



The Sapphire Coast Uniting Churches "Mouse"

March'18

Easter Sunday Prayer

Lord God,

You loved this world so much that you gave your one and only Son,
that we might be called your children too. Lord, help us to live in the gladness and grace of
Easter Sunday, every day. Let us have hearts of thankfulness for your sacrifice. Let us have
eyes that look upon Your grace and rejoice in our salvation.

Help us to walk in that mighty grace and tell your good news to the world.
All for your glory do we pray, Lord. Amen.

- Rachel Marie Stone

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All were saddened to hear of the death of Susie's mother who moved to Imlay House from
Melbourne before Christmas. Our deepest sympathy is extended to Susie. Please keep Susie
and her family in your hearts and prayers.

Rev. David has a busy Easter period ahead and is hoping to hold a Tenebrae Meal on
Maundy Thursday if the venue is available. He will also be conducting the Easter Service at
Wyndham.

David is going to be coordinating the June Jazz Service at the Catholic Church this year and
Merimbula may have their usual jazz service on the June long weekend if the band is still
willing to take part.

Bec Minnear from Ability Links held a luncheon meeting at Merimbula church on 26th
February which the Fellowship ladies catered for. Many thanks to those who helped. Bec
will be holding similar meetings in the Eden to Bermagui area.

Bec donated a very nice olive tree to the church.

Rev. David has suggested a church Walking Group or Coffee Group. This needs further
development by interested people, so let one of our committee members know if you are
interested in taking part in something like this, also those interested in potting up plants or
other group activities. David will possibly be taking leave in August.

We welcome John and Bec back to our lovely area and say farewell to Alf and Joan until
their return in October.

.....
A man trying to understand the nature of God and asked him: "God, how long is a
million years to you?" God answered: "A million years is like a minute." Then the man
asked: "God, how much is a million dollars to you?" And God replied: "A million dollars
is like a penny." Finally the man asked: "God, could you give me a penny?" And God said,
"In a minute."



The Op shop is still going very well after a wonderful Christmas period, when we had lots of visitors coming to our shop for the first time. We have very good compliments made about our shop, especially about our friendly staff and our low prices. We have recently welcomed Julie Downes who is enjoying her time with us and we will miss Alf and Joan when they leave us to return to Canada. Jeff Smith has come in to look after our garbage as John is no longer able to do it. We welcome Julie and Jeff to our team.

Unfortunately we are being inundated with donations, probably because Salvos and Vinnies are not taking donations. Not that this stops people from dumping at their doors when the shops are closed. We do get some very good donations, but a lot is rubbish that the people should take to the tip, so it is costing us a lot more for rubbish removal. Staff enjoyed a very nice pre-Christmas lunch at the RSL and I hope to have a staff afternoon tea in June or July. Thanks to Margaret and Colin who regularly take toiletries, clothing etc. to the Women's resource in Bega and Jeanette has been taking surplus stock to Bega as we don't have enough room for all the donations that come in. We all miss Jacqui who has had terrible trouble with a hip replacement that went wrong. She does come in to help out occasionally, but suffers for it the next day. It's good to have Libby helping out on a Monday morning.

Sadly we farewelled Irene West who has moved up north to live. She will be missed by us all.

**Council Clips**

Church Council met on Thursday 1st march at the new time of 2.30 pm. Donations passed were \$1000 to the Tonga Appeal, \$500 to the Community Kitchen and \$250 to Eden Uniting church for the kind donation of the piano which our congregation is now enjoying. David stated the need for three new Elders to replace Kerrie, Lyn and Paul. If you feel the call to be an Elder please speak to Rev. David or one of the Elders. There are plans to hold a Multi-cultural dinner in September or October and another Garage Sale when Alf returns in October. Also the Memorial wall is still a work in progress. If you would like to have a plaque remembering a loved one placed on the brick wall looking out from the front of the hall, please see David.

**Community Visitors Scheme *Corinne***

Sadly, Susie is resigning from the position of Coordinator in April. Thank you so much Susie for the love and care shown to the visitors and residents in the scheme. I'm sure you will be missed. Greg Wollaston will take over the position and we wish him well as he settles into the new job. Greg is involved in sporting clubs in the area and hopes to get some younger people involved in the scheme. Keith Akesson has resigned from the CVS committee. Thank you Keith for the time you gave to this worthy cause. Susie will take Keith's place on the committee so will still be keeping up with what is going on.



Last month the first meeting of the year was at Tura Beach Country Club, where we enjoyed a very nice meal. Fellowship date has changed for this month. Meeting will be held on 12th March when Brian and Ann are visiting to pick up a load to take to the outback. After loading up, they will speak to us on just what the huge trip entail. All are welcome to attend to hear this interesting story. Please let Corinne or Joan know if you wish to attend. Afternoon tea will be enjoyed after the meeting.



