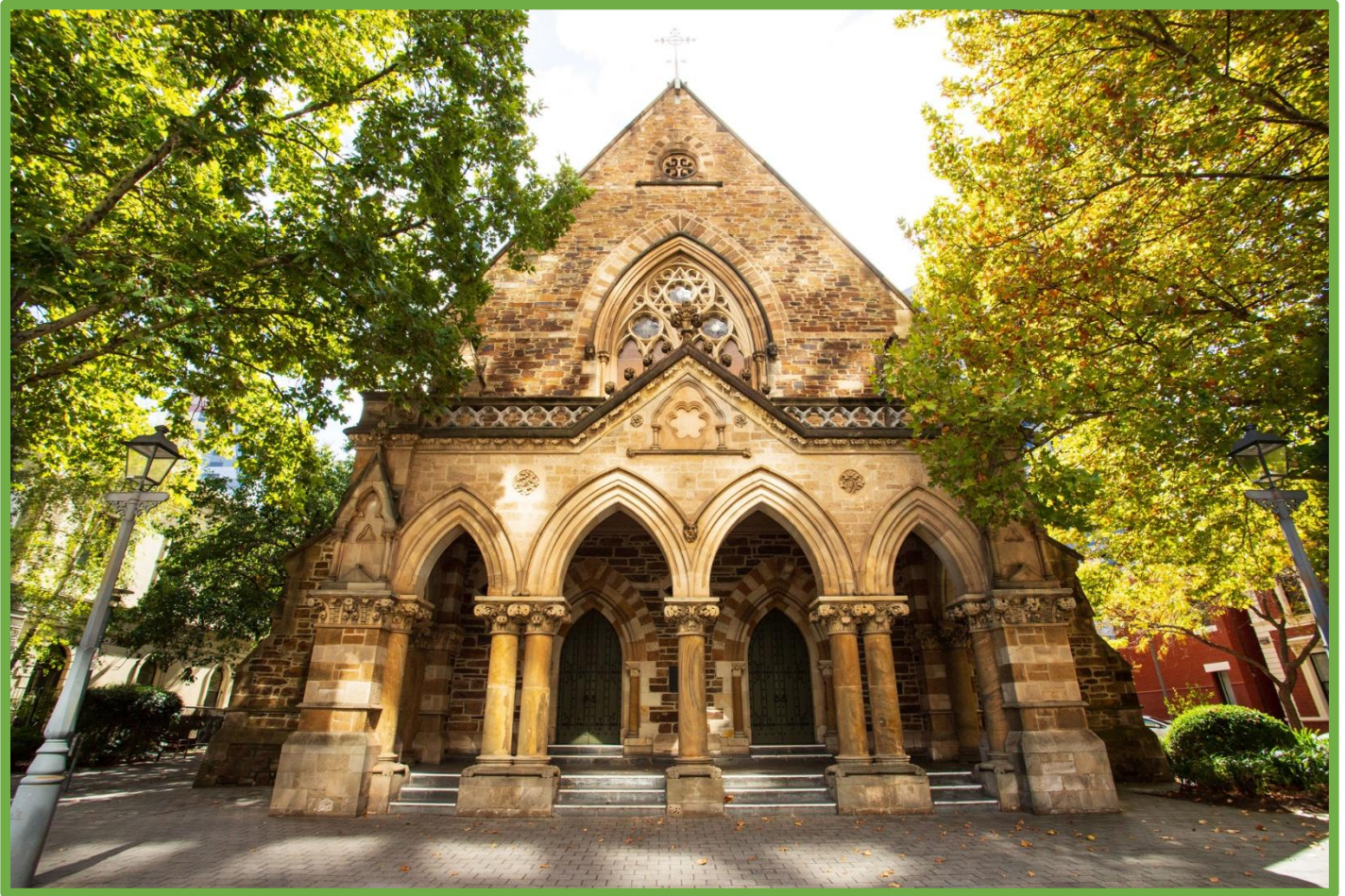




Pilgrim Uniting Church



Annual Report 2025

Vision and Mission Statement

We are called to be a transformative community following Jesus, embodying the love and grace of God and seeking abundant life for all.

Therefore, we live out our vision and mission through:

- seeking forgiveness, healing and transformation for ourselves, the communities within which we live, and our world
- acknowledging that this church is located on unceded Kaurana Land and committing ourselves to work for reconciliation among all Australians
- resourcing and nurturing spiritual growth through worship, learning, discipleship and pastoral care
- fostering commitment to social justice, care of creation and environmental sustainability
- expressing worshipful creativity and witness through music and the arts
- celebrating unity in diversity that is consistent with our essential Christian identity
- promoting inter-faith and inter-cultural relationships
- engaging and contributing to the life and public discourse of the City of Adelaide.

Revised Preamble, accepted by the Pilgrim Congregation in March 2025; step one in the creation of a new Strategic Plan

Minister's Reflections

'Let us go on to the next towns...' (Mark 1:38)

Friends in Christ,

This past year at Pilgrim has been a year marked unmistakably by transition. Not hurried change, but faithful movement. Not endings alone, but the courage to step forward together. The words of Jesus to his disciples in Mark's Gospel have quietly echoed through the life of our community this year: 'Let us go on to the next towns...'—a simple sentence that holds both gratitude for where we have been and trust in where God is leading next.

In July we gave thanks for, and celebrated, the conclusion of Rev. Mark Hewitt's ministry among us. Mark's time at Pilgrim was shaped by quiet creativity, deep attentiveness to the Spirit, and a passionate commitment to justice. His ministry consistently reminded us that faith does not belong only within church walls, but is found in paddocks and city streets, in poetry and paint, in laughter and labour, and in the long, faithful work of listening. We honoured Mark not simply for what he did, but for the way he helped us see—inviting us to notice where God was already at work and to trust that holiness is woven through ordinary, shared life.

At the same time, we welcomed Rev Deacon Christa Megaw into a supply ministry role from June 2025 through to mid-January 2026. Christa's diaconal ministry has embodied what baptism looks like when it leaves the sanctuary. With an outward gaze and a refusal to let faith remain safe or inward, her presence among us has been a living reminder that the church exists not for itself, but for the sake of the world God loves. Her commitment to justice, pastoral attentiveness, and grounded theology have been a gift to Pilgrim during this season of transition.

Alongside these significant pastoral changes, the congregation has also been engaged in deeper work of discernment and direction. A Joint Nominating Committee was established and entrusted with the important task of seeking a new minister to join me in 2026. This work has been undertaken prayerfully and patiently, grounded in trust that God is already preparing the next chapter of Pilgrim's story.

The Church Council has continued its careful leadership through the development of the Strategic Plan. In March 2025, the congregation adopted the Preamble—our Vision and Mission Statement— giving voice to who we understand ourselves to be and what we are called to embody. The draft Strategic Priorities were then brought to the congregation at the November Meeting, and these will now be further discerned for adoption at the March 2026 Meeting of the Congregation. This process has reflected Pilgrim at its best: thoughtful, collaborative, and deeply committed to faithful action rather than quick answers.

Throughout all of this, it has been the people of Pilgrim who have carried the community. Leadership has been shared generously. Change has been met with grace. Worship, care, justice-seeking, learning, and service have continued not because circumstances were easy, but because this community knows how to walk together when the road bends.

