

“We are the Uniting Church in Australia”

Series One: Our Story

“An Australian Church”

Phil Smith

We're the third largest Christian church in Australia. We have more than 2,000 local churches with 100,000 people attending worship each week across Australia – from Canberra to Cunnamulla, Darwin to Dapto, Bunbury to Broken Hill. Uniting Churches offer friendship, spiritual enrichment and care to young and old.

Andrew Dutney

The Uniting Church came into being in 1977 and it was the result of the decision of 3 churches to come together and form one church. That was the Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational churches here in Australia. It needed to be a listening church that's always listening to the movement of the Spirit and watching what's going on in the community so that it could be a church responding in mission to what God's doing.

Lin Hatfield-Dodds

So the Uniting Church has a large presence in community services across the country. And we touch the lives and provide services and supports to 1 in 8 Australians in any year. The services that we deliver range from early years to the very old, so we deliver services to children, young people, families, Australians living with a disability, and older Australians in any sense you can imagine, in every location. So it's pretty exciting to be part of that as a church.

Laura Cregan

We have 50 schools nationally, with approximately 50,000 students. I think our teachers and our chaplains are really committed to going on that journey with young people and really investing in them and asking them, what are the questions that they have, and how do we journey along with that, and how do we tie in their emotional and spiritual and academic needs into creating a bigger picture around how they participate in society and what that's about.

Colleen Geyer

We had a very clear view and we still have a very clear view about ourselves, that we will be in the country of Australia, that we will be committed to partnerships with other churches. Ecumenism is very important to us. We said it right from the beginning, and that's because we were basically an ecumenical endeavour to become Uniting Church.

Rob Floyd

UnitingWorld works with our overseas church partners in ways that engage whom with our church here in Australia and help them as they serve their own people overseas.

Sureka Goringe

We try and build relationships and help people in the Uniting Church to work alongside the ministry of our partners to support them in solidarity and in return have vibrant, life-changing relationships

Rob Floyd

One of the units is called the Relief and Development Unit. It works with our overseas partners in community development. So that's areas like education, health and economic empowerment for people in poor communities.

Grahame Ryan

The heart of Frontier Services is indeed the heart of mission—We are in many ways, in many senses, the hands and feet of Christ in the field, and our patrol ministers, they do births, deaths and marriages, but they also provide practical assistance - a hand to hold, a shoulder to cry on, an ear to listen to for people who otherwise don't have access to that sort of support - people in remote and isolated communities throughout the country.

Elenie Poulos

The Uniting Church is committed to social justice because we believe that God calls us to work together for a better world. And we believe that because we have faith in a God who loves everyone without distinction, without discrimination and that God's will for the world is for reconciliation and peace.

Stuart McMillan

So the Uniting Church is committed to First Peoples, because of the history of this land and we would not be an authentic church acting with any integrity as the followers of Jesus unless we had a relationship with first people.

Brooke Prentis

What it really means for me is that there's a commitment to working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, a commitment to wanting to walk alongside us in our issues of justice and poverty, and a commitment to building the kingdom of God, here on earth, here in Australia.

Denise Champion

We look at ways in which we can share our culture, share the space, share the land in which we live, and that seems to me, the very essence, really, of the gospel.

Charissa Suli

As a second generation Tongan Australian who was born here in Australia, had parents who migrated to Australia, to know that I'm part of a church that gives us a voice, that gives us a space, and it's not about giving the cultural space. It's more than that. So the fact that the Uniting Church declared itself back in 1985, that we are a multicultural church, it's very important for me, cause I know that I belong.

Nicky Wadman

I'll never forget actually, the first time I came to church here. And it felt strange at first, because you have all of these pre-conceived ideas of what church will be like, an unfortunately they're not usually positive, and this church just blew them all away for me.

I never expected that my life would turn down this path. Really. It was a surprise. Your life is just filled with so much more value, and, yeah. I'll never look back.

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