



Biggest Morning Tea 2025

The Biggest Morning Tea 2025 was held on 15th May with 80 guests in attendance.

See inside this issue for more photos and information about this worthy event.



King's Birthday Honours

John and Margaret Middleton honoured in King's Birthday list

In the 2025 King's Birthday honours, both John and Margaret Middleton were awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia.

John's citation mentioned his services to music, particularly in relation to various leadership positions held with the Federated Music Clubs of Australia and the Killara Music Club. Amongst the other activities he has served over many years as Treasurer of both Killara and East Killara Uniting Churches and prior to that, as Treasurer of the then Five Church Parish. He has also held various other positions in the Uniting Church and community organisations.

Margaret's citation listed the many organisations which she has supported by organising social events and in other ways including those in support of our own Church. She has researched matters for the Ku-ring-gai Historical Society and actively supported key movements to ensure the maintenance of community facilities and organisations which enhance the social and recreational life of the local community.



IN THIS ISSUE:

- ◆ **Biggest Morning Tea**
Cover & page 12
- ◆ **Middleton Honours**
Cover
- ◆ **From the Editor**
Page 2
- ◆ **From the Minister's Desk**
Page 3
- ◆ **Daniel Gunaseelan**
Page 4
- ◆ **Evaline Grant Lochtie**
Page 5
- ◆ **Warm Comfort**
Page 6
- ◆ **Dorothy Mae Smith**
Page 7
- ◆ **Concert Aug 17th**
Page 7
- ◆ **Mi-Yong (Michelle) Son**
Pages 8 & 9
- ◆ **Korean Embroidery Project**
Page 10
- ◆ **Walking Group June**
Page 11
- ◆ **Property Update**
Page 11
- ◆ **Book Club**
Page 11
- ◆ **Cancer Why there's hope**
Page 13
- ◆ **ANZAC Service**
Pages 14- & 15
- ◆ **60 years of Ministry**
Page 15
- ◆ **Floral Tributes**
Page 16
- ◆ **Morning Coffee**
Page 16

Editor:

Julie Sekhon
Mob: 0400 631 739

margaret_sekhon@bigpond.com

**Connection layout:**

Linda Brown

gibbsbrown@optusnet.com.au

**From the Editor**

The past three months have brought the sadness of four deaths – three of people part of our present worshipping community, and one important in our past. On editing the tributes I was struck by the fact that they used to the full their God-given gifts and abilities. Would anyone meeting them at age 10 or even 15 have realised what they would accomplish? They were people who loved and were loved: we reverently include these tributes and bless them for the good they achieved.

In spite of references in the Bible, much about what happens to the soul after death remains a mystery, and for this reason I have included a short extract from Revd Professor Christiaan Mostert's homily which contains some affirmations to hold onto.

I have the full text of many of the tributes given and the homily and can provide these to anyone who would like them.

Some interesting topics are included: the Korean Embroidery Project and the talk given by Professor David Smith at our Biggest Morning Tea on May 15th: 'Why we haven't Cured Cancer - and why there's still hope'.

For the rest, this issue reflects the various activities and interests of our congregation - the Handicraft Group, the Walking Group – and photos from our Anzac service, always special. Coming in late in the preparation of this issue was the happy news of the OAM awarded to both John and Margaret Middleton in the King's Birthday honours, and I was pleased to include this.

I hope you enjoy this issue.

Julie Sekhon

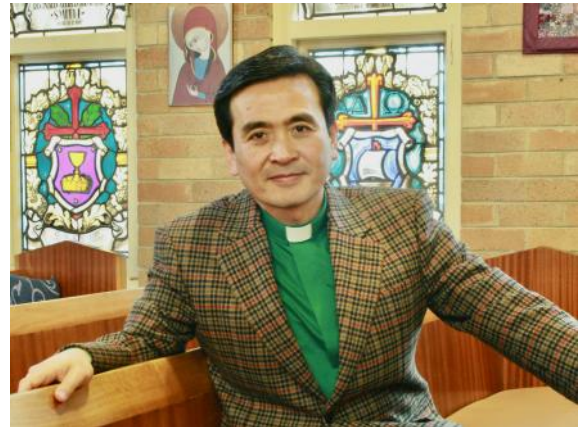
Killara Uniting Church
Painting by Vi Finch



From the Minister's Desk.

