



March 2023 ISSUE 9

## PRESBYTERY OF THE RIVERINA

Discipleship and Education Committee

Removing the stops and roadblocks to learning. Like a roundabout, D&E strives to allow for the continuous journey forward in your faith through engagement and learning.



REGISTRATIONS NOW OPEN ~  
DUE 21ST APRIL 2023

### RIVERINA PRESBYTERY RETREAT

Retreat Leader - Rev Yvonne Ghavalas

5pm May 8th ~

1.30pm May 11th

St Clements

Retreat & Conference Centre  
Kalangan Rd, Galong, NSW

We encourage people to attend the full retreat, however if time doesn't allow this you are more than welcome to attend for a day or perhaps 2.

For more information please contact Lorraine on  
0427 204 051 or 0269 206 233



## Safe Church Awareness Face to Face Workshops

Some tentative dates have been shared for Face to Face workshops in the Riverina with more details to follow once arrangements are finalised. For more info contact Jenny Whitlock  
P: 0429 818 657 E: jandbw@bigpond.net.au

Cootamundra - April 29th

Coleambally - June 24th

Griffith - either Sept 9th or 16th



## Retreat Yourself

NOURISH TO FLOURISH

### The Presbytery Retreat ~ Galong May 8-11

Feel like you need rest and restoration? A comfy bed, delicious meals, beautiful grounds to walk in? What about amazing company plus a spiritual journey not to be missed?

If this sounds heavenly – then the Retreat at Galong in May is for you! Please give this unique opportunity some thought. You can come along for a day or 2 or the whole 4 days, whatever fits in with your busy lives.

Rev Yvonne Ghavalas – Southern Region minister is leading this year's retreat. Yvonne has a special gift of creativity and the theme is "Playing in Creation – Genesis 1".

I feel we are all in for a treat. So I encourage you to **say Yes** to this opportunity. See the flyer attached for details and registration.

# Presbytery Report

Nearly every one of Riverina's 26 congregations was represented at the Presbytery meeting held at Pilgrim. Dorothy Creek (Chair) led the liturgy and Rev Bronwyn Murphy (Associate General Secretary) gave the reflection. Rev Yvonne Ghalalas presided over Communion to close the meeting.

## Presbytery Leadership Changes

As no nominations had been received for the positions of Chair, Treasurer, Property Officer and Webmaster in 2023, the Moderator appointed Rev Bronwyn Murphy to the role of Presbytery Chair. With prayer and words of appreciation, we released Dorothy Creek (Chair), George Thomas (Treasurer) and Paul Creek (Property Officer) from their Presbytery roles, and Rev Bronwyn Murphy put on the Presbytery stole and crucifix as the outward symbols of her new role.

## Regional Partnership Model

In response to Presbytery's request in November 2022 for a consultative review with Synod of our Presbytery structure, staff and regional ministry, the Synod team presented the summary of its findings and recommendations.

Rev Bronwyn Murphy and Rev Rob McFarlane (Presbytery Relations Minister) detailed the nuts and bolts of the Model. Rev Peter Overton (Saltbush/Far North Coast Presbytery) gave examples of how effectively the Partnership is working in FNC. The Model's aims are to:

1. direct local energy to ministry and mission in congregations using Saltbush staff and initiatives
2. provide Synod support by managing finances and property

After breakout discussion sessions, the following resolution was agreed by consensus.

(i) To support joining the Regional Partnership model in principle.

(ii) To nominate 5 people to work with Synod in working out details:

- George Thomas
- Jackie Stempel
- Jen Lawler
- Stephen Trickett
- Wendy Fraser

(iii) To report back to the next Riverina Presbytery meeting for final approval. I propose the next Presbytery meeting be held Saturday, 17 June 2023, to allow time for the work to be done and to separate multiple Presbytery meetings on the same date.

*'The purpose of the Church/Riverina Presbytery is to...be a Presbytery that supports the ministry and discipleship of local congregations and develop structures to meet growing needs of congregations and regions.'* (Season of Discernment, 2022)



## *Training in Information Technology*

Would you like to be able use computer technology in worship services to a greater extent? Are you not quite sure what you can and cannot do without breaking copyright laws?

Presbytery wide training is being held during 2023 to take advantage of Rev. Keith Robinson's background in the IT profession.

