

New Times



The United Methodist Church in Australia
Synod of South Australia

February-March 2022 • Issue 44 / No 1



I am the

*light of
the world.*

Whoever follows me will never
walk in darkness, but will have the

light of life.

John 8:12

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From the Editor

A friend of mine often says 'if you can't find a way ... you need to make one.'

Quite a profound statement really, especially in these difficult COVID times that we are currently living through. As we come to terms with masks, vaccinations, booster shots, RAT and PRC tests etc. I am encouraged by people's resilience in the face of great challenges.

When COVID first hit, many congregations pivoted to the online so they could continue to worship and although some events were cancelled, some still happened – they may have looked a little different, but they still went ahead.

It is in times of great challenge that innovation comes to the forefront, for example: the Uniting College can offer its courses online; instead of pancakes during Pancake Day some groups provide individually wrapped treats; part of this year's Synod meeting will be delivered online; and church communities seek to establish new models to better serve their communities, and so on.

As the Moderator has indicated in this issue of *New Times*, 'May you continue to look for the glimmer of light shining in the darkness, and seek ways to share the good news with those around us, shining the light and love of Christ into our communities.'

As we embark on a new year, may we give thanks and be grateful that we can indeed find new ways to shine Christ's light into our world.

Bridget Ransome
Executive Officer Engagement

Shining a Light into the darkness

By the time you read this the Christmas decorations will be long packed up and the holidays a distant memory. We are now about half way between Christmas and Easter. Both are significant events in the life of the Church: events that shape who we are and our relationship with God.

At Christmas we focus on finding glimpses of light in the darkness; Christ comes as the light of hope and love that pierces the darkness of pain and despair. We celebrate the coming of the One who brings the light, who said 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life' John 8:12.

Soon it will be Pancake Day and Ash Wednesday, when we begin the journey through Lent towards Easter, remembering the death and resurrection of Jesus. We are reminded that the light shone through the darkness of the tomb, once again giving hope and new life to the world.

In the current times of darkness and uncertainty, where do we see hope and light for the world? Is there even a glimmer at the end of a seemingly unending dark tunnel? In many of my conversations I hear of church leaders and congregations who have been challenged to be the church in new and different ways for two years now, and feel exhausted. Extra ministries and programs have been instigated, new ways of worship established, holidays deferred, people have risen to the challenge, hoping this was for the short term. But now managing with COVID looks like continuing and the reality that things are not going to go back to what they were before has set in.

We are ready to move on, to start planning for new possibilities, to find new ways to shine the light of Christ into our world, yet we continue to be constrained by COVID-Safe Plans and changing restrictions, and the need to look out for each other, and especially those who are most vulnerable.

How do we as individuals and the church continue to change and adapt to these on-going circumstances? How might we determine our priorities going forward? What is within our long term capabilities?

These and many other questions can't be answered quickly, and may not even have answers; and what works in one situation may not work in the next. I encourage everyone to assess what they are doing, the missional activities they are involved in, their own lives as people of God, against their strategic priorities, considering what connections they are making and the impact they are having on the lives of those around them.



Stained glass window image sourced from Canva.com

For example, the seventeen congregations of the Yorke Peninsula have, as a group and individually, looked at where they are now, and where they desire to be. They have recognised that continuing in the format they have used for many years is not aiding the effective mission of the church. They are now looking at models of regional ministry with an emphasis on mission outside the doors of the buildings. They have been working with Rev Dr Phil Marshall and others to develop a new model that will serve the church and wider communities in living out the Gospel in innovative ways. Church connections and relationships will be different and new missional ministries will be developed as they seek God's calling for the Yorke Peninsula congregations.

“May you continue to look for the glimmer of light shining in the darkness, and seek ways to share the good news with those around us, shining the light and love of Christ into our communities.”

The good news of Christmas is that Christ turns our lives upside down, and offers new possibilities for us to live into. In this time of uncertainty, how are we experiencing the transforming love of Christ, and being challenged to share that good news with those around us?

May you continue to look for the glimmer of light shining in the darkness, and seek ways to share the good news with those around us, shining the light and love of Christ into our communities.

