

Uniting Tasmania



Presbytery of

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

Issue No. 188

October 2020

Welcome to the team, Kate!

Kate Rayner has started as our new Administration Officer, working with Bron in the Launceston office two days per week: Thursdays and Fridays.

Kate brings lots of experience in community organisations including event organisation with schools, extensive bookkeeping skills, administration systems for safety and incident management, and experience in office management for a construction company, including certificates courses in several of these areas. Kate is also enjoying exploring family history through a course at UTas.

Please welcome Kate when you phone the office or email the general email address

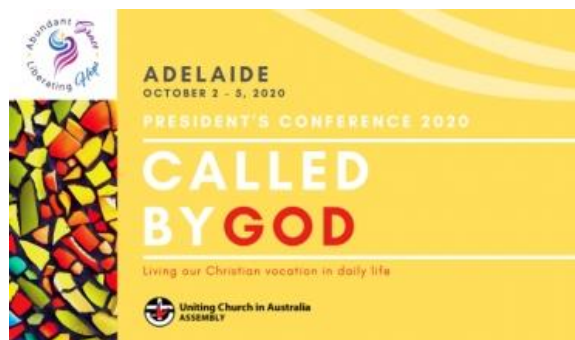
Tas.office@victas.uca.org.au



UCA President's Conference 2020: Called by God

Uniting Church President Dr. Deidre Palmer will host three webinars on Sat 3 October, and lead worship on Sunday 4 October.

Registration is free. For details see page 2 or <https://uniting.church/prescon2020webinar/>

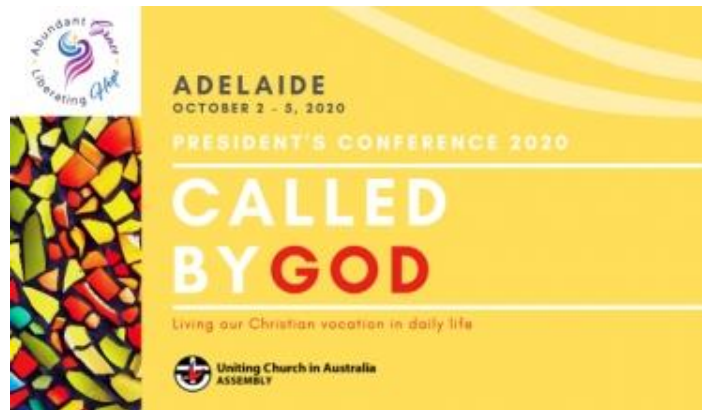


Opportunities

Saturday October 3, Dr. Deidre Palmer will host three one-hour webinars that showcase the theme, from 1:00pm-5:00pm AEST.

Sessions include:

- Called by God
- Every member ministry
- Faith in public life



Sunday October 4, 9:30am AEST, worship will be offered in two ways –

1. Livestreamed through the Assembly Online Worship forum
2. As a written liturgical resource and a short pre-recorded sermon that you may use with your own community.

For more detail visit <https://uniting.church/prescon2020webinar/>

See pages 4-6
For resources on Mental Health.

Presbytery of Tasmania Directory

- updated and now available



The UCA Tasmanian Office has updated Presbytery Directories available. Please contact us at 6331 9784 or tas.office@victas.uca.org.au to order your copy. A PDF copy can be emailed to you, a hard copy collected at the UCA Tas Office, or mailed to you for \$5.00. The Directory will continue to be updated and available for those congregations who are having delayed AGMs this year.

Reflection

Lacuna

*Move into a space ☐ of wisdom
And discover a secret blessing
An inner open welcome place
Where anything could happen
And often does.*

- Joan Wright Howie



Lacuna isn't a new word, but it's new to most of us. It's a Greek word for gap or lake and is used to describe the space in a manuscript where the writing is missing. Michael Leunig describes prayer as a creative Lacuna. It's the empty moment waiting to be filled with the breath of the Holy Spirit. Lacuna is space to listen attentively for the call of God. Lacuna is an invitation to respond to God's love and to participate in the conversation God has already started.

