



Uniting Church in Australia
Western Australia

Issue 79
December 2023

Revive

a fresh perspective on faith, church and life



Post-Referendum Reflection

Rev Dr Ian Tozer

Finding the Need, Sharing the Love

Uniting Church WA
Adopts Disability Access
and Inclusion Policy

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Revive is a publication of the Uniting Church WA. The Uniting Church WA acknowledges the traditional custodians of the lands and waters on which we live and work. *Revive* is produced at the Uniting Church Centre, which sits on the lands of the Wadjuk Nyungar people and we pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge the Nyungar people as the sovereign First Peoples of this place. Opinions expressed in *Revive* do not necessarily reflect those of the editor, or the policies of the Uniting Church. *Revive* welcomes contributors. Contact the editor in the first instance at revive@wa.uca.org.au.

Editor Wendy Hendry
Graphic Designer Rhett Connell
Contributors Ann Barnes, Fairlea Baxter, Hannah Campbell, Marcus Campbell, Michael Chester, Trish Crocker, Cam Crothers, Rob Douglas, Delys Griffith, Rebekah Jones, Cyrus Kung, Cathie Lambert, Mariga and Monika, Callum Mitchell, Jen Park, Wendy Pederick, Andy Reavell, Julie Ridden, Rhonda Tillbrook, Ian Tozer, Sue Whitworth.



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From the Moderator

Time marches on, my mother used to say.

It's nearly Christmas time!
Are you ready?

Writing to the Galatians, Paul wrote that when the time was right, God sent Jesus Christ into the world.

When we know more about the situation at the time of Jesus's birth, we may well wonder. Jesus lived under occupation. His parents, according to the birth story Luke tells, were counted as unimportant and those who heralded his birth were regarded as among the lowliest – shepherds, whose working lives made observing the requirements of Jewish law almost impossible. That was the right time?

Matthew tells us that Jesus was threatened at birth and his parents were forced to become refugees to preserve his life from the danger of the king's fear of a rival. That was the right time?

As we look at what is happening in the land where Jesus was born, we may well wonder why it was then and there that Jesus was born.

When I was young, I recall people telling me that Jesus was born in God's perfect time. People told

me that it was a unique period of history: Greek was spoken throughout the Mediterranean and the so-called Pax Romana (Roman Peace) meant people could travel with relative ease. (Read Acts to see how easy it was for Paul!) Jesus was born at the point in human history when the message could spread quickly (in ancient terms).

When is the right time? However we answer this question, what happens in the world raises questions. When we read about, or see vision of, what is happening in the land where Jesus was born, we might well ask, did the birth of Jesus make any difference?

By faith, we declare that the coming of Jesus is a sign of God's love for us and for all people. It is a sign of God's refusal to allow any human behaviour, any human rejection, any experience that calls God's love into question to have the last word.

In October, Munther Isaac, a Palestinian Christian pastor in Bethlehem preached: "God is under the rubble in Gaza. He is with the frightened and the refugees. He is in the operating room. This is our consolation. He walks with us through the valley of the shadow



Rev Dr Ian Tozer
Moderator, Uniting Church WA

of death. If we want to pray, my prayer is that those who are suffering will feel this healing and comforting presence."

By faith we remind ourselves that God our Creator came to us in Jesus Christ and continues to come, working in and through us by the Holy Spirit as we offer ourselves in service to one another.

It is always an act of faith to look past all that is wrong in the world to see things that are of enduring value and to continue in hope. We dare to do that. When is the right time? The right time is now. Every now in every place.

Rev Dr Ian Tozer
Moderator, Uniting Church WA

Our New Moderator Installed

At the 47th Annual Meeting of the Uniting Church Synod of WA, Rev Dr Ian Tozer was installed as Moderator for the 2023 – 2027 triennium. Ian has chosen the theme for this triennium - 'Being With Jesus in Ministry'.

The Synod in session thanked ex-Moderator Susy Thomas for her service to the church in WA and Alison McCubbin (pictured) presented her with flowers.



Rev Dr Ian Tozer Installed as Moderator.



Ex-Moderator Susy Thomas thanked at 2023 Annual Synod.

Welcome to the December 2023 edition of *Revive*. December is the beginning of the Nyungar season of Birak, the first summer, where typically we will see the rains ease up and the warm weather begin to take hold. I hope you can find somewhere cool to relax and enjoy the stories we have gathered for you.

In this edition of *Revive* we are featuring stories from some of our congregations who are finding ways to reach out and support their local communities in a variety of creative and practical ways. From 'Free Food Monday's', to a weekly community hub, and a mobile laundry bus, these stories are only a small selection of the many inspiring examples of community outreach being shared by Uniting Church WA congregations. They highlight the transformative power of faith, advocacy and community engagement, and remind us of the strengths that can be found in our shared beliefs and collective efforts.



As well as our community stories, there's an article on the new Uniting Church WA Disability Access and Inclusion Policy which was approved at the 47th Annual Meeting of the Synod of WA in September 2023, and an update on the Presbytery of WA Listening Journeys. You will also find news from some of our Agencies, along with some of our Uniting Church schools, and much more.

Thank you to all of the people who have contributed to this issue, and to the team of volunteers who help pack and distribute it to our readership. *Revive* is a collective effort in telling the stories of our Uniting Church WA community.

Many people will be reading this at a time when the busyness of the end of year festivities and gatherings are in full swing. Our churches will have begun lighting the Advent candles preparing for Christmas Day, when the birth of Jesus in a humble manger serves as a reminder that hope can emerge from the most unexpected and modest circumstances. In amongst the busyness of the season may this also be a time of much hope, peace, joy and love.

In thinking about hope, I'll leave you with some words from one of my favourite Christmas hymns, 'Mary's Child':

"Hope of the world,
Mary's child,
you're coming soon to reign;
King of the earth,
Mary's child,
walk in our streets again."

Wendy Hendry, Editor

5 minutes with... Rev Cyrus Kung

Cyrus is a Minister of the Word in the Uniting Church and is currently working as the Administration and Engagement Officer for the Act2 Project. Cyrus works on the National Uniting Church project remotely from his home in Perth, and has an office space in our Uniting Church Centre.



Rev Cyrus Kung

How would you describe your journey in ministry?

I was formed for ministry in an independent Chinese Church. My passion for the Church grew out of a love to see those that are on the margins included into the life-giving grace of God. My early engagement with second generation Asian communities has shaped my passion for seeing people of diverse backgrounds engage with both their heritage, as well as the culture, community and land they now find themselves in. As I became more involved with the Uniting Church I also found a passion to engage in fresh expressions of Church, having come from a church planting space. I discerned a call to ordained ministry within the Uniting Church and continue to be shaped by the foundational documents of the Uniting Church, especially those that articulate a multicultural church and an ongoing covenant with Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress (UAICC).

What has been the most surprising or interesting aspect of the Act2 Project so far?

I have enjoyed hearing and seeing the church at its breadth. There are countless stories of the church in our local contexts that continue to inspire me as a "younger" minister. I think it is important for our Church to not only contemplate our future for the next couple of years but to contemplate our future for the next 30 years. I find the ongoing faith of local communities, whether they have been meeting for five years or 50 years, an inspiration to the ongoing movement of the spirit.

When you're not working, what's your favourite way to spend your time?

I like working with my hands. I like to build things, restore furniture, and work on my car. There is nothing like seeing an old throw away chair, or desk, or coffee table, restored to its former glory. I also love to just spend time with friends and talk about the deep things in life.

What's next on your bucket list?

There are three things in my life that I really love doing, they are; drinking coffee, listening to music, and listening to stories from people. I want to create a space, whether that is a retreat space, a cafe or a music studio, that encompasses these three things.

What's your favourite quote or expression?

'We cannot love ourselves unless we love others, and we cannot love others unless we love ourselves. But a selfish love of ourselves makes us incapable of loving others. The difficulty of this commandment lives in the paradox that it would have us love ourselves unselfishly, because even our love of ourselves is something we owe to others.' - Thomas Merton



Post-Referendum and Going Forward: a Reflection and Prayer from the Moderator

Rev Dr Ian Tozer

The Uniting Church began as a group of people with differences who saw the common ground that they shared. They opted to join together nevertheless. The Basis of Union says that unity is both Christ's gift and will. That means it is given to us by God, and we are called to do all that we can to promote it. The Uniting Church has never sought to make all members think in exactly the same way – there is room for diversity as well as our focus and commitment to unity.

We live in a culture of simple oppositions. Often there is talk of 'winners' and 'losers'. In the Christian church we are called to something more. In Philippians 2, Paul said (paraphrased) let everyone look past their own views and concerns and learn to see things from other people's points of view. Key elements in the Christian understanding of love include that we are called to be patient and kind with one another and not to lord it over each other – rather to serve one another (as Jesus himself commanded, Mark 10: 42, 43.)