Bronte Wilson, Moderator

Uniting College Semester 1 Classes

Semester 1 Intensives

Heritage, Theology and Polity of the Uniting Church (MINS3338)

Lecturers: Rev Dr Tim Hein, Dr Deidre Palmer, Rev Michelle Cook, Rev Dr Sean Gilbert, Rev Alison Whish

Intensive Course Mon – Fri,
7–11 February 9.30 am – 3.30 pm
face-to-face (unless otherwise advised)

Explore the past, present and future of the Uniting church movement. See yourself within the vibrant tapestry of the ministry and mission of the Uniting Church.

Human Being (MINS2315)

Lecturer: Rev Dr Christy Capper

Tuesday 26th – Friday 29th April
9.30 am – 4.00 pm (short introductory
lecture the week of April 4th)

What does it mean to be human?
Humans are complex – emotional,
thinking, spiritual, and sexual. A great
place to think about how God has made
us. This unit would be ideal for anyone
who works with people or in any kind of
advocacy role.

**Audit – means to enrol in the subject for no
grade and no credit (i.e. there is no requirement to
undertake the course-work assignments).*

***Synchronous – means that although you may
be learning from a distance, you will virtually
attend a class session each week, at the same
time as your instructor and classmates.*

Semester 1 Twelve Week Classes

Interpreting the New Testament 1201

Lecturer: Dr Mauro Meruzzi

Tuesdays, 9.30 am–12.30 pm
face-to-face or online

How can we read the New Testament more
effectively? Come and learn about the
historical, cultural, and social background
of the New Testament writing and explore
how these help us to better interpret what
God is saying to us in Scripture today.

Introduction to Christian Leadership (MINS1509)

Lecturer: Mr Craig Bailey and others

Wednesdays, 9.30 am – 12.30 pm
face-to-face or online

This course covers the basics of
leadership from a Christian perspective.
These include practical, ready to use
applications in any organisational
environment.

Introduction to Christian Thought (MINS1304)

Lecturer: Rev Dr Christy Capper

Wednesdays, 2.00 pm – 5.00 pm
face-to-face or online

What are the core beliefs of the
Christian faith and where did they come
from? A great opportunity for anyone
wanting to dive deeper into thinking
about our faith, for audit* or credit.

Introduction to Pastoral Care (MINS2536)

Lecturer: Rev Leanne Jensi

Wednesdays, 3.00 pm – 5.00 pm
face-to-face or synchronous** online

Explore the foundations for the
confident and competent practice of
pastoral care with a very skilled and
experienced pastoral carer who will
lead you through the theological and
ethical dimensions alongside practical
skills and the issues arising in a range of
pastoral situations.

Pauline Letters (MINS2216)

Lecturer: Dr Mauro Meruzzi

Wednesdays, 10.00 am – 12 noon
face-to-face and online

Missional, theological and still
contentious today, the letters of Paul
represent a significant portion of the New
Testament. Come join us as we consider
what the letters of Paul are saying to us
today as we engage missionally in our
contexts.

God the Trinity (MINS3555)

Lecturer: Rev Dr Sean Gilbert

Wednesdays, 5.30pm – 7.30 pm
face-to-face or synchronous** online
learning

A unit that explores the historical
development of Trinitarian thought and
practices with a particular emphasis on
contemporary application. This would
be an ideal class to audit* for ministers/
leaders in placement.

Uniting College is a member of Adelaide College of Divinity. Adelaide College of Divinity is an
accredited Higher Education Institution and Registered Training Organisation (RTO 4863) and if
any mention of the VET Cert III or Cert IV courses need to include the National Code i.e. Certificate III
Christian Ministry and Theology (Code 10741NAT) or Cert IV Christian Ministry and Theology (Code
10742NAT).



Uniting College
Learn. Lead. Live.

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Why study Theology?

by Justin Gutteridge

Integrative Ministry Practice (MINS2801)

Lecturers: Rev Dr Sean Gilbert and guest faculty lecturers

Tuesdays, 10.00 am – 12 noon
face-to-face, synchronous** or recorded online learning

A 12 week unit incorporated with field ministry practice that will explore the resonating theme of 'Courage.'

Reflecting on Best Practice in Ministry (MINS8557)

Lecturer: Rev Dr Tim Hein

Wednesdays, 9.30am – 11.30am
face-to-face and online

This unit will introduce students to models of ministry practice. Examples will be studied from Scripture, tradition, historical and contemporary local and global contexts in the interests of discovering elements of best practice for integrative ministry and innovative leadership in the Australian context. Through the unit, intentional reflection on ministry practice will be facilitated and modelled.

