



## Celebrating Years of Faithful Service at Ministry Milestones

by Lukas Harry

Pentecost Sunday was filled with celebration, colour and gratitude at Glen Waverley Uniting Church, as the Presbytery gathered for its annual Ministry Milestones service. It was a joyful afternoon recognising the faithful service of ministers and volunteers across our Church community.

This year, 13 ministers were recognised for a combined 610 years of ministry, with milestones ranging from 30 to an incredible 70 years since ordination. Alongside them, 23 volunteers from congregations across the Presbytery were celebrated for their dedication, service and commitment to the life of the Church and wider community.

Held on Pentecost Sunday, the occasion carried special meaning. Pentecost reminds us of the Holy Spirit moving through people of different languages, cultures and gifts, united in the one mission of sharing God's love. That spirit was beautifully reflected throughout the service.

Songs were sung, prayers were shared, and scripture was read in multiple languages, with a vibrant mix of cultures and ministry expressions represented throughout the packed church. It was a powerful reminder that while the Church is made up of many different people and gifts, it is the same Spirit at work through all.

The afternoon also invited reflection on the many ways God calls and equips people for ministry and service. For some, that calling may come in dramatic moments of change; for others, it grows quietly over years of faithful worship, volunteering and encouragement from those around them.

More than simply celebrating years of service, the event recognised the countless ways these individuals have helped shape communities, mentor others and keep the life of the Church moving forward.

Rev Andrew Hope - 70 years of Ordination



Their dedication stands as an encouragement for others to consider how they too might share their gifts, whether through ministry, leadership, hospitality, music, pastoral care or simple acts of kindness.

As part of the celebrations, Presbytery Chair David Higham reflected on the importance of recognising people who serve faithfully, noting that many of those honoured were first encouraged, mentored or noticed by someone else within the Church community. As the Church looks toward the future, the afternoon also carried a gentle challenge: to continue identifying, supporting and encouraging new generations of ministers and volunteers to step forward and share in God's work.

Stay tuned for next month's special edition of Newsbeat, where we'll further recognise and give thanks for the many ministers and volunteers celebrated at this year's Ministry Milestones service, and the faithful contribution they continue to make across our Presbytery.

## Keeping it in the family ...



Not quite 70 years, but our own Rev Peter Aumann (*left*) looking as proud as punch on learning that he was to receive a Presbytery award for no less than 65 years as an Ordained Minister. Congratulations Peter!

Meantime Sal Joyce, sister of our David Johnston (*seen here with Presbytery Chair David Higham*) received an award for outstanding service to St Leonards Uniting Church, Brighton Beach. Congratulations Sal!

Sal's award as Sunday School/Kindergarten teacher, administrator, typist, pianist, assistant organist, curator of our father's rose garden and everything else represents a long lineage of "Johnstons" at St Leonards.



In 1937 the 23 year old Cyrus Albert "Bill" Johnston was appointed Organist and Choir Master of St Leonards Presbyterian Church Brighton Beach.

It was here that he met and in 1941 married choirgirl Linda Smith. Linda was a contralto in the choir who just happened to sit right next to the organ console so that she could not escape the gaze of dashing young organist Bill



With the outbreak of World War 2, Bill, who disliked war was advised to join the Army Catering Corps (cooking). Certain members of our congregation will be delighted to know that his initial training as a cook was at the Collingwood Football Ground! From there he was transferred to the Port Melbourne Football Ground then to the Darley Military Camp, just outside Bacchus Marsh.

Corporal Johnston was promoted to the exalted position of cooking for the Officers, a position which entitled him to certain privileges such as getting extra leave to be with his newly wedded wife - which was not without its perils. His habit was to 'escape' through a hole in the Port Melbourne football ground fence after evening mess, spend the night with Linda then catch the 5am train from Middle Brighton in time for breakfast next morning. On this occasion both slept though the alarm and Linda awoke exclaiming "*Dawn has broken!!*" to which the sleepy Bill replied "*I know, I heard her break*". Fortunately his army mates covered his late arrival.

From Port Melbourne Bill was transferred to Darley Military Camp, outside Bacchus Marsh which turned out to be the closest he ever got to the war for 'organic' reasons. Again, cooking for the Officers he would often sing whilst cooking.

