

ST IVES UNITING CHURCH

Part II

Our Last 10 Years

2013 - 2023



“Christ the light of the world”

Stained glass window of
St Ives Uniting Church
By *David Saunders*

The centre of the bright yellow represents Christ the light of the world. The bright yellow forms a path along which walk the feet of the faithful. The red flame attached to each foot represents the Holy Spirit. Strengthened by Him these people are to “walk in the light” and reflect the light of Christ in the world. The colours symbolise:

Red, the act of redemption by Christ; green, the symbol of eternal life; purple, the Kingship of Christ.

Part I

Our First 50 Years
1963 - 2013

Part II

Our Last 10 Years
2013 - 2023

ST IVES UNITING CHURCH - Sixty Memorable Years

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A NEW DECADE

We moved into our sixth decade totally unaware of the challenges and unprecedented circumstances we would face as a congregation.

However, our ongoing programs of activities have continued to be supported by our members as we seek to adapt to change with the emerging demographics of our suburb.

We have been innovative over the last 10 years, mostly successfully, at times less so.

Our community outreach continued in our Respect for Seniors, support for U3A (University of the Third Age) programs at the church, our Pastoral Care, concern for refugees in our support for the Afghan Maboba's Promise charity, the Ukraine War effort and victims of the disastrous earthquake in Turkey and Syria.

Five ministers, and a number of Supply Ministers have taken us through our ecumenical journey over the period, each in their individual capacity.

Our regular activities .. Women's Fellowship, Meditation, Bible Study, and events including our garage sales and concerts continued as the decade progressed.

But no-one could have prepared us, or the world, for the upheaval of the COVID 19 coronavirus pandemic.

Like people all over the world, our life-style was limited to the confines of our homes, or with restrictions of a five-kilometre radius.

Church services had to be cancelled or curtailed, and technology ruled.

While many of us had computers and were able to partake in screened services, it was a difficult period for all who were literally cut off from family, neighbours, friends and services.

This decade is marked as "pre-COVID and post-COV ID" in our psyche. And for those who succumbed to the dreaded virus it can be a long recovery.

TEN YEARS OF PROGRESS

Over the past ten years we have continued with an active program of property maintenance, repair and refurbishment. I am sure this has helped to maintain an active program of tenants, concerts and recitals using our property every day of the week. Thanks to these efforts we have a very attractive venue appreciated by our tenants - and in this way we have been able to reach out into the community in a meaningful way. The original vision of Lock Finlay for our church was for "a seven day a week" church; and this is certainly continuing! The mark of an active church is that it is reaching out to the community and supporting mission.

The essence of a church however is not the building nor the activities but the people themselves; and I am thankful to have had the privilege of working and sharing with so many dedicated and inspiring people over these past years. Because of this we have been able to continue to worship God and serve during the challenges of Covid, ministerial changes, different attitudes in society, and general ageing. We have lost many dear friends over these past ten years and we honour them in our memory.

Finally, I would like to pay a special tribute to our current Pastor, Richie Dulin. Although on a part stipend, Richie has thrown himself enthusiastically into every facet of our church life. He knows us all as friends and leads by example. I give thanks and look forward to the paths we will take in the future.

Lawrence Peak

MINISTERS and WORSHIP 2013 - 2023

Four ministers have led our worship in the last decade, Rev Dr. Rob McFarlane 2011—2015, Rev. Vernon Prowse 2015 - 2016, Rev Dr. Geoff Dornan 2016 - 2020, Rev. Trevor Lunney 2021, and recently by Richie Dulin as Lay Minister 2021 and then as Pastor 2022—present.

All have had their distinctive styles and all have made a memorable impression on our congregation. Sermon styles have varied from the learned and erudite to the warm and casual.

Also, over this period, Lawrence Peak has led many services and there has been strong support from Rev Colin Bradford and Ms. Seng Eng Low to lead worship when there was a need.

We have now reached the situation where all service details including prayers, hymns and additional material is projected onto a central screen. A reduced printed hand-out is available for all who prefer a hand-held copy, also allowing for these to be distributed to those unable to attend church in person.

Stephen White, Ross Lorenz and Tenny Krisnadi have faithfully maintained the sound and projection facilities from the booth above; and we are very fortunate to have such a modern audiovisual system to enhance our worship each Sunday as well as at other times.

The services have essentially maintained the same format, except for the COVID periods of 2020 - 2021 when worship was beamed via pre-recorded YouTube, thanks to the skill and dedication of John Holliday-Smith.

Organists and pianists during this time have been Jim Abraham, John Hughes, Tony Ireland, Rosemary Osborne, Travis Loughhead, Lawrence Peak, Jeanette Steer, Toby Flander and Deborah Marshall.

During the Covid period intincture serving of Communion was suspended and we continue to serve via small glasses and diced bread. Rice crackers as a gluten-free alternative are also offered and there is no immediate plan to revert to intincture.

As an added Covid precaution, congregation members bring their offering and Exodus contributions forward to an ornamental bowl.

We have had two visits from the Cathedral Singers with their Director Jim Abraham who have richly enhanced our worship. There is an ongoing plan to invite this excellent choir back for two occasions each year.

The morning tea was greatly missed when suspended over the COVID period and gladly welcomed back when reinstated. It is an important part of our weekly church gathering.

There was a certain amount of initial consternation at the appointment of Richie Dulin in 2021 as a non-ordained Lay Minister. It is true to say that with his commitment, warmth, intelligence and enthusiasm Richie has dispelled all doubts and has bound the congregation into a loving and caring whole. As a result, his appointment in 2022 as Lay Pastor at St Ives for a renewable three year period was welcomed by all.

OBITUARY

REV. ARTHUR LOCKHART (LOCK) FINLAY

1926-2018

St Ives Uniting Church first and longest-serving minister, Rev Lock Finlay, died at the Uniting Church Nursing Home Bowden Brae on March 1, 2018.
He was 91.

Lock came to the new St Ives Presbyterian Church in 1963, and was our Minister for the next 28 years.

Born in the small NSW country town Peak Hill, Lock grew up on his mother's family farm. As a teenager he moved to Sydney with his mother, completing high school and then attending Sydney University, graduating in 1952 with a BA in History and Philosophy.

Lock originally considered doing law, but after some deep reflection he answered his calling and entered St Andrew's College Theological Hall.

It was here he met his life companion, Carol, who worked in the administration office.

The couple married at St John's Wahroonga on January 5, 1957.

Lock's first appointment was as a student minister at East Hills Mission Station, but after his marriage he and Carol moved to the North Coast town of Bellingen, shortly after the birth of their son Mark.

In his six years at Bellingen Lock transformed the church from a small congregation with four elders and significant debt, to a thriving membership of 200 on a sound financial basis.

Daughter Michelle was born during the family's time in Bellingen, and a second son, Scott, was born during the St Ives Ministry, in 1968.

(A comprehensive coverage of Lock's ministry at St Ives is included in the first section of this commemoration book)

Carol died in 1999, and Lock spent much of his time after retirement with his family.

He then went into the nursing home, where he was regularly visited by the stalwart friends he had made from the St Ives Congregation.

Lock is survived by his three children, Mark, Michelle and Scott, and four grandchildren, Natascha, Louisa, Charlotte and Sophia.

MODERATOR SIMON HANSFORD - ST IVES CONNECTION

The Rev Simon Hansford became the 28th Moderator of the Synod of NSW and the ACT in the Uniting Church of Australia on September 29, 2017.

Simon is married to Fiona (nee Lloyd) and they have two adult children, Rachel and Miriam.

Many members of the congregation remember Simon and Fiona when they were members of our youth fellowship in the 80s.

Simon was ordained in 1990, and his first placement was to Dubbo. He then served in Queanbeyan, and was later appointed Presbytery Minister for the New England North West Presbytery, with placement in Tamworth.

At his installation as Moderator, Simon described the Uniting Church as having a vital place in the community.

"We have a long experience in engaging communities with the gospel," he said.

"In a very diverse and rapidly changing world, our church has an even bigger role to play as arbiter of justice."

Simon completes his term as Moderator in the current year (2023) and will be succeeded by the Rev. Faaimata (Mata) Havea Hiliau.

Rev. Vernon Prowse

With the retirement of Rev Dr Rob McFarlane in January 2015, and with no immediate permanent ministerial replacement available, it was decided to issue an invitation to Rev Vernon Prowse to lead as supply minister for a period of a few months. With his extensive career before retirement, Vernon and his wife Cathy fitted in smoothly and seamlessly to church life at St Ives. The congregation quickly came to appreciate Vernon's deep faith and warm, wise counsel. After a brief overseas trip in July, Vernon graciously accepted our request to extend for another 6 months to allow time to prepare for the induction of Rev. Dr Geoff Dornan in March 2016.

Vernon and Cathy involved themselves enthusiastically in all aspects of Church life, even to the point of inviting much of the congregation to a thank you luncheon at their home in Newport in January 2016. Vernon and Cathy's last service was on February 7th 2016, and many were saddened to have to wave them "au revoir".

CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

The Coronavirus Pandemic, COVID 19, was first detected in December, 2019, and quickly spread around the world, including Australia, and on March 30, 2020, lockdowns were introduced in NSW.

The 2020 and 2021 years were very difficult times for the community at large and for our Church. This forced the suspension of worship services and all non-essential travel and gatherings. All community activities at the church ceased.

Rental income on which we depended also suddenly stopped and forced the cancellation of all planned fund raising activities.

