

# Beyond 2020 Vision

A Publication of Morialta Uniting Church

October 2021

Morialta Uniting Church—follow us on Facebook or check out our website at [www.morialtauca.org.au](http://www.morialtauca.org.au)

## Welcome to our October 2021 edition!

Colin Cargill, Editor and Helena Begg, Publisher

This month we feature an article by Rev Dr Rob McFarlane, an ethicist, discussing the inclusion/exclusion dilemma of welcoming the unvaccinated, as well an exploration of free speech in the context of Melbourne's Covid protests.

There is also a discussion by an Indigenous scientist on why we “acknowledge country”, and tributes to Ted Burford and Bishop John Spang.

The cut-off date for our next edition will be **29<sup>th</sup> October**. Either drop items in to Nicole at the Office or call or email Colin on 0427 122 106 or [snout-n-bout@bigpond.com.au](mailto:snout-n-bout@bigpond.com.au)

Go well.

## The ethics of gathering for worship in a part-vaccinated world

Adapted from an article by Rev Dr Rob McFarlane published on “Insights”, contributed by Margaret Cargill

The UCA holds two core values as part of our ethos.

- We believe that our gatherings should be safe places for all, especially the most vulnerable. We invest considerable resources to make our worship and other activities as safe as possible.
- We believe that all are welcome at worship. We sing this in our hymns and proclaim it in our spoken word, and on our signs, websites, notice sheets and orders of service.

As Australian society opens up, we face a new ethical challenge that wasn't present before. How do we respond when society is moving towards needing to be fully vaccinated to enter businesses, offices and indoor events?



The two core values point in opposite directions. The first principle of safety for the most vulnerable implies that people who are not fully vaccinated may need to be excluded for the safety of the vulnerable. The second principle of inclusion implies that we can't turn anyone away.

There are two questions that flow from this clash of equally valid principles. First, we have a duty of care to our volunteers. Can we reasonably ask a door steward or greeter to tell someone at the door that they can't enter? Second, we have a duty as Christians, individually and collectively, to obey the state, unless there are compelling reasons to disobey.

When questioned by a lawyer, Jesus affirmed the centrality of the command “Love your neighbour as yourself” (Leviticus 19:8; Luke 10:25-28). Now, the lawyer's next question may be a dodge, “Who is my neighbour?” (Luke 10:29). But his question

becomes for us “To whom do we owe our primary duty of care: the vulnerable or the unvaccinated?” The principle of being a safe place tells us that the vulnerable are our primary neighbour. However, the principle of being inclusive tells us that the unvaccinated are our primary neighbour.

Whichever path we take will exclude someone. Protecting the vulnerable excludes the unvaccinated. Including the unvaccinated may exclude the vulnerable who are afraid to come into an unsafe place. Congregations have already wrestled with questions of inclusion and exclusion. “To sing or not to sing” and “to wear or not to wear a mask” are but two.

Then there is the “digital divide”, people with limited access to broadband internet, or who lack technical ability, or have experienced exclusion from online worship. However, “the last, the least and the lost” already may experience exclusion because of social inequality – low levels of education and English, as well as personal limitations, including disability and (for some) age.

Some churches decided it was better to have online worship, that may exclude some, than no worship at all. Others distributed printed or pre-recorded DVDs, with no streamed worship. Some congregations who had to wrestle with reduced capacity and turning people away, or rationing members' attendance, developed new ways of gathering. One example was having 1 or 2 online services alternated with resourced home church gatherings (when allowed). Other congregations have gathered monthly in the open air or a large borrowed space. These are all examples of dealing with questions of inclusion and exclusion.

What we do with the new inclusion/exclusion challenge around vaccination status is still unclear. Nevertheless, as Wesley would have said, our struggle can be informed by our UCA tradition and scripture on one hand, and our experience and reason on the other. Whichever way we go, our ethics are not just a matter of opinion or theory, but decision and action.

