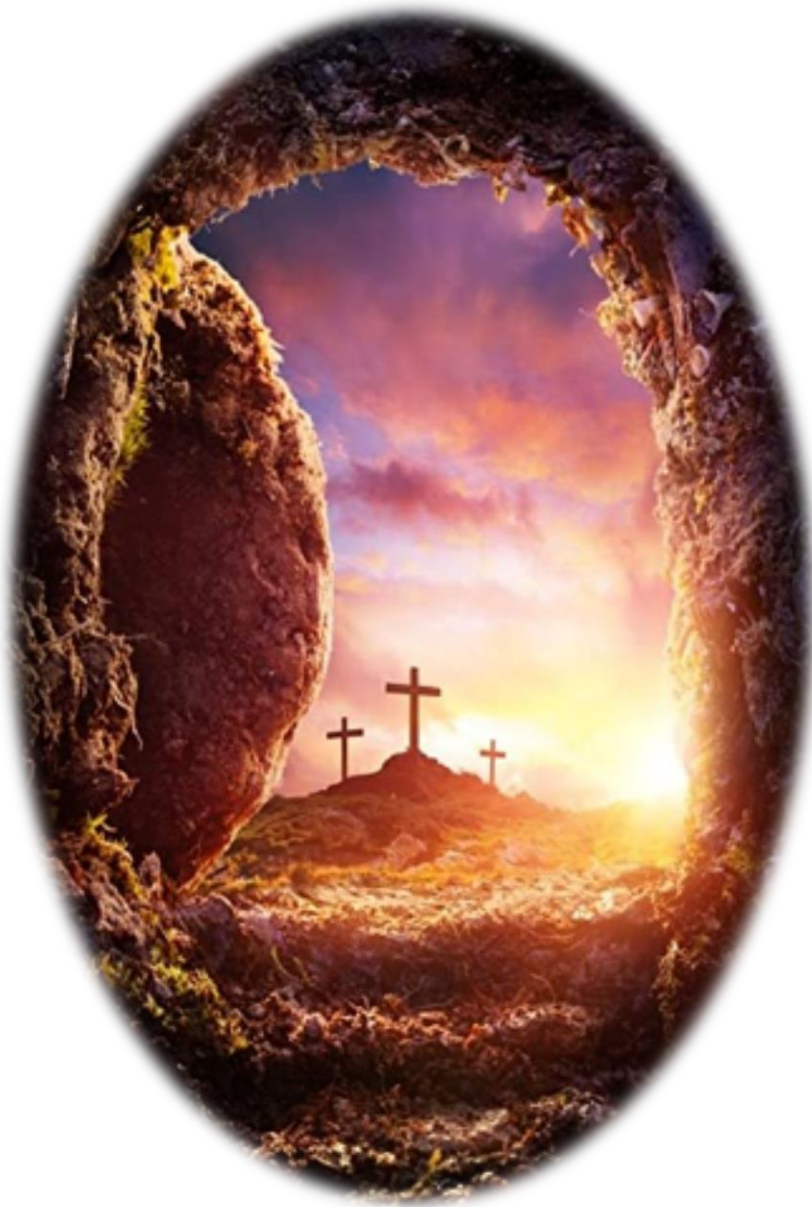


# WA UNITING CHURCH ADULT FELLOWSHIP FELLOWSHIP NEWSLINK



**APRIL 2023**



**PROMOTING FAITH &  
FELLOWSHIP ACROSS  
CONGREGATIONS & BEYOND**



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November 2022 issue - 20 October 2023

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with NEWSLINK in the Subject line.

Please include a contact number in submissions.

### To Register your group or send a donation

Send to the treasurer,

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# Chairperson's Corner



Welcome to the first edition of Newslink for 2023.

The beginning of the year is usually a busy time. The various Fellowship groups and activities which many of us are involved have begun their 2023 programs and activities.

World Day of Prayer was celebrated on the first Friday in March or a time near that day, with us learning about Taiwan and stories of the faith of some Christian ladies and their greeting 'Ping-an' meaning 'May God grant you peace'. The theme of the service was "*I have heard about your faith*" (Ephesians 1:15 – 20).

I hope readers of Newslink were aware of the letter sent from the Committee which was in the last Synod mail out regarding some changes with the magazine. We have a small committee, and some are dealing with personal issues which are limiting their ability to continue some of the tasks they have undertaken in the past. There will be **3 editions – these will be May, August, and December.**

Some good news from the Uniting Church Adult Fellowship National Committee. Our National Chairperson, Margaret Pedler, has met with Joan Stott to discuss a change in the age of eligibility for applicants to receive the '**Joan Stott UCAF Bursary**'. Joan has graciously agreed to change the age from under 35 to **under 50 years** for students undertaking leadership or theological studies within the ethos of the Uniting Church. Applications need to be received by 31 May by the UCAF State Secretary. The State Committee review the applications and those which meet the criteria will be forwarded to the UCAF National Committee who will make a decision to award the bursary. There are 2 bursaries which may be awarded each year. If you know of a student who may be eligible either in WA or another State do encourage them to contact their State UCAF Committee for an application form.

