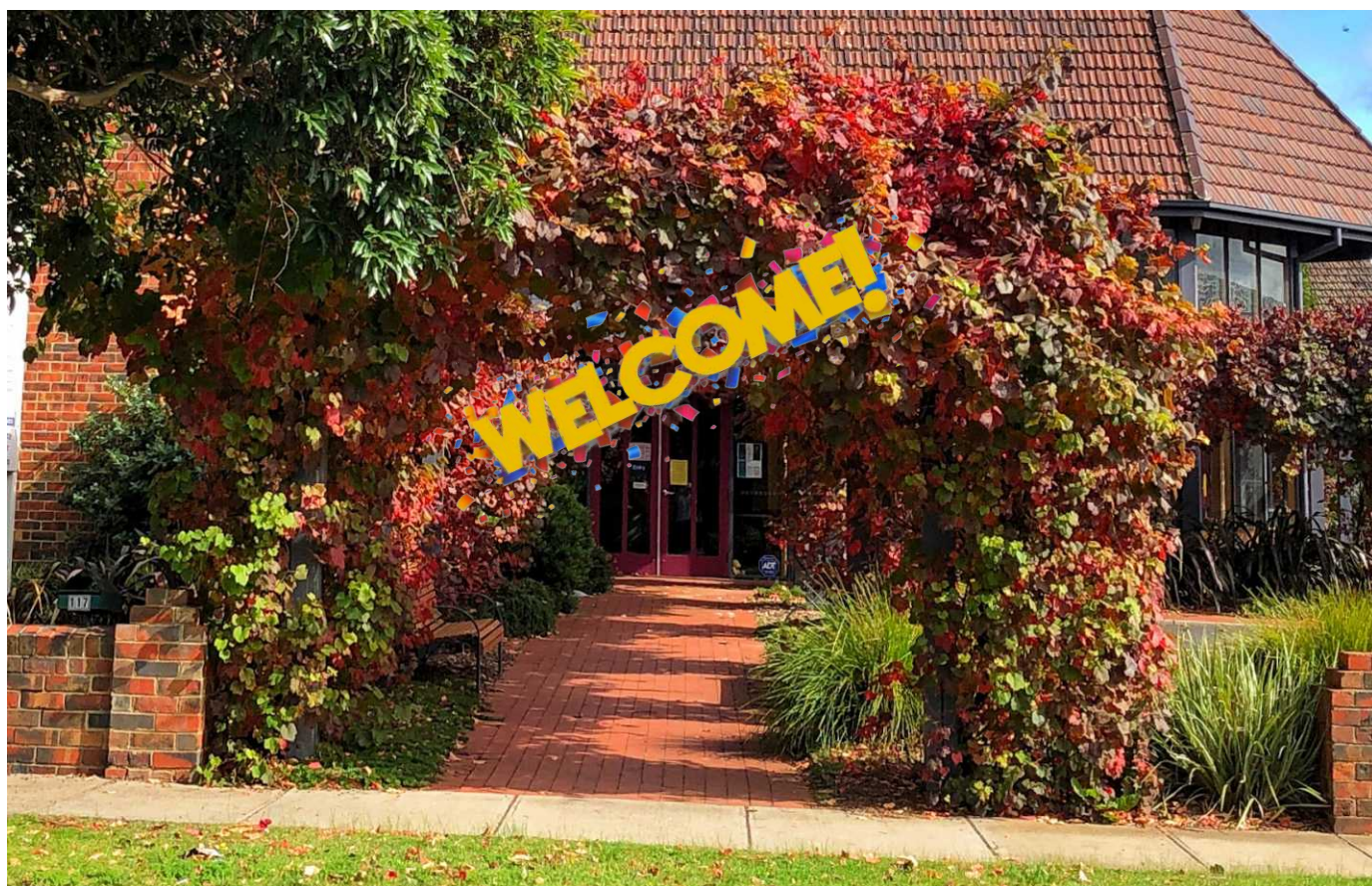


MUC Magazine

The News and Views of the
Murrumbeena Uniting Church



To make Christ known by preaching the
gospel in word and deed

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The Uniting Church in Australia
MURRUMBEENA UNITING CHURCH

August – September 2020

MINISTRY TEAM

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Minister

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0432 714 758



ZAK HANYN

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CHURCH COUNCIL



CHAIR:

**Alison Campbell
Rate**

0438 569 690



TREASURER:

Greg Pressey



Doug Faram

Also responsible for Pastoral Care
0422 033 283



Jo Petzer



Rachel Dart
Minutes Secretary



Margaret Reid



Dave Robinson
Correspondence Secretary

ORGANISATIONS AND GROUPS

Community Garden
Craft Circle
Drop In
Adult Fellowship
Friendship Fellas (Men's Group)
LIFT (Women's Group)

THE CHURCH

Adult Bible Studies
Pastoral Care
Worship Band
Lending Library

YOUNG ADULTS (18-35)

Getaway
Sonder Collective
Studies
Sunday Brunch

YOUTH (13-17)

Camps
Youthy

CHILDREN & FAMILIES

Families
» F.E.A.S.T
» Family Craft Days
» Family Movie Days
Kids
» Countdown to Christmas
» Kids' Time
Mainly Music

**GLENDAL
LEIGH**

Culture of Safety contact person
9568 8177



As I write this Editorial, it is now 128 days since lockdown restrictions were initially imposed in Victoria. A year ago, who would have imagined that we would be living and doing things in the manner to which we are now being forced? I use the term "forced" quite deliberately, since we risk severe fines for non-compliance with the imposed restrictions.

That said, we have managed to adapt reasonably well. Our Sunday worship services are available online and, from the statistics that Jay has elicited, our following is higher than it was on most Sundays when we had live worship together. I suspect that phone and email contact amongst our members is at least on a par with the face-to-face contact we used to have when meeting on Sunday mornings or in our various group activities.

In regards to our adaptations, our worship service on Sunday 26th July turned out to be a very successful experiment – it started in the Community Garden and later moved into the sanctuary of the church. Just goes to show that, regardless of the obstacles which are put in our way, "We can do all things through Christ, who strengthens us." [paraphrase of Philippians 4:13.]

Since we are in lockdown for quite a few weeks to come, I have included a couple of puzzles and quizzes to help keep you occupied (if you were running out of things to do). More significantly, Anne Don has done an impressive job of compiling information about the development of our church in Murrumbreena, marking our 130th Anniversary. Part 1, covering the period up to 1975 was in the previous edition of the MUC MAG. Part 2, which extends to 2003 is contained here for you to read and absorb.

