



Sunshine Uniting Church

Bible Readings for April 19, 2020

Acts 2:1-4a, 22-32
Psalm 16
1 Peter 1:3-9
John 20:19-31

Our new Bible to sit on the communion table has been ordered. We decided to wait a little longer and purchase a soon to be available Large Print version of the New Revised standard Version.

The idea is that this version of the Bible will be the same as appears in the weekly news-sheet, so we will now be able to read from the actual Bible at the front of the church and follow along in the news-sheet.

Thanks to an anonymous donor what has offered to cover the cost of the new Bible.

A Reflection from Ray on John 20:19 - 31

In today's gospel reading three times Peace or "Shalom" is extended by Jesus to the disciples. Shalom is not just as a polite greeting, but rather the promise of Jesus – Peace I give you, not as the world gives do I give. This is why we often at Sunshine Uniting "Pass the Peace" during worship. (or at least we used to! And we will again!). It is more than a slightly awkward contrived greeting, more than pleased to see you, though we are, more than let me introduce myself – though I might. It is the granting of the peace of Jesus.

Cont. on page 5

R.I.P. Shirley Hoare

It is with sadness we bid farewell to our sister in Christ, Shirley Hoare, who died this week in her nursing home in Altona. Shirley was a much loved and respected member of the Sunshine Methodist/Uniting church, along with her husband Len (dec.) who for many years was Treasurer. Shirley was a wonderful singer and is probably the longest serving member as she was attending from the age of three! Shirley's funeral will be held in our church on Tuesday but due to restrictions can be attended only by family members.

Shirley and Len had three children - the Rev Peter (dec.), Alan and Leanne.

Well done good and faithful servant and enter into the rest that is now prepared for you.



Do Your Self a Favour

What The Harvest needs more of is ... You! More audience participation.

So we are introducing a new column called, "Do Yourself a Favour". Some of you will recognise this as the catch cry of Molly Meldrum from Countdown as he gave recommendations on what new music to listen to that week.

In the spirit of Molly we are inviting you to share a book, TV drama, podcast or film you have read or seen. Maybe a recipe that worked out, a park you have discovered, a hobby you are learning at this indoor time. It can be pretty well anything.

While we are waiting for the contributions to come flooding in I will give some links to Youtube performances of some of my favourite songs and musicians. It does not need to be "Christian" music, just something that feeds the soul. This week's link is

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O9HFjErMMIA>

If I Had a Rocket Launcher by Canadian singer/songwriter Bruce Cockburn.
See more on page 4

How Do You Want To Die?

Now that is a confronting heading isn't it? This pandemic has thrust death front and centre. A reality most of us would rather not face and mostly we can avoid... until it is our turn. An interesting article about the reality of death. It's written from a USA perspective but quite relevant for us in Australia. The opening paragraph is below and follow the link for the full article.

How do you want to die?

If you're like **70% of Americans**, you want to die at home accompanied by your loved ones. But even before the current pandemic, **68% did not get that kind of death**. In part because we've attempted to hide the reality of our finitude for so long, death in the U.S. has gradually become medicalized.

<https://religionnews.com/2020/04/13/we-need-to-respect-the-choice-not-to-die-alone-of-covid-19/>



Our favourite cartoon from Easter. Neatly combines the big three themes of this past week - Resurrection, COVID-19 and Policing of social distancing. Brilliant!

Human Trafficking (with a focus on forced marriage) awareness workshop

According to Red Cross' Support for Trafficked People Program Data Snapshot: 2009 to 2019, 44% of the forced marriage cases involved minors and 51% of the forced marriage cases were in Victoria - I have provided the link to the article here- <https://www.theaustralian.com.au/nation/rise-in-forced-marriages-puts-children-at-risk/news-story/17fcc390fe98b36fc334e88de703824c>.

ACRATH (Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking in Persons) has been actively involved in the anti human trafficking space through advocacy and has also provided vital ongoing support to survivors of human trafficking. ACRATH has also engaged with schools and community groups to raise awareness about human trafficking and forced marriage.



Hence, ACRATH has partnered with Sunshine Youth Space to deliver a once off human trafficking (with a focus on forced marriage) awareness workshop to assist with your risk assessment when working with clients. Although this is a free workshop, any non obligatory donation to support ACRATH's work will be appreciated.

Date: **April 23, 2020**

Time: **1pm - 145pm**

Join Zoom Meeting : <https://zoom.us/j/95770957158>

Meeting ID: 957 7095 7158

Let Sam know on email if you will be zooming in on the meeting.



The free bi-monthly Uniting Church in Australia magazine, Crosslight, has been delivered in hard copy to the church site.

Here is the link to read it online

<https://crosslight.org.au/crosslight-magazine/>

or you can contact Ray for him to send you a paper version of the magazine.

"If I Had a Rocket Launcher" is a song by Canadian singer-songwriter Bruce Cockburn, from his 1984 album *Stealing Fire*.

The song was inspired by Cockburn's visit, sponsored by Oxfam, to Guatemalan refugee camps in Mexico following the counterinsurgency campaign of dictator Efraín Ríos Montt. Although Cockburn had occasionally touched on political themes in his earlier songs, "If I Had a Rocket Launcher" was his first explicitly political song to be released as a single, and earned him a new reputation as an outspoken musical activist.

