


NewView

<p>Glen Waverley Uniting Church Cnr Bogong Ave & Kingsway Glen Waverley 3150 Ph 9560 3580 Email: office@gwuc.org.au</p> 	Separation			
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Our theme of **separation** was prompted by thinking about how Jesus faced the knowledge of his imminent execution, not by fleeing or inciting revolution, but by selflessly thinking of others in trying to prepare his disciples for the forthcoming separation from his bodily presence.

Even as children we face unwanted separations: close friends move to new places (or we are moved away, as Ken Hutchinson remembers p. 7), beloved grandparents may pass away, and pets become old and die. These events force an adjustment upon us, providing our early lessons in facing some of the inescapable realities of our existence. Betty Evans (p. 4) reminisces on the effects on her young life of the loss of her father during World War Two. It is a stark reminder that such separations are occurring today, in countries such as Myanmar and Syria, where people are violently displaced and have to flee, losing the homes and places they know, but often also dealing with the grief of the brutal death of loved ones. Alison Clarkson's report of her attendance at the Songlines exhibition (p. 10) is an indirect reminder of the forcible displacement of Australia's First Peoples who have systematically been separated from 'country', the specific places where the history of their origins has developed and which provides their cultural identity.

Then there are the separations from *things* which sometimes occur due to natural disasters. We have recently seen again the devastating effects of bushfire and the loss of property and possessions. Although many in this situation are able to express their relief that their lives are intact, there is inevitably grief for the loss of the memorabilia of their past lives, and apprehension concerning the work ahead in re-establishing a secure home.

During our lifetime other unwanted separations occur. Personal relationships which we once thought would last forever, face differences of outlook and growth which sometimes overwhelm us. Most of us have experienced the heartache of such partings, and sometimes the damage we do to each other in dealing with those differences. It makes us aware that relationships are probably the hardest aspect of our lives: living out the Golden Rule, treating others as we would wish to be treated. And as we get older there are more frequent and forcible partings, as those whom we love face illness and old age, and pass away. It is a reminder that this is the path we all must tread eventually. It is the human condition.

On the other hand, there are separations which we sometimes initiate ourselves with the purpose of taking positive action in the future. New Year's Resolutions fall into this category - when we *choose* to give up some practice or lifestyle which we see as damaging. Or perhaps we see our association with a particular person or group as damaging to ourselves or others, and we choose to loosen those bonds and take a different path.

Neil's musings (pp. 2, 3) in this issue highlight the diversity of our community. In this situation, our separation into differing worship styles is seen as a *positive* feature of our community, because it caters for differing spiritual needs. His title, 'Unity in Diversity' draws our attention to the challenges facing the ministry team. Balancing diverse needs with the aim of building a larger, unified and supportive community is a challenge which is partly addressed by the combined services, and partly by invitations to be part of smaller activity groups where more personal relationships can be established. May the experience of our separations bring us wisdom and understanding of others.

Robin Pope

Neil's Musings



Unity in Diversity

Reflecting on our Worship Services

At a recent meeting of the Faith Development Missional Group there was a conversation about whether we have enough 10 am combined services through the year. It was felt that many enjoy the combined services and that these bring us all together. I am well aware that some would agree with this sentiment and some would disagree.

The meeting invited me to write a piece around this issue for *NewView*. I was asked to help us all see more clearly the big picture and the diversity that is represented within our congregation.

My understanding is that for many decades this congregation has had multiple services. The Methodist Church and the Presbyterian Church in Glen Waverley each had two morning services. These congregations would have had to work at being one congregation, one fellowship, one expression of the Body of Christ while having more than one service. I am sure that members had their preferred service then just as people do now.

Within our congregation we have people who might describe their faith as orthodox, conservative, liberal, progressive, middle of the road, a mixture of all or none of the above. There are probably some who would not want to be labelled. Then there are those who value ordered liturgy, hymns, organ, choir, quietness and minimal movement. There are those who like hearing instruments that make the sound that they listen to at home or

socially – keyboard, synthesiser, guitar and drums. Some like silence. Some love to sing and some prefer not to sing. Some like to listen and some like to offer an opinion in worship. More broadly, some see the importance of pastoral care and visiting, some are happy not to have a visit, some like fellowship meals, some value our local community engagement, some value our social justice edge, and some appreciate our support of overseas projects. There are different things we look for in a congregation to belong to. None of these positions is wrong – they are just different. The ministry team is well aware of this diversity and work intentionally to meet the needs of people.

