



Uniting Church in Australia
Western Australia

Issue 83
April 2025

Revive

a fresh perspective on faith, church and life



**St Martin's Foothills -
a heart for community**

**Renewed vision for a
place of healing and hope**

**Re-discovering the church's
Social Justice voice**

Contents

Features

St Martin's Foothills - a heart for community	6
New Moderator to be elected	9
Renewed vision for a place of healing and hope	10
Re-discovering the church's Social Justice voice	14
New life for Port Hedland church	16
Summer Spirit 2025	20
The power of perspective	22

Regulars

From the Moderator	3
Editorial	4
5 minutes with...	5
Agency News	12
School News	24
Book Review	26
From the Archives	27
Short News	29

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 Alison Atkinson-Phillips, Fairlea Baxter, Craig Bosman, Andy Broadbent, Reuben Edmonds, Tiffany Gossage, Helen Harmer, Wendy Hendry, Cathie Lambert, Elaine Ledgerwood, Julie Ridden, Lorraine Stokes, Ian Tozer, Paul Whitfield, Marissa Williams.



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Moderator

From the Moderator

What's your story? In my youth this was a common question. I'm not asked in those words these days.

I knew that my story had to make sense. If it were a family member, my telling was linked with knowing them. If it were a teacher, I knew the story needed to fit the school setting. Different contexts prompted different stories. We can never tell it all. We don't have enough time, so we select details to fit our purpose, depending on who asked.

Christians tell many stories. At the centre are stories about Jesus. We do so with the story available to us, catching glimpses of what it must have been like to those who were eyewitnesses. Even though we don't have it all, we have enough (John 20: 30, 31).

During Holy Week and the Easter season, we tell stories about the death of Jesus on the cross and about the resurrection. The earliest believers knew who was crucified because they were witnesses to the main events.

However, the resurrection was such a world-dislocating event that it wasn't as clear immediately. It took the disciples time to make sense of

what had happened. Some had epiphanies: Jesus appeared to Mary and called her by name. Some had slowly dawning understandings that the risen One was the crucified One. Some doubted, and – very probably – some gave up on Jesus, thinking that the cross was the end.

John says the disciples knew the risen Christ was the Jesus they'd known because of his wounded hands and side (John 20), thus connecting the crucifixion and the resurrection, the earthly life of Jesus and the new – risen – life of Christ.

Jesus says the disciples are called to forgive, which links with the stories of Jesus forgiving. Even in the process of being crucified, Jesus prayed: "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23).

When Thomas is absent at the first appearance, Jesus does not belittle Thomas's insistence on having direct experience, which fits with how Jesus interacted with people during his ministry (John 20).

We all have our own stories, and we often find ourselves in these stories.

Several theologians have said when Christ rose from the dead, his whole life rose with him.



Rev Dr Ian Tozer
 Moderator, Uniting Church WA

Gerald O'Collins, an Australian Jesuit priest and academic, spoke of the Easter Jesus and the Calvary Christ. The One who was crucified is the One who is risen. The One who called us to do to others what we would have them do to us is the One who was crucified and is risen. The one who continues to call us to love is the same Jesus who, in Galilee, mixed with sinners demonstrating welcome and forgiveness for all.

The story of Jesus continues in the followers of Jesus. We are the storytellers and the story being lived. May the risen Christ inspire all of our telling and our living.

Rev Dr Ian Tozer
 Moderator, Uniting Church WA



Being with Jesus
in Ministry

Welcome to the April edition of Revive magazine!

There are times for me lately when the world feels a bit overwhelming. With political upheavals, wars, and devastating natural disasters taking place overseas; and closer to home with people struggling to make ends meet, with heatwaves, fires and floods, and the general whirlwind of state and federal elections...I could go on. It feels like a lot to take in sometimes.



There was no set theme for this edition - more a smorgasbord of interesting stories from across our church. However, as the stories began to take shape I could sense an emerging theme coming from them. For me it felt like glimmers of 'Hope'. Hope in the form of a new worshipping community becoming part of the Uniting Church and breathing life into an empty church building in the Pilbara. Hope in the form of a new partnership realised between WA Congress, Beanang Kwuurt Institute (BKI) and the WA Stolen Generations Aboriginal Corporation (WASGAC) sharing the vision for a healing centre for stolen generations survivors and their families on the former site of Sister Kate's Home in Queens Park. Hope emerging from a renewed commitment to social justice action by the passionate volunteers who have re-formed the WA Synod Social Justice Commission.

It was a sense of hope that I felt after visiting the St Martin's Foothills Uniting Church Op-Shop and community centre last month, inspired by the way volunteers from the congregation and community have been able to work together with a shared commitment to serve the community around them.

I look around our church and see the hands and feet of God at work, and it gives me hope.

We know of many more examples in our church and community. This is just a snapshot, squeezed into a 32-page magazine. Our cover image has been chosen to represent this feeling of hope - life emerging from the cracked ground. It reminds me of lyrics from Leonard Cohen's song *Anthem*:

"There is a crack, a crack in everything
That's how the light gets in."

I hope you find a story to inspire you and shine a light in this edition of *Revive*.

Happy reading!

Wendy Hendry, Editor

Revive Survey - Have your say!

It's been a while since we last asked our readers for some detailed feedback about Uniting Church WA's *Revive* magazine. We've created a quick online survey form that we would really appreciate people complete.

It is hoped the survey results will help us better understand how our community are experiencing *Revive* in its current format and assist with future decisions around content and publication style.

Anyone can complete the survey, whether you're a regular reader or occasional browser.

We've done our best to keep it brief, and estimate it will take only a few minutes to complete. Feedback is anonymous unless you choose to identify yourself in the comments.

Go to: <https://bit.ly/2025Revive> or scan the QR code >



**5 minutes with...
Craig Bosman**



Rev Craig Bosman

As the Rural Resource Minister with the Presbytery of WA, Craig seeks to connect with and resource the regional and remote churches of the Presbytery. Craig is also the Minister at Margaret River Uniting Church and Augusta Faith Community where he seeks to work alongside them to help fulfil their mission in the community.

How would you describe your journey into ministry?

An unshakeable call! I knew at 14 years old that I wanted to be part of this crazy thing called church. I was totally immersed in it the moment I came out the womb - Sunday School, Youth Group, Camps, Missions, etc. It was my whole world, and I felt irrevocably drawn to participate in its inner workings. After studying for a degree in commerce and working in marketing research for a few years, I found myself in Dubai with Gen. It was there that we both decided to jump in, boots and all.

Is there a key or memorable moment that has shaped your faith journey?

Discovering contemplation! In my third year of Bible College, the information overload was really getting to me. In the early hours of the mornings before class, I started seeking silence and stillness in the college garden. While reading a devotional book, I was introduced to "the Jesus Prayer." This set me on the path of contemplative practice - reason and rationalism can only get you so far, eventually you need to transcend words and directly encounter the reality behind them.

Can you share something that has surprised or inspired you lately?

Small things make big differences! We can simply share a word, a link to something, a book, or even a look, and it can produce positive change in the world. Like throwing a pebble into a pond, the ripple effect reaches right to the edges. One case in point is that I recently shared a podcast episode with a bunch of friends. After listening to it, one of them let me know they changed their mind in a significant way about an important issue. Small acts, big changes, ongoing impacts!

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

Reading, walking in the bush, reading, going to the beach, reading, listening to podcasts, reading, hanging out with my family, and reading. Yes, I do love reading! Books provide deep wisdom and help me meet and learn from heaps of interesting people who I wouldn't otherwise know. I particularly like reading books about contemplation. What's my favourite? *The Naked Now* by Richard Rohr - it's short, simple and profound. I also love science fiction - *Dune* is my most loved book, which I've read annually for a couple of years - I love the 'litany of fear' in it.

What's next on your bucket list?

I've just started a PhD, but I'm not sure I should be telling anyone because I'm already feeling like quitting - it seems like such a mammoth task amid life's many other happenings. So don't hold it against me if I do! My topic is about creating a respectful conversation between Eastern Orthodox spirituality (the Philokalia) and Progressive Christianity. What does that mean? Well, I'll let you know in a few years - if I manage to stick it out (a big if).

What's one thing you couldn't live without?

My daily meditation/contemplation practice. Every morning and every evening I sit in quietness, close my eyes, and for 20 minutes I say a shortened form of the Jesus Prayer entrained to my breath (breathe in "Jesus", breathe out "mercy"). This keeps my 'reservoir of silence' topped up so that I can draw on it in-between sessions to meet the challenges of the day with greater equanimity. When I occasionally miss a session, I feel like the one necessary thing is missing.

