

Newsbeat

NEWSLETTER FOR THE PRESBYTERY OF PORT PHILLIP EAST



AUGUST HEADLINES

UNITING FOSTER CARE

THE VILLAGE MT ELIZA

PASTORAL CARE
IN TIMES OF
ENVIRONMENTAL
DEGRADATION

BOOK REVIEW:
GROWING UP UNITING

THE SONDER
COLLECTIVE

SHARE SUNDAY

FAR-OUT OUTREACH
SPRINGVALE

Photograph by Kim Cain

AUGUST 2022 ISSUE

Port Phillip East Presbytery's *WHAT'S HAPPENING*

An insight into what congregations,
schools & members are doing

The world we live in

The last couple of years have been a significant challenge for the church and those in ministry. Rev Cameron McAdam from The Village Mt Eliza congregation expresses the challenges his congregation are facing in 2022.

Like many churches and other organisations, the community at the Village Church has changed significantly. Some of our members have not yet returned post COVID lockdowns. The weekly pattern of attending church has been disrupted for many, and, especially for families, it has been hard to re-establish. New faces have joined the church, some people just reacquainting themselves with the church during the pandemic. The decrease of attendance with face-to-face activities during the week, like playgroup, has not recovered.

Whenever I meet with colleagues from the Uniting Church or other denominations, what I have found refreshing has been the honesty about how our churches are going. People from other organisations share a similar story. It's clear that we are all finding things difficult, the church has changed, and no one is clear about where we might land.

Census data felt like a further blow and showed that the established church is in an upheaval. We are dying and birthing, both moments of huge emotion and struggle. It's a challenging time, and an important time for honesty and encouragement.

At the Village Church, our Church Council has decided that it is time for us to think about the next season. In May, under some great external leadership, our key leaders shared in a planning day.



Photo of congregational members from Mt Eliza

We have explored the census and NCLS data. We are refreshing our shared vision and mission, what we believe we are called to live and be as the church in this place.

We are discerning the key focus areas of our ministry and mission. We have limited resources and we can't do everything. So how best can we allocate those resources, and live faithfully into the vision that God has given us?

This recent spike in COVID cases is yet another challenge. But the decision by our Church Council to re-set, has given us a new energy and hope. It is helping us look forward, rather than back. We are planning a camp in November. We see collaboration and partnership with other churches and community organisations as vital to the future.

We understand it's difficult, as we face these challenges, but we are working towards the future at the same time. "In thee, O Lord, do we put our trust."

by Rev Cameron McAdam





Photograph from iStock

Do you have what it takes to become a foster carer?

One of our congregational members has made a significant change in their everyday lifestyle. Read below to see how and why.

I am a 40-yo single male foster carer from a multicultural background who performs the duties of a healthy father figure to a soccer-playing, playstation-addicted, kind, respectful and mild-mannered 17 year old boy that loves food and history documentaries from YouTube, through the Uniting foster agency.

Some of us are terrified of becoming a foster carer because we have misconceptions on what the system is all about (thanks American TV series) and we have all heard the “horror stories” (thanks 60-Minutes report). The reality is one of the most gratifying short-term volunteering experiences you can possibly have in your life.

The basic principle of the foster care system is family reunification. As a carer we only connect with our foster agency. In the majority of cases – after investigation, and collaboration with a social worker – the children will return to their home. In the meantime, they need a healthy and safe place to transition and discover a predictable house dynamic: aka. Your Home.

You can be single, same-sex couple, senior citizen or come from a multicultural background.

After accreditation, you become part of the pool of foster carers.

Your first experience as a foster carer is most likely to be hosting a child from a stable placement (happily matched with a foster carer home) for a weekend. Children in child protection cannot simply stay with a babysitter.

After some training, a few safety checks, you will join the pool as a healthy home for the children of Victoria.

I challenge you to find a more adventurous volunteering role.

Contact the Uniting foster care team by phoning Foster Care Recruitment Team on 03 9051 6600 or visit unitingvictas.org.au/foster-care



Photograph from iStock

Far-Out Outreach with UC Springvale

Christine MacDowall, a retired minister and member of the Springvale Uniting Church, shares encouraging stories of partnership with Mission Liaison Group in Keysborough and Craft for a Cause gift shop in Horsham.

