



UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA
Northern Synod

NORTHERN SYNOD NEWS

JANUARY 2025

HAPPY CHRISTMAS FROM SYNOD OFFICE



Pre-Christmas is always really busy in Darwin as we rush to get things done before the Christmas shut-down and before people travel to family down-south. It was certainly the case this year in Synod Office.

We reviewed our cyclone plan, and our General Secretary was cracking the whip regarding de-cluttering our office space. Some of my colleagues approached the task with irritating gusto and, unfortunately, they kept finding things of importance and bringing them to my office. Now my office looks worse than when we started, and a sharp contrast to others which look neat and tidy, ready for another year of work.

To conclude the year, we brought food to share in a Christmas lunch. It was a wonderful feast including prawns and mangos and build-your-own pavlovas. Franco impressed us with some delicious Peruvian specialities.

We are looking forward to the new year, and building on the good foundations established in 2024.



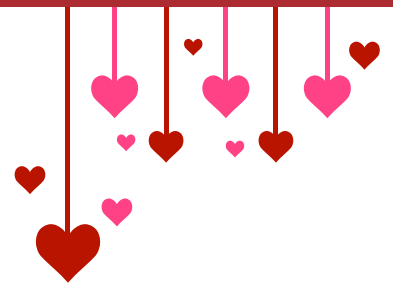
Its a drawing about love!

Life is full on joys and sorrows, and this is especially true in the remote Western Australian community of Mowanjam.

Recent deaths prompted pastors to lead the community in a 'Blue Christmas' service, leading to the writing of beautiful prayers.

These photos, taken the Sunday before Christmas, as the community gathered to worship and share a meal. Sixteen children eagerly participated in the service, drawing what they know about love.

Let's uphold Mowanjam, and all our churches in remote places, in prayer, asking God's blessing, and that he strengthen our Pastors, and those who minister to others, that they may continue to live out the love that God has shown us through Jesus Christ.



Happy
Christmas
from
Mowanjam



Pastors Gail Cresswell and Kirsty Burgu (back row) with elders, supporting the community.



THANKYOU

A big thank you to Broome Uniting Church for their support which allowed Rev George and Bernadette Woodward to travel to Mowanjam to attend a funeral in November. The church provided use of the manse and car, and extended a warm welcome and fellowship to George and Bernadette.

George and Bernadette, and the Northern Synod, wish to convey their appreciation to Broome Uniting Church.

Farewell

SONDRA



After just over three years in Dec 2024, Sondra Lowing left Alice Springs and her position as the Administrator and Property Manager of the Alice Springs Uniting Church. This is a massive role including oversight of our many properties, our volunteers, our office and community engagement. However, for Sondra it was not just a job, it was a ministry and she did it with efficiency, generosity and grace. As on Sunday morning, during the week the Alice Springs Uniting Church is a hive of

activity living out our mission “to be a welcoming sanctuary for travellers, a reconciling community, a church caring in its community in the name of Christ.”

Sondra seemed to have almost bottomless energy and patience. Despite a never-ending to-do list, she always made time for everyone, including people dropping into the office for a foodbank voucher, shower or just a cuppa. She saw the best in people and brought it out in them. She was innovative, constantly coming up with ideas about how to make things better, and then actually doing them. She always followed through what she said she is going to do. I feel like everything around the church looks and feels better and is running more smoothly than when she started, and I am just so unbelievably grateful to her and to God for all that she has done. The fact that she was available at the time she was to step into this role still feels like something only God could have made happen.

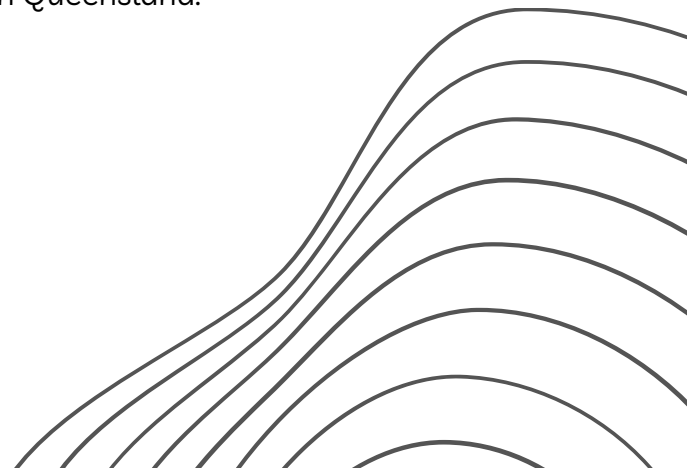
Over the past three years we have seen Sondra’s confidence, faith and leadership capacity grow and I trust she will take this with her. The ASUC wish her so many blessings in her future endeavours.

