



Uniting Tasmania

Issue No. 237 | December 2025

*The Uniting Church all together seeking
to be faithful to God's abundant future
for all creation*



A Prayer for Faithful Futures

Holy One - Sacred Three

You speak us into being, you awaken us to your hope and love.

May your Holy Spirit challenge and change us,

Lighting within us, your joy and purpose.

Spark optimism and hope deep within us.

May we deeply listen to your call and voice in the stories of others.

May we develop the courage to be your pilgrim people

Sharing your hope and love

into and with all your creation. Amen

Rev. Fiona Morrison (she/her)

Chairperson of Gippsland Presbytery

FAITHFUL FUTURES

→ Shared Vision

Following Christ, walking together as First and Second Peoples, seeking community, compassion and justice for all creation.

→ Shared Goals



Presbyteries and the Synod working together with shared goals and responsibilities, helping to relieve burdens and strengthen mission opportunities as we follow Christ together.



Uniting Church in Australia
SYNOD OF VICTORIA AND TASMANIA

Scan the QR code to visit the Faithful Futures page



Faithful Futures Studies

The Faithful Futures team have assembled a group of three studies to help groups of people think through the implications of a future focus. They can be found at: <https://victas.uca.org.au/faithful-futures/further-resources/>

Covenanting Pathways Toolkit

This series of resources will help you and your community of faith might action some of the suggestions to explore Covenanting in the Uniting Church, and beyond. [The Covenanting Pathways Toolkit](#) and its supporting resources were designed for a Victoria and Tasmania to explore contemporary pathways to connect, or re-connect with Covenanting.

2026 Course Guide now available

Pilgrim's 2026 Course Guide and timetable are out – and we're excited about what's on offer! We've developed a range of study options that respond directly to the needs of the Church and to our shared vision for a more just and compassionate world. What's different about the 2026 Course Guide is the number of short courses and intensives, online evening courses, and the practical orientation of the study design. There are micro-credentials and professional development options, and units of study to help equip the church for the priorities of Faithful Futures. We hope this makes enrolment possible for busy people. We know from experience the deep value of reflecting theologically in the midst of life and work.

If the questions and challenges posed by the Synod's Faithful Futures Project are of interest, consider enrolling in one of these units:

Respecting Country: Deep History, the Colonies and the Church (Intensive: 5 days in Feb, March & May)

Intercultural Leadership and Multicultural Ministry (Wednesday mornings – Semester 1)

Care in a Grieving Church (Intensive: 3 days in May & June)

Practicing a Missionary Church: Forming a Community of Christian Witness (Wednesday evenings – Semester 2)

There are study opportunities for:

lay leaders, chaplains and pastoral carers, church-based study groups or hubs, ministry candidates, and those in a period of discernment, professional development in leadership or supervision, and continuing education

And, as always, there are rich offerings for:

lovers of scripture, theology, history, and mission, and seekers of understanding and insight

You can download a digital copy of the Course Guide from our website or pick up a paper copy from a church near you in the coming weeks. Give a copy to someone whose life will be enriched through learning and community at Pilgrim.

[View the 2026 course guide online now](#)



Marian's Musings



I am writing this on King Island, that small island off the northwest of Tasmania. The island is remote and isolated, but from what, in relation to what? Tasmania is also remote and isolated when compared to the rest of the country. So, perhaps remote and isolation and words to describe how we look at somewhere which is distant and different from us and where the reliance on one another is admirable.

We all make choices in life, some we would no doubt like to have another shot at, but all of our choices shape who we are and where we are at any point in our lives. It struck me that this was the same for the disciples of Jesus, they made choices, they decided to change the direction of the current life circumstance for something else. This came with a deep need for perseverance and tenacity for the disciples then and for us now.

We are in times when the global future is seemingly being driven by a powerful few, and we appear to be totally powerless to do anything meaningful. I don't believe this. If that were true, we would have no hope now or for the future, but we know we do. We hope in God, we hope in one another, we hope in Creation and that hope each one of us has makes a lot of hope. We have to believe God will see our hope in the actions we take, the words we say, the decisions we make and the relationships we nurture.



