

# St Leonard's Uniting Church June 2023

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Minister: Rev Kim Cain

## Ministerial Meandering

Are you one of those people who find the word 'Pentecost' discombobulating? If not downright threatening, is it at least confusing, or non-repeatable?

Many of us would not use the word without getting a bit panicky that we might mispronounce it, or faintly worrying we are even entering into the strange religious territory of speaking in tongues, mass hysteria worship, and waving arms.

It's ok for some: not a problem, what are you writing about you might say? Easy – 'we have Pentecost every year – okay, the lesser of the big church occasions after Christmas and Easter, but hey it's the day we wear something red, so it is all normal'.

For those of us who use the word easily, remember those who are a bit shy of it. It won't be said in the presence of friends or amongst work mates, even if everyone knows you go to church – and that's the trouble, it sounds kind of "churchy".

And of course, this is the least of the worries for those who have had a brush with the 'Pentecostal movement' – the fastest growing branch of Christianity in the last century.

Technically the word 'Pentecost' simply means fifty days in Greek. In Judaism on the 50th day after the Sabbath of Passover, the Feast of Weeks takes place. Today it is called 'Shavuot' and celebrates the first harvest (Spring) and the giving of the Torah – the first five books of the Bible.

It was during one such time of celebration, just after Jesus' resurrection, that his followers had an outstanding spiritual experience – wind, fire, languages, confusion – occurred according to Luke. (Acts 2: 1-13) It's worth noting that in the Gospel of John, Jesus blows the spirit on his disciples on the same night as the resurrection at Easter. (John 20:19)

Despite confusion of days and *modus operandi*, or comfort or otherwise with words – something happened and the first believers were animated and motivated about this Spirit within them in the manner of Christ. It really kicked Christianity off, although it wasn't called that yet!

Regardless of our level of comfort with the word Pentecost, most people have experienced some kind of spirit, awe, touching moment in the midst of life; something that has cut through to us, beyond the temporal even though we live in the temporal world all the time.

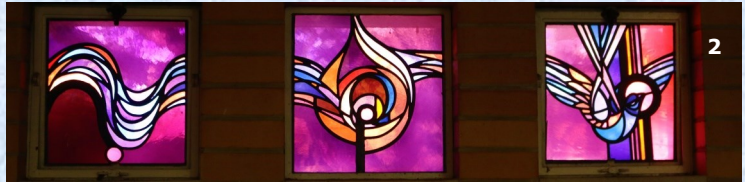
It need not be churchy, but it can propel us into reflection of what life's values are and how we would like to live. Maybe it's a taste of Christ/God/Spirit with us, and so we are moved towards faith. If not a Christian faith another faith order that shares this same essence.

So, in our church we come to the season of Pentecost: it's not just a Sunday in the church year, but a time to let the spirit break free... for all of us to get over our hang-ups with language and intuitively express the goodness we have seen and tasted; to do the tasks of living better, loving deeper, seeking peace and justice on all the days that are given to us.

Grace and peace, Kim



# St Leonard's MESSAGE

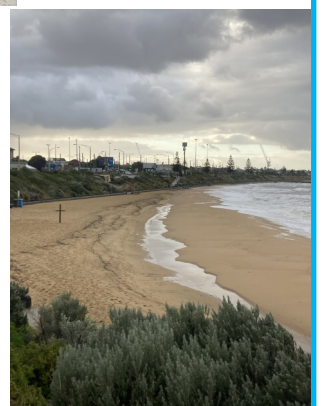
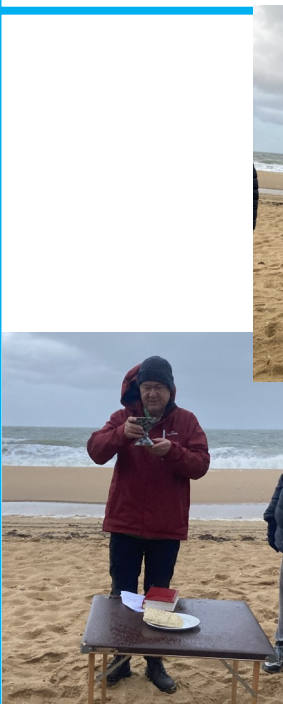


## May 2023 Church Council report

Hi everyone. Your Church Council continues to work hard to keep the mission of our church progressing as effectively and efficiently as possible. Recent activities of note include:

