

## LEADER'S LETTER

### Alex Scutt (Day 22)



I am pleased to be able to write in my capacity as Leader for this first edition of Pipeline for 2021 after what has been an extraordinary and stressful year for so many of us in 2020. As the efforts continue worldwide to contain the pandemic of COVID-19 and vaccines are rolled out in stages here in Australia, we listen carefully, act cautiously, and live prayerfully.

There are several important things for me to communicate by way of news and community, and the first is that our partnership with Common Grace is beginning as we make our first financial commitment of \$4000 from our accumulated funds to support their work through Knit for Climate Change, to help to provide

prayer resources and to help fund a content specialist who can help curate the abundance of Aboriginal justice resources so they are accessible for small groups. This will be reviewed annually, but our commitment is to provide a sum of \$4000 for 2020, 2021 and 2022 paid at the end of each year.

At our council meeting in February, we appointed Joy Connor to be the Wellspring "Abassador" to Common Grace - and she has already begun this work through her involvement with projects to do with refugees, particularly in New South Wales. At the time I am writing this, Joy along with Doug Hewitt are compiling a submission from Wellspring at the invitation of the Voice Secretariat in response to the release of the Interim Report of the Co-Design process of an Indigenous Voice to Parliament/Government. Joy and Doug are being guided in this response from our First Nations partners in Common Grace who are also working on their own submission, and the final wording of ours is awaiting input from Brooke Prentis, CEO of Common Grace. When our response is complete, I look forward to sharing it with you all and to signing it on Wellspring's behalf. This will happen in the coming days before Easter in time for the deadline of 31 March. In essence the submission will express strong

### INSIDE this issue

- » LEADER'S LETTER  
Alex Scutt (Day 22)  
Page 1
- » UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD  
Geoff Stevenson (Day 20)  
Page 2
- » 5 CHALLENGES & WELLSPRING MEMBER RESPONSES
  1. Children, Young People & COVID-19  
Neil & Margaret Holm (Day 26)  
Page 3
  2. Climate Change  
Maz Berry (Day 23)  
Page 4
  3. Indigenous Rights  
John Martin (Day 28)  
Page 8
  4. Youth & Fellowship  
Joy Connor (Day 2)  
Page 9
  5. Mental Health & Resilience  
Col Jennings (Day 3)  
Page 11
  6. Addendum  
Page 12
- » GENERAL ARTICLES FROM MEMBERS  
Doug Hewitt (Day 13)  
Page 13
- » OTHER ISSUES  
Jo Inkpin (Day 11)  
Page 14
- » AN EASTER MEDITATION  
Peter Millar (Day 31)  
Page 15

support for First Nations People for their voice to be heard in order to influence the policies of government which impact them in their everyday lives and to express strong support for the Uluru Statement from the Heart. It states our wish as a community to stand beside our indigenous sisters and brothers in their desire for justice.

On 28 March Helen Weavers and I will be joining a meeting in response to an invitation from the Leader of the Iona Community to all associates of that Community who live outside the United Kingdom to talk about stronger links and partnerships that might potentially happen in the coming years as we in Wellspring and those in Iona Community look for ways to share and support one another. In essence we are looking at ways in which the two communities can co-operate and allow those in Australia

and other parts of the world who wish it to have closer links with Iona, whilst still fulfilling their own unique vocation, plans and community Rule.

On the third weekend in May our Annual General meeting on 15 May will include consideration of a motion to change Wellspring's articles of association to reflect the fact that Wellspring has now one level of membership. Several other changes are required pursuant to the Associations Incorporations Amendment Act 2016 in New South Wales to bring it into line with that new legislation. It will include new provisions for the composition of our Wellspring Council. Over the course of that weekend there will be an opportunity via Zoom to meet together for some catch-up and fellowship informally, for some worship, for the AGM itself, and an opportunity on the Sunday afternoon

16 May to hear and speak to Ruth Harvey about the Iona Community and its future plans. More news of this will appear in your inboxes in the weeks following Easter.

In the meantime, please enjoy this latest edition of Pipeline and I wish you all a happy, safe and meaningful Holy Week and Easter. As I sign off, I commend to your prayers everyone affected by the floods in Sydney and surrounding areas and for emergency workers and hospitals. I also note the passing of Bishop Bruce Wilson who died this week and who was a friend and mentor to many in Wellspring, especially again in New South Wales.

“May the love of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach, preach, pray and uphold one another.”

Grace and peace.

*Alexander Scutt,  
Leader*

## The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child – Some Responses

### **An introduction to the March 2021 Edition of Pipeline.**

#### **Geoff Stevenson (Day 20)**

Welcome to a new year (quickly passing us by) and a new edition of Pipeline. The theme (and challenge) set for this issue was a response to:

*A report (<https://bit.ly/ChnIssues>) marking the 30th anniversary of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), identified the top five challenges facing young people:*

1. Children, young people and COVID-19;
2. Climate change;
3. Indigenous children's rights;
4. Youth and citizenship;
5. Mental health and resilience.

What are we doing about it?”

We move into the depths of Holy Week, with Good Friday and Easter

Day looming large and the Cross rising higher into the sky, confronting us with the reality of the power and violence of the ‘Powers and Principalities’ and how the vulnerable of the world are left powerless. We remember the stories of Jesus who reached out to the poor, powerless and vulnerable of his world and especially the ‘widows and orphans’. He spoke of us becoming as children in order to appreciate and receive God's Reign and yet, children and young people are often pushed to the margins of the church and society. Many of our churches are not open places for young people, who don't engage and find our forms and rhetoric less meaningful in their complex and difficult lives.

It is hard to understand how the younger generations engage with the world and the information they receive. It is hard to recognise the

dark forces that loom large in their lives, things we may have experienced in different ways or approach from the experience and wisdom of life. I know young adults who are seriously asking themselves if they are really prepared to bring children into this uncertain and crisis-ridden world – especially around Climate Change.

Whilst our generations lived through wars and the Cold War, nuclear threat... we are now facing an extreme climate emergency, which for the young is an experience of deep and profound fear and anxiety.

There are increasing levels of anxiety and depression as young people encounter a complex, changing and unstable world. They often do this without the firm and strong foundations of life and spirit that many of us fall back on. There are

spiritual practices and hope derived from experience of the Living God, that sustains us. We have developed deep and strong relationships and a church community that nurtures and supports each other. Young people don't always have such strong and firm support bases and their lives teeter on trembling and unstable ground.

The call of Jesus invites us to embrace the marginalised, the weak, the struggling, the lost, seeking and yearning. Jesus reached out in relational ways to give a hand up without the judgement that often accompanies responses to young people. He offered a way forward through a radical community that is a life-giving place to belong, receive support, offer our gifts and wisdom and give and receive love.

The following articles highlight some of the deep issues and invite us to consider what we are doing in response to these issues raised with respect to younger generations, here and across the world. There is poetry and reflection on life, neighbours,

faith, climate, creation and the world: a rich tapestry of experience, wisdom, personal and collective responses, and prayer. We hope that you are drawn into the journey and find enrichment but also challenge to act for the sake of the young of the world in the power of God's Spirit. As we proceed through the 5 areas, members of Pipeline offer some stories and reflections on how we respond.

