



**Uniting Church in Australia**  
**Synod of Victoria and Tasmania**  
**Presbytery of Yarra Yarra**

PO Box 4308  
Balwyn East VIC 3103

14<sup>th</sup> October 2021

## **Notes and news for Yarra Yarra Congregations and Institutions**

*As usual, the newsletter contains a number of items which may be of interest to your congregations. Please identify other items relevant to your community, and promote the issues and events listed below through your own newsletters and other communication channels as appropriate. There is much going on, so please take a few minutes to review. Please ensure that items for the next edition are sent in by the end of the month. It is helpful if you can provide text, rather than copies of fliers which need to be transcribed and summarised. Please include contact information for those seeking more information.*

### **PRESBYTERY NEWS**

#### **Essential Safety Measures**

We know that many congregations are already making progress towards the achievement of the mandatory ESM requirements. Remember that if you need advice or assistance you can contact Rob Nosko at [rob.nosko@victas.uca.org.au](mailto:rob.nosko@victas.uca.org.au) or tel 0438 555 010. Note that Rob works with Yarra Yarra Presbytery on Thursdays and Fridays so please try to limit your contact to those days.

#### **Synod Climate Action Task Force**

Our last Newsletter asked for volunteers to become engaged with this project and we now thank Richard Hedding from the Burwood Congregation for stepping forward. Richard has already engaged with the Task Force and is preparing now to engage with congregations. Church Councils can expect a letter about this matter shortly.

#### **Presbytery Update**

At its meeting in October, the Presbytery Standing Committee agreed to rename the Resourcing Committee to become the Resourcing and Property Committee, in order to more accurately reflect the scope of its activities.

#### **Presbytery Meeting**

Here is an early reminder that the next meeting of the Presbytery will be held on Saturday, 28<sup>th</sup> November. More information will be circulated to members in the coming weeks.

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## **Elections and Appointments**

The Call for Nominations was circulated widely this week, and now needs a response. Church Council Secretaries are asked to ensure that this is an item on the next agenda for your meetings, but please note that the closing date for nominations is 8<sup>th</sup> November. Our Presbytery needs people who are willing to be engaged in a wide range of activities so please think about who might be suitable for the roles listed.

## **Presbytery Membership**

Many congregations take the opportunity to review their Presbytery representation towards the end of each year. That is very helpful as it means that advice of any changes can be given early, to ensure an accurate membership list as we start our meetings in February.

As a reminder, here are the details of membership entitlements. Regulation 3.3.4 sets out the basis for membership of a presbytery. Clause (d)(i) explains the calculation of entitlement for members elected by congregations:

One confirmed lay member elected by each Congregation. Where a Congregation includes more than 150 confirmed members and members-in-association in total, one additional confirmed lay member may be elected by the Congregation or where a Congregation includes more than 250 confirmed members and members-in association in total, two additional confirmed lay members may be elected by the Congregation.

When advising membership names for larger congregations, Church Council Secretaries are asked to also advise the number of confirmed members and members-in association used as the basis for the calculation.

## **Supply Ministry**

Following agreement by all Presbyteries, a new Approval Form for Supply Ministry is being developed to ensure a standardised approach across this Synod. This Presbytery has started to use the new form already, so if you are submitting a request for approval of a Supply Ministry, please ensure that you use a copy of the new the form which can be found at <http://yarrayarrapresbytery.unitingchurch.org.au/resources-and-documentation/>. Requests submitted using the older form(s) will be returned and will need to be resubmitted.

## **Mandatory vaccination status reporting**

Please note the following important information, which applies to anyone

engaged in recording worship services at a church, as well as any other approved workers.

From midnight on 14<sup>th</sup> October, to be able to work (either paid or as a volunteer) in any workplace in Victoria other than your own home, you must meet three criteria: 1: The type of work you do must be on the government's Authorised Worker List. 2: You must have had at least one COVID vaccine, or be booked to have your first dose by 22<sup>nd</sup> October, or be medically exempt from vaccination. 3: You must have provided proof of your vaccination status to your workplace. Additionally, in Metropolitan Melbourne or a regional LGA under stay-at-home orders, you must also have a Permitted Worker Permit.