*Rob McFarlane is experienced in institutional ethics in public hospitals and non-government agencies and has served on Uniting Church ethics working groups around issues such as euthanasia.*

## A prayer about aging

Lord thou knowest better than I know myself,  
that I am growing older and will someday be old.

Keep me from the fatal habit  
of thinking I must say something  
on every subject and on every occasion.

Release me from craving to straighten out  
everybody's affairs.

Make me thoughtful but not moody,  
helpful but not bossy.

With my vast store of wisdom,  
it seems a pity not to use it all,  
but thou knowest, Lord,  
that I want a few friends at the end.

Amen

## Prayer

We know that in the gathering of the people,  
power is present among us; the Holy Spirit stirs  
and moves and gives us courage to remember  
that all good gifts come first from you.

In the words of the psalmist,

“God speaks: the heavens are made;

God breathes: the stars shine.

God bottles the waters of the sea and stores them in the deep.

All earth, be astounded, stand in awe of God.

Keep us faithful to this gathering in faith and bless this vine your right  
hand has planted.”

Now and forever, Amen.

*Taken from liturgy materials used on Earth Day 1997 at Seattle University*



## Acknowledging country – an Indigenous understanding

On a recent episode of the ABC documentary series, *Back to Nature*, Jamie Graham-Blair discussed his relationship to country. Studying Marine and Antarctic Science he sees this kinship connection through western scientific eyes. “Every molecule in our body, every atom, every protein, every acid comes from somewhere, right? Our physical being is made up of hundreds and thousands, millions and billions of little tiny components that we get from the air we breathe, the water we drink and the food we eat. Every plant you see here, every bird you hear singing ... this stump that we’re sitting on. It’s very possible that we’re sitting on atoms that were within my Old People, my actual ancestors.”



Jamie’s ancestors were often cremated within the “big scar” trees in the forest, releasing their spirits to the country – their physical being taken up by these trees. When we use them in smoking ceremonies, I’m physically and spiritually introducing you to those Old People.”

The idea that humans are part of the environment, and the wellbeing of one depends on the other, is a recurring theme in the Indigenous stories. Everything is connected and needs respect – not just humans, animals, trees and rocks – but land and sky, and past and present.

Aaron Pedersen, a descendant of the Arrernte and Arabana people of South Australia, talks of the sense of belonging and revitalisation he feels on country.

“The rivers, mountains, and red earth are a part of me. I belong to this land, this country, this planet, this cosmos. I’m connected to billions of stars and planets that are floating through space.”

The remnant crater west of Alice Springs called Tnorala (Gosses Bluff) is a special place for the Western Arrernte

people – a place of great cultural significance. In the Dreaming, a group of sky women danced as stars in the Milky Way. One of the women placed her baby in a wooden coolamon. As the women continued dancing, the coolamon fell and the baby plunged into the earth. The force of the baby striking the ground drove these rocks upwards. And this crater was created.”

Karlie Noon, Gamilaraay woman, is an astrophysicist and astronomer. She has studied the Milky Way, and recalls something an elder once told her. “What is on the land is reflected in the sky. And what is in the sky, is reflected on the land.”

For Karlie, the creation story told by Aaron fits with western accounts of the crater being formed by a space rock crashing there 142 million years ago. “We’re really looking at the same thing, just in a different way.”

On Ngarigo land in the foothills of Mount Kosciuszko, the Snowy River twists through valleys and foothills a thousand metres beneath its birthplace. Wiradjuri man Richard Swain reads this country and sees the marks left on it by the countless men, women and children who have travelled this route over thousands of years.



Richard invites people to listen to the voice of the land, as Indigenous people have done for so long. “If you’re walking through the bush and really relaxed – birds are chirping. If you get off track and don’t feel so good – the bush goes quiet. When you get back on track – things feel good again. That’s country speaking to you and crying out for people to listen to it.”