We begin with the offering of Peggy Goldsmith; some challenging words from Kathy Galloway inviting us to enter the story and change the ending. The following responses are some ways that Wellspring members are trying to change the ending...

### **The Challenge to be Involved!**

**Peggy Goldsmith (Day 3)** offers the challenge for us to be involved with issues that affect young people. It is an extract from *Growing Hope, Daily Readings*, March 15 'Spectating' by Neil Paynter. Wild Goose Publications, Glasgow, 2006, and contributed by Kathy Galloway.

In the forum theatre of the Brazilian August Boal there is an exercise called 'spectating'. In it, people are divided into two groups. One group is then given a scenario to act out. The other group watches the scenario unfold, without comment, till the story ends. Then the group starts acting out the scenario again. But this time, any member of the onlooking group who thinks the action should be different, who does not agree with a particular interpretation, can stop the play, can replace one of the characters and, if they choose, after the course of the action, bring a new perspective, a fresh direction. If no one chooses to engage in this way, the scenario runs on to its original conclusion. This is a wonderfully clear way to illustrate the point that, without action, without engagement, without the investment of our time and energy, nothing changes, no matter how passionately we feel or how strong our convictions. We can love our brothers and sisters (and young people) only through what we do.

*Kathy Galloway*

## The 5 Challenges and Wellspring Member responses...

### **1. Children, Young People and COVID-19**

*Neil and Margaret Holm describe how they responded to COVID-related stress levels in their RI (Godspace) lessons at their local state school once it reopened following COVID lockdown. We share in a conversation as Gladys Pagendam*



*(Day 26 and part of the Wellspring group Margaret and Neil reported to) provides comments on the work of Neil and Margaret. Gladys reminds us that our responses are all significant and has deep value, even if we think it may be small. She also reminds us that the resources and ideas we utilise can spread and be used in other places.*

### **Responding to the Challenges Facing Young People in a Lower Socioeconomic Suburb of Brisbane.**

**Neil and Margaret Holm (Day 26)**

We live in Inala, about 20 km south-west from the Brisbane CBD. The 2016 census data describes Inala as

- Population: 14,849 people (48.5% male, 51.5% female).

- Median age: 34 years, 3 years below the Australian median.

- Place of birth: 45.9% Australia (national average of 66.7%); 19.4% Vietnam; 3.1% New Zealand; 2.0% Samoa; 1.9% England; and 1.6% Somalia

- 39.8% spoke only English at home (national average 72.7%)

- Unemployment rate: 18.4% (national average of 6.9%).

- Median weekly household income: \$852 (national average of \$1,438).

Such a complex suburb is a challenge for the local school at any time. Many children are of refugee background. They have experienced trauma to a greater or lesser extent. The situation became even more complex during



the COVID lockdown. Neither the school nor the children's homes were equipped for any form of online education. The school delivered photocopied packages for each child but this was very difficult for children in homes where the family educational level was low and English was not the first language.

After the children returned to school, RI (GodSpace, as we like to call it) resumed. Although Margaret's health prevented her from teaching each week, she continued to help with planning and preparation. In response to the stress we imagined the children must have been under, we planned our GodSpace lessons for 60 Grade 3 and 4 children to address some of these mental health issues.

We ended each lesson with a Circling prayer that children and teachers came to appreciate. We included a laminated copy of it in a bag of GodSpace activities, games, and puzzles that we gave to children at the end of the year.

Circle me, God,  
Keep comfort near  
And discouragement afar.  
Keep peace within  
And turmoil out. Amen

The theme song used in every lesson addressed these issues as well.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fzoOmdZrxr8>

Woah (echo)  
Jesus is the one who lights our way  
Woah (echo)

He gives us hope for each new day  
Woah (echo)  
When the world feels dark and  
lonely,  
His love illuminates  
He's the one I trust And I will



follow him  
He is the light that,  
breaks through the darkness  
Follow his lead and  
Light it up  
Light it up  
Jesus will guide us  
Through every dark time  
Follow his lead and  
Light it up

Although not every lesson addressed these issues directly, some did. Neil used the account of Jesus meeting the woman at the well to explore feelings of loneliness, exclusion, and marginalisation. Here was a woman despised not only by Jewish people but also her own Samaritan people. Jesus sought hospitality and in return offered her living water. Although the children were Grades 3 and 4 and of varying ethnicities, he tried (bravely?) to explain living water as water that gives life. Rain is like living water. Rain brings life to plants, trees, and rivers. It refreshes. It washes clean. That's what Jesus promised. This woman's life was sad. She was depressed. No-one liked her. She felt rejected. Jesus said if you trust me, I will make you come alive. I will refresh you. The children seemed to follow his drift (he thinks!).

In the scheme of things, our response to the children's challenges was tiny

but it was our response, our way of living in the Kingdom in Inala.

**Gladys says:**

*Dear Neil*

*What you describe sounds in no way tiny to ME. I think it is quite monumental. This is how we fight the Goliaths in our midst and you have equipped these children with a way to fight theirs. You have empowered them in a very REAL WAY with song and dance and joy. I am fighting my own Goliath at the moment and I acknowledge the power you are drawing upon to fight yours. It is SO sacred Neil and you might be modest about it but I don't underestimate its benefit to those around you. It speaks to me indirectly and I hope it is something you will publish in the Wellspring magazine for the edification of others.*

*Wow! What an amazing story. I am not surprised though. You and Margaret take every opportunity to live out your understanding of what it means to follow Jesus. I absolutely love the song and I think I will try to download it somehow onto my phone for during my dark nights. Thank you for sharing Neil. It is truly inspiring, particularly in its fun simplicity.*

## **2. Climate Change**

*Maz Berry (Day 23), along with many others have accepted the challenge to do something about Climate Change through knitting. She and other Wellspring members (and many beyond) have accepted the challenge of Brooke Prentis, of Common Grace, to knit scarves for Climate Change. Maz provided this outline of the project by Brooke. At the end of March, the scarves received will be sorted and prepared for presenting to our elected representative and church leaders during winter 2021. Maz also provided a more detailed description from the Common Grace, describing the scarves and how the colours symbolise the changing climate. There is a great deal more information available from Common Grace about the issue of Climate Change for those interested.*

## 2.1 Climate Change Scarf Project – Inspired by Brooke Prentis, Common Grace.

Contributed by Maz Berry (Day 23)

Many knitters from across Australia have committed to knitting a scarf that represents the truth of climate change. These climate scarves will be gifted to politicians and church leaders to show that Christians are deeply concerned about God's creation, as well as highlighting the need for a bold and credible national plan to tackle the climate crisis. Our project was inspired by the Cambridge Federation of Women's Institute's 100 Years Climate Scarf and uses Dr Mick Pope's temperature data from 1919 to 2019. Each temperature is assigned a different colour and then a stripe is knitted to correspond to each year.

