**Moderator’s Letter** 

**. . for members of the Uniting Church in the Northern Synod**

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 **MARCH 2022**

**GOD IS DOING SOMETHING NEW**

We have a Peace Lily plant on our balcony. Margie brought it home as a small plant about 4 years ago, I re-potted and fertilised it and it grew and grew and grew. It gave us a beautiful flower; and a bit later another one; and then another one. This big healthy plant looked like it was doing well . . . and then it just started to shrivel up and it eventually died. I didn’t know what had happened. I cut all the dead leaves off and just left a stump in the pot, thinking that maybe the roots might still be okay. I really didn’t know. I love plants, but I’m not much of a gardener. Over the next few months I squirted some water on the dead-looking stump each time I watered our other pot plants. Nothing happened. For about a year, , nothing. And then about three weeks ago, wah, I saw a light green shoot coming out of the brown stump. New life. There are now some beautiful leaves and a couple of healthy new plants growing. New life. What joy!



As we come to the season of Lent, it is good to think about life and death; death and life. Lent this year begins on Wed 2nd March (Ash Wednesday) and runs until Holy Saturday (April 16th), the day before Easter. It is a time when we remember Jesus preparing for his ministry in the wilderness; and we think of Jesus preparing to go to Jerusalem too, where things would get pretty bad and he would be crucified. The season of Lent is a time when we can prepare our hearts and minds to receive the story of Jesus’ arrest, crucifixion and resurrection. A time of preparation for the gift of New Life

Has anyone ever said to you that to make room for new things in your life you need to get rid of old things? I remember hearing that a long time ago. Hmmmm.

Some people are too busy and so they haven’t got time to listen to new ideas or to spend time with other people. Some people have got too many clothes in their wardrobe. Or maybe a big pile of clothes. Too many. There’s not room for new clothes. I know some people who have got so many books that their book-shelves are full and there’s no room for any new books.

Of course, if we live simply and our wardrobes are only half full it’s not a problem. But you and I both know that that only happens if we are disciplined in ‘getting rid’ of old things.

Giving something up or going without something is a discipline that some people do in the season of Lent. It’s a way of getting our hearts and minds ready again for celebrating the gift of new life that is offered by Jesus; the new life that we celebrate at Easter.

Going without something reminds us of the sacrifice that Jesus made for us in his crucifixion.

One person might go with-out chocolate for Lent. Do you think you could do that? Or try going without red meat for Lent (easy for some). What about going without Facebook? Maybe you could get rid of extra clothes or books or other things that are cluttering your life. How about giving up (stopping) any hard words coming out of your mouth? Going without something, giving something up, will help us to recognise and receive the gift of new life that Jesus has offered to each one of us.

The good news of the gospel is that God is making all things new. But often our lives are so cluttered that there isn’t room for anything new. No time, no space, no energy.

Giving up something for Lent will help us to see the newness that God is creating in our lives and in the world around us. God is always doing something new. New life and new opportunities are always close by.

What old things do you need to get rid of to make room for the new?

About 2600 years ago, way back then, the prophet Isaiah told the people that God said this:

*I am doing something new! Now you will grow like a new plant. Surely you know this is true. I will even make a road in the desert, and rivers will flow through that dry land.****20****The wild animals will thank me. The large animals and birds will honor me when I put water in the desert and make rivers flow through that dry land. I will do this to give water to my chosen people.****21****I made them, and they will sing songs of praise to me.[[1]](#footnote-1)*



Maybe there are some words for us there as well.

What do you think?

God is doing a new thing in the Northern Synod.

Let us drink of the water that God provides

and let us sing songs of praise to God.

Grace and Peace.

The best is yet to come,





The Uniting Church in Australia

Northern Synod

2 Railway St, Parap NT 0820

Postal: PO Box 38221,

Winnellie NT 0821

Ph: 08 8982 3400  Fax: 08 8982 349

admin@ns.uca.org.au

Rev Tony Goodluck

Nangarridj

**Moderator**

**Northern Synod**

**Uniting Church in Australia**

Mob: 0498 680 215

Email: tony.goodluck@ns.uca.org.au

*Living on* ***Larrakia*** *land*

*Born on* ***Jaitmatang*** *land*

*Raised on* ***Jaitmatang****,* ***Woiworunn****,* ***Maarku*** *and* ***Larrakia*** *land*

1. Isaiah 43: 16-21 (Easy to Read Version) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)