



# New Times



# Issues that MATTER

Issue 42

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## Placements news

### Placements finalised as at 2 August 2021

Rev Samson Asirvatham (Anglican) as 0.3FTE Coordinating Chaplain, Resthaven, Craigmore from 1 September 2021

Rev Jesse Size (Deacon) as 0.4FTE Spiritual Care Chaplain CAHLN from 1 September 2021

Mandy Harvey (MOP) as 0.6FTE Spiritual Care Chaplain CAHLN from 1 September 2021

### Advertised placements

Wimala Presbytery Regional Coordinator 3 x 0.2FTE  
Expressions of interest to [wimala.chair@sa.uca.org.au](mailto:wimala.chair@sa.uca.org.au)  
Coordinating Chaplain Helping Hand

### Vacant placements

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

#### PROFILES AVAILABLE

##### Generate Presbytery

Kangaroo Island Linked Congregations (0.7)  
Seeds UC Associate Pastor from 1 January 2022

##### Presbytery of Southern SA

Adare UC  
Willunga UC (0.4)

##### Wimala Presbytery

Croydon Park UC (0.3)  
Lefevre UC (0.7)  
Kadina Wallaroo UC  
Western Link (0.5) from a date to be advised

##### Linked Congregations in Multiple Presbyteries

Southern Yorke Peninsula (0.5-0.6?)

#### PROFILES NOT YET AVAILABLE

##### Generate Presbytery

County Jervois

##### Wimala Presbytery

Berri UC / Barmera UC  
Modbury UC (0.5)  
Port Augusta UAICC  
Semaphore UC

##### Presbytery of Southern SA

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##### Linked Congregations in Multiple Presbyteries

-

*For more information about placements, please visit [sa.uca.org.au](http://sa.uca.org.au)*

### Cover details:

Walking on Country – June long weekend

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# Contents

## Features

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| Which is your type of Advocacy? .....                                     | 6     |
| What would it take for the Uniting Church to become Carbon Neutral? ..... | 7     |
| A Safe Church for all .....   | 8-9   |
| Walking on Country .....  | 10-11 |
| Homelessness .....  | 12    |
| Everybody needs a home .....  | 13    |
| Leading with creativity and hope .....                                    | 14-15 |
| Chasing the wind of the Spirit .....                                      | 16-17 |
| Who is God calling to be the next Moderator? .....                        | 18    |
| An Informed Faith .....   | 20-21 |
| Suicide awareness ... It's no secret .....                                | 22-23 |

## Regular pages

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| Message from the Moderator .....         | 3     |
| Note from the Editor .....               | 4     |
| Message from the General Secretary ..... | 4-5   |
| Classifieds .....                        | 25-27 |

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# Church vs state

Since Union, the Uniting Church has taken seriously its responsibility for social justice. The *Statement to the Nation*, read at the Inaugural Assembly in June 1977, affirmed our 'Eagerness to uphold basic Christian values and principles, such as the importance of every human being, the need for integrity in public life, the proclamation of truth and justice, the rights for each citizen to participate in decision-making in the community, religious liberty and personal dignity, and a concern for the welfare of the whole human race. We pledge ourselves to seek the correction of injustices wherever they occur.'

Proposals concerning various issues of doctrine, polity and justice are discussed in the councils of Assembly, Synod, Presbytery and the Congregation. Over the years the Assembly has made decisions on refugees, First Peoples, marriage, domestic violence, climate change, language and disability, among many others. Recently, the Synod of South Australia has made decisions on the environment, deaths in custody, nuclear waste, ethical investment and refugees.

As Moderator, I am regularly asked to support various causes and make statements on matters of importance to church members. I have also been asked why I speak about some issues and not others. I have been given the responsibility to speak for the church on topics for which the church has determined a theological, legal or moral position. However, there are some current social justice issues on which the Uniting Church has not come to a position, or has not had a discussion. I cannot speak where there is no position to speak from, and it is not appropriate to express my personal views in the public forum.

Ministers and leaders in the Uniting Church are bound by our *Code of Ethics* 'To represent accurately the teachings of the Scriptures and of the Church ... accurately represent opposing views' and 'be guided by the decisions of the Assembly' (*Code of Ethics* 3.3). Mindful of this, we enter discussion

and teaching opportunities with care and the desire to bring forth the wisdom of the church.

On many matters of doctrine, theology, justice and polity, a variety of viewpoints are held by individual members of the Uniting Church. On some matters the Assembly or Synod have an agreed position, arrived at through discussion on proposals put to those bodies in session. It is out of those decisions that I engage both within and beyond the church.

Some of the church's work in these areas takes place in the public forum, while some occurs behind the scenes, including meetings with politicians, participation in working groups and writing submissions. Some wonder if the church's voice is seen to be relevant in today's society, but it is often in the lower profile private meetings and communications where the church has the most impact.

With regards to some topical issues, the Uniting Church has had varying positions and experiences. For example, the South Australian Synod last debated abortion in 1984 and determined that 'The abortion of a foetus should only be undertaken after a serious consideration of all possible options, and with an awareness of the responsibility we have as Christians to protect life.' That message was included in a letter Rev Sue Ellis wrote to all congregations and I have continued to promote in discussions.

Climate Change continues to be a topic of discussion in the church and society. I have supported initiatives on climate change that are consistent with agreed policies. The Uniting Church has made formal decisions supporting actions to reduce global warming, and we are each encouraged to support environmental initiatives.

When the matter of voluntary assisted dying was discussed at the South Australian Synod meeting some years ago, we could not come to an agreement. More recently, in other states, two Synods have arrived

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As passionate followers of Jesus Christ, we seek to follow his example and support the marginalised and the down-trodden, informed by the teachings of the scriptures.

at quite different conclusions. In our thinking and discussions we rely on our understanding of Christ's teaching about love, care and compassion towards all.

The Uniting Church is a broad church, comprising individuals who have many different understandings of how we should respond to justice and other issues. On some matters we can come to a consensus and as the Uniting Church can promote that position to government and society. On others, we hold no official view and the Church either refrains from entering the debate or contributes from a neutral position, always guided by the teachings of the scriptures.

As passionate followers of Jesus Christ, we seek to follow his example and support the marginalised and the down-trodden, informed by the teachings of the scriptures. Our personal views and interpretations give us the impetus to take particular actions and say certain things as we seek to do God's will.

May God continue to give us understanding, corporately and individually as we connect with and minister to those around us.

Blessings,



Bronte Wilson, Moderator

# From the Editor

As I write this editorial for the August/September issue of *New Times*, I do so having just moved from working in the office to working from home and then back to the office again, as South Australia continues to come to terms with the on-going impacts of COVID-19.

We have just experienced the toughest set of restrictions so far in South Australia and we are grateful we have the technology to keep us linked and the ability to still communicate as we grapple with this terrible disease.

I know most people might not see it this way, but as a self-confessed introvert I look on periods of lock-down as a gift. A time to take a small step back from the busyness of life and to devote time to reflection, contemplation and prayer.