It's getting hotter. It was only last year that every state and territory in Australia was burning. Many remember the heat, and smoke, from the 2019-2020 bushfire season. I know that in the centre of these lands now called Australia, ceremonies that have taken place for thousands of years are under threat because it is too hot to perform them. I myself have felt the hottest day on record, a sweltering 46.6°C in Adelaide, Kurna country on the 24th of January 2019. We know it hasn't always been this way. We feel it. But what if we could see it? As Christians passionate about creation & climate justice we know we must do all we can, individually and collectively, as community and as a movement, to care for God's beautiful earth. This includes calling for political action. Imagine if we could do that in a creative way! Imagine our parliamentarians, and in particular every member of the Senate as a starting point, and church leaders wearing a Common Grace scarf with 101 years of average global temperature data - we could all see how over 101 years it's getting hotter.

Imagine the hauntingly beautiful way we could call for climate action through knitting for creation and climate justice. So let's unite for the



common good, finding common ground and sharing in common grace as we knit, gift, and wear scarves for climate action.

Brooke Prentis  
(Common Grace CEO)

### **What temperatures do the sixteen colours of the scarf actually represent?**

The idea of the warming stripes is simple enough: each band of colour represents a single year, running from 1918 to 2019 and the hue of colour (blue or red) represents global average surface temperatures for that year. If we take the temperatures of the 1960s-80s to be our baseline, then blue colours are for years where the average temperature at the Earth's surface was colder than that baseline, and red are for years that were warmer. The stronger the blue, the colder the year; the stronger the red, the hotter.

**But how much has Earth actually warmed over the last century? What is the difference between the coolest blue and the warmest red?** The short answer is that the surface of the planet has warmed by roughly 1°C over the last century. This may not feel like much, but this measurable change represents a staggering amount of heat being added to the planet. In fact, Earth is warming at a rate equivalent to adding the energy of about four Hiroshima bombs every second. During our lifetime, the planet has been warming much faster than at any point in human history, and (as

far as scientists can reconstruct) faster than any point in the history of life on Earth. For comparison, twenty thousand or so years ago, during the height of what is commonly called the last Ice Age (what scientists call a glacial maximum), there was three times as much ice on the planet and sea levels were something like 120m lower than today. Back then, global temperatures were 'only' about 4°C colder, yet the planet was radically different. We are already one quarter of the way towards such a transformation of the planet's surface, but in the opposite direction and at a pace about one hundred times faster than when the planet warmed naturally from that frosty period.

### **A way forward – Our Prayers, Hopes and Challenges...**

Our Creator is faithful and is not about to give up on the garden, or us. God has always been at work amongst all creatures, even if our conceitful eyes hid that from us.

And not all humans have been as blind as those in the industrialised West. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia maintained a much closer, familial relationship with other creatures. After a long and violent colonial history of repression, the rest of the Australian church is becoming more open to receive these insights, enriching Australian Christianity with the eyes to see God amongst all living things, concerned not just for the salvation of individual souls, but Earth.

As [Indigenous] Pastor Ray Minniecon says,

*"The trees, and the animals, and the stars and the moon and the whole landscape... Are all part of our family-brothers and sisters... the loss of all these beautiful species which are part of our family has been part of our pain and suffering as Indigenous people... We are all related to everything. Every life form is a part of what [God] created back there in the beginning... that's a better starting point for us..."*

Jesus came not just to save me from my owns sins... he dies to save the whole universe... salvation is not just how do we save ourselves, but the whole planet we're living in?...

*This particular voice of Indigenous peoples is marginalised, it probably won't be heard, like our Creator's voice is never heard... Not Genesis 3, but Genesis 1 is the starting point. If we can do that we might be able to save our little home, our little planet here. Our land, and our Mother.*"

The people of the Pacific Islands also see deep connections with the family of Creation. The West, perhaps, is the prodigal of the Creation family, having lived wastefully and now is challenged to repent and return in full humility from our preoccupation with wealth.

**As followers of the risen Christ, we are invited to be a faithful presence in the world, praying that God's will is done on earth as in heaven.**

As resurrection people, empowered by the Spirit, we are people of the raven and the lily, guarding against all forms of greed, sharing with those who need it, actively pursuing God's justice, anticipating God's kingdom coming and the end of Creation's groaning.

So today, in the task of *'spiritual and cultural transformation'* - we have a part to play!

*This is an abridged version of what is contained in Climate Change Scarf knitting handbook. Used by Permission to further publicise the Climate Change Scarf. I delighted in knitting my scarf. Maz Berry (Sydney Northern Suburbs, Wellspring)*

## 2.2 Liturgy, Poem and Prayer

*Liturgy, Poem and Prayer are important means of engaging our spirit and being in the deeper space of transformative grace. Through deep worship, prayer and reflection we are touched in our deepest being, where the transformative change of the Spirit is possible.*

*Julie Brackenreg and Deborah Ruiz Wall have been composing liturgies*

*and poems that encourage worshippers and readers to consider deeply and prayerfully their relationship with the natural world. When acted upon, these liturgies create a better world for future generations.*

**Liturgy: Fire** (Julie Brackenreg Day 2 – a member of the Blue Mountains Wellspring Group prepared the liturgy and led the discussion on Chapter 4, Fire, in the book *Dark Emu* by Bruce Pascoe)

Gurtha maynmak, gurtha yati  
Bili ngayi nguli wanganha yatjuma  
Wiri buntja ngayi maynmak mirithirri  
Mari ga mumu ngandi ga bapa  
Nguili bitjanbili nyina  
gurthamirringura  
Walangu maybnmak mirithirri  
Balanda mala nguli warwugyun  
Gurthawyntja  
Wiribuyntja walala nguli  
Gongurrnthanmirri  
Waru!

Is fire good? Is fire bad?



Because it destroys the home and the country?

But sometimes this may be good  
Grandfather, grandmother, mother  
and father

Have always used and been dependent  
on fire

For them it is very important

White people are concerned about  
bushfires and

Are quick to work together to put  
them out.

Fire!

(Waru! The Warumpi Band)

### Isaiah 11:1-5

*A shoot shall come out from the stock of Jesse,  
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.  
The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him,*



*the spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
the spirit of counsel and might,  
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of  
the LORD.*

*His delight shall be in the fear of the  
LORD.*

*He shall not judge by what his eyes see,  
or decide by what his ears hear;  
but with righteousness he shall judge the  
poor,*

*and decide with equity for the meek of  
the earth;*

*he shall strike the earth with the rod of  
his mouth,*

*and with the breath of his lips he shall  
kill the wicked.*

*Righteousness shall be the belt around  
his waist,*

*and faithfulness the belt around his  
loins.*

At the beginning of a new year . . . . .  
**we look for renewal.**

After a time of testing by fire . . . . .  
**we look for renewal.**

In the midst of a time of testing by  
plague . . . . .

