



## Western Heights Uniting Church

31 Douglass Street, Herne Hill, 3218.

(03) 5229 2681

Email: office@whuc.com.au



Loving God: Growing Together, Partnering Community, Sharing Faith

WESTERN HEIGHTS UNITING CHURCH

# December 2025 / January 2026 NEWSLETTER

## SAFE CHURCH

Western Heights Uniting Church is committed to the safety, protection and well-being of all children and young people from all forms of abuse and neglect. We will make every effort to provide an environment of safety and support. All key leaders have completed a Working With Children Check. Western Heights UC has adopted the Synod "Keeping Children Safe" policy.

## December at a Glance

Saturday 6th	9.30am	Shared Community Garden Working Bee
Sunday 7th	10.00am	Worship—Rev. Temukisa Amituana'i-Vaeluaga Rev. Robert Van Zetten—St. David's
Wednesday 10th	7.00pm	Neighbourhood Carolling
Sunday 14th	10.00am	Worship—Rev. Temukisa Amituana'i-Vaeluaga
	12.00pm	Friday Fun Night—End of year celebration picnic
Monday 15th	7.00pm	Neighbourhood Carolling
Tuesday 16th	7.00pm	Neighbourhood Carolling
Sunday 21st	10.00am	Worship—Rev. Temukisa Amituana'i-Vaeluaga Communion Rev. Robert Van Zetten—Anglesea
	6.00pm	Community Carols
Wednesday 24th	11.30pm	"Welcoming Christmas Quietly"
Thursday 25th	9.00am	Christmas Day Service— Rev. Temukisa Amituana'i-Vaeluaga Rev. Robert Van Zetten—St. David's
Sunday 28th	10:00am	Worship—Rev. Temukisa Amituana'i-Vaeluaga

## January at a Glance

Sunday 4th	10:00am	Worship—Rev. Temukisa Amituana'i-Vaeluaga
Sunday 11th	10:00am	Worship—Rev. Temukisa Amituana'i-Vaeluaga
Sunday 18th	10:00am	Worship—Rev. Temukisa Amituana'i-Vaeluaga Communion
Sunday 25th	10:00am	Worship—Rev. Temukisa Amituana'i-Vaeluaga

## Church Office Hours & Staff Leave over December-January

The office will be closed from **Friday 26th December** and re-open on **Friday 23rd January 2026**.

Taking into account time in lieu Jan will be away as follows:

Jan Grigg from Christmas until January 7th

There will be no pew sheet until **Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2026** and the monthly newsletter for February will be available on **Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> January**.

## Shared Community Garden News

---

The community garden provides an opportunity to engage with others in a relaxed atmosphere. Our vision is that the wider community will find a place of safety and support as we grow vegetables and relationships together.

### NEXT WORKING BEE

**SATURDAY 6th December 9.30 – 11AM**

Come when you can, leave when you have to.

Refreshments provided

The **Community Garden Task group** meets regularly to develop further ideas for engaging the community, discuss tasks in the garden and plan future planting and harvesting.

A Christmas Card and 2 packets of seeds has been left in the letterbox. This is the message for church members

Merry Christmas to you all and thank you for supplying the neighbourhood community garden. We appreciate it!

## New partnership

---

Church Council would like to inform the Congregational of a new partnership with the Korean Baptist Church who will be leasing our premises on Sunday afternoons and Wednesday mornings. A welcome combined service will be held on **Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> December** at our **10.00am** service.

## Community carols

---

Our Community Carols will be held **6pm Sunday 21st December**.

We are hoping to gather outside again, so please bring a chair and blankets to sit on.

## 2026 Church Directory

---

We are currently updating the Congregational Roll and the Church Directory.

In order to do this, we need everyone to check their details and then return their form so changes can be made to our current records with your permission slip to be included or not in the 2026 Church Directory. Forms must be in by **Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> December**.

