

NewTimes

The voice of Uniting Church SA

June/ July 2018



Life is
a journey



Uniting Church. **Uniting People.**

DEIDRE'S DISCIPLESHIP
The path to Presidency
pp. 10-12

FROM SEEDS TO SAI MAI
A family's story of serving
in Thailand pp. 14-15

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DEADLINE FOR AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2018 EDITION:


Friday 20 July

Cover details:

Former Uniting Church SA Moderator Dr Deidre Palmer will become President of the Uniting Church in Australia at the 15th Assembly meeting in July 2018. Read more about Deidre's ministry of discipleship and her history in the Uniting Church on pages 10-12.

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The next stage of the journey

When I start preparing a print edition of *New Times*, I'm always a little unsure of what title I'll include on the front cover. Having abandoned the idea of strict edition themes a couple of years ago, I usually look for a common thread amongst the main feature stories. Sometimes it's difficult to draw out a common idea. But that wasn't the case with this edition.

"Life is a journey." It may sound cheesy, but it feels very appropriate.

The article on pages 10-12 shares how Dr Deidre Palmer moved through study and ministry, from caring for youth and young adults to academia, social work to Uniting Church leadership, and finally the Presidency – quite the journey!

We also hear from Matt and Bek Sarre about a family's experiences in Thailand (pages 14-15), about Amos Washington's travels across Australia (page 13), and the stories of those who have undertaken a Ministry of Pastor (pages 18-19).

But the theme is perhaps most fitting for this page – my editorial. It will be my last as *New Times* Editor and Communications Officer for the Uniting Church SA. I'll be leaving this role on Friday 15 June to take up a new position at an arts organisation.

My journey with *New Times* has had its ups and downs, but it has overall been a very positive one.

I've been fortunate to work with wonderful people in the Communications team – some of whom are still on board, others of whom have continued their own journeys elsewhere. I thank all of these people for the things they have taught me, the love they have shown to me, and the skills they have brought to our shared projects.

The other staff members within the Presbytery and Synod office have also been overwhelmingly supportive of me. They forgive my last minute requests and questions about process, and put up with my frantic running around as print deadlines approach.

But I'm perhaps most thankful for what you, the readers of *New Times*, have given to me – the wonderful stories of faith, the criticisms that have helped me to grow, and the encouragement so many of you have provided.

It feels strange and sad to be leaving *New Times* behind. But I have great hopes that whoever takes on my role will breathe fresh life and air into the publication.

If you would like to speak to me before I leave on Friday 15 June, please feel free to contact me on **8236 4230** or email newtimes@sa.uca.org.au

Thank you for all you have taught me and shown me over the past five and a half years.



Catherine Hoffman



Catherine Hoffman as drawn by Chris Edser.

Placements News

There were no placements finalised in April or early May 2018.

Vacant placements

The following is the list of vacant (or soon to be vacant) approved placements:

Profiles available - Barossa Congregations (0.7) (Angaston, Nuriootpa/Tanunda, Greenock), Blackwood (from 1 July 2018) (two ministry placements to total 1.4 FTE negotiable), Burnside City, Burra (0.7), Enfield (from 1 July 2018), Glenunga, Lefevre Taperoo (0.5) (from 1 June 2018), Malvern & Unley (from 1 June 2018), Seeds (Associate Pastor) (0.5) (from 3 September 2018), Sunset Rock (Stirling) (0.8-1.0), Uniting Churches of Tatiara (0.8) (Bordertown, Mundulla, Buckingham), Waikerie, West Lakes United (0.5) (from 1 August 2018), Woodville (from 1 July 2018).

Profiles not yet available as of 15 May 2018 - Adelaide West, Burnside City (second placement), Dernancourt (from March 2019), Maitland & Districts (from 1 June 2018), Mannum (0.3), Seacliff (from 1 August 2018), The Grove (0.3).

For more information about any of these placements, to view national placements or to find out more about upcoming services, please visit sa.uca.org.au/pastoral-relations-mission-planning/placements-vacant-and-finalised

Together in discipleship

I have discovered a new way of addressing the peak hour traffic on my daily commute into the Synod Office. I am listening to podcasts! Some are the sermons I miss from my home church, or sermons from other churches; others are human-interest stories, and others still are about discipleship. I recently discovered “The Bible for Normal People”, which has helped me grasp deeper biblical insights.

When I listen to human-interest stories, audio books, or even news and current affair broadcasts, I ask the Holy Spirit to help me listen with Jesus’ ears. What would Jesus make of this? How would he respond? Is there something I could do as a Christian in response?

Drawing on my theme of “Grow, Nurture, Flourish”, this year I am focussing on “Nurture” and intentionally nurturing discipleship. Listening to podcasts is one of the ways I am intentionally nurturing my own discipleship.

Discipleship is about following Jesus and becoming more like him. In Matthew 28:19-20, Jesus gave the Great Commandment:

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.

The witness of these disciples, as they followed Jesus’ commandment, set the pattern for the future church. The life of the church is centred on making disciples for Jesus, and nurturing discipleship by learning and living out the great commandment to love God and love our neighbour as ourselves.

Relationships of love and compassion can lead people closer to knowing Jesus as friend and Saviour. Discovering more about Jesus and the ways of the kingdom of heaven compels us to become more like him in our character and in the ways we behave towards others.

Discipleship always turns us towards Jesus. Jesus often surprised and puzzled the disciples who walked this earth with him, and there will be times when our own discipleship will be tested as we wrestle with difficult questions.

What would Jesus make of our discussions about same-gender marriage? What would Jesus make of the abuse of children and the elderly in care, or people who live in fear of domestic violence? What would Jesus make of our care of the land and the sea and our river systems?

Disciples make judgement calls on all these things, weighing up their own attitudes and behaviours against those of the Jesus of Scripture and of the traditions of the church for their time.

A disciple’s behaviour matches their belief.

While behaving according to one’s beliefs can bring many benefits, it can also be destructive when love for people is missing. We see this when there are political bombings that are designed to intentionally harm those who are different and not understood.



And we can see it in the life of the church, too, when we fail to consider the impact of our words or behaviour on another. How do people see and hear Jesus through our character and witness?

Discipleship is not something done in isolation. We need others.

After listening to a podcast, I will often find an opportunity to talk with someone else about what I found helpful or challenging or thought-provoking. Together we can reflect on what Jesus would make of the message, and how it relates to what we know and believe of the Bible and God’s love. I appreciate the insights of others – both those sharing in the podcasts and the people I discuss content with afterwards – as they help me to critically examine my own attitudes and ask questions. What can I learn? What needs changing in my character?

Let us be patient with one another, for we are all works in progress, nurturing the character of Jesus in one another. As Carey Nieuwhof said at GLS+ in May 2018, it is “character, not competency that ultimately determines our capacity” to be the disciples who can effectively lead the Church for today’s world.

Rev Sue Ellis

Touring the majestic Murray

The majestic Murray River winds 1,470 miles through South Australia, passing towering limestone cliffs, spectacular scenery and expansive farmlands. The river's rich eco-system has been an important resource for our Ngarrindjeri sisters and brothers for thousands of years.

The Living Water tour will take full advantage of the beauty and history of the majestic Murray over four days and three nights from Tuesday 11 to Friday 14 September.

Organised by Uniting Church SA Moderator Rev Sue Ellis, the tour seeks to nurture discipleship through spiritual responses to the environment, particularly the living water of the River Murray. Each day will begin and end with times of spiritual reflection on what has been experienced.

The Living Water tour has been generously supported by Uniting Church congregations in the Riverland and by a 40th Anniversary Ageing and Wellness Grant, made possible through the generosity of Resthaven.

After departing from Adelaide, the Living Water tour will travel to Barmera via Blanchetown and the Border Cliffs lookout, where insights into the geology of the Murray Darling Basin will be shared. In the evening, tour participants will hear from local Indigenous guest speakers who will speak about the rich and extensive history of First Peoples and the River Murray.

Day two will include leisurely touring around the Riverland, and visits to Yatco lagoon, wetlands, produce farms and more. The evening will include a Q&A session at Barmera Uniting Church to delve into the current state of the Murray Darling Basin and its water distribution systems. Special guest Rev Dr Vicky Balabanski will conclude the session by providing insight into the eco-theology of the region.

On day three, the tour bus will make its way south to Meningie, savouring the beauty of the river and the region, with stops at the famous Big Bend cliffs, Tailm Bend and Murray Bridge, and opportunities to explore Ngarrindjeri country with Sean Weetra. An



overnight stay at Meningie will include a dinner hosted by Meningie Uniting Church.

The final day of the tour will feature a Goolwa river cruise, taking in the Coorong National Park with its high sand dune systems and wetlands, which connect to the lower Murray River and Lakes system. The four-hour cruise will include lunch, afternoon tea and a guided walk.

Through the generous 40th Anniversary Ageing and Wellness grant, the Living Water tour is offered at the low cost of \$350 +GST per person (shared accommodation) or \$500 +GST per person (single accommodation). Costs include accommodation, transportation and meals.

