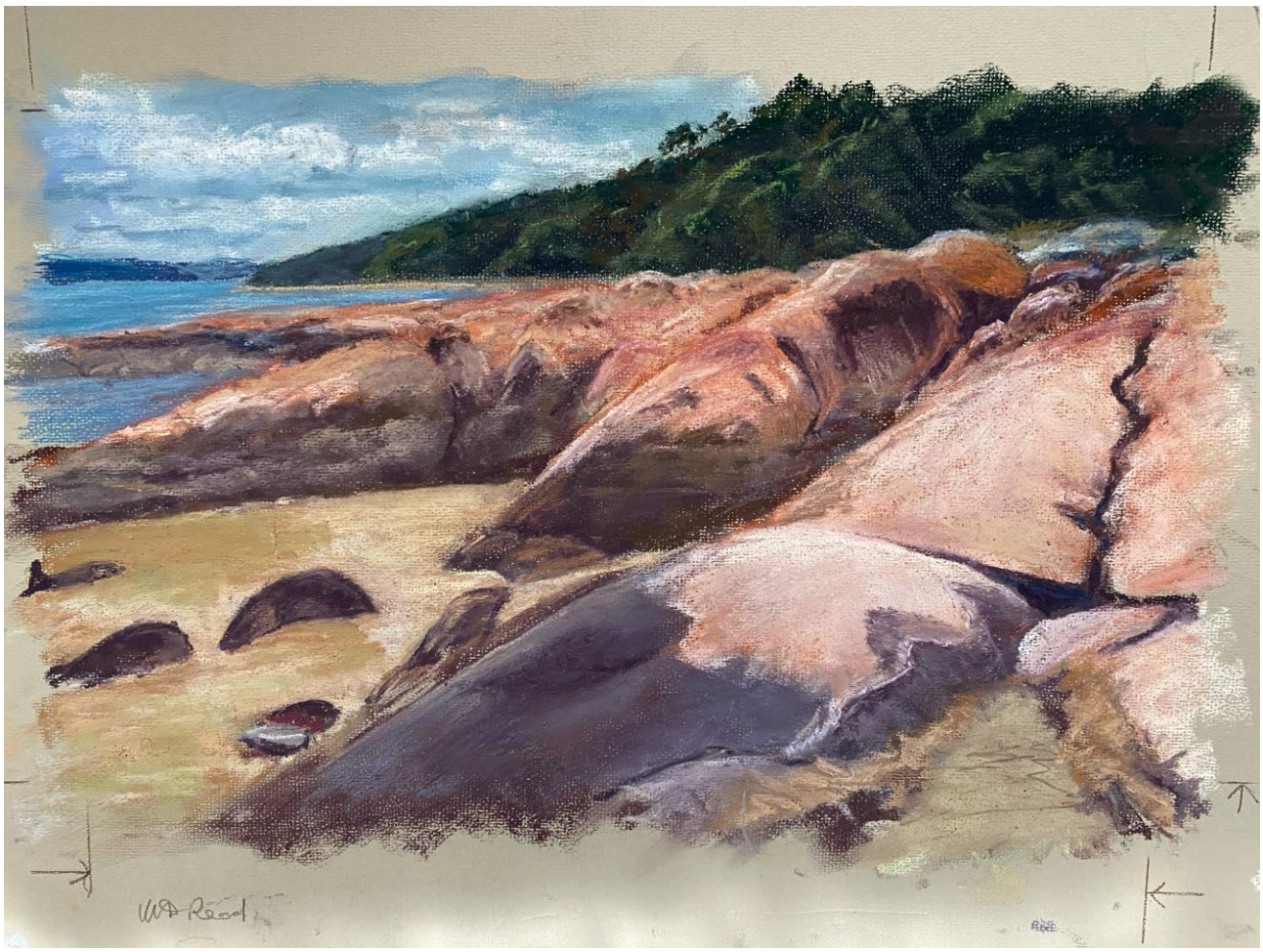
InSpire

NEWSLETTER OF THE STONNINGTON COMMUNITY UNITING CHURCH

Vol. 12, no 8 **September 2026**



Rocks at Tamboon Inlet, Cann River, by Michael Read

InSpiring

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

The World Wants to Be Fertile

There is something wonderfully excessive about spring.

After the restraint of winter, the world suddenly seems determined to produce. Trees that have stood bare begin covering themselves with blossom. Birds become noisier and busier, pairing and building nests. Bees move from flower to flower carrying pollen. Seeds that have waited quietly beneath the soil begin to germinate. Everywhere there are shoots, buds, flowers, eggs, nests and new life.

And there is an extravagance to it all. A tree does not produce one flower because it needs one seed. It may produce thousands. A plant scatters far more seeds than could ever become mature plants. Birds fill the morning with song. Pollen is released in extraordinary quantities. Nature seems almost wasteful in its abundance.

Spring reminds us of something easily forgotten during winter: **life does not seem content simply to survive. Life wants to create more life. The world wants to be fertile.**

If creation is so fertile, what might that tell us about its Creator?

Christianity has traditionally reached for the language of power when describing God. God is almighty, sovereign, ruler, king. These images have their place, but perhaps the living world offers us another image that is at least as ancient and profound.