In the song, Cockburn despairs of waiting for a political solution to the crisis, and expresses the desire to take matters into his own hands. Each verse ends with a line stating what Cockburn would do if he had a rocket launcher: in the first verse, "I'd make somebody pay". In the second, "I would retaliate". In the third, "I would not hesitate". The fourth and final verse ends with the song's most famous and controversial lyric: "If I had a rocket launcher, some son-of-a-bitch would die".

In a later interview, Cockburn stated that the song "is not a call to arms; this is a cry."

In 2009, Cockburn performed the song for Canadian troops in Afghanistan; he was subsequently presented (temporarily) with a rocket launcher.

From Wikipedia

For me this song captures and expresses all the rage, impotence, naked white hot anger of any person who is committed to justice and sees it flaunted by those who are powerful in a military fashion. As Cockburn himself said I do not take as a call to violence but a tortured cry similar

to the outrageous cry in Psalm 137:9 "blessed are those who dash their children against the stones". Justifiable? No, but for those who are daily violated, perhaps a bit more understandable.

And the song has a great beat and rhythm.

Its over to you. Let Ray know by email your "Do Your Self a Favour" entries. Win a year's free subscription to The Harvest.

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News from Rev Fiona Bottcher, Mental Health Ministry Coordinator

Greetings everyone, I hope you're finding ways to stay connected in these strange new Corona times.



As a new minister whose placement is all about gathering people, you can imagine that I have had to rethink and reimagine my role quite a bit! Of course, isolation is something that's not new for a lot of people living with mental (cont. on page 6)



Our second favourite COVID-19 cartoon

Reflection from Ray cont. from page 1

And here are the disciples, in defiance of all social distancing laws, locked behind doors shuddering in fear - locking the world out. The trouble is it means locking ourselves into prison, even if for most of us our prisons are metaphorical and self imposed. But the thing about prison if you stay too long in prison, you get institutionalized and you forget what exists beyond your shrunken cement cell. You can forget how to think for yourself, and most numbing of all you can forget that this world is God's. Nothing that happens, nothing that exists, nothing that will ever exist is beyond God.

All things have been redeemed in the power of the cross and resurrection of Jesus. So Christians have no reason to be intimidated by life, no reason to be fearful or passive. Yes, there is a world of death and hell, but the Spirit is breathed upon us and we are sent in the name and in the power of the resurrected Jesus.

Jesus goes out of his way it appears to come to Thomas. Poor Thomas who does get such a hard time. Especially here in John's gospel. , where most of the doubt is

tipped upon one representative figure of Thomas, who has to carry all the doubts of the church, and of every individual who has ever struggled with faith. And Jesus does come to him, not with harsh denouncing words of judgment and condemnation, but words of understanding and hope and invitation.

And for Thomas the way out of his prison is excruciating. It so often is for us also. Touch the wounds. Touch the place of pain. Place your hands and the hands of Jesus upon your place of hurt, upon the hurts of others, and bring the healing touch of the resurrection life of Jesus. You got to get close enough to someone to do that though don't you. Close enough to the wounds of yourself and others. We are never told if he did touch or not.

Thomas.... He does have a nickname you know and it is not "Doubting"... oh no, it is "twin". Maybe we could resurrect him this Easter not as the despised doubter, but in his honesty, and in his statement of faith that is the strongest of any person in the gospel of John, My lord and my God – as our twin.



continuing Fiona's column from page 4

illness, so these new challenges have also made me think more deeply about how communities can learn from the experiences of those living with mental illness.

I think we all have times of grief and loss in our lives and it is in our sharing of these stories that we can help each other through tough times. So that simple act of calling a friend, family or neighbor and asking "how are you?" really is a great way to help, and hold each other.

I'm now working completely "off-site" and visitation is heavily restricted at all Western Health hospitals, with the Pastoral Care Team having limited access to wards. Which means we are now supporting patients, family and staff using a range of technologies including telephone, Facetime, Messenger and Zoom. This has been a challenge for us as we realise how much we all communicate with our faces and bodies!

A new role for the Pastoral Care Team is our involvement in an initiative being introduced to provide telephone support for hospital staff, particularly those caring for Coronavirus patients. It has been incredible to witness the hard work of hospital staff in preparing for potential outbreaks and makes me realise how fortunate we are to have such wonderful, dedicated health care workers and support staff such as cleaners, cooks and security personnel. If you would like to show your appreciation of the great work being done by Western Health, I encourage you to visit this website. There you can show your support in many different ways - from leaving an encouraging message or getting involved in community work, to making a donation:

<https://itsuptous.com.au/>

With the "open-door" community space at the church being closed for now, I'm thinking about other ways we can support each other as a community. If you're interested in updates, look for the HMAS Sunshine Facebook page - a work in progress! In the meantime, here are some great "corona specific" web sites that provide some excellent resources for dealing with anxiety, grief and the emotional and mental stresses that we may be experiencing in this challenging time:

Black Dog Institute: <https://blackdoginstitute.org.au/>

Beyond Blue: [https://](https://coronavirus.beyondblue.org.au/)

coronavirus.beyondblue.org.au/

Headspace: <https://headspace.org.au/>

And also, feel free to give me a call or drop me an email, I love a good chat!

The peace and love of God be with you,

Fiona

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And just a reminder that if you are in a position to maintain offerings to the church it will really make a difference. Direct deposit is the best way to make offerings at present. The Sunshine Uniting BSB is 083430 & Account No is 5155917189. If you are an envelope user put your envelope number in the message section or if not an envelope just your name will enable our Treasurer to know what is happening.