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# The Mustard Seed

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Armadale Uniting Church

Issue 41, Lent 2023

## **Lenten Greetings from Fiona**

As we enter the season of Lent and as I prepare some thoughts for this edition of Mustard Seed, I thought I might include some of my report to the recently held Annual General Meeting.

My report was a reflection on the past year and how we have come through the challenging years of pandemic lockdown, as well as setting out something of the course and direction, the priorities and the challenges as I see them as we look ahead and wonder about our future.

Here is something of what I wrote:

‘As I reflect on the past year...2022 was a year of recuperation, recovery, and seeking to re-establish the life and work of the congregation... These have been, and continue to be, challenging times for the whole community – including church congregations.

The pandemic has raised questions of viability, sustainability and longevity for many organisations. We are not exempt.

But, as a small, committed community of faith, we have come through with remarkable resilience, goodwill and a hopeful outlook – no matter what unknowns await.

Worship, care of each other, those around us, and seeking to make connection with the wider community continue as priorities.

I would list the important missional issues for us as:

- developing and deepening our understanding of First Peoples...
- supporting the work of those who work in mental health...
- building a sense of genuine connection with the local community.

In each of these areas I see growth - and the possibility of more growth – for us as a people of God in Armadale...’

There is work to be done for sure. What part will you play in this?

In the first instance, may I ask you to put Sunday the 26<sup>th</sup> March in your diaries?

This is ‘Neighbour Day’ - an initiative of Relationships Australia - an opportunity to get to know your neighbours.

Greetings from Fiona (cont)

The theme this year is: `Create belonging`  
Come along. Invite a neighbour!

Council has agreed that we will open the church from 9.30–10.30 a.m.  
and invite the local community to come, have a look around, inside and outside,  
and enjoy a morning tea together – maybe even a sausage thanks to Arrow Health!

A simple service will take place,  
for those who want to gather for worship that day, at 11 a.m.

I conclude this letter with heartfelt words from the end of my report to the 2023 AGM:  
`I continue to be grateful to every one of you who continues to encourage and teach me about what it  
means to follow Jesus in this place, at this time.

With perseverance and vision - may we continue on into all that God has for us  
with gratitude, hope and confidence.`

Many blessings.  
Fiona Winn - March 2023

### From the Editors

The Church is to participate in Neighbour Day on 26 March (see Fiona's letter). Come along, ask a neighbour!

We were pleased to welcome Jane Yun to worship on Sunday 5th March. Jane is in her second year of formation as a candidate for the Ministry of Deacon at Pilgrim College.

She comes to Armadale for her field placement - to experience the life and work of a UCA congregation. She is with us for an intensive five months, until July.

We look forward to getting to know Jane, having her with us and learning from her.

– Bill and Graeme

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## TIME

**Into the inch of time left.**

**Not even that wide.**

**Such pain of the absence of time,  
even though time was there.**

**It was so compressed as to not have air.**

**To breathe onto earth if it does,  
not possible did it have as a matter.**

**Taking time and given it no second only to find,  
matter negated time no second and likewise.**

**Patricia M. Robertson**



# WHY CHRISTIANS PRAY

Lyn Ferguson

‘The Lord’s prayer must have come from Jesus’ inner world, where he was truly himself, an insecure, loving man, prepared to take the risk of loving’, writes Neville Ward in his book, *The personal faith of Jesus as revealed in the Lord’s Prayer*. He goes on to suggest that these appear to be the thoughts about life he has spent much time thinking of, taking counsel from them, and surviving on them when there was nothing else.

When asked by his disciples, he taught them his own prayer, which steadied him and took him straight to the truth of every situation. Their request must have gladdened his heart. The new thing about this was the remarkable warmth and affection with which Jesus apparently said and used the word ‘Father’. The directness and brevity of the prayer he gave them was certainly unusual in its brevity and free from pious solemnity and verbal pretentiousness. It was the style of a man who never said more or less than he believed.

Over the centuries, the development of civilization has not created a stable structure of peace or equality – and it breaks my heart when our children turn away from belief in a loving God and Saviour. However other reports on human experience show that generally speaking, people who believe in God rarely find their belief in him shaken by suffering. Faith is a way of interpreting both the goodness and evil of life.

To say the Lord’s prayer mindfully is to deepen our faith, especially in a time of anxiety of suffering. People’s intolerance of suffering varies astonishingly. People who know or have known deep love are practically certain to say that whatever pain life has brought them, even the death of the beloved, has not been as powerful in meaning as that love. They would not trade that love for a life without pain. In one of Tennessee Williams’ plays, a character argues that the greatest of all differences in this world is not between rich and poor, or even good and evil, but between those who have loved and those who have only watched it in envy.

