



Toorak Uniting Church

Update 17 July 2016



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Still thinking: On Death and Dying — Christopher Page

Someone once said, “Death is much too important to leave until the end of life.” Death and dying are not subjects that we raise in polite conversation, while in other periods of history it was quite common to discuss the matter of one’s impending death. In the 17th century Jeremy Taylor, an Anglican Bishop published a two volume book which he titled, “*Holy Living and Holy Dying.*” *Holy Living* was designed to instruct the reader in living a virtuous life, increasing personal piety, and avoiding temptations, while *Holy Dying* was meant to instruct the reader in the “means and instruments” of preparing for a blessed death. Commentators suggested that *Holy Dying* was a much more interesting book.

Death should be talked about in conversational and even casual ways. Obviously, there are appropriate ways to discuss this subject, but avoidance of the topic of death leads to a less healthy approach to life.

While I was in the Arizona desert for the Men’s Initiation with Fr Richard Rohr, I had a day where I was to go, by myself into the desert and contemplate my death. At first it seemed a little silly to be sitting on the side on a dry rocky hill repeating to myself, “I am going to die!” I agreed with the statement and quickly moved to thinking about life. But after a couple of hours the desert and the words I was saying began to touch me at a deeper level. “How will I die?” I thought to myself and then the question, “When will I die and where will it happen?” The questions kept coming. I thought of Woody Allen’s comment “I’m not afraid of dying, I just don’t want to be there when it happens to me!”

Of course there are no answers to the questions I asked myself. But by the end of the time in the desert my conviction was that the purpose of contemplating one’s death is so that one may live more fully.

Our faith can give us confidence about how to live before we die, but it can’t give us certainty about how when or where we will die, nor what death is like. The death of Jesus happened in the midst of life – his life. He was thirty-three years old. He didn’t die an old man, rather his life was taken from him by cruel and violent men. I don’t believe that Jesus chose to die, he didn’t relinquish his life casually or to serve some grander plan. No, he was too full of life for that. Nevertheless, for him

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.

death was not something that was to be avoided at all cost. For Jesus death was a part of life. He lived for freedom and therefore would not bow the knee to oppression and the god of slavery. He lived with courage and so stood against cowardice and conformity. He lived with love and compassion and so his life confronted the powers of hate and coercion. And while he had to face fear, violence and cruelty, he found within his life and his living, the power to resist evil and to live and die true to all he valued. This is why Jesus' death remains for us a path way to life fully lived.

The author of I Peter illustrates this with his words in chapter 2

“Jesus suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow. He did not turn away or act with bitterness. When he was reviled, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he did not weaken, but committed himself to the one who is righteous.”

Christopher

2016 Congregation Directory

Forms are available at the rear of the Church today.

If you wish to be included in the latest edition of the Directory, please **complete a form or notify the office via email**—even if your contact details have not changed. Thanks.



Morning Group this Thursday at 10am in the Faichney Room: A Guide from the National Gallery of Victoria will talk about the Degas exhibition. All welcome.

Kinross

Indelible is our next exhibition. Presented by Anita Traynor Fine Art this exhibition features paintings by young Australian artist, Laura Matthews. Opens on Thursday 21st July at 6pm - 8pm. Drinks and Q & A with the artist. All welcome. On display until August 5th. Please come over and meet Anita Traynor who will be assisting at Kinross on weekday mornings.

WANTED: Good quality, modern children's clothes, toys, books, sporting goods, etc to assist a young couple about to become foster parents to children whose ages will range from 1-16 years. As they do not have children of their own, this couple would be extremely grateful for help setting up their home to welcome and share with young people. Donations via Kimberly in the Office. **Thank you!**

In our thoughts and prayers:

The families of all those who died in Nice during Bastille Day celebrations

Music Service: TODAY at 10:15am

Bach Cantata "Ich habe genug" (I have enough) BWV 82 by J.S. Bach

Guest Soloists:

Allegra Giagu (Mezzo-Soprano), Anne Gilby (Oboe)

The cantata "Ich habe genug" was among Bach's favorites, he revisited it on at least three further occasions, revising the scoring and transposing the music for different voice types. The gospel for the Feast, for which the cantata was written, is taken from Luke - "And there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel; and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ." The cantata contains three arias: a poignant gravely beautiful movement that treats the end of Simeon's long life with a mixture of melancholy and resignation; a profound lullaby both for the death of Simeon but also for the sleeping Christ child; and the third is a joyous and



The topic for our next **Fellowship Morning Coffee** discussion is "Obsolete Expressions". So 'put your thinking caps on'!
Please join us on 25 July at 11.00am in the Faichney Room.

Kinross Annual Art Excursion

Wednesday 17th August, 11am - 1pm

Venue: Islamic Museum of Australia, 15A Anderson Street, Thornbury

Cost: \$12 per ticket.

Car pooling available from Toorak Uniting Church or meet at the Museum.

All welcome. RSVP to kinrossarts@gmail.com .

Lady White Memorial Organ Recital: Sunday, 14 August at 2:00pm

An all Bach recital by Paul Dean (London):

Fantasia & Fugue in G minor (BWV 542)

“Herr Jesu Christ, dich uns zu wend” (BWV 655)

“O Mensch, bewein dein Sünde groß” (BWV 659)

Trio Sonata V (BWV 529)

“Allein Gott in der Hoh sei Ehr” (BWV 662)

Prelude & Fugue in E minor “The Wedge” (BWV 548)



Paul Dean is the Director of Music at St Michael's Church, Highgate and Deputy Director of Music at 'The Hall', Hampstead – one of the leading boys' preparatory schools in London. He's had considerable success in international competitions over the years, winning the Third International Organ Competition in Biarritz, the 1997 Royal College of Organists Performer of the Year Competition and the First International Organ Competition in Warsaw. In 2009 he undertook his first solo concert tour of Australia to critical acclaim and is delighted to be back making a return visit!

TICKETS AVAILABLE at <https://www.trybooking.com/LNVX> or

<http://www.toorakuc.org.au/music-sermons/concerts/>

Diary Dates

Sun	17 Jul	11.45am	Interment—Anne Parratt	Memorial Garden
Tue	19 Jul	4.30pm	Management Team	Wettenhall Room
Wed	20 Jul	6-8pm	Handbells	Wettenhall Room
Thu	21 Jul	10.00am	Morning Group	Faichney Room
Thu	11 Aug	7.45pm	Toorak Ecumenical Council	TUC
Sat	13 Aug	10a-3p	Congregational Retreat	TUC

Patricia Begg's lecture on her travels in China has been postponed.
Further details TBA.