So, having a diversity of worship services where each service has a different style or flavour enables people to feel comfortable and worship in a way that is meaningful for them. At the same time, it is important that we do have opportunities to worship together as one congregation. The ministry team has moved away from having 10 am Combined Services on the fifth Sunday of the month to ensure an even spread of these services – January (helping the ministry team take leave), Congregational meetings, Easter, the Church Anniversary, the first Sunday of Advent and Christmas. The ministry team also thought it would be good to worship together after we worked together at the annual fete. It seems that this has been well received. This year we plan to have 13 Combined services, thus averaging about one combined service a month.

It has been suggested that it would ease the workload of the minister if we had more combined services. On paper that sounds plausible. From my experience it takes a lot more time to prepare a combined service. This is because the ministry team takes time to

Neil's Musings cont.

plan a combined service to try and ensure that a component of each of our services is in the service. We want that service to reflect our diversity. So we might use a video clip or we ask you to make something small or write something on some material or we create something like a weaving. We try to have a song that is written in the last decade. We try to have combined services reflect the diversity of our congregation.

It has been observed that we don't know everyone in the congregation. I wonder if attending worship is the best way to get to know people. I know that people who attend 9.15 and 11 am services now generally don't know everyone in the service of worship they attend. Early on in my time here I would ask someone, "Remind me of that person's name over there". I often got the response, "I don't know them". This made me feel a little better when I forgot a name. Recently we have been using some extra, smaller tables to make space for more people to stay for morning tea after the 9.15 service. It is an attempt to strengthen our fellowship.

We also have had an Indonesian service happening over the last 12 months. This group

is not a hirer but is part of Glen Waverley Uniting Church. We are slowly encouraging them to become members of the congregation. Five or six now are members and we are slowly trying to integrate this fellowship into our congregation.

One last observation is that we track weekly attendance at our services. On average about 70 to 80 fewer people attend a 10 am combined service compared with a Sunday when we have all our services. While I am not hearing anyone say let's have fewer combined services there is obviously a lot to weigh up when considering the number and the styles of service offered by this congregation. Someone said to me a few months ago something like, 'One of the gifts of this church is its capacity to hold together such a diverse group of people through being able to offer a diverse range of services'. There is a lot to think about and pray about with regard to our services. We cannot meet everyone's expectations all the time. The ministry team is committed to ensuring that each of our services of worship is conducted to the best of our abilities.

Rev Neil Peters

I wanted to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their well wishes following my recent graduation when I was awarded a Graduate Diploma of Theology ... and here's the photo to prove it actually happened. I am now half-way through my Master's as well as in the final year of formation so things continue to be busy. That said, I feel blessed to be supported by family, friends, a great college community at Pilgrim as well as congregation members at Glen Waverley Uniting. Your prayers continue to be an encouragement.

Heather Hon



Separations

Separations: times of war and family crisis are full of separations. Some are temporary, others final; all are life changing.

In 1941 my father was serving overseas in the 2/14 Battalion. They were involved in the Syrian Campaign and were fighting the Vichy French. My father was killed during the battle in June, 1941.

Back home my mother was now a young war widow, with three children, aged 11, 7 and 4.

We lived in a small house in Brunswick which we rented. My mother had no money, and her only income now was the War Widows pension, which at this time was a pittance, plus a small allowance for each child.

My father and mother had always hoped one day to have their own home. Now my mother's ambition was to get a War Service house. The only way for this to happen was for Mum to go out working.

But working and looking after three children and house became too much.

In 1943 I was sent to my Great Aunt Emily and Great Uncle Tom's home in Wonthaggi. Originally it was for the school holidays, but as I was still with them when school resumed, I commenced at Wonthaggi Primary School.

Aunt Emily and Uncle Tom were lovely people, who cared for me well. I think Aunt Emily managed a very determined 8 year old (who didn't like cabbage) very well. At my first test at Wonthaggi I got good marks, and Aunty Emily gave me a book to celebrate. What could be better ?

