

WINTER EDITION 2022

SALT

The Seasonal Newsletter of Saint Andrew's Uniting Church
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Winter
EDITION

From the Minister

Shalom

For this article in this edition of SALT, I begin with a disclaimer and a warning. First what follows is my opinion, thoughts, pondering as a woman who happens to be ordained in the UCA, this is not a statement from the Church. The warning is that this article has been prompted by the recent Roe 'V' Wade overturning in the US and discusses abortion.

I write this as a woman, who like many, has experienced miscarriage which in some states of the US and South America could and would have led me to be charged with murder. As I reflect on what is happening in the US, with abortion being banned completely in some states and severely restricted in others, I begin to feel a level of despair. I don't think the argument is one of pro-life or pro-choice, I think this makes it too simple, when in reality the decision of a woman to terminate a pregnancy is actually quite complex. As I've mentioned, strict laws on abortion have seen women who have experienced miscarriage finding themselves in prison charged and convicted with murder. The banning or criminalisation of abortion will not prevent it happening; what it will do is put the lives of women, forced with this decision, at risk.

As a woman, as a mother, I am thankful I have never been in a position where I have been forced to face such a decision, but many are. As many reports reveal it is the poorest most vulnerable women that will be impacted by the decision to overturn Roe 'V' Wade. I believe that in most cases the decision to end a pregnancy is done so with a heavy heart, perhaps the woman has been raped, perhaps the woman lives in a domestic violence situation, perhaps there has been a diagnosis of some sort for the woman or child, maybe the distress of termination at a particular time in a woman's life is less than that of continuing with the pregnancy.

During my time in ministry, I have sat alongside a number of women of faith and heard their stories of distress, of anguish, of being silenced because of the shame and guilt they feel and carry. They remember the due date and how old the child would be and yet they have been unable to share the journey they have been on because of fear of judgement and rejection.