God is fertile.

Divine creativity is not best imagined as an all-powerful designer standing outside the universe and constructing each part according to a predetermined plan. Creation itself suggests something much more dynamic. New things emerge. Possibilities multiply. Relationships form. Life experiments. Complexity grows. Beauty appears.

God's creativity might therefore be understood less as control and more as **fecundity**—an inexhaustible capacity for bringing forth possibility.

This is a very different image of divine power. Fertility does not control what it creates. A gardener can prepare the soil, plant a seed, provide water and nourishment, but cannot command the seed to grow. Life emerges through relationship between seed, soil, moisture, sunlight, microorganisms and countless other conditions. What finally appears is both continuous with what came before and genuinely new.

God's relationship with creation is something like this. God is not continually imposing finished forms upon the world but is present within its deep creativity: generating possibilities, nurturing relationships and drawing forth forms of life that have never existed before. This may be one reason spring can feel so deeply spiritual. It makes visible something that is happening all the time.

The blossom opening on a branch is part of a creative story billions of years old. The bee disappearing into the flower is participating in an intricate relationship that neither bee nor flower invented. The bird carrying a strand of grass towards its nest is caught up in the ancient impulse of life to bring forth more life. Underneath it all is this extraordinary fecundity of existence.

The universe does not simply exist. **It creates. It generates. It brings forth.**

And perhaps, when spring erupts around us once again, we are seeing something of God—not simply God the maker of a world long ago, but God the inexhaustibly fertile presence within a universe that is still creating itself. The world wants to be fertile.

And surely it does so because, somewhere within the deepest nature of things, **God is fertile too.**

John Power

AWAKENING TO THE LIVING UNIVERSE

Spirituality Workshop on Tuesday 1st September, 10.00am in the church, led by Rev John Power.

Chaos — Letting the Wildness In

What if chaos is not simply the opposite of order, but one of the ways the universe creates something new?

In our next **Awakening to the Living Universe**, we will explore chaos in nature, in our lives and within ourselves. Drawing on chaos theory, meditation, mythology and personal reflection, we will listen to those unexpected thoughts, desires and disruptions that disturb our familiar patterns. Might some of them be invitations to change?
Together we will explore the strange and creative territory between order and disorder and ask:
Where in my life do I need to let a little chaos in?
Come ready to reflect, imagine, journal and share as much—or as little—as you wish.

CAFÉ CHURCH Sunday 30 August

The Power of Music and Spirituality

Music possesses a unique ability to express emotions and spiritual depth where words fall short. Hosting the Café Church event, John introduced the theme by highlighting how music speaks directly to the heart and soul.
Rather than straight performance, ensemble members shared individual pieces that held deep personal and spiritual meaning for them, demonstrating that non-liturgical music can be just as sacred as traditional church pieces.

Musicians of the Ensemble

Member Selections and Personal Reflections

- **Marion:** Selected Bach's aria *"My heart ever faithful"*, recalling memories of singing to her mother's accompaniment, followed by Handel's joyous *"Where'er you walk"* from the opera *Semele*.
- **Judith Heale:** Host of the weekly practices, she shared Jim Harvey's philosophy to "listen to music from the bottom up." She selected the song attributed to JS Bach, *"Bist du bei mir"*.
- **Keith:** Offered Mozart's *Ave verum corpus*, reflecting on its sublime nature and historical context as a gift for Herr Stoll in 1791 for caring for Constanza.
- **Gavin:** Shared Howard Goodall's setting of *Psalm 23* (famously featured in *The Vicar of Dibley*), contrasting its quiet reverence with the sweeping romantic melodies of symphonies.
- **Peter Furze:** Chose *"Vilja"* from *The Merry Widow*, reflecting on a fond memory of taking his mother to a matinee where the audience sang along with soprano Marina Prior.
- **Cheryl:** Selected the traditional song *"Danny Boy"* (*Londonderry Air*), noting its origins and widespread popularity during World War I.
- **Vino:** Led congregational sing-alongs for two meaningful hymns: George Matheson's 1882 hymn *"O Love that will not let me go"* and her mother's childhood favourite, *"What a friend we have in Jesus"*.
- **Lorna:** Presented a movement from Corelli's *Trio Sonata Op. 4, No. 9*, the sole purely instrumental piece not associated with songs. She noted that its interweaving musical lines reflect how individuals in a community connect to create something beautiful.

Listening to these pieces of music chosen for their significance to the performers obviously touched the listeners; many a hanky was raised to dab a moist eye.

History and Ethos of the Ensemble

During the gathering, Keith outlined the 40-year history of the ensemble, which began in the late 1980s at one of the church's weekend family camps. Professional flautist Glenda Williams founded the group by encouraging camp attendees of all ages and skill levels to bring instruments and participate in a shared

musical feast. This initiative evolved into providing monthly accompaniment for church family services. Driven by Glenda's leadership—and supported early on by Norman Henry—Keith affirmed that the group established an inclusive environment built on kindness and respect, directly mirroring the supportive ethos of the broader congregation. John reminded us that small instrumental groups reflect a long-standing tradition in church music history. Following appreciative feedback from the congregation, the event highlighted not only the technical joy of playing together, but also the deep interpersonal and spiritual connections fostered through shared music.