2024 is the 30th anniversary of our Uniting Church in Australia Covenant with the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress. This year our Synod adopted a Covenant Action Plan to guide our way forward and this continues to be the subject of the on-going work of the Synod Covenanting Commission. The Basis of Union describes us as a pilgrim people, always on the way. This is true of our Covenant and important to guide us as we move past the range of reactions to the Voice referendum.

Prior to the referendum I prepared a prayer which is adapted below.

Let us pray:

*O God of steadfast love and compassion,
You have made us in your image
so that we, too, may be people of love and compassion.*

*At this time when differences
in our country have been highlighted,
send your Spirit of Wisdom upon us,
so that we may take great care
in our interactions and conversations.
Now that the vote on the Voice is over,
and we continue to explore our Covenant
with Congress,
open all hearts so that we may*

*treat each other with great respect,
whatever our views.
We pray for all of Australia's First Peoples
and, in particular, the Uniting Aboriginal and
Islander Christian Congress.
In all of our living, O God,
in all of our loving, O God,
in all of our listening, O God
may we be mindful of your call
for us to be agents of reconciliation
as we witness to your reconciling love for all
creation in Jesus Christ our Lord,
in whose name we pray. Amen.*

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Sharing the greatest gift of the Christmas story

Marcus Campbell

It's a tale so mysterious and compelling most of us can recite it from childhood.

A betrothed Mary and Joseph make an unwanted trip home for a census. Mary is heavily pregnant and when there's no room at the inn they make do where the animals are kept.

A child is born and rests in a manger. Away in the fields, a host of angels sing a chorus to a group of shepherds and invite them to come and see. In the far east, a star intrigues three Magi enough for them to pack extravagant gifts and make the long journey to worship a newborn king.

Into the messiness of everyday life, God comes to us as a child, stripped of might and born into the same dangerous, makeshift and humble circumstances experienced by people the world over.

It means God is with us. Walks with us. Suffers with us.

Loves us.

It's an incomparable gift.

It's no wonder the story never seems to get old. We instinctively mimic the story, practising extravagant generosity and offering love and hospitality to one another at Christmas.

I think of our church partners and their communities around the world.

Across the Pacific, people will return to their home villages to spend time with family and loved ones. There will be feasting and sharing of abundance with the community; rich traditions that existed long before missionaries introduced Christmas (but is now a match made in heaven). On Christmas morning, our partner churches will be filled with hymns of praise sung with the highs and lows of soaring multi-part harmonies.

In Bali, where the Christian community is a small minority, believers will prepare extra food to share with their Hindu and Muslim neighbours at Christmas, reaching out as part of a custom of generosity and interfaith harmony.

In India, our church partner has a tradition of hosting candlelit peace marches and speaking up for the downtrodden during the Christmas season. They're never shy in pointing out the context of Roman occupation, inequality, and exploitation that the Christmas story played out in – and how much of God's creation still cries out for liberation today.



In rural Timor-Leste, the simple setting of Christ's birth is a reassuring sign to our church partners that Jesus shows solidarity with those who suffer, and that they should do likewise.

The Christmas story will never stop stirring hearts across the world to respond with love and generosity.

UnitingWorld's Everything in Common Gift Catalogue is one way that we Christians in Australia can be part of the story.

When we share gifts that help people who need it, we also share the greatest gift we were given: God with us, and the hope, peace, joy and love that came bundled up in that manger.

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“One Child. One Hour. Once a week”.

This is the motto for Kids Hope Australia.

Photo by Kids Hope Australia.

Rhonda Tilbrook and Julie Ridden

In 2016 the Deputy Principal of Floreat Primary School invited All Saints Floreat Uniting Church to be part of the Kids Hope program. Amanda Brown and Rhondra Tilbrook met members of North Beach Baptist Church who were involved in the program with North Beach Primary School. They explained how the program works – volunteers from the church spend an hour a week with a student who could benefit from one-to-one mentoring. During the hour time is spent on academic work, provided by the teachers, and on ‘fun’ activities.

Kids Hope is Australia’s largest early intervention, school-based mentoring program. Since starting in 2004, it has provided care and support to thousands of children across Australia through church volunteers. In 2018, Monash University conducted a study

evaluating the impact of Kids Hope, with 96% of teachers indicating that they believe that Kids Hope had a positive impact on the health and well-being of the mentored student. It is a reliable and easy to implement program, valued by teachers and parents.

Kids Hope equips congregations by providing high quality training, resources, and support for the volunteers. They establish the relationship between the school and the local congregation. It is a registered ChildSafe program. There is an administrative cost for

joining Kids Hope but congregations should not see this a deterrent as the Uniting Generations Network does have some grant money available to help congregations with programs such as this.

Some mentors from All Saints Floreat have provided feedback on their experiences.

“I have mentored three students each with their own very different needs. When I started working with my present student she was reluctant to do or say anything but over time I found out what subjects grabbed her attention. Puzzle books, games, craft and a love of all things nature gave me plenty of scope to work with. I found a book on Leaf Litter which kept us busy for a few weeks with gloves on and a garden trowel out in the school grounds looking for insects. My most enduring moment came last year when I asked

if she would like to help decorate some gift bags for our church Christmas appeal. Without prompting she wrote a message in pencil on each bag. On my last day of the term I gave her a printout of the thank you message sent to all those who had helped. I had taken a photograph of some of her bags to highlight the message. When I told her why I had chosen her bags her eyes filled with tears. I had just told her she was so very special because she was the only person who was thoughtful enough to write a personal message on each bag and how important that would be to the person receiving the gift.”

“One of the first activities I did was working through a ‘getting to know you’ sheet. I learnt a little about their interests, pets and family. One of the boys

was competitive and we played a lot of card games where he was pleased to win. During the games he gradually started to talk more about what he had done during the week. Our major academic task was reading and it was pleasing to see his confidence with reading improve over time.”

Kids Hope helps build relationships between congregations, students, their families and teachers. It is an easy to run program, low energy-high impact, and is very suitable for older congregations to engage with the younger generations. All Saints Floreat are now in their seventh year and enjoy seeing their mentorees grow.

You can see Amanda Brown from All Saints Floreat, talking about her experience as a Kids Hope mentor at <https://vimeo.com/688637713>

For more information on how your congregation could get involved in Kids Hope, contact Melissa French at melissa@kidshope.org.au or Julie Ridden at julie.ridden@wa.uca.org.au



Christmas Bags decorated by a Kids Hope participant.



Photo by Kids Hope Australia.

Finding the Need, Sharing the Love.

Wendy Hendry

A quick look at some key statistics in our community gives us some concerning insights into the reality of life for many people in Australia at the moment.

According to the *Foodbank 2023 Hunger Report*, in the past year "3.7 million Australian households (36%) experienced moderate to severe food insecurity", a 10% increase on the number of households in 2022. The Hunger Report also found that "[m]ore than 2.3 million of all households (23%) fall into the category of severely 'food insecure', which means they are actively going hungry – reducing their food intake, skipping meals or going entire days without eating." The statistics are concerning, with food insecurity in recent years affecting homes that have never experienced this issue before.

Uniting WA's Tranby Engagement Hub, an engagement and referral service for people experiencing homelessness in the City of Perth, have noticed a significant increase in the number of people reaching out to them for support, with 28 new service users in February 2023 increasing to 774 for the month of June. Tranby have told us that the

average daily number of people attending the Hub went from an average of 175 in January 2023 increasing to 275 by July 2023, with multiple days of 300+ service users.

In the *State of the Nation Report – Social Connection in Australia 2023*, the Ending Loneliness Together organisation looks at the social health of the nation, and the effects of loneliness and social isolation in our communities. The study found that almost one in three Australians feel lonely, and that one in six are experiencing severe loneliness. Dr Michelle H Lim, Chair and Scientific Chair of Ending Loneliness Together writes, "The national survey found that despite nearly 1 in 3 Australians feeling lonely, community misconceptions and stigma are preventing people from talking about it – and in turn seeking the connections and support they need." The study found that "loneliness is a risk factor for poor health, wellbeing and lower workplace productivity."

A few years ago, the Uniting Church, through a collaboration of work from people involved in social justice related mission and ministry work across the Church, created a vision statement – *Our Vision for a Just Australia*. The

statement is a call to look beyond ourselves and "take a wider view of our country and our world". It is a vision for building a more just and compassionate Australia, with this vision expressed in seven foundational areas. In the introduction to the statement, Uniting Church in Australia President Rev Sharon Hollis writes, "In the Uniting Church, and as followers of Jesus, we believe we are called to participate in God's life-giving mission in the world. This calls us to be communities of justice and mercy, embodying God's love, peace and reconciliation so that all people and all creation might share abundant life."

