

15 December 2020

# PRESBYTERY UPDATE



## DATES 2021

**Retreat Yourself - Keiraview UC**  
6.30pm Friday 15 January and  
10am Saturday 16 January 2021

**Induction of Rev David Stuart - Keiraview UC**  
2pm Sunday 17 January

**Change the Heart 2021**  
7:30pm Monday 25 January

**Grants for Mission Applications Open**  
Monday 1 February

**Induction of Rev Graham Anson - Corrimal Region**  
2pm Saturday 20 February

**Gospel Yarning 2021 UME**  
Thursday 25 to Saturday 27 February 2021

**Grants for Mission Applications Close**  
Wednesday 31 March

## Illawarra Presbytery Meetings 2021

Wednesday 10 February  
Saturday 15 May  
Wednesday 11 August  
Saturday 13 November as the AGM

## A Message from the Chair

Christmas greetings to you all.

I wish to thank all of you for the time and energy you have offered for the ministry and mission of God in what has been an interesting and difficult year. 2020 brought us challenges I would never have imagined.

Yet in the midst of change we have found new ways of being church and of reaching out to those in our communities who are hurting.

I am praying for a healthy and safe Christmas for us all, and that you can enjoy time with family and friends.

May you be blessed with the spirit of the season, which is peace,

The gladness of the season, which is hope,

And the heart of the season, which is love.

Rev Diane Anderson  
Illawarra Presbytery Chairperson

Illawarra Presbytery Contact:

Vi Richardson, Presbytery Administrator

Mobile: 0491 185 320 Email: [Admin.ip@nswact.uca.org.au](mailto:Admin.ip@nswact.uca.org.au)

PO Box 163, KEIRAVILLE NSW 2500

All underlined, blue items in this newsletter are active links.  
Click to connect

## Retreat Yourself – Keiraview UC 6.30pm Friday 15 and 10am Saturday, 16 January

Encourage your emerging gens to take up Keiraview's invitation for a night of cooking and a day of connection.

Starting Friday night 15 January at 6:30pm, Keiraview are hosting a FRIDAY NIGHT COOK-OFF™.

They'll connect via Zoom with 7 other UCA kitchens and cook the same dish at the same time. If you can't make it to Keiraview, join from home and follow along with the cooking, recipes provided.

10am Saturday 16 January kicks off with a Zoom-gathered worship and study, then connect with others attending at Keiraview to discuss how we encounter God personally, locally, within our church and wider community, and as we grow as disciples.

Contact Khairul Hamdan at Keiraview for attending at Keiraview, email: [khairul@keiraview.org](mailto:khairul@keiraview.org)  
Follow at home by registering at [nswact.uca.org.au/Ry21](http://nswact.uca.org.au/Ry21)

*Coordinated by the Pulse team – growing vital Christian communities where emerging generations thrive.*



## Presbytery farewells Rev Glenys Biddle, Bay & Basin UC and Rev Peter Chapman, Gerringong UC

Earlier this year Rev Glenys Biddle completed her placement at Bay & Basin Uniting Church after 14 years.

Rev Biddle was instrumental in developing and sustaining the Presbytery Education Committee (PEC) and was convener of the committee for many years. Under her direction, the PEC facilitated courses to ministers, pastors, other ministry agents, lay preachers and congregants in our local area. The PEC has ensured there are now local facilitators who can deliver courses to us here, eliminating our need to travel to Sydney.

Most recently, Rev Biddle wrote a course for church councils that will be instrumental in guiding our church councils as they navigate their way through the everyday issues planning and governance and seek to discern mission, vision and leadership.

Bay and Basin congregation has a thriving mission through their Huskisson Op Shop. The congregation pastorally serves the community offering conversation with a cuppa and demonstrates a new form of outreach and approach to existing as a church in the 21st century.

Rev Biddle has also given many years' service to the Presbytery Pastoral Relations Committee and the Presbytery Standing Committee and we acknowledge her very significant contribution to the life of the Presbytery.

Rev Biddle has accepted the call to be Minister of the Word at Port Stephens Uniting Church, Salamander Bay.

### **After 15 years at Gerringong UC, Rev Peter Chapman is leaving the Illawarra for Bondi Junction, Church in the Market Place.**

Rev Chapman served as Chairperson of the Illawarra Presbytery from 2011-2014 and has been a member of the Presbytery Strategic Mission Committee for 14 years.

