



The Journal of Killara Uniting Church Parish

"Fiveways" - Corner Arnold Street and Karranga Avenue

<https://killara.uca.org.au>

Issue 92 August 2021

UCA Anniversary 2021 – a great event!

Sunday June 20th, the 44th anniversary of the institution of the Uniting Church gave us a treat. Our service featured an array of young and old who shared with us aspects of their life and gifts.

Peter Bidencepe, at 93, has memories of sharing the life of our Church as a young boy, and spoke of his life's journey with God. Heather and Kaylee Zhou, whom we remember as very small children, brought us encouragement by speaking with maturity about what the Church has meant for them.

There were gifts of music: Tom Mao, tenor and accompanist Jason He – both ex-students of Michelle Son – inspired us with a moving solo: 'O Divine Redeemer'. Jason and Samantha Dhillon, children of Nicky Dhillon, played "The Merry-go-Round of Life" on tuba and euphonium, accompanied by their grandmother, and our dear friend, Patrice Wong.

Peter Son, younger son of Yangrae and Michelle, gave the address. Peter, at 32, is still young, yet has had time to experience and evaluate his experience of growing up within the Uniting Church. He spoke of the things he valued, 'Old and young worshipping together', and of lessons learnt in his life, 'God has always been there for us.'

Thank you, contributors, for the blessings you brought us.



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**From the Editor**

A notable event over the past months was the UCA Anniversary service on June 20th, where young people were well represented. The Anniversary coincided with the release of a book, 'Growing up Uniting' which records the testimony of young people (mainly 20s and 30s) who grew up in the Uniting Church.

In reading the book, and seeing young people with such sincerity and impressive gifts at our service, I was struck by the resources they can offer us. I also realised that they grow into adulthood accepting without question, standards of equality, openness and fairness, to which some of us older Christians have needed time to adjust. Theirs will be the church of the future.

I was reminded also, that the development of a Christian is not essentially our doing but God's. We may provide the soil, like the farmer in Mark's gospel (4:26-29). He sows seed and 'he sleeps at night, is up and about during the day, and all the while the seed is sprouting and growing. Yet he does not know how it happens'.

Thanks be to God for our wonderful young people, growing and developing faith; for older Christians, like Peter Bidencepe, in whom the plant has borne fruit, and for all others who bear fruit according to their gifts.

Julie Sekhon

From the Minister's Desk.

“In Jesus the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God.”

Ephesians 2:21-22

At the last UCA anniversary service, we heard faith-journey stories from our own parishioners and noted that their stories reflected the inter-generational and cross-cultural diversity of our congregation. That is the nature of the church.



We boldly claim to be a “multicultural church”. I often find myself asking, to what end? For what purpose? Sure, a buffet of food from various cultures warms both heart and stomach, but it should not end there. What about the spiritual food we so desperately need?

The term “multicultural church” is rather tautological. By nature, and definition, the church, being an assembly of both saints and sinners from various walks of life, would indeed be multicultural. Culture is not just defined by race and ethnicity, but like the Jews and Gentiles experienced, culture can be marked by separation of economics, political affiliation and gender.

Cross-cultural ministry is like walking through minefields because there will inevitably be conflict between different perspectives and [modus operandi](#). When we humbly listen to other cultures’ perspectives, such cross-cultural dialogue enlarges our horizons of life experiences and understanding of the gospel, the truth.

In one of my previous parishes, a Tongan congregation was very generous with their offering. Their generosity meant that they often neglected their own needs. After a series of sizeable donations, I rang the families to thank them kindly and to see how they were doing, only to find that their landlines were disconnected. I found out that they had spared nothing for themselves, or for their children. Overwhelmed by their faith, I suggested that they ensure they set aside money for essentials, particularly their children’s education. Upon sharing this story with the wider church, I believe those who listened were inspired by their generosity, while the Tongan families embarked on a new way of faith expression through sustainable generosity.