I want to offer my deep thanks—to Council members, committees, ministry leaders, volunteers, and all who call Pilgrim home. This has been a year when we have heard again Christ's invitation: 'Let us go on...' Not leaving behind what has shaped us but carrying it forward—trusting that the Spirit who has been faithful in this place will continue to lead us into the next towns, the next questions, and the next acts of love.

Peace,
John



*Pilgrim's celebration of Mark's ministry, 27 July 2025
L to R: Rev Mark Hewitt, Rev John Hughes*



*Pilgrim's ministry team from July 2025 to mid
January 2026
L to R: Rev John Hughes, Rev Deacon Christa
Megaw*

Contents

Church Council	6
8.00am Morning Eucharist	7
9.30am Community Worship	8
11.00am Choral Worship	10
Music Enjoyed	11
9.30am Music	11
11.00am Choral and Evensong Music	12
Mission Development	14
Walking Together as First and Second Peoples Group	16
Sunday Night Tea	18
Open Church	19
Music on Flinders	20
Art Exhibitions	21
Ministry Development	22
Operations	24
Human Resources	24
Work, Health & Safety (WHS)	24
Safe Church	25
Heritage, History & Archive Working Group (HHAWG)	25
Property Management	25
Significant Maintenance Work Completed	26
Maintenance Still Required	26
Information Technology and Audio Visual	26
Financial Management	26
2026 Budget	27
Pilgrim Foundation	28
Future Bequests	28
Leadership in 2025	29
In Memoriam	32
Thank You	33

Church Council

Pilgrim Uniting Church met monthly during 2025 to fulfil its responsibility of 'leading the Congregation to a fuller participation in Christ's mission in the world.' (UCA Regs. 3.1.2).

Early in the year Church Council led community meetings with the specific purpose of finalising a revised preamble of a new Pilgrim Strategic Plan, 2025-2028. This was formally adopted at the March 2025 Meeting of the Congregation. Later in the year Council approved a draft revision of the main Strategic Plan in readiness for community consultations in 2026.

Council took responsibility for addressing security concerns and this led to a pause of Open Lounge and Open Church. After consultation with volunteers and staff about how to institute additional safety protocols, Open Church resumed in July.

Following the premature retirement of Rev Mark Hewitt after Easter, Church Council negotiated a 0.6 EFT supply ministry placement with Rev Deacon Christa Megaw from 1 June 2025 to mid-January 2026. Church Council approved the congregational membership of a Joint Nominating Committee to select a new minister. The JNC began its deliberations in mid-November and just before Christmas brought to the Congregation a recommendation. The special meeting Congregation overwhelmingly approved the recommendation to appoint Rev Vicki Aitken as 1.0 EFT minister in early 2026.

In May Council approved the re-election of Blair Badcock and Justin La Brooy as Directors of the Board of Pilgrim Foundation.

Church Council approved expenditure of funds from the social justice budget for the National Disaster Appeal and Uniting World's appeals for Myanmar and Gaza.

Church Council passed the budget for 2026 managing a reduction in deficit by negotiating the closure of the office on Wednesdays.

Church Council gratefully acknowledges the work of all members, staff and volunteers of Pilgrim Uniting Church for their commitment to and achievements in ministry, mission and service in 2025.

Beth Prior

8.00am Morning Eucharist

The 8.00am community continues to gather in a semi-circle around the communion table at the front of the church.

Attendance has been consistently good, averaging over twenty each week, sometimes up to thirty. We've also welcomed Bruce Whyatt and Miriam Gravino as regular worshippers. It's wonderful to see that these newcomers, along with Anne Thompson, who joined us last year, have all agreed to lend a hand on the 8.00am roster.

The 8.00am service is also available on Zoom and Donald Boyce has been able to join us regularly this way, as well as others who are away or can't make it for some reason. Several of the community are keeping in touch with Brenda Moore, who can no longer attend.

We were sad when Mark Hewitt had to retire but were very happy to welcome Christa Megaw and her husband Phil into our community in the second half of the year. A big thank you to John Hughes for his leadership; he and Christa both greatly enhanced our worship.

Also, we're grateful to Vikki Waller, Trev and Ann Rogers, who have stepped in when we needed them. We're especially thankful to the musicians who accompany us each week: Jenny Ward, Norm Inglis, Ann Rogers and Gwenda Kerley.

Many of the 8.00am community members are also involved in whole of church and wider church activities. Ann Rogers is leading Open Church, Beth Prior is Council Secretary and Pam Mitchell assists the ministers with pastoral care; others are involved in Open Church, Sunday Night Tea, sub-committees and assisting at the Royal Show.

We've continued to have coffee together in the Adina Hotel courtyard or a reserved area inside if the weather isn't cooperating. The ministers have joined us most weeks offering a wonderful chance to support each other as we age and face challenges. Community meetings at the Adina keep us informed about the Pilgrim Congregation and the wider church. This year, we held one community lunch at the Caledonian Hotel in North Adelaide. Community members appreciate the chance to participate in retreats, Lenten studies and other whole of congregation activities.

We invite people from other communities to come and experience an 8.00am service. We're excited to welcome a new minister and look forward to the challenges of the year ahead.

Rhonda Williams

9.30am Community Worship

The 9.30 am community members value the atmosphere of welcome and inclusion together with the sense of community generated through the variety of worship activities. There is a wide participation of people in services, and a demonstration of acceptance of different perspectives. The strong social justice focus that arises out of our worship supports worship participants in their commitment to living out their faith.

The membership of the Worship Planning Committee during 2025 included Joy Germein, Denise Griffen, Mark Hewitt (until his retirement), John Hughes, Christa Megaw, Rose Milton-Head and Ros Wilson.

Worshippers have enjoyed the creative contribution of many people in the planning and conduct of worship. We particularly valued the contribution of Mark Hewitt's art, sculpture and photography, and Christa's gifts of inclusion and focus on communities worshipping in other places. John Hughes continued to inspire through his preaching and his encouragement of those involved in planning and presenting stimulating liturgy.

A special thank you goes to our musicians who so generously add depth to worship: to Norm Inglis and Jenny Ward for the planning, preparation and support of the musicians; to Jenny Ward and Judy Homburg on the piano; to Genevieve Bassani, Jenny Hamper, Don Bell, Ruth Farrent and Morgan Avalum as instrumentalists; and to singers: Michael Heathcote, Noel Holmes, Alison McDougall, Peter Muller and Colin Telfer.

The services of the audio-visual and live-streaming team are also very much appreciated: thanks to Peter Russell, Greg Bassani, Rose Milton-Head, David Davis and Jack Hughes. Their commitment to preparation ahead of time resulting in the smooth presentation of sound and visuals are valued highly by our worship participants both within the church and on-line.

The 9.30am and 11.00am Worship Committees held joint meetings on two occasions to determine the thematic approach to the seasons of Lent and Advent. Joint meetings will continue to be held to ensure effective coordination across the important seasons of the liturgical year.