The 2020 Concert series which Fay Laginestra had already secured artists and associated arrangements for ticketing, publicity and refreshments had to be cancelled. Two major garage sales planned also had to be cancelled causing significant loss of income for our church.

Fortunately, the Government introduced JobKeeper Allowance which substantially met wage costs where revenue declined by more than a stated percentage. Without this support by the Government, St Ives Uniting Church would not have survived financially.

Weekly worship services were pre-recorded during the lockdowns in 2020 and 2021 and were available online each Sunday. We were fortunate to have John Holliday-Smith, a member of the congregation, with video and editing skills to produce very high standard on-line worship services each week.

The lockdowns ended on October 11, 2021 and church life slowly returned to normal.

POST COVID

As we emerged from lockdown in October 2021, NSW Synod issued guidelines for returning to worship.

We resumed our regular services on October 31, just three weeks after the so-called "Freedom Day" when restrictions on compulsory vaccination rules were lifted. However, regulations for mask-wearing, mandatory QR registration, no singing or morning teas continued.

With regular worship resumed, the video presentations were discontinued. Worship material was still sent out via email and posted on the church website.

CHURCH COUNCIL

The Church Council is the governing body of our church.

It is responsible for building up the congregation in faith and love, sustaining members in hope, and leading the congregation to a fuller participation in Christ's mission in the world.

It shares with the Minister in mission, and in the pastoral care and spiritual oversight of the congregation.

Church council meets four times a year, as well as occasionally being called together for special meetings.

All facets of church life are reviewed by the council, and future plans put in place regarding personnel, worship, finance, property maintenance and outreach activities.

While Church Elders have separate meetings on occasions, at least 50% of the Church Council must be Elders.

Councillors are nominated and elected by the congregation for a period of three years.

CHURCH COUNCIL MEMBERS 2023

Lawrence Peak (Chair)

Dianne Peak

Stephen White

Caroline Turner

Bob Knox

Jenny Huckson

Emily Jacobsson

John Holliday-Smith

Pam Tickell

Darren Ting

John Marshall

John Egarr (Deceased, June 2023)

A TIME LINE OF CHURCH COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

All past and present Elders and members of Church Council are acknowledged for their faithful service over the past decade.

OUR 50 YEAR BOOK WAS SIGNED OFF IN SEPTEMBER 2013

The following time-line of significant church activities continues from the Church Council meetings for the next decade.

NOVEMBER 2013

Formation by the Church Council of the Children and Families Mission Team. Blue Christmas service for people in the community experiencing depression and loss.

2014

Ongoing activities of Women's Day Fellowship, Women's Evening Fellowship, the Craft Group and Friday Night Group, and reports on new organisation of concerts, garage sales and the Men's Shed. Our Honour Roll, to be repaired and placed in a more suitable position within the church building.

Plans announced for a Holy Land Study to Israel, Jordan, Greece, Malta and Italy in April 2016 under the Uniting Life and Learning program.

It was disappointing that an application for funds from the NSW Government for our Respect for Seniors program was unsuccessful.

Elections for the Chairperson and Secretary for the following year were resolved with Richard Hansford re-elected in his role. It. and Caroline Turner volunteering to continue to act as secretary until a replacement can be found.

Rev Rob Mcfarlane advised he had accepted a call to become Presbytery Mission Education Officer at Morton Rivers in Queensland, beginning on March 1, 2015, with his final service scheduled for January 25, 2015.

After some years in his role as Treasurer, Mike Tickell resigned.

Our church was invited to join Killara, Gordon and Pymble to form a "village" to share resources and work more closely together.

Four issues for action were discussed at the northern Sydney District Assembly of the Sydney Alliance in October. They were: affordable housing, access to a publicly-funded Lymphoedema clinic, increased palliative care services, and travel concessions for refugees living in the community.

Uniting Life and Learning session attracted 25 participants including members from other churches.

Plans for the closure of Rob McFarlane's Ministry were made for January 25, 2015.

2015

We decided against joining the Village of other local Uniting Churches, leaving the door open for future discussion.

Richard Hansford stepped down as Chairperson.

Seng Eng Low led a devotion with the theme of Pentecost, emphasising we are a community with a spirit of belonging, and the importance of using our spiritual gifts.

Activities included the successful Living Faith studies and the Meditation Group.

Appreciation was expressed to David Turner for his significant contribution in maintaining and running the church properties, and thanks also to Stephen White for his contribution.

A report from our Supply Minister, Vernon Prowse emphasised his belief that the congregation has worked through changes in leadership, and is ready to face future challenges.

Events planned for the remainder of the year include a Hymns of Praise Service, Stewardship Sunday, a Congregational Meeting with election of Elders and Councillors, the Parish Luncheon and Thanksgiving Service.

Children and Families Group reported on the very active and well-attended Playgroup.

SPECIAL MEETING OF CHURCH COUNCIL, NOVEMBER 5, 2015

A unanimous recommendation from the JNC Committee to call the Rev Dr Geoff Dornan to our Ministry. Rev Dornan met with senior members of the congregation and had very encouraging and positive referees.

He has had ministry placements in many countries, and his impressive CV ranged from beginning as an industrial Relations Officer in the 1970's, teaching in Chile, chairing the Refugee and Migrant Services Committee of the National Council of Churches, secondment to Buenos Aires and El Salvador by the Commission for World Mission, appointment in Boston at the Massachusetts School of Theology, Chaplain at Sydney's Newington College and International Programmes' Manager for Asia and Africa, Uniting World, and most recently as Minister of the Uniting Church at Jesmond, Newcastle. It was determined his tenure will begin in mid-March 2016.

Services in February and March, until Rev Dornan takes up his Ministry, will be taken by Lawrence Peak, Seng Eng Low and Colin Bradford.

2016

It was decided to seek information from Ku-ring-gai Council regarding provision of hampers for Syrian refugees.

Our Respect for Seniors program will be taken over by Uniting Ageing, while we will still continue with our own annual Wear Purple Day.

A collection of 12 knitted blankets from the craft group, with boxes of toys to be sent to Syrian refugees in Wollongong, Newcastle and Fairfield.

Our groups continue to meet regularly and provide valuable support for the Meditation Group, the Living Faith Study Group, the Men's Shed, Wednesday Craft Group, Women's Day Fellowship, Women's Evening Fellowship and the Friday Night Group.

A new Worship Work Group included Seng Eng Low, Rosemary Osborne, Ross Lorenz and Lawrence Peak and will build further as it develops.

Geoff visited congregations at Terrigal, Pymble Roseville and St Ives to see how they engage with the community. It was decided to draw on the skills of volunteers in the congregation, look at ways of staffing needs, and use music to attract new members.

2017

Appreciation was expressed for Lawrence Peak's monthly studies of Living Faith, which will not be carried over to 2018.

Two other series proving to be popular are the Lenten studies, and a discussion group convened by Barry Lloyd and led by Geoff, focusing on contemporary issues from a Christian perspective.

An innovative new step, considering the age demographic of the congregation, is the discussion of a request from Presbytery that we integrate the Kwaebok (Korean) Congregation into St Ives Uniting Church.

It was also resolved to seek ways forward to establish a relationship between the St Ives Jewish community and synagogue.

Our Seniors DVD (owned by SIUC) will be used in Respect for Seniors training, along with the website. Parties interested include Blue Care Queensland and the Northern Suburbs Uniting Churches.

Geoff reported on progress on the proposed integration with the Korean Uniting Faith community.

It was suggested that the possibility of a "buddy system" would help, and it was determined to worship together beginning with a cross-cultural Carol Service and Christmas Day Service, progressively building until the commencement of services in February, 2018.

2018

Discussion was held on the inclusion of Rev Jeremy Kim as a volunteer part-time minister. Decisions regarding the formalisation of Jeremy as Minister in Association, setting up of a Sunday Morning Group, a Monday Playgroup and development of our Website.

Geoff outlined some general points in the Same Sex Marriage debate, indicating there would be two marriage services.. one for heterosexual couples and one for same sex couples.

He indicated that there were sensitive issues involved and there would be some risk in conducting same sex marriages in a cross-cultural church.

Moore Bae submitted his resignation, issues arising included some problems with language, theological content and the same-sex marriage issue.

2019

A Pastoral Letter was received confirming the Church's decision on same sex marriage.

Geoff projected the idea of adopting multi-centres congregations, who work together in forging new ministry.

It was decided to establish a working group and ask a representative of Presbytery to begin a conversation, examining what is being done in other UC congregations in other regions.

Colin Bradford reported that both Monday and Tuesday Playgroups were working well.

The Sunday Morning Group takes children out of worship and engages them in games and quieter reflection, using material from Seasons of the Spirit.

The Korean Group continues a Bible Study following Sunday's Church Services.

Gordon, Pymble and St Ives report on two meetings regarding multi-centre congregations.

A proposal to go ahead with a service for dementia sufferers which will be conducted in the Baptist Church.

It was also suggested we could engage with the new Chaplain at Macquarie University as an outreach to foreign students, and conduct informal services on Sunday evenings.

The years of service of two congregation stalwarts, Pastoral Care Co-Ordinator Pam Walker, and Men's Shed leader, Barry Lloyd were acknowledged following their resignation after many years of service.

2020

The year opened with a number of changes, described by Lawrence Peak as a "Church in flux".

We farewelled Jeremy Kim, who is joining Thornleigh Uniting Church.

Geoff is in the South Coast aiding bushfire victims.

Seng Eng Low will take over from Pam Walker as Pastoral Care Co-Ordinator, while Jenny Huckson prepares to replace Gill Lloyd, who has run the morning teas for many years.