### **Annual Reports and Financial Accounts**

Given the response to the reminder about Annual Reports in the last Newsletter, it may be that there are some congregations who may not be aware that they are on the list of those still to provide a report and/or financial reports for 2019. To help jog some memories, here is the list:

Banyule Network - Cross Generation; Blackburn (The Avenue); Blackburn North - Nunawading; Box Hill (Hanbit Korean); Box Hill (St Andrew's); Box Hill (Wesley); Diamond Creek; Emerald; Fairfield (St Andrews); Ferntree Gully; Gembrook; Lilydale; Melbourne (Gospel Hall Melbourne); Mernda; Monbulk Open Door Community Church; Montrose; Richmond; Scoresby; The Loving Church of Melbourne; Warrandyte; Yarra Glen.

If your congregation is on this list and you believe you have already provided a report, please accept our apologies and resubmit.

### **Mental Health Resources**

The Mental Health Working Group of the Presbytery has assembled a list of resources to assist congregations. It is sufficiently large that it is being attached as a separate page, so scan to the end of this Newsletter to find it.

## **MEMBERSHIP OF THE BOARD OF CAN COMMUNITY SUPPORT**

Church of All Nations in Carlton has been working with vulnerable people in the Carlton community for over 150 years, and over the last 30 years this commitment has found its form through the services and programs offered by CAN Community Support.

Programs offered are responsive to the needs of the community and currently include (pre lockdown) a homework club and family learning program, emergency relief, women's wellbeing programs, a drop-in centre, community meals program, and oversight of a community safety project. This is supported by a staff of 6 people and a team of volunteers.

CAN Community Support is a part of the life of the UCA, and draws its mandate from the life and teachings of Jesus and all people are welcome to CAN Community Support's programs.

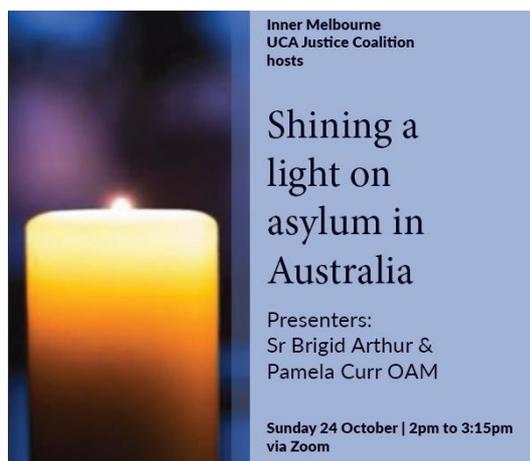
As of January 2022, CAN Community Support will be governed by a skills-based Board. CAN Church Council is seeking nominations to be a part of this inaugural Board. People with a background in any of the following areas, - financial management and accounting, law, community services, marketing and fundraising, previous board experience and Uniting Church membership - are particularly encouraged to nominate.

We welcome expressions of interest for nominations to the new Board. To find out more click here <http://carlton-uca.org/news> or contact the Rev Ray Gormann at [minister@cancarlton.org.au](mailto:minister@cancarlton.org.au) or tel 0447 142425

Expressions of interest close Monday Nov 7, 2021

### **SHINING A LIGHT ON ASYLUM IN 2021**

Some of the adjacent inner-urban UCA congregations have established a modest 'justice coalition' to try to link up people with a passion for justice. These congregations include St. Michael's, Richmond, North Melbourne, Church of All Nations and Wesley.



Our first 'event' (organised by Wesley and St. Michael's people) will be a seminar, on Zoom rather than live, regrettably, on Sunday afternoon, 24<sup>th</sup> October, 2–3.15pm. Our pitch is: 'Learn about the realities of life for asylum seekers living in the Australian community. Hear from people seeking asylum and the people who support them to survive. Engage in action to make a difference.'

Basically we are trying to encourage our members to get involved in practical action to support asylum seekers in our community as well as present them with advocacy options. We are not trying to initiate any new programs but to alert people to existing networks and organisations, including, of course, JIM and Uniting.

It is pretty UCA focussed even though the two key presenters are not UCA but Sr Brigid and Pamela Curr are well-known activists and advocates in this space. We will promote the event through the Synod e-news and we would appreciate if you could your networks to let your people know about it.

