

PRESBYTERY UPDATE

DATES

Mental Health First Aid Course

Zoom

Tuesday 23 August,

Monday 12 September

Register interest: Admin.ip@nswact.uca.org.au

Soul Care UME Conference

Online and Wesley Mission Centre

Sydney 31 August - 2 September

Register: [here](#)

Volunteer Compliance

Zoom

7.30pm Tuesday, 20 September

Fire Extinguisher / Warden Training

9.30am Saturday 8 October

Dapto UC

Walking Together Conference

9:30am to 4:45pm 22 October 2022

Wesley Conference Centre, Sydney and Online \$35.

Details [here](#)

Ethical Ministry

Session B 2022

Face to Face

Venue and dates TBC

Presbytery Meetings

Saturday 12 November AGM **venue TBC**

9:30am morning tea, 10am start

Living Our Values small group

Dates & Venue to be confirmed (Possibly via Zoom)

Register interest: Admin.ip@nswact.uca.org.au

Illawarra Presbytery acknowledges the unceded sovereignty and rich cultural diversity of Australia's First Peoples, and we pay our respects to Elders, past, present and to the Yuin, Dharawal and Gundungurra peoples on whose lands we live and work.

Illawarra Presbytery Contact:

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Introducing Rev Dr Matthew Wilson

Presbytery Minister - Mission



Rev Dr Matt Wilson is the new Presbytery Minister – Mission. Here's a few words from Matt:

I have been an ordained minister for 27 years. I've been minister in congregations in Sydney and the Hunter, a University Chaplain in Newcastle and Albury-Wodonga where I was also a (very) part-time prison chaplain and fill-in for small minister-less rural congregations in the Riverina and north-east Victoria. I've a passion for (and PhD in) New testament studies and ecumenical and interfaith relationships.

The worldwide church (in theology speak the Church Catholic) was struggling with the question of what it meant to be in mission in the world in the 21st Century – particularly in 'western' societies. The last two years have only made that problem, and the urgency with which we as congregations need to engage with it, much more imperative.

Mission is not what we do, or pay someone else to do for us. Mission is what God is already doing in our communities that we and our congregations can join in.

We already suspected, but Covid has proved, that we no longer need paid ministry agents a few kilometres apart basically reproducing a very similar worship offering each Sunday at 9 or 930 am.

Covid has also proved that we have a desperate need for building, strengthening and sustaining community relationships. We need ways of engaging with each other that are not simply watching a television/computer/phone screen, or reading a printed reflection.

The question is, how does this engagement become something that leads to discipleship? How do we build communities of people who follow Jesus? (especially when some of them are half a world away and it is unlikely we will ever physically meet).

Mission today is about looking, hearing, observing where God is active around us, and finding ways that we, and the wider church, can be part of that action. It might be in your mission plan – or it might not. We need to be observant, adaptable, and willing to embrace the opportunities and challenges that offer themselves.

As we continue to adjust to a Covid world, please resist the easy pull of familiarity to return to 'how it was'. Our world has changed. The church needs to work out how we engage with those changes.

I'm happy to help your congregation wrestle with any of the above, along with mission plans, property and compliance issues (and probably a few other things as well). Please ask. The answer may be yes, yes - but not yet, or even 'have you tried ...' however I will aim to help you as best I can.

Important News from Presbytery Finance and Property Committee

Pest Inspections

PFPC has negotiated with a pest company for discounted pest inspections for congregations.

To secure the discount please contact Vi Richardson as soon as possible. Even if you do not need an inspection for several months, you need to book or the quote will expire. The booking could be for months ahead when your next inspection is required. The inspections will include termite inspections.

Presbytery Finances – Congregation Reimbursements for Compliance

The Presbytery is no longer in a position to reimburse congregations for compliance invoices.

Stair Nosing for Heritage and All Stairs

The simple act of adding quality stair nosings can help prevent slips and falls, add a sense of security, and help prolong the wear of both the stair tread and the floor-covering product used on the stairs.

Heritage: Synod has advised that congregations with heritage stairs should contact their local council for advice.