Jesus’ mind seems to have worked within the certainty that God’s power, his involvement in the life of the world, and his desire to help us find our way to him, are all unlimited, and that he is to be trusted in the worst and the best that we encounter. Naturally, then, he turned to him in prayer.

Living on the Christian assumption means accepting the tensions involved, between God’s love and the world’s evil, between our faith that God desires to help us and the limitations he has evidently set for that help. It will always be hard to fit together our prayers and God’s providence. God is the unity, the One, in whom, all opposites are reconciled, and, being reconciled, are themselves transformed into the unimaginable sustenance of the love that is His eternal kingdom.

The image above is one of four “banners” painted by Lyn and displayed in the church.

This article first appeared in *The Mustard Seed*, July 2010. At the time, Lyn was a member of the Synod Worship and Liturgy Committee.

## BOOK REVIEW

# The Sanity of Belief: Why Faith makes Sense

Simon Edwards (SPCK 2021)

**We've all heard the arguments that Christianity is irrelevant, irrational and even immoral. But what if the Christian faith makes sense of all that matters?**

### Reviews

In *The Sanity of Belief*, Simon Edwards brings his sharp mind, quick wit and legal training to bear on the question of whether or not there are strong enough reasons to find meaning and hope through Christian faith. Drawing on history, philosophy, literature and more, his rapid-fire ideas come wrapped in a generosity of spirit that makes you feel that he'd still be your friend even if you disagreed with every word he said. This is a lively, fresh and thoughtful exploration of Christian belief. Highly recommended. (Sheridan Voysey, BBC Radio 2's Pause for Thought).

\* \* \* \* \*

In this thoughtful, engaging book, Simon Edwards challenges the assumptions that may lead us to reject a faith and doubt something that we'd never had a chance to understand in the first place. From our need for meaning and significance, to our desires for truth, goodness, love and hope, he explores the things that matter to us as human beings and shows us why the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ might just make sense of them all.

The *Sanity of Belief* is a fresh take on apologetics, faith and doubt, that will leave you with a stronger understanding of Christian belief and how it relates to today's world. It is ideal for anyone looking for a clear, down to earth introduction to Christianity, or for those wanting to reaffirm the foundation on which their faith rests. (Goodreads.com)

\* \* \* \* \*

### The Author:

Simon Edwards is an Australian lawyer who has also worked as a barrister in Sydney. He is currently a Senior Tutor, speaker and writer, at the Oxford Centre for Christian Apologetics.

There is a copy of this book for loan in the lobby bookshelf.

\* \* \* \* \*

## Offerings

We're grateful for the level of support that we receive through weekly offerings, but have you thought about the amount you contribute? If it hasn't increased for a while, perhaps you might like to consider whether a small increase might be in order. Some of us use envelopes or make direct credits. Envelopes are available on the table as you enter the Church, and you can speak to any member of Council about making direct credits.

To be a Christian in our present society is a conscious act of resistance. (Peter Hitchens).

# A Chat with Charlotte



***We asked Charlotte Burland a few questions!***

**Can you tell us something about your parish church in England?**

*I come from a small Parish in the UK called Boldmere Methodist Church in Birmingham, which both my parents and grandparents are members of. It has a great sense of community and many of its members have been there since I remember. It was lovely to go back to the UK 6 months ago and catch up.*

**Have you always been a Christian, and why do you remain one?**

*My parents raised me as a Christian and I have continued to follow God ever since. There becomes a time in life when you have to take active steps to carry on your faith and unfortunately, for many they do not carry on their faith after they leave home. In a time where we have so much science and require Google to validate our questions, it is difficult to have faith. I remain a Christian because I have faith in God and that there is a higher being.*

**Why did you choose (a) Melbourne (b) the Armadale Uniting Church?**

*I first arrived in Australia 5½ years ago and then went up to far north Queensland to work. From there I travelled down the east coast and arrived in Sydney to begin working again. I was staying there for a few months before my partner and I travelled down to Melbourne. We did not have any expectations that we would be here 4 years later, but we fell in love with the city of Melbourne. Since arriving in Melbourne, I visited a numerous local churches and then found my way to Armadale. I felt a lovely connection to Armadale as it reminded me of my church in the UK. Fiona has been so welcoming and I've appreciated her kind words over the last few years.*