As we come to Advent this year, I wonder what we can see as hopeful? What is around us and within us which speaks of peace? What drives us to continuing to believe, to have faith strong enough to reach out a hand to another person? When we stop and pause for long enough, where is love found?

May this Advent birth in all of us renewal and change strong enough to step out with perseverance and tenacity into a new future.

Rev Marian Bisset



Synod 2025 Reflections

Shirley Bowers, Presbytery Secretary

The theme for this Synod Meeting was “Pilgrims of the Spirit”. This theme was introduced at the opening worship held at Kingswood College. This worship service included the installation of a new Moderator, Rev Salesi Faupula and the introduction of the image of a boat. The symbol of the boat continued throughout the meeting with a handmade boat at the worship service and later outside the meeting room. The worship was attended by a large group of people – not only people attending the Synod Meeting but also people from the local community. There was a choir that sang some songs during the worship service and then again at the end of the service they sang and smiled while the attendees left the chapel which was different and for me was a way of including everyone and a way of preparing me for the long meeting that was about to start.

The image of a boat was about everyone being in the boat together as we went through the Synod meeting and making decisions. There is a safety in the boat but that the seas could be rough. It was not just about being in a boat together, it was also about having the Holy Spirit in the boat as well. During the meeting there were many proposals to be considered and decided on. Some of these proposals had a long period of discussion including questions to the proposers. With the use of orange and blue cards at various times the moderator could see if a proposal would be accepted or if a change to wording would help a proposal to be accepted. The work of the Holy Spirit worked through a group of over 200 people to reach the same conclusion at the same time.

(Cont. p.4)





Synod
2025

(From p.3)

During the meeting there were times of prayer, Bible study and reflections and other activities. Each of these speakers spoke about the theme of the meeting – Pilgrims of the Spirit. The Welcome to Country included the invitation for each person to crush and smell a gum leaf – the smell of eucalyptus could be smelt in the air around me – inclusion of everyone in the room. I noticed that a number of people carried the gum leaf around with them in their name tags for the rest of the meeting maybe as a way of inclusion of all people including the first peoples. One of the prayers by a chaplain to the Moderator was to breathe in the Holy Spirit – a time of quietness and the preparation for the day ahead of us. The tributes service included a response from Rev Randall Prior who talked about the Holy Spirit leading him as a Minister into the unknown.

As you can image in a room with over 200 people it was at times noisy. There were times when we were invited to talk to the people around us at our table. The people around me came from a variety of places and unless they identified themselves there was nothing to identify if a person was Lay or Ordained. Everyone together for a purpose. One of the other noises heard throughout the meeting was the scraping of chairs



on the floor. This occurred every time that a break was announced. It seemed that every person had to move their chair to stand up to go on a break. The sound of scraping chairs was a repeated and constant sound throughout the meeting.

One of the highlights of the Synod meeting was the many opportunities to talk to others. Not just the people from Tasmania. There were people that I have known from previous Synod meetings and others that had only been names on emails. One of the examples was when I was speaking to a lady at the information desk who was adamant that she knew my name. After going through a variety of possibilities it turned out that she was a PA within the Synod office. This meeting allowed me and this person to put a face to a name. This connection of name to face happened for me a number of times over the course of the four day meeting.

You are invited to uphold in prayer the Moderator, Rev. Salesi Faupula.

Teachers Exploring Chaplaincy or Spiritual Care?

Many schools report difficulty filling chaplaincy and spiritual-care roles. At the same time, some teachers may be wondering about that work—perhaps in a hybrid role that keeps some teaching alongside a formal role in caring presence.

eLM's Chaplaincy and Connections Team is running a small, six-month inquiry to see what interest exists and what supports would help (formation, mentoring, time release). This is exploratory and listening-led - not a push to move teachers out of classrooms.