All Other Stairs

With regard to contrast non-slip nosing strips or surfaces on the stair treads, PFPC suggests purchasing "Roberts Carborundum Stairnose" strips, available in black, grey and yellow

[link to this product here](#)

or "Brutus 1.2m Anti Slip Stairtread Nosing"

[link to this product here](#)

The manufacturer will include application instructions.

For stairs outdoors, a stair nose paint may be a better option.

[Research paint options here](#)

Tactile Studs

Tactile indicator studs are an important safety feature that help everyone and particularly vision impaired people navigate hazardous flooring, changes in flooring elevation or obstacles more safely. Not only do tactile indicator studs provide a sensory warning system (pedestrians can feel them through the soles of their feet, even if they can't see them), they increase the visibility of flooring and reduce the risk of slips and falls.

Costing as little as \$19 a tile, [research tactile flooring tiles here](#)

Evacuation Points

Church Councils are asked to ensure congregations and hall hirers are aware of evacuation points and evacuation plans.

Property Templates

The property inspections reports done by Australian Essential Services Compliance during 2020-21 showed a need for asbestos reports, chemical registers, contractor registers etc. Templates are available from Vi Richardson for congregations to easily complete. Please contact Vi for copies and let her know if you need help to complete the templates.

Chairperson on Leave

Andrew Hunt will be away during August/September. Please send emails that require follow up to Vi Richardson.

Fire Safety Statements

There is conflicting information on Synod's website regarding the procedures for signing off on an FSS. The PFPC has received the following clarification from the Synod:

[Local Government] Councils have changed the AFSS requirements outlining that these could be signed off by an agent, which in our case is church council, without the need for Synod to sign off. In saying that though, some Councils are picky and prefer it to be signed off by Synod with the Synod Delegations attached so it does really depend on the local Council.

We are happy for congregations or presbyteries to execute them, as long as we are sent a copy for our records and if the council does not accept it, we are then happy for it to be sent to us for execution instead.

The reason we have not changed our website, is because not every council accepts the new arrangements, even though it was set by council/government.

Email : Property@nswact.uca.org.au

Thermographic Imaging:

Each year insurance companies receive a significant number of claims, worth millions of dollars, as a result of fire. Many originate in switchboards and could potentially be prevented by conducting a thermographic scan.

After much research and discussion with appropriate companies, the PFPC has concluded that the cost of travel for electricians to conduct thermographic imaging using a shared contractor is unrealistic. Congregations should book electricians directly. Please contact Vi if you would like a list of electricians used in the past by other congregations.

Seeking Presbytery Assistant Treasurer

Presbytery is seeking a volunteer Assistant Treasurer for 4 hours per week.

Training, support and mentoring will be provided. The Assistant Treasurer will be an elected member of Illawarra Presbytery.

Working closely with the Presbytery Treasurer and Presbytery Bookkeeper, the Assistant Treasurer will be invited to attend the Presbytery Finance and Property Committee monthly meeting.

If you are interested in the Assistant Treasurer position, please email your interest to Vi Richardson

Admin.ip@nswact.uca.org.au

Delete and Destroy the personal information collected during COVID-19

As restrictions continue to ease, congregations should take stock of personal information they hold and assess whether it is necessary to continue to collect and retain personal information.

It may be the time to destroy personal information if there is no longer an ongoing need to retain it. This supports community expectations that the information they provided to support the COVID-19 public health response should not be retained indefinitely and should be deleted as soon as it is no longer needed.

The Australian Privacy Principles (APP), specifically APPs 11.1 and 11.2 require that reasonable steps be taken to protect personal information and personal information be destroyed or deidentified once it is no longer needed.

Fire Safety Training for Congregations

9.30am Saturday 8 October

Dapto UC



Book your spot by 31 August

Presbytery has organised accredited fire warden and safety training to assist congregations in a fire emergency. At least one person from each congregation is recommended to participate in the training.

Training will be held at Dapto UC, 9.30am Saturday, 8 October. The course will take 5 hours and will be delivered by Platinum Safety & Training.

The cost is approximately \$200 per person but the cost will decrease if Presbytery can get more than 6 people to attend the training. Scholarships are available for some of the cost, on application to the Presbytery.