Different perspectives and wisdom emerging from different cultures should be brought into faithful dialogue in understanding the gospel, the truth. When we humbly listen to other cultures’ perspectives, our horizons of life-experience and understanding of the gospel are enlarged. Compassion for other perspectives is important, but such compassion must be coupled with the discipleship of mission to follow Jesus, who is the truth. It is not a variety of different perspectives that enhance the truth; but rather, it is the truth that illuminates our different perspectives. The mission of our multicultural, cross-cultural church: to follow Jesus, the way, the truth and the life.

Yangrae Son [Minister of the Word]

Biggest Morning Tea *Supporting Cancer Council NSW*



On Thursday May 27th, at the Killara Uniting Church hall, I hosted a morning tea. After the cancellation in 2020, I believe friends were so pleased to come this year, and 90 attended - **a record number!**

Gregory and Carr, Funeral Directors in Gordon, generously catered for the morning tea, through their Events Manager, Brea Burke and with the usual Raffle offering many worthwhile prizes, and the guest Speaker, Professor Louise Baur, the morning was enjoyed by so many friends.

The tables were set and with lovely flower arrangements, the food placed on each table and tea and coffee served individually.

Louise, Guest Speaker, has a family connection with the Killara Church, as her grandfather Norbert Baur, was Church Secretary until 1958, when he died, her parents were married here, Louise and her sister were baptised here. She was delighted to come to assist the Cancer Council, as she is Professor of Paediatrics at Westmead Childrens Hospital.

The Cancer Council are thrilled with such a happy day, enjoyed by their representative Angelina, and the deposit of **\$15,000** – a great result.

Sue Mitchell



Biggest Morning Tea A message from Sue:

Dear friends,

Thank you so much for coming to my Australia's Biggest Morning Tea, and helping to make it the special time that it was.

Together, we contributed to the \$9,793,462 raised across the country... woohoo!

The team at Cancer Council have gotten in touch and asked me to pass on their thanks too.

Your donations will go a long way in helping them provide vital support services to ensure no patient or family faces cancer alone, as well as fund ground-breaking research into gentler and more effective treatment methods – to help create a cancer free future.

Thank you. I can't wait to do it all again next year!

Your friend,
Susan 🍷



Photographic competition Theme: "Life's Blessings"

Opens: 1 August 2021

Closes : 29 October 2021

Appropriate photos without personal information will be uploaded on our website

<https://killara.uca.org.au>

One of the judges will be the Hon Jonathan O'Dea MP



Email your digital photo as a jpeg to: kucphotos@gmail.com

Include - Name of Photographer:
Contact phone number or email:
Title of Photograph:

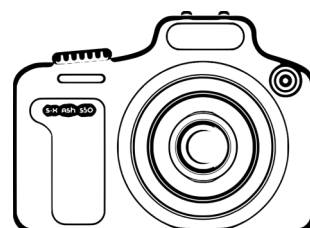
Prize winners will be announced in December Connection

Another option is to post your photographic print together with the above information to **PO Box 345 Killara NSW 2071.**

No more than 3 photos per person and a suggested entry fee of \$5 per photo to Bank account details:

Name: The Uniting Church in Australia Killara Uniting Church

BSB: 032 086 Account: 127972 include reference "photocomp"





Amelie sends greetings!

Claude came to Sydney twice in May to celebrate Amelie's birthday together. It's been nearly one month since lockdown started but Amelie and Akiko have really enjoyed spending time at home during school holiday, Amelie was also very happy to do lots of things like dancing, stretching, crafting, singing, drawing, cooking, playing games and studying. Even Amelie started to take online piano lessons from this school holiday which she has been really enjoying.

We have got a baby budgie in March and we brought two more friends for him in June. They entertain us a lot too.

photos from Amelie's 7th party, taekwondo grading, Easter, budgies and Amelie's craft.

Amelie, Akiko and Claude



Blackwells home on leave from Bulgaria

Andrew and Kate Blackwell (family of David and Robin) and their teenage sons, Ben and Will are currently in Sydney on 10 weeks home mission assignment.

Andrew and Kate are missionaries in Bulgaria with European Christian Mission, primarily focused on whole-life discipleship amongst Roma communities in Bulgaria.

