

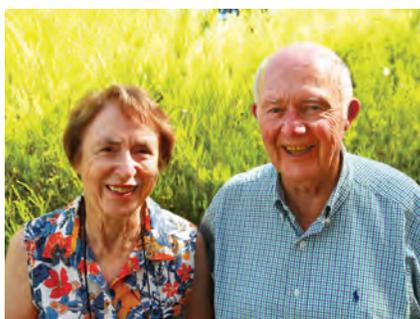
## Wellspring Community at Ebenezer in March 2016

*Twenty-four Friends and Members of Wellspring came together at Ebenezer on Saturday 12th March. We met in Ebenezer Church, Australia's earliest church building still standing, built in 1809 by Scottish settlers. The church stands on 5 acres on the banks of the Hawkesbury River. It is an impressive location with rolling slopes of green lawns, striking eucalypts and a cemetery full of historic memories. It is all cared for by local members of the Uniting Church.*

We were provided, first, with a Devonshire Tea in the Pavilion, then moved to the Church for an Opening Liturgy led by Joy Connor of the Blue Mountains Wellspring Group, assisted by Ruth Thomas. We learnt that, depending on the Presbyterian minister in charge, one might only sing hymns at home as they were considered frivolous.

Ted Brill, the secretary of the Ebenezer Uniting Church, gave a picture of the early life of the church. He held up large photos of early days in the colony when people came by rowboat, then buggy to church. Ted had a well-honed gift of presenting Ebenezer's story. He was not a school master for many years for nothing. His talk was well received.

John & Jenny Kubale especially enjoyed hearing about the early days since John's grandfather, Rev Reid, was the Moderator General of the



*Peggy Goldsmith and Jim Tulip*

Presbyterian Church of Australia in the mid 20th Century. Ebenezer carries rich memories for Presbyterians of that era and later.

Jim Tulip raised the way the Hawkesbury world is seen today in films, novels and other media under the title *'The Challenge of the Hawkesbury'*. He compared Kate Grenville's *The Secret River* (2008) with Eleanor Dark's *The Timeless Land* (1941), two iconic studies, yet indicating changing attitudes to Aborigines. He mentioned Grace Karskens' recent and well received book *The Colony, a history of early Sydney* (2010) where the emphasis on 'war on the Cumberland Plain' was a highlight. Yet there was little mention in the book of churches or Christianity, which is the style of today's media. Lunch followed on the lawns under the great gum trees.

Neil Holm opened the afternoon's discussion on how Wellspring sees its role in relation to local church life and society generally. Geoff Stevenson drew on his role as the local minister

### INSIDE this issue

- >> WELLSPRING COMMUNITY - Ebenezer in March 2016  
Jim Tulip and Peggy Goldsmith  
Page 1
- >> REIMAGINING THE CHURCH  
Neil Holm  
Page 2
- REIMAGINING THE CHURCH  
Geoff Stevenson  
Page 5
- >> RECOGNITION OF AUSTRALIA'S FIRST PEOPLES IN THE CONSTITUTION  
John Telford  
Page 7
- >> BAMB (Books-Art-Music-Movies)  
**ART** BUSHLAND RETREAT  
Shared by Ingrid Meagher  
Page 8
- ART** I AM A TREE  
Shared by David Sloane  
Page 8
- >> CHANCE CONVERSATION  
Bill Thomas  
Page 8
- >> WILDERNESS POEMS  
Libby Mortimer, Caroline Pearce, Val Bennett  
Page 9
- >> ANZAC DAY  
by Eric Smith  
Page 9
- >> ENGAGEMENT  
AN ECUMENICAL JOURNEY  
Doug Hewitt  
Page 10
- WITH DANCING PARTNERS  
Alex Nelson  
Page 11
- NEW MEMBER JANE ROBERTSON  
Page 12
- WITH TREE PLANTING  
David Sloane  
Page 13
- WITH FAIR TRADE  
John Martin  
Page 13
- >> GREEN GRANNY AND THE GROOVERS  
Page 14
- >> HOSPITALITY  
Maz Berry  
Page 14
- >> VALE AILSA MALEY  
Page 15



*Ebenezer Uniting Church*

to point to particular ways he hopes church life will relate to today's society and culture. Small groups followed. John Burnard offered a theological summary of the Frost and Hirsch book entitled 'The shaping of things to come', a subject he has thought deeply about. John Kubale spoke of his grandfather's memories of Ebenezer in early colonial Australia.

The chance for people from Brisbane, Newcastle, Sydney, the Blue Mountains and the South Coast to meet in this way and to enjoy one another's company led to a happy sense of the Wellspring Community to take away from Ebenezer.

## Reimagining the Church



*Neil Holm*

For many years, Margaret and I have gone to whatever church is closest to us. We have not been happy with most churches we have attended and we have come to the conclusion that part of the problem, perhaps all of the problem, lies with us. But there is also something about many churches that is not quite right. I believe that it is important to reimagine the church.

Let me illustrate some reasons why we should reimagine the church. When I speak of church, I refer to the worshipping community, the body of believers, who meet in a particular locale week by week.

From time to time, I try to visit some friends who live in another city. I do so because they have many issues that they want to think through theologically and Biblically. They want to look critically and fairly at

the denominationally-accepted and -approved responses to these issues. They want to give voice to doubts and possible misunderstandings. Unfortunately, when they try to raise these issues with others in their church, they feel that their friends recoil from them in horror.

I yearn for a church where there is sufficient trust and mutuality to be able to share concerns, worries, and shortcomings. I long for others to hold me accountable and for me to hold them accountable. I hope that fellowship and hospitality will be the glue that holds us together. We recently had the AGM in the church that I attend. I was saddened because the locum priest decided that rather than holding the AGM on a Saturday afternoon as in previous years, this year it would be tacked on to the end of a truncated Sunday morning service. In previous years, we had a liturgy to commence and the AGM flowed out of the liturgy. The AGM was a celebration of the events of the past year and thinking about plans for the future. It culminated in dinner together. This year, the priest regarded the AGM as a business meeting that should be concluded as quickly and expeditiously as possible. There were no reports, no votes of thanks, no hospitality, no celebration, and no

communication. The purpose of the meeting was to elect parish council. As you might guess, I found it very dispiriting. It was far removed from a Biblical or otherwise satisfying vision of church.

So how do we go about reimaging the church? Let me begin by looking at a somewhat surprising source: the recent launch of the National Rugby League 2016 Competition. Let me be quite clear: I am not a great fan of the NRL – but many people are! This launch offered a fresh vision or reimaging of Rugby League. I want to consider whether reimaging NRL has anything to offer us as we reimagine church.

For many years, the NRL celebrated the launch of the competition with a large-scale entertainment event featuring celebrity performers like Tina Turner, Hoodoo Gurus, and Bon Jovi. This year, the launch focused on current players. It encouraged NRL fans to support the game at the club level and to attend matches. Seeking a greater sense of inclusiveness, the NRL asked fans to return to the grassroots and to experience a greater sense of belonging at the local club level.

The NRL planned to interact with fans and stakeholders in new and different ways. In its own words, it sought to move away from "big bang

and premiership” to “get more people playing the game.” It hoped to move towards “celebrating organically the core of the product.” The NRL envisioned fans moving away from simply attending celebrity events to making organic connection at the local level.

