

Beyond 2020 Vision

A publication of Morialta Uniting Church

August 2026

Welcome to our August edition!

Colin Cargill, editor and Helena Begg, publisher

In this edition theologian Richard Rohr discusses how the Beatitudes build on wisdom in a joining of law and love.

With a very hot dry summer being forecast, you can also read a report on the Second UCA Roundtable 'Towards Net Zero'.

We celebrate the life of Roger Whibley, and Ruth Dunning remembers a trip she took to the USA.

And, as usual, there are lots of news items and stories from MUC groups and individuals. Enjoy!

The deadline for the September Vision will be 4th September. Either drop your item in to the church office, or call/email Colin on 0427 122 106 or snout-n-about@bigpond.com

A joining of law and love – how the Beatitudes build on wisdom

Adapted from a post by Richard Rohr – Center for Action and Contemplation

The Beatitudes are paradoxical 'commandments.' They don't tell Christians what to do; they tell them what they will be like if they are living in the kingdom: They will be poor in spirit, pure in heart, merciful, and gentle peacemakers; they will thirst for what is right and be persecuted because of it, and they will mourn. Not a very happy prospect!



And yet the Beatitudes call discipleship a happy life. Because when we live in right relationship with God and one another, we are comforted, our hunger is satisfied, we are shown mercy, and we see God; and so, we are called God's children, and we live under God's reign!

As the Ten Commandments were in the ancient days of Israel, the Beatitudes are concerned about a new way of relating. The commandments spoke of showing honour to God and to one's parents, of not killing, lying, stealing, cheating, or being jealous. The Beatitudes take nothing away from this revelation, but they do add something new. Instead of asking us to obey rules, they invite us to a lifestyle based on vulnerability, self-emptying, and cooperation.

Interestingly, many Christians when asked what it means to be moral, think of the Ten Commandments – legalistic morality – not the Beatitudes! But to follow Jesus is to follow him out of the legality of systems and into living in a much larger truth, where we discover God much more as 'life-giver' than 'law-giver'.

The law makes us aware of problems. It gives a certain basic framework within which people can live their lives. But what if people just obey the law and nothing more? Is there any law that requires you to make friends, that compels you to fall in love, that says you have to have agency, accomplish something, or be happy? Is there any law that states people have to care about you when you are suffering? Almost everything that makes life enjoyable and satisfying comes from people going beyond the legal minimum. It's going beyond the letter of the law that makes life worth living.

The same is true in our spiritual life, where the commandments provide a basic regularity. We can't expect to be blessed with the happiness of living in the reign of God if we never obey God's laws. Yet even God's laws are not an end in themselves. Living within them simply frees us to hear the call of the Spirit to the more radical spiritual life of the Beatitudes.

You can read the full article @ <https://cac.org/daily-meditations/a-joining-of-law-and-love/>

Translating the essence of Christianity into secular language

Out of billions of years of the universe churning with creation and destruction, a breathtaking reality has emerged: love. On earth, love has evolved from the bond between community and family members into something deeper – unconditional and universal. The emergence of this love marks a profound turning point in natural history. This love flows through deeply attentive, open, all-embracing consciousness.

This love lifts people out of self-centeredness and into lives of selfless compassion, creativity, service, and activism for justice. This love manifests in humble awe and wonder. This love is more extraordinary and beautiful than everyday prose can describe. It inspires poetry, music, ritual, and mythic narrative, and it brings people together in community to celebrate and practice it more fully. Christianity is one expression of the emergence of this deeper love.

(From "Water in the Desert: Progressive Christianity for the Spiritually Thirsty" by Jim Burklo).

Second UCA Roundtable – practical steps to Net Zero

Adapted from The Assembly Newsletter

Around 60 people from across Australia gathered online during June for the second Climate Action Roundtable, sharing practical initiatives, innovative projects and collaborative approaches.

The first presentation focused on one of the foundations of effective climate action: understanding and measuring emissions.

Emily Murray, Queensland Synod, and Zoe Smith, Uniting Communities South Australia, introduced work underway to establish a national carbon emissions baseline across congregations, schools and agencies.



If we wish to reduce our emissions it is essential to identify where the greatest opportunities exist by measuring and then tracking progress.

