

From the Minister

A warm spring greetings to you all! Would you believe that we've almost come to the end of the Spring season. And in few weeks' time we will close the Church calendar and begin our Advent season.

While some of you have enjoyed some travelling or other exciting activities, I am aware that some of you may have been confined with some health issues. Unfortunately, I too have been dealing with some nasty viral infections these last few weeks, which thankfully are now much improving.

In the last few Sundays, we have reflected a lot on the big lesson about faith in our worship services. We began with the disciples' request on obtaining greater faith, and reflected that faith is not something we get externally, but it is coming from us internally. It is a gift of God that has been given from the first day of creation and we exercise it as we go through life. However, like the rest of our body, we need to nurture our faith and keep it healthy as secular culture; past experiences and misleading understanding fuelled with fear and anxiety can weakened our faith even in smallest things, like having a faith in people's kindness and God's daily providence. So, it is important to keep our faith alive and healthy.

God also invites us to continue living with persistence and resilience even in the hardest moments in by faithfully doing what we are called to do – caring and serving others, being a light to others without ceasing.

God is happy with
our mustard seed size faith

I think in all of these reflections, there is this beautiful reminder that God only invites us to be whoever we are in current moment without extra pressures of expectations. God is happy with our mustard seed size faith. God is happy with us even if what we can only do is to sit at home and read the Bible, gently caring for ourselves and our nearest and dearest in our own capacity. Through all those reading, God wanted to take the pressure of us: the pressures of being the perfect disciples who always have everything under control. Also the pressure of worrying about our future knowing that God always sees us.

This month I have the pleasure to sit down with Evelyn Hanson through pastoral conversations as she will confirm her faith in a Confirmation Service on Sunday, 7th December 2025. Evelyn had been baptised as a child by her own request, but due to various circumstances she have never had a chance to confirm her faith as an adult. With this Confirmation, she would officially affirm her faith that has been nurtured for over 80 years in a special service. I may also say that Evelyn has shown us an example that there has never an age limit for Baptism and Confirmation in the church as it is a personal statement of faith.

As for prayer, let us continue to pray for Heather and Alan Wynne as they continue their recovery process. May we continue to uphold each other in prayer and care as we nurture our faith and church that God has called us to be.

Amen.

Kharis Abadani

Zoom in to worship

Our in-person worship services are also available via Zoom 10am Sundays.

To join simply copy or click on this link: <https://zoom.us/j/4111712080>

Passcode uevX6a

To join in using your phone only, call 7018 2005 and when prompted enter Meeting ID 4111 712 080 # #

To mute/unmute yourself press *6



Thank you, Anneke

Over the past few years we have been extremely fortunate to have been regularly led in worship on the fourth Sunday of the month by our Presbytery Minister, Rev Anneke Oppewal. Alas, the increasing demands of the Presbytery on Sundays means that she will not be able to visit us as regularly in 2026.

The support she has provided has been amazing and we are immensely grateful.

Thank you indeed, Anneke.



Hampton Uniting Church



17 Service Street Hampton VIC 3188

www.hamptonunitingchurch.wix.com/hampton-ucca

WORSHIP Sundays 10am

SUPPLY MINISTER:

Zoom <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/4111712080> Passcode uevX6a

Kharis Abadani
0402 084 230

rev.k.abadani@gmail.com

CHURCH COUNCIL CHAIR:

Ian Menzies
12 Littlewood Street
Hampton, 3188
0403 727 080

menzies.ian.robe@gmail.com

CHURCH COUNCIL SECRETARY:

Margaret Ackland
2/136 Linacre Rd
Hampton, 3188
0429 136 629 or 9598 0190

margackland@bigpond.com

NUCH EDITOR: Ian Menzies

dayspringcontact@hotmail.com

Believing is Seeing

Every day until 14th November an exhibition of Icons and Religions Art of the Uniting Church Icon Schools will be open at the Centre for Theology and Ministry, College Crescent, Parkville. This free exhibition is well worth a visit if you are in the vicinity, and includes three icons written by our own Sue Dowling.



Christmas Dinner

Following the worship service on Sunday 7th December we will be holding our annual Christmas Dinner.

All are welcome, but for catering purposes please let Margaret Ackland or Ian Menzies know of your intention to attend and any dietary requirements.



The suggested donation is \$10, with proceeds going as usual to the Christmas Bowl Appeal.



The Year of Matthew – Lectionary 2025-26

As President of the Uniting Church in Australia, my theme for these three years is “Threads of Love – Weaving Christ’s Love Across Cultures and Boundaries.”