The Garage Sales will also be handed over to Stephen White after Joan Knox's sterling efforts.

Stephen White presented legislative amendments to the Child Protection Act which will require follow-up discussion with church people involved.

Stephen, David Turner and Greg Starr were thanked for their tireless work in keeping the church property in good order.

A special meeting was held on June 18, following the declaration of the COVID 19 Pandemic on March 11, which resulted in the first lockdown, an event which affected the entire population, including the life of the church. While not specified at the meeting, video link services were held while lockdown continued, and all on-site church activities cancelled.

It was resolved to resume services on July 5, restricting seating to allow specified spacing. Hymn singing, organ or piano playing could not be included.

Despite the expected financial effect of the pandemic it was reported that, thanks to Government assistance, the church remained in good financial shape, considering the entire closing down of the church and loss of tenants.

A mini-garage sale was suggested to take place after July 1.

In the special Budget estimates for the 2019/2020 and 2020/2021 it was provided for one major garage sale and two mini-sales to raise \$20,000 income.

Unfortunately it is unlikely that we could hold a concert series as limited numbers permitting only 80 people would not make holding a series economically viable.

Geoff will leave SIUC for a move to Canberra, and congratulations were extended by Lawrence.

The Minister reported that face-to-face worship will probably not be resumed until next year, and on-line worship will continue.

The Church Family and Pastoral Team, continues to function well, as also the Meditation Group.

COVID-safe plans were accepted and endorsed.

Seng Eng Low's call to the Specified Ministry of Lay Preacher in Australia was also endorsed, and thanks were extended to Stephen White for the many hours of work he has carried out for the church's COVID safety plans.

Following Geoff's departure in December 2020, services in January will be shared between Seng Eng, Colin Bradford and Lawrence Peak.

Rev Trevor Lunney will be a supply minister from February 1 for six months, and in August Richie Dulin will take over for the following six months.

2021

Guest Fiona Blair spoke on the Life and Witness process to strengthen and encourage the congregation, and assess the needs for the next five years in developing and updating our Mission Plan.

A farewell service for Geoff and Gilda was held on January 10.

An Extraordinary meeting was held June 17, to make plans for the church's future direction. This included the adoption of a new Mission Statement .. "Finding meaning in Christ, finding purpose in life".

Goals discussed included future planning for children and families, mid-life transitions, seniors and cross-cultural groups.

We are currently contributing to an Afghan Plan raising fund for the charity "Mahboba's Promise", and have raised \$1200 to support girls' education in Afghanistan and support for refugees arriving in Australia.

A farewell luncheon for Trevor and Karen Lunney and a welcome to Richie and Beth Dulin will be incorporated into a Church luncheon planned for January 2022.

We have been financially supported by the Federal Government's Jobkeeper Assistance, receiving \$102,059, spread over three financial years.

Stephen White reported that all members of the Church Council should undergo a Child Safety Awareness program.

2022

Seng Eng Low and Colin Bradford are moving from our congregation and have resigned from their positions in the church. They will be farewelled at a special morning tea on March 6. Members of the congregation will take over the roles left by Seng Eng and Colin.

The pandemic continues to affect the life of the church, but attendance at Advent Bible Studies has been encouraging and a further Lenten series will begin in March.

A guest from the "Jews for Jesus" movement will speak at the service on March 27, and a Thanksgiving service for our energetic workers will be held after Easter.

Richie reported that he had attended the March presbytery meeting on the formal closure of the 150 year old Pymble Chapel.

Stephen White reported on Compliance Risk Management and it was agreed that all Church Councillors will be required to submit a Working with Children Clearance.

It was also decided to appoint an external auditor for church accounts, and to appoint a Safe Church contact person. The recently appointed Pastoral Care Co-ordinator, Beth Facer, was thanked for her services.

Richie continues to take "friendship hour" services at Fernbank, and is also trialing a Uniting Church Chapel Service at BUPA once a month.

2023

As preparations were made for this year's planned giving program, Lawrence Peak expressed special thanks and appreciation for the significant work and contribution to the program by Bob Knox, and Caroline and David Turner over the past 28 years.

Pastoral issues continued with four members of the congregation admitted to hospital with heart problems.

Richie taking leave in January 2024 to travel to Japan. Lawrence gave thanks for the contribution the late John Egarr had given as an Elder and member of Church Council.

We continue to be in a sound financial position with rental income now our major source of income. Repair of the car park surface is our main priority currently.

Caroline Turner will resign from position of Church Secretary and Church Council Secretary, effective from December 31, 2023. Caroline will continue as an Elder.

Planning discussed for our 60th Anniversary Commemoration, a celebration with some hymns and prayers and guest artists, with the launch of our history book.

Darren Ting has accepted an invitation to join the Church Council.

MINISTER'S REPORT, JULY 18, 2020

Introduction

In complex and very different times, this report focuses on the past few months, for the majority of which we have been in effective lockdown. Most of our time will reflect upon the new framework for opening up, but I would like to share some of the pastoral experiences of the last few months with you.

Worship

The demands for worship fell upon us like a thunderclap in the early year as soon as churches were closed down. The real genius and expertise behind the construction of a new way of worship through recorded services, came from John and his friend Sam, both university students, with whom I worked pastorally last year. John is an active part of our Christian life and has dedicated up to 10 hours weekly organizing, recording and then building the service. We have worked closely together, along with Colin and Tay, the theological student from UTC, slowly developing our confidence and skills. It has been interesting doing this and also receiving calls from people who have never been to St Ives worship, wanting to talk about the themes and ideas raised. There have also been favourable comments about the use of Taize. Finally, SMG has continued through all the *chaos' and was held together by the team, carrying out the Christian education every second Sunday on-line. We need to acknowledge that work as a Church Council If we could continue with our online work and preparation after the restrictions are lifted, I think that may be a good thing.

The Church Family and Pastoral Team

The pastoral team has worked well during this time, keeping up with the demands upon it, ensuring that people are looked after and reassured. I have also been phoning people and covered the majority of the congregation to ensure that all is well and that people are feeling secure. There have been range of responses to the Covid-19 situation, but most have handled things, things well and benefited in grand part from their immediate family, who have kept a kind eye upon them.

Of late, as you know, Don Hagarty passed and we celebrated his life on Tuesday. It was a wonderful event and I would like to thank all of you involved for the support you have offered and the work you did to ensure it did justice to dear Don. Pastoral support for Pru and Samantha will continue, as it did prior to Don's death. Samantha lives at distance, but Pru is close and will now be under the strain of sorting out her father's affairs. I note also that Barry was hospitalized and operated upon pretty much at the same time as Don was approaching the end of life.

Thank you to all of you who offered support as Barry recuperated.

Korean Community

Tay our theological student has continued to work with the Korean group during this time, and has been well received. On a weekly basis he has led worship on-line and has built relationships with the group. Only two weekends ago, the group met together for a meal with Tay and also with Colin and Seng Eng. It went very well indeed.

Opening-Up

The process of opening-up has been a complex one, and we are in Stephen's debt for the precision and dedication with which he has managed the situation, usually well ahead of the Synod. We are without doubt in a strong place because of his work. Speaking from my perspective and experience of the NSW Government's "process", I was and remain impressed by the thoroughness of the committees who resourced and advised those decisions, right from the word go, back in March. The frustration has been moreso with the Synod in terms of the slowness of the responses to government changes, which is comprehensible, but also the challenge of interpreting the recommendations sent out to us, which themselves, moved from recommendations to stipulations.

I look forward to the process of returning to normality while we retain the norms required by law and the Synod.

Geoff Dornan

MINISTRY REPORT MAY 2023

We have had a busy three months, and it is heartening to see the ongoing enthusiasm and faithfulness of the congregation.

Lent and Easter We welcomed the Cathedral Singers on March 5, and the singers' contribution to worship, both through the singing of anthems and uplifting congregational singing was appreciated by all.

We embarked on a thorough examination of the "Parable of at the Prodigal Sons", (or the "Parable of the Two Sons" as it may be better called) based on Timothy Keller's study book "The Prodigal God".

Attendance varied week to week, but people were well-engaged with the topic and willing to share with the group.

I gave the Easter devotion for Women's Day Fellowship.

We welcomed many visitors at our Easter services, particularly on Easter Sunday.

The Maundy Service Tenebrae was also well attended, and the move to a service of hymns and readings on Good Friday was appreciated by the congregation, as was the inclusion of more recent music on video during the service.

On Good Friday I attended, as did many members of the congregation, a performance of Stainer's "Crucifixion" at St John's Church Gordon.

Pastoral

We held the funeral for Jan Berry in February, and a memorial service for Beryl Loder in April.

I also took the memorial service for Doug Watt (son-in-law of Bryan Evans) in April.

We have several members of our congregation who have recently moved to assisted living, and they have appreciated the love and support they have received.

Local

I have been leading the Friendship Hour services at Fernbank which are much appreciated by the residents.

We are hoping to build a relationship with the St Ives Baptist Church following my attendance at the induction of Rev Benedikt Exner.

I also attended the induction of Rev Karen Mitchell-Lambert at Gordon-Pymble Chapel. Karen has organised a meeting of local UCA ministers (Roseville-Wahroonga, including the three UCA schools).

I met with Harry Hamman and Rev Daniel Valle from Praise Messiah - a local Messianic Jewish congregation, and we are exploring the possibility of a follow-on presentation from last year's "Christ in the Passover" from Jews for Jesus. They also extended an invitation to their Shavout (Pentecost) Celebration.

