

The Link



**February &
March 2020**



**Thornleigh Hillcrest
Uniting Church**

Making a choice

The film 'The Two Popes' was released last year, based on true events relating to the present Pope Francis and the previous one, Pope Benedict XVI. The film stars Anthony Hopkins as Pope Benedict and Jonathan Pryce as Pope Francis. Pope Francis is originally from Argentina and has been elected as Pope in 2013 while Pope Benedict was from Germany. It is a well-known fact that Pope Benedict was very conservative in his Papal theology, while the current Pope Francis is more people-oriented and open-minded in his Papacy.

During their conversation in the film, Pope Francis was telling a joke about two priests having a chat. He said, "the first priest goes to his spiritual director and asks, 'Father, is it permitted to smoke while praying?' And his spiritual director says, 'No. No. Of course not.' And the second priest is a Jesuit and he says to the first one, 'Brother, you were asking a wrong question. And next time you'll see your spiritual director, asks this. 'Father, is it permitted to pray while smoking?'" It's a joke but it has some point in it. Upon every situation taking place in our ordinary life, there are always more than two different perspectives that interpret and give meaning to the situation. According to certain perspective you take into the situation, it results in a very different, and even opposite, reality that often affects everything you think and act as a human being.

When we take this interpretative mechanism to the issue of making choices, it's not you who makes the choice, but a certain perspective you have in your thought that makes the choice. This also means that when it comes to making choices, it is far more important to examine your own perspectives than examining all the possible choices that you have in front of you.

In the 30th chapter of the book of Deuteronomy, there appears a story regarding to the leadership and dilemma of the leader named Joshua. Just before Moses handed over his leadership to Joshua, he sent a group of scouts to Canaan to secretly assess the situation there and Joshua was in the group. The group returned and gave Moses their reports. However, there were totally different messages involved in the reports. One was that 'we can never defeat Canaan because the residents are more powerful than us'. The other was that 'Yes, they are giants and we are just grasshoppers. But we can defeat them because God is with us.'

In the following episodes in the passage Joshua struggled a lot in decision making as a leader. Why? Was it because of his leadership issue or something? I believe Joshua was being stuck in two conflicting perspectives that made it difficult and confusing for him to make a choice on behalf of the people of Israel. Joshua struggled because he struggled in choosing which report that had been delivered by the secret scouts. He had to make a choice and that's when God intervened by saying to him continually that God would be with him and his people.

I believe the same thing happens with us whenever we are to make a choice. When we find ourselves struggling in making choices, maybe we are not hearing enough what God says to us continually. "I will be with you. I will be with you always!"

Rev Hugh Park

2020 EVENTS & MEETINGS

Thornleigh Hillcrest Uniting Church

Monthly Prayer Time. On the first Saturday of each month at 9am.
1st February, 7th March, 4th April & 2nd May – 9 am to 10 am in Rosie's Room gives an opportunity to pray for our church and people, our nation and the world.
Enquiries: Hugh Park or David Richardson.

THUC Community Playgroup

Playgroup meets during school terms. A Community Playgroup meets in our hall every Friday from 10 am till 12 noon.

Morning tea is provided.

The cost is \$3 per family/ per week or \$25 for a term.

We are needing more people to help us on an occasional basis. If you can come along for the fun please see Yoonhee Park or Gill Mein.

LENTEN BIBLE STUDIES

A three series on

Jesus' death and resurrection through the eyes of Luke.

WEDNESDAYS: **4th, 11th & 25th MARCH** at 9.30 am and

THURSDAYS **5th, 12th & 19th MARCH** at 7.30 pm

All studies will be in Rosie's Room, with each session running for approximately 1 1/2 hours and as a unit in itself. **YOU** are invited.

In April/May there will be studies on **four different faiths** – watch for details.

Enquiries – Rev Alan Lowe or David Richardson

CLUSTER GROUP: Three members will tell us about their background or a topic they are able to share. When? **Saturday 15th February** at 7.30pm in the hall.
Enquiries: David Richardson or Fred King

Elders - All Elders are encouraged to be at the next Elders' Gathering on Saturday 8th February from 8.30 am to about 12 noon in the hall.

