



Toorak Uniting Church

Update 19 February 2017

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Phone: 9829 0300
Sunday services 9am & 10.15am



Still Thinking – Resilience – Christopher Page

Some time ago I heard an interview with Ingrid Betancourt who was held captive in the Colombian jungle for six years and released after a dramatic rescue in July 2008. Betancourt was born in Bogota, Columbia and raised in Paris, France. Her mother was a former Miss Columbia and her father the Columbian ambassador to UNESCO. Having been raised and educated in Paris she decided to return to Columbia after the assassination of the Columbian Liberal politician Carlos Luis Galan 1989. Her mother had been at the rally where Galan was murdered and narrowly escape death herself.

In 1994 Betancourt became a member of the Columbian Chamber of Representatives and in 1998 she was elected to the senate. By the time she announced her candidacy for the presidency in 2002 she had made some powerful enemies among the drug cartels. On February 23, 2002 she was stopped at a FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia) checkpoint and she and fifteen others were taken hostage. So began her captivity and continual movement around the Columbian jungle.

After six years in captivity Betancourt speaks passionately about her love and belief in humanity. Even after torture and deprivation she says, “I love crowds, I love that people are concerned about the little things in life, doing this and that. I love it that after six years of torture, people greet me and want their picture taken with me.” When asked about adjusting back to life in Paris after such an ordeal she said, “It took no time. After six years without seeing one, I love just seeing smiling – every smile I see gives me hope.”

The interviewer asked her why it is that trauma and desolation can make her believe more insistently in the human spirit, rather than abandon all faith in it? She replied, “Maybe this, I was in a situation where I had to make a decision: I could follow the path of cynicism, or that of some kind of spiritual discipline and faith. The first would be easy, the second very hard. The first is about ego and what is happening in front of you. The second is about the battle inside of you, beyond these events, that gives life meaning. I choose the hardest path, but once I had

**Please note: There will be no 9:00am service next Sunday, February 26th.
Our Whole Church Family worship service begins at 10:15am.**

Following the whole church family service on Sunday February 26, all are invited to join in a sausage sizzle and picnic lunch with salads, bread, cake and fruit.

If you would like to contribute a salad or slice that would be much appreciated.

Please RSVP to the office or Barbara McKinnon barbara.mckinnon@bigpond.com, 0405 987 890 to assist with numbers for catering and special dietary requirements.

decided to follow that path, it was like having wings. I wanted to look at everything another way. Take the hostages. When you live for so many years like that, with people you would not otherwise meet in life, you realize that humanity has a common soul. I thought about the guards too: if I am ever out of here, how will they remember me?"

For Ingrid Betancourt this way of life is found at the heart of every religion. "It is a deep belief in God and the human spirit...once I had made my decision, I never let go of that belief – not in the jungle, or since."

Courage and resilience are spiritual qualities that need to be nurtured and nourished in our lives. Our faith and our religion can be vital sources from which we draw commitment and meaning for the living of each day. But the faith and religion we follow must be open to the wisdom of humanity, the leading of inner voice of the Spirit and be a life-giving force for ourselves and others. While Betancourt learned and practiced this in the Columbian jungle we have the opportunity to learn and practice courage and resilience as we are faced with the challenges of everyday life.



Julian Burnside to Speak at Ewing Memorial Centre

Julian Burnside AO SC will be featured at a Progressive

Christian Network of Victoria public address at the Ewing Memorial Centre, cnr of Burke Rd and Coppin St, East Malvern at 3.00pm TODAY, 19 Feb. Mr Burnside is a senior barrister at the Melbourne Bar and a prominent critic of Australia's treatment of asylum seekers, especially those who have arrived here as "boat people". He will give his views on the present Commonwealth policies and processes and suggest what should be done to create a more humane system for dealing with refugees. There will be ample time for Q&A and public discussion. Admittance \$7 (PCNV members \$5) with net proceeds going to the Asylum Seekers Resource Centre.