Do you know a teacher or educator who might be willing to share some thoughts? They can participate in two ways:

Short primer (comment welcome): [[Google Doc link](#)]

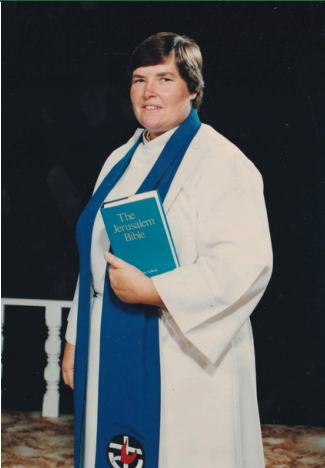
Brief anonymous survey (4-6 mins): [[Survey Link](#)]

Questions? Contact Adrian Pyle: adrian.pyle@victas.uca.org.au

Does Santa have his WWCC/VP card?

The festive season is quickly coming upon us. Soon enough it will be time for Christmas parties, carol events, fetes, nativity plays, and all the other ways we celebrate during advent. With all this in mind please remember that we will have an influx of visitors into our spaces including children. Now is the time to make sure any extra volunteers who will be helping at these events are up to date with their WWCC/VP cards and Child Safe Training ready for the festive season to kick off in a few weeks. This includes Santa and any of his elves that might be visiting your events to see the kids. It would also be timely to ensure your safe church contacts details are visible and up to date should any visitors need to raise any concerns. Let's be prepared to have a safe festive season.





Rev. Colleen Grieve: celebrating 50 Years of ordained ministry



Rev. Colleen Grieve has spent 50 years serving God and helping people. Her journey began when she was given a Bible as a child. She loved reading it and learning about God's promises. This love grew stronger when she studied at Theological College, and she felt called to ministry.

Her first job was at Woodleigh Residential College in Queensland, where she cared for high school students from many cultures, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. This experience opened her eyes to different traditions and taught her respect and understanding. Later, she worked in Mt Isa, where she became close to Aboriginal women and was even given a special name and totem. She also helped families who needed to travel for medical care.

Colleen returned to Woodleigh as Principal and worked hard to improve education for Indigenous students. Later, she moved to Tasmania, where she served in many places, including the West Coast and the Northern Midlands. Life wasn't always easy—sometimes people disagreed with her—but she learned to stay strong and trust God.

These rich experiences, with strength and trust, were vital in the leadership Colleen exercised as the final Moderator of the Synod of Tasmania, including merger negotiations with the Synod of Victoria. Colleen then continued as the first Chairperson of the new Presbytery of Tasmania during times of significant change and challenge.

Colleen's leadership has continued to demonstrate the Uniting Church's deep commitment to leadership by women and men using the gifts God bestows upon them, called of God regardless of unconscious cultural biases. Younger women in leadership today – and the whole church – continue to benefit from the paths forged and examples shown by Colleen and other women in ministry and in leadership.

Colleen has many special memories, like leading her first Holy Communion, helping communities during hard times, and learning important lessons from people others might overlook. One story she treasures is about Bill, a man many thought was just a "town drunk," but who turned out to be kind and faithful.

Colleen also loved being part of the community—playing cricket, joining events, and even considering flying lessons for ministry! Over the years, she served in churches, schools, and community groups, always trying to share God's love.

Now retired in Longford, she looks back with gratitude for the joy, challenges, and friendships that shaped her life. Her message: trust God, love people, and never stop learning.

Sharing the joy, wonder and mystery of God through 'Godly Play'

In most religious education children are told what God did.

In Godly Play children discover who God is.



What is Godly Play?

1. Godly Play is a Montessori method of telling Bible stories, developed by Jerome Berryman, using parables, sacred stories and liturgical lessons about religious traditions using tactile natural materials.
2. Godly Play is used extensively with adults and children in many settings, from schools to hospitals, churches to aged care facilities.
3. Godly Play can be a way of preparing children to join the worship life of their congregations as they experience sacred stories, symbols and rites and encounter the religious language associated with worship within the context of our faith tradition.