What's your favourite quote or expression?

"Your practice of sitting in silence contributes to the spiritual hygiene of all the world in ways we do not understand." Martin Laird wrote this to me after I sent him an email thanking him for writing the book, *Into the Silent Land* (highly recommend!)



Op-Shop volunteers Janice, Mary and Karen.



St Martin's Foothills – a heart for community

Wendy Hendry

St Martin's Foothills Uniting Church is located in Forrestfield, across the road from a busy shopping precinct. It was the first new congregation formed within the Uniting Church in Australia, post Union, with a vision to provide outreach into the Perth eastern metropolitan suburbs in the foothills of the Darling Range escarpment. Having heard about their Op-Shop and Community Centre I decided to go out there for a visit.

Pulling into the driveway on a Thursday morning, the car park was a hive of activity as the Op-Shop was preparing to open for the morning trade, and Marty's Community Centre adjacent was

getting ready for its weekly open-house style gathering. Customers had already begun rummaging through racks and displays at the Op-Shop a few minutes ahead of the opening time of 9.00am, and volunteers were busily working through donations, and tending to their assigned roles for the morning.

30 Years of Service

The Op-Shop at St Martin's Uniting Church commenced operations in August 1995 and will soon be marking 30 years of service to the community. It began as a small enterprise set up in the corner of the church hall and gradually expanded into the whole hall, and now incorporates sorting areas, storage sheds and even expanding into the main church sanctuary on opening days to enable goods to be tested, sorted and prepared for their destination.

Back in 1995, the vision of the Op-Shop, supported by the minister at the time Rev Bill Jenkins, was that in 30 years time it would be "a well organised building providing a wide range of goods, reaching deeply into the community, leading the way as a model for other Churches in mission and fellowship." The bustling Op-Shop today is a testament to this vision.

Mary Tulloch kindly spent some time showing me around the shop and explaining to me the way everything is run. Mary is the Op-Shop co-ordinator, and has been involved since it began almost 30 years ago. As part of her role she ensures new volunteers are inducted and takes care of some of the administration tasks.

St Martin's Op-Shop is made possible by the work of approximately 40 volunteers - from the congregation and wider community - who who generously

give their time and expertise to the operations. Donated goods are diligently sorted, priced and arranged according to seasonal need. Storage sheds are utilised for out-of-season goods, with a special shed set aside for stock suitable for Christmas, some of which is given to the 'Sharing A Hills Christmas' appeal, a combined initiative of local churches, schools and businesses in the Kalamunda region. There are even volunteers who 'work from home' helping to sort puzzles, test electronics and toys, and assist with mending and ironing.

Well established community connections are evident as Mary and Janice, a community volunteer who co-ordinates incoming and outgoing donations and helps manage volunteers, described the many ways stock is distributed, not just to be sold in the shop front, but donated to other groups as needed. They shared with me the connections with schools through the local chaplains, where items such as books, toys, and even

quality ballgowns are gifted to be used by local school students as needed. Other items such as hygiene and personal care products are bundled into care packs for people experiencing homelessness, and for local women's refuges.

The strength of relationships across the community are evident. As well as donations from local community, there are around 26 organisations as well as individuals who regularly give items to St Martin's Op-Shop, and close to 40 charities and community groups who receive goods from the centre for assorted needs. You really get a sense of an encouraging circle of support amongst individuals and groups who all have the shared vision of helping the community.

The volunteers ensure stock is regularly refreshed in the shop, and they have an ongoing arrangement with Uniting Church agency, Good Sammy Enterprises who collect surplus stock on a twice-weekly basis to be used through their op-shop and recycling systems.

Janice also emphasised the focus on sustainability, finding ways to ensure there is minimal waste with their donations to reduce landfill.

Funds from the Op-Shop support a range of church and community initiatives, including support for YouthCare, UnitingWA, and regular donations to international projects supported by the Uniting Church's International Partnerships and Development Commission.

A Cuppa and Community

Marty's Community Centre is a weekly initiative that is currently run every Thursday morning at the church. Volunteers greet people with a friendly smile, and a warm and welcoming atmosphere. I was greeted by Nely Watson, co-ordinator of the Community Centre who explained some of the background of the space, as well as sharing with me some future plans for the centre.

The community centre was originally built in 2004 with a Lotterywest grant to be used as a low-cost food centre run by



Marty's community centre volunteers ready for the doors to open.



Volunteer Beryl with the donated bread ready to serve.

volunteers from the congregation and community. As the years went on, major food retail stores opened up nearby, and the food centre became harder to sustain. The congregation eventually made the decision to cease the food centre operations.

Now volunteers run a drop-in style space on Thursday mornings, offering a barista coffee or cup of tea and homemade treats to anyone who walks through the door.

It was clear upon visiting that there were many regulars who attended the centre for a cuppa and community, as well as people who drop in after visiting the Op-Shop. All are welcome. Norma, a regular at Marty's who used to volunteer at the food centre when it was operating, now enjoys coming along for conversation and friendly company. One of the other regulars picks her up every week so she can attend. During their gatherings birthdays are celebrated, stories are shared, and they regularly have activities for people to take part in.

The coffee and cakes are freely given, however there is a donation jar nearby for people who wish to make a contribution. Funds from these donations are split between assisting with running costs, and a donation to Frontier Services. Last year they were able to donate \$700 to Frontier Services from this jar!

An important part of Marty's community centre is the free bread products they are able to offer thanks to donations from local supermarkets. The bread is brought in on Thursday morning and displayed on shelves ready for anyone who wishes to take an item home. Beryl (pictured) is a regular volunteer who helps display and give out the bread. She's been doing it long enough to know to set aside certain items for regulars!

During my visit I was delighted to hear of the newest development coming from this wonderful community-led initiative. At their recent congregation meeting St Martin's Foothills Uniting

Church have agreed to partner with *Orange Sky*, a not-for-profit organisation offering a free mobile laundry service. The service will set up weekly on Thursdays, after the Op-Shop closes, offering free laundry for people in need in the community. During the operations of the *Orange Sky* laundry van the congregation will provide a BBQ for anyone attending. Partnering with this highly regarded volunteer-led organisation will offer yet another opportunity for the congregation to serve the foothills community.

The combination of the Op-Shop and Marty's Community Centre creates an energy and vibrancy around St Martin's Foothills Uniting Church that spreads out into the community. Thank you to Nely Watson, Mary Tulloch, and their amazing teams of volunteers who not only made me feel so welcome, but so wonderfully demonstrated Christian hospitality and service in action.



New Moderator to be Elected

A new Moderator is elected every three years and is the pastoral and spiritual leader for the Uniting Church in WA.

In September this year, at the 49th Annual Meeting of the Synod of Western Australia, the Uniting Church WA will elect a new Moderator-elect. This person will succeed Rev Dr Ian Tozer as Moderator commencing at the 50th Annual Meeting of the Synod of WA in September 2026 for the triennium 2026 to 2029.

Being Moderator is a big commitment. The person who is elected will serve as Moderator-elect for a year, before serving as Moderator for three years, and then as Ex-Moderator for another three.

The Moderator is a pastor, a proclaimer, a prophetic voice for the Uniting Church in WA. They can be lay or ordained, male or female, and from any cultural background.

As we begin to collectively seek the call of God for this important leadership role, a nominating committee is asking members of the Church to prayerfully consider,

then nominate, a person who might strongly exercise this role which includes:

- Providing visionary, pastoral and faith leadership for the Church
- Visiting the Church in action, encouraging its mission.
- Attending, calling and chairing meetings as required.
- Ensuring the proper ordering of the life of the Church.
- Offering wise counsel for its faith and standards.
- Speaking on behalf of the Church and representing the Church on public occasions.

In 1977, three churches responded to the call to mission in a new church, the Uniting Church in Australia. Their hope in this union was clearly articulated in a Statement to the Nation.

Since then, our call to mission in God's world has been central to all that we do.

Now, as we look to the future, we value the leadership of our Moderator and look with great anticipation to new leadership, building on past relationships with Congress and with intercultural

congregations, and look forward to fresh expressions of faith within our agencies, schools and congregations.

We seek a Moderator who will guide us into this hope-filled future. Someone who will build and maintain the strong and diverse community that is the Synod of Western Australia.

Who do you know in the Uniting Church WA that could serve in this role? It's time to let them know.

