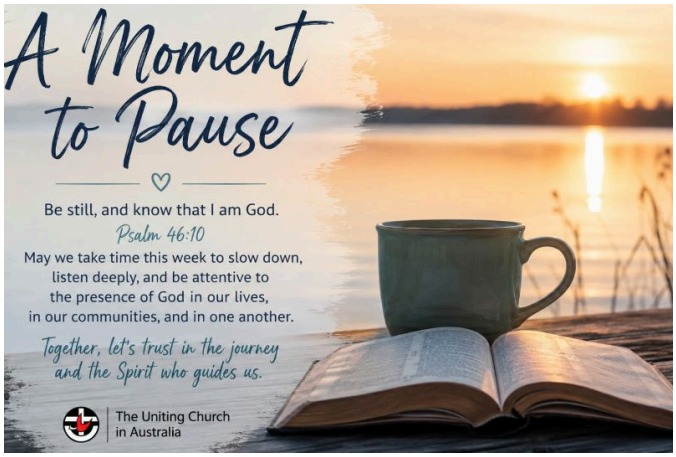
The Northern Presbytery Weekly News

Keep sharing your stories and events with us — we love to hear what's happening across The Northern Presbytery!

Contact The Northern Presbytery News Team



Reflection — Clothed in Love

On Saturday, I had the joy of leading my first marriage blessing at Mosman Uniting. The two women whose marriage we blessed had already been married in a civil ceremony. Because of their denomination's teaching on marriage, they couldn't celebrate it in their home church. It was a privilege to welcome them and their family and friends to ours.

The reading they chose, Colossians 3:12–17, has quite a bit to say about what we wear. "Clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience … Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together."

The word I kept returning to comes just before that list. The letter calls the Colossians *beloved*. Everything they are asked to put on grows out of a love that has already been given to them. I think of it as being given a garment made just for us. We put on love because we are already beloved.

At the beginning of the service, I shared our statement of inclusion. It says that all people are made in the image of God and that God reaches out to all people in love and acceptance. I know from my own life that these words are not something to take for granted. For many people, being welcomed in the church has been hard-won, and in some places that welcome is still withheld. It was a gift to speak those words as we gathered with their family and friends to bless their marriage.

This Sunday I'll be presiding at my first baptism. I hadn't expected two firsts to come so close together, but the images sit close together too. In baptism we are clothed with Christ (Galatians 3:27), and I like to think of the life of faith as growing into that garment. It looks like kindness on an ordinary Tuesday, forgiveness when we've got it wrong, and patience when we'd rather be getting on with things.

As we come to the end of the church year, I wonder where we've caught glimpses of this love in our churches. With Advent just ahead, and as we find our feet together in the new Northern Presbytery, what might it look like for love to be the outer layer that holds everything together in the year to come?

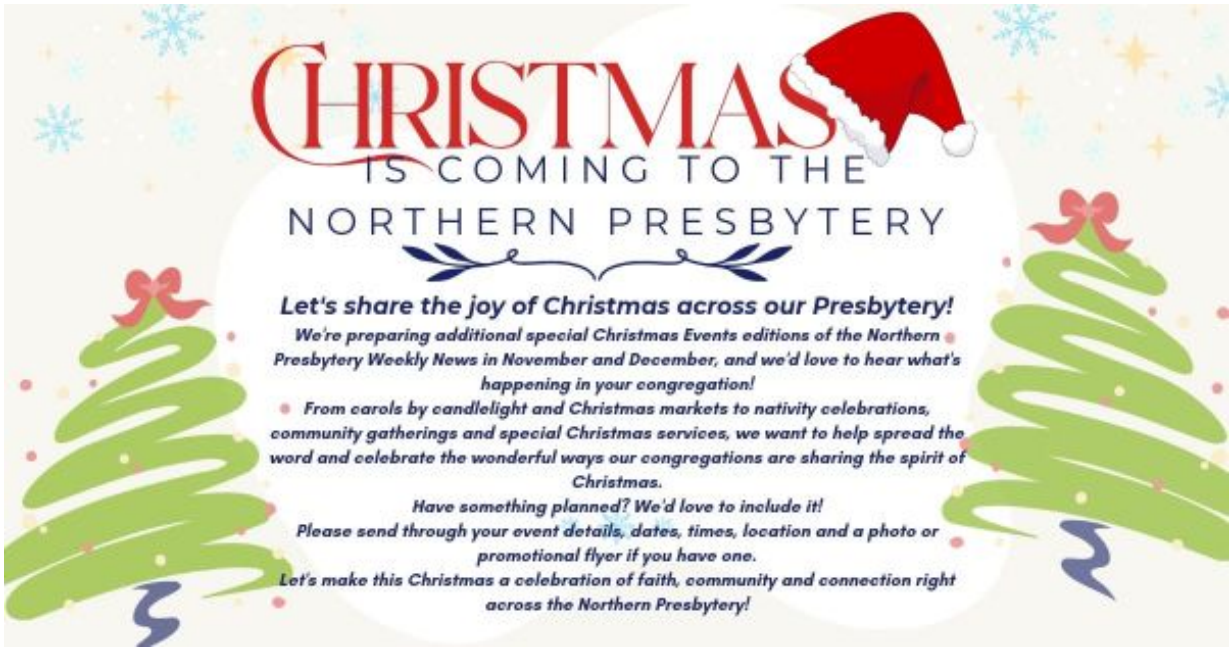
Perhaps we begin by listening to people who have wondered whether there's a place for them in our churches, and letting what we hear shape the way we live together.

