



Issue 40
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New Times



THE VOICE OF THE UNITED CHURCH IN CANADA
FREE

New Times

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Synod of South Australia

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PLACEMENTS NEWS

Placements finalised as at 18 January 2021

Rev Linda Forsyth to Loxton UC, Renmark UC and Renmark West from 3 May 2021

Rev Peter Morton to Annesley from 1 January 2021

Advertised placements

Theologian in Residence - Part Time Fixed Term

Presbytery of Southern SA Minister - Full Time Fixed Term

Vacant placements

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

PROFILES AVAILABLE

Generate Presbytery

Port Augusta UC (0.8) Note increased FTE

Presbytery of Southern SA

Adare UC; Noarlunga UC (2nd placement); Rosefiled UC; Newland UC (0.5 TBC)

Linked Congregations in Multiple Presbyteries

Southern Yorke Peninsula (0.5-0.6 TBC)

PROFILES NOT YET AVAILABLE

Generate Presbytery

Kangaroo Island Linked Congregations (0.7)

Wimala Presbytery

Croydon Park UC (0.3); Kadina Wallaroo UC from May 2021; Trinity Alberton (0.5 TBC)

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

God is doing new things

At this time of the year in the Christian calendar we are approaching the season of Lent. Lent is the period leading up to Easter and is immediately preceded by Shrove Tuesday, which is also known as Pancake Day. Traditionally Shrove Tuesday is the day on which the faithful eat up all their luxuries such as eggs and sugar, often made into pancakes in preparation for the period of austerity that is Lent. As a Uniting Church, we consider our abundance on Pancake Day and raise money for those who do not have enough, and these funds are used by our UnitingCare organisations to provide relief in many ways.

Lent is considered a time of reflection and as we prepare for Easter celebrations may we pause and reflect on our lives, our priorities and our faith. In our preparation, may we also take time to respond to God's on-going presence and action in our world and our lives. May we see God with us through our own struggles and uncertainties and recognise the opportunities God reveals to us and the ways we can put them into action.

As it says in Isaiah 43 *God is doing new things, God is making a way in the wilderness and streams in the desert.* My prayer is that we might be open to this, and to use the opportunities to connect with the community around us in ways that bring God's love, care and compassion closer.

As Easter approaches, we remember that it wasn't easy for Jesus. There were times when he asked God to 'take this cup

of suffering away.' Along with Jesus, we know that things won't always be easy and that it is often through our struggles that we see new opportunities for growth in our discipleship. We find new ways to connect with people and new ways to serve others.

“
**May we be sustained by
 God's constant presence
 through the resurrected
 Jesus to continue seeking
 new opportunities to be
 God's hands, feet and voice
 in the world.**

We have moved from Christmas, through to the New Year and Epiphany, and now we approach Lent and Easter. So much has changed, and is continuing to change in our world, in our church and in our personal lives. May we be sustained by God's constant presence through the resurrected Jesus to continue seeking new opportunities to be God's hands, feet and voice in the world.

Blessings,

Bronte Wilson

Bronte Wilson ■



Caption: Meningie Uniting Church - featuring the Christmas poster with the empty cross of Easter



Photo by Melethril on unsplash.com

From the Editor

A few years ago, whilst working as a freelance editor and book coach, a young woman contacted me as she wanted to tell her story and to have it published.

She was in her early thirties, an attractive, confident, professional person, and yet there was also a quiet fragility about her.

Her story was one of domestic violence, and as I began the task of editing her manuscript, I became more and more upset. It became evident that just about every week, her partner would systematically beat her and she would learn to hide – both the bruises and the pain – from her family, co-workers and friends.

Until one day she collapsed at work because of a fractured rib which impacted her ability to breathe.

This was her 'wake-up' call as she realised that if this continued, she actually might not survive. It was then that she set about leaving – initially moving interstate to try to distance herself; to recover a life free from the violence and the fear.

She eventually returned to live in Adelaide and when she published her book she did so under a pseudonym, because her ex-partner still resides here – and the fear was still an issue.

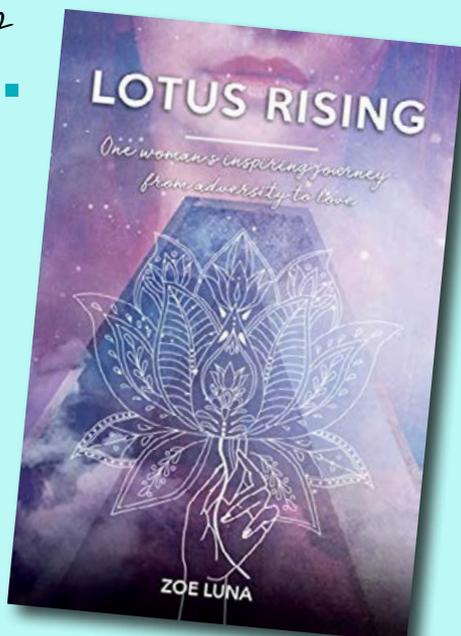
I am pleased to report that she is now happily married – however, how many stories of this kind do we come across that do not have such a happy ending?

As you read this issue of *New Times* the articles may be uncomfortable and confronting, but the singular message is that we need to continually seek to listen, understand and discern a way forward which respects all.

If you are interested in finding out more, below is her book.