“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

[Philippians 4:4-7]



It is said that grief is the cost of love, and this idea often resonates with many. Whether it's a spouse, family member, friend, or cherished pet, most of us will face such painful times caused by the loss at some point in our lives. In 2023, over 180,000 people died in Australia. According to the University of Cambridge, for each death, nine people are impacted by bereavement.

As a community, we are deeply connected and affected by what happens to each other. It's our responsibility to support one another in times of need and celebrate the good moments together. By coming together during crises, we can make difficult situations more manageable and improve everyone's quality of life. As Christians, we are committed to the Church, which is considered the Body of Christ. When one part of this Body is in pain, we all feel it. Recently, our church has experienced several funerals, and we have shared in the sorrow of losing loved ones. My own experience of losing a loved one has given me a deeper understanding of life and death, and I hope it has strengthened my dedication to caring for my parishioners.

How can we find joy in the Lord during difficult times? In the early Christian Church, believers faced severe persecution and death in Rome. Despite this fear, Paul reminded them and us of God's promise and the “peace of God that passes all understanding.” Hope comes from knowing God is near.

Many of us can relate to how some of our most painful moments have brought us closer to God. Although we would not choose suffering, we often find that God transforms our worst times into our best times with Him. He uses our pain as an opportunity to be present in our lives. ‘Rejoice in the Lord always’.

Yangrae Son
[Minister of the Word]

Daniel Gunaseelan

11th April 1945- 26 March 2025

We lost a warm and kind friend with the death of Daniel Gunaseelan. Daniel came to Killara Church in semi-retirement, having already achieved a high profile through his Singapore based engineering firm DG Consulting which specialised in façade engineering.

He was born in Sri Lanka and studied at Hartley College, Jaffna, becoming an engineer. He worked firstly in Sri Lanka then moved to Singapore. After working for the Public Service and then private industry he resigned to form his own company: DG Consulting. He was a risk taker!

Daniel began in a small way, designing, drafting, submitting plans and supervising construction himself, but gradually his business grew and he employed staff. Over the years his company has designed and built the façades of landmark buildings, for example Changi Airport Terminal and Singapore Esplanade 'Durian' building. His company has won a number of prestigious awards.

Throughout his life, Daniel practiced his Christian faith. He was active in the Tamil Methodist Church in Singapore for many years and maintained his love of its fellowship even after making his home in Australia. He worked for the church in many capacities and was a generous donor. Always there was the welcoming smile. Coming to Australia to be near his children and grandchildren, we were fortunate that he joined Killara Uniting Church. This was consequent on his discovering our Minister was Yangrae Son with whom he had already built a friendship stemming from Yangrae's ministry in Strathfield.

Daniel's last years were shadowed by his being diagnosed with lung cancer – despite his being a lifelong non-smoker. These years were difficult times, but he testified in an article 'Abiding in Jesus'* that he 'walked with Jesus' throughout. He did have a time of remission, but unfortunately the cancer returned. We give our sympathy to Daniel's widow, Bridget, his son Roshan, daughter Justina (Nishani) and grandchildren Arj and Eve.



He showed us how to be kind with no boundary.
(Words spoken at Daniel's funeral)

* 'Abiding in Jesus', see Killara Connection June 2024



Evaline Grant Lochtie

10th April – 20th May 2025

Rosalind Hobbes

Evaline died suddenly on 20th May, following a heart attack. Her death was unexpected and a great shock to her family and to her friends.

Evaline grew up in Scotland and emigrated to Australia with her husband Ian and three young children. Professionally she worked as a Physiotherapist at Hornsby Hospital. She had many interests, and attended the Presbyterian Church.

She was a resident at Fernbank for about 7 years. In spite of failing eyesight, she was still very involved, with many interests. Apart from various social get-togethers, she was attending a Book Group, a Bible Study and Christian Friendship Group, Physio. Exercise, and her Ionian Club. She was in demand as a partner at the Trivia nights, and for her company.