- **Tennis courts and playground area** - The tennis courts have finally been completed and the St Leonard's Tennis Club is ecstatic with the outcome. The Playgroup is also pleased to finally have the playground area tidied up and fully functional again.
- **Ministry and Mission Strategy** - Our Ministry and Mission Strategy developed by Council over the past 18 months was released on 7 May 2023. As noted previously this important document is intended to guide our current and future mission activities. We will be structuring some active discussions around the six facets of the Strategy over coming months and are keen to hear your thoughts and input, to make this a 'live' document that guides our church into the future.
- **Information Meeting on Development Project** – We held an Information Session after church on 16 April 2023 to provide a comprehensive update of the development project over the past couple of years. The Q&A session after the Information Session was lively and indicated a keen interest and strong support for the project, though there is clearly still some work to be done to resolve some concerns. We are pleased to advise that after a challenging couple of years the design work is recommencing with a view to go to tender later this year. Please contact me at any time if you wish to discuss any matters related to the development project.
- **Annual General Meeting was held on 7 May 2023** - The AGM was held after church on Sunday 7 May 2023. We are pleased to advise that Janeanne Lee was elected to Church Council and Mike Wheatley was re-elected. Thanks to all who attended. There were some questions raised during the AGM specifically related to the available funds in the Hume James Robertson Trust that was set up as a managed fund following the sale of the tennis court. On the next page, page 3, is a summary document prepared by the Treasurer, Rod Lee, in response to those queries, that was handed out to attendees after church on 14 May. We hope that answers most of the questions about the funds in the Trust, but please speak to Rod or myself if you need any further information or clarification.

Peter Hunkin  
Church Council Chair

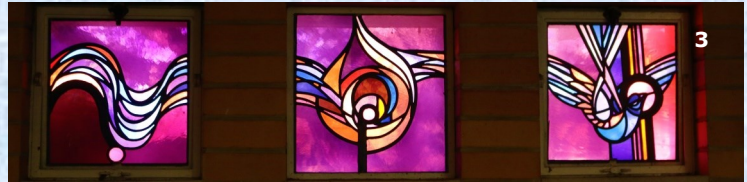


### Easter Dawn Service

It was a cold, wet and bleak morning when we met at dawn to celebrate the risen Christ.

After Kim celebrated Holy Communion, (left) we adjourned to the Rotunda on Green Point for fish, bread and hot cross buns.

# St Leonard's MESSAGE



## **Supplement to St Leonard's UCA 2022 AGM Financial Report**

The St Leonard's AGM was held on Sunday 7 May 2023. During the Treasurer's presentation of the 2022 Financial Report several questions were raised seeking further details about the expenditure of funds in the Hume James Robertson Trust (the Trust).

The Trust was set up by the UCA Property Services team, in favour of the St Leonard's congregation, following the sale of the single tennis court (Settlement occurred in July 2021). The initial value of funds invested in the Trust was \$3,128,068.72, after sale related expenses were deducted from the actual sale price.

The purpose of the tennis court sale was to provide funds to enable the Strategic Development Plan (the Plan) to proceed. Funds have therefore been drawn from the Trust to pay for various expenditures related to the Plan. Some minor expenses at the end of 2021 left a balance of \$3,098,249.38 at the start of 2022.

Expenditure in 2022 included investigation works, consulting advice and permits to support the progress of the Plan, as well as the costs of refurbishment of the remaining tennis courts. The movement in the Trust during 2022 is summarised below:

Opening Balance 1/1/2022		3,098,249.38
Withdrawals	Tennis Court	-39,172.82
	Investigations	-15,850.00
	Authorities/Permits	-2,164.00
	Architect	-12,700.00
Investment revaluation		-166,256.22
Balance at 31/12/2022		2,862,106.34

The requirements of The Uniting Church in Australia Property Trust (Victoria) for bequests such as this one, is that the Property Trust (not our own congregation) manages the investment strategy for the Trust funds. At the inception of the Trust, we were advised that the money was deposited with UEthical to be invested "*in accordance with the current investment policy of the Property Trust*". The policy is structured to seek long term growth of the funds. This has meant that the bulk of the funds have been invested in managed fund accounts with UEthical. The managed fund operates in a similar manner to superannuation funds, where the unit value of the managed fund fluctuates from day-to-day based on the performance of the various investments within the managed fund.

This may mean that in any particular year, gains or losses may occur depending on the status of those fluctuations. In the long term a managed growth fund would be expected to produce an overall gain in value. However, there were significant turmoil in markets during 2022, resulting in a lower unit valuation across the year. The analysis shown above demonstrates that there has been a notional loss in the value of the Trust of \$166,256.22 through 2022.