In this edition, we will hear from Reuben Edmonds who was awarded a Joan Stott Bursary in 2020 for the 2021 academic year.

Have you a story we could share in our Newslink Magazine?? What plans does your Fellowship have for 2023? We would be delighted to meet you – our committee meets on 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of the month at Noranda Uniting Church at 10AM. It would be great to share your ideas and news with the committee.

As I write I am aware we are well into the season of Lent. Rev Ivan Clark shared these words from Pope Francis with his congregation recently which he found inspiring and so do I. While the Pope's words related to Lenten fasting, I believe they are words for our Christian life throughout the year:

*Fast from hurting words and say kind words. Fast from sadness and be filled with gratitude. Fast from anger and be filled with patience. Fast from pessimism and be filled with hope. Fast from worries and have trust in God. Fast from complaints and contemplate simplicity. Fast from pressures and be prayerful. Fast from bitterness and fill your hearts with joy. Fast from selfishness and be compassionate to others. Fast from grudges and be reconciled. Fast from words and be silent so you can listen.*

As you prepare to join the special services which are part of our Christian journey during this Easter, we ask God to help us focus on the love of the Easter message and rejoice in the gift of life in Jesus Christ.

Our prayer for this Easter season: Lord Jesus, bless us with Easter moments as we encounter your presence in our day to day lives.

*Go gently my friends:  
Helen McMillan*







## *A New Year's Prayer by the President of the Uniting Church in Australia*

God of time and space, God beyond all that is  
As we stand on the threshold between the end of one year  
And the beginning of a new year  
Grant us the gift of self-reflection  
That we might review our year with honesty  
Help us confess those things that were  
That took us away from the things of your kingdom  
That did not reflect your great love for us and all creation  
Or denied the image of God in the other  
Help us give thanks for the times we have followed the way of Christ  
For the acts of kindness, mercy and compassion we experienced and offered  
Our participation in acts of justice and repair of creation.

God of time and space, God beyond all that is  
Travel with us into the New Year as you have been with us in the old one  
That You might grant us courage to live freely, following the way of Jesus  
Generosity to love more abundantly  
And hope to sustain our living for justice and peace.

We pray in the name of Christ, our wisdom and hope. **Amen**

***Rev Sharon Hollis, President of the Uniting Church in Australia***

## By the Director of Banabas Aid

### “In your wrath ,Remember Mercy”

"There is no such thing as religion in England... If anyone speaks about religion, everybody begins to laugh." <sup>1</sup>

"An open and professed Disregard to Religion is become ... the distinguishing Character of the present Age... Christianity is ridiculed and railed at with very little Reserve: and the Teachers of it, without any at all." <sup>2</sup>

"It has come to be taken for granted that Christianity is no longer a subject of inquiry; but that it is now at length discovered to be fictitious. And accordingly, it is treated as if, in the present age, this were an agreed point among all persons of discernment, and nothing remained but to set it up as a principal subject for mirth and ridicule." <sup>3</sup>

These comments were made about England in the 1730s, but how well they apply today not only in England and the rest of the UK but also in many other Western nations!

Various Christian heresies were fashionable among the upper classes in 1730s England such as Arianism, Pelagianism and Socinianism. Other people put nature on a pedestal, like a religion, while anything to do with Christ Himself was rejected. Many clergy knew little of the Bible, and ordinary people gave themselves up to vice of every kind, largely unaware that what they were doing was sinful in the eyes of God.

### The Evangelical Revival

Some Christian leaders saw what was happening and cried out in anguish of spirit. Yet the Church remained teetering on the edge of a precipice until John Wesley and his associates began their ministry, urging people up and down the country to read the Bible and gather together to pray.

What followed has become known as the Evangelical Revival, often dated (as regards England) from Wesley's own conversion in 1738 and reckoned to have continued until about 1815. <sup>4</sup> Personal faith thrived. Gospel truth was taught in churches and became widely known and believed.

