

# Uniting



Presbytery of

# Tasmania



<https://ucatas.org.au/>

Issue No. 184

June 2020

## Is your church ready to re-open and re-gather?

The Tasmanian Government has announced places of worship can reopen for small religious gatherings and ceremonies for a limited number of attendees (plus those necessary to provide the ceremony), once COVID-19 Safety Plans are in place including thorough cleaning, use of hand sanitiser and maintaining physical distancing (1.5 metres and 4 square metres per person). *Perhaps you can gather, but should you?*



In Tasmania gatherings of up to 10 can restart from May 18, with a limit of 20 attendees from June 15. It is a government requirement that a comprehensive COVID-19 Safety Plan is developed before gatherings take place, as well as keeping records of all people in present in case contact tracing is required.

Before re-opening your doors to gatherings including worship services, prayer groups and other meetings by other users, it is vital to consider not only all of the necessary physical requirements, but even more importantly the ministry and mission implications. *Who can gather safely, and who would be left out?*



*Rev Brian Cole leads worship via Zoom from Devonport Uniting Church*

There are a number of additional factors for every Church Council and congregation to also consider, including requirements for COVID-19 cleaning and cleaning time between events, no food or drinks shared, and pastoral care.

The UCA safety checklist sent to all Uniting Churches will assist in deciding if you are able to be COVID-19 compliant, and will help develop your COVID-19 Safety Plan.

For more information visit the [UCATas website](https://ucatas.org.au/) or phone the Tasmanian office (03) 6331 9784.

# Opportunities



## Next Presbytery Gathering

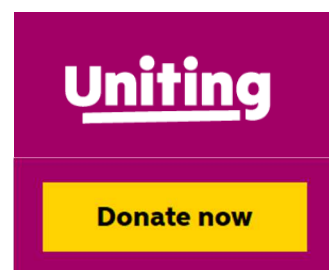
9.45am Saturday 13 June 2020

by Zoom

If you are not a Presbytery member and would like to join us on the day by Zoom, please let the UCA Tasmanian Office know and we shall send you a Zoom invitation.

**Synod Updated Covid-19 Information:** In a bid to assist congregations keep abreast of what is and isn't permitted, the Synod Coronavirus Crisis Team has gathered Frequently Asked Questions and attempted to provide easy answers. This FAQ sheet is updated WEEKLY and re-sent in every Coronavirus edition of *eNews*. Coronavirus editions of the Synod *eNews Update* is sent weekly to all presbyteries, all ministers in placement and retired, all Church Councils, and to all Lay Preachers.

**Uniting VicTas** is the community services arm of the Uniting Church across Tasmania and Victoria. Uniting VicTas already provides emergency relief to people now also affected by Covid-19, on top of existing poverty, homelessness, domestic violence, mental health issues, and more. Covid-19 makes these situation even more dire. You can donate now: phone 1800 668 426 or visit <https://www.unitingvictas.org.au/donate/>



## Worship Resources

Both the Presbytery of Tasmania and the Synod have resources pages that are updated frequently. Here you can find worship ideas, faith at home, online churches and services, printable resources and Zoom meeting information among other resources.

Presbytery link: <https://ucatas.org.au/resources-for-non-contact-times/>

Synod link <https://victas.uca.org.au/resources/covid-19-worship-resources/>

Growing in the love and knowledge of Jesus Christ is transformational. It may be a long time since we have intentionally reflected on this and pondered our heart for God. When all the distractions and activities are removed, there is time to wonder, read, pray, reflect, repent and be renewed through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Lifelong Christian faith is encouraged through family/household nurture and generational connections. There are so many ways that we can foster generational connections (letters, prayer partners, phone calls, gifts, social media, stories, sharing tools/puzzles/photos) and putting faith into practice in our homes/households (prayer, journaling, reading scripture, acts of kindness, faith stories/testimony, honesty, and forgiveness). These foundations of lifelong faith formation are relational and real. They continue beyond Church programs, meetings and activities. We are welcomed, we are loved, we can learn and grow as we share the joy of living in and through our faith Jesus Christ.

