

Uniting Tasmania

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



Issue No. 204

May 2022



The 16th Assembly is the triennial decision-making meeting of the national Council of the Uniting Church, which guides the life of the Church and its advocacy over the next three years. The 16th Assembly meeting will be reconvened from 6-9 May 2022 on the Sunshine Coast in Queensland.

The Uniting Church in Australia believes that we hear the voice of God through the councils of our Church, so time is also set aside for prayer, worship and Bible studies. Elected members come together to discern the guidance of the Holy Spirit in a meeting that encourages community and listening to one another in openness and humility. This Assembly will bring together 200 members from Synods and Presbyteries, with office holders, Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress members, youthful members and others to form a national decision-making body.

Proposals, Reports and other documents for the 16th Assembly Reconvened Meeting can be found online: <https://uniting.church/16thassembly/>.

Please uphold the Assembly meeting including President Rev Sharon Hollis and General Secretary in prayer. The President's inaugural sermon "Love that bears all things" can be found at https://uniting.church/president-sharon-sermon/.../ cont page 2

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Assembly meeting 2022



Reports and proposals to the Sixteenth Assembly reconvened meeting are online: <https://uniting.church/16thassemblyresources-2022/>.

Significant proposals for discernment by the Assembly members include:

a. Act2 On the Way requests the Assembly Standing Committee undertake a process to review the current 'interconciliar' model of governance of the Uniting Church; authorises the Assembly Standing Committee, following consultation with the Church, to provide guidance to the Church and amend the regulations relating to communities of faith to provide for more flexible and innovative local and digitally gathered communities of faith and discipleship formation; and request the Assembly Standing Committee to lead a national process with the Synods and other relevant councils and bodies to identify a new theological education framework in the context of developing the Uniting Church's theological culture.

b. Continuing Witness proposes to approve the following documents for consideration by the Uniting Church between the 16th and 17th Assemblies, for reception as continuing witnesses: (a) The Confession of Belhar (South Africa, 1986); (b) Laudato si' (Papal Encyclical, 2015), and (c) The Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification (Catholic Church and World Lutheran Federation, 1999). The process of consideration would involve an invitation for all Presbyteries within the Church, and such other Councils of the Church as desire to participate, to commit to discussing each document for a period of at least one hour, using resource materials provided by the Continuing Witness Task Group, and reporting the results of this discussion to the Task Group.

c. Regulations on Discipline proposes to delegate to the Assembly Standing Committee the authority to make Regulations under Part 5 of the Regulations (Church Discipline), to manage the complaints and discipline processes within the Church, subject to a framework of principles, and advice from the Assembly Legal Reference Committee.

d. A call to action for climate justice: listening to First Peoples wisdom, which commits anew to listen to First Peoples wisdom and knowledge, and to take practical climate action including changing our own behaviour, and to call on all Councils of the church, agencies and schools who have not already done so to join with the Assembly in committing to net zero emissions by 2040 at the latest, so that together we can become a zero emissions Church. Proposed by Alison Overeem.

e. Audit of small congregation financial statements proposes to authorise the Assembly Standing Committee to amend Regulation 3.8.7(e), Variations to Qualifications, from 2.5 times the notional stipend to the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) financial reporting revenue threshold for small charities.

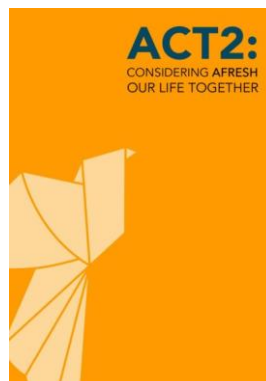
f. Preventing Harm from Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity Change Efforts (SOGICE) proposes that the Assembly recognise that sexual orientation and gender identity change efforts (SOGICE) are harmful to people's mental health and wellbeing, and request the Assembly Standing Committee to develop a process to provide a national resource for congregations, agencies, and individuals to learn how they can help prevent harm from SOGICE ideology and practice.

g. Moving Forward in Being a Multicultural Church proposes to request the Assembly Standing Committee, liaising with other parts of the Church, to move towards simpler, friendlier, and more equitable church structures, processes, and ways of working that foster CALD participation and intercultural partnership by reviewing the national property policy for the UCA, and reviewing the regulations relating to Faith Communities, and produce guidelines for receiving/recognising Faith Communities/Congregations from other CALD churches.