One of the foundational areas of this statement looks at 'Flourishing Communities', with the following vision: "We live in communities where we are connected and we care for one another. In communities all over Australia, from our big cities to remote regions, we seek the well-being of each Australian and uplift those who are on the margins."

Considering this, and the Christian call to 'participate in God's life-giving mission in the world' what are some ways the church can contribute to 'Flourishing

Communities' and help make a difference to those in need in our communities?

In the Uniting Church WA we can be proud of the work of our care agencies; Beanang Kuuurt Institute, Good Sammy Enterprises, Juniper (aged care) and Uniting WA. They are an outward expression of the church's mission to meet human need through charitable services,

supporting and strengthening our communities.

As well as the work of our agencies, there are many examples of Uniting Church congregations living out the call to love their neighbour in the ways, big and small, they reach out to the community around them. Congregations who have looked within in prayerful consideration, looked out at their community, and

identified areas of particular need. In doing so they have found there is a role for the local church to play in helping to build community, reach out to the vulnerable, and be a living expression of God's love.

The following three stories highlight just a few of our many congregations who have found unique ways to support their local communities.

Free Food Mondays

Sue Whitworth, Armadale Uniting Church

The Armadale Uniting Church's free food program started with a phone call from a young lady who wanted to volunteer for the organisation called Feed it Forward. She was looking for a church that could distribute leftover food from a supermarket once a week. A quick email to the Church Council members and a positive response from all has set us on an interesting journey for the last two years.

The food arrives on Monday mornings, and we have it available from 9.00am to 11.30am. On Mondays, we also run our Razzle Dazzle program which is dancing and playgroup for preschoolers in the hall, so during school terms we have the food on tables outside. The food we get is bakery items and some fruit and vegetables and occasionally grocery items.

We currently have about 20 people who come to take food and we have got to know many regulars. We advertise via a weekly post on Facebook and a mobile sign that

we put out on the footpath. We do not ask for a Health Care Card as there are many working families in the area that struggle at times and can benefit from what we offer. It is wonderful seeing people only taking what they need and saying that they will leave food for others. We have numerous requests for other help such as furniture, payment of bills and housing. We quickly realised that we needed a list of agencies working in these areas, so last year the City of Armadale held a community services day where we gained a lot of information about where to refer people.

The most positive thing about the free food program is the community connections that have come from it. We have a gentleman that comes to the church every three months and gives us money so that we can buy more food to supplement what we get from Feed it Forward. So far, since December last year, he has donated \$550. The fresh vegetables and fruit that we can buy are greatly appreciated by our recipients. We have another lady who brings us ten dozen eggs every fortnight as well as fruit from her trees. We have had many other people donate fruit and pantry items. Another significant



connection we have made is with the staff of the Armadale Community Centre where we take any leftover food for their free food program.

Many people who come obviously want to talk. We greet everyone with a cheerful good morning, and many want to have a chat about their situation. We now have two men, who have been coming every week and have got to know us, wanting to volunteer. Building relationships is the key to successful mission outreach.

In the future, if we can get a bigger building, we would like to be able to offer space for recipients to have a cup of tea and coffee and more of a chat. For some of the elderly people who come, we may be the only people that they get to talk to that day. We feel we are making a real difference to people's lives and look forward to being able to expand what we can offer in the future.



CommuniTEA Hub - A Conduit to Connection

Thursday morning at the
Wagin CommuniTEA Hub.

Wendy Pederick, Wagin Uniting Church

CommuniTEA Hub
A place for a cuppa, chat and connection
Love is spoken here.
Joy is chosen here.
Grace is given here.

Who would have thought that opening a church hall door for three hours a week could fill a gap that we didn't even really know was there? Who would have thought something so simple could make a difference? Who would have thought stepping into the unknown would be so exhilarating?

And yet, here we are, over two years after the opening to be an established place for connection and welcome, where people are affirmed, and bonds are strengthened. Touted as a place of 'cuppa, chat and connection', the Wagin CommuniTEA hub has become a place of stories told, hearts opened, care expressed, laughter heard, and lives enriched.

While numbers were never going to be a measure of success, the regular attendance of 35-42 adults, mostly aged 65+ years, has exceeded expectations. More importantly, CommuniTEA Hub is a safe place

for talking and listening, belonging and being.

While the yearning was to be more than salt in the salt-shaker, the story gained traction in 2018 and 2019 when a number of Elders from Wagin Uniting Church participated in Mission Shaped Ministry. In 2020 the Elders wrote a strategic plan, highlighting four key actions, one of which was to engage with the community. The question was asked, 'What can we do, given our resources and passions, to serve the people of Wagin?'

After prayer, a social hub was proposed. A pilot program from June to September 2021 was funded by Church Council at a cost of \$5,000. The church hall was fitted with couches, chairs and tables, and a partition added to make it feel less like a cavernous hall and more like an inviting meeting place. The plan was to start with what we felt we could maintain over time.

Thursday's formula is simple: People + Coffee + Food + Availability. More than just a drop-in coffee shop, because we didn't want to provide something that was already commercially available, each week birthdays are celebrated, and an activity that engages the whole

room is undertaken as an essential unifying element. Some play cards, Rummikub, or do a jigsaw.

The leadership team consists of eight dedicated, enthusiastic trailblazers who prioritise The Hub, giving willingly and generously, in multiple ways, including being attentive to listen well. The team includes men, possibly a significant factor in 50% of attendees (called 'Spokes') being men, giving us 'balance'. They tell tall yarns, laugh readily, and fortify each other during personal trials.

Six months into The Hub, federal funding to help seniors cope with the negative impact of Covid-19 was accessed. To be spent over seven months, the \$50,000 allowed us to undertake bus trips, be extravagant with gifts, hold topical seminars, expand cultural experiences, celebrate Christmas with a long-table lunch, and improve mental health by holding stimulating events with the associated expectations. This undoubtedly gave momentum to group formation.

People who come along are from a cross-section of Wagin's population, older citizens, from multiple denominations or none, who have a common need for social engagement.

The project is about service. We serve with no expectations. There are no rules, no hidden agenda, no manipulation for outcomes. We simply say, "Come as you are."

The Hub is financially enabled by Spokes giving a gold coin donation, and by food donations from the leaders, making it now financially self-sustaining. The backing of Church Council has been deeply appreciated and is our security blanket if needed.

These are some of the responses from the Spokes and Wagin residents:

"A great day every Thursday. Plenty of laughs and all world problems solved." - Barry

"A happy, friendly place where we all feel welcome. An asset to Wagin." - Thelma

"What a joy - Spokes by their own initiative contribute to washing dishes, cooking, positive conversation, sharing garden produce - I love that." - Brian

"I appreciate the friendship and acceptance and enjoy coming each week." - Joan

"I told Jim to get himself to The Hub; he was lonely and needed people." - Bob

The congregation's response has been positive and helpful, with genuine joy that the dormant Wesley Hall has been brought back to life - in new, adaptive, appropriate, and God-honouring ways. Moreover, it is pleasing that news of CommuniTEA Hub is spread by word of mouth and promoted within the wider community as a success story and 'place to be', authentically meeting real needs and combatting loneliness. Lives have been impacted for the better.

As a church we now engage and interact with dozens of people that we would not have even known without The Hub. We can be salt and light, come alongside, and share in tangible ways the great love of God.

Orange Sky and More

Monika and Mariga, Spearwood Uniting Church

Our project began when we were looking into options for Mission Outreach. Praying and listening has been a big part of that process.

We started by learning who our neighbours are and what their needs are. This meant engagements with Cockburn Council, local organisations, churches and individuals and information gathering about the area and the wider community, including from Census and other statistics. Reading comments within local social media groups helped too. We also had to factor in our available resources and skillsets within our congregation.

We believe, if you pray for something, you will get an answer. You just need to keep your eyes open.

One of our members had seen the Orange Sky Laundry bus in action in Armadale. We realized that there was no public laundry in this area at that time (there is now). We invited a team leader of Orange Sky to our church to find out what our options were and if this could work here. It turned out that Orange Sky had been trying to get into the

Cockburn area for some time, and our location seemed ideal for this.

According to Cockburn Council, we are located within 'problem hot spots', with very low socio-economic areas. We are on a main road, with easy access by bus and are close to the major shopping centres. Our garden set-up would give a bit of privacy. We also have all the plumbing connections easily accessible. We have at least two

people within our team with some experience in communicating with the diverse range of people we would attract, and we like cooking.