Read and enjoy!

Roger McCowan

Please e-mail articles to: triumphguru@gmail.com, or hand them to Roger on a Sunday, preferably no later than 13th September.

CONTACTS

In view of the developments regarding COVID19, decisions have been made for many of Murrumbreena Uniting Church's events to be put on hold for the time being. These group activities will be resumed when deemed safe to do so. If you have suggestions for group activities at this time, or wish to find out a bit more about any one of the groups, the contact details for the various groups that host these events are given below.

Thursday Pancake Drop-In
Pam Wight 0459 226 070

Knitting and Craft Circle
Glynis Ramsay 0407 506 662

Friendship Fellas
Roger McCowan 0439 711 381
Geoff Edwards 0409 568 206

Lending Library
Anne Don 9578 4217

LIFT
Mary-Lou Keur 0409 937 727
Roz Franklin 0403 762 695

mainly music
9568 8177

Sonder Collective
Kelly Skilton 0432 714 758

Murrumbreena Community Garden
Kay Pentland
Glynis Ramsay 0407 506 662

Murrumbreena Uniting Afternoon Fellowship Group
Anne Don 9578 4217

Women's Bible Study
Alison Campbell Rate
0438 569 690

Youth Band
David Robinson 0439 610 960

As well as our own website at <https://www.murrumbreenauniting.org.au/> you might find the following links of interest (if you haven't already).

facebook.com/murrumbreenauniting/ - Live stream of 10:00am Worship and Service

murrumbreenauniting.online.church - Live stream of 10:00am Worship and Service

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-v0xIBPkGfZJcOl062yCjg/> - recorded Service

Online morning tea via Zoom at 11:05am. <https://zoom.us/j/91623114220> (Meeting ID: 916 2311 4220, Password: 015916), or by phone +61370182005,,91623114220#,,#015916#.



Well, we are in a completely different space at the beginning of this issue of the MUC Mag than we hoped we would be. As we move into August we are not sure when we will be able to gather together in the one place again, but it is great that we can still gather in our various places and at various times to worship God and pray for our people and the world.

Much of what I said last MUC Mag is true for this one. A huge thank you to all who have been calling, praying, dropping things in letterboxes or running errands when needed. One of the requests for us to share amongst ourselves contact details has come from this desire to connect. So, if you are happy for your contact details to be shared amongst our people do let Sue in the office know. There is no obligation to do this so please know that a 'no' is absolutely fine.

Our use of technology is getting better, although every now and again it falters. Church Council is continually working on sourcing the necessary skills and equipment for us to continue to live stream and record our worship services. I thought you might be interested in reading a bit of one of my reports to Church Council on our reach through our various technologies:

Our Facebook live streams seem to be getting 13-18 visitors per week watching as the service is actually being recorded. Statistics tell us that we are getting some 154 views on average each week, we don't have the information around how long they may watch, is it the full service or just a quick pop in and peek, and we do know that we are getting people joining us from around the world. Our church on line is getting an average of 14 people joining us at the time of the service taking place.

Roger has been upgrading our YouTube video by splicing in some of the power point slides and video. Thank you Roger! We are getting, on average, around 16 views per week on YouTube and then we add to that the 10 people who are getting USBs weekly. There are a further 8 members who are just getting printed material, so Bruce and I do a weekly run to 18 of our people. Keeping the base numbers in mind this means we are reaching at least 55 people per week, not too bad.

Zoom morning tea is still continuing and our numbers are up and down but I think those who do join us really appreciate it. We are also getting a couple of members call in on their phones.

Since I've last written to you, we've lost some treasured members or connections of our community. The first was Dr Colin Williams who is now at rest from all that ailed him. To be able to have a service in the church that allowed 50 people to attend was very special for the family and for us. We thank Colin for his love of the church and his commitment to it and the people of the church, as well as the local community. We continue to pray for Lois and the family as they adjust to the loss of Colin.

Doug, Greg and Marg Edwards have all lost parents in the last month and all have experienced the challenges of only allowing a small number of people to gather and farewell their loved one. Our prayers are also with them and their families.

A celebration we have had to kind of put off is that of the 130th anniversary of continuous worship and service in Murrumbidgee. Anne has been great in giving us the history behind this and when we can gather again we will celebrate with cake!

Continue to take care of yourselves, make sure you let us know if you need help, and know that you are all in my prayers and the prayers of each other.

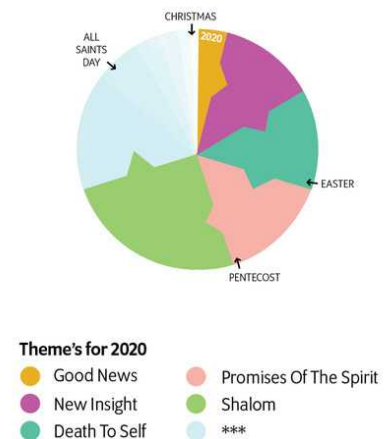
Jay



LECTIONARY READINGS FOR AUGUST

2 nd August	John 4:1-29	Unraveled Shame
9 th August	John 20:19-29	When the unimaginable has happened
16 th August	Exodus 1:22, 2:1-10	When our plans for our children unravel
23 rd August	Job 28:12-28	Seeking understanding when everything has fallen apart
30 th August	Mark 5:1-20	The unravelling of the mind
6 th September		
13 th Sept		
20 th Sept		
27 th Sept		

THE YEAR OF 2020 Grounded as God's People



As Zak, Kelly and I have been looking at our readings and lectionary, we haven't quite made up our minds where to next.

We've been using the Narrative Lectionary which runs from the 2nd Sunday in September until Pentecost Sunday. It also runs over four years so we spend a fair bit of time in each of the four gospels during the year.

Between Pentecost Sunday and September we've been working on some series or something with a particular focus over more than a couple of weeks. This year we've been working through the Unraveled Series that will take us up until September.

There is the Revised Common Lectionary that most of you are probably more familiar with even if you don't know what it's called. This runs for three years, has a focus on Matthew, Mark and Luke with bits of John added throughout the year.

We've done four years with the Narrative Lectionary and are trying to decide what next. We think we'll take some time to look at some of the less known biblical stories or themes until Advent and this will give us some time for conversation and thought. You'll need to watch this space for more details.

Jay

THE IMPOSSIBLY DIFFICULT BIBLE QUIZ

This quiz is not as easy as it might appear at first glance. Therefore, clues have been provided with Bible text references. Good luck!

