

# PRESBYTERY UPDATE

## Dates

### Centenary Celebration

Austinmer Uniting Church  
 Sunday 16 April 9:30am

### Making the Most of Your NCLS Webinars

Thursday 20 April 11am and 7pm  
 Register: [here](#)

### Pulse Kids Camp Out

Wedderburn Christian Campsite  
 22 to 23 April  
 Info: [here](#)

### Presbytery Meetings

Saturday 13 May	Dapto UC
Saturday 5 August	venue TBC (note date change)
Saturday 18 November	Berry UC

9:30am morning tea, 10am start

### Brooke Prentis - Conversations

#### Uluru Statement from the Heart and Referendum

Sunday 14 May	4-6pm	Keiraview UC (workshop)
	6:30pm	worship over a meal (conversation continued)
Monday 15 May	Evening	Wollongong Church on the Mall
Sunday 21 May	9:30am	Berry UC (worship)
Sunday 21 May	Evening	Kiama UC
Monday 22 May	Evening	Bowral UC
Saturday 27 May	9:30-2:30	Berry UC (workshop)
TBC		Milton-Ulladulla UC

### Ethical Ministry – Session A

Thursday 4 May	9:30am	Keiraview UC
Thursday 18 May	1:00pm	Bowral UC
Tuesday 23 May	1:00pm	Bomaderry UC

### IP Gathering of UCAF Synod Committee

Thursday 1 June 10am Gerringong UC

### Women In Ministry Retreat

Kincumber South  
 15 to 18 May  
 Register & Info: [here](#)

### Treasurer and Property Officers Meeting

Zoom  
 Wednesday 17 May 7:00pm

### Safe Church Training

Saturday 20 May	Bowral-Mittagong UC - Bowral
Saturday 5 August	Albion Park UC

9:30am – 4:00pm  
 Register: [here](#)

### Uniting Faith Formation Courses

Northern Illawarra Uniting Church  
 Saturdays: 27 May; 22 July; 23 September; 25 November

### IP Gathering of UCAF NSW/ACT Synod Committee

Gerringong Uniting Church  
 Thursday 1 June Time TBC

### Child Safe Standards IP Information Session

Zoom  
 Tuesday, 6 June 7:00pm

### Walking Together Conference

Newtown Mission & Online  
 Saturday, 12 August

### Presbytery Retreat

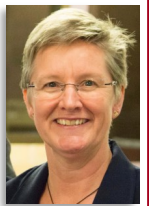
Hartzer Park - Bowral  
 10 to 12 October

### Preachfest

Sydney & Online  
 1 to 3 November

## Message from the Co-Chairperson

### Rev Kath Merrifield



As I write, we are in the midst of Holy Week. Many of us are somewhere between holding space for reflection and prayer and trying not to be too frantic about Easter preparations.

As I reflect on the meaning of Jesus' death and resurrection, I am drawn to wonder about the opportunities we have to tell this story and the way it is heard by our friends and neighbours.

Alongside the reality that many people have never heard about Jesus, or they have heard a less-than-accurate version of the story, I am wondering how we tell his story - what kind of language do we use and what do our lives say about this story and about who Jesus is? I pray that your living will tell a story of Love beyond measure, of the possibility of new life and hope when all seems lost, a story of grace and mercy and belonging.

As a church we continue to celebrate life in all its fullness and, at the same time, we are challenged with the practicalities of operating in today's world. Presbytery and its committees continue to offer support and encouragement to Congregations. Please don't hesitate to be in touch if you have a question, concern or just want to chat about how things are going.

There are lots of conversation happening across the wider church right now, conversations that hope to give direction to simplifying our structures and helping us to put more of our energy into ministry and mission and reducing the burden of compliance.

If you haven't yet had a chance to look at the Assembly's ACT2 project ([www.act2uca.com/localresources](http://www.act2uca.com/localresources)), I encourage you to take some time to consider the 6 questions they are asking and to send in your feedback.

### An Easter Blessings

May God our Creator enfold you in unbounded Love.  
 May Christ's life inspire you and keep you hopeful.  
 May the Spirit of God fill you with wonder and joy.

### Tasks in this newsletter

- RSVP and/or attend events relevant to you.
- Let your congregation know about events and news
- Get your Church Council's response to the Act2 questions in to Act2 by **30 April**
- Send your congregation's profit and loss & balance sheets to Vi Richardson by **30 April**
- Send an update on your AESC progress to Vi Richardson by **30 April**
- Annual Property Maintenance Checklist
- Fire Safety Statement
- Pass on to relevant people in your congregation information about:
  - SRE
  - Volunteer Insurance
  - Child Safe Standards
  - Applying for External Grants



We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which our office and congregations stand and we pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

We acknowledge the sorrow of the Stolen Generations and the impacts of colonisation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We also recognise the resilience, strength and pride of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

## News *from across Illawarra Presbytery*

### Presbytery Co-Chairpersons

#### Rev Diane Anderson and Rev Kath Merrifield

At the February 2023 Presbytery meeting, the Presbytery elected Co-Chairpersons for 2023, Rev Diane Anderson and Rev Kath Merrifield.

