



## Here's a tip

Growing up in an international family, I often had the opportunity to travel when visiting relatives across the globe. These experiences taught me much about cultural behaviour. In particular, I learned firsthand that not practicing cultural practices could offend locals, like the time we walked out of a restaurant without leaving a tip. In that culture tips are left irrelevant of the quality of the service.

When we arrived back in Australia I asked my Dad whether we were culturally required to leave a tip. I will always remember his answer because it taught me the valuable life and spiritual lesson that giving is not an act that should be in response to expectations but rather an attitude of generosity. The same principles apply to grace and forgiveness – they are not capped; there is no limit. We give grace, forgiveness and financial support because we choose to have an attitude to bless others – not because they deserve it or because it's expected.

BY HEIDI RIXON

### Reflection:

Whose standards are we to live by and who decides? Sometimes cultural practices are good, sometimes not. What should matter are the expectations dictated by our own conscience rather than the expectations of the world. Jesus was counter-cultural in ways that mattered – he respected some cultural practices but refused to blindly accept that 'the way it is done' should continue to be just for the sake of it. Ask yourself why you do things and why you give or don't give – and listen first to what your heart has to say.

February 2012

[www.victas.uca.org.au/givingisliving](http://www.victas.uca.org.au/givingisliving)



## THE UNITED PARISH OF BEECHWORTH-STANLEY AND YACKANDANDAH

Minister : Rev. Carolyn Field (03) 5751 1444 Mobile: 0418 363 707  
 Parish Secretary: Margaret Phillips (03) 5728 2595  
 Church Postal Address: Box No. 59, Beechworth. 3747  
 Pew Sheet Email Address: heatheron1@bigpond.com

Today's Service & Events — Sun.Feb. 19, 2012		
<b>Morning Worship</b>	9.30 am. <b>Beechworth</b>	Glen Miles
<i>Transfiguration</i>	11.15 am. <b>Yackandandah</b>	Glen Miles
	<b>2 Kings 2:</b> 1—12.	<b>Psalm 50:</b> 1—6.
	<b>2 Corinthians 4:</b> 3—6.	<b>Mark 9:</b> 2—9.
Coming Events		
<b>Morning Worship</b>	9.30 am. <b>Beechworth</b>	Rev. Carolyn Field
<b>Sun. Feb. 26</b>	11.15 am. <b>Yackandandah</b>	Rev. Carolyn Field
	6.00 pm. <b>Stanley</b>	Peter Bluck
<i>Lent 1</i>	<b>Genesis 9:</b> 8—17.	<b>Psalm 25:</b> 1—10
	<b>1 Peter 3:</b> 18—22.	<b>Mark 1:</b> 9—15.

For Your Diary		
<b>Feb. 2012</b>		
<b>Fri. 24.</b>	9.30am.	Pastoral Care Committee, Beechworth
<b>Fri. 24.</b>	6.30 pm.	Fellowship meal at the 'Nick'
<b>Tue. 28.</b>	7.30 pm.	Lenten Studies at Pope's (over 6 Tuesday evenings)
<b>Mar. 2012</b>		
<b>Fri. 2.</b>	.....	World Day of Prayer
<b>Fri. 9.</b>	10.30am.	Hospital Service, Beechworth
<b>Thur. 15.</b>	5.20 pm.	Beechworth Combined Churches' meeting @ Salvation Army
<b>Fri 16.</b>	12.00 pm.	Book Club, Beechworth
<b>Apr. 2012</b>		
<b>Thur. 12.</b>	1.30pm.	UCAF Yackandandah
<b>Sat. 14.</b>	10.30am.	Church Council Meeting, Beechworth

Anyone wanting prayer please contact Betty Pope (5728 2835) to start the Prayer Chain



Non perishable goods will be collected for CSU students on **Communion Sundays**, and Robyn Grimmer will take them to CSU. Thank you!

*Suggestions: Soups, Pasta, Noodles, Fish, Cereals & Toiletries - Soap, Toothpaste, etc.*

## A Word From Caro

### Ups and Downs

This Sunday, the church celebrates the Transfiguration of Jesus. It's a day that in some ways culminates Epiphany (all the bright shining clothes and revelatory voice from heaven), introduces us to Lent (zeroing in on the cross as they leave the mountain), and previews Easter (white clothes and glory again). But I want to think about the action in the Transfiguration story in Mark 9:2-9 from a different angle.