And perhaps we can make time to hear from those who have served faithfully in our congregations about what they hope we'll carry forward into the new Presbytery and what they hope might change.

In all of this, may the way we welcome and care for one another help people know they are beloved by God.

Rev. Michaela Antill-Cassie

Mosman Uniting Church





Celebrating the people, congregations and communities doing amazing things across The Northern Presbytery.

Neutral Bay Uniting Church



Building Bridges of Hope — A Journey of Faith, Friendship and Transformation

Sometimes a journey becomes so much more than the places visited or the people met. For Rev Alex Pittaway and Church Council member Maudie Rindorindo-Gusti from Neutral Bay Uniting Church, a recent two-week visit to Indonesia was just that — an experience filled with joy, compassion, deep connections and moments that will stay with them long after returning home.



The pair travelled to North Sulawesi in October to support the work of Bridge of Hope, an organisation close to the heart of the Neutral Bay congregation. For many years, the church has supported its work providing small loans to people experiencing poverty, particularly women, helping them establish businesses and create brighter futures for their families.

Hope in the Midst of Hardship

Travelling through remote villages, Alex and Maudie witnessed the harsh realities facing local communities. Five months without rain had left once-lush tropical landscapes scorched and dry. Bushfires, thick smoke and fuel shortages added to the difficulties of everyday life.

Yet amid these hardships, what touched them most was the extraordinary warmth, resilience and joy of the people they met.

Visiting women whose lives had been transformed through Bridge of Hope loans was particularly moving. One woman had purchased a fishing boat and equipment, enabling her to earn a living catching tuna and, most importantly, provide an education for her children.



Alex described being overwhelmed by the smiles and joy of these women, who had worked so hard to turn their lives around. Hearing their stories, sharing experiences and offering prayers of blessing over their families and businesses became some of the most meaningful moments of the journey.

What also stood out was the sense of community. Loan recipients support one another through local groups, sharing not only financial responsibility but encouragement, friendship and hope for the future.



Caring for Those Who Care for Others

The annual Bridge of Hope staff retreat offered another deeply meaningful experience. Staff working in impoverished communities regularly face heartbreaking situations, where families must sometimes choose between repaying a loan and meeting urgent medical needs.

Recognising the emotional weight of this work, Alex led a reflective labyrinth walk, Holy Communion and individual prayers of blessing for staff and visiting team members.

Throughout the retreat, one message resonated strongly: *empowering rather than rescuing*. True compassion is not simply about providing assistance, but walking alongside people, recognising their dignity and giving them opportunities to shape their own futures.

Faith and Friendship Without Borders



There was also tremendous joy in worshipping with local congregations in Manado. Alex preached at two churches, with Maudie providing translation, and both were embraced by the warmth, singing, laughter and vibrant faith of their Indonesian hosts. Alex was particularly struck by the sheer joy of worship and the love of life evident throughout the community. These were not simply church visits, but opportunities to celebrate a shared faith that transcends language and culture.

A significant meeting with the Moderator of GMIM, a sister denomination of the Uniting Church in Australia with more than 1,000 congregations, opened the door to

deeper theological dialogue and lasting relationships between churches in both countries.

The pair also met with Australia's Consul-General in Eastern Indonesia, discovering a genuine enthusiasm for strengthening connections between Australian and Indonesian communities. One of the Consul General's goal is for People to People Connections & cultural ties which includes relationships of religious organisations such as GMIM and Uniting Church.

More Than a Visit

For Alex and Maudie, these two weeks were a powerful reminder that faith is lived out through relationships — through listening, sharing, encouraging and standing alongside others, especially when life is difficult.

They returned with stories of remarkable resilience, generous hospitality, joyful worship and lives being transformed through opportunity and hope.

Perhaps the most enduring message of their journey is that we do not need to have all the answers or solve every problem to make a difference. Sometimes the greatest gift we can offer is to walk alongside others, recognise their strength and share in the hope of what is possible.

