

## LEADER'S LETTER

**Alex Scutt (Day 22)**

The Lenten season this year has been for me and for Stephanie a time of endings and anticipating new beginnings, and some travel to places in this part of Australia that are largely new to us: two road trips with a week at home between them. The first was up the south-east coast to Eden, Batemans Bay and Jervis Bay then onto Bowral and the Blue Mountains and then out west to Parkes and return via the inland route through the Lachlan and the Ovens and Keiwa Valleys. Second time around we returned to Yackandandah again for our first night, then across the mountains to Canberra for a six-night stay and returned another way around the high country down to Bairnsdale and home. There were many highlights to mention, but that is for another time.

Lent may, on one level, seem an odd time to travel, but in other respects it seems quite appropriate - a journey for various purposes - rest, recreation, refreshment as well as time to reflect on the future that is ahead. We had some opportunities to worship with church communities other than our own for the first time in several years. For us it was simply a matter of the right time - with Stephanie's PhD thesis having been handed in for the examination process and the need for some time away.

During this time, we had the opportunity to catch up with Wellspring people from the Blue

Mountains and also with Marion Gilmour and some of her contacts in Canberra and to discuss with them the leadership of Wellspring Community.

Among the themes that came through in our discussion about leadership was the importance of leaders bringing their own particular experience and skills and, above all, passion for one or more of our key justice areas and continuing that work as part of their role as leaders. Another was to be realistic about what leaders can and cannot do - and that travelling around the country visiting groups of Wellspring people as has been the practice in the past may not be as easy to do in the future due to travel restrictions, commitments to work, expense, and age.

Furthermore, keeping a regular turnover in the leadership with people with new passions and new ideas as well as important skills in seeing to matters of governance and finance which are required for an incorporated association, helps to keep pace with other like organisations. Organisations like ours, which are made up mainly of Christians, tend to cater for people who are faithful members of their own faith communities but who are in some respects disenchanted with institutional church life, especially in areas of justice, peace and reconciliation.

We also talked about the importance of a good flow of people willing to serve in leadership positions, of a good gender balance being turned

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over in the leadership, and of good succession planning which has been characteristic of Wellspring over the past thirty or so years. These things are essential to the spiritual and temporal health of a community such as ours. I am confident that going further into this third decade of the twenty-first century this will continue to be the case.

At the Annual General Meeting in May there is likely to be new nominations for the positions of Leader and Deputy Leader when, as at all our AGMs, all positions fall vacant. This time it is likely that we will have people nominating jointly for the positions of Leader and possibly Deputy Leader. I will not be accepting nomination as Leader this year but will be accepting nomination as a regular member of

Council for another year to assist in the transition and to assist the new leaders in whatever way I can.

During my time as Leader, some of us began to feel that the community may be reaching the end of its road. One of my highlights has been to guide the community through this phase to a place of balance, steadiness, and willingness to move forward. The great participation of everyone in the questionnaire we undertook in 2018 was of great assistance in discerning this. Endeavours such as Wednesdays with Wellspring, our monthly online gathering for worship on the first Wednesday of the month, has sustained many people who have been confined to a much smaller sphere during the pandemic, while others have welcomed the opportunity just to

gather with others online. The prayer diary and directory and Pipeline reach beyond the community and have helped to sustain the Community's life and bring a sense that we are all in this together under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Our gathering in Brisbane in 2019 encouraged us to see a future which includes a greater involvement with Aboriginal people and a continuing commitment to climate justice and justice for refugees. I have signed a number of letters to community and national leaders on the subject of refugees in particular, including just in the last week or so about the receiving of refugees from Ukraine and Afghanistan.

As we emerge from the lockdowns brought about by the pandemic, the need for face-to-face community is



**Kumantye Jagamara, Possum and Wallaby Dreaming**  
Australian Parliament House, Canberra.



Ulladulla, NSW



Bogong High Plains, VIC.



Eugowra, NSW



becoming more real, and it is good to know that a working group of members of Council are considering options for an event with outside speakers, perhaps including one from overseas, visiting places throughout Australia in partnership with other interested groups. This is likely to happen sometime in the course of 2023 and it will be an important way to reach out, to expand our horizons and to stimulate community life.

Even though it may not be sustainable in the longer term, the travelling around that I was able to do as Leader before March 2020 was a real blessing - and it was a delight and privilege to be able to share in many smaller group meetings and to receive the hospitality of Wellspring people in many parts of Australia. I want to thank all of you for your prayers, encouragement and support during my time as Leader. It has been stimulating, challenging and joyous experience.

I wish you all every blessing for the conclusion of the Lenten season, for Holy Week and beyond.

Alexander Scutt

Leader, Melbourne, 4 April 2022.

## Introduction to this Pipeline Edition...

Geoff Stevenson (Day 20)

*"If you, even you, had only recognised on this day the things that make for peace!"*  
(Luke 19:42)

This verse comes as part of Luke's story of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. As he approaches the city, he weeps over it and utters those words. There is a warning of suffering and pain, and the pericope concludes with: "...because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you."