This week you are invited to intentionally create a Lacuna. This may be in your prayer time, in the car, as you walk to the shops or as you drift off to sleep. What helps you to shift your focus and become aware of God with you? Write down some ideas and talk about them with a friend.

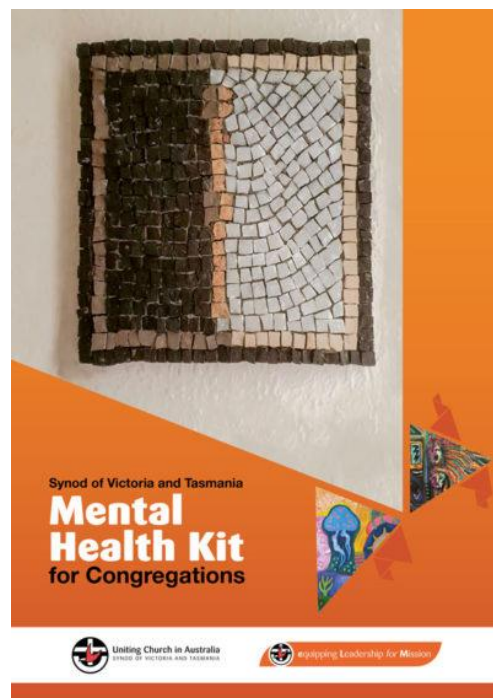
This reflection comes from Space for God: Lacuna, a resource kit from the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania published in 2003.

A Mental Health Check-up?

The Coronavirus has sharpened our focus on the presence of mental health issues within our churches and our communities. Social withdrawal for the best of reasons can be a catalyst to hidden and not so hidden issues of mental health.

In this article three useful resources are explored that may be useful in your community to name areas of mental health that are life affirming and areas that require attention.

The first resource is from the VicTas Synod website: <https://victas.uca.org.au/prof-allan-fels-says-mental-health-kit-can-reduce-stigma/>



Churches can play a vital role combatting the stigma that still surrounds mental illness even among medical professionals, according to leading mental health public policy expert and advocate Professor Allan Fels. Speaking at the launch of a **Mental Health Kit for Uniting Church congregations** [in 2019], Prof Fels said the kit rightly highlighted the degree of stigma and discrimination that people with mental illness suffered.

“Although we think of stigma as being that of ignorant members of the public, the fact is that there is stigma and discrimination even on the part of the most educated and informed people in society, including health and mental health professionals,” Prof Fels told the launch gathering at Brunswick Uniting Church.

“There’s evidence that doctors treat a person in a slightly different manner if they are known to be mentally ill. For example, if I complain about a sore back, it is taken seriously, but if a person with mental illness does, it is often assumed that the problem is mental illness rather than the sore back.”

The kit, prepared by Synod Disability Inclusion Advocate Rev Andy Calder, aims to inform congregations about mental illness and help them be more welcoming and inclusive of those with conditions.

Prof Fels said the solution to this widespread and entrenched stigma rested with examples set by smaller groups, such as churches, rather than highly funded campaigns.

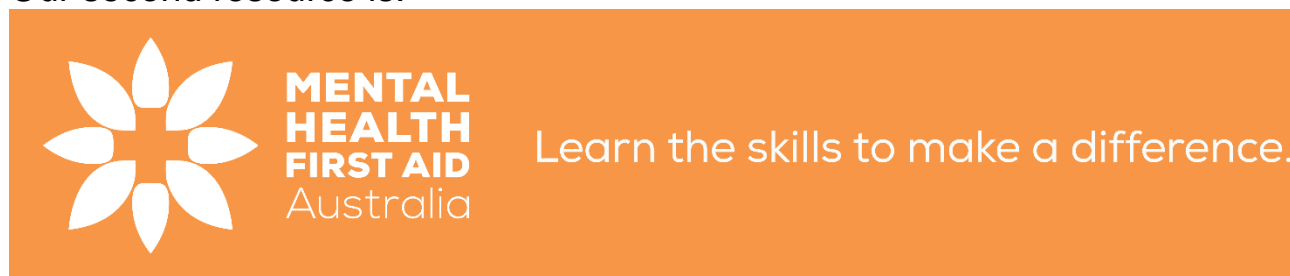
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“We need to work at the level of individuals and individual groups within the community,” he said.