Ensemble and congregation – sharing more than music

Three new age men at SCUC – a picture of love

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Bon Appétit!

Nadine's French Cooking Class

At SCUC's recent Christmas in July event (in support of Avalon), we ran a highly successful raffle. Prizes were quite various; of particular note were four separate tickets to a French cooking class, donated by our own authentic French chef, Nadine. These prizes not only included the cooking class, but dinner for each recipient and their "plus one". The tickets were beautifully presented by Rosemary, who designed a memorable scroll tied with the colours of the French flag.

Leanne, Meredith, Tik, Nadine, Wayne

At the dinner table: joined by Debbie and Joan

The French cooking class for the four lucky winners took place on Saturday 22 August in the Church kitchen. A wonderful time was had by all, during which Nadine demonstrated her great expertise, patience and good humour! Particular

thanks go to Nadine's daughter Sydney, who is a most professional supportive sous chef. Alison, Hiro and Maria helped with the set up and cleaning up. It was wonderful to be able to host this dinner in the more intimate cosy setting provided by the Margaret McKinnon room.

Maria, Leanne, Meredith, Nadine, Tik, Wayne

The menu included:

Field mushrooms stuffed with herbs and breadcrumbs, topped with melted brie and served on rocket with a balsamic glaze

Pork tenderloin with a creamy Dijon mustard and taragon sauce. Served with potato Gratin Dauphinois.

Dessert was a tarte tatin with ice-cream

This dinner provided another opportunity to engage with our friends from Avalon (who won tickets)!

Thank you to everyone for a special day: skills were imparted and developed, friendships nurtured and palates were refined.

MUSIC MISSION

PLEASANT SUNDAY AFTERNOONS

A series of concerts has been planned by Houston Dunleavy as part of our Music Mission. The first one, "Married Flutes", will be on Sunday 4 October at 3.00 pm. You have a whole month to bring this to the attention of your friends and family!

Subsequent concerts

Sunday 1 November, Berta Bogrul, piano

Sunday 20 December, Annual Carol Service

Tuesday 22 December 7.30, Helen Lin, piano

IN PRAISE OF ORGANISTS, PIANISTS

– and choral directors –

You may have noticed an article in the latest *Crosslight* with this title. At SCUC / Ewing, we are truly blessed with wonderful musicians who provide our services with the musical dimension of spirituality. Instrumental music enhances our experience of the sacred every week.

Praise to Colin, Hanford, Errol, Cheryl, and the ever-faithful Instrumental Ensemble!

Colin Prohasky

Hanford Lam

Errol Fernando and Johnny de Simone

Cheryl Jenkins

They also enable us to create music with our voices by accompanying our hymns, and in leading choral singing. Praise to Johnny with the Ewing Choristers, and Houston with SpiritSong!

The Ewing Choristers directed by Johnny de Simone and accompanied by Errol Fernando

Houston Dunleavy leading SpiritSong

Isabelle Roberts' **Musical Soirees** are another way music enriches us through shared listening in an intimate setting. Highly recommended!

MEMORIES TRIGGER MEMORIES

This month, we are featuring **Joyce Jenkin.**

Joyce grew up in the inner-city Perth suburb of West Leederville. Her father was a manufacturing jeweller, and worked at home, while her mother was often out delivering the jewellery, so Joyce would come home from school to be with her father. She was an only child. (You may have noticed the beautiful pieces of classic jewellery that Joyce often wears to Church!)

Her mother was Anglican and her father Baptist, but Joyce went to the Henderson Memorial Presbyterian Church due to the influence of the Misses Lacey who offered craft and sewing classes. One of the sisters played the organ; Joyce remembers her saying mid-service, "This hymn is too hard, I'm not going to play it!"

She attended West Leederville primary school (the same school her parents had attended), the historic Perth Girls School then the prestigious Perth Modern School (Glenda Williams also went there). She chose the Physics-Chemistry stream rather that the Biology-Art stream because she didn't think she would be good at art (strange, since she does such wonderful patchwork and crochet now!).

On leaving school she worked as a clerk at the Sir Charles Gardner Hospital, and then at the Education Department Central Cataloguing

Service, after she realized she wanted to be a librarian, and so started librarianship training.

In order to spread her wings, she moved to Melbourne aged 20, where she completed librarianship training. She got a job as serials assistant at the CSIRO.

She was living at the Salvation Army hostel in Spring Street and started to attend Scots Church where there was a vibrant PFA. There she met Ian. They both stayed at Scots until Union in 1977, when Scots remained Presbyterian.

They married in Perth in 1970, the ceremony conducted by Ian's father.

Ian was teaching as Bacchus Marsh, but fortunately got a transfer to Fitzroy High. Joyce worked at the University High School library. She undertook a Teacher Training Course at Monash Teachers College (later Rusden), which was one reason to move from Carlton to Carnegie. Probably they also needed a bigger house!

At a later date, she did an Arts degree at Deakin University, and then a Masters of Librarianship.

She worked as reference librarian at the Monash University Library Caulfield Campus from 1987, and later at the Peninsula Campus where she became subject librarian for Education and Nursing, and in time for the Paramedics, Physiotherapy Occupational Therapy and Health Services.