They have been in lockdown for the 5 weeks since they arrived back in Sydney, grateful to be staying with their two older children and to be able to pay limited compassionate visits to elderly parents.

They are now not able to meet up with and speak to congregations in their supporting churches.

Please pray that their online Zoom gatherings (with their supporting church congregations) will result in much needed and continued ongoing prayer and financial support.

Robin Blackwell



Ku-ring-gai Male Choir

A concert by the Ku-ring-gai Male Choir in our church on June 19th was enjoyed by all present.

What you missed in Lockdown ...

I am thankful to Ron Leckie for his time devoted to the garden - there is always the beauty bestowed by our Creator, to behold, as I take a walk past FiveWays.

Chris Richarson



GREAT IDEA



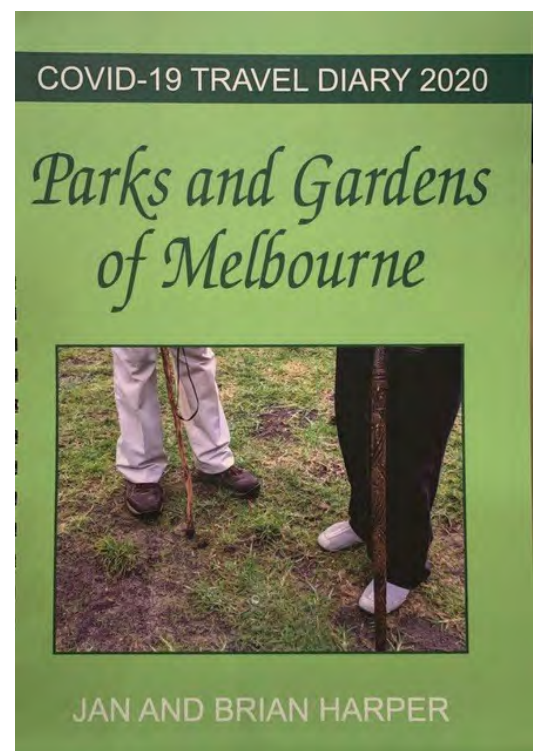
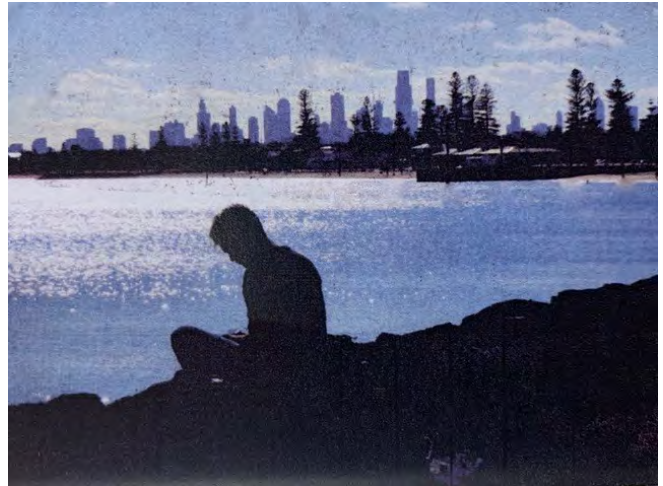
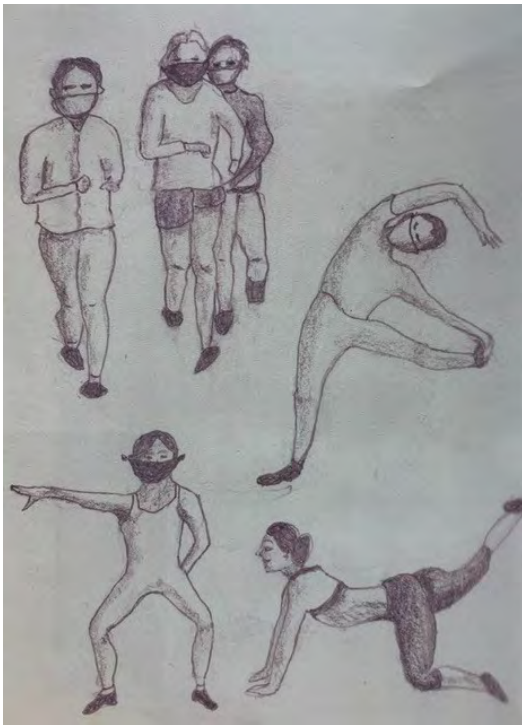
Joan Thomson

