

MOUNTAINSIDE RUMBLINGS

Mountainside
Lutheran Church

FEBRUARY/MARCH '17
Volume 16, Issue 1

AFTER EIGHT WEEKS OF LONG SERVICE LEAVE and a wonderful adventure it's good to finally be home and sleeping in our own beds! It was a long time to live out of a suit case, but our time away was such a great family experience. From the rugged beauty of the west coast of the South Island to the majestic Fiordlands, it was an experience we shall never forget. As a family we are really grateful we had the opportunity for this holiday, and thankful for God's protection on the roads. After over four years in New Zealand it was also good to get back to Australia for a visit and to spend some precious time with our family and friends.



Family Christmas Dinner, Culcairn, NSW

I want to say a big thank you to all the wonderful people who assisted with preaching in my absence, Ray, Peter, Freddie, Bishop Mark and Pastor John.

Thank you also to those who continue to serve in our congregation's ministry. I heard the children's presentation went off really well, so thank you Marjon for organising that, and for all the children who participated in making the story of Jesus' birth come alive.

It's a great blessing and really comforting to know that you can go away and leave things in the capable hands of others, and they still get done and done well! I've said it before, but I want to encourage you again, we are so blessed with the people who make up the faith



community we call Mountainside. There are so many who serve and do stuff, often behind the scenes that many of us may not even be aware of.

Before I forget, thank you also to Stanley and Kathryn who picked us up from the airport on the Sunday evening we flew in. The KFC was much appreciated!

Of course during a holiday there are always things you don't get to do. The wish list can sometimes be a bit too ambitious! I did however manage to get some reading done in the rare quieter moments of our time away, and the book I read is worth bringing to your attention.

"STEALING FROM A CHILD: THE INJUSTICE OF MARRIAGE EQUALITY", is authored by a Queensland Doctor, David van Gend. The subject of this book is particularly relevant to the Australian context because on the 11th of February Australians will be invited to cast their vote in a plebiscite which could change marriage laws in that country and allow for same-sex marriage. Sadly we already have this "right" enshrined in New Zealand law. As an aside, it was also interesting and rather tragic to note that the former President of the United States of America, Barack Obama, lists this "right" to same-sex marriage as one of his great legislative "achievements" during his time in office.

What's interesting about van Gend's book is that he argues against marriage equality not on biblical or theological grounds, but rather he argues on sociological grounds. (From a Christian perspective the matter is already settled.)

**STEALING
FROM A CHILD**

**THE INJUSTICE OF
'MARRIAGE EQUALITY'**

David van Gend

... continued page 2 ...

... continued from page 1 ...

Here's just a small taste of what he says.

"If the law says that two men can 'marry', that is an idea with consequences. For if we redefine marriage, we redefine parenting and family. It is no small matter to revoke the definition of "family" in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights—"the natural and fundamental group unit of society"—and replace it with a genderless fiction."

Lesbian social historian E.J. Graff exults that "same-sex marriage is a breathtakingly subversive idea: but we, the public, are assured that nothing will change."

This book takes a hard look at the changes that will come with this breathtakingly subversive idea: how it redefines marriage and family for all of us; how it breaks a child's bonds of kinship and identity; how it usurps parental authority over their child's education; how it eats away at core liberties of speech, conscience and religion; how it serves that century-long ideological quest to deconstruct the natural family and subjugate it to the authority of the state (p.9)."

Van Gend then goes on to introduce his opening chapter with a quote from Katy Faust, a child from a same-sex household.

"Redefining marriage redefines parenthood. It moves us well beyond our "live and let live" philosophy into the land where our society promotes a family structure where children will always suffer loss...Have we really arrived at a time when we are considering institutionalizing the stripping of a child's natural right to a mother and father in order to validate the emotions of adults (p.25)?"

Please pray that Australians will say "No!" on February the 14th.