Bransome

Bridget Ransome ■



Whatever it takes ...



Caption: Moderator and General Secretary enjoying a COVID-Safe pastoral moment with Rev Nathan Whillas, after an energising meeting with the leadership team at Port Lincoln



When I was a child my Sunday School teachers did a great job in teaching me the stories that have shaped my faith. They brought alive the epic narratives, the faithful obedient heroes that listened to God's instruction and teaching, wisdom and care.

As I got a little older I began to read the stories again. I was not a strong reader so it took some time for me to discover significant sub themes. It is probably not surprising that my teachers avoided Abraham's sacrifice of Sarah to protect himself (Gen. 12) and David's killing of Uriah (2 Sam. 11). For me, discovering these texts brought a deep sadness that I found difficult to resolve. Here were two such influential

characters who helped shape God's vision for the world, whose bad behaviour was tolerated, glossed over, even ignored – they were certainly not held to account.

In my role as General Secretary, too many days connect me with the deep sadness I felt about the lack of justice for the victims of Abraham and David's actions. It happens each time I receive an email seeking help to resolve bad behaviour that has, often over many years, perpetuated a mythology that accepts as okay, bullying and other forms of unacceptable behaviour. In the church, when the biblical text is silent (leaders not held to account because of the power they claim) we are called to look somewhere else to find help.

“

It is encouraging to hear about Church Councils who develop covenant agreements around appropriate and shared values.

The Cross provides us with a transformative frame that enables us to be changed and restored. Sadly much of the content of this issue of *New Times* reminds us that it is easier to ignore, make excuses for, or cover up violence in the church. Too often the soft version of events shapes our decision-making.

However, we know that God's covenant through Christ gives primacy to love and respect. Ministers make a vow at their ordination and each subsequent induction to accept the discipline of the church defined in scripture and the UCA *Code of Ethics*. Lay Leaders, also bound by scripture and our *Code of Conduct*, have no licence to cause significant harm to ministers and/or the people they are in ministry with.

As we embrace the joys and challenges of this New Year it is my hope that as a church we will address and call to account the violent behaviour that too often shapes our councils. There are people with resources and strategies to help. It is encouraging to hear about Church Councils who develop covenant agreements around appropriate and shared values. Newly formed Presbytery PRC committees are working hard to provide orientation and training around governance, managing conflict and how to have difficult conversations. A proposal will come to Synod seeking to strengthen our resolve and capacity to act. I pray that you will join us in this commitment.

Rev Felicity Amery ■

#16 Days of activism

Dr Deidre Palmer

As I write this article I have heard the horrifying news of a woman murdered by her partner outside the Alice Springs hospital. As you read this article it is more than likely that this week you have heard the terrible news of a woman being murdered by her partner or ex-partner.

In Australia, on average, one woman per week is murdered by her partner or ex-partner. One in three women have experienced domestic violence in their lifetime and since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, reports of domestic and family violence have been increasing.

Behind these horrifying statistics are women, children, their families and friends, whose lives have been shattered by the trauma of domestic and family violence. There are many other women and children, who have survived, but live in situations of abuse and on-going control and intimidation.

As a Church and as followers of Jesus we are called to take action in ways that call out violence as a sin against God and a breach of the love, trust and care, that Christ embodies and calls us to model.

In the Uniting Church and our agencies there are many inspiring women and men whose experience of the call of God and Christian discipleship has led them to advocate for justice, equality, dignity and respect for all people.

Most recently the Uniting Church's expression of this advocacy has been through our participation in '16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence'. This global campaign supported by the United Nations and the World Council of Churches, begins each year on the International Day to Eliminate Violence against Women (November 25) and concludes on Human Rights Day (December 10).

Our National Assembly invited 16 women to write a prayer to highlight the devastating impacts of gender-based violence, to offer pastoral support for those affected, and to raise up the vision of equality, respect, dignity and fullness of life that God intends for

us all. I commend these prayers to you. They are available on the uniting church assembly website: uniting.church/16-days-of-activism.

A key focus area in addressing gender-based violence is gender equality and respect for women. This has been a major feature of the Uniting Church since our beginning, grounded in our Biblical foundations.

The narrative that has shaped women and men in the Uniting Church is of a God, who calls each of us personally into our fullest humanity, women and men, beloved of God, created in God's image.

At the heart of the Uniting Church's understanding of God and our shared humanity is an embrace of the liberating word expressed in the person and work of Jesus Christ, in whom, God calls us to abundant life. Abundant living can be seen when we are free to express our God-given gifts, to live in relationships that are life-giving and loving, based on equality, trust and mutual respect.

As a social worker and a Christian educator, I have worked with women and children whose lives are diminished by domestic and family violence. Their sense of their own identity and sense of safety and trust have been undermined by those closest to them, who should have been trustworthy and affirming. I have also witnessed the toll on extended family and friends.

My hope that I want to share with all of you is that homes are safe havens, places where we can find peace, laughter, affirmation of who we are, and a celebration of our gifts and humanity.



As a Church and as followers of Jesus we are called to take action in ways that call out violence as a sin against God ...

Our faith communities must also be such places - compassionate, attentive and attuned to the ways our Gospel message is communicated and lived, aware of the impacts of what we teach and preach on the lives of people who have been affected by gender-based violence. The narratives we share need to offer healing, hope and flourishing for them.

