

# *Monthly update*

## *The Uniting Church in Australia*

### **St Luke's Congregation, Highton**

November 2022

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I don't know whether this happens to you, but often I find myself stumbling upon things that clearly are signs that reflect the life of the kingdom of God. It seems to happen when you least expect it and indeed when you are not looking for it.

On our recent holiday in Western Australia, we stayed at the small coastal village of Prevelly (not far from Margaret River). It is a place beloved by keen surfers with huge waves sweeping in from the Indian ocean. According to Wikipedia its permanent population is around 200.

There is a lovely spot at one end of the beach suitable for the average swimmer and overlooked by a Mediterranean style café called the "White Elephant." There are limestone cliffs and white sand which remind you of pictures of Greek Islands. But the links with the Mediterranean are deeper than this. The town was developed and named by Geoff Edwards.

He named the town after Preveli, a location on Crete. Edwards was among a group of Australian soldiers who sheltered there at the St. John Monastery in 1941 before he and his colleagues were evacuated aboard the submarine, HMS Thrasher. This was, of course, done at great risk for the Monks of the community.

To thank the people of Crete and the members of the community of the Monastery, and indeed God, Edwards facilitated the construction of the St John the Theologian Greek Orthodox chapel in Prevelly. You cannot miss it if you visit the town.

What a profound statement of connection between the people of Australia and the people of Crete. But, also, what a wonderful affirmation of the presence of God in all situations and the faithfulness of Christians.

***Paul Stephens, Minister in Placement***

Office administrator: Robyn Hodge.

Office open hours: Tuesdays and Fridays, 9:30am–12:30pm

## Coming Up

### Services:

10/11 Wednesday Mid-week Worship 1:30-3pm

### Activities:

12/11 Saturday

Repair Cafe

12 - 5pm

18/11 Friday

Sewing group

12 - 2.30pm

18/11 Friday

Collectibles sale

1 - 4:30pm

19/11 Saturday

Collectibles sale

9 - 12:30pm

26/11 Saturday

State election: Cake stall, sausage sizzle, collectibles sale (9am-3pm)

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## Church Council Notes

Over the last few months St Luke's Church Council has been reflecting on ACTS2, looking at the position and future directions of the UCA. Our October meeting was unable to be held due to lack of a quorum so notes below are from our September meeting.

Topics discussed have included:

- Involvement in the planning of the gambling awareness forum featuring Tim Costello,
- Financial sustainability and options for St Luke's,
- Review of future options re the St Luke's properties,
- Review of future proposals relating to the St Luke's Kindergarten,
- Review of grant issues re the Men's Shed,
- Transition and review of the office manager and admin coordinator role.

*Mike Currie*

*Secretary*

# Where are we going?

Extracts of an article from Crosslight, Oct 12, 2022, written by Andrew Humphries



*The future of the Church .. was a topic on the minds of Uniting Church members who attended Synod 2022 in Melbourne in early July. The theme for that gathering was 'Arise, come with me' and, during the three-day event, members were asked to give deep thought to where the Church was heading as it emerged from the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the background to all of this were Census figures released in June which appeared to paint a bleak picture about the decline in religion among most Australians. How bleak, though, is the picture for our Uniting Church?*

*Banyule Network of Uniting Churches Minister Rev Sandy Brodine reflected on how the Church might emerge from the darkness of COVID-19 into a new light and what tools it might need to make that transition.*

*"It was about pointing towards where God might be calling us to on a journey and it really talks about that metaphor of the winter being over: which can be read in a multiplicity of ways," Sandy says. "God is faithfully asking us to arise and come with Him and move forward into a new relationship."*



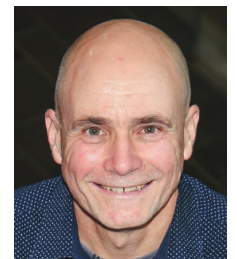
*Brunswick Uniting Church Minister Rev Ian Ferguson noted, "... the fundamental question hasn't changed, in that our future is bound up in God's future, so the question is, how do we best live out the coming Kingdom as the people of Christ?"*

*"Every age has been confronted with different challenges and some people may see it as more cataclysmic and existential than at any other time, but I don't necessarily feel that.*

*"I think God will always have a church, but it certainly won't have the same shape that it once did."*

*As New and Renewing Communities Catalyst, Rev Mat Harry ... says only a lack of imagination stands in the way of real and meaningful change. The Church, he says, can be taken in new and exciting directions.*

*"Absolutely, depending on the attitude that people bring," Mat says. "If it's an attitude of despair assuming that the Church has failed then that won't help us, but if we take on a curious disposition and try and work this through with others then there is huge potential."*



*"I think God will always have a church, but it certainly won't have the same shape that it once did," says Rev Ian Ferguson.*

He says it's time to start telling the world about the powerful and positive impact the Uniting Church can have on people's lives. "But I think we continue as a Church to be really strong, particularly in the areas of social justice.