In this Lenten issue of Pipeline, we will be challenged by some beautiful and inspiring stories of passionate actions for peace, justice and God's Reign in the world. There are stories that are personal, where individuals impact the lives of others in transformative,

inspiring ways and make a difference in the world. There are also the personal hopes and prayers as people ponder life in our world and the dreams of God being fulfilled.

There are stories where people work with local groups and organisations to stand up for justice for people and the Earth. There are stories of confronting large corporations that deny humanity and justice and stories that confront the larger struggles for peace across our world.

We will read how the various parts of the Christian Church can and do work together to seek mutual understanding and collaboration in embracing the ways of Jesus. There is openness to hearing the stories and life of other faith traditions and seeking a way forward together for the common good.

One article invites us to reflect on the nature of evil and move beyond our own ego-centric views of the world - and what that means for acceptance of life, the world, difference, struggle and all the questions we ask. Some responses to this article are included as part of that conversation.

As I read through these wonderful and diverse contributions I have been challenged. I have been challenged from the moment Mark Hurst suggested this theme - what would my response be? I can't point to the deep engagement of some other people, whom I admire greatly. Working for peace and justice takes deep commitment, much time and leads through many struggles and disappointments. I am involved in many different issues, but I seem to be more peripheral, supporting those on the front line and creating spaces for further support. I promote and support the various issues that our Uniting Church and Sydney Alliance are involved with and get involved in some of the direct actions. It doesn't seem much.

As I reflect on the issues of peace and justice, I also recognise that I too often

feel overwhelmed and helpless, and I suspect that such feelings are more about me and my own vulnerability. As I read these articles and the words from Luke's story of Jesus, I am challenged to recognise I cannot and never will be able to change the world - in my own strength! I must *recognise the time of God's coming to me/us!*

Part of my own reflection also takes me down the path of how I build the spiritual base for our lives that gives both impetus and sustenance to work for peace and justice in our world - both our immediate relationships with people and the Earth and the broader issues. My own work seems to be more focussed on building the deeper sense of 'being in God' as I work with people and congregations across Western Sydney. In previous times, I have easily found myself rushing from one thing to the next and not being focussed on any one thing. I burn myself out through such activism and wonder what 'I've' achieved.

My journey through more recent years has drawn me more deeply into place of spiritual renewal and discovering 'my home' in God and that there I will discover that my life can and will be an act of reconciliation and hope. This does not diminish the need to join with others in the wider work of God's mission in the world to seek reconciliation and peace between peoples and with the Earth and its creatures.

I have been deeply influenced by Richard Rohr and the team at the Centre for Action and Contemplation. I am challenged by Richard's assertion that the most important word in that title is 'and'. He implores us to both the life of contemplative faith and active service and witness. Within so many of the stories of Wellspring members there is the living evidence of this dual path - the inner and outer, contemplation and action in the world. Thank you for the encouragement and inspiration in your stories and work!

# Peace and Justice in Inala (Yuggerah country), Qld.

Neil Holm (Day 26)

## Justice for the Oppressed

Five or six years ago, L migrated to Australia. Soon after his arrival, he married O, a slightly older woman of a related but different nationality. O was mother to a daughter from an earlier relationship and carer for two older nieces. She had migrated several years previously. She met L on a return visit to her homeland. She may have been seeking a new husband. O sponsored his entry to Australia and soon after their son was born. A year or so later, L knocked on my door and said,

“I got this letter. Can you help?”

O had taken out a domestic violence complaint against him and was seeking a domestic violence order. Once the complaint was lodged, he could no longer live in or approach the family home. Effectively, he was homeless. He slept rough for a while until Margaret and I persuaded him to stay with us. He worked as a carer and if the DVO was successful he would lose his job. I helped him write statutory declarations and affidavits. I accompanied him through the court process that required several hearings. Finally, we reached “judgement day” when the magistrate would hear from both sides and make a binding decision. Although she had appeared for each of the preliminary hearings, O chose not to appear at the final hearing. Consequently, she presented no evidence to the magistrate who declared,

“Mr L, the aggrieved presented no evidence today. Her application for a Domestic Violence Order therefore fails. You are free to go about your normal business without further restriction.”

I helped L find a room in a boarding house and stood guarantor with his landlord. Since then, he has continued to pay O maintenance, kept up his carer role, but has seen his son rarely. Two weeks ago, L knocked on my door again,

“I got this letter. Can you help? O has lodged a new complaint!”

The complaint has numerous allegations but few details. And so, we repeat this arduous and stress-inducing process – perhaps to see the DVO application fail again at the final hurdle.

In Luke 4:18, Jesus said:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free.

L’s case ticks all these boxes. He was poor. He was captive in his domestic circumstances. He was unable to see a path through the legal maze. He was oppressed by his circumstances, even fearful that if things went badly, he might be deported. When he knocked on my door, what else could I, as someone following in the footsteps of Jesus, do?