Responding to gender-based violence is a whole-of-Church action. But we are not alone.

We greatly benefit as a Church from the professional expertise of our church and government agencies.

If you are reading this and you are one of those professionals, a social worker, a counsellor, a health care worker, a police officer, a lawyer, thank you for the ways you contribute to the safety and well-being of women and children in these situations.

If you are reading this, and thinking, I'm not a professional, what can I do? Know that we can all play a part in creating communities, congregations, homes, extended networks that are places of safety, healing and hope for those who have experienced gender-based violence.

Support and resources:



For those living in situations of domestic violence:

Phone: **1800RESPECT**



For information about international campaigns and hearing the stories of survivors and advocates:

As the community of the Uniting Church and in our own Christian vocation, we can:



- Say **no** to violence in word and action
- **Be aware** of signs of abuse
 - Offer **friendship and pastoral support**, where appropriate to those in situations of domestic and family violence
 - Be bearers of a **hope-filled and life-giving** Christian Story and Vision in our living, education, preaching, pastoral care, worship and mission
- **Strengthen our voice** in the public space – emphasising the equality of women and men, girls and boys and advocating for those who have experienced gender-based violence
- **Call out** those situations where power is used to abuse and diminish others. Use the power that we have responsibly and for the well-being of all in our community
- **Encourage children and young people** to have a voice in our Christian communities and wider society, through our ministry in local congregations, families, communities and schools

▪ **Address sexism** and patriarchal patterns, wherever we see these expressed and live in ways that encourage the equality of girls and boys, women and men

▪ Model **non-violent, loving and respectful** relationships.

As the people of God, embodying God’s compassion, justice and liberation, Christ calls us to be advocates for an end to gender-based violence.

In following this call, as the Uniting Church we don’t just say no to violence, we must continuously seek to end it.

We are called to contribute to and shape communities and relationships where all people are able to live the abundant life which is God’s vision for us all. ■



- ✓ unwomen.org
- ✓ uniting.church
- ✓ sa.uca.org.au/beyond-violence
- ✓ unitingworld.org.au

ONLINE SAFETY AND FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Rev Philip Gardner

Many anxieties assailed us in 2020 and one in particular was the impact of lockdown(s) on domestic and family violence.

People forced to spend time together, restricted movement and increased anger seemed like a powder keg in which the vulnerable were placed in an even more precarious position. Another concern was people's online safety as many explored the joys of Zoom meetings and generally increased their online presence.

I participated in a filmed national conversation about online safety for congregations late last year. One of the lessons from that conversation is that in many ways the same practices that help us be safe in our 'normal' settings protect us in an online space too. Thoughtful preparation, consideration of risks, exploring different perspectives on a

given scenario, screening and education of leaders, all help develop an umbrella of safety.

A very helpful website is the e-Safety Commission website: esafety.gov.au. They provide a range of resources for communities and families, including publishing research on e-safety. In December 2020 new research was published entitled 'Children and Technology - Facilitated Abuse in Domestic and Family Violence Situations.'

This article picks up some of the key concerns of the last year. One of the discoveries in the research is that most abuse occurs using traditional means of communication e.g. the most common means of communication in abuse to spouses or children involves the use of the telephone. One of the key recommendations is that leaders in

organisations – and this would clearly include the church – are educated about domestic and family violence.

Some of this is picked up in the Mandatory Reporting training, called 'Through Their Eyes' and also the 'Called to Care' program. For more information visit: sa.uca.org.au/safechurch.

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One of the key recommendations is that leaders in organisations – and this would clearly include the church – are educated about domestic and family violence.



BUILDING BETTER TEAMS

Rev Philip Gardner

In November 2020, Rev Mark Schultz led a session on Governance for Mission at the Generate Presbytery hub meeting for Southern Adelaide. I was there with other members of our Church Council and we were given an opportunity to reflect on our culture as a council.

We were positive about the culture of our Church Culture, the way we spoke to one another, the ways we disagreed with one another and the way we maintained the key focus of our meetings. We felt that we had a warm, generous spirit where people were encouraged to voice disagreement in respectful ways and we sought to discern God's will together.

However a series of questions arose for us. For example: How did the healthy culture arise? How do we ensure its continuation? What process do we have in place for new members? And what are

the values and practices that make up that culture?

Having conversations about developing and maintaining the culture of your Church Council or any other committee or team can be rewarding and helpful. Unearthing our expectations of one another, agreeing on behaviour, working through how to raise conflict and resolve it can all help strengthen and deepen the culture of a council or team. There are a number of resources to help you do this and I am sure that your Presbytery leadership would be happy to guide you. Placements and Safe Church would also be glad to assist.

A process might include engaging with Scripture passages where Jesus or Paul discuss expectations of leaders and communities. For example, the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5 – 7), Jesus

teaching to his disciples on the road to Jerusalem (Mark 8:22-10:52) or passages like Romans 12, Colossians 3-4 and Ephesians 4-5:20 and then think through what might a healthy community look like in your context?

The *Manual for Meetings*, which is included in the Regulations also has some very insightful things to say about Christian community and how this is embodied in how we meet together. Processes like 'Six Thinking Hats' can also be helpful because they invite dissent and disagreement in a structured process.