Prayer at its most basic definition is a time to talk to God. For me personally prayer is also my time not only to talk to God, but to also quietly listen. I am not comfortable with prayer in public situations or even in group situations, it does not resonate with me, as my personal desire to connect with the Spirit is much more private.

You may well also ask, what has prayer got to do with this particular issue of *New Times*? The articles in this edition express some of the challenges that face the Uniting Church, and there is, it seems much to pray for – not just for a speedy end to this worldwide pandemic but for the homeless and disenfranchised, those impacted by suicide, the safety and well-being of all, the land on which we live and for all leaders within the church at this time.

Paul wrote, 'Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus' (Philippians 4:6-7).



Bridget Ransome

# When the

Today I am grateful. Sustained by the fact that my office has a window and I have a view beyond my computer screen. Comforted by warmth that blows from an airconditioner that is working and enables me to think creatively, with imagination and courage on this cold wintery morning. Encouraged by South Australia's capacity to manage high levels of uncertainty at this time.

On this (Code Blue) day, we pray God's blessing and on-going care for those who are exposed to the elements, those who are hungry, those who are afraid and all those who care for them. As the church, we pray that people will come to know the love and saving grace of Jesus Christ who can provide sustaining warmth and acceptance, and hope in uncertain times.

I have spent a lot of time recently thinking about and exploring culpability and responsibility. Such reflection takes me to the final chapters of Ruth. Naomi courageously addresses her responsibility, 'Today ... I need to seek some security for you, so that it may be well with you' (R3:1). In the closing verses of Chapter 4 Boaz gathers together those responsible for decision-making, 'Today you have witnessed that I have acquired from the hand of Naomi all that belonged to Elimelech and all that belonged to Chilion and Mahlon ... May the Lord make the woman who is coming into your house like Rachel and Leah, who together built up the house of Israel' (R4:9-11). Ruth's story reminds us of our individual and corporate responsibility to 'care for the widows and orphans' to speak truth, to address those situations in our community where the system fails to acknowledge and remember.

Many of the projects I am working on invite me to reflect through the lens of the other. Our workplaces, across Venues, Brooklyn Park and in Pirie Street are all multi-cultured spaces. Each location is struggling with multiple changes in personnel, uncertainty around COVID restrictions and, like everyone in our communities, a concern for their family and friends.

I continue to work with Presbyteries and congregations around matters of conflict and discipline. Too often, we see the damage caused when people are unable to acknowledge their complicitness in the events that lead to broken relationships.

# system fails

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In recent weeks, it was my privilege to participate in a Walk on Country with first peoples in SA. Walking on Adnyamathanha Country with Rev Dr Denise Champion and her niece Rhanee Lester took us from Port Augusta to Nepabunna in the northern Flinders Ranges. It connected me in a very personal and gracious way with our recent and collective history, our culpability in the journey and experience of First Peoples; and the churches responsibility to ensure that the cultural, economic, political and spiritual systems that shape and define us, do not fail again.



Rev Felicity Amery, General Secretary



# Which is your type of Advocacy?

So why does the Uniting Church do advocacy? It is not just a pre-union tradition but advocacy is an expression of our discipleship in Christ. Our lives and ministry in the community are expressions of advocacy.

Let me show you three examples and you may find you have been part of more than you realise.



by Rev Peter R McDonald

## Advocacy as Pastoral Care

Imagine Mavis, a friend of your local congregation, is required to provide an update of her income to Centrelink to keep her part pension. We all know that Centrelink is a challenging environment. So you offer to go with Mavis to the Centrelink office as she wants to talk to a person not to a computer. Your physical presence with Mavis gives her the confidence to get this done and is both an act of pastoral care and advocacy. Our social work staff do this sort of advocacy all the time. You should not underestimate the profound and positive impact this has on Mavis. It is an expression of your discipleship in Christ and also builds a positive reputation when your community talks about your local congregation. Our actions matter and are remembered.

## Advocacy for Funding

Funding advocacy is where a community group or congregation seeks to bring financial resources to an issue that is missing out. Whether social issues such as poverty or domestic violence or gaining an upgrade for a sporting field or for a life-saving volunteer group such as the SA Sea Rescue Squadron or CFS.

Seeking funding requires a group of people to build community support to advocate for the topic. Countless hours are often put into funding applications, trading tables, lobbying and even Bunnings Barbecues! At times a thankless task, we all know the value when this work comes to fruition and the issue is addressed. When congregations lead or show their support for a community issue it shows that we translate our discipleship into action for the community in which we live.

## Political Advocacy

This sort of campaigning is agnostic to funding. Uniting Communities has three campaigns running in South Australia. First is *Improving Intervention Orders* which protect women and children after separation. Then there is addressing *Loneliness* in cooperation with Community Centres SA and thirdly responding to *Alcohol and other Drug addictions* primarily as a health and not criminal issue. In political advocacy we are seeking broader legislative policy and community change.

The National Uniting Church releases its political advocacy campaign *Our Vision for a Just Australia* prior to each election. The current version which was released prior to the last federal election is available at [uniting.church/visionstatement](http://uniting.church/visionstatement).

**Consider:** Include in your worship a moment where you interview or recognise the way individuals support others as an expression of their discipleship.

**Consider:** Seek out and support a campaign, many of which inform local politicians that churches believe in e.g. climate change.

**Consider:** Keep your eye out for the rerelease of *Our Vision for a Just Australia* prior to the upcoming Federal election.



# What would it take for the Uniting Church to become Carbon Neutral?

Climate change is one of our most pressing public matters. Notwithstanding the relationship between First and Second Nations Peoples, if not dealt with properly our climate has the potential to threaten our very existence.

One look at the media and you will find we are being exposed to a variety of advocacy approaches. There is the incremental reform approach which is represented by the ALP and some in the Coalition. And there is the radical reform approach represented by the Greens. Both the incremental and radical approaches have their own strengths and weaknesses, supporters and detractors and each of us has a preference based on our place and experience of the world.

The Uniting Church plays both approaches depending on any given topic. UnitingCare Australia has a reputation for bringing a constructive incremental change to national legislation. UnitingCare Australia is currently coordinating the Uniting Church contribution to the Royal Commission into violence and abuse of people with disabilities. This is a small and important part in a larger piece of advocacy for people with disabilities. Whereas on climate change Uniting Church leadership has called on us to attend rallies and radically protest.

You may not know that the current conservative SA government has set goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by more than 50% below 2005 levels by 2030 and net zero by 2050.

Many are demanding a similar target from the Federal Government to reduce carbon emissions. Regardless of the approach, radical or incremental it surprises me that a number of advocacy organisations do not have their own house in order. I'm aware of a number of peak bodies who haven't accounted for their own carbon use. Imagine demanding carbon neutrality from others when one hasn't started the journey for oneself? It disappoints me that the Uniting Church is one of them.

