

PIPELINE

The Newsletter of the Wellspring Community Inc · An Australian Community inspired by the Iona Community



2019 Gathering in Brisbane



Leader's Letter

Alex Scutt (Day 22)



Our National Gathering held at the beginning of August in Brisbane was another highlight in a year that has also seen the visit of John Bell to Australia, providing a variety of opportunities for Wellspring people to attend the varied sessions on offer in the various states.

Under the theme of Healing and Hospitality, the 2019 Gathering met in the beautiful bush surroundings of Mercy Place at the foot of Mount Coot-tha just six kilometres or so from central Brisbane. Beginning with a session on poetry and art with Jo and Penny Inkpin, the Gathering continued with the opportunity to visit a local mosque or to meet with indigenous Christian leaders Brooke Prentis and Jean Phillips and others. There were times for walks and quiet reflection, worship, prayer and conversation. Highlights for me were the robust conversations with Aboriginal Christian leaders about the struggles they have for recognition, meeting up with old and new friends, the night call of the Southern Boobook in a nearby tree as I sat preparing notes in the quiet hospitable space in the Mercy Convent late on

the Friday night. The piece of wattle which we were each given on arrival remains in my hymnbook and bible. A memorable and warm Gathering indeed. It was a great “instrument of unity”.

At this Gathering too, we met to discuss the critical decisions that are before us as a Community as we move into the new decade of the 2020s. The lack of people willing to take up positions of leadership in the Community is a critical concern and will become so as early as the end of this year, and the question of whether the Community as a whole is meeting its goals and objectives is one which we have to take seriously. The ageing of current members and no younger people joining is a reality we now must face. Is there a future for Wellspring and what does that future look like?

I introduced these concerns on the Saturday night of the Gathering, and in small groups we discussed our Community's life as it currently is and what it might look like in the future. There was a divergence of views as well as much common ground. Some new ideas emerged along with some older ones. One proposal that was widely endorsed was to explain our concerns to you as a Member or a Friend of Wellspring Community about the future of Wellspring, and seek your response.

Accordingly, with this issue of Pipeline you will find a copy of a questionnaire and some background material outlining in more detail some of the suggestions made, the reasons for our concerns, and the opportunity for you, as a Member/Friend to tell us what is important to you about Wellspring and what it should look like in the future. It is your invitation to be a part of a process that will help the current leadership team and the council map a way forward in a timely way and guide the Community into the 2020s.

INSIDE this issue

- » 2019 GATHERING PHOTOS
Pages 1 and 12
- » LEADERS LETTER
Alex Scutt (Day 22)
Page 2
- » IN THIS ISSUE
Geoff Stevenson (Day 20)
Page 3
- » HALLOWING CREATION
Neil Holm (Day 26)
Page 3
- » GATHERING 2019 - A PERSONAL ACCOUNT
Stephanie Hogg (Day 22)
Page 6
- » JUSTICE AND PEACE IN A WORLD OF CONFLICTS
Peter Millar (Day 31)
Page 8
- » RESPONDING TO ISSUES OF JUSTICE AND PEACE
Lynonan Hawkins (Day)
Page 9
- » THE JUSTICE OF FAIR TRADE
John Martin (Day 25)
Page 9
- » SHOULD AUSTRALIA JOIN THE NUCLEAR WEAPONS CLUB?
Page 10
- » WELLSPRING COMMUNITY
Page 12

As I open every edition of Pipeline I see the image of the windmill which is an important symbol of the Wellspring Community. The windmill expresses our desire to live an Australian Christian faith that is integral to our culture and environment. As well as being wind driven, impelled by the wind of God and its circular rim expressing the unity of the community, the windmill rotates with purpose drawing water from the depths of the land, and moving through troughs and pipes to sustain life in a rugged land. But pipes rust out, troughs need cleaning and realigning. The windmill will continue to rotate; the springs from which it draws are not

likely to run dry – but work is needed to ensure that the water is going where it is needed to feed and sustain. As we approach the 2020s our windmill needs to rotate with a new purpose.

Please take the opportunity between now and the end of November to read and respond to the questionnaire, and above all please keep praying and tapping into those springs of eternal life offered to us by Jesus crucified and risen and for the guidance of the Spirit as together we discern our future.

In this issue

Geoff Stevenson (Day 20)

It is said that all mission belongs to God and the church's mission is engaging in God's mission in the world in the power of God's Spirit. The mission of God is essentially to reconcile all things (not just people) back into the heart of God, the Trinity of Father, Christ and Spirit held in a deep and profound relationship of love. This is where all things derive their being, are sustained and find their true home – in God, or in Paul's language, *en Christo* (in Christ).