A container was packed by the Mission Liaison Group in Keysborough and after nine days' sailing across the seas, it docked and was unpacked in Tonga. Sorting was a huge task, allocating the goods to the people who needed them the most on the mainland and surrounding islands. One of John Connan's photos from Mission Liaison Group, shows a tiny boat full to the gunwales setting out for Eueiki. We had prayed a blessing on our gift and those who would receive it. Far-Out Outreach!

In mid July we invited our friends, the Tongan and the South Sudanese congregations to share worship with us. Rev. Paul Dau led worship with nearly fifty people contributing heartfelt pre-service singing, hymns, Bible readings, prayers and reflections. Then we shared a feast with scrumptious food – noodles, pasta, roast pork with yams and sweet potatoes, spring rolls, sandwiches – what a delight. A retiring offering was collected to be sent to Tonga – as 'close-in' neighbours we reach 'far-out' in love and compassion.

During Covid lockdowns many blankets were knitted from donated yarns of every shape and colour imaginable. Some of these went to our dear friend Faye Cheyne, who volunteers at Horsham's interchurch Craft for a Cause gift shop.



Knitted Blankets from UC Springvale

Faye shared a story with us, about one of the knitted blankets. In her article she wrote in the Horsham UC Newsletter, she says it was "Three Times Blessed ... "

Springvale UCA Op Shop has been reaching out and serving their community for almost 30 years. At times they receive donations of wool, and ladies knit blankets and small rugs. As these rugs can't get the monetary return they deserve in their shop, they come to the Craft for a Cause shop in Horsham where they are sold. The Craft shop gets 25%, and Springvale Op Shop gets 75%.

Faye continued to share... "that a lady came into the Craft Shop and admired the beautiful rug and when she heard where it came from, purchased it and handed it straight back to pass on to Pastor Susan to give to someone in need. The Spirit blows where it will."

Christine MacDowall, Springvale Uniting Church

Boat heading to Eueiki, Tonga



Pastoral care in times of environmental degradation



Flooded river in Sydney from earlier this year

Rev Deacon Andrea Mayes reflects on how pastoral care can help our pain and our grief and become a community experience. How can we draw on resources from our faith to sustain and keep us moving?

On 19 July 2022 Australia's most recent State of the Environment Report was released. It makes for very sobering reading.

Overall, the state and trend of our environment in Australia is poor and deteriorating as a result of climate change, habitat loss, invasive species, pollution and resource extraction.

Over the last few years, the impact of climate change has become tangible through bush fires and floods. Perhaps you, like me, are having more conversations with friends and family about our environment and what is happening to it.

When we do have these conversations, we have the opportunity to offer pastoral care, which starts with listening carefully. Listening to what is said and listening to how people feel.

There can be a whole range of different emotions including sadness, anger, helplessness and denial.

As we offer pastoral care, we may also feel deep emotions ourselves. Listening to other people's feelings can trigger our own grief or anger at the environmental problems and lack of action taken to address them. We need to sit gently with our own emotions and share them with our support people.

As we provide pastoral care and really listen and share, we open up a space where the pain and grief of what is happening to the environment becomes a community experience. It is no longer our own individual issue but something shared. A shared problem can then be addressed by shared action.

As we take action, we can draw on the resources of our faith to sustain us as we keep moving through grief, hope and action to address environmental degradation. Our faith reminds us that God loves the whole world. Jesus came to save all of creation and the Holy Spirit will keep comforting us and challenging us until justice is done and God's new kingdom is fully visible on planet Earth.

By Rev. Deacon Andrea Mayes



Flooded roads in Sydney from earlier this year



Margaret and Woody in front of the climate change banner outside Heatherton Dingley Uniting Church



The Sonder Collective

Are you wondering what is happening out there for young people, and wondering how YOU can support them across their faith journey? Kelly Skilton writes about The Sonder Collective.

There are many communities, peoples, opportunities and groups that are built for creating community specifically for our younger generations. For so long, the church was seen as the hub of this life – in some of our churches we still might be this hub – but what if there is only handful of young people, or even just one young person, in your church community? Is there a place for the one or two young people to be able to explore, question and experiment with their understandings of God?

YES! In fact, there are MANY places, but I want to tell you about the community that I help facilitate and run across Victoria – The Sonder Collective.