I returned to Melbourne later in 1943, and my elder sister and I went to live with my paternal grandparents. In this household were

Grandma, Grandpa, Aunty Rene, and three older cousins. I attended East Brunswick Primary School.

While all this was happening, a separation of another kind was going on. My Uncle Jack who was serving with the 2nd/2nd Pioneers was taken prisoner, and remained a prisoner of the Japanese for three and a half years.

I can remember that very occasionally Grandma would receive a postcard from Uncle Jack. These were like a brown cardboard postcard, and they were organized through the Red Cross who negotiated their use. They contained set phrases, such as 'I am well/ not well', 'working' etc. The prisoners could fill in the spaces and sign them, utilizing a strict type of censorship. Although these cards had limited news, when they arrived they were received with joy, as they indicated Uncle Jack was still alive.

I can still remember when the war ended and my cousins took me into town to see the celebrations, I was a bit frightened by the huge crowds.

I also remember when Uncle Jack was due home, the entrance to the house was decorated and a Welcome Home sign was hung up.

My mother eventually was able to buy a block of land in Pascoe Vale, and apply for a War Service house.

A few days before Christmas 1952, we all moved together into a brand new War Service House.

Betty Evans

Getting to Know Our Church Activities



Christmas at Leisure Time

Leisure Time started way back in 1978 and is still going strong thanks to a dedicated band of volunteers. There are 23 guests on our books with an average attendance of 17 each Monday.

The highlight of each year for many of the guests is the Christmas lunch and last year was no exception. The guests were entertained by students from the Glen Waverley Primary School, followed by lunch in the church hall. Alison Clarkson led a short Christmas service after the lunch.



Five outings have been planned and organized for this year, the first a smorgasbord lunch at the Lyndhurst Hotel on Monday 19th March.

The Annual General Meeting of Leisure Time will be held on Monday 16th April at 2.30pm in Room 1. An invitation is extended to all to come along where you will learn more of the activities of Leisure Time. Of course the meeting will be followed by afternoon tea.



Laurel Muir, photos Alison Hawkins



Getting to Know Our Church Activities

Careful Kitchen Crew Report

March 2018

Once again in December 2017, GWUC produced another City of Monash five star food safety award certification for our kitchen.

The Careful Kitchen Crew would like to thank you all once again for your ongoing diligence in labelling all items placed in the refrigerator, emptying the rubbish bin at the end of functions and leaving floors and bench surfaces spotlessly clean.

We need to maintain our standards into the future to ensure that all visitors to our facility are kept safe and healthy.

Many of our visitors are elderly or less robust and can be more susceptible to illness resulting from consuming food from a poorly maintained kitchen.

All food products are issued with a best before [BB] or use by date and it is in our duty of care and legal requirement that we are careful with to not serve out-of-date products. Once a perishable product is opened there is usually also a 5 to 7 day expiration, as stated on the label, and it should be discarded after this time period, irrespective of 'best before' or 'use by' dates.

After all is considered, the law requires our compliance.

If you have any questions regarding use of the kitchen please contact any member of the 9 member CKC. Our current crew members are again thanked for their diligence in these matters. Thanks to Yan Emms, Deb Graham, Andrew Hosking, Lynne Boyer, Doug Newberry, Maria Gillies, Diana Coles, Margaret Fraser and Nicole Robertson.

Best wishes for a healthy 2018

Lynne Boyer and Andrew Hosking on behalf of the CKC.

Sammy Stamp

Many members of our congregation save the stamps off their mail and place them in the box in the office for transport to the United Church Adult Fellowship Stamp Fund, known to us as **Sammy Stamp**. Two members of our congregation, Dorothy Graham and Joy Wahner, regularly assist this group to prepare the donated stamps for sale.