**What do you enjoy about living in Australia? What do you miss?**

*Australia is a wonderful country, full of incredible landscapes and people. I enjoy exploring as much of Victoria as possible on the weekends, whether that be going to the beach or camping. There aren't many other countries in the world where you have the freedom to explore as you do in Australia. That being said, I do love how close the UK is to Europe and the history of both the UK and Europe. I've got to say I do also miss a UK curry, fish and chips and roast dinner – nothing beats it!*

**Can you tell us something about your family/ education/?**

*I come from a close family, my Mom's side of the family are protestants and my Dad's are Catholic. They are spread over the UK so there was quite a bit of travelling to see family when I was younger. (I say travelling, about a 2/3hour journey which is a very short journey in Australia).*

*I was born and raised in Sutton Coldfield which is a town in Birmingham, there I went to school and studied until I was 18. I then moved away from home when I went to University in Sheffield, there I completed my Accounting and Finance degree.*

**What were your favourite subjects at school?**

*My favourite subjects were history, law and maths – That's why I am now working in Accounting.*

**Any favourite hymns?**

*- 'Be still in the presence of the Lord'; and*



*A Chat with Charlotte (cont)*

- 'How great thou art'

**Do you follow a sport or have a particular hobby or skill?**

*I am a big fan of football, or as Australians would call it "soccer". As you may know the UK is very passionate about football and I used to enjoy going to the football with my Grandad when I was younger to watch West Bromwich Albion.*

*I also enjoy playing and watching tennis. My favourite time is when the Australian Open is on in Melbourne, the city has a real buzz about it!*

**Do you have a favourite charity?**

*A charity very close to my heart is Dementia UK – My nan currently has dementia, which is a cruel disease. I know the pressure it can put on a family and any money going towards research of understanding/curing this disease is well spent.*

**Are there any stories in the Gospels that especially strike a chord with you?**

*Luke 10.25-37 "The Good Samaritan" – This strikes a chord with me as I do believe you should do good to be good.*

**Any other thoughts about the Christian faith or the Armadale Uniting Church?**

*The famous poem below sums up my journey with faith and Christianity, whilst also providing me with comfort being away from home and family:*

*One night I dreamed a dream.  
As I was walking along the beach with my Lord.  
Across the dark sky flashed scenes from my life.  
For each scene, I noticed two sets of footprints in the sand,  
One belonging to me and one to my Lord.*

*After the last scene of my life flashed before me,  
I looked back at the footprints in the sand.  
I noticed that at many times along the path of my life,  
especially at the very lowest and saddest times,  
there was only one set of footprints.*

*This really troubled me, so I asked the Lord about it.  
"Lord, you said once I decided to follow you,  
You'd walk with me all the way.  
But I noticed that during the saddest and most troublesome times of my life,  
there was only one set of footprints.*

*I don't understand why, when I needed You the most, You would leave me."  
He whispered, "My precious child, I love you and will never leave you  
Never, ever, during your trials and testings.  
When you saw only one set of footprints,  
It was then that I carried you."*

**Any thoughts about your experience of life so far?**

*This time 10 years ago I would not have imagined myself living on the other side of the world, so far away from my family. However, my life has been a wonderful journey so far and I am extremely grateful to have met the people I have met and visited so many places. I believe I have a positive outlook on life and try and look for the good in any situation. I believe my faith in God, gives me strength to embrace every aspect of life.*

# Around Armadale



Repor

(above) We're very grateful to Krystyna T who regularly arranges such nice flowers for us. (Below left) Keith and Rob created great pancakes for our Shrove Tuesday morning tea which we enjoyed with some of the Arrow staff.



As at every Communion Service, Fiona reminds us that we're baptized, and did so at the Covenant Service on 5 February. (right).

I believe in the redemptive death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Barack Obama





A number of our Congregation attended the Healing Ceremony on 26 January (see opposite).





# FIRST PEOPLES

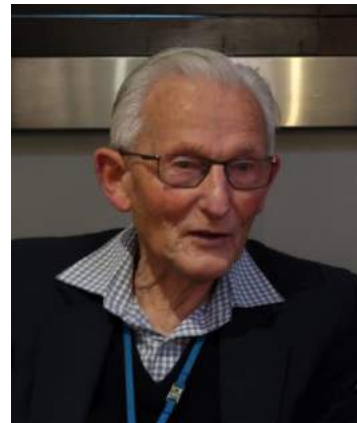
On January 26, Australia Day, ten members of our congregation and over 300 local residents, attended a healing ceremony at the Malvern Cricket Ground. This was sponsored by the Stonnington Council. A Welcome to Country was accompanied by a smoking ceremony and a speech by Aunty Diane Kerr. A community barbeque followed.