You may have heard about it before, but just incase, The Sonder Collective community helps to network opportunities where young people can find peers to journey alongside as they explore what it means to be a Christian.

We are committed to unity and collaboration by gifting our resources across many churches, no matter what church you call home. Every month we share a calendar of opportunities for people to be able to gather together online and offline.

Currently we are seeing these events in Port Phillip East and Port Phillip West Presbyteries, and we also see a handful of the North East Victoria Presbytery connecting in with our camps.

There are many ways people can connect, but let me share with you one of them – OddSonder.

GET FURTHER DETAILS ABOUT THE SONDER COLLECTIVE

www.sondercollective.org

facebook.com/sondercollective

instagram.com/the.sondercollective

twitch.tv/sondercloud

Sign up to our monthly email updates by heading to sondercollective.org and clicking the subscribe button.

The Sonder Collective
An ecumenical youth and young adults community.
Built for small and microchurches.

oddSONDER

+AFTERPARTY

What is Oddsonder?

Rev Will Nicholas and I share a live broadcast on Twitch - a program just like YouTube. It is a mixture between a bible study and a service. We spend 30-40 minutes unpacking scripture and then moments for community engagement and conversation.

When is it?

We are LIVE every single Monday Night at 8pm AEST; and you are also able to come and catch up on episodes you miss throughout the week. Every week there are around 15 people engaging live, and another 40-60 people watching at another point during the week.



Who is OddSonder for?

It is for everyone – we're not even joking – we have people as young as 11-years-old and as old as 70-years-old. If you are passionate about unpacking, questioning, pondering and exploring God and your faith, this is a place to connect. People from all across Victoria tune in, as well as a handful of people in Sydney. We even have people drop in who are searching specifically for a Christian community on Twitch!

We are blessed with amazing people, like Adin Brauer and Rev Amanda Nicholas, who help to keep us on track and make sure that people are following safety protocols within the chat.

How do I get involved?

There are three ways!

1. Just watch along. It is the easiest step and all that is required is heading to www.twitch.tv/sondercloud on Monday Nights at 8pm AEST.
2. If you have managed the option above, you can also sign up and follow the Sondercloud account. Not only is this supporting us, but it will also mean you can engage in the live conversation and contribute to the discussion in real time.
3. The deep dive into this community is also signing up for another program called Discord.

Discord is a private community where we can chat in throughout the week. This includes sharing memes, responding to community prompts and discussing our faith questions and ponderings. You can find the link for this either in our monthly emails, or during the OddSonder chat every Monday.

How can I help?

You can come and get involved, or even follow and like our social media links below. These help make the community more findable.

MEET THE TEAM



KELLY SKILTON
JENNER
FOUNDER & DIRECTOR
Murrumbidgee Uniting Church
@captainsonderpants
@thekellynorma



JEN SHIELDS
JENNER
REGIONAL COORDINATOR
Shepparton Uniting Church



CAM SHIELDS
JENNER
REGIONAL COORDINATOR
Shepparton Uniting Church



GEORGIE WEARNE
JENNER
SOUTH EAST COORDINATOR
St Peter's Anglican Church



REV WILL NICHOLAS
JENNER
ONLINE COORDINATOR
St David's Uniting Church
@oddrev



REV AMANDA NICHOLAS
JENNER
ONLINE COORDINATOR
East Geelong Uniting Church
@purplepastor



ADIN BRAUER
JENNER
ONLINE COORDINATOR
Warrabee Baptist Church
@adin



CANDICE BENNETT
JENNER
SOUTH EAST COORDINATOR
St Matthew's Anglican Church

[Click here](#) to join the Oddsonder Every Monday Night @ 8pm AEST

Luke 11:1-13 New English Translation

Instructions on Prayer

11 Now^[a] Jesus^[a] was praying in a certain place. When^[b] he stopped, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, just as John^[c] taught^[d] his disciples." ² So he said to them, "When you pray,^[e] say:

Father,^[f] may your name be honored;^[g]
may your kingdom come.^[h]
³ Give us each day our daily bread,^[i]
⁴ and forgive us our sins,
for we also forgive everyone who sins^[j] against us.
And do not lead us into temptation."^[k]

⁵ Then^[l] he said to them, "Suppose one of you^[m] has a friend, and you go to him^[n] at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread.'^[o] ⁶ because a friend of mine has stopped here while on a journey,^[p] and I have nothing to set before^[q] him.' ⁷ Then^[r] he will reply^[s] from inside, 'Do not bother me. The door is already shut, and my children and I are in bed.'^[t] I cannot get up and give you anything."^[u] ⁸ I tell you, even though the man inside^[v] will not get up and give him

HYBPA?