And the effect of this revival on society at large? While many of its sinful practices continued, there was a gradual move towards valuing virtue again. A God-fearing and devout attitude became more generally acceptable. Nevertheless, John Wesley himself, in an article published in 1782, wrote:

*What is the present characteristic of the English nation? It is ungodliness... By ungodliness I mean, first, a total ignorance of God; Secondly, a total contempt of him.* <sup>5</sup>

## Evangelicalism in the West today

What remains of the Evangelical Revival today?

A 2022 survey by Ligonier Ministries and LifeWay Research found that many American evangelical Christians held non-Biblical, even heretical, beliefs, especially about the nature of God.

*73% agreed with the claim that Jesus is the “first and greatest being created by God”.*

*55% believed the Holy Spirit is a force but not a personal being.*

*44% said that Jesus was a great teacher, but He was not God.*

*38% considered that “religious belief is a matter of personal opinion; it is not about objective truth”. <sup>6</sup>*

A separate survey, also conducted in the USA in 2022 but this time by the Cultural Research Centre at Arizona Christian University, looked at the beliefs of pastors. Among the evangelical pastors surveyed:

*39% considered that there is no absolute moral truth and that “each individual must determine their own truth”.*

*37% said that having faith in general is more important than the question of in what or in Whom that faith is placed.*

*30% did not agree that their salvation was based only on having confessed their sins and accepted Jesus Christ as their Saviour. <sup>7</sup>*

It is clear that the Church in the West stands once again on the brink of destruction. But what happened to bring her there?

## The de-Christianising process

The British theologian and scholar CS Lewis, speaking in 1954, described a “Great Divide”, which he considered “the greatest of all divisions in history”, that had begun to open in the middle of the nineteenth century, separating the Christian age of the previous 18 centuries from the post-Christian age. The process of de-Christianising Western society could be seen, he said, in politics, the arts, religion and technology, and the chasm was continuing to widen. <sup>8</sup>

Lewis’s almost exact contemporary, the American preacher and scholar AW Tozer (1897-1963), wrote:

*I see the time coming when all the holy men whose eyes have been opened by the Holy Spirit will desert worldly Evangelicalism, one by one. The house will be left desolate and there will not be a man of God, a man in whom the Holy Spirit dwells, left among them.* <sup>9</sup>

Tozer said that he would like to live to see the time when holy and spiritually enlightened Christians separated themselves from the sinking ship of evangelicalism and formed themselves into a “a new ark to ride out the storm”.

### **A vortex that is pulling us down to destruction**

Now in the 2020s we are at a stage where Christianity in the UK and much of the West is once again a laughing stock, as it was in 1730s England. This is due partly to the failures and corruption of its own leaders and partly to the arrogance of society's leaders, two factors which perhaps intensify each other in a vicious circle.

With the Church's authority lost, the moral framework that once underpinned Western society has gone, its value systems have collapsed, and the notion of absolute truth is widely rejected. Westerners have largely turned away from God, seeing Him as irrelevant and unnecessary for their happiness and fulfilment. In this view, humankind has matured and become master of its own destiny, no longer having need of any supernatural Being.

However, we see that nature appears to have turned against humanity, while humans have turned against fellow-humans. We are caught in a vortex that is pulling us downward to destruction. God says, “Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall” (Proverbs 16:18). Thus, human pride will be our undoing. The Church in the West, so favoured by God for many centuries, may now feel His wrath and be at the receiving end of His judgment.

### **“Man's extremity is God's opportunity”.**

If God were now to abandon the West, how could we complain, given that we have pushed Him contemptuously away so often, so publicly and so shamelessly? But let us not despair. It has been said that “man's extremity is God's opportunity”. The challenge facing Wesley and his associates in the eighteenth century must have seemed just as great as the challenge facing us today. What if we apply again the same remedy? Repentance, prayer and Bible study were the channels that God in His mercy used in the eighteenth century to bring England back from the brink. Maybe He will use them again.

George Barna, Director of Research at the Cultural Research Center, noted that their survey data showed that the beliefs of pastors were correlated with their spiritual routines. Pastors who held the most Biblical beliefs tended to be those who followed a consistent daily routine of Bible reading, prayer, worship and confession.



God could still revisit His people in the West. But we must repent and pray for His mercy again, remembering that there is no such thing as a Christian nation and that we cannot presume on His grace. We cannot look at the greatness, glories and triumphs of the West's past and assume it is our right to be blessed in this way again.