We ask for the Synod’s prayers for the ASUC as we search for her replacement, and for Sondra and her family as they settle into life in North Queensland.

Rev. Emily Hayes

Minister

Alice Spring Uniting Church



CASUARINA UNITING CHURCH INVITES YOU TO JOIN US TO CELEBRATE THE INDUCTION OF

Rev Vilianni Mila + + +
+ + +

Friday
7PM



45 Vanderlin Drive Wanguri

JAN

31st

2025



The CEO of ARDS, Mr Ben Grimes (right), attended the NRCC Executive Council meeting in November 2024. He is pictured here with Rev Dr Peter Hobson (NRCC Resource Worker) and Mr Howard Amery (Research Support Person).

TENNANT CREEK UNITING CHURCH

INVITES YOU TO JOIN US TO CELEBRATE
THE COMMISSIONING OF

Pastor Amy Lasslett

Sunday
10AM



FEB

9th

2025

Tennant Creek Uniting Church
58/60 Paterson Street Tennant Creek



To mark the 50th anniversary of Cyclone Tracy, an ecumenical service was held at the Catholic Cathedral in Darwin.

There were representatives from Anglican, Lutheran, Catholic, Salvation Army and Uniting Church - our own Rev Vicki Aitken and Moderator Rev Tony Goodluck.

It was a moving service with a focus on God's blessings and the resilience of the survivors.

JANUARY 19, 2025



UNITING ABORIGINAL AND ISLANDER
CHRISTIAN CONGRESS



Uniting Church in Australia
Assembly



DAY OF MOURNING

From the UCA Assembly website:

For 30 years the Uniting Church has been in Covenant with the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress (UAICC). Made in honesty about our history and in hope for the future, the Covenant commits us to work for a just church and nation.

Bound together by shared faith, witness and a dream for God's justice and healing, we walk together as First and Second Peoples, sharing in solidarity, joy and sorrow on the path to reconciliation.

As part of this enduring commitment and in this spirit, you're invited to mark the Uniting Church Day of Mourning on Sunday 19 January.

Since 2019 the Uniting Church has marked a Day of Mourning on the Sunday before 26 January to reflect on the dispossession and ongoing injustices faced by Australia's First Peoples, acknowledge our shared history and renew our commitment to justice and healing.

The 2025 Day of Mourning liturgy and resource is now available. Click [here](#) for more information and to find resources.



This beautiful image by Guwa Koa and Kuku Yalanji woman **Zoe Belle** is one of the official artworks for the 2025 Uniting Church Day of Mourning on Sunday 19 January.

Zoe writes:

"These artworks depict the story of Christ's presence being amongst First Peoples of these lands of his creation for generations. His teachings have long been known within the stories, songs, dances and ceremony First Peoples have used to connect with God as great Creator and teacher for our communities."

I just want to help.

SAFE CHURCH INFORMATION SESSION

Are we getting it right?

Can we keep it simple for everyone!