For more information about lifelong faith see <https://here2stay.org.au/> or <https://www.lifelongfaith.com/practices.html>

[Practices - Lifelong Faith](#) This website is service of Lifelong Faith Associates - committed to helping congregations develop lifelong faith formation for all ages and generations, increasing the capacity of leaders and communities to nurture faith growth. [www.lifelongfaith.com](http://www.lifelongfaith.com)

[Here2Stay | Faith formation for the generations](#)

Here2Stay is dependent on the leading of the Holy Spirit. It is the Spirit who disturbs thinking, prompts action, provides creativity, brings conviction and develops unity. Here2Stay creates spaces and fuels conversations where the Spirit of God can bring transformation within individuals, families, churches and communities.

*Anthea Maynard, Presbytery Minister - Leadership*

### **Membership of the Synod Meeting**

13 – 18 November 2020



The 2020 meeting of the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania is scheduled for November this year but with the uncertainties of the current COVID-19 situation, we are unsure whether the meeting will be able to proceed as planned, adapted to an alternate format, or may need to be postponed.

To cover all bases the Presbytery will undertake our usual process of electing Tasmanian Members of the Synod at the June Presbytery Gathering, so that things will be able to proceed smoothly if the meeting is held as planned.

## Tassie UCA agencies being church during the pandemic

### Leprena

Check out how they are using their Facebook page to connect with others.

There are posts relating to community events, relevant quotes and fun videos that invite people into the space that is Leprena while encouraging social distancing.

Artwork in the accompanying picture is credited to Tasmanian Aboriginal Artist Grace Williams, part of the Leprena team. Copied from Leprena's Facebook page on 12/5/20.

<https://www.facebook.com/leprenaucicctas/>



### Crossroads

Crossroads people are still staying in touch, with phone calls and cards. They have deferred their annual holiday weekend until October and have plans in place for this. Below you can see some pre-Corona pictures from events held.



*Two of our members having fun*



*Enjoying time together in 2019*





## Stories of people through the pandemic times

*My wife, June, has started writing a weekly story to our grandchildren, since she can't see them for the time being. (I get to edit for her since she reckons her grammar isn't so flash). Her last story told of going for a walk down to City Park and getting caught in a rain storm where she sheltered under a tree with another walker. She wasn't too concerned about getting wet but the wind was blowing so hard she was almost brained by the conkers (English expression meaning large Acorn like nuts) falling out of the tree. The kids thought it was hilarious and I have encouraged her to keep sending the stories.*

*Excerpt from Pilgrim Newsletter  
John Rays*

### Congratulations

The Presbytery of Tasmanian congratulates Uniting Church members Lexie Young and Jocelyn Watson as recipients of Australia Day awards:



- **Mrs Lexie YOUNG OAM**, Deloraine For service to the community of Deloraine. President of the Deloraine Branch of the Australian Red Cross since 2009 and Coordinator of the Annual Red Cross Doorknock Appeal. For 20 years she wrote the 'Lexie's Town and Country' column for the Western Tiers Newspaper. Currently President of the Deloraine Probus Club and a volunteer at the Deloraine Agricultural and Pastoral Society. Member of the Deloraine Uniting Church Adult Fellowship Group for 55 years. Former State Vice-President, 1989-1990 of the Country Women's Association. Australia's Fastest Knitter, 1969.
- **Mrs Jocelyn WATSON OAM**, Newstead For service to the community of Launceston. A member of East Launceston Uniting Church since 1977, a Church Elder for over 20 years and Chair of the Elders Council for 12 years. Now a member at Pilgrim Uniting Church and a Volunteer at Maggie's Cafe which is associated with the church. Member of the Royal Commonwealth Society and the Launceston Horticultural Society and a Life Member, Pharmaceutical Society of Australia.

*Have you a story to share from these extraordinary times? Let us know at the UCA Tasmanian Office by mail or email. We'd love to hear your stories.*



## Leadership Formation

This year we have been unable to gather and share in a common learning opportunity face to face in *Refresh (planned for May 2020)*. An alternative learning opportunity is to engage in a series of video inputs around the gospel of Matthew that Uniting Church minister and biblical scholar Bill Loader has generously pulled together and shared with the wider church.