Evaline had a large celebration for her 90th Birthday, with her family and friends. Her daughter Noël and her Grandchildren came up from Melbourne for the occasion. At Church we celebrated with a cake for her birthday.

Her funeral, on 29th May drew a large number of family and friends and was conducted in our Church by our Minister Yangrae.

Evaline leaves a daughter, Noël, sons Gregor and Grant and grandchildren Carys, Callum. Yasmin, Jayde and Robbie.

She will be sadly missed.



Warm Comfort for Winter Days

The busy workers in the Handicraft Group are pictured here. The Group continues to produce lovely goods which will bring joy to their recipients. This last consignment – children's jumpers, beanies, slippers and quite a few knitted rugs and other items were taken to Wesley Mission for distribution to needy folks.



And a note from our craft Co-Ordinator Sarah

Yangrae sent you a picture of us at craft

I just wanted to mention that all the knitted good on the table were taken to Wesley Mission for distribution to needy folks

We sent kids jumpers, beanies, slippers and quite a few knitted rugs and other items

Many thanks
Sarah



Dorothy Mae Smith
‘Mae’
16th May 1926 – 3rd May 2025

Mae Smith was the wife of Revd Robert Smith and an active partner in his various ministry appointments. After Robert's retirement, he and Mae began attending Killara Uniting Church, which was then benefiting from the ministry of Revd Ivor Bailey. When Ivor became ill, and died in office, Robert willingly took over the care of our congregation over the period 2001-2002, until the new appointee, Revd Chris Udy, was installed as Minister. Robert died in 2009.



Mae was a gentle, caring person who took an interest in all members of our congregation, and endeared herself to us all.

Life had not always been easy for Mae: she had many times of illness in her early married life, but surmounted them and it is a testament to her strength of character that she had the determination to carry on.

Mae said at the end of her long life: **‘I want you to know I’ve had a wonderful life’**



For your diary:

Our Organist, Kyung-Hee Jung will present a concert on **August 17th 2:30pm** in our Church.

The concert is presented as part of the program of the Killara Music Club, and tickets will be on sale prior to the event.

Mi-Yong (Michelle) Son

(This tribute is itself indebted to tributes given by sons Richard and Peter and by Dane Ropa, currently Principal of Northern Beaches Secondary College, but who was a Head Teacher at Cumberland College when Michelle joined their staff – Ed.)

Mi Yong, Michelle, a friend loved by us all, was gentle presence in our Church, supporting her husband Yangrae in all church activities. She was, however a woman of many gifts and she accomplished much through sheer will power and belief in what mattered.

She poured love into her boys, Richard and Peter. Peter quipped that her initials M Y Son, could well stand for 'my son' and might well denote either son. Knowing the importance of education she expressed her encouragement and love for each by making 1,000 paper cranes ahead of their HSC trials and again, the exams. Both sons excelled.

She was an inspiring music teacher: Peter says 'She helped students navigate the cacophony of sounds that drown out their sense of being and opened their minds to the magic of music' and Dane Ropa's memories of a music camp support this:

These big, blond, boofy, surfy boys had come to the camp for rock band, but Mi-Yong turned them into the tenor and bass line of her choir singing, among other pieces, the opening of Vivaldi's Gloria in Latin, in tune and in full voice and loving it...

The love she gave others was mirrored back to her when it was clear that her life was to be cut short. Peter and Richard organised a half-hour concert in the hospital foyer:

They stood there, students past and present, and sang to the woman who had helped them find their voice ... And for a few moments, she wasn't in a hospital foyer; she was back in her element... This was her final rehearsal. And it was perfect ... (Dane Ropa)



Michelle identified herself with Yangrae and his calling was also her calling. Their love for one another was testified in Yangrae's long vigil at her bedside as her life drew to a close, and in her immense need of him during those dark days.

Michelle, Mi-Yong, had walked in faith with God since her early life in Seoul, she gave selflessly to others the gifts she herself had been given, and now is with the One she served and whose glory she expressed in music.

We die unto God

Abridgment of the homily given at the funeral of Mi-Yong Son

Rev'd Professor Christiaan Mostert

To experience the death of someone we know well, and especially someone we love dearly and who has loved us constantly and deeply, is *disorienting* in the extreme. We feel *thrown*, not fully knowing what to *make* of this and how to give it a place in our understanding of who we are.