The NRL also sought conversation between the fans. It also wanted to create a conversation between fans and the NRL itself. The NRL invited fans to not only attend games but to create and share video footage of highlights of the games they attend. The NRL hoped to create a process by which it could interact with fans. It wanted fans to be conversationalists and contributors rather than just spectators, consumers, and “bums on seats” (see [bit.ly/NRLmum](http://bit.ly/NRLmum)).

‘Organic’ is the overriding idea within the NRL’s goals. Organic captures other ideas within the NRL vision: inclusiveness, grassroots, sense of belonging, being connected with others, and making a personal contribution.

The NRL vision is organic because it encourages fans from being isolated consumers and spectators to becoming an organism, a body, where there are



harmonious relations between fans as they attend local club games and even join a club as playing members. These harmonious relations are to celebrate diversity: inter-generational diversity within families as well as cultural and gender-based diversity.

In this vision, fans exercise their particular function: they play the game; they use their phone cameras to create videos that they share with the wider body of fans in the NRL. They join others at the games to celebrate the core understandings that unite them. They celebrate fair play, skill and beauty in movement, teamwork, mutuality, interdependence, resilience, and overcoming adversity. These are the values that unite them. These

values take precedence over winning and triumphalism and they go some way to countering tendencies to celebrate violence and cruelty.

This vision will be achieved not by razzmatazz, glitz, glamour, and celebrity that are unrelated to the core values and understandings of the game. Artificial hype and excitement created by involving celebrities from the entertainment industry who are totally unrelated to the game will be generated no longer. Instead, respect and praise will be directed at players who exhibit the highest level of skill and honour and who characterise the values of the game.

Why do I think this NRL organic vision has relevance for reimagining the church? It is relevant because the NRL believes that this vision will revitalise the game because it resonates strongly and deeply with Australian rugby league fans. As I reimagine the church, I seek a vision that resonates with all Australians and, in addition, is grounded solidly in Biblical and theological principles. The NRL vision is relevant because it contains elements that echo the Biblical and theological principles and sentiments. The NRL has decided, unconsciously, that the future of the NRL lies in some expression of Christian understandings of ecclesia.

Let us explore one Christian understanding of ecclesia, that of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. His radical vision of the church is worthy of further consideration in this context. (For another view see Frank Viola’s book, “Reimagining Church” and Ben Witherington’s four part review [bit.ly/ViolaF](http://bit.ly/ViolaF))

Bonhoeffer developed his ideas in response to Adolf Hitler’s determination to impose the philosophy of National Socialism on every aspect of Germany’s political and community life. The principles of National Socialism were to apply in every domain, including the churches. As a result, the state captured the church. In contemporary Australian society, there is a great danger that secularism will capture the church. In small ways, my earlier examples of church life point to this: the AGM

became an efficient business meeting; my friends’ church is so afraid of secularism that it has retreated into rigid, inflexible, and unquestioning orthodoxy.

Bonhoeffer saw the church as a community, as a special kind of family. This family was not restricted to those who were born into it. It also included those who were called into it. It was not a family that someone could choose. It was a family into which God has called people. This family had a special responsibility for creating personhood, for mutual formation of all members, old and young alike. This vision incorporated and went beyond the NRL goal of creating a body that is inter-generational and characterised by cultural and gender-based diversity.

While the NRL might aim at celebrating the core understandings that unite fans and celebrating fair play, skill and beauty in movement, teamwork, mutuality, and interdependence, the church as a life-community takes responsibility for creating personhood. These life-communities share life together. I think the NRL might also like fans to share more than just the game. I think it wants fans to share some aspects of life together but the NRL does not have the structures that allow this to happen. In Bonhoeffer’s life-communities, the concrete and lived experience of members were explored and reflected upon. These lived experiences revealed encounters with God and provided opportunities for deep reflection on the action of God in their lives. The NRL fans might make and share videos of significant moments and movements at the games but members of the life-communities reflect on and discuss the action and movement of God in their lives. In these life-communities, members help each other to come to know and confess Christ, not just as an idea, but to live for Christ and to live as Christ would have lived in the modern world.

In life-communities, members assist each other to live in a Christ-like manner through their incorporation into the life of Christ. Incorporation into Christ involves assisting each

other to move into the presence of Christ and continue to live in the presence of Christ. For Bonhoeffer, this meant that members would encounter Christ's presence through the Bible and enter God's presence through incorporation into the church-community.

The most radical aspect of Bonhoeffer's vision of the church was his theology of the child. While the NRL hopes that families might attend games together and that family members might play the game at their appropriate level, children have no special role in the NRL vision. Bonhoeffer, on the other hand, drawing on Matt 18:2-3 and Mark 9:42, deduced that children were not members-to-be but were members-in-formation alongside adults-in-formation. Bonhoeffer believed that children could understand the hardest theological concepts. In doing so, he anticipated by thirty years the work of educational learning theorist Jerome Bruner. Bruner argued that the youngest of children are capable of learning any material providing teachers organise the instruction appropriately. This theology guided Bonhoeffer's practice of ministry. Youth ministry should not separate children but should be a part in the continuing formation process, of parents as well as children. "Ministry is not only the running of games, crafts, and hand-motion songs but more so the embracing of the deepest fears, hopes, and questions of the young mother and father, for they, with their child, are a collective person".

The NRL seeks to turn from attempts to entertain and capture fans through razzmatazz, glitz, glamour, and celebrity. It seeks to return to the core values and understandings of the game. In the same way, Bonhoeffer sought a return to the core values of the church. He sought a return to the theological. He did not seek to promote theology. He wanted Christians, young and old, to engage theologically or Biblically with every aspect of their lives. He wanted Christians to become disciples of Jesus Christ. He wanted Christians to engage deeply with each other as a



community in Christ as they worship, pray, read Scripture, confess sins and shortcomings, and serve each other and the wider community.

The Bible reminds us that there is great danger in razzmatazz, glitz, glamour, and celebrity. Matthew 14:1-21, Mark 6:14-44, and Luke 9:7-17 all connect the beheading of John the Baptist at Herod's banquet with the account of Jesus' banquet of five loaves and two fish. Herod's palace, like many other Biblical palaces, was a place of privilege, power, prestige, grandeur, self-aggrandisement, hierarchy, coercion, lust, and threat. So often evil lies hidden beneath the razzmatazz, glitz, glamour, and celebrity. Yet many contemporary churches seek to be attractive in these ways. Jesus' banquet, on the other hand, was in a place that was out of the way, solitary, and deserted. It was a quiet place, a place restoration and renewal. It became a place of prayer, compassion, hospitality, and generosity. Despite its simplicity,

despite being in the wilderness, people came there in thousands. Amazingly, they were all fed. Their bodies and their souls were fed and the feeding came from within the gathered body. No external person or institution met their needs. The needs were met from within.

It is important in this context to note that, despite people flocking to him, I do not regard Jesus as a celebrity. A celebrity is a commodity. A celebrity is manufactured by the celebrity industry. A celebrity produces commodities and helps to sell other commodities. Celebrities seek fame and constantly put themselves in the limelight. They seek affluence and influence. None of these characteristics applied to Jesus.

To conclude, I suggest that Open Space Technology might be a useful tool in promoting the kind of church that Bonhoeffer sought. Open Space Technology helps create mutuality and equality among all who take part. The agenda is set from within. There is opportunity for each person to raise issues that embrace the deepest fears, hopes, and questions of mothers, fathers, children, grandparents, or any other participants. It might be one way, among many others, to promote dialogue that leads to mutual formation in an inter-generational and diverse community.