The discerning starts now.

To receive an information package containing the nomination form please email Amanda Rigby, Senior Executive Support and Committee Governance Officer for the Uniting Church WA - amanda.rigby@wa.uca.org.au

For enquiries, please contact Susy Thomas, Ex-Moderator, Convenor of the Moderatorial Nominating Committee, at p.sthomas@icloud.com

Completed nominations are to be sent to Susy Thomas c/- the Uniting Church Centre by Monday 30 June 2025.



Renewed vision for a place of healing and hope

Wendy Hendry

An historic partnership has been realised through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between Beanang Kwuurt Institute (BKI), the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress, WA Regional Committee (UAICC WA) and the West Australian Stolen Generations Aboriginal Corporation (WASGAC), trading as Yokai: Healing our Spirit, to support initiatives relating to truth, justice and healing at the former site of the Sister Kate's Children's home in Queens Park. The partnership was announced in a statement by WASGAC on 7 March 2025.

Beanang Kwuurt Institute (BKI), established in 2007, arose from a vision of the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress, WA Regional Committee, led by the late Rev Sealin Garlett, for a social and community service agency assisting vulnerable people, and especially Aboriginal people from its base on the former site of Sister Kate's Home.

The establishment of BKI was a reflection of the Uniting Church

in Australia's Covenant with the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress. The Uniting Church in Australia has been in Covenant with the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress since July 1994.

However, over the years BKI experienced some challenges. Despite significant efforts over a long period of time to achieve the vision of BKI, in May 2024 the Uniting Church in WA made the

difficult decision, at the request of Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress, to close BKI in its current form. After extensive discussions the volunteer BKI Board was suspended, with operations at the site ceasing in December 2024.

In a statement by UAICC WA in December last year, WA Congress said,

"We are not powerful or perfect, but we are trying to be faithful to the calling God has on our lives to

serve our community and support those in need, and to do so in a way that honours our Culture and our Old People.

This is why our predecessors set up Beanang Kwuurt Institute (BKI) and ran it for many years – to be an Indigenous led and run place of support and healing for our people. This remains our vision and we are committed to seeing BKI restored to its full potential.

"We have a vision for BKI to once again become a place of healing and hope."

We know, deep in our spirit, the importance of this place. It is a special place culturally. It is also a site of significance to many Stolen Generations survivors and their families as it used to be Sister Kate's where so many of our kids were taken."

They then spoke of their lament at the more recent struggles at BKI and of their intention for the site which is of significance to so many people:

"We have a vision for BKI to once again become a place of healing and hope."

In the months to follow, a new Board has been appointed for BKI, with Rev Robert Jetta, who is currently the Chair of UAICC WA, appointed as Chairperson of BKI.

The new partnership with BKI, UAICC WA and WASGAC/Yokai will enable the vision of BKI, founded by the late Rev Sealin Garlett in 2007, to continue.

Rev Robert Jetta, signed the Memorandum of Understanding, along with Dr Jim Morrison, Chair

of WASGAC, in early March saying, "This is a special moment for BKI as this will enable the long-awaited vision of the late Rev Sealin Garlett, who founded BKI, to be put into place, for BKI to partner with Yokai to enable this site to provide a range of services for Stolen Generations Survivors and their families and for all Aboriginal families who need support".

At the time of writing, plans arising from the partnership were still evolving.

At a special meeting of the Synod of Western Australia on 22 March decisions were supported in relation to the newly appointed Board of BKI. At the meeting Uniting Church WA Moderator, Rev Dr Ian Tozer, offered a formal apology to Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress, WA Regional Committee about recent events related to WA Congress and BKI in the spirit of the Covenant. He said:

"As Christians, we are not immune to struggle with how to respond to complex situations. So, we come to you members of Congress WA;

we confess our shortcomings, we regret the ways our actions have knowingly or unknowingly failed you, and we ask for your grace and forgiveness.

We ask that together we can learn from these experiences.

We commit to the Covenant we have made, and we pray that, through the grace of God, even as we stumble or make wrong turns, we will come back together and journey alongside each other as First and Second Peoples."

The media statement from WASGAC can be found on their website - <https://yokai.com.au/partnership-at-sister-kates-children-home/>

The statement from UAICC WA and the Apology to Congress from the Moderator can be found on the Uniting Church WA website - <https://unitingchurchwa.org.au/news/>



(l-r) Rev Mitchell Garlett, Brett Ingram, Seated: Rev Robert Jetta, Dr Jim Morrison.



James's path to recovery

Marissa Williams, Uniting WA

James believes his struggles with drug and alcohol addiction were influenced by low self-esteem worsening to the point he felt he did not deserve any help.

In 2021, James had everything: a supportive family, a house, car, job, friends, and a girlfriend. But his life took a drastic turn when he became involved with some unhealthy influences. He then made some bad decisions, and this snowballed into addictions and homelessness.

Despite his family's efforts, James's behaviour made it challenging for them to provide the support he needed. His romantic relationship broke down. He was evicted repeatedly from share houses.

James started sleeping on the streets on and off for about 1.5 years, never having a place to rest, always moving on and having belongings stolen. He rode trains to get out of the weather and accumulated transit fines from unpaid train fares. It was a demoralising experience.

"People experiencing homelessness feel so unseen by the world. I felt like people didn't want to help and I learned not to trust anyone."

His low point came when he considered taking his own life by jumping in front of a train. It was on that day that another rough sleeper saw that he needed help and brought him to Uniting WA's Tranby Engagement Hub.

"The [Tranby] support worker said to me, you can change your life today; you just have got to be willing to do the work."

Navigating a complex system that you've never been exposed to while sticking to personal goals and motivations isn't an easy task.

Tranby support workers told James where to access services for meals and vouchers and put his name down for transitional accommodation. Eventually James got a room in transitional group housing where he slowly found normality again.

Seeing his determination, Uniting WA's support workers supported

him to attend an intensive rehabilitation program.

James is now sober, employed, living independently and has been reunited with his family, including nieces he adores. He has been slowly paying off all his transit fines.

While James's story highlights personal choices, we also recognise that homelessness often results from systemic issues. Common causes include lack of affordable housing, unemployment, poverty, mental illness, and under-resourced support services. James's experience, though unique, shows the complexity of personal and systemic factors that can lead to homelessness.



(l-r) – H&S group member Alison Rowe, GCWA Secretary Cheryl McMillan, H&S President Robyn Edwards and GCWA Vice President Dianne Franklyn.

Group stitches its way to the heart of WA grandparents

Juniper

The Hugs and Stitches craft group at Juniper Chrystal Halliday Retirement Living is helping lighten the financial load for grandparent carers across the state.

For the past 15 years, members of the group have supported a variety of charities by making everything from jackets for premature babies to knee rugs, library bags and scarfs.

Former Juniper employee Robyn Edwards started Hugs and Stitches in 2010, and since then the group of Juniper Chrystal Halliday residents and friends has offered a social outlet to knit, chat and enjoy a cuppa each Thursday.

A couple of years ago, the group got word of the compassionate efforts of Grand Carers WA, which supports grandparents who take on the role of primary carers for their grandchildren.

For the past two Christmases, Hugs and Stitches has donated \$2000 to Grand Carers WA from proceeds raised from a shopping centre stall selling knitted wares and raffles.

"It's lovely for the members to feel that they are contributing to the community and to have that sense of achievement and personal satisfaction with what they create," Robyn said.

Grand Carers WA Vice President Diane Franklyn said the cost for many grandparents in WA who

were solely raising grandchildren on a pension was challenging and the group was enormously grateful to Hugs and Stitches.

"They are part of our family, we very much appreciate all the work they do," Diane said.

Each year, Grand Carers WA helps members from around the state with a \$300 food fund at Christmas and twice-yearly educational funding.

"The help we receive from groups like Hugs and Stitches makes all the difference," Diane said.

"It might go towards new shoes for the school year and a backpack, so they can feel like the other kids.

"The love Hugs and Stitches shows us helps keep us going."



Re-discovering the church's Social Justice voice

Dr Alison Atkinson-Phillips and Rev Dr Elaine Ledgerwood

When many people think 'Uniting Church', they think 'social justice' and right from our first Statement to the Nation, expressing God's love to the world through social justice has been a core element of our identity. In Western Australia, the Social Justice Commission has been an important part of our Synod, leading and resourcing thinking about the important issues of the day.