All the training will be both in person and via Zoom. You are encouraged to attend in person if possible.

The following dates have been organised:



### **Session 1: Downloading video/audio files and inserting them into PowerPoint Presentations – 2 hours**

**Sat 6<sup>th</sup> May, 10.30 am.** Cootamundra Uniting Church, corner of Cooper and Adams Street, Cootamundra.

You will be provided with some excellent sources for obtaining music, videos and sermons and shown how to download them using the free 4K software. You will also be shown how to insert them into PowerPoint presentations. A brief introduction to some copyright matters included.

### **Session 2: Music in worship – 2 hours**

**Sat 24 Jun, 10.30 am.** Location to be advised (depending on who wants to come).

This session will go into more detail on copyright and licensing as well as help prepare congregations for situations where they do not have someone to play music. It will also provide some advice on equipment requirements.

### **Session 3: IT in worship & meetings – 2 hours**

**Sat 23 Sep, 10.30 am.** Location to be advised (depending on who wants to come).

The subject of this lesson has been deliberately kept open and will be tailored to the needs of those who have been attending training so far.

If you are interested in participating or have questions, please contact Keith using the contact details below. To those who wish to attend via Zoom, please email Keith and he will send you the Zoom contact details.

Enquiries: Rev. Keith Robinson (0401 699 580)

[keithr@nswact.uca.org.au](mailto:keithr@nswact.uca.org.au)

## I need your HELP

Are you “over” all the advertisements enticing people to gamble?

I know I certainly am and when my 9 year old grandson said he was going to get a sports betting account because that’s how you make money .....I knew I had to speak up!!!!

I took my concerns to our church council and everyone agreed so letters have been written to Hon Justin Clancy Member for Albury ( NSW state Govt) and Hon Susan Ley Member for Farrer (Federal Govt) requesting that they do whatever they can to stop advertising for sports betting/gambling.

I discovered our very own Moderator Simon Hansford has sent out letters to 500 congregations urging them to be involved to: curb power and devastation of gambling industry Rev. Hansford said: *“I am encouraging your congregation to be part of the effort to break this cycle of silence and shame, to become a haven for people struggling with gambling and their families and to be vocal in sending our political leaders a message demanding gambling reform that cannot be ignored.*

*The church needs to be in the fight for political change. What drives us is not the politics, but the lives being crippled by what is happening. And there are clear measures that can be taken.”*

*In the letter church members are urged to write to their local MP to express their concern at the impact gambling is having in their communities and to urge immediate action.*

*“The social problems that are created or exacerbated by gambling – relationship breakdown, children going hungry, depression and at the extreme spectrum domestic violence and suicide – have all been exacerbated during this pandemic. We must act,”* Rev. Hansford said in the letter to congregations.

*“We are complicit if we stay silent. We are not serving our communities if we don’t raise our voice. I encourage you and your church to join with me in this important effort.”* The church has joined with Wesley Mission and the Alliance for Gambling Reform in a concerted campaign to reduce the damage caused by poker machines.

*“Australians lose more in gambling per capita than any other country in the world and by far the biggest losses – \$12.5 billion every year – is through poker machines,”* Rev. Hansford said. The stats are very scary and I agree with Simon bad things continue to happen when good people do nothing.

So please be active write to your local MP urging them to do whatever they can to curb the hold the gambling industry has on our communities our families and our friends.

Thanks

Jen Whitlock

Culcairn Henty UCA





**Uniting  
Mission &  
Education**

**Living Our Values | Online via Zoom | March-April**

Session 1 of 2:	Saturday, 25 March 2023
Session 2 of 2:	Saturday, 1 April 2023



**Living Our Faith | Leading Worship | Online via Zoom | April 2023**

Session 1 of 3:	Thursday, 13 April 2023
Session 2 of 3:	Thursday, 20 April
Session 3 of 3:	Thursday, 27 April