Godly Play can help you see and do things differently.

The best way to learn about Godly Play is by attending a workshop or training led by an accredited trainer, so the Presbytery of Tasmania recently funded a three-day immersive training program in the method and resources, led by two accredited trainers in Godly Play method: Judith Watkins and Judyth Roberts. For more information about Godly Play Core training and course details, see: <http://godlyplay.com.au/training/>

If you or others in your community are interested in Godly Play training, please contact the UCA Tasmanian Office: Tas.Office@victas.uca.org.au

I'd like to hugely thank the Presbytery for offering the Godly Play training in Northern Tasmania. Godly Play training has energized and excited me for children's ministry and experience of God in a way I haven't felt before. In training it felt like we formed a community of like-minded people with a shared passion and approach for learning and sharing the stories of Jesus. From this experience I feel far more confident sharing the joy, wonder and mystery of these stories with others, both inside and outside the church and in a way that has real integrity. This training is something I have been interested in for a while now, but being based in a rural community in Tas it was very tricky to find a training that I could practically and financially afford. I'm so excited to go back and begin sharing the stories and method with my church community in Scottsdale and Bridport.

Naomi Buster, Scottsdale Uniting Church

SAFETY ALERT



Ladder Use

Please distribute to your congregations

Under NO circumstances should anything other than a 'Platform Step Ladder' or a 'Safety Step' be used when needing to access/egress a work area.

This type of access equipment should only be used as a working platform for light work or short duration that can be carried out safely on the Platform Step Ladder/Safety Step.

Platform Step Ladders and Safety Steps must have a minimum load rating of 120Kg and are manufactured for industrial use to AS/NZS: 1892 Portable Ladders.

CAUTION: If Congregations have not audited the availability and 'fit for purpose' of 'Platform Step Ladders/Safety Steps' then it is highly recommended that this is done immediately.

If this equipment does not exist within the premises, then it is highly advisable that these are purchased based on the criteria mentioned above and are readily available for use and purpose. Sample below.



Thank you for your attention.

Please send any queries or concerns related to this matter to the Synod OHS team: SynodOHS@victas.uca.org.au or visit <https://victas.uca.org.au/resources/ohs/>

[Christmas cards](#)

This Christmas, Uniting Vic.Tas is once again spreading joy with a new range of festive cards, including a beautiful Australian native flora mixed pack. Every dollar raised helps provide care and support to people doing it tough during the holidays.

[Calendar for 2026](#)

The Assembly has released a list of key dates for 2026, which includes official Uniting Church commemorations, liturgical and ecumenical events, as well as social and cultural celebrations.



Act2: The Gift of the Spirit

Plain English (First Nations)

Act2: The Gift of the Spirit

The Act2 Project has asked many questions of our Church. We know that we are not the same Church that came together in 1977. God has been really good to us. There are many things we are thankful for. But there are also some ways that our Church does things together that are broken. Sometimes these things stop us from doing everything that we believe God wants us to do.

This is the story of what we have heard, who we are now, and what we think we could do differently in the future as the Uniting Church in Australia. We will decide about the things we want to do differently at the 17th Assembly meeting, on Darug Country, in Burrumatta (Parramatta) in July 2024.

The artwork tells this story and describes this vision in pictures. *What do you see?*

We have wanted to listen to every part of our Church

This has been very important to us from the beginning. This is why we have contacted every part of our Church. The Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress (“UAICC” or “Congress”) and all Uniting Church National Conferences and other groups of people that speak many different languages have also been talking to us.

