



“Let Us Build A House”

From House Churches to Cathedrals and Back Again: A Historical Overview

Church history is fascinating. It shows the many changes that happened to the church over the centuries as they were first faithful to God, then deviated drastically from his word, and finally began to come back to him. The history of the church begins with the book of Acts and shows how God’s people began serving Jesus after his resurrection. The early Christians were filled with the Holy Spirit, and they transformed cities and nations by God’s power. This beginning was glorious.



The First House Churches

The early church met in homes. In houses they broke bread together (Acts 2:46), had participatory meetings (1 Cor. 14:26), grew in their spiritual gifts, and shared life together. The apostles never built church buildings.

They never instructed anyone to build church buildings. Church buildings were not constructed until approximately 2 centuries after the apostles died. The church met in houses throughout the New Testament (see Rom. 16:5, 1 Cor. 16:19, Col. 4:15, Philemon 2).



Houses in the style of the First Century

The Origin of Church Buildings



As time went on, a new generation of Christians arose who were not as devoted to Jesus as the first apostles. They began leaving the word of God and introduced man-made religious practices into church.

Throughout the 2nd century and 3rd centuries, this apostasy continued. By the 4th century, the Roman Emperor Constantine supposedly converted to Christianity. He allowed pagan rituals to dominate the church. These practices began to overshadow the commands of the New Testament.

As the church apostatised, they abandoned house churches, and they began building religious buildings which were found nowhere in the New Testament. At first church buildings were relatively simple, with little adornment.

The Rise of Architecturally-Complex Cathedrals

As the centuries went on, bigger and bigger church buildings were built. Pagan temples were even converted into church buildings. People thought the presence of God dwelled in these buildings. Peasants travelled long distances to be awed by the powerful architecture of these religious structures.

However, God said, “The Most High God does not dwell in temples made with hands” (Acts 7:48). Throughout the Middle Ages, the Roman Catholic Church built bigger and bigger cathedrals, spending huge amounts of money.

At the same time, the Catholic Church persecuted, tortured, and murdered true Christians. They banned and destroyed Bibles. These massive cathedrals were the pinnacle of church architecture, reflecting the pinnacle of apostate Christendom.



The First Protestant Church Buildings – Getting back to Simplicity

Martin Luther threw off the yoke of Roman Catholicism and founded the Lutheran church. After Luther, John Calvin formed the Presbyterian Church. The Church of England arose. Later, John Wesley and the Methodists continued the Reformation. These Reformation movements forsook some traditions of men and accepted more of the word of God. However, the truth recovery in each of these groups was limited. This limitation of truth recovery among these first Protestant groups was represented by the way they built their church buildings.

They still built church buildings, but they were less ornate than Roman Catholic cathedrals. However, their buildings were still very ‘religious’. This is an architectural representation of the fact that these early Protestant churches recovered some truth, but they didn’t go all the way.



Modern Church Buildings Become Simpler

Later, other Protestant groups arose. Baptists, Evangelicals, Pentecostals, and Charismatics eliminated further human traditions from Christian practice and accepted more of the word of God.

Unlike their early Protestant predecessors, these new groups recognized truths like the need to be born again and the need to be baptized as a believer. Some of these groups recovered the baptism in the Holy Spirit and spiritual gifts. Their religious buildings became simpler and simpler. The relative simplicity of their church architecture reflected a gradual return to the simple faith of the New Testament.

Recovering the House Church

The restoration of the church is still continuing today. Now, some believers have abandoned church buildings completely, recognizing that these are not based on the New Testament. They are again meeting for church in homes like the first Christians.

Church history will continue in this direction. It will culminate when the glorious bride of Christ is manifested upon the earth. The bride of Christ will only reach maturity and preparation for the wedding supper by adhering to the apostolic teachings of the New Testament. This includes rejecting church buildings and only meeting for church in homes.



Read more at ->

BETHEL
CORNERSTONE
revealing Jesus Christ

Big or small, they’re all places of worship..

