



**PRESIDENT:** Rev Sharon Hollis

**GENERAL SECRETARY:** Colleen Geyer

### **PASTORAL STATEMENT – Cassius Turvey**

#### **To UCA members, congregations and faith communities:**

The Uniting Church joins with the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress (UAICC) in mourning the death of 15-year-old Noongar Yamatji boy Cassius Turvey and stands with them in their call for justice.

The tragic and untimely death of this much-loved young leader is unfathomable. Cassius was the nephew of UAICC Interim National Chair Rev Mark Kickett. I encourage all Uniting Church members to join me in praying for healing, strength and love to surround Mark and the family, friends and community of Cassius.

Please hold in your prayers all Congress members and First Nations people across the country.

The death of Cassius is a tragedy and a reminder that we have much work to do in this country to remove the evil of racism and confront the truth of our history and our present.

I urge you to read the message shared by the UAICC in response to this tragedy and to ask yourself and your community of faith how you will heed their call to stand against racism and injustice. The UAICC is calling us to a time of conversion as we face the truth of our country and the impact of colonisation on all First Nations people and invites us to be in solidarity with them. How can we answer their call to engage in loving conversations that honour all people, to be agents of change and seekers of justice?

As the statement from the UAICC National Executive reminds us, “As Christians in this land, we are called to make social justice a mandate of faith and a fundamental expression of Christian discipleship.”

The full national UAICC statement can be read here: <https://uniting.church/uaicc-national-statement-against-racial-injustice/>

Vigils continue to be held in Cassius’ name across the country. You might like to reach out to Congress or the First Peoples in your community, with whom you share a relationship, as a personal act of solidarity and compassion during this difficult time.

Meanwhile, I encourage you as you gather for worship this Sunday to keep in your prayers Mark and all who will deeply miss Cassius.

Grace and peace to you,

Rev Sharon Hollis  
President Uniting Church in Australia Assembly