What would it take for our Assembly or our Synod or our Presbytery or our Congregations to become carbon neutral? When young people have been on the streets how can it be that their schools, both public and our own are not responding to their desire for a renewed climate? How can our social service agencies find carbon not a priority when the poorest they serve will be the first to bear the brunt of the negative effects of a changing climate? It is not just governments that need to act, though they should.

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In 2015 Uniting Communities was the first organisation and first charity to be certified Carbon Neutral in South Australia.

It is time for us to do that which is in our control by measuring and abating our carbon emissions. Together we should set a plan and target for the Uniting Church to be carbon neutral. I'm keen to be part of a constructive group which sets and achieves carbon targets for ourselves.

*In 2015 Uniting Communities was the first organisation and first charity to be certified Carbon Neutral in South Australia. Peter McDonald manages a small team who undertakes advocacy on a range of social topics including Older Women in Poverty and Improving Intervention Orders for the Safety of Women and Children.*

Executive Advocacy  
Uniting Communities Inc.  
[peterm@unitingcommunities.org](mailto:peterm@unitingcommunities.org)

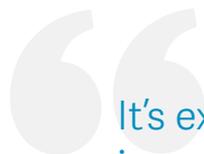


# A Safe Church for all

Synod SA is rolling out the UCA National Child Safe Training which complements the *Safe Church Called to Care* program and will support the continuing *Through Their Eyes* reporting child abuse and neglect training.

'It's exciting to offer this training to the Synod. It is so important we understand how we can help keep all people, especially children and young people safe. We're planning that all ministers will be invited to complete the first module of the training online by the end of the year. Key leaders, volunteers and lay people will be the next to be invited,' said Linda Vinall, Training and Development Officer.

Linda was part of the team who worked with the National Safe Church Unit and other Synods to create the training.



It's exciting to offer this training to the Synod. It is so important we understand how we can help keep all people, especially children and young people safe.



### Key messages about the new UCA National Safe Church Training

- The Uniting Church in Australia is committed to being a safe church for all people. As part of living this commitment, it has developed a UCA National Child Safe Training curriculum.

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- The training aims to deepen understanding of our Christian role in keeping children and young people safe as well as having people across the Church take part in the same training. This is a significant step in ensuring all parts of UCA are places where children and young people feel safe to participate in the life of the church and to grow in their faith.

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- The training is centered around the Principles of a Child Safe UCA, and will provide the same shared knowledge and expectations about keeping children and young people safe.

This is the first time the whole Church has worked collaboratively to create a national training package. The Synod's Safe Church team have joined together with other Synods, the National Safe Church Unit and child safety experts to address many topics relevant to the church community.

Training is free for all adults and can be accessed online 24/7 using a laptop, tablet or desktop computer or mobile phone. Group training sessions, and face-to-face gatherings may also be held.

By working strongly together that we can further live out our commitment to being a safe church, nurturing loving and safe Christian communities in which everybody, particularly young and vulnerable members, can confidently participate.

If you have any questions about the training, check out the SA Synod's Safe Church or National Safe Church Unit's websites:

- National Safe Church: [safechurch.uca.org.au](http://safechurch.uca.org.au)
- Synod's Safe Church: [safechurch.ucasa.org.au](http://safechurch.ucasa.org.au)
- Phone (08) 8236 4268
- Email [safechurch@ucsa.org.au](mailto:safechurch@ucsa.org.au)

# WALKING ON COUNT

with Rev Dr (Aunty) Denise Champion  
& Rhanee Lester

*by Ian Dempster*



## 'Walking on Country' is a special experience, enabling participants to catch a glimpse of the world through the eyes of First Peoples.

Walking on Adnyamathanha Country is a rare privilege, and to do so in the year when the NAIDOC theme is 'Heal Country' is even more amazing.

This was the experience for nearly 30 participants on the 2021 June long weekend, for an event organised by the Uniting College mostly for students, teachers and their families. We had some extra guests beyond the college life, including the Uniting Church SA General Secretary, Rev. Felicity Amery and her husband Howard, and Brooke Prentis, CEO of Common Grace.

Participants gathered excitedly at the Uniting College before mid-day on the Friday at Brooklyn Park to prepare for the drive to Port Augusta. The group stayed there on the Friday night, after experiencing the hospitality of the Port Augusta Congress congregation. There we met our Walking on Country guides, Rev Dr Denise Champion and her niece Rhanee Lester.

The trip from Port Augusta to Nepabunna in the northern Flinders would normally take around 4 hours: on this Walking on Country it took us 8 hours. Why? We stopped along the way to hear stories of the land and Adnyamathanha country at Quorn, Willochra, Yourabilla and Copley. In addition we had a lovely 90 minute lunch break at the café in Hawker, and a fuel 'top-up' in Leigh Creek.

Sunday began with an early morning sunrise story looking to the mountains in the east. And what a magnificent sunrise it was! After time spent in the Nepabunna church we travelled a short distance to Iga Warta, which is an Adnyamathanha camping and cultural centre. There we were able to look at displays, and make purchases at the shop. In the afternoon we visited a cultural site where we listened to more stories. This was followed by a visit to Ram Paddock Gate, where the Adnyamathanha community lived in the 1920s until their move to Nepabunna.

This was a sobering experience seeing where the early pastoralists expected the people to live on a small rocky paddock. In the late afternoon we gathered around the campfire sharing stories and reflections, as well as damper and quandong jam.

To Walk on Country with two generations was also a blessing. It was great to see Denise working with her niece. Rhanee read some of the Adnyamathanha stories on the site they were originally told from. In addition, she read her own, yet to be published children's story. Some people were able to buy copies of Rhanee's first book, 'Walking to Corroboree.'

Following the Walking on Country experience Brooke Prentis as guest presenter on ABC Radio National program *Soul Search*, interviewed Denise Champion about the journey back to her home country. This was especially appropriate for the 'Heal Country' theme for NAIDOC 2021. For Brooke some of the highlights of the trip included the early morning sunrise, placing her bare feet on country in the sandy bed of the creeks, hearing the stories of the dead river red gums on the Willochra Plain, and of the old Colebrook home at Quorn and of Denise's experiences growing up in Quorn.

You can hear this interview by searching for Radio National *Soul Search* and more of Denise's stories by reading her books, 'Anaditj' and 'Yarta Wandatha.' 'Anaditj' is available from Bev Freeman at the Uniting College, email [bfreeman@sa.uca.org.au](mailto:bfreeman@sa.uca.org.au) or phone (08) 8236 4243.

You may like to talk to your church or fellowship about organising your own Walking on Country in the area where you live. There is always more to learn!

If you need any assistance with this you are welcome to talk to the SA Congress, Resource Officer, Ian Dempster [idempster@sa.uaicc.org.au](mailto:idempster@sa.uaicc.org.au), phone 0417217320, or the Development Officer Ken Sumner, [ksumner@sa.uaicc.org.au](mailto:ksumner@sa.uaicc.org.au). Alternatively you may like to contact the SA Synod's Covenanting Officer, Tarlee Leondaris, [tleondaris@sa.uca.org.au](mailto:tleondaris@sa.uca.org.au), phone (08) 8236 4264.



