

Co-Leader's Letter . . .



From Joy: photo of Pitt Street Uniting Church

Joy Connor (Day 2)

Recently I went down from the Blue Mountains to visit Pitt Street Uniting Church during Gay Pride week. It was beautiful and safe. Signs everywhere saying, "you are loved", beautiful photo portraits celebrating the lives

of LBQTI+ people, soft music, places to pray quietly and beautiful angels of Compassion, Courage, and Joy, reflecting Christ's love, suffering, and resurrection.

In the nineties, I was a community development worker in

Woolloomooloo and work spilled over into Kings Cross. The transgender friends I made only felt safe in that area and few would go on public transport past Strathfield. They were so excited by Mardi Gras and wanted to celebrate who they were, but it seemed to attract the worst people

into the inner city. Once, a friend had her head shaved and was subject to degrading acts after thinking she had found her “soulmate”. Another was horrifically bashed. It was not safe. Now many things have changed. More mainstream people (even the Prime Minister) have joined the

parades, and more policies are in place to protect people.

Over the decades, places like Wayside Chapel and Pitt Street Uniting Church have gently shown that our God is inclusive, loving and welcoming.

The whole week I felt blessed by that visit.

Finding Joy and Meaning... - An everyday story

Lisa Wriley (Day 8)

This amazing sculpture *Gloria's Nightly Dance* by Lauri Smith, was in the Gosford Regional Gallery a few months ago and I loved it. It spoke to me on several levels. I can't really describe why. A reminder of the beauty within? That we are interconnected with nature, the earth?

The feet especially appealed to me, perhaps because of my own challenges with having happy feet (due to a congenital spinal condition). I have had a pressure wound on the outside of my left foot since late 2017 and it is slowly healing. It has had many ups and downs, infections, and many experimental dressings. As a result, I have kept many podiatrists busy!

I have had multiple times on crutches and in moon boots to try and reduce the pressure.

Last week I had a steroid injection in my 'good' (right) foot to relieve a different problem, we hope.



So treading lightly on the earth has a special significance for me. We all have our struggles.

I have been invited to participate in several smoking ceremonies lately and was encouraged to take my shoes off and put the soles of my feet in the smoke. I rarely walk barefoot due to the pain, so it was extra special.

I also love Gloria's position, seemingly at prayer - open hands, humble.

She was so life-like!

I pray that we can all find the sacred every day, treasure simple things and celebrate the risen Christ this Easter.

Two of my favourite Easter moments in the Bible:

When Jesus is coming into Jerusalem and the Pharisees tell Jesus to tell his

INSIDE this issue

- >> **Gay Pride Week**
Joy Connor (Day 2)
Page 1
- >> **Finding Joy and Meaning**
Lisa Wriley (Day 8)
Page 2
- >> **Introduction to this Issue**
Geoff Setverson (Day 20)
Page 3
- >> **Cosmology**
Jacinta Shailer (Day 27)
Page 4
- >> **In the Silence**
Deborah Ruiz-Wall (Day 11)
Page 6
- >> **Love Unbound**
Heather Eckersley (Day 17)
Page 6
- >> **What is the Greatest Work of Art in the World**
John Martin (Day 28)
Page 7
- >> **Prayer for Cash Containers**
Lisa Wriley (Day 8)
Page 8
- >> **Eco Spirituality**
Eugene Stockton (Day 27)
Page 6
- >> **Interweaving the New Cosmology**
Judith Keller
Page 9
- >> **A Prayer and a Poem**
Helen Menzies (Day 15)
Page 10
- >> **Book Review - The Forest Underground**
David Sloane (Day 15)
Page 11
- >> **Haiku**
Deborah Guido Ruiz Wall (Day 11)
Page 11
- >> **Ideas for Action and Reflection**
Lisa Wriley (Day 8)
Page 12
- >> **Refugee Report**
Julie Brackenreg (Day 2)
Page 12
- >> **Care for Creation**
Page 14
- >> **Wellspring News**
Page 16



disciples to be quiet. “Jesus answered, I tell you that if they keep quiet, the stones themselves will start shouting.” Luke 19:40

And in the Gospel of John (20:15), when Jesus appears to Mary

Magdalene after his resurrection - she does not recognise him and thinks he is the gardener!

I love to think of Jesus as a gardener and we are the garden, much loved and nurtured.

Life goes on in nature - death is not final, only a change of state.



(PSALM 8) GOD, brilliant Lord, yours is a household name...

... I look up at your macro-skies, dark and enormous, your handmade sky-jewellery, Moon and stars mounted in their settings. Then I look at my micro-self and wonder, 'Why do you bother with us? Why take a second look our way?'

Introduction to this Issue

Geoff Stevenson (Day 20)

Growing up, I lived in an *oikos* with my parents and brothers. There were a variety of functions within our *oikos* that made things work and we were connected to others in their *oikos* and the wider, larger sense of *oikos* to which we belonged. Again, there were relationships and interconnections that contributed to the well-being of the whole and those of us within the *oikos*. We all contributed as we were able in different ways and those in the *oikos* were cared for and had our needs met.



Oikos is a Greek word that refers to a household and the structures and functions that contribute to the well-being of those who belong to the household. There are different levels

or layers of *oikos* and in the New Testament we have the sense that the world is God's *oikos* and God is the householder whose concern is for the well-being of all who dwell in the *oikos* of the world.

