



Uniting Church Adult Fellowship

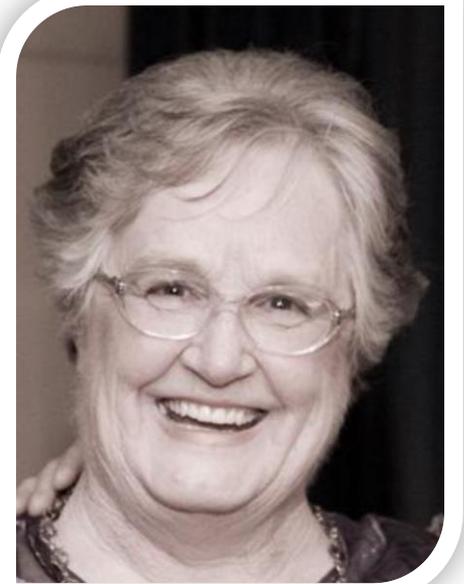
National Committee

Joan Stott

UCAAF Bursary

(Scholarship)

**for Young Adults under
the age of 35 years.**



Joan Stott UCAF Bursary 2017 Awardee



Kristen Marie Furneaux

My upbringing was one of bubble-wrapped Christianity; church every Sunday, prayers before dinner, and bible verses scrawled into birthday cards. It was safe and comfortable, and I was fortunate to be immersed in it; packed away from the dangers of the world, where I could remain content in the knowledge that “Jesus Loves Me,” which the Bible, and not to mention my sparkly pencils and devotional journal, told me so.

There was stability in this kind of upbringing, which was certainly necessary in my younger years. It was a hand-me-down faith, like a very old and well-loved jumper, and it fitted me well for that time.

However, as I reached my high school years, and began to engage with the more complex realities of life, my understanding of Christianity started to fray at the edges. With every new question, the threadbare sleeves shrunk even smaller. With every vexing doubt, the holes began to show. Until eventually, my hand-me-down faith no longer fit at all, and there I stood; toying with the edge of throwing it away altogether, or taking the arduous time to mend it into something new, something that might actually fit my growing self.

In my first year out of high school, I enrolled in a Bachelor of Theology. For the first time in my life, I was introduced to the complexity and the richness that existed beyond the all-too-comfortable church answers. I had found a place that could not only grapple with my questions and doubts, but furthermore came back with more mystery to engage with. It was truly captivating.

With every new insight, my understanding of God began to broaden ceaselessly, continuing to transcend the cramped boxes and rigid names that my confining faith had made. I began to recognise the image of God in the faces of those whom the church had warned me to steer well clear of. I began to truly engage with the Bible, not as some irrelevant book of memory-verses that sat collecting dust on the shelf, but as a kaleidoscopic lens into the unfolding narrative of God’s reconciling kingdom.

This is the fascinating path that I was invited to wander, where the opportunity to study theology has paved the way for my transformational journey to begin; and I haven’t looked back since. I am truly excited to continue this process of expanding my mind and furthering my understanding, so that I may delve deeper into the incomprehensible mystery of God.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The incumbent UCAF National Committee may award up to two (2) 'Joan Stott UCAF Bursaries' each calendar year, each bursary to the value of \$1,500 to assist those committed to, or who already are, studying in the field of leadership or theology, within the ethos of the Uniting Church. The bursary will be paid to the 'Place of Study' but other options will be considered if deemed necessary, and satisfies any requirements of Centrelink.
- 1.2. At the time of application, each applicant must be under the age of 35 years.
- 1.3. Each February, the UCAF National Committee will extend an invitation to each State and Territory Synod UCAF Committee through their Secretary, seeking nominations for the following year for the Joan Stott UCAF Bursaries.
- 1.4. These applications must be received by the Secretary of each State or Territory Synod UCAF Committee by 31 May each year.
- 1.5. Following interviews in each State or Territory, the recommended applications with names of their nominee/s are to be forwarded to the UCAF National Committee Secretary, together with comments from the applicant's referees, by 31 July for their consideration. If there is more than one application, an indication of the State/Territory's priority of the applicants is to be included.
- 1.6. Applicants will be notified of the decision of the UCAF National Committee by 31 October for payment in the ensuing year.
- 1.7. Each applicant will be asked to indicate how the grant will be used, e.g. study or tuition fees, etc. Each applicant will also be asked to provide a short faith journey statement and a précis of their ultimate goals at the end of their current study.