A couple of years ago Bill was in the Presbytery sharing with both Lay Leaders and Ministers for our learning opportunities. Bill is down to earth, and yet a world contributor to New Testament scholarship. His insights and thinking are invaluable for us as we engage with the Scriptures and stories of our faith.

We would like to encourage you to engage with the four sessions of input on video and gather however you might - either over the phone, soon in small groups of people, or online video/teleconferencing ways and share your insights together. Use these questions to be the basis of your conversations

- what was new for you?
- what was challenging?
- what did you connect with?

We can help each other to learn and grow in our understanding of who God is, our experience of God in our life and let or expression of faith continue to make a difference in the world in which we live. There is a curiosity in the world around us about who God and how we connect with God. Let this learning opportunity be a way of building your sense of that in this day and age.

Links to the video input can be found by going to Vimeo and in the search bar type in **Light and Shade in Matthew**.

This web address <https://vimeo.com/418850260> will take you to where you can see all four videos listed.

You might like to share with us the insights you gain from this learning activity. Email us or send a message through the Presbytery's Facebook page - UCA Tasmania: <https://www.facebook.com/ucatas/>

I wonder what this opportunity will bring for you in your faith journey. . . . .

**Presbytery's strategic focus:** *to help congregations and faith communities to thrive, and to utilise their resources well for mission.*

*Denise Savage, Presbytery Minister for Leadership Formation*

*If you would like Denise to listen and share around leadership formation, contact Denise 0 427 647 395 or [denise.savage@victas.uca.org.au](mailto:denise.savage@victas.uca.org.au).*

## 2019 YET ANOTHER GOOD YEAR FOR 'SAMMY STAMP'

Thank you to all those in Tassie for their bags of stamps which we collect here at the Tassie UCA Office, sort (thanks Lorna) and then send to Victoria with those travelling to Melbourne. Sales of stamps like yours, helps Sammy Stamp to raise funds to help many worthy causes.

Due to the Corona Virus, Sammy Stamp are shutting down and packing so they can move to their new location in Brighton. Please continue to keep collecting stamps and sending to the Tassie Office.

*Due to the continued support of church and community groups, individuals and businesses around Victoria, Tasmania and indeed Australia, we had another good sales result, whilst helping 14 causes (last year 18) with grants. Total sales reached \$41,608 (last year \$49,249).*

*Sales since 1977 now total \$995,403 plus, with interest - \$1,034,074. Thanks to the helpers from our pool of about 30 volunteers who come in to the church office to trim, sort and sell stamps to raise funds to support many worthy causes.*

*Below is the list of grants approved during 2019 totalling \$51,500.*

Healesville UC – Develop school garden to supply food for pupils in Kenya	\$ 5,000
Uniting Vic/Tas – Christmas Share Appeal to assist disadvantaged people	\$ 5,000
Queenscliff-Point Lonsdale UC – Weekend programs for refugees	\$ 5,000
Mission Liaison Group – Transporting charitable goods overseas	\$ 5,000
Vanuatu Prevention of Blindness	\$ 5,000
NW Tas Regional UCAF Supporting Grandparents raising Grandchildren	\$ 5,000
Wentworth Co-op Parish – Heater for Youth and Community Centre	\$ 5,000
Church of All Nations, Carlton–Replacement fridge for food program	\$ 5,000
Uniting Vic/Tas – Building a Fresh Start Together – Winter Appeal	\$ 5,000
Mercy Works (Sisters of Mercy)–Drum Ovens/cooking lessons etc PNG	\$ 5,000
Nat Council of Churches–Aid projects in Pakistan/India, Ethiopia, Vanuatu	\$ 5,000
UnitingWorld-Projects in India, Timor Leste, Zimbabwe, Eastern Himalayas	\$ 5,000
Frontier Services – Fill a tank for Bush Chaplains supporting outback people	\$ 5,000
Highfield Rd, Canterbury UC-Kondanani Zambia-Feminine Hygiene kits for School pupils	\$ 5,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$51,500</b>

**Total of grants since 1977 - \$980,693**

Allan Clark, Convenor



## Easter- The New Normal

As we approach Easter, we realise that life as we know it has changed. The world is now a village, with all of us threatened with a deadly virus. What can we do with this situation? How can we use it well?