Act 2: <https://uniting.church/act2/>

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, congregations, agencies, schools and Councils, have been invited to engage in a conversation about the future to which God is calling our Church.



As we look to the future, it is important to know what makes us who we are.

How to get involved:

1. Read the latest report, *Considering Afresh Our Life Together*.
2. Reflect with others on the Uniting Church's *Basis of Union* and reconnect with our theological identity, through the five studies/reflections in *Our Life Together*. Each study includes reflections on a particular section of the Basis of Union, related biblical passages, and questions for discussion.

To find out more about Act2 and get the latest news, visit <https://uniting.church/act2/>

Reflection

Some thoughts on church by Milton Jones:

- Visitors to a church find themselves thinking, "What am I doing here?" Sometimes so do the members.
- The early church had everything in common, but now somehow parts of the church have nothing in common with anyone!
- Ultimately, a church is just a rope bridge made out of spaghetti.
- Binoculars to watch a sunset.
- A tiger in a polythene bag.
- Sometimes people think of church as being like a giant helicopter. They don't want to get too close in case they get sucked into the rotas.
- The church is sometimes referred to as the Bride of Christ. Well, she must have a lovely personality.
- Church is a bit like being a member of a gym. Some people like the idea of going, but don't. Others go, but aren't really training for anything. And some actually use it to help with the race they're running.
- Church should be everyone arriving with one piece of a jigsaw.

*Taken from **10 Second Sermons...and even quicker illustrations.***

*"There's a sad sort of clanging from the clock in the hall
And the bells in the steeple too
And up in the nursery an absurd little bird
Is popping out to say "cuckoo"
Cuckoo, cuckoo
Regretfully they tell us Cuckoo, cuckoo
But firmly they compel us Cuckoo, cuckoo*

To say goodbye...

I leave and heave a sigh and say goodbye -- Goodbye!

*So long, farewell, auf Wiedersehen, goodbye
Goodbye, goodbye, goodbye
Goodbye!*

Taken from the Song So Long, Farewell by Rodgers/Hammerstein

It has been a privilege to work for the Uniting Church and you all
Kate (Presbytery office administration)



The next Synod meeting will commence on Thursday June 30 when Moderator-elect Rev David Fotheringham will be installed as our Moderator for the next three years. The Synod meeting will then continue from Friday 1 July until Sunday 3 July as an in-person gathering, albeit with a reduced agenda to previous meetings.

[A joint letter](#) to all Church Councils, Presbyteries, Ministers and Faith Leaders from our Moderator, Rev Denise Liersch, and our Moderator-elect, Rev David Fotheringham, has recently been and is sent calling on UCA members of all ages and backgrounds to join us and help shape the Church's future direction.

"Synod meetings provide the opportunity for discussion and discernment of major opportunities and challenges before us. You will hear what the Church has done since the last Synod meeting and help build the framework for much of the Church's work in the next 18 months."

"If you would like to attend, or know someone who you believe should be a member of Synod 2022, but have possibly missed the chance to be nominated by your presbytery, it may not be too late. Contact your Presbytery if you would like to respond to this call and we will do everything we can to ensure you can join us. We would love to see your faces and hear your voices at Synod 2022."