1. The first prophet mentioned in the Bible (Exodus 15:20).
2. The first prophet mentioned in the New Testament (Luke 2:36-38).
3. The disciples who gave their own money to support Jesus in his ministry (Luke 8:1-3).
4. The first people to see Jesus alive again after the resurrection (Matthew 28: 1-10).
5. The first person in Europe to become converted to Christianity (Acts 16: 11-15).
6. A teacher in the early church, who probably wrote The Letter to the Hebrews (Acts 18:2-26, Romans 16:3, I Corinthians 16:19).
7. Disciples, other than the twelve, who followed Jesus throughout his ministry (Mark 15:40-41).

Answers on page 16.

Dear people of Murrumbidgee Uniting Church, another two months, another article and another 6 week lock down. So much is going on in the world, and so much has changed, and yet so much of what matters has remained the same. Even though we are not able to meet in person, the spirit is here with us whenever and wherever and however we meet.

I am loving my role here, as there are great people and amazing opportunities. I work in a healthy and caring team and feel honoured to be a part of the Ministry here. A highlight of the past couple of months has been going round and visiting some of the families and spending time getting to know them. Thanks for your hospitality and conversations.

For those connecting with us in the service, you will know we are in week 4 of a new series called Unraveled as I write this. To think this series was written last year and yet so deeply speaks to how our plans, communities, lives and globe have unravelled in the wake of this pandemic. Planning for Sundays has been really enjoyable, as Jay is such a delight to work with, and learn from.

We had plans to begin a fortnightly gathering in the park for our families, but these new restrictions have thrown a spanner in the works. In keeping with this new initiative, I will be sending out a survey soon to gauge how you are feeling about worship, pastoral care, the online space and just all things Church.

Speaking of Church - I read a quote this week that I feel really speaks to our current situation. "Church, a human connection of love, not a building; a life style, not a weekly activity; an act of service, not a service to attend". While I have had conversations with many in the Church and share the expressed yearning to gather in person once again, I remind myself and all of us that Church is not closed, we are just Churching differently.

Thanks to all those people who have sent in words for the service, planted patiently, phoned others to connect, shared stories, prayed with me and been involved in different ways at Church. A special thanks to Roger for his engineering brain and assistance in pulling off the experiment a few weeks back.

Anyway, enough from me, I asked Caroline one of the people in our Church to write a reflection for me on my Ministry and all that has been going on at Church and how her family has engaged with what we have been doing together.

LIFE IN LOCKDOWN WITH THE KWONGS

Lotte's baptism was celebrated during one of the last services when we were able to meet together in person. Looking back on that day with the hindsight of lockdown brings a couple of things in to sharp focus. What a joy it was to be able to have our families there when we introduced Lotte to her church family and what a privilege it was for her to



Kay's Patience Plant



Zak walking on water



Flynn with his Patience Plant

be welcomed into that community by being marked with the sign of the cross by each member of the congregation there that day. It will be a while before we are able to return to such a practice, if ever. And so that day and that service becomes even more special, highlighting the community we have, rooted in our love of God and for each other.

Life has changed since then. It was with sadness that we farewelled my parents, not knowing when they will next be able to visit, but we have cherished the slower pace of life and the quality time we have been able to spend as a family. Our weeks have been brightened by thoughtful gifts dropped off by the church (including some very memorable hot cross buns!) and visits from Zak, the ever-cheerful cyclist despite the wet and windy weather thrown at him. Ellie has enjoyed these visits and the movie night Zak organised, despite finishing all the popcorn before we had even started the movie! Most recently we have been practising the skill of patience following on from Zak's Murrumbenees talk about the patience shown by Abraham and Sarah. Each morning we have watered our plant pot and we were so excited when we saw the beans starting to stick their shoots above the soil. We are looking forward to caring for these seedlings until they are ready to plant outside in our newly cleared veggie garden.

Finally, a special thank you to our elder Dave who has kept in touch throughout, sent Ellie photos of the animals from the farm and organised a catch up walk with Charlie and his family. Ellie and Charlie were very excited to see each other again and had great fun pretending to be dinosaurs!

Thanks to Caroline for writing this piece.

I have also included a few photos of what our people have been up to lately.

Until I write again,

Zak.



Chalk drawings at Charlie and Jasmin's house

SEARCHWORD PUZZLE

NOAH'S ARK

Help Noah find these animals to go into the Ark before it starts to rain.

E	V	S	C	O	W	N	R	M	O	T	V	W
A	G	O	R	F	O	X	E	O	K	C	U	D
U	Q	R	B	T	M	Q	G	L	B	G	B	O
M	Y	A	R	A	B	B	I	T	O	I	L	N
E	L	E	P	H	A	N	T	A	T	P	N	K
Z	I	B	C	A	T	G	I	R	A	F	F	E
D	O	G	K	A	N	G	A	R	O	O	T	Y
Y	N	H	O	R	S	E	D	S	G	V	Z	O

Bear	Goat
Cat	Horse
Cow	Kangaroo
Dog	Lion
Donkey	Pig
Elephant	Rabbit
Emu	Rat
Fox	Robin
Frog	Tiger
Giraffe	Wombat

LOCKDOWN MINISTRY?

And here we are in lockdown again.

But what does youth and young adults ministry look like during COVID? To be honest, it isn't that different in practice, though is very different in lifestyle.

Often people believe the younger generations are able to adapt easily into the lockdown climate, as we are already a digitally connected community. It might come to you as a surprise that studies have determined the largest age group affected by the pandemic are those within Generation Z (born 1995 - 2012) and Generation Y (born 1980 - 1994). This is interesting to look at as many have thought the younger generations to be the least affected as majority do not fall in the 'high risk' category.

