

Minister's word



In the season of Pentecost in the church, we can hear John's gospel 20: verses 19–24, the story of certain disciples gathered in fear behind locked doors, when the risen Jesus appears and speaks Peace and breathes on them with the words "receive the Holy Spirit". How, we might ask, did Jesus get through the locked doors? And how was this simple act of breathing Peace linked to the activity of the Holy Spirit, God's dynamic life force that could strengthen, comfort, and animate the believers. Indeed, we might consider doors as artifices of human construction which God is able to open to enable others to move freely to engage with their tasks of service in the world.

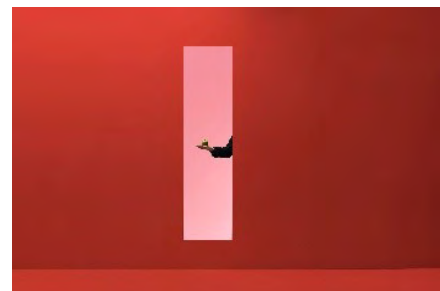
Throughout John's gospel, Jesus breaks down and goes through barriers where people were afraid, confused, or diminished. In John chapter 4, in the story of Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan women at a well, we hear how in a simple conversation Jesus traversed societal, racial, gender and religious barriers. Jesus invites the woman to receive living water springing up to eternal life. Likewise, in John chapter 3, Jesus challenged Nicodemus to move beyond the barrier of his narrow religious understanding to grasp a compelling vision of how God's Spirit could bring a new birth. Through these divine initiatives we see that God is Mystery and though revealed through human encounters not confined by knowledge or effort. Jesus in these teaching narratives can unlock doors and illuminate

new pathways to live.

In John 20:22, we hear that the disciples received the gift of the Holy Spirit as Jesus breathed on them. This act of commissioning reinvigorated them to continue Christ's mission of forgiving, healing, offering peace and welcome in the world. What can help us to do likewise? And what can help us know that we have received the blessing of the Holy Spirit alive in us?

I leave you with words from Blessing the Door by Jan L. Richardson that can inspire us to serve and trust in the God who invites us to find God present with us.

... the mark of a true blessing
is that it will take you
where you did not
think to go,
Once through this door,
there will be more doors
more blessings
more who watch and
wait for you.



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Church Council and Community Engagement Facilitator Report

The most significant news from Church Council is the approval by Synod of a five-year lease of the Kooyong Road property to the Caulfield South Community House. This is the result of committed and extensive work, particularly by Cathy and Greg. In February, five representatives from PART, Rev Jay Robinson, Presbytery, three CSCH and three ECS met to discuss the application regarding an extended lease for CSCH. It was a frank conversation about progress, expectations and difficulties from various perspectives. PART representatives said they would recommend a five-year lease with a series of expectations about the future, and this has now been realised. Praise be to God!

Church Council continues to be thankful for Rev Dr Lynette Dungan's continued supply ministry with the congregation and for the creative worship offered by others on the Sundays when Lynette is unavailable. The church's regular groups on Monday afternoons and Wednesday mornings offer welcome, inclusion and support to many from the wider community and there are often new people who come to "check us out", with quite a few returning, either occasionally or regularly.

Property maintenance and improvements continue across our properties. All the external doors at Kooyong Road are being replaced and the painting will be donated by volunteers from Dulux. External painting at the Jupiter Street manse continues, and a blind has been installed over the skylight in the kitchen. Together with the recently installed split-system heating/cooling unit, this will greatly improve the comfort for Lynette and Rod – and hopefully the energy bills too!

New equipment has been purchased over the past two months. A new printer/photocopier for the church office became necessary when the old printer was no longer supported by Toshiba and it was not possible to purchase printer cartridges. A large-screen TV and mobile TV stand were purchased. This can be used when groups hiring the building, such as Caulfield Garden Club, wish to make presentations. It has also been useful in Sunday worship services.

For Cathryn, 2026 has got off to a busy start, so far mostly with planning for events later in

the year. New PEACE signs for the front of the church have been designed, printed and are now in place at the front of the church. The new signs were designed with the intention of maintaining the simplicity of the original signs, but now with a rainbow dove of peace superimposed onto the "P". The dove and rainbow have held great symbolism through the centuries, going back to the story of Noah. The dove is a symbol of our baptism in Jesus Christ, the ultimate bringer of peace. More recently, the rainbow is a sign of acceptance of the LGBTQI community. It is hoped that this simple symbol will convey more than simply the word PEACE to the community. Thanks to Greg for his efforts in hammering the stakes well into the ground.



