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The Ecumenical Newsletter of the Covenant Churches of Brighton May 2011

Pentecost
Sunday
12th June



Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." And when He had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit."

Pentecost

By Danny Parkinson - Minster, Brighton Church of Christ

Although as an event Pentecost is clearly described for us in the Scriptures, it remains mysterious. Jesus described His earthly ministry as “finished” or completed; visited the captives in hell, rose from the dead and ascended back to the holy tri-union in Heaven.

What more could possibly be done? It was Tim Shaw the famous (infamous??) TV salesman who used to say “but wait, there’s more!”

Prior to His death, Jesus stated to His disciples “it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.” John 16:7 NIV. After all that was accomplished through Christ, our great God was choosing to give and bless His people AGAIN.

God the Father had revealed Himself to Moses and led the people of God in that era.

Christ the Son revealed Himself as Jesus and ministered on earth.

God’s great plan of redemption had a further element to be revealed. The victory was won and now it had to be applied to this new age. According to His purposes He chose to spiritually reside and abide with us - to commune with believers through receiving and being immersed in His Spirit.

He poured out His Holy Spirit on us. The book of Ephesians uses the word lavished to describe the manner of God’s giving.

Being the bearers of God’s Holy Spirit we are therefore a people of redemption, of grace, of prayer, of worship, of discipleship; light-bearers and proclaimers of the Word. Upon giving us this mighty gift, it is not to be stored up in secret, or treasured in a way that makes us hoarders of God’s grace. It must be shared, shed abroad. There are three directions or emphases that we bring to bear on being the people of God’s Spirit.

COVENANT EVENTS CALENDAR (cont...)

Advent studies 2011

The Covenant Churches are planning to share Advent studies in December this year. This was initiated last year with a strong involvement of locals, using a similar form to the Lenten Studies conducted each year. A coordinator is required for this. Please phone Covenant Chairman, Danny Parkinson on 9592 1531 if you can take on this task.

Bethlehem in Brighton 2011

This year - 4th December: In the grounds of St. Andrews Anglican Church, cnr New and Church Sts, Brighton. A wonderful event that re-tells the story of the nativity through drama and interaction. The TEAR foundation will have a promotional presence on the day. TEAR assist with Transformation, Empowerment, Advocacy and Relief in social justice initiatives in Australia and throughout the world.



Covenant Meeting dates 2011

15th June 17th August 16th November
All meetings will be held in the meeting room at
St. Joan of Arc Catholic Church beginning at 7:30pm.



COVENANT EVENTS CALENDAR

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

JUNE 5th		
6th	7:00 pm	St. Leonard's Uniting Church
7th	7:00 pm	Brighton Church of Christ
8th	12 noon	Trinity Uniting
9th	12 noon	Brighton Baptist Church
10th	9:15 am	St. James Catholic Church
12th	3:00 pm	St. Andrew's Anglican Church - a combined Pentecost service. General Secretary of the Victorian Council of Churches, Theo Mackaay is guest speaker.

Peter Cross Memorial Lecture

Time: 7:30pm Tuesday June 14th

Venue: St. Leonard's Uniting Church

Corner New Street and Wolseley Grove , Brighton

Speaker: Jenny Hayes, Co-ordinating Prison Chaplain for Victoria

Topic : How could we close a prison?

The lecture will focus on the issues that the prison and justice system throws up for our society. As well as looking at 'crime and punishment' with theological insight, Jenny will also address how we as a society might act justly in this arena.

Spirituality Day

To be advised.



First, we manifest the presence of His Spirit through worship, adoration and prayer directly to God. We offer it to Him through personal devotion and a delight in corporate praise.

Second, we bring the light of His Spirit to bear in the life and ministry of His Church. Corporate worship, acts and programs of compassion, teaching and equipping the people for ministry, receiving of words of revelation, church leadership and governance, and many other things. The Church needs to be a place of sanctuary for the healing and rest of the saints.

Third, and often the most neglected emphasis of the work of God's Spirit, is sharing Him in the world. Light shines most brightly in the darkness. Spiritually blind with processes, institutions and rhythms that do not honour God, the book of Romans describes the world as "without hope and without God in the world".