One night after the evening mess Corporal Bill was summoned to report to the Commanding Officer Major Bill King. "*Corporal Johnston, I heard you singing whilst cooking tonight*" "*Yes Sir*" said Bill. "*And you were singing the anthem 'I am the Alpha and Omega'*". Poor Bill thought he was in trouble as religion was taboo in the army, and how did Major King know that anthem? "*Well Sir, you see, I'm a church organist*" said Bill. Major King's reply really stunned him "*Do you think we could start a choir here?*" Bill's reply "*What! - amongst all these heathen??*". Said Major King "*I'm the Choir Master at Payneham Methodist Church in Adelaide. If you could play, I could train a choir*".

**And so the "Darley Military Choir" was formed.**



The choir of some 25 'heathen' as Bill thought they were remained together for all the war years, performing at numerous concerts for fundraising and other 'cheer up' events. Major King made sure that Corporal Johnston never got promoted beyond Bacchus Marsh, a blessing in disguise for the newly wedded Bill and Linda (*God does work in mysterious ways!*)



*First AIF Troops heading towards Darley Military Camp*

*Right: The Darley Military Choir at St Leonards. If Bill Johnston looks worried, it's because it's only one month before son David was born!*



Bill went on to serve St Leonards as organist & Choirmaster for some 55 years. Together with Linda they produced two of the most beautiful children on Earth (*the author just happens to know them!*) - David Matthew and Allison Anne, although from day one Allison was dubbed 'Sal' by her father and to this day many of her friends still do not know her real name - she's still Sal to everyone!

As mentioned, Sal recently received a Presbytery Award in recognition of a lifetime of service to St Leonards in numerous guises as teacher, pianist, assistant organist, admin, clerical and choir member. She carefully tended a rose garden established by Bill Johnston at the church.

David followed in his father's footsteps as assistant organist at St Leonards and numerous other churches, School Organist at Haileybury College, at the same time making a name for himself internationally in the realm of theatre organs and silent movies. Newly married and with two small children, he gave up his position as organist at the St Kilda Presbyterian Church after 11 years to be 'incognito' with his family at the Mentone Presbyterian Church. They hadn't been seated five minutes when he received a poke in the back "*What are you doing here?*" - it was the Ratcliffe family formerly of St Leonards. "*Come and meet the organist*" Said organist Athol "*David Johnston? I'm going away for a month, could you fill in for me?*" Twenty seven years later ..... and 'retired' due to health issues. In 2004 he re-joined life and went on to do amazing things. In 2009 he was awarded the Order Of Australia Medal (OAM) "*For services to music and the community*".

Sal and David continue to work tirelessly for their respective churches contributing to "whatever needs to be done".

**Corporal Bill Johnston would be proud of his family!**



*David the clown for the Essendon Football Club, Melbourne Town Hall Haileybury College 1962*

*Sal 'teaching' son Cameron at St Leonards 1978*

*Bill, first lesson for grand-daughter Kate, c1980*

*St Leonards Memorial plaque*





*Featuring Musicians from  
Melbourne Community Cellists and  
Get Noted Music Enterprises.*

**2:00pm Sunday 21st June**

**Elsternwick Caulfield South Uniting Church (St. John's)**

**567 Glen Huntly Road, Elsternwick**

Entry by donation - All proceeds to UNHCR Australia





## Bible Readings June 2026 *(the readings used in our service may differ slightly)*

|           |             |                                             |                                                       |                |                           |
|-----------|-------------|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| June 7th  | Pentecost 2 | Genesis 12:1-9,<br>Hosea 5:15-6:6           | Psalm 33:1-12<br>Psalm 50:7-15                        | Romans 4:13-25 | Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26     |
| June 14th | Pentecost 3 | Genesis 18:1-15, (21:1-7)<br>Exodus 19:2-8a | Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19<br>Psalm 100                     | Romans 5:1-8   | Matthew 9:35-10:8, (9-23) |
| June 21st | Pentecost 4 | Genesis 21:8-21,<br>Jerimiah 20: 7-13       | Psalm 86: 1-10,16-17<br>Psalm 69:7-10, (11-15), 16-18 | Romans 6:1b-11 | Mathew 10:24-39           |
| June 28th | Pentecost 5 | Genesis 22:1-14<br>Jerimiah 28:5-9          | Psalm 13<br>Psalm 89:1-4,15-18                        | Romans 6:12-23 | Matthew 10:40-42          |