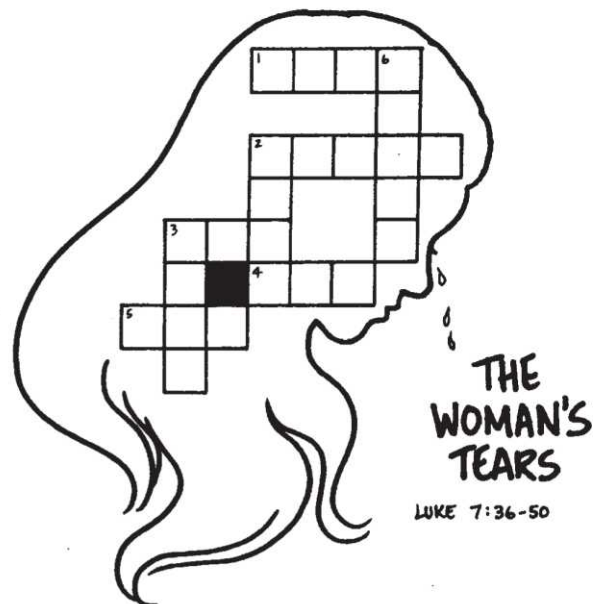
Our teenagers and young adults are those who predominately work in the hospitality and retail sector, both of which have had the majority of restrictions placed upon them. They are unable to continue to do work from the safety of their houses, and so the rise of anxiety has been astronomical during these times. In the first-third of life, we see that individuals celebrate many rites of passage, and our teenagers are currently unable to celebrate these life occasions, such as birthday's and graduations, with their peers or extended families. We see that teenagers and the younger adults (such as the Gen Z's, and others around Zak's age) are the majority of those who are still studying. It has been no surprise that schooling during this time has been heavily affected. We have seen a number of adjustments to ensure good education, though anxieties are shown to have elevated due to the pressures of not being able to learn in a classroom beside peers. Further than this is the predictions that COVID will have the economic and health (mental and physical) effects of the same levels caused by the Great Depression.

Our older young adults (such as myself and those within the Gen Y category) often have young children and parents in the older age bracket. This continual concern of the safety of their mothers and fathers, as well as the future for their children, is one of the things that keeps many Gen Y's up at night. In another space, some have still been able to manage to work from home (like our teachers, accountants, business analysts, etc.) though have had to endure a cultural shift of productivity. A lot of these individuals are also parents of young children whom they are having to entertain and educate while they are working — and for a lucky few they have managed to continue childcare, there is the concern of the safety of each person as they enter 'a petri dish' of families and daily contacts.

These are the stressors that the youth and young adults are facing, and ministering in this different lifestyle proves difficult. Even though young people are digital natives, it has not made this time one of ease. In fact, through the extra work and anxieties we find ourselves celebrating the times we have managed to connect together for an hour or two.

Not only is this a reminder to check in with those who are a part of our church community, but it is also where we are able to be people of grace when it has been hard to connect or do not get a response. A lot of the time the youth and young adults are trying to catch up on the sleep they are missing.

Kelly



ACROSS

- 1) THE WOMAN WASHED JESUS' _____ WITH HER TEARS.
- 2) OPPOSITE OF MAN (FEMALE)
- 3) OPPOSITE OF HERS
- 4) JESUS FORGAVE _____ SINS (OPPOSITE OF HIS).
- 5) TO BREAK GOD'S LAW

DOWN

- 2) TO CLEAN SOMETHING WITH WATER - _____ DISHES
- 3) LONG STRANDS THAT GROW ON OUR HEADS - RHYMES WITH "FAIR"
- 6) _____ COME FROM OUR EYES WHEN WE CRY.

MURRUMBEENA UNITING CHURCH

130TH ANNIVERSARY 12TH JULY 2020

Editor's note: The following is the transcript of a message that was presented as a short video during our worship service on Sunday 12th July.

GREETINGS AND BLESSINGS FROM THE MODERATOR, DENISE LIERSCH

Greetings to you all on this day of celebration, marking 130 years of life together as a Christian community - 130 continuous years of being a community gathering in worship and prayer, in sharing the love of Christ and serving your local community, of working together and witnessing to the grace and peace of God.

Jay shared with me your pew sheet from last week, and I joined in your worship last week - via the recording - so I heard a little of your hopes and plans together as a community, looking forward to things starting to open up a little more. I can only imagine how today must feel for you - not quite what you would ever have imagined just a few months back, of how you would be celebrating this special day.

But you are gathered together. And you have stayed gathered together over 130 years, through many challenges before these times. And whether you are new to this community, or have been a part of the community for generations, you are part of a huge gathered Christian family, held together in Christ, all worshipping and praying together in love and hope, this morning. Just yesterday morning, we had a Synod Standing Committee meeting, and I spoke about you, about this community of Murrumbeena Uniting Church, celebrating 130 years together as a faithful people - and we prayed for you.



I'd like to bring you now, a blessing on this special day:

*May the God who calls heaven and earth into being,
give you breath to sing.*

*May the God who opens our eyes and our hearts,
lift you up when you are weighed down,
and surround you with love.*

*May the Divine One who loves you and cares for you,
watch over your sleep and your living.*

May the God who keeps faith with us,

hold you and keep you all the days of your life. (words inspired by Psalm 146)

Happy 130th anniversary, Murrumbeena!

COUNCIL CORNER

Unfortunately the former manse at 159 Murrumbeena Rd was not deemed by Uniting to be a suitable site for a 'rapid housing project', a possibility flagged in the last Council Corner. Council will continue to consider options for this property and will come to the congregation with any proposals. Other property news - Kelly is moving out of 113 Murrumbeena Rd (next door to the church) to a unit in Rosella St. We will look at what needs to be done with 113 and the options for that property. For those who don't know, 113 was originally purchased in order to provide a wide enough driveway access for the rear carpark when the church was redeveloped about 15 years ago. It has been rented out since then, with Kelly (and friends) being there for the past few years.

Many thanks to everyone who is keeping in touch with other members of the congregation and keeping the community going with prayer and friendship.

Alison Campbell Rate

Chair, Church Council

"The history of the Church of Jesus Christ is the history of multitudes of congregations from the Book of Acts until now. The humblest story therefore becomes sublime." Rev. W. Howden in Foreword to St Giles Presbyterian Church Murrumbeena 1890-1955. July 1955

Part 1: 1890 – 1975, which was included in the MUC Magazine June-July 2020, introduced Murrumbeena in the 1880s and 1890s and acknowledged the countless numbers of church members like Alexander McLaurin who contributed in so many ways to our church history but could not all be named in this account. The Story in Brief told the Presbyterian beginnings in 1890 – the 2nd July meeting and 13th July first Service – and outlined the story of building and activities up to 1974, noting the challenges faced along the way. Photos of the original wooden Presbyterian Church of 1893, its extension as the Sunday School in Murrumbeena Road and the 1934 St Giles brick church were included. Murrumbeena Methodist Church provided a similar outline, with photos of the original wooden church and the 1928 brick church. Two early memories concluded Part 1.



