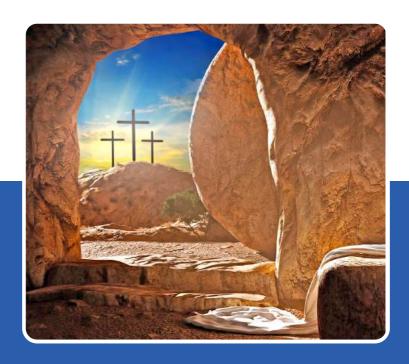
Fellowship Newslink

April 2025



Promoting Faith and Fellowship across Congregations and Beyond



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Newslink is published by the UCAF WA Committee GPO Box M952
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Front cover image: "You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him. (Mark 16:6)

Chairperson's Corner

Welcome to the first edition of Newslink 2025. The members of the State Committee of UCAF trust that your groups have made a good beginning for this year.

It seems a long time since we celebrated Christmas but we hope it was a time of blessing for members of your Fellowship as well as your families and friends.

Now we are into a new year with all its possibilities, new experiences, and maybe challenges. Regardless of what this year may bring we know that God will be present with us.



On the first Friday in March, there was the opportunity to join with other Christians to celebrate 'World Day of Prayer 'with the service being prepared by the women of the Cook Islands in the Pacific. Over the years I have attended many World Day of Prayer services in many different Churches with large groups and small groups as the service was hosted by my local Church this year.

As one lady commented "These are wonderful services" but in our area fewer Congregations are willing to prepare and host the service. In earlier times six denominations were sharing the preparation and hosting, we now have two. We enjoyed learning about the Cook Islands and how their community works together with the church and the government. Tourism provides 66% of their GDP being both a blessing as well as bringing some disruptive behaviours. The theme of the service was based on verses from Psalm 139: "I made you wonderful".

You would be aware we have an Annual Fellowship Day when our Moderator presents certificates to people celebrating their 80th birthday and we have a guest speaker. Over the years many different times and places have been arranged to hold the event in the hope of encouraging those who are receiving a certificate and other Fellowship and Congregation members to attend. We have appreciated the hospitality of the Congregations who have hosted our day and provided morning tea when we arrive.

Since COVID the numbers attending Fellowship Day have decreased

Chairperson's Corner cont'd

with only one or two people of the 20-30 names of people receiving a certificate attend in person.

Following Fellowship Day 2024, the State Committee reviewed the WA Synod By-Laws and decided to discontinue holding the Annual Fellowship Day which was followed by the Annual General Meeting.

We plan to continue inviting Fellowships and Congregations to provide the names of people celebrating their 80th birthday. The application forms will be included in the Synod mail-out and certificates will be prepared and sent to the contact person who provides the person's details.

The certificates will be sent out in September following the meeting of Synod. We encourage you to send the names of people celebrating their 90th birthday to Kay Lockley whose address is in this *Newslink* Magazine.

As we journey through this time of Lent may we spend time with Jesus as we prepare to celebrate Easter and the risen Lord's gift to each one of us.

These words have been inspired by the 'Sending Out' words from the World Day of Prayer service:

Go now and live this good news: God is our Creator. God made us wonderful. God knows us and God is with us. May God fill us with joy at the coming of Christ.

Helen McMillan





Last year, a friend gave me a little muslin bag with several small items inside: a blue ribbon, a picture of wheat and bread with the words Jesus is the bread of life, some coins, some stones, a bit of purple cloth, three nails and two sticks of wood.

There was also an envelope with the instruction 'To be opened at the beginning of Holy Week'. This contained a little paper cross and a paper with writing on it.

This is what I read:

Now, at the beginning of Holy Week, look at the symbols in a different way. They remind us of the path Jesus took to his death on the cross.

- The blue ribbon, the water of Jesus' Baptism is now the water that washed the disciples' feet.
- The bread that Jesus shared throughout his ministry is now the bread he broke at the Last Supper.
- The coins of the widow, given so generously, are now the coins received by Judas when he betrayed Jesus.
- The stones of the wilderness remind us of the hard lonely place Jesus found himself in the Garden of Gethsemane.
- The purple cloth, like those that were laid before him welcoming him into Jerusalem, is now the robe that was placed on him as he was mocked and ridiculed by the soldiers.
- The two pieces of wood and nails that remind us that Jesus, the son of God, was also the son of a carpenter, are now the cross on which he was crucified to give us salvation.