So an invitation – build consensus on agreed behaviour this year and plan how you will embody Christian community and deepen it as you come together.



BUILDING BETTER COMMUNITIES

Rev Philip Gardner

The Uniting Church has a number of codes of practice. The best known is the *Code of Ethics* and *Ministry Practice*, and there are similar codes for Lay Preachers and for Lay Leaders. Each of them is placed in a thoughtful and helpful theological framework reminding us that Christian community is a gift of God through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Furthermore as we worship God, serve the community and relate to one another we may build deep and vulnerable relationships. Protecting this gift from God requires thoughtful responses from leaders – hence the codes of practice.

One particular part of the *Code of Ethics* and *Ministry Practice* I want to draw to your attention is the section on bullying (Power 3.6 [c and d]). In particular ... bullying is considered repeated

unwelcome and unsolicited behaviour towards a person who considers it offensive, intimidating or threatening.'

A disappointing part of our work in Safe Church is talking to leaders, lay and ordained, who have been subjected to repeated and unwelcome behaviour. Long haranguing emails, constant aggressive phone calls, blatant rudeness which they are expected to take on the chin because they are a leader. It is time for many of our communities to think about how they will communicate their expectations for Christian community and invite people to commit to these as followers of Jesus.

For our part we intend to communicate about the resources that are available, continue to develop new ones and think carefully about building better processes to build better community and reduce 'offensive, intimidating or

threatening behavior'. Not simply a task for one person or committee but for the whole church as we seek to embody in community the liberating news of Jesus. ■

“
Not simply a task for one person or committee but for the whole church as we seek to embody in community the liberating news of Jesus.



Behaviour of people in the Church

Max Howland

Throughout this edition of *New Times* the theme focuses on domestic violence; but the sad reality is that there's another place where people too often use violent and abusive behaviour – the church.

Of course, this is not a new problem. We could probably make the case that Jesus' behaviour in criticising the religious leaders of his day could also be called a form of abuse.

The Apostle Paul encountered this in the churches when he wrote to a generation after Jesus:

- He confronted the abusive and selfish behaviour of the privileged members of the Corinth community even at the Lord's Supper (1st Corinthians 11).
- To the church in Rome he said, 'Who gave you the right to stand in judgement over another Christian just because they hold a different opinion to yours? How dare you sneer at another's belief or practice?' (Romans 14).

Jesus is recorded as teaching:

- Anger is as bad as murder, ogling is as bad as fornication (Matthew 5); following that logic, we could equally add that greed is as bad as theft.
- True greatness is found in self-giving, being as humiliated as a slave, as vulnerable as a child. (Mark ch 8-10).

On the other hand, history records that in the plague that ravaged Rome through 164-180 CE, most people fled for their lives (an act of common sense, one would think). The Christians though, stayed behind to care for the sick and bury the dead, often at the cost of their own lives. 'See how they love one another' was the response of astounded observers.

The Uniting Church has an assortment of Codes of Practice – for Ministry Practice, for Volunteers, for Lay Preachers.

The *Code of Conduct* for Church Councils begins with a reminder that a congregation is not just a bundle of 'shared interest' people: it is The Church in the place where it is located. It is to be a place where we are members of unity, faith and love, hope, grace, witness and service.

The Code then names the appropriate practices and attitudes: care for the well-being of all people, acceptance of and respect for difference, integrity, justice, compassion, respectful use of power.

These are values and behaviours that the UCA enjoins its members to observe – because that is what Jesus modelled and taught.

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... a reminder that a congregation is not just a bundle of 'shared interest' people: it is The Church in the place where it is located.

As Paul quoted:

Adopt the attitude that was in Christ Jesus: though he was in the form of God, He did not consider being equal with God something to exploit, but he emptied himself by taking the form of a slave and by becoming like human beings. When he found himself in the form of a human, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. (Phil 2.5f) ■



A time to gather - Synod 2021

Rev Sue Page



The meeting of the Synod of the Uniting Church in South Australia brings together people from across the state. Members come from diverse settings including rural and urban congregations; communities that share different cultures and languages; ministries in organisations associated with the Uniting Church; chaplaincy in all its forms; members from Synod boards and committees; and the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress. Members are lay and ordained, old and young, those who have been in the Uniting Church all their lives and those who are new.

Many people see the meeting of the Synod as a business meeting and to some degree it is. But it is also so much more. We come together to form a community of God's people who are the members of the meeting and we receive reports from ministry centres, committees, and organisations who are living out the mission of the church and we affirm and direct their work.

We share stories of what God is doing in our midst and through us in our communities, congregations, and presbyteries. We formulate public statements about important matters of justice and we deliberate, discern and decide how to be the Uniting Church in South Australia in the coming years.