When they bought a house, it was in Hope Street and they started attending Ewing from 1976, where they were warmly embraced. It was in Alan Parton's time. Joyce was friendly with Margot Parton who was also a school librarian.

Ian also was an only child, like Joyce, so Joyce was determined to have a large family to make up for what she felt she had missed out on. Roslyn was born in 1974, and Bronwyn in 1976. Tragically Bronnie died age four due to auto immune disease. Later they had John in 1982 and Dave in 1984.

Joyce taught Sunday School and remembers going with a young teacher called Alan Sandbach taking Roslyn over the road to the Hall. She thinks she was a somewhat unorthodox teacher. She remembers Adam Burnett in her class.

Ian served on the Church Council including as Secretary for many years. Joyce also served on the Council from 2011. She succeeded Jill Rogers as Secretary in 2012, and has been doing it to this day! She took over the editorship of *InSpire* from Faye Pattinson around the same time.

She retired from Monash Library in 2008, having persevered after an operation in 2006 for a benign brain tumor.

So, we can see that Joyce has devoted a huge part of her time and energy to the church after retirement.

Joyce has vivid memories of many Ewing highlights.

The Cluster Groups initiated by Norm Henry in the 1980s continued till around 2010, and then were replaced by the monthly all-in lunches that we have now. There were four groups, each meeting at one member's home on the first Sunday of the month. They have been remembered fondly by many.

Significant people include Audrey Healey who led massive lamington drives; Margaret McKinnon (whose brother Ian was on the Church Council) was a dynamo; Win Platt ran the Friendship Centre, that held afternoon programmes for shut-ins. (Check out their photo portraits in the Margaret McKinnon Room.)

The Op Shop in Derby Road Caulfield was spearheaded by Elfriede Graesser and Esme West, in collaboration with St Johns Finch Street. Joyce said it was very happy and fulfilling work. It had to close when the landlord of the shop made the conditions untenable financially and demanded other impossible conditions.

Family Camps took place several times. Activities included Bible studies and discussions. It was at one of these camps that Glenda Williams initiated the Instrumental Ensemble.

PFA and other youth groups led by paid external youth workers were attended by Roslyn and the

Osborne girls, and later the Jenkin boys among others. They eventually became unviable.

Roslyn lives in Kalgoorlie, John in Sunshine and Dave in Lara. Joyce feels blessed to have tremendously supportive children, especially since Ian died last year, and she gets on well with their spouses too. We are also blessed to have Joyce's intelligent, wise and compassionate service as Secretary of Council, and her active engagement in catering for morning teas, lunches and large-scale events, not to mention her regular participation in Book Chat, Common Threads, Café Catch Up and so on. She has contributed so much and continues to do so. Thank you, Joyce!

REPORTS

STONNINGTON COMMUNITY UNITING CHURCH COUNCIL REPORT
Joyce Jenkin

Council has decided that services will not be held at SCUC on 27/12/26, 3/1/27 and 10/1/27, members of our congregation are encouraged to attend other local churches on these Sundays.

SpiritSong has been performing every third Sunday and as required (Christmas in July).

There will be a concert held in the church on 27th September to celebrate the contribution of Wendy McLean to the *Sing alleluia* hymn book.

Alison referred council to an article in *Connect* in regard to a *Season of Creation* program from 1st September to 4th October on the theme of Living Water, and suggested that we consider working with it. John is thinking of leading a Sunday service with the theme.

SOMETHING FOR THE SPIRIT
Lorna Henry

In August we talked about a book, *Conversations with my Rabbi*, by Rabbi Eli Schlanger and Nikki Goldstein, subtitled *Timeless Teachings for a Fractured World*.
It introduced us to the Noahide Laws.

According to Jewish tradition, after the flood wiped out a corrupt world, God gave Noah and his descendants several foundational laws to build a just and compassionate civilisation. They are similar to the Ten Commandments and can be summarised as follows:

Recognise and honour the One Creator.
Use words with care; do not blaspheme.
Preserve the sanctity of human life; do not murder.
Practise compassion towards animals.
Do not commit acts of sexual immorality.
Establish courts of justice.

This month we move from thoughts about these ancient laws to thoughts of the future. . . . . or is it already the present?

It seems that some people today are finding friendship and close companionship in chatbots, i.e. through AI. We all need friends; so, what would it be like to have a friend who is actually a machine? Is it possible? Can it be a positive experience? And helpful? In a world where there are reported to be so many lonely people, could this be the answer?

Maria Sandbach and John Power will take us through these questions, the possibilities and the realities, and we look forward to a fascinating discussion.

We'll meet on Sunday September 20th, 5pm at 5 Vickery St., East Malvern.
And as always, if this interests you at all, you are very welcome!

LIBRARY NEWS
Faye Pattinson

A new book, "Finishing Well: A God's eye view of Ageing", by Ian Knox, will be available in our Library shortly. Knox says, "In our later years we are not only to be blessed but to be a blessing. God is not finished with us". Our next Book Chat will be held at Arcare Nirvana, Waverley Road East Malvern on **Thursday 10th September at 10.30 am;** tea & coffee (& good company) will be provided and all are welcome, with or without a book to share.