\* \* \* \* \*

On behalf of the congregation, the Church Council recently made a donation to Nungalinga College in the Northern Territory. This is an ecumenical institution, founded in 1974, which provides training for indigenous leadership. Men and women from over 100 different communities come to study part-time at the college. Recently we received from them a card of thanks addressed 'To all the saints at Armadale'!

\* \* \* \* \*

## People News



We were saddened to hear that Rev Gerrit Peterschlingman died on 17 February 2023. He was 87, and had been living with his wife Ruth (who survives him) at Warragul. Gerrit was Minister at Armadale from 1983 to 1992, and he also visited us to preach in December 2015. Gerrit's time at Armadale was a time of change in the Parish, and there's an article in *The Mustard Seed* (issue 8, Advent 2011) in which he wrote about some of the events. There are now only a few of us who were around in those times, but those of us who were remember him with great respect and affection.

We also recently received an update about Geoff P, who regularly attended at Armadale for a number of years until recently, and was also a conscientious attendee at our Men's Breakfasts.

In recent times, Geoff's age and Alzheimers's Disease have been catching up with him, and his daughters have told us that he's now at an aged care facility in South Melbourn. He's popular with the staff and other residents and enjoys the grounds

We haven't seen him for a while but he remains in our thoughts and prayers.

# Easter Services

All at Kooyong Rd except as noted

April 2nd **Palm/Passion Sunday** - 9.30 a.m. *'Fickle crowds...'*

April 6<sup>th</sup> **Maundy Thursday** 7 p.m. – Tenebrae and Holy Communion – *'Dirty feet...'*

April 7<sup>th</sup> **Good Friday** – 9.30 a.m. *'Broken Body...'*  
**Stations of the Cross – Central Park 11 a.m.**

April 8<sup>th</sup> **Holy Saturday** – 10-12 noon - Cleaning and Contemplation –  
*'Silent grave...'*

April 9<sup>th</sup> **Easter Sunday** – 9.30 a.m. Easter celebration with Holy Communion -  
*'Risen life...'*

## *Other dates to note*

### ***Neighbour Day - 26<sup>th</sup> March: "Create Belonging"***

Neighbour Day is Australia's annual celebration of community, encouraging people to connect with those who live in their neighbourhood.

On the morning of Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> March, we won't have our usual morning service but will instead hold a Neighbour Day, and open the church and garden space to the local community.

There will be an opportunity to gather for a simple worship service later in the morning at 11 am.

So, come along, and invite your neighbours and friends.

### ***'Darkness into light' - 6<sup>th</sup> May***

This is a walk arranged by and for those who work with or have experienced suicide in their family or friendship circle.

Details to follow - or speak to Fiona.'

## **PRAYER FOR OVERCOMING INDIFFERENCE**

For the sin of silence,  
For the sin of indifference,  
For the secret complicity of the neutral,  
For the closing of borders,  
For the washing of hands,  
For the crime of indifference,  
For the sin of silence,  
For all that was done,  
For all that was not done,  
Let there be no forgetfulness before the Throne of Glory;  
Let there be remembrance within the human heart;  
And let there be at last forgiveness  
When your children, O God,  
Are free and at peace.

From Chaim Stern, editor, *Gates of Repentance*. 1978

# The Boroondara Farmers Market and the Rotary Club of Glenferrie



**David Fallick**

On Monday March 13<sup>th</sup>, the Boroondara Farmers Market will be twenty years old, a remarkable achievement in the increasingly competitive and crowded farmers market sector. It is also significant that over these two decades all those working at the market are volunteers, overwhelmingly members of the Rotary Club of Glenferrie.

The then club president, Geoff Wood, heard that Boroondara Council was considering starting a farmers market and, perceiving a means to ensure the long-term viability of the club, the Boroondara Farmers Market was born. Operating from Patterson Reserve at the south end of Auburn Rd, near the corner of Toorak Rd and the Monash Freeway, it benefits from being so prominently located. And, unlike many other farmers markets, it is contiguous with a large council carpark which, when the weather is too wet for the grass reserve, provides an alternative location. This means that only in the most restrictive depths of Covid was the market closed.

Initially only operating between 0800-1230 on the third Saturday of each month and, when there was a fifth Saturday, two years ago, despite Covid, the market committee decided to expand to include the first Saturday. These 'new' markets are still building, averaging about 30-35 stallholders compared to approximately 60 on the third Saturday and 40-50 on the fifth Saturday. We endeavour to ensure that all our markets offer the full range of fresh produce, sourced from within Victoria while excluding the 'middlemen'; wholesalers and retailers.

