



Toorak Uniting Church

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Still Thinking: The Essence of Easter is Love by Christopher Page

“All you need is love.” When a judge of the High Court of Australia says it, then we should sit up and take notice. A couple of years ago Justice Michael Kirby when retiring from the High Court told business and law graduates from Griffith University in Queensland that he was not going to talk to them about tax and business law, but would share with them a precious jewel, *“I refer to love,” he said. “Love for one another. Love for our community. Love for others everywhere in the world. Love transcends even scholarship, clearness and university degrees. It is greater than pride and wealth. It endures when worldly vanities fade.”*

For Kirby as for many others, love is not a sentimental feeling or just the commitment to one’s family and loved ones. It is the underpinning of our fundamental human rights, it is, *“empathy for fellow human beings; feeling pain for the refugee; for the victim of war; for prisoners deprived of the vote; for children dying of cholera in Zimbabwe.”* Kirby went on to say that in Australia we have not loved women or indigenous people; Asian or gay people in the past, but we are getting better.

I remember a conversation I had with a woman some years ago. I asked her what she wanted out of life and she answered, “I want someone I can love.” I found her answer curious because I think I would have answered by saying, “I want someone to love me.” But we know that her answer gets to the centre of what love is all about. Love is not a commodity that can be bought or traded - it is a relationship. Nor can it be demanded or forced – it is a gift. Those who seek to be loved miss the point that the onus is completely on them to love those around them; but not only those who are closest, also those who are strangers. And not only people. Love for the world, nature, art, literature, sport, and love for God and life itself are all aspects of this self-giving expression we call love. Love is what I experience when I give myself, my attention, my thoughts and my passion to that to which I am drawn.

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.

There is no debate that Jesus' primary message was love. For Jesus and those who followed him, this it was a radical reorientation of their lives. We should not only love our neighbours; but also our enemies, he said. We should love our friends, but also the stranger and those ostracized by society. We should love those who are good and follow the rules, but also those who are bad and lawless. Love is not a sentiment but an orientation toward the world and to others. It is not just a feeling, although it does involve feelings, it is a commitment to live beyond the confines of my own life. Without love I am cut off from others and imprisoned within my own small psyche.

From its beginning unconditional love is woven into the story of Jesus' life and death and resurrection. When the good man Joseph finds his young fiancée pregnant, he abandons the legal requirement to divorce her and instead is embraced by a vision of this remarkable woman and the child she will bear. Love is always superior to the law. And perhaps that's what Justice Michael Kirby is saying. As justice without mercy is cruel, human relationships and human laws without love are cold and dry. It has never been said more powerfully than by the apostle Paul writing to the church at Corinth,

"Love is patient and kind; not envious, boastful, arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way and is not irritable and resentful, rejoicing in wrongdoing rather than truth. Love bears all things, believes all things; hopes all things and endures all things." (1 Corinthians 13)

Special Service Requiem and Reflection on Gallipoli

Sunday 24 April 2016, 10.15am

Toorak Uniting Church

Gabriel Fauré

Requiem

Worship Leader: Rev. Dr. Christopher Page

Toorak Uniting Church Choir and Soloists

Hayan Kim (Organist), Jennifer Chou (Director of Music)



Meeting of the Congregation and Call for Nominations

A meeting of the Congregation will be held on Sunday 17 April immediately after the 10.15 service. The agenda will be to elect various office holders, to receive the annual report for 2015, and to approve the annual financial report for 2015. Copies of these reports will be available from 3 April.

Nominations are called for the positions of **elder and non-elder member of Church Council**. Nominations are also called for the positions of **chair and secretary of the Congregation**, as the current term of the existing incumbents expires on June 30. Members considering accepting nomination for all these positions are invited to discuss the duties with the minister before accepting nomination. Nomination forms are available from the office and must be returned to the office by Wed. 30 March at 12.00 noon.

Morning Tea:

An opportunity for warm fellowship within our TUC congregation is offered each week as we gather for **morning tea following the 10.15am service**. A small band of congregants serves the tea and coffee regularly, but we are in need of two more people to commit to helping on the first Sunday of each month. It is a good way to greet your fellow parishioners and we have a group of 'emergency contacts' to assist on an occasion when you might need a substitute. If you are willing to offer your service, please contact Christine Brown on 9822 9242..



TUC Film Night

We warmly invite all members of the congregation (and friends of the congregation, as well as new friends) to TUC's first youth-led movie night and discussion. We will be screening the film *Electrick Children* (written and directed by Rebecca Thomas, who was nominated for the Someone to Watch Award at the 2013 Independent Spirit Awards) in the Faichney Room on Sunday May 22, with tea and coffee being offered from 5pm and a 5:30 show time. There will be pizza served after the movie, followed by a group discussion about the film, how it resonated with you and how you see it as connected (or not connected) to your faith.

While this is a youth-led event, we hope that people of all ages and backgrounds will be keen to attend, to both experience the film and offer their thoughts and perspectives in the discussion afterwards. If you're not sure whether the film or the event as a whole is for you, feel free to talk to Anna Field, Kristen Field, McKenzie Duncan, or Chris Page to get a better idea of what the film is like and what we're hoping to achieve with this inaugural event. We'd also love to hear what you'd like to get out of the night and any suggestions you might have!



TUC CONGREGATIONAL BREAKFAST

Wednesday April 20th at 8 am – Medical Defence

We look forward to welcoming you to our autumn Congregational Breakfast to be held on **Wednesday April 20th at 8.00 am**.

Our speaker will be **Dr Elizabeth Lewis of AVANT**, the group that manages insurance of doctors and arbitration with patients. Dr Lewis has a long career in various aspects of medicine, in effect working on both sides: as a practising Doctor for many years and, more recently, for the Insurers. Her message is that ‘Conciliation works!’ – only 2% of disputes go to court. (Dr Lewis is an adherent at Scots Church, in the city.) Breakfast Donation \$20.

Diary Dates

Thu	31 Mar	10.00am	Prayers For Christian Unity	St. Peter's
Sun	17 Apr	11.15am	Congregation AGM	Church
Wed	20 Apr	8.00am	Autumn Congregational Breakfast	Kinross
Sat	30 Apr	4-8pm	Kinross fundraising Scottish Dance	Hall

New in the TUC Church Library

The newly reactivated Church lending library is on a table in the Faichney Room this morning. Please borrow any you would like to read and record details in the exercise book. The suggested borrowing period is 2 weeks.



On Sunday 15 May, there is going to be a special organ recital at TUC to pay tribute to organ builder the late Peter Collins who died in October last year. The pipe organ at TUC is the largest of the 10 instruments that Collins had built for Australia. Jennifer Chou and guest artist Colin Andrews from the USA will perform organ works for four hands and feet.

While we are so lucky to have Colin Andrews to perform with Jennifer as part of his Australian concert tour, **Colin needs a bed for two to three nights before/after the concert. If you are able to offer accommodation to Colin, please speak with Jennifer** after the service or call her at 0410 844 552. Walking distance to TUC being ideal (anything up to 20-25 minutes on foot is fine), or short train or tram ride from TUC.