This edition of Pipeline invites us to reflect on Peace and Justice, which are intertwined and the outworking of the Divine love at the heart of all things. I think it was Desmond Tutu who said: 'Justice is what love looks like in public.' Love and justice are so connected that there cannot be love without justice and true peace is only found when we work for justice.

So, join in this journey of reflection on Peace and Justice. We begin, quite rightly, by reflecting on creation and the revelation of the Sacred, the holy, the Divine Presence in all things. *Neil Holm* invites us to ponder: How does the recognition of 'All things are in Christ and Christ is in all things,' (Col 3:11) change the way we look at the earth, its forms and creatures, at people and life? How do we live

differently as we experience and encounter God in everything? How do we recognise the presence of God's enlivening, guiding Spirit in cultures that are ancient and pre-exist Jesus?

We then hear a personal account from *Stephanie Hogg* of the experience of the National Gathering and the themes of hospitality and healing, hearing from different cultures and faiths, responding to the challenges, pain and conflicting experiences of people who look, think, feel and are different. The wisdom of Aboriginal culture and the general ignorance across the Australian community, along with the struggle of Islamic people and the conflicts and violence arising from people who are adherents to particular faith perspectives, was explored and engaged with. Surely this is a way into healing and peace.

In his typical broad visioning manner, *Peter Millar* brings us a reflection on Justice and Peace that engages the world of conflict and pain, but invites us into particular, concrete forms of action that will open the way for transformation in our world. What are the small things God can use to change the world through you and I, where we are? How can we add our voice to the voices of others and work collaboratively to build power and transformation for justice and peace in the wider world?

Lynona Hawkins invites us to ponder how we see, listen and speak into places of injustice and conflict, pain and struggle in our lives and the life of our world. How do we respond to the world around us, its beauty and wonder, its darkness and suffering, the joy and pain of human life and what might God speak and 'love' into these places through us? *John Martin* offers one response through his article on Fair Trade, leaving us with the very practical question of where do the clothes come from? Who makes them and how are they recompensed for their work? Are the materials our

clothes are made from renewable or contributing to the destruction of our planet? Is there peace and justice in how we dress ourselves each day?

In dealing with a significant issue confronting our world, *Doug Hewitt* offers a passionate and informative article on nuclear disarmament and Australia's place in this changing landscape. Doug invites us to think about our national role in the region and the implications of taking up arms – what does it mean to have nuclear weapons and how we might potentially use them? It is a powerful call for Australia to strongly affirm a position of nuclear disarmament and stand strongly against the proliferation of nuclear weapons. This is a serious issue of peace and justice and how we might respond.

So, as you journey through this edition, you are encouraged to prayerfully seek the ways in which you can respond to God's way of peace, justice, healing, hospitality and being part of the reconciling mission of God in our broken world with its joy, pain and yearning.

Hallowing Creation

Neil Holm (Day 26)

Within Judaism, the Hasidic tradition believes that an important human purpose is to "assist God in the work of redemption by hallowing the things of creation."¹ Devout people free "the divine sparks trapped in the mute things of time," they uplift "the forms and moments of creation" and bear them aloft. They perform these acts of hallowing with a "tremendous heave" of their spirits. Hallowing, the process of making holy, the process of recognising that something is holy, is a spiritual work closely connected to redemption and sanctification.

This description of hallowing reminded me of the Aboriginal understanding of the Dreaming as a time when the creation heroes emerged from the land, travelled about, and as they went, they released or instilled life-giving essence, potency, into the landscape. They, too, uplifted the forms and moments of creation and distributed divine sparks into the landscape. Contemporary Aboriginal religionists celebrate these acts of creation by recreating in ritual and ceremony the feats of the Dreamtime heroes. As they re-enact these events, they once again release the divine sparks trapped in the landscape, once again they uplift the forms and moments of creation.



The Rainbow Serpent (Ubirr, Kakadu)

Do these Hasidic and Aboriginal traditions and rituals have relevance for 21st century Christians? Are followers of Jesus in the business of working with God to hallow, make holy, sanctify, and redeem the things of creation? When Jesus said, “God so loved the world” did he mean just the human world? Or did he include the human and non-human world made in Genesis that God said was very good indeed? If he included the latter, how do Jesus followers hallow the world, love the world, or redeem the things of creation?

I’m drawn to the image of the Dreamtime heroes travelling through the land instilling the life-giving essence, infusing the world with potency. This act can be described as blessing the world. In Deuteronomy 33, Moses refers to God blessing the land with “choice gifts of heaven above and of the deep that lies beneath.”

