



Toorak Uniting Church Update Easter 2018



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Phone: 9829 0300
Sunday services 9am & 10.15am

Still Thinking – An Easter Youth Camp – Christopher Page



When I was a teenager our youth group would organise Easter camps in the Lamington Plateau in Southern Queensland. We alternated between Binna Burra and O'Reilly's Guest House. We never stayed in the guesthouse, we always camped in tents.

The programme for the Easter camp followed the familiar structure. The day began with prayer and quiet time followed by grace and breakfast; then morning Bible study, usually one hour of input and an hour of questions and discussion; an afternoon swim or hike; an evening meal; a campfire with skits, songs and a devotional; then off to bed. Well it may have taken a couple of hours to settle in for the night as teenagers raged freely between the tents!

On Saturday and Sunday the programme was repeated until we would break camp after lunch on Monday. As we drove back to Brisbane and as the mountain experience retreated behind me, I always felt a deep sadness. Year after year the Easter camp was a true mountain top experience that formed and shaped me.

Now some 50 years later I wonder what it was that made that Easter experience so vital and vibrant at the time. The Bible studies were I think, interesting. I really can't remember what we studied. I suspect there was a good dose of "being a true Christian" with more from the Letters of St Paul, than the parables of Jesus. I certainly don't underestimate the buzz of adolescent sexuality. The memory of the secret hand holding on the torchlight night walks. And there was also a strong bond that developed between the youth leaders and the young people at these camps. We saw them in a different light – less formal and more engaging perhaps. But there was something much greater that was touched in those few days together.

The Irish author Josephine Hart said, *"There is an eternal landscape, a geography of the soul; we search for its outlines all our lives."* It is not unimportant that during these retreats we were surrounded by the most glorious landscape. The Lamington Plateau is magnificent and the dark night sky 80 kilometres from Brisbane was luminous with moon and stars. As we gazed up into that dome of the evening sky it was as if the dark mystery peered back at us and saw deep into our souls. I think what was so magical about those Easter camps was that we had the space to wander within our own thoughts, feelings and desires and to wonder at the remarkable shape of the universe. And even though we were surrounded by friends, leaders and the natural environment the moment was really all about me and who I was.

In his book, *Let Your Life Speak*, Parker Palmer wrote, *"Before I can tell my life what I want to do with it, I must listen to my life telling me who I am."* I now know

we needed the silence and grandeur of that place in Southern Queensland to hear the still small voice within us telling us who we were. Now in the “autumn” of my life I can see that it was the God within, the ground of being who was whispering my name in those quivering life giving moments. My life was being opened to a sacred geography of the soul that would shape and reshape me for the rest of my life.

Christopher

In our thoughts and prayers—

Ted Billson and Margaret; Milton Cameron, in Delmont Private Hospital.

Those around the world suffering through war, famine and natural disasters .

Dear users of the church kitchens,

Please, please, please, please, please do not leave leftover food in the refrigerator, other than milk!

While we appreciate the desire to minimise waste, the reality is the food is forgotten, goes off and ends up in the bin anyway. Sadly, by then it's not always recognisable as having once been food.

Especially when it's left uncovered!!!

We appreciate your understanding of this sticky and stinky situation.

Yours sincerely,

The Kitchen Elves. xx



A Dialogue on Death:

Atheism and Christianity:



Tue, 3 April 2018, 7–8.30pm, Mercy Lecture Theatre, ACU Melb Campus, 115 Victoria Pde, Fitzroy.

Death confronts us all. But what is death? How do we live knowing that we will die? Join us for a conversation as we consider a range of perspectives on these questions, in order to develop a dialogue between atheism and Christianity that can shed light on how all of us might think about our own mortality. Our presenters are Denys Turner (Yale Uni. & ACU), Mark Kelly (Western Sydney Uni.), Robyn Whitaker (Uni. of Divinity), and Jon Roffe (Uni. of NSW). Hosted by ACU's Institute for Religion and Critical Inquiry.

Interested in being in the audience for **Millionaire Hot Seat**? You could win \$500 or other prizes. See Eddie live in action. Bring as many people as you'd like. Food, drinks and free parking provided.

Upcoming dates:

Tue 17 Apr | Wed 18 Apr |

Tue 01 May | Bookings:

Olivia Hains 94203190.



Mental Health Foundation Aust. invites you to attend a non-denominational **Grief and Loss Support Group**. Everyone welcome. Last Tue. of the month at 12pm, St. John's Church, 86 Clendon Rd, Toorak. 9826 1422 | www.mhfa.org.au

Many community groups meet regularly at TUC - eg Australasian Native Orchid Society, Bridge, Ceramic & Glass Circle, Dickens Fellowship, Feldenkrais, Ikebana International, Le Club Enfants, Soozexercises, Tai Chi, TUC Dance Classes, TUC Handbells, TUC Morning Group, Weight Watchers, Yoga, Young Engineers. Check our online calendar for meetings. Office staff can provide contact details.

