



Issue 39
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THE VOICE OF THE UNITED CHURCH IN CANADA
FREE

New Times

October // November 2020

One CHURCH...
Many VOICES



New Times

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Synod of South Australia

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NB: There will be no December/January 2020 edition of *New Times*

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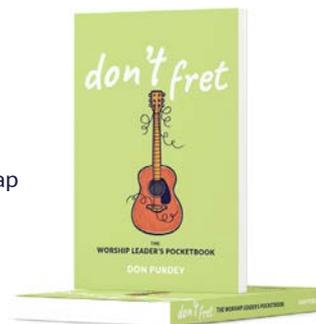
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'The Alberton Art Trail' art-works by the Trinity Alberton UC are intended to explore the multiple meanings and experiences of 'home' for the local community and enable local people to meet and be creative together.

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PLACEMENTS NEWS

Placements finalised as at 29 September 2020

Tea Tree Gully UC - Rev Roger Brook from 1 October 2020
Plains Community Church (Joint Church of Christ/UCA) (0.4) –
Ms Leanne Davis (MoP) – start date TBA

Advertised placements

Disaster Recovery Worker (Kangaroo Island) for 12 months
Chaplain, Lyell McEwin (NALHN) with a Mental Health focus (0.5FTE)

Vacant placements

The following is the list of vacant (or soon to be vacant) approved placements:

PROFILES AVAILABLE

Generate Presbytery

Loxton UC / Renmark UC / Renmark West; Port Augusta UC (0.5)

Presbytery of Southern SA

Adare UC; Noarlunga UC (2nd placement); Rosefiled UC; Seaford
Ecumenical Mission (0.4) (Joint Christ of Church/UCA)

Linked Congregations in Multiple Presbyteries

South West Fleurieu (0.5) - Delamere UC, Range Road UC, Yankalilla UC;
Southern Yorke Peninsula (0.5-0.6?)

PROFILES NOT YET AVAILABLE

Wimala Presbytery

Trinity Alberton (0.5) from 1 January 2021

Presbytery of Southern SA

Newland UC (0.5?)

Linked Congregations in Multiple Presbyteries

Ardrossan Parish (0.6) - Ardrossan UC, Clinton Centre UC, Dowlingville UC,
Price UC

For more information about placements, please visit

sa.uca.org.au/pastoral-relations-mission-planning/placements-vacant-and-finalised

Many voices...



Caption: The Congress Congregation, Port Augusta - meeting at the Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden

The other day, as I looked at my diary, I noticed the diversity in the appointments, meetings and events I have recently attended. They varied considerably in duration, location, subject and participants. It reinforced to me that we are indeed one church with many voices, and made me aware of the privilege of my role, that I am able to be involved across the breadth of the Uniting Church, as we worship, witness and serve in our different ways, together as God's people.

I have appreciated the opportunity to visit country congregations with the General Secretary. Since the beginning of August we have been to Ceduna and Mount Gambier, as well as many places in between. From these congregations we have heard of joys and struggles, hopes for the future, and questions about the Church and our faith. It is a joy to hear of people sharing worship resources with neighbours over these past few months, encouraging each other in faith and life.

I am also aware of a degree of exhaustion among the leadership of some congregations. Implementing significant change while maintaining pastoral care and support in different circumstances takes significant physical and mental effort. Many congregations are especially concerned for Victorian congregations and how we can best support them through prayer, contact and pastoral care.

I appreciated being able to attend the launch of the Uniting Church's 14th

Emergency Relief Centre at Brougham Place UC. The generosity in providing for the needs of people in hardship by establishing new outlets for care, as well as their continuing support of existing organisations, demonstrates our living out of the Gospel in very powerful and practical ways.

“
**We are indeed one church
with many voices, and for
this we praise God.**”



Caption: Launch of the Emergency Relief Centre at Brougham Place Uniting Church

Through my engagement with boards and committees, both within the church and through associated organisations, I sense a desire to engage more closely with the marginalised and vulnerable in our communities. Some of our schools and colleges in particular have expressed a desire to connect more closely with First Peoples. I have met with individuals and

groups with particular interests in social justice, the environment, covenanting, school ministry, education, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) congregations, overseas partnerships, remote ministry and young leaders. These are just some of the voices outside of the structured organisations and committees within the church, and are important in establishing connections, providing support in meaningful ways, and bringing about real and lasting change.

In all of my interactions I hear a range of voices, and many are encouraging. I witness the best aspects of the life of the church through congregations and other organisations working together to discern God's direction. However there are struggles and difficulties in our world which need to be acknowledged. In listening to each other and exploring those things that are important to us we can focus on our communal worship, witness and service as the people of God together. 'The Church's call is to serve that end: to be a fellowship of reconciliation, a body within which the diverse gifts of its members are used for the building up of the whole' (*Basis of Union*, paragraph 3). We are indeed one church with many voices, and for this we praise God.

Blessings,

Bronte Wilson

Bronte Wilson ■

From the Editor

By the time the October/November issue of *New Times* is published I will have completed just over three months in my new role as Executive Officer Engagement with the Synod of South Australia.

In the short time that I have been with the Synod I have learned much, especially about the diversity of the Uniting Church and its ability to connect with all peoples, which is very much reflected in this issue of *New Times* as it explores the theme *One Church ... Many Voices*.

In this issue we feature the three Presbyteries of Wimala, Generate and Presbytery of Southern SA. They have responded enthusiastically to appearing in this issue, taking the opportunity to highlight who they are and how they continue to support their congregations.

As I researched the article on the proposed Nuclear Waste Facility at Kimba, I found that there were many voices on all sides of the argument. It seems that there is no easy fix to what is a complex issue and there is no doubt that the debate is not yet over.

Members of the Engagement team also had the opportunity to visit and interview Rev Nicholas Rundle, Chaplain at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, who has developed a Mindfulness program that supports front-line health-workers. His work is so important in filling a need to ensure the health and well-being of all people during these especially challenging and uncertain times.

I applaud Tarlee Leondaris for the courage to convey her story – as it is not always the case that we see all sides of a situation; and as the Moderator and General Secretary have continued to visit country congregations diverse voices are present at every turn.

