



Witness



Easter at St Ninian's 2025

St Ninian's Uniting Church, Lyneham

June- July 2025

St Ninian's Uniting Church, Cnr Mouat and Brigalow Sts, Lyneham

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Treasurer	Gwen Souter treasurer@stninians.org.au
Finance Committee Convenor	John Cutts (as above)
Chairperson, Property Committee	Cheryl Wright
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Services of Worship at St Ninian's each Sunday at 9.30 am.

MATERIAL FOR NEXT WITNESS IS DUE ON: Sunday 27 July

From the Minister

'ARE WE IN OUR WINTER SEASON OF OUR FAITH JOURNEY?'



As our journey through life continues, we often use the yearly turnover of the seasons as an image to express how we feel. As we have entered the winter season, I'm using the season of winter for this short message. In many ways, aging can be seen as entering a 'winter season' of our faith journey. Just as winter is a time of dormancy in our gardens and nature, it can feel like we've entered into a time of stillness and reflection in our spiritual lives. However, this perspective doesn't take into consideration the potential for growth and purpose that can come during this quiet time. This is usually a time when we can sit still for longer periods of time and just simply 'be' with the Spirit, rather than busying ourselves with what we feel we must 'do'.

In winter, the earth may appear barren, but beneath the surface, life is preparing itself for spring. Similarly, in our later years, even when we may not be as active as we might like to be or as visible as we once were, God is still at work within us. This can be a time of deepening wisdom, as we have more time to set aside and listen to what the Holy Spirit is saying to us. It's a season where we contemplate the lessons learned and the many blessings we have received throughout our lives. We may find ourselves called to focus on prayer, mentorship, or quiet service within our faith community, each demonstrating our faith in a subtle, and yet confident way. We all age and experience what comes with ageing, however, the good thing about it is God's plans for us don't diminish with age. When we turn to the scriptures, we can see how God still has a use for those who are aged. I have a few examples to share: take for

example Moses who was called to serve God when he was 80 or thereabouts; Sarah had a baby at 90; and Elizabeth had John at 88, Anna the prophetess, shared the news of Jesus as a 105-year-old. These stories remind us that God's purpose for us isn't constrained by our age; as you can see it's expansive and ever unfolding.

In this 'winter' phase of our lives, we have the unique opportunity to reflect on our lives, crafting legacies of faith that can inspire the younger generations. Sharing our stories, wisdom, and the lessons of life we have learned along the way, both the positive and the negative, always with the attitude offering hope and encouragement as they make their own way in the world.

Winter also has the potential to be seen as a symbolic time for resting and relying on God more deeply. As we age, we may find ourselves in need of grace and support, leading to a richer relationship with our Saviour. It's often in our moments of vulnerability that we experience God's holy and gentle presence more intensely.

Ultimately, while we may encounter a time of peace and quiet in our faith journey, it's important for us to know that isn't a signal the end is nigh. Instead, this time can be a gift for spiritual growth, deep and meaningful self-reflection, and divine encounter, assuring us that God still has something quite remarkable for us to achieve regardless of our age.

Rev'd Sharon Cutts

News of People

We think of

- Enid Webster's family following her recent death. Her funeral was held at St Ninian's on 29 May.
- Anne Bouma's family, following her death on 25 May and now reunited with her soulmate Dirk,
- Jan Livingstone who has been in hospital recently.
- David and Margaret Clark, as Margaret has also been in hospital.

- Robyn and Thomas Russell as Robyn is not well.
- Grace Sugden who is in a rehabilitation centre in Red Hill for a short stay.

You are all in our thoughts and prayers.

Marion McConnell enjoyed a trip to Japan in May, and Kingsley Sutton also visited Japan recently

BOOK SALE: HELP IS NEEDED URGENTLY...

...TO SORT BOOKS FOR OUR MID YEAR BOOK SALE which is on Friday 13th and Saturday 14th June, 9am-1pm.

