

# The Flow

BARWON HEADS  
& OCEAN GROVE



26 AUG 2024



5PM SERVICE & DINNER  
AT BARWON HEADS UC

## What is true religion?

After five weeks of the Bread of Life discourse, many of us are feeling like it's 'Groundhog Day'! We have heard in John's gospel the news that Jesus is the true bread of heaven and food for eternal life. This is a teaching that scandalises some listeners, but invites others into a ministry where body and spirit are inseparable. In Annie's last sermon of the series we learned that we don't just have bodies, we *are* bodies! And these bodies require the right food!

This week we return to Mark's gospel, where we Jesus continues his Galilean ministry, teaching, healing and *doing* the mission of God.

We hear his response to those hard-hearted legalists who criticise the disciples for not washing their hands before they eat. We see the Syro-Phoenician woman beg for scraps from the master's table. We are stung by Jesus' rebuke to Peter and the other disciples as they frustrate their rabbi and bicker among themselves.

Throughout all these scenes, Christ emerges as the living bread of life offering a vision of true religion.

Faith is not about being the best at following human rules or acting more piously than other believers. It is not about separating oneself but rather participating with others in the missional life of God.

While Peter tries to flatter Jesus, while the disciples argue about which one is the greatest, and while the Pharisees mock the faith of those who follow him, Jesus does something else. He draws the smallest to him: a little girl, an outcast woman, a deaf man, and a small child.

The greatest is the least in the kingdom of God and it turns out that true religion looks like one poor beggar offering crumbs to another. This is what it means to believe and be fed by God.

*Kyle & Annie x*

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## A film about pilgrimage - 'The Way, My Way'

If you are interested in pilgrimage and haven't yet seen this film, 'The Way, My Way' is a light-hearted Australian take on the Camino de Santiago.

We saw it recently at the Pivotonian Cinema in Geelong and agree that it is among the best of the many Camino films recently produced. The movie is adapted from an autobiographical book by Australian journalist and film-maker, Bill Bennett, who made the pilgrimage several years ago.

The Camino de Santiago is an 800km medieval pilgrimage pathway to the Cathedral of Saint James in the Spanish city of Santiago de Compostela. Bennett's path followed the French Way, the most popular route of the Camino.

Annie and I are hoping to make the shorter 300km Camino Primitivo next year, if our funds and our feet hold up! While we are not yet in serious training, 'The Way, My Way' has provided some much needed inspiration as we plan for the journey ahead.



### Girardian Lectionary

We are fortunate to have a number of theologians, scholars and deep thinkers in our congregations. For those who want a serious dive into the weekly scripture, we can highly recommend Paul Nuechterlein's 'Girardian Reflections on the Lectionary'. Nuechterlein provides interesting source readings and commentaries drawing on the insights of French philosopher Rene Girard (and others). These are available for each week of the lectionary cycle and will interest anyone looking for a modern, anthropological reading of the Bible: <https://girardianlectionary.net>



### Resilience - Jo Reitze

Jo Reitze is a contemporary artist who worships with the Ocean Grove congregation. The opening of her exhibition "Resilience" is scheduled for **Saturday, September 7th** at the Hat Rock Contemporary Gallery, 2330 Portarlington Road.

The exhibition runs from 4-22 September and features gouache, oil and pen paintings of the windswept trees along Ocean Grove's beach and created during the recent lockdown. Come and support Jo's opening night!

[https://www.joreitzeartist.com.au/download/resilience\\_invite\\_2024.pdf](https://www.joreitzeartist.com.au/download/resilience_invite_2024.pdf)

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# What's Been Happening



## Service of Thanksgiving

Last month we gave thanks for the ministry of Rev. Bob Thomas at the Barwon Heads Evening Service. Ros and Chris Crook from Barwon Heads sang some songs chosen by Bob for his funeral, while Ian Cover read some of Bob's reflections.

It was pleasing to give thanks for Bob with members of both congregations at the service.



## Uniting Church Adult Fellowship

It was a privilege to be able to attend this month's UCAF meeting and meet John and Jenny Preston. The Prestons spoke about their missional work with Boroondara Community Outreach and John shared a presentation with the group. As a thank you, UCAF presented the Prestons with a donation to help fund this vital ministry.



## Other things we want to share:

- We continue to be grateful to the musicians who provide our music each week: Barry, Kel, Geoff & Lynne, Jeannie and the Band. You do a wonderful job leading us in song!
- We are also appreciative of the volunteers who bring and serve morning tea, welcome visitors, lead us in prayer, and fill in at last minute on the sound desk (that's you Diane J.)! Worship is so much better because of your service.
- We are pleased to report that a wedding has been booked at each of our churches in the coming months! Joyful news!



**Peter Mac**  
Peter MacCallum Cancer Foundation

## Peter Mac Walk

From **17-26 October**, people across Australia will participate in a Unite to Fight Cancer walk to raise funds to assist research at Peter Mac.

This is a disease that has impacted many of our members in recent years and we note that both congregations have members currently receiving treatment.



## The A&K Team

In support of these members, Annie & Kyle will be walking 100km in 10 days to raise funds to fight cancer. Their walk will be made as a pilgrimage, with prayers offered along the way. If you would like someone to be included in our prayers, let us know. If you feel moved to sponsor our walk, you can find our team using the QR code above. We are grateful for all of your encouragement!



## Reviving a tradition: the apostolic ‘Love Feast’

Our most recent 5PM evening service at Barwon Heads featured the revival of a lost tradition - the ‘agape meal’ or ‘love feast’.

Christian love feasts have their origin in the early church and are mentioned in Paul’s letters to the Corinthians and in James’ epistle to Jude. They included scripture, testimony, singing and a communal meal. The sharing of bread and water was an important part of the liturgy and distinct from the celebration of the Eucharist. Love feasts were a central part of Christian worship until around 700 AD when they ceased.

They were revived by the Moravian Reformers who introduced them to John Wesley in the 1740s. Wesley reintroduced the tradition to the Methodists who continued to participate in love feasts until the first decade of the 20th century. The meals were briefly revived again in the USA during the recent pandemic. The Barwon Heads congregation enjoyed their recent modern revival of the tradition and are looking forward to a shared ‘agape meal’ again soon. All are welcome with an open invitation extended to friends and family of members from both congregations: **5PM on the 4th Sunday.**



August ‘Love Feast’ at Barwon Heads

*Grace and Peace!*

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