ON ZOOM
MONDAY 10TH FEBRUARY 7PM-8.30PM

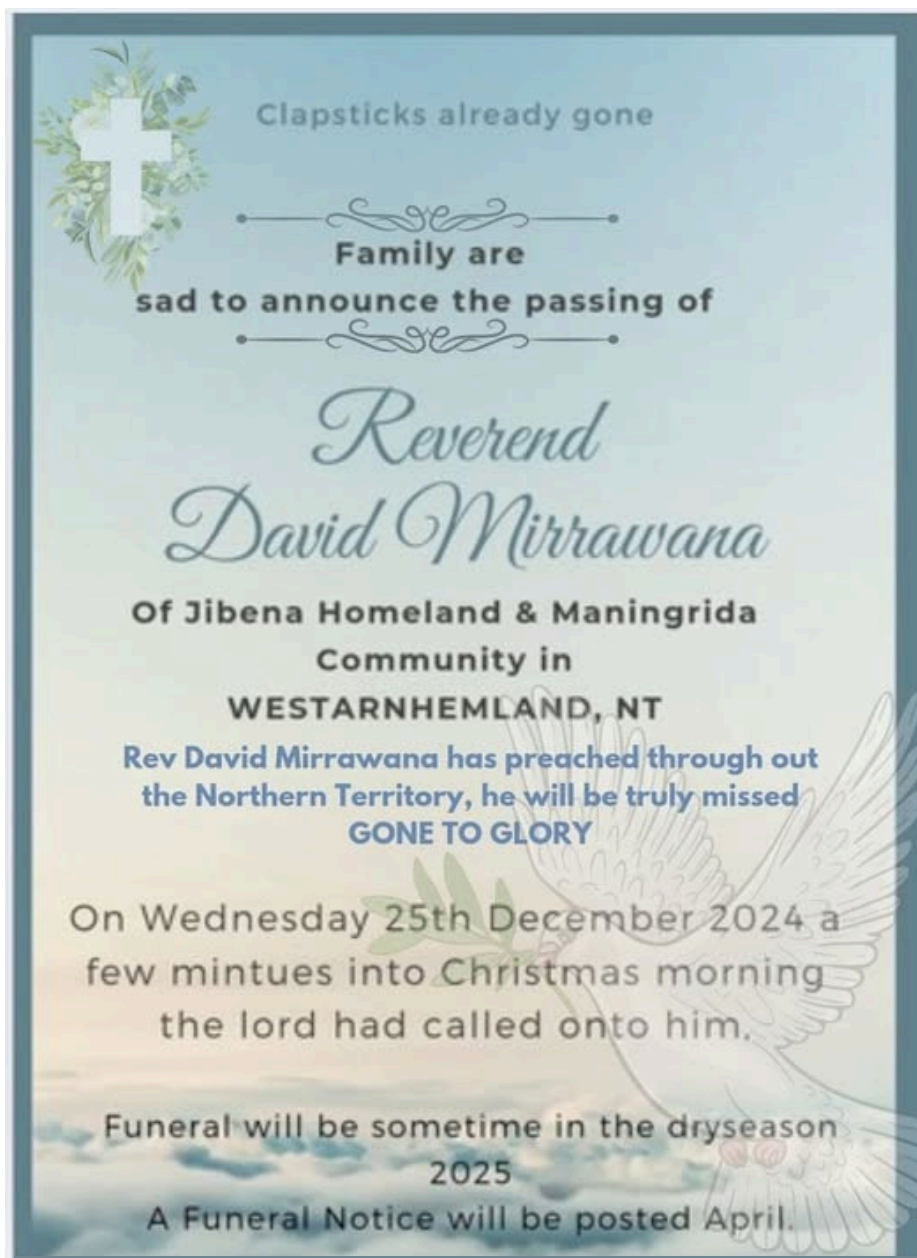
- Responsibilities of Church Councils and Ministers to create Safe Churches
- Volunteering in the regulatory compliance space?
- Managing complex legal requirements in an easy-to-understand way
- Supporting the well-being of vulnerable people
- Keeping people safe in high-risk activities

Church is a place for finding connection, meaning and support.

Safe places & safe people

To register phone 08 8982 3400

or email: heidi.mckelvie@ns.uca.org.au



Clapsticks already gone

Family are sad to announce the passing of

Reverend David Mirrawana

Of Jibena Homeland & Maningrida Community in WESTARNHEMLAND, NT

Rev David Mirrawana has preached through out the Northern Territory, he will be truly missed
GONE TO GLORY

On Wednesday 25th December 2024 a few mintues into Christmas morning the lord had called onto him.

Funeral will be sometime in the dryseason 2025
A Funeral Notice will be posted April.

John Bottomley, *Money Talks: Capitalist Ethics, Colonialism and Divine Governance*, Bayswater: Coventry Press, 2022 (ISBN: 9781922589156)

A book review by Matthew Anslow

If money talks, what it says seems profoundly consequential, though many of us are not conversant in its language. It seems fitting, then, that *Money Talks* is the title of John Bottomley's excellent series of studies on capitalist ethics and colonialism. Bottomley's studies invite us to consider what money might be saying and to listen to its conversation with other important and interested voices.

