

EBENEZER UNITING CHURCH



Welcome to our Spring Newsletter.

Welcome to the Ebenezer Church Spring Newsletter. This newsletter is for those with whom we have links through our various programs, activities, baptisms, weddings or funerals and for our community. It is an opportunity to let you know what is happening and share a reflection to help you think about God, life and Spirituality. Therefore, we offer you this newsletter with our prayers for your own spiritual journey through life. Please join us any time you are able, or would like to explore faith more deeply.

Upcoming Events

The following activities are coming up over the next few months at Ebenezer Church and across the Hawkesbury Uniting Churches. You are very welcome to join us for any of them:

1. ***Ebenezer Spring Fair:*** **Saturday September 30** at Ebenezer Church – food, craft, stalls, vintage cars, antique engines and a 'Blessing of the Animals'.



Inquiries to Dawn Case **0419 449 362**.



2. ***Jazz Afternoon@Ebenezer:*** It's on again! An afternoon of jazz to support the building of clean water wells in West Papua. The date is **October 15 from 3:30pm at Ebenezer Church**. Inquiries **0439 309 303**; andrews166@bigpond.com .

3. ***Rick Price in Concert:*** The wonderful gospel/country/blues artist, Rick Price will perform again in Windsor Uniting Church. Rick performed last year as part of the Sydney Blues and Roots Festival. His concert was a highlight and we are excited to have him return - **Sunday October 22, 2.00pm**. Inquiries **4577 3147**

Thoughts from Geoff

A man took his new hunting dog on a trial hunt. Presently he shot a duck that fell into the lake. The dog walked over the water, picked up the duck, and brought it back his master.



The man was flabbergasted! He shot another duck. Once again, while he rubbed his eyes in disbelief, the dog walked over the water and retrieved the duck.

Hardly daring to believe what he had seen, he called his neighbour for a shoot the following day. Once again, each time he or his neighbour hit a bird, the dog would walk over the water and bring the bird in. The man said nothing. Neither did his neighbour. Finally, unable to contain himself any longer, he blurted out, "Did you notice anything strange about that dog?"

The neighbour rubbed his chin pensively. "Yes," he finally said. "Come to think of it, I did! The son of a gun can't swim!"

The teller of this story goes on to say: *It isn't as if life isn't full of miracles. It's more than that: It is miraculous, and anyone who stops taking it for granted will see it at once.*

There is awe and wonder in life and everywhere I look is another miracle, another beautiful sight or experience. Whether it is the beauty of the natural world that captures our imagination and inspires infinite photographs, or the tender moments we share with one another. Life is a blessed experience, a miracle of grace that we all participate in.

Some people stop to embrace the moment and soak up the sacredness of life's wondrous experiences. They hold the beauty and joy of life in their being and are moved and transformed through life's deep and rich moments. Other people seem to miss this wonder as they hurtle along looking for something that always seems to elude them. They look through the awe-inspiring experiences and fail to appreciate their rich significance. Material wealth and having more seems to hold them in its grasp. Whilst some people look on life with optimistic hope and appreciative joy, others view everything through the eyes of pessimism and are disappointed, always wondering how they seem to miss out on what others have.

Not everyone sees the miraculous before our eyes. Not everyone is filled with wonder when they look up into the night sky, the sparkling of distant stars, the bright moon. Not everyone is moved by the beauty and potential of a small baby or young child. Not everyone appreciates the daily food they receive, simple or complex, shared with friends or family. Not everyone feels the joy and affection of a puppy licking a face or a kitten playing or meowing before us. Not everyone sees the full blaze of colour and beauty in the opening flower, the orchid or rose, or the bird seeking nectar or singing in the tree. These are the miracles of grace that enlighten our being, give us a sense of the holy and sacred in our midst and enrich our lives.

I wonder how many pause through a day to appreciate the people, places and experiences we each have – and give thanks for all we encounter. I wonder how many instead, rush on through the day burdened by deadlines and expectations or blinded by false hopes and thin promises, superficial and shallow. How many of us miss the precious moments of life because we are distracted by other things, pressures, hopes or demands?

