

JPC Newsletter August 2021

Ephpheta! Be Open

Front Page Quote: **Isaiah 26: 3-4** Those of steadfast mind you keep in peace—because they trust in you. Trust in the Lord forever, for in the Lord God you have an everlasting rock.

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MON - WED

9.30am to 3.30pm

THURS - FRI

By Appointment Only

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Sophie Duncan

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Br Shane Wood (Minutes)

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Damien Backholer

Sonya Tissera-Isaacs

Evelyne Albrecht

Lucille Bennetto

**Next Newsletter Deadline**

OCTOBER 2021

JPC would like to thank the community members for allowing us to use their photos in this publication and we acknowledge the use of the back page quote from awesomequotes4u.com as well as the images from Playgroups Victoria and their “All Come Out To Play” Program.

**From the JPC Executive Manager**

Hello everyone.

What a strange year for us all – multiple lockdowns which is disappointing but it is for the best. We Victorians and JPC have truly had our patience tested over recent months and I am thankful for the resilience of the community and the staff.

I believe that we have all become quite adept at staying strong through lockdowns by gaining support from family, friends and community. Contacting each other with our invaluable technology: iPhones, FaceTime, Zoom and so on, is so important in maintaining contacts even whilst we all have to stay at home.

I hope that you are all coping well and staying warm especially during this cold winter.

We are thinking of you all and also the businesses that have been impacted by the restrictions and are struggling. We must look for ways to help those around us, the Deaf community and the wider community. It really is a tough time.

As you know we had plans for the JPC 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations in August but it has been postponed once again. I believe this will be our third postponement! But we still look forward to the opportunity to celebrate with you all.

It will now be held on **Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2021** and combined with our Annual Christmas Rally. The rally was scheduled for the following weekend but have moved everything to the one date. It will be a big event to celebrate our history and the advent season, as well as the chance to come back together as a community. We know that the Christmas Rally is the highlight of the year for many people so we hope to see you all there on Sunday 5th December.

Our regular third Sunday Masses are consistently livestreamed, thanks to the awesome staff who make it happen each month. We will continue this service of livestreaming/recording mass for the foreseeable future given that lockdowns are still happening and there are many that are nervous to travel in or attend gatherings. Fingers crossed that we are heading towards a time when things are back to normal.

Staff will continue giving updates on the impact of Government restrictions and whether our doors will be open to the community and the number of people that we can allow to come in.

I encourage you to access the Covid-19 vaccine if you are eligible, wear your mask and use the QR codes when you go out. I know that masks are difficult for Deaf people and it is ok to ask people to remove their mask when communicating with you and you can maintain a 1.5m distance. We can get through this by supporting each other and being compassionate.

'Till next newsletter

Stay safe, Stay well and Stay connected.

**JPC AGM**—The Annual General Meeting of the John Pierce Centre was held on 18th April. It was well attended and also livestreamed online for the broader community and stakeholders. Theresa Counsel stepped down from Chair of the Board after nine years of service. Trevor Hughes is the incoming Chair. Guest speaker for the event was Brent Philips who spoke about “Deaf Leadership and Allyship”. An important topic about the promotion of Deaf Community members into positions of leadership within their community and how wider supporters can be their allies.

Two Directors' Awards were presented:

**Cheryl Clark** has been a part of JPC for many years. From 200-2004 she was the Chair

of the Catholic Association for Deaf People of Melbourne. She was also the President of the Pankina group and regularly attended activities and Mass with her children. She is well respected by the Deaf community and had a strong bond with her two Deaf sisters, Kathleen and Betty. Cheryl has volunteered countless hours to supporting events and activities at JPC.

**Lorraine A'Hearn** has been involved in JPC since the early years and assisted with finding a property for the church and centre of JPC. She was the housekeeper for over 8 years and her husband Bryan was a Director and Chair of the Board. They had 5 children including their Deaf son Kevin. Lorraine was good friends with Fr Robinson and has given many years of support to JPC events. She has also supported recent work in the archives and photo collections.

To My Dear Friends at JPC including their extended Families and Friends,  
God's Generosity / Our Generosity.

