



UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA
Northern Synod

NORTHERN SYNOD NEWS

SEPTEMBER 2024

REV MICHELLE COOK & PASTOR MARRPALAWUY MARIKA
VISIT CANBERRA WITH OTHER CHRISTIAN LEADERS



Last month our Moderator-elect, Rev Dr Michelle Cook (far right) and Pastor Marrpalawuy Marika from Yirrkala (second from the right), visited Canberra joining others in the Micah Women Leaders Network which brings together established and emerging women Christian Leaders from across the Australian Church who have a heart for Biblical justice and the world's poor. The network is a point of connection, training and action, equipping women to be engaged in global justice advocacy through high-level meetings with Australia's federal politicians both in local electorates and Canberra. At this time the group was advocating for the overseas aid, currently 0.68% of the Federal Budget, to be increased to 1%.

More photos next page.

#Forasafeworldforall @micahchallenge

ACT JUSTLY, LOVE MERCY, WALK HUMBLLY WITH YOUR GOD

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

GUPAPUYŊU BIBLE TRANSLATION WORKSHOP IN DARWIN

Over the past few years, the translation of the Gupapuyngu New Testament has reawakened. The work began in the early 60's when Beulah Lowe worked with the Methodist Mission at Milingimbi. Aside from her other duties, Beulah trained and did translation work with the local Yolŋu. Then the work slept for many years. Recently Judy Ngalambirra has been gathering a team to complete the work. It's not a job to do on your own, but one that flourishes when people with different skill sets work together on a task they agree is very important.

5th - 16th of August 2024, Judy Ngalambirra, Sophia Yinakarrangarr, and Bruce and Glenys Waters met in Darwin for a translation work session; coming from Milingimbi, Ramingining, and Melbourne. Together they checked Bruce's back translation of Ngalambirra's draft of Mark, they revised places that needed improvement. Ngalambirra and Bruce showed Sophia how to use Adapt It and she began working independently on Matthew's gospel while Ngalambirra completed her first draft of 2 Timothy. Bruce also managed the computers and back up of work, while Glenys handled the logistics, layout of completed books and printing of drafts to go back to community members for reading and local checking.

The work is not done in isolation. It includes some of those who have worked with Beulah before, or their relatives. Some have drafted books, some are our living dictionaries and language authorities who help with words and checking for naturalness and accuracy.



There are prayer supporters who underpin this work, and funders who make it all possible. It's an amazing picture of the body of Christ at work – over time and in our time.

We are very grateful for the ongoing financial support and encouragement from Coordinate, to Nungalingya College for use of their accommodation and to AuSIL for a place to work - all working together to support the completion of the Gupapuyngu New Testament. Currently over 62% of the NT has been drafted. We are starting to prepare some of the books for consultant checking and eventual publication. There is still much to do. We would appreciate your ongoing prayers and support.

Louise Macdonald



Casuarina Uniting Church has been without a minister for some time, so when former members, Rev Naomi and Rev Marty Rosenberg, offered to come for a period of supply, the offer was joyfully accepted.

The Rosenbergs were productive, embracing involvement in all areas of church life, including running craft groups on Saturdays.



Precocious puppet, George, entertained all with his endless questions about God and the Christian life.

Marty blessed the congregation by pulling out their Resource Centre's water-damaged kitchen and installing a new flat-pack kitchen. It looks beautiful!

Marty and Naomi have returned to their home in SA, and they will be sorely missed.

THANKING GOD FOR FAITHFUL SUPPLY MINISTERS

Since retiring, Rev George and Bernadette Woodward have been coming to the Northern Synod for many years to provide much-needed supply ministry.

Having recently driven from their home in Queensland the Woodwards will spend some time with Nightcliff Uniting Church. We appreciate their willingness to serve the Northern Synod in this way.



A VISIT TO GALIWIN'KU AND YIRRKALA



Uniting Church at Yirrkala

In August, the NRCC Resource Worker, Rev Peter Hobson and NRCC Admin Officer, David Forsyth, visited Yirrkala and Galiwin'ku, in order to inspect various NRCC properties, and meet with community leaders. This was a productive and illuminating visit, helping to inform the NRCC Property Strategy 2025-2030.

The NRCC is responsible for a number of buildings across the

Norther Synod that are built on land owned and managed by First Peoples. And even though the church may have built and maintained properties over many decades, and be 'legally responsible' in relation to insurance, rates and utilities, the 'ownership' of these buildings is often determined by ongoing occupancy and community sentiment. Many of our buildings are used and occupied by mission partners, or community workers. People living in these communities can sometimes mistakenly assume that these buildings do not belong to NRCC. And so, when buildings are vacated, ongoing ownership can sometimes be contested.

