

# New Times



The United Church in Australia  
Synod of South Australia

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THE VOICE OF THE  
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**FREE**



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### Cover details:

Belair Uniting Church sculpture: Neryl McCallum

**Editor:** Bridget Ransome

**Advertising:** Engagement Team

**Design:** Alex Gately

**Print:** Graphic Print Group

### For editorial enquiries:

Phone: (08) 8236 4249

Email: [engagement@sa.uca.org.au](mailto:engagement@sa.uca.org.au)

Mail: The Editor, New Times

GPO Box 2145

Adelaide SA 5001

### For advertising bookings:

Phone: (08) 8236 4249

Email: [engagement@sa.uca.org.au](mailto:engagement@sa.uca.org.au)

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The Uniting Church in Australia  
**Synod of South Australia**

Synod of South Australia  
Level 2, 212 Pirie St, Adelaide  
Phone: (08) 8236 4200  
Fax: (08) 8236 4201  
Country callers: 1300 766 956



[sa.uca.org.au](http://sa.uca.org.au)

# From the Editor

A few weeks ago a friend of mine was seconded from her role here in Adelaide to work in the Relief Centre of flood affected communities in New South Wales and Queensland.

She works for the South Australian State Government and was asked to provide assistance as she previously re-housed people during the aftermath of the Lobethal bushfires, with a particular focus on bringing in emergency container housing.

When she arrived in NSW and QLD she started to work with a number of agencies on the ground including those associated with the Uniting Church. She is not a particularly religious person and she doesn't come from a religious background, but she does care deeply for people and their welfare, and has often said that every time she works in a crisis situation she is always impressed by the level of care and the sense of community that characterises people at these times.

I suppose it is too naïve of me to say this – but why do we need a crisis to show our care and compassion for others – should it not be ever-present and be a part of who we are as human beings?

In this issue of *New Times* you will read much about those organisations and people who continually provide support services whether it is food, a friendly ear, a meaningful conversation or a roof over one's head and our gratitude is extended to them all.

Also, in this issue we pay tribute to Neryl McCallum who recently passed away. I didn't know Neryl very well, I first met her when she worked on the CMLA art project. It is this art project that is featured throughout the Synod's 2022 Calendar. I found her to be a warm and wonderfully creative person and she will be sorely missed. To quote Neryl's own words on page 15 ... 'we are held steadfastly in God's warm embrace.'

Bridget Ransome  
Executive Officer Engagement

# Dwelling in Love

I write this while returning from the Uniting Church National Assembly held on the Sunshine Coast in May, where over two hundred of us from across the nation gathered in person at the Queensland Synod's Alexandra Park Conference Centre.

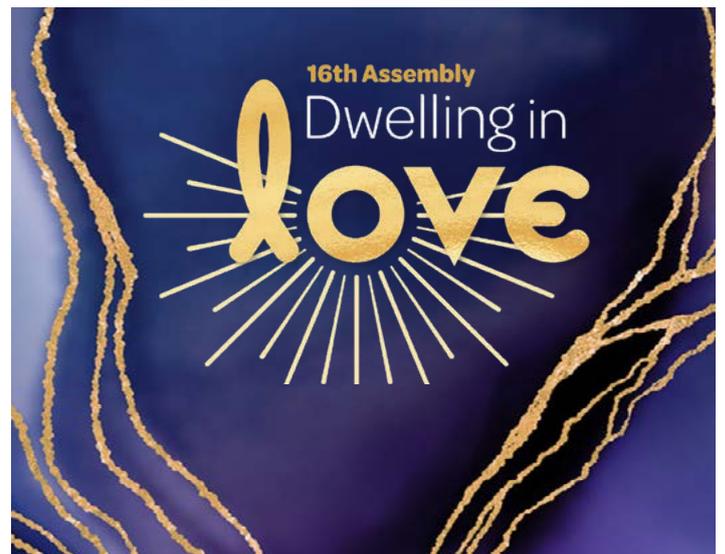
On the drive home I have been reflecting on the many ways in which we experience the church in action - from congregations at work in their local communities through Op Shops, soup kitchens and children's programs; Bush Chaplains lending an ear while helping to clean up flood damage; the advocacy and influence of UnitingCare in Aged Care; to the important work of Uniting World especially with the churches in the Philippines and Korea.

I continue to marvel at the many ways that God's mission is expressed through the life of the church and I am reminded of our unique ministry opportunities in South Australia, as lived out by organisations such as Uniting Communities and Uniting Care Wesley Bowden, and our local Uniting Care organisations, and the work of our Patrol Ministers Sunil Kadaparambil, Gary Ferguson and Julia Lennon in the north and west of our state as they are supported locally through the fundraising efforts of Uniting Church Fellowship and Mission Support (UCFAMS) and others.

During Assembly, as well as hearing about the work of the church, we have spent time in worship and prayer, we have fellowshiped and heard each other's stories, and we have made decisions about the future life of our church.

“  
The upcoming Synod meeting will provide us with more opportunity for conversation and connection, as we see and hear the local church in action.

There was much discussion about our identity and culture as the Uniting Church in changing times and circumstances, leading us to consider how we might best be the people of God together into the future. In five years we will approach the 50th Anniversary of the Uniting Church in Australia, and it is timely to look to our direction for the next fifty years.



The emphasis needs to be on our culture and relationships which will then inform and shape the processes and structures we need going forward. There will be broad conversation and consultation over the breadth of the church, and the Assembly will provide resources to help us in our discernment.

I invite all congregations, presbyteries and other groups in the life of the church to engage with this process, as we consider who we are as the Uniting Church, how we connect with each other and with our communities, and how God is continuing to call and equip us in mission in our own contexts. The upcoming Synod meeting will provide us with more opportunity for conversation and connection, as we see and hear the local church in action.

More details about the 16th Assembly meeting and the decisions made as well as the upcoming Synod meeting can be found elsewhere in this magazine and on the relevant websites at [www.sa.uca.org.au](http://www.sa.uca.org.au) and [www.uniting.church](http://www.uniting.church).

Bronte Wilson, Moderator

# Thoughts Following the Reconvened Assembly

by Rev Philip Gardner

The National Assembly Meeting was scheduled for July 2021 and it was being hosted by the Queensland Synod at Alexandra Heads on the Sunshine Coast. Due to COVID there was a shorter online meeting in 2021 and then a reconvened meeting on the first weekend in May 2022. Even then of course the preparations and attendance was hampered by the continuing pandemic.

So we gathered on the Sunshine Coast. As a reconvened Assembly, we had already installed the President, had the Cato Lecture and we didn't have any overseas visitors so some of the sense of celebration, of being part of the national and worldwide church was diminished. However we were glad to gather face-to-face after the last couple of years.