Presbytery and Synod

I attended:

- the (on-line) full Presbytery meeting on March 1. This meeting acknowledged the contribution of Rev Graham Perry to the life of the Presbytery, and noted the call of Rev Martin Levine as Presbytery Minister (Growth and Mission).
- The Pastor Development Day held at the Centre for Ministry¹ a gathering of those in the Ministry of Pastor across the Synod, to explore the possibilities to network with people in similar ministry.
- Ethical Ministry training.
- Safe church training at Pittwater Uniting.

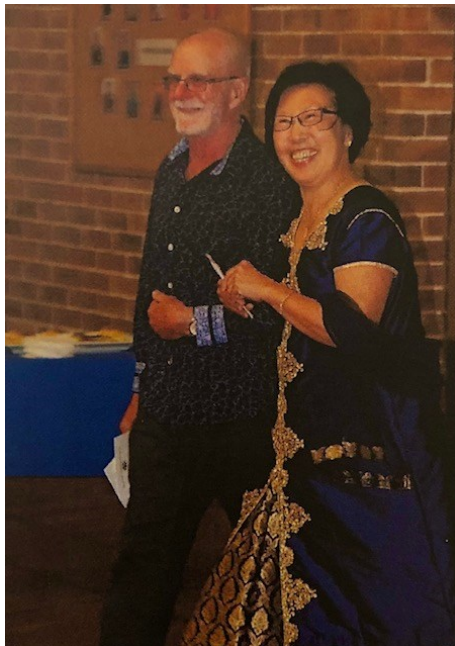
My authorisation to preside at the Sacraments as part of my ministry at St Ives has been renewed, and I will be meeting with Rev Manas Ghosh to affirm my call to St Ives.

I continue to thank God for my call to St Ives, and thank the Council and congregation for their ongoing support and encouragement. I look forward to a future together, growing in the knowledge and love of God, and sharing that love with each other and our local community.

Richie Dulin



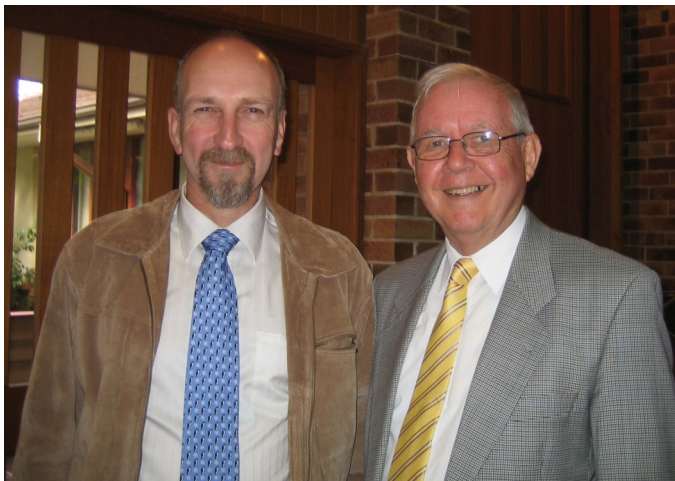
Pam Walker, pictured with the Governor General, (then NSW Governor) General David Hurley, AC,DSC,FTSE. Pam received her OAM for services to the Uniting Church Australia, to Knox Grammar School, the San Hospital, and Pastoral Care Coordinator SIUC, supported by a wonderful team of people.



Seng Eng Low & Rev. Colin Bradford at their wedding at St Ives Uniting Church



Rev. Geoff Dornan



Organist Jim Abraham with Lawrence Peak



Pastor Richie Dulin



Uniting Church Moderator Simon Hansford



Rev. Rob McFarlane officiating at Summer Swinney's
Christening on 20 April 2014



Dianne Peak with Caroline Turner who was presented with
flowers and a gift following her 23 years as Church Secretary



Rev. Geoff Dornan with Fay Laginestra at Wildflower Garden



Joan Knox, pictured preparing for another of her successful Garage Sales



Howard Walker with Gwen Knox



Rev. Geoff Dornan with guest speaker Robyn Gaspari AM, and congregation members Rosemarie Say and Anne Vans Colina at Wear Purple Day



University of The Third Age at Dance for Fitness class



Musical group at worship service



Ross Lorenz, Stephen White and Tenny Krisnadi



The St Ives group at the Sea of Galilee, Holy Land Trip



The statue of Prophet Elijah at the courtyard of the Carmelite Sanctuary in Israel, Holy Land Trip



Stephen and Elizabeth White



Indigenous Engineering Summer School



Samaritan's Purse



Rev. Colin Bradford with Play Group members



Men's Shed Fire Service visit



Some of the younger congregation of St Ives Uniting Church



Gill and Barry Lloyd

THE KOREAN EXPERIMENT

In November 2017, Church Council decided to invite the Hwaebok Korean congregation to become an integral part of the St Ives congregation. This community formerly met at Pymble Chapel starting around mid-day after the regular English speaking service. The St Ives experiment was to involve joining together for a united service with translational facilities, and adding the leadership of Rev Jeremy Kim to our ministerial team.

This was hoped to be more than simply the sharing of premises and it is believed to be one of the first such ventures in Australia.

Unfortunately, due to many factors the numbers of active participating Korean members slowly declined and it gradually became evident that perhaps the initial vision was too ambitious.

Some of these factors involved language, culture and the early service time of 9:30 for many of the Korean members who had quite a distance to travel. The proposal was strongly sponsored by the Rev Dornan, and on his departure, in spite of considerable goodwill on both sides, the situation was not sustainable and very few if any Koreans are currently seen in our congregation.

FORMOSAN CHURCH

Members of the Evangelical Formosan Church of Glory , looking to form a new Christian congregation in the St Ives area, approached us in September 2022 to enquire about renting rooms to hold worship services on Sundays.

Recognising the changing demographics of our community, this seemed an ideal opportunity for our church to be relevant and part of the broader community.

We agreed to rent three meeting rooms on Sunday afternoons/evenings for a 6 month trial period from October 2022 and after just a month, the arrangement was extended to four rooms because of the success of the venture.

Attendance numbers continued to grow and in May 2023 the arrangement was extended to include the main church on Sunday afternoons as well as the downstairs rooms which are used for Sunday school classes.

Bible study classes and youth activities on Friday and Saturday nights have now been included.

CHURCH ACTIVITIES

PASTORAL CARE

St Ives Uniting Church has continued its history of caring, both for church members, and for people in the community who don't attend the church, through outreach activities.

The Pastoral Care Program is overseen by the Pastoral Care Coordinator. We have been fortunate to have three outstanding co-ordinators over the past decade.

Pam Walker, whose tireless years of service were acknowledged in the 2017 Australia Day Honours, received a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM General Division) for her service to the Uniting Church.

On her well-earned retirement, Pam handed over to Seng Eng Low, whose role has now been taken by the current co-ordinator, Beth Facer. Each member in the program is linked to a carer, who is also a member of the congregation.

The carer's duties include keeping in contact with each member on their list, to check on and support their well-being. This is done through phone calls, visits to homes, nursing homes and hospitals when appropriate, and by getting together at church and over coffee outings.

Pastoral care is especially important at times of stress caused by illness and injury and when members are isolated due to decreased mobility. As an additional support, members were invited to submit an "emergency list" of contacts, should they be taken ill at church.

For those unable to get to the church to attend services and other activities, an effort is made to arrange transport when desired. In addition, literature including the Uniting Church magazine publication Insight, the Sunday Order of Service and the church information leaflet What's On are, when possible, taken to those unable to attend church.

Fulfilling the role of a pastoral carer can impose an emotional load and, for this reason, carers are, in turn, supported within the program.

Outreach to support the needs of the broader community has been achieved through donations of funds and goods collected at regular Garage Sales, Women's Fellowship meetings and weekly donations of food, made at church, to the Exodus program run by the Reverend Bill Crews at Ashfield in Sydney's west.

The Pastoral Care Program is increasingly important in the life of the church, given the average age of church members, and their emotional and physical support needs. A significant number of church members also subscribe to "With Love to the World" which gives daily bible readings and commentary.

WOMEN'S DAY FELLOWSHIP

The Women's Day Fellowship makes a significant contribution to the life of St Ives Uniting Church, while providing fellowship, friendship and a caring ambience.

Able led by President Dianne Peak and Secretary Caroline Turner and the Committee, WDF also supports a large number of charities including the Multiple Sclerosis Society, Hornsby Women's Shelter, Frontier Services, The Dish at Wahroonga, the Zimpeto Orphanage in Mozambique and Ronald McDonald House.

Members also play a major role in church activities, supporting the Garage Sales with Cake stalls, Marmalade and Relish stalls and Morning Teas, as well as enjoying Barbecue Picnics, Christmas Luncheons and Easter Devotions with a series of interesting speakers.

Music mornings led by Lawrence Peak and Movie Mornings, plus celebrations of birthdays, anniversaries and special occasions have contributed to other happy occasions.

As with all activities curtailed by the onset of the Coronavirus Pandemic, COVID 19, our regular meetings were interrupted, and sadly during those years the group lost a number of beloved members.

However, we have gained a number of new members with the closure of the Women's Evening Fellowship and the Pymble Chapel over recent years.

WDF is a wonderful group of ladies who enjoy our morning meetings and make a welcome and worthy addition to the life of the church.

WOMEN'S EVENING FELLOWSHIP

The Women's Evening Fellowship had a lifetime of more than 40 years and added to the successful outreach programs of St Ives Uniting Church until its closure in 2018.