Merimbula Mutterings

You will have noticed that the church seating has been re-arranged.

There seems to be mixed feelings about it, but evidently some of the Readers are pleased that they no longer have to step up onto the platform to do the reading. The church did look very nice over the Christmas season, especially with the beautiful nativity scene which was donated to us taking pride of place.

Peter and Rosemary have been making good use of the piano donated to us by Eden Uniting Church. The congregation have been enjoying a change from the organ.

We will have a shared luncheon after the service on Sunday 29th April, when John Blair will conduct the service.

Corinne has welcomed a great granddaughter since last "Mouse". Not biased but she is just so beautiful. Janet has unfortunately suffered a badly broken arm. We all wish her speedy and complete healing.

An update on our granddaughter, Aislin Jones

Aislin has had a very busy start to 2018. In January she won the National Skeet shooting title at the championships held in Echuca. It is not only in shooting that she excels but also academically at school and community work. For her efforts she was awarded Young Australian Citizen 2018 for the East Gippsland Area



She celebrated her 18th birthday in February and got her driver's licence on her birthday. As I write this she is on her way to Guadalajara (Mexico) for a World Cup meeting. When she returns she will be home only for a few days before going to Sydney for the Junior World Cup event. Then in early April it is up to the Gold Coast for the Commonwealth Games. We, together with the rest of the family have tickets for her events.

Tony & Anne



Our choir has recommenced and will be meeting at the church on Tuesday afternoon and early evening. We are planning a Community Concert and afternoon tea on Friday 25th May.

After noon tea will be served in the church after the Anzac Day service which will be held in the Wyndham Park. The Wyndham Singers will be participating in this event. Music lessons conducted by Christine Nicolson have recommenced for the year.

We have replaced the electric pump which operates our water system from the tank. We were most grateful for the support of Corinne at our recent service and it was lovely to have John and Jeanette with us on this occasion.

We continue to support the worship and fellowship of the Anglican and Catholic Churches through attendance at their services and providing afternoon tea facilities for the after church gathering.

Nancy has just celebrated a "special" birthday and Barbara has had the joy of nursing her first great granddaughter, Andi. Congratulations.



IMLAY HOUSE

The monthly Service at IMLAY has had to be moved to the First WEDNESDAY of each month as a result of staffing issues. So the weekly prayer meeting has also been changed and now meets at 1.15pm on Wednesdays other than the first Wednesday.

Last week there were several deaths (8 in all) in Imlay – including the passing of Susie Morrison's mother. So the House is a sad place at the moment with several empty rooms. The care of the staff has been wonderful however and we should be proud and thankful for the staff who work there.

Both Iris Ballard & Libby Roberts are now coming regularly to the Services and helping out – but more importantly getting to know people in the House. Others are always welcome!

Pauline Moulds who has been faithfully playing the piano for the Services is herself starting to slow down and so there is now the need for someone who might be willing to play the piano for 4 Hymns at the Service on the first Wednesday of each month. Know anyone? Please let Rev David know.

Imlay continues to be a significant ministry! Why come and enjoy it as much as we do!

You Never Hear in Church

Hey! It's MY turn to sit on the front pew!

I was so enthralled I never noticed your sermon went over time 25 minutes.

I volunteer to be the permanent teacher for the High Sunday School class.

I love it when we sing hymns I've never heard before!

Since we're all here, let's start the worship service early!

THE Power of NOW

The contemplative secret is to learn how to live in the "NOW". Saints knew and taught this long before the "New Age."

Jean-Pierre de Caussade, S.J. already spoke of this as "*the Sacrament of the Present Moment*" in his classic book of spiritual direction in 1735.

Richard Rohr's book, *Everything Belongs*, came out in 1999, the same year as Tolle's immensely helpful book, *The Power of Now*.

The "NOW". is not as empty as it might appear to be—or that we fear it may be.

Try to realize that everything that we really need is right here, right NOW.

When we're doing life right, it means nothing more than it is right now, because God is always in this moment in an accepting and non-blaming way.

When we are able to experience that, taste it, and enjoy it, we don't need to hold on to it nor are we afraid to let go of it. The next moment will have its own taste and enjoyment.

Because our moments are not tasted—or full—or real—or in the Present Presence—we are never fulfilled and there is never enough.

We then create artificial fullness and distractions and try to pass time or empty time with that.

God is either in this now or God isn't in it at all.

"This moment is as perfect as it can be" used to be a mantra which Rohr says they would repeat at the community of New Jerusalem in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Could this become our mantra too? We are exactly as God wants us to be – and for good or bad, **GOD IS WITH US NOW!** 6

Perhaps our entranceway into the NOW (here & now), is to simply slow down as suggested in Psalm 46:10:

Be still and know that I am God.