Some highlights for me included:

- The Bible Studies led by students from Nungalinya College and facilitated by Rev Dr Michelle Cook, explored scripture, theology and spirituality through story and art. There were some genuine moments of surprise and insight for all.
- There was also a renewal of the Covenant between the Assembly and the Uniting and Aboriginal Christian Congress. This was a deeply moving service with an extended confession of our failures as a community towards First Peoples and a word of reassurance and grace from Rev Mark Kickett the interim chair of Congress.
- The ACT2 project is an initiative to explore how, and whether, our structures are fit for purpose for our current missional context. The response to the initial work on the project was reported and then significant conversation was had, as we refined the scope and terms of the next phase of the project. Please look out for opportunities to participate in this process.
- A highlight for me, but maybe not for everybody, was that we passed the framework for a revision of the discipline regulations.

This is important and urgent work that will help ensure that our processes reflect best practice. This is a project of national collaboration.

- We noted the 30th Anniversary of the renewal of the Diaconate.
- We received a report on Continuing Witness, a phrase from the *Basis of Union*, about continuing to be informed and inspired by fresh confessions of faith. We considered three potential documents from the wider church, written in the last few decades, which might helpfully inform us. In a similar way to statements like the Westminster Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism and John Wesley's sermons. That is, we learn from them without agreeing to every word in them.

Organising an Assembly is not easy and we are grateful to the Queensland Synod for their planning. The work of the President, Sharon Hollis, and General Secretary, Colleen Geyer, in leading the meeting was impressive. One of the interesting parts of an Assembly is seeing fine leaders from other Synods and this year the Facilitation Committee, who help shape and revise proposals in response to feedback from Working Groups and the debate on the floor of Assembly, was of a particularly high standard revising some very long proposals.

A significant experience of the Uniting Church as a national body. Always great to catch up with interstate colleagues, and also to be reminded that we are broader and deeper church than just our own neck of the woods!

# Ordination of Mandy Harvey Ministry of Deacon

*by Lorraine Schroder*

The Presbytery of Southern South Australia had the wonderful pleasure of Ordaining Mandy Harvey into the ministry of Deacon at Blackwood Uniting Church on April 29th 2022. The Chairperson of the Presbytery of Southern SA, Rev Peter McDonald officiated and Rev Michael Dowling preached the word. A gathering of a group of wonderful musicians led all in worship.

In Mandy's response, she showed how her passion and calling to ordained ministry has come into being.

She first sensed a call to Ordination back in the early 1990s while at University in the United Kingdom, however, after making some early tentative steps into discerning the call, she decided that the time was not right.

It was after immigrating to Australia in 2005 and a deep spiritual experience in 2008 that Mandy began the road to ordination in earnest, starting a Period of Discernment. Having discerned her call as primarily focussed on those who would likely never walk into our churches, Mandy was accepted as a Candidate for the Ministry of Deacon in 2009.

Prior to this, in 2008, she was introduced to the Christian Contemplative Tradition and particularly monasticism, the spirituality of monasteries, through Stillpoint, the Uniting Church's contemplative Spirituality Centre. It would be monastic spirituality that would become the spiritual foundation to her ministry.

After three years of studying as a candidate, Mandy withdrew her candidature in 2014 to pursue further studies within the contemplative tradition, ultimately leading her to become a professed sister of the Community of the Transfiguration, a monastic community based in Victoria. She also studied at Tabor College in Adelaide to become a Spiritual Director.

In early 2019 Mandy returned as a candidate for the Ministry of Deacon and to study for a Master of Theological Studies at Flinders University. In March 2021 she began the role of Spiritual Care Chaplain at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Adelaide.

The Presbytery of Southern SAS welcomes Rev Mandy Harvey to her on-going role now as an Ordained Deacon, at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.



# Synod '22

## UPDATE

*by Rev Sue Page, Associate General Secretary*

Our Synod meeting is fast approaching and in just a few weeks, over 250 members from all across the Uniting Church in South Australia will join, firstly online on 18th June, and then in person on 24th and 25th June. It will be held at the Adelaide Hills Convention Centre at Hahndorf to celebrate who we are as God's people and seek to discern where God is leading us into the future.

The online portion of the meeting will be conducted via Zoom, and will mostly be spent in report electives. Members will be able to join in a conversation with report authors to hear more about the work of various committees and teams in the Synod.

When we gather in person, we will do a number of things:

- We will hear more reports and deliberate on proposals from reports
- We will receive general proposals
- We will elect a Moderator-elect
- We will elect and appoint members to a number of committees, including Synod Standing Committee.

Two of the reports that we will receive at our in-person meeting are the Presbytery Restructure Review Report and the Strategy and Planning, Mission and Property Report.

Some of the general proposals that the Synod will consider are a Synod Climate Action Plan; and a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Action Plan for becoming an intercultural church.

All reports and proposals are available on the Synod website.

We will not be able to host visitors at our meeting, and so the meeting will be live-streamed. If you would like to access the live stream, please email [synod22@sa.uca.org.au](mailto:synod22@sa.uca.org.au) to receive the details of how you can observe the meeting.

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

- **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 discerning.
- **Relationships:** Meeting new people, and catching up with old friends and colleagues is a wonderful part of our Synod meeting. Offering one another care and encouragement, and having a laugh in our breaks over a cuppa or a meal is such an important aspect of our meeting.

**18th June**  
Online



**24th & 25th June**  
Adelaide Hills  
Convention Centre,  
Hahndorf

- **Discerning together:** We form a community seeking 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.
- **Meeting in a variety of ways:** We meet in plenary session, where everyone is together, seeking consensus in decision-making. We meet in report electives. We meet in working groups, where we can discuss in smaller groups some of the key matters coming before the Synod meeting.

## Moderator Elect Nominees

One of the responsibilities of the Synod is discerning who will be our next Moderator. The person elected at the meeting in June this year will take up the role of Moderator at the next ordinary meeting of the Synod (proposed to be held in June 2023).

We have two outstanding nominees for Moderator Elect: Rev Linda Driver and Rev Peter Morel.



### From Linda

'I am, at heart, a pastoral leader: encouraging others; compassionate; curious and interested in the world; a team player with good social intelligence; kind and generous; wise; enthusiastic; joyful, warm and optimistic; versatile; creative; spontaneous; and a teacher who inspires creativity in others.

I have been described as circumspect – careful to consider all circumstances and possible consequences. Through personal struggles I have developed resilience, empathy and strength. In times of crisis (which I have experienced both in congregational leadership and in a previous role as Event Manager for the Synod) I have the capacity to remain calm and provide a non-anxious presence.