To be clear, I do not believe that COVID-19 is God's way of getting us to turn our lives around. Contrary to some popular belief, God did not cause this pandemic to teach us a lesson. But a crisis of this nature does offer us a way to work out new ways of living - the New Normal.

How does God work in a world in lock down? How does God work when people are trapped on cruise liners? How does God work when we become suspicious of other Australians from different states?

How do we define community? How do we stay in touch with people? We are working out ways to do that. Using the telephone is becoming much more important. Many more people are using the internet than ever before.

A crisis of this nature shifts our perspective. It makes us see what we have overlooked, taken for granted, assumed; what we have done through habit, as business-as-usual. Not that we needed a wake-up call.

At Easter time, followers of Jesus celebrate a special New Normal. We celebrate that when all seemed lost, when God was dead and buried, God came back to life. And through this, God offers everyone a New Normal, a way to never-ending life.

At the Penguin Uniting Church, we usually start to celebrate Jesus rising to life at Easter by gathering at dawn on the beach, sharing breakfast together and then erecting a flower-covered cross. But the New Normal will be erecting the floral cross as a positive sign of God's offer of new life.

This COVID-19 crisis offers us time to reflect on what is normal. It offers us a time to throw out what is not life giving. And it offers us the opportunity to develop new more loving, life giving ways of living with God.

Things will eventually return to normal. Whatever that may be. But a commentator called Dave Hollis says on his Face book page, "In the rush to return to normal, use this time to consider which parts of normal are worth rushing back to".



*Rev Brian Cole, Resource Minister, Cradle Coast Uniting Churches*



## Living alone, dying alone – for Julian

“Living alone during Covid 19 is a special challenge” says a friend who I met a generation ago: it was another time, another place. New cultural connections crossed old boundaries then, beings met in places unfamiliar to all, and became familiar, connected, alive.

Those living connections lay dormant for a generation, but now, that most wondrous invention of human ingenuity – Facebook – enables re-connection across time, across space, across chaos. C19 throws us back a generation or three, to times beyond our living.

Lived memories of the Spanish flu died with my grandparents, but their children, my uncles and aunts, my mother, remember stories of poverty, of want, of closure – and of common care. We who followed are learning of pandemic and depression anew.

The book of faces connects us in the moment to the pain, the loss, the fear and anxiety, uncertainty, chaos, the isolation of billions of individual lives shut down, staying home to save each other, to save others unknown. The book of faces reminds us of 1918.

Photos of a century ago show us mobilisation and isolation, physical distancing and hospital wards stretching to the dark. Are we living along, dying alone, separated by fear and chaos? Or are we weathering a storm, seeking shelter in place, to care?

Julian my friend from long ago, many are with you now, I know, for your book of faces shows me your abundant connections around the world: family, friends, colleagues; and each would – if they but could – reach out to touch you with care, and love.

You bring joy to others' lives with your *joie de vivre*: appreciation of food, and faith, of friendship, of fashion, of local community and global connections, of family ... did I mention food yet? Oh yes, appreciation of good food, good cooking: fellowship and hospitality.

In this time of separation, of physical distancing to show our care for others we have not even yet met, keeping our front line safe, may you still feel the touch of friends and family upon your heart and your very soul, for we – around the world – are with you now.

Not only now, and not only with you, but with others too, alone who wonder about living alone, and dying alone. What would we do to avoid being alone at this most vulnerable of times? Death comes to us all in time; but not yet, not now, we pray to our God.