The 'Offsets Feasibility Study' recognises that while emissions can be significantly reduced, some will be more difficult. Potential offset

opportunities include reforestation on church-owned land or land managed by members in rural communities, as well as projects drawing on First Peoples' knowledge, including cultural burning practices.

Participants expressed strong support for practical action, with examples already emerging across the church, including work underway through South Australia's EAG (EAG).

Trevor Brown, Armidale Uniting Church, shared how his congregation is responding to climate change through projects that combine environmental sustainability with social justice. The key question driving the congregation's work is: "What does it look like for a congregation to participate meaningfully in the energy transition, especially alongside those in the community who might otherwise be left behind?"

Armidale UC is exploring practical ways to ensure vulnerable people benefit from the transition to renewable energy. One project aims to electrify the church property and move it towards Net Zero emissions, with plans to share surplus renewable energy with neighbouring properties and vulnerable households where possible.

A second initiative will provide advice and practical support to at least 100 households with the assistance of 20 trained volunteers – aiming to reduce energy stress, improve household comfort and demonstrate the need for government investment to ensure the renewable energy transition is equitable.

The congregation is also developing practical household resources and will provide curtains to improve home insulation alongside winter clothing for people experiencing hardship.

The final presentation showcased the Victorian and Tasmanian Synod's Synod Emissions Reduction Fund (SERF), which provides grants to congregations for projects that deliver measurable emissions reductions. One of the project's greatest achievements has been strengthening relationships with congregations and encouraging local communities to explore additional funding opportunities and partnerships. "Everyone can make a difference".

To read the full report go to <https://uniting.church/roundtable-highlights-practical-steps-to-net-zero-by-2040/>

News from the July Church Council Meeting

Margaret Cargill, Deputy Council Chairperson

The full agenda of the July meeting is in the Church Council folder in the library, and the minutes will also be there once they are confirmed. In the meantime, here are some highlights:

1. **Stewardship Focus:** This was part of the services on July 26 and August 2, when we had opportunities to consider again how we can best support the mission of the church through time, talents and money.
2. **Holiday Fun Day 2:** This was a great day for the children and their leaders; see more elsewhere in this issue! We understand that children are looking forward to the next one already!
3. **Livestreaming Review:** Everyone should now be aware that this is underway, and we encourage you to participate; email addresses for the two reviewers are in the newsletter, or notes can be left in the box provided in the foyer.
4. **Grant application to the Uniting Foundation:** Council has asked a small team to write an application for funding to build links with and provide support to two more rural churches, at Ororoo and Maitland, through our live-streaming program. Watch this space!

As always, if you have any questions, please talk to one of the members of Church Council: Bruce Ind (Chairperson), Margaret Cargill (Deputy Chair), Helena Begg (Secretary), Anne Ind and Leonie Brown (Co-treasurers), Rhonda Amber, Chris Ayles, Michele Bennier, Anne Butler, Austin Phoenix, John Secombe, Jan Sillett.

Friendship Group

From Joan Wagner

On a sunny July day, we met for lunch at Kafe Schulze, Avenue Road, Glynde where 11 were able to attend. We missed the 9 unable to join us - the Whibleys because of the sad loss of Roger, some with medical issues and others with other important commitments.

We were given a private room in this modernised, spacious facility with a good range to choose from the provided menus. After an enjoyable time, we had a short meeting to discuss arrangements for our 70 years lunch celebration.

On leaving, Joanne, who had been so welcoming, was thanked, and she expressed how good it was to hear our happy laughter coming from the room.

A great place to go to, I heartily recommend it! 😊



Friendship Group Celebration

From Margaret Clogg

The Friendship Group will be celebrating 70 years of Fellowship and Friendship at the Morialta Uniting Church (previously Magill, Newton and Montacute Methodist churches, Finchley Park Presbyterian and Rostrevor Congregational).

The celebration on **Thursday, August 20th 2026** will begin at 11.30 and lunch will be served at 12 noon. If you have ever belonged to the Fellowship groups, and it doesn't matter how long ago, you are very, very welcome to join in this celebration.

A donation to Uniting Communities for their Christmas Appeal would be appreciated.

If you plan to attend, please RSVP to Margaret Clogg (0419 891 312) by Sunday 9th August, and please advise Margaret if you have special dietary requirements.



