

# *St. Andrew's Uniting Church News*

March 2018

## ***Mission Statement:***

**To bring the Gospel of Christ to  
The People of the Hawkesbury.**



## **Sunday Service**

**8:30am** (Church)

Traditional worship followed by morning tea & fellowship

**10:00am** (Church)

In conjunction with our Kids' Sunday program  
A family celebration including programs from three years old to Yr 6.

Morning tea and fellowship follows

**6:00pm Sundays@Six** (Auditorium)

A friendly & relaxed creative service held in the auditorium with great music, followed by a light meal.

## **Pastoral Leaders Team (PLT)**

**Rev Je-Kon Oh** 4578 3820 (Office, Bus. Hrs.)

After Hours: 0410 596 991 or 4578 3421.

Email: [minister@richmonduniting.org.au](mailto:minister@richmonduniting.org.au)

**Lester Vincent** (4575 1507)      **Justin Dacey** (4574 1312)

**Audrey Morgan** (4578 4421)      **Beryl Hedges** (4571 2087)

**Margaret Bailey** (4776 1487)      **Sandi Herbert** (4573 1517)

**Kerryn Johnson** (4571 4198)      **Anthea Inskip** (4573 1002)

**Geoff Lattimore** (4571 4061)

***Please send newsletter articles to the office & Julie will include them in the next edition: [office@richmonduniting.org.au](mailto:office@richmonduniting.org.au)***

## A little bit of humour



I believe five out of four people have trouble with fractions.

Employment application blanks always ask who is to be notified in case of emergency. I think you should write “A very good doctor.”

**Name Badges:** It has concerned me for a while that when new folk arrive at St Andrew’s, they may feel the need to have name badges fairly soon, so they can become known and get to know everyone soon afterwards. Unfortunately, our usual pattern for ordering and receiving new name badges has been to wait until a good quantity of badge orders are received, before placing the order. It then took at least another week before the badges were posted back to us. By the time the badges arrive, the need for them has reduced somewhat, as they have already met their new-found colleagues in our beautiful faith community.

I have changed to a local supplier, who will create the name badges – regardless of how many or how few we order – and have them ready to collect within a short time of receiving the order. It is also now possible for us to have a magnetic clip rather than a pin clip, which can be attached without perforating one’s clothing.

Please contact me if you would like to order a name badge. All you need to do is place the required money in an envelope, print the correctly spelt name(s) on the envelope, plus the words, “Name Badge Order”. Then you can place it in the offertory bag or give it to me and I will place the order without waiting for other similar orders. You also need to specify which type of clip (ie, pin or magnetic) that you need on each badge. Prices as follows: -

Pin clip \$ 9.50 Magnetic clip \$10.50.

I look forward to hearing from you should the need arise.

Lester Vincent, Hon Treasurer Phone: 0416 081 260

# A Real Life Prodigal Son Story

Since retiring from the workforce in 1993, I have had lots of time to reflect on experiences with the people I met during my years as a Probation and Parole Officer. One family in particular gave me cause many times to wonder how they fared. I will use fictitious names for them. One of their two sons was assigned to me for a pre-sentence investigation and report, before the Judge dealt with his guilty plea and imposed a penalty. This is a procedure regularly used in our Court system, and it involves interviewing the offender, members of his/her family, employers, doctors, psychiatrists, according to what is appropriate to the offender's circumstances and the type of offence committed. I will call the offender "Ted".

Ted was a very restless young man, reared by a devout catholic couple with good standards. He was very jealous of his brother, and rebellious of his parents, and obviously preferring doubtful company, away from his family. According to his parents, Ted's brother was the very opposite, who they thought was headed for the Catholic priesthood. It wasn't surprising to find that Ted had an unstable employment history, moving from one job to another after very short periods, and came to my office with very negative attitudes. He had pleaded guilty to a number of house-breaking offences and a car theft, and had certainly deserved a gaol sentence.

I presented my report to the Court, and the Judge was very unimpressed with Ted, but in view of his age, decided to release him on a 3-year good behaviour bond, with conditions that he **"report to, and place himself under the supervision and guidance, and obey all reasonable directions of the Probation and Parole Service"**. It was also a condition that he pay compensation for his crimes at a specific amount per month. Failure to comply with these conditions of his release would cause him to be returned to the court and sentenced to a gaol term for breaking his bond.

As the investigating officer, Ted was assigned to me for the period of his "probation". He reported later that day, and the terms and conditions were explained to him. He didn't say much, but his attitude was quite sullen and unresponsive.

Ted failed to keep his next appointment, and there followed a sequence of notices of his arrest for new offences. (This was the normal practice, as Police Fingerprints Branch gave such feedback when offenders under supervision were re-arrested, and it showed any false names given at the time of arrest.) Ted gave a different name each time he was arrested and was obviously moving from place to place around the city area. After some home contacts with his parents, it became clear that Ted had severed all contact with them, and this lovely couple were very concerned for their son, who they loved dearly. Because of their Christian faith, we shared a discussion about Christ's Parable of the Prodigal Son, ( Luke 15:11-32 ) and what Christ would suggest they do. I encouraged them to show him Christ's love if he should come back to them, even though they had been very badly hurt by his behaviour in the past.

I had reported Ted's failure to keep to his bond, and the Court had issued a warrant for his arrest. These warrants stay active for at least 20 years, or until they were executed.