**we look for renewal.**

As we step forward in faith . . . . .  
**we look for renewal.**

As we seek renewal let us take a short  
time to meditate on some of the words  
of the passage above:

*Wisdom, understanding, counsel,  
might, knowledge, delight,  
fear of the LORD, righteousness, equity,  
faithfulness.*

### Let us together pray for our world:

Gracious God, Creator, Redeemer,  
Restorer,

We pray for our world in its physical  
distress of fire, flood, earthquake,  
storm and plague which bring death,  
injury and sorrow many and cause  
destruction of habitat, culture and  
livelihood.

We pray for our world in its political distress of corruption, tyranny, use of military might and power inequalities which bring despair, suffering and death to many and cause fear, disunity and civil unrest.

We pray for those who seek to misuse position, power and wealth for their own greed and benefit which brings oppression and hardship to many of their fellow citizens. We pray for renewal of their hearts and minds.

We pray for our fellow citizens of this world who experience suffering through war, poverty, natural disasters and political actions.

We hold before You our God those who seek to alleviate suffering and distress – emergency workers, those whose work can bring relief to many through legislation, science and care. We pray for the love and neighbourliness of all in community who reach out and meet the needs of strangers, friends and family.

**Give us the grace and desire born from the Fire of your Holy Spirit to stand for that which fulfills your will for all peoples of the world and help us in our daily endeavours to bring about renewal for all regardless of personal cost.**

**This is our prayer. AMEN.**

*Jacinta Shailer's response to Climate Change is to delight in the wonders of nature – especially Pink Flannel Flowers post-bushfire. Jacinta describes a visit to see these beautiful flowers and shares her photographs – and joy!*

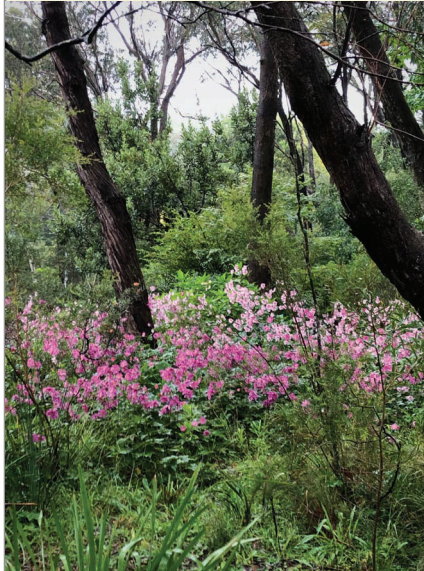
### **2.3 Pink Flannel Flower Adventure Jacinta Shailer (Day 2)**

At Meditation, recently, one of our members showed me a photo of pink flannel flowers she had taken at Narrow Neck off the Cliff Drive here in the Blue Mountains. My face lit up with joy as I have been in the Blue Mountains for thirty-two years and have only been able to photograph them twice; once at Hargraves

## **AUTUMN LEAVES**

### **Deborah Ruiz Wall (Day 2)**

Autumn leaves start to fall,  
I peer through the mist,  
feel the ground of certainty in disarray,  
raindrops form bubbles on the lake,  
reflective squiggles designing tomorrow.



of a future in bloom,  
not burnt embers of failed wars,  
not a tsunami of thoughtless assault

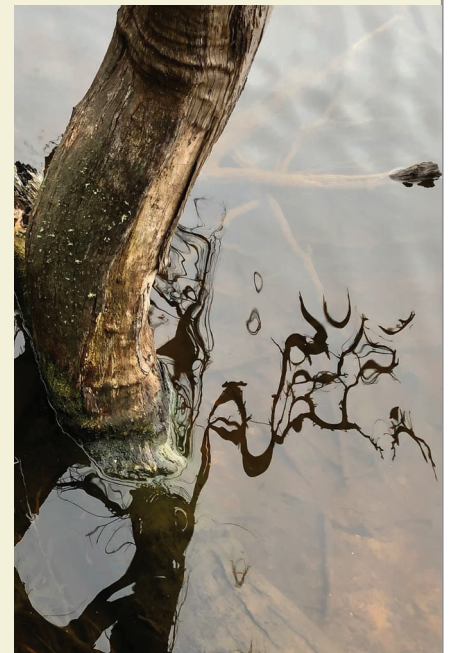


Lookout and the other time near Mount Hay. The pink flannel flower is very special because the seeds are propagated by the smoke from severe bush fires followed by good rain. Also, they never seem to come up in the same place again, as far as I know. My friend asked me if I would like her to take me to see them. I jumped at the chance. Two days later Michelle and Tony came to escort me to this enchanting place beautified by



on our verdant surrounds,  
not a desert of wasteland  
from unsustainable progress,  
not plastic figurines of politicians  
seemingly unmoved  
by planet earth's inter-generational legacy.  
the young must have a voice  
and look with faith in their hearts  
like they can walk on water.

*Photos & Text  
Deborah Ruiz Wall  
Wentworth Falls*



the pink flannel flowers growing joyfully in acres of burnt-out Hakea and Banksia. It was raining. The mountains were wrapped in mist. The road was muddy and full of pot-holes. The terrain was very uneven, but the beauty of the scene would take your breath away.

Armed with my camera and a walking stick I tumbled out of the 4-wheel drive. Quickly my friends came to ferry me safely towards the goal of



### 3. Indigenous Rights

*Indigenous People ('First Peoples, Aboriginal People, Native People – the culturally distinct ethnic people native to a particular place' - Wikipedia) across the world experience oppressive and culturally destructive forces such as exploitation, development, assimilation, violence and the ensuing marginalisation and impoverishment. John Martin reminds us often of the importance of Fair-Trade and justice in how and where we purchase and consume products. In this reflection he shares his own responses through Fair-Trade and prayers, and encourages us to make a difference in our own lives.*

#### 3.1 A Response from John Martin (Day 28)

Thank you to the editorial group for pointing us to this report from a very significant meeting of young people. All five challenges facing young people are major issues which we, as a society and as Wellspring people are facing too.

The question is asked of us: 'What are we doing about it?' A great question for Wellspring members and we could start by first, discussing the five responses at our various Wellspring group Zoom meetings and second, agreeing to definite action.

In the report there was one sentence that struck me. After 30 years of the

my photography. Michelle shielded my camera from the rain with her raincoat and Tony gallantly held the large umbrella over us while taking my arm with the other hand. When I came to take close-ups, I abandoned my walking stick and my two friends held me up, one on either side. It must have been a sight for sore eyes! Some of my close-ups were not as I would have liked but my friends were very patient. I kept on taking photos from one angle and then another till we were all a little spent. Since returning home I have enjoyed hours of working with the photos I took. It was very wonderful experience

and on the whole I would say my photographic efforts were moderately successful!

Regardless of photographic success or failure it was such a grace-filled moment of joy to be out in the mist and rain among these precious works of art.







United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) we still read:

*'Over half the world's children experience violence; 152 million children are working – half of them are doing hazardous work – and girls are still victims of child marriage and female genital mutilation.'* (*'Child and Youth Statement'*; page 3)

As a Fair-Trade Faith Group, Wellspring adheres to the 10 Principles of Fair Trade which includes ...

**Principle Five: Ensuring no Child Labour and Forced Labour**

The organization adheres to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and national/local law on the employment of children. The organization ensures that there is no forced labour in its workforce and/or members or homeworkers.