American highlights – 1988

From Ruth Dunning

My trip record reminds me of the somewhat embarrassing beginning to our Western Trails Tour. The tour comprised a number of American folk as well as Bruce, my sister Ailsa, and me. When our tour leader, Marianna, first suggested we sing, it fell flat. Later she tried again and this time Bruce began to sing – “Oh can you see by the dawn's early light” ... A delighted Marianna leapt to her feet and began conducting, the Americans sat open-mouthed while Ailsa and I just wanted to disappear. Undeterred, Bruce continued... “What so proudly we hailed, at the twilight's last gleaming” ...

Later, in Washington, we took a tour to historic Christ Church (1773) in Alexandria, where George Washington worshipped and his pew is marked. This really grabbed me as did his home, Mount Vernon, which has been well preserved and where one can see some of the original furniture. Ten of the twelve outbuildings, including the kitchen and smokehouse, have been restored. (Martha Washington was famous for her hams).



At Volta Place we had an appointment at the Volta Bureau for the Increase and Diffusion of Knowledge relating to the Deaf (as it was known then). In the foyer hung a portrait of Alexander Graham Bell who invented the telephone. He had been presented in 1880, by France, with the Volta Prize of 50,000 francs. His deaf mother had deeply influenced him over the years and he had done much ground-breaking work with the deaf. We were shown into the library and asked “Do you realize you are standing in the biggest archival library on deafness in the world?”

Niagara Falls was of special interest. Bruce's brother, Grant, had been a Uniting Church Minister and in 1972 he and his family had spent a 12-month exchange at Southminster church in Niagara Falls. We had contacted Rhia, a member of the congregation, who kindly invited us to lunch and then took us for a drive. Back at the Falls we saw the display of the various unbelievable contraptions in which daring people had risked their lives tumbling over the Falls. We also saw the spectacular view from the Table Rock viewing platform. Intrigued, Bruce then descended 38 metres by elevator to tunnels leading behind the front of the Falls – an eerie feeling to stand only a couple of metres, but behind bars, from the great volume of water as it crashed over the precipice sending out a huge spray. Despite him wearing the provided raincoat and hood he still got quite wet.

We finished the day with Rhia taking us into Southminster Church. We hadn't expected to see inside the church where the family had worshipped each Sunday and were even more startled to see a framed photo of Grant on one wall.

We left the church accompanied by the thunderous roar of the nearby Niagara Falls, which I will always remember.



Roger Lindsay Dawson Whibley (1946 – 2026)

Roger was born on the 20th of August 1946, to Bessie and Geoffrey, and grew up in Payneham alongside his younger brother, Chris. He attended Payneham Primary School, where he played soccer and spent countless hours playing tennis on the family lawn

court in Henry Street. His sporting ability was obvious from a young age – so much so that at just 12 years of age he was selected to play Under-18 soccer with the Eastern District Soccer Association. During his teenage years he was also an enthusiastic member of the Coo-ee Youth Club. From an early age there were two things that were obvious about Roger – he loved sport, and he loved being busy.

Roger later attended Norwood Boys Technical High School at Marryatville, where he competed in athletics and proudly represented the school at the inter-school athletics carnival. His love of sport continued well beyond school. He played tennis, basketball and table tennis with Argent Methodist Church, even coaching some of the junior girls' tennis teams, and enjoyed many rounds of golf at Tea Tree Gully Golf Club. Later in life he added volleyball, squash, badminton, lawn bowls and ten-pin bowling to the list. It seems Roger was always happiest when he was active, surrounded by good people, and enjoying a little friendly competition.

That determination carried through into his working life. After completing his electrical apprenticeship with the MTT, Roger worked for 2 private electrical contractors, before joining the Highways Department at Northfield in their electrical shop. He later took on a supervisory position for underground street lighting installation on the then 'new' South Eastern Freeway before he transferred to construction and maintenance for the installation of underground storm water drainage. In 1977 he joined Campbelltown Council where he worked for 30 years in roles such as Maintenance Supervisor, Depot Supervisor, Project Officer in the Engineering Department and finally a Civil Compliance Officer, before retiring in June 2008, aged 61. During his working life he built a reputation as someone who was dependable, practical and always willing to help.