Kinross House Breakfast Meeting

Tuesday 7 March, 8 am

"What on earth is happening in America?"

John Place, one of our own members—and an American—will share with us some of his insights. Come and add your own questions. ...

'What is the true state of the health system?' ... 'How bad have job losses been?' ... 'Are trade agreements helpful?'

Book early through the TUC Office, space in the Kinross gallery is limited. Ph 9829 0300.



We look forward to an interesting discussion!

\$20 donation.



Daly's Constructions is installing new electrical infrastructure for Citipower in the area around TUC. The work sites are in the footpath and road, so traffic diversions will be in place as required. Traffic controllers will be on hand to direct traffic and pedestrians around the sites.

From Tuesday 21 February to Thursday 23 February inclusive, the main TUC driveway exit onto Toorak Road will be inaccessible to vehicular traffic.

To access the church property on these days, please enter using the driveway on the eastern side of the church. Daly's will direct your exit back onto Toorak Road via the driveway on the western side of the Hall complex.

We apologise for any inconvenience and appreciate your understanding and patience during these scheduled works.

If you have any concerns, please contact
 Daly's: Geoff Reid — 0415 800 174, or
 Citipower: Rocco Malivindi — 0419 306 695.



USE OF THE FAICHNEY ROOM

While the John Macrae Centre is renovated, their program is running in the Faichney Room. The work is still on track to be completed by 3 March.

A warm welcome back to our wonderful choir as they begin their choral program for 2017. We hope you all had a refreshing break!

CONGREGATION MEETING AND ELECTION OF ELDERS

A Meeting of the Congregation will be held **next Sunday, 26th February 2017** immediately after the 10.15am service.

The purpose of the meeting will be to elect a new Chair of the Congregation; Barbara McKinnon has been nominated for this position.



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.

2017 promises to be an exciting and enriching year at Kinross Arts Centre with special events and diverse exhibitions such as the Blake Prize tour.



RE-EMERGENCE by Judi Singleton

Judi Singleton is a Roar Artist working with oils and ceramics. Her work explores her journey of illness and recovery and a 're-emergence' into the art world and experience of exhibiting again.

VOLUNTEER FOR THE 64th BLAKE PRIZE at Kinross Arts Centre & TUC

Would you like to help with the 64th Blake Prize exhibition and symposium in April and May 2017? Tasks include welcoming visitors; guiding tours; assisting with special events and promoting the exhibition to a wide audience. All volunteers will be trained and briefed on March 22 and will receive an information pack including a free catalogue about the artwork. A thank you event for volunteers will be held on Thursday 25th May. Exhibition Dates: April 7th - May 26th Symposium Dates: May 11th - 13th

Please email Lyndel on manager@kinrossarts.org.au to express your interest in helping out with this major event in 2017.

Diary Dates

Thur 23 Feb	10.00am	Prayers for Christian Unity	St John's
Sun 26 Feb	10.15am	Whole Church Family Service: Relationships	Church
Sun 26 Feb	11.15am	Cong. Mtg: election of Elders & Cong. Chair	Church
Mon 13 Mar		Office Closed—Labour Day holiday	
Sun 19 Mar	10.15am	Service on Death and Dying	Church
Thu 13 Apr	7.30pm	Maundy Thursday Service	Church
Fri 14 Apr	10.15am	Good Friday Service	Church
Sun 16 Apr	10.15am	Easter Sunday Service	Church
Tue 25 Apr		Office Closed—ANZAC Day holiday	
Sun 30 Apr	10.15am	Whole Church Family Service: ANZAC Day	Church
Sun 30 Apr	11.15am	Cong AGM: Reports & re-election of Elders	Church
Sun 21 May	10.15am	Communion & Elder commissioning	Church
Thur 30 Mar	10.00am	Prayers for Christian Unity	TUC

Baptism, Confirmation, Membership

If you are considering one of these Christian practices now or in 2017, please see the Minister to discuss it further. There is no age limit on any of them!