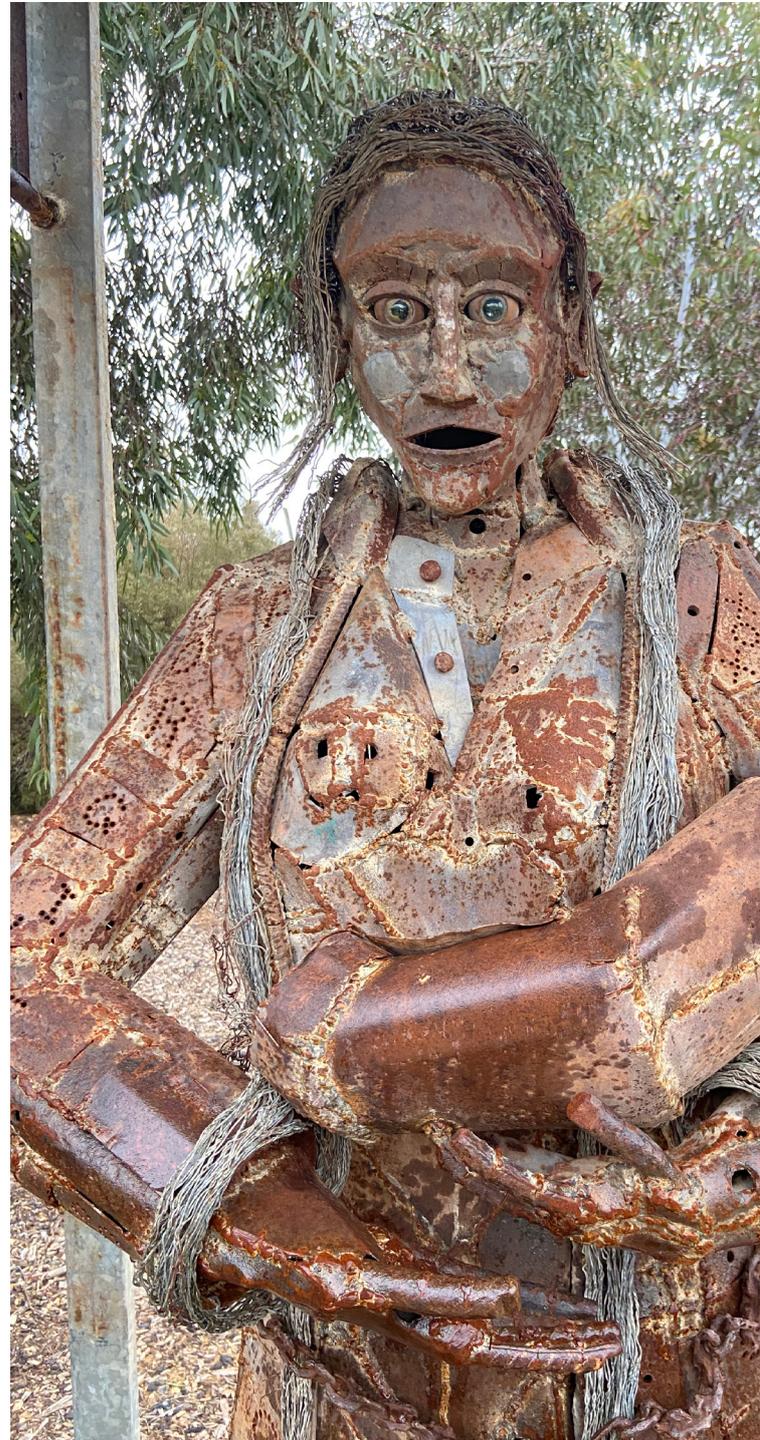
As we engaged widely from a variety of sources for this issue, it became clear that the over-arching message conveyed throughout is that regardless of race, ethnicity, age, gender or circumstance – we are asked to understand what it means to be the 'other' and to act with compassion.

To quote Rev Dr Christy Capper, 'Our different voices do not need to separate us; after all God has one church. Instead, our voices will catch the ears of different people, of different ways of thinking, and draw others into the song. So let us joyfully bring together our different voices, allowing the Holy Spirit to guide our voices ...'

Bransome

Bridget Ransome ■

Working to get it right ...



Caption: Part of the community art project at Karoonda, celebrating the historical contribution, joys and challenges that women make to their community



It is a gospel imperative for the church to work with those who are hurting, marginalised and at risk.

In the last few weeks I have been mindful that as a church we don't always get it right. On my travels to regional South Australia with the Moderator, most congregations have been warm and hospitable, keen to participate in a conversation that is seeking to discern God's future for the Uniting Church. They have been safe places to ask difficult questions, to raise issues of concern, to name painful events and to seek pathways for reconciliation and

hope. However there are congregations where some people behave badly and are abusive and I leave those meetings with an expectation that we will all do the work that is necessary for our relationships to be nurtured and restored by the love and grace of God.

'For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ ... If one member suffers, all suffer together with it ... (1Cor 12:12-31).

The biblical text, our personal experience of Jesus, the *Basis of Union*, the Code of Ethics and our particular personality type all serve to shape our formation for ministry, mission and leadership, and for how we manage grief and loss, anxiety and conflict, difficult conversations and bad behaviour.

It is a gospel imperative for the church to work with those who are hurting, marginalised and at risk. In recent weeks some of the issues that I have engaged with include: actively listening to church councils who are struggling to deal with leaders who engage in bullying behaviours; visiting a woman who experienced physical abuse enacted by a minister; and working with a presbytery concerning perceived misconduct by a person in congregational leadership. I have also written a letter to a victim of sexual violence perpetrated by a member of the Uniting Church stating: '... We express our regret, and deeply and unreservedly apologise for the trauma and abuse you experienced ... we accept responsibility for the way our ministers, pastors and lay leaders

conduct themselves, and expect they are called to treat people with generosity and grace, not to misrepresent their skills, and maintain the highest integrity in relationships with people under their care ... and we acknowledge that some ministers, pastors and lay leaders fall short of these standards.

We continue to make efforts to increase the professionalism of ministers, pastors and lay leaders and their accountability to appropriate bodies ... We apologise for the abuse that occurred, the trauma that you experienced and any way in which your engagement with our processes may have inhibited your journey to recovery.'

In all these things we have a responsibility to equip ourselves, to receive training, and to manage diligently and professionally the ugly and inappropriate parts of human community as and when they emerge in our Church. Thanks be to God.

Rev Felicity Amery ■

The many voices of Kimba

Bridget Ransome

A few years back when I was employed in a different role in another organisation, I was invited to present a paper for a conference that was being held at the Lucas Heights Nuclear Reactor Facility in New South Wales.

I was intrigued to visit the facility, and our first day commenced with a tour and a bit of a history lesson about the early days of radioactive research and nuclear energy leading up to the present day. I found it surprising that in the 1950s some manufacturers of crockery used to create

radiation evident. Of course none of these methods of manufacturing are used on everyday items today because we are more well-informed about their impact. However, during my visit I also had the opportunity to (safely) look down into the reactor to watch how the life-giving drugs required in the treatment of cancer are made.

It is a strange contrast – to be aware of the harmful impacts of radioactivity and the negative aspects often attributed to all things ‘nuclear’ and to the fact that the science enables the production of drugs that can prolong life. And then there is the question of the waste and what to do with it – which also presents many contrasts.

‘The challenge of making nuclear power safer doesn’t end after the power has been generated. Nuclear fuel remains dangerously radioactive for thousands of years after it is no longer useful in a commercial reactor. The resulting waste disposal problem has become a major challenge for policymakers.’ (Source: Union of Concerned Scientists)

Debate ensues about where this waste should be stored and how it should be stored and often remote sites are considered the most appropriate.

In 2015 the Federal Government approached the South Australian communities of Kimba and Hawker to explore potential locations to store the nuclear waste generated by the Lucas Heights Nuclear Reactor Facility ...

and this is when many voices became involved. The voice of local government, churches; farmers; towns-people and the indigenous.

Although two sites were initially being considered the Hawker site was dismissed due to an overwhelming response from the community who were against the proposal.

The focus then moved to Kimba where community sentiment wasn’t so negative but still controversial. ‘As debate rages over where Australia’s first permanent nuclear waste dump should be placed, the Federal Government has announced it will offer a \$31 million package to the community which takes it on,’ said ABC Radio back in July 2018.

Apparently the offer of \$31 million is made up of \$20 million for community development; \$8 million to provide training and up to \$3 million over three years for indigenous training and cultural heritage protection.

It is interesting that the government allocated funding to the indigenous community when the traditional owners of the land were never consulted in the first place!