Denise

Denise Liersch
Moderator

David

David Fotheringham
Moderator-elect

Tasmanian members of the 2022 Synod meeting are:

Lay: entitlement of up to 7 members	Ordained: entitlement of up to 7 members
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Margaret Wilson, Launceston South UC • Rohan Pryor, Synod Liaison Minister / Presbytery Chairperson • Barrie Robinson, Launceston North UC • Corine King, North East Tasmania UC (Scottsdale-Bridport) • Merrill Clayton, Devonport UC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rev Caro Field, Launceston North UC • Rev Fee Morrison, Cradle Coast UC • Rev Susan Malthouse-Law, Cradle Coast UC • Rev Hoon You, Presbytery Resourcing Minister – North

For more information about Synod meeting: <https://victas.uca.org.au/about-us/synod-meeting/>

Vision and Mission Principles

Following Christ,

walking together

as First and Second Peoples,

seeking community, compassion

and justice for all creation

God in Christ is at mission in the world and sends the Church in the Spirit to:

1. share the Good News of Jesus Christ
2. nurture followers of Christ in life-giving communities of reconciliation
3. respond in compassion to human need
4. live justly and seek justice for all
5. care for creation
6. listen to each generation and culture so as to live out the Gospel in fresh ways
7. pursue God's mission in partnership

Do you have a story from your place about how a part of these vision and mission principles are lived out in your congregation or agency?

Finding Uniting Church Documents online

You can find many documents produced by the Uniting Church in Australia by going to the following page: <https://ucaassembly.recollect.net.au/>

The page has a very cluttered look (only a corner of it is shown in the clip below), but there is a useful video that takes you through the basics of how to use the site to find documents that will be helpful to you.



The Uniting Church and the public good

The purpose and role of the Uniting Church is not only to support local church communities of hope, care, faith and compassion for followers of Jesus Christ – although that is certainly part of our witness to the Good News of the gospel, walking together and calling for community, compassion and justice for all creation.

Following the example and calling of Christ, the Uniting Church also has a role ‘in the public square’ working alongside other community organisations with common values. Cooperation is sorely needed in these times of pandemic, climate change and conflict.

A recent project supported by the Uniting Church and other community organisations has explored what our whole society needs now: a sense of common purpose for the public good, based on connection, care and contribution.



Reclaiming our Purpose: It's time to talk about the public good

A practical and values-led framework for navigating perilous times.

<https://www.australiaremade.org/public-good>

There's nothing like a crisis to highlight what really matters and to show us how quickly things can move.

After 18 months of listening to diverse Australians across the country, we're thrilled to share our practical and values-led guide for leaders navigating perilous times.

Learn all about the '3Cs' of public good, what we found people actually want (both on the surface and underneath their wishlists) and how to apply these concepts to your work easily and effectively.

Beyond punctuated moments of global crisis when we may stand up for 'freedom' or 'democracy', our current politics is sorely missing a clear articulation of purpose and values. We are going to need this in the complex and unpredictable decade ahead.

No one can map the future, but we *can* provide a compass to guide us through.

Download the report and further reading, or request a briefing on how we can work together for good: <https://www.australiaremade.org/public-good>



The Uniting Church's foundational commitments to social justice are an expression of the Christian gospel of good news for the whole world. *Just Act* comes from the *Justice and International Mission* cluster in the Synod's eLM unit.

Just Act always has a good range of practical resources for those in the Uniting Church who are interested in justice – all of us! <https://justact.org.au/newsletter/>

A recent addition is a Federal Election Resource. This is an update of last year's report *Our Vision for a Just Australia*. It covers seven issues in seven pages. Each issue is dealt with under the headings of Our vision, Our context and For the election and there are suggestions to take your learning further.

The issues covered are:

1. A First People's Heart – Voice, Treaty, Truth
2. Renewal of the Whole Creation – Action on Climate Change
3. An Inclusive and Equal Society – Ageing to our Full Potential
4. Flourishing Communities, Regional, Remote and Urban – Housing and Mental Health in the Bush
5. A Welcoming, Compassionate and Diverse Nation – Safety for Refugees and Asylum Seekers
6. An Economy for Life – Economic Participation for All
7. Contributing to a Just and Peaceful World – Humanitarian Assistance and Foreign Policy

You can access this resource at <https://justact.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Federal-Election-Resources-2022-Updated.pdf>

The April 2022 *Just Act* newsletter mailing also includes information about ways that Uniting Church members and congregations can act for justice, and the great work of the staff. The April mailing also includes information sheets including *Democracy, Justice and Allegiance: Theological Thoughts on the Church's Commitment to Political Life*, and draft proposals to the 2022 Synod Meeting.

