

WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?

I have been in many places, but I have never been in Cahoots. Apparently, you can't go alone. You have to be in Cahoots with someone.

I've also never been in Cognito. I hear no-one recognises you there.

And I have never been in Sane. They don't have an airport, I am told. You have to be driven there. I have only been close to the place, on occasions, thanks to pressing circumstances.

I would like to go to Conclusions, but you have to jump, and I am not too keen on physical activity anymore.

I have, though, been in Doubt. That is a sad place to go, and I try not to visit very often.

I've been in Flexible, but only when it was important to stand firm.

Sometime I'm in Capable, and I go there more often as I'm getting older.

One of my favourite places to be is in Suspense! It really gets the adrenalin flowing and pumps up the old heart. At my age I need all the stimuli I can get!

And, sometimes I think that I am in Vincible, but life shows me I am not!
Submitted by Bob Grant



Spirituality in the Pub

The Grange Hotel
(Bistro meals available from 5:30pm)
Cnr. Renwick St & Pacific Hwy,
WYOMING

6TH MARCH AT 7:30pm

JON BLACKWELL was born in Germany, educated at a Catholic Public School in UK, then joined the Army and saw active service in Belfast. Went to Uni at Nottingham, awarded an MA (Social Work), and worked in child protection before immigrating to Australia in 1983. Worked in welfare in Victoria, then ran health services in the Pilbara, South Australia and the Central Coast, and then as CEO of WorkCover NSW. John is committed to volunteering with Habitat for Humanity, having led building teams to Cambodia, Nepal, the Philippines and Mongolia.

RICHARD HARRIS grew up in Tasmania where he completed a Cabinet Making Apprenticeship and also trained as a youth worker with the Uniting Church. He was a youth worker with the church for 16 years before being ordained as a Minister of the Word. Some things that have shaped his life are bushwalking, permaculture, gardening, family and a couple of short term cross-cultural experiences with the church.



Gosford Uniting Church

"Sharing Life"

FEBRUARY 2012

FROM THE MINISTER'S DESK

A 3 year old boy answered a knock at his front door and found the local minister on the other side of the screen door. He called out to his mother, "Mum, Jesus is at the door". I wonder if that child will hold the same idea of Jesus throughout his life and I wonder what his image of God will be when he grows up.

The text for last week's sermon was, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of all wisdom" (Psalm 111 10a) or as Eugene Peterson in "The Message" puts it, "Good life begins in the fear of God – Do that and you'll know the blessings of God." The idea behind the sermon was that the central idea of the Christian faith was to be *centred* on God. That is, that in all we do, the way we spend our time and in our relationships our motivation is to be more focused on God.

This raises the obvious question, "What do you mean by God". God is different things to different people. To 3-year-old boy answering the door, God's son was the minister; to others God will be financial security; to others, God will be the pursuit of pleasure. To us, people of the Judeo-Christian tradition, God is.... well, how would you define God? Reflection upon this question is in itself one way to be more *centred* on God.

There are a number of spiritual disciplines that help us to *centre* on God. Regular times of prayer and devotional reading of the scripture is one things that comes from our tradition; participation in a community of faith is vital too. However, one aspect that is not strong in our Protestant tradition is "*wondering*" – playing around with ideas not to find an answer but to lead us more deeply into questioning. Frequently, perhaps because of our culture's scientific bent, we have sought answers to questions that our spiritual journey raises but perhaps it is more important to live with the questions rather than to quest for the answers.

Perhaps the idea of *wondering* for wondering's sake is something that is not easy for you. If you would like to "*wonder*" better, spend some time with children who have no problem living with wonder in their lives. Children have the refreshing ability to view the world as the most amazing and *wonderful* place perhaps because it is so new to them. Ironically, as children get older they start asking, "why" to every statement. Perhaps the

adult response, "because" is more insightful than it first appears.

One of the surprising outcomes of *centring* on God, is that rather than making sojourners detached from the world and others, it makes us more connected. *Centering* on God empowers us to see the "Christ" in others, and the creative force of God reflected in the world. The cross is a powerful image because not only does it have a vertical axis pointing towards "heaven", but also a horizontal axis reaching out to the world. We see this personified in Jesus who was able to be totally centred on God and living fully in his own skin.