God blesses the land, an inanimate object, not just with produce but also with choice gifts of heaven above. This



Rock Art, Ubirr, Kakadu

blessing is much more than wishing good things for the land, more than making it productive. It is instilling the land with potency, giftedness, God-given potential, and the choice gifts of heaven above. God blesses the land here in the same way that he blessed Mary at Annunciation, the bread that fed the 5,000, and the bread broken at the Last Supper. Psalm 1 describes the blessed person as a tree “planted by streams of water” and, here is the important part, a tree that “yields its fruit in season.” Blessedness lies not in pleasant living by cool refreshing streams but in yielding fruit in season, in releasing potency, yielding giftedness.

Followers of Jesus are also blessed. Their salvation is much more than an assurance that all will be OK when they die. Instilled with potency, the children of God release fecundity as they move through this world. They shower around the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Gal 5:22).

Conventionally, we understand this release as directed towards the human world. However, since God loved this world, since he declared that all creation was very good indeed, then perhaps those who work as “partners of Christ” (Heb 3:14) should understand that they are to hallow, bless, sanctify all of creation. They will recognise the non-human creation, the land, air, rivers, rocks, plains, trees, sheep, cattle, and chooks, as loved by God and worthy of treatment that is characterised by patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Rather than objects to be exploited and used up for human benefit, they are objects made and loved by God that have their own potency, potential, and purpose that humans are to honour and release rather than despoil.



Gunlom Falls, NT

This does not mean that humans cannot use these things of creation for their benefit. It does mean that humans will recognise that part of their purpose is to offer nourishment, to meet human physical and spiritual needs. Humans honour and hallow the potency and purpose of these things of creation by respecting them and bestowing love, gentleness, kindness, and the other fruit of the Spirit on them.

Before the arrival of the British colonists, Aborigines hallowed the land. They treated the land with gentleness and kindness. Although the colonists did not recognise it, the land was cultivated. Aborigines managed “the greatest estate on Earth” in a way that reminded the colonists of English parkland. With fire, through careful management of the native fauna

and flora, these original inhabitants created a sustainable ecosystem. This management gave rise to a satisfying lifestyle. Captain Cook described this lifestyle:

They are far more happy than we Europeans; being wholly unacquainted not only with the superfluous but the necessary convenience so much sought after in Europe, they are happy in not knowing the use of them. They live in a tranquillity which is not disturbed by the inequality of condition: the earth and sea of their own accord furnishes them with all things necessary for life.²

Since the time of Cook, the colonists and their descendants destroyed the tranquil life of the original inhabitants. They failed to learn how to maintain a sustainable life. Consequently, we ‘developed’ the sea to the point of the near extinction of whales, the dramatic loss of fish and widespread plastic pollution. We have ‘developed’ land into salination and desertification. We have lost native

species, drained rivers and polluted water sources.³

The colonists and their descendants were unable to see the place as “home” in the same way that Aborigines did: Our word home, warm and suggestive though it be, does not match the Aboriginal word that may mean camp, hearth, country, everlasting home, totem place, life source, spirit centre and much else all in one. Our word land is too spare and meagre. . . . When we took what we call ‘land’ we took what to them meant hearth, home, the source and locus of life, and everlastingness of spirit. . . .

Particular pieces of territory, each a homeland, formed part of a set of constants without which no affiliation of any person to any other person, no link in the whole network of relationships, no part of the complex structure of social groups had all its coordinates.⁴

The Aborigines hallowed creation. In the frontispiece of *White Man Got*

No Dreaming, Stanner quotes Muta, a Murinbata man who described our way: “White man got no dreaming, him go ‘nother way. White man, him go different. Him got road belong himself.” Our road is an unhallowed road along which we walk as unconnected individuals.

In his 1993 novel, *Remembering Babylon*, David Malouf paints a picture that tends to confirm the unhallowed road. The novel is set in the 1840s in a tiny settlement in north Queensland, inland from Bowen. The story revolves around the sudden arrival at the settlement of Gemmy Fairley. As an English castaway, Gemmy lived among Aborigines for sixteen years. His skin is black from the sun and general grime. He has white hair but only speaks a few words of English. The settlers, already struggling to cope in this alien environment where “the very ground under their feet was strange” and fearful of the “tribes of wandering myalls who, in their traipsing way, were forever encroaching on boundaries” (p. 9), are very unsettled by his arrival.

However, Reverend Frazer has come to see the place in a hallowed kind of way. He is an amateur botanist. With Gemmy’s help, he explores the bush describing and drawing various native plants. Gemmy was impressed. He sensed that Mr Frazer had grasped “the spirit of what he had been shown.”⁵ In his notebook, Frazer reflects on his experience:

We have been wrong to see this continent as hostile and infelicitous, so that only by the fiercest stoicism, a supreme resolution and force of will, and by felling, clearing, sowing with the seeds we have brought with us . . . can it be shaped and made habitable. It is habitable already.

