

MEDIA RELEASE

To: News Editor

From: Uniting Church Western Australia – contact Maggie Johns 0419 831 576

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MEDIA RELEASE: Ringing the bells of climate change – Uniting Church in Australia: President, Moderator and members urge Climate Action

Rev Steve Francis, Moderator of the Uniting Church in Australia, Western Australia, alongside 22-year-old Alexandra Hutchinson and Hanamoa Vaitogi, member of Perth Samoan Uniting Church are encouraging church members to participate in the Global Climate Strike on Friday, 20 September.

The trio recently sent a letter to all Uniting Church congregations in Western Australia, encouraging members to not only take responsibility for their own actions and impact on the environment, but to raise their voices to the Australian Government and call on them to “enact climate change policy that recognises anthropogenic climate change and acts effectively to address the crisis facing our planet.”

The letter invites all Uniting Church congregations and agencies to take this Global Climate Action “because this matters to us as people of faith, as young people and as people of the Pacific.”

Rev Steve Francis said, “We can’t understate the urgency and scope of the situation we’re facing. The science shows us that it is indeed a climate crisis – and we as people of faith need to step out in courage, prayer and action in response.”

This follows from a national invitation sent by Dr Deidre Palmer, President of the Uniting Church in Australia to all Uniting Church staff, congregations and agency members across the nation encouraging support for the [Global Climate Action on September 20](#).

“We are passionately committed to contributing our voice and action toward a world in which all people, creatures and the Earth can flourish,” Dr Palmer’s letter read.

“I invite members of the Uniting Church in Australia and all who share in our hope for the healing of the Earth, to take part in the Global Climate Action on September 20, 2019.” Dr Palmer said.

Hanamoa Vaitogi said, “The Churches of the Pacific are leading the response to climate change because they are already feeling the impacts. Pacific Islands Peoples feel deeply the changes to our land and lifestyle, but we are determined to raise our voice. We can still make change.”

Alexandra Hutchinson said, “I believe we are called to care for God’s creation, to ensure a sustainable world for all. For young people, this is our future we are talking about. That’s why I am going to be at the Global Climate Strike, and I encourage others to join me, as by acting together we can bring about amazing change.”

The church has written to all of the schools within its Synod, including Methodist Ladies’ College (MLC), which has begun preparations for its students to participate in an on-campus Climate Change Day of Action. Rev Hollis Wilson, MLC Chaplain, said it will be “a day devoted to raising the awareness of what each of us can do to alleviate climate change, culminating in a lunchtime ‘rally’ on the Great Court”.

Members of the church have been making banners and signs along with other faith groups as they prepare to walk with the Australian Religious Response to Climate Change in the Global Climate Strike.

In a symbolic measure of support, Uniting Church in the City, Wesley Perth will be ringing their church bells from 11am on Friday 20 September. Rev Francis was pleased that both the Anglican and Catholic Cathedrals in Perth were also willing to coordinate the ringing of their bells “as an audible sign of our collective support for Global Climate Action. We encourage all places of worship to consider how they might be able to demonstrate their support for this important event.”

Ends

Images available [here](#). Please contact Uniting Church WA Media and Communications Manager, Maggie Johns on 0419 831 576.