

WESLEY NEWS

JULY DIARY DATES

Sunday 3rd at 10.00 am
Rev Doug Hosking &
Rev Mac Macdonald
TARTAN SUNDAY
PENTECOST 4



Sunday 10th at 10.00 am
Rev Mark Dickens
Holy Communion
PENTECOST 5

Thursday 14th at 2.00pm
CHURCH COUNCIL

Sunday 17th at 10.00 am
Pastor Andrew Kieselbach
PENTECOST 6

Sunday 24th at 10.00 am
Rev Mark Dickens
PENTECOST 7

Sunday 31st at 10.00 am
Rev Mark Dickens
PENTECOST 8

MUSIC @ WESLEY

Choir Practice

Wednesday evenings in the church at 7.30pm.

WESLEY IS HOME TO
Young Adelaide Voices
Adelaide Harmony Choir
Metropolitan Musical Theatre Company
Organ Music Society of Adelaide Music Library

FROM THE MINISTER

Food for thought

Data has begun filtering out from the 2021 Census, and the first release shows a continuing decline in religious affiliation and interest. The initial information has got me thinking about what the future looks like for the institutional church, and in particular, the Uniting Church. There will be more detailed data to come in further releases, but the broad brush sweep that can be drawn is that Australians are becoming less religious.

You might recall from your own completion of the Census last year that the question pertaining to religion is the only non-compulsory question in the Census. That said, 93 per cent responded to the question, an increase from 91 per cent in 2016.

Christianity remains the most common religion in Australia, with 43.9 per cent of the population identifying as Christian. However, this is down from 52.1 per cent in 2016, and 61.1 per cent in 2011.

Other religions in Australia are growing, but adherents continue to make up a small proportion of the population. This is largely attributed to overseas migration to Australia.

What is also revealing of where society is at, is the number of people intentionally identifying with 'no religion'. 38.9 per cent responded with no religion, up from 30.1 per cent in 2016. A further 7 per cent chose not to answer the question. One might assume that by not answering the question most of these respondents are likely to fall in with the no religion group.

Here in South Australia, 40 per cent of our population identify as Christian. In 2016, Christian affiliation was 49.1 per cent. At the same time, in 2021 45.8 per cent identified with no religion, jumping from 36 per cent in 2016.

Nationally, 2.64 per cent of the population identify their affiliation with the Uniting Church. Another report presented last year titled Religiosity in Australia indicated there has been a 54 per cent decline in Uniting/Methodist Church affiliation over the period 2007 to 2019.

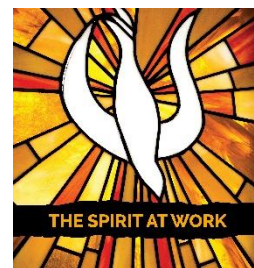
The question is asked, has religion lost its relevance? While I like to describe myself as a realist rather than a pessimist, I suspect we will see a further move away from religion when we have results from the 2026 Census.

The faithful few

While we might lament the decline in regular church attendance in our own congregation, we should not lose faith or hope. The facts and figures above suggest a broad situation, not one that is unique nor exclusive to Wesley Uniting Church. The recent 2022 Synod meeting recognised the decline occurring in our congregations and the implications this has in the life of congregations and the Uniting Church itself. We are not alone.

Anecdotal evidence suggests the percentage of people who identify as holding a spiritual or faith belief remains higher than those who identify as having a church affiliation. It invites us to consider how it is we can connect with those who no longer identify with the institutional church, so to speak, for whatever reason. I don't have the answer to how that gap can be bridged. But I do have the resolve to want to find ways that it might be and try. And, so, I wonder how might we enable our congregation and facilities at Wesley to become a place and space that gives people somewhere to call their spiritual home?

Mark Dickens



Wesley Uniting Church Kent Town
27 Grenfell Street, Kent Town



TARTAN SUNDAY SERVICE

A Tartan Sunday Service was held on Sunday 3rd July 2022. Representatives of Scottish clans were in attendance, and we were entertained by bagpipes and highland dancing during the service. The service commenced with a procession of clan banners down the aisles accompanied by bagpipes. This year the Bible bearer was Arthur Hackett-Jones Okutoi, the elder son of Mary Hackett-Jones and a grandson of Penelope Hackett-Jones.



Margaret Harkness has been the principal organiser of this event in the past and we were delighted that Margaret's daughter, Sonia Ferrari read the Gospel passage during the service.

The service was led by Rev Doug Hosking and Rev Mac Macdonald. As is the case for all our special services, Graham Bell organised an augmented choir. He also selected some Scottish music for the choir to sing

OUR NEW MINISTRY TEAM



Rev Mark Dickens and Pastor Andrew Kieselbach now form our ministry team and together will share leading Sunday worship and pastoral care of members.



Both men are Chaplains at PAC, as well as being our ministers.

A special service at the beginning of June, during which Andrew was commissioned as Pastor, marked the beginning of this ministry.

Mark had a bout of Covid recently and Andrew kindly stepped in for Mark at the last minute to lead the worship. There is a distinct advantage in having a ministry team.

ANOTHER SPECIAL DIARY DATE



Our **Church Anniversary Service** this year will be held on the **21st August 2022 at 10.00am**, with Rev Mark Dickens leading worship. Please mark this date in your diary now and invite family and friends along to enjoy the occasion. We

hope you can join us to help celebrate **157 years of worship and witness in this community.**

SPRING CONCERTS

Graham Bell and Mark Symons are planning a mini-concert series later this year. Once artists are booked we will be in a position to provide details. Our Winter/Spring Concerts were very popular in the past but Covid restrictions over the previous 2 years meant that the 2020 series was cancelled completely and last year it was only possible to hold one.

NEWS OF OUR PEOPLE

Raelene Chelley underwent shoulder surgery early in May which has relieved her arthritic pain considerably. After undergoing rehabilitation in Fullarton Lutheran Homes she has now returned home where her sister is able to give her some assistance with daily living. Severe

rheumatic pain in her hands makes it very difficult to drive. She misses coming to Sunday Worship.

Joan Atkinson is feeling much better following blood transfusions last month.. Joan is a resident of Elder Care-The Lodge where daughter, Fiona visits her regularly. Fiona had a great deal of work to do recently in preparing Joan's house for sale. Those of us who have recently moved house and downsized can relate to this.



Trevor Leane is quite ill and is in Ashford Hospital. He says that the nurses and doctors are providing him with excellent care and can't seem to do enough for him. His wife, Lee and four daughters, Jodie, Robyne, Karen and Stacey are visiting him regularly. Trevor turned 80 earlier this year but he kept that a secret from us. His close family celebrated the occasion with a luncheon at Balhannah. Trevor tires easily but is happy to receive text messages from people and he can respond to those when he feels up to it. All of us will have been recipients of Trevor's pastoral care in the past, so now it is our turn to give some back to him.



In Our Thoughts and Prayers

Let us hold Trevor, and other members of our congregation who are in frail health, in our thoughts and prayers.

A few months back, **Mary Hackett-Jones** and her 3 children, Arthur, Frederick and Vivienne, holidayed in Istanbul with husband and father, Gabriel Okutoi. Unfortunately they all contracted Covid while there but are fully recovered now. The photo shows the children in the town of Bodrum on the Turkish coast. They are wearing Turkish towels.



CONTACTS

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