But perhaps the most important decision Roger ever made was when he started dating his best mate Graham Stacey's sister, Margaret. They married in March 1970 and together built a marriage that lasted 56 wonderful years – a partnership built on friendship, loyalty, shared adventures and unconditional support and love. In November 1974 they welcomed premature twin boys, Brett and Peter.

Roger happily put some of his own interests on hold as family became his priority. Whether it was cheering from the sidelines, standing beside them at motor racing events, helping build a house, fixing something electrical, or offering advice whenever it was needed, Roger never hesitated to lend a hand.

Family caravan holidays every September school holidays became treasured traditions for the family. Every year there was somewhere new to explore, new friendships to make, and lifelong memories created together.

Retirement gave Roger more time for the things he loved. He volunteered countless hours maintaining community facilities at Milpara Nursing Home and Morialta Uniting Church, enjoyed lawn bowls and ten-pin bowling, and finally had time to develop the beautiful garden railway he had dreamed of for so many years. Most importantly, retirement allowed Roger to continue sharing life's adventures with Margaret.

Together they enjoyed many wonderful holidays, including trips throughout South East Asia with Graham and KK, along with memorable railway adventures through New Zealand. Closer to home, some of their happiest times were spent caravanning around South Australia and Victoria with their much-loved Italian Greyhound, Roman. Roman apparently loved travelling so much that he'd be asleep in his basket before they reached the first corner.

However, if there is one thing that brought Roger the greatest joy, it was family - whether it was helping around the house, lending a hand with another project, spending time creating wonderful memories with granddaughter Ella, or more recently providing incredible support when Brett was unwell, Roger was simply there. He celebrated other people's successes just as much as his own.

Roger's greatest legacy is the family he loved so deeply and the example he quietly set every single day. For Margaret, Roger was the love of her life, her best friend, her greatest support and life-long friend.

Rest in peace Roger.

Apologies to Brian Piller

We made a mistake in July Vision – our sincere apologies Brian. We spelt Brian's surname as Pillar instead of Piller and we apologise sincerely.

But ChatGPT tells us that pillar is a firm, upright support, such as a column of wood, stone, or metal, in line with the man himself.

Go well Brian and please accept our apologies and a year's free subscription to Vision! 😊😊

Digital Presence Group take a bow

From Christine Garner

Congratulations to the 'Digital Presence Group' who maintain the Morialta UC website. They meet weekly online to keep the website updated, relevant, interesting and informative. I think they do a wonderful job and I was amazed at the quality, especially on the 'More than Just Sunday' link.

Members of the group are Anne B, Bruce, Margaret C, Helena, Sharon, John S and Nicole.

Frontier Services Sunday 30th August



Frontier Services is Australia's oldest bush charity, founded in 1912 through the vision of Reverend John Flynn. Today, it supports people living in rural and remote communities through our national network of Bush Chaplains and dedicated Outback Links volunteers.

The people at Frontier Services believe that distance should never be a barrier to support and connection.

Their Vision is an Australia where every person in rural and remote areas is cared for and supported. A country where no one faces life's challenges alone, no matter how far they live from the nearest town.

Their Mission is to provide practical, pastoral and spiritual support to people living in remote Australia through the work of our Bush Chaplains and Outback Links volunteers.

Their mission is grounded in compassion, connection, and a deep respect for the people of the bush. Through their network of Bush Chaplains and Outback Links volunteers, they offer a trusted presence, showing up in times of crisis, isolation or hardship with a helping hand, a listening ear, and a connection to community.

People living in rural and remote Australia often face isolation, limited access to essential services, and greater vulnerability to crises. They include farmers, First Nations communities, small-town residents, and those in industries like mining, who can be hundreds of kilometres from the nearest support. Despite the challenges of distance, extreme weather, and economic hardship, they show remarkable resilience.

Frontier Services stands with them, offering practical, emotional, and spiritual care through our Bush Chaplains and Outback Links volunteers, ensuring no one in the bush has to face life's challenges alone.

To support the work of Frontier Services, click on <https://frontierservices.org/donate/>

Gondwana Link

From the Editor

For the past 9 months Morialta UC has been supporting Gondwana Link through our carbon offset project. We are supporting a revegetation project that also helps Indigenous Australians.



Gondwana Link works to ensure First Nations people have significant opportunities, which include leading significant conservation programs and benefiting from a range of other programs across the link.