NRCC properties are often in very remote areas that have significant environmental, infrastructure and social challenges. This means that repairs and maintenance can be very expensive, and contractors, tradies, equipment and resources are not always readily available. Developing relationships with mission partners and community leaders can be very important in order to work collaboratively in relation to property management.

Vandalism and safety can also be a significant concern in some remote areas. Again, maintaining and strengthening relationships with community leaders is really important.

This was a timely and informative visit - a time of strengthening relationships - as we seek to work together, serving our communities, to the glory of God.



A property at Galiwin'ku, vacant for some time and in need of significant maintenance



UAICC members from across the country attended the State Memorial service of Rev Dr Gondarra OAM

During the last week in August (26-29), the NRCC Executive met for the first time in 2024. It was a wonderful time of worship, Christian fellowship, and strategic decision-making. We also had visits from Rev Mark Kickett, (National Chairperson of the United Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress), Rob Floyd (National Director of Frontier Services), as well as members of the Northern Synod Leadership Team: Rev Janet Staines (General Secretary,) and Reg Gulley, (Executive Finance Officer). The NRCC Executive elected a Deputy Chairperson (Jamie Nyangu from APY Lands) and discussed policies relating to governance, ministry, and property and finance, as well as beginning a process of strategic planning to prepare for the future. We also attended the State Memorial Service for Rev Dr Gondarra OAM, and members of the NRCC Executive participated in the special service.



The State Memorial Service for Rev Dr Gondarra, held at Nungalinga College on 29th August 2024, was a beautiful time of sharing and celebration of a life well-lived.

If you would like to view the livestream, please use this link.

[Rev Dr Gondarra OAM on Livestream](#)



Rev Jack Goodluck:

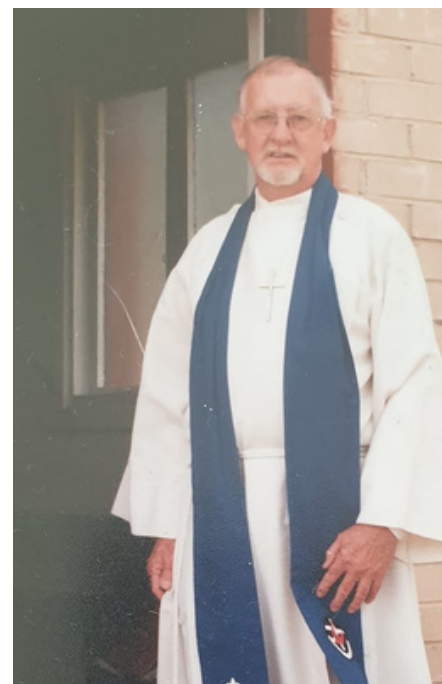
A celebration of life

The Synod offers sincere condolences to the Goodluck family on the passing of Rev Jack Goodluck on the 11th August 2024. A celebration of Life was held for Jack at Noarlunga Uniting Church on Friday 23rd August 2024, led by Rev Ken Sumner. Rev Jack Goodluck had a profound influence on the life of the Northern Synod, in his ministry placements and as a founding member of Nungalinga College. Rev Felicity and Howard Amery represented the Northern Synod at the Celebration. Here are some words from Felicity's reflection:

'The last time we saw Jack, was here in this church. It was the SA Synod's celebration and thanksgiving for Jack's 60 years of Ordination. It was a joy to be part of that celebration. My first memory of Jack and Peg was from Croker Island. Croker is about 200km northeast of Darwin and I arrived one hot day in January 1979 to be a school teacher at Mamaruni School. Fresh out of teachers' college, and with little knowledge of mission history in that part of the country... Over the pursuing months my wonderful and extraordinary Team Teacher, Molly Yarrngu, would unravel the trauma and tragedy that had been the Croker Island Children's Home for Stolen Generation children... Jack and Peg and their young family had left just over a decade before I arrived... Jack had been ordained by the church and sent to Croker Island to be the Superintendent Minister. For Jack and Peg, going to Croker, was responding to God's call. In those years profound changes happened for Jack, for the Methodist, then the United Church of Northern Australia, now the Uniting Church, and to our understanding of mission. Jack arrived to be in-charge of the Mission but came away with an understanding of people connected to land and language.