COLONISING PALESTINE: A PALESTINIAN PERSPECTIVE

Coinciding with the Palestinian Catastrophe (Nakba) commemoration, we wish to invite you to a public presentation followed by a Q&A session.

Date: Thursday 12 May 2022.

Venue: Hobart Town Hall, 50 Macquarie Street, Hobart.

Eventbrite registration: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/colonising-palestine-a-palestinian-perspective-tickets-311507486277>




To attend online please go to: <https://utas.zoom.us/j/85257970793>

Presentation: A former Palestinian refugee's account about the living conditions of Palestinians living in the state of Israel, Gaza and the occupied west bank of the Palestine. Colonisation, apartheid, justice and human rights will be discussed so that the people of Hobart will better understand the Palestinian narrative of the issues.

- Arrival time: 5.30pm start
- Finger food served: 5.30 to 6.00pm
- Presentation: 6.00 to 6.30pm
- Q&A session: 6.30 to 7.30pm

Speaker Dr. Adel Yousif: A third generation Palestinian (former refugee). Adel is the first in his extended family to have a nationality / passport, becoming an "Australian" in 1995. Adel is now married, living in Hobart and working as an academic at the University of Tasmania.

The Q&A panel members are:

		
Greg Barns SC barrister, author, political commentator and former political candidate based in Hobart, Tasmania.	Randa Al-Hasan, second generation Syrian Australian, devoted advocate for oppressed people, UTAS student - Bachelor of Justice Studies.	Andrew Wilkie, Independent Federal Member for Clark. Former ADF lieutenant colonel, Office of National Assessments senior analyst. Author of Axis of Deceit.

A donation bowl will be available for the Australian charity Olive Kids <https://olivekids.org.au/> so please remember to bring cash if you wish to donate.

Background on "Nakba"

The Palestinian people were forcibly removed from their land in 1948. At this time between 400 and 600 Palestinian villages were sacked during the war, while urban Palestinians were almost entirely extinguished.

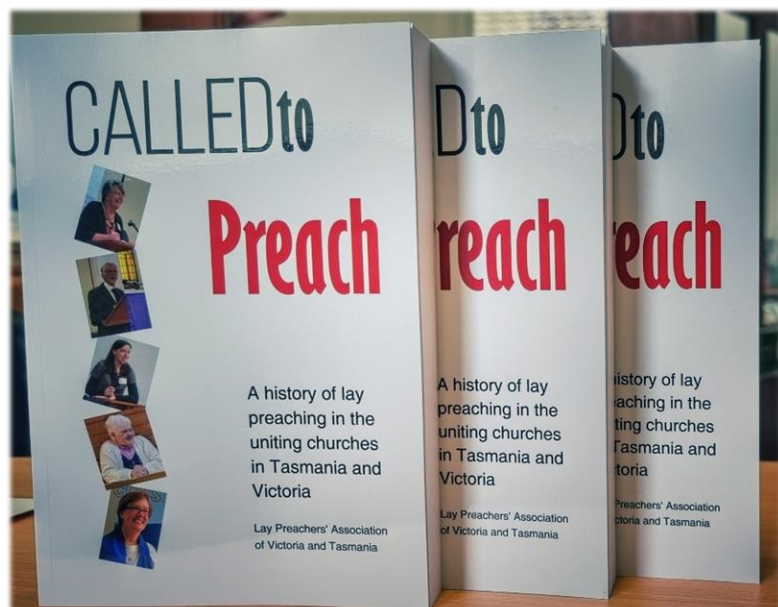
For further information contact Dr. Adel Yousif 0415591381.





A project to commemorate 150 years of the Local/Lay Preachers' Association

Published by the Synod Lay Preachers' Association of Victoria and Tasmania
in association with the Uniting Church Historical Society ISBN 978-0-9807168-7-0



Called to Preach

A history of lay
preaching in the uniting
churches in Tasmania
and Victoria

This is the readable story of the origins and development of lay preaching from the early settlement of Van Diemen's Land to modern Victoria and Tasmania, describing events and people who helped shape lay preaching; with an historical review of the Lay Preachers' Association from 1869.