Left to right: Brooke Prentis, Rev Dr Denise Champion, Rev Felicity Amery, Shelba Miller, Bruce Miller, Howard Amery.

# Homelessness

by Rev Dr Tim Hodgson

“As servants of Christ, as Dave Andrews, a Baptist community worker, says, ‘We must enter into people’s struggles with them, and, in the context of that struggle, serve them as a servant: not like a public servant.’”



Prior to joining the Air Force as a Chaplain, for seven years I was in placement with Wesley Mission Brisbane (now Wesley Mission Queensland) as the Outreach Minister to the Homeless in inner-city Brisbane. My outreach began doing street work at a local park, waiting for a food van to arrive at 5:30 am most mornings. This ministry was incarnational, meaning that I became immersed into the local culture and sought to ‘become the hands and feet and voice of Jesus’ to those people. Initially, I didn’t say much to those around me, I just provided a presence.

Over a few months I got to know a few ‘streeties’ (i.e. homeless). Then one morning, things blew up. I got a short hair cut from the barber just the day before. One of the streeties, whom I hadn’t seen previously, accused me of being an undercover police officer, and tensions rose in the group. Fortunately, a few of the streeties in the group who had gotten to know me vouched for me. One said, ‘He’s not a cop – that’s Reverend Tim.’

Over subsequent years, I became a pastor within the homeless community. To put it theologically I tried to encapsulate a ‘Christ-like life: a lifestyle characterised by the radical non-violent sacrificial compassion of Jesus the Christ; a way of life distinguished by commitment to love and to justice; working from the bottom up to empower people, particularly the marginalised and disadvantaged, so as to realise their potential, as men and women, made in the image of God, through self-directed ... community.’ *Not Religion But Love: Practicing a Radical Spirituality of Compassion* (Andrews, 1999).

A joining of souls, bridge-building and empowerment led to a community meal in

Fortitude Valley being established by the homeless themselves, where they would prepare, cook, and serve a three course meal to other marginalised people from inner-city Brisbane. Later an arts program called ‘Art from the Margins’ and an ecumenical emergency accommodation program using church halls called ‘Crash Beds’ were established to help the homeless. Every Christmas Day morning at a local park, I would hold a short communion service for the homeless and I regularly conducted weddings and funerals for members of the homeless community.

My time with the homeless taught me the true meaning of Matthew 25 – the parable of the sheep and the goats. They would give their own warm coat to another homeless person to help that person. As servants of Christ, as Dave Andrews, a Baptist community worker, says, ‘We must enter into people’s struggles with them, and, in the context of that struggle, serve them as a servant: not like a public servant.’

It was a challenging community to work among. Due to the ravages of addiction, mental illness and poverty, there was, at times, violence and aggression. I sought to be a calming presence and often acted as an intermediary with the police.

I am blessed to now be working with UnitingCare organisations and agencies that provide support services to the homeless community in South Australia. Recently I visited Uniting Country SA in Port Pirie and saw the wonderful work this organisation does with country communities in helping to prevent and respond to homelessness. Uniting Country SA as well as other UnitingCare organisations and agencies are at the coal-face in helping younger and older Australians to live fuller lives.

# Everybody needs a home

by Rev Sandy Boyce

Homelessness Week is held annually in the first week of August, and is an opportunity to raise awareness of people experiencing homelessness, the issues they face and the action needed to achieve enduring solutions.

Homelessness robs people of dignity and self-worth. The experience of homelessness, even for short periods, can have serious, long-term effects on a person's mental and physical health. It can contribute to premature ageing through earlier onset of health problems more commonly associated with later life.

Over the last decade, the number of older homeless people increased by 49%. Women make up a large number of those living with homelessness, largely due to family and domestic violence. As well, relationship breakdowns, financial difficulty and limited superannuation can put older women at risk of homelessness.

People living with mental health issues or disability, Aboriginal people, LGBTI+ people, and people leaving prison may be particularly vulnerable to homelessness. More recently, refugees waiting for their visas to be processed have joined those at risk of homelessness. They have no financial safety net, and many find it difficult to find work because of language issues, and a lack of local references or known work histories.

The recent changes in State funding in the homelessness sector have caused considerable upset, with the transition period literally being overnight - from established service providers and agencies, to an 'alliance' of agencies on 1st July. The competitive tendering process meant that some trusted long-term agencies in the homelessness sector missed out on fresh Government funding, which has translated to services being reduced at a time of increasing need, and in the middle of winter. The change is confusing for those living with homelessness and the lack of information available to them is a very real concern.

This year's Homelessness Week theme is *Everybody needs a home*. Housing is a fundamental human right, but the lack of affordable housing for low income earners leaves people at risk of homelessness. Years of inadequate investment has left Australia facing a shortfall of an estimated 433,000 social housing dwellings.

The welfare of people living with homelessness is an issue that should concern us all as is the more profound question about why homelessness exists at all. Our Christian faith holds up service as an inescapable response to the Gospel, and to be advocates for justice for the homeless and disadvantaged.



increase in older homeless people over the last decade

## People at risk of homelessness:

- Women make up a large number largely due to family and domestic violence
- Older women are at greater risk
- People living with mental health issues or disability, Aboriginal people, LGBTI+ people, and people leaving prison may be vulnerable
- Refugees waiting for their visas to be processed

# Leading with *creativity & hope*

When Rev Sharon Hollis was named President-elect of the Uniting Church in Australia, the world was a different place. It was pre-COVID-19 and before mandatory check-ins, the ubiquitous hand sanitiser, the mask-wearing emoji and we all got used to working from home!

**On 17 July, Sharon was installed as President of the UCA, the third woman to hold the post and the first ordained woman in the role.**

However, she will do so in a global context no one might have predicted. Even beyond COVID-19, there are many changing circumstances in our society and in our church which have left many of us asking, what is the future of the Uniting Church?

Some might say a daunting task lies ahead for Sharon to lead the Church through this pivotal time of self-reflection and change. But if there is one theme that is constant in Sharon's life, it has been change. She has lived it, led people through it and relishes the kind of big picture thinking needed to re-imagine what might be.

Sharon comes to the role having served in the Uniting Church from a number of interesting perspectives – she was Moderator of the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania from 2016-19 and has been a ministry educator and congregational leader.

As a young person, her identity was formed within and by the Uniting Church, and those experiences have shaped the hopes she carries for the Church going forward.

When she was eight, Sharon's family moved to Keilor Park under the flightpath of Melbourne's Tullamarine Airport. It was a hub of cultures and languages of largely European migrants.

'We lived on a street with over 100 houses and there were only two English-speaking families. There were people from Hungary, Germany, Malta, Italy and Greece. It struck me when we moved to the country how I'd really taken that for granted. It wasn't something that was celebrated like we celebrate multiculturalism today, but you would hear different languages coming out of your neighbour's backyards and smell different foods. I guess I grew up thinking it's possible to live alongside people who aren't like you.'