We strongly felt that this could work here. It was like a strong call for it.

From the time we agreed with Orange Sky to give this project a go, it took almost a year until it actually started, with time required for a vehicle to become available and an Orange Sky team trained.



The Orange Sky bus parked at Spearwood Uniting.



Nativity scene outside Spearwood Uniting Church.

The church provides a hot meal, and food packages if needed, while the Orange Sky team is in charge of the washing and drying of laundry, plus the shower facility. A hairdresser from our congregation is offering her services for free every second week.

This is a match that seems to work well. People at the edge of society, those who need support and acceptance are being helped. Orange Sky is providing us a trained team and part of the infrastructure to support us. When starting a new project, one never knows if it will take off and work out as expected. I am not sure we could have started this if we had to build a new infrastructure with laundry machines first.

When it comes to financially sustaining the project, Orange Sky is a not-for-profit organisation whom we partner with and is financially independent from us. We have a Fellowship donation system dedicated for our Mission Outreach. People attending our events are very generous in that regard. Our team is contributing fresh food and whatever else is needed. We

have people (strangers) walking in from the street, telling us that they have been watching us and would like to donate money. And a local Deli supplies us regularly with fresh cooked and baked (some frozen) produce. Another Uniting Church congregation brought us their non-perishable food collection for the food parcels we provide.

Our drive for Mission Outreach has opened up lots of valuable discussions about what church and mission actually is, should, would or could be, helping us in re-thinking old structures.

In the early periods of the service, there were concerns regarding safety of our own team and other potential undesirable outcomes. This is motivating us to invest into training, and thinking through our strategies and emergency procedures. Setting some rules and boundaries for our team and the participants helps for a smoother running of this type of event.

We have been trying to create a space where people are welcome the way they are, no questions asked. It does not matter what

their past or their future looks like, they are just welcome. We have learnt what value this has, what it does to people at the edge of society. It is a first, gentle step in learning about Christianity.

We have been running this event for more than a year now and our team, attending every Wednesday evening, is as motivated as ever. It gives our life a meaning and purpose and it gives us something back personally. Sharing God's love in service is a rewarding thing to do!

The Orange Sky mobile laundry nights are just one aspect of mission outreach for Spearwood Uniting Church who also offer a weekly café, open church with prayer and pastoral care, firepit dinner fellowship, movie nights, community talks along with tending their thriving veggie patch. They are regularly monitoring what is happening in the community around them to be able to respond if possible and adjust programs to meet the needs.

We appreciate your prayers, thank you!



Juniper Executives with Waratah Lodge Staff.

Waratah Lodge Joins Juniper Family

Juniper is continuing to enrich the lives of older people in regional communities after entering into an agreement to take ownership of Waratah Lodge, previously operated by Wagin Frail Aged Inc, as of 1 October 2023.

Hannah Campbell

The decision to transition ownership of Waratah Lodge to Juniper is driven by a shared commitment to ensuring the continued delivery of high-quality aged care services in Wagin, in the Wheatbelt region of Western Australia.

Juniper CEO, Russell Bricknell, said investing in regional aged care is more than just a commitment; Juniper aims to make a difference and strives to be part of, contribute to, and connect older people to the communities in which they call home.

"We understand the importance of providing older people with the opportunity to continue living in their communities, close to family, friends, and familiar surroundings. Our acquisition of Waratah Lodge in Wagin is a testament to this commitment. We believe that every older person deserves compassionate and high-quality

care, regardless of where they call home," said Mr Bricknell.

Juniper has a proven track record of delivering exceptional care in regional Western Australia, notably in the Great Southern and Wheatbelt regions. Its Residential Aged Care homes in Katanning (Juniper Bethshan), Albany (Juniper Korumup), and Northam (Juniper Bethavon and The Residency) are a testament to its dedication to providing quality care. Additionally, Juniper offers Home and Community Care services within the Wheatbelt region, with a base in Northam, and provides affordable accommodation for Great Southern residents at its Juniper Boronia Court Retirement Living Community in Albany.

"We are thrilled to join the Wagin community and ensure the ongoing delivery of quality aged care services. Together, we'll enrich the lives of older people in this region,

just as we've done in the Great Southern and Wheatbelt regions for many years," said Mr Bricknell.

Juniper is dedicated to ensuring a seamless and smooth transition for all residents, their families, and staff members at Waratah Lodge. Continuity of care and peace of mind is of utmost importance throughout this transition, and all staff will be offered the opportunity to work with Juniper.

Juniper's journey began in 1949 when they welcomed their first residents, and since then, they have grown to employ a team of more than 2100 staff and over 200 volunteers across the State. Currently, they provide care and support to more than 4,500 Western Australians through their Residential Aged Care homes, Retirement Villages, and Home and Community Care services.

Uniting Church WA Adopts Disability Access and Inclusion Policy

Michael Chester, Co-CEO Uniting WA
Presenting the Disability Access and
Inclusion Policy to the 2023 Annual Synod.

"The Uniting Church in Western Australia (UCAWA) is committed to the principle of the welcome, access and inclusion of any person living with a disability in order for each one to participate fully in the life of the Church."
Introduction to Disability Access and Inclusion Policy

When introducing the Disability Access and Inclusion Policy to the Synod in session, Michael Chester said:

"The Uniting Church acknowledges that people who live with disability have the same rights as everyone else. We embrace the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability and observe Australian, state and territory laws that uphold those rights.

This Policy sets out the way each congregation, mission outreach, agency, school, and college can

respect these rights and respond sensitively and in an inclusive manner to a person with a disability who seeks to be an active participant in the life of the church."

In the Policy there is acknowledgement that for many people with a disability, life and faith have not always reflected the church's vision of welcome, access and inclusion. However in seeking to be a community of reconciliation, the Uniting Church WA is committed to creating an environment of safety and opportunity for all people in the Church, recognising "that the more diverse and inclusive the Church community, the richer it will become".

As mentioned above, the next step is to work on a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) to strengthen the impact and implementation of the Policy. It is envisaged that the DAIP will inform the hearts and minds of church and community members about people with disabilities so that accessibility and inclusion become second nature to us all.

The Policy also encourages congregations, agencies, and schools to develop their own Disability Access and Inclusion Plans, specific to their individual situations and relevant legislative requirements, further contributing to a positive difference to lives of people with disabilities in the Uniting Church WA community.

When Robert Muir heard that the Policy had been adopted, he said,

"I am very happy to hear that Synod has passed this Policy in its recent gathering. My hope now is that congregations will involve people with disabilities more in their service and activity planning wherever possible. I am hoping in the future that the Uniting Church will hold a worship service once a year specifically for people with disabilities and include them to take a large part in the formalities."

You can read the full policy document on the Culture of Safety page of the Uniting Church WA website – www.unitingchurchwa.org.au/culture-of-safety/royal-commission

Wendy Hendry

At the 47th Annual Meeting of the Synod of WA, a proposed Disability Access and Inclusion Policy was adopted. The policy is a result of four years of work by the Disability Royal Commission Synod Task Group and now paves the way for the development of a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) for 2023-2026.

The Policy recognises and aligns with the Disability Welcome and Access statement which was affirmed at the 15th Assembly of the Uniting Church in Australia in 2018. The initial draft Disability Access and Inclusion Policy was introduced to the church community in a presentation to the 46th Synod in 2022. The Task Group invited Rev Andy Calder, a Disability Advocate from the Uniting Church Synod of Victoria/

Tasmania to present an overview and reasons for our Synod to adopt this Policy. He was joined by Robert Muir, a member of the Task Group, sharing his lived experience and insights into some of the issues and difficulties relating to the needs of people living with disability in the church and community. Following this presentation members of the Synod were invited to ask questions, discuss, and provide feedback to the Task Group on ways the church

can be more inclusive, recognising barriers to inclusion, and how we can make the gospel mandate a reality in our communities.

The final draft of the Policy was presented to the 47th Synod by Task Group members Michael Chester, Co-CEO of Uniting WA, alongside Cindy Gorton, Executive Officer: Culture of Safety with the Uniting Church WA.



Cindy Gorton, Robert Muir and Steve Francis at the 2022 Annual Synod.

Fostering inclusivity and diversity in the workplace

Good Sammy
a better future

Good Samaritan Enterprises

In a world where opportunities for personal and professional growth are often skewed by socio-economic disparities, it is heartening to see WA-based Good Sammy Enterprises, a proud Agency of Uniting Church in Australia, leading the way in fostering inclusivity and diversity in the workplace.

Good Sammy, with its unwavering commitment to creating employment opportunities for people with disability, is demonstrating how working together with the WA business community can make a substantial impact.