Rev Anderson is a retired UCA minister of the Word and has previously held the position of Illawarra Presbytery Chairperson.

Diane brings experience, wisdom and a deep passion for ministry in many years service in congregations, presbytery and synod positions. She has almost 30 years experience on PRCs in different presbyteries and has experience and understanding of what is involved in ministry oversight.

Rev Merrifield is the Minister of the Word at Kiama-Jamberoo UC. Ordained in 2003, Kath has Degrees in law, science and theology, and a Master of International and Community Development. She has experience across local congregations, Presbyteries, Synod and Assembly and has particular interest in equipping people to participate in the mission of God. She brings skills in strategic thinking, mission, pastoral care and theology; as well as practical skills in community development and collaborative projects. She is committed to developing partnerships between congregations and between congregations and other agencies and groups in their local communities to better serve their communities.

During the Presbytery meeting the Presbytery passed the resolution of electing Co-Chairs:

- one to exercise the responsibilities under Reg. 3.6.2(c) and be responsible for the line-management of Presbytery staff;
- the other to exercise responsibilities under Reg 5.4.1 and share in the responsibility of pastoral oversight (reg 3.6.2(c)).

Pastoral oversight and support of Presbytery staff, Committees and Working Groups will be shared as appropriate.

The role of Chairperson of the Presbytery fulfils a vital role not only in administration and compliance but also in the leadership of the Presbytery. At the Annual General Meeting of the Presbytery in November 2022, the Presbytery was unable to elect a Chairperson as there were no nominations received for the position. The idea of sharing the load began to emerge. There are examples of this working successfully in other Presbyteries. Illawarra Presbytery is thankful for the wisdom of the folk in the Presbytery of Canberra and Regions in considering this option.

The Presbytery thanks all those who volunteer their time as office bearers, chairpersons, convenors or members of Presbytery committees for 2023.

We are reminded that there are various ways of serving God and that God works through people in different ways, but it is the same God who is served and whose purpose is achieved through them all.

May God give strength to those who fulfil these roles in our Presbytery.

### Gerringong UC News

The Building upgrade is just about complete to the stone church at Gerringong UC and the minister Rev Steve Everist is hoping to hold the Good Friday Service there and the trial the 9:00am weekly services there weeks in early April.

Also at Gerringong, the Church Council has recently done a survey of the congregation and a planning report. The congregation recognised the need to grow their ministry with families and will enhance their morning service children's program. Emerging from the report are new teams to promote the life of GUC in the community, a creative worship team to give depth and colour to our worship and a social team to bring people together.

The congregation has three youth and family ministries - Kids Play 0-6 years, Gezza Kids for school years kindergarten to year 6, and Disciples in Gerringong (DiG) for high school ages.

All underlined, [blue](#) items in this newsletter are active links.  
Click to connect

#### 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  
Office: 5/32 Addison Street, SHELLHARBOUR VILLAGE

#### Presbytery Update

Is the newsletter of the Illawarra Presbytery Published (approximately) quarterly,  
it needs your input to be useful by letting everyone know what's happening in  
your congregation or zone.  
Send your ideas or articles to:  
**Vi Richardson**, Presbytery Administrator  
Mobile: 0491 185 320

## Wollongong Mission UC

### Accessibility Project - A Reflection on the Journey

The Wollongong Mission Accessibility Project was instigated by the Wollongong Mission Uniting Church (WMUC) Church Council on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2018.

The trigger for seeing the need for the project was twofold:

1. A person with a disability was seen to go up the steps to the Auditorium on hands and backside;
2. Usage of the building to raise revenue requires that it be Accessibility Compliant in line with the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)

Before the building works could commence the Heritage Officer at Wollongong City Council (WCC) was called in to determine the limitations that may be involved. There were quite a few.

After talking with Presbytery, Synod and the Wollongong City Council, building plans were approved in March 2020.

Wollongong City Council required many more reports, and an extra upgrade to the electricity supply and lighting in the building which delayed the start of the building until February 2022.

Once building started, it was discovered that termites had weakened the auditorium floor and extra funds were needed to repair the damage. Wollongong Mission is most appreciative of the support the Presbytery has offered during the long building process.

The weather was not kind resulting in several delays, as did the delivery of the lifts which were manufactured in Germany.

Today Wollongong Mission gives thanks to God that after five years there is now significantly improved accessibility to the Church and halls and an upgraded electrical system including solar panels and emergency lighting.

We celebrate with Wollongong Mission for their renewed church, and new facility that will contribute to an enriched life of prayer for decades to come.