Further movement of the markets has occurred over the first few months of 2023, such that the Trust has already recovered \$156,030.50 to the end of April. Expenditure has been \$49,129.09 to end April leaving a closing balance of \$2,969,007.75 at 30 April 2023.

**Rod Lee, Treasurer**  
**14 May 2023**

# St Leonard's MESSAGE



## Messy Church

April Messy Church focused on Easter as Messy Church was held on Palm Sunday. The children made wreaths, telling the Easter story as they placed each item on their wreath. Rock tombs with a stone to roll away were created so that the children could recount the story of the Risen Christ.



Right: Abigail constructs her "tomb" watched by Frank, Finley, Rebecca and David.

Below: Frank ensures a tight fit as Beau and Abigail watch.

The finished item with stone rolled away.



Frank's "put-put" boats were a highlight of Messy Church in May. There was a sense of anticipation as children arrived with 2 twenty cent pieces – not knowing why they needed these. But all was to be revealed when Barry Schofield and David Stamp explained what was happening.

Although Frank had only come out of hospital the day before, he made a surprise visit and was able to see the excitement on Archie's face as his boat "put-putted" in the water.



Left: David, Abigail and Genevieve read the instructions carefully.

Right: Archie studies his boat carefully and then fine tunes it for a race.



The activities conclude with a time of worship in the church and then a shared meal, before going home in time for school the next day.

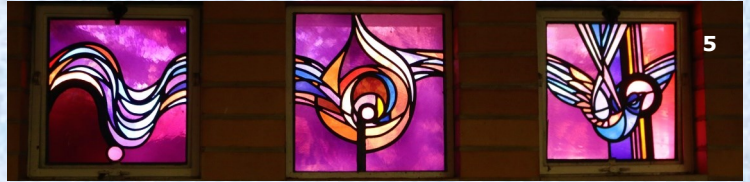


Right: Beau, Abigail, Genevieve and Archie with their put-put boats



Above: A shared meal to conclude the time together at Messy Church.

# St Leonard's MESSAGE



## Children & Family Ministry @St Leonard's

### Playgroup

Have you ever wondered what happens at St Leonard's on a Tuesday morning?

A totally different group gather to spend time together making new friends and supporting each other. It is Playgroup time! Members of our congregation are rostered on to assist Andrea the Playgroup leader, enjoying time interacting with the families who attend. This is an important time for many – in fact some mothers shared that they really missed the time together over the recent school holidays.



Excitement was high when the children saw that the playground could now be used – and even more excitement when the sand pit was reopened. Thank you very much to Peter Hunkin and David Stamp for making sure all was safe for the children when they returned after ANZAC Day.



On the cold and wet mornings, there is always something new to discover in the hall. On a recent morning Andrea had prepared a science experiment for the children to explore. Discovering the interaction of bicarb soda with water was something exciting and great fun. And something the parents can do at home too!

If you have young ones in your street, or grandparents caring for children, please let them know they would be most welcome to come on a Tuesday morning from 10am to 12 noon.



# St Leonard's MESSAGE



## LEAF (St Leonard's Environmental Action in Faith) Report

### The IPCC and International Concerns

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is a body of the United Nations. It was established in 1988 by the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) and the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP). The IPCC is an internationally accepted authority on Climate Change, reviewing many thousands of scientific reports and producing periodic Assessment Reports for policy makers and the general public.

The fifth report of the IPCC influenced the historic Paris Agreement 2015 where 196 countries agreed that action must be taken in climate change mitigation, adaptation and finance.

The sixth Assessment Report has recently been released and presents a dire warning that we have a 'rapidly closing window of opportunity' and the whole world must respond to the climate crisis. **'The choices and actions implemented in this decade will have impacts now and for thousands of years'**.

### The Uniting Church in Australia Concerns

Our Uniting Church is responding to the Climate Crisis with a resolution passed in May 2022 by the National Assembly that called on:

**All councils of the church, agencies and schools who have not already done so to join with the Assembly in committing to net zero emissions by 2040 at the latest so that together we can become a zero emissions Church.**

All churches in all Presbyteries are currently in conversation about this resolution.

