

EBENEZER UNITING CHURCH



Welcome to our Winter Newsletter.

Welcome to the Ebenezer Uniting Church Winter Newsletter. This newsletter is for those with whom we have links through our various programs, activities, baptisms, weddings or funerals and for our local community. It is an opportunity to let you know what is happening and share some reflections to help you think about God, life, hope and Spirituality. We offer you these reflections 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 are activities and events we are involved in. You are welcome to join us for any or all these activities.

Church Anniversary - June 18: There will be a joint celebration of Ebenezer Church's 208th anniversary and the 40th anniversary of the Uniting Church at Ebenezer Church on 18th June. This will be a great time together. A service will commence at 11.30am and a light lunch will follow. You are most welcome to attend.

All welcome



Uniting Church in Australia



EBENEZER UNITING CHURCH COROMANDEL ROAD

June 18, 2017 at 11:30a.m

*Combined UCA 40th Anniversary Service
with refreshments after the service*

Dates to keep in mind ...

29 July - The Macquarie Towns Motor Bike Club will be at Ebenezer Church for morning tea on Sat 29 July. 150 participants. You're welcome to drop in.

August 11&12 – Ebenezer Public School – 40th Annual Art Show

September 30 – Ebenezer Church Spring Fair

October 15 – Jazz at Ebenezer Church



Pitt Town Massive Market Day!

Ebenezer Church and Scots Church Pitt Town have historically been *two churches, one congregation* and still are today. Please note this upcoming event.

June 24: The highly anticipated Massive Market Day is coming and once again we are raising funds to build clean water wells in West Papua.



Tea Coffee & Cake Stall

Sausage Sandwich, Egg & Bacon Rolls

Books & Plants

HUGE FRUIT & VEG STALL with lots of LOCAL PRODUCE

PITT TOWN'S MASSIVE

MARKET DAY/ GARAGE SALE

SATURDAY JUNE 24

AT THE UNITING CHURCH, BATHURST ST

9AM - 2PM

LIVE MUSIC + SINGING BY DANCERS & MORE!

FREE STALLS
Book a spot & sell your garage items, books, clothes, old wares etc.
"Your stall, your money"
Take home what profit you make!

 Like us on Facebook

Our mission is to raise funds for a clean, water well in West Papua!

All enquiries call 0439 309 303 or for stall bookings call 4572 3518

Thoughts from Geoff

Yesterday morning Susan and I took our two dogs for their morning walk around the local creek in Toongabbie. It was one of those beautiful autumn mornings, warmer than expected. The sun slowly rose in the sky providing a gentle light. As we walked close to the creek with the sun in the background, the little valley glowed. The sunlight filtered through the trees and the creek was covered in a light haze that was beautiful. It really was breathtaking!



After a long weekend with services for Easter and other events in the life of our community I had felt the weight of busy-ness. As I walked through this lovely valley with gums and natives along the way I felt the weight of tiredness lift. The bird-song was beautiful and diverse. I can't name the birds but delighted in the sound of song and squawk. Our dogs wanted to chase the groups of ducks that wandered across the parkland and welcomed other dogs out for their walk. There were early morning exercisers walking, jogging or engaging in various activities in the park near the creek.

As I walked I found my breathing come easier. I hadn't even realised that my breathing was hard until it began to slow down and go deeper. I felt the pressure slide off somewhat and all around was the awareness of the Sacred, the Holy. The beauty of the world around me and the wonder of dogs, birds, trees, ducks and a creek with the sun shining gently from the blue sky, filled me with a sense of awe. When I look at such things I feel the Presence of God all around. It isn't something tangible that I can grasp and hold onto. It isn't something I can readily describe. It is an awareness that sometimes comes as a glimpse, a feeling, a tingle, a sense that the world is really good, despite the mess, stress and pain we experience and know exists.

When I stop to 'smell the roses' or look into the beauty of flowers in the garden or those along the way I see the world differently. Sometimes I find myself being caught up in the relentless flow of life and the expectations of people, society and even myself. I rush around and am sometimes filled with angst as I contemplate deadlines or challenges or difficulties. Often I feel overwhelmed by life and the struggle of so much of the world that I can do little, if anything about. In these moments I raise the expectations of myself, as if I can actually resolve the world's problems.

The flowers, our new puppy (and old dog), the ever-changing creek and the sun that rises each day and pushes the night away, all remind me that life is here, now and to be lived. There is beauty and wonder in the world and it points to God who holds all things in relationship and love. When I relax and rest in this Presence I find my levels of hope and inner peace grow stronger and I feel positive about life. It is in these moments that I realise I need to stop and ponder, reflect, listen and dream. It is somewhere between the little puppy that is always on the go with extraordinary energy (until he suddenly drops and sleeps before going again) and our old Labrador who takes life much more slowly. He comes for the morning

wander, stopping as necessary to take in the smells and rest. He ensures he is around when food is available but then he drops and sleeps his way through much of the day or just taking in everything in his relaxed and stress-free manner.

In our fast-paced world with high expectations and demands, it is vital to be able to stop for a few moments of renewal and reorientation. I love an account in Mark's story of Jesus. He responded to the illness in his friend's Peter's relative and restored her health. All of the town and region flocked to the house after hearing it was him and what he did. They brought everyone who had so much as a sore toe to see what this guy could do. He eventually fell into bed and slept. Early in the morning Jesus got up and went into the hills to pray and reorient himself in the way of God. His disciples came searching and when they found him urged him to come back because there was a huge crowd looking for him. This equated to stress, pressure and success. This could have been the beginning of a new mission or vocation or operation. It could have been highly successful and very popular. Jesus could have made it in Galilee and beyond and set himself up – the healer fixing everyone and everything. The disciples obviously saw the possibilities and upped the pressure.