In words that almost reflect those of Deuteronomy 33 cited above, Frazer writes, “For there is a truth here and it is this: that no continent lies outside



Above: Tiwi Islands – Timor Sea

Below: Smoking Ceremony – Tiwi Islands



God's bounty and his intention is to provide for his children. He is a gardener and everything he makes is a garden. This place too will one day, I believe, yield its fruits to us and to the great banquet at which we are guests, the common feast We must humble ourselves and learn from [the children of this land . . . This is what is intended by our coming here: to make this place too part of the world's garden, but by changing ourselves rather than it and adding thus to the rich variety of things.

Our poor friend, Gemmy, is a forerunner. He is no longer a white man, or a European, whatever his birth, but a true child of the place as it will one day be . . . and that too perhaps is part of His intention. As he writes this reflection, Reverend Frazer may be remembering Babylon. Like these settlers, the people of Israel were exiles. They were exiles in Babylon. Through the prophet Jeremiah, God advised them about living in Babylon, Jeremiah 29:4-7, 11-14: *Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon. Build houses and*

live in them; plant gardens and eat what they produce. Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare. . . . For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart, I will let you find me, says the Lord.

At last, in the 21st century, we are beginning to hallow creation. We are beginning to treat all creation with respect, love, gentleness, and kindness. We are beginning to appreciate the need to live in harmony with creation, to allow creation to sustain us while we reciprocate by sustaining creation. We have a long way to go but we have begun to walk in the footsteps of the original inhabitants along the hallowed road.



East Alligator River – NT

- 1 Annie Dillard, *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*, New York: Harper Perennial, 1974, p. 96.
- 2 Thomas Keneally, *Australians: Origins to Eureka* Vol. 1, Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 2009, pp. 31-32
- 3 Celia Kemp, *A Voice in the Wilderness: Listening to the Statement from the Heart*, Sydney: Anglican Board of Mission – Australia, 2018, p. 92
- 4 WEH Stanner, *After the Dreaming* (1968) in *White Man Got No Dreaming*, Canberra: ANU Press, 1979, p. 230.
- 5 David Malouf, *Remembering Babylon*, Sydney: Vintage, 1994. This quote and those that follow are from pages 129-132.

Gathering 2019: A personal account



Stephanie Hogg (Day 22)

We arrived in Brisbane early afternoon to lovely warm weather compared to Melbourne, meeting up Joy, Peggy, and David for lift up to Mercy Place in Bardon. Bardon is in the traditional lands of Jagera and Turrbal people. Mercy Place is perched on a

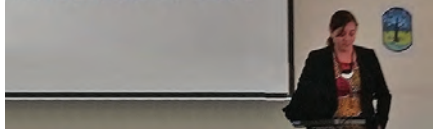
hill near Mt Coot-tha looking down over nearby Brisbane but surrounded by bushland: A lovely location for our Brisbane gathering. The grounds were a quiet retreat with a wonderful view over Brisbane. During the gathering, a number of us took the opportunity to explore the surrounding area, walking up paths by Ithaca creek to parts of the Mt Coot-tha Park, although we found every walk was downhill on the way out and steeply uphill on the way back.

On our arrival, our Queensland hosts welcomed us and after we had located our rooms, we joined others for afternoon tea. We soon started our explorations of hospitality and healing. On the first night Jo Inkpin

and Revd Penny Jones led us through an exploration art and poetry in healing. Working in groups, we first considered paintings from an artist's journey through sickness and healing. Our group reflected on an angelic figure wrapped around a figure sleeping or emerging. We were taken with cool calm greenness of the figure and warmth Next we reflected on poems from another artist that were matched to our image:

...The symbolic return
 To the womb
 The secure cocoon
 Protective and nourishing
 That sustains my trust
 in the power of Faith

Gracious Hosts for Thousands of Years



The next morning our two guest speakers presented two quite different cultures and their understandings of community and hospitality. Brooke Prentis spoke first, talking about her experiences as an Aboriginal woman and Christian as well as Aboriginal views of community and hospitality. For aboriginal people, hospitality is very much community centred, rather than individual based as is the Western norm. Community events are where hospitality is practised – without the need for invitation. Too often Aboriginal forms of hospitality are overlooked or ignored by other Australians. The church has been part this: in particular aboriginal Christians have been disappointed with how the church as an organisation still does not fully supported them. Aboriginal people often feel their churches and needs are always put behind other needs and their people are excluded from leadership. Individual church communities can also be unwelcoming – for instance not providing space for funerals. But there are simple ways of showing welcome, such as flying the aboriginal flag or displaying Aboriginal artworks. These provide a clue to the Aboriginal people that we may provide a safe space for them.

