



# Toorak Uniting Church

## Update: 22 November, 2015

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### *Still Thinking – Violence*

Another act of violence in our world: this time it is Paris that catches the world's headlines. Perhaps it is the senselessness of such an act that demands our attention and yet we know that there are hundreds of "senseless" acts of violence around the world every day. I suppose many of the perpetrators have a reason for their carnage. Some will say it is retaliation for the violence that has been reeked on them. For others it is hatred of those who are of a different religion, or race, or culture. And perhaps the worst of all is when violence and death is justified in the name of God.

The most unpopular view is that we all participate in violence just by being a part of the human race. The first murder in the Bible is when a young man visits his anger and vengeance on his brother. The story of Cain and Able is at times referred to as the "original stain." - that capacity in the human spirit toward hostility, brutality, cruelty and murder.

Of course most of us do not resort to violence and murder when we are angry or even provoked to anger. Our enculturation; our imbued values of love, respect and tolerance are able to overcome that raw emotion of aggression and violence. Parker J Palmer the Quaker scholar makes the observation that... *"Violence is what happens when we don't know what else to do with our suffering.... Nations, too, answer suffering with violence. On September 11, 2001, more than three thousand Americans died from acts of terrorism. America needed to respond and plans for war were laid. Few were troubled by the fact that the country that was eventually attacked had little or nothing to do with the terrorists who attacked us. We had suffered; we needed to do violence to someone, somewhere; and so we went to war, at tragic cost. A million Iraqis lost their lives, and another four million were driven into exile. Forty-five hundred Americans died in Iraq..."*

In Paris or anywhere in our world, violence should seldom be answered by war rather it must be answered with justice. Those who fail to respect and honour the life of another human being must be brought to justice and experience the full weight of the law. As I write this article that is what the French and International community is doing. Will it last though? The weight of the military and the quick temper of those who have their finger on the trigger so often has the first response.

The American theologian Dominic Crossan has reminded us that the Roman Empire and the reign of God both believed in peace. However, the significant

difference between the Roman and Jesus' way was that in Rome – the Empire believed in *Pax Romana* peace through violence and subjugation. While the Kingdom of God establishes peace through justice and non-violence, *Shalom*.

*Christopher*

Everyone is welcome to join the **Toorak Ecumenical Council** for its Annual Advent Service next Sunday 29/11 at St. John's at 7pm. It would be great if TUC was well represented.



### *Diary Dates*

Wed	25 Nov	6.30/7.30	Pamela Brown Handbells	Wettenhall Room
Thu	26 Nov	10.00am	Prayers for Christian Unity	Church
Fri	27 Nov – Sun	06 Dec	Food for Friends Collection	
Sun	29 Nov	10.15am	Grandparents/Grandkids Service & Morning Tea	
Sun	29 Nov	10.15am	Launch of new TUC Website	Church
Sun	29 Nov	3.00pm	Music for David Concert	Church
Sun	29 Nov	7.00pm	TEC Advent service	St John's
Mon	30 Nov	12.00-2.00	Time for Fellowship Lunch	Faichney Room





*The Road to Shangri La* is a fundraising concert for Uniting AgeWell Carer Respite Service's Music For David program. <http://www.trybooking.com/JNXH>



*The Persian Princes*  
*"The Road to Shangri La"*  
or (Sari Wrong Opera)

Presented by Opera Su Presto

Sunday 29 November 2015, 3pm

Toorak Uniting Church, 603 Toorak Road, Toorak

Music from Gilbert & Sullivan spiced up with the flavours of Kismet, Lakme, Pearl Fishers and South Pacific.

Devised and Directed by James Wright

Enquiries & Bookings T: 9809 0550

Admission: \$40; \$35 concession including refreshments.

A fundraising concert for Uniting AgeWell Carer Respite Service 'Music for David' project.

[unitingagewell.org](http://unitingagewell.org)



### 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.