It was back in May 2024, during the 'Trek for Timor' event, that former Social Justice Commission member Rev Sophia Lizares mentioned to Alison Atkinson-Phillips her sadness about the demise of the Commission, especially in the context of the ongoing conflict in Palestine. Alison shared Sophia's concerns and was invited to join a conversation with Rev Dr Elaine Ledgerwood. From this initial group of three, the flame of social justice was reignited.

Alison explains that this approach is both biblical and a way of working that she teaches to Community Development students at Murdoch University.

"The bible tells us that when two or three people are gathered together, God will be there. But it also teaches us that three is a powerful number

- after all, we worship a God who is three in one. In Community Development practice, we talk about 'triads' as a way of working - if you have a stool with two legs it falls over, but add another leg, and you have a stable structure. So as soon as we had three people who were passionate about doing this work, we knew we could move forward."

Whilst the Presbytery of WA's commissioning of a resource about the conflict in Gaza was an important start, it was also important to find a way to continue the work of Social Justice with limited resources. A meeting was called of interested people, and a new model of working was developed. Synod 2024 elected a new Commission, with Elaine and Alison as co-chairs. The Commission is a mix of previous members, including Sophia and Dr Bob French, and new members Michael Chester (Co-CEO of Uniting WA) and Darian Partington.

Social justice is not about taking a particular political perspective; it is instead, a combination of practical action and public theology that involves critical thinking about faith, our understanding of God, life, and a conversation with society, particularly with its most vulnerable members. Members of the Commission are from across the theological spectrum and share the passion for speaking God's love

and grace into the wider society.

Synod 2024 also saw the launch of a new idea: the social justice 'hive', bringing together all those who are busy working for justice. The idea of the Hive is to connect people who are passionately involved across a range of social justice areas of work, such as homelessness, prison justice or the environment, but who are either too busy or don't feel called to be part of a committee. To date, Hive members have resourced the Commission on issues about the environment and Gaza, as well as contributing to the 2025 state election resource "Your faith - your voice - your vote."

The Commission is also working with our colleagues nationally; we are grateful for the support from other Synods. This currently includes preparing a revised version of *Our Vision for a Just Australia* for the upcoming federal election.

With the many and varied issues facing our society and our world, it's easy to feel overwhelmed by the different needs. Individually, it is true, that we probably cannot do much to change what is happening, but together we can make a greater difference. The Hive invites you to focus on your one (or two) passions and resource the wider church on that issue.

If you are interested in being part of the Hive, email chair.socialjustice@wa.uca.org.au.

A Prayer of Confusion

Rev Dr Elaine Ledgerwood

I am confused, God. I am confused when I look out at all the beauty of this earth and see people responding in fear.

I am confused when I grow through the challenge of knowing who are different and see others who respond to difference with utter contempt and hatred.

I am confused when I look at all that we have learnt as humanity, all the improvements we have done together, at the ways that we can work together and achieve far more than any of us could possibly do on our own, when I look at all of this and yet there are those who isolate themselves and retreat into the past - into an imagined golden age that never was.

Or worse, they certainly do retreat, but they retreat to deny

all those wonderful changes and instead look back to a time of hatred, war, and separation.

I am confused when people who claim to speak of the Word call empathy a sin and see hatred as the way forward.

Take my confusion, O Word of Life, help me through it, call me to embody a new way - a way that lives out your hope, your love, your grace, your compassion - until once again humanity looks to hope and calls hatred out for what it is. Remind me again so I have clarity and understand the compassionate love that you would have our world know. Amen.



OUR VISION FOR A JUST AUSTRALIA

2025



Our Vision for a Just Australia

In April 2025, the National Assembly released its *Our Vision for A Just Australia* resource which looks ahead to the 2025 Federal Election. Just as the Western Australian election resources relied on a shared effort, this resource is a collaboration of all those involved in justice work across the whole UCA. Uniting Church President, Rev Charrisa Suli, has talked about the importance of talanoa, "a space of open, honest and respectful dialogue", asking congregations to "enter into talanoa within our communities, reflecting on the values that shape our society and advocating for policies that uphold human dignity, justice, and peace."

The Vision document is designed so that it also has a use beyond the election. By focussing on a vision for the future, the hope is that Uniting Church members and communities will use it to discuss, understand and advocate for what we care about as the UCA based on our vision for the kind of nation and world we want to see.

Our Vision for a Just Australia names our values and key aspects across seven foundations: First Peoples; creation care; a welcoming nation; a just economy; an inclusive society; flourishing communities (urban/rural); and a just and peaceful world. Each foundation includes our hopes, the Biblical witness, what the UCA has said before on that topic, the current reality, and some questions to help people discuss and engage with their community/ local MP.

In the words of Rev Suli:

"Now is the time to be the Church that Christ calls us to be—the Church the world needs us to be—bold, compassionate, and unafraid to work for justice."

— Rev Charrisa Suli, President, Uniting Church in Australia

The resource can be found on the UCA Assembly website - uniting.church/a-vision-for-a-just-australia/



The Hedland Fijian Uniting Church gathered after worship during Lora Brown's visit.

New life for Port Hedland church

Wendy Hendry

The Uniting Church in Port Hedland is being refreshed and made ready for a worshipping community to breathe new life into the buildings!

Although the history of the Uniting Church presence in Port Hedland pre-dates Union, taking us back to both the Presbyterian Australian Inland Mission (AIM) and the Federal Methodist Inland Mission (FMIM), construction of the current Uniting Church worship centre in Port Hedland was completed in September 1976.

Over many years the congregation in Port Hedland has played a significant role in the life of the remote Pilbara community. However, as the congregation changed in recent years, by 2018

the doors were closed on the church building, and from then until now was left unused and in somewhat disrepair due to the lack of congregation presence.

The Pilbara towns of Port and South Hedland are home to a diverse multicultural community of people. People come from many places to work and live in the bustling mining and port town. For the last couple of years, a group of Fijian families, referred to as the Port Hedland Fijian Fellowship, were meeting in members' homes for Sunday worship, prayer meetings and bible

studies. As their group continued to grow they began gathering for worship services in a room at South Hedland Lotteries House. Most families were members of the Methodist Church in Fiji, and joined the Uniting Church when they arrived in Australia.

Rev David Jackson, Frontier Services Bush Chaplain in the Pilbara Patrol, connected with this vibrant group in early 2024 and began to visit regularly during his Patrol in the area, providing spiritual and pastoral support to the Fellowship. During this time David has been walking

alongside the Fellowship as they explored the possibility of formally becoming part of the Uniting Church, and in potentially using the church property in Port Hedland. As these pathways were explored, work was being undertaken between the various areas of the church with responsibility for property and ministry.

At the November 2024 Presbytery of WA meeting the Port Hedland Fijian Fellowship was officially recognised as the Hedland Fijian Faith Community of the Uniting Church in Australia!

At the time of writing, the Hedland Fijian Uniting Church community, supported by Rev David Jackson, and the Synod and Presbytery, are preparing the building for an official re-opening. Refurbishment of the property is currently underway, - assisted by a grant from the Future Mission Fund, with regular busy bees taking place, and with local companies working on required maintenance and ensuring building compliance.

Rev Jackson said, "I have been overwhelmed and humbled by the support this endeavor has received from the Presbytery and Synod.



The Uniting Church building in Port Hedland.

They have caught the vision that the Fijian Faith Community has for their community and they have made this possible. Lora Brown recently visited from the Synod to check the scope of works and the Fijian community embraced her visit with enthusiasm, feasting her in. Their hospitality is second to none. That hospitality extended the entire long weekend."

The official opening is planned to take place on 28 June 2025. Celebrations will include a Church Dedication service followed by morning tea at the Church, and then

a traditional Fijian ceremony and feast to follow at Gratwick Hall, Port Hedland.

Tevita Naroba, the Hedland Fijian Uniting Church council secretary said "For the Hedland Fijian Faith Community, membership in the Uniting Church represents an exciting journey that connects them with their heritage while embracing new opportunities."

We wish our most northern Uniting Church WA family every blessing as they journey together as the hands and feet of God in this place.



At the Presbytery of WA meeting in November 2024 (l-r) Tevita Naroba, Rev David Jackson, Rev Claire Pickering, Timoci Turaga.



Discover the Good Stuff

Good Sammy is more than just op shops

Good Samaritan Enterprises

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 impact.

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.

Together, we've already:

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

"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 said. "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."

Discover more good stuff about Good Sammy at <https://goodsammy.com.au/goodstuff-containers/>.

Did you know?