The country where the Gondwana Link program works encompasses the traditional lands of the Noongar, Ngadju and Wongi people. Native Title over significant public land areas has been recognised in recent years and more recognition is likely. The Noongar settlement, which restores some rights to the traditional owners and gives them the opportunity to return to their roles as managers of their land, is nearing completion. But they need help to do that.

The Gondwana Link's specific strategies include:

- Developing and supporting groups to establish themselves as land managers, with conservation plans and Ranger Teams in place.
- Encouraging groups and other property owners to provide access to their properties for cultural purposes.
- Strengthening cultural exchange and cross-cultural learning.
- Encouraging a consideration of the needs and values of the First Nations peoples in all work undertaken.
- Providing opportunity for cross cultural relationships to develop and flourish.

This project protects 560 hectares of established eucalyptus plantation forest from land clearing and timber harvesting. Situated in the Southwest Australia Ecoregion and in one of only 36 global biodiversity hotspots, it is one of the richest areas on the planet for biodiversity.

"To a biologist like me, this is the nearest place to heaven on earth." Professor Stephen Hopper AC University of Western Australia, Albany.

The oldest to the newest Uniting Churches



The oldest is Ebenezer UC, built between 1808 and 1809 as a Presbyterian Church. It is located on the Hawkesbury River in Ebenezer, 45 km north west of Parramatta.

The newest, built over 2 centuries later, is the Playford UC, opened in 2015 in Playford 41 km north of Adelaide.





The Gardener and the Vine

Jan Sillett, Holiday Fun Day Coordinator

What a great time! Our second Holiday Fun Day for the year was another successful co-operative effort which focused on us all being an important part of God's family, The Gardener and the Vine. 18 children enjoyed colouring their vine leaves, painting their terracotta pots, making cupcakes, enjoying butterfly crafts, making pencil toppers, planting their succulents and creating their magnificent scarecrows.

We enjoyed music and singing for the first time on this holiday fun day and the children loved it, joining in with gusto, doing the actions and even asking for an extra session. It was great to hear the Camp Out songs encouraging a new audience to rock, Jesus, rock, put on love with their sneakers, to be a butterfly and to use their muscles to grow their faith!

The food is always a hit with hot dogs, salad rolls, cupcakes, flapjacks and fruit being on the menu this time.

Thank you to all the volunteers who made the day a success. Next time we will be Climbing Everest with Echidnas. Why not join us in October?

Welcoming the stranger starts long before someone reaches our shores

Adapted from Act for Peace



Image ABC

When Maya* fled Syria with her children, she arrived in Jordan carrying more than a few belongings. She carried uncertainty, fear and the overwhelming responsibility of trying to rebuild a life from nothing. Like many refugees, Maya wanted what every parent wants: safety, stability, and opportunity for her children. But starting again in a new country with limited opportunities made that feel almost impossible.

Then something changed. Through the FORSA project, supported by Act for Peace and local partners, Maya joined vocational training in food preparation and productive kitchens. She gained practical skills, confidence, and, eventually, a small start-up grant, to launch her own home-based catering business.

Slowly, life began to shift. Her income increased. She was able to repay debts and for the first time in years, she could begin saving and planning for the future.

Today, Maya is one of the most successful participants in the program. "The FORSA program completely changed my life and helped me reach where I am today," she says.

Stories like Maya's remind us that refugees are not defined by what they have lost. They are people with skills, resilience, leadership, and dreams for the future – people rebuilding their lives with dignity when given the opportunity and support to do so.

We need to look beyond the headlines and see both the realities and possibilities facing displaced communities around the world. Because displacement does not begin at a border. Often, it begins back in a village.

Right now, more than 123 million people around the world have been forced from their homes by conflict, disaster, and climate change. People who have experienced displacement are not strangers to fear, hope, grief, or courage. They are our global neighbours.

We need to pause and listen to stories like Maya's and recognise that transformation is possible when communities stand alongside one another with compassion and consistency.

Welcoming the stranger begins long before someone reaches our shores. It begins whenever we choose not to look away.