Cathryn has been liaising with artists to perform at two Concerts for Peace, planned for Sundays 21 June and 20 September. Plans are afoot for the mid-winter concert to feature stringed instruments, including the Cello group who hire the East Room on Sundays. The spring concert will have a different feel, with SoulSong choir again performing. Other artists are still being confirmed. Church Council has agreed that any donations received at these concerts will be forwarded to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

The church will support Chair-based Gentle Strength and Exercises sessions, run by Amanda Hawkey. Following conversations with people at both CSCH and Glen Eira Council, it is clear there is strong community desire for sessions of this type. The sessions at the church will be held on Friday mornings at 9.45am, commencing on Friday 24 April. This timeslot will complement the similar program that runs at CSCH on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Sessions will be \$15 per session if paying weekly, or \$11 if paying for the whole term in advance. Please contact me if you would like to join the sessions. The Glen Huntly Road noticeboard is one of the ways the congregation connects with the wider community, sharing our strong

focus on social justice. Cathryn ensures the noticeboard displays are changed regularly.

Thank you for the many ways you support Cathryn in the Community Engagement Facilitator role. And feel free to chat with me about any ideas you have of ways we might further connect with the community around us.

We are appreciative of the contributions the young people from The Break training in community development make to our Craft,

Games and Chat, and Chatty Cafe sessions. We are exploring further ways we might be able to work together.

We have decided not to hold our mini fete in conjunction with the Caulfield Garden Club's Plant stall in May. We may hold a mini fete in October with other community groups.

**Cathryn Peppiatt
(for Church Council)**

UCA President urges Political Leaders to back peace and immediate ceasefire

6 March 2026

President of the Uniting Church in Australia, Rev Charissa Suli, has written to the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition, the Leader of the Australian Greens and other Australian political party leaders, urging multi-partisan support for the Australian Government to call for peace and an immediate ceasefire across Iran and the wider Middle East.

The call follows escalating conflict that has spread across the region since the US-Israel strikes on 28 February 2026.

"The pursuit of security through escalating force risks drawing entire regions – and potentially the world – into deeper suffering," Rev Suli said.

"Political leaders carry a profound moral responsibility to choose the hard work of restraint and peacebuilding over more killing and destruction."

The Uniting Church's call for bipartisan political support for a ceasefire echoes appeals from global Christian leaders and bodies, including Pope Leo XIV, the World Council of Churches and World Communion of Reformed Churches.

Earlier this week, the Uniting Church gathered people from across the country for a National Online Service of Prayer for Peace in the Middle East, led by Rev Suli.

More than 140 people joined the service, including members of the Uniting Church, ecumenical partners from Catholic and Anglican communities, and people of other faiths. Together they prayed for peace, compassion and wisdom in the face of escalating violence.

The service began with an Acknowledgement of Country and an opening prayer from Rev Ken Sumner of the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress. A reading from Psalm 46 reminded participants that "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble".

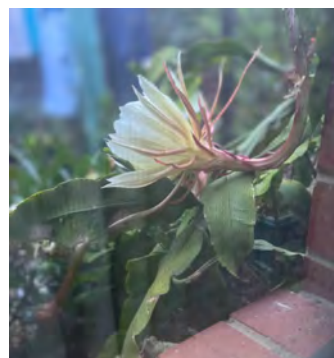
Those online also heard from Pastor Jirair Ghazarian, a minister currently in Lebanon, who shared the reality facing communities in Beirut and across the Middle East, where many families have been displaced by violence.

Four Synod Moderators, along with Rev Dr Gaby Kobrossi, Rev Dr Krikor Youmshajekian and Australian Defence Force chaplains, helped lead prayers for civilians, displaced families, humanitarian workers and political leaders. Pastor Ghazarian, who will soon serve at the Armenian Uniting Church in Willoughby, also joined in the prayers.

As followers of Jesus Christ, the Uniting Church continues to pray for justice, reconciliation and lasting peace.

Source: Uniting Church Assembly website
<https://uniting.church>

Ministry of Flowers



A long journey in supporting what is good: Security of tenure for CSCH

We have been advised that our congregation has been successful in seeking a five-year lease of Kooyong Road properties to the Caulfield South Community House (CSCH). It seems like a good time to acknowledge key moments in the history of our relationship with CSCH, and the commitments of some of our congregation that have helped good things happen.

The original connection began in 1996. Following the merger of Elsternwick and Caulfield South congregations, Jack Campbell facilitated relocation of the then Glen Huntly Neighbourhood House to the Kooyong Road buildings.

In 2012, many Uniting Church properties were put up for sale to pay the debt incurred by Acacia College. Michael Forbes and Kevin Payne worked hard in conjunction with CSCH Committee of Management to protect the Kooyong Road property being sold off.

To make room for increased patronage and program of CSCH, the Anglican-Catholic Church which occupied the church space was given 12 months notice to vacate in 2018. The church space was then renovated, levelling the floor, painting and electrical upgrade, in 2020. The Synod's Property Applications Review Team (PART) agreed to a three-year lease for 2021–2024 with the support of Rev Duncan Macleod, the Presbytery Minister at the time.

