



The Uniting Church Maffra Congregation

MONTHLY - NEWS

Church Office (Ph. 5147 1325)

Vol. 26. No.4

MINISTER'S LETTER

May 2026

Dear Maffra Uniting Church family,

May is a rich month.

We are still walking in the warmth of the Easter. At the same time, we carry the memory of ANZAC Day, we prepare to honour mothers and grandmothers on Mother's Day, and we draw alongside our Korean who celebrate Gajeong-ui Dal(Family Month) throughout May.

These are not just events on a calendar. They are invitations to remember, to give thanks, and to live differently because of what we have received.

Last month we spoke of Jesus as the Servant King, the one who did not come to hold power, but to give his life away. The resurrection is God's great 'Yes' to the life Jesus lived, a life of love, humility, and self-giving.

As N.T. Wright puts it, the resurrection is not just an escape from death; it is the beginning of God's new creation breaking into the old. We are called to live inside that new creation not waiting for it, but walking in it now.

On April 25, we paused to remember. We remembered young men and women, many of them not much older than teenagers who gave everything so that others could live freely. There is something deeply Christ-like in that kind of love.

Jesus said, 'Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends' (John 15:13).

ANZAC Day is not a celebration of war; it is a recognition that some people loved their neighbours so much they were willing to pay the highest price. We are grateful. And as people of faith, we commit ourselves to be peacemakers in our homes, our church, and our town.

On Sunday 10 May, we celebrate Mother's Day.

We give thanks for mothers, grandmothers, and all those who have held us, prayed over us, and shown us what steady love looks like. The Bible is full of this kind of love.

In Isaiah 66:13, God says: 'As a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you.'

That is an extraordinary thing, God reaching for the image of a mother to describe how tenderly he cares for us. Whether your experience of motherhood has been joyful or complicated, we hold space for you this month. We give thanks for every act of love that has shaped who we are.

In Korea, May is Gajeong-ui Dal(Family Month).

It is a time to honour children (Children's Day, May 5), parents (Parents' Day, May 8), and teachers. The whole month becomes a celebration of the relationships that give life its meaning.



Here in Maffra, I think we understand that instinct. Our church is a family not always a tidy one, but a real one. We share meals. We sit with each other in hard times. We open our doors. That is the community of love that Jesus calls us to build and it is already happening among us.

So as we step into May, here is my invitation to you:

In the spirit of Easter, choose the way of the Servant King in one small, practical moment this week.

In the spirit of ANZAC, be a person of peace wherever you are, even when it costs you something.

In the spirit of Mother's Day, reach out to someone who has loved and shaped you, and tell them so.

In the spirit of Family Month, hold your door a little wider for whoever needs to come in.

These are not grand gestures. They are the quiet rhythms of a resurrection life and they are available to every one of us, every single day.

May God's grace carry you gently through this beautiful month.

Blessings,

Your minister Rev. Paul Ryu

At Morning tea recently we celebrated Rev Paul Ryu's birthday.



Maffra Uniting Church seeks to comply with Federal Government National Privacy Legislation. Articles in this publication may not be copied or distributed beyond our reading list for any purpose without the express permission of the author or the Editor.

APRIL CHURCH COUNCIL MONTHLY NEWS REPORT 2026

Our Minister, Rev. Paul Ryu

Paul is currently a Minister of other Denomination (MoD) but is working through the process to achieve the same situation as most other ministers in the Uniting Church. This process should hopefully have been completed by the end of July. After July it would then mean that he could be called to another church after 5 years in placement with us in Currawong, in the same way that any other minister would. It also means we have at least three and a half more years with Paul as our minister.

Paul has been doing lots of visiting of church members and has also been meeting with his supervisor and mentor regularly.

The Currawong leaders will be having a 2-day meeting in late May to discuss Currawong and wider issues in our churches. Presbytery Minister Chris Rowney will be attending the meeting, and on the Sunday, he will lead a service in our church.

Easter Services

All Easter services on Easter Sunday went well, as did the Currawong churches combined Good Friday service in Sale. Each Easter season we now combine with the Maffra churches for the Palm Sunday Walk, have the option to attend the Maffra Anglican Church Maundy Thursday service, combine with the Currawong churches (Sale, Stratford and Maffra) for the Good Friday service at Sale, combine with all the other Maffra churches at the Easter Dawn Service in Victoria Park, and then have our own Easter Sunday service in our church. It is great to see the sharing of these important occasions with the worshippers from the other churches.

Gippy Gutters

Gippy Gutters have done a wonderful job of cleaning all of our church and hall gutters. There is now nothing growing in them and the water flows away beautifully.

Church Council, in particular Sue Burnett and John Little, are continuing to keep our church and hall compliant with all Uniting Church requirements for safety and the smooth operation of all facilities.

Jude Walker extension on presiding at Communion

The pastoral relations Committee of the Gippsland Presbytery have given Jude an extension on being permitted to preside at Communion for the next two years. She will do this whenever we don't have a Minister present on the first Sunday of the month.