"We have these powerful agencies and congregations with a real heart for justice and the poor and we need to be continuing to tell that story so that the world hears who we are."

It does mean, though, that some serious thinking is required around how the Uniting Church can best position itself for the future.

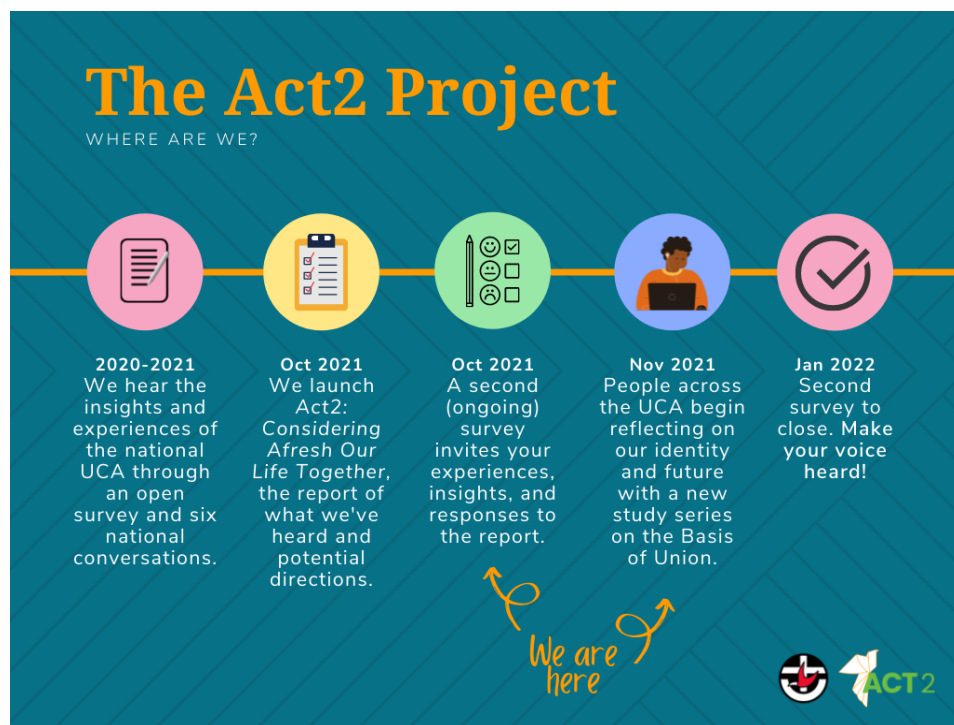
This serious thinking is currently being done through the [Act2 project](#), a national conversation about the future of the Uniting Church.

The Act2: Considering Afresh Our Life Together report outlines potential future directions based on the rich insights of an open survey during 2020-21 and national conversations. [The full report is now available to read](#), along with a [video snapshot](#) and message from the President.

### Take a fresh look at the Basis of Union

At the centre of the current Act2 phase is a new study series on the Basis of Union, the Uniting Church's foundational document and one of the most enduring resources we have for thinking about the kind of church God is calling us to be. You might like to form a group in your local context and engage the studies together, reflecting on how our identity grounds our thinking about the future and how we might innovate with integrity on tradition.

Taken from [Act2: Where are we?](#) <<https://uniting.church/act2-where-are-we/>>. Read the full article on pp. 24-31 in this month's Crosslight.





# Congregation News

## Mission Outreach



### ST LUKE'S CHAPEL COLLECTIBLES

I believe that your continued interest in reading our Collectible stories inspires me to continue – as the Team continues to support and raise funds for newcomers and people in need.

October saw another breathtaking month. Record breaking in the number of new faces visiting the Chapel, record breaking with increased sales, and record breaking as we rostered a new Team from our community – this providing some much needed respite from our St Luke's regular helpers.