Highlights for 2025 included:

- *L3-Liturgy, Learning & (purposeful) Life* on the theme of 'Wilderness' was used across all three worshipping communities during Lent. A sand tray was used as a visual focus and each week different configurations expanded the theme. The 9.30am community also participated in activities during the morning coffee time providing opportunity for deeper conversations
- The Season of Creation theme of 'Balance', with a focus on environmental care, self-care, community care and spiritual care. We appreciated guest speakers including Brian Polkinghorne and Christine Gilbert
- Guest preachers at other services: Jill Lienert, Suzi Plein and Cyrus Kung
- Taizé style services on 5th Sundays

- Day of Mourning and National Reconciliation Week services encouraged our work in growing a deepening partnership with First Nations people
- Spring Festival
- The Advent theme 'The Will to Dream' drew on resources from Illustrated Ministries

The 9.30am community thank our Ministers and lay people for their skills, dedication, creativity and commitment in shaping worship which inspires, challenges, encourages our community cohesion and energises our social justice action.



*9.30am community's embodied practice
'Untangling our Fears', held on the second Sunday in Lent, 16 March 2025*

11.00am Choral Worship

Worship at 11.00am is characterised by a relatively formal liturgy with contributions from the choir and organ. For special services, additional musicians are engaged to enable larger scale musical works to be presented in a formal worship context. Further details about the choir and musicians including visiting organists are in a separate report by Peter Kelsall.

The regular attendance at the 11.00am services has remained consistent. We have been pleased to welcome several new worshippers. Typical attendances (including the choir) are 40-50 each Sunday. Special services such as Easter Day, Christmas Eve and Christmas morning were exceptionally well attended. Evensong services, held on the first Saturday in the month from March to December plus Anzac Day, had average attendances of over 70, including the choir. Evensong draws in people from across all three Pilgrim worshipping communities as well as many regulars from the wider community. We greatly appreciate Peter Kelsall's leadership in the choral worship.

Streaming of 11.00am Choral Worship and Evensong services continues. Online access, either live or catch-up, is a great benefit to people who cannot attend in person, allowing for a broader inclusion in our worshipping community. The enabling support of Chris Bridge and the team of technical operators is much appreciated, and we thank them.

Pastoral care for the community continues to embrace the Pastoral Partners model, with the core caring team being Jenny Drilling, Barbara Francis, Jan and Graham Moseley, and Liz Francis.

Ongoing support for the services continued to be provided by rostered volunteers as welcomers, readers and communion assistants, with approximately half of our regular attendees involved. Their ongoing commitment has ensured that the high quality of worship has been maintained. Thanks to John Pedersen for managing all the rosters. Ray Nolan provided leadership support as Chair of the Community meetings that were held during the year. Jenny Ward took care of activities for children and her ongoing commitment to this part of worship is appreciated.

Morning tea, organised by Denise Griffen and Barbara Francis, was provided at the end of each service. In addition, several shared lunches were held after the service. This facilitated community members staying on for community meetings and offered an opportunity to get to know each other in a relaxed social environment.

Many thanks to our ministry team (John Hughes, Mark Hewitt, Christa Megaw, Vikki Waller) for their leadership in worship and pastoral care over the year.

Music Enjoyed

9.30am Music Report

Our resources continue to be stretched tightly these days, but our team of singers, pianists, instrumentalists and singers has underpinned our music most generously. At full strength, our singers have been supported by piano, flute, cello, guitar, djembe, percussion and on occasions, trumpet. Mid-week home rehearsals with singers have helped greatly to achieve fluent delivery and confidence in execution, with the bonus of being a lovely team building exercise. Small choirs have been assembled to lead the singing for special services at Easter, Christmas and Sundays when a Taize format has been adopted.

We never fail to be grateful for Pilgrim's exceptionally fine piano, organ and chamber organ when these are called for.

Our widely diverse community, with a common quest for relevance and meaning, is well served by our song books *Songs for the People of God*, *Songs for Pilgrims*, *Here's A New Day*, *Another New Day*, *Sing my Soul*, *Hymns for Times and Seasons* and *Together in Song*. Within these are many fruits of Pilgrim's poetic and musical creativity over decades, incorporating the use of contemporary language, progressive theology and concern for social justice.

We are grateful to our collaborators at the video and audio console, who negotiate the ever-present whims of technology in the ongoing quest for excellence of sound, both within the church and online.

Norm Inglis



9.30am musicians

L to R back: Norm Inglis, Michael Heathcote, Peter Muller, Jenny Homburg, Jenny Ward (in front), Colin Telfer, Alison McDougall, Noel Holmes

L to R front: Genevieve Bassani, Jenny Hamper, Don Bell, Ruth Farrent, Morgan Avalum

11.00am Choral and Evensong Music

Pilgrim's choral and orchestra music ministry has enjoyed another year of significant growth.

As well as the established pattern of 11.00am worship services, the Choir and Organists continued to provide music for monthly Evensong services, along with the ANZAC Day Evensong and services for Good Friday, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. This year, the Choir also sang an Evensong at St Peter's College and two services over a weekend in November at Port Elliot-Newland Uniting Church, Victor Harbor. In August, we enjoyed combining with the Choir of Bethlehem Lutheran Church to sing services at both Bethlehem and Pilgrim on the same Sunday.

Orchestral services provided two of the year's highlights. Easter Sunday Eucharist featured Mozart's Coronation Mass, and the Advent 4 service included choral orchestra works by Mozart and Durante. We were again able to sponsor and participate in a liturgical performance of a Bach Cantata given by the Adelaide Cantata Band.

There was a focus in 2025 on preparations for our English Cathedrals Tour. This tour in January 2026 was a great success, with the Choir being well received everywhere. We are enormously thankful to those individuals who made financial contributions to assist our choristers.

The Choir continues to grow as a community, and we are very fortunate to have several young adults at the core of the group. As well as our time spent singing, the Choir enjoys connecting socially, with post-rehearsal drinks and post-service meals an important part of our weekly schedule. These occasions help foster this sense of community and have undoubtedly contributed to our increased numbers. One of the happy problems we currently have is that we are running out of music, with chorister numbers at some rehearsals coming close to 40. The tour Choir numbered about 34 singers.

