



15 December 2025

A Pastoral Letter from the Moderator

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

Grace and peace to you in the name of Jesus Christ.

Like many across our nation, I write with a heavy heart in the wake of the violent, terror-driven attack in Bondi. Such acts shock us, grieve us, and unsettle our sense of safety. We lament the loss of life, the trauma inflicted on innocent people, and the fear that ripples far beyond the place where violence occurred.

We hold in prayer all who have been affected — the Jewish community, those mourning loved ones, those injured and recovering, first responders and health workers, and the wider community carrying shock and grief.

We also acknowledge the NSW/ACT Synod, as this tragedy has struck at the heart of Sydney. We uphold the Moderator, Rev Faaimata Havea Hiliau, and Synod leadership in prayer as they walk alongside congregations, families, and communities directly impacted by this devastating event.

Our President, Rev Charissa Suli, has issued a pastoral statement on behalf of the Uniting Church in Australia — grounded in grief, solidarity, and a call to peace — [see link here](#). The President has also written to our National Jewish dialogue partners to express our care, solidarity, and unequivocal rejection of antisemitism. These statements are being shared through Assembly channels.

I have also written to Jewish leaders in Queensland on behalf of the Qld Synod, offering condolences, solidarity, and assurance of our prayers and ongoing commitment to stand against hatred and violence.

Let me say clearly and without qualification: we condemn this act of terror and all violence that seeks to harm, intimidate, or divide. Such actions stand in direct contradiction to the way of Christ, who comes not with hatred or destruction, but with peace, compassion, and love for the world.

The attack in Bondi targeted a peaceful, family-focused celebration of Chanukah, while many Christians were singing Christmas carols in churches around Australia. The Jewish community has the same fundamental human right to celebrate religious festivals publicly or privately, without fear or interference.

Both Chanukah and Christmas celebrate the miracle of God's care and provision for people. They are festivals of light, hope, and joy about receiving love in unexpected places and being inspired to generosity. The vicious terror attack in Bondi could not be more different. There is no place for such violence; it can have no justification.

As followers of Jesus, we refuse to allow violence to have the final word. We resist the temptation to respond with fear, suspicion, or blame. We are especially mindful that acts of terror can quickly lead to the unfair targeting or stigmatising of whole communities. We reject any narrative that fuels racism, religious hatred, or exclusion. In Christ, our calling is always toward justice, dignity, and the recognition of the humanity of every person.

The Uniting Church has long affirmed that the gospel calls us to be peacemakers in a broken world. This is not a passive hope, but an active commitment to stand against violence, to speak truth, to work for justice, and to



embody love even when fear presses in. In times like this, our witness matters. How we speak, how we listen, how we care for one another, and how we reach out beyond ourselves all proclaim something about the God we trust.

I encourage our congregations and faith communities to create space for prayer, lament, and honest conversation. Do not rush past the grief. Do not minimise the fear. But also do not surrender hope. The light of Christ is not overcome by darkness.

If this tragedy has stirred deep anxiety, fear or distress for you or someone you love, please do not carry this alone. I encourage you to reach out to your local minister, chaplain or trusted pastoral carer. You may also wish to contact Lifeline on 13 11 14, available 24 hours a day, for confidential support.

Friends, we follow the One who was himself the victim of violence and yet rose to bring life, reconciliation, and peace. May we be shaped by that same Spirit - steadfast in love, courageous in compassion, and unwavering in our commitment to peace.

Please continue to pray for our nation, for those most affected, and for the healing of our communities.

Yours in Christ's hope and peace,

The Reverend Bruce Moore
Moderator

Prayer – from the Assembly President

*God of mercy and peace,
we come to you with hearts that are tired and grieving.
We entrust to you the lives lost,
the wounded,
and all who are holding sorrow this day.*

*Surround the Jewish community and all who have been affected
with comfort, safety, and hope.
Strengthen those who serve and protect,
and grant wisdom and gentleness to all who lead and respond.*

*In a world shaken by violence,
teach us again the way of Christ -
the way of love, courage, and peace.
Hold us, heal us, and lead us forward.*

Amen.