## National Workshop 2016

The December 2015 issue of Pipeline included details of the Wellspring 2016 National Workshop.

The advertised date was Saturday 10 September from about 11am to 4pm Eastern Standard Time. However, this date clashes with the WA Uniting Church Synod. If we hold to the date we will have few if any WA Members and Friends able to join. This would defeat the purpose of a national workshop. We hope to advise a revised date soon.

We had our first National Workshop in 2014. This day is an opportunity to create a kind of a National Gathering in the year when we are not holding a National Gathering.

What does it mean to you? You have three choices:

1. Gather Centrally in your State. During the day groups will join a national teleconference at three times.
2. Work Through the Program By Yourself. If you are unable to join the central meeting, I invite you to work through the program by yourself for all or part of the day.
3. Short of Time or Energy? If you are unable to join the program in the ways outlined above, I invite you to take some time during the day to pray for the discussions and the outcomes.



# Reimagining the Church – A Wellspring Community Conversation



*Geoff Stevenson*

When we begin to discuss Reimagining the Church, there is a prior couple of questions for me:

*Where are we? How did we get here?*

These questions force us into a consideration of a broader perspective of the church and its place, function and efficacy in this 21st century world. Instead of me looking only at the vulnerable state of my own local congregations and becoming anxious over what we will do to turn things around, I consider more broadly what is happening across the breadth of Christianity and in fact western society. How do I answer and respond to these questions? Where might they lead me, teach me and how might they inform our conversation?

## **The Great Emergence** – Phyllis Tickle

### **Semi-Millennial Upheaval (Giant Rummage Sales)**

Whilst there are many voices in the conversation I have pursued in order to understand something of these questions, Phyllis Tickle has been very clearly the most significant. Essentially Phyllis Tickle proposes that in Western society there is a major upheaval every 500 years. These semi-millennial times of reformation and major change have had concurrent major reformations within the church. In fact one can trace semi-millennial change back through Judaism (and other major religions). These are named as follows:

- Great Reformation (1517 AD)
- Great Schism (1054 AD)
- Monasticism, with Gregory the Great (590 AD)

[Time of Christ (1 AD) - Babylonian Captivity (500 BC) - Monarchy (1000 BC) - Exodus (1500 BC) - Abraham (2000 BC)]

The book provides an account of the 3 transformations (Phyllis Tickle calls them rummage sales where we clear out everything that we no longer need or use, is broken, worn... and rearrange what is there and build something new) within Christianity over the last 2000 years and a more detailed account of the great Reformation.



*Monasticism*



*Reformation*



*Reconciliation*

## **The Great Reformation**

The period in which the Great Reformation within the church occurred was characterised by intense societal change – at every level. Emerging from the Dark Ages, the Renaissance in music, art, architecture, literature... brought light and new possibility. The Enlightenment produced dramatic new ideas in science, mathematics and philosophy. Explorers such as Christopher Columbus circumnavigated the Earth and demonstrated it was not flat but round. Copernicus and Galileo with their telescopes and mathematics proved the Earth was not the centre of the universe, nor even the solar system. Other scientists followed them – ultimately Newton, Darwin, Einstein, Freud... The invention of the printing press enabled the dissemination of information as never before and people began to read and learn through the readily available material.

Alongside this, there were social changes that transformed Western Society at its heart. Liberal Democracy and capitalism became the means of political and economic ordering of society. The King replaced the local Lords as the essential authority. The extended family and clan structure broke down so that the nuclear family became the fundamental unit of society as people moved into cities to find work.

There were tremendous changes within the Western world and these changes impacted every institution, including the church, which also had strong pressure for change within. Martin Luther struck the significant blow that began the reformation within the church and birthed Protestantism. Interestingly, Protestantism grew in diverse ways from the start. It was contextual and dependent somewhat upon the particular leader and place. Protestantism under Luther was

different from that under Calvin or Knox or Zwingli... This diversity and transformation has continued through the last 500 years such that it has birthed the Evangelicalism, Pentecostalism and so on. Within Catholicism, such diversity has been within the one church and under the authority of the church.

Phyllis Tickle suggests that in each one of these semi-millennial upheavals the church has survived but it in a new form. The church never emerges from these times the same. Through the reformation not only was Protestantism in its variant forms birthed, but the Counter-Reformation produced some profound changes in Roman Catholicism – especially through the 2 Vatican Councils that emerged from this time.

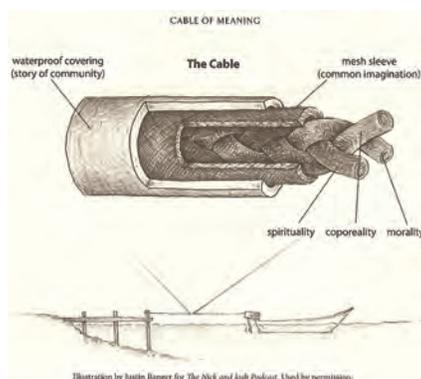
### The Great Emergence

Phyllis Tickle describes the powerful forces at work in the contemporary society of which we are part. Over the last 50-100 years there have been changes that have revolutionised our lives and society. Virtually nothing has been left unaffected. Transportation, Communication and Technology lie at the heart of these changes. We can travel across great distances with ease, in comfort, affordably and quickly. The distance across the world in terms of time, has shrunk. We can communicate readily with people wherever we are and at any time through mobile technology – phones, tablets, laptops through texting, calling, emails, twitter, facebook... Technology has changed our lives and how we engage with one another and the world. Everything from the way we live in the home, to work, medicine, education and beyond has changed. We can access information at any time and in any place – more information than ever before and far more than we can handle. This information is not without its imperfections and errors (eg. Wikipedia) but these sources are said to be more accurate than the Encyclopaedia Britannica at the time of its printing. The other interesting element to these sources of information is that they are open

source and anyone can contribute. Anyone can make a website and post what they think, believe, know etc. In Wikipedia, anyone can add to the pages and topics on any subject. The voice of the ‘expert’ is present but its sits alongside the ordinary voices.

### The Cable of Meaning

Phyllis Tickle proposes a model of how religion provides the source of meaning and undergirds a society, a group or an individual. The model is of a waterproof cable connecting a dinghy to the dock. The dinghy is the individual, group or society, the dock is God, the Divine, and the cable is religion (or the meaning that religion gives our lives). The cable is constructed of an outer waterproof casing (= the central story of our world or society) around a mesh sleeve (= the shared illusions about how the world works whether true or not. She gives an example of the flat earth that held sway – it was untrue in fact but true in the sense society believed it and it was their shared illusion). There is an inner braid of 3 strands – spirituality (the internal experiences and feelings), morality (the externalised experiences) and corporeality (the evidences of the religious reality and functions – eg symbols and forms that hold religion (eg the cross, eucharist, liturgy, vestments, canon law...)).