The Barnjarla Determination Aboriginal Corporation (BDAC) is the native title holders in the region and they believe they were unfairly discriminated against by being excluded from the original Nuclear Waste Dump Ballot.

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It is a strange contrast – to be aware of the harmful impacts of radioactivity and the negative aspects often attributed to all things ‘nuclear’ and to the fact that the science enables the production of drugs that can prolong life.

the vivid colours of their plates with a form of radioactive paint! The plates were sealed and safe to use, unless of course, they cracked! Or did you know that watch hands also used to be radioactive so that they could glow in the dark!

A Geiger counter was used on each of the items to show us the level of



‘The Creator Spirit lives within the land and sustains us, it is just as connected to us as is our family and kin. Once the land is destroyed so is our kinship with the land. In support of the Traditional Custodians of the area, the Barngarla, I stand firmly opposed to a Nuclear Waste Dump Facility at Kimba,’ said Rhanee Tsetsakos, Co-Chair, Covenanting Committee.

In September 2016 the SA Standing Committee of the Synod of South Australia also formally agreed to stand in covenant solidarity with the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress on the issue of nuclear waste repositories in South Australia. Unfortunately, in March of this year *The Advertiser* reported that the BDACs appeal to the Federal Court to prevent the waste dump had failed.

In December 2019 there were renewed calls to dump Kimba as the preferred location for a nuclear waste facility. The voices of the community were getting louder and dissent appeared on all sides of the argument.

Does the town and region need an injection of new industry to keep it alive, farmers are struggling, after all jobs are scarce – but what will be the long-term implications of the choices made today? Should they take the cash and

use it to revitalise the town and the wider community – upgrade local buildings, improve facilities and simply let future generations worry about the waste and its potential impact?

‘Although over 60% of the local Kimba community voted for the nuclear waste facility, we still have a part of the community and our congregation who do not agree. There is no easy fix it seems,’ said Brian Cant, Chairperson of the Church Council at Kimba Uniting Church.

It is interesting that the Federal Government has previously indicated that it will not proceed with a Nuclear Waste Facility unless it has a clear majority of community support. At this point in time a clear majority is not self-evident, yet the Federal Government continues to progress its radioactive waste bill through Parliament which will effectively remove a community’s right to legal review. There is also no clear understanding as to why it is necessary to move waste to Kimba.

September 2020 and the decision to build the nuclear waste dump at Kimba is being hailed as a great economic recovery story for the region. It seems that there is no easy solution to this issue and there are still many voices ... ■

“
The voices of the community were getting louder and dissent appeared on both sides of the argument.

Sources:

- Union of Concerned Scientists, <https://www.ucsusa.org/resources/nuclear-waste>.
- ‘Kimba nuclear dump moves a step closer,’ *The Advertiser*, March 14th, 2020.
- ‘SA farm named as nuclear waste dump,’ *The Canberra Times*, February 1st, 2020.
- ‘Ecowarriors should get out of the way of vital Kimba nuclear dump,’ *The Advertiser*, February 4th, 2020.
- ‘Multi-million dollar incentive put on the table for town that takes on nuclear waste facility,’ ABC Radio Adelaide, July 23rd, 2018.



Finding my voice in Christianity and Spirituality

Tarlee Leonardis

During the *Season of Creation*, Rev Jenni Hughes invited me to speak at Brougham Place Uniting Church. The theme was being blessed by creation and acting in ways that bless creation. Jenni and I briefly discussed that I would present about the importance of connection to land from my perspective as a person of Aboriginal heritage. I felt honoured to lend my voice to a topic I felt deeply about.

I have always felt a strong connection to land, so talking on this topic seemed simple enough. All I had to do was write down my feelings on paper, then rock up to Brougham Place on Sunday and read the paper.

I was so wrong. The topic was not simple and it definitely was not easy to write about. Little was I to know that the theme would lead me on a personal journey of self-reflection. Helping me to better understand my own spirituality and voice in amongst other Christians.

In the week leading up to the presentation, I tried to put pen to paper but it was hard to express the thoughts of my heart in words. After giving up on pen and paper, I moved onto trying to type my thoughts. I sat staring at a blank document for a significant amount of time ... still nothing!

For a couple of days I thought about why it was that I could not describe my connection to land. Finally, it came to me. My connection is not one of words. My connection is one of feeling. I experience it when I am outdoors when I feel the earth beneath me, when I can smell the scent of eucalyptus or when I feel the cool touch of the breeze on my skin. It is in these moments where I feel the earth has restored and rejuvenated me. It is in these moments where I feel an instant sense of calm and it is in these moments I feel true clarity in my head and heart – when I know what it is to be truly alive.

I wish I could share some cultural education in connection to this. Unfortunately, I just do not have that knowledge to share. I grew up not learning about my family's culture. My mother was a child of the Stolen Generation. She was born in the 1960s to

an Aboriginal woman. Authorities removed my mother at birth for being a 'half-caste' child and it saddens me deeply to know my biological grandmother was not allowed to have a voice. Even the most basic right such as to keep her own child was taken away from her. Perhaps this is why I feel so strongly about sharing my family heritage because in the life of the church today, I can give a voice to the voiceless of the past.

I never had the opportunity to meet my biological grandmother as she passed away when I was a small child. I wish I had had an opportunity to know her and learn our culture from her, unfortunately that was not to be.

For many Aboriginal people, kinship, the importance of family and Country are vitally important to all aspects of life. This leads me to reflect on the question 'What about people like me?' My Aboriginality runs in my blood and is a part of my identity; my heritage; and my genetic make-up – it is quite literally in my DNA.

Although, there have been many occasions in my life where I have felt a dwindling of this sense of pride – having light skin, often Second People have not recognised me as Aboriginal. In school, work and even church I have had to endure awful racist remarks about Aboriginal people. I would refer to this as passive aggressive ignorance, where those being racist do not realise they are being offensive. Many times, I have struggled to find my voice. I have sat silent and offended with my sense of pride slowly destroyed with every derogatory word.

Then there is what I would call 'reverse ignorance.' Where I have tried to connect with other First Peoples but not been deemed Aboriginal enough. I did not grow up on Country or with culture so to some I am not a 'true' Aboriginal person. This is almost more hurtful than ignorance from a Second People as it leads to questioning my self-identity.

Much like everyone in this incredibly complex world, I have had to find my own peace and come to terms with my own identity. There are two ways I truly experience peace. Earlier I described my connection to land as a feeling and it is in this feeling that

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My connection is one of feeling. I experience it when I am outdoors when I feel the earth beneath me, when I can smell the scent of eucalyptus or when I feel the cool touch of the breeze on my skin.

International Mission Update: Many Voices ... One church ... One Mission

I find my peace. The feeling of truly being content. It is in this connection to land that I really feel my biological grandmother and ancestors walk with me.

The only other place I experience this contentment is in Christ. It is in the words of Scripture and in prayer that I feel the same connection. People ask me, 'How is Aboriginal spirituality connected to Christianity?' I am definitely not a Theologian of any sort so my answer is not a learned one. However, I can say from my personal experience it is when I have the earth beneath my feet, smell the eucalyptus and feel the breeze on my skin which is the same feeling I have when I connect to Christ. I can only help others understand by asking the question 'What is it that makes you trust in Christ?' Is it the words of Scripture, a lived experience or your time in prayer? If from any of these, you have felt that overwhelming feeling of hope, safety or as I describe it contentment, then that is the feeling I am referring to.