As Moderator, I would be an encourager, helping people see how Christ is actively at work through his Church - through his people.

*The Church's call is ... to be a fellowship of reconciliation, a body within which the diverse gifts of its members are used for the building up of the whole, an instrument through which Christ may work and bear witness to himself.* ('Basis of Union,' Paragraph 3).

Guided by these inspiring words from our *Basis of Union*, I would get out and about visiting our communities across our Synod (I love road trips!) sharing their joys and challenges, seeking out the good news stories and highlighting how we are working together towards the common good. I would listen to and encourage those who are struggling and feeling disconnected. I would seek out stories of innovation, new growth, and community connections, stories that will build up the faith of others in our Church, stories that will bring hope. Stories that will knit the many and diverse parts of our Church community together.'



### From Peter

'I bring experience in both Congregational and Chaplaincy ministry. Through these ministries I have engaged with the local and wider church. I have also had the privilege of engaging in International Mission through the Orphan and Vulnerable Children Project (Mwandi, Zambia). I bring my experience in the Sacramental ministries as well as many pastoral encounters with people within, and beyond the Uniting Church.

I bring an attitude of hope and positivity which is grounded in my personal relationship with Jesus Christ. I have an ability to integrate the light-hearted, with the deeply serious matters of life and faith.

As I have been reflecting on my nomination, I have been considering the essence of our joy as God's people. My reflections have challenged my thinking, and encouraged me to live out my convictions in a renewed light. I have been reminded of Jurgen Moltmann's view that Christianity is "uniquely a religion of joy." At the same time, I hear the challenge from Willie James Jennings, that joy can be "an act of resistance against despair," and Pierre Teilhard de Chardin's belief that "Joy is the infallible sign of the presence of God."

If there is a theme that I would like to bring before our Church, it is one of Joy. This is not a joy that simply seeks acts of happiness, but a joy that connects deeply with our pain and suffering. It is a joy that underpins and embraces our humanity and identity in Christ. It is a joy founded in faith and trust in God's presence and faithfulness.

What might it look like if we, the followers of Jesus, are able to be "Seriously Joyful and Joyfully Serious?"

**Linda and Peter's full statements are available on the Synod website at [sa.uca.org.au/about-us/synod-meetings/](https://sa.uca.org.au/about-us/synod-meetings/). They will both make a presentation to the Synod meeting before the ballot for Moderator-Elect takes place on Saturday, 25th June.**

Please pray for Linda and Peter as they offer themselves to the church for this most important role.

Please pray for the Synod meeting in all the celebrating and discerning that we will do together.



Source: Words and picture by Angela Skujins

# Percolate and Preach:

## How Larry & Ladd's co-owner balances two passions

You may know Billy Hogarth as the friendly barista taking your coffee order at café Larry & Ladd, but the business owner lives a double life as a pastor for a local Christian church.

When we ask Billy Hogarth if he ever finds himself preaching to customers from the Larry & Ladd service counter, he says: 'People that come to a coffee shop aren't asking for an encounter with Jesus ... people just want a good coffee.'

During the day, Billy makes lattes and cappuccinos from the café's Synesso Factory coffee machine on Grenfell Street, Adelaide, while his business partner Carlos Astudillo organises the food options off-site, which spans sweet treats to fruit salads to bowls of granola.

But from Friday to Sunday, Billy adopts a different persona. He becomes the pastor of the city branch of local Uniting Church, Journey. Although these parts of his life – coffee and church – are very separate, they occasionally interact. 'I want to serve people and I want to serve them well,' he tells *CityMag*.

'One of the reviews we get here at Larry & Ladd the most is that our staff are just awesome with customers, and that we give people the time of day and that's something that me and Carlos are really big on.'



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Billy and Carlos – also someone of ‘faith,’ Billy says – we bought Larry & Ladd from former owners Josh Baker and Jeremy Downey a couple of years ago. The duo’s shared religious beliefs, plus Billy’s decade-long career in hospitality and Carlos’ experience as former head chef of French brassiere Hey Jupiter, the Bird in Hand Winery restaurant, made the pairing perfect.

‘I fell in love with making coffee and then I fell in love with serving people, and now I just do both,’ Billy says.

For the uninitiated in the world of Journey, the church’s most recent annual report holds some answers as to what they believe. The report says the faith holds to an ‘evangelical, orthodox view of Jesus, bible and marriage’ and positive ‘social research’ following this doctrine is clear:

*Adults, young people and children who participate in a local church are far less likely to be involved in illicit behaviour or to experience relational breakdown and if they do are much more likely to recover and rebuild their lives.*

“  
I fell in love with making coffee  
and then I fell in love with serving  
people, and now I just do both

On a personal level, Journey – where Billy’s parents and brother are all in ministry – helped him transform from an ‘angsty’ sixteen-year-old to someone who felt heard. This happened when a pastor from another church lent an ear to the young frustrated man.

‘I really wrestled for a while with having my parents in ministry, my brother in ministry, and I couldn’t comprehend being sixteen and not being employed in ministry,’ he says.

‘I was just angry and for no good reason, and went down the rabbit hole of blaming that on the church, and it wasn’t accurate at all. It was just where I was at.’

Journey also aims to give people the chance to get to know who Jesus is – not *was*, Billy says.

‘I went to a Christian school where my experience of faith was vastly different to my experience of faith outside of school,’ he explains.

‘Jesus was spoken about like a historical figure and in my home and in my church growing up, Jesus was spoken about as someone that I could actually have real relationship with. My firm belief is that those questions that you sort of wrestle with throughout life and meaning and purpose and destiny ... I think all those answers are found in Jesus.’



On a professional level on 14th March 2022 Billy and Carlos moved Larry & Ladd from the inner bowels of Regent Arcade – where it was for seven years – to its new locale at 95 Grenfell Street, where Monday’s Coffee used to be.

The new address comes with window frontage and lots of natural light, and also a revamped menu and branding. Billy and Carlos swapped out their grab-and-go food options, such as pork and halloumi buns, to meals such as poached eggs on toast and build-your-own-big-breakfasts. They also rejigged their signage.

‘When we moved here, we wanted more of a dining experience,’ Billy says. ‘This [space] is a lot more corporate and it’s a much cleaner and brighter, professional space. We also thought it might be best to sort of give the brand a little bit of a touch up.’

Although Billy feels there’s distance between running a café and being a pastor, and he will eventually devote his whole life to being a Journey pastor, he feels like he’s achieving certain aims at Larry & Ladd – overall to foster community.