To Wurundjeri elder, Aunty Di Kerr – “The main thing is to always acknowledge that you’re on country, because acknowledging that and acknowledging the ancestors, actually helps you feel safer on country.”

*Back to Nature is available on demand on ABC iview.*

## News from Morialta...



Doug was celebrated as he retired from preaching at Morialta UC.



Ray and Margaret were recognised for their service to Morialta UC, as Ray stepped down as our faithful cleaner.



Soraya turned 6 and celebrated her birthday, (delayed due to lockdown), with a mermaid party with friends and family at a local playground.

## Fellowship news

*Margaret Clogg*

At our Fellowship meeting in September, we were all challenged with a variety of quizzes and puzzles. There was a great deal of hilarity as members tried to find appropriate answers to many curly questions.

We enjoy fun and fellowship together during our BYO lunches and we look forward to the October 21st meeting when Gill Sullivan will talk to us about his life through music'

Every-one is welcome to join us at our meetings, which start at 10.00am with a cup of tea or coffee.

If you would like more information, please talk to Margaret Clogg.



## Anti-Poverty Week: 17 – 23 October

Every community in South Australia has children, young people and families enduring financial stress and poverty. This year due to the impacts of COVID, responding to poverty and hardship must take on an even greater priority. The evidence shows that unemployment, under-employment, financial and housing stress and mental health problems are compounded by COVID.

Anti-Poverty Week is observed every year in the week around the United Nations Day for the Eradication of Poverty on 17 October. It aims to increase understanding of poverty and to encourage us to take action collectively to end it.

The key message is: *Poverty exists. Poverty hurts us all. We can all do something about it.* It is one of hope, not despair.

Helen Connolly, Commissioner for Children and Young People has written to churches and their communities to seek our support at this time. "That is why Synod is seeking your support and the support of Church communities throughout South Australia."

Two new initiatives that churches can take up are:

1. The display of the Anti-Poverty Week logo and core message on digital screens during Anti-Poverty Week.
2. Providing information in church newsletters and doing things to raise awareness of the injustice of poverty, as well as practical steps church communities can take.

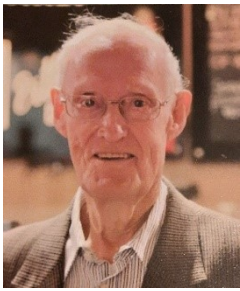
New evidence of the link between financial hardship as a cause and consequence of family violence for women has also been published.

We can also encourage Governments to unlock poverty for individuals, families, and children by:

- raising income support above the poverty line and investing in social housing;
- fixing child support compliance as non-payment is a form of financial abuse and control;
- building more social housing so women don't have to risk homelessness by leaving;
- including measurable targets in the future National Safety Plan;
- committing to tackling gender inequality, the main driver of violence.

The Anti-Poverty website [www.antipovertyweek.org.au](http://www.antipovertyweek.org.au) has an abundance of material your group will find informative and engaging.

## Edward (Ted) Burford (1936-2021)



Ted was born at the Clare Hospital in 1936 and was the middle son of Henry Harrold and Ruby Mills Burford. He grew up on a farm at Yacka, where life was frugal and disciplined, but never lacked in wholesome food and love. His dad worked long hours and the boys had many tasks to undertake after school.

Ted attended primary school at Yacka, travelling to school on horses, which were put in a paddock and needed to be attended to at recess and lunch time. Ted enjoyed school and remembered vividly the end of year school concert, sports day, football matches and geography excursions.

After school, horses had to be fed, eggs collected, cows milked, and separator turned. After tea they did their homework.

In their spare time they trapped rabbits, using their horses to carry their haul. They were paid one shilling (about 10 cents) for each rabbit. In year 11 Ted built a pigsty and his dad bought him 2 pigs, which he bred, and he sold the litter at Red Hill market. His bank account reached 1000 pounds (\$2000) and the money paid for a quarter of their first home in Adelaide.