4 days ago

This week on OddSonder Time for a rematch, Annual Lego Battle. Come ready to watch, laugh and dig into some scripture

Just Chatting • 58 views

sondercloud
last live yesterday

Follow

Chat on Videos

0:33 **StreamElements**: sondercloud live! Streaming Just Chatting: This week OddSonder Time for a rematch, Annual Lego Battle. Come ready to watch, laugh and dig into some scripture

2:09 **migrated_**: 🐱

2:31 **sanka_you_dead**: Hey tony

3:38 **thekellynorma**: Hey All 🍌

6:15 **davsav4life**: Hello Everyone

6:35 **xchi3fx1**: 🍌

6:41 **sanka_you_dead**: Hello crew

6:46 **AceTheQuoka**: hey!!

7:26 **sanka_you_dead**: so pumped

7:42 **davsav4life**: Both in the same place Very special edition

7:54 **StreamElements**: Why not come check out the SonderCloud Discord? <https://discord.gg/cUccWta>

7:57 **thekellynorma**: 💜 💜

8:25 **AceTheQuoka**: @davsav4life im in the house as them

9:34 **sanka_you_dead**: Hello everyone

9:47 **davsav4life**: @acethequoka that is super special 💜

9:59 **thepurplepastor**: Evening all

10:21 **xchi3fx1**: wurrundjeri

10:48 **davsav4life**: Tuning in from the land of the Wurundjeri people

11:03 **thepurplepastor**: Waddawarrung I

11:22 **xchi3fx1**: I love Kelly's jumper

Innovative Mission: Meet Steve Taylor

Presbytery Minister: Church Development Craig Mitchell is looking forward to hosting two exciting seminars for the Port Phillip East and Yarra Yarra Presbytery in August and September, featuring Dr Steve Taylor. Here's Craig's introduction to Steve.

Steve Taylor is a hybrid kind of guy. A Kiwi who has lived in Australia. A Baptist who has worked for the UCA. A theologian who trained in horticulture. A practitioner and deep thinker.

Steve will lead two online seminars on Seeding and Sustaining New Faith Communities on 24 August and 14 September as part of our PPE Mission Catalysts project combined with Yarra Yarra Presbytery.

Steve is the author of *First Expressions: Innovation and the Mission of God*, which examined the development of new faith communities in the UK.

Steve's latest book is rich with stories, practical theology, metaphor and provocation. He uses the lenses of authenticity, becoming holy, becoming apostolic, and becoming catholic to describe directions in ecclesial innovation. This resource is deep and wide in insight and application.

"Innovation is nothing new," says Steve at the start of his latest book, "and neither are responses to innovation." Examining new faith communities, Taylor goes deeper than "what worked and what didn't". Instead he proposes that a rich practical theology of innovation as fundamental to being a church engaged in the mission of God.

I worked with Steve at the UCA theological college in Adelaide when he was Director of Missiology and then Principal. Here's some of the conversation I had with Steve recently.

by Dr Craig Mitchell



Rev Dr Steve Taylor

Craig: You studied new faith communities and then went back 10 years later to see what had happened. What is one thing that surprised you?

Steve: How important new faith communities are for faith and spirituality. Even if they don't survive, they still embed such important experiences and memories, which become quite transformative in developing leaders across the whole people of God.

Craig: You also interviewed then Archbishop Rowan Williams from the Church of England, who was influential in giving permission for different expressions of church. Tell us something that sticks with you from that conversation.

Steve: His generosity of time. He had just moved from the Archbishop's residence in London to Cambridge and was still settling in as Master of Magdalene College. There were boxes of books everywhere in his study and yet he was willing to give me time and think so deeply and carefully about what he had learnt. It was extraordinary to see how God had led the Archbishop to make different expressions of church so central to his leadership in the Anglican church.