## Making Peace in a Community Garden

For the last 12 years, I have coordinated St Hugh’s Inala Community Garden. First established about 15 years ago, the garden is in recess because we do not have a management committee. We have never had a proper management committee because the gardeners do not want to join a committee.

Most gardeners are of African refugee background. They are keen to have some plots and to grow their own food but are unwilling to come to working bees to manage the compost bins and to look after the upkeep of the entire site. Consequently, the site gets out of control from time to time. Although we have designated areas called “community spaces” where we might plant and grow for the benefit of each other and perhaps the wider community, these spaces are ignored.

Despite my best efforts, I have failed to engender a sense of community within the group. The gardeners seem to understand “community garden” as a place on the church grounds where members of the wider community might come and garden.

*What is Community Anyway?*, an article by Chavis and Lee in Stanford Social Innovation Review sums up the situation in our garden and explains

why our garden fails as a true community:

The meaning of community is complex. And, unfortunately, insufficient understanding of what a community is and its role in the lives of people in diverse societies has led to the downfall of many well-intended “community” efforts.



PASSIONATE ABOUT NATURE, WELLNESS, AND COMMUNITY FOOD SECURITY?

**WE ARE LOOKING FOR LEADERS FOR A COMMUNITY GARDEN!**

The Community Garden at St Hugh's Anglican Church, 105 Poinsettia St, Inala is looking for individuals to join the committee

Current members of the community garden come from all walks of life. Some have lived in Inala for years, some are recent refugees, but all are keen to grow food for their families and to build a healthier, more connected community.

If you are interested yourself, or if you know someone who could make a great contribution, please contact Neil 0420 936 190 or come to our meeting on 30 April 9am



Community is both a feeling and a set of relationships among people. People form and maintain communities to meet common needs.

Members of a community have a sense of trust, belonging, safety, and caring for each other. They have an individual and collective sense that they can, as part of that community, influence their environments and each other.

That treasured feeling of community comes from shared experiences and a sense of—not necessarily the actual experience of—shared history. As a result, people know who is and isn't part of their community. This feeling is fundamental to human existence.



At least one member of our church has called for the removal of the community garden infrastructure to allow a labyrinth to be built.

However, recalling the meme attributed to Einstein, “The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result,” I decided to change tack and recruit other people who might share my definition of community. I recently called a public meeting using the local Facebook sites and a kerbside sign. The advertising made it clear that I am recruiting committee members. We had a good meeting of community-minded people who, although not ready to form a committee, have agreed to work towards a further meeting.

As we inspected the site, I told the group,

“The church makes the site available and provides the infrastructure because we believe in community.

Or more accurately, we believe in the Kingdom of God.

The Kingdom of God is not some far off place that we might enter when we die. The Kingdom of God is now. Here and now.

The Kingdom exists when people relate to each other, care for each other, help each other, feed each other, work together, and enjoy being with each other.

The church wants this garden to be more than a place where each person

grows their own food in isolation. My dream is that in this garden we will relate to each other, care for each other, help each other, feed each other, work together, and enjoy being with each other.”

I could have ended by paraphrasing Luke 19:42,

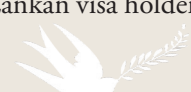
“I pray that you, even you, might recognise that every day in this garden things are happening that make for peace!”



John Clarkson (Day 15)

I am a member of the Bathurst Refugee Support group, and we support a couple of Afghan visa holders staying in the House of Welcome provided by the sisters of Mercy while they are studying nursing at the University. We have also set up a rent fund to help a number of Sri Lankan visa holders who are given limited help from the Government.

I believe this is a true understanding of Peace.



Helen Menzies (Day 16)

Tim Costello, who is head of Afghan Refugee Restore Association, asked people to contact their member of parliament regarding the recent cut in Afghan refugees coming to our huge empty land; to provide the necessary visas and support for these displaced people when they are settling in, and to assist them to find jobs and, most necessary, a place to live.

I did that immediately in view of the up-coming election. I then prayed for the whole situation. We need to add our pleas for refugees from Ukraine who are fleeing the bombs in their homeland.

## Poetry Reflection and Photo Deborah Ruiz Wall (Day 27)

### *Halfway world*

*Halfway world where we exist now  
when the world appears to be tumbling  
down  
before our eyes, then clouds of hope turn up  
on the horizon, whispering, “Peace be  
upon you!”  
and fear suddenly perishes from our sight.*



*Photos on pages 5, 6 and 10 from Wentworth Falls Lake, 18 March 2022*

# Saving Giligarambala

Mark Hurst (Day 15)

What does it mean to live at peace with the land?

We discovered in November 2021 that Energy Australia (a Hong Kong based company) wants to remove a large part of Mount Walker, known to local Wiradjuri people as Giligarambala, and build a huge reservoir to hold water pumped up from Lake Lyell in a pumped-hydro scheme. They plan to pump water up to the reservoir for twelve hours and then let it flow down for eight. The flow of water in and out of Lake Lyell will raise and lower the lake two metres every day. It will take more energy to pump the water up to the reservoir than will be gained by letting it flow down.

