



Werribee United Church

We acknowledge the people of the Kulin alliance, the original custodians of the land which was never ceded and on which our buildings for worship stand and we gather.

7 July 2024: Pentecost 7

Are the 'climate wars' starting again?

The following is an edited version of a statement by Gershon Nimbalkar, who is the national director of Common Grace. He argues that the climate wars have sadly returned to Australia's politics, but I would argue that they have never really ended as actions speak louder than words, and many people are concerned that new fossil fuel mines are being opened up despite claims by government to reduce their use. Christians cannot help but be caught up in the debates and arguments, whatever your views. Christianity and politics are uneasy but unavoidable bedfellows. (Editor)

"For those of us who thought, and hoped, that after decades of debate in this nation we had finally resolved a pathway forward, another election fought over this issue, with all the uncertainty and delay it brings, is disheartening. Especially as we, and the rest of the world are becoming increasingly familiar with the devastating impacts of climate change. I mourn the damage being done to Australia's ecosystems, including our spectacular Great Barrier Reef.

These impacts I've felt are of course dwarfed by those who are most vulnerable. Those losing homes and livelihoods, or facing hunger and displacement. Many of our Pacific neighbours may find their entire nations rendered unliveable if we don't act with urgency.

Our faith teaches us that creation is a gift from God, and that we, as His image bearers are called to steward it according to his good purposes. A responsibility that involves developing and protecting it so that all people and the rest of creation flourishes (Gen 1:26-30).

It means that even though some of these political discussions can feel technical, or ideological, the consequences of the decisions being made on climate change, mean that it's important we engage.

The urgency of climate change demands immediate action, and it seems clear that the pathway forward is doubling down on our increasing investments in renewable energy and infrastructure.

We're already enduring the terrible impacts of the climate crisis. This decade is crucial to stop these disasters from becoming worse. I look forward to acting with you to advocate for policies that help us better steward God's good creation."

"Common Grace began in 2014 as a story of prayer and conversation from around Australia and the world, woven together by the power of God's spirit. Common Grace seeks to not only encourage followers of Jesus to act on issues of injustice, but also to provide them with tools and training so they have an effective voice in the public sphere." For more information go to this site: <https://www.commongrace.org.au/>

TODAY AND NEXT WEEK

Worship services

7 July: Rev. Ian Pearse (HC)

14 July: Rev. Bruce Watson

Bible readings

Today: 2 Samuel 5:1–5, 9–10; Psalm 123; 2 Corinthians 12:2–10; Mark 6:1–13

Next week: 2 Samuel 6:1–5, 12b–19; Psalm 85:8–13; Ephesians 1:3–14; Mark 6:14–29

What's on this week

Monday: 7.30pm Justice Task Group

Wednesday: 7pm Church Council

Thursday: 9.30am Gardening Group;

5pm Health & Fitness;

5pm Choral Practice (chapel)

Saturday: 7am Health & Fitness

Next Sunday: 4pm Samoan Fellowship

Rosters 7 July (& 14 July)

Greetings: Liz B (Margaret B)

Audiovisual: Noel S (Christian R)

Morning Tea: Samoan Ladies (Jan B & Julie H)

Flowers: Bev C (Margaret F)

Music: Wendy B (Gina L)

Prayers: Lauina L (Jan B)

Reader: Fay D (Lauina L)

Werribee UC on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/621987747878234/>

Church office

Open Monday to Friday 9.30am–12noon. Phone 97411084 Email

office@werribeeunitingchurch.org.au

WUC Newsletter (Editor: Robert Renton)

Send information for inclusion to the Editor at

robert.renton@bigpond.com

Bank Account & Boom Gate (0459#)

BSB 083-909 A/c 516109795

To book facilities at WUC:

Email: (Elizabeth B)

bookings@werribeeunitingchurch.org.au

Samoan service The Samoan language service is held every 3rd Sunday at 4pm in the church. All welcome.