“For example, we need church groups and parishes to do things that help remove stigma. Not only does that work well in a parish, but its effects can spread more widely through friends and neighbours.”

Download the Mental Health Kit for Uniting Church congregations here: <https://victas.uca.org.au/ministry-mission/disability-inclusion/>

Our second resource is:



In these challenging and uncertain times, maintaining mental health – and supporting others who experience anxiety or depression, or live with ongoing mental illness – is an important aspect of the abundance life that Christ can bring (John 10:10).

Just as with physical illness and injury, providing ‘first aid’ in times of difficulty or crisis can literally be a life-saver. The VicTas Synod of the Uniting Church has recently offered a ‘Mental Health First Aid’ course through a blend of online learning and webinar discussions.

Rohan Pryor, Synod Liaison Minister, participated and comments “The course is very worthwhile, and I would highly recommend it to others: local leaders with pastoral care roles, Elders and Church Council members, and ministry leaders. The course includes a good reference manual, online learning modules, and discussions with other course participants as well as the course facilitator. The five online learning modules were a useful blend of information and interactive learning (true/false questions and short quizzes to check understanding) that got me thinking about the content and applying it to everyday situations. The printed manual is a very useful resource, although I didn’t need to read every word in order to complete the online learning modules.”

The course is accredited through Mental Health First Aid Australia, and takes about 10 hours for the five online learning modules, two 2.5 hour online webinars, and a short quiz to conclude the course. A certificate of completion is included.

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If you are interested in participating in a repeat of the Mental Health First Aid training course organised by the Uniting Church, please contact the Tasmanian office. Phone: 6331 9784, email: tas.office@victas.uca.org.au or visit our website <http://ucatas.org.au/>.

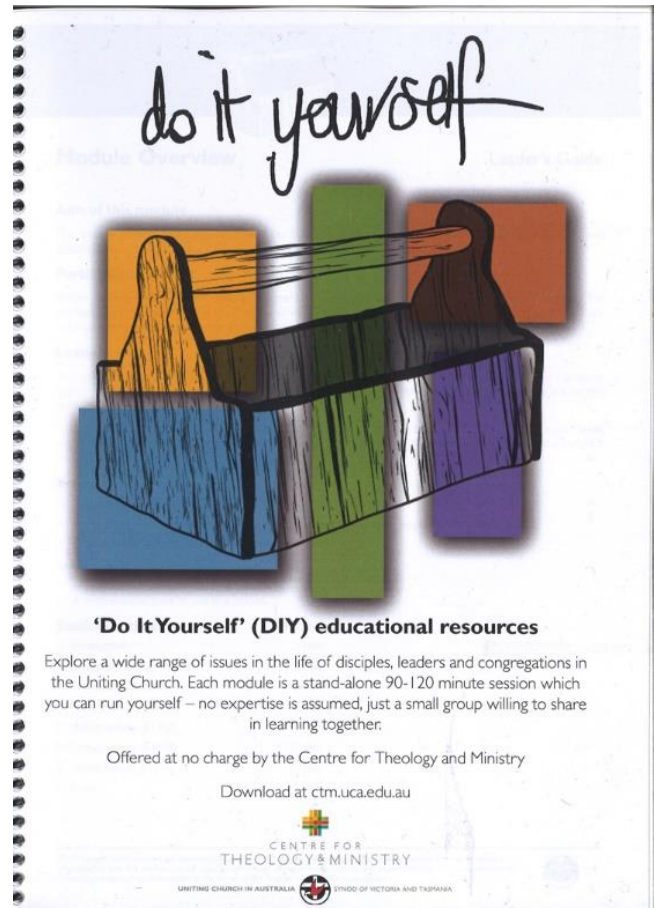
Some more free resources include:

“Do It Yourself” educational resources

Also available for local leaders are “Do It Yourself” educational modules on pastoral care, dementia, and grief care for congregations, including **E12 Dementia and Pastoral care** and **E13 Dementia-friendly Congregations**. Visit

<https://ctm.uca.edu.au/lay-ministries/diy/> for the full list of “DIY” modules – all at no cost!