“The Living Water Wayside Chapel” in Toronto can accommodate six people and is Canada’s smallest chapel



Our Social Justice Group have brought a number of issues to our attention.
See the document attached to this week's email or click [HERE](#) for all the details.

ethical
investing with purpose

Whistleblower protection and ethical standards following KPMG scandal
August 2026

Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!"
Mark 10:23

In short, when segments of the wealthy elite exempt themselves from social norms and disengage from broader society, they contribute to the fragmentation of society, sharpening the divide between the privileged few and the rest. Civic trust and social cohesion rely on shared values, norms, and a sense of mutual responsibility, so when elites remove themselves from the spaces where these rules apply, trust in institutions is eroded, and a sense of unfairness spreads.
Clive and Myra Hamilton, *The Privileged Few*, (2024)

ethical
investing with purpose

What You Can Do
Write polite and respectful letters to:
The Hon Michelle Rowland MP
Attorney-General
PO Box 6022
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

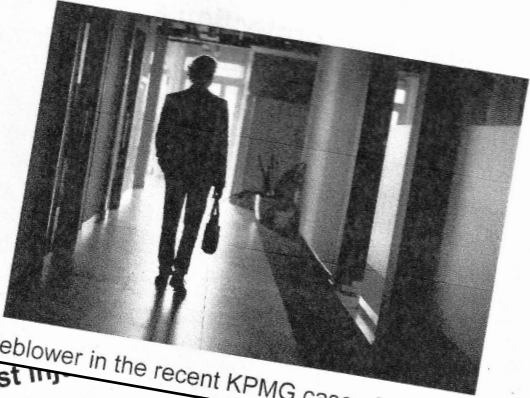
Salutation: Dear Attorney General

Points to make in your letter:

- Express deep concern at the treatment of the whistleblower in the recent KPMG case of highly

ethical
investing with purpose

Uniting Church in Australia
SYNOD OF VICTORIA AND TASMANIA



Asking the Australian Government to advocate against the
inflicted on Palestinians
August 2026

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.
Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.
Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.
Matthew 5:7-9

The Synod Justice Mission Cluster has nearly 30 years of experience of advocating for the rights of Palestinians by successive Israeli Governments and while he has been in detention.

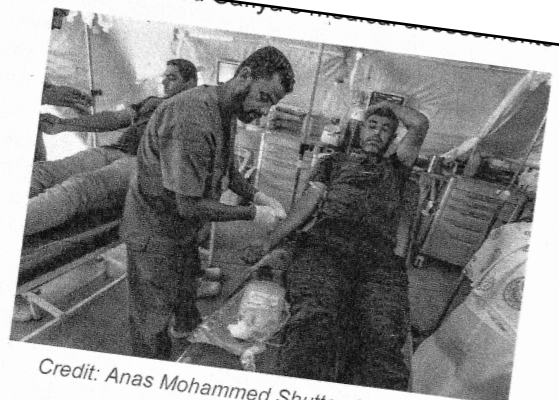
The Synod Justice Mission Cluster has nearly 30 years of experience of advocating for the rights of Palestinians by successive Israeli Governments and while he has been in detention.

What You Can Do
Write polite and respectful letters to:
Senator The Hon. Penny Wong
Minister for Foreign Affairs
PO Box 6100
Senate
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Salutation: Dear Minister

Points to make in your letter:

- Thank the Australian Government for establishing the International Peace Fund for