ON A HAPPIER AND BRIGHTER NOTE, we thank God for blessing Botany Lutheran Church with a pastor. Doctor William Chang has accepted a call to serve the Botany Chinese congregation as their pastor. William has been part of the Singaporean Lutheran Church, and in the last five years he has been

based in Geneva, Switzerland, where he served as the Lutheran World Federation's (LWF) Secretary for Asia, the Middle East, Palestine, and the Pacific. Currently Bishop Mark, and our National Administrator, Robert Hagen, are in the process of organising the appropriate visas that will allow William to live and work in New Zealand. It is hoped that he will begin his work sometime in late February or early March. In the meantime the

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

All members of Mountainside are invited to attend our AGM on

Sunday 26th February 2017

after the worship service.

This is an excellent opportunity to review the year just gone, and to find out what's being planned for 2017.

leadership of Mountainside are in conversation with Botany regarding the use of our facility.

David Pang and our "brothers and sisters" at Botany are excited about what the future holds for them. As David recently told me, "We look forward to refreshing ourselves and we feel that Mountainside will give us a new foundation. We are thankful for Mountainside". Let's rejoice with the people of Botany, and continue to support them as they begin to look forward to the arrival of William and a new beginning. God is good!

Finally, as we are now well into the new church year, it's a good time to give you a heads up about our Lenten series for 2017.

BEGINNING WITH ASH WEDNESDAY on March the first, our mid-week Lenten journey will see us explore the Seven Deadly Sins. William Willimon says in his book, SINNING LIKE A CHRISTIAN "... the thing that first impresses us about the Seven [Deadly Sins] is how utterly ordinary and unspectacular they are. These are the mundane, all too-human foibles of the human race in general, not of the utterly depraved". What strikes us about them, as he says, is that they "don't seem that deadly" (p.2, 5). But are they? Come along on March the first and find out for yourselves. You might be surprised by what you learn!



The Seven Deadly Sins And The Four Last Things
Hieronymus Bosch (1485)

... continued page 3 ...

... continued from page 2 ...

JUST TO ADD A FEW CONCLUDING FOOTNOTES: congratulations to Tabitha Meharg and Kelsey Fagan. They announced their engagement over the holidays. Paul and Visse Hopley have also become Grandparents. Their son, Sam, and his wife, Ngaire, recently welcomed into their lives a baby girl, Sophia, born prematurely, entering the world at only 25 weeks into her development. Congratulations to you all. Please keep this family in your prayers, and in particular Sophia that she may grow and develop into a healthy young girl. On a sad note we share in the grief of Peter Golconda and his family. Peter's mother recently died, and he and Sumita travelled to India to be with family members and to attend the funeral. In the Gospel according to Saint John, Jesus comforts us with these words, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die" (John 11:25).

Blessings to you all for the busy year ahead. Know that our loving God goes with us in Christ as we together face the challenges and the opportunities of 2017. May we all continue to serve him with joy and live faithfully in his abiding grace.

Pastor Joe

Munchies for Mission & Ministry (MM & M)



Each month on the first Sunday of the month, the Fellowship team organises delicious slices/ baked goods for a gold coin donation. The donation goes towards a mission or ministry area within the church or wider community. The Fellowship team has decided that the focus for 2017 will be to raise funds to support the Mt Wellington Foodbank. The first Sunday for this year's MM & M will be Sunday, 5th March. So, save up your gold coins and come along to enjoy some tasty treats and support the Foodbank!!

Community Service 2017— Mt Wellington Foodbank



Mountainside Lutheran Parish is a founding member of the Mt Wellington Foodbank. The parish assists with the operation of the Foodbank and is on the roster to do parcel packing and deliveries 3-4 times annually.

Mountainside's first rostered month comes up in March. Please check the notice board in February to sign up for a day or a day per week that you are able to help with this important community service. Don't worry if you don't have any experience, training is easy and readily available. You can help with packing on either a Tuesday or a Friday or you can organise a partner and do deliveries. All help is needed and very much appreciated. Roxanne Bakke and Sharon Golconda are co-coordinators for 2017, so please have a chat with either one to discuss your availability and desire to assist.