### **“Those who revered the Lord spoke with one another”**

The prophet Malachi describes a society in which people were still going through the motions of organised religious worship, but half-heartedly, offering their lame and sick animals to Him (Malachi 1). They considered that struggling to serve God was pointless, given that evildoers were so visibly prospering (Malachi 3:8-16). But some in that society still loved God and honoured His commandments; they must have been greatly distressed by what was happening around them. Let us read in Malachi's words what that faithful remnant did, what God did in response and what He promised them for the future:

*Then those who revered the Lord spoke with one another. The Lord took note and listened, and a book of remembrance was written before him of those who revered the Lord and thought on his name. They shall be mine, says the Lord of hosts, my special possession on the day when I act, and I will spare them as parents spare their children who serve them. Then once more you shall see the difference between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve him. (Malachi 3:16-18 NRSV)*

Even if we are the only one in our family or church or town reading the Bible and praying humbly to Jesus, He will take note and listen. But, if we can, let us gather with like-minded others to speak together, pray together and study the Scriptures together, thus helping one another to remain true to the Lord.

### **“You are mine and I am Yours”**

Wesley managed to transform the drunken revels of Bristol coal miners every 31 December into the thoughtful “watch-night” worship services with which Methodists see in the new year. Furthermore, in 1755 he began the custom of “Renewing the Covenant” on the first Sunday of the year, when believers solemnly re-affirm their commitment to the Lord. The Methodist Covenant Prayer, which many other churches have now adopted, runs:

*I am no longer my own but yours.  
Put me to what you will,  
rank me with whom you will;  
put me to doing,  
put me to suffering;  
let me be employed for you,  
or laid aside for you,*

*exalted for you,  
or brought low for you;  
let me be full,  
let me be empty,  
let me have all things,  
let me have nothing:  
I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things  
to your pleasure and disposal.  
And now, glorious and blessed God,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
you are mine and I am yours. So be it.  
And the covenant now made on earth,  
let it be ratified in heaven.*

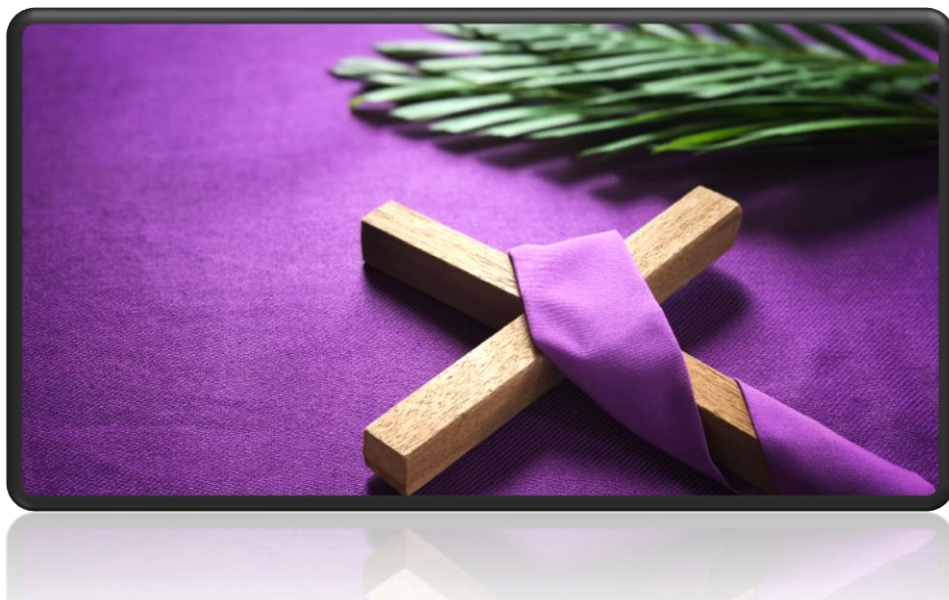
So, as 2023 begins, let each one of us recommit ourselves to the Lord, and determine to make the new year one in which we give priority to prayer and Bible study, walking humbly with our God, and asking Him:

Lord, I have heard the report about you;  
Lord, I stand in awe of your deeds.  
Revive your work in these years;  
make it known in these years.  
In your wrath remember mercy!  
(Habakkuk 3:2, CSB)

