

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Who we've been and who we will be

There is a saying, that change is always happening, regardless of whether we choose it or not. I tend to agree with that, and have been reminded on what seems like hundreds of occasions that it's up to me if I embrace that change or resist it. If I resisted, I'd be like the Plover, a beautiful little bird who is yet to work out that laying its eggs in a more protected place will prevent them and their eventual hatchlings from being found by predators. Instead, it lays them in the middle of the beach or grassland, or in many cases where I live, in the middle of the golf course. It has failed to evolve to new landscapes, and now lives in what appears to be a perpetual life of anger, fear, protection and spends much of its day attacking and defending. If it chose to learn and live a little differently, it may lay its eggs in a more protected environment, only needing to defend when a danger came close.

This edition of the Herald speaks to how the church has listened to the Spirit and evolved over time to both adapt to its surroundings, but also to live its fullest self. Over time, the church has learned new ways of being. It has needed to adapt, and at times I feel as though we were the Plover, always ready to defend ourselves and live a life of fear. Yet, I also suspect we have moved to a new understanding of who we are as a people of faith, choosing to trust in the Spirit's promptings and leave the nest.

In the coming pages, Adam Wade unpacks our enduring principles and why they are to be felt not recited, and then how God still speaks through us as shared in our understanding of continuing revelation.



Peter Lonsdale shares about the impact of grace & generosity on his life and the gift they are to others. Anne Bonnefin shares with us a beautiful memory of why sacredness of creation matters to how we interpret the Spirit of God. Lyn Palmer Lander shares her experience of how people have impacted her life, and Rob Thompson shares his testimony of how all are called to love and care for one another. June Stephenson describes her experiences about learning the theological lessons which underpin our responsibilities in life, and Rick Sarre portrays why he chooses to

act for peace and justice in our world. Apostle Mareva Arnaud describes how diversity among us can be a strength during trying times, and Anne interviews Julian Archer and Andrea Putting about their experiences with community.

As we develop our understanding of God and community, we more fully grasp the ideas and culture of what it might look like to be a community of peace and joy. The Spirit is leading us into a place where the soul of Community of Christ is abundantly received, and unlike the Plover, we must listen and adapt as we have done so over the decades. We are not the same church we used to be, but we are the same people. A people who are able and willing to move where the Spirit leads us, and I'm grateful for each of you who are a part of its song.

Ben Smith

Editor & Australia Mission President