We will be commencing our Lenten Journey towards Easter on Ash Wednesday, 22 February. Perhaps you might like to play around with the idea that living in *wonder* is a spiritual discipline.

May God be at your centre.

Greg. Woolnough

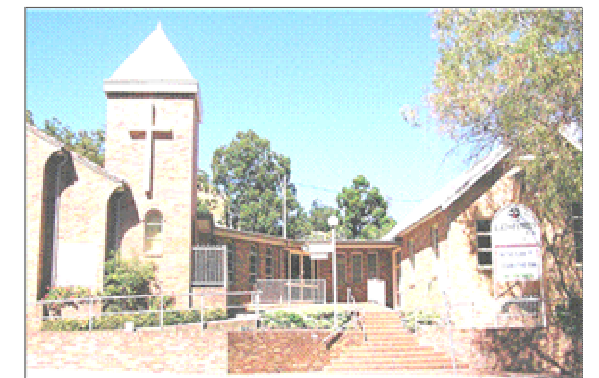


Gosford Uniting Church
129 Donnison Street (PO Box 425)
GOSFORD NSW 2250

Church Service Times
Saturday: Family Fun at Five (FF@5) 5pm
Sunday: 9am Worship Service

Activities Include: Adult Fellowship, Women's Breakfasts, Men's Breakfasts, Tennis Group, Forums, Sunday Lunch Programme, Social Groups, Craft Group, Bible Study Groups, Soccer Group, Charity Quilts Group
Aged Care Programmes Mon and Tues - Contact Church Office for more information.

For Weddings, Baptisms, Funerals and Pastoral Care please phone Rev. Greg 4329 2932
Room/Hall booking enquiries, please contact the church office.
Phone: 4325 3695 (hours 9-12noon Mon-Fri) Fax: 4325 5604
Email: info@gosforduniting.net.au
Web: www.gosforduniting.net.au



Thanks

We should all give thanks for the acceptance, nurture and talents of this wonderful congregation of Christ's people.

Could I also comment on enjoyable atmosphere of the combined 09.00 services. There is a buzz in the church prior to and after worship and also in the hall at morning teas. The singing is great, the varied music shows the talents and acceptance that exists amongst us, and there is an increased sense of "alive-ness". Thanks be to God!

Clive McCormack



MEN's CAMP
(Old Blokes and Young blokes)
23/24 & 25 March 2012

Treachery Beach—Seal Rocks—200km (2.5hrs)

Small blokes and big blokes, young blokes and not so young blokes.
Tent Camping or a van if you're that way inclined.
A great time for relaxation/or not relaxing.
Getting to know each other better.
Sand and surf, walks or just lazing about.

Where: Treachery Beach Camping site near Seal rocks ~ 2.5hrs north from Gosford

When: Fri night (gates close 9pm) 23 Mar, Sat 24 Mar whenever you make it, and Sunday 25 Mar, till just after lunch.

Cost: \$13 per adult per night, \$6 young blokes (5-15y), real young blokes free

Camp among the goannas and trees—some extra tents and gear available. Don't tell the women — (there is 'secret men's business'). Hot showers, BBQ and wood fires available, car pooling available.

Contact: Clive 4369 1096 or Mark 4324 2423



CHOIR TO SING AGAIN

Our Church Choir is to sing again at a Special Choral Service, scheduled for Palm Sunday, 1st April, at 9.00a.m.

Practices are to commence on Saturday, 18th February, at 9.00a.m., and will continue each Saturday (except 25th February) up to and including 31st March. Copies of the music are now available.

Anyone who would like to join our Choir and experience the joy of singing, would be made most welcome. Please speak with either Bob or Nancy Grant (Tel. 4324 6160).

CHURCH PLANNER & Future Dates for the Diary

To help with the **Church Planner, Hall/Church bookings and Web Calendar** it is my hope this year that **all group Leaders/ Secretaries** will pass on to Pam Munt any **special events planned for the year (or 6 months)** so we avoid clash of dates or having too many things on in the one month.