**Dr Patrick Sookhdeo**

International Director of Barnabas Aid

*Permission to use extract Granted  
by Editor of Barnabas Aid Australia.*



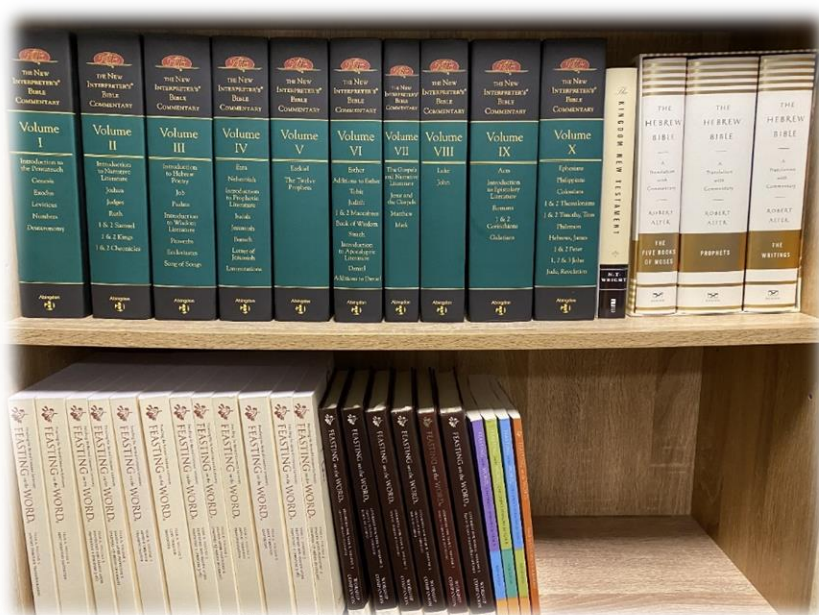
# Joan Stott UCAF

## Bursary Follow Up



My name is Reuben Edmonds, and I was fortunate enough to receive the Joan Stott UCAF Bursary for 2021. During 2021, I was studying theology in Melbourne as part of my formation to become a Uniting Church Minister of the Word. With this future in mind, I decided to apply for the bursary with the aim to buy theology books for my study and ministry. With the bursary I was able to purchase the New Interpreters 10 volume Bible Commentary, the Feasting on the Word series including worship and children's resources, NT Wright's New Testament translation, and Robert Alter's translation and commentary for the Hebrew Bible.

I have used these resources extensively since purchasing them including using them as academic sources in essays and helping with sermon and worship preparation during my field placements. No doubt I will continue to use these books as I hopefully begin my full-time ministry this year. Many thanks to Joan Stott and the UCAF for their encouragement and support of me.



*Reuben Edmonds*

# Recipe Page

## Raspberry & Chocolate Hot Cross Bun Pudding



**2 x Coles Bakery Chocolate Hot Cross Buns, split.**

**4 x Coles Bakery Fruit Hot Cross Buns, split.**

**40g butter, softened.**

**½ cup (160g) blueberry or raspberry jam**

**6 eggs**

**1 ½ cups (375ml) milk**

**¾ cup (185ml) thickened cream**

**1/3 cup (70g) caster sugar**

**1 tsp vanilla bean paste / essence**

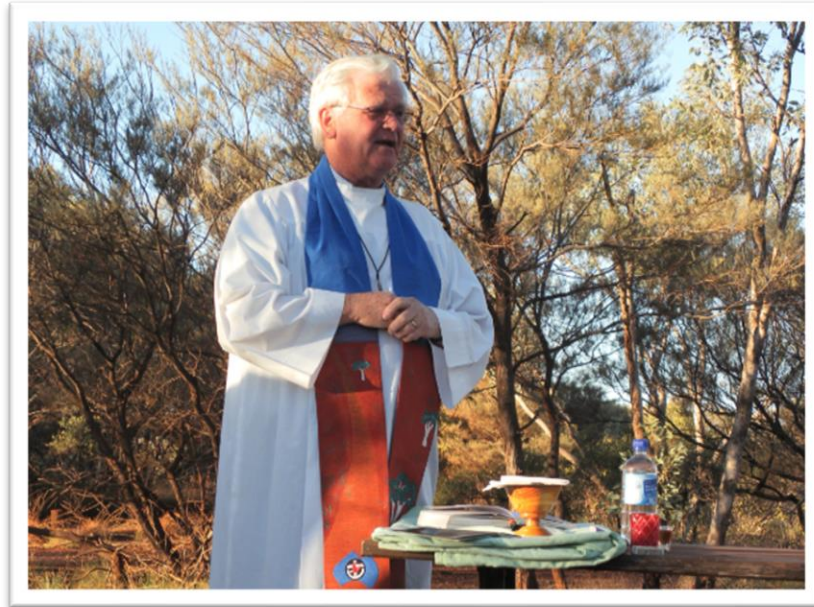
**125g fresh or frozen raspberries**

**125g fresh or frozen blueberries**

- 1. Preheat oven to 160 C. Grease an 8-cup (2 liter) ovenproof dish**
- 2. Spread the cut side of each bun half with butter. Spread the bun bases with the jam. Arrange the bun bases, jam-side up, and the bun tops, cross-side up, in the prepared pan.**
- 3. Whisk the eggs, milk, cream, sugar, and vanilla in a medium bowl. Pour evenly over the buns. Set aside for 10 minutes to soak.**
- 4. Sprinkle with the raspberries and blueberries. Bake for 30-40 minutes or until just set. Set aside for 10 minutes to stand before serving.**



# FRONTIER SERVICES



## Serving The Country

After 20 years serving the country as Bush Chaplain for Frontier Services, we say a huge thank you Rev. John Dihm as he moves into retirement. John still remembers when he was first called to the outback, pulled from his duties as a Chaplain in a Melbourne cancer hospital. Two decades later, he admits it has changed him as a person, and that even if he might be leaving the country, the country can't leave him. It gets into your blood.