When the first Covid lockdown hit Melbourne last year two dear friends of mine had an inspired idea for exercise. They are both in their late eighties and both physically “challenged”. They decided to pretend to be tourists, so each morning they set forth with their walking sticks ready to explore a local garden, park or trail. When they were allowed to travel further from home they extended their excursions.

Each day they would research the park they visited. Jan would then do a painting (she is a great painter!) and do some sketches of people they had seen exercising, and Brian would vet his wonderful photos taken that day.

With this, they created a little book. After visiting 60 parks and gardens they said “And every day our legs got stronger”.

PS. Jan’s parents, Stewart and Hope McPhee, were staunch members of Five Ways church long ago.





NANCY (NAN) ATKINSON 1928-2021

Nan Atkinson (nee McCredie) was born in 1928 in Roseville. The family moved to a farm in Pennant Hills during the depression, before moving to Beecroft during her high school days.

She attended PLC Croydon, where she excelled, particularly at sport. She was captain of tennis, basketball and athletics and school captain. She went on to study Physical Education at ACPE. She was a PE teacher at many different schools including PLC Pymble and Croydon, Toowoomba and Ravenswood. She married Bill in 1958 and had 5 children and 10 grandchildren. She attended Lindfield Uniting Church (formerly St David's) from 1958 when they lived in West Killara.

She helped to run Square Dancing and Fetes in the hall and set up pet and floral arrangement stalls and was involved in church picnics at Lane Cove River Park. She also organised Fashion Parades at the church hall and in her home both at Wahroonga and at West Pymble

and assisted with the modelling. At the time of church union she was St David's representative for parish events organised to bring members of the parish together.

She was involved in Open House and would chair meetings, but her most prominent role was organising the Christmas Luncheon and she spent a lot of time making it a special occasion for all involved. She also organised a collection of socks and toiletries for Exodus.

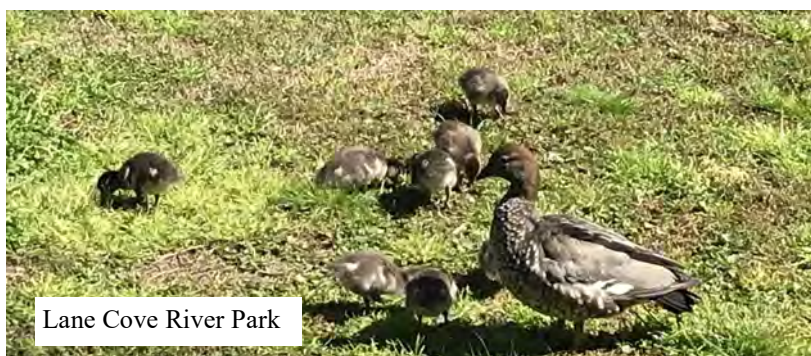
Nan was loyal friend to many. She worked hard for Lindara—cooking, sorting goods before markets, making Christmas hampers and much more. When Lindara was first set up she was involved in furniture collection for families in need supported by Lindara.

One thing we all remember her for was 'flowers'. On many occasions she produced gorgeous flowers for Sunday church services and posies for many who needed support or appreciation.

Nan loved life in general but particularly loved tennis, golf, bridge, travel *and Bawley Point* where she had a house, cooking, shopping, flowers, family and friends. In later years Nan and Bill moved to the Landings at North Turramurra due to Bill's ill health and after Bill's death Nan continued to live there independently where she had many happy times and lots of friends.

We miss Nan's attendance at Sunday services and particularly think of her at this present time as we would have celebrated her 93rd birthday on 13th July.

Lorraine Prowse



Peter Bidencepe speaks of his Life's Journey



My association with this church occurred before I knew it, as I was christened by Rev. A.P. Campbell here in this church or at my grandmother's house in nearby Powell St. Shortly afterwards I was taken over 600 km to my father's grazing property at Coonamble. My mother told me a dust storm was blowing at the time and only my eyes were showing.