It leads me to believe if I am experiencing this feeling through my connection to the earth and my connection with Christ that the two are interconnected. That is how I believe Aboriginal spirituality connects with Christianity.

We are truly blessed by creation and all the natural beauty of the earth. Our Lord is the God of First and Second Peoples and we are connected through our Creator Spirit. I truly believe our call as Christians is to use our blessings as strengths to bless others. I encourage us all to be inclusive of all God's people and to accept and be kind to all regardless of race or cultural background. ■



Tarlee Leondaris is the Covenanting and International Mission Officer within the Synod of SAs Mission Resourcing Team

2020 has been a challenging year for international mission. This is certainly the case for the SA Synod's international partnerships with the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP) and the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (PROK).

Of paramount concern has been the impact of COVID-19 on our partner churches. It has been a harrowing experience to hear stories, especially from Christians in the Philippines experiencing many hardships including human rights violations.

Recently the Promotion of Church Peoples Response (PCPR) Australia along with the Filipino National Conference in the Uniting Church facilitated an online conference for 'Church People's Prophetic Voices against State Terrorism in the Philippines.' This forum was inspiring to join virtually and to stand in solidarity with Filipino Christians. A recording of the forum is available on the PCPR Facebook page at www.facebook.com/PCPRAus.

As the International Mission Officer, I would really like to learn about how congregations are doing international mission. Likewise, how the Mission Resourcing team can support and resource congregations for international mission. We find ourselves in a perplexing time, where we cannot do international mission the way we previously did. This does not have to burden us, instead, it should encourage reflection on the importance of partnerships, solidarity for social justice issues and ecumenical sharing.

Likewise, it opens possibilities for all Christians to do mission. Not just those who are fortunate enough to travel or host international guests. It may also present opportunities for congregations to collaborate on international mission in similar parts of the world. This may lead to improved resource sharing.

I would like to facilitate international mission workshops that provide opportunities for virtual mission trips as well as information sharing about mission between congregations. If you would like to participate, please email or phone me. Please also consider answering the following questions in your correspondence:

- What countries and churches does your congregation partner with?
- What international mission activities is your congregation contemplating or doing?
- How can the Mission Resourcing team support and/or resource your congregation's international mission activities?

For more information, contact Tarlee Leondaris on internationalmission@sa.uca.org.au or 8236 4264 ■

God's Church and its buildings ... *fit for Mission?*

The church, like our local communities, is not the same as it once was. We live in an increasingly regulated society and a commitment to ensuring the church and its communities are safe is both a priority and of critical importance to us all.

Over the past two years the Synod of SA Resources Board has been conducting an extensive audit of our properties across the state as part of a wider Property Review Project.

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We anticipate that congregation leaders around our state will engage in on-going discussions about how we continue to provide safe spaces ...

Visiting 264 congregations has been no small feat, and we wish to express our heartfelt thanks to all of the volunteers who have hosted visits.

Like most organisations we have specific regulatory responsibilities when it comes to people and buildings and during the initial visits we focused on five safety aspects:

 **Building condition**
(roofing materials, flashings, gutters, ceiling materials, stormwater systems, movements/cracking in walls, condition of amenities)

 **Asbestos**
(asbestos register, asbestos management plan, necessary signage)

 **Accessibility**
(clearly defined disabled car-parks, wheelchair/threshold ramps, hand-rails, disabled toilets, doorways/walkways of sufficient width)

 **Electrical safety**
(Residual Current Device [RCD or safety switches], Test & Tag, Earthing system, older style switchboards)

 **Fire safety**
(exit lighting and evacuation plans, fire exit doors, extinguishers, clear fire exit pathways).

Most congregations have now received their *Building Safety Report*, with some remaining congregations (whose visits were delayed due to COVID-19) who will receive their reports in October.

The Building Safety Reports are designed as a guide to congregations in helping to highlight maintenance tasks and/or projects to ensure that each property is a safe place for members and guests.



It includes everything required to fulfil statutory responsibilities in relation to building management.

Included in reports is some indicative costing information which can help each Church Council plan and budget for works in coming years. Many congregations weren't surprised by their report, but for others, reading the report was daunting and overwhelming. Knowing that the health and safety of our people is paramount, it is our hope that each Church Council will work with its respective Presbytery, as well as the Synod, to explore the contents of their *Building Safety Report*.

We aim to empower every congregation to ensure that they meet their statutory requirements for building safety management and that long-term they have a system in place to maintain buildings into the future.

One of the things that the Property Review has shown is that only a small percentage of church buildings meet current safety guidelines and in fact, the majority require further work. Works range from minor matters (such as steps, glass door decals etc.) through to significant building works (such as cracking walls, roof replacements etc.). Some works are urgent and will require immediate attention, while other works may not be necessary for a number of years. The spread of works is not limited to any particular geographic area, age of building, demographic of congregation or particular Presbytery. We anticipate that congregation leaders around

our state will engage in on-going discussions about how we continue to provide safe spaces for our worshippers and communities.

The next stage of the Property Review Project will be the presentation of a discussion paper to the next SA Synod meeting in February 2021. This discussion paper will provide the Synod with an overview of the safety of the Church's buildings throughout the state and will stimulate conversation about how we ensure our

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We aim to empower every congregation to ensure that they meet their statutory requirements for building safety management ...

buildings are fit for mission now and into the future. The report is a collated overview and does not include individual data.

Congregations with concerns in relation to the practical content of your *Building Safety Report* (e.g. any items that you consider to be confusing or incorrect) are encouraged to contact the Synod of SA Property Services Team at propertyreview@sa.uca.org.au. A member of the team will be in touch as soon as possible. If you have any pastoral or missional concerns, we encourage you to talk this through with your Presbytery. ■



On 14th March 2020 'Presbytery A' chose the name *Wimala* as our Presbytery name.

The word *Wimala* comes from the Adnyamathanha people of the Northern Flinders Ranges and means 'business ground'. Adnyamathanha Elder Charles Jackson explained that the word is used to describe a place where Yura's (people) would gather together to discuss rules and for how we live and work together, how we behave and treat one another, and how we gather and make decisions together.

Each family would be represented and invited to participate, and no-one would be excluded – it was a place where everyone was included. Being *Wimala* ensured that it was community-focussed and driven, and that it had a collective leadership approach with shared responsibilities amongst families.

This name helps us to create a sense of who we are as a Presbytery – a people coming together to do the work of the presbytery, where everyone is encouraged to participate, and no-one is left out.

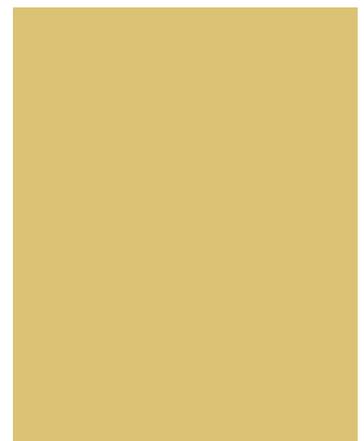
This ideal has helped us to develop our mission statement – 'Gather, Connect, Go,' with the full statement to be presented to the Presbytery meeting on 31st October 2020 for approval.

The mission statement will help us to focus as we gather with intent and purpose as children of the living God; we connect, with God and with each other to encourage and support; and we go into our churches and into our communities to bring hope to all we journey with.

The name of *Wimala*, together with our mission statement helps us to see ourselves not just as individuals or as isolated congregations, but as part of something bigger, a part of the South Australian Synod of the Uniting Church, a part of Christ's church in the world.