New for 2020: modules **C2 – The call to faithfulness in changing times: COVID-19 and beyond** and **C7 – Intentional and creative community: engaging pastoral ministry in varying circumstances**: see <https://victas.uca.org.au/new-do-it-yourself-modules-for-2020/>.



Congregational Checklist

☐ The Mission and Service request for contribution form will be coming out soon. Watch your mail box or your InBox.

‘We Are the Uniting Church’ video series

This is our story as a church. Formed in 1977 as the first truly Australian church, we’re on a journey together. We’re here to serve God and seek hope, compassion, justice and peace in God’s world. We call ourselves a pilgrim people.

Six videos tell our story: <https://uca.ut.je/weareuca>

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. An Australian Church | 4. Supporting Communities |
| 2. Partnering In Mission | 5. Educating For Life |
| 3. Our Congregations | 6. Ageing Well |

Read more about the Uniting Church: <https://uca.ut.je/component/k2/item/102>

Tips for Leaders

These videos are designed for use primarily in group settings. They can also be embedded on a church or agency website.

It is not intended that the videos would be viewed all at once. You are free to choose which videos to use and in what order. Video #1 “An Australian Story” has been designed as a standalone overview of the Uniting Church.

Possible group settings include

- an induction session for new staff or volunteers
- an information session for new church members
- an information session for prospective parents at a school
- a staff development day for existing day
- a worship or chapel service

Group discussion questions:

- What is something new that you learned?
- What interested or impressed you the most?
- Was there anything that surprised you?
- What would you like to learn more about?
- What questions did it raise for you?

We encourage you to invite feedback and conversation about the videos

<https://uca.ut.je/component/k2/item/2511-tips-for-leaders-in-churches-agencies-and-schools>

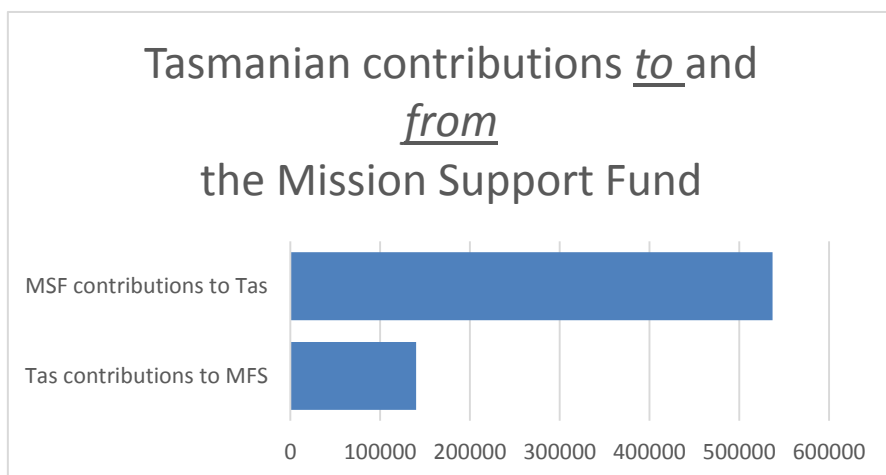
Mission & Service Giving and the Mission Support Fund

Thank you for your faithful financial giving! Your regular giving – either through envelopes, direct debit, EFT, or ‘open plate’ – supports the ministry and mission of the Uniting Church across Tasmania and beyond, as well as the costs of maintaining the Church’s presence in your local community.

Each congregation contributes through ‘Mission & Service Giving’ to our Synod’s central ‘Mission Support Fund’, which in turn provides grants for ministry and mission in every presbytery. Despite the challenges and uncertainty of COVID-19, congregations in Tasmania have sustained ‘Mission & Service Giving’ for 2020, which is fantastic!

