



The Westerly



PPW & PWV Newsletter No.9 – 10th June 2021

Do you have a calling?



Rev Linley Liersch (Mission Development Strategist & eLM)

I received a calling from God when I was about 12 years old. It was after 12– 14 Bush Dance we were all sleeping in Church Hall. God asked me to be a minister and I said 'No way that is hard work!' God asked me to be a teacher, and I said 'Yes.' I did everything I could to become a good teacher and when I exited college we were in a recession and no teachers were employed into public education that year. So I found a job working for the Uniting Church in the area of Christian education, Youth work, Family work. (Long story short!) Until I candidate for **Minister of the Word (MOW)**. To me being a minister of the word is about Church building: I want to help build the Uniting Church for the future. When I later reflected on my call story it reminded me of Samuel in the Temple at the age of 13 y.o. called by God in the middle of the night, for work he would do when he was older.

I have a friend who was called to ministry in her 60's, her biblical call story was Sarah laughing that she was a called so late in life to serve. So you are never too young and never too old to have a calling!

Fi Botcher talks about her calling to the ministry of **Deacon** and Marjorie Crothers in the role of **Pastor** (p.3).

My daughter came home from National Young Adult Leaders Conference NYALC. There she experience the wonderful multicultural, wide theology of the UCA, along side her peers. "I don't have a calling Mum! But I have a feeling in my gut that I want to be a leader in the Uniting Church." Within 6 months Adara Liersch was a member of Synod where she spoke eloquently about the things she was passionate about and was elected onto Standing Committee. All her experience of youth leading, chairing meetings and reading reports at university all helped her make this move into **leadership**.

Lay leaders often start by being a reliable usher at church. Then a person might be asked to help read the Bible Reading next Sunday, they find this an honour. They read the bible so well they are then asked to lead a prayer. Then they co-ordinate worship the week the minister is away. Some time down the track, Church Council might ask them to consider training as a **Lay Preacher**. After showing a commitment to their lay preaching commitments and ongoing training the Church Council might now ask them to become a **Lay President**.

The Uniting Church is in need of leaders: lay preachers, lay pastors, MOW, Deacons, School Chaplains, Hospital Chaplains... Perhaps God is calling you? The first step is as easy as talking to your local minister.

Is God Calling you?

Children & Families Ministry: core issues in diverse contexts

Get equipped for even more effective ministry with children and their families!

The unit examines the theological, developmental and methodological resources for contextual children and families ministries across the spectrum of Australian church based, community based and para-church expressions. Addressing the theology, spirituality and sociology of the child in relation to family, church, faith, culture, technology, history and philosophical discourse, the unit develops critical skills for evaluating and designing robust, contextual processes for discipleship, pastoral care, safe practice, mission and leadership with children and their families.

For more information visit: pilgrim.edu.au/courses



CENTRE FOR
THEOLOGY
& MINISTRY

Lecturer
Beth Barnett

Beth Barnett has a background in various sectors of Education, Pastoral Ministry and Mission across many denominations and parachurch groups and contributes in the international conversation on child theology and intergenerational faith formation. Beth has taught in children and families ministry, biblical studies and pastoral care across several Melbourne theological colleges. Beth writes resources and hosts cohorts for professional development and peer learning in intergenerational ministries.

July 7-9, 12-14th On-

Intergenerate Conference 2021—Australia—Sharing the Table

Last year the Intergenerate Australia Conference 2020 was the best!

Not just the latest thought in **Intergenerational worship and ministry**. But also the latest thoughts on **discipleship, mission, evangelism, connecting with younger generations, digital church and church planting**. Lots of great speakers from around the world so you get to think about what works globally and how it might work locally.

My great insight was that in the Uniting Church we think a lot about mission as programs that are leadership heavy. I wondered how in the future we can continue mission if it always demands a lot of our leaders and caterers? I began asking: What if mission was simpler and lighter? What if mission was a joy to participate in? What sort of mission could smaller/older congregations sustain?

Intergenerate provided many models of ministry to explore. Like a banquet and we were all sharing the table.

Rev. Linley Liersch (Click the picture for links to this years conference.)