The Wimala Presbytery team are here with information and resources, so reach out and let us know how we can help.

Trevor Phillips, Chairperson ■





The Uniting Church in Australia
WIMALA PRESBYTERY

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The name of Wimala, together with our mission statement helps us to see ourselves not just as individuals or as isolated congregations, but as part of something bigger ...

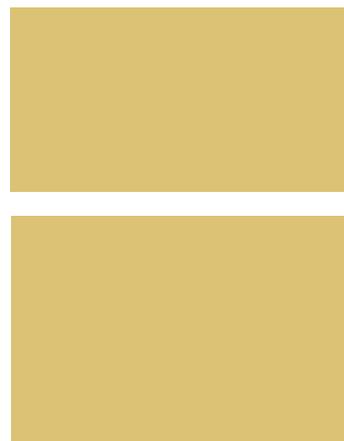
Contact:



wimala.ucas.org.au



wimala@sa.uca.org.au





When we felt God calling us to a year of *Courage* we had no idea just how courageous we would need to be. Sir Winston Churchill said 'Fear is a reaction. Courage is a decision.'

It takes courage to continue to hope in the midst of a crisis and it takes courage to lead through uncertain and difficult times. It takes courage to find new ways of doing ministry and mission. It takes courage to ask tough questions of our own discipleship and it takes courage to allow some things to die so there is energy and room for new things to grow.

The summer's fires affected our state and nation and were profoundly experienced by a number of Generate congregations and communities, and with barely time to catch our breath we were experiencing COVID-19. The care and love that leaders and churches have shown for each other and the courage to continue in their pursuit of God and his mission has been inspiring.

Despite the difficulties faced in 2020 there has certainly been much to celebrate. In true Generate fashion congregations across the presbytery chose to embrace their mission in the midst of these changes. It was encouraging to see leaders sharing ideas, skills and resources. We saw so many congregations move to online services and church 'at home' packs. Many others tuned in and experienced worship with an online congregation.

Excitingly many have continued streaming or creating online campuses so that they can continue to reach those who choose to connect in.

While it would have been easy to allow the obvious pressure and challenges of the situation to distract us from what it means to be the church, instead so many leaders and congregations found a new language, voice and heart for who they are as



the people of God. Our message and mission hasn't changed just because the method we use has.

In the midst of all of this there has been stories of people coming to faith, others connecting and coming back to church, and faith deepened across our state and beyond. God has certainly been on the move.

But this year has been about so much more than COVID!

In March we met as the Generate Presbytery at Seeds Uniting Church, just before the restrictions were announced. This was a wonderful time of gathering, laughter, worship, food, prayer, and hearing from God together.

We saw the formation of the Generate Church Planting Task Group as we look to see new communities of faith formed over the coming



years. With exciting conversations taking place – we can't wait to celebrate.

Work is underway to form pipelines to raise courageous leaders and avenues to foster renewal. Media resources have expanded to support the Sunday needs of congregations. Congregations have begun forming partnerships for resourcing and development, and we have

Contact:

 generate.ucasa.org.au

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GENERATE

Passionate disciples Courageous leaders Renewed congregations



Although we may not know all the circumstances that next year will bring, we can see the heart with which Generate churches and leaders will approach it.



been excited to welcome Port Vincent and Driver River into Generate.

In June Generate joined with the Propel Network to host a series of four webinars around our

shared core focus areas of seeing people come to faith, growing passionate disciples, raising courageous leaders, and planting and renewing churches. Leaders logged in from around the country to hear a panel of everyday practitioners sharing what they're learning. Many leadership teams and councils continue to engage through these resources on our website.

Our five area hubs kicked off this year. Although COVID-19 affected some of the plans for 2020, they are beginning to be a great source of relationship, sharing of resources and

support across the presbytery. When we have been able to gather we have experienced times of sharing, prayer and worship and we look forward to the October Presbytery meeting being held simultaneously across all five hubs.

After the year that 2020 has brought many of us we would not be so bold as to guess what 2021 will hold. Proverbs 16:9 says that we can make our plans but God determines our steps – how true this is!

Although we may not know all the circumstances that next year will bring, we can see the heart with which Generate churches and leaders will approach it. A hunger for more of God. A passionate pursuit of the mission even when circumstances change. A generous heart to share and encourage each other as one Presbytery together. The courage to see people come to faith, grow as disciples, leaders raised up, and churches planted and renewed. We are in this together. ■



The Presbytery of Southern SA covers the geographical area that is the southern half of the Adelaide suburban area (south of a line along Currie/Grenfell Streets) and then south and east to the state border.

We are both urban and rural, with a significant Congress community alongside a predominantly Caucasian English-speaking heritage. That said, we also include a vast range of likes and opinions across every human interest imaginable: worship, music, scripture interpretation, theological perspectives and social values.

Through the Presbytery, congregations are encouraged to strengthen and support one another so that they can fulfil their role of worship, witness and service.

Through these COVID-19 times, congregations – both big and small, city and rural, have engaged with video worship, whether pre-recorded or live via Zoom or Facebook. Newsletters and magazines took on extra significance (and size) as did intentional care via phone calls.

People linked in to worship from interstate and overseas; one family shared a Tenebrae meal with friends in the USA, in American time, about 15 hours behind Australian time; a large church found a creative way of holding two worship services on a Sunday morning while meeting COVID-safe requirements; and a monthly congregation's magazine swelled from four pages to ten every three weeks!

We have been brought messages of hope and encouragement as the Moderator and the General Secretary have travelled to many parts of the SA Synod in recent times, as part of gathering information to inform the Synod of SA's new Strategic Plan. They have discovered a Church that turns out to be much more creative and adaptable than we might have thought possible! ■





We have been brought messages of hope and encouragement as the Moderator and the General Secretary have travelled to many parts of the Synod in recent times, as part of gathering information to inform the Synod's new Strategic Plan.



Contact:



[facebook.com/
presbyterysouthernsa](https://facebook.com/presbyterysouthernsa)



southern.chair@sa.uca.org.au

God has spoken ... so we speak

Bec Preston

There is no doubt that social media has transformed the way in which we communicate and connect with each other and is used by many individuals and organisations to convey key messages and items of interest. The Synod of SA uses social media to enhance communication, engagement and information exchange so we can support the church and God's work.

One of my favourite quotes is, 'God has spoken ... so we speak. God has written so we write – not to ellipse God's words but to illumine them, explain them, celebrate them and offer them to others' (Mathis, 2017).

Mathis speaks of God's goodness, grace and mercy which is extended to everyone who is willing to listen. We all have a voice and in many ways social media has allowed us as a church to continue to reach more people and to spread God's word and God's work.

Social media allows us to advocate for refugees who are seeking asylum, raise awareness of mental health issues, promote the UnitingCare Emergency Relief Centres and express gratitude and give thanks.

Our social media platforms also provide us with an opportunity to use our voice, a voice that supports the needy, raises awareness of the important issues and offers guidance, not only to those in our social circles but to people all across South Australia.

On average, our Facebook channel reaches, 440 people every day with informative, engaging and meaningful messages that provide information and opportunities to support the church and other important causes. We use Facebook to keep people in the loop with job advertisements, upcoming events, to share reflections from our Staff Chaplain, Rev Wendy Prior and recently we created #FunFriday posts. These posts are dedicated to bringing enjoyment to our followers at the end of the week in the form of a game or quiz. For example we received great feedback from our recent 'Spot the difference' post and 'Guess the Uniting Church buildings!'