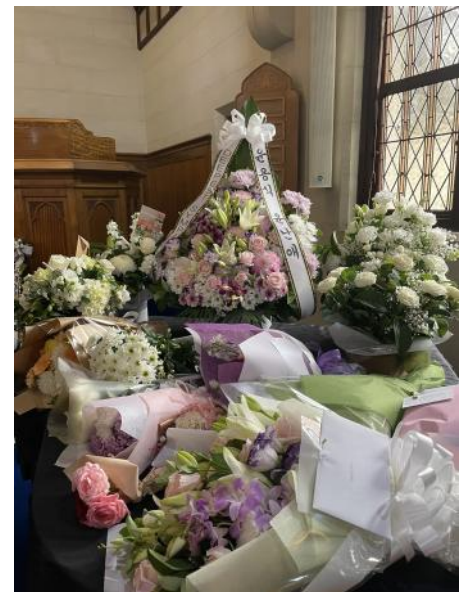
In Psalm 63 the writer expresses his longing for God: ‘O God, you *are* my God; eagerly I seek you!’ ‘My soul *thirsts* for you ...’ ‘My soul *clings* to you.’ At a time like this a marginal faith is not enough: we need something deeper, something that touches the **core of our being**. Sometimes in a time of loss and grief we *do* go deeper and find a more solid foundation for the challenges – of many kinds – that confront us. At the end of the Psalm, the writer says, ‘Your right hand *holds me fast*.’

One very distinctive thing about Christian faith is that we do *not* die into *nothingness*; we die into **God** – and *in* and *with* God we will have life. The Christian hope is of *eternal* life, *quantitatively and qualitatively* speaking.

The writer of the last book of the New Testament, John of Patmos, has a lovely vision of **God** making God’s home among mortals, dwelling with them. God will *wipe every tear* from their eyes. **Death** will be *no more*; and there will be *no more crying and pain*. (21:3-4)

God *does* make *all things new*, not least for those who have died. However hard it might be to conceptualise this, it cannot be *less* than what we know and experience here and now. If the New Testament is to be believed it must be *more!* Let us take *comfort in that!*

Thanks be to God.



The Korean Embroidery Project 1963 – 1972



In the Southern city of Masan, at 74-2 Sang Nam Dong, the Australian Presbyterian Mission was administered by Revd John Brown and Mrs Norma Brown, who worked there from 1960 to 1972.

They saw a need to give employment to women and girls who had no income. Some were widows, others had physical disabilities, girls who were orphaned, and women with large dependent families.

An embroidery project was begun using Korean linens and cottons and the traditional “Saekdong” fabric. The designs included Korean symbols and national dress and other decorative patterns, embroidered in cross stitch, satin and stem stitches.

The women made table mats and tablecloths, with matching serviettes, handkerchiefs, hand towels, tea towels, pillowcases, cushion covers, slippers and dolls. All the embroidery was done by hand. Handmade cards and small trinkets were also made.

Beginning in 1963, these items were sent to Sydney, Australia in large boxes, to the home of Mrs Edith Dyster who then sold them to ladies from Presbyterian organisations across the country. Mrs Dyster went to many meetings carrying large cases of these items to sell. All the money raised from the sale of these unique items was sent back to Korea for the women to be paid for their work. It was not a money-raising project for the Church in Australia, but it did foster goodwill and knowledge about Korea.

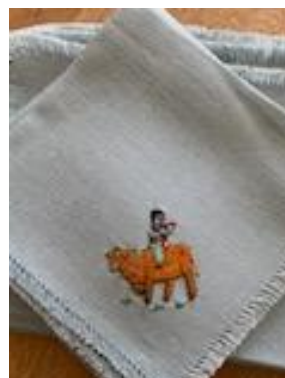
In 1972, Revd John and Mrs Norma Brown left Korea to return to ministry in Australia. By this time, the embroiderers had been able to find better jobs and the project was closed.