- 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 five cash drive-thru locations and more than 41 convenient Drop & Go locations!



Autumn Appeal 2025

Frontier Services

Bush Chaplains like Noel travel the distance to those bereft and grieving.

In rural Australia, where the vast landscapes can feel isolating, the role of Bush Chaplains can be a beacon of hope. Bush Chaplain Noel knows firsthand the importance of being present for those facing life's toughest challenges, such as grief and loss.

Meet Paul, a farmer who recently faced the heartbreaking loss of his son.

In the bush, access to mental health services means overcoming the kilometres, the waitlists, and the social stigma.

Paul's son, who experienced depression, found himself far from the support he desperately needed. Tragically, he took his own life, leaving Paul grappling with profound grief.

"People make terrible decisions when they're desperate," Noel reminds us. This truth resonates

deeply in rural communities where the rate of suicide is significantly higher than in urban areas.

For men like Paul, the barriers to seeking mental health support can seem insurmountable. Even if you can overcome the fear of social stigma, who do you turn to?

Many face their pain alone, gritting their teeth, resorting to keeping busy to cope.

Noel's role as a Bush Chaplain extends beyond just a cuppa and a chat; it's about establishing a relationship built on trust.

When learning about Paul's situation, Noel traveled two hours to meet him. This gesture alone meant the world to Paul, who expressed, "It definitely helps being able to have a chat with Noel. Just the fact that somebody cared and wanted to help... it restores your faith in human nature."

With the support of donors, Bush Chaplains like Noel can travel the distance to sit beside those in pain



Paul and his dog.

and grief, letting them know they have someone to lean on, reminding them that they matter.

Your contributions help build these vital connections, providing practical assistance and emotional support to individuals like Paul.

If you or someone you know is struggling with mental health issues, remember that support is available. You can reach out to services like Lifeline Australia (13 11 14) and Beyond Blue (1300 22 4636) for assistance.

To donate to the Frontier Services Autumn Appeal go to <https://frontierservices.org/donate/>



Rev Dr Mike Frost (left), Rev Alex Sangster with Rev Dr Cathie Lambert (right)

Summer Spirit 2025

Rev Andy Broadbent

Summer Spirit 2025 was a time of encouragement, challenge, and inspiration.

The event started on Friday night at the Floreat Bowling Club, where 80 people from congregations across the state gathered to enjoy a meal, fellowship, and hear from Rev Alexandra (Alex) Sangster. Alex encouraged us to embrace the ancient call to be instruments of peace and light in a dark world. Sharing stories from her placement in St Kilda, she reminded us that “mission doesn’t mean fancy, it means love,” and no matter our context, God provides opportunities to love and bring God’s light wherever we are.

Goldfields Bush Chaplain, Pastor Lindsay Ginn also shared a song he had written specifically for Summer

Spirit, titled “Ride the Wild Water,” which perfectly set the tone for the rest of the weekend.

The next day, 110 of us gathered at All Saints Floreat Uniting Church to continue our journey. The morning consisted of two sessions from renowned missiologist Rev Dr Mike Frost, who in his book *Mission is the Shape of Water* argues that missional engagement must be context-driven—there’s no ‘one size fits all’. Building on Alex’s message, Mike shared that followers of Jesus are called to point people to God’s reign through both words and actions, showing a new way of being human as embodied by Jesus Christ.

After a delicious lunch provided by All Saints Floreat’s volunteers, Alex kept us engaged with playful activities, reminding us that as followers of Jesus, we are often called to act ‘foolishly’ by dreaming of and striving for new possibilities, even when the world says they can’t or shouldn’t be done.

The day concluded with a final, rousing rendition of the Summer Spirit theme song, “Ride the Wild Water,” a beautiful reminder of the call to join wholeheartedly with what God is doing in the world.

You can find the lyrics to the theme song on the next page along with a link to Lindsay’s YouTube channel to listen.

RIDE THE WILD WATER

Words and Music copyright Lindsay Ginn 2024

Hear Me call you to the water
 Feel my spirit pull your soul
 Take my hand and I will lead you
 Where the raging billows roll
 Don’t look down or you’ll start sinking
 Look ahead and you will see
 There’s no need to be fearful
 When you ride the waves with me

Ride the wild water, walk out on the sea
 Sail out from the harbour
 Come and follow after me
 Ride the wild water, there’s no need to fear
 Though the wind and waves surround you
 Take my hand I’m always near
 Ride the wild sea

I can choose to just stay normal
 I can choose to play it safe
 I can choose to never take a chance
 Or choose fear over faith
 I can choose to sail a quiet stream
 Or a river still and long
 But it’s only on the high seas
 That I’ll grow a faith that strong

Ride the wild water, walk out on the sea
 Sail out from the harbour
 Come and follow after me
 Ride the wild water, there’s no need to fear
 Though the wind and waves surround you
 Take my hand I’m always near
 Ride the wild sea

You can listen to this song on Ps Lindsay Ginn’s Youtube page here - <https://bit.ly/RideWildWater> or scan the QR code to take you there.



Summer Spirit Feedback

JANINE MCDONALD

“Summer Spirit 2025 was such an engaging and inspiring event with two fabulously passionate and experienced mission-focused leaders. The whole weekend was professionally presented and as always, the hospitality at All Saints Floreat Church was wonderful. A credit to the UCEF team and the Cedal Committee.”

KARL SULLIVAN

“Summer Spirit 2025 was a truly profound and moving experience. The Friday night dinner was a great time of fellowship and community which led quite naturally into the Saturday program. Our first speaker presented a passionate and thought provoking account of what mission can look like in the 21st century, and our second presenter facilitated two workshops that were deeply engaging and inspiring. Overall I came away from the weekend feeling motivated and empowered to go after it and re-imagine how the work of Christ best makes sense in my context. I also found myself singing along to the theme song all through Sunday afternoon!”



(l-r) Ps Lindsay Ginn, Rev Dr Cathie Lambert, Rev Alex Sangster, Rev Andy Broadbent, Mahshid Zadeh.



Rev Alex Sangster leading participants in play.



The Power of Perspective

Rev Dr Cathie Lambert

In November 2024, I attended the Association for Reflective Practice in Theological Education Conference in Adelaide. It was a gathering of people from around Australia and New Zealand who were involved in education and formation of ministry practitioners. Some were formators for denominational leaders: priests, pastors and ministers. Others led clinical pastoral education programs associated with hospitals or other chaplaincy contexts. The participants were from diverse backgrounds and contexts and there was a great deal of rich discussion.

I learnt a lot from the presentations and incidental conversations, however, there was one discussion that surprised me and caused me to rethink the language we use in our own formation program. One woman shared that the current cohort of formation students that she was working with had several people from African backgrounds. As she introduced the concept of field education, one courageous student mentioned that the term 'field education' was very difficult for them. 'Going out into the field' had negative connotations associated with their experienced oppression of those who worked manually in the fields. They did not want to experience the hurt of more 'field education'. As a result, the woman sharing this story altered the language used in her context, speaking of the opportunity to

learn ministry skills in a Ministry Practice Placement. Her story had an impact on me. I saw the term 'field placement' from an entirely different perspective that I had never considered. As a result, I chose to rename this aspect of our formation program in the same way. In July this year, the Uniting Centre for Education and Formation (UCEF) will be holding a Formation Focus Week. We hope this will become an annual event that will help the Uniting Church in Western Australia to intentionally highlight the importance of lifelong learning. In 2025, our theme will be "The Power of Perspective". Our perspective on faith, God, Jesus and the Christian way are shaped by our experiences, culture and teachings throughout our lives. It is, however, one perspective which may be limited

and partial. Listening to people who are different to us allows us to learn from a new perspective we may not have considered.

You may have heard the story of the group of blind men who discover an elephant for the first time. The one who felt the trunk described it like a snake, the one who felt the leg proclaimed it was like a tree trunk, the one in contact with the tusk pronounced it was a spear, and so on. Various versions of the story have different endings. In some, the discussion descends into a heated argument with each person holding to their experience of the elephant. In other accounts, the men learn from each other and come to a more rounded description of an elephant. Perspective holds power. It holds the power to divide and separate us from one another. However, it also holds the power to bring about learning, growth and transformation.

The Uniting Church is wonderfully diverse, bringing people together of different ages, cultures, genders, and theological understandings. As with the blind men and the elephant, our differing perspectives could be a characteristic that divides and separates us. Our hope is that as a community we will choose the more challenging path of embracing our different outlooks in order that we may all grow and learn.