At the recent Presbytery AGM, Rev Geoff Flynn of Wollongong Mission UC, read these words on behalf of the Presbytery:

"It is with great appreciation that the Illawarra Presbytery of the Uniting Church in Australia recognises the work and commitment of the Reverend Peter Chapman who is transferring from the Illawarra Presbytery to the Sydney Presbytery in January 2021 to take up a placement at the Church in the Market Place at Bondi Junction. Peter arrived in the presbytery in 2006 to take up an exit placement at Gerringong Uniting Church. The Presbytery allowed Peter a year to settle into his placement before appointing him to the Presbytery Strategic Mission Committee, a committee on which he has served continuously for 14 years. Peter was subsequently appointed as the Chairperson of the Strategic Mission Committee. He then served as Chairperson of the Illawarra Presbytery from 2011-2014. After a short break Peter once again offered himself for service as the Chairperson of the Strategic Mission Committee.

It is with great appreciation that Peter is thanked for his sustained commitment and leadership in the Presbytery these past 14 years. As Chairperson Peter, led the Presbytery through a period of transition precipitated by the retirement of the past Chairperson David Jones and the conclusion of the Reverend Mark Greenlees placement as Presbytery Minister. In Peter's words he did all that was necessary to "keep the show on the road". But Peter did much more than that, he laid a foundation on which subsequent Chairpersons were able to build. Peter is also thanked for his passion for evangelism and church growth and the way in which he exercised his gifts in the Gerringong Congregation and the wider church.

It is with great humility that the Illawarra Presbytery extends its thanks to Peter for all his ministry in the name of Christ and prays God blessing upon him and his family as they enter they embark on a new ministry together."

## Inductions and Commissionings

In 2021, Presbytery will welcome Rev Graham Anson to Corrimal Region UC and Rev David Stuart to Keiraview UC.

Rev Anson has been most recently at Wayside Chapel in Bondi, while Rev Stuart has been at Yass Uniting Church.

Thank you to Rev Mark Beaton and Rev Les Hewitt who have conducted services at Corrimal Region and Keiraview respectively during 2020.

During 2020, Lucy Earl and Nicola Goncalves were commissioned as Pastor.

Pastor Earl is based in the Southern Highlands and works with Bowral and Mittagong Uniting Churches seeking to encourage and increase the engagement and relationship between the congregations and the community.

Pastor Goncalves is the Chaplain in Uniting South Region Hub 3. She offers Chaplaincy and Pastoral Care to residents, clients, patients, staff, families and carers in the following aged care facilities: Farnborough, Elanora and Osborne House Nowra.

## Emissions Reductions

The Uniting Church in Australia Assembly is committing to reduce its carbon footprint to achieve net zero emissions by 2040. The commitment forms part of a new Climate Action Plan designed to encourage action across the Church.

A short booklet listing simple steps you can take to help is available online.

Click here for the [Emissions Reduction Information Booklet](#)

There are also hard copies available from Vi Richardson [Admin.ip@nswact.uca.org.au](mailto:Admin.ip@nswact.uca.org.au)

# News

## PRESBYTERY HAPPENINGS

### UCA Presence in West Lake

West Lake is the local government name of the large development area in West Dapto. At the Presbytery AGM, the Presbytery determined that establishing a UCA presence in the area is an urgent missional priority. The Presbytery Strategic Mission Committee will develop a strategy for this vision. Regular updates will feature in our 2021 newsletters.

### Grants for Mission

Applications for Grants for Mission and Capital Works open 1 February and close 31 March 2021. The Presbytery's own funds will support the successful applications. Congregational Presbytery Representatives have received information to help church councils start to plan for the process. Please email Vi Richardson if you have any questions.

### Help with Building Compliance

Congregational buildings were recently inspected by Australian Essential Services Compliance for safety and building compliance. Copies of each congregation's full inspection reports are available from Vi Richardson. Please email Vi with any actions your congregation has taken to address compliance issues. If your congregation needs assistance with compliance, email Vi who will notify the Presbytery Finance and Property Committee.

### Presbytery Committees 2021

The Presbytery congratulates committee members elected for 2021 and wishes to thank them for taking on these volunteer roles, thus keeping the Presbytery running efficiently for another year. Particular welcome to committee members serving for the first time, including: Strategic Mission Committee Convener, Rev Kath Merrifield; Presbytery Assistant Treasurer, Julie Watts; and Pastoral Relations Committee member Mrs Jennifer Tibben. Thank you to those who volunteered their valuable time to serve on committees in 2020.