**Maya's name has been changed for safety reasons.*

Community-Building and Fund-Raising Task Group

The CB&FR Task Group is pleased to welcome Rev Anne Butler and Linda Johnson to their ranks. We also express our sincere thanks to Carole Lyons who has been a member since the beginning. Carole's contributions will be greatly missed. The current team is Helena Begg, Judith Purling, Anne Butler, Linda Johnson and Colin Cargill. If you have any ideas for events in 2027, please speak to a member of the group.

Our next event is "Guess who is coming to lunch" which will be held on 16th August. Please make sure you have filled out a form and handed it to Judith or the church office.

We have a **Community Lunch followed by 'Around the world in 80 minutes'**, a film clip show, **on Sunday 13th September**. A sign-up sheet will be available in late August so watch the newsletter. Lunch will be served at noon.

Kym Purling will present a concert at 2.00pm on Sunday 4th October.

Illumina Voices will sing for us on 1st November. Both of these events will include afternoon tea!

To round off the year we have the **Merry Magill Market on Saturday 21st November** from 9.00am to 12noon.

NCCA calls for action on racism directed at First Nations Peoples

From NCCA Newsletter (edited)



The NCCA, in its submission to the Parliamentary Joint Committee Inquiry into racism, hate and violence directed at First Nations Peoples, proposes three steps toward addressing the deeply embedded nature of racism

directed at First Nations People. Churches condemn all forms of racism as profoundly immoral because racism rejects the equality of all people, created in God's image with human dignity and equal rights.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people experience racial prejudice, discrimination in workplaces, barriers to housing and services, online abuse, and interactions with policing and government systems that reflect the systemic and structural nature of racism.

The NCCA calls for the implementation of the Australian Human Rights Commission's National Anti-Racism Framework. The Framework recognises the structural nature of racism, promotes truth-telling and self-determination, and places

First Nations voices at the centre of anti-racism efforts. It provides a practical roadmap for governments, businesses, community organisations and churches to eliminate racism.

The submission highlights concern about the lack of progress on 'Closing the Gap' targets. While some gains have been made in health, education and economic participation, significant inequalities remain. Greater investment in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations and genuine partnership in decision-making are essential to bring about change.

The NCCA calls for raising the age of criminal responsibility to 14 years and increasing investment in Indigenous-led diversion, prevention and community-based programs that keep vulnerable children out of detention.

Racism diminishes us all. The NCCA stands in solidarity with First Nations people, many of whom belong to our member churches. We hope and pray that this inquiry will provide the impetus to governments and all sectors of society, including churches, for a transformation to a more just and caring culture in Australia where First Nations people are heard and their dignity and rights protected.

Feeling helpless in a turbulent world

Adapted from an article by Rev. David M. Felten in *Progressive Christianity*

Rev Felten was recently asked: "When the direct actions of a country kill innocent people, and the government fails to investigate or apologize, what are ordinary people supposed to do about it? As a Christian, I feel like I should care and say something. But it feels like there's nothing any of us can do."

The mix of anger, grief, and helplessness you're describing is not only a very human response, but it's also a sign that your moral compass is still working. As any therapist will tell you, the only people who can watch innocent lives lost, governments shrug, and the world carry on as usual without feeling disturbed are people who've shut down something essential in themselves. Feeling upset isn't a weakness. It's evidence that your humanity is intact.

In moments like this, one of the most neglected but crucial of human responses is lament. Not the polite, quiet kind, but the kind that refuses to pretend everything is fine. Across cultures and traditions, people of conscience have always cried out when the powerful harm the vulnerable. The Psalms are full of examples: grief spoken aloud, anger directed toward the Divine, and the stubborn conviction that human suffering matters. When violence is done to the innocent, it's appropriate for people (especially people of faith) to loudly proclaim: *This is not okay*.

But naming the wrong is only the beginning. When governments are evasive, investigations shut down, and officials hope the news cycle will move on, we have an obligation to keep asking the hard questions. Write to

representatives. Support independent journalism and organizations pressing for accountability. Talk about it with your friends, in your community, and yes, in your church. Nothing about the separation of church and state prevents you from advocating for justice and accountability from those in power.

When something terrible happens far away, it's tempting to do nothing because we feel we can't influence it. But don't discount this truth – don't look away! Makes a difference. If praying is your thing, do it. If you know their names, say them. Hold them in your thoughts. Stand in solidarity with immigrant communities and others affected by the human rights tragedies we see unfolding every day. Shared grief across boundaries of religion and nationality is itself a quiet act of resistance against the dehumanization that makes war, treating refugees as non-persons and the normalization of political lies easier.