Until then, Happy Reading!

FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITY TABLE

Lencie Harding

Another Op Table will be run after the service on Sunday 13th September. Donations of goods will be gratefully accepted. To comply with health regulations, please label all homemade goods with the name of the item, ingredients, date made and name of the cook.

Please bring and buy!

SAMMY STAMP

Lencie Harding

Another delivery of stamps was made to the Sammy Stamp volunteers last month.
Wendy from the Synod Archives and Anne Don who volunteers there always save any stamps they source for Sammy.

Thank you to the members of our congregation who also kindly donate any stamps received for Sammy.

The following is Allan Clark's report for the September 2026 issue of the Uniting Church Adult Fellowship magazine 'Net Work'.

Up till 29/7/2026 sales had reached about $31,277, (end of same month last year $15,656).
We have also approved two further grants:-
$2,000 to Colac Kindness Network to assist people experiencing significant life challenges; and $5,000 to Whitehorse Uniting Church to assist the Laynhapuy Homelands Aboriginal Corporation School establish a breakfast program in eight remote community areas and alleviate food security issues in those areas.
We have approved $24,000 in grants so far this year.

That's all, folks!

Allan Clark
Convenor

PERSONALS

Jo Miller celebrated her 90th birthday on August 8 with a convivial gathering of family and friends at the Wattle Park Chalet. The highlight of the day was Jo's dance with her dancing teacher-partner to the soundtrack of Abba's "Dancing Queen". Go, Jo!

The Dancing Queen!

And Dick and Heather Carter celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary on August 12! (See photo on page 13)

MacDonald is settling in well at Sue MaGrath's place.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From Rosemary Grenness

Appreciation of the new church kitchen

Hi Alison

Random thought

FFF and XIJ

We have thanked lots of people....

I would also like to thank the forward-thinking folk who were part of the kitchen renovation (a couple of years ago). The planning, the donations, the church funds, the consultation process, the upheaval. Build it and they will come has come to pass for the recent fundraising efforts. The former kitchen and equipment served well, but the current amenity is a game changer.

Cheers

Rosemary G

Dear Alison,

Dr Mary-Grace Whyte has subscribed to Net Work for many years. She celebrated 100 years this year so I asked her son, Rev Peter Gador Whyte, if he would write about his mother for the Net Work readers.

Do you think InSpire's readers could be interested in reading the article which I found fascinating?

If not, you and Hiro may enjoy reading it?

Kind regards,

Lencie

Dr Mary-Grace Whyte

Mary-Grace was born in Melbourne in 1926, and grew up in China and then Hong Kong, where her parents were missionary teachers. She spent some of her schooling in an international School in China, but when it was clear that war was about to break out her mother took her to the Philippines and then on to Melbourne in order to be safe.

She attended PLC secondary College and then studied Medicine at Melbourne University before marrying Neilson Whyte, a Presbyterian Minister. As his first placement was to be a Missionary in New Hebrides (now Vanuatu) Mary-Grace undertook a course in Tropical Medicine before sailing off into the Pacific with Neilson and their first son Michael.

The mission station they were sent to was on a very remote Island and had recently been devastated by a hurricane, so there was much to do to rebuild the communities and lives of the local people. Over time while working as a doctor, treating people with tropical diseases and attending to the local communities, Mary-Grace soon found herself also treating people from the Big Nambas tribe in the interior of the Island. While they were there, they built a small two bed hospital clinic where Mary-Grace treated patients. She also ran a kindergarten for the children of the district.

When it was time to leave and return to Australia their family had grown with three more children to attend to. Neilson took up a Parish in Adelaide where he was also responsible to support the work of the Inland Mission and developed a close relationship with the Aboriginal Community at Ernabella. All through her life Mary-Grace particularly enjoyed painting landscapes in watercolour, when time permitted.

After five or so years in Adelaide the family moved back to Victoria with the addition of three more children and settled in Learmonth near Ballarat where Mary-Grace became the local GP, visiting people in their homes or seeing them in the master bedroom of the Church Manse. Bringing up seven children and practising Medicine, playing the organ in church, leading the local PWMU group as well as tennis on the church courts at weekends made for a very busy life.

Moving to Donald in the Wimmera Mary-Grace worked for the local doctors in Donald and Charlton and at times also in St Arnaud, where after additional training she took on the role of anaesthetist when surgery was needed.

It was late in their time at Donald that her husband Neilson tragically died and Mary-Grace had the unenviable task of supporting her large family. However, as they grew up and left home she continued to work as a GP in the Wimmera. She spent periods of time working in Fiji, Papua New Guinea, and doing locums in the Western District.

Moving to the Warburton area and then eventually to Point Lonsdale Mary-Grace continued doing locums well into her seventies. She also enjoyed a variety of sports, from tennis and golf to table tennis and then Croquet where she has made firm friends and enjoyed the company of other players.

She has regularly played the organ for church throughout her life, volunteered on work parties to Alice Springs and Southeast Asia, worked in church Op Shops and most of all enjoyed her craft. For many years she has made wonderful lead light windows, knitted for family, made mosaic artwork and hook rugs which she continues to do in her 100th year

There is so much more that could be said about Mary-Grace. She has always been a warm, generous-hearted woman dedicated to helping others and living life to the full, while supporting many causes both in Australia and beyond our shores in places like Vanuatu.