Tasmania contributes a total of \$140,000 per year to the Mission Support Fund (MSF), and receives over \$500,000 each year from the fund. Specific grants to Tasmania provide ministry for Midlands-Glamorgan (Rev Dennis Cousens) and Bridgewater-Gagebrook (Rev Joanna Wierenga), and the MSF also funds our Presbytery ministers (Anthea Maynard, Rev Deacon Denise Savage, Rev Hoon You, and Rohan Pryor) and administration staff and office costs for the Tasmanian office in Launceston (Bronwyn Howard and Kate Reyner). The blue chart below shows the comparative contributions from Tasmania, and to Tasmania. The coloured chart shows the different ministry and mission roles within Tasmania.

In addition, the Mission Support Fund also contributes to the wider Uniting Church as well, including *Leprena* (the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress within Tasmania) and the President of the Uniting Church.

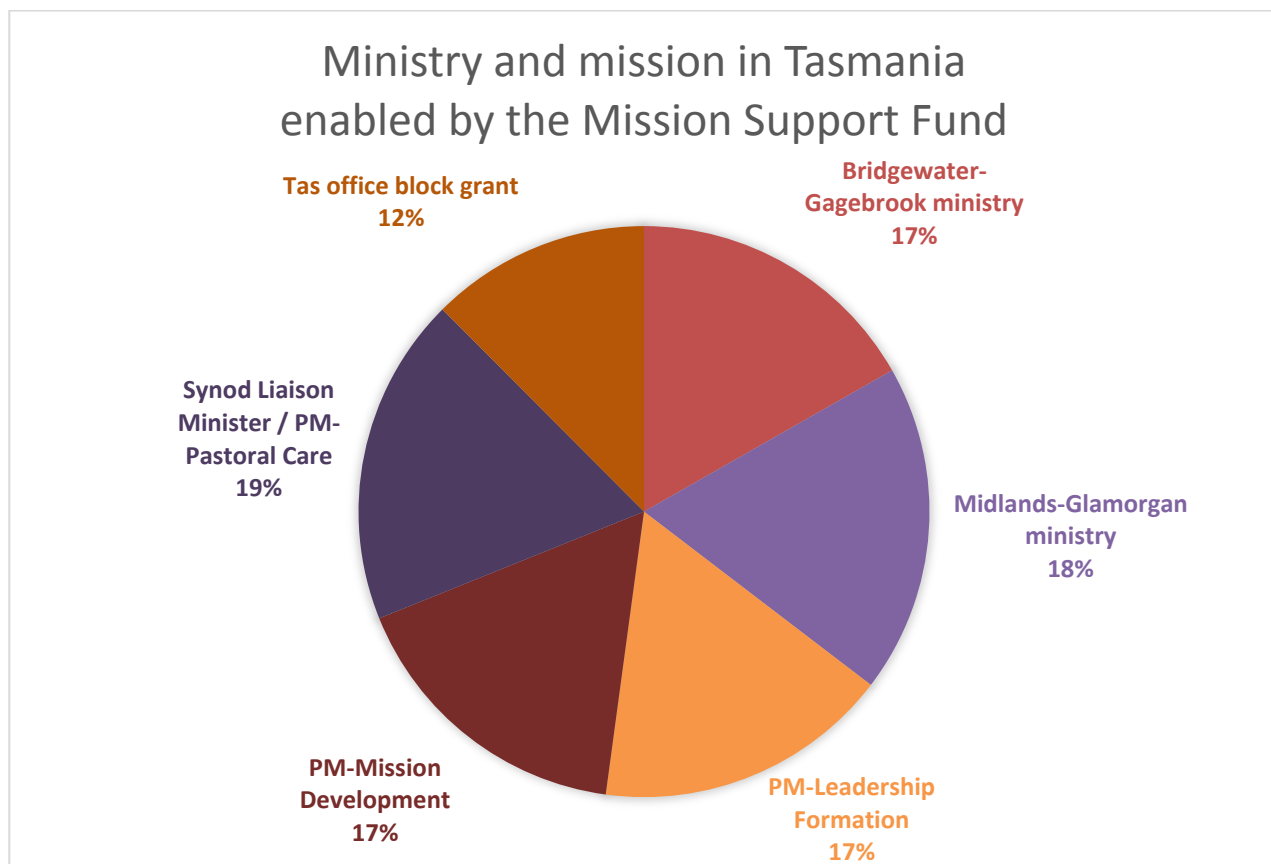


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The photo below includes artist Grace Williams and ex-President Stuart McMillan at Leprena in Glenorchy