Anne Don

PART 2: 1974 – 2003

THE JOINT PARISH – MURRUMBEENA UNITED CHURCH (METHODIST/PRESBYTERIAN) 1975 – JUNE 1977

In the 1970s, plans to form an Australia-wide Uniting Church from the Congregational, Methodist and Presbyterian Churches were underway. In 1974 Murrumbeena Methodist Church – without a settled Minister and strongly in favour of union – approached the larger St Giles Presbyterian Church – which had a Minister – requesting the formation of a Joint Parish. After discussions within the congregations and consultation with both Churches' State bodies, the congregations were united on 3rd January 1975, with the Presbyterian Rev. A.L. Pollock as Minister and with part-time ordained assistance.

Union was made easier because both Churches' parallel history of development, similar worship, service and outreach groups and activities, a history of co-operation for years in social and sporting activities and more recently in Sunday School and Prayer Groups. Both churches since 1964 had also shared Good Friday morning worship with Murrumbeena Baptist Church. [It had also begun in 1890 – constituted on 18th May, first Service on 29th June and first building erected in 1892 on the present site.] However, time and patience were needed for the members of both congregations to understand and reconcile differences – for example, in approaches to worship, particularly communion, in the titles and workings of the governing bodies – and in deciding how to combine committees and activities into workable groups.

At first, Sunday worship was held alternately in each church, different forms of Communion used, new interim names for the two governing bodies adopted, and committees were large and discussions long. Groups with similar purposes combined. Others like the St Giles Flower Guild (1969 –) and Methodist Lamington Ladies (1970 –) gained new members. Volunteers continued on the various rosters and in such activities as caring for the church gardens.

After making the difficult decision to conduct worship permanently on the St Giles site, the final Worship Service in the Methodist Church was conducted on 13th April, 1975. A new organ, considered for St Giles prior to Union, was purchased in December 1975. The Church Choirs combined, working with the Methodist Choirmaster and Organist, and continued to lead hymn singing and provide anthems as had been the tradition in each congregation since their early years. Earlier in 1975, a Community Hymn Singing Afternoon was recorded in the Methodist Church for Sunday Radio and later that year there was a City – Country Exchange with Maffra Church. The Friday Friendship Centre outreach began its life in 1975.

Fusion was chosen in 1976 to use the Methodist suite of buildings. This group of young Christian adults had begun in Sydney as Teen Crusaders in 1960, then branched interstate. Thus began a long association as Fusion developed a variety of Christian outreach activities for local youth, families and older age groups, and some church members became volunteers.

THE UNITING CHURCH

MURRUMBEENA – HUGHESDALE PARISH 1977 – 1988

St Giles joined Tara Grove Methodist and Hughesdale Congregational Churches as one Uniting Church Parish in June 1977, with Colin McLean (Hughesdale) and Rev. Frank Elmore (part-time from Murrumbeena) sharing ministry with Rev. Lex Pollock. The Hughesdale Congregation dated its formal start to 18th March 1917. They already had erected a wooden church in 1909 and, when that was destroyed by fire in 1916, laid the foundation stone for the new brick church later that year. Tara Grove – originally South Carnegie Methodist – opened in September 1957 as a Church planted by some younger members of the Grange Road, Glenhuntly, Methodist Congregation, was a church largely composed of young couples with young families at the beginning, but now grown older. Seating was movable, worship innovative, All-Age Services a tradition and the Ladies' Fellowship very strong. The original pedal organ by 1977 had been replaced by a piano and clarinet or saxophone accompaniment.

The three churches continued their worship and other activities separately. There were occasionally joint gatherings on one site and Sunday School classes were shared. At St Giles, with the encouragement of Lex and his wife Mabel, Sunday Forum teas with speakers were tried. Annual New Year's Eve Watchnight Services began – starting at 11:30pm after shared supper at the Manse. New groups like the Warrawee Club for single women commenced and lunch was introduced at the Friday Friendship Centre. Fusion continued its work, in spite of the 1977 fire destroying the former wooden Methodist buildings at the rear of the property. Exchange trips with Belmont Church and three long church trips extending out of Victoria took place. Early in 1978, the Methodist 'Good Shepherd' window from the Beck family was incorporated into St Giles Church with many plaques and was re-dedicated – “a symbol of our coming together” (Rev. Pollock on 4th June).

A new Publicity Committee was formed. It continued the tradition of publishing a regular church paper, begun decades earlier as *St Giles Church Record*. Called *Encounter*, begun in 1978, published three times a year with church news (local and beyond) devotional items, directory, calendar and Minister's message, it developed over its lifetime; labour intensive and relying on volunteers from beginning to distribution, its final edition came out at Easter 1997. The Committee also set up the St Giles Church Lending Library, first opened on 1st July 1979 after Church worship and still in use today (2020) after undergoing many changes of accommodation, opening times, and accompanying refreshments.

1982 began with a memorable “Back to St Giles” and closed with a farewell to Lex and Mabel after 20 years of much valued, dedicated service in the Presbyterian, United and Uniting congregation here.

Rev. Derek Evans ministered at St Giles and in the Parish from 1983 until his tragic death in February 1988. He encouraged the growth of the youth groups and the Youth Orchestra's formation and supported the activities of Fusion and the local Inter-Church Council – some studies and services and a local census took place. A Parish Council of Elders was set up. There were more Parish Services and activities. In 1984, after the Ash Wednesday bushfires, a church bus trip took plants to the Anglesea congregation. At St Giles the Men's Brotherhood ceased meeting but continued its practical work in and beyond the Church. A Prayer Network and Discipleship Group began in 1987. That year, the Flower Guild provided uniform cushions for the Church's wooden pews and on 24th May, following many discussions, Sanctuary alterations were dedicated – enabled by a bequest from our long-serving, faithful, first woman Elder, Miss Beryl Crooke. Some Parish folk became interested in activities supporting the Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress which culminated in a ceremony at Sandown Park – including an attempt at a Guinness Record of laying gold coins.

Church, Parish and Ecumenical activities continued in 1988. Rev. McLean was assisted first by Rev. Robin Denholm, then Pastor Richard McRae. A weekday KUCA* Club for children began. A Parish Retreat and Conference took place, as did discussions on the future of the Parish. It was Bi-centennial Year and some members attended the 18th June Bonfire Celebrations which followed the opening of the New Parliament House in Canberra in May. On that occasion, thousands of Christians marched, formed a circle of prayer round the new building, then held an Overnight Vigil and a Dawn Service.

* KUCA = Kids of the Uniting Church in Australia. Began at St Giles in 1998 on Thursday afternoons for primary-school age children. Terms were six weeks. The sybol/logo was a kookaburra.