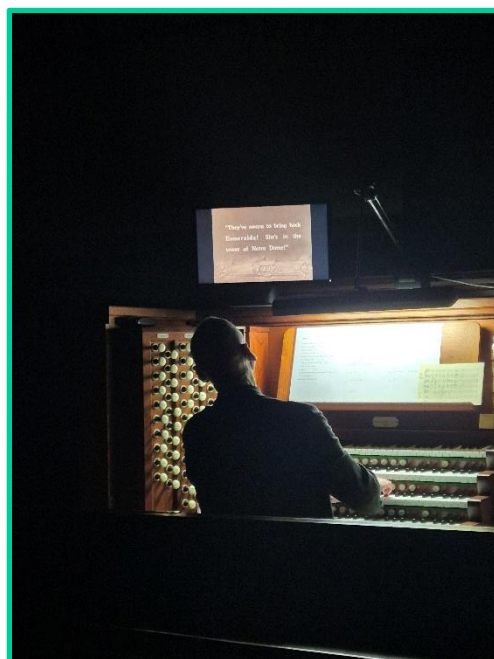
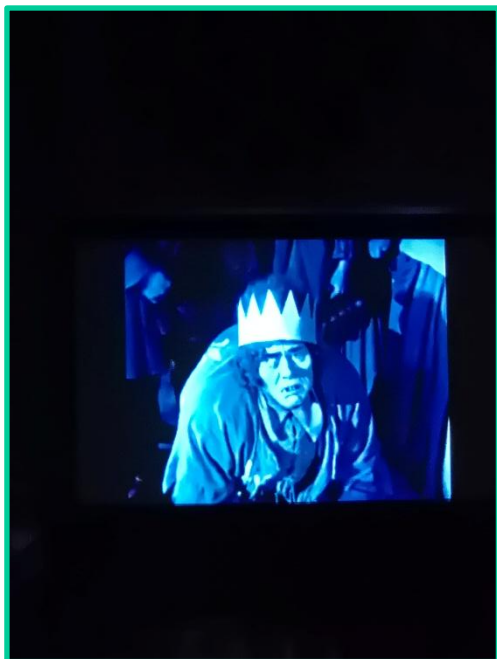
Pilgrim's International Organ Recital Series had a remarkable 2025, hosting an outstanding line-up of Australian and international organists, including James O'Donnell, Martin Baker, David Drury, Richard Pearce, Jean-Baptiste Robin and Daniel Roth. The return to a Sunday afternoon timeslot saw significantly larger audiences at this year's recitals. The feedback from our audiences has been overwhelmingly positive, with people appreciative of the significant place that the series now holds in Adelaide's music scene. Indeed, a visitor from the UK remarked that he 'hadn't seen a recital series this good anywhere in the UK'.

We were well served by our Assistant Organist Chris Bridge and Organ Scholars Val Estrella and Casey McEwan. Behind the scenes, several people contributed to the smooth running of the music ministry programme by coordinating and assisting with the library, management of robes, fundraising, and publicity. Special mention must be made of Chris Bridge's coordination and contribution to our social media platforms, alongside his coordination of service livestreaming.

The commitment of Pilgrim's Choir members continues to be central to the ongoing strength and growth of all aspects of the music ministry and should not be underestimated or taken for granted. The support and encouragement of our ministers is also greatly valued. We are particularly grateful for the work that Noel Holmes has done in facilitating the work of the Choral and Organ Music Events Working Group. As well as providing administrative and practical support to Pilgrim's music ministry leaders, the

group is also active in advocating for increased transparency and accountability around budgetary matters, particularly the application of the Stow Music Fund.

Peter Kelsall



*Movie Night at Pilgrim, 21 June 2025
Visiting organist, David Drury accompanying the viewing of The Hunchback of Notre Dame*



Pilgrim Choir on their UK Cathedrals Tour 2025/26

Mission Development

The Mission Development Committee continues to support, coordinate, and resource the missional life of Pilgrim Uniting Church. With representation from all three worshipping communities, the Committee brings together diverse perspectives to guide the Church's engagement with the city and its commitment to justice, hospitality, reconciliation, and care for the earth.

Overview of Mission Areas:

The Committee provides oversight to the following groups:

- Walking Together as First and Second Peoples
- City Missional Group
- Open Church
- Sunday Night Tea
- Circle of Friends 27
- Earth Justice
- Art Exhibitions
- Music on Flinders



Mission Development Committee

L to R: Amanda Ruler, Peter Muller, Dianne Watters, Andrew Clarke, Marelle Harisun, Meredith Edwards, Ruth Lyddon, Allen Edwards Sr.

Key Highlights in 2025

Walking Together as First and Second Peoples hosted significant truth-telling events, including a Q&A panel featuring Glenise Coulthard AM and Mike Brown who shared stories of the impact of colonisation in the Flinders Ranges on Adnyamathanha people and a reflection by a descendant of one of the pastoral families. Equally powerful was an exhibition sharing the life story of a member of the Stolen Generation, Kunyi June Anne McInerney, through her art. These events deepened understanding and strengthened Pilgrim's commitment to the Covenant with Aboriginal and Islander peoples.

Sunday Night Tea continued to welcome growing numbers of guests, offering warm meals, connection, and community through the faithful service of volunteers. We thank the work of Peter and Carol Dungey for their organisation and compassionate leadership over the last few years and thank the new coordinating team of Pauline McEntee, Eagleheart Bird, and Angela and Jeff Andary.

Open Church underwent renewed organisation, under the leadership of Ann Rogers, and continues to open daily from 12pm to 2pm, providing a quiet place for reflection, prayer, and support.

Music on Flinders, led by Kathy Pike, brought joy to the church forecourt through inspiring performances that connect with city workers, visitors, and the wider community.

Earth Justice maintained around climate action and ecological responsibility, encouraging sustainable practices within the congregation.

Circle of Friends 27 offered ongoing support for refugees and people seeking asylum, assisted by the generous contributions of congregation members. As a Migration Agent, Libby Hogarth is a valuable resource in supporting marginalised people.

Art Exhibitions curated by Vikki Waller continued to engage the public through creativity, inviting reflection on social issues and personal experiences.

City Missional Group strengthened partnerships with local organisations to clarify potential future outreach opportunities aligned with Pilgrim's mission.

Acknowledgements

The Committee expresses sincere gratitude to all leaders, volunteers, and congregation members who contribute time, energy, and compassion to these ministries. Their faithful commitment ensures that Pilgrim's mission remains vibrant, outward-looking, and grounded in the call to love and serve. We also thank sponsors for Sunday Night Tea in 2025, including Adelaide Rotary, Seymour College, Red Dove Café and Scots Church Community Connections. We also thank the generous donations by congregation members to Circle of Friends 27 and to Justice for Refugees SA.

Walking Together as First and Second Peoples Group

The work of this working group had two strong arms in 2025. The first was a commitment to the spirit of the *Uluru Statement from the Heart* through Truth Telling and awareness raising. This began with the Day of Mourning service at the beginning of the year. Members of the 9:30am community were asked to write their hopes for reconciliation on gum leaves, along with suggestions for the way forward.



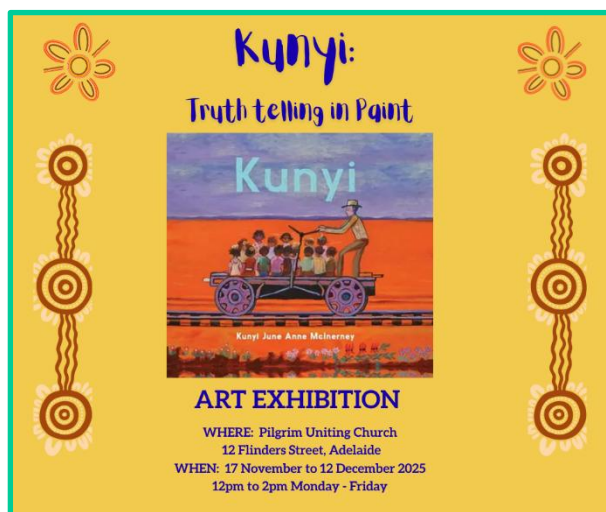
*2025 Day of Mourning
L to R: Judith Raftery, Norm Inglis*

In August, Pilgrim UC worked with Unley UC and Unley United Allies to host an afternoon highlighting the impact of colonisation on the Adnyamathanha people of the Flinders Ranges. Glenys Coulthard spoke of the loss of language and connection to land for many of her people due to pastoral expansion, along with both the positive impact of the church at Nepabunna Mission. Fellow guest speaker, Mike Brown, spoke of the role of his pastoral ancestors in this dispossession and violent response to resistance.