*continued page 9...*

# This 'n That

■ **The Mercury 19 June 1875** “Mr. Thomason, bush missionary, gave an account of his work at the Huon subsequent to the period embraced in the report. On the 10th January last he entered upon his work, and from that time to the 7th of this month—a period of a little over four months—he had preached 102 times in Franklin, Port Cygnet, Irish Town, Castle Forbes Bay, Wattle Grove, Gardiner’s Bay, Surge’s Bay, Port Esperance, Hastings, Recherche, Southport, and other places. Although the distances had been long, he had every reason to be thankful with the success of his labours. He had met with the greatest kindness and hospitality; and he had had the happiness of seeing no less than 34 souls converted to the truth. (Hear, hear.) Some present perhaps asked what conversion meant and he might answer, what made men praying men. All the 34 persons he alluded to had, since their conversion, engaged in public prayer, and some of the young men had conducted prayer meetings and Sunday-schools.”

- Join us to celebrate the faithful ministry and mark the **conclusion of placement of Rev Brian Cole** in team ministry with the Cradle Coast Uniting Church (Wynyard, Burnie & Stowport, Penguin, Devonport). The Presbytery of Tasmania will participate in the Cradle Coast’s weekly Zoom service on **Sunday 31 May from 10:00am** to formally conclude this ministry placement within the Presbytery. A later event will mark the retirement of Brian from active ministry as a Minister of the Word in the Uniting Church – although we are certain Brian will remain very active! For the details of the Zoom meeting contact the continuing minister Rev Fee Morrison ([fionam73@bigpond.com](mailto:fionam73@bigpond.com)).

Continued from page 8...



May health and comfort be yours,  
this day, each day,  
until this time passes too into memory,  
where it will remain as reminder and spur  
to appreciate friendships formed,  
relationships from birth or moment,  
connections to other living beings,  
life lived in whatever span we have.

May faith and hope be yours, this day, each day, until this time passes too; and may love and life be yours in abundance, alone or surrounded by the cloud of your connections that span this globe. Alone, or not alone, you are treasured and held, eternally, in Spirit.

Rohan Pryor, 9/4/2020

Rohan met Julian Gurupatham in 1991 at a regional youth gathering for the Asia-Pacific, held in Hong Kong and hosted by the Christian Conference of Asia and the World Student Christian Federation

# Praying for the Everyone

- Wisdom for those in leadership roles in every local church and UCATas
- Those who are working through job loss and all it entails
- Those who are suffering from loneliness, anxiety and fear
- Our witness to the wider community in many different ways
- Families, schools and children as they navigate multiple changes in school and family arrangements
- Those providing care to others in the community
- Aged Care residents as they adjust to fewer visitors

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## Congregational Checklist for June

- Annual reports, including reports from ministers, chairpersons, various church activities, financial statements to be sent to UCA Tasmanian Office (if you have had the opportunity to hold your AGM yet)
- Review of Safe Church Policies (following AGM)
- Notify UCA Tasmanian Office of any changes to Presbytery Directory – office bearers, worship times etc. (following AGM)
- Check items in Annual Maintenance Statements Log Book and send to UCA Tasmanian Office
- Annual Manse Inspection Report to UCA Tasmanian Office



## what's On

### June

Mon 1	10.00am	Resource & Development Committee
Tues 2	10.00am	Pastoral Relations Committee
Sat 13	9.45am	Presbytery Gathering by Zoom
Mon 22	10.00am	Resource & Development Committee

### July

Tues 7	10.00am	Pastoral Relations Committee
Mon 13	10.00am	Resource & Development Committee
Thur 23	10am	Presbytery Standing Committee
Mon 27	10.00am	Resource & Development Committee



*We ARE part of the Community of Christ and while we may not be able to gather in one location as Community we are still gathered in spirit and in His love through His Holy Spirit which He has left with us for all eternity.*

*We should not be disheartened by current events and difficulties because we do have the HOPE and the ASSURANCE of God's presence with us, in us and through us to others.*

*Taken from the Derwent Cluster newsletter*

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Editor: Graham Booth, 36 Paterson Street, Launceston, 7250

or (03) 6331 9784 or [tas.office@victas.uca.org.au](mailto:tas.office@victas.uca.org.au)

Presbytery of Tasmania website: <https://ucatas.org.au>

The map of Tasmania including King and Flinders Islands has been adapted from a Creative Commons file  
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