**We who are strong have a duty to put up with the qualms of the weak without thinking of ourselves. Each of us should think of his neighbours and help them to become stronger Christians. Christ did not think of himself: the words of scripture apply to him – 'the insults of those who insult you fall on me.'**

The passage above is part of St Paul's Letter to the Romans (Chapter 15: 1-3). It reminds me of the extraordinary generosity of all at John Pierce Centre (JPC) and the wider Catholic Deaf Community. Generosity of care, time, engagement, support, love and spirit. Paul's letter is a lesson in generosity even when it challenges and there is a cost involved. The Covid Pandemic is one of those challenges when it would be a legitimate excuse for not helping another. Yet we help one another in spite of our own difficulties. On Sunday the 24<sup>th</sup> of July we had the opportunity to listen and read St John's story of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes where Jesus is generously giving his time and energy to educating and healing the people who were hungry for what he was offering. Come the end of the day he asks his disciples where they can get some food for the hungry crowd. One of his disciples finds a boy in the crowd who has five loaves and two fish. Hopefully the boy has offered his food with a generous heart. Jesus receives the food and gives thanks, blesses the offerings and distributes to the crowd. We are told there was enough to feed thousands with enough left over.

Our community reminds me of that story where our generosity and God's blessings are such that there will always be enough because we are willing to share what we have, be it little or plenty.

May God bless you all.

Yours in Christ

**Fr Wayne Edwards**

## **Chaplain to the Deaf**

### **Centre Update**

This year has had its own unique challenges, and whilst we have been able to get out and about more, we have faced rapid lockdowns and constantly changing restrictions. We understand that it can be exhausting to keep up with the news and rules. We are working hard to ensure information gets out to the community about the changes and effects on the running of our centre.

Our priority is always the safety of our community and with many people in higher risk categories, we take a cautious approach as to when we open and how many people can come into the centre. We appreciate your understanding and patience.

We use Facebook to provide a lot of our information so please follow us and watch our videos in Auslan. You can always email us at [admin@jpc.org.au](mailto:admin@jpc.org.au) with specific questions. Please look after yourselves and each other.

#StaySafe #StayConnected

### **Ephpheta Appeal**

JPC would like to say a huge thank you to all those that donated to our centre during the annual Ephpheta Appeal this year. We realise that the pandemic continues to impact many within the community and it is humbling to see that so many people are ready and willing to dig deep to support our mission. Your donation assists us in our work to support individuals and groups through pastoral care programs, group programs and tailored support.

**Thank you!**

### **Margherita Riccioni**

#### **Grants Officer**

After an 18-year career in the corporate world, I decided to transfer my sales and marketing skills into the not for profit sector. I have spent the last 15 years working for small to medium charities in the youth, disability, aged care, mental health and health sectors. My roles have focused on grant writing, service development and managing operational functions. I really enjoy exploring the unmet needs of our community's most vulnerable people and presenting these to potential funders and partners in order to secure support.

Prior to coming to the John Pierce Centre, I spent seven years working at Deaf Children

Australia, where I was lucky enough to learn about the Deaf community and acquire some basic Auslan. Since joining JPC in May this year, I've enjoyed brushing up on those skills and am very thankful to staff who continue to support my learning.

Outside of work, I enjoy my family, friends, Latin or ballroom dancing, travelling and tending to my veggie garden.

### **Staff Day—Flower Arranging**

Building team morale is important, especially during challenging times. Snap lockdowns and working from home effects everyone in different ways. The JPC staff have worked tirelessly over the passed 18 months to support the community and each other. We took a well earned opportunity to come together and do something as a team to support our mental health and team connection. A morning of connecting with the beauty of nature and talking to each other was lots of fun.

### **40 Year Anniversary of the John Pierce Centre**

Join the John Pierce Centre in celebrating 40 years of service to the Catholic Deaf Community.

A community centre and a community spirit that has been a home for so many Deaf and hard of hearing people.

Join us in celebrating 40 years of the John Pierce Centre!

**When:** Postponed to Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2021

**Where:** Mass at St John's Church & Lunch at the Catholic Leadership Centre. 594 Victoria Parade East Melbourne

You can still buy your tickets to attend the event which will now be held on

Sunday 5th December at 11am.

As we are having the event in December it will be combined with our annual Christmas Rally.

We hope you can join us for some end of year fun, and 40 years wrapped up into one fabulous event!