At thirteen she moved to her mother's home town of Finley, a small town in the Riverina region of NSW where she finished her schooling. Moving back to Melbourne to begin an Arts Degree at Monash University opened a new world.

'My horizons expanded beyond anything I'd ever known, both socially and culturally, but particularly intellectually. I did a subject on how women are portrayed in Australian history, and I became a feminist. It gave me a sense that learning can change you and can give you real insight and power.'

It was also a formative time for her identity as a Christian.

'It was probably my first exposure to how negatively some people view the Church. I had to work out what it meant to engage in social justice from a faith perspective. When that wasn't the motivating factor for most people, how do you make peace with that in yourself?'

'A key mentor for Sharon at the time was Rev Jim Murray, the minister at Monash Uniting Church. He helped me understand that if your faith was to have any integrity, it had to be embedded in committed action in the world.'

Not long after university, Sharon discerned a call to ministry. She describes her life as an ordained minister as an honour and privilege.

'To be able to preach every week, open up scripture and help people see the way of God in that; to accompany people through major life transitions and to be with people in the darkest of moments; just to be able to encounter people at depth, is really rewarding.'

In her first congregational placement, Sharon was called to a congregation that was approaching the end of its life. Eighteen months into the placement, when all avenues for survival were exhausted, the congregation voted to close and gave themselves 18 months to prepare.

'I have such high regard for that congregation. They didn't fight it. They just said, right, let's work out the best way to do this.'

Sharon walked alongside the congregation through the process and helped them discern their priorities for transferring to a new congregation. In the end, the congregation unanimously agreed to a new home and they all moved together.

‘When we all met a year later, they all looked at me and said, “Oh, we should have done it earlier. It’s been so fantastic. They’ve been so welcoming.”’

Sharon is still full of admiration for the mature approach of the community. ‘They were able to find new life because they ended the old one. It might not have emerged in the same way if they hadn’t been willing to say, this congregation’s life is ending. It was a very hopeful and faithful experience.’

Sharon has also found hope in the darkest moments of her own life.

Nearly eight years ago, Sharon lost her beloved partner Michael to suicide. They were married for 19 years. At the time of his death, Sharon says she pulled on all her intellectual knowledge of grief and loss, but that didn’t make it easy.

‘People say, “I don’t know how you keep going” but you don’t get a lot of choice. I had two daughters and I had to get up every day and at least make their lunch and pack them off to school. I said to myself, this can either break me or it can break me open and I want to choose to be broken open by it. And I hope it’s made me a better, wiser, more compassionate person. I still miss him all the time. I’m still deeply grateful for having known him. He had a great capacity to be supportive and encouraging and I still feel the legacy of that all the time.’

A key project during Sharon’s term as President is to help lead the Assembly’s Act2 conversation – a process of discernment about where God is calling the Church into the future. Sharon says this may mean sitting in the uncomfortable space between endings and new beginnings.

‘I think we need those courageous conversations about the way we do things. Is this way of being, or structure, or project helping us be the community we want to be? That takes a lot of discernment and being willing to listen to each other, and to own our sadness when we need to let go.’

For Sharon, the future conversation is also about hope. ‘One of the phrases that has stuck with me from the Act2 conversation is the end goal of life-giving communities of faith.’

Sharon hopes the Act2 project will inspire us to be more creative in thinking about what a community of faith looks like, whether it’s online, face-to-face or gathered for a short time, and to rethink the ways the Uniting Church is engaged in the world.

**‘What life-giving communities of faith do is help people notice and see where God is in the world and equip them to participate in that.’**

For Sharon, how the Uniting Church engages in the public space unequivocally starts with how we as a Church and as a nation come to terms with the dispossession of Australia’s First Peoples and the continuing privilege most of us have because of it.

‘Our First People have gifted us with the *Statement from the Heart*, and the generosity in that continues to stagger me. That a people dispossessed by us would come back and say they would like to have another go to set this right. I think if we miss that opportunity, it’s catastrophic for us as a nation. Our own *Preamble* is a beginning, but we still have a long way to go to live into that and really work out what it means.’

At the 16th Assembly online meeting in July, Sharon invited First Nations students from Nungalinga College to lead the Bible Study. ‘I’m intrigued and really glad we’ve got this opportunity to hear those leaders open scripture for us and to hear what they want to say to us about what it means to live together in love and what that demands of us as Second Peoples.’

Another way Sharon hopes the 16th Assembly will help the Church think differently is the intentional use of different languages to communicate the theme *Dwelling in Love*.

‘We have to keep reminding ourselves that we are a multilingual church. We all speak many languages and those languages have embedded in them meaning and culture. I hope it prompts people to find someone who speaks another language and ask them how they draw out different meaning when they read it.’

Sharon is also aware that stepping into the role of President requires switching her own perspective from a Synod lens to a national perspective.

‘I have belonged and worked in the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania for nearly 30 years. It’s a part of my life I’ve always been involved in. There’s a little bit of grief in that part of my life coming to an end, but I am also looking forward to seeing the future of the UCA from all of the unique and diverse perspectives that we have across our Church.’

Whatever lies ahead, change is certain. Sharon will no doubt lead with creativity, energy, resilience and hope.





Synod Reso

# Cha the of the

18  
SEP

Adelaide West Uniting Church

9  
OCT

Pt Lincoln Uniting Church

16  
OCT

Pt Pirie

23  
OCT

Murray Bridge Uniting Church

30  
OCT

Robe (Tarooki Campsite)

6  
NOV

Berri Uniting Church

In September this year, a new event will be hosted by the Synod of South Australia. We are calling it *Chasing the Wind of the Spirit*.

This conference has a clear purpose. After what has been a challenging period in the life of the church in Australia, many of us have found it hard simply to keep going. Even though the One whom we worship is God of all the earth, many of us have found it painful to simply keep the doors of our churches open.

*Chasing the Wind of the Spirit* is a series of multi-located, one-day events starting from the city to five different locations around the state to:

- encourage us to what God is already doing and where the Spirit is at work
- inspire us about the opportunities we still hold and capacity we possess
- equip our churches with skills and ideas that will help them to find the next way that they might engage in the mission of God, within our congregations and beyond.

We are thrilled to announce Rev Canon Dave Male as the keynote speaker who will be presenting virtually at the forthcoming Expos.

urcing Expo

# sing wind Spirit

In addition, we will have panels of leaders from your area and the wider Synod, workshops, food, friends and opportunities to connect with the people in your part of the church and what they are doing.

Registrations are now open for the Synod Expos. In order to manage the on-going impacts of COVID-19 it is essential to register to attend these events. You can do so by visiting the Synod website: [sa.uca.org.au/synod-expo](https://sa.uca.org.au/synod-expo).