### Also at Wollongong Mission

The church recently received the Illawarra Hawks basketball team Hero Winner award. At the Hawks game on 21 January 2023, Linda Knowles received the award (pictured right) in recognition of the church's support of the African and wider community.

Linda said of collecting the award at the public event attend by approximately 3,000 people, that the work of Jesus through the Uniting Church was seen by a very large group of non-church people.



### Presbytery Retreat 2022

In 2022, the annual Presbytery Retreat was held over 2½ days at Hartzel Park, Bowral.

The theme of the Retreat was *Risking Delight*. Facilitators, Rev Drs **Sarah Bachelard** and **Neil Millar**, examined: What happens, that we get frantic, stressed, overwhelmed, and dissatisfied? When life is like this, joy seems elusive. Besides, with such suffering in the world is joy even justified.

Yet children, poets and sages, together with some of the world's poorest communities witness to its presence in simple things and difficult places. St Paul exhorts early Christian communities to 'Rejoice always', to 'be joyful' even in the face of persecution and suffering. Dare we believe that joy is not only permissible but an ever-present reality?

Rev Dr **Sarah Bachelard** is a theologian and leader of Benedictus Contemplative Church, based in Canberra. She is a teacher with the World Community for Christian Meditation and a Circle of Trust® facilitator. She is author of *Experiencing God in a Time of Crisis*, *Resurrection and Moral Imagination: a Contemplative Christianity for our Time*, and *Poetica Divina: Poems to Redeem a Prose World*.

Over the past three and half decades Rev Dr **Neil Millar** has worked as a youth minister, congregational minister, theological educator, and aged care chaplain. He continues to work as a pastoral supervisor and facilitator of practitioner learning circles. He is a member of the Australasian Association of Supervision (AAOS) and a Circle of Trust® facilitator.

Attended by Presbytery staff, ministers and ministry agents from across the Presbytery, the retreat was an opportunity to come together and contemplate living, working, leading and loving from a renewing and refreshing place - risking delight.





## University of Wollongong

### Orientation Week 2023 Club Compass

During University of Wollongong Orientation Week 2023, 150 students signed up to **Club Compass**, the group facilitated by Rev Doo Ah Leeming and a team of active club member supporters.

Rev Leeming reports that “One Chinese student who comes to our church regularly, helped us for four days. She was hesitant to speak English to strangers but now she is confident speaking in English to anyone. I realised that her English improved through the conversation with Evening Service people [at Wollongong Mission UC] and Bible studies on the University campus. She was so committed and loyal to the Club!”

“The University is so vibrant now, even though we are still coming out of COVID. Many overseas students have come to UoW to study.”

Club COMPASS stands for:

**C**: Culture  
**O**: Oneness  
**M**: Meditation  
**P**: Pointing to active social and spiritual  
**A**: Active  
**S**: Social  
**S**: Spiritual

The compass points to our Wellbeing and happiness.

A further 52 students signed up to Club Compass on the UoW's Club Day, 8 March.

Club Compass hosts life skills lessons based on the Bible at North Wollongong beach and 35 new students attended during March 2023.

#### Rev Doo Ah Leeming

Tertiary Minister at University of Wollongong



## Illawarra Presbytery Celebratory Service

On Saturday 18 February, Illawarra Presbytery held its first Celebratory Service since the start of the COVID pandemic. A gathering of people from all across the Illawarra, the Service aimed to foster relationships and inspire each other through the sharing of our stories.

Held at Keiraview UC following the February Presbytery meeting, the service began with the Acknowledgement of Country and Call to Worship by Keiraview's Rev David Stuart.

The service included music by Wollongong Mission's Congolese congregation.

Berry UC's Rev Andrew Watts and Presbytery Chairperson for 2022, Julie Watts led those present in two songs.

Informative PowerPoint or video presentations were giving by Uniting, Presbytery **Tertiary Minister** Rev Doo Ah Leeming, **Kiama-Jamberoo** UC and **Keiraview** UC. **Shoalhaven Central** UC presented news on *Care Corner*, where members of the congregation offered care to hundreds of attendees at the 2023 Nowra Show.

The service also included the Commissioning of Presbytery Committees and Office bearers conducted by Acting Chairperson Rev Geoff Flynn.

The full service can be viewed on the Presbytery YouTube channel using this [link](#).



## Walking Together Conference

### How can the Church Embrace First Peoples' Theology in a Post-Colonial Australia?

Parts of this article are from *Insights* article by Jonathan Foye, read the full article [here](#).

In late 2022, Rev Andrew Watts, Minister at Berry UC and other Illawarra Presbytery members attended the **Walking Together Conference**. Walking Together was the inaugural First Nations Theology Conference that featured four keynote speakers. At points challenging, this was a look into the theology of stolen land and what it meant for the Uniting Church to acknowledge the dispossession and role of Indigenous Australians.

A recording from the day can be accessed [here](#).

From the *Insights* Article:

The first keynote speaker for the day, Dr Anne Pattel-Gray, spoke on the topic, "Raising our Tribal Voice."

