

Summer 2020 Congregation Connect



Partnership helps rebuild from the ashes

The Bridgewater-Gagebrook Uniting Church community in Tasmania has overcome some big hurdles in recent years.

Despite a flood and 2 fires, the series of setbacks never dampened spirits thanks to a strong partnership between the congregation and Uniting staff.

The congregation has a long history of faith in action, supporting its community through additional services for people in crisis.

"With the support of the congregation, the Uniting team recently relocated from Gagebrook to the newly established Bridgewater Hub," says Community Services Co-ordinator, Charlotte Ryan.

"We offer emergency relief, disability and family services alongside warm hospitality and arts and craft mission work by the Uniting Church.

"People who access our services are often vulnerable and anxious. But the process is less confronting thanks to the continuity provided by Uniting staff and congregation members."

The Church recently welcomed a new minister, Reverend Joanna Wierenga.

When Uniting works in collaboration with congregations, sharing resources to support people when they need it most, it makes a big difference for local communities.

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Advocating for change

In October we joined a diverse network of individuals and organisations across the country to support Anti-Poverty Week.

Anti-Poverty Week supports the Australian community to gain a better understanding of poverty and to collectively take action to end it.

Since 2002, we've been active in the week, which is held around the United Nations Day for the Eradication of Poverty.

More information can be found at www.antipovertyweek.org.au

Our CEO, Bronwyn Pike was Victorian Co-Chair of Anti-Poverty Week 2020.

This year we supported affordable housing as the best solution in reducing poverty by partnering with the Everybody's Home campaign.

We are also continuing to support the Raise the Rate campaign led by the Australian Council of Social Services (ACOSS) to ensure that unemployment payments never go back to \$40 a day.

For more information about the campaigns please visit

www.everybodyshome.com.au

www.raisetherate.org.au



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

Uniting



Pancake Day 2021 is fast approaching and we are busy preparing host packs, which will be ready for distribution in the first week of January.

This Pancake Day, you can help make a difference to some of the most vulnerable and marginalised people across Victoria and Tasmania.

All money raised goes directly to Uniting programs and services of your choosing to support people in our community experiencing crisis, vulnerability and disadvantage.

Register now for Pancake Day 2021 by completing and returning the enclosed registration form, visiting the website or calling our Supporter Services team.

T 1800 668 426
victas.pancakeday.com.au



Thank you to all the congregations who have registered to support Food For Families in the lead up to Christmas.

We want to support everyone who comes to us for help – but we can't do it alone. Due to the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of people reaching out to our emergency relief services continues to rise.

The reality is that we need donations all year round, so it's never too late to support Food For Families.

Register now to start your own collection.

T 1800 668 426
foodforfamilies.org.au

Contact Uniting

T 1800 668 426
@ hello@unitingvictas.org.au
unitingvictas.org.au



Coffee Cup Challenge

The Coffee Cup Challenge is a great way for congregations to add an extra dimension to their Pancake Day fundraising activities.

In our last Congregation Connect, we shared the story of Airport West Uniting Church who joined the Coffee Cup Challenge for the first time in 2019.

This lifted their Pancake Day fundraising efforts to a whole new level.

So far this year, we have 10 congregations that have jumped onboard to start their own Coffee Cup Challenge.

All funds raised from the Coffee Cup Challenge will support people experiencing crisis, vulnerability and disadvantage. A small sacrifice can make a big difference.

To learn more about this great initiative or how we can support you to participate, please contact our Supporter Services team.

T 1800 668 426
@ pancakeday.info@unitingvictas.org.au

Keeping Spirits bright

For people in crisis, Christmas can be the loneliest time of all. In the past, we've decked the halls and opened the doors to over 300 vulnerable people through our Prahran Christmas lunch.

This year, Christmas lunch is going to look different - but we can still bring joy to our world. Hundreds of boxes will be delivered to people in the Stonnington local area who would have joined us for lunch. We want to make sure that the people who access our services can still celebrate Christmas.

On Christmas Day, volunteers will connect with a call – personally wishing everyone a Merry Christmas. We want everyone to know they're not alone.