Organizations who buy Fair Trade products from producer groups either directly or through intermediaries ensure that no forced labour is used in production and the producer complies with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and national/local law on the employment of children. Any involvement of children in the production of Fair-Trade products (including learning a traditional art or craft) is always disclosed and monitored and does not adversely affect the children's well-being, security, educational requirements and need for play.

How do we respond?

**We pray for children.**

Lord Jesus, once a child, you showed a special concern for children, inviting them to come to you, threatening a millstone round the neck and into the well for anyone who thwarts the wellbeing of a child.

We thank you for childhood; for the fun and joy experienced by many children; for the learning and growth, the exuberance and wonder of discovery.

We thank you that you instructed serious narrow-minded adults to become like children.

Yet, even today, many children are forced to work in deplorable and dangerous conditions. Victims of the greed of respectable-looking corporations – children toil, out of sight, hidden on farms and in jungles.

Lord, forgive us, for many a chocolate bar has been won at the expense of young children who will never taste the product of their exertions.

As we pray for child labourers around the world, motivate and inspire us to take creative action in our churches and groups to free these little people. AMEN

**Declaration of the Rights of the Child (1924, 1959)**

Principle 9

*The child shall be protected against all forms of neglect, cruelty and exploitation. He (sic) shall not be the subject of traffic, in any form.*

*The child shall not be admitted to employment before an appropriate minimum age; he shall in no case be caused or permitted to engage in any occupation or employment which would prejudice his health or education, or interfere with his physical, mental or moral development.*

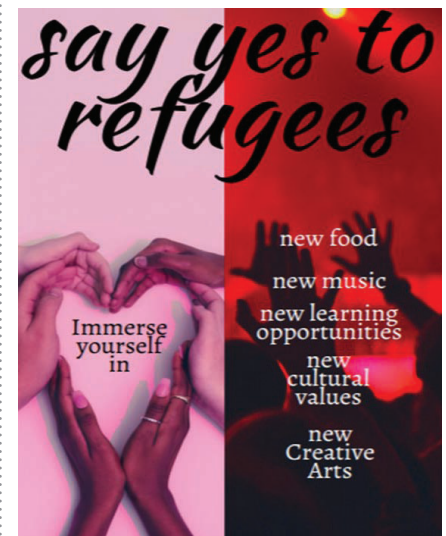
**4. Youth and Citizenship**

*Joy Connor is the chairperson of the Blue Mountains Refugee Support Group. She*

*reports on a video and poster competition for school students that focus on positive messages on the contribution of refugees to our community. She also notes the Cars for Refugees project that Wellspring contributed to. In this project students repair cars that are then given to refugees. These are two wonderful stories of responses that address youth and citizenship for young people.*



**4.1 Joy Connor (Day 2) offers 2 responses – from the Blue Mountains Refugee Support Group Giving young people a chance to be part of positive change**



Empathy, outrage, compassion and fellow feeling came through loud and clear in entries from school students in the 2020 National Video and Poster competition run by Blue Mountains Refugee Support Group and Rural Australians for Refugees. The Competition offers substantial cash prizes for the winning entries which change attitudes to refugees. Despite COVID disrupting many schools, entries that did arrive were excellent.

Positive messages from the students of the contribution refugees can make to our community (like the winning poster above) are an inspiration. Messages like “Shine a light on the darkness”, “Struggle is real”, “It could be you”, “this could be your tomorrow” showed a depth of heartfelt humanity and an understanding of the impact of our countries’ current policies on refugees, people seeking asylum and our nation’s soul.

Other winning entries and information, resources and entry forms for the current 2021 Video and Poster Competition can be found on Blue Mountains Refugee Support Groups website at [bmrsg.org.au](http://bmrsg.org.au). If you have contact with schools pass it on. Wellspring members have been involved in initiating, developing resources and promoting the competition.

*Joy Connor Refugees and Reconciliation*

#### **4.2 Wellspring Donation Helps Young People Contribute**

Late last year Wellspring donated \$2,000

Towards the Cars for Refugees Project run by Blue Mountains Refugee Support Group (BMRSG).



The project began when the motor mechanics teacher at Blaxland High contacted a BMRSG member offering a car his class had repaired to be given to a refugee. Many in the class had never met a refugee. Their negative attitudes soon changed once they met the recipient of their hard work, heard his story and the difference it would make to the gentleman and his family.

Since then, collaboration with the school, generous donors of cars and money for parts and local tradesman who volunteered for larger repairs, has meant that 27 cars have gone to refugees.

The money from Wellspring has helped towards new tires and various parts. It has helped people like the single Mum from Iran with two children take her old parents to medical appointments and get to her part time job and back home for the children. Very few asylum seekers get any Centrelink assistance so having wheels to get to any work available is a huge help. For the students, contributing to the welfare of others has changed attitudes and given them an enthusiasm for doing good. As the mental health slogan says, “Doing good is good for you”

#### **4.3 Musings on Neighbours Mac Nichol (Day 4)**

*This response from Mac Nichol is not a direct response to youth and citizenship, but describes how he contributes to a relational, connected, hospitable community. He and his fellow citizens of Princes Hill demonstrate the essence of good citizenship. The 2016 census tells us that in Princes Hill-Carlton North there were 3,109 young people aged under 18. These young people are surrounded by a vibrant example of good citizenship.*

We have encountered a lot of neighbours since we came to Princes Hill in January, 1966, just two weeks after our wedding.

In our current residence, with a front door on McIlwraith Street, we have also a rear lane entrance from Keeley Lane, which is no ordinary lane. It has ample room for two cars to pass, it has several front doors opening on to the Lane and is therefore a source of many greetings and conversations.

I would often come inside, having been at the local shop, and told Marg that I was late because I had been chatting in the lane. What a stack

of engaging conversations! What a delight to yarn with those who share this area with me.

What a range of occupations... antique dealer, architect, retired paediatric surgeon, professional photographer, AFL footballer, retired nurse, accountant, Supreme Court judge, former estate agent, primary school art teacher with two beautiful, sensitive whippets, the owners of the old fish and chip shop, now a photography workshop and home to Mum, Dad and three lovely children whom they accompany down the lane to school...and more.

What an age range...from a year-old child of proud parents to a 99 year old great grandmother, living independently and keeping abreast of world affairs.

What a variety of connections...an occasional wave as we pass in the street; a brief exchange of comments about the weather; a serious inquiry about our welfare; a doorstep call with a pile of fruit or eggs; a stirring question about the success of my football team [the Blues of course]; a talk about keeping llamas alive and well at a country property...the thoughtful offer of buying some hardware to save me the trip to Bunnings; dropping off the mail I’ve collected for that couple a few doors down; a freshly baked cake for us when Marg had just returned from hospital.

What mysteries to be solved! Who painted our back gate, removing the graffiti and leaving us with a shiny entrance from the lane? Is he the same person who painted part of a neighbour’s garage facade? Where have all those deserted rubbish bins disappeared to?