And now we look forward to November when our Chapel Collectibles will be open on 2 consecutive weekends:

Our next opening is:

**NOVEMBER:** Friday 18<sup>th</sup> Nov between 1pm and 4.30pm.

Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> Nov between 9am and lunch time **AND**

Sat 26<sup>th</sup> Nov between 9am and 3.00pm. STATE ELECTIONS St Luke's Polling Booth

I take a special moment to especially thank Geoff Boehm for his never ending support, encouragement and a supporter of helping solve some Collectible logistic problems. Geoff and his Men's Shed team are a very integral part of what we do. Thank you team.

The collection of Collectibles continues to change each month. We are boasting a large collection of old land-line telephones, a collection of Japanese furniture and art-work, a collection of porcelain and of course as we think of Christmas we display a large range of gifts and decorations.

So here is our monthly question. How can you help?

If you have any unwanted items in your house and you wish to declutter, why don't you think about passing them on to our Chapel Collectibles. (But firstly check with your family beforehand.)

If our November dates are not convenient for you to visit the Chapel, then why don't you tee up a time with Linda or myself to visit on another day.

*Linda Salamy & Rae Anderson – Collectibles Co-Ordinator*

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## Pastoral Connections

### PRAYER REQUESTS

Prayer requests received during Prayer gatherings throughout October 2022. Please use these prayer points as a reference for your prayer time.



#### Praise and Thanksgiving.

- Praise God for the blessing of life and the blessings we receive each day from our families, friends, and work colleagues.
- We are reminded and thankful for the many people in the church and the community who do God's work quietly, seeking no recognition or acknowledgement. Praise God for the opportunities that open as we talk and work together.
- Thankyou Lord, for the joys that we share each day, for those who are uplifted by good news regarding medical results, job opportunities, new houses to create as their own, for the opportunity to reconnect with friends and family.
- Continued praise for the hospital, age care and health workers who work tirelessly to care for the vulnerable.

**Website:** [stlukesuca.org.au](http://stlukesuca.org.au) **Email:** [info@stlukesuca.org.au](mailto:info@stlukesuca.org.au) **Ph:** 5244 2997

- Praise for the philanthropic partners in the Geelong community who support aid agencies, medical research, and outreach programs such as Food bank, Uniting, Noah's Ark children's services, Bethany, the SES, plus many more organisations, and thanks to the volunteers who sustain these groups.

### **General Prayers.**

- Our ongoing prayers each week are for the people of Ukraine, especially for the brave medical and community leaders who work in dangerous circumstances to support the people in so much need. Organizations like Doctors without Borders, Humanitarian Aid workers and UNHCR agencies all supporting the efforts of local people
- Our love and prayers are with those of our congregation who are unwell, receiving treatment, have experienced grief or loneliness. Grant them peace and strength to continue and let there be someone who can support them during their time of need. We pray for Dawn and the Fielder family as they grieve the loss of Brian.
- We pray for the many and varied needs of our new arrivals to this country and our city. Praise and thanks to the 'army' of workers who walk beside these families to support and guide them in the direction of help and practical support.
- Prayers were shared for those impacted by the recent floods. The shop owners, government infrastructure such as schools/ovals/transport, students especially VCE students about to sit exams, farmers, and exhausted SES and army workers working with the town people.
- We pray for our congregation; that people will step forward to take on responsibilities, in the Church council, on rosters and pastorally. We pray that the right person will be found to maintain our church office and to lovingly care and support our congregational needs, while maintaining connections with sister churches.

**ALL PRAYER REQUESTS ARE CONFIDENTIAL NAMES ARE MENTIONED ONLY WHEN SPECIFICALLY REQUESTED.**

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## **Readings for the Month**

	<i>1st Reading</i>	<i>Psalm</i>	<i>2nd Reading</i>	<i>Gospel</i>
<b>November 13</b> Pentecost 23	Is 65:17-25	Is 12	2 Thes 3:6-13	Lk 21:5-19
<b>November 20</b> Christ the King	Jer 23:1-6	Lk 1:68-79	Col 1:11-20	Lk 23:33-43
<b>November 27</b> Advent 1	Is 2:1-5	Ps 122	Rom 13:11-14	Mt 24:36-44
<b>December 4</b> Advent 2	Is 11:1-10	Ps 72:1-7,18-19	Rom 15:4-13	Mt 3:1-12