We have thought about who we are as the Uniting Church

We have thought about who we are and what we believe is important. People have agreed on many things. Our Covenant with Congress is important to us. We want to be a Church with many cultures and languages. Both men and women can be leaders in our Church. We love justice. Everyone, not just the leaders, can be involved and have a say in the Uniting Church. All these things are like deep wells that we can draw water from and learn from. At the same time, other things have been hard for us. Our disagreements over sexuality have been painful for some. We love the Covenant with our First Peoples, but we have sometimes struggled to live it out. We have struggled to be the Church that we want to be for different cultures and languages

We want to do some things for all of us, for the whole Uniting Church

We have heard that there were some important things that we should do for all of us, together. Then we can be stronger, quicker, and better at sharing. We want our Church to have a voice and speak out about things that are important. We care about our Church partners and friends outside of Australia too. The Assembly, the national council of our Church, can help us talk about things we disagree on, and help us learn from each other and from our history. The Assembly can help connect people across our whole Church, but it needs more people and money to do some of these important jobs.

National Lay Preachers' Conference 4-6 September 2026

Our theme is building on the President's Assembly theme of Threads of Love: weaving Christ's Love Across Cultures and Boundaries

Weaving Christ's love as a Lay Preacher

We want our local churches to be the beating heart of our Church

We want to focus on growing and making disciples of Jesus and living God's mission. We want to make it easier for people to be Uniting churches with the right amount of freedom and support. This needs to be different for different places and different times. We want more churches to start. We want more parts of our Church to work together as teams. We understand that some need support to change or end. We also want to do more thinking about 'discipleship', 'mission' and 'evangelism' together. We think this will help us.

Our culture and our theological education need help

Our Church celebrates difference. We don't always agree on everything. We are not all the same. We think and do things differently from each other, too. This is not bad. But sometimes we have not been good at listening to each other. We want to be better at learning from First Nations theology and spirituality. We need open spaces to talk together about theology. We need help to get this right. We need to better support people everywhere in our churches. We need to help people who want to be ministry leaders. We believe we need a strong theological college to help us. We also believe we need to connect and bring parts of our Church together so we can do this better.

We need to change to be the Church we want to be

Again and again, people have said they want us to be courageous. We need to change to be the Church we want to be. We want to be true to who we know that we are. But we know we need to dare to change to be the Church we want to be.

How can we do this?

At the 17th Assembly meeting, will decide about:

- Helping our local churches be the heart of the Church and focus on discipleship and mission. To do this, we need to work on church membership and changing some of the Regulations (rules) and the Constitution (law) for the Uniting Church in Australia.
- Helping our culture and theological education. To do this, we need a Commission to form a Network for Theology and a new national College.
- Helping us share our life, our people and our money. To do this, we need a Commission to help us work together to be the Church we want to become and better share all that we already have.

We want all of us to talk about and think about these things together.

What do you think? What do you see?

VicTas Lay Preachers' Assocation

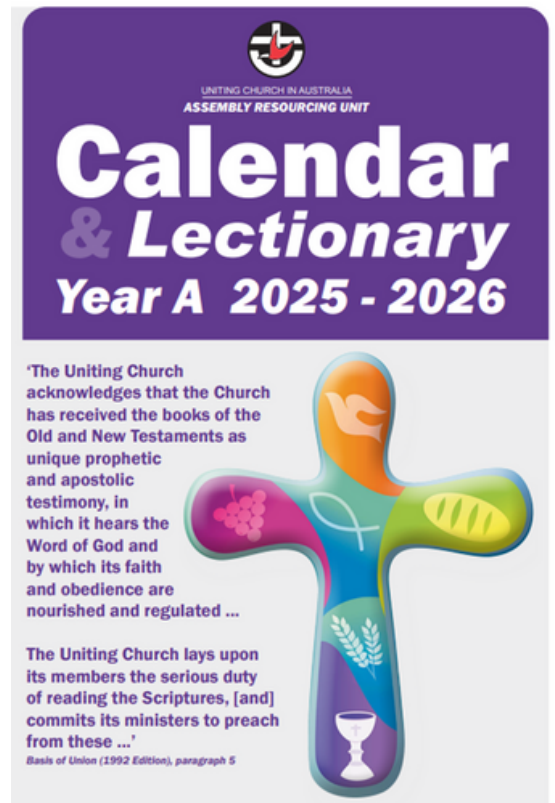
AGM and Conference 13–14 March 2026

We already have speakers in mind, and Natalie Sims, the Lectionary Singer and author of the website/blog Singing the Lectionary, will be a speaker.