*Truth Telling and Truth Listening, held 24 August 2025
L to R: Guest speakers, Kingsley Coulthard, Mike Brown, Glenys Coulthard.
Members of the coordination team, Christa Megaw, Allen Edwards Sr.*

In November, Pilgrim Church welcomed Deb Moyle, a member of the SA Voice to Parliament to open the special exhibition featuring the artwork of Aboriginal artist, Kunyi June Anne McInerney. Through her art, Kunyi reveals the pain of the stolen generation, separated from their families and subjected to many hurts in both the Oodnadatta Children's Home and in some foster homes. Pilgrim has purchased two of Kunyi's artworks depicting both sorrow and resilience.



*Q & A at the opening of Kunyi: Truth Telling in Paint
L to R: Friend and ally, Di Grigg with Kunyi June Anne McInerney*

The second arm of the work of the Walking Together group is advocacy as allies with First Nations people. Walking Together networks with other churches and non-religious advocate groups such as Blackwood Reconciliation and Unley Allies to form the umbrella group called SA Allies. This networking widens the impact of Pilgrim's Covenanting work and enables the call to the wider church and governments to provide recognition and recompense.

Sunday Night Tea

Sunday Night Tea (SNT) is a vital part of Pilgrim's outreach to support people in Adelaide who are facing homelessness or rental challenges.

Carol and Peter Dungey, who dedicated four years to coordinating SNT, decided to step down from their roles at the end of July 2025. The Dungeys played a crucial role in helping Pilgrim find and welcome a new team of coordinators. Angela and Jeff Andary, Eagleheart Bird and Pauline McEntee, who were already SNT volunteers, started in the coordination role in August. They're happy to share that SNT is thriving, serving 1,312 guests over the six months leading up to the end of 2025.

In addition to the time generously given by around 80 volunteers from Pilgrim and beyond, SNT received wonderful donations from Seymour College, Adelaide Rotary, Red Dove Cafe and Scots Church Community Connections in 2025. Norwood Bakers Delight provides free bread each week. We've also received plenty of fresh produce, including home-grown tomatoes, corn and apricots, from Noel Magor, a Pilgrim member and a fantastic gardener. Most of our other supplies come from the Hahndorf market in the Adelaide Hills, where we try to buy fresh, seasonal produce. Our goal is to provide food that is nutritious and something we would want to offer to our guests in our own homes.

Pauline McEntee



*Seymour College donation to Sunday Night Tea
Carol Dungey Coordinator of SNT (second from left) with Seymour College staff and students*



*A new Sunday Night Tea coordination team started in August 2025
L to R: Eagleheart Bird, Angela Andary, Pauline McEntee, Jeff Andary*



Sunday Night Tea volunteers with Adelaide Rotary's banner of support

Open Church

After a short closure Pilgrim recommenced its Open Church programme in the third week of July with 22 volunteers. The aim is to be open each weekday from 12pm-2pm, but sometimes, due to sickness etc. this is not possible. Two volunteers are rostered each day with safety measures in place. A de-escalation training day was held in mid-November.

The two billboards outside the church encourage passersby to enter. Among those who visit are local office workers, holiday makers from interstate and from many countries. Some admire the architecture, windows, plaques and organ, while others spend time praying or benefitting from the peaceful atmosphere. The eastern transept is appreciated by those who wish to light a candle and read the seasonal devotions.

In summary, for the period from 21 July to 19 Dec 2025 Pilgrim was open on 83 days and received 617 visitors from the following overseas countries: Algeria, Austria, Bali, Brazil, Canada, China (including Hong Kong & Macau), Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, Norway, Russia, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States and Vietnam.

We are grateful that our church doors can once again be open to all who wish to enter.

Ann Rogers

Music on Flinders

Music on Flinders has successfully operated as a vibrant community outreach programme since 2012, celebrating 13 years of providing complimentary lunchtime concerts on the Pilgrim forecourt and inside the church during inclement weather.

Music on Flinders is coordinated by programme coordinator and curator Kathy Pike, with support from volunteer team members Geoff Hurst, sound engineer; Peter Farley, assistant sound engineer; Bruce Skinner, equipment supervisor; and Peter Cranwell, equipment assistant.

In 2025, Music on Flinders commenced its Summer/Autumn programme in February, hosting concerts every Monday until the end of May, followed by the Spring/Summer programme from October to 15 December.

The 2025 programme featured performances by various artists, including Andy and Marta, Palmer and Co, Forte, Fergus Maximus, Verity Skye and Will Metzer, Soul Trader, Jen Lush and Steve Lennox, Scott Rathman Jnr, Sue Baker and Friends, Dingo and Casey Thompson, Buffalo Drive, Pete and Kerry Arthur, The Soul Sisters, Nat Pike, Gene Phoa, Cloudy Davey, Sevenfold, and Linda Ronstadt tribute trio, Silver Threads. These talented and accomplished musicians performed a variety of music styles including, folk, jazz, country rock, rock and soul music.

Consistent with previous years, Music on Flinders, in conjunction with Pilgrim Church, provided hospitality to several youth disability organisations, enabling young people to participate in music concerts and enjoy a safe environment in the coffee lounge, accompanied by volunteers. This hospitality was greatly appreciated by KnH Quality Time Services, Vibrant Care Australia, Inspired Options, Campability, and Opportunities First.

The Music on Flinders programme continued its mission in 2025 to deliver a vibrant splash of creativity, music, and community to the forecourt of Pilgrim Church on Flinders Street.

Kathy Pike



Art Exhibitions in 2025

Desert Sojourn

The Lenten exhibition 'Desert Sojourn' comprised a set of nine acrylic works by artist Helen Stacey which are on permanent loan to Pilgrim. They form 'a metaphysical narrative about the search for spiritual wholeness in the desert.'

Arriving

'Arriving' by multimedia artist Toni Hassan was the display held in June for Refugee Week. Painted curtain fabric was pulled away from the wall to form a half tent with related images depicting people suspended without real bearing; a community on a risky journey.

Kunyi: Truth Telling in Paint

Kunyi June Anne McInerney is a member of the Stolen Generation who tells her truth in paint. Her foster homes included Oodnadatta Children's Home and a family in Adelaide. The exhibition's official opening at 5.30pm on 14 November attracted a large audience which included members of several government and lay organisations. Kunyi's 30 vibrant works of events in her life drew emotional responses to the life journey of our Indigenous brothers and sisters.



*Kunyi: Truth Telling in Paint exhibition
L to R: Rev Vikki Waller (Curator) Kunyi June Anne McInerney (Artist)*

A Light has Come

The Christmas exhibition 'A Light has Come' was comprised of images taken by photographer Janet Leich. They depicted the annual celebration of the nativity story, mostly in or outside Spanish churches. Over 100 of these images were displayed in the exhibition that ran from 10 December through to the end of January 2026.