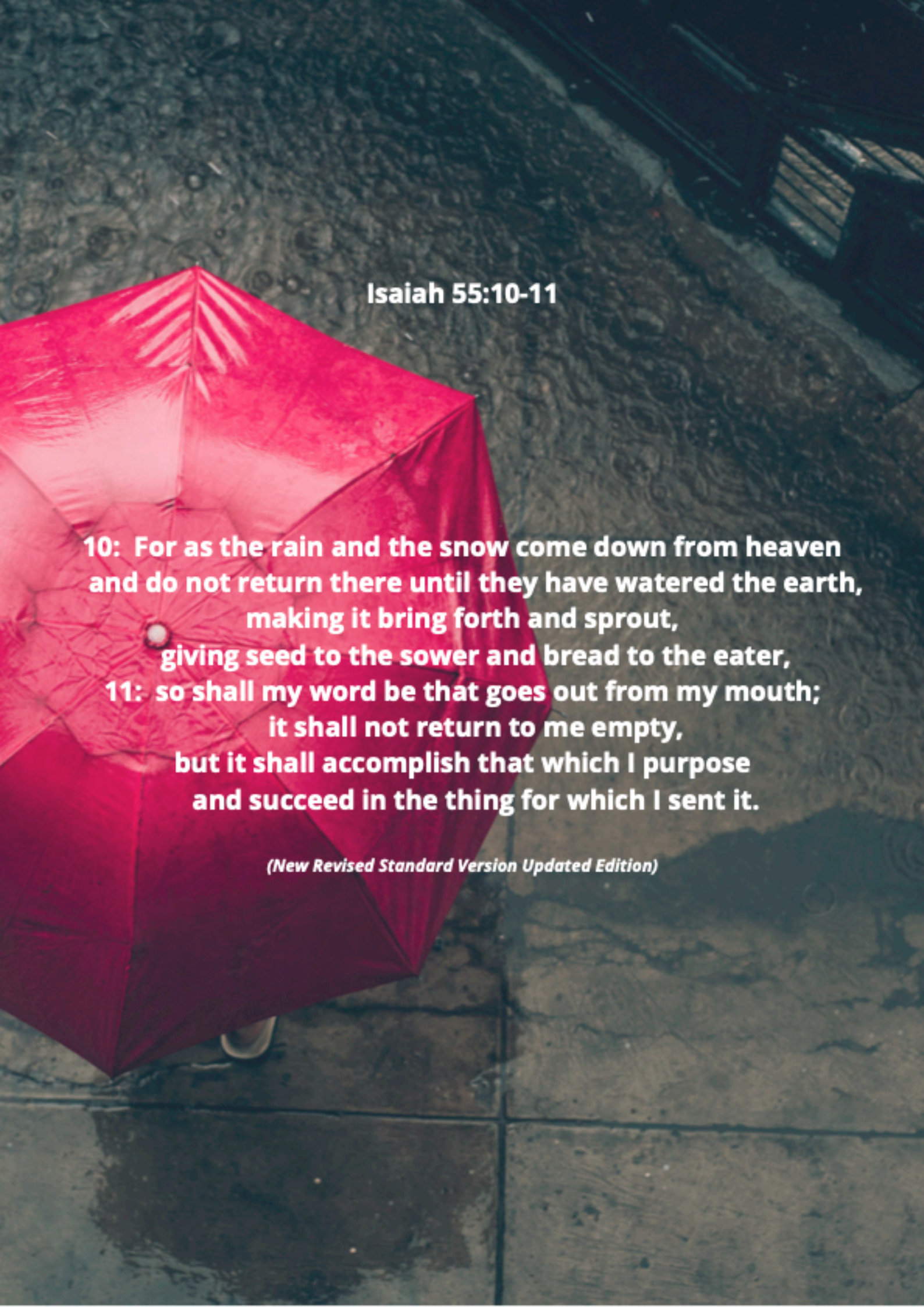
I watch the division that the decision has brought in communities and ultimately across the world as we are catapulted back years and see the potential for 'Handmaids Tale' to become real. I find it to be a stinging irony that many of those calling for the ban of abortion in the US are possibly the same people call for their rights to carry a gun. As I see and hear people of faith calling for bans and criminalisation of abortion, or gathering at abortion clinics, the first question that pops into my head is will you be there at the 2am feed, will you be there to pay the rent, the power bills, the food bills, provide childcare when it is needed? When I see or hear of violence that's occurred at clinics, I wonder what is meant by pro-life, if people are prepared to harm the women who attend or work there?

I think Joan Chittister, Benedictine Nun, author and speaker says it well: "I do not believe that just because you're opposed to abortion, that makes you pro-life. In fact, I think in many cases, your morality is deeply lacking if all you want is a child born but not a child fed, not a child educated, not a child housed. And why would I think that you don't? Because you don't want any tax money to go there. That's not pro-life. That's pro-birth. We need a much broader conversation on what the morality of pro-life is."

What is pro-life about placing the health and life of a woman at risk? What is pro-life about plunging a woman into poverty or adding to the pressures of staying in a violent relationship? What is pro-life about heaping judgement upon a woman, and rejecting her?

The intention of sharing my musings on this is not to say I have it right. But I hope that it's provocative enough to encourage open and safe conversations rather than being afraid to speak about such an emotive topic. Why? Well because there will be women among us who are living in silence, in fear of judgement and rejection, who are desperate to know that they are loved by God and the community of Christ, and that in moments of despair they have somewhere to turn.

Peace
Susan

A high-angle photograph of a red umbrella on a wet, dark pavement. The umbrella is open and its surface is glistening with water. The background shows a dark, wet surface with many small, circular ripples from raindrops. The overall mood is somber and reflective.

Isaiah 55:10-11

**10: For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven
and do not return there until they have watered the earth,
making it bring forth and sprout,
giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,
11: so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;
it shall not return to me empty,
but it shall accomplish that which I purpose
and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.**

(New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition)

Church Council Report

Nick Tate

I am very pleased to report that we have a new church administrator, Rosie Catt, who will be working from 9am to 2pm on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. It is a great pleasure to welcome Rosie to this role. We have also taken the opportunity to upgrade the administrator's computer system to a new laptop as part of the programme of ongoing IT upgrades in the church.

