



# Toorak Uniting Church

## Update: 4 October, 2015



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### *Still Thinking — Inspiration*

My father came home from the Korean War when I was about 3 years old. He had been in the Royal Australian Navy serving on the HMAS Arunta. While he had been back in Australia on leave several times since I was born, because I was such a young child I have no memory of it. During his long absences, my mother, sister and I lived with my father's parents in Coorparoo, Brisbane. There are several photographs of me with my grandparents and in particular with my grandfather. The story goes that he was delighted with his first grandchild (me) that when I was old enough to sit on his bicycle he made a special seat attached to central the bar of the bike so that he could take me on his visits to family and friends.

I was close to my grandfather and perhaps because my father was not in the picture, I called my grandfather, Dad. Something I did until his death. In later years I realized what a cranky old man he really was. Nevertheless, that early bonding meant that he and I had a special relationship. When he couldn't ride his bike anymore (he never drove a car) he gave it to me. And after his death my grandmother gave me his watch, given to him on retirement from Whirlpool where he had worked as a storeman for over forty years.

Sadly, I was never as close to my father. There were difficult times during my adolescence and it wasn't until I had my own children that our relationship began to improve. We know that our relationship with our parents does shape our relationship with our children but it is only one factor. We can all learn for life's experiences and I firmly believe that we are not determined by what has happened to us in the past. That is not always an easy position to hold when we see the devastating long term effects of child abuse on the lives of adults.

Even though I was not as close to my father as I could have been, I can say that I loved him and he loved me. I recall when I was 16 going to the Gold Coast with a group of older boys. It seems strange now but I didn't tell him that I would be away for the weekend. He spent some time contacting my friends to find out where I was. When I arrived home on Sunday night he only said one thing to me, "Well you could have @#\$ told me where you were going." I was surprised that he cared, but also he was a man who didn't believe in retribution or even punishment. He believed that his children would do the right thing and when they stepped out of line they would know it.

Much is written in Christian theology that says our image of God comes from our parents. I don't fully agree with that. Yes, a young child is dependent on his or her parents and how a child is treated will influence the way they are in the world as an adult. But if a parent is violent or abusive it is quite possible that a child, and later the adult, can find both resilience and healing in the experience of God as non-coercive and non-violent. Father is only one name the ancients attributed to God there are many other ways we can image what we call G-O-D. The theology of the Bible is clear that it is God the Father who names fatherhood and not the other way around.

*Christopher*

**In our Thoughts and Prayers:** Helen Clayton, recovering from a fall.



**TUC SPRING BREAKFAST,  
8am, Wednesday, 7 October.**

**Our American Exchange Minister,  
Rev Dr Wolfgang Stahlberg,  
turns political as he speaks on:**

**“THE INTEREST OF THE  
U.S. CHURCHES IN THE  
PRESIDENTIAL RACE.”**

**This is an opportunity to clarify some of the mysteries behind  
the US Elections!**

**Come and enjoy a special breakfast in Kinross House, Hodges Gallery,  
Cost \$20. Please Book via the TUC Office by Friday, October 2.**

### **Morning Group**

On Thursday 15 October, Christy Faulks will be updating us on SOSK, her charity in Kenya. Revs. Wolfgang and Liliana Stahlberg will also be there. 10.00am, followed by lunch. All welcome.



### **Welcome to Toorak Uniting Church**

We welcome all people irrespective of race, religion, political views, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, or age. Wherever you are on your faith journey, wherever you have come from and wherever you are going to; whatever you believe, whatever you do not believe, you are welcome here at Toorak Uniting Church.

Please come and join us after the service for fellowship and a cup of tea or coffee.

We welcome Dr. Gordon Atkinson today to play the organ and conduct the TUC choir. We are so grateful that Dr Atkinson agreed to come out from his retirement to help out while Jennifer is on another mission!

### John Macrae Centre's Annual General Meeting

will be held on Thursday 8th October at 4.00pm. All are welcome to come to the AGM and a talk from our guest speaker, followed by delicious refreshments from chef Bill. Guest Speaker: Ms Robyn Johnson, a former clinical nurse in ophthalmology at the Eye and Ear Hospital and nurse administrator, now volunteers for "Eyes For Africa". She will talk of her life-changing work there.

