

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Creating Community

Community is both what we are experiencing today and an aspirational idea of what might be. This paradox can be challenging for us, as some are living a completely different existence yet might be in the same house or the same neighbourhood. One's experience of community is defined by every facet of their life, and each moment contributes to our understanding of what it means to live in community together.



Eliza's work 'The Glass Ceiling' demonstrates that we must be open to seeing that life is not equal for all people, and to continually be moving toward justice is not just a calling for radical teens, but rather, all people.

One line sticks out to me from Mel's piece: "...I have finally learned to just keep [my art] moving, better to put it out imperfect than not at all. And I also realised that their stories are imperfect". I love this thought.

In this edition of the Herald, we asked our youth what being part of community meant for them. There are some inspiring stories here, and their voices are a challenge to me to be more real, more intentional, and to listen deeply. So often I look to our elders or those with great experience for wisdom, which is a time-tested strategy. Yet, when I take the time to listen to those who are younger in years, I am often impacted in a monumental way. Imagine if we were to listen and be guided by youth more often?

We are reminded time and time again through our sacred story that we are enough. We are loved beyond measure, and we can love others in that same way. If we learn anything from these words from our youth, it is that to create meaningful community doesn't require anything external. It just requires you. And time. May you find that time to intentionally connect with the youth in your life, to learn their story, to hear their dreams, and to then believe in them enough to want to adapt.

Alicia writes about her work with Community Plus, and how it is providing a space for youth and young adults to express their true selves in a safe environment. Mel explores the work she is doing in the Dangar Island community, spreading joy and connecting people through art and sculpting. Kari shares some examples from her scientific work about how we can work together to help equip children with the skills to be able to tackle life's most challenging times.

Ben Smith

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