**Living Our Faith | Exploring the Old Testament | Online via Zoom | May-June 2023**

8 sessions -Tuesday evenings - 6 pm to 8:30 pm beginning 2nd May

**Living Our Faith | Exploring the New Testament | Online via Zoom | July-Sept 2023**

8 sessions -Tuesday evenings - 6 pm to 8:30 pm beginning 18th July

**For more information and to register go to <https://ume.nswact.uca.org.au/>**

## CUP OF POSITIVE-TEA



You are enough



Your feelings are valid



Believe in yourself



You are strong



You are important



You can get through anything



You are worthy of good things



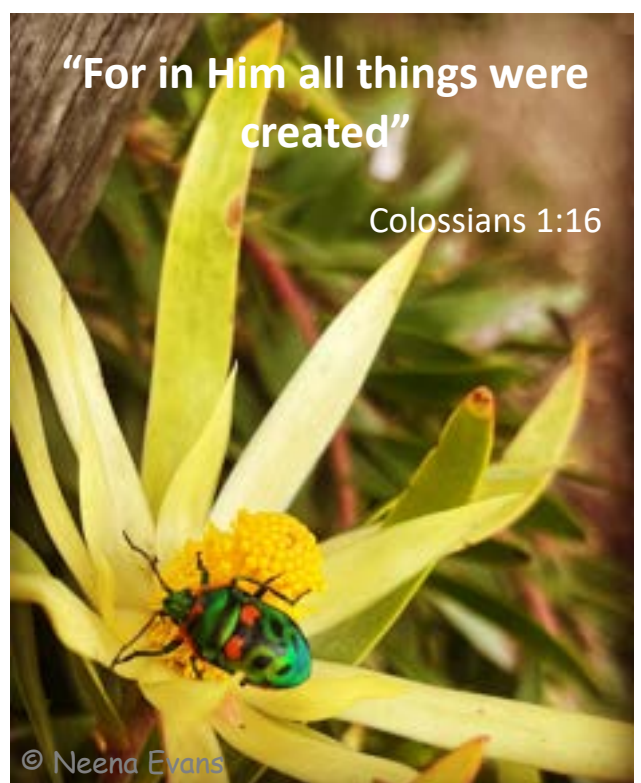
You make the world a better place



You are perfect just the way you are

**“For in Him all things were created”**

Colossians 1:16



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3 minute  
RETREAT

## Reflection from Loyola Press 3-Minute Retreats – 28th Feb 2023

Give us today our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

-- Matthew 6:11-12

When Jesus teaches the disciples how to pray, he identifies God as our loving Father who cares about our needs. Living in a consumer culture makes it hard sometimes for us to distinguish between our wants and our needs. The Lord's Prayer, in two sentences, names God's will; daily sustenance, forgiveness, and deliverance from evil as our basic needs. It also points out that the way God meets our needs is directly related to the way we meet the needs of others.

How can I see more clearly the wondrous ways God meets my needs each day?  
Who do I need to forgive as God has forgiven me?

*Merciful and generous God, thank you for meeting my needs. Diminish my wants and help me to reflect your mercy and generosity as I meet the needs of others.*

Receive 3 minute retreats on your mobile device

Take your daily moments of prayer with you wherever you go with free apps for your Apple and Android mobile devices.

You can now experience a peaceful, prayerful "time-out" anytime, anywhere on your iPhone™, iPad™ or Android™ smartphone or tablet.

**The 3-Minute Retreat app is free.** It brings you a new retreat each day or sign up to receive a daily email at <https://www.loyolapress.com/3-minute-retreats-daily-online-prayer/>

### PRESBYTERY LIBRARY

The Presbytery library has a large section of over 30 different Bible Studies, plus resources for leading worship many with multiple copies. If congregations are unable to run a service themselves they may like to consider holding a Bible Study during their worship time.

Please contact Lorraine Hoffmann for a list of titles and more information.

Ph 0269206233 or 0427204051 or email [lahoffman@bigpond.com](mailto:lahoffman@bigpond.com)



Bible Study

### PRESBYTERY WEBSITE

New resources available for service leaders and lay Preachers. For all the latest on upcoming events check often to keep up to date. <https://riverina.unitingchurch.org.au/>

### D & E CONTACT INFO

**D & E Chairperson:** Lorraine Hoffmann Ph: 0427 204 051 Email: [lahoffman@bigpond.com](mailto:lahoffman@bigpond.com)

**D & E Secretary:** Jenny Whitlock Ph: 0429 818 657 Email: [jandbw@bigpond.net.au](mailto:jandbw@bigpond.net.au)