It's been a wonderful ministry. A lot of fun, a lot of tears and a lot of kilometres. When I accepted the position with Frontier Services, I didn't even know where [Hawker](#) was. I didn't know anything about the outback. Nothing.

Within the first few months of arriving though, John was thrown into the deep end attempting to provide support through disaster. We had floods, absolute floods [a bit like Fitzroy Crossing now](#). It was challenging because I didn't know the people. The people didn't know me, but it really cemented our time in the place, and they still talk about it today.

## Bonding with the Community

Through the relationships he has formed with the people he has supported over two decades; John has learned to see the beauty in tragedy. He's seen many people come and go, and each one has left a lasting imprint on him.

They become your friends, they become your family – because you're with them so often out there. How does it affect me when they pass away? Well, you've lost a friend. That's how it affects you. And you're the one doing the service. You're the one who's got to hold everything together. Because that's what Bush Chaplaincy calls for.





It's a ministry of three things. It's a ministry of listening, it's a ministry of presence and it's a ministry of being with people. That's what it's all about. Serving the country. His message for the next in line to replace him is simple. Get to know the town, your people and yourself. Because you're going to be a different person to who you were before.

Frontier Services will continue to support Bush Chaplaincy in the Pilbara region of Western Australia.

*By Justin Ackland  
Frontier News February 2023*

Travelling tens of thousands of kilometres every year, our Bush Chaplains collectively visit thousands of families and individuals (including farmers and miners) but getting to remote locations is one of the biggest expenses. From just \$10 per month, you can gift an extra tank of fuel for one of our Bush Chaplains

<https://frontierservices.org/donate/>





Beanangina Kwuurt Institute is located on a large piece of land (40,000 m<sup>2</sup>), with a group of historical buildings. We are working to maintain these buildings, and to preserve this site as a link to the history of the Stolen Generations. We are actively seeking funding from other agencies for site maintenance and further community programs.

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### **Our current outreach programs include:**

#### **FOOD RESCUE**

Every Thursday at 1pm, we give out fresh food to anyone in the community who is in need. The food is collected every week from SecondBite, an organisation that rescues surplus food across the retail network for redistribution to more than 1,300 charities across Australia.

Our ethos is to help all people who are in need. Families who are Indigenous, non-Indigenous and from other cultures all access our Food Rescue program, which keeps us in touch with the wider community.

#### **SECOND HAND CLOTHING OP SHOP**

BKI operate a second-hand clothing op shop, providing affordable clothing, children's needs and household goods from families. The op shop is operated every Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday by volunteers.



## ART AND YARNING CLASSES

On Thursday mornings a group of people gather to do art and yarn. All welcome to join at 10am on Thursday mornings.

## COMMUNITY GARDEN

Drop in on Wednesday mornings to get involved in our Community Garden or register your interest [here](#).

## COME AND HAVE A YARN WITH US

People in our community are invited to drop in any time they like and have a yarn with the volunteers at BKI.



*The team that makes things happen at BKI: Raylene Picket, Helen Skiadas, Felicity Biggs, Lou, Ruth, Alison Gilchrist, and Jules*

# UC Adult Fellowship Registration

Adult Fellowship invites congregations and groups to register with Adult Fellowship, so copies of Newslink and other mailings can be personally addressed to you.

All congregations receive one unaddressed copy of Newslink in the synod mailout. All registered groups receive an addressed copy/copies of Newslink.

**We ask you to REGISTER so your group is on our contact list.**

Group Name .....

Contact Person for Group .....

Or Individual person's name .....

Postal Address .....

Email Address .....

Phone .....

**Adult Fellowship** would appreciate **DONATIONS** to assist with the running expenses. We need to cover the cost of the Certificates of Appreciation for 80year old's and Greeting Cards sent to 90year old's and general running expenses.

**Please send your REGISTRATION and DONATION to**

*the Treasurer Mr. Bob Nicholls. UC Adult Fellowship GPO Box M952 Perth WA 6843*

*Cheques payable to Uniting Church Adult Fellowship WA*

*Please attach the form below.*

✂-----

## **Want NEWSLINK POSTED to YOUR ADDRESS?**

*For \$8.00 per year, Newslink can be posted.*

Recipients Name .....