Dr Pattel-Gray is Professor of Indigenous Studies and inaugural Head of the School of Indigenous Studies at The University of Divinity. Dr Anne Pattel-Gray is a descendant of the Bidjara / Kari Kari people of Queensland and a celebrated Aboriginal leader.

She said that first nations people's experience must form part of the task of theology, such as the stolen generations, the destruction of Indigenous people's lands, and ongoing removal of children, and high incarceration rates.

Rev Dr Garry Deverell is an Anglican priest and lecturer and research fellow in the School of Indigenous Studies at the Melbourne-based University of Divinity. Rev. Deverell is a trawloolway man from northern lutruwita/Tasmania who currently lives in Naarm/Melbourne.

He presented a wide-ranging address, this time on the theme of how the church might redress inequity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

Rev. Dr Deverell pointed out that those who participated in the massacre, frontier conflicts, and genocidal government policies, were overwhelmingly Christian.

"Many of you continue to deploy an imaginative terra nullius regarding our people by pretending that we don't exist."

"How are the churches, cooperatively, to reckon with the legacy of colonialism?"

Rev. Dr Deverell presented a challenge to churches to hand land back to traditional owners.

"One way churches came to receive land was the crown took it from us and passed it along to them without fee or compensation."

At the denominational level, this included making arrangements to hand properties churches were originally given by the crown back. At the congregational level, he challenged churches to contribute 10 percent of their annual budget to ministries run by Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people.

He said it was a part of the concept of "Setting up camp in the Centre."

"The fruit of these ministries would make for stronger mob," he said. "The churches should allow us to set up camp in the centre of your corporate life. The place where decisions are made about ministry and mission."

This, he said, would also help the church.

"Your churches are in decline because they are seen as being irrelevant and too corrupt," he said. "The churches need to get with the program. They need to get with what the spirit is doing in the world. You need us and our theological perspectives."

"Our theology is really different to yours," he said.

Rev. Dr Deverell said the church was at a "Kairos threshold of opportunity."

Rev Andrew Watts said of the event "I found all the sessions helpful and informative. For me personally, the most confronting, disturbing and uncomfortable talk (in other words the one with the most potential for my personal growth) was by Rev Dr Garry Deverell. He placed before us the very difficult call that the Christian tradition makes on us to respond to the injustice of the history in this land. Having said that, I did find all speakers to be inspiring and worth listening to".



*insights*





## News Continued

### Upper Illawarra Family Night: Fun, Faith, and Fellowship

Keiraview Uniting Church recently hosted the lively "**Upper Illawarra Family Night**", a fantastic collaboration with **Corrimal** Uniting, **Dapto** Uniting, and **Wollongong Mission**. Around 40 people, from kids to adults, joined together for an evening of fun, faith, and fellowship.

The night was packed with activities, including a tasty sausage sizzle, volleyball, outdoor bowling, and giant Jenga. Kids got creative with crafts like tree painting, while folks of all ages enjoyed some Mario Kart action.

As the night progressed, we came together in song, filling the church hall with Christian melodies. A short, heartfelt message reminded us of the importance of family, faith, and fellowship in our daily lives.

The Upper Illawarra Family Night was a great success, and we're grateful to everyone who attended and made it memorable. We look forward to more gatherings that will continue to strengthen our church communities.

**Khairul Hamdan,**  
Community and Church Worker,  
Keiraview Uniting Church

## Photo Gallery



## Information for Your Congregation

### The vision of Act2 for the UCA

#### Act2 – Church Councils – Respond by 30 April

Later Act2 is a project born of the conviction that now is a critical time for the Uniting Church to consider afresh the ordering of its life. We have changed as a Church in the last 45 years and the context of our society is significantly different. This is a whole of Church project, led by the National Assembly. We're discerning God's call for our future as the Uniting Church, and we need everyone's voice. For more information on the Act2 Project visit [act2uca.com](http://act2uca.com)

Before the end of April, Church Councils are invited to have a conversation about the Act2 Project and how it relates to their local community. The Act2 team has Church Council packs to download [here](#).

Church Councils are asked to respond to six questions. Responses will contribute to shaping the directions and options offered to the Church over the second half of 2023. The six questions are:

1. What is most life-giving about your community of faith?
2. What does the wider Church (e.g. your presbytery, synod, assembly, agencies or schools) do to help you be a life-giving community of faith?
3. What's hard, frustrating or hindering the ministry and mission of your community of faith?
4. For those things that are hard, what could the wider Church do that would help?
5. How does your community of faith contribute to the wider Uniting Church?
6. What do you value most about the national identity or national work of the Uniting Church?

Share your answers to the questions in one of the following ways:

- Use the online form on the website
- Email the Word Document provided below to the Act2 team: [uca.act2@nat.uca.org.au](mailto:uca.act2@nat.uca.org.au)
- Mail the Word Document provided to: Act2  
Project Unit  
c/o Uniting Church Assembly, PO Box A2266, Sydney South, NSW 1235.