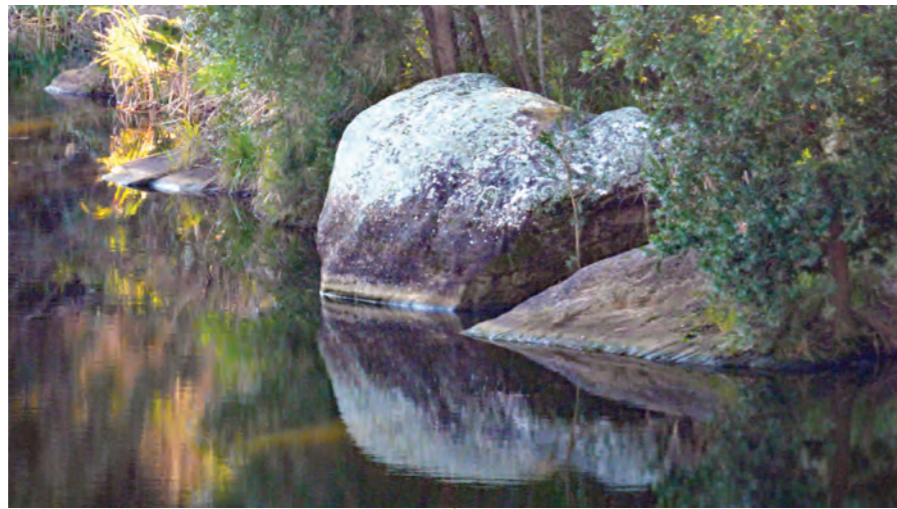


This notion of *oikos* and the relational elements and connections is prevalent in our theme for this edition of Pipeline. Eco-spirituality and Eco-theology both derive their essential meanings from *oikos*. The term, 'eco' is from *oikos*. Ecology and economy both pertain to the well-being of the household of people and the Earth. The economy is meant to ensure the well-being of everyone in this household, whether the particular or

the larger economic region under the care of the 'householder'. Ecology invites us to ponder the relationships between Earth and its creatures and to commit to the well-being of everything within the household of God's Earth.

I love the sense of interconnectedness that comes from this sense of being part of the ecosystem of God's family. The notion of Trinity, through whom all things came into being and have their essential existence and being, holds this deep sense that everything belongs in Christ, in Trinity, in God. I am in constant wonder of the creatures around me to which I feel connection, the creatures that make my world and life brighter and broader. Dogs, for example, bond deeply with humans and show deep trust, dependence, loyalty and love. The plants and flowers in our garden or along the bush tracks fill me with delight. The connectedness between these flowers and the insects that drift through the gardens or amongst trees is a mystery and wonder.

As I walk under the gums on a hot, sunny day, I feel the cool of their shade, or the breeze that flows through their leaves. The sun warms me on a cool morning and the creek flows gently by, on its way to the river and ocean. Those water molecules have been through humans, animals, trees, creeks, streams, oceans, clouds... In fact, the atoms that surround me in the ancient rocks and ridges, valleys and trees, and even in my body are ultimately the things of stardust, dating to deep time.



Cosmology opens me to the wonder, beauty and fascination of stars and galaxies, planets and moons, meteors and deep space and all of its mystery and wonder. I ponder this overwhelming reality – how big? How far? What is out there? I sit on this small blue dot in a vast universe, thinking I occupy the centre of everything until I am drawn out of my minuscule self in wonder and awe, and into the mystery of everything beyond. There is somehow

a connection to everything and I am part of the substance, the stuff of everything that has its origins in a Big Bang of Love where everything began – or perhaps a gentle word from the Word that became flesh.

Maybe it is simpler and deeper, held in story and myth that ancient, indigenous cultures told (and tell), along with their art and music and dance. In the Spirit world of Dreamtime, everything is held in

the mystery of existence and we are opened to ponder and dream and be. To be a simple part of the household, the *oikos*, of the One who holds everything in love and grace.

In this issue of Pipeline we will ponder, reflect, imagine and create around these deep themes as we are drawn into the Paschal Mystery of Easter, journeying to the Cross and beyond in the presence of the Christ.

Cosmology

Jacinta Shailer (Day 27)

Some years ago, a few of us, who were very concerned about the state of our Mother Earth, decided to get together monthly, and learn what we could do to help restore, in some small way, the environment in which we lived. We were also educated in our responsibilities within our expanding universe. This led to a deeper understanding of our interconnectedness with the whole of creation. We did not realise at the time that this would also lead to a deepening of our spirituality as we discovered the importance of being aware of the presence of the Divine in every single molecule and atom in the created world. It led us into understanding that science and true religion needed to be intertwined, one informing the other.



We called our group the “Cosmology” group. I think a very good definition comes from the pen of Judy Cannato and is expressed in her book *Radical Amazement*. Cosmology is the story that flows out of the study of the origin and development of the universe, including purpose and meaning.” But, I think, Brian Swimme’s comment on the subject

fills me with greater enthusiasm for the pursuing of Cosmology when he writes “Cosmology, when it is alive and healthy in a culture, evokes in the human a deep zest for life, a zest that is satisfying and revivifying, for it provides the psychic energy necessary to begin each day with joy.” I personally find that the more the Cosmology group deepens its



understanding of its subject, the more it deepens its spirituality and the more it expands its joy in living.

When we come together for our Cosmology gathering, we begin with “Round the Ridges” in which those who wish share some happening of the month that has past. For example, it may be an excursion they have enjoyed, a book read, a visit made, a funny experience. After that we pray together. I usually prepare a sheet of prayer based on the season, liturgical and of Nature. I like to illustrate the prayer sheet with appropriate photography to make it look beautiful. As an ending of prayer we share some word, phrase or sentence that means



something to us and then we sit quietly for a few minutes breathing in the presence of the Divine. As we have a beautiful garden overlooking the Valley of the Waters the participants are invited to spend fifteen minutes of silent prayer in the garden or sitting by the fire if it is cold. On return we share some experiences of our quiet time and then enjoy morning tea. After morning tea we discuss the assigned chapter and end with a short prayer of peace.

We began our Cosmology gatherings using *The Story of the Universe* by Thomas Berry and Brian Swimme. At our monthly gatherings we discuss a chapter or so of the current book related to Cosmology. Consequently, over the years we have read quite a number of books, including: *The Blue Sky God* by Don MacGregor; *A New Harmony* by J. Philip Newell; *Rainbow of Mysteries – Meeting the Sacred in Nature* by Norman Habel, *The Cosmic Mystique* by Henry Garon and *Radical Amazement* by Judy Cannato.

A small group of us also run a monthly zoom book club so that we can discuss together the books of Ilia Delio, a Franciscan Sister who was prominent in scientific research before she entered the Convent. During her religious life she has studied Theology

and Scripture as well as Psychology and other disciplines. This learning combined with a deep Faith in the God of Love and an articulate pen, has well equipped her to explain to the world the transforming changes that the New Story of the Universe, the recent Scientific discoveries and a renewed understanding of Scripture and the Good News proclaimed by Jesus the Christ, have brought to our spiritual lives. We realise we are people of Blessing.