Spaces on the Living Water tour are limited. A \$100 deposit is required by 30 June. To secure a place on the tour or find out more, please visit sa.uca.org.au/nurture or contact Tim Molineux on 8236 4200 or tmolineux@sa.uca.org.au

*Photo by Mattinbgn, CC BY-SA 3.0
(<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=9031260>).*

Moving forward with Fellowships

In May 2018, the National Uniting Church Adult Fellowships (UCAF) Consultation gathered at Hobart North Uniting Church. Three members from each Synod UCAF committee presented reports that celebrated the outstanding mission, fellowship and support shared through UCAF over the past three years. In depth discussions at the consultation focussed on new directions and opportunities.

The National UCAF committee is based in South Australia for the coming three years. Incoming members are Janet Woodward

(President), Max Howland (Secretary), Lindsay Parker (Treasurer), Lesley Williams (International Officer), Bev Freeman (general member), and Naomi and Marty Rosenberg, who are sharing a chaplaincy role.

More information about Uniting Church Adult Fellowships, please contact Janet Woodward on 8236 4275 or email jwoodward@sa.uca.org.au

Making decisions amid God's abundant grace

Uniting Church members from around Australia will come together in prayerful community at Box Hill Town Hall in July for the 15th Assembly meeting.

On Sunday 8 July, members of the 15th Assembly will install Dr Deidre Palmer as President of the Uniting Church in Australia – the second woman in the history of the Church to hold that leadership position.

Deidre has chosen “Abundant Grace, Liberating Hope” as the theme for the Assembly and the triennium.

“As the Uniting Church, we have been greatly blessed by the abundant grace of God, calling us into being and shaping our life and mission,” Deidre says.

“This theme, ‘Abundant Grace, Liberating Hope’, invites us to reflect God’s generous and overflowing love, in our relationships with one another, in our local community and in the wider world.”

Deidre will be installed as President in a service at St Michaels Collins Street Uniting Church on the first night of the Assembly meeting.

From Monday 9 July, the Assembly’s 265 members, drawn from across the councils of the Church, will decide the Church’s national priorities for the next three years. Together they will consider reports and proposals on a dauntingly diverse set of issues.

These range from the Church’s response to the Royal Commission into Child Sexual Abuse, to the challenge of domestic and family violence, to our continuing conversation

on Indigenous sovereignty, in light of the Covenant relationship between the Uniting Church and the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress.

Assembly members will consider a report and proposals on marriage and same-gender relationships. There will also be a landmark statement encouraging action and advocacy on climate change, and a consultation process proposed regarding voluntary assisted dying.

These big conversations aside, the weeklong meeting is also a festival of all things Uniting Church.

Assembly Agencies such as UnitingCare Australia, UnitingWorld, Frontier Services and other Assembly groups will have a marketplace of information stalls at the venue.

There will be two public lectures. The first lecture is being hosted by the Uniting Church National History Society on Saturday 7 July and will be presented by Prof Stewart Gill, Master of Queen’s College, Melbourne, on the topic “No Gods and Precious Few Heroes: Why We Need to Remember Our History.”

The Cato Lecture, a regular feature of every Assembly meeting, will be delivered on Wednesday 11 July by Bishop Ken Carter of the United Methodist Church in Florida.

Daily Bible studies will have a Pacific flavour led by Rev Dr Sef Carroll of UnitingWorld and Rev James Bhagwan of the Methodist Church in Fiji.

The worship program is being coordinated by Rev Ian Ferguson of Brunswick Uniting Church in Melbourne.



Stuart McMillan will conclude his term as President of the Uniting Church in Australia at the 15th Assembly meeting.

Uniting Church members have been invited to join in 40 days of prayer before the Assembly meeting from Tuesday 29 May.

“Joining the 40 days of prayer, or taking the Assembly week to be a time of spiritual discipline in prayer and fasting, is a way of being in solidarity with our National Church and with our South Australian members” says Uniting Church SA Moderator Rev Sue Ellis.

“All church members across our South Australian Presbytery and Synod are called to pray for the 15th Assembly and for our new President Dr Deidre Palmer, who we are delighted to see taking on the role of President.”

Who are the members of the Assembly?

Representation at Assembly meeting is set out in the Uniting Church in Australia Constitution and Regulations.

- One minister and one lay member appointed by each Presbytery
- Ministers and confirmed lay members appointed by Synods
- Ex-officio and other members
- Sixteen members of the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress

One in 10 members must also be of a “youthful age” (under 25 at the beginning of the meeting).

In Synod and Presbytery representation, and overall, the number of lay members shall not be less than the number of ministerial members.

Discerning the Spirit

Members of the Triennial Assembly are expected to be open both to the Holy Spirit and to each other.

The Uniting Church believes that we hear the voice of God in the councils of our Church.

When a council of the Church makes decisions, it is aiming to discern the guidance of the Holy Spirit in response to the word of God.

Church meetings that encourage community and listening to one another in openness and humility assist in the process of discerning the will of God.

The business of the Assembly

The business of the Triennial Assembly meeting falls into three broad categories:

- Holding the agencies and working groups of the Assembly accountable to the Church.
- Making decisions on those matters for which the Assembly has determining responsibility according to the Constitution.
- Making decisions that offer leadership and guidance to the Church.

As members are seeking to discern the guidance of the Holy Spirit, a great deal of time is also set aside for prayer, worship and Bible studies.

Written reports are presented by Assembly agencies, together with presentations made by working groups and task groups. Time is devoted to discussing these reports and presentations in small groups, and questions are answered in plenary sessions.

Members of the Assembly also discuss proposals in table groups as a way of helping every voice to be heard. Individuals are given the opportunity to speak to the plenary and share their insights on the proposals.

The Triennial Assembly meeting encourages community and listening to one another in openness and humility through a model of consensus decision-making, as set out in the Uniting Church's "Manual for Meetings".

Where to find information

The 15th Assembly will be the first to attempt to go paperless. All proposals, reports and timetables will be provided to members' mobile devices using the Crowd Compass app.

Uniting Church members can follow what's happening in the lead-up to the Assembly, read papers and proposals, and register for regular updates on the Assembly meeting website uniting.church

Uniting Church SA members can also subscribe to receive email updates, such as e-Updates and Moderator's messages, by joining the UC e-News mailing list at sa.uca.org.au/uc-e-news

The August/September print edition of *New Times* will feature articles on matters of importance discussed at the Assembly meeting.

Presbytery and Synod to meet in June

The June meeting of the Uniting Church in Australia, Presbytery and Synod of South Australia, will take place from Friday 22 to Saturday 23 June at Adelaide West Uniting Church.

A gathering of Assembly members will take place late afternoon on Friday 22 June, followed by a dinner break prior to the beginning of the Presbytery and Synod meeting. More information about this gathering will be provided to elected Assembly members in the coming weeks.

Following the close of the meeting on Saturday 23 June, members are invited to take part in a listening forum on same-gender relationships, marriage and the upcoming Assembly meeting. Information about

this forum was provided in the Intention to Attend email sent to Presbytery and Synod members.

Uniting Church SA Moderator Rev Sue Ellis will be holding several of these listening forums in the lead up to the Assembly meeting, some of which will have taken place by the time this publication goes to print. The forums are being coordinated through the mission networks. Congregations or members interested in the forums are encouraged to contact their mission network.

More information, including papers and proposals for the June Presbytery and Synod meeting, will soon be available online at sa.uca.org.au/pres-synod-meetings



Presbytery and Synod members sharing in communion at the last meeting in November 2017.

A new property project emerges

The Uniting Church in Australia Property Trust (S.A.) has responsibility for over 500 properties held for the beneficial use of Uniting Church congregations in South Australia. The Property Trust is seeking to gain a clearer understanding of all church properties and to assist congregations in managing their property responsibilities through a new project.

“Our Constitution and Regulations require a congregation church council to be responsible for the management and administration of all property held for its use,” explains Matt Wilson, Manager, Property and Projects.

Property resources are often a significant gift of past generations and are a legacy of the faithfulness and dedicated service of these past church members. As the current caretakers of the Church’s property, the Property Trust, Church Councils and congregations work together to exercise this responsibility out of a theological awareness and understanding of stewardship. This includes making responsible and deliberate decisions about the Church’s property that give weight to the needs of the future Church.

“Here in the Presbytery and Synod office, we understand that property management can be complex, and have put in place a project to assist congregations in understanding our statutory obligations, as well as provide a resource for local churches to access with any property related queries they may have,” Matt explains.

The absence of information related to the condition of Uniting Church SA properties creates a high risk to the Property Trust – and therefore to the Church. The potential cost of doing nothing, the known risks and a plan to improve our information are outlined below.

The cost of doing nothing

With the current lack of information about many Uniting Church SA properties, it is feared that some properties and buildings may be falling into disrepair.

