

Winter 2022 Congregation Connect



Standing up for justice and compassion

At Uniting we face injustice head on. We stand up for what is right with confidence and strength. We believe the world is made a better place through action.

Alongside the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania, we took part in the Palm Sunday Walk for Justice & Freedom for Refugees on 10 April to stand up for justice and compassion.

Australia's treatment of refugees continues to be inhumane and unjust. For example:

- around 30,000 people have been on bridging visas for many years, living in the community with uncertain futures
- after nearly nine years, around 250 people are still stranded on Nauru and in PNG, with no prospects for permanent resettlement.

As part of this year's Walk for Justice for Refugees, we called on the Australian Government to immediately address a number of issues which we believe are crucial to improving the lives of refugees and asylum seekers.

People seeking asylum are some of the most vulnerable in our community.

Our asylum seeker programs have been serving the community for over 20 years without sustainable government funding.

Each year, over 3000 people seeking asylum in Victoria attend our Welcome Centre in Melbourne.

To find out how you can offer support, visit unitingvictas.org.au/seeking-asylum

Your Mission Team at Uniting Vic.Tas

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Keeping people warm this winter

With the colder months upon us, we need your congregation's help to bring comfort to those who suffer most in the cold weather.

With the continuing impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, the challenge is even greater this year to keep those most vulnerable warm and sheltered during a cold, wet winter.

You can help provide new or good quality used blankets, doonas, swags, jackets and other winter woollies for those in need.

Uniting's Emergency Relief Co-ordinator for Goulburn North East and Wodonga, Catherine Byrne, knows how important these gifts are each winter.

Catherine and her team have worked with ABC Goulburn Murray and Bank WAW for many years to run a local winter blanket appeal, helping people sleeping rough to stay warm during the colder months.

She says local congregations have always been a big part of the appeal's success.

"Local congregations have always supported people in crisis, so they know how important the winter appeal is," says Catherine.

"Their support has allowed us to provide blankets, swags and tents for people sleeping rough."

To find out where you can drop off winter items or make a donation, visit unitingvictas.org.au/local-winter



Uniting is the community services organisation of the Uniting Church in Victoria and Tasmania.

Uniting



Suzanne helps nurture NoBucks

From humble beginnings as a tea and coffee service, volunteer Suzanne has watched NoBucks grow into something much more meaningful for many Hobart locals.

NoBucks was established by members of the former Wesley Uniting Church congregation in Hobart.

“Initially, we set it up to help bring more people into the church,” says Suzanne.

The congregation used a \$2000 bequest to revamp the Sunday School room and open it to anyone who wanted to drop in for a cup of tea or coffee at lunchtime.

“People were free to walk in and make themselves a drink and sit down to relax and have a chat.”

As word of the service spread, people experiencing homelessness or social isolation soon became regular attendees. Suzanne and her fellow congregation members then started cooking meals for those who came to NoBucks.

Fifteen years down the track and now run by Uniting Vic.Tas, NoBucks provides free two-course lunches each weekday to anyone who walks through the door.

“For many, it’s unfortunate circumstances that lead them to a tough place in life,” says Suzanne.

“I believe we are there to help people in their time of need.

“And I always follow the three P’s. I don’t preach, pry or presume.

“I’ve met some lovely people along the way and I just hope that I’ve been of some help to those people when needed.”

Suzanne kindly shared her story as part of this year’s National Volunteer Week celebrations in May.

Contact Uniting

T 1800 668 426

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unitingvictas.org.au



Share Sunday resources

This year, the focus of Share Sunday on 28 August is ‘hospitality.’

Share Sunday is an opportunity to acknowledge the community services our agencies, parish missions, presbyteries and congregations carry out in the community.

Resources are available to download at unitingvictas.org.au/share-sunday

Your congregation will soon receive a Share Sunday resource pack which you can use to help promote our Share Sunday Appeal.

Pancake Day

Thank you for supporting Pancake Day 2022.

This year 57 congregations across Victoria and Tasmania took part in Pancake Day.

Over **\$24,000** was raised through local events.

Through this initiative, your congregation’s support is helping individuals, families and communities across Victoria and Tasmania where we deliver vital programs and services.

These range from emergency relief for families facing food crisis, to supporting people who are experiencing homelessness into permanent accommodation. We help people living with a disability find work and older people to live independently.

Thank you again for making Pancake Day 2022 such a success.

Important update

Change to bank details.

Please note for your records that the Uniting Vic.Tas fundraising bank account number 033-005 347047 held at Westpac will shortly be closed.

If applicable, please delete this account from your saved banking records.

Our new account details are:

Name: Uniting Vic.Tas Fundraising

Bank: National Australia Bank

BSB: 083-004

Number: 861630143

If you need any assistance, please contact our Supporter Services team on **1800 668 426**.