The subsequent lease extensions were limited to 12 months, with Synod requiring justification why Glen Huntly Road or Kooyong Road facilities should not be sold and resources made available for UCA programs.

The limited tenure available to CSCH has restricted what has been possible in grant applications, building renovation and program development yet the extensive community and child care programs, involving around 13 staff and 500 community members each week, have continued to grow.

Cathy McNicol has been a mainstay of this relationship, volunteering at CSCH, facilitating renovations, ensuring the property has been maintained, serving as member of their Board and advocating for equitable *Link* April–May 2026 page 4 of 14

recognition of their programs by Synod.

She has been supported by Michael Forbes and Greg Smith who have both brought great insight into governance and strategic thinking to the applications to PART.

We have been supported by shared vision and commitments of Presbytery, in recent years Rev Jay Robinson Presbytery Minister, David Higham Chair of Presbytery, and Gavin Faichney Chair of Presbytery Property Committee.

The journey of seeking an appropriate lease has involved many people, supporting what they saw, and in many cases helped create, as "good work" in the community – providing care, nurture, connection and quality of life for countless children, parents and older folk over many years.

We acknowledge how we have been supported by our faith and vision over this time, which we believe to be ongoing expressions of our creator's love and care in all their forms. We look forward to whatever the future holds as our journey in the community continues, at both of our locations.

Greg



Presbytery Report

The last two Presbytery-in-Council meetings were held on 19 November 2025 and 31 January 2026.

The first was held face to face at night at Noble Park. As there was no Zoom, I apologised and did not attend. Neither a night drive nor train travel to and from Noble Park was attractive.

The 31 January 2026 daytime meeting was held at Mount Martha Uniting Church (MMUC). This is a rather new building in an attractive one-hectare bushland setting.

Worship comprised the reading and hymn followed by the sermon by Uniting Church Moderator Rev Salesi Faupula.

An introduction to MMUC and its Peace Trail of Reflection adjacent to the church followed. Presbytery members were invited to visit the trail. Cathy's article on this page provides

details of the trail.

Commissioning of Presbytery Standing Committee members followed with David Higham continuing as Chairperson and the Rev Joy Blamires as deputy. After a presentation from eLM, Bruce Robinson outlined the findings of a homelessness survey which he had conducted with Presbytery churches. He classified several approaches of these churches ranging from no program to activities that addressed homelessness.

The meeting concluded with an enlightening Q&A session featuring the Moderator which went some way in defining his background and thinking.

An enjoyable and informative meeting.

Geoff

Mount Martha Peace Trail



In late January Ian and I attended the Presbytery meeting at Mount Martha Uniting Church (MMUC) as we were interested to experience their Peace Trail. Their supply minister, Rev Peter Wiltshire, had previously led the creation of a peace trail at Hampton Uniting. MMUC has a mud brick church, built by the community in the 1970s, set on a bushy hectare block. The Peace Trail

wraps around the block linking bush plantings, the memorial garden, children's play area, a courtyard garden, a garden planted with roses named to commemorate qualities of strength and resilience and a red bench, part of the Red Rose Foundation which raises awareness of domestic violence. Along the walk there are stations with seats and signage to encourage people to reflect, pray or meditate on personal, domestic or international peace.



MMUC has partnered with community groups such as the Men's Shed who have built nesting boxes and seats, and the Koala Tree Planting group who have assisted with tree planting. Various community members and funding bodies have contributed time and finances.

The community are encouraged to come and sit, contemplate and walk whenever they wish. With some magnificent trees and varied spaces it certainly offers peace and renewal.

Cathy

Sign of the Times

Electric bus in Elsternwick



Peace Vigil
Wednesdays 4-5

From the wider church

**Rain across the Flinders Ranges
brings relief – and repair**
by Justin Ackland



Across large parts of inland Australia, recent weeks have brought extraordinary weather. After record heat and dust storms early in the year, widespread rain has begun transforming landscapes that had been parched for years. In many regions the change has been dramatic – dams filling, grass returning almost overnight, and communities adjusting once again to the unpredictable rhythm of our beloved country; the “sunburnt country” of “ragged mountain ranges” and “droughts and flooding rains” of Dorothea Mackellar’s poem.

In South Australia’s Flinders Ranges, that change is being felt across the Parkin–Sturt Remote Area.

Country that had been dry for years is shifting quickly. Creeks are running again. Dams are filling. Hills that were brown only weeks ago are turning green.



At Wonoka Station near Hawker, Andrew and Robyn McInnis (pictured above) recorded 60 millimetres of rain in one fall. A week later another 106 millimetres arrived.