Credit: Anas Mohammed Shutterstock.com

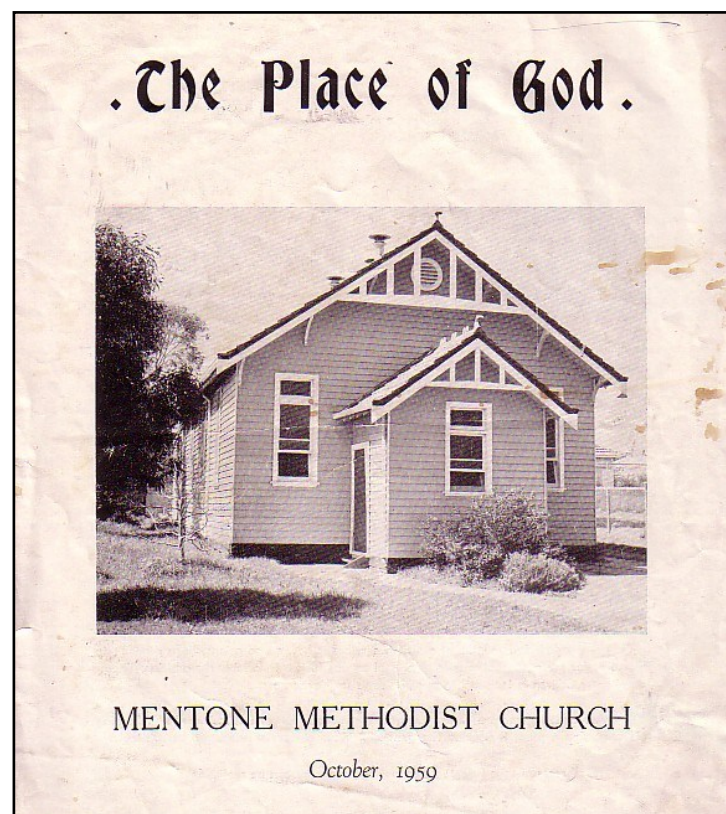


Mentone Uniting Church 125th Anniversary - 2008 (collage Jo-ann Stenton)



East Cheltenham (Herald St) Uniting Church
(formerly Congregational)

Our own "Trinity"



Cheltenham, Mentone &
Black Rock congregations
now

Charman Uniting Church

313 Charman Road,
Cheltenham

You are cordially
invited to attend the

Grand Opening

of our newly Renovated Church buildings
Sunday, 20th September, 2026 at 2pm



The Cheltenham, Mentone and Black Rock congregations joyfully announce the Grand Opening of the newly renovated **Charman Uniting Church** buildings at 313 Charman Road, Cheltenham. We invite all members and friends of our Presbytery community to join us on **Sunday, 20 September 2026 at 2pm** as we celebrate this new chapter in our shared ministry and mission. It will be a wonderful opportunity to give thanks, reconnect, and look forward to the life that will grow in this renewed space.

Note: No 10am service on this day



Furrowed brows as the Mentone Presbyterian Church Board of Management ponders as to how to 'Advance their Heritage'
... and we're still wondering how!





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

September 6th	Pentecost 15	Exodus 12:1-14	Psalm 149	Romans 13:8-14
September 13th	Pentecost 16	Exodus 14:19-31	Psalm 114 or Exodus 15:1b-11, 20-21	Romans 14:1-12
September 20th	Pentecost 17	Exodus 16:2-15	Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45	Philippians 1:21-30
		John 3:10-4:11	Psalm 145:1-8	
September 27th	Pentecost 18	Exodus 17:1-7	Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16	Philippians 2:1-13

Prayers of the People



Robyn	Jenny and Janine Bartholomeusz	Gloria, Samson & Family
Pat	Anita and Kingsley	Mark
Adie & Ally	Joyce Curnow	Margaret Walker
Katherine's cousin David & Family	Stuart - addiction struggles	Joyce Carpenter
Tina, friend of Joan Wood	Helen & Earle Hosking	Andrew
Phillip (Barbara's nephew)	Grace & Van Rensberg	Bronwyn
Barry	Joan's friends Robyn & Jemma	Teresa
Adrian	Kath Tondorf	June and Grace Fairbank
Anne-Maree, Andrew and their daughter, Rachel	Susan Hoskin	<i>We give thanks for those whose prayers have been answered..</i>
Maria	Karen	
	Helen Cole	

BayCISS Collection Contributions - change of delivery arrangements

Many thanks to those who continue to support BayCISS with donations. Goods especially non perishable food should be brought to the church where they will be distributed along with Family Life contributions

~ DINE OUT GROUP ~

Our next dine out will be on 15th Sept at 6:30pm at Cheltenham RSL.
Please let Joan LUM (0437 397 066) know if you are interested in coming.