And then there are the shop keepers, just round the corner. What a pleasure to be waved to as you pass the hairdresser, what learning about neighbourhood activities at the newsagent, such a wise caring widow who carried so much helpful local



knowledge and who really cared for her neighbourhood. And what a warm greeting awaits always at the milk bar from where I often return with a smile after an engaging chat with the owners who are never too busy to exchange family stories or mathematical questions about the giving of change.

So, is my neighbourhood simply on the periphery of my life, simply the inevitable small talk and small occasions of little significance?

Perhaps, I have been musing lately, these random meetings, these occasional chats are significant moments which I ought to welcome, value and reflect upon as being at the very heart of my life .

Try thinking about your neighbours this week....and ponder.

*Helen Weavers (Day 9) offers this poem written by Jan Sutch Pickard written about her experience in Bunessan on Mull during lockdown. Jan's poem reveals both the challenge to mental health (challenge #5) but also how being a good neighbour (citizen) touches the loneliness and struggle of life. Children and families will benefit from caring neighbours who exemplify good citizenship – and loaves on the doorstep.*

#### 4.4 Year of the Doorstep

This morning  
there was a loaf of bread  
on the doorstep – freshly baked.

This year  
has been lived out  
on doorsteps just as much as screens.

We've met  
huge stumbling blocks –  
uncaring as a kerb to a wheelchair.

For months  
the world's news was a barrier  
to beginning the day well, or moving on.

Step steps  
that stopped us in our tracks; blocked  
travel, touch, shared meals, even song.  
Steps too far,  
in the name of protection,  
made a mockery of life in community.

Doorsteps were  
neither here nor there – no-go areas –  
the only guest to cross over was  
loneliness.

Yet, at the same time,  
here's where daily life has been  
delivered:

bread, half-a-dozen eggs, garden veg,  
parcels through the post, windfall  
apples,  
gift of a painted stone, poetry,  
questions,  
answers, surprises, laughter.

From this vantage point  
you can wave to the bus,  
shout greetings across the street:  
it's a safe place to stand still looking  
out,  
wait and worry, wonder what will  
happen next,  
watch the clouds unfurling, shelter  
from the rain,  
listen to curlews calling across the bay,  
and, in solitude,  
greet the new day.

In between worlds –  
liminal space –  
stepping stones to being human again,  
down-to-earth grace.

This morning  
there was a loaf of bread  
on the doorstep – freshly baked.

Jan SP 23 November 2020

## 5. Mental Health and Resilience

*A Col Jennings poem, Co-creating, does not address young people's concern with mental health and resilience directly. However, he points any reader to finding mental health and resilience through engagement with Creation. The deep Spirit in all things touches us deeply in the natural world, as we open ourselves to the wonder and beauty, through reflection and pondering.*

*Among much else he reminds us that, "Sister Moon is shining forth to say: 'When we are lost, alone and overwhelmed, be still, and listen to your heart. In that desert place, in that lonely room, or even in a garden filled with flowers... it is here – in that stillness, we will find ourselves again.'"*

### 5.1 "Co-creating" – a poem for Meditation.

#### Col Jennings (Day 3)

A Poem revised and renamed on 15th February, 2021.

We experience silence,  
then that gentle breeze  
drifts by – 'Elias style'.

Soon around us the changing Autumn  
leaves  
will begin to filter those warm, soft rays,  
of Brother Sun and change colour.

The gigantic white speckled gums  
stretch up and point skyward...  
to a Creator – resting.

Around me something beautiful and  
eternal  
is happening,  
small birds twitter,  
while bush flowers open themselves  
to the descending light and life,  
and the rhythms of the universe  
are reconnecting and  
drumming a new tune for all.

Creation itself is beginning to awake.  
For so long now  
it has screamed to us all:  
'Please listen,  
you need to put it right!'  
The same breeze,  
with trees swaying  
and the birds, flowers and even the rocks

will sing the glad chorus to us all,  
'The heart is where the beauty of the  
spirit  
comes alive!'

That gentle breeze  
whispers so gently,  
'The human heart  
is what makes us human'.  
It is the world's true jewel!

It is there in your heart,  
where concern, respect, and compassion  
come alive.

As your heart begins to feel,  
you will slowly begin to discover  
that it is the secret bridge  
that penetrates solitude and isolation.

Brother Sun  
speaks with warmth and light:  
'In your heart of hearts,  
you know that all of us must nourish  
our bodies, minds and spirits -  
all three.

In our heart of hearts  
we know the consequence  
of our failure to do this  
is distress, dislocation, fear,  
and even despair.

Where, Brother Sun, does healing  
take place?  
The poet Auden says:  
'Even in the deserts of our heart  
we can let the healing fountain start'.

We know instinctively that our  
Creator  
speaks to us,  
guides us,  
teaches and educates us.

It can happen through our heart,  
if we are receptive  
and still.

Poets, theologians and  
psychologists say:  
'That our hearts need to be aware  
and they can instruct us to connect,  
so that our lives can blend  
into one another's'.

We are told there can be no peace,  
or joy or freedom  
for me,  
unless there is peace and joy  
and freedom for you.

Sister Moon  
is shining forth to say:  
'When we are lost, alone and  
overwhelmed,  
be still,  
and listen to your heart.

In that desert place  
in that lonely room  
or even in a garden  
filled with flowers...  
it is here – in that stillness,  
we will find ourselves again.

Somehow, from past traditions, I feel  
we can learn this language of the  
heart.

The Hindu sacred scriptures say  
that the heart is the connecting link  
between Heaven and Earth,  
it is where you can experience  
the love of God.

The Hebrew Scriptures tell us clearly,  
God is only interested in the heart,  
not sacrifices, nor rituals, nor rules.

In the Buddhist tradition, the Dali  
Lama says:  
'I believe that whether a person,  
follows any religion or not, is  
unimportant,  
he or she must have a good heart,  
a warm heart'.

Mystical tradition continually  
suggests:  
'The heart is beautiful,  
precisely because  
God dwells there'.

Jesus reminded us: 'Where your  
treasure is,  
there is your heart also'.

In the Qur'an, the Islamic teaching says:  
'Truly, it is in the remembrance of Allah,  
that hearts find peace'.

The sacred scriptures of the Bah'a'i  
Faith say:  
'In the garden of your hearts,  
plant naught but the rose of love'.  
We know Creation and all of Nature  
is asking us to awaken our hearts.

Possessions, even food and clothing  
are not what life is about.  
Are the birds of the air,

or the lilies of the field,  
ever left wanting?

Maybe tomorrow,  
I'll ask some friends to come with  
me,  
here or in some other place,  
or in our great outdoors,  
to meet in that vast temple of  
Creation,  
and to enjoy  
the sun, moon, the stars  
and the sea...  
to listen again to the birds of the air,  
to gather on the shore,  
to fish in the sea,  
or to run wild through a meadow of  
flowers.  
With each step we can  
invite others to open their hearts to  
love,  
to beauty,  
and to fun.

We can,  
throughout our lives  
gather and celebrate the wonders of  
Creation,  
and together with God  
become co-creators in life.