Edith Dyster had chosen to be involved as she and her husband, Presbyterian minister, Revd Colin Dyster, had visited Korea in October 1962 to represent the Presbyterian Church of Australia at the 50th Anniversary of the Presbyterian Assembly in Korea. They travelled around Korea visiting Australian missionaries, including the Browns in Masan. Revd Colin Dyster preached at the Young Nak Church in Seoul which seated 2,000 for services three times a Sunday. They found it a privilege to visit Korea on behalf of their Church in Australia and then to talk about their experiences and sell the special items of embroidery.

Today, there is an awakened interest in Korean textiles, and this history has been written in response.

Written by Alison Scott, daughter of Edith and Colin Dyster who still has items of this embroidery project, now over 50 years later.

Postscript: Alison has given some Korean embroidery items to our organist, Kyung-Hee Jung to return to South Korea for inclusion in a history of Christianity in Korea. It is pleasing and fitting that they return to the place where they were made.



Walking Group at Lane Cove

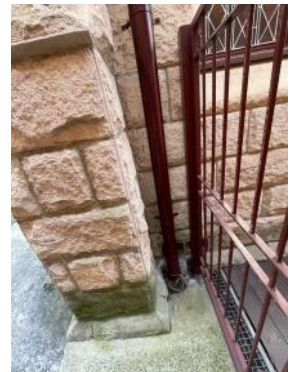
On Friday 6th June, the Walking Group, led by John and Liz Giles met at Blackman Park, Lane Cove West and walked through bushland reclaimed from an earlier industrial site. Native birds and small animals have also reclaimed the area as their own and it was a pleasure to hear small tweets around us. A cold morning, but a refreshing walk.

The photo omits one competent walker – our photographer, Yangrae.



Property Update

One of the improvements made to the Church and Manse in 2025 was the replacement of the downpipe and painting. An insurance claim was submitted for this work.



News from Book Club

The KUC Book Club meets on the second Thursday of the month and discusses the book read over the past month. We borrow 'Book Kits' alternatively from Willoughby library and Ku-ring-gai Library. Of course not every book pleases everyone, but with the last book, 'The Light we Carry', by Michelle Obama we 'hit the jackpot'! Everyone appreciated it.

Michelle Obama wrote of lessons learnt through life – coping with being 'different', taller than others, being black, and being a woman in jobs dominated by men. Other lessons learnt were:

Holding on to one's integrity (as First Lady she was subject to misrepresentation and vilification): **When they go low, we go high.**

The importance of building places of welcome and gladness: **Come home. We will always like you here.**

The value of a group of friends who provide emotional shelter, good humour and communal energy. She calls them her '**Kitchen Table**'.

Face fear head on (e.g. fear of failing):

Oh, hello, it's you again

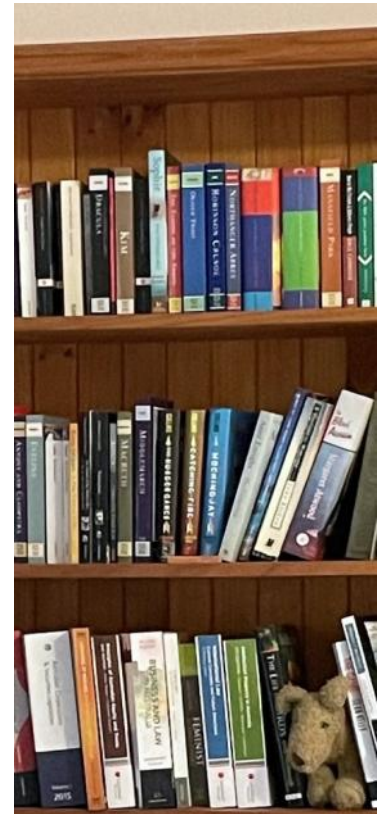
Thanks for showing up, for making me alert.

But I see you

You're no monster to me.

Our new book, 'Elizabeth and Elizabeth' by Sue Williams takes us to early colonial days in New South Wales and the unlikely friendship of the wives of the most powerful men in the colony – Lachlan Macquarie, intent on bringing order and decency to New South Wales, and John Macarthur, intent on furthering his own fortunes.

You are welcome to join the Book Club: meeting details appear in 'What's On'.