He arrived a minister and left an educator, profoundly impacted by what people on Croker had taught him. People like Dick Malwagu, Rev Lazarus Lamilami and many others. He joined their teaching with the writings of liberation theologian and educator Paulo Friere. Jack learned that 'in order to teach others, you have to learn and be educated by those you seek to teach'.

When I arrived on Croker, there were not many Jack stories, but it was clear Jack was a very different Superintendent. I would reconnect with Jack's legacy when I met Tony and Margie on Croker in 1980 and then again when Jack and Peg arrived in Darwin by train to attend the 40th Anniversary of Nungalinga College in 2014 while I was Dean of Uniting Church students.



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Jack and Peg had seen the end of what we knew as the 'mission error' and the closing of the Children's Home on Croker. But God was far from finished with them. In Darwin, Jack, in a very transforming style would take on some community education and leadership training for indigenous church leaders and his vision and passion to build an education facility for Aboriginal people, that would become Nungalinga College, was born."



The Pilgrim Presbytery of Northern Australia is meeting 4th – 5th October and holding a Ministers and Pastors Retreat 7th – 9th October in Darwin. Sunday 6th is 'off' so Ministers/Pastors/Participants can either lead their regular service, or visit a local congregation, or just take a breath.

We are grateful to Rev Dr Sunny Chen, a passionate educator and the Assembly National Consultant, who stepped in at short notice to lead our meetings and retreat. As well as a lecturer and honorary researcher at the University of Divinity, Rev Dr Sunny Chen has been chairing the Ministerial Education Board for the past six years.



The theme, *The Better Part*, comes from Luke 10:42 "Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her."

We look forward to a refreshing time together.





EVERY CONVERSATION MATTERS

Speak up – and speak together – about how every child in every community can safely belong, grow and flourish.

1st-7th September, marks National Child Protection Week across Australia. The first Sunday in September is recognised in the Uniting Church as Child Safe Sunday. We encourage everyone to reflect on how we can be a safe church for all people so that all people, including children and vulnerable people, may live life in all its fullness.

In recognition of this week, the Uniting Church Assembly and National Safe Church Unit have released a new poster inspired by this year's theme, 'Every conversation matters' – an encouragement to speak up and speak together about what needs to happen so that every child in every community can safely grow and flourish.

MEETING DATES IN SEPTEMBER

- **Placements and Pastoral Relations Committee** - Thursday 12th September
- **Finance and Property Services Committee** - Wednesday 25th September
- **Synod Standing Committee** - Friday 27th and Saturday 28th September

Join us for devotions

We share fortnightly devotions at Uniting House every second Tuesday at 10am. We would love you to come and join us.

UPCOMING DATES: 17TH SEPTEMBER, 1ST OCTOBER, 15 OCTOBER



INCLUDES WEEKLY NARRATIVE LECTIONARY READINGS

With Love to the World is a daily Bible reading resource, written and produced within the Uniting Church in Australia. For many decades it has followed the Revised Common Lectionary. As from September this year, it will be including the main Narrative Lectionary reading each Monday, along with a short commentary on the passage. This is an important step in the development of the resource, to cater specifically for preachers who are now using this lectionary.

With Love to the World shows the breadth

and variety of voices within Scripture, inviting people to hear the stories telling of hope and disappointment, suffering and redemption. In all these varied contexts, we find God dealing with the complexities of human life.

The Creation 2024 issue of With Love to the World is currently making its way to subscribers. It features a striking cover: an original artwork by Howard Wallace, a calligrapher and former Professor of Old Testament. The image, Faith and Flora, offers an Australian version of a "still life" painting, which was a style that flourished in the Dutch Golden Age of the early 17th century. "Let it be a reminder", he writes, "that our own bush and flora can be ways of keeping our faith before us".

This issue of With Love to the World has contributors from across Australia, with people of Anglo and Asian heritage, reflecting the diversity of the church and indeed of multicultural Australia. Alongside the commentary on a daily passage of scripture, there is a prayer, a song suggestion, a psalm for the day, and a question for discussion. The resource is produced by the Uniting Church in Australia.

You can subscribe to With Love to the World on your phone or iPad via an App, for a subscription of \$28 per year. Search for With Love to the World on the App Store, or UCA—With Love to the World on Google Play. For the hard copy resource, for just \$28 for a year's subscription, email Trevor at wlwuca@bigpond.com or phone +61 (2) 9747-1369.

Rev Dr John Squires