MURRUMBEENA PARISH – ST GILES/TARA GROVE 1989-1996

The new Parish continued regular activities in 1989 with Pastor McRae while a Parish Selection Committee and Parish Mission Committee considered the future. Tara Grove organised its own preaching plan. Sunday School and KUCA continued and our teenagers were invited to the Coatesville Youth Group. A call was issued to Rev. Robert Brown in June, sad news came of Lex Pollock's death in July and planning began for centenary celebrations to come in 1990. Pastor McRae was thanked for his pastoral care and thoughtful sermons and his wife, Val, for her support and involvement at their farewell on 29th October 1989.

Rev. Bob Brown was inducted on 17th January 1990, Good Friday that year was again celebrated with Murrumbeena Baptist Church and a Planned Giving Programme undertaken in April/May.

The long-awaited Centenary celebrations occupied Sunday 15th July, officially from the 10:30am Worship Service until the 4:30pm Afternoon Tea with birthday cake. Over 450 present and past members and former Ministers attended to celebrate both the Presbyterian and Methodist past, enjoy buffet lunch, afternoon speakers and music, view displays and exchange memories. Past choir members joined the present members after some practice sessions. A special 'Order of Service and the Day' and a short history – *100 years in Murrumbeena* were produced and an audio-cassette made of the Morning Worship and Afternoon Session. Following this event, it was decided to start a Book of Remembrance, recording each year the names of deceased members and significant events, and to read them each year at a special All Saints Service in November. This began in 1991. On All Saints Sunday in 1994 there was a dedication of a special cabinet, made by Dr. Colin Williams using timber from the original St Giles 1934 pulpit, to house the Book. A beautiful bookmark embroidered by Mrs Florence Burton marks the current year.

The churches here (and elsewhere) faced challenges to their thinking and activities in the 1990s. Overseas conflicts and natural disasters were regularly in the news. Many Australians saw this country now as a secular, multi-cultural and post-Christian society. Christianity was losing some of its special status and Sundays, Christmas Day and Good Friday were no longer held sacrosanct by many. The proposal to introduce casinos and poker machines in Victoria was much debated. At the 1991 7th Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Canberra, issues of faith and culture were raised and Christians from warring countries came face-to-face in worship and discussions. The UCA was discussing the Basis of Union, Church Structure, Sexuality, the Environment and a Covenant with Aboriginal peoples and seeking the views of its members on all these. Locally, the changing nature of the congregations and finances were of concern.

Parish worship continued as before with some combined services and the annual Good Friday morning with Murrumbeena Baptist congregation. Members joined other Christians in the Melbourne Awakening Easter Marches and other ecumenical activities. The annual Spring Fair re-started, with members of both churches involved, as was the case with some of the groups and activities within each church.

At St Giles some activities ceased, including the KUCA Club in 1991 and former Brotherhood Men's Wastepaper Project in 1992. A Congregational Development Committee was formed and a Pastoral Care Committee and Prayer Chain commenced. Other new ventures included a Christmas Eve Carol and Communion Service, Thursday Service of Prayer and Bible Study, Lenten and Winter Bible Studies, a Casserole Bank, and a Tuesday morning outreach Coffee Shop. The Tennis Club – social and competition – was the last of the many sporting clubs originating in the decades before 1974 to still exist.

On 15th March 1992, there was a special re-dedication of the foundation stone of the 1928 Murrumbeena Methodist Church, relocated in the garden beside the Macdonald Hall. The Methodist Church had been sold and demolished in 1991, after a long history as a loved 'House of God' and then home to many Fusion outreach activities.

On 13th August 1995, a special Worship Service was held to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the ending of WW-II. Talks were given by two returned P.O.W. servicemen – Mr. Ian Jack and Mr Wal Hicks – and by Mrs Gwen Salmon who had served in Melbourne. These were followed by a special morning tea with an historical display in the Main Hall. The tape and transcript of the talks is in the Church Library. *Encounter* issues that year contained memories from the 1940s.

During these years, the church also held a 'Time of Sabbath' and a bus tour to other churches, employed a part-time Office Secretary, bought copies of *Sing Alleluia* and a photocopier to replace the Gestetner duplicating machine, and in 1993 dedicated a stained-glass window in the Chapel to Mr

Christianz, a member from 1975. In 1993, damage was done during a break-in of the Church Office before Christmas. Mr. Bruce Miller became St Giles' Church Organist for six months, following the death in November 1995 of Miss Gwen Thomas – the Methodist Organist from pre-United days. Earlier that year Rev. Bob Brown graduated Doctor of Theology. His acceptance of a Call elsewhere and subsequent departure at the end February 1996 led to further discussions on the future of this congregation and the Parish; again they faced the vital question, asked by faithful leaders and members of this congregation so often in the past: how to be the Christian Church in this age, worshipping, nurturing present members, encouraging new ones, witnessing to the Good News through word and deed to the local community and wider world, working in harmony with other Christian groups and being good stewards of our finances and property.

Rev. Peter Bachelor, ably supported by his wife, Beth, was our Interim Minister from March to December 1996. With enthusiasm he introduced new ideas into worship: June was 'Memory Month', culminating in the 1st July Service which included the Presbyterian 'dressing the Church' for Communion and the Methodist Covenant Service; he encouraged the children with stories and activities during worship; a combination of old favourites and new hymns and songs were tried with the aid of our new organist and Choir Leader, Mrs Elaine Moyle, who stayed with us until early 1999. Good Friday with the Baptist folk, the Spring Fair and other regular activities and groups continued in both churches. The closure of the Kildonan Oakleigh Opportunity Shop in May ended 33 years association of St Giles women with Kildonan in several support roles. A Sunday afternoon bus tour to the Dandenong Ranges and the 30th November St Andrew's Night at St Giles were memorable Parish events. Peter's support and encouragement were important as members and leaders began discussing and making decisions about the future with the two-church Parish of Glenhuntly – Neerim Road and St David's in Grange Road. Members of both Parishes combined on several occasions.

KOORNANG PARISH 1997 – 2003

The Inauguration of the new Koornang Parish on Sunday 9th February 1997 brought together the former Parishes of Murrumbeena (St Giles/Tara Grove) and Glenhuntly (Neerim Road Carnegie and St David's Glenhuntly) and the Ministers – Rev. Dr Sandy Yule, Interim, and Rev. Don Saltmarsh, Supply.

Carnegie Methodist Church had begun in 1886 with a Trust Meeting in September and the first church service in December, in a weatherboard church on the Neerim Road site. A new church was erected in 1914, a parsonage built in 1921 and a School Hall in 1933 with additions and redecorations to the church in later years. In 1997 the congregation worshipped at 11:00am and had a Uniting Church Fellowship, several Adult and Men's Groups and a Thursday Pancake Drop-in Centre. Weekly table tennis had begun. A Pre-school Centre on the property was associated with the Church. Weekly Notices and a regular Church Paper were issued.