Good Sammy's approach to improving open employment outcomes for people with disability is multi-faceted, encompassing education, training, and invaluable on-the-job experience. By providing a stepping stone for individuals who face barriers to employment, Good Sammy ensures that people not only gain essential skills but also become job-ready, ready to tackle the challenges of the professional world.

One of the most noteworthy aspects of Good Sammy's efforts is its collaboration with businesses like Centurion, which provides win-win outcomes that make good business sense.

"In addition to providing employment opportunities for people with disability, partnerships like this help organisations access local talent in a tight labour market and evidence their commitment to workplace diversity while also supporting greater economic and social participation for people with disability," said Good Sammy Chief Executive, Kane Blackman.

Centurion, one of Australia's largest logistics providers, understands the significance of partnering with Good Sammy Enterprises.

"Diversity and inclusion are really important to us, and we work closely with Good Sammy to ensure we have an ecosystem of support and opportunity for people coming through," said Centurion Development Pathways Business Partner, Jason Tincknell.

This sentiment underscores that the partnership between Good Sammy and businesses like Centurion isn't just transactional; it's a genuine commitment to fostering a workplace environment where diversity and inclusion are celebrated, where differences are seen as strengths, and where individuals are encouraged to reach their full potential.

In the words of Mark Paull, a dedicated Good Sammy employee who is currently working at Centurion, "Working with the

team at Centurion has been a great experience. I'm building my skills, workplace experience and confidence. I am currently in the process of getting a forklift license too with Good Sammy's workplace license program. This will open up even more opportunities within Centurion."

Good Sammy is proving that diversity and inclusion are not just buzzwords, but essential components of a thriving business, and the organisation's collaborative efforts with high profile businesses are a testament to what can be achieved. Through education, training, and on-the-job experiences, Good Sammy is not only changing lives but also transforming the employment landscape in Western Australia, one opportunity at a time.

Reach out to Good Sammy and help support the employment goals of a person with disability, email info@goodsammy.com.au or call 9563 0500 on weekdays.



Uniting Aid needs volunteers to power on

Andy Reavell

Many readers will be aware of Uniting Aid and what its function is, however, for those who are not familiar with the organisation, the following is a run-down of what Uniting Aid is all about.

It all started in June 1981, when the churches in the Yokine Region Uniting Church Parish began a phone contact service from the Dianella Church office offering to assist people in the local community with emergency food, domestic help, shopping and respite support for home carers. Rev Marie Wilson was the first Director of Uniting Aid and Wendy Gardner, after completing a Voluntary Welfare Studies diploma course, accepted the role of Co-ordinator in 1983.

Caring services for people in need were extended during the first decade with training courses offered in a variety of areas including budget cooking, keep fit classes and, under the leadership of John McKechnie, a free legal advice service. Caring services have continued since then and evolved to what they are today with over 20,000 family units receiving more than \$1.3 million in emergency relief payments and food over the past 10 years.

Today, Uniting Aid assists clients in the local government area of the City of Stirling, with current Centrelink or Health Cards, with emergency relief in the form of food, clothing, household goods etc., and some financial assistance with utility bills. The centre at 19 Monterey Street, Nollamara is open on Tuesdays and Fridays from 9.00am to 11.45am.

An Op-shop also operates from the Nollamara premises which sells items of clothing and household goods — second-hand and new at very low prices. This helps cover some of the centre's operational costs.

Feedback from some of the clients:

"Great place for help with bills, food, clothes and great people to chat with."

"A very supportive community-based service."

"These people are the right hand of God".

"All of the staff, people who work there are so lovely, caring & dedicated to help people in need. And if they are unable to assist you and your situation, they do their best to refer you to another organization that may be able to help. God Bless them All."

Of course, it would not be possible to provide this service without a dedicated group of volunteers and Uniting Aid has been very fortunate over the years in this regard. However, the time has come to call for more volunteers. There are several roles people can perform for the organisation, some include interviewing clients whereas others are supportive roles such as maintaining the pantry, cleaning or working in the Op-shop and resource centre.

The other side of the coin is, of course, donations. Uniting Aid is fortunate to have the generous support of many individuals, community groups, businesses, and congregations.

Donations, both monetary and food, as well as good second-hand items to sell in our Op-shop are always welcome. Monetary donations above \$2 are tax deductible. Our bank account details are BSB: 036-304 and Account No. 382452. Alternatively, please call the office on 9344 3840 or email admin@unitingaid.org.au



Volunteer Maureen Lewis with a toy box.



Colin Horton (left) and John Marshall tally the days takings.



Every human must experience some trauma, you can't avoid it unless you avoid all things. But we can still create a good life for ourselves, surround ourselves with people we like and doing things we enjoy.

There will be parts of our life that we can't control, but we should only spend our energy worrying about what we can. And now that I'm leaving to start my independent life, as exciting as it is, I can't help my chest getting tight whenever I think of it.

I won't ever be able to forget these eras of my childhood. The pain I have experienced will always shadow my heart, but with everything I've done since getting out and setting up my life to be what I dream to have, the brightness from that will always outshine those now-distant times.

Thank you to people like you who support Uniting.

Chloe

Chloe's Journey to Independence

In June 2022 there were 4,394 children in out-of-home care in WA.

Jen Park and Michael Chester, Co-CEO's Uniting WA.

Your gift this Christmas can help us support more vulnerable children like Chloe.

When Chloe was just 13 months old, she was brought into foster care due to concerns that Chloe and her siblings were experiencing neglect, family domestic violence and parental substance abuse.

Chloe stayed in foster care until she was 14 but she started struggling with her carers and running away.

Chloe's care team determined that she would benefit from transitioning into a Uniting WA Family Group Home (FGH), an out-of-home care service that provides care and support for children and young people who have experienced significant trauma.

Uniting operates 6 homes across WA, currently supporting 24 children.

Initially, Chloe was very shy and spent a lot of time in her bedroom but before long, she was enrolled into a new high school. Once she was back at school, Chloe flourished. She excelled in lots of subjects, particularly in drama where she took the lead role in a school play.

"Drama helps me express different feelings in a safe space where I can feel free to express myself too."

However, it wasn't always smooth sailing.

One of the carers that Chloe was close with left the home for another role. This reignited Chloe's fears of abandonment and her mental health took a turn for the worse.

She agreed to go to the hospital for a mental health assessment and was admitted into a mental health unit for two weeks, the isolation making it a difficult time.

"Returning home was a feeling I won't forget. I couldn't be happier anywhere else, lying in my own bed, walking in my own house. I might not live here forever but for now I'm happy to call it my home".

Initially, the prospect of departing the FGH at age 18 filled Chloe with anxiety. She was supported to apply for a placement with a specialist youth housing service. Chloe successfully transitioned into her new home in January 2023 and is settling well.

The Uniting WA FGH team is beyond proud of Chloe, and they look

forward to seeing the bright future she has ahead of her.

At Uniting, we're passionate about supporting more young people like Chloe. These vulnerable children can come to us from the most volatile situations such as family domestic violence or parental drug use. We work hard to build trust, connections and life skills that will enable a young person to thrive.

Your support today can help us provide essential services and critical support to the most vulnerable children.

If you'd like to read more of Chloe's story or support Uniting WA, follow the QR code with your phone camera or call Uniting WA on 9220 1222.



St Stephen's School Living in Service

St Stephen's School students visiting Suwung Village, Bali.

Fairlea Baxter

St Stephen's School is delighted to be resuming their overseas service learning program in 2024 with a tour to Indonesia in partnership with the Bali Life Foundation and Five Pillar Experiences.

Bringing to life the School's motto 'Serve God. Serve One Another', the service learning program engages every student from Kindergarten to Year 12 in age-appropriate activities from fundraising, to making meals for Perth's homeless, to food collection drives or spending time with elderly residents at aged care homes.

The overseas service learning tour program pre-COVID saw St Stephen's School students working with groups in Asia and Africa. These immersion experiences are life-changing for students.

"Living and working alongside people whose lives are quite different from their own helps to mould our students into more compassionate people with life experience before they have even graduated", said Service Learning Tour Co-ordinator, Donna Wilson.

"In Bali, students will be assisting farmers in rice fields, permaculture farms and mangrove projects, working with community members living with disability, as well as assisting at a children's home, and

the Kuta Street Kids Centre. Strong bonds are created between our students and the community which continue long after their return to Australia."

"Not only do we make a difference in the lives of those people facing immense challenge, helping others is a wonderful antidote to the stress and pressure that students feel in their own lives. Being 'other centred' is a key component for resilience and wellness", said Donna.

In 2024, there will be 18 St Stephen's School students and four staff travelling to Bali in June. The whole school will engage in fundraising for the tour and students will share their experiences with the wider school community upon their return.