### Our Response at St Leonard's

The LEAF group and our Church Council has been taking steps to work towards reducing our church's emissions, and there is much work still to do on this. We aim to keep working on this and to keep educating and supporting the congregation on this important situation. We are initiating a series of educational Breakfast Meetings and invite you to our first one, coming up on Sunday, June 4<sup>th</sup>:

### "Climate Crisis and Christian Theology"

The LEAF group invites you to a pre-service Breakfast Meeting on **Sunday June 4<sup>th</sup> at 8.45am**. We'll be learning about how Christian Theology shapes the way we see ourselves in relation to the earth. We have a guest presenter Brad Denniston who is the Facilitator of the Learning Hub at Ormond Uniting Church. Brad holds a Masters in Theology from the University of Divinity. He is passionate about making theology accessible and transformational for everyone – including in the important and engaging field of climate change theology.

**Come along and bring a friend! We'll greet you with a cuppa and something to eat while you listen and learn.**



# St Leonard's MESSAGE



## Crowning a King

Although not all Australians are monarchists, David and I considered it a privilege to be in England for the historic religious Service of King Charles 111 Coronation on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> May this year. A festive atmosphere was apparent throughout the cities, towns and villages of Britain, with red, white and blue paper Union Jack flags festooning buildings everywhere, including shops, train stations, hotels, and many houses.

We did not join the thousands who lined London's streets on the day, but watched the Service on TV, as did people all over the world, seeing pomp and ceremony at its best with horse drawn carriages, marching uniformed men and women from the Household Cavalry Armed Forces, cheering crowds, and over 2,200 guests arriving or departing both before and after the actual Coronation in Westminster Abbey.

This was conducted by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Most Rev Justin Welby, in a traditional religious Service within the Anglican Communion Service, with prayers, hymns, Bible readings, Sermon, Anthems and responses. It began with a child of the Chapel Royal addressing the King: "Your Majesty, as children of the Kingdom of God we welcome you in the name of the King of kings." To which Charles replied: "In his name and after his example I come not to be served but to serve." And that was the general theme, in the Service. Other faiths beyond Christianity were well acknowledged, and in Biblical fashion the King was anointed (privately behind a screen). Appropriately the Coronation Anthem "Zadok the Priest" was sung magnificently, symbolic of Solomon being anointed with Holy Oil by Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet.

The next day, Sunday, street parties were held all over England. After morning Worship in the 15<sup>th</sup> Century Parish Church of Thaxted, a small village in Essex, we joined others in the main street which was blocked off for families and neighbours to bring picnic chairs and tables, and share food and drink. My forbears have farmed land around there for many generations, and continue to do so, which made it a personal delight. Everyone was cheerful, families of all ages, Morris Dancers, solo singers, all enhanced by warm, sunny Spring weather. Maybe some were there just to celebrate another holiday, with an extra Bank Holiday on the Monday.

So, a very special week-end, and we remember a King with a crown of 444 gemstones. We also remember a King with a crown of thorns. This is well described in a verse of the hymn written by Matthew Bridges and Godfrey Thring.

Crown him the Lord of life  
Who triumphed o'er the grave,  
And rose victorious in the strife  
For those he came to save:

His glories now we sing  
Who died, and rose on high;  
Who died eternal life to bring,  
And lives that death may die.





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Our **webpage** is [www.stleonards.org.au](http://www.stleonards.org.au)

Our **YouTube** channel is [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC9CcPZAoAYjj\\_VCsZEexlg](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC9CcPZAoAYjj_VCsZEexlg)

Our **Facebook** group is <https://www.facebook.com/groups/113607279517/>

Our public **Facebook** page is <https://www.facebook.com/St.LeonardsUCA/>

Our **Instagram** page is <https://www.instagram.com/stleonardsuca/> You will need to request to follow this page.

## St. Leonard's Uniting Church Monthly Worship Cycle 2023

**FIRST SUNDAY OF THE MONTH:** WorshipOne 10.00am - organ/music + variety

**SECOND SUNDAY OF THE MONTH :**

Modern Liturgical, Holy Communion 10.00am - organ music  
New Wave Evening, 5.00pm - band music

**THIRD SUNDAY OF THE MONTH:**

New Wave Classic 10.00 am - band music

**FOURTH SUNDAY OF THE MONTH:**

Modern Liturgical 10.00am - featuring music, art, vision  
Messy Church, 5.00pm- children's craft, food, song

**FIFTH SUNDAY OF THE MONTH:**

Contemporary worship 10.00am - something different!



The string ensemble of Ensemble Liber performed an interesting program at St Leonard's Church on Saturday 22nd April.

Items for the next edition of *The Message* should be submitted to [contactstleonards@gmail.com](mailto:contactstleonards@gmail.com) by **Sunday 16th July 2023**, clearly marked "For the Message".