These special events outside of regular meeting dates will be advertised in the **Church Calendar in the Foyer/ Hall and on the Web** under "**Future Dates for the Diary**". For example: Adult Fellowship (Guest Speakers, Trips, Lunches etc); Elders & Church Council (Anniversary; Fete; Christmas Party local Ecumenical Events etc.); Community Events (Forum, Picnic in the Park, Bicycle Ride/BBQ); FF@5 (weekly highlights); Container Aid special events; Sunday Lunches parties; etc

Maryke Keulemans



THE LORD BLESS YOU AND KEEP YOU!

TRAVELLERS' CORNER

Cruising is not just being "all at sea". There are many ports of call which give opportunity for extended land travel, for the day, of anything up to 12 hours or more and I remember our visit, a few years ago, to Casablanca, in Morocco, on our way to South America. where we had opted to take the tour to Marrakech, some 250 kms to the south.

Leaving the ship at 7.20a.m., we had a quick tour of Casablanca itself, this important commercial and industrial port city of 5 million people. It is the largest city in Morocco, situated on the Atlantic Coast and developed during the days when it was a French Protectorate (1912-56). It was made famous by the film of the same name and its song, "You must remember this....". Whilst being heavily Westernised in its outlook, it remains Muslim, with its Medina (Old Walled City) and the Hassan II Mosque, which is one of the largest in the world, built in 1993 to accommodate 100,000 people. Its Minaret is 210 m high. Against all this is the Ville Nouvelle (New Town), displaying the French influence of buildings and squares. Sadly, there is to be seen the massive Cathedrale de Sacre Couer, built in 1930, which is now just a Cultural Centre.

We headed out of the city on our 3 1/2 hour journey to Marrakech, passing through moderate sized towns and across rich black soil plains which eventually changed to rather desolate and undulating semi-red soil desert country. It is in just such an area that one comes upon the massive oasis-like pink ochre coloured city of Marrakech, positioned west of the distant Atlas Mountains, which were shrouded in a heat haze and beyond which lie the beginnings of the Sahara Desert.

Our first sight, beyond a line of palm and olive trees was part of the immense 16 km long wall which surrounds the old city. It was to be a busy few hours for us in this fascinating place of 2 million people. Founded in 1062 CE, it is today the second largest city in Morocco.

Our time was to be spent within the Medina where we began by visiting the magnificent 19th Cent. Bahaia Palace, containing picturesque columned courtyards, gardens and reception halls, etc., decorated with the most beautiful tile and stucco work, a craft perfected, in earlier years, in Andalusia in Spain. We understood that the Palace was used by the King on his visits to the city. It has also been featured in a number of films.

Lunch was in a special Moroccan Restaurant, where we were greeted by beautifully dressed women, before sitting down to our all Moroccan meal, whilst being entertained by a very strangely sounding instrumental quartette, later to be bedazzled by a bevy of "Belly-dancers"!!

After being well fed, rested and given the foregoing

opportunity to become 'orientated' to local ways, we then turned our attention to the nearby old city centre with its souqs of amazing shops, its smells, its noises and its labyrinth of narrow streets and alleyways down which we walked, squeezing past one local, standing unconcerned to one side, who had just cut the throat of a chook and was allowing the blood to drain out onto the ground. By the way, we had earlier had to step over the head of a sheep that had been cut off and left lying on the walking path outside a butcher's shop.

Having avoided the man with the chook, we were approached by "in your face" street sellers only escaping by being directed down a dark stairway to an underground dimly lit and dusty 'Aladdin's Cave' of local products and souvenirs. We were glad to eventually exit that shop, find the street sellers gone and head for the famous and expansive old city square called Djemaa-el F'na.

Our experiences were not at an end for, here, we were confronted with masses of people along with snake charmers, jugglers, tooth pullers, magicians, hustlers, soothsayers, barbers and what have you, along with sellers of anything from goat's heads to snails. It all seemed like walking in the world of literary fiction, but it was real!