Remember in your Prayers Joan Reeve, Barbara West & family, Anna Mathew & family, Kate Lyons & family, Isobel Vessey; Matthew, Helen and Mal Whalley & family, Bea Roche, Ann Reid, Jean Holmes, Ron's folks Ed and Gwen Newton, Marie Williams, our Missionary families – the Wakefields & the Parkers, all SRE teachers, and the Broken Hill Congregation.

In early January we were treated to a visit from a group of young men from Chang Shin High School who sang during the service.



NCEA APPRECIATION and INVITATION

The Normanhurst Christian Education Association (NCEA) wishes to thank churches and individuals who, through prayer and finance, have supported this strategic ministry at Normanhurst Boys' and Hornsby Girls' High Schools during 2019.

YOU are invited to hear more about this ministry at the NCEA Annual General Meeting on **Monday 17th February at the Normanhurst Uniting Church Cottage**, Buckingham Avenue, Normanhurst at 7 pm and concluding about 8 pm. Enquiries: 9980 8353

Vale Garth Cook



The members of THUC extend our deepest condolences to Judith and Gaye and all the family.
May God's peace and love surround you all.

The family of Garth Cook would like to warmly and sincerely thank the people of Thornleigh Hillcrest Uniting Church for their care and love over the past few weeks, following Garth's sudden passing.

We have really appreciated your help with Garth's thanksgiving service, your cards, your hugs and show of support.

We will miss him dearly, but we have the eternal hope that Garth is in heaven with his Hope and our Saviour....and many of their friends.

Thank you once again.

Regards

Garth's extended family.

Missionary Support

The Congregational Meeting on 24th November 2019 endorsed a recommendation by the Elders that congregational and individual support for:

- (i) the Wakefield family continue until 31 March 2020;
- (ii) the Parker family continue for the remainder of this financial year (to 30 June), with future support to be reviewed before the Budget for 2020/2021 is set.

If you are able to make a commitment to give financial support to both or either of these families for the periods specified, please complete the form supplied with this issue of *The Link* and place in the box in the vestibule.

The Parker Family

This new year we have hit the ground running. We have had a lovely, albeit short, break between Christmas and New Year. Although Richard has needed to put in a number of work and study hours during that time. He is very close to finishing his degree in Intercultural studies, through Tabor. He has a rather heavy load in terms of lectures, reading and assignments in the next few weeks - but by 17th February it will all be handed in. Please pray for him in this last stretch.

This year sees the first group of Jump (gap year) and Leap (internship) participants starting off with WEC. Richard has developed these programs and will be supervising both programs. The orientation is from 29th January till 7th February. Please pray that they will all settle in well and that the orientation will be a fruitful time. They will be spending time at our centre in Strathfield, and doing some regional visits from February till April.

Andrew is very ready to start year 3 next week! He has enjoyed attending a musical theatre workshop these holidays, where they put on a very fun version of Narnia. He has spent many hours at the public pool with friends, and was blessed to see *Shrek the Musical* with Kerry and Jess Elliott.

Jonathan has been back at preschool since the second week of January and is very excited to start Kindergarten on 4th Feb. He will be starting off with 2 hours a day in the first week, and that will gradually increase to a full day depending on how he copes with the new environment and teachers. We are confident that the small class (support unit) at Concord Public School will be the best start for him. He will be one of 7 children with two staff members in his class. Please pray for both boys in this time of transition.

Lindsey enjoyed doing some casual teaching for three days at a local art school this summer, and is hoping to teach some classes during the term. She is still struggling with daily pain and is hoping to get into a pain clinic soon. Her capacity to cope with work and family demands is diminishing - please pray for answers and solutions soon.

Thank you for your continued support and prayers.

Richard, Lindsey, Andrew and Jonathan

BUSH FIRES and information from Uniting Church Australia.

This link <https://www.unitingearth.org.au/bushfire-crisis-info/> provides a comprehensive response to the recent bushfires.

Bushfire Crisis Info

Contents:

- Are these bushfires caused by climate change?
- Will Australia's bushfires get worse?
- Did we know this was coming?
- The Planned Burning Debate
- Were hundreds of bushfires this season lit by arsonists?
- Is cultural burning the same as planned burning?
- Spare a thought for our wildlife
- Additional fact-check sources
- How should we respond? Includes links for donations and a section titled **Helping our young people to cope**
- What does this mean for the church?