My first education was by correspondence, but I didn't do well with it, so at eight I was sent to board at a small school, "Lochiel" not far from here in Kardella Ave.

On Sundays we used to walk here to this Church with the principal and his wife, then afterwards I had Sunday lunch with my grandparents. In the afternoons I'd walk back here to Sunday school, which in those days had some 20 or 30 pupils. This was held in the old wooden hall which had been the original church, beside where we are now.

On some occasions we also attended 7.15pm evening services.

At one of these I can recall Mr. Campbell, preaching what he called a "sermonette" for the younger ones. On the side of the pulpit he displayed a small flat torch, which he'd mounted on a small wooden post. This had a sliding front with 3 lenses, red, green and white. Red to symbolise what our consciences told us would be wrong, green when our consciences were clear and white to show us God's way.

For Sunday school anniversaries a large platform was set up here over the sanctuary area, so we could sing facing the congregation. When holidays finally came around I would board a steam train leaving Central about 9.00pm and travel back to Coonamble and return to my country home.

Sunday afternoon services there were sometimes held in private homes with the Presbyterian minister coming out from town. On several occasions I remember my father playing a reed organ to accompany the hymns.

In 1941 I began my 1st year of secondary schooling as a boarder at Knox and attended Sunday services at St Johns Presbyterian Church in Wahroonga. Later that year I received a message that my grandmother wanted to see me in Killara and she broke the news to me that my father had died unexpectedly in Coonamble following appendicitis complications. This was the greatest shock I have ever received.

After appointing a manager to the property my mother came down here and we lived in a flat on Pacific Highway in Killara to be near her parents. In 1942 I became a day pupil, which made it possible to resume attending back here at Five Ways, then a Congregational Church. In the early 1950's our Church held several fêtes to raise funds for building a new hall. Arnold Street was closed off and I can remember advertising these by driving around local streets with my sound equipment in a loaned panel van.

When the hall was being designed, Denis Ryan sought ideas for inclusion and I suggested a projection room at the back of the hall for screening 16mm films. This was included and is still there, although no longer used.

In 1954 I ceasing worshiping here at Killara and sailed to England. During my two years there, I worshipped in several London churches including Westminster Abbey, St Pauls Cathedral, St Martins in the Field as well as several others.

Returning to Sydney in 1956, I re-commenced attending back here at Five Ways and not long after was fortunate to meet Judy, who'd been attending St James Anglican Church in Turramurra. Subsequently I asked her if she would like to visit Five Ways and hear Mervyn Kelly preach. She accepted, liked it, and came more often. Then in September 1959 Mervyn Kelly married us here. More frequent attendance followed and he invited us to become members and when each of our three sons were born, they were also christened here.

Later I was asked to join the Diaconate, which is now called the Church Council, and when Andrew Roberts retired, as he was moving to Canberra, I was asked to become Church Secretary.

Due to my practical abilities, I was sometimes referred to as Mr. Property or Mr. Fixit, as I'd done many repairs etc. to both properties. When the Uniting Church came into being in 1977, its structure required a Property Committee be set up and I became a member.

When my working days were over and I retired, I assisted my son Ross build a new pole home in Avalon about 1988. One day whilst down there, I suffered an unexpected heart attack and ended up in the intensive care ward at Mona Vale Hospital. While lying in bed one dark night there wondering whether I would survive, I remember praying the words of King George VI :

“Lord give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown, and he replied “Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of God. That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way.”

This must have been heard, as fortunately I recovered and was able to return home.

Some years later in 2003 my condition deteriorated and this required surgery with a triple by-pass at the San. Once again the Lord watched over me and I was fortunate in regaining normal good health.

After turning 80, I decided to retire from the Property Committee. However a few years later Ron Leckie asked me to re-join the Property Committee and assist him with my accumulated knowledge of the Church properties. I agreed and remained on the committee until March this year, when, after losing Judy and reaching 93 I finally resigned.



