



Uniting Church in Australia
SYNOD OF VICTORIA AND TASMANIA

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Dear Friends,

The Opening Service of the Synod meeting is upon us – tomorrow, 7.30pm at St Michael's Uniting Church, Collins Street Melbourne. All are welcome. The rest of the Synod meeting is at Box Hill Town Hall, from 9-13 September.

September *Crosslight* covered some of the matters that are before Synod. I invite your prayers for the meeting, as members gather in community as part of the body of Christ, seeking to discern God's will in the matters for consideration. Members received their papers over the past month, and have had time to give careful preparation to the reports and proposals before them.

Just a reminder that there are some worship resources for Sunday 10 September on the Synod 2017 website (<http://synod.org.au/2017/>). Click on the link and download the material.

The Uniting Church is somewhat of a curiosity for some in the wider community as we are the only Church that is neither informing how its leadership will vote in a plebiscite on same gender marriage nor recommending to its members how to vote. It is not that we are indifferent to the issue; we are in the middle of a discernment phase for further consideration at the 15th Assembly in July next year.

The ABC television program, Lateline, will be in attendance at the Synod meeting on Sunday to observe and film how we engage in respectful conversations around the topic of same gender marriage. Lateline will observe one working group undertaking a discussion on marriage, as part of the Assembly's consultation processes with synods and presbyteries in the lead up to the July 2018 Assembly meeting. It is anticipated that the story will run on Monday evening, but this cannot be guaranteed. **Please inform your congregation of this, so members can look out for it.**

The Synod's Communications team will be providing regular news updates on the special Synod 2017 website (<http://synod.org.au/2017/>) and via the UCA VicTas Facebook page and Twitter (links can be found on the website). There will also be a comprehensive report on the Synod meeting in the October *Crosslight*.

Thank you for your ongoing prayers.

Grace and Peace,

Rev Sharon Hollis
Moderator