If you have any questions about the day, please call the Mission Resourcing Team on (08) 82364200, or email [mr@sa.uca.org.au](mailto:mr@sa.uca.org.au).

This is going to be a fantastic event for the whole church and we are creating it just for you. Look at the dates and make sure you block the day for the one closest to you in your diary.

Rev Mark Schultz  
Team Leader, Mission Resourcing



We have invited Rev Canon Dave Male from the United Kingdom to inspire us in our thoughts of embracing new ways of doing things, preparing our churches for the future and challenging us on sharing our faith with others in word and deed. He is currently the Director of Evangelism and Discipleship for the Church of England, based in Westminster. He will be sharing a message for us and is excited to be spurring us on once again.

# Who is God calling to be the next Moderator of the Uniting Church in South Australia?

By Rev Rod Dyson

A little over ten years ago I had the privilege of being the Moderator of the Synod of South Australia. It was (mostly) a wonderful experience. As Moderator I visited many congregations in South Australia and a significant number of these were celebrating anniversaries or other significant events. So, churches were full, and people were delighted to catch up with each other again. I met so many faithful people who had uplifting stories to tell. I was greatly encouraged after each visit. The membership in South Australia is a very rich canvas. I also met many from other denominations and staff in schools, agencies and St Andrews Hospital.

One of my enduring memories is the prayer support that I received from across the church. This was tangible and a great assurance to me as I was constantly asked to step out in faith.

It is now time to begin the process of choosing the next Moderator of the South Australian Synod and I write this article on behalf of the Moderator Nominating Committee. Information has been sent to presbyteries and to the wider church about the nomination process. Nominations must come through the presbyteries so we encourage you to be in communication with them.

Presbyteries may nominate more than one person, although there is no requirement for every presbytery to nominate someone. Presbyteries are also welcome to nominate people from outside their presbytery (as long as they are within the Synod of SA).

Details of the nomination process including the timeline, the By-laws that relate to the Moderator, the Nomination Form and the Moderator Role and Person Specification are now available on the Synod website at this link: [sa.uca.org.au/moderator-nominations](http://sa.uca.org.au/moderator-nominations) and from the Associate General Secretary, Rev Sue Page, email [assocgensec@sa.uca.org.au](mailto:assocgensec@sa.uca.org.au).

Nominations close on the **30th of September 2021** so send your nominations to presbyteries well before then to allow them time for discernment and to forward them on to the Moderator Nominating Committee.

Send your nomination to your presbytery and they will continue the discernment. The permission of the nominated person should not be sought before nominating. The Moderator Nominating Committee will contact those whose names are forwarded by the presbyteries.

My experience is that God calls a particular person to be Moderator for each season of the church. I ask that you pray and discern who God is calling for the next season of our church.

## Nomination process

● Access information at [sa.uca.org.au/moderator-nominations](http://sa.uca.org.au/moderator-nominations) or by emailing Associate General Secretary, Rev Sue Page at [assocgensec@sa.uca.org.au](mailto:assocgensec@sa.uca.org.au)

● Send nominations to presbyteries before deadline of 30th September 2021

● The permission of the nominated person should not be sought before nominating

● The Moderator Nominating Committee will contact those whose names are forwarded by the presbyteries

# Growing Up Uniting

Edited by William W. Emilsen and  
Elizabeth A. Watson, Mediacom, Adelaide 2021

by Rev Philip Gardner

William Emilsen has greatly blessed the Uniting Church over the years by editing a series of books on the Uniting Church. There were editions of essays for the twentieth and twenty-fifth anniversaries of Union, another in 2014 and of course his marvellous biography of Charles Harris the founder of the UAICC.

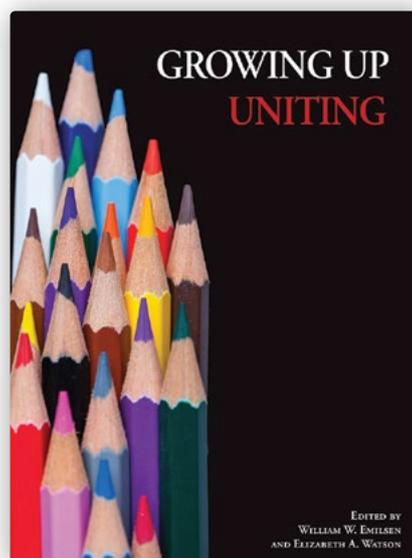
This time he has joined with sociologist Elizabeth Watson to edit a series of reflections by people who have grown up in the Uniting Church. That is, those who were born after Union or whose conscious experience of church has only been the UCA. There are twenty contributors ranging in age from around twenty to late-forties (based on the clues in the essays!). A treasure trove of voices and perspectives.

Although the contributors were given areas to consider in writing the essays they were also given the freedom to respond and the resulting essays vary widely in structure, content and tone. My favourites in the book tended to be those essays that were more autobiographical. Often in the sharing of their story, key themes were shared that were paralleled with those essays that were less narrative driven.

Consistently the contributors spoke of their pride of belonging to a denomination committed to justice, especially the mutuality of women and men in ministry, the encouragement of lay ministry, the gift of multiculturalism and the honouring of First Peoples. Other themes were also strong, including the importance of welcome by local congregations, the building of community and the importance of good mentors.

Story after story spoke of key people who had invested in their lives ranging from folks in local congregations to tertiary chaplains and other ministers. (Throughout this book I was envious, not for the first time, of the great tertiary chaplaincy program developed by the NSW/ACT Synod.) One of the key themes raised by this book for me is how intentional are we about helping all people, but especially young people, mature as followers of Jesus? What pathways and tools are we using to grow intentional followers of Jesus? For that reason alone this book is worth the investment of your time if you are a leader in the UCA.

“Story after story spoke of key people who had invested in their lives ranging from folks in local congregations to tertiary chaplains and other ministers.”



It was very encouraging to be reminded of significant program in the UCA over the years. Kids and Youth Camp Outs in South Australia, NCYC, About Face and many more. To see how these efforts had a life time impact on those that participated was affirming. Another interesting part of the book is that not everyone was still actively participating in the Uniting Church, yet all seemed to have a deep connection and fondness for the ways in which their lives had been shaped.

I came away from this book wondering whether there might be a sequel, with yet more stories, or maybe a webpage with others invited to share their stories with similar discipline. This book is a gift to the UCA, a reminder of our strengths, and where we need to grow. You won't agree with everyone or everything in this book – but that is part of being Uniting isn't it?

# An Informed Faith

*Adapted from an article by Rev John T Squires*

The exercise by men and women of the gifts God bestows upon them: celebrating women in leadership in the Uniting Church.

The National Assembly of the Uniting Church in Australia recently installed the Rev. Sharon Hollis as President of the Assembly for the next three years (2021–24).

At the same meeting (being held online because of the COVID pandemic), members of the Assembly elected a female President-Elect, the Rev Charissa Suli, who will serve as President-Elect for three years, and then she will take up the position of President in July 2024.