Ted attended Gladstone High and won a State Bursary and a Commonwealth Scholarship in his final years. However, his dad wouldn't allow him to accept them as he felt it would be sponging off the government. Instead, Ted passed an entrance mathematics test to be accepted to study Electrical Engineering at Adelaide Uni, and successfully applied for a cadetship at ETSA.

Ted attended Enfield Methodist Church on Sunday nights where a certain young lady (Lorraine Farmer), dressed in a white frock, caught his eye. Although Lorraine was not all that impressed, Ted persisted and they were married at Enfield Methodist Church on a 42-degree day on the 24<sup>th</sup> of January 1959, followed by a short five-day honeymoon at Port Lincoln. They were thrilled with their new life together and very proud of their new house at Tranmere.

Ted was a very community minded person with a passion for helping others. He began his service to the community by becoming the leader of the church youth group at Enfield where he worked hard at engaging youth. He continued this role at Barmera, where they lived for three years, also joining the golf club and immediately becoming the Treasurer. He was also a member of the Apex club at Barmera and later at Clare.

On returning to Clare, he joined Rotary and was President within 4 years. Rotary remained a very big part of his life and he went on to hold all of the positions within the club at one time or another, including president twice. He received two Paul Harris medals among other honours, which included the 50 years presidential award for service to Clare Rotary Club.

Ted was also president of Clare Primary School Council for 9 years and the High School for 11 years. When his son played football, Ted volunteered to be a field umpire for the junior and senior colts. He also mentored high school students, conducting mock interviews to assist them in finding jobs. He supervised the building of the new golf course in Clare in 1969 and was construction supervisor of new greens in 1980. Later he chaired the building committee for the Clare Uniting Church retirement village, and also helped to paint the church. After retirement Ted and Lorraine spent several months in Katherine helping clean up and repair houses after severe flooding.

Ted had a very successful career with ETSA, becoming Regional Manager in Clare (1969) and returning to Adelaide as Acting Manager Country Regions prior to retiring.

Ted joined Morialta Uniting Church when he moved to Adelaide, where he 'quickly moved in' and became a valued member, helping with various clean up and repair projects, and supporting the Sunday Youth discussion program. Ted always had a warm greeting and an infectious smile for everyone.

## A story about good neighbours

*Contributed by David Purling*

A Uniting Church in Sydney is literally neighbours with a Muslim school. The school was planning some building work and asked the church if they could use the church property during lunch break and for some classes.

Representatives from the school and the church sat down together to negotiate what it meant, in practical terms, to be neighbours. The school wanted to make some financial contribution to the church, and the church people said 'as neighbours we are committed to sharing what we have with you.' It was agreed that the school make a donation, as they saw fit, to the church. So the building project went ahead and the students used the property.

Prior to the building work, there was a high, impenetrable fence between the two properties. After the redevelopment a new lower fence appeared that included a gate. The school director describes it as the 'Friendship Gate.' Neighbours have gates in their fences.

*Grand Mosque and Catholic Cathedral are good neighbours in Jakarta.*



## Remembering John Shelby Spong (1931–2021)

Bishop Spong has been an extraordinary figure in the life of the church in the 20th century. Whilst a bishop in the Episcopal Church in the USA, his influence has been across denominations and across continents, with countless thousands of thinking, exploring Christian believers, questioning received doctrines, exploring new ways of understanding what it means to be a person of faith, living out their discipleship in fresh and innovative ways.

Many people of faith (including members of MUC) point to Spong as the person who first opened up their understanding about faith. He drew new visions, offered different understandings, provided viable options for people to hold to their faith in the increasingly complex and secularised world of the later 20th century. The miracles of Jesus, the resurrection of Jesus (and of believers), the Virgin Birth, the inerrancy of scripture – these, and more, he explained in his books in ways that “the ordinary believer” could understand.