Be still and know that I am.

Be still and know.

Be still.

Be.

Adapted from Richard Rohr's book

Everything Belongs: The Gift of Contemplative Prayer. (pp.60-62)

REPORT ON 'PLANNING/DREAMING' QUESTIONS 2017

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

The following questions from a Church Council Meeting were posed during Worship on 30th July and people were invited to respond by writing answers on posters over morning tea.

1. Why do we do what we do as a Church?
2. What will this church look like in the next 3-5 years? Will we be the same or similar to the way we are today?
3. What 2 or 3 things would we like to see changed? Do we want change at all – or more of the same?
4. What dreams, hopes & expectations do we have for this congregation?

The responses were as follows.....

Why do we do what we do as a Church?

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- That's what we have always done – we need to think outside of our comfort zones
- We dislike CHANGE
- * We love CHANGE
- To help each other survive in this ever-challenging world – dealing with grief, illness, unemployment, increasing expenses, anxiety in the world.
- To help each other on the journey of life with Christ as our guide.

What will this church look like in the next 3-5 years?

Will we be the same or similar to the way we are today?

- Communion every week
- Kids involved in Church
- Communion – share from the 'blessed' common loaf using the Intinction method.
- ?? It is impossible to predict just how God will challenge us and how we will respond.

What 2 or 3 things would we like to see changed?

Do we want change at all - or more of the same?

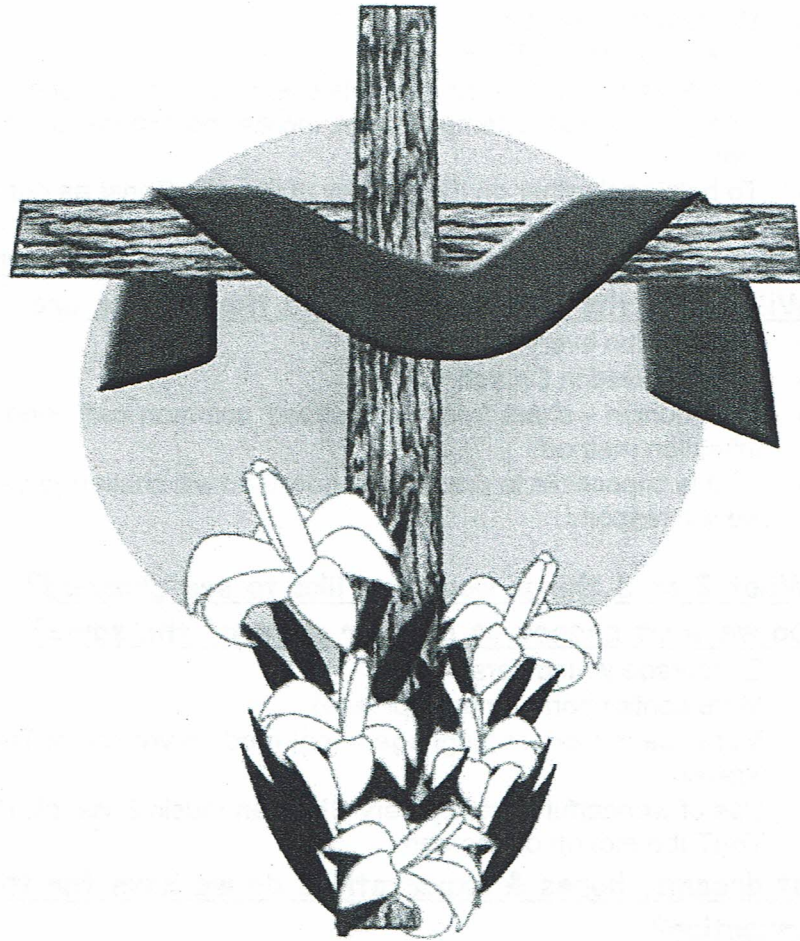
- Encourage youngsters
- More contemporary music (please)
- More use of modern language – (eg) modern version of The Lord's Prayer
- Use of wonderful contemporary Christian music & visuals (from YouTube etc) on our screen

What dreams, hopes & expectations do we have for this congregation?

- That God's Spirit will refresh and encourage us to bring hope where there is despair and to bring love instead of hate in our homes, community and world.
- Lots of connections with the wider Sapphire Coast community

Some previously mentioned possible "ministries" to be explored:

1. "Healing Holidays"
2. "Mindful walking tours"
3. "Ministry to lonely hearts"
4. "Blue Waters conference Centre"
5. "Sapphire Arts Ministry"



"I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?" (John 11:25-26)

"If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you." (Romans 8:11)

"As for me, I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last He will take His stand on the earth." (Job 19:25)