Grace Williams and Stuart McMillan at Leprena, Tasmania; fence & other artwork by Grace



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The Mission Support Fund also provides other important Synod services available to all presbyteries, including support of Safe Church, eLM lay education & worship resources, Code of Ethics workshop materials for ministers, staff focussed on intergenerational ministry, intercultural ministry, 'new & renewing' congregations, *Crosslight*, accounting services for Bridgewater-Gagebrook and Wesley, property OHS/WHS, discounted Zoom pricing, and much more.

Thank you! Your giving matters, and your contributions through Mission & Service Giving to the Mission Support Fund for 2021 will continue to support God's ministry & mission across Tasmania and beyond.

Rohan Pryor has created a short video/voice-over of his update on the Mission & Service Giving (MSG) and Mission Support Fund (MSF), shared with the Presbytery meeting on Saturday 12th September. Several people commented that they had not understood where the MSG contributions go – and appreciated knowing that Tasmania receives substantially more back through the MSF in the form of grants and Presbytery placements.

You can view the video here:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/83xo3jvugm04grd/UCATas%20MSF%20summary2.mp4?dl=0>



Target Christmas Appeal 2020

Watch out for new ways to contribute towards this appeal which is one way in which you can show care towards the most vulnerable in our society. <https://www.unitingcarechristmasappeal.com.au/>

Learning Opportunities

On-Line Stories of Childhood Conference: Saturday Oct 10

It's **FREE**, it's **SOON** and it's for **ANYONE** engaged in **Playgroup/Pre-school ministry**! More accessible than ever before, the annual [Stories of Childhood](#) gathering is taking place **via Zoom** on **Saturday October 10** from **3pm to 5pm**.

Focusing on the **needs of children and their families** in the light of all things Covid-19, **Dr. Vivienne Mountain** will help us reflect on **appropriate pastoral responses**. Focusing on Playgroup/Pre-school **being a missional expression** in the light of all things Covid-19, **Rev. Mat Harry** will help us explore an **appropriate model for missional engagement** for 2020 and beyond.

Registration and more information: [2020 Stories of Childhood](#)

Re-imagining Faith and Theology from a Non-Western Paradigm: Tuesday October 13 via Zoom

"Imagination is a parent of change" and this seminar will encourage participants to re-imagine Church and Theology from a non-Western perspective. Particularly relevant for the Uniting Church, Dr. Randy Woodley, PhD - activist/scholar, distinguished speaker, teacher and wisdom keeper - will address a variety of issues concerning faith/spirituality, justice, race/diversity, regenerative farming, our relationship with the earth and Indigenous realities.

More information and registration: [Re-imagining Faith and Theology](#)

The Nurture and Spiritual Guidance of Children Nov 25-27, Dec 1,2, Parkville

This excellent professional development opportunity is for **Ministers, Chaplains, Pastors, Thoughtful Practitioners** and **Christian Educators** and especially suitable for **church-based, school-based** and **community-based** expressions of ministry.

More information: [2020 Intensive](#) or e-mail Erlinda.loverseed@pigrim.edu.au



Leadership Formation

How do we understand call? When baptism takes place, we become a part of the Body of Christ - we are called to participate in Christ's ministry in the world, no matter our age. A minister or lay leader in the life of the church will often have tested a sense of call to a particular task and specified ministry service. An elder, pastoral carer, chaplain are some of those spaces in faith community life where call is tested. Each time we gather for worship, we are called into the space and designated community time to engage and encounter God, alongside each other.