AUGUST TRAVELS TO THE TOP END

August saw three Council members taking leave-of-absence with spouses to explore different parts of the Top End.

The Carters

Dick and Heather embarked on a long voyage of Central and Western Australia, taking in the length and half the breadth of the continent starting July 24. You can follow their journey on Facebook, but here is a small selection. (Lifted with permission with some editorial license re the captions.)

Two VOPs (Very Old Passengers) about to board The Ghan to Darwin.

The Ghan is approximately 800m long. Its 36 carriages include staff living quarters, & power generator cars drawn by two NR Class locos. Darwin is 2,979 km & 3 days away.

(Was this the Royal Suite on the Ghan?!)

Crossing the border

According to Dick, no trip to the NT should fail to document crocodiles. This was sighted at Kakadu.

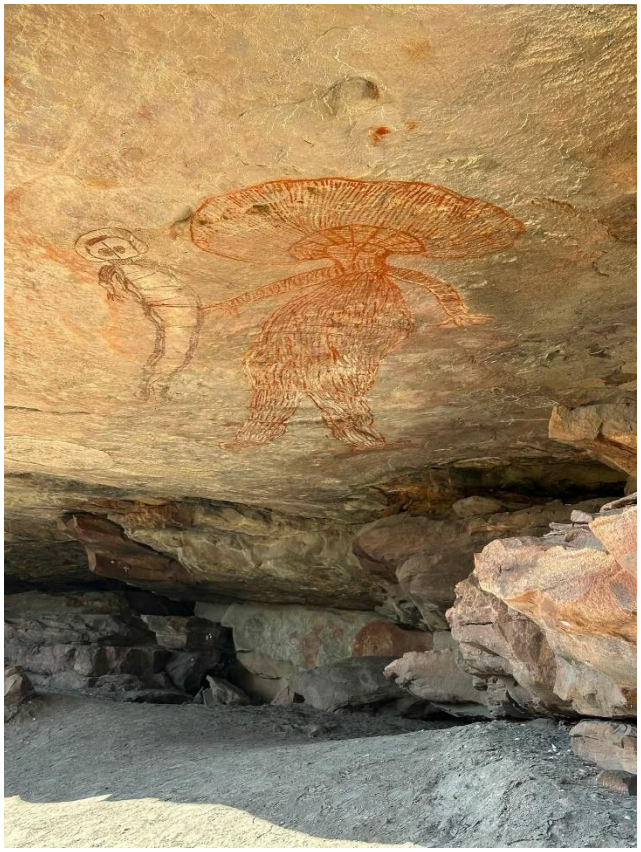
After a few days in Darwin and a tour to Kakadu, they embarked on a cruise to take them to Broome.

Aboard the good ship “Seabourn Pursuit” as they set out west from Darwin into the setting sun & Heather’s hair is ruffled in the slipstream.

August 12, aboard The good ship Seabourn Pursuit, celebrating their 65th wedding anniversary! Note Dick's scandalous dessert.

A number of off-ship on-shore excursions were taken by The Intrepid Explorer

Including to the Talbot River with its horizontal waterfall!



One of the fine examples of Wanjina rock art seen near the Mitchell Falls in the Kimberley. These are "modern" & have great significance to the local indigenous people. This image is of a creator being.

From Broome a flight took them to Perth, from whence they returned to East Malvern on 26 August. What an adventure!

Maria and Alan Sandbach

Our recent 8-day adventure in Far North Queensland featured an outback road trip of approximately 700 km from Cairns to Normanton. After leaving the lush rainforest of the Atherton Tablelands, this section of the Savannah Way was characterised by flat dry plains, wallabies, wild pigs, termite mounds and Brahman cattle. It was also punctuated by remote proud isolated tiny towns that punched above their weight in terms of community spirit, postcard sunsets and friendly folk doing it tough.

Memorable moments included finding a frog in the toilet, the rejuvenating Innot hot springs and the Rocky Creek War Memorial Park.

Overall, it was a wonderful climate change and totally different way of life: so much so that we are almost ready to write the next episode for Back Roads!

Alison and Hiro Tokita

We enjoyed a week in Darwin in August. The primary purpose of the visit was to catch up with son Nowaki, and Rachel and Macy and Ray, who had set off from Melbourne in a caravan in early April, travelled westward skirting Adelaide, Perth, Broome etc before reaching Darwin in early August, after which they would head east and south via Kakadu, Alice Springs, Uluru, and back to Melbourne by early October. (Virtually the same as the Carters but in a clockwise direction.)

We enjoyed the warm tropical climate, the different vegetation, the surrounding natural wonders including a gorge to swim in at Berry Springs.