All too often, we overlook the Aboriginal people in our midst. To show what she meant, she invited us to test our knowledge of the names of Aboriginal nations. We showed a common western response of seeing this as a challenge for ourselves to solve rather than to engage with our expert. It is easy for us to come up with excuses for this, but what this underlines how we need to keep challenging ourselves to listen to and work with Aboriginal people rather than for or on behalf of

them. Brooke then invited us to a symbolic meal of welcome – calling us to the feast that is laid before us by this land and the aboriginal people if we have the courage to attend.

Nora Amath then spoke on hospitality and Islam. She started by provided a basic outline of Islamic beliefs and practise. High among these are the practise of prayer and hospitality. Hospitality to the stranger is one of the five pillars of Islam. In a Muslim community, a traveller may find many invitations to come into a home and share a meal. Nora also spoke about the practise of hospitality in our own society between people of different backgrounds: she told us the story of her first home in Australia where she and her neighbours lived without fences, getting to know their neighbours on a then new housing estate. After 9/11, her family worried about their welcome: would their neighbours fence them out? They waited for it to happen, but it never did. For Nora and her family was deep sign of hospitality and welcome.

Nora showed her own hospitality, patiently answering our many questions about her faith, and things read in newspapers. The next day was a time for some of us to accept the hospitality of the Bosnian Islamic society and their Rochedale Mosque south of Brisbane. A new modern building, built to a classic design, this mosque was built by the Bosnian community as their numbers grew here during the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina. From a collection of demountable rose a white mosque with wide cloisters where we would be welcomed to lunch. First though we were able to walk through the building, spending time in the prayer hall learning more about this faith and



Praying near a stranger is in fact encouraged. Our day provided as new insights into the Muslim communities in our midst and the practise of prayer and hospitality and community.

For others in our group, the Saturday provided time to meet again with Brooke and a number of local Aboriginal elders, including Auntie Jean Philips. After a morning tea provided by Brooke and the Aunties, and a time of listening, this group had a picnic lunch and time on Mt Coottha.

On Friday afternoon there was time for people to participate in range of activities. There was a guest speaker from the Hospitaller Order of St John on their healing ministry. We had an opportunity to make origami birds to be sent to the Prime minister with a plea for refugees, mandala's reflecting on place and journey, and Elaine and John Telford provided banner of the Uluru statement from the heart to sign. Personally I took the art track, finding the creation of a mandala a way of reflecting on the mornings input. But I did manage a bird for the PM and sometime reflect on our surroundings and find some of the peace of walking over the land where we were staying.

Saturday night was a time to reflect on Wellspring's future. This discussion is related more fully elsewhere, but people entered strongly into this time, reflecting on where wellspring was and what its futures might be, with a diversity of suggestions being made. Auntie Jean returned to join us for



our final service on Sunday, and our farewell to Brisbane and each other.

Finally, worship remained an important component of the Gathering with morning and evening prayer each day provided by a different group. Worship started on Thursday night, and then concluded our gathering on Sunday morning. Some highlights that stay with me are the exchange of wattle by our hosts on the first night, and a reflection on the



Assisi declarations. These declarations are interfaith expressions of care for

creation and all humanity from the diversity of five of the world's major faiths. Another evening prayer saw us reflecting on Jesus call to offer hospitality not to our friends or important people, but to the poor and the stranger: similar to the reflections of both Brooke and Nora and an ongoing challenge to our Christian communities. Fittingly, for our final worship, we shared the bread and wine of Jesus ongoing hospitality.

Justice and Peace in a World of Conflicts

Peter Millar (Day 31)

The world belongs to God
The earth and all its people:

How good and how lovely it is
To live together in unity:

Love and faith come together
Justice and peace join hands:

If Christ's disciples keep silent
These stones will shout aloud.



These wonderfully strong words form the Opening Responses of the Daily Act of Prayer of the Iona Community. I like the fact that they are said in many parts of the world, including in areas of conflict, by people of various nationalities and ethnicities every day. They encapsulate the Biblical vision of the Kingdom and the promises of God, and remind us of some of the core truths in the teachings of Jesus.

* Pause and read them again slowly then quietly think of them in relation to the modern world.