This theme captures what I see and hear as I travel among our communities: Christ at work across difference, drawing us together in hope.



threads of love
WEAVING CHRIST'S LOVE ACROSS
CULTURES & BOUNDARIES

Year A of the Revised Common Lectionary invites us into that same story as we walk alongside Jesus through the Gospel of Matthew. Matthew’s account speaks directly to communities seeking to live faithfully in complex times.

It is a gospel rooted in Scripture and tradition, yet radically open to the new work of God in Christ. Written for a diverse and often pressured community, Matthew weaves together a story of Jesus as Emmanuel – “God with us” – from his birth to the promise of his abiding presence at the close of the age.

This year we will hear the voice of Jesus the Teacher.

Matthew frames Jesus’ ministry around five great discourses, echoing the five books of Moses. In these we encounter the Sermon on the Mount with its call to a deeper righteousness; parables of the kingdom that reveal God’s upside-down reign; instructions for life together as disciples; and visions of judgment and hope for the nations.

Matthew continually invites us to see not only what Jesus does but what it means to follow him: to embody mercy, humility, justice and courage in our own context. We also hear Matthew’s deep concern for the community of faith.

This gospel was written for a church learning how to live as Christ’s body – struggling with persecution, diversity and change, yet called to bold witness. Matthew names the reality of conflict, but also offers practical teaching for forgiveness, reconciliation and leadership that serves. In a time when our own communities wrestle with similar challenges, these texts ground us again in the transforming presence of Christ.

This Lectionary year invites us to weave these same threads of love in our worship, witness and daily life. It draws our eyes to Jesus who fulfils the law and prophets, who heals and feeds, who calls us to pray “Your kingdom come.”

May this journey through Matthew renew our discipleship, open our lives more fully to the Spirit, and draw us closer to Emmanuel who makes us one.

*Rev Charissa Suli
President of the Uniting Church in Australia*



OnlineGiving



Your Offering

Offerings can be made by Direct Debit as follows: Westpac BSB 033 055
A/c No: 112 529
Hampton Uniting Church
(Please identify as “Offering”)

Ta-ta to the tat

The Fellowship Room carpet has been a 'tattering' concern and developing as a potential trip-hazard for some time; the Foyer carpet is heavily stained; and the carpet joins under the folding walls are failing. So the Church Council have decided to replace the grey carpets in the Parish Centre with a very similar 'look,' commercial-quality carpet. Installation works are planned for November 6. We look forward to fresh new floors in the Parish Centre for the Advent season!



In other maintenance matters, it is disappointing to note some considerable damage has been inflicted on the cabinetry in the men's toilets, and to a lesser extent on the kitchen cabinet doors. Our annual electrical safety inspection of all circuits, emergency lighting, appliances, cords, etc has been completed this month; the most notable result being that the hand dryer in the ladies' toilets failed and has had to be replaced. Ongoing various issues with the church's sound system, light globes, broken chairs, the vestry door, sundry door locks, the Hocking Hall's window and door handles have also all been recently addressed.

Christmas gift ideas

Choose gifts that fight poverty and build hope – the **Everything In Common Gift Catalogue** is now online at everythingincommon.com.au

Order a gift card now and it will be sent by post for writing your own message, or you can buy eCards to print-at-home.

Chickens, pigs, goats and seeds are amongst the popular gifts that are available through this wonderful scheme.



Lost coin, Lost sheep ... Lost sons?

A commentary on Luke 15: 11-32

The name that is given to the parable of the prodigal son is misleading. We focus on the prodigal son, I think, because we love the idea that this wayward child would get welcomed home. We love the idea that this gift of compassion is resented by the evil older son, kind of like an early ugly stepsister, because it creates a tension that we are familiar with.

I think we read it that way because it sets up stuff to be simple. A great story of a father who is 'obviously' God, who embraces his son - those of us who sin - and then I guess we say the world - who must be the older son - just doesn't understand what God is like.

However, this is not how I understand it now. I once heard Amy Jill Levine speak on this gospel reading. She said, pay attention to the first character mentioned in the story. That is the key to Jewish parables. There was a woman who had ten coins, there was a shepherd who had 100 sheep, there was a man who had two sons.

The woman and shepherd could count, the man with the sons, could not. In welcoming home his wayward son, he forgot to count his older son. He threw a party for his prodigal and forgot to even tell his older son.

In this reading, the father is the antithesis of God, because God counts everybody. God loves counting. God has an entire book called 'Numbers'!

When I read the parable through this lens it makes me consider my context [as a Chaplain in a school] and how it may inform our ministry in the world.

How does our ministry count those who cannot read? Or who cannot deal with the over stimulation of singing? Or who may have a severe allergy to something in our communion elements? Or who are not sufficiently church-ed to speak the Christianese language? Or who do not agree with our statements on Gaza or Aboriginal Australia? Or those who hold theologies or politics that we believe to be destructive? Or whose presence in our community is a danger to our most vulnerable? Or those who have no relationship to Church? Or those who come seeking comfort in their questions rather than seeking an answer?