We would be most grateful for any assistance sorting books into categories for non-fiction and alphabetical order for authors in fiction on Tuesday 10/6, Wednesday 11/6 and Thursday 12/6 at 9.30-2.30pm

On Saturday 14/6 we need help closing down the sale and returning unsold books and tables to the shed. This involves lots of physical work so some extra MANpower would be wonderful

We really need more Children's books in clean and good condition too please. At this stage no more Adult books are needed. Our shed is full.

At this stage we would like to thank our terrific Radford College helpers who will be bringing the books to the hall on Tuesday morning and thus helping us with a lot of the heavy lifting. This is greatly appreciated.

We look forward to seeing many of you this busy sorting period. Thank you in anticipation.

Kay Hahne and Barbara Mackay.

Women's Activity Group (WAGs)

Wags has had a busy few weeks. In April some of our group met at Stepping Stones in Dickson for morning tea and a chat. Stepping Stones is a small cafe tucked away from the main shopping area, is predominantly

vegetarian and is mainly staffed by refugee women. Leading up to Easter, Sharon, our minister, led us through a communion to celebrate Maundy Thursday. It was a very fitting way to lead into Good Friday and Easter. In May a few of us travelled to Murrumbateman to see the painted water tower. After a delicious morning tea, we headed off to view the magnificent painting of two Gang Gang cockatoos. They are certainly worth visiting and we were all very impressed by the way in which the painting was done by the artist. At our last meeting we had my friend Susie Nelson talk about her experiences on The Chaser which is a quiz programme shown each night on Channel 7. It was interesting to hear about the steps taken to get on the show, the happenings prior to filming each segment and how nerve racking answering the questions were. Last Sunday we had our morning tea to raise money for the Cancer Council. Thanks to the generosity of all those who contributed we raised \$1290 which was wonderful effort. Thank you to all who brought food, helped in the kitchen and to Joyce McGuire and John Cutts who collected the money on the day. A huge thank you to everyone involved.

Irene Reid

Uniting Church Adult Fellowship (UCAF)

John Masterson was an interesting speaker who addressed our April meeting. A volunteer with Lifeline Bookfair for 13 years he has filled different roles, beginning in logistics to now being involved with the sorting process. He not only described the processes and systems involved but also told us something about the type of books and related products received. John gave a very informative session, impressing us with both the professionalism of the helpers and the worth of the results achieved.

The May meeting was not held due to the clothing sale on 9-10 May and the need for preparation. Once more we received help from a Radford College group of students led by their teacher, Kath Notley. They did an excellent job and we are very thankful for

their efforts. Thanks also to Rev'd Sharon Cutts who made the arrangements and to all who donated items, helped with the preparations, worked in the kitchen and packed away. We were pleased with the amount of \$1,339.80 raised.

Pat Semmler

Coming Events

Meetings

4 June 2025 Speaker: Beth Roberts

Topic: Botanical Painting

2 July 2025 Speaker: Horst Hahne

Book Sale:

13-14 June 2025 We would appreciate help for this. Further information will be in the pew sheets.

Church Council

The St Ninian's Church Council meets every second month to oversight the life of the Congregation. A number of significant matters were on the last agenda being:

- The Meeting Place: The final proposal and application form for a grant from the the Synod Futures Fund were sent to the Synod Committee for consideration during May. Unfortunately, the grants exceeded the available funds, and we were not successful. The Meeting Place Sub-Committee will now look at the reasons we were not successful and determine if there is a possibility to re-submit a new application in August based on the feedback from the Synod Grants Committee. Also under consideration are potential alternative strategies for bringing to fruition a Meeting Place proposal that might be possible without grant funding. Watch this space.
- Church Finances continue to be a strong focus of Church Council and the new Finance Committee. St Ninian's continues to be holding its

own regarding income and expenditure. Cash at the bank is holding steady since start of the current year. Several factors are increased offering generosity, hall user income up.

- The Church Council extended an invitation to Rev'd Charles Vesely to be a Minister in Association at St Ninian's UC. This honorary role has been approved by the Pastoral Relations Committee under the regulations of the Uniting Church.
- Kevin Playford has been approved by the Presbytery as a Sacraments Lay Presider at St Ninian's, well done Kevin.