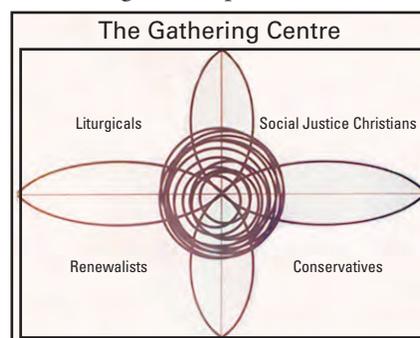


The cable that holds things fast is not indestructible or impenetrable. There are various forces that work upon the cable to nick or tear the outer casing. If this receives a lasting break, the water penetrates and the mesh is exposed. As the shared illusions or the common imagination of society is attacked by forces such as scientific discovery that challenge the factuality of these shared

illusions, the mesh gives way. People being people can't resist taking the exposed braid out and looking closely at the component strands. After we have looked at and questioned each of the strands, questioning their basic foundations (eg, we are currently engaged in a significant conversation regarding same sex marriage. This has been tossed back and forth over several years. We take the morality strand out and look at it, argue and put it back. Take it out and debate again until it is no longer the same.) and then place them back, repair the mesh and cover the outer tear with waterproof duct tape. The cable will now hold fast for another few hundred years until another tear begins the process again. We last repaired the cable following the Great Reformation. It is now tearing again.

### The Emerging Church

So that is where we are and how we got there. Every institution and organisation in our society is feeling the heat of change and upheaval. Change is inevitable whether we like it or not but we have a choice. We can choose to ignore the obvious and seek to re-engage with or recreate the past. Alternately we can embrace the reality we face and find our way through the seeming chaos and confusion to something new. With this latter, the temptation is to try to get on board the latest fad or the next movement and join the ride so as not to be left behind. Brian McLaren suggests a better way. We know that something new is unfolding so let's get involved in helping to create this new thing from the ground up.



No-one knows what the final outcome will be like but Phyllis Tickle and others offer some thoughts to help us proceed. The diagram

shows 4 quadrants that represent roughly equal groupings within Western Christianity. It is possible to identify particular denominations predominantly within one or the other of the quadrants. Rather than flat lines between the quadrants there is a crossover segment between the categories. Phyllis Tickle and others have observed that at the end of the last century and early this century there has been a gathering towards the centre whereby people from different traditions have interacted with others from other traditions and brought forms, ideas and experiences to bear on their own tradition. For example, some evangelicals (conservatives) have experienced Taizé and incorporated their style and form into their own traditions. In other words there is

movement out of a more defined, structured tradition to an eclectic form of faith practice, worship, spirituality and so on. This is a relationally based trend that is also incarnational (lived out and experiential) and often independent of the 'expert' (minister, pastor, priest). There is a rise of small house meetings, gatherings in places beyond the church by a group of people who share a common journey, questions, struggles, despite being from different backgrounds.

The Emerging Church will not be defined by ecclesial rules, doctrines, dogma or rigid structures of the past. It will be conversational and the participants will journey together expressing faith in practice and action rather than through philosophical or theological (doctrinal) forms. The

important, perhaps foundational elements of the various traditions will be employed but perhaps in modified ways. Faith will be more eclectic across the range of ecclesial and spiritual experience and will be praxis-oriented – ie grounded in practice and practical ministry. The authority will no longer be an infallible book but more of God's Spirit in our midst speaking through experience, reflection, Bible, tradition and the community that wrestles with the way of Jesus. The emerging church will be more focussed on following Jesus as a way of life, over pursuing correct beliefs and doctrinal purity. There will be less emphasis on denominational names and more on like-minded people coming together to share the journey.

## Recognition of Australia's First Peoples in the Australian Constitution



The focus at the present time for many who are actively involved in the reconciliation process is to organise forums and other opportunities for people to become informed about the recommendations and issues surrounding the proposal to make amendments to Australia's Constitution to recognise the

place of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples in our history, and to remove or amend clauses in the body of the constitution which give power to the Commonwealth to make laws exclusively affecting the lives of particular groups whether those laws are perceived to have positive or negative impacts on their lives.

On 7 December 2015, the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition appointed a Referendum Council to progress the recognition process. The Council is leading the process for national consultations and community engagement, including a series of Indigenous-designed and led consultations. It will advise the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition on constitutional change, including a proposition to take to a referendum and its timing.

The Council comprises sixteen Indigenous and non-Indigenous members. It is co-Chaired by Ms Pat Anderson AO and Mr Mark Leibler AC.

The Council's work builds on progress on constitutional recognition to date, including the Expert Panel on Constitutional Recognition of Indigenous Australians, the Act of Recognition Review Panel and the Joint Select Committee on Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

For details of constitutional changes being discussed go to <http://www.recognise.org.au/why/recognise-what-is-proposed/>

In addition the current debate on this issue has galvanised the debate about a Treaty. The Victorian Government recently sponsored a conference which was attended by a large number of Aboriginal people and 99% of those attending voted to pursue that as a goal rather than amendments to the Constitution.

However many Aboriginal leaders such as Linda Burney do not see the issue as either/or but as a step-by-step



process. They argue that by removing the racist clauses in the constitution and by recognising the prior presence of Aboriginal people in this land before the British invasion, the argument for negotiation of a Treaty is strengthened.

*John Telford*

# BAMM: BOOKS, ART, MUSIC, MOVIES



*BAMM is a place where Members and Friends reflect on their recent viewing, hearing, creating, and reading in ways that engage the central concerns of the Wellspring Community.*

## BAMM: ARTS

### *Bushland Retreat by Ingrid Meagher*

Blessed twilight  
when day dies  
giving way to the gentle cloak of  
night.  
Birds seek to roost  
Frogs dare emerge  
after the blistering heat of day  
calling mates  
hunting insects.

Time to let go of the day  
connect with our soul  
leave the busyness of our minds  
drink the peace  
and be clothed in a magical mantle  
of sound.

In togetherness we connect with the  
essence of the day  
and dream our hopes for tomorrow.  
We reflect, we absorb the richness of  
sharing.  
Stillness enters.



### *I Am a Tree by David Sloane*

I am a tree. A yellow box gum,  
Eucalyptus melliodora. I stand  
alone in the middle of a paddock. I  
act as a giant guest house providing  
residential accommodation to all sorts  
of essential critters. Everything from  
tiny insects like ants and beetles to  
birds, possums, goannas, gliders and  
bats. I am a living ecosystem bound  
to the soil by my roots. I store carbon  
and give you oxygen. I am essential  
for the well being of the bio-diversity  
around me and so sustain the web of  
life well into the future.



*Eucalyptus melliodora*

Sadly, my lot are fast disappearing and  
its predicted within a 120 years, unless  
protected, we will disappear from the  
farming landscape. If sustainability is  
taking what we need now, without  
jeopardizing our future needs,  
clearing us from your paddocks may  
not be the wisest thing to do. Cut me  
down, ring bark me, burn me in your  
stubble burns if you like, but I cannot  
guarantee you a sustainable future.  
After all we are all in this together.  
The ants, the birds, the animals and  
every living thing. And, O yes, even  
you, Mr Homo Sapiens!"

## Chance Conversation

Last Sunday I spent the bulk of  
the day at Leura Harvest Festival,  
a community not a church event. I  
was on the Greens information stall.  
While I was waiting for the train,  
still wearing my Greens shirt, a man  
spoke to me and shared his concerns  
for the environment, the hornets'  
nest stirred up by the invasion of  
Iraq and the future for our children.  
He wondered whether the majority

of people understood or cared about  
these things.

I thought of our seven grandchildren  
and two little great-grandchildren  
and also wondered about their future.  
I thought about the beautiful and  
tranquil views from the look-outs  
at Wentworth Falls and wondered  
whether in 100 years the lyre birds and  
the magpies and the bush will still be  
there to welcome a person looking into  
the Jamieson Valley.