Our world needs the gentleness of the Spirit's love, the care of His compassion, the power of His ability to overcome and break strongholds, and the spirit of service that leads one person to serve another.

This Pentecost lift your eyes, reflect on the precious gift of the Holy Spirit within and conduct your daily affairs according to His light, guidance and strength. And as you look up, you will notice standing alongside you brothers and sisters in Christ from all Christian traditions.

Together, we are a beacon of love, justice, hope and salvation.

Together, we are the Body of Christ.

Together, we are the bearers of the Pentecostal Spirit.

We are the family of God - we are One.

*But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you:
and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem,
and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth
Acts 1:8 (NKJV)*

A mural for the doors of St. Stephen's Anglican Church

By The Reverend Roger Prowd



"The Tree of Life" was the theme chosen for a mural on the front doors of St Stephen's, Gardenvale, by girls from Year 9 at Firbank Grammar School as their Community Service project. The tree of life is mentioned in Genesis (3:22) where in the Garden of Eden it is a symbol of the life from which Adam and Eve are expelled. The tree is mentioned again at the end of the Bible in the book of Revelation where the story of humanity is recapitulated and restored through Christ with the leaves of the tree being for "the healing of the nations" (Rev 22:2)

It was a memorable experience for the girls Georgina Bellesis, Angela Dyer, Veronica Fletcher, Caitlin Mclvor, Sophie Thorn and Gabriella Xipolitos who undertook this project with the help of Art Teacher Deborah Waite and Chaplain Rev'd Maree Vines.

The girls designed the mural so that both children and adults would be drawn to the entrance of the church. They wanted to show God's creation of life and so they included creatures from sea, land and sky, Australian mammals, sea creatures typical of the Brighton area, birds, reptiles and insects.

The idea of new life and growth was expressed through a baby koala with its mother, and a family of owls. The fluffy baby owls were carefully positioned so that they sit on the door handle. The tree is laden with a variety of fruits including pears, lemons, apricots, pomegranates, apples, peaches, to represent the twelve kinds of Biblical fruit that are produced each month and the tree stands by the river of the water of life. The leaves which are for the healing of the nations are large and distinct. The river which flows out to the sea is teeming with living creatures. Hovering above the tree and coming down is a dove which represents the Holy Spirit.

CHURCH NOTICES

THE WELSH MALE CHOIR RETURNS TO BRIGHTON

The Melbourne Welsh Male Choir is one of Victoria's most outstanding singing ensembles. The Choir makes a most welcome return to Brighton as the next presentation by the St. Andrew's Music Foundation on:
SUNDAY, 19th JUNE 2011 at 3pm
St. Andrew's Anglican Church
New Street, Brighton
Come and enjoy the rich harmonies of this wonderful group as they sing a varied repertoire including much loved Welsh songs.
Ticket bookings available at: 9592.1240 and at the door.

FORWARD NOTICE

3pm Sunday 2nd October, Trinity Choir at St. Andrew's Anglican Church

GLEE COMPETITION

St. Leonard's Uniting Church are hosting a Glee competition for primary and secondary school students. Based on the very popular TV show. Competition Dates: 26th June: - theme Fruits of the Spirit. 27th November - theme True Spirit of Christmas..



VALE GWEN O'BRIEN

A devout member of Trinity Uniting Church and for many years a committee member of the Covenant churches, died suddenly in January. We give thanks to God for her contribution to Christian ministry in Brighton.

TRINITY UNITING CHURCH NEW MANSE.

In 2003, when the Brighton Uniting Church decided not to hold onto two big properties, the decision was made to sell the John Knox church on the corner of New Street and North Road. This property had the existing manse in its bounds. Trinity House next to the church in Black Street had been a manse built in 1961, but had been modified inside in the 1990s to give the congregation an administrative centre and a place where social events could take place.

Following the sale of John Knox and using the UCA policy of a 'manse for a manse' some money was made available to enable the building of a new house on one of the tennis courts in Lindsay Street at the back of the Black Street block. This house at 8a Lindsay Street has now been completed and it was dedicated on Sunday 10th April by the Associate General Secretary of the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania, the Rev Dr. Peter Blackwood.

The Reverend Ian and Jill Cayzer will move into the house very soon and will welcome their friends to call. The reduction in travel times will be a pleasant benefit after commuting from Frankston for 7 years.

