The Westerly

PRESBYTERY OF PORT PHILLIP WEST

PPW & PWW Newsletter No.69 – May 2025

Presbytery of Western Victoria

Meetings make a difference

Good leadership requires good meetings. Unfortunately, this reality can often be buried underneath our negative feelings about church administration. God called us into ministry so we can do pastoral care, work for justice, proclaim the gospel as preachers and teachers, etc. — who wants to sit through meetings all week?

Years ago, Louis Weeks, president emeritus of Union Presbyterian Seminary, acknowledged that administration is often regarded as "scutwork," the work nobody wants to do. He tried to recast the administrative responsibilities of the church in a more positive light. Scutwork, he argued, is an essential part of a flourishing ministry. Someone has to plan the worship service so the music, prayers and message are presented with intention. Someone has to schedule maintenance to ensure the congregation is a good steward of its facilities.

This brings us to meetings. It may be helpful to think about the opportunity they offer you to do ministry in a more faithful way. For example, they provide an excellent opportunity to work through conflict. When we avoid meetings because of conflict, the conflict festers and becomes even more difficult to manage. Hosting a hospitable meeting with the affected parties can lead to reconciliation and a better working relationship.

Meetings also create space to invite participation and solicit genuine input. Having a planned conversation with a staff member, church volunteer or ministry group lets them know that what they have to say is important. When leaders use the agenda to foster dialogue, people will know that leaders care about what they have to say, and they will tell the leader what they really think.

Administrative and ministry meetings are an opportunities to build relationships and foster collaboration. In a culture that is hyper-focused on efficiency, it doesn't take long to lose people's confidence with meetings that don't seem relevant. I've learned to make every effort to start the meeting on time and to communicate clearly when you want the meeting to end. In this respect, a good meeting is like a good sermon. It needs to have an organized starting point and a definite conclusion. Also, like a good sermon, good meetings require preparation. **Do your homework. Bring relevant information. Ask generative questions. And it never hurts to bring snacks.**

Manual for Meetings 2025 version explains UCA meeting procedure.

Meeting Together workbook Downloadable version explains the ethos of the Uniting Church designed for committees of the church to read a section a month. Video available: Meeting Together Resources Launch on Vimeo

Meetings Make a Difference

Meeting Together

We believe that meetings can be rewarding, enjoyable and worthwhile, whether the issues that we face together are large or small. The Meeting Together workbook will assist ***Church Councils, Committees and groups*** in the Uniting Church to work more collaboratively, to understand the role of their group and leadership in the wider life of the church, and to deal with poor behaviour in meetings.

It can help to build the capacity in our members to meet and work together well, to respect and listen to one another, and to value each person's voice. It looks at the Scriptures and what we believe, the Basis of Union, the Manual for Meetings, and other resources. The booklet includes 14 short sections that can each be used to start discussion, plus resources for community building. These resources are an invitation to pause from what we do, and to have conversations about why and how we meet.

Meeting Together workbook Downloadable version & Imago Vita cards.
Launch Video available: Meeting Together Resources Launch on Vimeo

From the Editor: If you missed an edition of The Westerly see Newsletters – Presbytery of Port Phillip West (ucappw.org.au). Rev Linley Liersch Linley.Liersch@ppw.victas.uca.org.au.
Please click links or pictures for hyperlinks.

Next edition submissions 27th May 2024 .

Self Care Matters

MINISTRY AGENTS RETREAT— VICTAS-WIDE EVENT

22ND MAY 9:30—4pm

Altona Trinity UCA — 7 Seves St, Altona VIC 3018

Retreat Leader: Julie McDonald BETHel CentreCo-ordinator / Counsellor

"I appreciate the unique challenges associated with ministry and within church communities. The privilege of my work at Bethel is supporting each person to voice their thoughts and feelings, and to tell their own story in their own way."