In 2017 I was living in Queensland when God called me into ministry study. At the time, the church I attended, Newlife Church, offered the Diploma in Ministry through the Uniting College of Leadership and Theology (UCLT). As I was nearing completion of a Diploma in Counselling, I was excited by the call to the next step and really enjoyed the first steps into the world of ministry and theology.

At forty-seven, I was a long way from real academic study and the counselling diploma was less academic than my study at the college. At the time, the courses were a mix of online and face-to-face at the Gold Coast campus which gave me an introduction to the members of staff at the UCLT. There were times when I felt far out of my depth, but the staff were amazing, guiding and helping me and every student along every step of the way.

In 2021 my wife and I decided to move to Adelaide to assist my ageing mother-in-law. This also allowed me to continue my study at the UCLT campus. Right from the start of the first semester, I was made to feel welcome. I was assisted in choosing majors and subjects that aligned with my own call to ministry. The classes are

“The classes are really enjoyable, and the teachers are always willing to go the extra mile to help, within the class and outside of it as well. The library is fantastic, and the library staff go above and beyond to help find what is needed.

really enjoyable, and the teachers are always willing to go the extra mile to help, within the class and outside of it as well. The library is fantastic, and the library staff go above and beyond to help find what is needed. It has been a novelty for me to have an entire library to access for my studies.

Despite the massive change in my life, the family at the college has been a significant source of comfort and support, not only in my learning but also in my life. During the semester, bonds and relationships were formed both between students and faculty alike. Not being young, I have found that there is a range of students – from the straight out of school to older than me(!) yet the camaraderie is wonderful and always in the sure knowledge of the privilege of a relationship with God; and the honour of a call to ministry in whatever form that takes.



Find out more and enrol by visiting
unitingcollege.edu.au
or acd.edu.au



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Lay Preacher Training

by Rev Jessie Sanders

Stephen Wright enrolled in the Certificate IV in late 2020 so that he could become an accredited Lay Preacher in order to serve his local church and other churches. He attends Greenwith Uniting Church. When this congregation no longer had a minister in placement in early 2021 Stephen was approached by the Synod and the Generate Presbytery to take on the role of acting Lay Minister.

In the last ten months, Stephen has taken on the leadership of the Greenwith congregation. His roles have included leading a team of three to lead the weekly services, creating Powerpoints (as he's the only one with digital technology skills!) and overseeing a number of projects including re-opening the thrift shop, developing a community garden and setting up a weekly men's working bee.

In 2021, Stephen remained focused on completing the four Certificate IV units required for Lay Preacher training. He found the training to be a regular time of blessing, which has enabled him to develop study skills, new preaching methods and to draw from course content to use in weekly services.

'The new ideas I have introduced have been intriguing for the congregation, as it has created an opportunity for the congregation to be more involved and encouraged them to use their gifts in service of each other,' said Stephen.

These new inputs have been warmly embraced by the congregation and brought the community together in unity after a difficult season.

Stephen affirms that the course content had broadened and deepened his faith in God as well as broadened his practical journey in ministry. It has helped him grow and to be equipped in his ministry knowledge and skills and in supporting him to fulfil his role at Greenwith.

Following a Period of Discernment, a confirmation of calling to ministry and encouragement from many other supporters in the Uniting Church, Stephen has decided to continue his ministry formation by enrolling in the Diploma of Ministry at Uniting College of Leadership and Theology.

Lay Preacher Accreditation Training commences in February. One unit of study is offered in each school term. 'Christian Scriptures' will be available in Term 1 as a fully online unit and enrolments are now open.

Visit: acd.edu.au or contact Jessie Sanders, VET Coordinator for details: jsanders@unitingcollege.edu.au

Vocational Education and Training

Contact Jessie Sanders for further details or refer to the ACD website: acd.edu.au or (08) 8416 8400.

Certificate III in Christian Ministry and Theology

Distance Package. Self-paced. Enrol anytime.

*For all enquiries contact Adelaide College of Divinity on (08) 84 16 8400
All Units are available for audit* or credit.*

Lay Preacher Accreditation Training and Certificate IV in Christian Ministry and Theology

Term 1 offerings: Christian Scriptures CMTTHE402
(Interprets theological data)

Within this unit, you will study an overview of the Scriptures, with an emphasis on the Gospels. The main aim of this unit is to equip you with strategies for effective interpretation and application of the Scriptures.

Offered fully online over 9 weeks.