John Cutts
Secretary

Choir

From: Jane Allen, St Ninian's Choir Member.

I didn't sing in choirs until I was in my mid-50s. I had played piano since the age of 6, never more than moderately, and always enjoyed music in general. About twenty years ago I visited my sister in the UK and told her about my long-term desire to sing, and she promptly invited me to a rehearsal of the Latvian choir for which she was the accompanist. In five minutes flat she gave me the rudiments of Latvian language pronunciation, said she reckoned I was an alto, and I was off and singing! On my return to Australia I joined a community choir and, in turn, other groups including the Canberra Choral Society where Kay was already a member.

In 2011, following a harrowing divorce, I moved to Canberra's inner north and came to St Ninian's where I knew Kay was the choir director. I instantly felt like I had joined my new family, and time proved me spot on. I met new friends and started a very healing journey. And..... indeed I am an alto! I have been watching a program on the ABC called The Piano. Someone on that program, one of the many players who turned up to

play a piano situated in the middle of a big public place such as a major train station, said 'Music connects us all'. This summarises perfectly! Music is a joy, it is sustenance, it is a beautiful road travelled, and we all can share.

Here at St Ninian's we have a small but committed and talented choir. We sing all 'voices', though at present we are alas missing a 'bass' section – however our tenors make up for it! Kay is our endlessly patient and amazingly talented director. Our fabulous organists and pianists currently are Mervyn (and his wife Heather on viola), Linus, Sonja, Melda, and often Kay herself. We sing an anthem three weeks out of four and we have a few special events – at Christmas, Easter and sometimes other occasions such as the 'Come Sing With Us' afternoon. Our friends in the congregation always support us, often commenting when we sing an especially beautiful rendition, and some join us as and when needed. We are one big singing community.

I offer my sincerest thanks and appreciation to you all, current participants, occasional participants and supporters, and those past as well as present. To our Minister Sharon and her husband John, who bring vast energies, generosity and kindness to our lives at St Ninian's; to Kay and her incredible expertise and commitment; to the members of our choir and the musicians who accompany us; to the members of our congregation who listen so closely to the songs we sing. Thank you everyone for being there and for sharing our music. Sing! Enjoy! Feel it in your very souls!

EASTER 2025

Another successful lunch was held after worship on Palm Sunday in April. We had a great time, sharing in fellowship together. We had a game of 'Pick-a-Box' which included prizes and I'm sure the recipients really enjoyed them.



Palm Sunday Service

Maundy Thursday morning with WAGs was a time of sharing communion with each other with Kevin Playford leading a moving worship in the evening which was followed by a more solemn Good Friday service.



Maundy Thursday Service

Easter Sunday was a joyful occasion with the resurrection of Jesus Christ.



The flowers and wilderness that followed us through Lent now sitting in front of the open tomb in a garden with the light of Christ

The Choir continues to present us with music that enriches our worship experience. Well



The joy of Easter Sunday morning. After the Lent colour of purple is finished we have the opportunity to enjoy the bright and light-giving yellow through the church. The joy of Easter Sunday morning. After the Lent colour of purple is finished we have the opportunity to enjoy the bright and light-giving yellow through the church

done and much appreciation to all those who helped it be the experience it was. During Lent the ministry was supported by Neville Biggs, Kevin Playford and Rev Sharon Cutts. The team working together offers strengthened threads of diverse theologies and worship experiences to the St Ninian's congregation all through the year.

CEMENTING OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH RADFORD COLLEGE

Wow, what an exciting adventure we have started! More students from the college came to help with the May Clothing Sale. They had a wonderful time helping us, and just as young people do, they also had a session of playing dress-up.

It's a wonderful relationship that we are building together, building stronger connectivity in our community. Their help has made all the difference to setting up for the sales – they also made purchases on the day to help us.