When a neighbour first heard about these plans, he alerted others in the neighbouring area that will be affected by the years of construction and then the running of the pumped-hydro scheme. The property we live on borders Mount Walker which we thought was part of Marrangaroo National Park but soon discovered was purchased by Energy Australia. When a public meeting was finally organised, the company flew in employees from Melbourne where the project is being designed for the meeting held in the Wallerawang Bowling Club. The Energy Australia project designer began his presentation by saying “We own Mount Walker. We own Lake Lyell. They are close to the energy grid so we can do this.”

The project designer had never been to Mount Walker and Lake Lyell. He had not met with local Aboriginals who talk about Giligarambala as a place for men’s business and initiating boys in the ways of becoming men. The mountain is known to them as “Eagle Dreaming” for the wedged-tail eagles who live there. We regularly see eagles soaring over our property

and are always stopped in our tracks by their elegance in flight.

Energy Australia talks about renewable energy and green projects but this one fails the test. Their representative at the public meeting admitted that they will use whatever is the cheapest source of energy to do their pumping. This could include energy from fossil fuel sources.

Pumped hydro can be a good, clean, renewable source of energy. Mary and I grew up in an area in Pennsylvania where that was the case. But it was on a flowing river going over a dam, not being pumped up a mountain.

We wanted to support our neighbours in their attempt to stop this project but wondered “Are we just joining a NIMBY effort?” “Is it because it is literally in our back yard that we are opposing this?” The answer we came up with as we studied Energy Australia’s plan was “No, there is more to this than NIMBYism.”

We’ve gotten to know our neighbours through this effort. Some discovered Platypus in the creek where the pumping is scheduled to occur and in a video the group has prepared, we’ve been able to see the beauty of Giligarambala and its connecting ranges. We’ve seen parts of Lithgow we never saw before as we delivered brochures to post boxes and we’ve been learning local history from some of the other group members who have lived their entire lives in this locale.

Last weekend we attended the Lithgow Show where we volunteered at an information table about the project and tonight, we were at a meeting of the Lithgow Council where members of our group made a presentation (after one via Zoom from Energy Australia).

Our local group is called the Concerned Lithgow Community Group and our Facebook page is

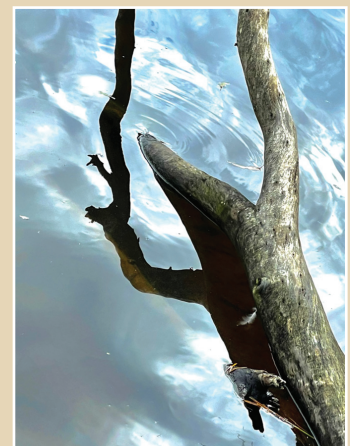
found at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1387026761737555> The final decision on whether this project goes ahead or not will be made by a government minister in Sydney. In the meantime, we hope to make as much noise as we can and involve as many people as we can.

What does it mean to live at peace with the land? Living at peace with our neighbours and speaking up for the land that can’t speak for itself.



Mary at the Lithgow Show

## Poetry Reflection and Photo Deborah Ruiz Wall (Day 27)



### Shadows

*Forked roads in our sojourn  
often leave us in a confused state.  
We only see shadows twinning our trail,  
then a stream of light appears within  
to say to us, 'to live life wholly,  
we truly must confront our frailty.'*



# Christians for Peace Newcastle

Doug Hewitt (Day 9)

On behalf of **Christians for Peace Newcastle** I wish to share some reflections of the theme of Peace based on the words on Jesus in Luke 19:42. Jesus is weeping profusely as he looks over the city of Jerusalem “If you, even you, had only recognised on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes.” For Jesus, peace in the Temple city seemed very elusive, a situation not very different from that of today, not only in Jerusalem, but also in many parts of our troubled world.

We know that many are also weeping today as they view the Holy City from that same place on the Mount of Olives, knowing that it could be a place for a peaceful co-habitation of the three great Abrahamic faiths. But sadly, the Zionist Jews who dominate the State of Israel, are now refusing to share it with Christians and Muslims, whose land and homes, which have been owned by their families for many generations is being seized for new Jewish settlements, while the world looks on and refuses to act, thus condoning these illegal seizures. Today, peace in the city of Jerusalem seems to be a long way off.



As I write Christians for Peace in Newcastle have been represented this week at a local community meeting, called in response to a Federal Government announcement that Newcastle is one of three favoured sites for a base for nuclear-powered submarines. We have joined those protesting about the choice of Newcastle as one of the alternatives to

host the submarines, planned as part of the AUKUS agreement. We are compelled to act at a time when our government has halved its spending on both overseas aid and its diplomatic service, while promising massive increases on defence spending. These priorities are troubling, as we know that every war is the result of a failure of diplomacy, with Ukraine being the latest sad example. Our country is losing its ability to negotiate with fewer diplomats available.