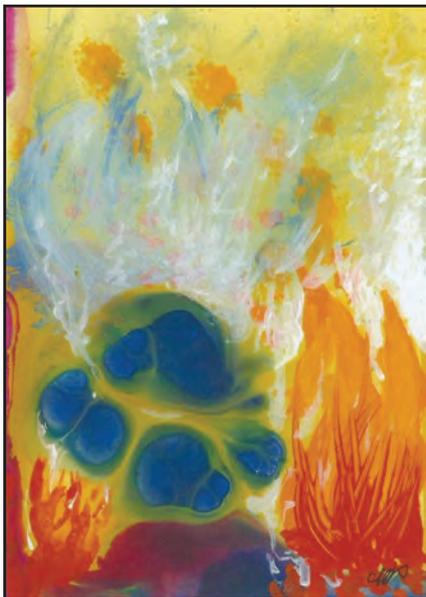
How do these things connect with  
our faith story? Do we have good  
news of hope at this time?



*Ruth and Bill Thomas*

## BAMM: ARTS

Poems written at Wellspring SA Lenten Quiet Day 20 February 2016: Desert Pilgrims



*Spirituality*  
by  
Helen Barnes

*Lynona Hawkins wrote that "we spent time reflecting in and on the 'wilderness' places and experiences of our lives".*

*Here are three poems and their authors:*

Our journey is mapped by love  
It is not rational.  
Love draws us on from despair.  
Often we feel abandoned, alone in the wilderness,  
But a glimmer comes at last  
Of hope and possibility:  
Loving is an option once more!  
Called into fellowship with loved ones  
and with God  
We can move on.  
God is in control.



*Libby Mortimer*

Alone in the desert  
abandoned but not alone  
the terrain criss-crossed with song-lines  
of those before me  
silent but not silent  
still but not quite still  
almost perceptible sounds  
of movement and of life

Distant light in night sky brings hope  
warmth of rising sun bathes me in love  
the burning midday sun brings thirst  
but emptying myself of clutter  
I am filled With love  
Love of the Creator God  
and the Hope of the Cosmic Christ  
for all humanity.



*Caroline H Pearce*

## Anzac Day

Today is a magnificent autumn day – the weather is fine, warm and sunny where we are in Gippsland, Victoria. To be sure, there is a slight smoke haze from controlled burns – we hope they are ecologically responsible. In Australia, the Easter season in autumn brings forth new growth on indigenous plants as they arouse from their summer heat slumber.

By contrast, today is ANZAC Day. Anything but magnificent, though highly significant. Misused, sanitised, too often touted as the heart of the Australian nation. ANZAC Day is rightfully commemorative, for to build true peace we need to remember the folly of war and the costs born not only by those who died, but also by those who came home (often traumatised) and those who remained at home. The Armenian genocide started the day before the Gallipoli landings. The Somme was yet to come.



Today is like every day, a mix of fear and hope, beauty and failure. Now is the time for new growth in the light of the new life assurance of our God, following crucifixion.



*Eric Smith*

Wilderness Wanderings

In times past -  
I ran from wilderness:  
Subsuming my anxieties and fears  
in act of kindness and other beneficent  
doings:  
Visiting, cooking, gifting, praying -  
and other present participles -  
filled my days.

Now  
I continue with my props.  
But, ageing, have more time and need  
to stay longer with the pain:  
Usually walking, I try to name the  
feelings.

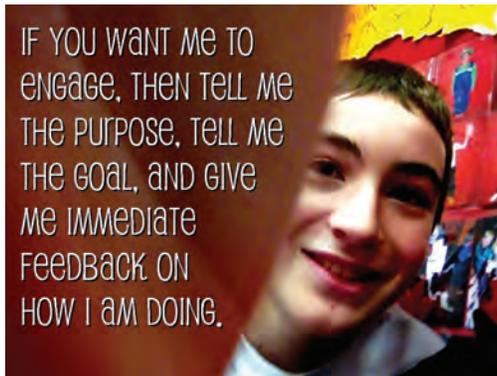
Breathing deeply into them, between  
them, around them.  
My daily exercise.

In the future  
how shall I live?  
Abiding in my acknowledged frailties,  
Bedevilled, yet beloved,  
by the extravagant - bountiful - life-force  
I know through Jesus (the guide of my tribe).  
This, then, is prayer.



*Val Bennett*

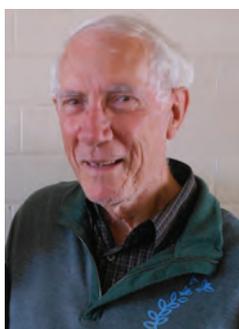
# ENGAGEMENT



**Engagement:** Members and Friends will have an opportunity to engage with or respond to ideas that were addressed in the previous issue of *Pipeline*. Engaging with the ideas of others, respondents will affirm and / or commend the ideas and also take the opportunity to recommend other points of view.

## Doug Hewitt - An Ecumenical Journey of more than 50 Years

*Doug was awarded an AM on Australia Day 2016. Here is the citation for the award.*



**“For significant service to ecumenism and inter-faith dialogue and to the Uniting Church in Australia”**

Many Christians today are still inspired by a commitment to ecumenical relationships originating from a 1952 Conference in a small Swedish town which gives it the name, the *Lund Principle*: “*doing all things together except those which deep differences of conviction compel us to do separately.*” This is a passion which still remains with many of us today.

The inspiration for a personal ecumenical journey began in earnest at a National Conference of Presbyterian youth in Perth in 1959, when the Rev Alan Brasch, a New Zealander, then working for the East Asian Christian Conference (now the Christian Conference of Asia), was the guest speaker. He lifted his hearers out of our denominationalism into a new vision of the church as a transformed community of faith, moving towards unity in Christ

This encounter sparked an involvement in the ecumenical movement which began in the early 1960’s with student campus activism in Armidale, followed by participation in the *NSW Christian Youth Council*, best known for its Work Camps during the Christmas holidays, building houses for Aboriginal families in many country towns. The NSWCYC was part of a national network of similar groups in each state, providing a meeting place for youth from all churches, at a time when denominational youth groups were at their zenith. Doug became the chairperson of NSWCYC in 1964, and was then invited to be a Presbyterian representative on the national committee for the **Christmas Bowl** appeal, part of the *Australian Council of Churches*.

This eventually led to chairing that Commission for 12 years from 1976, when it was the country’s principal national organisation for aid and development, well before World Vision and other such appeals began. Christmas Bowl income from church members exceeded that of any of the community aid appeals. One significant aspect of that opportunity to chair a national aid organisation was the confidence placed in a young person to lead, inspired by mentors who had confidence in youth, not just as “the church of the future,” but

as equals in the present. Presenting reports to the Annual Meetings of the Australian Council of Churches in the 1970’s and ‘80’s, and occasional representation at overseas conferences broadened the ecumenical experience. The Uniting Church has been a major force in this all ecumenical work, sadly diminishing in recent years with retreat into denominationalism in many churches.