But what is call? What does it mean when you are 4, 40 or 400? Our biblical stories are full of moments when God calls. How do we know when we are called to a task or ministry? Are we called to ministry and service beyond our faith communities? Or is call confined only to the boundaries of church?

It is God who calls. Sometimes call is connected to what brings great joy as we exercise the essence of who we are. Sometimes call is connected to a conviction with us for a particular cause, an area of passion or interest, to the gifts and skills we have, and that conviction just won't let us go. We sense we are supposed to do something, and it doesn't make sense about where it comes from or even what it might be about. We need to test out call in the community of God's people. Have we "heard" that sense of call right? This is discernment. Those conversations that become places of wrestling with the inner world of what we think we should be doing in life.

Call might come to us in a dream, or a word that sticks from our devotional and prayer time. It might come as we witness the breaking of bread during communion. Sometimes it comes as this thing that makes no sense whatsoever. A young child might understand call to be a better friend.

God calls, firstly in that moment of baptism. Then throughout our life, call comes. The call to love our neighbour, to raise our voice in the face of injustice, to meet the need of school students whose homes mean they might not have had breakfast. The call to pick up rubbish along the road sides because the environment matters. The call to lead the church, to look after those who are sick. The call to pray for our towns, the call to hear painful stories from another. We are not all called to the same task. Whole communities might be called to engage a particular activity, mission and ministry or in each of the daily lives, called to simply love those you connect with.

When we leave our spaces of worship, the blessing and sending is a reminder that we are to live out our call in the moments of our days til we next come together. To be God's people sharing in the activity of God in the world. What are you called to? What is your community of faith called to?

You are welcome to contact any of the Presbytery Ministers to journey with you as you or your community discerns call.

Presbytery of Tasmania - assisting faith communities and congregations to thrive and use 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

0427 647 395 or denise.savage@victas.uca.org.au.

Presbytery in the age of Covid-19



Though a little dark, this photo shows how Presbytery meetings at this time cope with those from a distance while caring for those in the place. The screen shows various people linked in and we can see people spaced appropriately.

Praying for the Everyone

- For the people of Australia and the world as they live with the changes for life that are necessary to check the spread of coronavirus
- For churches as they comply with the guidelines for gathering together at this time
- For Kate Rayner as she commences work in the Tasmanian Office.

Well done, good and faithful servant! Rev Ron Upson



A half-century of ordained ministry is a notable achievement, and the recent Presbytery meeting recognised the 50th anniversary of the ordination of Rev Ron Upson by the Methodist Church in Western Australia in 1970. Ron began as a home

missioner in suburban Perth and probationer in rural towns, then fulfilled urban ministry in a parish mission in Perth, biblical teaching and church administrative leadership in Western Samoa, and parish ministry in Launceston South before serving as Moderator for the Synod of Tasmania in 1986-1987, followed by parish and presbytery leadership roles in South Australia.

The recitation of Ron's ministry career at the time of his retirement noted "the ministry of a man who has shown himself to be a caring pastor and counsellor, a thorough administrator and leader, a serious and dedicated student and teacher, a methodical sacramentalist and leader of worship, an earnest and visionary preacher, and a dedicated family man - a good son to Syb and Len, a loyal husband to Glen and a strong father to Bronwin, Laurita and Matthew."

what's On

October

Tues 6	10.00am	Pastoral Relations Committee
Tues 13	11.00am	Resource and Development Committee
Tues 27	11.00am	Resource & Development Committee
Thur 29	10.00am	Presbytery Standing Committee

November

Sat 7	9.45am	Presbytery Gathering, venue to be advised
Tues 10	11.00am	Resource and Development Committee
Mon 23	10.00am	Pastoral Relations Committee
Tues 24	11.00am	Resource and Development Committee



Website Review

Please help us make the UCATas website (<http://ucatas.org.au>) more useful and easier to navigate! The website has been set up and in use for about two years, and in order to review how it might better meet the various needs of our audiences, we have recruited a survey monkey to ask you some questions.

Please complete the survey at the link below by 30 September and our survey monkeys can get to work:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/N7CFN6X>

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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
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Australia_Tasmania_location_map_blank.svg