“When faced with difficult decisions about property-related issues, it is sometimes easier to elect to defer maintenance to a later date – to ‘do nothing’. However, this can lead to issues like deteriorating church buildings or even major property damage,” Matt says.

A deteriorating church building is a significant risk to the health and wellbeing of individuals who use the church, and as such is contrary to the Uniting Church’s values of caring and providing a safe place for all people.

Some congregations who occupy ageing buildings have firsthand experience of neglected minor maintenance matters that, over time, have developed into major structural issues. These may eventually require substantial and costly repair or even demolition of part or all of the building.



Known risks

There are a number of known areas of concern or risk that need to be further identified and managed by the Property Trust and congregations through greater reporting. These include asbestos registers, disability access, fire safety, heritage management, electrical safety, workplace health and safety (WHS), and property maintenance.

If issues have gone unreported, a deteriorating church building may also expose the Church to significant financial and reputational risks. Some of these risks include penalties for non-compliance with regulatory requirements, or denials of insurance claims, as the insurance discovers maintenance has been inadequate.

Plan

To address these concerns, the Uniting Church SA Synod has appointed a Buildings Officer to visit each and every property, with the aim of assisting congregations to understand and manage their building responsibilities. Through this new project, the Buildings Officer will provide advice to congregations on any matters that might need to be addressed in order to meet statutory obligations and provide a safe environment for our members and guests.

“John Fong started in the role of Buildings Officer in May 2018, and will be contacting congregations over the next two years to arrange a visit,” says Matt.

John (pictured above) has most recently been employed by the Catholic Education Office in Darwin, and has been responsible for asset management of a portfolio of private schools throughout the Northern Territory. John attends “Church @ Para Vista” in the north eastern suburbs of Adelaide.

For further information about the project, please email property@sa.uca.org.au

Foundation funds life-living projects

So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. – Ephesians 4:11-13

Every day, Uniting Church congregations, faith communities and associated organisations provide programs and services that bring hope and joy to South Australians. Uniting Foundation offers support for establishing projects that will help to build vibrant churches and communities into the future.

Uniting Foundation receives income from Property Sale proceeds, donations and bequests, and currently oversees 29 active grants totalling \$1.2 million.

In 2018, Uniting Foundation has \$425,000 available to assist with projects that:

- Demonstrate capacity to lead to growth, new church plants or congregational revitalisation.
- Provide direct contact with non-church people and move in their faith journey closer to Christ.
- Develop the leadership skills to assist in growing or transitioning congregations.
- Align with the Presbytery and Synod Strategic Plan emphases and directions.
- Have potential to assist and/or influence other Uniting Church congregations or bodies in their mission.
- Effectively increase capacity to extend the missional outcomes of the applying body.

Uniting Foundation has a history of supporting existing and new projects from congregations and faith communities across South Australia.

In 2017, funding was allocated to employment positions (Pathways pastor, children's and youth worker), projects at Meadows, Enfield and Ceduna Uniting Churches, Oodnadatta and Kalparrin Congress ministries, and the Northern Suburbs Dinka Speaking Faith Community.

This year, \$50,000 has also been allocated to support the Uniting Leaders Project 2018-2020, a joint leadership development initiative with the Queensland Synod. This decision was made in reference to a 2016 request from Standing Committee that at least 50% of available funds be utilised for leadership development projects.

Applicants can seek funding for projects that are short term or extend over a period of several years. The ability of an employment-related project to be self-sustaining beyond the initial period of funding is highly desirable. Region Ministers are available to support applicants in the grant application process.

The closing date for applications is Tuesday 31 July, 2018. Applicants will be advised of outcomes during August with funds available from September 2018.

Eligibility criteria, application forms and other associated documents are now available online at sa.uca.org.au/uniting-foundation/applying-for-a-grant

Further information is available from Uniting Church Foundation Manager Malcolm Wilson on 8236 4206 or at mwilson@sa.uca.org.au

Breathe. Breathe again.

SAYCO (South Australian Youth Camp Out) might look a little bit different for those attending from 27-29 September in 2018. Campers and leaders will be given the opportunity to ditch the tent, sleep in a classroom and access catering for the duration of the three-day event at Woodcroft College.

This year's theme of "Breathe. Breathe Again." is inspired by Jesus' words on the Mount – words that encourage his followers not to worry, but to find peace in God. There's a lot for young people to get caught up in and be concerned about in their everyday lives. Through this theme, Team SAYCO hopes to help youth to know they can trust in God and to support them in taking time out to breathe.

Team SAYCO are committed to making this year's event an amazing experience for youth and leaders. The future vision for SAYCO is a priority as the team seeks to build a youth discipleship event full of creativity, passion and energy for future generations to experience for many years to come.



Registration for leaders and campers will open closer to the event date. Early bird registrations will close on Monday 10 September, and final registrations must be made by Friday 21 September.

This year, SAYCO will use the Yapp app for the first time. It will help provide updates and information about SAYCO 2018. Search for "Yapp" in smart phone app stores, download the app, click to add an existing yapp and use type 8P9KEM to get started, or visit my.yapp.us/8P9KEM

More information will be provided online at sa.uca.org.au/sayco

Deidre's discipleship

Matt Pulford

Dr Deidre Palmer chooses her words carefully when asked about her call to church leadership.

"I'm probably more called to discipleship than leadership," she says.

"As an educator, as someone who contributes to people's formation in faith, I see leadership arising from inviting people into a deeper relationship with God. So I actually think leadership grows out of discipleship."

Youth worker, Christian educator, academic, theologian, social worker, counsellor, Standing Committee member, Working Group Chair, Moderator of the Uniting Church in South Australia.

From 8 July 2018, Dr Deidre Palmer will extend her invitation to discipleship to the whole of the Uniting Church in Australia and beyond in the role of President.

When Deidre receives the symbols of ministry from outgoing President Stuart McMillan at St Michaels Collins Street in Melbourne, she will become the Uniting Church in Australia's 15th President. She will be only the second woman to take up the role, following Dr Jill Tabart who served as President from 1994 to 1997.

"Abundant Grace, Liberating Hope" is the theme Deidre has chosen for her term.

"This theme highlights for me Christ's call

to be a church that embodies God's abundant grace, compassion and love - a Church that is a bearer of Christ's hope and light in the midst of despair and darkness," Deidre shares.

"The overflowing of God's abundant grace will be seen as we create communities and contribute to a world where people experience God's good news of reconciling love, healing and hope.

"God's gift of abundant grace calls us to be a people who share our gifts, resources, time and energy generously."

Abundance

Deidre grew to appreciate God's abundant grace at Seaton Methodist Church in the western suburbs of Adelaide in the early 1970s.

Her formation took place in an era of great creative ferment. Tradition was under challenge on many fronts, from music to social justice. Amidst this period of social and cultural change, the peace, anti-nuclear, women's and land rights movements all competed for Deidre's attention.

"I was fortunate enough to be nurtured in a church that gave voice to those movements," says Deidre.

She recalls the justice ministry of Rev Dr Geoff Scott, and the distinctive talents of songwriters like Ian Coats, Robin Mann and Rod Boucher.

"Seaton was a small very vibrant suburban church that was deeply committed to nurturing its young people in faith. We were given lots of opportunities - leading worship, bible studies. They were very consultative about the way we shaped our life as a congregation.

"Geoff Scott encouraged people to think theologically about why they were passionate about justice - and how this came out of the radical call of Jesus to identify with the poor and to bring freedom to the oppressed."

Church activities were a big part of Deidre's life through high school and while she completed a Bachelor of Arts and Diploma of Education at the University of Adelaide.

"Every year I used to go to the Mount Barker Easter camp, and one year I heard about the Order of St Stephen, which gives lay members the opportunity to give a year of voluntary service to the Church," Deidre recalls.

"I heard God's call to that ministry through the encouragement of a number of Methodist leaders."

Deidre's offer of service coincided with a new Sunday School curriculum for the Methodist Church in South Australia. She was quickly enlisted into its rollout, working from the Methodist Conference office in Adelaide.



Clockwise from top left: Deidre and Lawrie Palmer's 1978 wedding featured in Central Times; Deidre outside the old Parkin-Wesley College in 1998 for New Times; an Around the Table event in 2015; cutting a 40th anniversary cake in 2017; with the Assembly Worship Working Group in 2018; and at KCO in 2015.

"I did it for one year. Then I did it for a second year – and that second year was when the Uniting Church began. As young adults, we felt that it was a movement of the Holy Spirit in our time," says Deidre.

"The Churches were coming together – not in a marriage of convenience or reasons about finances or efficiency – but because this is what the Spirit was calling us to do."

Deidre and a group of young adults travelled to Sydney to attend the first Assembly at Sydney Town Hall on 22 June 1977.

"It was a really exciting time to be part of the creation of this Australian Church," she says.

"I still believe today that the Uniting Church is a movement of the Holy Spirit."