Many years ago, the City of Newcastle declared that it was a Nuclear-Free Zone, and therefore would refuse to host any ships that were nuclear-powered, carrying nuclear weapons or nuclear waste products. This week's public meeting was called to ensure that this commitment is maintained, in the face of strong pressure on the City Council to change that policy. As expected, the government's announcement is being warmly received by many business leaders and the strong local advocates of the rapidly expanding defence industry in the Hunter region.

**First speaker at the meeting was Gem Romuld**, Director of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, who **said that ICAN Australia views this proposal with alarm, due to the increased nuclearisation of Australia's military capability.** “Important questions remain over construction of the submarines and the potential imposition of military nuclear reactors in host cities, making any construction sites and host ports certain nuclear targets.” She thanked the Newcastle opponents for their strong opposition to the base as she outlined ICAN's policy on the implications of the AUKUS agreement.

“Military nuclear reactors in Australia would present a clear nuclear weapons

proliferation risk and become potential sites for nuclear accidents and radiological contamination long into the future.” She suggested that even nuclear-powered submarines would become targets. “The AUKUS alliance sends a message of hostility and encourages preparations for war among nuclear-armed nations. Australia should resist becoming further embroiled with military escalation in our region.”

Christians for Peace Newcastle has members from many churches who act decisively in an attempt to bring peace in a world hell-bent on war. For over 30 years the group has observed Hiroshima Day, holding a sunrise service on 6 August in the grounds of Christ Church Cathedral, and in recent years replacing that with an evening worship commemoration on the Sunday closest to Hiroshima Day. Speakers have helped us to offer prayers for peace and have given a focus on alternatives to war. In 2019, following the reading of the account of *Jesus clearing the temple in John 2: 12–17*, we reflected on *Louis Duffy's painting, Christ driving out the money changers depicted below.*



## **Christ driving out the money changers by Louis Duffy**

*The scene is a graveyard where sixteen men in business suits are in confrontation with Jesus who is holding a baton. The men are arms dealers trading their weapons on the graves of the dead – the ultimate profiteers in suffering!*

*So, Jesus continues to turn things upside down, in a world that frequently rejects his message of peace on earth. While many feel uncomfortable at an angry Jesus, there would be greater concern if he remained silent in the face of acts of violence, oppression and injustice.*

*He gives an example for us all.*

Recent surveys indicate that the vast majority of Australians want Prime Minister Morrison to sign and ratify the *UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons*. While this wouldn't bar Australia from acquiring nuclear-powered submarines, it would require our government to ensure that its alliance relationships do not involve cooperation on the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, a critical step forward for global security, which we know could not survive a nuclear conflict.

Increasingly, the Hunter region of NSW is becoming a major defence hub, with both F-18 and the new F-35 jet fighters based at RAAF Williamtown.

The expanding aerospace centre at the airport has a collection of weapons manufacturers setting up or extending existing industries, with our politicians promising greater support for the production of armaments for sale to any country seeking weapons. We know from ministerial announcements that some arms have been exported to Saudi Arabia, for use in its war in Yemen, with Save the Children reporting on their use on civilians, causing the deaths of children.

Members of Christians for Peace have been writing to political decision-makers for several years, protesting at the growing subsidies of federal funds (our taxes) to arms manufacturers. When Prime Minister Turnbull announced the gift of 4 billion dollars in grants for arms production, with the objective that Australia should become one of the ten highest arms exporters, we wrote that as followers of the Prince of Peace we were totally opposed to such a decision. The reply

assured us that despite the stated market for arms sales were countries in Asia, Africa and the Middle East, the government monitored the sales very closely. Evidence quoted above suggests that this oversight is very cursory.

When the International Campaign for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), was given the Nobel Peace Prize in 2017, Christians for Peace Newcastle applied to become a partner organisation, as Wellspring Community did last year. For the past five years we have supported ICAN's efforts to get Australia to sign the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. At our annual Hiroshima Day commemoration in 2019 we launched ICAN's Report Choosing Humanity, in the presence of over 100 local people. We are gratified that the ALP has promised to sign the Treaty when in government. We await this possibility with great anticipation for peace needs all the support that governments can give.

## The Gift of Peace in a Vulnerable Life

Julie Brackenreg (Day 2)

Greetings from the Blue Mountains - the sun is shining - a rarity this summer, but those of us who live here are counting our blessings at having had a summer without threat of fire.

I am attaching a piece that I want to share with fellow Wellspring folk. It is a Reflection on the Beatitudes written by a young friend who died suddenly in January. His family reprinted it in his Funeral Service and I have been coming back to it ever since. I have been fortunate to have been Stephen's friend for almost 20 years [his mother and I became firm friends in Greek classes at Theological College in the early 2000's] and I am still coming to terms with his death.

I have included a brief Biography which his mother has given me

permission to have published. Through my friendship with this family I have been a member of the L'Arche Community for many years and my life has been enriched.