The *NSW Ecumenical Council* began in 1962, as a state offshoot of the Australian Council of Churches, and soon after she became its general secretary, Miss Jean Skuse asked Doug to join its committees. That began a long involvement which eventually led to becoming a part time staff member in 2000, after retirement from university teaching. More recently there was a two year period from early in 2012, working from home in Newcastle, Doug served as the Council’s honorary general secretary. At this time, with the sudden withdrawal of the Catholic Church from Council membership, the Council was in danger of closing. With thanks to God, and hard work from a small group of energetic people, it has now been revived, with renewed commitment from its 17 member churches, and it has appointed a full time secretary, Father Shenouda Mansour, from the Coptic Orthodox Church. At the Council’s annual

meeting in 2015 Doug retired from the various committees of the Ecumenical Council.



Within the local ecumenical movement there has always been a desire to enable Australians to better understand the partnership that exists between those who give to the Christmas Bowl, and the people in developing countries receiving those gifts. While on staff at the Ecumenical Council Doug was able to organise groups of church members to visit projects supported by Australian churches in Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Gaza and the West Bank, Armenia, Indonesia, China, and several East African countries. All members of these groups paid their own way, and accepted simple but generous hospitality from the partner churches. There was always the sense that we learned far more than we gave in such experiences. Walking in another's shoes is the first step to better understanding. Leading groups to attend the visitors' program at World Council of Churches Assemblies in Brazil and South Korea also enriched an understanding of ecumenism.

The challenges continue to encourage Australians to give through Act

for Peace which now organises the Christmas Bowl, particularly at a time of severe cuts to Australia's overseas aid. As our government becomes mean and isolationist in its international outlook the need grows for people to speak out in opposition to such short-sighted policies and to give more generously. The generosity of the wider community has been growing at a time when official overseas aid and development has collapsed as a proportion of government spending. The withdrawal of our federal government from its high reputation as an international citizen is to be deplored.

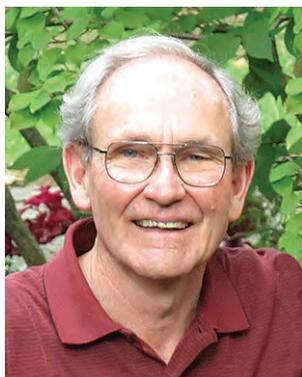
Recognition of participation in the *Wellspring Community* is given in the citation, with mention of the four-year period as a Deputy Leader. Involvement in the Newcastle *Christians for Peace* in recent years is also listed. While many churches have reduced their commitment to ecumenical involvement, as they have shifted energy to shoring up their diminishing resources, both human and financial, the need for cooperation in achieving justice has become more urgent. Interfaith dialogue has become essential and there are encouraging signs of Christians taking this more seriously. There are parallels between the struggles to encourage inter-church contact in the 1950s and 60s, and the current reluctance for Christians to take a lead in forging strong relations between the faiths in contemporary Australia. There is still suspicion on the part of some in the churches to interfaith dialogue, falsely imagining that it is denying one's own

faith. However, those of us who have experienced strong relationships with members of other faiths have often felt enriched in our own faith journey.

The involvement at the national and state levels of ecumenism may have been reduced but Doug remains actively involved through the Hunter Presbytery's Social Justice Committee, and the new Hunter Ecumenical Justice Network. He also continues as Secretary of the UCA Synod's Faith & Unity Committee and involvement in *Love Makes a Way*, to support asylum seekers.

All of this involvement would not have been possible without the continuing support of Isabel, and the sometimes reluctant understanding of three children who saw less of their father in evenings and at weekends. An understanding employer also helped tremendously, as the leadership of Catholic Teachers' College in the 1970s, and later the Australian Catholic University, allowed time for local meetings and travel interstate or overseas. Some of the international representation fitted with periods of study leave and speaking on behalf of the Australian churches was a great privilege. Senior university staff were supportive and like ecumenical leaders they too encouraged participation in the movement towards Christian unity. There are many people who should share this award and it is unfortunate that only one name appears in the citation. We offer thanks to God for the movement of God's Spirit through followers of the way of Christ.

## Alex Nelson - Engagement with Dancing Partners



Alex Nelson

### Dancing Partners ?

Many of us began our lives in a family that regarded us as members of a gathered community of faith. Often that identity held a quality of separateness from other communities of faith, based on convictions that our particular expression of Christian faith and life had a quality of integrity that others lacked. Wellspring Community, however, identifies as a dispersed community of faith where members

and friends participate in its life while at the same time perhaps belonging to some gathered congregations and communities of faith.

At the Gathering in Ballarat, 2015, we were invited to suggest for consideration in *Open Space* something that might hold a *Eureka* moment for Wellspring. I took *Eureka* to mean something like a bright idea, a solution to a dilemma, an epiphany to reveal an opening or mark a step on the way forward in the journey

of Wellspring. I proposed in response to the invitation that there might be some value in exploring the question *Who are Wellspring's dancing partners?* I thought that some reflection on the metaphor of partnership in the dance of faith, hope and love with others who also live in dispersed or gathered community might lead us to recognise and be thankful for the ecumenical, interfaith and "commitment to the common good" dancing partnerships in which many of us already participate and enjoy. My experience of the group sessions on the following days included hearing about wholehearted interfaith cooperation in ministry, social justice, environment protection and prayer. Great partnerships.

The metaphor weaves through Sydney



Carter's *Lord of the Dance* (sung to a *Shaker tune*). My experience of the dance of faith began in the 1940s in a self-contained and defensive culture of Irish Catholicism in Belfast. No other dancing partners were imaginable. A so-called Mixed Marriage between a

Catholic and a partner from another denomination was abhorred. At that time, a mirror image of disapproval existed in Belfast Protestantism. My father's conversion to Catholicism at age 21 and subsequent marriage to my Catholic mother was regarded with suspicion by many Catholics, and as desertion or treachery by many Protestants, even within family circles. As I look back, I realise that from my earliest days, I have never quite belonged completely to a "home side" and have found light and life with a variety of "dancing partners".

Subsequent experiences since then have included emigration to Australia, schooling, entering the priesthood, twenty three years of ministry that included study and travel overseas, my exit from the priesthood and marriage. More than fifty years ago Vatican Council II gave Catholics invitations to engage in ecumenism and social justice cooperation with new partners in faith. At the time, it was not a Catholic church act of desperation seeking mergers from the brink of extinction but an awakening to heed the invitation to unity that is a gift of the Gospel.

I am sure that many members and friends in Wellspring can recall and relate stages in their spiritual journeys.

My intention at Ballarat in proposing the image of "dancing partners" was to invite a naming of the resources

people currently share as a dispersed community. This probably would reveal how members and friends live in connection both to Wellspring Community as well as to others in the local community and through the Internet. It appears to me that members and friends of Wellspring Community contribute to and draw upon other organisations and institutions for spiritual direction, retreats, meditation groups, book groups. As well there are local and national links with actions for social justice, democratic participation at various levels of government, cultural awareness, and environmental protection. Some people may find a resource for faith and spirit through occasional or regular participation in the activities of other local Christian groups for Taize prayer, Christian Meditation. Others may enjoy having daily or occasional internet links with institutions and communities such as the *Center for Action and Contemplation* [cac@cacradicalgrace.ccsend.com](mailto:cac@cacradicalgrace.ccsend.com) (Richard Rohr) and the AAANZ Anabaptist Community Mailing [aaanz@iprimus.com.au](mailto:aaanz@iprimus.com.au). I consider all these examples of dancing partners in faith and life.