(Continued from page 4)

Hall Hire

The main user for the hall is Lou Sullivan who has been successfully expanding her Pilates Classes' business with a lot more classes operating these days, and now stores her Pilates equipment in the back room. It is great to see the hall being used so productively for our community.

Annual General meeting

Our Annual Reports were collated by Sue Burnett this year as Jeanette was very busy. Thank you, Sue.

Frazer Burnett was ratified as Treasurer for 2026 and Jeanette McNamara as the Gippsland Presbytery Representative for 2026.

An evacuation drill was also completed at the end of the service with 30 out of the 30 people attending completing it successfully.

Keeping Children Safe

The annual "Our Statement to keeping Children Safe" document was unanimously agreed to by church Council members present and the document signed. It will be ratified at a Congregation meeting in June.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

The week of prayer for Christian Unity will be held this year from May 17th to May 24th, finishing with a Pentecost lunch at the Webster Centre on Sunday May 24th.

Jeanette McNamara
Maffra Uniting Church Secretary

Upcoming Dates:

Sunday May 10th – After the service the Congregation vote for a new Church Councillor.

Monday to Friday May 18th to 22nd – Week of Prayer for Christian Unity at the Catholic Church, the Anglican Church and on Friday May 22nd at the Maffra Uniting Church

Sunday May 24th – Pentecost lunch at the Geoff Webster Centre after our church service.

Sunday May 31st – Presbytery Minister, Rev Chris Rowney leads our church service

Upcoming Events

May 14—Thursday

May 14 –Thursday

May 17—Sunday

May 18—Monday

May 20—Wednesday

May 22—Friday

May 24—Sunday

May 28 –Thursday

Friendship Group 1.30pm

Quilt Group 10-3

Isa's walk

WOP—St Mary's 10am

WOP– St John's 10am

WOP– St Andrew's 10am

Pentecost Lunch

Quilt Group 10-3



Just letting you know that there has been one new person who has been nominated for Church Council in this current round of nominations.

I am delighted to announce that this person is David Lancey.

We value the contribution that he has already made to our congregation over the last 18 months by instituting Games afternoons and a special morning tea with his wife Lyn, his regular participation in our congregation on Sundays and for morning tea, as well as for special events, and ideas he has for other improvements.

Thank you for accepting the Nomination, David.

We will have an election to vote on David's nomination after our church service on Sunday May 10th.

Regards,
Jeanette

Rosters



ELDER

May	Jude Walker
June	Lois Ramsey

BIBLE READER

10 & 17 May	Sue Burnett
24 & 31 May	Jeanette McNamara
7 June	Jude Walker

DOOR STEWARDS

10 & 17 May	Sue & Frazer Burnett
24 & 31 May	Jill Johnstone & Dot Berryman
7 & 14 June	Alan & Christine Clyne

LAWN MOWING

4 May	Duncan & Kathy Malcolm
18 May	Geoff Little & volunteer
1 June	Sue & Frazer Burnett

FLOWERS

3 & 10 May	Jeanette McNamara
7 & 13 June	Lois Ramsey

Profile- David Lancey

I was born in March 1945 in Korumburra. In 1946 my parents, Tom and Enid Lancey purchased a dairy farm at Tinamba West. My father and his brother, Bob, walked 20 Ayrshire cows from the farm at Arawatta near Korumburra to our new 150 acre property at Tinamba West. They would travel in the daytime and camp overnight. Not a small effort considering the distance between Arawatta and Tinamba West is around 195 kilometres.

I attended the Boisdale Consolidated school with Alan Clyne and the White brothers who lived on neighbouring farms. When I turned 15 I decided that I had enough of school and left to work on the farm with dad. We built up the herd to around 120 cows and won many prizes in the Maffra and Sale Shows.

My parents attended the Methodist Church in Maffra. As a little boy I went to the Sunday school with Lorraine (Shearer) Little. My father and Keith Bowie were the main organisers of the fund raisers which was usually a church fete held in October each year. Later, after the Methodist church became part of the Uniting Church they attended St. Andrews.

I married in 1976. Madeleine was born in 1977 followed by Andrew in 1983 then Peter in 1986.

My marriage lasted just over 13 years. The farm was sold in 1991 and after my divorce I spent 3 months travelling around America I like travelling and had been to New Zealand and Europe prior to my marriage then the UK just after Madeleine was born.

After my American trip I worked on several dairy farms. I went back to old time dancing in Sale on Saturday nights and sometimes on a week night. One night I met a lady, Lyn, who later became my second wife. Lyn was a widow with two teenage daughters, Liz and Cathryn. In March this year we celebrated 28 years of marriage!

Lyn encouraged me to pursue my passion of steam trains and old diesel trains. I volunteered with the South Gippsland Tourist Railway for 4 years. I enjoyed being a fireman on the steam train, shovelling the coal with several opportunities to drive it. When that railway declined I joined 707 Operations in Newport. After several years of travelling to Newport once a week we moved to Warragul for 6 months then to Knoxfield for just over 2 years.

I am still able to indulge my love of steam trains by spending most Thursdays with a restoration group in Traralgon who are building a steam train from scratch.