“The Wonoka Creek was one of many waterways overflowing and a raging torrent,” they said.

For graziers who had endured more than two years of drought, the rain brings a change in outlook. Feed is returning and some families are already thinking about restocking.

In Quorn and the surrounding district, the transformation across the landscape has been just as striking.

“We are thankful for the rainfall – the likes of which have not been seen this time of year since early 1974,” said local resident Rebecca Lyman.

“Dams are full, creeks continue to flow and groundwater has been restored.”

Yet across the region there is also a quiet awareness that one good rain does not always mean the drought has truly broken. In some places the green now visible across the hills hides soils that are still dry beneath the surface, and in the outback a single deluge can sometimes be followed by months without rain.

But rain in the outback rarely arrives without consequence.

Floodwater has damaged crossings and fences. Long station driveways have washed out. Access roads into Hawker have closed while debris and tree stumps are cleared.

For Bush Chaplain Sunny Kadaparambil, pastoral care has continued even when travel has not been possible. With roads cut off, many conversations have happened by phone. Families speak of the excitement of full dams and green shoots. They also speak about damaged fences, washed-out crossings and the work that now lies ahead.

Across the Flinders Ranges, this season brings both relief and responsibility. The rain has brought life back to the land. It has also left repairs waiting.

Out here, rain can be a gift and a challenge at the same time. Through it all, Frontier Services Bush Chaplains continue to check in with families across the region – on verandahs, over the phone, and wherever the road allows.

Source: <https://frontierservices.org/>

Bible Word

Silence

There are not many references to "silence" in the Bible, surprisingly. But the concept includes silent, still, stillness, holding one's tongue.

1 Sam 2: 9. [The Lord] will guard the feet of his saints, but the wicked will be silenced in darkness.

1 Kings 19: 11–12. Then the Lord said [to Elijah] "Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by." Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains . . . but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came a fire. But the Lord was not in the fire. After the fire came a still, small voice. (Some versions give "a gentle whisper".)

Job 2: 13. Then they sat on the ground with [Job] seven days and seven nights. No one said a word, because they saw how great his suffering was [The mark of empathetic friendship].

Ps 28: 1. To you I call, O Lord my Rock, do not turn a deaf ear to me. If you remain silent, I will be like those who have gone down into the pit.

Ps 46: 10. Be still and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations and in all the earth.

Ps 94: 17. Unless the Lord had given me help, I would have dwelt in the silence of death.

Prov 10: 19. When words are many, sin is not absent, but he who holds his tongue is wise.

Zech 2: 13. Be still before the Lord, all mankind . . .

Mark 4: 39. Then [Jesus] got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.

1 Tim 2: 12. I do not permit a woman to teach or have authority over a man. She must be silent. [Not very helpful in these days of equality, where women have much to contribute to faith. But in those days, women were taking advantage of their new-found freedom in Christ to become unruly and aggressive.]

1 Peter 2: 15. It is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men.

Rev 8: 1. When he opened the seventh seal there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. [The silence was in order that the prayers of the saints could be heard.¹]

In the words of a favourite hymn: "Be still, for the presence of the Lord is moving in this place . . ."

These words show the power of the Lord and our response to him.

¹ E. F Davidson Ed. *The New Bible Commentary*.

Andrea

Crucifixion of Jesus

It was extremely difficult for early Christians to make sense of a crucified Messiah.

The gruesome character of the crucifixion was well known, dealt out only to the lowest of the low, a dreadful death. How could this be a revelation of God?

Each of the four Gospels wrestled with it and dealt with it in two ways. Firstly dealing with it according to the prophecies in the scriptures and secondly they cited the words that Jesus issued from the cross.

Important was Psalm 22, a lament referred to by all four Gospels. The details of the crucifixion are especially dark and step by step in Matthew and Mark. Jesus was ridiculed and mocked as King of the Jews and the Roman soldiers scourged him. This weakened Jesus so much that he could not carry the beam of the cross

and Simon of Cyrene was forced to pick it up and carry it.

Matthew and Mark do not go into the crucifixion procedure of nailing Jesus to the cross, nor his physical pain and suffering but mention lesser details of vinegar giving and those casting lots for his clothing thus suggesting the crucifixion is the fulfilment of the Biblical prophesy. The chief priests comment Psalm 22: 8 and Matthew 27: 43, He trusts in God let him deliver him. Also Matthew 27: 43. and Mark 15: 34, both record, *Eloi, Eloi lama sabachthani*, meaning *My God, My God, why have you forsaken me*. Now, forsaken by all, Jesus descends into the darkest experience that a human being can go into. This anguished cry is also recorded in the first words of Psalm 22: 1.

These two Gospel writers did not try to soften the anguish, but instead tried to show the

consequences. Firstly, there was the confusion of not understanding the words Jesus uttered and secondly, there was the centurion who was his executioner, who said, Truly this man was the son of God. Mark 15: 39. This became the focus of the whole of the Gospels.

