

March 2026



Uniting Church in Australia
Synod of Western Australia



MODERATOR'S EASTER MESSAGE 2026

Hi, my name is David Jackson, I'm the Moderator of the Uniting Church in Western Australia and I bring this Easter message to you.

Each year the Uniting Church in WA holds an event called Summer Spirit. It is an event that calls our Uniting Church family together to hear, discuss and consider issues of faith and practise. This year's event titled 'Walking Together, Covenanting Together' commemorates the 30th anniversary of the Covenant between the Uniting Church in Australia and the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress.

We listened to stories of this land, the journey of the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress and the Covenant that calls us to walk together as First and Second peoples.

No punches were pulled. It is a story of dispossession, stolen generations and betrayal.

In 1994 the Uniting Church in Australia formally entered into a Covenant with the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress so that together we may contribute to a more just church and nation. It was a confronting time as it came after the Assembly went back on its own resolutions in 1982 where it committed to only celebrate the Bicentennial if sufficient progress had been made towards the just claims of the Aboriginal people for land rights, freedom to build their society and financial compensation.

Rather than walk away from the Uniting Church, the Aboriginal leader, the Reverend Charles Harris called the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress and the Uniting Church together to reconciliation, so that together they may face the unresolved issues of justice that separated them.

Combating racism is in our DNA as a church. Since its beginning in 1977, in the Statement to the Nation almost 50 years ago, the first Assembly of the Uniting Church pledged to seek the correction of injustices wherever they occur and to pledge ourselves to work for the eradication of poverty and racism within our society and beyond.

That pledge is no less important today, particularly in the light of events on the 26th of January this year when a man, said to hold white supremacist ideology, is alleged to have thrown a bomb into a crowd of First Nations people and supporters assembled in the Perth CBD at a peaceful Invasion Day rally. The homemade device, filled with screws and ball bearings, thankfully failed to detonate.

Aboriginal people around Australia reacted to the news of the attack, expressing their hurt and anger. The Premier of WA, Roger Cook, said in a statement that the attack was motivated by hateful, racist ideology. He went on to say that any attack on our First Nations people is an attack on us all.

To the fact that the device did not detonate was described by the WA Police Commissioner as sheer luck, and to some Aboriginal leaders attributed to ancestral protection.

Whether by luck or ancestral protection, the parallels with Easter are compelling. Both events are where a catastrophe is narrowly avoided. The bomb, if it should have detonated, would have been catastrophic to innocent women, children and elders. The death of Jesus, an innocent victim of political power plays, would have been catastrophic for the followers of Jesus if it had not been for Easter morning, when Jesus was raised from the dead.

Divine intervention led to the spread of the Gospel to every corner of the world. The bomb was thrown into an a crowd of 2500 people, including women, children and elders during a rally in support of First Nations people. Innocent people attending a peaceful rally. Easter revolves around the crucifixion of Jesus as an innocent figure sacrificing himself for the sake of others.

The attempted bombing has been described as a moment of reckoning for social cohesion in Western Australia, with the Premier, Roger Cook stating that it sent shock waves through the community and has forever changed the state. Voices from the community reflected a mixture of fear, defiance and demands for justice. Uncle Herbert Brofo, Nyungar Elder, urged continued resilience, saying don't let this stop us from what we've got to do. Easter and the attempted bombing function as pivotal events that force us to confront deep seated issues and undergo a shift in understanding and perspective.

For Christians, Easter represents a fundamental turning point in the Christian faith, separating the Old Covenant from the new and drastically changing the world view of believers.

At the 1985 meeting where Congress was established, Reverend Charles Harris sent people out with these words. "History has been created. God's purpose has been fulfilled. Be advocates of peace. Let us break down the walls of racism as we go forward. The gates of hell will not prevail against us."

Thank you for listening.

Rev David Jackson
Moderator, Uniting Church WA