Most of Larry & Ladd’s employees are from the church. But this sense of connection is not exclusive to non-believers. Creative friends Bella McRae (of Stuff by Glad) and jewellery maker Maddison Brown are participating in the branding, and they’re not from Journey. Regulars come and go, ignorant to what Billy gets up to once he clocks off from the coffee machine!

In the end, there’s not that much difference between serving up a daily dose of caffeine, made from Five Senses Roasting beans, and some sound weekly religious advice.

‘Making people feel known and needed is part of our ethos here,’ Billy says.

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(Source: Originally published on 29th March 2022 in CityMag / InDaily / SA Life, online:

<https://citymag.indaily.com.au/habits/percolate-and-preach-how-larry-ladds-co-owner-balances-two-passions/>)



# Coffee with a Purpose

by Cate Bond

When you have a cup of coffee what does that mean to you? Something to calm the nerves? A moment of peace with yourself?

Have you ever thought about having a coffee that had purpose? That each latte or cappuccino you sipped on was changing a child's life, a community? That your long black or espresso was bringing a child to know Jesus guiding them on a path that will change their life forever? That's exactly what 'Coffee with a Purpose' is doing at Spicer Uniting Church by sponsoring a compassion child. We are able to do our part by serving nice barista style coffee and donating our proceeds to our sponsor child Ameto who lives in Togo, West Africa.

We are so fortunate to be able to have the comforts that we have here in Australia, but for 356 million children that comfort is not a given. With compassion holding dear to my heart personally I have always wondered

how could I bring forward another way we as a church could help change a child's life overseas?

Then I considered my knowledge of the hospitality industry. Having worked as a barista for 2 years and a waitress for 7, I knew that when our church was gifted a barista-style coffee machine that the answer to my prayers was right there. We agreed to change our normal morning tea once a month to offer a barista-style coffee made by our lovely baristas at church who were taught the skills they needed.

Our congregation now know that the coffee they order is not just a regular coffee, it's a coffee for our sponsor child, a coffee that will help educate that child, feed him, teach him the word of God and let him know that no matter how far away he may be, he is loved.

Compassion are incredible beyond words as they are helping to educate children and end poverty. The children are not just receiving help to live a better life, they are being able to know who Jesus is and that he loves them no matter what. As a child it

is so important to know that you are loved deeply and unconditionally.

When I say that compassion holds dear to my heart, I truly mean it. I was adopted from a very poor part of Brazil by my family in Australia. I often wonder that if I wasn't gifted a second chance of life, could that have been me being sponsored by Compassion? A sponsor child asking and praying that someone would spare a piece of their heart to give me hope for another day. I'm lucky that I am living that second chance and so 'Coffee with a Purpose' is my way to help give those children a second chance.

We can all give hope to a child. It doesn't just change a sponsor child, it changes your life too. It gives you a connection that is so sweet and unique.

If you would like to sponsor a compassion child please follow this link <https://www.compassion.com.au> to start your journey as one of God's disciples teaching his word one child at a time.

Left to right in photo: Ruth Sheldon (Treasurer), Leonie Dixon-Thompson, Rev Nathan Whillas

# Unity Hill Op Shop

Unity Hill Uniting Church in Port Lincoln is extremely proud of the management of their Op Shop, with forty-four local dedicated rostered volunteers giving their time to ensure donated items are in pristine condition, at the same time enjoying great fellowship together.

Each year the Unity Op Shop Management team find local organisations who need funds to run their organisations, also funds for overseas mission support, this year to Tonga also Mwandu Orphans and Vulnerable Children's Projects in Zambia.

Rev Nathan Whillas presented each organisation with a cheque toward their needs.

Picture shows Ruth Sheldon, Treasurer, Rev Nathan Whillas accepting a Certificate of Appreciation after presenting Leonie Dixon-Thompson Secretary of Mwandu OVC Project Support Team Inc. \$6,000 to feed approximately one hundred and thirty children's daily feeding and nutrition. Also \$4,500 for wages to the local dedicated staff, Secretary, Councillors, Kitchen staff, Cleaners, Vegetable/Nursery Gardeners,



General Maintenance, and Watchmen – with thanks to them all!

We are all blessed with God's timing over and over again He puts us in His hands able to take care of a situation.

'For you are great, and do wondrous things; you alone are God.' Psalm 86:10.

## 2022 UNITING FOUNDATION GRANT ROUND OPENS



Congregations, faith communities and individuals are invited to apply for funding to assist with missional projects which will build vibrant church communities leading the Church into the future.

The projects need to be able to demonstrate how the missional effectiveness of the applying body will be enhanced. The amount of available funds impacts the Committee's ability to fund projects. Accordingly, applications need to meet the established criteria. The applying body's Mission and Service Fund (MSF) contribution status is also considered when assessing applications.

Property upgrades and maintenance are not eligible for Uniting Foundation funding. An applicant cannot have more than one concurrent active grant. Please note. Applications close 21st July 2022.

Application forms, eligibility criteria and other related information can be found at:

<https://sa.uca.org.au/uniting-foundation/applying-for-a-grant>

Additional information is available by contacting Malcolm Wilson, Uniting Foundation Manager,

Email: [mwilson@sa.uca.org.au](mailto:mwilson@sa.uca.org.au)  
Phone: 0414 520 140



Left to right: Leanne Taylor and Dorie Tran

# Harmony Day

## Scots Church Adelaide

Harmony Day is the Australian term for what the United Nations calls 'The International Day for the elimination of racial discrimination.' Many countries, including most schools in Australia, celebrate this Day on March 21st each year. Australia has turned it into a week called Harmony Week commencing on the 21st.

Why would a church celebrate Harmony Day? For Scots Church Adelaide the reasons were many, including:

- We aim to connect with university students. Students who have studied in Australia will have, at some point in their education journey, have celebrated Harmony Day. This important event is thus known to students. Scots celebrating this day is not a 'weird' concept but something they are already familiar with.
- We have heard stories from local and international students about the disconnection between the two groups and thought this might be a way to open conversations between the student groups.
- We would want to condemn any form of racial discrimination. We believe in peace. We want the public to know that we stand for this.



- Working with international students to prepare this event allowed us to reiterate to them that any form of racism is not acceptable in Australia.

We are truly blessed to have an on-going relationship with University of Adelaide, University College, a facility that supports and teaches foundation level international students. A group got together to design Harmony Day 2022 and the ideas grew and grew. The first idea was to blow up biodegradable balloons and attach a card that informs people about Harmony Day and encourages people to share their balloon with another person and learn to say 'Hello' in that person's language. This was not difficult or costly.

Students got very excited and, in an effort, to raise funds for Ukrainian families, they created and sold at a trading table:

- Orange hand-made flowers and placed these on sticks
- Potted succulents
- Made cookies and had them COVID safe in sealed bags
- Created a hamper to have a raffle.