There are important aspects of our time together in the Synod meeting:



▪ **Worship and Bible study**

We start our days in worship as God gathers us as a community of sisters and brothers in Christ to hear his words and to offer ourselves and our meeting in prayer and to ask the Holy Spirit to guide our discerning

▪ **Relationships**

Meeting new people and catching up with old friends and colleagues is a wonderful part of our Synod meeting. As we offer one another care and encouragement, and have a laugh in our breaks over a cuppa or a meal which is such an important aspect of our meeting



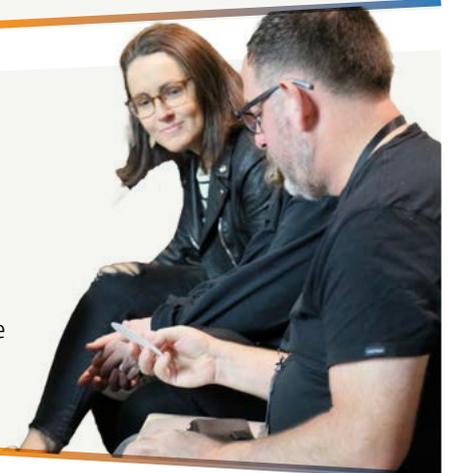
▪ **Discerning together**

We form a community and seek to discern how to step into God's future for us as a church. As we gather it is important to remember that we do not represent the views of the committee or council that appointed us as members. We come together as a unique community to form the Synod meeting and we discern together at the meeting where and how God is guiding us into the future



▪ **Meeting in a variety of ways**

We meet in plenary session where everyone is together, to seek consensus in our decision-making. We meet in electives. We have reporting electives and we have some electives that help members take a break from thinking and discerning, inviting creativity and play. We meet in working groups, where we can discuss in smaller groups some of the key matters coming before the Synod meeting. This meeting we will be discussing the *Synod Strategic Plan* and the *Property Review Report* amongst other things.



The meeting of the Synod is being held in January and February 2021. We were due to hold the meeting in October 2020 but due to the impact of COVID-19 we postponed the meeting until now.

The challenge in planning a meeting with over 300 people under COVID restrictions has led the *Synod Standing Committee* to reduce the membership to just over 200, and we will be adapting many of our practices to keep people safe. We are also planning for the possibility that the meeting will need to be held in an online format. Much testing and preparation has been done for this eventuality, which may be decided just a few days prior to the meeting on 11-13 February. The first session of the Synod meeting was held online on 30 January to test our capacity to hold our meeting in this format.

For more information about the Synod meeting please go to the Synod website where you will find the program, reports and proposals and keep an eye out on social media for posts about the meeting as it happens.

Please pray for those called to serve the church as Synod members. We direct you to the *Synod Prayer Diary* which can be downloaded from the Synod website: sa.uca.org.au/about-us/synod-meetings

All voices matter

Rev Peter Macdonald

At the relaunch of White Ribbon late last year the new Chief Executive, Brad Chilcot released an Essential Poll which revealed that 42% of men aged 18 to 34 years of age, do not regard physical violence such as punching or hitting to be domestic violence. Nearly half of our young men don't see physical violence against women as an issue.

This is deeply disturbing and in Australia results in the weekly death of a young woman at the hands of her intimate male partner.

Further to this, I am bewildered by those among us who hold the view that the issues of women in leadership have been largely sorted. Some in UCA leadership have pitched to me that the feminist project is largely irrelevant because we are 'all now equal.'

Plainly this is not the case. Here are my top three things that I believe we need to work on:

1 Men need to permanently adjust our internal dials so we stop expecting that the way we understand the world is the only way. The sociologists call this 'male privilege.' I try to replace privilege with an 'inquiring' mind-set by asking myself 'How many views are there in this group and what might I learn?' Now my personal view remains in play but it is alongside others, I'm seeking to listen, understand and discern a way forward which respects all.

“
Without all voices we will be unable to discern God's call on the lives of the communities in which we live and lead.

2 When issues arise in the ministry or workplace where women have concerns about men then that needs to be responded to in a timely manner. Leaving issues for months or years to 'sort itself out' is a recipe for disaster. My favourite resource for this is 'Fierce Conversations' by Susan Scott and also seek external help to do this well.

3 Language is a real challenge - here are a few examples. Our church deifies pleasant language and avoids conflict and difficult issues. Males tend to default to confident speaking whereas females tend to default into caution. When strong women find their clear words often they are not given due weight until a male 'man-splains' the same angle. Getting our pronouns right is a new piece of work before us all. Will you resist or roll with it, and what does this say about us and our connection to language and to the wider community? We all have a role in being aware of our language, its impact and the way it holds to a 'niceness' culture which stops dissent and doesn't want multiple conflicting voices around complex topics like gender, reconciliation and the future of the Uniting Church in Australia.

Without all voices we will be unable to discern God's call on the lives of the communities in which we live and lead. ■



churches @ the Fringe

After such a challenging 2020 for everyone, including the arts, it is pleasing to see that the Adelaide Fringe will once again be held from 19th February to 21st March 2021 and Uniting Churches have again opened their doors as venues.

Sophie Cairo

– the Pianist and I – Hits of a Century,
Sufi Music Highway

19-20
February

Church of the Trinity, 318 Goodwood Road, Clarence Park

A musical journey, with piano, inspired by Gershwin, Whitney Houston, and Adele. Sophie Cairo has worked with the greatest symphonic orchestras and jazz musicians in Hungary and due to COVID-19 is now in Adelaide. In 2016 Lane McCray invited her to be the female vocalist of La Bouche, touring the world and delivering her trademark scorching vocals.