In “*Sacred Nature*,” Karen Armstrong argues that ‘if we want to avert environmental catastrophe, it is not enough to change our behaviour: we need to think and feel differently about the natural world -- to rekindle our spiritual bond with nature.

For most of human history, and in almost all the world’s cultures, nature was believed to be sacred, and our God or gods to be present everywhere in the natural world. When people in the West began to separate God and nature in modern times, it was not just a profound breach with thousands of years of accumulated wisdom, it also set in train the destruction of the natural world.

Taking themes that have been central to the world’s religious traditions – from gratitude and compassion to sacrifice and non-violence – Armstrong offers practical steps to help us develop a new mindset to reconnect with nature and rekindle our sense of the sacred.

Sacred Nature reveals the most profound connections between humans and the natural world. It speaks to anyone interested in our relationship with nature, worried





about the destruction of our environment, and searching for new ways of thinking to shape the action needed to save our planet.”

Now is the time for each of us, regardless of nationality or religious persuasion, to awaken to the situation of Mother Earth today. One person can make a difference. So now is the time to open our minds and hearts and search for new ways to firstly, keep our minds informed of the state of our universe and our local area, and then to discern where one, according to our giftedness, can make a difference. Remember we are not

alone. Great things are being achieved in many parts of the world by people unheralded and unsung.

If we put our mind to it, we Wellspringers, by our prayer for Mother Earth and those who are striving to care for her, coupled with a growing consciousness of our connection with the whole of creation, can bring forth a surge of healing, restoration and blooming for this land, our home. Then great rejoicing will fill the cosmos as each one takes his or her place as responsible co-creators with our loving Creator God.

In the silence

Deborah Ruiz Wall (Day 11)

In the silence, a new world emerges, in the stillness, a new language appears, in the quiet space, we encounter the wordless where quietude creates and recreates a paradise from the depths

of an individual quest down from the realm of the beyond, away from the cacophony of the world around us, where human construct of ‘what is’ fades from view, a sliver of truth whispers in the ether of the unknown, away from the madding crowd, a secret hidden space.



Love Unbound
Heather Eckersley (Day 17)

On the beach
tidal flow
no effort of mine
Letting go
Letting be
Letting flow

Radiance of sky sea sand
deeply rooted shoreline trees
holding on
Or pulled up
by the forces of Nature
no effort of mine
will hold back the tidal flow.



What is the greatest work of art in the world?

John Martin (Day 28)

What is the greatest work of art in the world?

How do we evaluate art, whether it be by the great European Masters, First Nations rock art or dot paintings, contemporary painters, those under-represented among the great names: women artists?

Do we assess value by the number of people who visit to view a painting and, perhaps, tick it off their bucket lists?

Are the best artworks those that fetch the highest sums at auction or are insured for the greatest amount, or are displayed behind the thickest glass?

Some might remember the hullabaloo 50 years ago (16.7.1973) over Gough Whitlam’s purchase of Jackson Pollock’s 1952 painting ‘Blue Poles’ for \$1,348,170. In June last year this painting was valued at \$508,056,322. People travel from all over to view it at the National Gallery in Canberra.

An artist friend of mine said “The best art is what gives you pleasure.”

I live on level four of a block of units. My bedroom window faces East giving a splendid view of the sky, stretching out above the neighbouring townhouses, Robina Anglican Church and one of the largest shopping centres on the Gold Coast, Queensland. At dawn each day I can witness the sun rising reminding me of the Resurrected Christ, overcoming the darkness.

This is where I see the greatest artwork. The sun combining with the clouds frequently offering a display unmatched by any human work of art. Varying shapes, textures, and colours, not lasting long, in the words



by Matthias Claudius contains half a line which says much:

‘He paints the wayside flower,’

How do I respond?

I can do no more than exclaim in the words of Edward Caswall’s 1854 translation of another German hymn:

of Robert Louis Stevenson’s 1885 poem ‘From a Railway Carriage’
‘Each a glimpse and gone forever’.

‘When morning gilds the skies, My heart awaking cries: May Jesus Christ be praised!’

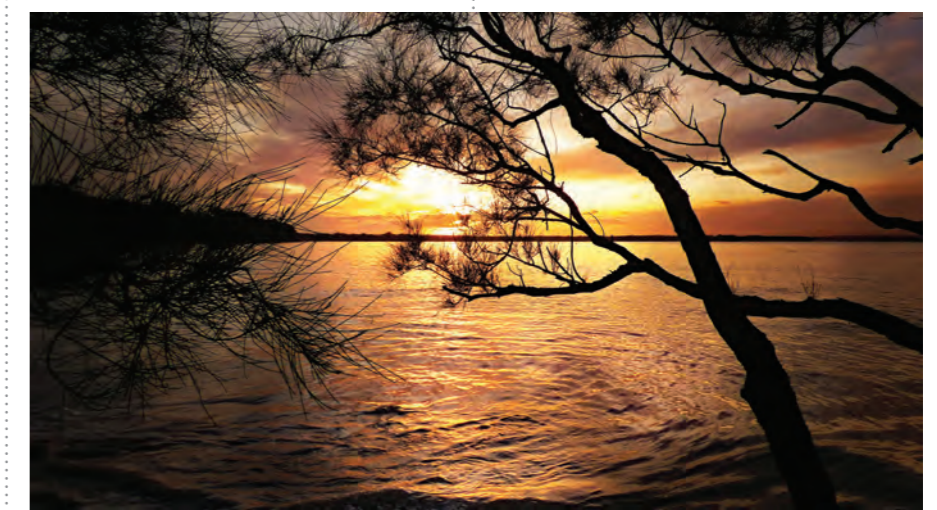
This is an example of the artwork of the Creator.

What a start to the day!

‘We plough the fields and scatter’
Jane Montgomery Campbell’s 1861 translation from the German Hymn

The sky so bright with morning light.

If you have read to this point, you might have similar thoughts about sunsets.