If we had not spoken to one person that day, the effort and excitement of the students involved would have been enough to satisfy us that the day had been worthwhile, but every conversation that was had between a balloon was precious, informative and broke down many barriers:

- We handed out 150 balloons with strings and postcards
- We made \$188 on the Lucky tickets and table.

Overall, we made a total of \$188 to send to World Vision Ukraine Emergency Fund. More importantly there were many priceless moments:

- An elderly couple enquired about what we were doing and they stayed for a long chat with students, took two balloons and as they left smiling broadly the lady commented: 'This is just what the world needs right now, harmony, thank you!'
- A man who identified his culture as Greek worked hard to teach the (mostly Asian) students to say Hello in Greek. 'What fun' he stated laughing. When it was his turn to learn to say Hello in Vietnamese, he tried hard and laughed more.
- A young lady took her balloon and danced up the street.
- Students delighted in teaching us to say 'Hello' in their languages.
- We raised awareness of the Ukraine Emergency Fund and showed our support.
- An office worker came out for lunch without cash and wanted a succulent so much we gave it to her, only to have her return later in the day with correct coins and a photo of what the pot looks like on her office desk.
- The delight on our volunteer's faces as they learned new words, engaged with people passing by and had the opportunity to explain what we were doing.
- The surprise on the face of people we did not speak to, as we watched those who had received a balloon pass them on.



# A tribute to Neryl McCallum

*by Dr Deidre Palmer, ex-President,  
Uniting Church in Australia*

Neryl McCallum lived a remarkable life and made a life-giving difference to many of us, and to the life and mission of the Uniting Church. She was a youth worker in the early days of the Uniting Church, and continued to contribute to its shaping through her passion for justice, her participation in the creative work of God, and her generous offering of her many gifts.

I had the privilege to work with Neryl through the National Assembly of the Uniting Church, when she served as Executive Assistant, during my time as President of the Assembly (2018-2021). It has been a joy to share in life, friendship and ministry with Neryl. Her creativity, insights on the world and her ability to create sacred spaces, have been a gift to our lives.

Neryl's beautiful visual art, her moving words in poetry and prayer, her ability to organise events and people, with grace, hospitality and humility are gifts of the Spirit that she has shared so generously with us all.

Neryl was a person who attended to organisational details, relational networks and practical hospitality so the Christian community could be encouraged, inspired and strengthened. Neryl was involved in planning and supporting national events, including:

- National Young Adult Leaders Conference 2019
- President's Conference in Fiji in 2019
- President's Conference online in 2020 and face-to-face in Adelaide in 2021
- Meetings with the Moderators and President
- Uniting Women 2016 in Adelaide.

Many Uniting Church members across Australia, remember Neryl from these national gatherings. They have commented on her warmth, her creativity, her care and interest in their stories of life and faith.

Neryl loved the people of the Uniting Church and embodied our commitment to justice and hope. We deeply grieve her passing. We give thanks to God for her amazing and full life, and the community in Christ we share. Our prayers for peace and comfort are with her family and friends.

Neryl wrote this *Call to Worship* for our South Australian Synod worship in 2013. It reflects her understanding of the abundant love of God, that shaped her life and service to Christ:



This image on the right from the Belair Uniting Church was taken at their recent Good Friday service.

The congregation crushed flowers and brought them to the feet of the Jesus sculpture as a symbol of the fears, regrets, sins that crush us. On Easter Sunday everyone in the congregation was given a fresh flower as a symbol of resurrection life.

Sculptor: Neryl McCallum

### Call to Worship

No matter who we are,

Regardless of where we have been,  
or what has happened to us along our way,

At each and every moment

God reaches out to us with arms wide open in welcome

And says:

‘Ah, here you are, I have been waiting for you.

I am overjoyed that you have come.’

And so it is that today as we come to worship and pray  
we are held steadfastly in God’s warm embrace.

*(Create – prayers, songs and other resources, p.18 (2017) by MediaCom Education,*

*The Centre for Music, Liturgy and the Arts*



# UnitingCare

*by Rev Dr Adrian Brown*

When Jesus shocked the establishment by daring to eat with 'sinners' he was making it very clear that service and justice was an integral part of what it meant to practice the Gospel in the community. This has flowed on through the centuries and been part of what it means to be part of the Uniting Church and, before that, in its antecedent churches.





In South Australia we have a rich history of serving the community and promoting justice in a variety of ways, especially through the organisations which come under the umbrella of UnitingCare.

Each of the 23 organisations and 12 Emergency Relief Centres are committed to serving the wider community as outreaches of the Synod and the members of the Uniting Church in South Australia.

These organisations go about their work and are able to tell their stories which directly reflect the ethos of the Uniting Church.

It might be a husband, separated from his dementia affected wife because of the health requirements of COVID who needs to be valued and supported. It is reaching out to the lonely and those who feel discarded by society. It is making opportunities for indigenous students to be provided with educational opportunities denied them by the tyranny of distance.

It is supporting a student going through the challenges of being transgender and caring for international students unable to return home and being separated from their families for more than a year. It is reaching out to tired and distraught nurses and doctors overwhelmed by the demands of the pandemic.

It is providing a safer pathway for those who struggle with their mental health and who need their anxiety eased. It is working to provide housing for people unable to access public housing or lighting up the day of aged care residents with a poetry reading. It is also working to provide emergency relief for people unable to access in the face of growing need and reduced food and human resources.

It also means having a sense of humour as when one UnitingCare cleaned up at the end of the day but discovered an overabundance of 'suds' emerged from the dishwasher such that the suds went a lot further than intended!

The stories are significant because they provide a human face to need as UnitingCare organisations reach out to the community through health, schools and colleges, aged care, community services and emergency relief. Each of them is doing 'our work', which is God's work.

Watch as these stories come to life in various communications from our Church.



# Aged Care

*by Paul Hodgson, Coordinating Chaplain*

As Coordinating Chaplain, employed by the Uniting Church, I coordinate the delivery of Pastoral Care and Chaplaincy services to residents and staff of Helping Hand Aged Care.

Just after Christmas, the opening of the borders and the arrival of Omicron in South Australia impacted our sites significantly, with activities, including church services, shut down, visits restricted or suspended altogether, and levels of anxiety, isolation, and loneliness heightened for many residents.

In this complex and multi-faceted situation, one simple story in particular highlights for me evidence of the ethos of the Uniting Church at work and present in aged care chaplaincy, in practically demonstrating care, love and support to people outside the 'reach' of the local church.