While none of this will fix the world overnight – living with integrity has never been about guaranteed outcomes. It's about staying awake to what is happening in the world.



Young men are more religious than women

*Adapted from an article in the Conversation
by Intifar Chowdhury, Flinders University*

While young Australians are less religious than their parents and grandparents, some young people appear to be returning to religion. More surprising is that the trend is being driven by young men, rather than young women. While Australia is continuing to secularise overall, beneath that trend, gen Z appears to be the first generation where men are more likely than women to identify with a religion.

Between 1987 and 2025, the religious affiliation of 27,478 Australians was recorded across six generations:

- war generation (born during the 1920s)
- builders (born 1930–1945)
- baby boomers (1946–1960)
- generation X (1961–1979)
- millennials or gen Y (1980–1994)
- generation Z (born after 1994)

While church attendance tells us about participation in organised religion, affiliation captures something broader about identity, belonging and self-understanding. As expected, religious affiliation declines sharply across generations. Older Australians remain significantly more likely than younger Australians to identify with a religion.

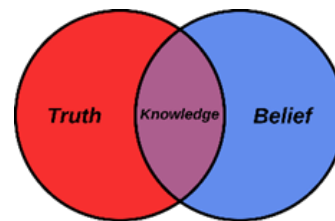
As expected, in every generation from the war generation through to millennials, women are more likely than men to report a religious affiliation. Similarly in millennials, (gen Y),

while both men and women have become less religious over time, women consistently remain ahead. In the 2025 Australian Election Study, 46.2% of gen Y women reported a religious affiliation compared with 40.3% of gen Y men.

However, in the 2025 survey, 55.7% of gen Z men reported a religious affiliation, compared with 43.2% of gen Z women. While religious affiliation among gen Y men remained relatively stable between 2019 and 2025 (41.0% to 40.3%), affiliation among gen Z men rose from 35.3% in 2019 to 49.1% in 2022 and 55.7% in 2025.

The pattern is still present when political ideology, parental birthplace, marital status and place of residence are controlled for. The results are statistically significant and point to a markedly different religious landscape among the youngest cohort of Australian voters.

However, the answer may have less to do with church attendance and more to do with identity. Religion may increasingly function as a source of belonging, meaning and community, particularly for young men. In a world characterised by economic insecurity, social isolation and uncertainty about traditional masculine roles, religion can offer purpose, structure and a sense of place.



Wikidata

Religion offers not only beliefs, but a framework for understanding oneself.

How can you tell whether your dog is right-pawed or left-pawed?

Adapted from an article by Phie Jacobs in Science News

Anyone with experience caring for dogs knows no two pups are quite alike. Some play for hours; others are couch potatoes. Some are fearless protectors; others tremble at the sight of a vacuum cleaner. And just as humans can be right-handed or left-handed, our canine companions often show a distinct preference for one paw over the other.

In dogs, this asymmetry doesn't stop at paws: They even use different nostrils to sniff out different scents.

Dogs are an appealing animal model for scientists seeking clues into our own laterality.

When we talk about laterality, we talk about two aspects. The first is direction: You can be either left-handed, right-handed, or ambilateral. But there is also another important aspect, which is strength: How much are you right-handed, or how much are you left-handed? This aspect is very important because there is evidence that both direction and strength affect physiology, immune response, and behaviour in dogs.

For example, there is evidence that left-pawed dogs are more “pessimistic” and take fewer risks. They also appear to mount a weaker immune response to some vaccination. Right-pawed dogs trained to herd sheep display more aggressive behaviour toward the sheep. And ambilateral dogs appear to be more fearful of thunderstorms.

Dogs were given four different tasks. Two were manipulation-based – two were related to locomotion. Dogs were given a Kong toy filled with food and observed to see which paw was used to stabilise the toy. Then the dog's favourite food was placed under a slightly elevated piece of furniture and the dog's ability to get to the food recorded. Next the dogs were sat at the top of a staircase and the first paw they used to descend the stairs recorded. Each test was done several times with each dog.

After the tests, dogs could be divided into one of five categories – strong left, weak left, ambilateral, weak right, and strong right.

Is your dog left or right pawed?