Initially members met at their homes, and transferred to the church as the group grew larger.

Several members of the current congregation have been founding members, and many others enjoyed the group's activities for more than 20 years.

As well as the regular meetings, WEF included many activities to add to both the financial and social aspects of church life. Bring and Buy Sales, Garage Sales, Crazy Whist evenings, Cooking for Exodus (which gave street people a nourishing hot meal), Progressive Dinners and Parish Lunches were just some of the activities.

Speakers were also welcomed, touching on such subjects as Health Issues, History of Dolls, Police Function and the mysteries of Pine gap.

The Women's Day of Prayer was also a key occasion, with local churches taking turns in organising the special event.

A principal aim of WEF was "to nurture a fellowship between members in a Christ-like acceptance of caring compassion for each other". This was carried out for the long period of existence of the group, but because of declining membership it was decided to close WEF.

Looking to the future, members decided to seek to build a "Friendship Group" to continue the care for each other through church activities.

MEDITATION GROUP

In 2015 an evening meditation group was established during the ministry of Rev Vernon Prowse. The initiative to establish this new activity came from congregation member Rob Walker, who invited a retired Uniting Church minister, Rev Graham Ellis to provide training.

The group became a member of a network of meditation groups in the World Community for Christian Meditation (WCCM), and a leader of WCCM in NSW, Jan Wylie, regularly participates in the weekly sessions.

The aim of the group is to supplement traditional prayer with an alternative based on stillness and silence, opening the hearts to the presence of the spirit of God. God is there in the silence. Each of the weekly sessions has a similar format : a short audio about the practice of Christian meditation; an opening prayer; 20 minutes of silence with attention to the mantra; a piece of music; and a closing prayer. The total time of each session is about 45 minutes.

Initially meetings were held at the church with Helen Mcloughlin, Max Walker and Rob Walker as leaders. However, when the COVID 19 pandemic ended the group meetings early in 2020, Rev Colin Bradford established weekly Zoom sessions to continue the weekly meetings.

These proved to be popular and convenient with participants, and has continued with Pastor Richie Dulin.

The group meetings also attract people from outside our congregation as the Zoom format is available throughout Australia.

Zoom meetings are held each Thursday at 7.30pm.

THE MEN'S SHED

The Men's Shed came into being during the leadership of Rev. Doug Purnell.

Following a Sunday Service two male members of the congregation were overheard complaining that, although the ladies of the congregation had a social opportunity to meet, chat, arrange speakers and socialise, the men had no similar opportunity to "chew the fat".

Barry Lloyd overheard this observation and immediately said that he would make appropriate arrangements to form a suitable Group. Doug Purnell gave his support and the first meeting was held in the home of Barry and Gill Lloyd.

Half a dozen men arrived, afternoon tea was served and a vigorous discussion took place. It was accepted that the Group would meet fortnightly in members' homes. The Agenda would be ad - hoc and unrestricted.

A number of meetings were held but the gatherings could not compete with the COVID restrictions and inevitably slipped into oblivion. Perhaps one day a new leader will emerge and the menfolk of the church will again meet to discuss issues of significance and importance.

PLAYGROUP

Our very successful Playgroup was unfortunately a victim of COVID 19 in 2020.

Begun in 2012, (following the successful previous group formed by Jenny Smith) with the support of Rob and Andrea Mcfarlane, it was held every Tuesday morning except during school holidays. Heather Lakiss led the Playgroup for three and a half years, with the help of an enthusiastic group of church members Judy Jacobsson, Win Baseby, Jane Ann Tainsh, Gill Lloyd and Elizabeth Starr. They provided morning tea, set up the room and tidied up afterwards. Rev Colin Bradford was a constant volunteer.

When Rob Mcfarlane took a new placement, playgroup continued to be run by Church volunteers.

Rev Geoff Dornan became our minister in 2016 and was very supportive of playgroup. He talked to the parents and often read a story for the children,

One Christmas he dressed up as Santa, the children loved it. Bob Knox and Darren Ting were a great help in packing up the outside ride-on toys, water play table and chairs. Stephen White organised the building of a shed to store the large ride on toys and garden chairs and also maintained the garden, while David Turner repaired areas inside.

Recent arrivals from England, South Africa, Zimbabwe and many lonely grandparents from China were among community members who came along.

A lady from England said she had been in Australia a few days and just wanted to make some friends, which she did.

A small group gathered around Helen McLaughlin who tried to teach them some English. Other carers made friends around the craft table, which proved as popular with the adults as the children with as many as 20 adults and children frequently attending.

The carers included mothers, some fathers, nannies and grandparents. With Chinese families the mother would come to enrol the child and leave the grandparents to continue the care each week.

There were sometimes tears from grandmothers when they had to return to China, having enjoyed their time at playgroup so much. A father and son from the Phillipines living in Mt Colah were regular members, any worries he had in parenting were allayed after talking to the helpers.

Activities included playtime, jigsaws, books, dress-ups, games, kitchen and shop play items, play dough, dolls and puppets and craft inside, or outside play on the bikes, scooters, climbing equipment, water play, sandpit, and dolls' prams.

When morning tea and sandwiches and fruit provided, the children and their carers would line up and be served. On fine days they sat outside on picnic rugs to eat under the tree. The parents helped themselves to tea and coffee and as time progressed we ended up with a cappuccino machine. This was followed by clear up put away time and then music with dancing, actions, a story and the final clear away.

During the school holidays we arranged to meet at a nearby park and older siblings came along. In 2017 one of the mothers, Eve Edmonds took over running the Playgroup and the Church volunteers continued helping. The Womens' Day Fellowship supported playgroup and donated \$700 to pay Eve Edmonds for running the group.

We continued until COVID came and playgroup closed in March, 2020.

A Christian Korean group joined our Church in 2018, and they already had a playgroup for young parents. This was run by the Minister Jeremy Kim's wife Hee, together with Wendy Lim. The much smaller group met on Monday mornings with six to seven mothers and their children. It was a support group for young mothers to connect with each other who were more comfortable speaking their own language and discussing things of interest to them.

After a year Hee and Wendy asked for a Church volunteer to help with running the group. They were unable to continue as they both had full time employment. A volunteer worked with them until March 2020, then COVID came and that playgroup closed also.

Judy Jacobsson

RESPECT FOR SENIORS

Our successful Respect for Seniors Program was adopted by the wider Uniting Church.

It was based on three ways to help create a safe, caring community where all aged can live with dignity and respect.

The first was the simple act wearing purple as a positive celebration of ageing and as a sign of pride and respect.

Community conversation was another aspect, beginning with having a conversation encouraging discussion and acceptance of different perspectives, beginning with such questions as:

- What does respect mean to you?
- How do you show respect for others?
- In what ways do you feel respected by others?

Thirdly the program included a special Champions section, with the suggestion to introduce the conversations into social or sporting groups, organisations, congregations, work and home, to focus on the respect deserved by our senior citizens.

MONDAY COFFEE MORNINGS

What began as a casual meeting for coffee with a couple of friends some years ago has now developed into a regular gathering of a dozen or so congregation members every Monday morning.

An "open house" invitation is extended to any of the church family who enjoys a social cuppa, meeting at 10am at a St Ives Shopping Centre cafe.

Richie is just one of the members who have adopted the ritual with enthusiasm, and attends regularly, as does the founding member, nonagenarian Ina Dowell, who well remembers the early days when just two or three friends would regularly meet to provide friendship to a newly-widowed husband.

"The poor man was quite bereft, left alone, and also stranded with cooking," Ina recalled.

"As well as company and friendship, we provided the occasional meal, and supplied simple recipes."

Nowadays the coffee mornings have become a regular feature with a friendly and sociable group who enjoy the opportunity for a chat and relaxation.

They extend a hand of friendship and the chance to meet in a companionable atmosphere, especially for those who have lost their life partners.

CHRISTMAS BOWL

St Ives Uniting Church annually supports the Christmas Bowl Appeal, joining 19 church groups including Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox and Coptic churches.

It is one of the most effective charities, with 80% of all money donated going directly to aid where it is most needed in every part of the world.

Recent support has been given to drought relief in Africa, refugee assistance, disaster relief and clean water projects to improve the health and living standards of Third World countries.

LENT EVENT

"live simply, so that others may simply live."

Lent Event is a call to individuals and churches to embrace simple living, to give up something from daily life to donate to those less fortunate.

Lent traces the journey of Jesus to the Cross. It is a time to reflect on our own journey as disciples, to act in solidarity with others within our global church, many of whom live courageously in challenging circumstances.

Each year a country in need is chosen to receive assistance through lent Event.

It targets poor nations who suffer malnutrition, disease, lack of sanitation and fresh water, violence against women and children and/or a lack of health education.

It gives us an opportunity to make a commitment to the selfless way of Christ and to one another, as we take up our Cross and follow Him.\

SAMARITAN'S PURSE

During the last decade we continued to fill the Samaritan's Purse boxes with gifts for children in the Southeast Asia Pacific Region.

In just one year, up to 370,000 boxes are distributed to youngsters, many of whom are receiving the first Christmas present in their lives.

Gill Lloyd initiated our participation and worked tirelessly to organise the generous donations of cash and gifts to fill the boxes to bring joy to children less fortunate.

MS FRIENDSHIP GROUP

The Multiple Sclerosis Friendship Group met monthly at our church for 38 years. In 1991 Church Council agreed to a suggestion by Jenny Smith to allow the group to use our premises, giving us another opportunity for community outreach.

