



### ***Uniting Church National History Conference***

*All who have an interest in the heritage of our churches are invited to register for the UC National History Conference to be held at Canberra City Church on 3-5 October.*

*The theme is about our church offering a 'prophetic voice' having spoken up on issues affecting Australia. Speakers will look at the impact of the church's influence in the past, give a focus to the present and offer inspiration for the future.*

*For registration options, please visit the Humanitix booking link:*

<https://events.humanitix.com/uniting-church-national-history-society-conference-2025>

*For further information, please visit our website:*

[www.uniting.church/uca-national-history-society/](http://www.uniting.church/uca-national-history-society/)

*Enquiries: Rev Ivan Roberts – mobile 0422 648 191*

# Draft Program

Presenters will explore what lessons from the past will best prepare the church to maintain and strengthen its prophetic witness in the future.

- **Rev Dr Alistair McCrae**, former President of the Uniting Church in Australia and former senior minister, Wesley Uniting Church Melbourne, will open the whole theme of the Church as a Prophetic Voice in Australian Society with a **Keynote Address**.
- **Dr Judith Raftery**, making use of biblical perspectives will set the scene on Saturday morning exploring the opportunities and challenges of offering prophetic witness to society whilst being called to both citizenship and discipleship.
- A uniquely Canberra experience is on offer in the **Panel Discussion** featuring:
  - Gordon Ramsay, Chief Executive Officer ACT Cultural Facilities Corporation, ACT Government member from 2016-2020 and former Executive Minister at Kippax Uniting Church; and
  - Lin Hatfield Dodds, most recently Chief Executive Officer of the Benevolent Society, previously the Deputy Secretary for Social Policy in the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, and former National Director of UnitingCare Australia; and
  - John Williams, founding member of the Wentworth Group of Concerned Scientists, former Chief of the Division of Land and Water, CSIRO and former Chief Scientist and Chair of the NSW Department of Natural Resources' Science and Information Board.
- Offering a prophetic voice from global to local, **Rev Professor Glen O'Brien** will explore the Uniting Church's role as part of the global communion of Methodist churches. **Dr Christine Weir** will review UCA Assembly Disarmament Debates of the 1970s and 80s as Australia seeks to define its place in the world, particularly the Pacific.
- In contrast **Rev Dr Dean Eland** will share the experience of South Sydney congregations engaging in prophetic ministry at the community level during the 1960s and 1970s. **Dr Glen Powell** will further develop the theme of community engagement and the Uniting Church's involvement with Sydney Alliance, a coalition of faith groups, trade unions and community organisations.
- The Church's commitment to securing the rights of our First Peoples will be shared through recalling the prophetic voices of Rev Charles Harris, Rev Bernie Clarke and Rev Edgar Wells, as related by **Rev Dr William Emilsen, Andrew Clarke and Rev Jonathan Barker** respectively. **Dr Patricia Curthoys** will share the 'hands on' engagement of the NSW Christian Youth Council in providing housing for Aboriginal communities to counter the racism, prejudice and discrimination experienced by Aborigines in 1960s Australia.
- The call and challenge for churches to be an inclusive and 'safe place' in contemporary society will be addressed by **Sarah Lim**, National Director of UCA Redress Ltd, responding to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, on driving and embedding a culture of safeguarding for all vulnerable people in Church communities. **Warren Talbot** will share how the Uniting Church has exercised a prophetic voice on several matters affecting LGBTIQ+ communities in Australia.
- Churches influence in the forming of Australia's 1901 Federation will be explored by **Clive Jackson**. **Margaret Reeson and Rev Leanne Davis** will recount the advocacy by church women for greater representation in 1890s Australia. Leanne will focus on the nine-year fight in South Australia for the right to vote in, and stand for election, paving the way for women's political equality in the new Commonwealth of Australia in 1901.

# Draft Timetable

## **Friday 3 October**

5.30pm	Registration
6.00pm -7.00pm	Light refreshments
7.00pm	Welcome/Acknowledgement of country
7.30pm	<b>Keynote address by Rev Dr Alastair McCrae</b>

## **Saturday 4 October**

8.30am	Registration
9.00am	<b>Session one: Biblical voices</b>
10.30am	Morning tea
11.00am	<b>Session two: National voices</b>
11.30am	<b>Panel discussion:</b> Gordon Ramsay, Lin Hatfield Dodds, John Williams
12.30pm	Lunch
1.30pm	<b>Session three: Inclusive of all voices</b>
3.00pm	Afternoon tea
3.30pm	<b>Session four: Indigenous voices</b>
5.00pm	Annual General Meeting of UCNHS
Optional	Dinner in city; private arrangements in groups

## **Sunday 5 October**

10.00am	Join in worship with Canberra City Uniting Church
11.30am	Morning tea with Canberra City Uniting Church
12.00noon	<b>Session five: International voices</b>
1.00pm	Lunch
2.00pm	<b>Session six: Founding fathers and mothers – early voices</b>
3.30pm	Thanks and closing