



The Westerly



PWV & PPW Newsletter No.25 – 3rd February 2022



Presbytery Minister Consultation Rev. Linley Liersch [PPW MDSE]

Assembly is undergoing many nation wide conversations to look at the future of the UCA. One of these conversations were with the presbytery ministers.

Act2 asked the group of presbytery ministers...

‘When you dream about the UC in 2030 what phrase occurs to you?’ Some of the answers included responsive to mission opportunities, passionate commitment to the Good News of God with us. Serving the community with God, inclusive of all, planting new ways of church, covenanting with first peoples, sustainable practices, faith in everyday, local and loving.’



Is the UC you dream about in 2030 substantially the same, incrementally different, substantially different, radically different? Of the 32 PM’s surveyed...

- 0 % Substantially the same. No one said the church would be the same!
- 15.6% Incrementally different.
- 65.6% Substantially different—the majority voice.
- 18.8% Radically different

What things are essential and must be preserved? The bible, the gospel, the Trinity, the Basis of union and UCA ethos were named as theological foundations. Identity markers were covenanting with first peoples, valuing diversity and inclusion, intercultural engagement, social justice, discipleship of all believers and everyone having a voice through consensus.

What things could be let go of? At a national level we needed to let go of complex structures, bureaucracy, duplication of theological colleges and Synod structures. At a congregational level we need to let go of small groups holding onto large and expensive properties that can not be maintained and is not being used for effective ministry.

What trends in ministry do we observe in the future church? No longer one minister per congregation. Every minister will be a resource minister. Every minister will have to work in teams. Smaller or micro-church networks based around a large central Church hub. Increase in faith communities. Increase in flexible expressions of church life, that is, more new and renewing expressions of church. **Then we worked on developing what some of these new trends might look like and developed timelines for putting them in place.**

Assembly: Act2



Act2 Resources and Re-

As we look to the future, what is God saying to us as the Uniting Church about how we order our life so we can be committed to transforming lives and communities in God's love?

Members of the Uniting Church, our congregations, agencies, schools and Councils, are invited to engage in a conversation about the future to which God is calling our Church.

Alongside this was a clear acknowledgement that we are facing many challenges, both internally and externally. As we look to the future and consider afresh our life together, it is obvious we can't stay the way we are. We need to be open to what is required to be the Church God is calling us to be, as we focus on growing and nurturing life-giving local communities of faith and hope.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED:

1. Show these short **Videos** at Church Council and on Sunday Morning notices
 - Prommo Video [The UCA Act2 Project - Uniting Church Australia](#)
 - Realities we are facing in the church right now [Considering Afresh - Uniting Church Australia](#)
 - Assembly President Rev. Sharon Hollis Call to Action, Act2 <https://vimeo.com/636780117>
 - Update on who are we hearing from [Act2: who are we hearing from? - Uniting Church Australia](#)
2. Church Leaders or small groups may read the latest results in a **report** "[Considering Afresh Our Life Together](#)" towards a more equitable resourced and Sustainable Church. It is 20 pages long, with graphs and charts & pictures. It talks about the realities we are facing as a church right now. It is easy to access relevant information and statistics quickly. [Act2-Paper final.pdf \(uniting.church\)](#) Interesting facts can be placed in **newsletters** as discussion starters.
3. Do a **Bible study** "[Act2 Our Life Together Reflections on the basis of union](#)" written by Geoff Thompson to help reconnect with our theological identity. [Our-Life-Together-Reflections-on-the-BoU.pdf \(uniting.church\)](#) We value the input of all our diverse communities into this conversation and have begun translating *Reflections on the Basis of Union* studies into some of the languages used within the UCA.
4. Take the **Survey**. Have your say and join the biggest conversation in the UC. Fill in the survey as individuals, presbytery, congregations or small groups. (Closing Soon).



**Uniting Faith & Family Camp -
March 11th—14th 2022
Strong Spirit Story:
Pay attention.
Be astonished.
Tell about it!**

Spring boarding from Mary Oliver's
"Instructions for living a life",
Family Camp 2022 is all about strengthening
our practices, exploring our spirit, and
sharing our stories.

*How can we further build our faith
practices?*

*Why should we investigate our faith
stories?*

*What are the ways we can share these with
those around us?*

All this and more at the 2022 Family Camp!