Mental Health Matters

REV. FI BOTCHER (DEACON AT SUNSHINE MENTAL HEALTH)

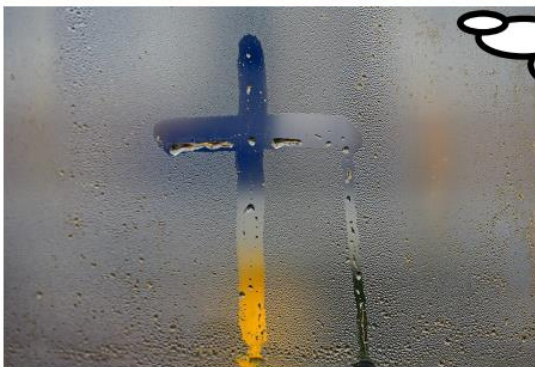


“**Discernment**” wasn’t a word I used often before undertaking a Period of Discernment (POD), but since then I seem to hear myself saying it a lot – although admittedly often jokingly “so Fi, what is it you discern today?”

My own call into the Deaconate was very much influenced by the UCA’s ongoing discernment to be a deeply missional church, a church prepared to walk into the world, meeting the needy where they’re at. This is where I felt the spirit stirring – both my own heart and within the heart of the UCA.

Since my ordination I have also felt the uncomfortable tension that this stirring creates within congregations. I feel the “yes... but...” Yes: we want to be a radically inclusive church, but: we are reluctant to let go of our power. We hold tight to the “things we own” – the furniture and the theology.

And this is where I feel the **disturbing winds of the spirit now, stirring us to discern** how to authentically invite the voices that are too often spoken over to be heard. In our congregations, our presbyteries and within all levels of our decision making.



Period of Discernment (POD) is a time given to discern your calling and what ministry God might be calling you for? Speak to your local minister and then the presbytery or the process in your presbytery.



Marjorie Crothers (Role of Pastor)

My current placement with the Hopkins Region (Warrnambool and area) is primarily hospital visiting, the aged care establishments and leading worship there. I work with Rev. Geoff Barker and Rev. Malcolm Frazer as a team.

There is recognition of prior learning and experience, my experience is in school chaplaincy with the, then, CCES; some years as voluntary Pastoral Care Person in Palliative Care in Warrnambool; involvement in the UCA since its inception. Accredited Lay Preacher and authorised to conduct the sacraments. The work with Palliative Care involving working with patients, families and staff, developing bereavement support and I was enabled and encouraged to undertake a number of courses

Pastor, a role within the Uniting Church, it is not a title such as Rev. We are not ordained but there are competencies identified by the Assembly to be met and we are accountable to the Presbytery as well as to our employing body (a congregation). Once recognized, Pastors are commissioned and are members of Presbytery.



Education Events



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| 12th June | Discernment Workshop: <i>Everything you want to know about your life's purpose.</i> |  |
| 16th June | Worship & Preaching on-line training 2021 June 16th Leading Worship & Communications and Ethics in worship |  |
| 27th & 28th July | Intergenerate AUS (Brisbane, Sydney, NZ, Zoom) |  |
| 7th August | Make it Messy (Parkville, CTM) | |



**PRESIDENT'S ROUNDTABLE
VICTORIA**
18-20 JUNE 2021

CALLING ALL UCA YOUNG ADULTS (18–25 y.o.) — FREE EVENT

Meet the UCA President Dr. Deidre Palmer. Share your hopes and dreams for the church and the world!

This event is going on-line!

Please register—click picture for link.

CALLING FOR ALL UCA YOUNG ADULTS, I WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

The President of the Uniting Church Assembly, Deidre Palmer invites you to a conversation.

In living out the gospel of Christ, what are you passionate about?

What brings you joy?

What do you hope for?

What are your concerns about the world and our society?

As the Church, how do you think we could respond to these concerns and participate in the transforming mission of God in our world?

What are your hopes for who we are and who we are becoming in the Uniting Church?

I would love to hear your insights on these and other questions.

Come join me for a free-ranging conversation and together let's be part of the movement of God's liberating Spirit in the world.

This is a free event and dinner will be provided.

[Please register which evening you wish to attend through Eventbrite here](#)

For further information, please contact:

Robin.Yang@victas.uca.org.au or NeryM@nat.uca.org.au

PRAYER POINTS

We hope and pray that each of you - as ministry agents and as congregations- are able to find your way through this difficult time of lockdown.

We pray for those doing worship and decision making on-line.

We pray for those who are hand delivering newsletters and prayer sheets.

We give thanks for winter rain and pray for the farmers sowing seed and watching for the first flourish of growth.

We pray for all who make a living off the land that they may be sustained by hope.

We give thanks for our emergency workers and their service of our community.