Many then went on to discover the work of Dominic Crossan, Marcus Borg, the Jesus Seminar and locally, Australian voices such as Val Webb, Rex Hunt, and Greg Jenks. Many across the church have been enriched by the articulate, faithful writings and speaking of such people. Spong opened the door for them to experience a wider audience.

Not only people with progressive viewpoints are in the debt of Spong. There are many evangelical scholars who have benefitted from the spadework done by more progressive scholars – adopting historical criticism, using it to illuminate the biblical text, and eventually enhancing understandings of scripture amongst evangelicals, even conservatives, and not just progressives.

Bishop Spong last visited Adelaide in June 2001 at the invitation of the Rev David Carter, the late Rev Nairn Kerr and others. This allowed many of us to react with him and benefit from his insights and scholarship. He helped popularise and make widely known an extensive set of insights about what it means to have an informed faith that “makes sense” in the contemporary world.

We give thanks for his ministry of deepening and broadening the whole Christian exploration of scripture, faith, and discipleship.

*Adapted from an article posted by John T Squires, on ‘Informed Earth’*

### Humanity hanging on a cross of iron

Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired, signifies in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, who are cold and are not clothed.

This world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children.

This is not a way of life at all in any true sense.

Under the clouds of war, it is *humanity hanging on a cross of iron.*

*Dwight D Eisenhower*

## Looking ahead

### World Mental Health Day

will be observed on 10<sup>th</sup> October and this year the message is simple - *Look after your mental health, Australia!*  
<https://lookafteryourmentalhealthaustralia.org.au/>

### International Day for Rural Women

will be celebrated on 15<sup>th</sup> October and gender-responsive investments in rural areas have never been more critical. The theme for 2021 is “Building rural women's resilience in the wake of COVID-19”, to create a Rural Women's Day awareness of these women's struggles, their needs, and their critical and key role in our society.

<https://www.ruralwomensday.com.au>

### Anti-Poverty Week

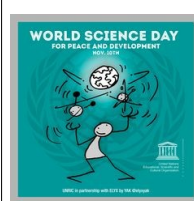
is observed from 17<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> October around **International Day for the Eradication of Poverty**. The day is observed to provide an opportunity to acknowledge the effort and struggle of people living in poverty; provide a chance for them to make their concerns heard; and a moment to recognize that poor people are the first ones to fight against poverty – see separate article in this edition.

[www.antipovertyweek.org.au](http://www.antipovertyweek.org.au)

### Disarmament Week

is observed from 24<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> October to raise awareness about the dangers of the arms race. During the week, the UN urges Member States to advance international peace and security by eliminating nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction.

### World Science Day for Peace and Development



celebrated on 10<sup>th</sup> November, highlights the important role of science in society and the need to engage the wider public in debates on emerging scientific issues. It also underlines the importance and relevance of science in our daily lives.

### Armistice Day

is observed on 11<sup>th</sup> November. At the 11th hour on the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918 the Great War ended. At 5am that morning, Germany, bereft of manpower and supplies and faced with imminent invasion, signed an armistice agreement with the Allies in a railroad car outside Compiègne, France.



### World Antibiotic Awareness Week,

13-19 November raises our consciousness about antibiotic resistance and how we need to observe the proper use of antibiotics. WHO defines it as: “Antibiotic resistance occurs when bacteria change in response to the use of these medicines. Bacteria, not humans or animals, become antibiotic-resistant.”



## Friends and Puppets

*From a friend and colleague of Margaret Cargill*

In the 1990s when I was a visiting professor at Moscow State University some law students asked to come to my distant Schelkovskaya apartment. I could see that they didn't only want a home cooked meal and conversations about language. They really required food for their souls because so much abstract knowledge seemed to hinder active thought. They were worn out and losing liveliness. In reality, although they didn't know it then, they desired to learn how to apply intellect to social needs. These very clever students felt a reality when told that Marionettes got their name because humans dared not perform the most sacred roles in Miracle Plays on the steps of English and French cathedrals, so instead carved "Little Marys."

