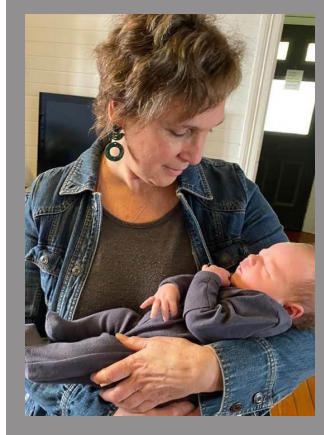


LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Courage and Connection

Nothing says a connection to awe and the meaning of life more than holding a newborn baby in your arms. There is something about their innocent presence that brings you to acute awareness of the present moment yet at the same time connects you to timeless wonder. It is as if a young baby is suspended between earth and heaven, past and future and for a short moment so are we in their company.



We don't need hours of meditation to take us to a renewed sense of balance or deep connection to life. We only need to pause and remember for a moment something that brings us to a sense of awe. It might be the remembrance of a new baby in the family and the love you feel for them. It could be picturing in your mind a beautiful, majestic scene in nature that brings you immediately to a sense of awe within or the remembrance of a loved one. It could be reading about the life of Christ and picturing yourself walking by the sea of Galilee alongside Jesus.

Holding space for the 'Spirit of Life' to breathe into our everyday is vital to our wholeness and sense of wellbeing. It is in this space we find inspiration, courage, connection and peace. It is about 'Holding Space for Spirit' that the stories in this edition are dedicated to.

Ben Smith, Australia Mission President challenges us to take this 'Sacred Pause' created by Covid 19 to capture and be reinvigorated by a sense of the Spirit breathing new life into us individually and collectively as an Australian church. He says this moment calls for renewed discernment as we are not the same people we were - "Can we be transformed into who God is calling us to be?" Ben asks.

Vera Entwistle reminds us about holding onto hope even when facing the unknown and the courage that comes from finding this hope in our connection to the Divine.

Robert Thompson reminds us of the importance of finding the space and the courage to pondering deep questions about identity and what makes us truly come alive. "What is it to truly be?" he asks.

Harry Fielding says "We are called to examine ourselves and to know that God IS love and that God's love is extended to all. " He challenges us to review our connection to God and to 'the stranger' and asks us at this time to contemplate have we made our own image of God too small? He challenges us to expand our viewpoint.

In the practice of Welcoming Prayer I invite you to take a moment to connect with unclaimed parts of yourself, and to welcome them and the gift of transforming grace into your life.

In an interview with Leigh Lonsdale, we explore factors that contribute to our openness to risk taking, our beliefs around failing and what it means to 'hold space' for one another.

In his article Rick Sarre celebrates fifty years since the first leadership camps were held at Mountain Hut. He reminds us of the leaders and the experiences that were transformational to so many.

And finally Tom Strickland shares a moving story about synchronicity and honoring a friend.

We certainly are in uncharted waters in our own lives and in the life of the church. May we use this pause to breathe, to discover who we are and then to approach the future with courage, conviction, faith and hope. May we be for each other what God would have us be forgiving, loving and joyfully encouraging.

Anne Bonnefin

Editorial Team Member