Tickets can be purchased online at [www.jpc.org.au](http://www.jpc.org.au)

**Gold Sponsors:** Auslan Services, Deafness Foundation, Expression Australia

**Silver Sponsors:** Echo Interpreting

**Supporters:** Melbourne Racing Club, Missionary Sisters of Service.

## **Community Activities Update**

**Due to Government restrictions and lockdowns, the rules for community activities and gatherings in 2021 are constantly changing.**

This can affect groups in different ways depending on their numbers and the type of activities. It is important to keep in touch about when groups are happening or not. Please email us at [admin@jpc.org.au](mailto:admin@jpc.org.au) OR keep an eye on our Facebook page [www.facebook.com/JohnPierceCentre](http://www.facebook.com/JohnPierceCentre)

## **As Flat as a Pancake**

**By Melissa Thompson—Signee Tots Coordinator**

I've spent a lot of time reading JPC newsletters lately. In fact, in the last 6 months I've read every issue since 1991! This has been as part of my work researching and writing the book celebrating the 40-year history of JPC.

As I sit here trying to write my report for this August 2021 newsletter, though, I cannot think of much to say. For the past seven years I have spent my time planning, promoting, running and then packing up after Signee Tots sessions every fortnight. This year, although I have planned a lot of sessions, many of them have had to be cancelled due to last minute 'snap' lockdowns.

How I miss the children and families! To be honest, I have felt quite flat about not being able to do my usual work. And my feedback from families is that many of you are feeling the same. It has been a long 18 months. At the beginning of this pandemic, I organised and ran regular online sessions, but over time I have noticed the engagement drop off. And I am not surprised. Zoom is no longer a novelty and we have so many other things to do while at home – working from home, supporting children remote learning, etc.

In the first week of August, with over 14 million Australians in lockdown, many are finding it hard. In an article from 'The Age' newspaper, educational and developmental psychologist Emily Berger said, "[For Melburnians], there's increased stress, anxiety, uncertainty and frustration. People's resilience has ebbed and flowed". Jayashri Kulkarni, a professor of psychiatry at Monash University and Alfred Health added "I have a sense people are tired". ('Fatigue weighs heavy as Victoria snaps back into lockdown', The Age, July 17, 2021).

Authors of an article in 'The Conversation' on June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021 talked about the impact of repeated lockdowns. They wrote "if you're a Melburnian and you're feeling more stressed, uncertain, anxious, lonely or burnt out, or are worrying more about COVID-19, these reactions are completely normal". ('Lockdowns don't get easier the more we have them. Melbourne, here are 6 tips to help you cope', The Conversation, June 3, 2021)

There are a number of ways to look after your mental health during this time and these include:

1. Staying connected with others
2. Thinking about what's in your control and what's not

This is a picture that Gail Finn put into our Staff Whatsapp Group recently, to help with this.

3. Looking after your body – including getting a good night's sleep and doing physical activity, healthy eating, and limiting alcohol and drugs.
4. Seek support

There is another article from 'The Conversation' which talks about the disruptions of Covid lockdowns and school closures on children's mental health and development. One of the ways to help children who are lonely is through play. Parents can help their children play, making time and playing with their children through the day.

Where possible, it is best to do this off devices such as computers and tablets, and even better is to play outside. The most important thing the authors describe is for parents to "be a role model - [because] children often mimic their parents. The best way to ensure children grow up healthy and happy is to be a role model to them. More play, and enough quality time outdoors with children is good for your own health and happiness too." ('Are the kids alright? Social isolation can take a toll, but play can help', The Conversation, Sept 17, 2020).

JPC is here to help in any way that we can during these hard times. In June, JPC partnered with Playgroup Victoria and Hullabaloo Music, to host an interpreted online session for families called 'All Come Out to Play'.

### **Over 50 families attended this fun and energetic Zoom session.**

ALL Come Out To Play! helps children learn about respectful relationships and gender equality through music, song and dance. These free of charge music sessions are beamed direct from Hullabaloo Music's audio visual studio straight into the comfort of your own home. They are LIVE and totally INTERACTIVE! So clear some space and get ready to sing and dance and LAUGH! Oh, and don't forget to ask the Grandparents to join in – they will get such a kick out of seeing their grandkids sing and dance and having fun.

<https://www.playgroup.org.au/all-come-out-to-play/>

If you missed out on the live session, don't worry! The session is being recorded and will be available on the JPC website for Signee Tots families.