Peter is soon to be leaving us:

All will be sad to know that our dear friend Peter Bidencepe will move into Pittwater Palms Retirement Village, quite close to his son, Ross's home - about mid to late September. We who know Peter count him as our friend, and give him our good wishes trusting that this change will bring blessing to him.



What the Church means to me

Peter Son

(Talk given at the Anniversary Service, June)

Anniversaries are a special moment in time. On the 22nd of June, 1977, the Uniting Church in Australia was founded, forty four years ago. Anniversaries, like birthdays, are important because they help us reflect. Reflect on our achievements, our mistakes, and our learnings.

Today, it gives me great joy and honour to be standing in front of you, not just as the Minister's son, but just like all of you, a child of God. Today, I'd like to share with you what the church means to me as we celebrate our church's 44th anniversary.

When I was a rebellious and forgetful teenager, I made the horrible mistake of forgetting my own mother's birthday: I had somehow mixed up my dad's birthday, which is the 21st of March, with my mum's, which is the 19th of March. Yesterday, I turned the youthful age of 32 years old. Hopefully, at age 32, by now, I am a little bit more mature, a little less self-absorbed, a lot less forgetful, and a lot more loving.

The mistake of forgetting my mum's birthday is not the worst mistake I made. While I share the same name as Jesus' disciple Peter, I am no saint. I've made mistakes, plenty of them. We all have. Mistakes, or wrongdoing, is what we Christians would call 'sin'.

However, the church has taught me a great lesson: that our mistakes are forgiven through God's grace. Our Christian faith is distinct. Unlike other religions, we do not believe in a quantifiable, transactional, calculative system of karma. We do not believe that our actions or words, however right or wrong they may be, guarantee us a spot in the afterlife of heaven. The Bible teaches us, as we learnt last week, to look not at actions and words, but our hearts.

Indeed, there are people sitting with us today, perhaps for the first time, that were born somewhere outside of Australia. Indeed, there may be people sitting with us today, who do not identify as Christian. We come from all walks of life, with diverse backgrounds, speaking many different languages, and yet, here we are all – gathered here today to experience God and feel his presence in our hearts.

Growing up in the uniting church was not really my choice. As the son of a church minister, the Uniting Church is the church that I was born into and raised in. In our postmodern, consumer-driven world, we love to think that we have choice: a choice in where to live, a choice in what car to buy, a choice whom to marry. It was never our choice to be born, it just happened. A lot of things in our life we can control, but a lot more things we cannot.

My journey growing up with the Uniting Church was not really something that I chose. It was something God had chosen for me.

Looking back, I can see God's hand, gently guiding me along his providential plan.

Dad's first full-time placement was in the Strathfield-Homebush congregation, starting from the mid 1990s. There, I was able to enjoy all the aspects of a good Aussie childhood: playing cricket, watching the footy, and riding my bike around the neighbourhood. Living in Homebush, our church was a rather multicultural church, with many Sri Lankans and Tongans. I remember the hospitality and warmth of our Sri Lankan and Tongan friends, as they fed me copious amounts of food. It was my time at Homebush, that I fell in love with Sri Lankan spicy chicken curry, and Tongan food. In my pre-pubescent innocence, I boldly claimed to my father one day, "Dad, when I grow up, I'm going to marry a Sri Lankan or a Tongan woman."

As I look back, I laugh at how innocent and naïve I was. One of the great strengths of our church is that we boldly claim to be a multicultural church. Yet, the underbelly of all of this, is that we may start seeing each other through labels and tags. We all have different cultures and backgrounds, yet the one thing that we know, yet perhaps do not readily manifest in our words and actions, is that we all are made in the image of God. As tempting as it is to start seeing each other as Sri Lankan, Tongan, Korean, Irish, Scottish, Japanese, Chinese or otherwise, the church reminds me that Christ is at the centre, and not our cultural preferences or upbringing.