Almost a year later, there was a phone call from Ted's mum, who wanted to see me. At about 3.00am the night before, they received a panic call from Ted, to come and get him. He was living in a flat in the city, and had been badly beaten up by a couple of men who broke into his room. He had been living rough for months, sharing accommodation with prostitutes and leading a miserable life.

They brought him home, and saw to his needs. A very broken, contrite young man, so different from when he had run away. His mum asked what he could do, as she said he wanted to turn his life around. There was this warrant for his arrest, for breaking his bond. I said what he needed to do and assured her I would not have him arrested if he wanted to resume contact.

I prepared a quick advice to the Court, and they agreed to list the matter for hearing, to take place about 6 weeks later. Ted resumed contact with me, and what a different young man he was!! He had quickly found a job, worked out how he could pay the compensation, and was very relieved and happy that he could prove himself this time.

Having been through this process a few times with others, I stressed that it was up to Ted to show he could do it, given plenty of encouragement from his parents and myself. He seemed to feel much better about his brother too. Ted came in regularly, and did all that was asked of him. I was able to prepare a Court report on his changed behaviour, which recommended that the Judge take no action for the breach of his bond.

Ted turned up at Court, the matter was heard, and the Judge allowed him to resume his period on probation. He soon paid the compensation and reported as required till the end of his bond. He had also been given more responsibility at his workplace.

What made the difference for Ted? Firstly, the faith and love of his parents was a great blessing to him, even though it took a long while to appreciate it. Having a compassionate Judge who assigned him to the Probation Service was also very beneficial in his case. Such matters don't always come to such a great conclusion, but I think the Lord was responding to the prayers of Ted's parents, and I felt a strong sense that Ted would lead a good life from that time.

Ted's case and the Parable of the Prodigal Son go together in my memory bank these days.

Lester Vincent



## Fun and Fellowship at the February Meeting of U4F

With the Christmas Lunch at Kravings a distant memory, February 1<sup>st</sup> was the first meeting of the second year of the Uniting4Fellowship group.

The team comprising Beryl, Judith, Denise, Lorraine, Ann and Lyn have prepared an interesting and varied programme for the year and now the first meeting was about to start.

The morning tea was organised by Lorraine helped by Denise and enjoyed by the twenty-one folks who came. This was followed by a Welcome and Notices by Beryl who then led a time of reflection and devotion speaking on Serving.

She told of instances when a total stranger had helped her out physically and totally spontaneously. She was so grateful but could only smile and say thank you.

A more recent episode occurred at the beginning of her road with a broken leg and unable to drive. Responding to an offer of help from a friend she was surprised at how delighted the friend was at the opportunity to be able to do something for her.

It made her aware of the value in allowing people to serve us. We love doing things for people in need and giving our time and energy, but it is just as important to learn to accept with grace those gifts from others.

We then sang the hymn “Brother sister let me serve you. Let me be as Christ to you “

Judith then explained the activity for the morning which was titled ‘Memory Tray’ when a tray with twenty items was placed on each table (as shown in picture) and two minutes was given to memorise as many as possible. After this time the tray was removed and a further four minutes was given to recall and record the items on your tray. This game created fun and fellowship and was enjoyed by everyone.

The meeting ended with a Benediction given by Lorraine.



Fellowship will be held on the first Thursday of the month  
in St Andrew's Auditorium at 10:00am

2018

### **PROGRAMME**

1<sup>st</sup> Mar LINC S Derek Scott – **Living In CommunitiesS**

5<sup>th</sup> Apr A Trip to the Holy Land–Power Point  
Presentation

3<sup>rd</sup> May Outing to Secret Garden

7<sup>th</sup> June Fashion Parade

**Everyone is most welcome**

## WHAT'S HAPPENING DURING THE WEEK?

- MONDAYS**      **Playtime:** 9.30am-11.30am parents & pre-schoolers (Sarah Jones 4577 5353)  
**Andy's Hands-on-Help:** 9.00-1pm maintenance & fellowship (Bob Thuaux 4578 2309)
- TUESDAYS**      **Church Council:** 7.30pm 1st Tuesday odd number month (Greg Inskip 4573 1002)  
**Pastoral Leaders Team:** 7.00pm 1st Tuesday even month (Je-Kon Oh)
- WEDNESDAYS**      **Time Out For Mums:** 9.45-11.15am Fortnightly school terms for mums & pre-schoolers (Sandra Brown 4589 3008)
- THURSDAYS**      **1st: Uniting 4 Fellowship 10.00am** (Beryl Hedges 4571 2087)  
**2nd & 3rd: Cuppa 4 Seniors:** 10.00am-12 noon  
**3rd Thursday:** Patchwork with Thelma 1.30 pm  
**4th: Seniors' Lunch:** 12 noon-1.45pm  
**Seniors' Bible Study:** 12 noon-1.30pm (1st, 3rd & 5th) (Sandi Herbert 4573 1517)
- FRIDAYS**      **Prayer Meeting:** 9am-10am (Margaret Bailey)  
**1st: IDA Service:** 10.30am  
**Youth Group:** 7pm (Yrs 5 and up during school term (Evelynn Inskip 0447119020)

**St. Andrew's Uniting Church**  
**(St. Andrew's is a member of the Assembly of Confessing**  
**Congregations in the Uniting Church.)**  
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