But we know that this is not the end. The small paper cross reminds us that on the third day, Jesus rose again and lives in the hearts of all those who believe. - Alison Judd, President Emerita, WFM&UCW President.



After years of dedicated work, the Uniting Church WA (UCWA) Mission Fellowship Stamp Team has finally put away their sorting boxes and scissors.

With volunteer numbers dwindling, coordinator Bob Lockley is preparing the final batches of stamps. Some will be sold, while others will be sent to stamp-collecting groups in VicTas and NSW. This marks the end of an incredible chapter of service.

A Legacy of Fundraising Through Stamps

The Uniting Church WA Mission Fellowship has a long history of raising funds for mission outreach. Since at least 1974, grassroots efforts—including stamp collecting and sales—helped support various causes. Initially, the Mission Fellowship met on the third Wednesday of every month at Wesley Central in Perth. Members would bring in bags and boxes of stamps, which volunteers took home to trim and sort. The stamps were then packed and sold to a bulk stamp-buying agency, distributing them to collectors across Australia.

In 2015, a major shift occurred after the passing of the key packer-coordinator. The centre of operations, along with hundreds of kilograms of stamps, was relocated to Bicton Uniting Church. To manage the increasing volume, group sorting sessions began every Wednesday from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm in the Bicton church foyer. Many volunteers even took additional stamps home to process in their own time. To keep up with changing buyer requirements, a newsletter called Stamping Ground provided instructions to ensure the donated material generated the best possible income.

A Well-Oiled Operation

Volunteers took on various roles to keep things running smoothly:

- **Gatherers** sourced as many stamps as possible—often still on envelopes, in shoe boxes, and even in albums from unwanted collections.
- **Trimmers** meticulously tidied up usable stamps, ensuring they had enough envelope backing while discarding damaged ones.
- **Sorters** categorised stamps by country, denomination, or theme.
- Packers prepared parcels—22kg and 5kg packages for sale, with premium material sent to auction.

This careful process maximised the value of each stamp, with proceeds going to Frontier Services to support Australians in the outback.

Beyond stamps, the team also found creative ways to raise funds. They collected 2-litre ice cream containers for sale to the fibreglass industry and, before that, old newspapers by the trailer load for recycling at APM Spearwood.

Generosity from Near and Far

Donations poured in from Uniting Church congregations, many of which had collection boxes in their foyers. Community groups, individuals, and businesses also contributed.

One particularly memorable donation came in 2019 from Kelvin Woodward, a member of Kardinya Uniting Church. While helping his 98-year-old father declutter his garage, he discovered boxes of used stamps on envelopes, stored in a shed for over 20 years. Unsure if they were still needed, he reached out to fellow church member and UCWA archivist Betty Pearson. When Betty enthusiastically confirmed their value, Kelvin began dropping off the collection. What started as just a couple of boxes soon grew to thirteen, left on Betty and her husband Reg's veranda over several weeks. Bob and Kay Lockley then transported them to Bicton Uniting Church for sorting.

A Remarkable Achievement

As highlighted in News and Notes last year, the stamp team has raised more than \$37,000 for Frontier Services over the past 11 years alone—an extraordinary contribution to helping those in need.

A huge **thank you** to all the dedicated volunteers, donors, and supporters who made this initiative possible. Whether through collecting, sorting, trimming, or donating, your efforts have left a lasting impact.

Though this chapter is closing, the legacy of generosity and service lives on. If you'd still like to contribute stamps, other groups continue this work—consider checking with local churches or community organisations.

Thank you for being part of this incredible journey!



At first glance, the corner illustration appears to be just a "pretty" Easter picture. It acknowledges the Cross, setting it in a garden of colorful flowers, alongside a tempting pile of Easter eggs. But how close is this image to the true meaning of Easter?

Some might argue that the eggs do not belong. However, eggs symbolize new life—and isn't that precisely what Jesus gave us through His sacrifice on the Cross? He walked the road to Calvary for us, obediently bearing the weight of our sins so that we might be forgiven and live freely for Him.