The link and password are as follows:

<https://zoom.us/j/93235042878?pwd=aHQxYkQwTkswQk5PMTVEWWdKaHZPQT09>

Meeting ID: 932 3504 2878

Password: 362 935

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*If you have information that you wish to have distributed through this newsletter, please ensure that it is submitted by the start of the month in which the item is to appear. I plan to try to send newsletters out in the third week, so that means if your event occurs early in the month, you will need to have it submitted by the start of the **previous** month.*

*The newsletter is sent to Church Council Secretaries and Presbytery members. If you should not be receiving it, please contact me at [pyy.secretary@victas.uca.org.au](mailto:pyy.secretary@victas.uca.org.au) with the name of your congregation and the name of the correct person.*

## **Yarra Yarra Mental Health Working Group — Some Resources**

Hopefully Melbourne will soon be emerging from our title as the most locked down city in the world! During this pandemic we have been hearing a lot about the toll lockdowns have taken on us all through the impact on the economy, education, physical and increasingly, our mental health. Levels of anxiety, depression, insomnia, loneliness have increased markedly. Although, thanks God, rates of suicide have not shown an increase.

If we could be so bold as to look for a silver lining in the dark cloud it just may be that as a community we are far more attuned to the importance of attending to our mental health.

As we emerge from our homes and make our way back to what may approach everyday life many of us are wondering in what frame of mind our folk will return to face to face church gatherings and particularly worship. And not just the members of our faith groups, but also the wider community. There will definitely be people looking to connect with a local community and will be looking for a sense of belonging and connection.

Here are some resources from the Yarra Yarra Mental health Working Group that may be of interest to local churches and ministries. There are lots of others around. If you know of something and wish to share it you could send details to Ray Gormann, Chair of the working group at [minister@cancarlton.org.au](mailto:minister@cancarlton.org.au)

### **Hear For Each Other**

Mental health communicator David Pearce dives deep with world-class performers from business, sport, politics and health, discussing their experience of the relationship between emotional expression and mental health - especially as it relates to men. The show is basically a series of hour-long interviews with great people talking about real social and cultural challenges that impacted how they feel about life, what they did to deal with it, and how that worked out. If you liked "You can't ask that", or "Love on the spectrum" then stop right here - this is for you. If you're more "Big Brother" or "MAFS" then maybe swipe left.

Hear for each other so far has videos featuring Steve Bracks, Steve Moneghetti, Greg Combet, John Fitzgibbon on their channel. Click [here](#).

### **Caring for Mental Health in your congregation**

A helpful article in Ministry Matters by Karen Lampe who established The Caring Congregation LLC to provide a model of care for churches of all sizes. The model was developed during 15 years at Church of the Resurrection in Leawood, Kansas. Click [here](#)

## **Mental Health First Aid Courses**

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) courses teach participants how to assist people who are developing a mental health problem, experiencing a worsening of an existing mental health problem or in a mental health crisis, until appropriate professional help is received or the crisis resolves.

All courses are delivered by an Accredited Mental Health First Aid Instructor. The Mental Health First Aid course can now be done 100% on line. There are versions of the evidence-based courses for workplaces and the general community.

Click [here](#) to access courses.

## **Synod Disability Inclusion**

There are great resources on the Synod's Disability Inclusion website. Two resources in particular to note are -

### **Mental Health Forum**

"Mental Health: does religion/spirituality help or hinder?" was the topic of a forum hosted in June 2021 by Rev (Deacon) Dr Andy Calder of the Synod's equipping Leadership for Mission Unit (eLM). The keynote presenter was Prof John Swinton, Professor in Practical Theology and Pastoral Care, and Chair in Divinity and Religious Studies at the University of Aberdeen. The keynote presentation is available for viewing.

### **Mental Health Kit**

A Mental Health Kit for Congregations is available for download. The kit contains personal perspectives, worship resources, sermon starters, a list of community-based resources and checklists to help congregations better respond to people with mental health issues.

Wesley Mission Queensland has assembled two Q&A video series focusing on COVID-19 and mental health. One is designed specifically for people living with a disability and the other is for the deaf community.

Click [here](#) for the Disability Inclusion website

## **Presbytery Report into Creating Welcoming Communities**

Any congregations or agencies that may like to consider establishing a ministry based around the principles of hospitality, community or even going so far as to establish a "Open Door" style welcoming fellowship that would include people living with mental health issues is encouraged to read the report commissioned by the Yarra Yarra Presbytery Mental Health Working Group in April 2018.

Click [here](#) to read the report.