For the next three years, the President, the Past President, and the President-Elect will all be females: the Rev Sharon Hollis, Dr Deidre Palmer, and the Rev Charissa Suli, respectively. In addition, the current General Secretary of the Assembly is also female: Colleen Geyer. Her term has just been extended by the current Assembly. It is a striking symbol, when considering the national leadership of Christian churches across Australia, that all of our key leadership are female.

The symbolism is potent, when Heads of Churches gather: women in such ranks have, to this point, been somewhat rare. The Uniting Church contribution

has been, and will continue to be, a reminder, of the importance of providing a female perspective when issues of national social and political importance are being considered. (It's a message that our national political leadership seems incapable of hearing and implementing—despite the power of the #EnoughIsEnough movement from earlier this year.)

Women in leadership is not an unusual thing for the UCA. Women have served in leadership roles in a number of denominations.



But amongst the historic mainstream denominations, the Uniting Church stands out from Roman Catholic and Anglican Churches, with many more women stepping forward into leadership.

The same comparisons can be drawn with Baptist, Church of Christ, and Pentecostal churches over the past half century.

This is completely consistent with the affirmation made in the *Basis of Union*—the document on which the formation of the Uniting Church was based. Paragraph 13, after recognising the existing ministries in the three participating denominations at the time of union, states, 'The Uniting Church will thereafter provide for the exercise by men and women of the gifts





The Uniting Church contribution has been, and will continue to be, a reminder, of the importance of providing a female perspective when issues of national social and political importance are being considered.

God bestows upon them, and will order its life in response to God’s call to enter more fully into mission! This was consistent with the practice of those three earlier denominations, which each had ordained women to serve in ministry.

Indeed, this practice is also consistent with the fundamental theological affirmation made earlier in paragraph 13 of the Basis, declaring that the church ‘acknowledges with thanksgiving that the one Spirit has endowed the members of Christ’s Church with a diversity of gifts, and that there is no gift without its corresponding service: all ministries have a part in the ministry of Christ.’ This, of course, derives from the crystal clear affirmations about the gifting of the Spirit that Paul makes in 1 Corinthians 12. The Spirit knows no limits of gender in gracing individuals with gifts for ministry.

And Paul was completely accepting and affirming of women in ministry leadership as partners with him in the work they were undertaking. So, women in key leadership

roles is a practice consistent with scripture and in accord with the central values and practices of the Uniting Church. Along with the women already noted in the opening paragraphs, a number of the Synods have also had female Moderators. Currently, there are three female Moderators: Thresi Mauboy Wohangara in the Northern Synod, Denise Liersch in VicTas, and Susy Thomas, in WA.

The Rev Charissa Suli, a second-generation Australian of Tongan heritage, is the first person of non-Anglo origins to serve in the National leadership role, although some Synods have elected non-Anglos as Moderators. The age of Charissa Suli is striking: she is a ‘young person’ by church reckoning, having been ordained for just seven years, and still being in her thirties. That must surely be something not often seen in church leadership.

Of course, all of this recounting of females in prominent leadership roles hasn’t yet taken into account the numerous females who have served as Chair of Presbyteries, Church Councils, and Congregations—to say

nothing of the thousands upon thousands of females serving as active members of Congregations and Fellowship Groups and living out their discipleship in community groups right around the country. Females outnumber males within the church by a factor of at least 2:1, so it is way beyond time that our leadership reflects this!

Nevertheless, the array of leadership we can point to is a sign of our commitment as a church, to be open to the moving of the Spirit. We have seen that in the gifted leadership of Dr Tabart (who signed the Covenant relationship with the United Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress in 1985) and Dr Palmer (who has steered the church through the difficulties of the 2018 decision about marriage, and who has been key to the development of a fine resource on domestic violence in 2021).

May that be what transpires under the leadership of Sharon Hollis, our first ordained female President, and then Charissa Suli, our first Pacific Islander female President.



*From left to right: 15th President Dr Deidre Palmer, General Secretary of the Assembly Colleen Geyer, Rev Charissa Suli and Rev Sharon Hollis recently installed as the 16th President of the Uniting Church.*

# Suicide awareness... it's no secret.

*by Rev Jill Lienert*

It was a week we referred to as 'Swat-vac'. It was the week between finishing Year 12 and starting exams. It was a frenzied, agonising time of cramming in last-minute information just in case it might be in the exam, setting ourselves last year's exams to complete in exam conditions. It was gruelling and we were sleep-deprived, and with our future dream jobs hanging in the balance, we were delirious with stress.

I remember well that it was Thursday. Our first exam, English, began on Friday. The phone rang and Mum came in to tell me my best friend was on the phone. She had rung to say that the Wednesday night just gone, a boy in our year level had died from suicide. It was not presented as calmly as that sentence may sound, it was more like: 'Oh my God, Jill, I can't believe it, Steven is dead,' and somehow I found I could take my focus from exam preparation and asked stunned. 'How?'. 'Suicide', she replied.

We lived in a small country town. Somehow a phone chain began and everyone that could be gathered locally did. We hugged and cried. We were all in shock. Steve was top of our class academically. It seemed inconceivable that he, with all his talent and knowledge, would do this. We bolstered ourselves for Friday, and still stunned, faced our first and further exams.

Our families never spoke of this tragedy with us. It is never difficult to discern when a topic is taboo. The only words I heard my mum say were, 'I hope he's not Catholic.' I didn't even know then what that meant in this context. The local newspaper carried a small article about 'a gifted and talented lad' who had 'committed suicide.' We never heard of there being a funeral for Steve. We heard months later that his family had moved away. The rumours that circulated ranged from ludicrous to heart-breaking. Everyone had an opinion; no one knew the truth. No one used the word 'suicide.' Years later when we would come back together for reunions, Steve's name was never mentioned, though Peter, who died in a motorbike accident was.

Many years after this event, my niece died as a result of suicide. It was my daughter, Bek, who phoned from Germany to tell me of the tragedy. Our families had become distant through divorce, but Stephanie, located in Sydney, and Bek (both the same age) had remained in touch.

**Lifeline: 13 11 14**

When Bek called I could hear the anguish in her voice, 'Steph has died from suicide' she managed to get-out between sobs and shock. My mind raced, *What do I say? Sorry Honey?* That doesn't seem very adequate. *Bek, are you okay?* Bit obvious she's not. I ached to reach through the phone to hug her and hold her close.

Bek's loss lived heavily with her and continues to define her; she is not afraid to say 'I was thinking about Steph again the other day.' The 'why,' the 'how could she leave ...?,' the 'I couldn't tell!' all live with her.

There are far too many hurtful, belittling and soul-wrenching ways to act and things to say; words and actions that may be well-meaning, have emerged out of ignorance or a lack of theological exploration, leaving people hurt and distanced from the church and faith.

But what do we say? How do we approach this subject without stigma, without qualification and without judgement? Where can we refer people? This year, the Synod of SA is putting together some resources that aim to assist us to think about this issue and discern just what we might say to someone who is reaching out for support, understanding and care after a loved one has died from suicide.