Bach to the Future

presented by Saxism – Acoustic SA

28
February

**Clayton Wesley Uniting Church,
The Spire Community Church, 280 Portrush Road, Beulah Park**

SAXISM'S 8th Fringe season presenting an entertaining and varied program of our favourite transcriptions, well-known classic saxophone quartets and more contemporary selections. Come and enjoy an entertaining hour with SAXISM and all the colours, excitement and exquisite beauty of the sax quartet!

Bronzewing String Quartet

featuring Soprano Fiona McArdle

13, 19
February

Clayton Wesley Uniting Church, The Spire Community Church, 280 Portrush Road, Beulah Park

The formidable Bronzewing String Quartet joins forces with Adelaide Soprano Fiona McArdle, recently returned from London, to present a splendid program of beautiful string and vocal arrangements.

Songs of travel and bush poetry

Clayton Wesley Uniting Church,

The Spire Community Church, 280 Portrush Road, Beulah Park

5-6
March

Escape into a fully staged performance of Ralph Vaughan Williams' beloved song cycle 'Songs of Travel' interspersed with classic Australian Bush Poetry. Performed by Nicholas Cannon – Baritone and Andrew Georg – Piano.

I didn't know I was drowning till I saw the shore

Pilgrim Uniting Church, 12 Flinders Street, Adelaide

This collection of images aims to provide a visual narrative of how abuse looks through the eyes and psyche of the abused. The victim's day-to-day compass for living is distorted and broken. The aim of the work is not to shock but to provide a deeper emotional understanding of what it is like to live with the impact of trauma.

19, 22-26
February

21, 28
February

Bookings: adelaidefringe.com.au



Uniting Venues SA 10 Years Young

Mark Lee

Someone once told me that you over-estimate what can be achieved in one year and under-estimate what can be achieved in 10 years – this saying rings true for Uniting Venues SA.

On 1 April 2021, Uniting Venues SA will be 10 years old. Whilst Adare Camp and Caravan Park, Nunyara Conference Centre, Tarooki Campsite, Thuruna Campsite, Emmaus Campsite and, more recently, Beyond Limits Outdoor Education have all had a long association with the Uniting Church; it has been Uniting Venues SA that has navigated the pathway of effective Christian camping ministry in the 21st Century.

The Uniting Venues SA story began in mid-2009 with conversations about creating a fresh approach to the management and operation of the five camps connected with the Uniting Church in SA. At the time, Adare and Nunyara were managed by a governance board, but they had very little connection with the other three independent camps.

The Synod Standing Committee agreed to conduct a comprehensive review of the activities of Adare and Nunyara to determine a strategy for including all five sites under the one management umbrella. It has always been understood that Camps and Conference Centres are a very important part of the Uniting Church in SA, particularly in relation to its missional and discipleship objectives, the resources it utilises and the management of risks associated with its activities.

In 2010, a series of consultation workshops were conducted with a range of key stakeholders from all campsites. The first of these workshops commenced with a sharing of stories of how 'camp' has influenced the lives of many. It was clear from the various stories and discussions that the campsites had much in common and all had a genuine desire to work together.

'These discussions are the best thing to happen to Thuruna in a long time and I fully support the concept of working together,' said Robin Dixon-Thompson, representing Thuruna.

In February 2011, the Synod Standing Committee established Uniting Venues SA to oversee all operations. At the time, the name Uniting Venues SA linked appropriately to the Uniting Church SA as well as Uniting Venues (NSW) and Christian Venues Australia (the national industry representative association). At the time, Synod Standing Committee also approved the mission, or purpose statement of Uniting Venues SA. Our

mission statement is 'to provide opportunities for exploring faith, fostering community, creative learning and leadership development through exceptional Christian hospitality' and is central to all that we do. On 1 April 2011, the name Uniting Venues SA was officially registered with the Australian Securities and Investments Commission and a fresh approach to Christian camping ministry in SA began.

“These discussions are the best thing to happen to Thuruna in a long time and I fully support the concept of working together,”



10 Years on and a lot has changed in that time. We host 27,000 guests annually and have 80 permanent and casual staff (plus volunteers) and we have successfully established Beyond Limits Outdoor Education – the vehicle for activity programs and intentional relationships with our guests.

The secret to the success of Uniting Venues SA is threefold; continuous prayer, an on-going commitment to the mission statement and careful selection of staff. Prayer speaks for itself and underpins the delivery of our mission and selection of staff who share our vision, with passion and culture also fundamental to the growth of Uniting Venues SA. ■




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Journaling apps

Winaya Kamaputri

Most people will begin a new year by setting goals and making new plans while dreaming of all the possibilities for what lies ahead. New Year is certainly a great time to do this, but have you considered your spiritual goals at the start of a New Year – and how to journal them?

'Journaling' can mean different things to different people. For some, it is about keeping records of prayer requests and answers. For others, journaling is a way to keep track of poignant spiritual truths from a sermon, book or from scripture. Some keep a journal to write accounts of revelations or particularly meaningful encounters with God. Whilst for others a journal is as simple as a diary to record daily highlights or thoughts and insights of the events of their day.

Writing a journal can help us to reflect, contemplate, and more fully digest our lives. Proverbs 4 speaks to us about gaining wisdom at all costs: 'My son, pay attention to what I say; turn your ear to my words.' Journaling can help us to do just that – to pay attention and to record wise thoughts. It can help to guard our hearts as we search our inner being, giving attention to the works and ways of God in our lives. You may be surprised by how much you can discover about God in your daily life.