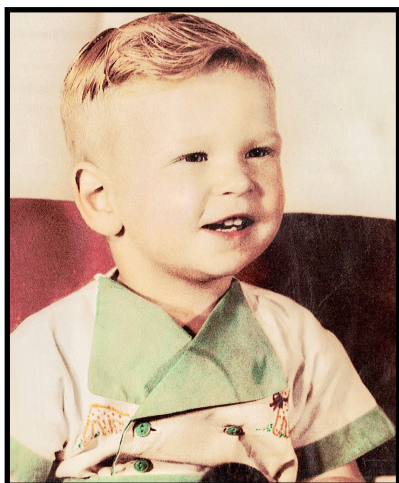
The sale of stamps provides money for charitable purposes. In 2017 they raised nearly \$51,000, and the money was directed to projects such as: water projects in PNG; Aboriginal Ministry Training and Live Church Streaming; Queensland-NSW Cyclone Flood Appeal; U-Music program for disabled young adults in Leongatha; Vanuatu Prevention of Blindness Project; breakfast and lunch programme in Echuca/Moama Uniting Church; transporting goods overseas for the Mission Liaison Group; training workshop for Indigenous Bible Translators in the Northern Territory - and other projects.

This is an easy but useful way of helping others! All you need to do is leave the stamps attached to the original paper and leave a 3mm surround of paper, so buyers can handle them safely without damaging the stamp. Without the border, they have to be discarded. When you have a collection in an old envelope, place them in the box in the office cupboard.

Questions? See Dorothy Graham.

Getting to Know: Ken Hutchinson

So, you thought you had collected a considerable library of books? So did I, until I visited Ken Hutchinson, whose 4-bedroom home is filled with shelves housing his eclectic collection of over 7000 books, all of them meticulously catalogued on his data base. We sat amidst his non-fiction section while he told me about his early life.



When Ken was born in Yallourn in 1956, his father was postmaster there, and 18 months after Ken's birth his younger sister joined the family. But when Ken was two, his father was notified of a transfer to Willaura, a small town of about 600 people twenty-two miles south of Ararat. Ken's mother had to oversee much of the task of packing, unpacking and settling into a new home while caring for a 6 month old, a two year old and a five year old.

Ken's earliest memories are of his boyhood at Willaura. He feels grateful that he had a country childhood, where he and his older brother (three years and 40 minutes his senior) and younger sister were able to wander freely about the town, and where every one was known. He recalls that it was not until they moved to the Big Smoke when he was nearly through high school that their family felt the need to lock their doors. They stayed in Willaura for seven and a half years, during which time all of the children had begun their schooling at the local primary school.

Ken's predilection for books and learning is apparent from this early age. He began school at age four and a half and coped well academically. In fact, the children's abilities so impressed their teachers that they told the parents that they all

had the potential for university, so that became an early family expectation and ambition.

Ken remembers the year 1965 as the year they were uprooted again, when his father was transferred to Trafalgar. He recalls this move as a period when he felt upset at losing his friends. Although at first he felt quite alone in the new school, eventually he adjusted to his new surroundings. He also remembers his next year at Trafalgar coinciding with the introduction of decimal currency (14th February 1966), but that full conversion to a metric system of measurement did not come in until 1974. Hence, as most of his schooling still used imperial measurement, he still thinks of his (considerable) height in the terminology of imperial measurement: 6 foot 4 and a half inches.

When Ken's older brother completed high school in 1971, their father (with his children's education in mind), obtained a position at Clifton Hill Post Office, and bought a house in Nunawading. Ken was just commencing Form 5 (now Year 11), and his brother was able to commence at Melbourne University. By the time Ken joined his brother at Melbourne University in 1973, at age sixteen and a half, his brother had his driver's licence, and the practice was for the boys to travel with their father to Clifton Hill and then to take the car on to the university. However, before long Ken decided he would prefer to walk from Clifton Hill and so began a lifelong habit for keeping fit which he still maintains. Five days a week he walks from his home in Legend Park to The Glen shopping centre to buy a paper, and he often walks to the station if catching a train to the city for the day.

In 1976 Ken graduated with an honours degree in science. He gained employment with National Mutual Insurance Company, and when he became involved in actuarial work he took up further studies in that field, becoming a qualified actuary by the mid-1980s. In 1982 he purchased a unit near Pinewood shopping centre, and at that time transferred his church membership to Glen Waverley Uniting Church, when services were still being held in the Springvale Road Methodist Church. He soon joined the Property Committee, and then the Stewardship Continuation Committee. Meanwhile he found his unit too small to comfortably house his growing book collection, so in 1987 he bought his house in Legend Park - and has been there ever since.