I am a proud grandfather to Madeleine's children, Honey, Ellamae and Jack, Andrew's children Matilda, Thomas and Alexander and step-grandfather to Liz's children Grace and Jack also to Andrew step-daughter- Chani.

When St. Andrews celebrated 125 years of service I attended the celebrations. It felt like being home again! I look forward to coming to church on Sundays and catching up with my old friends and people I have gotten to know in the last eighteen months.

QUILT AND CRAFT GROUP

Meeting: 2nd and 4th Thursdays
14th and 28th May 2026

Where: Craft Room St Andrews Hall
Time: 10am until 3pm

Cost: \$10 per session

ALL WELCOME

Bring your lunch and Tea/coffee.

Enquiries:

Jude Walker 0412778707

Dear Friends,

My Challenge is nearly here! Our Dementia Australia Sponsored Walk is on 17th May. We will walk around Albert Park. It will probably be less strenuous than walking into Maffra and back up the hill. I am training! I am not as young as last time I walked, but I have to try to walk the 4.6 km.

Some friends have already supported me and I just wondered whether others might help me raise a bit more money for Dementia Australia.

I hope to be at Church on the 3rd May and on the 10th. Just in case there will be some "pennies from heaven".

Ever hopeful Isa!!

Gippsland Camino 2026



Last weekend I participated in the Gippsland Camino and I thought you might like to know a little about the experience.

It was led by the Anglican Diocese of Gippsland and supported by the Uniting, Anglican, Baptist and Catholic Churches on the route

Camino is a Spanish word meaning 'I walk'. When described as 'el camino' it translates to 'the way'. Whilst traditionally a Camino has been undertaken as a spiritual pilgrimage, people embark on 'the way' for all kinds of motivations.

We started our Gippsland one on Thursday April 16th with an evening service to bless the pilgrims,

our reading was The Road to Emmaus, and we were all presented with a little package with prayers, bible readings and thoughts to use throughout each day and when we were reflecting/praying at the various churches. The theme was basically an unfurling to open to new possibilities, with a closed fern at the start and an open fern as our last artefact.

We then walked from the start of the Great Southern Rail Trail at Nyora Friday to Korumburra 24km and stopped to look at churches and have a snack in Loch and Bena, then arrived at Korumburra in the rain.

On Saturday we walked from Korumburra to Leongatha and were greeted with a handwritten verse and flowers at Leongatha Uniting, and given a lovely afternoon tea at Leongatha Anglican.

On Sunday morning we walked from Leongatha to the Anglican Church in Meeniyan and were greeted by Bishop Richard, had our feet washed/massaged, were given lunch out in the sunshine, and then participated in a finale service with a sermon by the bishop.

I walked with Sue Clancy, (with whom I have walked the Australian Alps Walking Track and the Three Capes walking track in Tasmania), and Glenda Mann was our support person to get our belongings and cars at the right place each night. We all shared accommodation each night rather than camping. Luxury!

Jeanette



Hello everyone, as mentioned this morning in Church we have a busy month May coming up. By the time you read this we will have enjoyed our shared soup lunch and games afternoon, this is a social event suggested by David and Lyn Lancey, always fun and if you haven't been, come and try the next time it is on.

As one of your representatives to the Maffra Combined Churches Committee, I would like to give you the information for the

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Services and Pentecost lunch.

Commencing from Sunday May 17th to Pentecost Sunday May 24th, our services will be held in the **mornings from 10.00am**, : Monday May 18th at St Mary's, Wednesday 20th St John's with cuppa afterward and Friday 22nd St Andrews (us) again cuppa afterward, concluding with Pentecost Sunday shared Lunch May 24th at Geoff Webster hall St John's. We, St Andrews will be providing Soup and Breadsticks. I will put a sheet on the door next week for offers of soup etc. There will as usual be raffles on the day, entry \$10.00 and families \$20.00. There will be more later I am sure.

This year the theme is 'There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling', (Ephesians 4:4). The service title 'Light from light for light' and is from our friends the Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church.

Thank you
Lois Ramsey



MESSAGE FROM JOHN AND ANN CONNAN

Please thank Anne Morgan again for her generosity. back packs will be in Honiara (in the Solomon Islands) mid May. Hopefully more will be in Ha'apai in Tonga by early July. '

A cheque for \$1,200 was forwarded to MLG (Mission Liaison Group recently. MLG are working under difficulties at the moment, as they have lost their venue at Keysborough and are now working out of a shed at a non - operating Church. Local school children are helping with the Back Packs under the Supervision of John and Anne's Grandson. Rev John and Anne send their greetings to our congregation they loved staying in Maffra and went on their way with their car packed to the roof with donations of School needs mainly from our Vinneys. thank you to St Mary's also. This was a project which was going to run for a couple of years, but is still going after many years and is so much appreciated by those we are helping.
Alice Ryrie

THANK YOU

Many thanks to all who shared in many different special ways my birthday celebrations by being present on the day, phone calls, messages, flowers, etc.

It was all very special to me.

Joan Irving.

FRIENDSHIP GROUP

- Will meet on 14th May at the Church Hal at 1.30pm. Come along to a fun afternoon playing a card game (sequence).

■ Dot