Methodist Ladies College
Hosting the Australian Combined Schools Music Festival

MLC music students with MLC Director of Music Dr Andrew Sutherland.

Rebekah Jones

Music students band together for the first Australian Combined Music Festival in Western Australia.

Methodist Ladies' College (MLC) made history as the first Western Australian school to host the Australian Combined Schools Music Festival (ACSMF) in the Festival's 50-year run.

From Wednesday 28 June to Saturday 1 July 2023, MLC welcomed 237 students from 13 schools across the country to rehearse and perform a high-level range of musical pieces under the guidance of world-renowned conductors.

MLC Director of Music Dr Andrew Sutherland said the Festival was

the chance to witness student musicians from well-established music programs showcase what they are capable of when young talent comes together.

"This was a rare opportunity for our girls to play with and learn from Australia's best student musicians and internationally recognised conductors," Dr Sutherland said.

Students went through a rigorous audition process to create three exceptional ensembles who then rehearsed for three days at MLC before a Gala Concert at the University of Western Australia's Winthrop Hall to showcase their hard work.

MLC Year 10 student Charlotte Swann said she enjoyed

collaborating with other students on a national stage.

"As a player, I loved meeting new people and sharing our love of music together; after all, that is what it is all about," Charlotte said.

Joined by three WA partner schools – Christ Church Grammar School, Scotch College and John XXIII College – the Festival was an opportunity for MLC and Perth to cement the State's position as a place for music mastery.

MLC Principal Ms Rebecca Clarke said the College is proud of its vibrant Music program and loved getting to show what the West has to offer.

Scotch College
Small acts of charity. A powerful force for good.

Callum Mitchell

The Fight Motor Neurone Disease (MND) Big Freeze Dunk Tank was greatly supported by our entire school community. Students and teachers united to promote the cause with all students encouraged to have a throw and dunk their favourite teachers or students.

Beyond the laughter, this served a greater purpose. We raised significant funds which will go directly to supporting MND research, assisting patients, and raising awareness of this devastating disease. Our school community has demonstrated that together, we can make a difference and bring hope to those affected by MND.

The Push-Up Challenge ran for the first time, creating awareness for those who suffer from mental illness in Australia. Teams competed

to complete 3144 push-ups in recognition of the number of Australians who took their life in 2021. We were able to raise awareness for suicide prevention whilst learning about mental health and staying healthy at the same time. We had a total of 252 students participate and complete 406,560 push-ups.

Middle School made an amazing push for Crazy Sock Day which was a heart-warming triumph for Uniting WA Cosy Toes Sock Appeal. Students proudly showcased their mismatched socks, while donating 461 pairs, blankets and sleeping bags for the homeless, along with \$474.40. Beyond the fun, this event raised awareness for those less fortunate, displaying the power of empathy and social responsibility. The students' compassion and enthusiasm highlighted the significance of giving back, proving that even small acts of charity can

create a powerful force for good. Crazy Sock Day at Scotch College exemplified a united community's potential to make a meaningful impact on society.

Finally, Scotch College is proud to participate in Wear It Purple Day to foster an inclusive and supportive environment. By wearing purple, we stand in solidarity with the LGBTQ+ community, showing our commitment to acceptance, respect, and diversity. Together, we celebrate individuality and send a strong message that at Scotch College, we embrace the uniqueness of every student, irrespective of their sexual orientation or gender identity.



Push-Up Challenge.



Scotch College Middle School students enjoying Crazy Sock Day.



Building Resilience in the Outback

Cattle farmer Mick

By Frontier Services

When Mick gazes over his family's cattle farm today, he is greeted by the same quiet beauty but a vastly different landscape from his childhood memories.

It has been four years since the devastating Black Summer bushfires, yet the indelible marks remain - blackened trees along the roads, and the once lush hills now stark and bare.

What isn't immediately evident are the emotional scars. You can't see the fear that Mick and the locals faced as the fires raged. Nor can you visualise the loss of returning to an empty plot where home once stood, or the heart-break of losing a friend you had just spoken to.

Practical and emotional help

Led by Frontier Services Bushfire Recovery Bush Chaplain Peter Harvey, a dedicated group of 24 volunteers from various corners of Australia recently embarked on a journey to Buchan, Victoria.

Their mission was to provide practical, emotional, and pastoral services and instill renewed hope and lift spirits.

Frontier Services, an agency of the Uniting Church and formerly known

as the Australian Inland Mission (AIM), is Australia's oldest bush charity. Established over 111 years ago by Rev John Flynn, the man on the \$20 note, Flynn's vision was to create a "mantle of safety" to build resilience in the Outback.

The volunteers rebuilt kilometres of fencing destroyed by the fire and tamed the overgrown grass that had encroached on the once-thriving garden.

Their contribution transcended practical help; it was a testament to human companionship.

"It gives you incentive to keep going, do more," Mick said. He added, "You have no idea how much this means to me and how grateful I am."

For survivors, recovery does not mean getting back the life they once had. Life will never be the same. But Frontier Services can make pushing forward that little bit easier.

Sometimes it's as simple as knowing help is available, that people care, and that there is hope and strength within ready to be awakened.

Preparing for El Niño

Recovery can be a lengthy journey. You can stand by those who are still rebuilding their lives after natural disasters, especially as many brace for the upcoming El Niño season.

Donate \$20 today

Your donation of \$20 today can help build resilience in people of rural and remote Australia.

Scan to donate, call 1300 787 247, or visit frontierservices.org/donate.

To learn more about Frontier Services or how to become an Outback Links volunteer, go to frontierservices.org

Donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible. ABN 77 231 384 646



Frontier Services
Standing with people in the bush

Festival of St. Lucia

This recipe for **Lussekatter**, Swedish Saffron Buns, has been sent to us from Trish Crocker, the recipe editor of Pinjarra Uniting Church's 'Pinjarra Vine' newsletter.

These Saffron Buns are traditionally part of the celebrations for the Swedish Festival of Saint Lucia. Trish has kindly given some background to this festival.

The Festival of St. Lucia, which is traditionally celebrated on 13 December, begins the Christmas season in Swedish custom. The so-called "Festival of Lights" stems from the fourth-century martyrdom of an Italian saint and the incidents which followed.

A woman named Lucia, which means light, was born to a noble and prosperous family in Sicily. Her father died when she was young, so Lucia was raised by her mother in the Christian tradition. When Lucia was a young woman, her mother became very ill, and Lucia accompanied her to the tomb of St. Agatha. There they offered prayers, and Lucia vowed that if her mother could be healed, she would remain unmarried and devote her life to God. Lucia's mother was healed. She revealed her promise vow to her mother, convincing her mother to allow her to give her inheritance, which would have been her dowry, to the poor. Lucia's mother was touched and grateful for her healing so agreed, but Lucia's suitor was not so cooperative. Not only had he lost beautiful Lucia, but her generous dowry as well. He reported Lucia to the government as being a witch and helping the Christians. Lucia was called before a judge and was killed because she refused to renounce the Christian faith. At twenty years old, Lucia became a martyr, and accounts of miracles followed.

According to Swedish legend, after Lucia's death a ship carrying a maiden "clothed in white and crowned with light" appeared on the shore in the Swedish province of Varmland during a great famine. The maiden, widely believed to be Lucia, distributed food and clothing to the needy, thus endearing herself to the Swedish people.

Different stories and traditions surround St. Lucia, but all focus on the central themes of service and light. St. Lucia is celebrated throughout the world and honored by many cultures. In Sweden, Lucia symbolizes the coming end of the long winter nights and the return of light to the world.

**Have you got a favourite recipe?
Send it in to revive@wa.uca.org.au
or mail them to Revive magazine,
GPO Box M952, Perth, 6843.**

What's cooking



LUSSEKATTER [Swedish Saffron thread buns]

Ingredients

- 1 ½ cup milk
 - 2 ¼ tsp active dry yeast
 - ¾ cup sugar
 - 1/3 cup unsalted butter, melted
 - 1 egg lightly beaten
 - 1/2 tsp salt
 - 6-6 ½ cup plain bread flour (all purpose)
 - 1/2 tsp Saffron threads
 - 1/2 cup milk
 - 1/2 cup raisins
- For egg wash: 1 egg + 1Tb water whisked together.