Journals come in a variety of forms – written in a notebook, typed on the computer, which can include pictures or illustrations without words. There are also a range of online, digital journaling apps that provide flexibility, privacy and are easy to use.

Here are just a few of the apps that may enhance your Christian journaling experience:

You may be surprised by how much you can discover about God in your daily life.



1. Daily One Journal

Google rating: 4.7

Pricing: Free or paid subscription available

Daily One Journal is a popular, award-winning journaling app which keeps track of memories in a convenient and secure way. Though it is not particularly faith-based, it is versatile as a calendar journal, memory journal, travel journal and it can automatically add locations, weather, motion activity, music and step count. This password protected app is very user-friendly with an elegant, unobtrusive design. The best feature for this app is the ability to customise multiple reminders which will be helpful for starting your Christian journaling experience.

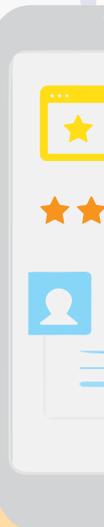


2. Pursue Journal and Bible

Google rating: 4.2

Pricing: Free

This cloud-based app allows effortless reading and listening to the Word of God. It is easy to find the passage you want to read and it has an audio bible option to read scriptures aloud. The app provides a daily reading plan which takes you through the Old Testament once a year and through the New Testament twice a year. This app allows for easy content management with freedom to have as many journals as you like. Entries are fully secure for privacy, yet there is a sharing feature via Facebook, Twitter or email.



Australia Day Awards 2021

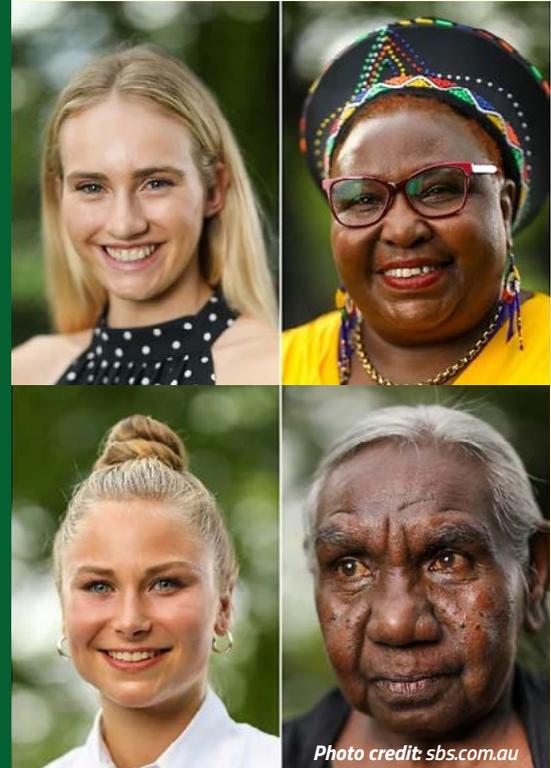


Photo credit: sbs.com.au

This issue of *New Times* is dedicated to the four women who recently received Australia Day Awards, Dr Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr Baumann AM, Rosemary Kariuki, Australian of the Year - Grace Tame and Isobel Marshall. To view: [youtube.com/watch?v=FQbok_RtSrM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FQbok_RtSrM)

We applaud these women as they continue to epitomise those values we hold dear of respect, tolerance, compassion and equal opportunity.

We also acknowledge the following South Australians who received awards in the Australia Day Honours list:

- **Rev Norah Norris**
For significant service to the Uniting Church
- **Mr Ronald Duncan**
For service to the community of Stansbury
- **Mrs Catherine McKechnie**
For service to the Uniting Church and to the trade union movement
- **Ms Avril Noy** (Local Hero award, Holdfast Bay Council)
For her role as Coordinator of UnitingCare Glenelg's Emergency Relief Services. ■

3. Reflect – Christian Mindfulness

Google rating: 4.8

Pricing: Free

This app promotes an excellent way to relax and reduce stress levels. It contains reflections and biblical meditations based on Christian principles including contemplative prayer. Reflections on this app are guided with audio descriptions. With four relaxing background music pieces to choose from, you can look forward to quiet time with God.

4. Happyfeed – Gratitude Journal & Daily Self-Care

Google rating: 4.8

Pricing: Free or paid subscription available

Happyfeed is a simple journal designed to focus on the good things in life by reflecting on three things each day you are grateful for. This gratitude journal is incredibly easy to use with the ability to add photos. The layout and design are simple. If you are in need of inspiration, this app also provides a hint for your writing and you can add an emoji to sum up the mood of your day.

Journaling is a very personal process and can be whatever you think will work for you. Digital journaling can be fun to play with and can help to enrich your journaling practice. Whichever format you choose – challenge yourself this New Year to sit down every day, and collect all the memories that you can look back on to help support you in your spiritual journey. ■

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***Coming Home* (meditations, prayers, poems) and *Kindlings* (poems) by Catherine Lewis**

In *Coming Home*, Catherine Lewis takes readers on a journey, through wonderfully evocative poetry as she navigates life with a deeply felt faith in God. Also, in Rev Alex Sangster's words, '*Kindlings* is a collection of a life lived with courage and with a clear eye. There is nothing sentimental here, but there is deep compassion.'