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More than Compliance

by Rev Philip Gardner



... the work of making the church a safe place for all people is more than compliance, more than meeting our duty of care, it is about living out Jesus' vision of the coming reign of God.

Whenever I speak about Safe Church matters to a general audience one is basically guaranteed to get at least one comment that, 'this is all about compliance.'

Sometimes there is an added invective that is 'driven by the government' or 'forced on us by the insurance companies.' To be fair I have probably uttered similar things myself. There is an element of truth to these comments, the church has responded to the concerns of government, society and insurance companies, but the work of making the church a safe place for all people is more than compliance, more than meeting our duty of care, it is about living out Jesus' vision of the coming reign of God.

There are many entry points for speaking about God's coming reign, a whole range of voices throughout Scripture and in the history of the Church talking about what the kingdom of God looks like, what the peace and wholeness of God's Shalom feels like, what the love of God and neighbour looks like when embodied in community.

I think a very helpful perspective is John's gospel where the theme of God's abundant life, life overflowing is described in passage after passage, perhaps most simply in Jesus' words, 'I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly' (John 10:10). I would suggest that it is an interesting exercise to consider these words in the light of being a safe church. We might ask questions like:

What are the obstacles to people thriving in our congregation?

What can we do to help people experience the fullness of life in Christ?

What are the forces at work in our communities that deprive people of fullness of life?

It can be instructive to think about these questions in the light of various cohorts: young and old, women and men, differences in ability – depending on the values of your congregation you can expand these to include all manner of groups, and, depending on your courage, you might invite people from different cohorts to share their experiences.

As I have reflected on what it means to be a community where we invite all people to experience the fullness of life in Christ, it has struck me that if people experience trauma in the life of our congregations, then that has a lifelong impact on them.

While I would never want to downplay the power of God's healing love, research continues to emphasise the deep psychological, even physiological scars left by trauma. For most the journey to healing is a lifetime. Doing all that we can through screening, thoughtful recruitment processes, accountability of leaders, and developing healthy teams significantly reduces the chances of abuse in our communities. Thinking about our communication, the information we provide and listening to the voice of the vulnerable in our communities all help us be places where people have the opportunity to thrive and are protected from abuse.

Jesus commanded us not to put obstacles to the well-being of the vulnerable in our midst (Mark 9:42). That ought to be enough motivation for us to seek to be exemplars of a healthy and safe community. It helps though to think about our communities as places where we make the safe spaces for people to experience God's promised abundant life through Jesus and in the Spirit. That will mean clearing away the obstacles and making pathways for people to find life in all its fullness.

Safe Church Audit 2021



Back a few years ago, following the release of the findings of the Royal Commission into *Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse*, Linda Vinall and Philip Gardner noted that regular audits was one of the guidelines for churches. This led to an interesting on-going conversation about what an audit would look like, what we would ask – or perhaps more accurately what was it fair to ask. Deciding that we would use an online survey tool also meant that the questions we asked needed to have concrete answers to ensure that we would have useable data. In the end we decided on five key indicators that we thought that we could expect all congregations to meet:

- All leaders working with children and vulnerable people screened
- All leaders are up-to-date with their mandatory reporting training
- Key leaders have attended a *Called to Care* program (especially Church Councillors)
- Church Council have adopted/adapted the Synod's Child Safe Policy
- Safe Church information is visibly displayed in the buildings of the church.

It has been helpful to have conducted the audit three times now and we were grateful for the leadership of the presbyteries in encouraging participation last year. This has provided us with a wealth of helpful information. It also helps us to respond when we are audited as we work together with the other Synods and Assembly through the National Safe Church Unit.

Thank you to all the congregations who participated in last year's audit and we look forward to your continuing support. Hopefully you are proudly displaying your poster or projecting the image showing that you are working towards being a safer church.



2021 Audit Summary

by Linda Vinal

We conducted our latest audit in mid-2021, with presbytery leaders encouraging participation. This led to a much higher participation rate and therefore more helpful statistics. A summary of the audit results were shared with each presbytery at their gatherings last year. In trying to communicate the key emphases of being a 'safe church' we have developed the acronym STAR. When communicating with the presbyteries about the audit we focused on the pillars within STAR:

- S Screening:** Completed by all appointed leaders
- T Training:** Relevant participation for those in roles of responsibility
- A Adopt:** Announce policies and posters
- R Response:** Complete a yearly audit.