Luke's focus was not so much on Jesus' anguish but his serenity and confidence. Luke knew that Jesus understood all that was to happen. Luke 23: 34, Jesus prayed when he was on the cross, Father forgive them; for they know not what they do. Also, when one of the bandits on the cross beside Jesus defended him, he said in Luke 23: 42, Truly, I say to you today you will be with me in Paradise. Luke was showing that even on the cross Jesus was able to grant eternal blessedness. Death held no threat to him. The final words by Jesus on the cross are reported by Luke in 23: 46, Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit. And these words had been prophesied in Psalm 31: 5.

John reports three sayings of Jesus from the cross which emphasise his control. Jesus appointed the disciple he loved to act as his mother's son, John 19: 26, Woman here is your son. And then he said to the disciple, Here is your mother.

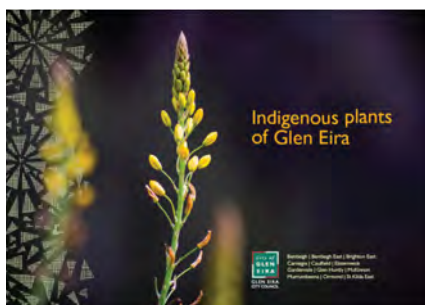
The last two sayings show Jesus' desire to fulfil the scriptures. The first in John 19:28, I am thirsty. Psalm 69: 21, They gave me poison for food, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink. John 19: 30, Jesus' last words after drinking the vinegar were, It is finished. Then Jesus bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

The voice of each Gospel together reveals how for the early Christians, a dreadful and brutal act, became the wonderful mystery of God's love to the world and the gift of eternal life.

Patricia

Envirotip

To increase biodiversity in Glen Eira, check what plants are indigenous to our city. Go to <https://www.gleneira.vic.gov.au/media/3007/indigenous-plants-of-glen-eira-2018.pdf>



Church Calendar

April 2026

- 2 World Autism Awareness Day
- 2 Maundy Thursday
- 3 Good Friday
- 4 International Day for Mine Awareness
- 5 Easter Day
- 7 World Health Day
- 22 Earth Day
- 25 Anzac Day

May 2026

- 1 International Workers' Day (May Day)
- 3 World Press Freedom Day
- 9 World Fair Trade Day
- 14 Ascension Day
- 15 International Day of Families
- 16 International Day of Living Together in Peace
- 18–24 National Volunteer Week
- 21 World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development
- 22 International Day of Biodiversity
- 24 Pentecost Sunday
- 26 National Sorry Day
- 26 2017 Statement from the Heart at Uluru
- 27 1967 Referendum allowing laws for Aboriginal People and to be included in the census
- 27 Reconciliation Sunday
- 27 May–3 June National Reconciliation Week
- 31 Trinity Sunday

Sources: *Justice and International Mission and Revised Common Lectionary*

New Church Council

The 15 March Annual General Meeting elected Alex, Audrey, Cathy, Greg and Wendy as Church Council members for the coming year.

More than just an international student

Shalini attended Chatty Cafe while a volunteer staff member at The Break.

There is something interesting about beginnings. Mine started at Uplana a small village in Haryana, India. When morning started with chirping of the birds, neighbours greeting each other by name. Life felt steady and familiar. In such places dreams usually are simple, well mine were not.

My name is Shalini Rana and I am an international student.

When I decided to come to Australia, I had big dreams even bigger than the fields I grew up around. Bigger than the straight village roads I once walked on my way to school. I dreamed of confidence, independence and a future that would make my parents proud. I wanted to prove not to anyone but to myself; that no matter how and where you start you can grow beyond boundaries.

But dreams are always sowed with sacrifice, faith and courage.

The day I left India, my family stood next to me at Indira Gandhi International Airport Terminal 3 holding back tears, my father trying to be strong, looked at me and said "Sab Acha Hoga" – Everything will be Okay. And those words became my cornerstone.

When I arrived at Melbourne Airport everything felt so filmy; tall buildings, different accent, busy streets – a complete opposite world from the quiet corners of Uplana. At first excitement moved me forward, I felt nothing can stop me, I felt confident.

But shortly after excitement settled and reality came knocking at my door.

Life here is not just about studying. It is about navigating a new culture, managing work, understanding transport, figuring out where to go for help, and learning to survive while missing home. Many students struggle silently, juggling part-time jobs, assignments, and daily responsibilities. Homesickness and pressure to succeed can feel heavy, and sometimes it feels like the world is moving ahead while you are trying to find your footing.

But this struggle teaches you more than any lecture ever could. It teaches resilience, independence, patience, and courage. Every small victory, every step forward, no matter how tiny, becomes proof that you can do it. And the community you find along the way makes all the difference.