Jesus, somewhat surprisingly, told them that they were going on to the next town. He came to tell people about the Reign of God that is about justice, peace and inclusive new life in the love and grace of God. He didn't come to heal. I suspect that it was in his stopping and praying that he remembered his mission, what was really important and found direction, strength and the grace to move in the next direction.

When I am able to stop I often find myself wondering why I am doing what I am doing and asking what is really important. I find a reorientation of life and a slowing down that allows me to value what is before me and life in the moment that exists now.

Yesterday morning was a reminder that God is God and I should slow down a little and appreciate the beauty and wonder that is ever-present around me. I pray that you will be able to find the same space to breathe more deeply and experience wonder and grace in the Presence of God who holds us in love.

Geoff Stevenson
(Hawkesbury Zone Minister)

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Something to ponder...

The Last Wishes of Alexander the Great



On his death bed Alexander the Great summoned his generals and told them his three ultimate wishes:-

1. The best doctors should carry his coffin:
2. The wealth he had accumulated (gold, money, precious stones etc) should be scattered along the procession route to the cemetery:
3. His hands should be let loose, hanging outside the coffin for all to see:

One general who was surprised by these unusual requests asked Alexander to explain. Here is what Alexander the Great had to say:

1. I want the best doctors to carry my coffin, to demonstrate that, in face of death, even the best doctors in the world have no power to heal.
2. I want the road to be covered with my treasures, so that everyone sees that material things acquired on earth stays on earth.
3. I want my hands swinging in the wind so that people understand that we come into the world empty handed and we leave this world empty handed, after the most precious treasure of all is exhausted: **TIME**.
4. We do not take to our grave any material wealth. **TIME** is our most precious treasure, because it is **LIMITED**. We can produce more wealth, but we cannot produce more **TIME**.
5. When we give someone our time, we actually give a portion of our life that we can never take back. Our **TIME** is our **LIFE !!!**
6. So therefore the best present that you can give to your friends and family is your **TIME**. May God grant you plenty of **TIME** and may you have the wisdom to give it away so that you can **LIVE, LOVE and DIE in peace**.

Alexander the Great (356-323 BC) was only 33 when he died of a fever, which he contracted in India near the Ganges River. He was a pupil of Aristotle and ascended to the throne on the murder of his father in 336 BC. He was King of Macedonia and conqueror of an empire that covered much of Asia, and included parts of Africa and India. Alexandria in Egypt gets its name from Alexander.

In 13 years he accomplished, perhaps more in this regard, than any other in history.

Who was Albert Brown?

The speaker at the Ebenezer Church pilgrimage on Sunday 18 June will be Peter Worland, Executive Director, Uniting. On that occasion Peter Worland will be bringing a silver cup that was presented to Albert Brown in January 1900 by the congregation of Ebenezer Church.

The cup has been in the family of John Cahill, a neighbour of Peter Worland, for many years and the family would now like the cup to be returned to the church which they feel is its rightful place.

So ... who was Albert Brown?

In March 1850 James Dawbney Brown, a student of ministry under Presbyterian minister Rev. John Dunmore Lang, arrived in New South Wales. In June 1851, he married Sarah Hopkins, eldest daughter of William Hopkins, the proprietor of Hopkins' flour mills and bakery in Windsor.

James Brown opened a successful and popular private school in Windsor but later turned to farming.

In the 1864 Hawkesbury flood James, his wife and four children, passed a night in an improvised second storey in a one-storey house over the rising floodwaters at a farm at Freeman's Reach. In the morning a rescue boat removed all to a place of safety. The youngest of those four children was Albert Brown who at that time would have been two years of age.

In his adult life Albert Brown was a farmer and owned land between Coromandel Road and Sackville Road, Ebenezer. Albert and his wife were highly respected in the Ebenezer community, Albert being called upon to chair community meetings. He must have been an accomplished singer as he was often asked to perform at concerts and weddings.

More on Albert Brown at the church anniversary on Sunday 18 June.

A Lighter Moment

My wife said, "What are you doing today?"

I said, "Nothing".

She replied, "But you did that yesterday."

I replied, "I know that dear but I haven't finished."

A celebrity went to pay a charity visit to an Aged Facility, to cheer up the residents. But he was disappointed that none of them seemed to recognise him, instead they all looked mystified. Finally he went up to one lady and asked, "Do you know who I am?"

The old lady whispered, "Don't worry dear, Matron will tell you."

Something for Children!

Find-A-Word

The words can go across, backwards, up, down or diagonally!

Have fun!

In the beginning...

G	S	D	F	T	H	H	D	U	T
S	N	N	A	H	S	T	E	L	H
W	U	I	A	Y	I	R	T	L	G
I	E	N	N	E	F	A	A	I	I
N	O	O	M	N	C	E	E	G	N
B	I	R	D	S	I	O	R	H	M
R	E	S	T	E	D	G	C	T	G
S	N	E	V	A	E	H	E	O	Y
A	N	I	M	A	L	S	D	B	P
W	D	Y	M	A	N	K	I	N	D

ANIMALS
CREATED
FISH
LIGHT
NIGHT
SUN

BEGINNING
DAY
GOD
MANKIND
OCEANS

BIRDS
EARTH
HEAVENS
MOON
RESTED

God's Beautiful Creation