So, after a quick look at the city's main mosque, with its 60m high Minaret, and set in a lovely rose garden, we began our journey back to Casablanca, but not before passing through the Ville Nouvelle (New Town), developed by the French (same as in Casablanca) where are to be found fine hotels and conference venues, which are drawcards for holiday-making tourists and business leaders.

We arrived back at our ship at 7.20p.m., just 40 minutes before sailing, after 12 hours of "on the go traveling and touring" and were glad to have 3 days at sea to rest, digest what we had seen and prepare for the next port.

The question is always asked, "What impressed you most?" Whilst all our experiences and what we saw, described here, left us with indelible memories, there was something quite different that attracted our special attention. In each of the various cities and towns we traveled through, there were large signs in Arabic, exhibited near flagpoles, schools and military establishments. We asked our guide to translate these signs for us. His reply was that each one was the country's Motto which read, "God, Country, King" in that order.

Now that made us think, especially when some of our fellow-Australians believe that "Waltzing Matilda" would make a good National Anthem. What did Jesus say were the two great Commandments? - "Love God and love your neighbour", in that order. The Motto we saw may have been Muslim, but it seems that it may have something to say to us, don't you think?

Bob

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH SRE (SCRIPTURE) IN 2012

A Dedication service for SRE (Scripture) teachers was held on Thursday 1st February at the Gosford Presbyterian Church at West Gosford.

There were 65 SRE Teachers in attendance from the various churches in the area covered by the Gosford Ministers Association

They will act on our behalf in taking the Christian message to children in the Primary schools. It will be in lots of cases be the first time any of them have heard the stories from the Bible, about Jesus and a God who loves them.

You see, SRE teachers are like Missionaries. So take time each day to pray for them, that the Holy Spirit will act through them to awaken the spirit within each child. Remember Tracy Bagot who will be teaching at Narara and Ron Taylor at Lisarow.

In a couple of weeks, SRE teachers will commence the task of teaching the children at the 17 schools in our area. There is a number of classes who will not have a teacher. Some of those schools are at Gosford, Niagara Park, and Kariong.

Who is going to teach these children? Do you hear God calling? What is your answer? Here am I send me.

Ron Taylor

THANK YOU!

Col & Pam Browne would like to say a big thank you to our Church Family for their prayer support, calls, cards and love, during their recent rough times. We are both going well and very thankful.

Col & Pam

Re: Trauma Teddies

(Please refer to Nancy Axe's article). The new sized 13" trauma teddy pattern is available from the Gosford Red Cross, downloadable from the internet or Nancy Axe has copies. The bears are now larger, don't have separate limbs and are 'hairless', compared to the ones some of you may have knitted (and nearly went batty making!) some years ago. The Red Cross will accept your completely finished teddy, or if you would like to just hand in your knitted pieces, other ladies sew them up, fill them with wadding and sew the faces on for you!

If you have no wool scraps, "Hot Dollar" - near green car park, level 3, Erina Fair, has pre-packaged 20g x 5 balls of assorted, coloured yarn, perfect for your trauma teddy. You would also require a colour suitable for the legs, arms and head.

Pam Munt

FEBRUARY MATTERS

Sunday 12 February: During our congregational meeting we will be considering the Church Council's recommendation that Gosford Uniting Church donates \$20,000 to the Warnervale Uniting Church Development. The people of Warnervale are planning to establish a new worship and community centre in this quickly developing area.

Sunday 19 February: We will be commissioning and re-commissioning our Elders and Church Councilors. We will also be welcoming Roy and Gwen Shave into Confirmed membership by transfer from the Broken Bay Congregation.

Church Camp is coming! Our annual camp at the Monterey Tourist Park at Mannering Park from Friday 24 - Sunday 26 February. Numbers are down from last year but it is not too late to book in IF YOU CAN LET Ian D'Arth 4324 4870 KNOW TODAY, if you would like a cabin.

Camping/caravan sites are also available. If you're not able to come up for the whole weekend, day trippers are welcome. Mini Olympics will be held on Saturday afternoon and worship at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday

Rev. Greg.

KNIT-A-THON 2012



Once the belated summer weather is behind us, it will be time to prime up your knitting needles and take part in the 2012 Knit-a-Thon!