Participants will receive a Statement of attainment in Operating as part of an emergency control organisation; and Confined small emergencies in a facility.

Please book by the end of August to help Vi make arrangements with the trainer. If you need more time please let Vi know Admin.ip@nswact.uca.org.au

Volunteer Compliance Zoom

7.30pm Tuesday, 20 September

Incorrect volunteer compliance may affect your insurance. Ensuring your volunteers are compliant is easier than you think, and Presbytery is offering to help you with the steps required.

Synod's website features new volunteer compliance forms and guidance to assist congregations. Presbytery Minister – Mission, Matthew Wilson will explain in a training Zoom how to use this new paperwork, how to register volunteers and how complete registration forms.

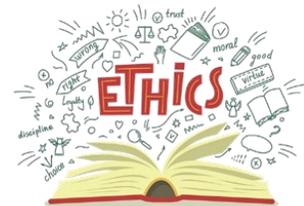
Church councils are encouraged to have one or two members attend the Zoom.

Ethical Ministry

Dates and Venues to be confirmed

After 2.5 years in a small group/individual format, Presbytery is excited to be able to offer Ethical Ministry face to face for Session B 2022.

Three locations will be available, and we trust that there is one available to suit you.



Safe Church Awareness Training

The Presbytery gives thanks for the informative UCA Safe Church workshop hosted by Shoalhaven Central UC at Nowra on 6 August. 29 people attended and the Presbytery wishes to acknowledge the work of Shoalhaven Central UC volunteers who helped out on the day.

If you have completed a safe spaces/churches workshop with or online training with another denomination, please email a copy of your certificate to the Synod Safe Church team to receive the UCA supplement. safechurch@nswact.uca.org.au

Soul Care: 31 August - 2 September

Online and Wesley Mission Centre Sydney. Register: [here](#)

Soul Care is just around the corner! With just over two weeks until the conference, in-person ticket sales must close in one week from today - Monday 22 August. If you haven't already, you can purchase tickets from the Eventbrite page.

In-person tickets are available in both three-day and single-day pass options. Morning and afternoon tea are also included with all in-person tickets.

If you can't make it in person, there are also virtual ticket options available which must close **Monday 29 August**.

Discover innovative developments and practices, understand community-based approaches and explore existing ministries and programs that give you opportunities for engagement, whether in disaster relief, at school or on social media.

And get practical, with all the skills, tips and tools you'll need to take your ideas into the world. There will be keynote speakers, workshops, panel discussions, daily reflections and much more.



Conference

Walking Together: How can the Church embrace First Peoples' Theology in a post-colonial Australia

9:30am to 4:45pm 22 October 2022

Wesley Conference Centre, Sydney and **Online \$35.**

[Insights Article Here.](#) [Website Here.](#) [Book Here](#)

The Synod of NSW and the ACT, in collaboration with the United Theological College, Uniting Mission and Education, and Newtown Mission, is pleased to host the inaugural First Peoples' Theological Conference – an opportunity to hear the voices and perspectives of First Peoples on issues relating to the Uniting Church, Theology, and Reconciliation.



Walking Together - Resources

The Synod's Walking Together Action Plan ("WTAP") is a plan for the all of us to support First Peoples in our community. It is designed to provide members of the Uniting Church in NSW and the ACT with guidance around some practical actions that can be taken to strengthen relationships with First Peoples and to bring to life the commitments made via the Uniting Church in Australia's Covenant Statement of 1994 ("the Covenant Statement").



Nathan Tyson is the Synod's Manager, First Peoples Strategy and Engagement. Nathan is an Aboriginal man who has spent most of his life in Sydney and is of Anaiwon/Gomeroi descent (with connections to the Brown, Munro and Sullivan families from the Tingha region in North Western NSW).

Nathan suggests congregations access the First Nations Resources page on the Synod's website for resources to help your congregation. [Link to resources page here](#)

The page includes links to the Walking Together Action Plan and related resources, access to some of the Assembly's First Peoples related resources, and information about general topics such as the Stolen Generations, and community engagement.