In the early noughties, dad's next placement was in Concord Uniting Church. Here, as I moved into my schooling years at North Sydney Boys High, I was able to better understand the importance of church as more than just a social club I went to on Sundays. I met some of the most loving people in this congregation. One high school teacher who was a member of that church, took an interest in my brother and me, and provided me with great mentorship during my troublesome high school life. This was what the church was about for me: I learnt that the church is a place to find fellowship and role models who embody the love of God, that the church is an expression of God's love on earth. The church, in its perfect imperfect ways, teaches us how to love, just as God loves us. I pray that we can continue mentoring our youth here in our church today. Indeed, as we look around us, we have both old and young sitting under the same roof, worshipping at the same time. This is the strength of our Uniting Church. To be able to sit together, with multiple generations, all worshipping God, who was there before time itself.

As my brother and I both started our law degrees at the University of Sydney, my father was then called onto the lower North Shore to minister at Northbridge-Castlecrag. During this time, I started my professional life, running a side tutoring business and working at commercial law firms, and then a policy adviser at the NSW Premier's Department. Being involved in law, policy, and politics, I was able to see the Uniting Church through a different type of lens. I became interested in its governance, ethos, leadership structures and decision-making process. During my time at Northbridge, I was also working as a legal officer at the Royal Commission on Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. While I will not go into the things I read and experienced, I remember almost losing my faith in the church. How could the church, who so boldly claims to worship God, seek to prioritise protecting its reputation, above protecting its most vulnerable? After being exposed to such sinister realities of the real world, indeed, I struggled with my Christian faith. However, what pulled me back to the church was the love I experienced at Northbridge. They, like congregations before, lived out the paradox of the church – a manifestation of God's perfect love in a community of imperfect saints and sinners.

And now, I find myself in Killara. The suburb name Killara, derived from the Aboriginal language, means 'always there'. Reflecting on my journey growing up with the Uniting Church, I can sense that God has always been there in the past, is always with us in the present, and will always be there in the future.

You only have to take a stroll around this beautiful suburb to truly appreciate its majesty. We are blessed to live in such a tranquil place. Not only is the beauty found in our physical landscape, but I find beauty in the people sitting here in our pews today. When my brother went through the tumultuous period of his son's premature birth, I sensed there are angels sitting amongst us today. When my father went through the challenges of COVID and other stressful matters, I sensed there are saints sitting amongst us today. And when I see the faithful, young and old, sitting here with us today, I sense God's presence is amongst us today.

While I may not be at church every single Sunday, I thank the Lord for the blessings he has bestowed upon us here at Killara Fiveways Uniting Church. As a 32 year old man - although in my parent's eyes, I'm still their baby - I will not only never forget my mum's birthday, but I will also never forget the love that the Uniting Church has shown. This is what the church means to me – a place where angels and saints, sinners and strangers, come together and find comfort in the warmth of the heart of God.

God bless the Uniting Church in Australia. Amen.