Craig: What do you think it will take to get new faith communities higher on the agenda for our denomination?

Steve: Some actual experiments. The Basis of Union celebrates fresh words and deeds – and so it needs to see some fresh "word and deed" experiments – people having a go and trying new stuff and in the process collecting lived experiences. Every creative act informs another creative act, and so the ripples grow.

Craig: What energises you about teaching?

Steve: Diversity in the classroom. Having different voices and learning with and from them and seeing how that helps other participants engage and connect and integrate. The unique cultural perspective of one participant invites other participant to reflect on their uniqueness, and so the learning grows.

Craig: Why cats?

Steve: Our cat is called Stella, an Adelaide orphan, who when we shifted back to New Zealand became known as "golden paws" because of the costs of crossing the ditch. Cats are to soften the human heart and drain the human wallet.



ABOUT STEVE TAYLOR

View Steve's blog
emergentkiwi.org.nz

Get your own copy of Steve's book from [SCM Press](#) or [Amazon](#) (including Kindle version)

Watch a video of Steve talking, and sign up to two online seminars on Seeding and Sustaining New Faith Communities on 24 August and 14 September as part of our PPE Mission Catalysts project combined with Yarra Yarra Presbytery:

ucapnep.org/seeding-sustaining-new-faith-communities



Seeding & Sustaining New Faith Communities

ONLINE SEMINARS
24 AUGUST & 14 SEPTEMBER
10.30AM-12.30PM

REV DR STEVE TAYLOR

Steve is a researcher, teacher, pastor, speaker, church planter, author and innovator. He is a former Principal and Director of Missiology at Uniting College for Leadership and Theology in Adelaide. Steve has recently served as the Principal of the Knox Centre for Ministry and Leadership for the Presbyterian Church in Aotearoa New Zealand. He lives in Dunedin.



CURRENT RESEARCH

Steve will draw on his research into new faith communities 10 years on, published in his excellent book "First Expressions" (SCM 2019).



STORIES OF INNOVATION

The sessions will explore real-life examples of new communities and how they developed. You will be invited to make connections with your own context.



THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

Steve brings great wisdom in connecting theological sources, Scripture and images to the practice of mission.



MISSION PRACTICES

A key focus of the sessions will be on cultivating missional imagination and missional practices as leaders and teams.

These seminars are for ministry leaders and mission catalysts in Yarra Yarra and Port Phillip East Presbyteries. There is no cost for participation, however participants must attend both sessions. The group size is limited to 20 people. Sessions will be held on Zoom. Register at tinyurl.com/seedingfaith by Friday 12 August.

Share Sunday 2022



Share Sunday is an opportunity for the whole of the Uniting Church to celebrate the incredible community services being undertaken by our agencies, parish missions, presbyteries and congregations. It is also an invitation to continue to explore how we can partner together as we respond to Christ's calling to serve humanity seeking to create an inclusive, connected and just world. Congregations are invited to invite staff and volunteers from Uniting to share in their worship services.

This year, the focus of our Share Sunday resources is 'God's Kind of Hospitality.' We've included here two stories from the resource pack provided by Uniting, based on the lectionary scripture readings for 28th August (Pentecost 12).



Uniting

Serving up support in Ballarat

Some people like to eat alone, some people have to eat alone, some people have nothing to eat. At BreezeWay, Ballarat, those experiencing homelessness and social isolation eat together. They find shelter and a safe place to be themselves. In this safe place they are respected and learn to respect themselves. They are made aware of wrap around services to assist their complex needs of homelessness, mental health and addiction.

For over two and half decades, for 365 days a year, BreezeWay has served over 400,000 hot meals to Ballarat's most vulnerable people. This is an amazing organisation of resources and people. The dedicated team of staff and volunteers have been a welcoming and supportive part of many lives. It is this kind of hospitable support and welcome that provides the environment where positive and constructive change can happen.

During Covid the team was undaunted. While catering for the increasing demand for the service during Covid lockdowns, the team of loyal volunteers also served takeaway meals during uncertain times.

Uniting recently opened a larger BreezeWay service in Albert Street, which can now support over triple the amount of people. "For many people attending BreezeWay, it is their only daily connection with the greater community and the only way they can access a hot meal," says Jen.