September 10th is *Suicide Awareness Day*, and it is around this date that we intend to start the campaign – *Suicide Awareness, It's always time to talk*. Scots Church on North Terrace Adelaide will be holding an Awareness Day on September 9th (which is the national RUOK Day) to support people who are seeking answers to *What is the right thing to say?*

Rev Jill Lienert is the Community Connections Minister Scots Church Adelaide.



“When one is affected by the loss of a loved one from suicide, the shock, grief, guilt and questions are all-consuming. And in this space, where are we, members of the church?”



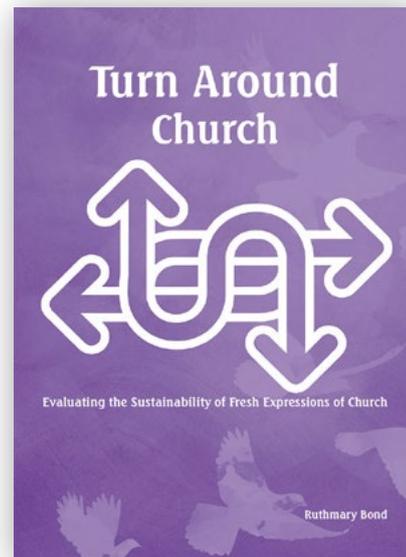
# Discipleship and evangelism as one entity

by Rev Ruth Mary Bond

Evangelism and discipleship go hand-in-hand, evangelism cannot stand alone because both begin from the first contact with a new person. Being raised in the church I had an understanding that you first tell people about Jesus, which is evangelism, then when they come to Jesus they are discipled. However I don't see this model in the way Jesus discipled his followers. Jesus met them, said 'come follow me,' come hang out and in that space of relationship He taught them. Jesus essentially said 'do as I do and I will teach you about God.'

The question that is not often asked is, when did the disciples who followed Jesus become believers? Believers meaning they accepted that Jesus was the Son of God, Messiah. If they were believers from the moment they joined the group why did they question if Jesus was the Messiah? To me this illustrates that Jesus journeyed with them from day one and over time they became dedicated believers of Jesus the Christ. The evangelism happened along the way as they learned about God and saw how Jesus behaved and the love he had for people. Each one of these actions evangelised the followers of Jesus while they were being discipled; learning to live the way Jesus lived. This model sustained them and grew the disciples into being the founding leaders of the church.

I believe this is how evangelism is best effective today. The impression of Jesus that people get starts the moment they meet us. People are being 'evangelised and discipled' every day – into other ways of thinking and ways of doing – by the world around us. For example consumerism is the biggest threat to Christianity, as it discipled people every day: this happens through television shows, the Internet, social media and through advertisements that tell people what to wear and what they need to look like to be acceptable. So if Christians don't disciple those around us then the world will – into something else! Being in neutral is not good enough. Of course I am not talking about discipleship as a list of rules that need to be followed but an active relationship with the living God that assists us to live the Christian life.



“... we are not taking people to a spiritual place we have been before but rather it is inviting them to come with you to a place where neither of you have gone before, a journey with Jesus.”

Evangelism and Discipleship are about everything we say and do. Living what we believe is vital. One way to put it is 'Correct action in living out the Gospel is more important than the correct thinking about the faith. People want to see people of faith live out their faith in action for the transformation of society.'

I am sure that all of us have felt a certain weakness when it comes to evangelism and sharing our faith, we never feel ready. However the whole picture of evangelism changes when it is connected directly to discipleship. Rev Canon Dave Male comments:

'No longer is it about being ready, it is about being authentic. Living authentically as a follower of Jesus Christ so that others see there is something more to life than consumerism or rigid rules. This means we are not taking people to a spiritual place we have been before but rather it is inviting them to come with you to a place where neither of you have gone before, a journey with Jesus.'

*Adapted from the book 'Turnaround Church,' by Rev Ruth Mary Bond.*

## In Memory of Deacon Nick Kerr

Deacon Nick Kerr from the Catholic Church passed away on 27th July 2021 after an extended illness. He was 81 years of age.

Prior to his ordination as a Deacon, Nick was a religious journalist until 2007. As an award-winning journalist, he wrote and edited religious publications, including the *Southern Cross* and *New Times* for 17 years. He continued writing in many forums in his role as Deacon. Pope John Paul II knighted him (Knight of St Sylvester) for his work in religious journalism and he was also presented the Gutenberg Award for excellence by the Australasian Religious Press Association.

In his retirement, Nick continued to serve the Church as a Deacon at St Francis Xavier's Cathedral and through his pastoral work with the African Catholic community.

Our grateful thanks are extended to Nick for his service to the church and our deepest sympathy is extended to his family at this time.



## Board Director Vacancy

Uniting Country SA is a dynamic and innovative community service organisation working across a vast geographical area of regional South Australia delivering services including housing, foster care, financial and family support, mental health services, disability services and community development.

If you are passionate about making a difference in regional communities an opportunity exists to join the Board of Directors at UCSA.

UCSA is seeking expressions of interest from suitably experienced people with a desire to strengthen their connections to community and share their specialised expertise by contributing to the strategic direction of the agency particularly in the areas of:

- Disability
- Industry and Sector Expertise
- Board Governance
- Community Housing
- Business acumen.

The successful candidate will be a member of the Uniting Church and demonstrate their alignment with UCSA's vision, values and strategic goals.

Board meetings are held on a monthly basis at Port Pirie.

Further enquiries may be directed to Sue Park, Board Chairperson on 0408 971 306 or email [suzannepark@gmail.com](mailto:suzannepark@gmail.com).

Expressions of interest accompanied by your CV detailing relevant experience should be emailed to Joanne Stark, EA to CEO, Uniting Country SA, [joanne.stark@ucsa.org.au](mailto:joanne.stark@ucsa.org.au).

Please visit [www.ucsa.org.au](http://www.ucsa.org.au).



The Uniting Church in Australia  
WIMALA PRESBYTERY

## Employment/placement opportunity Regional coordinator/s

Wimala Presbytery is seeking Regional Coordinators to work within one, or more, geographical regions. Their role will be to coordinate and encourage congregations, faith communities, and ministry agents in their pursuit of the mission of Christ by providing coordination, support, care, leadership, and resourcing.

**Conditions:** This is a 0.2 FTE appointment per region for 2 years with possibility of extension. Note that a person may apply to work in more than one region.

**Location:** The three regions available include Metro, Outer Metro East (Adelaide Hills, Barossa, Riverland) and Outer Metro West (Yorke Peninsula, Eyre Peninsula, Northern and Flinders) although the boundaries are flexible and can be discussed on application.

**Length:** Initial period of 2 years.

**Applications/Enquires to:** The Wimala Secretary [wimala.secretary@sa.uca.org.au](mailto:wimala.secretary@sa.uca.org.au) by close of business 30 September 2021.



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