*We pray for all in need especially -*

## Prayers of the People



Emily's family & friends  
Katherine's cousin David & Family  
Joan Wright on the loss of her brother  
Tina, friend of Joan Wood  
Phillip (Barbara's nephew)  
Barry  
Adrian  
Anne-Maree, Andrew and their daughter, Rachel  
Maria  
Helen Cole

Gloria, Samson & Family  
Jenny and Janine Bartholomeusz  
Anita and Kingsley  
Joyce Curnow  
Stuart - addiction struggles  
Helen & Earle Hosking  
Grace & Van Rensberg  
Joan's friends Robyn & Jemma  
Kath Tondorf  
Susan Hoskin  
Karen

Mark  
Mary  
Margaret Walker  
Joyce Carpenter  
Andrew  
Bronwyn  
Teresa  
Sybil Bond  
June and Grace Fairbank

*We give thanks for those whose prayers have been answered..*

## ~ DINE OUT GROUP ~

Our next dine out is at 6:30pm Tuesday 23rd June at Black Olive, 6 Bluff Road, Black Rock.  
Please let Joan Lum (0437 397 066) know if you are interested in attending. Please note it is licenced only not BYO.

**ALL WELCOME**



**WEEKLY OFFERINGS:** Thanks to everyone who have continued to make their weekly offering.

**Direct Debit:** Cheltenham / Mentone members note that direct payments can now be made to our Westpac account at Southland, **BSB number is 033 358, Account Number is 664 881** Payee "UCA Cheltenham Mentone Parish"

Although we are now the Charman Uniting Church, we expect banking arrangements to remain the same as before, for the rest of the year.

## SOCIAL COLLECTION DEPARTMENT:

**BayCISS** - collection of goods by Graeme & Joan Wood has recommenced. Leave goods with them at 66 Bernard St. Cheltenham, or call them on 9555 0462

**Emerge** - Financial help is the best way to help - Cheques to - GPO Box 420 Melbourne VIC 3001 or donate via the website [www.emergesupport.org.au](http://www.emergesupport.org.au)  
Emerge welcomes vouchers for supermarkets or art materials which children could use at home - materials, pencils, colouring books etc. Margaret Bode is happy to collect items if you leave them at her home, 16 Monaco Street Parkdale. **Donations in an envelope marked EMERGE may be left in the collection plate.**



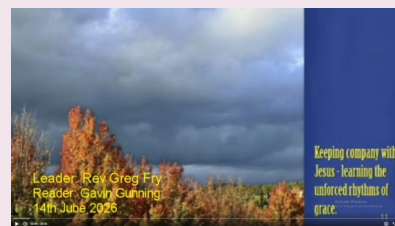
## OUR YOUTUBE CHANNEL:



Click on the YouTube logo to view a selection of **over 200** sermons and service preludes

*This week's video –  
"Keeping Company with Jesus"  
Rev Greg Fry 14th June 2026*

*Click on image or [HERE](#) to view*



**Church on the Internet - Sunday 10am (virtual doors open 9:45 am)**



If you don't have Zoom on your computer/laptop/iPad/Smartphone, click on <https://zoom.us/support/download>

Then click on this link below or the "Sunday Church" image to join our Service

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82004410836?pwd=cU9RWlhVMm8wOUw0TStLV1EvNFdYdz09>

**Meeting ID: 820 0441 0836 Passcode: 665 784**

You can also join us on your phone by dialling **03 7018 2005** and entering the above meeting details.

**Sunday Church  
on Zoom**



*We all know the feeling ...*



**When I get a  
headache, I take 2  
aspirin and keep  
away from children  
just like it says on  
the bottle!**

**The rule "I  
before E  
except after  
C..."**

**Has been  
disproved by  
science.**