## Property Compliance

### Annual Property Maintenance Checklist

Congregations are reminded to complete their Annual Property Maintenance Checklist, sending a copy to the Presbytery Administrator and the Synod.

Link to the Checklist [here](#)

Send completed checklists to [admin.ip@nswact.uca.org.au](mailto:admin.ip@nswact.uca.org.au) and [Property@nswact.uca.org.au](mailto:Property@nswact.uca.org.au)

### Fire Safety Statements

Remember Fire Safety Statements for church properties 2023. See the Synod website for more information [here](#):

### AESC Progress Reports Due 30 April

Australian Essential Services Compliance (AESC) inspections were conducted on all Illawarra church buildings in 2020/21.

Congregations were sent reports of actions for building compliance that resulted from the inspections. The Presbytery Administrator also sent congregations an Excel spreadsheet to assist in updating the Presbytery on progress with completing the tasks.

Please email Vi Richardson by 30 April a short report on your congregation's progress with the property tasks. Let Vi know what has been completed and what is outstanding and also any tasks the congregation is struggling to complete.

The Treasurer and Property Officers Meeting 17 May will endeavour to give advice on overcoming some compliance tasks.

### Compliance Tips – Synod Website

Synod's Congregation Governance Toolkit has resources to help Congregations to plan risk, administration and compliance activities throughout the year. Link to the page [here](#).

Key activities for each quarter, compliance for people, property and finance are listed with links to further information and relevant paperwork.

## Information for Your Congregation Continued

### Special Religious Education

Thank you to all SRE teachers for volunteering your time each week.

An email was recently sent to SRE teachers and congregations with 2023 forms and handbook attached. Please contact **Vi Richardson** if you did not receive this email.

For more information on SRE please see this link from the Synod website:

<https://nswact.uca.org.au/safe-church-unit/special-religious-education/>

Further SRE resources and teacher training options:

1. Inter-Church Commission on Religious Education in Schools (ICCOREIS) website [www.iccoreis.asn.au/](http://www.iccoreis.asn.au/)  
ICCOREIS is offering refresher training for teachers who have previously completed full modules. Click [here](#) for the flyer.  
Also, online SRE training can be completed at any time. Check [here](#) for details
2. Christian SRE website [www.christiansre.com.au](http://www.christiansre.com.au)
3. Lost Sheep resources [www.lostsheep.com.au](http://www.lostsheep.com.au)

Please check with your curriculum publisher to see if a resource is compatible with your program.



### Applying for External Grants

Are you looking to apply for funding from an organisation external to the Uniting Church?

Synod has a webpage with guidance on how to go about this, including the forms required. Click this link:

<https://nswact.uca.org.au/shared-resources/property/funding-application-process/>

Key points:

- A four-step process should be followed before applying. See the Synod's website for the steps required.
- All grant applications for funding must be lodged in the name of the *Uniting Church in Australia Property Trust (NSW) on behalf of (your Uniting Church name)*
- Individual Uniting Church organisations are not authorised to enter into any form of contractual arrangement in their own name.
- Funding bodies will not accept funding applications from any Uniting Church organisation unless a Property Trust Funding approval letter is attached.
- Congregations should allow plenty of time prior to the closing date of a grant, to complete the steps required.
- The Property Trust meets every Tuesday to execute documents.
- Documents need to be received by Synod Office Property Services no later than the COB on the preceding Thursday.



### Insurance Information

Vi Richardson recently sent an email regarding insurance for volunteers. Contact Vi if you did not receive it.

Briefly, the email outlined:

#### 1. What does Synod's insurance for volunteers actually cover?

Volunteers who undertake authorised and approved activities of the church are covered under the Synod's public liability and personal accident insurance. The volunteer personal accident insurance provides cover for out-of-pocket medical expenses that are not covered by Medicare or Private Health insurance.

Synod will not provide insurance cover for volunteers' motor vehicles. Any accidents or damage to persons or property will be the responsibility of the volunteer and claimed against their motor insurance.

It is advised that a church confirm that the volunteers have insurance for their vehicle.

#### 2. What documentation is now required to ensure a volunteer is covered?

For insurance purposes Synod need the Congregation to keep a record of who their volunteers are (the Volunteer Register Template) is a guide aimed at helping you do this.

#### 3. How would a claim be made?

The Congregation would notify the Insurance Team of the incident either via email and with or without a completed incident form.

The injured volunteer would incur the medical costs, complete the claim form, and liaise directly with the insurer to obtain reimbursement the out-of-pocket medical expenses. They can liaise with the insurance team if they have any difficulties.

In the event that a claim does occur for an injured volunteer, [here](#) is the relevant link.

Link to the Synod Volunteer Policy [here](#).





