



Werribee Uniting 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.

3 March 2024: Lent 3

Musings from Rev. Mark Dunn

My research tells me that the origin of the expression 'no strings attached' may go back to ancient times when documents were written on parchment that were rolled up and secured with a string.

The Babylonian Talmud in *Tractate Bava Metzi'a* tells of a man who gives his wife a bill of divorce on such a parchment, but holds onto the string so that he can snatch it back, should he choose to do so. The divorce, therefore, is not considered valid since he will not give it freely. Similarly, love, forgiveness or friendship that is given with strings and conditions attached are a sham and not valid, since they can be snatched back at any time.

An unknown author beautifully portrays the possibilities of no-strings-attached love in this heartfelt story titled "The Rock." As she grew older her teenage daughter became increasingly rebellious. It culminated late one night when the police arrested her daughter for drunk driving. Mum had to go to the police station to pick her up.



They didn't speak until the next afternoon. Mum broke the tension by giving her a small gift-wrapped box. Her daughter nonchalantly opened it and found a little rock inside. She rolled her eyes and said, 'Cute, Mum, what's this for?' 'Read the card,'

Mum instructed.

Her daughter took the card out of the envelope and read it. Tears started to trickle down her cheeks. She got up and lovingly hugged her mother as the card fell to the floor. On the card were these words: "This rock is more than 200,000,000 years old. That is how long it will take before I give up on you."

This mother is not saying, "I will love you IF..." Instead she says that she will love her daughter forever and nothing can change that. No strings attached. That is how God loves us—evidenced in 'The Prodigal Son' of Luke 15.

When we learn to love like that, I think we'll understand the words of Emmett Fox, who said, "If you could only love enough, you could be the most powerful person in the world."

Grace & peace as you learn to love without strings, Mark

Justice and Mission Task Group

Rob Bradley, convenor, says: "Everyone is invited to the Justice and Mission Task Group meeting on Monday March 4, in the church foyer at 7.30 pm. We are glad to hear your ideas for living out the Gospel in the life of the community." (Rob's phone is 0431 964 544). Our JIM group supports the Annual Palm Sunday Walk for Justice for Refugees, on Sunday 29 March. Nauru Detention Centre reopened recently for 43 asylum seekers who arrived at Beagle Bay, WA. PM Albanese said he is reactivating Operation Sovereign Borders. Home Affairs

TODAY AND NEXT WEEK

Worship services

3 March (Lent 3): Rev. Mark Dunn
10 March (Lent 4): Rev. Angela Tampiyappa

Bible readings

Today: Exodus 20:1–17; Psalm 19:1–14; 1 Corinthians 1:18–25; John 2:13–22

Next Week: Numbers 21:4–9; Psalm 107:1–3, 17–22; Ephesians 2:1–10; John 3:14–21

What's on this week

Monday: 9.30am Playgroup; 7pm Boys & Girls Brigade at Dreambuilders Church

Tuesday: 11.30am Bible Discussion & Lunch

Wednesday: 10am Property Committee; 1pm UCAF meeting (Rev. Mark Dunn speaker)

Thursday: 9.30am Gardening Group

Rosters 3 March (& 10 March)

Greetings: Sandra S (Margaret B)

Audiovisual: Paul K (Jacob L)

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

Flowers: Emily M (Bev C)

Music: Wendy B (Gina L)

Prayers: Chris M (Luciana A)

Reader: Margaret F (Amando A)

Werribee UC on Facebook:

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

Church office

Open Monday to Friday 9.30am–12noon.

Phone 97411084 Email

office@crossroadsunitingchurch.org.au

WUC Newsletter

Send information for inclusion to the Editor at robert.renton@bigpond.com or Neil T

Bank Account & Boom Gate (0459#)

BSB 083-909 A/c 516109795

To book facilities at WUC:

Email: (Elizabeth Barnes)

bookings@crossroadsunitingchurch.org.au

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

Minister Clare O'Neill said "People who arrive at our coast by boat will be sent home."

No arrival is illegal. Let's build a more just society for all persons who come to our shores seeking asylum.

Our JIM group also supports local environment organizations: Werribee River Association and Beach Patrol 3030. Stop Adani coalition is raising awareness of Adani's massive black coal mine operation under construction in Queensland, drawing on water resources for years to come. See the Australian Conservation Foundation website for news of the protest movement. (NT)

Good Friday's Way of the Cross



Planning is underway for this year's event on Good Friday morning 2024, involving people of the St Andrew's Catholic Parish, St Thomas Anglican Church, Werribee Uniting Church, with St

Steven's Karen congregation.

Neil T is co-ordinating for our congregation. He says: "We need volunteers to read the scriptures, and for a singing group when the scene moves to the Racecourse Hotel. Can you help? My phone is 0402817673."

The morning concludes at St Andrew's church with a tableau, followed by hot cross buns and coffee.

See Wyndham City website:

www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/whats-on/good-friday-way-cross.

Uniting Church Adult Fellowship

The March meeting is on Wednesday 6th March at 1.00pm. The Rev Mark Dunn is going to be our speaker. If you would like to hear Mark speak please join us. You do not have to be a member to come along. All welcome.

Training opportunity: public prayer



Have you thought about volunteering to lead the Prayers for Others and Ourselves on Sundays but have been reluctant for

whatever reason? Rev. Mark Dunn is offering a 30 minute training opportunity for those who would like to join him after worship in the church on Sunday 17 March (bring your tea/coffee). Resources are available and it would be great if we had more people willing to give it a go. Book through the church office (97411084 or office@crossroadsunitingchurch.org.au).



Uniting Wyndham food donations

At our first UCAF meeting on Wednesday 7 February, the group requested the re commencement of the Uniting Food Basket. A member from the UCAF will place the basket in the front entry of the church each Sunday morning and all donations will then be taken to Uniting Wyndham mid-week. *Please note that all donations will need to be non-perishable.* Many thanks in anticipation, Margaret G (assistant Secretary Werribee UCAF)



Sunny was welcomed into the family of God last Sunday