"BreezeWay's impact on the local community would not be possible without the dedication, compassion and respect each and every member of our volunteer team brings through the door each day."

This is transformational hospitality at work, done in the name of Uniting and the Uniting Church. Something to celebrate.



A hearty meal at Chapel Street's Community dinner in Prahran



Another shining example of God's kind of hospitality is found nestled in the heart of Chapel Street, Prahran. Hartley's Meals Community Dining Room is a homely, welcoming space where anybody can come and sit down, have breakfast or lunch, read a book or mingle.

Run by Uniting, Hartley's Meals has been designed to help break down the stigma of food relief. From its beautiful courtyard to the warm hubbub and wonderful aromas that greet you as you enter, it looks and feels like a great cafe.

Hartley's Meals Team Leader Sara Loots says "Our dining room has communal tables and books as we want to make it a safe space for everyone – a place people can come to feel comfortable and to connect," she explains.

Anyone is welcome, but most of the patrons are rough sleepers, rooming house residents, or those unable to cook for themselves or to afford food due to issues like loss of employment, low income, the increasing cost of living, or struggles with mental health.

The ingredients show God's kind of hospitality: respect, warm welcome, safe space. These lead to deep connections and transformation.



GET COMMUNITY SUPPORT

If today's theme stirs something for you, you may choose to talk with someone you trust, an elder, your minister or refer to one of these help lines:

Lifeline | www.lifeline.org.au | 13 14 11

Beyond Blue | www.beyondblue.org.au
1300 224636

Kids Helpline | www.kidshelpline.com.au
1800 551800

MensLine | www.mensline.org.au
1300 789978

Open Arms | www.openarms.gov.au
1800 011046 (Defence Forces)

Butterfly Foundation
www.thebutterflyfoundation.org.au
1800 334673 (Eating Disorders)

Further details on Share Sunday can be found on Uniting's website:
unitingvictas.org.au/share-sunday-thankyou



**Welcoming
you as you are.
exactly**

Cornish College celebrates 10 years

Cornish College celebrated their 10 year anniversary on Saturday 23 July with a gala dinner at the Frankston Arts Centre. It was an occasion filled with great music, beautiful food, and some wonderful auction items. With over 250 in attendance, there was much to celebrate

It was a wonderful opportunity for many of those who have played a vital role in the establishment of the College to come together to relive the past and share their memories of the events of 2011.

It was also a fantastic opportunity for parents, staff, Board members, both past and present, alumni and friends of the College to reflect on the amazing progress that has been made over the last 10 years and to share their passion for what the College has meant to them.

Founding Principal Kerry Bolger noted the courage and sacrifice that those who fought to establish the school showed, and how, out of this unique experience, lifelong friendships have been established.

Principal Nicola Forrest reminded everyone of the qualities that make Cornish College such a unique and much-loved place, and how the values established when the College was formed remain as the foundations of the College's growth and development today.

As a most fitting reminder of what has been achieved, Nicola launched the College's 10 Year Anniversary book entitled, "A Celebration of Courage". This hard-covered book features more than 50 personal reflections and anecdotes on the College's early history and its growth and development over the last decade.

After the challenges of the last few years, people were ready to celebrate what truly has been an amazing achievement. Cornish College looks forward to opportunities to celebrate our future successes.

Dennis Freeman, Director of Community Relations, Cornish College, Bangholme



Personal support training with VCC Emergencies Ministry



Victorian Council of Churches Emergencies Ministry is an organisation specialising in disaster response in Victoria. They are offering a training course on psychological first aid and personal support.

**Tuesday 16th
August via
Zoom**
(Details sent when you
register)



What does the training involve?

VCC EM training is a comprehensive training package designed to equip members of faith communities to support affected residents through their participation in VCC EM deployments.

The training course is a 2 stage process involving:

- Self-paced learning, completion of a workbook.
- A Zoom Meeting on the date above with a short face-to-face session when permitted under COVID guidelines.

Successful registration will require the completion of safety checks and referee reports and will occur after the training has been completed.

Why complete the training?

This training is essential for all in the faith community intending to respond to emergencies and disasters in Victoria.

The Victorian State and Local Governments are continually tightening the requirements for people entering disaster areas.

The VCCEM is authorised by Government to coordinate an integrated faith communities' response when disaster occurs.