The Knit-a-Thon will run from whenever you feel comfortable enough to knit, to the end of May and this year you have a choice of 3 much needed projects to choose from!

Items needed:

1/ acrylic lap rugs - approx 120cm x 120cm (48" x 48") approx - they can be squares, strips, knitted or crochet and they will be distributed by Frontier Services to Respite and CareLink Centres in Alice Springs.

2/ Lois and John Shaw's daughter Kareena is involved with the Fistula Hospital in Addis Ababa and the maternity ward needs premmy baby sized jackets and hats for the newborns. (no booties, mittens or leggings thank you) I have patterns if required, please contact me.

3/ Trauma Teddies. Please see Nancy Axe's article in this issue of Sharing Life.
Happy knitting, Pam Munt

McCormack Family Gathering

Clive and I decided that while our daughter Ellen and her family were visiting from Tasmania we would organise a McCormack clan family gathering.

Many of you will have known Clive's father James McCormack who had attended Gosford Uniting since the 1960's and was a member from 1972-1984. James and Lucy McCormack came to Green Point after his 'semi-retirement' (James never actually stopped doing Electrical work for his friends).

Lucy McCormack died in 1972 just 6 weeks after moving into Green Point. James met and later married Mabel Hunt (June Moxey's mother), in 1976. June and Kevin Moxey have also been members of Gosford Uniting for many years. Sadly after one year of marriage Mabel died in 1977 and James died in 1984.

James McCormack's advice to all his children on their marriage was that for a marriage to succeed it was not one of a 50/50 relationship but one where each gave 100 percent, his advice also was to "keep up the church".

Clive and Rhonda subsequently bought the family home, and have now been living there for

28 years. We thought it fitting that we gather the clan at the McCormack family home - so the gathering was organised for Sunday 8th January and included both June Moxey and her sister, Barbara's, families.

Family members traveled from Canberra, Newcastle, Orange, Adelaide and Sydney. Our neighbours, Marie and Alan Swan kindly allowed the children to spill over onto their block to play games. There were boating, kayaking, sailing and other ball games to occupy the many children, ranging in age from 9 months to 18 years.

A total of 84 people came for the day. Everyone brought their own picnic lunch and we spread out on the lawn on the waterfront. We are so fortunate that our home lends itself to such occasions. The weather was perfect. James and Lucy built a house that was far too big for just the two of them, but always intended that the home be used by the extended family.

If James had been around today, he would have smiled at this gathering and been pleased to see his home used for the purpose for which it was intended. He was a great family man.

Clive's brother Hugh's daughter, Jane, is a helicopter pilot instructor. She had to

work on Sunday, but organised her training flight to fly over the house around lunch time. What a thrill that was for us all. We even managed to get some photos of the helicopter flying over. Jane opened the door, looked out and waved and did a few fancy manoeuvres that thrilled some, and scared others.

Hugh is very much a McCormack family given name. There has been a Hugh McCormack in every generation since the 1770s. There were three Hughs here on Sunday. There were also three James.

All in all it was a wonderful success, so important for all the cousins to have an opportunity to see each other again, having connected each Christmas whilst growing up back in the 70s - most now have families of their own and the children all get on very well.

Since childhood, Clive and his siblings have such fond memories of holidays at Green Point. Clive and I are absolutely over-awed by the fact that we are now the grandparents, enjoying our grandchildren at the same venue where we brought our children each year to see their grandfather, James. Where have the years gone?

Rhonda McCormack



Accommodation wanted

by a retired couple from South Carolina USA for a month during April or May 2012.

For further details, please contact church office during office hours.

(they were out here 15 years ago and stayed at a home at Terrigal).

SUNDAY SERVICE IN FEBRUARY & CONGREGATIONAL MEETING:

The 9:00am Sunday Church Service continues throughout February.

On Sunday 12th February, 2012 there will be a Congregational Meeting at approx. 10:20am to discuss a loan to Warnervale U.C.

Sunday 4th March 2012, two Sunday Services recommence, at 8am & 9:30am. Neville & Colleen Boyce will kindly open up their home for morning tea after the 8am service on the first Sunday of each month, commencing March 2012. Thank you Neville and Colleen for this lovely gesture and time of fellowship.