Spaces like Chatty Café at St John's Uniting
Link April–May 2026 page 9 of 14

Church are more than just cafés. They are lifelines, places where students can meet, talk, share their experiences, and feel a little less alone. It is where I found others who understood the highs and lows, the fears and small triumphs. I am so thankful to Geoff for giving me this chance to share my story in the newsletter. It reminded me that being heard matters, and that sharing our struggles can help someone else feel seen.

Being an international student in Australia is a constant balance. You learn to navigate lectures and assignments, while also learning how to navigate life itself. Some days are exciting, some days are exhausting, and some days you feel small and out of place. But every challenge, every moment of doubt, every mistake, becomes a step toward becoming stronger, braver, and more capable than you knew you could be.

I have learned that the small things matter too. Learning to take public transport without getting lost, figuring out how to submit an assignment on time, communicating in a new accent, asking questions even when you feel shy – all of it builds not just skills, but confidence. And through it all, my father's words echo in my heart: "Sab Acha Hoga." Everything will be okay. They remind me that setbacks are temporary, that growth is messy but real, and that no matter how overwhelming things may seem, it is possible to keep moving forward.

Dreams are not easy. They require sacrifice, faith, and courage. But being an international student is not just about earning a degree. It is about learning to rely on yourself, finding community, discovering your strengths, and realising that you are capable of more than you ever imagined. Every placement, every new connection, every lecture, every challenge is part of a journey that shapes who I am and who I will become.

To students reading this, I want you to know that your struggles are real and that your effort matters. To the community, your support is life-changing –it can give someone the courage to keep going. And for me, every day is a reminder that even when things feel uncertain, it is possible to find hope, strength, and progress.

So here I am, still learning, still growing, still dreaming, and still believing that no matter what, "sab acha hoga". This is Shalini Rana, signing off with a little hope for every student out there trying to find their way.

Recipes

Pani Puri



Ingredients

- Ready-made puris – 25–30
- Boiled potatoes – 3 mashed
- Boiled chickpeas or white peas – 1 cup
- 1 small onion, finely chopped (optional)
- Chaat masala – 1 tsp
- Red chilli powder – ½ tsp
- Salt – to taste
- Fresh coriander leaves – 2 tbsp, chopped

For the Spicy Pani

- Mint leaves – 1 cup
- Coriander leaves – 1 cup
- Green chillies – 2
- Ginger – 1 inch piece
- Tamarind pulp – 2 tbsp
- Roasted cumin powder – 1 tsp
- Black salt – 1 tsp
- Salt – to taste
- Cold water – 3–4 cups

Method

1. In a bowl, mix mashed potatoes, chickpeas, onion, chaat masala, chilli powder, salt and coriander. Set aside.
2. Blend all pani ingredients with a little water until smooth. Add remaining water and chill well.
3. Make a small hole in each puri.
4. Add a spoon of filling inside.
5. Pour in the spicy pani and serve immediately.

Serving Tip

Pani puri tastes best when the water is very cold and the puris are crisp. Serve instantly for the perfect crunch.

**By Shalini
The Break**

The editors, Andrea, Patricia and Geoff, thank all *Link* contributors. Thanks to Colin for his proofreading.

Leche Flan



Ingredients

- 8 egg yolks
- 1 can evaporated milk
- 1 can condensed milk
- ½ cup of granulated sugar

Method

Mix together 1 can evaporated milk, 1 can condensed milk and ½ cup of granulated sugar to put in the mould and mix thoroughly until the solid sugar turns to liquid (caramel) having a light brown colour.

1. Spread the caramel liquid sugar evenly on the flat side of the mould.
2. Wait for 5 minutes then pour the egg yolk and milk mixture on the mould.
3. Cover the top of the mould using aluminium foil.
4. Steam the mould with egg and milk mixture for 30 to 35 minutes.
5. After steaming let it cool then refrigerate before serving for dessert.

**By Deebhe
The Break**

The Lord sees what happens everywhere; he is watching us, whether we are doing good or evil. Proverbs 15:3

LIGHTING A CANDLE

- ... for a loved-one
- ... for someone on your mind
- ... for a pet
- ... for peace.

A time of quiet, peace and personal reflection.
Bring something that represents your care, if you wish
South Caulfield Community House
450 Kooyong Rd. Caulfield South 5-6pm Sunday
24th May, 26th July, 23rd Aug, 27th Sept.



Neighbour Day Morning Tea – A Lovely Morning of Connection

By Kerry Rendell

We had a really lovely morning at St John's Chatty Café on 4 March, coming together to celebrate Neighbour Day with a relaxed and welcoming morning tea.

