



UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA  
Northern Synod

# NORTHERN SYNOD NEWS

APRIL & MAY 2025

## MODERATOR'S THOUGHTS - MAY 2025



### *Greetings from the Moderators Desk*

As we sit and stand, as we laugh and cry, as we walk and run, God is with us, breathing life into us. As we pause, seeking stillness and peace, we respond to God's loving presence. We remember that nothing can separate us from God's grace. We receive through the living Christ, the power of God's Spirit.

It is now just five weeks since we gathered for Synod. A time of worship, fellowship, sharing stories, eating, reconnecting and enjoying being together. Since then, we have

Photo: The Meeting of Moderators, held in Hahndorf, S.A.

<https://www.ns.uca.org.au>

taken the journey of Easter, remembering the pain and fear associated with loss and the joy and hopefulness the dawn of Easter morning brings. It a journey repeated every day of our lives as we navigate the challenges and the celebrations before us.

My devotions this morning took me to John 17:20-21. Jesus is praying. It's a prayer for unity, for you and for me, for the church and for all people in the world, that we might be united in the love of Christ. Jesus' longing is that we might enjoy, appreciate, value being together. Jesus' invitation is that we might talk, love, serve and pray together with all people, revealing God's grace to the world.

Thus far, being the Moderator has been a gentle journey interspersed with ministry in the Nightcliff Uniting Church Community. Since becoming Moderator, I have;

- attended a meeting of the Nungalinga Board,
- debriefed with Synod staff,
- navigated the Moderators phone (that still wants Tony's facial ID to function effectively),
- met with the other Moderators at Sunset Uniting Church in Stirling,
- attended to my responsibilities at NUC,
- been confronted by overzealous supporters at the polling booth,
- enjoyed some sewing time over the May long weekend,
- and supported a woman across the road who has finally decided to take out a DVO against her violent husband of 15 years.

It is no accident that the Holy Spirit came down on a group, rather than individuals. Called to be the church, holy, catholic, apostolic and universal; we gather together, study together, worship and serve together.



As your Moderator, it is my prayer that you would draw deeply on God, be reconciled with those who challenge you and united in tasks of justice, truth telling and kindness.

Grace and peace,

*Rev Felicity Amery*

Acting Moderator

[moderator@ns.uca.org.au](mailto:moderator@ns.uca.org.au)

(m) 0498 680 215

Easter Sunrise Service



# Northern Synod Disaster Recovery Plan

Our church councils have been sent our Northern Synod Disaster Recovery Plan that was approved at the 47<sup>th</sup> Synod Meeting last month.



Church Councils are to familiarise themselves with this Plan and identify the local community contacts for their congregation to connect with in preparation for a Disaster. Knowing who your contacts are in the community is part of being prepared and they will provide access to further resources and community plans.

The Disaster Recovery Committee will be in touch in the near future to assist with the implementation of the Plan in congregations.



Rev Steve Orme is the Disaster Recovery Chaplain if you have any queries. The Disaster Recovery Plan is available to view on our website.



**Our Disaster Recovery Plan Goes Something Like This...**





The poster features a vertical strip of colorful Indigenous Australian art on the left, including a large white cross and various patterns. The background is black with faint grey circular patterns. The text is in white and yellow.

# Nungalingya Arts Centre

## Open Day

Saturday 17th May 11am - 3pm

Art & crafts on display and for sale.  
Pop in to say hello and meet some artists!

Nungalingya College  
72 Dripstone Rd  
Nakara



If you are out of town, you can check out some Nungalingya art in their online [shop](#).

## Language and Culture

As part of our commitment to learning language and culture, we run a class every Tuesday morning at Uniting House 9am-10am.

Howard Amery guides us through the learning.

**All welcome.  
Contact Synod Office  
for more information.**

## Code of Ethics Training now on

The Synod of Victoria and Tasmania has kindly allowed the Northern Synod to join their Code of Ethics training.

If you are in placement, please peruse the list provided via email and sign up to participate in the session of your choice.

Please contact Heidi at Synod office for more information on 08 8982 3400.



# National Insurance Gathering



The Northern Synod hosted the National Insurance Gathering this week. The Uniting Church is blessed to have good people attending to the Finance and Property Services of the church.

I hear this was a great meeting and it was a lot of fun - not that they are letting on in this photo. Perhaps it is the case that what happens at the National Insurance Gathering, stays at the National Insurance Gathering?

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Tennant Creek Uniting Church has a beautiful new sign reflecting its colourful personality and desert location. Just gorgeous!





## Dr Susana Saffu's sudden passing grieves the Northern Synod

The Northern Synod has been rocked by the sudden passing of Dr Susana Saffu. Susana, who lived and worked in the NT for many years in education and community development, was an active member of Palmerston Uniting Church.



Susana was awarded a PhD from Charles Darwin University in 2014 for her thesis entitled: Learning as transformation and empowerment: the case of African-Australian women in the Northern Territory of Australia.

Recently relocating to Melbourne to be closer to family, Susana passed away peacefully in her sleep.

We continue to uphold Susana's friends and family in prayer. She is sadly missed by all who knew her.