WELCOME to LENT EVENT 2012

*Lent Event works in partnership with UnitingWorld**

In a few weeks, **starting on Ash Wednesday 22nd February**, Lent begins and so does **Lent Event 2012**. This period of about 6 weeks leading up to Easter is a time for reflection & review, a time to rediscover or deepen our relationship with God and God's people and in particular with those living in severe poverty.

Did you know that this year more than 780 participating Congregations across Australia are being encouraged to forgo an item of their daily lifestyle and give the money saved to those less fortunate so they may live a life of dignity?

What does it mean to live a "life of dignity"?

For millions across the globe this means clean water, nutritious food, elementary education, viable employment and essential health care.

How can you and I make a difference?

The statistics overwhelm us, yet through UnitingWorld and the overseas participating Churches and their local governments we are able to help communities in remote villages in North India, Zambia, Rural Bali, Zimbabwe, Milne Bay PNG and Ambon. It is through our generosity and the combined effect of thousands of others that UnitingWorld can make an amazing difference in assisting and uplifting those in real need.

As we move into the six week period of Lent you will hear and learn more of the wonderful, effective and life changing work taking place at this very moment in these remote parts of the world and the need for our continued financial and prayerful support through Lent Event 2012.

So feel moved to join the growing movement of Australian faith communities seeking to come alongside our international partners burdened by material disadvantage. **You can do this in several ways:**

By donating a lump sum at the close of Lent using the envelope attached to the L. E. brochure; or

Forego something and donate the money saved; and

Participate in the opportunities to connect with communities that are disadvantaged; and explore options for walking more closely in the way of Jesus Christ, opening up to the transformation of the Holy Spirit through the Lenten studies;

Our Church has been participating and supporting Lent Event since 2004. Many of you understand and know the program but for those who are new to Lent Event please give Maryke a ring on **4328 2596** or speak to her at Church and she will be happy to answer any of your questions.

To help us focus in a special way we are invited to journey with those in need using the **Lent Event Journey Guide "This One Life"** which incorporates 6 Bible discussion sessions and 40 days of prayers.

You will find a copy **on the Foyer Table** with an Order List.

Alternatively, you can view and save a copy from the Internet. Go to: www.lentenvent.com, then click **Resources** and select **Journey Guide** (Bible Study & Prayer Book) -108 pages.

It is really worthwhile having a peep and to read some of the very inspiring prayers.

If you want some computer/internet assistance please talk to Maryke.

Maryke Keulemans
Co-ordinator Lent Event 2012

**UnitingWorld is an agency of the National Assembly of the Uniting Church in Australia*



The computer swallowed grandma,
Yes, honestly its true!
She pressed 'control and 'enter'
And disappeared from view.

It devoured her completely,
The thought just makes me squirm.
she must have caught a virus
Or been eaten by a worm.

I've searched through the recycle bin
And files of every kind;
I've even used the Internet,
But nothing did I find.

In desperation, I asked Jeeves
My searches to refine.
The reply from him was negative,
Not a thing was found 'online.'

So, if inside your 'Inbox,'
My Grandma you should see,
Please 'Copy, Scan' and 'Paste' her
And send her back to me.

This is a tribute to all the Grandmas and Grandpas who have been fearless and learned to use the Computer.... ..

TRAUMA TEDDIES NEEDED!

In early December my one year old grandson was taken by ambulance to the John Hunter Hospital in Newcastle. The Red Cross supplies ambulances and hospitals with trauma teddies which are knitted by volunteers.



Neither the ambulance nor the hospital had a teddy to pacify my grandson. So I have started a teddy knitting project and so far have made 8 teddies.



I would welcome anyone to join in this project with me. I have a pattern and will give the teddies to the Gosford Red Cross to distribute. They may not go to the Newcastle area but will be welcome wherever they are sent.

Also, many thanks to those of you who have given knitted items to me for Mission Without Borders (MWB). This is ongoing and I will take any items to them also.

I recently visited the MWB distribution warehouse and that was a real eye opener to me!

Thank you everyone. Nancy Axe.