For Neutral Bay Uniting Church, these relationships are an expression of the cross-cultural and intercultural ministry that is part of the congregation's DNA — learning from one another, sharing faith and growing together across cultures.



Through its ongoing support of Bridge of Hope and its growing relationships with Indonesian churches, Neutral Bay Uniting Church is demonstrating how a local congregation can make a meaningful difference far beyond its own community — **building bridges of friendship, faith and hope across borders.**

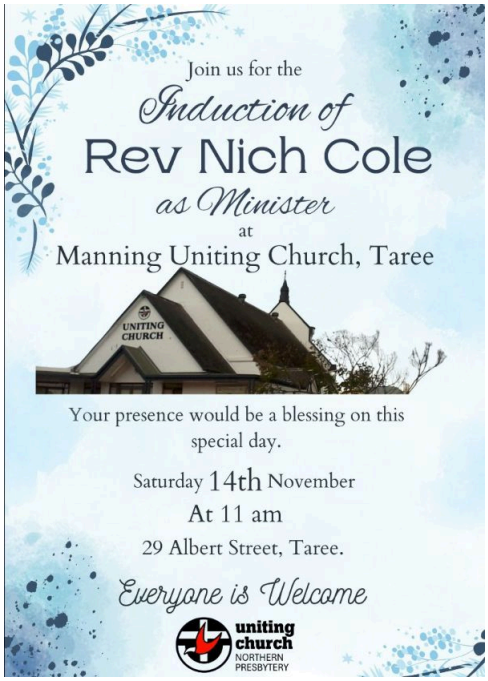
Story adapted from a reflection shared by Rev Alex Pittway, Minister of Neutral Bay Uniting Church, with thanks for sharing the experiences and photographs from the visit.

Northern Presbytery Website Link

Northern Presbytery Update



Please note that the Presbytery Meeting that was scheduled for Tuesday, November 24th has been cancelled.





The Presbytery Standing Committee (PSC) updates

PSC meeting dated 16th September:

The Presbytery Standing Committee (PSC) met for the first time on 16thSeptember following its election by the First Meeting of Northern Presbytery. The meeting focused on establishing governance arrangements, supporting the work of the newly formed Presbytery, and progressing key priorities during the transition period. The Committee acknowledged and thanked Dr Jenny Barnes for her leadership and service as Interim Chairperson during the transition to the new Presbytery structure.

A significant focus of the meeting was governance and decision-making structures. The PSC resolved to establish a PSC Executive to assist with implementation of decisions, and urgent matters arising between meetings. Work will also continue clarifying delegations and responsibilities within the new Presbytery framework.

The PSC received updates regarding the appointment of the Presbytery Minister and agreed that several governance and ministry-related matters would progress following the appointment of the successful candidate.

Looking beyond governance, the PSC demonstrated a strong commitment to mission by approving the development of a short-term research project focused on First Third (Next Generation) ministry. This project will help map existing ministry initiatives, identify opportunities for growth and support future planning for ministry with children, youth and young adults across the Presbytery.

The meeting reflected a positive spirit of collaboration and a shared commitment to supporting the life, mission and ministry of Northern Presbytery.

PSC Meeting dated 13th October:

The Presbytery Standing Committee (PSC) met to continue shaping the work and governance of the newly formed Northern Presbytery.

Members reflected on positive feedback received following the inaugural Northern Presbytery meeting and considered suggestions to help strengthen future Presbytery-in-Council gatherings. There was appreciation for the engagement of members across the Presbytery and a commitment to ensuring future meetings continue to be welcoming, transparent and effective.

Work is also progressing on a Delegations Handbook and committee charters to help clarify responsibilities and decision-making processes across the Presbytery.

A significant focus of the meeting was the recommendation from the Joint Nominating Committee regarding the appointment of a Presbytery Minister. Following a thorough discernment process from the Joint Nominating Committee (JNC), the Chair of the JNC, Rev. Steve Aynsley, presented the preferred candidate to the PSC. The PSC endorsed the recommendation to present the preferred candidate to the Presbytery for a call and authorised arrangements for a special Presbytery meeting to consider the recommendation.

The PSC also continued discussions about the future governance and mission structure of Northern Presbytery. Planning will commence for a Growth and Mission Committee to support congregational vitality, mission, strategic development and regional partnerships, alongside the work of the Presbytery Resources Committee.

Preparations are underway for Synod 2027 nominations, with a particular desire to encourage broader participation from younger members, regional representatives and people from diverse backgrounds.

The meeting concluded with updates on property, business and ministry matters, and an ongoing commitment to developing structures that will support the life, mission and ministry of Northern Presbytery into the future.

Summaries supplied by Leslie D'Mello Transition Commission Administration Support Officer

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As we look towards Advent, Uniting Creative has been collaborating with some incredible partners to bring you fresh music, videos and creative resources to inspire your worship, enrich your gatherings and connect your communities.