Around 29 people joined us, including at least six people who were brand new to St John's and the Chatty Café. It was wonderful to see new faces mixing in, chatting away and getting a feel for what makes this community so special.

The morning was made possible through the collaboration between Connect Local, St John's and the Chatty Café, with support from Glen Eira Council through a grant, which helped bring the event together.

A big thank you to Rhonda for organising the event and the lucky door prizes, to Lynn from Connect Local for organising all the food, and to Vicki from the Chatty Café, and Michelle from Glen Eira Council who joined us on the day. We were also lucky to have some Friends of Connect Local helping out behind the scenes in the kitchen – their support made a real difference.

Everyone enjoyed a delicious spread of cake, cheese, crackers and fruit, which gave people plenty of time (and reason!) to sit, chat and connect.

We're also very grateful to the Sandringham Life Saving Club for generously donating two Silver Saltie classes for our lucky door prizes. It was especially lovely to see residents from the local nursing home take home a good share of the prizes on the day.

One of the most special moments of the morning was celebrating Margaret's one-year anniversary. Margaret first discovered the Chatty Café at St John's during Neighbour Day in 2025, and she shared how becoming part of the café has changed her life for the better. Neighbour Day is all about simple connections, a cuppa, a conversation and a sense of belonging, and this morning was a lovely reminder of just how powerful those moments can be. Thank you to everyone who came along and helped make the day such a warm and welcoming one.



World Day of Prayer 2026

I attended the World Day of Prayer which is held on the first Friday of March in different churches throughout the world. This year's service was brought to us from the Christian women of Nigeria (flag shown above).

Nigeria has 36 states plus a federal territory with Abuja as the capital. Nigeria is the largest country in Africa with over 200 million people. Nigeria has a young population with 41 per cent under 14 years of age.

Nigeria is rich in cultural diversity with over 500 indigenous languages and over 250 ethnic groups. The official language is English. It has two main faiths Christianity and Islam.

Nigeria has the largest economy in Africa with rich oil fields and minerals. 20% of its Gross Domestic Product comes from agriculture. However, many live below the poverty line. Corruption in government is widespread. Many women and girls face difficult circumstances

The theme "I Will Give You Rest" was drawn from Matthew 11:28. We had three stories. These testimonies reflect their experiences.

Beatrice's Story

I became a widow at the age of 28. My husband was killed in a regional clash. I lost my place in society. I was alone with three young children. Poverty hit us hard. I lost our main source of income and struggled to find work as a single mother. My in-laws treated me with suspicion and tried to take away the little property my husband had left behind. But in my darkest moment I found strength in my faith and in the community of other widows, including the support program organised by my local church. People were encouraged to donate clothes, rice and money to help us. I use what little resources I have to support other widows and together we are stronger.

Jato's Story:

The Burden of Religious Persecution

My name is Jato and I am a Christian mother living in Northern Nigeria. Every day when I send my 14 year old daughter, Amina, to school my heart tightens with worry. You see Amina is the same age as Leah Sharibu was when she was taken from her school in Dapchi. Leah's story haunts me. A young girl steadfast in her faith refusing to deny Christianity in the face of captivity. It's been eight years since Boko Haram took her and still she remains their prisoner. There are areas where Christians are killed simply for their faith. It is not the same

Link April–May 2026 page 12 of 14

everywhere in Yoruba – land in the southwest Christians and Muslims live together like family.

Leah's story reminds us of the cost of this faith. In Damaturu, a small Christian community still gathers to pray for Leah's return which inspires me to continue living alongside all my neighbours Muslim and Christian alike.

Blessing's Story:

The Burden of Poverty and Despair

I have seen Nigeria change over the years, but not in the way we all hoped. We dreamed of progress, of a better life for our children, but instead our nation slides into poverty and despair. We have stopped believing that things can get better.

Salaries for most aren't enough to live on while a select few earn fortunes. A bag of rice – a staple food – is now a luxury for many families. Our young people can't find work and too many are committing suicide. Others turn to crime – kidnapping, banditry or prostitution – out of desperation. We are a nation rich in resources but poor in leadership and hope.

This is my testimony – that even in our struggles, we see evidence of God's faithfulness. We may be burdened, but we are not broken. We continue to work, to hope, to pray for the Nigeria we know is possible.

Audrey

A Litany for Pentecost

Let us pray to God the Holy Spirit, saying: Come, Holy Spirit, come.

Come, Holy Spirit, creator,
and renew the face of the earth.

Come, Holy Spirit, come.

Come, Holy Spirit, counsellor,
and touch our lips that we may proclaim
your word.

Come, Holy Spirit, come.

Come, Holy Spirit, power from on high:
make us agents of peace and ministers of
wholeness.

Come, Holy Spirit, come.

Come, Holy Spirit, breath of God,
give life to the dry bones of this exiled age,
and make us a living people, holy and free.