Prayer for Cash Containers

Lisa Wriley (Day 8)

Creator God,

We give thanks for this beautiful, complex earth we live on.

Remind us, God that you made us part of this earth and that what we do to it, we do to ourselves.

We lament our over-consumption of the earth's resources, as we dig them up at an alarming rate and turn them into all manner of things and then discard them as useless.

Our waste is quickly filling up our landfill sites, harming our fellow creatures and will cause more problems for future generations.

God, we need to change our ways; to live more gently, to live within the



limits of this sacred earth, to work with nature, not against it.

Help us to work for change, for policies that make our communities more sustainable in the present and for generations to come.

We pray for our political leaders as they consider the way forward with packaging waste and ways that producers of consumer items can share

responsibility for the cost to the earth of the things they make and sell.

We give thanks for the ordinary folk who, every day, pick up other people's rubbish, for the common good. Bless their hands and feet as they do this thankless task.

We pray for the continued strength of those who have been campaigning for Cash for Containers for over 10 years, a modern-day David and Goliath battle with the beverage industry.

Bless them as they challenge the powers that be.

MAY your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

AMEN

Eco-Spirituality

Excerpts from "Directions of an Earth Minded Spirituality" by Eugene Stockton (Day 27)

Both Aboriginal traditional wisdom and modern science concur to tell us what a wonderful environment we have. We can take that further and see it as a sacred place where we can meet God, mingle with the Spirit and learn the mind of Christ.

While respecting other viewpoints, it is not necessary to suggest the customary series of dualities like physical-spiritual, natural-supernatural, body-soul, earth-heaven, secular-sacred etc. That is, as far as I know or am concerned, there is no reality other than the one I am experiencing now.

Self-transcendence happens by going, not beyond, but going deeper into this very rich reality, where God's Spirit is profoundly immanent. Nor need we entertain several levels of being or consciousness, nor hierarchy of classes. Scientists and philosophers ponder the problem of mind and matter, but without understanding the mystery, we simply experience it as one mode. I am both mind and



matter, not as opposite principles, but as a single thinking body. Charles Birch speaks of mind-matter and so describes every physical entity, from protons to persons. As I experience my matter imbued with mind, so the cosmos is imbued with spirit, and I share with others the experience of a cosmos conscious of itself.

Yet the Creator whose spirit mingles with our own in creation stands outside the creation in the centre of her personhood, and the Transcendent draws me out towards him/her in an act of self-transcendence, a sense of wonder which is at the heart of mystical union....

"Each creature is a door to God." God is this being and beyond this being.

Reaching out to God through the environment this prayer of wonder contrasts with the inward-looking character of much modern spirituality. My inwardness is not found by gazing back into some dark centre of my being (my ego) but by looking out and seeing myself reflected in persons and things about me, a screen scintillating with light and colour, where my inner self has, as it were, been turned inside out to the outer circumference of my experience (i.e. my spirit). Transcendence is felt to be not so much out of this world, an escape from reality, as deeper into it.

Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr-Baumann, an Elder from the Daly River area, talks of Dadirri as "deep listening, silent awareness, quiet stillness and waiting." So, transcendence, drawing me out in wonder is not only all around me but beckoning me unhurriedly into the future. So the environment, according to Aboriginal intuition ("intersubjectivity"), is alive, conscious and aware, responding to me in prayer - still alert, listening, waiting, knowing, loving.

Interweaving the New Cosmology, Poetry, Ecology and the Holy Spirit

Contributed by Judith Keller

Brian Swimme says: "Cosmology as an ancient wisdom tradition draws from science, theology, art, poetry, and philosophy... It's terminology... generally seeks to make use of language arising out of our experience of living within an unfolding cosmos."

For Thomas Berry, "Poets and artists can help restore a sense of rapport with the natural world. It is this sense of reciprocity with nature, in all its complexity and remarkable beauty, that can help provide the psychic and spiritual energies necessary for the work ahead."

"It is the Spirit, the Holy Spirit, who spins the globe." (Dermot Lane)

My own fascination is in the many ways the new cosmology, poetry and deep time perspective go together. I have been a member of the Deeptime Network for a few years now. It is a global online community for people coming from diverse religious and cultural backgrounds across education, the arts, humanities, and the sciences including astronomy and physics. There are many people in this network affiliated with religious organisations who are committed to the flourishing of the conversation between spirituality, cosmology, ecology and science today.

A deeptime perspective arises in response to questions we ask about where we come from, and where we are going: 'How do we belong to something larger than ourselves?' 'How are we connecting our personal and communal lives to the larger arc of cosmic evolution?'

You and I belong to the first generation of humans for whom this 13.8 billion-year history is now



being revealed by cosmologists and scientists. The James Webb telescope launched in December 2022 is sending back images which increase our understanding of our cosmic origins.

Astronomer Stephan Martin speaks of the relevance of the first images received from the James Webb Space Telescope. It appears in a Deeptime Network blog.

<https://www.nasa.gov/webbfirstimages>

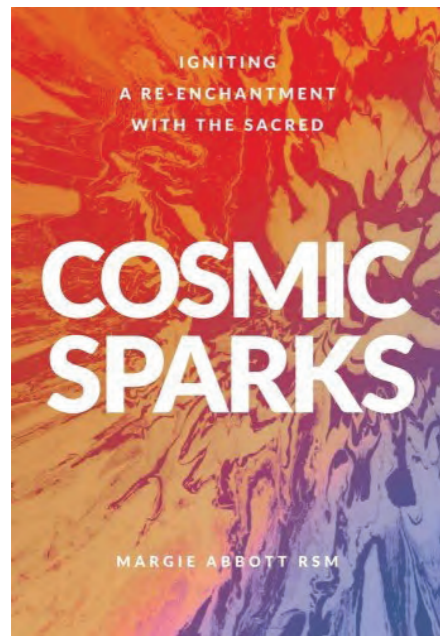


Within this Network my own allurements have been to the ways contemplative practice can bring science and the arts together. Around

the world, artists, poets, and scientists are creating amazing projects together. They are discovering collaborative ways to open doorways, helping to "bind the universe together" as cosmologist Brian Swimme has observed in his tiny breath-taking book, 'The Universe is a Green Dragon: A Cosmic Creation Story.'

