

Threads of Love in Action: Visiting Hobart North Uniting Church

Wednesday 29 July 2026

One of the great joys of serving as President is being invited by our local congregations. Every community has its own story, its own challenges and its own gifts. Whenever I visit our churches, I am encouraged by the many ways people faithfully respond to God's call within their communities.

While in Tasmania for the National Presbytery Ministers Gathering, I had the opportunity to visit Hobart North Uniting Church and spend time with Rev Simone Smalley and the congregation.

As we walked through the church, shared stories over coffee, and talked about the congregation's life, I heard a community continually asking a simple question: "How can we love our neighbours well?"

One of the things that stayed with me was not simply the range of ministries, but the way they were intentionally woven together.

Rev Simone shared how the congregation had embraced our Assembly theme, 'Threads of Love: Weaving Christ's Love Across Cultures and Boundaries', as they reflected on their life together. During an Intercultural Neighbouring Sunday, each person selected a ribbon representing their story, gifts and place within the community. Together, those individual threads were woven into a tapestry that now hangs beneath the church's Joy stained-glass window.

Standing before it, I realised the tapestry was more than a work of art.

It had become a picture of the congregation itself.

As I listened to Rev Simone and members of the congregation share their story, I realised they had made a deliberate decision not to do ministry alone.

For more than a decade, they have partnered with Orange Sky, welcoming people experiencing homelessness with dignity, conversation and practical care. Through their partnership with Uniting's Catalyst Day, they walk alongside people recovering from alcohol and drug dependency and open their doors to Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, a community food pantry, and Bible studies and theology conversations. They are now exploring new ways to partner with Uniting to support migrant women and families settling in Tasmania as they build confidence, connection and a sense of belonging in a new community.

Rather than asking, "What can we do on our own?", they continue to ask, "Who can we partner with?"



That question stayed with me.

It reminded me that God's mission has always been shared. None of us holds every gift, but together we weave our different callings into something richer than we could ever accomplish alone. At Hobart North, I caught a glimpse of that truth in action. The local congregation, Uniting ministries, community organisations and volunteers were not working alongside one another by chance; they were intentionally weaving their gifts together for the sake of their neighbours.

As I reflected on my visit, I found myself thinking about our Assembly Strategy and its vision of Flourishing Faith, Thriving Communities and Liberating Justice. One of the commitments we have made together is to strengthen relationships across the life of our Church, enabling us to participate more faithfully in God's mission. Hobart North showed me what that can look like – not as a strategy on paper, but through relationships built over time, a shared purpose and a willingness to walk alongside others in service to the community.

I left Hobart North grateful for what Rev Simone and the congregation taught me. Their witness reminded me that weaving Christ's love across cultures and boundaries is not something we do alone. It happens whenever we recognise the gifts God has given to one another, choose relationship over isolation, and trust that God is already at work in the partnerships we build together.

My sincere thanks to Rev Simone Smalley and the people of Hobart North Uniting Church for your generous welcome, your faithful witness, and the quiet ways you continue to reflect Christ's love in your neighbourhood. May God continue to bless your ministry as you seek to serve your community with compassion, hospitality, and hope.

Rev Charissa Suli
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