Stephen lived in Newcastle NSW. He was the fourth son in a loving, gentle and wise Christian family who gently shared their love and wisdom with many through their church and especially, for many years, through the L'Arche organisation.

Stephen lived his life with many and varied chronic and, at times, disabling health and social conditions. Through all this he constantly grew in faith and succeeded academically. His faith was evident in all he chose to do and those who were his friends were blessed. His academic understandings enriched his colleagues in the Disability Work



Sector in many ways. He used these understandings to improve the lives of those living with disability through the L'Arche Community and latterly those who grappled with the complexities of the NDIS in Australia. He was a philosopher, writer and genuinely wise man whose gifts have been lost



too early through his death. Stephen wanted those he knew to know and live life in all its richness and he strove to facilitate others in reaching for this abundance.

We were blessed to know him and the poorer for his leaving us.

### Reflections on The Beatitudes

Matthew 5:3–10

Stephen Rigby [1980 – 2022]

**Blessed are the poor in spirit**, for theirs will be the Kingdom of Heaven.

*Blessed are those who struggle in this life, for through their struggle others will learn more about me, this world and themselves. Though they will suffer in this world, I will walk with them on their journey.*

**Blessed are those that mourn**, for they will be comforted.

*Blessed are those that miss the ones that they love, and are no longer with them, through the struggle in this world. Sometimes you will feel that you are alone, but I will comfort you through these times.*

**Blessed are the meek**, for they will inherit the world.

*Blessed are those who are gentle, patient and show humanity to all, for in them my work in this world is done. Through them I can show the world another way, another perspective. They are close to my heart.*

**Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness**, for they will be filled.

*Blessed are those who strive and fight for justice and peace in this world. These people are my visionaries, my eyes and my voice in this world. These people search and strive to do my will and my work.*

**Blessed are the merciful**, for they shall be shown mercy.

*Blessed are those who are compassionate, those who search to try to understand the pain and suffering of others. Through them I bring new insight, views and understandings.*

**Blessed are the pure in heart**, for they will see God.

*Blessed are those who focus on me; those who search for me, for they spend time trying to understand me and my will better. Through them and their*

*searching, they will find my love and compassion.*

**Blessed are the peacemakers**, for they will be called Children of God.

*Blessed are those who work for peace, for they are doing my will. They will bring my will to fruition, make my will a reality in this world. Through them and their actions people will see me and my will.*

**Blessed are those who are persecuted for their righteousness**, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

*Blessed are those who suffer for me because they answer my call; for they are working for me. They shall know in the future the full fruits of their labours.*



## Article for NSW Ecumenical Council

Clabon Allen (Day 20)

### Ut Unum Sint



### John Paul II

ENCYCLICAL LETTER ON THE CHURCH'S  
COMMITMENT TO ECUMENISM

The “Ut Unum Sint” papal encyclical was an important landmark in a long

process of ecumenical discussion and dialogue. I want to concentrate on some of the earlier ecumenical developments, and especially those where I was involved.

One of my clearest memories from my theological training at Mansfield College, Oxford was to hear firsthand reports from my theological lecturer about Vatican II. Rev Dr. George Caird had attended sessions of the Vatican Council as a Protestant Observer (it helped that he had fluent Latin). He came back from his trips to Rome very excited about developments at Vatican II. He believed that the Holy Spirit was creating new possibilities in the whole

life of the Roman Catholic Church. In particular, Vatican II statements talked about their irrevocable commitment to the ecumenical movement. As an interesting historical addendum, Dr Caird became the first Non-Anglican to be appointed as a Regius Professor at Oxford University.

One of the staff members of the Secretariat for the Promotion of Christian Unity in the 1960s was Father Thomas Stransky CSP. He helped to write the statements on the ecumenical commitment for Vatican II.

Some of the later developments after Vatican II did not fulfil the hopes of the Protestant Observers.

However there was one good result. At the suggestion of the Protestant Observers, it was decided to set up an ecumenical theological institute in Jerusalem.

Pope Paul VI pushed ahead with this despite a war and conflict in Israel. Eventually in 1972 the Tantur Ecumenical Institute was founded on a Catholic site between Jerusalem and Bethlehem. This began a long tradition of advanced theological research from Catholics, Orthodox and Protestants. This helped to lay some of the theological foundations that resulted in "Ut Unum Sint".

I felt it was a great privilege to spend part of my sabbatical at Tantur in 1990s. Thomas Stransky was the Rector at the time and shared some

of the developments since Vatican II. As well as lectures and visits to archaeological sites, there was a programme where we heard Muslims and Jews give their understanding of their faith. This was a good use of my sabbatical; I was able to read widely and enter into serious dialogue with Catholics, Orthodox and Anglicans.