Brian Swimme is a mathematical cosmologist and with Thomas Berry has authored two books: 'The Universe Story', and 'Journey of the Universe'. The latter has been developed as a free online course through Yale University. Another book by Swimme is 'Hidden Heart of the Cosmos: Humanity and the New Story.' All these books help make the universe story accessible.

There are Christian theologians in this poetic unfolding of the cosmic story-space too. This contributes to the healing process between science and religion. These helpful insights coming from the new cosmology are reshaping theology, prayer, and worship. They are contributing to a healing process between science and religion in the post-Darwin, post-Einstein, post-Hubble world in which we live. We can turn our backs on these insights, or we can be part of the great turning that is occurring across all disciplines including religion. It is



increasingly clear that if we are to save the planet, we need the resources of religion and science working together. This includes harnessing the power of prayer and worship in the service of caring for our Earth, our only home.

In the Australian context, in creating liturgies which inspire ecological and cosmic conversion, I recommend the book by Mercy Sister Margie Abbott rsm: *'Cosmic Sparks: Igniting a Re-Enchantment With the Sacred'*.

Other current theologians conversing with science and the new physics include Ilia Delio and Catherine Keller, Diarmuid O'Murchu, Dermot Lane, John Haught and Australian Denis Edwards. Many of these theologians, in the words of Dermot Lane "hold that contemporary science offers more reasons – not less – for cultivating a life of prayer and worship. The discoveries of the new cosmology

open extraordinary levels of beauty, of order and of symmetry in our cosmos; these experiences evoke within us responses of awe and wonder and amazement and humility and praise and gratitude. It is responses like these that are at the heart of prayer and the foundation of worship".

With regards to praying the new cosmology in my own life, I share a commitment with 20-25 other people each week on Mondays in an online meditation space called "Weaving a Silence: Contemplating Earth and All the Stars". We are earth lovers, justice seekers, climate change activists, cosmic creatives, lovers of eco-poetry, spiritual companions and friends of silence. In intentionally sharing our silence we feel called to choose Earth and to transition from our human centred consciousness to one of Sacred Earth Community. Here is a link to our flyer on the FORE Forum on Religion and Ecology website: <https://fore.yale.edu/event/Weaving-A-Silence-Contemplating-Earth-All-The-Stars>

I will close with one of my favourite prayers from the book, *Prayers to an Evolutionary God* by William Cleary [Skylight Paths Publishing, 2004]. We draw often from this book of prayers in our online Monday Meditation:

Toward the future – In Hopeful Times

The future is full of promise, Holy Mystery,

If only because we discern your forces of evolution at work everywhere.

Every opening daffodil, every growing child,

Every glimmer of human enlightenment,

Every bodily process of healing

Tells us the future is not fearsome, but is full of potential;

Your face is hidden, your name unknown;

Still we turn to you in faith and confidence.

Creating Evolutionary Spirit,

We hear your comforting voice

In the steady music of the unfolding creation,

In harmonies and dissonances in the world around us

Into which we pour our humble efforts.

We give thanks to exist, and to be in some way, the joy of your heart.

Amen

Judith Keller lives at Southport. She has links with Wellspring Community over many years in NSW and QLD. She values these links for the mutually shaping and sustaining inspirations these connections have been and continue to be in her life. She can be contacted on her email kellsull@ozemail.com.au

1. Brian Swimme, *Hidden Heart of the Cosmos*, p. 107-108
2. Thomas Berry, *The Sacred Universe*, p. 48
3. Dermot Lane, "Praying the New Cosmology, *The Furrow*, Vol. 69, No 9 (September 2018), 474-479
4. <https://dtnetwork.org/deep-time-perspective/>

A Prayer and a Poem...

Helen Menzies (Day 16)

When I was six years old, I learnt this lovely little poem:

Over the earth there's a mat of green,
over the green the dew,
Over the dew the arching trees, over the trees the blue
Over the blue the scudding clouds, over clouds the sun
Over all is the love of God blessing us everyone!

I would like to add this prayer from John Philip Newell's *Praying with the Earth*.

Praying for peace

May the love of life fill our hearts
May the love of Earth bring joy to heaven
May the love of self deepen our souls
May the love of neighbour heal our world
As nations, as peoples and families this day
May the love of life heal our world!

BOOK REVIEW: "The Forest Underground... Hope for a Planet in Crisis"

David Sloane (Day 15)



In all the bad news about climate change, this book comes as a breath of fresh air. Written by a Mytleford man from an old Italian family, Tony Rinaudo did Rural Science at the University of New England and

trained to be an Agronomist to work for the Sudan Interior Mission in West Africa.

He went to Niger to plant trees to help in reforestation but he found very few of his trees survived in this very hostile environment. Tony then made an embarrassingly simple discovery of restoring this degraded landscape without having to plant out a lot of tube stock.

His discovery has revolutionised reforestation across Africa. To date it has rehabilitated over 18 million hectares, doubling crops yields and income for the subsistence farmers.

The book title, *'The Forest Underground ... Hope for a Planet in Crisis'*, gives a clue to his amazingly simple discovery. There was an underground forest of

tree stumps, which, when the top layer of sand was removed, were found to be still alive.

Tony is a humble person of faith who has lived out his Faith in a most practical way in helping the people of West Africa with a sustainable system of land management. It has helped reverse deforestation, bringing hope to a climate change-weary world. It is the good news you don't hear through the usual news channels.

Tony is now the Principal Climate Action Advisor for World Vision and lives in Melbourne.

The book won the Australian Christian Book of the Year Award in 2022. It is available from ISCAST and the Koorong Book Chain. Highly Recommended.