As I listen to people in the midst of life or share with them around organising funerals and hear the shared stories, I realise more and more that life is best lived and experienced with other people. Food is better when shared around a table with family and friends. It can be a simple meal or a complex feast but the presence of others is the spice that makes a meal an experience. The experiences we have are best when shared with another person. Even the telling of the stories of life make them real and more precious. Perhaps that is why so many share the simple and profound across the spectrum of social media. There we see the sublime to the ridiculous as people lay their lives open to others in the pathos of sad memories and tears through to the fun and wonderful and ludicrous and amusing.

Life is lived in and through the One we called God who holds all people and all things in wondrous love and grace. Life is imbued with love and wonder because God is present in all of life's experiences from the deeply profound and joyful through to the depths of pain and struggle. God holds us in such grace that we are able to breathe again and live fully before the world that has much to offer, many rich and diverse experiences. In all of life giving and receiving love is central, the essence of what life is truly about. Love is what makes life meaningful, rich and awe-filled. The connection with other people and the shared experiences are vital. A deep connection with the earth itself and all of its creatures grounds us and opens our eyes, minds and hearts to the wondrous in our midst. The world, filled with God's presence, is rich and wondrous. It is filled with delight and joy, along with touching and moving moments and deep struggle. Within all of life God is with us and holds us in grace. May God's love be with you!!

Geoff.

***For any support, questions, comments, please visit
or contact us at:***

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Some Recent Celebrations and Activities...

Ebenezer Art Show



The 40th Ebenezer Art Show was held on 11-12 August. Past school staff and parents returning to the school for the occasion included Lyndall Harrison (pictured opening the show), Wendy Bartimote, Saskia van Beest and Margaret Middleton

and P&C secretary of the first art show Lynn Popplewell.

Pitt Town Uniting Church Market Day

Members of Ebenezer Church supported the Pitt Town UC Market day to help raise more funds to build clean water wells in West Papua.

Insights, the Uniting Church magazine, ran a wonderful story on this activity. It can be found at the link under the photos.

<https://www.insights.uca.org.au/news/uc-market-day-funds-clean-water-wells-in-west-papua>



This is a photo of the vehicle that the Hawkesbury Churches raised funds to purchase for the team in West Papua. This team goes into the poorest regions to build wells for clean water in the villages. The vehicle will make a huge difference to their work.



The 40th Anniversary of the Uniting Church

The Hawkesbury Uniting Churches gathered to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the Uniting Church. This wonderful event was held at the oldest church in Australia - Ebenezer Church.

The guest preacher was Mr Peter Worland, the Executive Director of Uniting, which provides services in aged care, child care and children,



housing, advocacy and other social services, care and support as part of the Uniting Church's call to love all people and seek justice.

There was ample food to fuel the celebration into the afternoon. Special thanks to the people of Ebenezer-Pitt Town UC who hosted this wonderful event!



Volunteers' Lunch at Ebenezer Church

In July Ebenezer Church hosted a lunch for the volunteers who run the 7 day a week Tea Rooms. Around 40 people gathered for a wonderful lunch, a talk from Ted Brill who answered the commonly asked questions of people who come to Ebenezer.

Tom Millington entertained the guests with some wonderful, funny and moving poetry, both original and popular.



The volunteers are the heart and soul of the ministry of Ebenezer to reach out to the community and provide an hospitable welcome to our many visitors.



If you would like to experience the ambience and hospitality, the Tea Rooms are open daily between 10am and 3 pm. If anyone would like to join the wonderful team of volunteers, please talk to us.

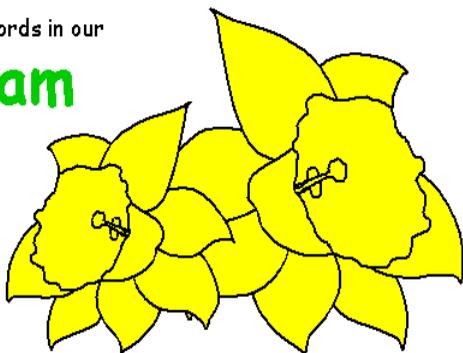
Something for Children!

Unscramble the letters to find the words in our

Spring Anagram

Hidden Word (circled letters):

Word List: daffodil, flower, garden, growth, jacket, puddle, raindrop, sunshine, tulip, umbrella



a d d f f **i** l o

e h i n n **s** s u

e f l o r w

g h o r t w

i l p t u

a d e g **n** r

a b e l l **m** r u

a d i n o p **r** r

a c e j k **t**

d d e l **p** u



RaisingOurKids.com

How many words can you make with these letters?

September Brings Spring