St David's Presbyterian Church, Glenhuntly, had started with a meeting in February 1914. The original church was opened that November on Grange Road. It became an Independent Charge in 1923. The new church was dedicated in 1938 and its Peace Memorial Pipe Organ on 11th November 1951. At Union in 1977, the congregation was joined by members of the Grange Road Methodist Church (begun in 1908 in a home and from 1910 in a church) and the Trinity Congregational Church (begun in 1909 in a building moved from South Melbourne, today used by the Greek Orthodox Original Old Calendar Church). In 1997, St David's congregation met on Sundays at 9:30am, held regular choir practice, a UCF group, Heather Club, Mission Morning Group and Kui Centre. Weekly Pewsheets and a monthly Newsletter were issued.

In 1997 a new Parish Elders' Council was formed immediately from all Elders of the four Churches and a Parish Council sometime later. The Parish Office was located at St Giles. Regular Sunday and weekday activities of the congregations continued with the open invitation to other church members to participate and Parish-wide events were organised. Weekly Pewsheets, a Directory and a periodical Church magazine became the means of communication. *Koornang Koinonia* (meaning "fellowship") with its distinctive cover, editing by the three former Church papers' editors (Miss Anne Don, Mr John Hewitt and Mr Roger McCowan) and containing local and wider church news, views and children's activities was published quarterly from June 1997 until July 2003.

By the time both Ministers left (Sandy in April, Don in June 1997) a Parish Profile was in place. Rev. Rosalie Rayment and Rev. Katharine Davies (Deacon) were appointed Supply Ministers – Katharine part-

time, to share pastoral care and worship. In November, Rosalie was inducted as the permanent full-time Minister and Katharine's appointment extended to 28th February 1998. Her particular contributions to pastoral care, outreach activities, music and the production of *Koornang Koinonia* were much valued. Rev. Alex Poore then became part-time Supply Minister until, in September 1998, Rev. Greg Shanahan was appointed half-time Settled Minister. He left in 2001 and Rev. Paul Kruse took his place for the final six months of that year, leaving Rosalie as our only Minister from January 2002 and many questions about the future to be settled. Each of the part-time Ministers made special contributions to the worship, administrative, pastoral and outreach life of the congregations.

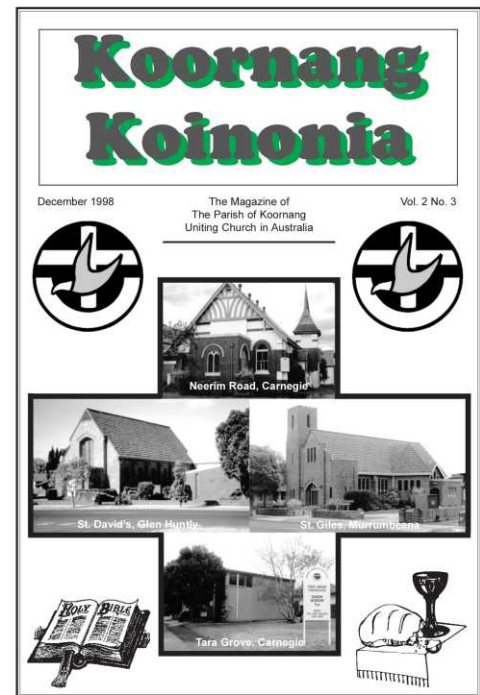
One challenge facing the four congregations was the change made to regulations by the UCA Assembly in 1999. In 1998 Koornang had combined the Parish Elders and Parish Council into one Ministry Council. In 1999 this became the Joint Interim Church Council (JICC) – with Elders doing local pastoral care. Then Assembly ruled that each UCA congregation must have its own Church Council but could also work in co-operation with other churches. The four congregations voted to continue as a group of co-operating congregations called Koornang Parish. As a result, the JICC ceased in November 2000 and a new Koornang Parish Co-operation Committee (KPCC) was formed to oversee the finances and mission outreach. Dr. Colin Williams (Chairman), Mr Peter Barnes (Secretary) and Mr Laurie Thompson (Treasurer) in the JICC were elected to the corresponding positions on the new KPCC.

The changing nature of the congregations posed another challenge – declining numbers of older, long-standing members, some interest from young people and new families, declining finances, ageing buildings and a changing attitude to regular attendance and volunteering.

Local worship continued with some time adjustment to allow for Ministers travelling between locations. Regularly there was a Parish Service at one Church with the others closed. A monthly Parish Evening Service began at Neerim Road in 1998. Services at Easter and Christmas were shared among the congregations. New Year's Eve was celebrated early that night and with members of St Peter's Anglican and Murrumbena Baptist Churches. Some Koornang members helped with a home visitation/information distribution in the area with folk from St Agnes and St Anthony. Special local worship continued, with other Parish members invited: Tara Grove's October Series, St Giles November All Saints Remembrance, and St David's Evening Christmas Carol Service (dating from 1948, with the church beautifully decorated).

Many fellowship and other activities such as St Giles Lending Library continued, Sammy Stamp and World Vision were supported and volunteers continued working on Sunday rosters, care for the churches' gardens and building maintenance. Some valued groups ended: St David's Kui Outreach Centre – begun in 1976 – including many activities finished in December 1999; St Giles Tuesday Morning Coffee Shop ceased in February 1999 after seven years outreach. Some groups adapted: St Giles Friday Friendship Centre became afternoon only and began inviting Rosstown and Spurway residents for special occasions. New ventures began. The Friday afternoon Koornang Kids began at St Giles in December 1997 and numbers gradually grew. The Friday evening English Conversation Class for adults started at St David's in 1998. Countdown to Christmas began at St Giles in December 1998 as an Advent programme for local primary-school aged children with three mornings leading to a Christmas Eve barbeque and Family Service. In 2001, Margaret Griffiths – Presbytery Regional Development Worker – spent time at St Giles helping to develop the Parish ministry with children and families.

A Parish Stewardship Campaign was held in 1999. The annual Parish Spring Fair continued each year. On 3rd August 1997, a new Technics Digital Piano – funded by income from three bequests – was dedicated at St Giles in the morning; the afternoon concert included hymns from the *Australian Hymn Book* and the newer *Sing Alleluia*. On the afternoon of 27th February 2000, at St Giles, Rev. D'Arcy Wood introduced Parish members to the new *Together In Song*. Already used by Tara Grove and Neerim Road,



this hymnbook was adopted by the other congregations by the end of that year. The 'Afternoon with Gilbert and Sullivan' held in May 2000 was so successful that there was another in 2002.