On the Protestant side, the Student Christian Movement and the World Student Christian Federation brought students together from different theological traditions. It was one of the factors that helped form the World Council of Churches (WCC) after World War II. There have been close relations between the WCC and the Vatican ever since, with Catholics active on WCC study programmes. I

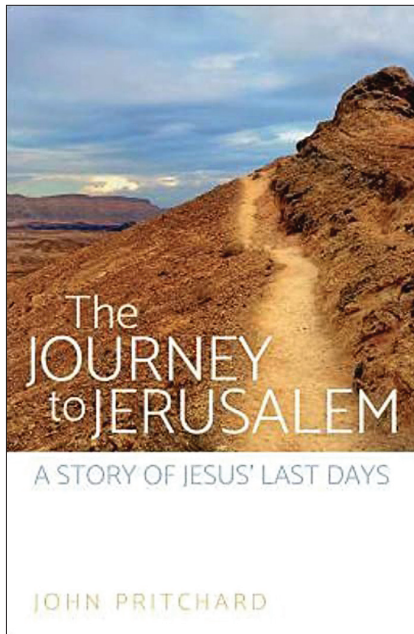
served on SCM staff in the 1960s and that helped to deepen my commitment to ecumenical work. I have served on ecumenical committees in Malaysia, Hong Kong and Britain.

Over the years there have been a series of meetings between Popes, Orthodox Patriarchs and Archbishops of Canterbury. These have all contributed to the slow process that created "Ut Unum Sint". The ongoing dialogue between the Vatican and the WCC has also contributed to the very significant achievement of the papal encyclical.

May the ongoing process of ecumenical engagement continue for many years to come.

## Book Review

Clabon Allen (Day 20)



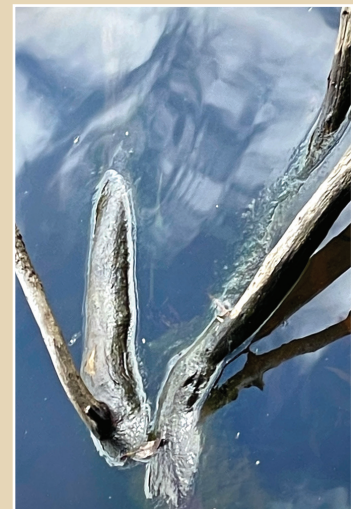
As part of my Lenten reading I thought I ought to try something different. As a minister for over 50 years I had been preaching about the events of Lent quite regularly. This book read gave me a whole new angle.

The book is called "The Journey to Jerusalem" with the subtitle of "A story of Jesus' Last Days". The writer

is John Pritchard who was formerly Bishop of Oxford. The thing that made it original is that it is written through the eyes of the disciple John. It covers all the well-known events of Lent but in a fresh way. In an imaginative way he puts forward all the doubts, fears and worries of the disciples as they climb up to Jerusalem.

Often John will admit he could not understand the teachings of Jesus, but the disciples mulled it over together; the author then gives possible interpretations. John cannot understand why Jesus wants to go to such a dangerous place as Jerusalem but fearfully he follows on. There is quite a bit about the impetuosity of Peter and the strange ways of Judas. In particular John struggles with Jesus' prediction of his suffering and death. In quite a down to earth way the writer gets us into the mindset of the disciples and in particular of John. I found this book a very stimulating way to look afresh at the well-known stories of Lent. The writer also manages to give some quite profound deep interpretations of what is happening.

## Poetry Reflection and Photo Deborah Ruiz Wall (Day 27)



### *Cloud blankets*

*There are times we feel  
we are falling apart, transforming  
us into a disintegrating entity...  
into a disembodied identity,  
and then we come to realise  
we are never really alone...  
cloud-like blankets descend from  
the sky  
to heal our wounds  
and wipe all our tears away.*



# News, Views and Work in the Blue Mountains...

Joy Connor (Day 2), Julie Brackenreg (Day 2), Deborah Ruiz-Wall (Day 27)

## “The Horror of War: The Cry Of The Angels”

Deborah Ruiz-Wall (Day 27)

Wars in Ukraine and Afghanistan, horrific floods in NSW and Qld-rising Covid numbers and stressed health staff:

The last few months have made the angels weep.

Below are some of the signs of hope in Wellspring areas of concern while we weep with the angels.

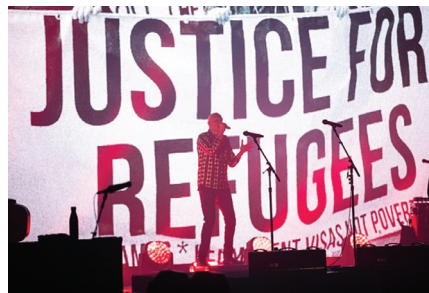
## News in Brief from Areas of Concern

### Refugees

Wellspring members have been active in advocating for refugees and there has been some progress during March. Several long-term detainees have been released and more are being told they may soon be out. The New Zealand offer has been accepted for resettling refugees

Wellspring joined with Christians for Afghanistan and 40 Anglican Bishops the last week in March in congratulating our government on offering visas to refugees from Ukraine but urging them to provide a special intake of 20,000 places to be set aside, in addition to our current refugee intake, for those in Afghanistan who have been left in extreme danger for standing bravely alongside our own troops and working for an inclusive democratic society. The letter from our leader, Alex Scutt to both the government and opposition, expressed our concern for legislation which would further undermine natural justice for refugees, applauded the acceptance of the New Zealand offer of re-settlement, spoke strongly against indefinite detention and urged them to “continue the good work you

have begun and set these additional captives free.”