In themselves the words hold out to us a vision, and without such visions

of goodness and true humanity we perish. Yet while they are visionary, they are also practical. We become less than human when injustice and wars prevail. We become less than human when love and faith become disconnected. We become less than human when we forget (especially in our time) that we are only stewards of God's good earth. We become less than human when we are silent in the face of evils, fake news and totalitarian leaderships. We are reminded again of that famous saying: "All it needs for evil to flourish is for good people to remain silent."



Justice & Peace

In one sense the words JUSTICE and PEACE on earth and amidst the human race - which are so much a part of the Gospel vision - seem to be mere dreams. Yet they are not wild dreams or unreachable fantasies, however hard the task of making them realities. If the global commitment to search for justice and to seek peace is lost, we are all lost. Truly lost, as various writers and commentators are reminding us in this day and age. And we must not be lost, for this remains God's world and we are his people, despite our

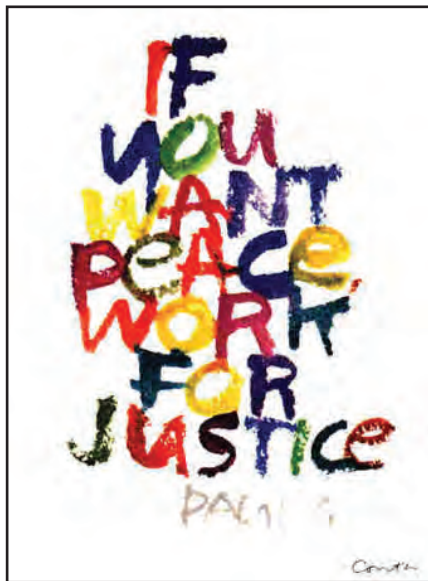
own internal confusions and despite the conflicts, poverty, inept leadership and turbulence of our times.

The task for us all, whatever our age, is to grasp such a vision with even more determination, prayer and awareness. And despite many signs to the contrary, people in every walk of life, and in countries around the world, are making their voices heard in the search for a fairer and more honest international order; for an end to poverty; for the oppressed to go free; for the silent to be heard; for the forgotten to stand tall.

Sometimes these people are out on the streets: sometimes busy writing letters to their representatives; sometimes praying with like-minded others; sometimes clinging to trees to remind us of our wounded planet; sometimes singing about justice and peace; sometimes making every effort to understand cultures different than their own: sometimes welcoming the strangers into their midst: sometimes changing their own life-styles in order that others may survive in a better way - the list is endless, and today we have to thank the One who holds us all for these encouraging signs which all over the world are actually on the increase.

I hope you find encouragement for this great task which God gives to us all in relation to justice and peace in this prayer which I have based on a prayer from the Iona Community.

God of history, You share our joys and crushing sorrows; You hear the cries of the afflicted; You set free the oppressed; You give hope to those without hope: You bring peace where there is conflict: and You enable us to work and to pray for justice and peace. Inspire each of us with the all-embracing love of God: challenge us with the sacrificial love of Jesus: empower us with the transforming love of the Holy Spirit. Now and always.



Responding to Issues of Justice and Peace

Lynona Hawkins

We are all familiar with the ‘Three Wise Monkeys: See no evil, Hear no evil, Speak no evil’. Good advice at first glance to avoid getting into trouble. Yet is that really the way to work toward a world in which peace and justice abound? Not that the advice is easy to achieve. It is hard to avoid ‘Seeing evil’ when watching the evening news for instance. And somehow, walking around with our eyes closed is fraught with danger! There is also the chance that by shutting our eyes to the outside we will become more aware of the ‘evil’ within, our thoughts, judgements, urges etc. that are less than gracious and loving.

‘Hearing no evil’ is also impossible to achieve even if we are deaf. We hear not only with our ears but also with our hearts, which, if we are honest, might convict us personally of evil on the form of pride, selfishness, racism etc. The words we ‘Speak’ too become a mirror into our hearts and minds. Nowadays ‘speaking’ takes many forms, including electronically. A certain president’s Twitter habits are a prime example!

While the advice to see, hear & speak no evil seems safe advice it is all about what we should NOT do. How can we turn these negatives into positives? I am reminded of the Edmund Burke quote: “The only thing necessary for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing”. If we are going to work toward Peace and Justice in our families, communities, nations and world, how can we make a difference? Instead of turning a blind eye, a deaf ear and a mute tongue when we are aware of evil in its many forms, we need to confront it in word and action. May we:

See, with the eyes of faith, beauty, promise the transformative possibilities of hope, love, mercy and blessing;

Hear with the ears of our hearts the groans of the earth, the pleas of the poor and downtrodden, the cries of First Nations people’s, those in detention and prison or caught in the grip of addictions, listening deeply with openness and generosity;

Speak out against injustice with words, prayers and actions of peace, solidarity and grace.