Re Sammy Stamp: Thank you to so many of you who saved your used stamps and delivered them to TUC in Feb. Despite the fact that many envelopes these days are stampless, together you produced an amazing amount for us to take into the Central Church Office, for the dedicated volunteers there to sort through and prepare for sale. They do a wonderful job and I have included here the grants that they have given out, and the amount of money they have raised from “Sammy Stamp”. I am hoping that *now* you have all got into the habit and automatically will keep your used stamps. I hope we’ll do a collection drive again around Christmas time. It’s a really easy way to help our less fortunate friends, and perhaps some of you who missed out on the opportunity this time will start saving stamps too, and we’ll have even bigger bags to take into the city next year. Thanking you again – and in anticipation, June DeVere.

Below is the list of grants approved during 2017: Total \$49,350 (Last year \$52,860).

Echuca/Moama Uniting Church (U.C.) assisting their breakfast & lunch programme.	\$2,250
UnitingWorld – peace in Sth Sudan; water project in PNG; training ministers in China; overcoming poverty in India	\$4,000
St. Andrews UC Mildura – Andy’s Café; meals to the needy	\$3,000
SHARE Lenten Offering – towards Aboriginal Ministry Training and Live Church Streaming.	\$4,000
Co-ordinate – assist in training workshop for Indigenous Bible Translators, Northern Territory.	\$3,000
SHARE Queensland/N.S.W. Cyclone/Flood Appeal.	\$5,000
The Vanuatu Prevention of Blindness Project.	\$1,000
Mission Liaison Group – transporting goods overseas	\$2,000
High St. UC, Frankston – N. India Woman & Child Clinics	\$2,000
Leongatha UC – U-Music program for disabled young adults	\$2,000
UnitingWorld – Livelihood Programs in West Timor	\$2,000
UnitingCare Prahran Mission – Winter Breakfast & Emergency Relief Program	\$2,000
Wise Choices for Life – Ugandan Reproductive Health Training Program	\$2,000
Frontier Services – Outback Links Program in S. Australia	\$3,000
Uniting Vic/Tas. Ltd. – Uniting Harrison Arts Project	\$3,000
National Council of Churches – Act for Peace Appeal	\$2,500
UnitingWorld – Water Taps (PNG), Toilets (various countries)	\$3,600
Preston U.C. – set up Hospitality & Friendship Programme	\$3,000
Strathdon/Parkmore Faith Community - hymn books purchase	\$960
TOTAL 2017	\$50,310
Total of grants since 1977	\$873,133

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 TUC.

Users of church property (incl. tea & coffee facilities, rooms, tables, chairs, crockery, PA system, etc) **must make arrangements through the Office.**

This includes ANY requests of James please.

This is especially important for managing multiple events on the church property, and is critical at busy times in the TUC calendar.

Diary Dates

Tue	17 Apr	4.30pm	Management Team meeting	Wettenhall Rm
Thu	19 Apr	10.00am	Morn. Gp. Spkr: Charmaine Cornford	Faichney Rm
Thu	26 Apr	10.00am	Prayers for Christian Unity	St John's
Thu	26 Apr	7.30pm	Church Council meeting	Faichney Rm
	13-20 May		Week of Prayer for Christian Unity	
Tue	15 May	4.30pm	Management Team meeting	Wettenhall Rm
Thu	17 May	10.00am	Morning Group. Speaker:	Faichney Rm
Thu	17 May	12.00pm	Prayers for Christian Unity + Lunch	St Peter's
Sun	20 May	TBC	Congregational Meeting	TBC
Thu	24 May	7.30pm	Church Council meeting	Church (D.C.)
Thu	31 May	10.00am	Prayers for Christian Unity	Church

KINROSS

Succulents in Situ by Jo Reitze. Open Easter Sun 11.30am-3.30pm with the artist present.

The Language of Landscape and Objects a solo exhibition of paintings, sketches & narratives by Lisa West McNeice. 15 Apr-11 May
Special Event: Sun 29 Apr, 2-4pm: Poetry Reading Performance by artist & collaborators



"A huge thank you to Barbara, Jaki and their team for organising the 9am breakfast it was such a special morning. ... We really appreciated it."

DIRECT DEBIT OFFERINGS

Church Council reminds members of the congregation of a former request regarding the collection of offerings during the church service. If you have made arrangements to use a Direct Debit system, please take one of the laminated cards from the small box on the table at the rear of the church, to place in the offering plate at the appropriate time. This will help the Elders on duty and also be a witness to our visitors of freewill giving.

Do you remember when you first came to Toorak Uniting?
Were you made to feel welcome?
Would you like to greet people as they arrive at TUC? If so, please join our volunteer Welcome Team.
Contact June De Vere on 98135242.

A friendly reminder: the deadline for inclusions in Update is 12pm (noon) Thurs.

Attention kitchen users: Please take care with freezing food, gently moving the drawers and ensuring that the freezer is **securely shut** before you leave. Thanks.

Faure Requiem. Mozart Requiem. Victoria Chorale, Graz Boys Choir Austria & Art of Sound Orchestra. St Paul's Cathedral, 5pm Sat. 7 April. Tickets from Anne Page.