The Formation Focus Week will be held from 21 to 27 July 2025. We invite you to join UCEF in a week of exploring "The Power of Perspective". Resources will be provided for a group discussion in your local context. This may be used in a regular bible study or fellowship group. You may also choose to bring together a group of people especially for this week. The resources will use a variety of modes to encourage you and your community to engage with differing perspectives to your own.

On the evening of Friday the 25 July, we will come together as the wider Uniting Church in Western Australia. There will be an opportunity to meet in person or online. During this evening, we will continue to explore the theme and have time

to meet with others from around our church.

Resources for Sunday worship will also be provided for congregations to bring the theme together in an act of worship. More details will follow shortly, but we hope you will save the dates and plan to engage in Uniting Centre for Education and Formation's Focus Week on "The Power of Perspective".

Check the Uniting Church WA events page for details of Formation Focus Week - unitingchurchwa.org.au/events or contact the UCEF team - pa.education@wa.uca.org.au





Junior School students enjoying the new outdoor learning space.



A year of celebration at PLC Perth

Tiffany Gossage

With compassion, we connect. With capability, we solve. With bravery, we act. With strength, we persevere.

2025 holds a special significance for PLC Perth as we celebrate our 110th year. We look forward to commemorating this milestone throughout the year and celebrating the wonderful sense of pride we have in our community.

For 110 years, a PLC Perth education has empowered girls to shape their world. We celebrate a legacy of nurturing brave, capable, strong, and compassionate young women ready to embrace the challenges and opportunities of their time. From our earliest students to today's generation, PLC has fostered an environment where girls discover their unique strengths and develop the confidence to lead, to challenge, to innovate, to

collaborate, to serve, to grow, to inspire, to be themselves.

We honour the visionaries who established this remarkable school and the countless educators who have dedicated themselves to inspiring a love of learning. PLC girls are encouraged to be brave in their pursuits, capable in their endeavours, strong in their convictions, and compassionate in their interactions with others.

Like all the previous Principals and Headmistresses who have led PLC in the past, Ms Cate Begbie is thrilled to lead with the same compassion, bravery, strength, and capability in this, our 110th year.

"I feel very honoured to be part of this important year in our College's history and look forward to celebrating with our community at our events throughout the year," said Ms Begbie.

As we mark this milestone, we reaffirm our commitment to providing an exceptional education that prepares girls for a future filled with possibility.

At the beginning of this year, we opened a new outdoor learning environment for our Junior School Students, providing a strong environment where they too can be strong, brave, capable and compassionate. We look forward to the next chapter, continuing to empower young women to make a positive impact on the world for another 110 years and beyond.

We are sharing the stories of inspiring women from our community—past and present—who have shaped our rich history. Please visit <https://www.plc.wa.edu.au/a-year-of-celebration-at-plc-perth/> or PLC social media for more inspiration.

Love and legacy

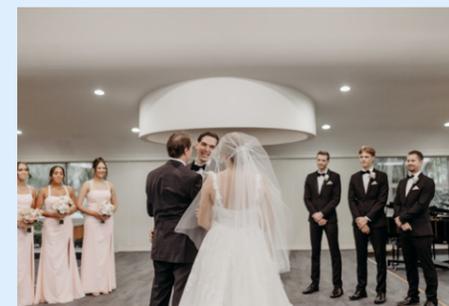
Paul Whitfield, Penrhos College Chaplain

The Penrhos College Chapel is more than just a place of worship. It is a sanctuary of love, legacy and lifelong connections, where generations of students return to celebrate life's most meaningful moments.

It's such a joy to meet graduates when they return to the College for their wedding or the baptism of a child. Alongside the celebration of a marriage and the cuteness of a baby, it's heartwarming to witness

how families, who once embarked on campus tours beginning at the Chapel and concluding in the rose garden, now come full circle to celebrate these significant milestones.

During their time at Penrhos, our students develop a deep bond with the Chapel, which stands as a symbol of faith, community and tradition. From the Junior School girls starting their week with Chapel services to the regular attendance of Secondary School students, the Chapel also serves as a vibrant



hub for music groups, choirs and performances, including ATAR music exams. In my time, I have witnessed countless memorable events, from leadership speeches to year meetings and even talent shows.

Given the many memories students form at the Chapel it is no surprise

they consider it as a place to come back to. After graduation, alongside marriages and baptisms, alumni have returned for memorial services and to commemorate their loved ones in our Memorial Garden.

Often bridesmaids and godparents turn out to be Penrhos graduates, not to mention the number of Wesley old boys who come out of the woodwork. At my first Penrhos

baptism, we were able to find the Godmother's name prominently displayed on the Chapel Captain's board. The organist who played at my first Penrhos wedding knew our venue well, having learned to play at Wesley College.

As a place of cherished memories and stories passed down through generations, the Chapel stands as living testament to the rich history

of Penrhos College. Whether it's discovering the names of past students inscribed on the Chapel Captain's board or hearing anecdotes from parents and grandparents who attended special events, every corner of the Chapel resonates with the echoes of our shared past.

St Stephen's School A Heart for Service

Fairlea Baxter

The inaugural St Stephen's School Vietnam Service-Learning Tour proved to be an eye-opening experience for students.

Designed to foster a heart for service and provide a deeper understanding of global communities the ten-day tour saw the School partnering with not-for-profit organisation Hearts for Hue. Established in 2007, Hearts for Hue's mission is to improve the lives of resettled villagers through health, education, sanitation, water access, environmental awareness and household economic development.

For the students from St Stephen's School it seemed only natural that their service work focused on education, specifically transforming the music room at Quang Phu kindergarten into a magical creative space. Students worked as a team to design, paint and set up the classroom. For Year 12 student Elissa Groves, seeing the children's reaction to their new music room was one of the highlights of the trip.

"The most meaningful moment to me was seeing the looks on all the kids' faces as they walked into their brand-new music room that we had just built," Elissa shared. "Acts of service are incredibly important,

no matter how big or small they may seem."

For tour leader and Head of the Carramar campus, Mr Bennet Andrews, his highlight was watching St Stephen's School students conduct English lessons with Quang Phu pupils,

"Watching students 'click' into teacher-mode is a wonderful experience for an educator. It is a bit like watching someone take the training wheels off a bike for the first time – start slow, a few necessary wobbles and then they get it -and never forget it."

Donna Wilson, Service-Learning Tours Administration Officer, states that the purpose of the tour is to instill a commitment to service in students, encouraging them to contribute to the welfare of others both at home and overseas. Ultimately the tours help to broaden a student's worldview and strengthen their understanding of service. Mr Andrews agreed, "Living out service in communities less fortunate is the most powerful way to grow your own empathy and understanding of others, the echo of service experience is enormous, as it serves as a reference point for someone's own understanding of their place in the world and the plight of others."



St Stephen's School Year 12 students with Quang Phu kindergarten kids.

Whilst this was the first tour to Vietnam, service learning tours have been an integral part of the St Stephen's School's service learning program for years, offering secondary pupils the chance to engage with communities, embrace different cultures and make a meaningful impact.

Later this year, a group of Year 8 students will tour through the breathtaking Kimberley region, spending one week at the newly opened Manjali Studio School. This immersive experience will allow students to live, learn and share experiences with Manjali students. Beyond their time at Manjali, students will contribute to an art project for the Mowanjum Community Centre and explore stunning landscapes that make the Kimberley such a special place.

With service and community at the heart of these tours, it is hoped students will not only leave an impact on the communities they visit but ultimately develop a lifelong love for service.

FAITHFUL FAMILIES: CREATING SACRED MOMENTS AT HOME

2017, ST LOUIS: CHALICE PRESS

BY TRACI SMITH

Review by Ps Julie Ridden

Ever wondered how to bring your faith into the everyday or significant family events? Then this is the book for you. Traci Smith, a mother and ordained Minister of the Presbyterian Church USA, has a passion for “helping families find time for connection and spiritual nourishment amid the hustle and bustle of daily life”.¹

Traci has collected a wide range of practical activities to connect family members with God and each other. She divides the book into three main sections.

Part One - Traditions includes activities around everyday routines such as bedtime or getting ready for school, and special days such as birthdays, Christmas and Easter.

Part Two - Ceremonies is about creating family traditions around life's transitions such as the first day of school or getting a driver's licence, and ceremonies around difficult times such as a death or a natural disaster.