### New conversation series with Rev. Dr. Wolfgang Stahlberg:

Please join us on Tuesdays 6, 13 & 20 October at 10.00-11.30am for "Conversations with Wolfgang".

Tuesday 6 October: "How I learned what matters most" - in the Faichney Room. Queries: ring Isobel Negri on 9882 2117



#### \*\*\*\*\* TOILETS \*\*\*\*\*

*While construction is in progress, men are encouraged to use the Kinross loos and women the disabled loos off the Faichney Room. (Entry via the concrete ramp at the Eastern entrance.)*

Renovations should be completed mid-October.

**THE PLAN FOR CHANGE**

**HOW YOU CAN HELP WELCOME REFUGEES**

3PM-5PM SATURDAY 10<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER  
ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL - MELBOURNE CBD

HOSTED BY CORINNE GRANT

SENATOR SARAH HANSON-YOUNG GREENS SENATOR FOR SA  
BISHOP PHILIP HUGGINS ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF MELBOURNE  
ANDREW JACKSON 'GO BACK TO WHERE YOU CAME FROM', SBS TV  
PAMELA CURR ASYLUM SEEKER RESOURCE CENTRE

The poster features a background image of a crowd of people with their hands raised in a gesture of support or protest.

Jennifer Chou and the Pamela Brown Handbell Choir are in Adelaide participating in the bi-annual Australasia Handbell Festival this weekend. The Pamela Brown Handbell Choir is recruiting beginners now. If you want to try out, please come along. Term 4 rehearsals start from Wed 14 October 6.30-7.30pm. You don't need any musical ability or reading skills. The only requirement is you can keep the beat, anything extra is bonus to the group. Call Jennifer at 0410 844 552 for more details. The choir is in urgent need of beginners to continue and sustain it from immediately after the festival. SOS!

## Diary Dates

Wed 02 Sep—Sun 25 Oct		Wolfgang Stahlberg on Roach Exchange at TUC	
Sun 27 Sep	11.30am	coffee & discussion	Faichney Room
Mon 28 Sep	12.00pm	Time for Fellowship lunch	Faichney Room
Sun 04 Oct	11.30am	coffee & discussion	Faichney Room
Tue 06 Oct	10.00am	“Conversation with Wolfgang”	Faichney Room
Wed 07 Oct	8.00am	Breakfast w. Rev Dr Stahlberg	Kinross
Thu 08 Oct	4.00pm	JMC AGM	JMC
Mon 12 Oct	10.30am	Drop in Card Day	Faichney Room
Thu 15 Oct	10.00am	Morning Group	Faichney Room
Sun 18 Oct	11.30am	coffee & discussion	Faichney Room
Tue 20 Oct	10.00am	“Conversation with Wolfgang”	Faichney Room
Tue 20 Oct	7.30pm	Management Team	Wettenhall Room
Wed 21 Oct	6.30/7.30pm	PB Handbell Choir/Quartet	Wettenhall Room
Sun 25 Oct	11.30am	Farwell morning tea for Stahlbergs	Faichney Room

## Celebrate Mental Health Week with Prahran Mission and St Michael's Grammar School Chamber Choir



St Michael's Grammar School year 7-9 Chamber Choir will sing at Hartley's Reduced Cost Canteen, Prahran Mission, 211 Chapel St, Prahran Thu. 7 Oct. 12.30–1.00 pm. Eat your lunch to the sound of music! (Ian Savage chaplain Prahran Mission 9692 9500)

**Manse Gallery Café  
will be closed for  
the September  
school holidays.  
Re-opening  
Monday 5th  
October.**



## ROACH MINISTERIAL EXCHANGE:

The Roach Exchange provides a wonderful opportunity for our congregation to experience a minister from a different country and tradition. The Messiah Community Church in Denver is well established and well attended with similar worship and activities to TUC. It is a church in the Lutheran tradition and affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America - a progressive denomination in a traditional environment.

## SUNDAYS AFTER THE 10.15am SERVICE

11.30 am – Coffee and Discussion with Rev Dr Wolfgang Stahlberg.

## TUESDAY 6 OCTOBER

10am Conversation with Wolfgang Stahlberg on What matters most.

## WEDNESDAY 7 OCTOBER,

8am BREAKFAST IN KINROSS with Rev Dr Stahlberg speaking on aspects of American life.