Maybe the three monkeys could be renamed, See what is good, Hear what is hopeful, Speak out for Justice and Peace!



John Martin Day 26

In Biblical days, orphans and widows were amongst the poorest people in society. With no social security safety net and no breadwinner to care for them they were often destitute.

One way of seeking justice in society was to care for orphans and widows.

The Book of Isaiah opens with a salvo of strong language against the pious who neglect issues of justice. Even though people may lift their hands to God and be assiduous in prayer, to not care for the orphan and widow was considered evil.

¹⁵ *When you stretch out your hands,
I will hide my eyes from you;
even though you make many prayers,
I will not listen;
your hands are full of blood.*

¹⁶ *Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean;*

*remove the evil of your doings
from before my eyes;
cease to do evil,*

¹⁷ *learn to do good;
seek justice,*

*rescue the oppressed,
defend the orphan,
plead for the widow.*

(Isaiah 1:15-17 NRSV)

Recently I attended a day of an annual Conference in Brisbane which brought together principals and teachers from Catholic Franciscan schools around Australia. As one of

a number of trade stalls I was give 1½ minutes to talk about fair trade! The friar who led the opening worship reminded people of how St Francis had undressed himself in the presence of the bishop and his father in order to stress his determination to care for the poor.



I spoke about my fair trade clothing: Hemp and cotton shoes, sox, undies and hoodie from Etiko. <https://etiko.com.au> Shirt from Sahyog <https://sahyogthehelpinghand.com> and jeans

from Outland Denim <https://www.outlanddenim.com.au>

When I went to remove my hoodie the 80 participants displayed looks of shock as they thought I was about to emulate St Francis with a striptease.

My innocent purpose was to read to them the slogan on the label on the collar. ‘Wear no evil’.

What about the clothing you are wearing as you read this? Where was it made? How well were the workers treated? Was there slavery or enforced labour? Were fair wages paid?

We may close a blind eye to where our clothing comes from, especially if it is a bargain. I am sure Isaiah would assent to the Etiko slogan as sound theology. To wear clothes where those involved received unjust treatment is surely evil. We can’t escape by

claiming that our clothes came from an op shop. Someone, somewhere, once upon a time made each garment.

How do we shop ethically? Start with the A+ brands and retailers in the Baptist World Aid Ethical Fashion Guide <https://baptistworldaid.org.au/resources/2019-ethical-fashion-guide/> Or phone to order a copy on 1300 789 991.

St Francis proved Mark Twain wrong, courtesy of Google:

Who said the clothes make the man (sic)?

Shakespeare might have written the idea (apparel oft proclaims the man), but we’ve got to give Mark Twain some serious props for this one. He’s the one who said, “Clothes make a man. Naked people **have little or no influence on society.**”

Should Australia Join the Nuclear Weapons Club? New Report - Choosing Humanity: Why Australia must join the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

Doug Hewitt Day 9, on behalf of Christians for Peace, Newcastle

“Australia has long been an advocate of nuclear disarmament and has been an active party to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. But, unlike New Zealand, it has not signed on to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

In fact, its attitude has been very negative so far. If we believe it is possible to restore the world to a nuclear-weapon-free state, and that we must work towards this for the sake of generations to come, we must encourage the Australian government to sign on to this treaty and encourage like-minded governments to do the same, and to work together to

persuade states with nuclear weapons to join together in renouncing them.”

Elizabeth A Evatt AC Lawyer and jurist: First Chief **Justice of the Family Court of Australia**

The Australian Government is currently being urged to become a member of the nuclear-armed nations. Professor Hugh White is promoting a debate on Australia acquiring its own nuclear arsenal, despite our 45-year commitment to nuclear disarmament under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone.

White proposed that Australian nuclear weapons “would be aimed at cities, they would be aimed to impose

massive damage on an adversary to deter them from using nuclear weapons against us.” In response, human rights lawyer, Diana Sayed, drew attention to the devastating humanitarian impacts of nuclear weapons, noting that such a course of action “would trigger a nuclear arms race in our region... The fact that Australia would be entertaining this thought is unfathomable and unconscionable to me and it goes against everything in international law”.

This debate is a dangerous distraction from the difficult yet crucial task of eliminating nuclear weapons. The next step Australia must take is to reject the flawed notion of nuclear



Upcoming report:

CHOOSING HUMANITY

Why Australia must join the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

deterrence and join the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Nuclear weapons are never a legitimate means of defence.