If you'd like to know more, please contact VCCEM at emergencies@vccem.org.au or call (03) 70376010 or visit their website at www.vccem.org.au



Growing Up Uniting

One conference, two books

In June, 2021, the Uniting Church National History Society held a conference in Sydney with the theme, “Growing Up Uniting”. A highlight of the conference was the launch of a book featuring the perspectives of 20 young adults. Now a second book has been published, with the same name, featuring papers delivered by speakers at the conference.

Clive Jackson reviews the second book, ***Growing Up Uniting: The Proceedings of the Third Uniting Church National History Society Conference***, edited by Patricia Curthoys and William W. Emilsen, Hoppers Crossing, Vic., Uniting Church National History Society, 2021.

This book is a collection of 18 papers presented by people who have been influenced by belonging to the UCA. These people include theology teachers, clergy, lay people, youth leaders, musicians and historians.

The conference proved to be a watershed, where its theme, ‘Growing Up Uniting’ combined reflections and learnings from the past, with a focus on the present, and a commitment to a more positive future.

Duncan Macleod reviews the first book, ***Growing Up Uniting***, edited by William Emilsen and Elizabeth A. Watson, published by MediaCom Education, Adelaide, 2021.

Duncan’s full review is available on the [Presbytery website](#). Here’s a sample.

This book brings insights from 20 people in their twenties, thirties and forties. One trend I noticed reading through their stories was that they discovered the significance of the Uniting Church as they visited or attended churches from other denominations.

Some contributors have taken a break from the UCA, and others have travelled overseas and returned with new eyes for what we share together here in Australia. While there are many expressions of gratitude for experiences in the Uniting Church, a common concern is the decrease in intentional faith formation with younger generations.

You can order a copy of *Growing Up Uniting* at [MediaCom Education](#), who provide a sample document with the contributor bios and the editorial introduction.

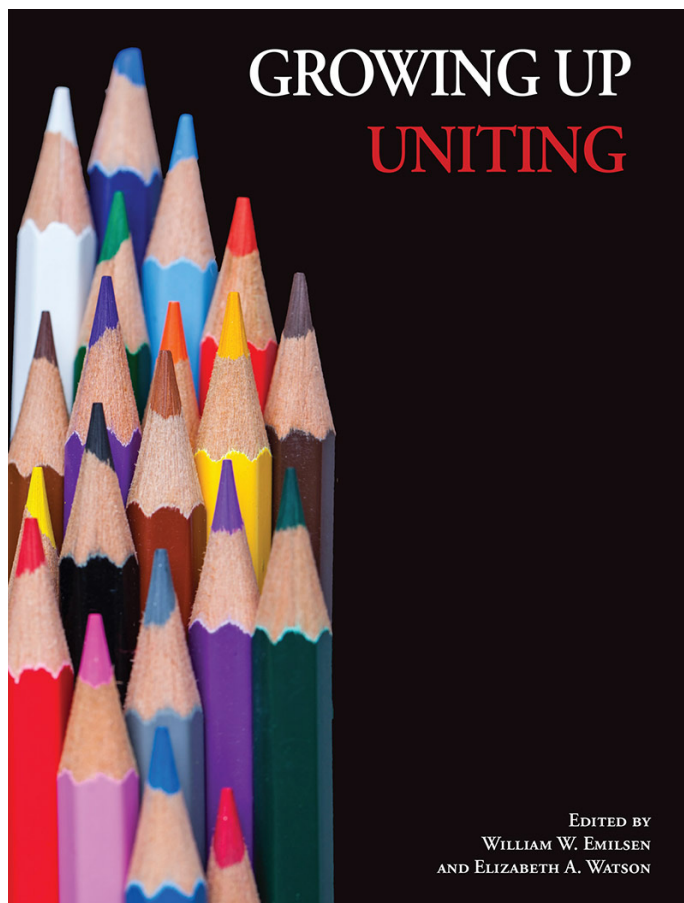
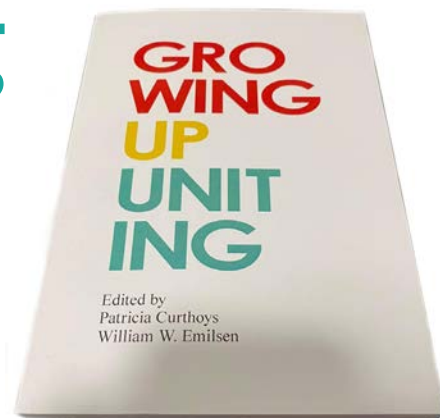
There are refreshing and encouraging discussions on intergenerational relationships, multi-cultural opportunities, education, roles such as Deacon, and the church today.