I phoned the Sydney consul, Mr Nestorov, who with the Ambassador, had officially invited me to Russia in '93. He was on leave in Moscow and he bravely suggested an event in a prison. A week later he had got round the massive seemingly impossible paperwork involved in taking pretty girls and handsome youths into a jail. We performed, "The Soldier and Death", written by Arthur Ransome, translated into Russian and adapted by the students.

Nothing could have prepared me and the young idealists for the response. The room was hot and the criminals had their shirts off to show jail tattoos that were beautiful, sinister and biographical. There was the gagging stink of exaggerated masculinity. But our elegant narrator had only to raise an elegant finger to her lips to get silence.

## Call for CLIMATE ACTION

From SA Synod's EAG and NSW Synod's Uniting Climate Network (UCAN) 'Statement to the Nation' in 1977.

*"We are concerned with the basic human rights of future generations and will urge the wise use of energy, the protection of the environment and the replenishment of the earth's resources for their use and enjoyment."*

This visionary statement was made at a time when concerns about climate change were only just emerging. Now the situation has become more urgent.

UCAN and EAG invite all Uniting Churches to publicise the call for **CLIMATE ACTION NOW on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> October** as part of the build-up for COP 26 in Glasgow from 1 - 12 November 2021.

COP26 is the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). It aims to limit temperature rise to 1.5 degrees by urging countries to develop targets to reach net zero emissions by 2050 by: accelerating the phase-out of coal; curtailing deforestation; speeding up the switch to electric vehicles; and encouraging investment in renewables.

The performance started and the belligerent audience suddenly transformed. The tough guys fearfully covered their eyes when Death approached Ivan Ivanovich, and they slurped as the wetnurse showed a breast to feed the baby. They wiped away tears as the little prince was dying. They cheered when Good Soldier Ivan opened his magic sack and trapped Death. And they joined in the chorus, "For everyone knows, fire can't burn a Russian soldier and water can't drown him."

On the way back to Moscow Mr Nesterov said that the prison doctors at the back of the room had been discussing the phenomenon.

"Had the emotional maturation of the prisoners stopped at 4 to 5 years, thus causing criminality, or had the puppets stripped away lifetimes of accumulated defence mechanisms to reveal the innocence of childhood?"

When I told the story at the bunya, the psychology genius Вадим Петровский Vadim Petrovskiy said, "There is a third possibility. What if we are all puppets ignoring the mechanisms of our manipulations, and by witnessing the performance we are suddenly freed from the instinctive rationality we use to justify everything? For a moment we know the puppeteer is our unacknowledged self and the prison bars are our unrecognised self-created situations."

*Postscript:*

Time elapsed and I was in a cheap Moscow cab at the traffic lights when a long posh car stopped in the neighbouring lane. The black glass of the back passenger window electronically slid down. I wound down the Lada window with trepidation.

A well-groomed young official said in clear American accented English, "Remember taking law students with puppets to jail? I was Death, the Devil and the Mad Tsar. I'm now in the Government Attorneys Department. I'm doing all I can. Don't you recognise me? I'm....."

The climate is already changing and it will continue to change even as we reduce emissions, with devastating effects. Countries need to work together to enable and encourage those affected by climate change to: protect and restore ecosystems; and build defences, warning systems and resilient infrastructure and agriculture to avoid loss of homes, livelihoods and even lives.

We can only rise to the challenges of the climate crisis by working together.

## Supporting young Australians

On **Friday 15<sup>th</sup> October**, many students will walk out of classrooms around Australia in a global call for climate action. Led by the children who started the movement, they will be saying "no more" to new fossil fuels and "yes" to a sustainable future. A majority of climate scientists tell us that we are facing a climate emergency and the time to act is now.

That's why we, the Uniting Church, will be standing with students from our UC school to support the schools' climate strike on Friday, October 15<sup>th</sup>.