Part Three - Spiritual Practices outlines simple ways in which

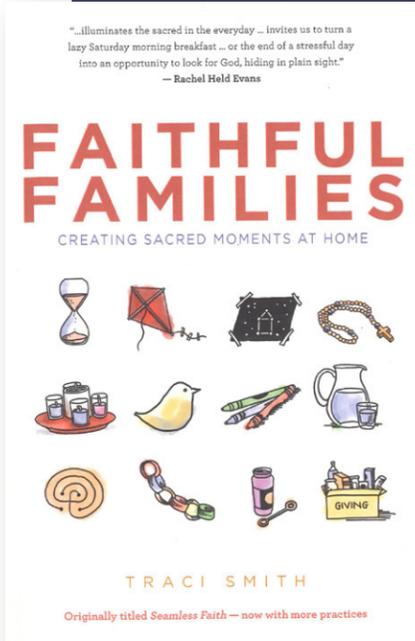
families can develop spiritual practices such as prayer, meditation or Lectio Divina.

Each activity begins with a brief description and a suggested age suitability for children. There are activities for a wide variety of ages, from newborns to older teens. Traci provides a list of materials required, which are common household or easily obtained items. She then supplies simple step by step instructions for carrying out the task. It concludes with some advice based upon experience, and variations of the activity that you might like to try.

The last couple of chapters of the book provide supplementary ideas for grandparents and church ministers to support faith development in the home.

This book contains very simple and practical activities for family use so that the Christian faith is not just about Sundays, but every day. This is an important book for any family library as family continues to be the most important influence in the development of faith in children.

Currently available from online bookstores.



Wendy Hendry

This year there are some significant anniversaries to mark in the life of the Uniting Church in Australia which will be celebrated over the weekend of 31 May and 1 June 2025, so our *From the Archives* will be a little different this edition.

On Sunday 1 June, the church will celebrate 195th anniversary of the first Methodist service which took place under a jarrah tree in what is now the Hay Street pedestrian mall. The service took place on 6 June 1830 conducted by Joseph Hardey. The tree is long gone, but a plaque still stands in the mall footway as recognition of this moment (pictured). Services took place out in the open for another four years before a chapel was built and opened on 22 June 1834.

From the Uniting Church in the City archives are two items of particular interest relating to this event. One is a block of wood, taken from the original Jarrah tree – note the notation on the wood incorrectly

names the service as 'Anglican', and the year '1829', but the understanding is that it's referring to the Methodist service. The other is a painting by Ernest Philpot which is an impression of the first Methodist service painted for the Centenary of the Wesley Church in April 1970. The artist donated the painting to the Perth Central Methodist Mission.



¹ About Traci - <https://tracismith.com/about-me/>

Celebrating Milestones - *continued*



Uniting Church in Australia President, Rev Charissa Suli.

To celebrate this milestone, on Sunday 1 June the Uniting Church in Australia President Rev Charissa Suli will attend and take part in the 10.00am communion service at the Wesley Uniting Church in the City, with Uniting Church WA Moderator Rev Dr Ian Tozer preaching.

In the afternoon of the same day there will be a worship service for the wider Uniting Church community to attend with Rev Charissa Suli preaching and a celebratory reception to follow.

The other milestones being recognised over this weekend are the 185th anniversary of the inauguration of the South Perth Methodist Church (1840) and the 100th anniversary of the South Perth Uniting Church building on Angelo Street (1925).

On Saturday 31 May Rev Charissa Suli will attend and take part in celebrations with the South Perth Uniting Church and community as they recognise 185 years of 'Keeping the Faith'. Celebrations will include a walking tour starting at Coode St Jetty in South Perth, visiting four significant church sites along the way. There will be songs, stories, and a word from the President. A bus will be made available for those unable to take part in the walk. Contact South Perth Uniting Church for more details – spertnuc@gmail.com

In the early days, the minister at Perth Wesley Church rowed across the Swan River to conduct services at the South Perth Methodist Church. Keep an eye out for details of these celebrations to see if any of the clergy involved will be reenacting this tradition.

With our President attending, this should be a grand weekend celebrating the heritage of the Uniting Church while looking forward to the future.



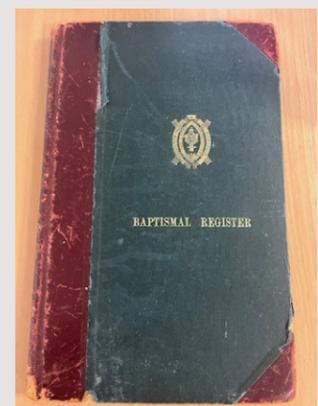
A Note About Baptism and Marriage Registers

Do you have any Marriage or Baptism Registers in your church that are completed, or not in use? Marissa Krajcar, Archives Co-ordinator would really appreciate for these to be brought into the Uniting Church WA archives for safe-keeping and to help maintain our records.

It is a requirement that these registers are kept up to date and sent to the Archives upon completion, or in the instance of a church closure.

The Archives are regularly receiving requests from the community for the baptism and marriage certificates but often find that the registers are yet to make their way to the Archives.

If you would like to contact Marissa about this, or any other Uniting Church WA Archives related matter she can be contacted on 9260 9800 or email archiveswa@wa.uca.org.au



Gaye's Family Quilt

St Martin's Foothills Uniting Church

At St Martin's Foothills Uniting Church as part of the Advent preparations for Christmas they drew on the Uniting Church President's Rev Charissa Suli's theme of "Threads of Love". One of the congregation members Gaye Lawrence showed and spoke about a quilt made by the multi-generations of her whole family for her parent's 70th Wedding Anniversary. It was given just two months before her Mother passed. It was a real message of the importance of connectedness.

In sharing with the congregation at the service, Gaye explained the story of the quilt:

"In 2014, two of my nieces suggested we make a quilt to give to my parents for their 70th Wedding Anniversary.

Each member of our family contributed by designing their own personal panel, with a different shade for each generation. The dark one in the centre represents Mum and Dad, the next is for their six children, then the grandchildren

and finally the great grandchildren (kept together as much as possible in family units).

As the date approached, Mum was hospitalised and we did not know whether or not she would be here for the anniversary. As a family, we decided to give the quilt to our parents before their anniversary. This caused a flurry of activity in order to complete it, with those who were able, helping.

The quilt was presented to them during their stay in hospital (Dad was boarding with Mum). I think as their children, we got as much joy in 'giving' as they did in 'receiving'.

Thankfully Mum was discharged from hospital and we were able to celebrate their milestone anniversary.

When Mum passed away a few months later, Dad loved using the quilt because he felt that he had all his family close.

"What do I see when I look at this quilt?", Gaye wrote, "I see the love I see the love radiating out from my parents and I am reminded



of the love, care, support and encouragement given to each one of us and which was also extended to many others. This quilt represents our family history and as a family, binds us together in love."

Celebrating 55 years of service!

Rev Reuben Edmonds, All Saints Floreat Uniting Church

This month, All Saints Floreat Uniting Church celebrated the retirement of Sylvia Ryan, who has been an elder of our congregation for 55 continuous years!

During her time as elder Sylvia has been involved in many ministries at our church. She has been a long supporter of the local school chaplaincy program, volunteered for many years as part of the church's playgroup, is the co-ordinator of the church's *With Love to the World* distribution, and is a strong advocate of the church's prayer chain. In 1988, Sylvia started a Know Your Bible study group, alongside Val Chew, which they continue to lead today.

One role of being an elder that Sylvia prioritised was pastoral care. Many members have been cared for by Sylvia and encouraged into their own ministries. For many years Sylvia was the convenor of the Care Group for the church and only retired from this role last year. Sylvia still sits as a member of the Care Group and continues to deeply care for members of our congregation, those who have been coming for decades and those who have just arrived.

On behalf of everyone at All Saints Floreat Uniting Church, thank you Sylvia for your devoted service to our church over the last 55 years as elder and for the many ways you will continue to serve and care for us.



Sylvia Ryan, who has been an elder of our congregation for 55 continuous years.

Trinity North Milestone

Helen Harmer

Trinity North Ladies Breakfast Fellowship met on 25 January for their first breakfast of 2025 and then enjoyed a wonderful morning celebrating the 100th birthday of one of their members, Billie Hinson.

The morning was made even more special with music from the Memory Lane Minstrels, a photo display, speech by Jan Thorpe and cake made by Yvonne Alexander.