This books is recommended reading for every member and adherent of the Uniting Church so that they are more conscious of the church’s influences, and more able to communicate its values to those who are starting their journey with the church, or are simply searching. This is not just a book of history. It’s a book with the future in mind.

Copies of the Proceedings of the 2021 UCNHS Conference are available for \$30 (including postage) from Bob Coote at bandybc@gmail.com

Payment can be made by direct deposit or by cheque and Bob will happily provide the details.

Clive Jackson, VicTas UCHS committee member



Seven Spice Chicken

Main Ingredients

3 chicken breasts
3 tbsp malt vinegar
½ lemon
3 tbsp water

Lebanese Seven Spice Seasoning

5 tbsp ground allspice
3 ½ tbsp pepper
3 ½ tbsp ground cinnamon
5 tbsp ground cloves
4 tbsp ground nutmeg
4 tbsp ground fenugreek (coriander is an alternative)
4 tbsp ground ginger

Instructions

1. Cut chicken breast into strips and soak overnight in a mixture of 3 tbsp malt vinegar, juice of ½ lemon (maybe 2 tsp?) and 3 tbsp water.
 2. Next day toss the chicken in the Lebanese seven spice seasoning.
 2. Sear the chicken breast strips in a pan.
 3. The chicken is served on some baked vegetables with home-made baba ganoush and saffron-cumin rice cooked in chicken stock.
- Suggestions for extra taste are pine nuts, pomegranate seeds, some chard, a slice of lemon and yoghurt. A great combination.

Craig Mitchell's favourite Chicken recipe from
[The Lebanese Kitchen](#), Phaidon Press, 2012, by Salma Hage



Uniting in prayer for August

Each week congregations are encouraged to include their neighbours in their prayers. The Presbytery's prayer calendar covers congregations, schools and agencies of the Uniting Church in our Presbytery and Synod. You can check the calendar on the Presbytery website.

August 7	St Mark's Mornington Congregation – Rev Joy Blamires, Chair Ann Scoular The Village Church Mt Eliza Congregation – Rev Cameron McAdam, Mr Tim Gordon, Chair Andrew Stork
August 14	Monash & Mulgrave congregations – Rev Kharis Abadani, Chair Chaterine Altmann (Monash), Chair Sandra Leane (Mulgrave), Supply Minister Rev Paulo Kwajakwan
August 21	Mt Martha congregation – Supply Minister Rev Peter Wiltshire, Chair John Hennekam
August 28	Uniting Vic.Tas – Ms Bronwyn Pike CEO & Ms Silvia Alberti EGM - Operations Rev John Clarke, Uniting Mission Director, Rev Deacon Gavin Blakemore, Mission & Ethos Partner.

CLIMATE CHANGE PRAYER

*God of Creation,
You created night and day.
You separated the sea from
the sky.
You gave life to all living
creatures and saw that it was
good.
Help us to reconnect with the
majesty of your creation.*

*God of Love,
Fill us with your love
for all creation.
Empty us of apathy,
selfishness and fear.*

*Inspire us to live simply
and in harmony with creation.
Help us to be good stewards,
caring for all creation with
self-sacrificing and nurturing
love.*

*God of Compassion,
Breathe into us solidarity
with all who suffer now
and the future generations
who will suffer
because of our environmental
irresponsibility.*

*Help us to put people before profit
and 'being' before 'having'.*

*God of Justice,
Empower us to work together
as one global community,
To find creative and just solutions
to protect those most vulnerable
in our world, and all of creation for
future generations.*

*Move us into action for climate justice
and to restore your creation.*

Amen

by Caritas Australia from
Australian Religious Response to Climate Change
arrcc.org.au/reflect-prayers

Send your articles and photographs for
Newsbeat, the Presbytery website and
Facebook page, and weekly email, to
Communications Officer Sarah Manase

comms-officer@ucappep.org



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