



# Bathurst Uniting Church

Sharing God's love by connecting people to God;  
people to people; and people to community.

Newsletter

December 2022

## Advent and Christmas

Sunday 11 December 9.30am Rev Keith Hamilton

5.00pm Contemporary service in Activities Hall

7.00pm – 9.00pm - *Carols by Candlelight in Machattie Park*

Sunday 18 December 9.30am KUCA present "Kids Praise"

5.00pm Contemporary service in Activities Hall

3.00pm – 4.30pm "Blue Christmas" in the Church foyer.

*For those who have lost a loved one this year.*

*Including reflection, prayer, afternoon tea and a time to talk*

Thursday 22 December 6.00pm – 7.00pm - *Carols in Kings Parade*

Christmas Eve 24 December 7pm Carols and Nativity



### Christmas Day

Sunday 25 December

9.30am – Rev Keith Hamilton

Sunday 1 January 2023 9.30am Rev Keith Hamilton Holy Communion

Worship in January will be each Sunday at 9.30am

The 5pm worship will be in recess after 18 December and will restart on Sunday 29 January.

You can join morning worship on Zoom by going to <http://www.bathurstunitingchurch.com.au/> and pressing the purple button.



### Staying Connected

For pastoral support, please contact your Pastoral Partner, or one of the Elders, or email [BUConnect@gmail.com](mailto:BUConnect@gmail.com) and we'll put you in touch with someone.

You can also contact our minister, Rev Keith Hamilton on 0417487446 or email [keith.hamilton.bathurstuc@gmail.com](mailto:keith.hamilton.bathurstuc@gmail.com)

## **Reflection USING POWER TO WORK FOR PEACE**

Matthew 5:9 “Blessed are the peace makers, for they shall be called children of God.”

How can we strive for peace with God and with people, in a world of different opinions?

**Firstly, what is a definition of Peace?** A theological definition: In the New Testament the meaning of the word is related to salvation and concord with God. A feeling of rest, a state of reconciliation with God, concord with humanity and the whole of creation. To be reconciled to God is to be reconciled to all of God’s creation. Peace is the salvation that has come to earth in Jesus.

**What is a definition of Power?** A theological definition: to be able, one who has ability, the ability to decide, denotes the absolute possibility of action that is proper to God.

### **A case study in the use of three-dimensional power**

For nine years a congregation, referred to here as “boarders,” paid rent for its use of a church building of a congregation of another denomination. Even though they paid “rent,” they have been more like boarders than renters. Over the years, there have been many joint activities. These have included the annual church services, Christmas events, and other activities. These joint activities are increasing.

A difficulty has been having a ‘rental’ that accurately reflects the hourly cost of usage. It was been estimated that the cost in terms of maintenance, insurance, electricity, water, cleaning materials is more than \$15 per hour (in 2005) whereas the people were paying substantially less than that amount. Therefore, the home congregation was subsidising the “boarders”. The funds of the “boarders” are also limited, paying a stipend for their minister and paying off their house. Furthermore, their insurance policy for public risk (in 2005) is close to three thousand dollars per year. The congregation is running a very large deficit, and does not have any reserves. Their deficit is equivalent to the total annual property costs. Furthermore, the “boarders” at this time were more than ten months in arrears.

It was decided necessary to hold a meeting. In conversation beforehand, the congregation representatives decided that they would need to increase the “rent” by one-third to come close to realistically meeting the expenses of property use. However, it was decided that rather than begin by asking for that amount, the congregation representatives would outline the problem. The problem was the very large deficit for this year with no reserves; the aging and declining congregation unable to do such things as cleaning, thereby necessitating paying a cleaner; and the hourly running costs of the building that exceeded the rent by a factor of two. It was also decided to share some of the implications of the deficit in terms of property maintenance viability.

At the meeting the “boarders” expressed the view that they had also been thinking about this issue, and knowing that the congregation were paying \$1,200 per year in cleaning, said they could do the cleaning, in lieu of paying extra money. They also offered to ask for a donation from their members who use the building for social purposes, and pay that to the property fund. Furthermore, they suggested holding joint fundraising activities to go towards the building expenses. The congregation, for their part, offered to explore options to help reduce the “boarders” insurance premium that would in turn raise their capacity to give more towards the property expenses. The “boarders” also offered to pay their outstanding amount within a week, and this was duly done.

Everyone left the meeting on a high note, having arranged another joint activity, made some adjustments to the times of the use of the buildings to better help each other, and planned to hold more combined services and events next year.