Haiku

Deborah Guido Ruiz Wall (Day 11)

Every moment counts,
each breath of life,
a precious gift to behold

My city life, my mountain life;
I ruminate between my twin worlds

All our worlds are a bubble,
our thoughts, a tiny fleck
in the universe of meaning

The dance of the mind splits
into smithereens of infinitives:
to be, to become the One

Memories are albums of our past,
bygone fallen leaves live but in our heads

Time stood still silencing my mind;
my heart bleeds from the vacuum
of our misunderstanding

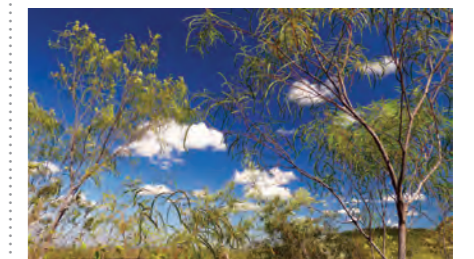
The unspoken snaked into existence
collapsing sandcastles of surface
familiarity

Awakened souls spoke with one breath
In rhythm with the timeless heart
of Australia's ancient continent

Opposites starkly define today
light and darkness swing
like the theatrical showpieces of our
lives

Shadows lurk in the background
to steal the light, to reverse the order
and deceive the unwary

God speaks within through the
birdsongs,
through all of nature's enthralling
splendour— a living paradise
for sentient eyes to see



Ideas for Action and Reflection - Sustainability



Lisa Wriley (Day 8)

Friday 3 March – Student Strike for Climate Rallies in Sydney and Perth. Currently these are the only publicised locations. Follow this link to find out more and to register your local event.

Sunday 5 March - Clean Up Australia Day - find a clean-up near you or register your own

22 March - World Water Day is about accelerating change to solve the water and sanitation crisis. Billions of people and countless schools, businesses, healthcare centres, farms and factories don't have the safe water and toilets they need. To accelerate

change, we need more action, including from individuals like you.

Thursday 23 March – Earth Overshoot Day. COMMON GRACE will be marking this sober and appalling date with a prayer vigil in the evening.

Check the **Common Grace Calendar** [overshoot day for the world was 28 July last year - 23 March was the date when Australia had used its share of the Earth's resources at current consumption rates. Shameful.]

28 March - Earth Hour - 8.30pm - sign up to switch off and join a worldwide community of millions taking #TimeOutForNature.

22 April - World Earth Day - Get Inspired. Take Action. Be a part of the green revolution. Follow the link for information, action ideas and quizzes.

And dates for your diary, later in the year

20 May - World Bee Day

5 June - World Environment Day

8 June - World Ocean Day

1 September – 4 October – Season of Creation Lisa will lead us for Wednesdays with Wellspring

28th September – 31st October and in this issue are details about a very special Year of Deep Listening and dialogue with First Nations folk across the country. I have the great privilege to travel with Brooke Prentis, Aboriginal Christian Leader and Wellspring Community Member and Ruth Harvey, Leader of the IONA Community. There will be events you can join in person, on zoom and pray for.

30 November – 12 December - COP28 Prayers for the Earth and about Climate - gathered by Common Grace:

Also, this year the country will be going to a referendum on enshrining an Indigenous Voice to parliament in our constitution. Common Grace is actively supporting the YES campaign through their **'Listen to the Heart'** campaign. As part of their campaign, they will be hosting in-person events in Brisbane, Sydney, and Melbourne. Check their website.



Refugee Report

Julie Brackenreg (Day 2)

The election of the Albanese Government in May 2022 brought hope of a change from the restrictive and often cruel actions of former Governments towards those who sought safety in our country but change has been slow and advocacy needs to continue to right the wrongs of those still suffering.

The granting of a possible 19,000 Permanent Visas to holders of two classes of Refugee Visas [Temporary Protection and Safe Haven Enterprise] was welcome. Permanent visas allow people to study and get permanent

jobs and most important of all to bring their relatives to safety. But applications will take time and many people aren't eligible.

According to government figures, there were a total of 31,256 people in the so-called Legacy Caseload as of December 2022. So, thousands

are still uncertain of their futures and the hope of bringing family to safety. There are people on Bridging Visas who have cases before Courts or on appeal to the Minister's Office –often they have no work or education rights, no Centrelink or Medicare and are constantly working with lawyers and dependent on charities for their basic needs – rent, food, clothing.

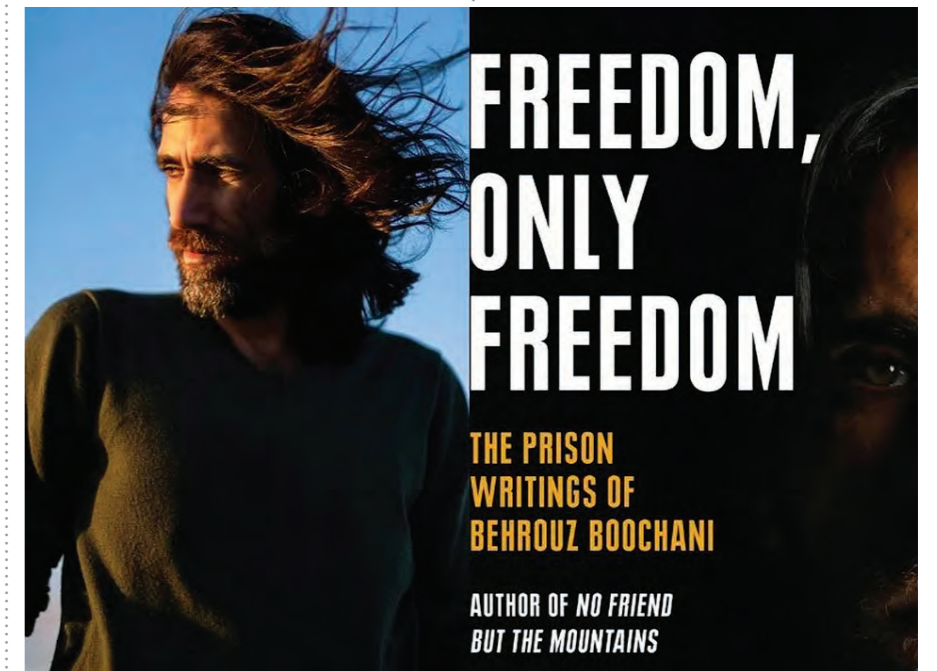
There has been action however on several other fronts:

- The government has given Support for Community Sponsorship Programmes with Refugees to help grow the numbers being settled in diverse communities around Australia. Local sponsors supported by church and community groups are currently fundraising to enable them to support refugees on their arrival in Australia and eagerly awaiting to be “matched” with refugees through CRISP [Australia] and UNHCR working in Refugee Camps worldwide.