Invitations were sent to 260 congregations to which we received 291 responses. While the request was for one response per congregation, upon filtering the multiple responses, 203 congregations were represented.

We learned that while the messaging regarding the need for screening is understood, that it is just over 50% of

congregations that are compliant. Since the audit we have noticed a greater awareness with a number of congregations seeking further assistance to achieve the screening component of the STAR.

Providing face-to-face training over the last two years has been a challenge, as the ability to gather safely has been our highest priority. Some opportunities are being sought as we journey onwards into 2022.

Awareness of the suite of Safe Church policies is one we continue to advocate and the survey results indicated that, if it wasn't already on the Church Council's agenda, that now it is for many Church Councils.

The Placements and Safe Church Team seek to communicate the key messages through posters, short monthly articles in UC-eNews and posts on the dedicated Safe Church Website <https://safechurch.ucasa.org.au>. We confess that this is still an area for growth for us.

Safe Church Congregation liaison people are valuable in assisting congregations with monitoring their actions against the STAR pillars. In some congregations this role is assigned to an individual or has been absorbed into the roles of the designated

council office bearers. A helpful task by someone in that position is to maintain a simple register of 'leaders' screening status and providing a report for the Church Council. Also helpful is being aware of what training needs are within the congregation's leaders and advocating for attendance at courses when they are offered.

More results from the 2021 Safe Church Audit can be viewed from the dedicated Safe Church website: <https://safechurch.ucasa.org.au/resources/#audit>. And while you are there – check out the past articles, posted in the blog section and the event calendar which lists upcoming training opportunities.

Our team works closely with the National Safe Church Unit, who work in collaboration with all the Synod Safe Church teams as we seek to find commonality in our various state legislative requirements. Work is on-going with national online training modules. We hope that this will be available for leaders and church members in the coming year. Another initiative of the Unit is an upcoming Online Safety webinar for adults who are youth leaders. This is free and open to anyone to register.



Friday 11th March 2022

11:30am - 12:30pm (12noon - 1pm AEST)

Free online safety webinar for adults

Are you an adult who is a youth leader or involved in youth activities within the Church? Please join us for this free e-Safety webinar hosted by the National Safe Church Unit in partnership with the Office of the eSafety Commissioner.

Learn more about:

- Current technology trends and issues for young people
- The online environment and safe online interactions with children and young people
- Managing risks and supporting young people in a youth group environment
- Where to get resources and help.

This webinar is primarily for adults who are youth leaders or involved in youth activities, however any adult in the Church may attend. The presentation is not suitable for those under the age of 18.



Synod Meeting 2022

by Rev Sue Page



18th June (online)
24th & 25th June

The meeting of the Synod brings together people from across the Uniting Church in South Australia. Members come from diverse settings: 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.

Planning has commenced for the Synod meeting which will be held in June 2022. We will meet online on the 18th June, and in person on Friday 24th and Saturday 25th June, at a venue yet to be determined. We will also hold a *Celebration of Ministry* service at another time. Details will be provided in due course.

Membership of the Synod meeting has changed in recent years, since we have moved from one presbytery to three presbyteries. Membership of Synod is discerned mostly by presbyteries and due to COVID restrictions, our last Synod meeting had a reduced membership, with not all ministers and lay members from every congregation appointed to membership.



At the Synod meeting in February 2021, Synod Standing Committee was tasked with reviewing Synod membership. A task group was formed and reported to the Synod Standing Committee after consultation with the presbyteries. The Synod Standing Committee approved the following composition of Synod membership for the 2022 Synod meeting:

- **60%** of ordained Ministers of the Word and Deacons from each presbytery
- **60%** of those exercising the specified lay Ministry of Pastor, Lay Pastors and Youth Workers from each presbytery
- Confirmed lay members appointed or elected by each Presbytery equivalent to **50%** of the number of congregations and faith communities in each presbytery.

To ensure members come from across the breadth and diversity of our Synod, a number of membership categories need to be met. These relate to age, gender, cultural and linguistic diversity, location (to ensure rural members are represented), and placement (to include those in non-congregational ministries).

There are a number of ex-officio members and some Synod appointments from boards and committees, and appointments from the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress in South Australia.

This means our total membership could be 265!

The Synod meeting is about:

Being the body responsible for oversight of the ministry and mission of God in the South Australian Synod, where members come together to form a community of God's people.

We receive reports from ministry centres, committees, and organisations who are living out the mission of the church. 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.