Liberation

Back home in Adelaide, Deidre continued working in youth ministry. During this time, she met Lawrie Palmer on a Uniting Church Youth Committee. They married in 1978.

Reflecting on this time, Deidre says life was a "wonderful adventure" as she took on a role in Children, Youth and Young Adult Ministry at the SA Synod, and Lawrie worked as a doctor.

When US academic and religious educator John Westerhoff came to Australia to speak about intergenerational ministry 1981, Deidre spoke to him about the possibility of

doing further education. He suggested she undertake a Masters in Religious Education at Duke University in North Carolina where he was a teacher.

A few months later, Deidre and Lawrie were living on campus at Duke Divinity School.

While Deidre completed a Masters of Religious Education, Lawrie undertook a Masters of Public Health at the University of North Carolina.

At Duke, Deidre studied systematic theology with Professor Frederick Herzog who had studied with Karl Barth. It was through Herzog's teaching that Deidre engaged with the work of liberation theologians, including the writings of Gustavo Gutiérrez.

"This was an amazing opportunity. Something I'd never anticipated," explains Deidre.

"Reflecting on it since, being Christian and following Jesus gave me and Lawrie the courage to do things that we wouldn't ordinarily have done."

After two years in North Carolina, Deidre was ready for the next challenge – a PhD at Boston College with Thomas Groome. Groome's educational approach, Shared Christian Praxis, has contributed to the shape of Christian formation in Australia and in many other countries.

Boston College is a Jesuit university, and Deidre was the first Protestant accepted into the doctoral program in religious education and theology. There she took courses with Gustavo Gutierrez and feminist theologian Rosemary Radford Ruether. She read the works of Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza and Christian ethicist Margaret Farley.

"I studied with women who were gifted leaders, but saw how they were denied full participation in some of their local Christian communities," Deidre recalls.

"These people inspired me and sparked my thinking on how we respond to inequality and injustice in our churches and other social and economic structures.

"When you see and experience abuse of power it reinforces the importance and radical nature of the discipleship of equals, to which Jesus calls us."

The title of Deidre's doctoral dissertation was "An educational approach towards a discipleship of equals in a socially prophetic church."

In 1986, it was time to head home to Adelaide to write up her thesis. By this time, the family had grown with the arrival of daughter Kate.

continues to page 12

Deidre's doctorate was conferred in 1989, and after the high intensity of US academia Deidre settled back into teaching and editing Christian Education curriculum.

After her second daughter, Joanna, arrived in 1992, Deidre was looking forward to parenting, part-time teaching and involvement in various Uniting Church events and committees. But through her PhD supervisor, Thomas Groome, Deidre heard of a new opportunity – a position teaching Christian Education at Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University in Dallas. Deidre applied for the position and was successful. The family headed back to the US, for the foreseeable future.

Grace

"I loved my job in Dallas. I loved the teaching, and the students and the community life were amazing," says Deidre.

The communion of women sharing their lives and faith was a powerful influence.

"I had a fabulous group of women colleagues. We used to meet every week for lunch as faculty to support one another. They were amazing women and I'm still in touch with some of them," she continues.

"We also had a fantastic church that was embedded in its neighbourhood, with a great minister, Kathleen Baskin, who effortlessly integrated evangelism and social justice. She and I met for coffee every week to share our faith and support one another."

In the meanwhile, Deidre's contract had been renewed at Perkins and Lawrie had a job at the University of Texas Medical School teaching family practice while also working in a family practice.

Then a deep sense of call drew Deidre back to the Uniting Church again.

On a trip home to Adelaide in 1997, Deidre heard there was a faculty position vacant at Parkin-Wesley College and the Adelaide College of Divinity.

"I felt that by being in ministry in the Uniting Church I was pouring my energy into a Church whose vision I was deeply committed to – to the equality of women and men, to every member ministry, to the

voice we give to children and young people," says Deidre.

She applied and won the position at Parkin-Wesley, where she began coordinating lay education, and teaching Christian education, feminist theology, and family and children's ministry. Deidre still lectures in Christian Education at Uniting College for Leadership & Theology and Flinders University.

In 2005, a weeklong family visit to the Christian Medical College of Vellore in South India sparked another academic adventure. Deidre saw social workers implementing the community development models of Paulo Freire, a Brazilian educator who was known for working alongside liberation theologians.

Realising this work had a significant intersection with her work as a Christian educator, Deidre soon after enrolled in a Masters of Social Work at Flinders University. This course included 140 hours of professional placement.

"I found it amazingly life-giving. I did a placement with Families SA in child protection and a placement with UnitingCare Wesley Adelaide [now Uniting Communities] in family and relationships counselling."

Deidre went on to work for Uniting Communities, counselling adult survivors of child sexual abuse.

"As a social worker, I heard their stories and responded to their suffering by inviting them into narratives of hope.

"As a Christian, I believe that this work is a vital expression of Christ's compassionate ministry, especially in an area where Christian organisations have failed."

Deidre was working as a counsellor three days a week when members of the SA Presbytery and Synod nominated her as Moderator-elect.

Hope

During her time as Uniting Church SA Moderator from 2013 to 2016, Deidre continued to share her passion for children's, youth and young adult ministry. She participated in many South Australian events, including KCO (Kids Camp Out), SAYCO (South Australian Youth Camp Out), Live Life

Loud worship nights, and Around the Table forums for youth and young adults.

In 2015, she launched the Uniting Church SA's Beyond Violence campaign (sa.uca.org.au/beyond-violence), which provides valuable information and resources related to domestic and family violence.

As Moderator, Deidre also spent considerable time sharing in ministry with Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress communities, and visiting more than 120 Uniting Church congregations and faith communities across South Australia.

The confidence placed in Deidre as Uniting Church SA Moderator was resoundingly shared by members of the 14th Assembly in 2015 when they chose her as President-elect of the Uniting Church in Australia.

As is the case with all incoming Uniting Church Presidents, Deidre's first task is to preside over the Assembly meeting.

The first tranche of reports and proposals for the 15th Assembly were released at the end of April, and there are already several big conversations on the agenda (see pages 6-7).

Beyond the 15th Assembly, youth and young adults will continue to be a focus for the new President.

During her time as Moderator in SA, Deidre actively canvassed the views of young Uniting Church members, encouraging them to share their issues and struggles, and to speak into what they thought their Church should be doing in the public space.

"These young people are amazingly gifted and committed to shaping the Church and to live their faith in the world around them," she says.

"We can move courageously into the future because we see the hope among us now."

To read more about Dr Deidre Palmer's theme of "Abundant Grace, Liberating Hope", please visit the 15th Assembly website at uniting.church/assembly-theme

To read Deidre's reflections on her time as Uniting Church SA Moderator and her hopes for the Church, please visit sa.uca.org.au/new-times/moderator-reflections

What if young people were given a greater say?

Catherine Hoffman

Australian Youth Representative to the United Nations is an impressive title. But it's one that is associated with hard work, dedication and long trips away from home for Amos Washington, the 22-year-old who currently lays claim to this name.

"I first heard about the [UN] Youth Representative role and program when I was in high school," Amos recalls.

"When I heard from the Youth Rep, I felt empowered to do something good."

He became involved with United Nations Youth Australia as a volunteer, and helped to run the Youth Representative initiative before applying for the position himself.

The Youth Rep role is a full time, voluntary position granted to a young person under the age of 25.

Starting at the beginning on 2018, Amos is spending just under a year travelling around Australia holding a series of consultations to explore the question, "What would Australia look like if young people were given a greater say?" This is a topic close to Amos' heart.

"I think it's important to involve young people in discussions about policy and the different issues that face this country," he explains.

"The issues that face young people are the same issues we all face – young people are just coming at them from a different perspective.

"Young people have something unique to bring to the table and their input helps to paint a fuller picture of the issues facing Australia."

Touring Australia over the past few months has allowed Amos to gain firsthand knowledge of the insights that can be garnered from listening to young people speak into different areas of concern.

But the experience hasn't been without its challenges.

Due to the demanding nature of the full time role, Amos has had to press pause on his studies at the University of Adelaide, where he would be in his fifth year of a double degree in law and arts.

"Being a full time volunteer has been difficult," Amos admits. "Although I receive some support from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, I am largely reliant on the support of other volunteers, family and friends, and members of the community."

Spending so much time away from home has also proven challenging.

"I just got back from Western Australia where I held 21 consultations over 11 days, speaking to people from the age of 11 to 26 in rural and urban locations," Amos explains.

"It was amazing, but it takes a lot out of you – and I'll be heading off to do more interstate consultations in just a few days!"

Upon completing his listening tour, Amos will prepare a report and speech, which will be delivered to UN delegates during a six-week stay in New York from late September 2018.

Amos believes the things he has learned could also benefit the Uniting Church. He poses the challenge: what would it look like if young people were given a greater say in the Church?

"I've been going to Brougham Place Uniting Church since the age of four or five, and I've seen how powerful young people can be within church communities," he says.