**Reflection:** The congregation came to the meeting seeking a solution, rather than bringing a solution. To have come and presented a solution such as “You need to pay one-third more rent, would have been a one-dimensional use of power. The “boarder’s” would have been left with either paying up or moving out. Conflict would have been created. The use of three-dimensional or multi-dimensional use of power, meant that the two groups began with the problem. They were then able in a calm conversation canvass various solutions. The outcome was a mutually satisfying solution, and a deeper bond. The care of the property, while always on some level a shared concern, has become an increased shared concern.

Stuart Rees wrote about the three-dimensional uses of power in, *Passion for Peace: Exercising Power Creatively*.

### **One-dimensional use of power**

This is the top down, hierarchy “my way or the highway” (Rees p58) obedience from slaves, serfs, from prisoners, pupils or army privates, from children or wives is demanded. A one-man dictator. Problem: with a “one man band” input for decisions and the decisions themselves are reliant upon the one person, therefore solutions are confined to one person’s view.

One-dimensional exercise of power is the “do this” style. The manager who takes pride in themselves in giving others a hard time. The style of Margaret Thatcher who was proud to be known by the acronym TINA – there is no alternative. It is the obedience to rules even where they have become destructive or obsolete.

Rees writes (p71), “The historical record shows that if authoritarianism is maintained over long periods, it will eventually blow up in the face of the politicians, bureaucrats, teachers or managers who effect such control. Even in the face of authoritarianism, children and adults grow in confidence, they learn to question the disempowering consequences of abuses of power.” Gandhi said, “When I despair, I remember that all through history, the way of love and truth has always won. There have been tyrants and murderers and for a time they seem invincible, but in the end they always fall. Think of it. Always.”

Statements that begin with “you,” are power-laden and almost always coercive. “You should,” “You shouldn’t,” “You did,” “You didn’t” are about winners and losers. Such dialogue never builds community, only division. Likewise sentences that begin with “why” tend also to be coercive. “Why did you do that?” “Why don’t you do that?” are interrogative questions, perhaps suitable in a court room, but not for building relationships. “You” statements and “why” questions inevitably lead to the receiver feeling under attack, and either responding with attack or defence, or they may physically and or emotionally leave the relationship.

Starting with “I” statements rather than “you” statements builds communication. “I feel . . .” “I was disappointed . . .” “I was surprised when . . .” “I would like to . . .” “I am aware that your preference is . . .”

Instead of why questions, questions that begin with: “Can you help me understand . . .?” “Can you help me clarify what you meant when you said . . .?” “Can I check I have heard you correctly . . .?” Such an approach when seeking clarification build relationships, and builds community.

One dimensional use of power is always about winners and losers.

“I am going to get someone/you to do that . . .” is always a coercive use of power.

I always think if someone cannot say no, they are not really saying yes; they are being coerced into yes. Coercive use of power might be useful to get everyone out of a building when it is on fire, but not for building community.

When someone in the church, or elsewhere, raises an idea and the first response is “no,” or “that wont work because . . .” that is a coercive use of power, a one-dimensional use of power which destroys community.

### **Two-dimensional use of power**

Two-dimensional use of power is exchange. Stuart Rees suggests that there is greater equality between superiors and subordinates, between men and women, adults and children. If genuine exchange is to apply in proceedings, each party must sense that they have something to trade: information, respect, access to others and a willingness to develop trust. People only learn to experience a fair use of power if they hear other’s views, if they learn to exercise their point of view and respect another’s.

An example of managing using two-dimensional power: A senior, who says, “I suggest you go away and think about it. There will be at least two ways to do this. I’m available if you want me.”

Two-dimensionality, exchange, is where people who are seldom heard are sought to express their views. It means leaders seek out and encourage those who seldom express a view to do just that. The 'silent' person is heard, trust is built.

Power is shared, but in a limited way between various options that have been offered. But they can turn into a two-dimensional fight of winners and losers.

Paulo Freire (*Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Sheed and Ward, London, 1972), "Dialogue requires an intense faith in humankind, faith in their power to make and re-make, to create and recreate, faith in their vocation to be more fully human which is not the privilege of some elite, but the birthright of all."

Two-dimensional use of power can be win/win, but not always.

### Three-dimensional use of power

Three-dimensional or multidimensional view is empowering for it says there are fields of possibilities hitherto unimagined. It is a sharing of power. People come to an issue, rather than being told what to do (one-dimensional), or given limited choice between two possibilities (two-dimensional view), they have the opportunity to explore the issue or problem and together and find creative solutions (Three-dimensional view).

In seeking a win/win solution we treat each person as created in the image of God, with intrinsic worth. Stephen Covey in *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, set out the seven habits as: Be proactive. Begin with the end in mind. Put first things first. Think win-win. Seek first to understand, then to be understood. Synergise - not compromise, but let's come up with a better way together. These seven habits help to shift from one-dimensional use of power to three dimensional or multi-dimensional use of power.