During August the new ICAN report, featuring contributions from international legal experts, faith groups, parliamentarians, unions, poets and lawyers has been launched around Australia. In Newcastle the report was introduced on Sunday 4th August following the annual Hiroshima Service of Commemoration, organised by Christians for Peace, which includes several Wellspring Community members and friends. Local churches are giving strong support to signing the Treaty.

In the Foreword to the ICAN Report, Ms Gillian Triggs, the former President of the Australian Human .

“The danger of nuclear war is growing. The more we learn about the catastrophic consequences of any use of nuclear weapons, the worse it looks. Nine nations possess some fourteen thousand nuclear weapons.1 Eighteen hundred of them stand poised and ready to launch within minutes. As long as they exist, nuclear weapons pose the most acute existential threat that human beings have created for ourselves and for all species with whom we share planet Earth.

Humanity has made substantial progress towards eliminating other

indiscriminate and inhumane weapons – chemical and biological weapons, landmines and cluster munitions. Evidence of the indiscriminate and unacceptable consequences of these weapons provided the necessary motivation to outlaw them.”

In a statement entitled, Seeking a Just and Peaceful World, which is contained in the Report, the Revd Rob Floyd, Associate General Secretary of the *Uniting Church in Australia*, declares:

“The Uniting Church in Australia (UCA) has a long commitment to working for a world free from nuclear weapons. As a proud member of ICAN, we have continued to call upon our political leaders to work towards a ban on nuclear weapons.

The UCA believes that God in Jesus came to make peace. As Christians, we are called by God to love our neighbours and to work for an end to violence and fear in our world.

The destructive power of nuclear weapons threatens all life on this planet. We believe that reliance upon nuclear weapons to attain peace and security is entirely contrary to God’s creative will for the world.

In our recent 2019 statement, Our Vision for a Just Australia, we called on the Australian Government to sign the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons Treaty as part of Australia’s contribution to a just and peaceful world.

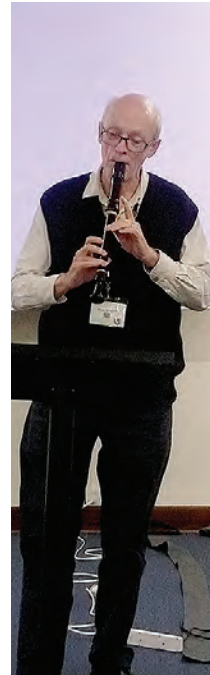
It is the first Treaty to comprehensively outlaw nuclear weapons and sets out a pathway for their total elimination. We maintain that reliance on weapons for peace and security can never achieve a just and lasting peace. Rather, we seek to build a world transformed by hope, peace and justice where the sacredness of all life is protected.

In a letter to then Foreign Minister Julie Bishop in 2015, the Uniting Church Assembly highlighted the urgency of a ban on nuclear weapons. ‘To ensure that nuclear weapons are never used again, they must be eliminated. To eliminate them, they must be banned.’

Revd Floyd concludes: “We continue to pray that those who seek security in nuclear weapons may discover that genuine security can only be achieved through non-violent means.”

ICAN, founded in Melbourne in 2007, and now an international movement, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2017 for its work in developing the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. The Report just published urges the Australian Government to continue the established tradition of our country’s support for similar UN Treaties. We have been leaders in the banning of biological weapons (1972), chemical weapons (1993), land mines (1997), and cluster munitions (2008). It is time to join over 130 nations which have already given their support to the prohibition of nuclear weapons.





WELLSPRING COMMUNITY INC.
Wellspring Community Inc. ABN 81 293 869 355

Leader	Alex Scutt	0419 501 545	scuttaj@bigpond.com
Deputy Leader	Janelle Macgregor	0427 051 101	abbeypathways@gmail.com
Secretary	Neil Holm	0420 936 190	neil.holm.wellspring@gmail.com
Treasurer	Marion Gilmour	0432 988 156	marion_gilmour@hotmail.com
Ecumenism and Interfaith Faith	Doug Hewitt		doug.isabel35@gmail.com
Healing and Hospitality	Janelle Macgregor		abbeypathways@gmail.com
Peace and Social Justice	Mark Hurst		m5hurst51@gmail.com
Reconciliation	vacant		
Spirituality and Worship	vacant		
Sustainability	Lisa Wriley		wormss@bigpond.com

Visit our webpage at: www.wellspringcommunity.org.au • Follow us on Facebook

NEXT ISSUE: December 2019.

Pipeline Committee: Janelle Macgregor, Geoff Stevenson.

Deadline for material is Friday 24 November 2019. The theme for the December issue is "Incarnation".

Contribution on the theme and other materials are welcome.

Please send to Janelle: abbeypathways@gmail.com