I hope that others will feel inclined, perhaps through Pipeline, to share and appraise contacts with some of their own dancing partners.

### **Why not share your thoughts on our shared resources?**

## **Engagement with New Member Jane Robertson**



*Jane Robertson*

I was born in Scotland, one of four children and known as the "favourite sister". It didn't take me long to understand that I was the only girl and the other three were boys!

The family migrated to Australia in 1956 and I had my 10th birthday in my new home, Australia. Like many other immigrants of that era it took time to assimilate but being younger made this process much easier than if I had been older. Still, memories, ethnicity and culture remain however distant or fragmented they may be.

My parents had no committed faith background but we children were sent to Sunday school in Scotland, my older brothers in their kilts and dress jackets, but I have vague memories of this time and couldn't understand as an adult why my memories were so sparse. It is only in recent years that

my brothers laughingly recounted that it was no mystery to them, they often didn't arrive at Sunday school having opted to play in the fields and woods and taking me with them!

One strong memory I do have is being baptised before leaving Scotland, it must have been a bumper day for the minister as there were four of us and five from our next door neighbour. I can still remember standing there whilst the Rev. McPhail signed the watery cross on my forehead, to this day I only have to close my eyes and I can feel it there, dead centre.

Life in Australia moved on and another brother was born, now we were five. I

became a nurse, travelled a bit and am now semi retired working part time supporting two congregations of Religious Women. I have started piano lessons and I judge progress by how many times the dogs get up and move away. I have my eye on the double bass next.

Connection to Wellspring came through the Iona website, so I made contact in WA. It fits spiritually, culturally and upholds issues I feel strongly about. I was appalled to find on my arrival in WA in the 70s the citizenship and rights issues faced by the aboriginal communities. We have

not always treated our new “incomers” much better either. Fear of the unknown can often block that which, if understood, would be less stressful and move forward with less impact. I am moved by the daily trials many folk with gender issues have and of which there are few satisfactory answers at this time.

The struggle refugees have seem almost unimaginable, how could one possibly begin to feel like in their shoes, will they ever stand on free ground let alone holy ground. I asked myself how I could make a connection with a refugee, what could we share in

common? I did find one part of the answer after reading an autobiography of a refugee: we both were not born in Australia and had to assimilate, came here by boat (very different journeys) and both lived in the East Hills migrant hostel (NSW). There are of course many and varied ways we can achieve a connection, it can be as simple as just having a conversation.

I enjoyed my first community get together in Ballarat last year and look forward to “Tassie” in 2017, particularly Launceston or “Lonny” as it is often called.

## Engagement with Tree Planting - David Sloane



David Sloane

Sloane Tree Planting and Overseas Flights

Savernake has had only 14 mms of rain since the end of January. Soil conditions are not conducive for tree planting to offset your carbon emissions on overseas flights. But it

will rain one day! So, here’s a plan if you are planning an overseas flight. If you want to offset your offset your carbon emissions I can plant trees on your behalf.

For big emissions trips to Europe, I can plant 50 tub stock trees like eucalypts, wattles, and bull oaks at a dollar a tree.

I offer a discount if you are crossing the Tasman to the Land of the Long



White Cloud. It will only cost you 20 trees.

North America will cost you 40.

So far I have 50 trees ready to go in my Dogleg paddock when it rains. But for now all I can do is wait and paraphrase Henry Lawson,

Oh, may the showers in torrents fall,  
And all the tanks run over;  
And may the grass grow green and tall,  
In pathways of the planter...  
And may good angels send the rain,  
On desert stretches sandy;  
And when the winter comes again,  
God grant will bring us many.

For further information contact:  
David Sloane 02 6033 3725  
dvsloane@bigpond.com

## Engagement with Fair Trade - John Martin

Wellspring becomes a Fair Trade Faith Group.



John Martin

The Fair Trade Association has recently approved our application to

be recognised as a Fair Trade Faith Group. The journey towards this approval grew out of the Open Space Technology process at the gathering in Ballarat last year.



Our responsibility is to continue using only Fair Trade products – tea, coffee etc. – whenever we meet in the name of Wellspring.

The Association is encouraging us to provide a picture (jpeg) of a Wellspring Group happily holding a sign that says ‘We are Fair Trade’.

The Fair Trade Association website has much useful information and many useful resources including their excellent Shopping Guide which can be downloaded at [www.fta.org.au](http://www.fta.org.au)

If you wish to continue the Fair Trade conversation within Wellspring please contact John Martin: [revj@aapt.net.au](mailto:revj@aapt.net.au)



# GREEN GRANNY and the GROOVERS

## (3 G's) at the Sydney Meditation and the Environment Seminar

The 3G's immersed themselves in Ecology, Economy and Meditation at the Australian Society for Christian Meditation seminar 22-24th April and came away inspired. Things start to buzz if you mix hundreds of lovers of the earth with leading thinkers and practitioners from Monastic, Aboriginal, Celtic, Eastern, Scientific, Quaker, Permaculture, Climate change Theological and Activist perspectives in a spot by Sydney Harbour. Then if you make the stillness and silence of meditation the heart of each day you have a space to expand your mind, nurture your soul and energize your love for the planet and its creator.

*Some quotes to give you a taste:*

Human society is totally dependent on the natural environment for our survival. (*Prof Mark Diesendorf*)

Self knowledge is more powerful than miracles-they are two a penny these days... Contemplation is the fruit of

meditation and was previously the goal of human fulfillment reserved only for the rich or holy persons. Jesus' teaching was that prayer was for all, and that its heart prayer is contemplation. Contemplation is the simple enjoyment of the truth. Truth is "what is"-all our hopes, all our history, all our mistakes -held in God's love...When we are in touch with the whole truth it sets us free and we experience "metanoia" an inner transformation. (*Fr Laurence Freeman*)

Don't ask what the world needs but ask what makes you alive. (*Donna Mulhearn*)

Every Saturday I sit quietly by the fire in my bush place in the mountains -young people drop by -it's quiet and still. (*Indigenous artist and National Parks Ranger Chris Tobin*)

As a practice that bears the fruit of simplicity it (meditation) may reveal to us both the need of, and our capacity to live within limits, such that we will secure space for other life and future generations. (*Linda Chapman*)

"Pattern thinking' - the connections between all life and the sacredness of the land-is the gift we Aboriginal people bring. (*Aboriginal philosopher Vicki Grieses*)

Helen's take home message: Churches wanting to connect with Environment need to listen and connect to our indigenous people and Celtic Christian spirituality.

For your Wellspring Group: See <http://www.christianmeditationaustralia.org/> for how to meditate. You may like to try meditating for 10 minutes at your meeting.



*Green Granny and the Groovers at the Eco garden stall run by Lisa and advertising Wellspring.*

## Hospitality

I have offered hospitality through the Wellspring Directory and wonder why? as I have not had one visitor in 12 years! until very recently when Jim and Peggy came to stay and we spent a happy few days getting to know each other. We shared a meal, walked across the Harbour Bridge and caught the ferry to Watson's Bay for fish and chips.

For me hospitality/welcome is offered to us by Jesus and we accept him. Opening my home to strangers is one way, going into the community

another. Jim and Peggy also tagged along to my weekly Twilight session at The Wayside Chapel where I hand massage. I have built up a rapport with many of the 'homeless' who are often lonely people who have suffered trauma, neglect or abandonment and just crave simple touch. I always come away feeling touched myself - this week I was asked if I minded being called Nana Maz by a young man who has spent time in prison, has mental health issues and is now trying to change. One never knows how you affect others. Hospitality is risk taking but certainly worth it.