Important aspects of our time together in the meeting of the Synod include:

Worship and Bible study. We start our days in worship. God gathers us as a community of sisters and brothers in Christ to hear God's word, to offer ourselves and our meeting in prayer and to ask the Holy Spirit to guide our discernments.

Relationships. To meet new people, and catch up with old friends and colleagues is a wonderful part of our Synod meeting. We offer one another care and encouragement, and have a laugh in our breaks over a cuppa or a meal – and this is an important aspect of our meeting.

Discern together. We form a community that seeks to discern how to step into God's future for us as a church. As we gather as community 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.

Meet in a variety of ways. We meet in plenary session, where everyone is together, and seek consensus in decision-making. We meet in electives. We have report electives and we have some electives that help members take a break from thinking and discerning and invite 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.

If you would like more information or if you would like to nominate to be a member of the Synod, please contact your presbytery. Each presbytery is planning to appoint Synod members in March.

Please pray for the work of the Business Committee and for those who would nominate to become members of the Synod meeting.

Pancake Day 2022



Here's something to celebrate – Pancake Day is coming up on Tuesday, March 1st, 2022. Yes, it's that time of year again!

Our recent Christmas celebrations were a bit different for many of us. There were limits on the number of people gathering in homes and public venues and the limits dropped before New Year's Eve, so those celebrations were even smaller!

As we settle into 2022, we're continuing to adjust as our community and personal circumstances change.

Will we be able to gather to celebrate Pancake Day? We hope so! And so do the people who benefit from the funds raised.

Throughout South Australia, a lot of people struggle to make ends meet. They rely on UnitingCare Emergency Relief Centres and other services to help provide food and other necessities for their families.

Please help us to support them by hosting a Pancake Day event or making a donation this year.

Since 1992, Pancake Day events have raised funds for UnitingCare organisations which provide financial and food relief to people in need, as well as aged care, hospital and community service organisations associated with the Uniting Church.

During 2021, UnitingCare Emergency Relief provided prepared meals or food items for about 200,000 meals. That's a huge effort, which supported thousands of people.

More than just meals, they also provided a wide range of other services, including

goods from op-shops and financial planning. Importantly, they made a positive contribution to the lives of clients by welcoming them into the centres.

At Lefevre Uniting Church, Stephen Bray is the coordinator of the UnitingCare Taperoo Emergency Relief Centre. Stephen and a team of volunteers are very active in sourcing food and providing meals and last year they held a Pancake Day stall at a local community event and raised \$570.

'The Pancake Day stall at the Family Expo was very successful. By working together with other community groups and the local Council, we were able to promote the Church and the Relief Centre to the community. This promotion resulted in six potential volunteers from the community expressing an interest in assisting and donating to the Emergency Relief Centre,' said Stephen.

Pancake Day fundraising events are not just held by Uniting Church groups. Last year, 40% of the groups were not associated with the Church. They included public and independent schools, Girl Guide groups, child care centres, craft groups and businesses.

Fundraisers can be held any time during March and April, in the lead up to Easter.

Gatherings can be made COVID-Safe through a variety of ways such as distancing people, using appropriate food handling procedures and not sharing

utensils. You could also be creative by not actually having pancakes! In 2021, some groups had individually wrapped treats instead of pancakes.

To find out more about Pancake Day fundraising for UnitingCare, please register online via the Uniting Church website at this link: <https://sa.uca.org.au/unitingcare-sa/support-unitingcare/> or email: pancakeday@sa.uca.org.au.



The call to keep looking up!

by Cath Taylor, *UnitingWorld*

Have you seen the film 'Don't look up'?

A stellar performer for *Netflix* throughout January, it follows the progress of two astronomers as they desperately try to warn a pre-occupied population that a killer comet is on a collision course with the planet. In response, politicians, celebrities and ordinary people find refuge in the idea that if they simply 'don't look up', they'll be protected from reality.

It's an uncomfortable watch, but many of us probably have some sympathy with the desire to keep our heads low and our focus narrow right now. It can feel like the only way to stay sane.

There are, however, really life-giving reasons to keep looking up. Looking up focusses us on the story of Christ.

At the foot of the cross, Jesus' friends stayed to look up into the reality of his suffering and then to care for his body. They found redemption not only in their own actions, but in the ultimate, astonishing act of God in bringing new life. The same is true for us.

Looking up, and sharing the stories of others, allows us to realise our collective power to bring about change.