Congregation .....

Postal address ..... P/code .....

No of copies..... Postage      \$8

Donation      \$.....

Total      \$.....

*Payment detail for Treasurer as for Registration above.*

*Internet Banking BSB 036-001 Acc. No. 92-1850*

*Reference 'Name of group or individual'*

## CELEBRATING MILESTONES OF OUR SENIORS

The UCAF WA Committee offers you the opportunity to recognise the contribution your seniors have made and to celebrate with them and show appreciation when they reach their important milestones.

**EIGHTY-YEAR-OLDS:** at the UCAF Annual Synod Fellowship Day 2022, Certificates of Appreciation will be presented, on behalf of the WA Uniting Church, to octogenarians nominated by their church or fellowship group. All who reach their 80th year during 2021 or have missed out are eligible.

**Application forms will be in the June 2022 issue of Newslink.**

**NINETY-YEAR-OLDS:** the WA Uniting Church Adult Fellowship Committee, will send an especially designed greeting card, on behalf of the WA Uniting Church, to any person celebrating their 90th birthday and who has been nominated by their group or congregation. The Greeting Card is sent out as applications are received. We meet on the 1st Friday of each month (except January and December). If the application is received before the first Friday, the greeting will be sent the following week. **See application form below.**

**ONE HUNDRED-YEAR-OLDS:** The Synod looks after these. A letter to the Moderator requesting a greeting to those turning one hundred years will be responded to. If you have any questions, please contact WA UCAF Newslink Editor Gill Muir on 0408 232 047. Email [muirj@iinet.net.au](mailto:muirj@iinet.net.au)

✂-----

### APPLICATION FORM FOR GREETING TO 90-YEAR-OLDS

**SEND TO:** Kay Lockley, Email: [kaylockl@bigpond.net.au](mailto:kaylockl@bigpond.net.au), 20 Roediger Drive, Northam WA 6401 or phone: (08)9622 1152.

PLEASE PRINT

Name of Congregation..... Date of Birth .....

Name of 90-YEAR-OLD: .....

*If there is more than one please photocopy this form or list on blank paper and be sure to give all details.*

### CHECK SPELLING PLEASE

To whom shall we **SEND THE CARD?** Please (✓) tick

- ☐ Congregation so it can be suitably presented.
- ☐ Nominator: The person who wishes to deliver card personally or arrange a special time for presentation?
- ☐ The 90year old person nominated. To their personal address? Please supply the following:

### CONTACT PERSON:

Name: ..... Phone No.....

### ADDRESS TO WHICH TO SEND THE GREETING CARD:

Name: .....

Address..... Post Code: .....

## *Update from Monique Crabtree*



Monique has devoted 20 years to bringing up our four responsible adult children. She's a Director of Crabtree Agricultural Consulting and has served on the WA Tabor Bible College Board. She is currently working part time as an Education leader with Esther House, Kalamunda. Monique has a Certified 3 in travel and Certificate 4 in Workplace Training. She has planned 14 global agricultural study tours and has teaching and prophetic gifts with a heart to help women who are recovering from a difficult past.

Monique and Bill visited 5 African nations in February 2019 on a research and development trip to ascertain where they could assist African farmers to develop more sustainable, large scale farming practices. They then spent time becoming friends with South African KZ NoTill Farmers Association and Zimbabwean Foundations for Farming.

*Now, back in Australia and working from here, a Winifred Kiek scholar, which is awarded by Australian Church women every year to further their religious studies and is inter-denominational. Monique was awarded the scholarship in 2003, and this story is what she has been doing with her life since this time. She asks for prayer support in this time of pandemic, which is touching all countries around the world, but so far, they are doing alright.*

"I commenced work as a School Chaplain at Queens Park Primary School in late November 2022 and have a contract to work there in 2023, 2 days per week.



The school is very multicultural with over 40 languages spoken by the families of students. Many refugees are in the school from Africa and the middle east. Of course, it fits my skill set perfectly. I managed to do 2 units upgrade of School Chaplaincy studies through Scripture Union to graduate as a qualified School Chaplain on 5 December 2022.

I am not able to proselytise in the school, but I am able to support students who voice faith to me. I'm treading carefully and following the leading of the Holy Spirit to impact these young lives, and the lives of their parents. A local church partners with the school which is fabulous, and their prayers have no doubt impacted the atmosphere of the school because it is a beautiful place to work and there are some Christians on staff there.