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"

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
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:

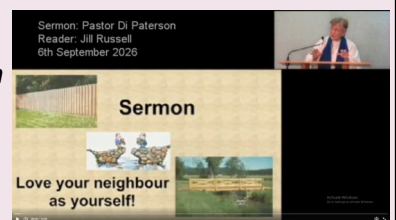


Click on the YouTube logo to view a selection of **over 200** sermons and service preludes

This week's video -

"Love Your Neighbour As Yourself" Pastor Do Paterson 6th September 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

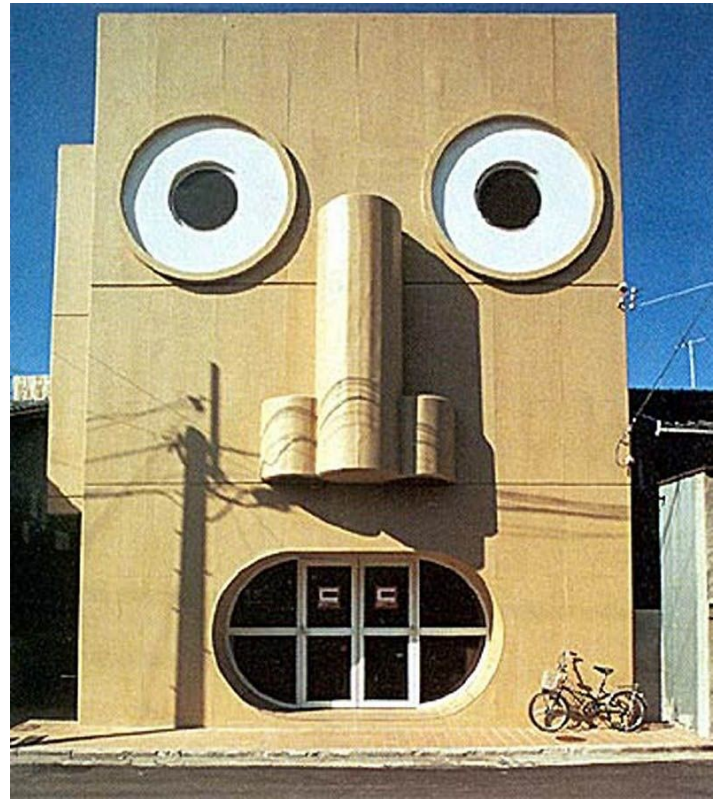
You can also join us on your phone by dialling **03 7018 2005** and entering the above meeting details.

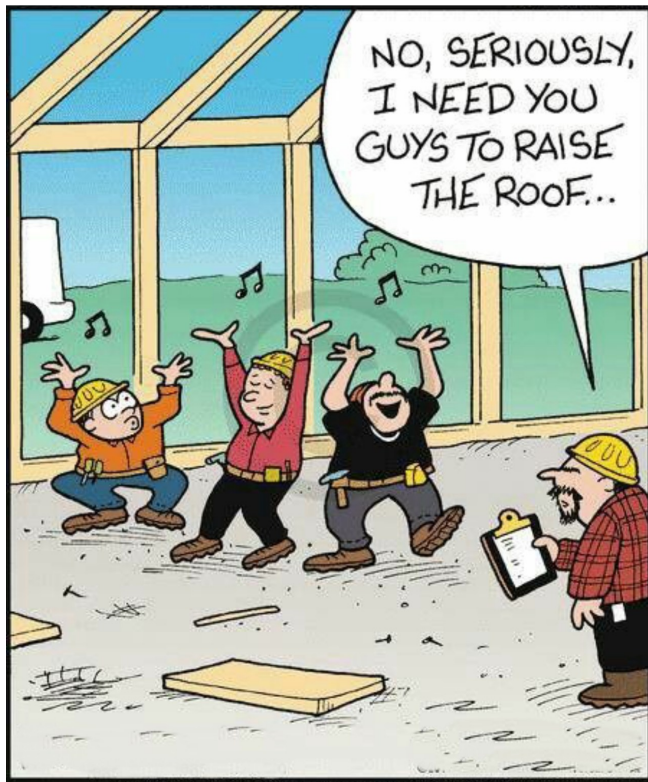
Sunday Church
on Zoom



"Let Us Build A House"

When the glue isn't dry yet





When people ask how my day is going
My day:



"Start small, and
then just expand"