For further information visit: catherinehopelewis.squarespace.com ■

***Don't Fret: The Worship Leader's Pocketbook* by Don Purdey**

Rev Philip Gardner

There will be many people in the Uniting Church in South Australia who will have warm memories of Don Purdey leading worship with his 12 string acoustic guitar. Others will have been touched by his testimony after he retired from stipended ministry and wrestled with Motor Neurone Disease.

Whatever your musical tastes, worship preferences or theological stripe you could not help be impressed by the thoughtfulness, sincerity and depth of Don's leadership in worship. In that space between retirement and his death Don was at work collating his notes and writing down his considered thoughts on a lifetime of leading worship in a variety of contexts. Now it is published in this short, highly readable and at times entertaining pocketbook on worship leading.

Intended to fit into the bag of a worship leader or musician the book is filled with practical advice on how to lead and enhance worship. The book also provides a helpful framework for understanding the purpose and possibilities of worship. There is a fair chance that you won't agree with everything that Don has written but that is not the point of this book, rather Don wants us to think carefully about how we plan, design and lead worship. If he has to provoke us to think with an opinion or an anecdote he is happy to do so.

This may well prove a blessing to many congregations and leaders. Congregations could do worse than invest in some copies of this book for their worship teams. It is worth reading for the stories alone.

For further information visit: dontfretbook.com ■



Lay Preacher's Handbook

Leading worship services or taking on further biblical/theological studies, or because of a desire to increase understanding and skills in both worship leading and preaching – all of these can contribute to the Call to further one's faith towards becoming a Lay Preacher.

The ministry of Lay Preacher is a specified lay ministry within the Uniting Church. Lay Preachers read scripture, lead prayers, share faith stories and conduct other aspects of congregational worship.

To become a Lay Preacher a person must become a candidate for training and undertake prescribed studies and supervised practical experience.

An updated guide for Ministers, Church Councils and people interested in considering a call to Lay Preaching is now available on the Synod website at the following link:

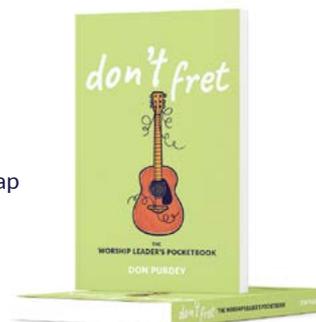
sa.uca.org.au/lay-preachers

This guide is offered by the Lay Preachers' Committee of the Synod of SA for the information of anyone seeking advice about becoming an Accredited Lay Preacher. ■

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Written by
Rev Don Purdey



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During the Christmas period, The Corner Uniting Church screened the *Out of the Box* Christmas movie outdoors. The KCO band got to play together prior to the screening.



Members from the Plains Community Churches gathered at a few elderly people's homes to sing together in the street and on front lawns. Afterwards they went to the Owen Hotel and then onto the Owen Community Church to continue carol singing, with about 40 people in attendance.



Leanne Davis was commissioned as Pastor at The Plains Community Churches on 17 January. Rev Rebecca Purling led the service and Rev Sue Ellis preached. The service was held in the Institute building.



On the Day of Mourning, prayers were said that our Church and our nation will continue on the journey of confession and truth-telling as we all work towards justice and healing.



Christmas carols and an unrehearsed Nativity in the Bush Chapel last December. This event was attended by approximately 200 people and 20 children took part in the Nativity. As the children arrived they dressed up in costumes to take part in the Christmas story. For the past 10 years this has been a very successful annual event.

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!



Resurrection

2 Cor 5:17

New beginnings,
New opportunities

We have moved from Christmas, through New Year and Epiphany, and now we approach Lent and Easter. So much has changed, and is continuing to change – in our world, in our church and in our personal lives. God's constant presence through the resurrected Jesus continues to sustain us as we seek new beginnings and new opportunities to be God's hands, feet and voices in the world.

Out of the darkness and despair of Jesus' death and resurrection we are called to embrace a bright future with the possibility of new beginnings and opportunities – for all of our communities. As a church we seek to be the streams of life giving water, bringing new hope to the wilderness.

The 2021 Easter Campaign speaks to resurrection and renewal and will feature a range of themed postcards, posters and Powerpoint slides and a suite of other resources for congregations to use for free to promote Easter events. These resources are designed so that congregations can amend, print and promote their events themselves.

We encourage you to share your stories of new beginnings and new opportunities by posting your message on social media (i.e. Facebook, Twitter or Instagram) using the hashtags: **#Newbeginnings #Newopportunities**. Let us know you have posted by tagging us **@UnitingChurchinSouthAustralia**.

You can make the most of the Easter campaign materials in the following ways:

Option 1 (Do it yourself)

- The Engagement team will provide files on the Synod website that can be downloaded and edited
- You organise your own printing and delivery
- No charges apply
- Here is the link to the website from which you can download the free, editable files
sa.uca.org.au/easter-2021

Option 2 (Assisted)

- We assist you with editing the files according to your congregation's needs
- We organise the printing and delivery for you
- Printing and administration fees will apply
- Contact the Engagement team for assistance before **Friday 12th March**
- Call the Synod Engagement Ministry Centre on (08) **8236 4237** or email engagement@sa.uca.org.au