### Presbytery Office

The new Presbytery office is 5 / 32 Addison Street in Shellharbour Village. This space will be used for Presbytery meetings, as a central location for Presbytery staff to work from and for future training courses.

### Update Congregational Contacts

Please keep Vi informed of any changes to the contacts for your congregations. Especially in this time of COVID-19, it is important the Presbytery keeps up to date with the email addresses for Church Council Chairs, Secretaries and Treasurers. Email contacts for Newsletter Editors, Safe Church and Property Officers are also essential. Please email Vi Richardson with any changes to your contacts: [Admin.ip@nswact.uca.org.au](mailto:Admin.ip@nswact.uca.org.au)

## Kiama - Jamberoo News: New Worship Space

Is there an area in your church where old items seem to collect? Kiama UC found their large stage area was not being used and had become a storage space for bits and pieces.

They also had a problem of having to pack away chairs after services so the worship space could be used for craft and other activities.

The plan was hatched to demolish the old, not-disabled-friendly stage and move the worship space into the freed up area. The result is the new worship space pictured.



"No services during COVID made for an ideal time to get the work done" says Property Officer at Kiama UC, Cliff Mason. "We were also able to upgrade the AV equipment, including adding an audio loop".

Multi-talented Kiama-Jamberoo UC Treasurer, Alan Fowlie restored the old pulpit which had been gathering dust but now serves as a historical feature in the backdrop to the worship space. He also restored the frames of the stained glass windows. A small communion table used in worship services was previously restored by the Kiama Men's Shed.

A large communion table that was no longer needed was donated to the William Campbell Foundation.

Plans for 2021 include a reconstructed foyer, a meeting space, accessible toilets and a semi commercial kitchen.

*Alan Fowlie writes: "A picture of the 1862 Methodist Church in Kiama (it was destroyed in a storm in 1969). The picture taken in about 1889 shows the*

*current Pulpit and Communion Table in place in the centre of the semi-octagonal sanctuary. Many Methodist churches in England after 1757 were octagonal in shape."*



## Presbytery Tertiary Minister, Rev Doo Ah Leeming passes on thank you from International Students

Following the call in the Presbytery Newsletter for help for International Students, Illawarra UCA members got straight to work making donations, delivering groceries, gift bags, encouragement cards, blankets, warm clothing, food and food vouchers.

Rev Leeming, has been working with the students, offering Zoom church, bible study, cooking classes and other social gatherings and delivering much needed items and food to help the students.

She would like to thank everyone from the Illawarra Presbytery, who participated in giving to the students:

“The students are so grateful; they are touched by the generosity of strangers they have never even met.

Thank you for the prayers, hospitality and grace of Illawarra Presbytery, your steadfast support encourages the students, (and the Chaplain!). The students feel encouraged, loved, and that somebody cares about them. Even though they will never be able to repay your kindness, they will carry God’s love throughout the world. One Chinese student gave to me a box of face masks to share with elderly people. Love virus is stronger than Corona Virus! Please keep praying for University students (local and international students).”

Many people assume that overseas students are from wealthy families where money is no object. The reality could not be further from the truth.

Most overseas parents have been able to cover the cost of airfares and tuition fees, but the students are expected to support themselves with part time work while in Australia.

At Orientation week this year in February before the Pandemic, Rev Leeming asked international students why they chose to come to Australia to study. They said:

- Make local Australian friends and learn spoken English & culture.
- An opportunity to travel Australia, Australia is one of the most beautiful countries in the world.

- Part-time jobs are available to support their rent and food.
- UoW degree is highly valued in their home countries and they will be able to get a better job.

International students at the University of Wollongong have been impacted hard by COVID-19. They have found themselves isolated, unable to support themselves, outside of Australia’s welfare envelope, restricted in their ability to make Australian friends, restricted in travel, unable to physically go to lectures and tutorials, and unable to go home during University breaks. On top of this, many parents in other countries are doing it much tougher than we are in Australia and cannot support their children as they normally would.

With regard to the wonderful donations made by Illawarra Uniting Church members, Rev Leeming added:

“I am reminded of Matthew 25:35-40,

Where Jesus says,

‘For I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty, and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick, and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’

The King will reply, ‘I tell you, whenever you did this for one of the least important of these followers of mine, you did it for me!’

May God bless you with good things!”



## Gospel Yarning 2021 by Uniting Mission & Education

Thursday 25 to Saturday 27 February 2021



This event will significantly raise your understanding of how the context of secularism affects the church and introduce tools for strengthening your ministry in that context.