The Church Council met during the evening of Tuesday 5th July, when we reviewed the finances and received a report on the excellent ongoing work of the Community meal team. Other topics that we discussed were the possibility of replacing pews in the church with chairs, as many other churches have done. Unfortunately, the pews are becoming increasingly difficult to manage. I should stress that nothing at all has yet been decided and that we are just intending to look at options.

We will also look again at our use of space throughout the church to see what we are using each area for, so that we can develop a plan for the best utilisation of our space. The Church Council will start this process by undertaking a space audit.

A note on our discussions with Presbytery about the size of the Church's annual contribution to Presbytery and Synod, which I mentioned in my last article for SALT. I am very pleased to report that we have come to a good agreement on the contribution amount.

And, it would be remiss of me not to acknowledge the recent Jubilee celebrations for the Queen's 70 years of service to Australia and the Commonwealth, which have taken place since my last article.

If you would like to know more about any of this, then please don't hesitate to ask and I can update you at morning tea after church on a Sunday morning.

Nick Tate, Chair, Church Council

From the Editors

With so many in our community away from our regular activities, we do look forward to seeing everyone again soon.

In the meantime, please remember to stay in contact with those who may need help or maybe you can be a friendly voice on the end of the phone to someone who is in isolation.

If you enjoy reading our little magazine, please let us know. Likewise if you have suggestions, please tell us. Catch us at morning tea after the 9.30 Sunday Service.

Please make sure those around you know how to access our church website: www.saintandrews.org.au to read SALT. Catch up with the important weekly notices, rosters, service times and events in NEWS & NOTES, also now on the website.

Stay warm this winter.

Wendy & Ian

Contact SALT via email
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*We pray our community is well;
or getting better;
or being well looked after.*



Youthful Perspectives



Students and teachers from All Hallows' School visited on 14th June and found lots to look at! Susan, Wilson and Robyn assisted with their visit. Photo by Robyn Lulham.

It is always a pleasure to have visitors at Saint Andrew's. It helps us see anew the legacy we have from over 100 years of worship in this church.



Thanks to Isabel Robson, Samuel Robson and Rowan Mildwaters for your artwork done during the Sunday Service on 19th June.

Community Meal

25th June 2022

Visitors from Lismore

A visit from students from the schools in the Catholic Diocese of Lismore has become an annual event for the Community Meal at Saint Andrew's UC, and we were pleased to welcome them again this year.

The year 11 students are part of a programme called STREET RETREAT, coordinated by Kate Nestor, the Education Officer at the Diocese of Lismore Catholic Schools Office. The students spend a long weekend in Brisbane, working on a range of Social Justice programmes. - 'Students are challenged physically, emotionally and spiritually through giving back to the community through a range of ministry placements working within disability, aged care, rehabilitation and social activism.'

The students who join us are always enthusiastic, polite and respectful and keen to tackle any task assigned to them. This year's group was no exception. 4 students, Emily, Bradley, Ellie, Elijah and their teacher Bev from Port Macquarie, assisted me in the kitchen, while Holly, Simon, Anja, Elijah, Claire, Cooper, Georgie, Hugh, Bella, Johnathon and teachers Peter and Jacob assisted Jennet in the hall.



I am always pleased to find some Hospitality Students in my kitchen group, as they are very competent and will take on any task assigned to them. Emily even created an Italian inspired dish using left over chicken.

Washing up using the dish washer is not a popular job, but one of the boys in the hall group assisted with this task enthusiastically, and it included some very dirty pots! Nothing was too much trouble for this group.

In the kitchen we really appreciated the extra hands as we were down on helpers due to COVID.

On Friday I was capably assisted by our 2 grandsons, Liam and Riley, who helped with the preparation for the Saturday Meal. We were then joined on Saturday morning by Robyn and Jennet to complete the preparation and service of the meal.

The menu was:

Creamy Pumpkin Soup with Crispy Bacon and Parsley Sprinkle

Garlic Bread

Apricot Chicken with Rice and Peas

Snacks of fruit, a bar and a snack bag.