The tradition of Easter eggs can be traced back to early Christians in Mesopotamia, where they symbolized the empty tomb of Jesus.

From there, the practice spread into Eastern Europe and Siberia through Orthodox churches, later reaching Western Europe through Catholic and Protestant traditions. One custom involved staining eggs with red dye to commemorate the blood of Christ shed at Calvary.

Today, our chocolate eggs wrapped in shiny foil have

largely replaced the carefully hand-painted or intricately carved wooden eggs still used in some Eastern cultures. According to medieval scholars, the widespread use of Easter eggs stems from the Lenten prohibition of eggs, which were then blessed and enjoyed at Easter. Unfortunately, in modern times, their significance has faded—especially when they appear on store shelves almost as soon as Christmas ends!

Some might also say that the Cross in the Easter picture looks too neat and clean. The Cross of Calvary was anything but—it was rough, cruel, and brutal. Yet Jesus did not hesitate. He set His face toward Jerusalem, entering the city on a donkey, a symbol of humility rather than power, to the cries of "Hosanna." The same voices that praised Him soon shouted, "Crucify Him," as He carried His own Cross to Calvary, bearing the weight of our sins.

Yet in this image, the Cross stands empty. It rises above the eggs and flowers of everyday life, reminding us that Jesus conquered death. He reappeared to His disciples, encouraging them before ascending to the Father, leaving us with the Holy Spirit to guide and walk with us on our Christian journey.

So perhaps this "pretty" Easter picture holds a deeper lesson after all.

May you be blessed this Easter as you reflect on what Christ has done for you. May your life be enriched as you live in faith and hope, trusting in all that God has in store for your future.

Amen.

By Anne Steed



Discover the Good Stuff: Good Sammy is more than just Op shops!

When most people think of Good Sammy, op shops are likely the first thing that comes to mind. But here's the good news: there's so much more to discover.

Good Sammy has been a cornerstone of the WA community since 1958, creating meaningful employment opportunities for Western Australians with disability. As one of WA's largest social enterprises, we're proud to say we're all about doing good *for* WA, *in* WA.

Now, through our #DiscoverGoodStuff campaign, we're inviting the community to learn more about the good we do beyond the racks of pre-loved treasures. From leading WA's largest for-purpose Containers for Change operation to the Good Sammy Academy, hospitality, online e-commerce store, and Gardening and Property Care services, every initiative supports local people and creates a positive <u>impact</u>.

Take *Containers for Change*, for example. This isn't just about recycling; it's a win for everyone. Every accepted container returned to a **Good Sammy refund point** is worth 10 cents to the customer and an additional 7 cents to support our mission.



"You can triple your impact when you choose Good Sammy as your charity of choice to recycle your containers," Good Sammy Chief Executive Officer, Kane Blackman explains. "You get money in your pocket, Good Sammy gets an extra 7c per container towards our mission of disability employment, and together we are diverting waste from landfill."

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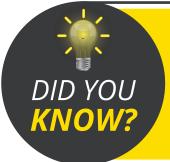
Together, we've already:

- Diverted over 50 million containers from landfill.
- Saved 14,400 cubic metres of landfill space equivalent to nearly six Olympic-sized swimming pools.
- Refunded an incredible \$5 million in 2024 alone.

Our five cash drive-thrus are located in: Canning Vale, Balcatta, Wanneroo, Jurien Bay, and Lancelin, making it quick and easy to return your containers.

Plus, we offer more than 41 convenient Drop & Go locations across WA, including within most Good Sammy shops.

Visit our *Containers for Change* web page to find your nearest location: goodsammy.com.au/locations/type/containers-for-change.



- Container recycling with Good Sammy creates employment opportunities for Western Australians with disability.
- Every accepted container you return is worth 10c to you and an extra 7c to Good Sammy.
- We have 5 cash drive-thru locations and more than 41 convenient Drop & Go locations!



Spanning over 285,000 square kilometres, Bush Chaplain Erica (Ric) Payne's Mid-West region is vast, remote, and home to many facing unique challenges.