Palmerston Uniting Church (pictured above) will hold a memorial service for Susana - details to be confirmed.





## ***Broome***

The Rev Alistair Macrae recently spent some time providing supply ministry in Broome over the Easter period.

Following this, Al Macrae headed to Darwin to lead the consultation team as Darwin Memorial (DMUC) held their 5-year Congregational Life and Witness Consultation last week.

As Al Macrae flies home to southern climes, we thank him for his ministry in the Northern Synod.

## ***DMUC Consultation Team***



Mr Ross Champion, Rev Al Macrae, Rev Thresi Mauboy, Rev Janet Staines

# The Uniting Church in Australia congratulates the Roman Catholic Church on the election of Pope Leo XIV



The Uniting Church in Australia warmly congratulates the Roman Catholic Church on the historic election of Pope Leo XIV, the first pontiff born in the United States of America.

President of the Uniting Church in Australia Rev Charissa Suli stated,

"We pray that God will grant Pope Leo XIV the wisdom to lead with humility, the courage to walk with truth and love, and the grace to listen deeply to the cries of the earth and the hopes of all people."

To read the full statement click [here](#).

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## Enhancing Congregational Interest + Congregational GST



Our Congregational Treasurers are invited to attend a Zoom meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> May, with our finance team, regarding these important topics.



# CLINICAL PASTORAL EDUCATION

## Darwin/Adelaide based CPE unit

APPLY NOW FOR SEMESTER 2 2025



### What is Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE)?

CPE is an intensive and practical training program in pastoral/spiritual care using an action/reflection model of learning, supplemented with teaching sessions and reading. Participants will explore how to be present to others who are experiencing distress and how to offer grounded spiritual interventions informed by self-awareness, one's own faith background and best practice.

CPE consists of a minimum 400 hours of learning made up of:

200	hours of placement	90	hours of group work
10	hours of individual supervision	100	hours of reading, reflection and preparation

### Details

A **Darwin/Adelaide** based online CPE unit facilitated by Helen Vester, an experienced CPE Educator.

Dates: 3 July – 4 December 2025

Group work: Group days will be mostly Thursdays each week 9am-4:15pm (Darwin time). Exact days/dates available on request. Attendance at group days is compulsory as classes are not recorded.

Individual supervision: 10 hours of individual supervision are included. Times to be negotiated.

Placement: Average 10 hours/week.

Cost: \$2000 (If enrolled through the University of Divinity (UD), FEE Help is available and UD fees apply.)

**Helen Vester** (B Theol, MA(Theol), Grad Dip Ed, B Tech(Hons), Prov CPE Consultant, AAOS supervisor)

is an experienced CPE Educator and Professional Pastoral Supervisor based in Perth. She has a background as a high school teacher, prison and hospital chaplain. A Catholic layperson who embraces Ignatian spirituality and contemplative forms of prayer, Helen enjoys supporting people to develop their pastoral identity, grounded in their spiritual values. She also has a private practice offering professional supervision to clergy and others in pastoral roles. In her spare time Helen enjoys hiking, travelling and exploring Australia with her husband in their camper.



*Helen, I value your listening without judgement, your noticing and giving feedback with kindness and love. CPE Participant 2023*

Only six people can be accepted into this CPE program. Please direct your **enquiries** to:

CPE Centre Director: Rev Jensi Email: [Jensi@stand.org.au](mailto:Jensi@stand.org.au) Mob: 0409 516 857

CPE Educator: Helen Vester Email: [HelenVester99@gmail.com](mailto:HelenVester99@gmail.com) Mob: 0418 920 356





Hello Northern Synod Ministers and Employees,

I want to draw your attention to our Employee Well-being Provider TELUS Health. Here is a link to follow for more information: <https://www.telushealth.com/en-au>

There are many Employee benefits in this scheme, including up to six (6) counselling sessions per employee (or immediate family member), per year delivered via telephone, video or in person, webinars, critical incident response support, well-being information and access to TELUS Health One Wellbeing Platform with a free downloaded app.

It is worth a look at the scheme to see if there are supports for your work life and general well-being.

If you have any queries, please reach out.



**Uniting Church**  
SYNOD OF NSW & ACT

## Culture of Safety Training



**COMING  
SOON**

Thanks to Synod of NSW and ACT for  
facilitating training for the Northern Synod



## Safeguarding Elders

Webinar: Wednesday 21 May 11.00am - 12.00pm AEST

**About the topic:** Elder abuse is increasingly recognised as a problem in Australian society, and there is much still to be done to improve safeguarding awareness for this vulnerable population.

**Session details:** This will be a 60-minute webinar with time for questions and answers.

**Cost:**

ACSL Subscribers: \$32.50

Non-Subscribers: \$65.00

For more information or to register, click [here](#).

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MAY

- 8-10th West Arnhem Area Council meeting in Maningrida.
- Every Tuesday, Language and Culture 9am-10am at Uniting House
- Monday 19<sup>th</sup> Enhancing Congregational Interest
- Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> PPRC Meeting

JUN

- Every Tuesday Language and Culture 9am-10am at Uniting House
- Monday 9<sup>th</sup> King's Birthday Public Holiday - office closed.
- Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> PPRC Meeting