The Oromo Christian Fellowship began using Neerim Road Church on Sunday afternoons in 1998. Their association with the Parish developed over the next few years.

The Parish rejoiced when Rev. Rosalie Rayment and Mr John Hewitt, a member of Neerim Road, were married at St Giles on 25th September 1999.

The Neerim Road Parsonage was repaired in 1997, ready for the new Settled Minister. It became Rev. Rosalie's home, and a venue for meetings and hospitality, and continued to be after her marriage. The St Giles Manse in Murrumbeena Road was refurbished and used for some time by Rev. Greg Shanahan. The original Manse was first occupied in May 1914. In 1999 the rear section of the block was sold after subdivision and the home rented out from July 2000. Much time and thought were spent on considering the contribution and future of the Neerim Road Pre-school Centre.

The turn of the millenium and the Sydney Olympic Games in 2000 were an opportunity which Christians world-wide chose to celebrate by reaching out in unity into the community, witnessing in a joyful, non-threatening way. The Awakening Movement was a decade old and supported by the UCA. The annual Easter March and Celebration took place in Melbourne in 2000. The final Global March For Jesus, the Christian Churches' international millennial celebration, took place around the world on 10th June. It was the largest public witness to Christ in human history, marking the Day of Pentecost in every time zone. The Australian celebration was in Sydney. The Glen Eira Pastors' Network hosted a Millenium Flame Festival on 10th September to co-incide with the Olympic Torch passing through the municipality. From 14-17 December there was a 'Celebration of Christianity 2000' at the Melbourne Exhibition Centre. Many Koornang members had been and were still involved in these Awakening activities.

Discussions in and between the four congregations had been taking place from 1997 with the hope that the four centres could remain viable with some adjustments. However by 2002 it had become evident that more drastic measures were necessary. A proposal in 2002 by the KPCC that all should come together as one congregation was firmly supported by all of the churches and at a Parish meeting in February 2003 was confirmed after consultation with Synod.

Grief and sadness at what must be let go, hope for a better future united, and relief that a decision had been made were the main reactions. Gratitude was also expressed to those faithful men and women who worked hard through the discussions and formal meetings, at congregational and parish levels, from 1997 to 2003. Many had been involved in talks in previous years; some would continue in the future. The three main Parish Committees chaired by Dr Colin Williams were supported by other committees and much prayer as they sought to discern God's will for the future, while continuing the regular Sunday and weekday activities and trying new ventures.

Worship and groups continued to function in 2003 as much as possible. Mr Ken Roberts, Uniting Church Elder and Lay Preacher, was appointed as Parish Assistant to Rev. Rosalie in April. St Giles Tennis Club ceased in May. The final edition of *Koornang Koinonia* as a jointly-edited Parish Paper was published in July.

It had been decided that each congregation would hold a special final Service of Thanksgiving between July and the Service of Inauguration on 17th August. Much time and effort were spent in preparations for these celebrations, which took place as listed here with many former members attending:

- » 20th July – 10:30am St Giles Celebration Service, followed by a light lunch
- » 27th July – 11:00am Neerim Road Celebration Service, followed by a shared lunch
- » 3rd August – 10:00am St David's Celebration Service, followed by a light lunch
- » 10th August – 9:30am Tara Grove Celebration Service.

On 17th August, members of the four congregations gathered together at the St Giles site, 117 Murrumbeena Road, to celebrate the Inauguration of the new Koornang Uniting Congregation. This marked the start of yet another stage in the story of our present congregation.

Anne Don

Some interesting historical facts are on the next page.

1890 – 2020: 130 YEARS OF WORSHIP AND SERVICE

DID YOU KNOW?

- » Neerim Road Methodist property in 1893 included stables to house the Minister's horses and water tanks. There was no public water connection to the property until 1913.
- » In Christmas week, 1920, the wooden Murrumbeena Methodist Church was transported on a wooden jinker drawn by 12 horses across the railway line, with SECV (State Electricity Commission of Victoria) and PMG (Postmaster General's Department) linesmen propping up the wires.
- » An official school crossing was provided in the 1950s in Murrumbeena Road to enable the crowd of Presbyterian Sunday School scholars and teachers to cross safely from the old St Giles Church/ Sunday School to the new brick church on the current site.
- » Tara Grove was one of the first churches to include drama and dance in regular Sunday worship.
- » St David's Kui Centre made 7000 rugs (and many other items) during its life from 1976 to 1999. (Kui is an Aboriginal word meaning Welcome, pronounced Coo-ee.)

[Information found in historic papers – Anne Don]

ANSWERS TO THE IMPOSSIBLY DIFFICULT BIBLE QUIZ

1. We are not used to thinking of Miriam, the sister of Moses, as a prophet, yet that is how she was described. For another famous prophet who was also a judge of Israel, see Judges 4 and 5.
2. It appears that the prophet Anna was one of the first people to see that Jesus was the Messiah.
3. These three women, Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Susanna obviously had money of their own to help pay for Jesus' ministry. They may have been quite important women in their own right. They travelled with the male disciples, along with other women who are not named.
4. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary (probably Mary the mother of James and Joseph) were the first to see Jesus alive again, and the first to go and tell others about this wonderful event.
5. Lydia was a wealthy woman, with a heart open to God's message. She, and all her household, became Christians.
6. Priscilla (or Prisca) was a significant member of the new Christian church. Her house was one of its first places of worship, and she is often mentioned by Paul in his letters.
7. It appears that most of the disciples, including Peter, ran away in fear, when Jesus was crucified. But some disciples remained at the cross, including Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and Salome. There were probably many other female disciples who are not recorded. One female apostle, a companion of St. Paul, was named Thecla. Her name used to appear in the Bible and St. Jerome continued to argue that she was authentic even after she was removed from the official New Testament..

So... was that hard, or what?!! If you knew any of these women's names without looking them up you would be doing well. The Bible doesn't identify very many women. We know that there must have been many other women, behind the scenes, whose names never got written down. The few women who are mentioned must have been very remarkable, indeed! And yet we hardly ever hear about them. Why do you think that is? Why is it that we only learn the names of the twelve male disciples, or the male prophets? Why do you think this quiz is so hard?

Used by permission of The United Church of Canada; Bible Quiz; Worldview Magazine; 1991, vol. 10, No. 1: Pages 12 and 21.