## 6. Addendum

*The concerns of Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander young people are complex and vary greatly from region to region. Closing the Gap is a strategy that aims to improve the life outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with respect to health and wellbeing, education, employment, justice, safety, housing, land and waters, and languages. Recently the Australian Human rights Commission released a report on this strategy. While this strategy addresses all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, it clearly has major implications for the concerns of young people. Doug Hewitt has provided a summary of the report. Please consider carefully, discuss in your Wellspring group, and decide what action you can take as a consequence.*

# General Articles From Members

## **Close the Gap Report from the Australian Human Rights Commission Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner Summarised by Doug Hewitt (Day 9)**

I write this on Close the Gap Day 2021, confessing that the failure of our national program for Closing the Gap is an ongoing injustice. In the last issue of Pipeline I asked the question: “Why is there so little progress on Closing the Gap?” Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples continue to die too young and too often from this injustice, and through these gaps we realise the inequality in these lands now called Australia. May we all grieve the lives lost far too young through child, youth and adult suicide, life expectancy gaps and prison incarceration, and may we take individual and collective action to see justice roll down. In March 2021, we have seen three Aboriginal Deaths in Custody.

As a signatory to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Australia has legal obligations to achieve minimum standards in the protection of its children and youth. It is clear from myriads of research evidence that many Indigenous children are falling short of these standards. First Nations youth continue to be locked up at alarming rates, some as young as ten years of age, as our country refuses to raise the age of youth detention to normal UN levels.

The *Close the Gap Campaign* is an independent, Indigenous-led campaign that calls on political leaders from all levels of government to take action on health and education equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. It is

separate to Closing the Gap, which is a government strategy, and the campaign continues to pressure our political leaders to be serious about meeting the Close the Gap targets.

The Close the Gap Campaign was launched in 2006 to address the unacceptable gap in life expectancy and other health indicators between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians. Annual reports on progress towards the achievement of targets have usually been given in March for the previous year, but in 2020, with the establishment of a range of new target areas the reporting date has been pushed back to July.

The Campaign is made up of 54 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous health and advocacy organisations. Over 200,000 Australians have signed a pledge supporting the Campaign.

### **Targets agreed in July 2020 between the Australian Government and the Close the Gap Campaign**

The targets in the new list of 16 which relate to children and young people include: increasing the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander **babies with a healthy birthweight**; increasing the proportion of ATSI children enrolled in **early childhood education**; increasing the proportion of ATSI people **attaining year 12 or equivalent**; reducing the rate of ATSI **young people (10-17 years) in detention**; reducing the rate of continuing over-representation of ATSI **children in out-of-home care (despite the 1997 Bringing Them Home report)**, and achieving a significant and sustained **reduction in violence and abuse against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children.**

The **Close the Gap Campaign** released its own report at the usual time on National Close the Gap Day, Thursday 18 March 2021, and looks forward to seeing a comprehensive government report on the refreshed targets for Closing the Gap by July. We expect to see the Prime Minister and Minister Wyatt release the data in July, including a full analysis of what governments plan to do to reform and address the ongoing inequality. In releasing the Campaign’s report its co-chairs commented:

“While we understand the need for a change in timeframe to allow a year since the signing of the new National Agreement on Closing the Gap, this cannot be used as an excuse to kick the can down the road,” said Close the Gap Campaign Co-Chairs, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner June Oscar AO, and CEO of National Association of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers and Practitioners, Karl Briscoe.

“By July, we expect to see a comprehensive report outlining not only the data, but the governments’ understanding of that data. Most importantly, we expect to hear what governments plan to do about addressing those targets.

“First Nations people have waited many years for governments to give us a seat at the decision-making table, and many years for something to be done to address the egregious health inequities our people suffer in our own country. We will wait another five months.”

They conclude by stating that Australian governments must commit to urgent funding of Indigenous healthcare and the critical and overdue systemic reform. The full report begins:

“On behalf of the Close the Gap Campaign’s 54 members, we invite you to engage with our 12th annual report titled, Leadership and Legacy Through Crises: Keeping our Mob Safe. This year’s report was produced by the Lowitja Institute, Australia’s community controlled national institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health research. This year there are 15 recommendations, with some specifically related to children and youth. A selection of these proposals follows.

The Indigenous youth suicide rate remains four times that of other Australian youth, and the incarceration rates for young people result in over one third of all 10 to 14 year old children in youth detention being Indigenous. The report insists that the age of criminal responsibility be immediately raised from 10 to 14, and alternatives to detention be given the highest priority. It states baldly: “no children of any age belong in prison.”

“This report presents the voices of our youth—our future generations. Our young leaders are showing the way in matters of huge importance such as climate change. In the words of Seed Mob, as sea levels are rising globally, so too First Nations peoples are rising and demanding genuine action on climate change. Climate change is suffocatingly real, yet our governments’ responses to the hottest of issues, the survival of all Australians and our planet, are tepid at best. Our northern homelands are disappearing under rising sea-levels, to the despair of Torres Strait Islander peoples attempting to sustain their communities as they have done for millennia.”

Also, the report recommends that “truth-telling” must be an essential part of all formal curriculum programs in the country’s educational institutions. Too many lies have been told for too long.

Other recommendations are: “We should start by grasping the opportunity of the Uluru Statement from the Heart – with its full implementation of a constitutional voice, treaty and truth-telling processes. Over the past 12 months, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and allies have embraced the Black Lives Matter movement that helped inform many on the prevalence of systemic racism and the preventable deaths in custody of so many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

“At times of crises true leadership steps up. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders moved rapidly to safeguard communities when the COVID-19 pandemic took hold. Their actions were decisive and designed with each local community in mind and avoided a potential catastrophe. Some of our homelands, once threatened with closure by governments in the past, became some of the safest places in Australia. We know what is best for our people and we are delighted to summarise some of this remarkable and ongoing work herein. Leaders have been congratulated by the government for their success in preventing COVID-19 from reaching into remote communities.

“In 2020 our leaders finally sat down with government, negotiated and co-signed the New National Agreement on Closing the Gap as partners. The implementation of these targets must be the primary goal.”

### **OTHER ISSUES Queensland Farewells – NSW Welcomes Jo (Josephine) Inkpin**

Margaret Holm reported on Jo’s farewell-welcome. Could this be an example of how we welcome young people and children into groups with which we meet? A way of acknowledging their value and visibility?

The March 6 was a special occasion for Wellspring. Queensland Wellspring and NSW (Sydney/Central Coast/Newcastle) Wellspring met by Zoom to hand Jo and Penny from our state group to theirs.

The zoom connection was terrible, but we pressed on. Here are the blessings

#### **Margaret read:**

Jo, God bless you as you embrace the future.

God bless you as you lay down the past.

God bless you in the present moment with lively hope and hopeful life.

Kate McIlhagga

#### **John read:**

May the blessing of the Maker be yours, warmth and welcome and stars dancing in the darkness, circling you, cherishing you.

#### **Ingerid read:**

May the blessing of the Storyteller be yours, justice and joy and bread for the journey, challenging you, inspiring you.