## Information for Your Congregation Continued

### Congregation Profit and Loss & Balance Sheets - Required by 30 April

Congregations are requested to send to the Presbytery Administrator their profit and loss statements and balance sheets up until the end of the March quarter for the financial year 2023, by Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> April.

Please email to: [admin.ip@nswact.uca.org.au](mailto:admin.ip@nswact.uca.org.au)



### Congregation Annual Reports

Congregations - please send a copy of your most recent annual report to the **Presbytery Strategic Mission Working Group** via email [admin.ip@nswact.uca.org.au](mailto:admin.ip@nswact.uca.org.au)



The **Presbytery Strategic Mission Working Group** (PSMWG) assists the Presbytery to develop and implement plans to engage in new opportunities for mission across the region, working with congregations where appropriate. They also facilitate congregation and Presbytery mission opportunities through internal and external resourcing as available and provide leadership, strategic thinking, encouragement and resources for congregations and their lay and ordained leaders.

Your annual reports help PSMWG see opportunities where they may be able to assist congregations in their missional endeavours.

## Also

### Uniting Social Justice

**Uniting Social Justice** informs debate and decision-making among politicians, policy makers, opinion leaders, and the broader community. Campaigns and advocacy work speak up for those who may not ordinarily have their voices heard.

Campaigns include drug law reform, affordable housing, people seeking asylum, aged care advocacy, climate change and more.

Your congregation can get involved and attend events.

Sign up for the eNews letter here:

<https://uca.us19.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=adea70bac92fd774a78077800&id=22f797da29>

# Uniting



**Social  
Justice  
Forum**

# Uniting Mission and Education *Events and Courses*

<https://ume.nswact.uca.org.au/upcoming-events/>

A wide offering of courses, events and training including:



## Living Our Faith

Thursdays 13, 20, 27 April 6:00pm

<https://ume.nswact.uca.org.au/calendar/living-our-faith-leading-worship-april-2023/>

**For:** Worship Leaders, Lay Preachers, Bible Study or Small Group Leaders, those engaged in informal chaplaincy or pastoral care, those interested in learning more about worship in the Uniting Church

**Topics:** Leading Worship, exploring Theology, the Old Testament, the New Testament, Code of Ethics and more.



**VENUE** Zoom (not offered 'in person' in the Illawarra in 2023)

**COST** \$75 for entire course

## Ministry of Pastor Professional Development Day

Thursday 20 April 9:30am

**For:** those serving in the specified ministry role of Pastor.

**VENUE** Uniting Church Centre for Ministry North Parramatta

**COST** free BYO food

\$40 catered



## Presiding at the Sacraments

Thursdays 4, 11, 25 May Zoom

+ Saturday 20 May face-to-face

An exploration of the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion as celebrated by the Uniting Church in Australia. This course will be presented through a mixed-mode of three Thursday evenings via Zoom, and one full-day face-to-face training day.

The *Understanding the Sacraments* training course is a pathway that can lead to Presbytery authorisation as a Lay Presider, it is also an ideal opportunity for: a small group, faith community, bible study group, or congregation to spend time exploring the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion as celebrated by the Uniting Church in Australia.



**For:**

- Lay Leaders seeking Presbytery authorisation to preside at a service of the Sacraments.
- Chaplains and Pastoral Practitioners
- Candidates for Ministry

**COST** \$100 per person (Registration via Scholarship is also available)

## Synod Mentor Training

Tuesdays 26, 30 May, 6 June Zoom (2 hours/session)

We need mentors! Mentors from all walks of life. Mentors who are equipped and confident to spur on, to encourage, support, guide and walk with others as they open themselves to the grace of God in their lives.

Whatever your experience level, this training will provide the opportunity to strengthen and deepen your skills as a mentor. It will include teaching on how to mentor people at different stages of faith and ministry – for all phases of ministry development and for discipleship. Along with teaching content, and skills development, there will be the opportunity to both reflect on your own practice and to engage with other mentors in a collaborative, supportive community.

Download the course brochure [here](#).

*Christian mentoring is a dynamic, intentional relationship of trust in which one person enables another to maximise the grace of God in their life and service.*

John Mallison

## Uniting Mission and Education *Events and Courses* Continued



<https://ume.nswact.uca.org.au/upcoming-events/>

A wide offering of courses, events and training including:

### PreachFest

1 - 3 November

<https://ume.nswact.uca.org.au/calendar/preachfest-2023/>



PreachFest is back in 2023! Join us from 1-3 November at locations in Sydney and Melbourne for a 3-day festival designed to enliven and inspire the art and vocation of preaching in Australia. You can find out more by visiting the *Preachfest* [website](#), and reading [this article](#) in the latest (Autumn) issue of *Insights*.

Tickets will go on sale shortly after Easter, and speakers will be announced soon. In the meantime, you can sign up to the *Preachfest* mailing list [here](#) to keep up to date with the latest information, including speakers, event information and special early bird ticket prices!