Food donations are also very much needed at this time of year. Please consider picking up an extra item or two for the Foodbank over the coming weeks to help us re-stock and meet this high demand period. Things needed are cereals, school lunch items, tins of meat, fruit, beans, and spaghetti/pasta items. Also, if you have citrus trees or excess produce from your gardens, these are also welcome! If such produce items have about 7 days of shelf life, they can be distributed before they get too old.



*Congratulations to these wonderful couples who recently announced their engagement:
Simon Lieschke and Lydia Evequoz on 6th December 2016.
Tabitha Meharg and Kelsey Fagan on Christmas Eve.
Best wishes to both couples!*



Learn about Luther — through words and music

Saturday 25th March, 7.30 pm
at Mountainside Church

Come along and hear about the Significance of the Reformation
and hear the actual Music!!

2 wonderful, entertaining presenters.

Dr Norman Franke - Convenor of the German Programme
at the University of Waikato School of Arts

[Pastor Joe heard Dr Franke speak at a recent church workers conference
and was thoroughly impressed with what he presented.]

Organist Nicholas Forbes – an enthusiastic speaker and talented organist
who will introduce us to some of the music of the time.

Café style setting with supper.

Invite your friends to this Free Event!



REFORMATION
500



Reformation 500 – POSTERS:

Check out these specially prepared posters.

Changing display throughout the year – at Mountainside Church.

Watch out for further Events throughout the year at Mountainside.

Reformation 500—2017: Special Commemoration Day

Save the date! **Sunday 4 June 2017** in Wellington—for the LCNZ
Reformation 500 Commemoration day (Queens Birthday weekend, during
Convention of Synod).

This is a special one-off day for the LCNZ. Advance notice is being given, so
that those who would like to be a part of this day can start making plans.
There will be a Thanksgiving service, a combined Lutheran/Roman Catholic
service at the Roman Catholic cathedral, and a Commemoration dinner. Go
for the weekend and enjoy Wellington! Travel subsidy will also be available.

Mountainside will also have a calendar of events in 2017.

The Mountainside Reformation 500 team

LCA/NZ ORDINATION CONSULTATIONS



For all of its history, our church has ordained men to the office of the public ministry. At our General Synod in 2015, a proposal to ordain both women and men was defeated. According to the constitution such a decision would need a two-thirds majority of those registered at Convention.

The Synod, however, did not let the matter rest there. In a subsequent resolution your delegates voted, by a large majority, that the theologians of the church be requested to develop a draft doctrinal statement that presents a theological basis for the ordination of both women and men, and why this need not be church divisive.

The Commission on Theology and Inter-Church Relations (CTICR) has prepared a preliminary draft of the statement, which is now ready to be discussed by church members as we prepare for our 2018 Convention of Synod.

You are invited, along with all members of the LCA and the LCNZ, to join that discussion in person. Members of the CTICR and Bishops will be travelling to a number of centres across Australia and New Zealand for these consultation meetings. Consultations will take place across the LCA—Australia and New Zealand during the period March to October 2017.

The locations for the NZ consultation rounds are outlined below and I would encourage anyone interested in this matter and especially those who are Synod delegates, to come along to listen and contribute. This is an important conversation for our church, as we continue to grow in serving our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

The dates and locations for these consultations in NZ are:

Saturday 4th March at St Pauls Lutheran Church, Wellington

Saturday 11th March at St Lukes Lutheran Church, Palmerston North

Saturday, 18th March at Mountainside Lutheran Church, Auckland

All sessions are from **11.30 am to 2.30 pm** and include a light lunch. A koha will be received to assist with catering costs.

To register your attendance please email the LCNZ Office on admin@lutheran.org.nz by **Friday 24th February**. Please also indicate if you have any special dietary requirements (eg. dairy or gluten free).

You can see further information about the consultations, read the material, and if you want to, contribute electronically on the Ordination We're Listening (OWL) website—www.owl.lca.org.au.

Please pray for those doing this work, the consultations, and the church as we continue what has proven to be a very long and difficult conversation for us.

Bishop Mark Whitfield



ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

1st March, 7.30 pm

'The Seven Deadly Sins'

Mid-week Lenten devotions will begin

Wednesday, 8th March, 7.30 pm

@ Mountainside

All welcome!