*Maz Berry*



*Ailsa was a foundation member of the Wellspring community, attending the first meeting called by Rev John Martin in Sydney, 1992, during an Assembly of the Uniting Church. Subsequently, she was present at the very first meeting in Perth hosted by Lee Edwards. Ailsa, Lee and Janet Watts led the way in Western Australia and continued to maintain their Membership. Ailsa died on 8 May 2016. This tribute to Ailsa is an edited version of separate tributes from Betty Matthews, Janet Watts, Lee Edwards, and Janelle Macgregor.*

*Betty Matthews first met Ailsa in December 1946 when she attended her first Presbyterian Fellowship Association Christmas-New Year Camp as part of the Subiaco Church PFA Group:*

Ailsa was one of the three Lyons sisters from Scots Church Fremantle. Several churches had groups of about 30 young people who mostly attended Easter Camps and the end of the year camp. We also 'turned up' together for Scripture Union and other events. I went on to become ordained, whilst others became workers in the Church.

I remember especially the Easter Camps because with Ailsa I became one of the leadership team, we progressed from the Committee to Assistant Leader and then Leader (Ailsa and I did these in different years). This also included high jinx, including midnight feasts in the hall where we all slept on the floor, or in tents that leaked as it "always rains" at Easter

Ailsa married Bill Maley who was a student for the Ministry, they went to NSW to complete his studies

and he was ordained in 1954. They served together in several places, including West Leederville, Northam, Peppermint Grove, Kalgoorlie, Bunbury and Busselton.

*Lee Edwards writes:*

When I went to Bunbury as a Deaconess of the Methodist Church, many folk referred to the Presbyterian Minister and his wife who had just finished a term in Bunbury and moved to Kalgoorlie. It was apparent that quite a lot of people around the town still missed Bill and Ailsa Maley.

Some years later they moved to Busselton and had a very successful shared ministry in that town. Bill retired in 1976-7 and they went to Europe intending to include visits to places where Bill had served as a soldier in World War 2. They visited Taize first and unexpectedly it was there that Bill died and was buried.

*Janet Watts adds:*

Ailsa and Bill built a house at Dunsborough. Ailsa lived there for many years and loved the environment of beach and native bush, and always enjoyed opening her house to many visitors.

Ailsa was a Friend of the Iona Community, she had visited there several times becoming part of their Community and also had stayed with Peter and Dorothy Millar in Scotland.

When an Iona type Fellowship was suggested for Australia, she with other Iona Friends in Perth were very enthusiastic and attended our first meeting in October 1992.

Ailsa felt a deep love in being a Member of the Wellspring Community, she was very ecumenical, and firm and vocal about peace and justice issues, about the environment and Reconciliation issues and keen on writing and making her thoughts known. She loved communicating with other Wellspringers.

*Janelle Macgregor adds some more:*

Ailsa was a dynamic presence within the Western Australian Wellspring group, attending meetings regularly until transport from Dunsborough created difficulties for her. She also attended retreats and Gatherings until 2011. But, even when she was less able to be with us, she remained in constant contact with WA members - and members across the country - and contributed to the Community's ethos and theology. She often expressed her own spiritual journeying in poetry and shared this with the Community through Pipeline.

Ailsa was a wonderful social justice advocate with her sincere and feisty personality - and all the more noticeable for the strength of opinion that emerged from her tiny physical frame. We loved her, we admired her, we are grateful for her presence among us, we will miss her.

*Betty continues:*

Ailsa has always been someone out there encouraging, pushing, and helping people in their leadership hopes. She was a great supporter of Ecumenical groups including Wellspring, Focolare and Indigenous groups. She also attended many WCC, NCC, ACW events whether overseas, or in Australia including WA. Of course she was active on the local scene too.

I give thanks for Ailsa's life and witness to many people.

*Janet concludes:*

Ailsa had a close and loving relationship with her five children and their extended families. They gave her much joy. Over the last 35 years Ailsa has been my soul mate and special friend. It has been wonderful to share so much of the joy and inspiration she had in her life and the deep and assured faith she had in God.

## WELLSPRING COMMUNITY INC.

### Executive:

Leader	Neil Holm	07 3372 2562	neil.holm.wellspring@gmail.com
Deputy Leaders	David Sloane	02 6033 3725	dvsloane@bigpond.com
	Alex Scutt	03 9572 5073	scuttaj@bigpond.com
Treasurer	Margaret Allen	02 9798 4663	clabon.margaret@bigpond.com
	Marion Gilmour	0432 988 156	marion_gilmour@hotmail.com
Secretary	Stephanie Hogg	03 9572 5073	hoggse@bigpond.com

**Wellspring Community Inc.** ABN 81 293 869 355

PO Box 16, Kogarah NSW 1485. Phone: 02 8006 1853

Administrator: Sydney Office: Jan McEvoy 02 8259 0813. Email: [admin@wellspringcommunity.org.au](mailto:admin@wellspringcommunity.org.au)  
Website: [www.wellspringcommunity.org.au](http://www.wellspringcommunity.org.au)

**NEXT ISSUE:** September 2016.

Editorial Panel: Eric Smith, Neil Holm, Jim Tulip, Geoff Stevenson, Linda Murray.

**Deadline for material** is Monday 2 August 2016. We welcome contributions on any topic, but for the next issue contributions on a topic that reflect Wellspring's Season of Creation perspectives will be especially welcome. Send to: [pipeline@wellspringcommunity.org.au](mailto:pipeline@wellspringcommunity.org.au)

### Becoming a Member of Wellspring Community

**FRIENDS** are sympathetic to the vision of Wellspring Community. They seek to be informed about its activities and its common life. They receive the Wellspring annual Prayer Diary; the Wellspring annual Directory; quarterly Wellspring Community newsletter, *Pipeline*; and notices of Community events. They are welcome to attend and participate in community gatherings, workshops and local cell groups.

**MEMBERS** of Wellspring Community make an annual commitment to live according to the Rule of the Community as fully as possible.

1. To become a Member, a Friend will

- a) be familiar with the history, philosophy and theology of Wellspring Community
- b) be familiar with the Rule
- c) have discussed the Rule with a mentor
- d) have discussed with a mentor a commitment to faith, peace-making and justice
- e) demonstrate that commitment through engagement with at least two of the Wellspring areas of Spirituality and Justice
- f) complete a small project within one of the Wellspring areas of Spirituality and Justice
- g) attend at a National Gathering or National Workshop (as available)
- h) participate regularly with a cell group or make other regular connection in the case of a remote Friend in Formation
- i) meet regularly with the mentor
- j) propose to the mentor what the Friend will (continue to) bring to Wellspring Community.

2. A mentor will be nominated for the Friend in Formation through the Wellspring Council (any person with oversight/coordinating mentorships must be a member of the Council by agreement within the Council).

3. Depending on the Friend's background, the Formation period may include reading, writing, journaling, in areas such as the Spiritual Disciplines, the Gospel imperative of Justice, or other topics as suits the needs and interests of the person in keeping with the philosophy and theology of Wellspring Community.

4. The period of Formation will be one year, or as considered appropriate by the Mentor in conjunction with the Council. A Friend may commence the formation period at any time.