Understanding our experience relative to others around the world also helps us celebrate our wins and work against losses.

UnitingWorld calls you to embrace this call by taking part in two events in the first part of 2022.

The first is happening during Lent. It's called *Seven Days of Solidarity*, and is happening 27th – April 3rd, 2022 or any time that suits

you, and shares a vision of God at work through our global neighbours. You'll hear inspiring stories of the challenges faced and changes created by ordinary Christians around the world. Better yet, respond in worship, prayer and giving across two Sunday Services. Find out more and download videos, prayer, sermon and liturgy at www.sevendaysofsolidarity.com.au.

The second event is *Lent Event*, from March 2nd – April 14th, 2022, and is a call to live simply so others can simply live. For forty days, take action to bring about change for others. Join a challenge to give or take something up in solidarity with those who live with less. Ask friends to support you, and hear about how your efforts can put power in the hands of ordinary people to earn an income, keep their children in school

For forty days, take action to bring about change for others. Join a challenge to give or take something up in solidarity with those who live with less.

or get access to clean water. Check out www.lentevent.com.au for details.

Together, *UnitingWorld's Seven Days of Solidarity* and *Lent Event* point us back to God's faithfulness and focuses our eyes, heart and hands on building a Kingdom of peace and justice. Look them up this year – you won't regret it.



Effective Living Centre in 2022

After a great year of programs and events in 2021, the Effective Living Centre (ELC) is gearing up for a busy and exciting 2022.

The ELC was founded in 1998, and is the on-going community engagement project of Christ Church Uniting Church in Wayville; and is also a recognised mission centre of Mission Resourcing in the Uniting Church in South Australia.



The Effective Living Centre

Stan Grant

Wilks Oration

'The Politics of Identity'

Friday 25 February 2022
7.30 - 9.30pm
Doors open at 6.45pm

With Vonda Last - Ngaanyatjarra singer-songwriter

Venue
Concordia College, Highgate
Cheltenham St. Cnr of Balmoral St

Tickets
\$30 adult, \$25 concession

Bookings essential
at Humanitix
Enter Stan Grant in Search and tickets come up.
Please bring e-tickets.

A project of Christ Church Uniting, Wayville

Highlights of the program in the first half of this year include:

- The Wilks Oration, with leading Indigenous journalist, writer and academic Stan Grant speaking on *The Politics of Identity*, 7.30pm on Friday February 25th
- The Seminary of the Third Age 2022 program with the theme of *Faith Relating to the Present Age*, commencing March 3rd, with Olga Gostin on *How Culture Shapes Identity*
- Another year of magic with a bi-monthly Poets' Corner starting in March
- A great series of social issue events starting with Rick Sarre on *What are Civil Liberties all about?* On March 31st
- A new series of regular Relaxation/Mindfulness/Meditation events under the banner of *Spirit Space*
- Find out about events and Open Days when you will be able to visit *Turlatina Wirra*, the beautiful Peaceful Garden, along the Parklands Creek.

For more details and information, go to www.effectiveliving.uksa.org, where you can contact the organisation or subscribe to their regular updates and newsletters. And, of course, they are always on the lookout for volunteers, so please let them know if you would like to be involved.



How Culture Shapes Identity

The Seminary of the Third Age launches its 2022 program with a presentation by Olga Gostin.

There is no doubt that the subject of culture and identity is a hot topic in Australia today. Multiculturalism challenges Australians to embrace the diversity of the nation and re-think how a cherished past is valued. First Nations' people have a voice which begs to be heard and their ancient cultures continue to forge Indigenous identities. To reflect, consider and understand how culture shapes us all will broaden our minds and prepare us to re-imagine our national identity while still honouring cultural diversity.

Renowned social anthropologist, Dr Olga Gostin will share her research and personal experience to launch the 2022 program.

Of mixed Belgian-Russian parentage, Olga was born in Nazi-occupied Belgium and at the age of nine migrated with her family to South Africa. She grew up under the apartheid regime, experiencing

discrimination because of the colour of her skin. Olga graduated with a BA(Hons) degree in social anthropology from the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg and then gained a postgraduate scholarship to study anthropology at the ANU, Canberra. Her research project took her to Papua where she lived among the Kuni people studying the effects of re-settlement, cash cropping and their conversion to Catholicism. In 1968 she had a post-doctoral exchange at Moscow State University and honed her interest in syncretism and cultural change.