The three-dimension or multi-dimension way of exercising power is the way of faith. The other ways seek to control the future, the third way leaves the future open, which means open to the possibilities of God.

### Conclusion

Everyone has power to act. We exercise power in showing or not showing of courtesies. Will we smile at the shop assistant, or will we scowl; either way we are exercising power. In each interaction we can be exercising a spirit-filled power, or a coercive use of power. We can build up, or tear down. We can be working with God bringing in the kingdom, the reign of God on earth, or we can be part of the problem of unredeemed humanity. Which one will we choose? It is not always as simple as that question might suggest. We are not always aware of how we use power. We can however, become more aware of our use of power, and put in place habits that help us be peace makers.

Blessings

Keith Hamilton  
7 December 2022`



A concert poster for Hayden Wiseman. The top half features a photograph of Hayden Wiseman playing the violin. The text "from the heart" is written in a large, elegant script font. Below it, "HAYDEN WISEMAN IN CONCERT" is written in a smaller, sans-serif font. At the bottom, there is a dark blue banner with white text: "TUESDAY | DEC 13 | 7PM" and "BATHURST UNITING CHURCH". Below that, in a lighter blue banner, it says "LOVE OFFERING | FREE ADMISSION". At the very bottom, in a small font, it says "ENQUIRIES: bookings.hwiseman@gmail.com | www.haydenwiseman.com".

## KUCA NEWS

The children at KUCA decided to donate money to the Uniting World Gift appeal shown in the Gift Catalogue. They had fun choosing gifts that they thought the most suitable and a vote was taken.

We raised \$125.00 and after voting this is what we decided to buy:-

Chicken to send to Bali, Indonesia  
Seeds for growing a garden in Maluku, Indonesia  
Clean Water for Papua, New Guinea  
Healthy kids in Timor-Leste  
Goat in Bali, Indonesia

We were amazed that we could send so many important gifts to help others. The children understand that the partners in these countries buy locally.



- ❖ A great reminder for us all to consider [www.everythingincommon.com.au](http://www.everythingincommon.com.au) for great gifts and e-cards, especially last minute ones!

## BUSS UPDATE

There has been so much happening that some highlights from the BUSS November newsletter is being sent as a separate document with this newsletter.

Instead of doing our own hampers for those in need this year BUSS joined with other church groups to pack hampers organised by HopeCare for pick up by many in the community in need.

### PLEASE NOTE

There will be no January newsletter. The next newsletter will be for Sunday 5 February 2023.

As always, urgent matters will be emailed as needed. If you have something urgent please contact me. Ruth

**For good news stories, upcoming events or updates to be added to the church website email Allan - [allanwray@hotmail.com](mailto:allanwray@hotmail.com)**

If you have items for the Newsletter please send them to Ruth at [revaughan@bigpond.com](mailto:revaughan@bigpond.com) by 9pm on the last Wednesday before the first Sunday of the month.



### Mowing Roster

10 Dec Henry and James  
24 Dec Peter  
14 Jan John and Max  
28 Jan Brian

**UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA  
BATHURST CONGREGATION**

**CHURCH COUNCIL ELECTION 2023**

Each year we have opportunity to elect new Church Council Members (Elders and Councillors) who can be a part of a team who assist with "leading the congregation to a fuller participation in Christ's mission in the world.' (UCA regulations)

Those nominated can choose to be Elder or Church Councillor.

Those nominated can choose to serve for 1 to 5 years.

The Congregation has resolved that the Church Council consist of 12 elected members. There are 7 members whose terms continue beyond the end of 2022.

Five vacancies exist. two members of the current Council will complete their nominated term in February 2023. They are eligible for re-election if they so desire. They are:-

**Elder** – Lilian Beauchamp

**Councillor** – Betty Cowan

Nominations close on Sunday 5th February 2023 with the election of Elders and Church Councillors to take place on Sunday 26th February 2022.

\*\*Nominations can be submitted either by:

- Placing in a box which will be provided for completed nomination forms in the Foyer, or
- By submitting Online through the church email – bathurstuca@gmail.com
  
- A candidate will require at least a majority of votes to be elected.
- All nominees are required to be either a Confirmed Member or Member-in- Association

---

**BATHURST UNITING CHURCH COUNCIL NOMINATION FORM – 2023**

I am happy to accept nomination as an Elder/Church Councillor (*cross out which is not applicable*) to the Bathurst Uniting Church Council for a term of

\* \_\_\_\_\_ year(s)

\* Please indicate number of years you are prepared to serve (1 to 5 years)

Name.....

Signed ..... Date .....

Nominated by 2 Confirmed Members or Members-in-Association

Signed ..... Signed .....

Note: If information relating to the duties and responsibilities of Church Councillors/Elders is required, please contact an existing Church Council member.