Getting to Know: Ken Hutchinson

During these years Ken developed quite a taste for travel, which he often did with a company which specialised in small group tours. In 1980 he travelled to the United States, followed by a memorable trip in 1982 to Japan and China. He has fond memories of travelling through the Three Gorges of the Yangtze River before the controversial dam was built. His transport was on one of the regular boats which plied the river, and this was an 'organised tour' but only in the sense that his group was taken to the boat and told, with the help of sign language, to disembark on the third day! It provided for local travellers with three classes of travel: first class with cabins; second class cabins with bunks and third class which just had rows of bunks.

In 1985 Ken travelled to the Middle East, visiting Jordan, Syria and Egypt; then in 1988 he went to Alaska, where a highlight was attending a midnight baseball game which was played without lights! On this trip he made it as far north as the Arctic Sea. In 1992 he again spent his holidays overseas, this time in Greece and Turkey.

However, in 1994 at a time of financial crisis and cost-cutting in National Mutual, he found himself retrenched, at age 38, so he decided to use his accrued long service and annual leave to travel again, this time for an extended period of six months. During this venture he travelled on the Trans-Siberian Railway from Vladivostok to Berlin, then using his Eurail Pass he travelled independently around Europe for some time before picking up a walking tour of about two weeks in the Alps and then venturing on to Scandinavia.

Sadly, his father became ill while Ken was away. During this period his sister had also been away nursing in Saudi Arabia, and their mother, in need of urgent assistance to visit their father, had been wonderfully supported by the members of their Uniting Church at Nunawading. Ken and his sister returned home as soon as possible, but by then his father had moved in to a nursing home, and he passed away soon after, in February 1995. Ken was able to assist with his mother's subsequent transfer from the family home to a retirement village where she still resides.

On his return from his travels in late 1994 Ken was taken on at National Mutual again, working



on a specific project on a 'casual' basis, and after two years this was converted to a contract. By

2002 he was back on permanent staff, but meanwhile National Mutual had been taken over by AXA in 1997-8, and then the business was again sold in 2011, to AMP. During that time he lived through the vicissitudes of having his employer shed staff as the businesses merged and staff endured the inevitable euphemisms which emerge in such situations (of 'integration costs' and 'system improvements' etc). When the headquarters were shifted to Sydney, choices had to be made, both by the company and individual staff members. In 2009 he dropped back to part-time work of four days a week, and so when he was finally retrenched in 2014, he was well prepared.

In 2010 Glen Waverley Uniting Church utilised Ken's financial experience by appointing him as Recorder of the Growing Generous Givers committee, a task he took over from Robert Wood. Since his retirement in 2014 he has also taken on the work of secretary of the Leisure Time Committee, and he enjoys the company of the GOMERS on Monday mornings at Jells Park. Following his favourite football team (the Bombers) occupies some time, but there is still space for other activities such as helping out setting up and cleaning up after our fete. And then, of course, there is always the siren call of those 7,000 books to read...

Robin Pope

Book Review: Give Me a Child When He is Young...

I first encountered Ian Guthridge's writing when I read *The Rise and Decline of the Christian Empire and Beyond 2000...?* (1999). His interesting background and the breadth of his scholarship impressed me, and the way in which he addressed such questions as the Christian ethic and Christian dogma, and was prepared to reconsider the traditional acceptance of the Bible as 'literal truth' and the notion of the divinity of Jesus Christ in the light of his reading in wider and lengthier historical settings than Christianity itself. In some ways it was a useful forerunner of my reading of *Give me a child...* for although *Give me a child...* was written first (1987), he had flagged some of his overarching concerns in *The Rise and Decline...*

Give Me a Child... is autobiographical, and I am sure readers who track their own spiritual journey will find many experiences and thoughts with which they can identify. He traces his journey with as much honesty and integrity as he can muster, from the beginnings of his schooling, through his 14 years of rigorous Jesuit seminary training, to his eventual ordination. He is careful to make no wider claims than saying that this is his own personal story which may be irrelevant to others. It was not until he was confronted in the wider world of Melbourne University life that he began to realise how 'cocooned' his past had been and how what he had been taught, and accepted, as 'truth' was questioned by others outside his Jesuit milieu, at many levels. During his time with the Jesuits he taught seminarians in New Zealand and USA, and finally in Rome, where he did his Ph. D.