I could go on.

But this is the challenge of God. To somehow count everyone, because everybody counts.

Peter Rivett
Chaplain, Wesley College
from the *Presbytery News Update* 9 October 2025

Praying for Ourselves

A reflection on Luke 18: 9-14

Jesus tells another parable about prayer, this one intended for those “who trust in themselves.” Immediately our attention is caught. What sort of people would bother to pray at all if they trust in themselves? Well, maybe people like you and me.

What sort of people
would bother to pray at all
if they trust in themselves?

Our tendency is to shame the Pharisee, to see in him a pretentious and self-righteous quality to be shunned. But the minute we see him that way, we become like him. His prayer is not unlike some we too have uttered:

*“God, I thank you that I am not like other people:
thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax collector.
I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income.”*

And I’m sure his list goes on, naming plenty of other traits about himself that prove his worth and value. Don’t we, too, try to prove ourselves, afraid that if we don’t sneak our praiseworthy traits into the conversation, no one will ever notice them?

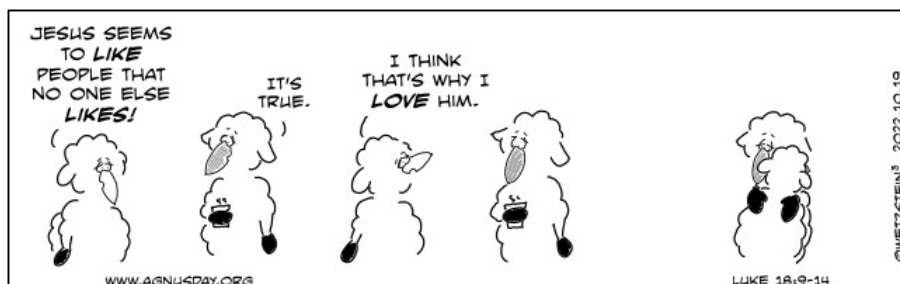
If our conversations with God tend to be mostly about ourselves, mostly about how we are doing or not doing in comparison to others, we might do well to ponder what lies beneath the words. If I am talking with the God of the universe, the source of all wisdom and compassion, perhaps I am not the most important subject. But, I argue, how can I not be at the heart of my prayer?

I am in need of so many things, I am grateful for so many things, I am responsible for so many things. Do you hear me? I am, I am, I am...

How easily I forget that God and God alone is *I am*.
God might be the better subject for my prayers.

The tax collector does not claim to know as much about God as the Pharisee knows, but the tax collector at least knows who is who. He knows he cannot grant mercy upon himself and that no comparison to others will ever wipe his slate clean. He knows who is God and who is not, who is the subject and who is the object. Jesus says, to learn who is who will not diminish our importance but exalt us to our rightful position. No longer the subject of our own prayers, or the granter of our own grace, we can be the humble recipient of God’s.

from the blog at inwardoutward.com



Agnusday appears with permission of agnusday.org

November Rosters

Worship

November 23
November 30

Kharis Abadani
Margaret Pollock
Sue Dowling and
Michele Kennan

Communion

Barbara Lobb

Meditation

November 3
November 10
November 17
November 24
December 1
December 8
December 15

No meeting (Cup Day)
Kharis Abadani
Sue Dowling
Isobel Marshall
Kharis Abadani
Nancy Duncan
Elizabeth Baird

(Final meeting for 2025:

Meditation resumes in February 2026)

Lectionary

November 2
Ailsa Drent

Habakkuk 1:1-4, 2:1-4
Psalm 119:137-144
2 Thessalonians 1:1-4,
11-12
Luke 19:1-10

November 9
Val Jemmeson
Colour: Green

Haggai 1:15b - 2:9
Psalm 145:1-5, 17-21
2 Thessalonians 2:1-5,
13-17
Luke 20:27-38

November 16
Elizabeth
Thompson
Colour: Green

Is 65:17-25
Isaiah 12
2 Thessalonians 3:6-13
Luke 21:5-19

November 23
Christ the King
Ian Menzies
Colour: White

Jeremiah 23:1-6
Luke 1:68-79
Colossians 1:11-20
Luke 23:33-43

November 30
Shirley Coxhell
Colour: Purple

Isaiah 2:
1-5
Psalm 122
Romans 13: 11-14
Matthew 24: 36-44

The Last Word

My wife and I decided to never go to bed angry. When we were out she said: “That’s the 4th time you’ve gone back for dessert! Doesn’t it embarrass you?” I said: “No, I keep telling them it’s for you.” I’ve been awake since Tuesday.