



DOWNNS PRESBYTERY

NEWSLETTER

September 2025



Newsletter: Ruthannah76@gmail.com

October Presbytery Meeting

is fast approaching at Crows Nest Uniting Church. Following the recent Synod meeting, the Presbytery Ministers engaged the General Secretary, Rev Dr Adam McIntosh, to progress the Presbytery Capacity Project. This project emphasizes a broad collaboration with each Presbytery. Rev Dr Adam McIntosh will join the Downs Presbytery Meeting on Saturday to provide further insights and facilitate discussions, inviting your valuable input.

Everyone is welcome to attend, but please **RSVP for catering purposes**. If you require meals on Saturday, the cost is \$15, which includes lunch, morning tea, and afternoon tea. While tickets to attend are free, meals require payment. If you need assistance with the form, please contact Anni:
admin@downspresbytery.org.au
Office: 4638 9989

We look forward to seeing you and hearing about the work of God in your region.

Accommodation!!!

Due to other events in Crows Nest over the Presbytery weekend, you may need to consider accommodations in Highfields, Toowoomba, and the surrounding areas. If you encounter any difficulties, please contact us, and we may seek assistance from Toowoomba members regarding billets. There are a few billets in Crows Nest too.



Presbytery Celebrations

Earlier this year it was announced that Jean Reid, a member of Warwick UC, was to be awarded the Moderators Medal in recognition of more than 70 years



service to our congregations, the wider church and community. Jean is well known to youth workers and young people, ministers, pastoral carers, teachers, women's groups, Presbytery members... for her stalwart support and willingness to step in where needed. She filled the gap when ministers moved on before a replacement could be arranged, ensuring that all the various groups continued in worship, witness and service.

From her youth Jean has contributed to the life & work of the church teaching, preaching, encouraging - being "a wellspring of faith development through fellowship, friendship and spiritual development". In reflection on her service, people have spoken of her as someone who guided them in times of uncertainty and struggle. Who leant a listening ear, if they wanted to test their ideas and plans.

In short, a mentor to many who still value the words of wisdom, of caution, of encouragement she offered. Thankful for the times she gave someone a push to use their gifts.

Jean says that she is not unique or unusual, there are many Christians like her across the church nation wide. They strengthen the church and contribute to its work of spreading the gospel and ministering to their communities.

Stable One WinterShelter is 10 Churches working together during Toowoomba's cold Winter offering a safe place for our Homeless.

Winter Shelter @ St Stephens 2025

**And we gather here side by side underneath this roof,
we take pride with open arms and hearty meals. A
place of hope where compassion heals....** From a song
written by Anthony Davis, former guest of Winter Shelter.

For the past 5 years St Stephens have opened their Church Hall on a Wednesday evening to welcome up to 10 homeless Guests. On a Wednesday afternoon the Shower Trailer & Bedding Trailer are parked on the church grounds ready to be unpacked by a team of Volunteers. Our first group of Volunteers arrived in the afternoon to make beds & set the tables ready for the night ahead. The Evening Team came in around 5pm. Our Guests & Volunteers all sit down to an evening meal. At 10pm the Nightshift come in to take over until 6am. The Morning Crew arrived to cook a hot breakfast for our Guests & to pack the trailers ready to move on to the next Church. Each week it takes approximately 25 volunteers to run our Shelter.

At St Stephens we have past Guests who come back each year to Volunteer. James was a Guest the first year, and after finding accommodation he has returned each year to volunteer. He has been the Shift Leader for the Afternoon Team for the past 3 years, a role he takes very seriously. Steve was a Guest 3 years ago, and after finding accommodation he has returned each year. You will find Steve at our Hall most Wednesdays from 4pm & he stays until 6am the following morning.

Each year there is always that one story that touches your heart. On a Wednesday you will find Ivan either outside on a seat talking to the Guests or on the couch in the Hall. Ivan sits quietly listening to their stories, never judging. One guest after spending the afternoon talking with him, decided he would reach out to his father. He hadn't been in contact with his Dad for a very long time due to the choices he had made in his life. It was lovely to hear that his Dad had returned his call & they are now having regular contact. This Guest now has employment & is in a share house with other tradies.

Anthony, a former Guest, created & released a heartfelt song with aid of AI. The lyrics, developed in collaboration with fellow guests during his stay, beautifully capture their shared experiences.
<https://youtu.be/Lq8K0oq90V0?si=V3JvXn4FN770B9IZ>

In November I will attend the Australian Conference for Stable One WinterShelter representing Toowoomba.

More information?