Lectioary Year A

The Uniting Church in Australia 'Year A' Revised Common Lectionary 2025-2026 is now available on the UCA Assembly website and can be accessed using the following link: [2025-6-YearA-UCA-Lectionary.pdf](#)

This year's lectionary continues with the new-look poster format for easy reference. It includes listings of special days officially adopted by the Assembly. The list of resources and commentaries is hosted online and accessible from the poster by QR code.



The Year of Matthew

'Year A' in the Lectionary commences on 30 November 2025 and celebrates the Year of the Gospel of Matthew. Uniting Church President Rev Charissa Suli writes:

"Matthew's account speaks directly to communities seeking to live faithfully in complex times. It is a gospel rooted in Scripture and tradition, yet radically open to the new work of God in Christ. Written for a diverse and often pressured community, Matthew weaves together a story of Jesus as Emmanuel - "God with us" - from his birth to the promise of his abiding presence at the close of the age."

"This year we will hear the voice of Jesus the Teacher. Matthew frames Jesus' ministry around five great discourses, echoing the five books of Moses. In these we encounter the Sermon on the Mount with its call to a deeper righteousness; parables of the kingdom that reveal God's upside-down reign; instructions for life together as disciples; and visions of judgment and hope for the nations. Matthew continually invites us to see not only what Jesus does but what it means to follow him: to embody mercy, humility, justice and courage in our own context."

A hard copy version of the Lectionary is available to order from Wayzgoose, the online store for Uniting Church resources:

<https://www.wayzgoose.au/product/calendar-and-lectionary-2026-year-a/DQQ4LZO3GWCC7YISDGE53WLB>

We encourage ministers, lay preachers and other preachers to utilise the online version or order hard copies directly from Wayzgoose. However, if you require assistance in obtaining a hard copy version, please feel free to contact the UCA Tas Office Tas.office@victas.uca.org.au

Enjoy preaching and worship leading in the 'Year of Matthew'!

Glenorchy Uniting Church has a new Kitchen

This was made possible from a Synod Grant with Presbytery & Clarence Congregation contributions

The kitchen now has features such as:

- A servery
- 900mm induction cooktop & oven
- Wall mounted continuous hot water dispenser
- Second hand wash sink
- Commercial fast dishwasher
- Easy to clean cooktop exhaust
- Ample storage
- Easy to clean laminex benchtop & vinyl flooring
- The switch board has also been upgraded to isolate the various electrical items

The Congregation leaders such as Anthony LeFerve & Marilyn Goninan are very committed to constantly improving the facility to accommodate the great work the Congregation does for the local community



Planning to Archive Records?

Church Councils are advised that information has been updated with regard to Recordkeeping and Archiving Guidance (2025) on the Synod Archives webpage
<https://victas.uca.org.au/resources/synod-archives/>

Key sections related to Tasmania:

Church records remain the legal property of the Uniting Church and should not be transferred to local historical societies or other organizations, with the exception of the State Library and Archives of Tasmania.

Tasmania: records for Tasmanian congregations should be archived with the State Library and Archives of Tasmania

Step 1: Contact archives office

Contact the relevant archives office and let them know that you are planning to send records. The Archivist will be able to give you detailed information about the transfer process.

Tasmania: State Library and Archives of Tasmania

Victoria: Synod's Archive Office

GIVE THE GIFT OF A

VICTAS UC HISTORICAL SOCIETY GIFT SUBSCRIPTION

TO A CHURCH FRIEND OR FAMILY
MEMBER THIS CHRISTMAS.

Here's how it works:

- 1. Contact your friend,*
- 2. Fill in the Membership Form with the person's details noting your name as 'Gift Subscription', and post to:*

*The President
30 Campbells Road Portsea Vic. 3944
enclosing a cheque for \$45
(concession \$35), or using these bank account
details; BSB 063-194 Account 10031138 Note as 'Gift'.*

We will then send a welcome letter to the person, noting your gift. The Membership Form can be emailed to you by request, or downloaded using the QR code.