*Congratulations on your
60th Wedding Anniversary*

*Maurice & Linda Heidrich who celebrated
60 years of marriage on 19th January.
Best wishes to you both!*



'Happy Birthday' and Best Wishes to the following people celebrating birthdays in February:

Emily Kummerow (3rd) Terri McClintock (3rd)
 Ruth, Andrea & Grace Sutton (3rd)
 Geeta Sharma (5th) Lalitha Doss (5th)
 Mary Jyothsna (6th) Nolla Lippelt (18th)
 Elizabeth Duncan (22nd) Funaki Ongoongo (22nd)
 Malcolm Wisker (23rd)

Wedding Anniversary Congratulations to:

Jorgen and Martha Holgersen 4 years on the 1st
 Floyd and Marjon Gerson 12 years on the 9th
 Peter and Jacque Morris 34 years on the 12th
 Malcolm and Barbara Court 50 years on the 18th
 Lucien and Annette Jorna 23 years on the 19th
 David & Tanya Sutton 23 years on the 19th
 Hayden & Rhiannon Morris 2 years on 23rd

'Happy Birthday' and Best Wishes to the following people celebrating birthdays in March:

Jade Hewett (1st) Marianne Frederiksen (3rd)
 Annette Jorna (5th) Nina Sawyer (5th)
 Betty Muirhead (6th) Marianne Kraack (7th)
 Kristen Lindstrom (9th) Eleanor Fraser (9th)
 Samuel Doss (13th) Joel Golconda (16th)
 Sarah Kirtlan (17th) Kristina Brock (18th)
 Stephen Lindstrom (20th) Asher Talapati (20th)
 Merry Tsao (26th) Benjamin Gerson (26th)
 Jens Meder (29th) Isobel Alexander (29th)
 Neil Lindstrom (30th)

Wedding Anniversary Congratulations to:

Ray and Jan Meharg 40 years on the 12th
 Brett & Marcia Thomson 7 years on the 31st

Deadline for articles for the April/May issue of *'Mountainside Rumbings'* is **TUESDAY 28th MARCH 2017.**

Don't forget that you have 3 options for receiving this newsletter—a printed copy available in the foyer of Mountainside Lutheran Church, we can post you a copy if you let us know your address, or we can email a copy in PDF format which you can enjoy in full colour!! Just contact Kathy and she will organise it for you. And please remember to let us know if your contact details change so we can alter our records accordingly. Thanks very much.

PRAYER POINTS

In your prayers this month, please pray for the following:



We pray ...

- ✚ With thanks for all the support and encouragement given to lay readers and guest preachers during Pastor Joe's absence. Thank you Lord for safely returning the Kummerow family to Auckland refreshed after their holidays.
- ✚ For the Small Group leaders and all our ministry volunteers as they prepare for another year of service.
- ✚ For our Parish AGM which will be held on 26th February. We give thanks for all who have faithfully served on Parish Council and other committees over the last year.
- ✚ For the churches & volunteers involved with the Mt Wellington Foodbank and all who work with those in need.
- ✚ For the Golconda family as they mourn the recent passing of Peter's mother in India. Give them strength and reassure them of your love and saving grace.
- ✚ For Dr William Chang as he prepares to come to Auckland and shepherd the members of Botany Lutheran Church.
- ✚ For the members of Whakatane Lutheran congregation as they close their church on 5th February.
- ✚ For all who are sick or suffering at this time—may God give them strength and his healing comfort.



Mountainside Lutheran Church
 1 Harris Road (P O Box 85-014 Harris Rd),
 Mt Wellington 1545
 Office Ph: (09) 579 4490
 Office Fax: (09) 571 2468
 Email: lcnz.auckland@clear.net.nz
 Website: www.mountainside.co.nz
 LCNZ Website: www.lutheran.org.nz

Pastor: Joe Kummerow Manse ph (09) 272 4382
 email: joe.kummerow@clear.net.nz
Family & Community Worker: Vacant
Admin Assistant: Kathy Kirtlan ph/fax: 09 292 4640
 email: kjkl.kirtlan@gmail.com