#### **Heather read:**

May the blessing of the Holy Spirit be yours, wind and fire and a bright shawl of wisdom, disturbing you, comforting you.

#### **Helen read**

May the blessing of the Wellspring Community be yours encouraging you, befriending you.

*Ruth Burgess*

### **A Blessing for NSW Wellspring Community and Jo**

**Gerard read:** The blessing of sharing, laughing, listening.

**Judy read:** The blessing of comforting, supporting, shielding.

**Judith read:** The blessing of forgiving, trusting, respecting.

**Neil read:** The blessing of honouring, cherishing, loving. The blessing of community

*Jenni Sophia Fuchs*

After these blessings, Diane responded with a beautiful prayer.

Jo was inducted as Minister of Pitt Street Uniting Church on 14 March. Alston Scott reported that it was a colourful occasion with many gay/trans people and many bright robes. Current and former Wellspring connections included Ian Pearson, Clabon and Beth, Gillian Hunt, Isabel Bishop, Roslyn Whiley and Peter Bennett. It was a joyful and peaceful day.

Margaret continued: When opportunities to pass people from one state or group to another arise, perhaps each group could think about having a similar time of blessing. Maybe we could also think of doing something like this when people decide to leave the Community: a blessing as you go? And entering the Community? Each



event being open to all to join via Zoom?

This time was significant for Jo and Penny. The other suggestions could be significant for other participants too. Thoughts appreciated.

*Congratulations to Rev Dr Jo Inkipin who was inducted as Minister of Pitt Street Uniting Church on March 14. Our prayers are with Jo and Penny in this new adventure of ministry!*

**A Service of Introduction  
for the Rev Dr Josephine  
McDonnell Inkipin  
at Pitt Street Uniting Church  
Sunday 14 March 2021, 2:30pm**



**Artist:**  
Lalania Tusa, Kuku Yalandji women  
& Anglicare Southern Queensland  
Cultural Sport Worker.

## An Easter Meditation - Peter Millar



(This is a meditation from a book I wrote with Neil Paynter some years ago – *We Journey in Hope; Reflections on the Words from the Cross.*)

**Forgive them, Father. They don't know what they are doing.**  
Luke 23:34

A few years ago with the late and wise Anne McPherson I wrote a book about a ministry we had shared, along with my late wife Dorothy, in Bidwill in western Sydney. Bidwill carries many of the markers of modern social deprivation and is home to a

large range of different cultures and religious traditions. Dorothy and I had been given a place to live in a local church hall which was also a vibrant community centre. In Bidwill, random violence and acts of sacrifice and love companion one another each day. In the foreword to that book, Jo Inkipin, an Australian friend, wrote some words which are prophetic. In my understanding these words relate to these first words of Jesus from the Cross . . . *“The contemporary world provides a great paradox. The incredible diversity of the world's population is linked ever more closely to the forces of globalisation and climate change. Yet we remain deeply fractured by massive disparities of wealth and by conflicts intimately related to our varied cultures, religions and identities. Rather than divisions being transformed, past painful memories are regularly enlarged and new walls are daily erected. In the Western world, fear of the ‘other’ has become a powerful driver of social*

*and political policy. Meanwhile, many people are accustomed to knowing little or nothing of their neighbours – a fact which impoverishes us all”.*

At this time when new and higher walls of division and fresh disconnections are becoming an accepted part and parcel of the fabric of humankind, the idea of forgiveness seems totally counter-cultural. Why should we forgive one another? After all, we have been wronged. Why should nations forgive one another? How can we possibly forgive past memories and earlier narratives within our communities or within our own often complicated lives? And why should the millions of our sisters and brothers who today remain trapped in gut-wrenching poverty and oppressive social structures even dream about forgiving the rest of us, who, it can be argued are directly and indirectly responsible for their marginalisation?

Throughout the centuries, theologians and biblical scholars have reminded us

that these strong words of Jesus are in a sense a nutshell of the whole Gospel. They bring us to the mind and heart of God. Here in this situation of agony, Jesus, hanging on a rough cross, looked around at all who mocked him, and in tenderness invited God to forgive both their cruelty and their ignorance. Many of those gathered around the cross that day did not know what they were doing – in fact they had not the slightest clue as to what they were doing. They were blinded. Just as we are also constantly without sight or understanding in our own lives, or in Brian Wren’s words, ‘half-free, half-bound’. Like many of those at the foot of the cross that day, we too are swept along by multiple forces which desensitise us. How else can we explain the continuing, moment by moment abuse by us all of our beautiful planet and our steadfast refusal to live more simply than others may simply live? (End of the book quote.)

\*\*\* In the years since I wrote that book with Neil our world has changed at every level. The words of Jesus from his cross are more needed than ever

– both in our own personal journeys and globally. It is not however a time for despair. Yes, there is lack of forgiveness, but there is also an awakening. Millions now believe that we must live differently if humanity is to survive. It is just not possible to increase our enmities and think we can be at peace. The massive popular movements now on every continent demand our listening ears. Within human history we all know well that so much has to be forgiven. Seeking to free ourselves of sub-conscious prejudice is a healthy step toward to us being a more forgiving person.

Why not just accept that we have often been wrong, ignorant and blind vis a vis other cultures and identities? And our awareness can move forward in quiet prayer and stillness even if we are approaching a hundred! One example. Christ must weep over the level of our racial prejudice. So let us, wherever we are, have that inner quiet and allow the words of Jesus to penetrate our often distorted hearts. To face our inner selves with greater integrity, and to seek forgiveness. We journey together.

*Let us build a house where love can dwell and all can safely live, a place where saints and children tell how hearts learn to forgive; built of hopes and dreams and visions, rock of faith and vault of grace; here the love of God shall end division, for all are welcome in this place.*

Words by Marty Haugen

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### Next Edition of Pipeline

You are invited to reflect on how you respond to Thomas Merton’s 3 elements of being Christian (see below).

You are invited to share your own experiences of opening to the reality of God through the inner journey; expressions of love and justice in your life; ways you embrace and draw in otherness and unite people and creation.

What are your personal experiences, your struggles and questions and the inspiring moments in your life? Please Note: We are not asking for theory or even expectation, but personal experience in prose, poetry, picture, song or even reviews of books, music...

We look forward to this personal Wellspring journal of experiential faith lived out.

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Visit our webpage at: [www.wellspringcommunity.org.au](http://www.wellspringcommunity.org.au) • Follow us on Facebook

**NEXT ISSUE:** August 2021.

Pipeline Committee: Geoff Stevenson.

**Deadline for material** is Friday 16 July 2021. Theme for the August issue is “Thomas Merton speaks of 3 elements of being Christian: 1. Awakening to the reality of God within (contemplation/meditation). 2. Living with Love and Justice. 3. Recognising and sustaining all that unites the human community. How are these 3 elements of ‘being Christian’ lived out amongst Wellspring members?

Please email material for that edition to Geoff Stevenson [geoffs81@gmail.com](mailto:geoffs81@gmail.com)