“
On average, our Facebook channel reaches, 440 people every day with informative, engaging and meaningful messages ...

We now have an Instagram page too which you can follow @unitingchurchinsa. We will be posting regular interviews and will keep you up-to-date with Uniting Church events and opportunities for you to contribute to meaningful causes. We have also created a YouTube channel which we will shortly launch.

Social media gives us multiple platforms to communicate and promote the message of God to people of different ages, backgrounds and experiences. We promote the work that God enables us to do and continue to share messages of hope and faith.

'Go into the world. Go everywhere and announce the Message of God's good news to one and all. (Mark 16:15).

Follow our social media accounts below:

-  Facebook @UnitingChurchinSA
-  Instagram @unitingchurchinsa
-  Twitter @SynodofSA
-  LinkedIn: Uniting Church in South Australia
-  YouTube: <https://bit.ly/3jgZVFx>

Source:

David Mathis, 'God Made You a Writer, an invitation to every Christian', Desiring God, 24 August 2017.



Risking the way of Jesus

Rev Philip Gardner

It is hard to over-emphasise how counter-cultural Jesus' ministry was in his day. For example, in the central section of Mark's Gospel (9:30-10:52) there is a rhythm where Jesus' disciples fail to understand him. Jesus patiently instructs them on the nature of the reign of God, and then they fail him again. Many of these failed understandings relate to the place of the vulnerable in the reign of God, especially women and children.

In one of the best-known stories Jesus' disciples attempt to turn away a group of mothers who are looking for Jesus to bless their children (Mark 10:13-16). Jesus rebukes the disciples and blesses the children. His acceptance of women and children, his re-framing of divorce and marriage, his healings of those whose suffering made them outcast from the community all point to a particular openness to the vulnerable in the community and a commitment to welcoming them and offering hospitality to them. (These are other important themes of the first three Gospels.)

As followers of Jesus, I would contend, we are called to make similar commitments in our own time and place. This commitment includes at the very least an openness to listen to the stories of the vulnerable in our own communities. This is not an easy commitment, it asks us to give freely of our time. Deep listening will often call into question our own views and values and those that are vulnerable, especially those that have experienced trauma, will often have difficulty in learning to tell their stories.

The impact of events and the protective mechanisms that survivors have had to employ to endure can make it challenging to re-tell and re-claim one's stories. Offering hospitality, creating safe spaces and making room for people to tell their stories can help in the journey of healing. I do not see the above as replacing the care that professional counsellors, psychologists and psychiatrists provide in this context.

The Uniting Church's commitment to First Peoples in the covenant, our commitment to offering hospitality and learning from those whose backgrounds are culturally and linguistically different to ours (CALD communities) and our participation in



the National Redress scheme can all be seen as listening to the vulnerable in our community. Similarly our work with refugees and the work many congregations and organisations do in providing help to the poor are further examples.

'Risking the way of Jesus' was a popular phrase in the 1990s, based on a larger statement by an Assembly group on the meaning of mission. A key part of risking the way of Jesus will always be sitting with and listening to those who are vulnerable. Remembering that Jesus becoming one of us and one with us, commits us to learning from the vulnerable and recognising his presence amongst them.

You may find the following resource helpful – especially in listening to the voices of children: sa.uca.org.au/safechurch/policies-and-documents ■

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A letter from Evangelist Matthew: Toward intercultural transformation

Rev Dr Paul Goh

Dear Uniting Churches in South Australia,

When I was asked to write about *One Church ... many voices*, I first thought that Paul the Apostle would be the right person for this edition as he already wrote in his letters about the issues of unity and diversity from theological and ecclesiological perspectives. But as I pondered the situation in terms of congregational make-up, I found that I have to say that my congregation is also a (Jewish dominant) homogenous Christian community.

Let me first commend your vision and commitment to be a multicultural church with an affirmation that 'Christians in Australia are called to bear witness to a unity of faith and life in Christ which transcends cultural and economic, national and racial boundaries' (*Basis of Union* paragraph 2). In order to help you to further your aspiration, may I tell you the story of the Canaanite woman (Matt 15:21-28)? I invite you to imagine you are walking on a street in the Gentile region near Judea in the first century. There is a woman from that region following Jesus in the crowd. She rushes to come to Jesus, desperately saying something to him. Can you see her face? Can you hear what she says?

'Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon ... Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table.'

Let me elaborate why this Canaanite woman's voice was challenging to my first century congregation. With this voice I raised an uncomfortable question to my Jewish Christian community: 'Should our church continue to struggle to keep our Jewish identity by limiting its ministry to Jewish people? Or, should we extend our ministry to people of other backgrounds living in our multicultural society of the Greco-Roman world?' And I know my congregation's immediate answer to this question

and the risk taken by putting it to Jesus' lips:

'I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel ...'

Perhaps some of your congregations in South Australia would resonate this answer, saying, 'Absolutely! Why bother us? There are a variety of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) churches available for others—Chinese churches, Korean churches, African churches, etc.'

Yet, this story does not end here. Instead, the Canaanite woman talks back to Jesus. Regardless of his biased words, she is persistent in her request for him to extend his grace to her and her demon-possessed daughter, saying (in my paraphrasing), 'Yes, Lord. Yet, my daughter and I also deserve to eat the food that comes NOT from your children's table but from God's table.'

Then, surprisingly enough, her words moved Jesus' heart, and he embraced them in his ministry of reconciling love and compassion by immediately healing her daughter.

If you read the Gospel more carefully, you would learn that the story of the Canaanite woman is a turning point in Jesus' ministry. That is, the rest of the chapter shows that Jesus' ministry has changed its direction beyond his ethnic boundary toward the Gentile believers. In the following verses of the chapter, he heals many sick people who have

followed him from the Gentile region and feeds four thousand men plus women and children who are non-Jews. What happened is a mutual transformation. On the one hand, the Canaanite woman could receive the grace of God; yet, on the other hand, Jesus could

get a new vision for his ministry. Through the story, I tried to tell my Jewish homogeneous community that 'Like Jesus, we are good guys, faithful Jews, a chosen people, descendants of King David. But, like Jesus our Lord, we are challenged to reconsider our identity and ministry from God's point of view.'

Having heard the voice of the Canaanite

“
Yes, Lord. Yet, my daughter and I also deserve to eat the food that comes NOT from your children's table but from God's table.”



woman from the margins, my community was challenged. And I hope all your congregations in South Australia are challenged too.

If Jesus had been challenged and changed the direction of his ministry, my church, which was also challenged, should also change the direction of its ministry. How then? You know, I end my gospel with Jesus' great commission to 'Go therefore and make disciples of all nations ... I am with you always, to the end of the age' (28: 19-20).

What I wanted to say with this and the story of the Canaanite woman is that our church, located in a multicultural neighbourhood, should be the

first place to make 'disciples of all nations' and be a 'foretaste of that coming reconciliation and renewal which is the end in view for the whole creation' (*Basis of Union* paragraph 3).

Please note that I did not propose to my church any long-term and short-term strategies to make my church a multicultural community of faith. Instead, I did just one thing, that is, to let a Gentile woman who visited my community challenge my congregation by making her voice heard.

Who is she? She is an extremely marginalised person, the stranger of the strangers to my Jewish Christian community. Her ethnic profile doesn't match that of the majority of my congregation; her gender draws people to look down on her; obviously she is not in a socially respected position; perhaps, she is a single parent;

perhaps, as a Canaanite, she spoke to Jesus with a strong accent.