Being of a curious nature, and with his interest in history, he probed further into the ways in which the Christian church had adapted and incorporated not only many 'pagan' practices from the Greeks and Romans, the Germanic tribes and the Celts, but how these adaptations have changed Christianity itself, and what he sees as 'later accretions, distortions, perversions' (p. 134). He had particular concerns about the governance of the Catholic Church:

[In] the time of Christ and St. Paul (rabbits, both) and throughout most of Christian history, the mass of Christians (women particularly) were simple uneducated people, while the priests were the learned caste of their day. So, naturally enough, the Church was ruled and run by priests - an all-male caste; and the opinions and

feelings of the laity (women particularly) were seldom if ever consulted. But times have changed. Many of the laity - women included - are now better educated, better trained to think, and in closer contact with real life than their priests may be. And yet the Church is still run by men.

Finally, this path led him, in his early forties, outside the walls of the Jesuit monastery, which forced him to earn his living without the support and backing of the Church which had been his 'family' and mainstay. He took up teaching in the area of historical studies and Comparative Religion, both in Australia, back in Rome and in US universities.

He wrestled with concerns about whether the Bible should be acknowledged as the Word of God or the Word of Man; about the actual existence of a God; and questions concerning sexuality.

Although he no longer counts himself as Christian, he still sees himself - '*and possibly many others in this un-churched generation - as still essentially religious*' (p. 304), defining Religion - (capital R) as the plethora of Christian churches and denominations, and ... *priests, dogmas, Churches, even believing in God or an afterlife, the whole divine or supernatural dimension* (p. 304).

He contrasts this position with 'religion' (small r), as *the search for truth, wisdom, humanity, which is precisely the area that many non-white, non-Western, non-Christian religions have regarded as perhaps the essence of religion itself.* (p. 304).

Then he summarises where his journey has taken him:

even if I can no longer accept what some have called the 'vertical' dimension of Christianity (belief in God), I still accept its 'horizontal' dimension (belief in man, the Christian ethic of love).

Finally, he provides his own 'modern credo' which deftly illustrates this position.

This is a thought-provoking read for those interested in personal spiritual journeys.

References

- Guthridge, Ian (1987) *Give Me a Child When He is Young...*, Medici Publications, Melbourne.
 Guthridge, Ian (1999), *The Rise and Decline of the Christian Empire and Beyond 2000...?*, Medici Publications, Melbourne, 1999.

Robin Pope

Songlines: Finding Inspiration in the Dreaming

Recently I was in Canberra to see an exhibition at the National Museum entitled 'Songlines - Tracking the Seven Sisters'. The Museum magazine explains, 'Songlines are the foundational stories of this country, belonging to the world's longest continuing culture with a storytelling tradition that stretches from time immemorial. Songlines work like corridors of knowledge that criss-cross the continent and transmit history, culture and beliefs from generation to generation while keeping country alive.'¹

Songlines are from the creation time. 'oral stories of creation and ancestral beings who mapped the country'.² The Tjukurpa or dreaming story follows the journey of seven sisters across three deserts over five tribal lands, each with their own story of the Seven Sisters. Visitors walk through the exhibition, from modern Roebourne in the west to the Docker River on the Northern Territory boundary in the east, in the footsteps of the Seven Sisters, experiencing the sisters' many escapades as they flee from one water source to another in advance of their relentless pursuer, the lustful man known as Wati Nyiru or Yurla.

Michael Jackson, a historian, writes, 'History is the story of the traces and tracks of human lives over time. As with history, the Dreamtime, like a person's lifetime, involves a journey.'³

It is important for indigenous culture that their traditions and stories are not forgotten. Each part of the journey through the exhibition is represented by interpretations from local people as they seek to fulfil their duty and obligation to pass on the knowledge to succeeding generations across the songlines. These interpretations include paintings, sculptures, figures and oral stories. Maps and photos show the places on the journey where events and encounters happened, places which are still known to local people by their

traditional names and connections, rocks marking the place where the sisters rested, caves where they sheltered, water courses where they refreshed themselves and tracks following their route. I found it interesting that the songline locations were linked to modern names such as points along the Canning Stock Route.