Come, Holy Spirit, come.

Come, Holy Spirit, wisdom and truth:
strengthen us in the risk of faith.

Come, Holy Spirit, come.

*Book of Alternative Services 1985, Anglican
Church of Canada. Uniting in worship, p. 199.*

Recently Seen

1. Concentrating at Craft, Games and Chat. 2. Chatty Church with Cathy. 3. Patricia with Pauline supplied tasty pancakes for Pancake Day. 4. Happy Birthday Gwen. 5. Congratulations on the Big One, Patricia. 6. Great to see Josephine. 7a, 7b and 7c. Happy retirement for Alex. 8. Friday Friends at the Glasshouse. 9. Remember the Peace Tree.



St John's Uniting Church, Elsternwick

Roster & diary dates for April and May 2026

Good Friday Service 9.30am

April	3 Good Friday	5 Easter Day*	12 Easter 2	19 Easter 3	26 Easter 4	April Diary Dates
Leader	Rev Dr L Dungan	Rev Dr L Dungan	Dr Greg Smith	Rev Dr L Dungan	Rev Dr L Dungan	Birthdays No birthdays
Lectionary Readings	Is 52:13–53:12; Ps 22; Heb 10:16–25 or Heb 4:14–16; 5:7–9; Jn 18:1–19:42	Acts 10:34–43 or Jer 31:1–6; Ps 118:1–2, 14–24; Col 3:1–4 or Acts 10:34–43; Jn 20:1–18 or Mt 28:1–10	Acts 2:14a, 22–32; Ps 16; 1 Pt 1:3–9; Jn 20:19–31	Acts 2:14a, 36–41; Ps 116:1–4, 12–19; 1 Pt 1:17–23; Lk 24:13–35	Acts 2:42–47; Ps 23; 1 Pt 2:19–25; Jn 10:1–10	Events 3 Good Friday service @ 9.30 12 Sunday Night@ St John's @ 5.30 24 Friday Friends @12.15
Prayer	Rod	Greg	Patricia	Audrey	Cathy	Weekly Craft & Chat Monday @1–3 Chatty Café Wednesday @10–12 Peace Vigil Wednesdays @ 4
Greeters	Rhonda	Raj	Colin	Alex	Raj	* Holy Communion
Readers	Don	Audrey	Alex	Greg	Patricia	
Data Projector	Geoff	Geoff	Cathy	Cathy	Greg	
Steward/Offering	Patricia/Raj	Andrea/Raj	Cathy/Colin	Andrea/Raj	Cathy/Raj	
Morning Tea	—	Barbi/Rod	Luchee/Pat	Audrey/Colin	Wendy/Alex	
Flowers	—	Patricia	Alex	Wendy	Audrey	

May	3 Easter 5*	10 Easter 6	17 Easter 7	24 Pentecost	31 Trinity Sunday	May Diary Dates
Leader	Rev Dr L Dungan	Rev Dr L Dungan	Rev Dr L Dungan	Rev Dr L Dungan	Cathy McNicol	Birthdays 10 Alex E 15 Geoff 16 Don 22 Lynette 23 Greg 24 Michael F 25 Luchee
Lectionary Readings	Acts 7:55–60; Ps 31:1–5, 15–16; 1 Pt 2:2–10; Jn 14:1–14	Acts 17:22–31; Ps 66:8–20; 1 Pt 3:13–22; Jn 14:15–21	Acts 1:6–14; Ps 68:1–10, 32–35 ;1 Pt 4:12–14, 5:6–11; Jn 17:1–11	Acts 2:1–21 or Num 11:24–30; Ps 104:24–34, 35b; 1 Cor 12:3b–13 or Acts 2:1–21; Jn 20:19–23 or Jn 7:37–39	Gn 1:1 – 2:4a; Ps 8; 2 Cor 13:11–13; Mt 28:16–20	Events 10 Sunday Night@St John's 5.30 24 Reflection at CSCH @5 29 Friday Friends @12.15
Prayer	Patricia	Greg	Cathy	Lynette	Audrey	Weekly Craft & Chat Monday @1–3 Chatty Café Wednesday @10–12 Peace Vigil Wednesdays @4–5
Greeters	Alex	Raj	Colin	Rhonda	Raj	* Holy Communion
Readers	Rod	Don	Audrey	Alex	Patricia	
Data Projector	Geoff	Cathy	Geoff	Cathy	Greg	
Steward/Offering	Cathy/Raj	Andrea/Raj	Cathy/Colin	Andrea/Colin	Rhonda/Raj	
Morning Tea	Luchee/Barbi	Rhonda/Denise	Wendy/Pat	Audrey/Barbi	Alex/Colin	
Flowers	Patricia	Alex	Wendy	Rhonda	Audrey	