



Dear Friends,

It was amazing last Sunday how many fellow rock collectors came out of the woodwork - or should I say, the stonework? (See what I did there, Callum! 😊 Thanks for your ‘between a rock and a hard place’ comment on the sermon last Sunday!)

Here is a picture of my cousin, Laura, with one of the walls she built at her stone wall building course.

I put a link to last Sunday’s service in the family WhatsApp to thank Laura for the great sermon illustration material, and she sent back a picture of her rock collection (she is also a rock collector!) that is, *“lovingly stored,”* she writes, *“in my memory box built by Uncle David”*.



I found that very moving – that Laura’s rocks and memories are housed in a display box built by my dad. I know dad found it hard to reconcile the world view he had grown up with and the biblical teaching he had been given with the news his much-loved niece (my parents looked after Laura before she went to school) had a girlfriend and they were planning to be married. But I also know he loved her very deeply.

That is what it means to be living stones. To know we are all different; that God is calling all sorts of different people; and that we are called to welcome and to love one another. That is what we celebrated on Sunday. And that is what we witnessed as people came from our community centre groups, from the local community, and from far and wide to celebrate with us

My very special thanks to everyone who made Sunday's *All are Welcome Day* such a beautiful occasion!

- To all of you who brought your welcoming faces and your plates of yummy morning tea – thank you! *(BTW there are still a few plates being kept safely in the office – so please collect them from Rebecca!)*
- To Aron and your set-up crew; Daniel, Eric and Glenn – thank you!
- To Faye and your incredible bunch (see what I did there! 😊) of balloon inflaters; Alan and Sue, Meryl and Glenn, Sepideh – thank you! The balloons made the whole event look fantastic!
- To Steve and your info desk team; Ben, Monica, Peter and Tracey – thank you!
- To Sue and the morning tea team; Ana and Maddie, Charo, Edna, Josephine, Miriam, Pam and Simone – thank you!
- To Sharon and the group from the Kingston Organic Community Garden (who raised over \$1000 for Canberra Refugee Support) – thank you!
- To Rebecca and the history tour team (looking very flash in your fluoro vests!); Catherine, Kenji, Meryl and Penny – thank you.
- And finally to David and the BBQ team; Aron and Richard – yum!

They say, “*many hands make light work*” (that was a favourite expression of my dad's), but we could also say, “*many hands make light shine*”, as was the case on Sunday – or perhaps “*many living stones help build the spiritual house God is building!*”

Let us build a house where love can dwell
and all can safely live,
a place where saints and children tell
how hearts learn to forgive.
Built of hopes and dreams and visions,
rock of faith and vault of grace;
here the love of Christ shall end divisions.
*All are welcome, all are welcome,
all are welcome in this place.*

Grace and peace. Happy “All are Welcome Day 2026!”

Belinda