Ministry Development

Ministry Development Committee has continued to focus on pastoral care, discipleship, worship, practical church-life routines and congregational/community development. At their bimonthly meetings, members engaged fully in discussion about these areas, also in response to reports and Council requests. Noel as committee chair attended and presented at two Council meetings (as policy requires). Committee membership remains stable going into 2026. (See membership list at the back of the annual report.)

Ongoing Responsibilities

- Reinforcement of the concept of Pilgrim as a community of prayer, to encourage a sense of connection and unity
- Emphasis on social justice and worship as integral to the faith, including the acknowledgment that we occupy unceded Country.
- Oversight of the planning for pastoral support via Cluster Groups and Pastoral Partners for the 8.00am, 9.30am and 11.00am communities
- Liaison with Council and members of the congregation in the scheduling of meetings for the committees, communities and the whole congregation
- Oversight of the scheduling and preparation of combined services that bring the three worshipping communities together, for the liturgical seasons (Lent, Easter, Season of Creation, Advent, Christmas) and special community services (e.g. Day of Mourning, NAIDOC, ANZAC Day)
- Oversight of the Children's Ministry at 11.00am services. We thank Jenny Ward as she hands over this role to Barbara Francis
- Consideration of reports and accomplishments; making suggestions and recommendations to the Open Church, Flowers and Communion and Worship groups
- Overview of sending birthday cards to congregation members
- Facilitation of discussions between working groups and Church Council
- The ongoing shaping of the Tolhurst Bequests program to assist our church community's ageing members to recognise and meet their spiritual and daily needs (a five to seven years programme)

We recognise and appreciate that members of the congregation manage many of the ministry services: personal and online welcome and support; shared liturgy preparation and participation through symbolic arrangement of the sanctuary, music, spoken word; and preparation of holy communion and morning teas.

Specific Tasks and Achievements in 2025

- Valued summer and winter retreats; planning for the retreat for summer 2026
- Invitations to guest Uniting Church preachers and leaders—especially in support of a changed ministry team in 2025, early 2026
- Strategy and development of the eastern chapel as a quiet spot for prayer and meditation

- Support and advocacy for the Choir and Organ Program Working Group: to create a shared vision, to clarify and strengthen leadership roles; protocols, policy and meeting agenda; and to facilitate discussions with Church Council including about budget preparation and management
- Follow-up of work begun in 2024 about the rostered roles and duties in support of the 11.00am worship service
- Discussion about art exhibitions including insurance policies
- Consideration and response to Council about the draft revised Pilgrim Strategic Plan

Tolhurst Bequest Achievements

- The completion of negotiations with UniSA to fund a scholarship in the Social Work Masters' programme to support a student from a refugee and or non-normative-ability background
- Undertaking a charitable project with Housing Choices for some vulnerable clients
- Developing a concept for Pilgrim and some other Uniting Church congregations to coordinate their ageing-care education programs
- Engaging UniSA Social Work Masters' Degree students in a project to support some ageing church members.
- Planning for specific activities to be funded in 2026 by the Tolhurst Bequests

The Future

The Ministry Development Committee has responded to Council's strategic plan revisions. It accepts its role and tasks for the future as open for further discussion as a new minister takes up the vacant position.

Acknowledgments

The Ministry Development Committee has benefited from the open support of Pilgrim Office staff, and recognise that intense, intricate, functions are filled by volunteers. We give thanks for the earnest commitments.

Associated Reports

Music: Norm Inglis (9.30am); Peter Kelsall (11.00am, Choir and Organ program); (8.00am) as acknowledged within the worship community's report.

Noel Holmes



Winter Retreat held in the church and lounge in July 2025

Operations

The Operations Committee is responsible to Church Council for providing oversight and guiding development of the physical, financial, human resources, and systems management policies and processes to support Pilgrim's ministry and mission. In 2025 committee members met together as required, usually in sub-groups, with work continuing between meetings.

Human Resources

2025 continued a pattern of change in Pilgrim's staffing. Nyleta Rogers joined us as Administration and Media Officer on 14 January. Julie Bradley continued to work only on Mondays but filled in when required. Julie retired on 15 December after 16+years of service. Finance Officer, Carol Eckert resigned on 6 August. On advice from Alexandra (Administration and Finance Manager) Church Council approved the creation of a part-time Facilities Officer to support the ongoing maintenance issues and to free up Alexandra's time for financial and staffing oversight. Bernie Szantyr was appointed as Facilities Officer on 7 October to work Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Pilgrim now has three continuing part-time administration staff.

We thank Jon Miller who has retired from a long-held role volunteering to count and bank the weekly offerings.

Jijo Sebastian continued as a Caretaker, with Peter Mann and Tim Lee covering December and January. Tim continued caretaking for weddings and funerals as well as for the Adelaide Angels special Easter and Christmas meals, and at other times when Jijo or Peter were unavailable.

Given that Jijo, Peter and Tim were not interested in cleaning on a regular basis, Alexandra negotiated with Cinderella Cleaning to work three days a week.

All staff supported the valued work of Operations Committee volunteers.

Work, Health and Safety (WHS)

This aspect of operations involves developing, implementing, and reviewing policies and procedures to ensure the welfare, health and safety of our employees, volunteers, visitors and members of the congregation. WHS induction was ongoing as staff changed. Safety certification of electrical items was completed early in the year. WHS issues were raised and dealt with at weekly administration meetings often before incidents occurred. Incident reports were recorded and the most significant reported to Church Council. One issue arising from outsourcing the cleaning was the added burden put on Sunday Night Tea volunteers to pack the old, heavy tables away after the meal. Di successfully reapplied for a grant to purchase more suitable tables for the hall and trolleys to help store and move them.

At one stage during the year there was an increased number of rough sleepers, some of whom were behaving inappropriately. The police were very helpful in moving them on and the Adelaide City Council assisted in removing rubbish and cutting back bushes to discourage people from using the area at the back of the church for illicit drug use.

Due to ongoing issues of a few visitors behaving inappropriately that risked safety of staff and volunteers, Church Council approved a pause and review of the Lounge, Open Church and Music on Flinders programs. Pam Mitchell provided counselling for staff. After wide consultation, Open Church recommenced with additional safety measures and under the coordination of Ann Rogers. (See the Open Church report.) It was agreed that the lounge would remain permanently closed. A volunteer now assists staff and coordinates support for people with disabilities who eat lunch in the lounge before attending Music on Flinders. Staff and volunteers across all programs attended de-escalation training on 15 November.

Installation of cameras in the south porch now gives coverage on selected individual phones for all areas outside the church and Pilgrim Centre, meaning less obligation for Pilgrim to attend onsite or call SA Police. Installation of smoke and security alarms were completed in October, albeit with some outstanding issues with the smoke alarms.