Volunteer helpers provided stimulating conversation, showing empathy, serving lunch and plates of delicacies to have with coffee.

Unfortunately the group was disbanded in 2017 as clients increasingly became unable to attend, and volunteers retired.

The years of tireless support and encouragement given by Jenny and her band of volunteers was an inspiration to the members struggling with the debilitating disease.

SUPPORT FOR UKRAINE

Only three months after Russia invaded Ukraine, St Ives Uniting Church showed its support for the beleaguered country by inviting the Honorary Consul in Sydney, Mr Jaroslav Duma OAM, to speak on the history and events leading up to the invasion.

The well-attended meeting on May 18, presented a rare opportunity to hear and ask questions about the damage inflicted on the Ukraine people and the destruction of its cities and towns.

Born in Australia of Ukraine heritage, Mr Duma is an active member of the Australian-Ukraine community, and devotes much of his time to volunteering for community organisations.

For his St Ives Meeting he brought a wide array of historic Ukrainian photographs and interesting folk items.

The evening was arranged by Barry Lloyd.

Donations were made at the meeting to the Australian Red Cross Ukraine Crisis appeal.

INTERCHURCH COMMITTEE

The Ku-ring-gai Interchurch Committee was launched in 1980, and aims to promote friendship and understanding between Christians, learning from each other, worshipping together, and praying for one another.

St Ives Uniting Church has been an active member for many years, and since 2008 has been represented by Annette Burne, who followed George Katsoolis.

Annette has been the secretary from that year, and was joined by Shirley Ashton as Church representative in 2021.

Shirley had previously represented Pymble Chapel, which closed in 2020.

The Committee is guided by the Lund Principle: "In essentials unity, in non-essentials liberty, in all things clarity."

Over the years the Committee has included up to eight Ku-ring-gai churches, representing a diversity of denominations, currently Anglican, Catholic, Baptist, Presbyterian and Uniting, with meetings held monthly at a member's home.

Prior to COVID the group held three annual functions, each hosted by one of the member churches.

These were a Breakfast, a Social Awareness (Conscience) Lunch and an Annual Dinner, giving the opportunity for members to meet and get to know one another. Since 2008 the Annual Dinners were held at St Ives Uniting Church, and included inspirational speakers such as Rev. Bill Crews and Father Shenouda Mansour.

Since regular meetings resumed in May 2022 following COVID shutdowns, functions have been discontinued and emphasis placed on the "World Day of Prayer" in March, and the "Week of Prayer for Christian Unity" (which falls between Ascension Sunday and Pentecost at the end of May).

A prayer roster provides a program for members to pray regularly, as well as supporting specific issues at member churches.

Annette Burne

AFGHAN APPEAL

Church Council unanimously agreed to channel donations collected in the Afghan appeal to an international not-for-profit organisation called "Mahboba 's Promise" based in North Ryde.

The charity is particularly appropriate, being Australian and based locally.

It works with women and children both in Afghanistan and Australia and fully complies with all Government requirements.

The founder is an Afghan refugee Mahboba Rawi, who knows the culture of the people she is trying to assist. Her inspiring story began in Kabul, Afghanistan.

At just 15 years Mahboba was forced to flee from Soviet authorities and lived for two years in a Pakistan refugee camp until she married and moved to Australia.

Despite suffering a personal tragedy in 1992 when she lost her son in a drowning accident, Mahboba worked tirelessly to help Afghan refugees in Australia, by teaching them swimming and English.

Mahboba's Promise was established in 2001 and is dedicated to directly improving the lives of vulnerable Afghan women and children. Not only has Mahboba's Promise made a huge impact in Afghanistan, it is building bridges between Australian and Afghan communities. Some of its work was highlighted in media coverage of the recent mercy flights bringing refugees to Australia.

Mahboba was awarded the Order of Australia in 2010 and was Australian Muslim Woman of the Year in 2012.

We were able to help Mahboba's promise with financial donations and also a number of practical gifts such as sewing machines, clothes and materials.

THE INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIAN ENGINEERING SCHOOL

St Ives Uniting Church gives moral and in-principle support to the Indigenous Australian Engineering School (IAES) which provides Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander youth with educational opportunities.

Under the patronage of the Governor-General, David Hurley, AC, DSC, FTSE, who succeeded former Prime Minister Bob Hawke, the IAES is a registered charity run almost entirely by volunteers, and was commenced by a SIUC congregation member, the late Jeff Dobell, 26 years ago.

Anne Vans Colina is currently a senior member of the organisation.

The IAES conducts two week-long schools at the University of Sydney and Curtin University (WA), and plans are underway to open a third school in Queensland, where students can meet engineering role models and gain insights into the opportunities for future engineering careers.

The programs provide a holistic experience from academic exposure to hands-on activities, oncampus living and mentorship, and have been the catalyst for many young participants to follow a career in engineering.

More good news as we go to print, the IAES has been named a finalist IN the Australian Museum Eureka Prize for STEM inclusion.

REPORTS

THE PYMBLE CHAPEL

Cast your mind back to the 70s. Does anyone remember them? No, not the 1970s - the 1870s.

That's when the story of Pymble Chapel began.

Pymble Chapel, then called Lane Cove Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, had its first service on the 26th of January 1879, replacing an earlier chapel on what are now the grounds of Ravenswood School.

Back then, you could walk to the Chapel along the dusty Stony Creek Road (the road which we know as Mona Vale Road), or you could ride your horse there, and park it in the empty paddock across the road.

It prospered as a small local church.

The church thrived through the two world wars, the Depression, and it wasn't until the post-WWII boom that changes came to the small outpost.

Nearby St Ives was being opened up - small farms were being subdivided into suburban lots, and what was now renamed Pymble Methodist church was stuck between the established railway centre of Gordon, and the new locale of St Ives.

The development of Mona Vale road into a six lane highway involved lowering the road, effectively hiding the Chapel from the main road, cutting the Chapel off from Church Street Pymble, and making access more difficult. With the opening of St Ives Methodist church, it was thought that the chapel's historic bell would attract more worshippers in developing St Ives rather than the surrounds of Pymble Chapel, so it was moved to the new church.

The St Ives Methodists and Presbyterians amalgamated with union in 1977 and moved to the Presbyterians site, while the Methodist church along with the bell was mothballed, and the Pymble Chapel name was adopted.

Like most other local churches, the 1970s and early 80s were a heyday.

Church services were packed, and Sunday school was overflowing.

Unfortunately over time that changed, and numbers fell away.

Ministry changed from full time to part time and when part time ministry ceased, services were led by a roster of retired ministers and lay preachers, under the pastoral oversight of the minister at Pymble Uniting.

The congregation remained small, with mostly older people, and there were ongoing concerns about its long-term viability. Plans for the 140th anniversary service raised doubts if the end of the Chapel was imminent.

The St Ives congregation generously agreed to loan the historic bell back to the chapel for the anniversary year. The 140th anniversary service in 2019 was a great success.

Following the amalgamation of Gordon and Pymble Uniting churches, the Chapel lost its 'linked minister', but with a core group of four lay preachers and retired ministers preaching regularly, along with visits from local school chaplains, worship continued and even flourished.

The congregation's numbers had been stable, but they were still tenuous. We had a few key losses, as people ceased to be able to attend or take active roles, and the first round of Covid caused a few people to drift away.

The congregation had a serious discussion about its future, and resolved to try and carry on, but by December 2021, it was decided it could no longer continue.

Family and friends, blessed by the timely easing of Covid regulations, gathered to worship as a congregation for the last time.

The bell rang out for the last time and the place rang with songs of praise.

Thanks to God were given for all that had been done at and through the chapel.

In the words of the hymn sung at the end of each service at Pymble Chapel - we'll praise him for all that is past, and trust him for all that's to come.

St Ives has welcomed former members of the chapel including Shirley Ashton, Barbara Coupe, Doreen Gill, Susanne Hledik, Guy and Virginia Smith, and Margaret Wilson.

Richie Dulin

12th March 2022

GEOFF DORNAN 'S MINISTRY

Rev. Geoff Dornan provided some interesting and thought-provoking years during his ministry at St Ives Uniting Church.

Inspiring sermons like "The Theophany of God", and "The Now-ness of the Gospel" challenged our minds to move beyond the lectionary readings to look at relevant statements by philosophers, economists, monks, politicians and martyrs.

The quotations and extensive notes on Bible readings were supported by film clips illustrating aspects of the sermons.

The congregation also learnt how to sing in Spanish.

"Tu ha venido a la orilla - You have come down to the Lakeshore", and we reached out in friendship to many Koreans who joined our church.

They made delicious food for special occasions, and they held a service in Korean each Sunday at noon.

Geoff and Gilda Dornan opened their home to many events in the life of the church. Discussion group "The Ark" and "The Ethics Group" brought a lively interplay of ideas after the morning teas provided by the Dornans.

Such topics as goodness, morality, privilege and responsibility were introduced with a video by a university lecturer and students, who with Geoff formed a challenging basis for discussion and thinking- memorable Friday mornings indeed.

The Friday Night Group also was memorable in that it had the support of Gilda, and the members were frequent guests at the manse for evenings of entertainment and friendship.

MINISTERING TO BUSHFIRE VICTIMS

A special report from Geoff Dornan

My ... our work---mine and that of St Ives ... is drawing to a close tomorrow. It has been a solid month, getting around the 4 congregational parish of Narooma, Bodalla, Cobargo and Bermagui.

I have taken services each weekend at two centres a Sunday, meaning I have been at each centre twice. Central to the task, has been visiting people from the church " communities but additionally from the broader communities.