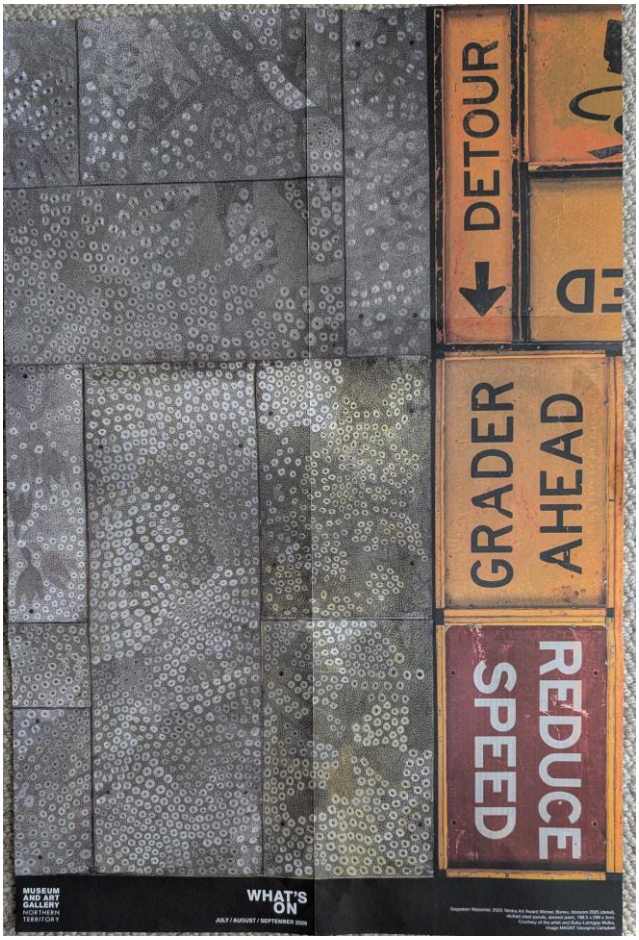
It was good to see and interact with a lot of indigenous people and to note an interesting mix of integration and segregation at the same time in the city. Most of our activities involved eating, swimming and observing crocodiles and mangroves, playing games, and other things of interested to the kids. Also, we did lots of swimming in the lagoon sheltered from the wild life of the sea, and enjoyed sunsets while dining on the wharf.

Overlooking Darwin harbour before dining on the wharf

Chilling out in our cabin, slightly roomier than the caravan they'd occupied for four months.

Relaxing at the end of the Mangrove Walk

Our visit happened to coincide with the Darwin Festival so Alison was able to squeeze in a visit to the NT Museum and Art Gallery to see the extraordinary exhibition of Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islande Art Awards.



She also got to see with Nowaki a show called *Gapu Ŋupan*, a wonderful collaborative performance of story, dance and music, weaving together Yolŋu songlines from North East Arnhem Land and storytelling from Paiwan and Amis artists from Taiwan.

Sinuous and fluid duo of dancers from Taiwan: tradition and modernity interwoven

FORTHCOMING EVENTS!

SPIRITUALITY WORKSHOP

The next session of "Awakening to the Living Universe" will be held on **Tuesday 1 September at 10am**. (See details on page 2-3)

September 23 MUSIC SOIRÉE

The soiree on 27 August was curated by Houston, who introduced a fascinating program of choral music from Vaughan Williams to Morten Lauridsen, pointing out the originality of each composer.

Isabelle will host another musical soirée at her home on Wednesday 23 September, 2.00 pm.

As always, please speak to Isabelle to reserve a place if you are interested in coming.

PLEASANT SUNDAY AFTERNOONS

and other concerts

Sunday 27 September 2.30, The Genesis *of Sing Alleluia* and honouring Wendy McLean

Sunday 4 October 2.30, “Married Flutes”

Sunday 1 November 2.30, Berta Bogrul, piano

Sunday 20 December 7.30, Annual Carol Service

Tuesday 22 December 7.30, Helen Lin, piano

OTHER EVENTS

4 and18 September TAICHI AT ST ANDREWS

Taichi classes at St Andrew’s Gardiner are held on the first and third Friday of each month at 2.00 pm. It is great for your mental and physical serenity, and for forging links with a vibrant neighbouring congregation! Everyone welcome.

MELBOURNE MANDOLIN ORCHESTRA

A concert on the theme Multicultural Mandolins is planned for Sunday 13 September in the church.

This concert will feature music from a wide variety of cultures and countries and written or arranged for mandolin orchestra. Countries featured in this concert include Venezuela, Italy, Japan, America, Greece, Australia, Germany, Afghanistan, France and the Czech Republic. The orchestra will be conducted by Darryl Barron.

You can buy tickets at the door on the afternoon of the concert ($35 for general admission, $30 for concession admission for pensioners and Health Care card holders.

Tickets can also be purchased online at

https://events.humanitix.com/multicultural-mandolins

YUKARI ECHO

Sunday 25 October “Yukari Echo”

The Japanese Ladies Choir / Yukari Echo are preparing their 45th anniversary concert to be held in the church on Sunday 25 October. It will be a musical smorgasbord of Japanese and intercultural singing and instrumental music. Entry by donation.

A WORD FROM THE EDITOR

Thanks to all for your contributions to the issue. We always welcome your letters, articles and photos. Special thanks to Lencie, Maria and Alan for their support, and to Michael Read for his painting on the cover!

The deadline for the **October 2026** edition of *InSpire* is **Sunday, 27 September.** Articles should be emailed to the Editor, Alison Tokita, at [redacted].