A unique experience was a Dome which incorporated modern technology with images of country, animation of parts of the story and a time-lapsed transit across the night sky, of the constellation of Orion and the Pleiades star cluster, also known to us as the Seven Sisters. As the images were beamed across the dome above us we lay on benches looking upward, an experience which gave another dimension to the visit.

There was so much to take in - sights, sounds, atmosphere and information - that one visit was just not enough. The journey through the exhibition was described both as a theatre in which knowledge is passed on in traditional dramatic ways and as a narrative in which we meet the characters and follow the story plot which includes elements of deceit and moral law.

As we know, different cultures have their own way of describing creation and their history. I was struck, at the start of the exhibition, by a comment that the Songline stories are to indigenous people what Genesis is to us, and to the Jewish and Christian traditions. The first 11 chapters of Genesis are primeval or universal history applicable to all humanity, referring to creation of the cosmos and stories of the first humans, including the flood and dispersal of humanity. These stories 'reflect the human experience of life, work, pain, greed, disobedience'.⁴ They feature traditions similar to myths in other cultures, including Australian indigenous culture.

The bulk of Genesis covers the ancestral history of Abraham and his descendants through stories of God's relationship with people. 'People are portrayed as very human with all their faults and strengths - they lie, deceive, steal, test God, have courage, journey into the unknown',⁵ as they seek for and question God. There are many similarities with the stories from Songlines - stories of journeys, of creation, of relationships with gods and spirits and with each other, of the need to pass the stories to future generations, of an oral tradition.

In the Songlines of the Seven Sisters we learn that they are being *pursued* by a wicked person as they sought to escape and find safety. In the Genesis story we follow Abraham and his descendants as they were *led* by God. 'It is a record of the religious experience of a people, the central theme of which is the revelation of God to God's people.'⁶ These stories are part of the narrative we hear and know today, from the recorded stories collected from oral traditions.

As the Dreamtime stories are remembered and respected by indigenous people, we also should become familiar with these stories to assist in our understanding of this ancient culture and to benefit from their knowledge, We can set them alongside the Biblical records of journeys, of struggles, of failures and forgiveness, of God's revelation to humans and of promise fulfilled in the life and work of Jesus.

*O Lord of every shining constellation
that wheels in splendour through the midnight sky,
grant us your Spirit's true illumination
to read the secrets of your work on high.*

*You, Lord, have stamped your image on your creatures
and, though they marred that image, you love them still;
uplift our eyes to Christ, that in his features
we may discern the beauty of your will.*

(TIS 157, vv 1, 4)

Alison Clarkson

Notes:

1. Bradfield, Janae, 'Bringing the Desert to Canberra', *The Museum*, magazine of the National Museum of Australia, Sept 17-Feb 18, p. 24.
2. Roberts, Rhoda, 'Songlines = Connection for us all', *The Museum*, magazine of the National Museum of Australia, Sept 17-Feb 18, p.12
3. Jackson, Michael, *Songlines Exhibition Catalogue*, p. 128
4. Briggs, C.R. & Grant-Henderson, Anna, *A Way into the Old Testament*, p. 34.
5. *ibid*, p. 35.
6. *ibid*, p. 1.

Scout Heritage Victoria

Many of you or your children have been youth members or leaders in the Scouting or Guiding movements in Australia or overseas.

Recently Scout Heritage Australia opened 'Museum on Mackie', a Scout Adventure Centre on Mackie Road in East Bentleigh.

The Museum offers 'Scouting and public visitors an exciting opportunity to explore a range of exhibits and interactive activities showing the past and present of Victorian Scouting'.

Volunteers are on site each Monday 10 am - 2 pm. If you are interested in visiting the Museum, please talk to me. We will happily arrange a visit.

Of course we always welcome new volunteers!

There are some information leaflets below the Inclusive Community noticeboard.

Alison Clarkson



for everything there is a season
and a time for every matter under heaven...

We record with sadness the deaths in the past months of members of our church family and we extend our support and sympathy to their families

John Albert Vivian WATSON

Sarin WONGPRASARTSUK

Colin Stephen Francis FALCONER

Keith Henry WOODLAND

Albert Maxwell HARDING

Graham Ross LOCKHART

We record with joy the baptism of

Eleanor Hummina SNARE