So my question today for you. Do you find a person with this kind of personal profile among your congregants? If so, how, then, can their challenging voices be heard? I am curious how your church has listened to their desperate cries and responded to them with Jesus' love and justice.

I assume some of your congregations would be shaking their heads in

answer to my question. Maybe their congregations are culturally, linguistically and socially homogeneous. Then, without the Canaanite woman, who can challenge

their church? If you don't have the Canaanite woman in your congregation, who can play the Canaanite woman's role for your church?

In response to these questions, I am encouraged to hear that your Synod of SA Mission Resourcing team has been undertaking a research project called *Mapping Intercultural Neighbourhoods in South Australia*, to assist your congregations to find where the Canaanite woman and her faith communities are worshipping in your neighbourhood. I hope and pray that you shall be challenged and transformed by listening to her stories of faith, suffering and hope as my community did.

In God's mission together,

Matthew the Evangelist ■

66 ... like Jesus our Lord, we are challenged to reconsider our identity and ministry from God's point of view.

Revitalising the mission, relaunching UnitingCare Kapunda

Julianne Rogers

It wasn't quite spring, but the sun was still pouring over the golden canola fields on the drive into Kapunda. I was catching up with Allan Fahlbusch, Chair of the Kapunda Uniting Church and the UnitingCare Kapunda Board at the amazing *Little Mo's Bakery* on Kapunda's Main Street.

We were working together on UnitingCare Kapunda's new strategic plan which involves a new vision, purpose and values statement. Over tea, coffee and the most delicious spinach roll I've ever had we talked about Kapunda, the church, UnitingCare, the whole community and the future.

Allan's eyes always sparkle whenever you ask him how God is at work in the Kapunda Uniting Church. Today he smiled, took a deep breath and said, 'My wife Jenny and I moved up here from Adelaide to retire a few years ago because we fell in love with its quiet beauty. I had no idea the call from God that was waiting for me when I got here! Kapunda Uniting Church is going through a change as the community changes, much like many other churches. I believe strongly that the church still has a place in the community and a mission to that community.'

As the hot drinks disappeared, Allan continued ... 'Jesus said, "Feed my sheep,"

and "make disciples." He didn't say "Stand on the corner and bang on people's ear drums!" We need to be filled with compassion, like Jesus was filled with compassion when he raised the widow's son and fed the five thousand. The bottom line is compassion. After several hard years of drought, and with many new families moving into the area, if we aren't bursting with compassion, we need to be refreshed by the Spirit. Jesus said, "You saw me naked

and young families doing it tough. COVID has really crystallised the mission for UnitingCare. One of the most exciting things is that the people who are coming along on this journey with us are being empowered to share their gifts and skills in new ways and that serves both the community and the volunteers. It's all getting more and more exciting. The more I stop and look around, the more excited I get about the mission we've got ahead of us.'

“The more I stop and look around, the more excited I get about the mission we've got ahead of us.”

and homeless and you reached out to me. And you reached out to all these people just like it was me." Jesus sent his disciples out to find people wherever they are, even if they are considered scruffy, rough or smelly!'

As we talked about their main activity being food relief I asked Allan to explain why food relief is so important, 'Well, that's the big need out there right now. We've got struggling farmers, struggling retirees

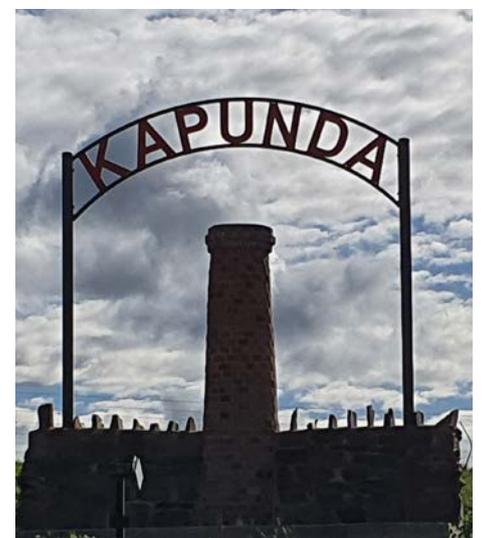
His excitement is infectious and I, for one, can't wait to see what's next for UnitingCare Kapunda and the Kapunda Uniting Church.

That excitement will be spilling over when UnitingCare Kapunda re-launches its new strategic plan on 11 October 2020, which also happens to be Anti-Poverty Sunday and a time when many Uniting Churches will be saying a prayer and doing what they can for those in need.

Everyone can support a UnitingCare Emergency Relief Centre by volunteering, donating food, or giving to our UnitingCare SA ERC Appeal. For further information go to: www.sa.uca.org.au/foodhelp ■



Caption: Volunteers Gary Hawke, Sue Burnes, Rosemary Chamberlain at Kapunda Uniting Church.



2021 Calendar

Each year, the Uniting Church in South Australia provides congregations and individuals with lectionary readings, important dates and an overview of the Mission and Service Fund Budget via its annual Calendar publication. The 2021 calendar is currently being prepared.

All congregations and organisations wishing to receive printed calendars can do so by placing orders between the dates of 19th October and 9th November 2020. Printed calendars will be priced at \$4 each (for orders received after 9th November, calendars will be priced at \$8 each).

Calendars can be picked up from the Synod office (Level 2, 212 Pirie Street, Adelaide) from 19th November 2020 onwards. They may also be posted at an additional cost for postage and handling.

Orders must be placed using the calendar order form which will be available on the website: sa.uca.org.au/calendars-annual-reports.

For more information, please contact Engagement on **8236 4230** or email engagement@sa.uca.org.au ■

Christmas Postcards

Postcards are a great way to inform congregations about Christmas service times and for your church to connect with your wider community. The Uniting Church Synod of South Australia's Engagement Ministry Centre has designed a postcard for your use across the Christmas and New Year period.

We also offer resources to encourage congregations to build relationships with their immediate community and to provide a place of welcome where all can share in the companionship of the season.

Postcards and accompanying posters can be ordered from 19th October through to 9th November, 2020 and can be picked up from the Synod office on Level 2, 212 Pirie Street, Adelaide from 19th November 2020 onwards. There will also be a set of free, downloadable PowerPoint templates.

The Engagement Ministry Centre will send out the order details to congregations via Presbyteries and UC-enews. ■

Synod Meeting

Rev Sue Page

Due to COVID-19, the meeting of the Synod has been postponed from October 2020, until February 2021, and will be held at Adelaide West Uniting Church and the Brooklyn Park Campus of the Synod from 9 am on Thursday, 11th February until 4 pm Saturday, 13th February 2021.

The Synod Standing Committee feel that it is important that we gather together in person as a community of God's people; to lament the challenging times we have been through, and to celebrate how we have adapted; to share stories and to listen to one another about how God has been moving and working through our church in all its different expressions and councils. We are excited to hear from our three new presbyteries and to find out about their life and mission.

It is also important that we gather to discern where God is leading us as a church, to listen for the guidance of the Holy Spirit as we decide on the strategic plan and missional priorities for the Synod for the next few years. It is also a time to elect members to boards and committees, and our members to the 16th Assembly in July 2021; and discuss other important matters in the life of our Synod.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the membership of the Synod meeting will be reduced to just over 200 members. Each Presbytery will elect 60 members, and there will be some Synod appointments. We are very keen to have a diverse membership, with people from different cultural backgrounds and young people.