"I think that involvement of young people in leadership makes for a more vibrant church community. Getting people involved in leadership roles at a young age is important as these will be the generations of people who will be leading the church in the near future."

Beyond completing his tertiary study, Amos isn't sure what the future will hold for him. For now, he is focussed on being a strong UN Youth Representative for Australia and providing young people with an opportunity to speak into larger conversations.

"It's one of the most challenging things I've done in my life, but it's also incredibly rewarding," he says.

To support Amos Washington in his work as the United Nations Youth Representative for Australia in 2018, please visit gofundme.com/youthrep2018



From Seeds to Sai Mai: one family's story of serving God in Thailand

Catherine Hoffman

Over the past 12 years, members of Seeds Uniting Church have been building a strong relationship with the Zion Sai Mai Church, which is part of the Church of Christ in Thailand (CCT).

Matt Sarre (pictured above, third from left) has involved in building these relationships since the very beginning when he and a team from Seeds first visited the Zion Sai Mai community in 2006.

Sai Mai is a district in the outer section of Bangkok and is the location where the team spends most of their time. In recent years, they have also visited Khek Noi, a small tambon (sub-district) in northern Thailand.

“Both of these places face different issues and are a long way from the tourist attractions most people visit in Thailand,” Matt explains.

Matt is the leader of the Seeds team on these trips to Thailand and has seen people of all ages and backgrounds participate over the ten trips the church has conducted. Over 60 different people have taken part in the Thailand visits.

This year's trip was held over two weeks in April and May, and included participation from people aged 10 to 64.

Since his first visit, Matt has dreamt of taking his family – wife Ros and their three children, Bek, Micah and Ebony – on the journey to Thailand.

“We first made the trip as a family in 2015, went back in 2017, and have just returned from our 2018 trip,” Matt explains.

“It's one of the best things we've ever done as a family. It's allowed the kids to see God work in the lives of people in another culture. It's really grown their faith and their worldview.”

Bek, a Year 11 student and active member of the Seeds community (pictured above, fourth from left), has wholeheartedly welcomed the opportunity to experience life and faith in a vastly different culture.

“It's been a really huge learning experience for me. It's such an interesting, but rewarding experience getting to do this with my family and having their support,” she says.

In both Sai Mai and Khek Noi, the Seeds team spends the majority of their time teaching English and forming relationships with the local church and community.

The Zion Sai Mai Church runs a “Summer Camp” program through which Seeds team members act as guest teachers to children and young people during the day. Later in the evening, adults visit the church for their own English lessons. These help to connect new people with the church community.

“It's quite a different approach to mission and ministry – it's absolutely a ministry of the local church,” says Matt.

“It's not our ministry or something we're bringing to them. It's very much a local ministry that we're being used for.”

The ministry context in which the Zion Sai Mai Church operates is very different than that of Seeds Uniting Church in Aberfoyle Park. Both Bek and Matt identify language barriers, heat and humidity as big challenges for the team – “we're there at the hottest time of the year,” says Matt.

But the biggest difference is the religious climate in which Christian churches operate.

“In Thailand, being Thai is synonymous with being Buddhist. This means communicating the Gospel can be really difficult for the church,” Matt explains.

“But because the church there exists in an environment that is so hostile to the Gospel, if you're going to be a Christian you have to be very fired up in your faith. I think it's that passion that has really helped their church community to grow so much in recent years.”



The Sarre family and other members of Seeds Uniting Church sharing and teaching in Thailand in 2018.

To support their continued growth, the Zion Sai Mai Church has recently purchased land on which to establish a church building, having outgrown the house they had been meeting in for the past 15 years.

“Before visiting Sai Mai, I’d never really thought of what it would be like to meet as a church in something other than a church building,” Bek says.

“I’ve seen firsthand the struggles that come from meeting in a house and I think this new church building provides an amazing opportunity to see that Christian community grow even bigger.”

The plans for the new church building include accommodation, which would allow visitors from Seeds and elsewhere to help support the church for longer periods of time.

“We really want to see this plan become a reality and we’re organising fundraising efforts here in Australia to help support the building project,” Bek shares.

This is one way that the Seeds members can help to support the Thai church from home. This opportunity is particularly welcome as many of the team members struggle with the return to “normal” life in Australia.

“Coming back home feels really strange. While it makes me realise how lucky we are, it also hits home how much we take for granted in our everyday lives,” says Bek.

“Going to a shopping centre is really hard. I’ve really struggled to cope with how much we have and how much we complain, when there are so many people going without the items and opportunities that we can access so easily.”

The cultural differences and shock extend from the general community to the church, too.

“The Thai church has a huge belief in what God can do – there are so many incredible stories of people being delivered from things and experiences of healings. The hardships they face seems to have given many Thai Christians a greater faith that God can do great things,” says Matt.

“Getting your head around the different ways people approach faith and the church when you get home is a huge adjustment. We’re just so much more comfortable – in our faith and generally – in Australia that it can be hard to consistently find that passion and fire.

“But overall, this experience just makes us much bolder about the way we talk about and share our faith back home.”

Matt and Bek Sarre are available to visit churches and church groups to share stories from their visits to Thailand. For more information, please contact Matt Sarre on 0447 447 437 or email sarre@adam.com.au



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Finding meaning as we age

Creative Ageing and Spirituality SA's Seniors with Style event drew crowds of people to listen to music and browse stalls on Thursday 12 April.

What does it mean to “live well” as an older person in Australia?

This is a question Ken Burt hopes to help ageing generations explore through Creative Ageing and Spirituality SA.

“Many older Australians struggle to find meaning and purpose now that they’ve retired or taken a step back from other family or community roles,” Ken says.

“The Uniting Church has an opportunity to help speak about spirituality and the meaning of life with ageing members of the community, as well as to provide support and other services.”

Created under the guidance of the Urban Mission Network, Creative Ageing and Spirituality SA aims to empower people in their 60s and older to find ways of fostering spirituality, skills, gifts and identity. This goal sits well with the current climate of talk about positive ageing.

“We’re seeing a lot of community members talking about things like ‘ageing in place’ and retirement cooperatives – new ways of thinking about how we live as we age, creating new social enterprise opportunities,” says Ken.

“The South Australian Economic Development Board are leading the dialogue on ageing well and suggest the state could be a global leader in positive ageing.

“Creative Ageing and Spirituality SA was created as a way to try and catch the enthusiasm bubbling within the wider community regarding ageing well.”

“Seniors with Style” was the first Creative Ageing and Spirituality SA event. Funded by the Adelaide City Council, the event was held on Thursday 12 April outside Bonython Hall on North Terrace.

Throughout the day, older community members, people from the Uniting Church, and students from the adjacent University of Adelaide stopped by to visit stalls and food trucks, see a fashion show, and listen to local singing group The Honey-Bees.

The event provided an opportunity for older people to explore identity, fashion and meaningful ageing through the style and stories of the 60s and 70s, as well as to access information about important aged care services.

“It was great to see Uniting Church congregations and organisations connecting with each other and those who attended the event,” says Ken.

“One of the main ways we aim to serve older community members is by linking them with existing services and information.”

In order to fulfil this goal, Ken has already connected with Walkerville Uniting Church’s “Thrive with Age” series, Stillpoint Spirituality Centre, Resthaven, COTA SA, the State Government Economic Development Board, Urban Mission Network, and others currently working in the aged care and community sectors. Many organisations and grassroots movements have expressed interest in collaborating in the future.

“People from the wider community have told me they think churches have an enormous potential to engage with the movement around ageing well,” says Ken.

“They see that the isolation factor amongst older Australians is really high and loneliness is a huge issue for many. Through Creative Ageing and Spirituality SA, we’re trying to ask: how can we use church communities and church buildings to support people?”

There is no current plan to hold another Creative Ageing and Spirituality SA event. But Ken does hope to continue connecting with other organisations to offer training, conversations and activities around ageing and wellness. Creative Ageing and Spirituality SA is also building a platform to share existing resources and events, enhanced by an alliance with Meaningful Ageing Australia, the national peak body for spiritual care and ageing.

“Our aim is to help older members of the community to flourish, enjoy themselves, and engage spiritually with the meaning of life,” Ken says.

“We’d love to get more organisations, churches and individuals on board with this idea – so please contact me if you’d like to get involved or have a conversation.”

To find out more about Creative Ageing and Spirituality SA or to get involved, please visit creativeageingsa.org.au or contact Ken Burt on 0455 830 292 or email kennethburt@bigpond.com



A diverse ministry

As the Intergenerational Leadership Developer for Ministry of Pastor and the Period of Discernment, Judyth Roberts is exposed to the broad diversity of people drawn to different kinds of ministry within the Uniting Church. For this article, Judyth spoke to several individuals who have undertaken the Ministry of Pastor through Uniting College for Leadership & Theology.

When pig farmer Dave Sigley first took his children to Messy Church at Mt Gambier Uniting Church, the last thing he expected was to one day be serving as pastor of the congregation.