My husband, Bill, has full time employment with an Agricultural Chemical company just 6 minutes from where I work at the school. Also, we have taken in 4 international boarders to our home to help pay our housing loan. This means we have a spiritual assignment inside our home too. We are reflecting the love of Jesus to these four adults. So, Father God has provided for us financially on our return to Australia.

We continue to have contact with the local workers at our Demonstration Farm in DR Congo on a weekly basis. There are challenges all the time in that space! It keeps us prayerful, and we look for creative solutions. Two prayer points are:

1. the land that we purchased and are currently building our farmhouse on, has multiple owners (supposedly). One of them is asking for more money from us. We are praying that those claiming ownership will be touched by God and see what the Demo farm stands for in the local community.
2. we continue to be stolen from. Thousands of dollars of fertilizer has been taken from the sea container on the demo farm site. Our security guard, John, whose role it is to protect the land and its assets, has denied any involvement. Sadly, we will need to let him go, which will impact his family greatly. Unless God intervenes and shows us the thief, we have no choice.

*Monique Crabtree*

# Devotions

## We are Shepherds and Carers

by Rev David Houston



### Reading: Psalm 23

Have you noticed how readily people will respond to calls to 'shepherd and care' for other people in need? They respond with feeling and compassion. And mostly to strangers to them - asylum seekers and refugees and families in bushfires and floods.

We must never doubt the capacity of God's spirit to work in people's hearts and prompt them to care for others. The whole human family is meant to live as a diverse *and* respectful, caring community. It is God's purpose that anyone in need should experience and benefit from the care of others.

For us who follow Jesus, our call is to be front-line partners with him in this shepherding caring ministry. Looking briefly at Psalm 23. It is a loved and familiar celebration of God, the good shepherd doing what good shepherds do – providing and protecting. There is darkness, or evil, which is real; and enemies who seek to separate us from God are lurking, undermining our confidence that there will be a future for us.

Over-riding all, however, is the conviction that with the Lord as the shepherd, we experience something more than just existence. What is given is a sense of peace and wellbeing even in difficult and distressing times. Why? Because it is God's nature to give in this way. This is the meaning of 'for his name's sake'.

I recall an ABC TV documentary story some time ago about a Vietnamese man, Jimmy Pham, whose open heart, and vision has helped change the lives of impoverished street kids in Hanoi through his catering school's 'Know one, Teach one' program.

Eighteen months after the first 20 students graduated, each was still employed and doing well. All were helping to support their families. Two became key mentors/staff in the ongoing program.

And the story of the Rev John Flynn's shepherding in the outback is legendary. The Royal Flying Doctor Service became his "mantle of safety" for outback Australians. At Moliagul in Victoria, his birthplace, there is a memorial with the inscription, "Across the lonely places of the land he planted kindness and gathered love", *pictured right*.



In John's Gospel chapter 10: 11-17 Jesus is described as the Good Shepherd, making him one with God in this commitment to 'protect and provide' for the whole human family. And, what's more – he will lay down his life for this goal. A little further on in chapter 13: 33-34 he says "...Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples..." And that is the real call to us – to love as he loved.

A prayer line for you as you try to shepherd and care for others around you. "Good Shepherd, send my mind, my heart, my feet, my hands towards those whom you would have me serve". I wonder where in the world this might take you this month.

*Rev David Houston, now retired, was a Parish Minister in various appointments and then became the Head of Lay Education at Parkin Wesley Theological College. On 20th October 2019 his 60 years of ministry milestone was celebrated at Brighton UC, Adelaide.*

# Calendar of Events



## April 2023

- Saturday 1 April, 9.00am to 12.00pm **Kalamunda Uniting Church Market Day** at Kalamunda Uniting Church.
- Sunday 2 April, 1.00pm. **Palm Sunday walk for justice for refugees** at St George's Cathedral.
- (For a list of Easter Services please go to our **Easter Events** page.)
- Friday 7 April. **Good Friday Public Holiday.**
- Sunday 9 April. **Easter Sunday Public Holiday.**
- Monday 10 April. **Easter Monday Public Holiday.**
- Thursday 13 April, 12.30pm. **Recitals at Ross - Euphonium Music** at Uniting Church in the City, Ross Memorial
- Friday 21 April, 1.00pm. **Wesley at One** at Uniting Church in the City, Wesley Perth.
- Tuesday 25 April. **ANZAC Day Public Holiday.**

**You are welcome to have your activities listed. Send to  
UCAF NEWSLINK GPO M952 Perth 6843**



### USED STAMPS PLEASE!

We want ALL your used stamps! Don't wash them off the envelope, paper or whatever they come on. Trim with a 10 cm border (pencil width) around the stamp/s. They can be dropped at the Church Centre, or Pinjarra UC.