Brian\* and his wife, Sally,\* had moved from interstate to take up residence at Helping Hand just before the onset of the COVID pandemic two years ago, to be closer to family in South Australia. Sally has dementia, and needed the care and support of the dedicated Memory Support Unit (MSU) at Helping Hand, but Brian moved in as a resident in the standard Aged Care facility, so he could continue to be close to her.

Brian spent significant time most days visiting Sally in the MSU, or taking her out in her wheelchair for coffee or shopping or little adventures. His dedication in care and support of Sally is a significant component of Brian's own sense of purpose and well-being.



In January, the MSU went into lockdown and Brian was unable to see Sally for a number of weeks. One of the Lifestyle team, who I work closely with, identified Brian as being at risk in his mental health, and asked if I could spend time with him. Brian is not a church go-er, and doesn't identify as being of faith, so we hadn't met at that point.

I went to his room, explained that I was aware that he was missing Sally, introduced myself as the Chaplain, and would he like to talk with me about how he was feeling. Brian was indeed distressed and expressed hopelessness. He took up my offer, pouring out the whole story, and his worry and concern for Sally without his regular visits (she, indeed, was being well looked after, but Brian's emotional response was driven by his absence from her).

I was able to offer Brian the gift of time and presence. I listened. I empathised. I showed interest and care. I brought him in a coffee from the outside world, and sat with him in the garden courtyard in the fresh air with blue skies above us. Sometimes we'd spend ninety minutes together, other times, particularly as his well-being improved, it was just a 10 or 15 minute touching base.

I was only one of many involved in the care and support of Brian, but I am convinced of the huge difference the ministry of chaplaincy made directly to him; and of the appreciation of other staff for this additional resource to be able to draw on in care of residents' emotional, mental, and spiritual wellbeing.

\* not their real names

“ I was able to offer Brian the gift of time and presence. I listened. I empathised. I showed interest and care. I brought him in a coffee from the outside world, and sat with him in the garden courtyard in the fresh air with blue skies above us.



# UnitingCare Wesley Bowden

## Going from a dark place into the light

'Kerry has brought me out of my shell, I was in a dark place before meeting her with the program ... I have things to look forward to now.'

Community service organisations under the UnitingCare banner play an important role in supporting people who struggle with their mental health.

At UnitingCare Wesley Bowden there is a commitment to providing an inclusive, connected, safe place for people who do not have other support. For example, their Wellness Connect Continuity of Support program provides targeted support and connection to people who are experiencing challenges with their mental health.

This program was accessed by Anita, a mother whose teenage children were in foster homes. Anita was experiencing severe social isolation due to her anxiety, depression, and medical issues and rarely left her house. Mental Health worker, Kerry, spent time with Anita to understand her story, strengths, and interests. With Kerry's support, Anita set goals to improve her mental and physical health, address her financial issues, and meet new people.

Anita received assistance from our financial health and well-being services and was successfully supported to apply for NDIS funding to address her medical issues. Anita's anxiety and depression reduced, and she began to leave her house, attending groups and connecting with other people experiencing similar challenges. Energised and purposeful, Anita now provides advice and ideas to improve the Wellness Connect programs for current and future clients. When describing her experience with us Anita said:

'Kerry has brought me out of my shell, I was in a dark place before meeting her with the program ... I have things to look forward to now.'



# Uniting Communities

## On Being Lonely

Addressing isolation and loneliness is something to which members of the Uniting Church can and already do make a significant contribution.

At Uniting Communities we seek to make a contribution to addressing the pain of loneliness and in February saw the first of our significant workshops for 2022 which brought together key resources and conversations with Together SA around loneliness.

The event hosted a US expert, a panel for State politicians in election mode and workshops brought into sub-topics of youth loneliness and resources for community developers. 891 ABC ran the topic on morning radio, we had good responses on social media and we have more social media content to deliver over the next three months. The work on loneliness is based around a data survey of the rates of loneliness in the community.

Recent events in this area include:

- Hosted Overcoming Loneliness Workshop on 2nd March with Community Centre's SA which included an election panel with candidates and a focus on connectors and young people and loneliness. Guest speakers included Helen Connolly and Professor Jane Farmer.
- Created two videos on loneliness, one general video and one on young people and loneliness to distribute as part of a social media campaign, which commenced in April 2022.

A Call to the Parties proposal video was created and distributed via social media which included a focus on reconnecting South Australia, implementing local fetes and festivals and investment in dedicated community 'connectors'!

### **Linking with Wellbeing SA on Young People and Loneliness**

Rev Peter McDonald is available to share the story and opportunities of addressing loneliness. He has recently been at the following congregations: Cityview, Glengowrie, Croydon and the Corner UCA. With Meningie and Mount Gambier lined up in the next 8 months.

Email: [southern.chair@sa.uca.org.au](mailto:southern.chair@sa.uca.org.au)

Phone: (08) 8236 4200



# UnitingSA

UnitingSA is a values-based organisation committed to a vision for 'a compassionate, respectful and just community in which all people participate and flourish.'

Founded in Port Adelaide in 1919 the organisation has been affectionately known as the Port Mission for most of its history.

Uniting SA works in harmony with the church to ensure the best possible outcomes for South Australians through the delivery of housing, aged care and community services.

The following are just a couple of examples of their values in action:



*LtoR: Tenant Lyn, UnitingSA Board Chair Gael Fraser, Michelle Lensink MLC, UnitingSA CEO Jenny Hall*



“This housing means I can move forward in my life. It means I can move from insecurity to stability.”

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## Centre wins The Loneliness Cure Award

UnitingSA's Taperoo Community Centre was named the winner of Community Centres SAs The Loneliness Cure Award, as part of the 2021 South Australian Community Achievement Awards.

The award recognises the incredible impact of the centre's poetry group, which uses poetry and performance to help participants develop literacy skills, build confidence and forge friendships.

Poetry group participants spent many months learning to draw on their life experiences to write poetry and perform their work in a special showcase at the centre.

Many of the centre's members have learning disabilities or experience significant mental health challenges, making the role of the centre even more vital in helping them develop skills and increase community connection.

Comments from the group's members show just how impactful the poetry group has been:

Dorothy: 'I am proud and overjoyed that I came to the centre and was a part of this group. In my whole life, I could never imagine that I would be able to achieve something like this.'

Jasmine: 'My life has changed for the better since joining this group. I am so proud of what we have done.'



*Taperoo Community Centre participants (LtoR: Belinda, Jason, Dot, Centre Coordinator Kathy, and Tracey)*

## New housing provides safety and stability

UnitingSA opened a new community housing project in Adelaide's north-west in September 2021 to provide affordable accommodation for older women experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

The \$2.6m development includes eight two-bedroom houses for women aged 55 and over – the fastest growing homeless population in the country.