“To be honest when the idea was first proposed by our departing minister and the Church Council, I thought ‘how is that even possible? Will the Synod – or the congregation for that matter – ever approve of this?’” Dave shares.

“For the last 10 years, since moving to Mount Gambier, I’d been milking cows and pig farming so the idea of becoming a pastor had never even entered my head!

“I prayed about it and God gave me this scripture from Proverbs 3:5-6: ‘Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge God, and God will make your paths straight.’ So that’s what I did! And God definitely made the paths straight.”

Dave completed training in the Code of Ethics and the Basis of Union through Uniting College for Leadership & Theology, as well as an Understanding the Sacraments course, before being commissioned as Pastor in Supply of Mount Gambier Uniting Church.

“I’m absolutely loving my role as a pastor and every day I’m feeling a greater call from God into ministry – whatever that may mean and wherever that may lead [me],” says Dave.

“I’m currently doing a Period of Discernment through the Uniting Church and [am] studying the Introduction to Formation for Ministry online through Uniting College.

“I am so blessed to be in this position of pastor of a church. God is guiding me in ways and in situations through this role of pastor that I never thought possible.”

The Ministry of Pastor is a holistic approach to the support, training and formation of lay people exercising their ministry under the auspices of the Uniting Church in Australia.

As a lay specified ministry of the Uniting Church, a pastor is commissioned by a Presbytery, Synod or Assembly to minister within a congregation, community or organisation. Pastors undertake roles like teaching the beliefs and practices of the church, pastoral oversight of members or groups, leadership of worship in congregations, or evangelism and service beyond the gathered congregation.

In South Australia, there are currently 60 pastors serving in a range of roles, with many more currently undertaking Ministry of Pastor studies. Among them are Cyrus Kung, Jeanette Lennon, Jessie Sanders and Phil Mann.

Cyrus Kung is the pastor of CitySoul Uniting Church. This diverse community meets in Hutt Street on Sunday afternoons, and has a strong focus on mission and a ministry of hospitality through Experience Café. Cyrus’ pathway into ministry has been through youth leadership and café management.

When asked what led to him taking this role, Cyrus says: “Participation in the community prior to me starting the role was a big part of me wanting to take it on. Having already established some relationships meant that stepping into the role seemed natural.”

After serving as Pastoral Care Coordinator of a regional parish in Victoria, where she loved the hospital visiting component, Jeanette Lennon moved to South Australia to serve as Chaplain and Volunteer Coordinator at Memorial Hospital.

Ministry of Pastor roles are recognised throughout Australia in the Uniting Church, so Jeanette’s prior experience and training was valued.



Left: Dave Sigley (photo by Luke Roberts). Above, clockwise from top left: Cyrus Jung, Jeanette Lennon, Phil Mann and Jessie Sanders.

“The process was quite simple,” Jeanette says. “I continue to be supervised, attend Spiritual Care workshops and meet regularly with colleagues from Ashford and Flinders Private.”

Jessie Sanders has been the VET (Vocational Education and Training) Course Coordinator at Uniting College since February 2017. In this role, she engages in course writing, teaching and marking, recruitment and support of teachers, and collaboration with local and rural congregations.

“I have a passion for seeing people grow in their discipleship and in equipping people for ministry. I thoroughly enjoy my work and the people I am privileged to work with,” says Jessie.

Phil Mann spent over 30 years lay preaching and serving across the Limestone Coast region before taking on the role of pastor at Goolwa Uniting Church, where he coordinates life groups, discipleship and community outreach.

Prior to taking on this role, Phil had been thinking about retirement in Goolwa. He prayed to God to open doors for him, and for his wife, Sharon as they moved and started a new season of life.

“So many little miracles took place that month with my job, with our accommodation. I really knew that God was in the move!” Phil shares.

Pastors contribute greatly in the life of the Uniting Church in South Australia and beyond, serving in diverse roles in church communities, chaplaincy and leadership – as this article has shown. Undertaking the Ministry of Pastor can be an enriching experience for those considering a new ministry pathway.

For more information about the Ministry of Pastor, please contact Intergenerational Leadership Developer (MoP/PoD) Judyth Roberts on 0434 884 625 or email jroberts@sa.uca.org.au

Use of church symbols

I write to express my concerns with regards what I and many others see as the inappropriate wearing of the clerical collar at a same sex rally last year.

I am informed that the wearing of the clerical collar is regarded as a matter of individual dress preference for ordained ministers. But such freedoms come with responsibilities to not mislead the public or offend others in the church.

To me a clerical collar is representative of a common, that is, church identification.

The fundamental point is that a Minister in the Uniting Church is seen by the general public in the first instance, as representing the faith we all proclaim and then, as a member of our denomination. The clerical collar wearing clergy are seen as spokespeople for the wider church, not simply as representing their local church or a particular cause, in this case same sex marriage. The fact that the collar is rarely worn makes its use in this case appear have the intent of connecting the cause with the UCA.

The same argument applies to all church symbols, and for that matter the use of church property to display banners, and applies equally to ministers and lay people.

Not only is it inappropriate but it is offensive to that those church people and others who have a different, or even neutral view. As such it represents a serious reputational risk to the church and does little to encourage more of the general population to embrace the Christian faith.

Is it that the Uniting Church does not have clear guidelines governing such use or is the church leadership blind to the wider ramifications or not prepared to take action when there is a breach?

It has been suggested that the appropriate action is for me to lodge a formal complaint. Surely it should not require lay people to resort to such actions.

G. Thomas, Blackwood

A response from Moderator Rev Sue Ellis

The Uniting Church does have guidelines governing ministry agents and volunteers. It is correct that the choice of wearing a clerical collar as public identification as a Uniting Church minister is that of individual ministers in whatever context they appear e.g. hospitals, funeral homes, rallies. Guidelines on liturgical dress are available from the Uniting Church in Australia Assembly (assembly.uca.org.au). The Code of Ethics for ministers provides the appropriate boundaries to which ministers must adhere, in all their behaviour. The Pastoral Relations & Mission Planning team of the Presbytery and Synod of South Australia deal with reported breaches of the Code of Ethics.

Ministers may not speak on behalf of the Uniting Church. The Moderator speaks on behalf of the Uniting Church in South Australia, and the Assembly President speaks for the Uniting Church in Australia. Whenever there is a request by media to a Uniting Church SA minister for interview or comment, the request needs to first be approved by the Moderator’s office.



Send your letters to:
newtimes@sa.uca.org.au
or PO Box 2145, Adelaide 5001.

GROWING HARMONY WORKSHOP. Friday 15 June, 9.30am-4pm. Effective Living Centre. This workshop will cover an overview of the work of nonviolent communication, focussing on how to connect with empathy and communicate important matters in a way that will be warmly received. The workshop facilitator will be Rev Sarah Williamson, and it will cost \$35 (includes lunch). For more information, please contact the Effective Living Centre on 8271 0329 or email office@effectiveliving.org

COME AND TRY DANCING. St Andrew's by the Sea Uniting Church. Two sessions to focus on different dance styles: Saturday 16 June, 10.30am-2.30pm (Scottish Country Dancing) and Saturday 23 June, 4-8pm (Argentinian Tango). Complete beginners are invited to try out a new dance style in a supportive environment, then meet and mingle with new friends over a delicious meal. No long-term commitment necessary, no special equipment needed. Highly experienced teachers will lead each workshop. Cost of \$40 per workshop, per person, includes meal. Ages 18 and above only. For more information or to book, please contact Arts by the Sea on 0405 459 214 or email artsbythesea@standrewsuc.org.au

FAREWELL EVENT. Sunday 17 June, 9.30am-12.30pm. Enfield Uniting Church. Enfield Uniting Church will be celebrating Rev Alan Biglow's 10 years of fruitful ministry in the congregation, as well as the rich contributions of Lee Biglow. The church invites all friends of the congregation to join in worship and a shared lunch. For more information, please contact Peter on 0428 363 685.