Shaaron Currie,

Venue Coordinator 0428130038

*There is something to be
said about journeying
honestly through one's
thought garden,
bringing clippers in one
hand, seeds in the other,
a shovel in the pocket,
eyes to behold new
colours, arms eager to
plant, and knees ready
to kiss the earth.*

New
Shoes?



Those shoes that have carried you – that have stomped through mud, hurdled over lies, trekked under stars, and helped to gather blooms for your heart – it's time to pass those pilgrim stories on to other weary feet to find support within them too.

There are new shoes to wear in, more stories to tell, more blooms to hold, and more stars to behold.

New shoes, while not always comfy and bringing blisters (for a while) are still the right shoes for you, for right now. You are stepping out onto an adventurous new path of good works – one that has been prepared in advance, especially for you.

From Beauty Maker, Sarah Alison



"Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking with us on the road and explaining the Scriptures to us? Luke 24:32

Let us pray:

Lord, We remember the people of faith whom you have given to us through the scriptures, those messengers of yours whose hearts were set on fire with love of you and your word

We remember people in our lives who have kindled your fire in us, all those who have motivated us to give ourselves more completely to you

We remember how, at every turn in our journey, we need to trust in you and to count on your love to fill us with the courage we need in order to change and grow.

**You have shown us, Lord, what is good
Help us, we pray, to act justly,
love mercy, and walk humbly with
you, Our God.**

Based on Micah 6: 8

Disaster Chaplaincy Training **Be there when it matters**

A special training event to equip chaplains and ministers local to WD region to join with **Qld Disaster Chaplaincy Network** to respond to disasters in your community.

Thursday 16th & Friday 17th October.

More info: Western Downs Council, Chinchilla
Ph: 0483 835 198 email: chair@QDCN.org.au



More information and coverage at ucaqld.com.au

On Monday 15th September, the sounds of bagpipes rang through the crisp air of the Southern Downs as church and community gathered for the opening of Uniting Place Warwick. This highly anticipated project is the latest affordable housing build by the Uniting Church for Queenslanders in need. Uniting Place Warwick was brought to life by the Warwick, Killarney and Freestone Uniting Church congregations who saw a need in their community and asked themselves, "*what do we have that we can use to help?*". They had land and a congregation of passionate people.

The Severnlea Uniting Church (Granite Belt Parish) is celebrating the 80th Anniversary of the opening of the Methodist Church at Severnlea with an Anniversary Service followed by Afternoon Tea. You are cordially invited to attend this special occasion

**@ 440 Whiskey Gully Road, Severnlea.
Saturday 8th November 2025 @ 2.00pm**

RSVP 15th October 2025

Margaret Carnell, Phone: 0427835268,

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Photo:

Elsie Gibbard

December 1945



Severnlea's beginnings.....

A meeting was held on an unknown date at the home of Mr and Mrs Townsend to discuss having a church at Severnlea. It was attended by Rev. John Murray, Will Townsend, Stan Carnell, Bernie Kerridge, Norman Mikklesen and Selim Kerridge. The Severnlea Methodist Church was opened on 24th November 1945 by Rev G.W. Pettendrigh.

The original building was built in Tannymorel in 1902, moved to Amiens in 1920 to serve the Soldiers Settlement, and moved to Severnlea in 1945.. It was almost derelict at the time. It was built on crown land (with permission) and the transfer was not complete until 1950. The work of pulling down, re-erecting and relining the building, was carried out, and organ, hymn books and church furniture were acquired. Rev Murray built the pulpit, communion rail, communion table and hymn board using timber originally purchased by Rev Murray for his wife's dining room suite. Various aspects of establishing the property were carried out by voluntary labour. Eventually (1963) power was connected and the church stuccoed as we see it today.

From its opening the congregation began to work for the benefit of the community and Fetes/Spring Fairs were started. A bus brought people from town and the Stanthorpe Brass Band played. There were stalls, afternoon tea and, in later years, a Children's Art Competition.

The Ladies' Guild (later Fellowship) helped send food parcels to England up until 1947. They supported Frontier Services and raised funds for the local Chaplaincy committee by holding a morning tea which averaged over \$1000 per year for the first 11 years. (I don't know the total until they stopped during Covid but it was in excess of \$20,000). They also organized family teas.

A Christmas Tree was held each year to thank the Severnlea community for their support. All Severnlea children east of the Severn River were invited as well as Sunday School students.

And always God was worshipped, prayers were prayed, praise and thanksgiving was offered, baptisms, confirmations and the everyday work of Christians in Severnlea was carried out.



**Harvest Festivals of thanksgiving
each year**