Method

1. Place saffron in small bowl and grind to fine powder.
2. Heat saffron and ¼ c milk until steamy. Cool until warm to touch.
3. Drop raisins into a small bowl, cover with warm water and set aside to plump up.
4. Pour warmed milk into a large bowl and mix in a few Tbsp sugar.
5. Sprinkle yeast over the top of milk and allow to rest until frothy.
6. Mix remaining sugar, melted butter, beaten egg and prepared saffron milk.
7. Gradually add the salt and flour until dough is a kneadable consistency.
8. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured surface and knead for approximately 5 minutes. Once dough is smooth and soft, shape into a ball and place into a clean, greased bowl.
9. Cover with cling film and set aside, in a warm place to rise until double the size.
10. Turn dough out onto work surface and knead a few times.
11. Divide the dough into 24 evenly sized pieces and roll each into a ball. Roll each ball into a snake shape. Curl the ends of each piece, in opposite directions to form a scroll "S" shape (cat's tail).

Drain and dry raisins. Press a raisin into the centre of each curl.

Brush each bun with egg wash. Allow them to rise until nearly double in size.

- Bake at 200 C For 8 minutes until golden.
- Cool on wire rack before serving.



Presbyterian Moderator's Suit.

From the Archives... The Moderator's Hat and other treasures.

Wendy Hendry

The Uniting Church WA Archives team of Marissa Krajcar, Archive Coordinator, and a dedicated group of volunteers, carry out valuable work for our Church.

They document and sort the volumes of material that are sent into the archives for safe-keeping, enabling the rich history of our church to be preserved, along with assisting with requests for records from within the church, and from the wider community.

Along with the written records, there are plaques, photos, and other materials from church life, as well as some more unusual and unique items in storage. Recently Marissa came across boxes containing a 'Moderator's Tri-corn Hat' as worn by the Moderator of the Presbyterian Assembly of Western Australia. Along with the hat was a box containing the Presbyterian Moderator's regalia including the suit jacket, complete

with lace cuffs and jabot, black wool britches, and the detachable shirt front 'dicky'.

The hat and suit were donated by the family of Rev Charles D. P. Taylor, Moderator of the Presbyterian Assembly of WA in 1912, and the first Minister of St Paul's, Nedlands.

The photo insert above of Rev. J.R. Fiddian, who was from South Australia, is a great example of what the outfit would look like.

We wondered if anyone has any memories of this regalia? Thanks to Marissa for showing us this collection - an interesting insight into some of the traditions of one of our founding churches.

Marissa would also like to remind congregations of the importance of keeping up-to-date records of their Baptism and Marriage Registers, financial records and committee meeting minutes. Registers should be kept in a safe and secure location until completion, after which they should be sent to the Archive.



Moderator's Tri-corn Hat.



Moderator's Lace Embellishments.

If you have other items from our church history you feel may be suitable for the Uniting Church WA Archives please contact the Archive Co-ordinator by email archiveswa@wa.uca.org.au or phone 9260 9800.

ST. PATRICK AND THE HELICOPTER: THEOLOGICAL STORIES AND REFLECTIONS FOR YOUNG AND OLD

BY WILLIAM LOADER

Rev Dr Cathie Lambert

Rev Dr William (Bill) Loader's newest publication, *St. Patrick and the Helicopter*, is a treasury of theological gems waiting to be discovered. The book is a collection of stories, prayers, poems, songs, dreams, and conversations. Each page brings a different angle, a fresh perspective and new surprise. With over 90 separate reflections, this anthology contains numerous invitations to delve into scripture and the experience of God in our lives.

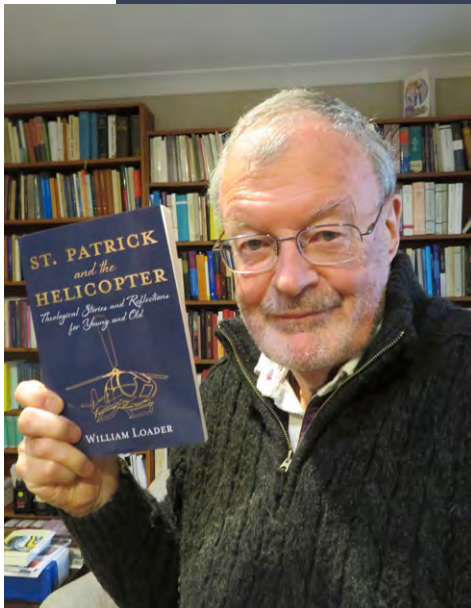
The book is divided into sections according to broad seasons of the Church calendar. As we revisit the high moments of Christmas and Easter, Loader introduces us to the perspectives of a donkey, the Christmas star, a Roman soldier, and a sheep in the fields of Bethlehem. The reader is drawn into a playful imagining of the well-known stories to discover fresh insights from the less seen and heard characters.

Loader beautifully brings together the past and the present, the

traditional and the contemporary. We listen in on conversations between an Australian Galah and Jesus, hear biblical characters offer challenge into current issues, and eavesdrop on Loader's continuing journey of learning and discovery. The reflections range from deeply theological to intimate and personal. We are welcomed into Loader's dreamlife in one piece and in the next benefit from his scholarly knowledge of the New Testament.

Loader moves seamlessly between the more concrete and the fantastical. At every turn, however, he brings honest and challenging reflection on the human condition. Loader does not shy away from difficult questions and social commentary around issues of climate, violence and injustice in our world. At times this is presented in playful stories and, at other points, deeply moving prayers and poetry.

St. Patrick and the Helicopter would be an invaluable resource on the shelf of anyone who leads worship or preaches. It contains responsive prayers and liturgies that are accessible and beautifully worded.



The numerous reflections relating to Bible passages, from both the Old and New Testaments, also provide an alternative viewpoint to inspire preachers and bible study leaders alike. The book would also be welcome on the shelf of those seeking resources for personal reflection. The diversity of writings would not only nurture the spirit of the curious reader but inspire each to write from their own experiences about everyday encounters with God.

As someone who grew up with Bill Loader in my home congregation, I could hear his voice in the gentle explanations of biblical history and the carefully crafted words of wisdom. *St. Patrick and the Helicopter* is a work of playful imagination grounded in deep scholarship. It is accessible, challenging and stimulating and an absolute joy to read.

Listening Journeys

What will the congregations of the WA Presbytery of the Uniting Church look like in 25 years' time?

**Rev Rob Douglas,
Presbytery Minister: Mission.**

That was the question that was posed when Thrive Mission Committee presented a report to the 18th Annual Meeting of the Presbytery of WA in June. But more than a question, the report also put forward some proposals that could influence the shape of that journey over the next 25 years.

It's relatively easy for a committee like Thrive to come up with a report that is filled with lots of good ideas, but what are we to do with such a report, and how is it going to make any difference to the diverse congregations of the Uniting Church in WA?

I recently attended a professional development day where I was introduced to the story of Mary Magdalene at the empty tomb of Jesus. (It's recorded for us in John 20) Three different verbs are used in the original language of the text to unfold the deepening levels of seeing:

The first level: I see, I notice, I observe;

Second level: I wonder, I imagine, I turn over in my mind;

Third level: I perceive, I understand, I realise the significance, I see things in a new light.

As a pilgrim people we have begun an important journey from facts

(the first level), to curiosity (the second level) to insight (the third level).

At the Annual General Meeting of the Presbytery on 17 June 2023 the following proposals were agreed upon by consensus.

1. Commit to the implementation of the 25-year Mission & Property Strategy for the WA Presbytery of the Uniting Church WA as a resource for congregations and faith communities within the Presbytery to enable us to continue playing our part in the mission of God in sustainable ways; and
2. Request Thrive Mission Committee to develop and implement a two-year process of mutual listening with our congregations and faith communities, with other Presbytery committees and networks, schools, agencies and with the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress (UAICC) to explore together how this strategy can be implemented with regular reporting to Presbytery on progress, feedback and outcomes.

THE FIRST LEVEL: I see, I notice, I observe.

This process of mutual listening that was described in the second proposal we have been calling "Listening Journeys" and this is the first level of that process of seeing the way forward for the Presbytery over the next 25 years.

It starts with us meeting with local congregations and asking questions about who you are, what makes you tick as a congregation, what your dreams for the future may be, and your observations about the challenges you need to address in order to continue that journey into the future.

Thrive Mission Committee and Pastoral Resources Committee will be appointing small teams of people who will visit local congregations to hear your stories. The visits are not about telling congregations what to do, but are about seeing, noticing and observing.

THE SECOND LEVEL: I wonder, I imagine, I turn over in my mind.

These listening journeys will provide an opportunity for both Presbytery as a whole, and the local congregation to not simply provide information, but to begin to wonder about those facts that have been imparted and to begin to imagine a new future.

It's an opportunity to wonder what will happen if growth doesn't happen; if the congregation continues to diminish without seeing new shoots of hope and anticipation. It's an opportunity to wonder what the congregation would look like if it were to share its resources with another congregation. It's an opportunity to imagine what the congregation would look like if significant changes

were to happen to the model of church, the way we manage our buildings and property, or the way we perceive the wider community.