Venue t.b.a.

Registration:

Em Chandler emchandler6@gmail.com

0424 578 153 for further information.

**Do you worry about the families in
your congregations not being
supported in their faith journey?**

Then sponsor them to one of these great
camps...

More Info: [Intergenerational – Presbytery of Port
Phillip West \(ucappw.org.au\)](#)



FEB 2022

Links on Back Page
'Education Events'

**DEVELOPING A
+ CULTURE OF WELCOMING +**

Online Workshops

Churches will:

- ✦ Develop their own Welcoming Pathway.
- ✦ Learn the typical process of how people come to faith.
- ✦ Understand why ongoing inclusion is the key.
- ✦ Improve entry points into their church.

WEDNESDAY EVENINGS
7:30-8:30pm (4 Weeks)
Commencing 2nd February.
[Register for Wednesday
by clicking here](#)

THURSDAY AFTERNOONS
2-3pm (4 Weeks)
Commencing 3rd February.
[Register for Thursday
by clicking here](#)

Uniting Church in Australia
SYNOD OF VICTORIA AND TASMANIA

equipping Leadership for Mission
Priorities, Focus & Advocacy

Messy Church Camp

HEROES



**March 11th - 14th
2022**

Acacia Campsite—Halls Gap

**Arts and Crafts, Games & Sports,
Bible stories, Bush walks... for All-Ages.**

Promo Video: [UYC Messy Church Camp Promo Vid-
eo - YouTube](#)

Camp Form: [docx \(ucappw.org.au\)](#)

Send registration to:

Email: Linley.liersch@ppw.victas.uca.org.au

Post: Messy Church Camp, c/- Horsham

Uniting Church,

10 Pynsent St. Horsham VIC 3400

Mental Health Matters

REV. FI BOTCHER (DEACON AT SUNSHINE MENTAL HEALTH)

“Dean” is 23 with a childlike presence. Today he’s bouncing around, skipping from one topic to another. “Wanna see me box? I’m good! Hey, can you put a speaker on your phone? I wanna rap!”. Dean lives with learning disabilities that effect his mental health and I’m barely keeping up with him today.

Suddenly he stands still, looks me in the eyes with an innocent, searching gaze and says: “Is the world about to end?”

Here we are at the beginning of another year overshadowed by uncertainty. We can’t be sure what next month will look like let alone next year. How do we imagine a future for our worshipping communities when the present feels so shaky?

After two years of wrestling with what we thought would be temporary changes, some changes have started to take root. Things that seemed inconceivable, like online worship, now form a part of who we are.

I tell Dean that I don’t think the world is ending, not yet - but I do think the world is changing. **And change can feel just as scary as endings. However, it’s in change we find God’s promise of renewal and growth, and in change we find transformation.**



Discipleship Learning Community

Mel Perkins (Lay Leadership Development Coordinator, Equipping Leadership for Mission eLM)

Do you enjoy movies? Have you ever sat through one where the plot and music didn’t fit? It rarely happens because there is an understanding that there needs to be a coherence in all the elements that make up and go together in telling the story – it is part of what draws us into the story!

Worship and Preaching are like this. Every element needs to fit together because they too come together to tell a story – and to draw us again and again into God’s wide and deep story. When things don’t fit together in Worship there can be a dissonance or disconnection for those who are present and might even impede some worshippers in their worship.

It is so important for those of us who lead Worship and Preach in the Uniting Church, to understand the hows and whys of Worship leading and preparation, and Preaching preparation and delivery. Often, we become the co-facilitators for the faith development of others through the words we speak, the songs we choose, the prayers we pray, and the theology we espouse. And, it is hard to be mindful of what we are doing, or even recognise this as a ‘calling’ in the church, if we are unaware of what really sits behind the decisions we and others make as we prepare.

So are you someone who currently prepares and leads Worship, and/or Preaches? Wouldn’t you like to know more about why and how you are doing what you are so you can enhance and better facilitate Worship and the experience of Preaching for others? **Then join the Discipleship Learning Community!**

Interested? Check out more at: <https://victas.uca.org.au/community-learning/leadership/lay-resources/>

Or want to ask in person about it first? Or ready to enrol?