2. Application Form (see separate document)

3. Guidelines for Synod Committees

3.1 Calling for applications

Having received advice from the UCAF National Committee, applications should be called for by each Synod when advised.

- Details of the bursary (copies of the leaflet and any further information) should be distributed through each presbytery, publicised in Synod UCAF newsletters, Synod magazines/news and made available to all UCA tertiary facilities within the synod.
- The information distributed should include contact details for the Secretary of the Synod UCAF Committee together with a request for:
 - (a) letter of application,
 - (b) application form including statement of personal faith journey and a passport size photo of the applicant,
 - (c) future ministry/leadership objectives.
 - (d) contact details for referees (as indicated in leaflet), and
 - (e) note the closing date of 31 May for applications;
- Applications to be received by email;
- The Synod committee shall appoint an interview panel.

3.2 Applications received

- 3.2.1 Immediately on receiving each application, the Synod UCAF secretary shall acknowledge receipt of the application.
- 3.2.2 At the closing date for applications, the Secretary will forward all applications received to the convenor of the interviewing group.
- 3.2.3. The interview process will include:-
 - interviewing applicants by an appropriate means, e.g. face to face, SKYPE, teleconference, etc.;
 - consulting with referees;
 - determining a priority order of applicants within the Synod, if more than one applicant, determine and
 - providing a recommendation back to the Synod committee.
- 3.2.4 The Synod UCAF committee receives the report, considers any recommendation/s and forwards application/s and referee comments together with that committee's decision to the UCAF National Committee Secretary by 31 July. If more than one recommendation, then an indication of priority for their nominations is to be included.

4. Guidelines for National Committee

- 4.1. The National Committee will receive all applications and nominate from the Committee those who will be responsible for the review of all the applicants.
- 4.2. Any member of the National Committee who has been involved in any way with their State Synod recommendation will not be eligible to be part of the review and selection decision.
- 4.3. Where necessary, the National Committee may seek to further interview any applicant, e.g. face to face, telephone, telephone conference, SKYPE or any other appropriate way for clarification or further questions. They may also need to contact the State or Territory Committee from which the nomination came as well as contacting any of the referees of any of the applicants.
- 4.4. The incumbent National Committee has the discretion to choose to award up to two (2) Joan Stott UCAF Bursaries.
- 4.5. The Chairperson of the UCAF National Committee will advise all applicants of their decision by phone and in writing before 31 October, and the names of the successful applicants will be circulated to all Synod UCAF Committees via their Corresponding Member by 31 October for the bursaries to be paid in the following year.
- 4.6. Whilst the Bursaries should not necessarily be awarded on a rotating basis among the Uniting Church Adult Fellowship Synods, the National Committee should be mindful of an equitable distribution over time (as per C09.36.4 (f) May 2009 National Consultation Minutes).

Joan Stott

Past President (1985-1988)

Joan Stott is an older member of the Uniting Church. A nurse prior to marriage, some years later she completed a Clinical Pastoral Education Program enabling her to develop and train volunteers for a visiting program in which 500 people became visitors in 25 aged care facilities.

One of her passions has been the role of elderly people in their congregations and the way they contribute in unique ways to the life of their church. This interest, along with other God-given skills which have been developed over the years, enabled her to become involved in UCAF leadership.

On her appointment as UCAF National President in 1985, Joan also became involved in the World Federation of Methodist Women (WFMW) and in the Asia Pacific region attending international conferences and becoming editor of WFMW's *Tree of Life* newsletter.

In 1996 she became WFMW world secretary at a time when the movement became the World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women.

Her ministry in the years 1991 - 2001 involved participation in many World Federation and 'Non-Government Organisation' (NGO) United Nations Conferences held in various countries across the world.

Joan has been an elder and chair of several boards and committees, but in her retirement whilst she is still a lay preacher, she spends most of her time preparing to lead "Worship on Thursday" each week, and writing Prayers and Personal Meditations for her website www.thetimelesspsalms.net/

Are you under 35 years of age?

Are you undertaking leadership or theological studies?

If you answer 'yes' to these, you are eligible to apply for the bursary, by .

- a) Completing the application form by 31 May and sending by e-mail to the UCAF Secretary in your state.**
- b) The UCAF state committee will review all applications.**
- c) Any applications the state committee feel meet the criteria will be forwarded to the UCAF National Committee.**