Hear, Hear

Linda Brown Secretary Property Committee

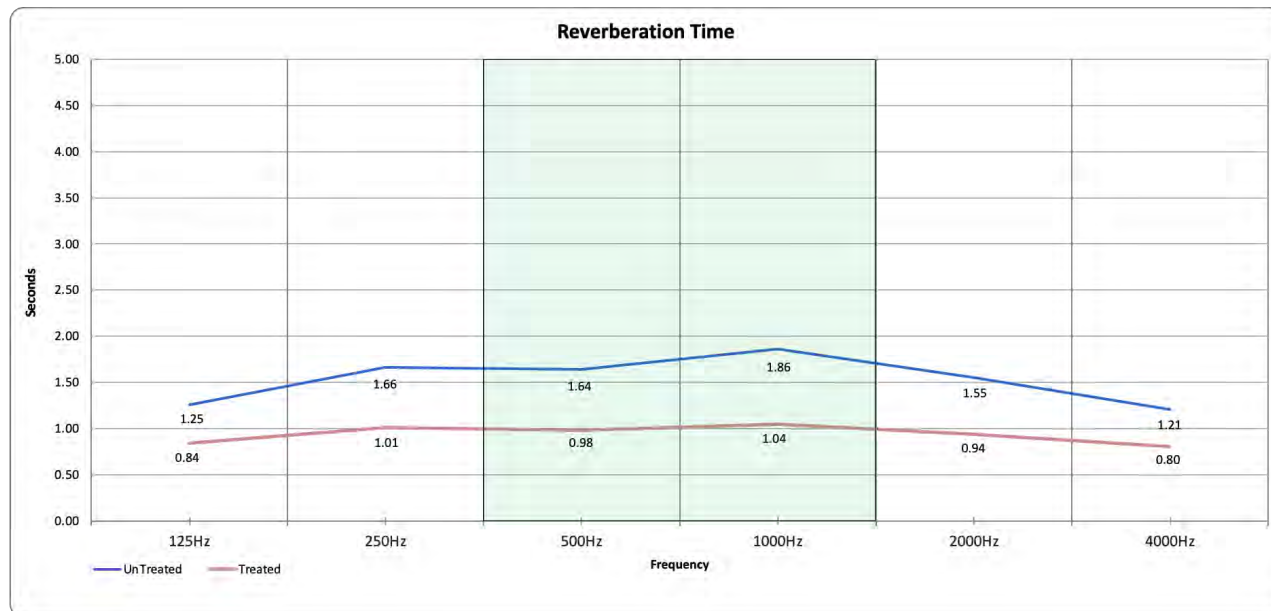
PANELS

The congregation will appreciate the dramatic improvement with acoustics in the hall when buffering panels were installed. The Committee organised a quote from the same company that did that work in our Hall in 2016.

On May 31, 2021 Fabio Valero Director of Acoustica Projects visited the church together with our in-house experts, Rob Muir, Peter Bidencepe, Peter Gibbs and Ian Neilson. Tests were carried out with sound readers and popping balloons. Fabio explained that it was important to determine the reverberation of sound in the Church space and also that it was important to maintain some of the acoustics to keep the rich tones of voice and song in the space. Below is a graph showing the current reverberation and the proposed improvement.

After processing the collected data Acoustica identified the reverberation time for the church as 1.75 seconds, this is certainly the reason for the speech problem. "To solve this and improve the speech intelligibility in the church we will have to drop it down in between 0.85 to 1.1 seconds. This way we will have a good balance in between speech and singing." "The idea it is to use 50% of the ceiling area by installing acoustic panels every second bay/slot. The proposal includes a panel across the back wall at the head level to support the back end." The estimate is around \$30,000.

The Property Committee and Church Council need to investigate further and consider the proposal.





Peter Bidencepe, Rob Muir and Fabio Valero



Fabio Valero bursting balloons

IN THE MEANTIME

A survey of the congregation determined that the best position for clear hearing is in the first 6 rows from the middle front and the 11 rows behind the piano on the right hand side. The back two rows may have distracting sounds from the two entries and street.

Rob Muir and Peter Bidencepe concurred that if hearing aids are switched to the T-loop, the sound comes directly into the ears from the system and there is no echo or reverberation. Please refer to your hearing aid instructions and seek supplier advice for your specific instructions.

AV SOUND SYSTEM

Regardless of how much acoustic treatment improves the sound in the church the AV system still needs an upgrade. The upgrade does not just make sound clearer for the attending congregation but enables better transcription and communication for recording and presentation purposes.

Thanks you to Peter Gibbs, Rob Muir and Peter Bidencepe for all the unseen and regular service for our church.



Peter Gibbs with his tape measure rechecking after receiving Acoustica's quote



KUC Walking Group

John and Liz Giles have started a once a month walking group in the Ku-ring-gai area (and possibly further afield); easy to moderate level of walks in the bush and around the streets, with coffee afterwards. Days, times and locations will be all negotiable so if you are interested in joining, please contact Liz via email

elizzie51@gmail.com

On 6 June John and Liz led our first group. It was beautiful weather and a treat to find out a little of the history of Lane Cove National Park. The participants enjoyed bird song and stunning scenery and the café chat afterwards.

The next walk (which was postponed due to lockdown) will be rescheduled and include a local bus up hill and then a gentle down-hill walk through lanes and footpaths to discover 3 secret Lindfield/Killara Parks.

Linda Brown



Ticket of Leave park—a future walk