Safe Church

Di Russell continued as Safe Church liaison person. Ensuring that Code of Conduct and Safe Church Clearances are completed and our records updated is an ongoing process. In March we completed a Safe Church Audit which indicated that we had reached 75% compliance. Sue Heathcote retired from a support role due to other commitments. All those who volunteer in a role where they might be perceived to be a 'leader' in the Congregation need to complete at least a Working with Children Clearance (WWCC). All clearances are preferably sought through Synod who liaises with DHS to provide them. The WWCC is the only clearance currently available through DHS so Synod is exploring how it might progress Probity and Vulnerable Person clearances some people need (e.g. Staff, Church Council members and Directors of the Foundation, and those involved in Sunday Night Tea). All the Choir members going on the overseas tour needed a WWCC. Rev John Hughes supported Di in ensuring this occurred. Our records are safely secured, both electronically and in hard copy and there is now a Pilgrim Safe Church email address: safechurch@pilgrim.org.au

Heritage, History and Archive Working Group (HHAWG)

The Terms of Reference for the working group has been revised and endorsed by Church Council. A significant milestone was reached in the Pilgrim Archive. All records and documents received since its establishment have been assessed, sorted, filed and stored. Work on digitising these records continues. Enquiries from within the church and beyond were dealt with. Brochures on the history of Pilgrim were reviewed and, where necessary, revised. A special leaflet 'Decisions: the Pilgrim Story' was prepared for the SA History Festival and a report on this event was sent to Church Council. In 2026, work will focus on the Archive's photographic and art collection, including what needs to be insured.

Property Management

A major property inspection was undertaken in January to record essential maintenance and required upgrades to the Pilgrim buildings. The Synod 2025 Congregational Missional and Property Questionnaire was completed. Recognising that our caretakers and cleaners could not do everything that needed to be done tasks were prioritised with ongoing repairs and minor updates completed as required. We value the work of volunteers in undertaking specific tasks, especially David Walton, Brian Arnold, Peter Russell and Peter Dungey.

Some unrelated lights were mistakenly disconnected during the 2024 church lighting project These were reconnected by Duratec and now light up the cross at the front of the sanctuary. Some significant programming issues are yet to be fully resolved. Also, the spotlights will need to be replaced as they no

longer hold their programming. Non-structural damage to the stonework revealed from the lighting project's scaffolding was assessed as minor, and repairs have been deferred.

In August a power surge caused major disruptions to the lights, organ, computers and security systems. SA Power Networks compensated Pilgrim for some of the repair costs.

We have commenced investigating waste disposal as outsiders often use the Pilgrim bins and bin area inappropriately.

Significant Maintenance Work Completed in 2025

- Refurbishment of the floor in the hall
- Replacing carpet and furniture to enable more efficient office workspaces (under the \$10,000 approved by Church Council)
- Repainting the grubby walls in the lounge and offices
- Replacing the very old yellow chairs in the hall with newer chairs at no cost, other than pickup by staff (the old chairs were given to another UC group)
- Replacement of air conditioner (office 2) in the Pilgrim Centre after persistent problems
- Repair of the back door to the Lounge, and to the lock on the offering/donations box
- Installation of a new gallery rack system for art hanging in the church aisles

Maintenance Work Still Required

- Upgrading the lighting control system in the church
- Integrating the large lights on the front pillars to better light the communion table
- Replacing the spotlights
- Extensive repair work on church and lounge gutters and lounge roof
- Replacement guttering for the upper level of the Pilgrim Centre: Bernie will play a large part in organising much of the work, with Alexandra supporting and guiding the lighting work.

Information Technology and Audio Visual

Ongoing repairs and minor updates continued as required, including the purchase of two new headsets for the head mikes and a new router to speed up access to software on computers in the offices. Purchase of a new data projector was required to enable connection with the speakers already installed. There are still issues related to the hanging choir microphone. The Communications and Technology Working Group will start looking at potential major AV restructuring in the Church. This process will take time because it will require extensive consultation as well as careful consideration of all implications and benefits/costs.

Financial Management

In February Alexandra and Carol fine-tuned documentation processes to ensure consistency in recording financial transactions. They finalised a new chart of accounts format. They completed the 2024 Audit which was finalised and signed in March. Brendan Connolly as registered tax agent for BAS lodgements worked with Alexandra to report on overseas payments and withholding tax, particularly for overseas visiting organists.

Alexandra coordinated a useful financial reporting session with Council members, as a start to her 2025 monthly financial reporting. Alexandra and Carol developed the first draft of the 2025 budget after consultation with stakeholders and using the new chart of accounts. They presented it to Council for amendment and a decision on the total amount to request from the Pilgrim Foundation. The approved

2025 budget was presented to the congregation later that month. However, due to the volatile global economic situation, Council reconsidered the budget. Alexandra provided year-end projections to facilitate these discussions. Council decided to monitor expenditure more closely and to explore grant and special purpose donation opportunities. Significant cash donations from the Red Dove Café and Seymour Junior School for Sunday Night Tea were received. To decrease electricity expenditure, Alexandra signed Pilgrim up to the Synod's contract through Synergy. To increase income, she organised two 4-month Term Deposits with UC Invest before interest rates reduced. Unfortunately, offerings have consistently and significantly decreased from previous years.

2026 Budget

In September, as per the agreed timeline, Alexandra and Di commenced preliminary analysis and discussions with individuals and groups to help prepare the 2026 budget. Alexandra presented carefully reviewed A and B options of the budget to Church Council, each with large and unsustainable deficits. Following lengthy discussions, firstly with Council and then with Di Russell and Rev John Hughes, two further options, C and D were developed. Option D has a significantly smaller deficit of \$11,356 that is dependent on a reduction in expenditure on staffing and cleaning by closing the office each Wednesday—when there are no permanent facility bookings. Continuing staff have agreed to work around this closure. Church Council approved this option D and Di as Treasurer presented this final budget to the Meeting of the Congregation on 16 November. Church Council would have preferred no deficit but felt that this was unrealistic as there was some potential to increase income to lower this deficit. For example, we ran a stewardship campaign in November.

Also, there is the potential to obtain a State Heritage Grant, dollar for dollar, for work on the Church that needs to be done (two priorities have been identified) and work on the Church building could also be funded, at least partially, by **tax deductible donations made through the National Trust of SA**. Requests for donations will be made in the first half of 2026.



*Thilan Legierse leading Pilgrim staff and volunteers
in resilience training in November 2025*

Pilgrim Foundation

Board of Directors

The Directors of the Pilgrim Foundation Inc met six times in 2025 to review the financial position of the Foundation and to make decisions regarding the investment and management of shares held by the Foundation for the benefit of the mission of Pilgrim Uniting Church. The Foundation invests capital funds in line with the ethical guidelines of the SA Synod of UCA.

The Directors approved distribution of Foundation income to Pilgrim Uniting Church in accordance with its constitution and trusts such as the Muriel James and Stow Music Fund.

Year	Corpus Value	Distribution: General	Distribution: Muriel James Fund	Distribution Stow Music Fund
2025	\$12,010,956.55	\$455,000	\$6,906	\$110,000

Thanks to the Directors for their considered input and diligence in ensuring the best possible returns for the Foundation. They have worked with Mr Greg Crowe, financial advisor from Ord Minett. Also, the Directors express their appreciation to Mr Jon Miller for his secretarial role over several years, and to Ms Alexandra James who manages the financial administration and now records minutes of each Foundation meeting.

Future Bequests

Supporters of Pilgrim Uniting Church are encouraged to contribute to its future by making provisions in their wills for bequests to the Pilgrim Foundation Incorporated.

Bequests given as untied funds are preferred as they may be used for the greatest need. Bequests may be made in the form of cash, fixed interest securities, shares and property. However, legal advice should always be sought when making a will.

