



Crookwell Uniting Church

“To Know Christ and Make Christ Known”



*Witnessing to God's love for the world
From the main street to the paddock.*

May 2023

Why Having Kids in Worship Matters

Recently Nicki and I caught up with some friends who were lamenting that their Church does not have a Sunday School programme for their children.

Now, as a parent I empathise with the desire to have special kids' programmes during Church. It is hard to concentrate on the sermon with kids whispering in your ears all the time, and it's hard to shake the fear that the rest of the congregation is looking on you with judgment every time your kids make a noise. Sometimes it is so much more relaxing to be part of a congregation where the kids will be taken out to a special programme during worship and you can just enjoy the service.

But, I'm not a big supporter of Sunday School (at least when Sunday School is run

at the same time as worship), and here's why:

Worship is an act of what we call 'primary theology'. It is that place where God meets us today and calls us into existence as the Church. Here, the Living Word of God makes himself known to us through the words of scripture and sermon. Here, the Risen Crucified Lord feeds us with the grace of his body and blood. Here, we learn to *pray* God's vision *for* the world so that we might become part of God's vision *in* the world.

All other theology is secondary – it is our attempt to understand and describe what we have experienced in our liturgy. This includes Sunday School, which helps kids understand the God they have met in worship. But if they have never been in

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worship to meet God...the old adage, faith is caught before it is taught.

So, when we fail to include children in worship, we cut them off from experiencing this presence of the Living God for themselves. We prevent them from being formed as the muscles and sinew of his body, the Church. And, we deny them the ability to see the world sacramentally – that is, as a window through which the light of Christ shines.

Many years ago, I heard a conference presentation on why my generation does not attend church today. It was called, “And now the children may go out – how a whole generation did exactly what we told them.”

This idea really struck a chord with me – for you see, I was raised within the worshipping life of the Church. The congregations I was part of might have had a Friday Youth Group programme, but they did not have anything special on a Sunday. Instead, I sat with my mum, or my grandparents, and learned to pray the prayers, sing the songs, and reach out my hands to receive Christ’s body broken for me. Is this why I am still in the Church today, when so many of my peers aren’t? I’m not sure, but I can’t help but feel like it is related.

It is true that our kids won’t engage with all parts of the service at all times. They may become restless during the preaching, or tire at long prayers of intercession. But what they see during these moments of restlessness is the adults around them taking this faith

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seriously, and over time, they learn to take it seriously too. Since they were old enough to walk and talk, my boys have come forward to the table, and known that Christ’s body and blood is for them.

May we than, as parents, grandparents and a community of faith, work hard to make space for the children among us to come and worship the Lord. Because, when we do, we will also remember the power of the Easter message: Christ really is risen. He is present. And, he is calling us by name. Hallelujah!

Pastoral Drop-In

Come and join Daniel for a cuppa and conversation during the new ‘drop-in’ times at Crookwell and Goulburn.

Daniel will be available at the Welcome Christian Bookshop on the first and third Wednesdays of each month from 1-4pm.

He will also be at the Red Dove Centre in Goulburn on the second and fourth Monday from 9:30am-12pm.

May Dates

Crookwell

May 3rd
May 17th

Goulburn

May 8th
May 22nd

Meeting the Uniting Church Again for the First Time

In recognition of the many new members who have joined us from other denominations and traditions, we have begun a new segment in our newsletter, reflecting on the theology and life of the Uniting Church in Australia. This month, we turn toward mission.

Jesus is the Reconciler of the World

The Uniting Church's foundational document, the Basis of Union describes God's great mission in the world as "that coming reconciliation and renewal which is the end in view for the whole creation." As God's 'Messiah', or Chosen Person, Jesus' pre-eminent role in that mission is to bring peace between human beings and to reconcile human beings with God.

Our three founding denominations came together to better serve in God's mission and the Uniting Church today continues to see being *Missional* as integral to our existence.

In the reconciled and renewed world Jesus is bringing about, we look forward to a future where a vast crowd from every nation and tribe and people and tongue will be gathered together in worshipping Jesus (Revelation 7:9-10).

In 1985 the Uniting Church declared itself to be a "Multicultural Church" celebrating

our rich cultural diversity. Every Sunday people worship in Uniting Churches using 45 different languages, including fifteen First Nations languages.

Around 200 congregations across the country represent particular cultural backgrounds, and increasingly Uniting Church members, leaders and Ministers come from a wide diversity of backgrounds.

We also see cultural and linguistic diversity as a goal – worship, witness and service ought to happen across cultural boundaries as we become a genuinely **intercultural Church**.

The Uniting Church lives and acts with a deep and wide **appreciation of diversity** because we see the enormous diversity of humanity which God has created and whom God will gather together in the reconciled and renewed community.

Grace Dates

Supper Church - Thursdays, 7.30pm via

Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7751851567?pwd=b05nSlo4RndzZmJNcFFweDVzOFFEQOT09>

Meeting ID: 775 185 1567

Passcode: 552845

A study of upcoming lectionary texts with members of Crookwell, Grace and Goulburn.

The Den (Board Gaming Community) - Fridays 12th and 26th March, 6.30pm, Wesley Centre, Goulburn

Worship & Readings

Sunday 7 May

9:30am Crookwell and
crookwelluniting.org

Readings: Acts 7:55-60; Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16; 1 Peter 2:2-10; John 14:1-14

Sunday 14 May

9:30am Crookwell and
crookwelluniting.org

Readings: Acts 17:22-31; Psalm 66:8-20; 1 Peter 3:13-22; John 14:15-21

Sunday 21 May

9:30am Crookwell and
crookwelluniting.org

Readings: Acts 1:6-14; Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35; 1 Peter 4:12-14, 5:6-11; John 17:1-11

Sunday 28 May

9:30 Crookwell and
crookwelluniting.org

Readings: Acts 2:1-21; Psalm 104:24-34; 1 Corinthians 12:3-13; John 20:19-23

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News From Adult Fellowship

It's been a busy start to the year for the Fellowship, with members organizing and conducting morning worship at Crookwell Uniting Church on Sunday, February 12th.

A big thank you to Gill for assisting with the preparation, including her presentation of a great message for the congregation. Also thanks once again to Helen for playing the organ, featuring five well known hymns.

Margaret, our dedicated church gardener, presented a snippet of information about one of the roses in the garden.

Congratulations to Reta Beattie as this year she celebrated her 75th year of exhibiting at the Crookwell Show; an achievement of which she should well be proud.

Our latest event was a street stall on Friday, April 21st. Thanks to everyone who participated in the event, and to all who kindly and generously donated.



Reta Beattie