Ric and Montarna Cohen, Senior Outback Links National Coordinator, were recently in Perth, moving between various venues—from churches to caravan shows—to promote the vital work of Frontier Services' Outback Links volunteers. While volunteers in the Eastern States can often travel interstate to assist during emergencies, Western Australia's vast distances mean there are far fewer available to help those in need.

For two decades, Outback Links has been a lifeline for people doing it tough in remote Australia. By connecting volunteers with those in need, they provide practical support where it matters most—whether that's caretaking, property maintenance, gardening, painting, or general farm work. Whatever the task, there's an opportunity for everyone to lend a hand and make a real difference.

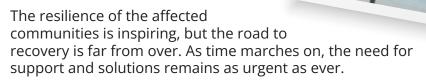
More than just help, Outback Links volunteers bring hope. Their presence alone reminds people that they're not forgotten. Sometimes,

the biggest impact comes from simply showing up, rolling up their sleeves, and easing the load.

Four Years On: Cyclone Seroja's Lingering Impact

It's hard to believe that four years have passed since Cyclone Seroja tore through the Mid-West region of Western Australia, just south of Kalbarri. With howling winds and relentless rain, the powerful storm left a trail of destruction—homes, businesses, roads, vegetation, and communication networks were battered beyond recognition.

But even after all this time, many buildings remain in desperate need of repair. A shortage of skilled tradespeople has slowed the rebuilding process, leaving some homes still covered by wornout SES tarpaulins instead of proper roofs. Each rainy season brings fresh challenges, as these makeshift coverings struggle to hold back the elements.



As Outback Links celebrates its 20th anniversary, why not consider lending a hand on your next adventure? Or perhaps you know someone who'd love to make a difference in the bush? A little help goes a long way.



To register as a volunteer, or to receive some Outback Links support, scan the QR code or visit frontierservices.org/outback-links





It's eyes down every Tuesday at Juniper St David's Retirement Village in Mount Lawley, where a dedicated group of bingo fans gathers for an afternoon of fun, friendship, and friendly competition.

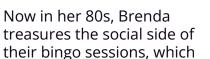
It's eyes down every Tuesday at Juniper St David's Retirement Village in Mount Lawley, where a dedicated group of bingo fans gathers for an afternoon of fun, friendship, and friendly competition. "We're like the follies - we never close!" says Brenda Stubbs, the group's longtime bingo caller and treasurer.

For the past three years, Brenda has kept the games running smoothly with her clear, no-nonsense calling. She eschews traditional bingo nicknames like "Legs 11" in favour of keeping things simple and fast-paced. She's supported by the ever-energetic

Joyce Ashworth, who helps organise the games, check winning cards, and prepare afternoon tea.

But it's not just about calling full-house games. To keep things fresh and minds engaged, the group enjoys a variety of bingo formats, including picture frame rounds - where players mark the spaces around the edges of their cards - and creative patterns such as the letter Z or a diamond.

Each week, a steady group of 14 players gathers for two hours of laughter and light-hearted competition, with \$5 prizes for full-house games and \$10 jackpots up for grabs. Winning is always met with enthusiastic applause, proving that at St David's, camaraderie is just as important as the cash prizes.



welcome both retirement village residents and a few players from the nearby Juniper residential home.

"Everyone likes a bit of competition," she says. "And it's always nice to have a win- even if it's just \$5!".







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From Surviving to Thriving: Sharlene's Next Chapter

Sharlene has navigated a whirlwind of changes, moving from homelessness to transitional accommodation, and finally to her own home in December last year. Though excited to begin the next chapter of her journey, she recalls feeling nervous about living independently - a significant change after living in Koort Boodja transitional accommodation with 24/7 wrap-around support.

Sharlene is gradually rediscovering the things she enjoys while getting used to a new way of life. Taking it day by day, she wants people to know that adjusting to new surroundings doesn't happen overnight. The phased reduction of support often overwhelms those transitioning back into housing.

"I'm still trying to figure out how to organise furniture, food vouchers, and get where I need to go without a car," says Sharlene.

During her time at Koort Boodja, Sharlene enjoyed cooking for fellow residents, even making damper during Uniting WA's NAIDOC Week event last year. Now, with a kitchen of her own, she enjoys exploring new recipes and hosting her son and his partner for dinner every weekend.