## Indigenous Australians

In this edition we publish a brief history of the life of a revered aboriginal woman who made major contributions to the Uniting Church, the UAICC and her people.



### Lucy Waniwa Lester (1940 – 2021)

Aunty Lucy Waniwa Lester was born at Tieyon station on Anangu country. When she was about eight, Lucy moved to Pukatja (Ernabella Mission) so she could attend school. Ernabella was a Presbyterian mission station where First Nations people were encouraged to speak and retain their own languages. Lucy, who spoke Yankunytjatjara, was introduced to the Pitjantjatjara language. Lucy served as an interpreter for speakers of both languages for many years and even in her 70s was still volunteering as an interpreter in the Port Augusta prison, providing comfort to the many Anangu there.

Lucy later became a teacher assistant at Ernabella and studied early childhood education at what is now the Bachelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education. (then Bachelor TAFE).

When she was 17, Lucy moved to Adelaide at the invitation of Dr Charles and Phyllis Duguid – Duguid was the founder of Ernabella and the first lay moderator of the Presbyterian Church in South Australia.

Here she held various jobs with the Department of Aboriginal Affairs working in arts and crafts, and then at the Aboriginal Advancement League's Wiltja Hostel at Millswood – established in 1956 to accommodate Aboriginal girls from country areas attending secondary schools in Adelaide.

Lucy also volunteered at Adelaide hospitals, visiting and translating for patients from the APY Lands. It was through her hospital visits that Lucy met her husband Yami Lester, a Yankunytjatjara man, who was being treated by eye surgeons at the Royal Adelaide Hospital.

Yami and Lucy married in 1966 in the Grote Street Church of Christ. They had three children, Leroy, Rosemary and Karina. In 1970, Lucy and Yami joined the Uniting Church in Alice Springs as interpreters, beginning a long ministry in both the APY Lands and Alice Springs with the late Rev Jim Downing and the Institute for Aboriginal Development (IAD).

In 1981, Lucy and Dr Deidre Palmer were joint delegates at the World Federation of Methodist Women in Hawaii. She was involved in the formation of UAICC and was at the meeting on Elcho Island in 1983.

Lucy was a talented artist and her artwork is an enduring reminder of her giftedness in expressing her faith and culture in meaningful ways. One of her major pieces was a painting depicting the Last Supper in bush country which Lucy presented to Rev Ken Sumner. The artwork now hangs at Yarthu Apinthe, Uniting College, in Adelaide, and features in the Bible Society book of First People's art, "Our Mob, God's Story".

While in Port Augusta, Lucy became a mentor for Aunty Denise, now Rev Dr Denise Champion and she later participated in the laying on of hands at Denise's ordination.

Aunty Lucy had a real love and passion for language, especially her Yankunytjatjara language. She always taught with deep wisdom and knowledge and used her language to do that.

## You are not our liberator



*Adapted from an article by Omara Guevara Ogaram whose campaigning led to the establishment of an EU Emergency Trust Fund to address the root cause of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa.*

Omara argues that those who came as "Liberators" – whether 17 and 18<sup>th</sup> century colonists or 21<sup>st</sup> century militia – did not bring freedom.

You claim you have liberated us. This is not true. Before you came, we had our way of life. We did not want to be liberated from anyone. We were free. We grew crops and looked after cows. We were peaceful.

Every family had a way of survival. We were never beggars. We had our way of supporting each other. Every planting season, we worked as a community. When we lost our loved

ones, we buried them as a community. A newborn was welcomed to the clan by everyone. We never knew famine. We had food. We lived happily, drank our ajon\* and enjoyed our lives.



Then, you came ... you dispossessed us; we were driven into the wilderness. You watched as our last cow was stolen. Our granaries were destroyed. You stared as our mothers and sisters were raped. You did nothing as our children were brutally killed. You laughed as our old men were humiliated. We are now swimming and choking in poverty and misery. And you are calling yourself a liberator?