Gospel Yarning is for: ministers, chaplains, deacons, presbytery workers, and ministry agents.

We will meet to talk/yarn in groups, open space sessions, elective discussions and share our stories.

Elective topics so far include: Women leading the Mission, Post-secular society, Hearing and Resourcing Next Generation Leadership, Church Growing Younger, Get Ready to turn the church around, Propel, Congregations Being Multicultural and missional, Congregation in fast-growth, The Newlife (Gold Coast) story, People from other states, Theology of the Church as seen in Sexual Abuse Royal Commission, Witness in Sydney Alliance, Chaplains on the front line.

Earlybird tickets are on sale now until 31 January for \$175/ \$80 concession. From 1 February, the regular ticket cost is \$200 / \$109.50 concession.

Click here to more information on [Gospel Yarning 2021](#)

## 7:30pm Monday, 25 January - Save the Date! Change the Heart 2021



Click to find out more at [#ChangeTheHeart](#)

You are invited by one of Australia's most senior Aboriginal Christian Leaders, Aunty Jean Phillips, to gather together to pray in unison on the evening before 26 January. During a moment of national significance, answer the call to prayer to #ChangeTheHeart of this nation.

Participate in the largest #ChangeTheHeart service by tuning in to the national simulcast service on ACCTV, [commongrace.org.au](http://commongrace.org.au) and across a number of radio networks across these lands now called Australia.

Over 20 churches, organisations and faith communities have committed to making their place available for this unique event. If you are interested in making your church available to broadcast #ChangeTheHeart [read more here](#)

### About #ChangeTheHeart

Every January, Aunty Jean Phillips, invites Australians to pray as we approach 26 January—a day of mourning for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander brothers and sisters. Since 2017 these services have been held in every state and territory with the support of Brooke Prentis and the Common Grace movement.

## 2020 Voucher Appeal: Supporting Jesuit Refugee Service and House of Welcome

### A word from the Uniting Advocacy Team:

As you know, the Uniting Church has a long and proud history of defending the rights of refugees and people seeking asylum and you have shown your support by donating to our previous Give Hope Voucher Appeals and being involved in other campaign actions. Thank you so much for your advocacy, generosity and continued support over the years – it is both inspiring and greatly appreciated and shows these individuals and families in our community that people care for them.

This year we're doing things a little differently, by directly supporting the Christmas Appeals of the House of Welcome and Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS). House of Welcome and JRS are two of the key agencies in NSW working to advocate for the rights of refugees and people seeking asylum and also in providing case work support, emergency financial assistance, food relief, employment assistance and housing to some of the most vulnerable and at-risk people in our community.

### Crisis during COVID19

2020 has been an incredibly challenging year for us all and the impact of the COVID19 pandemic has been particularly severe for people seeking asylum and their families in our community with many facing loss of work and with no access to safety net payments like JobKeeper and JobSeeker. Rates of unemployment, homelessness, destitution and hospital admissions for mental health conditions have risen along with the demand on agencies like JRS and House of Welcome, whose resources are already stretched. See the attached Snapshot to hear stories of JRS and House of Welcome clients who are in need of your help this Christmas.

### Can you help?

We're calling on our members again this Christmas to get involved, if you can, to bring hope and joy to people seeking asylum in our community like Reema\*, Manil and Mandari. This is an opportunity for you, your colleagues, family, friends and congregation to provide

much-needed practical and tangible help. We invite you to spread the word about the appeal and share the attached SnapShot to encourage others to take part. For your convenience, JRS will accept any donations made in the lead up to Christmas and throughout January and February 2021.

### How to get involved:

Purchase a shopping voucher to the amount of your choice. We suggest a Coles/Myer, Westfield Voucher or gift card to another department store or pharmacy so that JRS & HoW can add these to their client's foodbank deliveries for them to easily buy essential items and gifts for their kids.

Send the voucher to JRS: Jesuit Refugee Service, Suite 1, 10-12 Victoria Road, Parramatta NSW 2150

The vouchers will be collected by JRS, but evenly distributed between clients of JRS and House of Welcome.



Please don't hesitate to get in touch with me at: ([ahogan@uniting.org](mailto:ahogan@uniting.org) / 0423 503 998) if you would like more information on the appeal. Thank you again for all your support – it is a pleasure doing this work with you!

I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a safe, healthy and prosperous New Year.

**Alexandra Hogan**  
Social Justice Advocate  
Uniting Advocacy Team