*Peter Garret at The Rod Laver Arena  
Sunday 27th March*

### Reconciliation

Many in Wellspring signed on to Support for the letter from traditional owners against Fracking of the Beetaloo Basin. The Strong support from across the country helped as traditional owners fronted a Senate inquiry in March.

### Sustainability in action

Led by Wellspring member Deborah Ruiz-Wall, a newly formed mission team at Leura Uniting Church, *Leura Eco Group* (LEG) has embraced sustainable climate change practice. Four Wellspring members are part of LEG’s journey which began with doing self-awareness courses that triggered Individual lifestyle changes. Members reported growing their own vegetables at home, composting, worm farming, installing solar panels, using beeswax instead of plastic food wrappers, conserving water with a sustainable toilet basin that uses the same water for flushing and washing hands, and distributing leaflets of good environmental practice.

Leura Uniting Church transformed all their lights into LED and displayed a climate change banner outside the church. After viewing the documentary, *Mining in the Blue Mountains* at Vic Flicks cinema, LEG members contacted Natural Areas/Renewables Transition Liaison

Officer, Julie Favell of Lithgow Environment Group Inc to join hands in advocacy campaigns.

Adding Fair Trade to their agenda, LEG recently began a six-week Fair Trade themed Bible Study program. Anna Spoores, Uplift FairTrade Director was invited on 27 March as its guest speaker.



*Anna from Uplift Fair Trade  
finalising a purchase*

### Healing and Hospitality - for people who are often lonely

Julie Brackenreg, Wellspring member from Blackheath, drives 2 hours down to Sydney every Friday to co-ordinate the Have A Chat Café, a community drop-in Café which began in Glebe in 2004.

It was opened to enable the folk who live, often alone, in social housing on the Glebe Estate to gather and enjoy affordable coffee and cake in a suburb known for its [rather expensive] café culture. It has grown over the years to include a wide variety of activities. Currently we have a group of older women who meet as the “Crafty Women” and knit, crochet and make cards and jewellery and an Art and Craft group who have two facilitators who engage with a wide range of men and women drawing, painting and crafting. Meanwhile our Café features barista coffee, tea or milkshakes with cakes and raisin toast - at \$2.50 a serve.

We have weathered closures over Lockdowns AND maintenance after flooding and are again building our clientele where some people arrive at 9:30 each Friday and don't leave until we close at 1:00. J.P. services, advocacy re tenancy and other matters and free food are available for those who need



*Have a Chat Cafe*

that help. We also host celebrations – birthdays and wakes are our speciality, along with the occasional Memorial Service for friends whose funerals were conducted away from Glebe.

### **Celebrating Wellspring Contributions to Reconciliation and Justice**

The contributions of long-term Wellspring members Elaine and John Telford and Sheila Quonoey of the Presentation Sisters were celebrated recently by the Blue Mountains Community. Traditional owners paid tribute to their work for reconciliation through speeches from both young and old, a spontaneously composed song, a song in Darug and dance by the Killimai Wagana dancers. The local and State and Federal MP's and local councillor added their appreciation.

Elaine, John and Sheila were active members of the Blue Mountains People for Reconciliation, Together for Timor and the Blue Mountains

East Timor Sisters and spent time assisting projects in East Timor.

Elaine championed Women's Spirit Events in the Mountains, putting Aboriginal wisdom and teaching at the centre of the activity; using ritual and sharing with a sense of fun. John Telford helped each organisation work structurally in strategic, respectful and considered ways. Sheila provided her writing and communication skills to spread the word. The trio all believed in working with schools to develop understanding of Aboriginal culture and the importance of respect.

The Blue Mountains will miss them as they move to their new homes.



*Celebrating reconciliation*

## **WELLSPRING COMMUNITY INC.**

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Peace and Social Justice	Mark Hurst		m5hurst51@gmail.com
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Sustainability	Lisa Wriley		lisaw0508@gmail.com

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

**NEXT ISSUE:** August 2022.

Pipeline Committee: Geoff Stevenson.

**Deadline for material** The Pipeline, August Edition, focusses on the theme of Spirituality and Worship (one of our Wellspring focus areas). In the Prayer Diary for Sunday, we read in John 4:16 that God (Trinity) is love. You are invited to reflect upon how you experience this reality of 'GOD is Love' in your life. Share your experience, write a poem, share an image or review a book, song, movie... that conveys your sense of 'God is Love.'

Contributions are to be submitted by Friday August 5. You are welcome to begin now and submit early!

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