THE THIRD LEVEL: I perceive, I understand, I realise the significance, I see things in a new light.

These listening journeys have already begun, and it is the hope and prayer of the WA Presbytery that as these listening journeys continue into 2024 we will begin to see new

opportunities to further the mission of God in our local neighbourhoods.

As we listen to each other and begin to wonder about what the future may look like, there will be a dawning of fresh vision and ideas will be shared. For many congregations there is a fear that the church will not exist in 25 years time, but with renewed vision and hope, positive steps can begin right now to bring about the changes that will bring new life to the church.

This journey is now underway and we are preparing to provide a legacy for the future, however, as we listen, and observe, and as we begin to wonder and imagine, we need to be open to see things in a new light. The challenge before us is not simply to ask what the Uniting Church will look like in 25 years time, but what our local congregations will look like in 2024 as we leap into a new year of hopefulness and expectation of God's fresh calling.

Recognition for Volunteering

Cam Crothers

Helen Williams, an active member of the Rockingham Uniting Church was recently recognised for her volunteer work, being awarded the 2023 Rockingham City Council Community Volunteer Award in the Category "People Who Make a Difference".

For over 50 years Helen has been an active volunteer in both the Church and the Parkin Street Opportunity Shop. Helen possesses humility, selflessness and is truly committed to the service of others in all her many activities. She is welcoming

to all, especially to those she meets in her opportunity shop work.

Helen has been a leader in ladies groups and in her role as Elder visits many who are housebound, providing understanding and encouragement.

In both her work in the community and at the opportunity shop and her home visitations, Helen's cheerfulness is an outstanding attribute and serves as a role model to all.

Helen is a true quiet achiever who makes a positive difference to our community.



Helen Williams with Rockingham City Councillor Robert Schmidt.

Northam Uniting Church Celebrations 2023

Ann Barnes

As we know the Uniting Church is a pilgrim people, and different stages are celebrated along the journey. This year has been one with great moments of celebration for the Northam congregation.

On Saturday 15 April 2023 at Lake Leschenaultia in Chidlow, Jenny Kelly, and her grandchildren Mason and Mia were baptised by Rev John Dihm with family, friends and some of the congregation there to support them.

Jenny requested baptism by full immersion – a first for Rev Dihm, though Ann Barnes and Raelenne Ashman braved the cool waters on his behalf for the baptism. Mason and Mia were then baptised on the shores of the lake.

A beautiful morning tea followed. At Sunday worship the next day a special service was held at the church to welcome Jenny, Mason and Mia into the congregation as they received their gifts of a bible

and a candle lit from the Christ candle. Of course, another scrumptious morning tea followed this special time of worship

On 7 May, family and friends of Rev John Dihm joined the Northam Congregation in a service to mark the conclusion of John's time with Frontier Services as the Pilbara Patrol Bush Chaplain.

The service included much symbolism as John returned items that had been included in his induction. Each item included a story to go with it. Representatives from the Pilbara communities shared stories of John's different areas of ministry with love and laughter. It was recognised that John made a great difference in many varied ways to the community and would be greatly missed.

Northam congregation welcomes John and his family into our family and we and the wider community in the wheatbelt are grateful for his presence here as he continues to



Rev John Dihm's conclusion of placement service.

walk alongside this community. Once a chaplain always a chaplain.

On Sunday 18 June the congregation at our Café Fellowship service celebrated the 80th birthday of Bev Walker, a special member of our congregation. Bev will also receive her Certificate of Appreciation when we celebrate the visit of the Chairperson of the National Uniting Church Adult Fellowship Mrs Margaret Pedler on her visit to us in Northam on 25 October.

Sharing joy is a part of our worship, fellowship and mission.

Soup and Sandwiches for Tea

Delys Griffith

For a number of years Darren Mouchemore of the Scarborough Uniting Church has liaised with Ruma Abedona Australia Inc to purchase boxes of mangos grown in the North West of WA. One farmer has set aside a field of mangos to be used as a fund raiser for the work of the Ruma Abedona Hospice in Kolkata, India.

Our church members who are mango lovers have been very happy to buy the mangos each year. This has been one part of the fundraising done by the members of our Scarborough Uniting Church each year. We have an Open Plate 'open' all year, with the proceeds going every two months to various organisations.

The Ruma Abedona Hospice was founded by Santanu Chakraborty following the death from cancer of his wife Ruma in 2000. Santanu gave up his career as a professional musician when a desire grew in him to help others in Ruma's circumstance. He began to realise that God had entrusted him with a responsibility to help the poor and those suffering from terminal cancer in their final stages.

In October 2001, Santanu completed an extensive Palliative

Care course at the McAuley training centre in Perth, Western Australia. He also completed a post-graduate diploma in Palliative Care in 2008 from Flinders University, Adelaide. Santanu completed his practical training at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital in Perth.

After 14 years of growing the Hospice, Santanu married Meheli, a volunteer at the hospice. Together they have devoted their lives to providing "Care Beyond Cure". Together with a team of dedicated doctors, nurses and helpers, they serve relentlessly and selflessly, caring for not only the terminally ill, but also providing assistance to orphans, widows and families trapped in the cycle of poverty.

In August Santanu and Meheli came to Perth and it was their desire to meet with the churches who have supported them financially over the years. The Scarborough congregation invited them to a Soup and Sandwich Tea in the evening of Sunday 13 August 2023. Santanu and Meheli were joined by Joan and Bill Grosser of Ruma Abedona Australia Inc.

The soup, sandwiches and cakes were provided by our church members. After singing Grace and sharing a meal together, Santanu and Meheli, together with Joan



Santanu and Meheli.

Grosser, told us of the work they are doing. We then enjoyed tea, coffee and cake and a further chance to talk with our guests. This lovely social occasion was enjoyed by our visitors, and also the members of our own congregation who attended.

As we have been made aware that the mango crop this year will probably be affected by the floods up north, our congregation made the decision to have the Ruma Abedona Hospice the recipient of our Open Plate for the months of July and August and we raised an amount of \$460.

Please pray for this amazing couple and the work they are doing in India.

New Beginnings in Ministry

Congratulations to Rev Reuben Edmonds, recently Ordained as Minister of the Word, and now Inducted as Minister at All Saints Floreat Uniting Church. Congratulations also to Rev Dr Elaine Ledgerwood, recently Ordained as Deacon, and Inducted as Minister at St Aidan's Uniting Church, Claremont.



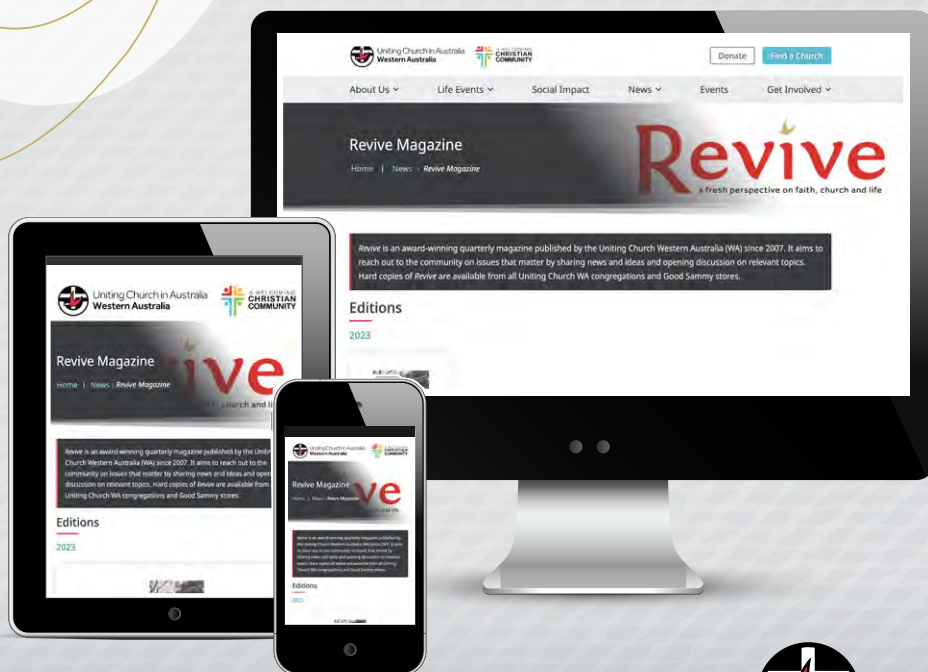
Rev Reuben Edmonds' Ordination Service.



Rev Dr Elaine Ledgerwood's Ordination Service.

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* Not all schools offer Pre Kindergarten.