Most of the time has been spent in and around Cobargo, which , as is widely known has been most devastatingly hit. It is extraordinary to look west from Cobargo and to imagine that just behind the range of hills that border the town, leading to the alpine national park, there are thousands of hectares of burnt territory.

It has been both painful but also inspiring to see people support each other even as many face financial ruin. Some of the farmers I have met - interestingly enough at an ecumenical Prayer and Praise service in Cobargo, last Sunday night -do not have the years left to recover, and are doing well just to manage the rebuilding of their homes.

Today I am travelling to a property at the back of Bodalla to a family who have lost most of their house and sheds but happily not their cows - it is a dairy property. They knew I was around and rang,. asking that I call in.

People here have repeatedly expressed to me their gratitude for St Ives and the Canberra regional Presbytery enabling me to do the work. To actually have a Uniting minister on the ground has been significant for them. It is not that we talk about the fires all the time - we talk about many other things as well - but to have the UC present in an ordained person, appears to help.

The other side to this equation, has been unexpectedly, being drawn into discussion with the Mt Dromedary Parish, as to their future. The parish itself is well integrated into the broader community having taken many social initiatives over the years, but they have not been especially well served by the broader Uniting church, in fact these last few years, Anglican priests from the Canberra-Goulburn Diocese have been ministering to them. It is an ecumenism of necessity but nevertheless welcome.

Blessings to you all

Geoff Dornan

STUDY TOUR TO THE HOLY LAND

(APRIL 21 to MAY 10, 2014)

Led by Rev Dr Robert McFarlane and Rev Laurel Barr

I was privileged to be part of this very special spiritual and travel tour. Our travelling companions were from our church and Roseville Uniting Church. St Ives Uniting members included Greg and Elizabeth Starr, Bob Knox, Seng Eng Low and John and myself.

From a spiritual point of view, we discovered many sites from the Old Testament and followed in Jesus' footsteps over his life span, and in our travels we visited many historical areas of significance from the ancient Roman empire and the world of today.

In the footsteps of Jesus, the places we visited were in Israel, beginning with Cana, where the miracle of the transformation of wine at the wedding was performed, is now a Franciscan monastery. Sephoris, was an ancient town built by Herod. Antipas where Joseph and Jesus are believed to have worked as carpenters. Nazareth, where Jesus lived, overlooks Sephoris (Zippori) and has many well-preserved mosaics and ongoing excavations. Originally a rural village, it is now a large town. Nazareth was also the site of the Church of the Annunciation where the Archangel Gabriel visited Mary.

On the Sea of Galilee we enjoyed a boat trip and saw an ancient boat like that of Jesus'. One of the most moving events of the tour was a Sunday communion service on the banks of the sea at Tabgha, conducted by Laurel and Rob. Tabgha was the site of Jesus' miracle of the loaves and fishes.

The town of Capernaum, where the ruins of Peter's house are found, was the centre of Jesus' Galilean ministry. There were also the ruins of an ancient synagogue where Jesus may have preached.

Our last stop of that day was to Mt. Tabor in the Jezreel Valley where Jesus was transfigured. A beautiful Roman Catholic chapel by architect Antonio Barluzzi, included mosaics of the transfiguration and included three chapels for Elijah, Moses and Jesus.

The eastern side of the Sea of Galilee was the site of Jesus' exorcism of the Gadarene Demoniac. Another beautiful church designed by Antonio Barluzzi in 1937/8, features one panel for each of the beatitudes on the Mount of the Beatitudes.

Bethsaida, where Peter, Andrew Phillip and the Zebedee brothers were born, excavations revealed it had been a fishing village, but as the water retreated owing to various earthquakes and landslides, the fishermen left the site and moved closer to the lake. This is the site where the blind man was cured and Jesus calmed the tempest on the water by walking on the sea.

The most memorable parts of the tour were in Jerusalem. Bethlehem, where we visited the Church of the Nativity, (the original of which was built by King Constantine and his mother Helena, burnt down in 6th C. AD), and is believed to be Jesus' birthplace, is also the site of the Stations of the Cross.

The church of the Holy Sepulchre stands in the Christian quarter of the walled Old City of Jerusalem on the site of Golgotha where Jesus died on the cross.

Another moving ceremony was in a Barluzzi Church of All Nations in the garden of Gethsemane on the Mount of Olives where Jesus was betrayed.

We also dipped our feet in the River Jordan where Jesus was baptised by John the Baptist, feeling awed at the thought of the baptism being the start of His ministry.

The sites of historical interest related to the Old Testament and Roman time, were spectacular.

We saw many examples of the historic builder Herod the Great (the Jewish king sanctioned by the Emperor Augustus) including temples, palaces and most ingenious of all, the harbour at Maritime in the Caesarea National Park. We also visited the locations of many crusader castles.

Jewish sacred sites we visited were Megiddo, Masada, where the last stand of the Jews took place in the year 70CE, and the Wailing Wall.

Old Testament sites were Jericho, accessed by a cable car, the Museum for the Dead Sea Scrolls and descriptions of the life of the Essenes.

The most amazing places from the Old Testament were the tunnels and water channels of the City of David where we walked and marvelled.

Apart from all the Roman ruins and amazing technology of Roman times, the most meaningful for me was our visit to Beersheba, where the wells were saved by the charge of the ANZAC Light Horse soldiers in WWI, immortalised in the story by Charles Chauvel's daughter.

There was an impressive park built by the late Jewish/ Australian packaging millionaire Richard Pratt, which told the story and exhibited a wonderful statue of a Light Horse soldier leaping over the trenches of the Turks.

We also visited Petra in Jordan, an ancient site of the Nabataeans, established around 312BCE.

We returned home spiritually renewed, amazed and excited by our visits to so many wonderful historical and ancient places in Ephesus and Corinth where Paul journeyed, Athens and the Greek Islands of Santorini, Mykonos and Crete.

Jane Ann Tainsh

ST IVES UNITING CHURCH

A Personal Recollection

My memories of St Ives Uniting Church stretch back to 1972 when I first tried it out as a Presbyterian Church after a year's posting in Switzerland and having been Methodist and Anglican for all my earlier Christian life.

St Ives Presbyterian worshipped each Sunday morning in the Gilmore Hall under the leadership of Lock Finlay with Bert Wyatt impressively providing the music on the organ. Ron Burrows was a youth leader at the time and soon I also became involved with the young people in studies and discussion groups.

Lock Finlay had a vision of a new "seven day a week" church which was constructed during 1973 and was completed with a grand opening in October with Bert on the organ and a choir rendering the Hallelujah Chorus of Handel. The church had strong links with the YMCA and did indeed have activities all through the week. This pattern has continued to this very day with tenants utilising our premises every day of the week. One could call this "The Finlay Legacy"!

Dianne and I were married in the sanctuary of the new church in January 1974; and were the first couple to be married there - again with Bert on the organ. We walked in from the side, so not much aisle to process down! This has been our spiritual and social home ever since.

I have memories of a strong youth group/fellowship meeting in a regular evening service and socialising afterwards. This continued throughout the ministry of not only Lock Finlay, but also Russell Thompson and Werner Haase. Church highlights at the time were the musicals presented by the young people - "Spirit", "Jesus Folk" and "Godspell". Although by far the oldest, the young people kindly asked me to play along on the piano in their band; an experience I enjoyed immensely! Adding to this was "Nehemiah" written and produced by Pauline Hubner and involving many of the congregation, both young and old. The Fellowship and Pauline also ran "Day Camps" for young children - a truly major undertaking, delighting the children, including ours!

There are too many memories to include here. Sights and Sounds of Christmas, Garage Sales, concerts, Stations of the Cross and Creation, WDF dinners, WEF progressive dinners, study groups and an inspiring

week long crusade led by Sam Kamaleson from World Vision -to name just a few.

In looking back over the years I am saddened that we do not have the youth vitality of those early days. I am also a little saddened to think of so many good and inspiring friends who are no longer with us. We have been privileged to have known them all - and we have learnt so much from them.

I have felt God very close on many an occasion. Thanks to our worship here and to some very inspirational preaching, there have been some "lightbulb" moments when I was given a new perspective. Always Dianne and I have been encouraged by those of deep faith around us.

I am full of heart that St Ives will continue to be a centre of excellence even though we are all now somewhat older. We have an opportunity to affect society in a very positive way with our accumulated wisdom, warm hearts and long experience. Christianity is not about numbers or statistics; rather it is reaching out to need wherever we find it. We have been doing this over the years and are certainly continuing to do this right now in 2023.

We ask for God's strength and perspective to lead us into future paths of faith and mission. I thank God that we currently have our very special Pastor, Richie Dulin, to walk with us into these future paths.

Lawrence Peak

August 2023

A CONGREGATION MEMBER'S TESTIMONIAL!

Neil and I have been attending SIUC for more than 10 years, having moved from Adelaide. Our first experience was a garage sale, I had the best time and bought lots of things I had got rid of in the move! I was impressed with the way everyone worked together.

Gill Lloyd took me under her wing, organised a name tag for me and invited us to Barry's and her home for a meal. We enjoyed happy times together.

I was invited to join the Evening Women's Fellowship and was on the

committee for three years.

It was a good way to get to know ladies better and we organised lunches which were enjoyed by all.

I like gardening but didn't like to interfere, until I saw a message in the church notices asking for helpers. I was in! Because of the drought watering had to be done with a bucket.

Then came COVID. Neil and I walked to church most weeks, I carried a back pack with tools.