JPC, Playgroup Victoria, and Hullabulloo Music are also planning another similar online interactive event, this one called 'Move It 4 Life'.

Watch the JPC Facebook page for updates. You can also join the Signee Tots email list for regular updates, by emailing Melissa at [m.thompson@jpc.org.au](mailto:m.thompson@jpc.org.au)

We do also have tentative dates for Signee Tots sessions, but of course these will only be possible if Covid restrictions allow. You will need to wait for confirmation closer to the day, but if you would like the dates for your diary, they are:

- \* Tuesday August 31,
- \* Tuesday October 19,
- \* Tuesday November 16,
- \* Tuesday November 30,
- \* Tuesday December 14 – Signee Tots Christmas Party

So, in conclusion, yes many of us feel flat, and that is okay. The staff of JPC are here if you need support, and there are better days coming.

As I was reminded when my husband appeared with pikelets this morning, things that are flat are not always bad! I look forward to the day we can gather and eat pancakes together.

Melissa

**Remember!! For information on any community activities, please contact Katrina:  
SMS: 0400 660 601 / E: [k.mynard@jpc.org.au](mailto:k.mynard@jpc.org.au)**

## **Deaf Art and Craft**

### **Fridays from 10am-2pm**

You must register to attend so please contact us to join this group

Even though some sessions have been at home and some in the centre at JPC, there is still lots of fun to be had with Deaf Arts And Crafts. Check out some of the group's recent work!

If you are interested in joining us please contact the group Co-Ordinator Diane via

email: [d.backholer@jpc.org.au](mailto:d.backholer@jpc.org.au)

### **Ladies' Get Together**

The Ladies have been getting back out there for get togethers!  
- Co-ordinated by Diane Backholer

Having the opportunity to catch up with friends has been fabulous for the Deaf Ladies Get Together. Re-connecting and sharing experiences of the last year is good for our mental health.

If you would like to join the Ladies Get Together please contact Diane via email:  
[d.backholer@jpc.org.au](mailto:d.backholer@jpc.org.au)

### **Pankina & Deaf Men's Group**

Due to the Deaf Men's Group numbers decreasing, they have opened up their group to Pankina attendees, so all are now welcome to attend the sessions. There have been a few sessions of Pankina and the Men's Group over the past few months which has been a great time to catch up with friends after such a challenging time throughout the Covid-19 pandemic and even though we are not out of the challenges yet, it is well worth it to get together when we can.

Stay safe, stay well, stay connected, stay home!

### **Video Series: Connection to Faith**

#### Prayer Series

Whilst times continue to be challenging and many people are isolated during lockdowns from their families and friends, the JPC team continue to provide connections to faith with regular Auslan prayers that can be watched online. We hope that you are enjoying watching and connecting with your faith and God. His offering of strength and resilience during these times are so valuable in our lives. Please watch on our Facebook or our website.

### **Our Deaf Interpreting Team**

If you have been watching Mass from St Patrick's Cathedral on Channel 31 each Sunday at 11am then you will know that we have had a dedicated team of Deaf Interpreters working each week to interpret the Mass. The learnings have been extraordinary for the team of Interpreters and all involved. The team also attended a

workshop to support their skill development of interpreting in the catholic faith.

Last month, The Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne wrote an article about Katrina Mynard, and her work as a Deaf Interpreter at St Patrick's Cathedral. It was a fabulous article about her work and the progression towards using Deaf Interpreters in religious settings. Katrina and Gail Finn also work at JPC each month, signing the Mass. JPC is proud to be leading the way in using Deaf Interpreters and Deaf led faith! We hope you can join us for our next service.

### Calendar for Masses

Every Sunday for the time being (ongoing during the covid pandemic)

11am televised on Channel 31 (sometimes listed as channel 44 on digital TV) or Youtube.

Sunday 19 September JPC 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday Mass: 11am at JPC if Government restrictions allow and live streamed to [www.facebook.com/JohnPierceCentre](http://www.facebook.com/JohnPierceCentre)

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> October JPC 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday Mass: 11am at JPC and livestreamed

Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> November JPC Memorial Mass: 11am at JPC and livestreamed

Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> December JPC Christmas Rally: 11am at St John's Evangelist Church East Melbourne

You can also watch 'Mass For You At Home' which is televised on Channel 10 each Sunday morning at 6am.