The book is composed of a series of small group studies. It is

not an academic treatise, but a group activity for laypeople, featuring readings, questions for reflection and discussion, and prayers. As such, *Money Talks* is not an attempt to break new theological or economic ground, but rather to aid the task of Christian discipleship as it pertains to the world of finance.

Study One explores the connections between ethics and vocation within the context of capitalism, using the story of Jesus' temptation (Luke 4) as a starting point for considering our own ethical framework in contrast to the market ethics inherent within capitalism.

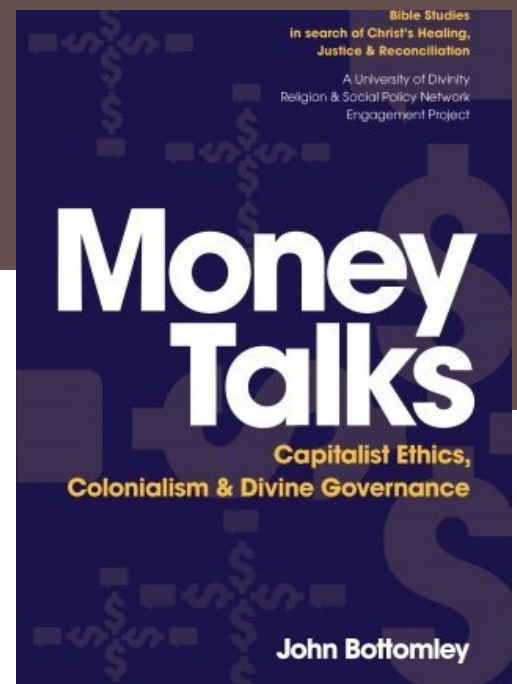
Study Two focuses on Jesus' rebuke of Herod's corruption (Luke 13:31-35), asking readers to contemplate the corruption and oppression they see and experience in their work, as well as the roles of lament and whistleblowing in the struggle for justice.

Study Three uses Jesus' words on coming judgement (Luke 13:1-9) to encourage reflection on imagination and repentance. Bottomley explores the importance of acknowledging colonial idolatry and listening to Indigenous voices.

Study Four uses Luke's Parable of the Lost Son (Luke 15) to explore covetousness (qua sin against God and neighbour) and restorative justice. Bottomley considers how the covetousness inherent in colonial capitalism's approach to the world has led to environmental ruin and economic inequality. He suggests The Uluru Statement from the Heart might represent a voice yearning and hoping for a change of heart, much like the father in the parable.

Study Five uses the story of Mary's anointing of Jesus (John 12:1-8) to reflect on love and solidarity in the shadow of death. Here, the testimonies from workers in the financial sector, outlining instances of attempted suicide on account of the pressures, alienation, and abuses of power within the industry, are particularly poignant.

Talking about money is, as Bottomley's introduction notes, a social taboo. But the questions asked by Bottomley's book are important and these studies are well worth a look, particularly for those in the Australian context.



MONDAY 3RD FEBRUARY – FRIDAY 7TH FEBRUARY 2025

HERITAGE, THEOLOGY AND POLITY OF THE UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA INTENSIVE

NUNGALINYA COLLEGE

TOPICS INCLUDE:

- The Basis of Union
- The Covenant Relationship
- Ministry in the Uniting Church
- The Polity of the Uniting Church
- The denominational history of the UCA
- The practice of Sacraments – Baptism & Communion
- The Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice for Ministers in the UCA
- The Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress Covenant



REGISTER NOW

**Phone: 08 8982 3400
or email**

PPNA email: admin@ns.uca.org.au

NRCC email: nrccadmin@ns.uca.org.au

JAN

- **20th - 24th** Transition Training Remote Indigenous Ministries (TTRIM)
- **Tuesday 21st** Uniting House Devotions at 10am all welcome
- **Friday 31st** Induction of Viliami Mila

FEB

- **3rd - 7th** Heritage, Theology and Polity of the UCA Intensive
- **Tuesday 4th** Uniting House Devotions at 10am all welcome
- **Sunday 9th** Commissioning and Induction of Amy Lasslett
- **Tuesday 18th** Uniting House Devotions at 10am all welcome
- **Wednesday 19th** FAPS meeting
- **Friday 21st & Saturday 22nd** SSC face-to-face meeting