If you would like to hear Nathan offering his thoughts on "Voice, Treaty, Truth" (the 3 topic areas of the Statement from the Heart) at a Social Justice Forum organised by the Hunter Presbytery's Social Justice Committee please click:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YS442nGkLok&t=2s>

(For about the last 10 minutes Nathan also talks about Aboriginal Community Engagement and offers some advice).

At the recent Presbytery meeting, Presbytery Strategic Mission Working Group convenor, Rev Kath Merrifield presented the Midnight Oil - Uluru Statement from the Heart (Read by First Nations collaborators). Access that video here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rWolgPyQTK4>

For wording and advice on delivering an Acknowledgement of Country And People at the start of your services and meetings see Rev Dr Amanda Koh-Butler's [blog here](#)

On the Sunday before Australia Day, all Uniting Church in Australia congregations were invited to hold worship services to reflect upon and lament the effect of the invasion and colonisation of this nation upon First Peoples.

Berry Uniting Church held a service via Zoom. A link to the service is available here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bPIWI1qFy_w

Nathan was the guest preacher at the Berry UC service. Following the service, Kiama Uniting Church, hosted Nathan for a Q&A and information session with the theme *How congregations can build/strengthen local relationships with Aboriginal people and communities.*

A link to the informative Zoom recording is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Jpl-zxdA4>



Illawarra Presbytery Meeting

The quarterly meeting of the Presbytery was held at Shellharbour UC, Saturday 13 August.

West Lake

After much research on the West Lake area and on viable options for the Uniting Church in West Lake, the Presbytery has decided to step away from the vision expressed in November 2020 of developing “a gathered, worshipping community of faith actively engaged in discipleship and service (100 people)”.

Instead, the Presbytery will work towards a model of community chaplaincy that would focus on building meaningful relationships and growing discipleship with people who live in the area and encouraging people to engage with existing congregations for their worship life.

Rev Dr David Manton

At its recent meeting, the Presbytery acknowledged a minute of appreciation for Rev Dr David Manton's contribution to the Illawarra Presbytery. Rev Dr Manton is retiring from formal ministry activities after 60 years of ordained ministry.

“The Presbytery offers a minute of appreciation and its thanks to God for the ministry of Rev Dr David Manton OAM as he steps back from formal ministry activities.

David has had a long and varied ministry in the Methodist and Uniting Churches. In significant ways his ministry encapsulates the profound changes that have occurred in the life of the Australian Evangelical church, stemming from the heady post-war years into Church Union in 1977, and as a leader in the Uniting Church ever since.

David was ordained in 1959 after which he served in numerous congregational placements within and beyond Sydney, Synod board positions, as Moderator of the NSW/ACT Synod 1998-2001, and through an enduring and distinguished relationship with Newington College which awarded him the Newington Medal in 2013.

Following his formal retirement in 2003, he was also awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in 2005 for services to the community through the church. His final placement was at Bowral/Kangaloon Uniting Church in the Southern Highlands of NSW where David and Fran chose to retire and have remained as active residents.

A churchman through and through, David has continued to serve the local family of faith in preaching, pastoral care, small group leadership and in other ways. Feeling that the time had come to 'lay down his stole', David led his final communion service at Mittagong Uniting Church on the first Sunday of June, 2022, near enough to 70 years after first entering theological college. A keen interpreter of Scripture, gracious pastoral presence, and faithful servant across all he does, his contribution has been appreciated deeply by the Bowral/Kangaloon/Mittagong congregation/s, among many others.

In marking this moment of transition, the Presbytery prays God's blessings on David, a good and faithful servant of the Lord, on Fran and their wider family, and wishes him well into the future.”

Rev Elizabeth Walker

Presbytery acknowledged a minute of appreciation for Rev Elizabeth Walker's contribution to the Illawarra Presbytery. Rev Walker is also retiring from formal ministry activities.

“The Presbytery offers a minute of appreciation and its thanks to God for the ministry of Rev Elizabeth Walker as she steps back from formal ministry activities.