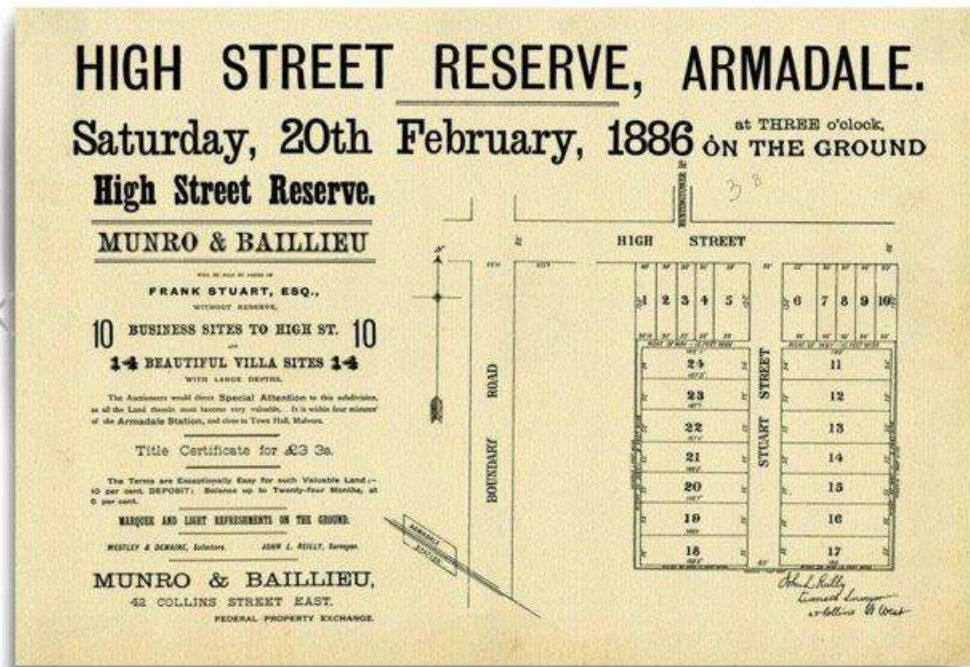
The stallholders all pay \$80 in advance for a single site or \$150 for a double, including power if required. Patrons, as they enter at the two 'gates', are encouraged to donate \$2 per adult; children and canines free! All revenue raised goes to various club projects and, most significantly, Chances, a long-established education foundation which assists disadvantaged students complete their studies.

The smooth, sustainable organisation of the market requires a great deal of time and effort by all the club members on the market committee and, in particular, the two Co-Chairs who need to regularly liaise and meet with council officers. Both Patterson Reserve and the adjoining carpark are council property while our Rotary club are the market managers so regular and clear communication is essential.

Unlike many service clubs, the Rotary Club of Glenferrie has, over the last few years, been fortunate to have attracted many new financial members so the total is now more than 60. Nor is the traditional image of 'stale, pale and male' applicable; more than a third of the membership are women, including both the current president and treasurer. And many of the newer members have helped to significantly lower the average age. In 2023, in order to introduce more of these newer, younger members to working at the market, a 12-month roster was set up for both the early and late shifts requiring every member to serve on at least four shifts over the calendar year.

It is no exaggeration to conclude by stating that, without the Boroondara Farmers Market, the continuing viability of the Rotary Club of Glenferrie would be of concern. And, in turn, without the strong revenue generated by the market, the many diverse community projects the club supports, both locally and overseas, would not be possible





Much of the land in what is now known as Armadale was subdivided in the late 1880s, following the opening of the railway line past South Yarra in April 1879 and the first service at Kooyong Road in 1881. Ann Ahin located the flyer above for one of the sales in that era.

April Blackwell leads a Christian Meditation group at the church on Tuesday evenings at 7.30pm.

Sessions usually conclude about 9 p.m. For further information contact April @ 0419 807 892

## Armadale Uniting Church

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Organist: Rowan Kidd  
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0403 662 786

<https://armadale.ucavictas.org.au/>

Regular service times: 9.30 am each Sunday, Holy Communion on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month.

Quiet Contemplation: 10 am each Wednesday.

Children's program: 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month, during term time.

Usually on the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday (where a month has 5 Sundays) we hold a combined service with other Uniting Churches in Stonnington, which are not always at Armadale. If the service is not at Armadale, no service at Armadale on that day. During January, the format of our services may vary.