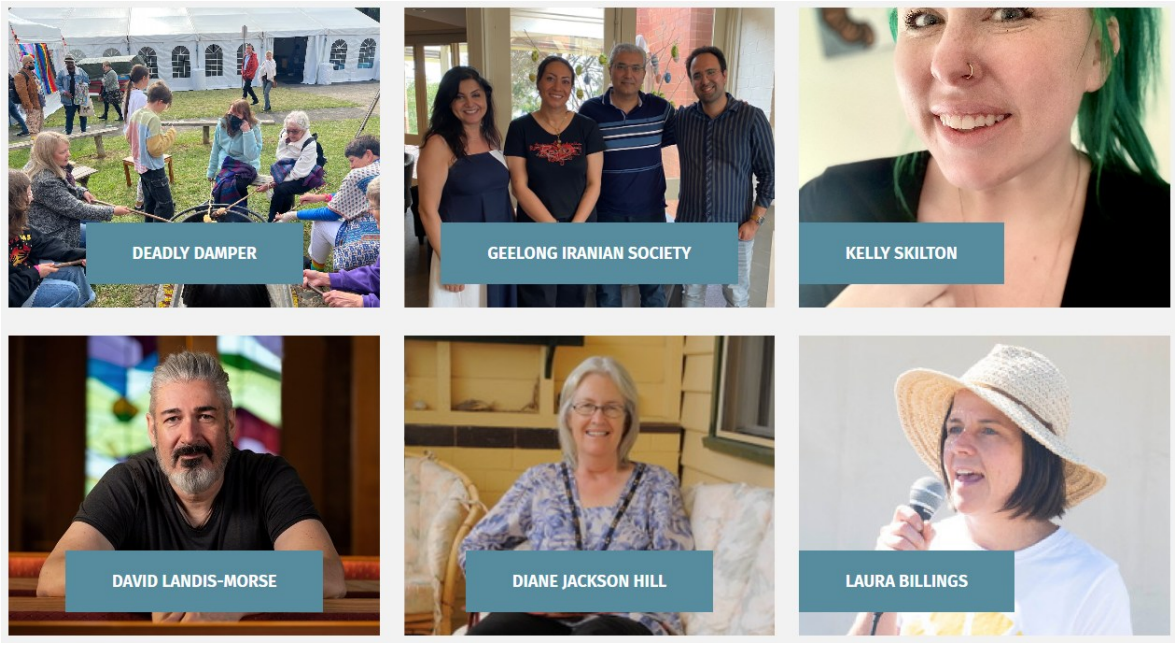
The focus of this retreat will be reflecting on our self care.
These times are important for you to engage with your colleagues,
to support each other and for you to have time for your own spiritual wellbeing.

MBAs and payroll

An online event hosted by Rev Sharon Hollis and Michelle Ennis outlining information on MBAs and payroll will be held on Thursday, May 8 from 11am–12pm.

VIEW EVENT DETAILS

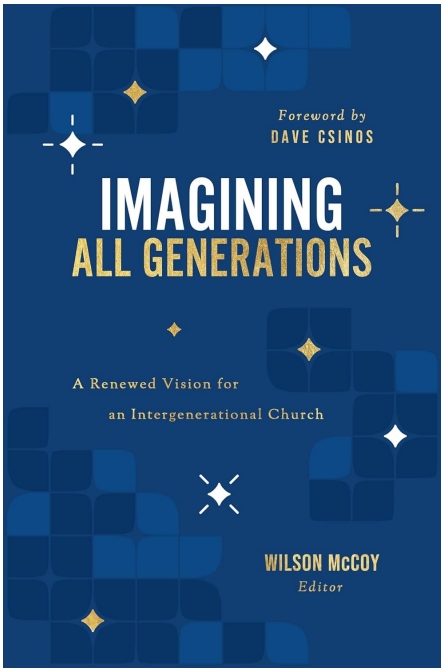
A weekend of diversity and inclusion under one roof. Sacrededge brings Artists, Musicians and Storytellers together into a unique community over the Sacrededge weekend. Conversation and deep listening, music, stories and dance, art and ocean labyrinth, food and fun, concerts and workshops… with indigenous, refugee, environmental, LGBTIQA+ and disability advocates, all with their own particular spiritual focus.



BOOK REVIEW:

Imagining All Generations

A Renewed Vision for an Intergenerational Church



Many churches today face worry and concern over their collective future. One tragic consequence is that growing anxiety can turn inward on communities of faith. A subtle distancing and dividing can occur, often happening along generational lines. Us-versus-Them thinking morphs into Old-versus-Young. Instead of a culture of generation to generation, churches are shaped and formed more by a culture of generation versus generation. Imagining All Generations offers a better, more faithful way forward by remembering our identity as the generational people of God. This volume features nineteen authors from around the world, providing fresh theological reflection, innovative practical wisdom, and a unified call for all churches to move into a more intergenerational future by answering four key questions:

What theology and theory support an intergenerational vision of the church?