*Preachfest* is organised by the Uniting Church Synod of NSW & ACT in partnership with the Synod of Vic/Tas.

## Events *in the Presbytery*

**Brooke Prentis Illawarra Visit: Equipping ministry leaders and other interested people for conversations on the Uluru Statement from the Heart and Referendum multiple Dates**



We (the church) invite Brooke, as a nationally recognised Aboriginal Christian leader, to offer an independent First Nations perspective. She comes as someone who is not part of any official campaign and not a member of any political party. Brooke is aiming to help people be informed about the Uluru Statement from the Heart as well as the Referendum and in that process gain some grasp of the variety of views within the First Nations communities. Her vision is to work towards healing so that we, together, can build an Australia built on Truth, Justice, Love and Hope.

Sunday **14 May** 4:00pm - 6:00pm Keiraview UC  
6:30pm worship around tables and over a meal, flexible format for discussion and Q&A

Monday **15 May** Evening\* Wollongong UC Church on the Mall  
Public Evening Lecture followed by Q&A

Sunday **21 May** 9:30am worship Berry UC  
Opportunity for more discussion and Q&A at morning tea afterwards

Sunday **21 May** Evening\* Kiama UC  
Public Lecture followed by Q&A

Monday **22 May** Evening\* Bowral UC  
Public Lecture followed by Q&A

Saturday **27 May** 9:30am - 2:30pm Berry UC  
Half Day workshop (including lunch and morning tea)

**Date Pending** time TBC Milton/Ulladulla UC  
Public Evening Lecture followed by Q&A and maybe a church service

The half day workshop (at Berry, 27 May) has a charge of \$25 which includes lunch, covering costs and a contribution towards Brooke to assist her in this work.

The Public Evening Lectures and the evening at Keiraview UCA will also have a charge (yet to be determined) for the same reasons. Concessional rate available.

Tickets will be available on Humanitix (online) and at the door.

These events are provided for our church, other churches and the wider public.





## Events in the Presbytery Continued

### NCLS Webinar: How to Make the Most of your NCLS results

Thursday 20 April 11am and 7pm - Zoom

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/ncls-webinar-how-to-make-the-most-of-your-ncls-results-tickets-540297322837>

So your church completed the National Church Life Survey and you want to know more?

This free 1½ hour webinar guides you through your Church Life Profile of results, with insights and tips for exploring your results and using them to inform your ministry.

What is most significant in our church's results? What has changed in our churchgoers' attitudes or experiences since the impact of COVID-19? How do we take steps of action into the future together?

Come along and see how your NCLS results and resources can help your church answer these questions.

This FREE webinar will help you to:

- evaluate your results
- identify strengths and areas to address
- respond to your results with a team or group at church, and
- use your results to form future directions

Bring your Profile. Bring your team. Act on your survey results and take positive steps into the future of your church!

This webinar will be held on Zoom, details to access the webinar will be included in your confirmation email.

COST free



### IP Gathering of Uniting Church Adult Fellowship: NSW/ACT Synod Committee

Thursday 1 June time TBC - Gerringong UC

After 45 years of wonderful work, the Illawarra Presbytery Uniting Church Adult Fellowship (UCAF) Committee closed in 2022. However, Presbytery wished to support an annual event continuing and appreciates its value in providing a worthwhile day of fellowship and worship together.



The UCAF Synod Committee has been invited to host an event in the Illawarra and Gerringong Uniting Church has offered to host the 2023 fellowship gathering, 1 June.

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.

The Offering at the event on 1 June will benefit the Flying Padre, David Shrimpton based at Broken Hill. David's ministry is the project sponsored by the UCAF Synod Committee for the current three years.

David takes to the skies in his Cessna 182 to reach his 225,000 km<sup>2</sup> congregation - roughly 600 people on 150 cattle and sheep stations - stretching the length of NSW, south to Victoria, east to Ivanhoe and up to the Queensland border.

Guest speaker at the event is Northern Illawarra's **Rev Josh McPaul** (pictured).

Rev McPaul grew up in the Sutherland Shire and graduated from University of Wollongong before moving to the USA for 25 years. In Oakland near San Francisco, he was involved in a church plant serving a diverse community and committed to reconciliation and anti-racism.

At the Adult Fellowship gathering, Josh will share his story from serving the homeless and growing a large congregation in California to returning home to Australia and leading one of Illawarra's own Uniting Churches.

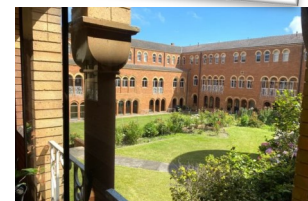


### Presbytery Retreat 2023

Tuesday 10 to Thursday 12 October - Hartzer Park, Bowral

Guest at year's retreat will be **Rev Dr Chris Mostert**. Chris is a retired theologian and theological teacher, with a doctorate from the University of Sydney. He has taught Systematic Theology in Seoul (Korea) and at United Theological College.