Enquiries email: ken.barelli@bigpond.com



Save these dates in 2026

Presbytery 'in council' meetings:

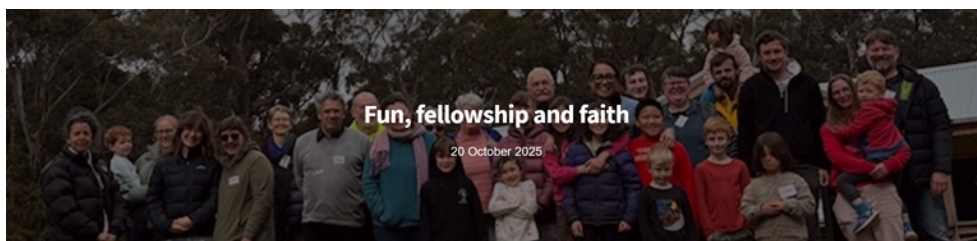
- **Sat 28 March 2026:** Kingston Uniting Church, including induction of Rev. Peter Overton as Presbytery Resource Minister – South
- **Sat 20 June 2026:** all online using Zoom!
- **Sat 7 Nov 2026:** in person, north (venue to be confirmed)

Regional gatherings: Sat 22 August 2026 (venues still to be confirmed)

- What: two gatherings on the same day at the same time: 10am to 1pmish
- Where: both north and south (venues to be confirmed), BYO lunch!
- Who: open to anyone and everyone, an opportunity for people from all the congregations and faith communities in the region to get together, to share and hear what is going on in each congregation and local community, and to hear news from the wider Uniting Church as well (Presbytery, Synod and Assembly).

Uniting Church resources:

- Uniting Church commemorations, key liturgical dates, ecumenical dates and events, social and cultural celebrations: see <https://uniting.church/2026-calendar-of-dates/>
- Lectionary resources and liturgical/seasonal Christian events: <https://uniting.church/lectionary-resources/>



Earlier in October, President Rev Charissa Suli joined families in the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania for a weekend camp exploring the theme, 'Threads of Inclusion.' The theme was inspired by the President's theme for the triennium, 'Threads of Love'. The camp – filled with laughter, zip-lines, worship, prayer and shared meals – brought the theme to life as people of all ages celebrated being part of a Church where everyone belongs. Read this reflection by Rev Deacon Jeanne Beale, originally published in [Crosslight](#).

WHAT'S ON!

DEC 2025 - JAN 2026

DEC 02 | **Pastoral Relations Committee**
10.30am - 4.00pm

JAN 12 | **Presbytery Office opens for 2026**
9.00am

DEC 04 | **Synod Staff Christmas gathering**
Presbytery Office Closed

JAN 22 | **Presbytery Standing Committee**
10.00am - 3.00pm

DEC 09 | **Resource and Development**
10.30am - 2.30pm

DEC 19 | **Presbytery Office Closes for Christmas Break**
4.00pm

A small group of lay preachers met online recently and discussed the following issues:
Training as a leader - many lay preachers are being called on in wider areas of leadership within their congregations, often without the guidance of people in placement
Liturgy resources - some worth following up include Area 52 (Engage Worship), Intergen, Church of Scotland, Sacredise, Bruce Prewer, Olive Tree
Archives - we raised questions about the process for diverting unneeded historical documents
We thought it might be valuable to meet three monthly
March 6th is a possible date for a future meeting sharing Easter thoughts
We thought it appropriate to continue to invite any interested lay preachers and to include those who are called from time to time to lead worship in their congregations.

MONTHLY CHECKLIST



Check monthly and three monthly items in Annual Maintenance Statements Logbooks

The next issue will be distributed in the week before the end of February. Contributions to be received seven days before publication. Contact Graham Booth, editor, by [email](#), phone 6331 9784 or post: 36 Paterson St, Launceston, 7250.