Biggest Morning Tea 2025

The Biggest Morning Tea 2025 was held on 15th May with 80 guests in attendance. The smooth running of the event with a delicious morning tea, many lucky door prizes and attractively presented tables disguised months of intense preparation by Sue Mitchell, whom we thank for again taking on the event. The keynote speaker, Professor David Smith presented an engaging talk on the state of cancer research. A précis of his talk is included in this issue.

Gregory and Carr again provided and served a generous morning tea and we thank them for once again supporting such a worthwhile charity. All proceeds - in this case \$14,850 - went to the Cancer Council. In total over the years the Biggest Morning Tea over the years has raised \$245 million towards research.

An enjoyable event for a good cause.





Why We Haven't Cured Cancer – And Why There's Still Hope Associate Professor David Smith

I often get asked “why haven’t we found the cure for cancer yet?” Cancer is not just one disease—it’s over 100 different types, each with its own challenges. That’s why finding a single “cure” is so complex. But there is good news: every day in Australia, cancers are being treated and cured, especially when caught early. Thanks to advances like immunotherapy and precision medicine, survival rates are improving—even for later-stage cancers.

Early detection is key. Currently, national screening programs exist for bowel, breast, and cervical cancers, with lung cancer screening starting in July 2025. These programs are based on strong evidence and aim to save lives without causing unnecessary harm or anxiety. If you’re eligible, participating in these programs is one of the best ways to protect your health. A case in point is the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program. Cancer Council research shows that if we could lift the participation rate from 40% to 60% we would save approximately 60,000 lives over the next 40 years. We encourage everyone, when invited to do the bowel cancer test to participate.

Behind the scenes, organisations like the Cancer Council and the Daffodil Centre are leading the charge in future cancer research. They fund over \$18 million in research each year, supporting scientists and doctors working on everything from new treatments to better use of existing technology. Their work is saving lives—prostate cancer death rates, for example, have dropped by over a third in the past 20 years.

The Daffodil Centre is also pioneering research into early detection using genetics and risk factors, aiming to catch cancers even earlier and treat them more effectively.

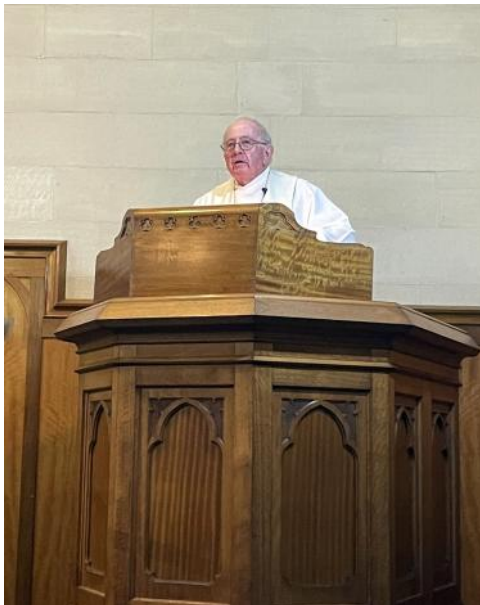
Thanks to your support through participating in Australia’s Biggest Morning Tea, this vital work continues. Together, we are bringing hope, healing, and more time with loved ones to thousands of Australians.

ANZAC Service 27 April 2025

John Middleton (led the ANZAC remembrance and Prayers of Intercession), whilst the Bugler was Percy Speed, and the Piper Allan Watts.

Margaret Middleton and Edith Cowlshaw laid the wreaths.

Organist Kyung-Hee Jung played a stirring rendition of Edward Elgar's Nimrod Enigma Variations at the close of the service.



Minister David Gill gave a wonderful sermon.



Piper Allan Watts





60 years of Ministry

Following the service lead by the Reverend David Gill on 22 June, morning tea featured a celebratory cake. This was to recognise his 60 years of Ministry, and coincidentally his recent birthday. In his thank you David acknowledged how special the caring congregation was at Killara Uniting Church. "You have something really great and it's **you!**"



Floral Tributes for Mi-Yong (Michelle) Son



Morning Coffee in Lieu of a Bushwalk



It was a wet 19th May so the group met for coffee instead of a walk. Great coffee and company.