The retreat will be a mix of group discussion, reflection, learning and relaxing.



## Events in the Presbytery *Continued*

### Child Safe Standards: Illawarra Presbytery Information Session

Tuesday 6 June 7pm

Zoom

From 1 February 2023, Part 9A of the [Children's Guardian Act 2019](#) will come into force, which will allow the Children's Guardian to take action to ensure organisations comply with the Child Safe Standards. This means where organisations do not comply with the Child Safe Standards, the Children's Guardian can:

- issue a compliance notice to the organisation, or
- accept an enforceable undertaking from the organisation

Religious organisations are included in this scheme by state legislation.

This applies to your congregation whether you engage in children's activities or not and even if you do not usually have children attending worship or other programs.

While on the surface this may seem another onerous compliance task there is some good news.

The Office of Children's Guardian will be taking an educative rather than punitive approach to implementation.

The Presbytery will be holding a Child Safety Standards session via *Zoom*, at which we will have the Faith Sector Child Safety Officer present to help guide congregations as to how to work towards these standards and answer questions.

In the meantime, if you have questions, please contact either:

Rev Dr Matthew Wilson	Presbytery Minister – Mission	<a href="mailto:mattheww@nswact.uca.org.au">mattheww@nswact.uca.org.au</a>	0413182684
Vi Richardson	Presbytery Administrator	<a href="mailto:Admin.ip@nswact.uca.org.au">Admin.ip@nswact.uca.org.au</a>	0491185320



### Uniting Faith Formation

**Multiple dates** 4x 1½ sessions

@ Northern Illawarra Uniting Church

The Uniting Church is a distinctively Australian expression of faith. But the way we read the Bible, the way we govern ourselves and the way we live out our faith has deep roots in the Christian tradition. Northern Illawarra Uniting Church is hosting a series on what makes us distinctive and why.

Rev Josh McPaul is facilitating a series of seminars diving deeper into our Christian traditions.

Everyone is welcome to attend each of the seminars. There is no need to attend all if you can't commit to all the dates. Just come to the topics of interest to you.

**Saturday 27 May** 9:00am Of the People, By the People: Church History and Polity  
A look at how different churches govern themselves and why it matters

**Saturday 27 May** time TBC More than Fire Insurance: The Gospel and the Kingdom of God  
A look big picture of how wide the gospel is and how deep it goes.

**Saturday 23 September** time TBC Of Spiritual Gifts and the Priesthood of All Believers  
A vision for the whole church serving together

**Saturday 25 November** time TBC How Mark Can Change the Way You See Everyone Around You  
Reading the gospels as radical psychological transformation

The sessions will be recorded, and the links will be circulated for those who miss attending at NIUC.



### Treasurer and Property Officers Meeting

Wednesday 17 May 7pm

Zoom

Always informative, organisers are endeavouring to have guest speakers on topics including: budgeting; fire safety; property inspections and maintenance; test and tag; Synod's adjustments to Sales Proceeds; how to get your AESC requirements completed.

The **Presbytery Training and Education Working Group** is very busy working with facilitators to organise and promote events and courses of many different topics, throughout 2023.

# Austinmer Uniting Church

The Village Chapel

**Centenary Celebration**



48 Moore Street

Austinmer

Disabled access in Moore Lane

You are invited to attend

Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> April 2023, 9:30AM

Guest Speaker

**Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbury**

Entertainment

**Soprano Louise Lavilles**

Come and share your memories and photographs

**Morning tea provided**



REST NURTURE  
SPIRITUALITY COMMUNITY

# WOMEN IN MINISTRY RETREAT 15-18 MAY

For Ministers, Pastors & Deacons  
and those in other specified Ministry roles in the NSW/ACT Synod.

ST JOSEPH'S SPIRITUALITY & EDUCATION CENTRE  
8 HUMPHREYS RD, KINCUMBER SOUTH NSW  
8 HUMPHREYS RD  
KINCUMBER SOUTH NSW  
COST \$ 399

*The cost has been heavily subsidized,  
but if this cost is still prohibitive contact Jo Drayton  
Joannad@nswact.uca.org.au*

Online registration & More information  
<https://tinyurl.com/2eulzgcj>

Registrations Close 1 May 2023

For more details Contact Christine Palmer  
[christine@pnpuca.org.au](mailto:christine@pnpuca.org.au)

Supported and Subsidized by: Uniting Mission & Education

Facilitator: Susanna Pain is an experienced spiritual director and a life member of the Australian Network for Spiritual Direction. She is Co-founder and Life Member of InterPlay Australia. Susanna works part time as Senior Associate: Community, Spiritual Care and the Arts at Benedictus Contemplative Church in Canberra, alongside spiritual direction, supervision, and leading retreats, InterPlay Workshops and contemplative quiet days.