We can all help the local wildlife by providing sources of water for them. Birds need the container to be in shade and near shrubs & trees so they have an escape route. Lizards and frogs appreciate low water containers with a rock or stick/ branch protruding so that they can get in and out without difficulty. Change the water daily or when it gets hot.

Lent is a Christian annual period that starts on *Ash Wednesday (26th February in 2020) lasting for 40 days (not including Sundays) representing the 40 days Jesus spent fasting in the wilderness. This 40 day period for Christians is a time to reflect, fast, and give penance in preparation for the resurrection of Christ Easter Sunday.

* Ash Wednesday — officially known as the Day of Ashes — is a day of repentance, when Christians confess their sins and profess their devotion to God. During a Mass/ Communion, a priest may place ashes on a worshiper's forehead in the shape of a cross.

Checking the defibrillator is a simple task.

It is located in the First Aid Cabinet in the entrance vestibule in a red case (see attached image below). The defibrillator is battery powered. The battery has a life of up to 5 years but the defibrillator won't work if the battery is flat.

To check the unit,

1. Open the First Aid Cabinet,
2. Check that the “battery check lamp” on the defibrillator is flashing. One flash every 1 or 2 seconds.
3. If it is not flashing report this to the Safe Church Contact Person, Fred King, or a member of the Finance & Property, or the Minister.

When the battery is nearing the end of its service life, the light will stop flashing and the unit will start “beeping”. Even at this stage the unit can still be used to resuscitate someone suffering from heart failure but we should act quickly to replace the battery.

Your help in checking this unit is appreciated.

Fred King

Safe Church Contact Person



Diary Dates 2020

- **Cluster Group** normally meets on the third Saturday of the month.
- **Mingles Group** normally meets on the fourth Saturday of the month.
- **Men's Woodwork Group** meets on Mondays at 9am at James' home.
- **Chatterbox** normally meets on 2nd Monday of each month at Lillian Fraser Gardens Pennant Hills
- **English Conversation Group** meets every Thursday during school terms at 9.30am– 11.30am in the Youth Room
- **Singing Group** meets every Tuesday at 8pm at the church.
- **Prayer Group** meets first Saturday of the month in Rosie's Room 9 am to 10 am
- **Quilt and Banner Group** meets Mondays afternoon.
- **Playgroup Friday** 10am to 12pm during school terms



Matthew, Callan and John

Sunday Church Services

at 9.30am

February 2020

2nd Rev Hugh Park
9th Rev Hugh Park
16th Rev Hugh Park
23rd Rev Hugh Park with
Sue Kim to preach

Holy Communion



March 2020

1st Rev Hugh Park
8th Rev Hugh Park
15th Rev Hugh Park
22nd Rev Hugh Park
29th Rev Alan Lowe

Holy Communion
Graham Castle from PHCCEA
Alternative Worship

April 2020

5th Rev Hugh Park
5th Messy Church in evening

Holy Communion

The Link Editor Jan Williamson

email link@thornleigh-hillcrestuca.org.au Contributions for the April/May 2020 issue should be submitted by **Friday 27th March** Images in *The Link* have been taken by Jan Williamson, unless credited otherwise .

Please note that **ALL contributions** (words, 420 or less, & images) must be original. If a contribution is not your original work, the content must be referenced and have copyright approval. If you wish to reproduce another's article then the author's permission for publication is required.

Important Dates for 2020

Elders Saturday 8th February
Mondays 20th April, 20th July & 26th October

Worship Committee Monday: 16th March, 15th June & 12th October

Church Council Monday 2nd March, 4th May, 3rd August, &
2nd November

Congregational Meetings Sunday 17th May & 22nd November (AGM)

Finance and Property Monday 17th February, 20th April, 20th July &
19th October

Prayer Time Saturday 1st February, 7th March, 4th April, 2nd May,
6th June, 4th July, 1st August, 5th September, 3rd October, 7th November &
5th December

Pastoral Care Committee Wednesday 12th February, 3rd June &
9th September

Working Bees: Saturday 29th February, 30th May, 29th August &
31st October

Market Day TBA

Seniors Luncheon Wednesday 18th March Second date TBA

Christmas Day Friday 25th December