Billie (Lilian) was born in Pingelly on 15 February 1925, one of nine children. Born into a Christian family her parents were members of the Salvation Army Church. At the age of 14 she went to live in Busselton with her eldest

sister, Jean. She trained as a telephonist at the Busselton Post Office, an important position as World War Two had just broken out and top secrets were transmitted between Cape Naturaliste Radar Station and Perth via the PO. She met her future husband, Jim, in Busselton when he returned from the war.

Billie's faith journey has been nurtured in congregations in Busselton Uniting (formerly Congregational), Scarborough Uniting (formerly Methodist), Greenwood Uniting and now as a member of Trinity North Uniting Church.

Billie has four Children, nine Grandchildren and 20 Great-Grandchildren



Walk to Save a Life – Trek 4 Timor 2025

Alison Dyall

It's not easy to put yourself into someone else's shoes but in some small way that's what the participants in the Trek for Timor are doing. We are trying to imagine how hard it is for the people in Timor Leste to have to walk many kilometres to seek medical attention. So we walk to raise funds to support a mobile medical clinic that visits rural remote villages in Timor Leste to improve the health and well being of people who otherwise may not be able to make the journey by themselves.

This year's Trek 4 Timor Perth is happening on Saturday 17 May starting at Mt Pleasant Uniting Church and walking to St Stephen's Applecross Uniting Church around the beautiful Swan River. There are three recommended routes, ranging from 4.5km to 7.2 km with a sumptuous afternoon tea at the end.

It's a great time of fresh air, exercise and fellowship. You can bring your dog, ride your bike, scooter or mobility machine. If you can't participate, please sponsor someone in your congregation or make a donation. We're trying to raise \$15 000 for the annual donation to Fundação Lafaek Diak (The Good Crocodile Foundation), our partners in Timor Leste.

To register for Trek 4 Timor go to - trybooking.com/CZRB

Trek 4 Timor
Walk to save a life
Saturday 17 May
@1.00pm
Mount Pleasant Uniting Church
to
St Stephen's Applecross
Uniting Church

walk | fundraise | donate

Can't Join Us?
Sponsor a friend or member of your church.
Donate
Donate on our event site or direct to:
East Timor Fundraising
BSB: 634 634
Acct: 100093518
Ref: T4T2025

The International Partnerships & Development Commission (IPDC) invite you to join them for a walk around the river to raise money for Lafaek Diak's mobile health clinic in Timor Leste. Operating out of the back of a 4WD, the clinic works its way around the remote villages of East Timor delivering medical aid and services, health promotion education and care, immunisations and clinics. Starting at Mount Pleasant Uniting Church, there will be three walk options to end up at St Stephen's Uniting Church in Applecross for afternoon refreshments. You can register to walk and fundraise or simply support this great cause with a donation. Go to our Trybooking site to register or donate!

Details and Registration:
www.trybooking.com/CZRB
or email - justice@wa.uca.org.au

Uniting Church in Australia
Western Australia

Celebrating the Baptism of Emanuel

Rev Lorraine Stokes

It was a day of celebration for the Holy Assyrian Church and associated family and friends on Sunday 2 March 2025 in the Fremantle Wesley Uniting Church. Rev Emanuel Audisho conducted the baptism of his first grandson, Emanuel Vince Audisho, the son of Vince and Lilit Audisho. Vince and Lilit had sought permission from Rev Emanuel to use his Christian name as is culturally relevant. It was special to the family to use the Fremantle Wesley church as Rev Emanuel's four granddaughters have been baptised by him at Fremantle.

Lilit's mother, Anait, and her sister Sona, visited from Armenia for the occasion bringing with them a jacket

specially embroidered with Emanuel's name for him to wear during his baptism.

The bilingual service (Arabic and English) included family members participating in the bible reading, prayers and the music.

The family was blessed by the Moderator Rev Dr Ian Tozer. Rev Lorraine Stokes from the Armadale Uniting Church preached for the service. Most members of the Holy Assyrian church are members of the Armadale Uniting Church. The Holy Assyrian church meets regularly for worship at Armadale and the congregations enjoy joint services.

Members of the Armadale congregation joined in the celebration with the family and congregation.



Pictured: Rev Emanuel Audisho, Vince Audisho, Lilit Audisho, Nahrain Audisho and baby Emanuel. Two very happy couples.



UNITING CHURCH WA Busselton Campsite

The Uniting Church WA campsite is located at 140 Caves Rd, Siesta Park, Busselton. With the adjacent dazzling waters of Geographe Bay and surrounding picturesque countryside, our campsite is an ideal location for school groups, youth camps and ministry retreats.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Hire bookings can only be accepted for members of the Uniting Church including employees, schools and agencies.

BOOKING OPTIONS

The campsite offers 21 powered sites and 7 unpowered sites. There are two booking options available:
Weekdays: Monday to Friday.
Weekends: Friday to Monday.

BOOK ONLINE

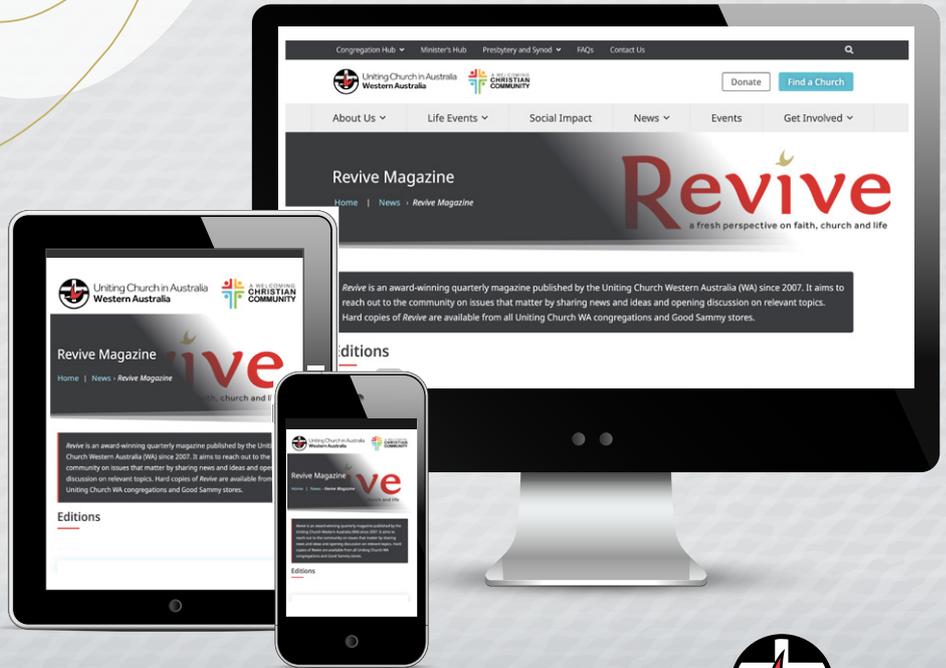
To find out more and book online go to our website via the QR code or go to - unitingchurchwa.org.au/congregation-hub/congregation-resources/campsite/
For group bookings email property@wa.uca.org.au



unitingchurchwa.org.au
(08) 9260 9800
property@wa.uca.org.au

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unitingchurchwa.org.au



Uniting Church in Australia
Western Australia

EDUCATION WITH Uniting Church Schools

Our seven independent schools provide education for over 8,000 students from Pre Kindergarten* to Year 12. They offer a variety of learning environments, from some of the oldest and best-known independent schools in WA to the more recently established colleges in new suburbs on the edge of the Perth metropolitan area. While these schools respect the faith diversity of all students, the story, values and practices of the Christian faith are expressed with integrity in order to nurture young lives for sound learning, faith, compassion and responsible service.



Methodist Ladies' College
356 Stirling Hwy
Claremont WA 6010
T 08 9384 4000
mlc.wa.edu.au



Penrhos College
6 Morrison St
Como WA 6152
T 08 9368 9500
penrhos.wa.edu.au



Presbyterian Ladies' College
14 McNeil St
Peppermint Grove
WA 6011
T 08 9424 6444
plc.wa.edu.au



Scotch College
76 Shenton Rd
Swanbourne WA 6010
T 08 9383 6800
scotch.wa.edu.au



St Stephen's School
Campuses in
Duncraig and Carramar
T 08 9243 2108
ststephens.wa.edu.au



Tranby College
90 Arpenteur Dr
Baldivis WA 6171
T 08 9524 2424
tranby.wa.edu.au



Wesley College
Corner of Coode St
and Angelo St
South Perth WA 6151
T 08 9368 8000
wesley.wa.edu.au

* Not all schools offer Pre Kindergarten.