Rain eventually returned and beautiful things appeared, an orchid and snow drops. The agapanthus, camellias and clivea have been lovely.

I am now a member of Women's Day Fellowship and attend Monday morning coffee group which is a good way to get to know people better.

I have been happy to attend some lovely concerts, so close to home. In particular I enjoyed Simon Tedeschi and Teddy Tahu Rhodes who shook my hand!

I like my church and the teaching and Richie our minister. It is the best ever.

Win Baseby

FUND RAISING

GARAGE SALES

Garage sales at St Ives Uniting church were a logical extension of the Jumble Sale and Market Day traditions, giving the opportunity to benefit from St Ives' shifting demographics.

There was a surge in the number of overseas executives from the 1970's onwards, particularly from the USA, who, following employment here for a few years, would return home. Their unwanted household goods were offered for sale in their domestic garages and advertised in the Garage Sales column of the local newspaper.

Around 1993, declining attendance at churches led to new initiatives by the minister of the time, the Rev. Ian Pearson, to seek new activities and programs.

Joan Knox could see how well the provision of Garage Sale goods would appeal, if set within the time frame of buyers moving from house to house on a Saturday morning.

With Ian's approval, the first sale occurred at the church in 1993, manned by Joan, with Jeanette Stutchbury, Bob Knox, and David Turner as assistants.

The venue was then limited to the [now] China room and the passage way at the front of the church. The takings that day were \$700, an encouraging result.

With growing amounts of goods coming in from a large number of homes, advertisements in local newspapers and subsequently social media, sales grew handsomely, and two sales have been held each year, except during COVID restrictions.

To maintain the ongoing success up to 100 members of the Church and the community work together on the sales days, and on the preparation. Team leaders head each department.

Goods are received and sorted throughout the year and stored in the cage.

During this process, china and glassware items, and other small household goods known to be valuable in other districts, but not so attractive in large quantities in St Ives are identified, and packed in boxes for periodical collection for Father Chris Riley, for sale in his Op Shops.

The contents of up to a hundred of these boxes are very much welcomed in the Hunter Valley each year.

A special attraction provided by the Women's Day Fellowship, are morning teas in the Gillmore building, providing home baked foods, tea and coffee. Jams and relishes are also very popular.

Sale areas have now expanded to the downstairs carpark, the Wesley Room, the Knox Room and the China room.

After a very successful term, with significant levels of income, Joan Knox surrendered her role as Co-Ordinator in 2019, and was succeeded by Stephen White who continues to organise the events.

CONCERTS

The organisation of our successful concerts by Stephen and Elizabeth White were handed over to Fay Laginestra during the new decade.

A system of four annual subscription concerts "The Magic of Music" was successfully introduced as loyal audiences enjoyed performances by world-class artists.

Previous distinguished performers, including pianist Simon Tedeschi and flautist Jane Rutter, were joined by such acclaimed artists as John Bell, Cheryl Barker, Greta Bradman, Teddy Tahu Rhodes, David Hobson, Peter Cousens, Tamara-Anna Cislowska and the Welsh Choir.

A similarly high-profile program was organised for our 2020 series, which had to be cancelled because of the outbreak of COVID 19. Hopes for resuming the following year were dashed as the pandemic persisted.

Unfortunately, it is unlikely we will be able to resume staging concerts. The disruptions caused by the pandemic, distancing and catering requirements, our ageing congregation and difficulties in providing the large numbers of helpers to organise the events have restricted such a possibility.

We regret we are unable to provide the opportunity for our community to hear world-class artists at a convenient local setting.

However, the concerts are remembered very positively as an important part of our outreach into the community and a substantial help to church income.

UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE (U3A)

The popular courses provided by U3A and SIUC were brought to an abrupt halt in March 2020, when COVID 19 was declared a pandemic and lockdowns began.

It was a difficult time to get the classes up and going again, with NSW Health Government rules and the Uniting Church rules, QR code and agreement between both parties and sanitization regimes all to be adhered to.

Happily, since then, there has been renewed interest in the courses.

The enthusiastic Leader of The Golden Age of Cinema was so keen to have the best view of films in the course, he paid for the installation of blinds for the room.

Dance for Fitness and Fun, held twice a week, is very popular with classes, mostly held in the undercover carpark, providing more room and good ventilation.

Ukulele for Fun is another course in high demand.

Mah Jong started this semester and quickly became a highly sought after course with a long waitlist for next semester.

Current Affairs Forum, is also eagerly attended and is a full class.

The on-site parking is a bonus for the members.

We currently have around 130 attending each week with other numbers registered.

OUR PROPERTY

In the past 10 years St Ives has undergone significant development, with ever increasing multistorey unit blocks changing the landscape from its previous leafy village atmosphere.

St Ives Uniting Church continues to be an attractive green oasis, with its buildings. Surrounded by expansive, well-maintained lush green lawns, trees and shrubbery, and off-street parking.

The church has continued to be a seven-day-a-week church, as was the Rev Lock Finlay's vision.

Today, more than ever, there are 100 people using the buildings every day for extensive community programs, including the North Shore Dance Academy, U3a, Catholic Health Care and the Evangelical Formosan Church of Sydney.

Maintaining the buildings is a financial challenge.

In 2022 it was necessary to replace the roof on the education wing. This was followed in 2023 with major maintenance on the main building roof, and the replacement of the Gilmore Hall roof.

The Gilmore building was the first church constructed on the site and was added to the NSW State Heritage Inventory in 1915.

Stephen White

OUR VISION

*St Ives Uniting Church
finding meaning in Christ
finding purpose in life*

OUR MISSION

Christ calls us to make disciples.

St Ives Uniting Church reaches out to people seeking meaning and purpose, inviting them to life-transforming encounters with God.

St Ives Uniting Church shows God's love to all people, in the local community, nationally and globally.

St Ives Uniting Church is a community of respect for all people.

MISSION GOALS

How are we going to get there?

Children and families. To connect with children and their parents in order that they may have foundations for lifelong faith in Christ.

Mid-life transitions. To help people asking the big questions about life to find or re-find faith through transforming encounters with Christ.

Seniors. To build a culture of safety and respect within the congregation and the wider community and through developing programs of companionship and support in the transition to supported living, and life-stage questions of meaning and purpose.

Cross-cultural. To connect with people of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds in order to extend Christ's inclusive love to all, focusing on both new arrivals into the community around St. Ives Uniting Church and asylum seekers entering Australia.

OUR CHURCH WEBSITE AND DIRECTORY

Our website was created by Doug Purnell around 2007. Dianne Peak took over the maintenance and development in 2008.

During this time our website has highlighted church events especially:

- Landmark Services - Law, Education etc. Uniting Life & Learning study programmes. Rob Mcfarlane's time: 2011 - 2015.
- Social Justice, Social Debate including Ethics and instigation of Sunday Reflections which publishes the Order of Service and Sermon every week. This was particularly important during the COVID lockdown. Geoff Dornan's time: 2016 - 2020.
- Richie Dulin has continued with the Sunday Reflections tradition. Richie joined us in 2021 as a Lay Minister Leader and became our Pastor in 2022.
- Concerts have been promoted on our website over many years. Programmes and booking details were all available on our website.

Overview:

Our current website was created in 2012 with a new format.

The main purpose of the website is to attract people who are browsing for Uniting Church congregations and to include people from our own congregation who can no longer attend church.

Our website is a valuable resource for the community and our church family.

Our 50th Anniversary book and photos from that occasion are on our website archives.

CHURCH DIRECTORY

Our church directory is a valuable resource for our church members. It is updated on a regular basis by, Angela Lloyd and Dianne Peak. Our most recent publication was created in 2022. This information is only available for church members and is not published on our website.

We also have a church email list and during COVID this was very valuable. We were able to keep in touch with our members and provide the Order of Service and Sermon on a weekly basis.

LOOKING FORWARD

Lord, you have been our dwelling place throughout all generations.

Psalm 90:1

St Ives in 1963 was a very different place than it is today - and so is St Ives Uniting. The people who founded our congregation would be amazed at the changes that have taken place in our society and our congregation over those years—economically, socially and demographically.

Our 60th anniversary is a great time to look back at all that has happened at St Ives Uniting - the people who have been part of the life of the church, the events held, the facilities that have been built, the traditions established and developed, and the people who have gone out from St Ives to live and work as part of the church in other places.

But our 60th anniversary is also a great time to look forward: We can't know what our church or our suburb will look like in 2083, but we do know that God has a plan for us - and that we, as individuals and as a congregation, get to be part of that plan.

We have a responsibility to the people of 2083, to share with them the good news of Jesus, and to be examples of his love for the world. To be as generous to them, as the people of the past 60 years have been to us.

As we celebrate, may the stories of faith, commitment, and service that are shared in this book, strengthen and inspire us into the next 60 years of worship and mission as St Ives Uniting Church!

Richie Dulin

You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden.

-Matthew 5:14

AUSTRALIAN ARCHIVES

Copies of our 50 year history were lodged as listed. Copies of our 60 year book also will be lodged.

State Library New South Wales

National Library of Australia

Uniting Church Archives Deposit Register

Royal Australian Historical Society

Ku-ring-gai Council Library

FOR ENQUIRIES - CONTACT BOB KNOX AT THE CHURCH OFFICE

St Ives Uniting Church "50 Memorable Years" section was compiled by
Howard Walker.

The decade to include "60 Memorable Years" was compiled and edited
by Bob Knox and Fay Laginestra, with publishing assistance by
John Holliday-Smith.