The project was delivered by UnitingSA in partnership with the South Australian Housing Authority (SAHA), which provided a \$1 million grant, and members of the former local Gospel Mission, who generously gifted the land.

UnitingSA was compelled to create housing targeting older women having seen first-hand the increased economic uncertainty they experience due to a range of factors, including limited savings, superannuation and assets.

One of the inaugural tenants, Lyn, says it has been life changing after experiencing the instability of couch surfing for more than five months.

'This place means something – it's much better than couch surfing, going from place to place, just hoping that something comes up,' said Lyn.

'This housing means I can move forward in my life. It means I can move from insecurity to stability.'



# St Andrew's Hospital

## Health

Along with the entire Health Sector, St Andrew's Hospital has faced a number of challenges since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. These include, periodic limits to elective surgery, reductions in the number of patients and visitors, increased screening measures for patients and visitors, and increased levels of wearing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for all staff, patients and volunteers.

On a number of occasions one of the social hubs at St Andrew's (the Coffee Shop) has been closed due to restrictions on volunteers attending the hospital. In all of this staff have, at times, needed to work above and beyond their normal duties. The chaplaincy response within this period, rather than implementing new initiatives, has been to maintain a sense of 'less anxious presence' and 'availability' to staff, volunteers, patients and their families.

The Coordinating Chaplain (Rev Peter Morel) has continued to offer personal support, as well as the normal Grief and Loss Education for Graduate Nurses and 6th Year Medical students. He also assists in presenting 'Resilience and Self Care' awareness within the Orientation Program for new staff.

Peter maintains that opportunities in the role of chaplaincy emerge most often from having 'one conversation at a time,' rather than relying on a series of programs. As with many of our chaplains, this is a ministry of 'being present' and thus being able to respond as needed. At St Andrew's Hospital, this is an integral role within the delivery of holistic care for our patients, and support for all staff.



**St Andrew's  
Hospital**

# Prince Alfred College

## Schools

The last twelve months Prince Alfred College (PAC) has seen a number of initiatives conducted in conjunction with the Church, or which advance the shared Church and School ethos.

The first of these was support for their Chaplain, Rev Mark Dickens, to spend half his time in 2021 on placement with the Uniting Church on Kangaroo Island, in a support role following the bushfires of the previous year. The college was pleased to have Rev David Prior join them as half-time Chaplain and found the shared chaplaincy arrangement worked very well.

Discussions over a number of years have seen Prince Alfred College and Wesley Kent Uniting Church come together to establish a shared Chaplaincy/Ministry model. The links between the two institutions go back to the beginning of PAC, as the College was largely founded by members of the Kent Town Church. Under the new arrangements, the college is in the process of appointing a second, part-time Chaplain, with 0.5 ministry to the Church being shared by both Chaplains: Rev Mark Dickens and the new appointment.

In 2021, PAC adopted a new Strategic Plan, which commits the school to promoting and celebrating diversity and inclusiveness. This sees expression in a number of ways, including the further expansion of the Aboriginal students' program. Aboriginal student numbers have increased from 13 in 2021 to 23 in 2022. To support the students, a new Aboriginal Program Coordinator, Mr Ben Lewis has been appointed, who comes to the school from a Uniting Church schools background in Western Australia.

Finally, the school's commitment to diversity and inclusiveness has seen support for a Year 12 student who is now a transgender female. The student has been with the college since the Early Learning Centre and is pleased to support her through this process, to enable her to complete her schooling amongst the students and staff whom she knows best.



PRINCE  
ALFRED  
COLLEGE

## UnitingCare, Taperoo

# Connecting through Community Care

Although many changes have occurred in the 100 years since a small home mission outpost of the Semaphore Methodist circuit was established in the sand hills at Gedville Road, Taperoo, connecting with the local community remains central to the mission of the Lefevre Uniting Church, Taperoo. This is reflected in the Mission Statement which is 'Connecting with Peninsula people for Jesus.'

To enable connections to be established, the Congregation developed links with the Port Adelaide Enfield Council, community groups, local schools, the Ocean View College Children's Centre and other churches through its membership of the Lefevre Community Services Forum.

Through this forum, the Port Adelaide-Enfield Council encouraged the Congregation to be part of a renewal of the Taperoo/Osborne area by starting a low-cost community coffee shop and lending library to complement its existing Op Shop. This led to the establishment of a community venture called Lefevre Connections which strengthens and builds the local community by providing a community place for adults to meet for a coffee and chat while their children play on the playground, access library resources, buy clothing from the op shop, or meet with a Justice of the Peace.

In 2020, when COVID-19 struck and the coffee shop and community activities were required to close, a partnership was formed with UnitingCare SA to establish a second community venture called UnitingCare Taperoo. The idea was to provide frozen meals cooked by volunteers in the church kitchen to elderly residents affected by the COVID pandemic. However, as time went on and word spread, the service grew to include the provision of fruit, vegetables, bakery items, non-perishable food items, clothing and blankets to the unemployed, single parents, families, homeless, recent prison inmates, international students and people being cared for under the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

In 2021 UnitingCare Taperoo provided assistance to 4,500 people. The assistance included 6,737 meals and 10,964 kg of fruit, vegetables and bakery items. This support was recognised at the recent City of Port Adelaide Australia Day Awards where the Lefevre Uniting Church Taperoo received an award in recognition of Service to the Community.

The demand for assistance has continued to grow in 2022. Since September last year the average number of people being helped each week has increased from 74 to 125 (70% increase). At the same time supply problems associated with COVID have reduced the average weekly collection of fruit and vegetables from 123 kg to 83 kg (33% decrease).

In looking to respond to the increase in demand, Church Council has recognised the need for a separate body to be formed to manage the community outreach activities.



UnitingCare, **Glenelg**

# Food Service



The statistics below were collected between opening in mid-January through the end of March 2022. They give a glimpse into the practical care that happens at St Andrew's UC during the week. Some statistics include comparisons between January-March this year and last year.

As demand increases, there has been a significant drop in the amount of fresh food received from SecondBite. Currently, this shortage is being offset by purchasing food from Caruso's using grant money. Please let UnitingCare Glenelg know if you have ideas for other ways they might procure fresh food.

While their story can be seen as grim, this doesn't stop them from giving vent to their sense of humour. Trying to give the dishwasher a spring clean, things simply went too far and the suds kept on growing and growing. You have to laugh – it's a whole lot better than crying!