Even if you are not a member of the Synod meeting, you may be able to nominate to serve on the councils and committees of the Synod and also for the 16th Assembly. The nomination process will be conducted prior to the meeting, rather than at the meeting.

Be assured that the Synod meeting will be held on these dates next year, even if the worst should happen, and we are not able to meet in person. We are also planning for a virtual meeting if that becomes necessary.

Please pray for the Moderator and the General Secretary and all the staff and volunteers involved in planning for our Synod meeting. Updates are available at sa.uca.org.au/synod-meetings ■

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A plurality of voices



Rev Dr Christy Capper

When I graduated from university, I began to work full-time as a staff worker with *Power to Change* (formerly known as *Student Life*, part of *Campus Crusade for Christ*). Invariably, one of the questions that people would ask me, both students and people in local churches, was ‘why is there more than one Christian group on campus?’ It was a fair question.

The fact was, the two major Christian groups on campus were both non-denominational and had nearly identical beliefs, but we had different cultures. We had different ways of working, different flavours if you like. Some students came to *Student Life* who would never have gone to *Christian Union* (the Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students ministry) and vice versa. Their diverse cultures and flavours aided people who came to faith in Christ through these different groups. We used to work together for joint events, and the staff teams and student leaders got on well – our different flavours were a blessing.

When I think about a plurality of voices within the church, I remember back to those days, working with different groups of Christians from various denominations and backgrounds as it helped me to learn to value that diverse voices can bring both dissent and harmony. It all depends on how they’re used.

When the Uniting Church formed, the uniting churches declared, in Paragraph 1 of the *Basis of Union* that ‘... they look for a continuing renewal in which God will use their common worship, witness and service to set forth the word of salvation for all people. To this end they declare their readiness to go forward together in sole loyalty to Christ the living Head of the Church; they remain open to constant reform under his Word; and they seek a wider unity in the power of the Holy Spirit.’

When our Christian groups on campus worked in harmony, each was singing our particular part, but looking to the Kingdom of God, things went well. When we forgot that broader vision mission and ministry, things did not go so well.

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... when we keep our eyes on Christ, when we remain open to reforms shown by Christ the Word, we will find that we can come back into harmony through the power of the Spirit.

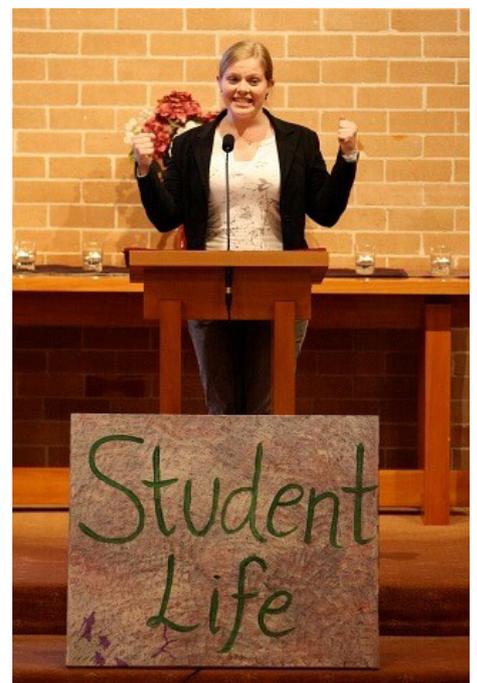
As our different congregations and presbyteries grow in Christ, God will use the gifts and skills of the members to shape the culture and vision of these groups. Sometimes, with these different cultures, it might seem like we are not working in harmony. However, when

we keep our eyes on Christ, when we remain open to reforms shown by Christ the Word, we will find that we can come back into harmony through the power of the Spirit.

Our different voices do not need to separate us; after all God has one church. Instead, our voices will catch the ears of different people, of different ways of thinking, and draw others into the song.

So let us joyfully bring together our different voices, allowing the Holy Spirit to guide our voices as we look to the Son to conduct us in the song of our Trinitarian creator God. ■

Rev Dr Christy Capper is an ordained minister in the Anglican Church. She is the Vice-Principal & Director of Missiology with the Uniting College for Leadership and Theology.



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Mindfulness and hand care

Win Kamaputri

As the world comes to grips with a global pandemic we spend more and more time washing our hands and squirting hand sanitiser! The message is that hand hygiene is one of the most important measures to help prevent virus transmission – none more so than in a hospital environment and especially for frontline health-care workers.

Despite advanced technologies, the human hand and hygiene play a pivotal role in the process of prevention and healing. Just ask Rev Nicholas Rundle, the Uniting Church Chaplain at the Royal Adelaide Hospital (RAH), who developed the practice of *Mindful Hand Care*.

Nicholas cares directly for COVID-19 patients and families as he is the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and Critical Care Liaison Chaplain. In consultation with key RAH staff, he developed and continues to promote the *Mindful Hand Care* program for the Central Adelaide Local Health Network and two UK National Health Services Trusts. It's a five-step series of brief meditations that re-set awareness and attention.

'During COVID-19, when staff are highly anxious about infectious patients, *Mindful Hand Care* becomes all about a patient-centred care approach,' said Nicholas.

It starts with taking the time to stop and to shift the focus into sensing the body by standing fully upright with the feet slightly apart. Three sighs follow to release the breath after inhalation. Then rub the hands with gel for 20 seconds whilst putting aside any other thoughts. Ask yourself, *How am I feeling? What is on my mind?* Before releasing another breath and moving onto the next task to conclude the exercise.

'The process helps to avoid mistakes and maintains the focus on the patient. Blood pressure and heart rates drop, the breath lengthens, the body relaxes, the mind becomes clear and there is more energy to take on the next patient or task,' said Nicholas.



As someone that has meditated for over 40 years and as a qualified Secular Mindfulness Meditation teacher, he affirms that for him often meditation helps keep his focus and awareness in Christ, especially when supporting end-of-life patients in traumatic situations.

During the week he runs mindfulness sessions at the RAH Chapel and Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Guiding people through a breathing meditation, a loving kindness meditation or a word-based meditation. He also provides workshops where he trains the patients and health-care workers in a series of 'spot' meditations.

In the Uniting Church, opinions about mindfulness meditation and its impact may vary. However, many Christian counsellors use meditation in a Christ-integrated way as a therapy tool to teach about taking on the mind of Christ. Mindfulness can be compatible with a biblical world-view – as long as it is rooted in scripture and focuses on connecting with God.

For Nicholas, meditation builds bridges where conversations about the Gospel, the Church and the life-changing message of Jesus naturally occur. 'It's a ministry of prayer and healing, reconciliation and care. Jesus was able to be fully present to all he met and meditation helps me to do the same, especially when praying in full Personal Protective Equipment with a family,' said Nicholas.

For more information, contact Rev Nicholas Rundle on **08 7074 1122** or email nicholas.rundle@sa.gov.au ■



Frontier services BBQ & Campfire & Messy Church - September 27, 2020 Bell Paddock, Willunga Uniting Church



'The Alberton Art Trail' is a walking trail of public art created with, by and for the people in the neighbourhood. The artworks are intended to explore the multiple meanings and experiences of 'home' for the local community and enable local people to meet and be creative together.

Do you have a photo of your event that you would like to see featured here? If so, please send it to us along with a description of what happened, where it happened, and who is in the picture. We can only print high resolution photographs sent as attachments to engagement@sa.uca.org.au. Keep them coming!



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