Sharlene finds peace tending to her garden and plants, with plans to bring life to the trees out the front. Gardening has become a therapeutic pastime, allowing her to enjoy the fresh air and reset. A goal Sharlene has set for herself is finding a job, exploring opportunities in volunteer work and cleaning. She feels having a job will make her feel stronger and more independent.

Sharlene has found home again, but her passion for homelessness support services in Perth remains strong, keeping in touch with the Tranby Engagement Hub community.

Now a fan of the reality TV show *Survivor*, Sharlene draws an interesting comparison between homelessness and the show's challenges, where contestants compete for their next meal to survive. The difference, she notes, is that rough sleepers aren't being filmed, and don't have a backup plan. She reflects on waiting for food relief in the cold.

Sharlene's journey is a testament to her resilience and determination. As she adapts to her new surroundings, she looks forward to the future, one step at a time.

To read more stories or to donate to support more people like Sharlene. Head to <u>unitingwa.org.au/donate</u>.

Wondering how you can get involved?

At Uniting WA, you can volunteer as often as you like. Book shifts that suit you at our Tranby Engagement Hub, and support those experiencing homelessness.

If you're interested in volunteering at Uniting WA and having real impact, visit <u>unitingwa.org.au/get-involved/volunteer</u>.

To donate to support our critical services head to <u>unitingwa.org.au/donate</u>. Want to know more, call us on (08) 9220 1222.



Savoury Hot Cross B A few years ago, celebrity chef Jamie Oliver stirred the pot (or should we say the mixing bowl?) with his cheese and chive hot cross buns. Some people couldn't wait to try them, while others thought he had taken things a step too far. As the only one in my home who enjoys traditional dried fruit in hot cross buns, I was intrigued. Love them or hate them, here's Jamie's recipe - decide for yourself! - Newslink Editor

Ingredients:

- 200ml milk
- 55g unsalted butter
- 2 x 7g sachets of dried yeast
- 455g strong bread flour, plus extra for dusting
- 1 large egg
- 2 tablespoons plain flour
- 180g Cheddar cheese
- 180g red Leicester cheese (see Note 1.)
- 1 bunch of fresh chives, 20g (see Note 2.)

Method:

- 1. Heat the milk and 50ml water in a small pan over low heat until warm (not hot to touch).
- 2. Melt the butter in a separate pan over low heat, then set aside.
- 3. Transfer the warmed milk to a bowl and stir in the yeast.
- 4. Sift the flour into a large bowl, add 1 teaspoon salt, and grate in most of the cheese (reserve some for later). Finely chop and add the chives.
- 5. Make a well in the centre, pour in the melted butter and yeast mixture, then add the beaten egg.
- 6. Mix with a fork until a rough dough forms, then knead on a floured surface for 10 minutes until soft and springy.
- 7. Place the dough in a floured bowl, cover it with a damp tea towel, and let rise in a warm place for at least an hour, until doubled.
- 8. Knead the dough briefly (1–2 minutes) on a floured surface.
- 9. Preheat oven to 190°C and line a baking tray.
- 10. Divide the dough into 12 pieces, roll into balls, and arrange on the tray.
- 11. Cover with a tea towel and let rise for 30 minutes until doubled.
- 12. Mix plain flour with 2 tablespoons of water to form a thick paste.
- 13. Lightly flatten the risen buns, then pipe or spoon the paste to form crosses.
- 14. Bake for 15–20 minutes until golden brown.
- 15. Serve warm, sliced with butter delicious!

Notes:

- 1. **Most economical cheese to buy** Coles Finest Aged Red Leicester, 200g
- 2. **Chives alternative** Dried chives can be used or try *Gourmet Garden 'Lightly Dried Chives'*, found in the fruit and vegetable section of most grocery stores.
- 3. Traditional recipe jamieoliver.com/recipes/bread/hot-cross-buns/

Easter Prayer

We Lift Our Hearts to You

"Lord, we lift our hearts to you. As the dawn breaks, may we carry the unity we share into every moment knowing that we are one with the risen Christ.

Lord, we lift our eyes to you. As the sun rises, may this moment stay with us, reminding us to look for the beautiful colours of promise in your word.