## Friday Fun Night

---

**Sunday 14th December**

**12.00pm**

**End of Year Celebration**

**Picnic by the river near the Labyrinth end of**

**West Fyans Street**

**BYO food, drink and chair**

## Marshalls for Bike Ride

---

2026 Cadel Evans Race:

**31 January—1 February 2026**

We are looking for volunteers for the Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

Please talk to Bruce Rookes 0402 135 313 or sign up using [volunteers@sparkeventgroup.com](mailto:volunteers@sparkeventgroup.com)

Every volunteer enables us to receive a donation towards the resurfacing of the courts.

## The Labyrinth



**You are invited to walk the Advent Labyrinth down by the Barwon River.**

*(Located near the boat ramp at the end of West Fyans Street, and as you walk towards the Queens Park bridge.)*

**Perhaps you may walk it slowly and in a spirit of quiet meditation, taking your time to notice and appreciate the beautiful surroundings and to maybe ponder what this time of year means to you.**

Sponsored by Western Heights Uniting Church  
31 Douglass St, Herne Hill 2018 Ph.5229 2681

## Christmas message:

"The Magnificat sings it: 'Mary, did you know, that your baby boy is Lord of all creation? ... This sleeping child you're holding is the great 'I am!'

"How could anyone have known? Who could have guessed it?

That the Almighty and Loving God would in his wisdom and mercy, quietly come into our world in the frailty of a baby! Born in the small town of Bethlehem in a distant corner of the Roman Empire, he would be named 'Jesus' which means 'he will save.' He would be called 'Emmanuel' – it means, 'God is with us.'

Advent and Christmas is a time of waiting, anticipation and rejoicing, yet for many, this season is one of the hardest; haunted with cherished memories of separation, of grief, of chaos, of uncertainty and pain.

As we rejoice and celebrate this Season of Advent & Christmas, we again are reminded of the depth of the Creator's love for creation - a beautiful reminder for us this season that God enters our lives in all its fullness: that we are loved, held and that we are never alone - Emmanuel God is with us!

Have a blessed and safe Advent & Christmas season



Outside Western Heights UC

Please bring a chair and  
blankets to sit on



# Special Christmas Concert

## David van Elst

Featuring

## Making Harmony



**Uniting Church  
Queenscliff  
Cnr Hesse & Stokes**

**Wed 10  
December  
6pm  
Festive Dinner  
7.30pm  
Concert**



**Info & Bookings online or scan QR code**  
[www.unitingqueenscliff.org.au](http://www.unitingqueenscliff.org.au)



## Carols By Candlelight at Wesley

### Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> December at 7.30pm

The Carols by Candlelight service is always a highlight of our year. We warmly invite our friends from all the Greater Geelong Uniting Churches to join with us to celebrate the approaching birth of Christ and enjoy a time of fellowship together.

Guest artists include the all-abilities With One Voice Choir, led by the very talented Kym Dillon, and an extraordinarily talented child prodigy pianist, 12-year-old Daniel Min Jiang.

Singers and musicians are invited to join with us to make this a joyful regional Advent celebration.



Rehearsals will be held at  
Wesley UC on:

Wed 3<sup>rd</sup> Dec 7.30 – 9pm

Wed 10<sup>th</sup> Dec 7.30 – 9pm

Sun 14<sup>th</sup> Dec 6pm onwards

Please email or sms Heather Cooney if you would like to participate:

[handpcooney@gmail.com](mailto:handpcooney@gmail.com) or 0477805234



## Gifts For Families. Thanks to you.

Your support will help us make sure there are gifts under every Christmas tree in our local community.

### Gift Suggestions

Outdoor games, frisbees, balls, cricket sets, board games, puzzles, building blocks, Lego, dolls, action figures, dinosaurs, cars, trucks, trains, headphones/speakers, make up packs, perfume/aftershave, gift cards

### Food suggestions

Christmas treats, Christmas cake, biscuits, chocolates, plum puddings, sauces & toppings

Donate online: [unitingvictas.org.au/local-christmas/barwon/](http://unitingvictas.org.au/local-christmas/barwon/)

Donate a gift: Please leave at Reception or drop off at

Uniting Grovedale: 272 Torquay Road

Uniting Norlane: 10 Wendover Avenue



Uniting is the community services organisation of the Uniting Church in Victoria and Tasmania.



# Uniting

Every child  
deserves a  
happy Christmas.



