christian camp when I was quite a young teenager. Since I'd grown up a Christian, I felt a bit ripped off... I didn't really have an impressive story of the kind that was being shared. Perhaps you have a conversion story? What about an 'economic conversion' story?

In 'The Upside Down Kingdom,' Donald J Craybill writes that 'the amount of material in the gospels focusing on wealth is astonishing. No other concept, except for the 'kingdom of God' itself, appears more frequently in the gospels. We simply can't conclude that economic values are peripheral to the kingdom. Conversion which doesn't involve economic change isn't authentic. The values of the kingdom clash with the economic values of modern life...'

I may not have a 'conversion story' to Christ as such, but I do have an economic conversion tale. I remember as a fifteen year old, Matt Wade (then working for TEAR) spoke at our church about the sheer inequality in the world and our responsibility as Christians to use what we have to meet that need, particularly financially.

I was working as a 'check out chick' earning \$3.25 an hour at the time and I still felt incredibly wealthy by comparison. I was convicted of the need to share my wealth - my abundant, undeserved, lucky wealth (very much not confined to what I earned over the counter).

I've given to overseas aid ever since - and yet I constantly have to challenge myself to examine my wealth and my giving. I forever self-justify and become complacent.

Poverty exists in large part because we do not share what we have. The world has enough to feed, clothe and educate the world's people many many times over. The problem is that our giving universally comes mostly from our abundance - from what we have 'left over' after we believe all our own needs are met - not from the core of our resources.

We are all in need of an economic conversion - over and over again. How are we to make sure that this regularly comes about, especially when it's not considered polite to talk about money?

Prayer points for this week

Prayers of Thanksgiving

- We celebrate and give thanks that we serve a risen Saviour, and that nothing can separate us from God's love.
- Praise God for the opportunity to share the Easter message through worship and witness.
- Give thanks for the many activities at St. Luke's that reach out to people with God's love, and for the involvement, energy and commitment of so many people.

Prayers for Others

- Pray for those who have lost homes, livestock and possessions in the fires in western Victoria and Tathra in NSW.
- Pray for safety on the roads during the Easter period.
- Pray for children and young people, that they may be safe in a world where there are so many temptations. Pray that they may be guided to develop sound values, decision-making skills and to have good support in their formative years.
- Pray for the Church Council, and all leaders. Pray too for volunteers to fill office administration roles and tasks.
- Continue to pray for those who are ill or in hospital, facing or recovering from surgery, those who are undergoing radio or chemotherapy, frail aged, and those experiencing loss, loneliness, anxiety or depression.
- Pray for those who find it hard to make ends meet – the unemployed, homeless or hungry.
- Pray for newly-arrived settlers, and those seeking permanent residency – for help and friendship.
- Pray for those who are suffering injustice around the world, and for all those who reach out to offer help.
- Continue to pray for peace in the world.

What's On this coming week

What's on @stlukeschurchgeelong 2nd Apr - 8th Apr 2018			
Men's Shed Tue/Thu 9:30-12:30	Church Choir 4pm	Trekkies Fri 9:15am	
Sunday Worship 9:30am 8th April		Lectionary Readings	
Worship Leader:	Rev Paul Stephens	Acts 4:32-35	
Welcomer:	J Hines	Psalm 133	
Ushers:	I Speare & P Gill, D Younghusband & I Allan	1John 1:1-2.2 John 20-19-31	
Sound:	K McAvaney	Weekly Offering & Attendance	
Powerpoint:	J Daw		
Reader:	B Allen	Palm Sunday	77+2
Morning tea:	B Murphy & S Crowe	Good Friday	68+2
Connections:	P Seller	Budget	\$1,815
Drivers:	J & V England	Actual	\$1,690
Sharing the Journey:	Max Robertson 0439049716	Difference	\$-125
Kids Church	J Clarke & J Boehm	YTD Budget	\$21,780
		YTD Actual	\$23,264
		Difference	\$1,484
Upcoming meetings			
Resources Ministry Team	Tuesday 3rd April 3:15 - 4:45	Fellowship Room	
Pastoral Connections	Wednesday 4th April 1:00-3:00pm	Fellowship Room	

Please note - The weekly bookings calendar is updated and displayed on the noticeboard facing the Sanctuary. Church volunteers can check online or on this noticeboard to see when spaces are available for setup etc.