**45%** identify as male **55%** identify as female

**64%** are feeding more than one person

**2** people are over 90 and **1** person is under 20

**22%** of people were not born in Australia **7%** identify as First Peoples

**18%** have no fixed address (up from 11% last year)

**360** main meals were served on Tuesday nights

**488** litres of soup were served

**1,018** bread rolls

**504** litres of coffee/tea



# Resthaven



Often in aged care residents may feel that they can't 'do' anything. One year staff assisted residents to create a butterfly. They did the cutting, the glueing, the creating. Some residents only had the use of one hand, yet were able to take part.

As part of Easter services we folded stones in paper on Good Friday and placed them at the foot of the cross. On Easter Sunday they walked in to see the butterfly they had created. Beauty emerged from those hard wrapped things. It had a huge visual impact, but more importantly, for the rest of the long weekend, residents told their families 'come into the hall and see what we made.' There was a sense of accomplishment, dignity and pride in contributing not just to a decoration, but a transformation of their understanding of what they could do!

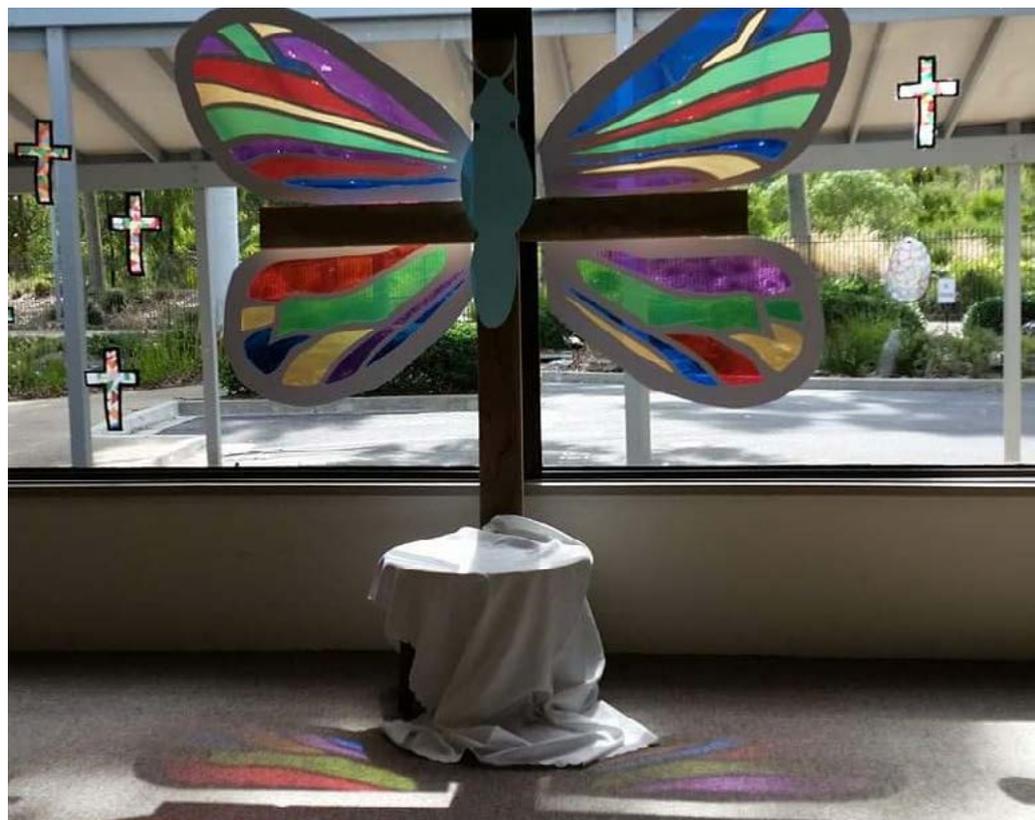
In the weeks following Christmas and after a challenging time with COVID, it has been hard to feel that life is beginning once more. Some residents are more physically unwell and may be this way for some time after their bout with COVID. Others are emotionally flat, needing coaxing out of their rooms to engage with activities and life once more. At Paradise they are having a 'We Survived COVID Party!'

There will be COVID balls to bat away, ridiculous decorations and general silliness to mark that we have all been through something. We are not the same as we were, but we are still here. There is still life to be lived, family to see, conversations to be had and life will come again in all its fullness.

Each year in autumn we pause and reflect on the question, why are leaves the most colourful at the end of their lives? Sometimes with all the white and grey heads, we do not feel colourful. Asking questions though, helps to see that inside those grey and white heads are stories of journeys to new, different lands, tales of the horror and triumph of war, creativity with paintbrush, pen, clay and metal. Children

encouraged, people healed, the whole diversity of the world met within these stories. They are filled with many colours, shapes and textures and for those of us who come after, they tell us of why the world is like it is, how we have come to be where we are. Even as we go on and may feel like the dried up, frail and fragile leaves that have fallen. We are reminded that the leaves continue to nurture the tree, the stories continue to nourish and support, the leaves form mulch to hold in moisture, keep the soil warm in the cold winter months, to allow the tree to bloom again for another year.

The stories remind us of the strength in our past, and their hope for our future.



*The Butterfly created by the Resthaven residents*

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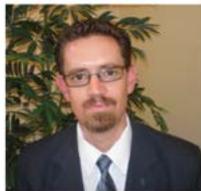
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## Placements News

### Placements finalised as at 27th April 2022

Rev Dr Tim Hein as Executive Officer, MLD from 1 April 2022  
Rev Paul Turley as Wimala Regional Coordinator (0.4) from 1 April 2022  
Rev Frances Bartlett to Semaphore UC (0.6) from 1 May 2022  
Kym Diment (MOP) to Bordertown (0.8) from 1 May 2022  
Rev Geoff Tiller to Modbury UC (0.5) from 1 May 2022  
Andrew Kieselbach (MOP) as Chaplain, Prince Alfred College (0.7) (2nd placement) from 16 May 2022  
Rev Dr Vicky Balabanski as Principal, UCLT from 1 August 2022

### Vacant placements

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

#### PROFILES AVAILABLE

#### Generate Presbytery

Balhannah UC  
Naracoorte UC  
Salisbury UC

#### Presbytery of Southern SA

Adare UC  
Glengowrie UC (0.5) (Vacant 2023)  
Noarlunga UC (0.8)

#### Wimala Presbytery

Croydon Park UC (0.3)  
Lefevre UC (0.4)  
Kadina Wallaroo UC  
Para Vista (0.3)  
Scots Church  
Western Link (0.5)

#### Placements Across Two Presbyteries

-

PROFILES NOT YET AVAILABLE

#### Generate Presbytery

-

#### Wimala Presbytery

Berri UC / Barmera UC  
Port Augusta UAICC

#### Presbytery of Southern SA

-

#### Placements Across Two Presbyteries

County Jervois (Generate and Wimala)

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

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