Join us at  
the Uniting  
book sale.

Nothing over \$1  
Children's books  
\$0.50!

Join us at our monthly book sale.

Held the first Friday and Saturday of  
each month (*except January 2026*) at  
Uniting Grovedale, the Uniting book  
sale raises much needed funds for  
local services.

Friday  
5<sup>th</sup> December 2025

&

Saturday  
6<sup>th</sup> December 2025

10am - 2pm

272 Torquay Rd, Grovedale  
(Corner Reserve and Torquay Roads)

# Uniting

## End Child Poverty Update

The data is in. Australia is on track to reach **1 million children living in poverty**, with a 33% increase in just the four years.

That's **another 237,000 Australian** children missing out on meals or living in crowded housing or homeless.

Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre (BCEC) has just released the Child Poverty in Australia Report for the End Child Poverty campaign, and its damning:

**950,000 children living in poverty in 2025**

**Single-parent families hardest hit:** 36.6% living in poverty

Poverty is not just about income—**children face food insecurity, poor housing, and limited access to education and healthcare**

Children report **skipping meals, sleeping on floors**, and being punished for torn uniforms.

**Feelings of isolation and stress** replace confidence and connection.

**Poverty impacts health, education, and future opportunities.**

This report is more than data - it's a call to action. Together, we can push for a child-centred definition of poverty, stronger legislation, and policies that put children first.

[www.endchildpoverty.com.au](http://www.endchildpoverty.com.au)

Please feel free to speak with me if you have any questions. I also have badges and car stickers if you'd like them.

Robert Van Zetten



# Contact Details

---

**Minister:** Rev. Temukisa Amituana'i – Vaeluaga

0400 664 991 **Communications**

Temukisa's day off is **Monday** so please refrain from contacting her on this day.

**Administrator:** Jan Grigg 5229 5889

**Church Council Chair:** Lynda Scott

**Pastoral Care:**

Rev. Temukisa Amituana'i – Vaeluaga

0400 664 991

**Property Co-ordinator:** Graeme Hardy  
**graeme.c.hardy@gmail.com** 0408 630 391

**WHUC Office:**

Phone:	5229 2681
Office hours:	Wed: 1.30pm - 3.30pm Fri : 9am – 1:00pm
Office email:	<b>office@whuc.com.au</b>
Website:	<b>www.whuc.com.au</b>
Facebook:	Western Heights Uniting Church

---

## Parental/Guardian Permission

In order for Western Heights to be a Safe Church, we are seeking the permission of parents or guardians to photograph or video their children during church services and other church-related activities. Permission forms are available at the back of the church. Please hand completed forms to the duty steward of the day.

---

## Eco Group

The Eco Group has started an Eco Books library, in the entry foyer. Please borrow books and if you have good books on the subject, you would be willing to share, see Bruce W.

---

## With Love To The World

Used With Love to the World booklets can be left in the marked drawer in the recycling material box in the foyer.

---

## Pew Sheet

If anyone wishes to receive the Pew Sheet information by email each week, please give your name and email address to Jan in the office.

---

## Light Globes & Batteries

Did you know that light globes and batteries of any sort can be recycled? There is a box in the foyer near the stamps where you can leave them.

---

## Postage stamps

Sammy Stamp is a part of the UCAF (Uniting Church Adult Fellowship) that collects postage stamps, sells them and then provides grants for small projects not covered in the Synod Budget. There is a box in the foyer for you to put your used stamps. If you could cut around your stamp leaving 5mm of paper that would be helpful.

---

## Milk Bottle Tops

We are collecting plastic **milk** bottle tops with St. Joseph's College. You can leave your milk bottle tops in the foyer for recycling.

---

## Future Monthly Newsletters

To be included in the Monthly Newsletter, please ensure your notices are at the church office by the **20<sup>th</sup> of the preceding month**. They can be dropped in to the office in a clearly marked envelope, or emailed to the office, at **office@whuc.com.au**

---

## Uniting Church Safe Church Policies

Access to key Safe Church policies is available on: [safechurch.ucavictas.org.au](http://safechurch.ucavictas.org.au)