To contact the Rev. Ian Pearce

The Rev. Ian Pearce offers pastoral care to anyone in our congregation. Please ring mobile: 0411 771 853 or send an email to: enps@iinet.net.au.

Today marks the start of NAIDOC week

NAIDOC Week 7–14 July—an exciting time in our national calendar to come together to celebrate and recognise the contributions and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

This year's NAIDOC Week theme of 'Keep the Fire Burning: Blak, Loud and Proud' points us to the important opportunity to reflect on the strength of First Nations leadership and ways we can all be involved in keeping the fire burning for justice, truth and hope.

As we enter 2024 NAIDOC Week celebrations in this post-Voice referendum year we hold to the call in Hebrews 10:23-25 to consider how we can spur one another onto love and good deeds in our communities.

Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching. Hebrews 10: 23-25

We are inspired by the resilience and tenacity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Their encouragement to not give up, to engage, and join their efforts to bring urgent change through justice, truth-telling, treaty and genuine relationship. Non-Indigenous Australians can support by showing up, by listening, learning, and amplifying First Nations voices - this is how we add logs to the fire. **May we take actions together to keep the flame of justice, truth and hope burning so all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, now and into the future, are safe, free and flourishing.**

(Text from <https://www.commongrace.org.au>)

A prayer for NAIDOC week

This prayer has been written for NAIDOC Week 2024 by proud Wuthathi and Mabuiag Island woman Safina Stewart for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to keep the fire burning, and prayer for the church to continue walking together for truth and justice.

Creator God, you are the sustainer of life, the composer of creation's song, you taught our Elders how to listen to Country's rhythm, To stand to protect, sustain and care for Country. Open our ears and enflame our commitment toward creation justice. You are the celebrator of language, kinship and culture. You have taught our communities how to be resilient. Renew and encourage our disheartened spirits, restore our peoples to flourishing. Overflow us with vision, guide our paths, give us comrades for the journey.

You are the fire keeper, the Creator of time and place. You remember the silenced and ignored stories; your stories connect us back to your love to fuel the flame.

Quicken our memory to your way of justice, hope and love. We are Blak, Loud, Proud. We will keep the fire burning.

You are the holy God of truth and justice; you hear the cry of our hearts, our laments and our mourning and you comfort and accompany us. We experience your faithfulness and peace. Blaze us with your love and presence, holy God of truth and justice.

You are the Spirit of restoration and healing. You gave Jesus to show us how to live in right relationship. We take our place to listen, learn and build understanding. We walk together with honour, respect and celebration. We walk together to keep the fire burning. Amen.

A notable Australian



Aboriginal Christian Leader Aunty Pearl Gibbs (Gambanyi) was a leading Aboriginal activist in the 1900s, advocating especially for Aboriginal civil rights and the rights of Aboriginal women and children.

She was born in 1901 at La Perouse (Sydney). She and her sister Olga worked as domestic servants where she met Aboriginal girls who had been removed unwillingly from their country homes and 'apprenticed' by the Aborigines Protection Board as domestic servants. Disturbed by their position, she tried to help them by acting as advocate with the board. This was the start of her concerns for the rights and proper treatment of Aboriginal people.

Aunty Pearl Gibbs was a key member of the Aborigines Progressive Association and was a lead organiser of the Day of Mourning protest in 1938.

Aunty Pearl Gibbs campaigned against the discriminatory policies of the Aborigines Protection Board including the terrible conditions of Aboriginal people living on reserves and young Aboriginal women working as domestic servants. In 1954 Aunty Pearl became the first and only Aboriginal woman to be given a seat on the Board.

In 1956 Aunty Pearl Gibbs co-founded the Aboriginal Australian Fellowship which brought together Aboriginal people and non-Indigenous allies to campaign for equality and citizenship rights for Aboriginal peoples, including the right to vote. She continued working for the rights and support of Aboriginal people until she died in 1983.

You can read more of her story in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* — <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/gibbs-pearl-mary-gambanyi-12533>