Not only are they helping us with the clothing sale, they're also part of a brand new 'Hats for Homeless' in the area. On Friday May 23rd we had our first lunch lesson of creating



beanies with 25 young people, it would have been more except there was a cup cake stall happening at the same time. Rev Sharon will be there again on Friday May 30th with another group of young people. All in all, we have 40 students registered to be part of this community outreach. With those numbers in mind, we have a need for more beanie looms and thick ply wool in darker colours. Kath Notely the teacher at Radford is a remarkably energetic and caring teacher of her students.

The Shared Supper with Raio De Sol on Monday May 26th

was another great success with a real multi-cultural meal, lots of laughter and conversation with a soft background of Brazilian music to accompany us. There were 32 people covering all generations who came together to share a meal. It was wonderful to see the children playing their instruments with intensity to keep the rhythm, families coming together to share quality time and the mingling of different groups joining together as one – it was a light and life-giving evening of flowing blessings. The cleanup was done to the rhythms of the drums, and we couldn't help tapping our feet as we moved around the kitchen and hall. A great time again this year with many commenting 'we look forward to the next one!'. Thanks to all those who came to lend a helping hand.

Unfortunately, no photo is included in this article, due to either the editor's or the

computer's inadequacy. However, here is a link to photos of the shared supper.

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/13AclNOXXMpjCGyu8lTsxKVZStt2ww8q?usp=s_haring



COME SING WITH US 2025

Save the date! September 14th 2025

is the date for this years community singing 'Come Sing With Us.' Last year we had a fabulous response which has been the catalyst for us to be encouraged to have another one this year. More information will be shared about this later in the year.



Another save the date for July 6th.

Linus Lee and St Ninian's are having a Sunday afternoon concert 'Impromptu' at 2pm. The concert includes both organ and piano performances followed by afternoon tea. More information to follow.

Rosters April-May '25

Date	Stewards	Morning Tea	Bible Reading	Sunday Prayers	Sunday Flowers
1 Jun	A Briscoe, J V McGuire	C Wright (M), P Bourke	M Bush	Neville Briggs	Barbara Mackay
8 Jun	M McConnell, G Souter	K Campbell (M), I Reid,	J McGuire	Elizabeth Smith	Janice Schroder
15 Jun	K Olive, P Semmler	J Klemke (M), P Rodda	J Allen	Kingsley Sutton	Pat Bourke
22 Jun	T Lovie, G Souter	C Wright, J Roe (M	E Smith	Kevin Playford	Sharon Cutts
29 Jun	A Briscoe, J V McGuire	I Reid, J McGuire (M)	K Hahne	Rev'd Sharon or John Cutts	Anita Hutchinson
6 Jul	P Bourke, T Lovie	C Wright, P Bourke (M	A Briscoe	Anita Hutchinson	Barbara Mackay
13 Jul	T Lovie, G Souter	K Campbell, N Thompson (M)	J Schroder	Kingsley Sutton	Janice Schroder
20 Jul	A Briscoe, J V McGuire	J Klemke, M McConnell (M)	P Semmler	Elizabeth Smith	Pat Bourke
27 Jul	P Bourke, G Souter	J McGuire, I Reid (M)	K Hahne	Rev'd Sharon or John Cutts	Sharon Cutts
3 Aug	M McConnell, K Olive	K Campbell, J Roe (M)	A Briscoe		Anita Hutchinson
10 Aug	P Semmler, T Lovie	J Hobson, J V McGuire (M)	J Schroder		Barbara Mackay
17 Aug	N Thompson, K Olive	J Klemke, M McConnell (M)	P Semmler		Janice Schroder

PLEASE NOTE: If you have an (M) next to your name on the Morning Tea roster it means you are responsible for bringing the milk that Sunday. Thank you to all those who help on rosters. If your name isn't here and you would like to help please email me at stninians@stninians.org.au or give me a phone call. I WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU. Thanks Elizabeth

THE GARDEN GROUP usually meets on the first and third Mondays of each month from 9.30am for an hour or so. Let Mary Bush know if you would like to join the group. We always enjoy a cuppa and a chat out in the garden afterwards. Bill and Mary Bush