In 1973 Olga became a founding member of the Aboriginal Task Force, Australia's first specifically designated tertiary program for Indigenous Australians with what is now known as the University of South Australia. She remained associated with the program in its many guises for the next forty years.

After completing a Masters of Environmental Studies in 1992, Olga maintains a passionate interest in

environmental issues, the dynamics of culture change, and matters of social justice - particularly as they apply to Indigenous Australians.

To book for this event visit: effectiveliving.ucasa.org.au or the PCNet website: pcnetsa.org

*Thursday 3rd March
7pm at the Effective Living Centre*

Multiculturalism challenges Australians to embrace the diversity of the nation and re-think how a cherished past is valued.

A special weekend on Kangaroo Island

The weekend of the 15th and 16th January was a special one for members of the Kangaroo Island Uniting Church Linked Congregations.

On Saturday 15th, Rev Mark Dickens, Bushfire Recovery Chaplain, was farewelled after 12 months supporting islanders after the events of the 2019–20 bushfires. Initially Mark went to Kangaroo Island as part of the Australian Defence Force assistance; and then, funded by the Uniting Church he returned in January 2021 and spent two weeks on the island and alternated with two weeks in Adelaide throughout the year. Kangaroo Island's Mayor Michael Pengelly and community members were present to express their appreciation for the service Mark has given especially to fire affected farmers.

Members of the Uniting Church throughout Australia and overseas donated money to aid bushfire recovery and this money funded a number of services to support the Kangaroo Island community both immediately after the fires and on-going.

After identifying a need to improve remote area communication and in conjunction with Telstra, some of the funds have been used to purchase 25 devices that will boost signals to mobile phones. This will improve mobile reception in previously fringe locations. The Chair of Kangaroo Island's Linked Congregations, Bryan Branson presented 15 devices to representatives of the local CFS and SES brigades (five donated by Telstra and presented by Telstra's Chris Marks). The remainder will be on permanent loan to farmers/landholders who spend most of their time without access to adequate communication.

Present at the event were the incoming Pastor of the Kangaroo Island Uniting Church congregations, Conrad Tickner, and Rev Naomi Duke, Pastoral Relationships Co-ordinator of the Generate Presbytery, and her husband. Next morning Naomi led the Commissioning Service for Conrad and representatives of the different congregations took part in the service.

Conrad is well known to the Kangaroo Island community. He grew up on Kangaroo Island and after several years in ministry



Top L to R: Conrad Tickner, Gina Tickner, Naomi Duke and the Tickner family.



Bottom L to R: Conrad Tickner, Caleb Bowden and Des Pratt.

interstate felt the call to return. He has spent the last six years as a Pastoral Care Worker at the Island's schools, building strong relationships with staff, students and their families. He will continue in this role part-time while also serving as Pastor to the Uniting Church congregations.

Conrad's first official pastoral ministry responsibility was to baptise Caleb Bowden on the Sunday. The weather co-operated for a seaside baptism and Caleb chose the songs used in the service.

The outdoor celebration was a fitting end to a very special weekend.



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Placements News

Placements finalised as at 27th January 2022

Conrad Tickner (MOP) to Kangaroo Island Linked Congregations (0.7) from 1 January 2022.

Advertised placements

Wimala Presbytery Regional Coordinator 3 x 0.2FTE

Vacant placements

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

PROFILES AVAILABLE

Generate Presbytery

Naracoorte UC

Presbytery of Southern SA

Adare UC

Noarlunga UC (0.8)

Pilgrim UC: Minister - Deacon (Mission and Community Engagement) 0.6 and Minister - Pastoral Care 0.4.

NB: These part-time positions may be filled *as one* full-time role.

Wimala Presbytery

Croydon Park UC (0.3)

Lefevre UC (0.4)

Kadina Wallaroo UC

Modbury (0.5)

Semaphore UC (0.6)

Western Link (0.5)

Placements Across Two Presbyteries

-

PROFILES NOT YET AVAILABLE

Generate Presbytery

Bordertown Parish

Salisbury UC

Wimala Presbytery

Berri UC / Barmera UC

Port Augusta UAICC

Presbytery of Southern SA

Glengowrie UC (0.5) (vacant 2023)

Placements Across Two Presbyteries

County Jervois (Generate and Wimala)

For more information about placements, please visit sa.uca.org.au

Deadline for the April/May 2022 edition:

Friday, 11th March 2022

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