NEW MUSIC: Emmanuel (Draw Near to Us)

In partnership with Common Grace, a new song capturing the hope of God drawing near to us in Jesus, and the invitation for us to draw near to one another in an increasingly fractured world.
Listen on Spotify: https://open.spotify.com/album/0nmRNwrUTvGK17MEtP8kQi
Download the Lead Sheet:
https://assets.nationbuilder.com/commongrace/pages/14160/attachments/original/1793063397/Emmanuel_lead_sheet.pdf?1793063397
Lyric Video: https://youtu.be/IIKa4fctAx8

ONE – A Poetic Liturgy
ONE – A Poetic Liturgy - features the incredible poetry and writing of Will Small, brought to life through the musical composition of Jon Reichardt.
Now available to listen to and share. These creative resources offer fresh ways to engage with faith, worship, story and imagination in your own community.
https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLm3-xJWhhWWsEdN6jPrqCOwr3iUIkFN4p&si=nPUEQYkxuomgLmzc

Stay connected with Uniting Creative!
There's lots more happening! Make sure you visit the new Uniting Creative website and sign up to their mailing list to hear about upcoming music releases, creative projects, events, workshops, resources.
unitingcreative.org.au



Have something on your heart? Share your prayer request and let our Presbytery surround it in prayer. Click here to request a prayer

Throughout COP31, Religions for Peace Australia is holding multifaith prayer and meditation sessions. Gathering online at 12pm AEDT each day, participants will offer prayers and

As we mark Remembrance Day, we remember those who have served and sacrificed in times of war. We pray for veterans, their families and all affected

reflections for a positive outcome at the UN Climate Conference.

by conflict, and for a world where peace prevails.

We pray for all communities preparing for the warmer months, particularly those vulnerable to bushfires and extreme weather. May emergency services, volunteers and residents be kept safe and supported.

As preparations for Advent and Christmas begin, we pray for those experiencing loneliness, financial hardship or uncertainty. May our congregations welcome all, and offer kindness and hope to those who need it most.

As we offer these prayers may God open our eyes this week to the people, places and possibilities where love is needed most.



Interested in what's happening at your local congregation?

Many of our congregations have **regular activities, groups and events** throughout the week. For the latest details, times, changes and **special events**, check your congregation's **Facebook page or website**.

It's a great way to stay connected and discover what's happening in your local church community.

Lane Cove MUSIC

CONCERT No.6

7.30pm TUESDAY 24 November 2026

Venue: Longueville Uniting Church Hall,

47A Kenneth Street, Longueville

Le Basque Trio

performs

Beethoven & Friends

Le Basque Trio, a partnership between tenor Ben Oxley, horn Robert Johnson and piano Cheryl Oxley, explores over a century of music for voice, horn and piano, from the Classical elegance of Beethoven through the Romantic era to the rich colours of the twentieth century.

Bookings open on 3 November 2026 via our website

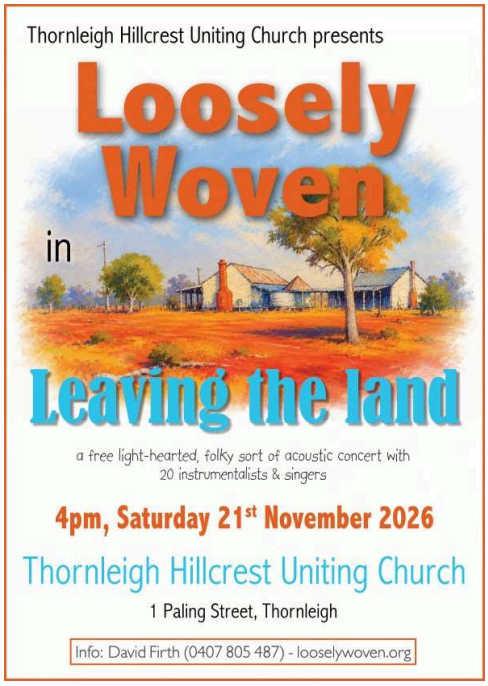
www.lanecovemusic.org.au

Online bookings preferred. Limited admission at the door on the night.

Adults $30 cash, School Students $10 cash

Enquiries welcome: 9428 4287









Orders close on the 15th Nov







Click here to Book

Other Publications

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

weekly SYNOD SPOTLIGHT
Uniting Church Synod of NSW and the ACT

Uniting Climate



Acknowledgement of Country

From before recorded time, the First Peoples of this Nation have cared for this Land.

We praise God, the Creator, for the beauty of this Land and honour those who have cared for it.

We acknowledge the Elders and community members who have told the sacred stories and nurtured faithfulness to the Creator.

We ask God's blessing on those who continue to work for the healing and restoration of this Land and its many communities.