- Gradual release into the community [often Community Detention] of mainly young men, from Manus and PNG who have been Medivacced over the past few years into “hotel” detention. Unfortunately, these releases are sporadic and ill-planned and Refugee Agencies often scramble to facilitate accommodation and care for those being suddenly released.

- Facilitating the removal of refugees from Manus and PNG to third countries of settlement, but this has been handled in a less than optimal fashion. The continuation of the holding of people in PNG and on Manus is plagued with inconsistencies, frustrations, questionable government actions and huge financial cost to the Australian tax payer.

The September 2022 Rural Australians for Refugees Conference Declaration, which reflected the policies of refugee advocates across Australia called for these steps being taken without delay:



1. Action for Afghanistan: issue all the proposed 16,500 humanitarian visas, and a further 20,000 emergency visas, for asylum seekers from Afghanistan;

2. End all forms of inhumane detention, include offshore detention, and indefinite detention, including a resolution to purported statelessness;

3. End the ban on refugees in Indonesia re-settling in Australia;

4. Enable asylum seekers in Australia to live with dignity, including having access to Medicare and rights to study and work;

5. Support additional community-pathways to settlement, for which the government takes responsibility, for visa and travel costs.

6. A campaign for a Royal Commission into offshore and onshore immigration detention.

7. Delegates support the Ending Indefinite and Arbitrary Immigration Detention Bill 2022.

Behrouz Boochani a Kurdish refugee [journalist] who has spent 6 years in Immigration Detention on Manus Island and in Australia and who now lives in N.Z. has been making a tour of Australia to promote his latest book *Freedom, Only Freedom* and draw attention to refugee concerns in Australia. I attended the launch at the Democratic Kurdish Community Centre in Blacktown for a most informative evening. The Green Left

Weekly has published an interview with Behrouz which you can access at this web address:

<https://www.greenleft.org.au/content/behrouz-boochani-many-people-have-been-damaged-because-indefinite-detention>

War and civil unrest are traditionally seen as the main causes for increasing numbers of refugees worldwide but entire populations are already suffering the impacts of Climate Change and it affects refugees, internally displaced people first. Many are living in climate “hotspots” e.g., Rohingya in Bangladesh and those on islands in Indonesia. Many of our Pacific neighbours will be the first affected by massive sea rises –significant numbers of people are moving from the Pacific to avoid this phenomenon e.g., Gilbertese [from Tuvalu] now living in Niue and Solomon Islands. <https://www.ncronline.org/earthbeat/faith/oceania-bishops-assembly-spotlights-climate-crisis>

Wellspring continues to stand beside, act for and speak on behalf of all Refugees who seek shelter and safety in Australia. Wellspring Members will be part of the upcoming Palm Sunday Rallies to be held in all capital cities and many rural regions on Sunday April 2nd. Since 2019 these rallies have emphasised Justice for Refugees, as well as their traditional Peace themes.

Care for Creation



Listening to First Nations and Celtic voices A Wellspring and Iona listening Pilgrimage (September - October 2023)

The “Care for Creation-Iona visitor sub-committee” is pleased to announce that, God willing, the Wellspring and Iona Listening Pilgrimage will begin in Perth on September 29, 2023, and end on November 1, 2023 in Brisbane.

Listening to the voices of our First Nations in dialogue with the Christian Celtic wisdom of Iona is at the core of what we are about and “pilgrimage” best describes the travel across these lands of the Care for Creation Iona and Wellspring pilgrims. This pilgrimage aims to nurture peace and healing of communities and creation in 6 states and territories, however we expect that we, in Wellspring will be as changed by the experience as any pilgrim is who goes on pilgrimage.

As we listen we will be trying to live in solidarity with the pain of people who live with ongoing racism, dispossession, incarceration and deaths in custody. They live in a broader community emmeshed in the contested issues around our colonial history and all are affected by the hope around the referendum on a constitutional voice for First Nations people. This is a difficult pilgrimage and we are depending on the prayers of all the Wellspring Community as

we continue the preparation of mind and heart.

Conversations about the spiritual roots of caring for creation will include locals, First Nations people and the travelling Pilgrimage team of, Ruth Harvey (Iona leader and Quaker) from Scotland, Brooke Prentis (Aboriginal Christian Leader, Wellspring’s First Nations justice person and advisor on the pilgrimage), Lisa Wriley (Wellspring Co-leader and Quaker) and Nick Austin, Ruth’s partner (media).

You are invited to join the members of the pilgrimage in any of the places they visit. The times and places are below. Updates will appear regularly on the website. Registration details will be on the website in May.

Grateful thanks for the members who have already contributed money towards the pilgrimage. Your generosity is so encouraging. Donations can be deposited into our Bendigo Bank account or cheques sent to the secretary.

The Pilgrimage Road so far Perth, Boorloo, Noongar Country: 29th - 30th September

A visit to Wadjemup (Rottnest Island) where we hope for a Welcome to Country and time with local First Nations people. Lisa is currently seeking advice from Quakers in WA. Currently the draft plan also includes a public meeting.

Adelaide, Tarntanya, Kurna Country and surrounds: 1st - 6th October

Brooke Prentis and Lynona Hawkins are working together on the Adelaide program and listening to locals. We plan to be a part of a worship service, meet on Country with Aboriginal elders and local people and be part of a public meeting. At this meeting Adnyamathanha woman, Senior Aboriginal Christian leader, and



theologian, Aunty Rev Dr Denise Champion will be in conversation with Ruth Harvey from Iona on Celtic and First Nations spirituality of Country and Care for Creation.

Alice Springs, Mparntwe, Arrente Country and surrounds: 7th - 12th October

Our trip will be a time of listening and sharing between First Nations people, other locals and the Leaders of the Iona and Wellspring communities with a view to deepening our understanding of what it means to connect with, and care for, this country. We are particularly planning time on Country with Arrente Elders to engage with their art and Country. We will also spend time with local Christian and contemplative communities who are dealing with the complexities of living in Central Australia at this time.