Leadership in 2025

Church Council

Meredith Edwards
Rev Mark Hewitt (on extended sick leave from May 2025; celebration of ministry 27 July 2025)
Rev John Hughes
Rev Deacon Christa Megaw (from June 2025)
Ray Nolan (co-opted in August 2025)
Beth Prior (Secretary)
Judith Raftery
Di Russell (Treasurer)
Ros Wilson

Meetings of the Congregation

Beth Prior (Secretary)
Judith Raftery (Chair)

8.00am Worship Community

Pam Mitchell (Chair, Community Meetings)
Rhonda Williams (Minute taker)

9.30am Worship Community

Denise Griffen (Chair, Community Meetings)
Meredith Edwards (Minute taker)

11.00am Worship Community

Christopher Bridge (Chair, Community Meetings)
Cynthia Randell (Minute taker)
Jenny Ward (Children's Ministry)

11.00am Pastoral Care

Jenny Drilling
Barbara Francis
Liz Francis
Graham Moseley
Jan Moseley

Mission Development Committee

Andrew Clarke
Allen Edwards, Snr
Meredith Edwards (Minute taker/Chair)
Dean Eland
Marelle Harisun
Rev Mark Hewitt to July 2025
Ruth Lyddon
Peter Muller
Elizabeth Petersen
Amanda Ruler
Dianne Watters

Walking Together Group

Andrew Clarke
Allen Edwards, Snr
Meredith Edwards (Minute taker)
Marelle Harisun (Chair)
Rev Mark Hewitt to July 2025
Ruth Lyddon
Di Russell
Peter Russell
Dianne Watters

Open Church

Blair Badcock
Judy Bunney
Pat Button
Andrew Clarke
David Davis
Barbara Francis
Miriam Gravino
Josie Joyce
Nim LaBrooy
Ruth Lyddon
Ann Rogers (Coordinator)
Trev Rogers
Petryn Thiele
Anne Thompson
Vikki Waller
Brian Ward
Chris Ward
David Walton

Open Church cont.

Dianne Watters
Ros Wilson

Pilgrim Circle of Friends #27

Andrew Clarke
Meredith Edwards
Libby Hogarth (Chair)
Josie Joyce
Vikki Waller

Sunday Night Tea

Peter and Carol Dungey (Coordinators to May)
Pauline McEntee, Eagleheart Bird, Angela Andary, and Jeff Andary (Coordinators May to Dec)

Thanks to the many volunteers for the preparation and service of food and security duties.

Groups Leaders

Barbara Dawe
Allen Edwards Snr
Meredith Edwards
Cam Grant
Michael Loffler
Sharon Tilley

Art Exhibitions

Vikki Waller (Curator)

Music on Flinders

Kathy Pike (Curator)
Andrew Clarke (Carer support)
Dianne Watters (Carer support)

Ministry Development Committee

Barbara Francis
Joy Germein
Noel Holmes (Chair and Secretary)
Rev John Hughes (ex-officio)
Peter Kelsall (Choir and Organ)
Nim La Brooy
Colin Telfer
Petryn Thiele
Rev Vikki Waller

Music Leadership

8.00am

Norm Inglis
Gwenda Kerley
Ann Rogers
Jenny Ward

9.30am

Morgan Avalum (Percussion)
Genevieve Bassani (Flute)
Don Bell (Guitar)
Ruth Farrent (Djembe)
Norm Inglis (Coordinator, Pianist)
Jenny Hamper (Cello)
Judy Homburg (Pianist)
Jenny Ward (Pianist)

Singers

Noel Holmes
Michael Heathcote
Alison McDougall
Peter Muller
Colin Telfer

11.00am and Evensong

Christopher Bridge (Assistant Organist)
Val Estrella (Organ Scholar)
Peter Kelsall (Organist and Choir Director)
Casey McEwan (Organ Scholar)

Choir Members

Javed Alam
Olivia Arcangeli
Willow Barrett
Bronwen Blight
David Blight
Susan Brooke-Smith
Janet Buchan
Lisa Catinari
Jamie Cock
Martin Day
Deanne Dooland
Mark Egelstaff
Annie Fisher
Connor Fogarty
Barbara Francis
Liz Francis
Tiffany Gaze

Choir Members cont.

Kate Haslam
Sue Irvine
Bill Jackson
Louise Jackson
Peter Jackson
Trudie Jackson
Richard Jones-Parry
Max Junge
Emily Kelsall
Richard Knowling
Alison McCall
Theo McCall
Alison McDougall
Louise McGee
Vicki McGregor
BJ Moore
Suzanne Pederson
Martin Penhale
Cynthia Randell
Amelia Roberts
Mary-Anne Roberts
James Scott
Sean Tanner
Colin Telfer
Chelsea Trewin
Andrew Turner

Choral and Organ Music Working Group

Chris Bridge (Secretary)
Lisa Catinari
Maryanne Hyde
Emily Kelsall
Peter Kelsall (Chair)
Warren Mossman
Colin Telfer (Ministry Devt Cttee Rep)

Flowers

Meredith Edwards
Kate Everett McDougall
Denise Griffin
Vicki Hagan
Marelle Harisun
Rose Milton-Head
Jenny Ward
Helen Warman

Operations Committee

Brian Arnold (Grounds support)
Jule Bradley (Office Administrator)
Peter Dungey (Lighting support)
Caol Eckert (Finance support) resigned in June
Sue Heathcote (Safe Church support)
Alexandra James (Administration and Finance Manager)
Sue Mann (Heritage, History and Archiving)
Jon Miller (Offering counting and banking)
Nyleta Rogers (Administration and Media Officer)
Di Russell (Chair, Treasurer and Safe Church Liaison)
Peter Russell (Property, IT and AV, lighting control)
David Walton (Maintenance support)
Brian Ward (Heritage, History and Archiving)
Christine Ward (Heritage, History and Archiving)

Pilgrim Foundation

Blair Badcock
Alexandra James (ex-officio)
Alan Nankivell (Chair)
Justin LaBrooy
Jon Miller
Cynthia Randell
Andrew Wilkins

Staff

Julie Bradley (Administration Officer)
Carol Eckert (Finance and Admin Officer)
Alexandra James (Administration and Finance Manager)
Tim Lee (Caretaker)
Peter Mann (Caretaker)
Nyleta Rogers (Administration and Media Officer)
Jijo Sebastian (Caretaker)

Editorial Team

Beth Prior
Nyleta Rogers
Di Russell

In Memoriam

Barbara Horne (9.30am)

3 August 2025



Thank you

Pilgrim Uniting Church is blessed
to be greatly supported by the contributions
of our generous volunteers
whose hearts beat in service to others.

We are all grateful for the many volunteers
who share their time, skills and knowledge
in helping to sustain Pilgrim
as a healthy and resilient community,
making significant contributions to the
quality and vibrance of our Church.



Pilgrim
Uniting Church

12 Flinders Street, Adelaide SA 5000

GPO Box 116, Adelaide, SA 5001

Phone: 08 8212 3295

Email: office@pilgrim.org.au

ABN: 14 903 697 626

 facebook.com/pilgrimunitingchurch

www.pilgrim.org.au