Authors:

Barry Brown, Alastair Davison, Cheryl Griffin, Glen O'Brien, Daryl Pedler, Robert Renton, and D'Arcy Wood, with a Foreword by the Moderator, Rev Denise Liersch



In this book... We hear of adaptation to changing circumstances, of being responsive to the call of God and the needs of the community as they were perceived at the time. And along the way, we hear something of what we might learn, not just of other people and their stories from the past, but of where we've come from and what has formed us: of who we are and how we might move into the future.

Chapters: [including a conversation with Arthur Tonkin]

Lay preaching in historical perspective; Methodist Lay Preaching in Tasmania and Victoria, 1820–1902; Methodist lay preaching in the Victoria-Tasmania Conference 1902–1977; Congregational and Presbyterian Lay Preaching; The Basis of Union and Lay Preaching; Lay Preaching in the Uniting Church, 1977 to the present; After the call to preach, what then?; An association of local preachers; Information from the Lay Preacher questionnaire; Observations, comments, challenges.

300 pages including Foreword, Preface, Glossary, Index of names.

Only 2 copies left through the Uniting Church Presbytery of Tasmania Office
on 03 6331 9784 or email tas.office@victas.uca.org.au - Price \$25 [postage included in the last 2 copies]

This 'n That

■ Have you read a **good book** lately that has extended your understanding of God, spirituality, theology, the Bible? Send us a review. Thanks to Margaret Wilson for reading Red Alert.

■ Reminder: Contractor and Consultant Safety Management – contractors must be pre-qualified and have completed the Linksafe online safety management induction before starting work at any UCA property.

■ Frontier Services have produced an order of service to help congregations celebrate and pray for their work in our country. You can access the service by using the following link: <https://frontierservices.org/news-media/our-resources/download-our-order-of-service/>

■ Susan Malthouse Law advises us of a Being LGBTQI+ Communities Workshop led by Garry from Working It Out Tasmania. It will be held on Thursday the 26th of May, 2022 at Devonport Uniting Church from 9:30am til 1pm. More information can be found at: <https://www.workingitout.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/WIO-Being-LGBTIQ-Inclusive-Flyer.pdf> Numbers are limited so please contact Rev Susan- if there is abundant interest, we can explore offering a second one. Morning tea will be provided. This session is being funded by a “Go Grant” from the Presbytery of Tasmania.

■ Reminder: Volunteers are asked to complete an induction session on Linksafe which covers very basic safe church information and ethos of Uniting Church. Accreditation lasts for one year. Find this at <https://linksafe.com.au/uca/>

Praying for Everyone

- The people of the Ukraine and the people of Russia
- The people of Israel and the people of Palestine
- For Tasmanian members preparing to go to Melbourne in order to participate in a face to face Synod meeting.
- For the church, our church, Jesus' church.
- For the Federal Election – its peaceful display of democracy in action whatever the result and our hopes to be able to align the aspirations of faith with the choices on the ballot paper.

Annual reminders for leaders in Congregations:

(this section is back by popular demand)

May:

- Annual Reports (2 copies) including minister's report (if applicable), reports of various group activities, financial statements to be sent to UCA Tasmanian Office
- Do you have new people in leadership? Working With Vulnerable People cards must be sighted, details added to your list (full name, registration number, expiry date), and then congregation list updates sent to the UCA Tasmanian office.
- Review of Safe Church Policies, ensure Statement of Commitment is renewed.
- Contractor pre-qualification to be completed with Elnura at Synod.

What's On

May

Tue 5	10:00am	Pastoral Relations Committee
Tue 12	11:00am	Resource and Development Committee
Tue 26	11:00am	Resource and Development Committee
Thu 28	10:00am	Presbytery Standing Committee

It's still Easter:



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Editor: Graham Booth, 36 Paterson Street, Launceston, 7250
or (03) 6331 9784 or 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
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Australia_Tasmania_location_map_blank.svg