Lord, we lift our prayers to you. As the dew air falls, may we breathe this morning in and know that like the earth, you sustain us, keep us and work within us always.

And so, we lift our voices to you. We celebrate the greatest day in history, when Jesus rose from death, defeated darkness and bathed the world in stunning resurrection light. May we ever live to praise you! Amen."

- unknown

UCAF WA Committee Invitation

We invite membership on the Adult Fellowship Committee to those in the Uniting Church who think that fostering and creating opportunities for fellowship is an important part of the development and life of our Church.

What we do:

- When invited, visit congregations in urban and rural areas to encourage groups.
- Honour our 80-year-olds during the Annual Fellowship Day.
- Send a special greeting card to our 90-year-old people on their special day.
- Regularly interact with the other Australian UCAF Committees.
- Maintain links with Uniting Church National Assembly.
- Connect with the World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women Groups.
- Produce and distribute the triannual newsletter "Fellowship Newslink".

UCAF WA is a member of the Synod, giving general members an opportunity to express their opinions on the Church's activities.

New Members:

When a member's situation changes or they must retire due to the Synod 10-year Rule, replacements are constantly needed. if you would like to join our committee or if you have any questions, please contact Helen McMillan or Bob Nicholls by the details listed below.

Additionally, if you know any suitable individuals who might be interested in joining, please contact us. Our work is both engaging and enjoyable.

We meet at 10:00 am, Noranda Uniting Church on the third Friday of each month. All Welcome!

Chairperson:

Helen McMillan P: (08) 9279 3051

E: norandaunitingchurch@gmail.com

Secretary/Treasurer:

Bob Nicholls P: (08) 9255 2567 M: 0419-927-638 E: wraxall@iinet.net.au

UCAF Registration

We invite congregations and groups to register with us so that 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*.

Registration Details:
Group Name
Contact Person for Group
(or) Individual's name
Postal Address
Email Address
Phone
Donations We would appreciate donations to assist with the running expenses. This assists us in covering the cost of the <i>Certificates of Appreciation</i> for 80-year-olds, Greeting Cards for 90-year-olds, and general administration.
Want Newslink mailed to your address?
For \$8.00 per year, Newslink can be sent directly to you.
Recipients Name
Congregation
Postal address
No. of copies Postage \$8.00
Donation \$ Total \$
Payment details of the Treasurer, for registration: Internet Banking BSB 036-001 Acc No: 92-1850 Reference: 'Name of group or individual'

Celebrating the Milestones of Our Seniors

We offer you the opportunity to recognise the contribution your seniors have made, celebrate with them and show appreciation when they reach their important milestones.

Eighty-Year-Olds: at the UCAF Annual Fellowship Day 2024, Certificates of Appreciation will be presented to octogenarians nominated by their church or fellowship group. All who reach their 80th year during 2024, or missed out previously are eligible.

Ninety-Year-Olds: Our Committee will send a specially designed greeting card 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. Please refer to the application form below.

One Hundred-Year-Olds: The Synod oversees these. Please contact the Moderator to request a special greeting for individuals turning 100 years old.

Application form for greeting cards: 90-year-olds

Please Print

Contact person

The postal address to send the card:

Send to: Kay Lockley, 20 Roediger Drive, Northam WA 6401 Email: kaylockl@bigpond.net.au | Phone: (08) 9622 1152

Name of Congregation
Date of Birth
Name of 90-year-old
If there is more than one recipient, please attach a separate sheet. Check spelling and details, please!
Where is the card to be sent? Please (✓) tick
☐ Congregation (if arranging a presentation)
☐ Nominator (person who is personally delivering the card and/or arranging a special time for a presentation.
☐ The 90-year-old nominated person
Please provide the following:

Name: ______ Phone No _____

Name: _____

Address



A little of your time can make a big impact - whether it's fixing fences, lending a hand on a farm, or simply listening. Your kindness changes lives.

An agency of the Uniting Church in Australia, Frontier Services supports people living in remote Australia. Established by Rev. John Flynn, we have provided practical, emotional, and spiritual support to Aussies living on the land for more than 110 years. Through your gift, you'll help send Outback Links volunteers and Bush Chaplains to people in the Outback who have been doing it tough.