Send your Christmas Cheer

Uniting Christmas Card Range 2026

Each pack of 10 cards is only $15

12 Days of Christmas Sentiment
May the festive season bring only happiness and joy to you and your loved ones.

Australian Native Flora Sentiment
Native Flora: May you have a wonderful Christmas and a happy New Year.
Floral Joy: May the joy and peace of Christmas be yours throughout the year

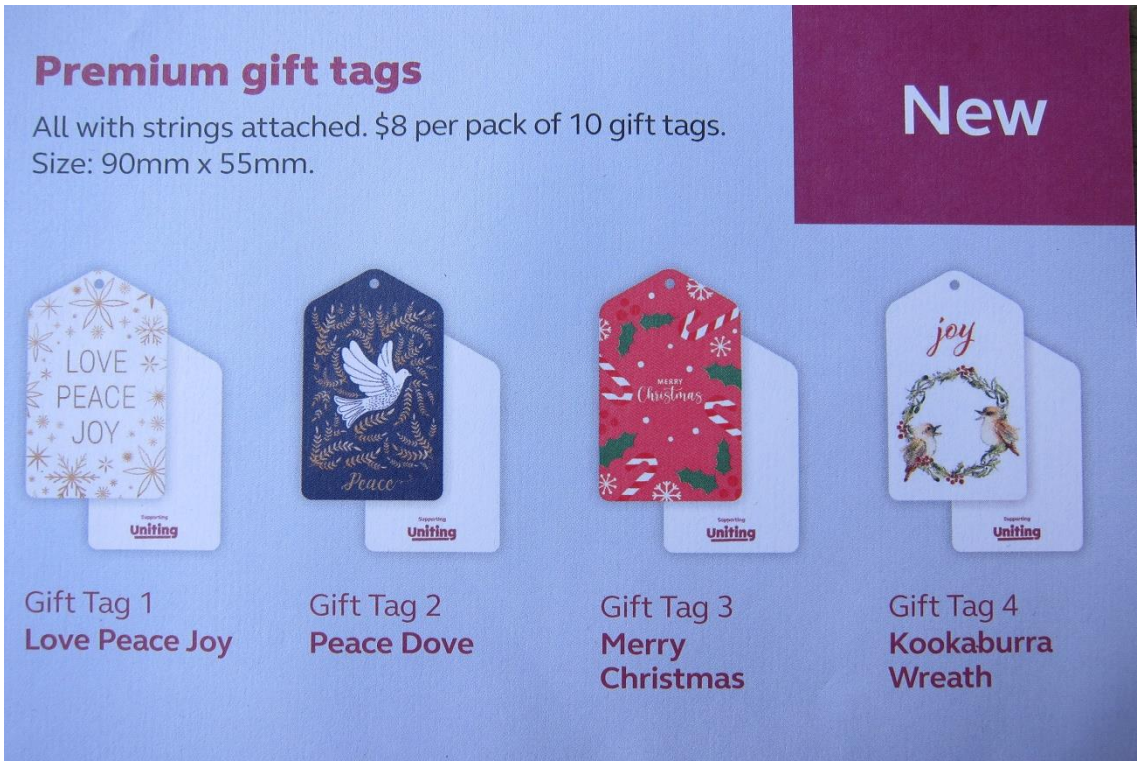
Christmas Stockings
Wishing you a wonderful Christmas and Happy New Year.

Nativity Sentiment
Nativity: May joy be yours during the season of goodwill and may he New Year bring grace and peace
Bible Verse: 'And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son full of grace and truth' John 1:14
Three Kings: May joy be your gift at Christmas and may hope and love be your treasures in the New Year.
Bible Verse: 'From his fullness we have all received grace upon grace'. John 1:16

Peace Dove Sentiment
May happiness be yours during the season of goodwill and may the New Year bring peace and joy to you and your loved ones.

Uniting Christmas Gift Tags

All with strings attached. $8 per pack of 10



CALENDAR SEPTEMBER 2026

TUESDAY 1ST	**10.00 AM**	**AWAKENING TO THE LIVING UNIVERSE SPIRITUALITY WORKSHOP**
SATURDAY 5TH	**12.30 PM**	**SPIRITSONG REHEARSAL**
SUNDAY 6TH	**11.00 AM**	**EUCHARIST & COMMUNITY LUNCH**
THURSDAY 10TH	**10.30 AM**	**BOOK CHAT**
SATURDAY 12TH	**12.30 PM**	**SPIRITSONG REHEARSAL**
SUNDAY 13th	**10.30 AM**	**CHURCH SERVICE**
TUESDAY 15th	**2.00 PM**	**CAFÉ CATCH UP**
SATURDAY 19TH	**12.30 PM**	**SPIRITSONG REHEARSAL**
SUNDAY 20TH	**10.30 AM** **5.00 PM**	**CHURCH SERVICE** **SOMETHING FOR THE SPIRIT**
WEDNESDAY 23RD	**2.00 PM**	**ISABELLE'S MUSICAL SOIREE**
THURSDAY 24TH	**10.00 AM**	**COMMON THREADS**
SATURDAY 26TH	**12.30 PM**	**SPIRITSONG REHEARSAL**
SUNDAY 27TH	**10.30 AM**	**CHURCH SERVICE**