Melbourne, Naarm, Wurundjeri and Boonwurrung Country: 14th - 15th October

Meeting with Iona Associates and a Church Service at Wesley Uniting in Central Melbourne at 11am on Sunday.

Gippsland, Gunaikurnai Country: October 16th -18th October

A Wellspring- Iona Retreat at The Abbey, Raymond Island involving First Nations people, local Land Care workers, local clergy, time on country with First Nations people and a one-day retreat for visitors.

Canberra, Ngunnawal and Ngambri Country: 20th October

In partnership with the Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture; there will be a simple lunch and an after-lunch conversation between Iona Leader Ruth Harvey and First Nations friends around Celtic and First Nations spirituality of Care for Creation.

Sydney, Warrang, Eora Nation: 21st - 23rd & 25th - 26th October

Time will be spent with the First Nations fellowship, Scarred Tree Ministries in Glebe.

22nd October - Sunday church service at St. Stephen’s Macquarie Street.

23rd October - recording radio time on the ABC, dinner and conversation between Iona Leader Ruth Harvey and First Nations friends in partnership with the NSW Ecumenical Council.

25th October - time with Iona Associates and people from the Pacific Islander Community

26th October - a youth focussed gathering at Pitt Street Uniting Church including eco groups and advocates for First Nations Justice from schools, universities, churches and the community and the Australian Religious Response to Climate Change. Q and A with Iona Leader Ruth Harvey and First Nations friends.

Blue Mountains, Dharug and Gundungurra Country: 24th October

In this region, ruthless displacement of people 60 years ago is still raw for many. Wellspring members are researching interviews with First



Nations people who were affected and are preparing to publish articles in the local paper and probably to have a memorial ceremony (depending on current consultation with the local First Nations group), in the evening a dialogue on Care for Creation between Ruth Harvey and First Nation friends in a local pub closer to Western Sydney.

Central Coast, Darkinjung and Guringai Country: 28th October

Connect to Country at the Bulgandry Aboriginal Place with Tim Selwyn (Girri Girra) and a shared lunch at Kariong Eco Garden.

Newcastle, Awabakal Country: 29th October

A church service involving an Iona member and Iona Associates and Ruth Harvey (Iona leader).

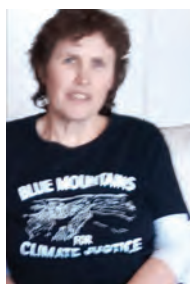
Brisbane, Meanjin, Yuggera and Turrabul Country: 30th October - 1st November

A public meeting and a final session for Ruth to hear, in a yarning circle format, from Aboriginal Christian Leaders, including Senior Aboriginal Christian Leader, Aunty Jean Phillips. This is the final meeting with First Nations peoples before Ruth departs these lands now called Australia. Organised by Brooke Prentis and the Brisbane Wellspring group.



Wellspring News

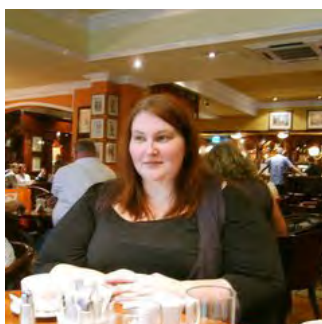
Welcome to New Members:



Hilary Stewart, Katoomba, Darug/Gundungarra land,



Brooke Prentis who is a Wakka Wakka woman living on Wakka Wakka Country,



Naomi Wolfe who is a Trawlolway woman living on land of the Wurundjeri nation Moonee Ponds and **Fiona Green**, Norah Head Darkinjung Land.

We remember with sadness the loss to our immediate presence of:

Rev Will Robinson from Worimi Land, Tuncurry, a teacher and then a minister. A man of strong faith and constant love for others. One of our founding members who contributed

reflections for the prayer diary.

Dawn Underwood from Brompton SA, Kuarna Land

Jim Houston a kind and passionate activist for justice, friend to politicians. Congratulations to:

Wellspring Deputy Leader Professor Emerita Diane Speed who was made a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for significant service to tertiary education, and to the Anglican Church of Australia.

Council member Dr. Stephanie Hogg who was awarded her PhD in December for research focussed on applied statistics, in particular developing complex statistical models to determine the geographic distribution of species of plants and animals which are used in species conservation.

WELLSPRING COMMUNITY INC.

Wellspring Community Inc. ABN 81 293 869 355

Co Leader	Lisa Wriley	0429 431 889	lisaw0508@gmail.com
Co Leader	Joy Connor	02 4784 1819	j.j.connor@bigpond.com
Deputy Leader	Diane Speed	0499 777 580	dianespeed1@bigpond.com
Secretary	Neil Holm	0420 936 190	neil.holm.wellspring@gmail.com
Treasurer	David Eckersley	0401 212 913	hdecks17@gmail.com
Ecumenism and Interfaith Faith	Doug Hewitt		doug.isabel35@gmail.com
Peace and Social Justice	Mark Hurst		m5hurst51@gmail.com
First Nations Justice and Reconciliation	Brooke Prentis		brooke.prentis@gmail.com
Refugees	Julie Brackenreg	0401 516 482	jbrack1350@yahoo.com.au
Spirituality and Worship	Alex Nelson		alexnelson@optusnet.com.au
Sustainability	Lisa Wriley		lisaw0508@gmail.com

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

NEXT ISSUE: August 2023.

Pipeline Committee: Geoff Stevenson, Heather Eckersley, Neil Holm, Joy Connor.

Deadline for material: Friday 7th July 2023

The theme for the next edition of Pipeline is informed by the Pilgrimage and Creation Care – and listening to First Nations People. The theme, therefore is around our own story and our connection to land and place. Some guiding questions from Naomi Wolfe are: “What is your story of the Land? What is your’s and your family’s history of connection to this land and how does that connect to First Nation’s people and your spiritual journey”

The edition is due out in July/August so articles need to be in by Friday July 7. Please send articles, book/music/art reviews, poetry, photos to me (Geoff Stevenson) at geoffs81@gmail.com. Please send any accompanying photos as separate attachments and as high quality as possible. If you want to include the photos within your article to demonstrate where they fit, that is fine but also attach the photo separately as well. Thank you.