Email Mel Perkins on Mel.Perkins@victas.uca.org.au or phone on 0424 142 8147

From your Climate Action Group

Have you thought about developing a community garden or looking to find ways to encourage our communities to care for our ecosystem? Below are three articles that might spark your interest! Feel free to contact us if you would like to chat further. Quick Reminder: Don't forget to complete the "5 Leaf Eco Award" survey by the end of March. Call us if you need help with it. Christine cstorie65@gmail.com or 0409 521 998; or Sue susanannestrong@hotmail.com or 0437 741 077. [Five Leaf Eco Awards](#)

Bringing in the Sheaves: What might be possible in your community? Ever thought about a shared garden? A number of them have sprouted across UCA congregations. They produce organically grown vegetables, herbs, and flowers. Churches see this as a way to deepen connections with and within the community. "At the same time, sowing, growing, and harvesting your own food reconnects communities with the beauty of God's creation" said a congregation member. Take a look. [Bringing in the sheaves: Church community gardens take root - JourneyOnline](#)



Faith and the Common Good: Faith and The Common Good is a Canadian, interfaith network founded in 2000 on the belief that our diverse faith congregations and spiritual communities can be powerful role models for the common good. Their network is composed of people of faith, hope and spirit who, despite their differences in theology, dress and culture, share a calling to protect our ecosystem and a passion for community service. Take a look at this video which includes advice on gardening, harvesting and community involvement. [Faith & the Common Good \(faithcommongood.org\)](http://faithcommongood.org)

Farming God's Way: Take a look at this encouraging video of action being taken in Africa. [FGW01 102 Promo - YouTube](#)

Towards Zero: Connecting Faith and Action

Explore how you and your faith community can shape a better future for our planet with this new video series from the Assembly. Drawing on his personal journey and experience in renewable energy, Assembly Theologian-in-residence Rev Dr Ji Zhang has produced the videos and accompanying resources including an emissions calculating tool. Discover the real possibility of becoming carbon neutral as a household, a congregation, a network of agencies and a whole church. [Click here to view these resources](#)



Net Zero 2050 - National Center for Climate Restoration Report Latest analysis reveals "Net zero 2050" emissions (NZ2050) strategies will lock in many decades of unnecessary fossil fuels use well past 2050, with an unsustainable, business-as-usual economic pathway, dangerous "offset" trade-offs, and unacceptable risks of unstoppable climate warming. [Read the full report here](#)

Email ANZ: lift your climate ambition and exit gas and oil ANZ is reviewing its gas and oil lending policy – giving it the perfect opportunity to make good on its support of the Paris Climate Agreement, and become the first big bank to exit gas and oil. Email ANZ and urge the bank to: 1. divest from existing oil and gas projects by 2030, and 2. commit to no new oil or gas immediately. Your message to ANZ will contribute to a wave of community pressure holding the big banks accountable on climate. [Read the template and find out more here.](#)



Education Events

Feb 3rd

Developing a Culture of Welcome

2—3 pm

THURSDAY AFTERNOONS 2-3pm (4 Weeks) Commencing 3rd February

Register:- <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/zoom-link>

Feb 12th

PPW Presbytery Meeting

Hybrid meeting on-line and in person at Hoppers Crossing



Feb 17th

Northerly Lecture—Red Ochre Theology by Dr. Anne Pattel-Gray

7—9:30pm

Centre for Theology and Ministry 29 College Cres, Parkville VIC OR ONLINE

<https://events.humanitix.com/northey-lecture-with-dr-anne-pattel-gray-red-ochre-theology?fbclid=IwAR1csKhhTD1s5PopPZXev3IzA0UdWgffB8fOyyba3aiQiAuEfpPwo7XNTKE>

Feb 19th ?

PWV Presbytery Meeting??? —t.b.a.

9:30 am ?



March 1st

Discipleship Learning Community (Nhill or on-Line)

5:30 - 7:30pm

TUESDAY AFTERNOONS March—June EXPLORONG WORSHIP in the UCA.

Brochure: [DLC-brochure-for-2022.pdf \(ucappw.org.au\)](https://www.ucappw.org.au/DLC-brochure-for-2022.pdf)

March 5th

[Amplify](#) Conference (In person & On-Line at a Hub near you)

Ecumenical Conference on Children, Youth and Family Ministry

Save the date!