Elizabeth has been a servant of the church in different capacities her whole life, firstly as a lay person and then through specified ministry. A successful teaching career proved to be fertile ground for a call to the Ministry of the Word in middle age and ordination in 1995. She then served a number of pastorates in various forms from full time placement to periods of supply.

Her first placement was Wesley Church, Hamilton and Broadmeadow Congregation in Newcastle, with following stints at Roseville, Killara, and Gordon Uniting Churches, among others. Elizabeth also served the wider church in other forums including as Chairperson for the Assembly Agency for Theology and Discipleship, Convenor of the Assembly Doctrine Working Group, over a decade as a member of the Ministers' Support Fund Committee and through the church's councils in many other ways.

Married to Ed Walker, one of the most significant lay people in the Uniting Church over the past 40 years and a former President of the NSW Ecumenical Council, Elizabeth has also been a tireless supporter of ecumenical endeavours, as well as a committed member of the local church, most recently and continuing at Bowral/Mittagong Uniting in the NSW Southern Highlands.

She brings a deep pastoral wisdom to everything she does and has the gift of an uncontrived holy presence that conveys the love of God through her very being. She is a church person through and through, continuing to preach, preside, and baptise as befitting her vocation, recently being called on unexpectedly to preside at a communion service in her aged care village, which she did with grace and dignity.

Elizabeth now feels it is time to step back from formal ministry work, but will be remembered fondly by many across the Uniting Church and beyond, and by the Earl family especially as the one who baptised their youngest daughter, Elise.

In marking this moment of transition, the Presbytery prays God's blessings on Elizabeth, a good and faithful servant of the Lord, on Ed and their wider family, and wishes her well into the future.”

Illawarra Presbytery Meeting

Adult Fellowship Committee

As noted in the July Presbytery Newsletter, the Presbytery Adult Fellowship Committee held their last meeting in July. The Illawarra Presbytery recorded a minute of appreciation for the contribution of the Adult Fellowship Working Committee to the Illawarra Presbytery.

“The Presbytery Adult Fellowship Committee sadly held their final meeting on 14 July 2022 closing 45 years of committed service.

While the Presbytery Adult Fellowship has closed there are still Adult Fellowship groups continuing in some congregations, although few in number.

The Adult Fellowship came into being with the inauguration of the Uniting Church in 1977. The Adult Fellowship in congregations replaced the many women’s groups such as Ladies Fellowship, Ladies Church Aid, Couples Clubs and other such groups. It was also to be for men as well as women.

The main role of the Presbytery Adult Fellowship Committee was to organise the annual fellowship days in the Presbytery and to forge the links with the Synod Committee and the wider mission work undertaken through the Adult Fellowship networks at state, national and international levels.

Adult Fellowship groups have been committed supporters of the work of Frontier Services and the stamp collection activity – the sale of which has provided funds for bursaries/scholarships for education – to name some of the wider mission work.

It is the hope and prayer of the outgoing committee that the Presbytery will find other ways of expressing the offering of fellowship that the Adult Fellowship provided for many members across the congregations.

At the last Annual Fellowship Day as no congregation was nominated to host the next annual fellowship day, the Presbytery was handed the piece of Tapa Cloth. This cloth was given in 1992 as a special symbol of solidarity with our Pacific Neighbours. It was the practise that the congregation to host the next annual event would display the Tapa Cloth in their church for the next twelve months.

We thank the many members of the Presbytery Adult Fellowship Committee over the 45 years for their dedication and commitment to the importance of fellowship as part of the life of the church and to the mission of the wider church beyond this Presbytery.

We particularly thank the outgoing committee for continuing the work in the last few years as named below:

Carole Burnard, Judith Oyston, Pat Armstrong, Laurel Kellett, Gail Pickles, Marie Bone

News from Moss Vale UC

In the school holidays Moss Vale held a family night. We learnt about fire safety, played hilarious games related to fire fighting and rescued each other, we performed the Parable of the Good Samaritan with hand puppets and gathered around a fire pit where marshmallows were toasted..... unfortunately rain stopped us cooking damper on the end of long sticks but it didn't matter cause we were all full from a lovely BBQ dinner....