HYMNFEEST. Sunday 17 June, 2-4pm. Adelaide West Uniting Church. Adelaide West Uniting Church Men's Choir is presenting a festival of hymn singing. It will include items by the church's choir and supporting artists, as well as an opportunity for audience participation in singing hymns. Admission is \$12, which includes tea, coffee and biscuits. For more information, please call 8234 1199 or email office@awuc.org.au

SONGS OF FREEDOM: SHALL WE DREAM? Sunday 17 June, 2.30pm. Brougham Place Uniting Church. To celebrate Illumina Voices' 10th anniversary, a very talented group will be singing an engaging variety of songs across genres including World Music, Afro-American Spirituals, Folk, Contemporary Australian and Popular Music. The Illumina Voices choir will be joined by guest artists Sam Howes on violin and Katie Howes on harp. For more information, please contact Cathy on 0421 573 160 or visit illumina.org.au

REGIONAL RUMBLE. Sunday 17 June, 5.30pm. Crystal Brook Uniting Church. Come along to the Regional Rumble for an evening of food, friendship, worship and encouragement across Christian churches in the Mid-North. People from all churches are welcome to attend. The theme for this Regional Rumble is "Rural Mission" and the guest speaker will be Rev Ian Clarkson. For more information, please contact Phil on 0416 343 204 or email phil2042@hotmail.com

CHILD SAFE ENVIRONMENTS TRAINING: REPORTING CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT. Thursday 21 June, 9.30am-4.30pm. Uniting College for Leadership & Theology. The Child Safe Environments: Reporting Child Abuse & Neglect courses educate participants about their legal obligation to report reasonable suspicion and concerns about child abuse and neglect. All church leaders, including Elders and Church Council, are encouraged to participate in training and to maintain their knowledge in this area. It is a requirement for those in ministry placements and paid leadership roles to undertake and maintain this training. Full day courses are offered for those who have never participated before and or have not attended within the last 4-5 years. For more information, please contact Called to Care on 8236 4248. Bookings can be made via the website at sa.uca.org.au/safe-church

JUNE PRESBYTERY & SYNOD MEETING. Friday 22 – Saturday 23 June. Adelaide West Uniting Church. The June meeting of the Uniting Church in Australia, Presbytery and Synod of South Australia, will begin at 6pm on Friday 22 June and is due to conclude at 4pm on Saturday 23 June. For more information, please visit

the 2018 Presbytery and Synod meeting page on the sa.uca.org.au website or download the Yapp app from smart phone app stores (use the code "Y7XMVT" to access papers and information).

40TH ANNIVERSARY. Sunday 24 June, 4pm. Wallaroo Uniting Church. The Methodist, Presbyterian and Congregational congregations joined to form the Wallaroo Uniting Church at Union. Wallaroo Uniting Church will celebrate 40 years since their opening date. RSVPs requested by Sunday 17 June. For more information, please contact Necia on 0409 286 884.

SILENT RETREAT DAY. Saturday 30 June, 11am-4pm. St Ignatius Church Hall (Queen Street, Norwood). Australian Christian Meditation Community SA is having a silent retreat day led by Rev Dr Gary Stuckey on the theme "Making All Things New". Suggested donation: \$15. BYO packed lunch and cup. For more information, please contact Australian Christian Meditation Community SA via email at chr.med.southaust@gmail.com

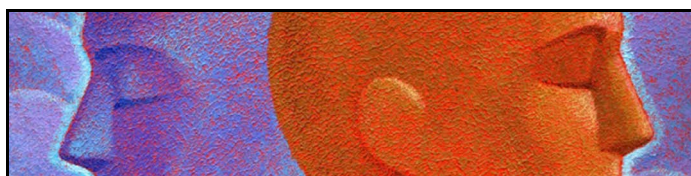
15TH ASSEMBLY. Sunday 8 – Saturday 14 July. Box Hill Town Hall, Melbourne. The Triennial Assembly is a meeting of approximately 265 members of the Uniting Church in Australia. The 15th Triennial Assembly will be held in Melbourne in July 2018. Dr Deidre Palmer will be installed as President of the Uniting Church in Australia at a special service at St Michael's Uniting Church (120 Collins Street, Melbourne) on Sunday 8 July, 7.30pm. For more information, please visit the Assembly meeting website at uniting.church

WINTERBOURNE. Tuesday 17 – Friday 20 July. Westbourne Park Uniting Church. Winterbourne is an activity-packed, four-day event in the second week of the July school holidays. The event will run from 9.30am each day, finishing at 3.45pm on Tuesday and Thursday and at 9pm on Wednesday and Friday, with an optional overnight stay on Wednesday. Winterbourne will include a variety of activities, community games, small groups, electives, hang-outs, food, a social-justice program, worship, discussion, and hearing from guest speakers. It is open to all young people from Years 8 to 12. For more information, please contact Aimy on 0449 926 446 or email aimy@wpuc.org.au

150TH ANNIVERSARY. Sunday 12 August, 10am-4pm. Port Wakefield Uniting Church. Port Wakefield Uniting Church (formerly Methodist Church) will celebrate its 150th Anniversary on Sunday 12 August, 2018. The organising committee is seeking old photos and memorabilia from people with past and present connections to the congregation, particularly those who held their weddings at the church. For more information or to share photos, please contact Dianne Correll on 8827 3213 or 0428 273 213 or Jan Higgs on 0428 811 015.

CONTEMPLATIVE CHRISTIANITY CONFERENCE. Friday 7 – Saturday 8 September. St Saviour's Anglican Church (596 Portrush Road, Glen Osmond). The Australian Christian Meditation Community's National Conference will be held on Friday 7 September (7-9.30pm) and Saturday 8 September (9.30am-3.30pm). The conference will include input from guest speaker Rev Dr Sarah Bachelard, and will include pre-recorded presentations on Contemplative Christianity from Father Laurence Freeman. Early bird registrations are now open. For more information, please contact Australian Christian Meditation Community SA via email at chr.med.southaust@gmail.com or visit wccmaustralia.org.au

Diary events are submitted online and featured on the Uniting Church SA website (sa.uca.org.au), in UC e-News and in New Times (deadline permitting). To submit your event please visit sa.uca.org.au/events/submit-an-event



SEMINARY OF THE 3RD AGE

The Jesus Factor



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'RE-THINKING THE BLOKE CALLED JESUS'

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with *Vicky Balabanski*

August 9 - Jesus, the Stoic Sage with *Vicky Balabanski*

August 16 - Theo-political Reading of Parables of Jesus

with *Bruce Grindlay*

August 23 - Findings from the Jesus' Seminar

with *Don Hopgood*

Thursday evenings from 7:00pm - 8:30pm

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Check website - www.pcnet.sa.org , \$45 for all 4 seminars or \$15 each

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MORIALTA CHARITABLE TRUST FUND

Morialta Charitable Trust Fund has been supporting disadvantaged children, young people and their families in South Australia through its annual program of distributions for 40 years. To enable the Fund to continue this support through community organisations in South Australia, Morialta Charitable Trust Fund seeks donations from the public. Donations of \$2- and above are tax deductible and can be forwarded to the Morialta Charitable Trust Fund at PO Box 92, Crafers SA 5152.

GRAVE BUSINESS 2.0: Navigating the final journey

Revised and expanded, this publication is packed with resource material for arranging and conducting funeral services. It is the complete funeral service manual for both clergy and celebrants seeking material to complement the traditional church liturgies, as well as for the non religious. It also includes several contemporary hymns suitable for a funeral service and is peppered with humour and wisdom. Copies available from Jacob's Well (41 Roberts Street, Horsham 3400), phone/fax (03) 5382 3769, jacobswell41@bigpond.com at a RRP of \$20.00 plus \$5.00 p.p.

New Times Editor and Communications Officer

Uniting Church in Australia, Presbytery and Synod of South Australia

- Outstanding opportunity to work with a Christian publication
- CBD location
- Permanent, part-time (0.8FTE)

An excellent opportunity exists for a dynamic and energetic editor to join an award winning, Christian publication.

Based in Adelaide and reporting to the Communications Manager/ Editor-in-chief, this permanent, part-time position is responsible for the production of *New Times*, the Uniting Church SA magazine (circulation 9,000) published six times per year.

With the oversight of the Communications Manager/Editor-in-chief, duties include: planning themes and writing articles, editing and sourcing contributed material, including photographs, relevant administrative tasks including finance related tasks, supporting and contributing to the broader work of the communications team and overseeing all aspects of production including the design process, printing and advertising.

From planning through to distribution, this hands-on editorial position is both challenging and rewarding.

It is expected the successful applicant has completed tertiary studies in journalism, communications or a related field or demonstrates an equivalent amount of publishing experience with a newspaper, magazine or similar publication. It is also essential that the successful applicant has an active participation within the life of a Uniting Church congregation or faith community, or another mainstream Christian denomination.

A Position Description is available from: sa.uca.org.au/humanresources. Applications addressing the selection criteria can be forwarded to Human Resources, Attn: Belinda Taylor, Communications Manager/Editor-in-chief humanresources@sa.uca.org.au or GPO Box 2145, Adelaide SA 5001.

Phone enquiries can be directed to the Human Resources department on (08) 8236 4234. **Applications close 5pm Wednesday 20 June 2018.**

The SA Dancing Society using the Ezydance system

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★ 4 Colley Tce, Glenelg

Wed: ★ 393 Payneham Rd, Marden

Thurs: ★ Young St, Blackwood

Fri: ★ 167 Grange Rd, Beverley

★ Old South Rd, Reynella

Sat: ★ Plympton (1.30pm)

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Resthaven's new Aberfoyle Park site opens in July

Resthaven is excited to open our 12th residential aged care home.

Resthaven Aberfoyle Park will provide high quality, fully accredited residential aged care to around 100 older people, and employ approximately 100 local staff.

CEO, Richard Hearn, says: "There's been a great deal of interest in the home. I can certainly understand why".

