

Prayer Guide – Athelstone Uniting Church - July, August 2018

The Uniting Church Assembly has decided to hold two equal and distinct statements of belief on marriage. This decision will allow ministers and celebrants in the Uniting Church the freedom to conduct or to refuse to conduct same-gender marriages. Church Councils, our Church Council included, will have the right to determine whether same-gender marriage services take place on their premises.

In response, as we discern a way forward for our church, Church Council has called us to join them in 40 days of prayer. This guide (over the page) provides suggested prayer points for each day commencing Monday 23 July.

Linda and members of Church Council are available if you would like prayer or to discuss your response to the Assembly's decision. In particular, if there is something that you discern through your prayer, that would help our Council make its decision, we ask that you let us know by Sunday 2 September.

Suggested Daily Prayer	
<i>If you don't have a routine of daily prayer, you might like to give this a go.</i>	
Prepare	We suggest that you take time each day to pray. It doesn't matter when. Pick a time that suits you best. Set aside 15 -30 minutes (more if you wish) and find a quiet peaceful place.
Centre	Begin by centering your prayer on Jesus. You might like to light a candle. Be still. Breathe slowly and deeply.
Opening Prayer	"O God, who calls us to follow along with you, show us what you want us to pray today, and give us bread for the journey. Amen."
The Word	Read a passage of scripture out loud. You may already have a reading in place or you could choose from: Lectionary readings, Psalm 103 (or other Psalms that feel appropriate for the day), or short lectionary-based daily readings from the Taizé Community ¹ : https://www.taize.fr/en_article1854.html Then spend 2 minutes in silent reflection.
Prayer	Pray for the specific point provided for the day (see table on next page). Apply the 'TSP' (teaspoon method): Thanks, Sorry, Please. Give thanks to God for the people mentioned, then say sorry (confess) about any thoughts that come up about them that are not healthy, then ask God (please) to help/ support/ bless/ heal them as you feel led to pray. Continue to pray for other things that come to mind.
Journal	Make a note of those things that you felt called to pray for and any emotions that may have surfaced during this time.
Benediction	Enlarge my heart, dear Lord, that I may really love you and live in harmony with all your creation. In Jesus' name. Amen

Further reading for reflection on the Uniting Church Assembly's decision regarding same-gender marriage:

- Pastoral Letter from the Moderator, Rev Sue Ellis: <https://unitingchurchsa.createsend1.com/t/ViewEmail/j/9F6801EE585747422540EF23F30FEDED>
- Pastoral Letter from the President, Dr Deidre Palmer: <https://uniting.church/pastorletter/>
- A reflection on the marriage decision by past President Rev Prof Andrew Dutney: <https://uniting.church/a-reflection-on-the-marriage-decision/>
- And a pastoral video from the President, Dr Deidre Palmer: <https://vimeo.com/280896599>

¹ The Taizé community is a Christian ecumenical monastic order with a strong devotion to peace and justice through prayer and meditation. The community of around 100 Roman Catholic & Protestant monks is drawn from 30 countries and based in France.

Prayer Guide – Athelstone Uniting Church 2018 – Prayer Points

1 Mon 23 July Uniting Church (UCA) Assembly members who prayerfully discerned this decision	2 Tues 24 July Uniting Church President, Dr Deidre Palmer	3 Wed 25 July Uniting Church General Secretary, Colleen Geyer	4 Thurs 26 July Uniting Church Standing Committee	5 Fri 27 July Congregations & groups who are celebrating the decision to hold 2 views regarding marriage	6 Sat 28 July Congregations & groups who are grieving the decision regarding marriage	7 Sun 29 July Congregations & groups who are working through how they feel & will respond to the decision regarding marriage
8 Mon 30 July Other Denominations & Faith communities	9 Tues 31 July Agencies that are associated with the UCA (eg Uniting Communities, Uniting SA)	10 Wed 1 Aug Schools that are associated with the Uniting Church	11 Thurs 2 Aug Our neighboring Uniting Churches, incl Campbelltown & Dernancourt	12 Fri 3 Aug Our network: the Community Outreach Mission Network	13 Sat 4 Aug Our neighboring Churches from other denominations	14 Sun 5 Aug Our neighbours
15 Mon 6 Aug SA Moderator, Rev Sue Ellis	16 Tues 7 Aug SA Interim General Secretary, Rev Rob Brown	17 Wed 8 Aug SA Presbytery and Synod Pastoral Relations & Mission Planning team	18 Thurs 9 Aug Ministers in the UCA who are celebrating the decision regarding marriage	19 Fri 10 Aug Ministers in the UCA who are grieving the decision regarding marriage	20 Sat 11 Aug Ministers in the UCA who are working through how they feel & will respond to the decision regarding marriage	21 Sun 12 Aug Members of the LGBTIQ community
22 Mon 13 Aug Past president of the Uniting Church, Rev. Prof. Andrew Dutney	23 Tues 14 Aug Those observing how the Uniting Church is working through this decision	24 Wed 15 Aug Those preparing for marriage	25 Thurs 16 Aug Athelstone Uniting Church Council	26 Fri 17 Aug Minister, Rev Linda Driver	27 Sat 18 Aug Chairperson, Victoria Pederick	28 Sun 19 Aug Secretary, Mike O'Connell (taking leave of absence while he serves in an AVI placement in PNG)
29 Mon 20 Aug Acting Secretary, Jeff Dry	30 Tues 21 Aug Treasurer, Glen Luestner	31 Wed 22 Aug Administration Support Person, Sharyn Dobroszczyk	32 Thurs 23 Aug Individuals in our congregation who are celebrating the decision regarding marriage	33 Fri 24 Aug Individuals in our congregation who are grieving the decision regarding marriage	34 Sat 25 Aug Individuals in our congregation who are working through how they feel & will respond to the decision regarding marriage	35 Sun 26 Aug Our households & families as they work through how they feel & will respond to the decision regarding marriage
36 Mon 27 Aug Ourselves as we consider our own theology around marriage & how we will respond to the decision regarding marriage	37 Tues 28 Aug Athelstone Uniting Church pastoral care oversight team	38 Wed 29 Aug Those we reach out to each day through all the activities of Athelstone Uniting Church	39 Thurs 30 Aug All who are working through how they feel & will respond to the decision regarding marriage	40 Fri 31 Aug Athelstone Uniting Church Council		