No! We refuse to believe you are our liberator. A liberator protects and guides. We believe that one day we shall emerge from the misery that you caused – a stronger and more prosperous community.

\*Ajon - A type of beer brewed from finger millet in northern and eastern Uganda.

## Reflection

The high, the low – all of creation – God gives to humankind to use. If this privilege is misused, God's Justice permits creation to punish humanity.

*Hildegard of Bingen (1098 - 1179)*

## Free speech

*Adapted from an article by Luke Zaphir and Peter Ellerton from the University of Queensland Critical Thinking Project, published in the Conversation September 2021.*

The recent protests in Melbourne raise important questions about the nature of freedom of speech. Do the actions of the police represent an attempt to limit what people can say, think or believe?

The Australian constitution does not have explicit statements regarding free speech. But the right to freedom of opinion and expression is contained in articles 19 and 20 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

When we talk about freedom of speech we're actually talking about (at least) two things: freedom of opinion or belief, and freedom of expression.

Freedom of opinion gives us the right to hold a belief without interference, exception or restriction. We have the right to believe anything we want. We can believe the earth is flat.

Freedom of expression is more complicated. We have the right to say what we want — to give our opinions, advertise, display art and protest — but within limits. Most people are aware of these limits: we aren't allowed to say fighting words, slander another person's name, cause a panic, or incite violence.

An analogy is that we have the right to drive freely on roads provided we observe limits on speed, parking restrictions and the amount of alcohol we have consumed.

Simplistically, limits on what we say, where we say it and how we act are like limits on the road – designed to optimise both our rights and public harmony.

The protesters were claiming and acting as if they have a right to not conform to restrictions put in place for the sake of public health and safety. In other words, they are not acknowledging any limits.

There are consequences to this, just as there are consequences to breaking road rules.

But what about when the free speech is done in a privately owned sphere but is available to the public – such as social media platforms? Both news organisations and individuals have been banned from social media platforms — example US President Donald Trump. This is not a government blocking people from expressing their opinions but a private entity with its own rules and regulations.

Private businesses also allow people into their stores so long as they accept certain conditions governing their behaviour. Most people think this is reasonable.

But what if we did not allow people of a certain racial background into our coffee shop? Or certain genders? Almost no one would think that was reasonable. The conversation needs to be about whether limitations are fair and reasonable.

And if you're free to express an idea, people are free to respond to you, and perhaps dismiss you. Your right to be heard is not a right to be taken seriously.

*'In order to maintain a tolerant society, the society must be intolerant of intolerance' - Karl Popper.*

## A poem of hope during the pandemic

And the people stayed home.  
And read books, and listened, and rested, and exercised, and  
made art, and played games, and learned new ways of being,  
and were still.

And listened more deeply.  
Some meditated, some prayed, some danced.  
Some met their shadows.

And the people began to think differently.

And the people healed.  
And, in the absence of people living in ignorant, dangerous,  
mindless, and heartless ways, the earth began to heal.

And when the danger passed, and the people joined together  
again, they grieved their losses, and made new choices, and  
dreamed new images, and created new ways to live and heal  
the earth fully, as they had been healed.

*Kitty O'Meara (2020)*



## Changing the world

*From words inscribed on the tomb of an Anglican Bishop (1100AD) in Westminster Abbey London.*

When I was young and free and my imagination had no limits,  
I dreamed of changing the world.

As I grew older and wiser I discovered the world would not  
change – so I shortened my sights somewhat and decided to  
change only my country, but it too seemed immovable.

As I grew into my twilight years, in one last desperate  
attempt, I settled for changing only my family, those closest  
to me, but alas, they would have none of it.

And now I realize as I lie on my deathbed, if I had only  
changed myself first, then by example I might have changed  
my family. From their inspiration and encouragement, I would  
then have been able to better my country,  
And who knows, I might have even changed the world.

*Contributed by David Purling.*