Overall it was another successful meal, that was enjoyed by our 100 guests.

Beth Brand

Photos from Beth: (top to bottom)

1. Students making garlic bread
2. Students packing snack bags
3. Robyn and Jennet preparing chicken
4. Students and Hall Volunteers plating the meal
5. Liam frying bacon for the soup
6. Soup!





2nd July 2022 Christmas in July!

Merrilyn and her team of helpers prepared a stunning 'Christmas in July' menu. Roast Rolled Turkey, Roast Potatoes & Sweet Potatoes accompanied by creamy Cauliflower and Peas. There were gluten free and vegetarian options as well. Dessert was delicious rich fruit pudding served with custard.

The hall helpers decorated the tables with a festive touch. There was even a Christmas Tree.

Photos: W. Smith



The Community Meal Steering Committee reports re first half of 2022:

- 373 hall volunteer slots filled of 3 hours each
- **1,119 volunteer hours in the hall**
- We have 6 dedicated cooking teams who each have between 4 and 6 volunteers each week
- In addition to the 4-hour cooking slot on a Saturday, each cooking team lead also spends approximately 3 hours on the Foodbank run, and up to 4 hours additional cooking / shopping during the week = 31 hours per week
- **775 volunteer hours in the kitchen**
- Average cost for a meal is \$2.70
- Increasing guest attendance throughout 2022 - now averaging just over 85 per week



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

It's cold. It's raining.
There are viruses about.
I'm not feeling so good.
I think I'll stay home.
What's on the TV.....?



All comfortable, hot drink and snacks at hand....

- *Mary Magdalene* (2018) Rated M. Netflix. Directed by Garth Davis.

A thoughtful and thought-provoking interpretation of the ministry of Jesus from the perspective of Mary from Magdala. In 2016, the Vatican declared 22nd July to be the Feast Day for Mary Magdalene, honouring her as *prima testis* to the resurrection and giving her the title 'Apostle to the Apostles': thus finally removing the 1,500 year slur of Pope Gregory that Mary was a prostitute. This movie dives (perhaps literally as you will see from the opening shots) into this 'new' way of looking at Mary as a spiritually aware disciple both constrained and liberated by her experiences as a woman.

- *Babette's Feast* (1987) Rated PG. SBS OnDemand & Netflix. Directed by Gabriel Axel.

Definitely one to watch on a cold day, so grab another knee-rug. This is a classic. One you can watch and rewatch. Nothing is wasted in this film. Every shot, every line of dialogue draws you to the amazing conclusion. Set on the desolate coast of Jutland (yes, this is a Danish film), it concerns a small pious religious community and the arrival of the mysterious Babette, a refugee from Paris during the time of the Paris Commune (1871).

- *Come Sunday* (2018) Rated PG. Netflix. Directed by Joshua Marston.

Based on the real-life story of Carlton Pearson a very successful and well known pastor in the Pentecostal tradition in the USA. At the peak of his fame Pearson came to doubt that only those who are 'saved' or 'born again' can enter the Kingdom of Heaven and further he questioned whether Hell is real. Not surprisingly, his church accused him of heresy and many of his congregation shunned him. This is a well acted and gripping telling of his story.

- *Blue Miracle* (2021) Rated PG. Netflix. Directed by Julio Quintana.

Also based on a true story. This one set in Mexico. A group of orphans have to save their orphanage using prayer and fishing line. Lots of blue sky, blue water, blue painted walls and blue marlin. Great sweeping shots of little white boats in the incredibly blue ocean make this feel very cinematic even if the storyline is predictable: the orphans win, the marlins lose.

- *The Two Popes* (2019) Rated M. Netflix. Directed by Fernando Meirelles.

This fictionalised story of the meetings between Pope Benedict and the soon-to-be Pope Francis is fascinating to watch. The dialogue between the two Popes is enlightening and at times unexpectedly humorous.

- *Compass (Series)*. ABCiview.

The long running ABC series must be a go-to for anyone wanting a small dose of interesting, spiritually uplifting and challenging stories on faith and values.