



Why Pilgrimage?

My first 'experiment' with pilgrimage was in 2013 at the suggestion of my Spiritual Director. This was the year that Andrew and I divorced after twenty-five years of marriage. The idea was that I had undertaken an enormous amount of emotional work, and that it would be a good idea to do something substantial that engaged my body. St

Joseph's Catholic Church in Subiaco hosted the pilgrimage from their church in Subiaco, providing accommodation, meals and transport for the week-long pilgrimage of around 190km over seven days. I approached the pilgrimage with no real expectations, but an openness to the gifts of the experience. On the first day a stranger shared her lunch with me, and a bunch of strangers welcomed me to their table. The fellow pilgrims were very generous, sharing practical things such as blister treatments, snacks and sunscreen, as well as narratives of our lives. I discovered a long-forgotten agility in navigating rocks along a river and I was welcomed wholeheartedly into this very generous welcoming community. In the course of the week my sense of self became more grounded and assured. On arrival at New Norcia, the abbey bell rang for the pilgrims. I reflected that the previous time a church bell had rung for me was on the occasion of my marriage to Andrew. Here the bell was ringing once more, herald of the new chapter ahead of me!

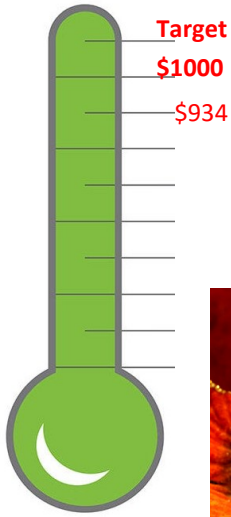


With an invitation to write a proposal for next year's Oceania Talanoa Conference, I hoped my 2025 pilgrimage would make space for me to reflect on my study leave reading. Pilgrims walked five days and 90km from Wandiligong to Beechworth, so there was plenty of time and space for reflection. The Conference invitation is to speak to the theme 'Negotiation' from an LGBTQ+ perspective. My reading was around the area of trauma, truth and healing.

Ephphatha has emerged as a strong handle upon which to base my work, meaning 'be opened' (Mark 7:34). Besides seeking inspiration for my writing, I was aware of the sort of community that was being formed, with shared meals, games, stories, recipes, blessings and much more. My encounter with a white-faced heron was perhaps the most profound, with the heron watching me carefully as I powered on along the path. I experienced the sense of being seen by creation, indeed, being one with Creation. Once more my experience of pilgrimage was one of identity becoming more grounded and assured.



LOOSE CHANGE



Our contributions up to last week is \$934. We finalise our loose change offerings for The Orange Door on 21 December.



This months' services

- 7 Dec — 10.30 am Rev Karen
HC & Loose change
- 14 Dec — 10.30 am Denise's Team
- 21 Dec — 10.30 am Rev Karen
- 24 Dec — 11.30 pm Christmas Eve
Rev Karen
- 25 Dec — 8.00 am Christmas Day
Rev Karen
- 28 Dec — 10.30 am Rev Karen
Café Church

EMPTY CHRISTMAS TREE

Final day for gifts to be added to our Christmas tree is 7 December, before they are taken to Uniting Barwon for distribution.

FOOD DONATIONS

The final day for this year's food items for FoodAssist 3223 is 7 December. If you can add something that would be really appreciated.

ROSTERS

Would you like to join a roster? New rosters for the first quarter for 2026 will be prepared shortly. We have rosters for door welcoming, vestry support, flowers, bible reading, prayers of the people, morning tea, offering counting, food donation delivery, Op Shop. Please speak to Wayne to volunteer or enquiry about.

DECEMBER
 Jenni Nickelson
 Verna Taylor
 Kelly Lestrangle
 Indianna Colley
 Gerald Edgar
 Carol Lascalles
 Angel Siagian



	MORNING TEA	WELCOME	VESTRY	READING	PRAYERS	COUNTING	FLOWERS	COMMUNION
DEC 7	Melva & Brenda	Melva	Rhonda	Rhonda	Val	Ian	Denise	Denise & Marie
14	Pat & Andrea	Jean	Claire	Denise's Team	Colleen	Colleen	Val	
21	Margo & Marie	Wilma	Val	Carol	Margo	Denise	Susan	
28	Rhonda & Carolyn	Brenda	Ian	TBA	TBA	Margo	-	

Web site: <http://drysdale.unitingchurch.org.au>

Facebook: [Drysdale Uniting Church](#)

Our Vision—Reaching out with God's love and care