Standing proudly at 100 Hub Drive, Resthaven Aberfoyle Park is a state of the art home, featuring single rooms with ensuites, couples rooms and premium suites, all fitted with smart televisions.

"There are dedicated dining and lounge areas in each area, along with a hairdressing salon, shop, internet café, children's play area, and secure landscaped areas with sensory gardens," says Richard.

The development also includes many environmentally responsible features, such as grey water recycling for garden watering, courtyards that maximise light, and energy efficient design features. As at all Resthaven residential homes, Resthaven Aberfoyle Park is equipped with a generator to minimise disruption to residents in the event of power outage.

Manager, Mia Brooks, who was appointed in February, is excited about the opening.

"This is a fantastic opportunity to work in my local area, in our brand new, state-of-the-art residential home," says Mia. "I am looking forward to building a supportive and welcoming site community at Resthaven Aberfoyle Park."

To make an enquiry or place your expression of interest, please telephone Resthaven Accommodation Enquiries on 8373 9113 or email: accommodation@resthaven.asn.au

For more information about the site, visit:
www.resthaven.asn.au/care-homes/aberfoyle-park



Come and see Resthaven Aberfoyle Park!

OPEN DAY

**Thursday 12 July
11am to 2pm**



Established in 1935 by the Methodist Church, today Resthaven works together with around 10,000 older people and their carers to provide outstanding care and support throughout metropolitan Adelaide, the Adelaide Hills, Murraylands, Riverland, Gawler and lower Barossa, and the Limestone Coast.

Resthaven offers retirement living and the full range of aged care services from a little support at home to 24/7 residential aged care; proudly South Australian and not-for-profit.

Resthaven Aberfoyle Park
100 Hub Drive, Aberfoyle Park



Resthaven
Incorporated

www.resthaven.asn.au

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A must-read for ministry leaders

Title: Understanding sexual abuse: a guide for ministry leaders and survivors

Author: Tim Hein

Recommended for: Ministry leaders who would like to gain a deeper understanding of the psychological and theological issues associated with sexual abuse.

In short: A comprehensive guide to childhood sexual abuse and trauma for ministry leaders and survivors.

Available: MediaCom, Koorong, Amazon and more.

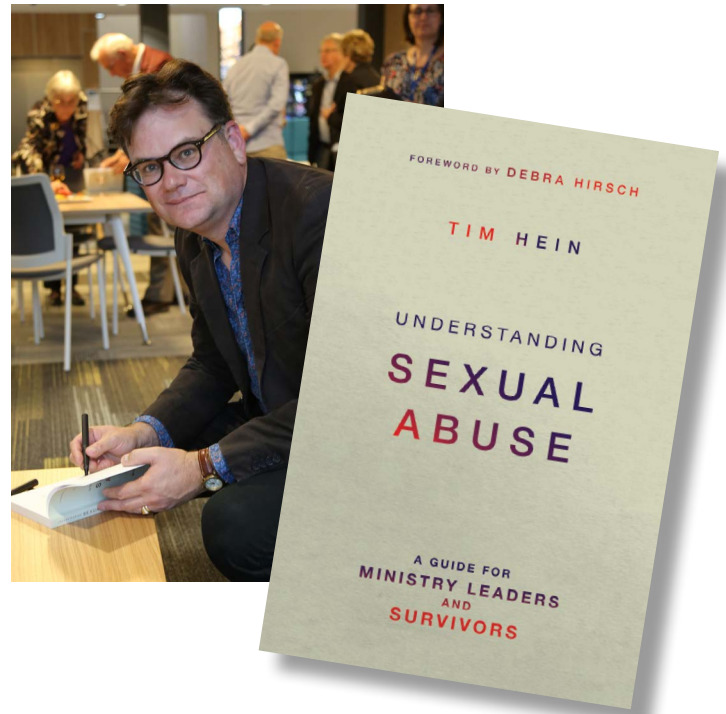
Tim Hein has written a very helpful and informative book for leaders of congregations about how to respond when survivors of sexual abuse disclose their experiences.

Tim has clearly done his research for this book, reading work from the significant practitioners in the field and engaging some of them in conversation, and talking to Safe Church Educators. His advice is sound and insightful. From the very first chapter, this is a must read for ministers and other church leaders!

While the book is helpful in providing understanding for church leaders, it is more importantly a conversation with survivors of sexual abuse, particularly childhood sexual abuse.

Tim weaves together wisdom from writers in the field, in addition to theological reflection, insights from the wider culture, and personal experience. Throughout, there is a focus on the continuing journey toward wholeness and healing.

The book carefully explores the psychological and theological issues that create misunderstandings about sexual abuse in the life of the church and can hamper the recovery of survivors, or even further wound them.



The discussion of the multiple layers of damage caused by abuse, the exploration of what recovery looks like, and the reflection on the place of anger and forgiveness in that journey are all very helpful indeed.

As well, there is a chapter on worship, especially on the place of lament that many leaders of worship would do well to read and reflect on.

Finally, there is the gentle encouragement to take the small steps, in a myriad of ways, towards life.

This is a well-written, thoughtful book that will help church leaders, and the general reader, to understand more deeply the nature of sexual abuse and how the church might respond.

On a deeper level, it is an invitation to develop the kind of theological understanding, community and worship life where survivors might be welcomed and supported to continue to choose life.

Rev Phil Gardner

Sally Stamp, at your service

Every Monday morning, a small group of volunteers meet at the Uniting Church SA Presbytery and Synod office to sort stamps. Known as “Sally Stamp”, this dedicated group has worked faithfully over many years to raise significant funds for the mission of the Uniting Church SA.

The huge assortment of stamps are donated to Sally Stamp by Adult Fellowship groups, congregations, businesses and individuals across South Australia. Buyers from across Australia and overseas purchase these stamps by the kilogram to add to their own collections. The funds raised are generally distributed to international mission projects, although some are allocated to other mission work.

In 2017, Sally Stamp raised over \$7,500, with almost \$3,500 donated to South Pacific School Aid to assist with shipping school supplies to Solomon Islands. As of the end of April, Sally Stamp has already raised in excess of \$2,800 in 2018, giving \$1,000 to Remote Area Ministry. A further \$3,000 has been donated to South Pacific School Aid to assist with sending school supplies to Honiara and Yangon.

This is a significant contribution by a dedicated few, and it is an effort that is well worth celebrating!

For more information about Sally Stamp or to donate stamps, please contact Maxine Haines on 0427 972 417 or email jimmax.haines@bigpond.com



Promoting peace and tackling poverty in Indonesia

Cath Taylor, *UnitingWorld*

Kadek and Gede are working together with UnitingWorld partners in Indonesia to help end poverty in their community.

The work of our Christian brothers and sisters in Indonesia has probably never been more important. In the wake of church bombings in Surabaya in May, in which 12 people were killed and at least 40 injured, our church partners are again acutely conscious of their role as peacemakers and their call to love, justice and hope.

Under the lingering shadow of global terrorism, the good news stories we hear from our friends on the front line throughout the islands of Indonesia are all the more valuable. Harmony and goodwill is being woven between people of different religions and culture – and Uniting Church partners are in the thick of it.

In Maluku, Ambon, where ongoing violence tore Muslim and Christian communities apart 18 years ago, UnitingWorld partners are seeding projects that bring communities back together by overcoming poverty – projects like chicken breeding and community gardens (including hydroponic kale, no less).

In Bali, where 98% of the population are Hindu, the tiny Christian Church is punching well above its weight, travelling to remote areas to kickstart small businesses among impoverished women, training families in the care and breeding of goats, and providing health care for whole communities.

While visiting Indonesia through my work with UnitingWorld earlier this year, I spoke to a family in the mountains north of Denpasar who eke out a living growing flowers for Hindu ceremonies and rituals. They sell the flowers to those who need to make offerings for the many occasions demanded by the Hindu gods.

Kadek, Gede and their two children are quietly proud of their immaculate garden and the chickens they've newly acquired through UnitingWorld partners. They have, they tell me, often been hungry. Gede has a thyroid condition they can't afford to treat. They long for so much more for their children.

"No one comes here. We aren't part of the tourist industry – we don't have the skills," they told me.

"Until MBM [the development arm of the Bali Christian Church] came here, we had no help at all. But they came and they listened to us – to our worries for our children. And so much has changed here for us because of their help."

Right now, your gift to UnitingWorld can go up to six times further toward the work of our partners in Indonesia – and also in India, East and West Timor and Zimbabwe.

In recognition of the success of UnitingWorld's poverty alleviation and peacebuilding projects, each year the Australian Government offers us funding toward our work. For every \$5 for which we're eligible, we're committed to raising \$1 from our supporters.

We're passionate about the strengthening of relationships between different cultures and religions, particularly those right on our doorstep in the Asia/Pacific region.

We know that we're better together.

If you're able to join us, please give a gift that goes six times as far at unitingworld.org.au/together or call (02) 8267 4267.