You may recall that I have said (on more than one occasion) that the Gospel of Mark shows us Jesus as an 'action man', as he is always going place and doing things, 'straight away', or 'immediately'. In this passage, we see Jesus taking his disciples with him *up* the mountain; after the period of revelation, transformation, and transfiguration, they come back *down* again. Think of it: Jesus *could* have stayed there. Perhaps he *should* have stayed there. After all, this transfigured state, attended by Moses, Elijah, and his three disciples, was much closer to the state of glory that Jesus deserved than what's coming. Yet he comes back down.

Why is this important? I remember when I was a teenager, there was a song that we sang in a youth group that had the line, "He came down to our level, when we couldn't get up to his". There are many people I have spoken to who believe they are not good enough for God... that perhaps Jesus is just a little too good for them. As Christians, we try to become more like Jesus, to be perfect, but we know we fall pitifully short.

But this isn't a story about *our* going *up*, it's a story about *Jesus* coming *down*, all the way down into our brokenness, fear, disappointment, and loss. And, of course, it only gets more so as we commence our journey through Lent. We will soon watch our Lord travel to the cross, there embracing all that is hard, difficult, and even despicable in life in order to wrest victory from death itself that we might live in hope knowing that wherever we may go, Christ has already been.

So as you prepare to start out on your Lenten journey I invite you to think about those things that are dark and fearful in your life, the things hiding in dark corners, pushed to the back of your consciousness, that you're afraid, or maybe even ashamed of... and know that Jesus is already there. Jesus is not afraid of what is difficult in our lives. He will not reject us on account of our failings.

Jesus' descent back down the mountain reminds us that we don't have to hide the hard parts of our lives from the God we know in Jesus. For God the Father came to us in and through the Incarnate Son precisely to be with us and for us through thick and thin and through life and death -- indeed, God came in Jesus to be with us through death into new life. For no other reason was Jesus born, lived, died and was raised again, except that we might know that God is unrelentingly and indefatigably *for us*! Thanks be to God.

Have a great week,  
Caro

\* **Lenten Studies**- we will be hosting a series of ecumenical Lenten studies, using a study booklet entitled 'Towards the Light', prepared by the Catholic Archdiocese of Brisbane. The studies will be held at the home of Don and Betty Pope, 32 Elgin St Beechworth, over 6 Tuesday evenings, commencing **Tues 28<sup>th</sup> Feb**, 7:30pm. Booklets will be available for participants to purchase at a cost of \$10 each. All are welcome, please contact Caro if you would like to be part of this study group.

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### World Day of Prayer

Friday 2nd March.

This year, the Uniting Church is hosting the annual World Day of Prayer service in Beechworth (9.30 am) and Yackandandah (7.30 pm)

All are welcome to this ecumenical celebration.

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### Commissioning service for RE teachers:

A regional service will be held to commission the RE teachers for this region, at 2 pm. Sunday 18th March, at Myrtleford Uniting Church. It would be great if people could come along and show support to the people who go into our local schools on behalf of all of the churches.

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\* **Now that** Uni is starting up for the year, it's time for us to resume our practice of collecting donations of food for the Ecumenical Chaplaincy service to distribute to students in need. Every Communion Sunday (2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month) please bring some non-perishable food items that would be suitable for uni students (eg tinned baked beans, tuna, cuppa soup, noodles etc). Chaplaincy Coordinator, Judy Redman has expressed thanks to us for our contributions

### Colin Buchanan

#### In Concert

A fantastic performer & highly entertaining, the kids will love it. Don't miss it! Colin is a 9-times Golden Guitar winner, a regular on national TV and radio for over 15 years, a leading children's entertainer, award-winning singer/songwriter, #1 selling Christian artist, genial host... Colin Buchanan is a hard man to pin down! Many children will know Colin's music through CRE lessons at school.

#### Wangaratta High School Performing Arts Centre

Mon 27<sup>th</sup> February 5.30pm Start

\$10 per seat Tickets available from Edgars Newsagency in Wangaratta 5721 3758.

Stay and meet Colin after the concert.

BBQ & refreshments available from 6pm.

General enquiries: David Lloyd 5721 9731

*The Church Website [www.beechworthunitingchurch.org.au](http://www.beechworthunitingchurch.org.au) has been updated and will have the News sheets available each week.*

**The emptier the pot, the quicker the boil —  
watch your temper!**