What are researchers and practitioners learning about how to meaningfully bring together different generations in communities of faith?

How can churches better share faith among various age groups within their congregation?

How might we reimagine worship as a time and place where every generation brings a valuable contribution ?

Fundamentals of Transitional Ministry

is a 3-day program designed to give participants an introduction to the key concepts and practices of ministering with congregations and agencies in times of transition.

While it is a stand-alone program, it is also the first phase of training that leads to being qualified as an Intentional Interim Minister. Thus, it is useful in itself for anyone in lay or ordained ministry, and also for those exploring whether they are called to Intentional Interim Ministry.

This initial three-day course is especially helpful for:

- People in Presbytery leadership roles
- People in the latter half of Third Phase of Ministry
- Ministers intending to do significant amounts of supply
- Ministers moving from chaplaincy/agency roles into congregational ministry
- Ministers in placements going through significant transitions, such as looking for new mission directions, contemplating combining/closing, moving to resource ministry.

Walk for Truth

Listen Deeply

Yoorrook Justice Commission is inviting people to be part of the Walk for Truth from Portland to Parliament. Yoorrook Deputy Chair Travis Lovett, Kerrupmara Gunditjmara, will walk from Portland, where colonisation began, to Parliament, where we can transform the future. Starting on Sunday 25 May on Gunditjmara Country at **Portland**, the Walk will travel through communities including **Warrnambool**, **Colac**, **Geelong** and **Footscray**, finishing at **Parliament House** on Wednesday 18 June. Along the way there will be opportunities for people to join the Walk and attend community events. This powerful journey aims to bring everyone together to walk toward truth, celebrate the strength and resistance of Aboriginal people, and be proud to have the oldest living culture in the world as ours. To find out more, including dates and details of specific legs and community events, register to join the **Walk for Truth.**

Lay Preacher Studies in 2025

PILGRIM THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

Semester 2 - **Exploring Christology** -7 July to 22 September https://victas.uca.org.au/exploring-christology/

Semester 3 **- Exploring Preaching in the UCA** - 13 October to 24 November - $30 https://victas.uca.org.au/exploring-preaching-in-the-uca/

Semester 1 - **Understanding the Lay Preachers Code of Ethics**—10 June to 24 June - $20 https://victas.uca.org.au/understanding-the-lay-preacher-code-of-ethics/

Retired Minister's Gatherings—Pascoe Vale RSL

Venue: Pascoe Vale RSL, 40 Cumberland Rd Pascoe Vale 3044

Time: 12:00 – till 13:30 Friday 23rd May 2025

This is for those of us who are retired or in the process of retiring to have lunch together and share a little of the journey. We gather in an informal way to catch up on how everyone's going and what we're up to. New members welcome.

So if you're interested, can you please let me know your RSVP by email before 5pm Tuesday 18th February mark@dunn.id.au This is essential for a lunch booking.

State Youth Games

The State Youth Games are coming up in June. If you'd like your youth group to join in with our team, contact Kelly Woods from the Younger Generations team by **email**.

June 7-10 • Warragul VIC

CLICK TO JOIN OUR SYG TEAM

Events

2nd—4th May	**Sacred Edge Rego** @ Queenscliff UCA (page 4)
6th, 13th, 20th	**Fundamentals in Transition Ministry Congregation** Rego
8th May	**MBA's & Payroll** Rego Rev. Sharon Hollis Associate Gen Sec of VicTas
15th May	**Wesley Conversations: The Ethics of AI & Human Rights** @Wesley Place Londsdale St.
18th May	**Record and Work of Care—Bronwen Pike AM** @ Robert.renton@bigpond.com for link
22nd May	**Ministry Agents Retreat—Self Care** Rego Julie McDonald (Bethel Co-ord / Counsellor) @ Altona Trinity UCA
23rd May	**RAAF Band** @ Wesley Uniting Church
26th May	**National Sorry Day** Link
27th May—3rd June	**National Week of Reconciliation** Link
3rd June	**Mabo Day** Link
June 1st—8th	**Week of Prayer for Christian Unity** Resources
June 7 – 10	**State Youth Games**