**What is a prayer of Spiritual Communion**—A prayer of Spiritual Communion is a prayer that can be made if you can not attend Mass to receive the sacrament of communion bread. It is the expression of our deep desire to be united to Him even though we can not attend Mass. Below is a prayer of spiritual communion for you.

### **My Jesus,**

I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, Come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen

We remember always, those that have been a part of our lives, as their spirits are weaved through the story that is our Deaf community.

### **Rest in Peace**

**Andrew May - 22nd April**

**Eunice Finn - 2nd July**

**Nathasia Domingo - 5th July**

**Mary Delahunty - 12th July**

**Esme Harford - 13th July**

**Nance Takacs - 22nd July**

### **Leave a bequest**

By leaving a gift to John Pierce Centre in your Will, you will have a lasting impact, supporting our centre for years to come. It is a powerful reflection of the values and principles you treasure. It enables you to create a legacy of love and care for those in need.

For more information, please contact our office on 03 9525 1158 or email [admin@jpc.org.au](mailto:admin@jpc.org.au) Thank you.

### **NDIS National Disability Insurance Scheme**

**Are you over 65 and not eligible for an NDIS plan? Did you know that you can still access interpreting support through Expression Australia?**

If you are over 65 and do not have an NDIS plan, you can still get access to interpreters through Auslan Connections at Expression Australia. You do not have to pay for the interpreting as the Government have provided financial assistance for those over 65. You can contact Auslan Connections to request an interpreter for things like going to a community activity, or going to church.

**If you need assistance or more information please talk to the staff at JPC.**

### **Mental health and wellbeing**

During the Covid-19 pandemic, our mental health has become even more important. We know that the impacts of isolation, lockdowns and restrictions can take a toll on our wellbeing so it's important to take care of yourself and others around you.

Things you can do to maintain good mental health are:

- \* **Regular physical activity** like walking and spending time outside as well as **eating healthy foods**.
- \* **Stay connected** with friends and family through FaceTime, Zoom/video chat and/or sending SMS to reach out to others.
- \* Following a **routine** each day.
- \* **Take a break** and be kind to yourself.
- \* **Reach out** to others when you are feeling low or lonely.
- \* **Seek support** from professionals if needed such as LifeLine or Beyond Blue.  
[www.headtohealth.gov.au](http://www.headtohealth.gov.au) is a great website with information to help you find support.

**Your contribution:**

**Help us to support Deaf people and their families throughout VIC by making a tax deductible donation today.**

**Office Hours-**

**MON - FRI: by appointment only as deemed necessary. Please make contact via email at [admin@jpc.org.au](mailto:admin@jpc.org.au)**

**Chocolate Crackles Recipe**

An oldie but a goodie! Great to make with the kids and easy to find ingredients. You can also add in bits of marshmallow or other sweets like M&Ms that you like, to make them extra yummy!

**Ingredients**

- 250g capha
- 4 cups rice bubbles
- 1 cup icing sugar
- 1/3 cup cocoa
- 1 cup desiccated coconut

**Method:**

Step 1

Melt the copha gently in a small saucepan. Cool slightly.

Step 2

Combine the rice bubbles, sifted sugar and cocoa with the coconut in a large bowl.

Stir in the copha and mix well. Spoon mixture into paper patty cases and refrigerate until firm.

**If you have a great recipe you'd like to share, please send it to [admin@jpc.org.au](mailto:admin@jpc.org.au) so that we can share it with the community!**

Two new Bishops for Melbourne

Auxiliary bishops are those who assist the Archbishop in governing / leading the church of Melbourne.

Recently two new auxiliary bishops were ordained in Melbourne:

Most Reverend Bishop Anthony John Ireland, bishop for the Southern Region;

Most Reverend Bishop Martin Ashe, bishop for the Western Region.

JPC wish them well on their journey with Christ and their connection to the community.

**JPC would like to thank the following organisations for their support through grants and sponsorships.**

Deafness Foundation

Community Bank Windsor – Bendigo Bank

Auslan Services

Expression Australia

Echo Interpreting

Ephpheta Foundation

Gorman Foundation

**Ephpheta! Be Open to the workings of God**

When you find yourself in the position to help someone, be happy and feel blessed because God is answering that person's prayer through you.

Remember, our purpose on earth is not to get lost in the dark but to be a light to others, so that they may find way through us.