ECUMENCIAL PRAYER SERVICE

The Covenant churches has started an "Ecumenical Prayer Service". This is a trial to see if it meets the needs of members of the Covenant churches. They are to be held in Trinity Uniting Church in Black St, Brighton on the first Wednesday of every month.

The inaugural service was held in May when twelve people from a variety of churches gathered. It is a thirty minute service and in future will start at **7:00pm** to enable those who have an 8:00pm commitment to get to that also. The format comes from a similar service which the churches in Echuca have used for thirty years. Future dates are:

1st June
6th July
3rd August
7th September
5th October
2nd November.

Testimonials from some of the girls:

Sophie Thorn

Painting the doors was amazing - the highlight of all of our weeks. I loved learning to use new techniques and applying them, and it all felt worth it because I knew these doors would be put to good use. I'll certainly be sad not to paint each week, but I am so looking forward to seeing them up in the church!

Caitlin Mclvor

Working on the church doors for the last 7 weeks has been a really amazing and enjoyable experience. I'm going to really miss our community service on Wednesdays, but will be really pleased to see the doors finally in place next Sunday at St Stephen's Church. Our sessions were a lot of fun and I learnt a lot about tonal painting techniques and my personal strengths when I'm painting. I'm definitely going to miss painting the church doors but I'm going to be really satisfied seeing them finished and in place.

Angela Dyer

I really enjoyed participating in creating the mural, as it gave me an opportunity to express myself artistically and do something for the community. I loved painting my fluffy baby owls in their nest, I can't wait to see them on the door handle. I really enjoyed working in a group of my peers and seeing the mural will evoke many warm memories for years to come.

Veronica Fletcher

Painting the doors seemed like a big project at first. Working with friends made it fun. It feels good to have created something that will be seen by the community. I'm very proud of the work and effort that I put into my bird and butterfly. I chose bright colours so that they stand out. I hope that other people enjoy looking at them.

Georgina Bellesis

Painting these doors was not just a whole load of fun to us all, but each of us obtained a new skill every week. we never would have learnt new techniques and skills if it wasn't for Mrs Waite. The animals that each of us painted were very much symbolic as our theme was based on 'the tree of life'. It was fulfilling to know that these doors would be coming to good use. I can't wait to see them on display.

Good Friday 2011

Walk of Witness

Reverend Father Gerard Johnson
Parish Priest—St. James Catholic Church

The clouds had gathered and so had the Christians for the 2011 Walk of Witness outside the Brighton Church of Christ on the corner of Wilson Street and Male Street. The route chosen this year was a little different to other years and somewhat more direct. Without the Police escort this year our Christian witness journey of some 150 Christians headed off a little later than expected to Saint Andrews Anglican Church in New Street with our regular banner and new (hollow) Cross. As our journey progressed so did the number of people who joined us on the way so that by the time we had arrived at our destination our numbers were nearly double from when we had started.



**Lifting high the Cross of Christ
in the streets of Brighton**

There were seven stations along the route where we stopped, thought, pondered and remembered the experience Jesus endured for our sakes so long ago in Jerusalem. Each Station had its focus for us, a Scripture Reading and a Hymn to help us recall the original station made so by

The Scripture Readings were from the Gospel of Mark Chapter 15. The Hymns were chosen to encourage people to make their response to the readings via song for 'Singing is for one who loves' Augustine says and of course there is the ancient proverb, 'One who sings wells prays twice'.

The route took us west along Male Street to Church Street, then north along Church Street pass Safeway, shops, estate agents, banks, eateries and theatres, to the roundabout on the corner of Church Street and St Andrews Street. There we gathered to hear what happened on Preparation Day, the day before the Sabbath and respond with a hymn that evoked the Prayer of Jesus, 'that they be one', (John 17).

As one body we then walked a little further up St Andrews Street to the seventh station, the Parish Hall of St Andrew's Anglican Church. There, we were greeted by our hosts with warm hospitality and the opportunity for morning tea with hot cross buns. In all, a fitting occasion for fellowship in the Week of Weeks on the Christian Calendar, for all was done in Jesus' name. And now we can proclaim Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia – for he is risen just as he said!

